

# HALF MAN, HALF

DM 9-5-89

## BORN WITH FEMALE AND MALE ORGANS

**A HERMAPHRODITE** is an individual born with male and female sexual organs and capable of reproducing with both, a professor of biology said today.

Professor Des Cooper of Macquarie University said many creatures were hermaphrodites, the best known being the earthworm.

"The term hermaphrodite is often used incorrectly when referring to people," he said.

Professor Cooper said he was unaware of any case of a human being born with both male and female sexual organs.

But he said there were many disorders of sexual determination. One such condition, he said, was of people born as women, but who had undescended testicles and did not have a uterus or fallopian tubes.

"They would be only found in one out of hundreds of thousands of people," he said.

A more common case was of people born with a both male and female chromosomes. Normal women have XX chromosomes and normal men have XY chromosomes.

But one in a thousand men are born with XXY chromosomes, a disorder known as Klinefelters condition.

By BRETT McCARTHY  
**A HALF man-half woman** was driven to suicide after an operation which would have ended the taunts and discrimination was continually delayed.

Friends today revealed the sad tale of **Samantha Raye** who took her own life in a cave at South Head while she waited to have a final sex change operation.

They said she was born an hermaphrodite, someone with both male and female sex organs.

Ms Raye grew up as a boy despite feeling she was more woman than man.

But delays in finding suitable accommodation eventually became too much for the person friends described as a "gentle and talented human being".

Volunteer worker at the Wayside Chapel Hanna Hedler said Ms Raye's doctor would not perform the operation, which would have changed her life, because of the infectious conditions in which she lived.

### Notebook

"She had been trying to get somewhere through the Department of Housing for two years but she was continually told there was nowhere available," she said.

Ms Raye's body was found in March, in a cave at South Head beside a bottle of insulin and a notebook full of sad poems and bizarre scribbles on the wall.

"She had already had one operation but needed the final one," Mrs Hedler said.

She said the walls of Ms Raye's cockroach-infested flat at Potts Point were covered in mildew, water leaked through a wall and

# WOMAN'S TRAGEDY



BIZARRE: Scribbles in the cave where Samantha's body was found

tiles fell from the bathroom wall.

"The doctor said he would not allow someone recovering from an operation to return to these conditions," she said.

Mrs Hedler said she had known the person others referred to as "it" for two years.

In that time Ms Raye, 31, had told her much about her tragic life.

"She was born in New Zealand and through no fault of her own suffered this terrible life," she said.

"Her father wanted her to be a boy so much that he beat it into her."

After going to school and battling through her teenage years Ms Raye came to Australia to start a life as a woman and have the corrective operations.

Mrs Hedler said she was a talented artist and poet who wrote continually about her search for her real self.

In her tragic poems Ms Raye talked of her wish to be treated as a normal

person and to find a male companion.

"She had male friends but they always turned away from her," she said.

In 1984 she was beaten and raped — an attack which brought to an end a career as an entertainer.

She was known as The Blue Angel during her time as a dancer and singer at Les Girls in Kings Cross.

"She was a very talented singer who could sing in both male and female voices," Mrs Hedler said.

"She could just go from one voice to the other in a second.

"She had so much to offer the world if other people would have just treated her as a normal person.

"Unlike many others in her situation she was not a drug addict or a prostitute."

Mrs Hedler said she had warned a number of times of the possibility that Ms Raye would commit suicide.



TORTURED LIFE: Samantha