

Hyde Street #
San Francisco CA 94109

March 22, 1980

Judy Van Maasdam, Coordinator
Gender Dysphoria Program
905 Middlefield Road
Palo Alto CA 94301

Dear Ms. Van Maasdam:

This is in response to your letter of non-acceptance into your Gender Dysphoria Program.

When I applied to your Program, I knew I had an 80% chance of being rejected, but felt it important to add my special circumstances to your list of statistics. I was warned that I would most likely be rejected because of my interest in men as sexual partners. I realize this is an unusual "twist" for the female-to-male. Yet it is very common for male-to-females to become lesbians after surgery. It is unfortunate that your Program cannot see the merit of each individual, regardless of their sexual orientation. The general human populace is made up of many sexual persuasions-- it is incredible that your Program requires all transsexuals to be of one fabric. I had even considered lying to you about my sexual preference of men, as I knew this would surely keep me out of your Program, but I felt it important to be straightforward, possibly paving the way for other female-to-males with homosexual orientations-- and we do exist.

Hearing that you had "some concern that I have expectations that my life will change radically once I begin to live as a man," I actually had to laugh. It would seem to me that someone who does not feel their life will change after gender reorientation should be discouraged from taking such a radical step. If I felt that my life would continue as is, I would never consider the serious and body-traumatizing effects of sex reassignment. Moreover, after crossdressing and passing as a man for close to 7 years, I think I have a very realistic picture of what is and what is not. In looking over my application, I can see nothing that would communicate unrealistic expectations. In fact, I clearly state that I do not foresee any major changes in my present lifestyle... I've been trying to live as a gay man for nearly 7 years! In addition, after taking testosterone for about 4 months now, I am passing full-time as a man and have never been read once. I have a California State Driver's License in my male name and sex. My future as a man is already well underway, and I have never felt better about my life and myself.

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I find it pretty amazing that I have been accepted by everyone I have come in contact with regarding my plans to become a man, except your Program, which is reputed to be expert. My entire family, friends, my employers and co-workers have all extended their support and acceptance, including:

- my 78-year-old grandmother, who is one of those who adapted best to calling me by my male name and using male pronouns in reference to me though she has lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin her entire life
- my mother (who bought me men's suits 5 years ago, addressing me as her son in front of the tailor); my father (who, without my asking, offered me financial assistance for the change); my 3 sisters (one of whom suggested she pose as my female lover if it would help in my acceptance into your Program) and 1 brother (who says I'm the closest thing to a brother he has); and my 3 nephews
- my 4 superiors at my place of employment, who have all begged me to continue at my job there, even after my change of identity
- my 17 co-workers, who have seen me daily for the last 4 years and who are all straight as an arrow, yet can understand that, for me, this is something necessary
- my friends of the past and present, almost without exception

This, in itself, is an incredibly strong statement in favor of my suitability for gender reorientation. As far as I can see, you have rejected one of the best candidates you've probably ever had.

Sincerely,



Lou Sullivan
(Sheila Sullivan)