

Woman, thy Name is Vanity

By

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Men spend an average of 30 minutes a day on grooming; women spend an average of 45 minutes. Men shower, shave, and brush their teeth. Women shower, shave their legs, put on make-up, fix their hair, do their nails, and pluck their eyebrows. Well, some women pluck their eyebrows. And I know plenty of men who should.

Anyway, if my math is correct, which is unlikely, men have an average of 91 more hours per year than women do, simply because they spend less time on their appearance. That's more than two work weeks which, in my opinion, they could spend doing housework.

For our part ladies, vanity is costing us. Those who know me may think that, while I have a lot of issues, vanity can not possibly be one of them. And it is true that I'm probably not spending a full 45 minutes on my appearance, but even I, whose style can best be described as "disheveled," will admit to being vain at times.

For example, one day a few years back, I rolled out of bed early and headed to the gym. I was almost there when another driver ran a red light and totaled my car. I had many concerns immediately after the accident happened--my condition, the other driver's condition, my car's condition. And right up there with them was the fear that everyone at the scene would think I always leave the house in bed head and ragged sweatpants. "Yes Mr. Handsome EMT Man, I can move my legs. And by the way, I don't normally dress this way."

Like many women, I'm vain enough to require at least three pairs of jeans: one for dress up, one for every day, and one for wearing while I do yard work. This last pair is the most comfortable, but I wear them the least because they're ugly and I hate yard work.

I wear my second pair more often because they can be seen in public and they don't make me think of manual labor. They aren't particularly flattering, but they are fairly comfortable. If they ever get a hole in the knee, I'll use them for yard work too-- though I can't imagine why I would need two pairs for that.

The dress jeans aren't comfortable at all, but in my opinion they look better than the other two. They aren't faded yet, and for now I can zip them without lying on the bed to do it. That could change if I ever accidentally run them through the drier on hot or eat one too many Girl Scout cookies. In order to keep them from fading or shrinking, I'm determined never to wash them again. And the best way to avoid washing them is to avoid wearing them. They continue to look very attractive hanging in my closet.

It was vanity that drove me to try teeth whitening strips. I'm not sure how well they whitened my teeth, but I do know that when I slobbered while wearing them, my spit took the dye right out of my sleeve. And they're convenient; you can wear them while you're cleaning house, driving, working--anytime really. Well, maybe not when you're eating. Don't try that.

One day I was wearing the white strips when a teenage girl showed up at my door selling Christmas wreaths for her soccer team. I always buy a wreath, but I had these things in my mouth. What could I do? I was vain enough to use white strips and too vain to let my guest know I was using them. So I talked without moving my mouth and kept

my hand over my face the whole time we were conducting our business. See what vanity got me? She probably thinks I'm missing a front tooth.

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