

The Sissy Question

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Questions surrounding the sissy kink have graced online spaces frequented by trans women for years. The MtF subreddit, in particular, saw an uptick in sissy related questions lately which has prompted me to write this piece. These posts are most commonly one of two types, either a post deriding the sissy community as a mockery of trans womanhood or a current sissy asking why the sudden uptick in hatred for sissies is occurring. This is a discussion on these types of posts and the effect they have on the current and future trans feminine community.

Part Zero: An Admittance of Bias

I identified as a sissy for over two years. During this time, I used the kink as a private outlet for my gender dysphoria while simultaneously presenting as a cis man in my life outside of my private bedroom sessions. Due to this prior affiliation, even after reclaiming my womanhood, I maintain a friendly attitude towards the sissy community that is uncommon in trans feminine spaces. I will go more into why I maintain this attitude later in this discussion, but I wanted to be upfront about my past to prevent any potential readers from feeling blindsided.

Part One: What is a Sissy

A sissy is primarily a person who views themselves as a cis man who enjoys the idea of being feminized and degraded for that feminization in sexual contexts. Sometimes the degradation is based around the idea of “failed masculinity”, while other times it will be based around “the inherent difference of women in society” aka using the misogyny and heteronormativity they have been taught throughout their entire life to validate their gurlhood. Notice how I spelled gurl there. For most sissies, there is a clear line drawn between women and the most female approaching form they can achieve. Being a “real woman” is the supreme, but ultimately impossible, goal.

A large part of the sissy community do actively crossdress during sexual activities, both alone and with a partner (or partners). Some sissies have even been known to take diy HRT to try to, as Torrey Peters puts it so eloquently in *The Masker*, “sand off their masculine edges and lessen secondary sex attributes” and become closer to the female goal. The duration and strength of this HRT regimen will vary on the basis of multiple factors, including availability, desired effects, and emotional response to being on feminizing hormones. Remember that, after all, a sissy when not in an erotic situation will almost assuredly swear to be a “normal” cis man. For most however, the kink begins and ends with porn consumption.

Erotic hypnosis videos are the most common type of porn produced and consumed by those involved in the kink. These videos feature audio played overtop porn with a hypnotic swirl overlay. The contents of these hypnosis videos is primarily one of two kinds; to either give in to

desires and begin exploring crossdressing and having sex with men or to force the body to begin producing more estrogen and less testosterone in order to achieve a more feminine body without having to put in effort. The effects of these videos is obviously null, but they remain popular choices of erotic entertainment among sissies.

This paints a fairly good picture of a typical sissy. A self proclaimed man who enjoys porn that plays with his masculinity and heterosexuality and who may or may not have tried crossdressing in order to further engage in this kink. Some will go further, trying out feminizing HRT, but the majority don't. Of course, this does raise one question; what does this have to do with trans women?

Part Two: The Problem With Talking About Sex

Although those sissies who do pursue some form of HRT have an obvious connection to trans women, needing to know the places where we get our hormones when doctors won't cooperate and what effects are to be expected, what connection does the sissy who is too scared to even try crossdressing in front of another person have to a trans woman? Sure, an ignorant cis person may confuse an early transition trans woman for a sissy or vice versa, but no one cares about ignorant cis people. Unless of course, they're not actually cis?

Now, I am not going to say that every single person who engages in forced feminization play is trans and just hasn't realized it. Many a cis man is into force fem and there is nothing wrong with that. As long as the play is RACK and/or SSC compliant, all the more power to them. However, it would be dishonest to act as if no trans person has ever fallen into the sissy kink as a sexual coping method for their latent gender dysphoria. I know I did. However, this coping method can be a point of shame before a reclamation of oneself or after words, when entering the trans community for the first time as admitting to having used sexual coping methods is one of the worst faux pas you can make.

After all, trans women have been a victim of hypersexualization for most of recent memory. Sex workers, both dead and living, on police shows were often the only trans characters on television. At the same time, representation in film did not fare much better. A stream of sex-obsessed serial killers and gag-inducing characters have scared generations of trans women into presenting themselves as nonsexual entities out of fear. A fear of seeming predatory or being accused of having tricked a person by merely existing, an excuse that can still be used to justify murder in 35 states.

This is part of why the "born in the wrong body" narrative was pushed so heavily in the late 2000's and early to mid 2010's. This simultaneously saw a push to emphasize the stories of those who figured out their gender at an ultra young age in order to fight this hypersexualization. Four-year-olds are pure and sweet and innocent. A four year old cannot be a pervert. That is why they are the ones who were featured on daytime talk shows. This did see some success, with some neutral to even positive trans representation finally appearing in mainstream media. However, this wasn't a perfect situation. While this rebranding did serve to alter the general cis perception of trans people, the intra-community discussion suffered.

Discussions of sex became a taboo, with sexual coping methods for gender dysphoria being dropped first out of fear of them being used as proof that trans women are just perverted men. Many trans sex workers saw their support network shrink seemingly overnight, especially

those who used terms like sissy or shemale to attract a bigger audience. In this push, stories that a person who had been using the sissy kink as a crutch could connect to were purged from most digital trans spaces or forced into obscurity, hidden in sites on the twelfth page of search results.

The consequences of the “born in the wrong body” narrative has been disastrous to the trans community. One, it caused many people to spend years in repression and pain that could have been avoided. Two, it created a culture of hatred for sissies, crossdressers, and, to a lesser extent, even drag queens. Posts mocking sissies and crossdressers became a staple of trans feminine spaces, a tradition which was extended to other trans women on 4chan’s /tfff/, and that still continues to this day mostly unchecked. But this raises another question, why has this hatred been allowed to become so virile even as the “wrong body” narrative has been moved away from?

Part Three: The Fear of the Mirror

Dysphoria is a harsh master. It’s subtle, cruel, and one of the best damn gaslighters to ever exist. Dysphoria is fully capable of convincing a person that it doesn’t exist and that everyone feels that way while making them suffer in the worst way. No one I have met has ever argued otherwise. With this in mind, it should come as little surprise that dysphoria often drives how a trans woman views and reacts to many things. Drag is a disuniting topic for this reason. Drag, in the drag queen sense at least, is typically a man putting on an exaggerated mask of femininity that we were so long denied even a subtle version of. For some, it was the only way to enjoy any femininity while others felt mocked and belittled. The sissy kink is these feelings turned to eleven.

Sissies and crossdressers encapsulate the worst fears our dysphoria feeds us of being a man in a dress, but enjoy it as that is their goal. They are men in dresses and they enjoy being men in dresses. Meanwhile, we can’t help but be afraid that we look like them despite all that we do to not. Internalized transphobia and fearful projection fuels this all consuming dysphoria, which is only allowed to grow by a majority of the trans community creating a cycle of hatred that is nigh on impossible to break.

Online trans spaces are especially bad about reinforcing this cycle, while simultaneously often being the only trans spaces a person will have access to especially if living in a rural area. This can, and I’m sure it has, lead to people never being able to find out that there is nothing wrong with them, that they’re not broken or inferior, and prematurely taking their lives. We can and must do better for our siblings, out and hidden and unknowing alike.

Part Four: A Future of Solidarity

In order to try to create a better future, one must look to the past to see what has changed. The shared community of sissies, crossdressers, drag queens, and trans women must not only be allowed to reform, but be encouraged. For decades this shared community allowed for mutual aid and protection with the goal of a shared liberation. After all, what does it mean to be trans feminine if not to desire to be more feminine in presentation and body? All of us were so long denied the ability to claim any femininity that we all have a mutual understanding of that

basic core instinct. To those of you who have read that and cringe at the thought of having to work with such “perverts”, I ask you to consider the history of trans women in the United States.

Yes, the sissy’s desires are born out of sexual scenes, the same sexual exploration many a trans woman used to discover herself. However, think through what saying that a sissy’s desires are invalid solely because they are born out of sexual actions implies. Does one have to be a sex repulsed asexual to be a “true” trans woman, if no sexual based desires are allowed in the community? If so, then how does one explain that under the two tier transvestism scale of the 1960’s that a primary determining factor of validity was a sexual desire for a female sexual role with men?

The simple fact is that one can’t while operating under such flawed logic. Sissy’s deserve a seat at the table for discussions of improving hormone deserts and easing the effects of the medical system on those desiring a more feminine body and presentation just as much as those trans elders who transitioned under older forms of medical gatekeeping. We, as a community, must confront our anti-sex biases and internalized transphobia to allow us to finally take steps toward liberation together and not at the cost of others.

TRANS LIBERATION NOW!