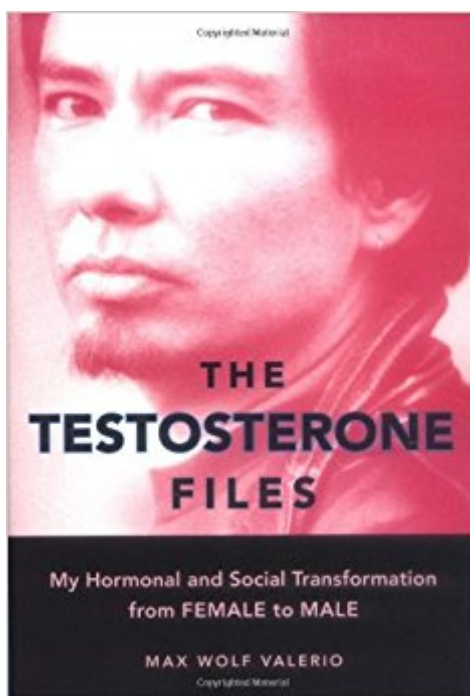


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# The Testosterone Files: My Hormonal And Social Transformation From Female To Male



## Synopsis

Max Wolf Valerio crafts a raw, gripping, and poetic account of life before, during, and after injecting testosterone. Valerio's detailed observations about a lesbian transitioning from female to a heterosexual male highlights the physical and emotional differences between women and men, and alternately challenges and confirms readers' assumptions about gender. Valerio presents his story in three parts: the height of his transition, in which he witnesses his own increased energy and sex drive while struggling with gaining confidence in his male self and bearing witness to his own demise as a woman; life before testosterone, when as Anita, a self-identified lesbian out for fourteen years, he confronts startling moments of awareness of a deeper, earlier dream of who he really is; and life after testosterone, when the experience of living in the world as a man is at once a homecoming and a confirmation that male behavior is at least partly rooted in biology. *The Testosterone Files* addresses the most fundamental issues of transitioning, from buying men's underwear to choosing a male name, as well as the profound subjects of male privilege, physical power, and existing as a male who was once distrustful and critical of men's intentions. Valerio's honest and forthcoming opinions on gender, identity, and self-perception comprise the core of this intensely personal and absorbing narrative which grapples with the tough and complex issues that emerge in a world whose assumptions about gender binaries are being increasingly challenged as more people openly self-define across the gender spectrum.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The best thing about this aggressive, emotional memoir by a former lesbian, female-to-male

transgender is that its author never elicits easy sentiment or empathy from the reader. This is, by intent and in delivery, a tough book. Born in 1957 in Germany, a part-Native American Army brat, Anita Valerio grew up to be a lesbian-feminist who, after seeing the boxing film Raging Bull at age 23, began to understand that she was really a man. Eleven years later, Valerio is injecting testosterone and well on his journey to manhood. Valerio writes directly and forcefully about his "primal" new male sexual desires, which feel like "an outburst of instinct," as opposed to life on estrogen, which felt like being submerged "in a sweet, dense fog." Valerio's maleness is often expressed in blunt, even offensive language, as at the end of the book, when he realizes, with irony but not sadness, that he has made a further advance into maleness when it becomes more difficult to communicate with women. Valerio's broad, dichotomized stands on politics and gender often feel like just another tough pose. Worse, they flatten out the memoir's emotional landscape. (June) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Determined to convey the experience of "one of the most extravagant experiments of the twentieth century," Native American Latino Sephardic poet and performer Valerio details the physiological, psychological, and social transformations of female-to-male sex change in three "files." The first describes Valerio at the start of the transition. "Before Testosterone" looks back at the internal--external factors leading to then leather-and-spikes lesbian Valerio's decision for the life-altering change. "After Testosterone" assays the "construction" of maleness. Valerio's on-target perceptions reveal such all-important details as increased hair growth on legs and feet, enlargement of the pores, and increased energy. Valerio started testosterone injections on March 20, 1989, and learned to give himself the shots of thick, oily liquid while watching his femaleness recede with attendant joy and nostalgia. Eventually, he built his masculinity physically--the clitoris, a "neocock," enlarged sufficiently to achieve penetration with female partners--and, most important, psychologically. A signal addition to gender and sociology collections. Whitney Scott Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I was amazed at what an articulate and accomplished writer Max Wolf Valerio is. His journey is nothing less than courageous and heartwarming. I'm thankful that I could hear his story from his own personal experiences and true feelings from within. I purchased the book because I was curious about the effects of testosterone but I learned so much more by reading this book. It is definitely a book to be applauded and valued for its most sensitive content.

Very interesting book! The author is a good writer and has an important story to tell about his life. He courageously tackles the subject matter of his transition in all its complexities without watering it down. Max shows himself as an imperfect individual, yet still evokes empathy in the reader. Recommended for anyone with an open mind!

This book reads like a personal diary was the basis for a book (which it most likely was). I found "Becoming a Visible Man" by Jamison Green a bit more informative on the topic of transmen in general and in society; however, what I loved about The Testosterone Files was how personal it felt. Max takes you on a very emotional and intimate ride through his life where you get to experience his highs, his lows, and everything in between. If you're looking for one person's individual experience through transforming from female to male, then this is the book for you; if you're looking for something more historical and more broadened into the world of transmen in general, then I would recommend "Becoming a Visible Man."

I barely made it through the prologue of this book because of the writing style. The author is a poet and it really shows in that section. Unfortunately I'm not too keen on poetry and, while slogging through it, kept mumbling Mark Twain's Rule 14: Eschew Surplusage! Nevertheless, this book is a fascinating read, and well worth pursuing to the end. Valerio throws amazing revelation after amazing revelation (ok, a little surplusage of my own) at you. I was surprised, for instance, that there are so many things about the effects of testosterone on men that I never knew or suspected. Valerio does an excellent job sharing his experience, providing insight into the (to me) mysterious feeling that one has been born into a body that does not fit his sexual identity. Our society would benefit from a greater understanding of LGBT issues, and this book is well-suited to that purpose. Read it and pass it on.

This is one of the most formidable works on gender studies I've read. The author takes you on a rather wild ride, through his childhood (as a female), adolescence and adulthood, when he decided to transition into masculinity. He writes it all in a lucid, stream-of-consciousness narrative, focusing sharply on details that would otherwise be lost. It's a fascinating read.

Poorly portrayal of men in general. Not impressed with how it's written.

This is one of the better ftm memoirs I've read. Intelligent, engaging, and honest. Valerio doesn't

shy away from the more complex or controversial aspects of transition.

WOW! Very revealing, enjoyed it very much....insights abound!

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Testosterone: The Definitive Guide to Boosting Your Testosterone, Gaining Muscle, Increasing Your Sex-Drive and Becoming the Ultimate Male (testosterone, health, fitness) The testosterone book.  
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