

# CLOTHING



FASHION·FABRICS·CONSTRUCTION



# CLOTHING

*Fashion Fabrics Construction*

Jeanette Weber

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*Special Fashion, Clothing, and Textile Consultants*

Irma Fischler  
Sharon McKenzie  
Rae Comunale Pantalone  
Ramona Rowan  
Anne Marie Soto

*Review Consultants*

Nadine Hackler,  
Professor, Extension Clothing Specialist,  
University of Florida  
Anne MacCleave-Frazier,  
Clothing and Textiles Specialist,  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Sharon McKenzie,  
Curriculum Resource Teacher,  
Consumer and Family Studies,  
San Diego City Schools  
Eloise Murray,  
Professor in Charge,  
Home Economics Education,  
The Pennsylvania State University

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*Design and Production*  
Design Office, San Francisco

*Cover Photomontage*  
Jane Wattenberg

*Illustrators*  
Norman Nicholson  
Phyllis Rockne  
Gretchen Schields  
Sally Shimizu  
Ed Taber

*Handbook Illustrators*  
Barbara Barnett  
Phyllis Rockne  
Sally Shimizu  
Diana Thewlis

*Photographers*  
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# *Clothes and You*

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**CHAPTER 3**  
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## Dear Editor

**Q.** I can never make up my mind about what to wear. I may try on several outfits before I finally choose one—and then I'm still not sure that my choice is right. How can I gain more confidence in deciding what to wear?



**A.** Confidence comes from learning how to make good clothing choices. You must consider both the occasion and your own personality and self-image. In Chapter 1, you'll learn about the many reasons for clothing and how groups influence your clothing choices. Good decision-making habits are discussed in Chapter 2. And you'll learn how to express the *real you* in Chapter 3. This information will help you gain self-confidence about yourself and your clothing choices.

**Q.** I don't think that what you wear is important. It's *who* you are that counts! If I want to wear jeans to a fancy restaurant or party, I think I should be able to. I resent people telling me what is right and wrong to wear.

**A.** I agree with you that who you are is far more important than the clothes you wear. However, your clothes send messages about you to others every day. People's impressions of you are influenced by your appearance. Even family and friends are influenced by your clothing selection for special occasions. In Chapters 2 and 3, you will learn more about first impressions and how appropriate dress shows respect and consideration for others.

**Q.** I'd like to improve my appearance. Can you give me some guidelines to follow?

**A.** Your appearance is based not just on your clothes but on your total look. You can improve your appearance through good nutrition, exercise, rest, and good grooming. After reading Chapter 4, you'll under-

stand how to develop your own healthy good looks.

**Q.** My parents say that our family spends too much money for clothes, and that we all must take more responsibility for our own clothes. We are going to sit down and draw up a clothing budget for our family. Where do we begin?



**A.** Every family has different clothing needs that are influenced by lifestyles, interests, and values. Every family has different resources for acquiring and taking care of clothes. In Chapter 5, you'll discover how clothing decisions affect the family. A clothing spending plan can benefit both families and individuals.



# 1 *Why Do People Wear Clothes?*

Pretend that you are at a large party, and you do not know anyone else who is there. How are you going to decide whom to talk to? You may glance around the party looking for people whom you would like to meet. You are looking for clues from people who will make you feel more comfortable and at ease.

But how do you decide all this before you walk up to someone and introduce yourself? Or how does someone decide to come up and talk to you?

The clothing that people are wearing offers some clues about themselves. Each person has chosen some type of outfit to wear to the party. Why did they choose what they did? Usually, the reasons are very complex, although the clothing decision may be made very quickly. Clothing is used to cover the body, to make you feel more attractive, and to communicate with others.

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- list the reasons why people wear clothes,
- explain how clothing identifies a person,
- describe how groups influence clothing choices,
- give examples of peer pressure.





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# The Reasons for Clothes

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People wear clothes for many different reasons. Some of these reasons are physical. You wear clothes for comfort and protection. Others are for psychological and social reasons. Clothes give you self-confidence and express your personality. Clothes also help you identify with other people.

All people have basic human needs. Meeting these needs provides satisfaction and enjoyment in life. Clothing helps to meet some of these needs. Knowing something about the role of clothing helps you to understand yourself and others better. Clothing is a complex but fascinating part of everyone's life.

## PROTECTION

In our world, we humans need to protect ourselves from our environment. We do not have a natural protective covering like most animals. The feathers and fur of animals protect them and keep them comfortable. Our skin is uncovered and exposed. We can be easily affected by the elements—rain, snow, wind, cold, and heat. We can be harmed or injured on the job or while participating in sports. In some cases, we need to protect others with our clothing.

## Climate and Weather

If you lived in an environment that was completely controlled for human comfort, your clothing needs would be very simple. You would not need to consider the climate or changes in the weather. Large indoor shopping malls, hotel

complexes, and many schools come close to such environments.

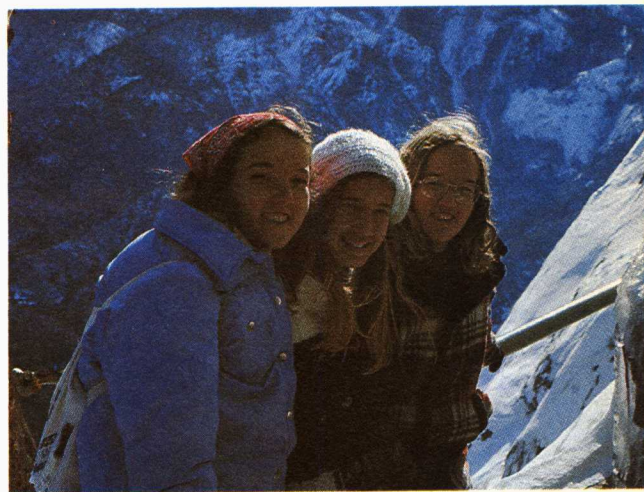
Even on balmy days or while inside climate-controlled buildings, clothing adds to your comfort. It absorbs perspiration, prevents sudden chills, and acts as a buffer between your body and accidental burns, scratches, and rough surfaces.

But it is outdoors under extreme weather conditions that clothing plays its most important physical role. The right garments can insulate your body against extremely hot or extremely cold temperatures.

All over the world, people have traditionally used clothing for comfort and protection in this way. People who live in severely cold climates, such as the Eskimos, keep warm by wearing pants and parkas with fur linings. The fur traps the warm air from their bodies and creates a life-saving insulating layer of warmth.

Desert nomads keep the harmful hot sun from dehydrating their bodies by covering up with long flowing robes and headdresses. Their clothing actually keeps them cooler than they would be without it.

*Hats over the ears and thick mufflers prevent body heat from escaping on winter days.*



# Fashion Focus

## Needs and Wants

In our vocabulary, the word *need* many times becomes identical with the word *want*. We often say that we *need* something new: "I need a new pair of blue shoes." Since we may already have several pairs of shoes in our closet, what we really mean is, "I want a new pair of blue shoes."

Shoes are needed to protect one's feet. There is no relationship between the color of the shoe and the protection provided.

Abraham Maslow, a psychologist, studied human needs and came to the conclusion that everyone has the same basic needs. He divided these needs into five categories. Then he organized these categories into a *hierarchy*, which means arranging them according to their level of importance:

1. *Survival*. Everyone needs food, water, clothing, and shelter in order to survive.
2. *Safety and Security*. People need to feel free from physical harm, and secure that their needs will be met.

3. *Belonging*. Everyone needs to belong to a family and other groups, and to love and be loved.

4. *Self-Esteem*. People need a feeling of self-respect and worthiness.

5. *Fulfillment*. People need to use their special talents, be creative, and reach personal goals through their own efforts.

As people's first needs are met, they can become concerned with the next level of needs. For example, once survival needs are met, people will begin to worry about safety and security. Once those needs are met, they will be concerned with their need for belonging. In a highly developed society, many members have the time and means to satisfy and develop all five categories of needs.

Can you think of examples of how shoes and clothes might be used to satisfy each level of basic needs? How do you define *needs* and *wants*?

These are extremes in weather conditions in which people have adapted their style of dress to their climate. In other areas, where the weather is more moderate or where it changes with the seasons, people dress with the weather in mind, too. Warm weather clothes include loose styles and light colors. Cold weather wear includes additional layers and bulkier fabrics than warm weather wear.

### Safety

Clothing also serves to protect your skin from harm or injury. Some sports and occupations require protective clothing for safety reasons. Football players wear helmets and protective padding to help prevent injury during rough play. Soccer and hockey players wear shin guards to protect their legs from hard hits by





*Heavy boots and thick water-repellent clothing protect the firefighter. How many protective items are on the bike rider?*

the ball or puck. Amateur boxers wear protective headgear to reduce the blow from punches.

All of these protective aids were developed so that people could enjoy a sport and reduce the risk of injury.

Some people's work requires them to be in dangerous or hazardous conditions. Clothing can offer protection. Some items are even labeled with the term "safety" to identify them from regular day-to-day clothes and accessories.

Construction and mill workers wear safety shoes and boots with steel reinforced toes. Many workers must wear hard hats, too. Firefighters wear asbestos clothing in hazardous situations. Police officers wear bulletproof vests. Road workers wear fluorescent orange vests so that drivers can see them easily and prevent accidents.

Clothing can protect you in recreational situations, too. When at the beach, you may wear a shirt or jacket to prevent overexposure and a bad sunburn. While hiking through the woods, you may wear long pants and a long-sleeve shirt to avoid insect bites and scratches from the bushes. While sailing, you may wear a life vest as a precaution.

## SANITATION

Special clothing and accessories are often worn for sanitation reasons. People who work in factories that produce food and medical products wear sanitary clothing, face masks, and hair coverings. This precaution prevents contamination of the products by germs.

In operating rooms, doctors and nurses wear special disposable sanitary uniforms, gloves, and face masks. Fast-food workers wear hats or hair nets to prevent their hair from falling into your food. These are examples of how other people protect you by wearing special clothing. Can you think of any other examples?





*The waitress's uniform identifies what she does. It helps to create an atmosphere of efficiency and service in the restaurant.*

## MODESTY

**Modesty** refers to *what people feel is the proper way for clothing to cover the body*. Different groups of people may have different standards of modesty. People follow these standards in order to fit in and be accepted by the group. Usually you can recognize what is considered modest or immodest because most people in the group dress in the acceptable manner.

Standards of modesty may vary from one situation or activity to another. For example, no one would think twice about a young man playing volleyball on the beach without his shirt. But it would be unacceptable for him to appear shirtless for his math class at school. Clothes that a woman might wear to a fancy party would probably be unacceptable at work the next day.

Sometimes standards of modesty are only minor variations of dress. For example, buttoning a shirt up to the neck would be more acceptable in some groups than leaving two or more buttons open.

Standards of modesty may differ from one culture to another. For example, some women of the Muslim religion are required to wear a long veil that completely covers them when they are in public. Only their eyes can show through a small opening. This is a very old tradition. In other parts of the world, it may not be considered immodest to wear very little clothing.

Modesty standards can also change over a period of time. Around the turn of the century, American women wore long skirts. And a woman always followed a man when walking up stairs. Why? It was unacceptable for him to see her ankles!

## IDENTIFICATION

Clothing can also identify people as members of a group. Certain types of clothing, colors, and accessories have become representative of certain groups, activities, and occupations. Or by simply dressing alike, people can show that they belong to the same group.

### Uniforms

A uniform is one of the easiest ways to identify group members. Uniforms can provide instant recognition or create a special image for the group.

Members of the police force, fire department, and military wear uniforms so that they can be recognized quickly and easily for public safety. Athletic teams wear different colors to identify their team and to tell them apart from their opponents. Different sports have different styles of uniforms. For example, rugby players wear