Transsexual Women's Successes: Links and Photos

by Lynn Conway
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Approximately 30,000 to 40,000 postoperative transsexual women live in the United States, and many thousands more are now in the process of gender transition here. These numbers are much larger than commonly assumed by the public because a veil of invisibility hides the true nature and extent of the transsexual condition. Especially hidden are large numbers of highly successful women who have fully transitioned. The reason is that most successful women live in "stealth mode" or are "woodworked". They leave their pasts behind and hide in plain sight in order to avoid social stigmatization and get on with their new lives. Their personal successes insure that they assimilate and blend right into society.

The social invisibility of successful women who have undergone gender corrections supports the notion that male-to-female transsexualism is extremely rare. However, intense transsexualism is not all that uncommon. Recent calculations indicate that the condition occurs in about 1 out of every 250 to 500 children born as boys, and that about 1 in every 2500 males in the U.S. has already undergone surgical sex reassignment*. Transsexualism is thus more than twice as prevalent as multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy or cleft lip/palate conditions.

The invisibility of these successes supports notions that gender transitions often have rather sad outcomes. At present, the media only spotlights transsexual people on two occasions, namely when "someone well-known changes sex" and when someone is a victim of discrimination, harassment or attack. Media stories about someone's "sex change" are never followed-up to find out what happened years later. Instead stories always focus on pre-transition life and struggles during transition and never on their life afterwards. This lack of balance in exposure shapes society's notion that transition leads to social marginalization or worse, because we "never hear about them again". Only stories of occasional social failures and victims of harassment and attacks remain visible longer term.

Lacking successful role models, and confronted with deliberately staged, stereotypically-prurient images of "transsexuals" from media like the Jerry Springer Show, young trans girls are often terrified to tell anyone about their condition. Constantly reminded of the violence and discrimination that trans people face, but unaware that large numbers of successful women get beyond such difficulties, many young transsexual girls can't see any way out of their awful predicament. Social stigmatization of transsexualism leads many young people to internalize a lot of undeserved shame, embarrassment and guilt about their condition. As a result, young transsexual girls often waste precious years before they seek help, and many never find a way to correct their gender condition.
Recently the veil of invisibility has been lifting, as many post-operative women all around the world have begun creating websites to help others. Some of these women are quietly "out" within the TS community. Others share their stories by being "virtually out" (VO) only via the web (while otherwise remaining woodworked or in stealth). We are very fortunate to finally be able to learn about their lives, as they become listed on webpages such as this one. Lynn hopes that more and more successful women will quietly come out, and feel comfortable sharing their stories this way via the web.

The women listed on these pages are a very diverse group. They are of many different nationalities, races and ethnicities. They come from a wide range of social classes and family backgrounds. They transitioned at many different ages. Some have been postop a long time, others transitioned more recently. Some have been "out" for many years, others are still living stealthily.

Many of these women had to suffer terrible trials in order to transition, especially those who did so years ago. Some rose from extremely humble beginnings, including living on the streets, and yet succeeded anyways. Others had easier transitions in more recent times in the more enlightened western countries. A few were even fortunate enough to have had the support of their parents when they were young. As you'll see, this webpage isn't meant to be an "honor roll" or whatever. Instead it is meant to be place where these many diverse yet representative role models can come forward and become more visible - role models who are mostly accessible via the internet for interactions and help.

The thing that makes these women "successes" isn't how far they've gone in their careers, or how much money they've made, or how pretty some of them are, or how well known some are as entertainers. Those accomplishments are very meaningful, and show that transitioning doesn't have to hold a woman back from achieving traditional social measures of success. However, the real successes we find here are ones of the heart. They are successes in living "life in the large". We see it in the happy faces, and sense it in between the lines of their stories. These are the successes of women who have survived and corrected their earlier transsexualism, and gone on to find joy and comfort and peace in their lives.

Taken together, our stories will gradually help change people's views of the transsexual condition. After all, we are happy and productive contributors in all walks of life: as doctors and lawyers, as scientists, engineers and programmers, as airline pilots, as entrepreneurs, managers and office workers, as university professors and students, in politics, in education, in law enforcement, in the skilled trades, in modeling and in entertainment. The realities and completeness of our physical gender transformations cannot be denied. Many of us are wives, lovers or partners in long-term loving relationships. You can put a compelling human face on the transsexual condition by browsing the websites linked from these pages, which contain information about the experiences of these successful women.

Lynn hopes that these women's stories provide hope, encouragement and role models to others, especially to those young transsexual girls-to-be who are facing gender transition. As teenagers they (and their parents and loved ones) need to learn that a complete correction of their gender condition is now possible by applying the knowledge gained by the pathfinders who have gone before, and by exploiting the miracles of modern medicine. They also need to learn of the profound advantages of undergoing gender correction while young, as opposed to living in angst in the wrong gender for decades and then finally transitioning, in desperation, late in life. If parents can just learn to see that their transsexual child is really a "girl with a physical problem" rather than a "boy with a mental problem", then that child's future is especially hopeful. With parental love and support, a young transsexual girl can now reach for her dreams, and go on to live a full and joyous life as a woman.

[For more information on MtF transsexualism, see Lynn's TG/TS/IS information webpages]
[For more about the prevalence of transsexualism, see Lynn's Prevalence subpage]
[For information on MtF Surgical Sex Reassignment, see Lynn's SRS webpage]
[For more weblinks on MtF gender transition, see TS Women's-Resources]

[See also note below: "These pages pass into history"]

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**Photo Gallery of Successes:**

![Gallery Page 1](#) ![Gallery Page 2](#) ![Gallery Page 3](#) ![Gallery Page 4](#)

You can also locate all the women's photos and stories by consulting the Directory of Successes
Some Ways to Use these Pages:

The main purpose of these pages is to provide role models for individuals who are facing gender transition, especially young TS girls who are often desperately fearful of what the future might hold for them. This page is aimed at providing them with hope and with a wide range of diverse role models to help show them the way.

Through these pages, young transitioners may also be able to help their parents, relatives, friends and others important in their lives to understand that undergoing a gender correction does not mean living a marginalized life, and that they will be fine afterwards. In spite of the difficulties involved in such transitions, the stories on this page show that many postop women go on to live very full and happy lives.

The pages are also aimed at countering public stereotypes of women who have undergone gender corrections. No one who reads these pages and studies the many stories here can help but have a very different image of such women than those traditionally presented by the media or written about by "experts".

Readers of these pages are strongly encouraged to proactively use this material to help counter negative media stereotypes. Whenever you read a media report that misrepresents transsexual women, SEND the writer and publisher the URL for this page, and ask them if they've ever seen this website. If they answer "no", then ask them "Why not?" Ask them "Why are you publishing things that so misrepresent TS women, when there is so much counter-evidence to your views?"

Readers should also CHALLENGE any and all "experts" and "authority figures" in organized religion, in medicine, in psychiatry, in bureaucracies, in corporate personnel departments, in the legal system and in the political system in the same way. Whenever you hear "experts" say erroneous things about transsexual women, challenge those "experts" by insisting that they learn about and study these pages.

In the past, OTHERS HAVE ALWAYS SPOKEN FOR US. It's always been others: physicians, psychiatrists, religious authority figures, lawyers, "ethicists", politicians, gender counselors, and in recent years gay, lesbian, and feminist activists. All these outsider "experts" have spoken for us, each with their own axe to grind and their own "expert theories" and spins on who we are and why we are. For example, see the following pages in my website concerning the controversy surrounding a book by psychologist J. Michael Bailey which denigrates and caricatures transsexual women: Learn about the Bailey book controversy. (more)

In every case, such "experts" have known only a tiny, totally non-representative sample of "trans" women, if indeed they have known any at all. Few of these "experts" have ever known a successful postop woman. Yet they always feel free to speak "for us". They tell people how to think about us, and spin endless bizarre theories about us. How have they gotten away with this misrepresentation? The reason is simple: Our very successes have meant that we've been almost "invisible" in the past. We've also failed by not having the courage to challenge the abusive stereotyping and misrepresentation of who we really are.

Well folks, that era is over. We're no longer going to be invisible, and we are increasingly going to "speak for ourselves".

As it turns out, the most effective way we can "speak" is by living very full, productive and happy lives. Our life stories will then speak volumes, and will help publicly shatter the old stereotypes posed by all those "experts". In the end, who we are isn't a matter of "theory" or "opinion" or "who dominates thought by shouting loudest". Instead it is simply an empirical matter of observing our real lives in the real world.

You can greatly help in this process by making these "successes" as publicly visible as you possibly can, especially among physicians, psychiatrists, religious leaders, lawyers, politicians, gender counselors, etc., and yes - also among gays, lesbians and feminists. All these outsiders who've been speaking for us need a good lesson in who we really are, and they especially need to know about the now visible, undeniable reality of our successes.

References for Young MtF TS/TG Transitioners

There are wonderful websites that can provide help for young TS/TG transitioners. Lynn especially recommends Aunt Jenni's "AntiJen Pages" and Andrea James' page on "Transitioning Early in Life". Jenni and Andrea also do referrals and networking to assist young transitioners. They are always there to offer a helping hand.

Emily Hobbie's Genderpeace website is also aimed at the young transitioner. Emily's site can help young trans girls find peace, comfort,
self-acceptance and then happiness after "surviving transsexualism".

Also be sure to read the wonderful on-line books From Within by Vicky, and Mom, I need to be a girl by Just Evelyn. Vicky is a young teenager who is now transitioning. In From Within she is conveying what it feels like to grow up as a girl in a boy's body - revealing all the confusions, emotions and experiences along the way from early childhood to, and through, gender transition. Mom, I need to be a girl is an inspiring book of a young TS girl's transition, written by her mother (Just) Evelyn who fully supported her gender transition.

*A young TS girl tells her story - from within - in this online book:

( also at Andrea James' mirror site )

A mother tells the story of her child's transition in this online book (PDF Version):

NEW! Second Edition is now in print! NEW!

English, Español, Français, العربية, Português, Deutsch

An especially good way for a young TS girl to explain to her parents what she is going through, and also how her gender condition can be corrected, is to have her parents read From Within and Mom, I need to be a girl. These on-line books, combined with Lynn's TG/TS/IS information webpages and this TS Successes Page, can also help young transitioners communicate about their condition with their extended families, their classmates, and their friends.

It is very important for young people who are feeling some degree of gender angst to realize that there are many options available for resolving their condition. Depending upon the intensity of their gender condition they may find really good solutions in P/T crossdressing, or by transitioning hormonally and socially into an androgynous condition while retaining a male identity, or by undergoing a hormonal and social (TG) transition and taking on a female identity without undergoing SRS.

Only in cases of intense transsexualism is a complete TS transition (including SRS) usually required if the girl is to go on to a full and happy life. There are many transgender people who do not have intensely transsexual feelings, and for them SRS can be a big mistake (see Lynn's "SRS Warning" page). Thus it is very important that young transitioners carefully determine the right gender trajectory for their own particular case. Only you will know what's best. Listen to your own heart - it will tell you what to do. And remember, there is no shame in establishing a transgender identity and not having SRS. There are many who have chosen that path and become successful too. If you study the many lists of "T-girls" (CD's, DQ's, and TG transitioners) on the web, you can gain insight into the possibilities for TG transitions.

On the other hand, those who suffer from the intense TS condition almost always know with certainty, even as teenagers, that they need to be girls and that a TS transition is the only solution that will work for them. It is for these girls that this page is especially designed. The women in the page above are a testament to the fact that complete TS transitions can now be very successful for intensely TS girls who are highly motivated, who plan things very carefully, who work hard to transition, and who move on with a strong sense of self-acceptance into their lives as women afterwards.

*Important Note About FtM Transsexualism:

Since Lynn is a TS woman, MtF transsexualism is the main focus of her webpages. However, not only are there many boys who really should have been girls, but there are also many children born as girls who really should have been boys. In fact, female to male (FtM) transsexualism is almost as common as MtF transsexualism. In recent years hormonal and surgical treatments have enabled many TS men to transition very successfully, and there is now extensive information about such transitions on the web. For information on FtM
transsexualism, see the websites for FTM International Website, American Boyz, and FTM Resources & Links, and follow the many links at those sites.

Also see Lynn's webpage: SUCCESSFUL TRANSMEN: LINKS AND PHOTOS (en español)

Summary of links to websites and stories of women in the galleries of TS successes:

Aelisie Sellers, Aida Baraji (India), Alejandra (Argentina), Alexus Sheppard, Alina Petrova (Russia), Amy, Amanda Simpson (more) Andrea Colliaux (France), Andrea James, Anna Taylor (UK), Anna Moore (more), Anne, Anne Vitale, Arlene, Athens (Iran), Ava Kamikawa (Japan), Barbara Nash, Becky Allison (more), Binu (Korea) (more), Calpemia Addams, Canary Conn, Candi Stratton (Australia), Caroline (Australia), Cher Lili (China) (more), Christie Lee Littleton, Christine Beatty, Christine Burns (U.K.) (more, more), Christine McGinn, Colette Berends (Netherlands), Cindy Thai Tai (Viet Nam), Dana Bever, Dana Zircher, Danielle, Deborah Davis (Australia) (more), Debra, Deirdre McCloskey, (more, more, more), Diane Hutchinson, Donna Rose, DzaDawa (Spain), (more), (more) (more, more), Emily Hobbie, Erica Zander (Sweden), Erin Swenson, Faiza Khalida (Brazil), Femke Olyslager, Frances Bennett, Gabrielle, Georgina Beyer (NZ) (more, more), Gina Graham, Gina Kamentsky, Glenda Adams, Gwendolyn Ann Smith, Helen Hill, Jackie McAuliffe (UK), Jamie Clayton, Jan Morris (UK) (more), Janet Bowman, Jaqueline P. (Germany), Jennifer Boylan (more, more), Jennifer Leitham, Jennifer Martin, Jennifer O’Connor (her story), Jennifer Diane Reitz, Jenny Scott (Australia) (more), Jessica Mills (Australia) (more), Jessie Chung (Zhong Jie Xi) (Malaysia), Jin Xing (China), Joan Roughgarden (more), Joanne Herman, Jordana, Jowelle de Souza (Trinidad), Julie Ann Johnson, Julie Peters (Australia), Kalki (India), Karen J., Karina Espinosa (France, Chile), Katie Craig-Wood (UK), Kate Kira (Netherlands) (more), Katherine Cummings (Australia), Kelley Winter, Kim, Kimberly, Kriston Worley (California), Kristine Holt, Lauren Foster (South Africa, US), Lauren Manzano, Leandra Vicci (more), Leanne Sothothea (Popi) (Cambodia), Leeanne Mackowski, Lena (from Kiev, Ukraine), Leona Lo (Singapore), Leslie Townsend, Liching (Taiwan), Lili Ebe (Denmark), Lynn (Canada), Lynn Conway (more), Madeleine Williams, Marc Bowes, Margaret Stumpf, Maria, Maria Rohliger (Germany), Marisa Allen (Belgium), Maryam Khatoon Molkara (Iran)(more), Melanie Anne Phillips, Mianne Bagger (Australia), Michela Ledwidge (UK), Michelle Dumaresq (Canada), Michelle J., Monica Green (U.S., Mexico) (more), (more), Nadia Almada (Portugal, U.K.), Nicole Hamilton (more), Nong Poy (Thailand), Nong Tum (Thailand), Nun Udomsak (Thailand). Nungning (Thailand), Paula Cofer, Paula R., Phoebe Smith, Rachael Padman (UK) (more) (more), Rachael Wallbank (Australia) (more), Rachel Morgan (Canada), Robertina Manganaro (Italy), Roni (US, Philippines), Rosalyne Blumenstein, Sahara (Korea) (more), Sally (more), Sally Mursi (Egypt), Samantha Adams, Sandra (Canada), Sandra Clark (more), Sara Kristine Becker, Sarah, Ph.D., Sarah Fox, Sarah Jane (UK), Sine (Korea) (more), Sister Mary Elizabeth, Sohini Baichi (India), Susan Stryker (more, more), Stephanie Langhoff, Terry Noel, Tista (India), Tracey O’Keefe (Australia), Trixie McCurdy, Trixie Kuwahara, Vanessa Vogue, Victoria, Veronica (Philippines), Veronique Renard ("Pantau") (Thailand, India, Netherlands), Yasmene Jaber (Jordan), Yoona (Korea) (more), Yvette Hirth, Zhang Lin (China).

Also take a look at some of the post-op transsexual women who’ve been movie stars, entertainers and models. Among these are some of the pioneer transsexual women who opened the pathway that so many others now follow: Aleshia Brevard (more, more), Amanda Lear (France) (more, more), Antonia San Juan (Spain) (more, more), April Ashley (more) (more), "Bambi" (Marie-Pier Ysset) (France, Algeria), Bibiana Fernandez (Spain), Bulent Ersoy (Turkey), Candis Cayne, Carlotta (Australia), Caroline 'Tula' Cossey (more), Christine Jorgensen (more), Coccinelle (France) (more) (more), Dana International (Israel) (more, more). Gloria Gray (Germany), Harisu (South Korea) (more, more), Haruna Ai (Japan), Holly White, Jahna Steele (more, more, more, more), Jenny Hiloudaki (Greece) (more), Julia Sommers (Australia), Kelly Van De Veer (Netherlands) (more, more), Kurama Motoki (Japan) (more), Lian Lian (China) (more), Marie France (France), Natsuko Okuda (Japan) (more), Nattis Kollkla (Thailand), Roberta Close (Brazil) (more) (more), Romy Haza (Germany)

You cannot help but feel the joy and happiness of all these wonderful, successful women.

Reflections on V-Day in L.A, by Calpemia Addams and Andrea James

Link to Performers’ Bios and Photos / Transsexual Road Map

The V-Day documentary "Beautiful Daughters" is airing on the LOGO Channel (schedule).

Overview About The Show Cast and Bios Videos Photos

** "Beautiful Daughters" can now be viewed for free on LOGOonline! **
It is also available for downloading from Apple iTunes
Deep Stealth Productions presented the V-Day 2004 Worldwide Campaign event for Los Angeles on Saturday, February 21st. In cooperation with the author, internationally-known playwright Eve Ensler, and under the auspices of Jane Fonda, this benefit performance featured the first ever transgender cast of "The Vagina Monologues," and included a new monologue written by Eve especially for this event.

This large-scale, mainstream event was a historic opportunity for the trans community to present ourselves in a positive, contributing light. The performance showcased notable trans women reading Eve's beautiful monologues about the experiences of womanhood and the reclaiming of self through loving and respecting our bodies. The event also featured artistic, literary and musical contributions from trans women from around the country. Among the many women participating were: Calpernia Addams, Becky Allison, Marci Bowers, Lynn Conway, Andrea James, Donna Rose, Gwen Smith, Leslie Townsend, and many, many more...The V-Day Los Angeles event was held in Hollywood on Saturday evening, February 21, 2004 in the Silver Screen Theater at the beautiful Pacific Design Center.

A special keepsake publication for V-Day LA 2004 was produced as a remembrance of this wonderful event, and a documentary of the event, entitled "Beautiful Daughters," can now be seen on LOGOonline.

See also Calpernia's and Andrea's new reality-TV show, premiering on LOGO in February 2008: "Transamerican Love Story" (more)

Logo Channel website: "Transamerican Love Story" (photos, videos)

Acknowledgements:

Lynn gives her special thanks to "David", Carla Antonelli and Lorna Root for inspiring her to create these TS Successes pages. David is the author of the original "Gallery of Goddesses" website (now offline), which conveyed a wonderfully positive image of transgendered and transsexual women from all around the world. Lynn first learned about the stories of a number of the successful postop women listed here from David's site. That site has been down lately (and links to it from Lynn's site don't work right now). Hopefully David's site will be on-line again someday. Lynn then met Carla Antonelli on-line and learned of her LGBT support activities and her Spanish language support site featuring positive images of many trans women. Lynn was also very moved by Lorna Root's website "A Midsummer Night's Dream", which features the stories and photos of many trans women. A number of the entries here in the TS Successes pages are linked to stories posted in Lorna's wonderful website.

There are a number of other important websites that feature TG/TS women from all across the transgender community, and these too have been sources of ideas and inspiration for this page. Among these are Vicki Rene's "Prettiest of the Pretty", "Fiona's Fantasyland", Susana Marque's Directory, and URNotAlone.

We're also seeing development of new sites that compile TG/TS women's stories, with each site having its own special theme. For example, my friend Karen Serenity's site includes newly compiled information about almost-forgotten trans pioneers, along with the stories of friends in her extensive network (Gallery 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). Many of the larger transgender societies, such as the Chicago Gender Society, have websites that list photos and sometimes bios of key members (who are often very approachable for help and mentoring). Circles of trans women in various career fields are also now building sites where their stories can be shared for mutual support and benefit. A good example of a career-field support-site is "T-Cops" (Transgendered community of police and sheriffs). It would be wonderful if more sites like T-Cops could be created for many other career fields and for affiliation-groups in many other countries too. That way many many more success stories could be shared via all these sites and more widespread mentoring could be done by women who have completed their transitions. Our thanks and encouragement go out to everyone involved in building and maintaining these new sites.

Finally, we all owe a great debt to the many women who've volunteered to be listed here in these pages. We hope that all readers will treat them with the kindness, respect and honor they truly deserve. These women have earned their places in the world the hard way. Only by reading their stories can you begin to understand the trials, sacrifices and pain that most of them endured on the way to their successful new lives. Please join Lynn in thanking all these wonderful, courageous women for coming forward, telling their stories, and illuminating the pathways for others to follow.
In Memoriam:

Sofía Iglesias (Mexico)
1958 - 2004

In April of 2003, a wonderful woman named Sofia Iglesias volunteered to translate this “Successes page” into Spanish, and we became good friends over the following year. Sofia went on to translate even more pages into Spanish, doing this work to help young transitioners in Mexico and all across the Americas. As others saw the results of Sofia’s work, volunteers began translating the pages into many other languages too - and the translation project rapidly escalated in scope and coverage. And then suddenly and tragically Sofia died of a heart attack, in August 2004, at the early age of 46. We were heartbroken by this terrible news, and to this day we miss her very, very much.

Sofía deeply touched many lives through her support work, and lives on in the memories of those whom she helped. Then too, her spirit continues to touch many lives through the translations that she left behind and the translation project she helped inspire - a project now making information about gender variance and transsexualism available to people all around the world. Sofia was a beautiful spirit, and she gave much hope and inspiration to others while she was with us. To learn more about her story, please read the memorial to Sofia at this link.

These pages pass into history:

I began work on the ‘successes pages’ back in 2000, during a time when transitioned women were considered sexually-deviant mentally-ill people by the psychiatric and psychology communities. By compiling photos and stories of women who had gone on to lead successful and fulfilling lives after their transitions, the page openly debunked those so-called “scientific” views – while at the same time providing role models and hope for many people then in transition.

By 2005, the page had become so large that I could no longer keep up with necessary edits, much less add new entries, because by then thousands of transitioned women were becoming open about their pasts. The page has since been closed to entries, except on occasion when someone leaves the page to return to a more stealthy life. Thus the page should be seen as an historical artifact of trans-advocacy in a time now gone by. Even so, it still gets huge numbers of hits each year, and is an ongoing source of hope for many.

In follow-on work to these pages I began a new page in 2005 entitled “Trans News Updates”, to track and archive media imagery of transitioned women as years went by. One can follow the progress of the trans community since then by studying the shifts in topics, issues, terminology, and understanding revealed in those archives. Of special significance are our many successes in exposing and refuting the hideously pathologizing teachings of the old-guard psychiatric and psychology establishment.

Meanwhile, we should all give thanks to the women who volunteered to be listed in this page, back in the days when such public exposure often brought down great wrath from hateful transphobic people. Fortunately, the worst of those days are past, and thousands upon thousands of gender transitioners can now be open and proud of their successful transitions.
Subject: Photos and links to the stories of many successful transsexual women from all around the world.
Keywords: transsexual, transsexualism, transsexuality, transgender, transgenderism, transexual, gender transition, photographs, stories, successes.