



News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

Vol. 9, No. 1 • January 1995

Renaissance

National Office Use Expands

The Renaissance National Office has evolved into a real working space for the national board and its projects. It is currently being used by Co-Director of Membership, Elizabeth Jarrell, as a sorting spot for Renaissance mail. Elizabeth also sends out information packets to anyone inquiring about our group. At this time we are publicizing the new office address as the place to send anything for the attention of the National Board (address on page 2), but the old box will remain open for several months, so we don't miss any correspondence. The office address should also be used for *News & Views* business mail (checks from advertisers, etc.), which should be sent to the attention of Barbara Schwarz, the *News & Views* Business Manager. All letters for the Editorial Department, including Classified Ads and display advertising, should be sent to our Bensalem PO Box.

The National Office also houses the Renaissance Library. Librarian, Lee Etscovitz recently recruited Jody Burns, Tiffany Taylor and Michael Butera for a needed session of organizing. Thanks to their efforts newsletters from all gender organizations we exchange with have been arranged according to the

state or foreign country in which they originated. Articles and magazines are being arranged along lines of topical interest. All such reference materials are available for use in the office during Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter meetings. People attending GPC meetings may check library books out and return them at the next meeting.

If you have books of interest to the transgendered community that you have finished reading and you would like to donate them to the library contact the librarian at the National Office.

If you need to contact the National Office for any reason, please note that we have a brand new phone number, 610-975-9119. This number actually rings in the office and we are working on setting up office hours when the phone will be answered by volunteers from GPC. If you are interested in phone answering work at the office get in touch with Co-Director of Outreach, Angela Gardner. Leave a message on the office machine. Anyone calling the old Renaissance number will get the phone company's referral message.



Aussies Consider TG Discrimination Bill

Australian Associated Press, Nov 23, 1994

SYDNEY: Legislation outlawing discrimination against transsexuals was introduced into the New South Wales parliament today. Independent MP Clover Moore, whose Bligh electorate encompasses much of Sydney's gay and transsexual communities, said she was introducing a private member's bill to ensure these people received basic human rights and fairness. NSW already has laws making it illegal to discriminate against a person on the basis of homosexuality but Ms. Moore says her parallel legislation is needed for transgenders.

She said she used the term transgender rather than transsexual because the people themselves preferred the first description. "Trannies believe the term transsexual has strong, political overtones which do not adequately describe or include all the people that risk discrimination because they live identified lives as members of the opposite sex," Ms Moore told parliament today.

The bill defines a transgender person as someone who assumes any of the characteristics of the opposite sex. She said "trannies" were subjected to an extraordinary level of physical and verbal abuse and other forms of violence and discrimination.

A recent survey commissioned by the federal [Australian] government of 150 transgenders in the Sydney area showed almost 40 per cent had attempted suicide. "The transition from one gender to another is not made lightly or pleurably," Moore said. "It involves balancing an overwhelming need to be true to themselves against the almost certainty of discrimination and social rejection." Ms. Moore said many lost their jobs, or lost family and friends once they made the decision to change sexes.

She said for the past decade the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board had been calling for transgender people to be included in its act. Ms Moore said she introduced her bill after the coalition government had taken no action. Debate was adjourned.



Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

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

New Jersey

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

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia area: Write Renaissance GPC, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020-0530. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 p.m. all year 'round. Call **610-975-9119** for information.

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

Affiliates

Georgia

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

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

Louisiana

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

New Jersey

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

New York

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

Renaissance News & Views

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\$2 per issue, \$16 per year (12 issues). Back issues are available for \$2 per copy plus \$0.52 postage and handling. Send check or M.O. to the above address, attention: Beth Marshall.

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Articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor are always welcome. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to our editorial office care of Renaissance, PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020-0530. Complimentary and irate letters to the editor may be sent to the same address.

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



Resources

Background Papers:

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

Significant Other Support

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

Pen Pal Program:

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

TransParent Forum:

If you are transgendered and have children, that makes you a TransParent. If you'd like to network with other TransParents contact Elsa Larson, PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, Pa., 17105, attention: TransParent.

Events Calendar

January

- 7 Ren. South Jersey
- 7 Ren. LSV meeting
- 14 Ren. Delaware
- 21 Ren. GPC
- 28 Balto. Group Meeting

February

- 4 Ren. South Jersey
- 4 Ren. LSV meeting
- 11 Ren. Delaware
- 18 Ren. GPC
- 21-25 Texas "T" Party, San Antonio
- 23-25 Int'l Conf. on Cross Dressing, Sex & Gender, Northridge, Ca.

March

- 4 Ren. South Jersey
- 4 Ren. LSV meeting
- 11 Ren. Delaware
- 18 Ren. GPC

News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

Ok, I guess I can finally admit it. After all these years, I still don't know what an "Auld Lang Syne" is. I'm not even sure I can spell it. But, another year has chugged on by at Bullet Train speed and here we are in 1995. Republicans are in charge of the government, **Arnold Schwarzenegger** (a Republican) got pregnant and **President Clinton** fired the Surgeon General cause she said teaching school kids about masturbation was a good idea. As **The Wicked Witch** once said, "What a world, what a world."

Well, we'll just have to make the best of it, and to help you make the best of it let's talk about a few events. First, an event just past and then some exciting new opportunities to attend public functions in a dress.

EVENTS! EVENTS!

The Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter Holiday Party happened on December tenth in Center City, Philadelphia at the DoubleTree Hotel. Despite what I consider to be a light turnout, we all had a great time. The hotel helped us out by providing a smaller room so the seventy five attendees didn't get lost in a gigantic ballroom. The intimate atmosphere worked and with the energy of the **Steven Russo Band** pushing the crowd, it was party time.

Four lucky ladies won door prizes, Santa hats, filled with perfume and cosmetic samples (courtesy of our new national Director, Linda C.) and gift certificates for goods and services from

our *News & Views* advertisers. Two other winners got bottles of wine courtesy of Alison Laing. Randi Thomas provided music cassettes that were used while the band was on break and Terri Arnaldi brought her guitar and jammed with the band on a couple of blues tunes. I joined in on background vocals for a couple of songs and some teen and preteen girls who were part of the **Pennsylvania Ballet's** production of *The Nutcracker*, across the street at the Academy of Music, crashed the party—with their chaperones of course. A great time was had by one and all, except for one young lady who bemoaned the fact that our room did not have a crystal chandelier. Well, we would have had one if more people had shown up for the fun.

As I said before, I feel that seventy-five people is light for an event that, in the past, has drawn over a hundred people. In my capacity as a member (in good standing) of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter, I took on the responsibility of organizing the Holiday Party to give Michelle Lynn and Joanne White a break, since they put together the last two parties. I thought it would be easy to get people to come into the city if we paid for their parking and had a live band. Guess not. I put it down to a general reluctance on the part of many suburbanites in the Philadelphia area to come into the city for any reason, no matter how they are dressed. If that's the case then it's a sad commentary on how people can be ruled by their misconceptions. I have never been

threatened or harassed for being crossdressed while in Philadelphia's downtown district. There **are** places I won't go while crossdressed. Heck, there are places I won't go while sporting my male attire. But, in most areas I haven't been hassled. The hotel is located smack in the middle of one of the least threatening areas.

There were mutterings that people weren't attending because they weren't getting dinner. Who wants rubber chicken? Hotel food is just not that great. They have to put it on the plates a long time before it gets to you and after you've eaten it, how do you get your energy up for dancing? That's always been a problem for me. Maybe others felt the cost was too high.

Anyhow, if you didn't attend you missed a good time. I'll probably be foolish enough to take a crack at planning this year's Holiday Party (if they want me to) and I'd like you to tell me why you didn't come in 1994. Drop me a line at the Bensalem box.

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON

The first event of 1995 is called, appropriately, **First Event 1995**. It starts on January 25th and runs till the 28th. Tiffany Club of New England has put it together and they invite you to attend all five days or any part of the event. Registration for the whole event is \$100 with the price going down every day. You can go to the Saturday and Sunday activities for \$50. Where are these activities? The Holiday Inn Crown Plaza on Route 9 in Natick, Mass. For more First Event information contact your hostesses Sharon and Andrea at 617-891-9325.

Helen Davis handed me a flyer a while ago on **Karalyn's Oasis**, another New York club that caters to femmes like us. They operate on Friday and Saturday evenings "in an exclusive cabaret setting, catering to transgendered individuals, and people of all interests and persuasions." They're located at 818 Tenth Ave. in New York. There was no phone number on the flyer so be prepared to go to **Edelweiss** if Karalyn's has folded.

continued next page

News Beat...

Yahoo! Little doggies! It's cross-dressing time down in Texas, February 21 to 26 at the **7th Annual Texas "T" Party** in little ole' San Antone. Even though there doesn't seem to be a real support group in charge of the event, the event seems to keep on happening under the direction of the Phillipeses. Call 210-980-7788 for info on costs, location, etcetera.

Did I mention New York a paragraph ago? I did, I did, and there's more going on in New York; the girls in the Greater New York Gender Alliance are pleased to announce **Moonlight in Manhattan 1995**. They'll be partying at the Hotel Pennsylvania April 20th thru the 23rd. Contact Linda Frank at 212-765-3561 for registration information.

If you are a lover of the opera and have longed for a transgendered opera company to fill the same niche in the world of opera that the **Ballet Trocadero de Monte Carlo** does for the world of dance, long no more my little cabbage, **La Gran Scena Opera Company** is here for you. Well, not exactly here *here*, since they are currently on tour around the country somewhere in an opera house near you. Check newspapers for listings and feature times. But seriously folks, **Charles Ludlum's** performance as Camille (Ridiculous Theater Company) inspired **Ira Siff** to found La Gran Scena in the mid '80s. He created his own grand diva character in

Madame Vera Galupe-Borszkh and, of course, she is a soprano. Not just any soprano but as Siff says, "a traumatic soprano." His vocal technique? "My vocal technique is what you might call self-inflicted... my own vocal style can be attributed to very tight pants."

Keep your eyes open for them in your town. Columbia Artists handles their bookings so give them a call and ask for an itinerary. Do I have to do it all? Why are there no lilies in my dressing room? And this champagne! It has gone tepid. **I WILL NOT SING TONIGHT!**

ADDING THE SOAP TO OPERA

Suzanne T., an old friend from pre-Renaissance days, sent a long letter filled with info. One of the reported items was about the soap, **Another World**. It seems the character Cass will don drag to go undercover and search for the abducted Felicia. His alter ego is **Miss Krystal Lake** and "she" was first introduced on the show ten years ago. It seems the fans loved him as a woman and that's why Krystal is coming back. If she has to do a lot of searching for Felicia then the story could drag (oops) on for weeks. I always find it interesting when the writers use an excuse like a male character going undercover to put a guy in a dress. Like that makes him more inconspicuous.

Stephen Schnetzer, the actor who portrays Cass and Krystal, has some tips for walking like a woman. "If you caress the inside of your thighs together, you'll get a sway and it works. (If you haven't shaved well you'll get a

rash-Ed.) All you have to do is throw the shoulders and you're home free." Personally, I've always felt that in order to walk like a woman you have to think concave instead of convex. Ruminant on that for a minute.

MORE SHOWBIZ DRAG

Back on November 25th, I happened to catch the band called **The Cramps** on the **Conan O'Brian Show**. I've heard of them for years and may have seen them before but they have always stood out in **my** mind as being the band my friend Jane Peabody had on her T shirt when she decided to dress like a punk. She did look great with spiked hair and a leather mini. She tied it all together with spike heels to match the spiked hair and that's what really got my attention as I watched The Cramps' performance on Late Night; they were all wearing spike heels. Even the woman in the band. I can't really say if the drummer was, since he was behind his kit, but the singer and bass player, both male, were wearing spikes. They were also attired in tight PVC suits, kind of **Emma Peelesque**. The female guitarist wore a PVC bottom with a velvet top.

All I can say is, if more bands would take the time to learn how to walk in heels then maybe more young men would give pumps a try and stop wearing those big, ugly sneakers.

Speaking of big and ugly, did you catch **The Nanny** on December 12 where **Cher** (played by a female Cher impersonator) came to the Sheffield house to recover from plastic surgery.

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One wacky plot device leads to another and word leaks to the press that Cher is in the house. In an attempt to fool the media, Fran's cousin Ira was called upon to do his Cher impersonation. Fran said, "He's the best female impersonator to come out of Queens." I don't know about that Franny. Ira was about two hundred pounds heavier than Cher and nowhere near as good looking. (He was wearing spikes, too.) Mr. Sheffield said to Fran, "Before you came into my life, I never had the need for an emergency transvestite." What if Ira is just a crossdresser, Mr. Sheffield? Hey, what if Fran's actually a crossdresser? That might explain that nasal voice. It could be an attempt to talk like a girl.

RuPaul is back in pumps again. We reported a while back that she was going to try and get some recognition as her male-self. Didn't work. Amanda Grae has sent along a tabulation of Ru sightings which include promos for **Comedy Central**, in a Southern Belle outfit to promote their *No Scarlet Station*, and a part in a movie with **Madonna**. It seems **Wayne Wang** has directed a film called *Smoke*, a pic about the goings-on in a smoke shop. Wayne had the kooky idea of doing a second picture based on the characters from *Smoke* and having them totally ad-lib their dialog. The result is called *Blue In The Face* and it features Madonna as a singing telegram girl. Miss RuPaul Charles sings her song *Stinky Dinky* along with a cast of hundreds. The whole film was shot in six days and it will be released this year

along with the scripted film that spawned it.

RuPaul is also slated to appear in a motion picture version of the **Brady Bunch** as Jan's high school guidance counselor. I guess he'll be dressing like a boy for that one. If not, as Amanda said, "If I had a counselor like that in high school, I would have dressed very differently at my senior prom."

A movie version of *The Brady Bunch*? What's next... **The Flintstones**? Wilma!!!

YOU SHOULD BE UP IN PUMPS

We've been talking a lot about pumps this month, haven't we? Yes, it's all part of a plot to get you to notice our new advertisers' full page ad on page 11. We'd like to welcome **Queen Cushion Shoes** to *News & Views*. I've spoken to their Marketing Director, Athena Rose, a couple of times over the past month and she explained their exciting new concept in feminine footwear for fellas. Their shoes are made in France and are about the finest quality leather pumps you can get. What makes them different is the way they are sized. They make the female style shoe using the male shoe form. That means anyone who wears a size 12 men's shoe would wear a size 12 in one of their female style shoes. It also means a more comfortable fit since most men have feet that are wider than the average woman's. Look over the ad and if you'd like to try them on for size give them a call at 800-42COMFY. Tell Athena that

Angela says hello.

JAPAN'S FEM BOYS

If you think a strict, work oriented society that has kept women in subservient roles is ripe for an outburst of transgender activity, you're right. Of course, we've all heard about the **Elizabeth Club** in Tokyo, where the standard issue Japanese crossdresser goes to unwind after working his usual 14 to 18 hour day. Now a new phenomenon has reared its head, like **Godzilla** on the skyline and our faithful clipper Billie Jaye West has sent it to us direct from the *Arab Times*. (How come the *Arab Times* has all this stuff about guys in skirts?)

It seems that some Japanese boys, between 14 and 20 years of age, have adopted a new style of dress. Literally, a dress. They call themselves fem boys and shop for their girl clothes in special boutiques with names like Milk Boys and Super Lovers. Most of the boys lean more toward skin-tight pants and tight animal print tops, with skirts and dresses only being worn occasionally. They do wear their hair long and use makeup and jewelry. Kotaro Inaba, a 19 year old fem boy, said, "I don't care if people say that I look like a girl. I love it, and I'm expressing myself that way. Those who understand, understand."

Japan still is prejudiced against homosexuals and the older generation thinks of the fem boys as gay, but they can be seen walking hand-in-hand with their girlfriends in Tokyo's fashionable

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DONNA'S HAIR STUDIO 1 AND BOUTIQUE



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by Phyllis Randolph Frye, Attorney and Executive Director
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What began as my idea in June 1991, then was given some valuable input by Merissa Sherrill Lynn [IFGE] in August of that year, was embraced and promoted by Cynthia and Linda Phillips at the Texas T-Party of February 1992 (and 1993 and 1994), was sponsored for its first conference by Jackie Thorne and her Directors of the Gulf Coast Transgender Community (GCTC) in August 1992, and was awarded three annual grants from the Winslow Street Foundation, is now into its fourth year. It is I.C.T.L.E.P., the International Conference on Employment Law and Policy, Inc., also known as the Transgender Law Conference and as TRANSGEN: YOUR JOBS, YOUR HEALTH, YOUR RIGHTS AND YOUR DOCUMENTS.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the three attorneys who joined with me in those very early months. These were, in the order that they came in, Sharon Ann Stuart of New York, Martine Aliana Rothblatt of Maryland, and Laura Elizabeth Skaer of Colorado. I owe them a great deal of gratitude, and so do you.

A review of our accomplishments, a scorecard if you will, is presented herein for your consideration. This card will score I.C.T.L.E.P. in the following areas: education in law through the Proceedings, education about law to transgendered non-attorneys, and developing progressive strategies for change. The major progressive strategy for change is to make you into a better consumer of legal services.

I. EDUCATION IN LAW THROUGH THE PROCEEDINGS:

Each conference has a paid court reporter and audio and video technicians to faithfully preserve our work.

These are compiled, edited and published in what we call Proceedings. The advantage of the written format is that it is easily recognized as a transcript, it is readily studied and reviewed, it is in a format usable in deposition or trial, and it contains an addendum of written items that were referenced at the conference. The advantage of the audio format (without the addendum) is that it is usable during commutes. The advantage of the video format (edited and without the addendum) is that it provides visual impact for local TG groups as a monthly program supplement.

During the three conferences, we have discussed how the law relates to transgendered individuals in the following areas:

employment	military	family
housing	probate	discrimination
health	civil	commitment
imprisonment	insurance	criminal
education	intervention	
standards of care	medical policy	
bill of rights	civil rights	divorce
adoption	child custody	
child visitation	identification	
name change	gender change	
birth certificate	passports	drafting

In addition there are discussions and debates about getting the transgendered out of the Diagnostics and Statistics Manual (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) just as the lesbian/gay community did back in the early 1970's (also, Jo Ann Roberts has written a very insightful review of the new DSM appearing in the *Cross-Talk*, Oct 94) about recognizing the fully hormonal non-surgical transsexual option, about promoting transition without divorce, and about counting the transgender census. Whatever has been presented at each conference in the above areas is in the respective Proceedings.

Speakers thus far have included the following: women business leaders, law school professors and an associate dean, authors and TG historians Leslie

Feinberg and Gordene MacKenzie, an EEOC prosecutor, two legislators, three trial and three appellate judges, and numerous lesbian, gay, bisexual AND transgender (both our transgendered men and our transgendered women) activists.

We have placed a few and are constantly encouraging the purchase and donated placement of our Proceedings in county, parish and law school libraries. We hope to be "the" resource for legal knowledge and strategy in transgender issues.

If you are paying a lawyer with your green dollars, and she or he does not utilize our Proceedings in the matter of your legal interest, then she or he is not fully aware of the law and the strategies that are applicable to you, their transgendered client.

And, if you don't tell that same lawyer—to whom you are paying your green dollar—that you are transgendered, then you are simply not serious enough about who you are and should stop reading this article and go read other TG literature about such pressing matters as wigs, nail polish or foam rubber allergies.

II. EDUCATION ABOUT LAW TO TRANSGENDERED NON-ATTORNEYS:

During our three transgender law conferences, well over 70% of those in attendance have been non-attorney, transgendered.

Reread the above sentence.

Reread it one more time. Did you notice the "non" part of non-attorney was underlined?

I.C.T.L.E.P. has empowered the transgendered non-attorney with legal knowledge. Anyone who attends the TRANSGEN conferences or who studies (studies, not merely reads) the Proceedings becomes empowered with knowledge of what her or his rights are (usually it is what her or his rights are NOT) and consequently becomes a

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The American Educational Gender Information Service **AEGIS**

ANNOUNCES A NEW MEMBERSHIP POLICY

AEGIS is now a membership organization. Membership at \$36/year includes: 2 issues of *Chrysalis*, a theme-oriented magazine focusing on serious transgender issues; 4 issues of *AEGIS News* our quarterly newsletter; a 10% discount on all publications sold by AEGIS; a membership/I.D. card; and the right to vote for AEGIS board members. Membership is open to anyone.

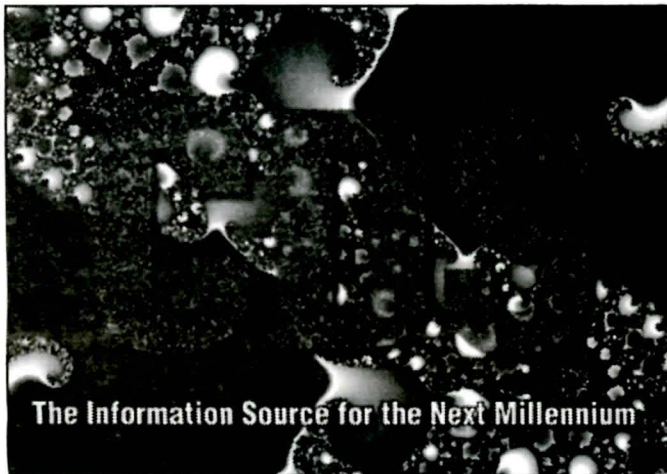
AEGIS is a 100% volunteer, non-profit information and education resource for all people and does not discriminate on any basis. AEGIS supports SSSS, HBGDA, SIECUS and other professional organizations. AEGIS is a founding partner of the Transgender Alliance for Community and an affiliate of the Renaissance Education Assoc., Inc. Write or call today.

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Dallas Denny, M.A., Executive Director

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Hypocrisy, prejudice, teenage boys in drag, social stratification... it's all in a day's work on the *Vis-a-Vis* beat. If there are seven million stories in the naked city, then there are at least six stories in the transgendered community. And fortunately, I'm able to find just about that many each month to fulfill my quota here.

HANGING OUT THE "NOT WELCOME" SIGN

The Paradise Club in Parma, Ohio, puts out a newsletter they call *Paradise Tales* and the November issue contained a very interesting—and hypocritical—juxtaposition of articles.

The newsletter carried a piece about their September meeting when the guest speaker was a spokesperson for the local gay community. According to the club's reporter, the guest speaker issued "a challenge" that made "us feel like we belonged in his fight against bigotry and civil rights abuse." This is a nice thing to hear because there is a certain gulf between the gay community and the heterosexual crossdressing community.

The newsletter also carried a reprint of the Transgendered Bill of Rights. This manifesto includes such topics as: the right to free expression of gender identity, and the right to define one's own gender identity. Not many of us could find anything objectionable about any of the rights defined.

And now we come to the hypocritical juxtaposition I alluded to earlier. Buried in the President's Letter was discussion of a new bylaw that had passed at a prior board meeting: "Members are expected to attend meetings as either a male or a female,

appropriately attired. To these ends, no outlandish, bizarre, half and half, or unusual costumes are allowed." By some circuitous reasoning that eludes me, the board feels by restricting the mode of dress in this way that *more* members will be able to attend meetings. It would seem just the opposite would be true and the President herself sees it this way, but was out-voted by the rest of the board.

The hypocrisy is apparent: two articles talking about how great it is to fight the good fight against repression and trumpeting our transgendered rights, undercut by a paranoid sanction against anyone who wishes to express themselves in an "outlandish, bizarre or unusual costume." So much for the right to define one's own gender identity, huh?

The sad part of the whole thing is club members who can only dress partially (the 'half and half' reference), or who haven't progressed beyond a fright wig and fishnet stockings are the very people a support group should be trying to help.

Every group wants the membership to be appropriately attired, especially if the club's function is in a public venue, but writing a restrictive bylaw isn't the way to encourage newcomers or even enforce a dress code for current members. If a new crossdresser wished to attend the meeting, how would she know if she was "appropriately attired?" The whole prospect of crossdressing in public is daunting enough without trying to determine if you'll run afoul of some dress code. Besides, dress codes are more effective through example and socialization—not by legislation.

The Paradise Club should remember there was no dress code in the original paradise. And their own Board has legislated against a couple of the freedoms for which they are supposedly fighting.

THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

One of the great challenges we face as crossdressers is dealing with the non-crossdressing public. And the reason dealing with the general population is so difficult is because of the misperceptions others have about us. But misperceptions are not a complaint exclusive to crossdressers.

Recently I was in a restaurant (not crossdressed) when a half dozen men and women bikers came in and sat at a nearby table. They stood out from the ordinary crowd and I caught myself wondering why anyone would want to adopt an appearance that so many people find threatening. I had to laugh at my own prejudice. A crossdresser should be the last person to judge someone based on external appearances. The bikers were there for hamburgers and beer just like everyone else; their behavior, if not their dress, was no different than any 'normal' customers'.

A recent job development has allowed me to see a co-worker's Masonic Fraternal group's newsletter. Perusing the photos of the grand potentates and candid photos of the lodge activities also made me wonder what prompts men to engage in such a ritualistic and regimented form of socialization. Again, I had to remind myself to imagine what the brotherhood might have to say about a roomful of male crossdressers.

And, in another recent instance, outside a fetish fashion convention one member of the general population was overheard to declare about the outlandishly dressed convention-goers, "these people are weird." Weirdness, however, did not keep her and her friends from staring for a good long while. Like many misunderstood groups, the fetish fashion lovers are intelligent and interesting people who incidentally enjoy bizarre clothing.

We all have some prejudices that flare up from first impressions. Those prejudices can be overcome by maintaining an open mind about others despite stereotypes. To a crossdresser, a villainous-looking biker may seem weird; the biker may think a group of middle-aged men wearing fezzes looks very weird; and almost anyone might think a man in a rubber bodysuit and gas mask is a weird-looking thing indeed.

One definition of *weird* is: "of strange or extraordinary character." So maybe people who enjoy different forms of expression are weird in the literal sense of the word. Maybe crossdressers are weird, too... not that there's anything wrong with that.

THE NEW PROM QUEENS

Over the past year there have been a handful of stories from different parts of the country about teenage boys crossdressing in their high schools. In some instances, it has been a prank, in others a statement of protest, in yet others an imitation of punk rock fashion, and in several cases there have been sincere expressions of transgenderism by male students. While not quite a fad, the number of boys choosing female clothing to make some form of personal statement has been remarkable.

The high school years are when we start to move into our adult personalities and that process of discovering our true selves can lead us on many twists and turns as we develop into adults. We get our first taste of freedom and as individuals we try to stake out our

own space, perhaps trying out different personas as we go along.

But those high school years are also the times when herd instinct and peer pressures are at their strongest. As much as we may want to express our own unique personalities, the thing most teenagers want is to be part of the group. Instinctively, we learn how far we can go before we are ostracized for being too different. We can all remember individuals who were either so far out on their own trip, or, conversely, so buttoned down and inhibited they were excluded from the great mass.

The fact that these cases of cross-dressed high school boys attracts media attention proves how 'shocking' it is. It also proves the steady trickle of transgenderism doled out through our community's PR mechanisms, the ubiquitous talk show appearances, and crossdressing themes in the film and fashion industries has moved the concept into the public consciousness. For the pranksters and protesters, they know that 'boys in drag' has a certain shock value; for the truly transgendered teens, they know they aren't the only ones who feel 'different.'

When these cases stop being covered by the media, we will know we have reached either acceptance—or market saturation.

I ONLY DO IT ON HALLOWEEN

The newsletter of the Virginia's Secret group down in Richmond carried a first-person article by a member named Cindy. Cindy took the

opportunity of the Halloween season to go to work crossdressed. According to the article, she has done this in two of the last three years.

Cindy's account of her day focused on how much at ease she felt being dressed as a woman in her workplace. Her co-workers were curious but apparently not shocked since she had done this in the past. Besides working at her own desk, she took lunch in the company cafeteria and took the usual afternoon walk to the 7-11 for breaktime. All without incident, feeling pretty good about herself and her acceptance by others.

There was no great lesson to be learned through Cindy's experience. But I think many crossdressers have imagined what it might be like to crossdress at work. Aren't you curious to know what your co-workers would think if they knew that you were a part-time lady? Would it be all snickers? Or some grudging respect for your ability to transform yourself? Maybe outright fascination about that whole facet of your life which you've kept hidden from everyone?

We would all like to feel that our friends—our true friends—would accept our crossdressing if they knew about it. After all, the revelation of it doesn't change the nature of the person they've known all along. And if it does change their feeling towards you, it must be a result of some hang-up of their own.

Wouldn't the excitement of having your crossdressing appreciated by a

continued on page 14

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TG Characters In Chaykin's Comics



by Robyn Dormer

Comics veteran Howard Chaykin has been writing and drawing in his own inimitable style since the early '80's. His first big project was for Marvel, drawing the first *Star Wars* adaptation, recently reprinted by Dark Horse as *Classic Star Wars, a New Hope*. He took a 2 year leave of absence and returned with a vengeance.

An outspoken critic of the comic's work-for-hire system, Chaykin took his newest creation, *American Flagg!* to First Comics, retaining all rights to publishing, merchandising, etc. (Work-for-hire essentially said that a creator working for a company under contract, gives up any rights to characters created while working for that company.)

American Flagg! told the story of Reuben Flagg, "a fearless vice-cop walking the mean streets of an unnamed, untamed and STD-riddled sector of a great urban metropolis." In his first adventure, he encounters "drag hustlers" who attempt to keep him from pursuing a suspect. He kicks one in the, uh, groin, and mutters, "Thank God, a pre-op." He finally captures his quarry, killing 'her' in the process, and the mystery is solved. I don't want to give away too much, in case you want to actually read it. The 'secret' will be no secret to you anyway, and the shots of the crossdresser in stockings, garters and heels are priceless. Look for issues 1-6 of First Comics' *American Flagg!* or the trade-paperback *American Flagg! Southern Comfort* which reprints those first six issues. A great read.


In 1988, Chaykin unleashed "*Black Kiss*," a black and white, *film noir* limited series so intense it was shipped in a polybag, the first regular series to be so published, now a common practice. It was pub-

lished by Vortex, best known for their NASCAR driver biographical comics. If you picked up the first issue when it hit the stands, the opening sequence set the tone. There's music playing, and a phone ringing. There is a photograph of a beautiful woman and a man, and a movie poster of "High School Venus" on the wall. The answering machine picks up, "Hello, lover, this is Dagmar, and I'd love to suck your d—k. I'd love to talk to you, but I can't come to the phone right now, because I'm showing some lucky guy just what five-feet seven-inches of natural blonde heat can do to a man. And I do mean seven inches..."

It is a complicated, convoluted, highly erotic tale of transsexuality, obsession, crime and the film business. It was published originally as a 12 issue limited series, each issue in a polybag to protect minors, one presumes. That was followed by a three issue reprint series called "*Big Black Kiss*" and that was followed by a hardcover called "*Stiff Black Kiss*." The reprint volumes should still be available, and the single issues were made available again by Vortex this past summer.








"*Howard Chaykin's Power and Glory*" was released this summer under Malibu Comics' Bravura imprint, concerning an attempt by the American government in the near future to create a super-hero named Apex. Unfortunately the man they've chosen to be Apex is a dolt. The four issue miniseries follows the misadventures of Allan Powell, who looks like a hero, but isn't and Michael Gorski, who actually performs the heroic deeds but isn't built in the image of a superhero. There is a tran-character in stockings, garters and high heels who appears briefly, I believe in issue #3. There is a mention that these 'transies' are not uncommon in this future world. There is a second "*Power & Glory*" miniseries scheduled for 1995. You can count on Howard Chaykin's further exploration of transgenderism in this and projects to come.





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"I wish people who have trouble communicating would just shut up."

—Tom Lehrer

Let us hope that communication is the rule and not the exception at what seems to be a gathering of eagles on the West Coast. The first *International Congress on Gender, Cross Dressing and Sex* will convene Friday, February 24, in Northridge, Calif. The partial list of participants received in early December reads like a *Who's Who* of both the transgender community and professional care-givers. Presenters are coming from as far away as China and as close as the next valley. The congress will mix and match the likes of Merissa Sherrill Lynn (IFGE), Stanley Biber, Anne Bolin, Dallas Denny (AEGIS), Ari Kane (Outreach Inst.), Veronica Vera, Bill Henkin, and many more. Yours truly will be doing a workshop with professionals exploring their stereotypes of transgender folk. The conference will be preceded by a Welcoming Reception on Thursday evening where all the participants can mix. The conference, to be an annual event, is presented by The Center for Sex Research at Cal State Northridge, and is co-sponsored by AEGIS, FTM of Northern California, Outreach Institute, Quad-S, Renaissance, Tri-Ess, and IFGE. A more impressive array of useful information and content will not be found anywhere.

Since I am sometimes referred to as "that bitch from Philadelphia," you can imagine my pleasure at finding the following t-shirt:

I am not **a** bitch.
I am **THE** bitch.
And to you...
I'm **Ms. Bitch!**

I've been roaming the Internet quite a bit lately and it seems that TG resources are increasing rapidly. I am partial to the World Wide Web because it is graphically oriented and at least we now agree that a graphical interface is the way to go. Anyway, there are several TG sites on the Web, so if you can access the Web, try these URLs. The Transgender Page — <http://rniles.pnw.net/transgen.html>; TStar — <http://travesti.geophys.mcgill.ca/tstar.html>; Tina's Page — <http://www.ifi.uio.no/~tina/> (where you'll find a complete list of CDS pubs with graphics). Other resources include: Julie's Page — <http://www.betaxs.com:8080/~julie/>; and the Queer Resources Directory — <http://vector.casti.com/QRD/html/QRD-home-page.html>. The QRD is interesting because it has a lot of political action information, as well as many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender organizations. More GLB groups are adding transgender to their names.

Since this is the season for giving, I'll mention a few of my personal favorites for charitable giving. Top o' the list is **Renaissance**. I can't think of an organization more deserving and more dedicated to Community than our own. Charity begins at home, so give to Renaissance first. My second choice for donations is **AEGIS**. Dallas Denny deserves a medal for all the work she does for absolutely no compensation. AEGIS is in need of a new computer to compose *Chrysalis* and its newsletter *AEGIS News*. If you can spare a few dollars, send it to AEGIS, PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033. Remember, AEGIS is

a Renaissance affiliate. My third choice is **ICTLEP**, otherwise known as TRANSGEN, the law conference. Phyllis Frye is another person who is laboring for no compensation. Send your donations to ICTLEP, 5707 Firenza St., Houston, TX 77035. All donations to Renaissance, AEGIS, and ICTLEP are tax deductible to the extent allowed by IRS regulations. These three organizations are 100 percent volunteer, so every dollar you send end up in a project or program, not in someone's purse.

Now for a little politics. There is no better revenge than to use an enemy's own weapon against him. That's what was suggested in the December issue of *WIRED*. Seems the Rev. Lou Sheldon, leader of the Traditional Values Coalition, an anti-gay rights group, set up an 800 number so his followers could call their reps in Washington to voice their concerns over gay rights amendments. But, since it is an 800 number, anyone can use it to call their rep. So, call 1-800-768-2221 and let your voice be heard for gay and transgender rights. TVC will have to pay the bill.

Let's get serious. The HOT BUZZ for the season is **corsets**. Ah yes, I can see you drooling now. Believe it or not, corsets are the hottest fashion accessory. Just about every lingerie manufacturer has hauled out their 1950's corset and corsolette designs and updated them for the 90's. The bod is back. Macy's in New York opened a corset boutique and sold half their inventory the first day. The best seller was a short seamless bustier with padded, push-up underwired bra by Natori, for \$48.

I have to relate this story because it's just too precious. In *LadyLike* #21, I ran a reprint of an article by Virginia Prince called *The Death Of Gender*. In it, Prince laments the loss of femininity by genetic females. One correspondent took exception to Prince's view and

HOT•BUZZ

wrote that she could refute Prince's assertion with one word: WonderBra. Who says femininity is dead?



The next actor to appear in a dress on the silver screen will be Danny Aiello. Aiello plays a crossdressing fashion buyer in Robert Altman's upcoming *Ready To Wear*, a send-up of the fashion industry.



The latest lip rage is custom color, but you don't have to go to a salon or a professional artist. Try blending colors you already have in your makeup kit. By blending colors you extend the palette of colors available to you. Use a lip brush and work directly on your lips. Start with a lighter color first and layer darker colors on top. To tone down a too-bright color, apply a brown-based shade. To intensify a light shade, layer fuschia or coral over it. Always line lips first.



Some fashion mavens predict that the current flirting with stiletto heels will give way to a more refined, and thicker, heel with just a bit of platform. Oh good! My late 80's shoes from Wild Pair will be back in style.



I caught *Inside Victoria's Secret* on Showtime last month. It was very interesting to see some of the inner-workings of fashion photography. For example, in almost every instance shown, the clothes were pinned, tucked, tightened, shortened and otherwise made to mold to the model's body in a way that the clothes alone would not do. In one shot, a model was wearing a sweater that had been cut up the back to make it fall better from the front. Ah, sweet illusion. What you see is not what you *actually* get.



A few people told us here at the editorial offices that they didn't take the article about Premarin seriously (RN&V, Oct. 94). Well, don't say we didn't tell you first. The November issue of *Vogue* carried an article on Premarin that verified much of what we printed.



From *Allure* magazine, a few tricks of

the trade, stand ins when you don't have the right stuff... Lipstick-mix eyeshadow with Vaseline... Nail file-use the abrasive strip on a matchbook... Blush-lipstick blended very well to avoid looking like Norma Desmond.



BUZZWORDS: I remember when the Macintosh computer first came out. People talked about "mouseterbating." Now almost every computer has a mouse. But the coolest new word has to do with the computerized touch-ups that happen to almost every photo that now appears in print—these pix are said to be "rasterbated." You can no longer believe everything you see, but I said that in this column already. Viewer Beware!



A lot of attention has been given to breast implants of late. However, as many as 40,000 women had breast *reductions* last year and men too. Up to 40% of males have a condition called gynecomastia or enlargement of the breast tissue. Something like 5,000 men had breast reductions in 1992 due to this condition. Anything that disrupts liver function can cause gynecomastia in males because estrogen is metabolized in the liver and estrogen is present in all males in small quantities. If the estrogen is not metabolized, it can affect breast tissue. Alcohol, marijuana, anabolic steroids, and some prescription drugs can cause the problem. So, if you're trying to figure a way to explain those breasts your growing by taking hormones on purpose, there's your excuse.



It's official: the just-at-the-knee length for skirts and dresses is a total flop at the cash registers. Women are just not buying this length. The most often cited reason: too dowdy. Way to go girls. We know what we like and it ain't dowdy.



When you're "out" you might as well make yourself useful, like Jessica Stearns, First Officer for Continental Airlines and a post-op M-t-F transsexual. (You read about Stearn's legal battle to be reinstated in her job in these pages.) Stearns sent a letter to the editor of *Bazaar* praising the article the magazine did last September on a F-t-M transsexual in the San Francisco police de-

partment. Stearns wrote: "The manner in which police sergeant Stephan Thorne was treated should be the norm for transsexuals throughout our society. I think that your article has helped." If only more of us had the courage to be "out" and speak up for our brothers and sisters, we might accomplish more.



The word on belts is **SKINNY**. Yes, teeny, tiny, leetle belts not more than an inch wide. The big problem for us big girls is that we can end up looking like sausage casing if we're not careful.



Back to the bust. One of the nicest and sexiest bras I've seen in a long time comes from Lilyette. It's a convertible, strapless, padded push-up underwire, style 0853. For a free Lilyette catalog call 1-800-4-YOUR-BRA (800-496-8727).



Chanel wants to take you back to the future. They've introduced Le Regard, a line of single shade smoldering colors to create the HOT eye looks of the season. The little compact combines liner, shadow and cake mascara. *Cake mascara?* I haven't seen that since I played with my mother's cosmetics as a kid.



I've had a lot of fun on the Internet and I've found a lot of useful information as well. I've also made connection with some really nice folks. One of those people is Kalina Isato, the Sexy Vampire. I saw Kalina's e-mail posts in the newsgroup *soc.support.transgender* and I noticed they were coming from Philadelphia. So, I sent her e-mail and we finally made a face-to-face connection at Henri David's Hallowe'en party. Kalina has written a book called *Tales of a Sexy Vampire* and it is just chock full of tidbits of useful information, like she plugs my books, and how to be a "guidette" (that's the feminine form of "guido"). If you're interested in *Tales*, drop Kalina a line at TransVamp Publications, c/o Mary Lerario, 2300 Walnut St. #405, Phila., PA 19103. You too can be a Sexy Vampire in no time.



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Vis A Vis

few people cancel out the less complimentary comments of the rest of them? Probably so. But the fear of the unknown reaction and the stigma attached to what we do will probably keep all but the bravest souls from giving it a go. Even on Halloween.

A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

The NWGA Newsletter out of Portland, Oregon, carried an item by a member named Carolyn in which she classified various social activities. For example, a Level One event would be one in which only crossdressers are in attendance. A Level Three event would require crossdressers to venture into public but the destination would be a crossdressers-only affair. A Level Five event would mix crossdressers with other members of the public.

It isn't quite clear why this classification system was devised but it could actually come in handy for group

leaders planning social events. It's akin to the system used to classify white water rapids so river-runners know what they're up against when the rough water starts. If everyone knew the classification system, then we could refer to our events as Level Two's or Level Four's, or what have you, so all attendees knew what sort of environment they'd be venturing into before they left the house

But like all classification systems, this one needs some refinements. We need to be a little more particular in our measurements and perhaps expand the number of Levels to make the system more workable.

For example, a Level Zero event is when the crossdresser doesn't even leave the house, thereby not interacting with other human beings at all.

A Level Minus Two is when a crossdresser stays home wearing only panties, stockings, and high heels and looks at herself in the mirror.

Much more serious is a Level Eight which refers to a situation

where a crossdresser must change a flat tire in front of an all-night convenience store.

And Level Ten is that singularly disastrous occurrence when the crossdresser must phone his wife to make bail after being caught in a streetwalking dragnet.

You think I'm kidding about all this? Well, some community bigwigs, the movers and shakers, are working on an elaborate system such as I've spelled out but I can't tell you about it. It's classified.



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News Beat...

districts. Of course, it's considered scandalous for couples to kiss in public in Japan so imagine what a fuss could be caused by a fem boy kissing his girlfriend whilst strolling the avenue.

The article lays the blame for the fem boys' behavior on the lack of male influence in the home. The men in Japan really do work all hours and the women are left to raise the children. It doesn't seem as if the fem boys are transvestites. I doubt if they get erotically attached to their crossdressing. It's more likely they get emotional satisfaction from exploring their femininity as a form of rebellion. The fem boys could well be the beatniks and hippies of their time. Like those fads of yesteryear, some of the fem boys will probably keep dressing up, but the majority will probably be running around in business suits giving themselves heart attacks in a few more years. As crossdressers we can only hope they'll keep a couple of animal print outfits for weekend wear.

I DREAMED I WAS DANCING IN MY MAIDENFORM BRA

Actually, I'm partial to Vanity Fair, but this item is about dreaming, not dancing, or what kind of bra you wear while doing it. Suzanne T. tells us that Dr. Elke U. O'Donnell from Cambridge, Massachusetts is undertaking a study of the dreams of transgendered individuals. If you're one of those people who has vivid dreams in which you transform into a beautiful woman and have exotic and amorous adventures, send them to me—I need the stimulation. But seriously, Dr. O'Donnell would like to hear from you. Write them down and send them to her at 43 Roberts Rd., Cambridge,

MA 02138. She is breaking new ground with this study and who knows what science will reveal about transgender dreamland.

MEANWHILE BACK IN VIRTUAL REALITY

From dreamland to cyberspace in one stroke of the word processor. What power. What a way to live.

Anyway, Stella Bamvil, that prowler of the Internet, that Commando of Cyberspace, sent me a note about a conversation she read while logged into a local BBS. I reprint it here.

"I'd say that (name of BBS here) does indeed have a slightly more seasoned crowd than most. Without encouraging people to freely create their own sign-ons and identities we end up with **fewer snooping transvestites** than other privately run BBS's tended to have..."

Them's fightin' words! Give me that BBS's phone number. I'm logging on for a little snooping. Come on folks, what is this, more virtual prejudice, or do we really snoop?

Stella left out the name of the BBS involved, but she is located in the Silver Springs, Md., area and she said it's a local board. If we notice prejudiced statements like this while we're logged on, wouldn't it be a good idea to say something to the bigot? The net is the perfect place since the offending individual can't punch you in the nose and maybe you can educate the jerk.

NOW, THE TWILIGHT ZONE

Here's a strange story sent in by Vera Rae House. She found it in the *Baltimore Morning Sun*. It seems that Mary Bernhardt took her 40 year old, mentally disabled son on a cruise as a birthday present. They boarded the luxury liner Queen Elizabeth 2 (note the word queen), and sailed off into The Twilight Zone. On a Saturday

afternoon near the end of the cruise crew members staged an impromptu female impersonation show with members of the audience, including Mrs. Bernhardt's son, William Mark, doing the impersonating. His mother said, "He seemed to be having fun." William won the first prize for his theatrics and then had lunch with his mom while still in his comedy cross-dressed attire. Then the two parted company with the understanding that they would meet at the 5:00 PM Mass. Mrs. Bernhardt never saw him again.

The crew searched the ship and the Coast Guard searched a 206 mile long portion of the coast with no sign of crossdressed Bill. Foul play has not been suspected but there has been no explanation of the disappearance. They weren't even cruising near the Bermuda Triangle. Mrs. Bernhardt was left with the memory of her son dressed in his comic drag. She said of the show's competitors, "They all looked terrible. He (William) didn't do much imitating, but he did better than the other men."

We've heard of the mystery of The Flying Dutchman, now we also have the mystery of the Vanishing Queen.

RAP UP

Happy New Year again folks and remember to keep those cards and letters coming. Let us know what you think and we'll share it with the rest of the world in our Letters to the Editor space. Agree or disagree, as long as you have some kind of opinion, but try not to be judgmental.

And now a closing quote. This one was reported to *News & Views* by Elizabeth Jarrell and was told to her by a homeless man who was hustling her for spare change. He said, "Those who judge don't count. Those who count don't judge."

See you next month kittens!



Unemployed? Underemployed?

Ben Franklin said, "The Lord helps those that help themselves." Renaissance is going to try and help the transgendered who are unemployed or under-employed. **Announcing: Renaissance Job Match**, a national employment resource center. If you are looking for work send a resume or brief description of what type of employment you want. Make sure you include a way for us to contact you. If you are in a position to offer employment or let someone know of a job opening send a description of the position. Maybe we can make a match. To be included in the Job Match files send your information to: **Renaissance Job Match, c/o Renaissance, 987 Old Eagle School Rd, Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087**

ICTLEP

good consumer of legal services. I'll come back to legal consumerism.

The TRANSGEN Wednesday, Thursday and Friday workshop formats are just that — workshops in the areas of jobs, rights, health and documents. They are moderated by attorneys or professionals in their fields and attended by both attorneys and non-attorneys in a usual mix of -30% to 70+%, respectively. The transgendered non-attorneys (like you reading this article now) are the folks that are in the real world facing real life problems and carrying real life concerns. The level of discussion is very high and the knowledge and strategies that emerge are often profound and sometimes surprising.

As an example, the International Bill of Gender Rights began as a third tier workshop at TRANSGEN'93, but it emerged as the most significant

workshop of that conference. Further, consider the "Policy for the Imprisoned, Transgendered." That workshop was moderated by an ex-con, prison rights activist. The comprehensive policy considerations were distilled into merely six statements and the sixth called for grievance hearings if the first five were not adhered to. Truly profound stuff.

The TRANSGEN Saturday Reports Day is with the moderators presenting the results of their workshops. This is mostly lecture and is designed for those who can only make the weekend. We have had a few problems, actually only one, with a non-transgender professional who chose to miss the entire workshop format and then complained about the Saturday report and demanded input.

As an example, our "Health Law Standards of Care for Transsexualism" are attacked by those non-transgendered professionals who have thus far chosen to miss each annual conference and who could, as they have been

invited, certainly provide input during the workshop days. Those non-transgendered professionals who have, in fact, attended an entire conference have no problem with our "Health Law Standards of Care for Transsexualism." Indeed, those same non-transgendered professionals understand that our Standards of Care do not advocate surgery on demand, but that our Standards of Care instead elevate the position of the pre-surgical transsexual in the decision making process. We are no longer experimental subjects to be used as data for published reports in professional journals: we are instead full partners in our treatment and management.

We have also had a few, actually only two thus far, of the transgendered "self-appointed beautiful people" who have written detracting articles about our published conference work. None of these people have attended a conference or ordered a Proceedings to date; therefore, they have no credibility.

continued on page 22

BOOK NOOK

A Commentary by Dallas Denny Mackenzie, Gordene Olga. (1994) Transgender Nation. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.

I've been very encouraged by the increasing realization by many in the transgender community that it is entirely reasonable and appropriate to live full-time as a member of the other sex without having genital sex reassignment surgery. For many years, this was not even considered as a possibility. Those who crosslived full-time without surgery professed to want it, whether they meant it or not, and those who had had it deluded themselves that they had reached the end of a journey that could have but one legitimate outcome, the lancet.

To their everlasting credit, a few

courageous souls, notably Virginia Prince, Linda Phillips, Phyllis Frye, and Holly Boswell, realized the absurdity of this type of thinking, and began asking, quietly at first, and then with increasing force and volume, "Why is it necessary to have a surgery I don't want in order to live the life I desire?" Once posed, this question had but one logical answer, and that was that the rigidly dichotomous gender roles of our society had made us blind to the possibility, and of course, they and other transgendered persons *could* function in society as women without offering their genitals up to the surgeons.

With time, this new view merged with the similarly awakening realization of post-operative transsexual men and women like Jason Cromwell, Denise Norris, Riki Ann Wilchins, and Kate Bornstien, who had independently realized that surgery was not the panacea they had thought it to be, and they were, in fact, still transgendered and would always remain so. This merged philosophy is now making its way into

the world at large through books like Kate Bornstien's *Gender Outlaw* and magazine articles like R.M. Jones' "Crossing the Line", which appeared in *Mother Jones* in June, 1994.

For a time, it seemed as if at long last transgendered persons, rather than being channeled into preprogrammed (hormones, real-life test, SRS, disappear into mainstream society) scripts, would be allowed to be themselves, that at long last we as a community had defied the stereotypes which we, in our ignorance, had subscribed to. We would be able to simply be ourselves. If we desired surgery, we would have it, but if we did not, there would be no need to submit to it.

But clearly, the battle is not over. *Transgender Nation*, a new release from Bowling Green University Press, attacks transsexual people and the men and women who have helped them. It does so by attributing an almost magical importance to surgery.

By idealizing the newly emerged

continued next page

transgender sensibility (which after all, differs from full-fledged transsexualism only by a three hour medical procedure), the author, Gordene Olga Mackenzie, vilifies SRS and by association, transsexual men and women themselves. Somehow, in her mind, this little operation, a relatively minor procedure, really reinforces existing gender roles, whereas living as a member of the other sex without the surgery does not. Transsexual people, by having surgery, perpetuate the tyranny of the existing system, whereas transgenderists, by not having the surgery are enlightened pioneers.

Excuse me. Unless one is an exhibitionist, only a very few people see the surgery site. Genitals, those of transgendered and non transgendered persons alike, are not visible to others in a society in which genitals are almost always clothed.

Susan Kessler and Wendy McKenna, in *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach*, speak of cultural genitals. By that, they mean we assume particular genitals for everyone we

know; we have no personal experience with them. If we see a woman in a supermarket, we assume she has a vagina. This is not always the case, for she may well be Holly Boswell or Phyllis Frye or Linda Phillips, who retain and plan to always retain the original factory equipment. The fact is that transgenderists, like everyone else in our society, no matter how androgynous, are assumed by those who meet them to be either male or female or transgendered, and their genitals are a product of the imagination of the other party as well as what they are concealing beneath their clothes. In this way, transgenderists are exactly the same as post-op transsexuals. If they are assumed to be male or female, their genitals are assumed accordingly. It is when they (transgenderist and transsexual alike) are read, and when they claim their transgender status and are Out, that they transgress dichotomous gender roles. Genitalia have nothing whatsoever to do with it.

This is a realization that Gordene Olga MacKenzie has obviously not made, and it is for that reason that

Transgender Nation is an unfortunate book which will do a great deal of damage to the transgender community and to the understanding of the community by the general public.

John Money once wrote that those who attack transsexual people the most viciously have never to any extent known them. It's clear, from MacKenzies' description that her exposure to the transgender community has been limited and her exposure to transsexual people even more limited— and yet it is an attack on transsexualism, and not the uplifting of transgenderism, that is the real goal of *Transgender Nation*.

MacKenzie seems unaware of Sandy Stone's article, "The Empire Strikes Back: A Post-transsexual manifesto," and other writings of transsexual people. In fact, from her description it seems highly unlikely that MacKenzie met any nonassimilation-minded transsexual people. Her involvement with the community was brief, certainly not extensive enough to justify writing a book like *Transgender Nation*.

continued on back page

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Dear Doctor

Dr. William R. Stayton answers your questions in a monthly column.
Send questions to PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020

Dear Dr. Bill,

I recently had a surgical procedure to repair a left side inguinal hernia. After the operation the surgeon informed me I had 2 tears, both a direct and an indirect inguinal hernia. Both tears have been repaired with nylon mesh patches sewn over them to hold the abdominal wall closed while scar tissue forms to complete the repair.

I have been dressing for four years to date and I have had no problems or discomfort previously when hiding my male genitalia by "tucking" (pushing my testicles up into my lower abdomen and folding my penis back between my legs). I have not tried to do this since the operation because as yet I am still too sore and not fully healed. I hope to be able to do it again when I dress completely in the future.

The surgeon stated that the indirect tear was probably due to a congenital defect and that the direct tear was probably due to lifting or straining in an incorrect and unsafe manner. I was unable to ask him directly with regard to crossdressing.

Will I be able to "tuck" when dressing at some point in the future or should I try to find some other method of hiding my genitalia? How long should I wait before even attempting tucking again (the surgeon stated a healing period of twelve weeks)? Is there anything that I can do specially to encourage and assist the healing process?

Anxious and Uncertain,
Recently Repaired

Dear Recently Repaired,

You have done an excellent job of describing your surgery. I know of no reason why you will not be able to continue the practice of hiding your genitals after the healing process has completed unless the nylon mesh has made the space smaller where you "tuck" your testicles. My guess is that the twelve weeks is a good interval for healing. I would then recommend that you try the "tucking" at home for an hour or so and see how comfortable it is. If the hour is comfortable, then the next time extend the time until you have built up to the period of time needed for your crossdressing.

It is always best to discuss a medical matter, as above, with your physician. If you feel you cannot ask your own physician for some reason, you can call Renaissance or my office for the name of a physician who is understanding of the gender community.

Dear Dr. Bill,

I am a Renaissance member and have been reading the newsletter for about six months. It really sounds like a great organization and even though I am only about a half an hour from the meeting site, I can't get myself to go. I have the map and I have even gotten the nerve up to drive by during

the day but when I think about actually going to a place with other crossdressers I choke. Once I got as far as the parking lot. I saw everyone arriving but it was too much and I drove home.

Is there anything I can do to overcome my extreme nervousness about attending a meeting?

All Shook Up

Dear All Shook Up,

Your anxiety is not unusual for someone going out to a support group for the first time. I believe that growth only takes place in an anxiety producing situation, so it sounds like you are getting ready to grow in your personal life and experience. In fact, you have already started the growth process because you have driven to the meeting place. You need to pat yourself on the back for that accomplishment. There are some who have not even gone that far yet!

There are many wonderful people in Renaissance who will help you to feel comfortable as soon as you arrive for your first meeting. There will be someone near the front door to greet you and introduce you to others. There is a newcomers meeting to introduce you to the many activities and resources of the organization.

One suggestion — if you just cannot make yourself go to that first meeting, call Renaissance and tell them about your anxiety. Ask them if they could recommend a "sister" to you, who can meet you at your convenience and maybe pick you up and bring you to that first meeting. You will then not be alone. You just may find it much easier to attend the meeting. It is obvious from your letter that you want to attend, and there are lots of warm, friendly people waiting to meet you. Good luck.



Letters to the Editor

Dear Ms. Gardner,

In response to your recent article in Renaissance News & Views, I recently saw *Just Like A Woman* and thoroughly enjoyed it. Adrian Pasdar did an admirable job of presenting what it is like to be a secret crossdresser. He experienced the highs of genuinely passing as a female and the lows of public exposure; the thrill of buying and wearing beautiful women's clothing and the agony of throwing away or burning an

entire wardrobe. These are experiences and feelings that are shared by many transvestites, although most of us would die to be able to look as pretty as Adrian when dressed. What made the movie particularly appealing to me was that the hero/heroine was a very successful professional, a fact that I believe is true of many crossdressers.

On another topic, I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you how much I admire girls like you and JoAnn Rob-

erts. You have the courage that makes life bearable for closet dwellers like myself. Your publication, along with others such as *LadyLike*, act as a breath of fresh air, guaranteeing a pleasant day when they arrive in my Post Office. I would like nothing better than to attend your meetings, along with other transgender activities. Unfortunately, my business and home situation make that impossible. I am, however, with you in spirit.

Sincerely,
Melissa Sue

The following letter has been edited for space.

To The Editor;

As a physician and as a transsexual, I would like to comment on JoAnn Robert's article on the DSMIV in the 10/94 issue of *News & Views*. For a lay person (by that I mean anyone who has not undergone the rigors of medical school/biomedical research, conducted a psychiatric intake interview, participated in a psychiatric treatment team, and was in essence evaluated at least once as a psychiatrist in training.) she did a fine job in explaining many difficult concepts to her public. However, Ms. Roberts erred significantly in her explanations of the designations and nomenclature and of their subsequent effect on the transgender

community (both CD & TS) as a result of societal stigmata.

Ms. Roberts is quite right when she states that some TS/TG people have complained in the past because designations and nomenclature both oppressed and fostered discrimination against transgendered people via the inclusion of "transsexualism" and "transvestic fetishism" in both the DSM-III and the DSM-III-R. Although the DSM-IV also addresses these same issues in a different manner, the results to TS/TG peoples, in terms of fostering discrimination and oppression against us, still exists.

For many years transsexuals and crossdressers alike have believed, in error, that by designation as a psychological/psychiatric entity that discrimination and oppression against us by the straight public would cease. because we were designated as mentally ill. Much the same was believed by our gay and lesbian counterparts in the 1940's and 1950's. (At that time) clinicians were unable to acknowledge the existence of a "healthy homosexual" within society. These same clinicians often participated in government "witch hunts" in order to ferret out the homosexuals in various prominent and professional positions. Furthermore, this designation in the DSM allowed for the continued existence of

Reparative therapy in order to convert the healthy, well adjusted homosexual individual to the more socially acceptable and palatable lifestyle of the heterosexual. Reparative therapy methods of behavioral conditioning include, electro-convulsive therapy, and prefrontal lobotomy/leucotomy. This is done to transsexuals and crossdressers, as has been well documented in an article by Dallas Denny M.A. in issue #69 of the *Tapestry Journal*.

While Ms. Roberts is correct in stating that the DSM-IV does not classify people, the mere designation of the term "transvestic fetishism" under the heading of Paraphilias is in itself a negative connotation, and is extremely damaging to the cross-dressed individual. Ms. Roberts is correct in stating the definition of a paraphilia, and she does note that it is distressing to the crossdresser in its implications. What she fails to mention is that paraphilias are things such as necrophilia, coprophilia, pedophilia, oprobophilia, bestiality, sadomasochistic behaviors and other fetishes that are, at least to me, too sickening to mention and too damaging to transgendered individuals as a societal label.

As Ms. Roberts points out, the APA does recognize that some crossdressers are mentally healthy individuals who lead well adjusted lives. What the APA fails to recognize is that the majority of individuals are productive members of society!

It is interesting, as Ms. Roberts duly notes, that homosexual males and all females are excluded from this ("transvestic fetishism") definition. Clearly the APA appears not to acknowledge the existence of "drag" within the gay milieu, nor is it aware of the existence of "drag kings", nor of female crossdressers. This may be due to political and economic changes in the world and in the APA.

Now, I would like to turn to the topic of transsexualism. Ms. Roberts is again correct in stating that all references to transsexualism are deleted in DSMIV. Instead it uses the euphemism of "Gen-

continued on page 20



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Letters

der Identity Disorder in Children, Adolescents, and Adults." As Ms. Roberts states, the criteria used are quite extensive to form a diagnosis, and the term "cross-gender identification" is used in preference to transgendered. Also included in the criteria, a person suffering from significant distress or impairment as well as having difficulty functioning in their gender role assigned at birth. Ms. Roberts states that diagnosis often leads to cross-gender hormonal maintenance and management and also to genital reconstructive surgery. In essence, it employs the same if not all of the criteria that had previously been in the DSM-III-R under the definition of transsexualism. It does not preclude, if anything it seems to imply that aversive or conditioning therapy be employed for both children and adolescents that exhibit behaviors within this condition.

Since Gender Identity incongruency is still classified as a disorder, I only see that any movement to obtain civil rights and civil liberties will be futile, since we as TS will still retain our social stigmata. If TS is not going to be reimbursed by either third party payers or by the government then why should we continue to hold onto the false promise of the medical model by retaining its designation as a medical or psychiatric illness? Why retain it in the ICD-9 or CPT codes if Medicare, Medicaid, and even any of the proposals for health care reform don't even consider paying, unless by court order for cross gender hormonal management and SRS? Since it is often considered to be "cosmetic surgery" by HMO's, PPO's, insurance companies, Medicare, Medicaid and both Blue Cross and Blue Shield why not eliminate the designation completely within the DSM? After all, TS individuals like myself and many others are bearing the financial burden anyway. By this method any discrimination and oppression experienced by

TS persons could be legally eliminated and the basis for the establishment of civil rights and civil liberties have a framework to be built.

As a final note, I would like to urge my crossdressing counterparts as well as other transsexuals to cooperate with, ally oneself and integrate ourselves within the structure of gay/lesbian/bisexual society and culture. We have a lot to learn from them. Where we TS/TG are now in society is similar to where they were twenty five to thirty years ago, before the Stonewall era. We have only to gain from such an alliance and nothing to lose. After all, we like they are struggling for civil rights and liberties, acceptance and inclusion within society. We, like they, are fighting for the right to be called and treated like human beings.

Dr. Melanie Erin Spritz

An open letter to the leadership of the transgendered community...

continued next page

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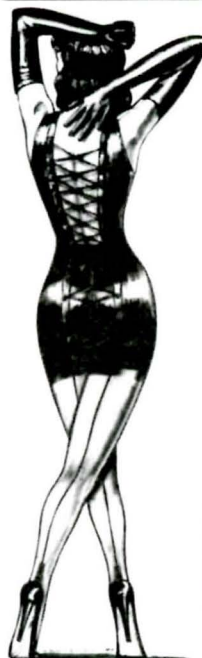
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"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference."

The following are my thoughts after attending the Fourth Annual Southern Comfort Conference in Atlanta.

I have just spent one of the most rewarding times of my life. I learned about love and sharing... I learned of the intelligence and intellectual excellence of my fellow sisters... I learned and I grew spiritually from my association with them. What I learned most was that I want to be involved and contribute so I may give back, from now on, any experiences of mine that may benefit them.

I humbly submit that I have been "urged" by God, through a spiritual experience at the conference, to reach out and explore the possibility of forming a 12 step program similar to AA throughout the transgender community. I would hope to foster support and comfort through sharing spiritual thoughts with all those who chose to share.

My efforts would be in addition to the great job already being done by our leadership. It would be in support and complimentary to everything good now in force. I am but a humble servant and in no way am I looking for control or power. I would enjoy serving in a mentor capacity.

I've spent the last 38 years in AA. Through their 12 step program I have learned to be one with God (Higher Power) and have reached a serenity I would love to share with my sisters.

I am not a "religious fanatic" nor am I a "born again"... I am spiritually in touch with my God and would love to share the experience. I know there are others in our community that could feel these same emotions if exposed to what I've been graced with. I would be honored to pass it on.

I have been a crossdresser for over fifty years. I started at the age of nine. These have been horror years for me and I've hated myself to the point of suicide. If it hadn't been for AA, and it's sharing, supportive members, I don't think I would have survived. My life, until I came out of the closet, was full of shame, guilt and a tremendous amount of waste, both time and money.

What I have been given in AA is just as valid, and applicable to the cross-gendered community. Crossdressers suffering these same feelings of shame, guilt and loneliness could only benefit through a similar program. We as sisters with feeling and knowledge can help one another by sharing and offering comfort through our truthful stories. I have learned to love myself, and others, in an honest and unselfish way. I'd like to give it back... "you don't keep love until you learn to give it away."

I saw a great need at the convention for a spiritual outreach based on the AA philosophy. It should be leader less but trusted to humble servants. It must have humility to succeed. I would like to be the spearhead of such an addition to our sisterhood. I don't feel superior but I do feel entrusted and I do have the time.

I place myself at your disposal in any manner you feel I could be of service. I will communicate by phone or mail to begin the networking process.

There is a need. There are sisters who deserve our help to live a comfortable life. Let's bring them out of their "clothes closets" and into the world of freedom. Let's give them this forum to express themselves. Let's reach out!

Much love and God BLESS US ALL:

Yours in sisterhood,

Lee Cashin, 8 Laurel Lane

Hilton Head Island, SC 29928

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Dear Lee,

You have a lofty idea and I wish you luck in carrying it out. When we started Renaissance over eight years ago, we wanted to reach out to our sisters, hiding in their closets and give them a place to meet others like themselves. We wanted to give them a forum to network in and gain the strength of community that most of us missed while we were busy hiding our difference from a cruel world. We have, to an extent, accomplished our purpose. After all those years we have grown from a group of thirteen people to several groups around the country. And, we have developed our newsletter as an instrument that can reach out to more people, carrying the message: We are all only people, people with a difference. A difference that does not make us any less a human being or any less entitled to love and respect.

Unfortunately, when I listen to the hangups on the Renaissance answering machine, I know there are people out there who aren't getting the message. They are people who are hating themselves and living in their own "horror years." They try to reach out but their shame, guilt and self loathing keep them from making the connection that could save them from a miserable existence. If you want to augment the efforts of the established community groups, these are the people you must reach. I don't know how you will find them and get them to open up. Maybe they will read this newsletter and contact you but I have the feeling they are too scared to be seen buying this newsletter or have it sent to their homes.

There is a problem with the concept of a Crossdressers Anonymous. I have heard of things like it before and while I believe it may apply to those who are really in pain because of their inability to accept themselves, I don't believe every crossdresser is powerless over their crossdressing. I have found that just coming to a group and meeting others like yourself is fairly liberating for most of us. I believe you would concur from your Southern Comfort experience. In treating crossdressing as an addiction you do it a disservice. It is a personality trait that can become addicting, but then, so are eating and exercising.

I went through a period when I was very obsessed with women's clothing. That was back when I was "in the closet" and I had no one who shared my secret. It was always on my mind and the guilt and paranoia that I would be found out and the terrible things that would happen as a result were, also, always on my mind. After coming to the realization that I needed to know others like myself and after actually meeting them I began a stabilization process that has resulted in my being a much more well-rounded and better adjusted human being. The years I have spent with Renaissance have been my path to enlightenment. Each of us has to follow his or her own path to any kind of enlightenment and, just when you think the end of that path is near and that's all the enlightenment you're going to get...surprise, a bend in the path reveals a whole new vista to explore.

By all means, help your sisters and brothers to find a path. It is a noble undertaking. Good Luck.

Angela Gardner



Shopping With Jackie

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Isn't it great looking at all the **After Christmas Sales** in the Newspapers. Now is the time to buy. The mild winter and fall left a lot of items hanging on the stores racks and they need to clear them out. Look for real savings....they are there. I'm sure we all got our share of things during the holidays and we all got everything we wanted (NOT). But, it's fun to dream. How about a catalog with outlet prices for **Hanes, L'eggs, Bali** and **Playtex**. Stockings, pantyhose, lingerie and outerwear. Phone 1-800-300-2600 for their catalog. **Hanes Her Way** has introduced a line of leg wear with a wide variety of styles and colors to complement practically any outfit or activity on your itinerary. The collection includes Trouser Socks,

Tights, Silky Opaques and terrific sheer hosiery styles like Shapers, Silky Sheer, All Day Sheer, Light Support and Thigh Highs. They are available at most department stores. I particularly like the thigh highs.

The Bedford Fair Catalog still remains one of my favorites. Nice clothing at nice prices in sizes to 20. If you don't have a copy, phone 1-800-964-100. If nothing else, I hope this column has shown you that you can shop locally and by mail for everything you need. I have also attempted to show that you do not have to pay the high prices some TV shops want for the same things you can get elsewhere. Just because we practice a "not generally accepted" behavior we don't have to be taken advantage of by

greedy speciality shops. Keep sending me your sources...they are appreciated by many of our members. I get mail thanking us for providing the sources that we do. Remember, every month we get a new member who is looking for support, and Renaissance is here to provide that support. In fact, send a note to Angela Gardner and thank her for the great job she does with this newsletter. It's many hours of hard work, and I, for one, really appreciate her dedication. JoAnn Roberts is tireless in her efforts for the organization. Have you said thank you to her and all the other hard working directors, chairpersons and members? Let's start this year off right and say thanks... to all of the people who make Renaissance the dynamic organization it is. And Ladies... Thank you... from Jackie. Keep shopping. Drop your letters to me in care of the Editor, and until next time, HAPPY SHOPPING.



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III. DEVELOPING PROGRESSIVE STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE:

A strategy for change that has reoccurred frequently throughout our annual conferences and appears in all of the Proceedings is to take the loopholes that exist in the oppressive laws and use them to our advantage. The first to so advocate was Connie Moore who won the first Transgender Advocate Award in August.

Connie presented family law caselaw in Proceedings I. As she related, both England and the State of Ohio had a similar problem over the non-changing of the birth certificate after genital reassignment surgery. Without the birth certificate change, caselaw prevented a transgendered man from marrying a woman or a transgendered woman from marrying a man since legally, in those jurisdictions, the transgendered man was still legally female and the transgendered woman was still legally male. Connie's remedy was for all of those transgen-

dered men who had a willing male partner and for all of those transgendered women who had a willing female partner to go to Ohio or England and get legally married. Then they should flaunt their homosexual marriages in the face of the same laws that denied them the dignity of their gender correction. She stated her case in a very forceful manner: "ram the inconsistencies down their throats" were her fiery words during her inspiring presentation.

Connie is about as subtle as I am, but her point is well taken. This was the reverse argument for transition without divorce. Examination of most marriage law reveals that two people of the same sex cannot get married, but once legally married two people cannot be separated without clear and specific statutory reasons (bigamy or under age) or divorce. Since a loving heterosexual couple can marry, when one partner transitions with the love and support of the other partner without violating the statute and without invoking a suit for divorce from the other partner, then the state cannot void the marriage.

Call it being proactive, or call it

being assertive, or call it being an activist, or call it being in-their-face. Whatever term you feel comfortable with, this is what it is mostly about.

Being proactive can be soft conversations wherein you come out to one person at a time. Being assertive can be a letter to your members of the state legislature and of the federal congress alerting them that one of their constituents is TG and is proud and votes. Being an activist can be refusing to knuckle under and be ashamed when your children or your job are about to be taken away.

An in-their-face activity is being willing to appeal your case if the trial court rules against you. Too often an appeal is simply not prosecuted when a good solid win is very possible. Either a transgendered client who was shafted in trial does not want her or his name in the newspaper associated with the appeal or else there is insufficient money for the appeal (each step of an appeal can run from \$2,500 to over \$5,000).



to be continued next month

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GLBT Information & Referral Database

Univ. Minn., September 1994

A new on-line service is now available to provide easy access via the Internet to information of interest to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities. This Information and Referral Database (IRD) was developed and is maintained by the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender (GLBT) Programs Office of the University of Minnesota.

The database is accessible through "information superhighway" connections that are widely used at home or in the office, and through public access terminals at University of Minnesota libraries. The IRD allows users to easily browse through or search for information on campus, local and national resources and regularly updated events and action alerts.

A few of the many topics covered by the IRD include information on University of Minnesota policies, such as how to register for domestic partner

benefits, and descriptions of community resources for counseling, health, education, employment, housing, legal services, family and relationship issues, nightlife, organizations, and violence and safety issues.

Of special interest to University students and others doing scholarly research on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender topics is a series of "Research Guides" that will help users locate information sources on the history of the GLBT movement, parenting issues, marriage and domestic partnership, the military, psychological and mental health issues, queer theory and other topics.

The GLBT Programs Office IRD uses Gopher software, a text-search program developed at the University of Minnesota. Users can access the IRD by following this path on Gopher: University of Minnesota Home Gopher Server/ University of Minnesota Campus Information/ All the

University of Minnesota Gopher Servers/ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Information And Referral. More detailed instructions for access to the database, which can vary by terminal type and means of connection, are available from the GLBT Programs Office.

Organizations and individuals will be able to reach a broad audience by listing their resource and event information on the database.

For information on submitting items for the database, contact the GLBT Programs Office by calling 612-625-6042 (Voice/TT) or E-mailing to "gltb@maroon.tc.umn.edu" and ask for either the "resource" or "event" form.

Media contact: Beth Zemsky, Coordinator Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Programs Office University of Minnesota (612) 626-9765.



Book Nook

Mackenzie's involvement with the transgender literature is even briefer— or perhaps she is merely being selective in her use of that literature. She relies heavily on papers such as Meyer and Reter's infamous 1979 study, which has been thoroughly discredited as bad science and unmasked as having political motives, and the writings of Leslie Lothstein, whose findings about effectiveness of transsexual surgery are at variance from more than a dozen other researchers. But most of all, she centers on Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male*, using Raymond's arguments as her own. Raymond's thesis, which seems laughable, but which has been taken with utmost seriousness by feminist scholars, is that transsexual surgery is a plot by males to render females obsolete by creating "constructed" females from men. Raymond also vilifies transsexual people, for, like MacKenzie, she does not realize that it is transsexual people and those who work with them,

much more than transgenderists, who have for more than 40 years brought into question our society's bipolar model of gender.

MacKenzie fails to mention that those she cites have been challenged and in many instances refuted. She seems ignorant of much of the literature, and in fact does not mention the activist organization Transgender nation, which had its name and had been working to deconstruct traditional gender roles long before her book appeared. There are two words which explain this: poor scholarship.

MacKenzie's book has already elicited one enthusiastic review in the transgender press, and will no doubt be praised by writers in the mainstream press who also have no knowledge of transsexual persons. Once again I call it an unfortunate book, for Mackenzie has driven a wedge firmly between transsexual people and transgenderists, just as they were figuring out just how very much they have in common.



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