

# The lively needle

## Wearing a wig was no fun then

By MARY KAY DAVIS

Antoinette's head.

The annals of fashion contain a preposterous chapter involving the wearing of wigs.

Anybody who aspired to be anybody in the pre-revolutionary days wore wigs — not our drip-dry, acrylic kind, but the itchy, powdered variety.

Men began wearing wigs when Louis XIV of France used one to hide his bald head. By 1700 you could spot a European gentleman by his white, elaborately curled head rug.

Though these were very expensive, it wasn't the original cost but the upkeep that kept the aristocracy broke. Wigs required the constant services of a barber to keep them well-dressed. Such a craftsman was paid eight to 10 pounds a year — an enormous sum for the times — to care for each wig. It was curled on Saturday morning and rushed home on Saturday afternoon to be in time for Saturday evening wear.

**THE BEST WIGS** were made of human hair. The next best were made of horsehair, goat's hair, and "hair from the tails of cows." Pomade was spread over the wig to "dress" it. Then two pounds of expensive wig powder was sprinkled on top. Only the lower classes used flour — it attracted weevils. The powder and grease got all over clothing and upholstery.

Wigs became such status symbols that they attracted thieves.

Women's wigs were influenced by those of Marie Antoinette and her French ladies. Higher was better until these confections soared to unbelievable altitudes. Plumes, flowers, ribbons, whole scenes and even naval battles decorated these huge hair-do's. It was said that the best ships in the French navy were on Marie

**THESE CONSTRUCTIONS** were composed of one's own hair extended with false hair over a framework which could be made of anything from buckram to wire to rope to yarn or hay.

The false hair could come from used wigs, horse's tails, goat's beards or whatever was available. It was curled over the framework, slathered with pomade and coated with powder until it reached the consistency of papier mache.

Since my lady's own hair was involved, the "wig" couldn't be taken off at night. How anyone slept is never mentioned.

The rich could pay to have their hair "refreshed" often, but the less wealthy had to make their "heads" last up to three weeks. Since the hay, cow tails, old wigs, etc. that went into the mix were far from clean, bugs had a field day. Lice were normal and one woman is said to have died from bites of the spiders nesting in her hair.

**WHEN THE ITCHING** got too bad, a lady's "head" was "opened" with a knife. Ivory wands, like chopsticks, were inserted so that she could get a good scratch. Then the whole thing was glued back together again.

The height of these confections got so enormous that a fashionable lady couldn't fit into a coach. She either had to kneel on the floor, or sit on the seat with her head sticking out the window. Cartoonists of the time had a field day. They showed ladies riding in sedan chairs with their hair-do's poking out through trap doors in the roof.

And the main door of St. Paul's Cathedral in London had to be raised four feet to allow fashionable ladies to enter without musing their hair.



## Directing concert

Steve Sutherland will direct the Wonderland Chorus, a group that has won awards for barbershop singing, in concerts at 8:15 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 2 and 3, in Our Lady of Mercy High School, Eleven Mile and Middle Belt, Farmington Hills. The 80-members group of men from varied professions won a district meet in Grand Rapids last October and in July will take part in an international competition in Minneapolis. (Staff photo)

## Graphologically Speaking

### Printing or cursive, similarities are there

By LORENE GREEN



Dear Mrs. Green,

I have two types of handwriting. I'm curious to see why they're different. I usually prefer to print instead of write. I love to read your column and am very interested in the outcome of my analysis. Thank you so much for keeping such an interesting column. Below is my writing. Do you see any difference in the style?

Although I prefer to print, I think this type of writing for me has become simpler and less attractive. Writing is important for me because I'm almost constantly writing all day.

I am 18 and right-handed.  
C. P., Birmingham

Dear C. P.,

Yes, there are many similarities between your printing and your cursive writing. The fact that you prefer printing suggests that you have a need to be understood, and you wish to communicate clearly to others.

From your small writing I know you have very good ability to concentrate. You are able to direct all of your energies to the task at hand. The precise placement of t bars and i dots tell me that you work in a careful manner. You are skillful at putting ideas into practice.

Outwardly, you are poised and controlled. You are not one to show your emotions freely. In fact it is quite important to keep your feelings under

In the cursive of my subject, Birmingham, I see an interesting union. Below is my writing. Do you see any difference in the style?

Although I prefer to print, I think this type of writing for me has become simpler and less attractive. Writing is important for me because I'm almost constantly writing all day.

You are objective and will consider the consequences before becoming involved (vertical slant).

Although more reticent than talkative, you can be very tactful probably quite charming when you choose to be (closed circle letters with tapering m's and n's).

You have been raised in a mother-dominated home, but are trying to make your way in life rather independently of either parent. This sometimes leads to rebellious behavior on your part (gestalt picture of your handwriting).

Placement of your writing on the sheet suggests that there is something in the future that has you concerned. I suspect there are pressures that have you apprehensive.

There are many things that you want and these are usually not large things (small hooks at the beginning of many of your words).

While you present a good self-image to others, inwardly you do not feel as confident as you would like to feel. This concerns me because you have so much going for you. You are inclined to set your goals too low (low t crossings and shape of your capital I). You really should challenge yourself more, because you can do it. Positive thinking is the secret to success!

If you have a question about your personality write to Lorene C. Green in care of this newspaper. Please use a full sheet of white paper and write in the first person singular.

## 4-H seeks to make biking safer way to go

State Police records show 45 people were killed and 3,710 injured in bicycle accidents in Michigan during 1977.

To try to make this popular sport safer, the Michigan 4-H Foundation has been granted \$78,746 for the second phase of a three-year bicycle care and safety program.

The program is funded by the Office of Highway Safety Planning and the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It is designed to reduce bicycle fatalities and injuries through local comprehensive bicycle safety program.

Last year, 4-H provided bicycle education to more than 11,000 young people in the 10 counties involved in the pilot phase of the program.

Any persons interested in getting assistance to develop a local bicycle education program should contact their county Extension Service office.

## Announcement

The Charlotte Ford

for Don Sophisticates  
Spring Collection

Will not be shown as planned

Wednesday, March 7 Somerset Mall  
Thursday, March 8 Grosse Pointe

The shops of  
**Walton-Pierce**  
Grosse Pointe • Somerset Mall

The New Suit  
from Les Mouches



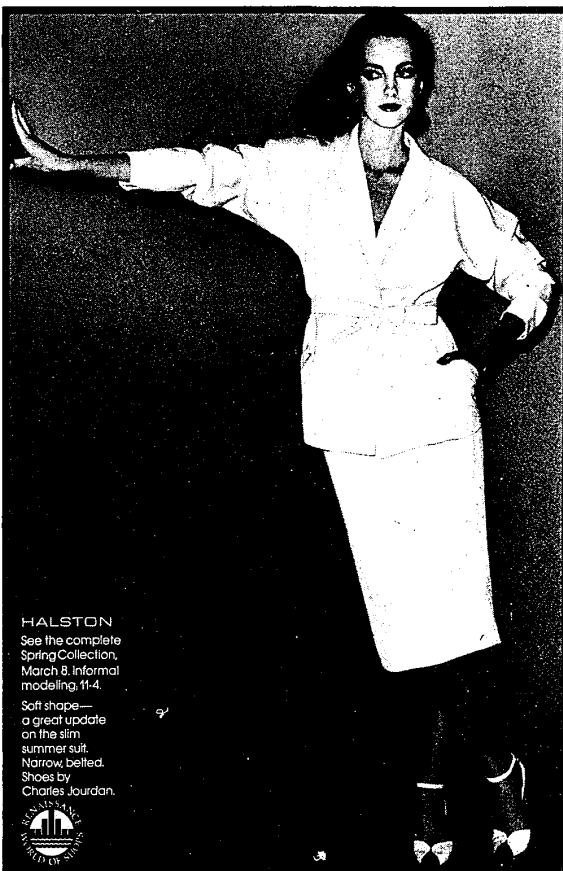
Black silk  
dotted with  
white  
size 4-4  
\$200.

The shops of  
**Walton-Pierce**  
Grosse Pointe • Somerset Mall

## RENAISSANCE DESIGNER BOUTIQUES

HALSTON LANVIN COURRÈGES CHARLES JOURDAN les must' de CARTIER HATTIE UNGARO

Together at only one place in the world—Renaissance Center, Detroit—the complete collections of Halston, Jeanne Lanvin, Andre Courrèges, les must' de Cartier, Charles Jourdan and Emanuel Ungaro, as well as selected designs from Valentino, Giorgio Armani, Basile, Yves Saint Laurent, Chloé, Missoni, Fendi, Tarlazzi, Sonia Rykiel, and Zandra Rhodes.



HALSTON

See the complete  
Spring Collection,  
March 8, informal  
modeling, 11-4.

Soft shape—  
a great update  
on the slim  
summer suit.  
Narrow, belted.  
Shoes by  
Charles Jourdan.



Between 100 and 400 Towers, second level of Renaissance Center. Major credit cards accepted. Valet parking available. Hours: 10 to 6, Mon. through Sat.