

FOR A YEAR MY HUSBAND, JOHN, HAS REFUSED TO let me buy an English bulldog because he doesn't want to be seen trundling down the street with an animal that looks alarmingly like him; he has also complained about the roll of fat around his neck that does, admittedly, add years to an aging, albeit adorable, face. Five years ago, when I was pondering the vanity—and morality—of having liposuction on my hips and thighs, John was infinitely soothing, reassuring me that although surgery is serious business, the impulse to vacuum away fat

mister,

was no more morally questionable than the impulse to run a comb through one's hair. But when it comes to his own perceived shortcomings, his most persistent refrain is, "Real guys don't suck."

Well, in fact, they do. They also nip, tuck, tighten, and, occasionally, enlarge. In 1993, according to the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons, 26 percent of all cosmetic surgery patients were men, up from 18 percent in 1988. "Cosmetic surgery is very, very common among men in the highest levels of business—c.e.o.s, managing directors, investment bankers," says Dr. Alan Matarasso, a leading New York plastic surgeon. Among the tycoons rumored to have improved their executive visages by going under the knife are Bear, Stearns managing director emeritus Paul Hallingby and Reliance Group Holdings chairman and c.e.o. Saul Steinberg.

Why are more men having surgery? The motivation is in many ways similar to women's, suggests Upper East Side psychotherapist Jane Greer, Ph.D. But the emphasis is not so much on youth and sexual allure as on the perceived relationship between youth and performance. "If you look at the investment world, for example, it's really a young man's game, and these guys know it," says Dr. Greer. "For many of them, it's not a matter of looking young per se; it's looking vigorous and vibrant. It's like drinking from the fountain of youth: renovating their appearance makes these men feel they have more *clout*."

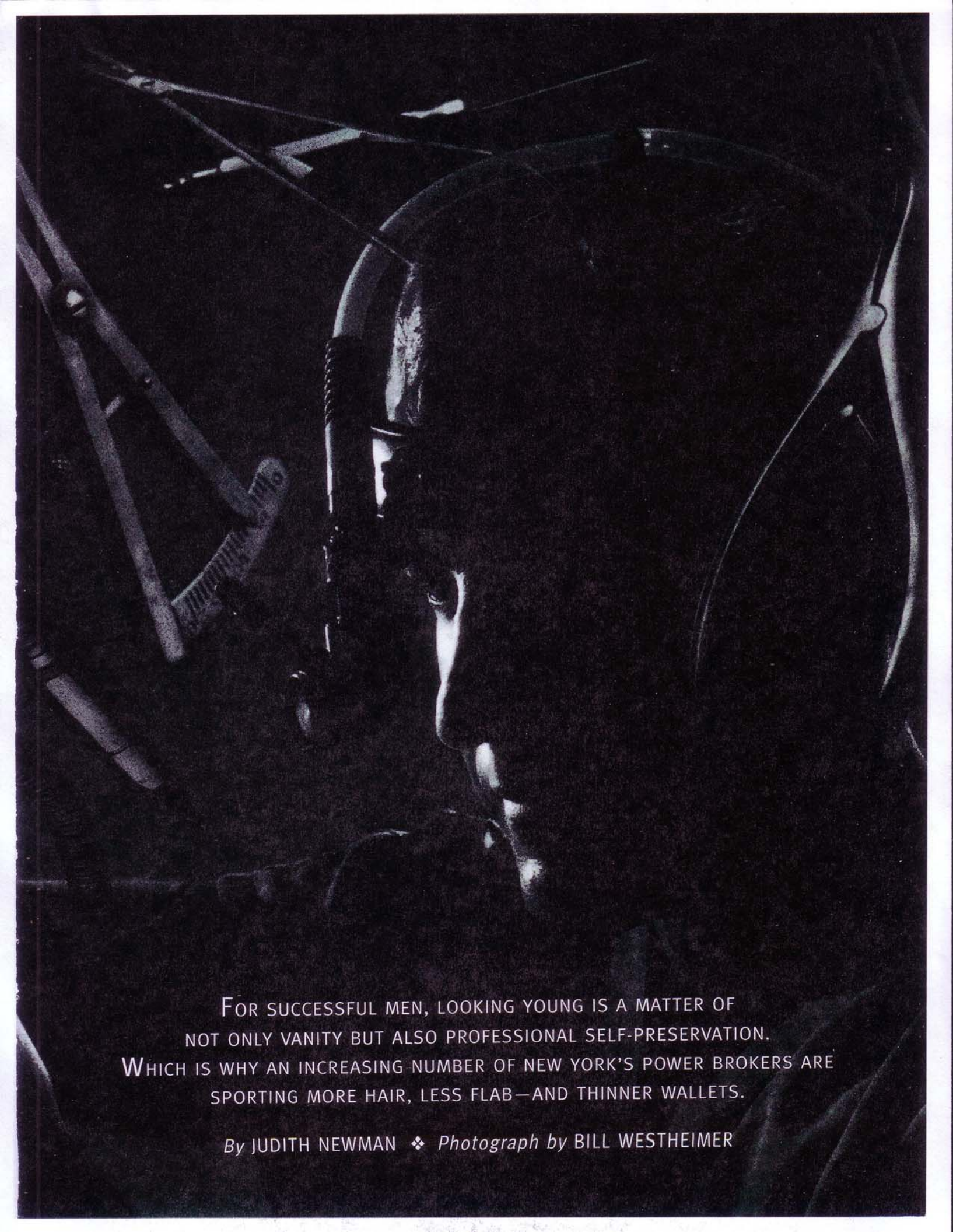
But just because more men are opting for surgery doesn't mean they're discussing it among themselves. "I have a back door in my office," says Dr. Matarasso, "and it's particularly the men who ask to use it."

Dr. Helen Colen, whose cosmetic-surgery practice is about 25 percent male, says that many men will claim to have been strong-armed into her office by a zealous wife or lover who's pleased with her own surgical results. And once the surgery is over, Dr. Colen laughs, the average guy "just vanishes. You never hear from him again."



it!

Like many Upper East Side plastic surgeons, DR. ANDREW N. KORNSTEIN is seeing more men who want to compete with the young and the wrinkleless.



FOR SUCCESSFUL MEN, LOOKING YOUNG IS A MATTER OF NOT ONLY VANITY BUT ALSO PROFESSIONAL SELF-PRESERVATION. WHICH IS WHY AN INCREASING NUMBER OF NEW YORK'S POWER BROKERS ARE SPORTING MORE HAIR, LESS FLAB—AND THINNER WALLETS.

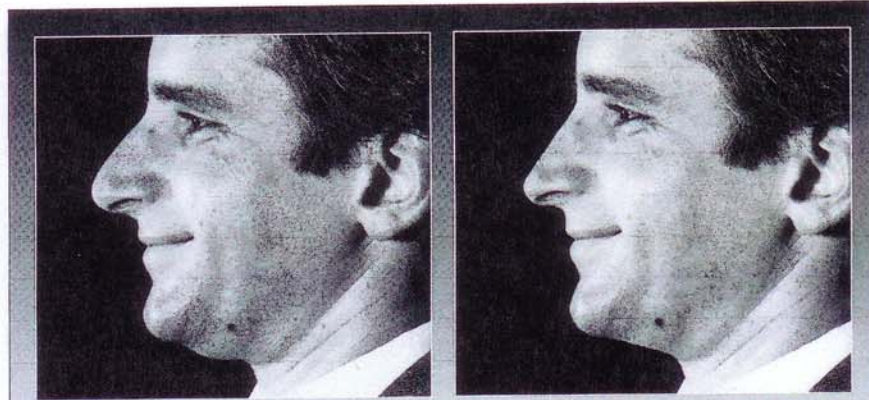
By JUDITH NEWMAN ❖ *Photograph by* BILL WESTHEIMER

Or as put by "James," a 49-year-old married physician who had his love handles suctioned by Dr. Colen, "Of course I haven't told anybody. All the men I know attribute the change to my working out."

WHILE NOSE RESHAPING IS the most common procedure for men under 35, and exotica such as pectoral implants and penis enlargements (via fat injections) is not unheard of, titans of industry are opting most often for blepharoplasties, or eye tucks; liposuction of the neck, stomach, or love handles; fatty breast tissue reduction; face-lifts; and hair transplants.

Emerson's observation that "the eyes indicate the antiquity of the soul" may sound romantic, but many men do not appreciate the fact that in reality the eye area is usually the first facial feature to succumb to aging. Fortunately, a blepharoplasty is one of the least invasive surgeries, erasing years with dramatic and long-lasting results. Just look at male television news anchors: while most have a few craggy, virile lines on their face, none has bags under his eyes. No coincidence there. "I had to have my eyes done because television lighting emphasizes the area under the eyes," one local broadcaster explained.

Every facial wrinkle is caused by a muscle contracting underneath the skin. In a conventional blepharoplasty, a surgeon usually elevates the skin and muscle, removing fat pads if they exist, "ironing" the skin, and trimming away any excess. With transconjunctival eye tucks for younger patients, there isn't even an incision line in the eyelashes: the surgeon reaches the fat pads underneath the eye by burrowing through the conjunctiva in the eye's corner inside the lower lid, so there is no external scar-



Before surgery (left) this 28-year-old man's nose was the focal point of his face, and though he was in excellent shape, he still had a bit of fat under his chin. Rhinoplasty and neck liposuction brought his face into harmony. "It looks natural," says Dr. Richard Leinhardt, chief of plastic surgery at Manhattan Eye, Ear & Throat Hospital. "Patients want to look better, but nobody wants to look like they've had surgery."

COURTESY OF DR. RICHARD LEINHARDT



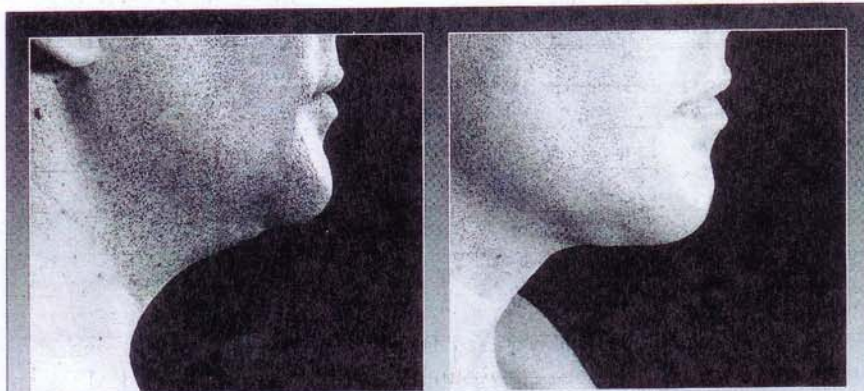
This 45-year-old suffered from browtosis. "There are two kinds of aging: atrophy, and stretching or drooping caused by gravity," says Dr. Andrew N. Kornstein. "He had both problems." Dr. Kornstein removed some upper lid skin and the crow's-feet at the corners, and injected fat to plump up the tissues above the cheekbones. Finally, he applied six rounds of Retin-A and a glycolic acid peel to erase the patient's freckles.

COURTESY OF DR. ANDREW N. KORNSTEIN

ring. Discomfort is minimal, serious complications (infections or excessive bleeding) are rare, and most patients can be back to work within two days to a week. Total cost? About \$5,000 to \$7,000.

In performing a blepharoplasty on a man, a good surgeon will leave a little more skin than on a woman to mask the incision, since a man is unlikely to wear eye shadow to camouflage it. Likewise, there are subtle differences when it comes to male and female face-lifts. The surface area of a man's face is about 50 percent larger than that of a woman's, so the procedure is slightly more involved; the skin is thicker, and there's generally more bleeding. (Nobody is quite sure why; surgeons postulate that a man's facial hair necessitates a better blood supply to the surface.)

Since virtually every man over 40 has a receding hairline, most men are chary of having hair-bearing scalp removed during the procedure. "Instead of making the incision above the hairline, as we would with a woman, so it would be totally invisible, we'll make the incision *at* the hairline on a man," says Dr. Matarasso. "You'd think it would leave a lousy scar, but it



This 39-year-old patient chose to have both liposuction and a surgical tightening of his neck muscles to achieve a slimmer-looking neck and chin and a sharper jawline. With most patients his age, however, liposuction alone often delivers similar results.

COURTESY OF DR. ALAN MATARASSO



Before this 45-year-old man had a blepharoplasty (left) he looked tired all the time, and people constantly asked him if he was angry or under the weather. "By getting rid of the 'window-shade effect,'" says Dr. Richard Leinhardt, "we've really made his eyes smile. It's a window into his true self."

doesn't." And, with forehead lifts, excising skin not only removes frown lines, but also slightly lowers the hairline and gives the illusion of *more* hair in front. (Average fee: \$4,500 to \$6,500.)

Another possible way to avoid any incision is with the relatively new endoscopic lifts. "They leave a minimal scar, so they're well suited for men," says Dr. Cap Lesesne. "The technique is still evolving, but more Upper East Side doctors are becoming proficient in it."

A face-lift runs about \$8,000 to \$10,000; recovery time varies considerably. A man will feel well enough to work from home after two or three days, but he won't be able to show his face for about a week or so, and even after that may need flesh-toned makeup to cover swelling and bruising.

Finally, there's one little drawback that plagues virtually all male face-lift patients: "Because of the way the skin on the face is pulled back," Dr. Matarasso says, "men who've had face-lifts will have to shave beyond their earlobes."

As a neck-lift alternative, liposuction, the vacuuming of large deposits of body fat, has been refined to the point where minute amounts can be removed from areas of the face. With a 1.6 millimeter cannula, "microsuction" can remove double chins in young patients with good skin elasticity. The surgeon inserts the cannula under the chin to draw out the fat, and the patient wears a compression collar to help the skin tighten up afterward.

Sometimes microsuction isn't quite enough to give a sharp chin angle, so doctors have modified the procedure: they make a 1.5-inch incision underneath the chin, suction (or simply excise) the fat, and then tighten up the platysma—two vertical bands of superficial muscle, which, when they sag, give older people a turkey wattle. Done under general or local anesthesia, a chin job is usually a once-in-a-lifetime operation, costs about \$5,000, and requires a week or less recovery time. The temporary drawback? A tiny horizontal scar under the chin that fades with time.

For larger fat deposits around the belly and flanks, several surgeons have recently abandoned conventional anesthesia for the "super-wet" technique, which involves pumping a cocktail of saline solution, local anesthetic, and adrenaline underneath the skin during surgery. This procedure counteracts fluid and blood loss and allows the doctor to remove as many as three liters of fat safely at one time.

"Men tend to be more fibrous than women—you have to work harder to get the fat out," says Dr. Andrew N. Kornstein, a new-surgeon-on-the-block with a growing Upper East Side clientele. The only problem with lipo, Dr. Kornstein adds, is that those who think they're the best candidates sometimes aren't very good at all. "You have to distinguish intra-abdominal fat, which is below the muscle, from regular fat, which is above the muscle," he explains. "Many men with beer bellies have intra-abdominal fat that can't be suctioned away."

For chubby breasts, however, liposuction is perfect—as long as the patient doesn't suffer from clinical gynecomastia: enlarged breast tissue in men that sometimes results from heavy marijuana use, ulcer medication, or an estrogen-testosterone imbalance. Serious, noticeable breast enlargement is rare, and is treated much like a woman's breast reduction: a surgeon excises excess fat, glandular tissue, and skin. Otherwise, a little liposuction can often be performed on an outpatient basis, costing \$4,000 to \$7,000.



Before surgery (left) this 39-year-old man suffered from enlarged breasts, a condition known as gynecomastia, which he found both uncomfortable and embarrassing. Dr. Mark R. Sultan excised part of the breast tissue and used liposuction to remove excess fat. Halfway through the two-and-a-half-hour surgery (center) the patient's right breast, which was done first, looks "normal"; 10 weeks after surgery (right) he feels confident enough to be seen in public without a shirt.