

Privileged and Pretty Equals Success

By Marti Abernathey

Published September 2, 2009 | Updated March 31, 2026

https://www.transadvocate.com/privileged-and-pretty-equals-success_n_1218.htm

Abstract

This morning I received an email talking about a website called “The Pink Butterfly Network”. It claims to be a knockoff of Lynn Conway’s Transsexual Women’s Successes, pointing to transsexual women who should inspire us. I like Lynn Conway, and her Transsexual Women’s Successes page has become more than just pretty faces. But this knockoff [...]

Article

This morning I received an email talking about a website called “The Pink Butterfly Network”. It claims to be a knockoff of Lynn Conway’s Transsexual Women’s Successes, pointing to transsexual women who should inspire us.

I like Lynn Conway, and her Transsexual Women’s Successes page has become more than just pretty faces. But this knockoff site and others like it bother me. A success to who? What qualifies as a success? Someone that is feminine? Someone that is pretty? To me, this list plays to the worst face of the trans-community. It’s reminds me of this:

It’s every ugly thing that radical feminists say about us. Successful=feminine, Successful=thin, Successful=attractive. How misogynistic and shallow is that?

Success stories in my book are Ethan St. Pierre, Merissa Richmond, Monica Roberts, Diego Sanchez, Meghan Stabler, Katrina Rose, Vanessa Edwards Foster, Allyson Robinson, Earline Budd, and Robyn Walters. Not all of them are pretty, young, or feminine. They all have one thing in common... success.

Oh and I left one off the list... me. I am a successful transwoman. And I don’t need a website full of privileged white transwomen adorned with pink butterflies and glitter to know that.

Suggested citation

Marti Abernathey. "Privileged and Pretty Equals Success." TransAdvocate, September 2, 2009.

https://www.transadvocate.com/privileged-and-pretty-equals-success_n_1218.htm