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# Geeks Make the Best Husbands

Marianne Jennings, NPR Commentator

*Robert Siegel, Host:* There is a comical stereotype of the computer aficionado, a disheveled appearance, a pocket protector filled with pencils and pens, a pallor suggesting too much time spent in the great indoors of cyberspace. Well, commentator Marianne Jennings says that is just the way she likes her men.

*Marianne Jennings, NPR Commentator:* I have lived by the following philosophy for the last 25 years: Never trust a man whose hair looks better than mine.

**There are only two types of men in the world:** those who make good husbands and those who have pecs.

When nature counts you out in the aging-gracefully department, you have two choices. You can spend money on Rogaine or you can develop character. It's character that makes a good husband.

With all the focus on looks, I can't help recalling our high school days. The lettermen looked good on the exterior and always had dates and Corvettes. But the gems could be found in the band and math clubs. They drove El Caminos that their Baskin-Robbins wages kept running the six blocks to school.

They wore glasses that were the weight equivalent of a July cantaloupe and just about as thick. Contact lenses were beyond their ice cream means. They watched the lettermen dance at parties. The phrase "out of your league" was part of their daily lives except when they asked another geek's kid sister to the prom.

Clumsiness was as natural as breathing to them and their only fans were mom and dad. Because nothing was easy for them they learned how to work. Humor developed as their coping mechanism.

Insecurity breeds humility. Physical imperfection brings depth. From those awkward cocoons that were shunned for baseless reasons emerged men with style and character. Our ugly ducklings from high school became swans in every sense: quiet, reflective, and not vain.

The exterior seems even more important today than it was in high school. But Corvettes rust and exteriors fade. The interior remains. That interior is rich beyond description in those who carry physical imperfections with grace in a Cindy Crawford world.

The geeks of middle age may be slightly balding. Their chests may sag. But Jean Claude Van Damme has the looks of a Greek god and four marriages to show for it. I'll take depth over hair. I'll take monogamy over facials. I'll take love handles over a stomach toned into the six-pack muscle formation.

Show me a man who wears his wrinkles proudly and I'll show you a good husband. Show me a man with an ab machine and I'll show you trouble. I don't want a letterman in middle age. I want what's inside. I'll take a geek for better or for worse, just the way he is.

*Marianne Jennings is a professor of legal and ethical studies at Arizona State University in Phoenix. She comes to us by way of member station KJZZ.*