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Life &

Advice by Ann Landers

Support for donning 'his' dress

Dear Readers: Recently I printed a letter from a woman whose husband enjoyed dressing up in her clothes. I said, "Some psychiatrists say all transvestites are either homosexual or bisexual."

That sentence unleashed a flood of angry responses from hundreds of transvestites, their wives and sweethearts. I was told in no uncertain terms (and unprintable language) that I am "off my nut," "crazy as a loon," "ill-informed," "living in the Dark Ages," and to "crawl back under that rock."

From Tucson, Ariz.: Take it back. You made an awful lot of trouble for me. I enjoy dressing up in women's clothes — have for years. My wife loves to see me put on a fashion show. I am neither bisexual nor am I homosexual. Our sex life is great. After your column appeared, my wife kept me up half the night insisting that I tell her what guy I am seeing on the side. Please print this letter so she will get off my back. I swear I am straight.

From Louisville, Ky.: Listen, you creep, I have been cross-dressing for 20 years and anyone who calls me a homo gets a fat lip. It's a great way to relax and have a little fun. No one has seen me in my outfits but my wife. She thinks it's O.K. and it's nobody else's business.

From Orlando, Fla.: My wife and I have been married 12 years and I have never looked at another woman — or a man. I resent your statement that just because I enjoy dressing in ladies' gowns and slippers that I am a homosexual. We play these little games about once a week in the privacy of our home. Once in a while we invite another couple in who enjoy the same thing. But we never swap partners and I have no desire to make love to a man. Please get your facts straight.

From Berwyn, Ill.: My boyfriend is beautiful. I wish I were half as good-looking. He surprised me one day by bringing a complete female [illegible] along on a weekend trip. The two of us decided to go to a first-class restaurant for dinner with him wearing his best dress. It thrilled me when heads turned to look at the gorgeous "gal" — not ME — him. He is straight as a rail and is a fantastic lover. If a man makes a pass at him when he is dressed up he becomes very indignant. I can't speak for the others, but I can tell you my guy is no homo. Run a retraction, Kiddo.

So now, Dear Readers, I will repeat my original statement: "SOME psychiatrists say all transvestites are either homosexual or bisexual." Please note the word "SOME."

I have checked further and have additional opinions from two of Chicago's most distinguished psychiatrists. Both Dr. George Pollock, Director of the Institute of Psychoanalysis in Chicago, and Dr. Harold Visotsky, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at Northwestern University Medical School and Northwestern Memorial Hospital, said as follows: Approximately 20 per cent of the cross-dressers are either homosexual or bisexual, but the majority are heterosexual and have no interest in other males. They get their jollies dressing up and that's as far as they go. When I asked Dr. Pollock if such behavior was "normal" (a word most psychiatrists deplore) he replied, "Not if the cross-dressing produces an orgasm."

So — now you have an idea of what my week has been like. How was yours?