

# Gee, do men realize what it takes to be a woman today

BY LARUELLE LEVERT

**O**K, ladies, when was the last time you permed your hair, shaved your legs or went on a diet? Better yet, when was the last time you actually thought about why you do such things? The answer, my fellow females, is MEN!

"Men?" you say. That's right. Think back, ladies, to adolescence — wasn't it crucial that you be as pretty as the girl in the second row to your left so that so-and-so who was captain of the basketball team would ask you to go for pizza after the game? Then, of course, you would pick, bird-like at your food, sipping your diet cola while batting your eyes and swearing, "Oh, I just couldn't eat another bite!". Then, we land home and pig out.

Well, girls, nothing's changed. Since Neanderthal times, women have been conditioned (by you-know-who) to believe that, as "the gentle sex", we must conform to fashion, beauty ideals, and modes of conduct befitting a lady. To what end? So that we might attract the opposite sex, of course — nauseating, isn't it?

This evolution didn't stop with fashion and conduct, though. Then there came the age of diets — endless lists of calorie-counters and enough brain-washing to convince us that dry curds and pulverized tofu are delicious and will guarantee weight loss if consumed in quantities of

two quarts a day. Garfield was right — DIET is Die with a "T"!! The diet craze continues even today, but now we're also faced with the exercise mania.

That's right, girls, pull on those leotards, ignore those bulges, do three thousand leg lifts and thrash around until you either die of cardiac arrest or get a black eye (depending on whether you're horizontal or vertical)! Personally, I don't get my thrills out of "four more ... three more" chanted to the strains of top-40 hits, nor a case of the dry heaves.

Gee, do men realize what it takes to be a woman these days? A hell of a lot more than it does to be a male, I'll tell you. We must give guys *some* credit, however. After all, it's only recently that men have begun to break into the cosmetics industry — previously a female-dominated field. Now, men can buy face toners, night creams ... I dread the day when my future husband wakes up in the morning and reaches for his hot curlers and under-eye concealer. Sure, the "natural look" for women is in, but do you realize it takes more time and war-paint to look "natural" than it does to look "made up"?

Men think we do all of this instinctively, without a second thought. Granted, I love to get dressed up and spend hours teasing and tantalizing my hair, but it gets kind of monotonous after awhile. Men must realize that we don't do it all for our own self-esteem, but for approval. Listen,

when was the last time you had to worry about stubble on your ankles, dark circles, PMS or getting a run in your nylons? Well, about 85% of women (past puberty) do have to worry about these things. I wish guys would start to appreciate us for more than the stereotypical 38-28-38 ideal we're supposed to live up to! The day of the 'brainless bimbo' and 'dumb blonde' is gone. Men are now facing female competition in the workforce, the business world, and endless other social and economic realms. Obviously, men are quite stunned at this transition if the best offensive measures they can come up with are after-shave with skin toner and PH-balanced Brylcreem!

Wake up, guys. We've been suffering too long. We may not stop the diets, the fashion or the bust-building nautilus machines, but we're certainly not going to sit back and let you get away without a bit of suffering, so start squirming.

To every woman who ever wished anorexia nervosa was a short-term virus, and to those who have a closet full of enough outdated styles to start their own theatrical company, let's band together and show those men that, despite cramps, face creams, perms, diets, shin splints and the endless array of equipment, symptoms, and rules involved in being female, we're damn proud to be women.

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