

Behind the Curtain of the Gender Game

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By Tony Perkins

“It was all a sham.” After four long and difficult years, that’s how Jamie Shupe started making sense of his life again. To the LGBT community, he’d been a hero – a trailblazer in the transgender movement that’s upending society. But there’s a lot more to the story of America’s first “nonbinary” person than that. And he hopes the world is listening.

“I’m one of the lucky ones,” he says now. [In a compelling piece for the Daily Signal](#), he talks about his winding journey from a gender-free pioneer to a man who understands the horror of walking away from who he is. Like a lot of people struggling with their gender identity, Jamie’s pain started early. After a traumatic and abusive childhood, he became a soldier. Married, but addicted to pornography, he says his life began to fall apart. Plagued by post-traumatic stress disorder from his 18 years in the Army, Jamie’s mental health crisis exploded. He says he convinced himself that he was a woman and decided in 2013 to visit a nurse practitioner to ask for a hormone prescription.

Jamie’s nightmare could have ended there. Instead, it started a devastating six-year roller coaster that he is scarred by to this day. “If you don’t give me the drugs, I’ll buy them off the internet,” he told the nurse. “I should have been stopped,” he says soberly, “but out-of-control, transgender activism had made the nurse practitioner too scared to say no.” She never looked into his background of PTSD or possible bipolar or personality disorders. He walked out of her office on that very same day with a prescription for estrogen.

“The best thing that could have happened would have been for someone to order intensive therapy. Instead, quacks in the medical community hid me in the women’s bathroom with people’s wives and daughters. ‘Your gender identity is female,’ these alleged professionals said. The medical community is so afraid of the trans community that they’re now afraid to [accurately diagnose people]...They just kept helping me to harm myself.”

Only one therapist tried to stop Jamie from “crawling into this smoking rabbit hole.” When she did, he says with regret, “I not only fired her, I filed a formal complaint against her.” But by then, the whole façade was already starting to crumble. Jamie looked in the mirror one day, and everything came tumbling down. “When the fantasy of being a woman came to an end, I asked two of my doctors to allow me to become nonbinary instead of female to bail me out.” Desperate to be let off the hook for his failed sex change, they did.

By that time, Jamie was being pumped full of hormones -- the equivalent of 20 birth control pills a day. To “escape,” he decided to lead the crusade for a “mythical third gender.” To the cheers of LGBT activists, an Oregon judge granted that wish, declaring him the first legal “nonbinary” person in American history. Overnight, he became an instant celebrity. From television interviews to New York Times’s features, Jamie had celebrity status. Suddenly, far-Left groups like Lambda Legal were contacting him, sensing an opening to tear down the walls of the only true sexes.

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Eventually, the weight of this charade was too much. Despite the intense pressure from LGBT groups, Jamie found his voice. He came out publicly against open transgenderism in the military and [the indoctrination of gender-confused children](#) in 2017. Suddenly, he says, “LGBT organizations stopped helping me. Most of the media retreated with them. Their solution was to completely ignore me and what my story had become.” After all, they’d gotten what they wanted. Eleven states now have nonbinary options because of Jamie. And what does he have? A lifetime of regrets.

“I should have been treated,” he shakes his head. But that’s becoming more impossible by the day, thanks to a fierce campaign against counseling for people like Jamie. The unforgiving Left has made the medical community -- like the education, sports, and business fields -- terrified to embrace the truth and stop people from making a mess of their lives. Their stories are ones of “crippling levels of depression” and suicidal thoughts -- even after getting the bodies they think they want. Ask [surgeon Miroslav Djordjevic](#). Behind the transgender flag-waving and pride-marching are real people in real pain. And like Jamie, they’re the puppets of a radical movement that doesn’t care about anything but advancing their agenda.

Some people are fortunate enough to find their way out. But, as Walt Heyer pointed out in [a wistful USA Today op-ed](#), it’s time they’ll never get back. As for Jamie, he’ll live with those wounds forever. But don’t feel sorry for him, he says. Learn from him. “Two fake gender identities couldn’t hide the truth of my biological reality. There is no third gender or third sex... I played my part in pushing forward this grand illusion. I’m not the victim here. My wife, daughter, and the American taxpayers are. They are the real victims.”

Tony Perkins' Washington Update is written with the aid of FRC senior writers.