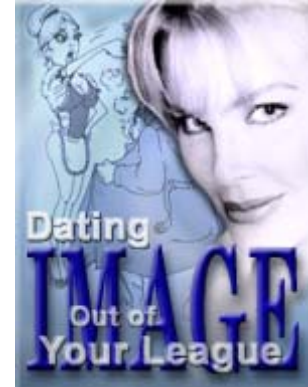




WHO SAYS IMAGE ISN'T EVERYTHING!?

By April Masini

You've likely heard the expression, "You can't judge a book by its cover." But if you believe it's true—I would strongly suggest you not to go into publishing! Book and magazine publishers have long since proven that although a cover may not tell you what's on the inside, it is the reason that we're initially drawn to a book, and it is the reason we choose to take one magazine off the shelf as opposed to another.



And here's the thing—until a book is picked up, guess what? No sale. And no sale means that the great story inside never gets told. How does this relate to you? Simple. You, like a book, may be fabulous on the inside, but if you haven't interested people enough with 'your cover' to pick you up and see what you're all about —there is no way they are ever going to find out!

Clearly, my objective is not to defend the value of the book cover, rather to illustrate a point. That being that your image—from the clothes and accessories you wear, to the car you drive, to your hairstyle and hygiene—is your book cover. It may not fully or accurately represent the whole story that lies inside your proverbial pages, but it will determine your ability to make a sale, in both the literal and figurative sense.

Remember the adage, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression," and heed it's warning. Those impressions are formed in a matter of seconds. Being both immediate and long lasting (if not permanent), they will largely determine your success or failure – with women, with career, with life.

THE OLD DOUBLE STANDARD

Many men—though maybe not you—might be reading this and thinking that the lesson doesn't apply to them because, well...they're men, and men don't have to be concerned with their appearances (their "covers") in the way that women do.

If you're one of these guys, you'd better wake up...and fast! This type of misconception—and let there be no mistake about it, it most definitely is a misconception—may not only be holding you back from reaching your goals—it might downright prevent your success! But don't just take my word for it. Studies have shown that white-collar job interviews involving strangers succeed, or fail, much more due to appearance-derived judgments than underlying abilities. Is it unfair? Yes. But is it true? You absolutely, categorically, better believe it is!

CHECK YOUR IMAGE FOR 'CAUSE AND EFFECT'

It's been over 2,000 years since Socrates explained "The Law of Cause and Effect", and you know what? After all this time, nothing has changed. When you pick the action, you pick the result. You choose your image – you choose how people will react to you and how they will treat you. That is a proven fact!

Everyone—from the sexy woman you see every morning at Starbucks who you've been working up the courage to ask out, to your boss who may (or may not) give you a promotion, to the maitre d' who determines which table you get—will make judgments about you that modify their behavior, and determine their treatment of you, based upon your appearance and their perception of you.

In other words, that sexy woman might think twice about saying yes if she's not crazy about your dirty, scuffed up shoes or the way you were slurping your coffee as you neglected to hold the door open for that elderly older woman. And your boss might not consider you for that promotion if you're coming in every day looking disheveled and unkempt; or if you did not allow a female client to walk ahead of you to the table, and pull out her chair, at that important dinner he invited you to. And the maitre d'? You know where you'll be sitting if you've missed getting your monthly hair cut – for a third week – or show up wearing a wrinkled shirt and 'too loose in the seat' pants! That's right. The back...next to the kitchen...on the way to the bathroom.

LOOKING THE PART

Now that you grasp the importance of your image, it's time to actually do something about it. Because while it may seem unjust that people make judgments based on "covers", or that your success depends upon an initial impression of only a few seconds, the great part is that your image—and the judgments others make about you based upon it—is that most of it is totally within your control!

The real question is whether you're going to positively—or negatively—affect and influence that judging. The real question is whether it will be you getting the promotion, or the well-dressed guy with impeccable manners next to you (you know the one who's got half the qualifications as you but somehow comes across as more together). The real question is when you're going to accept the fact that looking the part is one giant leap toward actually being the part.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A former model and actress, April Masini, is a bold, fearless, highly creative and immensely persuasive, "ideas person," who in addition to being the author of *DATE OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE*, is also the President and CEO of a multifaceted television/film/events production company, Masini Television & Film Enterprises, LLC, located in Hawaii and Masini Enterprises, Inc. in Los Angeles.