

to figure out who was who, and I didn't recognize Cindy Crawford until I read the photo caption. Shouldn't we have the faces we've earned? Hey, I like seasoning. To me, Nick Nolte looks flawless.

### Pumping Rust

> I used to be a fairly serious runner, but as I've gotten older, it's taken a toll on my knees. I'd like to do something else that will still give me a solid cardio workout. Any suggestions? >> I did the treadmill till it got to my knees, then the bike till it got to my knees, then the recumbent bike till it got to my knees. Maybe it wasn't the exercise—maybe it was Catholic school that aged them?—but all my aging hoop-nut peers have had knee operations. Today I just do pilates, and I swim. Do the swim, baby.

### Belt It Out

> My girlfriend has a cool skinny gray snakeskin belt that I'd like to wear with my suits. Can a man pull off wearing a woman's belt? >> Why not? In the '50s, skinny belts were worn by men, too. If it'll hold your pants up, the worst that can happen is you'll be taken for a flamenco dancer.

### Bow-Tie Outcasts

> I've wanted a bow tie ever since André Benjamin made them look cool. Are there rules to follow as far as shape, size, and body type? Do you recommend always making a tight knot? Or can you go looser sometimes? >> Just a few years back, the bow tie was the mark of an eccentric, but fortunately, millions have gone off-center, and men of style can, in civilized areas, wear a bow without fear of hoots and sneers. If you have a big face you shouldn't wear a skinny little bow tie, and if you have a skinny face you shouldn't wear a big fat one. Some bow men like the butterfly, some like the straight model. If you are interested in checking out the various styles, may I suggest you investigate [www.bowties.com](http://www.bowties.com), which makes a good tie in an exceptional variety of patterns and silks. I myself like

### Leatherman

> A few months ago, GQ told me I could wear a leather jacket with a tie. Really? Is this something you've ever done, or do, or would do? >> Back in my wild youth, I wore a tie with my motorcycle jacket on occasion. It would have been a requisite if you were planning on, say, dining at '21,' then heading down to a leather bar like the Spike for an all-male nightcap. But I'm guessing GQ suggested wearing a tie with a leather blazer with notched lapels and a tailored cut, a Euro-flavored jacket that goes with boho styling, maybe dark glasses and beret. The Fonzie look can also work if you've got midcentury-modern edge.

a thin straight bow tie, rather sloppily tied, and I also like the big fat loosely tied bow that Frenchmen favor and that you can buy pre-tied at Charvet. I must confess that being rather against pre-tied, I bought one and untied it and tried to retie it myself, and now it's a mess, so be careful.

### Let's Not Be L7

> Can you once and for all settle the question of whether or not it's okay to wear square-toe shoes? >> If Donald Duck wore shoes, he'd wear 'em square. And before soccer-style kickers ruled the NFL, the greatest field-goal kicker in the game, Lou "the Toe" Groza, wore a big square-toe shoe on his right foot. It meant business. Square toes are too architectural for my taste, but I suppose if you're hip enough, you can carry off square.

### Needs a Shrink

> I've dug up some old Boss and Armani wool sweaters that used to belong to my dad. They're a bit big, but they're classics, and so I was wondering if it's possible to shrink them. My girlfriend says I can wash them in the sink and then throw them in the dryer, but I'm afraid of ruining them. Any ideas? >> Our housekeeper has



• • • **Leather jacket with a tie? Plenty of pomade—and attitude—always help.**

laundered some sweaters of mine, including my favorite old, nicely worn olive drab Prada V-neck. It now fits my wife. A few of my wife's best sweaters are now being worn by Oscar, the 8-year-old. Shrinking them is a dangerous, highly experimental proposition. I think your girlfriend just wants to wear them herself.

### Fashion Man's Burden

> I've noticed that labels like Ralph Lauren still make some suits with shoulder pads. They fit well, but I don't want to look like a complete anachronism. What do you think? >> This letter would have been almost unimaginable just a few years ago. Shoulder pads were virtually de rigueur for decades. But now the natural shoulder is back, and all seems right with tailoring, to the point that it's hard to imagine the soft, natural look ever going out again. Hard, but still it will happen, when interest rates hit a certain figure, or there's something going on in the stars. Yes, those Pat Riley/Grace Jones-style pads that make your head look smaller will return one

day when social conditions demand it. I will be gone, probably, but if not, I'm not going back there. My own shoulders are big enough to hang my jacket on.

### Clueless

> My best friend is a good-looking guy and does well for himself. But even though he buys expensive clothes, he doesn't know what he's doing. His suits are baggy, and his shirts blouse. I want to help, but I don't want to hurt his feelings. Is there a gentle way to do it? >> Humor is good, but I can be brutal if I have to be, because I know people will be brutal to me if I'm caught in a lapse—like when the blog Kempt saw me in a loose old Issey Miyake short-sleeve shirt in Miami and titled the item "Style Guy Gone Wild." Sometimes a guy needs tough love. Cluelessness among friends is difficult. Gentleness doesn't get attention, but wit wakes 'em up.

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