

## *Gender Mosaic's*

# NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

### *IN THIS ISSUE*

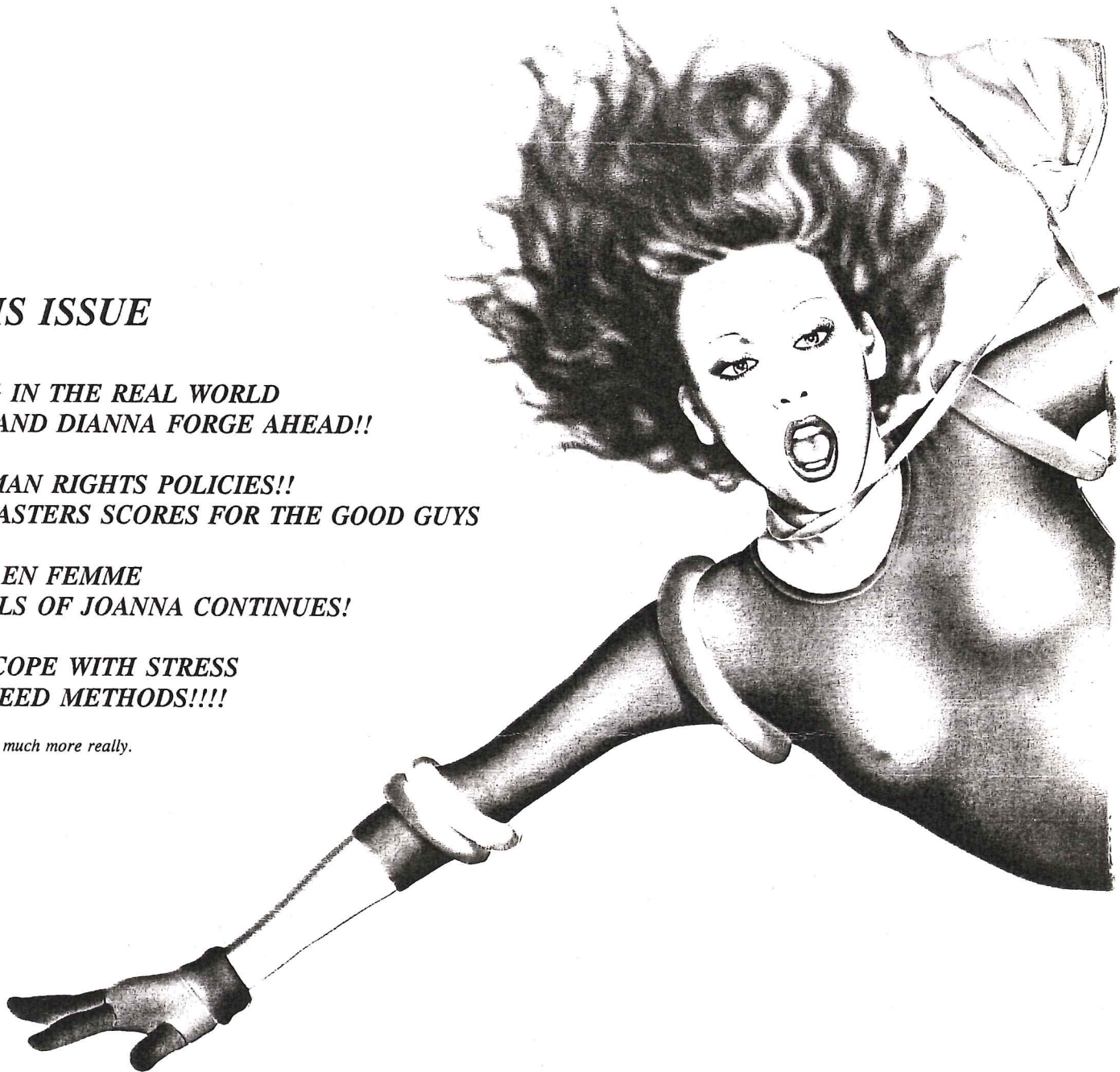
*WORKING IN THE REAL WORLD  
SHARON AND DIANNA FORGE AHEAD!!*

*NEW HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES!!  
LAURA MASTERS SCORES FOR THE GOOD GUYS*

*HOLIDAY EN FEMME  
THE PERILS OF JOANNA CONTINUES!*

*HOW TO COPE WITH STRESS  
GUARANTEED METHODS!!!!*

PLUS: Well, not much more really.



## EDITORIALS

Reading this, you may be breathing a sigh of relief, realizing that the rumours of the newsletter's demise, were, of course, unfounded. With Ted tipping his hat, after a remarkable tour at the helm, it is obvious that the evolution of the newsletter has come to a turning point. Regrettably, I have always maintained that NFTU was one of the finest newsletters produced by a club on this continent. Of course I thought Ted would be the editor for decades to come. I wish now that I had left a bit of room for improvement. Does anyone remember who batted after Babe Ruth? Whatever, please realize that I see no sense of just pumping out a weak imitation, trying to recapture glories of time past. I cannot guarantee that the newsletter will be better, but you can take for granted that it will be different!

"Editor" may be a misleading term; I don't see myself choosing which viewpoints get aired, and which don't. After all a club which incorporates the word "MOSAIC" shouldn't have a newsletter which advocates any particular "slant" but instead presents an eclectic mix of viewpoints. It will be up to the reader to select those elements which are of validity to themselves. I am not a big fan of censorship, and in my mind there is no subject that you should be leery of talking about. This is no place to hold back! If you feel strongly about something let fly! Do not underestimate the therapeutic benefit of speaking your mind. Be aware that if people disagree they can let fly as well. In a no censorship environment every individual must take responsibility not only for what they write, but the taste in which they write it. I would very much like to see vigorous debate take place. Things may get heated, pet theories may get ripped apart, people may get the urge to reach for pistol holsters, but it beats being boring and lethargic any day. I think we are very capable of developing very interesting insights on a variety of topics. To me there is no reason why this newsletter shouldn't be read with interest by those outside of the crossdressing community.

Those who aren't into all of this militant social engineering should not feel left out. "Lighten up" may be the best universal maxim ever created. Humour, observations or reviews of TV shows, practical tidbits, are more than welcome. Have some cynical comment about the newsletter? Write to the

"Letters to the Editor". Think something in the club should be done differently? Write to "Letters to the President" Do you have some embarrassing personal neurosis you would like to share...then write to "Ask Diva". Provide me with the raw material and I will concoct a section especially for you! In closing please remember that some of the most brilliant, eccentric, erotic, zaniest, sanest, craziest, nicest, exasperating people on the planet are crossdressers. I would very much like this newsletter to reflect that.

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is a letter of thanks for Ted in our appreciation for his time and work in producing our news letter, his thought provoking essays, researching of true facts and life experiences of crossdressing in the community. Just getting the news letter out every 2 months deserves a round of applause from all our members. It is not easy to sit in front of a computer for hours on end or whatever is required to edit a first rate news letter. (I still work with tools so I really don't know the internal workings of a computer). Ted has given us good copy to read. Now its time for another editor to take over the terminal, but we also need letters from our members to make NFTU work. On behalf of Gender Mosaic we wish you the best. Thank You Ted.  
Joanne

#### *Notes From the Underground*

P.O. Box 7421  
Ottawa (Vanier), Ontario  
K1L 8E4  
613-749-5203

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## NEW CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

by

Laura Masters

### POLICY

After a six month negotiation between Transequal and the Canadian Human rights Commission (CHRC) a new policy is being put into action at CHRC offices. The new policy will improve human rights support for transgenderists, transvestites and transsexuals who fall victim to discrimination by the federal government, federally owned corporations, and federal regulated private enterprises.

### Expanded Coverage

Traditionally, complaints from transsexuals were accepted only on grounds of "Disability." There has also been no distinct recognition of transgenderists or transvestites. This has effectively limited our complaints to situations describable in terms of mental illness. Because of these limitations the CHRC has, until now, provided human rights enforcement in only about 10% of the discriminatory situations we encounter.

Things are changing. Many of the erroneous stereotypes about transsexualism will no longer shape CHRC policy. Transsexuals, transgenderists, and transvestites are now recognized as three distinct minority groups, with separate concerns and individual identities. We can now file complaints of discrimination because of Sex, (perceived) Disability or (perceived) Sexual Orientation. It is also possible to use combinations of grounds in complex situations. This offers profoundly improved coverage and should provide recourse in law for at least 90% of situations.

### New Understandings

These new grounds of complaint demonstrate a crucial first step away from the "disorder" model of transsexualism. The new CHRC policy sees transsexuals, transvestites and transgenderists simply as members of minority groups, not as mental patients. Our humanity is finally being

acknowledged. Hopefully: we can soon be rid of the insult of relying upon psychiatric and medical support in distinctly non-medical and non-psychiatric situations.

In fact, the assumption of mental disability is now grounds for complaint, whereas only a few weeks ago it was the foundation of our rights enforcement.

### Examples

Our most frequent problem is discrimination in employment. Under the old CHRC policies a complaint of discrimination in employment, raised by a federally employed transgenderist, would have to be filed under Disability and would likely be written as though it was from a transsexual. The case would rely upon psychiatric experts and would likely seek special accommodations for the complainant. This could be extremely counterproductive; it risks convincing the employer of the transgenderist's "sicko" status. Their employment could well become little more than needless accommodations for an imagined mental illness, resulting in missed promotions and minuscule pay increases. Clearly, this method risks producing a solution far worse than the problem itself.

The new policies will permit the same complaint to be filed on the ground of Sex. The case can now be built upon the simple assertion that the employer has no right to punish a male for womanhood or to penalize a female for manhood. This is a very beneficial approach; it reinforces the complainant's rights in employment, not the employer's prejudices about transgenderism.

Transvestites, too can finally challenge the old perspectives. Consider the recent case of a male transvestite who chose to fly while cross-dressed and was refused a boarding pass unless he changed his clothes. Under the old policies there would have been no premise for complaint, since there was no discrimination due to disability. However; it is now

possible to build a case claiming discrimination in services arising from the insistence that his clothing was unacceptable for a person of is Sex.

A memorable example comes from my "now I've seen everything" file. I was once consulted in a case where a male-to-female transsexual was fired from a job because of her preference for women lovers. The employer claims to have no problem with the employee's clothing, maleness or womanhood, but considered her a lesbian and dismissed her for this reason. Under the new policies a complaint could claim discrimination on grounds of Sexual Orientation.

### The Near Future

The new CHRC policies are currently being sent to all Canadian Human Rights Commission branch offices. Your complaints can be filed or revised anytime. If you have questions or wish advice on specific issues, please don't hesitate to contact me. (Laura Masters is a human rights advocate working out of St. Catharines. She also is founder and director of Transequal which specializes in transgender issues. She may be reached at 416-688-0276).



### Working Girl

by

Diana Coltrige Peters

Working helped my self-esteem a hundred fold. Knowing I was earning double the hourly wage I ever earned as my former male self while living out a long-time fantasy of having Diana earn her keep was a concept I never though possible until I actually tried.

I went to various temp agencies in town practicing the job interview. After a couple, I found myself at CDI and they just happened to have something handy for someone bilingual with WordPerfect experience. The expression on my husband's face when I came home and told him I had a contract for fourteen an hour for two and half weeks was of utter shock. It was like "you did what?" My ego was dancing on air. After the first day though, I realized what I had got myself into. Waking at 5:30am to make sure I looked flawless and negotiating the bus system to Hull was the first major chore. The introductions to everybody in the office left me a little shakey...wondering if they heard my voice crack or if they read my tea time under that horrible fluorescent light. The only way to describe it was tension overkill.

Everything went reasonably well on my first day. I didn't hear any whispering behind my back, but I also didn't get invited for coffee. I wasn't sure how people were reacting to me. It made me a little uncomfortable so I tried to ignore the social aspect of the office and got down to work. After the third or fourth day I started to run put of appropriate wardrobe. My clothes were meant for night-clubbing, not the office and I didn't have much variety for daywear. I felt so uncomfortable doing the files for the lady in the corner office. She had manicured claws, a different seven hundred dollar outfit for every day of the week, and you could tell she wore Italian shoes and only the best of make-up. If anybody could make me feel insecure, it was her. And I was stuck in close proximity with her for two and a half days working on a mountain of obsolete files. Somehow my contract was terminated early by a week. But I put in a week and a half learning what it's really like out there. They let me go politely saying they didn't have the budget for the extra week (I'm still not sure if somebody read me or if



that was the actual reason). But I really didn't care. I proved to myself that yes, it is not impossible to get a job. Next time I try, I'll be better prepared.

### A Trip to the Voice Doctor

by

Sarah Williams

I arrived at nine o'clock sharp and walked into the fanciest doctor's office I've ever seen. Dark green plush carpet, tasteful antiques, about a million dollars worth of art on the wall.

The receptionist asked me to have a seat and said that the doctor was running a little late today. My stomach was doing the most interesting things down there. As is usual in surgery I had been asked not to eat before coming in. It might have also had something to do with the fact that I've never had any surgery done before and the thought that this was the first big unalterable step on the way to becoming the woman I've always needed to be.

As I sat there, worrying, thinking about all the things that could go wrong, I could still hear the doctor going through the list of possible complications on my first visit. Things like scarring, infection, trouble swallowing, and five or six other things I can't remember. The one that scared me the most though, was that my voice might just return to it's old pitch sometime after surgery. He said that whatever happened there was no way to fix it again and that I'd be stuck with the way it turns out, good or bad. He made it clear that he wasn't making any promises, or guaranteeing anything. I asked exactly what he was going to do to make my voice change. He told me the technique was his idea, and that only he and God could do this, and that neither of them was going to tell anyone else. He said he was afraid that if he told anyone how it was done, some fool who wasn't as good as he was would try it and screw it up. Then the technique would get a bad name. Well okay, I didn't like that very much, but squeamish as I am, I'm probably better off not knowing.

I must have sat in that waiting room for at least two hours, though it seemed more like a week.

Finally a nurse came and took me to a room and got me into one of those cute little hospital nighties. Then I was off to the operating room. I sat there for a long time, shivering, wondering if this was just a dream. Then the nurse came back and started doing all those nurse things, installing all kinds of wires and sensors all over me. When she'd finished she told me to take it easy, don't worry, and don't pay any attention to the things the doctor said to her during the operation. She said it would sound like every thing was going wrong, but that this was just the way this doctor was during surgery, and it was really going to turn out fine. I was to speak when he told me to and there would be times he would ask me not to swallow. I had no idea how hard that would be. She covered my eyes and the rest of me except for my neck, and in came the doctor. As soon as he came in he asked the nurse, "did you give her your little talk". She said she had and then he asked me to speak into a mini tape recorder for a few seconds.

He then began to shoot me up with a local anesthesia all around my Adams apple and started drawing on my throat with a felt pen. As soon as I was good and numb he began to cut. The incision was about two inches long, it followed a line that already existed on my neck so it wouldn't show later. As he cut he used an electric device to stop the bleeding. I could hear lots of sizzling and the sound of his scalpel. I began to wish they had put me out entirely.

From the time he walked into the room, it had seemed he was in a foul mood. Though he was always polite to me, he was incredibly rude to his nurse. This got worse and worse as we went along. I, of course, couldn't see what was going on, but from the sound of it he just couldn't get what he wanted from her. He'd say, "Okay, pull it up this way. No! That's too far. Come on, get it right honey." He went on, "I can't do this if you can't do



what I tell you. No! That's not right, now I can't see!". He never stopped, "honey, this is getting all screwed up. If this doesn't work its all your fault. Don't be stupid, pull it over here". It got so bad I couldn't see how she kept from punching him out right then and there.

This all went on for about an hour. Sometimes it hurt a lot. I didn't say anything because I didn't think I could talk. I could feel him suturing something that was very tough in my throat. I think he broke several needles doing it. He kept repeating, "Don't swallow! Don't swallow!". I tried to keep from it, but the urge was incredible. Sometimes I couldn't stop and he'd say, "Oh shit! Don't swallow! You've got to stop swallowing!" As he worked, he'd ask me to say something. I tried to talk, but some squeaky noises would come out instead. Then he'd put in another stitch. Finally he stated, "that's as far as I can go, it sounds pretty good". I wasn't so sure. But I was so relieved that it was over. I didn't want to argue.

In a few minutes I was stitched up and he was gone. It felt like there was a huge lump in my throat when I swallowed and it seemed like I was going to choke. I fought the urge because the thought of gagging and coughing scared me to death. The nurse got me up, cleaned me off, and helped me back into my dress. She took such good care of me that I started to feel a little better. She gave me some post-op instructions and I was out the door.

There I was, in downtown Beverly Hills feeling sick, scared and lost. Here's one point of advice. Don't do anything like this alone. I found my rental car and sat there for a while just trying to breathe and get my head together enough to drive. I needed to eat so I stopped in at a fast food joint for lunch which I promptly threw up in the parking lot. I didn't like that much, but my throat didn't hurt as much as I thought it was going to. I felt a good bit better after that and I went back to my hotel room to see if I could sleep. The doctor had asked me not to turn my head side to side or tilt it back for at least two weeks. This made driving in the big city kind of tough. I had a lot of pills to take for pain and swelling and to prevent infection. It figures, the antibiotic he gave me was a pill that would choke a horse. I managed to get them down anyway.

If you should ever get desperate enough to try this crazy operation, there are some things you

should know. The first is that no matter what anyone tells you, it hurts. It hurt a lot for the first two weeks, and for the next two it felt like I had a cramp in my throat. The pain is almost gone now after six weeks, but my voice is still hoarse most of the time. I don't think that I was one of his big successes. He said that the goal was to give me a voice that sounded female on the phone. I still have trouble convincing people on the phone that my name is Sarah. But as I get back more and more control of my voice, it's slowly getting better. At first, I had almost no dynamic range. Now I've gained back about half the range I had originally and I feel it stretching a little every day. The voice modification surgery, as it's called, cost \$4,000 US not including travel and expenses. They ask that you stay in town for at least two days after surgery so they can check up on you. Looking back though the whole ordeal was as hard as anything I've ever done. I am very glad I did it. The change I got wasn't all I had hoped for, but it did help a lot. It gave me at least \$10,000 worth of confidence. I'm no longer afraid to talk. In person, I seem to pass without question. I feel reborn and my new life feels so right.





**WISDOM FROM THE AGES****THE FIRST JOB****JUDAISM**

"What is hateful to you do not to your fellow men.  
That is the entire Law, all the rest is commentary."  
The Talmud

**BUDDHISM**

"Hurt not others with that which pains yourself."  
Udana-Varqa

**ZOROASTRIANISM**

"That nature only is good when it shall not do unto  
another whatever is not good for its own self."  
Dadistan-i-Dinik

**CHRISTIANITY**

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do  
to you, do ye even so to them: for this the law of the  
prophets." The Gospel of Matthew

**ISLAM**

"No one of you is a believer until he desires for his  
brother that which he desires for himself." Hadith

**HINDUISM**

"This is the sum of duty: do naught to others which  
if done to thee would cause thee pain." The  
Mahabharata

**TRANSGENDERISM**

"What works for me, will not necessarily work for  
you." Corollary to the Golden Rule. The Kinky Diarist

by

Sharon

Monday September 21st was a very special  
day for me. I went for my second interview as a  
woman and I got the job. I have now been working  
as a female for three weeks. I'd just like to share my  
experiences thus far.

Getting ready for the interview and travelling  
there was probably the most terrifying thing I have  
ever done. I would have given anything to have just  
stayed in bed that day. I got ready, prayed to God to  
help me get through the interview, and drove to Hull,  
butterflies and all. I found the building and looked for  
the correct unit number and was surprised to find  
that the unit I was supposed to go to was not shown  
on any of the five entrances to the building. I picked  
the last door I saw since this was the only one with  
no number and went inside.

Facing me was a long stairway. So like a  
woman on her last walk to the gallows, I climbed the  
stairs, fully expecting to see a receptionist or at least  
a sign to tell me that I was at the right place.

When I reached the top of the stairs I was in  
a large room filled with computer terminals and  
bustling with people. There must have been forty to  
fifty people there. But there was no receptionist or  
sign to tell me that I was in the right place. I looked  
around and saw someone waving to me to just keep  
walking. So I walked and walked past still more  
terminals and countless people. I still didn't know if I  
was in the right place and I wondered how I was  
ever going to find the person I was supposed to see  
for the interview. Finally I came to the end of the  
room and found an office full of people. "Are you  
here for an interview?" a woman asked. I said I was  
and she pointed to a chair and told me to sit down  
and wait.

By now my heart was really racing. The chair  
I had to sit in was right in the middle of an aisle and  
facing at a very awkward angle. People were  
constantly trying to squeeze past me and the whole  
place was just bustling with activity. I sat there in  
terror and prayed that no one say anything to destroy  
my confidence. I had to wait fifteen minutes and it  
seemed like forever. A few times I thought to myself

that there was no way that I could work here with so many people running around and a few of the people were rough looking males in a leather jackets. The people I fear the most.

At one point I felt like running out of the building, but I didn't. Getting this job as a woman was just too important to me. I couldn't let myself back out now. I kept thinking that this has got to be the worst kind of place and the worst way of ever having to end up waiting for my first interview as a woman.

Finally I was called into the room. A few people were still in the office and I prayed that they would leave before my interview would start. Fortunately they did and the interview began. I was a little more relaxed because the person interviewing me knew about my situation. (Someone I met in another group had talked to him for me.) He explained to me that the job was doing surveys over the telephone and told me all the usual things about the company. I asked him if he thought that me being a transsexual would be a problem and he said that with the way I looked, he doubted if anyone would notice. He also said that if I had any problems with anyone to tell him and that he would either discipline or fire that person. He said that he wasn't going to tell anyone about me because it really wasn't any of their business. He told me to come back on Wednesday night for the training. I was now a working woman!

I drove home in a big state of relief both in that I was out of the place and still in one piece, and that it had seemed that no one had suspected anything while I had been there. Still I was terrified about having to go back on Wednesday night for the training. At least I had one day before then to try and relax.

Getting ready to go back on Wednesday, I was even more terrified than before. My hands were shaking as I put my makeup on and again I prayed to God to help me make it through the evening. I drove there in a state of near panic, and went through the training session. Everyone was to share a terminal, but luckily I got my own for the session. I even asked a few questions in a slightly raised voice and the person doing the training accepted me as a woman. I was really afraid that we were going to have to start working that night but we were sent home and told to come back the next night. I was glad that I didn't

have to work that night and happy that again it didn't seem as if anyone was suspicious of me.

Each evening that I have worked I am still very scared. Getting out of bed, putting on my makeup and driving to work is the hardest part. Once I'm there I calm down quite a lot and I probably don't appear nervous to anyone. So far I stay in bed until the last moment around 1:30 in the afternoon and then I get up and start getting ready. I'm afraid to get up any earlier because I know how much I'll worry about going to work. I'm usually so scared that I don't eat anything until I come home. Luckily, it must be the extra adrenalin that prevents me from getting hungry.

I'm so thankful of having Karen as a friend as she has helped me so much in making it through this. Without her it would have been so much more difficult. She has come over for visits after I've gotten home from work and I can talk to her about my fears and how the night went. Still, usually when she leaves I have a feeling similar to what I imagine the first astronauts had when they left to go to the moon and saw their last glimpse of the Earth before they knew they were on their way and wouldn't see the Earth again until after their dangerous mission.

After three weeks I still worry a lot about working. I'm so afraid that I will be found out or that someone will say something to embarrass me. The thing that bothers me the most is my voice. In spite of having a good voice when I practice alone, I'm still having great problems using it in front of others. So far I've been raising my voice ever so slightly and everytime I have to talk to someone I'm scared. So far I've had three brief conversations with other women and they didn't seem to suspect anything. I've also had to ask the other three supervisors questions and they don't seem to suspect anything either. I try to talk higher and more softly when I'm on the phone. It's ironic that the first job I ever get as a woman also involves spending the entire shift calling people on the telephone and using my worst female trait - my voice.

At least however, my fears are subsiding gradually. Every time I go there I don't feel as afraid. It's still really stressful mostly due to my voice. There have also been several shift cancellations so I have not worked a full week at a time yet. Every time a shift gets cancelled I'm disappointed because I won't



make any money that night. But I am also quite relieved because I am still afraid to go there.

All in all though, things have gone well. Nothing bad has happened and no one appears to suspect anything. If anyone does, they're keeping it to themselves. A few of the women I've talked to now say hi to me when they see me and I'm feeling more relaxed every time I go. I'm still afraid of what disaster might be awaiting me around the corner, but so far nothing bad has happened.

The last night at work was the scariest. I got there early so I could get a more secluded location in the room and ended up having three guys all of whom were friends sitting around me. They kept taking breaks and talking and I was so afraid that they would hear me talking on the phone and become suspicious of me. Nothing happened though, except that the guy sitting beside me kept looking at me. Still they made me nervous and don't think I'll sit in that area again.

Aside from my voice worrying me, the worst thing is that the job is so boring. Calling people and doing interviews is not very exciting work and it's pretty monotonous. My plan is to get a better job as a woman as soon as my confidence in being a woman in front of others reaches a high enough level. My next goal is to work in a ladies clothing store. I'm hoping to gradually work my way back up to a higher paying computer job. For now I'm going to take lower paying jobs where it won't matter so much to the people there that I'm a transsexual if they find out or can tell. This way I work on my voice, wardrobe and confidence so that I can eventually resume working in my field.

The experience of working as a woman has already done wonders for my confidence in "passing". Since I've began working I have been doing everything as a woman and I don't feel very self-conscious at all. So many things have become much easier to do as a woman because I'll always say to myself that if I'm working as a woman than I can surely go almost anywhere. Now I am finally living as a woman full time and it feels great. Although I have also never been so afraid to go to work, I have never in my life, been so happy.

## "HOLIDAY EN FEMME"

by

Joanne Law

This year my vacation included two events. First was JoAnn Robert's "Paradise In the Poconos" and the second was the Monarch Social Club's "Mardi Gras '92" in the Moskokas. Sandy joined me for the Poconos and a side trip to Boston.

We left Ottawa at supper time and drove all the way to Boston. About 7 hours later we could see the lights of the city. It was 2:00 am and we were tired. We found a Howard Johnson, booked in and fell asleep. Waking up we planned a day of shopping, with the first stop being Vernon's, the TV boutique, in Waltham. Sandy was a little nervous about being en femme as it was day time but after a few cups of coffee and a cigarette, she started to relax. Make up, clothes, shoes, wig and a purse, we were ready to shop. At Vernon's Sandy purchased a wig and a few accessories, and I purchased a few pierced ear rings and other jewelry. After spending a few dollars at Vernon's we headed for town, all dressed up with every place to go.

Now I am going to tell you something unbelievable. We decided to dine at the Holiday Inn in down town Boston. We pulled into the underground parking, and ventured to the restaurant on the 18th floor. We were greeted at the door and ushered to a table by the window over looking Boston. Our waiter took our drink order introduced himself as Freddy and disappeared. When he returned he told us that he himself was also a crossdresser and very active in the TV community!

He was not able to talk much but he told us that there was a bar very near the hotel called Bobby's that accepted crossdressers. He would meet us there after his shift. Sandy and I played a few games of snooker and talked with the other people in the bar. Freddy, whose femme name is Crystal, joined us and then drove us to another bar called Jacques. At Jacques there was a drag show in progress and we stayed to the end of the show. Crystal left us there and we took a cab back to the car, but not before making arrangements to meet Crystal the next night at Bobby's.



We shopped for a few hours the next day and I had my finger nails sculptured at a salon near the hotel. What a feeling having long beautiful nails and not having to worry about them falling off or breaking. It took the lady 1 1/2 hours to do them.

That night we went for a delicious dinner and then to Bobby's to meet Crystal and catch a drag show. The show was two hours of fantastic songs and lip sink melodies by the impersonators on stage. At the end of the night we meet with some of the performers, thanked Crystal for her hospitality and said our goodbyes to our new found friends. We drove back to the hotel and fell asleep the second our heads touched the pillow. Sandy asked me what was so special about Boston and I returned with "It's a drag". Boston is a beautiful city to visit.

On Wednesday we headed south towards Rhode Island, Connecticut, west to Pennsylvania and a little town of Scranton where we stayed at a Holiday Inn. By this time it was almost natural to dress en femme, shop, and be treated like ladies at the finer restaurants; it was great!

Thursday we drove to the Poconos to begin our long awaited weekend. As we drove up the drive way of the Pines Country Resort, a few people were chatting on the front porch. It was an older renovated building with a veranda and overhanging roof. Sandy and I went to the front desk to register and get our rooms. Of course ours was on the third floor! After several trips with our luggage we were exhausted.

We then freshened up and returned to the lobby to mingle with the other crossdressers who had arrived. It was there that I met Mary and David, old friends from Brampton Ontario. I introduced them to Sandy and we were introduced to some of their friends. It was like old home week. Some of the guests came from New York, New Jersey, Florida, Vermont, and Ontario. JoAnn Roberts had a full agenda of events during our stay. Costume balls and formal dinners, karaoke singing, makeup demonstrations, and the best amateur talent show I have seen in a long time. The show had folk singing, comedy, lip sync songs as well as magic and illusion. Not a flaw in the three hour show and the climax to end it all was the crowning of MS Poconos and her court.

During the not so busy times we met with other crossdressers and their wives, and individual people who had never did this before in front of a group. It's nice to talk to them as they are still nervous about this adventure. The staff of the resort was the best, caring and considerate and enjoying themselves the whole weekend. They helped up close the bar and were up to serve us coffee in the morning. I think the talent show gave them an idea of what crossdressing is all about and the fun in being female. On Sunday we said our goodbye, got a lot of mailing addressees from our new sisters, and tooted off back to Ottawa.

This event in the Poconos is a must for anybody who is a crossdresser or in a relationship. All the caring people involved with this party made it all worthwhile.

I still had two more weeks of holidays so I stayed home for a few days to relax and catch up in my sleep, do some laundry. My second leg of my trip was to the Mardi Gras in the Moskogas north of Toronto sponsored by the Monarch Social Club. It was at Divine Lake Resort on Divine Lake. The main lodge was made of pine with separate cabins blending into the fall colours of the leaves. It made a picture perfect resort. A full calendar of events were planned for the weekend and a lot of time to chit chat. I had met several of the members at other parties and was glad to see them there. We talked about old times just like a bunch of mother hens in the coop. Friends like Rebecca, Wiilamaina, Ruth and his wife Deb. Sandy and wife Karen all, great people. The karaoke night bombed but the ping pong table was in demand. People danced into the wee hours. Saturday night was a formal dinner, with fancy dress up, and costume all in one. The food was excellent and the service by the staff was great.

On Sunday I said my good-byes to some more new friends and drove home through Algonquin park. The leaves were at their best, full colour and the sun was shining. A perfect day to complete a perfect holiday. On Sunday night I had to search high and low for my twin brother; he just did not want to come out the closet. I finally got him out because he had to show up for work at 6:00 am the next morning.

What can I say about my holidays, Fantastic, three wonderful weeks of friendship and happiness.



**TWENTY-FIVE WAYS TO COPE WITH STRESS**

1. Jam miniature marshmallows up your nose and sneeze them out. See how many you can do at a time.
2. Use your Mastercard to pay your Visa and vica-versa.
3. Pop some popcorn without putting the lid on.
4. When someone says "have a nice day", tell them you have other plans.
5. Make a list of things to do that you have already done.
6. Dance naked in front of your pets.
7. Put your toddler's clothes on backwards and send him to pre-school as if nothing is wrong.
8. Fill out your tax form using Roman Numerals.
9. Tape pictures of your boss on watermelons and launch them from high places.
10. Leaf through "National Geographic" and draw underwear on the natives.
11. Tattoo "Out to Lunch" on your forehead.
12. Go shopping. Buy everything. Sweat in it. Return it the next day.
13. Buy a subscription to "Sleazoid Weekly" and send it to your boss's wife.
14. Pay your electric bill in pennies.
15. Drive to work in reverse.
16. Find out what a frog in a blender really looks like.
17. Tell your boss to "blow it out your mule" and let him figure it out.
18. Sit naked on a shelled hard-boiled egg.
19. Polish your car with ear-wax.
20. Read the dictionary upside down and look for secret messages.
21. Start a nasty rumour and see if you recognize it when it comes back to you.
22. Braid the hairs in each nostril.
23. Stare at people through the tines of a fork and pretend they're in jail.
24. Make a language up and ask people for directions in it.
25. Go to the grocery mart. Fill a Twinkie up with Ketchup. Put it back in the wrapper.

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE**

*Jolynne White and I.F.G.E*  
*-What planet are they from?*

*Shrinks, Creeps and other Sub-humans*  
*Shrinks are assholes - find out why*

*Gays in the Military*  
*-The debate rages in Cyberland*

*When Friends are Millstones around your Neck*  
*-Sometimes a woman just needs to do what she needs to do*

*Media Observations, Letters to Diva, earth shattering commentary, cutting edge opinion, side-splitting jokes..even some graphics..all this and more coming your way.*



## OPINIONS

Probably the only place where a man can feel really secure is in a maximum security prison, except for the imminent threat of release.

Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch*, 1970

Maleness remains a recessive genetic trait like color-blindness and hemophilia, with which it is linked. The suspicion that maleness is abnormal and the Y chromosome is an accidental mutation boding no good for the race is strongly supported by the recent discovery by geneticists that congenital killers and criminals are possessed of not one but two Y chromosomes, bearing a double dose, as it were, of genetically undesirable maleness.

Elizabeth Gould Davis, *The First Sex*, 1971

Every twelve year old boy knows what must be done to make it as a man, what it will cost to make him an American: the lessons seep through the skin forever. Money must be made, nothing is as masculine as this.

Gloria Emerson

In women's groups, the political clones, the Dworkinites...are the high priestesses of feminism, conjuring up the "wimmin's" revolution. As I understand it, after the wimmin's revolution, sex will consist of wimmin holding hands, taking their shirts off and dancing in a circle. Then we will fall asleep at exactly the same moment. If we didn't all fall asleep, something else might happen - something male identified, objectifying, pornographic, noisy, and undignified. Something like an orgasm.

Pat Califia

A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle.

Feminist slogan, 1970's

If you catch a man, throw him back.

Women's Liberation Slogan, c. 1975