

**HOW TO BECOME A  
REALLY REALLY  
NOT FAMOUS  
TRANS LADY WRITER**

**TORREY PETERS**

# Introduction

Hello intrepid reader! I decided to write this guide for you to read, because being a really really not-famous trans lady writer is a subject I'm very qualified to speak about. In fact, probably you are now turning to whomever is beside you to ask: "Wait a second, just how did Torrey become so really really not-famous?"

And that person is probably like, "Who's Torrey?"

Well, allow me to answer both questions!

First off: I'm Torrey!

Secondly, if you follow these steps, you too can become a really really not-famous trans lady writer.

# Step 1

Decide you should be really really famous.

## Step 2

Know that you've always felt special, and ask yourself, why? What about me is special? Consider the fact that you can dislocate your jaw whenever you want! Rule that out. Realize that you've always felt kind of fucked up about your gender. But only in a vague way—be sure not to think about specific instances in which you felt fucked up. Definitely don't think about the time you “borrowed” your 5th grade classmates's one-piece swimsuit. Discussing that incident publically, to anyone who happens to come across your writing, is not the thing for which you want to become famous. Remember not to do that! That would be embarrassing.

## Step 3

Google things about gender. Discover this whole transgender thing.

## Step 4

Certainly do not, under any circumstances, meet any other trans people. Especially not while you write a long essay about being trans, which, of course, you are now doing. Be sure to begin sentences in your essay with phrases like, “Trans people, in general...”

## Step 5

Give essay to cis people! Feel happy while cis people congratulate you on your bravery!

## Step 6

Ask cis people if they want to publish said brave essay? Understand that no, they do not.

## **Step 7**

Be depressed.

## Step 8

Buy your OWN swimsuit, girl! I mean, REALLY?

## Step 9

Realize the swimsuit you bought, as well as all the other stuff isn't cutting it any more. Consider hormones.

## Step 10

Go on hormones. But do not, under any circumstances, think about becoming a lady. Instead, imagine yourself as a cool and mysterious David Bowie type character. Plan outfits and practice talking as though you have done a lot of acid, so you will be ready for when hormones bestow upon you this new look.

## Step II

Meet a bunch of trans women who are all like, “Haaaaaaay, have you read Nevada?” Be really annoyed. Mutter under your breath, “Hell no, I haven’t read Nevada. I don’t need Nevada, I wrote my own damn book.”

## Step 12

Read Nevada.

## Step 13

Cry on Brooklyn G train after finishing Nevada. Understand two things: Number one: New Yorkers are surprisingly accustomed and polite to people boo-hooing in public spaces. And number two: Better give up on that David Bowie thing, 'cause you, sweetheart, are a lady.

## Step 14

Be paralyzed whenever you want to write anything. You were so wrong for so many years, so incredibly good at lying to yourself, and given that, how could you possibly think you'll ever put a pen to paper and say something true?

## Step 15

Meet actual famous trans writer. Feel indicted when famous trans writer says that they think all trans people want to be celebrities. That the drive to celebrity is an endemic problem that fractures trans communities. That we are all so alone for so long, the only way to survive is to nurture a private sense of specialness and uniqueness—all the while fearing that this sense of specialness is our only lifejacket as we swim in a culture where tokenization tells us that we must be the only one, the fiercest, most brutal one, the special one.

## Step 16

Give up on writing. 'Cause you're know you're not the special one.

## Step 17

Sit down one night on a whim, and scribble some modest thoughts about being trans that amuse you. Include an honest joke about wearing your classmate's swimsuit when you were younger, 'cause seriously, no biggie. Wake up the next morning and arrange those thoughts into an essay.

## Step 18

Publish essay on your own private Tumblr, which has no followers, and which is the Internet equivalent of that place in Mordor where Frodo throws the ring so that no one will ever see or hear from it again.

## Step 19

Receive an e-mail weeks later, from some trans lady who, through some kind of Tumblr immaculate conception, read your essay, felt inspired, and wrote something herself for you to read. Feel awesome. Realize that this conversation is what you have been wanting all along!

## Step 20

Promise your one reader you'll write something else.

And there you have it! Congratulations! You're now a really really not-famous trans lady writer.