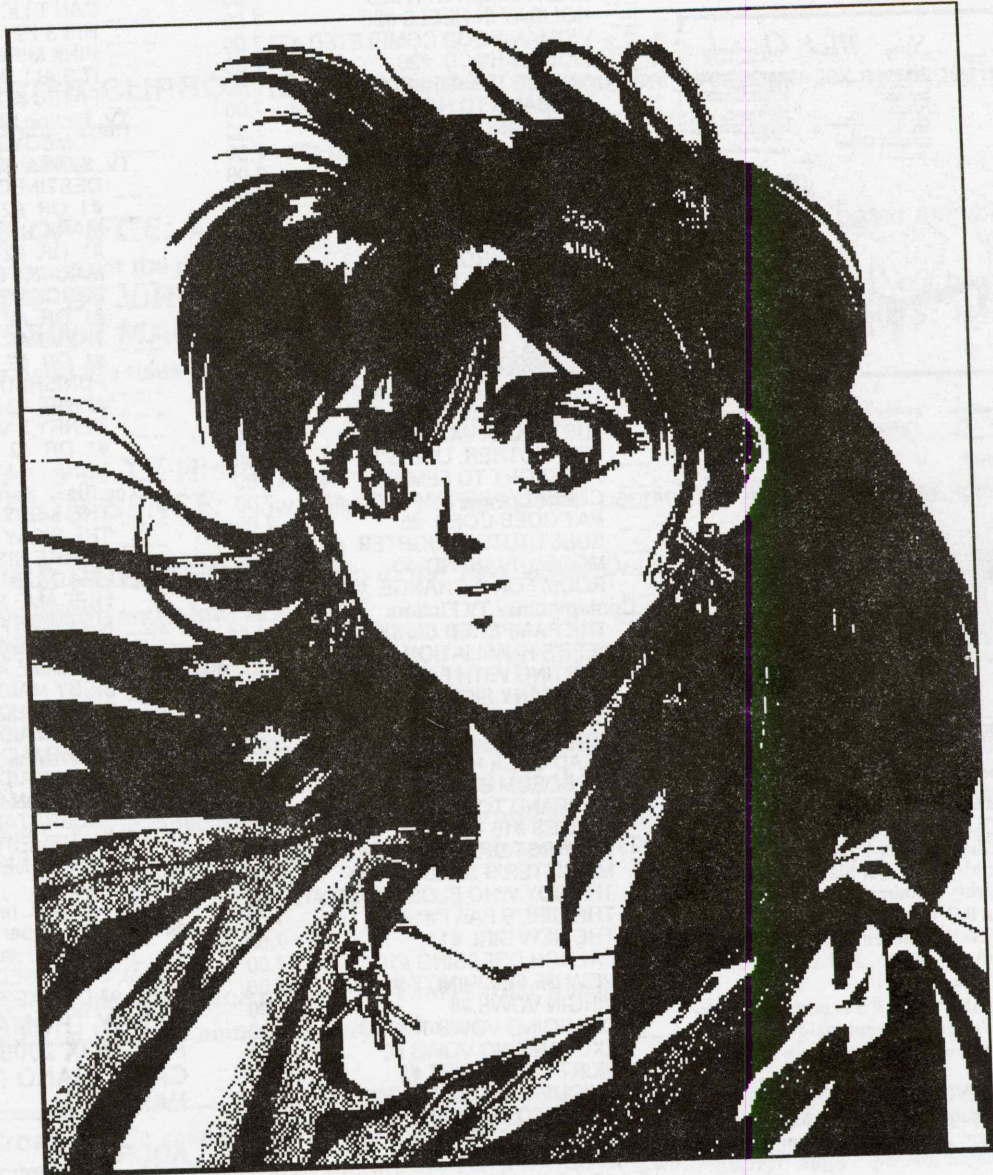


CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

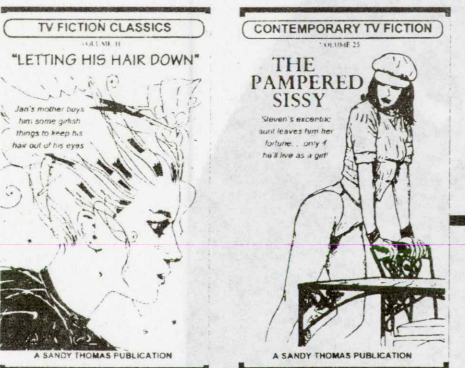
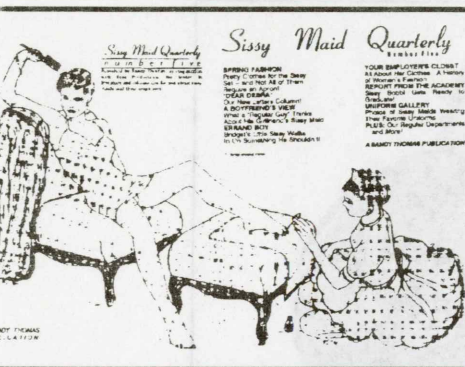
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The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

AUGUST 1996
(ISSUE #82)



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Cross-Talk: The Transgender Community's News & Information Monthly (ISSN 1070-6852) is Copyright 1996 Kymberleigh Richards, Publisher and Managing Editor. Permission is granted for the reprint in any non-profit transgender community publication of any original article appearing in **Cross-Talk**, provided proper credit is given to the author and source. Subscription rate: \$48 per year. For advertising information, telephone (818) 907-3053. Internet e-mail: <kymmer@xconn.com>.

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KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

THEY'RE OUT TO GET US

by Kimberleigh Richards
Publisher & Managing Editor

I have been watching the debate on same-sex marriages with a great deal of interest, since I spend a great deal of time in the lesbian community and that subject is of overwhelming concern there. The day of its introduction in the U.S. House of Representatives, the "Defense of Marriage Act" sparked debate that lasted into the early

Sadly, we don't have to look even as far as elected officials eager to please the "protectors of *real* family values" to find intolerance, nor do those who are intolerant of us have to play fair. Within the past few weeks, I was startled to encounter a bus operator for our regional transit system who apparently feels his personal opinions should interfere with driving a bus; he first insulted me, then rebuffed my request for an apology, then continued his disparaging remarks over the bus public address system before radioing his dispatcher to have police "come remove the mentally disturbed passenger from my bus." Fortunately, his manager and I are well

acquainted and get along very well, and that operator will be disciplined for his actions, but I have to wonder what kind of a nation we have evolved into when someone feels they can, without fear of reprisal, express slanderous remarks while on the job in a very public position. This is exactly the kind of thinking that fuels the fire our elected officials fall all over themselves to keep burning.

Where does it all end? Will *Cross-Talk*, *LadyLike*, and *Transgender Tapestry* be banned from publication because of a "Defense of Bookstores Act"? We have already seen an attempt to control free speech in cyberspace; why not go after the print media as well? If we can ignore separation of church and state to champion legislation "protecting the family unit" why not trample on the right to a free press?

For that matter, if this type of legislative abuse is allowed to continue unabated, how long will it be before hotels could be legally empowered -- or even required -- to deny us use of their facilities for our community's meetings and conventions? Are we to be thrown backwards several decades by lawmakers who conveniently ignore that they have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution, not twist it to fit the goals of those who fill their campaign coffers ... who seem to have forgotten that personal freedom was the entire reason this country was born 220 years ago?

All the demonstrations *Transsexual Menace* has staged ... all the posturing and in-fighting about such things as ENDA ... all of the court battles which have gained us some small victories ... all that pales in comparison.

This is the real danger.

"A Congress that would seek to legislate something like same-sex marriage is only a few steps away from attempting to legislate transgender expression."

hours of the next day, which made it perfect for viewing on C-SPAN out here in California. I was struck by the ignorance of some elected officials during the House debate; one representative, from a southern state -- can you say "campaign for re-election funded by the Religious Right," boys and girls? -- made the statement that no country on Earth officially recognized unions between two people of the same sex, despite the fact that mere weeks previous, one of the Scandinavian countries had their first legally-sanctioned lesbian wedding. (I remember thinking, in perfect Parliamentary procedure syntax, that "with all due respect, the gentleman from Georgia is sadly mistaken in his knowledge of the facts." Perhaps I'd make a good Congressman ... I'd certainly make an *interesting* one.)

Why do I report this to you? Because of the fact that a Congress that would seek to legislate something like same-sex marriage is only a few steps away from attempting to legislate transgender expression. Let's face it: These lawmakers are falling all over themselves to please a conservative Christian constituency (if you'll pardon the alliteration) who believe that being gay or lesbian is morally wrong. These same religious zealots equate crossdressing and transsexualism with homosexuality, so if they succeed in declaring same-sex marriages "illegal" they will become empowered to attempt similar sanctions against other "immoral" acts. (Never mind the fact that using religious arguments to protect "the institute of marriage" seems to violate the separation between church and state.) Somewhere along the line, we'll wind up the targets.



The NewsQueen

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

Ms. Sinclair has been wondering of late about the stark differences that exist between nations with a similar language, heritage, and pop culture. For example, while Great Britain still refuses to allow post-op transsexuals to marry, such marriages are routine in the United States. Yet American politicians in both parties condemn *homosexual* marriages as an unnatural threat to the "family," and states are falling all over themselves to ban it. But in Australia, three states have specifically banned discrimination against transgendered persons.

The Parliament of New South Wales (NSW) has passed a bill to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act by outlawing discrimination on the ground that a person is "transgender" (the term actually used). NSW joins South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory in including transgender (or "transsexuality") as a ground of discrimination.

The act prohibits discrimination by private and government employers, educational institutions, and clubs, making it illegal to discriminate against transgendered persons in the provision of goods, services, or public accommodation. It provides for exceptions for religious organizations, as well as for sports teams.

The act also provides for changes to the Crimes Act so that there is no doubt that sexual offenses committed against people who have undergone sexual reassignment surgery are, in fact, crimes.

The law has caused some confusion. Even though post-op transsexuals now can have their birth certificates changed to reflect their new gender, Australian law does not allow them to marry, according to one official. Activists hope to change that.

A hearing on a bill to ban transgender discrimination in California had Golden State lawmakers running for the exits when it came up for a vote before the Senate Judiciary Committee in May. Without a quorum, the measure is technically alive, but supporters have little hope that it will be approved.

Senators started leaving the hearing room after witnesses began to testify in support of the measure. The committee chair tried to speed up the testimony and move quickly to a vote, but he was unsuccessful in preventing five of his colleagues from bolting.

Following the hearing, Vicky Kolakowski, chair of the Bay

Area Transgender Law Association and Workshops, said there was "no way in hell" the measure would be approved this legislative session. But that may not be a bad thing, she conceded.

She called the bill a "nice gesture," but said not enough members of the community had been involved and that many lawmakers were very uncomfortable with the subject. Even if the bill were to win approval, she doubted that it would do little to end discrimination.

"We haven't laid the social groundwork for this," she said. "We haven't built enough of a level of tolerance in the general community."

"I don't think you can legislate people into accepting you," she added.

Nor can you simply proclaim acceptance.

That point was driven home when Connecticut Gov. John G. Rowland refused to sign a proclamation declaring June "Gay Pride Month" in the Nutmeg State.

Rowland's spokeswoman, Nuala Forde, said the governor felt the proclamation was inappropriate and objected to specific language referring to "people who do drag and transgender people."

"The bottom line is the governor feels any official statement or proclamation issued by him should be able to be read to a second-grade class," Forde said. "There needs to be a line drawn somewhere."

Rowland's decision rankled gay rights activists.

"I really feel the underlying thing is (Rowland's) using people who do drag and transgender people as a convenient out for him. I think he does not support us as a people," said Stillson.

Stillson said he offered to negotiate the language of the proclamation with the governor's staff, but was refused. In any case, references to people who do drag and transgender people would not have been cut, Stillson said.

"They're an important part of our movement. People who do drag were involved in Stonewall when this movement began. It was drag queens, harassed by police, who started to fight back," he said.

Steven Grandell continues to fight back, but with little success.

Last fall, the Minneapolis-area transgendered performance artist was rejected from a Hennepin County jury pool on a peremptory challenge by the prosecutor based on the way Grandell dresses. In May, four of his paintings were ejected from a show at a Minneapolis hair salon because of the way the figures were not dressed.

The 5-by-10-foot oil paintings depict Grandell's struggle with his gender identity. They show a human form that is both male and female. In three of the paintings, the figure is nude; in the fourth, it is clothed in a sarong.

Everything was fine at the opening, but days later the shop

called to say the paintings had generated "lots of negative comments" and the managers wanted them removed. Grandell is charging censorship, but the beauty salon operators denied the charge, saying that they weren't running an art gallery and "not even the Mona Lisa" would be welcome.



German activists tried to make Pope John Paul feel unwelcome during his first official visit to their country in June. They held a mock mass conducted by a prostitute who proclaimed herself "Popess Domenica the First."

During the gay "mass," a well-known Hamburg prostitute named Domenica Niehoff staged a mock beatification of Berlin transvestite Charlotte von Mahlsdorf.

Domenica also read a spoof encyclical declaring homosexuality a Church-approved form of birth control. Official response to the goings-on in Germany was mild. "I can understand serious criticism of the Pope," said Berlin's Roman Catholic Cardinal Georg Sterzinsky. But "if God is blasphemed, that hits us hard."



Perhaps it was the fear of blasphemy that lead police in Santiago, Chile, to raid two gay discos and arrest about 25 patrons along with the entire cast of the drag show at one club.

Those arrested were photographed, fingerprinted, and asked to reveal their preferred sex acts, HIV status and the names of sexual partners.

But when a Chilean gay rights group protested, police said the raids had been a "mistake," and they gave the arrest files to the group.



Officials in Rasario, Argentina, were not as forgiving with 60 transvestites who had been arrested for violating the law prohibiting crossdressing. They were put on probation and ordered to clean and repair the police station where they were detained.

According to two activist groups, the transvestites will be verbally, physically, and sexually abused by police when they perform their probation duties.



Election officials in Patna, the capital of the Indian state

of Bihar, thought the law was on their side when Kali, a eunuch, went to file election papers accompanied by a battery of colorfully dressed eunuchs and some lawyers. The group was initially stopped at the entrance by shocked security men until they convinced electoral officers that the Indian Constitution did not bar eunuchs from standing for election.

Described by newspapers as "endowed with the ebony physique of Hercules and standing no less than six feet two inches," 55-year-old Kali went around Patna City with a group of eunuchs carrying placards that read, "You have tried the men, you have tried the women, all are dishonest now try me."

Kali is the candidate of a previously little known Judicial Reforms Party.

The party's founder, Dev Kumar, said his group was a "psychological pressure group" -- which sought to compel the judiciary to reform itself.



Judicial reforms certainly appear to be necessary in South Korea where that nation's highest court has ruled that two men who sexually assaulted a male-to-female transsexual cannot be convicted of rape.

The decision by the Supreme Court hinged on whether a man who has had a sex-change operation is legally a woman. South Korean law recognizes rape only against women.

"Though the victim in this case behaves as a female, the person cannot be recognized as one because, among other things, his chromosomes remain unchanged and he cannot get pregnant," Justice Chong Kwi-ho ruled.

Chong upheld a lesser charge of sexual assault against the men who attacked the 37-year-old transsexual in April. The two were each jailed for 2 1/2 years.



This is the kind of discrimination that will no longer be tolerated in New South Wales. But discrimination in the area of sporting events can still occur, as it did in Thailand recently.

Two transvestite volleyball stars who powered a team of crossdressers to a men's championship have given up hopes of making the Thai national team.

They know they're not wanted, even if they are the best.

The widely popular team of twelve men, who have undergone plastic surgery, grown breasts, and wear heavy makeup, represents the northern Lampang province.

Against all odds, the team won the gold medal at the national games, but none of the players has been considered good enough to represent Thailand overseas.

"Although we act and look like women, I think we have every right to play in the men's team since we have not yet changed our sexual organs," Patphong Srinutham, the team's coordinator said.

Patphong said that when his players went for trials for the

national men's team, they were teased and discriminated against by other players. And, perhaps most important, they were not chosen to represent Thailand.

"We have to admit that we want to be beautiful, wear makeup, long hair," said 32-year-old Pitsanu Pleankum. "So we know and accept that we cannot be in the national team and have to think about our country's reputation." Volleyball administrators denied discriminating against the players because of their sexual orientation. Still, an official with the Amateur Volleyball Association of Thailand hinted at this when he acknowledged having transvestites on the national team would cause problems.

"I've heard them gossiping on the bench about how many men they get after a competition," the anonymous official said. "If we let them join the team, what will happen to our real men players, who are still young and impressionable?"

Compared to most societies, Thais generally take a relatively relaxed view about crossdressers, known locally as "katoeys." Some Thais have shown surprise when told that fans from other countries might jeer if transvestites played in an international match.

But Thai culture also frowns on conflict -- demonstrated by the good grace Pitsanu and 24-year-old teammate Danupol Changeung showed when they bowed to the inevitable.

"We don't want to cause a problem for society," said Pitsanu. He and Danupol spoke to a reporter at a Bangkok park during practice against a squad of teenage boys who appeared to have no problem playing the transvestites. "We are happy with ourselves. At least, we help change people and get them interested in the sport."

It would be difficult for Pitsanu to assume a more masculine persona for the sake of playing on the national team. A cabaret dancer in the beach resort of Phuket, he had silicon breast implants four years ago.

Danupol, who has less pronounced feminine features, holds his hands daintily between firing blistering spikes over the net. A former librarian, he coaches an under-19 men's team and is probably the best player on the transvestite squad.

He may have resigned himself to never making the national team, but he still thinks it's unfair. "They should give us a chance to try," Danupol said. "At least we are human beings."



And while Ms. Sinclair is in the sports section, she must pass along this item from the resort community of Palm Springs, California.

That is where the minor league Suns baseball team has scheduled a "Drag Queen of the Desert Night" for their game this month against the Sonoma County Crushers.

The promotion is the idea of Suns public relations director Catherine Masters, who said she wanted the team to host a benefit fund-raiser. A news release issued by the team said

money from "Drag Queen Night" will go to an organization called the Desert AIDS Association. But the existence of such a group could not be confirmed.

The Desert AIDS Project in Palm Springs has no such affiliation with the Palm Springs Suns, said Alexandra Christensen, a DAP administrator. "It's not something I'm aware of that we've sanctioned as a project," she said. "There are separate entities that put on their own events that have nothing to do with Desert AIDS Project."

Masters, who called it "just another promotion," said she got the idea from *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. Included in the night's events will be a drag queen parade and the crowning of a "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert Suns."

Suns owner Don DiCarlo, when questioned about the promotion, said that "close to 50 percent of the businesses in the area are either owned or run by the gay and lesbian community, so I don't see how they couldn't like it."

Well, at least this time, the fans will keep their clothes on.

The Suns first scheduled, then cancelled plans for a "Nude Night" last month -- in which a clothing-optional tent was going to be provided for interested fans. That proposal rubbed some Palm Springs City Council members the wrong way because the team failed to notify the city before proposing it. It gathered national attention and mentions from Jay Leno and David Letterman.

Mayor Will Kleindienst said he had not heard of "Drag Queen Night," either: "They should be promoting baseball, and it seems they have been promoting anything else," he said. "Whether or not drag queens and baseball is an acceptable combination will be determined by the sale of tickets."



Turkey is another place where the traditional value of toleration is loosing out to the modern value of intolerance. Transvestites have been part of Ottoman culture for centuries but in recent years they have been herded off the streets of Istanbul and tortured.

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Tour de Fierce

On the streets of the city, an unlikely trial of strength has pitted a sizable transvestite community against a police force whose affection for torture has earned it international notoriety.

Houses have been torched, dancers and street-walkers beaten up, while court cases brought against officers have had to be abandoned in the face of threats. Despite the intervention of international human rights groups, the conflict has escalated.

Police officers use laws against indecency and regulations governing the formation of associations to crack down on both the transsexual and wider homosexual community.

The crackdown intensified in June when thousands of international delegates flooded into Istanbul to attend the United Nations' Habitat II conference on the future of large cities. Transvestites were warned to disappear by the local police and several of their flats were allegedly set on fire.

There are also reports that many transvestites are "hiding out" in their own apartments, afraid to leave to go to work in the daytime or turn on the lights at night.

Other treatments which transvestites claim they are subjected to include being beaten with cables. "One of the policemen has a handful of different colored cables and asks you to pick one," a transvestite named Hande told a reporter. "If you choose a color he whips you with that one, if you don't you are hit with all of them."

There have also been complaints of detainees being tied at the hands and legs and hung upside down; of people being stripped, spat on and left in cold rooms; of being slammed into walls while being held by their hair; and of being kicked in their sexual organs.

But for a country in which Amnesty International last year recorded 15 deaths in custody due to torture and 35 people having been "disappeared" by the security forces, these may be relatively mild measures.

IHD, Turkey's Human Rights Association, has supported attempts by transvestites to sue police officers for the

torture they have endured.

None have been successful so far. In 1991, the courts dismissed one case on the flimsy grounds that the officer had been transferred to another station and therefore another legal district.

"The laws are set up to protect the police," said Hande. "We plan to take another case over the burning of the flats. Even if they put more pressure on us, the facts must come out."



The ugly facts came out in a London case recently, and a transsexual could be half-a-million dollars richer because of it.

The woman, identified only as "R," is a 29-year-old male-to-female transsexual who worked as an engineer. After she began her transition, her colleagues began to harass her and eventually refused to work with her.

Forced to work alone, she suffered an accident that has left her with a permanent disability. As a result, her employer, who was also unidentified, was ordered to pay her 250,000 pounds in damages.

R claims she was sexually harassed from the time she announced she was changing sex. Her coworkers put used tampons on her chair, wrote "queer" and "poofster" on her jacket, and left a fake coffin labeled "RIP" at her desk.

Madeleine Rees, the transsexual's attorney, said her client had tried to commit suicide after discovering that colleagues started an office pool, offering a large sum of money to whoever could cause her to resign or suffer serious injuries. Her employers denied the pool existed.

The decision from the London industrial tribunal is the first to follow a ruling in April from the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg that transsexuals are protected under a European Commission directive on equal treatment of men and women at work.

There is no maximum award for sex discrimination, and observers say the London judgment is a warning to employers that they face large compensation claims if they fire transsexual employees or fail to stop co-workers harassing them.



A lawsuit is one way to prevent discrimination if you are transgendered. But there is another, more time-honored way in Great Britain -- marry a member of the royal family.

The author of a new book on the Duchess of Windsor, Michael Bloch, claims that Wallis Simpson, the divorced woman who prompted King Edward VII to give up the throne, was actually a man who suffered from Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (AIS).

"In the case of AIS, a child is born genetically male with the male XY chromosome, but the body does not respond to the male sex hormone, and it develops outwardly as a female," Bloch said. "When they reach maturity, such

'women' tend to be rather 'butch' and long-limbed, as well as having unusually strident personalities. Yet they appear to be normal women and can be sexually alluring."

"There is a sprinkling of them in the fashion world," he added.

The author bases his conclusion on the duchess' somewhat masculine appearance and her domineering personality.

Bloch notes that Simpson's birth was never announced even though she was the child of a prominent Baltimore family. He also says that she was given her father's first name, suggesting that her family considered her a boy at birth.

Another fascinating fact is that Wallis and Edward didn't have sex before they were married, and, in fact, Wallis had never had sexual intercourse with either of her first two husbands. This leads to speculation that her first two divorces were because of her true gender. The theory also lends credence to the rumor that Edward was gay.



Talk about shattering images -- what has been called the world's greatest romance was really a same-sex marriage! If that isn't enough, Ms. Sinclair has another shocker for you: nearly a third of American cowboys in the Old West were transvestites!

The claim comes from Wu Chuan-fu, who a supermarket tabloid identified as a visiting professor of American history from Shanghai.

Wu says his research is based on correspondence, interviews, and photographs of cowboys who lived in the U.S. in the 19th and early 20th centuries.



Researchers in Louisiana have used a more rigorous scientific process to suggest that the modern era may be producing more gender abnormalities.

Expanding on the evidence that environmental chemicals could be altering sex hormones in animals and possibly in humans, the scientists have discovered that some pesticides with weak potential to imitate estrogen on their own become hundreds of times more potent when two are combined.

The findings suggest that exposure to mixes of chemicals routinely found in the environment could be posing a much greater risk than suspected.

Reporting in the journal *Science*, Tulane University scientists tested four pesticides. All four chemicals were weakly estrogenic alone. But when two -- especially endosulfan and dieldrin -- were paired, the potency rose by 160 to 1,600 times, a huge leap that stunned the researchers.

Endosulfan is one of the most widely used insecticides in the United States, where about 2 million pounds are applied annually on fruit, vegetables and other crops. The three other compounds -- toxaphene, dieldrin and chlordane -- were banned by the Environmental

Protection Agency in the 1980s but still contaminate many areas.

The pesticides were chosen because they commonly combine in many environmental settings, including Florida's Lake Apopka, where alligators with feminized hormones and half-male, half-female genitals have been discovered.

S. Stoney Simons Jr., a hormone expert at the National Institutes of Health, called the results remarkable, but said a major unanswered question is whether the effects seen in the study are comparable to real-life impacts on human beings or other animals.

Evidence that "gender-warping" chemicals boost estrogen or block testosterone and damage sex organs has emerged only in recent years. Yet the evidence has been mounting steadily, and it has become the hottest environmental health debate.

Tests in laboratories and on wild animals show that fairly low levels of several dozen synthetic chemicals can damage a fetus's hormones and sexual development.

Many male animals, including Florida alligators, Great Lakes birds and Columbia River otters, are born with super-estrogen levels, small penises or malformed testes that scientists have linked to pesticides and industrial chemicals.

In humans, though, the evidence is far less conclusive. Some researchers suspect that the fake hormones used in

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many chemicals could be contributing to sharp drops in male sperm counts and rising rates of testicular and breast cancer.

Or more transvestites and transsexuals?



From Tampa comes word of another reason for an increase in crossdressing -- ill-gotten gains.

Police are looking for a gang of crossdressing muggers who pose as helpless women and then rob the gallant men who try to help them. So far more than 100 such incidents have been reported.

"They pretend their car is broken down and stand next to the vehicle posing as damsels in distress," a police detective said of the crossdressed crooks.

"When men pass by they plead for help. Once the men stop, they ask him to check under the hood. When the men come up from under the car, the muggers each have a gun pointed at him. By that time it's too late to put up a fight."



Another type of transvestite crime is dropping off at least in one city.

Police in El Paso, Tex. say that since the U.S. Border Patrol began Operation Blockade and stationed a massive amount of agents on the north bank of the Rio Grande River, crimes such as transvestite prostitution have dropped dramatically.

Also down were car theft, purse snatching, and aggressive window washing.

Police didn't say if these were commonly committed by transvestites.



Continuing our check on the police blotter provides these updates on previously reported criminal activity: Los Angeles Municipal Court Judge Jacob Adajian has ruled that Valerie Nicole Taylor may be returned to Gaffney, S.C., to face murder charges in the 1979 shooting of Billy Posey. The murder took place before Taylor had a sex change.

Taylor, 40, pleaded innocent to murder during a hearing last month and has fought extradition since her arrest in May. She has been held without bail at a woman's jail.

After a fingerprint comparison, Adajian had previously ruled Valerie Nicole Taylor used to be Freddie Lee Turner.

Police in Gaffney said Turner was dressed as a woman when he was last seen with Posey, who was killed Jan. 7, 1979. A warrant for Freddie Lee Turner was issued a week later.

The FBI dropped its search in 1984 and the case went into its "inactive" file. In arresting Taylor, Burbank police said they were acting on an informant's tip.

Burbank police believe Taylor has lived in California since 1991. She told them she was unemployed when she was arrested.

Taylor's attorney, Walter Krauss, has claimed his client had a sex-change operation because it was a "lifestyle choice" and not an effort aimed at avoiding arrest.



Another California transsexual, Candy Walker, who had been charged with carrying a concealed weapon in a bizarre shooting incident in which she was shot and wounded by her father, is in jail following her conviction on the weapons charge.

Her father had sought to evict Walker from the family's home after she came out as transsexual on Christmas Day, 1995. Three days later, as Walker returned to her home to collect some of her belongings, her father fired two shots at her, one of them grazing her head.

Walker was arrested on burglary charges and was later charged with carrying a concealed weapon.

She was eventually released on bail, but she showed up late for hearings and court appearances, almost missing her own trial and effectively prejudicing her case. She was convicted and sentenced to six months in the Ventura County Jail on the weapons charge. Just before she was due to begin her sentence, she obtained breast augmentation surgery.

Although Walker has been living as a female and has changed her name, she has been held in the men's wing of the jail. In addition, she has been confined to solitary as punishment for refusing to surrender her bra, which she claims gave her necessary breast support following the implants. The bra was eventually taken from

her, reportedly causing her great pain and her stitches to begin bleeding.

The jail infirmary has refused to give Ms. Walker pain medication or female hormones.

Dismayed at the unnecessary abuse of his client at the hands by jail officials, attorney Allan Sigel has requested the local Transsexual Menace chapters and friends stage a public action to focus attention on Walker's mistreatment.



After a two-week nationwide manhunt, Canadian authorities have arrested a man they believed shot and killed three Toronto transgendered prostitutes during a killing spree that lasted only a few hours this past May.

Arrested and charged with the murders was Marcello Palma, 30. Palma is married and has a young child. He made no comment to reporters as he was escorted back to Toronto from Nova Scotia where he was arrested. Nor did officials say if Palma was suspected in other murders.

Meanwhile, a Toronto drag queen said that Palma tried to pick her up two years ago, believing she was a prostitute.

"I had just finished doing a show," the queen said, "and I was walking home with a friend of mine. He (Palma) drove by in his red truck. We chatted for a bit and then he said, 'I've never seen you girls here.' I said, 'Well, I'm sorry, we don't work the streets; we're entertainers.'" Snap!



Several drag queens and kings walking home after the Lexington, Ky., Royal Sovereign Imperial Court Coronation in June found themselves in the midst of a lot more excitement than they bargained for.

Just after The Bar closed for business, eight late-night revelers, including three queens in full drag, walked directly into a shootout involving a fugitive and a police officer.

When the shooting stopped, the cop was on the ground seriously wounded. His alleged assailant fled but was later captured. Unconfirmed reports indicate that a man his description was seen at The Bar earlier in the evening.

The queens immediately rushed to the side of the police

officer. As one cradled his head with an expensive Armani coat (not a blanket, as reported by a newspaper), a lesbian drag king (who was not in drag) yanked open the securely locked back door of The Bar and went inside to dial 911. A second drag queen ran to her car to do the same on a cellular phone.

All eight -- including the three men in drag -- were eventually taken to the police department to give statements, finishing at around 6 a.m. Because the crime scene was still off limits, they couldn't retrieve their regular clothes from The Bar. Lexington police drove the three home. Yes, they were still in drag.

The police were reportedly very pleasant to the entire group throughout the ordeal.



If Goldust of the World Wrestling Federation had been with the Lexington queens, they wouldn't have needed a woman to pull open the bar's back door.

Goldust, who dresses entirely in gold from the top of his wig to his lame boots, is one of several WWF performers who appear in the ring in a less than manly guise.

Although fans seem to love the gimmick, transgendered and gay activists are angry that the choreographed "violence" against the "sissies" in the ring encourages real violence against sexual minorities in the streets.



Another area of low-brow entertainment has embraced transgendered behavior.

The ABC soap opera *The City* features a post-op male-to-female transsexual character named Azure. In recent episodes, Jared revealed Azure's secret to the media. Then Bernardo, Azure's handsome boyfriend, talked her out of killing herself, but admitted that he does not know what kind of a relationship they can have now that he knows she is a transsexual. The plot thickened when Azure went to see Jared, who is later found murdered. Azure, along with almost everyone else in the show, is suspected of the killing. Ms. Sinclair tuned in just after Azure went on the lam, so she is unable to report if Azure is portrayed by an actor or an actress.

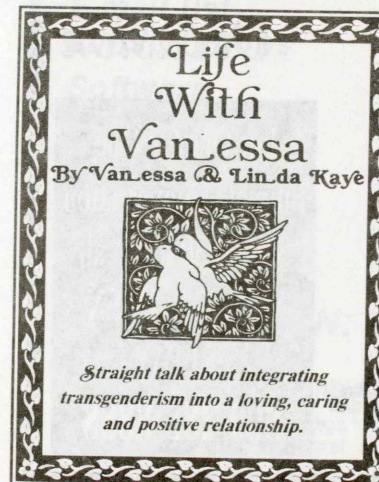
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"Life With Vanessa" is a new book just released. Written by Vanessa and Linda Kaye (formerly Linda Peacock), a couple in a transgendered relationship, it deals with many of the issues facing couples in similar relationships. Some of these issues are: *The Woman Within; Developing the Woman Within; Sensuality and Sexual Issues; Religious Issues; Friends and Family; Support Groups; Shopping and Money Issues; The Other Woman; and, Celebrating the Similar.* The book includes a chapter by Dallas Denny, M.A., founder and director of AEGIS, "Why Is Your Partner This Way," and an introduction by Jo Ann Roberts, Ph.D., co-founder of Renaissance, author and publisher.

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The actor/actress question was posed in New York City recently when the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus opened in Madison Square Garden. The star attraction of the RBB&B unit touring the East Coast this year is Airiana the Human Arrow.

A mild controversy ensued when someone (a circus flack?) suggested that Airiana is a man. As proof, the rumor noted that the circus prohibits interviews with her. The rumor didn't follow the circus to Philadelphia.



Although drag may be new to soap operas, it isn't new to another television staple, the sitcom. That tradition continues now that the hit Australian drag queen movie *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* is being turned into a sitcom.

The spin-off may be about three drag queens who see *Priscilla* and become convinced that it is based on them. The movie's creator Stephan Elliott, came up with the idea last year, and has delivered the first three half-hour scripts to London-based Working Title Television. The initial idea is to do six episodes. Working Title is owned by PolyGram, which financed the movie.

There has been no word as to whether or not members of the Palm Springs Suns will be involved in the project.



And the *Priscilla* juggernaut rolls on with *Ladies Please* ... The 55-minute documentary spin-off (or could it be a precursor?) is making the festival rounds and scoring rave reviews. The film is about the three real-life Australian drag queens whose adventures inspired the movie. Lady Bump, Strykermeyer, and Cindy Pastel were advisers to the film, played bit parts, and were hired to help publicize the movie when it premiered at the Cannes Film Festival.

The documentary shows the trio performing a lip synch show at a Sydney drag club, talking about their personal lives, and taking the Cannes by storm during the film festival.

The movie is tailor-made for eventual showing on cable or in art houses. See it if you can, and judge for yourself if one of the girls isn't a spitting image of Angela Gardner.



And speaking of Miss Gardner, we recall that she played a hooker in *Stonewall*, the film showing how the gay rights movement grew out of a riot started by drag queens angry about a police raid on the Greenwich Village bar of the same name.

The long awaited film debuted at the New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in June, and not expectedly, the premier audience had to pass protesters on the way into the theatre.

Members of the Stonewall Veterans Association and Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries were angry that



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the film' producer's had failed to donate \$1,000 to association for their participation in *Stonewall*. But soon the demonstrators and the movie types kissed and made up. It had all been "a little misunderstanding."

The movie is less about politics than it is about drag queens and the men who love them (one of whom is a Mafioso who runs the gay bar protection racket) in the Village. From what the critics say, here's another one you shouldn't miss. Of special note is Guillermo Diaz's performance as La Miranda Querides.



When they eventually make the autobio of Jayne Country (*Man Enough to be a Woman*) into a movie, the rock 'n' roller wants a known star to play her.

"For awhile I was thinking I'd like Courtney Love to play me," she said. "But I'm thinking I want a real transsexual to play me now, like Pamela Anderson Lee ... No, we can get Stephen Dorff to put back on the awful wig he wears in *I Shot Andy Warhol*."



Finally, Ms. Sinclair wishes to set the record straight on RuPaul. She had reported the hurt feeling that some Houston fans experienced when Miss Paul failed to appear at a fundraising VIP luncheon in connection with a concert appearance in that Texas city. Even though she had never agreed to the noontime gig and so was not to blame

for not showing up, Miss Paul promised her fans "something special."

The peace offering arrived in Houston recently, a limited number of "splendid concert program booklets" that "consists of the many faces of RuPaul and is filled with clever anecdotes."

Because there may not be enough for all of the people who bought tickets to the VIP luncheon, the books were to be given out on a first come, first served basis. But no matter, if the fans who shelled out money to break bread with RuPaul actually went to the Houston concert, they probably bought themselves a copy of the program booklet.



Following Ms. Sinclair's plea for contributions last month, a single faithful reader -- Bernice, president of Minnesota Freedom of Gender Expression -- sent in a timely item. Ms. Sinclair thanks her for that and for noting the name and date of publication.

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HotBuzz

by JoAnn Roberts

"It's easy to stop making mistakes. Just stop having ideas."

-- Unknown.

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On the community front, things seem quiet, until you lift the lid and see that the pot is about to boil over. There's lots of stuff going on in the background. Suffice it to say there's motion and where there's motion, there's usually friction. Look for motion from **GenderPAC** in the next month. They'll be going on a membership drive. GPAC needs your monetary contributions because GPAC is very fortunate to have **Dana Priesing** representing us in Washington, D.C., and **Riki Anne Wilchins** pounding the pavement at gender events, but they're doing it gratis right now and that's not going to play well much longer. GPAC has to be able to sustain its lobbying efforts and that means your tax-deductible dollars. Send anything you can to your favorite organization, IFGE, Renaissance, Outreach, AEGIS, FTM International, or Tri-Ess, and tell them the money is for GPAC. Or send the money directly to GPAC, care of P.O. Box 229, Waltham, MA 02154. Be sure to note which organization gets notified of the donation. It's needed for tax purposes. To get a peek at what GPAC is doing, hop on over to the GPAC page at <http://www.cdspub.com/gpac.html>.

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I've been sitting on this item for almost two months now and I gotta get it out. I never thought that I'd see someone who treated this community worse than **Michael Salem** does, but I have. I (and a whole buncha people) received a mailing from **Stephanie Lloyd's** Transformation Boutique announcing a U.S. mailing address. Ms. Lloyd is a post-op transsexual from the U.K. who owns a string of Transformation boutiques over there and publishes an eponymous magazine. Ms. Lloyd is as revered there as Mr. Salem is here. The junk that was offered in the mailing just blew me away because it is so patently false in all of its claims. Like, Oestrogen Breast Cream that will grow you a hefty set of boobs in just 6 months for only \$100 a month. Like, Hormone Nipple Cream (whatever that is) for just \$95 per ounce. Like, a realistic vagina replica for only \$149 shown with a photo of a real woman's vagina. Like, eight different types of breast forms all under \$100 per paid and all illustrated with photos of the breasts of real women. Gimme a break! Please. If you or anyone you know has received this mailing, please make sure you tell

everyone else what a rip-off this is. Better yet, go to the post office and file a mail fraud complaint.

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Also in the above mailing was an interesting tidbit that should concern **Jeri Lee of Spartacus**. Ms. Lloyd notes that we should not confuse her *Transformation* magazine with Ms. Lee's Transformation magazine, and that she is pursuing the issue through legal channels. Ms. Lloyd would do well to watch her own ass in that regard.

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I'm sure that someone will pick this one up and explore it extensively, but in case you've been visiting Mars, **Dennis Rodman** of the Chicago Bulls has all but explicitly proclaimed himself a transvestite, and on national television, too. I wonder if he'll do a *LadyLike* cover for me?

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Those of you who've been to a recent **Paradise In The Poconos** weekend know that we added a Big Hair contest and it's been a lot of fun. Now comes an online site to help you learn the ins and outs of creating huge hair. **Texas Hair & Style** at <http://www.dallas.net/~styletx/home.html> provides step-by-step instructions. They even provide you with Big Hair GIFs so you can paste them over photos of yourself to see how you would look with really big hair. Dallas! I shoulda known.

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More games online are available at **Hollywood Online**, <http://www.hollywood.com> where you can play Dress Up with **Nathan Lane** from *The Birdcage* and download *Barb Wire* video clips.

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I usually make a big hoopla about getting online and finding the TG community, but of late I am becoming dubious of the benefit, especially on the newsgroups soc.support.transgendered and alt.transgendered. Over the past several months a flame war erupted that was particularly vicious and very anti-transgender and anti-transvestite. New people coming in looking for support were driven away and some old-timers left, too. **Kym Richards** left the groups in May and **Sister Mary Elizabeth** wasn't too happy with what she saw there either. I've all but stopped reading the posts daily and only check in once a week.

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IFGE has expanded its online presence with an electronic bookstore and an electronic version of Transgender Tapestry <http://www.tiac.net/users/dba/ifge/ifge.htm>. Meanwhile, IFGE and **3-D Communications, Inc.**, the people who publish **Transgender Forum** on the World Wide Web, have agreed to merge their Support Group lists to provide a single, comprehensive resource for that

information. The list will be co-maintained by IFGE and 3-D Communications. I should have a URL for you next month.

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Quote without comment: "I heard **Senator Bob Packwood** is transferring to my district because my seat is up for grabs," Colo. **Senator Pat Schroeder**. And this just in from Teheran; The word "dole," as in **Bob Dole**, is Farsi slang for dick or penis. Hmmm!

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Are you a guy or a man? That's what *Glamour* magazine wants to know. What's the difference? A "guy" makes a lot of mistakes before he's 30. A "man" makes a lot of money before he's 30. A "guy" quits his job. A "man" starts his own business. Okay, you get the idea. What's intriguing about the piece though, are the women they rate as "guys" and "men" like ... Women Who Are Men: Angela Bassett, Courtney Cox, Lady Di, Sharon Stone, Michelle Pfeiffer ... Women Who Are Guys: Whoopi Goldberg, Rosie O'Donnell, Fergie, Madonna, Sandra Bullock.

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On to fashion news ... for Summer the eyes have it and the look is minimalist. Try a bold cover swept across the lids and mascara, no liner. I can't abide by that look, however. I feel the eye needs to be defined by lining and here's how: 1 - prep lids with a light coat of foundation to provide

a "canvas," or use a neutral shadow like beige or taupe ... 2 - the trick is getting it right for the type of liner you use (a) for liquid: tilt the container so the liner pools near the opening, dip brush and wipe off the excess (b) for cake: wet brush so it's damp and run over the cake (c) for pencil: rub the point of the pencil into your palm so body heat melts the liner then dip brush into it ... 3 - close one eye and place brush parallel to and up against the lashline. Start along the outer third and trace a line just past the corner. Now go back and make one smooth line from inner edge to outer corner ... 4 - allow liner to really dry, then close your eyes and dust lightly with powder to set. Apply mascara ... 5 - need to fix a smudge or mistake? With cake liner it's easy, rewet the brush and go over the edges. For liquid or pencil, dip a small synthetic brush with an angled edge into foundation and "erase" the smudge ... 6 - final tip: if you're right-handed, start on your left eye and vice versa for southpaws.

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Summer sweats can dissolve your makeup right off your face. We've all battled those little beads of sweat on our upper lip. What's a girl to do? Try one of the new silicone based foundations like Cover Girl **Continuous Wear Natural Makeup** or Max Factor **Lasting Performance Stay Put Makeup**.

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You can make a difference! Help us fight for your right to be transgendered.

In June of 1995, several of the national transgender organizations created the community's first political action committee — **GenderPAC**. It's purpose is to fund the increasing number of political activities of the transgender community such as the Transgender Lobby Days last October. In just a few short months, **GenderPAC**, through the evangelism of a few dedicated people, managed to raise and disburse over \$10,000. It is not enough.

It's time for the entire community to pitch in. **GenderPAC** wants to ensure that your right to work, your right to fair housing, and your right to reasonable public accommodations will not be denied. **GenderPAC** will continue to lobby Congress in 1996 for transgender inclusion in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). But, we can't do it alone and we can't do it for free. Your tax-deductible contribution will make the crucial difference. Give and give generously. You'll feel really good about it. Send your contributions to:

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If you like clothes that are the cutting edge of style (not fashion), watch for a **Rampage** store to open in a mall near you. Rampage is all the rage and they carry lines like **French Connection**, **Betsey Johnson**, and their own designs. Prices are *tres* affordable.



If you were hoping to make it into next year's *Renaissance News & Views* swimsuit issue, you'd better take that photo before the summer is over. What? You can't find a swimsuit that's suitable? Try a new line by **Elisabeth** from **Liz Claiborne** in sizes from 14 to 24. A mesh-top tank suit in nylon/Lycra spandex is about \$72.



For you extra tall girls, here are two possible sources of stylish clothes: **Long Elegant Legs** specializes in casual separates to size 22 (1-800-344-2225), and **Tall Classics** features both office and weekend wear to size 20 (1-800-345-1958).



Yes, I know it's barely August, but dahlings, you must begin to think about your **Fall Wardrobes**. The scene for Fall seems to be bright primary colors: red, blue and yellow. (Contrary to popular belief and computer geeks, green is not a primary color.) It's difficult to pull off yellow and blue just looks too dowdy to me, so I'll stick with my



... has been around as long as the movies themselves!

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favé, a bright bold red. Another hot look coming this Fall is **Military Style**. That means belted coats and jackets with epaulets and double-breasted pockets.



Corrective concealers are making a showing at beauty counters everywhere because no one has a perfect complexion, except perhaps a newborn. If you choose to use a foundation-concealer combination follow some of these tips ... put the foundation on first and the concealer over the foundation ... try to apply both foundation and concealer in natural lighting whenever possible ... choosing the right shade is tricky but don't be too fussy because the concealer will blend into the foundation ... never try to change your skin tone with a concealer. You can get skin care advice and makeup lessons online at Clinique's website <<http://www.clinique.com>>.



I found this really cool magazine called **TopModel** that features news exclusively about the top fashion models. The May/June issue focused on mega-supermodel **Cindy Crawford** with scads and scads of photos. But the one photo that really caught my eye is on page 59. It's a close up of Cindy's face that is not retouched. This unabashed view of Cindy's face reveals much of what the fashion and beauty industry routinely hide -- flaws. Cindy has large pores, tiny wrinkles around her eyes and a hair growing out of that mole at the corner of her mouth. There was also a great **Cindy Cut-Out doll** with flashy and casual clothes. A six-issue subscription just \$17.95 sent to P.O. Box 58295, Boulder, CO 80323-8295.



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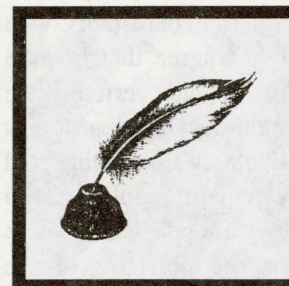


So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think if you haven't pissed off someone, somewhere, you're not doing your job correctly. Comments? E-mail them to <cyberqueen@cdspub.com>, or write me c/o **Cross-Talk**. Copyright 1996 by Creative Design Services.

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GUEST COMMENTARY

IN DEFENSE OF IFGE

by Winnie Brant

Chair, IFGE Nominations & Awards Committee

Member, IFGE Board of Directors

[Editor's Note: The following commentary is offered as a rebuttal to "An Open Letter to the IFGE Board" by Bob Davis, which appeared in **Cross-Talk** #79.]

Perhaps it is a spillover from conventional politics, but too many people are prone to see nefarious conspiracies where force of circumstance or honest mistakes are to blame. They assume the worst, never give benefit of doubt, and proclaim their erroneous conclusions to the world.

To support IFGE, one must have faith in its objectives, in the people that operate and guide the organization, and that any perceived deficiencies can be corrected by reform

from within. Blindly critical articles undermine the confidence of members and potential members, eroding the financial and other support necessary to achieve our objectives.

IFGE is the brainchild of Merissa Sherrill Lynn, conceived in love and devotion to service of the transgender community, to bring

us out of the closet of adult bookstores and into the mainstream as just another "minority". The first issues of *Tapestry* were published out of the basement of her home. She founded IFGE to bring together all segments of the transgender community -- notice that she called the conventions sponsored by IFGE "Coming Together - Working Together Conventions" and *not* "IFGE Conventions". She really meant it, though they sometimes seemed to devolve into "Fighting Among Ourselves" conventions.

The circumstances leading up to Merissa's departure were very painful for all concerned, as might be expected for any organization forced to sever ties with its founder. Though I attended some Board meetings as a committee chair, I was not a Board member at that time, so am not apprised of all the details. But as I see it, Merissa could not adapt to function as the type of Executive Director that IFGE came to need, and IFGE could not afford to pay both such a Director and a visionary leader like Merissa. Likely, there are as many different slants on this assessment as there

are Board members. There are some aspects of any decision that need not and should not be debated outside of Board meetings, and it is only natural for any organization to try to put the best possible face on a sad situation, which Mr. Davis sees as being "too Pollyanna."

Now, regarding the composition of the Board of Directors. Back before IFGE became a membership organization, Merissa had to put it together by "bootstrapping." She wanted to emphasize that IFGE is a "transgender community" organization by instituting a democratically elected board. But who should get to nominate and vote for directors? As a practical matter, she decided upon

subscribers to *Tapestry*, plus a few others, who had shown at least some interest in IFGE affairs and were on the IFGE mailing list.

Now, who would readers of *Tapestry* know best? Why, people who wrote articles appearing in *Tapestry*! If they attended a few crossdressing events such as Fantasia Fair or the Be-All, these

readers would meet many of the authors and get to know them personally. At the time, *Tapestry* was a predominantly MTF CD/TV/TS oriented magazine, as the renamed *Transgender Tapestry* still is to a great extent. So, the members of the Board are mostly MTF.

Another requirement that tends to skew the composition of the Board is that Board Members are expected to attend Board Meetings: four per year if possible, or at least two of them. And pay their own way, at about \$600 minimum per meeting (\$400 airfare plus \$200 for two nights in a hotel and meals). Thus, the cards are stacked in favor of the "economically advantaged," as some might say. Name recognition continues to be a problem, favoring an incumbent candidate over a newcomer. It is rather ironic that the desire to make IFGE more democratic should make it less representative. But this is no different than national politics.

The Board is well aware of these facts and *has* attempted to diversify. In the past, certain "outsiders" have been elected to the Board, but failed to attend board meetings.

**A response to the recent
"open letter" criticizing
IFGE and its policies.**

The intent of appointing one of the board members is exactly the opposite of what Mr. Davis assumes. Rather than blindly accept the candidate who ranked fifth in the voting, it allows the Board to consider another candidate, less well known, who they believe would bring in new ideas. I am the appointed member this year, and am willing to explore new ideas, though Mr. Davis may call me an "old girl." Incidentally, there were several resignations from the Board, leaving unexpired terms to be filled by alternates, so everyone on the ballot last year is now on the Board. In 1995, I served the final year of the term for someone who resigned, starting in 1993 as seventh alternate. Anyone interested enough to get on the ballot has a good chance of getting on the Board.

The change of IFGE to a formal membership organization has helped financially, but this is not the only or the main reason for the change. Those who are interested only in the magazine may still subscribe to *Transgender Tapestry* for the same \$40 rate. Many supporters of IFGE have always contributed more than this minimum in the form of donations. The basic \$25 membership rate was set to attract those who may not wish to subscribe, such as some who have completed their transition and no longer have great interest in the magazine, FTM people who find it too weighted towards MTF interests, as well as the economically disadvantaged. The important thing to note here is that these people who are interested enough to join IFGE are now the only ones eligible to nominate and vote for IFGE Board members, undiluted by mere magazine readers who may have just come out of the closet and may not know what is going on.

We also now ask that all candidates for the Board be IFGE members, and promise to attend at least two Board meetings for each of their three years of office. This is one guideline being enforced more vigorously than in the past. We have always asked that all candidates agree to run "on the basis of their ability and willingness to serve the entire Transgender Community without bias" -- these are Merisa's words. However, we cannot guarantee that some may have a hidden agenda -- that is something the voters must judge.

I am sure that our Board chair, Linda Buten, fully supports non-discrimination against minorities. Her article in *Cross-Talk* #66 is a warning that anti-discrimination laws may actually hinder rather than help "protected" minorities. Who wants to win the battle but lose the war? Linda implies that, without a law, she would consider hiring a transsexual having the qualifications needed for a job. But business employers, large or small, must be allowed to discriminate against people who prove to be ineffective on the job. Unfortunately, the opinion of someone who is fired is often very different from their boss. If they belong to a minority, they may conclude that their loss of job is due to their minority status rather than work performance -- and sue if they are in a "protected" category.

Lawsuits mean big buck expenses for the contestants, with lawyers the main beneficiaries. While I agree that if there is to be an ENDA, transgender should certainly be included, I feel that a less confrontational approach may be more effective in the long run. Nobody likes being told what to do, especially by the Government. Employers can be encouraged to voluntarily adopt all-inclusive non-discrimination policies. This is the objective of the "Partners in Diversity Award" instituted this year by IFGE.

Back to the selection of Board candidates. A "Call for Nominations" is mailed to all IFGE members in July. Nominators should know their nominees and make sure that they are willing to run under the guidelines listed in the letter. The Nominations Committee processes the returned forms, contacts the nominees to verify that they are willing to run and serve if elected, and prepares the ballots. All agreeable nominees will be placed on the ballot. Mr. Davis did not nominate anybody last year (if he did not receive a form, I'm sorry; he should have if he was an IFGE member at the time they were mailed). We invite him to nominate one or more candidates this year. Self-nominations are acceptable.

Regarding Mr. Davis' comments on fund raising: yes, IFGE has approached foundations, etc. on the subject of grants. These benevolent organizations usually require that beneficiary organizations have significant financial support from their constituents: if we don't give, why should they?

The opinions expressed here are my own.



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VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

HORMONES AND CROSSDRESSING

by Virginia Prince, Ph.D.

Ever since the book *Brain Sex* came out there has been a flurry of commentary in our culture putting the responsibility for crossdressing on either an excess of female hormones or a deficit in male hormones prenatally. As I have said and written before, I don't see this as a valid cause of gender behavior for two principal reasons: 1.

"I don't believe there is a cause [for crossdressing] in the true meaning of the word."

So far as I know, all CDs and TSs who come to medical attention turn out to be perfectly normal males. The fact that about 75% of us are married and have children tends to indicate that things are within normal range both structurally and functionally and, 2. Individuals who definitely have had some sort of known hormonal or genetic abnormality prenatally generally show some physical manifestation of it such as hare lip, cleft palate, dwarfism, or various other congenital abnormalities. So the case for hormonal abnormalities during fetal life causing general behavioral problems in the absence of any physical abnormalities is not really very strong. It is just another case of trying to find some external cause for CDing because that takes the heat off of the individual as being responsible for his own behavior. The cry "I can't help it ... the stars/leftovers from a past life/genes/hormones/dominating mothers/ absent fathers/too many sisters/(fill in your own pet causation) ... made me do it", has resounded for generations. The whole thing is a responsibility avoidance mechanism.

But now comes the news via TV, newspapers and scientific articles indicating that pesticides and other pollutants, in air, water, food, etc. have the ability to mimic estrogen -- the female hormones. Male animals fed such compounds or even their metabolic by products show a number of reproductive abnormalities such as a low sperm count, infertility, undescended testicles, impotence, hypospadias of the penis (a condition in which the penis fails to fuse together and the urethra on the underside remains unclosed), and other conditions. Male animals in the wild first showed some of these symptoms frequently leading to

low reproductive rates and that is what first alerted biologists to look for environmental explanations. And they found plenty.

Taking a lead from biologists, researchers into human sexuality and reproductive problems began to find and report that many of these same conditions are on the increase in human males ... the implication being that the increase in the number and amount of substances in the environment that mimic the action of estrogen is responsible for the observed effects.

Now this will act as a green flag to those who like to point to hormones as the cause of our crossdressing behavior. I expect to see commentary and letters to the editor in some of our community publications saying, in effect, "I told you so, hormones or hormone-like substances are responsible for the phenomenon of crossdressing." This is really grasping at straws, because all male babies spend nine months living off of their mother's blood which always carries estrogen ... so if estrogen in this environment is the cause of crossdressing, then why don't all boys and men become CDs?

But hold on a moment! Notice that no behavioral abnormalities are being reported for either man or animals. All the effects reported are either physical or functional. Because of that inconvenient little fact, these recently reported findings are substantiation of my point made in the second paragraph above. Males who are CDs do not show the functional and anatomical abnormalities reported. On the other hand there are some persons handicapped by being blind, having cerebral palsy and even Down's Syndrome who have nevertheless become crossdressers. Both of these points tend to indicate that the general behavioral choice of crossdressing behavior does not have its origin in hormones, either prenatally or postnatally by environmental substances with estrogen-like properties.

So I don't believe there is any warrant for seizing on these recently reported results as an explanation for crossdressing. The problem with people who have read *Brain Sex* and other books on the same topic is that most of them have little biological background. Since they are looking for a cause they latch on to anything that seems to provide it and adopt it as their own and that becomes the

"cause." Something that can be considered a cause is almost necessary to many CDs because the alternative is too dangerous. That is, if an actual, real, all the time, everybody kind of a causative factor could be found, and demonstrated to the satisfaction of scientists active and knowledgeable in the field, it would make life so much simpler for many CDs. They could then feel themselves to be completely the victim of whatever they have picked for a cause, which is to say, that they had no hand in the matter at all. It would immediately get rid of so much guilt and shame. Very few persons who are physically handicapped in one way or another ever feel guilt or shame about it because they *know* that the cause was beyond their control. Shame and guilt only arise when you do something that on a very deep level you know you could have avoided. But so far no such "cause" has shown up. So the only thing left for those needing an explanation is to take full responsibility for their actions themselves. It would also imply that if they wanted to stop they could and no self-respecting CD wants to face that music. So, better to keep onlooking at and considering every fantastic pseudo-explanation that comes along -- anything to avoid being driven into a corner where they would have to admit, "yes, it's true, I dress because I enjoy what it means to me and I enjoy it so much that I don't want to give it up on my own. So therefore I am motivated to adopt one or another explanation that will get me off the hook."

I guess I am ready to drop my little bomb and then defend myself against the resulting turmoil. My little bomb is the statement that I don't believe there is *a* cause in the true meaning of the word. To me a "cause" of some specific result is itself a specific thing, action or verbalization which impacts physically, socially or psychologically on something else be it a another physical object, a social group or its philosophy, or the self-concept, experience or expectations of an individual. Moreover, the impact brings about some change in the structure, action, behavior or attitude of whatever is impacted. In the case at hand none of these requirements are met so there is no "cause".

So the dedicated CD says "maybe not, but the phenomenon of crossdressing is real and widespread so there must be some kind of cause." Not so, if one is precise in the meaning of the word "cause." What I think occurs is that the crossdressing individual at some time in the past made a *discovery*.

Finding something you did not know was present or true is what a discovery is. When a scientist gets an unexpected experimental result which provides a new insight to nature we don't say that he "caused" the result; he did the experiment when, where and how he did it and thus made a discovery of a new phenomena. Many events led up to the discovery (including the fact that he got out of bed that morning to go to the laboratory to do the experiment). So since the result would not have been discovered unless he *did* get out of bed and go to the laboratory, why wouldn't



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we say that getting out of bed "caused" the experimental result? Obviously because that is a ridiculous idea. Along that same line of thinking, the "real" cause of your -- or anyone's -- crossdressing is the fact that your parents had intercourse one night many years before. Obviously if they hadn't the egg would not have been fertilized, a fetus would not have formed, and you or another individual would not have been born and would not therefore have grown up to be a crossdresser. Simple cause and effect, right? And my definition above would be fulfilled -- the sperm "impacted" the egg and fertilized it, which brought about a change in the chemistry and future development of the egg, resulting in the individual who subsequently became a crossdresser. So in the last analysis it was your parents (or grandparents or great-grandparents, *ad infinitum*) who were responsible. But you still are left to ask "why?"

My answer is that at some particular time and for any of a multitude of reasons our hero(ine) put on some piece of feminine apparel and made a *discovery*. It felt nice, either tactually or psychologically or both. Moreover, he realized that he enjoyed the experience and that it was therefore worth repeating -- which he did whenever possible. You have heard the expression, "rebel without a cause." Here we have a crossdresser without a cause! The experience was either unplanned or almost accidental but it provided the opportunity for the discovery and the stimulus for the

enjoyable effect. So let's forget all this causal stuff and simply admit that doing what we do brings us great pleasure and satisfaction and that we like doing it so we do it. We aren't the victims of some uncontrollable compulsion. Nobody *makes* us crossdress; we do it voluntarily on our own responsibility and we should gladly accept that responsibility and not try to cop out to stars, past lives, genes, hormones, misguided parents and all the rest of the pantheon of proposed causes.

You like it? Then do it, and do it to the best of your ability. You can celebrate your having made the original discovery and having the guts to admit it and do it. But forget about causes. *You* are the cause and you should accept responsibility for whatever you do. If you don't feel good about what you do then for God's sake stop doing it. Nobody is holding your feet to the fire! Relax and enjoy it.



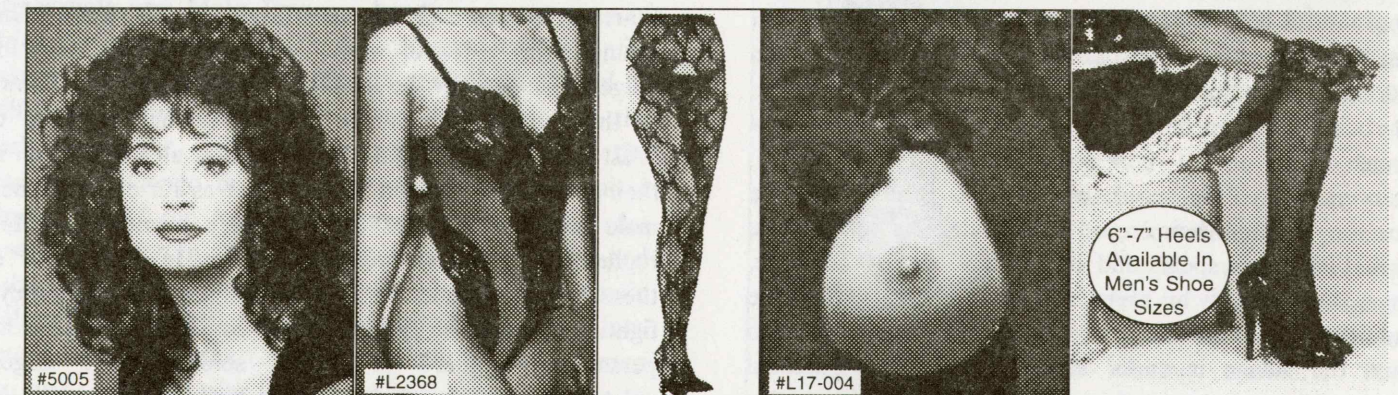
Virginia Prince is a co-founder of The Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) and the former publisher of Transvestia magazine. She may be contacted at P.O. Box 36091, Los Angeles CA 90036.

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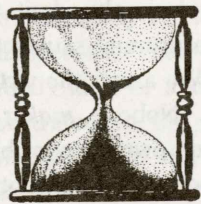
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CROSSDRESSING MAGIC, INTERSEXUALS AND FEMALE HUSBANDS



by Roberta Perkins

Africa offers a great range of gender crossing types ... more than any other continent on Earth. There are examples of crossing gender by both sexes, there are cases of men and women taking on the roles of the opposite sex without adopting the appropriate dress, and there are rituals in which one or both sexes crossdress for the period of the ceremony only.

The Magic of Crossdressing: When female diviners of the Zulus are called upon to forecast rain they carry the spears and shields of warriors, the symbols of male potency to pierce the clouds. Among the Masai boys are dressed as girls during their initiation into warriorhood. The Sotho of South Africa dress their girls in boys' clothing for their initiation into womanhood. When a man of the Bangala tribe of the Congo region is attacked by an evil spirit he dresses as a woman in the hope that the disguise will fool the demon. Zulu men put on women's girdles at a time of drought hoping this would bring sympathy from the rain gods. These are examples of crossdressing to induce a magical change in certain circumstances. The idea of temporarily donning the clothing of the opposite sex for the purpose of seeking supernatural help is not confined to African societies, but can also be found amongst some native Brazilian, Papuan and Asian societies. They all have one thing in common: the belief that a change of clothes will bring about a change of luck.

Every year the Zulu people performed a ceremony at the time they planted their crops. Women dressed as warriors, carried the men's spears and shields, and herded the cattle, which was normally an exclusively male occupation. At the same time the men hid inside their houses like women do when the village is under attack. This was the annual ritual to *Nomkubulwana*, the goddess of fertility. The Zulus had another ceremony, known as the *umkuba*, performed whenever disease threatened the tribe's cattle herd, in which girls donned their brother's clothes and tended to the cattle. Among the Yoruba of West Africa impotent men dressed as women and danced publicly to *Gelede*, a female demon and cult goddess of witches.

These are all examples of crossdressing in a type of ritual called "rites of rebellion." Not limited to Africa, rites of rebellion which feature transvestism are common to many

tribes in New Guinea, as well as many societies in pre-Christian and Medieval Europe, with fiestas such as Mummers parades, Halloween, Mardi Gras and Carnival. Rites of rebellion, whether or not they involved transvestism, were an expression of a change in order, which not only sought to reset the world to its normal

An examination of transgender behavior on the continent where it is the most diverse ... Africa.

order, but provided participants with the chance to temporarily reverse their roles, a kind of social safety valve enabling men to become women, and vice versa, for a period as a way of relieving the pressure of living in one role all the time. The Feast of Fools is an example of a non-transvestic rite of rebellion, whereby the king became a beggar and a beggar the king for a day.

Warrior Women and Woman-Marriages: There are many examples in Africa of women taking on men's roles for longer periods than the length of a ritual. The best known of these masculine women are the female warriors of West Africa. The Ashanti, Benin and Ife all had women in their armies who fought as hard and as furiously as their male counterparts. But the Dahomey formed an entire regiment of full-time women warriors. In 1845 5,000 of these women made up nearly half of the Dahomey's fighting strength of 12,000 troops. Under King Ghezo his personal bodyguard of female soldiers were largely responsible for overthrowing the Yoruba domination of Dahomey.

The phenomenon of same-sex marriages were also frequent across Africa. Among the Nuba and Azande of Sudan, the Siwan of southern Egypt, and the Nzema of Ghana marriages between men were not uncommon. But more widespread were marriages between women, in such societies as the Nuer and Dinka in Sudan, the Dahomey and Ibo in West Africa, and the Zulu, Venda and Lovedu of southern Africa. These woman-marriages vary greatly

from one tribe to another. Among the Nuer it occurs when an older, barren woman who has acquired a cattle herd from a previous heterosexual marriage purchases a woman from her clansmen with the normal bride-price for other marriages. The woman-husband herds the cattle and sometimes practices magic, both normally the prerogative of men. Whilst she does not identify as a man she has all the privileges that go with the male role. In Dahomey the situation is similar except women-husbands can acquire wealth for the bride-price without having inherited it in a previous heterosexual marriage, and she may not necessarily be barren. But among the Venda a woman needs to have acquired the status and property of a district chief, no mean feat for a woman, before she can obtain a bride. The woman-marriages of the Lovedu usually take place when a woman has a right to a daughter-in-law in the levirate system when she has no son to marry his brother's widow. To acquire an heir to her cattle herd and other property the woman-husband will hire a



non-kinsman to sleep with her wife and any child from the resultant pregnancy is socially considered to be a member of the woman-husband's clan, just as with any husband who fathers a child. The difference is that the child grows up with two female parents, even though it will call one of them by the term for "father."

Intersexuals and Male Transgendered: In many parts of Africa the phenomenon of male transgenderism is quite widespread. There are some strange examples reported by 19th century European travellers to the interior of the "dark continent," such as the sacrificial priest of the Kingdom of Congo dressed as a woman and was called "Grandmother," the Ankole of Uganda had a woman who dressed as a man in order to become an oracle for the god *Mukasa*, or Bangala shamans who dressed in female clothing to detect a murderer, to mention just a few. Among the Bala of the Congo were both men and women who were unhappy with their given genders and desire to change their sex roles. But Bala society frowns on gender crossing, accusing both sexes who try it of doing so for purely homosexual reasons, and give them a derogatory term, *bitesha*. Bitesha only partly crossdress to avoid ridicule; for instance, men may wear skirts but not tops nor kerchiefs about their heads, which only makes women suspect them of wanting to rape them. The poor bitesha try to meet opposition to them with some optimism. "I like to be insulted," said one bitesha. "This is what bitesha like ... I

love being a bitesha because no one expects or demands things or actions from him." Like elsewhere in the world intersexuals (hermaphrodites) were not unknown in Africa. But among the Pokot of Kenya they were given a special social status in the society, social status in the society, a sort of third sex. In Pokot society both sexes underwent genital mutilation during their respective initiation rites: boys were circumcised, and girls were clitoridectomised. But, because intersexuals' genitals did not conform to what was considered normal they could not undergo the genital surgery. Thus, they could not pass into adulthood and were given a status of non-person, as well as a neutral sex category, *sererr*. They were not allowed to have sex, nor to herd cattle, hunt, fish or undertake female manufactures. They were taunted mercilessly by other Pokots and many were put to death at birth. They considered themselves as mistakes of divine creation. Yet, those who escaped the infanticide claimed this was due to the intervention of a supernatural force called *Torurut*.

Trannie Entertainers on Madagascar: The large island of Madagascar off Africa's east coast had a long tradition of gender crossing among certain males in the island's tribes. Among the Sakalavas little boys thought to have a feminine appearance were raised as girls. The Antandroy and Hova called their gender crossers *sekrata*, who, like women, wore their hair long and in decorative knots, inserted silver coins in pierced ears, and wore many



bracelets on their arms, wrists and ankles. They considered themselves "real" women, totally forgetting they were born males, and through long practice spoke with a woman's voice. Their society thought their efforts to be female natural and believed that they had supernatural protection which punished anyone who attempted to do them harm. What a contrast the sekrata were to the unfortunate Pokot sererr.

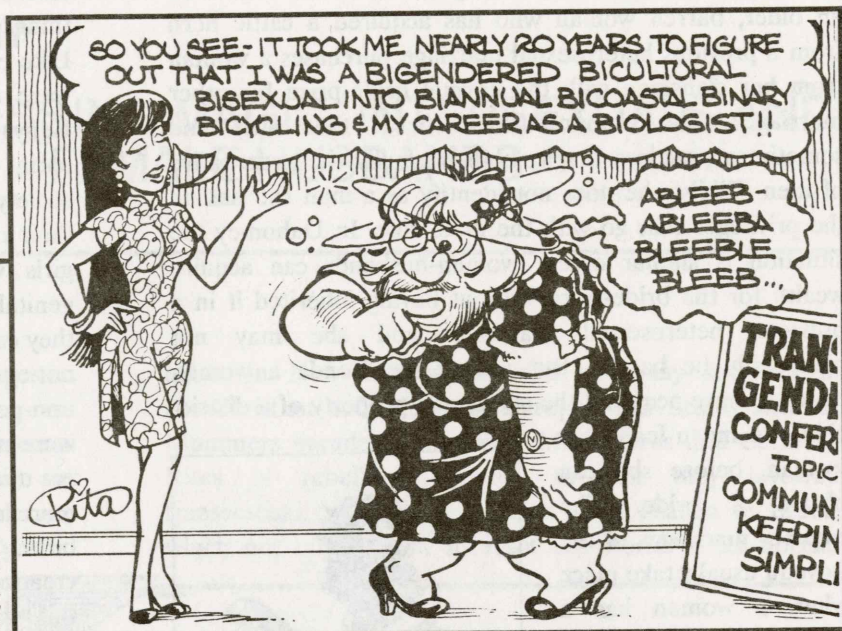
The Tanala were the most powerful of the Madagascar tribes and noted as great traders with visiting mariners. Their gender crossers, or *tsekats*, were the island's outstanding entertainers, dancing for visiting chieftains, who paid them in lavish gifts for their performances. They also received payment from lovers when they pleased them. Legueval de

Lacombe had this to say about them when he visited the

(continued on page 31)

The Bearded Lady

by Ricky Hunt
Illustration by Rita



We have a problem here, and the problem is communication. I am all for a gender neutral society, one that ignores the innate differences between those with contrasting genital plumbing. I encourage people to live without constant unnecessary reference to what position they assume when nature calls but, gosh darn it, there are limits! I refer specifically to one Saturday when I attended a function at a local college and felt nature calling me. I was, naturally, in my normal male attire and persona, and began to wander the endless brick-and-concrete halls of the building in search of the proper door. This being a modern college campus there were very few signs with words and letters on them around the place. Perhaps this is because so many students can't read, but is probably an attempt to use the so-called "universal icons" to aid non-English speakers so they will be just as confused as those of us who speak English.

I soon sighted an orange figure with round head, a sketchy torso and two pipes below representing legs. Ah, the universal icon for maleness, trousers! I placed my hand upon the door to enter when I heard a loud exclamation from a nearby stranger. The kind stranger pointed out the fact there were two little curved lines on the schematic torso denoting breasts, indicating that I was about to enter the women's room.

I never thought I would be arguing for continuing a sexist stereotype in print, but here I go: those little icons on the door are meant to communicate a message. That message is culturally based and changing the rules without telling anyone is a lousy trick. If you're going to change the icon for "woman" then give us poor males a hint when you do. Why orange? Color the fool thing pink to give us a hint. You could even put up a sign in a few common languages so you won't discriminate. I wouldn't even snarl at spelling it with a "y" if it would help me avoid embarrassment. That's the whole idea behind communication; the receiver of the message has to get the correct meaning from the sender. If either one is using a set of assumptions that the other is not aware of, there is a failure of communication. This brings to mind the unceasing attempts of those in our

community to invent new words to describe what we are. I'm sure it is meant as a way to communicate the subtle (or even blatant) differences between those of us males who feel compelled to wear women's clothes. The differences are there, they are real, they have meaning. I dress for the good feeling the clothes give me. A TS dresses because she is convinced the clothes match her gender. Drag queens have their own motivation, as do all the other endless flavors of crossdressers.

But do we really need a separate word to describe each person's motivation? Even if we were inventive enough to create an array of new words so each human being that heard it would have no doubt as to why you want to wear a bra and panties would it make any difference? Would someone outside the community really care if a gorzlop is a man who presented as a woman from 8 AM to 3 PM each day because his birth family warped his psyche? Does it help to know that a zlopgor is professional female impersonator who was into lace and spandex? Could you handle another slew of pseudo-words beginning with "bi" without going stark, raving bonkers?

So let's keep it simple, shall we? We are all crossdressers if we like to wear women's clothes. There's no shame in it, no need to be worried about what the word really means or if it really describes everything about you.

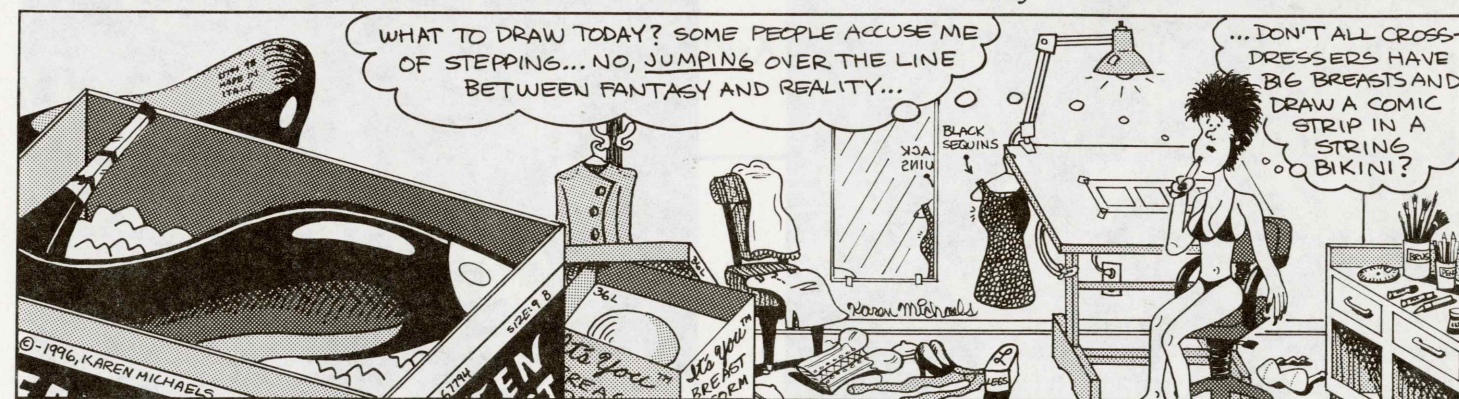
The art of conversation was created to find out the details, so if you want to know what motivated the person in the blue skirt to put it on, just strike up a conversation and ask. Person to person communication beats trying to decipher some made up word that tries to jam a wealth of ideas into a single group of letters. Give it a try sometime.

Ricky Hunt's primer on telling teenagers about a father's crossdressing *Hey Dad ... Do I Have to Watch the TV?* is still available by mail order. See page 32 for details.

CROSS-TALK COMICS

THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



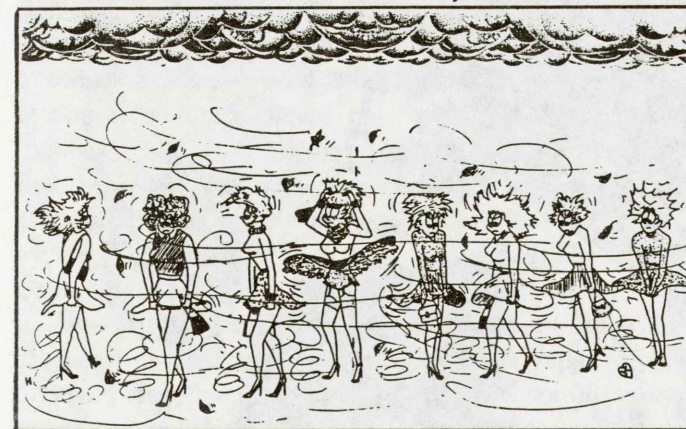
PANDORA'S BOX

by Amy Sakurai



WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT?

by Christine-Jane Wilson



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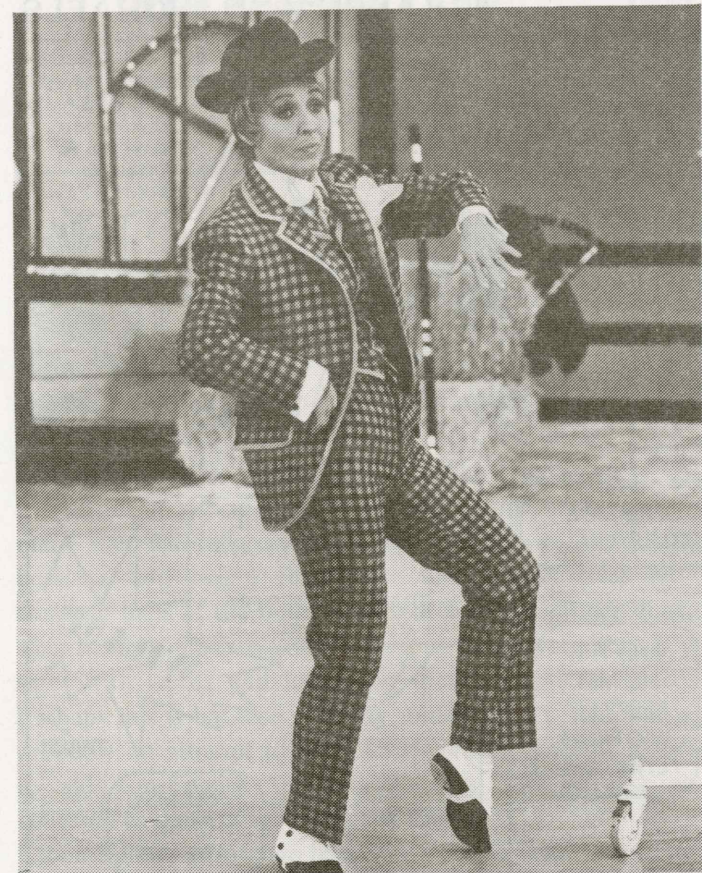
by Kay Lightner



CONNIE NEEDED A LOT OF WORK ON HER DEMEANOR, THOUGH.

GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

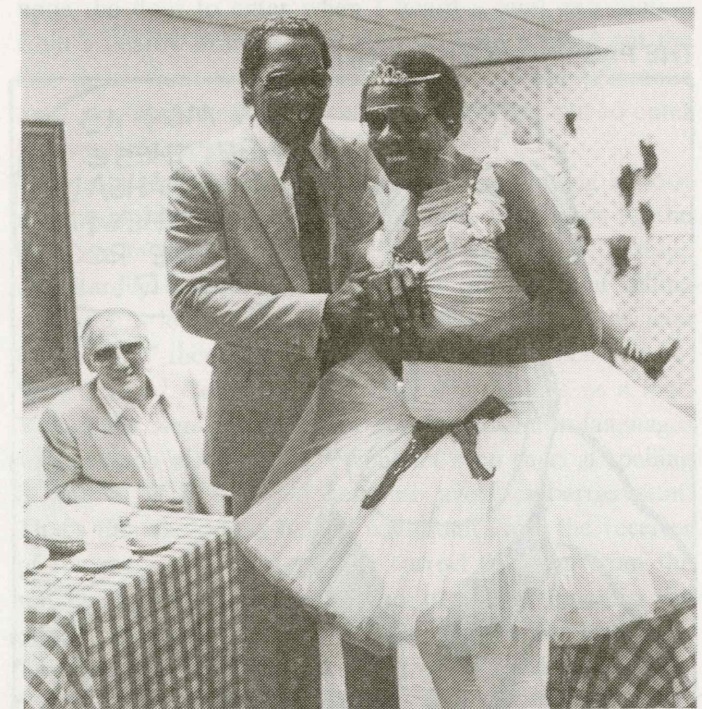
from the archives of Ralph Judd



12/3/68: Jane Powell does her impression of Clem Kadiddlehopper on *The Red Skelton Hour*, CBS.



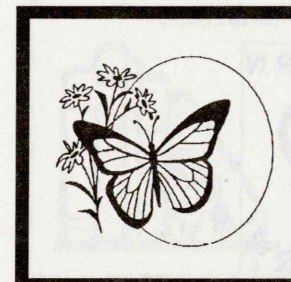
11/6/72: Jim Bailey agrees to do his Phyllis Diller imitation for Lucy's benefit show on *Here's Lucy*, CBS.



10/29/84: Former pro football great Deacon Jones is the victim of a practical joke by Bubba Smith, who convinces him to attend a non-existent costume charity affair, on TV's *Bloopers and Practical Jokes*, NBC.



11/2/71: Warren Berlinger plays Pat Finley's mother-in-law in her nightmares in an installment of *The Funny Side*, NBC.



TRANSGENDER TIPS

GEN-X FASHION SENSE

by Rachel Rudnick

Are you a twenty something TG, but look like a fifty something frump? Do Boy Scouts offer to help you across the street, when you went to the same school as their siblings? Did all of your clothes come from Woolworth's? If so, you've got a problem, a problem lots of younger TGs have: They don't know how to dress! Either it's all evening gowns or it's dowdy dresses from the clearance rack.

I freely admit that, once, I was like this. It took a lot of advice, trial and error, and my own observations to change it. If you wanna pass, you gotta blend. It's that simple: This article isn't about how to pass, it's about how to blend. If you don't blend, you draw attention. Dress like a hippie at a Republican convention? Wear tight leather at Wal-Mart? Either way attracts attention, and you have to know when you want that attention. If you want it, great. We all love it sometimes. Most TGs just don't want to be "read." So why dress in a way that makes people look and see between the lines?

Part of blending comes from dressing, looking, and acting your age. That doesn't necessarily mean you have to go out and find short shorts, skimpy halters, and big heavy boots. Nor does it mean you have to wear a conservative suit or Donna Reed dress. Dress how you feel! I don't think anybody really *wants* to look like Donna Reed, they just can't help it! One of the ways to do that is to just watch the other girls. Real girls, that is. You can't know what's up without paying attention. Read magazines like *Allure*, *Glamour*, and *Cosmo*. Ignore the stuff on runway show fashions and the comeback of '60s hair and makeup. Those are nearly useless, because they don't ever apply to the average person like me and you. See what's hot in makeup styles and colors. Don't be afraid to experiment. If you practice at home, and it doesn't work, the only person who knows is you.

Read the advice on makeup and clothing and carefully decide what might work for you but most importantly, what won't. Weigh 190 and play football for Penn State? You might logically decide that baby Ts are not an option. On the other hand, a nice blouse can work wonders. Always know your limitations. Wander around the clothing store; read the catalogs. And by that, I mean the catalogs that show people around your age. Work in a customer service

field like I do? Look at the people you deal with. Notice the details! For example, see the sleeveless blouse, matte lipstick, hair easily pulled back and not over styled. It's all in the the details. What wins contests from classic cars to the Academy Awards? The details. *Pay attention to the details.*

Solving the problems of younger crossdressers who want to look their age while they're expressing themselves.

The next question is: what's going to look good on younger girls? Well, just about anything! What kind of styles do you like? What really catches your eye? If you answer knee-high boots and hot pants, the key word is *style*. We all know it's fun to play for a while, but really! Wanna look like the young woman you are? Wear shorts (not too short, around halfway up the thigh is great). Jeans of any kind except the really tight ones. You want to feel somewhat comfortable, and tight is bad. Looks terrible, feels worse. Ts of any kind and various colors are cool unless they say "Bear Whiz Beer" or "Who farted?" Bodysuits! A few of us can wear 'em, but be careful of the length. Skirts are great -- above the knee or a mini unless you're trying to be dressy. It's a judgment call at that point. Blouses and shirts of all kinds abound. Polos, button up, sleeveless, are all great. Don't wear sleeveless unless you shave your armpits. Still want to wear a nice feminine dress? There are all kinds out there.

Retro is really in right now. If it looks like it's from the Sixties or it makes you look vaguely pregnant, it's hot. Georgettes, rompers, sundresses or jumpers with Ts (Ts in general are in right now), and denim. Denim is always cool, and there's a lot to choose from. Just be careful about the length and cut if you're above 5'6". Most regular dresses are made for women up to 5'7", and may be too short or have the waist too high. Look carefully and keep your receipts.

For Winter, sweaters of all kinds are always appropriate, although I hate holiday patterns. Nice blouses with little ornamentation are good. Natural is in right now. Vests look very good, even sexy, when they accentuate curves.

Jeans or slacks are always good. Skirts are usually longer in the Winter but again, it's whatever you fancy. Dark tights are very good with skirts, look good with long skirts, sexy with short skirts and you don't necessarily have to

shave your legs. Black is almost universal.

Experiment with contrasting colors, but be warned! Never, ever wear bright colors on your legs unless you really like attention!

This short article is by no means exhaustive; it's meant to give a few pointers to determine your style, and some styles to try out. Specific articles on determining what fashions work with what bodies can

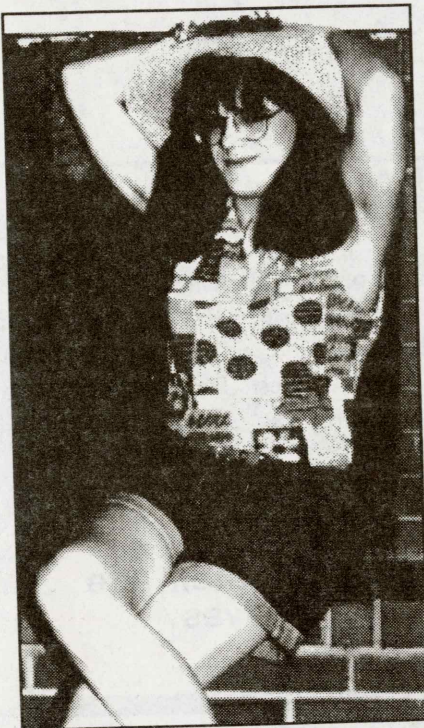
be found online. You can look good without drawing too much attention to yourself. After all, when people look at you carefully, they will notice the details and that is where you "pass or fail." I hope I've given some of you younger girls advice on getting hip in the '90s.

Mind you, for the older girls, most of this advice is still valid. It doesn't matter what age you are. Above all, observe and learn, wear what is natural for you, and try and be yourself!

Finally, some fashion tips from my neturfing: 1. Never attempt to "pass" approaching a hill, curve, or in a "No Passing" zone. 2. Never, I repeat, *never* attempt to pass for anyone but yourself. It is difficult at best, and usually illegal ... 3. Act your age, *not* your dress size ... 4. Spikes are *not* appropriate for every occasion. 5. A wig is a wig is a wig ... 6. Nobody has breasts *that* size. 7. The only person who should ever dress like Donna Reed is Donna Reed. Do *you* want to look like a rerun? 8. Red is *not* the only color of lipstick. 9. Throw away the blue eyeshadow, pul-eeze ...



Rachel can be reached via e-mail at <racheloked@aol.com>. This article originally appeared in Renaissance News & Views and is reprinted with the permission of the author and Renaissance Education Organization.



The author, looking her age.

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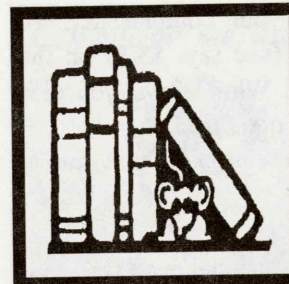
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Alternative Presses

by Kymberleigh Richards

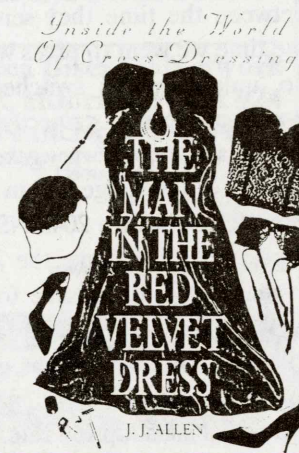
It would seem that the mainstream publishing world, eager to capitalize on Hollywood's recent successes with drag themes, is finally embracing serious discussion of transgender issues; the most recent entry is *The Man in the Red Velvet Dress: Inside the World of Cross-Dressing* (1996, Birch Lane Press, ISBN 1-55972-338-6).

Written by an actual crossdresser under the pseudonym J.J. Allen, this book attempts to cover the wide variety of behaviors that encompass crossdressing and in the process dispel some of the popular rumors and misconceptions about it. And as with any attempt to cover a wide variety of behaviors, it succeeds very well in some places, less well in others, and (inevitably) fails in some. Part of the reason for this, of course, is the need for making

the subject more palatable and/or less confusing to the reader; thus Allen starts with "the nine reasons men crossdress" rather than overload the reader with what would be perceived as lesser shadings. The more knowledgeable reader will undoubtedly disagree with some of the generalizations that result, but this is not supposed to be a book for our community.

Perhaps because Allen is active in the Los Angeles "scene" and thus knows of the many CD-related genres that turn up frequently, this book has a titillating feel to it; for example, although bondage issues are not a universal part of the crossdressing experience, it gets substantial play early on in a chapter titled "Eleven Different Types of Cross-Dressers." By the same token, the following chapter, on the fetish aspects (which turns out to be the longest chapter in the book), could have included a wide range of fetishists, it starts with clothesline panty stealers and never gets much beyond lingerie lovers.

Allen fares much better in describing the differences between fetishistic transvestites, recreational crossdressing, transsexuals, and transgenderists, and it is also obvious that he did a substantial amount of homework on such related matters as hormones and plastic surgery; he further describes the differences between the "chemical" CDs who are enticed by such enhancements and the



"cosmetic" ones who limit their feminization to those methods that can be more easily reversed in order to go to work in the male role on Monday morning. In fact, my only real complaint about the chapters comparing the two is the introduction of she-males and transsexuals into the discussion, for it is not totally clear to the layman reader this book is targeted at that these are not simply variations on crossdressing.

The best chapter of the book is the one entitled "The Black Lace Prison" in which Allen discusses the difficulties placed on the crossdresser by society and the difficulties faced by those who try to conform by giving up this "repulsive" behavior. The perspectives of significant others are presented here in a way that both brings home the potential despair the married CD has and perhaps brings a sense of understanding to a genetic female who feels she could never cope with a crossdressing husband or boyfriend. This is where Allen shares his opinions and observations on why it is virtually impossible for the CD to quit, regardless of how strong his motivation might be, and he also makes the observation, which has been echoed time and again by the helping professionals of our community, that it is only under specific conditions -- Allen includes examples -- that the transgendered individual should seek counselling.

The chapter entitled "A Day in the Life of the Transgender Community" contains references to many of the community organizations and businesses we recognize but would be a revelation to the unwashed masses (such as *Cross-Talk*, Sandy Thomas, Lydia's TV Fashions, and *Cross Connection*). It is here that Allen makes his strongest point, in my opinion; by bringing to light the quantity and diversity of support that has grown to serve this community, the reader is forced to realize that there are more of us than they previously thought.

I'm not entirely certain I agree with Allen's answer to the "riddle" of crossdressing that is the last chapter in *Red Velvet Dress*, but he does make a persuasive argument that -- at least for all MTF transgendered people -- there is a deeply rooted need to seek out a strong feminine/female component to our personalities. Unfortunately, he fails to bring into serious consideration other motivations for crossdressing, and thus the book ends on a weaker note than I would have liked.

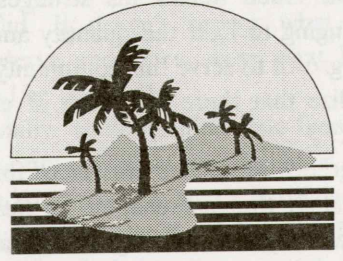
All in all, though, and taking into consideration that *The Man in the Red Velvet Dress* was written for a mainstream audience, it's not a bad book. It is well-organized, and while, as a transgendered person, you won't really learn anything you didn't already know, but you may find that your thought process is clearer afterwards.



Some of you who have been with us a while may remember the name Selena Anne Shephard; she has contributed

some of her works of prose art to our pages from time to time, often offbeat, but very on-target. She has now collected some of her more interesting work and added some equally provocative imagery and released a self-published 'zine called *Pregnant Muse*. This is actually a work-in-progress; I remember receiving a earlier version about a year ago with a request not to review it at that time, and the note Selena sent with this latest copy calls it "the final version (yeah, right)." What I find interesting is that, knowing that the artist has a strong erotic streak, *Pregnant Muse* has only a few references to sexuality about it. But it is delightfully strange; a page listing "9 reasons why I became a cross-dresser" (#8: Dr. Harry Benjamin was our family doctor) is juxtaposed against a page called "The Real World" which is apparently about a TV prostitute and bondage. There is even a "gratuitous Marilyn page" for those who worship the late Ms. Monroe as a drag icon. As with so much of the 'zine world, Selena says she has given away far more copies than she has sold, and some who see *Pregnant Muse* may -- with conservative intent -- say that's because it's not worth paying good money for. I choose to think of Ms. Shephard as one of our community's more unusual thinkers, and I would no more condemn her method of expression than I would Robert Mapplethorpe's or Loren Cameron's. (More on Loren, by the way, in a month or two ...)

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If you're not afraid to challenge your complacency, I'd suggest you send her a few bucks (she says \$3.33 on the cover) and get a copy for yourself. Who knows, you may even get a different version than the one I did!
Selena Anne Shephard (and her male persona of Andy Plumb) can be reached at P.O. Box 5112, Larkspur CA 94977.



It's been a year (**Cross-Talk** #69, to be exact) since I reviewed a 'zine from Australia called *Eddie*, named after its publisher, Eddie Greenaway. We had published an e-mail address for him and almost immediately heard from people that mail was bouncing back. Well, we received a copy of *Eddie* #12 a few weeks ago -- primarily so that we could read all kinds of nice things Mikol Furneaux said about us in his 'zine review column -- and apparently Eddie and company changed Internet service providers between the time they sent us the issue we reviewed and the time we went to press with our review. So, unless they've switched service providers again, their e-mail address is <zinecity@zip.com.au> and their WWW site is at <http://www.geko.com.au/eddie>. Their mailing address is unchanged from what we published before (P.O. Box 199, Newtown 2042 NSW, Australia), and I'm happy to report they still have the issue we reviewed (*Eddie* #10) available as a back issue for \$5.00, which I think translates to \$7.50 U.S. ...

I'll even forgive them for getting my e-mail address wrong in their review and for putting our postage charges in as the actual subscription rate.



I also want to note that the Summer issue (#11) of *Anything That Moves* contains an interesting article by ICTLEP's Dee McKellar about same-sex marriages being legal because of the way the law regards marriage in the face of transsexualism. ATM's ad is somewhere in our pages; just don't tell Congress.



STOP THE PRESSES! The day after I originally finished this column, I received a surprise package from Kalina Isato containing the second and third issues of *TransVamp* magazine.

While those of you who have read my reviews of Kalina's books and the first issue of her magazine will already know what to expect, I have to call your attention to the third issue, which includes a cut-out Kalina dress-up paper doll. (With breast implants, no less.)

Go find the *TransVamp* ad -- hey, what do you know, it's on the next page! -- and send Kalina more money. You have to have this.

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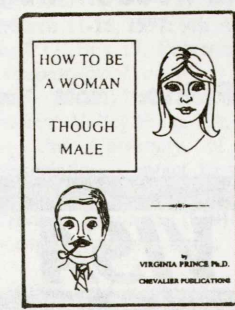
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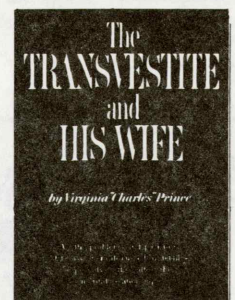
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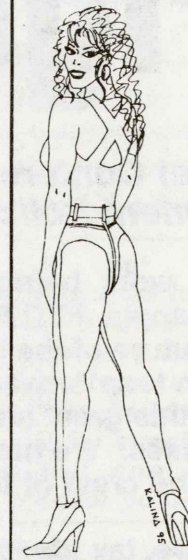
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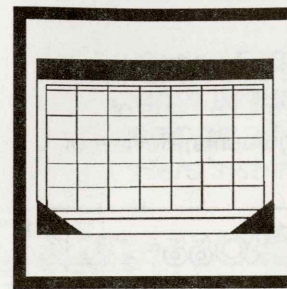
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EVENTS CALENDAR

August 9-11, 1996: Second "FTM Conference of the Americas", Seattle WA. Information from FTM Conference, 1202 E. Pike #1070, Seattle 98122, or by e-mail from <ftmconfer@aol.com>.

September 1-8, 1996: "Dignity Cruise VII" to Bermuda from New York, sponsored by Dr. Peggy Rudd. Details from Brenda at Cruises Inc., 1-800-247-7021.

September 19-22, 1996: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, produced by Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406. Information via Internet: <poco@cdspub.com> or by phone: (610) 640-9449.

September 26-29, 1996: 6th Annual "Southern Comfort Conference", Atlanta GA. Information from P.O. Box 77591, Atlanta 30357-1591, by telephoning (404) 633-6470, or to <phillida@atl.mindspring.com> by Internet e-mail.

October 17-21, 1996: "A Kindred Spirits Vision Quest", Dixon Mountain NC. Details from Kindred Spirits, P.O. Box 18332, Asheville NC 28814, or by calling (704) 253-9882.

October 20-27, 1996: "Fantasia Fair '96", Provincetown MA, sponsored by the Outreach Institute for Gender Studies. Contact Registrar for information at P.O. Box 147, Haverford MA 19041-0147; telephone (610) 446-6042; fax (610) 688-1762; e-mail <fanfair@lng.com>.

October 31-November 1, 1996: "Fall Harvest '96", Cedar Rapids IA, sponsored by Mid America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE) and hosted by Iowa Artistry. Information from P.O. Box 75, Cedar Rapids IA 52406-0075, telephone (309) 755-2310.

November 6-10, 1996: Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme", Chicago IL. Details from Chi Chapter at P.O. Box 40, Wood Dale IL 60191-0040 or by telephoning (708) 262-8707.

November 8-10, 1996: "Rainbow Spirit Convergence", for LGBT and Native healers and teachers, Highlands NC. Information from Kindred Spirits, P.O. Box 18332, Asheville NC 28814, or by calling (704) 253-9882.

March 11-16, 1997: 9th Annual "Texas 'T' Party", Dallas TX. Send SASE to P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163; phone/fax, (210) 980-7788; e-mail <txparty@aol.com>.

June 20-22, 1997: Second "International Congress on Sex & Gender Issues", Valley Forge PA, co-sponsored by the Human Sexuality Program at the University of Pennsylvania and Renaissance Education Association. Contact Renaissance, 987 Old Eagle School Rd. Suite 719, Wayne PA 19087 for information, or JoAnn Roberts at Creative Design Services: (610) 640-9449, fax (610) 648-0257, or e-mail <cngrs2@cdspub.com>.

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



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Roberta Perkins is affiliated with the School of Sociology at The University of New South Wales, Kensington. This series is adapted from her thesis in anthropology, and appears in alternating issues of Cross-Talk. The next installment, in issue #84, will look at gender crossing in Asia.

A list of transgender community organizations with contact phone numbers is available upon request by sending a self-addressed #10 envelope with 32 cents postage to Cross-Talk Hotlines, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365-0944. Outside the U.S., simply send your name and address and one International Reply Coupon to cover postage.

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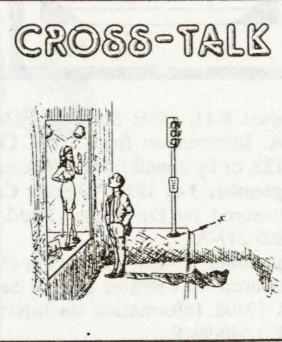
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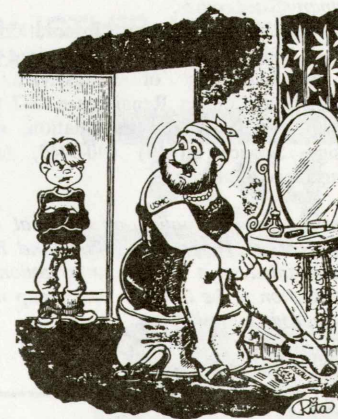
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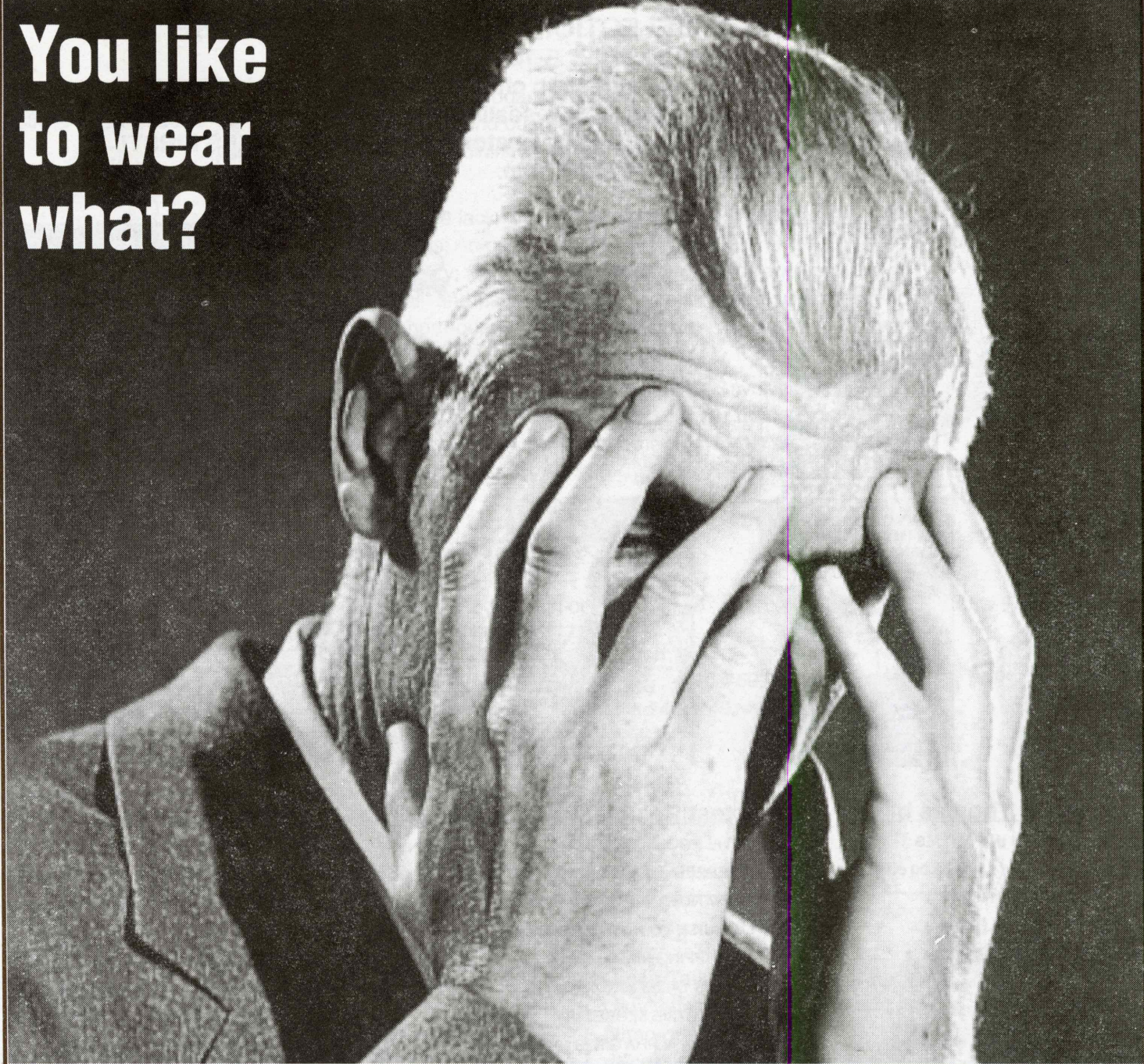
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