



The Pink Slip



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The Newsletter of Kappa Beta chapter of Tri-Ess

June 1999

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Kappa Beta's June Meeting:

18-20 May

Friday — Informal activities

Saturday — Informal activities

Sunday — Drab meeting, Sherri's room, 9 am

Kappa Beta's July Meeting:

16-18 July

Friday — Informal activities

Saturday — Informal

Dallas Denny is Featured Speaker at the Magnolia Ball

Ms. Dallas Denny, Founder of Aegis, the American Educational Gender Information Service was the main speaker at the Magnolia Ball. The following is a summary of her talk.

Ms Denny began by remarking how



much our special edition of the Pink Slip, which recapped Kappa Beta's history over the past eleven years, caused her to reflect on her role in the beginnings of Kappa Beta, and the changing view of our community over that time period.

Before Kappa Beta, Sigma Epsilon was the only Tri-Ess group in the entire Southeastern United States, and the only other support group in the area was Holly Boswell's Phoenix group in Asheville. Many of Sigma Epsilon's members were afraid to meet in Atlanta, so the group often met in Charlotte and Chatanooga. Kappa Beta eventually split off, and Sigma Epsilon stayed permanently in Atlanta.

In the past 10 years we have begun to think about ourselves differently. Fifteen years ago a study at the Gender Identity Center in Colorado found that you had to declare yourself to be either a Crossdresser or a Transsexual. Once you declared, there were very clear paths you had to follow. If you didn't follow the correct "script," you were a failure at your chosen path. There

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was no middle road. This was still true 10 years ago.

The medical community gave us labels over a hundred years ago. Christine Jorgenson typified the TS role in early 50's. The medical community expected the

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transsexuals to transition and fade into society. The other group, crossdressers, were expected to be men who would occasionally don the clothing of a woman. Crossdressers were terrified of exposure. In the 50's exposure as a crossdresser could ruin a person.

More recently these traditional cross-gender paths have blurred. People do not seem to have to make those black/white decisions. We are more able to express gender in any way comfortable to us. There is no right or wrong way. To live full time as a woman, with no surgery, is now O.K. Taking hormones but not transitioning is also O.K.

Dallas discussed a book she had read in the late 70's, called "The Prehistory of Sex." This book was an anthropological study of sex through the physical evidence presented by artifacts. Anthropologists have found many burial sites on all continents that showed cross-gender roles. There have been literally hundreds of societies which showed evidence of transgendered sex roles. Clearly, this phenomenon is not new. It has existed for thousands of years.

She then proposed that today, the traditional labels just don't fit. For example, Virginia Prince calls herself a crossdresser, but she has been living full time as a woman for 35 years, without ever having surgery. Thus, she doesn't fit either the traditional crossdresser or transsexual mold.

Holly Boswell, founder of Phoenix, in the early 90's said in essence, "why do I have to fit into a category?" She doesn't want surgery, but lives as a woman. Crossdressers are experimenting with hormones. They are living full time without surgery. Dallas also noted that most transsexuals never have surgery for one reason or another.

In 90's the word Transgender is beginning to supplant the traditional words. Transgender is an all-encompassing term which is understood by many people

including academics, the Gay and Lesbian Community, and we, ourselves. To us it means that there are no failures because of not following "traditional" paths. Transgendered people are those who express gender differently from the traditional two roles.

In society, the John Wayne/Marilyn Monroe roles don't really fit anybody. It's not only us who are finding that there are areas in which people are not comfortable in traditional gender roles. Many more people are finding that they are uncomfortable in their clothing, their expected expressions of emotions, their job choices. It is now possible to see that "this whole gender thing is bogus." Everyone needs to express who they are in their own way.

Our message in the next Millennium: We all have to express gender in our own way. Our "revolution" has a lot to give the world at large. We are not different from everyone else. We express gender in individual ways. It's not "us versus them." We need to stop thinking of ourselves as people with problems and start thinking about ourselves as just people.

More Instructions for Life

- w.. Spend some time alone.
- x.. Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values.
- y.. Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- z.. Read more books and watch less TV.
- aa.. Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll get to enjoy it a second time.
- ab.. Trust in God but lock your car.
- ac.. A loving atmosphere in your home is so important. Do all you can to create a tranquil harmonious home.
- ad.. In disagreements with loved ones, deal with the current situation. Don't bring up the past.
- ae.. Read between the lines.

Dyana passed an article to me. Allure magazine about the joys of wearing a corset. I didn't have time to retype it, but found this interesting article from the Detroit News, Saturday, October 18, 1997, on the Internet. I hope to be able to give you Dyana's article in a future issue.

Skip equal rights, ladies; empower yourself with a corset

J.B. Dixon

It is said that when you begin to experience everything for the second time in your life, it's time to die. If so, just shoot me now.

Corsets are back.

Even I, born shortly after the earth's crust had begun to cool, am too young to remember real corsets. But I remember their second iteration, the Merry Widow Bra.

Ah, yes, the Merry Widow. A high school rite of passage into womanhood, mainstay of all those strapless evening gowns and probably more influential than chaperones in preserving virginity on prom night.

The saving grace of the Merry Widow was its special occasion stature. After an evening of being gloriously, though agonizingly, wasp waisted and bosomy, due to the displacement of one's stomach up into one's bra, you could struggle out of the thing with sighs of relief and only temporary welts where the steel "stays" had dug into the skin on your torso and the dozens of tiny "hook and eye" fasteners had embedded into your back.

Pleasure, as we used to say, is the sudden cessation of pain.

Not so in today's revival, originating, like so many other atrocities, in Great Britain and California. The hot new trend, my fellow outre Michiganders, involves full-body corsets, worn not for an evening of glamor, but day in and day out in a

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