

ROTSLER'S RULES FOR MASQUERADES

1. There should be a weight limit for the purchase of leotards.
2. Every contestant should first see himself/herself from the rear.
3. Learn to manage your props, accessories and music.
4. Select costumes and characters suited to your personality and/or body type.
5. No name tags on costumes.
6. Thy shoes shall match thy costume.
7. Parts of your costume should not be edible or smell. Parts of your costume should not fall off accidentally, brush off against other contestants, or be left lying around on the stage.
Kathleen Sky's Corollary: Multiply any discomfort you have wearing the costume by the number of hours you are going to be in it.
8. Consider carefully before going nude or semi-nude. What looks good in the bedroom or bath may not be spectacular on stage.
9. Numbers alone do not make a coherent group.
Bjo Trimble's Corollary: A group is only as good as its weakest costume.
10. No fire, explosives, loud noises or dangerous weapons without full and proper clearance from the masquerade committee.
Marjii Ellers' Corollary: Effect is everything.
11. Carry a repair kit with appropriate tools and materials.
12. Whether prince or pauper act like it. Stay in character.
13. Speak distinctly, but not at length ... or at all. Learn to use the microphone -- or don't.
14. Do not lecture your audience. This is show biz. You are not there to make long statements about your particular passions, but to entertain yourself and others, to show off, to exhibit a character and/or a costume, not to convert, harangue, or bore.
15. When in doubt, keep your mouth shut.
16. Remember! Some people can grow a beard and some cannot.
17. Hand in a legible entry card, even to the point of writing out phonetically any difficult or unusual words. Do not assume either the narrator, the judges or the audience know all these words.
18. If you have the slightest doubt that your costume -- based on a cover, a story description or media origin -- might be unfamiliar to the judges, do not hesitate to supply them with visual materials or a copy of the passage in the text.
19. Give the judges sufficient time to examine your costume from all angles, giving special time to any particularly interesting aspect or design or construction.
20. If you have something for the narrator to read keep it brief, eliminate as much as possible all unpronounceable, incomprehensible made-up names and terms. Do not duplicate on microphone what the narrator has already said.
21. If you are thinking of doing something you intend to be amusing, try it out on honest friends.
Craig Miller's Corollary: Short is better than long; funny is better than non-funny; short and funny is Best.
22. If you are going to try a costume cliché, you must either do it better than ever before, or have a good variation, preferably comic.
23. Presentation can make a mediocre costume and break a good one.
24. Keep all presentations short. Action is better than words.
25. Do not commit the one unforgivable sin: **Do Not Be Boring.**
26. Rehearse! **REHEARSE! REHEARSE!**
27. The quantity of labor has nothing to do with art.
Len Wein's Law: Those who think these rules do not apply to them are wrong.

I encourage the distribution and reproduction of these "rules," not out of ego, but because it is my belief -- and the belief of many others -- that if they are followed we will *all* have better masquerades to enjoy. This "rules" should be published *prior* to any masquerade or fashion show -- in the Progress Report, Program Book or in the Registration Packet -- so as not to reflect on the contestants in that costume event.