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The Magazine Reader

# Sew-Sew Divine: This Quilting Guy Leaves His Readers In Stitches

By [Peter Carlson](#)  
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In Houston a couple of weeks ago, Mark Lipinski was mobbed by cheering, screaming, laughing women. Some wanted to hug him. Some wanted his autograph. And some wanted to learn where they could get one of those beefcake ironing board covers, the ones with a photo of a hunky guy wearing only a towel, a towel that vanishes when -- well, here's how Lipinski described it in his magazine, which is called Mark Lipinski's Quilter's Home:

"When you iron over said man, and get him hot (so to speak), his towel totally disappears and -- oh, baby, oh-oh-oh! -- he's naked! Your husband's going to wonder what wonderful thing he's done that's keeping you so happy in the laundry room (hee hee hee)!"

Who is Mark Lipinski?

That's a question that Mark Lipinski asks, in his own inimitable style, on the cover of the latest issue of Mark Lipinski's Quilter's Home, just above a photo of Mark Lipinski nestling in a quilt with his dog, Tulip, and his kitten, Lily: "Who the #\*#@! Is Mark Lipinski (and what's he doing to quilting)?"

The answer is: Lipinski is an impishly funny 50-year-old gay guy from [New Jersey](#), a former stand-up comic, a former dancer in a Chippendales-style nightclub, and a former producer for such daytime TV gabfests as [Ricki Lake](#), Sally Jessy Raphael and "The View," who's now putting out a magazine that has caused much glee and some outrage in the wild, wacky world of quilting.

"The other quilting magazines are a tea party," he says. "Mine is a cocktail party."

Lipinski started his magazine because he was bored with all the other quilting magazines, which tend to publish quilting patterns and quilting tips and not much else. He'd been teaching quilting classes for years and he thought quilters were ready for something with more pizzazz. His first issue, published in the



"The other quilting magazines are a tea party," Marc Lipinski says of his sassy journal. "Mine is a cocktail party." He launched it in spring 2006.

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spring of 2006, began with a pugnacious manifesto:

"When was the last time you spent more than 15 minutes looking through a quilting magazine? I've got to tell you, folks, I was getting so bored of looking at one pattern after another. . . . Kids, the days of Little House on the Prairie are over. It's time to come out of the quilting closet!"

In that first issue, Lipinski published an interview with the legendary Civil War-era quilter Jane Stickle, as channeled by a psychic Lipinski met when he worked on the cheesy New Age TV show "Crossing Over With John Edward." As it turned out, Stickle not only revealed her views on the Civil War -- "if we are going to go in it, then let's go in it to win" -- but she also endorsed Lipinski's magazine. "I think she's behind your magazine," the psychic Sylvia Rossi told Lipinski. "She's definitely with you."

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You've gotta love a magazine that prints endorsements from dead people.

In the debut issue, Lipinski also revealed what's playing on his iPod while he quilts: Tom Jones's "What's New, Pussycat?" among other gems. And he touted a campy fabric that depicts buff, shirtless cowboys floating through a bright blue sky.

It wasn't your grandma's quilting magazine and reaction was mixed. Lipinski got a lot of fan mail -- "Finally, I can see, someone GETS it" -- and some nasty letters, too. A few

readers told him he'd go to hell because psychics are Satanic. Another wrote to say she wouldn't read the magazine because the editor sounded sort of, you know, gay.

Lipinski laughs at that. "I guess I'm the first man to ever come out in a quilting magazine," he says. "But who cares? I'm sure there are some straight men in quilting. I can think of two, maybe three."

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