TGIC NEWS — JUN/JUL 1993

A Publication of Transgenderist's Independence Club, Albany, NY

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN – Winnie [redacted]

This issue of *TGIC News* is mostly a compilation of accumulated clippings, due to lack of time for writing on my part and lack of contributions that fit our publication strategy – see the fine-print boilerplate. We do have sufficient original contributions for the July issue of *The Transgenderist* but, after that, more material will be needed for both of our leap-frogging newsletters. So, all of you creative writers out there, get busy! How about some fiction? – see Paul's article last month. Submissions in ASCII on a 5¼" DOS disk are preferred, but hand-written or typed pages are acceptable.

Since only two confirmed people had signed up for our Dinner Party on May 15 by the announced deadline, the affair was cancelled again. We will try once more for Saturday, June 19 at 8 pm, at the Northway Inn as usual. *Be sure to get word to Joan H. by the end of our meeting on Thursday, June 17*, which is when we will make a "go" or "no go" decision. Those of you who may have been holding back for any reason, perhaps assuming that there will always be another opportunity, please show your interest by coming; this will be our ***last*** dinner party until September.

Contents

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN – Winnie [redacted] 1
QUESTIONNAIRE REMINDER – Joyce W. 1
THE LOST GIRLS – Paul K. 1
GENDER DILEMMA – The Sunday Gazette 4
BOYS WILL BE BOYS, BUT GIRLS WIN BY A HAIR 7
WHY NOT HORMONE THERAPY FOR MEN? 8
BILL CLINTON – AMERICA'S FEMININE LEADER 9
ANNOUNCEMENTS 10
CALENDAR 10

QUESTIONNAIRE REMINDER – Joyce W.

In previous months we have printed questionnaires in *TGIC News*, most recently Diane's in the *Apr/May* edition. Only five have responded so far. We need to hear from our members. We need your ideas and suggestions so we can plot and organize the Club events, and make it more accessible to our members.

Please fill out the questionnaires and mail them back to us. Feel free to make any comments or suggestions. If mailing is a problem, call on Thursday nights after 8 pm and ask for Joyce.
Again, we need to hear from you!
(Joyce and Sandy have offered to help Diane plan something exciting to do in the Fall, but we need more help – Ed.)

Dues Reminder! If you see ***LAST*** printed on your mailing label, this means that your membership has expired and you will receive no further newsletters unless you pay your dues before the next mailing – see page 2 of *TGIC News – Feb/Mar*. If you owe dues, please send your payment with the membership renewal form on the last page of *TGIC News – Dec/Jan*.

THE LOST GIRLS – Paul K.

(Paul recently visited the San Francisco area and found a group known as ***The Lost Girls***. Here, he presents *Questions & Answers* about them. If you visit the West Coast, see if you can find them! – Ed.)

1) Who are The Lost Girls?

The Lost Girls are a group of "T" people in San Francisco. Their birth sex is male, but they have issues with their gender, and spend at least part of their time dressed as women. Some live full time, some take hormones, some identify themselves as

transsexual, while some are part time, do not take hormones, and do not identify themselves as transsexual.

2) How many Lost Girls are there?

There are about 20 Lost Girls. It is rare that more than 10 of them will be at any one place at any one time.

3) How & when did The Lost Girls start

The Lost Girls started in August 1992 as "The Wrecking Crew" in an undisclosed San Francisco night spot.

4) How does one become a Lost Girl?

One becomes a Lost Girl by having The Lost Girls say that you are a Lost Girl.

New members are chosen by an informal process of determining if the individual is both truly lost and is on a personal quest to find.

5) Are they members of any more formal group?

Many of The Lost Girls are members of ETVC, but in general they do not feel that large organizations represent or understand The Lost Girls?

6) What have The Lost Girls lost?

While this point is under debate, some feel that The Lost Girls have lost their girlhood, their time of exploring their own femininity and how others respond to it.

Some note the allusion to the Lost Boys of Peter Pan fame, who have lost their mother, and point to the key role that mothers play in teaching girls to be women, but this connection is tenuous at best.

7) How do The Lost Girls search?

The Lost Girls ostensibly are focused on outreach into the San Francisco community. They talk with people about transgender issues.

This interaction with other people is a key part of The Lost Girls search process. Lost Girls get a lot of feedback and input about both how others see gender and about how others see them.

The Lost Girls are sensitized to accept this feedback on a visceral level by the extensive use of **Party Therapy**. The Lost Girls spend two or more nights a week out until the wee hours of the morning at unique S.F nightspots. The late hours, loud music, chemicals and other interactions wear down their mental defenses and make their psyche more accessible and sensitive.

This **Party Therapy** is not for everyone, and can have side effects, including severe emotional vulnerability and limited energy for other issues. However, **Party Therapy** is crucial to opening up the senses for the quest.

8) Have any Lost Girls found what they are looking for?

At this writing (February 1993), no. All of the original members are still members and none have become "Found Women"

9) What organization do The Lost Girls have?

The organization is informal and ad-hoc. While there are social structures coming out of the individual characteristics of each member of the group, none are defined.

It is important to note that all Lost Girls are very unique individuals. The key to The Lost Girls is following a a unique personal quest to find the girlhood inside of them. This is in sharp contrast to some organizations where the key is finding ways to fit an pre-defined external behavior pattern.

10) Do people like The Lost Girls

While as individuals, most are very likable, and have made many contacts and friends, some people have large conceptual problems with The Lost Girls. Some

traditional gender community members refer to them as "those people who want to get people to accept them as something odd."

The traditional gender community sees the key to peace and acceptance as fitting into reasonably clearly defined gender roles. The Lost Girls, as they explore their own gender issues, press on the firm definitions of gender roles, and make some people feel uncomfortable. For this reason, The Lost Girls often feel out of touch with large gender organizations, who they see as focused on the concept of "fixed gender role" behavior.

It is interesting to note that a "new gender community" of very young people exists in San Francisco. These people may wear a skirt, heels and an unstuffed bra with their own short hair out to a club. They break gender role restrictions even more than The Lost Girls, but without pursuing the quest of The Lost Girls.

11) What do The Lost Girls wear?

Anything they want to. While they dress as women, most have a wide repertoire of looks, from office to casual to serious night life, including torn hose, leather and chains.

Lost Girls can always be identified by the The Lost Girls pin that they wear.

12) What is the sexual preference of The Lost Girls?

While some have a clear preference for men, and others for women, many are experimenting with various relationships for what they can discover in their quest through intimate relationships. Some Lost Girls are very active sexually, and some are celibate. Some bring partners they have met into the club scene, and others find partners in the clubs.

13) What is the attitiude of The Lost Girls?

The Lost Girls have an attitude of irreverance, of distrust of traditions that limit people from expressing and understanding all parts of themselves. On the other hand, they have an attiude of support for each other, and for humans in general, as they know how difficult it can be to be a human. The Lost Girls are known for quiet and spontaneous acts of kindness as much as for wild abandon.

14) Is it easy being a Lost Girl?

No. Many Lost Girls comment on how difficult it is to pursue the inner quest. They note the late hours, the response of others to their quest, and their own personal inner turmoil.

Some Lost Girls are concerned that there is no end to their quest that meets all of their needs, including self satisfaction and participation in society. While this is probably true, in that for those who have taken the challenge of the quest to find the Lost Girlhood, will always be questing, there is some hope that a level of peace and comfort will be found along the way.

15) If The Lost Girls had a motto, what might it be?

"We have to dare to be ourselves, however frightening or strange that self may prove to be." – May Sarton.

16) How can one contact The Lost Girls?

They are creatures of the night, and can be found there. However, Lilly's ("Where Life is Always a Drag"), a bar at the corner of Market and Valencia in San Francisco is a good place to start the quest.

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GENDER DILEMMA – The Sunday Gazette

Transsexual woman recalls trauma of changing sexes after years of guilt, anxiety.
(Katherine is a member of *TGIC*. This is her story, as told to a reporter and published in *The Sunday Gazette*, January 3, 1993. – Ed.)

By ALAN GINSBURG
Gazette Reporter

COBLESKILL — Katherine Hawkins sat in the spotlight's pink glow and performed as monologues two songs from the Broadway musical "My Fair Lady": "Why Can't a Woman be More Like a Man?" and "I'm Just an Ordinary Man."

Dressed in a long black skirt, cranberry-colored blouse, white cardigan sweater, her ash-blond hair long and curled, Hawkins felt at ease before the small audience at the State University of New York College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill.

She was one of several performers at the Campus/Community Reader's Theater, but for her it was more than a chance to showcase her talent. It was an occasion for people to see beyond her gender identity — for Hawkins was no ordinary man.

"When I was a child, I wanted to be a girl," says Hawkins, who was born Kenneth C. Hawkins in Ridgewood, N.J., on July 13, 1943.

Years later, she would learn that she was a transsexual, a person who psychiatrists say assumes the role of the opposite sex and eventually may seek genital surgery.

Kenneth first acted upon his feminine desires at age 5 by wearing a friend's sister's lingerie.

"I saw his sister's pink slip draped on a chair and just put it on. No one forced me to, no one even suggested it. I just put it on and felt comfortable with it," she says.

By age 10, Kenneth was gathering his mother's discarded clothes and hiding them in a dark corner of the attic, where he would dress in the faded feminine attire and picture himself at school as one of the girls.

under the covers, wearing a piece of his mother's clothing that he kept stashed away in his closet.

He was terrified of being discovered.

Guilt, shame

When he was nearly caught once by his father, he felt guilt and shame.

"I also felt dirty, because I was hiding something. Here I was, a gregarious, honest, out-front person, and something that was a major part of my makeup, no pun intended, was to be hidden, to be ashamed of and be guilty about. I resented feeling that way," she recalls.

When Hawkins hinted to friends about his desire to dress as a woman, they thought he was joking.

As he grew older, his obsession grew. He rode the train to Paterson, about five miles from his home, to buy women's clothes. In a more risky venture, he bought lingerie at a store in Ridgewood, telling the clerk it was a gift for his mother.

At 21, he was married and had two children. It was early in the marriage that Hawkins told his wife about his desire to wear women's clothes. It was with guilt and shame that he told her, for he didn't understand at the time what caused him to do it.

There's no doubt, says Hawkins, that it put a strain on the marriage. He says it was a serious mistake not to have told her before their wedding.

"It wasn't fair to her. Sometimes she was accepting, other times she showed a great deal of resentment and hurt."

After 15 years, his marriage ended in divorce.

His two daughters, however, wouldn't learn until years later of their father's secret.

Kenneth — called "Hawk" by his buddies — played all the rough-and-tumble games as a youngster, and later

LUANN — BY GREG EVANS

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Continued

participated in interscholastic sports to demonstrate his masculine prowess.

At the time, says Hawkins, he was compensating for his obsession to be female and chose "macho" activities to hide his secret.

"I felt that my inner desires were written all over my face and that it was obvious to all around that I wanted to be a woman," she says. "So to prove them wrong, I would be more of a boy and played sports in school, as well as Little League and Babe Ruth baseball."

As an adult male, he tried to counter his desires to dress in women's clothes by participating in more "macho" activities. After a long day of moving pianos and furniture for the moving business that he owned and operated in Ridgewood, the 6-foot-2 Hawkins played catcher on a fast-pitch softball team. Several times he broke parts of his hand, trying to catch speeding pitches.

"Few men want to play catcher," she says. "You butt heads, you get hit and others are always trying to take your head off."

He would even try to thwart his obsession by throwing away all his feminine clothing when the guilt and shame became so great.

But it was too frustrating and traumatic, and he would soon replace the clothes and again dress in secret.

"All my life, I was hiding. If I got dressed up and wanted to leave the house wearing women's clothes, I put on men's clothes over them. And if I couldn't wear something that could be stuffed into my male clothes, I would carry it in a bag and get dressed in the car. I was very adept at dressing behind the wheel of a car while driving, putting on stockings and underwear and a dress and makeup."

One night, dressed as a woman, he walked through the courtyard of a shopping mall near his home, fearful that someone would spot him but still wanting to sense what it would be like to be seen as a woman.

Another night, he walked down a lane and up a hill, but after hearing a car door slam, he became frightened and ran, "heels and all, into a hay field and dove to the ground," he recalled.

"[I decided I] couldn't live this way anymore, always looking over my shoulder, always hiding, always afraid. I can't be the man I don't want to be, and I won't deny the woman I long to be."

When his marriage ended, Hawkins' teen-age daughters remained with him. He continued to dress in women's clothes while they slept or when they weren't at home.

Denying feelings

Yet his desire for heterosexual relationships continued, and he began dating again, perhaps, says Hawkins, as a way of proclaiming his manhood and to deny feminine feelings.

He became engaged to a young woman, and "purged" his obsession by throwing away his feminine clothing. But when the relationship ended after five years, he began buying and wearing women's clothes again.

He later moved to Summit, N.Y., where he had bought a farm during his engagement.

But it was while still living in New Jersey that Hawkins thought seriously of changing his gender. For years, he fought with himself, confused over whether to remain a man or become a woman.

"I didn't hate being a man, just the fact that I couldn't be both. I had to be one or the other, and to make a decision between them was difficult. Yet, there was also the fear that no one would accept me if I did become a woman."

In 1989, Hawkins sold his moving business and moved to his 65-acre farm in Summit, where he became a self-employed carpenter.

In August of the same year, at 46, he took the first steps toward changing his gender.

He joined a transvestite/transsexual support group, "The Transgenderist Independence Club," a 75-member group based in Albany. He attended the "Fantasia Fair," in Provincetown, Mass., where people gather annually to attend workshops and participate in therapy sessions to develop ways of dealing with gender issues. When he returned, Hawkins told his daughters, both now in their 20s, about his decision to become a woman.

"They took it quite well, probably because of the closeness of our relationship," she says.

A few months later, he told his father, now 84, and his mother, 79.

"My father said to me, 'It's your life, do what you want with it.' My mother was accepting, but had a feeling that she had done something wrong, that my transsexualism was caused by a flaw in her genes, that she raised me wrong or dressed me funny," recalls Hawkins.

But Hawkins' former male friends never accepted him as a woman.

"My friends may feel that I've committed suicide, because they had no indication. It's like never hearing of a wish from someone that they wanted to end their life," she says.

Many misconceptions

Hawkins says people have many misconceptions about transsexualism and that the more they can learn about it, the less fearful and threatened they'll be when they meet someone who is a transsexual.

"People shouldn't jump to conclusions that we're freaks," she says.

She adds, "If only I can get people to see what's inside me, see that I have a lot of honesty, that I love people and care about them."

After a few therapy sessions with a sex therapist, electrolysis to remove facial hair, evaluations by a psychiatrist and a clinical psychologist, hormone treatments, and a name change, Hawkins began living as a woman, as required before being accepted for "genital reassignment" surgery.

Dr. Phyllis O'Flattery Amyot, a sex therapist in Saratoga Springs and one of several therapists who evaluated Hawkins' adjustment to her new gender, describes her as "extremely stable emotionally."

Amyot said she recommended Hawkins for the surgery because she believed that Hawkins had "consciously and persistently" pursued gender change over a long period of time, and because she was a stable person.

In May, last year, Hawkins underwent genital reassignment surgery at Mount San Rafael Hospital in Trinidad, Colo., the last step in Kenneth's conversion into Katherine.

In seeking a new beginning, says Hawkins, she decided to attend college. Not only because her treatment left her without the strength to carry furniture, but also because she has always had a "constant yearning to learn."

Her experiences, she says, have made her more aware of other people's feelings, especially "since I stopped denying my own."

Professor William Applebaum, who teaches English at SUNY College at Cobleskill, where Hawkins is a liberal arts major, said: "She is respected by her peers, not only because she is bright, but also because she shows genuine concern for others."

After Hawkins' performance at the reader's theater recently, one of her classmates, Faith Massucci, praised Hawkins for "taking risks and having the courage to find out who she is and the willingness to accept herself."

Hawkins says she chose the two songs from "My Fair Lady" because they were intended to parody her "paradoxical nature," the fact that she is indeed a woman, yet once lived as a man.

One of the lines from her monologue — "I'll never let a woman in my life" — she says, is truly a paradox for her.

After all, says Hawkins, "I am the woman I let into my life."

Transgendered individuals often feel trapped in body of wrong sex.

By ALAN GINSBURG
Gazette Reporter

COBLESKILL — Katherine Hawkins is one of about 5,000 transsexuals in the United States, people who assume the gender role of the opposite sex, according to a sexologist who has studied the phenomenon.

"While most people's sense of being a man or a woman is appropriate to their sexual anatomy, for some this harmony doesn't exist," said Dr. Roger Peo, of Poughkeepsie.

Transsexuals often feel trapped in the body of the wrong sex, said Peo, a board-certified sexologist and sex therapist. Peo has written articles about transsexualism and provides workshops for mental health professionals and other groups seeking to understand the phenomenon.

Different from transvestite

Transvestites derive pleasure from wearing the clothes of the opposite sex, while transsexuals desire to become the opposite sex, he said.

One in 50,000 people is a transsexual, he said.

He noted that about one in 100 men in the United States is a transvestite. About 90 percent of transvestites are heterosexual. Most are married and have children.

Peo said that transvestism doesn't usually progress to transsexualism.

About 2 to 4 times as many men as women are transsexual, he said.

Neither the transvestite nor the transsexual is necessarily dangerous to others, said Peo.

"They're not exhibitionists, rapists, voyeurs or child molesters."

What transvestites and transsexuals have in common, he said, are behaviors and feelings that are socially and psychologically in conflict with their physical sex, a condition called being "transgendered."

Gender unhappiness

Psychiatrists and other mental health professionals also use the term "gender dysphoria" to refer to discomfort or unhappiness over one's gender role.

In some cases, said Peo, the feelings are temporary and are little cause for concern. In a few instances, however, they're "an integral part of a person's nature."

Powerless to stop the behavior, the transgendered person may seek therapy to understand and manage those feelings, Peo said.

Before accepting his transsexual feelings, a male-to-female transsexual may engage in rigorous activities like mountain climbing, or join the military to prove to himself and others that he is "normal."

Peo said that transsexuals are often so unhappy with their physical sex that they may go to extreme lengths to obtain "genital reassignment surgery," in which their genitalia are transformed into those of the opposite sex.

"Self-mutilation and suicide attempts are not uncommon," he noted.

In the last 30 years or so, said Peo, an estimated 6,000 people have had genital reassignment surgery.

Before being considered for surgery, he said, transsexuals should live, work and socialize as a person of the opposite gender for at least one year.

It's one of the standards of care established by the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association in 1981.

Standards of care

The standards — set by a group of physicians and other health care professionals — were developed to guide those counseling transsexuals to determine if hormone treatments and sex reassignment surgery is appropriate.

At the time, the group said it created the standards after finding that there were about 40 centers in the Western Hemisphere offering sex reassignment surgery to people diagnosed with a variety of behavioral disorders, and using different criteria for determining who was an acceptable candidate for the surgery.

Before Dr. Stanley H. Biber of Trinidad, Colo., accepts a patient for sex reassignment surgery, he requires evidence that his patient is seeing professionals who ensure that the standards of care have been followed.

"We simply do not operate on these patients because they come in and want an operation," said Biber, who has performed about 3,000 sex reassignment operations since 1969, and now averages about three a week.

Before being approved for surgery, he said, the transsexual "must have lived as the opposite sex for at least a year, and that has to be corroborated by the psychologist or psychiatrist who has been following them all this time," he said.

He said he also requires the transsexual to be evaluated by another psychiatrist or psychologist at the end of the year to determine if his findings agree with previous psychological evaluations.

Biber said the operation costs between $10,000 and $11,000. In rare cases, medical insurance will cover the cost.

He said the majority of his operations involve changing men to women, and that he performs about a dozen genital reassignment operations on women each year.

Sex reassignment surgery on women is still only experimental, said Biber, noting that the technique hasn't yet been perfected.

Follow-up reports from his patients, he said, show that "by far the greatest majority are satisfied, and we've had very few that have had [psychological] trouble afterward."

Limited experience

Dr. Sheila Kirk, a board-certified obstetrician and gynecologist who serves as director of medical services for The International Foundation for Gender Education, said that most health-care professionals have limited experience in caring for transgendered people.

The non-profit foundation, based in Wayland, Mass., provides a variety of services for transvestites and transsexuals, including referrals for counseling. The foundation also funds research projects and publishes a quarterly magazine.

Kirk, who has written articles about gender dysphoria, became involved with the foundation because she herself is transgendered. She practiced her medical specialty for 28 years as a man and began living as a woman after she left her practice about two months ago. She said she doesn't expect to undergo the sex reassignment surgery, however.

She said there is much research about transgender behavior, but the cause of the phenomenon isn't yet clear.

"There is still an argument raging in the medical literature as to whether this is an environmental circumstance or ... a genetic concern. We don't really know."

She added that genetic research may offer the solution to the phenomenon.

"The origin for transgender behavior — whether we're speaking about someone like Katherine [Hawkins] who has gone through a transsexual transition and now has become at least an anatomic female, or individuals who are casual cross-dressers — will probably be found in some kind of gene alteration."

In the meantime, she said, the goal of the foundation is to get society to understand that transgendered people need the same understanding and acceptance that all people need.

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1990

The boys will be boys, but girls win by a hair

Judy Markey

Today we are discussing Chronic Guy/Girl Inequities.

Because even though it's the '90s, there are just certain things that guys can do and girls can't, and girls can do and guys can't, and that is how it permanently is. You see it every single day. Just like Jan did yesterday.

Inequity No. 1: Spitting. This occurred when Jan headed to work. As she descended into the subway, Jan was ever so lucky to observe that extremely unattractive, but apparently constitutionally gratifying, guy act of spitting. It's hard to understand the appeal of this activity, but if you live anywhere in the vicinity of, oh say, Earth, spitting guys are also kind of a hard to avoid. What is also hard to avoid is the pivotal question: Why? Why do guys spit?

Of course, if you ask a guy why he spits, he will look at you as if your brain cells were spending the day at the dry cleaner, and say, "Why? Because I have to." Oh, right. Guys spit because they have to. We forgot. We forgot the big difference between guy throats and girl throats. Come on, give us a break. Guys don't spit because they have to. If they had to, then we'd have to. And WE NEVER HAVE TO. We don't even think about having to. Guys spit because they love to spit. And girls don't spit, because we aren't allowed to. Period.

Inequity No. 2: Vanity. After arriving at work, Jan had a 10 a.m. meeting with a guy who is an old colleague of hers. Only Jan had sort of a surprise, because all of a sudden he looked like a new colleague. The guy, who is in his late 40s and has had salt-and-pepper hair for the last six years, walked into the meeting as—shazam!—a regulation drenched-in-dye-job brunette. Jan didn't know what to say. So she was real quiet about it. Until she and her pals went to lunch. And considering their comments, they might as well have ordered saucers of milk. Because these girls were very catty about this gentleman's tinted tresses, no matter that most of them were foiled or frizzed or falsely colored hair-wise themselves. That was different. Girls get to be neurotic; guys get to be natural. Girls get to indulge; guys get to endure. Period.

Inequity No. 3: Discussions of Certain Topics. Plain and simple, guys have more license. In that morning's newspaper was a fabulous story about an environmental group quite convinced that the reduction of the Earth's ozone layer and global warming are linked to flatulent sheep and goats. No mention was made of flatulent humans. No mention was made of the story by Jan either, who thought it was hilarious and who was dying to show it to someone. But she knew how unseemly the story would be coming from a woman boss. Period.

Inequity No. 4: Closets. After dinner that night, Jan decided to get all of her winter clothes out. This year for some reason she organized everything by color. A woman should never do this. Because if she does, she will discover that she actually has seven green sweaters. Even worse, her husband will also discover that she has seven green sweaters. No matter that he has seven blue shirts. He gets to, she doesn't. His seven blue shirts means he shops efficiently, her seven green sweaters means she shops excessively. Period.

So is it fair? No. Is it going to change? No. Are we unhappy about it? Actually, no.

Because as I explained to Jan, this only proves it's still better to be a girl. Take a look at what we've got here. Basically all this means is that guys can spit, buy boring clothes and make sheep jokes.

But a girl can get away with becoming a drop-dead redhead whenever she feels like it.

All things being unequal.

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International Foundation for Gender Education

Why not hormone therapy for men?

Violence in our culture is overwhelmingly a male phenomenon; let's stop accepting it as inevitable 'boys will be boys.'

It is male violence, not "our violent culture," that is the problem. In our cities, males are killing each other in gang warfare. It is men who are fighting the wars in Somalia and Bosnia. Armed assault, murder, rape and abuse are committed overwhelmingly by men. Indeed, in the United States, 88.7% of those arrested for violent crimes in 1990 were male.

Recently, two 10-year-old boys were taken into custody for the kidnapping and brutal killing of a toddler in England. One constable was quoted as saying, "The cruelty of boys toward animals — it is always boys — is only one step from the killing of a toddler. The urges are the same. . . ."

Now this is not to say that all men are violent, or that women are inherently more peaceful, but we do need to accurately name the problem.

As Miriam Miedzian writes in her book, *Boys Will Be Boys: Breaking the Link Between Masculinity and Violence:*

"Imagine the reaction if close to 90% of all violent crimes were committed by women! . . .

"How quickly such behavior would be perceived as an aberration, a deviation from the norm of male behavior, a 'woman's problem' to be dealt with urgently!"

By Carlene Larsson, a Belmont, Mass., writer and consultant on multicultural curriculum planning; she is also a wife and mother of a son.

Admittedly, this is a complex issue. The list of factors which may contribute to men's violent behavior is a long one and includes such horrors as poverty, racism and abuse.

But it occurs to me that women also grow up in environments of deprivation, injustice and physical violation. Yet they are not, for the most part, instigators of acts of physical violence against others.

For men, aggression can be an important and culturally sanctioned way of "proving one's masculinity" and ensuring "respect."

Boys are taught to be tough, both emotionally and physically. The ability to beat the opposition is prized whether it be on the football field, the battleground or the marketplace. Dominance and control are linked to power and status.

Some say male hormones are to blame. I am only half facetious when I suggest that, if we can use hormonal therapy to abate the mood swings and other symptoms of premenstrual stress or menopause, perhaps there is a similar treatment for the ravages of testosterone.

Addressing the problem as "male violence" would involve massive change:

▶ The I-win-you-lose brand of competition would give way to an emphasis on cooperative challenge and mutuality in relationships.

▶ Games that emphasize creativity, skill and compassion would replace war toys.

▶ Empathy and a respect for difference would be foundational values.

▶ Men would be directly involved in nurturing and caretaking as part and parcel of their primary responsibilities.

▶ Individual income would reflect achievement within this framework.

Our culture is deeply rooted in an adversarial way of looking at things. Aggression and competition are synonymous with excitement, challenge and motivation. Difference is distrusted. But our perspective must change.

To solve the problem of male violence, we *all* have to stop participating in the values that support it.

USA TODAY 3/16/93 Editorial and publication headquarters: 1000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22229 Phone: 703-276-3400

CHOICES COUNSELING ASSOCIATES
Lesbian/Gay Affirmative

ARLENE S. ISTAR, C.S.W., C.A.C.
MOONHAWK RIVER STONE, B.S., Ph.D. CAND.
(518) 439-9270

PAUL G. POSTIGLIONE, C.S.W.
(518) 462-5016

266 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, New York 12054

TGIC OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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TGIC PUBLICATIONS

Transgenderists Independence Club (TGIC), PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604, Phone (518) 436-4513, is a nonprofit, educational, social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transexuals and their friends.

The Transgenderist

Bimonthly (Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Nov) to Members, Subscribers, prospective new members, friends, professionals, and exchange publications. Devoted to TGIC self-help and outreach to others, with original articles by Club members and local news of significant interest outside of our membership. Club business and other matters are limited to updates.

TGIC News

Bimonthly (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec) to Members, Subscribers and prospective new members. Devoted to TGIC business and inreach from others, containing Club business matters, local news of little interest outside of our membership, selected reprints and other outside items such as clippings and cartoons.

TGIC MEMBERSHIP DUES

General Member	$40/yr
Couples	$45/yr
Key Club / large closet	$40/mo
Key Club / small closet	$30/mo
Key Club / attic storage	$15/mo

All the above categories include a one-year subscription to both TGIC News and The Transgenderist, mailed First Class.

Subscriptions:

The Transgenderist, 6 issues: $25
TGIC News, 6 issues: $25
Single copies of either: $5 each

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It's too bad America's feminine leader is a man

BY STEVEN D. STARK 3/16/93
Special to the Los Angeles Times

In President Clinton, the country may have found another "great communicator." Yet what's becoming increasingly clear is that his rhetorical style is a striking departure from that of his predecessors.

If other presidents tended to speak by lecturing us ("We have nothing to fear but fear itself" or "Ask not what your country can do for you"), Clinton often communicates by listening ("I feel your pain").

Whereas other presidents tended to address the country most effectively from above at a rostrum or alone at desk, Clinton is at his best in level conversation, when he can look at the people with whom he is talking. (Remember the second presidential debate.) If the phallic, jabbing forefinger was the earmark of Kennedy, the maternal hug and the "all ears" attentive body language are the characteristics of this president.

Call it New Age if you wish. But the Clinton style is really a textbook example of a leader who communicates in ways often more characteristic of women than men.

From the work of Carol Gilligan to that of Deborah Tannen, a number of recent books have documented major differences in the ways men and women communicate and approach problems. While these differences are not exclusive to each gender, certain trends emerge: Women tend to listen while men tend to lecture; women are interested in connections, while men value independence and hierarchy; women stress concrete relationships, while men focus on abstract ideals; women seek consensus, while men invite conflict.

A woman tends to say, "I feel your pain." A man might say, "Let me tell you why you feel pain and what you should do about it." And then he might look at his watch, as a certain president did during that second debate.

This is not to say that displaying a "feminine" style is bad. These characterizations are generalities, and Clinton displays more than his share of "male" rhetorical attributes. Moreover, all good politicians display what might be called a "feminine" side, since the ability to appear empathetic and work collaboratively is a true test of leadership — Lyndon B. Johnson could hug with the best of them.

Yet Clinton is a few steps beyond the typical male politician. Taken separately, his coffee klatch managerial style, his infamous propensity to schmooze and gossip, his celebrated indecision, his discomfort with the military (it is said he still has trouble returning salutes correctly) and his constant emphasis on inclusion might seem unremarkable.

But taken together, these attributes present a different portrait. If traditional gender roles dictate that women care for the home while men police the perimeter, Clinton is the first president in more than 50 years to make domestic affairs his preoccupation.

It should not be surprising that a Democrat is feminizing the presidency. Clinton received 55 percent of his votes from women, in a year when his party elected four women to the Senate and gave "women's issues" a prominent role at its convention. Moreover, Christopher Matthews, a political columnist, has outlined how the two political parties often mirror gender stereotypes. The Democrats tend to be seen as the "mommy" party — concerned about education and health care. In contrast, the Republicans are the "daddy" party — perceived as strong on crime and defense.

Clinton's background and age are two other factors that have made him more inclined to assume a feminine style of leadership. You don't have to be Sigmund Freud to surmise that a boy whose father died before he was born and whose stepfather was abusive might relate more comfortably to the women in his life. So it has been for Clinton, who — unlike many male politicians — has always surrounded himself with stong-willed, capable women, from Hillary to former Arkansas chief of staff Betsey Wright to campaign aide Susan Thomases.

What's more, many baby boomers exhibit a more feminine style of leadership and rhetoric than previous generations — in part because of the effect of the women's movement and in part because of the strong formative influence of television.

Voters tend to view women as less decisive than men — particularly when it comes to matters of force. Thus, it would be shocking if Clinton didn't continue to have problems with the military — one of our most male-dominated institutions. Riots, a rising crime rate or an outbreak of domestic terrorism could also prove troublesome for a leader who is valued more for his ability to listen than his iron resolve. One would also expect Clinton to continue having trouble getting votes in his native South, where gender stereotypes remain strong.

The good news is that we finally have a feminine leader. The bad news, of course, is that she's a man.

Steven D. Stark is a commentator for National Public Radio.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POLICY: Short announcements and advertisements from Club Members are published free for two consecutive months (once each in TGIC News and The Transgenderist), unless cancelled by the originator or a specific request to continue is made.

MILITARY LAW QUESTIONNAIRE

A number of our members have already completed and returned their forms - thank you all! If you have ever served in the armed forces, please participate in this study, even if you did not cross dress while in service. See the article in *TGIC News - Apr/May*. Copies of the questionnaire are available in the *Club Room* or will be *mailed upon request* to TGIC.

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP

A monthly support group to help people deal successfully with their transgender issues is now meeting on the first Thursday of every month at the *IFGE Office at 123 Moody Street in Waltham, MA from 7-10 pm.* Membership is limited to encourage participation and allow ample time for frank and open discussion of your concerns and those of other group members. A nominal fee of $10 will be charged. For further information, contact:
Danielle or *Melissa* at **(203) 963-7664**
Or write to:
IMAGES
P.O. Box 85
Thompson, CT 06277

ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING

Your regional HIV Counseling and Testing Program provides free HIV counseling and antibody testing, support and referral. No names will be asked. (NYS Health Department) ***Albany Area:*** (518) 486-1595 or 1-800-962-5065.

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Wanted Back Issues of
Tapestry, Transvestia,
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CALENDAR

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 - 10:30 pm. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is wise call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at one of the Central Ave. night spots after the meetings.

JUNE 1993

June 3 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
June 10 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
June 17 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
June 19 Saturday, 8 pm
Dinner Party, Northway Inn
Last party until September
June 24 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

JULY 1993

July 1 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
July 8 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
July 15 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
July 22 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
July 29 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

MAJOR COMING EVENTS

Contact TGIC for more information. Some registration brochures are available in the Club Room

June 9-13 *Be All You Want To Be*, Chicago, IL
Jun 11-13 *Sunshine Club Weekend in the Country*, Warren, VT
July 9-11 *S.P.I.C.E. - Spouses / Partners International Conference for Education*, Dallas, TX
Aug 26-29 *Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy*, Houston, TX
Sep 16-19 *Paradise in the Poconos*
Oct 15-25 *Fantasia Fair*, Provincetown
Oct 28-31 *Fall Harvest Weekend*, Kansas City, MO