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Buffalo Belles

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BUFFALO BELLES**NU PHI CHI

President: Denise Miller V.P.,Treas.: Janice Gnau Newsletter: Kathy Lorraine

Address all correspondence to: Buffalo BELLES
7954 Trnst Rd. S.197
Williamsvil, NY 14221-4100

Dear Sisters,

First off, the BIG NEWS- The December meeting will be held on Dec. 10 th!
This is a change we have had to make. Starting time is 6:00 PM.

Our mild fall weather held true for the November meeting. Braveing the
clement weather were: Denise M., Pam S., Frances L., Jackie & Yvette, Tammy Z.
Collean D., Kathy L., Patty J., JeanH., Dana D., Joan C., and guest Jennifer
and Kurst.

We met upstairs in our alternative meeting location. All in all, it is
not a bad location either. The room is much larger than our present one,
and does have direct access to the outside via the firescape. (be carefull
in useing it, if you are wearing heels!). And the two bathrooms we use for
changing are just down the hall. We may be useing this room quite often in
future.

The reason we are shifting the Dec. meeting is that we were facing
two other groups using the facilities at the same time. We were bumped
off our alternative site even!. We still have the other group useing our
normal room until 6:00. So be careful as you arrive to which site to go to.
We will probably stay with the 6:00 start for now. The conflicting group
isn't expected to remain a problem for to long.

The December meeting will be our Cristmas party. As per years past,
we hope that you will bring three gifts. The first, Your company, second
a \$5.00 gift for a needy child-(try for one for an OLDER child-teenage-
as this group often has little donated suitable for them-cute, cuddly toys
don't really make it with them!)

Of course the third thing to bring will an exchange gift for another sister. Hopefully someone will bring something special for our snacks. If this isn't enough, we will go get our usual pizzas. This was one of our nicest meetings held last year. I hope the change of dates won't keep anyone away, but that we get a visit from some of the sisters we haven't seen in a long time.

The November meeting was a good one. The summer slump seemed to have ended. The cooler fall weather seemed to have snapped us out of our lethargy. We had actually what resembled a meeting once more. It was decided that we needed some programs and activities again. We are working on a wig show. Jackie is arranging for a demonstration for the February meeting. It was decided that a discussion group would be held each month for a specific topic. Our moderator will be Patty. So to get the fur flying, I'm going to suggest the first topic-Are we an "open" group or a "closed" group as defined by Triess. We are considered a chapter by Tri-ess. Yet we have many members who have declared themselves to be TS. What is our status? What do you think? If you can't attend, write!

We had a goodly representation at Riverside Weekend last week! Making the trip was Patty, Janice, Denise, Cleo, Jean & Luwella, Dana, and perennial guest Jeniffer. What I've heard, a great time was had by those attending. Our special congratulations must go to our leader, Denise! She won first prize in the Saturday evening dinner outfit award!!! Her 1890's outfit beat out the other hundred or so entries!!! I bet we will be having a theme night at one of the upcoming meetings so she can show off her work! And that she did, for we had several phone calls before the event and she was going all over looking for what to wear. Congratulations Denise!!!!

Janice would like it known that she is soliciting your business! Atleast the accounting and tax return variety! She is a CPA and has many(?) years experience! Who better to write off that Wonderbra as a medical necessity! Call her or write to Janice Gnau

PO Box 1701
Amherst, NY 14226-1701



Here she is !!! Our own DENISE MILLER, Queen of the Ball!! Fairest of them all...Congratulations Denise, your hard work paid off well!

C A L A N D A R

- December 10-Buffalo Belles XMAS party gift exchange, dsc. group 6:00 PM start
- January 7-Buffalo Belles 6:00PM Wig show? dsc. group.
- February 4-Buffalo Belles-Avon makeup show.
- March 4-Buffalo Belles-Dress up night? Denis must show that dress of hers!!
- ??????? Buffalo Nlght Out III ?? Anyone have any ideas???

Rochester CD Net has some inter-programs scheduled after the New Year. Their hotline # is 251 2132 Cost less then a wquarter after 11:00

Ladies it is time to once more venture into your purses and pay your dues. As was decided at last month's meeting, we are forced to raise the cost of associate membership to \$15.00. This is for those who can only be part of our sorority through the newsletter. We weren't even covering printing and mailing costs. Associates are full members, but forego meeting attendance. If we were ever to really get organized in some manner and held a vote on something like officers or star fleet commanders, they would receive a ballot. Hopefully we will always be able to suppress such male tendency's!! Our regular dues will remain at \$25. When sending in your dues, please include your mailing label. It is a good time to update any changes you would like in it. As we are a TRI-ESS chapter, it would also be nice to know how many of us are actually members!! Please indicate whether you are a member or not. Checks can be to cash or Buffalo Belles.

I just want to take this final space to wish you all a very happy holiday season. May the joy of this time of the year fill your hearts with gladness and love. Thankyou for bearing with me this last year, for it has bean a very strange trip I'm on ...where it will end, who knows....

Love, Nobby

Chapter Update

DATELINE: Spring '94
BUFFALO, NEW YORK

When the Buffalo Belles got together recently at their quilting bee they started talking about opportunities for a fun event. What they hatched was a summer picnic. Sounds like an excellent opportunity for a lot of family fun! The spaghetti dinner was apparently a raging success. Jackie and Yvette outdid themselves on making the spaghetti sauce and Colleen treated the chapter to glorious chocolate chip cookies. For the spaghetti supper the chapter had a special visitor. One couple brought their little daughter. This was the first time a child has ever visited the Buffalo Belles! She was described as a "beautiful pixie." So open, warm and friendly! Like most children, she relates to crossdressers simply as people. Truly, as Wordsworth so wisely said, "The child is the father of the adult."

Dateline: Buffalo, New York

The Buffalo Belles have, like their colleagues in Chi Chapter, opened their hearts to the needy. For their Christmas Party, their suggestion was that each member bring a \$5 toy or clothing for a needy child. It never fails to warm my heart when a group of Tri-Ess sisters reach out to do good for other human beings. The Buffalo Belles have also been reaching out to educate the public. There was a recent news story in the Niagara Falls newspaper which gave the group a good bit of favorable publicity, and resulted in contacts from new sisters in need of support. Joan C. and Janice G. did a wonderful job of educating the public about crossdressing. Like their colleagues in North Carolina, the Buffalo Belles are also developing a library with books by such authorities as Virginia Prince, Alison Laing, JoAnn Roberts, Jennifer Stevens, Susi Rogol, and Dr. Sheila Kirk.

At the November meeting, Toni T. did makeovers, and gave out styling tips for hair. A large number of sisters were in attendance. It so happens that Denise was away for this meeting. As she says, "When I miss a party, I sure miss a good one!"

Each month in the Femme Mirror, they run a few pages on chapter news. For those who are not members of Tri-Ess, I am reprinting what they had to say about us!

FALL '93

Dateline: Buffalo, New York

The Buffalo Belles Chapter, also known as Nu Phi Chi, is growing and enjoying it. In August a new couple, Paula and Sharon, visited. Sharon believes in diving right in. She already wants to form a wives' and partners' group. Although the chapter is not large, its dynamism is shown by the fact that not less than 7 of the sisters have served as officers. Elections are held anytime the chapter gets new volunteers. This is one way to keep enthusiasm in and politics out!

While having fun, the Buffalo Belles are a very civic-minded chapter. They are already publishing ads for events all around the gender community, and even fanned enthusiasm for Virginia Prince's trip to China by reprinting the fund-raising letter. Particularly moving is their plan for Christmas. The sisters are requested to bring a \$5 toy or clothing for a needy child. What a beautiful way to share the true giving spirit of Christmas!

Loose Lips

• Actor Terrence Stamp, who plays an aging transsexual in "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert": "It turned out to be one of the most fun jobs I ever had in my life, although everything about trying to be a woman was tough: cinches, high heels, eyelashes. They put false nails on me, which were extremely uncomfortable. . . . The nails, by the way, were always going through the fishnet stockings, and when you're in towns like Broken Hill, they don't exactly boast a shop that sells fishnet stockings."

For some, Halloween is time to take the alter ego shopping

By GREGORY N. RACZ
News Staff Reporter

Terry Bradley looks forward to Halloween because he likes to try on women's clothing.

No — not for a costume. Bradley, 47, is a cross-dresser, and he says Halloween is one of the few times of the year he can shop in women's stores without getting dirty looks.

"We're now in what we call the high holy days for cross-dressers," said Bradley (his cross-dressing name), a Rochester resident, whose wife supports his lifestyle. "It's a more acceptable time for a man to shop for women's clothing or get away dressed as a woman."

During the rest of the year, many men like Bradley say they resort to ruses to acquire wardrobes for their alter egos. A 35-year-old female impersonator who goes by the name of Chevron Davis says he has told clerks the blouses he eyes are for his girlfriend.

Bradley says he sometimes gives his wife a shopping list of the jewelry he covets. And Holly, 71, says he has told clerks the shoes he takes home are for his wife.

"I try them on at home, and if they don't fit, I return to the store and say, 'They were the wrong color,'" Holly said. "It's the answer that always works."

Though Christmas — and, to a lesser extent, Mardi Gras — also offer men "acceptable" times to frequent women's stores, some cross-dressers say they simply shop by mail to avoid any hassles. Some order from catalogs such as Michael's Salon or She-Male.

Others favor catalogs that cater to women or buy from women's stores over the phone.

"We have a couple of clients who call" in their orders, said the manager of Tall & Elegant, a women's clothing store in West Seneca. "It's usually no problem."

At Halloween, however, many men show up in person at their favorite stores, eager to browse, try on and buy clothes without getting ogled or badgered by other customers or clerks.

"I do most of my shopping at the Boulevard Mall, which is near where I live," one cross-dresser said.

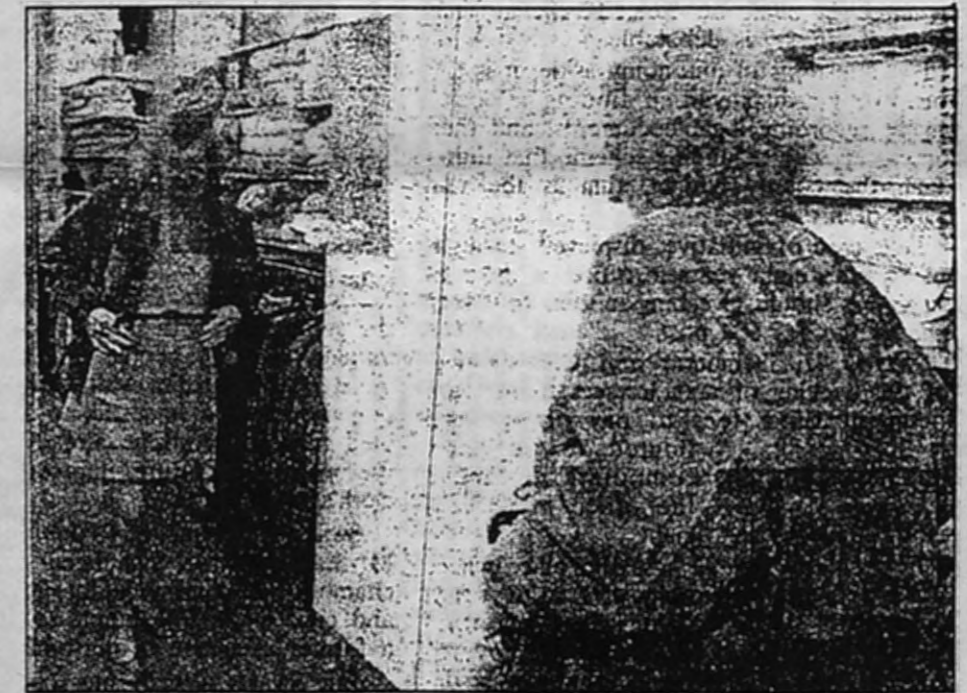
Though some stores rarely receive male patrons and others expect them year-round, store managers agree that sales jump slightly around Halloween, thanks to cross-dressers, many of whom remain in the closet and out of stores during the rest of the year.

"One guy was so excited he started telling me how he got started by wearing his sister's underwear," said the manger at Julie's Shoes in Kenmore. "I said all I needed to know was whether it was cash or charge."

Holly, the 71-year-old cross-dresser, says such enthusiasm is par for the course.

"I first came out in public the Halloween of 1982," said Holly, who works at the International Foundation for Gender Education in Massachusetts, a clearinghouse for information about cross-dressers.

Bradley, the Rochester cross-dresser, says one of his cross-dressing friends — out in public for the first time — went into a costume store Friday and picked up a French maid outfit. "Quite by coincidence, he ran into another member of our group," Bradley said. "Damned if you ever know when you're going to run into a cross-dresser at Halloween."



A cross-dresser who uses the name Teresa Hurd shops for new clothes in Boulevard Mall.

Monday, October 31, 1994

You wouldn't believe

what can go into a small article like this! Friday, the 27th I get a call from Terry in Rachacha about a News reporter looking to do article on us. Deadline tomorrow. Call Jan, & Denise. Calls back to Roch. Who would be interviewed? What is his point? More calls.

Jan will talk Sat. Terry going to see the guy Fri. Oh, a photo? Who? Jan? No, she is to shy!!! (and duct-taped into the closet). Luckily, our own Teresa, was coaxed out to meet the photo guy at Blvd. Mall and have her picture taken.

Unfortunately, the original article was cut quite abit and only appeared in morning edition. Maybe a follow up will occur.

MY LIFE AS A WOMAN Most cross dressers are happily married doctors, lawyers and engineers. A typical tv's history begins with an aggressive mother and a withdrawn father.

assured her that the purpose of my visit is not to inquire about a sex change. I said that I was acting in a women's lib movie about the Profumo affair in which all of the men are played by women and vice versa. Without batting an eyelash, she put me on the phone with Ms. Traum and we made a date for my first \$50 feminization session.

Ms. Traum greets me at the door with charm-school gloss. A smart-looking ex-model, she is wearing an oversized straw hat, sunglasses and a pants suit with an astrological sign on the belt. For my first lesson, she has outfitted an easel with a giant drugstore-display card for a perfume. On it is the face of a beautiful blonde. Some say the woman has the most beautiful face in the world—doelike innocence with a hint of danger, skin like porcelain. "When you saw this in the drugstore," says Ms. Traum, "I bet you said 'Boy, is she natural!' Well, there's at least two hours of make-up on this face. She's used Negro make-up for contour; then she's obviously used a light-bronze-coated-with-pink lip gloss. See how she cuts down the puffiness? You'll never see this gal full face—her face is too round. She wants to have plastic surgery on one of her upper lids, which you'll notice is drooping a bit."

I have almost recovered from the disillusionment of this cosmetological dissection when Ms. Traum "reads" me. (Being "read" is the opposite of "passing" in tv talk.) "You're really into it, aren't you?" she says coyly. "You don't have to pretend with me, dear." And so I confess my secret desire to dress as a woman. I ask why men such as I are driven to this secret vice.

"A man has so many pressures in his life," Ms. Traum says philosophically. "Earning a living, daily competition around the office, all that weight on his shoulders. Besides, there are rigid codes to which men must conform. A man can't wear a dress on the street, but I can smoke a cigar if I want."

Most of her clients are sedate businessmen, she continues. Some are grandfathers. She's been coaching one 63-year-old who has just graduated from silver wigs to strawberry blond. "There's nothing wrong with wanting to put on women's clothes," Ms. Traum declares. "If you're not a sports-minded person, it's sort of like a hobby."

Ms. Traum's approach is scientific. "I once spotted a transsexual by her tongue," she says. "Did you know that women have pointed tongues? A man's

WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE, IT'S EASIER TO BE A FELLA
ARTICLE BY DAVID DALTON

"Walk, walk, walk. Pivot! You hear that kick-boom, kick-boom?" asks Ms. Traum, referring to a recording of what sounds like the sultry chanting of temple maidens from a Maria Montez movie.

"Kick that dress away from you. Very nice—that was done very naturally, Dusty."

During a lull in the chanting, she checks to see if her 12-year-old daughter is still watching TV in the other room. We wouldn't want her

to come in unexpectedly and catch sight of this reporter in his pink bikini panties and garter belt, practicing the Powers Glide Walk up and down the hallway to the tune of *Ann Rand Live at the Howard Burlesque* would we?

Here at the Feminization School, I am Dusty. In her Cinderella trance Traum actually cannot remember my real name. Isn't that absurd? she says coyly.

And what is a more or less normal male doing here?

It wasn't the fashionable talk about bisexuality. It wasn't the proliferation of drag-queen shows and transvestite (hereafter, tv) taxi-dance halls. It wasn't the "Dear Abby" letter from a six-foot ex-Green Beret with a penchant for frothy undergarments. It wasn't the glittering disco scene where it has become fashionable to appear bisexual. It wasn't Bette Midler. It wasn't Jan Morris chattering on national TV. It wasn't the fight that broke out at the annual A.F.L.-C.I.O. convention over the International Ladies Garment Workers Union muscling in on the men's garment industry. It wasn't even Nixon's plucked eyebrows and Pan-Cake make-up.

It was all of this and more—a real trend, blatant in New York and Los Angeles and storming out of the closet everywhere in between. Decadence had entered the mainstream. Something was going on, even though we didn't know precisely what, and from its radiant surface, it appeared to be a national gender shift.

It was the trail of this gender shift that led me to the door of Manhattan's Feminization School, where Traum teaches tvs and would-be transsexuals how to walk, talk and behave just like women. I had heard about the Feminization School from an editor who had asked George Plimpton to enroll there. Plimpton decided that this was not a ball he could run with, and he declined the assignment. When it was offered to me, I realized that there was an element of risk—but the prospect of viewing the very heart of the national gender shift firsthand was too much to refuse. I thought I might also gain some insight into the anima lurking inside me.

I had to enroll in the Feminization School under cover, so I paid a visit to the Erickson Foundation, a referral service for transsexuals or people thinking about becoming transsexuals. The Erickson Foundation offers information on operations, psychiatric help, legal counsel and hormone shots. It also funds John Money's research in gender identity at Johns Hopkins University.

The Foundation's Miss Suplee helpfully explained the purpose of the organization—the aid of those possessed of "limited human potential"—and that the namesake of the foundation, Reed Erickson, is a philanthropist in the process of building a transsexual consciousness-raising Xanadu somewhere in Mexico. Suplee sighed with relief when I

The home office' has sent this letter explaining a request for our consideration of the Gender Bill of Rights. Please read and think about what it says. I will be a topic that ties in with our discussion session at the next meeting.

JANE ELLEN FAIRFAX
Chair, Board of Directors
The Society for the Second Self, Inc.
8880 Bellaire B2 STE. 104
Houston, Texas 77036

October 26, 1994

A Bill Of Gender Rights

The Feminist Action, Spring 1991

It is time for the transgendered community to take a stand, a strong stand, against all gender-based discrimination simply because some people are different and simply because some people do not fit into current social norms of gender roles. It is time the gender-based community articulate this stand in words that clearly define exactly what their gender rights are. It is time to stand alongside other minority rights movements to declare these gender rights as follows:

The Right to Choose a Gender Role

Every human being has within themselves an idea of who they are and what they are capable of achieving. That identity and capability shall not be limited by a person's physical sex, nor by what any society may deem as "masculine" or "feminine" behavior. It is fundamental, then, that each individual has the right to choose a gender role that is comfortable for them, regardless of their genetic sex or sex role.

Therefore, no person shall be denied their Human and Civil Rights on the basis that their chosen gender role or perceived gender role is not congruent with their genetic sex or sex role.

The Right to Freely Express a Gender Role

Given that each individual has the right to choose a gender role, it then follows that individual has the right to freely express that gender role in any manner that does not infringe on the freedom of another individual.

Therefore, no person shall be denied their Human and Civil Rights on the basis that a private or public

expression of their chosen gender role or perceived gender role is not congruent with their genetic or sex role.

The Right to Make One's Body Congruent With Gender Role

Given that each individual has the right to choose a gender role, it then follows that each individual has the right to change their body or alter its physiology so it better fits their chosen gender role. These changes may be cosmetically, chemically or surgically induced, provided these changes are supervised by the appropriate licensed professional and the individual accepts sole responsibility for their actions in this regard.

Therefore, no person shall be denied their Human and Civil Rights on the basis that they changed or wish to change their body, cosmetically, chemically, surgically or any combination of these, to better fit their chosen gender role.

The Right to Sexual Expression Congruent With Gender Role

Given that each individual has the right to choose a gender role, it then follows that each individual has the right to express their sexuality within their chosen gender role in any manner that does not infringe on the freedom of another individual.

Therefore, no person shall be denied their Human and Civil Rights on the basis of sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation. Further, no individual shall be denied their Human and Civil Rights for expressing their chosen gender role through private sexual acts between consenting adults.

Dear Chapter Leader:

This communication is in regard to the Bill of Gender Rights as originally promulgated by John Roberts several years ago. In building community, it is vital that all gender support groups reach a definition of ground we all hold in common. Whether our groups be "open", transsexual-focused or family-oriented, we hold in common such philosophy on which we can build consensus and true community. Please find the Gender Bill of Rights enclosed. As you see, it is completely non-controversial. It simply affirms the right to full personal expression, gender orientation and sexual orientation and the right to act upon such expression and orientation so long as one does not impinge upon the rights of others. The Tri-Ess Board of Directors has already unanimously ratified this Bill of Rights. If your chapter has already ratified, please send me a note so that I can make a permanent record of the ratification. If your chapter has not yet ratified, please schedule ratification at your earliest possible business meeting and communicate the results to me (whether positive or negative) as soon as you possibly can.

May all your efforts be crowned with continuing success as you strive to support crossdressers and their families.

In sisterhood and love,

Jane Ellen Fairfax

Jane Ellen Fairfax
Chair, Tri-Ess Board of Directors

Fashion & Style

by JoAnn Roberts, ©1994 Creative Design Services
PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 19406

is usually round. His lips are flat and stringy."

Ms. Traum—who also gives voice therapy to children with dental problems—explains that talking like a woman requires "extremely fine muscle coordination." It has little to do with lisping or speaking in a high voice. "Think of Lauren Bacall," she says. "Does she talk like Minnie Mouse? It's more a question of inflection. Your Ts, Ds, Ns and Ls are dead giveaways," Ms. Traum warns.

"Not a single U.S. vehicle ever got into space that did not pass through the hands of a transvestite." I read this thought-provoking sentence in one of the many magazines devoted to cross dressing in Michael Salem's TV and Exotic Boutique on East 57th. "Possibly no weapon, tank, plane or electronic instrument used in Vietnam was not in part designed by a transvestite," the article went on, "since engineers constitute the largest proportion of any occupation among transvestites."

The store is obviously special. The window display features rubber bloomers, size 40 baby-doll pajamas with open-crotch panties and a flesh-colored breastplate with red latex nipples.

Predictably, the biggest part of the store's business is mail order. Salem has a mailing list of some 60,000 names in his vault (there are an estimated 6,000,000 to 8,000,000 transvestites in America). He will send, on special order, a pair of expensive, wet-look Gothic boots with six-inch steel heels or a custom-made black-and-white satin French maid's uniform, with white frills and cap, for only \$125, both in extralarge sizes. The tv specialty that uses these uniforms is commonly called "petticoat punishment" and it's a big favorite among middle-aged execs who, after a hard day at the office, like to crawl across cold white tiles while some woman pussy-whips them.

From an editorial in *Transvestia*, the oldest of the publications in the tv field (founded in the Fifties by the *grande dame* of transvestism Virginia—actually, Charles—Prince), I learned one of the basic tenets of transvestism: that the average tv is heterosexual. "Our brothers of other sexual persuasions," noted Prince's editorial, can be distinguished from transvestites thusly:

Tvs are father haters. Homosexuals are mother haters. Transvestism is an individual personality expression, while homosexuality requires a partner. Tvs, therefore, don't solicit; homosexuals must. A homosexual is always a homosexual; tvs alternate their roles. Homosexuals often display effeminate characteristics; a tv is all man in the bedroom.

According to the predominant tv theory, most cross dressers are happily married doctors, lawyers, stockbrokers and, of course, engineers. A typical tv's history begins with an aggressive mother and a withdrawn father. Children's dress-up becomes fetishism during adolescence, thanks to family tension. But transvestism usually remains latent well into adult life, until a crisis—often so-called male menopause—arises, and pressure is released through role change.

One of the things I am beginning to find out is how time consuming it is to be a woman. My girlfriend says even a normal girl spends at least one night a week working on herself—shaving her legs, shampooing, rinsing, tinting—not to mention shopping. I learned about shopping first.

After four hours of shopping for women's shoes, my feet are killing me. I have been to at least a dozen shoe stores. My girlfriend, a Polish giantess whose foot size is the same as mine, has accompanied me. Finally I abandon my vision of Carmen Miranda platforms and settle for a simple pair of low heels in a tall-gal shop.

Another afternoon I spent looking for a dress, garter belt, stockings with seams and make-up. Aurora Beige is "my color," so I buy a tube of it, along with lipstick, rouge, blusher, eye shadow and mascara. It's not easy—there are 225 shades of lipstick alone.

At home in front of the mirror, the satisfaction of trying on my outfit for tonight's class has not allayed certain anxieties that have been developing over the past week. I have learned that friends who encouraged me in this clownish adventure would never dream of dressing up themselves. One said, "It sounds more dangerous than going to Cuba." I am also tired of the jokes and being asked out on dates. Even after I have given them my now-tedious explanation that tvs are not gay, they remain incredulous. Gay friends, it turns out, are supercilious. At dinner, an old friend propositions me. "It would be my first heterosexual experience," he says.

I begin dressing for class. I slip into my garter belt and nylons. While there is something sexually arousing about getting into the clothes, when I see myself standing fully dressed

in front of the full-length mirror I realize that this is not funny. I cancel my class and go out drinking with a couple of buddies.

A week later, I begin again. I follow instructions, diagrams and rituals. Getting ready for class. I draw a bath, following instructions in Salem's book *How to Impersonate a Woman*. I put in some salts and get in to luxuriate. After ten minutes, I am shriveled like a mummy.

The next step is shaving my legs, but my TRAC II will not penetrate the thick, wiry growth. I get out of the tub, put on some clothes, trot to the drug store and buy an old-fashioned safety razor. It seems to work. About 20 minutes later, one leg is shaved. I inspect its satiny, smooth sheen and find myself actually aroused by this unfamiliar, shapely thing. By comparison with its hairy mate, it is—yes—sexy. By the time I have shaved both legs, one hour after I started, I have cut myself nine times. Then, to my chagrin, I notice that my toes are covered with wild tufts that spoil the whole effect. Shaving a toe is like shaving an okra. I skip my underarms, but the arms themselves have to be shaved—that takes 20 minutes—and my nails have to be filed, which takes ten more. Before departing, I contemplate what name I'll use for my transmuted self. I settle on Dusty in honor of my disintegrating bathroom plaster—and because it has a kind of gun-moll ring.

On the way to my second session, I run through my exercise list of pronunciations. When I arrive, I tell Ms. Traum I've been having a little trouble with my dead-giveaway Ts, Ds, Ns and Ls. When I pronounce them clearly, I fall back into a British accent that I have spent ten years erasing.

"There's nothing more feminine than a British accent, Dusty," she assures me. When I ask her to zip me into the pink sheath I've brought along, she notices a bruise on my arm. Without losing a lilt, she asks, "Are you into B&D or S&M?"

"What's B&D?"

"Bondage and discipline, dear."

I explain that the demon who took a bite out of my arm earlier that morning is only a friend. She gives me a knowing smile. What if this class is just a sophisticated cover? Would she, if I implored her, tie my hands and feet to her Louis XIV chair? After all, for \$50 a shot, one might expect something more than a make-up lesson. But the next two hours turn out to be a little more than that.

We start my face with foundation: It's an absolute necessity for tvs to cover beard and rough skin. But once put on—using only our ring fingers, of course, so as to spread it delicately—it looks ghastly, like corpse coating. "Every woman gets frightened when she looks at herself in foundation," Ms. Traum reassures me in her purring, you-are-not-weird voice. Then my nose is straightened with clown white, a scar is erased and my eyes "corrected"—I have fleshy lids. Despite the expert application of paints, I see a mummy in the mirror. At best, I look like an ugly girl.

continued next month

Introduction

I'm going to assume you know what size clothing you should be wearing. If you don't, then you need to get a Sears, Penney, or other catalog and turn to the center section. There you will find complete instructions on taking your measurements and determining your correct size. Dress sizes have changed in the past 5 years. Once you know your size, it now becomes a matter of choosing the correct styles to flatter your figure.

Adjusting Your Figure

To assure you'll get the best fit possible, your "figure" should be close to the measurements in the size tables. You can make adjustments for those that don't.

- **Bust** - Most TVs go overboard with their bustline. I'd say, typically, 90% wear breast forms at least one size too large for their frame. If you observe genetic women, you'll notice most do not have large busts. In addition, a large bust draws attention. So, minimize your bust.

- **Waistline** - Many "crossdressing experts" agree that you should start with your natural waistline and adjust your bust and hips to match. It makes sense because your waist is the most difficult area of your body to control. Sure you can wear a corset and cinch down to a petite 26 inches, but would you like to wear that for 8 hours a day? If you want a smaller waist, go on a diet.

- **Hips** - Many of us have hips that are the same measurement or smaller than our waist. A few have hips an inch or two larger. The average female has hips 10 to 12 inches larger than her waist and very few men are built like that. So, you need to pad out your hips. Do not use the padded panty girdles from Fredericks. They look lumpy. You can buy a "hip-slip" which has crinoline-like material that fills out the hip area. Or, you can make hip pads like Female Impersonators make using foam rubber seat cushions shaped like a heart or shield. You wear these under control-top panty hose with lots of Lycra.

Sometimes it is just not practical to pad yourself out, especially if you're large to start. So, that's where the style sense comes into play. Know your figure limitations and fit the clothes to your body. Don't try to fit your body into clothes.

What Does "Well Dressed" Mean Today?

There was a time when well-dressed meant high-priced, designer fashions. Back then, only the well-to-do were able to afford to be well-dressed. That's not true anymore. Anyone with a bit of forethought can be well-dressed.

To be "well-dressed" now means to pay attention to the total image you present. This includes makeup, hair, clothing, colors, designs, fabrics and accessories. These factors must balance with each other and the personality of the individual. If you wear clothes that don't fit your personality, no matter how well they fit, you will look and feel uncomfortable. Therefore you will not be well-dressed.

Know Your Body Style

There are many different ways to classify your body shape. I've chosen three types that are pretty inclusive for us as crossdressers.

- **Curved or Figure-Eight** - This body style is the classic female form. Very few men will have this shape. If you are lucky, you may have hips

larger than your waist and you can pad-up your bustline to fill out your figure. The Curve is defined by a visible indentation from bust to waist to hips. Curves have little or no problems.

Examples of Women With Curved Body Lines - Elizabeth Taylor, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Beverly Sills, Dolly Parton.

- **Soft** - The "Soft" shape is characterized by broad shouldered and short waisted. You also probably don't have a definite waistline. More than likely, you wear a larger blouse size than skirt size. This shape and the "box" described below will be the most common among men.

Examples of Women with Soft Curved Body Lines - Ann Margret, Linda Carter, Jaclyn Smith and Joan Collins.

- **Sharp or Boxy** - The "Sharp" is the other shape most likely to be seen on a male. The Sharp is equal in almost all directions. The goal will be to define a waistline.

Examples of Women with Sharp/Boxy Body Lines - Cher, Jacqueline Onassis, Cindy Crawford, and Iman.

Find Your Personal Style

Generally, fashion experts agree there are four basic fashion styles although some have different names for the same style. These are "personal styles" that can be worn by almost any body shape. The Four types: Dramatic or Sophisticated, Classic, Romantic, Casual or Natural

- **Dramatic/Sophisticated** - The dramatic/sophisticated dresser is epitomized by high-fashion models like Paulina, Iman, and Cindy Crawford. We tend to think that dramatic clothes can only be worn by tall, thin people with angular faces. Wrong! Dramatic is a feeling. Are you ambitious? Do you like fast cars? Would you like to be an executive who travels the world? If so, then you are a dramatic personality and you will like to wear dramatic, high-fashion styles. Dramatics usually wear unusual cuts and bold colors. Dramatic Work Styles - Entertainment Industry, Fashion, Dept. Store Buyers, Boutique Owner, Art/Graphics Media & Public Relations, Advertising.

- **Classic** - Classic clothes are those that have a tailored, structured look to them and they tend to be timeless. Classic clothes are conservative and never go out of fashion. You are a "classic" if you are highly organized and conservative but outgoing. If you like the "career" look of an executive, administrator or manager, then "classic" is your style. Your colors include Navy blue, brown, camel and gray. Classic Work Styles - Corporate Executive, Law, Medicine, Politics, Government, Real Estate, Social Work.

- **Romantic** - Romantic brings to mind ruffles, lace and frills, but it is more than that and often less. Picture the image of a woman clad in nothing but a man's white dress shirt. That's "romantic." It is a softness that is almost ultra-feminine. Romantic is a difficult look to achieve well even for genetic women and is appropriate for only for special occasions. Romantic Occasions - Candlelight dinners, evenings at home, theatre weddings, formal occasions. Note: Romantic has no place in the workplace.

- **Casual or Natural** - Do you hate all the fuss of dressing in skirts and blouses? Are you the "outdoors" type? Do you feel confined in a suit? If so, then you're a Casual personality. You find yourself attracted to slacks and jackets with loose-fitting tops. Or maybe jeans and t-shirts are your uniform. Casual Work Styles - Teachers, Physical labor, Work not dealing with the public, Service-oriented professions, Store personnel

Matching Clothes to Your Body Style

Your first step is to identify clothing lines that will complement your body style. Try to imagine Dolly Parton in a tailored, sharply cut business suit. Doesn't work does it? Sharp lines work well for a Boxlike Cher but not for a Curve of Figure-eight like Dolly. We can categorize clothing lines into three categories: Sharp, soft and curved, corresponding to the same body lines. You must match the silhouette or exterior line of the clothing to your body line.

Matching Clothes-Weight & Texture

In addition to the clothing line, you must pay attention to the weight and texture of fabrics. At the extremes, Sharp and Curved, you want to minimize texture and weight. It is difficult to create sharp lines with loose or nubby fabrics. Stick with tightly woven fabrics such as wool gabardine, linen or fabrics with a sheen like silk and charmeuse. The soft body shape can handle more of both weight & texture.

Texture does not work well for a curved body because it adds the impression of weight. It will make you look bulky and bumpy. Stay with soft fabrics that drape well like silk, wool crepe, jersey, challis, and rayon.

A soft body can wear more texture because these types of fabrics naturally fall into soft lines. A soft body can wear almost any texture as long as the fabric weight compensates.

Matching Clothes - Scale

Scale is the proportion of one object to another. The first object is you, the second your clothing. If your clothes are not to scale with your body, you will look badly dressed. American fashion used to be obsessed with sizes. Until recently it was nearly impossible to find clothes above a size 12 in a regular department store. Now, every store carries at least up to a 14 and many have larger size "boutiques" for 16 and up. Over 50% of American women wear a size 14 or larger and clothing manufacturers have finally realized that larger women (and men too) want good looking, well fitting clothes.

Obviously, the better the quality of the clothes, the better the fit and the better the scale. Fit the scale to your body style. Small bones: small scale. Large bones: large scale. Most of us, with some exceptions will need average or overscale clothing to look well-dressed.

Overscale Designers: Armani, Ellis, Calvin Klein, Anne Klein II, Tahari, Versace, Kamali, Cardin, Montana, Karan. If you're over 5'7" you need overscale.

Average Scale Designers: Chanel, St. John, Castleberry, Dior, Claiborne, St. Laurent, Nipon, Adolfo, Jones of New York, Ellen Tracy, Carol Little. If you're 5'3" to 5'6" you need average scale.

Petite Scale Designers: Evan Picone, Claiborne, Pendleton, Nipon, Flora Kung. If you're under 5'3" you need petite scale.

Many designers have both large scale and petite scale sub-lines in addition to their regular lines. Look for the designer name with a modifier like "II" (Anne Klein II) or "sport" (Calvin Klein Sport) or "Ms" (Ms Chaus) to designate a large or overscale line.

Accessorize to Scale

Okay. You've discovered your body line and style. You've found the clothing silhouette line that suits your body. Now you need to complete your outfit with the proper accessories to scale with the rest of your outfit. Nothing will look sillier than tiny little heart shaped earrings on an overscale, sharp figure. You need to keep both clothing silhouette and scale in mind when selecting accessories.

Accessories for Sharp Lines: Geometric, angular, constructed, e.g., square, diamond, rectangle.

Accessories for Soft Lines: Geometric, soft, unconstructed, e.g., oval, or elliptical.

Accessories for Curved Lines: Curved, soft, constructed, e.g., oval or oval.

Finding the Right Styles on the Rack

Some designers predominantly use certain lines. While I don't expect you to buy designer clothes, you can find "knock-offs" and similar designs at reasonable prices.

- Straight Lines - Adolfo, Chanel, Feraud, St. Laurent, Gucci, Herrera, McFadden, Nippon Sport, Jones of New York, J.G. Hook, Picone, Stanley Blacker

- Soft Lines - Ellis, Calvin Klein, Blass, Armani, Karan, Escada, Versace, Anne Klein II, Liz Claiborne, Adrienne Vittadini

- Curved Lines - Halston, Valentino, Ungaro, de la Renta, Tahari, Norma Kamali, Dior, Ellen Tracy, Flora Kung, Ralph Lauren

Quality

Many TVs buy cheap, inexpensive clothes thinking they're getting bargains. Not so. Quality is what counts. Cheap clothes are cut tighter to save on fabric and consequently the fit is terrible, eventually they rip & tear. Quality clothes are comfortable to wear and in the long run, will be a much better bargain. Some Standards for Proper Fit:

Blouse: Sleeve length to wrist bone, Buttons remain closed with 1 inch of fabric on each side of bustline. At midriff, 2 inches of double fabric on each side for proper blousing, Length no shorter than hip bone.

Skirts: Pleats should never pull open, pockets should stay closed, straight skirts should hang from buttocks and not curve under, 1 inch of extra fabric at hips, waistband loose enough to allow for two fingers, panty line should not show.

Jackets: Shoulder should be 1 inch wider than shoulder bone, Collar should not wrinkle across back, 1/4 to 1/2 inch of blouse sleeve should show from under jacket sleeve, No pull across the back, pockets must remain closed.

Slacks: Pockets must stay closed, zippers and closings must lie flat, leg should fall straight from buttocks, Pockets should not gap or pull, Should be at least 1 to 1 1/2 inches of fabric at hips, Two fingers at waistband, No panty lines.

Tying It All Together

You now have the proper clothes that fit correctly and you have accessories to match. What's left? Well, your makeup, hair and shoes must coordinate with the rest of your look, particularly your hair. Nothing can give you away faster than the wrong style hair. Fortunately, long hair is once again in fashion, so the larger ladies can wear hair styles that are in correct scale to their face. Makeup should follow your personality. A Dramatic person can wear more eye makeup than a Casual and still look fine. Same goes for shoes. Four inch spikes will look out of place with jeans and a t-shirt, as would flats with a Chanel suit.

Two Important Rules

Rule #1: There are no hard and fast rules.

Rule #2: When in doubt, see Rule #1.

Developing a sense of fashion and style takes time. It doesn't happen overnight. You'll make "incorrect" purchases before you begin to realize what works for you and what doesn't. When you find something that does work, look for ways to create variations.