

## Gender misconceptions

Sad to say, the source Dr. Thomas K. Nelson cites in his letter "The meaning of gender" (Letters, CURRENT PSYCHIATRY, May 2007, p. 3) is a very prejudiced work in regard to transsexualism. I should know; I am a postoperative, male-to-female transsexual, although I now identify myself as a normal woman.

Gender identity disorder (GID) starts quite young, usually at age 3 or 4, and is a persistent knowledge that the body's physical characteristics are wrong for the gender our brain determines. Please note that this occurs well before the onset of puberty.

It is sad that therapists often act as "gatekeepers" and can impose their standards of who is female or male as the case may be. There is, of course, no way a therapist can detect who is lying or mimicking having GID because these individuals might be guilty of self-deception. Usually the start of hormone replacement therapy and loss of libido discourages these individuals, but a few do slip through.

For me the greatest sense of relief and happiness occurred immediately after the operation, and I realized that for the first time in my life my body was congruent with my brain's gender.

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