

A black silhouette of a bald man's head and neck is centered against a light gray background. The text is printed in white on the silhouette.

HOLD
YOUR
BALD
HEAD
UP
HIGH

WIN WHILE LOSING HAIR

Dwayne McClary

For men with anxiety issues over their male pattern baldness and other forms of hair loss. Instead of advising men to seek the treatment of Rogaine and other forms of alleged remedies, it encourages them to accept and embrace their bald heads. It recommends that men should try the shaven look for its easy maintenance, convenience, inexpensiveness, and preservation of a youthful appearance.

HOLD YOUR BALD HEAD UP HIGH: Win While Losing Hair

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WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF BALDNESS

To reach 21 years of age is a milestone. For some it means finishing their undergraduate college degree and making their next major decision in life. For others it means being able to go into casinos and gentlemen's clubs for the first time. For some it means being able to legally buy an alcoholic beverage. For others it means finally becoming an adult and having to face the real world. For me, turning 21 meant noticing a change in myself that I would have to deal with for the rest of my life.

Baldness was something that I always thought was synonymous with old age. Just as the waistline tends to expand as we get older, I associated receding hairlines and bald spots with the middle aged. To see hair diminish on the head—while witnessing it increase on other parts of the body like the chest, shoulders, back, nose, and ears—was something that I thought was only typical in those approaching Social Security age.

To be 21 and dealing with baldness right in the midst of the flat top, box cut, waves, and other asymmetrical haircut eras was especially challenging for me. While other young men my age were beginning to grow dreads, get creative cuts and designs, and twist their hair, I could only stand in the mirror and watch mine evaporate right before my very eyes.

Although I knew deep down inside what was happening, I still fought it and held onto every last bit of hope I could for a total of four years. During that ongoing struggle, I even experimented briefly with Rogaine and an aerosol bald-spot-covering spray in hopes that my hair would return or that I could disguise or camouflage what I was desperately attempting

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to hide. At the time, my own father had been sporting the “Bozo the Clown horseshoe hairdo” look himself for many years. I’d always been told and believed that his baldness was hereditary (but later learned that this is only partially true), so I figured that it would eventually catch up to me. With my father being nearly 30 years my senior, I assumed that I at least had a few years to play with—but that soon proved to be untrue.

For as long as I could remember, baldness had always been something to joke about and ridicule at someone else’s expense. Baldness was not deemed sexy, unless you were on the TV screen, playing professionally on the hardwood, or gracing the covers of a fashion magazine. But even that “celebrity baldness” took a long while before it developed into its current cachet.

For quite a while, and to a certain degree even still true today, baldness has been perceived to be intimidating and unacceptable in the corporate workplace. Although it’s now more present in the white-collar world, there’s still more room for it to grow (not literally) on that level. A lot of cultural shortsightedness still exists about complete baldness and many contend that it is only appealing in African-American men. Many Caucasian men fear that a clean-shaven appearance will make them look like a member of the radical supremacist group, the Neo-Nazi Skinheads. That couldn’t be any further from the truth, as we’ll later cite numerous examples of handsome, professional, completely bald white men.

I soon found myself having to make a choice that I could never reverse. As I continued to battle the baldness, I was running out of options. Other parts of my hair were starting to thin and it became even more difficult to keep my hair short enough to continue to play hide-and-go-seek with my emerging scalp.

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After years of running from the receding hairline, I decided to cut the remainder of my hair off. It's now 16 years later and that was probably one of, if not the best, decisions I've ever made in life. The first question I asked myself as soon as the barber removed the cape was, *Why did it take me this long to do it?*

Many men still get that rush of pain each time they look in the mirror to see how much of their hair has disappeared. It is still a tough adjustment to come to grips with, judging by the amount of men that are still in denial and wearing hats, caps, hairpieces, sprays, joining hair clubs, and getting transplants and replacements. I assure you it will always be something that men will find difficulty with. Go to YouTube.com and search using the keywords "hair loss". You will be amazed at all of the reality-based commentaries created by men that are embarrassed, frustrated, humiliated, and defeated by their genetic baldness. It's amazing that so many men can speak candidly in front of a video camera, post it onto a digital space, and express their discontent with male pattern baldness, but probably can't admit it to themselves privately and into a mirror. Like millions of others, I was an example of that type of a man.

If you are like me, you probably felt as if you were the only man in the world who had been cursed with baldness. There are over 1.4 billion people worldwide whose hair has performed the "now you see it, now you don't" routine, so you are not alone.

If you do not think that this book applies to you, please think twice. The following statistics will really blow your wig off. Male pattern baldness affects 20 million men in the United States and 25% begin balding by the age of 30. More than 50% of all men are affected by male pattern baldness by the time they reach 50 years old and two-thirds begin losing their hair by

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the time they turn 60. Recent studies show that 93% of men and women think about eventual hair loss and 88% of those stricken with baldness feel frustrated and helpless about the condition. Of all balding men, 50% between the ages of 20–45 years old feel that they are getting old and are less attractive. Three out of four balding men have self-esteem issues. There is a four in seven chance of getting the baldness gene. In other words, it may not get you today, but it's bound to get you later.

Many years ago, Benjamin Franklin advised us that there was no way around death and taxes. He could've added baldness into that famous quote as well.

Also, do not think that male pattern baldness only affects men. Male pattern baldness has been known to appear in women, too, but does not impact them in the same visible manner.

If you are not presently losing your hair, perhaps you are married, related, friends with, or an acquaintance to someone who's in the midst of the baldness struggle. This book will enlighten you to be more understanding and compassionate to the feelings of someone who is follically challenged. Over the next several pages, I'm going to share my story with you of how I transformed myself from a self-conscious, low-self-esteem, premature balding, early 20s boy to a proud, confident, and strong-minded completely bald man. Learn how I came to the realization that I could embrace my hair loss, have confidence in my appearance, be respected, found physically appealing, and sustain a white-collar job in America, all the while being bald.

It was a long, formidable journey, but I can honestly say I would have it no other way. I eventually learned that it is a

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privilege and blessing to be bald. I successfully made the transition from male pattern baldness to male pattern proud.

Hopefully by the time you're finished reading, you'll be able to "Hold Your Bald Head Up High", too!

AN ALLEGED “CURE” THAT’S WORSE THAN THE ALLEGED “DISEASE”

We’ve all been watching television late at night or early in the morning and have been inundated with infomercials and advertisements promoting products like Rogaine and Propecia or doctors specializing in hair replacement surgery. No matter what sporting event you watch on television, men are guaranteed to see four types of ads: beer, automobiles, erectile dysfunction, and hair loss remedies. If you’ve seen one baldness commercial, you’ve seen them all. The storyline is always the same. A hired actor with a perfectly groomed head gives his testimony of how he was once losing his hair, confidence, and self-esteem. The promo then highlights a before illustration of this alleged man’s receding hairline. (Notice how the head is always tilted so that we never get a clear view of this same man’s face?) The ad then resumes with an after photograph of this satisfied customer now shown with a full head of hair. They even throw in a female actress, claiming to be his alleged wife or girlfriend, who’s in disbelief that this miracle has taken place. She then states that she’s now more physically attracted to him than ever. The man explains how his entire life has changed for the better. People compliment him on his hairstyle; he can even go swimming and feels much better about himself. The promo ends with an alleged doctor claiming that the substance is medically sound and will last a lifetime. They’ve recycled this same script over and over again. We can’t even go online without being smothered with the same type of pop-up and banner ads and video streams promoting hair loss remedies.

What these infomercials and ads fail to tell you are three things. One, you’re not informed of how much each of these

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treatments cost. Two, their low success rates are not discussed, either. Three, the major side effects caused by each of these products and services are also never mentioned. It is clinically proven that Rogaine's success rate is about 38%. A bottle of Rogaine costs \$30 and has a recommended usage period of six months before any visible results are detected. You'll have almost \$200 invested and still be uncertain that this product is working for you. Also, Rogaine will only reverse thinning in the crown area of the head. Those experiencing hair loss will not be rescued by this topical solution. Not only is hair growth only a slight possibility, but Rogaine has also been known to cause scalp irritation, redness, dryness, itching, and dandruff. Although extremely rare, Rogaine has even stricken its users with breathing difficulties and fainting. If you decide to use Rogaine and have refractory high blood pressure, a little hair loss will be the least of your worries, as the likelihood of hypertrichosis will increase. Hypertrichosis is a condition that will result in hair growth on the face and other areas of the body. Lastly, do not think that Rogaine will cure your condition. If you do find success, it is strictly temporary. Rogaine only delays your hair loss.

The only upside to Rogaine is that you no longer need a prescription to purchase it. I was extremely nervous and embarrassed to redeem from the pharmacist the one bottle that I ever bought in my life. Now you can secretly slip it into the shopping cart and go to the automated cashier without another person ever knowing that you completed the transaction. In fact, 29.6% of all hair loss product users purchase their drugs online. So there's a plentiful amount of people not only buying Rogaine on the Internet for its convenience, but ashamed to be seen in public with the so-called remedies that they are so heavily dependent upon.

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Two-time NBA MVP and perennial All-Star, Karl “The Mailman” Malone, was an admitted Rogaine user who also endorsed the product. Charles Barkley referred to Malone as the “.....guinea pig for Rogaine for black men.” That soon changed. The postman must’ve stopped making Rogaine deliveries to Karl’s house, as even Malone (probably once paid quite handsomely to be a Rogaine poster boy) switched to wearing a baldy.

Scalp Med is another topical solution like Rogaine that also has minoxidil as a key ingredient. Consumers complain that Scalp Med is overpriced at \$90 per month and they have been accused of suckering customers in with their “introductory price” scam. Scalp Med, as illustrated in its infomercials, can generate full hair growth, but the other 98% of its users will not see comparable results.

Propecia, also known as finasteride, has a 39% success rate. Propecia comes in a \$70 bottle containing 30 pills. If Propecia is going to work for you, it’ll be determined after 90 pills. You will have to shell out at least \$210 before knowing if you fall into that less than 40 percentile bracket. Men taking finasteride have experienced low energy, headaches, depression, low sperm count, and sexual impotence. Although the manufacturer acknowledges the possibility of causing a loss of erectile vigor, their 1% probability is way too conservative. So if you’re taking Viagra and Propecia at the same time, chances are they’re both working against one another.

Maybe someone should ask the hired actress in the infomercial if she’s now equally satisfied with her man’s performance in bed just as much as she was before he started taking Propecia. Call me barbaric and primitive, but I think it’s much more manly to be able to give your lady a nice stiff one than having hair that she can run her fingers through. We can

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ask Jane, but I bet Tarzan's King of the Jungle reputation had nothing to do with his shoulder-length hair.

Another side effect of finasteride is possible gynecomastia, which is breast gland enlargement.

At one time, Propecia usage may also have led to disqualification from the Olympics. Just ask skeleton racer, Zach Lund, who was stripped of his second place finish in the Calgary World Cup for testing positive on finasteride. The drug had been on the banned substance list since 2005, which resulted in Lund having to serve a one-year suspension. Because of this suspension, Zach was unable to compete in the 2006 Olympics. Lund said that he last checked the list in 2004 and admitted to taking Propecia for many years, but solely to combat his hair loss. Since then, finasteride has been approved and removed from the banned list. Lund was cleared and permitted to participate in the Vancouver Winter Olympics. I wonder if he switched to wearing Top Coverage hair loss spray just to qualify for the games? A disposable razor has never or will probably ever be on the banned lists in any amateur or professional competition guidelines. Its usage didn't affect Michael Jordan, who has two Olympic gold medals on his mantel at home.

Beware of a cheaper generic version of this drug that's floating around the black market called finpecia. Please avoid this narcotic that's manufactured and shipped from India. It is illegal to import into the States and has not been officially tested by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Eric Romer found both Rogaine and Propecia to be ineffective and expensive. Rogaine didn't sprout any new follicles, but left his hair extremely greasy. Propecia didn't

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work either and was extremely difficult to afford on a college student budget.

Hair transplant surgery involves moving healthy growing hair from one surface of the head to a balding area. Depending upon how many grafts a patient requires, the average cost of this procedure ranges between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The grafts have to also be reattached and groomed every six weeks at \$75 per visit. A client will spend \$675 in maintenance annually. In 18 years, that'll be a total of \$12,150. Once you include the amount of the initial surgery cost, the cumulative price tag could be upwards of a whopping \$22,150! Sounds a lot more practical and intelligent to buy a HeadBlade and open up a college savings account for your child instead.

Eric Romer recalls a discouraging consultation session with a hair loss restoration specialist in Columbus, Ohio. The doctor became extremely dismissive once he realized that Romer couldn't afford the \$15,000 to \$20,000 quote for the procedure. The results of this one appointment made Eric feel much worse than he did over his hair loss.

Hair transplant side effects include headaches due to the constant strain and pressure placed on the scalp, bleeding, numbness, tenderness, swelling, pain, itching, keloid scarring, and infections.

Provullus, another hair loss product, has an extremely high success rate of 88% and costs \$50 per bottle, but has been known to create itching, flaking, warmth of the skin, chest pains, irregular or fast heartbeats, and allergic reactions. If I have a choice between having a healthy heart or a full head of hair, I prefer you do as the Indians do and scalp me!

Procerin, an all-natural supplement, boasts a high satisfaction level of 90% and costs \$400 to supply for an entire

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year. Users have complained of severe stomach discomfort after taking this product. Advectia, a newer baldness remedy, has caused insomnia, nausea, vomiting, constipation and diarrhea. Nioxin manufacturers even advise consumers that they may experience additional hair loss after taking it and state that they should discontinue usage after two weeks if the problem persists. A hair loss remedy that may make your hair fall out? That's like using an asthma inhaler that may make breathing more difficult.

Low-Level Laser Light Therapy is a method utilizing lasers or electronic light sources to stimulate hair follicles and increase scalp blood flow. This service can be done either in the doctor's office or by using a handheld device at home. The cost for this procedure ranges from \$500 to \$1,000, although THL-1 Hair Laser surgery can cost you around \$3,500. Currently there are no known side effects, but specialists caution that it has yet to be accepted as routine medical therapy and research on the method is still ongoing. Laser therapy has been effective in those stricken with certain cases of alopecia where the likelihood of hair ultimately growing back is much higher. So in reality, maybe the laser light therapy didn't do anything, perhaps the hair was in the process of returning anyway. It has not been proven to regrow hair and stop the progression of male pattern baldness. HairMax has introduced the LaserComb, which has received mixed reviews. The price tag on this instrument is as high as \$650. The LaserComb's hair growth effectiveness is questionable, but users have detected improved hair sheen, manageability, and stabilization of color.

If you're interested in using any of these hair loss remedies, please first consult a physician and get their approval. It's important to read all of the instructions in their entirety before using any of these substances and services. Men are so

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desperate to recover from baldness that very few of them do the required research. Some of the side effects are listed, but unless a man specifically reads the fine print, the companies deliberately keep this information closely guarded.

A colleague of mine who started losing his hair at 17 said that he spent a fortune on natural shampoos, vitamins, and thickening conditioners as remedies. He was willing to try anything to combat male pattern baldness. He even sat in the reception area of Men's Hair Now and was about to drop \$1,500, but a light bulb went off and he came to his senses. He decided not to go the same hair plug route that his father went because the device left several permanent scars at the back of his head. His dad, who's now completely bald, totally regrets ever getting the hair plugs. His self-consciousness over balding, he later realized, was nothing compared to how much he detests the scars. He eventually got over his hair loss self-esteem issues, but is stuck with the scars for the rest of his life. The same bald colleague is now completely shaven, proud, and free of any blemishes.

Another now completely bald man still has the remains of the snap-ins that once fastened and secured his toupee in place. He no longer wears the hairpiece, but gets daily reminders of his one-time shame that he'll have to bear for the remainder of his days.

After having a baby, a friend of mine began losing her hair. As a result, she started using a Dominican hair product made with cinnamon oil for hair growth. She got favorable results as her hair grew back in full. Her husband, who was losing the battle to male pattern baldness, witnessed this turnaround and thought that this same product would be just as effective on him. Because he didn't have enough hair for the oil to latch on, he had to wear his wife's shower cap to keep the substance in

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place. He tried this cinnamon oil for twice the amount of time that his wife did and needless to say, his fairy tale didn't end happily ever after. He later realized that perhaps his wife's hair loss, which is common in women who've just given birth, was only temporary and that the product had no impact on her, either, and it was just a matter of time before her hair grew back anyway. Meanwhile, he finally accepted the fact that his days of having a full head of follicles had totally run its life course. He eventually waved the surrender flag and shaved his entire head; a look that both he and his wife fully approve of and enjoy.

While in college, my soon-to-be wife briefly dated a guy in his late 20s. He was accomplished, handsome, dressed nice, drove a luxury car, and lived in a swanky pad. On date number three, she reached to run her fingers through his beautiful grade of hair. As she extended her arm, he attempted to duck away, but didn't move quick enough to escape. She vividly recalls her fingers getting stuck in the artificial turf and the drastic difference in texture between his natural curls and the weaved-in welcome mat. After getting laughed at to his face and then interrogated, he reluctantly confessed about his hair loss and weave. Needless to say, she never received a request for a fourth date.

Tennis ace, Andre Agassi revealed in his autobiography *Open* that while competing he wore a wig on the court to hide his baldness. During the French Open in 1990, he struggled to prevent it from falling off his head and lost the match as a result. Agassi recalls waking up each morning to find another piece of his identity on the pillow, in the washbasin, or down the drain. While standing under the shower one day, he felt his wig suddenly fall apart. At his brother's advice, Andre put 20 clips in the hairpiece and hoped that it would hold. He prayed not for victory in the tournament, but that the toupee would not

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fall out. Super model (and soon to be wife) Brooke Shields recommended that Agassi shave his head. “It was like suggesting I should have all of my teeth out,” he said. After deliberating and debating, it took Agassi only 11 minutes to become a chrome dome.

See how easy and quick it is? Agassi probably spent hours trying to make sure his wig and toupee were just right. That valuable time could have been better spent working on match strategy and mental preparation on the court. Plus add that to the amount of time during the actual match that Agassi spent being distracted and not concentrating on his tennis game. In a little over ten minutes he was able to put all of his hair concerns behind him for the rest of his life. Having the drop dead gorgeous Brooke Shields endorse it and having her to come home to every night couldn't have hurt, either. If you decide to wear a hairpiece, keep in mind that you must wear it at all times. No matter how itchy or hot it gets, there is no excuse for skipping one day. Mother told you to always leave the house with clean underwear on in case you wind up in an accident and land in the hospital. The same holds true with wearing a hairpiece. You never know who you'll run into or the rules and regulations of where you'll end up. Music producer, Phil Spector had to learn this the hard way. Spector, who's currently serving 19 years to life for second degree murder, was captured in a state prison intake center photo without his ever-present hairpiece. CNN.com described the hairless Spector's mug shot as startling and revealing. In fact, the wigless Spector looked almost unrecognizable and like a completely different man. If you haven't seen these candid pictures, just do a Google image search for “Phil Spector mug shot”. If I were to do a public service announcement for this book, I'd use the before and after shots of a free Spector versus an imprisoned one.

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Unfortunately for Phil, California state inmates are not permitted to wear wigs under Title 15, Article 5, Section 3062, which deals with prisoner hygiene. Correction officials also prohibit wigs because they can be used to smuggle forbidden items into jail. I haven't seen any pictures of Spector since he's been locked up, but by the time he sees the light of day (if he ever does), he'll be so old that his head will be more bald than the tires of a NASCAR race driver.

Take Lyle Menendez, who's presently serving life in prison along with his brother Erik for the highly publicized murder of their parents in 1989. Throughout the trial, Lyle, who was thinning on top, wore a hairpiece to court. Talk about twisted priorities. With all that was at stake, including the possibility of spending the rest of his life in jail and the intense severity of the case, he was worried about covering his balding pate. Although the case did receive national media attention, there should've been a few more concerns on Menendez's mind than just looking good for the cameras. But then again, what do you expect from someone who would murder his own mom and dad? I'm sure Bruno, his cellmate, could care less about the length of his hair.

What's ironic is that actors John Wayne and Ted Danson, as well as sportscaster Marv Albert were not ashamed to admit that they wore toupees. When I briefly used Rogaine and had my experiences with the J.L.H.-like hairspray, never in a million years would I confess my secret. My belief is that if you are bold enough to acknowledge the hairpiece, then be brave enough to go public with your baldness. Since you let the secret out from under your wig, you might as well feel comfortable enough to expose your bald head to the world.

When actor Burt Reynolds filed for bankruptcy in 1996, he listed Edward Katz International Hair Design, the company that

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provided his toupees, as a liability totaling \$121,796.62. With an outstanding tab like that, compared to 99 cents per disposable razor ten pack and at 10 packs per year, it would've taken Reynolds over 10,000 years to equal what he spent on hairpieces. He also could've thrown in a couple electric razors and a lifetime supply of shaving cream and aftershave to offset that debt as well.

Baldness treatment is over a \$1 billion dollar industry—another thing that the infomercials fail to inform you of. Rogaine Foam was able to shell out over a reported \$2.5 million to advertise a 30-second spot during Super Bowl XLIV in 2010, so it's obvious that enough men are giving them business. I was recently in Costco and more than half of a huge crate of Rogaine in bulk was completely sold out. The demand for various hair loss remedies is very high. The supply and demand theory teaches us that when demand increases and supply is consistent, then the price and quantity both increase. To translate, people want hair loss products so the manufacturers and distributors make them readily available and charge up the ass for it. In elementary math class, we learned to divide and subtract. Hair loss is making the follicles divide on our heads, so let's subtract the remainder and shave it all off! Baldness acceptance is a much easier equation and absolutely free, so let's divide and conquer.

In conclusion, if you are one of the few people that find success with hair loss remedies, please be aware that you are not terminating the condition. You've only postponed the balding process. If you seek treatment at 35 years old, the odds are that by the time you turn 40, you'll have another decision to make: Whether to continue investing additional funds into more so-called remedies or finally having to face your balding issues head on. Chances are those same anxieties and self-esteem

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problems that you thought you were avoiding by getting treatment will still exist in five years. Instead of wasting five years trying to fight off the inevitable, use that same amount of time to adjust and get used to the fact that you're losing your hair. The odds are that you'll run out of money financing your treatment long before you'll run out of shame. It makes more sense to deal with and be healed of the humiliation now and by the time you turn 40 you might even be content with how well you look.

I spent over \$500 on Rogaine and aerosol spray-ons in an attempt to fight my baldness. But what hurt more than the money spent, was the time and years spent in self-pity. If I knew what I learned at 25 years old, I would've gone clean at 21. Don't be like me and waste four years of your life thinking that a drug or device will cure you of all of your baldness hang-ups. It's like the alcoholic or drug addict that uses a substance to mask an ongoing problem in their life. While drunk and high, they don't worry about the circumstances that are clouding them, but once they come down, the problem is still staring them right in the face. Until the issue is dealt with head on, not even a drug will resolve it. Just accept, embrace, and move on now. Leave those manufactured remedies alone and let nature take its course. Sometimes these so called remedies will do more damage than what they are trying to prevent. Instead of making some other guy richer, you can be enriched by your shaven dome. To quote Dena Dietrich's character in the '70s Chiffon Margarine TV ad campaign, "It's not nice to fool with Mother Nature."

For men with anxiety issues over their male pattern baldness and other forms of hair loss. Instead of advising men to seek the treatment of Rogaine and other forms of alleged remedies, it encourages them to accept and embrace their bald heads. It recommends that men should try the shaven look for its easy maintenance, convenience, inexpensiveness, and preservation of a youthful appearance.

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