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Allen's P. C. B Est. 1888

Transsexual teacher looks forward to a new life

1304



Doris Richards before the operation

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"As far as we're concerned this is a name change," said deputy superintendent of the Alameda County schools department, Robert Coney, about the girls' physical education teacher who became a man at age 37.

"Miss Richards" simply asked that her teaching credential be altered to read "Mr. Dain," not much different than a Miss changing her name when she becomes a Mrs. Coney said.

But in Emeryville where Doris taught and Steve wants to teach, the sex changed teacher poses a problem without precedent.

Ironically it is the school district which unknowingly paid for Doris' transsexual operation.

The district's Blue Cross coverage for teachers paid for the operation, conducted at Stanford University, because "It was not specifically excluded in the contract," a Blue Cross spokesman said.

Steve Dain still has to undergo another operation to make him a complete man. He won't know if the medical insurance will cover it until he submits the bill, he said.

The operations plus hormones cost approximately

school board, he said, gave him some encouragement.

He said he is capable of teaching the biological sciences or English. His teaching credential allows him to teach any course in the junior or senior high schools.

For Doris Richards, the transformation was a lifelong experience.

A tomboy who could out run the boys, Doris always felt like she was somewhere in between being a girl and a boy.

She was born a girl but had broad masculine shoulders and boyish mannerisms. As she grew older she tried to curb her masculine movements and be more feminine.

'I've been a success as a woman and I'll be a success as a man'



The new Steve Dain, adjusting to a new life in a new body with a new outlook

Examiner photos by Katy Raddatz

The transsexual surgery, Steve said, "removed that dichotomy."

Doris had wearied of the constant stares and of being mistaken for a man. She had enough hair on her face to require shaving and her athletic body was tight like a man's. Even with makeup and earrings on, Doris was never considered a normal woman.

Then she did the bravest thing she had ever done, he said yesterday, "I declared that this is what I want to do and I'm not going to allow other people to dictate to me how I should be."

Doris went to Stanford, underwent screening and was given hormones. She tried passing as a man, rototilling part of a church yard, washing a diesel truck and

working as a salesman. She felt comfortable and no one seemed to notice that she wasn't a man.

Doris underwent the first of two operations, a mastectomy, which made her chest that of a man's.

He expects he will become a role model for others, "I've been a success as a woman and I will be a success as a man."

If the school board wants to throw him out, it will have to prove under California law, that he is either immoral, unprofessional or unfit for teaching.

Steve Dain, the sex change pioneer, doesn't believe it will come to that.

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The operations plus hormones cost approximately \$7,000. Forty-three women have become men at Stanford since the program began in 1968.

While Dain is growing more manly with close cropped beard, fine muscle tone and baritone voice, the Emeryville School Board has three weeks to decide whether to allow him to teach or to challenge his right to enter the classroom.

It is a decision, Emeryville school superintendent Lewis Stommel acknowledged worthy of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Before a decision is made, Stommel said, the district will hire an attorney versed in school law to tell them what it says, if anything, about sex-changed teachers.

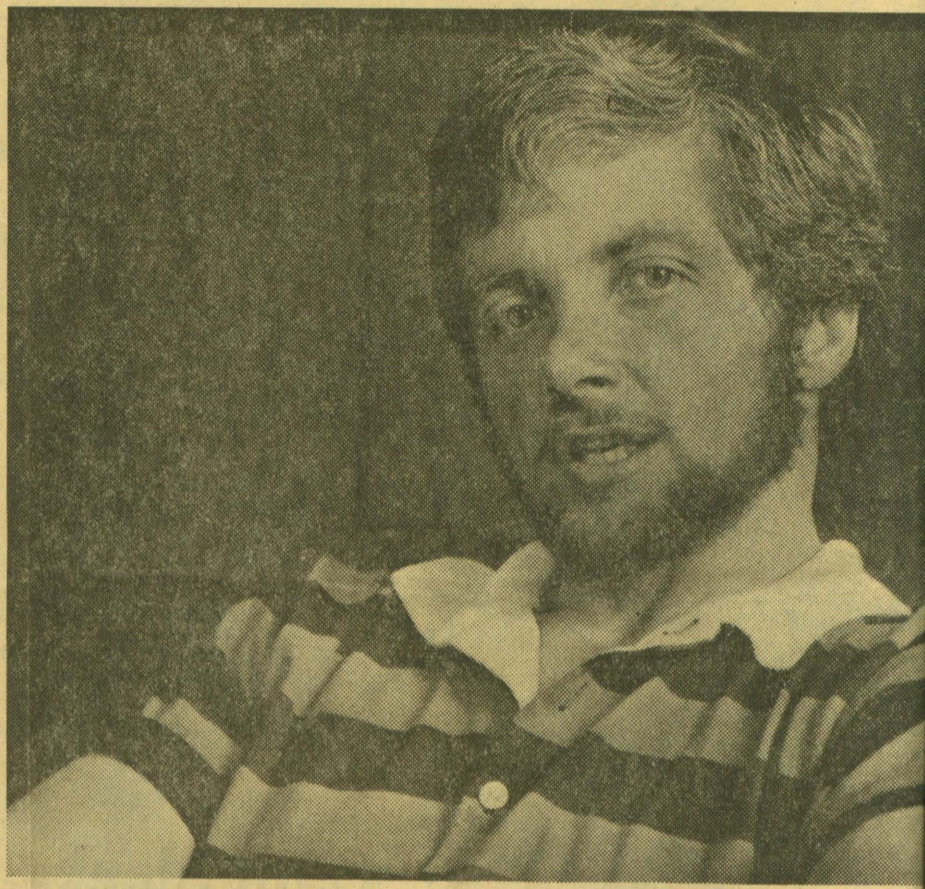
But "the law," Stommel said, "is not concrete. "The pivotal question is the children, he said.

"Sex change is a drastic personal, psychological and physical procedure," the superintendent said. "I always wonder whether this person has his act together... A teacher is dealing with impressionable kids," and a sex change, Stommel said, is much more than wearing unisex clothes.

The Doris Richards-Steve Dain question is a particularly sensitive one because Richards was named teacher of the year in 1975 by the students and because she had been head of her teachers' association.

Steve Dain has no intention of returning as a girls' physical education teacher. In fact, he said yesterday, he did not intend to return to the Emeryville schools until the students he had taught asked him to and the

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