

CROSS-TALK

THE TRANSGENDERED COMMUNITY'S NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1991

(ISSUE #27)



SIGMA CHI CHAPTER CEASES OPERATION, MERGES WITH ALPHA

(Los Angeles, CA) -- After nearly a year of battling to create its own identity, the Sigma Chi chapter of Tri-Ess has decided to cease operation.

After acting Sigma Chi president Janyne [redacted] announced her resignation and no chapter members attended the nomination meeting in June, Cresap turned the Sigma Chi mailing list over to Alpha chapter president Kimberleigh Richards. Richards mailed a letter to the Sigma Chi membership inviting them to attend Alpha meetings. Alpha subsidized printing of the final Sigma Chi newsletter containing [redacted]'s farewell message to its members, and Cresap has [redacted] to take over production of the Alpha newsletter beginning in September.

In [redacted]'s final communication as Sigma Chi president, she stated that the main criticism of Alpha, "we never do anything... but sit around and talk", was proven to be an indication of what the local membership wants. Sigma Chi, formed to counter that perception, had scheduled several outside activities during the past several months, only to have them sparsely attended. Responding to that statement, Richards reaffirmed Alpha's policy of providing "a safe place to get together" for its members, and promised not to attempt to force its membership into participating in programs that its members have not indicated a need or desire for.

Sigma Chi's demise comes just a little over a month before what would have been its first anniversary on August [redacted].

(Christine [redacted])

COMPUTER TAMPERING ERASES PART OF VERNON'S MAIL LIST

(Waltham, MA) -- Following the elimination of between 1,500 and 2,000 addresses from their files, Vernon's Specialties has issued a call for help to all gender community organizations.

Vernon Porter, president of the well-known community business, said the elimination of the addresses from his firm's computer hard disk was deliberate, but would not elaborate. He is asking that any of his customers who did not receive the store's May/June newsletter or any expected correspondence to contact them immediately so that any discrepancies or omissions can be corrected.

The computer incident is the third setback suffered by the store in the past nine months. On October 10 of last year, an armed gunman held up the store shortly after it opened for the day. The gunman drove off with a safe police say contained at least \$10,000. Two weeks earlier, thieves had thrown a cinder block through the store's rear door and ransacked a cash register.

(Kimberleigh Richards)

MARINES HELD IN TO DEATH IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

(Oceanside, CA) -- Two Camp Pendleton Marines have been booked into county jail in connection with the slaying last December 10 of a transvestite prostitute in the driveway of a Oceanside motel (January '91 "Cross-Talk").

Jeffrey Todd Hammons and Todd Alan Thornton, both 24, have been charged with murder and robbery and are being held on \$500,000 bail, a jail spokeswoman said. They were scheduled to be arraigned May 24 in Vista municipal court, she said.

Hammons and Thornton were arrested May 22 at the base by Oceanside police after a 5½-month investigation into the murder of Carlos Santiago, 25, who was also known as Carlos Santana or "Tasha".

Santiago, who reportedly was one of about a dozen transvestite prostitutes working downtown Oceanside, was found dead from a gunshot wound to the chest in the driveway of the Wally Johnson Motel on North Hill Street. Police theorize that the killing may have been prompted by customer dissatisfaction.

Oceanside Police spokesman Bob George said it took months for authorities to gather enough evidence to obtain warrants. The two Marines, both corporals, reportedly completed a tour of duty in the Persian Gulf while the investigation was underway. They have not been linked to any of the other five slayings reported in San Diego County last year in which the victims were transvestites or transsexuals.

The other incidents include two transvestites found shot in the head June 11 near San Diego Wild Animal Park (August '90 "Cross-Talk"), both known prostitutes; a Normal Heights TV shot several times in the head and stomach July 2; a transvestite prostitute run over by a car on a North Park street September 4 after fighting with the companion of the car's driver; and a Tijuana transsexual found November 23 on the side of the road on Sunrise Highway (December '90 "Cross-Talk"). The November incident has been linked to a five-year-old series of slayings of female prostitutes and drug addicts being investigated by the Metropolitan Homicide Task Force.

[San Diego "Tribune"]

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DETAILS ON PAGE 17

F2M TS SUES PENNSYLVANIA FOR SURGICAL PROCEDURES

(Philadelphia, PA) -- A suit filed in April in federal court here is creating an interesting twist on the oft-tried attempt to force the government or an insurance company to pay for sexual reassignment surgery.

The suit claims that state Department of Public Welfare officials violated the civil rights of "Erik V.S." by denying him surgery to make him physically male. Unlike m-to-f procedures, which are used only for transsexuals, the mastectomy and hysterectomy Erik seeks are routinely funded by Medicare when necessary for the health of female patients.

Erik's attorney, Stephen F. Gold, claims that state officials illegally discriminated against Erik because of his client's transsexualism, and have violated the federal Medical Assistance Act by denying payments for necessary surgery.

Erik was diagnosed as a transsexual in 1984, has been taking hormones since 1987, and has been functioning and living as a male for several years. But because of earlier psychiatric and medical problems, he is unemployed and receives Social Security and disability payments.

Named in the suit as defendants are Welfare Secretary John F. White Jr. and Don Jose Stoval, administrator of the Philadelphia County Board of Assistance. Attorneys for the Welfare Department had no comment on the suit.

["Renaissance News"]

FOUNDER OF SWAN'S INNER SORORITY DIES AT AGE 82

(Tralee, Ireland) -- Elisabeth P. Swan, psychic healer and founder of Swan's Inner Sorority, died of heart failure on March 29th at the age of 82.

Ms. Swan was born in Glenbeigh, Ireland, and entered into the craft of psychic healing at the age of 12 at her father's encouragement. She left Ireland at the age of 25 with an aunt and uncle, and lived in New York City for many years. She became a nurse and scholar, then moved to California at age 40 after her father died and left her a small inheritance. She bought a house in the Santa Cruz mountains and became well-known as a hands-on healer.

She became involved with the gender community after meeting Vendi [redacted] in 1986. The following year, a small group called S [redacted] er Circle (later Swan's Inner Sorority) was formed, using metaphysical lessons written by its founder.

In March of last year, after a vision of her death, Ms. Swan returned to her homeland. She is survived only by her adopted daughters of the Sorority.

She was cremated on April 3, with her ashes spread across the bay of Ballyheige. A cosmic communion and final rite of passage was performed by the Sorority's sisters June 26.

[S.I.S. press release]

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G.A.L. COMES OUT IN FAVOR OF SACRAMENTO LEGISLATION, SUGGESTS SIMILAR BILLS

(Napa, CA) -- While offering support for a bill pending action by the Sacramento City Council, Gender Alternatives League National Executive Director Cynthia [redacted] is suggesting that the bill could be a model for similar legislative action in other cities.

The bill, which would modify the city's discrimination act to exclude age, gender identity, marital status, and physical appearance and/or disabilities as reasons for exclusion in employment, access to businesses, real estate dealings, or city business. The changes, which were modeled after the Denver Civil Rights Act, would expand the scope of the existing city code banning discrimination based on sexual preference. The code already provides for civil action in the event of an business or individual's violation of its provisions.

In bringing the [redacted] changes to the attention of the gender community, [redacted] said she believes the revised ordinance could be [redacted] as a model for change in other local and state discrimination ordinances and laws. She has called upon the community's leaders to research the issue and send copies of any existing material on the subject to GAL so that proposed legislation can be introduced in the municipality or state affected.

[redacted] has also written a letter to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) suggesting the addition of GAL's term "genderist" with proper definition to the forthcoming fourth revision of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV). She has also given notice to the APA that any use of the term in conjunction with the psychiatric terms trans, [redacted] and transsexual will not be tolerated by GAL. [redacted] defines "genderist" as "any person who is part of [redacted] of the gender community which is mentally healthy and who because of preference or predisposition wishes to emulate the gender opposite his/her biological sex".

The letter to the APA goes on to object to the aforementioned psychiatric terms being applied to the entire community, maintaining that less than 2% of the [redacted] community have actually been examined by the profession. [redacted] further maintains that those examinations have [redacted] biased. She suggests that transgenderism be identified separately in the DSM-IV, and that it be specifically defined as "not a mental illness and genderists not mentally ill".

[Kymberleigh Richards]

TS BRITISH DISC JOCKEY CLAIMS DISCRIMINATION

(Exeter, England) -- A disc jockey who underwent a sex change says he was [redacted] as a man, then offered less money to do the same job as a woman.

Carolyn Jayne [redacted], who before undergoing two years of surgical procedure [redacted] become a woman five years ago was known as Glenn [redacted], says she was told by the new [redacted] director [redacted] radio station [redacted] at her services as [redacted] are no longer required. [redacted] said she was then [redacted] her old job as Carolyn, [redacted] less money. In the interest of broadcasting consistency, she had continued on the air using her old male voice and persona despite a [redacted] operation to give her a more feminine voice.

[redacted] claimed the cut in wages was not only an insult to her [redacted] to all women. A spokesman for Devon-Air maintained that the company has never operated a sexually discriminatory policy, and said terms of the proposed contract with [redacted] were strictly confidential. [redacted] Lo [redacted] sten [redacted] surprised to discover that [redacted] and [redacted] were [redacted] same person, but said it was [redacted] [redacted] what she sounds like than what she looks like.

[London "Independent"]

BETTY ANN LIND RECEIVES PRINCE LIFETIME AWARD FROM I.F.G.E.

(Denver, CO) -- Betty Ann Lind of Alexandria, Virginia, is the recipient of the 1991 Virginia Prince Lifetime Contribution Award.

The Prince Award is the highest and most prestigious award conferred by the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) and within the gender community. Previous recipients are: Virginia Prince herself (1987); Merissa Sherrill Lynn (1988); Ariadne [redacted] (1989); and Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE (1990).

For Lind, the Prince Award is the culmination of a lifetime of crossdressing that began in childhood in a hotel on a "tree" street in the city of Chicago. Following a bout with rheumatic fever around the age of five, Lind experienced her first skirts when female playmates dressed him as a girl for "pretend games" and named her "Betty" after the popular cartoon character Betty Boop.

Crossdressing experiences continued throughout Lind's childhood and early adulthood. Along the way Lind earned a Master of Arts degree from the University of Minnesota.

Lind co-founded the Minnesota chapter of FPE (Phi Pi Epsilon) in 1964. She served as the Mid-Atlantic coordinator for Tri-Ess from 1976-1980 and has been the editor and publisher of the Outreach Institute's "Our Sorority" from 1978 to the present. Lind has held many offices in various crossdressing organizations. Most recently she has been a member of the IFGE Board of Directors since 1987.

Lind is no stranger to awards within the gender community. In 1980 she was honored with the Tri-Ess National Service Award; she was also recognized as Miss Fantasia Fair that same year. In 1978 Lind received a Service Award from the Outreach Institute.

Lind's popularity in the crossdressing community is universal and her name is known to crossdressers, transsexuals, their families, and to helping professionals. She enjoys a reputation of caring and concern for her sisters that is seldom matched.

Asked prior to receiving the honor what message she might convey to the gender community following nearly fifty years of crossdressing, Lind replied, "Strength through unity. All groups, no matter what their orientation, should work together for the common good. We are either going to survive together, or we will each hang separately."

In addition to the Prince award, the annual Trinity Awards, recognizing extraordinary contributions and accomplishments in the gender community, were awarded at the IFGE "Coming Together - Working Together" convention. Honorees were Ellen Summers (in recognition of her years of caring, selfless service to others, as well as her kindness); Sheila Kirk (leader, teacher, and friend); Yvonne Cook (an extraordinary example of love, courage and self-sacrifice); Boulton & Park Society (sponsorship of the Texas "T" Party in a militantly conservative environment); Stanley Biber, M.D. (an outstanding medical caretaker and extraordinary human being); and Mariette Pathy Allen (a true friend and supporter of the gender community).

[Gender Identity Center of Colorado newsletter]

HORMONE TREATMENTS DENIED TO TS INMATE IN CALIFORNIA

(Sacramento, CA) -- A federal magistrate has refused to order officials at the California Medical Facility at Vacaville to provide female hormone treatments for a transsexual inmate, but has instead instructed them to conduct a thorough medical and psychiatric review of the inmate and recommend treatment.

49-year-old Georgette Rebecca [redacted], who is serving a life term for kidnapping and robbery, claims depression and anxiety attacks because prison officials have refused to continue the hormone treatments she had received for several years before being incarcerated in 1989. U.S. Magistrate John Moulds chastised the California Department of Corrections for not having a formal policy on the providing of therapy to transsexual inmates.

A physician for the department testified he is reluctant to prescribe female hormones for male patients because they could cause severe health problems. Arthur Mattocks, a clinical psychologist at Vacaville, said there was no reason to believe that [redacted] would suffer irreversible psychological damage on the loss of female appearance because of the discontinuance of hormone treatment.

Mattocks said some male inmates at the facility had received female hormones a few years ago, but that he was unaware of any currently receiving that treatment. Before being incarcerated, [redacted] had breast implants, but not a sex change operation. [McClatchy News Service]

NEW 900-NUMBER RESOURCE ACCESS SERVICE GOES ON-LINE

(Atlanta, GA) -- A new automated telephone service has gone on line to serve the national crossdressing community by providing resources to those who cannot otherwise learn of them.

"Him 2 Fem Guide", operated by AudioTextures, incorporates information regarding organizations and publications, a calendar of scheduled events and a shopping guide to help crossdressers purchase clothing and services. According to editor Jerrie Atkins, the service "hope(s) to provide reassurance and diminish feelings for loneliness, guilt and dissimilarity for those whose family, business and social obligations are frightening and suffocating to their few desires".

By refusing to accept sexually explicit materials for the service, the new service hopes to reach those who cannot or will not subscribe to crossdresser publications or join crossdresser organizations. Atkins further hopes that by using the audiotext qualities of anonymity and ubiquity, callers will feel secure in calling and will eventually feel part of the national gender community.

The service is accessible at 1-900-446-2336 for \$1.07 per minute plus \$2.00 connection fee. Information for the service is being provided by the participating groups and services. [AudioTextures press release]

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DOCTER RELEASES RESULTS OF GENDER IDENTITY SURVEY

(Northridge, CA) -- A potential measure of transgendered behavior was introduced by Richard F. Docter, Ph.D. in the first "feedback report" on his recent research.

A "Cross Gender Identity" (CGI) score has been developed by Docter, combining survey results in the areas of feminine gender identity, masculine gender identity, feminine role taking, and desire for body feminization. A high CGI score tends to occur with transsexuals and transgenderists, according to Docter, because of indications of strong feminine identity, social behavior, and desire for physical change to accentuate femininity.

Docter has set a median score of 100 on the CGI scales and on the sub-scales that determine a CGI score. He says that roughly 66% of his survey group fall between 85 and 115. The survey group consisted of 332 genetic males, made up mainly of periodic crossdressers. Of that group, 12% described themselves as living full-time as women either with or without sexual reassignment surgery, and 10% considered themselves to be pre-operative transsexuals even though they were not living full-time.

Docter stressed that his work is on-going in nature, and that he is developing a second gender identity questionnaire for future completion by the survey group.

[Kymerleigh Richards]

TS WINS EARLY PENSION POST-SURGERY

(Brisbane, Australia) -- In a landmark decision, the Australian Administrative Appeals Tribunal has found that a 61-year-old woman who had had a sex change operation is entitled to receive an age pension, even though men are not eligible until they turn 65.

The majority decision said that the law had to acknowledge that Australian society permitted sexual reassignment surgery to take place, and thus the woman, identified only as H.H., was eligible for the pension at age 60, just as other women are.

The tribunal heard an appeal by Secretary of the Department of Social Security Derek Volker against a decision by the Social Security Appeals Tribunal in February of last year. That tribunal had upheld H.H.'s appeal against a rejection of her application for an age pension because the accompanying birth certificate said she was a male.

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal found it "extraordinary" that counsel for Volker had stated the department had no official policy on the matter, and invited the tribunal to develop a policy. In response, the tribunal stated that "(t)he time has come to arrive at some standard by which to test a person's sex".

H.H., who had lived as a woman for many years, was treated by her local community as such, and carried a Queensland driver's license describing her sex as female. In fact, the decision said, until she applied for the age pension one month before her 60th birthday in 1989, she was treated by the Department of Social Security as a woman.

The decision stated that only transsexuals who had undergone sexual reassignment surgery should be classified as women for purposes of the Social Security Act. A spokeswoman for the Department said H.H.'s pension would be backdated to when she lodged her original appeal with the Social Security Appeals Tribunal. [Sydney "Morning Herald"]

IF YOU SEE AN ARTICLE IN A NEWSPAPER OR
MAGAZINE ABOUT TRANSGENDERED BEHAVIOR OR
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CROSSDRESSING SHOPLIFTERS PLAGUE MERCHANTS

(Fort Pierce, FL) -- A tall, skinny black man in a green floral dress is believed to have stolen some clothes from a Sabal Palm Plaza shop, leaving behind eight lipstick-covered alarm sensors that he apparently bit off, the manager said.

The incident is just one in a recent rash of men in dresses ripping off businesses in St. Lucie and Martin counties.

Police say the crossdressing shoplifters may have their origins in a two-year-old West Palm transvestite burglary ring. Seven men linked to that same group were arrested here two and three years ago.

Several suspicious sightings of men dressed as women have been reported to local authorities lately, with some of the complaints coming from security guards at Orange Blossom Mall and at clothing stores elsewhere.

Last month, a Port St. Lucie pawn shop owner told sheriff's deputies he saw a tall, skinny black man with a five o'clock shadow slipping something under his pink-and-blue floral dress. Men in dresses are believed to be responsible for three shoplifting cases in the Jensen Beach Treasure Coast Square Mall -- two at JCPenney and one at Sears -- officials say.

In the latest incident at the Kick in the Pants clothing store, the same transvestite seen in the store on Friday is believed to have stolen at least four pairs of shorts and jeans, the store manager said. [Tampa "Tribune"]

NEWS BRIEFS

Duane Mockus, a San Diego transplant from Phoenix, had heard the stories about California. Now he figures they're all true. Mockus just got his new California driver license, and the address is so garbled, he's amazed it made it through the mail. But then, everything about his new license is strange. His height is down as 2'19". Weight: 506. Hair: NBL. Eyes: U60. And then there's Duane's new Sex ... listed as L.

Taping on the CBS sitcom "Evening Shade" had to be halted recently when the wardrobe for Delta Burke of "Designing Women", produced by the same company, was inadvertently delivered instead of "Shade" co-star Mairi Henner's. The studio audience had a few laughs while waiting for the correct clothes to arrive, as star Burt Reynolds modeled some of Burke's dresses from "Women" ... all of which proved to be too big for him!

The new television series "Sisters" on NBC contains a plot element concerning a plastic surgeon who happens to be a straight crossdresser married to a woman who finds out after fifteen years of marriage. While the TV character is presented in an honest way, his wife is less so ... with her initial hysteria at finding out suddenly mellowing to complete acceptance by the next episode.

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SEX, GENDER AND TERMINOLOGY

OUR MISSING ROLE IN SOCIETY

by Kymerleigh Richards
Editor & Publisher, "Cross-Talk"

by Anne [REDACTED]

Not long ago, I was talking with Virginia Prince about her favorite subject, sex and gender. And something she said in the course of that conversation cross-referenced in my head to my favorite subject, terms within the gender community.

What Virginia said -- paraphrasing here -- was that transsexualism is the only condition within our community that deals with sexual identity rather than gender identity. On that basis, the term transgenderist is every bit as valid as transsexual, to some degree.

What that also means to me is that the scale on which we have been measuring "transgendered behavior" is actually two scales: One measuring transvestite (or transgender) behavior (with transvestite at one end and transgenderist at the other), and the other measuring transsexual behavior (beginning at some point on the transgender scale and continuing to an end point of post-operative transsexual).

If you look at it that way, a lot of things become clearer. Such as the TV who eventually decides he's TS. He gets to that point on the TG scale where the TS scale begins and changes direction. Others who get to that point on the TG scale, question whether or not they are TS, but do not change direction.

In my case, this relationship between the two scales, sex and gender, makes clearer my journey through the gender community. I started on the TG scale, got to the point where the TS scale begins, changed scales, and then eventually reached a point where I didn't feel justified in proceeding further along that scale. So I went back to the intersection and reappraised the community from the TG scale. This especially makes sense when you consider that virtually all transsexuals begin their journey through crossdressing.

Earlier, I said this approach legitimizes the term transgenderist to some degree. The problem is, this argument still applies the terms to their entire scales, and there not only needs to be a term for someone who lives full-time, at the other end of the TG scale from transvestite, but there probably should be a term for someone at the junction point, at the other end of the TS scale from post-op transsexual.

I do think, though, that we can start looking at the term "gender community" as meaning all members of both scales. We now need to agree that there are two smaller communities within that larger one; the transgendered community and the transsexual community ... both of whom have different perspectives, both valid within the scope of the larger community. On that basis, "Cross-Talk" is geared toward the transgendered community, because even when we discuss TS issues, we look at them from the TV/TG perspective. I'm fairly certain that this line of thinking is unlikely to offend either of the two communities as it respects the differences in viewpoints.

To many, it seems that I keep asking these questions about language without coming up with the definitive answers. That's because I don't feel it would be appropriate to single-handedly dictate a list of "acceptable" terms. But it's just as obvious that the longer we go on using different terms to say the same things, the longer it will take for society to know the differences between the various conditions that make up the gender community, and thus the longer it will take for society to understand us.

I believe it is time for all the leaders in our community to exchange ideas on the subject of language, and to reach a consensus on what any of us will mean when we use a particular term. Until we have clear, universal definitions of the terms and behaviors that make up our community in use by the mid-point of this decade, we will never be able to completely eliminate mainstream public confusion.

And that's just going to prolong the agony we all feel because of public unacceptance of our lifestyle.

October 16, 1990, 10:59pm: I'm sitting here thinking about a number of things, among them that which Renee Richards said about surgery being "a second rate solution" to the psychological problems of gender confusion. Also I've been thinking about the labels question.

Other cultures have created a place for such as us, giving us a role. Our technological society has given us a technological answer. Rather than putting a square peg in a square hole, medicine/psychiatry/society puts us on a lathe and turns us into a round peg and fits us into a hole it recognizes. In other words, rather than expanding its human horizons our culture would rather expand its technological horizons and change that which does not fit its template into something that does.

Better to change/blame the individual than recognize/admit fault on society's part.

Perhaps we should be defining new roles. Let us not forget that prior to the latter half of this century SRS didn't exist and therefore was not an option. How then did -- using current idiom -- transsexuals of the BC (Before Christine) era cope? How did they find a way to fit in? Now, I'm not saying, "Let's go back to the bad old days." I am saying, what were some of the methods they were used to deal with these issues and how can we adapt them and introduce them to our technoculture? We see that other cultures managed the TG issue successfully, but their solutions can't be transplanted directly into ours. A cardiac surgeon must not only carefully match a donor heart with a heart transplant patient, but that heart and patient must be treated chemically to reduce the possibility of rejection.

As much as we are forced to live outside our society, to the point of creating our own subculture (I hate the term paraculture), we are still products of it. As members of the industrialized First World West we have a mechanistic mind set, though many of us try to unlearn it, that mind set determines not only the kinds of solutions we find, but determines the kinds of problems we define. Determines the questions we ask.

A few columns ago the issue was terms. Transvitate. Contragender. We are talking about something very similar to the Berdache (as I understand it), but not quite the same since, at the very least, we are talking about two very different cultures.

Another question occurs to me now, or perhaps a glimpse of the future. How are we changing society by introducing the concept of the Transvitate? Are we teaching it that nothing is black and white? Are we teaching it that there are more than just the engineers' view of the universe? It is not a new concept, just a foreign one. Well, this is just an aside.

We are products of our society, and at the same time society is a product of its members. As long as we remain in the closet we have effect on society and the status remains quo. As we blossom in view of society, we affect it and our presence changes it. As the flower goes to seed and the seed drops to the ground and germinates those changes take root. We then become part of a sociological ecosystem. We feed and are in turn fed. The time to plant is now.

(Comments and criticisms may be sent to: Anne [REDACTED], P.O. Box 1251, Beverly Hills, CA 90213-1251.)

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MICROCOSMIC DELUSIONS

by Phaedra Kelly

Language might well appear to reflect thought, but it hardly does so very well. It is a singularly clumsy and inefficient communicator -- and always will be, unless and until assumption, presumption and sophist personalization are removed from perception, making the human animal at last capable of expressing itself in our thought with some certainty of understanding.

Over the last two hundred years, painters, sculptors and sundry other branches of the arts have been trying to replace language for exactly that reason. It hasn't worked because ultimately, to pass comment at all, we come back to the spoken and written word formed within the grey matter in which each is a prisoner until death, expressed through a very personal set of experiences and frames of reference.

And that is exactly why the terms transvestite, transgenderist, crossdresser, transsexual, etc., have not been working, why the community is discussing alternatives, and why, since my term Gender Transient is also born of language, it also has language against it.

To me it seems that only a person embroiled in a thin canopy of self-delusion, nervous of any true expansion or change, would challenge alternatives as soon as they show themselves, despite having acknowledged the need for them. Perhaps we need to form a committee to discuss terms. You know nothings ever really impossible until given to a committee!

Fear of change is vaunted to be a very male habit, so perchance there is still some pole of masculinity inside our very "female" members. Or perhaps it's just as a GT would see it: a part of a being a complete human being (or total androgyne) in which one voice illuminates the next and one gender touches the other. Obviously, an umbrella term must encompass all others. I would never suggest the expulsion of other terms under an umbrella ... since TV and TS have for so long been the only umbrella, have other terms been expelled by that umbrella?

Ultimately, free choice makes the change. If sufficient people elect, from conscious personal decision, to be called one or the other, that is how it should be. But how, for example, do TSs fit in with shifting across gender lines? Not very well, apparently, as their problems, needs for every more secure, closed and closeted groups, and endless paranoia would suggest. Even as they take the brave stand to change their own lives for themselves, they appear to run away from true personal choice. Many academics think that if males were free to be "gender benders" or TVs and not so condemned by men for their actions or women for invading "their" space, that TSs would cease to exist (or at least become fewer), and surgery would seldom prove to be the only solution. After all, as Anne Blackwood points out in her January column (which is what got me started on this dissertation), Kymberleigh seems to manage without surgery, and so too do I.

But then, swapping one half-life for another is not really the answer (except in atomic physics). A modern woman can be a tomboy or power dresser ... or bimbo, housewife, anything he/she likes. So, too, can a TS. My friend Clare Steen (who I shall introduce to you more fully in a future column), as a self-described GT/TS, has a dirty job in a factory, where she wears blue jeans because of the work. Yet her male doctor and the mainland TS group contend that she should wear a skirt, even though a female in the same position will opt for the same jeans Clare wears.

Clare calls herself a "TS woman", not wanting to use the second term without the first, because she is sufficiently confident of the level of her femininity of mind and attitude to embrace what's left of her masculinity and an advantage and option to be used and applied to her total life. She can do what's male in her own sweet, feminine way. Besides, she looks good in jeans!

I, too, know what I am. A true androgyne, far from fearing finding out. It is me and others like myself that are

PROCEED WITH CAUTION

by Eileen

[This column originally appeared in 1989.]

When a transgendered person was expelled from Disneyland, a lawsuit was discussed. I would urge caution on the part of our Community there.

Using the guns of the government to "make" a business deal with us on our own terms could be as such a dangerous precedent as a "landmark". The more we use the courts to force others to accept us, the less free everyone -- including ourselves -- becomes. Furthermore, knowing the tendency of some elements in the Community to push the limits of good taste (you know EXCEED is what I really mean), the most certain abuse of any new-found rights is more likely to stir up resentment against us, rather than promote our acceptance.

The key issue here, as I see it, is the right of a business owner to establish the conditions under which he (or she) will offer service to the public. I know that the notion of a dress code, for example, is obnoxious to most of us, especially when it is applied as a double standard between the ladies and the gentlemen (what restaurant has EVER required neckties on the ladies?). Nevertheless, if a business owner decides that he wants to operate his establishment for the benefit of those who prefer such an environment, he has a moral right to do so. Our remedy is to take our business elsewhere.

I realize that the courts have, of late, decided that they can limit a business owner's options -- this does not mean that they did so in JUSTICE.

Furthermore, the more we encourage the courts to take this sort of action, the more likely it is that, one day, that power will be used against us, perhaps not as a Community, but as individuals pursuing other interests.

WE know that most of us are family people who, in fact, do fit the sort of image that Disneyland wants to serve. I would urge a letter-writing campaign to educate the management at Disney. Suggestions might include the creation of a few single-user his-or-hers optional restrooms, so that the gender conflicted can use them without the females in attendance feeling that their security is being compromised. If we get the word spread nationwide, I believe that even the Disney management will see an economic advantage in some kind of accommodation.

It is my hope that in writing, we will conduct ourselves as ladies, just as we would if we were visiting the park. The best weapon we have toward changing public perceptions of our Community is a consistent ladylike demeanor under all circumstances.

What do I mean by "ladylike"? A lady is neither loud nor abrasive -- rather, she is firm, persistent, and calm.

expanding our boundaries beyond petty borders. To those like Anne Blackwood who claim that TSs have a "pretty good sense of gender and sex", I wonder about the reams of paper, magazines, letters, etc., both inside our community and out, in the media and academic circles, that cannot, will not, and has not concluded or concurred on just what a TS is.

No, within our microcosm of the mainstream, there is a little toy vacuum of delusions, holding onto all the faults of mainstream society as playthings.

Infinite options doesn't mean a lack of discipline; to the contrary, rather, if one has that many options some will be bad, wrong either for the person or society, therefore one has a strong, if simple, discipline and code of behavior to follow. Needless aspects of guilt and concern can be trimmed away, but the actual use of such guides to choice should be positive and applied through one's ability to adapt and adopt.

As a related point, I would like to further clarify my past
(CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE)

YOUR PERSONAL NICHE

by Tere [REDACTED]
(from "G [REDACTED] ia", Boulton & Park Society)

Recently, I've had occasion to discuss personal levels of transgendered behavior with quite a few folks. A lot of it was for my own benefit, to see if there was anyone else out there who had found a transgendered "comfort level" akin to the one I had finally settled on. Surprise! There were a lot more than I thought!

Because I'm going to discuss this from a personal aspect, I've couched it in M2F terms; however, the same concepts also apply F2M.

I've noticed a number of us who self-classify as transgenderist (TG) -- or maybe there is such a classification as a non-SRS TS. We're very female oriented, but don't see a need at this point to complete SRS. My personal philosophy is that SRS is only necessary if (1) you wish to be sexually active with straight males or (2) you must align your body so that your physically match your self-image in all female aspects. At this point, I've found I can live in harmony with myself with just secondary female characteristics. This, then, mandates a therapy that is not officially sanctioned by the U.S. medical community -- hormone therapy alone. Thus I've been forced to go outside the medical community "standard" for treatment to my personal satisfaction. The hormones not only are allowing me to achieve an acceptable body image, but seem to have a calming effect with me, so I'm much more relaxed and in a more desirable mental state. Regardless of whether the effect is a direct result of the hormones or psychosomatic, the effect is positive.

The problem I have with current medical thinking in the U.S. is the failure to recognize the validity of a transgendered behavior where SRS is not indicated yet warrants hormone therapy. Dr. Richard Docter probably comes closest to recognizing this in his book, but it still falls slightly short of the mark. Sadly, I believe, a lot of folks go through the expense and pain of SRS when just hormone therapy alone would have been satisfactory. But the way the medical community has set it up/dictated to us, you can't get hormones under the HBISC unless you're diagnosed as a good candidate for SRS. Basically, the medical community is still on the back side of the learning curve when it comes to completely understanding all facets of transgendered behavior and the multiplicity of possible therapies. So, it seems that stodgy old coots are best by lack of imaginative thinking -- you're either all male or all female in physical appearance; there is no such thing as a well-adjusted person who is a combination of both physically.

I've always advocated finding a level of transgendered behavior that fits within the context of the rest of your life and where you can live that life in harmony. I think some people let transgendered behavior rule their lives rather than making it just a positive aspect of the whole person. Some of this may be attributable to the medical community, where some people must get to a level of therapy beyond that which may be sufficient. In other words, they are driven into an improper niche and thus are not in complete harmony with the rest of their life expectations.

Despite having focused this editorial largely at one area of transgendered behavior, I believe it also serves to emphasize the importance of each transgendered person having the freedom to find their own personal niche on the transgendered behavior scale. If your transgendered behavior is not in balance with the rest of your life, then there's something wrong. It also points to the value of using other people as a "sounding board" in order to arrive in your "comfort zone".

I know this is a potentially controversial topic, but it's a subject that must be broached on the way to a complete understanding of transgendered behavior. A person part male and part female physically can indeed be a viable alternative.

"Cross-Talk" is published monthly as an information and entertainment resource for the gender community. For subscription information, please see page 17.

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THE OMBUDSTRAN ...

stance as the community's "pain in the arse". I own the responsibility for having refined that label into an analogy with the oyster and cultured pearl. Consider that the natural, uncultured pearl is irritated by a piece of sand in the same way, the difference being that the cultured one demands the introduction of the irritant by human means. Were it not that a certain portion of this so-called community has chosen to react to me and make me alien to it and maverick, I would to that portion be a natural irritant.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, I am not trying to -- or wanting to -- haul TV/TS groups out into the raw, open world. You don't save a drowning person by trying to drown everyone on the edge of the bank. To continue the analogy, you're only on the edge; you are not safe inland by any means. It's written that tranquility is not shelter from the storm, just peace of mind within the storm. Ships in harbor are safe from storm, but that's not what they were built for. There are ways of coming out just far enough to do these things in our own special and particular way.

My point about GT is that behind it goes a wealth of information, a certain healthy attitude to the self, and a truth worthy of embracing because it is the modern term for what we are, before we began to be noticed so much as to be buffeted back and forth. In the old way, assimilation meant that we did the changing of others, self-confident in what were were, all things to all people. By remaining so, we were able to influence society from within, not be influenced by society.

It now seems as though our communities in groups and the free world are at least doing the other kind of assimilation, rushing for camouflage wherever it looks safest ... first to the feminists to do their bidding, then to the male professionals to be shaped into their idea of a "new woman", then back to the radical feminists and straight gays ... and so on, like a pointless, shapeless, indecisive, insecure, and ultimately disappointed tennis ball in a very silly game.

Geological time puts our true roots all of a month past, and the roots of all the other illusory shelters barely half a day. We came first, will endure, and shall be humanity's destiny. I know what I am and where I am aiming to go, and it's not, thank the Dual Deities, into any deluded microcosm.

EYESHADOW COLOR DO'S & DON'TS

by Valerie [REDACTED]

Dear Val: In trying to find the right eyeshadow colors, I've experimented a lot and really haven't been satisfied with any of the results. I tried matching the color to my eyes, but it seemed to wash them out. I even tried two or three colors at a time, but either I picked the wrong colors (again) or I just don't know how to apply them. Or did I use too many colors at a time? And why aren't you supposed to use blue?

Susan, Ohio

Dear Susan: You sure sound confused about eyeshadow! It's not as difficult as it may seem. There are a few general rules, but to be more specific, a trip to a professional cosmetologist would be the most beneficial. First, lighter colors look better right under the eyebrow arch and in the middle of the eyelid. Darker colors are better placed in the crease, extending up and blending toward the end of the eyebrow. The most flattering dark colors are purple, burgundy, autumn green and brown. Blue eyes can wear deep blue or turquoise in the crease or smudged over the lower lash eyeliner, but don't overdo it and don't wear it on the lid. Blue shadow does tend to wash out the color of blue eyes, so if you must wear it, be sure the shade contrasts with your eyes. Brown eyes can wear blue on the lid, but again, don't overdo it. Three different colors of shadow are usually the maximum, and sticking with natural earth tones is your best bet.

[If you have questions about makeup, please write to Valerie Driscoll at the address below. Questions of general interest will be answered in this column.]

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USING TELEVISION AS A TOOL

by Kyberleigh Richards
(acting as guest columnist)

Much has been said and written about how we can develop a fashion sense by observing the genetic females around us. Indeed, for the part-time crossdresser, having an everyday male appearance makes it natural to girl-watch; to the casual observer, unaware of your motivations, nothing unusual is taking place. Even for the transgenderist or transsexual, there is nothing overtly unusual for one woman to scrutinize another's appearance; women are always checking each other's hair, makeup, and outfits. But for those who feel even a little uneasy about girl watching for this reason, the solution is close at hand.

Many have used mail-order catalogs, such as Lane Bryant or Avon Fashions, to get a sense of what colors and styles work well together. Unfortunately, these catalogs do not come out frequently enough to allow a continuous updating of your criteria. Fortunately, cable television has come to the rescue.

Virtually every cable system has expanded to the point where home-shopping channels occupy at least one channel. The most popular are Home Shopping Club (HSC) and Quality Value Convenience (QVC) Network. Unfortunately, the network that used to be the most useful, the JCPenney Television Shopping Channel, recently went off the air. JCPenney used to devote the vast majority of its programming toward women's fashions, but both HSC and QVC still provide a significant amount. The advantage for the transgendered individual is that the parade of fashions is ever-changing and they are modeled on-camera by live models, which is a distinct improvement over looking at a photo in a catalog. Plus you get to see all sides of an outfit, not just whatever angle the catalog photographer thought best!

While home-shopping channels are a convenient, secure way to shop, with only a few drawbacks, I would first like to discuss how sustained viewing of these cable services can improve your fashion sense.

Remember that not every style looks good on everyone. If you have determined what colors look good on you (see the past two months' columns), then you will be able, when an outfit in your colors appears on screen, to better estimate how it might look on you. After a while, you will begin to more quickly recognize the styles that fit your image. A good rule of thumb is that if you don't find the model's appearance on-camera attractive, odds are that the outfit she's wearing won't look good on you, either.

As for the convenience of shopping by cable, all of these networks have a policy of "one ordering name to a household". This means that whoever orders something from them, they will always use the same name that their computer has on file for that address as the "member". How this works in your favor is that even if a wife or daughter places an order, if the husband's name is on file, that's the name they'll mail under. Obviously, no one there is going to find it odd that "John Jones" is being shipped a size 18 dress ey'll all presume it's for John's wife and that his name is the one the computer has on file for their home. And there certainly isn't anything "suspicious" about UPS delivering a package from a home-shopping network! Best of all, at least one (HSC) has an automated ordering system using your touch-tone phone, so once you've placed your first order (which could be for a set of tools, or a small appliance, or whatever) with an operator, your account is established with the computer and subsequent orders won't even require you to say another word to a live operator.

Even if you never order from these channels, though, you can use them to develop your fashion sense, if you just watch them with the right attitude.

HAVE YOU ASKED A FRIEND TO
SUBSCRIBE TO "CROSS-TALK"?

TRANSSEXUALISM AND THE CHURCH: UNJUSTIFIED MUTILATION?

PART 1: INTO THE WHIRLWIND
by Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE
(Courtesy J2CP Information Services)

There was a time, not so long ago, when most answers could be found within the pages of the Bible. The twentieth century, however, has given birth to forces which have had a dramatic affect on all those truths that we regarded yesterday as self-evident certainties. Change is everywhere, and as Bishop John Shelby Spong has pointed out, "[b]efore our normal life expectancy is concluded, the rate and rapidity of change will make our day look as if it had been captured by a slow-motion camera."

Christian response to the new insights and realities of our world has often been condemnation. Galileo and Copernicus were excommunicated, vaccinations and left-handed people were condemned for being Satanic, and anything challenging the authority of the church is condemned as heresy.

The world of Jesus' day has changed, and the world continues to change. Within this whirlwind of change, we must live and worship and witness.

In bits and pieces that are often the subject of lively debate, twentieth century science has been teaching us more about the fine points of how we -- men and women -- differ. We are learning more about our physiology, our psychology, and how social interplay between the two influences both. For each question answered, however, a dozen more remain to be answered. Questions about the ethics of sex reassignment produce even more lively debate; coming down in the end to the conservative view that sex reassignment is inherently wrong or to the liberal view that it is the right thing to do in properly selected cases.

Moral implications of sex reassignment surgery were evaluated by Catholic theologians at the Pope John Center in St. Louis in 1983. They conceded that "[i]f it were possible for a person objectively to be of one gender while at the same time of the opposite anatomical and physiological sex, then in such a situation hormonal and surgical alterations could be seen as corrective rather than being an unjustifiable type of mutilation in the theological sense." Their conclusion, however, was that "... no clear and definitive moral decision in favor of transsexual surgery can be made because of lack of convincing proof that such disharmony does objectively exist and that transsexual surgery could be justified as corrective and therapeutic."

On the other hand, their position was found to be curiously ambivalent by Jesuit priest R. H. Springer. Springer pointed out that the Catholic theologians acknowledged that "[b]oth the transsexual and the therapist may well be convinced that the surgery would be genuinely therapeutic and ethically acceptable, and that 'Some pastoral counselors ... may well make some judgement (i.e., that surgery is morally justified)'. While continuing to hold their position that sex reassignment surgery was 'unjustifiable mutilation,' however, they went on to recommend that 'one should never consider transsexual surgery until all other treatment possibilities have been explored.' This recommendation is one that cannot be overstressed.

Moral theologians look to the Bible for their answers. As a source of moral values, it needs no apology. "Of all the literature that has come to us from the world's ancient civilizations, none is more fascinating -- or as provocative -- as the Hebrew Bible. It is highly esteemed by three of the world's great religions -- Islam, Judaism, and Christianity -- and yet to many people it seems perplexing to read, and difficult to understand. Is it possible to make sense of its contents in a way that says something to people living at the end of the twentieth century? As one might expect, the Bible contains no direct references to gender identity confusion or prenatal sex determination. So where can we look for answers?

The controversy surrounding sex reassignment surgery has

raged for over thirty years. The cause(s) of transsexualism are disputed among professionals; most of the controversy focusing on whether the etiology is psychogenic or organic. Lacking objective evidence, moral theologians have thus concluded that sex reassignment surgery as a treatment modality is suspect and "unjustified mutilation."

The debate has led many Christians to become very vocal and insistent about the immorality of sex reassignment, rejecting sex reassignment surgery as "... intrinsically outside the limits of ethical medicine." (Ashley and O'Rourke), or as an abomination of God. These same people often go on to use Scripture as a club to inflict guilt on the transsexual. As a result, many transsexuals live in agony, sincerely trying to reconcile their commitment to God in Christ to their "uninvited dilemma."

God has shown by His actions and nature that His love and concern extend to every area of human life. At the heart of the book of Deuteronomy is the instruction to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5). Likewise, love for neighbors is also advocated -- "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus stresses the importance of these two commandments by repeating them in the Gospel of Matthew 22:34-40 -- i.e., "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

In other words, our love of God must issue in love for men. William Barclay calls our attention to the order of the commandments, however; "[i]t is love of God first, and love of man second. It is only when we love God that man becomes lovable. The Biblical teaching about man is not that man is a collection of chemical elements, not that man is part of the brute creation, but that man is made in the image of God [Genesis 1:26-27]. It is for that reason that man is lovable. The true basis of all democracy is in fact that love of God. Take away the love of God and we can become angry at man the unteachable; we can become pessimistic about man the unapprovable; we can become callous to man the machine-minder. The love of man is firmly grounded in the love of God."

Barclay's commentary is carried a step further by the late Alan Paton -- i.e., "Isaiah 1:10-18 and Matthew 25:34-40 make it clearer to us what God's cause is. It clearly has something to do with caring for others. If we do not care for or about others, then no amount of churchgoing, no number of observances, no amount of money given, no amount of believing, will give us any cause worth working for. In fact, one cannot believe in God in a religious sense unless one has this concern for others. To love means to bring one's whole life under discipline, extreme in the case of Francis, 'wholesome' in the case of most others. This discipline, even if not extreme, means, negatively, refraining from any unloving or mean or cruel act, and positively, the offering of oneself to be made an instrument of God's peace." Clearly, our greatest offenses are to be unloving and uncaring.

The Bible, as we've seen, is very clear about our responsibilities and relationship to God and our neighbors, but does it say anything about sex reassignment?

GENDER-BENDER FACTOID: A follow-up by the Montefiore Medical Center in New York City of 14 post-operative transsexual patients found that they all had achieved good psychosocial stability, with continued employment and the maintenance of close friendships. None of the 14 regretted their decision to have surgery.

POLITICAL ACTIVISM: A TREND?

by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

Political Action Committees -- we have all heard of them, usually in connection with lobbying Congress for some special interest group. Closer to home, the gay and lesbian community used this concept to begin the slow process of changing the public's attitude toward them. This movement is now emerging in a part of the transgender community.

While at the 1991 IFGE convention in Denver, I had several opportunities to talk with Cynthia [redacted] of the Gender Alternatives League. Her goal is to [redacted] the stigma from gender-associated behaviors that do not fit the cultural norm. While her current focus is on the removal of transgender behaviors from the DSM categories, I suspect that her goals are much broader.

I also had the opportunity to talk with many other members of the transgender community in a variety of settings. The resulting view, for me, is that the community is growing and changing. Not only have some differences within the community been resolved, there is also some evidence that we are becoming more active in educating the community about transgender behaviors.

There has been a rapid growth in both the number and strength of organizations that support the people of the community. In some ways this change parallels the changes that took place in the gay and lesbian community some 15 years ago. Are you on the same track? In many ways the similarities between the transgender and gay communities are quite striking, especially so when one focuses on the crossdresser. Neither are visible unless they choose to reveal themselves. While some would say that you can spot (identify) a gay person by their looks, that is not true. Further, both the gay and the crossdresser (had) have a lot to lose by "going public". In fact, despite progress, this is still true for the gay. Just witness the phenomenon called "outing" where someone who is in the closet is identified as gay by someone who is out of the closet. While public acceptance of gays and lesbians have improved, there are still many bigots and "gay bashers" left.

The question is whether the gains to be made by becoming more visible outweigh the very real potential for loss. I suspect the jury is still out for the gay community. However, the transgender community has benefited from the gay community's efforts to gain public acceptance. I suspect the time is soon coming when we will see some movement in the transgender community to build on this foundation.

However, before you move in that direction, it is necessary to carefully formulate just what it is that you want the public to accept. What the gays asked for was simply respect and tolerance. They did not want to display their behavior. Will such be possible for the transgender community, especially if one aspect of the desired acceptance is public consent to crossdressed sales?

[If you have something you would like Dr. Peo to write about or have a rebuttal send [redacted] O. Box 4887, Poughkeepsie, NY 12602 or call (914) [redacted]. All communications are confidential. This column [redacted] reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter so long as Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. All others must obtain written approval.]

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INTRODUCING TED & ANN

by Cynthia Phillips
with Ted (Buffy) and Ann

Now that I will be writing this column in "Cross-Talk" again, I'd like to introduce you to two friends from one of our regional groups: Ted (Buffy) and his wife Ann. They are a young couple in their mid-thirties, married over five years. Ann did not know of Ted's crossdressing before she married him; however, she has an open mind and is a fairly accepting spouse, although she still does not completely understand his feelings (for that matter, neither does he!).


Ted and Ann will be sharing this column with me, off and on, for the next several months, answering letters that I think are of general interest to SOs.

Dear Cynthia: I have been married to John for over 12 years, but have only known about his crossdressing for five of those years. I must tell you that if I had known about this side of him before we got married, I don't think I would have married him. We manage to have a well balanced relationship most of the time, and I am able to tolerate his "dressing up" a few times a month. Our problem stems from the desire he has for me to go with him to his crossdressing group meetings. Do wives go to these things? What goes on at these "meetings"? Why does he want me to go? I am afraid to go for several different reasons, and would like some reassurance as to what they do at a "meeting" and what my status would be. Also, although I am fairly comfortable with my husband when he is "dressed", I don't know if I could handle other men dressed as women. It all seems somehow immoral and strange.

— J.E.

Ann: This is almost exactly how I felt before I went to a crossdressing party the first time. It really is perfectly normal to feel reluctant about going. Actually, they are just like any other party, except all the people are wearing the same type of clothes. If you can imagine a party of just women with no men, you can form a picture in your mind of what it's like. After you talk to some of the men, you will find they are very much like all the other men you have spoken to, with the exception that they are much more sensitive and easier to carry on a conversation with than most "normal" men. As to their appearance, some do look like a "man in a dress", while others look and sound a great deal like women. In conversation, though, there really is no doubt that they are male. There may be a women's group, as we have in our organization. Before I went to the mixed parties, I went to several wives and SO meetings where I was able to talk to other women who had the same concerns I did. Most of us sooner or later do go to the regular monthly

(CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE)



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We got a lot of mail this past month, so this is going to be one of our longer NPRs ...

NEW NATIONAL TG/TS MAGAZINE DEBUTS: The premiere issue of "Chrysalis Quarterly", published by the Atlanta Gender Information Service (AEGIS), has a decidedly transgenderist/transsexual content. Articles included a feature on SRS and hormones, the importance of losing weight for a better self-image while in transition, two personal transition stories, and an informative article on computer bulletin board systems.

While AEGIS director Dallas Denny admits that the new magazine's primary focus will be on transsexualism, I find that its approach makes it understandable for those whose niche in the gender community comes from a transvestite direction.

AEGIS also is publishing a bibliography of gender dysphoria on computer disk. Available formats are MS-DOS/IBM compatible (3½" and 5¼"), Macintosh, and Atari ST.

TRANSSEXUAL-THEMED "OUR SORORITY": Dallas Denny also acted as guest editor of the latest edition of Outreach's fine publication, which is expanding (again) to become a quarterly.

In addition to several articles written by Denny, the issue features articles by well-known TS activists Rev. Clinton Jones and Sister Mary Elizabeth.

For fans of editor Mary Ann Lind's autobiography "Many Little Kindnesses", which has been serialized in the past 11 issues, Lind has announced that the first nine chapters are being reissued as a book titled "The Little Girls in the Lobby".

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY "EN FEMME" FEATURES WEDDING ALBUM: As regular viewers of the Sally Jessy Raphael program know, "En Femme" editor-in-chief Robyn Ann Dornier got married in February on that show. "En Femme" #24 features photos of that milestone, along with congratulatory statements from various leaders in the gender community.

This issue, which doubles as the fourth anniversary edition, was short on other articles, but included JoAnn Roberts' review column, reader photos, and the increasing personals section.

WEDDING THEMED SANDY THOMAS BOOK: "My Son, The Bridesmaid" is the story of one boy's reminization as a surprise for his twin sister, due home from college over the holidays. Not surprisingly, the dress he designed for the occasion goes over well (as does the model), and he finds himself such in demand, as a girl, as a dress designer, and eventually, maid of honor at his sister's wedding.

I have mentioned in previous columns Sandy's efforts in reprinting stories that have been out of print since their original appearance in "Transvestia" many years ago. The three latest entries in this series are "A Tale of Two Mothers" (from TVIA #91 & 92), "Fashion Models" (#72), and "Acceptance" (#88 & 91). Sandy has done a wonderful job in bringing these stories up-to-date while bringing them to a

new generation of crossdressers. I recommend these reprints highly, even if you already have the original TVIAs they appeared in.

"METAMORPHOSIS" RELEASED ON VIDEO: The award-winning film telling the story of a transsexual transitioning from Gary into Gabi has been released on VHS. Some may have seen this film last summer when it appeared on the PBS series "P.O.V." or, if you live in Southern California, you may have been at one of Jayne Thomas' classes when she used it as a visual aid. The film is well done, following Gabi as she tackles each of the many problems a pre-operative TS faces during transition.

Order from Different Path Press, 4 Standish St., Provincetown MA 02657 (\$49.95 + \$3.50 shipping/handling).

FREDERICKSON & PHILLIPS RELEASE PAPER: The first of four installments of a paper entitled "Transgender Behavior: A Treatise on Adoptive Female Gender Roles of Males" appeared in the July issue of the Boulton & Park Society's newsletter "Gender Euphoria".

(CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE)

S.O: THERE! ...

parties also. Go, you'll have a wonderful time!

Ted: I had a hard time convincing Ann to go to her first CD party. She really dragged her feet. I think she put off going for at least six months after I first asked her. We all want our wives to come to our parties. The parties have been a lot more fun since we started having regular attendance by the wives. It seems that once they get over the initial first meeting, they really enjoy it. Usually we just have a cocktail-type party with everybody talking to everybody else. Frequently the talk is centered on crossdressing, but not always. Often you will find people with the same interests you have and it's a lot of fun to carry on a conversation with someone when everyone is "en femme". We are able to take down that old false, macho, male facade that we are stuck with most of the time. Sometimes we have programs at the meetings, but since our meetings are at a private residence, conversation between people seems to be the favorite activity. I have gone to other meetings in other cities that were held in hotel rooms and they seem to be more structured and subdued. I don't know where your meetings are held, but I agree with Ann; I think you'll have a good time, and you'll probably learn a lot about your relationship with your husband and find better ways to interconnect with each other.

[Cynthia Phillips is married to a crossdresser and is involved with two gender support groups in Texas, as well as being the current wives and partners liaison to the Tri-Ess board of directors. You may write her with comments or suggestions for future columns at P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163.]

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PUN-CHLINES: THE SEQUEL

by Pam
(from "The Pink Slip", Kappa Beta Chapter Tri-Ess)

When a crossdresser has surgery, should she request that the surgeon use a cross-stitch to close the incision?
I once planted a shoe tree. Never picked one pair of shoes that fit, though.
Do you remember the age-old phrase "the face that launched a thousand ships"? I guess they could only get a crossdresser for the Titanic.
Ever wonder how many crossdressing executives support an open door policy?
I bought a beautiful pair of red tap pants. Couldn't dance a bit better with them than I could without.
Do you think the headless horseman could have read a crossdresser?
Was pancake makeup originally manufactured by Aunt Jemima?
If a crossdresser stuffs her bra with panties, would this be considered to be a "chest of drawers"?
Some crossdressers are read because they forget their passwords.
When two crossdressers engage in an argument, is it safe to assume that cross words are spoken?
Many people say that pets often resemble their owners. If that's the case, I guess the chameleon is the favorite pet of crossdressers.
Crossdressers should always avoid people who are wearing reading glasses.
Didn't you just hate it in high school when you were asked if you were going to the dance "stag" or "drag"?
Are crossdressers considered a major cross-section of the American population?
You never have to ask a crossdresser if she knows how to make a face.
Would a crossdressing photographer usually develop a negative image of herself?
Is compound interest the result of a crossdresser entering a bank?

NAT'L PUB REVIEW ...

While we are only able to review the first part of this series, the entire paper is available for \$10 from B&P, including glossary, reference list, and binding. The two authors, Tere Frederickson (B&P's newsletter editor, whose articles have been reprinted in "Cross-Talk") and Linda Phillips (husband of "S.O. There!"s Cynthia Phillips and a major force in the Texas gender community) have created a well-thought out examination of public awareness of the gender community and transgendered behavior. I look forward to reading the rest of the series.

Boulton & Park Society's address is P.O. Box 169652, San Antonio TX 78280-3252.

SPLIT PERSONALITIES

by Ricky

It has always strikes me as odd when one of my sisters makes a big deal of the different lives and personalities residing in Jane/John. You all know the story of John who works as a high powered executive, hiring, firing, motivating, fighting the corporate battles and swashing the opposition who comes home at night, puts on a slip and lace and becomes Jane who has no responsibilities, sits there passively and accepts direction from the wife or girlfriend. Or maybe John is a construction worker with macho muscles who calls crude suggestions to passing women and Jane gets odd looks in a micro mini in the shopping mall.

Once again I exaggerate, I know there are many shades and gradations as there are crossdressers. So why does this split personality transvestite have two such divergent personalities living in one body? I can't think that Jane would be happy in John's place, or vice versa.

How has John become entrapped in a career that requires him to hide Jane? He thinks he knows what would happen if he let Jane take over. The corporate sharks would gather and attack his "weakness". His subordinates would not pay attention to a polite request, his boss would wonder if he has the "right stuff" to be a high powered executive. Conversely, Jane would not be able to be the wonderful fiction that she is if she had to think for herself, or take any action. Somehow it seems that the situation is out of hand, but all those decisions made in the past have led inevitably to the way things are today. Any change could lead to ruin, but neither John, Jane or the people associated with them are happy about the situation.

What we have here is a variation of the power and control cycle found in family abuse. If you haven't heard of it, it's not surprising, our society does its best to hide abusive relationships under the cover of the loving family pattern familiar to sitcom viewers. I am a trained rape and abuse counselor, and have been struck by the similarities between the two situations. For those of us men who aspire to the feminine, understanding this destructive cycle is essential.

An abusive relationship begins with distorted ideas of gender. The male partner usually thinks he must be supreme and in control, the female falls into the submissive and weak category, often to the point where she is unable to break out of the role and get out of a destructive, violent relationship. And yes, I'm afraid it is virtually always the male controlling the female. While there are exceptions, they are extremely few. The male can use many techniques to enforce these roles, emotional abuse, financial and physical isolation, intimidation, threats to children and family members and sexual abuse of the female partner.

The classic cycle of violence begins with everything rosy, life is beautiful and the future is bright. But sooner or later something happens and he starts to find fault, he becomes abusive. She walks on eggs, never knowing what will set him off. The tension builds and physical abuse starts, gets worse; she hides the bruises, after all it's her fault that he hit her, she didn't do the right things for him, right? One day it all blows up and she really gets it, maybe lands in the hospital. The tension is broken, he is contrite, brings her presents and promises never to let this happen again, she believes him and everything is rosy. Then the tension builds...

I'll leave the comparisons with the guilt cycle of the transvestite as an exercise for the student. Did you know that, on average, a woman will return to an abusive relationship eight times, knowing that she will be beaten again? Why would any person in their right mind go back to be beaten eight times before getting out? The answer is as complex as the personalities involved. She probably has no way to earn a living by herself, or to support the children. Neither she nor her husband wants to admit that something is wrong to the world at large. Strange as it may seem, they are probably in love with each other, and need each other,

(CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE)

Helping my big sisters' metamorphosis over the past nine years, I understand the joy, the triumph and the frustration you experience along the way. I am the only Electrologist in L.A. using the 32 multiple needle method, which has proven especially effective and comfortable in the removal of coarse facial hair. My salon is gay owned and operated, providing a supportive environment to serve the many needs of the TV/TS community with pride.



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WOMAN MASQUERADES AS MAN TO DOBBE SKIRT-CHASERS: A bashful bachelor girl got so sick of being hassled and hustled by skirt-chasing creeps that she donned a mustache and macho clothes — and spent six months masquerading as a man!

"I always figured things were a lot easier for the fellows and by God, I was right," 28-year-old Andrea Elkins said. The sexy secretary decided to try life as a guy to escape a barrage of bawdy proposals, winks and wolf whistles she faced daily on the streets of New York City. Says Elkins, "I couldn't walk five blocks without having a bunch of hardhats hooting and hollering at me ... the most disgusting men think nothing of rubbing up against you or pinching your butt."

She asked her lawyer boss if she could show up for work disguised as a man for a day or two, saying she wanted a break from "all that sexist crap". She was so tickled with her life as a man that she didn't remove the disguise until her boss finally laid down the law a few months later: "He said he was tired of giving dictation to a lady with a mustache."

["Weekly World News"]

THE KING'S A QUEEN: Audiences who get "all shook up" watching Elvis impersonator Stoney Jones would be even more shook up if they knew that Stoney is actually a woman!

The 43-year-old woman, whose first name is really Linda, lives in Gurney, Illinois, and performs lipsynching Elvis tunes while two girlfriends back her up by pretending to play guitar and bass. Jones has taken her act to Las Vegas and Atlantic City, but prefers to perform in her local Chicago-area nightclubs.

She says she's watched all of the King's movies several times to get his body language down, and often drapes her scarves around adoring fans' necks the same way her idol did. She has also visited Graceland several times and has an entire room filled with Presley memorabilia. ["Globe"]

ELTON JOHN BECOMING A "GOLDEN GIRL": Rock star Elton John will be joining the cast of NBC-TV's "The Golden Girls" next season — as Rose's hooker cousin!

According to a member of the show's production staff, Elton was initially going to just play himself in a guest appearance, but the star suggested that it might be funnier if he played the character, who comes back after working as a prostitute in England for many years, in drag.

Apparently the flamboyant British rock star is a big fan of the series, which he calls the greatest thing since "All In The Family", and even has advance copies of each episode smuggled out in advance of their airing. ["News Extra"]

SEXY MODEL WAS BORN AS A GUY: In a story resembling that of famous British sex-change model Tula, it was revealed that to [redacted] and runway model Vanda de [redacted] was born Norman [redacted], and underwent sex-reassignment surgery in 1987.

The 27-year-old blonde, who makes a fortune posing in skimpy bikinis and slinky sheaths, says that while she's not ashamed of her background, she doesn't publicize it either, because "I don't think it has anything to do with who I am now".

The 5'10" Vanda, who spent six years working as a waiter in New York to save for her transformation, was accepted by a top modeling agency just weeks after she recuperated. She earns \$250 an hour modeling in Miami, Los Angeles, and New York.

She says that even though her boyfriend knows all about her past, he wants to marry her anyway.

["Weekly World News"]

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but they just don't know how to control this compulsion that is driving their lives. Perhaps she walks out for good at last, and starts a new life. Perhaps they work out the problems and find a new relationship that is based on mutual respect and sharing. No matter what the choice, it is a long, hard path to follow.

The split personality transvestite doesn't have the option of walking out on the other half of the personality, unless you count sex reassignment surgery as the analog of the female leaving the man behind. No, the TV has to find a way to let those two personalities coexist in harmony. It's not easy. The split personality transvestite is in as much of a bind as the woman trapped in an abusive relationship. Obviously, the answer is to allow the male and female sides to merge, but what about family, job, finances, and all the myriad aspects that will be affected. About the only thing I can say is that left unresolved the cycle of violence within a person will destroy that person and those they love.

Maybe John will have to walk out on his job and take the economic, social and personal risks of a new career more in line with the needs of his/her blended personality. Maybe Jane will have to begin to live more in reality than in frothy fantasyland of femininity she now inhabits. If it's really bad, counseling may be needed, or maybe just some advice from a trusted sister or friend.

By the way, if you are interested in more information about rape/abuse and its causes, contact your local rape/abuse hotline, it should be in the phone book. You might even consider taking the training to become a counselor. As a transvestite you have a unique perspective that will prove valuable, and what you learn will help you understand your own life. Try it, it could be very rewarding both for you and someone who needs the help.

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NATIONAL HOTLINES

[This list of telephone numbers of local groups is provided by "Cross-Talk" as a service to the gender community.]

Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles:	(213) 876-6141
Atlanta Educational Gender Info. Service:	(404) 325-7055
Beta Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Mississippi:	(601) 982-7678
Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio:	(512) 657-2540
CD Network, Rochester NY:	(716) 251-2312
Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago:	(708) 364-9514
Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, New York City:	(201) 663-0772
Chicago Gender Society:	(312) 434-5445
City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minneapolis:	(612) 933-5288
Cross-Port, Cincinnati:	(513) 299-1353
Crystal Club, Central Ohio:	(614) 237-4321
Crossroads, Flint MI:	(313) 446-0782
Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas:	(817) 261-3253
Educational TV Channel, San Francisco:	(415) 763-3959
Emerald City, Seattle:	(206) 822-6953
Expressing Our Nature, Rochester NY:	(716) 251-2316
Gender Identity Center, Denver:	(303) 458-5378
Harriet Lane's TV Set, Connecticut:	(203) 237-1968
Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu:	(808) 529-5634
Heart of Texas Gender Alliance, Austin:	(512) 892-6454
Hierarchy, Philadelphia:	(215) 425-5240
Long Island Femme Expression, NY:	(718) 446-6753
My Choice, Baltimore:	(301) 732-4546
Neutral Corner, San Diego:	(619) 236-1586
Northwest Gender Alliance, Portland:	(503) 774-8463
Powder Puffs of Orange County, Anaheim:	(714) 779-9013
Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose:	(408) 984-4044
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Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg PA:	(717) 780-1578
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St. Louis Gender Foundation:	(314) 567-8615
Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston:	(713) 988-8064
Tiffany Club, Boston:	(508) 358-2305
Toronto Crossdressers Club, Canada:	(416) 864-0420
Transgenderists Independence Club, Albany:	(518) 436-4513
Transpitt, Pittsburgh:	(412) 781-0257

IF YOU SEE AN ARTICLE IN A NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE ABOUT TRANSGENDERED BEHAVIOR OR FEATURING A MEMBER OF THE GENDER COMMUNITY, PLEASE SEND IT IN!

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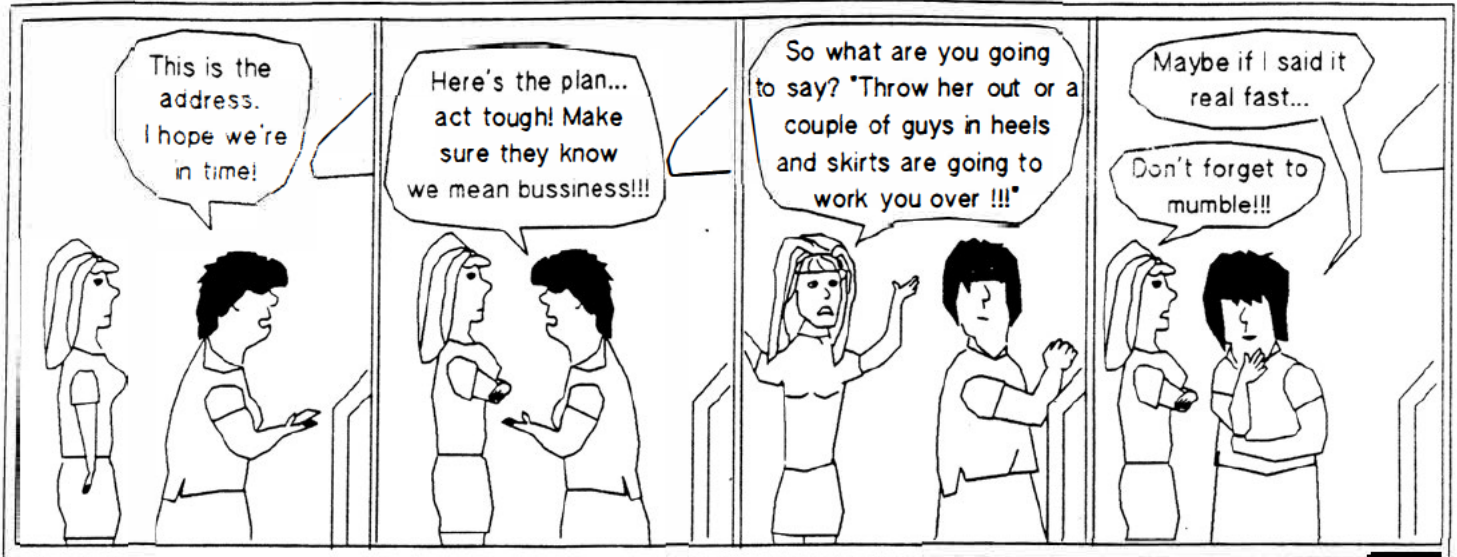
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LORI

THE GENDER BENDER



CUSTOM PRESS-ON NAILS

by Divinity

In my earliest efforts to feminize my appearance, I had used several sets of the press-on cheapo nail kits available from the grocery and drug stores. They just did not do the job. First of all, they didn't fit my hands at all. My thumbs, especially, are very wide and flat. Plus, as a result of attempting to stop numerous car doors from closing all the way, my thumbnails more resemble a washboard than a nail belonging to anyone (other than a Klingon).

I had reached the point where I was just about to give up on longer nails, and simply polish my natural nails and let it go at that, even if that didn't give me the most feminine appearance.

Then, one day when I was taking my wig in for a shampoo and style, I noticed all the nail ladies hard at work. "Aha!", I thought. "Maybe they could advise me on how to resolve this nagging problem." As it developed, one of them did come up with a solution.

So one Saturday morning at 7:15 (before all the other nail stylists and customers invaded my privacy), we made a set of acrylic nails for me. The secret difference is that my stylists did NOT prepare my nails for permanent bonding. When a woman goes in for acrylics, the stylist roughs up the surface of the natural nails and cleans them with a harsh astringent. Only then does the acrylic compound go on, and once dry it takes a jackhammer to get them off!

With mine, however, the acrylic compound was applied directly onto my "dirty", unroughened nails. This, I was advised, would permit me to "pop" the nails off at the end of the evening. So, after leaving the salon shortly before 9:00, I spent an entire day wearing my new longer, beautiful and VERY purple nails. The looks I got! After telling clerks at the grocery store, the optometrist, Builders Emporium and the dry cleaners that I was going to be in a play that evening (ha!), I tired of the charade and just let people think whatever they wanted.

I discovered that putting on makeup that evening was more difficult with the nails than I had considered, and I took a lot longer to get out of the house (let alone the closet). But I succeeded in pumping gas, visiting the ATM and spending a pleasant evening at the Queen Mary without a single problem. And the acrylics did, in fact, come right off.

Well ... not RIGHT off. A couple did pop off easily, but the others required the use of a pair of tweezers to pry under the edge of the acrylics to get them started. But there was no trouble, no pain, no mess, no need to remove the nail color, no reason to lose the acrylics. If you go this route and find you need to use tweezers for removal, I suggest you spread the tweezers far enough apart that you avoid scratching the surface of the nails.

Needless to say, I was pleasantly surprised, relieved, happy and satisfied. Now, whenever I wear one of my purple outfits, I already have matching nails. They fit my fingers perfectly, since the widths, curvatures and lengths are based on my natural nails. All I need is adhesive nail tabs, thin enough to fit the grooves, lumps, and ridges of my natural nails, to allow the acrylics to almost snap in place. Because the fit is so perfect, I have less concern about a nail popping off; just be sure to clean your nails thoroughly prior to applying the tabs.

While acrylics aren't cheap (\$25-\$35 a set), they last, are easy to re-use, and the polish doesn't flake off. I now have eight sets of nails, each set a different color, to match my various color schemes. I keep them in ziplock bags, one for each finger (NOT one for each set). This way, it's easy to find the right nail for each finger.

It may take a little research to find a manicurist who is willing to do this for you (some are uncomfortable with doing acrylics on guys), but it's well worth the effort.

MAKING THE REAL ONES LOOK GOOD

by Terri [redacted]
(from "The [redacted] us Flower", Alpha Zeta Chapter Tri-Ess)


This is a step-by-step summary of a manicure the way it should be done:

1. Clip or file the nails and bevel, remembering to file in one direction only.
2. Use a ruby (finishing) stone on nail ends.
3. Soak hands in warm soapy water for 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Use cuticle remover.
5. Use cuticle "pusher" or orange stick to remove the cuticle from the base of the nail bed.
6. Use a nail whitener to clean out underneath the nails.
7. Apply lotion on the nails, hands and wrists.
8. Remove the lotion with a brush, soap and water, and dry your hands.
9. Use nail polish remover to remove oil from the nail bed.
10. Apply a clear base coat to the nails. Try to cover the entire nail in three strokes.
11. Apply the color coat the same way as the base; use two coats.
12. Apply top coat.
13. Spray on nail dryer; never have a fan going if you use this as it can cause clumping of the polish.

Practice, of course, is the key to having better looking nails, and extra care and attention to hygiene can only reap benefits. However, if you want that "expert" look, spend the money to have a professional manicure!

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BE GOOD TO YOUR FEET: GOODY TWO SHOES

by Jennifer
(from North St Gender Alliance newsletter)

If the shoe fits, it's ugly. All too often, this seems to be the guiding spirit when choosing women's shoes. The trick is to select shoes that are both attractive and comfortable. The good news is that this combination is now available more than ever before. It has taken longer for the principles of good walking or aerobic shoe engineering to appear in women's shoes than in men's.

When shopping, keep certain principles in mind. Above all, make sure they are comfortable. This first and highest hurdle for many of us is how to have the opportunity to leisurely try on shoes. For some, mail order may be the route to follow. The obvious hazard is that the shoes may not fit properly. But also, you can't evaluate them for the many factors that go into a properly made shoe. For others, a quick and furtive try-on at a self-serve shoe store is an option, especially if you aren't crossdressed. I was nervous, but enjoyed going as Jennifer to Nordstroms, where a salesman carefully fitted a pair of Easy Spirit pumps with two inch heels. I bought them and walked around Nordstroms for half an hour, feeling the shoes to be a bit too snug. I returned to the shoe section and requested that the shoes be stretched. The salesman graciously complied and I have enjoyed wearing them since. This, of course, is the ideal way to choose your shoes but can be a bit scary.

Some tips on selecting shoes: They should be comfortable when you purchase them. Don't expect to "break them in" or assume they will stretch with wearing. Leather or fabric

will tend to mold to your foot as well as "breathe". Plastic uppers will do neither.

Our feet are frequently different sizes. For this reason, your feet should be measured (ideally, the old-fashioned way), especially the larger foot. Always try on both shoes and buy the size for the larger foot. There should be a thumb's width between the end of the big toe and the shoe tip.

Look for quality manufacturing in terms of strength, durability, smooth stitching, and finished edges.

Avoid extreme styles such as very high heels or platforms. The ideal heel raises the foot about 1 1/2" above the ball of the foot. Don't go above a 2" heel. Leather soles are desirable and resist punctures. Rubber or composition heels are superior to plastic. I've replaced my plastic heels regardless of the degree of wear.

A flexible sole is essential; always flex the sole in your hand. At the same time, a firm shank should stiffen the sole from the heel to the ball of the foot. It should be firm and unbending, providing support to the longitudinal foot arch in the underlying sloping part of the shoe. The flexible part of the sole should be just in front of the shank. A new and essential feature is the cushioned insole. Easy Spirit seems to have pioneered this, with television ads showing high-heeled women (or TVs?) playing basketball. Easy Spirit

(CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE)

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[]

(Please make check or money order payable to Kymberleigh Richards.)

ads now feature a shoe designed for shopping (shop till you drop!). Less expensive brands have followed their lead and now comfortable pumps are widespread. I urge you not to buy shoes that lack either flexible soles or cushioned insoles. As you get older, you especially need shoes that cushion the shock of foot impact ("Cross-Talk", April). The fatty cushion in your foot thins out, creating a greater need for a cushioned insole.

To get an idea if your shoe will fit properly, check that it is wider than your forefoot (the ball of your toes). Trace an outline around your forefoot while standing. Then place the shoe over the outline and see which is wider. If your foot is wider, a variety of foot ailments can result. Bad shoes can cause or aggravate the foot problems described in the previous article. Remember, your feet spread with activity such as walking or even standing. They swell in the afternoon and evening and those are the better times to buy your shoes.

Make sure there is enough room in the toebox by wiggling your toes. The ball of the foot should fit comfortably in the shoe. The heel should fit snugly and have a firm heel counter. The instep shouldn't gap open -- this is especially common in wide widths.

High heels are fun. They make our legs look more feminine and cause us to walk sexier. But if you walk too much in them, the toes are cramped, the feet are strained, and the body alignment is changed from the usual resulting in a swayed back and potential backache.

In summary, buying women's shoes should be the most important purchases in your feminine wardrobe. No other items of clothing, if chosen badly, can lead to so many health problems. Choose carefully and deliberately. Fantasy has no place in the selection of comfortable shoes. Take some risks of being read and don't be too frugal. Be aware

of the appropriate styles, colors, etc., but make proper fit and foot comfort be your lodestar. As the old shoe polish jingle said, "If you wore shoes upon your head, you'd make sure they looked neat".

HELPFUL HINT: Ever wear a pair of white shoes that were all scuffed with lots of black marks all over them? Try nail polish remover for removing tar and grease (but only on leather, not on plastic). And white shoe polish will go on evenly if you rub your shoes with rubbing alcohol before applying. Finally, spraying your white shoes with hair spray and letting it dry will keep the polish from smearing.

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A LITTLE ADVICE FOR KEEPING A MARRIAGE HARMONIOUS

by Leslie
(from "The Flip Side", Tri-Delta Chi Chapter Tri-Ess)

I have been married to my wife K.J. for almost three years now. Girls, I have had a lot to learn! She has pointed out to me a lot of mistakes I have made, but by telling me about those errors she has helped me look at myself at correct those mistakes. So I thought I would give you a list of some of the most common lessons I have learned and a few rules we can all use to make our marriages better. And about those rules: Yes, I have broken every one of them at least once and been forgiven each time, but sometimes that forgiveness is not the easiest thing for your lady to provide.

GIVE YOUR LADY EQUAL TIME. It is too easy to become selfish and get all wrapped up in your alter ego. Don't spend too much on yourself (and that applies to time, money and attention) without also providing something for her.

WHEN YOU BUY SOMETHING FOR YOUR SPOUSE, DON'T LET HER SEE IT ON YOU FIRST. This is a good way to anger her, and to make her hate an item that otherwise might have been a most welcome gift. She is most likely to think you originally bought it for yourself and the idea of giving it to her was just an afterthought.

FIND OUT IF SHE LIKES THE IDEA OF EXCHANGING CLOTHES, MAKEUP AND OTHER ITEMS -- AND IF SHE DOES NOT LIKE IT, LEAVE HER THINGS ALONE. If you take her things and she hasn't first given you permission, she is likely to feel that she has no privacy at all. Women also have a tendency to attach sentimental value to certain items, such as a dress that was worn on a particularly memorable occasion, or a piece of jewelry that may be cheap and without monetary value but carries important feelings because it was a gift from a special friend. You may not know which items these are, and you will definitely hurt her if you help yourself to these when she hasn't volunteered to let you use them. If she doesn't want to share, or even acts like she's not

really happy about it when you try it, get your own things!

WORK OUT SOME KIND OF BUDGET FOR THE PURCHASE OF YOUR FEMALE ITEMS. Agree in advance whether you can afford to spend money out of the family budget. A good example of a reason for this is that women who understand tight finances will often hold off on a purchase for themselves or the family if they feel it will strain the budget too much. Sometimes the item in question is frivolous, like a fancy dress she will seldom wear, but it is often something more important like new eyeglasses for one of the kids or repairs her car needs soon but not immediately. The best way to tick her off in a situation like this is to come home with a new dress for yourself. Remember, no matter how tolerant of approving she may be of your crossdressing, it is still an extracurricular activity in her eyes even though it is a necessity in yours.

REMEMBER THAT MARRIAGE IS A PARTNERSHIP, NOT A CONTEST IN WHICH ONE OF YOU MUST EMERGE AS DOMINANT. Don't say "I'm the man, so I'm the boss", particularly if you happen to be wearing a dress at the time. This is the very height of hypocrisy in her eyes and is the most damaging thing you can do to your relationship. This is especially to be avoided with a wife like K.J., who was already established in a successful career before our marriage. You're in for serious trouble if you try this stunt with a person who married you because she loves you and not because she needs you. She's likely to tell you that she got along without you before and that it won't be very hard to get along without you again -- and if she says it, she means it.

HONESTY ABOUT YOUR CROSSDRESSING IS ALWAYS BEST, AND IF YOUR

(CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE)

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SPOUSE KNOWS ABOUT IT, KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN. Some of us tell our wives we crossdress and some don't. The only way to tell if you should is to use common sense. Remember, you can avoid a lot of fights by telling her what you do, and, if possible, by asking her permission regarding when and where to do it. Often, it is possible to reach a mutual agreement about your "hobby" and to find a time when your crossdressing can be convenient for both wife and husband.

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOUR WIFE WANTS HER HUSBAND, NOT ANOTHER WOMAN. Let your wife see the man she married on a regular basis. Some crossdressers become so adept at transforming themselves into women that they have very clear-cut alternate personalities. While the wife may become good friends with that alternate personality, her husband's feminine side may not be enough at times. Sometimes, no girlfriend -- even if she is actually a husband wearing women's clothes -- will do. Your wife needs you, as a man!

ESTABLISH SOME KIND OF AGREEMENT REGARDING ATTIRE FOR SLEEPING AND SEX. You may be terribly turned on by crossdressing and may feel like making love to your wife immediately after you change out of your dress. Your wife may need a little time to make the transition between your female self and you. Some women, for example, are turned off when they see bra strap marks still on your body. K.J., for example, has an unusually sharp sense of smell, and she had a problem with the scents of makeup and perfume on me. Our solution was simple; I take a bath after I have undressed, and she says then I smell like a man again. Every woman is different. Some don't care if you wear lingerie to bed, but others simply hate it. If you're not sure, ask! If she's not certain what she likes and what she doesn't, experiment together.

MOST WOMEN STILL THINK THIS IS SOMETHING WHICH WILL GO AWAY AND WILL TOLERATE YOUR BEHAVIOR TO BEGIN WITH, THEN RESENT CROSSDRESSING WHEN THEY BEGIN TO REALIZE IT'S NOT A TEMPORARY CONDITION. A big problem now has to be dealt with, and how you do this is up to you. I handled it by being completely honest. Some of the resentment is triggered by the fact that one or both of you is uninformed about crossdressing. Sometimes only one or two specific aspects of crossdressing are causing the resentment and a willingness to be flexible and compromise can solve the problem. I handled this by keeping out communications about my "hobby" open and honest. This made a major difference in our relationship.

SOMETIMES A WOMAN WANTS TO HELP, BUT HER SUGGESTIONS MAY SOUND LIKE CRITICISM TO YOU. Here's the situation. You've just shown your new wife your entire wardrobe, all the

wigs and things, and she isn't happy about it at all. If she says "Real women wouldn't be caught dead looking like whores in those six inch heels and 4000 bras, and nobody would leave her house wearing such garish makeup", don't get mad and insulted. Listen! She's trying to help you pass in public. She has taken an interest and is willing to try and teach you the things she learned when she was just a teenager. The best thing to do, most of the time, is to take her advice. This will show her you respect her and you're willing to try, and she'll appreciate it. You'll even look better if you take her advice and stop wearing red next to your face because it makes you look pale and sick, and try that shade of blue she suggests.

She might even be impressed enough to help you shop! **ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS A WIFE CAN HAVE, ESPECIALLY ONE WHO IS NEW TO CROSSDRESSING, IS THAT YOUR "HOBBY" IS A THREAT.** Show her that you're careful when you dress and you don't want to do anything stupid or reckless. The thought of you going out in public "en femme" is a very big worry point for her. She doesn't know if you'll run into somebody important from work, or get arrested -- or simply blend into the crowd and get on with your shopping. If you'll just remember to use common sense, she'll have less to worry about.

My wife and I have grown and learned together and are continuing to do it every day. We're able to do this because we live by the Golden Rule -- we treat each other the way we would like to be treated.

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THE CON GAME

by Bobbi Renee
(from "The Pink p", Kappa Beta Chapter Tri-Ess)

The confidence game. The topic refers to passing as a woman. Feeling confident and natural as a woman in public is a very long process. There are many little steps along the way. Being older than most of the CO's that I meet, I thought that I might share with you some of my little steps. In doing so, perhaps I can help those who desire to go out in public.

For those that have not met me, I should tell you a little about myself. When I started, I was a 5'8" farm boy with broad shoulders, masculine looking, with very large hands. It was almost impossible to keep my hands looking nice because of their size and all the dirty work around the farm. I felt that I was the epitome of everything unfeminine. The only two things I really had in my favor were drive and attitude. My voice was so deep that I had to pretend I had laryngitis when I went out dressed.

My first step was to go out late at night driving around. Next I began going to an outdoor shopping center which had closed for the night. I would stop the car and go over to a drink machine and get a coke. I was now out in public -- it really didn't matter that there was no public there to see me. Nonetheless, this was an important step, similar to a child learning to walk. Each step builds confidence.

After many little similar occasions, my first real outing was to a distant town for a business meeting. I decided to arrive the night before as Bobbi Renee. I called a hotel and made a reservation for my sister. I still don't know how I summoned the courage, but I went to the clerk and whispered that I had a reservation. The clerk was kind, and checked me into the hotel. She then proceeded to explain that my throat problem could have been caused by stress. Little did she know just how much stress I was really under at that moment! I will never know if I passed or not, but I had built a little more confidence in myself. The next day I drove back dressed, during the daytime, I stopped and walked around several small malls, being too scared to venture into a store.

I wore gloves both winter and summer during this period because of my hands. I was in a coffee shop one night and a gentleman remarked that I "must work for Kelly Office Services". (How many of you remember the white glove trademark of the Kelly Girls?) I just indicated that I did, and went about my business. Looking back, I must have looked awfully stupid drinking coffee with my gloves on.

On another occasion, a gentleman changed my flat tire. I guess he didn't want me to dirty my white gloves. Each step gave me a little more confidence. But every time I was read, it subtracted from my confidence level. By this time I was going to movies and browsing around in dress shops. There were no enclosed malls in those days -- I was shopping Main Street in a capital city now, and I was really beginning to be confident.

Then in 1967 my confidence almost disappeared. I was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, since they couldn't find any other charge to file against me. It was my first (and hopefully last) encounter with a jail cell. I paid the \$100 fine and was released, but my confidence was at an all time low.

I instinctively knew that I would occasionally be read but my determination grew stronger with each setback. After a few small steps again, I was back to full steam ahead. In the very late 60's, I decided to buy a car. I went to a dealership and worked out a deal to trade cars. I told the salesperson that I drove the car all the time but that my brother held the title. The next day, I went back, this time as my "brother", signed for the car, and drove home. My confidence level was at cloud nine. I still wonder if they read me, but just didn't care as long as they sold the car.

There have been many setbacks and many successes since then. Each positive activity builds confidence. I met Julie

(CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE)

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Alexander something over two years ago, and she convinced me to chuck the gloves. Even though I had many years of experience, I have learned a lot from Julie's Tri-Ess chapter.

I am very comfortable in the female role now, in any situation. I can go up to a security guard and ask directions (I have had a few sessions with a speech pathologist.) Acting nervous is always a dead giveaway, but I find that I am no longer nervous. I told someone that I needed to get read to bring me back to reality; sure enough, I had a new wig one day and was read "big time" in a restaurant. I still don't like it, but I figure it comes with the territory.

Here are a few tips from my experience that may help you along the way. If you are read, just finish what you are doing and leave normally. Hurrying out is an admission of guilt. If they smile at you (most of the time this is the only indication you get), smile back. If they stare at you, then stare back -- they won't look at you for very long. Just remember that there are many shapes and sizes of genetic women. And they can never be certain without a physical examination. Study other women diligently -- practice makes perfect. You HAVE come a long way, baby!

QUICK QUOTE: "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman." -- Simone de Beauvoir in "The Second Sex".



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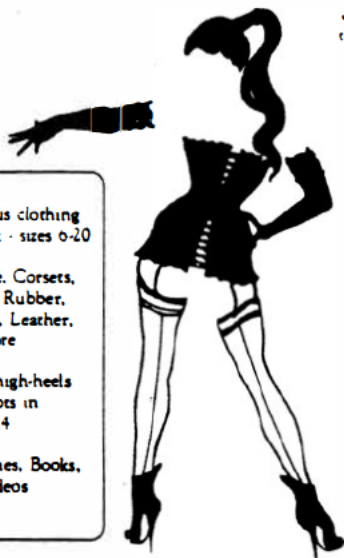
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