

Generations

Gray has become the new cool

I was ready to log off the computer recently when an email dinged into my inbox. Usually, the computer determines what to throw into the dark abyss called the junk folder, but this time it let one slip by, and I was glad.

It was an article from the Huffington Post titled, "Silver-Gray Hair Trending Strong, Moving from the Red Carpet to the Streets."

Having succumbed to silver-gray many years ago when I realized it was a losing battle, I read the article with relish.

I had long wanted to stand on a soapbox and spout all the rewards of embracing gray, not fearing it, but figured my audience was going to be very few rather than a whole herd of men and women who might be willing to listen.

And now, Lady Gaga had done it for me! In one appearance at the Academy Awards with Tony Bennett, she had taken old-lady gray to super-cool gray and the fashion world was abuzz about this amazing new idea.

Suddenly, I was part of a coveted look and didn't have to do anything to get it that way.

My genes had finally paid off!

Men have always looked handsomer with those silver strands, while we ladies immediately reach for the tweezers.

When I think about silver-haired men who grew better with gray, there's a gaggle of nominees, such as Bill Clinton, or the "Silver Fox" Anderson Cooper framing those bright-blue eyes, actor Richard Gere and that adorable smile below those snow-white

locks, and, of course, debonair George Clooney,



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who took Cary Grant's place for the current generation and still reigns as the world's handsomest man alive according to "Jeopardy" and every other game show that asks the question.

However, when I try to name a couple of women in the same category, it's difficult because they are few and far between, even with the help of Google. It seems that female celebrities continue to cringe at the sight of gray.

Hollywood actresses claim they can't get decent roles unless the gray is covered. Not so for Helen Mirren, Jamie Lee Curtis and Dame Judi Dench, all enormously talented ladies who don't care a fig about hair coloring and have the gold statues to prove it.

Off Sunset Boulevard, Toni Morrison, Nobel Prize winner in Literature, probably never had hair coloring on her "to-do" list.

And back to the world of make-believe: Who could forget Meryl Streep in "The Devil Wears Prada"? Sure, it was a wig, but those locks sent shivers down a lot of spines when she threw dozens of coats and handbags at her poor secretary.

Gray became a symbol of power, even if it was only for two hours in a dark movie theater.

But that was about it as far as gray being cool until Gaga decided to start a

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whole new trend cozying up to Bennett while singing some oldies. Was it simply a ruse or is she still gray? It's difficult to tell from her home page, and I really don't want to join her Little Monsters fan club to investigate further. Most likely, she will be on to something new by the time I finish this column.

But at least there was a moment in time when gray was cool for women. And Gaga didn't even get to spill the beans about benefits of the gray hue.

First of all, you save money on beauty-parlor appointments or at home dye jobs.

Second, you don't run the risk of ending up with green, blue or orange hair, which I have personally had to quickly fix.

Third, you'd be amazed at how many people open doors for you or help you load groceries in your car. Probably the best perk of all is that you're addressed as "Ma'am" instead of "Hey, you."

I love the way Jamie Lee Curtis summed up her decision to go gray: "My gray hair was a step in ownership of myself, my mind, my body, my heart. Maturity should be flaunted."

Jamie's got the right idea, so all we have to do now, ladies, is have enough courage to pass it on.

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