

editorial opinion

BY CORINNE ABATT

Check out the professionals

Who ever thought of interviewing a before using his services?
Traditionally, it is the doctor who does the interviewing and the patient who sits docilely in the leather arm chair, quietly awaiting news of his fate.

That's the way most of my generation were raised, revere the professional. Honor the doctor and the lawyer. Chew out the grocer. Question the mechanic but honor the professionals.

Then one day about 10 years ago I met a woman who interviewed gynecologists before choosing one. She said it was important to her to be able to establish good rapport with the person who was going to help bring her children into the world.

Made sense. Maybe total docility wasn't always the best way to go.
Maybe it was true that what was good for one person wasn't always good for another.

Harry Gornbein, columnist and legal advisor to the Southfield Parents Without Partners, suggests a lawyer be chosen with more care than most of us traditionally exercise.

Since lawyers, like doctors, don't advertise, Gornbein recommends those needing legal services first inquire about the lawyer's speciality.

He says of blind calls to lawyers, "When you are calling about specific problems, do not hesitate to ask the lawyer on the phone whether or not he handles the type of case you are involved with."

He continues, "If you are coming in for a will or a divorce, or some other type of specific matter, feel free to ask the attorney what the price will be in advance. If a lawyer refuses to give you an idea of how much your problem will involve on a cost or fee basis, do not hesitate to thank him and call another lawyer."
Gornbein speaks about changing attorneys.

"IT IS IMPORTANT to have a good rapport with your attorney. You have a right to have your questions answered. You also have a right upon request to see and receive copies of any and all papers involved in your file. If you find that your questions are not being properly answered, even if your attorney is excellent, sometimes a change of attorney is the answer."

This could apply to any professional person whom you have engaged for services. Gornbein recommends coming to an agreement on fees and when they are due before making a change.

One item of Gornbein's advice is valuable, especially for all those who may be trepidous about assertiveness.

"Try not to be intimidated and when you have questions, it is a good idea to write them down."

This assertiveness, new to so many women, takes time to get into good balance. There may be a temptation for those trying assertiveness for the first time to come on like the Mongol hords moving across the plains.

It is more a matter of being businesslike, not being afraid to admit ignorance and asking questions. Take a notebook, jot down questions and the answers you receive.

Farmington Observer & Eccentric
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352 5400

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Around the edge

Jackie K. vs. Jackie O.

I've got two chances of being a trend-setter-slim and none.
I'm the type style experts shake their heads at in disgust and mutter, "Some women are simply not up on what's in and what's out." I gave myself a fashion IQ test and scored in the upper percentile for being a total bundle of outs.

Do you remember the mini? By the time I got around to spending \$100 to have everything in my closet shortened so my knees would show, minis became the rage. I spent another \$100 to have the hems let down and ended up with 25 dresses the wrong length and with permanent creases six-inches from the bottom.

I thought I was really chic when I threw my outs in the garbage can with leftover TV dinners. Now I find "the tunic" is the tonic that invigorates spring fashion. If I weren't such an out person, I would have saved those 25 dresses to layer over pants, long gowns and skirts.

The problem is I'm not sure if the "big dress" that makes you look like you're about to give birth is in or if the stringbean dress, that puts bulges in your body you never knew you had before, is in or out.

I GUESS I'm doomed to be like frankfurters and baked beans in a peasant-under-glass world of fashion. I spent \$35 for a permanent to get the latest super frizzy curls just one week before the straight, slick Oriental hair-do became the biggest thing since egg rolls.

I finally mustered up the courage and the \$15 to have my nails wrapped so at least my hands would look like Barbra Streisand's. The very same

day, a line on a fashion page shouted at me accusingly, "OUT-dagger-long finger nails— IN-shorter rounded nails."

Even Streisand cut her daggers because she's an "in person." What has she got that I haven't got except money, talent, fame, her own live-in hairdresser and shorter rounded nails?

I bet you didn't know that Ultra-suede, mink oil, plain chairs, tan poplin raincoats, short little scarves and studded jeans are out. I know because not only do I have more than one of each, I've cornered the entire obsolete market.

IF YOU don't believe I have a monopoly on outs, ask my husband who has given me permission to quote him but not in a family newspaper.

Pantsuits are definitely no-no. Jump suits are very in. I'm told his and her jumpsuits (the supposedly out Ultra-suedes are \$400) are hopping like Mexican jumping beans all over the fashion market.

I really didn't have to be told because I threw my purple jumpsuit away along with my 25 TV dinners. I'm sure TV dinners must be out because I have more varieties than Heinz stuffed in my refrigerator.

I'm delighted to hear baggy-ankle tall boots are out. I never liked them since I discovered the fashion was started by a wacky designer inspired by Jackie O. who has skinny legs and can't keep her boots from drooping.

What does Jackie O. have that Jackie K. doesn't except money, beauty, fame, \$1,000 blue jeans without studs and bony ankles?

"The dumber a dress is, the more we sell," said one specialty store employee who sold me four dresses with a total IQ of 40. The next day I read, "If you thrive on looking new each season, the place to put your money now is on trousers—long, short, belting, ruffled, connected to tops or hiding under long tunics."

THE SAME fashion expert asks, "When did you last turn up for a Cub Scout carpool in a jumpsuit with ballooning parachute, leg-stuffed mid-high brown leather boots and topped it off with a matching checked jockey cap?" I believe the last time was the day they put me away in a home.

Did you know fashion designer Bill Blass shelters a black cotton jumpsuit under a tan raincoat like the one I threw away? I bet you didn't know Blass features bright red panels joined at the shoulders like a chasuble, flying wide over a shirred waist tunic and pants.

Even if I could afford the Blass look, I wouldn't have the slightest idea what a chasuble is. Then there's Kasper, another triple-digit designer, who came out with a nautical outfit for the regatta set, but he forgot to throw in the boat.

Kasper suggests you dash over to the yacht club in a sunspun green windbreaker and a sporty white culotte skirt with a white visor cap and a scarf tied under your chin or knotted into a noose in back. What do I wear when I dash over to the supermarket that has the best sale on meat?

I really don't give a snood if I'm in or out. But if I didn't have to work, so hard finding out what's in, I'd have more time to be depressed.

From our readers

Campaign rule change is sought

Editor: I had drafted the letter below just after the election but hesitated to send it in. When I read Steve Barnaby's "Crackerbarrel Debate" article in the Thursday paper and saw how closely his thoughts paralleled mine, I decided to do so anyway.

The 10 per cent turnout of voters in Farmington Hills for the Nov. 4 elections and their closest supporters actually voted. The rest of the populace didn't know that there was an election, didn't care, or both.

MY CONTENTION is that a significant number didn't know and I attribute this to our sterile, unimaginative sign ordinance which severely limits a candidate's use of campaign signs. With a little forethought, reasonable

and enforceable campaign sign parameters could be incorporated into the ordinance without lowering the overall sign standards. Signs do help remind us that it must be election time again.

Now maybe there is some reason for trying to keep the turnout low, thus maintaining the status quo with respect to the existing power structure. I hope this isn't the case, but there is reasonable doubt.

Regardless of the rationale for manageable campaign signs, there is no valid reason for keeping the polling places a secret. Every polling location should have large, conspicuous signs, put up by the city clerk's office, clearly marking the place, certainly on election day, and preferably several days in advance.

Detroit manages to do this for their 500 plus precincts, and I see no reason

why we can't for our 20 precincts.

Our local newspapers could also examine their level of coverage of the election scene from well in advance of the filing date to election day. I feel the past election was just barely covered.

WITH THE BICENTENNIAL just around the corner, maybe we can all begin planning now to bring a little life into our political campaigns by liberalizing the sign ordinance and doing a better job of reporting on the issues. It is worth noting that in Southfield, where campaign signs aren't prohibited, the turnout was almost twice as large as ours, 19 per cent, not conclusive, but certainly indicative.

HENRY CRIVISH
Farmington Hills

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