

10 Things Femmes Wish You Knew

It's not a weapon....it's just lipstick. **By Robin Miner-Swartz**



We femmes can feel unappreciated or misunderstood by our sisters. Some butches don't know what the hell to make of us. Is our nail polish really that scary? Most of us don't have weapons in our

Coach purses—just several lipsticks and a nail file. So, here are 10 things we femmes wish you knew about us. And to help us out with the list, we turned to two of the funniest femmes we know—comics Suzanne Westenhoefer (top) and Vickie Shaw.

We might be sitting beside you watching that NFL playoff game, but we're not paying attention. "In our minds, we are doing something completely different," Westenhoefer says. "But we are watching you out of the corner of our eye so we can jump up and scream when you do." We will, however, happily deck ourselves out in whatever team colors you like (especially if beads and leis are involved) and go get you another beer.

"Take care of the car and pay all the bills, geez." Or, to put a finer point on Shaw's words, we really do like to be taken care of. It makes us feel special. And we will take care of you by looking totally fabulous—about 90 percent of the time. We all get Sunday mornings off.

We have one dog (and no cats), because we're more like gay men, Westenhoefer says. Also, our dogs tend to be on the smaller side. Because if we had a big Rottweiler-Shepherd mix, we'd have to go running with it or do something else that might make us break a sweat.

We're always right. Please just know this and embrace it. Shaw would like you to learn to say, without hesitation, "Yes, honey."

We really are part of the club. Even though we do quite well sipping cosmopolitans at cocktail parties with gay boys (pinkies up!), we love nothing more than kicking back at

the neighborhood chicken-wing joint with a big bunch of lady-loving ladies. "I think there is still an underlying suspicion—'She's not really one of us. She'll hurt me and leave me for a man,'" Westenhoefer says. Don't be so quick to think we'll turn on you and we won't be so quick to judge your hair.

We are bottoms. Period. "And, whatever you're doing in bed, do more," Shaw says.

If we're bossy, it's because we know you don't think we're lesbians at all. "At a bar, femmes are all like, 'Would somebody please recognize that I'm a lesbian?' That's, I think, what makes femmes so aggressive," Westenhoefer says. "I think that's why femmes get like, 'You, me, dance floor, let's go, baby.'" Then we hope you overpower us later.

We want you to think we're pretty. "Always, without fail, tell us how stunning we are," Shaw says. And remember: Lipstick is not the enemy. Please don't hate us if we try to get you to cut your mullet. Or buy clothes in the women's department. We're not trying to

change you—really. OK, maybe a little, but not to the point of discomfort. You don't have to wear cute shoes.

We may be comfortable in cargo shorts, a tank top, a baseball cap and Keens, but "girly" outfits are really more in our comfort zone. We might not wear dresses, nylons and heels all that often, but we will wear pink—and jewelry—and get pedicures regularly.

Focus on us, please. "No matter what we let you think, it's all about us," Shaw says. We want to be the center of attention and we want to be adored. Yes, it's shallow, but we can be deep, too. You would know this if you'd only give us more than a glance.

"You meet so many girls who are big giant butches and don't want to be called that," Westenhoefer says. "It's like, accept your stereotypes. Is labeling really so wrong? I'm completely fine about being a big, giant femme."

Amen, sister. Wanna borrow my Clinique Long Last Soft Matte Lipstick? I have it in five colors... ■

