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Buffalo Belles

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BUFFALO BELLES

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- STARTING IN JULY, ALL BUFFALO BELLES MEETINGS WILL TAKE PLACE ON THE SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH.
- NOTED AUTHOR, PHYSICIAN AND TG SPECIALIST, SHEILA KIRK, IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO APPEAR AT THE JULY 10th MEETING OF THE BUFFALO BELLES.

Camille's Thoughts



Greetings Dear Belles.

It's good to be back at the keyboard again after my recent apartment move and an out of town trip. As you can see, I've been busy re-designing the cover page of our newsletter. Hope you like what you see. They'll be more changes coming shortly, both in the newsletter and in the administration of the Buffalo Belles.

As you may recall a couple months ago, I announced that we would be having upcoming elections for positions/jobs that are opening up due to members leaving or who cannot continue with their present duties. Well, that has changed. The fact is, in the recent member survey, not many of you offered to help with club duties and it seems pointless to ask for someone to run for an elected position with such poor responses. As a result, I will be contacting those members who did express a desire to help or assist in various functions that keep the Buffalo Belles a functioning and healthy organization. It will be easier to have an interested individual commit to a particular task, such as hotline care taker, new member interviewer, snack gal/guy, meeting facilitator, librarian, etc. When we have many hands helping, it makes the work light. I will continue as the newsletter editor but will cease working the hotline/voicemail, interviewing new members, coordinating meetings. We have gotten over our recent financial problems but now we need the *help* of individuals willing to do relatively simple jobs. You've heard this from me before: this organization will only be as good as you want

it to be. I can tell you now that we are getting close to having to suspend activities. Don't jeopardize its existence by assuming someone will be there for you. Enough said.

As June is Gay Pride month, I thought it appropriate that I ran an article or two that might enlighten us to certain issues that are pertinent to the gay/lesbian /transgender community that we are part of. Some of you may be saying to yourself "But I'm not gay, Camille. What more do I need to know about this lifestyle"? Well like it or not, crossdressers, transsexuals and other transgender individuals *are* members of the 'queer' community. "But, I'm not 'queer'. Don't say that I am." Ah, but you *are*. Not necessarily gay, but you are 'queer'. Let me explain.

The general population believes that crossdressers and transsexuals are gay. They assume that if we present ourselves as a female (or as males with F to M) we must be interested in attracting a male. So they figure we must be gay. Available statistics show though, that 90% of crossdressers are heterosexual. But because of this misconception, crossdressers and transsexuals are grouped together with the gay/lesbian population. And they have always been labeled as "queer". We are involved in an alternative lifestyle whether we dress once a month for our meetings or we have transitioned as members of the opposite sex. If you are ever out in public and run into some homophobic individual, he is going to assume you are gay or queer. Hopefully the worst that may happen is a nasty look or remark directed your way. Within our community the term 'queer' does not have the harsh meaning that most people

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give it. Accepting that we are 'queer' really doesn't do us any harm. In fact by accepting that label, we can diminish the severity of its power. Having an understanding of who you are and how you are perceived is important.

The article from the Village Voice, "The Hate That Makes Men Straight", does a fairly good job explaining why gay bashing and homophobia can exist. It can be a little dry but it's worth the read.

That should be enough food for thought for this month. See you at the next meeting on Saturday, June 5.

Hugs, Camille

MAY MEETING ATTENDEES

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| ◆ Jennifer | ◆ Jay |
| ◆ Colleen | ◆ Rhonda-guest |
| ◆ Nancy | ◆ Debbie |
| ◆ Cathy | ◆ Crystal |
| ◆ Joan | ◆ Janice |
| ◆ Jilly-guest | ◆ Kendra |
| ◆ Joy | |

The following letter is the from the national Tri-Ess organization acknowledging the Buffalo Belles stated desire not to be affiliated with them at the present time.

February 23, 1999

Dear Camille, Jean, Kathy, and Patti,

On behalf of the Tri-Ess Board of Directors, I accept your request to end the affiliation of Nu Phi Chi (Buffalo Belles) with Tri-Ess. I have received the Charter and your letter, and will proceed to remove Nu Phi Chi from our roll of chartered chapters.

I would also like to express my gratitude for the gracious way in which you have handled your withdrawal. It is apparent that you gave your options a lot of thought and made an informed decision.

I wish the Buffalo Belles all the best, and I hope our organizations will always be friends.

Sincerely yours,
Jane Ellen Fairfax, Chair
Tri-Ess Board of Directors

NANCY'S PERSPECTIVE

Is it just me, or do all of you wonder if being happy has a price tag? I got home from our meeting recently, and it came to me that I had used 8 hours of sick time (PMS?), drove 120 miles round trip, paid \$3.40 in tolls, \$4.85 for gas, paid \$6 in meeting fees (that helped pay for snacks and pizza), and updated my dues to the tune of \$8. I have no idea who said "happiness is a state of mind", but I think that might be true. Happiness infers laughter, geniality good will and much more. Having a safe, relaxed, fun place to visit each month is beyond having a price tag. Associating with a group of women who don't play "judgmental games" is a real blessing. Enjoying the moment is the key characteristics of our meeting, isn't it?

We talked about TG friendly stores at the meeting in March, I think. Add the "Bon Ton" to your list. I walked in recently during a sale, and bought four new skirts without incident. (I do know my size; so I didn't need a salesclerk to help me.) What a deal I got! The total price was \$53, while the suggested retail price was \$187.92. If you do the math, I saved \$134.92 or really only paid 28% of the full price. I end up with money to spend on something else ... like going to another meeting! I also end up with four new skirts to wear. Paying \$13.25 per item, instead of \$46.58, has to be some sort of record I would think. So what has math got to do with anything? Probably nothing, but it seems to have cropped up in this months column.

My point is, I believe all TG's are consummate actors anyway, so going to a store and buying things we like shouldn't be a problem. If you go during a super-sale then so much the better. Keep in mind that your credit cards, checks, or cash are accepted about anywhere you go. Shopping at a mall has one other plus: You will feel much better about how you look when dressing for a meeting when you observe some of the women shoppers milling around. These same women can also be found "hanging out" during the day at a local grocery store!

More next month. Please, come to the next meeting. We would love to see you, AND collect some money from you, too!

Take care.

Your sister,
Nancy

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Buffalo Belles, PO Box 1701, Amherst, NY 14226-1701 Or E-mail to: camille1@usa.net

TRANS COMMUNITY NEWS

MALE PREGNANCY POSSIBLE

LONDON (February 20, 1999 7:40 p.m. EST) - Advances in medical technology mean men could now bear children, according to one of Britain's leading fertility experts, the Sunday Times reported.

The paper, citing a forthcoming book by Lord Robert Winston, says doctors could use modern techniques to implant an embryo into a man's abdomen, allowing him to carry it to full term and give birth by caesarian section.

Professor Winston, who was ennobled three years ago, is head of the fertility clinic at a leading London hospital.



"Male pregnancy would certainly be possible, and would be the same as when a woman has an ectopic pregnancy -- outside the uterus -- although to sustain it, you'd have to give the man lots of female hormones," the paper quoted him as saying.

He outlines the concept in a book due to be published in April.

Winston said such fetuses could be implanted inside the abdomen with the placenta, through which the baby is fed, attached to an internal organ, such as the bowel.

He acknowledges it would be dangerous because of the risk of bleeding from the placenta, and hormone treatment could leave the man with larger breasts.

The idea of a man giving birth was the plot of the Hollywood film "Junior" starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, as the parent-to-be, and Danny DeVito.

If it did indeed prove possible, it could benefit homosexual couples and heterosexual couples where the woman could not physically carry a baby, the paper added.

The Sunday Times cited a recent case of a woman in England who carried a baby outside the womb. The embryo made its way into her abdomen and attached itself to her bowel, but she was able to continue with the pregnancy without mishap.

Other fertility experts quoted by the paper agreed male pregnancies were, in theory, possible, but warned of ethical problems.

MASSACHUSETTS WOMAN MARKETS 'GAY PRIDE' BEER



A Northampton, Mass., woman has begun selling "Gay Pride" beer in Massachusetts. Jenn Wolper said she developed the idea in 1997 as she scanned the beer list at the Grotto, a gay bar in Northampton. "How come we don't have our own beer?" she asked.

The contract-brewed pale ale features the initials "GP" and a banner saying "Gay Pride" on its label.

The Queer Brewing Co. sells Q Pale Ale, a year-old beer, mainly around the San Francisco area. 10% of its profits are earmarked for gay causes.

TG HISTORY

At Mona's, the San Francisco lesbian bar that opened in 1936, butch lesbians would often dress in male drag, and couples would dance together in butch-femme pairs to prevent harassment from the vice squad. On the bar's awning was written, "Where girls will be boys."

One of the first women to known to have lived as a man was Agnodice, who lived in Greece in the fourth century B.C. It is believed she used her disguise to study and practice medicine, becoming the world's first female gynecologist.

PEARLS OF WISDOM

- Try something new this year. Please.
- Look after your health.
- Pass on your passion to someone who needs it.
- And enjoy your journey.

The Hate That Makes Men Straight

by
Richard Goldstein

Psychoanalysts probe the roots of homophobia



If the murder of Matthew Shepard accomplishes nothing else, it will have focused attention on a bias so pervasive that it hardly seems like bias at all. This is homophobia, the last acceptable form of bigotry; the prejudice that enshrines itself in sermons and Senate speeches; the hate that does not hesitate to speak its name. Yet precisely because it is so embedded in the culture, homophobia doesn't register as anything more than an appropriate response, albeit one that sometimes gets out of hand. It takes a horrendous image—like the body of a waiflike young man strung up on a fence, his face so bloody from pistol-whipping that his flesh shows only through the streaks of his tears—to penetrate America's indifference to this systematic loathing.

On Friday, the American Psychoanalytic Association will host its first public forum on homophobia at the Waldorf Astoria. The roster of presenters ranges from Democratic bulldog Barney Frank to Harvard pastor Peter Gomes to Berkeley psychoanalyst Nancy Chodorow.

That night, *Out* magazine and the New School will sponsor a discussion featuring Arthur Dong, whose documentary *License To Kill* graphically demonstrates that gay-bashers are, at heart, regular guys. These two events are part of a growing recognition that something irrational but nevertheless central to the sexual order is involved in the hatred for gay people.

Murder is only the most extreme expression of this fury. According to a comprehensive recent study, nearly half of all lesbians and gay men have been threatened with violence, 33 percent have been chased or followed, 25 percent have had objects thrown at them, 13 percent have been spat upon, nine percent have been assaulted with a weapon, and 80 percent have been verbally harassed. The homophobic-crime rate may actually be rising as the religious right steps up its antigay organizing, and as homosexuals achieve greater visibility. Despite police denials, activists maintain that the incidence of antigay attacks in New York City has increased dramatically over the past year, especially in neighborhoods like Chelsea, the Village, and Park Slope, where bashers can count on finding queer prey.

Homophobia isn't just a symptom; it's a system.

These crimes follow a pattern so predictable that one can virtually read the structure of homophobia on its victims' bodies. All too typically, there is gruesome violence—"overkill," in the activists' words—as well as an unusual preference for weapons like clubs and knives, and rituals of sexual degradation or mutilation. Allen Schindler, the gay sailor murdered in a men's room by his shipmates, suffered severe lacerations of his penis. Matthew Shepard's groin was black and blue from repeated kicking. Brandon Teena, whose offense was passing so successfully as a man, was raped as well as murdered. This pattern attests to the psychic venom that underlies antigay violence, but ultimately, like other hate crimes, gay-bashing is a social act.

The perpetrators are usually young men, often operating in a pack, with such a profound sense of righteousness that they take little trouble to hide their crimes. As in a lynching, Shepard's body was strung up as if the killers intended it to be displayed (strange fruit, indeed). And just as the rationale for lynching is typically some sexual transgression on the victim's part, Shepard's accused killers gave police the classic justification for antigay violence: they said he had come on to them. This is the homophobic version of the rapist's cry: she asked for it. "It's the excuse that usually comes up in trials," says Carl Locke, director of client services at New York's Anti-Violence Project. "If straight women were allowed to plead 'He hit on me,' there would be no straight men left in the world."

Like lynching and rape, gay bashing is merely the most violent practice of a theory that also shows itself in ordinary male banter; in the laff-riot produced by the mere flick of a limp wrist; in the endless array of pejoratives for butch women and femmy men; and ultimately in the laws that sanction this hate, from sodomy statutes to prohibitions on gay soldiering and parenting to the insistence that it should be legal to fire homosexuals and deny them a home. "It's too easy to blame the kids who throw the punches, as if they are doing something aberrant," says Kevin Cathcart, executive director of Lambda Legal Defense, which will be represented at the APA event. "But in fact, homophobia is background noise in our society, and our basic rights are still a matter of political debate."

There is no consensus about homophobia like the one that condemns racism and sexism in all its forms. Nearly 30 years after Stonewall, the combined effect of discrimination and denial still profoundly shapes the homosexual, sentencing most gay people to a civil version of Franz Kafka's *In the Penal Colony*, in which punishment is meted out by a machine that slowly carves the nature of the crime into an offender's back. That machine is masculinity.

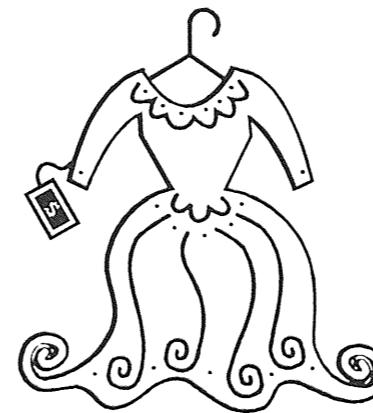
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FOR A BETTER YOU...



What's your opposite sex size? (A conversion chart for the well-dressed female ego)

Once a C/D has discovered his joy lies in wearing women's clothing, and he decides to engage in this exciting pastime, one of the first problems that he will encounter is finding his proper women's clothing size.



Unfortunately, not all cross-dressers have a wife or girlfriend who is the same size or even close enough so that one could guess the right size. So finding clothes that fit may present a rather serious problem. Buying different sizes of clothing until one finds the correct size can be not only frustrating, but downright expensive.

The following size conversion chart at least gives you a place to start.

Clothing sizes				
Miss or Woman's size*	Bust/chest (inches)	Waist (inches)**	Hips (inches)	Men's size
4	30/30-1/2	21/21-1/2	32/32-1/2	***
6	31/31-1/2	22/22-1/2	33/33-1/2	***
8	32/32-1/2	23/23-1/2	34/34-1/2	***
10	33/34	24/25	35/36	***
12	34-1/2/35-1/2	25-1/2/26-1/2	36-1/2/37-1/2	36(S)
14	36/37	27/28	38/39	
16	37-1/2/38-1/2	28-1/2/29-1/2	39-1/2/40-1/2	38(M)
18	39/40-1/2	30/31 1/2	41/42-1/2	40(M)
20(38)	41/42-1/2	32/33 1/2	43/44-1/2	42(L)
22(40)	43/44-1/2	34/35 1/2	45/46-1/2	44(L)
24(42)	45/46-1/2	37-1/2/39-1/2	46/47-1/2	46(XL)
26(44)	47/48-1/2	40/42	48/49-1/2	48
28(46)	49/50-1/2	42-1/2/44-1/2	50/51-1/2	50

* Woman's sizes are shown in parenthesis.

** Waist measurements shown here are misses sizes; men's sizes are approximately 3 inches larger.

*** Not available in men's sizes.

Misses tall sizes begin at about 5 feet 7 inches, men's tall sizes at about 5 feet 11 inches.

Women's clothing sizes can vary widely, depending on the source. A size 8 dress from a designer in NYC can be a size 14 in a ready to wear dress. Several NY fashion designer's use a "perfect" size 8 model who is a man. Sear's is the only known company that uses a recommended national size standard. If you can, compare the measurements of any size tables to get a feel for how close they come to size's you have that fit you well. Consider finding someone to alter clothing to your specific requirements or custom make an item for a special occasion.

Shoe sizes: A woman's shoe size is usually one number higher than the equivalent in a man's shoe. If you wear a 9 man's shoe, try a 10 woman's shoe. A B-width shoe is considered medium for women, a D-width for man. If a shoe is not available in the correct women's width, try a size 1/2 to 1 size larger (i.e. a 10 C-D size, try an 11B).

Lingerie sizes: To find your bra size, measure your chest up under the arms. For cup size a women measures the fullest part of the bust. If it's 1 inch more than the bra size, an A cup; 2 inches, a B cup; 3 inches, a C cup and 4 inches, a D cup. Many men have fairly large pectorals (especially if they are slightly overweight). You can pick your cup size to match your breast forms or by how much padding you want to put in your bra cups. Almost anything can be used from water filled balloons to birdseed and sponge rubber. Mastectomy prosthesis (silicone rubber), or molded sponge rubber pads are recommended. The type with hollow back's mold over the male pectorals and give the best fit. It is also best to buy the next size smaller, because the forms will fit better in your bra. An underwire bra will not ride up as much as a regular bra (attaching the forms with ostomy adhesive will help anchor a bra). A hairless chest will look and feel better than one with hair, especially if an adhesive is used.

Panty size is determined by hip size

Hips (inches)	Panty size	Hips (inches)	Panty size	Hips (inches)	Pant size
32-34	5	38-40	7	42-44	9
35-37	6	41-42	8	45-46	10

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Slip sizes correspond to bust measurements. Petticoat or half-slip sizes are based on waist measurements: S (22-24), M (25-27), L (28-30), etc. Nightgown and robe sizes are based on bust measurements: S (32), M (34-36), L (38-40), etc.

There you have it! Next time you walk into a store or boutique, you'll know just what size your "wife" or "girlfriend" wears, or if you have the courage, tell the salesperson it's for yourself! Many customers to Large or Tall girl stores are men who buy for themselves. Some will even allow you to try items on for fit (a phone call to the store before you go is advised). Most mail order companies (Sear's, Penny's, Lerner's NY, Anthony Richard's, etc.), estimate about 30% of their customer's are men. At least you won't run the risk of getting ripped off by a clerk or company who will sell you anything just to get rid of you. Most store's and mail order companies want to have a satisfied customer, who will buy



from them again. Another possibility is making your own clothing or finding a seamstress to make garments from patterns and cloth you purchase. You can get things made that are not normally available in stores (although they will cost more). You can have them made for your "wife" or you can tell the truth. Most people either don't care or will accept a plausible story.

Unless you are into something kinky like "rubber" or leather and bondage, buy your clothing where a GG (Genetic Girl) would buy her clothes. They will make you feel natural and give you a feeling of wearing what a "real" woman would wear. A woman will be much more willing to buy you clothing if she goes to stores she normally shops at, rather than porno stores or mail order from NYC with its inflated prices.

Now go shopping!



Make-up tips

The following is from Sarah Fox of the Crystal Chronicle:

I've discovered the greatest foundation!

Remember that I have the beard from Hell, and *Dermablend* was the only thing that could cover it. I previously outlined a rather elaborate method for covering a heavy beard. Although it worked better than anything else I had seen, it still left something to be desired. Well, you can take that article and tear it up!

Just try using *Almay's Amazing Lasting Makeup*. It's a hypoallergenic water-base liquid foundation with Vitamins A, C, and E, as well as an SPF-6 sunblock, that costs about \$9 for a 1.25 fl. oz. bottle. It goes on very thickly, with a consistency (and smell) reminiscent of latex paint. It dries and sets in about 60 sec.

One coat will cover most beards. (I take two.) From that point onward, nothing will budge the stuff. I can wear it for a full 16 hr and still have it look pretty fresh. When the makeup is new, you can even scratch your nose. (As it ages, and as skin oils penetrate it, traces of it will rub off, although not easily.) In fact, it has even survived a squirt gun fight with Cathy in my hot tub and has stood up to my peridontist's prying hands.

Use baby oil (mineral oil) and then soap and water to remove it. Without the oil, not even soap and water will touch it.

Ever since I have been using the *Almay Amazing Lasting* foundation I have found that my lipstick REALLY STAYS ON! I use the foundation on my lips and it is holding the color like nobody's business! Just suggesting that even if you don't like this for a foundation you may like it as a lipstick and/or eye base!

Best Wishes

(Continued from page 4)

Ever since Sigmund Freud posited that all paranoia stems from the repression of homosexual desire, there has been a vague awareness that some pathology is behind the fear and loathing of gay people. But only in 1972 did a sociologist coin the term *homophobia*, giving this syndrome a name. Within a year (and only after being zapped repeatedly by gay activists), the APA dropped its diagnosis of homosexuality as an illness, finally catching up with Freud, who had written in a 1935 letter to a worried American mother that, though homosexuality was "assuredly no advantage," neither was it an illness or "anything to be ashamed of."

It has taken the APA 25 years to address homophobia in a public forum, and it has yet to label this hate an illness, if only because, as Cathcart quips, "you can't call half the U.S. Senate pathological." Leon Hoffman, who chairs the APA's committee on public information, puts it more gingerly: "The nonanalytic attitude toward homosexuality has prevented analysts from studying this question."

Until now. Psychoanalysts are finally beginning to focus on homophobia, adding their perspective to the work social scientists have already done. The result is a new theory that regards homophobia as a key component of male dominance. As the critic Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick writes in her landmark study *Epistemology of the Closet*, "male homosexual panic [is] the normal condition of male heterosexual entitlement."

Gratifying as it might be to see this syndrome diagnosed as a pathology, many students of homophobia would disagree. Antigay bias is "not a phobia in the clinical sense," researcher Gregory M. Herek insists. For one thing, it's too functional; for another, it doesn't necessarily spring from a secret desire. True, there is some clinical evidence that homophobes are more likely to be aroused by gay pornography than are other men, but according to Hoffman, that could be the result of an erection caused by anxiety. Yes, some guys go hard from fear.

The idea that all phobes are closet cases has an appealing symmetry, but it doesn't begin to describe the web of impulses and beliefs that supports homophobia. NYU Medical Center's Donald Moss offers a more inclusive definition: "Homophobia will refer to the entire spectrum of conscious and unconscious fantasy-feeling-idea-sentiment" through which people are driven to avoid "all things sensed as homosexual." In the new scholarship, homophobia isn't just a symptom; it's a system.

As Herek notes, people who come easily to the word *faggot* share other traits. For instance, they are older than the general population, more religious, and more traditional in their thinking about sexual roles. If this sounds like Trent Lott, so be it, but the most important variable is not membership in the Republican party or even the Christian right; it's gender itself.

Homophobia serves to affirm male identity through a rejection of what is deemed either unmanly or negating the importance of males. This explains why effeminate men and butch women are the most common victims of antigay violence. They threaten the terms of masculinity.

Straight men "manifest higher levels of prejudice" against gays than do straight women, Herek writes. That's obvious, but Herek's conclusion is not. He maintains that homophobia serves to affirm male identity through a rejection of what is deemed either unmanly or negating the importance of males. This explains why effeminate men and butch women are the most common victims of antigay violence. They threaten the terms of masculinity.

By this standard, homophobia is nothing more than a tool to shape a social category by defining its boundaries. (It's worth noting that the homo/hetero di-

chotomy dates from only a century ago, when doctors invented both terms, thereby recasting as a duality what had previously been regarded as a wide variety of sexual attitudes and appetites.) Categories have their uses, especially when it comes to establishing hierarchy, and just as racism assigns value to whiteness, homophobia favors heterosexuality. Yet its major function is not to reward men for desiring women. As Sedgwick notes, male power over the "exchange of goods, persons, and meaning" depends on male bonding, and that solidarity is enforced by the threat of what she calls "homophobic blackmail." In other words, the fear of being perceived as gay holds guys together.

This is why boys in a playground police each other for signs of "sissiness," why adolescents conjure up elaborate codes in which wearing a certain color on a certain day labels the unwitting offender as a homo, and why the disingenuous *Seinfeld* punch line "not that there's anything wrong with being gay" is so funny. The obsession with homosexual signs—and the people who embody them—is the key to an order that ranks men by their invulnerability to same-sex desire.

It follows that a guy who is insecure about his place in the pack will panic when propositioned by another guy, and that the fiercest phobes are the most desperate for admission to the *bund*. But few men outgrow this febrile quest. "We're always proving our manhood in front of other men," says Stony Brook sociologist Michael Kimmel, the author of *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*. "Homophobia is the fear that someone might get the wrong idea."

In his lectures, Kimmel uses a routine to make this point: "I ask guys to tell me how they know a man is gay. The way they walk, the way they always dress so nicely, what they do for a living. The women mention the same things, but they also say, 'I get suspicious if a guy is listening too much in a bar, or he isn't coming on to me.' All these stereotypes become a negative rule book that keeps men enacting traditional ideas about

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masculinity; it keeps them hitting on women and dressing like shit, and it keeps women wearing uncomfortable shoes and showing no technical competence. You can see how homophobia maintains the most rigid gender roles."

The irony is that this heterosexual code of conduct has nothing to do with loving women. But it has everything to do with fear of femininity.

Perhaps the most perplexing figure in the Freudian pantheon is "the phallic mother." This is the primal parent as she is perceived by the infant not yet cognizant of gender. Regressing to a state of union with this figure is the ultimate desire. But for men, it is also the ultimate threat, since fusing with her means losing one's masculinity. What's more, it means incorporating the mother's desire for the father. The struggle against this unconscious fantasy is the root of homophobia.

This Oedipal model certainly helps explain the traditional association of homosexuals and that perilous condition known in some bars and Freudian circles as "failed masculinity." To be a gay man is to identify with mom, case closed. But what about those African cultures where homosex is a rite of passage, or those Greek city-states where it was the glue for an army of lovers? And what about lesbians? Does the specter of the primal parent in a strap-on explain why Barnard College recently found it necessary to brag that its graduates are more likely to marry and have children than are coed-college grads?

"Certainly the fear of lesbians is the fear of butch women," says Arlene Stein, the author of *Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation*. "But there's also the fear that women can be independent sexual actors, which is different from the issue with gay men. That doesn't mean the term *homophobia* can't apply to lesbians, but it has a different shape and tenor than when it's directed against men." Whatever the distinction, it isn't evident in the psychoanalytic literature on homophobia, which barely mentions

lesbians even though about a third of the victims of antigay violence are women.

Clearly the Oedipal model is only a clue to homophobia, not the whole story. "For many men, masculinity is defined as that which is not female," says Nancy Chodorow, whose psychoanalytic training is tempered by a grounding in sociology. "But that's about separating from *mother*; it's not about the phallic mother. I think what's equally tenuous in male identity is how you identify with dad without loving him. In fact, the Oedipal boy does love his father; all identification is based in love. So what you get in homophobia is that you love dad but you're not supposed to love him."

The irony is that this heterosexual code of conduct has nothing to do with loving women. But it has everything to do with fear of femininity.

This contradiction is compounded by the web of associations between male dominance and desire for women. Gay men, with their potential to be sexually passive, "threaten masculinity, which is supposed to be active," Chodorow notes. "And if we define gender by sexual orientation, which we do, then gender's at stake as well. To the extent that a man's heterosexuality is defensive and threatened, he's more likely to be homophobic. To the extent that his heterosexuality feels more secure, he can contain and live with his homoerotic desires. And if you want to talk about hate, then it's what happens when you are confronted with contradictions in yourself that you can't tolerate. You project the bad out, and then you want to destroy it."

Yet despite its grip, none of these scholars is willing to call homophobia innate. "What's innate is fear of the other," says Arlene Stein. Her sociologist's perspective tells her that even something as "natural" as sexuality is shaped by race, class, and gender. So, whatever its primal causes, why can't homophobia be

changed?

What would have to happen for that to occur? No doubt it would be helpful if boys could fall in love with their fathers as easily as girls do. But that's just for starters. "Heterosexuality would have to change," says Suzanne Pharr, the author of *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism*. "It would have to give way to a more fluid sexuality, so that people might be engaged at different times with the same gender, or the other gender, or gender wouldn't be an issue for them at all."

This is not the latest incarnation of bisexual chic. A better term might be Eve Sedgwick's *allosexuality*, an arrangement of many erotic patterns in no particular hierarchy. In this scenario, sexuality would be seen as a kind of working compromise assembled from alternative impulses. If that seems like fun, welcome to the queer new world. If it seems scary, then you can imagine how difficult homophobia is to eradicate.

"Before we can imagine what heterosexuality would look like without homophobia, psychoanalysis has to figure out what normal, nondefensive masculinity is," says Chodorow. "The fact is that ordinary masculinity depends not just on heterosexuality but on male-dominant heterosexuality. So the question is, what would happen if that changed? To the extent that straight men can fold in passivity, receptivity, and vulnerability, I think both homophobia and male dominance would lessen."

Short of this transformation, perhaps the best weapon against homophobia is to acknowledge it. Straight or gay, we all fear the queer within—that can't be helped. But in understanding this primal rage, at least we can control it, and maybe even fight the power it creates.

Research: Michael Zilberman

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MISS...PLACED FILES

Something to think about, what if we were the majority? What would life be like? Feel free to add your own to this start of a list:

- 1) All television/movie actors, magazine models, sports heroes, etc. would be visibly transgendered.
- 2) Non-transgenders would appear on talk shows, to be asked by an audience of drag queens, "Why can't you just be normal?"
- 3) Non-transgenders would develop body image problems and seek cosmetic surgery and/or hormones to feel "normal."
- 4) Nons would receive a constant barrage of invasive and embarrassing questions about their personal medical histories and the functioning of their genitalia.
- 5) Nons would be required to spend a year living full time in the "opposite" gender role, to prove they're *really* not trans.
- 6) Genetic males who wore jeans, grow facial hair, and enjoyed sports would be the target of verbal and physical harassment in schools.
- 7) Genetic females *under* 5'9" tall would be called "Sir" at first glance.
- 8) Both genetic males and females would be pestered to get the operation, by fetishistic lovers who immediately dump them afterward.
- 9) Non-transgenders would invest hours in the mirror each morning, hoping to "pass" for trans in order to obtain and keep a job.
- 10) San Francisco would become the only city in the USA to have almost no "gender minorities."
- 11) Kids would feel very upset and troubled for years because they are not trans
- 12) When they came out to their families and friends they would immediately be put into therapy sessions to "find out what's wrong".
- 13) They would have to find another nickname for a transmission on a car....probably a normie.
- 14) Normal lady's shoe sizes would be 9-14.
- 15) Dry-cleaning bills would be cheaper.
- 16) All Petite Sophisticates would become Tall Sophisticates.
- 17) All blouse/jacket sleeve lengths would automatically increase 2"
- 18) Jerry Falwell would BE a Telli-Tubbie--the purple one.
- 19) The DSM-IV manual would list "Machismo" as a psychosomatic disorder. Large doses of estrogens would be the cure.
- 20) There would FINALLY be a woman (of one sort or another) in the White House!
- 21) All car horns would be replaced by makeup mirrors installed in the center of the steering wheel.
- 22) No one who committed a traffic violation would receive a ticket if they committed the violation as a result of touching up their lipstick, eyeshadow, mascara, or hair.
- 23) Auto manufacturers would be forced to "raise the roof" on all automobiles by six inches, providing us girls with enough hair room!

FOR SALE

Braun Silk Epil Electric Hair Remover. (2nd generation Epilady) Used one time. Originally \$59.99. Asking \$20.00 Contact Camille. Leave message on hotline (446-2661), write to Belles PO box or see her at Belles meeting on June 5.

Your ad could be here ! If you have something to sell or give away that you think would be helpful for our members, we can run an ad similar to the one on the left. Just contact Camille for details.



COMING EVENTS



DUE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF LAST MINUTE CHANGES, CALL TO VERIFY THE TIME AND PLACE OF EVENTS

MAY 30

THE WHITE PARTIES (to welcome the Summer!) being held at Club Marcella (622 Main St, Buffalo and Club E, 393 Ellicott St, Buffalo

JUNE 2-6

17th ANNUAL BE-ALL CONVENTION CLEVELAND, OHIO (brochures available at meeting or call Belles' info line), also at: www.beall.net

JUNE 5

BUFFALO BELLES MEETING 7:00pm

JULY 10

BUFFALO BELLES MEETING 7:00pm Guest speaker Sheila Kirk is tentatively scheduled to appear.

AUGUST 14

**BUFFALO BELLES MEETING 7:00pm
ANNUAL PICNIC**

SEPTEMBER 11

BUFFALO BELLES MEETING 7:00pm

OCTOBER 9

BUFFALO BELLES MEETING 7:00pm

NOVEMBER 13

BUFFALO BELLES MEETING 7:00pm

DECEMBER 11

**BUFFALO BELLES MEETING 7:00pm
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY**



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