

About Jay Sennett



The craziest thing I have done in my life is a toss-up between creating and publishing cartoons, some of which are found in *Self-Organizing Men*, and actually publishing *Self-Organizing Men*. I can't draw. In real

time I don't think I'm funny. But as a long-post, uber theoretical blogger, I suck some serious wind. So I decided that if I couldn't say what I needed to say in a business-card sized cartoon, I had no business saying it.

Out of these experiences blogging and cartooning I created *Self-Organizing Men*. I got very, very tired of reading books where transsexual men were better than everyone else; or where everyone was genderqueer and beyond the binary; or where men were from uranus and women were from jupiter; or where we are just are the way we are because, well, you know, we're all born that way.

I wanted complexity! I wanted to create a poly-vocal, multi-voiced book of images, poetry, essays, and personal reflections that functioned like a jazz ensemble, where masculinity was defined by the author. Where masculinity wasn't about just clothing; or just hormones; or just genitals; or just communication styles; or just race; or just ability; but all of the above. Where masculinity was also about living with our contradictions and telling our privilege stories.



So in the process of editing the book, I created Homofactus Press, a global digital micropress. We're making history one book at a time, publishing books by, for and about transmasculine communities worldwide.

(BTW: The second craziest thing I have done in my life is change my gender. But that's another story.)

Before creating Homofactus Press, I worked as a filmmaker. My film *Phallocy* played to international audiences and was a blast to both create and talk about. *Phallocy* was a 2002 PlanetOut Short Film and Video Festival Finalist as well as a finalist in the Pink Apple Film Festival, 2001, Frauenfeld, Switzerland, Short Film Competition. In the film I talk about some very frank topics ~ FtM sexuality ~ that I thought other guys weren't talking about.



How does a 32-year-old lesbian become a man? Phallocy is an autobiographical film using spoken word, music and experimental techniques to explore the struggles of a female-to-male transsexual. The double-exposed, sepia-toned footage and sharp editing create the mood for the filmmaker's confrontation with living as female-bodied man. (From the film jacket)

When an audience member came up to me in Chicago to thank me for making the movie and said, "You've helped me vocalize a problem that I knew existed between me and my former FtM lover, but that he could never talk about," I learned how powerful story telling and honesty can be.

My previous films and videos include *Activism In Progress* and *The Parable*. My production credits include *Go Fish*, *Remembering Wei Yi-Fang* *Remembering Myself* and *The Cinematic Jazz Of Julie Dash*.

I've been in the trans community since 1994, which makes me practically ancient, and was the first out trans writer for *Outlines/Nightlines*, Chicago's gay and lesbian newspaper. I have over fifty published bylines; multiple speaking engagements at such places as the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, DePaul University, the Mayor's Office of Chicago, Ann Arbor City Council; and have keynoted at True Spirit Conference 2001 and at GenderQueer 2001: NW Transgender and Intersex Film and Video Festival and Forge Forward, 2007. My essay, "I am the Man! Performing Gender and Other Incongruities," coauthored with Sarah Bay-Cheng, Ph. D., has been published in *The Drag King Anthology* (Haworth Press, 2003).

In 2001, I was the **first female-to-male transsexual given the Cultural Award** by Detroit Gay and Lesbian Pride. In 1997 I believe I was the first out transsexual to be arrested for protesting the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia.

I continue to work on making Homofactus Press stronger, cartoon, observe masculinities and indulge in my passion for bespoke clothing.