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Mr. Louis G. Sullivan
[redacted] Albion Street
San Francisco CA 94110
U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

I am writing in reply to your fascinating letter of 24 August 1987. There are several points I wish to cover in this letter. First, however, I would like to express my sincere regret at your illness and my hopes that a complete cure for this disease will soon be discovered.

In the ASB paper which you mention, I excluded the one female-to-gay-male from the formal data analyses on the basis of purely mathematical considerations. In general, statistical procedures are simply not intended to look at groups of one. Because I recognized the importance of the case, however, I described this patient in a separate paragraph--the only subject in the whole study singled out for such special attention. I also made a point of looking for any previous references I could find on similar cases and managed to come up with the much earlier observations of Magnus Hirschfeld. I hope it will be clear from the foregoing that my handling of this case in the paper was not some form of discrimination, and that my intention was not to sweep this case under the rug but rather to highlight it.

In your letter, you mention that you have found three or four references to female-to-male gay men in the literature. I would be very interested to know where these references may be found. I have long been aware of Rupert Raj's remark, published in Metamorphosis, that he knows of seven such cases. I have also long toyed with the idea of contacting Mr. Raj (whom I have met on several occasions) to explore the possibility of working up a research project on female-to-male gay men. Your letter encourages me to think that this could be a worthwhile project to pursue in the near future.

I should certainly be interested to learn more about your life, your experiences, and your feelings, if you would care to write again. This information could be useful to me or anyone planning a research project on female-to-gay males, or it might

be possible to publish your story as a separate article in the form of a case report (with your name omitted, of course, and all other identifying information disguised). In the latter case, I would need you to include an explicit statement giving me permission to publish your history (anonymously) in a case report; journal editors nowadays are increasingly prone to require that authors have explicit signed (and preferably witnessed) permissions or consents from their subjects.

If you should write again, it would obviously be for the purpose of benefitting science rather than yourself, and you are free to disclose or withhold any information that you choose. You would undoubtedly wish to stress those aspects of your experience that seem most significant to you, and I would certainly encourage you in this. I am also, however, listing certain questions that seem significant to me, and you might address some, none, or all of them as you see fit. You will immediately recognize that many of these questions are intended to compare and contrast you with the stereotyped "classic" female-to-male transsexual.

Were you a tomboy as a little girl? Did you strongly prefer to play with boys rather than girls? Did you prefer games and toys associated with boys rather than girls? Did you ever play with dolls? Did you have to be forced to wear dresses? Did you ever believe, or hope, that you might turn into a male as you grew older?

At puberty, were you disgusted or dismayed by the beginning of your periods or by the growth of your breasts? Did you begin to date boys in high school? Did you have one or more steady boyfriends? If so, did you feel something was wrong or lacking in these relationships? Did you ever experiment sexually with another girl?

When did you begin having sexual intercourse with men? Did you find vaginal penetration to be uncomfortable, or repugnant, or just somehow unnatural for you? Did you prefer to perform fellatio on your partners or bring them to orgasm by some other means? Did you feel uncomfortable if a man touched your breasts or vulva or wished to perform cunnilingus on you? Were male partners able to bring you to orgasm, and if so, by what means? Did you just prefer to kiss and cuddle, without having to go beyond that? Did you wish you could do something to a man that another man might do, such as penetrate your partner anally? Did you ever attempt this, and was your partner willing?

As an adult woman, did you ever have a steady boyfriend? Did you ever fall in love with a man? Were you ever married? Have you ever been pregnant or borne children?

What were the circumstances in which you first began identifying as a gay man? Did your social circle at that time primarily consist of gay men? Did you feel more comfortable or accepted among gay men than among women or straight men? Did you feel that gay men were more amusing or sympathetic than straight men? Was there some aspect of the gay lifestyle that you found

particularly appealing? Did you enjoy socializing in gay bars? Did you find straight men too dull or too stodgy?

Did you find gay men more sexually attractive than straight men? If so, what was the important difference? Did you find gay men more attractive because you saw them as softer, more sensitive, more feminine? Or were you excited by some aspect of their sexual behavior--their willingness to be physically penetrated? Did they appeal to some protective instinct in you? What kind of gay man most appealed to you romantically and sexually? Macho, leather types? Flamboyant queens? Middleclass professionals? Were you in love with a gay man around the time you first began identifying as a gay man yourself?

How long did it take for your transsexual identity to crystallize fully? When did you first attempt to get sex reassignment surgery? Were you discouraged by professionals because of your sexual preference? Did you live full-time as a male before undergoing sex reassignment surgery? Did you work or attend school as a male before undergoing surgery? What operations have you had: breast amputation, hysterectomy, oophorectomy, phalloplasty? Did you ever regret having sex reassignment surgery? Was this because of AIDS or some other reason? How did your family accept your decision? Did you continue working or attending school (in the male role, of course) after your various surgeries?

Before you began testosterone, did you have difficulty passing as a male? Do you feel that surgery and testosterone made you a physically convincing man?

How did you fit into the gay community after surgery? Did surgery have any effect on your social integration? Were you better accepted as "one of the guys" after surgery than before? Did you feel like more of an insider? Was it easy or difficult to find acceptable lovers? How were potential partners affected by the knowledge that you are a biological female? Did your partners seem disconcerted or put off by your lack of a normal erectile penis? How did you and your partners usually achieve orgasm? Did you perform fellatio on them or allow them to penetrate you anally? Was there any means for them to bring you to orgasm that you found acceptable? Did your partners perceive you as a man, despite your lack of a penis or their knowledge of your chromosomal sex? Was it important for your sexual satisfaction that they perceive you as a man? Was it essential for their sexual satisfaction that they perceive you as a man? Did you ever have sex with a man who never discovered your original sex? Did you ever have sex with the same man more than once? Did you ever have a short fling or a longer-term relationship with a man after surgery?

I realize I have written a lot of questions and that I should stop now. I hope you will not find these questions offensive; you are not, anyway, under obligation to reply to any of them or even to answer this letter. You have stimulated a lot of thinking on my part and I was glad to receive your letter.

I also intend to write to Drs. Paul Walker and Eli Coleman, who have had the advantage of direct contact with you. I feel that their impressions and views of your case might help me develop a more multi-dimensional picture.

Finally, I might mention that there could be a Canadian postal strike anytime after September 20, which might result in mail being lost or greatly delayed. If you should write me, therefore, around that time and receive no answer within a reasonable interval, you should send me a follow-up note to make sure I received your previous correspondence.

Very truly yours,

Ray Blanchard

Ray Blanchard, PhD
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