

# Transsexualism



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Transsexualism is a condition in which a transsexual person self-identifies as a member of the gender opposite to the one assigned to them at birth. For example, a person who was identified as “female” at birth, raised as a girl, and has lived being perceived by others as a woman, may feel that their core sense of who they are is a closer fit with “male” or “man.”

” If this sense is strong and persistent, this person may decide to take steps to ensure that others perceive them as a man. In other words, they may decide to transition to living as the sex that more closely matches their internal gender. 2Many transsexual people desire various types of medical alterations to their bodies. These physical alterations are collectively referred to as sex reassignment therapy and often include hormones and sex reassignment surgery. The entire process of switching from one physical and social gender presentation to the other is often referred to as transition, and usually takes several years. To obtain sex reassignment therapy, transsexual people are usually required to receive psychological therapy and a diagnosis of gender identity disorder. They must also live as members of their target sex for at least one year prior to surgery, but this time may be longer if the psychotherapist has concerns about the transsexual persons readiness. This time is known as the Real-Life Test or Real-Life Experience, and is one of a number of requirements that a transsexual person must meet, which are specified by protocols known as Standards of Care.

These requirements are intended to prevent those individuals, who are not genuinely transsexual persons, from transitioning and later regretting having done so. These standards are however often criticized as being either ineffective or too strict. The intentions of the standard are to prevent people

from transitioning when such a transition would be inappropriate (as a dramatic example, a person seeking to transition in order to veil their identity from police), or ill-advised (as an example a strong crossdresser, who still identifies themselves as their assigned gender). Although the intentions of the standards may be good, they have been suggested as discouraging genuinely transsexual people from seeking treatment.

Despite anyone's concerns about the protocols, by most estimates, less than 1% of people who transition ever regret doing so. Well now, if it isn't the genes that determine gender identity (CAIS girls disprove that), and if it isn't the genitals and upbringing that determine it (cloacal exstrophy boys disprove that), then what the heck does determine a person's gender identity? Scientific evidence has been growing that somehow certain brain-structures in the hypothalamus (the BSTc region) determine each person's core gender feelings and innate gender identity. These structures are "hard-wired" prenatally in the lower brain centers and central nervous system (CNS) during the early stages of pregnancy, during a hormonally-modulated imprinting process in the central nervous system (CNS).? It appears that if those brain and CNS structures are masculinized in early pregnancy by hormones in the fetus, then the child will have male percepts and a male gender identity, independent of whether the genes or genitalia are male. If those structures are not masculinized in early pregnancy, the child will have a female percepts and a female gender identity, again independent of the genes or genitalia. As in the case of intersex infants having ambiguous genitalia, there are undoubtedly many degrees of cross-gendering of brain and CNS structures, so that while some infants are completely cross-

gendered others are only partially cross-gendered.? The degree of legal recognition provided to transsexualism has been varied throughout the world. Many countries now extend legal recognition to sex reassignment by permitting a change of gender on the birth certificate.

A sometimes controversial question is the marriage of transsexual people; a question to which different jurisdictions have come to different answers. Issues also arise in areas such as the right to change ones name, eligibility to compete in single sex sports, and insurance and social security where the benefits available depend on ones sex. The amount to which non-transsexual transgender people can benefit from the legal recognition given to transsexual people varies. In some countries, an explicit medical diagnosis of transsexualism is (at least formally) necessary. In others, a diagnosis of gender identity disorder, or simply the fact that one has established a different gender role, can be sufficient for some or all of the legal recognition available. Transsexual (TS)A transsexual is a person who is born with the physical characteristics of one sex but the gender (or mind) of the opposite sex. The physical sex is often used to categorise somebody as male or female but the mental sex often remains hidden behind an internal barrier of guilt if not discovered before a child knows about guilt and innocence. Giving a boy child “ traditional” male toys or a girl “ traditional” female toys will not help to change the gender in any direction.

At a young age children will play with any toys that are placed before them. Its only as they get older and they develop more of a self identity that minute signs begin to manifest themselves. A boy playing with dolls may not necessarily show future transsexual tendencies for example. There is no cure

for transsexualimTransgenderist (TG)A Transgenderist is another kind of transsexual. Sometimes a transsexual may not be able, for one reason or another, to go through with surgery. It may be family reasons, or medical reasons or just plain old fear.

Many may choose to transition, i. e. live in the opposite role to that which they physically present. Transvestite (TV)Also known as trannies. A transvestite is a person who cross-dresses but has no desire to change their physical sex. They may sometimes fantasise about being a member of the opposite sex but which to remain their birth sex.

Rarely a transvestite transitions to live as a member of the opposite biological sex but have no desire to become a member of that sex. Some transvestites are fetishistic in nature in that they only like to wear certain items belonging to the opposite sex such as underwear or shoes. Others like to wear all items belonging to the opposite sex.

Crossdresser (CD)Term commonly used to describe someone who wears the clothes of the opposite gender. Usually refers to a biological male who wears womens clothes. Drag Queen (DQ)Drag Queens (not ot be confused with Drag Artistes) are a particular form of male transvestite. They are usually overtly homosexual and portray an over the top appearance of femininity.

Some may have body modifications such as breast implants but do not wish to have genital surgery as they wish to attract other homosexual men.

Sometimes known as she-males. Drag Kings (DK)Drag Kings are very similar to Drag Queens in that they are Female and present as men but with the intention of finding a female partner. They may display facial hair and some

physical modification but they prefer lesbian partners. Several countries in Europe give transsexual people the right to at least change their first name. Most also provide a way of changing birth certificates. Several European countries recognize the right of transsexuals to marry in their post-operative sex. France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom all recognize this right.

The situation is different in some eastern European countries. For instance, countries like the Czech Republic have laws governing sex change or, at least, give people the right to change their name and legal documents (Latvia). Other countries like Lithuania do not have any working legislation governing sex change. Since June 2006, a new law in Spain allows transsexual people to modify their name and legal gender in all public documents and records on the basis of a personal request, regardless of whether they had genital reassignment surgery or not.

However, medical (hormonal) treatment for at least two years is a prerequisite. In the Republic of Ireland, it is not possible for a transsexual person to alter their birth certificate. A case was taken in the High Court by Dr. Lydia Foy in 2002 which saw her case being turned down as a birth certificate was deemed to be an historical document[2]. It is currently possible for anyone to undertake a change of name either through common usage or through a Deed of Change of Name.

Dr. Foy has taken new proceedings in the High Court relying on the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights in the Goodwin and I cases. This application is due to be heard on 17 April 2007. The United States law on this

issue varies from state to state, since the issuance of birth certificates and the recognition of marriages are largely state matters. Several courts have come to the conclusion that sex reassignments are not to be recognized for the purpose of marriage, including courts in Ohio, Texas and New York.

Other courts (including courts in Kansas and New Jersey) have recognized the reassignments. Most (almost all) U. S. states permit the name and sex to be changed on a birth certificate, either through amending the existing birth certificate or by issuing a new one. Only Idaho, Ohio and Tennessee refuse to permit a change of sex. California will amend birth certificates only for California natives currently living in California. However, postoperative residents of California born outside California may obtain a court-ordered change of name and gender.

Moreover, on August 2, 2003, California joined Minnesota, Rhode Island and New Mexico (as well as New York City) in expanding legal protection from discrimination to include gender identity or expression, which may aid transsexuals in future cases in these jurisdictions. The case of Corbett v Corbett of February 1970 set a legal precedent regarding the status of transsexuals in the United Kingdom. It began as a divorce case at a time when the UK didn't recognise mutual consent as reason enough to dissolve a marriage, so Arthur Corbett sought a method of dissolving his marriage to the model April Ashley without the issue of inheritance rights. His case was brought under the premise that, as Ms Ashley was born male (and should therefore be treated as male in perpetuity despite her change of sex) the marriage was illegal. At the time, medical opinion on transsexuality was divided and no consensus on whether Ms Ashley should be legally seen as

male or female could be reached. As a consequence, the judge (Lord Justice Ormrod, who was himself a medical man) created a medical test and definition to determine the legal status of April Ashley and, by extension, all transsexual people. The result of this test (which defined Ms Ashley, a successful model, as a man) was then taken up and used to define the sex of transsexual people for many purposes until the introduction of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 (which ultimately defined the sex of transsexual people as whatever is on their birth certificate, until such point as a Gender Recognition Certificate corrects the birth certificate – hence for those who do not possess such a certificate, nothing has changed since 1970). As a result of Justice Ormrods decision, the unofficial correcting of birth certificates for transsexual and intersex people ceased – after all, their sex was now defined by case law and couldnt be argued with.

Theres Something About Miriam was a reality television show filmed in 2003 and aired in the UK on Sky One in February 2004, in Australia by Network Ten in May 2004 and in Poland by TVN in January 2005. It featured six men wooing bachelorette Miriam Rivera, not knowing that she was a pre-operative transsexual woman. Producers warned the contestants that there “ would be shocks and surprises along the way...” This led contestants to wonder about Miriam for the first few days, even jokingly suggest that “ she was a he”.

A spokesperson claims that producers never referred to Miriam by her gender identity or biological sex. Throughout filming, the “ leggy” Mexican native and contestants got to “ know each other as friends and had a lot of fun”, according to Miriam. In response to allegations that she revealed her



big secret by lifting up her skirt, she was quoted as saying “ I want to say that I would never lift my skirt up on national TV.

My mother brought me up very well.” Following the completion of the show, the contestants sued the producers of the show, resulting in a cash settlement of ? 300, 000 for each contestant. Miriam herself went on to become a guest in the fourth series of Big Brother Australia. The male contestants on the show were: Dom, Scott, Aron, Tom, Mark and Toby.

Tom eventually won the prize money and the trip with Miriam, which he agreed to at first, then rejected the offer later in the show. Has reality tv gone too farLynn Conway is a famed pioneer of microelectronics chip design. Her innovations during the 1970s at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) have impacted chip design worldwide.

Many high-tech companies and computing methods have foundations in her work. Lynn went on to win many awards and high honors, including election as a Member of the National Academy of Engineering, the highest professional recognition an engineer can receive. You see, Lynn was born and raised as a boy. It was a terrible mistake, because Lynn had the brain-sex and gender identity of a girl. However, back in the forties and fifties there wasnt any knowledge about such things, and Lynn was forced to grow up as a boy. She did the best she could at it, but suffered terribly from what was happening to her.

She was still a boy and had a boys name when she worked at IBMWith Dr. Benjamins help, Lynn began medical treatments in 1967. She became one of the very early transsexual women to undergo hormonal and surgical sex

reassignment to have her body completely changed from that of a boy into that of a woman.

Sadly, just before Lynn underwent sex reassignment surgery in 1968, she was fired by IBM for being transsexual and lost all connections to her important work there. Lynn went abroad for her surgery, all alone. She had lost not only her career and professional reputation, but also her family, relatives, friends and colleagues. When Lynn returned, she made her social transition and took on her new name. She started her career all over again as a lowly contract programmer without a past. Amazingly, Lynn became so happy, and so full of life and hope after her transformation, that her career took off like a rocket. Moving up through a series of companies, she landed a computer architecture job at Memorex in 1971. In 1973, she was recruited by Xerox's exciting new Palo Alto Research Center, just as it was forming. By 1978, just 10 years after her gender transition, Lynn was already on the verge of international fame in her field for her VLSI innovations.

In the 80s and 90s, Lynn went on to enjoy a wide-ranging, influential career, and a wonderfully adventurous, fulfilling and happy personal life. She is now Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Emerita, at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where she also served for many years as Associate Dean of Engineering. She now lives on country property in rural Michigan with her husband Charlie.

They've been together since 1987. However, for 31 years after her transition, Lynn carefully remained in "stealth mode". Only her closest friends knew about her past. Lynn knew of other transsexual women who had been

socially ostracized, ghettoized, beaten, gang-raped, murdered or driven to suicide when “ read” or otherwise discovered by brutal, hateful people. For years Lynn lived with an ever-present sense of danger, fearful that exposure of her past could cause her to lose her civil rights, legal rights and employment rights, and to suffer estrangements in her professional and personal relationships. In 1999, computer historians finally stumbled into Lynns early IBM work. They tracked it down to her, and her past was revealed amongst her colleagues.

Frightened at first, she gradually realized times might have changed enough that she neednt be afraid to be “ out” now. She certainly has nothing at all to be ashamed of, and is indeed very proud of the successes in her personal life as well as those in her career. Lynn began to think that her story might help somehow ??” do you agree that Lynn??™s story may help those transsexualists who hide from publicDo you think that gender transition is a sad, frightful or maybe miraculous event