



Hunting the Male Accessories

By Sugar Gay Isber

Always searching for the latest trends is a full time job, some even make their living just looking for the edgy or completely different. Spotters for Anthropologie, hop the globe in an enviable career of photographing concepts that could be translated into new, sellable products. These photos are then sent directly to their offices in China, which are set up to judge the marketable aspect of the images and then translate them into products.

That isn't a hard job, just an endless quest for the new, or possible, trend. I have this job in my imagination.

Seeing a nugget or glimmer of a new twist on the obvious, requires rosy colored specs, as there is so little of it – so much is the same. You have to really hunt. Today, I smiled when I saw a shift happen, a fun photo on Facebook, which made for a pause in the search possible. It made me smile all day.



What was the photo, you ask? What tweaked my lips into a happy grin? A photo of a tattooed hipster with tiny white blossoms arranged sweetly in his beard. A happy hipster turned hippy. Those were the halcyon days of weed and flower power now updated to 2014. It could be a turning point in



dressing up men's facial hair that we have yet to really explore. I think a trend could be blossoming.

Men's accessories have been toned down and frowned on for almost forever, while I want them to soar. The gap between women's fashion and men's circles around each other but rarely do they merge. The closest that men's clothes have gotten to

the fashion forward stage is velvet pants, patterned or ruffled shirts and long hair.



Take the introduction of men's skirts. I was hoping that this would be a fad turned norm in Western clothes, but alas, I see no skirts other than runway oddities or on foreign lands.

Men in skirts are sexy. They are hot. Think of that freedom underneath the folds - partly for ventilation and partly for the swirling movement.

Prince Charles looks great in his finest Scottish kilt, sagging knees and all. Men and not just gay men, need to venture past the slacks and wiggle wildly into culottes and colorful tunics. Life is fun, live it!



Sometimes, you see connections happening between the corporate world and the real world. Usually, global companies have the colors that we are all going to be buying picked out years in advance, whether it is the new car you will buy or the color of your bathrobe.

Researchers know we love to match our bath sheets and our parkas. People get excited by color and buy! Money equals the trendiest colors if they pick it correctly. It makes us purchase more. Spend money is global market mantra.

A couple of years ago emerald was chosen as the color of the year. It was a bust. Emerald just did not have the panache to be picked up by the masses. Too many times the Emerald City had been mentioned not to associate it with a lost color.

Socks are the latest super billion dollar fad for men. The crazier the better and a fun loving man can finally express himself, even though it is barely seen. Male stockings can cost over a \$1000 a pair for the uber wealthy. Finally, men can spend real money and get almost nothing to wear.

Men need to buy a bigger jewelry cases and dress up their button downs with layers like a rock star. Be fearless. Rings come in all sizes for the biggest man hands. Wear a statement WOW ring the next time you run to the neighborhood bar and notice how many more people talk to you. You are now in the cool club. Be ballsy and go for bling.



Stacks of bracelets, neatly tucked under business jacket raise the Q factor - times ten, unless they are the now, deplorable, silicon snap-on bracelets. All of the colorful yellow Lance Armstrong and other copycat type bracelets were a great trial balloon for what men would wear and be happy adorning themselves. Stash them away for twenty years to bling out your 2010 costume party. They will be a relic that people will still remember years from now.

So the next time you see a man on the street or at the bar proudly sporting a necklace or bracelet, nod to him to encourage him to be braver. Buy your guy a colorful pair of socks, worse case, so he can fit in at the water cooler, like the other men in the office. Socks are the acceptable male accessory, but tomorrow it could be flowers in his beard.

Photo credits include: Ed Lehmann, Gay Isber, Facebook, and Leonardo D'Almagro