

Sounding the alarm - Many transgender persons regret what they did to their bodies and souls, and some are pleading that others not repeat their mistake

https://world.wng.org/2017/03/sounding_the_alarm

Robert Wenman was four years into being a “full-time” transgender woman in Ontario, Canada, when a police officer asked him: **“You got all your legal rights by now. Why don’t you just enjoy life as a woman?”**

The question left the then-LGBT activist stuttering: Here he was, training a group of law enforcers on transgender rights, yet he couldn’t answer a basic question: Why? Why was he still campaigning, still fighting?

The Canadian healthcare system, after all, had paid for his sex reassignment surgery and 10-day postoperative stay. The court changed his birth records from Robert John to Rebecca Jean. He had a secure job at the *Canada Post* with full access to female facilities, and his family accepted him. Wenman was the textbook case of a successful transgender woman—so why, he wondered, did he feel he was constantly battling something?

For days, Wenman stewed on the question and thought about all the ways he had blamed “intolerant society” for “the destruction in our souls.” ***Yet the deeper he searched his heart, the clearer he reached a painful acknowledgment: He had said he was fighting for transgender rights, but he was really fighting an internal battle. “I’ve been trying to fix things on the outside without fixing the inside,” he said.***

The idea that anything needs fixing inside a transgender person is anathema to big media. *Time* calls transgender rights “America’s next civil rights frontier.” *The New York Times* has, in its own words, “forcefully” advocated a transgender “crusade,” with former *Times* editor Andrew Rosenthal calling those who question the transgender movement “ignorant, stupid people.” This year, *National Geographic* joined the crusade, dedicating its first issue to the emerging “gender revolution.”

What’s missing from these stories, however, are the silent laments of individuals who now see their transgender experience as psychological and physical mutilation.

Walt Heyer, a 76-year-old ex-transgender (see "[Walt’s story](#)") who speaks publicly about his regret, says he gets regular emails from despairing transgender men and women who found him through his website sexchangeregret.com. Many underwent irreversible surgery and now regret it. They write him horrified and helpless: What do I do now? I feel like dying.

Heyer said every single person who contacts him reveals some kind of traumatic background and psychological scars. Their heartbreaking stories align with Heyer’s own personal experience that “transgenderism is an umbrella term for a group of mental disorders that have not yet been treated.” And the consequences are devastating: **According to studies, suicide rates are**

20 times higher among transgender adults who undergo hormone therapy and sex reassignment surgery. Meanwhile, a 2014 study found that 63 percent of patients diagnosed with gender dysphoria (a condition in which patients feel conflicted about their biological gender) had at least one co-occurring mental disorder, and 33 percent had major depressive disorders.

That's why Heyer grates his teeth at the burgeoning pro-transgender narrative: "This is the tragedy: Not one of these people needed to go through surgery. What they need is deep, effective, long-term psychotherapy." But when the psychiatrists themselves recommend hormones and surgery to treat gender dysphoria, what alternative options are available?

When a psychiatrist told Robert Wenman he had gender dysphoria and advised him to transition into a woman, every loose piece of his life seemed to lock into place: "Oh yeah! Of course that's it: I'm really a woman in a man's body!"

Wenman had always been a shy, lonely child who shimmied on his mother's stockings, girdles, and dresses in the private darkness of his bedroom closet. The more he cross-dressed, the more that addiction "grew and grew, feeding a monster." As an adult he went through periods of binges and purges: mass-shopping on women's clothing to parade at home, then tossing the clothes out in shame, and repeating the cycle.

So in 1991 when a transgender expert told him to transition into a woman, Wenman thought that would solve all his problems. He came out to his family, shaved off 50 pounds and his beard, grew out his buzz cut into waist-long tresses, began hormone therapy, and changed his legal documents. Six years later, he flew out to England and underwent sex reassignment surgery, and then returned home to Canada in euphoria: "I could have been dancing in the streets. It was like, mission accomplished."

That sense of accomplishment did not last. At 6 feet tall with big, manly hands and a masculine voice, Wenman struggled to "pass" as a woman and dreaded being in public. One stranger's weird look would provoke days of anguish in Wenman, and kids terrified him— these little ones gaped at him with brazenness. ***"Rather than feeling liberated, I felt like a criminal. I was getting more and more paranoid."***

Outwardly, Wenman volunteered weekly with the transgender community, marched in LGBT/feminist parades, giggled with fellow trans "sisters" at local bars, **and preached that gender is a psychological construct.** Inwardly, he was an emotional wreck. His chronic depression began affecting his work performance, and in February 2009, after 28 years of employment, he lost his job. Just as suicide began sounding sweeter than life, Wenman decided to find a church. He found a conservative independent Baptist church, where he realized: "I've been warring against my soul. I was transgressing against God, imprisoned by guilt and shame."

After 17 years living as a woman, Wenman, now 60, has detransitioned back into a man: He clips his white hair short, wears plaid shirts and slacks from the men's department, and prays

for a wife. Since his surgery is irreparable, he wonders if marriage is possible and mourns that he'll never enjoy the cuddles of his own children.

So when he hears stories of husbands who come out as transgender and leave their families, Wenman grieves: "I want to shake them and scream, 'You don't know what you're doing! You're giving your family up for something that's not real!'... But I also know how powerful that feeling is because I went through it. It's almost demonic." Yet not impossible to overcome, Wenman said, quoting John 8:32: "The truth shall set you free."

Like most little girls, KathyGrace Duncan formed her earliest image of women through her mother. What she saw was weak, vulnerable, abused. Whenever her father mistreated her mother, her mother would slip into Duncan's room to cry. As she listened to her mother sob, the little girl thought, "She's female and I'm female, but I don't want to be like her." Duncan's parents were distant with her, but her father showered attention on her baby brother. She concluded, "I need to be a boy in order to get affection and affirmation."

As a child Duncan fantasized about taking women like Jaclyn Smith out on dates. Unlike her father, she would rescue women from distress, buy them gifts, make them feel special—all the things she didn't get and wanted. By 16, Duncan was ready to be that perfect gentleman. She cut her hair short and feathered, wore two shirts to hide her late-bloomer's chest, and took girls out on dates to parks and fairs. Duncan didn't tell her dates she was a girl.

At 19, Duncan moved out of her house and transitioned into a man: She legally changed her name to Keith, wore slacks and tie to work, had a mastectomy, dated women. Her testosterone shots deepened her voice, widened her shoulders, and sprouted a full beard on her face. During that process, she professed faith in Christ and became heavily involved in church ministries. Nobody at church knew she was a woman except for an older couple who mentored her.

Then one day, a pastor called her to the prayer room and asked, "Who are you, really?" For the first time, Duncan spoke the truth—"I'm a woman living as a man"—instead of her default "I'm a man who used to be a woman." To this day, Duncan doesn't know what prompted her to say those words except that "the Holy Spirit blew in." All she knew was that if she wanted an intimate relationship with Jesus, she needed to come clean about who God created her to be. Then Duncan said something that again shocked both her and the pastor: "I think the Lord is calling me back to being a woman."

For the first time in years, she slept blissfully for two days: "It was like this tremendous pressure on my shoulders had been lifted. ... I had been living a fake life for 11 years, constantly tracking back to make sure people didn't know."

It took about four tortuous years for Duncan to embrace her womanhood again. In those years she lost her job, fell into depression, and joined the Portland Fellowship, a Christian ministry for people dealing with homosexuality. She threw out all her hormone shots, went shopping with

female friends for blouses, and even painted her toenails fire-engine red for her birthday—all giant steps for someone who once loathed every ounce of her femininity.

At first well-meaning people gave her lotions and makeup, expecting her to change instantly, but her heart had first to accept that being a woman was good. On many days Duncan was tired and overwhelmed, but then she would remember Abraham's faith when he left home to enter a foreign land that God had promised, and she would reshape her prayers: "OK, Lord, have Your way. What do You say? I'll follow what You say." Today Duncan accepts invitations to churches and youth camps to share her testimony.

Antoine Bou Ezz, a former transgender woman from Beirut, Lebanon, also says he cannot keep silent. He had a dream job, beautiful clothes, and glamorous parties, yet contemplated suicide until the day a woman told him about Jesus. The next day he went to church and, cut to the heart, begged Jesus to own all of him. Then as he studied the Bible, Bou Ezz realized transgenderism is fundamentally a worship issue: "God created man and woman. He blessed them and told them to go and multiply. He did not create transgenders—it is our choice to undergo surgery."

This March, Bou Ezz celebrated his third-year anniversary as a Christian man. That's three years of him telling anyone who would listen: "Jesus saved me. Jesus changed my life. If you want happiness and truth, throw everything at Jesus' feet."

—Also in this series on transgenderism: ["Suffer the children"](#) / ["Walt's story"](#)