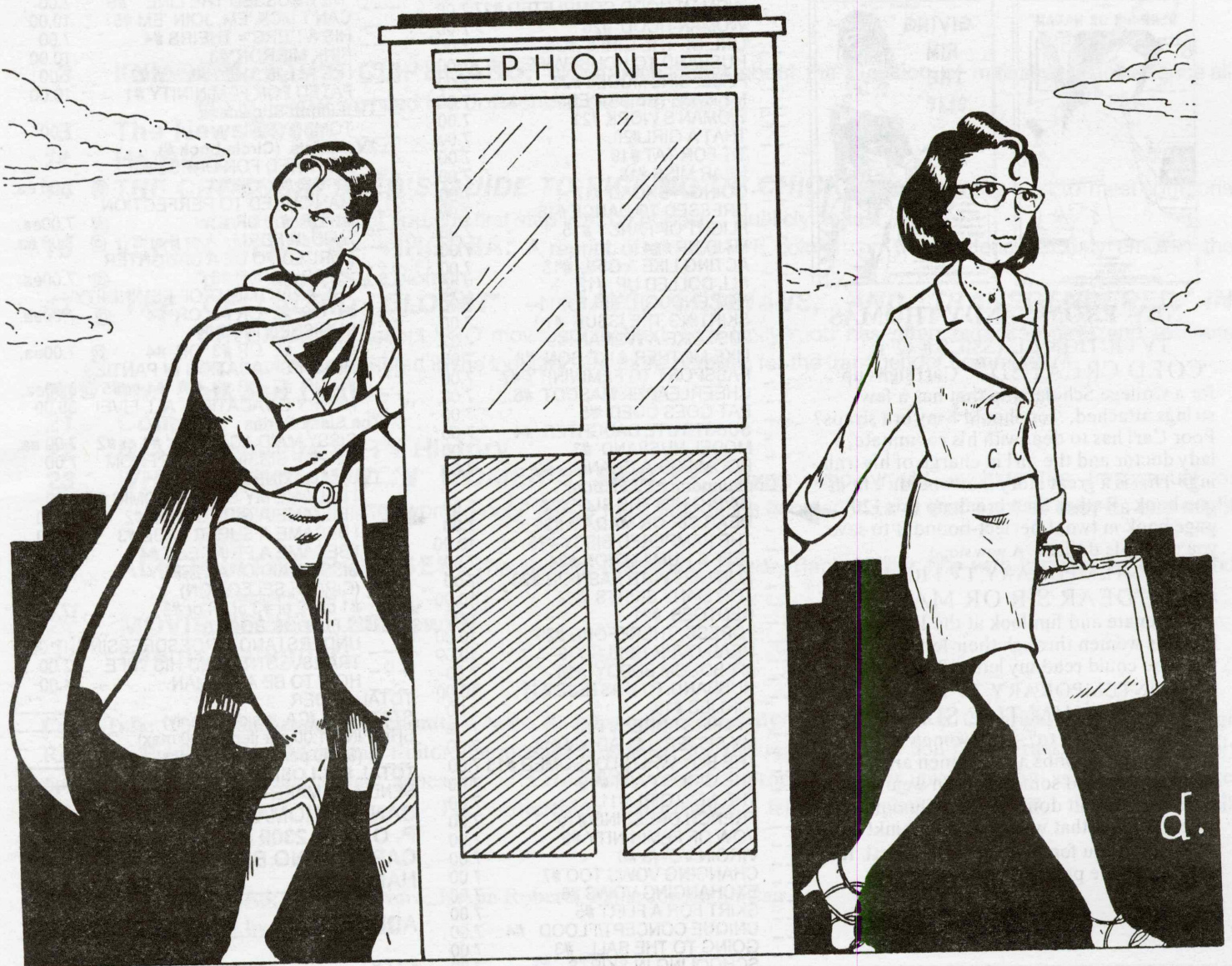


# CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

#83

\$5.00



**RELIGION, POLITICS, AND THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY  
DEFINING "WOMAN-ONLY" SPACE FOR TRANSGENDERED PEOPLE  
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# CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

SEPTEMBER 1996  
(ISSUE #83)



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## KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

### SAY "HALLELUJAH!"

by Kimberleigh Richards  
Publisher & Managing Editor

I have seen the light. After all the politics, all the arguments, all the editorializing, and all the rest of the bullshit, I have seen what the true path to acceptance by the masses is. I am declaring that transgenderism is a religion, and that crossdressing, transsexualism, and all the various "flavors"

**"The only people that the politicians listen to anymore are the ones with 'Reverend' in front of their name."**

of transgender behavior are just different faiths with different views of the same god ... the god of gender shifting.

The way I see it, the only people that the politicians listen to anymore are the ones with "Reverend" in front of their name and a dedicated flock of believers following them. And what the politicians don't realize is that the well-known celebrities of Christianity, like Pat Robertson and D. James Kennedy, care more about earthly prosperity than with heavenly salvation.

In fact, Kennedy said as much in a July interview for the *Los Angeles Times Magazine* in describing his "cultural mandate" which he uses to justify "every Christian's duty to involve himself in all aspects of secular society." It was reading those words that caused my divine inspiration; if they can pervade all aspects of everyday life, then so should we.

Think about it. There have been many periods in world history when being known as a Christian made you an object for public persecution, just as we have suffered persecution for having a different view of gender and identity. Yet they have persevered and become the persecutors. So why can't we?

Do you understand how clever an idea this is? All we have to do is prove, using the Bible, that Christ's death and resurrection made obsolete the provisions of Deuteronomy that made transgendered behavior "immoral" and throw in a bit of rabbinical logic and interpretation, and suddenly the argument that men as women -- and vice versa -- is the true destiny of humanity doesn't seem so farfetched. (Never

mind the jokes that priests and hare krishnas already wear dresses.) It's God's will that we're this way!

Best of all, transgender organizations will pop up in every town, only they'll be called "St. Christine's Orthodox Church of Transsexualism" or "Church of Our Lady Virginia the Crossdresser" and we'll be able to hold

meetings (now called services) in the open ... not once a month, but several times a week. And those Tuesday night Bingo games will take on a whole new meaning when the pot is enough to pay for that new pair of high heels!

We could declare RuPaul a saint, and Lydia's TV Fashions a religious shrine. The IFGE

board of directors would be akin to the College of Cardinals and their decision would not just be for that organization's executive director, but indeed for our Pope. (I just hope Alison is up to the task.)

Back to the words of D. James Kennedy, who quotes the Biblical directive to "be fruitful and multiply," which he sees as a mandate to bring God into government and science, among other things. Well, under our new religious philosophy, transgenderism belongs in all those places as well. Transgender Lobby Day will be everyday business on Capitol Hill, GenderPAC will be one of the more powerful political influences, and so much money will be budgeted for research into better methods of sex reassignment surgery that both Stanford and Johns Hopkins will have to reopen their doors immediately!

Of course, in order to match the religious fervor of Robertson, Kennedy, et al, we're going to have to prove we're just as "moral" as they are, so the fetishists and exhibitionists will have to stay in the closet. On the other hand, Christianity has had its share of scandals, and it only seems to give those who have not yet fallen something to preach about for their own greater glory, so go ahead and leave those closet doors open. I'm aiming for bishop and I need all the material I can get!

While I won't go so far as to try to make **Cross-Talk** into our new religion's bible, I figure there needs to be an equivalent to *The Christian Science Monitor* ... so fire up those presses!

The more I think about this, the more certain I become

(continued on page 19)



## The NewsQueen

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

She has only been on the job for a month, but already new *CBS This Morning* anchor Jane Robelot has stirred up a controversy. She thinks transvestites and transsexuals are mentally ill.

Robelot's opinion about the mental health of men who want to dress like -- or actually become -- women came up during an publicity tour prior starting her new job with the network morning news program. The term she used for such people was "crazy."

While looking for her muse this month, Ms. Sinclair lingered too long at the supermarket checkout counter and perhaps absorbed a tad too much tabloid influence. She feels better now, thank you, and wishes to apologize to Ms. Robelot (a former Philadelphian) for the unintentional slander. Here is what Ms. Robelot *actually* said in response to a reporter's question about filling Paula Zahn's shoes on the show:

"The beauty of it for me is that I'm not filling Paula's shoes. I'm filling my own shoes, which are 7 1/2 medium with very high heels. Any man who wants to wear high heels is crazy."

In a more temperate mood -- but still seeking inspiration -- Ms. Sinclair escaped from L.A. with Mr. Russell in his latest opus. But who should she run into than "blaxploitation" actress Pam Grier who plays a transgender crime queenpin who, appropriately enough, operates out of the beached grandeur of the Queen Mary (the Cunard liner, not the drag bar).

Grier had no problem playing a woman who used to be a man but who still acted a lot like a guy.

"If Wesley Snipes could have a padded bra in *To Wong Foo*, I could have a padded crotch," says Grier, star of several films in the '70s.

"I think it's easier for guys to play a woman, because they go to a more genteel world, which is all sweet and cotton candy," she said. "But when a woman goes from soft to hard to play a man, you'd better be ready for it. I had this punching bag in my locker room. I held my crotch. I went around slapping guys the way they do each other."

Gwyneth Paltrow is trying to convince the world that boyfriend Brad Pitt is just one of the guys. When asked by a reporter for *W* magazine about reports that the two were so close that Pitt had actually begun wearing her

underwear and was wearing a pair of her panties at the Academy Awards, Paltrow responded, "No way. Brad wears regular boys' underwear."

At least one type of crossdressing upsets Chastity Bono, the lesbian daughter of Rep. Sonny Bono (R-Calif.) and Cher.

"It *really* bothers me when I see people doing my mother in drag," she told a gay and lesbian newspaper in Oregon recently. "I mean, just imagine if you saw people doing that with *your* mother."

Ms. Sinclair understands completely, She takes great pains to keep from looking like her own dear Mater.

But there's bad news, Chastity. Drag queens are always going to try and capture the image of extreme personalities like your mother. And by all indications, drag entertainers are going strong. Consider ...

A gay and lesbian newspaper in Iowa (of all places) has regular reviews of local drag shows and beauty pageants. Ms. Sinclair was pleasantly surprised to learn that there are so many places in the Hawkeye State where a girl can earn an honest buck, and that queens who aspire to a crown can complete for Miss Gay Waterloo, Miss Gay Waterloo-at-Large, and Miss Gay Cedar Rapids.

Iowa, it seems, is on the cutting edge, for drag is just as big in the gay Mecca of Provincetown, Mass. Drag queens took over the Cape Cod resort town with a vengeance this summer. They were everywhere, blocking traffic, and strolling past the frozen foods at the A&P. It was entirely possible for drag devotees to go from one drag event to another. A seafood restaurant even sponsored a "Star Brunch" for participants to dress as their favorite personalities. A Boston reviewer called the performers at one bar "remarkable."

"I for one look forward to the show from week to week with an intensity that borders on the rabid, and its best performers inhabit and thrill my imagination long after the night has passed."

Ms. Sinclair may have an East Coast bias, but she thinks New York still lays claim to drag culture. And now -- like ornithologists tracking a rare bird species -- Big Apple drag fans have their own guide, *The Drag Queens of New York: An Illustrated Field Guide*.

Author Julian Fleisher breaks classified drag queens into four *geni*: Club Queen, Theatre Queen, Cable Queens, and Impresarios. The species are categorized by *modus operandi*: lip-sync, singer, dancer, disk jockey, writer, actor/actress, artist, and tuck. Individuals are further categorized on "glamour" and "clown" scales.

The book also provides practical and philosophical background on drag, ranging from the five steps to employ

to meet a queen to John Waters fear about the mainstreaming of drag: "I'm against the Disneyization of drag queens. I think drag queens should scare families and not make them feel happy about themselves."

*Village Voice* columnist Michael Musto is quoted as saying that "a lot of these drag queens are much more beautiful and fabulous in drag and it seems to tap into this fabulous person inside of them. As a man, a lot of them are kind of schlubby and not exactly the most vibrant people."



If new research coming out of the University of Georgia and published in the August issue of the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* is correct, at least some of the men buying -- and using -- the drag field guide will be homophobes.

Researchers recruited 64 men who were "exclusively heterosexual" and first tested them for their attitudes toward homosexuals. The men were put into two groups: homophobes and non-homophobes. Men in each group were connected to a device that measured changes in their penises and were shown erotic heterosexual, gay male, and lesbian videos. All of the men had about the same reaction to the straight and lesbian videos, but only the homophobic men showed a "significant increase in penile circumference." Specifically, "54 percent showed a definite tumescence to the homosexual video." In other words, they got really turned on. But in interviews after watching the videos, the men denied that they were turned on. Or, as the researchers said, "the subjective responses were not consistent with penile responses."

The researchers aren't certain what this means. A man's hostility toward homosexuals (or those perceived to be homosexuals, like crossdressers) may be a reaction to his own homosexual feelings, or his hostility may simply trigger a physical response which expresses itself in the penis.

All this talk about hostility gives a new meaning to Mae West's famous line about carrying a concealed weapon.



Drag queen watchers should have been in Alameda for the California city's annual Mayor's Fourth of July Parade. A float with transvestites, transsexuals, and their friends took the first place trophy.

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With the theme "Viva Las Vegas," the float was decorated like a casino. Straight women, transvestites, transsexuals, drag queens, lesbians, and gay men -- most of whom were dressed as showgirls -- danced around the float and threw candy to the crowd.

The groups received applause from most of the estimated 10,000 spectators who lined the four-mile route. But after the float and the dancers had passed, one woman was heard asking a man, "What about those girls in feathers? What was that about?" "I don't think they were girls," replied the man (perhaps with some tumescence).

"Oh, my," the woman said.



Another parade caused a stirring of a different sort across San Francisco Bay.

*San Francisco Examiner* cartoonist Don Asmussen parodied the city's annual gay pride parade and the blockbuster movie *Independence Day* with some jibes against drag queens and transgendered folk -- "it's worse than an invasion, it's a PARADE!" The day was saved when the humid San Francisco weather gave the drag queens split ends and they left, promising to be back next year.

Ms. Sinclair sadly notes that not every reader of the *Examiner* has a sense of humor. Raising the specter of Nazi death camps, one reader wrote that "the most disturbing 'joke' is the panel depicting the army dropping nuclear bombs on the 'body' of a 'transvestite invader.'" (In fact, the panel shows bombs harmlessly bouncing off the hair spray-armored wig of a drag queen.) Another reader objected to a panel which showed transgendered people throwing their recently removed ("censored") to the crowd. But transgendered people weren't the only ones feeling the point of Asmussen's pen: accountants were called freaks and an abomination; Dykes on Bikes were parodied by "Dykes Who Carpool;" Dick Van Dyke was dressed in leather and put with "the other dykes;" and the Gays With Carpal Tunnel Task Force marched with wrist braces a sign that proclaimed "no more limp wrists."

Ms. Sinclair thinks the really funny thing was that none of them wrote sanctimonious letters to the editor.



To show that not everyone in the community has lost their sense of humor, Ms Sinclair is reprinting a cybernews release she downloaded last month. She hopes it is supposed to be a joke; if it isn't, then it's really funny.

*Gender MAC Formed; Election Planned*

HOUSTON, AUG. 2 -- Formation of a new transgender activist organization, the Gender Millennial Action Coalition, was announced today. Its mission will be to "promote gender luck and gender evolution."

According to the founder and interim Executive Director, Trixie Dickens, "Few people are fortunate enough to have been born transgendered, and to have been able to take

advantage of the special insights and perceptions that accompany that status. Also, too many gender-challenged people are jealous, and use their numerical superiority to oppress those of us who are special. We hope to claim our proper place as leaders of society, rather than continue to be treated as perverted scum. Furthermore, we want to encourage transgendered people to come out of their closets and be proud, and we plan to assist the marginally transgendered to develop their latent talents."

She summarized, "Our goal is a society where men can be men, women can be women, and the rest of us can be whatever feels good at the moment."

The first project for the group is raising funds to erect a monument in the courtyard of a local hotel, the Ramada Astrodome. According to Ms. Dickens, "This was the scene of the first public proclamation of the Declaration of Gender Liberty, and will be recognized as the birthplace of the transgender liberation movement."

Ms. Dickens, wearing her trademark heliotrope tights and mauve sweatshirt with the neck cut out, was flanked by two bodyguards, both named Patty, wearing all-black beatnik costumes from the '50s. They carried signs protesting treatment allegedly received at Banyan's, a local restaurant featuring chicken-fried fajitas. A spokesperson explained. "The two all-beat Pattys are especially sore. Let's picket Banyan's!" says Amy C. Benz.

Joining in the announcement were several Houston-area troublemakers, along with (in spirit) Renee Richards, Christine Jorgensen, Billy Tipton, and Joan of Arc.



Ms. Sinclair does not wish to imply that all activism is bad. She just wishes that activists would choose their battles a bit more carefully. Here is one that clearly warrants attention.

In July, Merrisa Leigh Coleman, a Sacramento-area transsexual and her son, were harassed and expelled from "Water World," a local theme park.

While at the park, Coleman had tried on and purchased a bikini at the park store. A short time later, she was surrounded by three park security guards, a deputy sheriff, and several other park employees (including the park's general manager). Informed there had been a complaint that Coleman was actually a man in drag, Coleman was questioned in front of her son and forced to leave the park.

The woman who lodged the complaint refused to give her name, and when asked by officers present if Coleman appeared male or female to her, responded "I don't know."

Referring to Coleman as "a guy in drag," the deputy sheriff also accused her of lewd conduct for using the women's restroom. When informed her California driver's license and ID show her as female, he responded, "Well, we'll just take you into the restroom and have one of these ladies check you out," adding "Whoever issued you your driver's

license didn't check you out good enough."

The deputy declined to take any formal statements in this case, not even one from the complainant. No formal charges were filed. The entire affair was conducted as publicly as possible, possibly to maximize Coleman's humiliation.

"I feel humiliated and degraded and was made to feel like a freak," Coleman said after the incident. This was done completely indiscriminately right in front of hundreds of people as well as my own son. I could have been taken aside, questioned in private, and asked for my ID and, when it showed me as female, the matter dropped.

"I've worked so hard to get to where I am in such a short time, and now I have no idea where I am going. I've been having nightmares, nausea, lack of appetite and I'm terrified to be alone or even seen in public right now."



Presenting stories of discrimination and insensitivity like this would be most depressing for Ms. Sinclair unless she could also report advances.

Sadly, many of those are in nations where folks are more tolerant. But once in awhile, Americans capture the gold. It happened in Atlanta recently.

Erin Swenson, a transsexual who last year failed to persuade the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta to recognize her as a clergy member, has won acceptance on the tennis court in a league for women.

The Atlanta Lawn Tennis Association (ALTA) has ruled that Swenson could play in the Senior League city finals as a member of her women's team. The ALTA rejected an appeal by a women's team Swenson's team defeated in play-off semifinals.

The protesting team contended that Swenson is a man and asked ALTA to declare her ineligible and to have the play-off replayed. Included in the protest was a copy of an *Atlanta Journal/Constitution* story that profiled Swenson, a



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former local Presbyterian minister, and reported her decision to undergo hormonal treatment and sex-reassignment surgery. The surgical procedure was completed in March.

ALTA president Scott Vinson said he contacted Swenson by phone and asked if she had completed the surgery and if she had a driver's license that indicated she was female. Given a yes on both counts, ALTA officials concluded that a person the State of Georgia recognizes as a woman is eligible for its women's leagues.

Swenson, 48, says she's not surprised ALTA supported her eligibility, "considering physically and legally I'm a female," but admits she's disappointed the complaint was made.

Though this was a first for ALTA, the eligibility of transsexuals in women's tennis had a precedent in the case of Dr. Renee Richards, who was excluded from the 1976 U.S. Open because the U.S. Tennis Association required women to pass a chromosome test to play the Grand Slam event. Richards, an eye surgeon named Richard Raskin before her sex-change surgery in 1975, filed suit and won, and she played the 1977 U.S. open at age 43 under order of the New York Supreme Court.

Transgendered, gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees of Amoco Corp. have received official recognition through BTGLASS, the Bisexual, Transgendered, Gay, Lesbian and Straight Society.

The purpose of the group is to promote work environments throughout the corporation which are safe, accepting, and welcoming for persons regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification. The group is also a resource to management teams, diversity groups, and employees on issues involving sexual orientation and gender identity.

Judging from news from Great Britain, the Royal Air

Force and the Ministry of Defense could benefit from a group like Amoco's BTGLASS.

Recently, attorney Ramby de Mello won the right to challenge the RAF for discharging his client, a 26-year-old male-to-female transsexual.

The attorney for "M" seeks to have a Defense Ministry policy that forbids recruiting transsexuals and allows such individuals to be dismissed declared unlawful.

Nine months after M joined the RAF in 1990, she was diagnosed as having a gender identity disorder. If she had said she was a transvestite, she could have stayed in the RAF. But upon M's decision to have gender reassignment surgery, she was requested to take sick leave and later dismissed on the grounds that she represented a "permanently reduced" standard of employment.

De Mello says that M's dismissal breaches a directive by the European Union regarding equal treatment on the basis of gender. Several months earlier the European Court of Justice found that a fired British transsexual was the victim of discrimination under that directive.

An Australian transsexual is faring better on the employment front.

After telling her superiors that she was going to start living and working as a woman, Nicole (her last name was not revealed) was told that she could keep her position as a high school teacher.

According to media reports, the small South Australia town of Port Augusta is divided over the issue, but an officials with the state department of education said the dispute was exaggerated.

"The teacher is an excellent teacher and has the support of the kids and teachers and by far the large majority of the community," the official said. "She has been open about the whole thing and has been respected for that."

Parents and students also said they had no problem with Nicole, although one student had a bit of a problem with pronouns. "People should just leave him alone," the student said of her teacher.

This month's transsexual employment stories all had happy endings. But that is not always the case.

If you have wanted to sit on a civil jury and slam an employer who is charged with discriminating against a transgendered employee, you may have your virtual chance thanks to the efforts of Rahway, N.J., trial attorney Roy Konray. Through his web site, Konray is soliciting "cyberjurors" who can participate in his legal face-offs even before the cases come to trial.

Konray has profiled three cases for web browsers (fictitious names are used to protect the privacy of litigants). One of the cases involves a transsexual who says she was fired because of her intended sex change and her desire to consult an attorney before signing a

satisfactory-appearance clause in her employment contract. The second case involves a woman who claims she was seduced by her psychiatrist. The third is a malpractice suit involving penis enlargement surgery.

"All three cases are unusual," says Konray, "and raise tough questions regarding jury selection. Cyberjurors are valid resources that contribute to my selection process." He notes his law firm often assembles focus groups, usually a cross-section of a local population, to help attorneys develop a sense of what people think about issues headed for court.

Konray's web site includes demographic studies of participants, including marital status, sex, home town, race, hobbies, profession, reading preferences and education. People only need to register once; they can return to the site and tap into cases just by entering their e-mail address.

Web crawlers interested in joining a cyberjury can visit Konray's web page at <<http://cyberjury.com>>.

Like Nicole, Elizabeth Sharon James wants a sex change and wanted to be left alone, but a warrant for her arrest on bank robbery charges prompted her to end her anonymity by turning herself in to Vancouver police.

James, who is believed to have robbed a Toronto bank, arrived in Vancouver the day after the robbery. Police said that she told them she came to Vancouver because she had seen an article in a Toronto newspaper that said sex-change operations are paid for by the British Columbian provincial medical plan.

"She is in the process of a sex change," a police official said, "and she carries that article with her."

The medical plan pays for sex-change operations that are deemed necessary after the individual completes two years of living in the role of the other gender. However, the surgeries are not performed in British Columbia.

James is also suspected in three other bank robberies in Toronto and Vancouver.

Vancouver police are dealing with another transsexual -- a member of the department who says she wants to become a woman.

Saying only that a member of the police department had advised then that "he is in the early stages of going through a sex-change process," and that "we're trying to be sensitive to his needs and the needs of everybody on the job at the same time," officials would not divulge the officer's name nor predict the her future with the force. "Certainly this is a first, so there's no policy," a spokeswoman said.

Vancouver Police Union President John de Haas said the only issue for him was that the officer is not harassed at work.

A police officer in Long Beach, Calif. volunteered to dress as a woman for an undercover operation recently, but he said he would never do it again. At least that is what he told the other cops on the vice squad.

Detective Chris Anderson posed as a prostitute in hopes of snaring men who were cruising for sex with men dressed as women. Police in Long Beach routinely use female decoys to catch female hookers and their johns, but until Anderson volunteered to work the streets in drag, authorities were hampered in their efforts to arrest johns looking for crossdressers.

Police officials said that Anderson had entertained the idea of being a crossdressing decoy since he joined the vice detail two years ago, but it took him many months to feel comfortable enough with his colleagues to propose the idea.

A woman vice squad employee loaned Anderson his costume, did his makeup, and coached him in the proper deportment for a streetwalker.

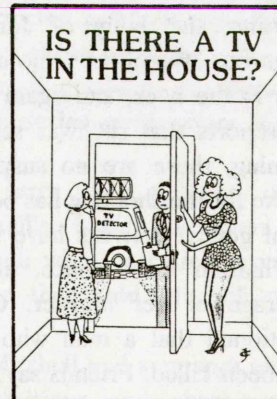
Johns didn't have to look far to spot Anderson, who stands 5'11" and weighs 190 pounds. Several passers-by identified Anderson as a man right away and didn't keep their realization to themselves. One shouted an anti-gay slur and some warned potential customers that a potential sting was going on.

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But a middle-aged man in a Taurus station wagon evidently didn't hear the warning, for he drove up to Anderson on Anaheim Street, asked him a question about his anatomy, offered him \$15 for a sex act, and became Anderson's first arrest of the sting operation. Two others followed. The detective said he found the experience interesting, but "I'm not going to do it again."



Police in Minneapolis say they are looking for a serial killer who, they believe, preys on prostitutes. He doesn't seem to care if they are male or female, just as long as they dress like women. So far, three victims have been found.

All three victims were beaten and their bodies burned by somebody using a chemical accelerant. The murders took place in the Theodore Wirth Park on the western edge of the city.

The body of the third victim was so badly burned police originally thought it was that of a woman, as were two other burned bodies found there since early June. Further investigation showed the latest victim to be a 21-year-old male transvestite.

Police said they have a good description of the alleged serial killer. Neighborhood children say they saw a man leaving the park with a gasoline can in hand, just before the latest body was found.



The motive for the killing of a Cleveland transsexual may be similar to the murders in Minneapolis.

In June, the body of Janice Ricks was found in a dangerous area of the Ohio city. Ricks had been shot twice, once in the neck, and again in the abdomen. While there are reports that she was seen with someone earlier that morning, there are no suspects at this time. Nor has a motive for the shooting been disclosed.

Local gender activists have been unable to get additional information from police, and news media carried little coverage of her murder. One television station briefly mentioned that a man who dressed in women's clothing had been killed. Friends say Janice Ricks was living full or nearly full time as a woman.

"Janice's death reminds us how many people there on the margins of society, often overlooked and forgotten," said Emilia Lombardi, a spokesperson for Transsexual Menace Cleveland/Akron. "Many of these are people who are isolated and alone, having little or no contact with trans and queer communities which could help and support them. How many others must die alone, or suffer in silence? We must continue to reach out to *everyone* in need."



The 1995 killing of another transsexual will be noted by a memorial vigil called for the 15th of this month by Transsexual Menace, IFGE, GenderPAC, Renaissance,

and AEGIS to coincide with the trial of Michael J. Thompson for the murder of Deborah Forte. The trial and the vigil will be held in either Lawrence, Mass., or nearby Newberryport.

Forte was brutally murdered last May. She suffered three stab wounds to the chest -- each half a foot deep, a number of slash wounds across her chest, a smashed nose, multiple blows to her head and face, and signs on her throat of partial strangulation.

Thompson later confessed to a coworker that he had killed Forte after they went to her residence, began "messing around," and he discovered that she had a penis. Forte's body was discovered by her roommate later that morning.

By a strange coincidence, Forte's murder occurred only hours after dozens of gender activists had left a memorial vigil for Brandon Teena, held in Falls City, Neb.



A Salt Lake City transsexual narrowly escaped death several months ago when a man alleged to be an embarrassed rapist fired four shotgun blasts at her apartment window.

Police say that a week earlier the intended victim reported that she had been raped by four men. She later said that the man who shot at her apartment was one of the four. Police theorize that the man had become angry and ashamed when he realized that the rape victim was

biologically male.

Police had been to the woman's apartment several hours before the shooting because the man had broken into the apartment. But he had fled the scene by the time police arrived. They arrested the 21-year-old man following the shooting.



Philadelphia police handling of a pre-op transsexual's complaint of a gang rape has prompted Georgia Rae Wahl to be the first transgendered person to file a complaint before the city's Police Advisory Commission.

Wahl says the rape occurred during the July Fourth concert and fireworks on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway which was attended by hundreds of thousands of people.

Wahl said she was penetrated by at least four different men. "The police officer at the scene blamed me for the attack because of what I was wearing," Wahl said.

"He also said he couldn't do anything because of the size of the crowd. Since then, there has been no adequate follow-up investigation by the police, even though I've attempted to cooperate."



Not all transgendered crime in Salt Lake City is as violent as gang rapes or shotgun attacks.

A 50-year-old man who unbuttoned his shirt to show visitors in the city's Liberty Park that he was wearing a bra

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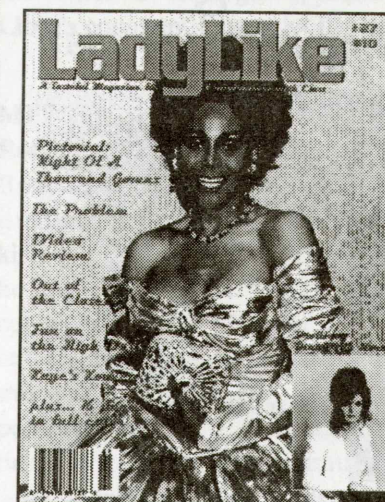
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was cited for violating the lewd acts law. He was not jailed.

But a 40-year-old man was arrested for being in a woman's restroom at the University Mall in Orem, Utah.

Police say a woman told a mall security guard that when she went into the restroom with her child she found the man with a tape recorder apparently recording "bathroom noises." The man fled the mall when security officials confronted him. He was discovered later in the restroom of a nearby business.

In addition to the tape recorder, he had a bag containing items of female clothing. He faces possible charges of privacy violation and lewdness involving a child.

The report did not say if he was found hiding in a men's or women's restroom.



If the unidentified bathroom spy had time to dress in the clothes he was carrying, Orem police may have been as confused as police in DeKalb County, Ga. were when they learned that a person booked on auto theft charges and held in the male dormitory for more than two months was actually an 18-year-old woman.

The misidentification of Sydney Samauell Mitchell began when a DeKalb police officer arrested her and filled out the incident report describing her as a black male, 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighing 235 pounds. The officer took her to the male booking area.

The error continued throughout Mitchell's two-month stay in the jail, and she never corrected authorities, said Major Dennis Cheatham, commander of the jail division.

Mitchell did not tell the arresting officer, jail personnel, or the magistrate court judge during arraignment that she was a woman, officials said.

Jail officials discovered the error when a county official interviewed one of Mitchell's family members and repeatedly referred to Mitchell with masculine pronouns, Cheatham said. The relative then said Mitchell was a woman.

When brought into the jail, Mitchell had a cursory physical that included answering questions and checking vital signs, but did not require the prisoner to be examined without clothes, Cheatham said. After receiving jail clothing, Mitchell underwent a strip search, according to the jail officer, who did not see any indications that Mitchell, who has chest hair and a bit of facial hair, is a woman.

Once jail officials discovered their error, they moved Mitchell to the women's dorm awaiting trial.



Mitchell could easily have that troublesome facial and chest hair removed by laser technology being developed in Britain that is providing a painless alternative to the razor, electrolysis, and creams.

Plastic surgeons at the Mt. Vernon Hospital in Middlesex

report "extremely successful" results following early clinical trials of the Ruby Laser, which removes excess hair by aiming a beam of light at hair follicles. Research has shown the laser can slow down or stop human hair growth without damaging the skin.

The laser will be a boon for reconstructive surgery, for people who suffer from hirsutism and for those who want to remove hair for cosmetic reasons, says Dr. David Gault, consultant plastic surgeon at the Restoration of Appearance and Function Trust at Mt. Vernon Hospital. "We're hoping we can treat people and relieve them of their problem for several years," Gault says.

"I don't think it will ever replace shaving for men, but if women are shaving their legs and armpits, I think it would be an advantage to them." But Gault didn't explain why the laser treatments would not be used by men.

The prototype's manufacturer, professor Marc Clement, of the Swansea Institute of Higher Education, stumbled on the idea 10 years ago while he was experimenting with different laser strengths and inadvertently struck his arm. He later noticed the area he had hit with the laser was bald and never grew back.



Hair removal was not the problem of a British woman who for 17 year posed as the husband of another woman. The identity of the pair was not revealed to protect the privacy

of the couple's children, who were conceived through artificial insemination.

In seeking an annulment of the marriage, the wife's attorney told a London court that her "husband" had always used an artificial penis and she always believed he was a man.



Ms. Sinclair hopes that before large numbers of Cross-Talk readers flock to British Columbia for free sex changes or to Middlesex for laser depilation, they send her clippings relating to crossdressing. She also hopes that amid the excitement of preparing for their trips they remember to note the date and name of the publication from which the clippings come.



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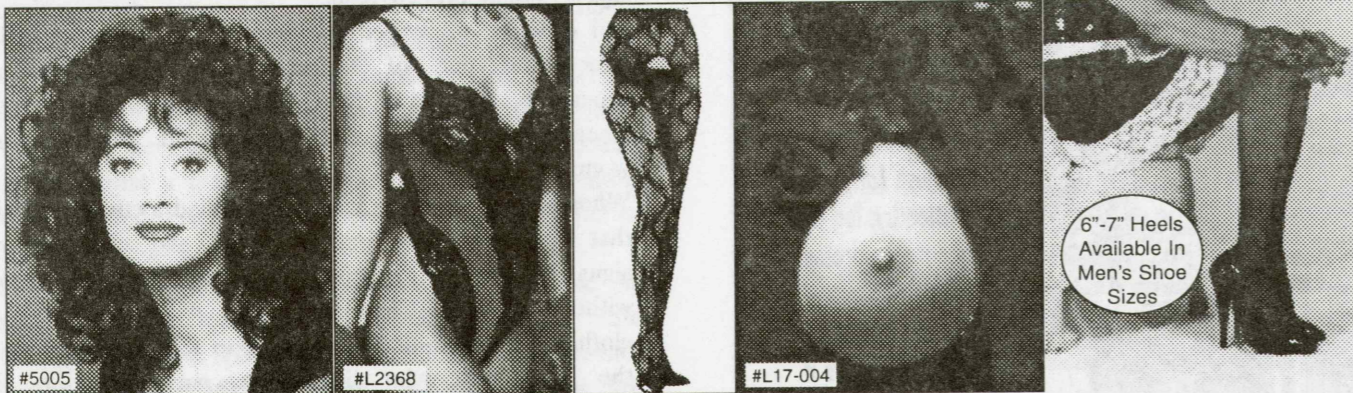
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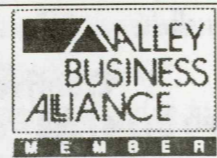
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**HotBuzz**

by JoAnn Roberts

"Happiness is something that comes into our lives through doors we don't even remember leaving open." -- Rose Lane



It's still touch and go on the political front. GenderPAC (GPAC) and It's Time America! (ITA!) have both announced plans to formalize their respective structures with boards of directors, etc. GPAC will be submitting congressional testimony later this month, and meanwhile, ITA! has made some impressive progress at grassroot levels lobbying state legislatures for trans-inclusive laws. If we can get GPAC and ITA! to work together, wouldn't that be nearly perfect. Imagine, a united front, working toward the same goals at both the state and federal levels. Hey, it could happen. I hope it does. If you're wired to the web, you can find out more about GPAC activities at <<http://www.cdspub.com/gpac.html>>, including information on the Second National Transgender Lobby Days.



I received the most feedback last month on my piece about Stephanie Lloyd (Transformations, U.K.) The responses ran 2 for 1 on negative/positive experiences with Ms. Lloyd's company. I guess let the buyer beware.



MTV announced they're giving Chicago Bulls star Dennis Rodman his own show. At a press conference where Rodman was wearing pink nail polish, he said, "I could be [transmitting] in a gay bar, dancing with gay guys, even kissing a gay guy." When asked if he was gay, Rodman said he wasn't. Interestingly enough, the gay/lesbian community seems to understand Rodman quite well. One lesbian activist said Rodman was a transvestite and that was just fine with her since he is calling attention to people of difference. Rodman may be the greatest thing that's happened to this community since RuPaul. Someone ought to invite him to a gender event.



I see Linda and Cynthia Phillips have formally announced they will be doing the Texas "T" Party again next year. I told you they would.



There's been a mini-explosion of TG related vendors on the net. Just last month Lee's Mardi Gras Boutique, Lola Inc., and Melody Products International, opened online

stores. You can buy just about anything you can dream of online and discretely. There's nothing quite like surfing the net at 2 AM in your nightie searching for fishnet hose. Visit Lee's at <<http://www.lmgny.com>>; Lola at <<http://www.lolainc.com>>; and Melody at <<http://www.melpro.com>>.



The Second International Congress on Sex & Gender Issues is coming along nicely. Registrations have started coming in and Sheila Kirk reports that a major name in transgender research has agreed to be one of the plenary speakers. Watch for an official press release in September. By the way, should anyone ask, the deadline for program and workshop submissions is Jan. 15, 1997.



Okay, on to kewl stuff ... Hair fashion for Fall is the slicked-back look. I envy those who have their own hair they can pull back into a bun or chignon. That look is so elegant and graceful. I've seen this done with a wig, but in order to pass close inspection at the hairline, we're talking *mucho dinero* and a custom-made hairpiece. Most of us can't afford that cost for realism. Other fads we'll be seeing are military looks and lots of metallics, especially gold.



Sexy shoes seem to be back in the Fall lineup after several seasons of what amounted to combat boots with heels. The latest Spiegel catalog has a pair of high heel (3 1/4-inch), ankle strap, suede pumps (a.k.a., knock me down and ... well, you get the idea) in sizes up to 12 medium and 11 wide for about \$65. In fact, ankle strap heels are among the really hot items for Fall. The styles range from the sexy (as above) to the utilitarian Mary Jane.



Some genetic women are just learning about a special kind of cosmetic surgery that many post-op transsexuals have known about for years -- the labia lift. Yes, ladies, you too can have more sensitive labia with a simple operation. One woman reported she became so sensitive that every time she bumped against the washing machine while it was running, she just stayed there. Must take a real long time to do the wash in her house. And, just so you guys don't feel left out, there is a procedure that can lengthen and thicken the penis. Who says size doesn't matter?



The color of the season for Fall is brown and anything close to it. I always like chocolate and camel tan for the Fall. And, most browns are neutral enough that they can be worn by anyone.



The metallic look is hot again (nothing in fashion is ever really new). If you have Fair skin try: Eyes -- any gold eye

shadow ... Lips -- **Chanel** Hydra Soleil Sheer lipstick ... Nails -- **Orly** Bronze Metallic. If you have Medium skin try: Eyes -- **Guerlain** Liquid Gold liner ... Lips -- **Benefit** SSHI lipstick ... Nails -- **Maybelline** 24K polish. For Olive skin try: Eyes -- **Maybelline** Gilded Bronze shadow ... Lips -- **M-A-C** O lipstick ... Nails -- **Revlon** Coffee Bean polish. For Dark skin try: Eyes -- **Stila** Kitten shadows ... Lips -- **Valerie** Kissing Kit ... Nails -- **Creative Nail Design** Burgundy Foil.



The really HOT BUZZ for Fall is the **pantsuit**. Remember in the '70s when women were being excluded from restaurants for wearing pants? I guess I'm old fashioned. I like skirts and dresses, but pant suits are hotter than ever. If you must be up-to-date, then it better be pants for Fall. The most flattering look is long, lean trousers under a tunic length jacket. You'll look tall and slender. The right shoe to wear with pants this Fall has a sturdy stacked heel and the pant cuff should fall just to the back of the heel.



With all the slinky new apparel made from microfiber, you have to be careful what you wear under it. Microfiber tops and dresses are very unforgiving and show every line of undergarments. That's why companies like **Victoria's Secret** and **Warner** have introduced seamless underwired bras and seamless panties, and now seamless pantyhose.

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*Glamour* staffers tested **CK** (\$10.50), **DKNY** (\$11) and **Wolford** (\$50 ... that's *not* a typo) brands of seamless pantyhose and universally loved them. Believe it or not, the **Wolford** brand lasted longest and were, therefore, the least expensive on a per wearing basis (\$2.50/wearing).



First, there was the **Wonderbra** to lift your bust. Now, there is the **Wonderbody** shaper to lift your butt. All brought to you by those crafty folks at **Sara Lee Intimates**. Well, it makes some sense. They used to make buns and now they lift them.



I just picked up an old book, *Pattern Making & Draping*, for my daughter, who is studying fashion design and marketing in graduate school. (I wonder where she got that idea?) The book, from 1948, is extremely interesting when compared to what we call fashion today. There was an illustration of how to correct a side seam for a woman who is sway-backed, i.e., rump out back and tummy forward. Just look through any fashion mag and you'll see every model standing that way. I also compared the size chart from then to now. A 6 today was a 12 back then, and my 14 was almost a 22.



While I'm on the subject of sizes, some manufacturers, like **J. Crew**, are actually offering size 14 and 16 **Petite**. Now a

14 **Petite** may seem like an oxymoron, but realize that **Petite**, in the fashion world, refers to height, not girth. A **Petite** version of any given size will have the same bust, waist and hip measurements, but the vertical distances between these measurements will be shorter, often by as much as an inch in the larger sizes.

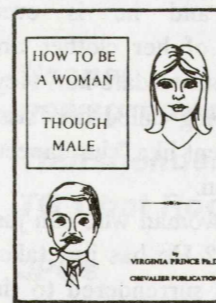


Last year it was **Vamp**, the nail color of the hour. This year **Chanel** follows up with **Very Vamp** and **Metallic Vamp**, in both nail and lip colors. Not to be left out of the picture, **Lancome** hits the street with **Platinum Rouge** for lips and nails. If gold is good, platinum is better.



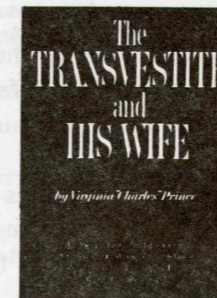
I know this has nothing to do with being transgendered or fashion, but I have to tell you -- go see the movie *Independence Day*. It is perhaps the most awesome and awe inspiring SciFi movie ever. The special effects alone are fabulous. But I liked it on another level beyond the technically fabulous. It's a ground breaking movie in that the "heroes" of the film aren't blue-eyed, Anglo-Saxon, Christians. A Jewish American and an African American, as played by **Jeff Goldblum** and **Will Smith**, are the most unlikely team to save the world, but they do. And, on an even deeper level, it is a story about family and relationships. Go, see, you'll love it. Oh, yeah, watch for **Brent Spiner** (Commander Data from *ST: TNG*) as the

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According to *Vogue*, one of the five best lingerie shops in the world is in Los Angeles. No, it's not **Fredericks of Hollywood**. Angelenos in the know, know all about **Trashy Lingerie**, 402 N. La Cienega Blvd. I found it on a business trip 13 years ago and was amazed at the selections. **Trashy** makes a lot of custom items for movies, too. If you're in L.A. and love lingerie, don't miss it.



Does anyone remember the original **Pulsar** watches? The ones where you needed two hands to tell the time? It seems these and other first run digital watches have become hot after almost twenty years of cooling off. I have one of the first **Pulsar's** and I stopped wearing it because the batteries, which last only a year, cost a small fortune.



If you have a favorite cosmetic color that is either out of stock in your local area or completely discontinued, try one of these ... **Nordstrom** Beauty Hotline 1-800-7-BEAUTY (will search for products from the lines they sell, M-A-C included) ... **Clinique's** Find Line is 1-800-444-FIND ... **Estee Lauder** Preferred Treatment phone number is 1-800-945-ORDER ... **Revlon** is 1-800-473-8566.



Fashion invades the World Wide Web as it has everything else. Here, then, are some of the coolest and best of the fashion sites ... **Fashion Cafe** <<http://www.nylink.com/fashion-cafe/>> **The Fashion Page** <<http://www.charm.net/~jakec/>> **Made in Italy** <<http://www.made-in-italy.com/>> **Ocean Drive** (Miami hip) <<http://www.oceandrive.com/>> **Women's Wire** <<http://www.women.com/>>



So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think you make your own happiness. Comments? Write care of this publication or e-mail them to <[cyberqueen@cdspub.com](mailto:cyberqueen@cdspub.com)>. Copyright 1996 by Creative Design Services.

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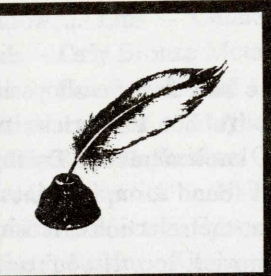


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## GUEST COMMENTARY

# THE CROSSDRESSER'S GUIDE TO PICKING UP CHICKS



by Janyne Cresap

Well ... aside from the obvious, which is "don't call women 'chicks'." There are some methods that can be used that are different from the traditional ones we have been using for all these years.

The way most crossdressers meet women is to get as manly as they can and hang out with guys and eventually meet a girl. The other way is to get fixed up with one. (This usually is set up by a well-meaning friend or relative who does not know you crossdress.)

What then happens is: the crossdresser likes this woman and she likes him. So he throws away \$12,512 worth of

clothes, so that he can have her over for dinner. She respects him because he doesn't try to bed her on the first date. He tells her he has old-fashioned values about his purity and he respects her too much to become intimate too early, and she buys all this. What he's really doing is letting his leg hair grow. When the leg hair is

long enough to be seen by the naked eye, he will be all over her like a sweater with static cling. The relationship (they slept together so we can call it a relationship) is progressing well; he has given up crossdressing, and is growing a moustache. (She is getting her upper lip waxed to remove hers.) This thing could be serious. It feels good to him and he thinks about her constantly, but he is also starting to think about her clothes.

Now she is a size 4 to 6 in a dress and a 4 1/2 in a shoe, and he is a 14 in both, but he tries on her undies one day when she's out, and splits the sides out. She is livid at the poor quality of her panties and vows to get that little salesgirl fired. He knows he should tell her, but what the hell that salesgirl probably has a live-in boyfriend who has a job any way, and a little unemployment never hurt anyone. So he just shines it on and picks up a couple of pairs of panties in his size, and a nice pair of silky panty hose ... and if he's got hose, he needs shoes.

Now everyone knows how hard shoe shopping can be unless you're dressed, so some mail order buying needs to be done so as to get enough to wear to go shopping (trust me, this makes sense).

Then one day he is sleeping late and he hears the scream

from hell. It rips the wallpaper off, it tears a hole in his heart, and he just knows that she found the white satin panties with the red hearts and lace Cupids arrows on them that he has carefully been keeping in the jacket pocket of his camelhair sportjacket. "Who is she, you son of a bitch?" she screams ... and he thinks, "Good, she doesn't think they are mine."

It doesn't matter what she -- or he, for that matter -- thinks, for this relationship is now history, and he has looked up his old crossdressing buddies and is busy telling them how crossdressing has ruined this relationship made in heaven.

If this kind of dating and relating is working for you, don't let me stop you from pursuing it further. What the hell, if it works keep it up. Any relationship that can't handle a little deceit isn't worth cheating on anyway, is it?

So now he wants to meet a nice girl who will accept his crossdressing, and he is even

willing to forgive the fact that most of her clothes are leather and she charges him \$100 an hour to date her. Hey, she has values; he can even forgive being called her "sissy maid," or some other term of endearment like "slut dancer" or something else just as cute as a button.

So he gives up on ever finding a nice woman who can just accept him as he is. Well, guess what? He has just taken the first step to meeting her. He has surrendered to the fact that he is a crossdresser, and always will be one, even if it means living alone.

Now about meeting these women. Let me suggest a way, something a little different, a little daring, a little scary. Honesty. There, we said it, the "H" word, now we can talk about it.

The old relationships that crossdressing "ruined" were really ruined by keeping secrets ... by not being honest. We don't know how to tell a potential girlfriend that on Saturdays we are ladies, so we don't, and one Saturday the relationship blows up in our faces, scattering mascara into the heavens.

So if we can't tell our lovers, how can we be honest? Try meeting them as a crossdresser! Wow ... how in the hell do you do that? Do something out side of the crossdresser

### A different approach to relationships as a crossdresser.

circles, and do it dressed. Take a class, attend a lecture series, volunteer at a hospital (not as a patient, silly). Sure they will read you, and it may be tough for a while, but keep doing it and be nice and keep smiling. You will in a short time make friends, and I can almost guarantee they will be women friends (the men won't come near you, trust me).

After you have earned the trust of these ladies you may be elevated to the status of "girlfriend." Now I want to tell you, it's an honor to be a girlfriend and if nothing further ever comes of your friendship, being a girlfriend is a reward in and of itself. As a girlfriend you will become privy to all sorts of things and you will get the chance to help your girlfriend sometime. She will of course know you are a guy (girls are really smart about this) and the chance just might come up for her to meet the masculine side some day. And she just might see in you a man who is also the girlfriend she likes so much.

This special lady who accepted you as the woman you presented yourself as will probably accept you has the man you also present yourself as. She will be curious about you, she will be fascinated with your gender/genders, she will still call you "she" or by your feminine name, and you will still always be sisters at your soul level.

There is a chance you will be allowed to express yourselves as people in love, not in the traditional masculine over feminine roles but as equals; she will never forget that you

are also a lady, and you won't forget that she is one too. The worst that can happen in all this is that you get the chance to take a chance and make a friend as a woman, be a woman in the world, be a person. The best that can happen is you just might meet a girlfriend and become involved. Trust me ladies, I know a couple who met just this way, it works for them, just fine.

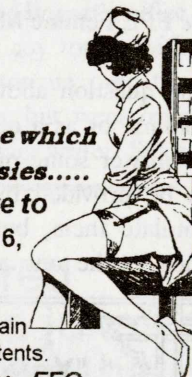


[The preceding commentary originally appeared in Alpha Bits, the newsletter of Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles CA. The author is the editor of same.]

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WHEN IS A WOMAN?

by Virginia Prince, Ph.D.

[Editor's Note: The following column originally appeared in the FPE Femme Mirror #19, July 1963.]

The question above may seem a very peculiar title for a column, or as a question, but it is asked to stir the reader to answer some questions for himself rather than answers to be provided by me. TVs admire women and like to emulate them, but it is worth asking oneself a question such as the one above in order to get some insight into

**"You tend to think only of those aspects of womanhood which are attractive, beautiful, and glamorous."**

one's own feelings. So -- "when is a woman?" Is a woman worth emulation under the age of twelve? Does she become a woman at puberty, as she begins menstruation -- as her breasts begin to develop? Would you emulate her then, or between the ages of 18 and 35? Or what about after the age of 60, no longer young, no longer attractive as she used to be physically ... is she something to emulate? When you get to be 60, would you emulate a woman of 60? Or would you go back and try to be like somebody in her 20s? And what about the matter not just of time but of work? Do you feel a woman worth emulating during her menstrual cramps, or during childbirth? Do you like to emulate her when she is cleaning house, doing the laundry, the dishes, making the beds, dusting? Is she a woman for you at this time? Or is it true for you (as it is for many TVs) that you tend to think only of those aspects of womanhood which are attractive, beautiful, and glamorous?

This is all well and good. I am not being critical, but I think it would be enlightening for most of us to stop and ask ourselves just what it is in a woman that we are emulating. I suspect that we would discover that we are --

that is, our femmeselves are -- women only to the extent that some particular aspects of womanhood appeal to us as men. Now as men, we are obviously attracted by glamorous, pretty females, from the point of view of clothing, makeup, behavior. These things we enjoy become that aspect of womanhood that we feel is desirable and worth emulating, and this is what we strive to achieve. We don't spend much time or energy trying to copy (or seeking to experience) the harder, more exhausting, discouraging, difficult or painful aspects of womanhood.

If this is a valid conclusion it should lead to further insight into the causation -- or perhaps I should say satisfaction -- because it is not as though we were females trapped in a male body, as so many contend. If this were the case we would be as interested in the less

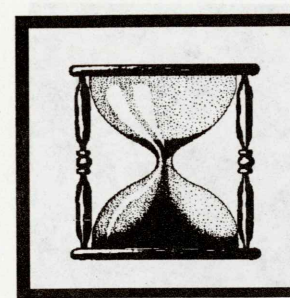
desirable aspects of womanhood as we are the desirable. It is therefore our very masculinity which provides the stimulus for our femininity. (I am talking here about TVs and not transsexuals; the true TS is concerned more on the sex level than on the gender level.) I believe that by becoming aware of the nature of our attraction, my gender theory is fortified as the motivating force in true TVism, rather than the sex approach which professionals tend to prefer. In other words, the appeal of TVism is a contrast to, an escape from, and a parallel expression for our masculinity rather than for our maleness.

As I said at the outset, this commentary was not so much an intent to air a point of view as an encouragement of thought on the part of the reader to develop insight into the nature of our common interest. Greater insight leads to better perspectives in how you handle our "hobby."



Virginia Prince is a co-founder of *The Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess)* and the former publisher of *Transvestia* magazine. She may be contacted at P.O. Box 36091, Los Angeles CA 90036.

**Back Issues of Cross-Talk are available directly from the publisher. See page 32 for ordering information.**



THE CELLULOID CLOSET: GAYS, LESBIANS, AND TRANSGENDERED IN CINEMA

by Melanie Yarborough

"The sissy made everyone feel more manly or more womanly by filling the space in between," wryly notes narrator Lily Tomlin in the recently released documentary *The Celluloid Closet*. Based on Vito Russo's groundbreaking 1981 book, it's an ironic and complex story of how an industry populated by gay actors, actresses, producers, and directors came to present a closeted and homophobic representation of gays to the American public.

This is a documentary largely about gays and lesbians. Only a handful of transgender films appear, and only for a split second: *Some Like It Hot*, *The Crying Game* and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. So why should the transgender community care? Because it shows how Hollywood makes and breaks images. The recent spate of transgender-themed movies has led many crossdressers and transsexuals to see Hollywood as a potential saviour. They can give us the exposure and acceptability to the general public we need, it is argued. But by seeing how Hollywood has depicted another sexual minority, the gay community, we can see the serious limitations and contradictions of this medium.

"Sissies" appeared early on in Hollywood as stock characters for comic relief. Effeminate men were already a figure of fun to the American public, and everyone instinctively understood who they were. Harvey Fierstein says "I like the sissies" as homosexuals needed "exposure at any cost." However, others felt that it was a stereotype as negative as burnt-cork minstrel show blacks.

Ironically, the film industry was relatively uncensored in its first decade and a half as it was still something of a novelty.

By the mid-1920s, the Church hierarchy, conservative politicians and the Legion of Decency cracked down, with help from the Harding administration. These groups had a list of taboo subjects including "sexual perversion". Hollywood more or less acquiesced under this as the price for continuing to do business. Gore Vidal commented that in many ways it was like living in Communist Russia: Many directors and producers had to submit things to a censor and cut or alter objectionable scenes.

Still, many filmmakers were able to slip in subtle gay messages, such as the brief appearance of a gay character.

For example, in 1941's *The Maltese Falcon*, client Peter Lorre is ushered into private eye Humphrey Bogart's office as a gentleman wearing perfume. Lorre's coy toying with his walking stick and softly flicking his tongue over the shaft was unmistakable to a gay audience, but went over the heads of many viewers. Noted lesbian writer Susie

Hollywood has considered homosexuality an "inside joke" for years; do they now feel the same about transgenderism?

Bright observes that gay audiences were so accustomed to the crumbs tossed them that they would watch a whole movie for even the slightest hint of a homosexuality.

Still, some scenes which hinted too broadly wound up on the cutting room floor. The most notable example was the homoerotic scene in 1960's *Spartacus*, where Roman slave Tony Curtis is bathing his master Sir Lawrence Olivier. Olivier beguilingly speaks of the differences between "those who like snails and those who like oysters." Preference is merely a matter of taste and not morality. For his part, he liked snails and oysters. This cut scene was only recently restored to the movie.

In the 1950s gays were introduced to the public as people, but as tortured characters because of their "perversion." *Tea & Sympathy* showed homosexuality as a character weakness to be cured by the right woman. *Rebel Without A Cause* (1956) featured the all-too-effeminate Sal Mineo with his not-too-hidden crush on James Dean. It can be argued that he, not James Dean, was the real rebel in the film. And he was the one killed at the end.

Nobody embodied the Celluloid Closet better than Rock Hudson. He played leading male heartthrobs in many films, and his private gay life was largely kept from the public. In movies like *Pillow Talk*, it reached the height of absurdity: Here was a gay actor, playing a straight man, who posed as a gay man to disarm Doris Day so he could pursue her! The gay community, which knew about him, enjoyed many double-entendres and inside jokes the rest

of the moviegoing public missed.

The 1960s were to carry the anguish theme further. 1962's *Advise and Consent* featured a budding Senator plagued by his queer past. *Suddenly Last Summer* was about several people who "procured" for the unshown gay character, who is later killed by an angry mob in a scene reminiscent of the monster's dispatch in *Frankenstein*.

But by far the most tortured depiction of gays was *The Children's Hour* (1962). A spiteful child falsely accuses Shirley MacLaine and Audrey Hepburn of something stronger than friendship; as it happens, one of the women indeed feels lesbian attractions. Shirley MacLaine pours out her torment and self-hatred in one particularly riveting scene, and later hangs herself. 1968's *The Detective*, starring William Windom, is similar. As a private eye who agonizes over his attraction to men, he stares in revulsion but fascination at the gay underworld of the city. Ultimately, he's lured into a gay man's apartment, but kills him in a fit of recrimination and disgust. Gay writer Armistead Maupin notes that for many young gay men and women, the message was that being gay meant despair, self-destruction, and death.

*The Boys in the Band* (1970) was a landmark film; it not only dealt with homosexuals as real people with good and bad moments, but they weren't even killed at the end. The movie needs to be seen in the context of the time, when blacks, Chicanos and women were speaking out and organizing for liberation. 1972's *Cabaret* introduced Michael York as a gay character and the idea that homosexuality could be a lifestyle. And who can forget Peter Finch's homosexual kiss in 1971's *Sunday Bloody Sunday*?

However, Hollywood soon went back to casting gays as



Two men dance together in an 1896 experimental film from the Thomas Edison studio.

token characters. 1971's *Vanishing Point* shows a pair of gay hitchhikers threatening Barry Newman before being forced from his car; 1976's *Car Wash* has a black queen being dished as a product of the white system which emasculates black men. However, it took one movie at the



Marlene Dietrich in the 1930 movie *Morocco*.

decade's end to mobilize the gay community: *Cruisin'*.

Al Pacino stars as an undercover detective tracking a serial killer in the gay underworld of leather and S & M bars. A psychotic stalks and kills gay men in extremely graphic ways; for example, a knife is repeatedly driven into a gay man's back as blood spurts from his wounds. Soon after the movie was released, a number of young men started emulating the movie, luring gay men and then beating them savagely. This led to massive protests by the gay and lesbian community against the film.

Hollywood took a tentative step towards a more positive image two years later with 1982's *Making Love*, starring Michael Ontkean and Harry Hamlin as gay lovers. Even so, the producers felt the need to preface the film with warnings about how it attempts to portray one married man's "struggle with his sexual identity", and the mature audiences only theme.

Although gay issues became more salient in America in the 1990s, a disproportionately small number of films actually dealt with them. Whether it's gay couples in *Torch Song Trilogy* (1988) or AIDS in *Philadelphia* (1993), representation of gays and lesbians has only slightly increased.

Lesbians have arguably fared better, but because they are not taken as seriously as gay men. Most filmgoers feel indifference or even titillation at two women making love. Hence, the relative noncontroversy of films such as *Personal Best* (1982) *Lianna* and *The Hunger* (1983) *Desert Hearts* (1985) *The Color Purple* (1986), and *Fried Green Tomatoes* (1991). Still, it is precisely because lesbians are not taken seriously that it's difficult for their issues to be

addressed. Recent movies such as *Go Fish* and *Bar Girls* deal with lesbianism from a more realistic perspective.

This documentary points out that Hollywood sees no problem demeaning gays, and largely to public applause. For example, the word "nigger" is now used only as something coming from a racist small town sheriff, or a term of endearment between black people themselves. But the equally offensive word "faggot" is used by many characters in many situations, and hardly raises an eyebrow.

In *The Boys In The Band*, one character movingly asks "if we can only learn to stop hating ourselves." By showing gays as comic figures, tortured perverts, token villains, or AIDS victims, cinema does little to encourage any feelings of self-esteem. The transgender community would do well to keep this in mind when they look to the entertainment industry with any kind of hope.

[Photographs from *The Celluloid Closet* courtesy Sony Pictures Classics.]

**KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD ...** *continued from page 2*

that I'm on to something here. Best of all, this move toward divine grace should eliminate a lot of the community's in-fighting. If Presbyterians can co-exist with Baptists in the same town, then surely Jeri Lee and Tri-Ess can also live in peace as separate denominations, yet holding the same basic tenet that "boys will be girls, and vice versa."

Perhaps we could even revive tithing. IFGE, in particular, should appreciate that idea.

The Kennedy interview that inspired this month's commentary ends with a question from that famed evangelist's mouth: "Just because we're rolling in the mud, does that mean we shouldn't try to get out of it?" Well, if ever there was a group of people who are regarded as mud-rollers by the self-righteous, it's us. So let's get out, and let's do it with the same zeal as the fundamentalists who have shown us the way.

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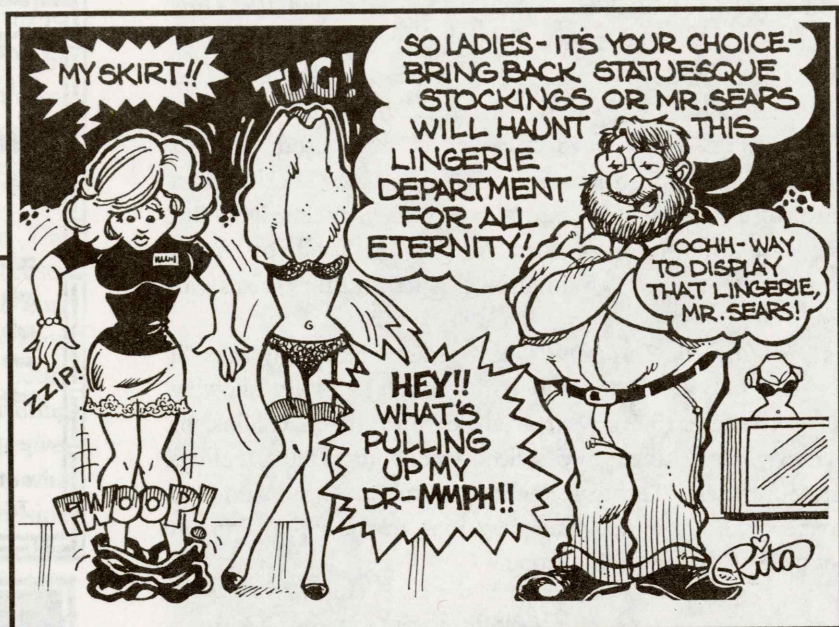
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# The Bearded Lady

by Ricky Hunt  
Illustration by Rita



Dear Mr. Sears,

I know that it may seem strange for me to be writing you -- after all, you've been dead for many years -- but my friends at the Psychic Network tell me that this may be the only way I'll attract the attention of the store you left behind. I have been a loyal customer of your store for many years because it supplies two classes of merchandise I cannot live without. I make my living with my hands, and for as long as I can remember I have used your Craftsman tools; they were the best around. Until, that is, a few years ago when some young whippersnapper decided Sears could live on your good name alone and started making them out of steel that had a close relationship to butter. I'm sorry to have to tell you this, Mr. Sears, but I turn to Mr. Stanley for his tools these days. Perhaps you and some of your ethereal friends in the netherworld could arrange to haunt the sucker who decided to make a quick buck off your name.

Although I no longer use your tools I still visit your store regularly. I hope I won't shock you, Mr. Sears, when I tell you why. You see, sir, after a day making my living with my tools I return home and relax in a way that might perplex a man of the 19th Century such as yourself. I remove my rough working clothes and put on a dress, or maybe a blouse and skirt. I doubt you ever considered doing this yourself, but as a man in the retail business I'm sure your philosophy is "the customer is always right." At least your sales staff has always been glad to sell me any article of feminine clothing I desire without so much as snicker. As long as I'm at the counter, that is, and they're very welcome to laugh at me when I leave.

I must admit I have not purchased many dresses or skirts from Sears. Being a large woman, until very recently your store did not carry anything in my size, but then until recently American retailers simply assumed all women were smaller than a size 16 so I can't fault your store for that. I hope I won't embarrass you too much when I tell you that I come to Sears primarily to purchase my underwear. Please, Mr. Sears, don't blush. I assure you that people in the '90s (the 1990s, that is) can talk about ladies' underwear with perfect propriety. For that matter, some ladies have been known to wear nothing but their underwear (they call them string bikinis) in public and not be arrested. Ogled maybe, but not arrested.

I don't quite know why, but while your store has never carried outerwear in my size they have always carried underwear to fit my large frame. In particular, Sears has always carried stockings to fit me. Since you died before they were invented, you may not know what pantyhose are, so I'll try to explain. Someone decided that having to hook up garters to a stocking on each leg, adjust the straps and snap the snaps was too much work for a modern woman, so they designed a one piece garment that encased legs and torso in nylon mesh (we no longer use silk for stockings; sorry to disappoint you) and called it pantyhose because it serves the purpose of both panties and hose. This is fine for a woman -- it makes their life simpler no doubt -- but it has its drawbacks for people such as myself.

When I put on a dress I naturally want to wear hose beneath it, and I have a bit of a problem getting pantyhose to fit properly. I'll try to be delicate here, but the problem is not so much as having the pantyhose conform to the bit of anatomy I have and women don't but getting them to conform to my pot belly and stay up. They have a disconcerting tendency to roll up and slide down the curve of my paunch. So I have developed a preference for gartered stockings and Sears has always carried stockings in my size. In fact, Sears is about the only place that still carries stockings since Mr. Ward's establishment went out of business around here.

I must congratulate the person who came up with the names for the sizes for your stockings. I'm considered statuesque. I like that, it's much better than humongous, and brings to mind a piece of art at our local museum. There is a beautiful white marble statue in the lobby of a woman in a flowing gown. The carving is exquisite and every detail of her body and garments is captured in timeless wonder for all to see and appreciate.

(continued on page 28)

## THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



## PANDORA'S BOX

by Amy Sakurai



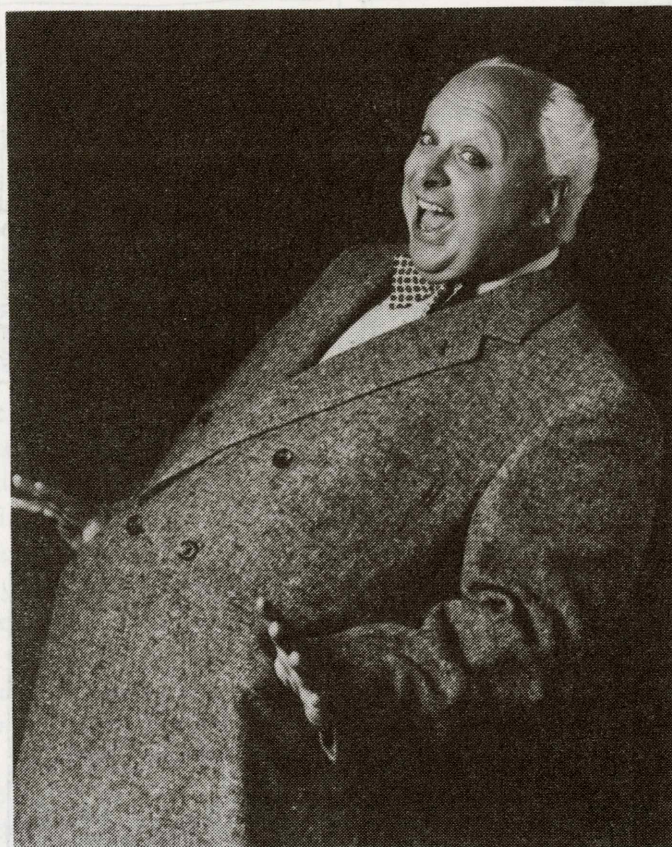
## WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT?

by Christine-Jane Wilson

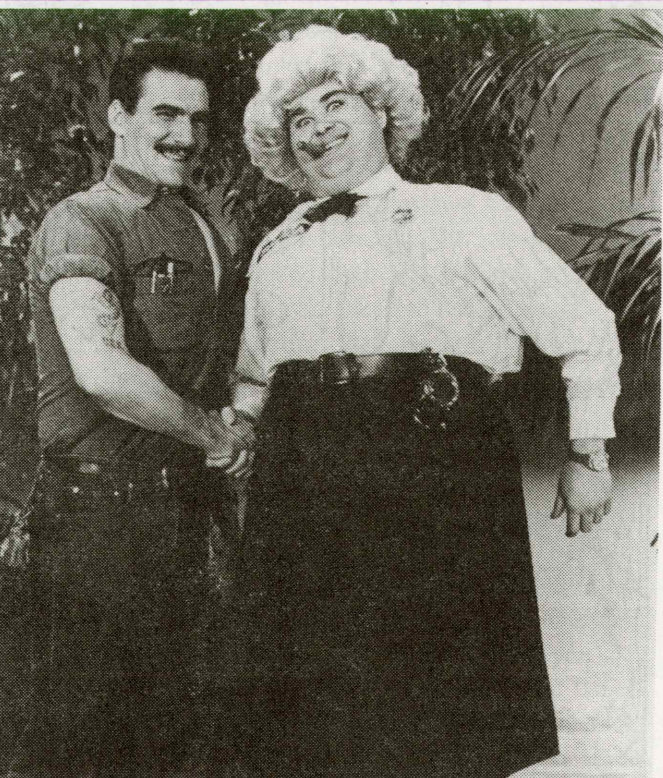


# GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

from the archives of Ralph Judd



2/15/86: An in-depth interview with Divine (shown at left as Harris Glenn Milstead) is featured on *Night Flight*, USA.



1985: Mr. Macho (John Paragon) lands an unexpected date with Vic Dunlop in a sketch on *FTV*, syndicated.



Uncle Miltie (Milton Berle) in one of his many drag appearances on *Texaco Star Theatre*, which aired on NBC from 1948 to 1956.

# WHO'S WELCOME IN WOMEN'S SPACES?

by Jane Anna Langley

Can a transgendered woman use the women's room? Well that depends. It depends first on whether or not you consider that she is a woman. If not then maybe you'll just say "the hell with it, let her use it anyway", or maybe you'll say "she's not a woman so she can't use it". In any case, the assumption that there is an identifiable category of people called "women" has been made.

Whether transgendered women are permitted to women's space is by the by. There is a good chance that there are either none at your university or place of work that want to use your women's room, or the ones that do may pass so well as women that you wouldn't identify them as transgendered anyway. In either case the question of permission is moot. So let's move on to the more interesting question of what is a woman. There are a staggering number of possible answers to this; I have found 23 fairly common ones. Instead of giving you the definitive answer to this question, an answer that I do not, in fact, possess, I will consider whether women do constitute a precisely and practically identifiable category of people.

**The Test of Womanhood:** If we seek to welcome some people into a semi-public space and exclude others, then when someone seeks to enter the space, we must have some means of determining whether that person belongs to the category of people that we wish to admit. This implies that those admitted share a common characteristic hence are definable in some way. It also means that there is some way in which we can test to see if an individual shares that characteristic.

Now, getting down to specifics, the space we are talking about is "women's space", the common characteristic is womanhood. So to do this we must define what it is to be a woman, and we must have a means to determine whether someone is a woman or not. If we cannot come up with a test, we will have no effective way of ensuring the integrity of the "women's space."

What qualities must such a test possess? It must be testable in everyday life. This means that the test can be applied anywhere, any time, and at no cost. This is an important consideration, because if we are to use our test to determine say, if a particular person is permitted to use the women's room, then we must be able to apply the test in that setting. It would be totally infeasible to take samples for laboratory testing, or to perform an intrusive examination of the person's genitals, or to inspect birth certificates or medical records.

It must also be effective. That is, the test must give a determination in every case. In other words, it must never

fail to determine whether the subject is a woman or not. If the test fails to produce a result, we might unfairly deny a woman her entitlements simply because we cannot determine her status. It must be repeatable: If the test is applied repeatedly to the same subject it must always produce the same result. And the test must be objective.

## How do you define "woman" when determining what "woman-only" space is?

That is, for any individual, the test must produce the same result no matter who administers the test.

Next, let us have a look at the candidate definitions of womanhood. The definitions that I will use are ones that I have encountered in everyday life, literature, and in the discourse on gender and sexuality. These "candidate-definitions" are a first approximation of a definition of womanhood. I have tried to come up with an exhaustive list of definitions, but it is possible that there are ones that I have not considered. Such is the nature of the exercise. You may have access to definitions that I have not considered and be able to complete this exercise with different results.

As I go through the definitions I will briefly comment on how they fare with respect to the criteria. I will comment only on the criteria that they specifically fail to meet, some I have listed as maybe's. I have adopted a conservative approach in that I have not listed a test as satisfying a criterion if there is any doubt about it.

**The Candidate-Definitions:** *Essential* -- a woman is someone with a female essence. Misses out on objectivity, since not everyone agrees as to whether there is an essence involved in being a woman, let alone what that essence might be.

*Spiritual* -- a woman is someone whose spirit is female. Misses out on objectivity for much the same reasons. Even the existence of such a thing as a spirit is a matter of some contention.

*Recursive* -- a woman is someone who was born a woman. This definition relies on us having a definition of womanhood to begin with (a matter that is not certain). It is also not testable because it requires us to time travel back to the subject's birth then apply some test to them to

see if they were "born a woman."

**Oppression** -- a woman is someone who has experienced oppression, imposed by patriarchy, in a manner unique to women. Not repeatable, because the effects of that oppression may not always be apparent. It is also not effective, because a person may exhibit the outward signs of having been oppressed in this manner, when in fact there is another cause.

**Group Self-definition** -- a woman is a member of a group who knows that they are women. "We know who we are." Is not repeatable because people may join or leave the group, or personally disagree with the group's definition. It is also not objective, because a member of the group and a non-member will likely disagree with the group's definition of itself. For example a group of male-to-female transsexuals may define themselves as women, but a member of a lesbian separatist group may well disagree with the transsexual's self-definition.

**Genitalia at Birth** -- a woman is someone who was not born with a penis. Requires the use of a time machine to test it. It is not effective, because a significant number of children are born with ambiguous genitalia. Nowadays, doctors usually "fix-up" babies with ambiguous genitalia to give them apparently normal male or female genitalia.

**Sexual** -- a woman is someone with a vagina capable of accommodating a man's erect penis. Fails testability for privacy reasons. Fails objectivity; after all, which penis are

you going to use to check?

**Genital I** -- a woman is someone with a vagina. Fails testability for privacy reasons. Arguably it also fails on objectivity, since it is not clear that everyone would accept as a vagina the surgically constructed neo-vaginas possessed by some "genetic women" who were born without them, and post-operative male-to-female transsexuals.

**Genital II** -- a woman is someone without a penis. This fails the testability criteria, for privacy reasons. Although some people who fail this one do display their wares prominently.

**Upbringing** -- a woman is someone who was raised in a particular fashion. This fashion being particular to females. Not effective because the nature of a person's upbringing may not always be apparent. When it is apparent it is not certain that any two people will agree on whether it was a female upbringing or not, so it also fails objectivity.

**Functional I** -- a woman is someone who has the capacity to give birth to babies. Is not testable without recourse to a medical examination, and maybe not even then, hence it is also not effective. It is also not repeatable as this is a capacity that comes and goes over the course of a person's lifetime. It is also susceptible to loss through disease. Hence it is also not repeatable.

**Functional II** -- a woman is someone who either has, or had, or apparently will have, the capacity to give birth to

babies. Suffers from much the same limitations as the previous definition. Although someone who turns up with their children in tow obviously passes, knowing whether someone will have the capacity to bear children if they currently do not (as in the case of a child) might be miraculous.

**Visual** -- a woman is someone with a particular body shape and facial features, that make her recognizably female. This one seems to be pretty reliable, but there are some people who is hard to tell with, and this tends to make it ineffective. Also, when in doubt people may come to differing conclusions, hence it is also not objective.

**Voice** -- a woman is someone whose adult speaking voice is higher pitched than men's. It is true that the average "female" voice is higher than the average "male" one, but like some of the later definitions, there is significant overlap. There is no absolute measure here, so this test is ineffective. Also the pitch of the voice can be changed by speech therapy or other training, hormonal changes, or just by having a cold. This makes the test unrepeatable too.

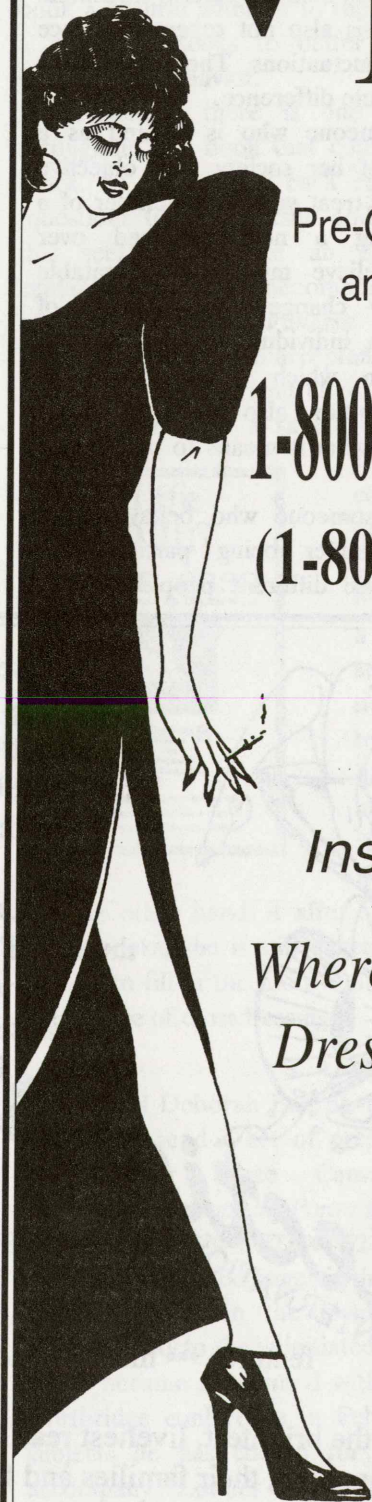
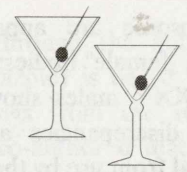
**Clothing** -- a woman is someone who dresses in apparel and in a manner that distinguish her from non-women. Not effective since clothes are easily changed, and this fact also makes it unrepeatable too.

**Mental** -- a woman is someone whose thought patterns are characteristically female. This is the "brain sex" definition. Like the "voice" definition before, there are only statistical, not absolute gender differences that have come to light in this research. Consequently it is not effective. Measuring the pattern of brain activity is also a non-trivial task, which makes it untestable for our purposes.

**Legal** -- a woman is someone who is considered female in the eyes of the law. This definition fails repeatability and objectivity, since different legal entities use different definitions for determining gender. If I may let my own situation serve as an example: In the eyes of the law in South Australia I am female. I was born there and have changed my birth certificate under their "Sex Reassignment Act," which is currently unique in Australia. However, Victorian law considers me male in some matters and female in others. Federal marriage laws consider me to be a man.

**Chromosomal I** -- a woman is someone who has more than one X chromosome, as determined by the Barr Body test. The test is administered by taking a scraping from the inside of the subject's mouth, and a dye which distinctively colors the turned off X chromosome is then applied to the sample. The sample is then examined under a microscope, and if a clump of the distinctive color is seen in each cell then the subject is determined to be female. Fails testability, otherwise apparently good. It was used for a time in the Olympic Games, but was dropped when it was found that it did not always produce the expected results when applied to people with a single X or an XXY combination. For example, people with a single X

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chromosome are apparently female in that they have normal "female" bodies; however the test shows them to be male. XXY males show up to be female under the test. These discrepancies are the reason that the test was dropped from use by the Olympic Games.

**Chromosomal II** -- a woman is someone with no Y chromosome. Again, fails testability, otherwise apparently good.

**Hormonal** -- a woman is someone who has a level of testosterone in her blood that is below a certain threshold. Again it fails testability, and is also not repeatable since these levels are subject to fluctuations. They are also a statistical rather than an absolute difference.

**Cultural** -- a woman is someone who is treated as a woman by other members of her society. Not objective because different people may treat you as a member of a different gender (try being a newly crossed over transsexual if you don't believe me). Not repeatable because people may easily change their manner of behavior towards you, or an individual may move to a different cultural setting in which they are treated differently. This whole definition also relies on there being a reliable definition of what it means to be "treated as a woman."

**Behavioral** -- a woman is someone who behaves in a particular manner, that manner being particular to women. Not objective because different people tend to

define "womanish" behavior differently. Not repeatable because behavior is subject to constant, and sometimes rapid, change. Nor is it effective since some modes of behavior are impossible to categorize as being exclusively male or female.

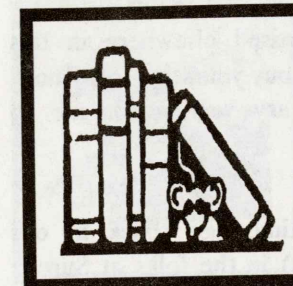
**Binary Opposite** -- a person is female if and only if they are not male. This definition will work if we have a satisfactory definition and test for being male. To apply it to women we simply negate the result. It makes the assumption that all individuals are either male or female, and are never neither or both.

Although we have not looked specifically at definitions of "man," it is clear that you can come up with many definitions for it by simply negating any of the above definitions. I, for one, have not been able to conceive of a definition of maleness that satisfies the four criteria. Therefore it is not possible for me to say that the "binary opposite" definition of woman satisfies all the criteria.

In part two, why there is no application of these tests that satisfies the question.



*This work is a more complete version of the presentation by Jane Anna Langley at the NOWSA95 conference at the University of Melbourne, on July 4th, 1995. The author may be contacted by e-mail at <janie@natasha.ironbark.id.au>. Copyright 1995, Jane Anna Langley.*



## Alternative Presses

by Kimberleigh Richards

I must confess that I'm not a big fan of self-help books, probably because the cynic in me can only take a certain amount of ultra-positive thinking before I exit the room screaming. (Perhaps that's why I stopped watching Robert Schuller.) I must thus be forgiven for not completely appreciating *The Bliss of Becoming One!* by Rachel Miller (Rainbow Books, 1996, ISBN 1-56825-031-2), because this book is so overwhelmingly positive about crossdressing that it makes Al Franken's character Stuart Smalley seem depressed by comparison.

This is not necessarily a bad thing, because if you are one of those deeply closeted people who fears discovery by friends and family, this book should improve your mood considerably. Miller covers the territory well, if not quickly -- the book is just over 100 pages long -- and makes a good argument for why transgender behavior should not be a cause of distress. While it is true that self-acceptance is necessary before acceptance by others is possible, though, I had trouble reading this book, because it is so sugar-coated that I felt the need to brush my teeth every few chapters! Miller hits a frenzied fever pitch by the closing chapters, in which she maintains that by improving acceptance we will eventually force society to accept us *en masse*, which might create a little *too* much optimism in the reader.

*The Bliss of Becoming One* is not for everyone; it certainly isn't the book to convince a non-accepting wife or family. But it is a good book for those who need an extra dose of courage, and it just might get a few people out of their solitude and into a local transgender organization. And that is *definitely* not a bad thing.



Many books have been written about transgender relationships, starting with Virginia Prince's *The Transvestite and His Wife* in 1967 and continuing with Peggy Rudd's *My Husband Wears My Clothes* only a few years ago. The latest entry is a short (about the size of a TV fiction novelette) book by former **Cross-Talk** columnist Linda (Peacock) Kaye and her husband Vanessa.



*Life With Vanessa* (available only through the authors; there is an ad elsewhere in this magazine) is based upon Linda and Vanessa's assorted writings from the recent past, rewritten and linked with new co-authored material. It is an extremely *personal* book, even to the point of highlighting Vanessa's fascination with Eastern religious beliefs, and Linda's long experience with crossdressing partners is also obvious to the reader. And the combined experiences of both would, one would think, make this book a natural addition to the reading material offered to a wife who seeks to better understand her husband's transgender behavior.

Unfortunately, there is one flaw which repeats itself throughout the book that could prove to be a stumbling block. At the end of each chapter, the reader will find "questions to ask yourself and your partner" which make this seem more like an exercise workbook than an explanation of the phenomenon. I fear that some wives may see *Life With Vanessa* as a contrived method to "brainwash" them into acceptance, and thus it may not have the desired enlightening effect with all female partners. (I also wonder what a skeptical wife will make of Dallas

Denny's two-page contribution of science's lack of explanations for crossdressing; it may have been better not to introduce a third voice for such a brief segment in which essentially nothing is accomplished in terms of a wife's understanding and potential acceptance.)

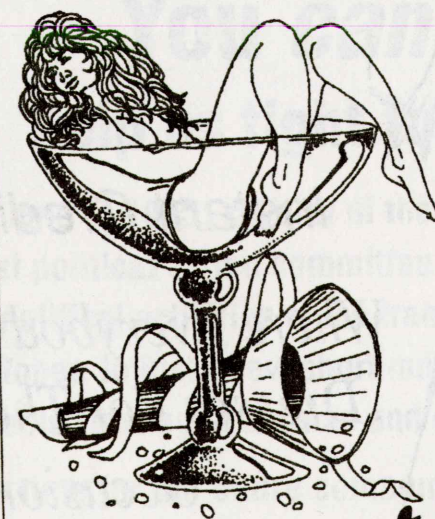
So this would not be the very first book I would give a wife.

On the other hand, if after she has read the Prince and Rudd books, she is still eager to understand, this book is perfect to fill in the more "intimate" gaps in her expanding knowledge of crossdressing.



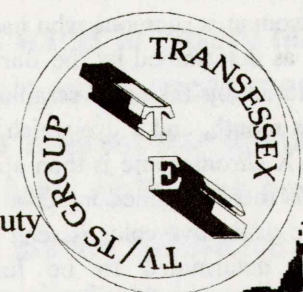
Our friend Deborah Barkun at Cleis Press has been kind enough to send a set of prepublication galleys for FTM photographer Loren Cameron's forthcoming *Body Alchemy: Transsexual Portraits*, scheduled for release in November (ISBN 1-57344-062-0), and my opinion of these xeroxed, unproofed pages is that this may well be *the* book that helps explain the phenomenon of female-to-male transsexuality to the uninitiated.

I first became acquainted with Loren and his work at the Northridge conference in February of last year, and the subjects he has chosen for this book -- whose words accompany Loren's images -- have interesting and sometimes poignant stories to tell. Those who have dismissed these men-born-female as the oddest practitioners



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of an already-odd lifestyle may well change their opinions after seeing this book; some may even feel a compassion they did not think possible.

*Body Alchemy* is not for the squeamish; the cover features the photographer, naked but for his abstract cat-stripe tattoos, giving himself a testosterone shot in the hip. Other images include Loren pointing a revolver to his temple as part of a section on the vulnerability he felt during his first exhibition, and hormone-altered, pierced, and surgically created genitalia, in a section on metoidoplasty and phalloplasty. But there are many other images that, while potentially startling to the reader, communicate just how normal these men are.

I only hope that the inclusion of some pre- and early-transition photos will not leave the more closed-minded reader thinking that the subjects would have been better off remaining women, for although some of them were rather dykeishly cute, to believe they should not have followed their own internal convictions would be missing the point.

Look for this book in a couple of months.



My U.K. acquaintance Mona, who first captured my attention three years ago with a self-published comic zine called *Trantastic Comics* has recently printed the fifth issue of her *Girly* fold-out one-sheeter. (Picture the sheet of paper that makes up the center pages of *Cross-Talk*, folded in quarters and printed sideways, and you'll have some idea.)

Mona, as in previous issues, does cut-and-paste in a manner reminiscent of the way Vickie Stone used to put together the *LIFELines* newsletter five years ago; the resultant hodgepodge of articles on gender-bending celebrities, fashion tips, and other news items is oddly fascinating. There's even an ongoing advice series for drag kings!

She'll send you a free copy for a self-addressed envelope in the U.K., or for \$1.00 postage in the U.S. (write *Girly*, 33 Romford Rd., London E15 4LY, U.K.). \$5.00 gets you either a subscription or some back issues.



When our readers venture their opinions about us, one of the more-often mentioned features is Christine-Jane Wilson's cartoon "What's On the TV Tonight?" which frequently features excerpts from her book of the same name, alternating with new material from her talented pen and humor-seeking mind.

Christine-Jane has published a second volume of crossdressing cartoons entitled *Is There a TV in the House?* (a play on the inspectors who go from door to door ensuring that the U.K.'s television licence requirements are being adhered to), containing more new material -- some of which has recently appeared here -- as well as cartoons that have appeared in *Tapstry* and the former

journal *The Glad Rag*, of which she was the editor.

You'll find the new book advertised elsewhere in this issue; if you're a fan, you'd better buy yourself a copy now, because you'll make yourself crazy waiting for me to reprint them one month at a time!



We made some friends some time ago (back in our newsletter days, if memory serves) in the folks at Sureen Publishing, who were kind enough to promote us as part of their newsletter for disabled people. Now they have released *Intimate Resources for Persons with Disabilities* and advised us of the inclusion *Cross-Talk* there as well. Although I have not seen the entire directory, I would suspect that there are many other resources of interest to the North American transgender community contained in it as well. (\$12.95 from Sureen Publishing, Box 23102, 124 Welland Ave., St. Catharines ON L2R 7P6, Canada.)



I'm about halfway through *Monsieur d'Eon is a Woman* by my friend Gary Kates of Trinity University, and provided I finish it in the next couple of weeks, you can expect a review here next month. I'll give you a sneak preview now ... it's *fascinating*.

#### THE BEARDED LADY ... continued from page 20

When I put on a pair of your statuesque stockings and buckle my garters, for a moment I am one with that statue, the essence of femininity ... at least until I look in the mirror. But the last few trips to your store have left me bereft, for I have been unable to find new stockings. I'll admit I have been reluctant to ask the sales clerk if they are no longer carrying my stockings, but it appears that I may have to switch to pantyhose when my stock runs out. So please, Mr. Sears, if you have any influence with the modern management of your store, let them know you still want them to do some things in the old-fashioned way. When you're done haunting the fellow in the tool department, could you scare the panties off whoever decided to take away my stockings? I'd appreciate it.

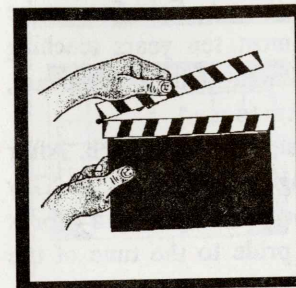
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## MOVIE REVIEW

# STONEWALL

by Diane Chaplin

Having somehow survived the torments of *Twister*, the implausible plot lines of *Mission: Impossible* and the ... well ... sovereignty of *Independence Day*, I found it a true breath of hot summer air to ogle *Stonewall*.

Why this film is in such limited release escapes me. I happened to catch a 12:30 screening on a Sunday afternoon and the theater was packed. I mean with lots of couples. I mean middle-aged, male/female!

Historian Martin Duberman notes in his book on which this film is based on that "Stonewall [was] the site of a series of riots in late June-early July 1969 that resulted from a police raid on a Greenwich Village gay bar ... now generally taken to mark the birth of the modern gay and lesbian political movement -- that moment in time when gays and lesbians recognized all at once their mistreatment and their solidarity."

However true that may or may not be, the rioting sequence in the film is depicted in the final ten minutes, when about 50 of New York's finest descend on the Stonewall Inn in riot gear and try to arrest an impressive array of drag queens -- not an easy task.

Although the film is, for the most part, a comedy, the true frustration of the gays as victims of police brutality for no discernible reason, is grievous.

I don't do tears! I don't do angry!" huffs LaMiranda, a lean, leggy, streetwise drag queen, after being roughed up by the police during a routine raid on the Stonewall Inn.

However, when the plot focuses upon the personal lives of the three leads: LaMiranda (Guillermo Diaz), a tough Hispanic drag; Matty Dean (Frederick Weller), a formerly rich, white boy who falls for her; and Bostonia (Duane Boutte) a very classy black drag being supported by Skinny Vinnie (Bruce MacVittie), a culpable Mafioso type, you can sense the film might have been, sort of "The Crying Game Goes Big Apple."

In that earlier effort, Jaye Davidson's Dil noted: "Even when you were throwing up, I knew you cared." Thankfully, *Stonewall* is one of few recent films to be released

here without barfing, hopefully, starting a new trend. Instead, LaMiranda notes: "I don't do love. There's no percentage in it," and Matty Dean, dressed up as LaMiranda at a military induction center, opines, "The state between maleness and femaleness is fabulousness." This scene alone is worth the price of admission.

The raids at the Stonewall Inn were not really "raids". They were, for the most part, three or four cops dropping in unexpectedly to badger the bar's patronage and general rough up a few drag queens, as evidenced when LaMiranda has her face dunked (or "washed" as the police sneeringly put it) in a dishpan full of dirty water.

Her defender, Matty Dean (Frederick Weller), who has recently arrived in New York from the Midwest, is sobbing after being punched in the nose by a policeman. All he did was point out that LaMiranda wasn't hurting anyone by applying her lipstick.

Although LaMiranda may hold back her tears, in Diaz's wrenching portrayal of the character, she is a walking open wound going through extreme emotional contortions trying not to bleed.

It is obvious at first sight, that LaMiranda is not quite sure how to even handle Matty Dean. But after a night of lovemaking with the handsome Beatle-coiffed hayseed who suggests John Boy Walton as Bob Dylan (he improvises clunky gay liberation verses to the tune of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*), she becomes his dotting honey pie.

In Brechtian fashion, the film uses songs to bridge the gaps. Between scenes, a group of three or four drag queens (including LaMiranda) lip-synch and sashay to rhinestone-studded hero-worshipping '60s anthems by the Shangri-Las and the Ad Libs.

Another strand of the story follows the tormented relationship between Vinnie (Bruce MacVittie), a macho manager of a gay bar, and his drag-queen lover, Bostonia. Vinnie fantasizes that if Bostonia would only have a sex-change operation, the two could settle down to an ordinary heterosexual life. One look at the



Guillermo Diaz as La Miranda.



grandly flouncing Bostonia, and you think Vinnie must be either mad or blind.

As long as *Stonewall* fixes its attention on LaMiranda and on her more regal drag compatriot, Bostonia (Duane Boutte), this fictionalized re-creation of events leading up to the Stonewall disturbance swivels glitteringly to life. But when the film settles down to re-enact the meetings, demonstrations and sit-ins of the inceptive gay-rights movement, it turns into a cardboard classroom exercise: Contemporary Gay History 101.

At one point, Ethan (Brendan Corbalis), a very handsome, Fire Island brand of gay activist, notes: "I came here as a freshman at Columbia, and I was going to kick the world's

ass. When you're 19, finding something to fight for can be something of a thrill. I spent almost ten years teaching Brooklyn kids about Walt Whitman and Shakespeare, never mentioning what really matters to me."

The disturbance, when it finally arrives, isn't much. After some window-smashing, head-banging and shouts of "Gay Power," a group of drag queens form an impromptu chorus line and sing an anthem of drag pride to the tune of the theme from *Howdy Doody*.

Near the end, it depicts vintage television news clips reporting the death of Judy Garland, an event that in some minds helped set off the clash. If these scenes are torpid, they at least serve a useful historical function in pointing out that in the late-1960s, homosexuals had few civil rights and were viewed as social and medical freaks by a sizable portion of Richard Nixon's mainstream America.

*Not rated. Starring Guillermo Diaz, Frederick Weller, Brendan Corbalis, Duane Boutte and Bruce MacVittie. Directed by Nigel Finch (who died from AIDS during post-production). Written by Rikki Beadle Blair, based on the book Stonewall by Martin Duberman. Produced by Christine Vachon. Released by Strand Releasing.*



Bostonia (Duane Boutte, center) with two drag divas.

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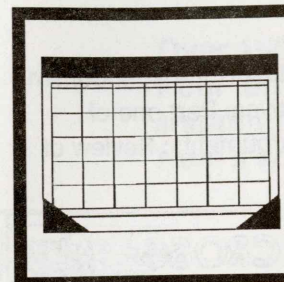
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## EVENTS CALENDAR

**September 19-22, 1996:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, produced by Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406. Information via Internet: <poco@cdspub.com> or by phone: (610) 640-9449.

**September 26-29, 1996:** 6th Annual "Southern Comfort Conference", Atlanta GA. Information from P.O. Box 77591, Atlanta 30357-1591, by telephoning (404) 633-6470, or to <phillida@atl.mindspring.com> by Internet e-mail.

**October 17-20, 1996:** "Danielle's Getaway", Greer's Ferry Lake AR. Contact Danielle Storm for information at P.O. Box 61, Jonesboro AR 72403-0061 or telephone (501) 972-1826 evenings.

**October 17-21, 1996:** "A Kindred Spirits Vision Quest", Dixon Mountain NC. Details from Kindred Spirits, P.O. Box 18332, Asheville NC 28814, or by calling (704) 253-9882.

**October 20-27, 1996:** "Fantasia Fair '96", Provincetown MA, sponsored by the Outreach Institute for Gender Studies. Contact Registrar for information at P.O. Box 147, Haverford MA 19041-0147; telephone (610) 446-6042; fax (610) 688-1762; e-mail <fanfair@lng.com>.

**October 31-November 1, 1996:** "Fall Harvest '96", Cedar Rapids IA, sponsored by Mid America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE) and hosted by Iowa Artistry. Information from P.O. Box 75, Cedar Rapids IA 52406-0075, telephone (309) 755-2310.

**November 6-10, 1996:** Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme", Chicago IL. Details from Chi Chapter at P.O. Box 40, Wood Dale IL 60191-0040 or by telephoning (708) 262-8707.

**November 8-10, 1996:** "Rainbow Spirit Convergence", for LGBT and Native healers and teachers, Highlands NC. Information from Kindred Spirits, P.O. Box 18332, Asheville NC 28814, or by calling (704) 253-9882.

**November 22-24, 1996:** "Riverside Gala Weekend '96", Cambridge Springs PA, sponsored by Erie Sisters Crossdressing Club. Details from P.O. Box 1571, Erie PA 16507.

**March 11-16, 1997:** 9th Annual "Texas 'T' Party", Dallas TX. Send SASE to P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163; phone/fax, (210) 980-7788; e-mail <txparty@aol.com>.

**April 15-20, 1997:** "California Dreamin'/IFGE California Unity", Long Beach CA, hosted by Powder Puffs Of California and other California organizations. Details from IFGE, P.O. Box 229, Waltham MA 02154 or by phoning (617) 899-2212.

**May 15-18, 1997:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA. See September 19, 1996 listing for details.

**June 20-22, 1997:** Second "International Congress on Sex & Gender Issues", Valley Forge PA, co-sponsored by the Human Sexuality Program at the University of Pennsylvania and Renaissance Education Association. Contact Renaissance, 987 Old Eagle School Rd. Suite 719, Wayne PA 19087 for information, or JoAnn Roberts at Creative Design Services: (610) 640-9449, fax (610) 648-0257, or e-mail <cngrs2@cdspub.com>.

**September 18-21, 1997:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA. See September 19, 1996 listing for details.

(Please send information on national transgender community events to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365. Listings must be accompanied by a written authorization by an officer of the sponsoring organization or be listed in their group newsletter. Information will not be accepted via e-mail.)

A list of transgender community organizations with contact phone numbers is available upon request by sending a self-addressed #10 envelope with 32 cents postage to Cross-Talk Hotlines, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365-0944. Outside the U.S., simply send your name and address and one International Reply Coupon to cover postage.

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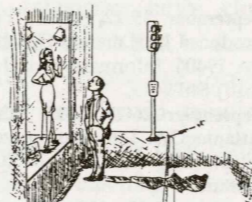
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**#78 (April 1996):** The arrogant attitude of those who feel that their take on transgenderism is the only one; Shamans and other transgendered mystics of Siberian natives; Part one of series on developing a feminine voice; Using the Bible to counter critics' arguments; Review of *The Birdcage*.

**#79 (May 1996):** The lack of progress within the TG community over the past five years; An open letter to the IFGE board of directors; Drag in American history; Part two of voice series; The balance between "having it all" and having nothing; A transsexual's take on crossdressing and hormones.

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**#80 (June 1996):** The dilemma when one starts to evolve away from their peers' views; The Chevalier d'Eon and other modern-day gender crossers; A respected economist comes out of the closet as TS; Part three of voice series; Review of *Kids in the Hall Brain Candy*.

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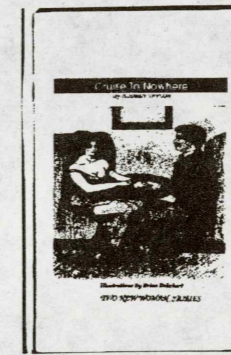
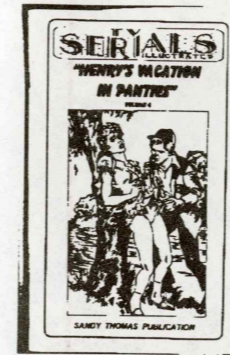
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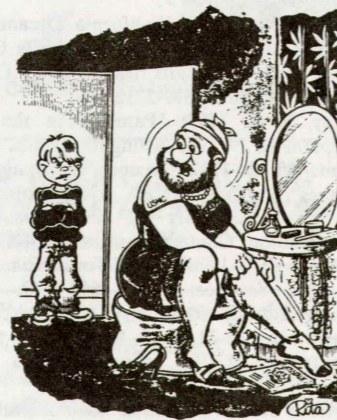
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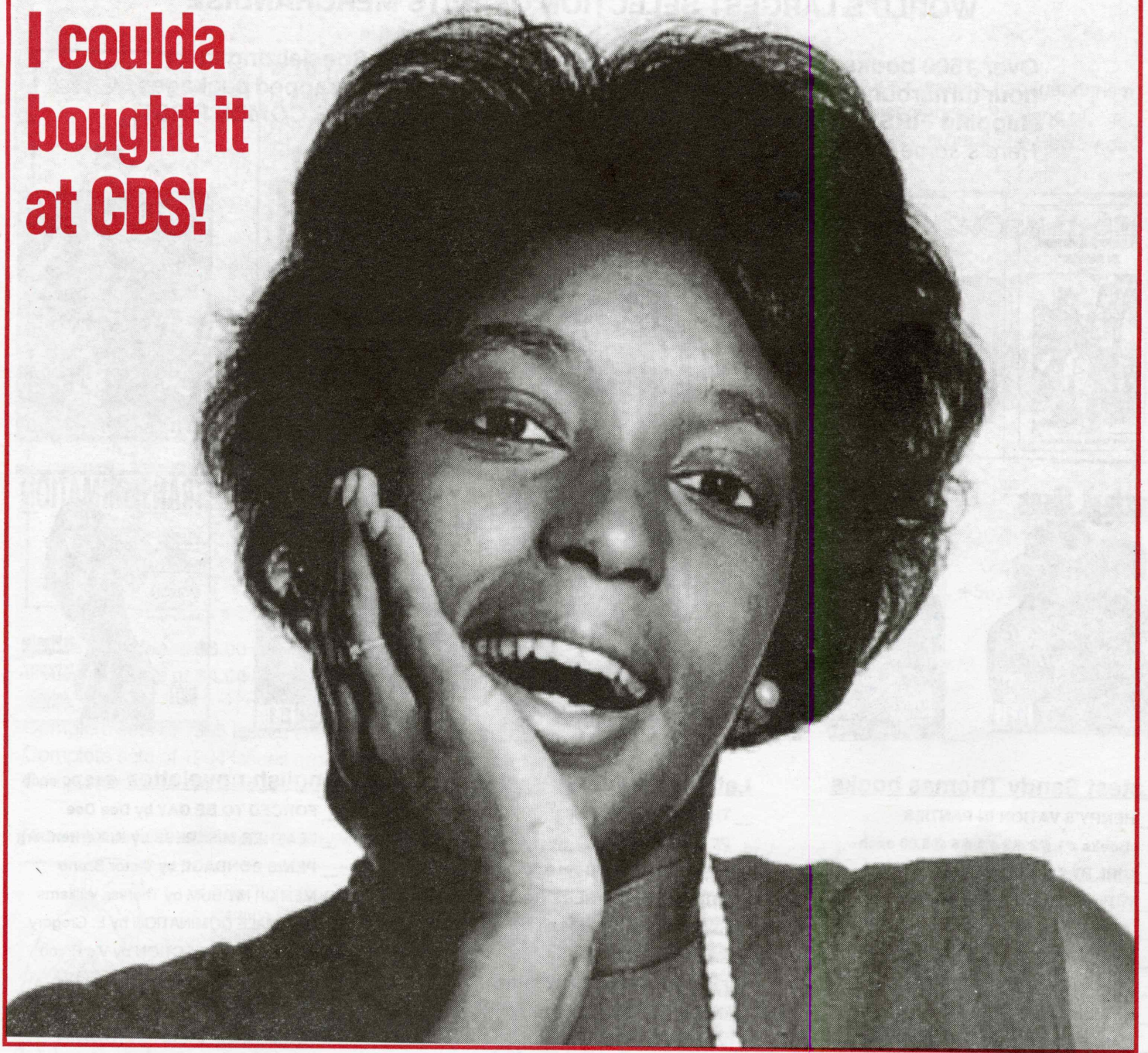


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