

# Cross-Port InnerView

P.O. Box 12701, Cincinnati, OH 45212

The next meeting is September 20 at 8:00

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## A New View

by Cathy

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We had a very good turnout for the August meeting. Heather warned me to expect a sizable showing but I was not prepared for the thirty-four ladies and friends who did attend.

Swelling our numbers were an awful lot of new faces. Welcome to Barbara, Bonnie, Loretta, Penny, Peter and Tony, for it was a first meeting for all of them. Tom's twin sister Melanie also graced us with her presence for the first time.

Candy Lee and Stephanie both celebrated their one year anniversaries of "Coming Out" to a Cross-Port meeting, and Jeaninne celebrated her fourth year of feminism.

Of course, we would have been disappointed if Linda had not brought the latest issue of the TV-TS Tapestry which featured her picture on the cover (as well as several in the interior). When Cross-Port's copies come in (hopefully by the September meeting), she said she'll be happy to autograph them for you. This is issue #56 for you collectors.

If you've been staying away because you don't like country music, Christopher's has been switching to "regular" dance music during the course of the evening, so come on back!

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This issue may be a bit slim, but give thanks to those hard-working folk who get the newsletter out even though the editor is out of town.

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The cross-dressing Ken doll which was purchased at a Tampa, Florida Toys 'R Us store in July was a prank by one of the store's employees. According to the Cincinnati Enquirer, the doll, which was featured on the Joan Rivers Show as well as in Newsweek and Fortune magazines, was redressed by a 26-year-old University of Florida student who worked as a night clerk at the store. The toy store fired the clerk because of the embarrassment the doll caused to both the store chain and Mattel, the manufacturer.

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From Candy Lee:

Hi ladies, this is a letter of apology to all of you. I was forced to cancel the August 30 Tupperware party as many of you who were expecting to attend already know.

Many problems came up that were very unexpected, but maybe I will be able to try one again at a later date.

Sorry, and thank you one and all for your support.

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From Tommy-Sue comes this Cross-Port comparison:

Q. What's the difference between Cross-Port and a department store?

A. Not all of the TV's are on the same channel at Cross-Port.

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Well, it's time to flog the bushes (or should I say petticoats) for some articles, etc. for the newsletter. *We Need Them, Folks!* It's an easy way to support the group and at the same time to share your experiences with others around the country.

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## Cross-Port Finances

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Here is the current status of the Cross-Port Treasury:

Beginning Balance as of the August Newsletter was: \$1480.94

### August Expenses:

Phone:	\$39.00
Envelopes & Stamps:	\$30.91
Printing August Newsletter:	\$24.21
Miscellaneous Supplies:	\$44.00
Bank Charges:	<u>\$ 1.90</u>
Total Expenses:	<u>\$140.12</u>

### August Incomes:

Meeting Collection:	\$95.16
Sale of Tapestries:	\$10.00
Subscriptions, Donations, Etc.:	<u>\$49.50</u>
Total Income:	<u>\$154.66</u>

Ending Balance as of September 7: \$1495.48

We also mailed six intro packets this month.

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## Poetry Corner

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Tide of Friendship  
by Tommy-Sue

Departing from my friends'  
was a cool Ritual.  
They seemed to want more warmth,  
but i didn't Understand.

coming home to Dan  
was a cold, Lonely kiss.  
the door Scared him,  
& then my hair got in His face.

it's Lonely late at night,  
when everyone's Asleep.  
i get Lonely, then restless,  
& i can't go to sleep.

my best Friend's drifting  
Away like the tide.  
i try moving Closer,  
but then he pushes me Away.

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## Transsexual Issues: Making the Mold

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When I was in the second grade I sat in the back of the class. As the year began I realized I was having trouble reading the material the teacher was putting on the blackboard. I didn't know at the time what was wrong, I only knew that I couldn't see the material. I asked the teacher if it would be possible for me to sit in a seat closer to the front. When she asked the reason for my request and I told her I couldn't see the blackboard she not only moved me to the front but she sent a letter home to my parents saying that she believed they should have my eyes examined. They did take me for an eye exam and I became the not so proud owner of a pair of glasses. It seems a shame that the same kind of help is not available for children that experience gender dysphoria.

In the book, "Transvestites and Transsexuals" by Richard F. Docter he notes the difference between "primary" and "secondary" transsexualism. Primary transsexualism involves a person who from their earliest years have manifested cross-gender behavior, has a profound history of gender dysphoria, does not have social roles which are consistent with their anatomical gender and who insist upon "sex" reassignment. It is said to occur in both men and women.

Secondary transsexualism involves a person who lacks a long history of gender dysphoria and who has functioned in a gender role consistent with their anatomic gender and has had a prior career as either a transvestite or a homosexual. Such a person, late in life will desire gender reassignment after they experience some form of life crisis or stressful changes. This desire for gender reassignment is said to be "secondary" to the earlier career. It is said to occur only in men.

I suppose that the problem I have in reading these theories is that they seem to fail to take into account instances similar the one with the eye glasses. According to those two definitions I would say I experience secondary transsexualism. The fact is however, that as a child I did express in the only ways I knew how, my feeling of gender dysphoria. Just as in the eye glasses example, I did not know what was wrong I only knew something

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was not right. If the teacher had not suggested the eye exam I might have continued to function without the aid of glasses. I would have learned to work around the problem and do whatever I needed to do in order to see when I had to. But that would not mean that the problem did not exist or that I did not wish to do something about it.

The same is true for my transsexualism. I knew there was something wrong but my cries for help were ignored and I was taught it was "bad" for me, so I learned to work around the problem and I stopped asking for help. Just as if had I known I would be called four-eyes when I got glasses, I might not have said anything about my sight problem.

As I began to strive to be what everyone said and thought I was, I worked hard to be successful, to prove to myself and everyone that I was a man. It was this career which was secondary to my transsexualism and not the other way around. As some degree of success was encountered along with love, family, and possessions, a certain amount of security developed. My transvestic behavior became my only release for the bottled up feelings which I had, so I strived to be a better transvestite.

When it finally became apparent that all the striving, and all the success was not going to eliminate the gender dysphoria, I decided I had to do something about it. That something was made easier by the loss of a job I had for 14 years but it was not that loss which caused me to take action, it simply provided the timing.

Docter also talks about a "mentor" relationship in which a fetishistic transvestite seems to experience a major reversal in gender identity through their involvement, many times in counseling, with a transsexual. Again I would seem to fit this picture on the surface but what I would suggest more appropriately happened is that the person finally was able to offer the kind of help I had been asking for all along. She helped me to cut through the secondary garbage and return to a primary goal of inner peace and existence with gender. I began to realize that all the striving and goal setting in the world would not make me happy if I could not attain inner peace with my gender. I would not say that is a major change in gender identity but rather a return to the original gender identity.

I do not raise these issues because I am concerned about whether I fit into a nice neat

package. I am what I am however it is defined. But I am concerned about the formation of definitions which seem to me, to disregard the overwhelming effects that the pressures of a society can have on the actions an individual seems to display. To base a definition on non-objective information which can not be ascertained with any degree of clarity would seem to cloud an issue rather than make it more clear.

For example, Docter suggests that a person moves from being a transvestite to being a secondary transsexual because of some "mid life" crisis and as part of a pattern of development and learning. But can it be determined whether the person really was a transvestite or did they just display transvestic behavior because they did not know how handle being a transsexual in the first place.

I am also concerned about the amount of misinformation and different information that is being stated by the various people who are appearing on talk shows. On one of the shows an ex-clinic doctor stated that *a transsexual is a person who will go through anything and do anything to have the operation: anything less is a transvestite.*

This definition does not allow for transsexuals who for some reason can not have the operation. Whether that reason is because they don't have the money, don't pass well, or have other problems besides transsexualism. There are many, I believe, who are transsexuals but simply choose not to do anything about it. Just as an alcoholic or drug addict must choose to help themselves so must a transsexual. The pressures of society can seem so overwhelming that a person may not be able to gain enough strength to over come this pressure, especially when very little help is offered by others.

In contrast, my doctor stated on a talk show that to him a transsexual is *anyone who suffers from gender dysphoria and begins seeking surgery.* He further stated that only 1 in 5 will complete the process but that some will continue to live as women without surgery.

The Attorney General's Office of the state of Ohio stated that a transsexual is *a person who has HAD the operation.* I am not covered by the laws in Ohio because I have not had the operation.

One thing is clear to me from all of this confusion. Until it can be determined what causes crossdressing, gender dysphoria and transsexualism there can be no experts in the field. No one can say whether a person is or is not a transsexual. Clinics may have experts who can determine whether a person is ready for surgery or whether they have other problems besides transsexualism, but they can not say that a person is not a transsexual. They can not say that a person is a transsexual either.

Transsexualism is very non-objective and one must rely on the self reports given by an individual about the extent to which it has had any effects on one's life. Reports of childhood memories can be cluttered with daydreams and fantasies which after years of suppression have become part of the mind's reality. There can also be many gaps in the historical memory because of the mind's ability to block out events. Add to that the fact that there will always be things about a person's desires and fantasies which will be too personal to share with anyone and you have the ingredients for a self report which does little to help determine how much of a part social pressure has played in suppressing the display of gender dysphoric feelings.

For example, I can recall a time which my mother dressed me in a dress and sent me to school. It is as clear as any other memory I have but I know it never happened. It is an event which I wanted to happen so badly that part of my memory has accepted it as fact. I just happen to know that it was a fantasy. Until recently I also did not remember several times in my childhood when I did crossdress, possibly because I was fighting so hard against admitting what I was, that my mind decided it was better not to recall too many incidents from my past.

Because of the reliance on the self report as a major reason for granting surgery we must be cautious not to dismiss anyone who says they want the surgery. In my eight years of therapy many of the things I said and believed at a given time proved not to be true beyond a certain point. When I began I stated that I only wanted to learn live with the fact that I was a man who crossdressed. After a period of time I said that I just wanted to be able to wear the clothes I felt comfortable in, I didn't care if people saw me as a man. Then I said I didn't care if they saw me as a man as long as they treated me as a woman. Finally I came to realize that I don't want people to know I ever

lived as a man. I am just another woman and I wish to be treated as such.

As the realization that I could live as the woman I felt I was became more real and I saw that I could gather the strength to fight the social pressures I was able to release some of the rationalizations which blocked me from the true feelings. Just as a drug addict will rationalize that they can quit any time they wish, they just don't wish to quit in order to keep from facing the fact that they can't quit, so too, some transsexuals will rationalize that they like living as a man, or only wish to crossdress because they don't believe they could survive the societal pressures caused by a change in gender roles.

If nothing else comes out of the gender community, we must help the "experts" to understand us. We must help to educate the public, but we must do it with a united voice. Much of the public does not wish to deal with things it does not understand and the more conflicting facts that we help to spread the less society will want to deal with us. The day must come when just as a child I was able to receive help for my sight problem before it caused other problems, a child can receive help for gender dysphoria before it makes a mess of their lives.

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## From Our Readers

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Dear Cross-Port-ettes,

Hi. Hello. Greetings. I thought I'd drop you gals a line and say howdy. I am mainly writing to tell you more about **Trans-WV**. We now have nine members, of which six are cross-dressers. We have decided that we wish to grow as a group.

One of the first things we did was elect an officer. I am the new secretary of **Trans-WV**. We also decided to get a post office box. So now we actually have an address where anyone can write us.

The address is: **Trans-VW**  
P.O. Box 2322  
Huntington, WV 25724-2322

We would be very happy if you were to include our group's address in the next few InnerViews.

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Our group is an open group to all cross-dressers, regardless of sexual preference. We meet every third Friday near Huntington. To become a member you must first write us a letter and then pass an interview with a senior member. Only then will more specific information be given on when and where we meet.

We would be glad to have any of Cross-Port's members to come to our meetings.

I do say the July Cross-Port meeting was my first time out in public. I enjoyed it very much. All I thought about for the next week was how I could get to another meeting. I thought and thought and as you see I did not make it back for the August meeting, although I did make our meeting here in WV.

Well... I guess I will close for now. If anyone is interested in joining our group just write. If anyone needs someone to write to just drop me a line. 'Til then.

Colorfully,

Tabetha  
Secretary, **Trans-VW**

*Good to hear from the VW girls. We have been sending out your old address with all of our intro packets since you formed. We will update them with your new address. It also makes sense to us that a cross-dressing group would choose a secretary before anything else. Congratulations. We hope to see you all again soon, either at your meeting or ours.*

-- Eds.

Hello and Best Wishes,

I received your note in reply to my recent inquiry yesterday at mail call and wanted to write you back and say thank you.

I appreciate you taking time to read my letter, and for your thoughtfulness in sending me the Cross-Port InnerView.

I have read both the July and August issues and found the articles to be very interesting. I could relate to the article in the July issue titled Role-Playing, as I have also played D&D and have played both male and female characters. I wasn't very good at the game though because my characters didn't make very many levels. But it was fun and made me feel good while playing, especially when I played the female roles.

Cordially yours in Corsets & Dresses forever,  
-- Christine

*We feel that we are always playing roles. We act differently around our friends than we do the people we work with or with family members. Cross-dressing is just a small step beyond how we act every day.*

-- Eds.

### SEE YOUR POETRY IN PRINT

Rhyming poetry and free verse sought for upcoming anthology of TS, TV and TG verse. Don't miss your chance to express yourself in print! (To be published in 1991). Please specify credit line and gender status. Send to: Rupert Raj-Gauthier, Box 1224, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1G7.

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Cross-Port is a not-for-profit support group which meets solely for the support of cross-dressers, trans-sexuals and their family and friends.

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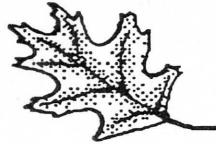
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TV/TS Support Group

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