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So You Want to be a TS?

Who Would be a Woman if they had a Choice?

by Ruth Farmer

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Do you like to dress compulsively in ladies' clothes? Have you always felt you were really a woman? Are you contemplating a new gender? Would you like to lead a whole new life? Would you like to achieve your dreams? Would you like to be pretty, to have big boobs, to be a sex angel, to "dress up" all of the time? Are you a prospective or new male-to-female transsexual, or a confused transvestite?

I know some females who couldn't possibly pass as women except that they were born that way.

Poor girl. I have news for you. Lots of people wear "drag". What does a woman feel like? If you have always felt like that, how would you know the difference? You don't change gender, only sex. Gender is what you are, sex is what you look like. At the worst it is the life sentence passed on you when the delivering doctor exclaims triumphantly, "It's a boy!" I suppose a prisoner leads a whole new life too, but changing sex is also a hard way to do it. The best way to achieve dreams is to fall asleep. In real life they are only on the telly.

The best way to be a pretty woman is to be born that way; very few transpeople achieve that, and they tend to be rather dull and they have written fairly dull books with lurid covers. Big boobs are a big nuisance. Avoid them if you have a chance. There is an enormous difference between falsies and the real thing. Ask Dolly Parton. Sex angel: see "pretty". Dressing up: Most women "dress down" these days. Or as the new saying goes, "If you want to look like a woman, dress like a man". So?

Are you a new TS or a confused TV? You have my sympathies, but you still have to live in a real world.

Why Bother?

Look, this whole sex change thing is often over-rated. It merely allows you to be who you really are. If you are a grotty man it allows you to be a grotty woman. That's progress? If you are already a great person, why change sex?

The answer is, of course, that if you have been living a lie it is pretty hard to be who you really are. When I started living as a woman I found that the real me was quite nice, a big improvement, really a very pleasant person. More modest too.

You imagine that it would be glorious to wear "women's clothes" all of the time, to be a real, honest, marvellous woman? Well, when you get there you find that clothes are just things that women wear, and although it is nice to wear a nice dress for special events, you will find that if you do that all of the time you will be conspicuously different - which is not exactly a good idea unless you are very pretty.

We live in a conspicuously dull age. As for being a real, honest, marvellous woman, there aren't many of those about either.

Of course, like any normal woman, I do enjoy dressing nicely — even if, for the sake of fashion, it only means nice-looking slacks.

Unending Bliss?

A woman's life is an unending bliss? Ha! Women are second class citizens in our advanced societies. They are discriminated against at every turn, you only find out about this when you join that club, and then it is too late.

Women have progressed from being property, through being second-class citizens (where many of them are still stuck today) to being allowed to have some of the privileges of men, on condition that they be men. What fun is that? Women are frequently put-down, patronised or bossed by people whose only advantage is that they have something extra between their legs. That's being liberated?

The other side of that coin is that it can be fun relating to men (after you have become thoroughly familiar with the feminine role). Poor dears, they are so well-meaning. They may put you down, but only to feed their famous male ego. You can manipulate that ego, and if you are very clever they will do whatever you want if they think it was their idea in the first instance!

Women usually get paid less (if they can find a job in the first place), and if you can't "pass" perfectly your chance of getting any kind of job isn't great. If you try to start up your own business, you will find male city officials doing their best to discourage you. If you do get a job, you will of course want to make suggestions and improvements along the way. Be prepared to be called "bossy bitch" or "whinging woman". A man makes suggestions, a woman makes complaints. Deborah Tannen puts it this way:

If [women in authority] speak in ways expected of women, they are seen as inadequate leaders. If they speak in ways expected of leaders, they are seen as inadequate women. The road to authority is tough for women, and once they get there it's a bed of thorns.

So, you don't want to be a leader? Okay, you are still a part of a stereotype. Richard Seaman says it picturesquely:

Whenever a woman is involved in aberrant behaviour, that reflects on the whole group. Whereas the man who walks into the McDonald's and mows everybody down because the burgers are cool is never seen as acting as part of a group. You know, nobody says, "Oh my God, it's testosterone poisoning", and you know, "Are we going to let men have guns? They're so unreliable".

Welcome to womanhood.

Why Bother?

So, why bother? Because God or Somebody made a little mistake a long time ago and you have had to live it with some discomfort. When you finally right that wrong, what do you end up with? You. If you are a neurotic dill you are still one after transition.

That is why Gender Dysphoria teams go to some trouble to make sure that you are not unusually psychotic, else the shock of transition might unhinge you.

At the end of my probation, I asked my chief psychiatrist, "Well, what do you think?" He said, "You appear not to have any obvious psychotic tendencies". He didn't say, "Oh yes, it is obvious that you really are a woman in the wrong body, go for it!" I wished he had, but he only said that I wasn't obviously worse than most people. Big deal. Well, at least I'm not worse than most people — and sometimes a transsexual needs that encouragement.

The Operation

Hmmm, what about the operation (to be said in hushed tones)? Otherwise known as Sex Reassignment Surgery, but everyone knows what you mean. Doesn't it change everything? Sorry, no. It changes nothing. You have merely exchanged a penis for a vagina and boobs, and if you think that that has some advantages of convenience, try wearing a bra on a hot, sticky day! — And, as a woman you are not privileged to take off your shirt.

No, what matters is that you live the kind of life that allows you to be in a woman's space. Then you can be the woman you really are (if society lets you).

The Operation doesn't achieve that, but it ratifies it. It makes it easier to live in that space. After all, it is harder to convince yourself and others that you are a woman if your swimsuit or slinky dress shows a bulge in the wrong place! Of course, I have to admit that sex (with a modern clitoris endowment) with a good man is very nice, but a good man is hard to find ...

What is a Woman

Being a woman doesn't have a lot to do with being female. I know some females who couldn't possibly pass as women except that they were born that way. Being a woman is what you feel inside. So, how do you know what you feel like inside? I don't know, at least I never knew it until I had to dilate, that lovely torture which pays you back for being born wrong.

Being a woman is ... what? I have read and read about that, and I still don't know. I have talked to feminist transsexuals who despise femininity, so I ask them, "Then how did you know that you were a woman in the first instance?" and they go off muttering something, and I can't quite make it out.

The only thing I know for sure is that women have breasts, and I do have to admit that having breasts is really quite nice. There's nothing better to make you feel feminine. But you don't need the operation for that, only hormones (or implants).

Viva La Difference

Despite all the elegant and numerous books showing how there is no inherent difference between men and women other than the plumbing, there is a difference, and that difference has persisted for untold ages. In recent times in Israel they tried rearing babies to adulthood and treating the boys exactly the same as the girls, no difference, no socialisation at all, just the same. Too bad, the women were still women and the men were still men. And I don't just mean females and males. The women had a greater tendency to appreciate relationships and feelings, and the men liked to dominate and compete, and could manage spaces and maps better.

It is claimed that boys are socialised into being dominant, aggressive and unemotional. But female-to-male transpeople have reported that with the benefit of testosterone they have felt more confident, more aggressive and less emotional.

Obviously there is more to that than socialisation. Why any woman would want to give up her lovely female body escapes me, but that is another matter. My surgeon once suggested, "Wouldn't it be nice if we could just switch you about?" Sigh.

No matter what the Experts claim, no matter how sociologists find that some tribal hills-people may live as aggressive females and passive males, I think that there is one over-riding fact that belies the whole argument: the fact of transsexuality. The transsexual is born knowing he/she has a problem.

When I was a boy I knew that there was something wrong from the age of four. As I grew up, I did not want to dominate, to be aggressive and suppress emotions, despite a massive effort by everyone to socialise me into that. It just wasn't in me, and I spent

many horrid years trying to build up that shell — and still it cracked around the edges. In vain, my teachers, parents and peers tried to convince me to be a good, sports-loving, gross male clod.

But I felt that deep within me there was a person who preferred relationships, cooperation and emotional honesty. Where did that come from?

By abusing rodents and correlating people, some scientists think that it comes from an irreversible feminisation of the brain of a transsexual (or homosexual) owing to hormonal imbalance before birth during a critical stage of the development of an embryo in the uterus.

Other scientists rubbish this, saying that "You can't tell anything from animal experiments" (so, ignoring most of the advances of medical science), or "Oh, that's only statistics" (so, ignoring the rest).

Whatever the scientists and sociologists say, I believe that transpeople exist as an irrefutable proof that there is a fundamental difference between men and women. Viva la difference!

Sugar and Spice and Puppy Dog Tails

In other directions, if you are a woman, are you made of sugar, spice and everything nice? I personally believe that caring and sharing is built into the female psyche, and I do enjoy caring and serving. If this outrages some feminists out there, well okay, but if you don't want to do the dishes along with the other women, you had better find some man to do it instead. Good luck!

What if you take your male ego with you into womanhood? Arrgh! I have seen plenty of that in well-meaning transsexuals. It looks revolting — unless you are pretty, in which case all is forgiven. Sigh.

Who Would be a Woman?

What more? Oh yes, governments also take a dim view of transpeople. Listen to Katherine Cummings:

To complicate matters further, recent cases where male-to-female transsexuals have been raped have resulted in decisions being made that for the purposes of rape a male-to-female transsexual is to be considered a woman. The anomaly arises that if a male-to-female transsexual has sex willingly with a man, then she is considered to be male, but if she is raped then she is transformed, for the time being, into a female. As I said in a letter to the Attorney-General on the topic, one's sex alters depending on whether one is being seduced or raped a fine distinction in some cases.

Who would be a woman if they had a choice?

Well, it's not really that bad. I greatly enjoy being a woman — because now I can be the real me (whatever that is) — no pretence. And somehow, that makes all the difference, and it makes all the rejection and agony worth the while.

Yes, it would be nice to be pretty, and sometimes when I look in a mirror I weep, but I then pretend that I look great, and people believe me! Amazing.

That is the little-known secret of being a successful transsexual: believe in yourself. If it doesn't come naturally, work at it. People will take you at your own value. It works. Well — it doesn't make me pretty, but I have a great smile.

Finally, who cares what governments think? After all, they are only run by men (mostly). You reckon you are a woman and you want to shift the earth? Vote for women!

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