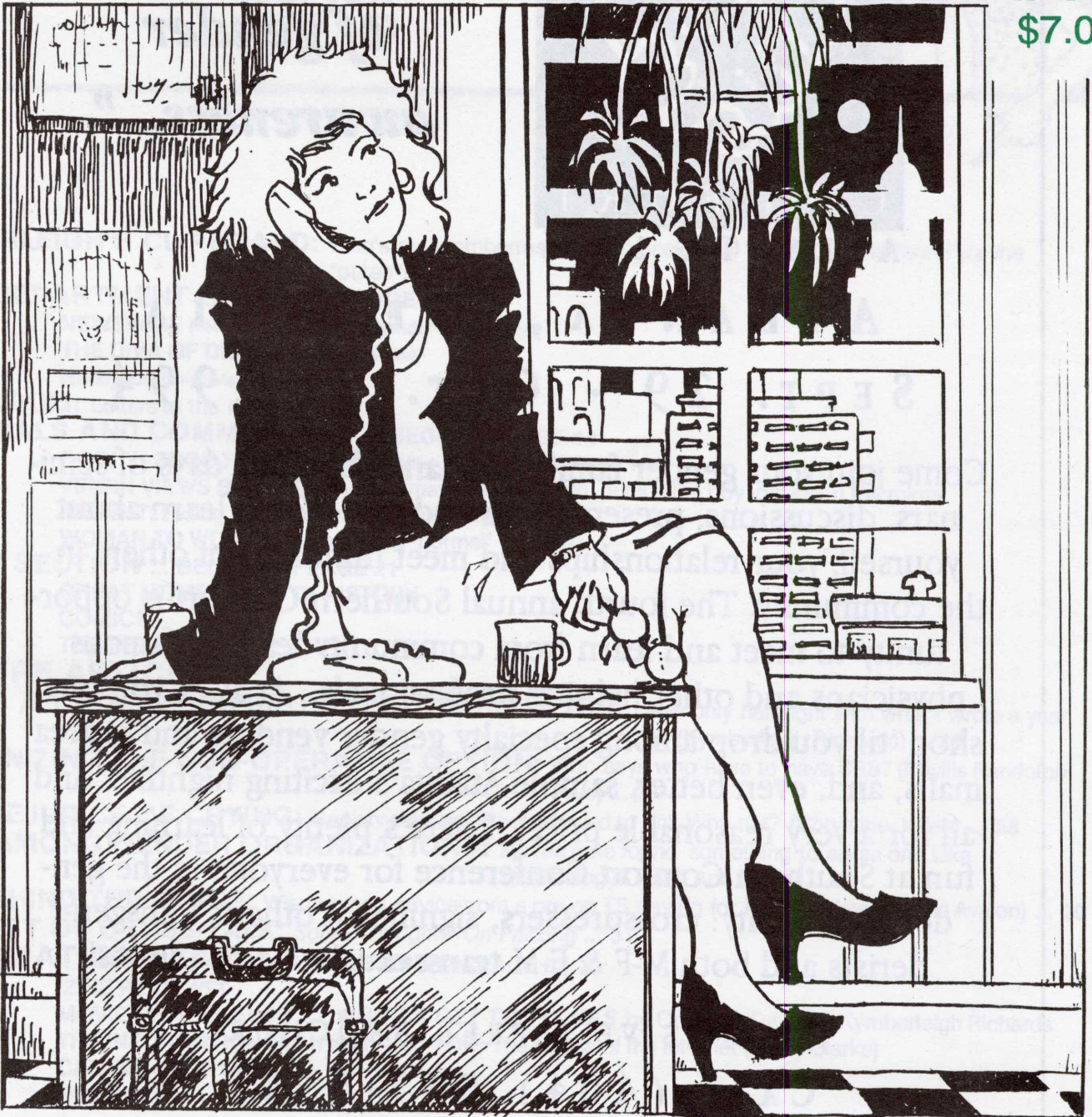


CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

#57

\$7.00



ACCIDENTALLY "OUTING" SOMEONE
WHO'S DOING THE LOOKING IN YOUR MIRROR?
AFTER FOUR YEARS LIVING FULL-TIME, NOW WHAT?
HOW (AND WHEN) TO TELL THE CHILDREN
EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO "PASS", REALLY ...
MOVIE REVIEW: EVEN COWGIRLS GET THE BLUES
RECOGNIZING THE NON-OPERATIVE OPTION
NEWS ... INFORMATION ... COMMENTARY ... HUMOR

ANNOUNCING



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CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

JULY 1994
(ISSUE #57)



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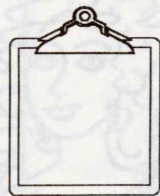
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KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

ACCIDENTALLY "OUTING" SOMEONE

by Kimberleigh Richards

Well, I suppose it had to happen eventually.

I accidentally "outed" someone a few months ago. Well ... actually, I'm not sure "outed" is a good way to put it. Because the person who I inadvertently "outed" expected the revelation. And there was only one person that might have found out because of my actions (and that person apparently either didn't notice or didn't care).

Maybe I'd better explain what happened before I start confusing the issue. As a result of some cyberspace correspondence (read that Internet e-mail) with a 'zine publisher who I had sent a sample copy of *Cross-Talk* to, I discovered that the publisher had a "T" for a significant other. At the time, I sent off a

reply saying I thought that was cool and then I didn't think consciously about it for a while. Until the occasion came to mention the publisher's 'zine in a way that disseminated to a lot of people, most of who neither knew or cared about the "T" SO.

Unfortunately, one of the people who was in the dissemination loop knew the publisher but did not know her SO was a "T". Which caused the publisher a great deal of consternation ... but not her SO, who figured that the

"outing" was possible when she gave permission for me to be told in the first place. And that person hasn't said a thing to either one of them, so we're all presuming he either failed to see the revelation or doesn't really care about the "T" thing.

(Having finally put this down and re-reading it, I'm not even sure I should be calling this an "outing", but I have something specific in mind here, so I'll continue on that basis for purposes of discussion.)

This incident has made two points even clearer in my mind that I already knew: **One**, "outing" someone doesn't have to be a deliberate act; it can be an accident, because we can't be on our guard every second, even if we make a concerted effort to protect those we share this community with. **Two**, it's not always the "T" who is affected by an "outing"; much of the time, it's the family that gets more

worried about the exposure.

I can't really think of much to say about the first point, because nothing can be done in such a circumstance besides apologizing, attempting to do "damage control" if possible, and hoping both for forgiveness and that you'll never repeat the slip of the tongue with someone else. Indeed, I think in such a case, the person who accidentally "outed" is probably going to be more embarrassed than the person who was "outed".

But on the second point, I have to concede that even though I've always been aware of the difficulties some families have walking the fine line between higher

visibility within the gender community and protecting their private lives from scrutiny by friends, co-workers, and acquaintances who may or may not be accepting or tolerant of transgendered issues, I never really gave the matter a significant amount of thought.

Those of us in positions of responsibility in the community live with the knowledge that we have access to large amounts of sensitive data about those members of the community and that we have access to that data

because we have been proven trustworthy. For example, more than half of *Cross-Talk's* subscribers have their real name on the mailing label. More than three-quarters send checks with their real name on it, even if they subscribe under an alias. About eight of every ten subscribers have either a post office box or get the magazine at one of those private mailbox rental agencies (and most of their checks have their home address on them). But I've only rarely had anyone question whether my knowing all this personal, private information compromises the subscriber, because part of being a gender community businessperson is **not caring** what the order form or the check says. All any of us who do business in this community -- be it myself, Mark Holden, Sandy Thomas, JoAnn Roberts, or Vernon Porter -- care about are (a) did the check clear the bank and (b) will the Postal Service deliver it or will it be sent back as

The person who accidentally "outed" is probably going to be more embarrassed than the person who was "outed".

"no such name"? (By the way, this is why most of us won't let you use "Occupant" or "Boxholder" for a mailing name. It prevents us from getting things back from the post office if you inadvertently gave us transposed address numbers or the wrong zip code.)

I happen to know a lot of our Los Angeles-area subscribers on sight (in both modes, which has placed me in the position of having to -- on a split-second's notice -- remember whether to call someone by their real name or by their *femme* name). I think I only slipped once, years ago, and in that case the person's real name was androgynous so it didn't cause a real problem. But I walk that tightwire all the time.

Again, though, the problem comes when the significant others or family are more worried than the "T"s themselves about being "outed". I now suspect, having looked at it from

this perspective, that this is where what objection there was to the media coverage of last November's Tri-Ess convention originated.

What's the solution? I don't believe there is one. Sorry to say, this is one editorial where I don't have a potential answer. I can only hope that as we continue to make small advances here and there toward enlightening society that "outing" will diminish as a problem for our community to the same degree that "coming out of the closet" has for the gay community in the quarter-century since Stonewall, so that it will be possible to "come out" of our closets without fear of retribution.

The only other thing we can do is be prepared to say "I'm sorry" when it inevitably happens and hope that no real damage is done as a result.

THIS MONTH, we have made adjustments in some of our regular monthly features.

First, I must regretfully announce the resignation of associate editor Paula Jordan Sinclair ("The NewsQueen"). I have asked Angela Gardner, editor-in-chief of *Renaissance News & Views*, to take on the responsibility for providing mainstream news; her column "The Diva Of Dish" beings appearing in this issue.

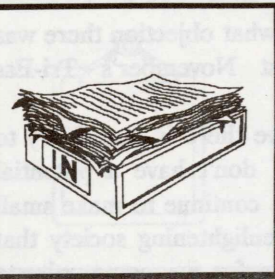
We have also, with this issue, begun grouping similar features together. All three of our news department features ("Newswire", "HotBuzz!", and Angela's new column) will appear in the pages immediately following my editorial rather than being separated throughout the magazine.

Our regular columnists, each with their own perspectives, will also be clustered, following the news sections and "Vox Populi": "Cogito Ergo Fem" (TS perspectives), "Virgin Views" (TG), "Insight" (CD), and "Woman To Woman" (wives/partners) will be joined next month by a new column, "The Doctor Is In" (professional perspectives).

Our humor features ("Great Moments In TV History", "The Bearded Lady" and the comics section) will be clustered following the regular columnists, followed by several stand-alone articles. These will be followed by our "Best of *Cross-Talk*" reprint; 'zine, movie, and other reviews; our "Information Highway & You" series; and the events calendar and hotlines listings. An additional "filler" article may appear at the end of the magazine from time to time, as space permits.

These changes are being made in response to reader feedback asking for a more orderly grouping of like topics. We hope all of our readers find the changes to their liking.

Kimberleigh Richards, Publisher & Managing Editor



"Cross-Talk" Newswire

News of the worldwide gender community

The International Foundation for Gender Education has announced that Los Angeles has been selected as the site for its 1997 "Coming Together-Working Together" convention, tentatively scheduled for March 16 through 23 of that year.

IFGE executive director Merissa Sherrill Lynn, in making the announcement, said the decision was made after lengthy discussion and careful consideration of local and regional issues. However, the leadership of the local gender community organizations (Alpha, PPOC, et al) indicated that they had not been contacted in advance of Lynn's announcement and that the selection of Los Angeles came as a complete surprise. Lynn says she was approached by several Southern California representatives of the Congress of Transgendered Organizations at the 1994 convention regarding the possibility of holding the convention in their region.

Lynn went on to explain that IFGE tries to rotate the location of the convention from east to midwest to west in order to allow those who would like to participate but are unable to travel great distances the opportunity to participate at least once every three years. "The 1994 convention was held in Portland," she explained, "so three years from now it will be time to return to the west coast."

IFGE board member and Marketing Committee chair Melissa Foster has been appointed as Host Committee Coordinator for the 1997 convention.

OOO

IFGE has experienced a decline in revenue and contributions through the first quarter of this year, according to Budget Committee chair Laura Caldwell.


In a statement released to gender community leaders and reprinted in *Tapestry* #68, Caldwell reported a 12% decline in revenue, but was unable to identify a specific reason. She also indicates that contributions fell 10% compared to one year ago, and the number of donors also dropped by 8%.

Caldwell used the announcement as an opportunity to explain the importance of contributions to IFGE, pointing out that revenue from *Tapestry* and other publication sales is insufficient to cover operating costs at the organization's Waltham, Mass. headquarters. She said that the decline has caused her to question the 6% growth assumption made in IFGE's Strategic Plan, stressing that the 26% of IFGE's revenue that comes from gifts cannot be allowed to decline.

On a more positive note, Caldwell pointed out that the organization's cash flow stabilized in the first quarter of 1994, with a surplus at quarter's end equal to an uncleared check covering part of *Tapestry's* production after a \$3,000 loan covered remaining bills for the quarter.

OOO

The recently formed Riverside, Calif. organization Born Free was the recipient of the Alicia Lichy Spirit of California Group Award at this year's "California Dreamin".



Sissy Boy Digest

THE SISSY BOY DIGEST is a Great New Publication where your Fantasies, Dreams and Desires of being Sissified can come true by way of the Unique Stories Available only in this publication. The stories are illustrated to make them more Enticing and Believable - It could happen to you. Don't you wish! 76 Fantastic Pages and only \$8.00. Sent in a Plain, Well Sealed Envelope by First Class Mail. Order Today and Receive a FREE 24 page Completely Illustrated Tv Book Catalog Valued at \$3.00. Send \$8.00 to: Empathy Press, P.O. Box 12466, Seattle, Washington 98111. Canadian Money is Taken at Par.

According to "Dreamin" chair Joan Goodnight, the organization was selected for the award in recognition of their efforts toward community relations and their unselfish act of cancelling their second-ever meeting so as not to conflict with last November's Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme" in nearby Burbank.

The Alicia Individual Award was presented to Powder Puffs Of California's Dee Grady in recognition of her efforts at building better relations and communications among the local gender community organizations as a goodwill ambassador.

The awards are named for the late Alicia Lichy, who prior to her death in December 1992 formed the now-defunct organization Feminine Image, operated the Alicia's gender community boutique, and published the newspaper *TV Girl Talk*.

OOO

An all-day for professionals interested in education on gender community issues has been announced by The Eden Society.

The South Florida "Gender Symposium for Medical and Mental Health Professionals" will be held at Barry University in Miami Shores October 8. Invited speakers include Sheila Kirk, M.D., IFGE executive director Merissa Sherrill Lynn, and ICTLEP's Phyllis Randolph Frye. Students and other members of the gender community have also been invited to attend.

The stated goal of the conference is to provide education to helping professionals and "familiarize the medical and mental health communities [with] all facets of gender expression and congruity."

OOO

International Gender Transient Affinity has announced plans to airlift two pre-operative M2F transsexuals out of Zagreb to safer territory.

According to IGTA's Phaedra Kelly, approximately \$2,250 US needs to be raised by September 19 to fund the project. She indicates that a fund set up by *Transformations* publisher Jeri Lee is covering part of the costs, but that individual contributions are also welcome.

In the U.S. and Canada, IGTA fundraising is coordinated by Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61246, King of Prussia PA 19406. In England and Europe, IGTA may be contacted directly at 1 Bank Buildings, School Green Road, Freshwater, IOW P040 9AJ, U.K.

OOO

Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues* and the historical pamphlet *Transgender Liberation*, has announced a transgender pride project consisting of a book focusing on historical and cross-cultural perspectives.

Calling it "the book I needed to read so badly when I was a scared, ashamed transgendered teenager", Feinberg has assembled research on transgender, as well as photos,

graphics, etchings and painting of transgendered individuals from many nationalities and time periods. Together, they will make up a book tentatively titled *Transgender: A History of Change*.

Feinberg is fashioning this body of work as a weapon to defend the rights of each person today to shape their bodies, identities and self-expression by showing that although gender has been expressed differently in diverse historical periods, regions, cultures, classes and nationalities, there has always been gender diversity in the human population.

The book is in draft firm and ready to go a publisher, Feinberg says, with only the cost as a barrier. "I have discovered that no matter who publishes the work, it is the author who must shoulder the financial weight of research and the steep costs of purchasing photo and graphic reproduction rights," Feinberg said.

Feinberg has submitted a \$12,500 budget to the Column Foundation in New York City, which has an IRS 501(c)(3), non-profit, tax-exempt status, which has agreed to award a grant in the amount of all the donations it receives that are earmarked for the "Transgender Pride Project." The budget includes funds for photo prints from museums and collectors, as well as the costs of travel to archives and private collections in Los Angeles, Atlanta and Boston, and xeroxing, print-making, long distance calls, faxing and postage to international collections and museums.

Those wishing to make a tax-deductible donation to the project should make checks payable to the Column Foundation, c/o William Sachs, Esq., 7 Penn Plaza, Suite 830, New York NY 10001 and note that the contribution is for the Transgender Pride Project.

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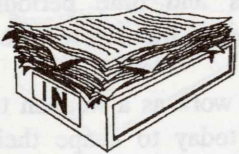
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The Diva Of Dish

-- Angela Gardner

Well girls, the summer is sizzling along. It's another July of sun and fun. If the comet that's scheduled to smack into Jupiter around the middle of this month causes that gas giant of a planet to ignite, maybe we'll be one of those lovely two sun systems. Think of the tanning possibilities that presents. Experts say that nothing may happen when the comet hits but what do they know? I'm stockpiling mascara and hair spray just in case.



SKIRTS ON CRUSADE: We got an interesting mass mailing from Fort Lauderdale, Florida last month. The hefty little packet contained a letter, three copies of clippings from the newspapers down there and some photos cut out of fashion catalogs. The letter was signed by a thirteen and a half (remember when you used to add "a half" to your age? I subtract at least four years.) year old, closet crossdresser named Michelle. Michelle and some of her friends went through an old issue of *Tapestry* and put together their mass mailing to groups in the transgender community. They are looking for our support in a crusade to bring boy's Skirt Days to a high school near you.

This all got started when a student responding to the men in skirts fad wore one to school and was asked to go home and change by administrators who felt his attire would disrupt other student's studies. Were his legs that good? Boys started a crusade to have as many males as possible show up on the next Thursday in skirts. Since the school dress code bans mini skirts, the boys wore long ones. The catalog clippings Michelle included were to illustrate what lengths the boys went to in their protest costuming.

The kids want us organized crossdressers to get on the phone and call stores to urge the buyers to carry the skirts for boys that have started to make fashion news. Michelle

and her friends, (who, according to her are not crossdressers) want to make men in skirts strictly a fashion issue. Her hidden agenda is, of course, then she could wear her skirt to school and get her satisfaction secretly. Ah ha!

Well, it's a great idea. I'm all for young men doing anything that will improve their world view. As Michelle points out, long hair on men was accepted, earrings for guys have become much more common and I even saw a young grunge rock type in a kilt walking down a center city Philadelphia street. (I thought my mid-calf, floral print was much nicer than his tartan pattern.) As Bob Dylan said, "the times, they are a-changin'." However, I'm not sure I believe in 13.5 year old Michelle the closet CD. Some of the phrasing in her letter is a little too sophisticated and how they got a "old issue of *Tapestry*" is glossed over rather quickly. I have a vision of a sixty eight year old, retired crossdresser with lots of time on his hands seeing the articles about boys in skirts and getting inspired. I see his plot to enlist support groups around the country with a sentimental plea from cute little "Michelle".

Well, what are you waiting for? Get on the phone and tell the boy's department that your son wants to know if he'll be able to get the popular boys' skirts there when the big back to school sales start. Maybe fashion pressure can change the world.



WHAT'S IN A NAME? Dr. Melanie Erin Spritz, a pre-op M2F transsexual sent us a copy of some pages of the *AAPHR Reporter* dealing with that organization's controversy over changing their name. The AAPHR is a professional group for gay and lesbian physicians and apparently at this time their name does not reflect that.

Dr. Spritz is the only transgendered member of the Philadelphia affiliate and she feels that the group's name should include "transgendered" as well as lesbian and gay. Shades of the Stonewall 25 controversy! I have no idea what Dr. Spritz's sexual orientation is, but it seems to me that if she is a lesbian then the group would relate to her on that basis. If she is interested in men sexually, then she shouldn't be a member of a gay physician's group since she's a straight woman.

I have no idea what the initials AAPHR stand for (I've halfway figured out AAP but HR has me stumped), but if they are going to admit transgendered members then I think they should add that word to their name. They are due to vote on the name change in September and if Dr. Spritz keeps us informed, we'll pass it along.



LET THE TV BEWARE: Stella Bamvil sent a page from the Washington-Baltimore edition of *TV Guide*. In the classified section under the Videos/Movies listing there is an ad for Michael Salem's Boutique. He's selling videos in this one. The ad leads off with *Mrs. Doubtfire* for \$18.88 plus \$3.50 shipping and handling. *Tootsie* is touted for \$14.99 plus \$3.50 for shipping and handling. (I've always wondered what makes "handling" different from "shipping.") Then, having got your attention with those deals, Mike shifts into high gear with his own video, *How To Impersonate A Woman*. It's regularly \$60.00 but now you can get it for only \$29.99 plus -- you guessed it -- \$3.50 shipping and handling. Be still my heart! Last time I checked on things like this there were video stores in most every neighborhood that would rent you a copy of *Tootsie* for around a dollar a day. *Mrs. Doubtfire* was available for sale at one local drugstore chain for around twenty dollars with a mail in rebate of ten dollars. No shipping and handling. If people are so worried that someone will think they are a TV when they go into the local Blockbuster Video to rent *Tootsie* or *Mrs. D.* then I guess they really do need Michael Salem's mail order services. Why would you waste the money otherwise? I haven't seen Salem's own video so I can't really comment on it, but if you need a video to give you tips on crossdressing, shop around. You don't have to order the first video you see. Ask for

brochures and ask other people in the community for their opinion before you pay the "regular price" plus (all together, girls): SHIPPING AND HANDLING!



NOT SO SWEET TRANSVESTITE: Britt Eklund, ex-wife of Peter Sellers, Lord Lichfield, Lou Adler, Rod Stewart and Stray Cats drummer Slim Jim Phantom, has written a book. I don't know how she had time to write anything with a schedule like that. Just think how much time she spent on wedding dress fittings and rehearsal dinners! But I digress. It seems the weighty tome that has spewed forth from Britt's word processor is not the usual sort of tell-all-bio book. It's called *Sweet Life* and it's a novel that Britt (with assistance from her manager) wrote by using stories she had heard in the worlds of rock and roll and film. Right. The plot, as outlined in the clipping sent in by Billie Jaye West sounds an awful lot like Britt's life. Fictionalized, of course.

Our heroine has been married to an aristocrat and widowed. On the rebound, she marries (this is the touchy part, girls) a violent transvestite who has a diaper fetish. Actually, it seems to go downhill from there but all we care about is the transvestite bit. Where did she get an idea like that? Britt is quoted in the *Kuwait Times*: "I got the transvestite idea from an article about Mick Jagger describing how he liked to dress up in women's clothes at his parties." Well, that's a far cry from a diaper, or as the British say, "nappie" fetish. Where did that come from? The article tells us that Rod liked to wear women's silk undies but was he the nappie lover? Was it Sellers ... or Slim Jim? Fortunately, we'll probably never know. At least as long as the American tabloid shows don't latch on to this story. *Hard Copy* would probably go through Rod's garbage looking for adult size diapers.

Don't waste any money on the book if it makes it to our shores. We don't need stereotypes like the one she presents and if we're lucky she'll find someone else to marry and won't write anymore.



WHEN WEDDED BLISS IS ILLEGAL: Billie is so busy snipping and clipping, I'll bet her wife has no paper left to

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read. She sent along another clip from the *Kuwait Times* concerning a couple in England who are victims of the British law about the legal gender of transsexuals. The law states that no matter what you've done to your body your legal status remains the gender that you were born to. Pretty stupid, huh? You bet. It's the law that Tula tried to fight and lost. She now lives here in the U.S. where a "new woman" can be a woman in the eyes of the law.

In any event, Janeen Newham and David Willis are victims of the same prehistoric thinking from the British lawmakers. They are both transsexual and have both had sex reassignment surgery. After being lucky enough to find each other and fall in love they cannot get married. Not without walking down the aisle in the sex roles they left behind. Since David is still legally a woman he would have to be the wife and Janeen would have to be the husband, in the blind eyes of the law. They are unwilling to do that

so they continue to live in sin.

The couple have tried to get their local Minister of Parliament to change the law, with no success, so Janeen has written a letter to the Queen. (Not of Prussia, of England.) I don't know the Queen's legal address but maybe a raft of letters from transgendered people around the world flooding into Buckingham Palace might get Her Majesty's attention. then maybe David and Janeen could get married in the roles they have chosen.



And now, a quote from that popular quipster, Anonymous; "Every time history repeats itself, the price goes up." That's it folks. See ya AC. (That's "After the Comet.")



[Please send newspaper or magazine clippings regarding crossdressing to Angela Gardner c/o Cross-Talk for inclusion in this column.]

BACK ISSUE EXTRAVAGANZA!!!!

Cross-Talk is reaching more and more people every month, thanks to the many alternative press bookstores and newsstands that now order us for their customers from one of our growing list of distributors. But that exposure means there are many new readers who missed our earlier issues. Fortunately, we plan ahead and keep a supply of back issues for those new readers. Here are the most recent ones we have a good stock of:

CROSS-TALK



#52 (Feb. '94): Media coverage of gender community events; theories of male bonding among drag queens; therapists as gatekeepers; the natural approach to femininity; how to write crossdresser fiction; transgendered music; review of the movie *Farewell My Concubine*.

#53 (Mar. '94): Being misunderstood; differences between men and women; was Magnuss Hirschfeld ahead of his time?; androgyny test; surprises encountered upon leaving the closet; sex-reassignment surgery realities; changing terminology to circumvent the *DSM*; why wives and partners make good community leaders.

CROSS-TALK



#54 (Apr. '94): The difference between constructive criticism and taking potshots; creating terms and then fitting into them; Dr. Roger Peo's final column; the effect of dishonesty on a relationship; rock stars in dresses; overview of 1993 international transgender law conference; memories of DREAM; abusive behavior in crossdressing.

#55 (May '94): Hotlines and effective outreach; using clothing as a "passport" to the opposite gender world; hypocrisy about homosexuality; coverage of IFGE convention; trends in military graffiti; Third World transgenderism; overcoming fear; non-traditional partners' needs.

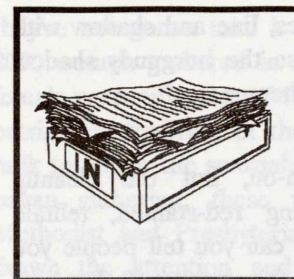
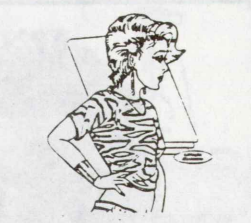
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Hot Buzz!

-- Jo Ann Roberts

"If homosexuality were normal, God would have created Adam and Bruce."
-- Anita Bryant



The alternative lifestyle communities were handed a number of setbacks in the past few months. In particular, the gay/lesbian community seems to be losing ground after a decade of progress. For example, I had mentioned that the state Supreme Court of Hawaii had issued a "show cause" order to the state for denying a marriage certificate to two men. The Hawaiian House of Representatives has moved to counteract that court ruling with a measure that argues the state has a "compelling interest" in denying same-sex marriages.



Meanwhile in Atlanta, officials there are trying to smooth out the wrinkles in the 1996 Olympic Volleyball competition. Actually, the volleyballers are innocent bystanders. The volleyball competition was set to take place in conservative Cobb County. The county commissioners, last August, passed a resolution that the "life style advocated by the gay community" was "incompatible with the standards to which this community subscribes." Gay groups have been campaigning since then for a boycott of the Olympic games. After some of the gay groups disrupted a few of the pre-Olympic events and made it clear they would do so for the actual Olympics, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games has been seeking a compromise solution.



In Austin, Texas, a city ruling that permitted health benefits for Domestic Partners was overturned. The focus of the campaign to reverse the policy was gay/lesbian relationships.



Do you get the hint here people? If the gays and lesbians are under attack, so are we. What are you going to do about it? If you haven't a clue, then I strongly suggest you get your pretty little butt over to the 3rd International Conference on Transgender Law & Employment Policy, August 17 through 21. Contact Phyllis Frye at (713)723-8368.



I mentioned the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition* last month and that book

was not forthcoming without some controversy itself. Ever hear of "Self-Defeating Personality Disorder?" It was one of the proposed categories for *DSM-IV*, but it was not included in the final version. SDDP categorizes people who bring misfortune on themselves because of unconscious motives. The disorder was listed in the Appendix of the *DSM-III-R*. SDDP was not included in *DSM-IV* because it would seem to add insult to injury by diagnosing a client's problems as self-inflicted. Hmmm. Too bad they didn't keep it in. I know a few people who fit this label to a T.



Biologically speaking, there would be a lot to gain politically if science could show that sexual orientation and gender identification were genetically programmed. That's the premise of an article in the May issue of *Scientific American* by neuroanatomist Simon LeVay and biological chemist Dean Hamer. LeVay is also the author of the book *The Sexual Brain*. LeVay and Hamer postulate that homosexuality, at least in males, is carried by a gene on the X chromosome. In other words, it's passed on by your mother. Countering the arguments of LeVay and Hamer in the same issue is William Byne, M.D., Ph.D. Byne says that even if there are genetic and neuroanatomical links to sexual orientation that does not prove these differences cause homosexuality. This is an area of research that is closely watched by both right and left politicians. If a genetic link is established, then Human and Civil Rights should not be denied on the basis of sexual orientation. But the sword cuts both ways. If a gene is identified, there are those who would want to try gene-therapy to "correct" the aberration. Science is blind. Thanks to Sharon Ann Stuart for sending me copies of the articles.



While we're dabbling in genetics and the like, let's try to dispel another myth: testosterone is the private hormone of males. Not so according to an article in the May 3 *New York Times*. As women's health issues reach the forefront of research, more information about the role of both testosterone and estrogen are being revealed. Some physicians now believe that a small amount of testosterone is essential to women's health. Doctors in Britain and Australia are likely to include small amounts of the "male" hormone to post-menopausal women on estrogen replacement therapy. It turns out that ovaries make a small

amount of testosterone and it is believed this is necessary to maintain muscle and bone mass as well as fuel sex drive. This research holds some consequence for post-op M2F transsexuals who may not be receiving any testosterone from their body. According to another *Times* report on May 10, testosterone may actually protect males from heart attacks. The study, performed at Roosevelt-St. Luke's Hospital in Manhattan, found a surprising correlation between a decrease in testosterone levels in aging males and coronary artery disease. The correlation was deemed "highly significant in statistical terms." So, guess what the leading cause of death is for post-op M2F TSs?



My very good friend and ardent supporter of the transgender community Vernon of Vernon's Specialities had a mild heart attack in May. Vernon hadn't felt too good for a few days and when the attack hit, it floored him. He recovered sufficiently to drive himself to the hospital where he remained for several days while they did a "Roto-Rooter" on his arteries. When I spoke with him, he was at home and ordered to rest and recuperate for two weeks. By the time you read this, he'll be back to work.



Let's get some beauty stuff in here. I'm always looking for new products, especially foundations with high coverage. Two new products to try are Estee Lauder's Maximum Coverage Lightweight Makeup (\$25 in six shades) and Prescriptives' Exact Makeup (\$28.50 in 34 shades). Of course, there's my "old faithful" Max Factor's Active Protection Makeup (\$7.50 in 10 shades).



As the weather warms up, so should your makeup palette; no more winter pale for Summer. Even though the GGs are told to go without foundation, we can't accept that advice, so choose a base that's one shade darker than you normally use for a warm summer glow ... For lips: try outlining only the lower lip and then fill both lips with lipstick. Make the lower lip look pouty. Color should be a reddish brown unless you're really dark skinned and then a wine-tint will do ... Eyes: since we're emphasizing lips, keep eyes almost bare with a taupe liner and touch of

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brown mascara ... For evening eyes, line and shadow with a burgundy and brown colors. Use the burgundy shadow under lower lid and the brown on the upper.



Dragon Red nails are a turn-on, but the cleanup afterwards can be messy leaving red-stained, telltale cuticles. I mean, how many times can you tell people you spilled red paint on your hands this weekend? Yet, my hands feel naked without polish and clear seems a waste of time. If I'm painting my nails, I want some color. So, try a pastel nail polish, like those from Monteil Paris. The five soft tints look sexy at night and *tres* professional by day.




I always have trouble with false eyelashes; usually end up gluing my lids together. Revlon's Ultima II Falsies may just change all that. This new mascara lengthens and thickens lashes so much they look like falsies (\$12.50).



Even though we're just getting over that horrible winter and into the swing of summer, the fashion mavens are hard at work on the Fall and Winter clothing lines. The **HotBuzz** for Fall is suits. Both Chanel and Armani showed lotsa suits in many styles and colors. It is interesting to note, though, that the Chanel suit introduced by Gabrielle (Coco) Chanel has really changed very little over its 60 year lifespan ... What's really new is the definition of "suit." The skirt is no longer required to match the jacket exactly in color or fabric. Skirts are almost all short, but they can be slim or they can be flared. Trousers and vests often accompanied the suits on the runways. Jackets are long and slim with some shaping under the bust, fitted through the midriff (get on that Nordic Track, girl) and sometimes flared over the hip ... Caroline Herrera's new Fall suit is actually a slim sleeveless dress under a jacket that takes the headache out of putting three pieces together.



Back to some politics ... Many transgender people have felt the disenfranchisement of organized religion and thus have turned to alternative spiritualities to nurture their alternative gender-alities. That's not so surprising when one realizes that most Judeo-Christian religions treat women like dirt. Well, those women are mad as Hell and



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they're not gonna take it anymore. Last December some 2000 women gathered in Minneapolis to give praise to a female personification of God. The gathered laughed at the patriarchal tradition of the churches and shared honeyed milk to affirm the sensuality of women. No, this was not a pagan gathering; these were members of mainstream Methodist and Presbyterian theologies. The meeting has drawn the attention and outrage of many Protestants. Why? Because the group roundly rejected the anti-feminine posture of organized religions. "We did not name the name of Jesus," said the Rev. Barbara K. Lundblad of New York, "Nor have we done anything in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The Rev. Delores Williams of New York quipped, "I don't think we need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff." "Whether it's Christian or not is frankly, darling, something about which I no longer give a pope," said Mary Hunt, co-director of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual. One speaker called for "lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual women" to join her on stage and the audience responded with applause as 100 women joined her. So, maybe there is a place within the mainstream religions for transgendered people after all. All you have to do is look for it in the right places. While we've got the Pope on the ropes, he reaffirmed the Catholic Church's position against women as priests. This from a man who essentially wears a dress every day.




George Orwell would be proud of the new Budget Chairman at IFGE, Laura Caldwell. Writing in the best tradition of NewSpeak, Caldwell gave us the First Quarter '94 financial report for IFGE. First, she says they made a profit of ca. \$13,000. Next she says there is an expense check outstanding for almost the same amount, so the profit is nil. Finally, she says one of the staff couldn't be paid \$3000 of her salary. Now, unless I flunked Basic Accounting (I didn't), that's a \$3000 loss for the quarter since IFGE didn't have enough money to meet all its expenses. The hole gets deeper each quarter and they expect you to cough-up another \$60,000 in cash donations this year just to break even. However, both donations and revenue from sales are down over last year. Maybe Susan Powter will apply for Executive Director and stop the insanity.



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VOX POPULI

-- Reader letters and feedback

Re: "People Make Terminology, Then Terminology Makes People" ("Best of", April): Virginia makes a very good point about how easily terminology's original intent and meaning takes on a much broader intent and meaning once the term is subject to interruption by those other than the originator. But this is not new, not unique, not even something that will never cease to happen with each new term that is introduced.

This is where the frustration starts (and most likely may never end), with the importance to separate ourselves from all the rest by the terminology. Does our identity depend on the terminology? God help us if it does. Though the terminology does help others to identify us, it's the understanding of the detailed definition that is more important. I believe the effort should be focused on clearly defining or redefining existing terms. Then looking for new terms to fill the voids.

Virginia makes it clear that she is not a transsexual, and I will state that I am a transsexual. I concur strongly that sex reassignment surgery is **not** necessary to live in the female gender. Sex reassignment surgery in itself will not make me into a woman.

Virginia is right on the mark that the transsexual experiences sexual dysphoria, but I would call it sexual **anatomy** dysphoria just to clarify that it has nothing to do with my sexual preference and choice in partners. But I also agree with Dr. Norman Fisk that transsexuals also experience gender dysphoria. Gender is a psychosocial matter. Since I was raised, treated and conditioned to the masculine gender, I have experienced guilt, shame, ridicule and rejection changing to the feminine gender not unlike what TGs experience. I have had to work through all the areas of my gender discomfort to get to where I am today. And so we all (TVs, CDs, TGs, and TSs) share some degree of gender dysphoria.

I see no value for bigenderists -- or any other group -- to disavow the use of the term "gender dysphoria". It's something we all experience and have to work through. It helps explain how we feel as we come to terms with who we are, and it reflects the pain we can experience from a society that is uneducated and/or refuses to tolerate this condition. There is no gain for us to deny, run or hide from gender dysphoria when we can work through these discomforting feelings.

Gina Ann Glass
Corona, CA

Re: "A False Sense Of Security" ("Kymberleigh's Clipboard", June): A distinction should be made between rights for the gay or lesbian and those of the transgendered ... especially the transgendered heterosexual. Are our goals really the same?

I suppose unconditional acceptance is common amongst everyone, but our emancipation remains as different as that of the Jew or the African-American. To suggest that we join together with the same ideals simply because we are all victims of the same hate crimes oversimplifies the issue. Yes, we want to be accepted by our families, our church, our employers, in public, and yes, even in homosexual circles, and at the same time remain unique both sexually and in gender choice.

A genetic male finding genetic females attractive, while dressed or living female, might appear lesbian in nature. Conversely, if the same genetic male holds strong Christian beliefs, the same attraction can be explained as simply heterosexual. This person's life may be politically incorrect with any number of people, though, ranging from the homosexual to the fundamental Christian. How can a transgendered genetic male heterosexual follow both factions' lifestyles? How can he follow either without ridicule from the other?

The civil rights of a transgendered genetic male heterosexual should be given separate consideration. Let every individual remain unique in their goals while seeking those rights. This is what unconditional acceptance is really about.

This is not just about opposing sides (liberals and conservatives, for example), it's a battle where the forces of darkness try to further instill hatred between the individuals of the world. The real question is not whose agenda will prevail, it's whether we can live together respecting each other's viewpoint in love instead of hate.

Stacey Livingston
Fullerton, CA

Re: "Frustration" ("Kymberleigh's Clipboard", March): As an admirer of crossdressers, and a deeply closeted "bearded lady", I would like to offer that I have never responded to any "contact" ads, but I enjoy looking at pretty faces and bodies.

Since **Cross-Talk** is on the open market, it is subject to forces beyond your control, and while that might prove unpleasant at times, that's what causes evolution. If you

wish the crossdressing community to affect the population at large, then you need to be prepared for a reciprocal effect.

You seem to think that "sex" can be separated from being human. Isn't that the same attitude that results in sexual harassment lawsuits?

Ever since pornography has gone into adult bookstores and thus removed from normal market forces, you don't know what you're getting until you shell out \$10 or \$15 for a shrink-wrapped slick cover and nothing much inside except recycled photos that have been around for years. Sometimes you get lucky, but very rarely.

One of the things I do appreciate is the return of crossdressing to normal magazine outlets. I can buy your magazine, *Tapestry*, or *Transformation* at a mainstream newsstand. It reminds me of when I was growing up in the '60s, when I had no problem finding them at "regular" stores ... way in the back, to be sure, but still in the open. Speaking of the latter, *Transformation* now shows actual male-to-female transformations. That's my erotic payoff. I'm not interested in stories illustrated by fantasy cartoons of people you'll never see in real life. (If it's so easy for men to become women, then where are the photographs? Why is it just drawings in your covers?)

There is frustration on both sides of the word processor, Kimberly (I don't deal in affectation -- especially trendy spellings of names). You may choose to put new definitions on things, and espouse the latest party line of the politically correct, but it won't change reality.

Peter Johnson
New Haven, CT

[Editor's Note: Mr. Johnson's letter went on for four pages. We have only published that portion germane to the topic of discussion. Incidentally, the spell-checker here flagged "Kimberly" as misspelled.]

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REGRETS? I'VE HAD A FEW, BUT ...



by Anne Blackwood

As I mentioned in my column last month, this past Christmas I made the announcement to most of my friends and family that I was transsexual and that my life was in for some major changes. The response I got was very positive and supportive. I was basking in my good fortune that so many people were with me. In one letter which went to a close circle of friends I said that after the new year I would be attending social occasions as myself, a woman. I added that if there were some particular event that they felt Anne's presence would present problems, to let me know and I would attend *en homme*.

This letter did not go to a couple of people because they had known about my situation for well over a year, closer to two, and had shown support and interest in my well being. In fact, one of these women was the first person -- outside the transgendered communities -- that I told that I am transsexual (vs. crossdresser). She had said that my transsexuality didn't affect our friendship at all.

This friend works in the entertainment industry on a highly rated show which tapes before a live audience. She has a standing invitation to all her friends to come and watch a

taping of the show. Recently I took her up on the offer. I told her that Anne would be coming and to put me on the guest list as Anne Blackwood, which she did. I arrived without incident (except that the security guard at the gate called me "pal"). The show was very entertaining and afterward I went down on the floor to thank my friend (who had offered to introduce me to the star) for inviting me. She was busy and couldn't stop to talk, but said things were hectic and thanked me for coming.

The next day was her birthday and she had arranged a party at a club in town. She invited her friends and co-workers. The day after the taping -- her birthday -- she called me to explain what the situation was on the set and

said that things had been tense and that it just wasn't a good time to talk or introduce me to the star. We talked for a while, and then she said she had a favor to ask of me. She said it was a big favor, but would I come to her party as my male self (which is no longer extant). She went on to explain that some people she worked with had given her "shit" about me, and had made her uncomfortable. She knew it was a "huge" favor to ask, but they were people she had to work with and blah blah blah. I told her I would oblige her, that she could consider it her birthday present

from me, but that next year it would be another story. (I later related this story to a mutual friend, who hit the roof at our friend's nerve for asking. I told her I should have made a deal. Our friend rarely wears feminine clothing; I've only seen her in a dress twice in the six or seven years I've known her. The deal I should have made was, "One of us has to wear a dress, and if you don't want it to be me ...")

Later I talked to a transsexual friend of mine and explained why I'd agreed and she thought I was handling the situation the right way. I said that had there been a week or two between the taping and the party I would

have had a talk with that friend and explained why I wasn't happy that she'd asked the favor. Still, I felt OK about it. But (that ever present "but"), the more I thought about it the more convinced I was that I had made a bad choice. I should have either declined to attend or shown up as myself anyway. The way I figure it, the few ignoramuses that had given the birthday girl a hard time about having a transsexual (or whatever they called me) friend won. They made her feel defensive and forced her to back down, and she asked me to "move to the back of the bus." **And I did.**

It won't happen again. The only way that the public's attitude toward those of us whose gender identity is out of the ordinary is to be out in

Now I realize that instead of saying "yes" because I didn't want to be rigid, I should have said "no", rather gently.

public and expose them to who and what we are: human beings. Not by confrontation, not by lectures, just be, and be in public. My transsexual friend is one of those lucky ones who vanishes into the throng, she is only slightly taller than average for a woman (vs. my 5'11" in stocking feet -- and I mostly have pumps with 3" heels -- and am an actress) and so she cannot change anyone's thinking by just being. I, on the other hand, would draw comments regardless of which reproductive system I was born with. It is up to the likes of me to be the Rosa Parks of the transsexual world.

I told myself and my friends that had it been any other occasion save her birthday I would have said "no, I cannot accommodate your request". Now I realize that rather than saying "yes" because I didn't want to be rigid, I should have said "no", rather gently, adding, "If my presence is going to be a problem I simply won't come." The shame is mine.

I must admit, I did feel some trepidation about going to a mainstream bar, but I had committed myself to doing it. I was prepared to deal with whatever may have happened, if anything did happen (which I doubt would have after surveying the place *en homme*). Of course, I'm not much for bars anyway even without this issue, so for me to go to a bar is something of a sacrifice on my part.

On the other side of this story, the following day the same circle of friends held a surprise party in a public park for

my friend (who almost hit the roof) and her husband. I was to take an engagement picture (a little belatedly) and the park was where she wanted it done. There I was, being in the park. A sunny Sunday in the park, lots of folks enjoying themselves, walking their dogs, seeing this very tall woman taking photographs of a young couple. No one batted an eye. At least not at me. I was feeling good about myself, my friends were enjoying our camaraderie. So maybe I did reach some people by my presence. Who knows. I do know that I felt much more comfortable Sunday afternoon than I did Saturday night.

One final comment. Some time ago this particular circle of friends went through some trying times when two members broke up after two years as a couple. She refused to be in the same building as he, and so we were put in an awkward position of having to choose sides if we were to have social gatherings. Perhaps part of me wanted to avoid creating a new rift in the network, that old one just recently having been mended. Mostly, I think it was a case of a dear friend asking a favor on her birthday and out of the obligations of that bond of friendship I couldn't say no. My married friend would probably respond by saying that out of that same bond of friendship, the favor should never have been asked.

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

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PASSING

by Virginia Prince

The subject of "passing" is much talked about these days in CD circles. It seems to be a straight forward word in the sense that if you are able to move about in public in feminine clothes without being recognized as being a male in a skirt or dress you have "passed". But it seems to me that there is more to it than that. To begin with, there is the implication that two or more people are involved. One, of course, is the CD herself but who are the others and under what circumstances is the interaction played out? The most complicated, but not necessarily the most important, is a CD in a large mall at noon on a Saturday. I pick this example because there are many other people involved. The number of people provide the complications because it would mean that all kinds of people would be present -- old, young, male and female, racists and bigots vs. tolerant, accepting, open minded people minding their own business and many other types. But the very complexity is a help because the CD can effectively get lost in the crowd. Everybody is too busy with their own affairs to pay much attention to anyone else. As a result the safest place to try yourself out is not some place where there are only a few people around but in the middle of a crowd.

But there is another aspect to passing that doesn't get much attention and that is passing with oneself. We all check ourselves out in the mirror before going out but that is more an examination to see if our lipstick is smeared, that our slip isn't showing, some button is not open or some other obvious error in our appearance. It is primarily an attempt to spot bad things in order to correct them. But do we "pass" with our severest critic our male selves? It is one thing to get ourselves up so that we can lead others to treat us as being women and by implications -- females, but can you sell yourself on that idea? Of course, we all know we are males, but I am talking gender, not sexual anatomy. Can you "buy" what the mirror is showing you,

namely that the person in the mirror is a girl or woman? If you can't you don't "pass" with yourself! If that doesn't quite make sense to you, stop a minute and ask yourself who is doing the looking and the judging? Who answered the question? You are going to say that is a stupid question, but when Diane, Barbara or Virginia or any other CD stands in front of a mirror all dressed up, I maintain that it is **not** Diane, Barbara, Virginia, or whatever name you go by, who is doing the looking and the judging. It is Don, Bill, Charles, or whatever your boy

name is, who is looking and judging. Why is that, you ask?

The answer is that when you were between the ages of fifteen and twenty you were interested in girls, dating them, learning about them and intergender relationships, etc. You also began to set up standards for the kind of girls (women) that appealed to you: tall or short, blond or brunette or redhead, slim or chubby, etc., etc. You did this unconsciously, but you did it. So you became able to look at some strange girl and know immediately that she looking interesting, worth knowing,

dating or, in due course, marrying. You have had those standards in your head ever since.

So now, standing there in your best dress, wig and heels does the mirror show a girl who, if she came out of the mirror and stood in front of you in flesh and blood, you would approve of, want to know, hold, kiss or make love to? If the answer is "yes" you "pass" to yourself, if it is no you need to work on either your *femmeself*, your judgement standards or your mental attitude toward women in general or perhaps all three.

Now don't get me wrong. I am not proposing the impossible. We are all not only anatomically and physiologically male but psychologically masculine. So we are not likely to be able to make ourselves into such a gorgeous piece of femininity that we would like to break into the mirror and take her to bed. Now like most

I maintain that it is not Virginia who is doing the looking in the mirror and judging, it is Charles.

everything else in life we have here a spectrum running between two extremes. At one end are those few who, at least while still on the sunny side of, say, 30, really can come across as very beautiful and desirable. Some of these attract so much male attention and interest that they may succumb to what would, by definition, be considered homosexual activities.

At the other extreme are those who are so ruggedly masculine that they cannot, with any amount of beautiful clothes, hairdos and cosmetics, come across as attractive women. Such unfortunate ones really don't want to look in the mirror because it reveals such a gulf between the actual appearance and the ideal which exists only in their heads.

In between these extremes are the rest of us. The vast majority of CDs like the vast majority of real female women are neither beautiful or ugly. We just **are** and have to make the most of what we have. Thus if what the mirror show could be improved by hairdo, better makeup or more fashionable clothes, **then do it!** If, on the other hand, your standards are too strict or out of date (remember you formed them anywhere from twenty to sixty years ago, depending on your age) consider them again and revise them to a more realistic and practical level. Women today are so much more relaxed -- I might even say careless (or even read that as *careless*) -- about their appearance that most any truck driver or foundry worker could pass in the mall on Saturday noon.

The third area of possible change to make you more accepting of your own mirror image is your masculine judgement of women in general. You may be holding them to a higher standard than they would be comfortable with themselves. Since your are judging yourself (on the basis of the mirror image) by the standards **you** are holding for them, you may, in effect, putting them out of reach in your own head, let alone in three-dimensional reality.

I might say that I write this article from my perception of what goes on with myself. I, like you, get dressed, made up, hair combed, etc. in front of a mirror with a final check when I am ready to go out. I came to realize that although it was an image of Virginia that the mirror showed, my ideas of what a women should look like were based on Charles' views. He hasn't been seen by anyone else or revealed himself in the mirror for 26 years but I came to realize that he remains the Vice President In Charge Of Checking Out The Girls. He got his training for that job when he was between 15 and 20. He learned his job well and has been applying it ever since. When Virginia elevated herself to the Presidency of "our" life (that means full time operations) she left him in charge of making the judgements about feminine attractiveness. He agreed to become the Vice President on the understanding that his jurisdiction not only covered the girls and women that we saw or met in the outside world but that it also covered Madam President herself, Virginia -- **ME**.

As a result when I stand before a mirror and Charles doesn't think I look just right or as good as I can look, it is back to the closet or the makeup table to rework the image until he is satisfied. That is how I came to realize that it is the masculine personality of any CD who checks out that image and approves or disapproves it. This goes for all of you as well as for me though probably you never thought of it that way.

It is often said by psychologists, therapists and even religious types that you can't truly love another unless you can first love yourself. That is what Charles does for me and your boynself is trying to do for you -- make you nicer looking and behaving and therefore more lovable to yourself and to others. So go get all gussied up, step up to the mirror, fluff your hair, straighten your skirt and think to yourself, "it is true, I am an attractive and lovable woman and I am the first to acknowledge it."

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TELLING THE CHILDREN



by Barbara Jean Jasen

One of the more controversial questions within our gender community is "Should our children be told about our crossdressing?" It is a question to which there are no hard and fast answers.

Perhaps what is a bigger question than **should** they be told, is **when** should they be told? If your crossdressing is something totally private, then you run into the problem that young children will not be able to keep it secret. Also, the young child does not have the ability to understand. Yet this lack of understanding can be an asset to us. A billboard I have seen locally shows a black and a white child hugging each other and the

words say "Children Are Not Born Prejudiced". As a child grows older, our attitudes and the attitudes of others will work to help the child form opinions. The longer we wait to teach them about people who are different, the bigger the chance we run into of their being prejudice against us. The one time in life that it is best **not** to tell children is during the teenage years. Teenage years are perhaps the most turbulent, with the young child trying to establish his own identity. Peer

pressure is the greatest, and the transition from being a child to becoming an adult often causes them to be extremely confused. To add anything which simply adds to their confusion about gender identity is not recommended.

On the other side of the coin there is the wife. Telling the children is **not** something that we decide alone; it must be decided together with our wives. Many wives are fearful that their children will also be crossdressers, and they are fearful of themselves becoming an outcast by their own social circle due to their remaining married to us. If a child were to express to others (especially parents) in their friends' families, we may well force our wives to explain things they may not desire to, or are prepared to.

One sister recommended that telling children between the ages of 8 and 10 is best, but here we have the problem that they are already begun to learn gender identity issues, and have begun to form an opinion about boys wearing girls'

clothes. I know this all to well; while I never told my son about my being a crossdresser, he grew up seeing daddy dressed as Barbara from time to time. For me our relationship was most turbulent during that time in his life. There was name calling, and other problems that I had to endure. I think part of the problem was my own fear. If I was dressed and someone would come to the door looking for me the wife would tell them that I was in the bathroom or sleeping. I myself was not as educated about myself as I am today. The secrecy of it gave my son the impression that there was something wrong in what I did.

Telling children is something both you and your wife must be completely comfortable with before it is done.

Telling children is something that both we and our wives must be completely comfortable with before it is done. If we both cannot be comfortable with this concept, then it is best to wait till they are adults (and well-educated themselves) before we even attempt to do so. Also it is very important that we ourselves be completely comfortable with our crossdressing, that we have and show pride in our being crossdressers. If we show fear or shame, our children will

certainly pick up on that fear and shame and will also feel that same shame in your crossdressing. Before we can even begin to educate our children about us, we must first educate ourselves.

Another question that I think you and your wife must discuss before deciding to tell the children is "What if little Johnny wants to be just like daddy?". I am all to often reminded of a story that Robin here in Memphis likes to tell. "Seems that one day a crossdresser, whose two sons were now adults and had finished college, decided with his wife to tell his sons about his *femmeside*. After sitting the boys down and telling them about his desires, they looked at each other and said 'So? We've been doing that for ten years!'" The sons never knew about their father, and the parents never knew about their sons. While incidents like the above are rare, they do occur, and yet this same thing is one of the fears that many women have about our

crossdressing. How prepared are you **both** to handle the concept of your own son being a crossdresser? Sometimes this can lay a severe guilt trip on the parents. Knowing the hardships and prejudices that crossdressers face in our society, what would you do to help your son face these same prejudices and hardship?

In an issue of *LadyLike* I discovered an ad for a book called *Fluff the Bunny*. The ad indicated that "This is the book you wish you had when you were a kid, and discusses people of difference in a way that is applicable to everyone, not just transgendered people. Fluff is a useful tool for discussing transgendered behavior with children and young adults; this is the book to help." I admit that I do not have the book, nor have I read it, but I believe the key here is the ad itself. We must teach our children to accept people of all differences. If we are to teach our children to accept our crossdressing, or crossdressers in general, then we must also teach them to accept people who are gay, people who are black, people who are (insert the prejudice of your choice here). We must teach them to have prejudice against no one. For those of us who are debating the issue of should the children be told, I think the book would be a most worthwhile investment into our own personal reading library. Perhaps it will be a good bedtime story book also. *[Editor's Note: I read this book when it first came out, and it is a wonderful tool for teaching children to overcome prejudices. JoAnn Roberts still has copies available through Creative Design Services. See the back cover for address and phone number.]*

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The answer to tell or not must remain an individual choice for the parents. To tell or not to tell will primarily be determined by how well-educated the parents are about crossdressing, and how they have raised their children. If we raise our children to be open and honest, and most important to accept others as they are, to recognize that we are all individuals and are all different, then and only then do I feel that children will be able to accept our *femmeside* without prejudice, confusion or fear. I think the real key will come in the question of how are we raising our children. Our children are our future and how we raise them today will determine what our world will be like tomorrow, for them and for us.

SPECIAL OFFER!

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

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WOMAN TO WOMAN

DEFINING "NORMAL" AS "CHANGEABLE"

by Linda Peacock

With the world in so much turmoil these days, I've been thinking how fragile our sense of normality can be. We are creatures of habit, doing so many of the same things at the same time every day. We awake at the same time, eat at the same time, work at the same time, go to bed at the same time. Life is so **normal**, so "same". In one sense, this can be good, for humans need continuity and normality in their lives. However, I think we tend to foster this sameness, and become afraid of change and dissimilarity.

Just the simple change of daily routine can be upsetting to the human psyche; therefore, we resist and fear change. Yet, I feel change can be healthy and it doesn't need to be fearful.

My husband and I recently saw *Dances With Wolves*. It was one of the most stunning, realistic

and moving films either of us had ever seen. Although very brutal and bloody, the film nonetheless shows us the simplicity and naturalness of the Indian. The Indians accepted what life gave them, making full use of what nature provided. They took no more than they needed, they never polluted the environment, they lived simple lives for thousands of years. They were thankful for what their creator gave them and never abused these gifts. They wanted only to be left alone to live out their lives peacefully. Isn't this what we should be doing? I think it is what I should be doing.

Today's world is one of complex, advanced technology, and we are driven from simplicity by high tech. How often do we take the time to enjoy the simple things in life? Have we become so entrenched in the fast-paced sameness of our lives, that we speed ahead, and never look back? Unfortunately, I think so.

In my own life, I think that I must stop and change things, return to a simpler time, and value the gifts that I have been given. It is time to evaluate my blessings, learn to appreciate and use them. Isn't this true of all of us? We belong to a community that has its share of frustrations and problems. The CD spends years closeted in loneliness. The wife/partner spends so much time in confusion and misunderstanding. We tend to concentrate on what's wrong, what the other isn't doing right. Isn't it

time that we begin to see what is good in our lives, what each other is doing right? As a wife of a CD, it is time for me to finish working through my frustrations and begin to see what is so right and good about Jacque. Oh, I have done this over the years, but it is time to concentrate on appreciating her in full. It is too easy to be critical and misunderstand. It is better to appreciate and love. It is better to utilize the gifts of love and caring. It is time for me to give more fully to our community and the dear

friends in it that we have been blessed with. It is time, too, for me to learn to take what Jacque and our community gives, and to slow down and cherish their gifts of love and caring. Sometimes, I think, we tend to go rushing ahead, giving, doing for, pushing ourselves to be "wonder" people.

However, we can't always be the doer; we need also be the "receivers" of what others have to give. By being both doers and takers, we have a balance in our lives, balance allows us to be receptive to change and weather the storms of life.

Although I write this using myself as the focal point that needs to reflect and change, I see this need in so many others, especially in other wives and partners. We all need to reevaluate ourselves and our lives, as persons and as women. We are such unique people, with so many needs. Perhaps as we begin to become more aware of each other, as women, we can help each other as we look into our hearts and evaluate our lives, supporting each other should we choose to change our lives or ourselves, as we attempt eliminate our frustrations and deal with our pain. If we look deeply enough inside ourselves, we have the opportunity to see how special we are, how needed we are, how loveable we are, and we can let our partners know what we need. We also have the opportunity to find new appreciation of the gifts and blessings we have been given. I'm here to support; I need your support. We can grow and learn and find the good that life offers, but we need each other to do it. I'm ready - I hope you are, too.

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

I feel change can be healthy and it doesn't need to be fearful.

GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

by Ralph Judd



11/12/77: Damon (Tom Poston) dons a dress and wig in an episode of *We've Got Each Other*, CBS.



9/22/66: Tammy disguises herself as an Arab sheik to infiltrate a Las Vegas casino on *The Tammy Grimes Show*, ABC.



11/26/78: Flo (Polly Holliday), Alice (Linda Lavin) and Vera (Beth Howland) take moonlighting jobs as singing telegrammers on *Alice*, CBS.

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

THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by **KAREN ANN MICHAELS**

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Karen and Hobbes

by KAREN MICHAELS

(Big time apologies to Bill Watterson)

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STILL TRYING FOR THAT FLAME THROWER, EH?

AT WORST THEY'LL END UP IN THERAPY!

THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner

ADIES 10-13

YES, REAL HAIRY ARMS, ABOUT 6'8" ... I TOLD HER WE WERE OUT OF 14B'S AND SHE JUST FLIPPED OUT

URBAN BIGFOOT SIGHTING OR IRATE CROSSDRESSER? DETAILS AT 6:00

here in the (un)real world by Nancy Wilson

A. FREUD U. LENT
PSYCHIATRIST
B. SHARK

WE'VE CONCLUDED THAT ANY TV THAT STILL WEARS BLUE EYESHADOW IN PUBLIC DESERVES TO FEEL INFERIOR!!

WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT? by Christine-Jane

BUT DADDY - I DON'T WANT TO JOIN THE BOY SCOUTS!

Tasha's World by Tasha Barnard

I AM SO TIRED OF THESE A-AFTER SHOCKS-S!!

YOU'RE TIRED?!

ADS WE'D LIKE TO SEE by Karen Rusnak

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A Few Seconds with: T.S. & C.D. by Calie

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THE BEARDED LADY

THE BRA: AN AMERICAN ICON?



by Ricky Hunt
Illustration by Rita

I hate Philadelphia. Well, maybe that's a bit too harsh. I hate living in Philadelphia. I took a job that made me move to Philadelphia once and lasted precisely one and a half weeks before I ran screaming back to my rural home and continued unemployment. But perhaps I was a bit hasty, for now it seems the enlightened curators of the Museum of Art there have declared my favorite fetish to be a legitimate subject of cultural study. They now have an exhibit of brassieres in their costume and textiles section. Not only that, but they have one Kristina Haughland as

go with each foot support system. If American industry can pull this one off we'll be out of the recession before you can snap the hooks on your own personal breast support system. Now if I can only find a way to market special occasion panties I'll be rich!

"It's confusion over women's roles," says Ms. Haughland. "Women are expected to be everything -- athlete in the morning, business woman by day and sex goddess at night. And there's a bra for every occasion." How true that is. I've been confused over women's roles for years, and I'm glad I'm not alone. Why, the Intimate Apparel Council of New York, New York (I'll bet you never knew they existed, did you?) says that sports bras account for 9 percent of bra sales and underwires take 38 percent of the tally. There was, sadly, no accounting of how many of those bras were sold for use by women, so we may never know how large our share of the intimate apparel market is.

There has been an interesting evolution of the brassiere over the years. The bra as we know it first appeared around the turn of the century as hoop skirts, super tight corsets and such began to lose popularity. Oddly enough, women considered the long-line boned and reinforced brassieres liberating when compared to their predecessors. By the '20s designers were advising fashionable women to throw away their bras and adopt the boyish look of simple breastbands. (Glad I wasn't around then!) The '30s saw the breasts part company, and women, or at least bra wearers of whatever sex, could be discerned to have two distinct globes instead of a single rounded mass mounted on the chest. The '40s and '50s saw the advent of the "torpedo" or "snow cone" bra, with its myriad stitched circles, the kind I first snatched from my mother and filled with washcloths.

The '60s were trying times for the manufacturers of bras, what with the bra burners and free lovers who had no use for intimate apparel, as they were cavorting naked in fields of flowers and doing things that scandalized their parents. But American ingenuity was up to the challenge, and the no-bra look became the standard in bras. Padded, seamless cups enhanced the figure without those lines on the sheer blouse. And someone discovered color. Of course you had to have the right color bra (continued, page 38)

LIFE AS A TRANSGENDERIST, FOUR YEARS LATER (Straight? Lesbian? Butch? Femme?)

by Kymberleigh Richards

A year ago in these pages, I wrote what turned out to be the second most-reprinted article in *Cross-Talk's* history. It was entitled "Life As A Transgenderist", and it created a controversy for a while due to my use of the phrase "drag queen mentality" to explain my discomfort with gender community weekend events.

The article, for the three or four of you who didn't see issue #45, one of the many reprints in organization newsletters or its appearance in *Tapestry* #66, concerned my discomfort at the 1993 "California Dreamin'" -- an event that, in its early days, I was heavily involved in the operation of -- due not to any fault of the event or its organizers but to my evolution as Kymberleigh Meghann Richards. I have been living full-time in this gender role for four years this month, and even a year ago it was obvious that my assimilation into the "real" world, not as a crossdressed man but as a woman, has gradually distanced me from the gender community that I started out in.

What I said, both during and in the aftermath of the "drag queen mentality" controversy, still holds. The many weekend events that take place each year in our community are a wonderful and necessary thing. They allow those who would not otherwise be able to appear in public in their transgendered roles to travel to a city far enough away from home where they won't accidentally be discovered by friends and acquaintances and spend several days enjoying and learning from the experience of living for a few days in the "opposite" gender role.

There is nothing wrong with that. In fact, I would encourage all crossdressers to experience one of these weekend events at least once in their lifetimes. But I am not a crossdresser anymore. I am a transgenderist. I live as a woman 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. And that's why I used the (ill-conceived) phrase "drag queen mentality".

Those who are using these weekends for its wonderful experience tend -- not unexpectedly or inappropriately -- to go all out for these events. This is the excuse to wear that sequined evening gown, the full-blown wig, the ultra-high heels ... to have a glamour makeover done by Jim Bridges or one of the other fine vendors who make themselves available at these events. In short, to try to out-"glam" everyone else in attendance.

But I don't need the excuse. To me, a dressy affair means to dress in the same manner that a genetic female woman would for a dressy affair. And like it or not, "glam" is

overdressed in that context. Because these weekend events are to large degree fantasy affairs, there's nothing wrong with it ... but it makes me uncomfortable. (I think I'm beginning to understand why some wives and girlfriends have difficulty with this.)

In fact, the longer I live as Kym, the further away I get from my crossdresser roots and the closer I get to lesbianism. I touched on this a year ago, because I have been socializing a great deal with gay womyn since I gave up being Kevin. This socialization has intensified over the past several months due to my involvement with a private Internet-distributed mailing list called sappho, which is a "woman-only" area. Men (even crossdressed ones) are denied access. We have some post-op transsexuals participating, and one transgenderist (me).

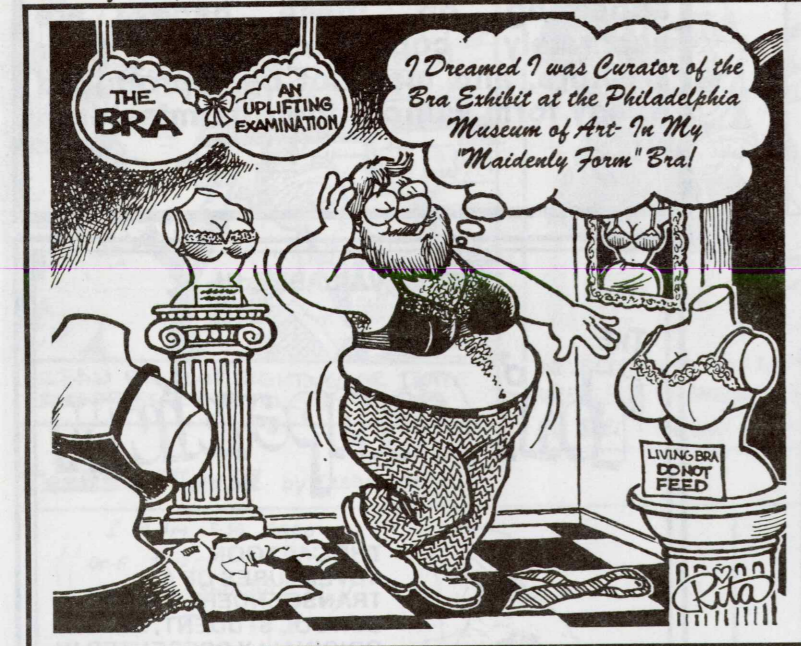
The longer I live as Kym, the farther away I get from my crossdresser roots and the closer I get to lesbianism.

Participating in sappho has reinforced my identity as a woman and as a lesbian. So much so that for my 38th birthday recently, I treated myself to an image change, resulting in a much more "dyke"-ish look. Lo and behold, about a week later, sappho had a discussion on "butch" vs. "femme". It seemed the perfect opportunity to get some feedback on where I appeared to be going, so I "outed" myself thus:

"The subject of butch/femme came along at a very appropriate time for me. I turned 38 recently, and this July I will celebrate four years since I felt any need to maintain the duality of the male identity I was born with. (Meaning I have not appeared as Kevin since the summer of 1990, only as Kym.)

"Anyway, I had been thinking lately that my continuing evolution needed yet another change in image. In the past six months (since joining sappho) I have been getting more out of the discussions on this list than in all the transgendered groups and lists combined, so I decided to reinforce my self-image as a lesbian.

"I now sport a very dyke-ish haircut, very blonde to boot. I got new glasses to better complement the haircut, and they are decidedly less 'feminine' than their predecessors. I changed my look to favor oversize sweaters and tops, wide leg pants or long skirts, flats or boots. I also increased the number of earring holes in each ear (current total is 3 in my left, 2 in my right). I kept the long acrylic nails, and I still wear



resident lingerie expert, who has made an anthropological study of female undergarments. How do people get jobs like this? I'm unemployed right now; why won't someone pay me to fondle feminine fashions?

It seems that currently the bra biz is booming. On one hand (breast?) there is a growing market for the reinforced, action oriented "sports bra", and at the other end of the spectrum sales of lacy nothings trailing ribbons and bows are going through the roof. I can just see it now, some poor woman goes shopping and spends hours choosing the right combinations of sneakers -- pardon me, that's canvas foot support systems -- so she is properly shod for every conceivable occasion, and then has to spend another day and a half purchasing the proper brassiere to

makeup.

"The reaction has been great and I feel absolutely wonderful about what I see in the mirror. My manicurist says I look more femme than when I was really trying to look the part, yet when I got together with my ex from five years ago to celebrate both our birthdays (hers is ten days after mine), she said she considered my new look to be more butch than femme.

"I didn't forget how to do 'man' things around the house when I stopped living as one, yet one of the reasons I self-identify as a lesbian is that I enjoy doing 'woman' things with other womyn, and I prefer their company.

"I'm not sure what label I should use ... or even if I should. I don't think I need to be labelled 'butch' or 'femme'. I just know that I've wound up being the person I was meant to be.

"Is it really that important in our community which I am?" I got private replies from several of the womyn on the list. Most have allowed me to share excerpts of their replies in this article. They are identified by first name only.

"It seems lots of people (including those in our community) struggle to define, classify, etc. though. Funny thing about that though, is that those people will decide which category they think you fall into ... won't matter if you make a decision or not!

"Sounds like you've been through the mill enough with the whole man/woman identity thing! The whole butch/femme dichotomy seems like peanuts in comparison, (though it sounds like a more challenging issue for you being transgendered)." -- Kim

"Personally, I don't think it matters whether we're butch or femme. I think all that matters is that we're comfortable with who we are. Ultimately, that's what's most important, right?" -- Denise

"Looks like you've found your true self! That's wonderful. I see so many people trying to fit themselves into molds and failing miserably. How refreshing to hear of someone with no need for molds for self-identity. Hell, Hon, pour your own mold!!! (You sound hot!)" -- Anita

"It sounds like you're doing fine becoming who you feel you are, whichever direction that takes. Most of the lesbians I know are in the middle third of the butch/femme continuum and are very happy there. I think it is also common for us to move along that continuum as we change/mature/experiment. Find a spot that feels right to you at the moment, learn from the perspective that place gives you, savor the experience, and, then, if the spirit moves you, try another spot." -- Nancy

"Is it really that important in our community which I am?" No way! Just as long as you are here." -- Erin

Erin's reply, particularly, reinforced my feeling that the lesbian community is where I belong. (I subsequently met her and her SO at a gathering of L.A. area sapphites, where I also discovered that I am accepted as a woman by other lesbians.)

I have learned, from this cyberspace ersatz opinion poll,

that regardless of how I might see myself, I will always be identified in the lesbian community as "butch" or "femme" by each individual based on their perception, but what is encouraging is that I will be identified as a lesbian, not as a crossdresser.

This fits very nicely with my assimilation into the mainstream as a woman. In fact, part of the reason I changed my image was that I'd rather be perceived (by the mainstream) as a homosexual female than as a crossdressed male. (I think I might be a little safer from gay-bashing that way, too.)

So I'm just going to enjoy the fact that I'm finally comfortable with my self-image (at least right now), and let the rest of the world decide for itself how they want to relate to me.

You know, I don't feel transgendered anymore.

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RECOGNIZING THE NON-OPERATIVE OPTION

by Phyllis Randolph Frye

Increasing numbers of pre-operative transsexuals are waiting longer for their surgery. Many tell me that because this is 1994, and because we have so many good support groups and events like the "T-Party", "Coming Together", "California Dreamin", "Southern Comfort" and others, and because there is so much more good reading material like *Tapestry*, *Chrysalis Quarterly* and *Cross-Talk* available, and because of an accepting and non-judgmental spouse or family support system, and because of the recognition of the danger of any surgery -- indeed, last November, one of our sisters died a few days after surgery -- and because many post-op's will admit privately that the surgery sometimes just isn't so great after all ...

YES, because of all of these reasons, increasing numbers of pre-operative transsexuals are waiting longer and longer and longer for their surgery.

I am one of those who has not yet had surgery even though I went full-time and out-of-the-closet in 1976, and I began hormones in 1977. My Trish said that although I was full-time and out, name change and all, if I remained pre-op long enough to fully adjust to all the changes then she would try to hang on. The result was that I became as much of a woman as I could possibly be just shy of one surgical procedure. I took the time to fully experience being full-time, completely out, on hormones, name change and all. I discovered that my sex is in my brain. I stand here before you fully female, completely female, and I remain non-operative. My genitals? They make me no less a woman. Besides in my monogamous relationship of over twenty years no one else sees or experiences them anyway. So who should care, for goodness sake? Certainly not the bigots, the hypocrites and the religionists! Tell them to keep their own skirts down and their pants zipped and to mind their own business.

Please understand that if you truly want surgery, I will support you. But I have seen too many cases of people rushing through the "real life test" with such breakneck speed that they do not take the time to savor the many and complex changes completely before they have surgery. I blame the medical community for this. The medical community never offered the non-operative option. The medical community put up this "real life test" where you either pass and get cut-up or else you go back to that intolerable situation before you began.

What kind of choice is that? No wonder people who are refused surgery find another doctor and learn from their previous bad answers!

Who gave us the non-operative option? We did, ourselves,

not the medical community. Many of those post-op people will confide that had they moved slower, had they just slowed down, had they known of an option, that they would have been just as complete without the surgery. Stop to smell the roses, people.

[This is the third in a series of articles based on Phyllis Randolph Frye's keynote speech at the 1994 IFGE "Coming Together-Working Together" convention. A complete review of the non-operative option is contained in the Proceedings to last year's International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, which is available for \$65 by writing Ms. Frye at 5707 Firenza St., Houston TX 77035-5515. The 1994 ICTLEP will be held August 17 through 21 at Houston, and details are available by writing the same address or by telephoning (713) 723-1800. This series of articles will conclude next month with Ms. Frye's suggestions on becoming politically active.]

The medical community never offered the non-operative option ... it gave us the RLT, where you either pass or go back to an intolerable situation.

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THE PREJUDICE OF CRYING

by Chrystine Julian

Recently I found myself in a situation that left me in a soggy lump on the floor. My soul was soaked through with tears. I had just put the final nail in the coffin of a long-standing relationship. I was going through items that represented the best of that relationship, the years of pleasure, joy, and hope. My recent memories of alienation and lack of interest were clouded by how good it was going to be, way back then. From deep within me came a flow of grief and loss. I couldn't stem the gush.

I am always amazed at how good a cry can make me feel. My insides bathed; the useless residue was being flushed from my system, making way for new emotions ... the necessary process of rebuilding my esteem.

This was also my first experience of gender prejudice from other women. As I related the incident to several friends, each had the same response, "It is the hormones, you better get used to it." While the emotional impact of biochemistry is well documented, I believe it is also overrated. The fact is, ten years prior, at the end of my only other long term relationship, I had exactly the same experience. This was also ten years prior to beginning hormone therapy. Perhaps I was crying because my heart was being ripped from my chest? Maybe I was witnessing the loss of something I felt I could never get back again? What if women are not victims of their biology? What if they are just more sensitive? Can we break the stereotype of "Big

Girls Don't Cry?"

It is strange how easily we adopt a typically male standard. Big boys don't cry, so women should be more like men? Frankly, it is fairly obvious that the social proscription on weeping is because it annoys many of the males. Like the siren of an oncoming fire truck, it forces their attention to emotional issues. It disrupts the unemotional structure of strength.

Crying is a sign of weakness?

Crying is a sign of weakness? If so, we need more weakness. I believe our world and society are in need of more people that cry ... persons that cry privately and publicly. What type of people would we be if we cried more? What would happen to society if our leaders cried when an innocent child died from stray gang gunfire? Could they cry when a woman is beaten beyond recognition by a jealous boyfriend? Do tears force their way to the surface when a non-prejudicial disease drain the life force from a stranger? When the Earth is left polluted and poisonous by the residue of industrialism, who cares? If we care, why should we keep it hidden? Crying is not a feminine characteristic, it is a uniquely human trait. I lay out the challenge that we need more women and men willing to be uniquely human.

UNITY AMONG GENDER ORGANIZATIONS

by Gina Ann Glass

It doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out that each human is different from one another. Each of us has our own unique genetic coding (DNA). We have our own voice print, and each of us have different finger prints. Need bone marrow or an organ transplant? Our bodies can't except that from just any donor. Everyone's immune system is different. Expose the same virus to a group of people, some get sick other don't. Man continues to evolve decade after decade. The human race is taller, stronger, faster, and lives longer. All identical twins have differences in appearances or personality. Oh, true they may be minor, but the point I make over and over again is that we are all different from one another. There is not one of us exactly the same as another.

Why do we work so hard to be the same as everyone else? We are so quick to unify ourselves into the favorite categories and sub-categories. Yet, at best we are only generally the same. Are we automatically enemies of one another if we don't meet at least the first five sub-categorizes of labeling? Then why do we act that way?

I say that the labeling of the finer categories is only as important as the reason behind them in the first place. I am reminded that there could be a real danger by creating new categories that continue to divide the gender community when it comes to our enemies and politics. Dividing ourselves into smaller and smaller categories allows our enemies to concentrate on picking us off one small category after another.

We must agree to one major general umbrella category that we can unite as a general group, then sub-categories are fine for further definition. But that's not what I'm hearing. What I hear is: "Don't ever call me a transvestite. I'm not a sexual deviant, and I don't dress for sexual gratification any more (well ... not often). Don't call me a transsexual. Transsexuals should not even be a part of our community. How can we possibly call them heterosexual. Besides they have to be suffering from sexual dysphoria anyway. You can call me a feminine male bi-dresser gender specialist." When you get right down to it, each one of us could have our own sub-category. It's getting that crazy. Whether we do or don't (are or are not) does not matter. There is one thing that we all share and that is crossing the gender line.

We must keep the numbers strong. Lets not shoot ourselves in the foot by rejecting one another. Whether the term is gender-gifted, gender-explorer, cross-gendered, transgendered, bigendered or the like is not really as important as picking one term. The first task at hand

should be to agree to adopt a universal term that covers all of us in the gender community for the sole purpose of unifying the gender community. It's back to the basics. Stand strongly for one another. United we win, divided we fail. This initial step is imperative for us to capture our rights and self esteem.

Here is what I suggest: Ten terms would be submitted to the Congress of Transgendered Organizations to

The first task at hand should be to agree to adopt a universal term that covers all of us in the gender community.

distribute to the representatives of the various groups with a time line for each group to vote on their most favorable term. The representative for each organization will report back one name to the CTO, and the most popular name will be adapted, no matter how many respond. At which time the community will start using that term to refer to all of the gender community.

I call upon Virginia Prince to unify the community in this effort and submit the ten names to the CTO ...and I call upon the community to back Virginia toward this end.

It's back to the basics for the security of all the community. Lets move this community forward and send your supporting letters to Virginia Prince in care of Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills, CA 91365, or Born Free, P.O. Box 1897, Corona CA. 91718

[Editor's Note: Does this sound like an idea I had several years ago (Cross-Talk#27, August 1991)? I thought so ...]

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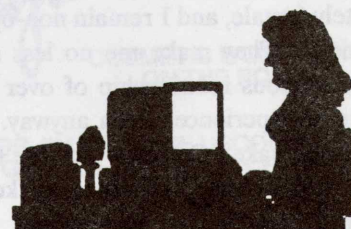
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LIFE BEHIND THE FENCE

by Katrina Avalon

I would like to share my experience of living as a pre-op transsexual behind bars. I know that you are assuming the worst; however, it's not that at all. Yes, being a pre-op TS has been a big disadvantage here, but sometimes in our lives we make bad decisions, and I just made a big bad decision that I now regret. I was involved with the wrong "queens" and my best friend over a bad money deal. To make a long story short, I was sentenced to 60 months in a federal correctional institution. Upon my admission to this place called "prison", I was terrified; I was in shock.

I made a bad decision that I now regret; becoming involved with the wrong "queens" in a money deal.

WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT?

Cartoons by Christine-Jane Wilson

A book of nearly 100 cartoons drawn by Christine-Jane Wilson. In the magazine 'Forum', editor Isabel Koprowski wrote: " - the answer is not East-Enders, you'll be glad to hear, but delicious feminine clothing such as lacy bras, six inch stilettos and the sheerest of stockings.

"What's on the TV Tonight?" is a charming cartoon book depicting transvestites in a variety of amusing situations. Because it is the creation of a TV, none other than Christine-Jane Wilson, the editor of *The Glad Rag*, the book always laughs with, not at, transvestites. The author draws on her own experience, as well as her imagination, to produce cartoons showing the dreadfully embarrassing things that can happen to TVs, whether in social or family context. But it's not blushes all the way: some pages glow with the positive pride a cross-dresser may feel when found out unexpectedly.

"Transvestites will identify with the author and find the book reassuring as well as amusing. Everyone will be touched by the sensitivity and delicacy with which Christine-Jane treats the difficulties of being a TV".

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A FANTASY OF CROSS-GENDER by Sarah Wood

Charles Merchant, a life-long transvestite, awakes - in the body of his attractive personal assistant, Jenny Page . . . from there, Sarah weaves an intriguing and well-written story, beautifully illustrated by the talented Emma

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ALSO AVAILABLE: *Hell -- It's Heaven*, Christine-Jane's non-crossdressing cartoon book on the afterlife, with lots of cute angels and devils. \$9.00 US to the same address.

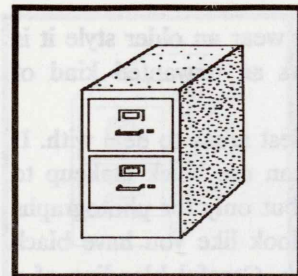
But once I was here, I started to meet other CDs, TVs, TSs, and gays. Yet I still felt out of place. I met a TS named Angie who was a lot like me; we became good friends and had the same interests, and we caused the most confusion because we both had breasts and looked so real (even without the Dermablend!). But I am very quiet and she is very loud, so we were totally different. As time went by, she was released and I was on my own again in this strange, cold world. (I did have a boyfriend, but it didn't last past a year.) The other "girls" and a few gay men approached me looking for members of their own clique, but I could not be bothered because they were loud and always in trouble. There are a great many "queens" (and no other word suits them better), gay TVs only looking for a date or freaky punks in confusion. I often do not understand them.

I stay to myself and out of trouble, because here if you get in trouble or caught with makeup, you go to the hole ... and if you are a real problem child, you stay there. Most officers here like to bother you over stupid things like bike shorts and other *femme* stuff, or they just enjoy seeing you get abused. There are a few officers with open minds, but they are few.

I try my best to keep up with the TV/TS groups. I order books from *Tapestry* and my girlfriends send me their old magazines. It is very hard to live in this environment with the sexual harassment and the verbal abuse, but I do receive my hormones and the publications of the gender community.

What I want to tell you is: **No matter how desperate you are to get your surgery, PLEASE do not rob, steal, or cheat to get the money you need.** It will only bring you a long time away from your life, your loved ones, and yourself. I am 21 years old and still have half of my sentence to go. I do have a few wonderful friends and I do my best to keep in touch with them, but sometimes they write only on special occasions. My family is great -- especially my mother and father -- they understand and want to help as much as possible, but I still hope others won't do the same as me out of desperate need.

[The author may be reached by writing K. Newsom #23142-034, P.O. Box 9000, Seagoville TX 75159-9000.]



THE BEST OF CROSS-TALK

SOME THOUGHTS ON PASSING

by Anne Blackwood

"You'd make a terrible looking woman."

How many transvestites have heard that statement and thought to themselves, "how true"?

How many transvestites have heard that statement and thought to themselves, "if you only knew"?

On the whole I suppose you'd have to say that most transvestites make neither attractive nor repulsive females, they would be average looking. Just like the genuine female population.

While there are a few facial types that work on men but not on women, and a few facial types that work on women

but not on men, by and large

what is attractive in a woman

with a few secondary features

altered -- most notably eyebrows

-- is attractive on a man. This is

not to say that a particular facial

type would be necessarily

unattractive on the opposite sex,

just odd. The fact is that what

makes a face attractive does so regardless of the owner's

sex, and conversely what makes a face repulsive does so

regardless.

If you doubt me start examining faces of attractive men

and women, note the nature of their features and how they

relate to one another. You will find that an attractive face

with only minor alterations will still be attractive whether

on a woman or a man. As I said, you will also note that

certain faces work well on men and not on women and

vice versa. A man could look like Richard Boone and be

considered ruggedly handsome but a woman with that face

would be plain at best. And while Doris Day was cute in

her heyday, a man with her face would be said to appear

boyish, not handsome. Now, take Christina Ferrare's face:

there is no question that this is the face of a very attractive

woman, but without makeup and with slightly heavier

eyebrows and neck it is also the face of a handsome man.

This is not to say that it is an androgynous face ... it is not,

for it is clearly either female or male depending on its

context. While the neck is not specifically part of the face it

is part of the face's context. Thin necks are associated with

women because of their usually lighter muscle mass. A

woman with a thick neck is often seen as appearing

somewhat masculine.

A transvestite should be able to pass, if only as a plain woman.

As an aside, androgynous faces usually are not. That is the face itself is not androgynous, but the context it is put in makes it so ... the dress or hair style of the individual, or the body type, or both. Androgyny is a function of conflicting signals to ones expectations. Expectations are a cultural phenomenon.

After you've studied this subject for a while and come to similar conclusions to mine you may make an off hand comment to the effect and the person to whom it was directed will most likely look at you like you are nuts. Most people are of the impression that what makes a woman

attractive is uniquely female and can never be so for a man and so the converse is also true. Expectations.

So what does all this mean? you ask. It means one or two things. One, it means that people will tend to accept things at face

value which also means that a

transvestite should be able to pass if only as a plain woman. I've forgotten the second thing. Oh! If some one finds what he or she thinks is woman is in fact a man that person becomes disoriented because their expectations have been violated, this violation brings forth a negative reaction in most people though not in all, in some it awakens that individuals curiosity. I suppose the greatest negative reaction will come from the sexually insecure person, especially if they thought the person in question was sexually desirable. I think you can fill in the blanks there.

The reason I brought this up, and was thinking about the subject at all at the moment was a recent event. I have heard the opening statement on several occasions and thought the second thought. The event was that the other day some real estate people were showing my apartment to some potential buyers; I was gone when they arrived. They happened to see a few photos of me in drag, yet they didn't know it was me. They asked if it was my girlfriend or wife. The one fellow said, "I saw the picture of that woman, she's very beautiful." I said, "Thank you" as if he were complimenting my taste and photography. Of course photographs are not real life and they put the face into a very different context. Still, the incident reinforces my

If you bought this copy of Cross-Talk at a retail outlet, you can now save at least 40% off the cover price by subscribing! See page 40.

contention that keeping the face in the proper context is key to passing.

Another situation occurred even more recently when I went to an audition for a play and the part that I was reading for was a transvestite murderess. When I was called to set up the audition they said that it would be helpful if I came dressed and so I did. While waiting to be seen I sat and waited in the lobby of the theatre where every actor and actress had to come to check in. The lobby was small, more like a walk-in closet, and so the camouflage of distance was simply not there. I sat quietly, studying the scene they'd given me. Seats shuffled around and a couple of actresses ended up sitting in the lobby as well. After a while I asked how long until I would read, in my normal voice -- I have a rather deep and resonant one -- and was told it would be a while and so I said that I was going to my car to get a change of clothes so I could put them on after the audition. When I got back not one but several actresses told me that until I had spoken they had thought I was a woman. I was a bit surprised that I had fooled anyone considering I was seen in the harsh light of day, and I was quite naturally flattered. The point here is that -- my surprise aside -- until I had altered the context by speaking I was taken for what I appeared to be, a woman. Had I used a feminine sounding voice I might not have revealed myself.

So, where do most transvestites fail in attempting to pass? Context. Wrong clothing for the place or time of day. Too much apparent makeup. Exaggerated gestures. Transvestites often present themselves as caricatures of women and not as women. Perhaps even the wrong place. Voice. If one is in an area where TVs are not unusual one is more likely to be spotted simply because people are expecting to see them; whereas, if a transvestite goes to an area where no one thinks of seeing TVs then no one will be looking to see them and so the transvestite will more easily pass. Halloween would not be a good day to try and pass.

Assuming that one has the makeup right, what does one do to create the "right" context? Hair is probably one of the most important parts of context, the wrong hair style whether it is your own or a wig can be very jarring and while a genuine female might get by a man attempting to pass probably wouldn't. One should use wigs which closely approximate ones natural hair color. A blond wig on a dark haired and complected individual looks very artificial and draws the kind of scrutiny that makes it hard to pass. Hair style is also important, choose a style that fits with your apparent age. I say apparent age because if you are say thirty-five but look twenty-five when dressed due to makeup and other factors use a younger looking hair style; if you are unfortunate enough to be thirty-five and look forty when dressed use a more mature hair style. While older women may try to wear younger styles it only makes them look older because it accentuates their age rather

than attenuating it. While you can wear an older style it is not a good idea for it too draws an unwanted kind of attention.

The neck may be one of the trickiest areas to deal with. If like me you have dark hair you can use black makeup to thin the appearance of the neck, but only for photographs taken front on, otherwise it will look like you have black makeup on the sides of your neck. Careful blending of a darker foundation with your standard foundation/beard cover on the neck can create the illusion of a thinner neck. Use a shade only slightly darker for you don't want to look like you never wash you neck. Blush applied on the sides of the neck can also help. Taking estrogen will naturally reduce the muscle mass through out the body including the neck, that and the subcutaneous layer of fat it causes to form are perhaps the two most feminizing aspects outside of altering the personality. The change in the neck alone would have a remarkable effect on the feminization of the face.

Finally clothes finish off the context. Like your hair, your clothes should fit with your apparent age. Clothes that are too young will draw unwanted scrutiny. Also clothes that are excessive should be avoided. Too loud, too bright, too short, too long, too sheer ... all of these should be avoided in public. Have fun with them at home but don't wear them in public if you expect to pass. Tasteful, fashionable clothing are what you should be wearing. By fashionable I do not mean trendy. Trendy clothes tend to be extreme, and personally I find rather unattractive anyhow. By fashionable I mean classic, slightly conservative, and well made. By slightly conservative I mean that at least one of the dimensions -- cut, color, fit -- should be conservative. If the fabric is bright then the cut should be (continued, page 38)

Crossdressing Headquarters

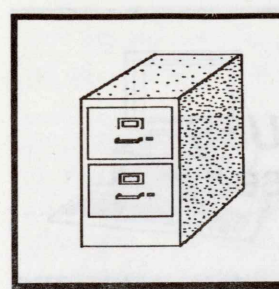
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'ZINE REVIEWS!

by Kimberleigh Richards

This month, a couple of 'zines from the gay community with content of interest to the gender community.



If you travel -- especially if you fly -- you'll appreciate *Skyjack*, which covers gay issues and insights about the airline industry. Written for the perspective of the passenger, it's full of travel advice, insider exposes, and even a guide to "movies the airlines won't show you" (for good reason). The issue that one of our subscribers sent me contained a celebrity travel profile of RuPaul (see, I told you it had gender community content!), which was, actually, kind of silly.

I was also impressed to find that after only two issues, *Skyjack* is attracting advertising from gay-friendly travel agencies around the U.S. I would suspect that they would be gender-friendly as well, so you might want to get a copy just for the ads.

[\$9.95 for one-year (four issue) subscription or \$3 for sample to *Skyjack*, 135 W. 20th St., New York NY 10011.]



Our second entry this month is probably not going to interest a lot of people outside the Pacific Northwest, but here goes anyway.

the Stranger is a tabloid-size free weekly gay newspaper in Seattle, Wash. that one of our readers/Internet correspondents is on the staff of (so we wound up with a six-month mail subscription just because we sent him a sample copy of *Cross-Talk*). Anyway, they go off in a lot of directions and wind up touching on all kinds of counter-culture stuff in and around the Seattle metropolitan area.

The gender content is a bit erratic, but in the issues I've seen thus far, there have been such things as ads for what appears to be a drag club called Video Vertigo, a female drag revue called "King Drag", and a comedic treatment of *Macbeth* with a woman in the title role; a comic featuring a guy discovering his girlfriend is a hermaphrodite; and a preview of the film *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

As I said at the outset, this may not appeal to you unless you live in or around Seattle (and can pick up a free copy somewhere), but they do sell mail order subscriptions to the rest of the free world.

[\$11.95 for six months, or send a self-addressed 9" x 12" envelope with 98

cents postage for a sample copy to the Stranger, 1202 E. Pike #1225, Seattle WA 98122-3934. No, Philip Salem is not affiliated with them, thank goddess.]



A REQUEST TO OUR READERS WHO ARE INTO THE ALTERNATIVE PRESS: Although we check a variety of sources, including *Factsheet 5*, *Queer Zine Explosion*, *Alternative Press Review*, *Global Mail*, *The Black Book*, *Alternative Lifestyles Directory*, and Richard Kadrey's *Covert Culture* (which will be reviewed in next month's column), we can still use some help in finding 'zines and other alternative publications of interest to the gender community.

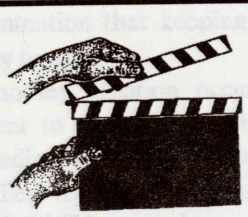
If you locate a 'zine, book, guide, newspaper, video, or ... (?) that has some gender community interest, please let us know about it. Or, better yet, send the publisher a note telling him or her about *Cross-Talk* and we'll trade with them.



Also, by the time this issue hits print I will have finished retooling the News Services Publications section of *Cross Connection* (run by my dear friend Trish Anderson an co-sysoped by yours truly and another dear friend, Billie Hughes) to include not only free access to electronic versions of our "Newswire" and "Kimberleigh's Clipboard" sections and our hotlines/events listings, but also several e-newsletters, including Melanie Anne Phillips' *The Subversive*, Gwen Smith's *Transmission*, and the new *Queer-e* electronic journal that will begin distribution this fall. We also have added electronic versions of Larry Roberts' *Queer Zine Explosion*, Ashley Parker Owens' *Global Mail*, and Carol Mortimer's "Gay TV Listings". About the only thing missing now is Vslerie Lambert's *cd-forum digest*, which we couldn't work out the security issues on.

Cross Connection recently added several more Internet/Usenet newsgroups of interest to alternative sexual and gender lifestyles, as well as local echoes of the distributed Netmail lists TRANSGEN and mail.gender, to better serve the varied interests of our community.

Since I did much of the work on these expansions, I'd like to personally invite you to dial in with your modems at (818) 841-8887 (841-TVTS) and check it out.



MOVIE REVIEW

EVEN COWGIRLS GET THE BLUES (and even reviewers get confused)

by Charlene "Siskel" Day and Kimberleigh "Ebert" Richards

Siskel: The opening premise of this movie is sort of cute. A young girl, Sissy, is born with greatly oversized thumbs. She is scorned by her peers and takes up a life of hitchhiking with the aid of those enormous thumbs to become Queen of the Hitchhikers.

But then things get disconnected. The plot falls apart ... probably because they couldn't figure out enough things to sustain the plot solely on the basis of the large thumbs. For some inexplicable reason, Sissy is offered a job to do a commercial for feminine deodorant spray by The Countess, played by John Hurt.

Ebert: I'm presuming that the presence of Hurt's quasi-drag character is the **only** reason they invited us to the advance press screening in the first place. But the character isn't on the screen enough to make it a reason to see the movie, and Hurt seems a bit detached from this already-detached plot.

Siskel: The commercial is to be made on the Rubber Rose Ranch in the Dakotas where women go for makeovers. It is managed by Angie Dickinson and is staffed by a bunch of rebellious, apparently lesbian, cowgirls.

Sissy becomes emotionally involved with one of the cowgirls, Bonanza Jellybean. Then the cowgirls decide to take over the ranch and throw out all the paying guests as some sort of protest against society. To further their protest they disrupt the normal migration of blue herons and

invoke the wrath of federal officials. This is followed by scenes of confrontation with police, the FBI and the Army.

Ebert: Even though I relate to lesbians, I don't think any of this will appeal to **them** either.

Siskel: The whole movie was very confusing. The characters were poorly played and one-dimensional. I am not sure if the ranch episode was a parody of ultra-feminism or of a cult such as the Branch Davidians in Texas.

At the end of the movie Sissy burns her love letters from Jellybean.

Ebert: They should have burned the **script** instead ... in the first scene!

Siskel: I don't think there was a script. I think they invented things as they went along to fill up the time.

I can only remember one movie that was worse. It was an old black-and-white version of *The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. It was so bad it was funny. *Even Cowgirls Get The Blues* doesn't even have that redeeming feature.

My rating on a scale of 0 to +5: -1

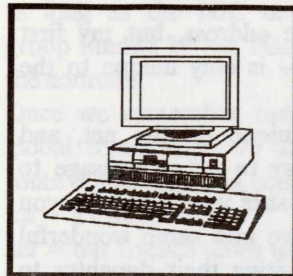
Ebert: Gee, Charlene ... you rated it **thathigh**? I think the blank looks on the faces of everyone leaving the theater after the press showing said it all. I never saw so many dazed and confused people in my life ... not even after that Led Zeppelin concert I went to in 1975.

They don't **have** a number low enough for my rating. And I note that the movie has already pretty much disappeared from the theatres. I think I'll go rent *The Crying Game* again and try to forget this disaster.

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THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY AND YOU DRAGGING ON THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

by Emily E. Clarke

Okay, it's a bad pun.
Or is it?

There are many reasons why treating the conceptual view of the information superhighway as a roadway and the efficient use as holding the 4:00 a.m. illegal drag race as an efficient use may be a reasonable way to approach it. With a subject as complex as the information superhighway, it is probably best to use analogies whenever possible, lest many readers here may get left in the dust. Not because the subject is one that is the domain of techies and computer wizards -- even the average techie isn't necessarily able to understand it. The problem with discussing the information superhighway is that it is like trying to discuss something that has a soul, but no form; etiquette but no rules; boundaries, but no limits.

Without additional puns, the information superhighway has many resources for the transgendered community (meaning transvestites, transgenderists, transsexuals, crossdressers), friends and family. There are information sources, support sources, publications and forums. All of it is free (sort of) because much of the network infrastructure, like much of the highway system, is supported by tax dollars through the National Science Foundation, Department of Defense and Education Department.

So read on, and hopefully we can all understand this valuable resource together.

What exactly is the "information superhighway"? The information superhighway, or at least that part most discussed by this article (which is the Internet), isn't something that is easy to define. The easiest way to define the Internet is to start by thinking of it as a huge highway system. Pull out a map of the world, and imagine every single town, city and state, no matter how small, as a dot on the map. Imagine if each was serviced by a highway, and you will start to see the magnitude.

Now connect every dot to every other dot. If you left the connections between continents out, don't. The technology to leap over oceans, mountains and deserts -- either by cable, microwave or satellite technology -- exists as surely as the Chunnel has united England and France.

Is there any space left on the globe where something isn't crisscrossing? The important thing to remember is that access to the Internet worldwide -- to everyone on the

planet -- exists. But is it practical?

From a physical standpoint, the information superhighway concept is a way to combine the connections in the same way that the Interstate Highway System of the 1950s and the Chunnel do. It would be silly to have a separate tunnel connecting every city and town in England to every city and town in France, but by establishing ways of feeding traffic (and information is traffic of a kind) into a central core transportation system. The core is capable of handling all the traffic fed into it (with some allowances for traffic jams) and acts as a common carrier. In network terms this is a "backbone".

Okay, but what is it? Let's start off by saying the Internet is like the Interstate Highway System. The interstate routes touch the major industrial, military, financial and educational centers of the country (subject to political influence, of course). The Internet is no different. The primary backbone or "superhighway" portions are routed the same. The original sponsors and investors are the intersections that feed the secondary routes, just as the elaborate cloverleafs feed the interstate highways into the U.S. highway system. (Remember Route 66? Nah, I'm probably dating myself.)

The interstates feed the U.S. Highway routes, they feed state and county roads, they feed local roads, and eventually with the assistance of a good map you end up with a route from your driveway to your grandmother's driveway three states over. It is that simple, but it is also that complex. The Internet (or **Inter-network** system) is a transportation system for information that starts at the user level or driveway, and completes its journey at the user level or driveway destination. Yes, you can get lost, especially without a map, but eventually you will reach your destination.

The network itself carries information from computer to computer, user to user. Going back to our road map and connecting dots, the Internet provides a means of connecting every Internet capable computer with every other Internet capable computer in the world, thus also connecting every user with every other user. Mind boggling, isn't it?

Okay -- where do I get a map? Well -- you can't. At least you can't get an up-to-date one. There are certainly landmarks, there are attempts at creating maps, but to say

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there is a current map of the Internet is like saying there is an accurate map of Los Angeles. Change happens quickly and any current information is obsolete as soon as it is produced. But the landmarks, the major signposts and the navigation tools don't change quite so quickly.

The important thing to remember is that the Internet is so huge that while it wants to provide services, it is so big and grows so fast that it can be intimidating. Current estimates is that there are close to three million people with Internet access. Estimates of future expansion approach 50 million in the next ten years. So getting an accurate map or directory is next to impossible, but the signposts and landmarks are there to start with, so the situation is not hopeless.

So let's start with some basic structure.

When the early formative elements of the Internet started, it became obvious that some form of categorization was needed. Since it started in the United States, the basic elements became organizational signposts. These exist today in forms that while cryptic, belie the basic nature of their purpose.

The basic names are formed by identifying a person and that person's location, which are separated by an '@' symbol. For example, I am *emily@netcom.com*. This means my name (or user identification) is *emily*, and the system I communicate through is *netcom.com*. Easy?

Perhaps, but you probably want to know what *netcom.com* really is. I'll get to that later, but for now, the main point is that I am *emily* and I am *emily@* or "Emily at" someplace. Okay, back to pavement. I am Emily Clarke, who lives at #5 Tollridge Court in (some city I won't publish) but that is my identity. I live next door to another Emily, who lives at #9 Tollridge Ct., but I am the only Emily at #5. There are several other Emily's at *netcom.com*, but I got there first, so the others may be *emilyz@netcom.com* or *emily999@netcom.com*. However, I am unique and the only *emily@netcom.com*.

There are certainly other *emilys* but I am the only one at *netcom.com*. Others reside at places like *eku.edu* (Eastern Kentucky University), *ucb.edu* (University of California Berkeley) and goodness knows where else. My e-mail

address is as unique as my home address, but my first name -- in this case my user ID -- is only unique to the place I am at.

This is important: Everyone is unique on the net, and everyone is welcome. The best way to get a message to someone over the network is to be sure you know who you are sending your message to. I have met some wonderful people who thought they were inviting their daughter to lunch only to end up having an affair with moi.

Okay -- so I know who I am. Where am I? Well, in the global world of the Internet as in the highway or postal system, one starts at the end of one's driveway which is where my mailbox sits on a post (when I haven't backed into it). The post office could know me as Emily Clarke, 366 Sunset St. New Bridge, New Jersey 08857. It is a complete and qualified address -- unique, concise and direct. It is accepted by the post office as meeting their addressing standard so they are able to know I can receive mail at that exact mailbox. In an international context (given my propensity to send myself postcards while traveling) I append USA at the end of the address so there is no doubt, but I am still viable once the card is delivered to my mailbox.

The Internet is very similar in that your identification is a statement of your mailbox address. Let's work from the end of the address and see how it deciphers since understanding this point makes it more simple to understand the structure and landmarks.

The suffix of a destination, being unique, betrays the nature of the origin. For example, the last phrase of my suffix is *.com*, and that says I originated at a company. Well, sort of, but more of that later. The most important are:

.com = a company or commercial service provider

.edu = an educational institution

.org = an organization

.gov = the government

.net = a special network organization

Of course, there are others, many others, but mostly the basics are observed. In this country. And there is no absolute requirement that a site use a conventional suffix,

as long as the NIC or Network Information Center, a group funded by the National Science Foundation, accepts the address.

Once we remember that while virtual, the Internet is a global community, we have make sure there is a way to route things based on country.

.ca = a Canadian Site

.au = our friends down under

.uk = those other English speaking people across the pond

.fi = Finland

.il = Israel (but don't ask about Gaza, I don't have a clue)

.us = the good old USA, but not always required.

My very first e-mail address was *emily.clarke@batpad.lb.ca.us*. To totally break it down to something less cryptic it translated to:

Emily Clarke who resides at the Batchelor Pad (a BBS system run by a dear friend) which is in Long Beach, California, USA.

There is also an alternative addressing scheme which is based on a numerical address for your host computer. So I could have also received mail addressed to *emily.clarke@145.121.20.40*, but since this is quite inconvenient to remember using the shorthand alpha address is the usual convention.

Addressing can be quite long, depending on the number of intermediate network nodes or secondary and tertiary nodes (remember the US, state, county and city road system?) in between you and the superhighway. So having an address such as *emily@spiff.calvin.westwind.com* would probably mean I am: Emily who uses a PC called spiff on a network with a server named calvin which is located at Westwind which is a company. Easy, right?

Okay, but how do I get connected up? There are a variety of ways to connect to the Internet and the methods are improving all the time. While a direct connection screaming along and tens of megabits per second would be nice, most of us, especially from home, will dial into what is known as an Internet service provider. My current address, *emily@netcom.com* represents the provider (*netcom.com*) who has a system connected to the network. It is like a computer bulletin board system (BBS) but usually much larger and provides a huge variety of services that may include full access to the system at the shell or system user level.

The job of the provider is to house your account and provide the storage, computing power, software and security, but the primary function and service is connectivity. Connectivity is everything, because without it, the network is just a bundle of wire and fiber optics.

The provider, who of course has to pay for connectivity and maintenance of the computers connected up to the net, will charge various rates for providing the service ranging from free up to hundreds of dollars per month depending on the nature of the service. These are the "tollbooths" on the information superhighway.

In the case of a toll road, some highways charge for the distance you travel by issuing a ticket on entry or metering by the occasional toll booth. Other highways (mostly bridges and tunnels) charge for usage each time you use it. You can buy a monthly pass that allows for unlimited use of the highways, and most all of us pay annual taxes to support others. If you have a large truck, the tolls go up as do the taxes because the burden you put on the "system" increases with weight. The same happens with Internet services. Some providers (such as Delphi, *delphi.com*) charge by the hour based on usage, some on a monthly flat rate but with unlimited usage (which is what my provider does) and others may charge for each individual service based on the user's needs. Like highways, many providers will offer discounts and promotional offers and all will charge extra if the burden (throughput or storage) increases.

The easiest way to access the Internet is to see if you already have it. Many bulletin board systems and large services such as CompuServe, GENie, America On-Line, and Prodigy (yes, Prodigy) have gateways (bridges and tunnels) that allow some exchange of services, primarily electronic mail. Even if your local BBS doesn't advertise Internet access you may be able to route through an intermediate gateway such as FidoNet, GenderNet, Bitnet and a whole host of other BBS based networks.

If you have an academic computing account it is quite probable that you also have Internet access there since the National Science Foundation issued a statement in 1993 proclaiming that all colleges and universities in the US were cabled up. However, even if your college is cabled up, you may still need special arrangements to establish an account to connect to the Internet.

For the average user, accessing the Internet involves using a modem at baud rates ranging from 2400 to 14,400 to dial up a provider and logging it. From there, depending on the provider, you navigate through menus, type in commands and you are there.

That's straightforward, so what do I do once I get there? That's a whole article in itself, so we'll continue the discussion in next month's column.

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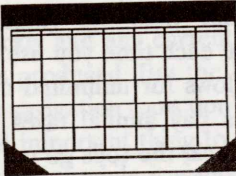
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This "Prisoner's Speak" issue includes over 70 full size pages of information. Over 600 Global Mail listings, a prisoner and zinester networker contact list, and two organization lists (zero population and prisoners rights). Also included are zine and product listings, and articles, comic, and art. This essential guide to the underground is available for \$5.00. Send to ARG, PO Box 597996, Chicago, IL 60659, USA.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



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

August 5-8, 1994: "Dignity Cruise V", Los Angeles to Baja California. Details from Peggy Rudd, 1811 Crutchfield, Katy TX 77449 or call (713) 347-6563.
August 17-21, 1994: Third Annual "International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy", Houston TX. Information from Phyllis Randolph Frye, 5707 Firenza St., Houston 77035-5515, or by calling (713) 723-8368 (fax: 723-1800).

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

September 15-18, 1994: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA. Details from Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406 or by calling (610) 640-9449.

September 29-October 2, 1994: "Southern Comfort Conference", Atlanta GA. Information from P.O. Box 77591, Atlanta GA 30357, or by calling (404) 875-5749.

October 8, 1994: "Gender Symposium for Medical and Mental Health Professionals", Miami FL. Information from The Eden Society, P.O. Box 1692, Pompano Beach FL 33061-1692 or by calling (305) 784-9316.

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

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

February 21-26, 1995: 7th Annual "Texas 'T' Party", San Antonio TX. Details from P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163 or by calling (210) 980-7788.
March 13-19, 1995: International Foundation for Gender Education "Coming Together-Working Together Convention", Atlanta GA. Details from IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778.

May 17-21, 1995: "Esprit '95", Port Angeles WA, sponsored by Emerald City, NWGA, and Cornbury Society. Details from P.O. Box 873, Kirkland WA 98083-0873.

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

THE BEARDED LADY ... continued from page 24

under your clothes or you were terribly out of fashion. And don't forget patterns of delicate pink roses on the fabric of the cup and the blue rose where the cups join. The Intimate Apparel Council says American women (how can they prove their sex, I ask you?) bought 292 million bras last year.

So what's in the future? A spokesman for Maidenform, which has its own bra museum in NYC, predicts bras in lush fabrics like satin, and bold patterns in deeper hues. Maybe even paisley or mosaic prints. We face a bright future under our blouses, no doubt about it.

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

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THOUGHTS ON PASSING ... continued from page 32

conservative, if the fabric is dark then it is OK to hike the hem up if you've got the legs to carry it off.

Your clothes should also be selected to hide your body faults. For example, I have broad shoulders and narrow hips; this figure makes it impossible for me to wear slinky knits. What does work for me are fitted dresses with full skirts and padded shoulders. If you are tall, don't wear vertical stripes, wear dots or solids or textured solids. What applies to the genuine article (GG) applies to the impostor. Fashion magazines or books on dressing for success will be more helpful than I can be.

I spoke of giving myself away with my voice earlier. I used my normal voice in that situation because I didn't think anyone was taking me for the genuine article (apparently I erred in judgment there). If you have a deep voice such as mine, one need not necessarily raise the pitch to affect the feminization of it; instead it is more important to change the tone. A lighter tone, one with less resonance makes the voice sound as if it is pitched higher than it is. Also there is a cultural bias that says that women have "smaller" voices, that is theirs have less body, less complex harmonics. Women also tend to use a different phrasing and vocabulary than men, nearly as different as the English and Americans in general. Adopting their language will go a long way in helping you pass, either that or keep quiet.

[Originally published in Cross-Talk #35, June 1992.]



HOTLINES

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

NEW ENGLAND/NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONS:

CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132
 Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @
 Cross Dressers International, NYC: (212) 243-0837
 East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
 Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 388-7022 %
 Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611
 Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #
 Gender Talk North, New Hampshire: (603) 924-8828
 Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
 Images, Hartford: (203) 779-9708
 Imperial Queens of New York: (212) 580-9858
 Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
 Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter Tri-Ess, Utica: (607) 547-4118 @
 Long Island Femme Expression: (516) 538-5304 @
 Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (718) 461-9050
 My Choice, Baltimore: (410) 732-4546
 Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858
 Reflections, Boston: (617) 323-6082
 Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (610) 630-1437
 Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg: (717) 780-1578
 Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 435-5401
 Sigma Nu Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Trenton: (609) 586-1351 @
 Silent Passage, Rhode Island: (401) 438-7417
 Tiffany Club, Boston: (617) 891-9325
 TransGender Educational Ass'n, Arlington: (301) 949-3822
 TransGenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513
 Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 231-1181
 Washington-Baltimore Alliance: (301) 277-5475
 XX (Twenty) Club, Hartford: (203) 646-8651 #

THE SOUTH:

American Educational Gender Info. Service: (404) 939-0244
 Atlanta Gender Exploration: (404) 875-9846 #
 Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 #
 Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838
 Eden Society, Pompano Beach: (305) 784-9316 #
 Fantasia, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #
 GDA North Carolina: (704) 642-1914
 Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178
 Grace & Lace, Mississippi: (601) 362-6335
 Louisville Gender Society: (812) 944-5570
 Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #
 Montgomery Institute, Gainesville: (904) 332-6638 #
 M.O.R.E., Ft. Lauderdale: (305) 966-2138
 Mu Sigma Chapter Tri-Ess, Arkansas: (501) 972-1826 @
 Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Central FL: (407) 677-9540 @
 Phoenix, Asheville: (704) 259-9428
 Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477
 Sigma Epsilon Chapter Tri-Ess, Atlanta: (404) 552-4415 @
 Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 527-1012
 Tennessee Vals, Nashville: (615) 664-6883
 Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 222-6796

MIDWEST & VICINITY:

Beta Gamma Chapter Tri-Ess, Minneapolis: (612) 870-8536 @
 Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918
 Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @
 Chicago Gender Society: (708) 749-1202
 City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minneapolis: (612) 229-3613
 Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557
 Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 791-3947
 Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267
 Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 777-0648

Gender Dysphoria Support, Kansas City: (816) 753-7816 #
 Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (812) 876-5635
 Minnesota Freedom of Gender Expression: (612) 220-9072
 N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258 #
 Paradise Club, Cleveland: (216) 586-9292
 Quad-City Society for Sexuality Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641
 St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 997-9897
 Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024
 Wichita Transgender Alliance: (316) 682-9131

SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:

Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @
 Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163
 Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 980-7788
 CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643
 Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas: (817) 261-3253 @
 First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144
 Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456
 Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 458-5378
 Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-4282
 Help Me ... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 416-6632
 ReCast, Dallas: (214) 994-9314 #
 Second Image, Austin: (512) 515-5460
 TS Peer Support, Houston: (713) 333-2278 #
 Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston: (713) 347-8747 @
 Texas Ass'n. of Transsexuals, Houston: (713) 827-5913 #
 West Texas Gender Alliance, San Angelo: (915) 944-1381

PACIFIC NORTHWEST:

Emerald City, Seattle: (206) 284-1071
 Ingersoll Gender Center, Seattle: (206) 329-6651
 Northwest Gender Alliance, Portland: (503) 646-2802
 Rose City Gender Center, Portland: (503) 230-1036
 Salmacis Feminist Social Society, Eugene: (503) 688-4282
 Transsexual Lesbians & Friends, Seattle: (206) 292-1037 #

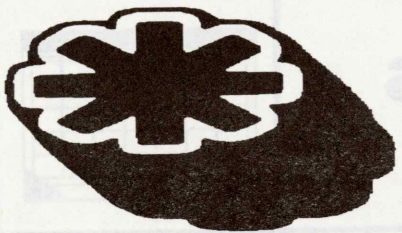
THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):

Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
 Amer. Transsexual Education Center: (213) 389-6938 #
 Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 856-4867
 Born Free, Riverside: (909) 278-0958
 CHIC, Los Angeles: (818) 248-9075 @
 Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 849-4112
 Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665
 FTM, Oakland: (510) 287-2646 #
 Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270
 Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696
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 Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044
 Sacramento Gender Association: (916) 482-7742
 Sigma Sigma Beta Chapter Tri-Ess, Lake Tahoe: (916) 544-2460 @
 Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @
 Swan's Inner Sorority, San Jose: (408) 297-1423

CANADA:

Club Met, Montreal: (514) 528-8874
 Entre Femme, Quebec: (418) 529-1132 #
 F.A.T.E., Vancouver: (604) 254-9591
 Gender Mosaic, Ottawa: (613) 749-5203
 Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661

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



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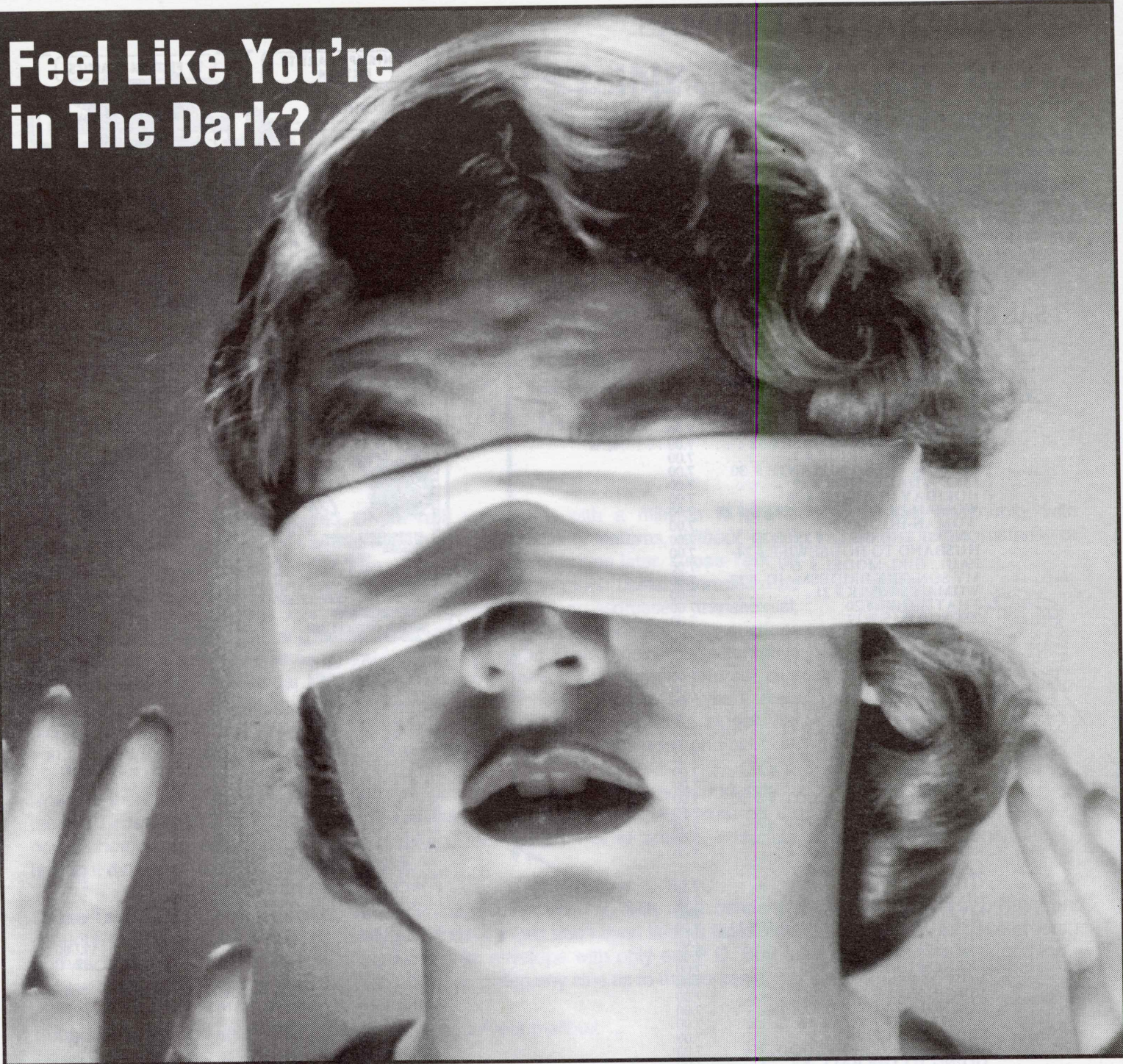
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