

CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

#85
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THE LACK OF LONG-TERM LEADERSHIP
RESPONDING TO CRITICS OF TRI-ESS
DEALING WITH ACCIDENTS WHILE CROSSDRESSED
THE GENDER-BENDING TRADITION IN THEATRE
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The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

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THIS SPACE FOR RENT

KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

WHERE HAVE ALL OUR LEADERS GONE?

by Kimberleigh Richards
Publisher & Managing Editor

Every once in a while, someone asks me "whatever happened to ...?" and I find myself having to dig either through the dusty recesses of my mind or the archives of the old **Cross-Talk** newsletter format issues to find the answer.

"The number of people who less than ten years ago were the 'movers and shakers' and who still hold that level of esteem today is small."

The "every once in a while" has been much more frequent of late, though, which gets me thinking about the leaders of earlier years who -- once having had name recognition in our community -- have faded into the background. And I, like others, have found myself wondering why this is so.

Of course, I am in obvious danger of reopening the old "what makes a leader a leader?" debate, which I remember first commenting upon just five years ago, in **Cross-Talk** #25, in which I argued that one becomes a leader not by proclaiming themselves such, but by their actions (and whether or not anyone follows their lead). But in reading that old editorial, I was reminded of a list of then-leaders I included in it, and I was astonished to realize how many of them are essentially absent from view now. Indeed, of those I mentioned, only a relative handful -- Jane Ellen Fairfax, Sheila Kirk, Naomi Owen, Virginia Prince, and JoAnn Roberts -- are both still active in the community *and* visible in its leadership. What happened to the rest?

Merissa Sherrill Lynn and Yvonne Cook (Riley), embroiled in the politics that surround IFGE's financial difficulties, are gone from that organization; Lynn is deliberately distancing herself from the community and most observers believe Cook-Riley will need to do so as well.

Eve Burchert, while still active, is a virtual unknown to most. That may be because her role in the community has always been a quiet, behind-the-scenes one, but nevertheless she is essentially a leader known only to other leaders (and occasionally not even then).

Renee Chevalier, Wendi Danielle Pierce, and Janice Van Cleve went on to sex-reassignment surgery and then went

on with their lives. Janice Rupard retired from the community and is rarely heard from. Ellen Summers, sadly, we lost to illness two years ago (just as we lost someone I had not mentioned in my original editorial, Jennifer Richards, within the past year).

Karen Ann Baumgardner and Wendy Parker are both personal friends, but their time for leadership roles has been limited by concerns of the real world ... namely, keeping the bills paid.

I have *no* idea what happened to Bette Lee Johnson ...

And then there are those who either I didn't think to mention back in issue #25 or who came and went in the half-decade since: Jane Kamper Bentley, Sister Mary Elizabeth (Joanna Clark), Tere Frederickson, Cynthia Howard, Glenda Renee Jones, Phaedra Kelly, Betty Ann Lind, Eileen McCleary, Vickie Stone, JoAnn Altman Stringer, and Gloria Wright, all of whom the transgender community hears little or nothing from these days.

There are others, of course, who were here then (but not mentioned in my original remarks) and are still active today. Dina Amberle, Carol Beecroft, Linda Buten, Angela Gardner, Deanna Johns, Alison Laing, Denise Mason ... well, you get the idea. Still, the number of people who less than ten years ago were the "movers and shakers" *and* who still hold that level of esteem today is small. Heck, *I've* been visibly active in our community for less time ... I won't even be eligible for IFGE's Lifetime Achievement Award until nearly the millennium (not that I'm sure I want one, given that the person for who it is named -- Virginia Prince -- seems to be the only leader who didn't fade from view after being awarded it)!

What's really sad is that I would be willing to bet that most people reading this column hadn't thought about many of the names I've mentioned above in two or three years, if not longer.

Why are these names absent from our community, and why are they so absent that they seem erased even from our memories? Is it burnout from having had to lead too long? Frustration with a community that seems so fragmented that true unity seems impossible to achieve? Does our

(continued on page 10)



The NewsQueen

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

While the presidential candidates have pretty much steered clear of talk about values, Ms. Sinclair is glad to report that America's educators have not shirked from their responsibility to instill values in our young people. And one of these important values is dressing in gender-appropriate clothing.

Burlington (Vt.) High School sophomore Matt Stickney, who openly refers to himself as a drag queen, started showing up for classes this school year wearing dresses and a wig. Stickney, 15, resisted repeated warnings from Principal Ridgely Schott to stop. When Stickney persisted, Schott suspended him, also claiming that the teen had used abusive language in discussions with the School's administration.

"I thought I would do it because it is who I am as a person," said Stickney in defense of his actions. "I thought of the reaction I would get -- people making fun of me -- but I just winged it and thought I'd deal with it if it came along."

Many students -- both boys and girls -- rallied in support of Stickney. They held a demonstration outside the school. Some of the girls wore white shirts and ties while several of the boys sported lipstick.

During the demonstration, Stickney was struck in the face by another teen, Shawn Stevens. Burlington police have classified the incident as a hate crime. If convicted on the assault charge, Stevens may face stiffer sentencing due to Vermont's hate crimes law.

After the assault incident, Stickney disappeared, prompting police to classify him as a runaway. But he was found two days later.

Donna Jemilo, Burlington's Superintendent of Schools, called the recent series of events a "complex situation," citing the challenge to "balance the need to maintain an environment that facilitates learning for all students and the rights of one individual."

Understandably, Stickney's supporters disagree. Amy Lawson, also a sophomore, said, "Everybody here just dresses the way they want to be. They wear spikes, purple, green colored hair. He wants to wear a dress and a wig and that is no different than the way other kids are dressing."

Leslie Williams, Executive Director of Vermont chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, said, "The ACLU thinks any disruption to the educational process at Burlington High School that has occurred is the direct

result of the actions of the school principal in refusing to allow a student to attend school wearing a dress. Matt has as much right to wear a dress to school as a Scotsman has to wear a kilt or a girl has to wear blue jeans. It seems to us that school officials should keep their prejudices at home and conduct school business in a fair and impartial way."

ACLU Cooperating Attorney Lisa Shelkrot had previously voiced her support for Matt in a television interview, saying, "He has the right to self expression. He also has the right to be treated without gender discrimination. A dress code that treats boys and girls differently -- a policy that prohibits men from wearing dresses and allows women to -- would probably be in violation of the equal protection clause."

But for Principal Schott, the issue was not whether boys should dress differently from girls. He said he took the action against Stickney only after teachers reported that other students were focusing their attention on Stickney and not the lesson.

"If Matt had worn clothes that would be worn by a female on a regular basis, it would have been different," Schott said. "But what he wore was more of a costume. It was a shock to us."



An Ogden, Utah, teenager also found himself in trouble when he wore a dress and high heels to his school's homecoming dance.

Miguel Gallegos, a junior at Ogden High School, was suspended indefinitely after school authorities charged that he went into the women's restroom during the dance. They said he was going to swap dresses with a girl.

Gallegos denied that he and Audrey Permann were going to exchange clothes. He said he went into the restroom with her to help her retie the bow on her dress. He said they had earlier joked about trading dresses, but they weren't really going to do it. Gallegos went to the dance with Permann and two other girls.

Gallegos said the suspension is an attempt by the school to get rid of him because he is openly gay.

Principal Larry Leatham denied that allegation and said the suspension was solely because of the bathroom incident.

"We had 20 girls very upset to have a male inside the restroom," he said. Gallegos has filed a discrimination complaint with the American Civil Liberties Union because of the suspension and because school officials have not stopped anti-gay harassment by other students.



School officials were obviously concerned that unless he was turned from his life depraved life, young Miguel could turn out to be another Robert Edward Heinze, the Ogden man who had confessed to robbing a credit union in drag and calling in a bomb threat to a nearby high school the day before.

Heinze recently was given a sentence of five years and 10 months by U.S. District Judge David Sam, who said he would recommend that the 30-year-old Ogden man go to a facility where he could receive medication and counseling. Defense attorney Robert Copier urged the judge to give Heinze a reduced sentence, saying his client has suffered psychological problems for years. But Sam noted that Heinze also has a long criminal record, and he said that the severity and premeditated nature of Heinze's crimes diluted any argument for diminished capacity.

Heinze pleaded guilty to the January robbery of the America First Credit Union in Ogden.

Federal prosecutors said Heinze confronted a credit union teller while clad in a plastic rain scarf, blond wig, turquoise sweater, black stretch pants and tennis shoes. He also was wearing pink lipstick.

On the previous day, Heinze had called the high school in Garland, claiming a bomb "was going to explode at the school if ... not found and disarmed."

Police also said Heinze stole a car to escape from the credit union and made an attempt at stealing a second car in Tremonton -- each time dressed as a woman calling herself "Rhonda."



School officials in Cleveland have a different problem on their hands -- a teacher who left school in June as a man and came back this fall as a woman.

Vanessa Ward had been a teacher in Cleveland public schools for 17 years. With the support of her therapist, the teachers' union, and the school district, she began living as a woman over the summer with the understanding that she would start teaching in a different school when classes began August 26.

But after a week, parents at Waverly Elementary School learned that Ms. Ward had been Mr. Ward, and they contacted the media claiming that their children's teacher was a pervert. Rather than explaining the issue of transsexualism, television news reports implied that Ward

was a transvestite who had simply chosen to start dressing like a woman.

But despite the public outcry, the school district and the union are working with Ward's attorney to find a solution that will allow her to continue her career.



It's a good thing that union and school authorities are working *with* Ward, 'cause you don't want to cross a crossdressing Buckeye.

When the promoter of a drag beauty pageant told Ronzel Hartshorn, a.k.a. Robin Banks, that she couldn't compete in the contest being held the next week at U4ia, a gay bar in Cleveland, Hartshorn reportedly said, "You'll never have this beauty pageant here. I'll see to that."

The following Saturday, a stolen Toyota truck crashed through the front door of the club. A stick had been propped against the accelerator. The truck came to rest against the opposite wall, but its wheels continued to spin, setting the tires on fire. The smoke set off the club's sprinklers, causing considerable water damage. The club has yet to reopen.

Police now say that Hartshorn obtained the truck after bringing a man back to his apartment for sex while in drag and overpowering him with the assistance of two other men. Hartshorn then took the truck's keys and later crashed the vehicle through the bar.



It was a careless queen -- not a mad queen -- who caused the September fire that destroyed The Dressing Room, a Detroit boutique and salon catering to members of the midwestern transgender community.

The staff had just completed a photo shoot for a soon-to-be-published catalog and a model's still smoldering cigarette in a trash can seems to have caused the fire according to Michigan State Police investigators. No one was injured in the fire, but the boutique and all its contents were consumed in the blaze.

The Dressing Room had only been open five months at the time of the fire. The owners began to rebuild immediately, and hoped to be open in time for Halloween.




It seems to be a tough time for businesses catering to the transgendered crowd, but that hasn't stopped some entrepreneurs from trying to cash in on the themed restaurant craze by opening drag eateries.

This exploding segment of the restaurant industry is dubbed "eatertainment." Part restaurant, part retail store, part museum or interactive amusement, these theme-dining enterprises will amount to a \$5 billion industry by the year 2000, analysts estimate.

No theme is seemingly too predictable or too bizarre: rock 'n' roll memorabilia (Hard Rock Cafe), soul food and Motor City music (Motown Cafe), silver screen shrine

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(Planet Hollywood), submarines (Dive!), environmental awareness (Rainforest Cafe), motorcycles (Harley-Davidson Cafe), homemade beer (Rock Bottom Brewery), supermodels (Fashion Cafe), horror and sci-fi flicks (The Jeckyl & Hyde Club), and comic books (Marvel Mania).

Ms. Sinclair suspected this trend would eventually include drag-themed restaurants when she previously reported on Lucky Cheng's in New York and Tricks in San Francisco. Now with the opening of Lips, there are three -- definitely a craze.

Babs and Carol provided this review of New York's newest and most impressive drag-theme restaurant in Greenwich Village.

"Fashioned after the Hard Rock Cafe, Lips features photographs and memorabilia from New York's most famous gender benders. For each drag queen who gave a signed photo and a personal item had a dish on the menu dedicated to them. Plexiglass encased accessories that caught our attention included Joey Arias' platform shoes near the entrance and Sweetie's hat from *To Wong Foo ...*

"Downstairs is a banquet room which features, among others, an impressive crown in honor of Empress Ran-dee and the past Empresses of the Imperial Court of New York. Mirrors are everywhere, the better to check our lipstick, of course. Bathrooms are private and bi-gendered.

"Over the crowded bar area we noticed video monitors playing theme-related movies; *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Wigstock, the Movie* while we were there.

"We were impressed by the friendly smiles and warm upbeat attitude of the hostess, manager and waitstaff as we made our 'grand' entrance. We were made to feel welcome by all!

"Although we did come for the food, and we were pleasantly surprised for the place had not only style, but substance as well.

"Fortunately we had made reservations as the dining room filled up quickly. Our lovely drag waitresses still had time to lip synch a few performances!

"Apparently owned by Yvon, a lovely drag queen herself, who isn't afraid to jump in the fray to keep things going, Lips celebrates the flamboyant part of our gender community. Lips is fun! The food is original, well prepared and reasonably priced!"

Lips is at 2 Bank St. just off Greenwich Ave. in Greenwich Village, (212) 675-7710. Reservations suggested.



Don't expect to see any Dennis Rodman memorabilia at Lips. According to the *National Enquirer*, he isn't a mere drag queen; his crossdressing is the result of deep, unresolved psychological issues from his childhood.

It seems that Rodman's mother was so poor that young Dennis had to wear his sister's underwear. According to an "insider," "the scars of Dennis' childhood are still there ... He started wearing feminine clothes out of necessity."

Coupled with that was the fact that Dennis' father was absent from the house, leaving him without a male role model.



New York may have *two* drag restaurants, but only San Francisco has the Faux Queen contest.

Sister Dana Van Iquity describes the annual pageant as "quite possibly the only event of its kind in the world, where genetically challenged women come out of the closet as drag queens trapped in real girls' bodies, vying for the title of the woman who most looks like a man trying to look like a woman."

To achieve that illusion, the hopefuls overdid their makeup, donned extra-large wigs, wore gaudy jewelry, slipped into obnoxiously high heels, and padded their bras.

All of this took time. Sister Dana notes that none of the contestants were ready when the pageant was scheduled to begin, which earned them all extra points in the judging. But the winner -- Patty O'Furniture -- wowed the judges by lip-synching to her *own* recorded voice doing her *own* rewrite of "Material Girl."

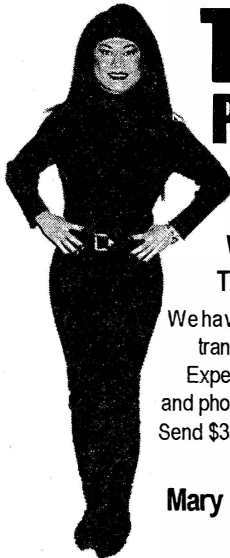
This was the second Faux Queen contest, and it raised money for Bay Area women's health organizations.



This was also the second year in a row Boston queens and fans gathered for a drag-themed fundraiser to benefit Hair Cares. The Boston Dragathon ran from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. October 6 and featured 12 uninterrupted hours of non-stop lip-synching.



While police in Detroit and Cleveland had no problem with the fire investigations in their cities, police in Ottawa Hills, Ohio, were totally baffled by the death of Charles Karabell, 64, a maintenance man at the Toledo Tennis Club. His body was discovered in the club's kitchen. We was almost totally encased in duct tape. A wall-mounted



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tape dispenser was nearby, leading police to speculate that Karabell had been murdered.

But last month the coroner ruled the death an accidental autoerotic asphyxiation. It seems that under the duct tape, Karabell was wearing women's clothing.



As a union member from way back (she was a member of the UAW when she was a mere slip of a girl), Ms. Sinclair is pleased to report that more and more union and employee associations are taking up the cause of sexual minorities. For example, state workers in Connecticut have just established the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered State Employees Organization. Readers in the Nutmeg State can get info from Nan Goldsmith at (860) 647-6056.



Transgendered city employees in Vancouver, British Columbia, may not have to worry about discrimination if Jamie Lee Hamilton is elected to city council.

"I'm open, I'm honest, and I'm not going to back away from it," Hamilton said of the sex change she underwent in 1983.

The former sex-trade worker said she wants to help Vancouver's street people and the city's downtrodden.



After a father undergoes a sex-change operation, or begins living as a woman, should she still have an active role in her children's lives? The Missouri Court of Appeals has to answer that tricky question.

The mother, who lives in St. Charles County, has said "no" in court records. She contends that it is in the best interest of her two sons, age 9 and 6, to deny their father visitation and temporary custody. Her oldest son has expressed "suicidal ideations" and was put on antidepressants, court records state. The youngest son has been diagnosed with attention deficit disorder.

But the father's lawyer said that the father should have regular, unsupervised visitation. The children's father now lives in suburban Washington, D.C.

"It's fairly obvious that we feel any restrictions are unwarranted at this time," said the father's lawyer, Elizabeth Harris Christmas. Last year, a St. Charles

County judge granted the wife, who uses the pseudonym Karen to protect the children's identities, primary physical custody.

The father, now called Sharon, got weekend temporary custody and unsupervised visitation for two weeks in the summer and on alternate major holidays. However, Sharon could not cohabit with a transsexual or sleep with another woman during those visits.

"We think she is 'married' to another transsexual but we don't know what that means," said Susan Hais, Karen's lawyer.

Both parents appealed. The issue could be heard in the Missouri Court of Appeals in St. Louis as early next month. This may be the first time the issue of child visitation with a divorced transsexual parent has come before the appeals court, Hais said. However, that issue may not be the one heard in this case, she added.

State law prohibits the divorce judge, Judge William T. Lohmar Jr., from giving the father unsupervised visitation without a prior hearing to determine whether it would be proper, Hais said. The appeals court could decide the case on that issue alone.

The father wants to delete from the divorce decree the requirement that the father cannot "cohabit" with other transsexuals while the boys visit.

Karen and Sharon met in 1982. He was an Air Force Academy graduate stationed at Whitman Air Force Base in Knob Noster, Mo., near Sedalia. Karen was a junior at a state university in Missouri. The couple met at a Bible study group. They married in March 1983.

Karen said in an interview last year that their relationship was always strained.

In the summer of 1991, Karen's husband -- "Tom," as he is called in the case -- refused to go with the family to visit Karen's relatives.

When she and the boys came home three weeks later, Tom told Karen that he had spent the whole time living as a woman. The couple separated in August 1992. Tom underwent a hair transplant, electrolysis, hormone treatments and psychotherapy. Karen filed for divorce in June 1993.

While the divorce was pending, Tom underwent sex-change surgery in Montreal.



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If attorney Hais wants to know what a transsexual marriage is, maybe she could go to Ohio.

A judge in Painesville, Ohio, issued a marriage license last month to a man who plans a sex change after he marries a lesbian.

Since Ohio law specifies marriage as a partnership between a man and a woman, Lake County Probate Judge Fred V. Skok asked for a doctor's note specifying that Paul Smith of Willoughby still has male sex organs. Smith dresses in women's clothes, except for work, and expects to complete his sex change within three years.



San Francisco may soon remove one of the major problems faced by transsexuals -- raising the huge amount of money needed for therapy, hormone treatments and surgery. City Supervisor Tom Ammiano plans to introduce a resolution to cover sex-change operations for city employees as a part of their health insurance.

Larry Brinkin, the coordinator of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and HIV Discrimination Unit of the Human Rights Commission, concedes that getting the resolution passed by the Board of Supervisors will be tough. "We'll definitely have to give them a good understanding of what this is about," he said.

Arthur Bruzzone, the chairman of the San Francisco Republican Party, is one of those who will need more understanding. He, and others, say such operations are a lifestyle choice and not medically necessary. They liken it to breast enhancement surgery.

Supporters counter that for many people, gender transformation is a medical necessity.

The potential cost is difficult to estimate because nobody knows how many of the city's 28,000 employees wish to have the operation. Some news reports said there were as many as 6,000 transsexuals in the city. But activists debunked those claims, saying that figure included all of the city's transvestites, and drag queens as well.

"According to our figures there are only seven transsexual city employees, so the effects of any change would be negligible," said Jamison Green, local activist and founding member of Transsexual Menace-Men.

"Also, city taxpayers are not being asked to pay a single penny. We are asking for the removal of an exclusion from existing insurance coverage, not a tax on the citizens," he said. "We deserve to have our medical needs covered just like anyone else -- trivializing our situation out of ignorance is something we will no longer tolerate."



Speaking of the health needs of transgendered people, *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (AMA) has published a letter to the editor entitled "Health Care Needs of Transgendered Patients" in its September 18 issue. The letter was written by Anne Lawrence, M.D., and

co-signed by Joy Shaffer, M.D., Wynelle Snow, M.D., "Cat" Chase, M.D., and Bo Headlam, a medical student. All of the doctors identify as transgendered or transsexual, and are also members of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association.

In their letter, the doctors commented on the report "Health Care Needs of Gay Men and Lesbians in the United States," by the AMA Council on Scientific Affairs. They stressed the overlap between the issues of gender identity and sexual orientation, and urged the council to explicitly address the health care needs of the transgendered in future reports. They briefly outlined some of the issues transgendered patients face.

In a reply, James R. Allen, M.D., Secretary of the Council on Scientific Affairs, responded favorably, and strongly encouraged further research concerning the health care needs of sexual minorities.



The civil rights needs of sexual minorities in Argentina were acknowledged last month when the city of Buenos Aires repealed the infamous "Police Edicts" that were used for years to arbitrarily detain transvestites, transsexuals, gays, lesbians, prostitutes, and others deemed "undesirable."

By some estimates 400 people are arrested every day in Buenos Aires without having committed any crime, simply because police suspect they are "dangerous." Those people

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usually spend around 12 hours in a police station, where blackmail and verbal, emotional and even physical abuse is common. There is no judicial review of the arrests, and those arrested are never taken to court.

During the past year, due to several demonstrations against police brutality, torture, and even the murder of young men and transvestites, mainstream society became increasingly aware of what the Police Edicts meant. Opposition to the edicts mounted. Eventually they were repealed.

Under the new law, persons arrested for illegal gambling, being drunk in public places, or disorderly conduct will go before a judge. Arrests for being "suspicious" or to check an individual's police records will be forbidden.

Transvestites and transsexuals are the most benefited by this measure, as they suffered police brutality in its cruelest forms. For example, more than forty transvestites were murdered in the past four years; a 43-year-old transsexual estimates she has spent a total of six years in jail during her life; transvestites working in the street spend in average three nights in police stations every week.

But during the week before the edicts were repealed, transvestites and sex workers were arrested in growing numbers, perhaps to remind folks that they would remain in control.

Under the new legislation, people can be arrested only if

they are caught in "a flagrant criminal act." Activists say it is very easy for police officers to "produce" those criminal acts, through the use of false witnesses, or by planting drugs on anyone they want to accuse.

Observers say it is very unlikely that police will voluntarily leave transvestites and other targets alone because they take in an estimated million dollars a week by bribing and blackmailing sex workers, transvestites, illegal gamblers and others.

On the day the law was signed ending the edicts, a noisy and courageous group of transgender people, lesbians, gays and pansexuals demonstrated in front of the Colon Theatre, where the statute was being signed. A huge banner read: "Police Edicts are gone. The Federal Police are still killing us."

"From now on, we will live among hopes and fears, in equal amounts," said activist Alejandra Sarda.



There is no doubt that public visibility is the best way to secure fair treatment. That is why *The New York Times* article on the transgendered movement was so important. When she reported on it last month, Ms. Sinclair was remiss in not urging her readers to contact the *Times* and thank them for the thorough and sympathetic coverage. Contact Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., *The New York Times*, 229 West 43rd Street, New York NY 10036. Or send letters by fax to (212) 556-3622 or e-mail to <letters@nytimes.com>.



Murders of sexual minorities are less common in the U.S., but here too the public needs to be reminded that these are hate crimes.

The killer of a Massachusetts transsexual pleaded guilty to second-degree murder recently. Although originally expected to defend himself against a first-degree murder charge, Michael Thompson worked out a plea bargain agreement in the death more than a year ago of Deborah Forte.

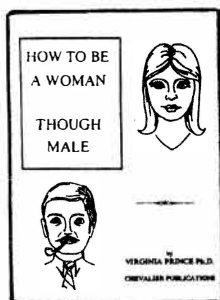
Thompson was given a life sentence with the possibility of parole in 15 years.

Last May, Thompson had gone home with Forte believing the her to be a woman. Thompson discovered Forte's biological gender in the course of foreplay. The 25-year-old Thompson then strangled, beat and repeatedly stabbed Forte. Criminologists have found this level of "overkill" to be practically a hallmark of gay-bashing murders.

Outside the Lawrence, Mass., courthouse, a dozen transgender activists held a quiet vigil in memory of Forte. One of the demonstrators noted that their presence was a comfort gratefully received by Forte's surviving family members.

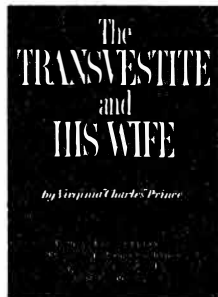
The group also distributed leaflets headlined "Transpeople are NOT Disposable People." One demonstrator's sign read, "Difference is NOT a Crime Punishable by Death."

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Killings by transgendered people during a sexual encounter are even rarer, but that is what police in Atlanta think happened to Jerry C. Truelove, 50, who was found shot to death this past summer in the passenger seat of his car. Police say he may have been killed during an encounter with a transvestite prostitute. A continuing investigation has not identified a suspect.

The empty driver's seat was in a reclining position, and Truelove was known to have picked up transvestite prostitutes in the neighborhood, said an Atlanta homicide detective.

There are no known eyewitnesses, although one man told police he overheard conversation in the car before the shooting. "He can't be sure if it was a woman's or a man's voice," the detective said.



The killing took place in Atlanta's Midtown section, an area known for drag queens. Most every large city has such a neighborhood. *New City*, "Chicago's News and Arts Weekly," reports that the best place to spot drag queens in the Windy City is on Broadway north from Diversey to about Addison, on any weekend evening. In New Orleans this past Labor Day weekend, the French Quarter was the place. That was when the Crescent City held its 24th annual Southern Decadence Day celebration.

A five-day round of drag shows, a leather contest, dances,

cocktail parties, beer busts, and barbecues culminated in the traditional Sunday afternoon costumed walking parade through the streets of the French Quarter. In keeping with his chosen theme, "Queen of Da' Nile," grand marshal Wayne White and his retinue of "slaves" were dressed in King Tut-inspired gowns and loincloths.

Following behind were several hundred drag queens, leathermen, and members of costumed contingents including a purported passel of Hooters' girls, "pink ladies," and ValuJet stewardesses.



Savannah, Ga. is another Southern city that could capitalize on its drag connections: Lady Chablis from John Berendt's mega-best seller *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. But don't count on it; not all residents are happy with he fame.

"There are two people I wish had never come to Savannah," an elderly man recently said to a visitor to his city. "One is William Tecumseh Sherman. The other is John Berendt."

Midnight is a nonfiction account that explores modern Savannah, introduces some of its quirky characters -- from the flamboyant drag queen Lady Chablis to a man who walks an invisible dog -- and tells the tale of a street hustler who is murdered by one of the town's wealthiest and best-known citizens.

"The Book" -- as it is simply known in the town -- has been

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on the best-seller lists for more than two years. The movie is in the planning stages. Lady Chablis expected to play herself in the film, but producers nixed that idea, and so Chablis said she would settle for Angela Bassett. But rather than have a faux queen in the role, how about a real queen, like Jaye Davidson?



You can help make your town as famous as Savannah by sending Ms. Sinclair clippings about local drag happenings. Just see how she has burnished the reputations of Burlington, Vt., and Ogden, Utah. Don't forget to note the name and date of publication.

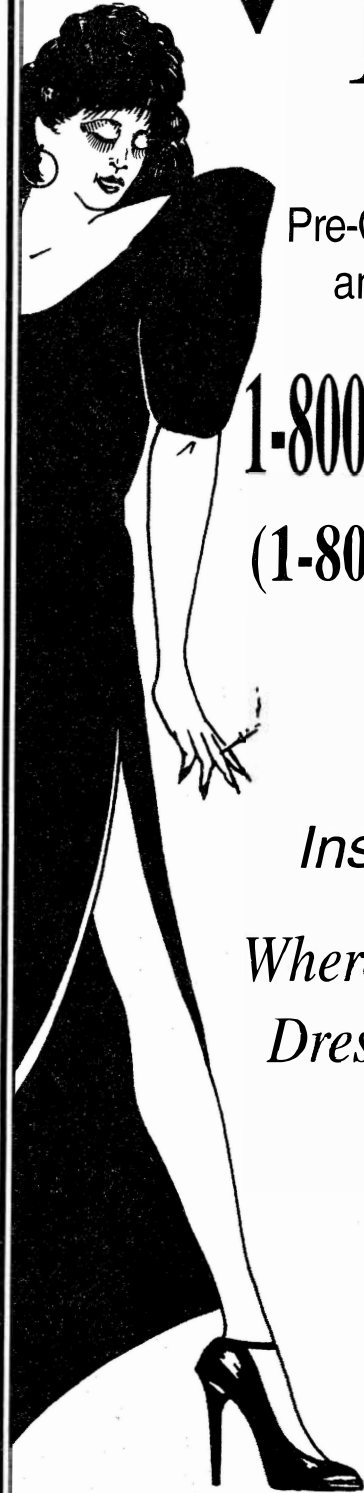

KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD ... *continued from page 2*
community place demands on its leaders that makes it difficult for them to continue, so they choose not to? Speaking from experience, I wouldn't be surprised if it was all three. I avoided burnout only by setting a limit on the length of time I served as president of Tri-Ess' Alpha Chapter, by taking a sabbatical from that organization's national board of directors, and by refusing to be nominated for any other organization's board. Anyone who reads these monthly rants of mine know that I frequently find fault with our community's lack of cohesiveness (which is also why one rarely sees me in the transgender areas of the Net these days, either). And one can only be spread so thin before time (and money) gives out; ask the organizers of this year's Holiday En Femme why I had to cancel my already-announced appearance as a luncheon speaker at the last minute.

Sometimes I wonder how I've managed to last this long, and others must ask that question of themselves from time to time. (A few of our subscribers, coping with recent delays in the production and delivery of **Cross-Talk**, must often wonder if I've stopped managing to last, as well.) Perhaps rather than asking "where have our leaders gone?" I should be asking why we haven't encouraged our leaders to stay, and develop leaders to succeed them. For those we look to for guidance cannot last in their positions of prominence without the support of those doing the looking.

Ultimately, the very things that have annoyed me about our community are also the reasons our leaders don't, on average, last very long. We squabble amongst ourselves, distancing ourselves from each other in the process, paying only scant lip service to the diversity which we claim is what pulls us together; we expect our leaders to travel here, there, and everywhere to plead our case, educate the masses, or unify our fragmented cliques, yet we make no attempt to cover their costs in doing so; and when there are problems, we point fingers and refuse to take the blame, leaving our leaders alone to cure problems we likely created in the first place.

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HotBuzz

By JoAnn Roberts

"Since the masses are always eager to believe something for their benefit, nothing is so easy to arrange as facts."

-- Charles Maurice de Talleyrand



The **HotBuzz** this month is the "restructuring memo" from the **International Foundation for Gender Education**. What I found most interesting was left as almost an afterthought, an "oh, by the way ..." **Yvonne Cook-Riley**, Director of IFGE Operations for the last nine years left effective September 30, 1996. Many people considered Cook second only to IFGE founder Merissa Sherrill Lynn. My news-net tells me Cook had been on probation for almost a year by the IFGE board of directors. During that period she had certain tasks to perform and tasks to complete. A reliable source said Cook missed almost all of these tasks and the board had no choice but to relieve her of all staff duties. Many people had "run-ins" with Cook in the last several years and the bitter complaints came from customer and vendor alike. Her arbitrary actions seem to have been emboldened by Lynn's departure in 1995. It was almost as if she believed she was immune to censure or review. Knowledgeable insiders place all of IFGE's past financial problems on Cook's plate. Cook's future as a member of the IFGE board and the Executive Committee is unclear.



My good friend **Alison Laing** says that you can tell when a trend has gone mainstream by counting the number of times a word appears in print. Well, if that's the measure then we (the transgendered) have arrived. I was reading an article in the local paper aimed at familiarizing college students with the local scene. As I was perusing the list of "in" clubs in the area, I noticed not one but two clubs with specific mentions of transgendered patrons, such as "... is an after-hours club whose patrons include cross-dressers and other hip ... people" Kewl, we're hip.



Cracked magazine pulled off a parody of *Marvel Comics'* X-Men with "**Ex-Men**". The Winter 96/97 issue cover caught my eye with what appeared to be several of the Marvel X-Men in decidedly feminine garb. Okay, so it's a parody, but any press is sometimes better than no press at all.



Just about a year ago, if you logged into **Yahoo**, the premiere web index on the net <www.yahoo.com>, you would have found any transgender sites listed under Lifestyles: Gay/Lesbian. These days, not only do we rate our own category, just within the last month or so we now rate our own hierarchy. That, my friends, is progress.



How about mixing politics, advertising and transgender? An ad for **Kenneth Cole** shoes that's making the rounds of fashion mags shows a very 90s high-heeled pump with the following copy, "Mistaking the Right to Choose for the Right to Shoes, a 2004 candidate campaigned wearing only pumps, declaring it was *his* body, his decision." [emphasis is mine]. Hey, it works for me.



Last month's announcement of the **GenderPAC Mobilization Meeting** has been met with great enthusiasm from the community. Almost every organization has said it will be sending a representative to this major community meeting which will be held in suburban Philadelphia on November 2. Representatives of major gay/lesbian political organizations will also be in attendance to give us the benefit of their past political experience.



Time to move over to fashion news ... Need a way to get your makeup from here to there? How about a travel makeup case. There's a neat little item by a company called **Modella** and it's a black bag that unzips to reveal two sides with clear compartments that zip individually. In the middle is a panel with elastic loops to hold brushes. Also, on the back of the center panel is a mesh compartment for things like scissors, tweezers, toothbrush, etc. It's large without being bulky, and it's waterproof. It's also only \$20 and well worth it. Look for this bag at just about any department store.



One really cool thing about the Fall is ... well ... it's cool. I mean it's what I call "dressing weather." You can wear almost any outfit in your closet (and I see some people who do). For me, I like the cool weather to wear shorter skirts and tights. (In the U.S. of A., we call opaque pantyhose "tights" as opposed to everyone else in the world calling regular pantyhose "tights.") And this season, it's not just tights but patterned tights that's making the scene. **Donna Karan** has homespun crocheted tights. Prada has cashmere argyles. Anna Sui showed cable-knit tights. Even fishnets are back. Hanes has a whole range of herringbone and ribbed tights. Colors this season are jewel tones and dark muted pastels.



Lingerie Factoids: Almost 80% of all the money spent on women's lingerie is spent on panties. Female consumers

have no definitive preference for expensive panties over cheaper brands. The average Argentinian woman spends the equivalent of a month's salary (about \$400) on lingerie annually while American women spend about \$57. I wonder what American men spend?



Some people have said that many women's swimsuits are not much more than underwear. Well, now it's been confirmed; underwear is for wearing anywhere you like, including the beach. Following in the footsteps of the **Wonderbra** is the **Beachbra**. This successor to the wildly successful Wonderbra is also a preshaped bra which you can wear either underneath your clothes or on the beach. Versatility is one of the aspects of underwear fashion today. Even the names are cute. I have a slip dress by a company called **Lingerie Worn Out**.



One of the hottest areas of lingerie marketing is shapewear. It ain't your mother's girdle (even though some of you wish it was). Best known is Nancy Ganz's **Bodyslimmers** line of Bust Boosters and Belly Buster lingerie. This year the target is the tush. As gravity and age take their toll on bodies, we could all use a little lift now and then. The newest butt-boosters are pantyhose with a U-shaped sling built-in that lifts the cheeks. Take a look at the **Donna Karan** and **Calvin Klein** lines of hosiery. The

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other area of great interest is the waistline. Smaller, nipped waists are back. (Ohmigawd! Please, not again.) So look for waist cinchers like those little numbers in the **Hanes One Place** catalog, or the high-waisted slimmer slip from **Va Bien**, or a high-waisted brief from **Aubergine** that offers maximum tummy and waist control. For the ultimate hourglass shape, look for the strapless full slip with built-in bra by **Smoothie**.



By the time this makes it to "print" (whatever that means these days), **Classic Curves** should be shipping their latest offering **The Diva**, a garment that creates cleavage where there was none before and without glue or tape. No price set yet but preliminary reports say the garment works really well and is very comfortable. **Espy Lopez**, owner of **Classic Curves** says it wasn't easy creating this garment and some new sewing techniques had to be invented to make it work properly. Contact CC at P.O. Box 115, Wilmington, CA 90748, 310-549-8787, or <classicurv@aol.com>.



Can't tell a **Gucci** from a **Gautier**? Looking for **Calvin Klein** and coming up **K-Mart**? Is that what's got you down bunky? Well, then listen up, kids! You're gonna get wise to the fashion scene this Fall if you just tune into **Chueless**, the new television show based on the movie. Five of the

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movie's cast reprises their roles on the tube, but not **Alicia Silverstone**. Cher is played by **Rachel Blanchard**, but Amy Heckerling who produced the movie (and *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*) will produce the show. The focus, of course, is fashion. But not just any fashion ... Beverly Hills fashion. The show airs on Friday nights at 9:30 on ABC.



Everybody wants to be an author these days and it seems as if they're all doing beauty books, too. I told you about **Cindy Crawford's** book last month. This month we have the announcement of **Gayle Hayman's** *How Do I Look?*, sort of the *Joy Of Cooking* of the beauty set. This encyclopedic tome covers everything from fixing puffy eyes to dry elbows. Look for it from **Random House** mid-month. If you'd like to reproduce some of the "classic" beauty looks of past decades, then you need **Mary Quant's** new book *The Classic Makeup & Beauty Book* due out this month.



Color copiers are hot items. That's color as in lipstick. Color was never really associated with a name until **Chanel** came up with **Vamp**. So now colors are ripe for knock-offs. The **Cosmetic Factory**, known for its knock-off designer fragrances, is now doing knock-off colors, like Ruby Dream for **Estee Lauder** Ruby Fantasy, or Suspense for **Prescriptives** Dramatic. The colors are almost perfectly matched although the texture isn't quite the same and the

containers are cheaper, but hey, for a \$1.99 plus tax, it beats \$14.95 anytime.



I always look forward to the September issue of *Vogue* with all the Fall Fashion news and this year I wasn't disappointed. For my \$3.50 I got 700 pages of the latest fashion news and ideas. You can learn a lot just from looking at the ads. I think the best example of the purple trend for Fall is the **Estee Lauder** ad. But one trend that I'm betting won't catch on is flapper dresses. I mean let's not take retro to an extreme here. Next thing you know we'll be doing the Charleston at weddings instead of the Macarena.



I noticed a new line called **Barami**. The designs are classic yet fashionable, not dated and the prices seem reasonable. A fitted jacket and slim skirt in a multi-check green/brown was \$240. Call 1-888-4-BARAMI to find an outlet near you.



So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think it's best to let the facts stand on their own. Comments? Write care of this publication or e-mail them to <cyberqueen@cdspub.com>. Copyright 1996 by Creative Design Services.

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GENDER IDENTITY DISORDER: THE RISK OF MISDIAGNOSIS

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

Some transgender activists are in a bit of a quandary when it comes to Gender Identity Disorder (GID). The American Psychological Association (APA) says GID is "the insistence that one is of the other sex" and a "persistent discomfort about one's assigned sex." It is this diagnosis that enables transsexuals to receive treatment from the medical profession to correct the incongruity between their gender identity and their bodies.

But activists claim GID is the diagnosis used to justify the confinement of some young people to psychiatric institutions where mental health professionals try to change their sexual orientation and gender-role behaviors.

Shannon Minter, staff attorney for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and Phyllis Frye, executive director of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, say that the GID diagnosis is most often used against minors because -- under the law -- parents have the right to institutionalize their children against their will. They think that is wrong and that the APA shares some of the blame.

Children who display non-traditional gender roles -- girls who display masculine mannerisms and boys who act effeminately -- are most likely to cause their parents to worry that their child is not "normal." And Minter believes there are enough therapists out there who promise parents that their kids can be "cured" before it is too late.

"They believe that if you intervene early enough, you can stop a person from becoming gay or transsexual," Minter said.

According to Minter, "therapy" for GID includes forcing children to change behavior that is natural for them. For example, girls who hold their books to their sides are trained to carry them close to their chests, and boys who hold their books "like a girl" are taught to carry them at their sides.

She has documented numerous cases of people institutionalized solely because they did not conform to traditional gender roles.

Kraig is a good example. His treatments began when he was four. Because his parents were concerned that his effeminate behaviors foreshadowed homosexuality or

something even worse, he was taken to therapists who attempted a cure.

In one exercise, Kraig and his mother were put in a room. His mother wore an earphone connected to a microphone outside the room while Kraig played; therapists observed

Is GID being used by homophobic therapists as an excuse to treat underage clients with "cures" for being gay, lesbian, or transgendered?

his behavior. When he did something that they decided was feminine, they instructed his mother to ignore him. Kraig panicked when he didn't understand why his mother suddenly turned her back to him, and was eventually taken from the room screaming.

In another exercise, Kraig's mother was told to give him a blue poker chip for every masculine behavior and a red chip for every feminine behavior. When his father got home, he was to spank Kraig once for every red chip he was given.

Terrified that he could not live up to the demands placed on him, Kraig attempted suicide when he was 18.

The case of Daphne Scholinski is another example.

When Scholinski was 14 she was diagnosed as having GID and was institutionalized in three Midwest mental hospitals. She was given -- along with anti-psychotic medications such as Thorazine -- these goals to work on: to wear makeup and dresses, and curl her hair. After the first three months, Daphne attempted suicide by "drinking Sea Breeze, a facial astringent." Daphne would not be released until four years later when she was 18.

"Most people die after they get out," she said. "The recovery from the system is what gets people in the end. Life expectancy of my friends is pretty low. Most of my friends are dead." But Scholinski, now 28, says she has never had any confusion or discomfort about her gender. Despite her masculine appearance, she says, she is a woman and a lesbian. It was because of her sexual orientation that she underwent what she now describes as four years of "psychological torture" and institutionalization.

Now, ten years later, Scholinski is at the center of a fledgling movement aimed at preventing what gay, lesbian

and transgender rights activists say is just another attempt by a homophobic psychiatric profession to make queer youth "straight." Many psychiatrists disagree, saying gender identity disorder is a bona fide problem, particularly for boys. It can lead to alienation, low self-esteem, out-of-control behavior at home, depression and even suicide, if untreated.

And although a rare problem -- less than 1 percent of the population is affected -- it is difficult to treat and involves intense therapy that can last up to three years.

"If a parent comes to me and says 'I'm very scared that my kid is going to grow up to be gay or lesbian,' I say that that is not a psychiatric issue," says Patricia Speier, associate director of child and adolescent services at Langley Porter Psychiatric Clinic in San Francisco. "It's about how they deal with who they are. It's about children not liking who they are -- their gender." This is a subtle distinction, activists say, and one that is frequently abused by the psychiatric profession. It wasn't until 1973, they point out, that homosexuality was declassified as a mental disorder. And, to muddy the waters further, three-quarters of the boys with a childhood history of gender identity disorder report a homosexual or bisexual orientation later in life.

There are other confusions, too. Activists point out that gay and lesbian or transgendered teenagers often find society unsympathetic to their situation, and this can provoke psychological problems, many of which are also symptoms of gender identity disorder: depression, attempted suicide, alienation, and what psychiatry calls "borderline personality disorder." As in Scholinski's case, these associated problems are often cited as additional reasons for hospitalization. Psychiatrists say hospitalization does not occur as readily now as five or ten years ago.

"In California, to hospitalize someone for gender identity disorder -- it would just never happen," says Speier. "The insurance companies just wouldn't pay for it. That hasn't occurred at Langley Porter for seven or eight years."

But gay and lesbian rights activists disagree. They cite private hospitals in Utah that specialize in curing "troubled youth," which, they say, is a euphemism for using "reparative therapy," also known as "conversion therapy," a treatment that purports to turn gays and lesbians into heterosexuals but has widely fallen into disrepute among many psychiatrists.

"It's a huge private industry with virtually no oversights," says Minter. "When you're talking about young people, not only do they not have access to legal representation, but they have few legal rights. The basic premise is that their parents have the right to consent to treatment." Minter runs a national hot line for gay and lesbian youth who have been institutionalized against their will and treated for gender identity disorder. She has received more than 70 calls in the last year, she says.

One of her early clients was Lyn Duff, now a 19-year-old reporter for Pacific News Service in San Francisco,

institutionalized against her will in Utah.

Originally from Southern California, Duff says her mother had her committed to a private hospital for troubled youth near Provo because of her sexual orientation.

She was there for 178 days before she "escaped" by feigning illness and being sent back to California.

Her treatment cost \$921 a day, excluding nurses, doctor's visits and medication. "It didn't work," she says. Duff eventually came to San Francisco, where she was placed in the care of foster parents.

She says she will never forget her experiences in Utah.

"I felt like I was being tortured, violated the whole time I was there," she says. "They tried to change who I was, my sexual orientation, my values, my beliefs, everything. They said that I didn't know what it was to be a man and what it meant to be a woman and they were going to show me." Of the 80 adolescents at that hospital, Duff says, most were between 13 and 16; about half were gay or lesbian, and others had been sexually molested or else were pregnant.

"Nobody wanted to be there," she adds. "The kids were constantly writing to their social workers back home saying, 'Please transfer me.'" Half a dozen of her friends there have now committed suicide, she says. Her best friend, Valerie, walked into her bedroom at her mother's house and shot herself two weeks before her 18th birthday, she says.

Now, three years later, Duff is still a lesbian.

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According to psychiatrists, gender identity disorder is a problem five times as common in boys as in girls. It may begin as early as 2 years of age when parents may observe in their son a strong preference for the stereotypical games and pastimes of girls. He may enjoy playing with Barbie dolls or girls and in school avoid rough and tumble games and sports. He may sit to urinate and pretend not to have a penis by pushing it between his legs.

Girls are less often diagnosed, because to wear short hair and jeans and be a "tomboy" is more socially accepted. Psychiatrists say these girls often have intense reactions to wearing girls' clothes, and are often misidentified by strangers as boys.

Scholinski says that she would often be thrown out of girls' restrooms because she was mistaken for a boy. Several times the police or security guards were called, and to this day she tries not to use public restrooms.

Treatment for the disorder varies, but nowadays usually includes the entire family. Some psychiatrists say gender identity disorder may result in girls who come from a family that had fervently hoped for a boy. Or it could result in boys who come from homes where fathers are aggressive and the mothers preoccupied during the early bonding months due to depression.

Activists are angry not just at the gender stereotyping, but also at the psychiatric belief that you must be either male or female to be mentally healthy.

"Says who?" says Minter. "I think it's absolutely absurd. There's a broad range of gender identity. This is an attempt on the part of the psychiatric profession and the state to gender-type everyone." Many mental-health workers are equally adamant.

"I disagree with that completely," says Dr. Annye Rothenberg of the Children's Health Council in Palo Alto. "A young child's natural instinct might be to just eat salty or sugary food. But every parent knows that is bad for them. They'll have a healthier life if they have a balanced diet. And emotionally they'll have an easier life if they are heterosexual."

"Not if you're *not* heterosexual," counters Minter. "It can be traumatizing if you're not. It's also dehumanizing (to go through the treatments). What they are saying is that you're a bad parent if you don't get your child fixed." For

the record, the APA's fourth edition of its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* warns that the *GID* diagnosis "is not meant to describe a child's nonconformity to stereotypical sex-role behaviors as, for example, in 'tomboyishness' in girls or 'sissyish' behavior in boys. Rather it represents a profound disturbance of the individual's sense of identity with regard to maleness and femaleness." Dr. Rochelle Klinger, immediate past chair of the APA's lesbian and gay issues committee, has some advice for activists who are attacking the APA: "I think the activists should focus on individual cases (of misuse) rather than on the APA as a whole," she said.

Jim Bridges

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Elvia Arriola, a law professor at the University of Texas School of Law in Austin, is working on a paper on institutionalized violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered youth. She has already collected empirical data the Travis County (Tex.) Juvenile Justice Detention Center, where, she reports, "extremely homophobic and transphobic staff have done things like classify gay-identified boys as 'sex offenders,' and put a transgendered-identified boy-to-girl in restraints for refusing to give up feminine underwear upon the issuance of a uniform."

"If you are aware of other sources of empirical data, cases on such abuses, either by medical institutions/doctors or law-related officials, I would love to have information on people to contact. I can pay for any photocopying charges. I am also interested in talking to anyone who is willing to share their own stories of abuse when they were adolescents and coming to terms with their sexual/gender identity." Anyone who wishes to share such a story can call he collect at (512) 471-5137, or (512) 474-7181 or e-mail <earriola@mail.law.utexas.edu>.



VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

A RESPONSE TO TRI-ESS' CRITICS

by Virginia Prince, Ph.D.

In recent months, the criticism oft-leveled against Tri-Ess -- that it is "exclusionary" or "discriminatory" against transsexuals -- has resurfaced. As co-founder of Tri-Ess, and having weathered these attacks many, many times in the past, I want you to know something of the organization's history and philosophies in hopes that you

"Tri-Ess is an organization for heterosexual CDs. It is not an organization against anyone else ... gay, bisexual, or transsexual."

will better understand what you are criticizing and (I hope) realize that you are "barking up the wrong tree."

As most of you know Tri-Ess is an organization *for* heterosexual CDs. It is not an organization *against* anyone else ... gay, bisexual or transsexual. The fact that Tri-Ess does not (knowingly) accept members of these other three groups says absolutely nothing derogatory to or about them. It simply says that we concentrate our efforts on heterosexual male crossdressers. I take complete personal responsibility for that policy because I conceived it back in 1962 when I founded Tri-Ess' predecessor organization: F.P.E., whose initials stood for Full Personality Expression. This meant that we were helping members to deal with and express *both* aspects of their personality, not just the one corresponding to their genital anatomy.

I formed F.P.E. from subscribers to *Transvestia*, which was the first magazine dedicated to those males who crossdressed. I founded both *Transvestia* and F.P.E. because I wanted to help other males like myself. I had "been there and done that" for a number of years so I realized what all other CDs were going through and felt that I might be able to help them. In those days most all of them thought that they were the "only ones in the world." Therefore I reasoned that a magazine dealing exclusively with their problems, desires, and fears would help them. Learning about others was great but actually meeting them was something else, so an organization was the answer.

But I was in my second marriage by then, having lost the first because of CDing. So I realized that any married CD's biggest problem was his wife. I wrote my first book,

The Transvestite and His Wife, to try to explain this to wives. Also, to have a functional organization you need members and meetings. I knew it would be nice if wives became sufficiently open minded that they would accompany their CD husbands to meetings. But since their biggest fear was that their husband might turn out to be either a homosexual or planning on having SRS someday, it wouldn't do to rub salt into that potential wound. I didn't want a wife to come and then discover that the "girl" on her right was talking about her boyfriend while the one on the other side was discussing having sex change surgery. That would drive the wife

away for good and probably assist in the breakup of the marriage. The wife could hardly be blamed for reasoning that if the people her husband regarded as friends and members of the same society were gay or SRS candidates, it increased the probability that her husband might be leaning in the same direction.

So what to do about it? It seemed very reasonable to me that if we had no gay or transsexual members it might reassure the wives that CDs like their husbands were very regular guys and that there was no reason for alarm. So I laid down that rule in the very beginning. Over the years I -- and subsequently, Carol Beecroft and I -- conducted several straw polls to find out the membership's feelings about retaining that policy or to open the group up to all comers as most of the other groups in the trans world did. It was always overwhelmingly "leave the rule alone, don't touch it." Several even said that if we made Tri-Ess an open group they would drop out of it. So we kept the rule in the past and we maintain it today.

This leads me to a certain often overlooked difference between an open and a selective (or focused) group. That is that FPE, and subsequently Tri-Ess, were designed to help CDs to live with their desires and get rid of the three monkeys of guilt, shame and fear that ride on all CDs' backs. We could do that because the groups were homogeneous. That is, the main problems were common in one degree or another to all. Homosexuals and transsexuals have a variety of other problems, personal, psychological and financial. I did not in the beginning and I do not now feel that I could understand gayness and

TSism well enough to be able to be of much help to such people. Thus I concentrated my activities, my publication and my organization on the group I did understand and felt I could help because I was part of it.

On the other hand, open groups are not so much "help" oriented and their functions are more social and perhaps educational. That is not to say that Tri-Ess doesn't have social functions and purposes or that open group members may not get individual help from other members. But no other organization has attempted a national convention specifically for wives of CDs; Tri-Ess did and it is called SPICE. We also publish a newsletter providing counselling for wives. Our quarterly magazine (*The Femme Mirror*) is almost as thick as IFGE's *Transgender Tapestry* but it is not full of personal ads and a group index as *Tapestry* is. We are a family oriented organization and as such we don't want to make family life any more difficult than it may already be. That is why we *select* members on the basis of their heterosexuality. We do not *exclude* gays and TSs as we are often accused of doing. We just don't *select them in* because they don't match our philosophy.

As a kind of parallel example: People with heart disease, diabetes, multiple sclerosis or paraplegia each have their own types of problems and people who set out to personally or organizationally help members of one group do not attempt to understand and help the others. You just can't do everything for everybody so Tri-Ess simply concentrates on straight CDs.

Now we come to current times. It is taken for granted that we have what is called a movement, or a community. But we are not really a community; rather, as I indicated in my column last month, we are a *coalition* made up of straight crossdressers, gay crossdressers, just plain gays and lesbians, bisexuals, MTF and FTM transsexuals and numerous satellite groups like the fetishists, S&Ms, bondage folk, etc. Since there are problems of common interest to the constituent groups in the "Transgender Coalition" we should join forces to deal with these and let each of the constituent groups go their own ways on everything else. An obvious area of common concern is

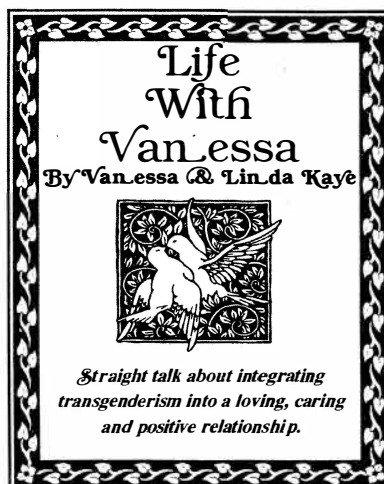
education about the various human types that make up our coalition, to minimize the rejection that the rest of society heaps on all of us. We should also all be concerned about various laws that restrict our rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness", naturally including the right to present ourselves as we wish, to adopt the gender role we wish, to not be discriminated against in housing, jobs, medical care, social privileges and legal limitations. There is a vast area that all groups in our (non) community can cooperate on for the benefit of all.

But what do we have in actuality? We have those on the one hand advocating and celebrating diversity -- witness the new IFGE Diversity award presented this year to American Airlines, -- the attempt in integrate people of various faiths, ethnic background, religion, etc. into common, mutually beneficial activities, policies, communities, etc. Then we have the fundamentalist conservatives who have their own vision of what is right and what our goals should be. In short, there is a verbal battle between those who want room for everybody under the same tent but leaving the right to each group in that tent to "do its own thing" as long as it doesn't infringe on the rights of others (this could be called Unity with Diversity) and those who think that to fight the common opponent we should all be alike in membership and other policies.

As I said last month, all kinds of fundamentalists have one thing in common -- they are "right" and you had better see the light and join up with them. In the gender world the concept that the only "right" way to have a group is an open one where every type is welcome. Thus the gender fundamentalists feel that Tri-Ess has no business dealing with one portion of the coalition and not dealing with all the others too. In short, Tri-Ess should change its focus from one segment that it can help to every group most of which it is not in a position to understand or help in any significant way.

The Society for the Second Self is not only the oldest but the largest group in the tent and it has brought more help to more members than any other group. I wish the

(continued on page 28)

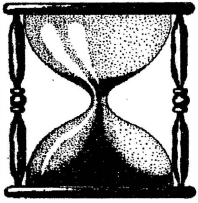


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HIS/HERSTORY

GENDER-BENDING IN THE HISTORY OF THE THEATRE

by Carl B. Pearlston Jr.

[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the Los Angeles Times as a rebuttal to an article on the Women's Shakespeare Company, which limits all roles and production crew to women. It appears here with the permission of both the Times and the author.]

In Shakespeare's day all stage roles were played by men, but why?

As noted in the *Cambridge Guide to World Theatre* and the *Oxford Companion to the Theatre*, female impersonation has a long cultural history dating to early European and Asian religious cults, in which women were forbidden to perform. Early Greek and Roman theater observed the convention of having males portray females -- even Nero was said to have acted the role of an incestuous sister in mime drama.

Men dressing as women was a tradition of pagan and medieval festivals such as Saturnalia, Feast of Fools and New Year's. Men playing women was observed as normal in Europe into the 17th Century, and into the 20th in Asia, especially in Chinese opera and Japanese Kabuki drama, which banished women from the stage for fear of provoking wantonness.

Except for amateur roles in morality dramas in the medieval era, such as portraying Eve in the Garden of Eden, it was not until the 16th Century that women first appeared as professional actresses in *commedia dell'arte* troupes in Italy and somewhat later in France. Charles II of England had seen women portraying women in Europe and brought the custom with him when he was restored to the English throne in 1660, after the English civil war. The first woman to act on the London stage played Desdemona in Shakespeare's *Othello* on Dec. 8, 1660, and thereafter, women were regularly seen playing female roles.

Even after the Restoration, however, men continued to take roles of comic female characters, called "dame" parts, from the English pantomime of the 18th Century and 19th Century to plays on the modern American stage (*Charley's Aunt*) and films (*Some Like It Hot*), in which crossdressing or being "in drag" is the main plot device. That term, which originally compared the train of a gown to the drag or brake on a coach, entered theatrical parlance around 1870.

During World War II, all-male "drag" reviews were popular in the armed forces. Female impersonation was

later exalted in such clubs as Finocchios and La Cage aux Folles, in films such as *The Rocky Horror Show* and *La Cage*, by troupes such as Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, and in the androgyny of rock musicians such as Alice Cooper, David Bowie and Boy George. Some ballets

Men playing women on the stage has been a custom for years; the same cannot be said for women playing men.

have female impersonator roles, such as the evil witch in *Sleeping Beauty*, the sisters in *Cinderella* and the mother in *La Fille Malgarde*, all of which have a comic aspect. The audience always knows that the performer is a man dressed as a woman, and that is part of the fun.

Male impersonation by females, on the other hand, has had little sanction from either ancient religion or folk tradition and has usually been condemned by society. During the 17th Century, when women were first seen on the London stage, actresses were frequently dressed in men's garb -- knee-breeches -- to show off their legs; Samuel Pepys noted in his diary of such a performer, "She had the best legs that I ever saw, and I was well pleased by it."

These "breeches" roles continued through the early 20th Century in the English music hall (*Burlington Bertie From Bow*) and in English and American theater, with women playing children or adolescents (*Peter Pan*), but not mature males. They were thus non-sexual or sexually ambiguous.

"Breeches" roles are still common in opera as a relic of 18th-Century *castrato* singing and an effort to supply a certain vocal balance.

After World War I, with its radical changes in both dress and culture, the theater saw much more sexually explicit,

unambiguous crossdressing; for example, Marlene Dietrich in her tuxedo conveyed a clear lesbian image.

Women have long been cast in certain male Shakespearean roles, such as children, or the young princes, or as Puck or Ariel, who are sexually ambiguous characters. And I have seen current productions in which male roles have been changed to female for the sake of diversity, at Shakespeare's expense.

But convincingly portraying a mature male has proven elusive. Sarah Bernhardt essayed Hamlet; one critic said she lacked only the buttons to her flies, while another said she was *tres grand dame*. Judith Anderson also made the experiment. The problem is that the audience never believes that the woman performer is really a man; its attention is concentrated on the technique of how well the woman portrays a man, rather than on the substance of the play itself, again at Shakespeare's expense.

To have men play the females' roles, as in the 16th Century, deprived those audiences of seeing realism and true feminine attributes on the stage.

To revert to that antiquated, but reversed, situation in which women play the male roles is certainly not theatrical progress.



Carl B. Pearlston Jr. is an attorney in Torrance, Calif., and a longtime theater buff. We appreciate his allowing this reprint.

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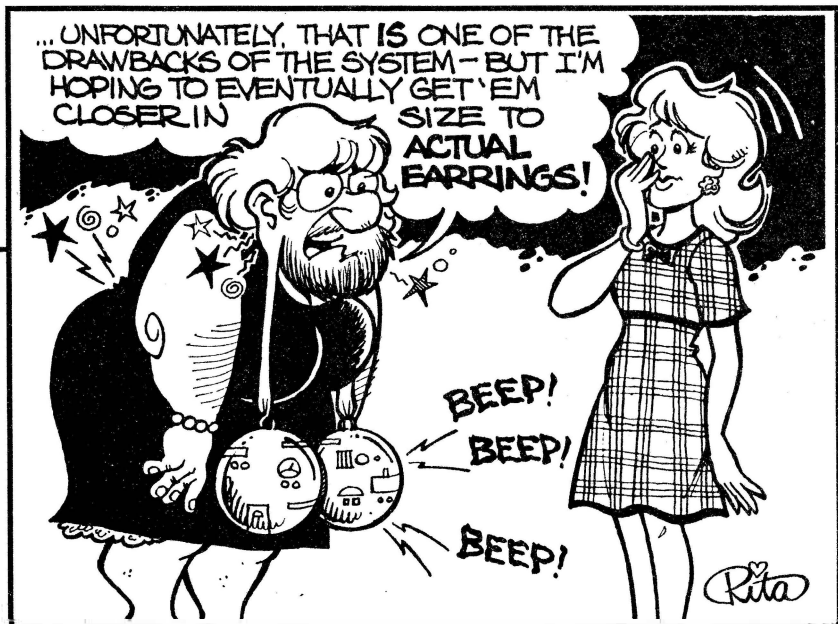
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The Bearded Lady

By Ricky Hunt
Illustration by Rita

We're a creative bunch, those of us males who like to wear women's clothes. I've never seen a bunch of folks so intent on inventing new words to describe every little nuance of just why they do this or wear that. My sisters seem to have an endless capacity to transform every Greek or Roman root for two into some new combination of syllables that exactly describes their motivation for putting on a dress. Perhaps this is done in an effort to communicate just exactly who they are, where they're going and their political stance as they travel, but I rather suspect it has more to do with being able to put a label on the other person for our own comfort. I find it all very confusing. Perhaps we gender benders should take a cue from a those whose sexual orientation has been so much cause for comment. They seem to be satisfied with simply "gay" and "lesbian", a sexual segregation which perhaps makes sense. With just these two descriptions they have created some great acronyms, yet the simplicity of the labels speaks for itself. Personally I'd be satisfied with "man-in-a-dress" and "crossdresser" is good enough for me. I really don't need to have some esoteric combination of "trans", "bi" or "tri" grafted awkwardly to some classical root stock to let the world know I (1) wear dresses for the fun of it, (2) have no interest in rearranging my bodily plumbing, (3) know all too well I don't look feminine in the least and don't care and (4) do not take part in group activities involving farm animals, small children or occult trappings. It seems we are trying to pack more and more information in a simple word. I even learned that the Transsexual Menace sees a political statement is spelling Transsexual with one "s." I'm sorry to disappoint you, ladies, but I hadn't even noticed the deliberate misspelling until it was pointed out to me, let alone its political import!

But where there is a need some Red Blooded American Entrepreneur will find a way to make a buck, and I am no exception. A few columns back I invited the world's fashion mavens to make me their poster girl for their next line, but the silence has been, well, silent. In fact you could hear my slip rustling and the elastic stretching in my bra straps for all the response I've gotten. So there is only one thing to do, I am announcing my own line of TV fashions that not only will flatter your figure but will provide anyone in the know with an exact label for your brand of crossdressing. I have applied my vast electronic knowledge to create a set



of earrings with a powerful miniature computer inside. This computer will constantly scan the apparel of anyone within 100 feet of you and, when it spots someone wearing one of Ricky's TV Fashions, will discretely whisper in your ear the information coded into the dress pattern. Rest assured the thing will only talk to you and not accept voice commands. We are conspicuous enough as is without having someone walking down the street whispering in their own ear to attract attention. With my line of clothing and accessories you can make a political statement at the same time you make a fashion statement. When the whole world is online, there will be no need for any more new words in our community.

I did have a bit of a problem in getting the proper way of encoding the information, though. Since the accepted Fashion Wisdom is that vertical stripes make you thinner, I tried a variation on the supermarket bar coding at first. It worked well, with the earrings successfully translating the encoded message to my squadron of testers as I wandered around the mall. I had to abandon it after going to the grocery for a head of lettuce when the supermarket scanner flashed my weight on the checkout screen and they made me pay \$7.99 a pound before I could leave the store. (I was very lucky that the scanner read the runs in my stockings as a half price coupon and what with coupon doubling I got off lightly. I did look kind of funny doing high kicks until the scanner read my leg properly.)

My next idea was a small radio transmitter with the antenna woven into the fabric of the dress. After all, what CD could resist the urge to buy something so functional in gold lame? Again it worked, but very time I got near one of those cute electronic displays for the lottery it flashed my bra size and gave my odds against passing as over a billion to one. Two ladies did place a bet on me, as they were the

(continued on page 28)



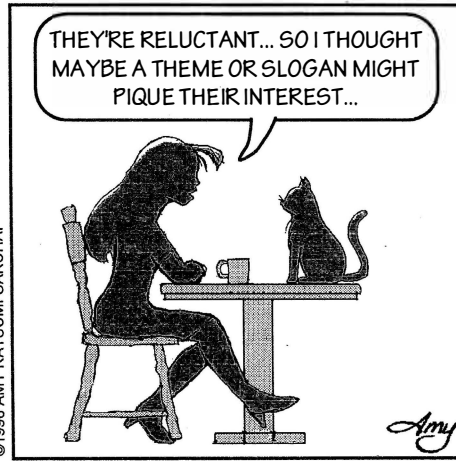
THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



PANDORA'S BOX

by Amy Sakurai



WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT? by Christine-Jane Wilson

THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner

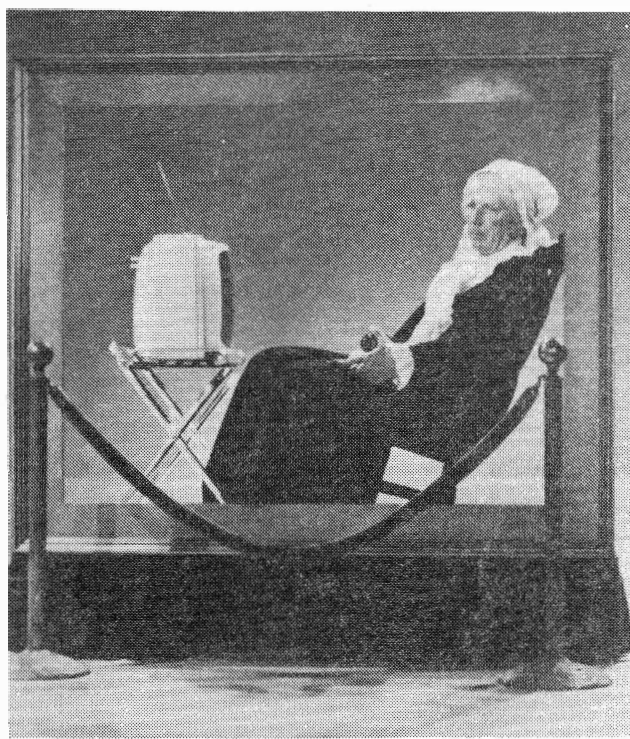


GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

from the archives of Ralph Judd



1970's: Michael Palin as Queen Victoria in a sketch on *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, BBC.



Airdate unknown (circa 1958): Durward Kirby appears as an updated version of "Whistler's Mother" on *The Garry Moore Show*, CBS.



3/27/76: Cinderella (Carol) is visited by her fairy godmother (Harvey Korman) in a sketch on *The Carol Burnett Show*, CBS.



TRANSGENDER TIPS

AN ACCIDENT WITH A REAL IMPACT

by Jennifer Thompson

What follows is an account of something that happened to me not long ago. An auto accident while en femme is one of those things that we all dread -- especially those of us who are concerned that our passability might not be up to such an occasion. I don't pretend to have handled the situation perfectly, but I *did* handle it. Here's the story, and the lessons I learned from it ...

One Saturday, not long ago, it was time for the monthly support group meeting. I don't normally attend anymore, but some friends were in town who I don't get to see any other way, so I decided to head downtown after all.

Just before I started getting ready, my soon-to-be brother in law called, inviting me to his bachelor party (in about half an hour). Well, it wasn't really *the* party -- it was more like a few jokers from his work deciding "hey, let's go drinking." I had to decline ... but having recently come out to him, at least I didn't have to hurry up and think of something. He understood, and we took a rain check.

(It's odd -- not long before that I got an invitation to someone else's bachelor party. I'm out to that friend, too, but it appears that I'm still "one of the boys." I wonder how long I'll keep getting invitations to these Guy Things? I guess that can be another barometer for me, measuring how far along the path I've gone. Or maybe it's a measure of how far my friends have come.)

So I got dressed, touched up my face, and drove down. The meeting was at the Diversity Center, where I work (en femme) as a volunteer. I went a slightly different route than usual, and in so doing put myself in the position of needing to turn left where no left turns are allowed. But not to worry; I just went up to the next break in the median (a fast-food place just beyond), hit the turn signal, and waited for the one oncoming car to get out of my way.

Wham!

The next thing I knew, I was in midair (good thing I was wearing the seat belt). The impact of the collision knocked me right out from under my wig (as I passed the rear-view mirror, I noticed: "Hey! That's my hair!"). In the same breath I realized that this rear-end fender-bender was one of the most dreaded scenarios of those I habitually concoct for myself, a two-stage nightmare where (1) we have an accident, then (2) we get beaten to death.

Still in midair, I snatched my hair and jammed it back on my head.

The impact killed my engine, yet it still gave me enough impetus to coast right up the (uphill) entry to the restaurant and park. My first instinct was to *get out of there!* I hit the starter ... it wouldn't engage. Someone in

**It's a crossdresser's worst nightmare ...
being in an accident while "dressed".
What one CD learned may help you.**

the car was saying some terribly unladylike phrases; I realized it was me. Escape being out of the question, I frantically straightened my hair, finger-combing it as best I could, hoping against hope that the other driver would at least not be homicidal ...

The other driver followed me into the lot. By the time he parked and looked after his passenger, I had myself reasonably well reassembled, although I wasn't about to win any beauty contests. As I shakily got out of the car, he walked up. Looking me up and down ("Oh God -- he's read me already!") he addressed me: "Ma'am, are you all right?"

I was rattled enough by the collision that I didn't really have to worry about finding a high-pitched voice. I limped around to look at the damage and answered, quavering, "I ... think so." In spite of the stress of the situation, I was amused: another first for me -- first time to be "ma'amed" at the scene of an accident.

As we traded information, I successfully avoided showing him my driver's license while getting his. As I was writing my information for him, I started to put "Jennifer", but realized -- oops -- that Jenny doesn't have any insurance. My male name definitely wouldn't do, given the situation. I wrote down "Abbie," my partner's name.

He surveyed the damage with me (not too bad, really) and helped make sure my brake lights and turn signals still worked. He asked me to call him with an estimate; he wanted to avoid turning in an insurance claim, if he could afford it. As he turned to leave, he "ma'amed" me one last time -- "Sorry again, ma'am," he said. "I'll talk to you later."

When I got to the meeting, about 30 seconds after getting

back in my car, I was still pretty jumpy. I walked in, and they did the usual thing ("Hi, Jenny, how are you ...") and I all of a sudden couldn't talk. I tried to tell what had happened, and just started shaking. Delayed reaction, I suppose. They were all very nice; either Erin or Kaylin, I forget which, brought me something to drink, and I realized that Linda (an R.N.) was unobtrusively taking my pulse. From there, I'd say the evening got better. At least I eventually calmed down. I'm still just a little stiff in the neck, but I'm okay.

Later in the week, having obtained a couple repair estimates, for repairs, I called the fellow. He wasn't home, so I left a message with his roommate to please call Abbie. It's hard to tell how passable my voice is on the phone, but I could tell from the way the man dealt with me that it was okay.

I was out by the time the fellow returned my call, but Abbie (the real one) was home. She had no idea at first what this man was talking about, but caught on quickly, and pleaded sleepiness for her slowness. They chatted for a bit; he let her know that he'd submitted a claim to his insurance, and we should be getting some forms soon in the mail. The last thing he wanted to know from her was: Was her husband upset?

I didn't know until that moment whether I'd really pulled it off, or if he was just a nice man. How good for my morale! I told Abbie, though, that she'd missed her chance at a great punchline: "Was my husband upset? Why, yes -- he flipped his wig!"

Now, I tell this as a funny story, and it always draws laughs. But there are some lessons I've learned from the experience, some of which have made me just a little smarter, while others have knocked me out of my previous terrified-little-TS mindset.

The lessons:

* I was an idiot to have even *considered* running away from the scene. Not only was that illegal, but it would have left *me* with a damaged car, higher insurance premiums, and possible medical expenses out of my own pocket -- all through no fault of my own. Thank heavens for a balky starter ... which, by the way, never faltered before, and never has since the incident.

* The best decision I made all day was to stay at the scene, and just deal with the situation. It was a good thing that I

wasn't forced to produce my license, but by the time it came up, if he'd demanded it, I'd have handed it over. I also would've called the police *right then* -- all bets would have been off.

* Next time something like this happens I *will* call the police. They've seen it all before, and they're just paid to determine the facts of the case. If my next partner-in-collision happens to read me, and if he's belligerent, the cops can calm him down. I'd say if you're worried about unpleasantness at the scene, you could stay in your car, lock the doors, and wait for the police -- Abbie told me that she, and a good number of her girlfriends, would do exactly that anyway, routinely.

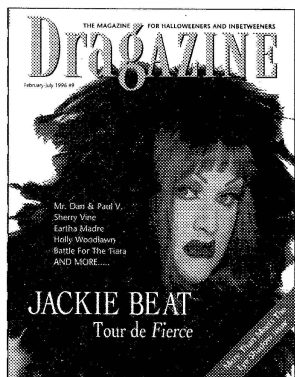
* Using my partner's name in the information exchange worked in this case, but I don't know if I'd try it again. There being no police report, and us both being on the same policy, I don't know if using her name constitutes fraud, but it wasn't exactly aboveboard, was it? It all goes back to the "calling the police" issue -- using Abbie's name was a self-defense tactic that would have been unnecessary if the cops were there.

* The real lesson in all this is easy to say, but hard to learn. It's the lesson that transsexuals (or crossdressers, or what-have-you) have the same rights and the same responsibilities as anyone else. Wearing a skirt does *not* make you automatically at fault in an accident, nor does it get you arrested. Running away, for whatever illogical reason, *does* make you at fault, and *can* get you arrested. Eventually, chances are that we'll all have a worst-feared thing that comes to pass. When it does, Just try to keep your cool. Don't ... *ahem* ... flip your wig.



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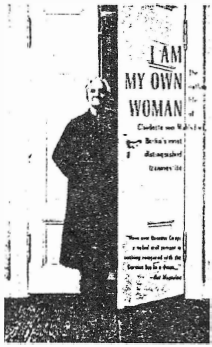


Alternative Presses

By Kimberleigh Richards

Move over, Virginia Prince.

The autobiography of Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, Berlin's most distinguished transvestite, who has lived openly as a male in dresses for much of his life, has just been translated from the original German into English and released by the lesbian/feminist publisher Cleis Press as part of their expansion into serious transgender issues.



I Am My Own Woman (Ich Bin Meine Eigene Frau) (ISBN 1-57344-010-8, Cleis Press, 1996) is more about the survival of homosexuality in East Germany as the days of Kaiser Wilhelm gave way to the Third Reich and then to the division (and later reunification) of Germany. Von Mahlsdorf's story is told through her passion for furnishings of the

Grunderzeit era of the late 1800s and her efforts to preserve them in the face of oppressive governments that would many times have gladly seized her collection to balance their always-in-deficit budgets.

Along the way, we learn of how she was sometimes ridiculed, often the source of amusement by neighbors, and yet frequently accepted for simply being true to her own inner feelings. Encouraged by her crossdressing lesbian aunt Luise (whose lover, Charlotte, was the inspiration for the name she assumed), this simple, unassuming person with a determined love for beautiful antique furniture and other pieces of historical significance walked a careful balance between satisfying her inner self and appeasing the single-minded officials who could have, at any point, brought her existence to a permanent end.

Like any truly engrossing story, von Mahlsdorf's transgenderism is incidental, being simply a fact to reflect on from time to time, as when being mistaken for a genetic female prevented her from being pressed into service by invading troops, or when bureaucracy, uncertain what to make of this somewhat androgynous creature, simply let her have what she requested rather than

waste time on pointless investigation. That she has survived so many changes in governments and remains at peace with herself is remarkable; in fact, she seems truly embarrassed at being considered a symbol for the German gay and lesbian community.

Charlotte von Mahlsdorf is 68 years old, and she continues as the *de facto* curator of the Grunderzeit Museum in Berlin. Which is as it should be, for without her there would be no artifacts from which to create a museum. Something about all that makes me smile.



A pair of documentaries on transsexualism have been released on video this year by The Cinema Guild; one is fairly well-done, the other more self-serving.

The Blank Point: What is Transsexualism? is the better of the two, presenting the diversity of two male-to-female transsexuals (one who is immediately pre-op, the other post-op for several years) and one female-to-male transsexual. Also featured is footage of a group session by San Francisco psychotherapist Lin Fraser and plastic surgeons Michael Brownstein and Richard Murray.

Of the three interview subjects, post-op Sarah seems to both the most candid and the most knowledgeable, and comes across very eloquently and honestly. FTM Richard is also open, although at times he seemed more guarded; however, he does deliver what I feel is the best quote of the film ("My condition can only be called 'gender dysphoria' if one assumes that gender identity is formed by examining one's body, discovering it to be either male or female, and accepting that ... [G]ender identity is not a construct based on logic.").

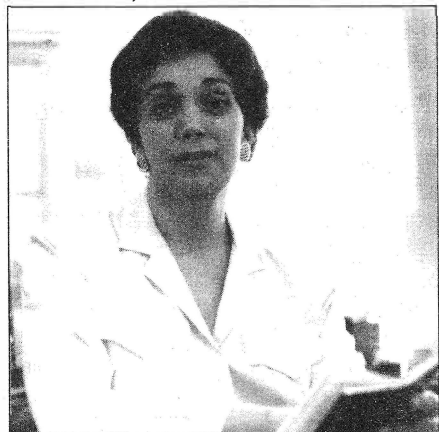
The filmmaker, Xiao-Yen Wang, was motivated by her encounters with a post-op MTF transsexual teacher during



Richard, a FTM transsexual featured in *The Blank Point*.

her early years in the U.S., and as a result *The Blank Point* presents the answers to the questions she had herself on the subject. My only serious complaint are that -- being an immigrant from Beijing -- her narrative frequently employs the incorrect term "transvestitism" (sic), and hearing that continually during the hour began to grate on my nerves before long.

Nevertheless, this film won several awards the year it was



Sarah, a post-op MTF TS.

who simply want an honest look at this aspect of human sexuality.

The second film, 1995's *A Transsexual Journey*, was produced as a documentary for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's 24-hour cable news channel; unfortunately its subject, Katherine Elizabeth Cohen, is so self-centered that the final result is flawed. Cohen takes every opportunity to expound on her personal philosophies about transsexualism, even when they are at odds with accepted medical knowledge.

It does get one fact right; that the "official" source for sex reassignment surgery in Canada, the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, is so restrictive that many transsexuals seek private assistance at their own expense rather than accept the state-financed solution. Yet this is mentioned almost in passing, and I found myself wishing that director/producer Behzad Sedghi had concentrated on the

originally released (1991), including Best Feature Video Documentary at the Athens International Film and Video Festival. It is of excellent educational value, both for future therapists and for those

Clarke Institute rather than on Cohen.

Both videos are available for purchase or rental from The Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway #506, New York NY 10019; the toll-free line for ordering is 1-800-723-5522. They also operate a website at <http://www.cinemaguild.com/cinemaguild>.



Our friends at the Tampa Gender Identity Program were kind enough to send us a copy of their latest project, a series of transgender reference guides, including frequently asked questions about transsexualism, which are designed to be loaded onto a computer and read using the Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Unfortunately, the distribution disk was for Windows, and although I eventually found my DOS version of Acrobat, there was no way to extract the files for the guide itself without installing the Windows version of Acrobat. Since TGIP made a special point of mentioning in the printed brochure that accompanied their disks that their guides could be read on different computers with the proper version of Acrobat, not including the ability to extract the guide separately was a major oversight on their part. To make matters worse, their website at <http://www.nu-woman.com> was inaccessible to me for some indecipherable technical reason; after several tries at various times, I tired of seeing "unable to connect to remote host" and gave up.

If TGIP ever distributes their guides independent of the Windows Acrobat install disk, though, I'll be happy to give them a proper review in a future issue. If you are one of the millions who *does* run Windows, drop them a line at P.O. Box 273107, Tampa FL 33688-3107 (e-mail: nu-woman@intnet.net) and I'm sure they'll be happy to send you a copy. Let me know if it works, will you?



We received a new literary 'zine called *salome* in the mail several weeks ago; it's dedicated to providing an outlet for queer diversity, and includes some transsexual-oriented poetry, although it's still more overwhelmingly gay/lesbian oriented (except for a three page comic-book story which appears to deal with a woman attracted to her male neighbor ... I'm *still* trying to figure out why that's in here). Perhaps future issues will attract more of the diversity in contributions that publisher Bill Olver is seeking.

You can reach them by e-mail at griot@mail.well.com or at 2211 NE Halsey #3, Portland OR 97232.

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THE BEARDED LADY ... continued from page 21

best odds they had seen in the lottery for some time. I finally settled on a fractal pattern with the outfits coming in complete Mandelbrot sets. No one seems to have used that for a commercial information system and all those lovely pastels make a really nice pattern.

So keep your eyes open ... soon you will be able to cruise the malls without that agonizing guesswork when you see someone who might be a sister but you really don't want to ask for fear of being foolish in a public place. And the next time someone invents a new word for transvestism, please refer them to me so I can encode it quickly and spare you all the trouble of having to decide if it's as dumb as all the other words we have invented in the past.

VIRGIN VIEWS ... continued from page 18

fundamentalists would occupy themselves with the more pressing problems that effect everybody and stop trying to tie Tri-Ess into all the open groups. I have nothing against the so-called "open groups" ... let them serve in their own way. But in the interests of diversity let there be one organization that deals with straight crossdressers. Afterall, the FTM group is not hassled for limiting its membership to those who qualify. Even members who belong to open groups should appreciate the help Tri-Ess has given to so many fearful, just out of the closet, CDs over the years. They should support, at least in principle, its right to set its own policies and grant it the freedom to do its work with those who seek its help and appreciate its philosophy.



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

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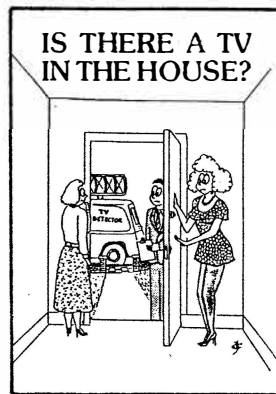
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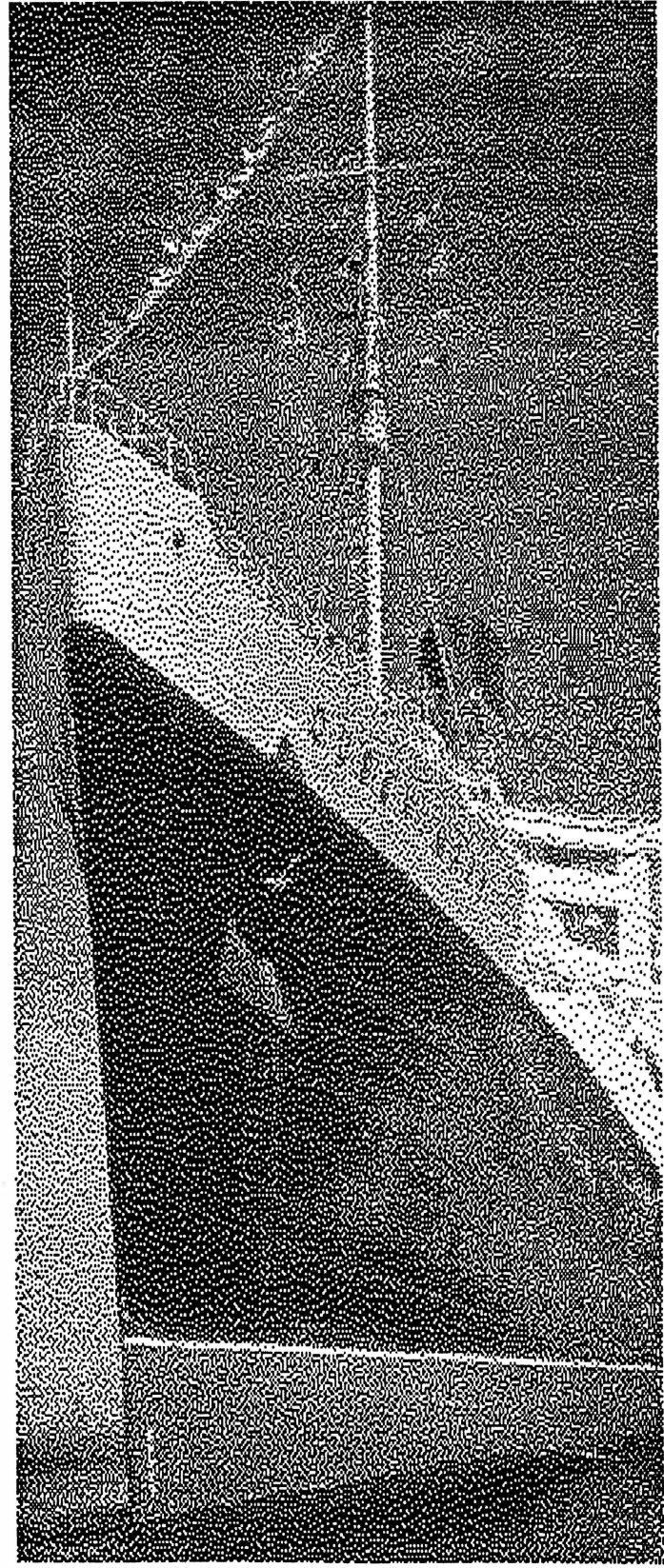


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November 8-10, 1996: "Rainbow Spirit Convergence", for LGBT and Native healers and teachers, Highlands NC. Information from Kindred Spirits, P.O. Box 18332, Asheville NC 28814, or by calling (704) 253-9882.

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

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

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

May 15-18, 1997: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, produced by Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406. Information via Internet: <poco@cdspub.com> or by phone: (610) 640-9449.

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

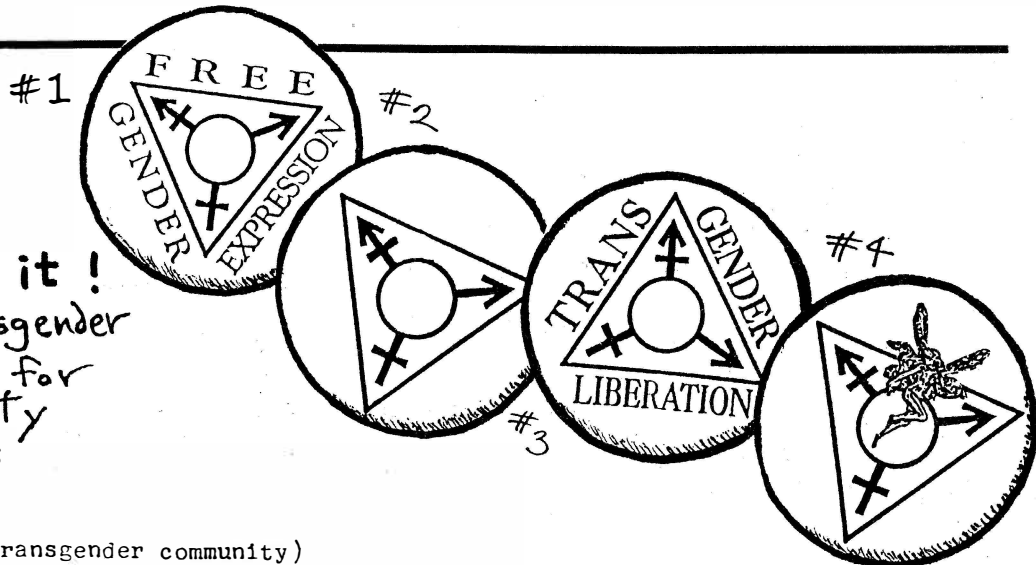
September 18-21, 1997: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA. See May 15 listing for details.

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

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#82 (August 1996): How much does the controversy over same-sex marriages affect the transgender community?; The diversity of African cultures' approaches to crossdressing and intersexuality; Hormones as a cause of crossdressing; Fashion advice for younger crossdressers.



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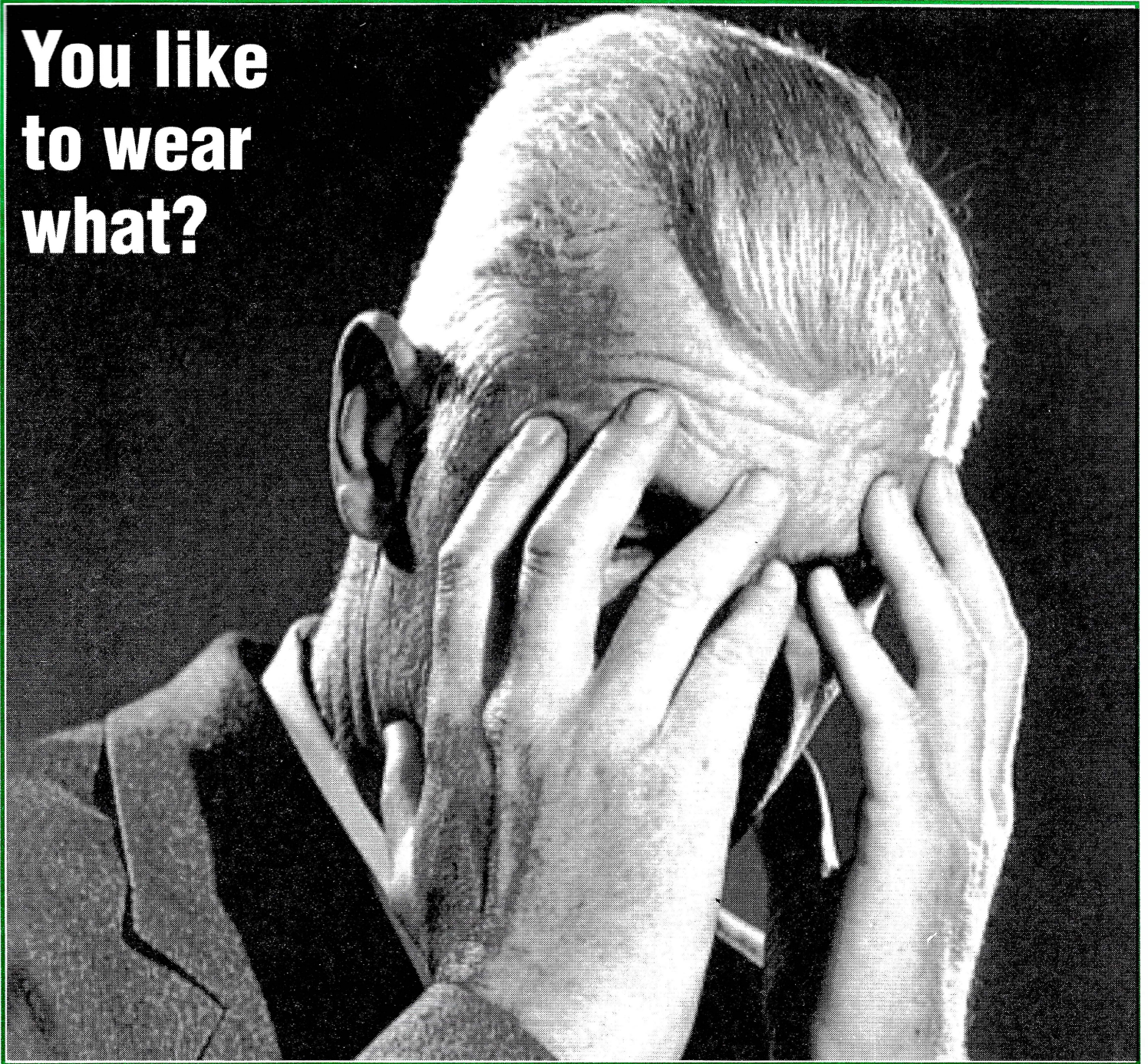
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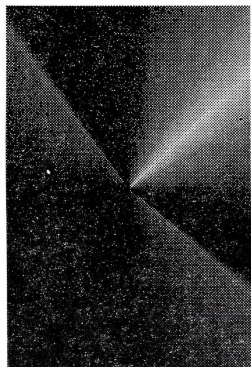
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