

# CALIFORNIA *Unity*

THE NEWSLETTER • Issue the Third • April 18, 1997

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## 200+ TRANSFOLK CAN'T BE WRONG! (Having a Wonderful Time, Glad they're Here!)

Panels, workshops and partying! Oh my!

Thursday, the second day of California Unity brought 200+ transgenders and supporters to the Hotel Queen Mary conference center



for the first full schedule of events.

As the photos this issue show, all concerned seem to have enjoyed themselves to the max.

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### F2M PROGRAM STARTS

Today is the first day of the female-to-male program. A fabulous array of events is planned. Don't miss it!

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### ROOM TO SHARE? LOOKING FOR AN OLD FRIEND?

Whether you are looking for a room to share or have one to share, the Message Board near the registration desk is the place to go.

Save yourself money, save someone else money. Make a friend. Share a room.

Trying to contact someone? Post a notice on the Message Board.

Check the Message Board daily. The message you read could be for you.

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### SCHEDULE CHANGES

Don't let last-minute schedule changes cause you to miss the program you most wanted to attend. Take a few moments to study the Schedule Changes bulletin board next to the registration desk.

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DON'T MISS TONIGHT'S SPECTACULAR FUNDRAISER FOR THE HIRSCHFELD EXHIBIT!

## WOMAN CULTURE: LEARNING THE SILENT LANGUAGE

Melanie Yarbrough (Neutral Corner)

“A foreign language is always spoken with an accent. Until you learn how to function within that culture, you run the risk of being seen as not being a member.” Whether you’re trying to learn Spanish and going to Mexico, or whether you’re a crossdresser trying to present and interact as female, the principle is the same.

Dianna Cicotella is Director of the Gender Identity Center of Colorado. She is also the author of the Employer’s Guide to Transition, under the pen name Dana Cole. At a California Unity Workshop, she spoke on “Things Your Mama Never Told You About Being a Girl.” This informative session dealt with those all too important differences between masculine and feminine that are often overlooked. Things so subtle, so ingrained they’re almost subconscious and invisible.

“We understand the body, clothing, and makeup just fine. But we don’t understand the culture we’re moving into.” Dianna argues that there is a very specific female culture, and if you don’t understand it, you can not completely pass. As men socialized in a masculine culture, we carry over so many of these things – often without realizing it. Some examples from Dianna’s workshop:

**The Silent Hello:** Women meeting other women in public often lock eyes and smile. It’s a way of validating and reassuring each other, a typically feminine gesture. So if you’re out and a strange woman smiles, don’t assume she’s checking you and has read you. Do the truly female thing: acknowledge and smile back.

**Eye Contact:** Men have a tendency to stare at breasts when talking to women. Real women look each other in the eyes. It’s important for men to avoid exuding male sexuality, even if attracted to the women they are with. These vibes get picked up by women who are sensitive to such things, and the incongruity gets noticed real quick.

**Body Language:** “Boys walk big, girls walk small.” Male body language is more aggressive and sprawling, while female body language is more passive and controlled.

**“May I Help You?”:** When a sales girl solicits your help, it’s not done to be intrusive or pushy. It’s as natural female effort to help another female. When you deny a woman’s ability to help you, it sends a negative sign.

**Admitting weakness:** Men are taught not to apologize or avoid being wrong. Women are much more graciously self-effacing, willing to express being sorry.

Learning a lot of these things may be difficult for white males. Being at the top of the social/political ladder, they aren’t used to being vulnerable, trusting, solicitous, caring, or conscious of being subordinate to anyone. Giving up power voluntarily is always hard. But to women who’ve had to live as subordinates most of their lives, this is natural. Those who want to pass as, interact, or live as women, would do well to recognize this, to know what they are getting into.

Dianna counsels, “Learn the stereotypes, and then you can make adjustments for your own personality.” While we aren’t here to reinforce the negative stereotypes which keep women down, but rather to regulate them and adapt some of them in a limited way.



Remember, Woman is as Woman does.

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## TGs GATHER - CAL UNITY OFF TO GREAT START!

Over 100 transgendered individuals and their supporters gathered here on Wednesday, aboard the Hotel Queen Mary for the first day of California Unity.

One of Wednesday's highlights was an inspiring keynote speech from IFGE Executive Director Alison Laing, which she delivered to an appreciative audience of attendees.

The day's second highlight was a Leadership Conference co-hosted by the redoubtable Ms. Laing and the efficacious Dianna Cicotella. It was well attended by those working to advance the TG community. Laing and Cicotella focused on key issues for community and group leaders: the challenges of leadership, the new model of "shared leadership" and team building, inspiring others, communication, feedback, and developing future leaders.

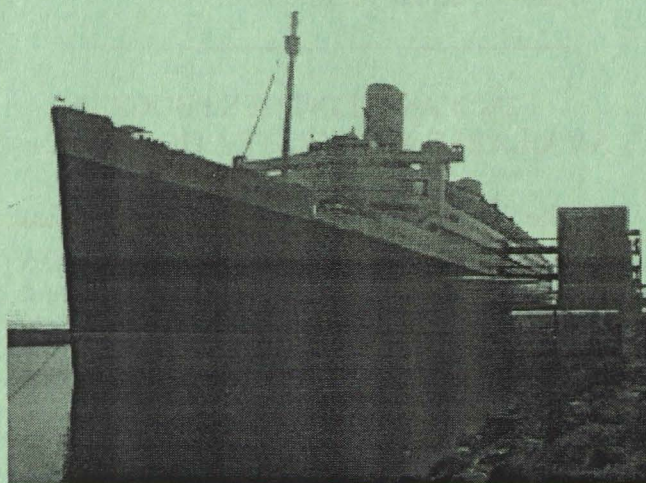
Throughout the day, bebies of beauteous femmes and handsomely clad hommes, not to mention spouses, S.O.'s, and professionals, paraded up and down the ramp from the shore

to the Exhibit Hall where the conference is being held.

And what a conference center it is.

California Unity is being held on three decks of the Queen Mary.

On the first level, which is reached by a ramp, can be found registration, vendors, booths sponsored by various national and regional TG groups, informational brochures, announcements for forthcoming conferences, and more!



On the second level of the Queen Mary conference hall, California Unity is proud to present, straight from Europe, the first U.S. showing of the Magnus Hirschfeld Exhibit. Dr. Hirschfeld is the pioneer sexologist of the 1920s and '30s who studied transgender be-

havior as a normal, healthy variant of human behavior, and who coined the term "transvestite."

Dr. Hirschfeld's work was suppressed and his clinic destroyed by the Nazis when Hitler came to power in the mid-1930s. The exhibit features surviving photographs and short biographies of Hirschfeld and other early pioneers in the study of TG peoples, as well as rare photographs of famous TG personalities of the pre-WWII era.

The lower level of the conference center hosts our panels, workshops and other presentations.

A Welcoming Reception Buffet out under the starlight on the stern of the Queen Mary



was a fit conclusion to a wonderful first day of California Unity. Old friends met, new friends were made; the joy, pride and excitement of being TG were very much evident.

And the best is yet to come!

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#### F2M MASCULINITIES PROGRAM AVAILABLE AT REGISTRATION DESK

The line-up for the special Masculinities Program organized by Jacob Hale is now available. Workshops, presentations, and parties are only some of the exciting events planned for those interested in or struggling with F2M issues. Pick up your copy of the Masculinities Program at the Cal Unity registration desk.



#### Why are these people smiling?

They didn't miss their panel, because they checked the Change of Schedule bulletin board by the registration desks to keep up on last minute alterations in the Cal Unity program.

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#### MEDIA ALERT! NEWSWEEK VISITS CALIFORNIA DREAMING

*Newsweek* magazine has two reporters here. They are interested in hearing your story. If you wish to share it, contact them at the special *Newsweek* booth on level one of the conference center.

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#### AWARDS BANQUET SCHEDULE CHANGE

Due to a time conflict, and so everyone can get to bed at a decent hour, we are moving up the start time of every event on Saturday night's program by one half-hour.

The Reception will now begin at 7:30 and the Awards Banquet will commence at 8:30.

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THE NEWSLETTER • Issue the First • April 16, 1997

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## WELCOME! WELCOME! WELCOME!

Welcome aboard!

Welcome aboard the good ship Hotel Queen Mary. Welcome aboard the transgender community. Welcome aboard the first day of the California Unity conference, which brings together transgender people from every hue of the gender rainbow, along with their supporters, families and helping professionals for a unique voyage of self-exploration, self-education—and fun.

California Unity is both the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Covention of the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) and the 1997 Powder Puffs of Orange County (PPOC) California Dreamin' Conference. The IFGE is the oldest and largest organization serving the entire TG community. PPOC is one of California's oldest and most respected TG organizations. Joining with four other Southern California TG groups—Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Born Free, Neutral Corner, and Pathfinders—they have merged regional and national efforts to present what promises to one of the most exciting TG events ever!

For your pleasure and edification there are workshops, panels, parties, entertainments, vendors, tours, a spectacular Trans-

gender Awards ceremony you aren't likely to forget, plus a great deal more!

(You'll find a complete itinerary in your registration packet.)

This year's conference has something for every member of the TG community—crossdressers, transsexuals, transgenderists, intersexuals, androgynes, professionals, activists, clergy, spouses and significant others.

So, once again, wherever you are on the gender spectrum—F2M, M2F or somewhere in between—welcome aboard!

Our Captains (Alison Laing & Joan Goodnight) and crew (IFGE, PPOC, etc.) will do their best to make your voyage a pleasant one.

And, if at any time you experience difficulty, please contact one of our friendly, if harried, crew. They'll do their best to address your concern. (And the same is true of the hotel staff.)

Bon Voyage! Glad you're sailing with us!

SINCERELY,  
THE CALIFORNIA UNITY  
STAFF AND CREW

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**CROSS THE BORDER? SI!  
CROSS DRESSED? NO!**

Note that crossing borders to the north (U.S. into Canada) while cross-dressed is okay.

But crossing borders to the south (U.S. into Mexico) while crossdressed can lead to serious consequences. Police there are often less tolerant than their North American neighbors, and those found crossdressed are often subject to arrest.

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**IF BEING PHOTOGRAPHED  
MAKES YOU SEE RED – WEAR  
RED!**

Camera shy?

Photographers from both the transgender and mainstream media will be attending the conference.

Those from the mainstream media will be escorted by a Cal Unity staff member, who will monitor their photography to ensure that no attendee's picture is taken without their express permission.

However, for your further protection, if being photographed makes you see red for any reason, wear one of the red stickers provided at the Cal Unity registration desk in the Exhibit Hall.

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**THE WATCH-TRANS IS  
WATCHING THE MESSAGE  
BOARD!  
SO SHOULD YOU!**

For your convenience a Message Board has been placed adjacent to the registration desk.

Check it daily for important messages.

The Message Board is for use by those seeking to contact others, to make

announcements, post last minute schedule changes, etc.

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**SHARE A ROOM, MAKE A  
FRIEND!**

Many convention attendees were unable to book rooms on the Queen Mary.

Others need to hold expenses to a minimum.

If you have an extra bed in your room and would like to share it with a roommate, notify the Cal Unity registration desk and they will try to match you with a compatible roommate. Who knows, you might make a friend for life!

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**DON'T BE LEFT OUT! SIGN UP  
FOR SPECIAL EVENTS NOW!**

California Unity has some exciting special events planned.

Special fund-raisers, banquets, lunches with community figures.

There is limited seating at all. If you wish to attend, to avoid missing out, purchase your tickets now at the registration desk.

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**PROGRAM SCHEDULE CHANGES  
& WHERE TO FIND THEM**

As you can guess, we have already had a couple of program and schedule changes. Due to illness and delayed arrivals, a few others will doubtless have to be altered later.

But you don't have to miss any.

All schedule changes will be posted on the Bulletin Board near the registration desk as they occur.

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