

# CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

#76

\$5.00



THE END OF AN EXPERIMENT IN MAINSTREAMING  
FEMALE TRANSGENDERISTS IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE  
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# CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

FEBRUARY 1996  
 (ISSUE #76)



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## KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

### THE END OF A NOBLE EXPERIMENT

by Kimberleigh Richards

The odds are very high that if you're reading this you are one of our subscribers.

I can make that statement with some degree of accuracy because this issue of **Cross-Talk** has the lowest distribution since issue #41 in March 1993, when our distribution was a mix of mail order subscriptions and two dozen assorted gay/lesbian bookstores and transgender community boutiques. Before we started using what could have been --

**"The decision to terminate this nearly three-year-old experiment became a necessary one."**

should have been -- profit to finance an expensive experiment to bring the transgender community to the mainstream in a tasteful, non-offensive way.

On October 22, 1993, I signed my first distribution agreement for **Cross-Talk** with an alternative press-friendly wholesaler; over the next two years, we would have as many as eight distributors working with us to expand our reach far beyond what we could accomplish on our own. The beginning of a new era, we hoped; the revelation of our serious side to people who, finding us on the newsstand or in the bookstores, would come to know that we aren't the "perverts" they always believed us to be.

At first, the experiment worked well. Our new distributor quickly gained us the support of Barnes & Noble, as well as their Bookstar division, and we began to appear in their larger stores. Borders, Hastings, Crossroads, and Tower also found us non-offensive and started allowing their store managers to add us to their racks.

There were a few chinks in our armor early on. A distributor in Scotland signed on to see if we'd sell in the U.K. (We didn't, but chalked it up to cultural differences.) One wholesaler specializing in alternative bookstores took us on; we proved to be a little *too* mainstream for their customers. Our regional distributor, who hoped our localness would overcome the fact that the newsstands they serviced really didn't carry a lot of alternative titles, kept us on even when returns were overwhelming, just because we'd come down there every couple of months and pick up the unsold copies so they wouldn't have to destroy them.

Nevertheless, early in 1995, we really believed we had broken through when a major, well-known, national mainstream magazine distributor opted to carry us after reading only one issue of **Cross-Talk**. As it turns out, trying to capitalize on that breakthrough nearly became our undoing.

The new distributor delayed nearly six months between signing the agreement and ordering any issues for their customers; by this time, we'd spent money on flyers and postage to promote ourselves to their customers, but less than 10% of them signed on. And the early sales from those outlets were so dismal that the distributor didn't even wait for all the returns to come in before advising us that they were terminating

our agreement. Meanwhile, our original distributor was seeing a drop in sales (not only with us but with other alternative titles); we had reached a plateau with Barnes & Noble, *et al* in the number of store managers who would stock us, and while sales at gay/lesbian bookstores remained strong, a new marketing tactic to increase the number of these locations stalled when the other publishers who had agreed to participate started pulling out of the project.

I contacted a friend of mine who works in the magazine distribution business -- who had been managing to sell a few copies of **Cross-Talk** per month through an alternative press-friendly bookstore chain her company services -- and she said that even mainstream titles like *Time* and *Newsweek* were having problems with newsstand sales.

So I started crunching numbers, and what I discovered was that we had not generated enough newsstand and bookstore sales to as much as pay for the *printing* of the issues we'd sent out for distribution. So the decision to terminate this nearly three-year-old experiment became a necessary one.

That is not to say the decision came easily for me. When you enter into a plan with the goal of improving our community's image, you want to achieve that goal at any cost. Sadly, when that requires you to overcome many factors outside of your control, you don't always have the luxury of convincing those who have the control to ignore the factors outside of *their* control. That is essentially what has happened here.

It would seem odd, were it not for the problems the magazine industry as a whole is having, to make the statement that while we are cutting our distribution by 60% our readership will only decline by 20%. But that is the case, and the 80% that are left comprise our core readership. They always have, but now they have an unrivaled claim to being the most important people in this magazine's existence.

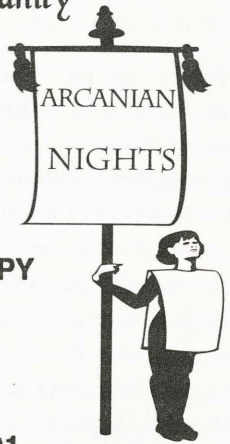
There will be some who have observed all of our trials with the mainstream who will be quick to claim that **Cross-Talk** failed because it is not "sexy" enough. While acknowledging that our look may not have attracted enough non-core readers -- in other words, those who will buy a transgender magazine because it is filled with pictures of pretty T's -- to make the experiment a success, for us to change the content of this magazine to pander to the "admirers" would have meant that the result would not have been **Cross-Talk**. I don't know *what* it would have been, but I know it wouldn't have been the magazine our core readership has grown to expect.

So we'll be smaller, we'll be a little harder to find, we'll be a little less mainstream driven ... but we'll also be able to produce this magazine for less (and thus charge less) because I've made a sound business decision to cut loose the unprofitable aspects of our business. And we'll also remain true to our original purpose: to be the *best* source of news and information to the transgender community

and to do it without lowering our standards. In the final estimation, I will stand tall and remain proud of what I have accomplished. Because after our first 38 issues as a magazine, even with the setbacks, this is *still* a better publication than it was in the 38 issues as a newsletter that preceded the past three years. And I'm not about to apologize for that.

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It's time for the entire community to pitch in. GenderPAC wants to ensure that your right to work, your right to fair housing, and your right to reasonable public accommodations will not be denied. GenderPAC will continue to lobby Congress in 1996 for transgender inclusion in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). But, we can't do it alone and we can't do it for free. Your tax-deductible contribution will make the crucial difference. Give and give generously. You'll feel really good about it. Send your contributions to:

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## The NewsQueen

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

Time again for the drag version of "America's Most Wanted," with your hostess, Paula Jordan Sinclair ...



But before we turn our attention to the latest criminal activity, here is a follow-up on two stories we reported earlier.

A Philadelphia jury sentenced Donyell Paddy to death for the 1993 slaying of a woman who was set to testify against him in a double murder trial. Witnesses testified that Paddy was wearing a flower-print dress and a wig when he jumped out of a car and shot LaShawn Whaley six times.

Another Philadelphia court sentenced John Hudgins to five to 10 years in prison for molesting the 9-year-old son of the woman he lived with. The prosecutor depicted Hudgins as "a homosexual, a crossdresser."



William Warren, who is serving time in an Oklahoma prison for murder, has sued state correctional officials for the right to crossdress behind bars.

Specifically, Warren wants to wear women's nylon bikini briefs. His suit says that by making him wear "white cotton, thick and absorbent" underwear, prison officials are subjecting him to cruel and unusual punishment. But Warren doesn't admit to being a crossdresser, claiming that his preference for panties is caused by a medical condition -- irritable bowel syndrome.



Police in Atlanta are on the lookout for a tall transvestite or transsexual who, with two accomplices, robbed a jewelry store of \$8,000 in gold and jeweled rings.

Store employees say that the woman's two male companions distracted them while she emptied the contents of three display trays into a large bag she was carrying. The trio left the store before the theft was discovered.



However, crossdressers are more often the victims of crime. Two teenagers in Miami face hate crimes charges after they harassed -- and one of them attacked and kicked -- a man wearing a dress and makeup. Both Michael Diezel, 18, and Patrick Muse, 15, shouted insults about gays as Diezel kicked the man in the stomach. The teens met the man on the street and asked him if he were "a

real woman." When the man replied that he was a gay crossdresser, Diezel attacked him. The man fled and escaped to a nearby house.



Oakland, Calif., homicide investigators say a 23-year-old transvestite who was found dead in his home in late December showed signs of blunt force injury. Police are still interviewing witnesses in the case of the apparent homicide of James Percy Rivers, who was also known as Tatiana Rivers and Keymani Howard.



Here's a story about a transgendered person who is the perpetrator as well as the victim.

Sean O'Neill is a 20-year-old woman who lives primarily as a male yet does not describe himself as transsexual. Prosecutors in Colorado Springs had charged him with 11 counts of felonious sexual charges stemming from consensual sexual contact O'Neill had with four teenage girls. If convicted of all counts, O'Neill could have been sentenced to 32 years in prison.

Transsexual activist Riki Anne Wilchins reports that rather than fight the charges against the conservative Colorado Springs D.A. and before a conservative judge, O'Neill has agreed to a plea bargain offered by the prosecutor. Unfortunately, Wilchins' report didn't specify the charge or charges to which O'Neill has plead guilty. Sentencing is set for the middle of this month.



A court in Salt Lake City sentenced a 25-year-old woman to a year in jail for posing as a 13-year-old boy.

Just before Christmas, Birdie Jo Hoaks touched hearts nationwide with his story that he was a teenager abandoned by his family because they could no longer care for him. Hoaks showed authorities a birth certificate for Michael Ross.

Dozens of people called Salt Lake City police offering donations, gifts, and even their homes. But one of the calls was Hoaks' undoing. It came from Vermont authorities who said that Hoaks had pulled the same scam in the Green Mountain State, and earlier had spent six weeks in a Kansas boys' home. She was suspected of similar offenses in Texas, Idaho, Montana, New York, New Jersey, Maine, Alaska, and West Virginia.

At the time of the Vermont incident, a newspaper reported that Hoaks had a twin sister, Becky, and that the pair had roamed the country milking kindhearted citizens while posing as abandoned teenage boys.



Perhaps the biggest crossdressing crime continues unabated. It is really a crime *against* drag. We speak, of course, about Howard Stern.

Continuing the promotional campaign for his latest book, Stern appeared -- in drag -- on *The Late Show* and grossed

out host David Letterman by showing his painted toenails to the national television audience. Meanwhile, street vendors in New York City are selling cut-outs of Stern in fishnets to hang from motorists' rear-view mirrors.

Stern's publisher offers some mitigation for Howard's behavior. "No matter how much success he has, it's a hollow victory because he doesn't deal with the central issues of his life, which is the humiliation he had as a kid," says Judith Regan, president of ReganBooks. "He still feels like an ugly beast. That's why he hides his face with his hair." He wasn't hiding behind his hair on *The Late Show*. Instead of the flowing (some could say stringy) dark tresses that have become his trademark, Stern wore an upswept blonde "do" that made him look like a demented Farrah Fawcett.



As befits a drag criminal of Stern's stature, he has been placed on the "11 most-wanted" list -- or "11 *least*-wanted," depending on your point of view.

Mr. Blackwell put Stern at the top of his 36th annual Worst Dressed Women list. The famous real women singled out for dishonors were Camilla Parker Bowles; rock singers Courtney Love and Melissa Etheridge; and actresses Drew Barrymore, Whoopi Goldberg, Diane Keaton, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Emma Thompson, and Christina Applegate.


Patrick Swayze earned Blackwell's praise for his movie drag excursion.



Mr. Blackwell has only recently begun to recognize that men can be well-dressed or worst-dressed women. Back in 1960, when he began skewering fashion victims, serious drag was something to be hidden away in closets or questionable nightclubs. That explains J. Edgar Hoover's absence from the list, as well as Richard Nixon's.

*Richard Nixon?* The author of a forthcoming book on the Nixon presidency says he has ironclad evidence Richard

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Nixon was a transvestite and he has the photographs to prove it, the *Weekly World News* reports.

Malcolm Tenniper, 41 says friends and associates of the late president told him Nixon dressed in garter belt and hose, high heels, ladies' underwear, and frilly frocks whenever he felt tense over matters of state. Nixon also partied in drag with FBI director J. Edgar Hoover. Amid the collections of the widow of a close friend of Nixon's was a picture of the former world leader in a woman's dress.

"On the back of the photo there was a message in Nixon's handwriting: 'At least I get some R and R now and then,'" Tenniper says.



If that doesn't shake up the image of Republicans as conservatives, consider this report from *The New York Times* ...

"On the morning of Nov. 6, 1986, as news of his secret arms-for-hostages deals with Iran first cascaded onto the world's front pages, Oliver North sat at a computer terminal in his third-floor office at the National Security Council and tapped out an electronic message.

"Oh, Lord," he wrote to a co-worker, sounding pained. "I lost the slip and broke one of the high heels. Forgive please. Will return the wig on Monday."

"Whatever the meaning of North's missive -- it is unclear to this day whether he had just returned from an undercover mission or a rowdy Halloween party -- it surely was never meant for public consumption." This was one of hundreds of unclassified White House e-mail messages from President Reagan's second term that have been published. White House aides thought the messages were being automatically erased, but technicians were regularly transferring them to more permanent storage. Now don't start Ms. Sinclair talking about Nelson Rockefeller.



The present Administration got into a bit of hot water because of Halloween when it was learned that the Walt Disney Co. provided free Beauty and the Beast costumes to Vice President Al Gore and his wife. But the water could have been a lot hotter.

A Washington newspaper says that aides had to talk Gore out of his original idea: he would dress as Beauty and the lovely and talented Tipper would be the Beast. The report said nervous aides questioned whether Americans are ready for a crossdressing vice president.



Dennis Rodman is hoping that Americans are ready for a crossdressing basketball star.

Perhaps with his tongue in his cheek, the Chicago Bulls forward has said that his next ambition is to host his own talk show in drag, aspiring to be a cross between fellow



Chicagoan Oprah Winfrey and Arsenio Hall.

In an interview with *Playboy*, Rodman also claims to enjoy dressing in drag and hanging in gay bars. In fact his new book, titled *As Bad As I Want to Be*, features photos of Rodman as his alter-ego Denise.



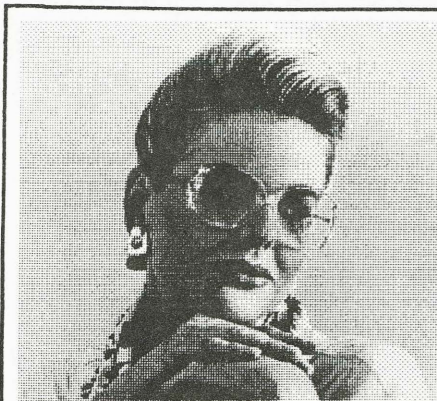
Ms. Sinclair believes we are seeing a trend here: iconoclastic celebrities become even more so by dressing as women. The in-your-face statement doesn't require full drag; sometimes a single feminine element is enough, like the colored fingernail polish worn by Rodman, Lenny Kravitz, and Antonio Banderas. (So okay, he paints his toes. But it's the same thing.) But you don't need to be a celebrity to be trendy in this manner; being a teenager is good enough. Ms. Sinclair's daughter, Rachel, has given her two clips regarding adolescent male fashion on the cutting edge. One advises young men who want to experiment with nail polish to wear dark colors (Chanel's Vamp, M.A.C.'s Cyber, and Hard Candy's Black). In the other, a teenage boy extols the benefits of eye makeup. "It's like a different aspect of yourself, it changes your look," he said. "It's exciting to do something different. I think it's cool. I don't see anything wrong with it."



Of course, someone will point out that "drag as rebellion" isn't new at all, especially in the entertainment world. What about Lou Reed? What about the New York Dolls? What about David Bowie? What about Milton Berle?

Well, forget Milton Berle. What about Wayne/Jayne Country? According to the transsexual rocker, "Everybody wants to be a drag queen today. It's not like the glam rock days when people were just pretending to be bi. The drag thing has gotten so big. There's a real liberal thing going on now. I'm getting a lot of young kids as fans now, and they're all so open.

Maybe there's actually going to be a civil war in this country between the Party People and the Party Poopers." More of Miss Country's wit and wisdom is contained in her new book called -- what else? -- *Man Enough to Be a Woman*. The book has been published in Europe, where Country continues to tour. Negotiations are underway for an American publisher. There is already talk of turning



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the autobiography into a movie.

"I want a really current, *really* nasty blonde party girl to play me," Country said. "Somebody suggested Courtney Love, and I think she's a great job of it already." Does Mr. Blackwell know how to pick 'em or what?



Another veteran drag performer -- Julie Andrews -- is said to be taking a break sometime this winter. Andrews has been in the Broadway hit *Victor/Victoria* for more than a year (including the Chicago run), and needs a respite.

Rumored to fill Miss Andrew's wing tips is TV talker Kathie Lee Gifford. Even though Gifford isn't a trained dancer and has never appeared in a play at the Broadway level, she is said to be a contender for the role because the Great White Way nowadays values name over performance.

It that's so, why not RuPaul?



*Victor/Victoria* is a Broadway musical that was a movie. *The Birdcage* (formerly *Birds of a Feather*) is a movie based on the Broadway musical *La Cage aux Folles*, which was based on the first of a series of French films, which were based on a French play. The movie, directed by Mike Nichols and starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane, was supposed to contain "special musical material by Stephen Sondheim" that wasn't in the musical. But the songs didn't test well with preview audiences and were dropped.



For Australian "drag artist" Tracey Twat, it wasn't the musical material the audience didn't like, it was her entire act.

Peter Robinson, Twat's manager, says his client was asked by a gay rights group to host a benefit at Melbourne's Glasshouse Hotel. But just days before the benefit, Twat was informed that she was no longer on the bill because many gays and lesbians found drag to be offensive.

The organization sponsoring the benefit was Gays and Lesbians Against Discrimination, Inc.



Fortunately, not all Australians hold the same opinion

about men gender issues.

That nation's Democrat party endorsed transsexual lesbian Julie Peters, 44, as a candidate for the federal legislature. But Peters thinks her chances of winning the election is slim seeing as how she is a third-party candidate.

One Democrat party leader, Sen. Sid Spindler, welcomed the endorsement of Peters. "People have asked me if it will reduce our vote," he said. "But I have confidence in my fellow Australians that they will not be deterred by archaic prejudices."



It was more likely fiscal prudence rather than prejudice that prompted government critics in the northeastern Australian state of Queensland to claim that a \$3,000 government grant to a transgender support group was to "show transsexuals how to apply makeup." Government officials said the grant was a preventative health measure that would help transsexuals integrate better into the general community. Yes, the official admitted, some workshops would focus on makeup, but they were to increase self-esteem.




In the neighboring state of New South Wales, government leaders have endorsed proposals to ban discrimination against transsexuals and to allow post-operative transsexuals to change their birth certificates. The civil rights advances will be contained in amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act and the Birth, Deaths, and

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Marriages Act.

"There is broad support for the proposals and I expect Parliament will see the logic of including transgenders in the anti-discrimination laws," said State Attorney Geoff Shaw. "It will protect an oppressed minority from discrimination in employment and many other areas."

Transgender Liberation Coalition (TLC) spokesperson Aidy Griffin said she was "delighted" with the developments. "It has taken us three years to get transgender rights considered as something other than an abstract notion," she said. "This is a major victory for the entire tranny community and a complete vindication of the radical approach adopted by the TLC some three years ago."



Progress continues in nearby New Zealand where that nation's High Court has ruled that post-op transsexuals can marry a person of the opposite sex.

The court recognized that "some people have a compelling desire to be recognized and to be able to behave as persons of the opposite sex. If society allows such persons to undergo therapy and surgery in order to fulfill that desire, then it ought also to allow such persons to function as fully as possible in their reassigned sex, and this must include the capacity to marry." The court added, "There is no social advantage in the law not recognizing the validity of the marriage of the transsexual in the sex of reassignment."



Australia and New Zealand are beginning to rid themselves of a disagreeable section of English law, and pressure is building in the British Isles as well.

Christine Burns is a 42-year-old businesswoman from the northern English village of Hartford. A self-employed computer consultant, she is also active in local politics as secretary of her Conservative Party branch and chair of the women's constituency supper club.

She is the epitome of English respectability. Yet she believes she is one of a group of 5,000 men and women who are among the most discriminated-against citizens in Britain -- transsexuals. Legally speaking, men and women in Britain cannot change sex.

Since 1970 transsexuals have not been allowed to alter their birth certificates to reflect their physical change of status. And as Britain has no legal alternative to the birth certificate as an identity document, the transsexual is obliged to reveal intimate details to complete strangers at almost every turn.

What really rankles Christine and the transsexual lobby group, Press for Change, is their belief that Britain's laws are the result of a legal accident. Between 1944 and 1970 transsexuals were provided with legal support: birth certificates were annotated, marriage was legal and the rights of citizens under detainment and imprisonment



were assured.

However, in a notorious divorce case in 1970, the marriage of transsexual model April Ashley was ruled null and void on the ground that she was male. Although this ruling was for the purposes of marriage only, it has since been used in all circumstances in which gender is legally relevant.

Since 1970 scores of British cases involving human rights abuses have come before the European Court of Human Rights. So far all have failed, but now Press for Change believes the tide is beginning to turn. Recently, the high court ruled that there is cause to review the whole birth certificate question.

This change prompted Burns to relinquish her privacy and to go public. "I felt I had no choice but to stand up on behalf of the thousands I represent," the transsexual said.

"I had been quietly active for years, writing letters to ministers but adding that I hoped they would be discreet," she said. "It made me feel grubby and nervous and finally I decided that if you want people to see you for what you are you've got to show them what you are."



Janeen Newham and David Willis are taking another course in the search for equality under British law. They have asked the Queen for help since they can't marry the way they wish -- because Janeen was once a man and David was once a woman. The couple want to be married as they are today, but the law says they must marry in their original gender.

"It's all to do with being alive, with living our lives as we want," said David, who was born female and gave birth to a daughter eight years ago before his sex change.

David met and fell in love with Janeen just before her operation five years ago. Janeen's name was John when she sailed the North Sea as captain of a trawler. British law requires that Janeen, 47, must take David as "my wedded wife" and David would have to take Janeen as "my wedded husband." In Janeen's pleading letter to Queen Elizabeth, she wrote: "We seek only that we may address each other in sincerity. I to take David as my husband and he to take me as his wife."



As if the Queen didn't have enough problems, drag queens and drag kings decked out in sequined gowns and tuxedos besieged the gates of Buckingham Palace in December demanding entry into Liz's annual Royal Household Christmas Staff Ball.

The members of the London street-activist group OutRage! said they were protesting Her Majesty's decree banning employees' same-sex partners from the party. The demonstrators carried festive pennants reading "What's a ball without fairies?" and "Queens demand an entrance."



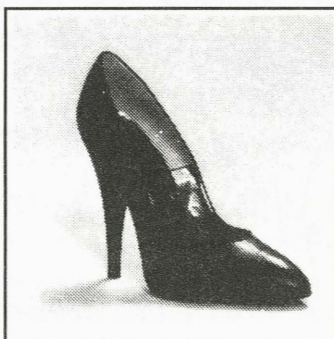
Closer to home, transgender activists in Maryland are

"devastated" with a setback in their quest for equal rights, but they haven't yet made plans to take to the streets.

Last year, transgender and gay activists had teamed up to promote a civil rights bill that would ban discrimination based on gender identity as well as sexual orientation. But discussions with state legislators have convinced representatives of both communities that combining the goals in one bill was premature. So officials of the gay rights group, the Free State Justice Campaign, and the transgender rights organization, It's Time Maryland, announced that they were taking "a turn in strategy." The groups are now promoting two separate bills. One will prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, employment, and public accommodations, as well as discrimination based on personal appearance in public accommodations. The other bill will address employment discrimination based on gender identity. Although no legislator was willing to sponsor the earlier combined bill, sponsors have been lined up for the two new bills.

The two groups promised to continue to work together. Noting that the Free State Justice Campaign had been educating lawmakers about gay and lesbian issues for more than four years, Jan Nyquist, co-chair of the organization, said "education on issues of discrimination as they impact the transgendered community must continue." Jessica Xavier of It's Time Maryland also stressed the need for further education, to "apprise not

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only the legislators but also the general public as to the extent of this discrimination."



We need go no further than New York City to see the extent of discrimination against transsexuals.

Following Diane Rousseau's 1993 sex change operation, co-workers at federal express "routinely ridiculed, harassed and abused" her, including one supervisor who called her "an abomination to God." Federal Express allegedly responded an increasingly hostile work environment by threatening Rousseau with dismissal if she appeared at work as a woman, eventually placing her under a gag order which promised "serious consequences" if she spoke out about her abuse. Under escalating pressure, Rousseau finally quit in November of 1994.

Now Rousseau has filed a ground breaking \$5,000,000 lawsuit against Federal Express, alleging on-the-job harassment by staff and employees forced her to leave an eight-year position as a computer technician.

Rousseau's attorney said Federal Express does not have the right "to mandate the sex of its employees, or to create a hostile work environment for Diane merely because she isn't the type of stereotypical female it thinks she should be. Employees with gender dysphoria owe no more apologies or explanations to an employer than those employees with a heart ailment."



Another example began in the middle of last summer. Sharon Franklin Brown, along with three other resident advisers, had been approved for permanent positions at the all-female New Dorm at Fayetteville State University in North Carolina.

Brown had been a popular RA the previous year, and she developed a warm rapport with the women in the dorm. But rumors started snaking across the small campus. University administrators, after doing a little digging, found out something that Brown had spent seven years trying to conceal: biologically, she is a man.

FSU responded by firing Brown, who is tall and slender with delicate features, reportedly for misrepresenting herself on her application. At first, university officials thought that she had provided the school with a fraudulent transcript. "They thought it was my brother's diploma," she said.

The university would say little about Brown's dismissal, but spokeswoman Lauren Burgess acknowledged that the university has no policy requiring female resident advisers for all-female dorms. However, she said, that is the way it works in practice. But Brown is quick to point out that her assistant at the New Dorm was a man. And the current director of the dorm also is male.

Brown says university officials asked her to provide documentation from a physician that she had undergone sex reassignment surgery. She refused.

"No one else was required to prove their gender," she says. "I hope to have the surgery one day, but I need to get together the money first." Brown is still taking graduate courses at FSU and looking for another job, believes her dismissal was blatant discrimination. She has consulted an attorney and is weighing her legal options. But she also acknowledges that a lawsuit would be costly and perhaps futile.

The issue probably doesn't have as much to do with gender as it centers on what Brown did about her gender. "Once you start destabilizing gender, it makes a lot of people nervous," says Anne Bolin, an associate professor of anthropology at Elon College, also in North Carolina, and a noted expert on gender issues. "Look at Sharon Franklin Brown. She was a social woman, who thought of herself as a woman, and was accepted as a woman. But for the single fact that she has a penis, and that the university learned she has a penis, she would still be working there. How much does her genitalia influence her performance on the job?" Bolin asks. "I would say zilch."



The halls of academia and the offices of Federal Express are hardly bastions of masculinity. So imagine how an organization based on machismo -- a police department -- reacts to a transsexual in their midst.

Surprisingly sane.

Both Hoboken, N.J. Mayor Anthony Russo and Police Chief Carmen LaBruno said they would stand by a veteran cop who plans to become a woman. "I was a bit surprised," Russo said when he was informed that 45-year old Lt. John Aiello, a 25-year veteran of the force, had been taking hormones for two years, recently began dressing as a woman full time, and had changed his name to Janet. "But in this police department -- which is a microcosm of society and Hoboken -- things happen." LaBruno said he would see to it that Aiello's gender does not prevent her from rising through the ranks, and he has ordered sensitivity training for the 130 members of the department.



Ms. Sinclair is going to join the ranks of those writing ad hoc autobiographies. But before she does, she must thank this month's host of contributors: Charlene Day, Vera Rae House, Leni Scaletta, and Michelle Nelson. They were kind enough to send Ms. Sinclair clippings regarding crossdressing, and they noted the name and date of publication.

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## HotBuzz

by JoAnn Roberts

"There is no truth. There are no facts; just data to be manipulated."

-- Glenn Frey, The Garden of Allah



Truth? Truth! We don't need no truth. At least Merissa Sherrill Lynn didn't need truth or facts in her article "Farewell". This article has generated some controversy because it was rejected by *Tapestry*, the magazine started by Lynn. But "Farewell" managed to get published ... first in Tri-Ess' *The Femme Mirror* and more recently here in **Cross-Talk**. In my view, "Farewell" is a mostly fictitious account of why and how Lynn resigned from IFGE. Lynn claims she was forced into retirement, which is untrue. The plan for Lynn's transition out of the Executive Director's position was developed, with Lynn's assent, at the IFGE board meeting in March of 1994. Perhaps Lynn never really believed that the IFGE board would find a suitable replacement and when they did, she decided if she couldn't have *all* the marbles, then she'd have none. Several board members tried to convince Lynn to stay on the board (her resignation as Executive Director would not have affected her position as an elected board member). She chose to leave the organization, just as she chose to defy the board at almost every turn over the past three years. Whether you love her, hate her, or are indifferent to her, one thing is absolutely certain: no one but Merissa Sherrill Lynn is directly responsible for her leaving IFGE. And that's a fact.



Get out your markers. It's calendar update time. Mark June 19 to 22 in 1997 as the date for the Second International Congress on Crossdressing, Sex & Gender Issues to be held in King of Prussia, Pa. A Call for Papers was issued in December and proposals for workshops are already coming in. If you would like to present a paper or a workshop, please contact Dr. Sheila Kirk, c/o IFGE, 123 Moody St., Waltham, MA 02154 or call (617) 899-2212.



For those of you who suffer from modem-deprivation or slow-modem syndrome, the transgender community on-line got a big surprise last month when two of the largest transgender websites and the only non-profit transgender domain joined forces to create a transgender "supersite." The new entity, 3-D Communications,

combines Cindy Martin's Transgender Forum, my On-Line Transgender Resource Guide and Jamie Fenton's non-profit webspace known as [transgender.org](http://www.transgender.org). The supersite offers a weekly e-zine, several monthly newsletters, user pictorials, personals, magazine archives, national and international support group listings with e-mail and web addresses, and shopping with several on-line catalogs. Additional services are planned for early 1996 including Chat and subscriber-only areas. If you are wired to the web, you can visit from any of the following pointers:

<http://www.tgforum.com>, <http://www.cdspub.com> or <http://www.transgender.org/tg/>.



There's a new organization in Center City Philadelphia. TransYouth Services (TYS -- pronounced "ties"), a division of Unity Inc., focuses on the needs of African-American transgendered youth, inclusive of MTF/FTM transsexuals and transvestites. The goal of YYS is to provide peer-counseling and referral services, health education, distribution and demonstrations of safer-sex materials, and support group meetings. Dee Stallworth, the YYS coordinator, has had meetings with Alison Laing, of IFGE, and she's been in contact with Renaissance. Both organizations have pledged to support the fledgling organization. Outreach to transgendered youth, especially minority youth, is an area that has been little explored. Anyone interested in YYS may contact Ms. Stallworth at (215) 724-4610.



Let's hit the runways ... the color for lips this winter is red. No, not chapped and blistered red. Makeup experts now agree that women don't want to think about blue-red, or yellow-red or orange-red, so they're recommending a "burned" or brick-red as a universal color that compliments just about everyone.



Do you look like a raccoon after just a few hours in makeup? Maybe it's not what you're using on your eyes but *where* you're using it. Lower lashed tend to be thin and don't hold mascara pigment as well as uppers. So, don't use mascara on your lower lashes (Doh!). But oil can also be the culprit so be sure your foundation under your eyes is well-powdered if you *must* apply mascara to your lower lashes.



We've been here before ... *Glamour* magazine (December) did another Tasteful vs. Trashy survey of it's female readers about Evening wear. Here's some of the results ... Long slim black skirt slit thigh-high - Tasteful (88%) ... Slim red satin pants - Trashy (69%) ... Velvet scoop neck bodysuit - Tasteful (67%) ... Velvet hip-huggers - Trashy (67%) ... Strappy high heels - Tasteful (79%) ... Fishnet stockings -

Trashy (83%) ... Silver satin slip-dress with black lace - Trashy (85%) ... Rhinestone choker with matching tennis bracelet - Trashy (only slightly at 54%) ... You know, this could easily have been a test to determine of you are a TV or not. If you liked all the "trashy" stuff, you're a TV.



Top dress of the season - the little black sheath with a touch of shine and bare shoulders. Pair it with sheer nude pantyhose (like Donna Karan NUDES, \$12.50) and you've got the *hot* look for the cold weather.



No one knows the things I endure to write this column every month, like the four hours I spent one Saturday afternoon wandering the web checking out every lingerie site listed by Yahoo!, the premier search facility. Off I went on my odyssey visiting almost 100 sites. My conclusion -- they're all pretty boring. Many of the sites offer the exact same items, even using the same photos scanned out of the same franchise catalogs. Gimme a break! Almost anything you can find on the web can be found in local stores, or by mail order from Victoria's Secret or Frederick's of Hollywood, and it's usually cheaper by mail. There are three exceptions of note: Northbound Leather (Toronto) at <http://www.northbound.com/>, Romantasy (San Francisco Bay Area) at <http://www.romantasy.com/> and Fashion World International (Sacramento) at <http://www.quiknet.com/fashion/fwi.htm> >. Not only are these sites interesting for their products, they're visually exciting as well.



We all know that fashion is fickle so it should not be a surprise that a few past fashion "Do's" have become "Don'ts." Please consign to Goodwill bins the following items: linebacker sized shoulder pads ... bell-bottom pants ... white opaque pantyhose ... and baby doll dresses. You can also give up the following habits: compulsive color matching (black is the exception to this rule) ... buying clothes for the body you *wish* you had ... compulsive shopping ... wearing clothes that are stained or ripped thinking no one will notice. The Fashion Police *never* sleep.



This has been an amazing year for me. I'm actually going to apologize for the second time. It seems I led quite a few people to the conclusion that both *LadyLike* #25 and the new *Transgender* (formerly *Tapestry*) from IFGE were on the street. Wrong again. *LadyLike* arrived mid-December and should be in subscribers' hands by the time you read this. *Transgender* went to the printer in mid-December and came out shortly after the holidays.



Renaissance Education Association begins its ninth year

as one of the largest transgender organizations in the world. Last year saw unprecedented growth for the suburban Philadelphia-based organization with the addition of six new affiliates. Renaissance affiliated organizations now stretch from East Coast to West Coast and from the Gulf Coast to the Great Lakes. You don't get more "national" than that. The "secret" of Renaissance's success is empowering people to take responsibility not just for themselves, but for their sisters and their community. For some people, this concept is just too scary; treating people like adults and trusting them to do the proper thing. But this empowerment attitude is why Renaissance has grown from a single support group to a network of 17 organizations in 11 states. So, which group is going to be the first international affiliate? Hey, you up there in Canada. Anybody interested?



From First Lady Hillary Clinton: "It is no longer acceptable to discuss Women's Rights as separate from Human Rights." Likewise, we need to get people to understand that gay/lesbian/bi/transgender rights are inseparable from Human Rights as well.



One of the best things that has happened to the transgender community in the last two years is the increased accessibility of the Internet. I seriously doubt that the Lobby Day activity last October would have drawn 100 people if we had to rely on phone and mail communications. For all the gains the net has given us, we are in great danger of losing this wonderful resource. Both the House and Senate are considering proposals to effectively censor the Internet. Under these proposals, any

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Karen Adler  
Laguna Hills, California



"indecent" communication may be subject to a \$100,000 in fines and a jail term. The problem is who gets to define "indecent?" Right now, local community standards prevail in most pornography related cases. How do you define a

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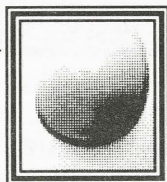
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"local" standard on a global network? Would the word *transvestite* be considered indecent in New York City? How about Tupelo, Mississippi, or Little Rock, Arkansas? How about the words *penis* or *vagina*? Will Congress lower the standard of Free Speech to the point where a library could be fined if they put James Joyce's *Ulysses* or *Catcher In The Rye* on-line? I support protecting juveniles from harmful and inappropriate information, but I also feel that parents have the first responsibility to monitor what their children do in real space as well as in virtual space. The technophobes in Congress sponsoring these proposals (and they're on both sides of the party fences) will use the bogeyman of the message-encrypting pedophile to push their measures through. These measures endanger not just Free Speech but digital commerce as well. Both the American Civil Liberties Union and the Electronic Freedom Foundation have vowed to take any net censorship law to court, but why wait until the damage is done? You can make a difference now. Call or write your Senators and Congressional Reps. Tell them you oppose any government censorship of the Internet.



So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think responsibility means not crying and whining when you screw up. Comments? E-mail them to <cyberqueen@cds.pub.com>. Copyright 1996 by Creative Design Services.

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### The Diva of Dish

by Angela Gardner

**RETURN OF THE "SEX CHANGE COP":** Janet Aiello seems to be doing all she can to provoke the Hoboken Police Department. New York's Channel 11 reported Aiello was called in for a disciplinary hearing. Her attorney used the occasion to maintain the Department was watching every little move she made and would essentially hound her into an early retirement, since she makes the big macho cops uncomfortable. Now that's an easy position for us, as members of the transgender community, to sympathize with. However, every report I have seen about Lt. Aiello indicates that she has not tried to cooperate with the Department at all. The hearing on December 1 took place because she went on an eight month leave of absence and never responded to the Chief of Police's request for her to meet with him and let him know when she was coming back to work. Refusing to do that sounds a little like insubordination to me, and possibly, a way to generate a hefty lawsuit and pick up a little spare change.

Whatever Aiello's hidden agenda may be, it's nice to note that Channel 11 was politically correct throughout its report and used the proper pronoun when they referred to Aiello. Aiello's mother talked on camera about how she supported her "daughter" in everything. Apparently Aiello was more communicative with her mother than she was with her employer. In any case, good luck Janet. A girl does have to eat and pay the rent.



**LOOK AT THE HOOTERS ON THAT GUY!:** The oh, so tasteful restaurant chain, **Hooters** (it's not called that cause owls live in the kitchen) is being hassled by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to hire male wait staff. The EEOC's position being that Hooters is discriminating against qualified men who need a job and are kept out of work because of the female only hiring policy. I say they should hire men. Oh, not like the guy in the ads Hooters has been running to win their case in the court of public opinion. (Miss Jessica Brandon sent me a story from the newspaper and I even saw a billboard with a photo of the "Hooters Man." He looks a little like Tom Selleck and is wearing a wig, mustache, Hooters Girl costume and simpering a bit. Of course, he looks ridiculous, and I wouldn't want to order a burger off of him.) What I contemplate is a method whereby Hooters could satisfy the technical letter of the law and do a public

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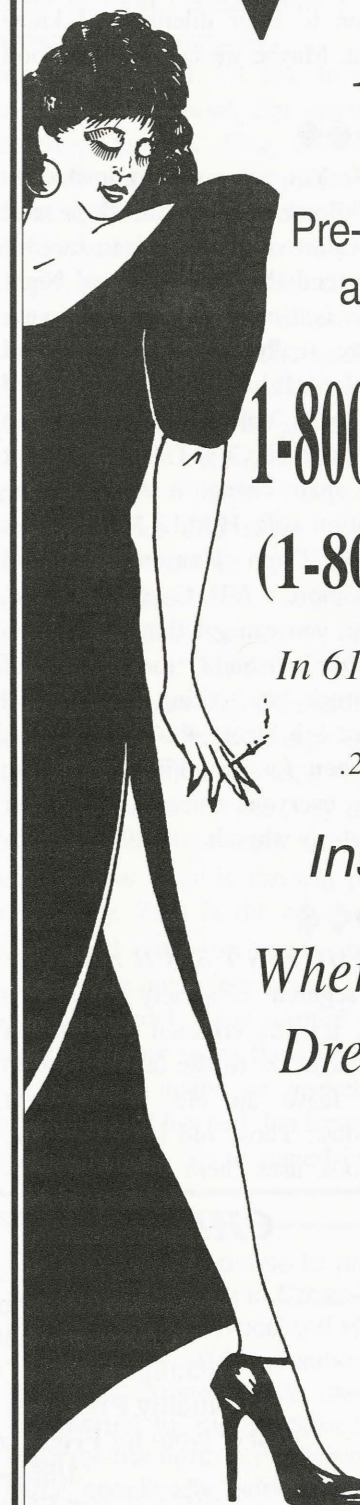
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service to the transgender community. They should hire transgendered Hooters Girls. Many of us have the necessary equipment for the job and need the money to maintain that equipment. If Hooters could offer a great health plan that covered a girl's endocrinology bills, and maybe, after a few years as part of the "male" wait staff, covered transition costs, I'm sure they'd have no trouble at all filling out their employment roster. It wouldn't be quite what the government had in mind but I think it's a great idea. Why don't we all at least send our photos to Hooters and offer them this solution to their dilemma? I know they're gonna thank us for it. Maybe we can get free food coupons!



**A ROYAL INVITATION:** You are cordially invited by **H.M.I.S.M. Empress IX Philomena of Faith, Hope and Cartier**, and The Imperial Court of New York to buy yet another formal gown and attend the Tenth Annual Night of A Thousand Gowns. This is a must for those seriously addicted to glamour. There really will be a thousand gowns, give or take five hundred. It happens Saturday April 20th, 1996 at the Sheraton New York Hotel on Seventh Avenue at 52nd Street in New York City. Tickets are a bit pricey but if you've got the spare change it is a glittering evening. For more information call: H.M.I.S.M. Empress Philomena, (212) 979-8956, Thom Hansen, President ICNY (212) 924-4766 or Empress VII Coco La Chine, (212) 475-0838. Imagine that, you can get the Empress on the phone just like any other person. If the thought of talking to royalty is too much, try writing to: Imperial Court of New York, 61 East 8th Street #149, New York NY 10003. Keep an eye open for me. I'll probably be sitting in the lobby watching everyone come in. I've never been able to afford a ticket so why should 1996 be any different?



**MAYBE A NAME CHANGE ISN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA:** It seems that one segment of society appreciates transsexuals. Unfortunately, it's the criminal segment. A number of criminals have caught on to the fact that when someone transitions they leave an old identity just hanging around, collecting dust. Those old identities have credit histories and the crook uses them to obtain new

credit cards. Be a smart gender swapper and take a tip from Miss Gruff, the transgender crime dog, (actually, several tips). Make sure your Credit Bureau Information is changed. Notify all your creditors, current and past that you have changed your name and give them specific orders to never issue cards, information or mailings in your old name. Be sure to keep a certified copy of your name change paperwork in a safe spot, like a safe deposit box, and just to be sure, carry a copy with you at all times in case you have to prove that while you may be a brand new person, no one else is entitled to make nefarious use of the "old" you.



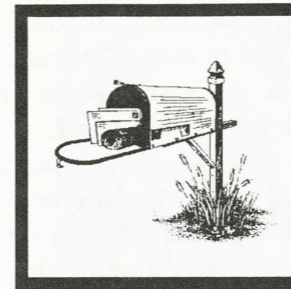
**CASTING CALL:** Okay girls, here's a chance for all of you transgendered Norma Desmonds and Marilyn Monroes to take a shot at stardom. A feature film (untitled so far) is going to shoot in New York City this coming Spring. **Bambie Sente Casting** has the task of finding four transgendered actresses for principal roles. That's what those of us in the business call "a speaking part" or, "Oh boy! Big Bucks!" Of course, since I heard about it first I've already sent my picture and resume but there are four parts available so there's plenty of room for all of us.

The breakdown is as follows: One "she-male"/pre-op TS, forty years old, and preferably African/American. One MTF TS, forty years old. One MTF/androgynous TG, 18 to 25 years old. One MTF, thirty to forty years old, of the Asian persuasion. Those who know me will attest that I am not suited to play either the Asian or African American parts but, maybe with a little coaching ... Nah. I'll be satisfied with the other older part. (I can't play 18 to 25 either.) If you have acting ability, experience and commitment send your photo and resume to **Bambie Sente Casting**, 48 Eighth Ave., Suite 224, New York, NY 10014. The breakdown says "Serious answer only" at the bottom so don't be a dilettante, be a pro. Make sure your phone number is on your picture and don't send anything naughty. They are looking at union and non-union actors.



That's it for another sparkling column of news you can use -- and abuse. Keep those cards and letters coming, and *auf weidersehen* my little muffins.

-30-



## Vox Populi

Letters to the Editor

**Re "Giving A Leader Her Final Say" (Kymberleigh's Clipboard, #73):** The basic reason I am out of IFGE and out of the community is because I screwed up. I had a vision, driven by idealism, love, a gentle spirit, and a desire to do something good. Then I stupidly created a large democratically elected Board of Directors. I exacerbated that problem by not making sure every candidate for the Board had a clear understanding of what the hell it was all about and how things were supposed to be done. The result was everyone and anyone could run for the Board and get elected. Most of those who did came from the corporate world, with incompatible spirits, their own agenda, and their own ways of doing things. I doomed myself.

Lest we forget, that vision was to build a better, happier, safer, more balanced world in which to live, not just for transgendered people, but for everyone. The primary focus was on respect for other people's differences, and learning how to make the compromises necessary to enable us all to live together. The method of achieving that vision was three-fold: 1. To use crossdressing and transsexual issues as a platform from which to work. 2. To gather around me people who shared those issues and that vision, and who were willing to work with me to achieve that objective. 3. To create the tools that would enable people, regardless of their interests or persuasion, to accomplish that objective. The tools included IFGE, *Tapestry*, the Coming Together convention, the Winslow Street Fund, Tiffany Club, and all the rest of it.

Now back to the Board. When I created the Board I believed people understood the vision. I wanted as many good people as possible involved to help make it happen. I wanted the Board to serve as working partners with the staff, to oversee projects and see them through to fruition. I wanted them to serve as IFGE representatives, and fund raisers. I wanted them to get out into the world and make good things happen. Instead, the Board focused on reinventing IFGE and controlling the staff. The results were predictable. My vision was replaced with no vision, at least none that was recognizable. The focus was switched to politics, power, and money. The method became a conflicting mess of private agendas and strategies. And, I was forcibly retired. IFGE became a subterfuge of intrigue and trauma, making it nearly impossible for anyone to accomplish anything, or have the will to try. I believe IFGE could have been the best thing that ever happened to the

transgendered community, and I blew it by making it a democratic organization. There is no possible way I can share with you how I feel about that.

What really poured the cement on my grave were the constant public attacks coming from individuals within the community, notably JoAnn Roberts, Joan Goodnight and Kymberleigh Richards, who admits as much: "... in the face of my (and others') attacks, even though those assaults were often merciless and unending." Vince Foster said before he committed suicide, "In Washington, destroying people is sport." That's how I came to feel about the transgendered community.

With all that said, I'd like to respond to a few things stated in the editorial. For starters, "Merissa resigned as Executive Director." First, I didn't resign. I submitted to retirement rather than be publicly fired. Next, I wasn't the Executive Director, I was the Founding Director, a subtle but fundamental difference. On the corporate flow chart that put me in a fluffy white cloud in the upper left hand corner. In a tribe, it's the difference between its Chief and its Medicine Woman. The soul of any organization is defined by the character of the people who make it happen. I made IFGE happen. By getting rid of me and everything I stood for, IFGE cut out its soul. That was their choice, not mine.

Comments were also made about answering my critics. For example, "... with her resignation, her critics might finally be silenced." And, "... it did not directly address the many complaints that had been leveled (fairly and unfairly) at her ...." My first response to the last quote was, who gave Kymberleigh Richards the authority to judge fairness? That aside, it is my perception that in America, aggressive, self-centered, arrogant, disrespectful mean-spiritedness is the way of things. That is why personalities such as Rush Limbaugh and Newt Gingrich are so popular. That is also why people like me get chewed up so badly. That is the environment that produced my enemies and critics on the Board and in the community. As long as people were acting in a self-serving, arrogant, disrespectful and mean-spirited way, as long as people were judging me using themselves and their own agendas as a base, no action or response from me could have placated them. I learned that from long painful experience. This letter is not about remedying an insult, or balancing



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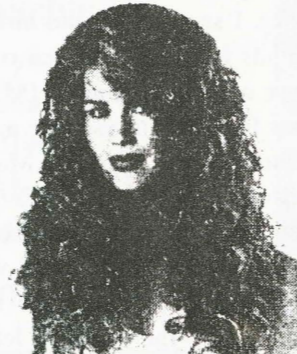
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the scales towards fairness, or answering critics. It is acknowledging the loss of a soul, and an opportunity. It is about the wolves devouring the sheep until there are no more sheep, and no more wolves.

Merissa Sherrill Lynn  
Wayland, MA

Re "Farewell" (#73): I was touched to read Merissa's article. I feel for her. I know that feeling of not being sure whether you've been kicked in the teeth or the backside, and having to relinquish something you've put your heart into. It's particularly prone to happen with journals; it's happened to me three times professionally and with *The Glad Rag* as well.

But Merissa was so much more than "just" an editor; she was a leading star. She might not like that description, but she was so well known and loved by so many. (Is *still* loved by many!)

It also seems to be an unhappy fact of life that once an organization reaches a certain size it has to become corporate to carry on functioning efficiently, and when corporation comes in, sentiment -- or consideration for others -- seems to have to go out.

Time dulls the sharp edge of the hurt, but it does not completely cure it. Like all hurts in life, we have to put it down to experience and learn to live with it. I suppose it's one of the things that helps us become more complete

human beings. The tragedy is when it turns to bitterness, but I don't believe Merissa is the type to harbor bitterness for any length of time; I do hope to see her re-emerge on the scene in some capacity. There is a lot of good in her.

It still hurts me the way *The Glad Rag* was "re-designed", subsequently ruined and then killed off. It also hurt me -- and lots of others, past, present *and* future -- the way the Transvestite/Transsexual Support Group was also killed off. It has left a gap in the U.K. which will probably never be filled in the same way. We lost a thrice-weekly venue, a helpline, and a first contact point.

However Merissa may feel at the moment, she can always point to IFGE and say "I played a large part in the creation of that," and to *Tapestry* and say "I built that" ... so part of her work lives on. In my case I don't have that satisfaction, and have had to drop out of the scene due to the difficulty of keeping my business in existence.

So, Merissa, you have my love and best wishes for the future. I would cry a little for you, but I don't think you would want me to.

Christine-Jane Wilson  
Wembley, Middlesex, U.K.



**ERRATA:** In the editorial "Giving A Leader Her Final Say" (Kymberleigh's Clipboard, #73), *Finesse*, the newsletter of the Central Illinois Gender Association, was omitted from the list of publications that published Merissa Sherrill Lynn's "Farewell." *Cross-Talk* regrets the omission.



**... has been around as long as the movies themselves!**

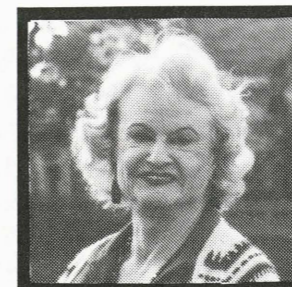
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## VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

### LET'S GET RID OF THE WORD "GENDER"!

by Virginia Prince, Ph.D.

The word "gender" comes from the Latin *gens* meaning "kind". Not kind in the sense of being thoughtful but kind as in "sort or type". Since there are two sexes, as initiated and represented by the two gametes, the egg and the sperm, and since the lifestyles of males and females differ in a number of ways that show that the two "kinds" of lifeways were characteristic of the two sexes, they became the "genders" of the two sexes.

**"Maybe we should begin to do away with the gender terms of masculine and feminine."**

While the anatomical/physiological aspects of maleness and femaleness can be incomplete, exaggerated or diminished by abnormalities of fetal development or by physical accidents or illness, such specimens do *not* constitute a third sex. Surgical removal or alteration of sexual tissue does not create a new sex nor does it transform one sex into the other. It merely modifies the equipment the individual has and makes it more like the external anatomy of the other sex. (As a comparison, think of a man who, because of illness or accident, has his leg amputated and can no longer walk on two legs. This does not change the fact that he is a member of a bipedal species.)

There are of course, the intersexed, whose chromosomal patterns or whose bodily anatomy is not standard. But they are not a "third" sex either. It took an egg and a sperm to get the individual started and any accidents or abnormalities that may occur during fetal development do not change that fact.

Sex itself cannot be changed. Although transsexuals talk about a "sex" change operation it is not truly such because the penis and vaginal structures are simply parts of a delivery system to bring sperms into close contact with eggs. When they meet the latter can be fertilized by the former and it begins the long process of development into an adult member of the species capable of participating in a further reproductive act as the next generation. The structures that make the gametes, the ovaries and the testicles, do not change in structure or function except in

the case of accident, disease or surgery. Sex is indicated, but not determined, by external genital anatomy, so altering it gives the visual impression of the other sex but the basic determinants are not changed. Gender, however, as the psychological and sociological manifestations of the way males and females carry on their lives, can be varied and changed in a number of ways and degrees. Thus while there can only be two kinds of gametes to participate in

the reproductive process, there can be all manner of differences in the behavior, dress and characteristics of each of these two kinds (genders) of human beings.

Even in animals the lifeways of males and females of the same species differ in various important ways. They do so because the

reproductive tasks of the two sexes are different. And in early man it was the same. But while the basic differences remain, as part of our animal heritage, the manifestations of those behaviors can and have varied enormously particularly over the last 500 or so years. This has been specially intense since the end of World War II, and has nearly come to a point today where, except for special occasions, there is little difference in the "kinds" of lifestyle (the "genders") of the egg makers and the sperm makers show. I think one could safely predict that this process will continue more intensely in the next 50 years to eventually reach a point where there remains only the differences basically related to reproductive roles, physical strength and personal choice. Today it is still possible to make a list of the characteristics considered appropriate to one gender and not to the other, but the genders are becoming more and more alike every day.

So it is appropriate to ask: What are the two basic behavioral characteristics, or styles of the two fundamental gender differences between masculinity and femininity? The answers, as I see it, are aggressiveness on the part of the male with insecurity lurking behind it. Insecurity is basic because in thinking, self-aware creatures like humans there is always the fear of being unable to carry out the role assigned to you. In the case of the male the whole reason for his existence, biologically speaking, is to be able to impregnate a female and get his genes into the next generation. To do that he must be able to get an erection and since the penis is not under direct voluntary



control there is always the question of whether it will work as well tonight as it did last week. While it is the testicles and not the penis that manufacture the sperm, what good are they if there is no means of delivering them to where they can fulfill their purpose? Male animals do not have this problem except as the result of structural abnormalities, physical injuries or illness. When an available, ready to ovulate female is within sight (and smell) the male is ready to "do his duty".

There is no equivalent insecurity in females because they have what has been called the "ever ready vagina"; for females the basic and fundamental characteristics are passivity, (acceptance of the male sexually) and nurturance, meaning all those behaviors aimed at caring for and rearing the young to adulthood. But even these basic characteristics are now being shared with the opposite sex. We all know of aggressive females, not only socially but also sexually. And we are becoming more familiar with the ideas of househusbands, single fathers and general sharing.

So the idea behind this article is to suggest that maybe we should begin to do away with the gender terms of masculine and feminine (we can't do away with the sexual terms male and female because our biology locks them in place). Since the current concepts of gender are largely based on visual information and the social tendency to consider some behaviors as characteristic of males and others of females I think we will have to base any new term or terms on what is visible. A sort of "what you see is

what you know" position.

I therefore, suggest the term "presentation", meaning how one presents him/herself to the world, as the successor to the general term "gender", with the understanding that "presentation" refers to everything about a person that can be observed. Thus while clothing, hair, makeup, decoration, etc., are obviously visible, body carriage, attitudes, behavior towards others, pugnacity, shyness, talkativeness, etc., are also observable and therefore part of presentation. As clothing becomes more and more homogenized it will be more and more difficult to tell from it alone whether a given individual is probably a male or a female. But if we fall back on the primary characteristics previously mentioned -- aggressiveness and nurturance -- we would probably characterize the person as being a "social" male or a "social" female.

Note the term "social" in reference to sex. Only if one is desirous of having a physical relationship with another person should it make any difference whether the person has a penis or a vagina ... that is, biological sex. Social sex would only indicate which behavioral type an individual belonged to and nothing requires that the biological and social sex be the same. So if we drop the term "gender" and substitute "presentation" we automatically do away with any numerical sense of gender. While we are accustomed to two genders and three, four or more seems awkward, there can be any number of "kinds" of presentations.

What difference does it make what the sex of a United Parcel Service deliveryperson or a flight attendant is? In

the past these two types of employment were considered to be basically for a man and for a woman. Today strong young women drive trucks and male stewards are on most every plane. Work and informal clothing is also becoming standardized. It will not be a case of a tradeoff. Pants and heavier shoes are now commonplace for both sexes and will continue to be so. There will eventually be no great clothing differences to help in the determination. But as I said above, what difference will that make?

When males and females are out cruising for sex and/or marriage partners they will probably both use the "classic" presentations. The females will want to appear sexy and desirable, and will want to wear fancy, low cut, short-skirted dresses and heels because they are specific to females and appeal to males. (It is difficult to predict what males will wear on such occasions, but to whatever degree is possible they will want to present themselves in ways that will indicate their talent, strength and ability to provide for her and her children. This has been the story throughout evolution and until such time as the government takes over such responsibilities it will continue to be.)

Much as we would like to we can't escape our biological heritage; while males -- CDs in particular -- can and do wear these items, they will, in the future, come to be regarded as sexual bait of females trolling for a male partner for "fun and games". In a world where there are no longer such gulfs between men and women, as there have been in the past, there would be little inducement to wear such items except at a masquerade party.

If anyone nurtures a forlorn hope that if women wear pants, shirts and boots men will take over the wearing of blouses, skirts and heels department, get rid of it! It won't happen, because there won't be greener grass on the other side of the fence once the fence has been taken down. It will be one big pasture open to all, cows and bulls alike. Biology will remain as the great divide but there won't be much of a social divide because there will no longer be need for one.

However, we can still adopt the term "presentation" for the way you show yourself to others as the prime determiner of whether you belong to the aggressive group or the nurturing one. So even as of today the two do not have to

be consistent. Thus a male person who is not too happy having to present his aggressive/insecure side can opt for a presentation (whatever it might involve) that would lead the observer to class him as a nurturer. This might not involve any clothing distinctions at all, except perhaps for color. so it wouldn't qualify as crossdressing. It would be a kind of psychic transvestism in which it would not be the clothing of the body that is switched but rather one might say the clothing of the spirit.

This recognition on my part that the old bipolar gender classification is essentially passe -- and will get more so as time goes on -- should please those who have been trying to downgrade me by referring to the "Benjamin = Prince" model. (I don't know why they invented that equation because Dr. Benjamin and I, while very good friends, never proposed any model for anything.)

People of either sex are entitled to live their lives the way they choose and society should not give them a hard time about it. They should be taken at face value; i.e., if they present like a member of one gender they should be accepted as a member of that group. Implicit in this is the fact that persons may choose to present themselves in various ways that do not conform exactly to other persons conceptions of how things ought to be. Thus a person who looks like a male physically but who chooses to wear a skirt and heels should have a right to express his androgynous feelings without being hassled for it. Women already do this (appear in men's clothes, haircut, occupation and attitude) and do not attract more than curious stares. So while it does not make good sense to say that there are three, five or nine different "genders" it is clearly fair to say that there are many different "presentations" and they do not necessarily have to have any correlations with physical anatomy.

So accept yourself as you are, hold your head up, adopt a positive attitude, use good judgement as to where you go and how you behave and enjoy yourself.



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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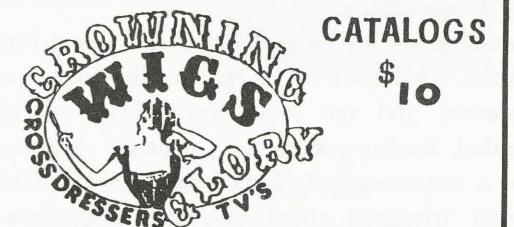
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# I WAS A MIDDLE-AGED WERE-TRANSSEXUAL

by Anne Blackwood

Let's see, where did I leave off? Let's see, I was transitioning to living as a woman, but hadn't made the switch at work. I'd started hormones ...

Well, things changed abruptly. Two months into hormone therapy *Anne* disappeared. I mean, vanished with nary a trace. So, what happened? Well, that's the \$64,000 question. I have no idea. I do have two theories, though. (You didn't think I'd be writing this if I didn't have a theory or two to spring on you, did you?)

First, let me say that I would have to classify what I went through when I thought I was transsexual as a pseudo-transsexual episode. You've never heard that term before, because I just now coined it. This does not diminish anything I wrote regarding being transsexual and how I felt transition should be handled, just be sure you really are transsexual. Now, the issue I am addressing is how to walk back from the brink when you discover that you really aren't transsexual.

You walk back by turning around and saying to yourself, "Well, that was an interesting trip." Lest anyone think that I "chickened out," let me say that this is not true. I was looking forward to making the transition; I had talked to a couple of co-workers about how to transition there. I was living my life away from work as Anne. All my friends knew what was going on and were touchingly supportive. Life was good. I was seeing an endocrinologist for hormone therapy.

Now to the theories I mentioned earlier. One is that the whole experience was due to a biochemical imbalance (for some as yet discovered reason) which caused the gender shift. Everything was moving fine until I started hormone therapy. At first that therapy was fine. I'd begun to feel some soreness in my nipples, which was exciting because of what that meant. But after about a month or so things started not feeling quite so right. Then, Anne disappeared. Had the hormones caused a correction of the biochemical imbalance? Maybe. At about the same time, I was fired for unrelated reasons (of which I was later cleared, but I had no desire to try to get the job back). This is what brings me to the second theory.

Many years ago, I had these occasional bouts of "being" Anne. That part of my personality took over. Anne is a woman, and she took over. These episodes invariably ended, leaving me rather perturbed. Was I a transvestite or a transsexual? I didn't know. So, I decided to find out what triggered these episodes. The answer is stress. Whenever stress reared its ugly head, Anne raised her pretty one. Well now, isn't it interesting that at the same time I left a stressful job (though I was not aware just how

so) Anne should pull her disappearing act ... what the hell was going on? I don't really know. I had not been any too certain that she was gone for good; I kept waiting for the other shoe to drop. I had suddenly become more masculine than I had ever been before, and I wasn't playing any games or trying to prove anything, I was just being me. A me that I was not used to.

So, I waited. Nothing. No sign of Anne. Three months

## Anne Blackwood returns with some insights from her personal "transsexual" experiences.

went by: nothing. Six months: I told friends what was happening, but said that I just didn't believe that Anne had vanished without a trace and wouldn't be back. Nine months: I was beginning to feel that Anne was perhaps gone altogether. One year: no sign of Anne. Fifteen months: I'm starting to worry about finances and guess what? Anne shows up. The old pattern. Now, isn't that interesting. Maybe that biochemical theory wasn't the right one; maybe it's the familiar Stress Theory.

I have a lot to say about the whole experience, so now the question is, where to start? Let's recap some personal history. In the latter part of the '70s I had accepted that I was a crossdresser and was adjusting to that. Things went along hunky dory. I left L.A. to go to college and when I returned four years later things seemed pretty much the same, except that I became aware of the aforementioned "episodes" of being Anne. I wasn't just playing at being Anne, she just took over and saw me through some difficult times (not that there was necessarily any outward display of Anne except at home). I was puzzled and disturbed by these events. So, I studied them and found, as I said, that they correlated with stress. It didn't bother me that I might be a Transsexual or a Transvestite, what bothered me was not knowing which.

In late 1987 I got a job colorizing movies (a far more valid reason to be despised by society than transsexuality) at a company that was very poorly run, and it was a stressful place to work.

One never knew if there was going to be a job once the current project was done, and of course management put the onus of profitability on the backs of the colorists rather than accept responsibility for their own inept handling of

virtually every aspect of running the business. By the summer of 1989 I was fairly sure I was transsexual, but when I was laid off that fall that feeling went away ... for a while. At the very end of 1990 (just after Christmas) I was rehired and back came the stress and by summer of 1991 I was fairly sure I was supposed to have been born a woman. God said, "Oops, sorry." Later that year, or earlier the next I found a therapist, and started working on the TS and other issues. Again, things were going hunky dory.

In 1992 I had a motorcycle accident, and had to stop seeing my therapist for a while as I was pretty much confined to bed for a month and on crutches for another two. In the meantime my therapist graduated from school and was planning to go into private practice, but there would be a delay in between, so that when I was ready to start seeing her again she was not available. I found another therapist.

In 1993 I informed my friends and family of my situation, that I was transsexual and would be transitioning to life as a woman in the relatively near future, depending on hormone therapy and some other issues, which escape me at the moment. It was at this time that I started talking to my friend Jane, with whom I had worked in various capacities, about how to go about transitioning at work. She seemed to think there would be no problems if I handled things the way I'd outlined. Besides, with Jane in my corner I felt that others would follow her lead.

It wasn't until 1994, early in April, I think, that I finally started hormone therapy, after a session with the psychiatrist my new therapist worked with and some tests by a clinical psychologist. I should tell you that one of my cousins, Alice, told me in a conversation that I ought not take hormones because she had reacted badly to them (the pill). She said they made her argumentative and cranky. I felt that there was a possibility that they were having a similar effect on me after a while (although it could have just been a cumulative effect of one annoying coworker).

In late May/early June, I went to visit my parents in Northern California. I had been debating whether or not to terminate hormone therapy. I was feeling constriction in my chest and other ill side effects, and also Anne was gone, again. On the drive back it occurred to me that if I was having so many doubts about continuing hormone therapy, then continuing was the *wrong* thing to do. So I stopped taking the Premarin and decided to see what happened next.

The rest I've already outlined.

In my Cogito Ergo Fem columns, which appeared in **Cross-Talk** for several years, I covered many issues, and one of the last I dealt with (in issue #52) was the question of whether a transsexual (or pseudo-transsexual for that matter) can get effective therapy, to which the answer was "no". In corresponding with Kimberleigh Richards about the possibility of writing the article you're reading now she said that she thought it was a good idea as peer pressure

can push people onto the wrong path for them. I'd like to point out that ego pressure had as much to do with it. Once one has invested a great deal of emotional and intellectual effort to persuade themselves and others that they are one thing, it is very difficult to say to friends and family, "I seem to have been mistaken." This is particularly true when that something is gender related. The economic term for this investment is a *sunk cost*, which is an unrecoverable expenditure. Sometimes you have to let go of a sunk cost in order to remain solvent.

I have only told a few people that Anne has returned. It's not a matter of hiding anything, it's a matter of still not being sure (rightfully or wrongfully) of what my situation is. Oh, if someone asks I'll tell them an abridged version of what I'm telling you, but most of my friends already know the details up to now. I think that what I need to do now is to redefine myself in broader terms than I had before. I am not a crossdresser in that I am not a man who likes to dress as, or pretend to be a woman. I am not a transsexual as my gender identity is not always at odds with my physiology. I am not a transgenderist because I have no desire to live full time as the gender role which is at odds with my body. So, what am I? I am a man who is sometimes a woman. However, Virginia, I always remain male.

(continued on page 30)

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## T NOTES

### THE FIRST 12 WEEKS

by Anne Vitale, Ph.D.

The first couple of meetings in any therapeutic relationship are extremely critical. This is especially true if the presenting problem is a gender identity issue. As you might expect, people come in at varying stages of dealing with their gender issues and the work must proceed accordingly. A minor number of people enter the work expressing a clear desire to change their sex and want me to monitor their transition. I am, of course, open to doing

**"People come in at varying stages of dealing with their gender issues and the work must proceed accordingly."**

exactly that ... when and if all of the criteria have been met. Others are far less anxious to think that far ahead. In this column, I want to concentrate on those people who present at the outset seemingly clear and ready to enter transition.

The first level of transition is psychological evaluation for hormonal therapy. In that regard, paragraph 5.1.2 of the HBGDA Standards of Care states that "The patient must be known to a clinical behavioral scientist for at least 3 months and that clinical behavioral scientist must endorse the patient's request for hormone therapy." This is such an important and useful period that responsible gender therapist have come to interpret the "3 months" to mean twelve weekly, one hour sessions.

The first two or three hours are used to establish a therapeutic alliance. I realize that what is transpiring for my client is life changing therapy. It is extremely important for them to have as much confidence in me as I can possibly endow. This is done by clearly defining the ground rules in which we will be working. I also assure the client that nothing drastic is going to happen immediately. The two of us will take all the time necessary to work out what is right and take appropriate and controlled action as the therapy evolves. I find it useful to subtly reveal my in-depth knowledge and expertise in the field of gender transition while being very attentive and authentic in my listening. This is also a good time to take careful notes that can be reviewed and annotated between sessions.

When a safe, secure environment has been established and as we move on in the series of interviews, the depth of the gender dysphoria and its ramifications begin to emerge. Family, friend and workplace issues are examined. Often a joint session with the client's parents or a significant other will be called for at this time. Questions about what the client might expect if he or she was to decide to transition are encouraged and answered as honestly as possible.

Another thing I do is keep the client aware of the pacing of our interviews. Even though we start out with my being in charge (i.e., insisting on following the Standards of Care, asking direct questions and strict adherence to a regular meeting schedule), I slowly shift the

burden of responsibility for the client's work in therapy directly onto the client. I make it very clear that although I am there to help, it is he or she who will be making the decision to enter and ultimately complete transition. The pacing, of course, is dependent on the individual's ability to handle his or her particular situation. If additional time is necessary for any reason whatsoever, than we simply schedule in more time.

I've said it before and I will undoubtedly say it again: "Transition is hard. Very hard!" The first twelve weeks should be the time when fantasies and misconceptions are tempered by reality. The range of transition that can be expected from the hormones and any subsequent plans for surgery should be very clear in the individual's mind *before* hormone therapy starts. Meeting others who have already started or gone through transition is usually the best way for the client to gain these insights. In my case, it is relatively easy because I am there as a real world model. I also arrange for the individual to meet, by mutual consent, others who are either dealing with common special problems or have the individual participate in one of my gender issues groups.

At some point, usually after the first two months of therapy, both the client and I have a good idea where we are going and at what pace to proceed. If we are still dealing with fundamental fears and uncertainty, then there is naturally no talk of moving on in transition. If, on the other hand all seems to be in order, I make a concerted effort to be

(continued on page 30)

## THE GOLDEN AGE OF "TRANNIES" IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

by Roberta Perkins

History has remained generally silent about females who lived as men. But during the Middle Ages many of them reached public prominence, and were even canonized by the Church, including the remarkable and tragic St. Joan of Arc, the best known of all the women who adopted a male role.

**Carnival, Fiestas and Satanists:** In Medieval Europe the Church was not only the center of learning and knowledge and the foundation of Canon Law, it also shaped social attitudes. Crossdressing or any form of crossing gender was unacceptable. It took the ancient Mosaic laws quite literally in this regard, notably *Deuteronomy 22:5*, by which a woman or a man dressing in the clothing of the opposite sex was considered "an abomination to the Lord your God." Yet, throughout Christian Europe in the fiestas and parades which took place in church yards, crossdressing was often a fundamental part of the ceremony, especially in the harvest rituals. All Hallows Eve (Halloween), the Mummers and Carnival are all remnants of pagan rites which had been incorporated into the Christian cycle of liturgical feast days. Thus, men were expected to don their wives' clothing during the festivities, but were frowned upon if they did so at other times. For a man to want to act like a woman was considered socially inappropriate, since it meant lowering his status to that of a female. On the other hand, for a woman to want to act as a man was thought to be a natural desire of raising status, and people were less offended by this, unless she made a serious bid for the power that was strictly a male privilege.

Then there was the Christian concept of the Devil as a temptress, reaching its hysterical apogee in Jacob Sprenger's document, *Malleus Maleficarum* (Hammer of Witches), in 1486. In this belief Satan took the shape of a beautiful woman to tempt men to sin. It was thought to be a practice closely associated with Satanism, and so men who dressed as women were suspected of Devil-worship, and many of them met their end on a funeral pyre along with the reported 300,000 women burnt to death as witches between the High Middle Ages and the late 18th century. It seems a terrible price to pay so that married men might have an excuse for their adultery: "the Devil made me do it" they cried as another innocent woman or crossdressing man was led to the stake.

**The Woman who became a Pope:** The Middle Ages produced many legends, but none is more enduring than that of "Pope Joan", perhaps the most enigmatic figure of Medieval history. The story begins in Germany in the early

Ninth Century with a teenage girl known as Joan Anglicus (so named because she was born in England), who was taught to read the scriptures by her father. When he died she took up with a monk named Ulfilias, with whom she had fallen in love, but since they travelled together through dangerous territory Joan dressed as a man. As a pair of monks they journeyed to Athens and then onto the Holy Land, and Joan, now known as John,

**The Church in the Middle Ages was kinder than might have been expected toward women masquerading as men.**

gained a reputation for his scholarship. Unfortunately, en route to Rome Ulfilias suddenly took ill and died. Heartbroken, Joan alias John entered Rome alone. His reputation preceded him and he soon got a job translating the scriptures in the papal court of Leo IV. In a short time John was elevated to a cardinal.

When Pope Leo died in 855 John was elected to the papacy as John VIII. In the two years of his reign John was apparently an outstanding pope, making Rome a great seat of learning and bringing peace between warring Italian lords. Unfortunately, he was smitten by a Benedictine monk from Spain who was employed in the papal court and John fell pregnant. Everybody thought John's swollen belly was due to his overeating, but then, so the story goes, he gave birth in the midst of a pontifical procession. One account has it that John and his baby son were torn to shreds by an outraged mob. Yet another account claims that the baby grew up to become Pope Adrian III. The Catholic Church has hotly denied the story of Pope Joan for centuries, and in time the Medieval history of the female pope passed into legend. But a few scholars of Medieval history have produced evidence in support of the existence of Pope Joan, and to this day there is a persistent rumor that in the Vatican since John VIII, in the inaugural chair on which the newly elected pope sits, there is a hole in the seat through which the cardinals supposedly check to see if their new pontiff possesses the appropriate genitalia.

**Bearded Women and Other Saints:** In Medieval times it was not so much gender behaviors which determined the social differences between men and women, but the



biological factors of menstruation and pregnancy in females. So long as women had periods and the potential for childbirth they could not assume a male role. On the other hand, men with effeminate inclinations were attracted to the holy orders and priesthoods as a means of avoiding such masculine pursuits as fatherhood, knighthood and mercenary soldiers. Conversely, women who wished to avoid traditional feminine roles often entered convents as nuns. But, in the more extreme cases of feminine aversion, women crossdressed as monks and priests. Thus, the male holy orders became something of a common ground for gender crossers of both sexes. Examples of women who crossed gender by disguising themselves as holy men abound in Medieval history and legends. What is extraordinary in these stories is the fact that these women usually crossed gender following some crisis or upheaval in their lives. Take the example of the so-called bearded saints like Sts. Galla and Paula, women who suddenly grew masculine facial hair in response to a shock of being forced into some form of ultra-feminine behavior. The best known of the bearded saints is the Christian daughter of a pagan Portuguese king, Uncumber, who grew a moustache and long curly beard to avoid having to marry the king of Sicily under her father's orders. Uncumber's enraged father had her crucified, and so she entered the kingdom of God as a Christian martyr. This is obviously a Medieval legend attempting to explain Uncumber's very unfeminine

behavior in biological terms, but turning her crossed gender behavior into the chaste actions of a saint.

But there were some historical basis in the stories of other famous saints of the Middle Ages. Pelagia was one of these historic saints. She was a dancing girl and prostitute in Antioch, and an apparently beautiful woman converted to Christianity by the saintly Bishop Nonus. Pelagia found a way of disowning her wicked past by leaving Antioch dressed as a man. After many years of travelling in the Holy Land, Pelagia returned to Europe and entered a monastery, where he was given the task of looking after a nunnery as its prior. But, after being accused of raping a nun he chose to flee rather than admit to his biological sex. After that Pelagia returned to the Holy Land to become a desert hermit noted for his asceticism. Upon his death in old age still living a solitary existence in the wilderness, mourners who discovered that he was a female declared: "Glory be to thee O Lord Jesus, for thou hast many hidden treasures on Earth, as well female as male."

Another historical figure is Saint Hildegund, apparently the daughter of a knight of Neuss on the Rhine. The knight took his 12-year-old daughter on a journey to the Holy Land dressed as a boy known as Joseph. But the knight died suddenly in Jerusalem and Joseph was forced to fend for himself. He was robbed of what money his father carried with him and in an effort to make his way back to Europe joined an old priest on his way to Rome. Joseph

fell in which a band of robbers but was captured by Italian soldiers who were determined to hang him. But he proved his innocence by undergoing an ordeal of hot irons. Later he entered a monastery in Germany where he lived as a monk until his death in old age, when his fellow monks were genuinely shocked to discover that their famous old monk was actually a female. There were many other female saints throughout the Middle Ages who became monks. Truly was this the golden age of female gender crossers.

**The Tragedy of Jeanne d'Arc:** It is hard to imagine a more tragic figure in Medieval history than Jeanne d'Arc, better known as St. Joan of Arc. Born in the little French village of Domremy on the Meuse River to a peasant couple in 1412, Joan became a devout Christian who would rather kneel in church than enjoy festivities in her community. At 13 she began hearing voices which she ascribed to angels. Over the next three years these voices became more and more political in their demands upon her. In 1428 they told her to lead a French army against the invading English and crown the Dauphin Charles king of France. After a period of ridicule she was eventually granted commandship over the French forces at the siege of Orleans. What convinced the Dauphin to appoint her military commander remains a secret, but some say Charles saw divinity in her eyes. However she achieved the appointment, Joan successfully led a French victory over the English at Orleans in 1429, despite receiving an arrow wound whilst scaling the city's walls. Joan followed this victory up with other victories at Reims, Compeigne and Beauvais, and received another wound during the siege of Paris.

These were remarkable victories achieved by a flagging French army in a short time over triumphant English forces, and all the more remarkable for being led by a 17-year-old girl. Throughout this warring period Joan dressed entirely in masculine clothing, including cropping her hair short in the style of a French knight, and wearing chain mail, plate armour and helmet, spurs, sword and dagger. Even during moments of peace she continued to dress in men's hose, tunic and cap, including attending the coronation of Charles VII (formerly the Dauphin) at the king's side. Eventually the "Maid of Orleans" was captured by the treacherous Burgundians and after failing to get a ransom from Charles they turned her over to the English, who were anxious to burn her immediately. However, the Church stepped in and demanded a trial. She was charged with treason against God.

Joan's trial was a sham. It was an obvious attempt at humiliating her and proving that she had demonic aid in defeating the English, because no mere girl alone could achieve such a feat. Faced with being burnt alive Joan recanted, agreeing she lied about her Heavenly voices, and agreeing to wear female clothing thereafter. Remember, this was a time when a common belief about the Devil was

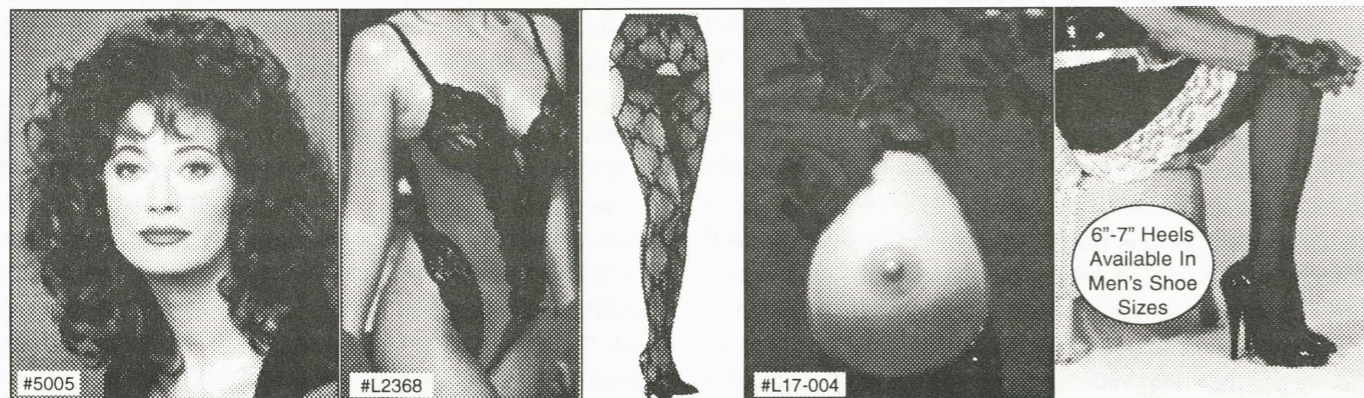
that he disguised himself as a woman to cause men to sin. But, in her cell Joan chose to don her more familiar male garb and her inquisitors took this to mean she had relapsed and fallen back into the hands of the Devil. She was burnt alive as a witch on May 30, 1431. There is no doubt that Joan's crossdressing was merely a political excuse to execute her. Joan threatened men much more than Pope Joan, Pelagia or the bearded saints, for as Medieval historian Vern Bullough remarked: "Quite obviously for a woman to assume a male guise to become more holy was permitted, but to compete with men on masculine grounds such as warfare was simply not permitted. Such competition represented not a gain in the status of women but a loss of status for men." Thus, Jeanne d'Arc was a true victim of genderization; she died a sexual martyr for defying the boundaries of the proscribed social sex roles. In 1456, just 25 years after her death, the papal court finally declared her innocent. In 1920 she was canonized, and today, rightly so, she is France's patron saint.



*Roberta Perkins is affiliated with the School of Sociology at the University of New South Wales, Australia. This is the fifth in a series of ten articles adapted from her thesis in anthropology; installments are presented every other month. The next, in Cross-Talk #78, will discuss transgendered mystics in 18th Century Siberia and Alaska.*

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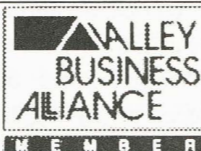
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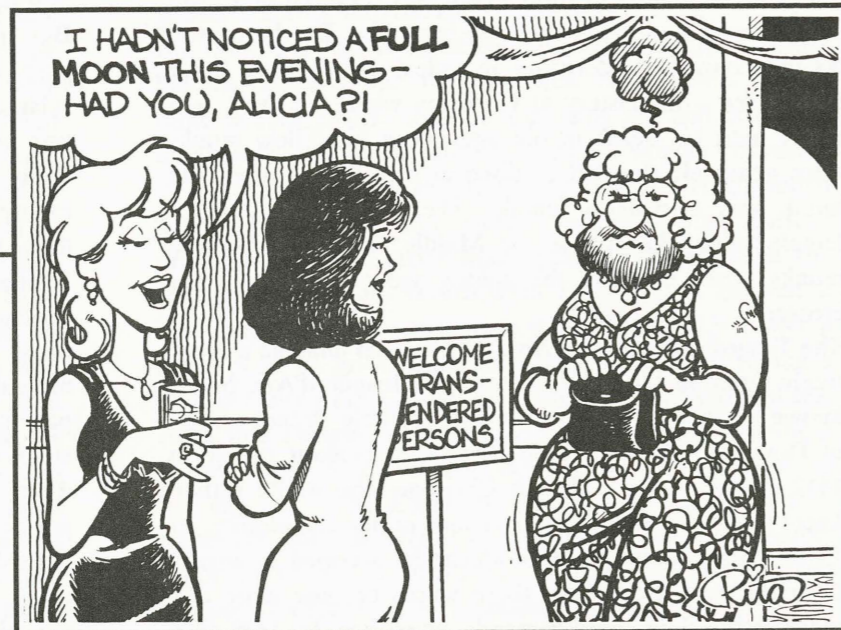
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## The Bearded Lady

by Ricky Hunt  
Illustration by Rita



O.K., I will grant that you are an exceptionally tolerant and forgiving person. After all, you're a crossdresser (or at least involved positively with one if you're reading this) and you can probably stand and deliver a fifteen to twenty minute lecture on how crossdressers should be respected, and it doesn't really matter what you're wearing, you should be treated with respect. Maybe you're one of the activists, willing standing up before God and all Her children in a dress to prove your point. I applaud you for your positive mental attitude and congratulate you for your "broad-minded" sensibility. So now I'm going to mess with your mind.

Let's act out a little scene. The setting is your local crossdresser's club. There are diverse persons of both apparent genders seated around the room chatting and schmoozing. Enter, stage left, yours truly, looking forward to an evening of fun and games among my crossdressed peers. Suddenly the conversation stops. Tableaux: shocked faces, disapproving stares and icy silence. I quickly take inventory: shoes match the clothes, slip not showing, blouse buttoned tightly, (grab head) wig in place. Everything checks okay. So why the dropped jaws?

(Portentous drumming, then a voice offstage with lots of echo.) "Check your face, stupid!"

Quick, a mirror! There's got to be a mirror around, crossdressers simply can't exist without a reflection to ponder. There, lots of eye shadow, long, thick lashes, ruby red lips, high neckline covering the Adam's apple. Still no

clue what's wrong.

(Voice offstage, downright exasperated.) "It's not the makeup, dummy, it's the hair."

Oh, now I get it. If you guys in dresses are so goldarned tolerant, so ready to demand acceptance of your crossdressing, why do you get so nervous at seeing me in a dress if I haven't shaved my beard? Relax, it's a rhetorical question, I don't expect you to answer it. In fact, I will admit that I am as unwilling to show up at a meeting in dress and beard as anyone. To be frank, I was more than a little embarrassed to dress up at home and have my wife see me, even though she actually encouraged it. Why is it unacceptable to express your femininity with hair on your face?

My wife the social worker explained it to me as she was reading over my shoulder while I typed this. It's called, in a typical social work phrase with far too many words, Internalizing the Mind of the Oppressor. (Why do social workers always need so many words? If you're going to use jargon, at least invent one simple word and save me some typing!) It's the old story of the kidnap victim joining the kidnapers, the battered woman announcing "It's really my fault." If we're so ready to demand uncritical acceptance of gender expression, why is the presence or absence of facial hair so important?

I'll freely admit I have internalized the view that I mustn't want to go out in a dress with an unshaven face. So go ahead and admit it: you think so too. Then take a minute to ask yourself why. Reach down to the liberated woman in you and tackle this hairy problem, then go forth with a new vision of tolerance and acceptance. Who knows, maybe I'll catch up to you after I've shaved the beard so I can go out in public.



## CROSS-TALK COMICS

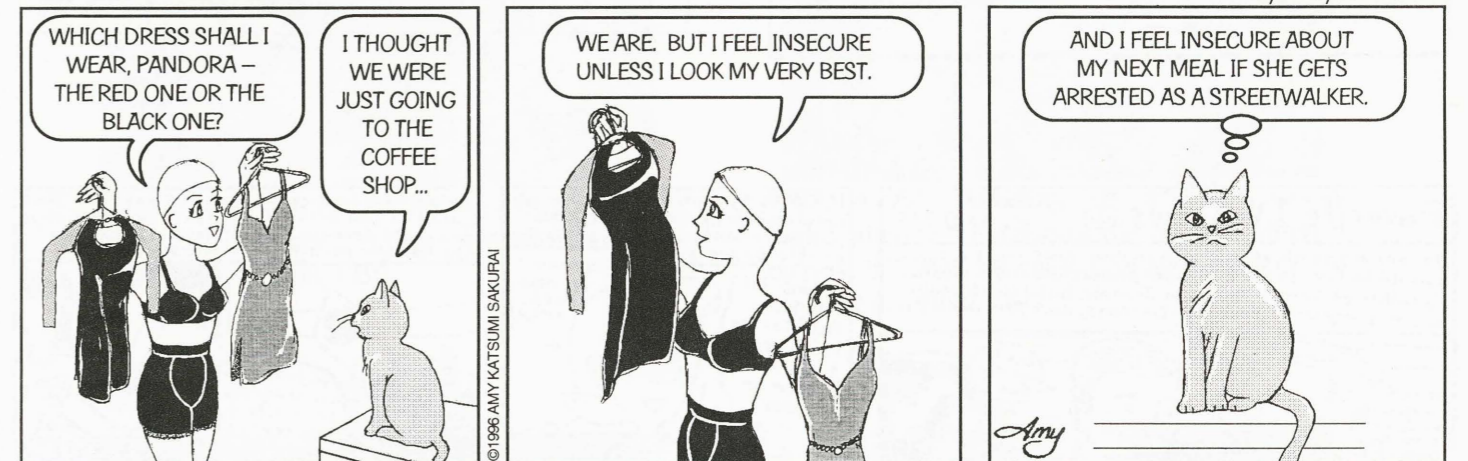
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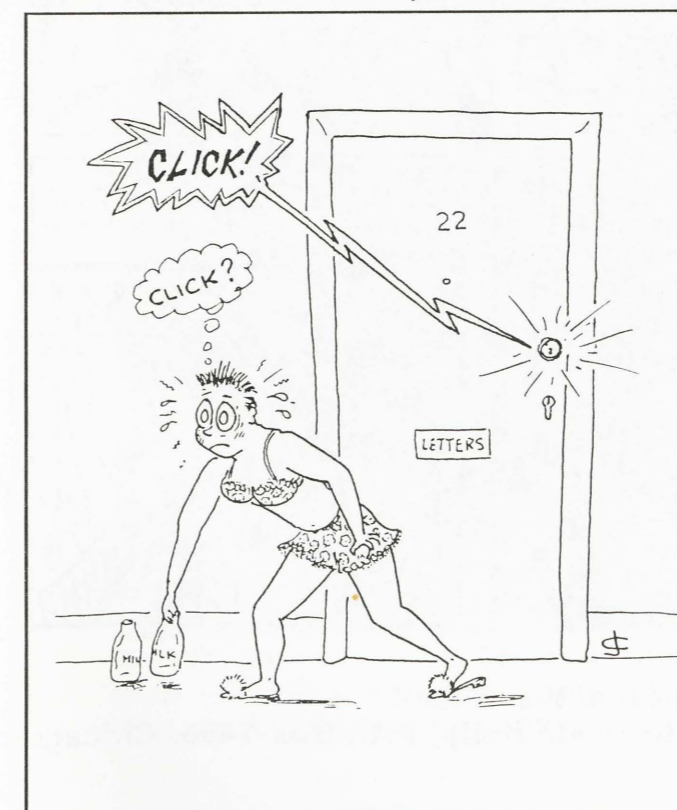
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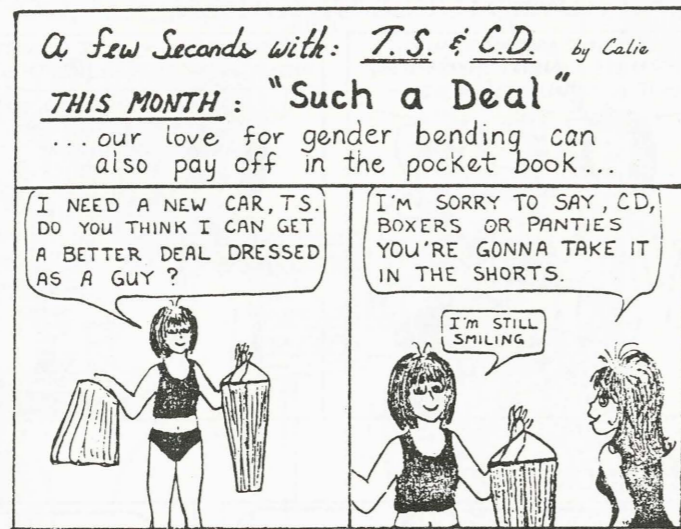
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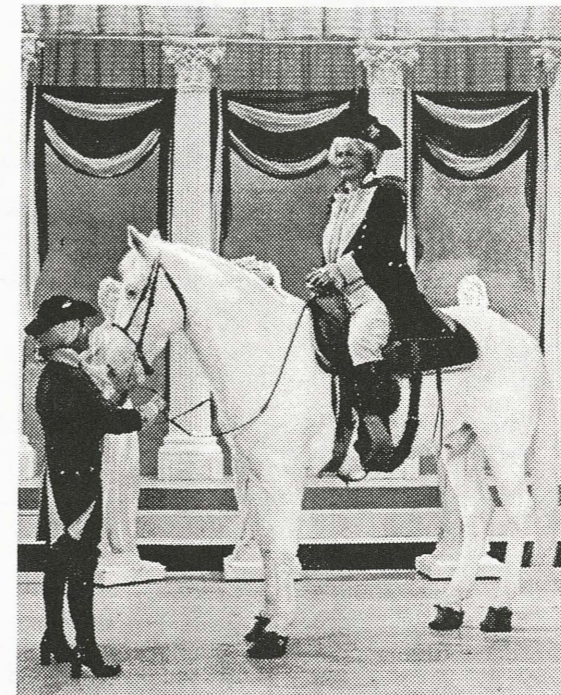


Tasha's World by Tasha Barnard



# GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

from the archives of Ralph Judd



2/9/76: Maude (Beatrice Arthur) plays General George Washington in the town Bicentennial pageant, on *Maude*, CBS.



9/22/84: Arte Johnson (left) and Bert Convy (right) attempt to masquerade as girls when a bevy of beauties set sail on an all-women cruise on *The Love Boat*, ABC.



4/11/54: George Burns and Gracie Allen burst in on Jack while he's preparing for a sketch in drag, on *The Jack Benny Show*, CBS.



11/5/81: Undercover cop Mick Belker (Bruce Weitz, right) discovers the "woman" who has been preying on cabbies is really a man in disguise, on *Hill Street Blues*, NBC.

Reprinted from *Steven's Comic* with the permission of the artist. To order a copy of *Steven's Comic*, send \$3.00 to David Kelly, P.O. Box 1450, Chicago IL 60690-1450.



**T NOTES ... continued from page 22**

very specific about what the client will expect physically and psychologically. To aid in empowering the client, I have him or her start thinking about what internist or endocrinologist they will want to work with. Here in the San Francisco Bay Area, we are lucky to have several physicians who specialize in hormone therapy. Each has a specific style and idea as to how fast transition should occur. One in particular is noted for her "cocktail" and strict, let's get this over as soon as possible approach. Another is noted for her thoroughness and in-depth knowledge of transition because of her having the experience herself. Yet another has a more laid back, we'll take it anyway you want it, approach.

Eventually the time comes when a referral for hormones is asked for and a letter is written. It may have taken twelve weeks or it may have taken twelve months. Either way, the time must be right.

In essence then, the first twelve weeks are used to authenticate the transition, establish a bond between the therapist and the client, set the pace for the rest of transition, and most importantly, empower the client by giving the client control over an element of his or her life that, till now, may have seemed impossible to attain.



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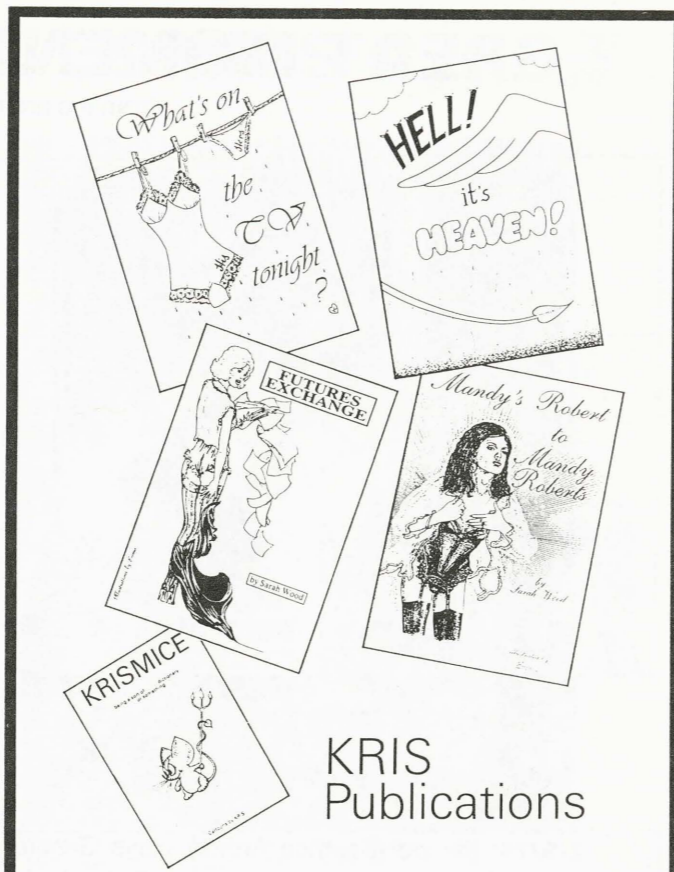
**I WAS A WERE-TRANSSEXUAL ... continued from page 21**

To be one or the other I must live a particular lifestyle. To always be a man I must lead a stress-free life (like that's ever going to happen); to always be a woman I would have to live a very stressful life, and that is just not in my nature. So, I have to learn to live in between and embrace both aspects of my life.

So, how does one walk back from the brink? The answer is simple, but not necessarily easy. One simply turns around and walks away from a bad investment. No matter how difficult, you say to yourself and to everyone else you've opened up to, "I seem to have been mistaken." You might add, "I really don't understand it myself." I can't say I've ended my journey of discovery, I hope I never can, even on my death bed. All I can say is ... what a long, strange trip it's been.



Anne Blackwood was a regular columnist in Cross-Talk for five years. Her last article for us was "Can We Have 'Standards' That Work?" in issue #63.



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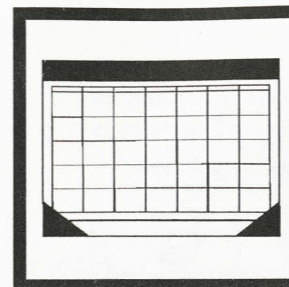
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**EVENTS CALENDAR**

**February 10, 1996:** 7th Annual "Gala Ball", Cedar Rapids IA, hosted by Iowa Artistry. Write P.O. Box 75, Cedar Rapids 52406-0075 for details or telephone (309) 755-2310.

**February 23-25, 1996:** "Weekend Break", Bollington Cheshire, U.K., sponsored by The Northern Concord. Information from P.O. Box 258, Manchester M60 1LN.

**February 27-March 3, 1996:** 8th Annual "Texas 'T' Party", Dallas TX. Information from P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163 or by calling (210) 980-7788.

**March 24-31, 1996:** IFGE "Minnesota Pride Celebration '96", Minneapolis MN. Information from IFGE, P.O. Box 229, Waltham, MA 02154, telephone (617) 899-2212.

**March 29-31, 1996:** 2nd Annual "Spring Gala", Niagara-on-the-Lake ON, Canada. Details from Xpressions, P.O. Box 223 Station "A", Toronto ON M5W 1B2, or by fax to (905) 627-2362.

**April 25-29, 1996:** "California Dreamin '96", San Francisco CA, sponsored by Powder Puffs Of California and co-hosted by ETVC, Diablo Valley Girls, Rainbow Gender Association and Sacramento Gender Alliance. Details from PPOC/California Dreamin, P.O. Box 1088, Yorba Linda CA 92686, by Internet at <dreamin96@aol.com> or by telephone at (714) 779-9013.

**May 4, 1996:** "Prom Night in New Jersey", Edison NJ, sponsored by the Chi Delta Mu and Sigma Nu Rho chapters of Tri-Ess and Monmouth Ocean TransGender. Details from (201) 439-9618.

**May 16-19, 1996:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, produced by Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 19206, King of Prussia PA 19406. Information via Internet: <poco@cdspub.com> or by phone: (610) 640-9449.

**July 3-7, 1996:** "Transgen '96: Transgender Independence Weekend", Houston TX, sponsored by the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy. Details from ICTLEP, 5707 Firenza, Houston 77035-5515, by calling (713) 723-8368, by Internet to <prfrye@aol.com> or by fax at (713) 723-1800.

**July 24-28, 1996:** 4th Annual "Spouses'/Partners' International Conference for Education", Wilmington DE (Philadelphia PA). Details from Dr. Peggy Rudd, P.O. Box 5304, Katy TX 77491, fax (713) 347-8747; from Betsy at (909) 875-2687; or from Evelyn at (215) 860-9271.

**September 1-8, 1996:** "Dignity Cruise #7" to Bermuda from New York, sponsored by Dr. Peggy Rudd. Details from Cruises Inc., 1-800-247-7021.

**September 19-26, 1996:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA. See May listing for details.

**November 6-9, 1996:** 7th Annual "Fall Harvest", St. Louis MO, sponsored by Mid America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE) and hosted by Iowa Artistry. Information from P.O. Box 75, Cedar Rapids IA 52406-0075, telephone (309) 755-2310.

(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.)

The hotlines listings are being revised and will return in a future issue.

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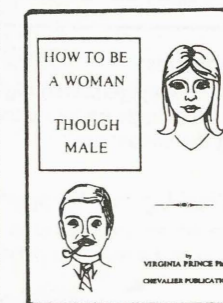
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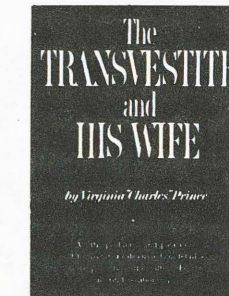
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**#72 (October 1995):** Discussion of "focused" support groups and exclusionary policies; Integration of positive and negative personality factors; Building true community; Polynesian transgendered behavior; Couples issues in therapy; The famous "Queen Mary" nightclub; Review of *Dr. Jekyll and Ms. Hyde*.

**#73 (November 1995):** Is the truth filtered by our community's organizations and publications?; Crossing the line from crossdressing to transsexualism; Merissa Sherrill Lynn's farewell message; Do we expect too much from our leaders?; 1986 transsexual beauty pageant; Natures and origins of gender; Review of *To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything!* Julie Newmar.

**#74 (December 1995):** Taking responsibility in the fight for equal rights; Magical beliefs and crossdressing; Transgenderism in southeast Asian cultures; Crossdressing in the Wild West; Hormone therapy without health risks; Acceptance compared to tolerance; False starts in therapy.

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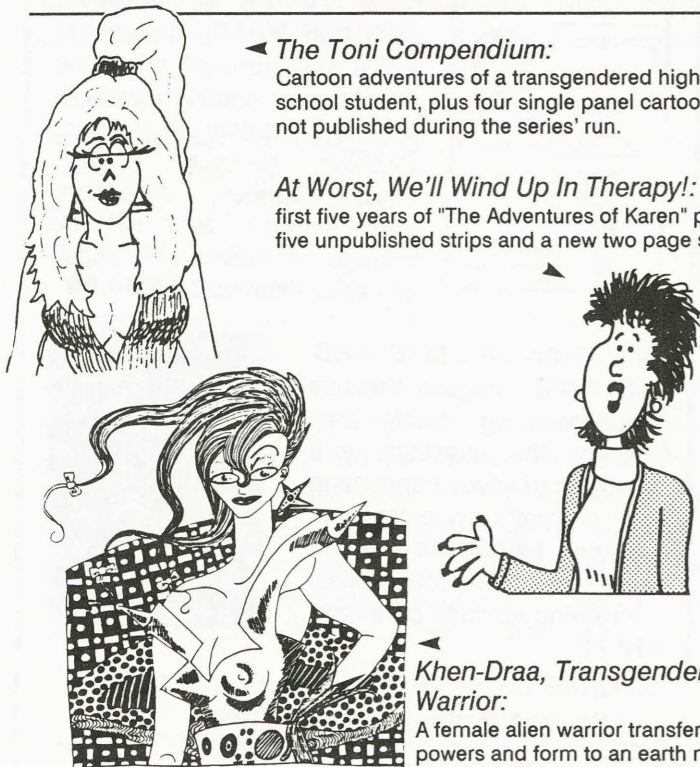
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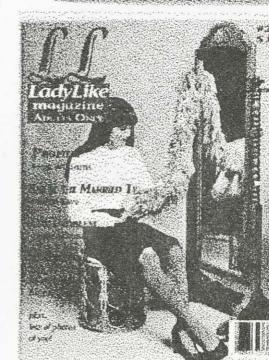
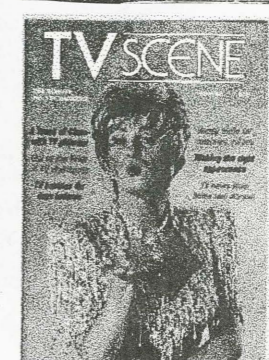
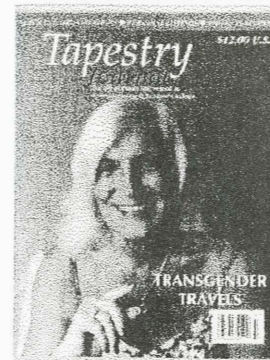
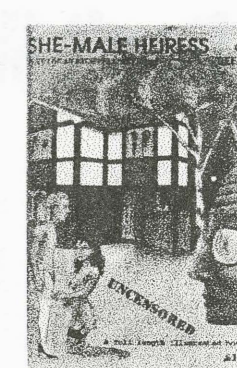
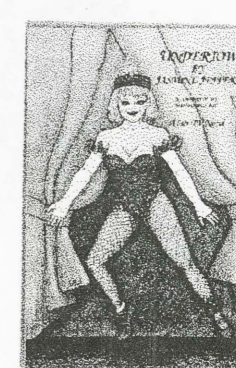
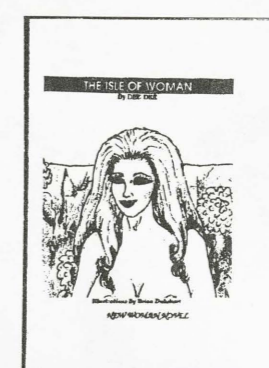
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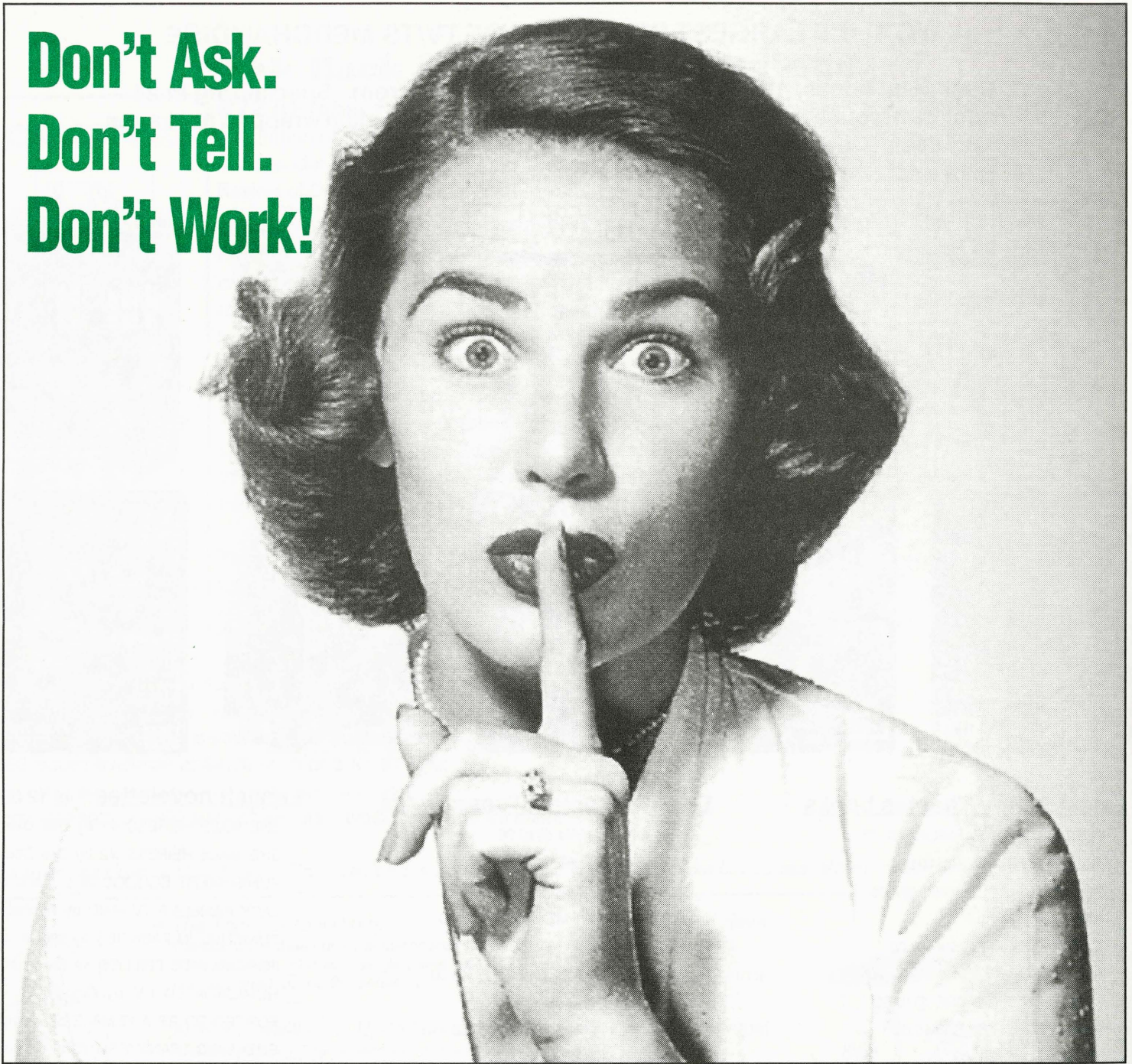
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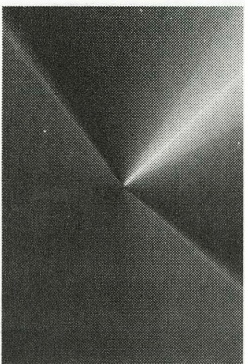
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