

## A fixation with small body parts

Every once in a while, I go through a restless phase. It usually happens as I peer into the bathroom mirror, first thing in the morning.

It's that teeny-weeny moment of indecision I must grapple with as I pick up the electric razor and fire it up.

To shave or not to shave — that is the question.

Whether 'tis nobler to trim that beard peering back at me from the other side of the mirror.

Or simply cut the damned thing off.

I'm sure most individuals (primarily men) who sport trimmed (or not so trimmed) facial hair, go through the same trauma and indecision from time to time.

What *does* that face behind the whiskers look like when it's denuded of all that protective covering?

I know the last time I did away with my beard it was suggested I grow it back, fairly soon. Like pronto.

My second oldest daughter, who was about six-years-old at the time, stared at me like I was some freak and said something to the effect, "Daddy, I don't like you with out your beard. Put it back on."

And when I think about it, I'm sure my youngest daughter, who is a scant decade old, has never seen me without whiskers.

Whenever I mention I might be shaving off my beard, most people I chat with tell me no one would know me. This furry face is too well known around town, I'd have to reintroduce myself to everyone I ran into.

(Now *that* has a certain appeal — I could shave my beard, dye my hair dark brown and replace my eyeglasses with contacts, and blend right into the background of society. And no one would ever recognize me.)

Now whenever I get into this restless-gonna-shave-off-the-old-beard mode, I

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usually pull out my old press card from my early days at the Independent/Free Press.

It sports a photo of me taken in 1982. And I look like a teenager. Now I can put up with the teenage look, (considering in 1982 I was little more than a teen anyway...)

But I have a problem with one of my facial features.

Now I realize traditionally, some guys have fixations of magnanimous proportions about the size of certain body parts.

In my case it's my chin.

Not that it's a bad chin. As a matter of fact, over the years I've become kinda attached to it.

But to me it seems a little small.

I never thought it looked too small in my formative years. But that was before I grew my first beard.

And ever since that fateful day, I've been plagued with a phobia about my little chin.

Nope, after I stare at that tattered old press card, I usually plug in the razor and turn it on, trimming that whisker line below that follows my jaw, and trim above my beard to keep those stray whiskers from looking like a jungle on my upper cheek.

And I know I'll rest assured that I've done the right thing, in keeping my beard.

Until the next morning, when I'll stare in the mirror — and wonder.

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