

# en *femme*<sup>TM</sup> Magazine

#25



*Autumn Accord*  
*Southern Comfort*  
**NEW!** *Art of Makeup*



# *en* **Contents**

Number 25  
August 1991

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Cover: Charliss (l.), President of EON & Molly Kennedy, NYSGC Rep.  
Photo courtesy of EON, Syracuse, New York

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<b>Publisher</b> JoAnn Roberts	<b>Editor-in-Chief</b> Robyn Ann	<i>en</i> <b>Femme Magazine</b> is published 6 times a year by CDS, P. O. Box 1263, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406. All rights reserved. © 1991 by CDS. No part of this publication may be reproduced, in whole or in part, by any means, without the express written permission from the publisher. U. S. Subscriptions are \$36 a year. Reader submissions are encouraged. All submissions become the property of CDS and cannot be returned unless postage and envelope are enclosed. Opinions expressed by the authors are not necessarily the opinions of the staff or the publisher.
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# The Transsexual Trail

*Roberta Angela Dee*

## *Cross-Dressed Wedding*

**E**laine is a 35-year-old suburban housewife. Her hair is neatly layered and slightly frosted to bring out the blonde highlights. Her best friend Sylvia knocks at the kitchen door which is to the rear of the house.

Sylvia is also 35 years old. She has dark hair and is slightly overweight. Both women practice the Protestant faith and regard themselves to be politically conservative Republicans.

Elaine is sitting in the breakfast area of her modern kitchen, unable to see Sylvia at the back door. She might have heard her had the volume on the television been lower.

"Elaine!" Sylvia yells until she finally attracts her attention.

Elaine rushes to the door. "I'm sorry, honey. I couldn't hear you. I was just sitting watching Good Morning America. What's up?"

"Oh, I just came over for some company," Sylvia explains. "I wanted to watch the Sally Jessy Raphael Show with you. I know you always watch it."

"I sure do!" Elaine comments. "But Sally doesn't come on for another 20 minutes or so. Would you care for a cup of coffee?"

"No, ma'am, but I'd like a cup of that iced tea you had yesterday."

"Sure thing. Have a seat. I'll pour you a glass."

"What's it about today?"

"What's that?"

"Sally—what's her show about today?" Sylvia repeats, clarifying her question while positioning the glass on the kitchen table.

"Oh, I'm not really sure. Something about two people getting married and wearing matching gowns. Something like that."



"Matching gowns? What is it—two women?"

"I don't really know, Sylvia. We'll just have to wait until it comes on."

Elaine married Rodney Stokes ten years ago. They have two children—a boy and a girl, aged six and seven respectively. The children are visiting their grandmother, leaving Elaine little to do around the house. She enjoys having adult companionship for a change.

Her husband Rodney is a journalist. He writes a column for a local newspaper and handles the marketing end of it. He is personable with a knack for talking to people. An all-American sort of guy who enjoys baseball, football, hunting, soccer, and beer. Typical middle-class stuff.

Sylvia is a divorcee with no children. Since her divorce she has gone out to a few singles bars, but that isn't her style. "People just go there to get laid for the night," she often says. "Who needs that?"

Briefly while watching the end of Good Morning America Elaine thinks about her life—how mundane it has become, how repetitious, how trivial. Everything fits into its proper place and everything falls into a proper pattern. And the band plays on.

Rodney is a good enough husband—a good provider, and good with the children. It's just that he fails to make her feel the way he did before they were married.

In the beginning Rodney was different—at least to Elaine. But as time passed she could see that he was exactly like every other suburban man who managed a business, pared their on the left side, and drove a burgundy Volvo. Exactly the same. "Can you fetch me a Bud, honey?" The request echoes in her mind during the commercial break.



She met Rodney when *Kramer vs. Kramer* was a hit movie, when "What a Fool Believes" by the Doobie Brothers was the number one hit record, and Mother Theresa was receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. She met him when the Equal Rights Amendment was taking a nose dive, when school busing and racial quotas were being opposed, and the country was shifting from a liberal and humanitarian philosophy to one that was ultra-conservative and protectionist. It was a time when the economy was slowing down, along with creativity, imagination, and morality.

Back then Elaine could hear her biological clock ticking and Rodney seemed like a good bet. Later she discovered that the only thing different between Rodney and every other man she had ever met was that Rodney took pictures of his poetry, then double-exposed the text over a portrait of himself and Elaine. It was a novelty at first, but after the sixteenth print, it grew tiresome, along with everything else. Rodney was now on his sixty-seventh print.

"She's on!" Sylvia announces, waking Elaine from her daydream.

Sally Jessy Raphael announces that the show's topic was cross-dressers—men who like to dress up as women. Ms. Raphael also announces that at the end of the broadcast one of the couple would be getting married—with both wearing matching gowns!

"Why the hell would she want to marry a transvestite?" Elaine asks, directing her question to Sylvia and perhaps to herself.

"And why would they want to do it on national television?" Sylvia adds. "People just don't have a sense of right and wrong anymore. People do things just to be on television, just for the fun of it. It's sick."

Most women continue to link cross-dressing with homosexuality, either overt or latent. Most psychologists agree. Not that their view means anything; it's just an opinion. Cross-dressers themselves maintain that it's done just for fun.

Sally Jessy Raphael, nor any of the participants on the panel, manage to discuss the more demented dimensions of transvestite behavior. And of course, that's only to be expected. Most of her viewers are middle-aged housewives and elderly widows who neither want to hear about these more sordid aspects of the fetish, nor tax their middle-class minds beyond anything that can be laughed at.

The show is meant to be a joke. The wedding is a joke—the couple will have a real ceremony several days later. It is just for fun.

As the show progresses towards its end, both partners leave to change into their matching wedding gowns—one for him and one for her. The reappear after a lengthy commercial break.

"He actually looks better than she does," Elaine comments.

"I think she's probably a dyke. Don't you think so?" Sylvia asks. "Why else would she want to marry a man who wants to be a woman?"

"I don't know if she's a dyke or not," Elaine answers, "but she probably does have some lesbian tendencies."

"You know there's so many important issues women need to talk about. I don't understand why they're bringing something like this on television. This needs to be kept in the closet."

"I agree with you one hundred percent. I think it's disgusting. And Sally's usually pretty good," Elaine answers, continuing to sip on her glass of iced tea. "She's going down the tubes—along with Geraldo and Oprah. Donahue's still pretty good though."

"Yeah, I still like Donahue too."

The Sally Jessy Raphael concludes with the couple running in their matched gowns toward a limousine parked just outside the television studio. Another segment of televised obscurity comes to a close.

This fictional piece is of course, strongly based on *enFemme* editor Robyn Ann and her televised marriage on the Sally Jessy Raphael Show, a nationally syndicated talk show. In this instance, the mock image was done just in fun. And fun is a key word.

In a previous issue of *enFemme*, I wrote about the hazard of striving to be too perfect. It's a fault common to many genetic females as they strive to match that *Playboy* magazine air-brushed, tanned and perfectly proportioned centerfold. Somehow the article was misinterpreted, concluding that I was somehow making an attempt to take all the fun out of cross-dressing. It wasn't my intent and nearly all of the responses from the readers were positive. I've never been able to understand how my colleagues managed to make so different an interpretation. But life goes on... and I'm still writing.

*continued on page 24*



## Roberta Dee . . . from page 24

This time however I intend to be a little more cautious. Most of us are aware that there's been a sudden social fascination with transsexuals, transvestites, and cross-dressers. This is the first time since Virginia Prince (the transgenderist) appeared on the late Alan Burke Show over twenty years ago, that any of us has had a real opportunity to discuss our alternate life-styles on national television. Even Playboy's television broadcast on cable television has been too timid to discuss the transsexual issue—except on one presentation hosted by Omar Sharif, which documented the lives of transsexuals living in Paris.

The Playboy documentary by the way, was very tastefully executed. I would expect nothing inferior from Hugh Hefner's fertile garden on graphics and text. These Parisian transsexuals were all exquisitely beautiful—exhibiting a very definite commitment to looking and living as real women.

Unfortunately most of the ladies were forced to earn their livelihood through prostitution—a condition imposed on them by a chauvinistic culture that prefers women and transsexuals to be viewed as sex objects.

What has always been lacking in the transsexual and cross-dressing communities is a special sisterhood with the feminist community. Supposedly feminism is about the right to choose various attributes about being a woman. Yet when it comes to transsexuals and cross-dressers the feminists look the other way. They prefer to ignore feminist issues that concern all women: the right to wear or not to wear make-up; the right to look feminine, masculine, or even androgynous; the right to live and work as a woman, and be fi-

nancially compensated on an equal basis with men; and so on and so on.

If these issues sound familiar, they should. Because each and every one is addressed at some point by the feminist community. Yet that same community is, in many instances, adamant towards our social goals.

Yes, I know there are exceptions. I'm fully aware of the fact that some bona fide women within the lesbian community have an attraction to transsexuals. However are any of these lesbians politically or socially active in the feminist cause? I think not. And from the indication most people receive from the television talk shows, the only activity in which these lesbians engage is sexual.

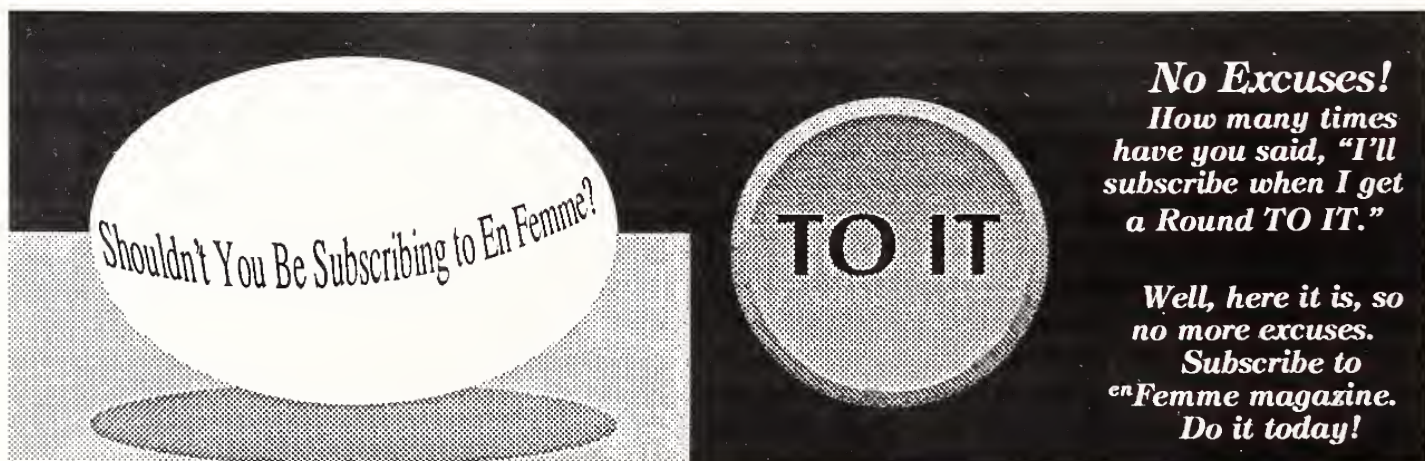
When that happens all of us are thrown into the pot of sexual perverts. That's why I'm so concerned about the image we project. Transsexual lesbians who make comments on national television like "I'm a dyke with a dick" do all of us a very serious injustice.

Some of us are falling into a trap set by television personalities who make millions each year by sensationalizing the lives of people who have no other voice. Thus far, television exposure has done more to hurt the rights of transsexuals and cross-dressers than it has done anything to help.

That's my opinion, and I stand by it. Needless to say I'm not infallible, and I would love to read your comments—pro or con—on this particular article and this issue. Address your letters to this magazine or to me:

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