



News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

Vol. 9, No. 7 • July 1995

Renaissance

Be All '95 Claims 2 Firsts

by JoAnn Roberts

The 1995 Be All convention was a success by any measure and may go down in transgender history as a turning point for the community.

Based on previous schedules, Be All '95 *should* have been held in Cleveland and *should* have been hosted by *Paradise Club*. However, according to Theresa Price, Paradise's president, most of the members associated with the previous Cleveland Be All had left the club. Consequently, Paradise felt it was not prepared to host the convention and *Crossroads* (Mich.), which will host Be All in 1996, was not prepared to jump ahead a year.

What to do? Cincinnati's *Crossport* came to the rescue. While *Crossport* has been around for some time, it had never been a part of the Be All circuit, which includes the above mentioned clubs, *Chi Chapter* (Chicago), and *Transpitt* (Pittsburgh).

Linda Buten, long time member of *Crossport*, made a pitch to the Be All Committee to host the event in Cincinnati and add *Crossport* to the committee. Faced with the prospect of cancelling the 13th annual Be All, the committee accepted *Crossport's* offer. The rest is now history.

Crossport's members can take pride in their accomplishment. Considering that the club had to

deal with a shorter than normal development schedule and had never hosted an event of this magnitude, the execution was relatively error free.

Crossport and Cincinnati have now become a permanent part of the Be All family.

While Be All '95 will be remembered by some as the first Cincinnati event, in the long term, that first is overshadowed by the creation of the community's first political action committee: GenderPAC.

Riki Ann Wilchins, co-founder of the Transsexual Menace and community activist, along with Lynn Walker, co-founder of the Menace and the Metropolitan Gender Network, came to the Be All in the hope that they could get the attendees interested in transgender activism. Wilchins spoke at the Friday luncheon about the issues that plague transgendered people everywhere.

With disarming ease and self-effacing jokes, Wilchins moved the audience to a standing ovation. But even more surprising were the cash and checks that people donated toward future activist events.

Wilchins and Walker, realizing that the community has developed a political consciousness, sought out members of the national organizations to create GenderPAC as a repository for donations and as an advisory committee to fund political actions.

The plan is simple. Donated funds will be invested and managed by IFGE, much like the Winslow Street Fund. Representatives from the major national organizations, AEGIS, IFGE, Renaissance, Tri-Ess, Outreach Institute, ICTLEP, CTO, and others form the committee, chaired by Walker, to review proposals for transgender activism and make appropriate cash awards.

Be All '95 will be recalled as the weekend the community came of age.



Renaissance at Be All, (from l to r): JoAnn Roberts, Angela Gardner, Andrea Susan, and Alison Laing



Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808 or call 302-995-1396.

Maryland

A chapter is forming in Baltimore. Write P.O. Box 39189, Baltimore, MD, 21212 or call 410-243-4250 24hr Hotline/Info.

New Jersey

South Jersey/Shore Area: Write Renaissance South Jersey, Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ, 08330. Meets first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee City. Doors open 7PM. Call 609-641-3782 for details.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Write Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, Pa. 19087. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 p.m. all year 'round. Call 610-975-9119 for information.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (1578) for location and times.

Affiliates

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 404-939-0244. Information resources.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 404-939-2128.

Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 870213, New Orleans, LA 70187-1300. Local support group.

New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701 or call 908-219-9094.

New York

Manhattan: Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), write 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014, or call 201-794-1665, Ext. 332. Local support group.

Long Island: New York GIRL & Partners, PO Box 456, Centereach, NY 11720, Call 516-732-8219 for info.

Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooners Belles, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Contact, Rachel Rudnick, P.O. Box 575, Norman, OK 73070.

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Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public.

Local Calendar

- July**
- 1 Ren. South Jersey
 - 1 Ren. LSV meeting
 - 8 Ren. Delaware
 - 15 Ren. GPC
 - 22 Balto. Affiliate

- August**
- 5 Ren. South Jersey
 - 5 Ren. LSV meeting
 - 12 Ren. Delaware
 - 19 Ren. GPC
 - 26 Balto. Affiliate

- September**
- 2 Ren. South Jersey
 - 2 Ren. LSV meeting
 - 9 Ren. Delaware
 - 16 Ren. GPC
 - 23 Balto. Affiliate

Resources

Background Papers:

- Background Papers are \$1.25 each:
1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
 2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
 3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
 4. The Matter of Children
 5. Annotated Bibliography
 6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
 7. AIDS/ HIV Safety and Ethics.
 8. Understanding Transsexualism

Significant Other Support

To network with other partners of transgendered people contact Evelyn Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940.

Pen Pal Program:

If you would like to correspond with other people around the country contact Pen Pals, care of Maryann Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940. Maryann will put you on the Pen Pal List and give you a copy of that list so you may correspond with as many new friends as you like.

News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

I just got back from a glamorous, crossdressed half-week in Ohio. Oy! What's a nice East Coast girl like me doing in the Midwest? Having a fairly good time at the **Be All**. On the morning of June 7, far too early for a girl who needs her beauty sleep, a small transgender caravan set out across the state of Pennsylvania. JoAnn Roberts, Andrea Susan, Alison & Dotty Laing and I filled a van and car with enough outfits and cosmetics to hold most women for a couple of weeks. It would have to do us for three days. I could go on about the trip (Andrea accusing truckers of wearing ladies undies on the CB radio) or talk about the fun I had (a manicure in a full service salon, or the cocktail dress I bought at Loehmanns for \$24) but I want to make a couple of observations about the convention and the people who attended. (See page one for more poop.)

I stayed dressed as a male the night we arrived and was dressed in male attire on Sunday morning for the arduous trip back to Renaissance Central. While walking around the Holiday Inn, I passed several of our "girls" in the hallways and shared a few elevator rides with them as well. For the most part, the ladies made sure they didn't make eye contact with this strange guy. During my "dressed" time, practically every convention attendee I passed would smile and say hello. Without my feminine external signals in place I guess they put me in the "outsider" category. Now, I can understand why you might not want to be open and friendly while out in the cold, cruel

world, but, in the context of a transgender convention shouldn't you be bold enough to be a goodwill ambassador for the community, and act friendly? It doesn't matter if the salesman from Sioux City or the woman in town for a business meeting are excited about meeting transvestites in the flesh, or if they are repelled at the idea. The idea is to make them know that TG folks are people too. We smile at you when we pass you in the hall and we'll hold the elevator door while complaining about how slow they are and how hot it is outside. By avoiding eye contact and staying withdrawn in a defensive posture "regular" people are likely to leave the convention hotel saying, "Boy, those guys in dresses are really weird." With a little natural human interaction maybe people will say, "Hey, those guys in dresses are okay."

Another thing I noticed was the reaction of "regular" folks. A few were obviously uncomfortable but many more were totally blasé. They were acting like we were just plain folks, maybe slightly eccentric but definitely not dangerous. Many of the girls would gather in the hotel's sports bar at various times and the patrons quickly became accustomed to us. Some of the girls got involved in pool games with the regulars and a couple got up to sing along with the karaoke machine.

Outside the hotel the local shopkeepers treated everyone with respect and gladly accepted their money and credit cards. I saw one of the girls in Loehmanns with her spouse (while I was buying that cocktail dress). She

was openly speaking in her male voice as she shopped and no one made a big deal of it. Perhaps, if we just act like regular people the majority of the population will treat us like regular people. What a concept!

At the next convention you attend, be all you can be. Be an ambassador of goodwill for the transgender community and don't walk the halls with your eyes to the floor. Make the straight world know that we are just regular people too. After all, we put our pantyhose on one leg at a time. At least most of us do.

Enough with the convention analysis. Now, the news and reminders.....

90210 TV

Joanne White called to my attention the plot of the May 24th episode of Beverly Hill 90210. It seems the boys are away in Palm Springs and they run into a hot babe who captivates one of them. They get together, have some good times and then, of course, comes the fateful moment when he bends her back over a sports car to have his way and finds a bulge in the wrong place and a breast form in his hand. She says, in a dubbed male voice. "Don't tell me you didn't know?" Of course he didn't know, they had a woman play the part.

Well, a few girls on the Internet transgender news groups didn't know she was really a female. There were several postings from people who wanted to know if she was a female impersonator and one even suggested she might be Jahna Steele. Wishful thinking girls. The 90210 TV was played by Eric Lindross' (Phila. Flyers) girlfriend, Monica Sklar. She talked in her own completely feminine voice for the whole show and other than the ability to pump her own gas, displayed no signs of maleness till the dubbed in voice incident. I told the producers I was available but they never called. Oh well... at least Ab Fab did.

Absolutely Fabulous

If you have cable TV and your system carries Comedy Central then

continued next page

News Beat...

you're probably already an *Absolutely Fabulous* addict. I had the chance to work on one of the new season's shows when the fab BBC was shooting in New York City last August. Patsy, the blonde (played by **Joanna Lumley**) is walking down Broadway when she meets three drag queens dressed almost like her. The queens take her for a fellow TG gal and tell her they'll see her later at the Boy Bar. The perfect end to a rotten day in the Big Apple.

I got to portray one of the queens along with two of renowned vocalist **Joey Arrias'** back up singers. I bring this up now since the shows are now running on Comedy Central and will probably be rerun to death, so check your listings for the show in which the girls visit the colonies, and look for me. I look just like my picture at the top of this column.

Stone Butch Pic to Click

Who says the transgendered aren't making progress? **Leslie Feinberg's** novel *Stone Butch Blues* is in development, as they say in L.A., to be made into a film. The screen writing chores will be handled by Pamela Gray who worked on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and Jan Oxenberg will direct. Since they're only working on it now it will no doubt appear in this column for months to come. Oh boy, something I can keep using to fill this space. Christine Vachon who brought us *Go Fish* is

co-producing with Jelayne Miles.

Dr. Jekyll and Mrs. Hyde

I saw this concept so long ago it was *Miss Hyde*. They're at it again though. Give Hollywood a chance to do a brand new script or a remake and which one do you think they'll pick? Anyhow, in this version **Tim Daly** is the unsuspecting perfumer who finds himself being taken over by **Sean Young**, an ornery character who spread chaos wherever she/he goes. Young was pregnant when she did the film and they not only had to use special effects to turn Daly into Young but also to hide the big belly. You should be able to find this one in theaters on July 28th. Go quickly, I wouldn't count on a long run.

Vegas In Space

Vegas in Space starring the late **Doris Fish** and the late "**Tippi**" had a late release. It took them eight years to finish the film. You know how cranky those drag queens can be. It hit the screen in 1991 and shortly thereafter Ms. Fish left us, followed by Tippi. Fortunately their legacy lives on in video. Keep checking the video store girls. **Troma Films**, the people who brought you *The Toxic Avenger*, own the rights and are planning to release *Vegas In Space* sometime this year. You'll thrill to the adventure and glamour as the butch male space explorers journey to planet Clitoris and undergo a strange but exciting metamorphosis.

If you'd like the soundtrack to play as you get made up and fantasize about

your trip to planet Clitoris, there is a cassette available for \$12.00, including postage or UPS delivery. Contact: Smiling Professional Music, 1256, Guerrero, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Speaking of Metamorphosis

*There once was a singer named Wayne,
who decided he'd like to be Jayne.
When his penis was snipped
her vocal range slipped,
and she tried something else to sustain.*

Not the world's best poetry but a succinct summation of the life of **Jayne County**, the first transsexual punk country singer. Just when she began to get notice as a singer she had gender reassignment surgery and became another big-haired, female country warbler. She has made a comeback in a different venue, as the Brits say, by beginning a writing career.

Her book is called *Man Enough To Be A Woman* and it has been published in the U.K. by a company called Serpent's Tail. No word on an American version but you know how unsophisticated the Yanks are. Probably never realize how worthwhile it is. Silly sods. Sorry... I got lost in Brit speak for a second. If you can't live without the book you can try ordering it from the Centerprise Bookshop, 136-138 Kingsland High Street, Hackney, London E8 2NS. You can ring them up at 0171 254 9632. Check your phone book for international dialing instructions and remember they're 5 hours ahead of Eastern time. Jayne appeared at the shop on June 19th to talk about her life and sign a few copies.

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Mr. James

Speaking of appearances, **Jimmy James**, best know for his Marilyn Monroe impersonation appeared in a one man show at New York's Duplex last month. With luck the run will be extended and we'll all get to see him in this show called *Voices*. It's called that since it features Jimmy's vocal ability and not his mastery of glamour. He sings tribute to some of the most outstanding female entertainers of our time, from Earth Kitt and Cher to Billie Holiday and Karen Carpenter. Watch your eating habits Jimmy!

Italian Tastes Turn TS

Our Internet correspondent Rachel O'Connor tells us that the Italian male has found a new sexual treat, the pre-op TS. "Het men admit they find them more sexy than women" says Dr. Abatte (an Italian psychologist), "heterosexual men like the TS, because it's a way to have a gay relationship without being gay!"

Call the travel agent girls! It time for La Dolce Vita. It all goes to show that the "heterosexual" man may not be all that heterosexual. I've met people whose attitude seemed to be, "Well, if she looks this hot, who cares if she's really a guy?"

Rachel quotes a well known photographer who sums it up, "The TS is the sexuality of the next century. You can have both man and woman in the same person, twice the choice, twice the love." I suspect the girls getting the men are mostly transgenderists. True

MtF transsexuals wouldn't be caught dead using the male equipment they were born with for sexual activity.

South Jersey Upgrade

Renaissance National had an old computer kicking around the office for a few months. The machine was donated to us and while we thought about using it to run a BBS, it turned out it didn't have enough RAM to be very useful. **Kelly Harris** mentioned at the national board meeting that the South Jersey Chapter could use some computing power, since they didn't have any, and before you could say MS-DOS the computer was in her car and on its way to New Jersey.

Meanwhile, the national board is pondering the purchase of something new, something we might actually be able to use for real work. Any transgender computer sales folk out there? Let us know what kind of deal you can cut us on a PC. It must run dBase. Have your modem call my modem.

Can I See Some ID?

Transsexuals in Great Britain have a tough deal. Legal name and gender change on official documents is not allowed, even after surgery. The Underground (the transit system, not some kind of hidden movement) are a little more enlightened, if you look at it one way. If you are preparing for the surgery in London and you work "in the city", as they say, the folks who run the tube trains will give you two ID cards, one with a male picture for your daytime, job persona, and one with your

femme photo for your off work hours. (It'll still have your legal name on it.) The need for the dual IDs arose when the London Transport folks realized that a TS might not always look like the picture on the ID card. Now the sad part is they need ID cards for people at all. And, the poor TV, who can also look quite different, is left out in the cold. The policy does not apply to transvestites. I guess the authorities will just have to try and figure out what the TVs look like as their male selves. They could use their imaginations....naw.

Final Ramblings

London's **Wayout Club** has moved. If you're visiting and can't find it, try looking at SHORTS, 125 Great Titchfield Street, W1, just off Oxford Street. Your hostess, Caroline Eggerton has got the place open every Saturday from 9PM to 3AM. Ring her up for info at +44 (0)181 363 0948. (email: caroline@wayout.win-uk.net)

Rachel O Connor tells us that there is a new weekly club for TG folk in Leicester Square (pronounced "lester"). The club is at Maximus next to the Empire club. The theme is Xdress and F-M get entry reduced. It's called Debbie nite at Club Naive.

Phaedra Kelly of the IGTA reports that the British Levi's ad starring a TG named **Zaldie** may not have stirred as much controversy as the press would have us believe. Miss Kelly contacted the Press Complaints Commission and found that not one

continued on page 15

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Please, Don't Throw Us Away!

by Kelly Marie Harris

Here I am, lying in bed, 3600 miles from home, alone and very lonely. Just two days ago I underwent a three hour operation to correct a problem I've had since the day I was born. With my 49th birthday only two days away, I can now find true happiness. Then why am I crying? Unfortunately these are not tears of joy running down my cheeks. Because I made the choice to correct this birth defect and undergo surgery, I have severed the few remaining threads that held me to most of my family.

In the five years since my condition has had a name and I've known which direction I must follow, I have sat down with each family member who would listen and tried to explain what I must do. Only my daughter has shown me unconditional love and stood by my side, thank God! We have become closer and we both have a better understanding of the meaning of the word "love." This story is not about her. If more people were like her I wouldn't feel the need to write this.

This story is for the other members of that family: my father, who would end up disowning me, my brother (who I was almost close to) and my sister, who could have made a difference. This story is also for my son, who's last words to me were, "If you ever try to see me or my family, I'll kill you." Unfortunately, the anger in his voice made me a believer in his words.

What ever happened to the old adage, "Blood is thicker than water?" Nowadays we are quick to throw away the old, the sick, or anybody that may be an embarrassment to us and our way of life. I am ashamed to live in a society that allows something like this to happen.

Maybe part of the problem is our values. Nowadays we put too much importance on "material" things and not enough on "emotional" and "mental" stability. We live in a time were "I" is more important than "we." Can you remember the last time somebody came up to you and asked if they could help you? Did you think the person was being paid to say that or did you feel the person really cared and wanted to help you, out of the goodness of their heart? I realize there will be some who may say, "Yeah, that's me", but it's only going to be a few and some of them will be lying. How many times have you been walking down the street and seen somebody walking toward you? Did you say "Hi" or did you think, "Maybe I should let the other person say "hi" first, then I'll say "hi?" Did you smile first...help the other person first? If we all waited till the other person was nice before we did something nice, nothing would get done. Try smiling and saying "Hello", it doesn't cost anything and it makes you feel good! Stop and think about something: what would happen if all the throw-away-people got together and found out that they were no

longer the minority, that suddenly they were the majority? What would happen if they treated you like you treated them? How would you like to spend your family holidays alone... all your holidays alone? How would you like to have good news and then find out there was nobody to share it with?

What is my family's shame: my crime, my condition? I suffer from gender dysphoria! This is the condition that causes transsexualism. It requires the sufferer to have gender reassignment or a sex change. "Big deal!!" My pain and suffering is over. I have rebuilt my family with fellow castaways. In the future I will be getting married to a , man who loves me, who knows my history and wants to share his life with me. I will never get over the pain that my former family caused. It was their choice and it's their loss. Now it's their guilt to deal with. I may not forget the pain but I am forgetting them!

What will you do if somebody comes to you and tells you they have something important and personal to talk over with you? Are you going to throw them away and hide your head or will somebody be proud of you and your actions? Me, I'm proud of my new family and I'm very happy to say "I'm no longer a prisoner in a body that is a stranger to my mind."

September 1993. Rewritten 1995

Ed. Note: Kelly will appear in News & Views with a regular column starting next month.



Jewish Gay/Lesbian/Trans Con

from the Internet

The 14th International Conference of Gay & Lesbian Jews will be held in New York from July 27th to July 30th, 1995 at the New York Sheraton Hotel. The event is to be co-sponsored by New York City's Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, the world's largest gay and lesbian congregation, and the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations.

This year's Jewish Gay & Lesbian conference is the first to explicitly in-

clude transgender/transsexual people with seminars about transgender and transsexual issues in the Jewish Gay & Lesbian Community.

Conference organizers are expecting over 1,000 lesbian, gay, transsexual and transgender Jews from around the U.S. and the world, to gather for presentations, seminars, and panels; social events and entertainment; a variety of Friday night and Shabbat morning services; sightseeing, Broadway shows; and more.

The theme of the Conference is: "Gay and Lesbian Jews: Taking Our Place in the 21st Century". Highlights are a keynote address by Yael Dayan, a prominent member of Israel's Knesset (Parliament); comedians Sara Cytron and Jaffe Cohen; and an acapella group, Sons & Lovers.

For information and registration materials contact Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, by phone, 212-929-9498 or by e-mail — cbst@haven.ios.com.





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It's hard to believe, but we're into our tenth year in business. We'd like to thank everyone who made this possible, especially those who frequented **Paradise In The Poconos**. So, we're making the Sept. '95 weekend a very special event.

We'll be giving away a free Paradise weekend and lots of gift certificates from really great community vendors. We've planned a marvelous event just for you.

Paradise In The Poconos is produced by and for crossdressers, just like you. Whether you're experienced or a novice, we've got something you'll love.

One price fits all: \$335* per person, double occupancy. Includes all activities — 3 parties and 2 seminars — room, all meals, tax, and gratuity. Register *now* for the September weekend before we fill up.

*Some single occupancy rooms available at higher price.

Paradise In The Poconos is produced solely by Creative Design Services and is not affiliated with any other organization.



If I get some interesting answers (G-rated, please) I'll print the results in a future column.

Ambassadors and Murderers

The NWGA *Newsletter* from Portland, Ore., carried an editorial by their President, Danni, in which she urged us to remember that we all represent the transgendered community with each action we take or word we speak. She mentions how other minorities are often painted with a broad brush based on the deeds or misdeeds of individuals in those minority groups. "Public trust is developed through hard work. It takes only a small incident or comment to seriously erode this trust. Each of us is an ambassador for the transgendered community," she writes.

This is an issue that comes up every so often: that we must all be on our best public behavior lest we give "the community" a bad name. I reject this notion. Intelligent people do not commit the logic error of drawing conclusions about a group from the words or actions of individuals. If unintelligent people do so – and they do – we can't live life trying to win over half-wits.

Last April, a transsexual person, not allied with any known support group or organization, murdered two law officers, wounded a third, and held police at bay for hours before surrendering. The tragedy was no more sensationalized because the perpetrator was a transsexual than any other similar case involving otherwise "normal" citizens who go on killing rampages. If ever there was a chance for our enemies to bang the drum against transsexualism or crossdressing, this was it – but it didn't materialize.

Each of us has our own personality and motivations for our crossdressing. We shouldn't be afraid to express ourselves as individuals for fear that we may be disqualified as the poster-girl for all transgendered people. Almost any behavior or comment is acceptable provided it is delivered in the right context. Matching the word or deed with the context is the responsibility of the individual and requires intelligence. Beyond that caution (and there is no way to police intelligence), none

Many Americans outside the metropolitan areas of our country fear the decadence and crime that they imagine in our large cities. And now, many of us city-dwellers have something to fear ourselves: the militia groups sprouting up in the supposed heartland of America.

I have this newly fostered image of rural America where portly truck drivers and spindly farmers are playing war games in camouflage fatigues and driving around in pickup trucks filled with enough explosive fertilizer to level Grand Forks, Nebraska, while their wives circulate petitions trying to have the Branch Davidians memorialized as national martyrs.

And to think we were worried about the 'A-rabs' terrorizing us 'normal' citizens. It's not the 'A-rabs' we need to worry about about: it's the All-American 'A-holes' out there that scare the bejesus out of me.

Generation 'X'-Dressers

I had a conversation with a friend of mine, Melissa Franks, who wondered to whom the young crossdressers of today and tomorrow would look to or emulate as catalysts or role models for their crossdressing.

We were comparing notes about those traits of feminine dress during our formative years that interested us in dressing as women. Since we both grew up in the era of miniskirts, hot pants, skintight jeans, and high heels, we found today's fashions wanting for inspiration and wondered what features in today's styles would make a young male want to dress like a female.

Implicit in this question is that the first stirrings of crossdressing behavior

is purely sexual, purely taboo naughtiness. Those who feel transgendered from their earliest years would be unmoved by changing feminine fashions and would be compelled to do so, no matter what the current style.

But most garden variety crossdressers can usually tell you an anecdote about some single piece of feminine attire that acted as a catalyst for their own desire to try that item on themselves. Most baby-boomer crossdressers could point to anything from stiletto heels and sheer stockings to platform shoes and hipster jeans; from organdy prom dresses to spandex bodysuits to thong bikinis as women's apparel that turned their fancy.

But what about today's styles and the young men who are predisposed to crossdress? Aside from the sex-driven fashions in films, television and music videos, are young women today wearing anything remotely interesting to crossdressers? High heels have been replaced with combat boots for even dressy occasions; women's casual clothes seem decidedly anti-sexy. Walk through any mall and you'll be hard pressed to find anything eye-catching from a crossdressers' viewpoint.

At the risk of sounding like an old fuddy-duddy (too late, you say?), where are the crossdressers of tomorrow going to go for inspiration such as most of us had during our formative years? I really would like to hear from any young crossdressers as to whether they find inspiration in the same fashions that I find uninteresting. And for the rest of you old queens out there, (myself included), what piece of women's wear first got your mind racing about transvesting yourself.

of us should have to worry about being ambassadors for transgenderism.

Are You Being Served?

Vicki Thomas wrote an article under that title in the *Femme Forum* newsletter of Tau Chi Chapter in Houston, Texas. It did not deal with the popular imported BBC sitcom of the same name, but it did draw my attention for that reason.

Vicki's article dealt with the various clientele that come to a support group and likened it to a business that must try to please more than one type of customer in order to stay in business.

She advances the analogy of the 'value' customer; 'price' customer; and the 'price and value' customer to the support group's membership base. Some come looking for qualitative rather than quantitative factors when they come to a support group. And there are those who will balance the material requirements vs. the spiritual rewards of belonging to a group like ours or the many others around the country. Leaders of groups need to find a middle ground to keep the maximum number of members happy, even if that means shorting some segments of the spectrum on occasion.

One of her most interesting comments was this: "Not everyone can attend [meetings] each month. However, if there are any members who pick and choose which meetings to attend based on which suit their needs, then it is my duty to tell you that you have violated the spirit of mutual support we have pledged to each other."

In our own group, the attendance fluctuates not so much in numbers but in which members attend in any given month. It does seem that as we have reached a level of success, some members have grown complacent and do indeed pick and choose which months to visit and which to skip. It's an interesting concept to say that the obligation to organize meetings is double-ended: the members have a certain obligation to support the meetings as the leaders do to put the meetings on. That might be something to think about the next time you "just don't feel like" going to the monthly meeting.

Mr. Sandman, Bring Me A Job

The Rhapsody newsletter published by TransPitt group in Pittsburgh, Pa., carried a brief 'situation wanted' ad from a member named Angela. In the listing, she said that she dresses en femme about 50% of her time and was searching for a new career where she could dress while "eloquently draped in stylish feminine attire."

Firstly – to pick a small nit – I think she meant to say 'elegantly draped' since an 'eloquent' draping would be a talkative window treatment rather than a stylishly dressed woman. Secondly, is she for real? Notice that she is looking for a new career in stylish feminine attire. No waitressing or checkout counter work for this babe. I'm thinking real hard about where a transvestite could get a job in which he/she could crossdress and then I narrow that field down to a job where stylish attire would be de rigueur. The trouble I'm having with this is that I'm thinking in terms of real life – not fantasy – and I keep coming up empty. The only job I know a transvestite can get that requires a certain stylish element in fashion is... hustling. And knowing how particular our Miss Angela is, I bet she doesn't want to work nights.

Anything Over A Mouthful... Would be Greatly Appreciated

My 'friend' from Chicago, Kiki Carmichael, wrote about a *Cosmopolitan* article on home-based breast augmentation in her *Out of Focus* column in *The Primrose* newsletter of The Chicago Gender Society.

Some of the techniques are simple, some are messy, and at least one creates an unusual odor, but all can be tried in the privacy of your own home, with everyday items you already have in the cupboard.

The first technique is simply massaging the breasts with a strong kneading motion, trying to manipulate the fatty tissue out towards the front of the breast. Another method is to rub ice cubes over your breast area, inducing blood flow and swelling of the breasts along with hardened nipples. This

seems like a rather short-term solution. The next two techniques involve covering the breasts with either a commercial facial mask (mud treatment) or whipping up a soufflé of raw eggs, condensed milk, sugar, seasoning salt and Tabasco sauce, and smearing the batter over the aforementioned breast area. These methods improve the softness of breast skin. I wonder how they decided that Tabasco sauce plays a role in breast softening?

The final method entails smearing Ben Gay salve over the breasts and letting it work its magic overnight while you sleep. The original author says she tried this for two weeks and swelled up 'gloriously.' The one downfall was that the overpowering smell of Ben Gay was near impossible to wash off.

I have a feeling we're going to be able to detect the faint smell of Ben Gay at our functions from here on in. It'll be like a ladies' auxiliary meeting inside a locker room. But who cares? Our tits – every pair of 'em – will look fabulous!



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Trash — Handle With Care

by Jane Ellen Fairfax

Tired Rhetoric Against Sense and Harmony (TRASH) is the single greatest obstacle to development of a real community of transgendered people. If we are ever to achieve mutual respect among gender-gifted people, we need to clean up our TRASH. Sooner or later we will have to decide whether ego considerations or community are more important, and act accordingly.

This does not mean that we cannot share a meaningful dialogue. In her article, "Taking Out The Trash," Dina Amberle (*RN&V* 6/95) states there is nothing offensive about a focused support group per se. Her criticisms of Tri-Ess policy stem more from practice than theory. In arguing against the practice, however, Dina shows that she is misinformed in one or two areas.

"Two years ago," she relates, "there was a major wrangle about allowing continued membership to... a sorority officer who decided she was a transsexual." Actually, the brouhaha had little to do with the practice of Tri-Ess policy. Because of our "Friends of Tri-Ess" membership, no Tri-Ess sister or brother need ever leave a chapter because of change in orientation. Tri-Ess actively encourages its chapters to have a parallel "Friends" membership. There need have been no problem in the situation Dina described. The President of the chapter, who had a private agenda, exploited the situation toward her own ends. When the officer in question deplored the President's actions, the President turned on her.

"Friends" membership has worked well for Tri-Ess, for it allows us to practice compassion while maintaining the focus which has done so much good for crossdressers and their families. Several of our "Friends" members are among the most loyal to Tri-Ess, and never miss a chance to promote our work of support.

"Many Tri-Ess chapters," argues Dina, "have a screening policy that can be off putting..." While I would not use the word "many," Dina's statement

is true for a few chapters. In its Chapter Formation Kit, Tri-Ess includes screening guidelines. For years I have used these guidelines for screening in my own Tri-Ess chapter and have never offended anyone. Tri-Ess does, however, give its chapters wide latitude in screening, as it does in most other areas. While our chapters are united in the basic Tri-Ess vision, they enjoy the freedom to apply that vision. They are encouraged to come up with new ideas for support – and permitted to make their own mistakes. This writer believes that encouraging creativity and providing flexibility is a good idea.

Dina broaches the very difficult problem of what to do if a Tri-Ess group is the only group in town. The Central Oklahoma Transgendr Alliance (COTA) experience provides the blueprint for establishment of an inclusive gender community in just about any imaginable population center. My position has always been that a community is truly successful if, and only if, everyone in it has a group in which they feel truly comfortable.

If we are motivated by anything except serving human needs, we need to re-evaluate our attitudes. Over the years, I have firmly advised our members that if Tri-Ess is the only group in town, they have a solemn duty to help establish other types of groups as soon as the need for them becomes manifest. Never, to my knowledge, has a Tri-Ess chapter ever tried to stifle an emerging open group. Would that certain open groups allow us the same courtesy! At various times, such groups have fired propaganda cannons at forming Tri-Ess chapters, tried to set restrictions on their membership and exerted back-room peer pressure on their members not to go "over there." These actions show a callous disregard for serving human needs. They are just plain wrong!

For Dina the open concept works well. For others, however, it is not a desirable solution. Trouble starts when

we begin to impose our beliefs on others, denying them the right to reach their own solutions. To justify judging others, some pretend to be able to read their minds and hearts. I know of only One I trust to do that. When the rest of us try to assume His role, we only hurt our fellow human creatures. "Why", in the words of the little shopkeeper in Cabaret, "can't we leben, und lebenleiden... live, and let live?"

In our own groups we are free to present ideas, critique them, and even get vehement if we feel strongly. We must be very careful, however, in whipping the other fellow's horse. Dina and I can engage in dialogue even where we disagree because our relationship is founded on mutual respect. Dina's intelligence and thoughtfulness shine forth in her article. She understands the main point of my "Talking Trash" article. We should indeed work together on points of agreement, regardless of policy differences. Disagreements on inter-group policy should be aired only if they encourage dialogue and understanding. Obviously, an open policy works well for Renaissance, while a family focus works equally well for Tri-Ess. The contributions of these worthy organizations to the benefit of gender-gifted people are obvious. Both groups have learned to handle "TRASH" with care. Both have contributed mightily to the support of crossgendered people, and to the building of community among them. And that is what counts!

Ed. note: Jane Ellen Fairfax is Chair of the board of Tri-Ess national and a member of Renaissance.



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The Low-Down on Thermolase

Recently, the FDA gave permission for a company to market a new hair removal process called Thermolase.

by Valerie June-mate

I ran a U.S. patent search and found the exact patent on which Thermolase is based. This has proved more illuminating than the company financial prospectus and press releases. While I, as much as the next woman, would love to see safe, permanent, painless, mass hair removal, and the science in the patent is believable, I think it will not be safe or effective in the real world for several reasons.

The general principal of the patent is that the hair and pores are contaminated with a substance that absorbs laser energy at a frequency that is translucent through skin. The contaminate is removed from the surface of the skin. The laser is scanned over the area, which activates the contaminate and kills the tissue in the pores. Three types of contaminates are exemplified in the patent: 1) An oil suspension of fine carbon particles that heat when properly excited; 2) dye that heats when properly excited; 3) hemotoporphyrin derivatives that release free oxygen radicals when properly excited.

These substances can do their work only if they completely penetrate pores which contain the hair follicles. The patent claims that this can be accomplished by massaging and capillary action. In reality, the substance can penetrate completely only into pores which contain no hair or waxy sebaceous buildup. In most people, healthy hair roots make a good seal in the follicle part way in, which would prevent the substance from reaching the base of the root which really needs to be killed. Therefore, the substance will mostly kill tissue near the surface of the skin which, at best, will not reliably kill the hair follicle and, at worst, will cause scarring by destroying too much healthy tissue near the skin surface.

In addition, the technique does not differentiate hair follicles from the other connections to pores: sweat and sebaceous glands. While losing sweat

glands is not serious if it is only a small percentage of the total body surface, losing all sebaceous glands in an area is a sure way to turn the skin into a desert that no amount of externally applied moisturizer can ever refresh.

The patent author freely admits that tissue damage could occur in a radius of 3-6 mm around each hair follicle. This is greater than the average distance between hairs on the face.

Besides permanently damaging the complexion if the technique is improperly applied – which all three substances could do – there could be significant adverse effects from each substance, specifically: 1) Carbon black suspensions and blue/black dye would mix with the dying cells and take days, if not weeks, to be completely expelled from the pores (since the sebaceous glands would also be cauterized, there would be less fluid than normal to carry out the matter – pseudo-blackheads from hell; 2) Free oxygen radicals (from excited hemotoporphyrin derivatives) are known carcinogens.

What scares me most about the Thermolase process is exactly one of their selling points: that it is astoundingly fast. The laser scan portion of the process is completed in less than a minute. If the parameters were not correctly set, my complexion could be permanently destroyed in one fell swoop before either I or the operator realized there was something wrong. Perversely, the full extent of damage may not be apparent for weeks or months, or even many years, if free oxygen radicals are used, and melanoma or other cancer resulted. In the interim, the temporarily amazed and satisfied customer will have persuaded many of their friends to do it.

In summary, I think the concept of the patent has some merit, but unless Thermolase has perfected; 1) an effective way to make the contaminates reach the root of hair follicles; 2) new contaminates without the adverse effects of the examples in the patent; 3) an automatic feedback mechanism that immediately adjusts the laser for

proper exposure based on the skin absorption and reflection; and 4) a way to differentiate hair follicles from sebaceous glands (most difficult), then they do not have a safe or effective product. It is possible that I am being unnecessarily pessimistic, but I am certainly not willing to be a guinea pig, which I posit that all Thermolase customers in the first couple of years will be.

If Thermolase is smart, they will allow more development time to address the above problems. If they are greedy and come to market too soon, their salons will be popular just long enough for the consumers to realize they are being ripped off, and/or harmed. In that case, if Thermolase is lucky, they will just go out of business for lack of revenue. If they are less fortunate, they will be forced out by lawsuits.

Let the consumer beware the salesman. Let the salesman beware of the consumers.



Thermolase Is Not Alone

A company called DUSA Pharmaceuticals Inc. has received a Notice of Allowance from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for a gel patch, light delivery device, which provides enhanced light penetration for ALA Photodynamic Therapy (PDT) of localized skin conditions. DUSA said it will initially evaluate the light patch for use in human hair removal, but they hope to develop it for a variety of potential dermatology applications. The company recently announced a successful independent study using ALA PDT for hair removal, and is currently developing a clinical trial program. Sounds a bit like Thermolase, doesn't it?

The invention was developed on behalf of DUSA by Synectics Corp., to be used in conjunction with its novel PDT red light source, which received a similar U.S. Notice of Allowance during the first quarter.

In other Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation (LASER) news, ThermoLase Corp., is not content with burning off your hair. The company has also received a U.S. patent for a laser-based exfoliation process to remove outer layers of skin, revealing the generally younger-looking skin below. They're just full of ideas involving lasers and the epidermis but ThermoLase has not conducted clinical testing of the process yet. The company would have to obtain FDA clearance before the process could be used commercially.

HOT BUZZ

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"We can't all and some of us don't. That's all there is to it."

— Eeyore (A. A. Milne)

The HOT BUZZ for this month is the formation of a GenderPAC to fund transgender political actions (see article this issue). It's about time this community got off its collective butt and did something productive instead of admiring itself in the mirror and giving itself awards. We need people like Riki Ann Wilchins to remind us that life isn't always a bowl of cherries; sometimes it's the pits. (Apologies to Irma Bombeck.)

With retro-fasion in great demand, what could be more retro than full-fashioned, non-stretch nylon hosiery like the kind Mom used to wear. (How many TVs cut their baby teeth on these?) Well, if you thought you'd never see this type of stocking again, guess again. Classic Fashions of Tulsa (Okla.) carries seamed hosiery of this era with reinforced soles and reinforced heel and toe. They make a mailing every 5 - 7 weeks with new items and specials. Send \$1.00 to get on their list and send it to: Classic Fashions of Tulsa, Dept. AD1-I, PO Box 700271, Tulsa, OK 74170-0271.

Looking for more makeup and fashion news? Try a makeup newsletter. One such publication is *Main Floor*, named after the television show of the same

name. Both the show and newsletter cover news of fashion, makeup, makeovers and skin care. A single copy is \$2.00 and 15 weeks is \$22.50. Contact: MAIN FLOOR Newsletter, 121 East 24th Street, 4th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10010, or call them at 212-982-9300.

We've talked about finding the correct shape eyeglass frames for your face shape in this space many time. Now, a Japanese firm has automated that process with computers and a dab of AI (that's Artificial Intelligence to you non-dweebs). Miki Cycglass boutiques have integrated a color scanner, analysis software and an eyeglass production unit on a local area network. A digitized image of the customer's face is analyzed by the software and then displays the customer "wearing" the recommended frames. Neat huh! Once a pair of frames are selected, they are made on the spot. Systems have been installed in Japan, France, Australia and Germany. Maybe they'll be coming to the USA real soon.

Well, after touting them for so long, I finally bought a WonderBra and guess what: it works! Yep, even for a flat chested old broad like me. The increase in chest cleavage is quite noticeable and with the help of some extra push up pads, it was downright respectable.

Speaking of push up pads, the latest in high-tech pads aren't pads at all but mini-breast forms. Half-forms and molded mini-forms of polyurethane covered silicone are the latest rage for increasing the apparent size on one's bust. The pads slip into any bra and help hold the breast tissue in place, high and visible. Try... Curves Invisible Breast Enhancers by Bodylines... Shapely Secrets by Kathleen Kirkwood... and Intrigue Breast Enhancers by Amoena. I found an ad for Curves. They come in Large and Small. Large adds almost 2 cups sizes to your bust. They are \$150 per pair with \$16 express shipping and handling.

Bodylines gives a 30 day money back guarantee, so what have you got to lose? Try 'em today. Call 1-800-528-7837 or mail a check or money order to BodyLines Inc., 951-2 Old County Rd M/S 255, Belmont, CA 94002.

So, lemme put my two cents in here about breasts. Having breasts is *the* most visible sign of femininity and I guess that's why so many non-transsexuals start fooling with hormones. My take on hormones and breasts is this: it's far cheaper and far safer to have implants than to take hormones, especially unsupervised. You are playing a chemical Russian Roulette with your body and you're going to lose. Okay, okay, I'll lighten up. Know how the classic Champagne glass got its shape? Legend has it that the glass is the size/shape of Marie Antoinette's breast.

What the Hell! This is too good a subject to pass up. Here are some interesting breast facts: Average size of an American Woman's breasts - 36B... Average size of a Playboy Playmate's breasts - 34C... Total amount of money spent by American women on bras in 1994 - \$2.85 billion (yes, billion)... Number of Wonderbras sold by Macy's NYC in the first 10 days they were available in the U.S. - 3000... Largest size of a Playtex 18-Hour bra - 50DDD.

Two fashion staples that signal summertime are polka dots and stripes. But remember, don't mix them; it looks way too busy. Classic dots and stripes color combinations are navy and white and red and white. They not only look cool, they are cool. So, go get summery. Don't forget the other summer stand-by, madras.

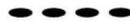
The first M•A•C ads with RuPaul are starting to show up in the fashion mags. *Allure*, *marie claire* and *Glamour* ran the ad with La Ru in red vinyl hip boots and corset-bustier. The ad shows RuPaul in various poses forming the letters that spell out "VIVA GLAM," M•A•C's best

HOT•BUZZ

selling lipstick. By the way, every cent of the retail selling price of VIVA GLAM lipstick is donated to AIDS research. Check out how they made the "M."



A couple of people asked about the address of my web site on the Internet. We've been moving stuff around and adding lots more interesting content. Consequently, links sometimes get a little fouled up. Your best bet is to surf on over to the top page at <<http://www.cdspub.com>> and check out what's new. For July, we've added a bibliography of transgender articles and books.



If there's one thing I've learned about fashion it is you must keep experimenting with new looks all the time else you begin to appear dated. One way to completely change and update your look is to change wig styles. We're lucky in that respect. I purchased a short dark wig, a la Liza Minelli, and wore it on the last night of the Be All last month. Not only didn't my closest friends recognize me, many said I looked 10 years younger. Lessee, that'd make me 18.



I've finally learned why the fashion industry seems to be so confused about what's going to sell and what won't – consultants. According to the *New York Times*, fashion consultants, not designers, have been driving the market and driving it into the basement it would seem. So, designers are taking back their turf and the result is the "new femininity" we've seen cropping up the last few seasons. Hot for Fall are still nip-waisted suits with skirts to the knee. Very 40's retro yet very modern. Get out those corsets, girls, it's a tight fit!



Here's a bunch of designers that must have been bored. Warnaco (Warners lingerie) one of the largest manufacturers had some extra Lycra and spandex lying around and decided that bathing suits made from basic girdle material might be "cute." Actually, they look like you forgot to put on your clothes! Yecch.



Someone recently asked me it it was permissible to wear a short sleeved sequined gown in the Fall. I'm not sure all those old rules still apply, but the answer would be, No. There are some rules, rather guidelines, for evening wear that do apply: A long gown is for Black Tie affairs... A short dress is for Cocktail parties (that's why they're called Cocktail Dresses)... any other event (like a wedding) a dress with matching jacket will do.... Don't wear velvet after April or cotton after September... With skimpy, tight evening clothes "invisible underwear" is a must (thongs & strapless bras)... Keep jewelry to a minimum... Carry the smallest evening bag you can; it should just fit in the palm of your hand.



That reminds me. I've noticed that many crossdressers don't carry a purse. What's up with that? Can you imagine any woman without a purse? Get with the program, kids. Buy a nice leather purse and stuff it with all those goodies a real woman would carry: tissues, car keys, wallet, comb, touch-up makeup, etc.



Victoria's Secret has yet another catalog on the streets. This one is called In Between and it features clothing for that in-between season as summer wanes and Fall comes on. The catalog is packed with stretch satin tees, skirts, jeans, and the like. The only real problem is you need a near perfect body. Stretch satin shows nearly every bump, wart, crease and dimple. There's no way to wear structured undergarments without having them show through, unless, of course, that's the look you're going for.



Got a little pot below your waistline left over from the winter hibernation? Try an A-line skirt or tank dress. It flares out just enough to hide that paunch and looks really cute. Every club girl should own at least one. And, also try the new body slimming pantyhose. With double and triple the amount of Lycra as regular hose, they can squeeze inches and pounds off any girl's figure.



Peggy Rudd has a new book on the market, *Crossdressers: And Those Who Share Their Lives*. Unlike the other offerings from Peggy, this book is hardback

and pink! The book is a collection of photos and vignettes about, by, and for crossdressers and their families. This book is going mainstream and should help bring out a lot of useful information about our community. Contact: PM Publishers, PO Box 5304, Katy, TX 77491 for price and availability.



Last April, a group of interested individuals proposed a home on the net for the Congress of Transgender Organizations (CTO) and the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE). Through the efforts, in large measure, of Jamie Faye Fenton (Calif.), Jenny Sands (Norway), and Dawn Wilson (Kentucky), the transgender community now has a World Wide Web site. More interesting is that it has it's own domain: transgender.org. Now, any organization can have a Home Page on the triple-dub *and* an email address. Crank up your Web browser and hie thee to <http://www.transgender.org/tg/ifge/> for a peek at their resource listings.



Riki Ann Wilchins wants YOU. Yes, you! for Transgender Lobby Day, October 2-3, 1995. I know that's a long way off, but you're going to think about this all summer to make up your mind. Last year, Phyllis Frye, Riki and Karen Kerin made the rounds of the Capitol talking with various staffers about transgender issues. This year, they want you to help. A coordinated effort will be made to get transgendered folks in to see their Representatives and Senators. Imagine walking the hallowed halls on Congress en femme. Gives a girl the willies. But seriously, these people know literally nothing about us based in reality. So it behooves us to call on them to make known our concern about the total lack of protection under present laws. So, if you can spare the time, getcher cute little buns down to Washington, D.C. Contact Riki Riki Anne Wilchins at 212-645-1753, or Karen Kerin at 802-223-4756, or Phyllis Frye at 713-723-8368.



So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I could get arrested for doing drag in Congress. Comments? Email them to CyberQueen@cdspub.com. © 1995 by Creative Design Services.




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News Beat...

complaint had been filed about the ad.

After clearing up that one she was a little confused by a report in *News & Views* (September '94) about a company called SWISH that planned to produce an item called the Drag Doll. Phaedra confused the drag doll with a transvestite sex doll named Morelle De Keigh. The doll cost fifty pounds and is supposed to be the ultimate TV Love Doll. (Phaedra says, "Her one eyed skirt snake is too big, and the erection precludes she ever don a frock.") No Phaedra, the drag doll we wrote of is indeed a foot tall and manufactured for the "kiddie-winkies." Another entrepreneur brought Miss Morelle to market. Phaedra has the love doll in a box to be exhibited in the IGTA transgen-

der museum, as soon as they get one.

Back in the States, **Erie Sisters** honcho and Oil City, Pa. transsexual, **Kristine Holt**, lost her bid for the Venango County commissioner gig. She came in fourth. Her campaign slogan was, appropriately though, "Committed to Change." Since losing the election she has decided to follow a new road in life, one which will lead her to Temple University's law school here in Philadelphia. From would-be-commissioner to Philadelphia lawyer, who says a woman can't reinvent herself? Kristine is looking for lodgings. Anybody got a room to rent?

A Low Life In High Heels is again in the news. **Holly Woodlawn's** book was last mentioned as a vehicle for **Madonna and Harvey Fierstien**. Now it seems Holly has sold the rights to independent producer Michael Zoumas. They're talking about not

even mentioning Andy Warhol.

If you are an artistic TG then **Gallery Q** is for you. It's a new gay owned fine art gallery that is opening this summer in Tuscon, Arizona. To submit your work send slides and resumes to Gallery Q, Box 300, 6336 N. Oracle Rd., Suite 326, Tuscon, AR 85704. Call them for more information at 520-577-8155 or 520-609-2181.

Welcome to new advertiser, **Kalina the Sexy Vampire**. Miss Kalina is a fetching young lass and she writes up the stories of her adventures as a continuing art project of her own. Look through this issue for her ad and sharpen your fangs for some fun.

That's it kids. I must rest my manicure. See ya next month.



Start Thinking About Swimsuits & February Now

Yes, we know it's July. But now is the time to get out your bikini and work on that tan. (Please use a sunblock and take it easy. This publication in no way wishes to encourage skin cancer.) And while you're frolicking on the sand or romping round the pool, get out the old Instamatic and capture the moment for the annual **February Swimsuit Issue**.

When we put this year's Swimsuit Issue together we found ourselves hanging around the editorial office without a whole slew of swimsuit pho-

tos to run. We were hoping for a two page spread in a dazzling display, but we only got enough for one dazzling page. Help cheer us up during the winter months and send in your swimsuit shot. Try to make it mostly of you in an outdoor (beach, pool, backyard) setting. No photos will be returned, no prizes will be awarded. Deadline for photo submissions is the first week in December, 1995.

The Swimsuit Issue will appear in February of 1996. Phaedra Kelly has

already submitted her photo, glamorously posed on the rocky shore of The Isle of Wight. Get your shot in and join her on the swimsuit pages. We'll expect to see some shots from the MOTG girls since they did the bathing beauty thing back in June at the New Jersey Pride Beach Party. Let's make it the best Swimsuit Issue yet! Hand me that cocoa butter and my shades.



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The River Of Life

by Vanessa Kaye, Chair of C.O.T.A.

If you grew up in a rural area as I did, I am sure that you've seen small ponds or pools of water alongside a river. These come about in a number of ways. One of the most common is for the river to rise above its banks and flow over into adjacent low areas. As the river level returns to normal, the pools remain behind, cut off from their life giving source.

As time goes by, the small pools of water grow heavy with scum and algae. There are usually no fish in these pools, now stagnant and decaying, while the River of Life flows nearby, full of life and vitality.

Sometimes life is like that. People dig little pools for themselves away from the swift current of life, and in those little pools, full of decay, they stagnate and die. Why do people dig such pools for themselves? The answers are many, but primarily it is because they seek a state of permanency in which all they know remains the same. They feel comfortable and safe in these pools. People in these comfortable pools slowly die as they watch life go swiftly by.

Life is not a stagnant pool. It is ever-flowing and ever changing. Nothing is permanent, especially life. The constant and swift current of life is part of its enigmatic beauty. If we avoid being caught up in the current of life, we may entirely miss out on the joys and lessons it has to teach us.

Over the course of the last few years, many detractors, and some Tri-Ess members, have accused Tri-Ess of becoming a pool alongside the banks of the Transgender River. It has appeared to many that Tri-Ess does little to attract new members, isn't innovative and that the organization shies away from controversial topics, such as sexuality. I, too, had begun to feel that Tri-Ess lacked vitality. So, I felt moved to address a few points.

Tri-Ess, like any other organization is comprised of people. I realized that it wasn't the organization digging this

safe little pool alongside the Transgender River, it was her members. The members of Tri-Ess are responsible for not only failing to challenge the organization, but for allowing Tri-Ess to have an image of being a stagnant pool. While ensuring their "safe" pools of social clubs, and losing sight of the main purpose of a support group, many members have cut their chapters off from the life giving currents. Attracting new members is the responsibility of all members, not just those at the top. An increase in membership for the sake of numbers is meaningless. If we have something to offer both as a local and national organization, there will be responses. Chapters must meet the needs of members and potential members in their local communities. If a group responds to the needs of local members and develops or is involved in outreach programs, new members will come. The national organization should be more active (than they are) supporting chapters and providing assistance; however, I am sure help will come when the need is made known.

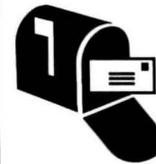
Tri-Ess can be innovative when approached with a new idea. When I was working to bring C.O.T.A. (The Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance) to life, many sisters warned me, "Tri-Ess will never go along with that idea." Yet, in truth, it was Tri-Ess who helped to establish this new community. Not only did Tri-Ess pledge its help, but the Chairwoman herself became personally involved with this new alliance that joins Tri-Ess, Renaissance and AEGIS to provide a comprehensive transgender support organization.

I challenged the editors of *Femme Mirror* with ignoring that sexuality and crossdressing are interrelated for many gender-gifted people. I asked them why they didn't print articles on this topic. I was quite surprised at their response, "If someone would send one in," they said, "we'd be thrilled to print it. But nobody seems to contribute such articles." There it was again, the responsibility for Tri-Ess appearing to

be cut-off from the life giving waters of the Transgender River should be directed to her members and not just the leaders alone.

There are other aspects of transgenderism that Tri-Ess should acknowledge and be more active with. Yet, Tri-Ess is so designed as to respond to the needs of her members, not to anticipate those needs. All of us: members, officers and friends of Tri-Ess, are responsible for keeping this organization alive. We should not, and cannot allow Tri-Ess to become a stagnant, dying pool of water separated from the mainstream of the transgender community.

To fulfill this responsibility we must constantly challenge ourselves in terms of being open and honest with both our feelings and our needs. Moreover, we must challenge Tri-Ess, or any support groups we belong to, to meet those needs.



Letters to the Editor

Dear Angela,

Hi. I just had to drop you a note and tell you how wonderful *News & Views* is. I'll make a few comments and I have some questions that maybe you or someone else on your staff might care to answer.

Although I am still very far in the closet, I'm starting to come out a little to correspond with some very nice people I met through *LadyLike* magazine. That magazine and now this great *News & Views*, how can a person go wrong? Like they say, where were you when I needed something to help me four years ago?

Well, I am now a member of REA and a reader of your *News & Views*. The articles and writing are great. Don't ever stop doing such a great job. About the only thing that might make it better would be photos of different events, people and

continued next page

Letters...

things. So far I have only written to three wonderful people, but I hope maybe to get some more through REA's Pen Pals.

Even though I have been a CD for many years, I am just now feeling my way along slowly. There are a lot of things I just don't understand. Maybe you can help me out. Like why do some of the "girls" go to such great pains with their makeup, figure, hair, dress and total appearance and then let their manhood show? What a waste. Can you explain what the terms Greek and French mean? Why do people want to do B&D, S&M and the many other fetishes? This is not a put on, I really don't know and I have the curiosity to want to find out, please. I am asking you to help because, like a child, I need help and guidance from wonderful people like you. Hopefully I will receive an answer from you.

Thanks for everything.
Georgi

Dear Georgi,
Thank you for your kind words. (No folks, we didn't write this ourselves.)

I'm glad you like *News & Views* and I'm sorry you didn't find us earlier. Four years ago, when you were looking for help, we had already been operating for four years. Renaissance celebrated its eight anniversary in May. JoAnn Roberts says that *LadyLike* has been around a bit longer than that. So, you just weren't looking in the right places, but we're glad you found us anyway.

We would be happy to run more photos of events around the country, but folks have to send us the photos and they have to be good enough for publication. Any Scavullo's out there should send their pictures to the Editorial office and we'll consider running them. Please don't send photos of "things," though as we would much rather run pictures of beautiful ladies and handsome gentlemen of the transgender community enjoying themselves at the many events around the country.

As far as your questions go, the girls who let their manhood show are doing

what they need to enjoy themselves and either aren't aware that they're acting like guys in women's clothes or are afraid that if they act too feminine they will lose their manliness.

Greek and French are not just languages, but sexual activities. Greek comes from the ancient Greek practice of having men having male sex partners. (I think a few modern Greeks may engage in this practice.) It's most commonly used to mean anal sex.

French, is sex utilizing the tongue, as in French kissing, but you use that tongue in other areas of the body. We can't go further without getting an "X" rating. As they say, different strokes for different folks. Some people like S&M and B&D, others find the practices boring or disgusting. It just depends on what is attractive to each individual. I like to dress like a dominatrix, but I wouldn't get a job as one. I just like the clothes.

Thanks for writing and I hope you'll enjoy *News & Views* for years to come.
Angela Gardner



Coming Events Calendar

July

26-30 The Third Annual SPICE in Memphis, Tenn. Write, PO Box 24031, Little Rock, AR 72221

August

18-20 First (Inter)National FTM Conference, San Francisco, Calif. Contact: FtM, 5337 College Ave #142, Oakland, CA 94618, or call 510-287-2646.

September

14-17 CDS Paradise In The Poconos. 4 days/3 night getaway weekend for crossdressers and partners. Call 610-640-9449 for info or poco@cdspub.com

27-30 Southern Comfort Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Write: PO Box 77591, Atlanta, GA 30357.

October

5-9 Tiffany Club Fall Fling on Cape Cod. Write: TCNE, PO Box 2283, Woburn, MA 01888, or call (617)-891-9325.

15-22 21st Annual Fantasia Fair (the oldest continuous running t-event in the world) sponsored by the Outreach Institute for Gender Studies and held in beautiful Provincetown, Mass. Contact: FanFair Registrar, PO Box 941, SE PA 19087.

28-29 Fall Harvest sponsored by MAGGIE, Mid-America Gender Group Information Exchange. Write: PO Box 9433, St. Louis, 63117.

October

31 Henri David's Hallowe'en Ball in Philadelphia. The largest Hallowe'en party on the East Coast, Call: 215-732-7711

November

15-19 Holiday En Femme, the Tri-Ess National Convention in Calgary, Canada. Contact Phi Sigma Chapter, Box 81115, 755 Lake Bonavista Dr SE, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2J 7CP

Got an event you want publicized? Let us know and we'll list it in this regularly recurring calendar.

Help, I'm Gendershifting And I Can't Get Up

by Callan Williams, ©1995

You wake up in the morning, and you know who you are. You do the rituals to start your day, whatever they are. You've been doing them so long that they feel a part of you, who you are. But one day, those rituals just seem wrong and unfulfilling. You wake up, and they lie there on the floor like an old set of clothes that don't fit.

I have been gender slipping for years. We all do, in ways we don't verbalize. Gender is about the cues we carry that give us our personal power in this world, the cues of connection, of dominance, of expression, of who we are and why you should want to work with us. As we change, those cues change. We aren't the cocky or seductive people we were at 18. That paunch in the middle means that we have to dress differently. Our hairstyle is different. All these things, and much more change the way that we see the world and the way that people see us, two visions locked in the dance of reflection that this world is.

When we change, when people respond to us in a new way because we have changed, our gender status slips. Usually this is a slow and clear process, following the outlines of a life that is the norm. Only in looking back over a period of years do we see how much we have changed, and how much people have changed in relation to us.

I was speaking about this gender slip to a therapist who had spent the early part of her life as a stewardess in those Coffee Tea or Me? days of the seventies. Her eyes brightened as she talked about how her life had changed because she was no longer a sweet young thing, no more the flavor of the month. Was this what genderslip was about? Exactly. We all gender slip.

The issue comes when you hit the

walls that divide the genders in this heterosexist, bi-polar gender world. At that point, genderslip becomes gender shift and that is not something we all experience. This is the hallmark of the profoundly transgendered.

I was talking to a woman I have known for over 10 years who just went to have her SRS. We have seen each other grow for a long time. When we met, I was in my Paul-In-A-Dress period, a time when I wanted simply to experiment with being a guy in a dress. Glittery clothes, big hair, bright makeup, a hint of chest hair and a dedication to finding out how to integrate my femininity into being a whole person. I rejected the "Now I'm Biff, Now I'm Suzy," disintegrative model of The Prince, and worked to become integrated.

I have continued that path, trusting and understanding more of my feminine urges. I have been profoundly genderslipping for the past four years, trying to discover all my potential as a human. I know that others see my feminine energy, even in boy clothes. I have also become more comfortable with creating myself as a unique person with a unique name and my own sense of style. My taste in clothes has matured, and women tell me that I act and dress like a woman.

My friend asked what that old Paul-In-A-Dress would say if he could see me now.

"I think he'd understand. I just wanted to find a point of comfort, and I have done that by trying to integrate in the man's role. I did genderslips — maybe dressing once a month, maybe group, maybe feeling freer, maybe just a bit more. But I took every step, one at a time, and I got here, to the edge of the gendershift. I really wanted to avoid going this far if I could, find a

way to be comfortable without jumping the barrier," I replied.

"Me too," she replied. We both had worked hard to stay effective as men, but the limits got to us. Gendershift seems to be the only solution.

My gendershift is getting more pronounced, at least to me. Everyday I see myself more and more as a woman, the old male rituals of girding for the world more confining and silly. I identify with the women on TV shows, listen to women's radio, watch other women in a new way. I want to talk about how this feels, this sliding faster and faster on a slippery slope, but I don't know who else can talk with me about it.

The problem seems to be that everyone wants to be on one side of the shift or another, and they want me to be on one side too. One woman around the gender community says I should go do boy stuff again, go and get a good butch power job that will remind me of the masculine effectiveness. One CD friend says that gendershift is just a separation, and we can't really do it, that it's undesirable. Many TS simply say "What are you waiting for? Just jump!"

To be in the midst of gendershift is a frightening thing. It is to be on the precipice of a leap, knowing that you have explored behind you and found it lacking, but still full of fear about surviving the leap — and finding peace on the other side. Frying pan or fire?

Garth Brooks: "Life is not tried, it is merely survived, if you're standing outside the fire."

Uh huh.



Her Life In His Hands **News & Views** **Editorial**

A Renaissance member and pre-operative transsexual named Diane Dahl has run up against a Common Pleas Court Judge with apparent psychological aspirations. Judge Howard F. Riley disallowed David Charles Dahl's request for a name change and stated, in a two page opinion, "It is the court's position that (Dahl) has not taken the necessary steps to acquire the emotional, psychological and physiological change from one sex to another that warrants granting this name change."

With this ruling, which seems more a psychological evaluation than an interpretation of law, the Judge effectively steps into Ms. Dahl's path on the road to reassignment with a needless road block. According to her attorney, she has been living in the female gender role for two years, has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria and has been undergoing psychological and medical treatments for four years. If she has not taken the "necessary steps" then what rules would the judge like her to play by?

In a statement to *Renaissance News & Views* Ms. Dahl made her position

clear, "I will continue to live in the female gender, period." Her attorney, Turrey A. Kepler of Norristown said, "You can bet we'll be back after the sex change in October. This goes to the very basis of who Diane perceives herself to be." JoAnn Roberts, co-director of outreach for Renaissance stated, "The true measure (of whether to grant a name change) is the real life test. If this person is really living as a woman, then I think the judge made a really bad decision. I think he overstepped his bounds."

In making his ruling Judge Riley cited a 1977 case from Cumberland County in which a name change was not granted since the TS had not completed surgery. On the other hand, a Philadelphia court opinion stated that changing a name to reflect a different gender status would help the individual "while in no way disserving any societal interest, principle of public order or precept of morality." Despite that opinion Judge Riley ruled against the change, apparently influenced by the "added complication" of Dahl still being married.

Life is hard enough without gender complications. For those born into the wrong gender it can be extremely difficult. Why should Diane Dahl's ability to control her own destiny and gender be placed in the hands of a judge who clearly has no understanding of her struggle? The information about her case appeared in the *The Daily Local News* and after it appeared Diane issued the following statement to *News & Views*, "On Friday June 2nd, 1995 something happened to me that will cause our community some pain. Because it happened to me, I feel the need to apologize." Diane, you have nothing to apologize for. You have done everything you were supposed to do. The fault is not yours and instead of pain we should feel outrage that this roadblock will be allowed to stand.



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ERRATA : In the article, *The Night of 1000 Gowns*, (May '95 *News & Views*) we inadvertently omitted mentioning that the **Imperial Queens of New York**, a group separate and distinct from the **Imperial Court**, is a member of the **Greater New York Gender Alliance**. We apologize for our oversight.

Next month *Dear Dr.* and *Shopping With Jackie* will return. Keep sending your questions for Dr. Stayton and shopping tips for Jackie to PO Box 530, Benslaem, PA 19020,

Third Gender.. New Half

by Lee Cashin

We are born... then taught... never allowed to... BECOME! The fears and histories of prior generations mold and shape each birth toward the gender destiny society sees. Human beings are more complicated and need time to develop gender responsibilities.

All beings are conceived hermaphroditic, having both male and female characteristics. As we develop, we begin to form more of one gender over the other. Finally, we are born into a society that molds us to conform to the way we appear on the surface.

Society, with all its altruistic intentions, fails to recognize "The Other Half" present in all human beings. This half must be understood in time or anxiety will lead to guilt, shame, and major confusion that can force each puzzled person into a maladjusted state of existence.

From birth we are shaped by parents, teachers, role models, clerics, etcetera, to become a member of the human race which they see as either male or female. We are placed in a category from the beginning. Anything contrary to what we appear to be is treated with scorn or fear. A man who appears effeminate, the woman who demonstrates a masculine toughness, are ostracized and considered other than normal. "This situation should be treated with drugs or therapy," says the establishment. We must be reeducated to bring us around to take our rightful place in the community. This makes it easy for everyone involved...round peg...round hole.

Could society be wrong? Is it possible we are missing something relevant within each human...the possibility of a THIRD GENDER?

The world looks at each human as

male or female... on the outside. What about the inside?

What about that part in each of us not yet developed but saying something different from what the outside shows, not male, not female, but a third undisclosed gender... perhaps androgyne?

Androgyne is not new. According to Webster, androgyne "is having the characteristics of either sex (clothing); having traditional male and female roles obscured or reversed."

Ever since early Egypt, the thought of man locked in a woman's body, and vice versa, has been studied and often accepted as norm. In ancient Greece, Shamanism was practiced as "male prophets afflicted by a female disease"...probably sexual impotence. This phenomenon migrated northward to Central Asia and has been reported

continued on page 22

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Moonlight In Manhattan – The Unofficial Story

by Carol & Babs

We checked into the Hotel Pennsylvania, opposite Madison Square Garden, early Friday afternoon, and tried fruitlessly for over 30 minutes, complaining, cajoling and pleading with management to trade up for something larger than our matchbox-size room, which was substantially smaller than what we had last November at *Holiday En Femme*. After the third person explained the place had been long ago sold out and nothing was available, we refocused our objectives, dressed, loaded our purses with “plastic,” whipped out the umbrellas, met Jodie and Char (our friends from upstate New York) and hit the streets to shop!

Stores such as Macy’s, Bloomingdale’s, Lerner’s and others had special offers or discounts for us Moonlight-ers! We were also quite relieved to find out the girls had done their roller-blading in Central Park on Thursday and didn’t expect us to join them in that “sport”! It’s no fun in the rain, anyway!

We had planned to eat out on Friday evening, but when we heard Victoria Weston, Miss New York City, was going to sing and model some of Carl Ferrando’s creations at the fashion show that evening, rather than Saturday because of a prior commitment, we inquired if we could view the show after dinner. “Yes, for \$100,” for the four of us. An offer we reluctantly declined, more on principle than anything. We were later told, unanimously, that the hotel-catered dinner

was mediocre, while the fashion show was excellent.

At least we enjoyed dinner! Armed with our box of matzoh on the last night of Passover, we joined Jodie and Char at Eamonn Doran, an American style Irish pub/restaurant located on the ground floor of the hotel. The Dover sole was light, tender and flavorful, the steak tender, and the chicken pot pie well prepared and enjoyed. We were impressed by the professional service, friendly and helpful to our dietary needs. A surprise bonus was they accepted the Transmedia card resulting in a 25% discount! The band and the small dance floor provided the basis for a very pleasant evening. We then headed downstairs to the Karaoke bar in the lower lobby for an informal evening of singing, drinking, and dancing. Our “socially shy” friends had found a curious, yet accepting clientele there last November. Carol, the real nightingale, needed little coaxing to lead us on stage singing (actually, Babs was under orders to lip synch) tongue-in-cheek tunes as *Happy Birthday Sweet Sixteen*, and *Walk Like a Man*.

There seemed to be a real warmth and friendship exuding from the eclectic crowd in the bar, from the “The Banner Man,” a Houston Oiler superfan who came up to New York to watch the NFL draft at The Garden, to the local regulars, several couples of mixed race, the flight attendant from Puerto Rico who jumped in to dance a

slow dance with Babs, a group from Italy, and our Karaoke bar Hostess! Some of the people seemed to be amazed, many a little bewildered, but we certainly felt we “touched” them in a positive way. We closed the bar with the song, *What the World Needs Now*, and were joined on stage by our hostess, some “gendered” sisters and it seemed the entire bar, in an emotional rendition of the arm in arm favorite.

In the Big Apple, 2:00 AM is still early in the evening, so we went back upstairs to Eamonn Doran, together with our curious, yet admiring, hostess who wasn’t ready to go home, the Banner Man and a few flight attendants plus a significant portion of the bar. We had a chance to talk, to answer questions for those curious and confused who wanted to know about the two couples with families, each married over twenty years, and their relationships. They wanted to know about the “Convention.” We individually talked about the gender spectrum, about relationships, about general things we might talk about in any social situation – morality and social issues. They brought us a tray of sandwiches to go with our drinks. As the night of friendship and fellowship flew by, it was suddenly 5:00 AM and the place began to thin out. After lingering goodbye hugs, we headed back to our rooms for a much needed rest to end a remarkable evening! Tomorrow was to be another day (to dress and express our other self!).



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Third Gender...

in North and South America as well as Polynesia. These Shamans, and their stages of sexual transformation, resemble those of present day prospects for gender reassignment operations. Tiresias, the androgynous Greek shaman, is depicted as an old man with a long beard and pendulous breasts by Camille Paglia in her book *Sexual Personae*.

There was a strong sense in early Greek culture that the androgyne person symbolized imagination, the creative process and poetry itself. The mind, with its pragmatic design, was hermaphroditic for the ancients much as the psyche is for Jung in an era where selfhood expands to include the unconscious. We begin to see the androgyne as a cultural symbol of mind. The Renaissance era casts the androgyne in alchemical terms to represent intuition and the spiritualization of matter.

On her native Cyprus, Aphrodite was worshipped as the Venus Barbata, the bearded Venus. Her image wore female clothing but had a beard and male genitals. Ritual sacrifices were conducted by men and women in transvestite dress.

Literature, art and sculpture down through the ages have proven the interest and belief in the science of male/female oneness. Most of the Gods of ancient Egypt were androgyne. Adepts sought to achieve their ideal condition through initiation. According to Elemire Zolla, in his book, *The*

Androgyne, they conveyed the sense of a peculiar kind of power, emanating from the inner balance of androgyny."

In the new world order the androgyne has ceased to alarm. The laughs and snickers at creatures of "sex indeterminate" are fading into the country we are fast leaving behind. The model of well tempered androgyne hovers above either sex as the new criterion for both. This could be the incarnation of a new man.

In the present day world, Jung, Hillman, Leary, and Rajneesh have all discovered the value in uncovering the hidden gender in all humans. In the early 70's, Timothy Leary realized that the path of LSD would end in shambles unless androgyny took over. He discovered that it was only if you could face unleashed randomness from what he called a "gyroscopic male-female linkage" could you avoid turning into a babbling acid freak. At the end of the 70's, Rajneesh was offering drugless retreats and courses in heart-centered androgyny. "The complete androgyne wades blissfully through the world as change balancing action and inactivity."

Virginia Woolf writes in the last chapters of *A Room of One's Own*, that "it is fatal to be a man or a woman pure and simple; one must be womanly-manly or a manly-womanly." She further states, "The androgynous mind is resonant and porous, it transmits emotion without impediment." Woolf advocates androgyny as a psychological and poetic ideal, a transcendence of sex, self and language. "It is in androgyny" she was quoted as saying in Kari Weil's book *Androgyny and the Denial of Dif-*

ference, "that our future salvation lies."

History, the ancients, scholars and great minds over the centuries have found "the other half" of an individual's psychic self to be an important ingredient of self knowledge. Where has modern scholastic endeavor gone astray? Why have we seemed to have left all the work of history's great minds at the side of the road of life's experiences? Who might know what genetic structures or psychological behaviors may cause a child to be of a third, not yet categorized gender?

Let us look into a case history of a child born male....at least to the world!

Leonard (name changed to protect privacy) spent the first nine years of his life living a normal, apparently healthy existence. At the age of nine, his parents moved far away from his normal routine to a community void of companions his own age.

His mother, being left along a great deal by his workaholic father, began to replace her lost husband with Leonard. She began taking him to bed at night to comfort him and ease his loneliness. This went on for five years until he was 14. Leonard says he "has no recall of ever having intercourse with his mother but does remember fantasizing about it." What is a vivid memory for him is lying next to his mother's bare breasts and feeling the sensuous satin nightgowns she always wore. This established a fetish for satin and silk that remains with him to this day.

to be continued next month...

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Ask The Dermatologist

Send your questions to
"Ask The Dermatologist" c/o
Renaissance News & Views.

Dear Dermatologist,

Is there any way I can keep from nicking myself when I shave? I have tried several different razors, and every time I go for that really close shave my face looks like I've been in a knife fight. Then, of course, I can't get the nicks to stop bleeding, and they come through my makeup and cause unsightly spots. Some of the spots appear to be permanent, as they are still there when I take my makeup off. Is this dangerous? How can I make them stop bleeding before I make up, or better yet, how can I keep from cutting myself?

Signed: All cut up

Dear All Cut Up,

This can be a dicey situation! Most shaving nicks are caused by applying heavy manual pressure with a very sharp razor, in order to get the closest possible shave. Copious application of hot soapy water for three minutes before shaving will remove oil and skin cells and soften the hairs. It is best to shave lightly, going in one direction. Reapply shaving soap and reshelve, again lightly. This will prevent nicks

and also help forestall ingrown hairs that can lead to infections (pseudofolliculitis). The skin treats these ingrown hairs as foreign bodies, and can build up quite an inflammatory reaction. As you shave, apply diascopic pressure over such contoured areas as the jaw lines. This will make for a close shave while minimizing nicks.

Those awful bleeding spots can be eliminated by using an aluminum chloride styptic pencil, or saturated solution of aluminum chloride (Drysol). You can apply the latter, which can be obtained by prescription, to the bleeding points with a Q-tip. While it does burn briefly, it works quickly and does not stain the skin. A discussion of preventing bleeding starts with the avoidance of aspirin. This drug, used as a "blood thinner" by internists, can prolong the bleeding time for quite a while. Other anticoagulants such as Coumadin are more of a problem. Usually, however, they are prescribed for serious cardiovascular problems, and cannot be stopped. Those on these drugs should learn to live with the inconvenience of applying Drysol.

The unsightly spots to which you refer may be small abrasions. Applying 3% Hydrogen Peroxide to them should close them within a few days. Deeper nicks may cause bleeding into the dermis (the middle layer of skin). This gives rise to "blood tattoos," purple spots of iron pigment. Your body has cells called macrophages which will pick up this pigment, literally particle by particle. While these are not dangerous, they can last 8 to 12 months. If they should occur, you can cover them nicely with a tiny dab of green concealer. Hope this helps you smooth the road to beauty!

Skin Saver of the Month:

People using Retin-A for photoaging should apply a sunscreen with at least a 15 SPF rating daily to all sun-exposed areas. Don't be lulled by cloudy days; the harmful UV rays are still getting through. Retin-A should be applied only at night since it causes the skin to be extremely sensitive to sunlight.



Be All 95 Banquet

From L. to R.
Bottom row:
Dottie & Alison
Laing, Angela
Gardner, Dr.
Richard Docter.

Top row: JoAnn
(Liza) Roberts,
Andrea Susan,
Mira Coluccio,
and Dr. Douglas
Ousterhoudt.

Alison & Dottie
celebrated their
40th wedding
anniversary.