

## Is Other

My Father was a man at 21.  
He was in Vietnam with bullets overhead, which  
(from my understanding) will quickly make a man of even a  
15 year-old.

But I, at 24, am still questioning if I'll ever be a man.  
And then...when?

What makes a man a man?

Does a level of self-sufficiency determine manhood?  
And where is that mark to which I must stride? How high? How wide?  
Is there a mold to which I must force myself to fit?  
“This *is* the mold of a man; he who does not fit is *other*.”  
Is manhood actually determined by selflessness?  
We in America have so few rituals, none of which are sacred, that  
I am left to wonder how vague the line is, and will become.  
Is there now no line at all?  
And why should I care if I never do become a man?

What is “*manhood*” that it makes being “*other*” shameful?