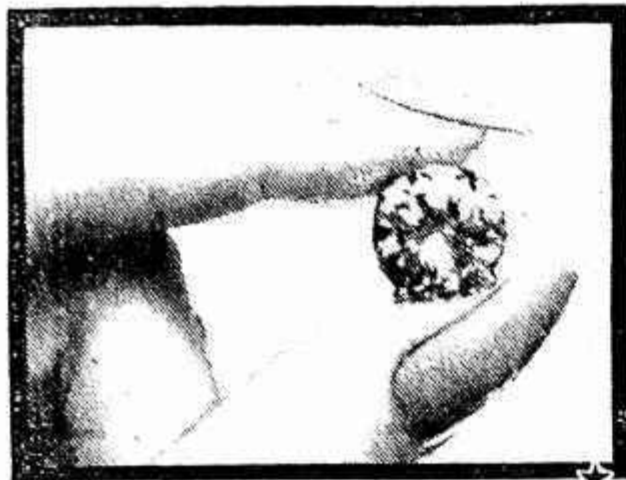


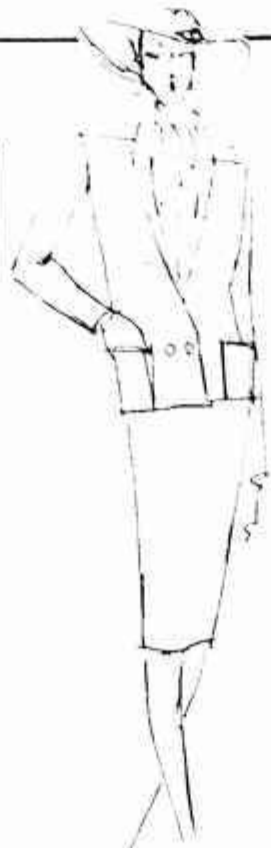
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Going-away suit worn by Phyllis George, CBS-TV sports announcer, when she married John Y. Brown, owner of the Boston Celtics...The red gabardine, slim skirted suit is an Albert Capraro design

YOU! *Gonnie Siegel of Bedford*

By BARBARA MAYER

To Gonnie Siegel, feminist, writer, career woman, wife and mother, there is no conflict between her politics and dressing attractively.

Ms. Siegel, a Bedford resident, has been a feminist since she was a child back in West Virginia. "But, I've never been much on torn blue jeans," she remarked in an interview at her home.

A former newspaper woman who combines a career as an author and public relations consultant, Ms. Siegel regards "looking the best I can" as part of the rules.

A Gonnie Siegel workday has several variants. Most days, after breakfast and a look at the newspaper, she is up, dressed in slacks and a shirt or sweater and at her home office typewriter by 9 a.m.

When working at home ("I work all day with time out only for a quick lunch"), she has a firm, inflexible rule: No household intrusions. "I simply do not 'see' household chores and I don't take time off from my work to do the grocery shopping or other errands. If I am very busy, I may not even answer the doorbell if it rings."

About once every two weeks, she travels into New York, perhaps to confer with clients who include government agencies and corporations. Also frequent are trips to Washington for the same purpose. Meetings in Westchester are a common occurrence, too. Ms. Siegel, who is a member of the Westchester County Task Force on Women, is also a founder and active member of Westchester's National Organization of Women (NOW).

For meetings and trips to the city, she is likely to be dressed in a tailored suit or a skirt and coordinated jacket.

Her shopping habits are typical of busy women who try to maximize the return on their time investment.

"I shop once a year, usually at sale time, and try to buy everything at once. Coordinating outfits is easier if you do it all at once," she has found.

She prefers to shop in small, local stores like Just Looking in Katonah where "they have the kind of tailored things that feel right to me."

She goes to the hairdresser only for a good haircut, and has chosen a style that requires no special care.

"I figure that I can take a shower, wash and dry my hair and dress in under 45 minutes and end up looking nice," she noted with satisfaction.

Although Gonnie Siegel's past is an unusual one, she regards her stop-and-start kind of career as quite typical for



STAFF PHOTOS BY VINCE ARTOLINI

I've never been much on torn blue jeans,' says Gonnie Siegel, shown here in the tailored clothes she finds perfect for her many-faceted life

women. Born in a small, poverty-ridden town in Appalachia ("I grew up 200 years ago for all practical purposes; we had no electricity, no running water and no money and everyone had to work to eat"), she dropped out of school and got her first full-time job at age 13, working a 12-hour day in a bakery for \$12 a week. Eventually she went back to high school and to college where she majored in journalism and got a job as a newspaper reporter.

After spending about 12 years at home caring for young children, doing all the housewifely things that "I did well but didn't like much" and being active in the League of Women Voters, she got a part-time job as an assistant to Warren Jackson, a consultant and a columnist for Westchester Rockland Newspapers.

About the same time she began to work with a number of other women on founding a Westchester NOW chapter. The jobs and her interests coalesced to women's affairs and communications problems.


She speaks with admiration of the success she has observed among Westchester friends who have followed similar desultory paths to job success.

"It is the most satisfying thing in my life to see women who deserve it and who have worked hard for it get ahead."

Although the concerns may seem rather far removed from the world of clothes and caring about one's looks, Gonnie Siegel doesn't think so.

"If anybody doubts the importance of clothing, let them go over to a company like IBM, for example, and see what happens if a top executive comes to work in blue jeans," she said.

BARBARA MAYER is a staff writer for Gannett Westchester Newspapers.

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WWD DRAWING BY KICHISABURO OGAWA

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