

# LETTERS

With a little trepidation, much thought and a lot of self analysing, I took a deep breath, then a giant step forwards. Forwards into the world of tranny boys and adopted the new persona of being a man. Now, here I am, a new kid in town. But is this what I really want for my now, my future?

Emphatically, from the rooftops of my mind, body, heart and soul I yell. YES! This is what I want. YES! This is where I want to go. YES! YES! A thousand times YES!

But it hasn't been an easy decision to make as I'm sure you're all very much aware if. My decision to metamorphose began 8-10 years ago, when I first started to take hormones yet, didn't continue. Why? Why did I stop? Why didn't I continue then? Simply because the time wasn't right. I didn't feel it from deep within, like I do now. Also, there was the matter of having a 6-8 year old daughter.

The issue of having a daughter though hasn't changed, only now she's 16 years old. Unfortunately for us, we live several hundred kms apart and I've only been able to tell her over the phone. Soon we'll have a chance to sit face to face and talk about my decision to change and to hopefully answer all each others questions.

Maybe that could be another letter for me to write? Right now, after many years of self denial, my

decision to become what I feel I should've been all along is constantly being reinforced. Consciously, I made the choice to be open from the onset with my community, the lesbian community. The response has been 100% support.

Hear I would like to say a very big THANKS JASPER, for making your arduous trek as public as you have. Your doing so has paved the way ahead and made it easier for myself and the others that follow. Even though, as I've said, I've had 100% support there has been a tiny but of negativity that's crept through. This has been from a womyn with whom,

**"Now, here I am, a new kid in town"**

on occasion, I've had sex with. I had, it seems, been her ideal image of what she referred to as a "big butch dyke". Her absolute turn-on from a visual/mental perspective. So guess who's having a problem pinning this womyn down privately and alone for more than five minutes? Cest la Vie. Because, I sure as hell ain't gonna let nobody else's ideals stand in the way of mine.

Finally, all I can say now is that with a blend of support from the lesbian community, you guys out there standing up and saying "I am here and I'm happy/proud to be a man" and from drawing on my own inner resources, I GET STRONGER EVERY DAY.

*Happy living, yours in Brotherhood,  
Max, Sydney*

when you are in the wrong body. I have no history of instability or attempted suicide. I'm 31 years old and as such like to think I have attained a degree of maturity. So why the wait? Is it because as genetic women we are dealing with the medical profession which has traditionally not always had our best interest at heart, is this merely a standard procedure that some of you have also encountered, and am I just over reacting because I am angry and impatient? I'd welcome any feedback from those of you who have had surgery or are undergoing a similar process. I'm aware of Dale having difficulties in Victoria but would also like to hear from others.

I've since decided to assert my right to surgery how and when I choose it is appropriate and have made an appointment to see a female psychiatrist highly recommended to me. She may prove beneficial, however, if all three psychiatrists agree on the lengthy wait then I'll consider that it is perhaps a necessity in my particular case. Hopefully this doesn't sound like sour grapes but a healthy questioning of the transsexual programme system. It is in no way an indictment against the psychiatrist involved as this article reflects only my personal evaluation of the process to date.

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# BOYS WILL BE BOYS

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER #5 JULY 1992

### INTRO

Welcome to the new look Boys Will Be Boys newsletter. Yes, Jasper has just acquired a new laser printer with which to work with (thanks to Wicked Women) and is terribly excited. The new format is more cost effective, that is, it's actually the same length as previous newsletters but is obviously condensed onto one double-sided page which cuts my photocopying cost by 60% (and looks pretty smart too). I've chosen a cowboy-style type face for the newsletter which is pretty corny but I thought we'd all be macho enough to appreciate it!

Well, after my plea from the black hole of publishing, I've had an influx of contributions. Firstly, Max has written about himself and his process. Again, it's fantastic that you guys share with us all. Though we may have many parallels, each of our stories are different and fascinating. Thanks Max and welcome to the brotherhood.

Our feature article for this month comes from the partner of Jamie from Qld. Sheryl has kindly put into words her perceptions of her boyfriend and her relationship with him. It's terrific that a partner of a transsexual has shared her thoughts. Quite often, we boys can become quite self-obsessed with our gender process and have a tunnel-vision on that which is happening around us. This, is a natural reaction to what has got to be one of the most fundamental (if not the most fundamental) changes

in life. Yet, as a result, we can be quite oblivious to what our partners and/or close friends and family are going through. It is an equally difficult challenge for those who know us and love us to re-arrange their perceptions of us on a gender basis. Though the decision may come as little surprise to them, none-the-less, we are all conditioned to behave toward and think of both sexes in a differing way. Thanks goes to Sheryl for opening up and hopefully she may inspire other partners and friends of us men to write.

\* \* \*

I've finally hopped on board the merry-go-round of medical psychiatrists in an attempt to get approval for the first of my surgeries. I know that a few of you on this list have already had some surgery, at the very minimum, a double mastectomy. I was referred by my Endocrinologist to a psychiatrist who regularly deals with transsexual people. Anticipating a series of appointments, I was quite surprised when, after only my second visit, he decided I would not be eligible for any surgery for a twelve month period. He has referred me to another psychiatrist for a second opinion. However, the new doctor is also part of the seemingly small circle of medical professionals who deal with transsexuals.

I was at first angered by the decision but realise that a period of time is necessary to convince the

authorities of our commitment. However, after 18 months of hormone treatment I figured I'd almost paid my dues. I'd at least expected a few more visits before a decision was made of that nature. I also felt a sense of powerlessness, at a man, who doesn't know me, making such a crucial decision on my behalf. I got the impression, from what my sister said of her conversation with him (she was asked in to see the Dr as a family perspective), that he has a rather paternalistic view of women and their bodies; a certain preciousness. How could this person or any other, understand the trauma involved in seeing your female body before you every time you hop into the shower, the discomfort of strapping down especially through summer, the inability to go swimming, the fear of being betrayed by your body publicly, the reluctance to have sex with anyone due to being embarrassed by your own body?

Prior to the hormone treatment, I was reasonably resigned to my female body but basically indifferent to it. Now I find it intolerable. Once you start, you are impatient to go through the whole process. I feel in between genders physically which is distressing to say the least. I can see no justifiable reason to wait a further 12 months to have at least my breasts removed. I am a reasonably well-adjusted person, as well-adjusted as you can be

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## BEHIND THE CAMERA

It seems as though another of our members may be documented and preserved forever on film! You may remember last year Jasper was featured in a 15min video called F2M which has since been screened in the U.S. Now Dale from Melbourne, has been approached by a film maker who wishes to do something similar but scripted with our infamous Melbourne representative. Once completed, the film will be screened at local gay and lesbian film festivals. Dale will keep us informed if and when the project goes ahead. He first has to obviously way up the pros and cons of public exposure which is in itself a scary decision. Good luck Dale.

## GENDER IN FORMATION

We received our first copy of Bet and Lonnie's FTM newsletter titled "Gender In Formation". The April issue is a smart, four-paged document on blue (of course!) paper and professionally typed and designed. It also features photo reproductions which is great to see (including a stunning photo of the glamorous editors themselves). This issue features reviews of a Gender Bender Ball and a transsexual lesbian performance artist, Kate Bornstein, news and up and coming events plus a historical

column called "Forefathers". There's also a letter section and the FTM group, which this newsletter is a product of, is holding regular meetings and events.

*For a photocopy of this newsletter send \$1.30 which includes postage.*

## NEW BLOOD

Well, after a lull of about six months or so, we've an influx of interest and letters from new guys. Not only were we made aware of a group of five boys in Qld, as mentioned in a previous newsletter, but the last two weeks has brought to us three new men; welcome Ross from Bathurst, Christopher from Sydney and Terry also from Sydney. At times I am not sure whether the people who have written to us are FTMs as it can be confusing when a guy signs his male name but doesn't actually declare his transsexuality. So quite often I request a confirmation of a person's status before sending out material.

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## SNAPSHOT

Okay, seeing as none of you guys have got the ball rolling on this one, I've published a photograph of myself (at a recent Wicked Women event) so that our long-distance relationship becomes a little more intimate. I know many of you are reluctant to send photos of yourselves as you have not yet/just begun your initial stages, but hey, so what. Also, some of us have changed dramatically and look like men and may even have had surgery so how about someone volunteering for the next issue. It all helps to create a sense of community if when can put faces to the names that appear in print.



I've just finished reading Newsletter #4 BWBB and was discussing it with my lover, Jamie. He suggested that maybe I should contribute something to the newsletter and I thought "why not?". So here goes...

As a lover of a transsexual (F/M) I feel that there may be others in my position out there who may benefit from my contribution. To start with, Jamie and I have been together for nearly two years. We have celebrated a spiritual union in the presence of our friends and are therefore "married" by our community. At this point in time, our community consists mainly of lesbians as this is where I met Jamie. I first saw and came to know Jamie as a butch dyke (nothing effeminate in Jamie). I have always seen myself more femme and was quite happy to be with such a butch dyke person.

So life was going along with its ups and downs and most of the time we were happy. Jamie had always made love with me in a possessive, masculine way. It fitted in well with most of my ideas of passion and lust. Then one day he confided to me that he really felt like a man inside and that he didn't like identifying at all with any of the female properties of his body.

Jamie has always been assertive, sometimes pushy. Some people always seemed to get nettled in Jamie's company because (for an outwardly visible woman) he was

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too certain (too cocksure) perhaps. Whether these are specific masculine qualities or not I don't know but I do feel social conditioning does have some part to play here. But I'm sure that is another discussion in itself.

Anyway, Jamie has acted very masculine ever since I first met him. Sometimes there was confusion too, but maybe this was because of the internal conflicts

**"I jump between him/her when I talk about Jamie but I know how masculine Jamie is when we make love."**

going on inside Jamie. Well, after the revelation of Jamie's true identity we had to re-assess our relationship. I had for quite a chunk of my adult life identified as a lesbian. I still find women attractive. However, I have enjoyed lovemaking with my man at home so now I call myself versatile. Some people may call me bisexual but as for me I'm not worried about terms or names. Jamie is now becoming more

accustomed to living as a male in our house. Some of his friends know and so there is some room to act naturally with them. Other people still see us as lesbian and we let them see what they want. I jump between him/her when I talk about Jamie but I know how masculine Jamie is when we make love.

I realise there are still changes ahead for Jamie (who is presently pre-surgery, pre-hormones). What changes will occur only time will tell but one change we don't want to see and will do anything to avoid is us breaking up. I realise that this seems to be a common problem in the transsexual world and after reading Julian's story I say goodluck to both you and your new lover.

Happiness (and isn't that what we all want) presents itself in the oddest places. So we should accept happiness when it happens and not burst the bubble with too many questions about what should be or how it should be.

To all the transsexuals out there, as a lover of a transsexual, I think I can say there is someone out there for you. I know I am happy with Jamie most of the time and to Jamie the transition to masculinity is the step which will give him peace in this world. To see my lover attain this peace will make me happy for him.

I'll finish up now and hope this letter is of some use to someone.  
*Yours, Sheryl.*