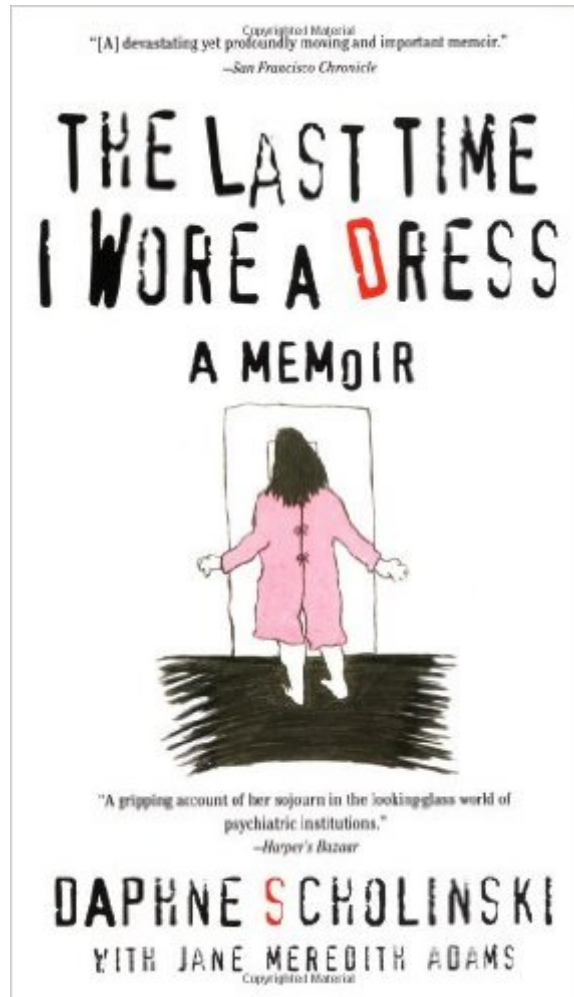


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# The Last Time I Wore A Dress



## Synopsis

At fifteen years old, Daphne Scholinski was committed to a mental institution and awarded the dubious diagnosis of "Gender Identity Disorder." She spent three years--and over a million dollars of insurance--"treating" the problem...with makeup lessons and instructions in how to walk like a girl. Daphne's story--which is, sadly, not that unusual--has already received attention from such shows as "20/20," "Dateline," "Today," and "Leeza." But her memoir, bound to become a classic, tells the story in a funny, ironic, unforgettable voice that "isn't all grim; Scholinski tells her story in beautifully evocative prose and mines her experiences for every last drop of ironic humor, determined to have the last laugh." (Time Out New York)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Daphne Scholinski wore the label of "inappropriate female" for much of her life. As a tomboy youth, she was often mistaken for male. On one grocery trip, a clerk caught the "boy" for using the women's restroom. When the clerk confronted Daphne's father, instead of correcting the clerk, her weary father slapped her hand: "Bad boy. I told you to stop doing that." In 1981, at odds with her raging father and abandoned by her free-thinking mother, 15-year-old Daphne was committed to a psychiatric hospital, at which a treatment plan was designed to help her identify as a "sexual female." Over one million dollars (you read that right) of insurance money was spent on three years of make-up lessons, encouragement of flirtation with males, and points for hugging male staff members. Daphne was indirectly blamed for all her family's troubles and told that her depression

and confusion were symptoms of her improper gender identification. Desperate for a mothering relationship, she latched onto nurses, begging to be adopted by the most compassionate one, and attempting suicide when her efforts were rebuffed. In a series of institutions, Daphne busied herself working the system to earn more privileges. To entertain themselves, she and other patients competed to shock the staff and get unusual diagnoses added to their charts. Their every movement was already analyzed and reduced into psychobabble, so why not? Daphne often embellished alcohol and drug abuse to make her case more interesting, but she realized she was out her league when she was transferred to rehab. All the while, a host of therapists and staff failed to identify sexual assault in Daphne's life, both before and \*after\* entering treatment.

Having come from an abusive home, I can relate to what Daphne/Dylan must have felt and how he behaved while trying to cope with his Gender-Identity and the far-from-sympathetic world around him in the 1980's. I came out as gay in 1970 and then as Transgendered in 1993, after having wrestled with "my self-knowledge - vs - what other people tried to make me act like" for MANY years prior -- it was a rocky hellish road at times, but (despite the abuse!) my parents accepted me (grudgingly at times) for who/what I was. I have nothing but kind words for those Transgendered friends of mine, who like Dylan, persevered through their own private torment, and who accepted me for who I was and for how I identified myself. I applaud Dylan for having the inner strength to keep going - keep going, no matter the present torment, no matter how horrible the present situation is - keep going forward with your own goal in mind, no matter how clear-cut or nebulous it is. This book has and will inspire others out there who "think they are the only ones" going through this. We may have come far but in too many parts of this country, children and young adults -- who are trying to reconcile their birth gender with their personal gender identity -- are still being put thru a living nightmare; parents abusing, insulting dismissing them from their households, with no nurturance, no desire to understand their own offspring; even their classmates, teachers, strangers, even friends turning against them. It takes HUGE inner strength to rise above all that and to keep going, keep going forward. This book will shock, inspire and galvanize. I hope it also EDUCATES those who harbor any prejudices against transgendered individuals, ESPECIALLY those who treat patients with Gender Identity "Disorder"..

Ever since she had been little, Daphne Scholinski had always had a somewhat masculine appearance, causing her to suffer the embarrassing fate of being mistaken for a boy in supermarkets, kicked out of public ladies' rooms, and even skated in pairs with unwitting females.

When her parents separated, when she was thirteen, and her mother left her in the care of her physically abusive father, Daphne also took on the masculine role of protector for her "girly" younger sister, Jean. As she grew older, she was sent to a therapist because she was flunking out of school, exhibiting anti-social behavior, and had joined a gang. When her behavior persisted, at the age of fifteen, she was sent to the first of a series of three mental hospitals where she would stay until she was eighteen, being treated for depression, substance abuse, an anti-social personality, and above all a mysterious Gender-Identity Disorder, costing more than one million dollars in insurance. The book starts out with Daphne's father driving her to the first hospital in Chicago, and her casually asking him not to send her. After she arrives, the narrative is a mixture of past and present, as Daphne talks about rebelling against her father and the consequences of that (being whipped with his belt), or how she would spend time at her mother's apartment (performing sexual acts for Frank, a man with a knee-holster who said he was a hit-man.) We hear about those who helped Daphne, such as a kind psychology intern at one hospital, and her third grade teacher; and those who hurt her, such as the best friends who pinned her down and smeared her face with lipstick, and the boys who cruelly raped her during her third and final hospitalization, knowing that because of her diagnosis of a Gender-Identity Disorder, she would never report them.

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