

# Coordinate system fails transgender student



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I seriously doubt that there isn't a person on this campus who hasn't noticed me at least once.

I'm the guy who's always dressed like a girl. Well, I figured it's about time to explain myself. Those of you who know me know that I'm not shy about telling people about who I am and why I dress and act the way I do.

To begin with I'm transgendered, which basically means that I believe I was meant to have been born another sex or raised another gender. For those of you who are business or math majors, there is a difference between sex and gender. Sex is the biological organs you are born with, which makes me male. Gender is the roles that you choose (or are forced) to take on. I chose to take on the roles that are commonly associated with the female. A lot of people ask me why, though, so I'll tell you.

When I was in high school, I used to wish I was a girl. Every day I wanted to wear skirts, have long hair and female friends. I was trapped in my male body; I thought that it was the only choice for me. I had a male body so I had to act

like a guy, which is not the way I wanted to act. All I ever wanted was to be like all the other girls. So, I made up a persona named *Felicity*. Every day I would try to figure out what I would do at school and at home if I were *Felicity*. Then every night I would pray to God for a miracle; that in the morning I would be *Felicity* and everything would be just as I imagined it would be. Yet every morning I would wake, and with my eyes still closed, I would reach down to my chest and be crushed to find that I hadn't sprouted breasts in the night. This went on for four years.

My senior year of high school I bought my first item of girl's clothing. Since then, I've been dressing more and more like a girl. My

friends call me *Felicity*, and everything I wished I was I now am. You see, I discovered something: I didn't need a miracle. I had the power to become *Felicity* on my own. God does help those who help themselves.

Despite what many people may think gender identity and sexuality are not really connected. Just because I want to be a girl doesn't mean I'm at all interested in dating men. In fact, I consider myself a lesbian. So I have the honor of being transgender and a lesbian, lots of fun.

Despite all my self-discovery since I arrived here, being transgendered on this campus is no cup of tea. By far, the most difficult element has not come from the student body, but from the administra-

tion. The coordinate system ensures that I will always be out of place. As a Richmond College student, I am always set apart. I'm the girl who lives in Thomas Hall. I have to use the same bathrooms and showers as guys and the closets are far too small for any girl's wardrobe. I'm effectively isolated from any of the Richmond College activities, which are focused on reinforcing maleness.

On the other hand, if I were a Westhampton student, I would also be separated, never allowed to be one of the girls. I would always be looked upon as an outside or an interloper. So I'm the victim of a system that believes, quite falsely, that everyone fits nicely into either a male or female group. I'm living proof that this is a mistake.