

TWENTY MINUTES

FEBRUARY 1990

THE XX (Twenty) CLUB

\$2.00

**Life is a circus,
and all the clowns
are in Washington!**

The exclusion of our community from the protection of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1989 has been the cause of much controversy recently and although there has been much said as to the consequences of being classified as disabled, relatively little consideration has been given to the consequences of being specifically excluded from the bill's protection. America's system of government, particularly at the Federal level has for far too long, granted protection only to those specifically entitled to receive such protection while neglecting those not specifically included which under practical everyday conditions, condones and sometimes actually promotes infractions against their rights. The "legal track record" of TSs in particular, concerning discrimination has proved this to be true (see "DISCRIMINATION" by Paula Stockholm, *Twenty Minutes*, November 1989). Also true is the fact that our community was not specifically included for protection under the bill at any time. Those afflicted with AIDS were also never included until no less than 166 organizations got together and fought for their inclusion in the bill...and got it! Many people still think of disabilities only as situations requiring special, bulky, and heavy equipment such as wheelchairs and all the costly new construction as well as modifications to existing buildings, vehicles, etc. to accommodate them when in fact there are many disabilities that require nothing more on the part of others than simple acceptance of individuals as they are. For those of us in the latter situation, our greatest obstacle is the prejudice and bigotry of others borne out of ignorance, misunderstanding, and unfounded fear to which we are all exposed every day, usually resulting in discrimination if not outright hatred. We are not asking for our own reserved parking places, for specially equipped mass-transit vehicles, or modifications to existing buildings and other structures. We are simply in need of some kind of legislation that would specifically forbid discrimination against us. Perhaps nobody wants to be considered to be disabled, but who wants to be fired from their job or evicted from their apartment just because someone else doesn't approve of their life-style?

IF WE CAN'T RECEIVE PROTECTION FROM THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1989, THEN WHERE CAN WE?

Louise L. Raeder

**Top matador gored
to death — & docs
discover he's
a woman!**



by Laurel Bowie

Swashbuckling Salvador Sanchez was billed as the world's toughest bull-fighter and hailed by millions of adoring fans as the bravest man alive - till doctors discovered the manly matador was really a woman! Sal's secret came to light when it was too late to do him any harm - just moments after he was gored to death by an enraged bull in Pamplona, Spain.

The world-renowned matador was actually a former choirgirl named Olivia Andrade. After her parents died when she was 15, she changed her name and set out to conquer the world as a man. For more than a decade, "Sal" battled bulls on three continents and became a hero wherever bullfight fans gathered.

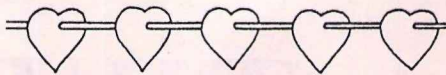
(Reprinted from the *Weekly World News*, Nov. 28, 1988 issue.)

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THE TRANSEXUAL SUPPORT
 GROUP OF NEW ENGLAND
 AND NEW YORK

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CLUB CALENDAR MEETINGS

- Saturday, Feb 10
 Saturday, Feb 24
 Saturday, Mar 10
 Saturday, Mar 24

Regular meetings of the XX Club are held the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 2 PM sharp to 5 PM.:

Christ Church Cathedral
 45 Church Street
 Hartford, CT

(Located at the corner of Church and Main Streets in the downtown area across from G. Fox.) If you believe you are gender dysphoric, you are welcome to visit and find out more about our group and talk about yourself and your feelings. The XX Club is a transsexual support group, not a dating service. There is **NO SMOKING** allowed during the meetings, though we do allow smoking during breaks and after the meetings. We attempt to provide peer support and practical information about making the gender transition, as well as information about the Gender Identity Clinic of New England. Parents, siblings, spouses and significant others are also welcome to attend.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance - from December \$1298.70

INCOME:

Collections - meetings	18.57
Newsletter subscriptions	85.00
Brochure sales	23.00
IFGE sales	28.10
CDS sales	10.00
J2CP sales	16.00
GF sales	50.00
Donations	3.65
Savings interest	6.64
Total Income	\$240.96

EXPENSES:

Refreshments	14.69
Newsletter & brochures	.00
Postage	32.40
Supplies	8.94
Bank Fee	.85
Total Expenses	\$ 56.88

Net Income for January \$ 184.08

Balance - end of January \$1482.78

THANKS to the many people who continue to support *Twenty Minutes* by submitting the many fine articles which make this newsletter the best in the TS community.

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



Geraldo Rivera of the wild.

All the news that's print to fit.

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THE LAST TWILIGHT ZONE TREKKIE EPISODE OF
THE ROCKY EDWARDS VALENTINE CHORUS VIDEO SPECIAL

(c) 1989 by Lynda Breckenridge

The image on the television screen flickers and goes blank. An old DUMONT television network test pattern fades in and dissolves to the 1984 MTV astronaut promo while the last strains of a Broadway musical comes on. It's a familiar tune that everyone knows, but one that nobody can identify. The MTV promo dissolves to eighteen sweaty male and female dancers, some of questionable gender. Colored spots play across their tight, glitzy costumes as they gyrate across the stage. They twirl one last time and toss their top hats into the air and stop. Beads of perspiration glisten, and on some, and on others, beard shadows can be seen through their heavy makeup. They face the audience, arms outstretched, with smiles of anticipation. There is thunderous applause from the unseen studio audience. Phil Donahue walks on stage with a microphone and raises his arms like a not-yet-fallen television evangelist and urges more applause, which he gets. The applause subsides. Phil Donahue speaks and he sounds like a second rate comedian doing Rod Serling.

Emcee - There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man...aw, come on guys. This isn't going to work. Let's do this the way I originally wanted. Can we talk?

The emcee pulls off the white wig and latex mask to reveal the blond tresses and face of Joan Rivers. She gingerly steps out of the tear away five hundred dollar suit and kicks it distastefully away like a soiled trash bag, displaying an ample body blessed with a plethora of bumps and curves. She sensuously runs both hands up and down her supple body, pausing briefly at her crotch.

There. That's better. What do you think, people?

She plunks one hand on a hip and raises the other arm over her head in a Marilyn Monroe pose and receives thunderous applause. The stage curtain has remained open all this while. The dancers haven't moved and now show mock embarrassment. They pick up their top hats and stumble over each other towards stage right. The audience laughs.

Emcee - I'm not really Joan Rivers. Not really. But, I sure look like her, don't I? Had you fooled, didn't I? See what three years of female hormones can do for a male body? My body was so slender to begin with and I nearly dieted myself to death. The doc gave me some pills, lots of pills, and shots too. Oh, loved those shots. It makes my nipples hard just to think about them. And plastic surgery. Oh, tell me about it. That's right! I had the most expensive surgeon in the country. He put in these little silicone implants and removed some upper teeth to give me these gorgeous cheekbones. And voice surgery, too. The voice training sucked but it was the final tweaking done by that handsome Beverly Hills doc that really did it. I took care of him in the back of his Rolls so he didn't charge me full price. Expensive little bastard! I'm one of those female impersonators who got a little carried away. Oh no, I -

Suddenly she whirls around, outstretches her arm and points at the last dancer who is nearly off the stage. Joan Rivers shouts at her in a resonant male voice.

Emcee - Hold it right there, bimbo.

Joan clears her throat and coughs twice.

Emcee - I started to say, I haven't gone all the way people. Heaven forbid I'd ever part with this neat set of family jewels. I mean, can we really talk? I like being half and half, well, I'm actually more like three quarters and one quarter, if you know what I mean. I can still get it up, and I've got the kind of lovers, who like their women a little, you know, different.

She turns to the bimbo on the stage.

Come here. Come here. That's right, walk right out here to me. You're not going to hide in among all the others. You're going to stand alone for the first time in your life...and like it. Understand? What's your name?

The dancer is embarrassed for real now. The back stage lights go dark, Joan and the dancer freeze for a moment. The lights come back on to reveal an average American livingroom of the late fifties. There are knickknacks on doilies on every table, lamps with plastic covered shades, a stack of 33 and 78 RPM records next to the mahogany RCA Victor Victrola. A modest couch and several wingback chairs are visible. The stage lights reflect in the highly polished hardwood floor. A stage hand hurries out and sprays something on the floor to cut the shine.

Emcee - So what is your name kid?

Dancer - M-my name is A-amber.

Emcee - (Aside in a whisper to the audience) Amber is brownish yellow in color and was favored by some of the ancient Arabic tribes in their healing rites, and is now used extensively by devotees in the New Age movement.

(To the audience) That's one of those jewel names, isn't it Amber? Aw, how cute, and so appropriate too, for someone who couldn't even make the intramural football team in high school. So people, this is not such a bad looking female who used to be a man. Well, she's not really ugly, but give me a break, would you kick her out of bed tonight? I know I certainly would.

Thunderous applause from the audience.

Offstage, the whine of a Starfleet transporter beam is heard. The not-really Joan Rivers vanishes in a cloud of magician's sparkles and is replaced by a smiling middle aged gentleman with slicked back hair wearing a narrow laped suit.

Emcee - Hello and good evening ladies and gentlemen. I resemble your memories of Ralph Edwards, but Mr. Edwards was unavailable for our show tonight and they got me instead. We've broken in here at the evening's last performance of A Chorus Line. And Amber, dancer mediocre, transsexual, former man and currently a mutilated male living a lie, this is your life!

Amber is escorted to the couch by a buxom blond in a metallic blue evening dress and wearing black high top P.F. Flyers and a Milwaukee Braves baseball hat. The not-really Ralph Edwards emcee walks towards the couch and stands beside the now seated Amber.

Emcee - So, Amber, your real name was Robert Paul Scott, and you were born in Dresden, Ohio, June 14th, 1955. Your Father worked hard at the local brewery, but he can't be here today. Remember the night of the accident, Amber?

(An amplified voice from backstage) Remember me Bobby? I came to the house that afternoon to tell your mother your Dad had suffocated in a slurry vat of hops and malt. Remember how you cried and I called you a sissy? Ten year old boys aren't supposed to cry.

A bald man with a tremendous beer belly jiggles on stage and plops into an easy chair. He pulls a can of beer from his pocket and opens it with a church key. The audience applauds wildly.

Emcee - You were called sissy by a lot of your classmates, weren't you Amber? Didn't that make you feel bad? But listen, remember this voice?

(An amplified but weak female voice from offstage) I know the boys called you sissy Bobby. But you got along wonderfully with some of the girls. You were such a cute little boy, but I knew deep down in my heart that God made a very bad mistake by giving you a penis.

Emcee - Here all the way from Dresden, Ohio, Amber, your former fifth grade teacher, Mrs. McGegan.

A thin, frail woman, who really belongs in a nursing home comes on stage with a walker, sinks into the couch totally exhausted. She opens her mouth to speak, clutches her breast and her head falls back, mouth open, eyes staring.

Emcee - Well, you win some, you lose some, Amber. (Aside - get that body covered) Now listen to this other voice from your past, a past you weren't proud of, were you?

(An amplified voice from offstage) Remember me Bob? I was your first high school sweetheart. Remember how we had sex in the back of your old Chevy? Remember how you said later, "Is that all there is?" Remember how I laughed at you when you told me you wanted to be a woman?

Emcee - All the way from her home in Little Bear, Alaska, mother of eight, divorced three times, and currently living in sin with the chief of police, your former sweetheart and first sex partner, Mary Lou Cummings.

There is thunderous applause as a slightly heavy set middle aged woman with Tammy Faye makeup comes out.

Mary Lou - Well, I always wondered how little Bobby turned out. I mean, he was such a soft, sentimental guy. Didn't have any male leanings at all. Say, Mr. Edwards, how much am I getting for being on your show?

Emcee - (Coughs and ignores Mary Lou's question) Well Amber, how are you enjoying this little walk down memory lane? Don't you wish you could go back in time and change everything? So, what do you say, Amber?

Amber looks at the floor with obvious discomfort. Tears drop from one eye and she shakes her head.

(An amplified voice from backstage) Hello Amber. Oh how I wish you hadn't done this to your body. You don't know how much anguish you caused me and your step father, Bert. Imagine, putting your feelings before your very flesh and blood. We were so embarrassed. What were we supposed to tell our friends and the people at the country club?

Emcee - All the way from her balmy retirement home in Brooksville, Florida, the woman who brought you into this life, your mother, Mrs. Bert Henry.

There is thunderous applause as a sprightly white haired woman comes out. She gives Amber a peck on the cheek, smiles at the audience, then slaps Amber across the face. The audience laughs and she sits down next to her former son.

Emcee - Mrs. Henry, when did you first find out about your son's terrible secret?

Mrs. Henry - Well Ralph, first let me tell you if it weren't for the all expense paid trip to New York City, I wouldn't be here. Bert was too embarrassed to show his face on the show. Robert, I mean Amber, never confided in me or Bert. I mean, how were we supposed to know our son needed professional psychiatric help, not that we could have afforded it anyway. I mean, Bert likes his liquor, his boat, his fishing and his lodge meetings. Bert was a real man (she gives Amber a disdainful look) not like someone else we know.

(The audience laughs and Mrs. Henry continues) We gave everything to that boy, (She smiles sweetly at Amber) food, clothing, a roof over his head. And look at what we got in return, years of misery and embarrassment.

Emcee - Thank you Mrs. Henry. I'm sure everyone here in the studio audience and those at home have sympathy for you and the terrible ordeal you went through. And now Amber, listen to another voice from your sordid past.

(Amplified voice from backstage) Remember me, Bobby? You came to me for psychiatric treatments after you graduated from college. I used hypnosis on you in a vain attempt to cure you of this terrible disorder, but you just didn't want to cooperate. You really didn't want to be cured, did you?

Emcee - All the way from his lucrative practice in Beverly Hills, California, your former shrink, Dr. Barret.

Dr. Barret takes a seat on the couch.

Emcee - So Dr. Barret, tell us about your experiences in attempting to cure Amber.

Dr. Barret - First of all, this disease known as gender dysphoria, is perhaps the most insidious mental malady known to man kind. In all my experi-...

Emcee - Hold on just a minute, Dr. Barret, before you go any further, I think we should tell the audience about your little secret. Shall you, or shall I? (Dr. Barret fidgets in his chair and becomes redfaced) Yes ladies and gentlemen, Dr. John Barret is, and has been, a practicing transvestite. And how many years have you indulged in this perversion?

Hidden clamps from within the chair snap around Dr. Barret's ankles. He covers his face in shame.

Come now Dr. Barret. Tell everyone about your perversion.

Dr. Barret - But, but, it's not a perversion. It's, it's just a need I have. (Dr. Barret begins to cry) You don't understand. I hurt no one. I simply...

Dr. Barret pulls a shiny revolver from his coat and shoots himself in the head. He slumps backwards. Blood and brains are splattered all over Mrs. McGegan's frail, inert body.

Emcee - Well Amber, it seems your sordid past has caught up with you. Look around at what you have caused. See the blood run. See the embarrassment in your dear mother's eye. And poor Bert couldn't even show his face.

The emcee's face is distorted, his eyes flash red and his eyebrows suddenly have a devilish upturned look.

Emcee - How dare you call yourself a human being! You are a disgusting creature! You -

Amber - Enough! Stop! I won't allow this to proceed any further. You've no right to intrude on my life this way. I've hurt no one. Those who were hurt refused to understand. They judged me and they had no right. She grabs the gun from Dr. Barret's lifeless hand and shoots the emcee in the foot. He jumps around the stage howling and exits stage left.

Amber steps forward towards the audience and motions to those behind her.

Amber - These people are not my judges. They are people caught up in their own fears. They've been taught by a system that fosters prejudice and fear of those who are different. Forgive them Mother/Father/God, for they know not what they do. I am my own judge and I must live with what I did. I am not ashamed. I must be left alone to live my own life.

Amber bows her head. The lights go dark and come up, and there is thunderous applause. Stagehands cart away the bodies and the people walk off the stage. Amber remains, her head still bowed. The applause stops, but no one leaves. Amber raises her head and glares at the audience.

Amber - OK folks. What are you doing here? Come on, leave. The ushers have to clean up the popcorn and candy wrappers you dropped. What are you waiting for? Leave. Now!

The credits begin to roll and an overvoice tells about the network's feature film for Wednesday night. Scene cuts to an over primped, local female newscaster with a small adam's apple who says in a husky voice, "The top stories tonight..."

THE POLITICS OF TRANSSEXUALISM: STRATEGY FOR THE 1990'S

Shelia Mengert

Many years ago I had the honor of listening to the great psychologist Bruno Bettelheim as he discussed his experiences as a prisoner in the German concentration camps. I remember thinking at the time of the strange irony of history and cycles of power. Here was a man, talented, wise, and productive speaking to me in a quiet bookstore and he was the same man who had shivered in the cold under constant threat of death and the taunts of men who viewed this great man only useful to move earth and then die. But he was alive and Hitler and all his cronies were dead, a nightmare from which the world had at last awakened. This conclusion I came to was that people as both individuals and as communities are capable of being defined out of existence by more powerful groups. The essential nature of most things in life are matters of existence and faith, definitions only come afterwards. It is the group that does the defining, that determines the nature of the response to any minority group. This act of definition is an exercise of pure power and any resistance must realize this fact. The world comes by enlightenment slowly and many are the lost lives while the sluggish giant rolls over in his sleep. Whatever may be the ultimate truth of the phenomenon of transsexualism as a topic, the lived reality of being a person who experiences being transsexual is often tragic. Jobs are lost, families alienated, mental anguish endured, all in the name of that blind and insistent drive for integrity and identity that consumes the days and nights of the transsexual person. And with all of this comes pseudo-moral condemnation, fear, ridicule, and now blatant political discrimination. Let us try for a moment to see ourselves as a community and see how the definitions of others determine the nature of our daily lives.

Prior to the 1950's a transsexual would have had trouble even finding a definition that corresponded to the transsexual's experience. Depending on the defining agency such a person would be viewed as: 1) A schizophrenic with gross body image distortion and the delusion that he/she belonged to the opposite sex; 2) A homosexual obsessed to an unusual degree with cross-dressing; or 3) An anti-social and criminal deviant. These abusive and unflattering definitions would have been applied to cover up a gap in knowledge as to the true nature of the phenomenon and also to enable various power groups to act upon the transsexual with some margin of belief in the rightness of their actions. Possible actions might include forcible confinement in a mental hospital, arrest and prosecution under vagrancy, disorderly conduct, and sodomy statutes, or general ridicule and oppression.

Now what happened in the 1950's, and continues to the present day, is that the medical community, or a section of it, came to see transsexual people as people manifesting a set of symptoms that might indicate an underlying disease entity. The word disease really implies a lack of ease, a discomfort. The primary experience of these people was one of acute pain in their assigned gender roles. The existence of an entity called transsexual is a medical construct to explain the experience of the transsexual person. Now the good part of this was that by defining us as victims of a syndrome we were freed from the former definitions which implied that we were morally deficient people living a deviant life-style. The bad part was that now we as individuals were put in the position of having to appeal to a particular power group, the medical professionals, in order to validate our experience and in order to obtain the aid in transition that only the medical community could provide. To their credit, no group in society has been willing to be as compassionate and as concretely helpful to us as the medical profession. Still the theoretical problem remained, both the medical establishment and transsexuals were whistling in the dark as far as the general society

was concerned. There was no objective test for transsexualism, we could only listen to the witness of transsexuals themselves as to the anguish of their position. Most people felt that this was not enough. It is strange but the testimony of the individual as to the character of his/her own experience was held to be the least reliable evidence. The transsexual person was therefore placed in the completely untenable position of seeking others to vindicate his/her own experience. The danger immediately becomes apparent. What if the defining groups withdrew their support? What if the DSM-III suddenly drops us? To whom could we turn, who would believe us, who would care enough to help us? The legal community, if judged by the position of the transsexual as regards the law, has been of marginal help. The law has retained for the most part the same ancient views as regards our condition as a community as the middle ages. A man is a man is a man and if you doubt it, try the famous seisen (sic) test--i.e. reach between the legs. The crudity and thinly disguised prejudice is evident in opinion after opinion. Lacking the wisdom and compassion of a Justice Cardozo or direct legislative action it would appear that transsexuals today have little hope of recognition and protection under anything but the areas of law where the condition as transsexual is irrelevant.

In short, as the 1980's draw to a close, we stand as we have too often stood virtually alone. Our very existence as a people is dependent on the good will and continued compassion and curiosity of the medical and psychological communities. It is true that support will probably continue because a truth once uttered is hard to destroy and our experience is a permanent part of the human story however rare it may be, but the point is that we must stop allowing ourselves to be treated like children (another oppressed class by the way) and to take responsibility for our own community. We must define our own lives or we will be forever victims. We must not rely on others to validate our lives. We must not view the necessary aid that we must obtain from medicine as the sole determinant of our identity as a people. Others must also seek the aid of medicine if they are to live productive and happy lives, but that aid is only a part of who they are as individuals and as people. The diabetic, the open-heart surgery patient does not need to point to the doctor every time that his condition becomes manifest and we need not carry forever a card in our pockets from our doctors explaining to an ignorant and uncompassionate world who we are. We must attain power as a community in our own right and we must network with others engaged in a similar search for their own dignity and the right to define their own lives.

Let me make some concrete suggestions: 1) We must learn as individuals and as a community to resist the temptation to bolster our own sense of credibility by relying on others to validate our own experience of who we are; 2) We must reach beyond the immediate medical necessity of transition and seek to be an open and self-affirming witness in other areas of human life but as members of a transsexual community; 3) We must not view surgery as the end of an Odyssey but as the beginning of a life freed of disability; 4) We must avoid the fetishization of our own experience and work to eliminate the whole tacky side-show mentality that has characterized the public media portrayal of our efforts to deal with our dilemma; 5) We must work to attain solidarity with one another and not waste time in bickering over minute differences of opinion or personality conflicts; 6) We must act out of our shared identity and experience to articulate our own version of who we are--i.e. we must learn to speak for ourselves in all of the arenas of life; 7) We must build bridges to other groups engaged in a similar struggle for human dignity, the aged, members of other sexual minorities, the poor, and above all feminists; 8) We must act as part of a meaningful human coalition to resist efforts to overt discrimination in the

law and the misguided attacks of right-wing fundamentalists; 9) We must never forget our own dignity; 10) We must learn from the experience of other oppressed groups and when possible make common-cause with them.

This is not merely an article, it is a call for action. Please send responses and suggestions to J2CP Information Services. I do not know you, but I have suffered with you. You are, in many ways, my unknown family. I do not wish to scare you or discourage you, but we are a community embattled on many sides. We have come very far, very fast, and God be thanked for that, but just as the Jewish people who lived for years and felt secure in the Germany, for which many had fought and died, which disowned them overnight, we may one day find ourselves alone again. We dare not while away our time though we are kind and trusting people. We live in a world where others are being daily defined out of existence. Let us not be victims waiting forever in the human bread line for our rightful dignity. We have suffered much and have survived, others less powerful need our witness. Let us leave our incapacity in the dust, clasp hands, and move into the future.

DRABBLE



PASSING

by Ann D. Nymous

Whenever I hear a reference to "passing", I feel vaguely irritated. So much is dependent upon a TS's ability to "pass" in the chosen gender role and there are so many implications associated with passing or not passing. I guess that I've just assumed the irritation results from negative associations with not passing. After giving the issue serious thought, however, I have a problem with the entire concept of "passing".

The implied pretension and artificiality smacks of a mentality that encourages members of a minority to endeavor to "pass" as a member of the (more accepted) majority, rather than coming to terms with the fact that they are different and finding a way to live with as much peace and dignity as possible. It seems to me a much more positive goal to try to assimilate rather than infiltrate.

All too often, some members of our community are so eager to embrace the (stereotypical) trappings of their conception of the "opposite" gender that they don't take the time to determine how/if all these pieces will fit into their own lives. To say nothing of how the world at large will respond to them.

It's unfortunate that so many people seem to tumble onto the gender community conveyor belt and get swept along; through hormones, electrolysis, crossdressing/living and, eventually surgery, without ever coming to terms with who they really are. Perhaps if we weren't so focused on crossdressing and "passing" initially, before embarking on crossliving, transition could bring about more personal growth and, therefore, be a more natural process more likely to be accepted by others.

While I don't discount the effectiveness and gratification of presenting an attractive and convincing appearance in the chosen gender role, without an underlying congruity it's merely a facade. Sooner or later, people are going to see what's behind it. I know a glamorous, female-appearing TS who probably gets read just as often as a football player in a dress. Her physical beauty and female appearance are distorted by overcompensation and people pick up on her insecurity and flamboyance. By the same token, I have other acquaintances with numerous challenges and contradictions to their outward female credibility who are readily accepted as female virtually everywhere they go. Again, the signals coming from within are the ones people ultimately respond to.

I may have enjoyed a comparatively smooth transition as a result of successfully blending in, however, I can not change the fact that I was born a genetic male and spent the first half of my life living in a male context. I've worked very hard at getting a handle on who I am and making my life as compatible and true to my inner self as I can. For me, it's a happy coincidence that living in a female context seems to fit so well. Perhaps the most meaningful lesson I've learned during this process is, the more I let go of assumed/expected behavior along the way, the more comfortable I've become with myself. And, not surprisingly, the more comfortable others have become with me.

Shouldn't the transition process be a liberating of what's within, rather than a fabrication to cover it up? I don't mind saying that I find it disturbing to see people knocking themselves out trying to pass themselves off as "one of the girls", frequently with good ol' boy sensibilities. Maybe this is what the TV experience is all about, but it certainly doesn't seem relevant to being a TS.

No doubt, it takes time and effort to dump years of programming and conditioned behavior, but just getting all dolled up won't make it go away. All too often, we make statements like "So-and-So passes well", inferring that this person has "made it". In reality, they may only have made a successful masquerade. Conversely, commenting that someone doesn't pass well, implies that they are not credible and, therefore, less genuinely TS. Making an attractive visual presentation can be a crucial component of a successful transition. However, it is by no means the most important one, nor should it be Step #1.

For a TS, the ability to blend in should, hopefully, occur as a side effect of discovering, healing, and nurturing the inner sense of gender identity. It ought not to be wholly dependent upon or limited to visual presentation.

To put all of this in perspective, every TS would do well to recognize that members of other minorities, such as people of color or physically and/or mentally challenged people, usually don't even have the option of "passing". Yet most of them seem to find a way to make their lives work without having to mimic WASP's or "normal" people.

I'm not advocating that we should all come out and announce the fact that we are TS's to the world at large. But neither should we ignore our origins and barge into the female gender expecting to be welcomed and accepted with open arms by one and all. A little honest self-awareness and discretion can go a long way toward inspiring acceptance and even respect from others. And, positive feedback from others can further enhance, or the lack of it inhibit, the most dedicated quest.

MAGGIE'S DRAG

(c) 1989 by Maggie Brinley

(Editor's note - this is the first in a series of columns by Maggie Brinley, who will enlighten and entertain our readers about drag in the cinema. It has nothing to do with TS or TVisn, (or does it?) but is a commentary on how Hollywood has treated the subject over the years.)

For those of us who are extensively read (little pun there) in the history of crossdressing, we find many instances where famous women and men dressed in drag for one reason or another. Joan of Arc was burned at the stake, partially because the Church took a dim view of her dressing in male clothes and armor. It is impossible to determine how many of these historical cases are the result of transsexualism or transvestism. We may also never know how many other such cases existed that weren't brought to the foreground by historical writers. I hope you will enjoy these future articles and may seek out the films I have written about.

The act of impersonating the opposite sex has always been a fascinating subject down through the ages. Any study of mythology, anthropology, psychology, religion, or even social behavior will show many examples of this phenomenon. The art of drag has been with human experiences since the time of the ancients. Drag, or crossdressing has also been a ritual in many of the Pagan religions that were absorbed by the later rise of Christianity.

The boy-priest, Varius Avitus, later re-named Elagabalus after his Pagan god, who at the age of fourteen became Roman emperor really had a captive audience for his drag shows. Perhaps the greatest female impersonator of his time, he dressed as a girl to give spectacular performances of femininity before the Roman people. If any in the audience displayed signs of not being totally entertained, they ran the risk of being put to death. Elagabalus was a perverted and vicious ruler and the people tired of this quickly and assassinated the teenager in 222 A.D. Was this a prime example of transsexualism, crossdressing, or just someone carrying Pagan practices to an extreme?

The Krealin Letter (1970), was directed by John Huston and features George Sanders as an old drag queen who becomes a celebrity in Moscow's gay literary circles. Of course George's character is really a western intelligence agent working under cover. Did he volunteer for such a frilly assignment, or did they have to drag him to Moscow?

In The Christine Jorgensen Story (1970), the young George Jorgensen, played by child actor Eddie Frank, dearly loves his private world of masquerade. George's mother, played by Ellen Clark, discovers her son's unusual interest in dresses and lipstick. John Hansen portrays the adult Jorgensen who feels "trapped in the wrong body" and ultimately undergoes medical treatment and has transsexual surgery in Denmark. The film is a low key, dignified scripting of Jorgensen's 1967 autobiography.

Rod Steiger starred in No Way to Treat a Lady, a 1968 film. He portrays a mother-haunted (let's blame the old lady syndrome) stage producer who affects a wide range of disguises, including drag, to meet, woo and kill females. Kim August plays one the females that Steiger (in drag) meets in a bar. A fact not revealed in the plot is that Kim August is a female impersonator.

Will the real Calamity Jane please sit down! Never mind what kind of a person you were, it's Hollywood that decides what the public will see. The real life character of Calamity Jane was portrayed by Louise Dresser in the 1931 film Caught, as a mannish woman who bellied up to the bar with the best of the boys. (Is that the opposite of an effeminate man, and do both descriptions portray the same negative connotations by society?) In the 1953 musical comedy production of Calamity Jane, Doris Day plays the part as an impish toadboy just waiting for the right man to come along and "make her a woman".

INFORMATION FOR THE
FEMALE-TO-MALE
CROSSDRESSER AND
TRANSSEXUAL

(2nd Ed) Lou Sullivan, 1985 (\$6)

Book Review by Rupert Raj-Gauthier

The first handbook ever to address the needs of the female-to-male transsexual and crossdresser, Lou Sullivan has done a remarkable job within the 48 pages of his slick little book. This book is chock full of practical hints on passing as a man and contains information on male hormones and sex reassignment surgery. However, what most interests this reviewer about this well put-together compendium is the author's unique collection of true stories of women who have lived and worked, and in some cases, even married, as men - many undetected until after their deaths - during the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries.

The book also examines such topics as the difference between sexual identity and gender role preference, feelings, possible biological and psychological causes, and psychological treatment. In addition, sections on family relationships, the transsexual's sex life, contacts, referrals, and a bibliography of readings and films are included. There is also a two-page spread illustrating the parallels between evolving male and female urogenital anatomy.

Some of the females Sullivan tells us about were probably just women who adopted male attire and mannerisms in order to infiltrate what was then "a man's world", so as to give expression to their androgynous inclinations. These would number such people as: Deborah Sampson (1760-1827), a Continental soldier who served 1 1/2 years as Robert Shurtleiff in the American Revolutionary War, and won an honorable discharge after discovery in a hospital; Dr. Mary Edwards Walker (1832-1919), a surgeon in the Union Army who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for meritorious service, and who, though she never tried to pass as a man, regularly wore male clothing and a top hat during the last 52 years of her life; and, Mrs. Lillian Arkel-Smith, who lived 6 years as Colonel Sir Victor Barker, serving in the British Army, and marrying a woman, and who was sentenced to prison in 1929 for making a false entry in the marriage register.

Other women mentioned in this book were possibly, judging by modern-day standards, female-to-male transsexuals who had to pass without the benefit of androgens and sex reassignment surgery. Characters such as the following would fit this category: Charley Wilson (born Catherine Coombs in England in 1834), who lived and worked as a man for over 40 years, and lived with his niece for 7 years as a man and wife until she died, who at 63 went into a poorhouse where "his" true sex was detected; Dr. Alan L. Hart (born Alberta Lucille Hart in 1892), who, at 27, began living permanently as a man in Portland, and who wrote a semi-auto-biographical novel, The Undaunted, published in 1936, and other books with gay male themes; and Jack Bee Garland, who was arrested in 1897 in Stockton, California for masquerading in men's clothes, and who was made an honorary member of the Naomi Bachelor Club, and who, after spending the last 40 years of "his" life as a man, died in San Francisco General Hospital in 1936.

(EDITOR'S NOTE...This handbook is available by mail, to obtain a copy, send \$6 to:

L. Sullivan
1827 Haight St.
Apt. 164
San Francisco, CA 94117

Rupert Raj-Gauthier has other books of interest to TSs for sale, see the Gender Worker ad on the back page of this newsletter.)

Dear Veronica,

It is with sadness that I learned of your move to Toronto and thus relinquishing your guidance of the Twenty Club and editorship of *Twenty Minutes*. While I am sure that those who follow will also do an admirable job, you brought special qualities that will be missed.

While some may accuse you of being abrasive, acerbic have insensitive, I have found that your views and perhaps influenced my thinking about the gender community. While I would like there to be "one big, happy family" I am all too aware that this is not so. Further, I have become conscious of the widening rift between transsexuals and cross-dressers. This break is due, in part, to the widely different needs of the two groups. Because there are many more cross-dressers than transsexuals (and for the most part the visible ones have more money) the community often focuses on the needs of the cross-dresser.

I am not sure there is a solution -- which saddens me. In fact, it seems to me that the two groups are moving farther apart. When coupled with the internal dissension within the cross-dressing community alone, I do not have hopes for any reconciliation in the near future.

At any rate, I want to wish you the best of luck in your new surroundings.

Sincerely,
Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.
Androgyny Unlimited

Dear Roger;

On behalf of the XX Club I want to thank you for your donation to the club.

Becky

Dear Editor,

The complimentary letters and remarks made about Veronica Jean Brown must be accepted at face value. Apparently she has been well liked by various people. However, I feel that I can no longer be silent about her periodic use of the *Twenty Minutes* newsletter to direct verbal abuse at some of her targeted victims!

As a sister transsexual, I have been embarrassed and troubled at times by some of the put-down remarks Veronica has made. And I was especially disturbed by the vicious diatribe she wrote as a farewell editorial in the December '89 issue. It was also out of place to have forgiven her malicious statements under the guise of just expressing her "sense of humor"!

It became apparent where Veronica's anger and vindictiveness came from after reading about the horrible abuse she suffered from the hands of family and other vital people in her life. Certainly it's easy to feel sorry about the hurt she suffered and has borne throughout her life. But her own mistreatment is no justification for directing bitterness towards others. It seems an interesting contrast to compare Veronica's editorial to those of another person who also suffered a good deal of rejection and prejudice during the early years of her life. Merissa Sherrill Lynn's editorials in *Tapestry* magazine have been a wonderful example of expressions of love and forgiveness (while she has been a victim herself of Veronica's hostilities).

Since *Twenty Minutes* has often had numerous fine articles about transsexualism, it is a shame to grace it with bad-mouthing of various persons and groups. At times the newsletter has seemed to take pleasure in "bashing" transvestites, transgenderists, groups or organizations, along with cross-dressers in general. For a support group which enjoys the use of a Christian Church's facilities for

meetings, it appears alien to partake of such unchristian behavior!

I can think of no valid reason or value in putting down others in an effort to support transsexualism. Surely we transsexuals have suffered more than enough prejudice and bad-press not to have learned that it serves no beneficial purpose to turn around and inflict similar behavior on others!

How terribly wrong it seems to "bite the hand that has often fed us". Many transsexuals have found their earliest help and support through the auspices of hospitable organizations made up primarily of transvestites. Why then do we provide a public forum to those who would in turn attack those same people who have so unselfishly accepted us and our fellow brother and sister transsexuals?

It is bad enough that so many of us TSs have only nominally given of our time and efforts to various support organizations. And to this we add the common practice of our eventually abandoning these groups at some point in order to "get on with our lives". The unladylike behavior and remarks that has periodically been expressed in *Twenty Minutes* helps me to better understand why the national leader of a major cross-dressing group is adamant about having transsexual members. No doubt she put up with her fill of verbal abuse and a lack of even a "thanks" from us deserting transsexuals.

This is an ideal time to rethink the purpose and policy of *Twenty Minutes*, and in hope and trust that this newsletter will be a "positive" publication for transsexualism in the future.

Most sincerely,
Jane, Topeka, KS

**If there's anything more
important than my ego
around, I want it caught
and shot now!**

Dear Ms. Rebecca:

On Behalf of the Church Street Foundation, I wish to thank you and The XX (Twenty) Club for your generous donation toward the restoration of Christ Church Cathedral.

As a vital humanitarian institution, the Cathedral links together the social, cultural, intellectual and spiritual values of a 20th century capital city. It provides stability in an ever-changing urban environment. The Cathedral administers human services to the needy, provides educational programs for young people and adults and is a place of worship and support for the liturgical and program needs of the Episcopal Diocese.

Your contribution will help restore the oldest originally designed Gothic church and the home of the first Episcopal Diocese in the U.S.A.

We welcome you as a supporter of the Foundation and look forward to sharing our success with you as the campaign progresses.

Sincerely,
Edward F. Beckwith
President
Church Street Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 3433 Old State House Station
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Becky:

I read your response to Louise L. Raeder in the January '90 issue of TWENTY MINUTES, and I could not believe my eyes.

Just in case you missed it, you began losing your right to insurance coverage in 1983, with the issuance of HCFA Transmittal 833, which declared SRS to be experimental. Beginning in mid-1989, no new health insurance policies have been issued without a specific SRS exclusion. Group policies that do not contain a SRS exclusion will contain an SRS exclusion when contract renewal time rolls around.

I begged, I pleaded for help in stopping the issuance of HCFA Transmittal 833 in 1982. The TS community remained silent . . . it could not be bothered. Dress up socials were more important than human rights. So we lost the right to health insurance coverage for SRS.

The definition of "handicapped" as written in S.933 and H.R. 2273 was enacted into law in 1974. In 1976 the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) found that transsexuals met the requirements of the definition when employers discriminated against the transsexual solely because of their being transsexual. In 1981 the RSA, at the urging of the ACLU Transsexual Rights Committee of Southern California, issued RSA-PI-81-3, allowing use of federal funds for rehabilitation services--job counseling, speech therapy, electrolysis--to assist the transsexual in becoming employable. In 1985 Jane Doe won the first discrimination case against an employer under 29 U.S.C. §706(6). The definition was not created for the TS community. It was created to protect the rights of all citizens.

The Armstrong amendment will be signed into law because of the silence of the TS, Gay, and TV communities. It is being called the "sexual deviance amendment" in Washington

Keep on burying your heads in the sand. It's safe there, for the moment!

In His lovingkindness,

Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE
Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE

SIX MONTHS AFTER VOCAL SURGERY

by Leslie Bernard

It has now been six months since I had the vocal surgery performed by Dr. J.S. McSraill and I thought I would give you my opinions on the results of the surgery at this point in time. For those of you who missed the write-up on the surgery in the July issue of *Trans News* (December issue *Twenty Minutes*), I thought I would give a quick re-cap. The surgery is done using a laser to burn away layers of cells on the surface of the vocal cords. This leaves them thinner and tighter and, in theory, working at a higher pitch.

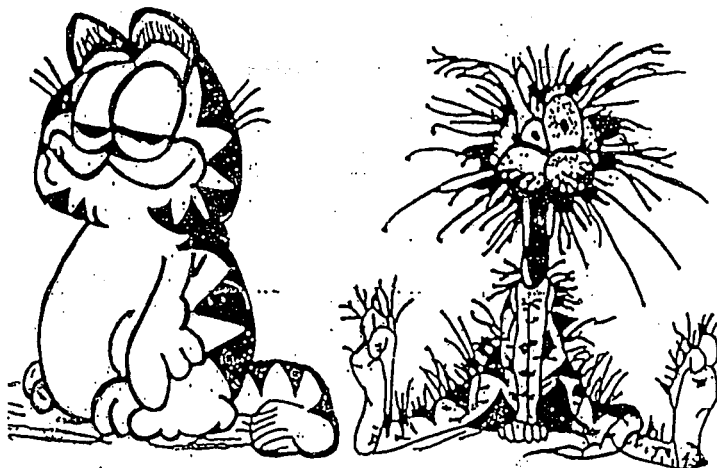
While the pitch is now higher, the habitual intonation of male speech remains unchanged by vocal surgery. For changing intonation, speech pathology is required; re-education has to take place. Many years of male habits must be broken.

On a spectrum analyzer my frequencies are from approximately 100Hz to 300-400Hz. Moreover, because of male speech pattern (intonation) the mean frequency was 128Hz which is high male or low female reducing my potential of the vocal surgery and subsequent female range available to me.

The combination of laser surgery and speech pathology is a very long and tedious process but can be extremely rewarding.

(EDITOR'S NOTE...This article reprinted from the December 1989 issue of *Trans News*, the newsletter of Transition Support in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.)

A TS'S WORST NIGHTMARE



Before
SRS

After
SRS

nice
computers
don't go down

CONGRATULATIONS

To XX Club members Laura, community liaison officer, on approval for surgery and to Angel, *Twenty Minutes* cartoonist, on approval for hormones at the last board meeting of the Gender Identity Clinic of New England.

JAY LENO, the comedian, discussing the recent political developments in Europe: "The exodus from East Germany has become so great that the only men left are the ones on the women's track team."

Ministry of Information

FOR SALE



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 Brochure contains everything you always wanted to know about transsexualism, but were afraid to ask...and a few things you don't want to know about. (ppd. 1st class)

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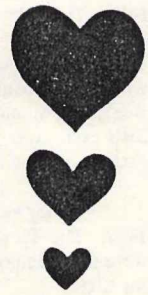
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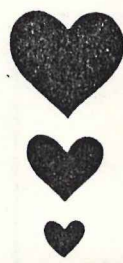
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Standards of Care: Harry Benjamin International
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Gender Worker, Box 1224, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1G7. Prices are in U.S. funds. Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

J2CP Information Services P.O. Box 184
 San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693

J2CP INFORMATION SERVICES provides information/referral services formerly provided by the JANUS Information Facility and its predecessor, the Erickson Educational Foundation, and Renaissance: Gender Identity Services.

J2CP INFORMATION SERVICES provides an information package consisting of pamphlets concerning gender dysphoria syndrome, in particular transsexualism. This package is available for a donation of \$30.00, to cover research, printing, first class postage, and secretarial services.

Additionally, J2CP INFORMATION SERVICES will attempt to provide referrals to reputable counselors, psychotherapists, or gender programs, and peer groups near your home.

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