

# Trans people just want the same as everyone — the right to live their life

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As trans people go, I would say I'm lucky. I'm in a strong relationship; we share a great apartment in a nice seaside town; I'm loved and supported by family and friends; and my acting career is ticking along quite nicely, thank you very much (at least until Covid-19 came along).

Yet I do feel the need to speak up when my community – the LGBTQIA community, in general, and the T in that alphabet soup in particular – is under attack, misrepresented or at risk of being silenced by a majority population that would rather we didn't exist at all.

In today's fast-moving social politics, I'm practically a dinosaur. I began my transition process 20 years ago – in fact I changed my name around this time of the year and so June feels a bit of an extension to my birthday month of May.

My transition was pretty much textbook. I had been seeing a psychiatrist at London's Charing Cross Hospital, working through my gender

dysphoria in our half-hour sessions for which I shall eternally thank the NHS.

Following the codified stepping stones towards completion of transition, I made a statutory declaration renouncing my previous name and obtained the necessary letters from my psychiatrist and GP to change the gender on my passport, driving licence and all other official documentation except my birth certificate. A year later the Gender Recognition Act made it possible for me to tick that final box off my list.

I've been reflecting on how my transition might have been different had I been permitted to self-identify as female from the outset and gain official recognition without having to obtain those confirmatory medical letters.

I was one of the lucky few: my GP was supportive and I always had a cordial rapport with my doctor at Charing

Cross. But many trans people's experiences have been, and continue to be, unhappy. Prejudiced GPs – the "gatekeepers" who can ease or impede transition – and long waiting lists are just the tip of the iceberg for the trans person embarking on transition in 2020.

Self-identification seems to be the last straw for those people who persist in their resistance to the trans-liberation movement. They presume the proposed regime will open up a flood of sex attacks on cisgender women (natal females) perpetrated by trans women.

Yet self-identity isn't about giving men a licence to put on a dress and call themselves women in order to rape and attack females. Self-identity is about giving people of all gender expressions the right to live without having to justify their existence, in their own skin and in peace.

Two decades after my transmy transi society is undergoing seismic change in civil liberties. It's time to embrace these changes and to accept that while we are all different, we're also all the same. Not every human life is a trans life, but all trans lives are human lives.

## READERS' POLL

**Should the law allow trans people to self-identify?**

Have your say at [sundaytimes.co.uk/poll](https://www.sundaytimes.co.uk/poll)

*Rebecca Root was the first transgender actress to play a leading role in a BBC comedy, BBC's *Boy Meets Girl**