

The Great Cosmetics Crash

By Connie Lynd Sievers

Women of America, I have a news flash and it isn't pretty. A recent survey revealed that 90% of men don't know when their wives are or aren't wearing make-up. Since men never even visit the land of 1,000 details in which most women eternally live, it's not a big surprise only 10% of them bother noticing this minor detail that consumes a minimum of 5 to 15 minutes of a woman's precious time everyday. That's almost 100 hours a year and over 7,800 hours or almost one full year of the average lifetime. Apparently they think all women who wear make-up look like Tammy Faye.

What is surprising is that women, myself included, bother spending time and energy in front of a lighted mirror so that every flaw is emphasized as we meticulously apply foundation, eyeliner, mascara, and the like. It's a routine that costs hundreds of dollars every year, not to mention the cost to the poor research animals. Some women get so sick of the make-up routine that they resort to costly and painful procedures to permanently line their eyes or stain their lips.

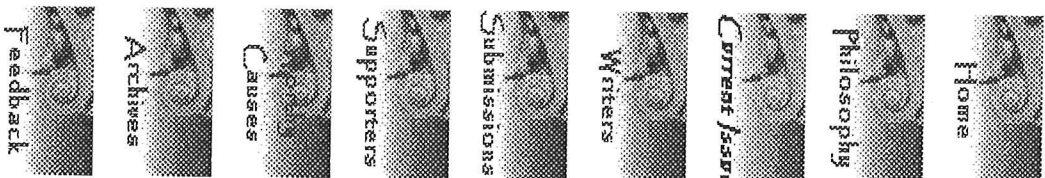
And for what? If women supposedly don't care about how they look for themselves (that would be the unattractive sin of vanity), but are only trying to appear pleasing to others, specifically men, and there is now proof that men don't notice make-up, why don't we all just sleep in a little more instead?

What woman isn't envious of a man's daily routine? Shave, shower, a brush of the hair, maybe some cologne, and whala! 15 minutes later, they're ready for anything. They probably won't look into a mirror again until they brush their teeth before bed.

Yet, it's impossible to ignore societies' signals that blast "you must wear make-up to be normal!" It's as vital to acceptance as bathing. Women feel naked, incomplete, ashamed and embarrassed without make-up. Bare-faced women risk being labeled a hippie or a dyke. To get ahead you have to look good, whatever the price.

Society starts sending this message at an early age. Cosmetics are marketed to girls as young as 2 years old. My 3 year-old niece has more lipsticks than I do. What kind of message is she being sent? That "just you" isn't good enough? That you need to color your face to be noticed?

Pre-pubescent girls take note when Mom spends 5 minutes spackling her face before a 10-minute



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trip to the store. They then spend a large chunk of their teenage years painting their faces, usually with a roller, concocting their best "look."

But does society really care as much as we think it does? What would happen if one day all the women on the planet decided life was way too short to waste hours and hours buying, applying, and learning about make-up. They needed more time in their day and universally concluded "to hell with it!" The time spent applying make-up every morning is a waste and could be better spent pursuing hobbies, playing with children, or climbing mountains.

It isn't easy for the women at first. Some have to give up the habit slowly - starting with eye makeup, then lipstick, then blush, until finally they throw away the whole messy make-up drawer to make room for all the books they now have time to read.



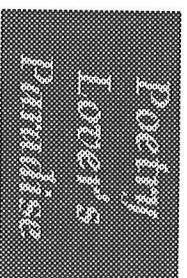
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The reaction from society isn't at all as the women had feared. Most men, of course, don't even notice. For the first time women, like men, can show their real face. They are no longer the good looking cheerleaders of the world. If they didn't get enough sleep the night before, people can take one look at their face and know it. Others can now empathize with them and help them through the tough day. Men don't go into shock the morning after, and women aren't sneaking into the bathroom at 6:00 AM to apply concealer.

Women soon discover that trashing their make-up gained them more than just time and money. They have a newfound freedom. They don't have to hide their inadequacies behind a mask to be beautiful. A pimple doesn't ruin their day. After all, it never ruined a man's day. They go out in the rain or have a good cry without worrying their eyeliner will run. No longer do they dash into restrooms to re-apply throughout the day in an effort to make society believe, "really, I always look like this!" Purses become optional.

The millions of dollars women previously spent on cosmetics is now spent on treats for themselves and their families, and they discover that healthy, beautiful skin is the best way to a good-looking face. Energies are re-focused from their looks to their well being, and girls grow up with a high self-esteem that is based on their accomplishments, not their genes. Mary Kay becomes Kay Laboratories and discovers a cure for cancer

As a result of exposing their "realness," women find themselves no longer held to impossibly high standards. They feel free to expose other faults without feelings of guilt about all that they aren't. They relax and let others help them when they need it. A woman's beauty is judged on her personality and her strengths, not her hair and her make-up. Similar to how men are judged now. The equality scale becomes more balanced.

The history books remember it as the day superwoman died and the women of the world sighed with relief. Isn't that a pretty picture?

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