

Telling Our Stories:
A Selection of Transvestite & Transsexual Autobiographies (1947-1969)

Sexuality [is] a chief influence of rhetorical culture, past and present... the history of GLBTQ discourse must be acknowledged, and engaged, and ...circulated— with the same increasingly felt obligation that attends discourses of race and gender in our journals, books... [and] bibliographies.

Charles E. Morris, 2006
“Archival Queer”

To help increase the accessibility of The Kinsey Institute collections, this annotated bibliography focuses on the autobiographical writings of transsexuals and transvestites housed in the Kinsey Institute. This bibliography serves as a navigational research tool. Both canonical and less well-known autobiographical writings by transsexual and transvestite individuals are represented here. While many of the individuals who so bravely shared their lives with others remain anonymous, creating a guide that traces the multiple writings across several collections will help researchers on future projects navigate these sources.

No tool can address the multiple dimensions within the lives of the trans individuals whose documents are found in the archives, or those lives that fail to be documented at all. This is evidenced by the fact that this list represents only transwomen, and only transwomen who are white. Even though they do not represent the variety of life experiences for transsexuals and transvestites in the mid-20th century, their stories are important ones. Too often the histories of transsexual, transvestite, and other LGBTQ individuals have been censored, lost, buried and/or neglected. The Kinsey Institute archives are invaluable to preserving the multiple histories of our communities and this is one more way these histories can be preserved.

Collections such as the Louise Lawrence and Harry Benjamin collections, along with the Transsexual Vertical File are crucial not only because they preserve the history of transsexual individuals, but they also offer some of the most diverse and rich archival material of the trans community available. The more people who are able to access, interpret, and produce work concerning these archives, the richer our LGBTQ history will become. It is crucial to not only remember but to consider the importance of these stories that would otherwise be lost. It is also crucial to create more accessibility in the hopes of making the archives more welcoming for scholars who identify either as allies or as part of the LGBTQ community.

**Transsexual and Transvestite Autobiographies
1947 – 1969 (Estimated dates)**

- (Gail), John Vogellus, "Autobiography," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Series VI Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.
- Anonymous, "Autobiography," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Series VI Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.
- Anonymous, "My Strange Fate," In Louise Lawrence Collection, Box 1 Series I Folder 14, Kinsey Institute.
- Arnold, Duane. "A Transvestite's Story." *Sexology* xxxii, no. 1 (Aug 1965): 22-25.
- Charles. "Branded: A 'Pervert'." *Sexology* xxxiii, no. 2 (Sept 1966): 98-100.
- Cowell, Roberta. *Roberta Cowell's Story*. British Book Centre, 1954.
- Doe, Jane. "Autobiography of a Transsexual." *Diseases of the Nervous System* 28, no. 4 (1967): 251-55.
- Doe, Jane C. "Autobiography of a Transsexual (Ten Years as a Women)." (1967).
- E.B.D., Mr. "Male Cross-Dressing." *Sexology* xxii, no. 1 (Aug 1955): 53-54.
- F.X.Y. "I Am a Transvestite." *Sexology* xiii, no. 12 (July 1947): 726-29.
- Faye. "Who Are 'True Transvestites'." *Sexology* xiv, no. 6 (Jan 1948): 311-13.
- Jeanne. "I Wear Dresses -- So What!". *Sexology* xvi, no. 6 (Jan 1950): 365-68.
- Jorgensen, Christine. *Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography*. New York: Paul S. Eriksson, 1967.
- Lana. "Sex Change Operation." *Sexology* xxvii, no. 1 (Aug 1960): 43-47.
- Laura. "Confessions of an Eonist." *Sexology* xxv, no. 12 (July 1959): 784-88.
- Lawrence, Louise, "Autobiography of Louise Lawrence, 1912-1945," In Louise Lawrence Collection, Box 1 Series I Folder 2, Kinsey Institute.
- , "Louise Lawrence Autobiography 1948-1957," In Louise Lawrence Collection, Box 1 Series I Folder 2, Kinsey Institute.
- M.D., X Y, "Transsexualism: A View from Within," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 7 E. Rodin Folder, Kinsey Institute.
- Man, Bloomer. "Transvestite Confessions." *Sexology* xv, no. 12 (July 1949): 752-57.
- Marilynne. "My Experience as a Transvestite." *Sexology* 11, no. 694-698 (June 1952).

- . "My Experience as a Transvestite, Pt2." *Sexology* xvii, no. 12 (July 1952): 776-82.
- Marion. "What Is a Transvestite." *Sexology* xiv, no. 3 (Oct 1947): 72-78.
- Masters, Carol Anne. "Transvestite Confession." *Sexology* xvii, no. 9 (April 1951): 567-76.
- McLeod, Charlotte, "I Changed My Sex," In Transsexual Vertical File, Transsexualism Folder 1, Kinsey Institute.
- Prince, C. V. "166 Men in Dresses." *Sexology* xxvii, no. 8 (March 1962): 520-25.
- Rees, Tamara. "Male Becomes Female: The Life Story of One of the Most Widely Publicized Cases of Sex Change in Recent History." *Sexology* xxvi, no. 5 (Nov 1959): 212-18.
- Reese, Tamara. "*Reborn*": *A Factual Life Story of Transition from Male to Female*. n.p.1955.
- Rivage, Kim Steven, In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.
- Robertson, Jerry, "Autobiography," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Series VI Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.
- Ryder, Bernard J., "Myself and I," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.
- Savage, R. L. (Lynn), In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 27 Series VI D Folder 2, Kinsey Institute. 1968.
- Transvestal. "'Bashful' Transvestite." *Sexology* xvi, no. 10 (May 1950): 647-49.

Bibliography in order of Collection/Publication with Descriptions and Common Themes

Common Themes:

1. Assertion of heterosexual desire, often times both before transition (with women) and after (with men)
2. Blame placed on parents for transvestism or transsexualism, either by author or others
3. Confession of hatred of body, particularly male genitals
4. Desire for change from childhood
5. Failed marriage
6. Explicit reference to sexual gratification while dressing (either the presence or absence of gratification)
7. Rejection and/or abhorrence of homosexuality
8. Association of transsexualism or transvestism with criminality
9. Assertion of asexuality

Note:

While these themes do not constitute every similarity present among these autobiographical writings, they are of interest in relation to the historical time period in which they were written. The fact that many writers intentionally make note of their *heterosexuality*, for example, suggests that they are wishing to distance themselves from homosexuality, a practice and identity they do not accept for themselves, something they see as markedly separate from their experience with transvestism or transsexualism.

While many authors did not share personal information beyond their experience identifying as either transvestite or transsexual, when they did share demographic information I have included it below. In addition to the common themes, I have indicated the age, race, profession, geographic location, educational background, religion, marital status, and identification [TV= transvestite, TS= transsexual). Photos are also provided when possible. Every individual included in this list was assigned male at birth and at the time of writing had some relationship to either transvestism or transsexualism. While very few indicate their race, it would not be unreasonable to postulate that most, if not all, authors are white. All photos or drawings included in any of these autobiographies, even when not of the author, are of white individuals. Many authors appeal to readers that, besides their cross-dressing/transvestism/transsexualism, they are “otherwise normal.” Language and rhetoric referencing “normality” often function as a discursive elision of whiteness. (For more info on this, see Julian Carter’s *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in American, 1880-1940*, Duke UP, 2007.)

Sexology Magazine:

F.X.Y. "I Am a Transvestite." *Sexology* xiii, no. 12 (July 1947): 726-29.

An autobiography of a transvestite, the writer also speculates as to the “causes of the urge of this man to wear feminine garments.” They also gesture towards an affinity for petticoat discipline.

Themes: 2, 4, 6, 7

White, 47 years old, married, White, TV

Marion. "What Is a Transvestite." *Sexology* xiv, no. 3 (Oct 1947): 72-78. (photo p73)

Marion, in the course of sharing with the audience was constitutes a transvestite, share much of their story - how and why they like to dress as well as why they continue to dress. A response to this was published in the Jan 1948 edition of *Sexology*.

Themes: 6, 7

White, Midwest, TV



This picture of "Marion" taken from a photograph shows him in street dress although he goes to great pains in stating that he never goes out in such dress.

Faye. "Who Are 'True Transvestites'." *Sexology* xiv, no. 6 (Jan 1948): 311-13. (photo p311)

Fay discusses what she believes to be "true transvestites." This is a response and a critique of Marion's story published in the Oct 1947 edition of *Sexology*. As she explains her understanding of TT, she shares part of her story.

Themes: 1, 4, 7

White, TV



Here illustrated is the author of the accompanying article, a male in female attire. According to the author, he possesses a voluminous female wardrobe.

Man, Bloomer. "Transvestite Confessions." *Sexology* xv, no. 12 (July 1949): 752-57.

Written under the name "Bloomer Man," this short autobiography describes moves from his first experience dressing as a child to living on his own and dressing full-time except when he is at work. When living alone, he tells his community about his dressing and mentions to them that he is a man "who wears dresses most of the time, but appears to be quite normal otherwise." (757) He briefly discusses the sexual gratification he feels when dressing.

Themes: 2, 4, 6

Over 28 years old, TV

Jeanne. "I Wear Dresses -- So What!". *Sexology* xvi, no. 6 (Jan 1950): 365-68. (photo p367)

Referencing Marion's 1944 article for *sexology*, Jeanne states that she is in full agreement with Marion's description of TVs. She at first creates a picture of what she believe is a TV and then shares how they came to identify as a TV.

Themes: 2, 4, 7, 8

White, former Military, TV



Another photo of transvestite "Jeanne" (note autograph). He loves to dress in women's clothes; carefully hides his face so his non-transvestite friends won't recognize him. He is a successful business man.

Transvestal. "'Bashful' Transvestite." *Sexology* xvi, no. 10 (May 1950): 647-49.

Transvestal writes in to share their story, prompted by the recent article written by "Bloomer Man." They share a very typical story of dressing young, hiding it from others, and they express distaste for homosexuality. Transvestal writes of the day when TVs will be accepted, when "society will no longer look upon us as unusual people."

Themes: 2, 4, 7, 8

TV

Masters, Carol Anne. "Transvestite Confession." *Sexology* xvii, no. 9 (April 1951): 567-76. (photo p568)

Carol Anne Masters is the author of this article, and comments by Dr. David Cauldwell appear throughout the piece. Carol discusses her first experiences dressing, and then her move into the spotlight. She performed and modeled as a woman, eventually become a famous female impersonator. She comments that she enjoys her life and enjoys her work.

Themes: 2, 7

White, 28 years old, former military (Army), lives in a city, TV



Mr. Masters all dressed up for a party he makes a pretty fine looking 'girl'— credit to his art of make-up gained us a female impersonator.

Marilynne. "My Experience as a Transvestite." *Sexology* 11, no. 694-698 (June 1952). (photo p695)

This two-part series, written by Marilynne, discusses her experiences as a transvestite. Having lived for 15 years as a woman when she wrote this autobiography, she discusses her desires, how she understand sexuality, as well as how she creates the perfect "illusion" of a female figure. (698)

Themes: 2, 4

White, 29 years old, lives in a west coast city, TV



Right—Proudly showing off his shapely legs, the same transvestite poses in a woman's bathing suit.

Marilynne. "My Experience as a Transvestite, Pt2." *Sexology* xvii, no. 12 (July 1952): 776-82.

In the second half of this two-part series, Marilynne discusses her work as well as her rise to the top at the dress shop where she is employed. She also describes her understanding of the four classes of transvestites.

Themes: 7, 9

Additional info provided: Assistant Manager of the dress department of a large store

E.B.D., Mr. "Male Cross-Dressing." *Sexology* xxii, no. 1 (Aug 1955): 53-54.

Mr. E.B.D. from Illinois writes to the editor of *Sexology* and in the process of asking for advice they share a brief but detailed story of their life. They talk about their struggle to rid themselves of the desire to wear women's clothes, something they have done since they were young. They express hope for a change similar to that of Christine Jorgensen.

Themes: 4

Former military (Army)

Laura. "Confessions of an Eonist." *Sexology* xxv, no. 12 (July 1959): 784-88.

Laura, a self defined eonist, provides a detailed story of her path to identifying as such. Laura identifies as an eonist, or as a male transvestite. He asserts his heterosexuality, and expresses gladness that he is a man.

Themes: 4, 6, 7

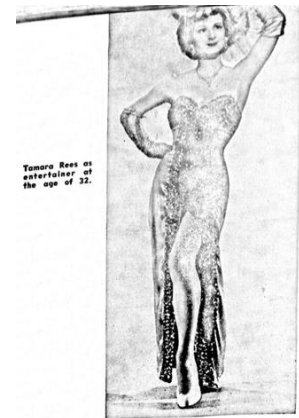
Unmarried, TV/Eonist

Rees, Tamara. "Male Becomes Female: The Life Story of One of the Most Widely Publicized Cases of Sex Change in Recent History." *Sexology* xxvi, no. 5 (Nov 1959): 212-18. (photo p213)

Tamara Rees shares a brief version of her autobiography. She writes, in part, to dispel the embellishments made by the popular press to her story of becoming a woman.

Themes: 4, 7

White, 30s, former Military, divorced and re-married, California



Lana. "Sex Change Operation." *Sexology* xxvii, no. 1 (Aug 1960): 43-47. (photo p43)

Lana discusses her journey to having vaginoplasty. She also shares her opinions on the differences between males and females, as well as her dislike for female impersonation, rather than the true desire to be female.

Themes: 1, 4, 7

White, TV (However, because of SRS, she would generally be diagnosed or classified in relation to transsexualism. The author does not use this term.)



Prince, C. V. "166 Men in Dresses." *Sexology* xxvii, no. 8 (March 1962): 520-25.

Prince explains and provides insight into transvestism in this short article. She mentions her publication *Transvestia* and references a survey that over 150 transvestites took, from which she is able to ascertain some general facts about the community. The survey covered everything from physical appearances, how active individuals were in sports, to their home life and types of punishment they endured as children. Prince uses the information to assert that, "none of the causes generally presented by the medical profession [for transvestism] finds any great support in the data cited in this survey." (523) She also takes care to distinguish transvestism from homosexuality, fetishism, transsexualism, and masochism.



Themes: 4, 7

White, 49, married, PhD in pharmacology, writer, founder of *Transvestia*, TV [or Femmiphile (FP)]

(photo from *How to be a Woman though Male*. Tulare, CA: Chevalier Publications, 1971)

Arnold, Duane. "A Transvestite's Story." *Sexology* xxxii, no. 1 (Aug 1965): 22-25.

Duane shares his struggle with cross-dressing, hiding it, and feeling ashamed about it. However, he believes that he has used his cross-dressing as a crutch his entire life, an activity that he used to cope with insecurities outside of the home. Now that he is confident and proud of who he is, he believes he can keep his transvestism at bay.

Themes: 1, 4, 7

White, 30s, married with children, TV

Charles. "Branded: A 'Pervert'." *Sexology* xxxiii, no. 2 (Sept 1966): 98-100.

Charles discusses his experience as a transvestite; he does not feel shame about his transvestism. Charles prefers the company of women, and his mind is more oriented towards the feminine than the masculine. He briefly discusses his childhood and his failed marriage, and wishes he would have told his wife of his transvestism sooner.

Themes: 1, 4, 5, 7

Late 30s or early 40s, divorced, TV

Louise Lawrence Collection

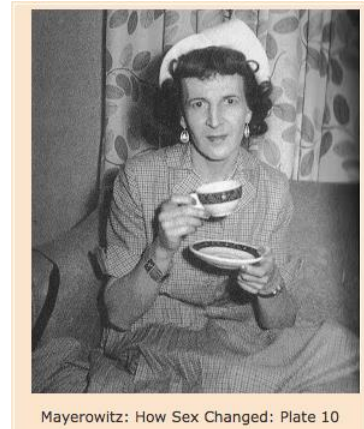
Lawrence, Louise, "Autobiography of Louise Lawrence, 1912-1945," In Louise Lawrence Collection, Box 1 Series I Folder 2, Kinsey Institute.

Lawrence traces her long history with the desire to wear feminine clothing. She shares stories from when she was a young boy and the trials and tribulations she experienced because of this desire. Lawrence's shares with the reader the difficulties with her family and her partners because of her transvestism, but also the joy she experiences when she is able to dress more consistently and eventually full time.

Themes: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7

White, divorced but partnered, worked with Alfred Kinsey and other medical professionals, TV

(photo from *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2002. np.)



Mayerowitz: *How Sex Changed*: Plate 10

Louise Lawrence, "Louise Lawrence Autobiography 1948-1957," In Louise Lawrence Collection, Box 1 Series I Folder 2, Kinsey Institute.

A continuation of her 1912-1945 autobiography, this second part begins when Louise has already begun to live full-time as a woman. This shorter and more disjointed autobiography provides insight into Louise's life with Donna, her friendship with Alfred Kinsey, and her growing

confidence in being perceived as a woman. She also briefly discusses her opinions about transsexuality and surgical intervention.

Themes: 7

Anonymous, "My Strange Fate," In Louise Lawrence Collection, Box 1 Series I Folder 14, Kinsey Institute.

This short 5-page autobiography describes one man's transvestism in relation to his wife. He told her before they were married of his transvestism, and she agreed to marry him and attempt to "help him with it." His wife eventually uses his transvestism against him, and she forces her husband to dress for her pleasure rather than for his own.

Themes: 1, 4

Married, TV

Harry Benjamin Collection

M.D., X Y, "Transsexualism: A View from Within," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 7 E. Rodin Folder, Kinsey Institute.

Published (earliest possible) 1969

Taking a more scientific approach, E. Rodin tells his story from a more 'objective' point of view and writes for an audience of physicians. They discuss the facts of their case, and the physical feelings, but omits many of the emotional reflections included in other autobiographical writings. He also emphasizes the importance of treating childhood transvestism as early as possible to avoid negative consequences.

Themes: 2, 4, 6

Married, TV or TS (Author uses both terms.)

Doe, Jane. "Autobiography of a Transsexual." *Diseases of the Nervous System* 28, no. 4 (1967): 251-55.

This autobiography can also be found in the HB Collection, Box 19 Series V A Folder 1B
Jane Doe discusses her life pre-transition, describing her childhood and her struggle to live life in the midst of wanting to be a woman and doctors who refused to help. She connects her stories to hundreds of other transsexuals who have been frustrated in their attempts to transition with the support of U.S. doctors. While Jane does not directly dismiss homosexuality as perverse, and in fact mentions that she seeks out "homosexuals" as people to confide in, she does subtly separate herself from homosexual activity, aligning herself with heterosexual desire from a feminine position several times throughout the piece. Having obtained surgical transition, she and the two physicians commentaries that follow the autobiography, assert her success in being happier and more well-adjusted as a woman.

Themes; 1, 4, 6

TS, 48 years old, unmarried

Anonymous, "Autobiography," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Series VI Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.

Wanting to be a woman for as long as she can remember, this self-identified "transsexual" tells of their jealousy and hurt over seeing women and girls dressed up. She wanted to *be* them, not

look at them or be around them. Growing up, she dated other women as was expected but was disinterested in anything sexual with them. Eventually marrying, dressing became a part of their sexual routine but the desire to dress full-time caused problems for them both. Eventually, she left for a weekend to dress full-time with her friend Lola, with her wife threatening divorce. After leaving her wife, she begins to live full-time as a woman and her (hetero)sexual desire for men is awakened. However, she wants her body to reflect her femaleness before she engages sexually with a man for fear of engaging in homosexual acts as a person with a male body. She excitedly awaits an operation to surgically transition, an operation that will correct what she understands as a “physical abnormality.” (56)

Themes: 1, 4, 5, 7, 9

Married, former military (Army)

Robertson, Jerry, "Autobiography," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Series VI Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.

Robertson shares their story of dressing from a young age, continuing through adulthood. He tells of his experience growing up, his family life, his experience in the military, as well as his conflicting desires to marry a woman and to also be one. He writes the letter asking for help and guidance for his troubles.

Themes: 1, 4, 6, 7

White, protestant, former military, California

Rivage, Kim Steven, In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.

Kim, in two letters, shares their desire to be wholly female. Kim affirms whole-heartedly that they are *not* homosexual, that if they were homosexual that they wouldn't have the desire to change their body. They believe that god intended them to be a woman, and they are actively researching available options for transition.

Themes: 1, 7

No additional information provided

Ryder, Bernard J., "Myself and I," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.

Bernard tells of his sickly childhood and passing for a girl until the age of 4 or 5. He desired to be a girl from a young age and was devastated when he had to cut his hair for grade school. He shares details of the next two decades of his life – his continuing desire to dress, his marriage, and eventually an encounter with doctors where they discover his “bisexuality” – he is intersex. He ends his brief autobiography with the hope of saving enough money for surgical transition in Europe so he may live the life that he was intended to live “from the day [he] was born.”

Themes: 1, 4, 5

Former military, Syracuse, NY, worker at GE plant, TV

(Gail), John Vogellus, "Autobiography," In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 26 Series VI Folder 25, Kinsey Institute.

In this letter to a physician, Gail recounts her desire from a young age to be a woman, not simply to dress as one. She was chastised by her family for dressing, yet the desire persisted until adulthood. After discovering *Transvestia*, a new world opened up to her, and “Gail” was finally

born. She began to dress with a wig, and eventually began to take hormones. She expresses her joy at finally feeling at home with herself.

Themes: 1, 4, 7

Late 20s, TV

Savage, R. L. (Lynn), In Harry Benjamin Collection, Box 27 Series VI D Folder 2, Kinsey Institute. 1968.

R.L. Savage, who preferred the name Lynn, provides an extensive and very organized autobiography. Including an introduction, a detailed description of her physical appearance, as well as her life story and future plans, Lynn shares her journey to fully accepting her desire to be a woman. Remaining very committed to her wife and children, Lynn recounts the various aspects of her life that distracted from her transvestism (rock climbing, motorcycle riding, her studies), and wonders about the current legal and employment difficulties she will have post-transition. Her story is unusual in that her wife, Judy, is committed to staying with her post-transition, and Lynn speculates that their sex and love life will be greatly improved by the transition.

Themes: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7

White, married, 30, White Plains, NY, electrical engineer with IBM, MS in engineering from Columbia University, TS

Transsexual Vertical File

McLeod, Charlotte, "I Changed My Sex," In Transsexual Vertical File, Transsexualism Folder 1, Kinsey Institute. (photo p11)

This text was originally published in *Mr.* in the winter 1956.

While this piece is written to warn readers of finding all the answers in a change of sex, McLeod shares about part of her life that led her to seek surgical transition. She feels that surgery is only the answer for 5% of individuals who believe they desire it. She insinuates that only individuals that are already feminine in many ways should seek surgery; then they might pass as women post-surgery. She also references the many complications that can and often do occur with difficult surgical procedures.

Themes: 4, 7

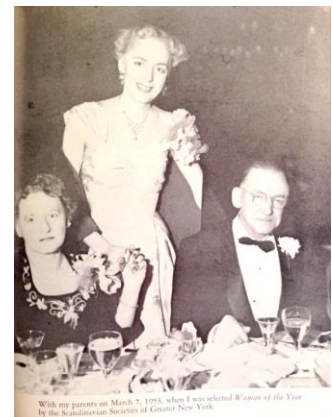
White, former military, married, New York



Books

Jorgensen, Christine. *Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography*. New York: Paul S. Eriksson, 1967. (photo from autobiograph, np)

Christine Jorgensen, one of the most famous transsexuals of the 20th century, offers the reader insight into her life and her transition. She shares stories from her childhood, her time in the military, and her



Bibliography by Liam Oliver Lair

times as a woman. Jorgensen also discusses the inner conflict of growing up as a boy, but also her delight at eventually becoming a successful entertainer. She shares stories of love, and particularly of confusion when she was attracted to boys growing up; she did not identify with homosexuality but rather longing for a boy to desire her as a woman. Along with her disavowal of homosexuality, Jorgensen is careful to assert that she never wore women's clothing until she was legally female. (173) Harry Benjamin, one of her U.S. doctors, writes the introduction and extols Jorgensen's courage and bravery.

1, 4, 7

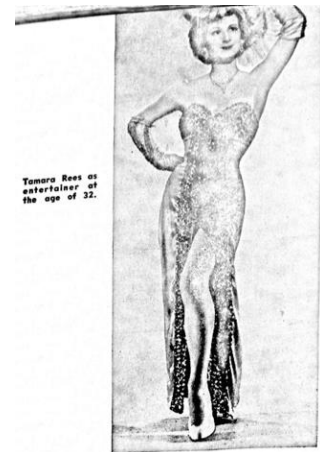
White, 41, Protestant, New York, Attended Mohawk College, Progressive School of Photography, and Manhattan Medical and Dental Assistant School, TS

Reese, Tamara. "Reborn": A Factual Life Story of Transition from Male to Female. n.p.1955. (photo p213)

Focusing largely on her teens and young adulthood, Reese recounts her life during school and in the military as a misfit. She was effeminate and lonely, mentioning that in school she did not get along with either sex. Her time in the military was also difficult, as she was not like the other men; she was physically small and was identified as someone to pick on. After a brief description of her military service in Europe, Reese moves quickly into discussing her relationship with Dr. Homburger [*sic*], Christine Jorgensen surgeon. She also describes her return to the states post-surgery. Reese affirms that, as a woman, she is a well-adjusted and contributing member of society, and she hopes that others might access the same medical care she obtained in order to transition.

4, 7, 9

White, 31, married, Los Angeles, CA, former military, TS



Cowell, Roberta. Roberta Cowell's Story. British Book Centre, 1954. (photo- cover of autobiography)

Documenting her transition from virile male to domestic female, Cowell's autobiography offers an exciting story. The first half of the text is largely stories from her military exploits; stories of adventure, bravery, race car driving, and piloting airplanes. After her military career, and after hours of psychoanalysis, Cowell begins to understand and accept her true nature as a woman. She provides details of her transition, both personal and social. She takes care to distinguish herself both from homosexuality and transvestism – two activities that she believes should be discouraged. (136-7) She ends the text recounting a dinner party she attends, commenting that she is finally herself.

Themes: 1, 3, 4, 7, 9

White, 36, former military, divorced, motor car driver, Europe

