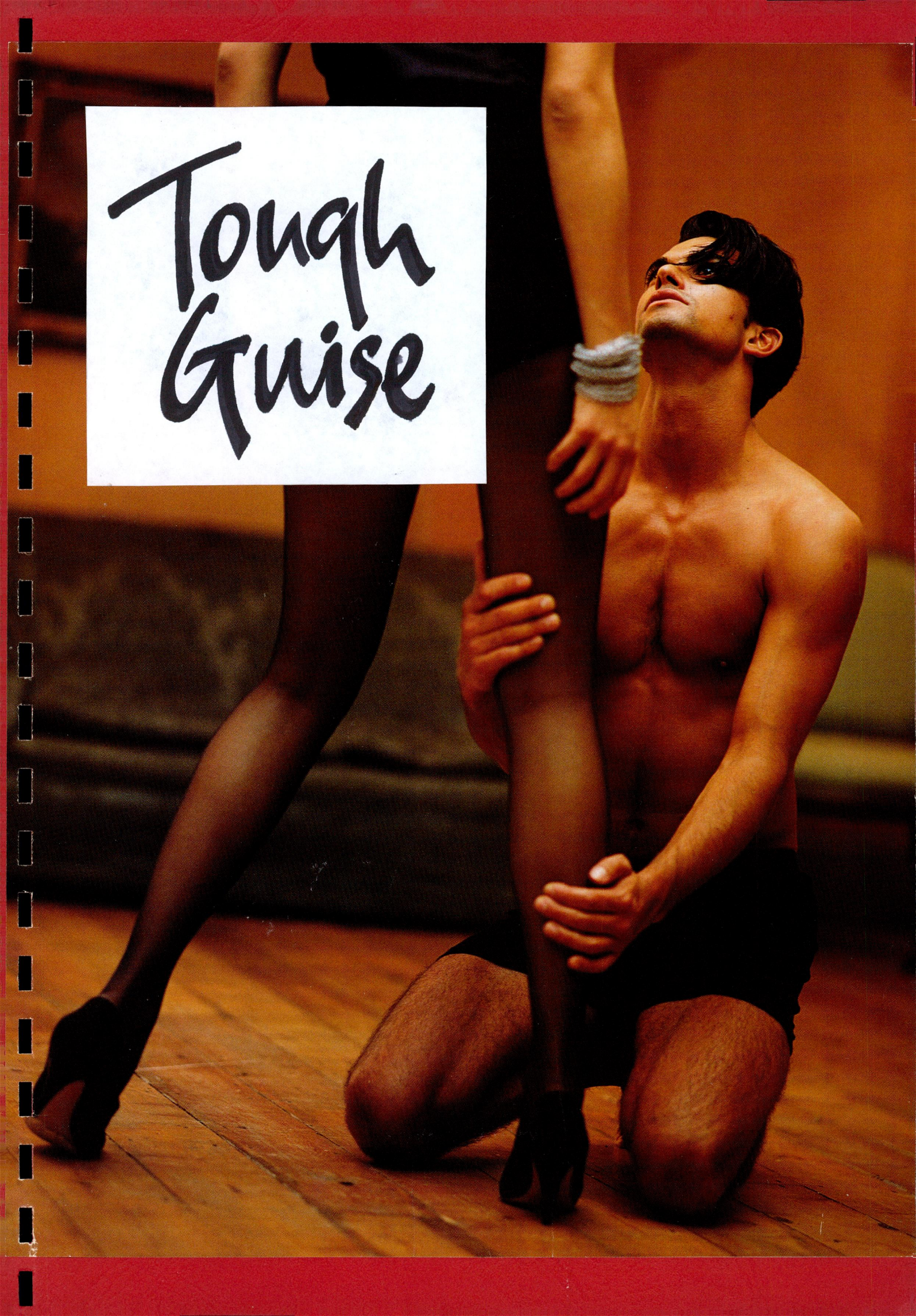
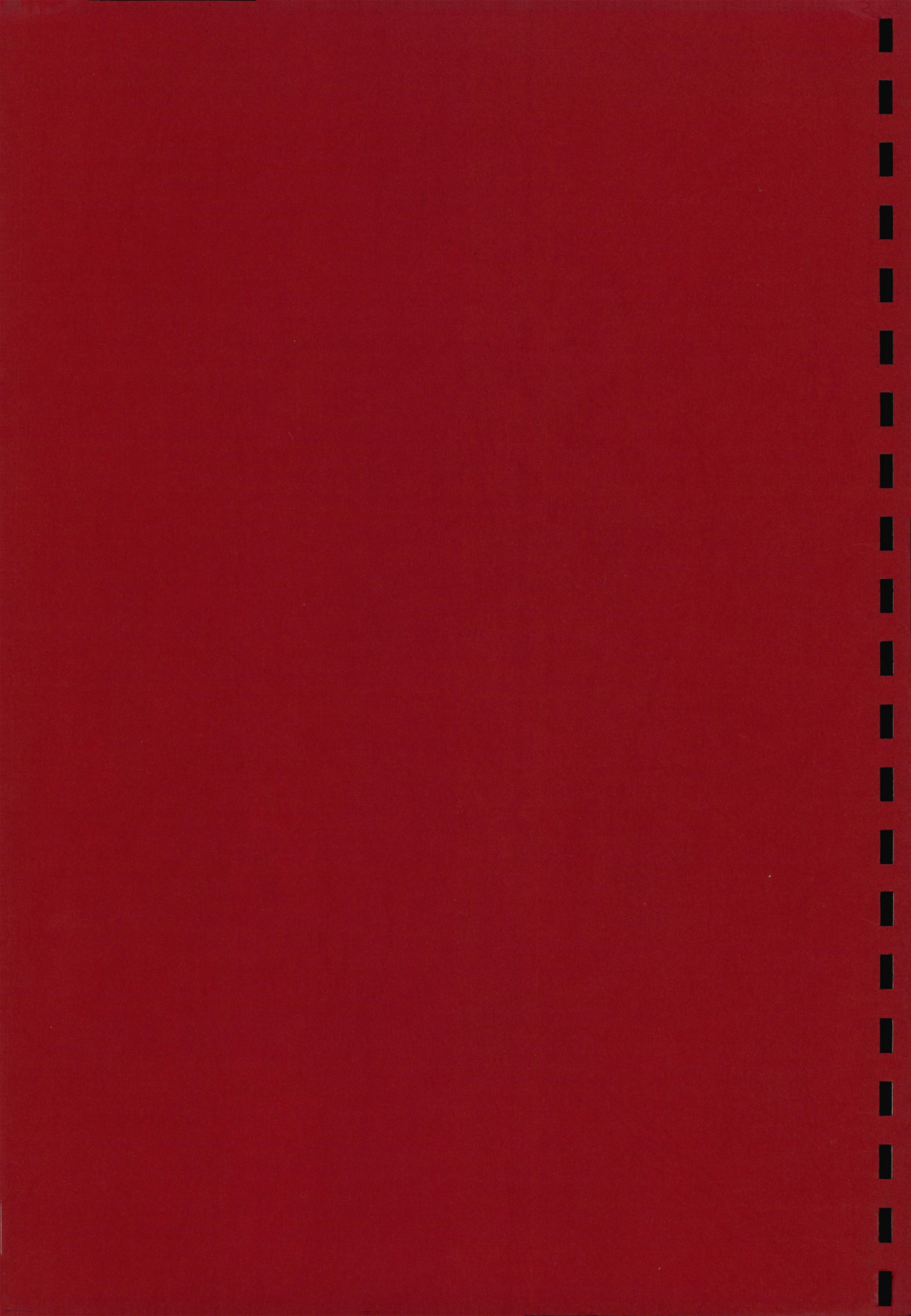


Tough
Guise







HOMMES!

FEMME?

MAN??

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TOUGH GUISE

by

GRAINNE WALSH

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. MASCULINITY, ADVERTISING AND THE TOUGH GUY STEREOTYPE.
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The most important legacy of the Twentieth Century has been the changing relationship between the sexes. In five hundred years time it will be this issue that future generations recognize as "our generations" revolution. Advertising clearly mirrors society and I will look at how changes in advertising reflect the fundamental changes in the socio-sexual forum. On account of a reassessment of the way in which women view themselves, men have been jostled into re-defining their identity and behaviour. What was once acceptable is now a violation of rights. The "New Man" was to emerge in the Eighties but he seems to have synthesized in latter years into a phenomenon known by marketing experts and sociologists as the "New Lad".

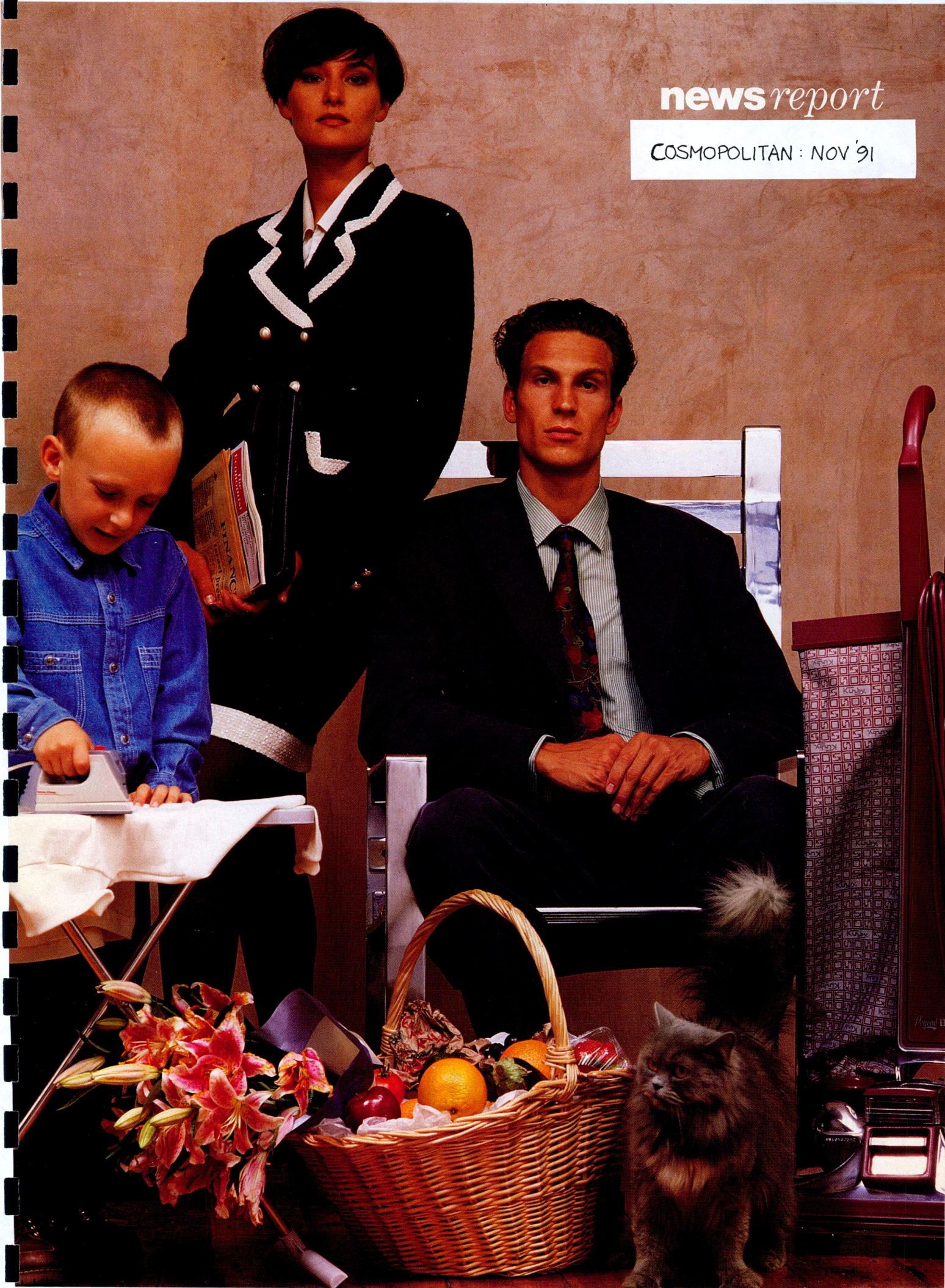
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news report

COSMOPOLITAN : NOV '91



**MASCULINITY, ADVERTISING AND
THE TOUGH GUY STEREOTYPE.**

- ADVERTISING AS THE MIRROR OF SOCIETY.
- THE TOUGH GUY ROLE; THE DEATH OF A HERO?
- THE NEW MAN; IMAGES IN ADVERTISING.
- MEETING THE NEW MAN.

They say you can serve the ball or your fellow man? I say, here it comes, man.



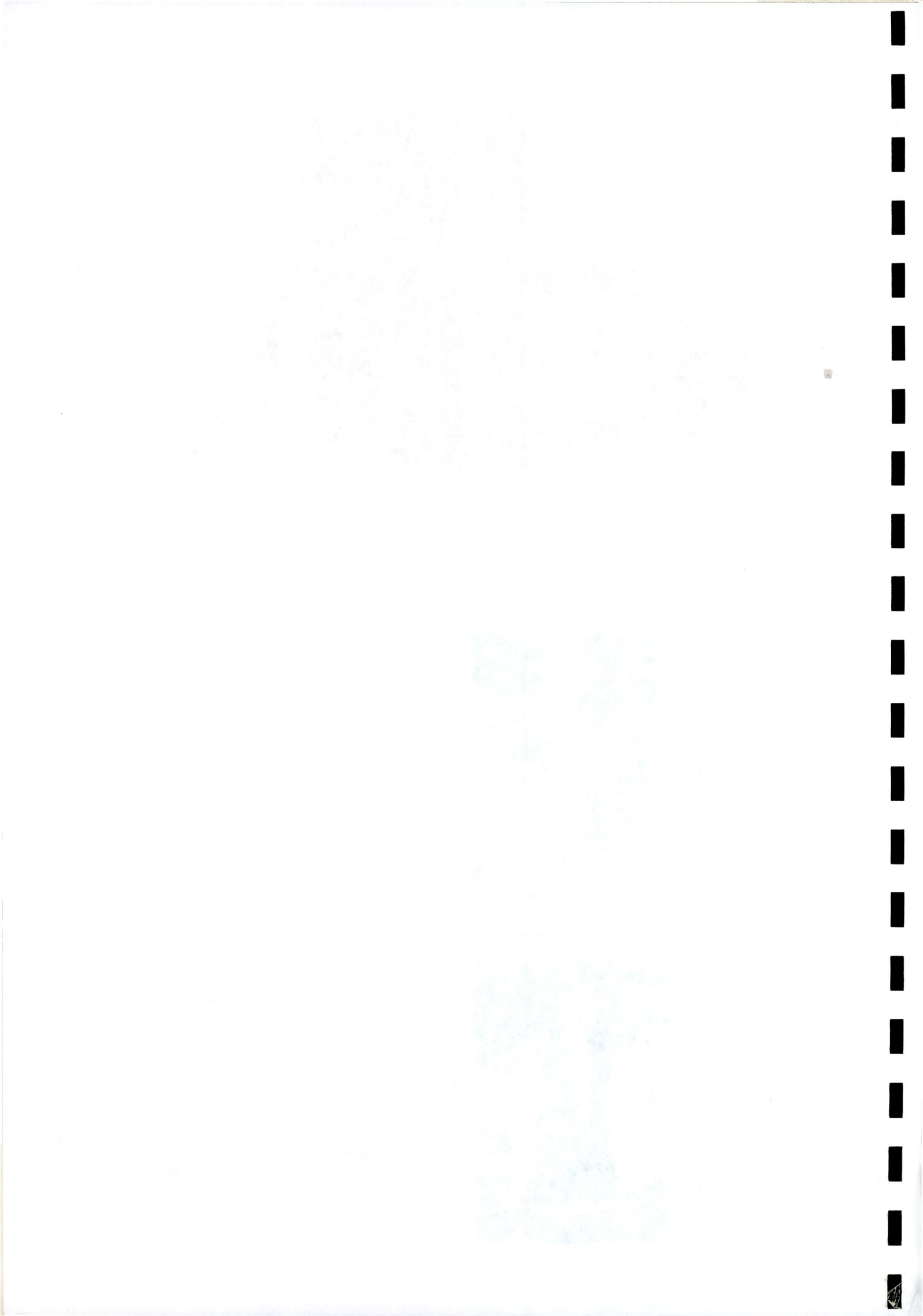
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ELLE MAR 92

Champion[®]
U.S.A.

Authentic Athletic Apparel and Footwear





"We are the objects of your suave entrapments."

Barbara Kruger.

More than any other kind of imagery, advertising has permeated our cultural consciousness. It reflects what we are and determines what we desire. It informs and offers modes of progression and behaviour; it seduces and teases with promises of perfection. It feeds our imaginations, whether we permit it or not.

The worker must grow up thinking, "well, it's a fair society on the whole and if I work hard and continue clocking in then one day I'll have a nice house and maybe go scuba-diving with that blond just like in that Martini advert."

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Advertising photography has "suavely entrapped" its consumer audience over the last century. During the Forties and Fifties, advertising affirmed its position as a highly influential tool of communication and persuasion and established the photograph as a principal in its arsenal. The steady growth of the advertising industry

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the needs of gaining attention have prompted another era of advertising, one that is marked by a unique visual literacy and an unprecedented creative visuality.

"Publicity announces or reminds, Advertising explains and sells."

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Most recently we are being bombarded with images that sell and explain the male as the "New Man". Visual images of that unbeatable "Tough Guy", we all grew to know and love so well, seem to be slipping from view. We are being asked to question what we see as "masculinity".

By masculinity I refer to those set of signs indicating that a person is a "man". These signs may include expressions, actions, appearance and even experiences of "emotion". We may specifically reject the absolute notion of "masculinity" (and "femininity"), as outside the bounds of, psychological testing. For example, it is not possible to link emotions and their expression to objective measures of "masculinity" and "femininity", at least not in any direct way. It is also clear that women are not simply "more emotional" than men. Rather masculinity is diverse, socially constructed and certainly not reducible to any simple, single essence. There are as many forms of masculinity as there are men.

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THE TOUGH GUY ROLE; THE DEATH OF A HERO?

For years the received role model of the real man was along the lines of "Tough guys don't dance" and "dead men don't wear plaid". Society aspired to a "hard-boiled" image of the real man.

Hard men drank, of course, but they drank in such a way as to make another man's drink taste like Tizer. The pickling was an integral part of becoming hard-boiled. Look at Parker, the unlovable bastard of Richard Stark's book POINT BLANK ⁴, played to perfection for the cinema by Lee Marvin:

"After the bath, he sat up naked in bed and slowly drank the pint of vodka straight from the bottle, grinning at the far wall. When the bottle was empty, he threw it at the waste-basket and fell asleep."

A tough guy, a bad man, felt pain but endured. Sometimes he even enjoyed. Perhaps it's the booze. In James Ellroy's BROWNS REQUIEM ⁵, Fritz Brown is shot at the climax of his investigations into murders with a golfing connection.

"Suddenly, I remembered my wound...Something dim resounded in my mind. I tore open my shirt and ran a hand over my back. When I found it I started to laugh...It was an exit wound and the blood that covered it was starting to congeal. I laughed until I passed out from shock."

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Later that night, or three pages on in the book, Fritz is discussing the music of Anton Bruckner with his assailant. It is noticeable that classical music often inspired many hard-boiled men to lofty thoughts. In general, they despise popular music, being followers of a narrowly defined and treacherously signposted moral path. Midway through the conversation about Bruckner things go awry for Fritz: I had had enough...I aimed my gun at Cathcart and shot him four times in the face."

Tough guys were short on verbal expansiveness. Some of them were so short on it that they became mute. "Thanks," says Frank, the central character of Charles Wielleford's COCKFIGHTER ⁶. It is his first spoken word of the book and it comes half way down the final page. Frank may not say a lot but he sure thinks up a storm. Women, somewhat lower down on his priorities than fighting cocks, can spark the odd amusing thought. "She was as strong as a tractor, but not quite as intelligent," he muses for the readers benefit.

Women spelled trouble for the hard-boiled man. In David Goddis' 1956 novel, DOWN THERE ⁷, later filmed by Francois Truffaut as SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER, Eddie gives little away. "Tell me one thing. Where do you come from?" he is asked. "I was born," says Eddie. The instant Eddie's thoughts are troubled by a woman he turns his mind to music.

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piano in a bar and dresses in rags, despite his past as a concert pianist. He denies himself engagement in anything beyond his own personal torture. Once he engages with the outside world, for the sake of family on the one hand and the sake of a woman on the other, his life collapses in ruins. Better to stay hard-boiled.

Sex is a central weapon of self-denial for the tough guy. When it happens, though, the tough guy is suddenly, quite miraculously good at it. In T Jefferson Parker's LAGUNA HEAT ^a, the obligatory divorced cop with the job stress finds himself invited for a swim by a woman whose father has just been brutally murdered. In spite of her bereavement and his lengthy sexual abstinence, in spite of the fact that they have only recently met and spent most of the time in violent argument and in spite of the fact they are bobbing about at night in the middle of the ocean, it is, nevertheless, multiple orgasm time. Electricity, shrieking, voltage. "The frenzied birds took flight." A miracle indeed.

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Coke, June 1949

The new era of post-war travel, from *National Geographic*, as Coke and American consumerism sweep around the world. The great ambiguity is the man in the peaked cap a chauffeur or a petrol pump attendant? Either way, the consumer is king: able to relax, travel, and choose from a detailed range of products specifically hinted at by the illustration. This is the very beginning of a new lifestyle. These images of American freedom caught the imagination of Europe from the early years of the war: by 1949 they presented a dream world still tantalisingly out of reach.



Travel Refreshed...Have a Coca-Cola

Driving finally catches up with you, but not with refreshment.

It's pausing that catches up with refreshment.

Along the way anywhere in this land, familiar red coolers invite you to enjoy the leisure and luxury of the pause that refreshes with ice-cold Coca-Cola.

That's really traveling.



5¢

Ask for it either way...both trade-marks mean the same thing.



COPYRIGHT 1948, THE COCA-COLA COMPANY

The camera pans inside the warehouse, funky but expensive: in these days of cramped two-bedroom flats, space is at a premium and an open plan, ex-industrial environment is highly desirable - hence it's heavily featured appearance in Euro MTV and "STREETS OF FIRE". Time for some significant moments. We see a scantily-dressed young man - very good looking but *not gay*.

His gestures are carefully, deliberately clumsy: he is hunting for his breakfast. There's no woman around to get it for him; as he grimaces at the cat, the only other occupant of this space, he reaches for... his reliable flexible friend. He slips on some clothes (American Classics) and saunters to the cash-point through a post-industrial, post-vandalism street scene: the final long shot shows him at the window of his wharf with his cat, gloriously alone. It's Sunday.

Our wonder boy, reading the newspaper that is produced just down the road, is a glaring example of the way in which advertising and marketers are attempting to get to grips with the young male market. He's glaring because he's not quite right: you end by remembering the tableau, not the product, and by suspecting that the ad is not so much targeting the requisite market as displaying an integral adland ideal.

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It is obvious that advertising exists in order to sell things. These days, the sort of products usually being sold are not necessary, but convenient or highly specific, tied in not with need but with *lifestyle*, a late Sixties term from the times when increased consumer spending really began to be generated by advertising. "Lifestyle" has become an advertising reality in our society since the early Eighties, tied in with new market research techniques like group discussions.

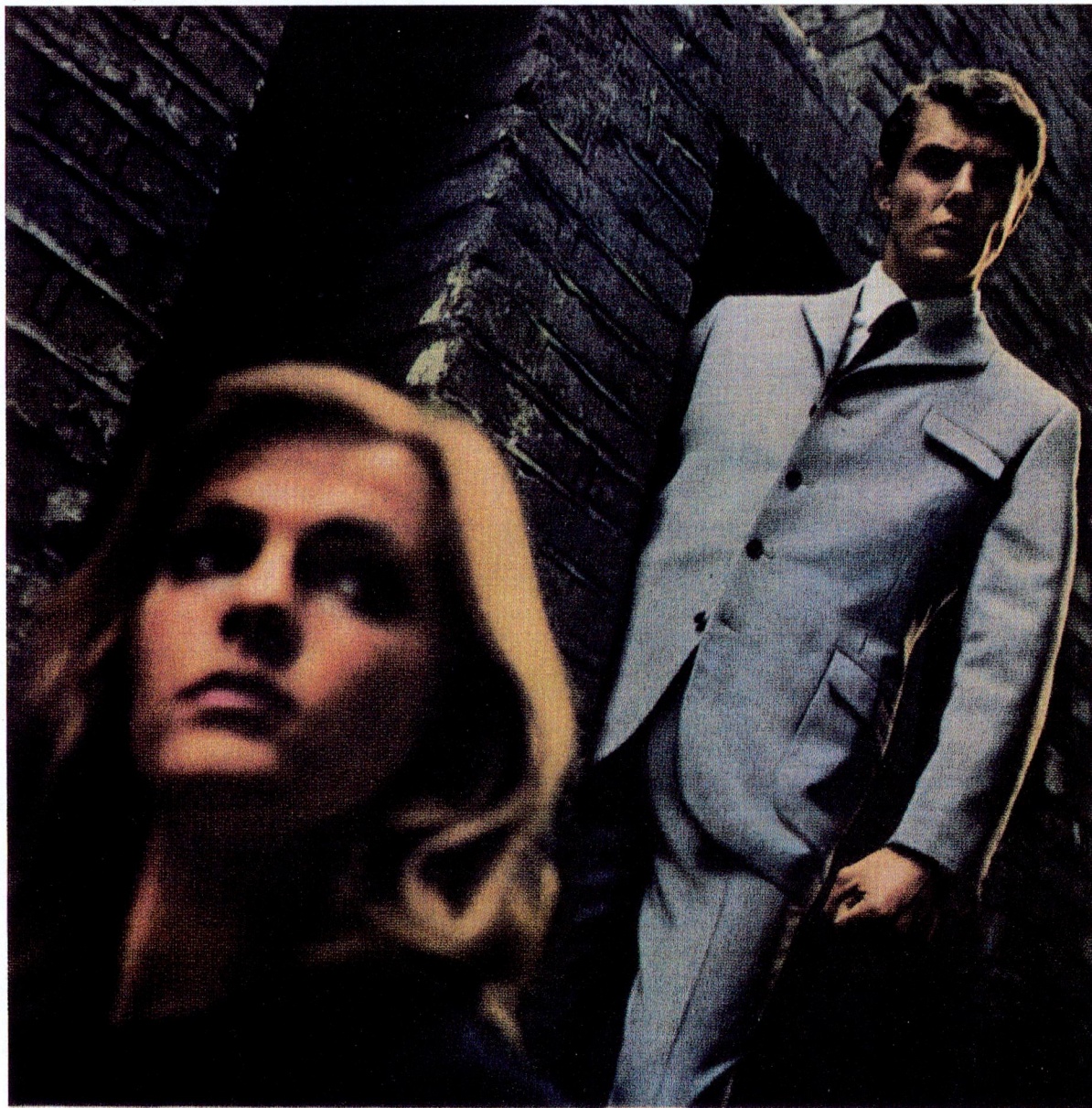
The key idea, often called "market segmentation", is to do with specific targeting. "It's recognizing that many people are sufficiently well-off and trained as consumers," says Peter York of market planners SRU. "Many products now have what is called Added Value. It says *I* will buy this because it has something for *me*."¹⁰ This idea - that you are what you buy - is of paramount importance: current in America since the early Seventies, it has spread to the U.K. only in the past few years.

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Terylene, 1965. From *Town*. By the start of the Sixties, the consumer society – imported from America's overproduction – was in full swing. ITV, which had begun in 1955, took £10million advertising revenue in its first year; by 1963 it had increased to £85million. The come-on of the consumer society was that anybody could join in: from the late Fifties on the working class was opened up as a massive, untapped market. Ads both reflected and propagated this new "classlessness". Here you have Sixties man as bouncer, licensed to ladykill. *Town*, originally *Man About Town*, had been bought by Michael Heseltine in 1960 and was restyled for this new "brilliant" advertising age.

(Opposite page, left) **Sumrie, June 1967** From *Town*. In America, *Playboy* had, during the Fifties, come to define a new male market: the non-conformist swinger. Now a discredited cliché, *Playboy* introduced the idea of the male good life, a "fun" morality of fleeting meetings as opposed to the responsibilities of family. Along with James Bond, it codified a type of male consumption.

(Opposite page, second left) **G-Plan, May 1965** The Sixties interior, *Sunday Times Magazine*. This male chair, hence the leather and the "matching stool", would have been paid for by the man, but the woman – still probably the wife, seen here lurking in the background – would have chosen it. The ideal interior is still a little out of focus but the central idea is there: comfort, luxury and beauty. Presumably this applies to the woman as well.

'TERYLENE': HIGH STYLE, SNUG FIT

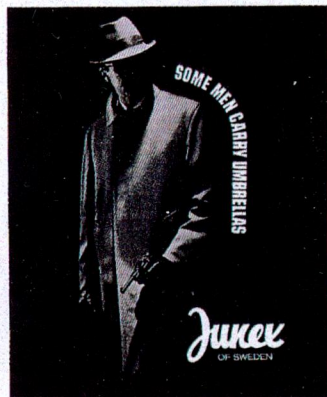
Didn't want Janet to see me, sure to return ring if found out accidentally engaged to Diana night before. Bound to be scene. Thought cornered, as narrow alley, no way out. Stroke of luck, wearing suit in 'Terylene'. Wouldn't get torn, frayed, generally creased if squeezed self into narrow opening high up wall. So did so. Could sponge down after.

SUIT IN 55% 'TERYLENE'/45% WOOL, WORSTED.

'TERYLENE' IS THE REGISTERED TRADEMARK FOR THE POLYESTER FIBRE MADE BY IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED, LONDON

1960-69

Town mid 60s. A more explicit James Bond fantasy: is that a gun in your hand or are you just pleased to see me? The male identity, if more blatantly macho, is now more fluid: men can "role play". A James Bond story appeared in the first ever *Sunday Times* colour supplement, June 1962: this new concept in publishing aimed to take the cool modernity of magazines like *Queen* and *Man About Town* to the mass market.



James O. Buchanan Ltd makes the quality umbrellas, coats and suits, providing employment through its production centres in north the English Midlands, south of the UK and industrial features of London South of Africa. For more information, contact St. James, Buchanan Office 20 Grosvenor St. or to 40 Grosvenor St. London W1A 3AB.



Wool, May 1965 From *Town*. More (James) Bondage, a recurring image of the Sixties – reflecting this period's curious innocence. Its oddness masks the old Brand X syndrome – ie our product is cooler than yours – and the obvious linkage of the product with sex is distinctly unsophisticated to today's eyes.

search for new markets. In this, the young/young middle-aged male market has been one of the last great unknowns. The history of teenage marketing originated in the immediate post-war period, with successful campaigns and products aimed at young women. The young male market had been notoriously difficult.

Indeed the whole business of selling things to men has been fraught with difficulty. There is, not only the problem of getting men to spend money on themselves , (not thought until recently to be a masculine activity), and training them as consumers, but the problems of targeting and representation.

"Advertisers have been looking to grab that sector for a long time," says Lucy Purdy of RBL.¹¹ "They know that the fashionable young man is out there, but they don't know how to address him. You can't address all men; there has been no one image specific to all men."

There has never been any problem with advertising cars, car phones, petrol and male orientated "executive". From the famous "national" advertisements of the late Fifties on, all you have needed to display are the right social cues of the time; status, power, speed, beautiful women or whatever. Similarly, advertising cigarettes and drink has been straightforward, complicated only by the legal restrictions on advertising cigarettes and the current "lager wars". These are the things that men *do*. It's when you get into sex roles, narcissism, and personal growth -

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GIVENCHY GENTLEMAN



G I V E N C H Y

ELLE · NOV '91

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It's all right when a male says, "Look at what I have accumulated". It is far more difficult when a man says, "Look at me!" The mere act of display is problematic and potentially alienating to the male viewer. As Andy Medhurst writes in *Ten-8*: "To put a body on display is usually to render it passive, to make it available for the bearer of the gaze, but that runs the risk of conflicting with ideologies of 'masculinity', of 'feminising' the body in question."¹²

Within the terms of UK advertising in the Fifties, representation was hardly an issue. In contrast to the detail already to be found in America, British advertisements were very primitive, simply displaying the product or relying on an assumed knowledge of traditional class codes. It was very much "A Gentleman's Wardrobe": advertisements for shirts would display an image of Regent Street behind the product, displaying a well understood association. A static class structure was matched by a static view of consumption: you bought things to last.

Images of men were generic - often conveyed by an idealised drawing - and, if there was any detail, it was to do with the war: there was little inherent sex or glamour in being a man. As the American model of consumption - a high turnover operation with a design aesthetic as a key selling point - came over to Britain

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Images of men were generic - often conveyed by an idealised drawing - and, if there was any detail, it was to do with the war: there was little inherent sex or

glamour in being a man. As the American model of consumption - a high turnover operation with a design aesthetic as a key selling point - came over to Britain

Baracuta Raincoats, May 1951 By 1951, UK expenditure on advertising was up by 15% a year. Here the product takes up three quarters of the illustration: the rest is topped off with smaller-than-scale, generic masculine features. No need to be detailed because everybody knows the form. Note the emphasis on practicality and quality: clothing coupons can't be wasted on mere fashion!



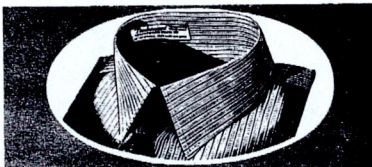
The Raincoat that every man wants

—the Raincoat that has revolutionised rainwear, transforming a drab old necessity into a stylish garment—well suited to situations demanding the smartest appearance yet always ensuring practical protection in the rain.



BRITAIN'S BEST RAINWEAR

BARACUTA (CLOTHERS) LTD. MANCHESTER - ALSO U.S.A. & CANADA



"Trubenised" collars

REGD. TRADE MARK still look neat and fresh at the end of the longest day. And laundering is extremely easy—no starch and no boiling. Buy them with matching shirts from any good outfitter.



stay neat all day

The registered Trade Mark "Professional" distinguishes a brand of finest semi-stiff country apparel made and processed under agreement with the proprietors—

TRUBENISED (St. Britain) LTD - 30 PARK STREET - LONDON - W-1

Morris, May 1951

Despite its growth, British advertising is still primitive in comparison to the US: like the motors, cramped and quaint. Despite built-in obsolescence, cars are subject as well to the "long lasting/quality" rule and the people that drive them are mere ciphers in a well-ordered collective society. As Jack Warner would say: "We'll all pull together; mustn't grumble"



... keep your present Morris in first-class running order by taking it to an authorised Morris dealer for servicing at regular intervals. Accredited Morris dealers carry stocks of genuine Morris spares and have the equipment and trained technical staff needed for the provision of "Quality First" service. Attention given to maintenance now will keep your running costs down... will keep your present Morris your ever-willing, capable and faithful servant.

Over 2,000 dealers are equipped to provide—

MORRIS

"QUALITY FIRST" SERVICE

Morris Motor Cars Ltd., Coventry, England. Export Division: 3, High Street, London E.C.4. & 11, Piccadilly, London, W.1.

1949-59

Old Spice, April 1960

From *Men Only*. This Brit after shave ad is still graphically basic and despite the bottle's phallic shape, the copy must be underlined to overcome "natural" male resistance to wearing scent. Yet in the small print lies the future: the start of zingy terminology ten years after the States ("lift" being a classic adword) and a hint of fantasy.



There's masculine freshness in

Old Spice

AFTER SHAVE LOTION

Enjoy that brisk, crisp, invigorating "lift" every day with Old Spice After Shave Lotion. You'll never have a happier ending to a shave! 9/54. and 6/54.

NEW YORK - SHULTON - LONDON

1980-

WITH FAVOURITE TRACK SELECTION
THE PHILIPS CD360 BECOMES
A TRUE REFLECTION OF INDIVIDUALITY.

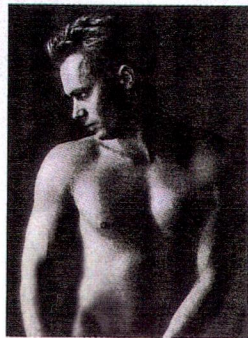
It is something the simplicity of a great individual there are many who in the end to find of their own creation of a great collection, another could be the ownership of a compact disc player with favourite track selection (TSS). In this system, unique to Philips, allows the user to pre-programme the CD player with a memory of the discs themselves, enabling permanent pre-programming of up to 237 discs into one central memory. It also has an auto CD search, or fast track on each of 99 tracks, or 100 tracks, or 111 tracks. The favourite tracks from any given disc are automatically played, without the need for individual re-programming. In the CD360 offers TSS in addition to the auto CD search of 99 tracks. A comprehensive track guide of digital information is stored four times faster than in hard. It naturally means when a multi-function remote control. But what really sets the CD360 apart is that this remarkable technology is available at a price of around £249.95. A Philips dealer can demonstrate how complete individuality can be achieved without sacrificing financial independence. The CD360 from Philips.

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK



(Above) Philips, summer 1987

The Eighties interior from *Arena*. Technology rules but this time it's not convenience but a depth of gadgetry and "individuality" – the shorthand for living alone. Classical interiors seem to set off these qualities at their best: by 1987 this has become the new advertising shorthand. The model is a bit too 1980, however: despite the designer wear, still a Gary Numan clone.



MAN IN GREY

(Right) Man In Grey, Sept 1986

This heavily posed advert for after shave – from *The Face* – is the final part of the "feminising" process. Here the masculine image takes over the space that female pin-ups once had. The pose is definitely male – not too macho and not too gay – with a slight prima-donna aspect. So boys and girls, take heed! You can look but you can't touch: he's in love with nobody but himself.

When you're out to look your best

BRYLCREEM GEL

your hair

OUR PRODUCT IS SUITABLE FOR ALL HAIR TYPES

Brylcreem, summer 1987. The full flowering of post-modernism, from *Arena*. A carefully worked out pastiche of a Fifties' ad to sell, oddly, a product that many had thought horribly out of date. Like all advertising pastiches of the past it gets the details subtly wrong, as history must be rewritten to suit the preconceptions of the present. Here the Nick Kamen-ish simper (this is Barry, his brother) and the Powell & Co 'kerchief give the game away, but the mere fact that most people wouldn't notice tells you a lot about the similarities between the Fifties and the later Eighties.

from the mid-Fifties on, advertising to men slowly changed (although not as quickly as advertising to women). It began to take on the American hallmarks of travel, power, money and sex appeal.

The central idea here was "cool". There was no one unifying image for the mass male markets in the Fifties: most people didn't think like that and for the few that did, the male icons were either too weedy (Dirk Bogarde), too tweedy (film stars like Kenneth More), or too rough (Elvis and the consequent rock-'n-roll stars). James Dean hadn't yet made the transition to youth cultural archetype. A sequence of extremely successful films translated youth-oriented mod styles and ideologies into an acceptable, older masculine image. Starting with *Dr No* (1962), the Sean Connery James Bond films mixed in American advertisement values -travel, money, power and sex - with a new style of technology consumption and an age old patriotism.

This new "cool" became an instant adland hit: it marked an increasing democratisation of consumption by apparently eradicating old class boundaries. A big mid-Sixties fantasy that had originated in the teenage market with the idea of classlessness: the new leisure wear would be modelled by carefully rough looking models to signify a *declassé* butchness. Just in case, these advertisements added an adoring female or two for the sake of clarity - as they continue to today, if ironically.

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Such early Sixties advertisements reflect a confidence in a unity of taste that had disappeared by the end of the decade, as advertising unwillingly mirrored the social and gender changes of the period. Advertisements from the early Seventies reflect a deep social fragmentation rather than a market segmentation: main themes reflect a post-hippie idea of "escape" mixed in with a bit of ethnicity and you see the beginnings of nostalgia creeping into the most basic of adverts. Interiors that in the Sixties had been sharp and modern were now countrified and muted: the man was still pictured with woman and children - recognizing his perceived economic dominance. *He* paid for the G-Plan, even if he didn't choose it.

Advertising is most effective when there is a consensus of taste and values which can be translated into a visual or verbal shorthand; the Seventies crisis of representation, which reflected a wider crisis of values, resulted at the end of the decade in the absence of all but the most basic of male images. Just as in the Fifties, advertisements often displayed nothing but the product, or else, like Brut or Denim, they were butch in the most crass way possible.

Several factors have contributed to the considerable change in male advertising imagery. There is the change in men's lifestyles and the change in which the advertisers now target their advertising, both of which date from the early Eighties. There is now a much more

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Lucy Purdy's research with Mantrack¹³, a report produced by RBL since 1985 "as a targeting tool for clients who sell services or products to men", has turned up influential findings about changes in men's lifestyles: "It is fair to say that traditional male/female roles *have* changed a little. Men are more likely to be on their own and are more likely to buy products that appeal to themselves. There is also a range of domestic tasks, like shopping, which is now socially acceptable for men to do." A good example of the domesticated male is to be found in the current Bisto ad. The divorced male, with care of his son for the day, bumps into his ex-wife's boyfriend at the supermarket.

This research has coincided with, and fuelled, a more concentrated attack on the problematic male market. The advertisers' task has been made easier both by the return to a social consensus among the well-off (epitomised by the media term "Yuppie" that came in after 1985) and the massive input of fresh male imagery provided by the Style Press.

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eight years ago: you can see these images - short-haired, polo-necked, be-501'ed, derived straight from Soho 1985 - all over current lager advertisements. These images from Style Culture have helped to fuel a new style of consumption and have codified a fresh marketplace: the 19-45 year old male.

But how *new* is our New Man? Beneath the compulsively attractive surface, the same old angst gnaws. There is still the same old problem involved in putting the male body on display, now exacerbated by renewed social sanctions on homosexuality. Despite the fact that the gay milieu informs male representation at every level, it is now doubly necessary to disavow this. One solution is the use of women as props. But, even ironised, this does not accord with social or commercial expectations: men are being asked to consume in areas that are traditionally "female".

We can't assume the New Man is a feminist man, he may just be more narcissistic. The dominant New Man advertisement is remarkable indeed for its *absence* of women: women are either a threat (at their most extreme, personifying the AIDS virus in *Fatal Attraction*) or simply irrelevant to the new, self-enclosed world of male pleasure and vanity. Far from marking a real change in gender roles, the New Man may be yet another example of masculinity's privileged status in our society - the same old wolf in designer clothing.

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THE MALE DIALECTIC

- UNDERSTANDING THE NEW MAN.

- DID HE EVER EXIST?

- THE NEW LAD EMERGES.



si page, left to right: navy single-
te tip-front jacket with silver buttons
by Junior Gaultier from Pellicano,
on, Guise, Nottingham, and Brother to
er heffield, cream crew-neck sweater
blomme des Garçons from Comme
a ins, London, and L'Homme,
hester; petrol-blue double-breasted
d wool coat £400 by Byblos from Harvey
ls ondon; black wool blouson with
str collar and waist approx £500 by
te Montana from Harvey Nichols and
s, London
ba black double-breasted P-coat-style
v leather collar £420 and cream
n crew-neck sweater £200, both by Yohji
moto from Yohji Yamamoto, London, and
Manchester

In a media made world, fashions in male attire and attitude seem to change faster than the advertisements on cable TV. "New", improved models of masculinity are paraded on every talk show and bounced around by any pundit with a sociology degree. It is almost impossible for us all to keep a grip on the things that matter.

The New Man. Was he such a strange, implausible concept? Was he really all that arcane? Unfortunately it seems that many believe the answer is yes. At first the idea sounded great; - there men stood, being re-invented and re-channeled before our very eyes. "We have the technology, " screamed the advertisements, "we can rebuild him!" But did we allow the indulgence of this new

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mantle? Or in fact, have men not even turned up for the fitting?

With all the media coverage it is hard to stop your self from thinking about what many believe to be that stillborn species, the New Man. Some have been wondering if, behind the myth, beyond the advertising concept, there was any real possibility of such a creature ever existing. A sensitive, caring, emotionally balanced, non sexist, non aggressive male? And what's more, a sensitive, caring, emotionally balanced, non-sexist male who wasn't a wimp.

For many, the answer these days seems to be a resounding "No". To some it seems blindingly obvious, with the benefit of hindsight, that the New Man is a figure of fun, sniggered at by men secretly relieved by the acknowledgement of the impossibility of such a conceit.

But some believe, just because the New Man may not exist, that is not an indication that things haven't changed. Indeed, the death of the New Man may have coincided with the birth of an identifiable, though slippery, sub-species which has emerged as a muted response to the embarrassing vacuum left by the New Man's ignominious non-appearance. In fact, their belief is that what we may be dealing with is a hybrid - a would-be New

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Man who can't quite shake off his outmoded, but snug-fitting, laddishness. This is the New Lad.

This half-(new)man, half-lad may be a tentatively positive reaction to three decades of feminism. Initially, he was a by-product of collective male guilt and the power of positive polemic, but, gradually, as the shrillness of sisterhood subsided, he has gestated into a more confident, not to mention more complex, being.

We may take a look, from this viewpoint, at *The Re-invented Man*, in an attempt to see if we can pin him down. Firstly, he tends to be seen as part of the thirtysomething generation - educated, stylish, more often than not well groomed and totally in tune with the shifting codes of contemporary culture. His character has, to some degree, been moulded by prolonged exposure to today's taskmakers - magazines, music and the entire spectrum of post-modern media spill from David Lynch to THE LATE SHOW.

We are looking at an intelligent and articulate gent here, particularly when he is in the company of intelligent, articulate women with whom he can broaden his cultural constituency even further and talk with confidence about such selfless topics as "sexism in advertising", "chauvinism in the work-place" and "a woman's right to choose".

In short, he is well versed in the language, and protocol, of post-feminist discourse and he will never,

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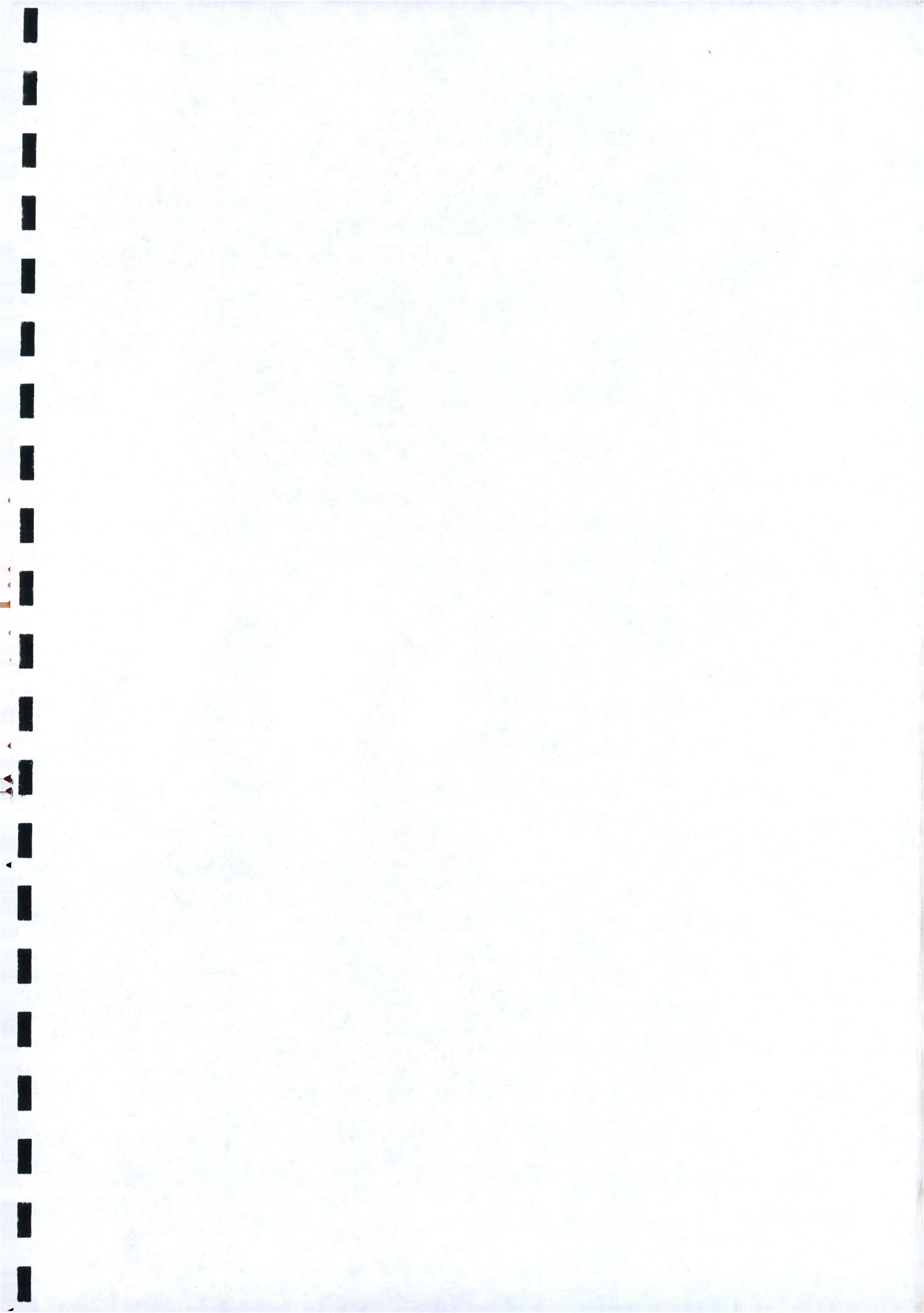
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| Support.
Freedom.
man give you
all that a bra
does?)



The bra for the way you are.



Confidence.

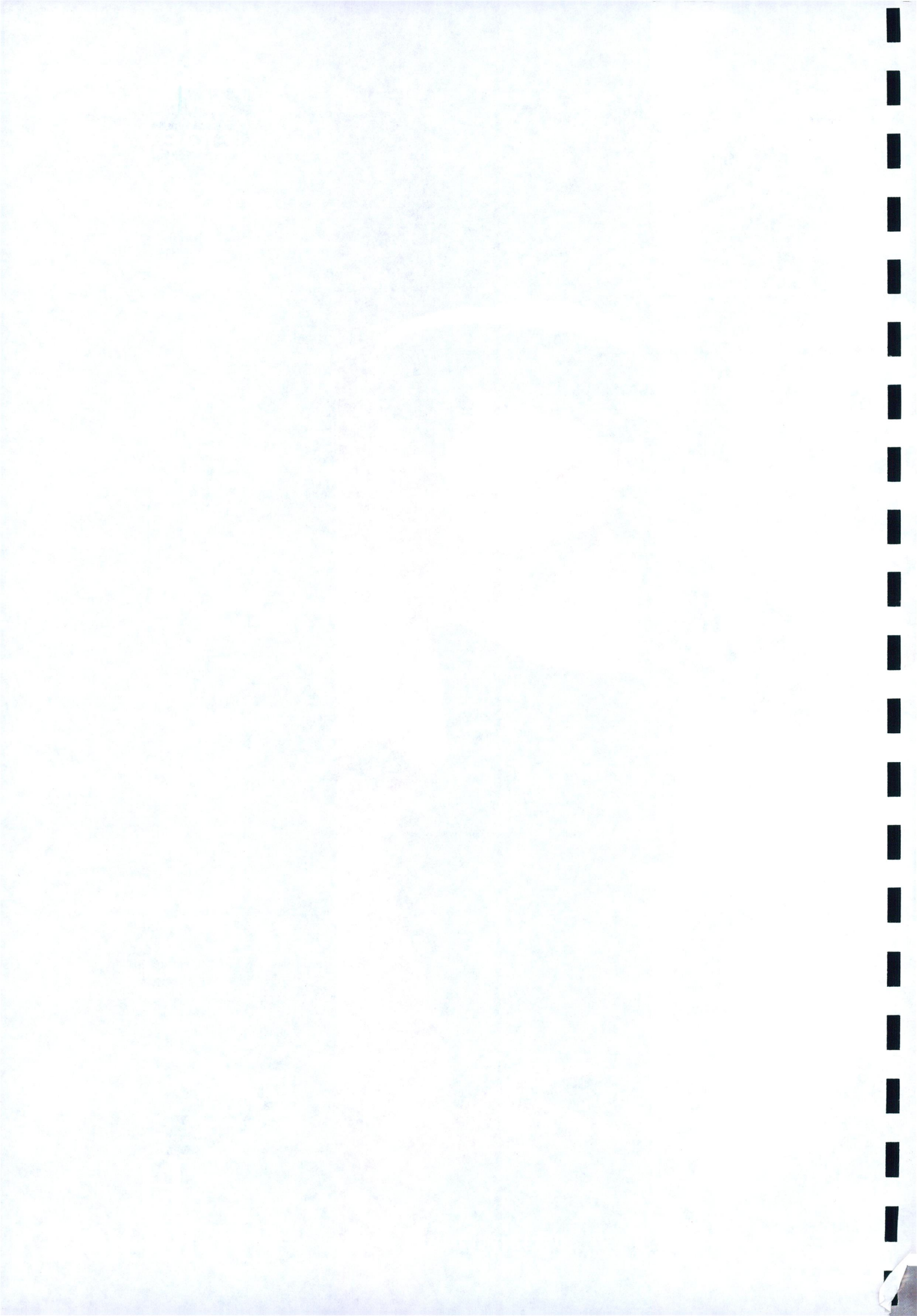
Why can't a

Amourette 105R.



LYCRA®
Lycra is a registered trademark of DuPont de Nemours & Co.

ELLE : MAR '92



ever, even after a few post-prandial brandies, slip into Sid The Sexist mode like a regular (Jack the) lad might. Of course, he may tell the odd dubious joke, but he'll preface it with the words, "You'll think this is a bit sexist, but it's dead funny," just so you know that he isn't trying to be New Mannish (i.e. boring, right-on), but is actually acutely aware of, and can even relish, his ideological shortcomings. And besides, the joke *is* funny.

It is difficult to find a generic term to describe this species. He is nowhere near ideologically sound enough to qualify for the New Man status, but he can't simply be dumped into the old unreconstituted Lad category. What we may be dealing with here is a New Lad, a rather schizoid, post-feminist fellow with an inbuilt psychic regulator that enables him to imperceptibly alter his consciousness according to the company he keeps. Basically, he aspires to New Man status when he's with women, but reverts to Old Lad type when he's out with the boys. Clever, eh?

If it's true, the New Lad is undeniably a perceptive soul, who has sussed out the fact that most women actually share his reservations about the New Man - the main one being that if he did exist, he'd be so terminally right-on, so awesomely aware, that he'd be a total turn-off. "If men try to be too good," a woman friend confessed recently, "they turn into such bores."

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Women actually enjoy some element of wickedness in their men. They don't want loud-mouthed lads and they certainly don't want neurotic wimps who are convinced that they're New Men. There has to be a happy medium."

This last sentence, I have to admit, was said with a distinct air of weary desperation rather than for the gratification of the New Lad. For, although New Lads may see themselves as the epitome of nouveau-male cred, however, women may see them as, at best, deluded souls and, at worst, charlatans. They may also detect an element of male manipulation.

"Initially, when a woman meets a New Lad," another woman friend confided, "they think they are meeting an open, communicative, emotionally balanced bloke who might be responsive to the things she wants. And they think this, time and time again, against overwhelming evidence to the contrary, because they want to believe it. Basically, women are incredibly optimistic when it comes to men, and men have learnt to exploit this."

This may introduce a new element into the New Lad's psychological make-up - the possibility that he, unconsciously or otherwise, preys on the progressive woman's need for a sensitive, caring, dependable soul partner. Maybe the New Lad's tentative grasp of feminist theory is simply another element in the psychology of seduction.

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STEVEN MEISEL

DOLCE & GABBANA

ELLE : MAR '92

"They all know the right buttons to push," insists another female source, "so they can tell you how misogynist the new David Lynch film is *and* they've read THE FEMALE EUNUCH. But when you scratch the surface, you'll find the same old surfaces lurking underneath. If a pretty girl walks into a restaurant, he won't ogle her openly like the old Lad, but you will catch his eye clocking her as she walks past. And, somewhere underneath all his surface good behaviour and carefully observed protocol, you suspect that he's probably wondering if he can eventually get you into bed ."

Outside the elaborate codes of the courtship ritual, the New Lad retains a chameleon identity. Among unavailable women or in mixed, convivial company, he has a tendency to overstate his non-sexist sensibilities to the point where the women present don't get a word in. The more deluded New Lad - those who actually think they are New Men - tend to get totally carried away with the extent, and exclusivity, of their emancipation. You shall know *them* by their wholesale appropriating of female issues; they will even go so far as chastising women for what they perceive as casual sexism and/or will give you a blow-by-blow account of the recent birth of their offspring while the woman who actually gave birth to said child is relegated to the sidelines.

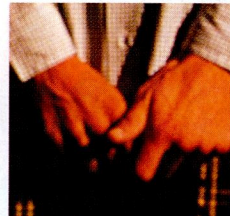
Women often feel that they are really irked most of all by the fact that if they confide some emotional problem to any of their men friends, they nod in sympathy

"They all know the right buttons to push," insists another female source, "as they can tell you how misogynist the new David Lynch film is and they've read THE FEMALE EUNUCH. But when you scratch the surface, you'll find the same old surfaces lurking underneath. If a pretty girl walks into a restaurant, he won't ogle her openly like the old lad, but you will catch his eye clocking her as she walks past. And, somewhere underneath all his surface good behaviour and carefully observed protocol, you suspect that he's probably wondering if he can eventually get you into bed."

Outside the elaborate codes of the courtship ritual, the New Lad retains a chameleon identity. Among unavailability women or in mixed, convivial company, he has a tendency to overstate his non-sexist sensitivities to the point where the women present don't get a word in. The more debased New Lad - those who actually think they are New Men - tend to get totally carried away with the extent, and exclusivity, of their emancipation. You shall know them by their wholesale appropriating of female issues; they will even go so far as chastising women for what they perceive as casual sexism and/or will give you a blow-by-blow account of the recent birth of their offspring while the woman who actually gave birth to said child is relegated to the sidelines.

Women often feel that they are really liked most of all by the fact that if they confide some emotional problem to any of their men friends, they nod in sympathy

Approximately 95 per cent of the male population believe if their penis was just a bit bigger their problems with women would be solved.



then start talking about their own problems. Women can confide , men demand an audience.

This is why the New Lad is not really that different from the Old Lad and why, indeed, he can metamorphose, at the flick of his psychic switch, into an Old Lad when he's in the company of his ideal audience - his mates. The bottom line with male bonding is that boys will be boys. If six women have dinner together they will, at some point in the evening, talk seriously about the things that matter. Put six men in a room together and they'll talk, loudly and at length, about anything *but* the things that really matter. And they'll talk against each other - "Your team were crap the other night", "Are you wearing that suit for a bet?" - or in praise of their communal excesses: "God, me and Steve got wrecked the other night." Cars and girls, sport and booze are still the staple ingredients of the lads' night out.

The only difference with New Lads is emphasis - they're not quite as boorish/tribal/drunken or loud as their prehistoric predecessors. And, if someone pulls them up on their double standards, they are immediately able to couch their laddishness in political/sociological terms - "I know that football is a tribal ritual but it's one of the few remaining outlets for working-class communal expression," or "I wasn't out on the piss with the lads last night, I was actually engaging in a new form of positive male bonding very similar to women-only

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All boys together: The myth of male bonding

Men don't really talk to each other, they talk *at* each other – an inexhaustible stream of banter, in-jokes, in-references, jargon, code, nicknames and wind-ups. Much of the subject matter is pre-determined (cars, girls, sport, work) in order to avoid anything too revealing. These exchanges are calculated to reveal *nothing*

Cinematic male bonding: the boys in *Porky's* (top) and *Diner*



groups insofar as it provides a productive environment for communal self-analysis. Now, where did you say the Paracetamol was?" The beauty of being a New Lad is that there is always a get out clause.

But, maybe this view of the new species is a little harsh. After all, we have to put the New Lad in perspective. He may be pretty flaky but isn't he's a damn sight more fun than the New Man and a damn sight more progressive than the Old Lad, who incidentally, is still going strong - loud, proud and utterly unreconstitutable? Or, as one of the many women I talked to in my research put it, "There are some positive aspects to the New Lad. I mean, he's not sexist to the core." He can be fun in his endearing naivety, his misguided self-righteousness, his brazen double standards and his utter, unshakeable conviction that he's a one-in-a-million catch for any intelligent female.

Ultimately, however, there is something sad about the New Lad and that something is tied up with the utter dismissal of the New Man - not the New Man as advertising construct, nor the New Man as neurotic right-on wimp, but the New Man as a potential role model. Was there just neither the will, nor the nerve, to seriously consider such a radical shift in consciousness? For now, to seal a recent advertising slogan, is the New Lad "the best a man can get"?

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WHAT COMES NEXT?

- THE INCREASINGLY EMBATTLED DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN THE SEXES?
- THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEW MAN AND THE NEW LAD AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE CHANGES IN WOMEN'S SEXUAL POLITICS.
- THE POST FEMINIST WOMAN.
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- THE NEW LASS
- THE SEX WAR RAGES ON?

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SONIA RYKIEL
PARIS

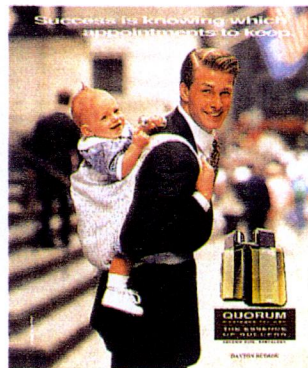
London: BIRRI
New York: M

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an advertising phenomenon: (clockwise from top left) men and babies in ads for Emporio Armani, Sonia Rykiel, Next, Gillette, Quorum and Calvin Klein's Eternity



WHAT COMES NEXT IN THE INCREASINGLY EMBATTLED DIVIDING
LINE BETWEEN THE SEXES?

The New Lad's stature grows in column inches. Once a list of what he drank and wore and watched, had been compiled, then hey, guys, he existed. *Media Hype!*

We have looked at the caring, sharing, emotionally balanced, non-sexist, non-aggressive male (aka New Man). Women didn't really fancy him; men couldn't change that much anyway. Recently they've given up trying and a hybrid has developed - the New Lad. "Basically the New Lad aspires to New Man status when he's with women, but reverts to Old Lad type when he's out with the boys."

If this is right, and men have really given up trying, then we haven't come a long way. Long before the Next advertisements and the Athena posters of baby-toting muscle-men, the New Man was a noble concept, and justifiably so. Feminism was a response to unequivocal inequalities between the sexes - in the work-force, in law, in education, in politics, in society. Initially men seemed mystified by women's anger, but eventually the

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more intelligent of them began to see the truth in women's complaints. They started to change.

Look at your fathers. Do men still honestly share their attitudes to women? Do they expect, as a right, from their girlfriend or wife, a clean house, a hot meal and sex on demand? If they're under the age of 35, I doubt it. There has been a definite shift in the relationship between the sexes; men today are well-versed in the language of feminism.

In understanding the metamorphosis of the New Man and the New Lad it is important to appreciate the way in which feminism itself has changed.

Seventies feminism, like any new concept, was not perfectly formed. It didn't get everything "right-on". Some women, in their eagerness to craft the perfect man, made unrealistic demands. In their construction of the New Man ideal, they sought, consciously or not, revenge for centuries of oppression. A mass of popular misconceptions developed about feminists and what they wanted from men. Some women live with, and laugh at, being cast as a 16-stone, hairy-legged harridan (that is, a feminist). It is tragic that the New Man also has to suffer the same misunderstanding. Just because the DAILY MAIL uses the word "feminist" as an insult, it hasn't lost its credence. But "New Man" has.

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He's my comfort, my inspiration, my love. But I am captain of my soul.



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Authentic Athletic Apparel and Footwear



COSMOPOLITAN : NOV '91

The important elements of the New Man are not his nappy changing ability or an abhorrence of football, any more than feminists are expected to eschew make-up or join the tenth anniversary celebrations at Greenham Common. From the women I approached the crux was clear: the real New Man is one who is capable of open, honest communication, who is not afraid to show some emotion, who does not cover every statement in a cloak of self-defensive irony. Who can, as one friend put it, "inter-relate without ever using the word "inter-relate"".

Such men are highly prized by women, though men - fearfully, I think - tend to denigrate them as wimps. It makes it oh so easy for them to slip back into the enduring old tough-guy roles. Certainly there is a contrariness in many women, who like a bit of a bastard in their men, but there is usually a much stronger desire for a real softness, too.

Revealing what you want/think/dream requires a certain level of maturity, and that seems to be the starting, or stopping, point for the New Lad. He's the New Man who never grew up, a Peter Pan Man. Educated and self-aware, he has clocked the weakest point of feminism - the fact that women still want men.

If the effect of New Laddism were merely to confuse and alienate men and women in the field of sexual relationships, it would be sad, but not radically bad. But I suspect it is more insidious than that. If non-sexist men are backsliding when with the pack, isn't

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there the possibility that the joke becomes the reality? That they will start to see women as sexual stereotypes. And not just the potential bed-mates, but every woman, from his mother to his boss. And how much longer before Irish and British men catch the American wave of masculinity which claims, through organisations like the National Coalition of Free Men, that society discriminates against men?

While most women have been denied the opportunity to improve their lot in public life, they're not blameless for their position in the privacy of their own relationships.

"Personal is political" was the catchword of the Seventies' women's movement - meaning that who does the dishes is of equal importance as who represents you in Parliament. Much of that appears to have gone down the drain in the intervening years. It may be depressing to see so many women subjecting themselves to emotional torture in the effort to wrench the dreaded c-word - commitment - out of the New Laddish partner. It may be true as one (male) friend put it, that everyone is capable of bad behaviour in relationships.

Perhaps New Lads would do well to think on another recent media hype, the virgin birth story. Most of the papers leapt on it, apoplectically raging against single women who choose to have children by artificial insemination. In that instance, the woman had never had sex, but in most cases - and the numbers are growing

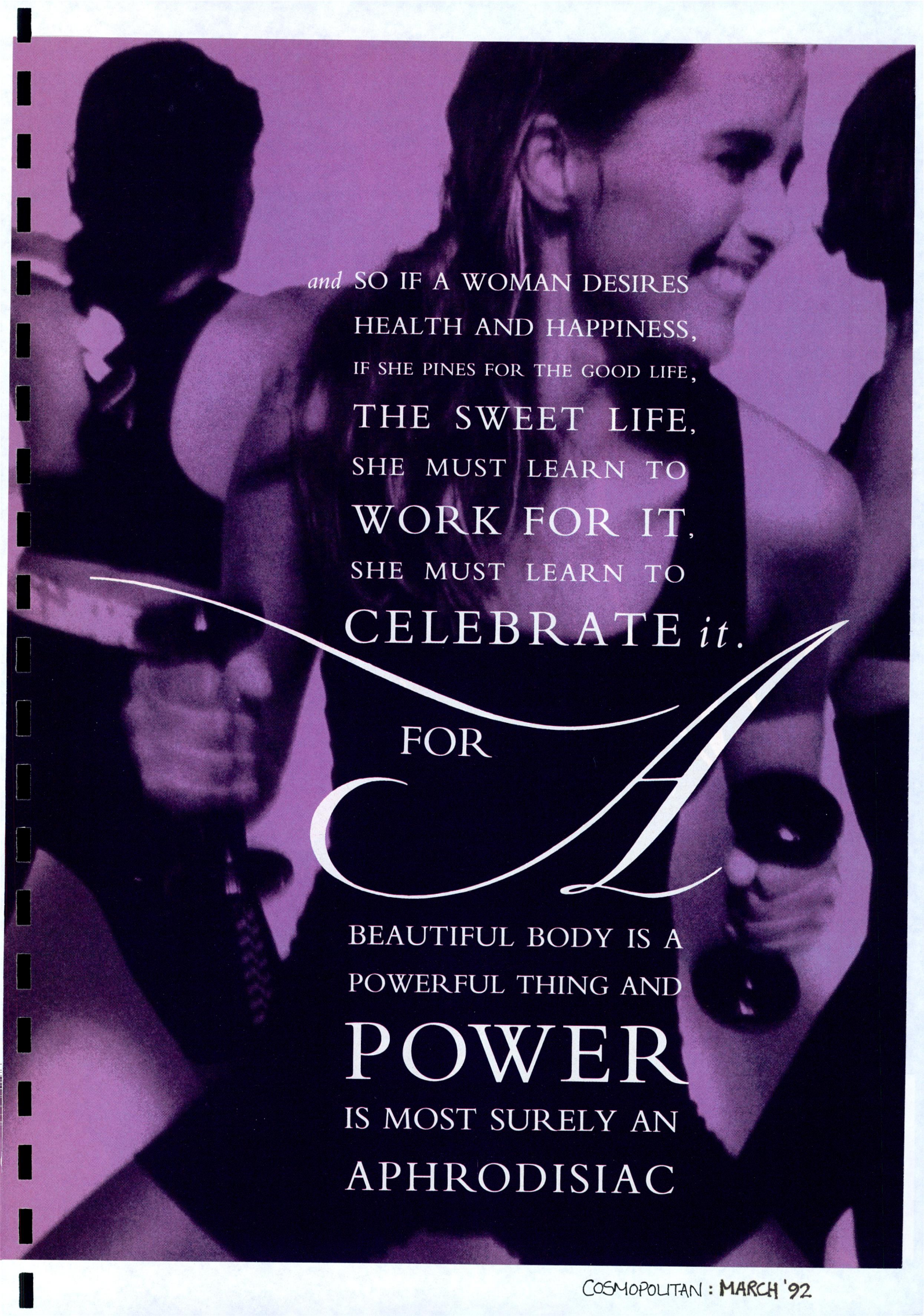
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HEALTH AND HAPPINESS,
IF SHE PINES FOR THE GOOD LIFE,
THE SWEET LIFE,
SHE MUST LEARN TO
WORK FOR IT,
SHE MUST LEARN TO
CELEBRATE *it.*

FOR

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BEAUTIFUL BODY IS A
POWERFUL THING AND

POWER

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{BECAUSE IT IS}

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Following the possible sudden death of the poor, long-suffering New Man, after years of agonizing illness, it seems a timely moment to examine that other sexual stereotype from the Seventies and Eighties: the dour, castrating feminist. Did she ever really exist (as we have been asking of the New Man) and, if so, what has happened to her? When did you last see a woman in dungarees?

It all seems such a long time ago now, so difficult to disentangle the real thing from the PRIVATE EYE's "Wimmin" and VIZ's Mille Tant. Maybe she was a fantasy for boys who wanted rough sex but were too afraid to ask. Maybe she was invented to entertain the lads when Tom, Dick and Harry failed to score, when a humourless para-lesbian was more comforting than their own charisma bypass.

We knew that men and women were essentially different, that women were good and men were socialised to be bad, and that we could withdraw completely and/or try and change the world through woman-power.

It was serious business and required constant vigilance. They holed up in woman's groups, discussing

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Tri-action sports bra.

for the
movement

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The bra
designed
for
the
woman's
point.



The bra for the way you are.

COCO

L'ESPRIT DE CHANEL

the relationship between male violence, patriarchy and penetrative sex. On Sundays they stood waving banners reading, "Porn degrades women". They spend solstices at Greenham, plaiting daffodils into the barbed-wire fence, trying to shame the government into getting rid of their phallic, murderous cruise missiles. In the company of men, they were strict about sexist language and, with lovers, vigilant about their autonomy.

Of course this "second-wave" feminism (following the bra-burning Sixties) was never 100% pure. When they went off to Greenham to embrace the base, feeling warm and sisterly and strong, did they tell anyone about their sexual fantasies involving muscular American marines? When they picketed the local sex shop, did they worry about the fact their favourite magazine was ELLE - not Spare Rib - which they bought for its fashion photography? While they walked out of Spike Lee's SHE'S GOTTA HAVE IT because Nola Darling finally chooses the man who raped her, they felt only mildly guilty that the comic-book machismo of TOP GUN made it the funniest, most exhilarating film of the year.

There was also the small problem of Margaret Thatcher. As the Eighties wore on, one had to admit there was nothing essentially "good" (in our terms, anti-war, anti-violence, supportive of other women, pro-feminist legislation) about women in power. But could perhaps write her off as an "honorary man" who had been forced to ape men in order to be taken seriously.

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The other examples began piling up. Child sex-abuse cases involving women as perpetrators (most famously, New York's Hedda Nussbaum) were widely reported in the newspapers. Peter Medak's film THE KRAYS portrayed Violet Kray as the terrifying matriarch at the heart of the family. There was a TV documentary about battered husbands. Female serial killers began to emerge in the United States. It couldn't be all explained away by economic hardship or self-defence.

The other problem was that joyless separatism didn't seem to have the desired effect. There were still only a handful of women TDs. Women were still getting paid less than men. Women were still getting raped. Relationships were just as troubled. It wasn't even working on women themselves - they still lusted after bastards (who didn't fancy them) instead of nice wimps (who did).

So why not have some fun with our women friends, rather than sitting around plotting about how to change the world (and failing)? Women went on "women only" holidays, had dinner date conversations about whether those Hollywood celebrities really were dykes and whether they should form all-female social clubs.

Now older, confident and sociable, women were into being at least outrageous and at most debauched, pissing in the streets on the way home. If they couldn't change men, they began to care less about what men thought of women's hairy armpits and their sexual habits - it was a question of practical, not ideological purity.

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Women soon began to enjoy the idea of intimidating men, whether by cat-calling a lycra-clad cyclist or having a good laugh together about a documentary on impotence.

Women's role models were powerful and contradictory (like, dare I say it, Mrs. T?), instead of unhappy victims like Sylvia Plath. Their biggest hero was, of course, Madonna, after she emerged from the Charlene Atlas school of reconstruction transformed from tubby pop star into... a goddess. Suddenly, contradiction was in vogue. Madonna dressed like a star of a soft-porn fantasy, but her biggest fans - and friends - were women. The world's most potent sex object, she was also the mistress of her image and identity whose principle creative pleasure came from re-inventing herself as other icons, from Marilyn Monroe to Mae West. Swearing, sex crazed, crass, offensive *and* Catholic, women liked her so much they were prepared to tolerate her poor taste in men.

But if not all women were good, then not all men were bad. Gradually the spirit of hedonism began to lose its separatist edge. That same mixture of take-it-or-leave-it good times, toilet humour and willy talk had the added attraction of flirting. To hell with patriarchy, let's dance! Despite her machismo, the new woman was not butch. She *re-invented* the cleavage, she had a wall-full of Virago modern classics, cried when relationships went wrong, and used only Clinique skin products. As ever, the

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double standard was in play. (And the last thing women wanted was men invading their space and empathizing with their pre-menstrual water retention and mid-cycle cramps.)

The mother of all wars, the Sex War, was still being played out, only now the weapons had changed. Instead of earnest separatism, women adopted reckless guerrilla tactics, invading and *enjoying* men's space like never before. They started saying "fucking" to describe sex, using hero not heroine, actor not actress, in the way that queer and dyke have been reclaimed. Some may have been refused entry into Parliament, but women were going to take over the pubs and the football terraces - partly for the sake of it, partly for the thrill of the game, the buzz of violence and partly to imagine all those big, strong men in shorts belonged to them.

Madonna's machismo, the Fat Slags' total dedication to good times, crying during THIRTYSOMETHING - it all sounds rather like that new species of man, the New Lad, who reads ARENA as well as PENTHOUSE and feels he can go "woof" if a foxy chick walks in without being sexist. (Hard to swallow, I know.) Perhaps she ought to be christened the "New Lass".

There may be an important difference however. Unlike her male alter-ego, it seems the New Lass hasn't ditched sexual politics completely?

double standard was in play. (And the last thing women wanted was men invading their space and empathizing with their pre-menstrual water retention and mid-cycle

cramps.)

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CONCLUSION.

The notion that all females are frustrated packages of love and emotion must be queried. It would seem that many subscribe to the "theory" that it is merely males that need to sharpen up in order to slot nicely the "New Man" tag. What about a "New Woman" label? Emotionally handicapped people come in all shapes and sizes, and it is what is in the person's mind that defines how far this human capacity can go, not his erection or her libido. Women are just as capable of being "loud mouth neurotic wimps", caught up in the "all I want is a caring man" trap. It's great that such all encompassing issues are being tackled, but shouldn't we cut out all the gender labelling?

We have looked at how easily a label can be attached to the generalisation that all "newish" men are the same. But is this media labelling all just a little too much? Whether the New Man is merely a New Lad with an Armani suit and a mind in the gutter might bear little relevance to the real world. Not only is this based on the generalisation that men are the same, it also uses the classic generalization that all women are oppressed, sensitive, caring, and the ultimate human form. It takes very little time to realise that relationships between men and women (and any other combination thereof) are not and should not be based upon sex; what is between ones

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legs only goes so far. It is only in the mind and in the hearts of people that a relationship can start. Sex can be watched, bought, sold, laughed at and thrown up over, and unfortunately I must concede that this is usually done at a female's expense.

In analysing an evolution and counter-revolution I have often been tempted to come to the conclusion that much of this is impossible over-generalisation but finally I hope I have put together some sort of picture of some very large scale changes in society. Personally, I hope that the rapid progress towards a better communication between the sexes does not slow down until the issue is no longer an issue and the ideal of a gender balanced society becomes a reality.

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FOOTNOTES.

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As most of the information available of my research has been gained from magazines and documentaries on television, most of my observations have been made looking at Britain rather than Ireland. Chanel 4, the BBC, Cosmopolitan, ELLE, ARENA, GQ, and Spare Rib.

MARQUILLAGE:
SHISEIDO

Jean Paul
GAULTIER
ELLE:
MAR '92

MEN!

FEMMES !!

DONNA!

