



The EON Accord

November 1993

Volume 2, no. 4

A PUBLICATION OF EXPRESSING OUR NATURE, INC.

Maybe Not

by Anne Harper

It has become more and more evident that our community is diverse to an extreme. In fact, the deepest motivations of our individual members are many times at cross purposes. This issue's EXCERPTS share a theme of encouraging change. The paragraphs from *Gender Blending* by Holly Devor speak of a future where there is no sexism; a time when transgendered individuals become more visible in society and gender roles become less and less distinguishable. The point is made that those who use a gender expression that is different than the one they were born with, have a unique responsibility to break down those rigid gender definitions. It's as if the gender blender is a bridge builder between the firmly established opposite shores of the social gender construct.

The second EXCERPTS selection provides some history of how some of these gender role differences became established. Loretta Ferrier discusses in *Dance of the Selves* that these differences are now so deeply entrenched that they are actually genetically encoded and passed down to following generations. Her book identifies these gender stereotypes as the basis for much of the personal conflict we have in our daily lives. The problem lies in the fact that we repress so much of who we really are in order to fit into society. She suggests that we embrace the other gender characteristics to become not only complete but successful in everything we do by returning to our original unified selves. Transgendered individuals can be seen as ones who are manifesting this unification in a very visible way.

Intimate Strangers by Lillian Rubin addresses the root of the differences between men and women. She points out that the mechanism that is used when a boy psychologically separates from his birth mother is significantly different than what happens when a girl does the same thing. This fact cannot be changed but it can be understood and utilized in bringing the genders close together so that relationships can be more fulfilling. This again is not an easy task because these differences are so strongly established.

These books encourage change to the rigid definitions of gender roles as a path to increased inner peace. They then postulate that this inner peace will allow better relationships, whether intimate, parental, or on the broadest social scale. So now we find some members of the transgender community embracing this opportunity for change. It becomes important *not* to pass so that their difference is evident. The more visible these individuals are, the stronger the bridge becomes between the well-established shores of gender identification. Some of the zeal for social change is to make it easier for those who have the need to express their gender in a different fashion. So this appears to be good for everyone in our community. Maybe not.

For some of our members this bridge building is not desirable. They require firmly established gender stereotypes so when they jump the gender gap, they land on a solid, clearly identified gender shore. They need to maintain the separation, certainly not bring the shores

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Support Group Schedule

EON offices and meeting rooms are open every Saturday evening from 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM. A light buffet is available with coffee and other non-alcoholic beverages. The cost of this meeting is \$5.00 per person.

Attendance is limited to support group members (crossdressers, transgenderists and transsexuals) except where noted. Meetings are organized as follows:

FIRST SATURDAY of the month:

An unstructured social evening. Relax with your support group friends; share experiences and practical advice. This is an opportunity to be supportive of each other in an informal setting.

SECOND SATURDAY of the month:

A moderated discussion group is included in this meeting. Bring your topic with you and explore it with others in a non-interruptive and meaningful way. An opportunity to allow each person to be attentive to her own voice and needs, as well as those of others. Any relevant topic is safe and welcome — whatever you need to explore in a non-judgmental setting. The discussion segment of this meeting is limited to one hour beginning at 8:00 PM.

THIRD SATURDAY of the month:

An unstructured social evening that may include family members and significant others. This is an opportunity to introduce others to your support group environment and your friends. They will be warmly received and assured of any assistance they may need from others to feel more at home with your own feminine reality.

FOURTH SATURDAY of the month:

An open social evening for support group members, prospective members, friends, and others who may have a desire to learn more about, and to interact with, our transgender community. This evening begins at 8:00 PM and ends at 11:00.

Especially in times
of darkness,
that is the time
to love,
that an act
of love
might tip
the balance.

Aeschylus

Also, please note...

FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month:

Board of Directors,
Expressing Our Nature, Inc.
7:00 PM

Contact a board member if you have an idea or a topic that you would like the Board to put on its agenda.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday & Wednesday — 2:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Support group members are welcome to use the facility individually or in small groups during these hours. The video and book library will be available; the dressing/makeover room can be reserved for a \$5.00 fee. Membership interviews for newcomers are also held on these days.

Call ahead if you wish to use the facility on these days or evenings. Board members and volunteer workers are often in the offices at other times as well; please feel free to call if you need to talk with someone or would like to use the facility at these other times.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

The current support group schedule was set up by EON, Inc. board members and others who are active within the support group. Please let us know if there are other types of programs that you would like to have for Saturday night meetings. Also, you may want to have a week night meeting of some kind, or perhaps you have an idea for a special event.

Once you have the desire and the idea for something new, are you then ready to help create the program, the meeting, or the event?

If you want to influence the movement and direction of your support group, you must take responsibility for making your ideas a reality. Every one encourages you to speak out.

National & Regional Calendar

HOLIDAY EN FEMME

Nov. 10 -14 Los Angeles, California
 Contact: Tri-Ess
 P.O. Box 194
 Tulare, California 93275

RIVERSIDE GALA WEEKEND

NOV. 19 - 21 Erie, Pennsylvania
 Contact: Erie Sisters CD Club
 2115 W. 8th Street
 Suite 261
 Erie, Pennsylvania 16505

SIXTH ANNUAL TEXAS 'T' PARTY

Feb. 25 - 27 San Antonio, Texas
 Contact: Texas T Party
 P.O. Box 700042
 San Antonio, Texas 78270

COMING TOGETHER CONVENTION

March 12 - 20 Portland, Oregon
 Contact: IFGE
 P.O. Box 367
 Wayland, MA. 17778-0367

Welcome, New Members!

In recent months, the EON support group has received several new members. They are:

Iris Renaudo
 Pamela Anne Burns
 Sherry Dewey
 Barbara Keller
 Ari Morgan
 Sherri Daniels
 Paige Pasquale
 Joannie Kennedy
 Sheila Andrews
 Derek Young
 Jonathan Weiner
 Eric Janas
 Patrick Harkins

EON welcomes you *and supports you* as you find your way to self expression, joy, and helpfulness to others.



Accord escorts

- shopping
- dining out
- museum visits
- evenings at the symphony

... is a service for support group members who would enjoy the companionship and support of fellow group members who are experienced in *en femme* activities. There are a number of stores and restaurants where group members are known and appreciated, and this is helpful to those who are just venturing out. Call us, or let us know at meeting time, if you would like to participate in this program.

Excerpts

Gender blend and social change

Sex and gender discrimination requires that gender categories remain at all times distinct, that the sex and gender statuses of all members of society be seen as immutably linked, and that persons' genders always be clearly in evidence. When these requirements are met it is possible to establish and maintain a hierarchical social structure based on male dominance. When peoples' gender role behaviors cause them to be attributed with social genders which do not schematically match their sexes, the foundation of sexism is undermined.

A gender schema that would more accurately describe the present situation and that would allow for a less sexist future might be based on the concept of *gender blending*. Such a conceptualization of gender would start from the recognition that sex identity, sex attribution, gender identity, gender attribution, and gender roles can all combine in any configuration. In such a schema, sex would not be assumed to be related to behavior in any way beyond the mechanical concerns of reproduction of the species. Genders would become social statuses available to any persons according to their personal dispositions and their exhibited behaviors. Members of society might be taught to value adaptability and flexibility rather than obedience to gender roles, so that the most respected and socially valued personality types would be those which were able to make use of any behaviors which served their purposes in any situation. Under such a schema, the

goal of mature personality development would be to reach a balance of gender characteristics. Men and women, masculinity and femininity, would be seen as immature stages in the process of reaching a blended gender identity and display.

A gender blending schema could serve as a transitional step between the present patriarchal sexist gender schema and a future state wherein the concept of gender would become obsolete and meaningless. Gender, as we now think of it, is an artifact of sex. Were gender to become divided from sex, it would begin to lose its meaning and it would become impossible to use gender as the basis for sex discrimination. Were gender blending to become a goal and increasingly a reality in society, the social entities we now call women and men would become archaic and the basis for gender as a meaningful concept would become irreparably eroded. Were people to become no longer distinguishable on the basis of sex, were all gender choices open to all people, were there to cease to be a cognitive system which measured the world in gendered units, the material basis for sexism would cease to exist.

from GENDER BLENDING —
CONFRONTING THE LIMITS OF DUALITY,
by Holly Devor

People in process

Intimacy, companionship, sharing, communication, equality. These qualities we now look for in our relations with each other still elude us too much of the time. Why? Certainly not because our intentions are ignoble, but because the traditional structure of parenting comes together with the developmental tasks of childhood and the cultural mandates about masculinity and femininity to create differences in the psychological structures of women and men. Inevitably, then, the core identity is different for each of us and, therefore, our ways of being in relationships — whether with lovers, children, or friends — are dissimilar enough so that we're often at odds, often have trouble understanding each other.

What are we to make of our relationships, then? Dare we hope that changes we seek can be ours? The answer is not an easy one. For there's reason for hope, and there's ground for caution — hope, because understanding brings with it always the possibility of change; caution, because the wellspring of those things we

would change about ourselves and our relationships lie buried deep in our social and psychological structures.

Society and personality live in a continuing reciprocal relationship with each other. The search for personal change without efforts to change the institutions within which we live and grow will, therefore, be met with only limited reward. And the changes we seek will not be fully ours unless and until we understand where the roots of the problems lie. As Freud taught long ago, it's only when we have been able to break through to the unconscious forces that so often guide our lives — only when we have brought them into the consciousness and, therefore, potentially under our control — that we are able to direct our efforts to the kind of change that's necessary to relieve our suffering, whether individual or social.

from INTIMATE STRANGERS —
MEN & WOMEN TOGETHER
by Lillian Rubin

Seeking wholeness within

If we were merely linear beings born to fulfill a one-dimensional destiny based upon our being male or female, life might be simpler. We could then fulfill the fantasy expressed by John Wayne of an era "where men are men and women are women." This is obviously not the case. For generations we have absorbed this one-dimensional message. Where did that come from?

There are several theories about human psychospiritual development. One is that we started out as whole beings and then became divided and incomplete at some later point in our development. *The Encyclopedia of Religion* states that many stories from the world's religious texts describe the original human as androgynous, and then separating into two sexes, male and female. You can find these accounts of androgynous human beings in Native American stories, in Eastern Indian philosophy, and in folk tales from Africa and the Pacific Islands. Other examples are tales of the Australian Aborigines, ancient texts from Mesopotamia, and even the account of Adam and Eve in the Bible.

I see the story of Adam and Eve as an allegory of the time when we were whole. Part of their original wholeness included what I call the integration of our internal masculine and feminine. Remember that our internal feminine correlates to that part of ourselves that is diffuse and intuitive, whereas our internal masculine correlates to the focused, logical part. I hypothesize that there was originally a wholeness in each of them, and because of this, they lived in perfect harmony together. The eating of the apple symbolizes their becoming polarized and incomplete. Adam became one half of the polarized experience and Eve the other. When this happened, Adam and Eve lost their full connection with God, who is the quintessence of integration, and thus were cast out of the Garden of Paradise. Being incomplete, Adam and Eve began to seek their wholeness outside themselves. Eve started to rely upon Adam for those qualities she lost and vice versa. They were, of course, doomed to failure.

It is possible that as we evolved physically and mentally, from that moment in time, our internal masculine/feminine also evolved. Bronowski, in his book, *The Ascent of Man*, suggests that the forerunners of man began to be nimble with their hands and clever with their brains in making and implementing tools. With the invention of the tool came the creative urge that separated humans from the lower animal kingdom. Bronowski correlates the drive that led man to make tools with the drive to create community. As we became hunters instead of gatherers, the nomadic way of life evolved and the necessity for community followed.

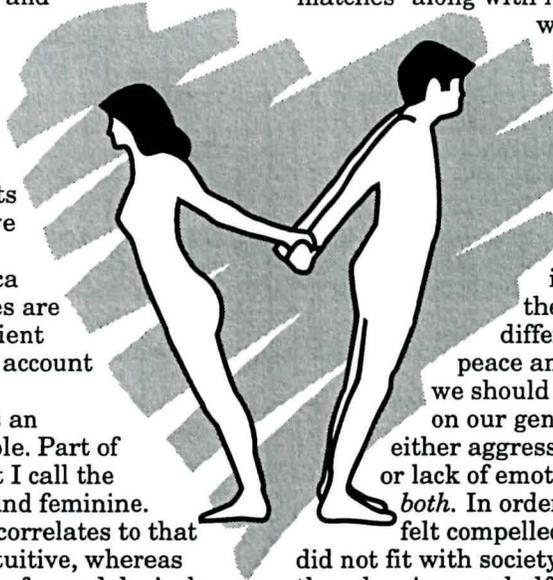
Community survival required communication and social interaction. Culture, as we know it, began to develop 50,000 to 100,000 years ago. Cultural evolution soon became as important as biological evolution. At some point the male as hunter began to dominate and

become protector. The more clever and skilled a man was in creating tools, the more mates he would attract. Conversely, women's primary role became mother and home keeper in support of her hunter mate. Her producer-of-life role placed her back at camp, vulnerable and needing protection. The word vulnerable is defined as "open to damage" and that is how women began to be perceived. Men became the planners and the powerful.

The emergence of role differences created "good matches" along with its converse, "bad matches;" thus we began to view others as desirable versus undesirable. With this division of expectations for the sexes we became polarized in our thinking and abilities. We started on a long journey of rules and expectations.

As community consciousness became more and more important to human development, the roles of the sexes were further differentiated in order to maintain peace and order. Our culture dictated how we should act as male or female. Depending on our gender, we were molded to display either aggressiveness or passivity, emotionality or lack of emotion, logic or intuition — *but not both*. In order to achieve social acceptance, we felt compelled to disown that part of us that did not fit with society's definition of proper behavior, thus denying one half of ourselves. We repressed any thoughts or abilities that contradicted the ones we were supposed to display, and developed stories or fairy tales to transmit our society's role beliefs to the new generations. The repeated transmission of these concepts from one generation to the next developed into what Carl Jung referred to as genetically inherited archetypes.

Jung discussed humankind's thoughts and behaviors in terms of archetypal images, which are genetically encoded and transmitted from one generation to the next. Thus we are born with an image of what reality is and how we are to function in it. Some of those images are: good/evil, God/Satan, and mother/father. To Jung, archetypes are essential building blocks, and form the basis of instinctive thoughts and behaviors common to all mankind. He referred to archetypes as "pieces of life itself — images that are integrally connected to the individual by the bridge of the emotions." Therefore these archetypes compose the psyche of men and women, coloring our very thoughts and reactions. In creating this paradigm, Jung went beyond the contemporary theory of environmental influence — that we are what we've learned in this life — and added that we are also what we've mentally/emotionally inherited.



from DANCE OF THE SELVES —
UNITING THE MALE AND FEMALE WITHIN
by Loretta Ferrier

A Whole New World

by Susan Parker

I'm sitting on the floor in front of my stereo system, headphones on and listening to my "Aladdin" CD. It's 1:45 AM on a Sunday and I've just come home from a social at EON. As I listen to "A Whole New World," I think about the day's events and the many feelings I've had — anticipation, uncertainty, elation, sadness; the hellos and good-byes. Let me start at the beginning.

All of us have had a secret wish to dress up, escape the comfort zone of hearth and home, and go out. Ever since I was seven years old, I've dreamed of passing in public. And like many of us in the crossdressing, transgendered community, I've dealt with feelings of shame and guilt over wanting to dress as a girl...and later as a woman. But on September 25th, my dreams came true. While I had attended EON meetings before that date, I was nervous about leaving the comfort of the meeting room. Occasionally, I would take a ride with Patricka, but still, that was in the safety of an automobile and not truly in public. But last night was the beginning of "A Whole New World."

It started at 12:45 PM when I met Patricka and her significant other, Flo, at the EON offices. I picked up the outfit I was to wear along with some accessories, wig, and lingerie. We then were on our way to Waterloo, NY, to meet with Rodney of *Rodney's Salon 34*, who would teach us the wonders of make-up. Halfway there I realized I forgot my high heels! Oh well, I'll pick some up at the Walmart. We arrived at Rodney's at 2:30 and when I saw the amount of make-up he had for me, I realized I was going to have to buy a larger make-up bag at Walmart, too. Flo and Patricka were both finished with their haircuts. Rodney gave Pat a new look with a flip to one side which looked marvelous. It reminded me a little of the Veronica Lake look of the 1940's (which I always thought looked sexy and sultry). Now it was my turn. I went into the powder room to shave and change my clothes; then it was time to learn all about the wonderful world of make-up! I never knew there was a twenty-one step plan that could make my face look feminine. The smells of powder and

the taste of lipstick sure can make a girl feel giddy. Finally, a half-hour later, Rodney was done with my face and started on my nails. As he worked, I wondered, "Is this me? Gosh! I'm falling in love...with me!" At last the nails are dry. We kiss Rodney good-by and head back to Syracuse. Rodney insists that Patricka drive since I'll be too busy looking at myself in the mirror.

We arrive at EON about 7:30 PM and we're a hit! Toni loves my new hair and new look. Meanwhile, Patricka calls to make 8:30 PM dinner reservations at *Phoebes*. I'm going out on the town! I'm going public! My heart is beating faster than a hummingbird's wings. This is my dream come true! We leave on schedule but soon discover that finding a place to park is difficult when Syracuse University is playing a home football game. At about 8:45 we find a spot to park. The parking attendant says, "There's a spot over there, ma'me." *Ma'am*...he called me *ma'am*!! I'm in heaven.

We enter *Phoebes* and are shown to our table. The waitress comes by and asks, "Can I get you ladies something to drink?" Ladies, we are all ladies! This is fantastic. I order a glass of wine. When she returns, she asks, "What would you like for dinner, miss?" *Miss*...I'm a *miss*! Someone pinch me. This has to be the sweetest dream ever. I order the grilled trout but later when she brings the dessert tray, I have to refuse. No desserts for me. I'm going to work on my girlish figure. After we pay the bill, the waitress talks to us for awhile. She loves my nails. On the way out, Flo overhears a patron comment, "There're three ladies out for the evening." If I'd heard that I would have kissed him! *Ladies*...it sounds so nice.

We head back to EON and join the others at the social. Unfortunately like all dreams, we have to wake up. Back home at 12:30, I sadly begin to remove my make-up, take off my wig, put my clothes away and become my "guy" self.

Now as I write this I feel mixed emotions of gladness and sadness. Gladness because my dream finally came true. Sadness because I really miss that woman. I love being a girl!

Maybe Not...continued from front page

closer together. This separation is what works for the majority of our support group members; it allows occasional gender shift without disruption of traditional male/female roles. So, this is where we find ourselves at cross purposes. Some want social change and this month's EXCERPTS will provide interesting encouragement for them. Yet others will be uncomfortable with too much change for it means that the shores of gender identity might one day merge and their carefully crafted balance of gender expression will lose its foundation.

A Place...continued from page 8

and sense of fulfillment as the individuals we are. We furthermore believe that this can only be achieved when we persevere in honestly opening the reality of ourselves to others. It is the "others" in the world with whom we must live and create. They are the ones with whom we must ultimately make our peace in this, our world.

You may always choose to continue your relationships within the group and be of service to it. There's a place for you here. *More importantly, there's a place for you out there too.*

We are very excited about the new design and layout of *The EON Accord*. We have been busy with a graphic designer in Rochester and have developed a format that is very literary in style and classic in presentation. SūzArt is a company that specializes in newsletters and we are extremely happy about the finished product. Although Susan is from outside our community, her open-minded, honest approach to the handling of our subject has made working with her a pleasure.

The **production cost** of our newsletter has continued to increase. When you add the expense of the graphic layout, the printing of 300 copies, and the postage to distribute approximately 150 issues to our membership, area helping professionals, and national organizations, we arrive at a per issue cost of approximately \$450.00.

The **EON Board of Directors** met last month and discussed ways to generate the capital needed to support such a fine publication. The first idea was to sell advertising to associated vendors, restaurants, and professional services. A quick calculation determined that we would have to sell 3 to 4 pages of ads to total the amount needed. Production costs would rise with more graphic work needed and more pages to copy. We also considered the time needed to sell the advertising at which point the whole idea seemed impractical. In addition we felt that advertising would compromise the high quality literary presentation of our newsletter.

The next idea we discussed had more merit. We now have our **501 (c) (3) classification** with its tax exempt status which is useful in gathering contributions and **tax deductible donations**. We thought that some of these donations could be dedicated to the production of our newsletter, especially if we make a direct solicitation to all who receive and enjoy this new newsletter format.

We have provided a contribution form on the facing page that will allow readers to show their appreciation and support of our newsletter activity.

Please consider our request for assistance in the funding of this worthwhile educational endeavor.

Yes, I/We would like to help:

SPREAD THE NEWS

"THE ACCORD" CAMPAIGN BENEFIT

\$ Enclosed is a gift for

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Please make my gift in honor of/in
memory of:

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

All gifts are tax deductible.

***Thank you for your generosity. Your
gift will make a difference.***

I prefer my gift remain
anonymous.

I would like more information
about EON support group
programs and activities.

EXPRESSING OUR NATURE, INC.

523 W. Onondaga Street
Syracuse, NY 13204

(315)
475-7013 or 475-5611

The Eye of the Beholder

by Victoria Lynn

The title of this article should be instantly familiar to those of you who are as old as the author. For those of you who are not, I will explain.

In the early 1960's (Yes, I am old enough to remember the early 60's but I don't remember them well...) a Syracuse University alumnus named Rod Serling gave us a landmark television series entitled *The Twilight Zone*. A particularly poignant episode was "The Eye of the Beholder." The story line revolved around a young woman whose face we can't see. The setting is a hospital and we can overhear doctors and nurses (whose faces we also can't see) discussing how unfortunate she is, everything has been tried, nothing seems to work, etc., etc. The impression you get is of someone who has undergone a great deal of plastic surgery to correct some type of horrid facial deformity. As the surgery has not been successful, she is to be sent away to some sort of home to live out her life in the company of others who have suffered the same fate. Needless to say, the young lady is heart-broken. The viewer is given every indication that she is, for lack of a better phrase, "uglier than sin."

In the closing seconds of the show, we are finally brought face-to-face with the poor girl only to learn that she is, by our standards, beautiful. The key phrase is "by our standards." When we see the doctors and nurses we understand that *they* are ugly by *our* standards and the lesson is that what is beautiful to one, may or may not be beautiful to another. It clearly illustrates the point that beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder.

What does this have to do with crossdressing? Have you noticed the increase in television shows that deal with crossdressing, transsexuals, and so forth? One thing that is obvious when I watch these is that the young ladies involved are for the most part, gorgeous!

The message that men get when they see "handsome" men on TV, is that they are the ideal to aspire to. The problem is that not all of us look like Burt Reynolds, Clint Eastwood, or Charles Boyer. Women face this same situation but it is increased by several orders of magnitude. If they don't look like Christie or Cindy then they are second class citizens. We all have preconceived ideas of what we are supposed to look like and as a society, we spend billions of dollars a year to achieve "the look."

What happens when this dilemma is applied to a crossdresser? A fellow who is perhaps six feet tall and weighs 200 pounds flips on the TV to watch *Donahue*. He is suddenly faced with a panel of crossdressers who all look like they just stepped off the cover of *Vogue*! What's the poor guy to do? Most genetic women don't look that good! So here he is, on the one hand, society is trying to pound him into a Steven Segal mold (which 99% of us don't fit). On the other hand, he has a feminine side which tries to pound herself into a mold that 99% of genetic women can't fit into. Ninety-nine point nine percent of us crossdressers haven't got a

chance. Instead of feeling good about his crossdressing, he now (consciously or subconsciously) feels as though he has to measure up to a crossdresser who spent a quarter of a million dollars on plastic surgery, makeup and clothes, not to mention the fact that he just finished a make-over by a Hollywood makeup artist. Not only is this an unrealistic ideal, it's an unattainable one!

How many of you know a TV who won't go to support group meetings because they don't think they will "pass?" What does that mean? It can be anything from looking "good" at a meeting, to passing at high noon on Park Avenue. But how many of us can do that?

The conclusion that we have to draw here is that regardless of what you look like, it's not fair to compare yourself to another who, for whatever reason, may appear more "female" than you do. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. If you can look in the mirror and be pleased with what you see, then it is enough. If you can be realistic in your values and not compare yourself to some Madison Avenue ideal, then you are doing fine. Perhaps a new definition of "passing" is in order. Now it seems to mean not being spotted as a man. To hell with the other part.

So, ladies, enjoy the TV shows. Appreciate the beauty of the people who are involved in them, but make no comparisons. Rejoice in the fact that we as a group are getting some sort of positive publicity but don't think that you have to be a perfect size six before you can enjoy it. Go to meetings as a way of interacting with others who share your love for things feminine. Don't go in with the "am I good enough?" attitude. Of course you are good enough. You're better than good enough. You are who you are and that, ladies, is a little piece of perfection.

The Capacity of Transgender

The capacity of the mind is great, like the emptiness of space...The marvelous nature of the ordinary person is fundamentally empty and has no fixed character. Such is the truly sky-like quality of one's natural self...The emptiness of universal space can contain the myriad things of every shape and form — the sun, moon, and stars, the mountains and rivers, the great earth with its springs, streams and waterfalls, grass, trees and dense forests, its sinners and saints, and the ways of good and evil...All these are in the void, and the ordinary person's nature is void in just this way.

by Hui-neng
Eighth century
Zen master in the Tan-ching

A Place For You

by Charliss Dolge

Sometimes we hear talk, whether in the form of quiet discussion or bitter gossip, that there is an "official" rule, or at least a prevalent pressure, that requires peer support group members to abandon the closet or in some other way to be what they are not.

If we read the back page of this publication carefully, and if we honestly and quietly reflect on our experiences within the peer support group, we will see that there is a place for each and every one of us no matter what our self-definition, experiences, beliefs, or goals as transgendered people. The description of EON clearly states that the peer support group is an open group, and that EON stresses a *holistic and non-discriminatory approach to personal development*.

Development is a key point here, for no one gives heart and soul in order to perpetuate the stagnation and frustration that we all experienced before we joined our group. We wanted change in our lives, enough so that we were willing to include new people in them, people who had what we wanted to have for ourselves.

The approach to personal development, to growth that is based on one's individuality rather than on a rigid society's insistence, is holistic in the sense that we care about the whole person — the mind and spirit as well as the body that expresses them.

Since the support group is an open group, we are non-discriminatory. We respect and honor each and every expression of our diversity. Diversity within a group of transgendered people presents itself in many forms — as male and female (genetically and spiritually), as man and woman, as young, old and middle aged. We may or may not crossdress or live transgendered full time, whether we define ourselves as crossdresser, transsexual, androgynous, or as something else.

Our diversity also expresses itself in ways other than gender definition and declaration. Some have freed themselves from guilt, shame, and fear to a greater extent than others. Many are still captives of, and restricted by, certain illogical or archaic beliefs and standards regarding gender roles, identity expression, choice of love partner, self-revelation, or life work. Others have risked adventure in their transgender experience, become more fluid and open to variations and alternatives, and thus are more intimate with the feelings of peace, gratitude, and fulfillment. Personal backgrounds, influences, and circumstances vary too, being barriers to be challenged for some and facilitators that serve to ease the way for others.

This variety provides many opportunities to experience love and sensitivity in new and different ways, and builds the diverse pathways along which this newness may travel to find its mark as expressions of empathy and concern, as instances of caring and assistance. Ideally, our experiences within the group will be personally transformative enough that they will translate themselves into freer and more harmonious relationships within the other areas of our lives.

Out of our three approaches to the personal develop-

ment of transgendered people — open group, holistic, non-discriminatory — which one would account for the pressure or the emphasis on coming out that some members are said to be experiencing? Which characteristic, which quality, would we toss out, or even modify, in order to make the group experience a more pleasant one for those who may have this complaint?

EON has its own particular character because it has organized itself around a particular philosophy, which is also stated on our back page. We believe that a transgendered person has a *right to dignity*, not just within the context of the support group but also within the context of society as a whole. If this dignity is important to a crossdresser or to a transsexual, and if EON works to help bring about this experience, in whatever way, then those who are not yet ready to claim this dignity, or perhaps even doubt its existence, may indeed translate their resentment of another's progress into a felt pressure to come out or to grow in directions that may be deemed unnecessary.

We also believe in the *right to peaceful community*, and yet there have been more than just a few group members who have either ceased their participation or have remained fearful and anxious because our offices and meeting place are not hidden away from the eyes of others. These people have been unable to claim this right. They may claim that EON could have been more thoughtful and considerate when it chose its location.

The *right to self love* includes the right to define ourselves as we wish to be defined, and the right to seek out our personal integrity without hindrance from society. Many of us who are transgendered have internalized the ugly and mean-spirited religious, political, and social falsehoods about transgenderism. In this strange twist of spirit, then, we too would join that part of society in its condemnation of us and in its denial of our right to self love. Most certainly, this will keep some of us closeted, and fearful of any attempts to free us from this awful self loathing.

Rather than advocating the denial of this right to self love through convoluted and illogical arguments about "common sense" and preservation of the status quo, EON simply states that transgendered people have a "light" about them because they are different, and that this light should not be "hidden under a bushel," for then its value and power is lost to a world that very badly needs its presence in order to heal itself of the very things that would have us keep it hidden. We believe that transgenderism is a natural endowment that the world needs to experience for its own health and transformation.

However, we must first desire our own personal transformations. This means more than makeup and hair styling, much more than feminine or masculine fashion and style. It is more than altering names or even documents and various bodily appearances. *EON believes that our real transformation as transgendered people has to do with our happiness, personal growth,*

continued page 6...

Attention, Shoppers!

A girl's guide to shops and shopping tips

by Jill Jackson



Ladies, would it be just a little bit easier to brave the world of shopping *en femme* (maybe a whole lot easier?) if you knew where to go and have the clerks, store managers, and owners treat you courteously and respectfully? Ready? Smooth your skirts, take a deep breath and take this list.

It's also important to take along your self esteem (it will improve with experience), your best public fashion sense, your warm smile and a willingness to make direct, but non-threatening, eye contact. Don't make jokes about crossdressing with the clerks. They won't take you seriously if you don't. *Act like the woman you feel you are.* Engage them as woman-to-woman. They can help you, and they will want to. Make it easy for them, and they will do likewise. If you are purchasing something that needs to be tried on, chances are that they will suggest it even before you need to ask for the location of the dressing room.

PICWAY at Shop City seems to have the largest selection of shoes of any in this discount chain. Very good for inexpensive casuals. (There is a little shop down the way is excellent for shoe repair and re-stitching of other leather goods.)

KAUFMANN'S at Carousel Center. If you want to try a top-of-the-line foundation and finishing powder, there are some really helpful women at the Estee Lauder counter. Ask to see the *Lucidity* foundation colors. Don't worry that you're already wearing makeup. A portion of your neck will still show your skin tone. Let them test it on your hand, or on your cheek, and for heaven's sake do use the little mirrors on the counters. Get right into it! This is how these girls get going — when they see that you want to look your best. This store is also good for hosiery — also on the first floor. Look for the *Hanes Silk Reflections* pantyhose and stockings. Don't forget to ask for your hosiery club card. The girl will punch a star for each pair you buy. When you have eventually bought eleven pair (you'll never give up stockings, will you?) the next pair is free. Upstairs, join the bra and panty club with the same kind of punch card. This is also a very complete lingerie dept. with many sizes and colors, from slips to camisoles to waist cinchers and garter belts to gowns and robes. These women will almost always engage you in conversation about the sizing and fit of the various lingerie items that will interest you during your shopping visit.

GANTOS at Carousel Center for dresses, skirts, suits, and tops up to size 14 and large. From conservative to glitzy. (Just because they sell glitzy doesn't mean that you should wear glitzy when you shop there.) As in any other store, approach the clerk before she approaches you — if you can, some of them are that swift on their heels — and ask where to look for what you want. Ask where to find size whatever, even if you think you know where it is. See if you can stop these ladies from throwing dresses at you while they shove you toward the dressing room!

BONWIT TELLER also at Carousel Center. Sharp and snappy high quality high heels, casuals, and boots. These lovely ladies will even guess your size (up to 11B) and insist that you try them on even as you reach out to touch the pair that your eyes have fallen on. This store is very savvy and accepting throughout. The ladies in accessories, next to the shoe dept., are also very good with jewelry, scarves, gloves, handbags, and hair ornaments. (Go ahead! Hillary wears a headband!) Upstairs is their size 16 plus designers dress dept. *Not* the usual boring floppy bags of dresses made to drape over and hide a multitude of sins with miles of wound up and gathered weird material.

CENTRAL SURPLUS, corner of Geddes and Delaware, is also good for large sizes. Dressy leather heels, casuals, and (winter is coming) dressy and casual boots. Reasonable prices at wholesale. Quiet but helpful guys.

EUREKA CRAFTS in Armory Square for fine hand-crafted jewelry, silk or mohair scarves. Really mellow people. They want you to take your time.

While there are many other stores that could be listed here, I'll save some of the shops and shopping tips for a future issue. Do you have a favorite store? Do you have some tips to share? Make a list and send it to:

**Jill Jackson,
c/o EON, Inc.
523 West Onondaga Street
Syracuse, New York 13204.**

“The Scoop”

National, state, and local news

Dateline: THE NATION

- Everyone's buzzing about the upcoming event in November being sponsored by the Erie Sisters in Erie, Pennsylvania. Yes, an inexpensive event in the near future that you don't have to spend a fortune just to get to. Within a five hour driving distance, and for only \$150.00, you could be enjoying the “Victorian Weekend” — a lavish weekend in an old Victorian estate with motel accommodations attached. Shopping excursions in Erie with your SO, or just shopping with the girls, seminars, programs, and a Saturday night gala banquet are some of the weekend highlights.

If you have not attended an event before, this is your chance to get out there with your EON sisters and party, party, party. Applications are at EON and I know that there will be at least three of our members going. If we are smart and have a truck large enough to accommodate our luggage, we should make plans to share the transportation costs and all go together.

- Speaking about events, the infamous “Texas ‘T’ Party” will be happening again this year in San Antonio. Information and details along with a registration form are available at EON.

If you are one of those Upstaters like myself, who, around February decides that I have had enough snow and ice to satisfy my annual change of season needs and begins to go slightly bonkers with the cabin fever blues, Texas “T” is for you. No snow, warm weather, sunny days and cool nights in the dead of our winter, makes this event something special for us northern country girls.

“Big” is commonly associated with the great state of Texas and possibly you might expect it would apply to the price of this event, but such is *not* the case. Actually, for the quality of the seminars, the experience involved and the number of people attending, the “T” is a very inexpensive event (except for the airfare from Syracuse).

Sponsored by the Bolton & Park group, the “Texas ‘T’ Party” is again expected to beat all attendance records this year. Of special note are the excellent programs for couples and significant others, usually monitored by *Dr. Peggy Rudd*, author of a number of books and articles directed at helping SO's (Significant Others) to get along with the gift of transgender.

Dateline: NEW YORK

- TGIC in *Albany* is having dinner parties almost every month that you can attend if you make reservations. Dinner is in a nearby motel that allow for room rental and changing of the premises. Details are available at EON.
- *Rochester's* CD Network group has obtained a new location for their monthly meetings. Call to let them know you are in town.

Dateline: SYRACUSE

- EON will be having our special November dinner with *Sheila Kirk* as our speaker. Sheila is IFGE's *numero uno* authority on hormone therapy. Look for details in this newsletter and plan on attending this special dinner night. Sheila will be available throughout the weekend to consult and visit with EON members. If you haven't met Dr. Sheila Kirk before, now is your chance!
- Our group is gifted with a few individuals who are making some excellent spiritual progress in the areas of *Wicca, Shamanism and Meditation*. The congruity of spirit strength and transgendered nature is coming to the forefront throughout our community. The true discovery of our Transgendered Spirit leads to the awareness of our inherent strength, tradition and gifts from the Creator. If you wish to participate in this awakening, we will form a circle for this purpose. Contact *Kia Wolff* or myself, *Angela Bright Feather*, through EON and we will get back to you and discuss your interests.
- Finally, please be aware that Charliss has gone to great pains to organize the incoming newsletters in the vestibule area of EON. Many groups in the US and Canada, and a few from Europe send us their news. Please feel free as a member, to look through all this wonderful information from your sisters and revel in the knowledge that our community is growing every day.

Reported by:

Angela Bright Feather
Scoop reporter

EON Library

Books...periodicals...videos

TRANSGENDER STUDIES

Transvestites and Transsexuals: Toward a Theory of Cross-Gender Behavior

by Richard F. Docter

A search for a comprehensive theory regarding the origins and meaning of a range of behaviors from fetishism through transvestism, transgenderism, and secondary transsexualism.

Legal Aspects of Transsexualism

by Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE

A well-known community figure examines how the legal system affects transsexuals in the military, family and civil law, health insurance, civil rights, and careers.

Fantastic Women: Sex, Gender, and Transvestism

by Annie Woodhouse

A study of crossdressing and the construction of gender conducted within a feminist framework.

Roberta Colwell's Story

by Roberta Colwell

From Robert to Roberta. Published in 1954, an early autobiography detailing the resolution of dual sexuality and gender ambiguity.

Wives, Partners, and Others: Living With Crossdressing

by Jan and Diane Dixon

A crossdresser and his spouse compile the essays, advice, experience, and opinions of crossdressers and their partners. Covers revelation, coping, and making relationships work.

The Spirit and the Flesh

by Walter Williams

Sexual diversity in American Indian culture. Landmark study of transgendered American Indians. Examines areas of spirituality, sexual and gender variances, the relationships of the transgendered and their "normal man" husbands.

RELATED LITERATURE

Particular Passions *by Lynn Gilbert and Gaylen Moore*

Autobiographical talks given by women who have shaped our times. Includes self portraits by Frances Stelhoff, founder of the famous Gotham Book Mart in New York City, who helped launch the work of Anais Nin and Gertrude Stein; Ruth Bader Ginsburg, founding director of the ACLU's Women's Rights Project and recent Supreme Court appointee; Mary Steichen Calderone, MD and public health educator, who co-founded SIECUS (Sex Information and Education Council of the United States).

Manners From Heaven and The Naked Civil Servant

by Quentin Crisp

The autobiographical narrations, caustic wit, and deadly accurate insights of the actor, entertainer, and author who came out in the streets of London in the 1930's as a self-confessed and self evident effeminate homosexual. Lessons of challenge, strength, humor, and dignity.

Quotable Quotes

Recent words on relationships and gender come from British actor and writer *Quentin Crisp*, long heralded as the master gender blender, who is currently starring as Queen Elizabeth I in the movie *Orlando*:

My dear, I live my life in a permanent state of indeterminate gender, which would in fact be the perfect model for any relationship. After all, a marriage can only work if each of you forgives the other for being the opposite sex."

Who we are...

Expressing Our Nature, Inc. is a non-profit community service organization for crossdressers, transgenderists, and transsexuals. Services include:

- peer support group membership
- regularly scheduled programs and discussions
- weekly class nights
- social events for members, family and friends

EON maintains offices, meeting rooms and a library which are open to peer support group members at various times throughout the week.

The peer support group is an open group. All are welcome regardless of gender identification or sexual orientation. EON stresses a holistic and non-discriminatory approach to personal development within the support group.

EON also engages in educational outreach activity aimed at colleges and universities, groups within the gay/lesbian and women's movement, the social justice community, the media, and organizations where real communication about the transgender issue is necessary and important.

The EON Accord is a monthly publication. Cost of the newsletter is included in the current annual support group dues. Articles, news items, reprints and original artwork are welcome. All submissions will be subject to editorial policy.

...and what we believe in

The right of the transgendered person to full participation in and acceptance and affirmation by society as a whole.
This is the Right to Dignity.

The right of all people subject to oppression to come together in unity and to create mechanisms of support for others of like kind. **This is the Right to Peaceful Community.**

The right of individuals to define themselves as they wish and to seek out their personal integrity without hindrance.
This is the Right to Self Love.

Furthermore, we believe...

Persons who are transgendered are endowed, by virtue of their differentness, with a special charisma and unique vocation to transform the perceptions of others and the world itself by being exemplars of tolerance and love.

Our happiness, personal growth, and sense of fulfillment as individuals can only be achieved when we persevere in honestly opening the reality of ourselves to others. EON exists to help create and to promote that courage.



523 W. Onondaga Street
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answering machine (315) 475-5611

President **Charliss Dolge**
Vice-President **Anne Harper**
Sec'y/Treasurer **Angela Bright Feather**

Artwork by SūzArt!

Expressing Our Nature, Inc.

A 501 (c)(3) Corporation

Since ancient times, cultures have recognized the presence of both feminine and masculine energies within the one individual.

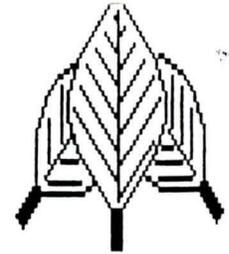
The crescent moons in our logo have historically represented these two energies. They are surrounded by the sun which unifies them in harmony.

The sun's own energy is life affirming, and its presence indicates that as individuals and as an organization we are rising into life, or gender affirming action.



Looking For Something SPECIAL?

And Save \$\$\$\$\$\$ Too!



EON

Presents Their

Annual Autumn Yard Sale



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1993

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM



**TRINITY PARISH
HOUSE PARLOR**



Corner of Midland Avenue and
West Onondaga Street

Plenty of Free Parking

Proceeds to Benefit EON

and

Trinity Church



SPECIAL AUTUMN EVENT

Dr. Sheila Kirk, long-time member of our transgender community, physician, and board member of the International Foundation For Gender Education will be with us for the weekend of November 12, 13, & 14.

All EON members, other support group members, friends and family members are invited to share this weekend with Sheila.

Sheila will be arriving from Boston on Friday. She will be with us at the EON offices Saturday afternoon, November the 13 th from 12:00 noon - 4:00 PM. There will be a catered lunch from 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM, and then a moderated discussion meeting will follow, covering a range of topics that are important to us all as crossdressers, transgenderists, transsexuals, significant others, and as a community. The cost for anyone attending this afternoon event is \$10.

The evening event, which is at Phoebe's restaurant will begin with a cocktail reception at 7:00 PM.....dinner at 8:00 PM.....followed by Sheila's special after dinner presentation. We will have our own private dinning room for this occasion. The cost for this is \$5 for anyone attending. There will be a cash bar for cocktails, and each person will be ordering from the menu.

The EON facility will be available from 10:00 AM Saturday, and also after 4:00 PM for anyone who needs to prepare for either the afternoon or evening event.

In order to prepare for both the afternoon and the evening events, the EON office will need to know in advance how many people will be planning to attend. Please call us and let us know by November 9, or leave your message to attend on our answering machine. The number to call is 475-5611.

Please join us on this occasion of friendship, sharing, and a good time.