

# EXPLORING YOUR FULL SEXUAL POTENTIAL, PART 37: "I CAN'T PLAY SOCCER FOR NUTS"



I was reading the daily news on my smartphone the other day, minding my own business, when all of a sudden, I saw this new campaign to be launched to change professional soccer into a more inclusive environment for, as they put it: 'gay' and 'bisexual' soccer players. Because in Belgium, there are no openly 'gay' professional soccer players. And that has to change, so we are informed. Damn, June. Pride Month. I had forgotten. Mosquitoes, sunburn, and Pride Month. How could I forget? Not to mention horny frogs, croaking in my pond all night.



And all of sudden, the soccer guys have to change. Yep, all of them. And that amounts to a lot of guys, I will have you know. Macho culture, so we are informed. No soccer career for me, but a hairdresser's career, or a nice codependent psychiatrist's. Little old me. Damn that soccer-playing culture. How repressive! I could have become a millionaire. After all, I was dying to play professional soccer, but then their culture stepped in. And now I am the victim. What to do?

First, I got to learn to kick a ball. Can't kick a ball for nuts. Never learned it, never liked it. They kept on pushing me away, and clumsy me, I never, ever, kept the ball between my legs for more than two seconds. Yep, it was done to me. And now look. Career down the drain.

I was never competitive, but then again, I was born that way. Yep. So, they are the problem, not me. I feel that soccer should be open, should be accommodating, should be inclusive to guys who are not in the slightest way competitive. Guys who are shy, guys who are into art, guys who care about the spastic children in their class, not to mention the Down Syndrome kids, guys who are sensitive, useful, and self-sacrificing. Guys like me.

Damn, where are the millions? It is so unfair. It has to change. They have to change. Yep. All of them. We gay guys are only 1.3% of the population according to a recent UK poll (Really? Ever heard of fake news? Surely we are up to 13%!)  
  
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On a serious note, there are two ways to look at the emancipation struggle: the moderate view and the radicalized view. We moderates, say *"change the world, start with yourself"*.

Our radicalized colleagues, however, say: *“change the world, start with the other guy, because me, I am perfect. Always have been, always will be”*.

So, as a sort of optometrist, let us look at these two worldviews.



*Fidel Castro dies at age 90*

Our colleagues are running out of steam ever since gay marriage was introduced more than twenty years ago. An arthritis, of sorts, or a 90-year-old Fidel Castro. Bay of Pigs, anyone? Never mind. What's up, this June?

Soccer. Those straight guys do it each Summer. This year, they're up next. Straight guys love soccer, straight guys hug each other after a hard-won battle, and they hate me. Or do I hate them?

Do I hate them?

I loathe them and all that they stand for. And all feminists agree with me. They loathe them too. And on my smartphone, we are informed of a campaign to step in and change those guys. Those guys are straight, white, and above all: men. They need fixing. The sound of their macho voices is as repulsive as the frogs in my pond. Horny. Soccer players suffer from toxic masculinity. And so do the frogs. Especially in June. The resemblance is striking. Keep you awake all night. So does my jealousy. I have every reason to despise them. They are the problem when it comes to my not being Cristiano Ronaldo. It can't be me.

But is that really so? In the rest of this article, let us see if we can use paradox psychology to investigate the opposite without making up our minds for good.

At a young age, we have not crossed the tight rope toward masculinity yet. It scared us, or perhaps there were other reasons. Whatever. We remained at the mother side of the canyon, a gorge that divides a human from aligning with mom and aligning with dad. For there is, after all, a difference. Every kid gets to understand that fact by the age of two, so science has proved. For most people, it goes without saying. Except for some people: us.

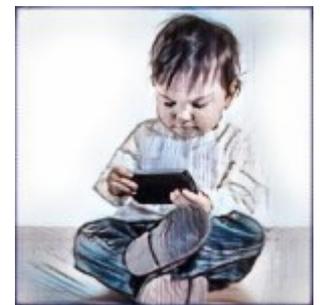


We got to face the tightrope like everyone else, but yuck, there was a small detour on our path. Many kids suffer from detours, but in our case, yuck. You do not trip over a mountain, you trip over a pebble. Yep, there was a pebble there alright. Make that two pebbles. And so, masculinity became elusive. No maleness for me. Yet.

But we want to, all the same. It is the call of the genes unless you want to deny the genes in your cells. They coax you, they lead you to become who you are: gendered.

Science now knows that this is hardware. But in this day and age of genetic engineering, plastic surgery, and the injections of phony levels of cross-sex hormones, the horizons have become clouded, confused, and filled with mirages of identity and escape-routes from genetics.

It is going to get worse because the demand to indulge in a fantasy world, hitherto unknown, is the hype of this day and age of social media. It is growing into our new Big Brother: *"We know you, we see you, we control you"*. Many complain about the lack of parental control in this realm. The parents watch *"Married With Children"* (corny, I admit), while the kids upstairs obediently click to follow the algorithms of Youtube. A cleverly engineered social addiction. Big Brother has also come to delete: it is called *"the cancel culture"*. Really clever.



What is it that causes the avoidant kid to seek the refuge of his smartphone rather than to learn to handle the reality of rough-and-tumble confrontations?

Dutch psychologist Dr. Gerard Van Den Aardweg points in his book *'The Battle for Normality'* to the paradox of boys seeking love and affection from their tribe (males) on the one hand and their ambivalence toward it on the other. He writes:

*"The boy may indeed have painfully missed the esteem and interest of his father, in other cases of his brother(s), or of his male peers, which made him feel inferior to other males. The ensuing urge for love is the urge to belong to the men's world, to receive the recognition and friendship of those to whom he feels inferior.*

At this point, we must avoid a common misunderstanding. There is a popular idea that people who did not receive (enough) love in childhood and who were psychologically affected by it will be cured if they now receive the lacking quantity of affection. Several therapeutic approaches have been based on this premise.

But it is not that simple. First, it is not the objective lack of love that counts so much as the child's perception of it. And that, by definition, remains subjective. Children may misinterpret their parents' behavior and, with their tendency to dramatize themselves, may imagine they

are not wanted, that their parents are terrible, and so on. Beware of taking the adolescent's view of his parents' treatment of him as an objective report!

Moreover, the "void of love" is not filled simply by pouring love into it. To be sure, that would be the solution the adolescent who feels lonely or inferior himself seeks and believes in. "If I receive the love I missed so much, I shall be happy", he imagines. But in accepting this theory, one overlooks an essential psychological fact: the existence of the attachment to self-pity.

Before the young person has become wont to experience himself as pitiable, affection indeed can help overcome his frustration. But once the "poor me" attitude has taken root, his love-seeking is no longer a functional and remedial drive, aimed at reparation.

It has become part of his self-dramatizing attitude: "I shall never get the love I want!" It is insatiable longing, never to be fulfilled. The search for same-sex love of the homosexual is a yearning that will not stop so long as the "poor me" attitude from which it flows remains alive.

It was Oscar Wilde who complained, "I have always sought love and all I could find were lovers." The mother of a lesbian daughter who committed suicide observed: "All her life, Helen was looking for love", but of course she never found it (Hanson 1965, 189). Why not? Because she was addicted to her adolescent self-pity about not being loved by other women. Put otherwise, she was a "tragic adolescent".



Cristiano Ronaldo

So, when we apply Gerard's findings to the latest LGBT headlines that a macho culture is preventing poor little gay guys from becoming Ronaldo's, we see exactly what Gerard warned us about: the *self-pity* syndrome, the "poor me" stance, the self-image of "the tragic adolescent". And he warned us way back in 1997.

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## Conclusion



It is June now, Pride Month. In September, a new soccer season will start. I am entitled to make millions and I am entitled to the crowds cheering for me. Straight guys never cheer for just your being gay, as everyone does in June. After all, in Summer, I parade around, macho in my leather gear in Pride Month.

In September, however, the crowds expect me to deliver. The very idea! Even those little brats who are six or seven years old and who go to watch soccer with their old man, expect me to be a role model and not for being gay because they don't know quite what that is, but for kicking the ball around as Cristiano Ronaldo does.

But now, we are back at Square One: I can't play soccer for nuts.

To be continued.

Job Berendsen, MD.

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