

Transsexualism- some recent research and opinion

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mmmm...



Transgendered individuals

“Transgendered individuals cannot be simply summed up as a community of people who feel like they are in the wrong body. Their experiences, issues, and identities are complex, but worthy of the time, energy, patience, and caring it takes to learn about them...”
(Morgan, S and Stevens, P. 2008).

The presentation today...

- **A disclaimer or two.**
- **What is Transsexualism, and what it is not**
- **The DSM Classification**
- **Some recent research, and opinion**
- **Some of the sociopolitical aspects pertaining Transsexualism**
- **Mention some useful resources**
- **Lastly, importantly, a period allocated for general discussion**

Disclaimers

- **I, in no way, consider myself an expert in this field, and, furthermore, do not claim to be so.**
- **I accept no personal responsibility for your own interpretations, of that which I today here present.**
- **Nor do I accept responsibility for any ensuing discussions subsequent that which I present.**
- **If you, yourself, have a gender identity problem, or gender dysphoria and, if it causes you distress, then please consider seeking professional help. Some contacts are provided at the end of this presentation.**

What is Transsexualism, and what it is not.

- “In the general public view, the terms ‘Transsexualism’ and ‘Transvestism’ may be, and quite erroneously, seen as identical, and interchangeable. Confusing matters, perhaps even further, the more recently used broad umbrella term, ‘Transgender’, and the interpretations, and criticisms, placed upon that term....”
- Some definitions, thus in order...

Some Terminology...

- a) **Autogynephilia.** Blanchard (1989) formally defined autogynephilia as a male's propensity to be sexually aroused by the thought of himself as a female.
- b) **Transsexualism/GID.** A condition in which an individual identifies with a physical sex different from the one they were born with. The person wants to convert their body.
- c) **Transvestism.** Dressing in the clothing of the opposite sex. Transvestism is distinct from both transsexualism and homosexuality. Also known as 'cross-dressing'. The person does not necessarily want to convert their body.
- d) **Transgender.** *An umbrella term* for people who do not conform to typical accepted gender roles, for example, transsexuals, cross-dressers, drag queens, and people who identify as genderqueer.
- e) **'Gender Identity Disorder' (GID).** The current psychiatric diagnosis for someone who is transsexual.

The Diagnosis of GID

The current DSM (Psychiatric Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) of GID requires these four components:

- A desire or insistence that one is of the opposite biological sex (that is not due to a perceived advantage of being the other sex)
- Evidence of persistent discomfort with, and perceived inappropriateness of the individual's biological sex
- The individual is not [intersex](#) (although a diagnosis of *GID Not Otherwise Specified* is available, which enables intersex people who reject their sex-assignment to access transsexual treatments)
- Evidence of clinically significant [distress](#) or [impairment](#) in work or social life.

Prevalence of transsexualism (1)

DSM-IV (1994) quotes a prevalence of roughly 1 in 30,000 assigned males and 1 in 100,000 assigned females seek surgery [sex](#) in the USA.

The most reliable estimate of prevalence is from the Amsterdam Gender Dysphoria Clinic. The data, spanning more than four decades in which the clinic has treated roughly 95% of Dutch transsexuals, gives figures of 1:10,000 assigned males and 1:30,000 assigned females.

Prevalence of transsexualism (2)

- Olyslager and Conway (2007) argue minimum lower bounds of 1:4,500 male-to-female transsexuals and 1:8,000 female-to-male transsexuals. They suggest the prevalence might be as high as 1:500 births overall.
- Presentation at the LGBT Health Summit in Bristol UK, based upon figures from a number of reputable European and UK sources, shows that the population is increasing rapidly (14% per year). (Source: [Transsexualism](#). Wikipedia. Accessed Oct 09)

Transsexualism- Recent Research and/or Opinion

- **Methodology adopted: a) Medline search, abstracts and full articles, human, English language, of the years 2000-2009, using the terms ‘transsexual’, and/or ‘transexual’, b) University of Sydney library search using similar search criteria, and c), a general Google internet search, again using similar search criteria. Priority has been given to the last five years.**
- **Material presented in this presentation is not exhaustive of that currently available. If you know of any other, particularly if easily accessible in full text, please write me c/o the address given at the end of this presentation.**

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- **Matte, Nicholas, Devor, Aaron H. and Vladicka, Theresa(2009)'Nomenclature inthe World Professional Association for Transgender Health's Standards of Care: Background and Recommendations', International Journal of Transgenderism,11:1,42 —52**

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Some resources found useful:

- ✓ **Professor Lynn Conway's site:**
<http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/>
- ✓ **Trans/Gender Theory email List**
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/trans-theory>
- ✓ **Trans Academic email List** <https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=trans-academic>
- ✓ **Transgendernews email list**
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/transgendernews/>
- ✓ **Wikipedia** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transsexualism>
- ✓ **WMST-L email list** (an international academic Women's Studies teaching/gender studies group)
http://userpages.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/wmst-l_index.html
- ✓ **The Gender Centre** <http://www.gendercentre.org.au/>
- ✓ And, a very useful book: **Heath, RA. (2006) The Praeger Handbook of Transsexuality: Changing Gender to Match**

Places to go for help, if you need help:

- The Gender Centre. <http://www.gendercentre.org.au/> 7 Bent Street (P.O. Box 266) Petersham NSW 2049. Phone: (02) 9569 2366 Fax: (02) 9569 1176ACON.
- ACON Hunter/Mid North Coast. 129 Maitland Rd, Islington 2296. Tel: 4927 6808
- Twenty 10. <http://www.twenty10.org.au/> *Twenty10* is a community not-for-profit that supports and works with young people, communities and families of diverse genders and sexualities. 45 Bedford Street, Newtown. NSW 2042 Support Line Tel 02 8594 9555. Outside Sydney 1800 65 2010
- Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service of NSW. (GLCS) <http://www.glcsnsw.org.au/> GLCS provide free telephone counselling, referrals and support groups for GLBT people and their families on matters of sexuality and life issues. The phone line is open 5:30pm-10:30pm 7 days a week. (02) 8594 9596 or 1800 18 4527 (rural freecall)
- Other?

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Post Script: Major gratitude for technical assistance and support on the evening this presentation occurred is extended to Ivan Skaines, current Co-Convenor of Rainbow Visions Hunter Inc. Ivan was able to supply the computer, data projector, screen, and sound amplification equipment which I didn't have, and, without which, the presentation wouldn't have at all gone ahead.

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