



## The Fruit of His Loom

Underwear used to be valued for its functionality. Granny panties and bras were standard issue for women, and it was assumed that men would wear the kind of boring tighty-whities or boxers that their grandfathers wore.

A hundred years ago, no one would have been able to predict that the bra would ever be sexy. As little as fifty years ago, no one would have been able to predict that guys would feel manly wearing underwear that looked like women's bikini bottoms.

A tremendous amount of marketing money and effort went into weaving these otherwise ordinary pieces of cloth into the sexual fabric of our culture, especially when it comes to men's underwear

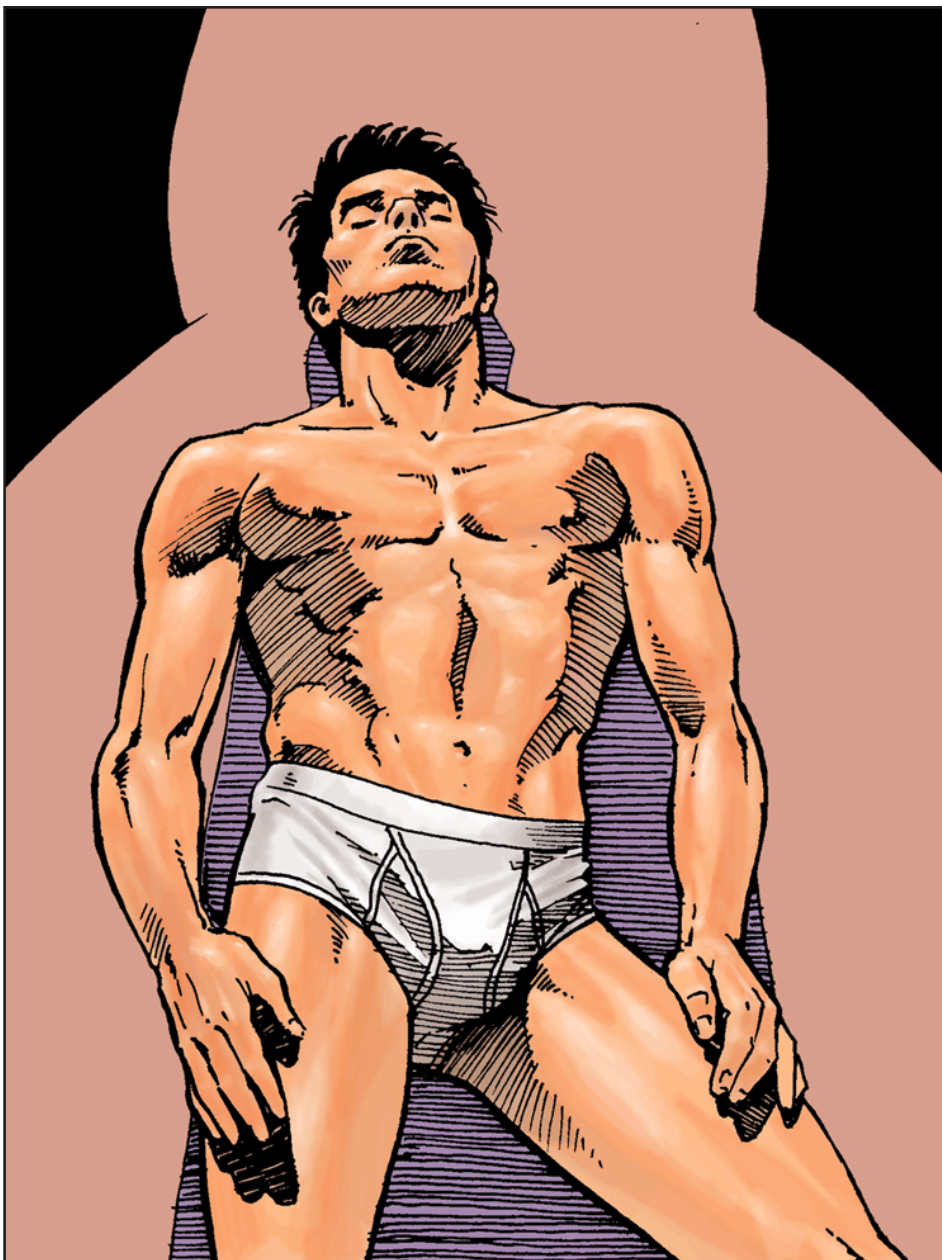
### **Calvin Klein in Your Underwear Drawer**

In the early 1980s, manufacturers like Calvin Klein teamed up with famous homoerotic photographers like Bruce Weber to help make men look sexy in their boring white briefs. However, the male models they used in their photo shoots would have looked sexy wearing a loincloth made of cornhusks.

Along with ads for magazines, Klein and Webber created huge billboards that drew your eye to the bulge in the crotch of the hot looking male models. (The illustration that follows was made from one of the first Calvin Klein billboard ads.)

The Calvin Klein ads had two primary targets: gay men and straight women who bought underwear for their husbands and boyfriends. Nail these two groups, and straight guys were putty in the corporate hand.

In these underwear ads, the hazy image of a penis behind the fly was sexier than if the guy had been naked. The model was able to give attitude in a way that a man who is buck naked can't. So while all roads led to the bulge in the briefs, these ads were far more effective than if



the guy's briefs had been pulled down to his knees. The combination of attitude and mystery about what's inside the briefs was fuel for many a fantasy.

### **Subliminal Messages?**

Wouldn't it be something if a woman could buy a pair of Calvin briefs for her partner and have him suddenly look like the models in the Calvin ads? And wouldn't it be amazing if a man could slip on designer briefs and suddenly feel like Ryan Gosling?

But the reality is, if one of the models in the early Calvin ads had been wearing \$2 briefs from Walmart, he still would have had no shortage of willing sex partners. The allure of these guys who were total 10s had nothing to do with the name on the waistband of their underwear.

### **Pro Athletes-Wearing Bikini Briefs**

It didn't hurt the cause of the male bikini when professional male athletes were hired as models to wear bikini briefs in magazine ads and on posters. These half-naked athletes had women swooning, and they reassured straight men that they could wear women's bikini bottoms and not risk being called gay.

### **Contemporary Girl Underwear – A Fly for Your Clitoris!**

There have been a few interesting changes in the underwear scene during the past few decades. For one, manufacturers have started making men's underwear for women. This has been perceived as massively cool. The boy brief as worn by women even has a fly or the suggestion of a fly in the front.

If you are in gender studies, you might assume that women enjoy wearing boy briefs because it's a woman's way of taking the patriarchy's penis and making it her own. But the real reason some women wear boy briefs is because they are fun and comfortable, and they help with pantyline.

Also, women in our culture receive far more encouragement to explore and experiment with fashion than men do. For many women, fashion is an adventure. Women have adopted zillions of styles throughout the ages—some being really cool, others being truly hideous. Few of these had anything to do with trying to assume dimensions of masculinity; much of women's fashion is designed to make a woman feel good when wearing it, as well as to win the awe and envy of her female friends.

### **Men with Bikini Briefs, Trimmed Pubes, and No Armpit Hair**

We used to think of masculinity as being the opposite of anything that's feminine.

But lately, men have been shaving off the hair on their chests, armpits, and even legs. Plenty of men have taken to trimming their pubes and wearing underwear that's closer to a thong than a woman might wear than a pair of traditional male boxers or briefs.

So let's look at some of the factors that have made it safe for men to wear underwear that's more like women's.

**The Speedo Coefficient:** Generations of incredible-looking male swimmers and water-polo players have worn nothing but Speedos, which are basically G-strings on steroids. Hard as you might try to keep looking straight ahead, Speedos have a built-in device that forces your eyes to stare at a guy's crotch and butt, sometimes in awe, other times in horror. The Speedo Coefficient made it safer for guys who aren't swimmers to wear what have traditionally been women's bikini bottoms.\*

**A Wife or GF's Influence:** A guy would have less resistance to wearing girls' bikini bottoms if his girlfriend or wife said, "I think you'll look sexy in these." This fact wasn't lost on the underwear manufacturers, as the ads with the male athletes in their bikini briefs were clearly aimed at women.

**Penis-Over-The-Top Factor:** The transition to bikini underwear for men has had practical significance. That's because when men pee, a lot of us don't pull our penis through the fly in the front of briefs or boxers. Instead, we yank the elastic waistband down and pull the penis over the top. So the fly is totally useless for a lot of men. Having the lower waistband of low rise or bikini briefs can make the process of peeing easier, depending on the kind of pants you are wearing over the briefs.

*\*Competitive Swimming's Darkest Hour:* As a spectator sport, swimming at the Olympics took it in the shorts when the traditional men's Speedos were replaced by a cross between bicycle shorts and a wetsuit. The women of Goofy Foot Press have wanted the new suits banned. Fortunately, men's Speedos still rule in water polo.

### **End of Chapter Notes**

*Different Water Cultures:* Most male surfers wouldn't be caught dead in Speedos. The only commonality between many male swimmers and surfers seems to be water, with the water of the swimmers smelling like chlorine and the water of the surfers tasting like salt.

*Athletic Supporters:* Athletic supporters used to be called "Jock Straps" and male athletes used to be called "jocks." Strangely enough, the origin of athletic supporters or jock straps had nothing to do with athletes who play sports. Instead, it comes from "bicycle jockeys" who the supporters were invented for in 1874 by the Bike Web Company. Bicycle jockeys were bike-riding messenger boys who rode over the cobblestone streets of Boston. The cobblestones made their testicles jiggle furiously. The Bike Web Company looked opportunity in the eye (or crotch) and the athletic supporter was born.

From the "Guide To Getting It On" Copyright © 2023 by Paul Joannides