THE RED HAT SOCIETY
Fun and Friendship after 50
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ABSTRACT
The social impact of the Red Hat Society is twofold: first, the “disorganization” is grounded solely in the belief that women over 50 have too long been ignored by society... hence the outrageous hats, boas and colors that accompany a Red Hat outing (Cooper, 2004).

LITERATURE REVIEW
When I am an old woman, I shall wear purple/with a red hat that doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.” Warning by Jenny Joseph, 1961

Birth of a Nation
The Red Hat Society started innocently enough, when Exalted Queen Mother Sue Ellen Cooper gave one of her friends a copy of Jenny Joseph’s poem Warning and a fabulous red hat (Priesnitz,2002).

What’s the Deal with those Red Hats?!?!?
We’re figuring out how to age without getting old.” (Cooper, 2004, p. 70).

Hattitude Defined
Ah, hattitude! Of course there is more to outrageous hats, bright colors and feather boas than just making a statement... it’s fun to play dress up! And fun, whimsy, silliness and creativity are the name of the game for Red Hatters (Cooper, 2004).

Strength in Numbers
The Red Hat Society and all the pins, scarves, stuffed animals and knick knacks that come with it wields some serious buying power. Savvy retailers across the globe have realized it as big business, and the Red Hat Society has secured licensing with 28 manufacturers and struck a partnership with QVC (Orr, 2005).

INTRODUCTION
On average, women live longer than men (Quadagno, 2005). The majority of older women are single (Quadagno, 2005). As journalist Wendy Priesnitz states, “The Red Hat Society has spontaneously organized themselves into something of a revolution about the way society views older women.” (Priesnitz, 2002, p.16)

The Red Hat Society philosophy of life suggests that one is never too old to make new friends, try new things or have adventures. One of our favorite catchphrases is, “we’re not done yet!” Sue Ellen Cooper, Founder of the Red Hat Society (Sutherland, 2005, forward).

FUTURE DIRECTIONS
“...As Exalted Queen Mother Sue Ellen says, “We’re figuring out how to age without getting old.” (Cooper, 2004, p. 70).

REFERENCES


www.redhatsociety.com