

(The Gender Centre advise that this article may not be current and as such certain content, including but not limited to persons, contact details and dates may not apply. Where legal authority or medical related matters are cited, responsibility lies with the reader to obtain the most current relevant legal authority and/or medical publication.)

What it Means to be a Man

I've always been a man, thought like one, walked like one, spoken like one

by Michael

Article appeared in Polare magazine: August 1998 Last Update: October 2013 Last Reviewed: September 2015



... I want facial hair, a moustache, beard, sideburns, the lot.

I've always been a man, thought like one, walked like one, spoken like one. Only trouble was, since puberty, I had breasts that I couldn't hide and everyone expected me to stop being a tomboy and act like a lady.

The hormonal treatment has helped my voice to deepen but my ovaries are mounting a rear-guard action and won't stop ovulating and off-setting the testosterone.

When I was thirteen, a visitor to our house asked me what I was going to be when I grew up, and I said, "a lady". Everyone laughed at this but it was no laughing matter, because I never grew up to be a lady, I stayed being a man.

As a teenager, I wanted to take girls out but never did because they didn't see me as a man. With breasts and menstruation I lost sight of my man and stopped

doing anything once a month, there was so much pain. My mother kept saying that she had the same monthly trouble and when she had me, she was okay. But I didn't want any kids and I didn't want to be sexual with guys (or girls but that was later) until I left the convent.

I think I liked it "inside" because I could hide behind my habit and no-one expected to see a lady there. My novice mistress harangued me about my deportment and my speech but I didn't know how to change it because I'm a man. Then Vatican II came along and nuns had to show more of themselves. I didn't like this because then I was back to wearing ladies' stuff and it didn't fit my manliness to dress like that.

So, after five years, I walked away and tried sex with over thirty guys over ten years before I "fell" for a woman. She was straight and she didn't see me as a man so I was turned away. I liked being around this woman. For the first time in my life (at the age of thirty-four) I knew what "being in love" was all about. It was both painful and joyous but more painful when she turned me out.

So I got into the dyke scene but over ten years I slowly got disenchanted with dykes. Then I met a transgendered lesbian/bisexual woman who wasn't too sure of herself. I knew I wanted to spend time with her but we couldn't relate the same way as I had with previous women. So we became friends and I decided to show the world that I'm a man.

My breasts disappear soon. Then I will feel comfortable going to bars and meeting people. "I'll lose the few hairs" I have on my chest in the reconstruction operation, but they'll grow back. The hormonal treatment has helped my voice to deepen but my ovaries are mounting a rear-guard action and won't stop ovulating and off-setting the testosterone.

There's a little dark fuzz above my belly button and hairs on my inner thighs. but I want facial hair, a moustache, beard, sideburns, the lot.

My gender map is a man's and I want the rest of the world to see this man. My love map is bisexual I think and both top and bottom. For now, I don't fit into any neat box as a man either anatomically or sexually.

I am me, a he-she, who now plays the waiting game to get a penis. It's a dangerous move, this phalloplasty, but a prosthesis is not enough for this boy. He wants it all.

Polare Magazine is published quarterly in Australia by The Gender Centre Inc., which is funded by the Department of Family & Community Services under the S.A.A.P. program and supported by the N.S.W. Health Department through the AIDS and Infectious Diseases Branch. Polare provides a forum for discussion and debate on gender issues. Unsolicited contributions are welcome, the editor reserves the right to edit such contributions without notification. Any submission which appears in Polare may be published on our internet site. Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, The Gender Centre Inc., the Department of Family & Community Services or the N.S.W. Department of Health.

The Gender Centre is committed to developing and providing services and activities, which enhance the ability of people with gender issues to

make informed choices. We offer a wide range of services to people with gender issues, their partners, family members and friends in New South Wales. We are an accommodation service and also act as an education, support, training and referral resource centre to other organisations and service providers. The Gender Centre is committed to educating the public and service providers about the needs of people with gender issues. We specifically aim to provide a high quality service, which acknowledges human rights and ensures respect and confidentiality.