

THE RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIAL CLASS AND  
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE TO CLOTHING AND  
APPEARANCE OF A SELECTED GROUP  
OF NINTH GRADE GIRLS

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## ABSTRACT

### THE RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE TO CLOTHING AND APPEARANCE OF A SELECTED GROUP OF NINTH GRADE GIRLS

by Arlene Louise Bjorngaard

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the relationship of social class position, social acceptance, and adolescent girls' perception of clothing and appearance in a high school with social class extremes.

Two factors, social class position and social acceptance, were considered in selecting the sample. Membership in cliques determined by a sociometric question was basis of social acceptance. Warner's Index of Status Characteristics was used for obtaining social class position.

The data were collected by interviewing the selected sample, 106 ninth grade girls of the East Lansing High School. The structured interview schedule contained open-ended questions pertaining to general acceptance, clothing and acceptance, clothing and self-satisfactions, and clothing confidence. A modified projective technique was also included. The girls were asked to react to "stories" about the appraisal and acceptance of a new girl in school regarding her clothing and appearance.

Data pertaining to general acceptance and clothing and appearance were analyzed descriptively as to similarities and differences between the independent variables. The





variables were upper social class group members, upper social class isolates, lower social class group members, and lower social class isolates. Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse were utilized for the analysis.

Appearance makes reference to gestures, grooming, clothing, and the like. Discourse is communicated by verbal symbolism.

The results of this study show that there was general consensus among the upper and lower social class group members and upper and lower social class isolates in many of the responses. These girls were more alike than they were different. A look at the similarities gives a view of the values, norms, and customs of these ninth grade girls. For example, the following points of agreement existed on the importance of clothing and appearance in being accepted by the girls of the sample regardless of social class position or social acceptance categories.

1. There was a strong consensus that appearance was important in acceptance. Appearance responses were frequent in judgment of a new girl.
2. The characteristic that most frequently was used to describe the popular girls was the appearance response, well-dressed.
3. The girls named as popular were also referred to as best dressed. The girls named as popular and best dressed were generally upper social class group members.
4. Girls in all categories of social class and social acceptance saw some of the girls as not dressed right. A higher percentage of girls who were not dressed right were from the lower social class.

There were, however, areas which pointed up differences in viewpoints or values of girls in contrasting social class positions and social acceptance categories. For example:

1. Upper social class girls tended to feel better dressed than lower social class girls.
2. Upper and lower social class isolates did not think they were judged as much by the manner in which their best friend dressed as did the upper and lower social class group members.
3. Upper social class group members seemed to be more aware of clothing and placed a greater emphasis on conformity.
4. Lower social class isolates seemed to be less aware of appearance. Many of their responses, even to "appearance questions," were discourse only.

This study attempted to determine whether appearance and clothing were important in the teen-age culture of a specific high school. The data supports Stone's thesis that appearance does affect interaction and views appearance and clothing in relation to other elements of the society.

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By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

Little depth research has been conducted in order to test the relationship of social class position and social acceptance with clothing and appearance. This exploratory study is part of a larger study on the relationship of clothing and adolescent behavior.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship of social class position, social acceptance, and adolescent girls' perceptions of clothing and appearance in a high school with social class extremes.

#### Review of the Literature

This section will be concerned with selected theoretical works and research pertaining to clothing and appearance; adolescent peer groups and social class; and adolescent peer groups and social acceptance. The social

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<sup>1</sup>Joanne B. Eicher, "Ninth Grade Girls' Attitudes and Behavior Related to Role, Appearance, Social Class, and Group Acceptance" (research in progress for Michigan State University Agricultural Experiment Station). A portion of the study was also carried out in another M.A. thesis, Betty Wass, "Clothing as Related to Role Behavior of Ninth Grade Girls" (unpublished Master's thesis, Michigan State University, 1962).

class and social acceptance categories will be interrelated with pertinent literature emphasizing the significance of clothing.

Every society classifies and organizes its members in several different ways. Once organized, if a society is to maintain itself, the young must be so shaped as to fit into the roles on which the survival of the society depends.<sup>1</sup>

One way of categorizing members of a society is by age.<sup>2</sup> One of the age categories made by our society is adolescence. Hurlock states that adolescence is the period of transition in which change takes place as the individual emerges from childhood to maturity.<sup>3</sup> She also states that adolescence is a stage in the life cycle when a new awareness of the self develops. Clothing and appearance become a major focus of attention in the emergence of the self. The adolescent examines and measures himself in relation to others in the group. It is important to the adolescent that he conform to the standards and be accepted by his group.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Coleman, The Adolescent Society (New York: Free Press, 1961), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph Linton, "Age and Sex Categories," American Sociological Review, VII, No. 5 (October, 1942), 589.

<sup>3</sup>Elizabeth B. Hurlock, Adolescent Development (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 240.

Any social group has norms of its own. Many of the attitudes of the individual are greatly influenced by the norms of the group. The system of norms transmitted to the individual occupying a given position becomes an element in his personality. The self develops through social interaction. It develops as the individual assumes the attitudes of others.<sup>1</sup>

This learned pattern of behavior in the development of the self is developed by means of symbols. A symbol is a physical phenomenon that has a meaning put on it by those who use it. Symbols become joined with the needs of the individual. It is important to know what symbols and attitudes others have so one can function successfully. Communication is possible when man develops symbols or gestures which have the same meaning for the person making the gesture as they do for the person addressed. Stone's study reveals two dimensions in every social transaction, appearance and discourse. Appearance sets the stage and limits the possibilities of discourse. "Appearance and discourse, therefore, may be seen as dialectic processes going on in every human transaction. The former process has been seldom studied; the latter extensively studied."<sup>2</sup> Stone defines appearance

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<sup>1</sup>Kingsley Davis, Human Society (New York: The Mac-Millan Company, 1949), p. 247.

<sup>2</sup>Gregory P. Stone, "Clothing and Social Relations: A Study of Appearance in the Context of Community Life" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Sociology, University of Chicago, 1959), p. 89.

as any aspect of the symbolic transaction which helps in the identification of the persons involved. "The appearance covers many things, including body size and shape, reputation and image, clothing, stance, and facial expression."<sup>1</sup>

Discourse is defined as the text of the transaction. It is what the persons involved are talking about.<sup>2</sup>

"Clothing in its symbolic aspects provides a basis for our initial estimates of others, enabling us to preclude, terminate, or get on with the up-coming discourse."<sup>3</sup>

Goffman refers to this in the statement

if unacquainted with the individual, observers can glean clues from his conduct and appearance which allow them to apply their previous experience with individuals roughly similar to the one before them or more important, to apply untested stereotypes to him. . . . They can rely on what the individual says about himself or on documentary evidence he provides as to who and what he is.<sup>4</sup>

J. C. Flugel in his edition of Psychology of Clothes also indicates that clothing is an expression of the self.

Apart from face and hands--which, it is true are the most socially expressive parts of our anatomy, and to which we have learned to devote an especially alert attention--what we actually see and react to are, not the bodies, but the clothes of those about us. It is from their clothes that we form a first impression of our fellow-creatures as we meet them. . . indeed, the very word "personality," as we have

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<sup>1</sup>Gregory P. Stone, "Appearance and the Self," Human Behavior and Social Processes: An Interactionist Approach, ed. Arnold M. Rose (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961), p. 86.

<sup>2</sup>Stone, "Clothing and Social Relations: A Study of Appearance in the Context of Community Life," p. 91.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>4</sup>Erving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1959), p. 1.

been reminded by recent writers implies a "mask" which is itself an article of clothing. Clothes, in fact, though seemingly mere extraneous appendages, have entered into the very core of our existence as social beings.<sup>1</sup>

That clothes are important to the adolescent's concept of self is indicated by the influence of clothes on his behavior. For example, Mary Ryan in a survey of tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students found that the girls that feel poorly dressed generally feel ill-at-ease. Some of these girls reported that they did not feel a part of the group when they felt they were poorly dressed. The ones that had a sense of being well-dressed were not conscious of their clothing most of the time. She indicates that if the girls

felt well dressed they might become more talkative and "peppier," or they might forget their clothing and be relaxed. On the other hand, if they were dissatisfied with their clothing they might be self-conscious and so quieter, or they might feel conspicuous and try to keep from center of group. . . . The reasons most often given for the importance of being well dressed were under the classification of "social contribution." Being well dressed was considered important because people are judged by their appearance and therefore clothes are important in gaining desired ends socially, attracting the opposite sex, or obtaining a job.<sup>2</sup>

The available research indicates that clothing plays a large part in making for happiness and success in adolescent life. Silverman did a study of the actual clothing

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<sup>1</sup>J. C. Flugel, The Psychology of Clothes (London: The Hogarth Press, 1950), pp. 15-16.

<sup>2</sup>Mary S. Ryan, Psychological Effects of Clothing, Part I: "Survey of the Opinions of College Girls" (Cornell University Agricultural Station, Bulletin 882, September, 1952), pp.30-31.

and grooming practices of adolescent girls by means of a check list and questionnaire. This was administered to 1100 students in a New Jersey High School. A section of Silverman's study, "Values of Clothing and Appearance," indicated that the entire group, regardless of age, attached considerable significance to clothing and appearance. Three-fourths of the group indicated that the right clothes were a necessary concomitant of happiness. Good appearance was felt to be an aid in building self-confidence.<sup>1</sup>

Warden's study revealed that "all girls expressed the belief that clothes can help one to feel more competent."<sup>2</sup> Adolescents' self-confidence is also influenced by their friends. Waldron found that "when asked if they thought that others would like them better if they were well-dressed, 46 girls answered 'yes' and eight answered 'no'."<sup>3</sup>

Another way of classifying members of a society is by groups. Peer-group is a term used by sociologists to refer to aggregates of youngsters about the same age level. Adolescent peer groups are organized much like the adult

<sup>1</sup>Sylvia Silverman, Clothing and Appearance: Their Psychological Implications for Teen-Age Girls (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1945), p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>Jessie A. Warden, "Some Factors Effecting the Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction with Clothing of Women Students in the College of Liberal Arts" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State College, 1955), p. 197.

<sup>3</sup>Joyce Jean Waldron, "Clothing Buying Practices of 11th and 12th Grade Girls of Wyandotte High School and the Opinions of the Girls and Their Mothers Regarding These Practices" (unpublished Master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1961), p. 137.



society of which they are a part.<sup>1</sup> The organization of adolescent peer groups is parallel to the social class stratification of our society. "The usual tendency of adults to associate with people on the basis of wealth and general occupational class appears here as a characteristic of high school pupils, doubtless indirectly because of the general tendencies for social groupings to accord with the economic and occupational hierarchies."<sup>2</sup> Allison Davis also indicates that the adolescent organizes his peer group along the line of social class.<sup>3</sup>

One type of non-deviant peer group is the clique. Bossard defines the clique as a "small intimate social participation group consisting of persons of the same social status and in agreement concerning the exclusion of other individuals from the group."<sup>4</sup> "The adolescent clique is a more or less permanent, closely-knit selective and highly intimate small group of individuals who share common secrets, common desires, common problems, and common interests such as those based on family background, school activities,

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<sup>1</sup>David P. Ausubel, Theory and Problems of Adolescent Development (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1954), p. 334.

<sup>2</sup>Mapheus Smith, "Some Factors in Friendship Selections of High School Students," Sociometry, VII (1944), 308.

<sup>3</sup>Allison Davis, "Socialization and Adolescent Personality," Readings in Social Psychology (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1952), 521.

<sup>4</sup>J. H. S. Bossard, The Sociology of Child Development (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), p. 496.

and the like."<sup>1</sup> When cliques are based on similar prestige class background, many of the activities of the clique become class related as the amount of spending money influences the activity.<sup>2</sup>

Hollingshead also found a relationship between the class position of an adolescent's family and his social behavior.<sup>3</sup> His study indicates that the people of Elmtown thought of "themselves as members of classes and they act in part toward one another on the basis of their judgments about each others class position. Persons who possess a cluster of similar values tend to be grouped into more or less common prestige positions. Persons with other values and correlated traits are assigned other levels or 'pegs'."<sup>4</sup>

In his study of the youth culture of the high school, Gordon found that status was based on a multi-value system. These values were instrumental to the individual in attaining his position. Several of these values were derived from income and family position. The values of main importance were grade achievement, grade rank, organized acts, clique membership, dating, dress, manners, and socio-economic

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<sup>1</sup>Ausubel, op. cit., p. 350.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph A. Kahl, The American Class Structure (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1957), p. 130.

<sup>3</sup>August B. Hollingshead, Elmstown's Youth (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1949), p. 441.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

positions based on the occupation of the father.<sup>1</sup>

The findings of Anastasi and Miller indicate that high school girls in upper socio-economic class ascribe greater prestige value to being a good dresser as contrasted to neat and clean than boys and girls of lower social classes.<sup>2</sup>

Vener in his study of adolescent boys and girls found that "boys and girls whose fathers are in occupations of higher status tend to express sentiments of high clothing deprivation less frequently than those whose fathers are in occupations of lower status."<sup>3</sup>

Hoult found the college students used as subjects perceived clothing as much more significant for others as a factor in a certain type of social status rating than it was for themselves.<sup>4</sup>

There are a few studies that have indicated a relationship between socio-economic status and social acceptance. Dewey points out that adolescence is the stage at which there is a great need to be accepted and to reflect the

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<sup>1</sup>C. Wayne Gordon, The Social System of the High School (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1957), pp. 133-134.

<sup>2</sup>A. Anastasi and S. Miller, "Adolescent Prestige Factors in Relation to Scholastic and Socio-Economic Factors," Journal of Social Psychology, XXIX (1949), 47.

<sup>3</sup>Arthur Vener, "Adolescent Orientations to Clothing: A Social-Psychological Interpretation" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Michigan State University, 1957), p. 62.

<sup>4</sup>Thomas Ford Hoult, "Clothing as a Factor in the Social Status Rating of Men" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1951), p. 274.

feelings of the group.<sup>1</sup>

Doctor G. G. Thompson of Syracuse University in a preliminary study showed a correlation between social acceptance and socio-economic status for girls between grades six and twelve.<sup>2</sup>

Morgan and Cook report high correlations between friendship and socio-economic status. Morgan reported that a combination of behavior and social status served to determine a child's acceptability and reputation. Coming from the right social class was more important than the amount of time a child had lived in the community.<sup>3</sup> Cook's data in a sociometric survey support the hypothesis that teenagers of similar social class chose each other as friends.<sup>4</sup>

Neugarten, in a sample of Midwestern school children, found that both friendship status and reputation parallel social class position to the advantage of the upper socio-economic classes. Lower class children were more often than not given a negative rating and named as people you would

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Dewey and W. J. Humber, The Development of Human Behavior (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951), p. 297.

<sup>2</sup>Raymond G. Kuhlen, Psychology of Adolescent Development, citing G. G. Thompson (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 326.

<sup>3</sup>H. G. Morgan, "Social Relationships of Children in a Warboom Community," Journal of Educational Research, XL (December, 1946), 285-286.

<sup>5</sup>Lloyd A. Cook, "An Experimental Sociographic Study of a Stratified Tenth Grade Class," American Sociological Review, X (1945), 261.

not care to have for friends.<sup>1</sup> This seems to signify that class values influence behavior, even at an early age.

Research also indicates that the socially acceptable and socially isolated have certain personality characteristics. Gronlund and Anderson found that the socially accepted boys and girls have the characteristics of being: good-looking, tidy, friendly, likable, enthusiastic, cheerful, and talkative. The socially neglected students were more apt to be overlooked rather than disliked. The socially rejected had a low rating on the above characteristics; however, they were aggressive so they drew attention to themselves and as a result were rejected.<sup>2</sup>

Hurlock and Coleman both report the importance of acceptance to the adolescent by his peer group. Hurlock gives physical attractiveness, good grooming, stylish clothes, and socio-economic status as some of the factors which contribute to popularity during adolescence.<sup>3</sup> Coleman found the elites of the school were closer to their fellow adolescents than to their parents. This adds intensity to the group pressures which they feel. The adolescent will bend over backwards to be like his peer group in dress, opinions, and behavior. This not only helps

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<sup>1</sup>Berneice L. Neugarten, "Social Class and Friendship Among School Children," American Journal of Sociology, LI (1946), 312-313.

<sup>2</sup>Norman E. Gronlund and Loren Anderson, "Personality Characteristics of Socially Accepted, Socially Neglected, and Socially Rejected Junior High School Pupils," Educational Administration and Supervision, XLIII (October, 1957), 333.

<sup>3</sup>Hurlock, op. cit., p. 202.

to guarantee acceptance but also helps to remove feelings of inferiority which they have when they are different.<sup>1</sup>

According to other investigations, appearance and manner are of great importance in determining social acceptance. A questionnaire used by Masumoto disclosed a tendency for students to select the students they considered well-dressed as being popular.<sup>2</sup> Moore also found that the girls who were leaders in clothing behavior were leaders in popularity.<sup>3</sup> An attractive face, a trim figure, a stylish hair-do, and clothes prescribed by the fads of the moment were elements of attractiveness. Homeliness, dirtiness, excessive fatness or thinness, out-of-date or shabby clothes, or crudeness in manner are sources of unpopularity. Girls who rate low in appearance are negative, withdrawn, and not interested in people or events.<sup>4</sup>

Enty mentions the significance of group approval in her study on the effect of clothing on the social adjustment of the adolescent girl. "The adolescent had a tendency to feel inferior if her dress were soiled, more practical than

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<sup>1</sup>Coleman, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Sachiko Masumoto, "The Relationship of Dress and Behavior Associated with Dress to the Social Participation of the Adolescent Boy and Girl" (unpublished Master's thesis, Pennsylvania State University, 1958), p. 131.

<sup>3</sup>Kathleen Anne Moore, "Fashion Leadership Designation and Related Factors Among a Group of Adolescent Girls" (unpublished Master's thesis, Pennsylvania State University, 1962), p. 73.

<sup>4</sup>Lester Cole, Psychology of Adolescence (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1954), p. 140.

fashionable, or extremely different from those of the rest of the group."<sup>1</sup>

An important factor in the group's acceptance or rejection of an individual is the extent and the manner to which he conforms to the ways of the group. "Fads become extremely important, and refusal to accept them may mean group exclusion."<sup>2</sup> This conformity in dress, opinions, and behavior is important to the adolescent as it helps him identify with the group and also in development of the self.

Much of what adults call "faddism" among adolescents stems from his attempts to try out different clothes, hair styles, manners, and attitudes in an effort to assert himself as a person. Murray Wax indicates that a teen-ager follows fad and fashion "because she is experimenting with herself and has not yet developed a self-image with which she can be comfortable."<sup>3</sup>

Fads which are followed are originated by the young women of the prestige bearing cliques who are leaders in other types of activities. Different types of fads are tried out in different types of cliques. The overwhelming majority of students do not originate fads. Girls who are insensitive to fads are also insensitive and unskillful in other social situations.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>J. D. Enty, "The Effect of Clothing on the Social Adjustment of the Adolescent Girl" (unpublished Master's thesis, Howard University, 1954), p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>John E. Horrocks, The Psychology of Adolescence (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Riverside Press, 1951), p.151.

<sup>3</sup>Murray Wax, "Themes in Cosmetics and Grooming," American Journal of Sociology, LXII (1957), 592.

<sup>4</sup>J. E. Janney, "Fad and Fashion Leadership Among Undergraduate Women," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, XXXVI (1941), 275.

Sohn in her study found that fashion leaders in a select group, fraternity men at Pennsylvania State University, could be identified by members of their peer group.<sup>1</sup>

Comments were made in the Gordon study that members of the popular crowd start the fads but it must be something everyone can afford before it will become a fad. He also found that dress was a major source of social differentiation because of its high visibility.<sup>2</sup>

A fad is one of the ways in which adolescents can conform to the behavior of the group. This conformity is shown in no other phase of the individual's life as it is in dress. "Every detail of clothing follows a set standard and any deviation from it is apt to cause mental anguish to the wearer. At no other time is the wearing of clothing inferior to that of the rest of the group so great a hardship as at this age."<sup>3</sup> The Lynds found in their study of Middletown that several mothers emphasized the importance placed on clothes and their inability to meet these standards were reasons for their children leaving school. They indicated that they could not give them money for the right kind of clothes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Marjorie Ann Sohn, "Personal-Social Characteristics of Clothing Fashion Leaders Among Fraternity Men" (unpublished Master's thesis, Pennsylvania State University, 1959), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Gordon, op. cit., pp. 114-117.

<sup>3</sup>Elizabeth B. Hurlock, The Psychology of Dress (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1929), p. 181.

<sup>4</sup>Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, Middletown (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1929), p. 186.



The right kind of clothes help the adolescent identify with the group and it gives him a feeling that he belongs to it. This gives him a security of status that he would not have if his appearance differed from that of the group.<sup>1</sup> The function of group conformity in dress as viewed by the students in the Gordon study is as follows: How one dresses influences the crowd one belongs to. If you belong to the right crowd, you are expected to dress above average. Most of the right crowd have their supply of cashmere sweaters. There are girls who are leaders who do not have cashmeres but dress better than average. It depends on who they are if they receive criticisms for what they wear. "The leaders do not have as many restrictions on clothing as do those who would like to be leaders. One who is a leader can wear something out of the ordinary and 'get by' with it because they are accepted and anything rather odd that they wear has a chance of becoming the style because the leaders are the ones who start the style."<sup>2</sup>

In his study of ten schools, Coleman found that in every school most students saw a leading crowd based on good personality, good looks, having nice clothes, and being well dressed. "Well dressed differs from well-to-do suburbs and working-class school. Nevertheless whether it is the number of cashmere sweaters a girl owns or simply having

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth B. Hurlock, Developmental Psychology (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), p. 246.

<sup>2</sup>Gordon, op. cit., p. 115.

clean and attractive dresses, the matter of having good clothes is important. The importance of clothes appears to derive partially from the fact that clothing symbolizes family status."<sup>1</sup> Coleman found that clothing symbols varied from school to school and among the cliques at each school.

In determining social acceptability in adolescents, factors pertaining to neatness, cleanliness, and dress have been included in several studies. According to Bonney, popular children were in accord with the group norms of dress, grooming, and manners.<sup>2</sup> Cannon, Staples, and Carlson found a significant relationship between personal appearance and social acceptance during the junior and senior high school period for girls. The popular girls from the seventh through the twelfth grade excel or conform closely to the norm for personal appearance.<sup>3</sup>

Kuhlen emphasizes the high social awareness of adolescence in contrast to adult life. This is partially because school life forces adolescents into contact with individuals from a variety of backgrounds. In the school culture, many adolescents are at a disadvantage as they rub shoulders with those who possess greater poise, better clothes, better

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<sup>1</sup>Coleman, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>2</sup>M. E. Bonney, "Popular and Unpopular Children: A Sociometric Study," Sociometry Monographs, IX (New York: Beacon House, 1947), p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>Kenneth L. Cannon, Ruth Staples, and Irene Carlson, "Personal Appearance as a Factor in Social Acceptance," Journal of Home Economics, XLIV (1952), 712.

family standing, and a more active social life. Attention is often focused on these differences. A school culture which is characterized with cliques and formal social groups often focuses attention on these activities and this enhances the need for the adolescent to belong to these groups. He will be conscious of his lack of status if he fails and does not obtain membership in these groups.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, in a response to his need to belong, the adolescent learns to dress like the rest of the crowd. Dress becomes a badge of conformity for the group.

#### Summary

Davis, Hollingshead, and Smith all indicate that adolescent peer groups organize along social class lines. Gordon points out that status for the adolescent is built on a multi-value system, several of which are based on the occupation of the father.

Others like Cook and Bonney have found a relationship between social acceptability and socio-economic status. Acceptance is important to the adolescent peer group. The literature (Hurlock, Coleman, and Masumoto) expresses the thesis that appearance, manner, and stylish clothes are important factors in determining social acceptance.

An adolescent culture which has an emphasis on cliques and social groups often focuses attention on clothing,

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<sup>1</sup>Kuhlen, op. cit., p. 291.

appearance, and family background. Thus to meet his need to belong, the adolescent uses dress as a badge of conformity to the group of which he is a member or to the group to which he would like to join.

The available literature points out the importance of clothing and appearance, social class position, and social acceptance to the adolescent. Research has been done on social class, social acceptance as viewed through clique membership and social isolates, and clothing behavior; but little knowledge is available on the relationship of these factors in adolescent life.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate the relationship of social class position with adolescent girls' perception of clothing and appearance to peer group social acceptance in a high school with social class extremes.

The significance of this exploratory study will be to develop hypotheses to determine the relation of clothing and appearance with social acceptance in a situation with social class extremes. The study will look at the social significance of the social interaction in terms of Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse. Data will be analyzed and distinctions will be made between these non-verbal and verbal symbols. The non-verbal symbols of clothing and appearance will be investigated as a basis for establishment of social identity of those who come together in a school culture which has its setting in a community which is predominately high income. According to Stone,

discourse has a great influence upon the development of the self; however, discourse is not possible without appearance which allows the discussants to identify each other.

The next chapter will discuss the methodology of the study. Chapters III, IV, and V will be concerned with an analysis of data using social class, social acceptance as related to general acceptance, and the influence of clothing and appearance. The analysis will be done in view of Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse. The last chapter contains the summary and conclusions of the study.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this study will be presented as follows: (1) selection of method, (2) selection of community, (3) procedure in selection of sample, (4) selection and description of sample, (5) development of instrument, (6) pretest, (7) administration of instrument, and (8) method of analysis.

#### Selection of Method

Because the relationship of social class, social acceptance, and clothing behavior in adolescent life is relatively unexplored, it was felt that an exploratory study would be the most fruitful method of studying these relationships. Selltiz indicates that in problems where little knowledge is available, an exploratory study will usually be the most appropriate method. An exploratory study may develop hypotheses and establish priorities for further research.<sup>1</sup> Exploratory studies must be tested for definite proof in other studies.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Claire Selltiz, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1960), p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>L. Festinger and D. Katz (editors), Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences (New York: Dryden Press, 1953), p. 74.

In formulating the research procedure of this exploratory study, it was decided that an excellent method for obtaining insights would be the intensive study of selected instances. Selltitz indicates that this may be done by focusing on individuals, situations, groups, or communities. He also suggests that isolates may emphasize factors which unite a particular group or community. They may disclose the manner in which attitudes and information is transmitted in a social group. The characteristics of individuals who fit well and those who do not fit well in a given situation give us valuable clues about the nature of a locality.<sup>1</sup>

The above factors were determinants in using social isolates and group members as a measure of social acceptance for this exploratory study.

"Even an exploratory study should be so designed as to provide as definite information as possible for a set of research objectives."<sup>2</sup> It is important to have control in the recording of respondents ideas. This implies the structuring of an instrument.

McCormick and Francis indicate that the depth interview is an excellent method for obtaining information for an exploratory study. It is "more capable than other methods for getting at the fundamental or essential factors of overt

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<sup>1</sup>Selltitz, op. cit., pp. 59-63.

<sup>2</sup>Festinger and Katz, op. cit., p. 75.

behavior . . . in which the investigator is interested."<sup>1</sup> Hurlock suggests the controlled interview as an excellent method for obtaining information concerning adolescents attitudes in regard to clothes. These factors were decisive in determining the use of the depth interview as the method for this exploratory study.

### Selection of Community

According to information from the United States Census reports for 1960, East Lansing, Michigan, can be described in this manner:<sup>2</sup>

East Lansing, a suburb of Lansing, is located in South Central Michigan. Since more than 20 per cent of the population of East Lansing is enrolled in college, it can be classified as an "education center."<sup>3</sup> There were 30,198 residents in East Lansing in the 1960 census, including the college students.

The population of East Lansing is highly educated. Persons of age twenty-five and over have a median of 15.8 years of education. Eighty-nine per cent of this population have completed four years of high school. Of the total population in the fourteen to seventeen year old age group 98.5 per cent are in school at the present time.

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas McCormick and Ray Francis, Methods of Research in the Behavioral Sciences (New York: Harper, 1958), p. 129.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Bureau of Census, Michigan General Population Characteristics, 1960 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1960).

<sup>3</sup>Grace Kneedler, "Functional Types of Cities," p. 4. (Mimeographed.)



The residents of East Lansing can be described as young and mobile. The median age is 22.2 years. Fifty-eight and eight-tenths per cent of the residents are natives of Michigan. The percentage who moved into their present house in East Lansing after 1958 is 50.7. The young mobile population may be an influence of the college community.

The median East Lansing income is \$7,152 while the median state income is \$6,256. Twelve and two-tenths per cent of East Lansing residents have income under \$3,000 but 31.7 have incomes of \$10,000 and over.

East Lansing provides jobs for its own residents as well as others. There are 71.9 per cent in white collar occupations and seven per cent in manufacturing industries. Almost 40 per cent of the wives and mothers are employed.

East Lansing is an atypical community in that it has a young highly educated white collar population. Economically the city is a high income community with one-third of the incomes \$10,000 or over.

The educational system of East Lansing is composed of six elementary schools, one junior high school for grades seven and eight, and a senior high school for grades nine through twelve. The high school has a student population of 1103.

A situation unique to the East Lansing school district is the recent annexation of an area called Towar Gardens which is primarily a low income working class neighborhood.

Students from Towar Gardens have been in the East Lansing High School for two years. The extreme differences in social class background of students in the East Lansing High School were the main reasons for the selection of this site for this research. The school officials of East Lansing were most willing to extend their co-operation for this research project.

#### Procedure in Selection of Sample

Two factors were considered in selection of sample. They were social class position and social acceptance.

#### Clique Structure

Membership in cliques was used for an operational definition of social acceptance and as one of the criteria for selection of the sample in this exploratory study.

Many investigations of social acceptability have been conducted in school settings. Students from selected classes have been given types of sociometric tests to determine their status among their schoolmates. Gronlund and Whitney in investigating the adolescent's acceptance in the classroom, the school, and the neighborhood found that scores on sociometric tests conducted in the classroom may be a reliable index of the individual's general social acceptability among his peers. The individuals who were accepted in the classroom were also accepted in the school as a whole and in their neighborhood. The students who were unpopular with their classmates were generally unaccepted by their peers in

the neighborhood.<sup>1</sup>

When children were asked to list the names of boys and/or girls whom they would select as companions for various activities, the answers were extremely significant in revealing the social acceptance of individuals and the social structure of adolescent groups. When adolescents were asked to name two friends in sociometric tests, they often failed to mention their third or fourth best friend. Thus it was theoretically possible for an adolescent to be a fairly good friend of many of his associates and have a relatively good level of acceptance yet not be mentioned by anyone at all.<sup>2</sup>

The sociometric question used to determine social acceptance in this study was asked in several parts to eliminate this error. The girls could name four of their best friends in this particular grade and school. The sociometric question was placed in an opinionnaire which was part of the larger study administered to all of the ninth grade girls in the East Lansing High School.<sup>3</sup> The sociometric question is reproduced in Appendix A, page 159. The social acceptance rating was indicative only of acceptance in the ninth grade (the only grade to which the questionnaire was

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<sup>1</sup>Norman E. Gronlund and A. P. Whitney, "Relation Between Pupil's Social Acceptability in the Classroom, in the School, and in the Neighborhood," School Review, LXIV (September, 1956), 270.

<sup>2</sup>Kuhlen, op. cit., pp. 614-615.

<sup>3</sup>Wass, op. cit.

administered) at East Lansing High School. Each girl in the study was given a number. Best friend choices were coded by number and tabulated on a large chart. If best friends were in another grade or another school, this was coded accordingly. Reciprocal choices were circled and joined with a line to indicate friendship choices. Distinctions were made between first and second and their third and fourth choice.

As a result of this sociometric question the social acceptance classification of the ninth grade of East Lansing High School was established. Two categories of social acceptance were determined. The established categories were social isolates and group members which consisted of mutual choice selections and clique members. An isolate was (a) one in which the best girl friend selected did not reciprocate or (b) one who selected no friends. A mutual choice was a mutual reciprocal selection by only one best friend. Clique members were those who had reciprocal choices by more than one best friend.<sup>1</sup>

The sociometric question showed the composition of clique structure in East Lansing High School as having seventeen cliques ranging in size from three to twenty-six members.<sup>2</sup> The average clique size was 5.35. Of the 154 ninth grade girls 111

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<sup>1</sup>A reciprocal mutual choice could be drawn into clique membership if reciprocal best friend had two or more reciprocal selections.

<sup>2</sup>Warner indicates the clique is an "intimate nonkin group, membership in which may vary in numbers from two to thirty or more people." W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, The Social Life of a Modern Community, Yankee City Series Vol. I (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 110.

were clique members, eighteen were mutual choices, and twenty-five were isolates.<sup>1</sup>

### Social Class

The other criterion used in selection of the sample was social status. Several different techniques for measuring social status are currently in use; the method used for this exploratory study was Warner's Index of Status Characteristics. "Several attempts have been made to construct short indexes but only Warner's has been validated against an independent measure of prestige from qualitative interviews."<sup>2</sup> In reference to Warner's Index of Status Characteristics Martindale also states that the use of the term social class and the manner in which it has been studied appears to be an adequate procedure which can be applied to small cities.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>These girls were isolates due to no reciprocal selection or their choosing someone outside of ninth grade or someone in another school. The twenty-five isolates in the ninth grade responded to the naming of their best friends in the following manner:

<u>Response</u>	<u>Number of Girls</u>
Gave no names	4
Named girls in ninth grade in East Lansing only	1
Named other grade only	1
Named other school only	4
Named both ninth grade and other grade	1
Named ninth grade, other grade, and other school	2
Named ninth grade and other school	12

<sup>2</sup>Kahl, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>Don Martindale, American Society (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1960), p. 397.

The social class ranking of each girl in the ninth grade was determined by Warner's Index of Status Characteristics. The three indices of the Index of Status Characteristics used were father's occupation, dwelling area, and house type. The source of income (the fourth index ordinarily used) could not be used since this information was not obtained in background information. Each index was rated on a seven point scale (Appendix A, pages 160-163). The rating was multiplied by the appropriate weight (a) occupation times five, (b) dwelling area times three, and (c) house type times four. The computed sum was the ISC score for the family.<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A, page 164 for the weighting system of determining the ISC scores.

A few changes were made in the occupational rating due to the particular nature of the "educational community" of East Lansing (see Appendix A, pages 160-161). Warner indicates that,

the specific classifications used here were designed for a particular community; certain modifications might be necessary in other communities. In a large city, with a number of large business concerns, a different monetary value might be assigned to each category of proprietors. There may be a change in the status, and consequently in the rating assigned to a mayor, high school principal etc., depending on the size of the community. However, while there might be a change in the range allowed within any category, the general method of classification and the framework developed here will have general use and can be applied to all communities.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>W. Lloyd Warner, Marchia Meeker, and Kenneth Eells, Social Class in America (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1949), p. 185.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

The father's occupation was obtained from background information of the Role Behavior Study.<sup>1</sup> Warner's Revised Scale for Rating Occupation was used in rating occupations (Appendix A, pages 160-161). A double check was made in accuracy of father's occupation by checking father's occupation in school records and the city directory.

The residential area of East Lansing was rated on a seven point scale by four individuals--an economist, a sociologist, a real estate agent, and the researcher of this study.

The houses were rated on a seven point scale by two or more individuals, one of which was the researcher.

With the use of Warner's ISC the social class range for the families of the ninth grade girls in East Lansing had scores which ranged from twelve to seventy-five. Table 1 gives the social class rank and social acceptance of the ninth grade girls. Social class is showed by the ISC weighted rating and social acceptance is viewed through isolates, mutual choices, and clique members.

#### Selection and Description of Sample

The selected sample based on the criteria of the sociometric question for acceptance and Warner's Index of Status Characteristics for social class consisted of 106 girls from 154 in the ninth grade.

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<sup>1</sup>Wass, op. cit.

Table 1.--Social class distribution of ISC weighted ratings by social acceptance categories of ninth grade girls, 1961-62; East Lansing High School.

ISC <sup>1</sup> Weighted Ratings	Isolate	Mutual Choice	C1 <sup>2</sup>																	Totals
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
12-17	1	1			1				3				1							7
18-22	1							2	5	1					1	1	1	1		13
23-24										1										1
25-33	7	4			6	3	4		1	7	1	2	3	1	1	6	1	1	2	50
34-37	4	2					1		1	4	1			3		1			1	19
38-50	7	4			7	2	3	1	7		6	2	2				1	1		42
51-53					1									1						2
54-61		2															1			3
62-66		1	2					1												4
67-69	1	1																		2
70-84	4	3	1				2					1								11
Totals	25	18	3	14	6	6	8	4	4	26	4	8	6	4	5	7	3	3	3	154

<sup>1</sup>ISC rating based on occupation, dwelling area and house type.

<sup>2</sup>C1 refers to clique. Each clique was given a number for identification.



For social class differentiation the two social class extremes were used. According to the ISC ratings, girls with scores of twelve to thirty-seven were classified as upper class. The range for lower class was sixty-two to eighty-four.<sup>1</sup> Social acceptance distinctions made were between group members and isolates on the basis of the sociometric question.

The breakdown of the number of girls in each of the established categories for the independent variables is given below:

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Number</u>
Upper social class group members . . .	77
Upper social class isolates. . . . .	12
Lower social class group members . . .	12
Lower social class isolates. . . . .	5

In this selected sample there were a higher proportion of isolates from the lower social class than from the upper social class. Out of a total of seventeen lower social class girls 35 per cent were isolates and of the eighty-nine upper social class girls only 13 per cent were isolates. Neugarten also found that friendship paralleled social class position to the advantage of the upper socio-economic classes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The use of the term "upper" for East Lansing does not have the same meaning as Warner's upper class did. Upper in reference to East Lansing also includes upper middle and indeterminate. The lower class of East Lansing consisted of indeterminate upper-lower to lower-lower class according to Warner's social class equivalents.

<sup>2</sup>Neugarten, op. cit., p. 312.

The community of East Lansing is highly educated. The high educational level is revealed in this study too. The main financial supporter of the families of the girls studied had graduated from college in 73 per cent of the cases. This is slightly higher than the entire ninth grade in which 67 per cent of the family heads were college graduates. The main financial supporter was the father in 102 out of 106 families (96 per cent). In the entire study, 95 per cent of the cases the father was the main financial supporter.

Professional status according to Warner's Index of Status Characteristics was held by 58 per cent of the primary financial supporter of each family. In the entire study, 44 per cent had professional status. The mother contributed to the financial support of the family in 24 per cent of the families of this sample, whereas 34 per cent of the families had a second person contributing to their financial support in the entire ninth grade. Both figures were somewhat less than the average 40 per cent of working wives and mothers in East Lansing.

The religious preference of this population was predominately Protestant. This sample was composed of 82 per cent Protestants, 10 per cent Roman Catholics, and the remaining were Jewish and other. Eighty-one per cent of the entire group were Protestants.

The girls in this study were active in clubs and organizations. Only five did not belong to any clubs. Eight did not belong to clubs in the entire ninth grade. The following

observations can be made about club activities of these selected ninth grade girls (Table 2). Upper social class group members have membership in more clubs than upper social class isolates. Three or more club memberships were held by nearly half of the upper social class group members while none of the upper social class isolates belonged to more than two. Upper social class group members have more memberships in clubs than lower social class group members do. Nearly 17 per cent of lower class group members belonged to three or more clubs, whereas 43 per cent of upper social class group members had membership in at least three organizations.

"Forty-six per cent of the ninth grade girls had attended grade school in a town other than East Lansing or had attended two or more grade schools in East Lansing. It appears that the families of the ninth grade girls were only slightly less mobile than the average population."<sup>1</sup> In the selected sample a difference in mobility was found between social class and social acceptance. The upper social class was more mobile than the lower social class. The lower social class isolates had no mobility. They had all attended only one school in East Lansing. The most mobile group was the upper social class isolates.

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<sup>1</sup>Wass, op. cit., p. 24.

Table 2.--Association of social class and social acceptance to membership in clubs and organizations.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories					Totals
	Belong to One	Belong to Two	Belong to Three	Belong to Four or More	Belong to None	
Upper Social Class						
Group Members	26	14	16	16	3	77
Isolates	5	7	0	0	0	12
Lower Social Class						
Group Members	7	2	1	1	1	12
Isolates	2	1	1	0	1	5
Totals	40	24	18	17	5	106

### Development of Instrument

A device which was helpful in developing the interview schedule for this exploratory study, in addition to the review of literature, was a two part theme on appearance. The ninth grade boys and girls of East Lansing High School wrote these themes in their guidance class. The titles of themes were, "Do You Think Personal Appearance Is Important In A Teen-Ager's Life?" and "What Do You Notice First About Other Teen-Agers' Appearance?".

The contents of the girls' themes were charted and tabulated to obtain their clothing and appearance opinions. Tabulations were made regarding the primary concern of the theme; that is, general appearance or particular aspect of appearance. Categories were established for particular aspects and tabulations were made for each category. The number of times an aspect was referred to was charted and categories were rated according to general description or detailed descriptions. The themes helped determine the types and emphases of questions.

The Adolescent Society by James Coleman and Arthur Vener's doctoral dissertation, "Adolescent Orientations to Clothing: A Social-Psychological Interpretation" were also helpful source materials in development of the instrument.<sup>1</sup>

Questions were constructed in Stone's frame of reference as identification of the wearer in categories that

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur Vener was also very helpful with suggestions when questions were being prepared for the interview schedule.

would give program or review responses. According to Stone, review responses were comments "made about the wearer of clothes by others"<sup>1</sup> and program responses were comments "made about the wearer by the wearer."<sup>2</sup> Questions 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 30, 31, and 32 were review questions and questions 10, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 were questions of program (Appendix B, pages 167-170).

The interview schedule was developed with open-ended questions for the following major categories:

1. Social class and social acceptance as related to general acceptance (Appendix B, Questions 1 through 7).
2. Social class and social acceptance as related to clothing acceptance (Appendix B, Questions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, and 25).
3. Social class and social acceptance as related to self satisfactions (Appendix B, Questions 14, 22, 23, and 24).
4. Social class and social acceptance as related to clothing confidence (Appendix B, Questions 16, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, and 29).
5. Social class and social acceptance as related to clothing acceptance as viewed through situational stories (Appendix B, Questions 30, 31, and 32).

The order of questions was determined by relationships of the categories to each other. Questions one through seven were placed first as clothing was not mentioned up

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<sup>1</sup>Stone, "Appearance and the Self," p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

to this point. This was done so a clothing and appearance bias might not be introduced.

A supplementary card with appropriate responses was used for questions 26, 27, 28, and 29 so that the girls could have before them the alternative from which they were to choose.<sup>1</sup>

### Pretest

Four ninth grade girls from Okemos, Michigan, were interviewed for the pretest to provide experience for interviewer, to test the interview schedule for comprehension at this age level, and to see whether intended meaning was attached to questions. The length of interviews in the pretest ranged from fifty to sixty minutes. A few minor changes were made in the instrument as a result of pretest. For example, another statement was added to question 17 to clarify the word "reflection" which did not seem clear to girls who took the pretest. The question, "Do they have many friends?" was added to question 18 to obtain more information about the girls who did not dress right. The kinds of suggestions mothers make about clothes worn to school was added to question 25. In two of the situational stories the wording of the final instrument was changed from "How important a part do you think messy hair plays in Lynn's appearance?"

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<sup>1</sup>Responses on the card were as follows:

1. Almost always
2. Often
3. Sometimes
4. Seldom
5. Never

to "Do you think messy hair plays an important part in Lynn's appearance?" and "How important do you think it is for Michelle to have bobby socks like the other girls?" to "Do you think it is important for Michelle to have bobby socks like the other girls?". These changes were made in situational stories to help increase the objectivity of the interview schedule.

#### Administration of Instrument

The interviews were conducted at the East Lansing High School. The interview schedule was followed and the girls were probed during the interview as much as possible. The interviews were limited to the seventy minutes of the class period. The interviews ranged in length from forty-five minutes to seventy minutes with one exception. One interview was only twenty minutes as the girl spoke in monosyllables.

#### Method of Analysis

To determine the association between independent variables of social class and social acceptance with various aspects of clothing behavior, it was the intention of this researcher to use the chi square test of significance. It was not possible to do so because more than 20 per cent of the theoretical frequencies were under five.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, a descriptive analysis of the findings was made.

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<sup>1</sup>Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1956), p. 110.



When percentages are referred to, it is important for the reader to keep in mind the distribution of the sample in each of the categories of social class and social acceptance given on page 31.

The data will be subsequently analyzed according to:

1. Social class and social acceptance as related to general acceptance (Appendix B, Questions 1 through 7). This will be done in view of Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse.
2. Social class and social acceptance as related to clothing and appearance (Appendix B, Questions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 25, and Question 5 on Role Behavior Study<sup>1</sup>). This will be done in view of Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse.
3. Social class and social acceptance as related to clothing behavior as viewed through situational stories (Appendix B, Questions 30, 31, and 32) in light of Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse.

The remaining questions will be analyzed as part of the larger study<sup>2</sup> according to:

1. Social class and social acceptance as related to self-satisfactions (Appendix B, Questions 14, 22, 23, and 24).
2. Social class and social acceptance as related to clothing confidence (Appendix B, Questions 16, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, and 29).

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<sup>1</sup>Wass, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Eicher, op. cit.

### CHAPTER III

#### SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE AS RELATED TO GENERAL ACCEPTANCE

Findings were presented descriptively to show similarities and differences among the social class and social acceptance categories. Types of responses were the basis for emphases. Responses were viewed in reference to Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse. Appearance makes reference to gestures, grooming, clothing, and the like.<sup>1</sup> Some of the appearance responses referred to "looks," "clothes," "neatness," "cleanliness," "hair," "figure," and "make-up." Discourse is communicated by verbal symbolism.<sup>2</sup> Some of the discourse responses were made in reference to: the way a girl "acts and talks," and personality characteristics such as "friendliness and sense of humor."

This chapter is concerned with the relationship of general acceptance to the variables of social class and social acceptance. The first section of the interview focused on question of general acceptance, omitting references to clothing and appearance to determine whether

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<sup>1</sup>Stone, "Appearance and the Self," p. 90.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

clothing and appearance would be spontaneously mentioned. This was an advantage of the interview schedule because it allowed free responses and the persons being interviewed were free to give as long an answer as they desired. Therefore, in the tables presented, the totals are often larger than the sample number of 106 as multiple responses were given by many of the individuals.

It is important that the reader keep in mind the disproportionate number of girls in each of the categories of social class and social acceptance given on page 31. Thus when percentages are used and references are made to lower social class isolates, 20 per cent refers to only one individual.

#### General Acceptance

This section concerns itself with popularity and acceptance. A situation was presented in which a new girl comes to the East Lansing High School.

When the girls were asked to give the best way for a new girl to get in with the popular group, there were more than twice as many responses for discourse as for appearance (Appendix B, Question 1). In all of the categories discourse was referred to more frequently than both appearance and discourse. Only one person from lower social class referred to appearance as is illustrated on the following page:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Response	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	0	41	33	3	77
Isolates	0	7	5	0	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	1	7	2	2	12
Isolates	0	5	0	0	5
Totals	1	60	40	5	106

According to Table 3 the main appearance responses given were "looks" and "clothes." Only a small difference was noted among the upper social class group members, upper social class isolates, and lower social class group members in the percentage of responses from each category that referred to "looks" and "clothes." Lower social class isolates made no reference to appearance; only discourse responses were made. This might indicate that they have a low clothing awareness. The percentage of responses to "clothes" was higher than "looks" in the three categories that responded to appearance.

Some of the girls phrased the emphasis on "looks" and "clothes" in the following ways: "It would be very helpful to her if she is attractive as it is easier to be accepted."

Table 3.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance in the factors necessary to be accepted by the popular girls.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse										
	Looks	Clothes	Neatness	First Impression	Hair	Other	No Responses	Totals	Pleasing Personality	Be Herself	Friendly	Nice	Actions are Important	Popular with the Boys	Activities	Money--Parent's Address	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	21	22	7	3	2	1	44	100	17	20	32	13	11	10	8	5	1	117
Upper social class isolates	3	4	1	2	0	1	7	18	1	1	6	4	3	1	1	3	0	20
Lower social class group members	1	2	1	1	0	0	9	14	2	0	5	3	2	0	1	2	2	17
Lower social class isolates	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	2	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	8
Totals	25	28	9	6	2	2	65	137	22	21	47	20	16	11	12	10	3	162

"Usually when a new girl comes in, if she is cute, the popular girls will make a bid. If she is cute and responds right, she is in." "Clothes count a lot. Popular groups don't overlook small things. They want you to be perfect. It counts if she is cute, has money, and everything else. Secondly, what they are."

The discourse responses were primarily concerned with the new girl being friendly (Table 3). Responses were made that having a "pleasing personality," "being herself," and "being friendly" were the best ways to get in with the popular group. "Follow the basic rules by being friendly, agreeable, and generally pleasant" was the manner in which discourse was referred to by one of the girls. Eleven of the girls mentioned that being popular with the boys was one way to get in with the popular group. Ten of the girls stated that having money and where you lived influenced getting into the popular group. One girl expressed it in this way, "It seems in the popular crowd you don't need such a terrific personality, just money."

The association of appearance and discourse responses to the question which asked the characteristics on which a new girl would be judged in the East Lansing High School (Appendix B, Question 2) is shown on the following page.

These responses focused on both appearance and discourse. Both isolates and group members in the lower social class made all references to discourse only or both discourse and

appearance. Seven girls from the upper social class, six group members and one isolate, referred to appearance only.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories			Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	
Upper Social Class				
Group Members	6	9	62	77
Isolates	1	3	8	12
Lower Social Class				
Group Members	0	1	11	12
Isolates	0	1	4	5
Totals	7	14	85	106

The appearance responses most frequently referred to were again "looks" and "clothes" when the girls were asked how a new girl in East Lansing High School would be judged. The upper social class emphasized "looks" and the lower social class put the focus on "clothes" (Table 4). The lower social class isolates, in contrast to the upper social class isolates, had more than twice as many responses referring to clothes. In their responses about how a new girl would be judged, the upper social class group members and lower social class isolates made more responses for appearance than discourse. This emphasis placed on appearance may signify the importance of first impressions in the teen-age culture. Nearly one-fifth of the appearance responses indicated

Table 4.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance in the characteristics used in judging a new girl.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse											
	Looks	Clothes	Neatness	Cleanliness	Hair	First Impress- ion Counts	Figure	Make-Up	No Responses	Totals	Personality	Way She Acts	Way She Talks	Grades	Activities	Popular with the Boys	Money--Parent's Address	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	46	41	20	6	15	6	7	5	9	155	55	35	11	3	9	6	6	6	131
Upper social class isolates	6	4	3	2	1	1	0	1	3	21	6	7	2	4	1	0	2	1	23
Lower social class group members	4	8	3	3	2	0	0	0	1	21	6	9	3	3	0	0	1	0	22
Lower social class isolates	2	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	9	1	4	2	0	0	0	1	0	8
Totals	58	57	27	11	19	7	7	6	14	206	68	55	18	10	10	6	10	7	184



the importance of neatness and cleanliness. Hair was mentioned nineteen times as a factor in judging a new girl. The emphasis placed on hair was also revealed in themes which were written as an aid in preparing the interview schedule.

Nearly 70 per cent of the discourse responses referred to the fact that personality and the way she acted would be important factors in judging a new girl (Table 4). The percentage of responses which stressed the manner in which a new girl acts was higher in the lower social class than the upper social class.

Appearance and discourse comments, referring to how a new girl would be judged, included the following statements: "When a new person arrives at school, they are either accepted or rejected immediately. They are accepted or rejected because of their manner of dress, general looks, and the way they conduct themselves." "Her clothing, hair, make-up, and general appearance would be the first areas to be judged. After this, her personality would be considered."

None of the girls used appearance only as a characteristic in choosing a friend (Appendix B, Question 3). Responses to discourse only were made by 58 per cent of the total number of girls, yet one girl (20 per cent) of the lower social class isolates responded to both appearance and discourse. Four of the lower social class isolates mentioned discourse only. This is similar to their lack of appearance responses to question 1 (which asked how a new girl could get in with

the popular girls). This again suggests that lower social class isolates may have a low clothing awareness. The association of appearance only, discourse only, and both appearance and discourse responses are illustrated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories			Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	
Upper Social Class				
Group Members	0	46	31	77
Isolates	0	6	6	12
Lower Social Class				
Group Members	0	5	7	12
Isolates	0	4	1	5
Totals	0	61	45	106

Only one-fourth of the responses were appearance responses when the girls were asked what characteristics they used in choosing a friend. The appearance responses "looks," "clothes," and "neatness" were categories most frequently referred to by upper social class members and isolates (Table 5). Cleanliness was the category most frequently referred to by lower social class group members. Lower social class isolates made only two responses to appearance. It is interesting to note that there were a larger number of appearance responses to how a new girl would be judged than when they themselves chose a friend. This may go along with the findings

Table 5.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance in the characteristics used in choosing a friend.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse								
	Looks	Clothes	Neatness	Cleanliness	Hair	First Impress- sion Counts	No Responses	Totals	Personality	Way She Acts	Way She Talks	Grades	Same Interests	Way She Thinks	Money-Parent's Address	Totals
Upper social class group members	17	9	11	3	1	3	46	90	47	40	1	3	30	16	3	140
Upper social class isolates	3	2	1	0	0	0	7	13	6	6	2	0	4	2	1	21
Lower social class group members	2	2	4	5	1	0	5	19	7	6	1	2	1	0	0	17
Lower social class isolates	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	6	1	3	2	0	1	0	0	7
Totals	22	14	16	9	2	3	62	128	61	55	6	5	36	18	4	185

of Hoult who, in his study of college men, found that respondents said clothing was more significant for others than for themselves.<sup>1</sup> One might question whether the girls in the investigation reported here, felt this way or whether they hesitated to admit how they feel about clothing and appearance.

It is evident in Table 5 that discourse categories receiving the highest number of responses were "personality" and the "way she acts." The following are typical of the discourse comments made. "Common interests, intelligence about like mine, coming from surroundings much like mine, and similar values and opinions are important to me." "I am concerned with personality, appearance, and her reputation." One girl gave the association between appearance and discourse when she said, "I think there is a definite correlation between the way people dress and the way they actually are. That is to say people that dress in a manner acceptable to me often have personalities that I find attractive."

Discourse responses suggested that these ninth grade girls used the same discourse characteristics in judging a new girl as choosing a friend. Having the same interests, discourse response, did not show up regarding a new girl but did for choosing a friend.

When the girls were questioned about the difficulty of making friends at East Lansing High School, responses were

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<sup>1</sup>Hoult, op. cit., p.274.

about evenly divided between "yes" and "no" (Appendix B, Question 4). This even division is found in all of the social class and social acceptance classification, as is shown in the following tabulation:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories*		
	No	Yes	Totals
Upper Social Class			
Group Members	42	35	77
Isolates	5	7	12
Lower Social Class			
Group Members	6	6	12
Isolates	2	3	5
Totals	55	51	106

\*One girl said "sometimes," which is equivalent of "yes."

Two-thirds of the responses gave "snobbishness" and "cliques" as the reasons for the difficulty of making friends at East Lansing High School (Table 6). No reference was made to cliques by girls in the lower social class. The girls seemed to agree that getting in with the popular group was difficult. "If one's goal is to break into the popular group, it can be difficult to make friends. However, if one merely wants friends, this can be achieved with a relative amount of ease." "East Lansing has an air of being 'la de da'. You'll be accepted if you do what the group does. If you like someone who is not accepted, you're shot. Everyone is careful

Table 6.--Association of social class and social acceptance to factors which make it difficult to make friends at East Lansing High School.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories							Totals
	Clique	Mobility	Snobbish	Emphasis on Material Goods	First Impres- sions Count	Shy	Other	
Upper Social Class Group Members	18	4	13	3	1	4	2	45
Upper Social Class Isolates	1	0	5	0	1	0	0	7
Lower Social Class Group Members	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	6
Lower Social Class Isolates	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	4
Totals	19	5	21	4	2	7	4	62

of their own position and doesn't want to jeopardize it."

"It is harder than at some schools. Kids seem to be higher class. They are more particular about how their friends look and act."

Two appearance only responses were given in answer to the question which asked what things were important to do in order to be popular with their group (Appendix B, Question 5). Seventy-five responses referred to discourse only. A similiarity was found in the number of discourse only responses in all of the categories of social class and social acceptance, as is shown by the following figures:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Appearance and Discourse	No Group	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	1	57	17	2	77
Isolates	1	6	4	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	8	2	2	12
Isolates	0	4	1	0	5
Totals	2	75	24	5	106

In answer to the question "With the group you go around with, what are some things which are important to do in order to be popular?" appearance responses accounted for only 17 per cent of the total number of responses. Two girls from upper

social class referred to appearance only. Table 7 indicates that having nice clothes and being neat were the items which received the largest number of appearance responses. Four of the lower social class isolates commented on discourse only. This is in accord with their responses to questions 1 and 3.

It can be seen from Table 7 that two of the discourse responses received seventy out of 146 responses. They were (1) proper action and attitude to others and (2) taking part in activities that the group was interested in, such as going to the movies, skating, and dancing. A good personality and being friendly were also important considerations in being popular with the group. Comments frequently emphasized the importance of "acting yourself and not being fakey."

Responses to the question asking for the characteristics of the most popular girl in the ninth grade (Appendix B, Question 6) were primarily both appearance and discourse responses. Seventy-six responses referred to both appearance and discourse. None of the girls referred to appearance only and nineteen referred to just discourse, as is shown in the tabulation on the following page.

Of all the appearance and discourse characteristics, the most frequent response was "dressed well" (Table 8). To prevent an introduction of a clothing or appearance bias, clothing and appearance had not been mentioned in any of the preceding questions up to this time. This response to



Table 7.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to factors which are important to be popular with group.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance					Discourse									
	Nice Clothes	Neat	Wearing Clothes Correctly	Interested in Appearance	No Responses	Totals	Good Personality	Friendly	Sense of Humor	Interested in School	Nice Proper Action to Others	Activities	Good Grades	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	8	8	3	5	59	83	16	14	9	5	4	27	7	3	111
Upper social class isolates	4	2	1	0	8	15	0	3	1	2	1	3	1	2	17
Lower social class group members	0	2	0	0	10	12	3	2	0	1	1	3	0	1	15
Lower social class isolates	1	0	0	0	4	5	2	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	9
Totals	13	12	4	5	81	115	21	21	10	9	6	36	8	6	152

Table 8.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to characteristics of the most popular girl in the ninth grade.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse											
	Cute	Dressed Well	Neatness	Cleanliness	Hair	Figure	Make-Up	No Responses	Totals	Good Personality	Friendly	Nice to Everyone	Interested in School	Not Interested in School	Popular with the Boys	Well-Liked	Money--Parent's Address	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	33	42	17	10	4	4	1	22	133	27	30	28	22	2	20	8	5	9	151
Upper social class isolates	5	8	2	2	0	1	0	3	21	3	4	4	3	1	3	2	1	0	21
Lower social class group members	3	6	2	2	1	1	0	2	17	7	4	7	4	0	0	0	1	1	24
Lower social class isolates	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	6	1	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	9
Totals	42	57	21	14	5	7	1	30	177	38	41	40	30	4	24	10	7	11	205

"dressed well" seems significant since the girls spontaneously made more references to "dressed well" than any other characteristic. In terms of the greatest number of responses received, "best dressed" ranked first, followed by "cute" which was also an appearance factor. This seems to suggest that clothing and appearance may be definitely related to popularity and acceptance in the value system of the adolescent girls in the sample. This supports Coleman's findings that the leading crowd is based on good looks, nice clothes, and a well-dressed appearance.<sup>1</sup> In order of importance, the next appearance characteristics mentioned were neatness and cleanliness. No differences were noted among the groups in the percentage of the total number of responses devoted to each item.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No One Most Popular	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	0	13	55	9	77
Isolates	0	3	9	0	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	1	10	1	12
Isolates	0	2	2	1	5
Totals	0	19	76	11	106

<sup>1</sup>Coleman, op. cit., p. 37.

More discourse characteristics than appearance responses were selected, but none of the items received as many responses as being "well-dressed" and "cute" (Table 8). The discourse characteristics of the most popular girl in the ninth grade were "being friendly," "having a good personality," and "being nice to everyone." Interest in school and popularity with the boys were other discourse characteristics of the most popular girl.

A variety of contrasting comments were made in describing the popular girls. "People who are popular are popular with entire class, not only the 10 per cent that have money, clothes, and looks." "Popular girls always go around as a clique. They don't let anyone else in. They are friendly to everyone in their group, not to others." The popular girl has "high standards as far as dress and looks. She has leadership qualities. She is attractive, a smart dresser and full of fun." "She dresses very well and her parents are financially well-off."

When naming the most popular girl in the ninth grade (Appendix B, Question 7), 77 per cent of the girls gave at least one name. Thirty-two per cent gave more than one name. Three out of 106 girls refused to give any names, even though they had stated there were popular girls. Twelve out of 106 girls said there was no one most popular and they did not give any names. All twelve of these girls were group members from the upper social class, as is shown in the illustration on the following page:

Table 9.--Association of social class and social acceptance to naming the most popular girl in the ninth grade.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories of Girls Named as Popular						
	Named One Girl	Named Two Girls	Named More Than Two Girls	Refused to Give Name	No One Special Popular	I Don't Know	Too Many to Name One Totals
Upper Social Class							
Group Members	39	8	13	1	12	3	77
Isolates	3	1	6	1	0	1	12
Lower Social Class							
Group Members	5	3	3	0	0	1	12
Isolates	1	2	0	1	0	1	5
Totals	48	14	22	3	12	6	106

When the girls named more than two girls, the names of the first two girls were coded and tabulated. Twenty-five different girls were named as being the most popular (Table 10). One girl was named by twenty-three girls as being the most popular. Five of the twenty-five girls were named eleven or more times. Seventeen of the twenty-five girls mentioned were named four or less times. Twenty of the girls named were from the upper social class, nineteen were group members and one was an isolate. The isolate was new to the East Lansing High School. This may account for her being an isolate at the time the opinionnaire (which included the sociometric question) was given. Five of the girls named as being most popular had a ranking of middle social class group members.

Fourteen of the girls named as being most popular were from the same clique. This clique had a membership of twenty-six. Four of the five girls who were named eleven or more times were in this clique of twenty-six. Three of the five most popular girls were not referred to by the lower social class isolates. Four of the girls in the lower social class isolates referred to were not chosen by anyone else. This may indicate that the lower social class isolates have a different view about who is popular. It seems significant that twenty out of twenty-five girls named as popular were from the upper social class and none of the girls from the lower social class were named.

Table 10.--Association of social class and social acceptance to naming the most popular girl in the ninth grade.

Identifying Number of Girl Named As Popular	Upper Social Class		Lower Social Class		Totals
	Group Members	Isolates	Group Members	Isolates	
122	19	3	0	1	23
043	12	2	1	0	15
124	9	1	3	1	14
034	8	1	2	0	11
039	8	1	2	0	11
041	2	3	2	1	8
093	6	0	0	0	6
126	4	1	1	0	6
036	3	0	1	0	4
042	2	1	0	0	3
091	2	0	1	0	3
019	2	0	0	0	2
038	1	1	0	0	2
090	1	0	1	0	2
113	1	0	1	0	2
114	0	2	0	0	2
008	1	0	0	0	1
037	0	0	1	0	1
074	0	0	0	1	1
075	0	0	0	1	1
077	0	0	0	1	1
089	0	0	1	0	1
116	0	1	0	0	1
119	1	0	0	0	1
138	0	0	0	1	1
Totals	82	17	17	7	123

Summary

When questions were asked regarding popularity and general acceptance without reference to clothing or appearance, both appearance and discourse responses were made. On the whole there were more discourse responses than appearance responses. The most frequent appearance responses were "looks" and "clothes" while discourse responses referred to "being friendly" and having a "good personality."

Differences in responses to social class or to social acceptance were not always evident. However, lower social class isolates did not always follow the same patterns as the other categories. For example, they placed a greater importance on clothing in judging others but yet made no appearance responses to the question which asked the best way to get in with the popular group. Lower social class isolates also tended to make fewer references than the other categories to appearance in choosing a friend and to factors which are important in being popular with the group.

"Dressed well" was the characteristic that best described the most popular girl. There seemed to be consensus on naming the most popular girl. The girls named as popular were predominately upper social class group members. A difference can be noted in that the lower social class isolates were not in general agreement with choices made by the others.

A relationship between clothing, class, and acceptance seems apparent. The girls named as popular were upper social



class members. The one characteristic that best described the popular girls was "dressed well." These comments seemed to characterize the attitude of the ninth grade girls because they resulted from a free response technique. Both appearance and discourse responses were made regarding acceptance and popularity.

The next chapter will be concerned with an analysis of the relation of social class and social acceptance to the influence of clothing and appearance.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE AS RELATED TO CLOTHING AND APPEARANCE

This chapter pertains to an analysis of questions referring to clothing and appearance with the same independent variables of social class and social acceptance. The analysis is concerned with similarities and differences between the class and acceptance categories. Responses are again viewed in light of Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse. Questions in this section emphasized appearance and will be subsequently referred to as "appearance questions."

Questions analyzed in Chapter III were organized to build up to naming the most popular girl and then questions on clothing and appearance were related to popularity and acceptance. The purpose of the questions on clothing and appearance were to determine how members of the four categories of social class and social acceptance viewed clothing and appearance.

#### Clothing and Appearance

When asked if the clothing of the popular girls differed from the clothing of the other girls, three-fifths of the 106 girls said that it did (Appendix B, Question 8).

There was almost equal agreement among the groups in this regard except that three-fourths of the lower social class group members did not see a difference, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories		
	Yes	No	Totals
Upper Social Class			
Group Members	28	49	77
Isolates	4	8	12
Lower Social Class			
Group Members	9	3	12
Isolates	1	4	5
Totals	42	64	106

When an examination was made of the kinds of comments made, they were mainly appearance responses. Even though this was an "appearance question," the girls were free to mention other factors since the instrument gave the opportunity of a free response. In spite of the fact that it was an "appearance question," it is interesting to note that five girls from the upper social class made reference to discourse as is shown on the following page.

The clothing of the popular girls, in contrast to the other girls in the ninth grade, was most frequently described as more clothing and more fashionable clothing with references to neatness and care of clothing.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	Answered No	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	31	4	14	28	77
Isolates	5	1	2	4	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	0	3	9	12
Isolates	4	0	0	1	5
Totals	40	5	19	42	106

Of the twenty-three discourse responses, twenty-one referred to money. There were also thirteen appearance responses to more expensive clothing which is associated with financial background (Table 11).

Descriptions of the differences between the clothing of the popular girls and the clothing of the other girls in the ninth grade included the following comments: "The most popular group of girls is very much tuned in to currently popular fashions." "The popular girls' clothes are stylish, they fit them well. They have money to spend on accessories like shoes to match." "The more popular girls take more pride in their clothes."

Only sixty-four girls said that the clothing of the popular girls differed from the other girls, but seventy-five indicated that clothing influenced a girl's popularity

Table 11.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to differences in clothing of popular girls to clothing of other girls in the ninth grade.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance										Discourse			
	More Clothing	More Expensive Clothing	Better Quality Clothing	More Fashionable Clothing	More Matching Co-ordinates	Neatness and Care of Clothing	Hair	Appropriate for Individual and Occasion	No Responses	Totals	Money	Good Taste	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	23	10	11	18	3	16	1	6	5	93	16	1	34	51
Upper social class isolates	2	2	2	1	2	6	0	0	2	17	2	1	6	9
Lower social class group members	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	6	3	0	3	6
Lower social class isolates	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	4	4
Totals	27	13	15	21	6	22	2	6	10	122	21	2	47	70

(Appendix B, Question 9). The percentage distribution for stating the influence of clothing on popularity was about equal for all the categories of social class and social acceptance, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	No	Yes	I Don't Know		
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	22	55	0		77
Isolates	3	9	0		12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	3	8	1		12
Isolates	2	3	0		5
Totals	30	75	1		106

Here again, the majority of responses made were appearance only responses concerning why clothing influences a girl's popularity. Although this was an "appearance question," it is interesting to note that five girls responded to discourse only as is illustrated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	Answered No Influence	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	39	3	13	22	77
Isolates	6	0	3	3	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	7	1	1	3	12
Isolates	1	1	1	2	5
Totals	53	5	18	30	106

According to data in Table 12 more than one-half of the 110 appearance responses indicates it is important to dress right and that it is easier to be popular if well dressed.

Twenty-eight discourse responses were again made to this "appearance question" (Table 12). Thirteen responses indicated that personality was more important than clothing in influencing a girl's popularity. Another factor mentioned as influencing popularity was money.

The following comments reflect the attitudes of the girls who indicated that clothing had an influence on a girl's popularity at East Lansing High School. "It's just one of the main interests of our school. If you do not dress well, you're just not with it." "If you look well dressed and cute, it is easier to be popular." "The 'kids' that are poor are not dressed so nice. The 'kids' that have more money dress nice and they are the popular ones." "I don't like it but if you don't have latest style, 'popular kids' don't think it is right." Both appearance and discourse references were indicated by this young lady as she said, "Clothes give a good first appearance but how you act makes a difference too. It is true the first thing that catches someone is the way you look."

Three-fourths of the responses referred to appearance only when giving characteristics of the best dressed girl in school. It is noteworthy that discourse comments keep occurring to "appearance questions" and that there were

Table 12.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to why clothing influences a girl's popularity at East Lansing High School.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance										Discourse						
	Neatness	First Impressions	Count	Amount of Clothing	Easier to be Popular if Well Dressed	Latest Styles	Cute (looks)	Neatness and Cleanliness	Important to Dress Right	Other	No Responses	Totals	Personality	Depends Upon Group	Money	Prestige	No Responses
Upper social class group members	9	15	5	21	4	2	3	25	2	4	90	11	1	7	3	43	65
Upper social class isolates	0	0	1	3	1	1	0	3	0	1	10	1	0	1	0	8	10
Lower social class group members	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	3	0	2	11	0	0	2	0	8	10
Lower social class isolates	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	7	1	0	1	0	2	4
Totals	10	15	7	32	5	3	4	32	2	8	118	13	1	11	3	61	89



four responses to discourse only, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Response	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	56	3	17	1	77
Isolates	7	1	3	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	10	0	2	0	12
Isolates	3	0	2	0	5
Totals	76	4	24	2	106

Table 12 indicates the appearance responses which describe the characteristics that are necessary to be the best dressed girl in school (Appendix B, Question 12). In order of importance, the characteristics were clean and neat clothes, correct combination of clothes and accessories, many clothes, clothes suited to the individual, and clothes of the latest fashion. Almost one-fourth of the 230 appearance responses referred to the best dressed girl as being neat and clean. The upper social class group members made more appearance responses than the other categories of social class and social acceptance. This may indicate they are more aware or conscious of appearance.

Although this was an "appearance question," there were thirty-six responses to discourse (Table 13). More than

Table 13.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to the characteristics that are necessary to be the best dressed girl in school.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance										Discourse				
	Many Clothes	Expensive Clothes	Clean and Neat Clothes	Clothes of Latest Fashion	Appropriate Clothes for Occasion	Clothes Suited to Individual	Combination of Clothes and Accessories	Hair, Make-Up	No Responses	Totals	Good Taste	Money	Personality	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	28	8	45	26	9	23	30	5	3	177	10	12	3	57	82
Upper social class isolates	5	0	3	2	4	4	7	0	1	26	3	2	1	8	14
Lower social class group members	3	0	6	1	1	2	6	3	0	22	1	1	1	10	13
Lower social class isolates	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	1	0	9	0	2	0	3	5
Totals	38	8	55	30	14	31	45	9	4	234	14	17	5	78	114

one-half of the discourse references emphasized the fact that money was necessary to be the best dressed girl in school.

The characteristics of the best dressed girl were described in this manner. "It is essential to have a very extensive wardrobe. However, this is not enough, it is important to be clean and neat as well." The best dressed girl has both the "money and good taste to buy the right clothes." To be best dressed "it is necessary to have accessories to match the outfits."

The girls were asked to name the girl they thought was the best dressed girl in the ninth grade (Appendix B, Question 13). Eighty-four per cent of the girls named one or more girls as best dressed. Three upper social class girls refused to give names and six girls said there was no one best dressed girl. Five of the six girls who said there was no one best dressed girl were upper social class group members, as is shown on the following page (Table 14).

Of the twenty-seven girls mentioned as best dressed (Table 15), sixteen of the girls were also mentioned as being popular. Three of the twenty-seven girls named as best dressed were mentioned eleven or more times. Two of the three girls named as best dressed were also named as being popular at least eleven times. The girl who was mentioned thirty-seven times as being best dressed was also referred to fourteen times as being one of the most popular girls in the ninth grade. The two girls who were mentioned as best dressed the greatest number of times were in the same clique.

Table 14.--Association of social class and social acceptance to naming the best dressed girl in the ninth grade.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories		Categories of Girls Named as Best Dressed						
		Named One Girl	Named Two Girls	Named More Than Two Girls	Refused to Give Name	No One Best Dressed	I Don't Know	Too Many to Name One
Upper Social Class								
Group Members	49	10	5	3	5	4	1	77
Isolates	2	3	5	0	0	2	0	12
Lower Social Class								
Group Members	9	0	1	0	1	1	0	12
Isolates	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	5
Totals	60	15	14	3	6	7	1	106

Table 15.--Association of social class and social acceptance to naming the best dressed girl in the ninth grade.

Identifying Number of Girl Named as Best Dressed	Upper Social Class		Lower Social Class		Totals
	Group Members	Isolates	Group Members	Isolates	
124	29	1	4	3	37
043	14	2	0	0	16
037	9	1	1	0	11
119	4	1	1	0	6
039	3	1	1	0	5
038	2	0	1	1	4
042	2	2	0	0	4
122	0	3	0	1	4
034	2	0	1	0	3
035	2	0	0	1	3
114	0	2	0	1	3
116	2	1	0	0	3
120	3	0	0	0	3
041	2	0	0	0	2
086	1	1	0	0	2
091	1	0	0	1	2
019	1	0	0	0	1
026	0	0	1	0	1
081	0	0	1	0	1
103	0	0	0	1	1
118	1	0	0	0	1
121	1	0	0	0	1
123	0	1	0	0	1
126	0	1	0	0	1
136	0	1	0	0	1
138	0	0	0	1	1
150	1	0	0	0	1
Totals	80	18	11	10	119

Of the twenty-six girls in this clique, fifteen were referred to as being best dressed.<sup>1</sup>

Twenty of the twenty-seven best dressed girls were upper social class group members. Five of the girls were middle social class group members. The girl mentioned thirty-seven times was a middle social class group member and a member of the clique having fifteen out of twenty-six girls mentioned as best dressed. Only one of the girls mentioned was a lower social class group member. She was referred to as best dressed by a lower social class isolate.

There appears to be a relationship between popularity, being best dressed, and social class membership. All of the girls except two that were named as being popular or best dressed were upper or middle social class group members. The exceptions were an upper social class isolate who had recently moved into East Lansing and one lower social class group member. There appeared to be consensus in the naming of the popular and best dressed girls. The girls named as popular were often named as best dressed.

The above findings reinforce other findings reviewed in the literature. Hurlock gives physical attractiveness, good grooming, and socio-economic status as some of the factors which contribute to popularity during adolescence.<sup>2</sup> Bonney found a relationship between social acceptability and socio-economic status in the fifth grade. Economic

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<sup>1</sup>This was the same clique that had fourteen girls named as popular.

<sup>2</sup>Hurlock, Adolescent Psychology, p. 202.

factors appeared to be important as reflected in access to clothes, spending money, and presentable home surroundings.<sup>1</sup> Cannon found a significant relationship between personal appearance and social acceptance. Popular girls excel or conform closely to norms for personal appearance.<sup>2</sup> A questionnaire used by Masumoto disclosed a tendency for students to select the students they considered well dressed as also being popular.<sup>3</sup> Moore also found that the girls who were leaders in clothing behavior were leaders in popularity too.<sup>4</sup>

Nearly 75 per cent of the girls said there were girls in the ninth grade who did not dress right (Appendix B, Question 18). The phrase "dress right" is used throughout the analysis as this was the term selected for the interview as being understandable and meaningful for the adolescent girls. Approximately the same proportion of each social class and social acceptance category were of the same opinion, as is illustrated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories		
	No	Yes	Totals
Upper Social Class			
Group Members	18	59	77
Isolates	3	9	12
Lower Social Class			
Group Members	4	8	12
Isolates	2	3	5
Totals	27	79	106

<sup>1</sup>Bonney, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Cannon, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Masumoto, op. cit., p.131.

<sup>4</sup>Moore, op. cit., p. 73.

Three girls who were group members (two from the upper and one from the lower social class), referred only to discourse. When explaining why some of the girls did not dress right, more than two-thirds of the responses were appearance only, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories			Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	
Upper Social Class				
Group Members	37	2	20	59
Isolates	7	0	2	9
Lower Social Class				
Group Members	6	1	1	8
Isolates	3	0	0	3
Totals	53	3	23	79

More references to both appearance and discourse were made by upper social class group members than the other categories of social class and social acceptance. Clothes were not right due to financial reasons according to twenty of the twenty-seven discourse responses. The upper social class group members seemed aware not only that clothes were not right, but also the reasons why these girls were unable to conform to the norm in dress and appearance (Table 16).

Clothing was not considered right because wrong combinations of clothing worn, clothing was not clean or cared



Table 16.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to why their clothes are not right.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance								Discourse				Totals
	Combinations	Appropriateness for Individual	Appropriateness for Occasion	Fashionable	Fit	Cleanliness and Care	Neatness	No Responses	Totals	Financial Implications	Don't Care	No Responses	
Upper social class group members	31	11	11	19	14	22	21	2	131	17	5	37	59
Upper social class isolates	3	1	4	4	2	5	5	0	24	1	2	6	9
Lower social class group members	3	3	1	0	2	3	2	1	15	2	0	6	8
Lower social class isolates	2	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	6	0	0	3	3
Totals	39	15	16	24	19	32	28	3	176	20	7	52	79

for in the proper manner, and clothing was not fashionable (Table 14). Again upper social class girls, members and isolates, gave more appearance responses than lower social class members and isolates concerning why the clothing was not right. This again indicates a higher awareness and a keener perception of the appearance of others.

One-half of the girls made reference to both appearance and discourse characteristics when giving a description (other than clothing) of the girls who do not dress right, as is illustrated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Comments	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	11	14	28	24	77
Isolates	1	5	3	3	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	3	1	3	5	12
Isolates	0	2	1	2	5
Totals	15	23	35	33	106

The appearance characteristics referred to in Table 17 were unkempt appearance, messy hair, figure problems, and too much make-up.

More than twice as many discourse responses as appearance responses were made in giving a description of these

Table 17.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to a description of girls who do not dress right.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance								Discourse									
	Too Much Make-Up	Messy Hair	Don't Care About Appearance	Not Cute	Figure Problems	Unkempt	Other	No Responses	Totals	Poor Grades and School Attitude	Nice	Stick Together	Poor Reputation	Come From Poor Families	Friendly	Shy	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	3	9	18	5	7	11	1	20	74	10	10	6	8	26	0	5	15	80
Upper social class isolates	3	3	2	0	0	1	0	5	14	3	2	0	3	4	0	1	1	14
Lower social class group members	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	8	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	4	9
Lower social class isolates	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	4	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	4
Totals	6	13	23	6	7	14	3	28	100	14	15	7	11	33	1	6	20	107

girls other than their clothing. Thirty-seven per cent referred to the fact that these girls came from poor families. Table 15 gives these discourse responses. Comments like this are typical of discourse responses made. "I don't know personal background but they usually don't have money to go out and buy lots of clothes. They are not the popular girls."

Forty-eight of the seventy-nine girls who said there were some girls who did not dress right named one or more girls. Twenty-four of the upper social class group members said they did not know names or refused to give names of the girls who did not dress right, as is shown in the illustration on the following page.

There were twenty-one girls named as not dressing right (Table 19). Of these twenty-one girls only two were placed in the contradictory position of being mentioned as best dressed and popular. Two other girls named as not dressed right were mentioned as best dressed. They were named by one and two girls, respectively. Two of the girls who were named as not dressing right were mentioned eleven times. Fifteen of the girls were mentioned four or less times.

Of the girls mentioned as not dressing right, eight were upper social class group members, two middle social class group members, eight lower social class group members, and three were lower social class isolates. Both of the girls who were mentioned eleven times were from lower social class, one was a group member and the other an isolate. A

Table 18.--Association of social class and social acceptance to naming the girls who  
do not dress right.

Response Categories of Girls Named As Not Dressing Right							
Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Named One Girl	Named Two Girls	Named More Than Two Girls	Refused to Give Name	Gave Names Other School	Thought Everyone Dressed Right	I Don't Know Names Totals
Upper Social Class							
Group Members	13	10	11	11	1	18	13
Isolates	0	5	2	0	0	3	2
							77
							12
Lower Social Class							
Group Members	1	2	2	2	0	4	1
Isolates	1	0	1	0	0	2	1
							12
							5
Totals	15	17	16	13	1	27	17
							106

Table 19.--Association of social class and social acceptance to naming girls who do not dress right.

Identifying Number of Girl Named as Not Dressing Right	Upper Social Class		Lower Social Class		Totals
	Group Members	Isolates	Group Members	Isolates	
004	9	1	1	0	11
102	8	1	1	1	11
107	6	2	1	1	10
108	5	0	2	1	8
105	5	1	0	0	6
003	4	1	0	0	5
014	3	1	0	0	4
146	2	2	0	0	4
153	1	2	0	0	3
035	1	1	0	0	2
110	1	1	0	0	2
154	1	1	0	0	2
019	1	0	0	0	1
047	1	0	0	0	1
050	1	0	0	0	1
101	1	0	0	0	1
118	1	0	0	0	1
125	1	0	0	0	1
143	1	0	0	0	1
152	0	0	1	0	1
Totals	53	14	7	3	77

higher proportion of girls named as not dressing right were from lower social class than from the other social classes. For example, eleven out of seventeen were named from lower social class, two out of forty-seven from middle social class, and eight out of ninety from the upper social class.<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of this population of girls in the ninth grade in East Lansing, it appears that one could say the chances for being considered popular and best dressed are greater if one is from the upper or middle social class. Girls from the lower social class are more apt to be referred to as not dressing right. Of the girls mentioned as not dressing right, lower social class girls were named more times than upper social class girls. The ten upper and middle social class girls were named an average of 1.6 times whereas the eleven lower social class girls were mentioned an average of 5.4 times as not dressing right.

In summary Tables 20 and 21, which refer to girls which are popular, best dressed, and those who do not dress right, it appears that on the whole a different group of girls is mentioned as not dressing right as opposed to those judged popular and best dressed. Table 20 shows the social class background of each group of girls named. Girls named as popular and best dressed were predominantly from upper and middle social class, whereas the girls named as not dressing right were from lower social class.

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<sup>1</sup>These numbers are based on all the girls in the ninth grade.

Table 20.--Social class ranking of girls named as popular, best dressed, and not dressed right.

Social Class Ranking	Response Categories			Totals
	Popular	Best Dressed	Not Dressed Right	
High	20	21	8	49
Middle	5	5	2	12
Low	0	1	11	12
Totals	25	27	21	73

It is interesting to see the evaluation of the appearance of the girls as rated by three interviewers according to the rating sheet of the interview schedule. They were rated above average, average, and below average on all aspects of appearance. An average rating meant that in the eyes of the interviewer, all aspects of appearance were neat and acceptable. An above average rating indicated the girl was outstanding in all aspects of appearance. A below average rating meant that one or more aspects of appearance were not acceptable.

A marked distinction is observable between the social class and social acceptance categories in regard to appearance of the girls interviewed. More than one-half of the girls were rated as average in appearance. Percentage-wise more lower social class girls were rated below average than



Table 21.--Summary of girls named as popular, best dressed, and not dressed right.

Identifying		Total Number of Times Mentioned			
Number of Girl	Social Class*	Popular	Best Dressed	Not Dressed Right	Totals
124	M	14	37	0	51
122	U	23	4	0	27
043	U	15	16	0	31
034	U	11	3	0	14
037	U	1	11	0	12
039	U	11	5	0	16
004	L	0	0	11	11
102	L	0	0	11	11
107	L	0	0	10	10
041	M	8	2	0	10
119	U	1	6	1	8
108	M	0	0	8	8
093	U	6	0	0	6
105	L	0	0	6	6
126	U	6	1	0	7
003	L	0	0	5	5
014	L	0	0	4	4
146	M	0	0	4	4
042	U	3	4	0	7
036	M	4	0	0	4
038	U	2	4	1	7
091	U	3	2	0	5
035	U	0	3	2	5
114	U	2	3	0	5
116	U	1	3	0	4
120	U	0	3	0	3
153	U	0	0	3	3
019	U	2	2	1	5
090	U	2	0	0	2
113	U	2	0	0	2
086	U	0	2	0	2
008	U	2	0	0	2
110	L	0	0	2	2
154	L	0	0	2	2
138	M	1	1	0	2

\*U refers to upper social class;  
M refers to middle social class;  
L refers to lower social class.

TABLE 21--Continued

Identifying		Total Number of Times Mentioned			
Number of Girl	Social Class*	Popular	Best Dressed	Not Dressed Right	Totals
074	M	1	0	0	1
075	U	1	0	0	1
077	U	1	0	0	1
089	U	1	0	0	1
047	M	0	0	1	1
050	L	0	0	1	1
101	L	0	0	1	1
125	U	0	0	1	1
143	U	0	0	1	1
152	U	0	0	1	1
026	M	0	1	0	1
081	U	0	1	0	1
103	L	0	1	0	1
118	U	0	1	0	1
121	M	0	1	0	1
123	U	0	1	0	1
136	U	0	1	0	1
150	U	0	1	0	1
Totals		123	119	77	319

upper social class girls. More upper social class isolates (58 per cent) were rated below average than upper social class group members (36 per cent), as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Rating of Appearance of Interviewee				Totals
	Above Average	Average	Below Average	No Rating	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	2	46	28	1	77
Isolates	0	5	7	0	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	3	9	0	12
Isolates	0	1	4	0	5
Totals	2	55	48	1	106

The preceding findings support Neugarten's study in which it was found that both friendship status and reputation parallel social class position to the advantage of the upper socio-economic classes. Lower class children were often given a negative rating.<sup>1</sup>

Clothing and appearance are symbols often used in social differentiation in the teen-age culture. Gordon points out that dress is a major source of social differentiation because of its high visibility.<sup>2</sup> Emphasis placed on clothing and appearance by the adolescent is referred to by Hurlock as a focus of attention in the development of the self-image.<sup>3</sup>

One-half of the girls who said that the girls in the ninth grade who were not dressed right had friends only in their own group. Twenty of the girls said these girls who did not dress right did not have many friends. As one of the girls said, "The girls who do not dress right are usually the girls who do not have very many friends." Another girl indicated, "They associate with one another rather than with any particular group." Tabulations to whether the girls that do not dress right have many friends are shown on the following page

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<sup>1</sup>Neugarten, op. cit., p. 312.

<sup>2</sup>Gordon, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>3</sup>Hurlock, Adolescent Development, p. 3.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	No	Yes	Some	I Don't Know	Everyone Dressed Right	Friends Only in Own Group	
Upper Social Class							
Group Members	15	12	1	3	18	28	77
Isolates	3	2	0	1	3	3	12
Lower Social Class							
Group Members	1	2	0	1	4	4	12
Isolates	1	2	0	0	2	0	5
Totals	20	18	1	5	27	35	106

A comparison of naming girls that were popular, best dressed, and not dressed right (pages 59, 74, and 83) seems to suggest that girls on the whole felt free to name popular and best dressed girls but hesitated to name girls not dressed right. The comments of one girl in reference to naming girls not dressed right may be the reason for the high number of refusals. She said, "It is not my say to indicate if not right. Maybe she is trying to be in style and this is all she can afford." Twenty per cent of the upper social class group members indicated that they did not know the names of the girls that did not dress right. Gronlund and Anderson found that the socially neglected students are more apt to be overlooked rather than disliked.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gronlund and Anderson, op. cit., p. 333.

However, indicating that they did not know names may have been another way of refusing to give names.

When asked if they had friends that did not dress right, group members proportionately said no more than the isolates. There were only 22 per cent who said they had friends that were not dressed right. Eighteen per cent of the group members indicated that they had friends that did not dress right and 29 per cent of the isolates thought their friends did not dress right, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories		
	No	Yes	Totals
Upper Social Class			
Group Members	61	16	77
Isolates	9	3	12
Lower Social Class			
Group Members	10	2	12
Isolates	3	2	5
Totals	83	23	106

Almost all of the responses were appearance only to the reasons for their friends not dressing right, as illustrated on page 93 hereafter. When asked why their friends did not dress right there were a scattering of appearance responses with references to fashion and neatness ranking the highest. There were only three discourse responses to this "appearance question" (Table 22).

Table 22.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to the reasons for their friends not dressing right.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse		
	Combinations	Appropriate for Age and Individual	Fashionable	Fit	Appropriate for Occasion	Cleanliness	Care and Neatness	Financial Implications	Don't Care	No Responses
Upper social class group members	4	0	8	5	5	4	7	33	1	14
Upper social class isolates	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	6	0	3
Lower social class group members	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	4	1	1
Lower social class isolates	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	2
Totals	6	2	11	8	5	5	9	46	2	20
										23

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	Friends Dress Right	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	14	0	2	61	77
Isolates	3	0	0	9	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	1	0	1	10	12
Isolates	2	0	0	3	5
Totals	20	0	3	83	106

#### Feelings About One's Own Clothing

In this section a consideration will be made regarding adolescent girls' attitudes about their own clothing situation.

When the girls were asked to make a comparison of their clothes to the other girls at school, 70 per cent of the girls felt that their clothes were "average" or about the same as the other girls (Appendix B, Question 10). Eighteen of the upper social class girls felt "better dressed" whereas ten did not think they were as well dressed. None of the lower social class girls felt "better dressed." One-ninth of the upper social class as opposed to one-sixth of the lower social class did not feel as "well dressed." This would seem to signify that upper social class girls have a higher

opinion about their clothes than lower social class girls. The comparison of own clothing to other girls in school is tabulated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories			Totals
	Better Dressed	Average	Not as Well Dressed	
Upper Social Class				
Group Members	17	52	8	77
Isolates	1	9	2	12
Lower Social Class				
Group Members	0	11	1	12
Isolates	0	3	2	5
Totals	18	75	13	106

When the 106 girls replied to the question of the other part of study which asked them how well dressed they usually felt for school, 77 per cent said "about average," seventeen said "better dressed," only three said "not as well dressed," and four girls gave no response.<sup>1</sup> These tabulations are shown on the following page.

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<sup>1</sup>Wass, op. cit., p. 78.



Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Better Dressed	About Average	Not as Well Dressed	No Response	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	15	57	2	3	77
Isolates	1	10	0	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	11	1	0	12
Isolates	1	4	0	0	5
Totals	17	82	3	4	106

This is in contrast to preceding tabulation which indicates that thirteen girls said they were not as well dressed as other girls at school. A possible explanation for this discrepancy might be the instrument techniques of open-ended versus closed response questions. The girls may not have been as willing to categorize themselves as "not as well dressed" in the forced response.

When a comparison was made of the clothing of their group to the clothing of other groups at school, there was an increase of "better dressed" and "not as well dressed" responses from the individual comparison to the group comparison. None of the isolates indicated their group was "better dressed." This could be because they did not feel "better dressed" or because they do not feel a part of a

group. The girls who said that their group was "better dressed" were nearly all upper social class group members. Thirty-two per cent of the upper social class group members referred to their group in this manner. One of the girls stated her response in this manner, "I am affiliated with a popular group so I would say that we dress better than most of the groups." The comparison of clothing of own group to other groups is tabulated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Better Dressed	About Average	Not Well Dressed	I Don't Know	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	23	44	10	0	77
Isolates	0	10	1	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	1	10	1	0	12
Isolates	0	4	1	0	5
Totals	24	68	13	1	106

#### Clothing Referents

An adolescent in the development of his self-image refers to the advice and reactions of other people. This section contains an investigation of the people referred to by these adolescent girls as influencing their clothing and appearance patterns.

When the girls were asked whose approval of their clothing meant the most to them, forty-four of the girls wanted one or both of their parents to approve (Appendix B, Question 15). Thirty-three of the girls wanted to have their girl friends approve their clothing. Only 20 per cent of the lower social class isolates wanted their parents' approval. The lower social class isolates would rather have their girl friends approval of their clothing. This may mean that these girls feel that their parents are isolated from the folkways and mores of the teen-age culture. Sixteen per cent of the upper social class members wanted their own approval first, while only one upper social class isolate and one lower social class group member wanted her own approval. This would seem to indicate that upper social class group members have developed a higher degree of self-confidence in their clothing behavior. Five of the upper social class group members would rather have their boy friends approve of their clothing, as is seen tabulated in Table 23.

Although peer group acceptance has usually been considered very important for adolescents, from this group of 106 girls a larger number would rather have their parents' approval than their girl friends. Vener also found that the adolescent's mother was chosen by the greatest percentage of students in response to the question, "Whose opinion counts most when you are deciding what to wear?"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Vener, op. cit., p. 65.

Table 23.--Association of social class and social acceptance to naming of individual whose approval of clothing is desired.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						
	Parents	Girl Friend	Self	Boy Friend	Siblings or Other Relatives	No One	No Response Totals
Upper Social Class							
Group Members	23	12	5	2	1	4	77
Isolates	4	1	0	0	1	0	12
Lower Social Class							
Group Members	3	1	0	0	1	0	12
Isolates	3	0	0	0	1	0	5
Totals	44	33	14	5	4	4	106

In response to parents' approval the following statements are typical. "I feel they know what is best for me. If it suits them, it suits me. We usually have the same taste." "My parents must approve or else they wouldn't buy it if they didn't approve."

Comments regarding peer group acceptance and conformity were much like this. "Friends wouldn't accept you if you didn't wear clothes like them or like what they liked." "After all I have to meet their requirements in order to be a part of the group. They do have certain standards by which one is expected to dress."

The reasons given by 30 per cent of the girls for wanting the approval of the individuals chosen (whether parents or peers) was that they had good taste. One-fourth of the girls said that the approval of their clothing by others would be of help in acceptance. This categorical breakdown of why approval is desired is given in Table 24 on the following page.

Seventy-four per cent of the girls said their mothers made suggestions about the clothes worn to school (Appendix B, Question 25). This tabulation is given on page 101, at the top of the page.

Data suggest that an adolescent's mother has a great influence on her clothing and appearance. Of the seventy-eight girls who said their mothers made suggestions, fifty-two said they followed her suggestions and twenty-two

Table 24.--Association of social class and social acceptance to why approval is desired.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories													
	Tell You	What You	Look Best In	Makes Me Feel Good	Parents Buy Clothes	Good Taste	Helps in Acceptance	Satisfy Self	Spend Most of Time	With Friends	I Don't Know	Other	No Response	Totals
Upper Social Class														
Group Members	4			8	4	22	20	8	5		1	0	4	77
Isolates	0			0	1	4	2	1	1		0	1	1	12
Lower Social Class														
Group Members	1			0	2	5	2	1	0		1	0	0	15
Isolates	1			0	0	1	2	0	0		0	0	1	5
Totals	6			8	7	32	26	10	6		2	1	6	106

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories			
	No	Yes	Sometimes	Totals
Upper Social Class				
Group Members	21	55	1	77
Isolates	1	11	0	12
Lower Social Class				
Group Members	3	9	0	12
Isolates	2	3	0	5
Totals	27	78	1	106

indicated the suggestions were followed some of the time,  
as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories					Totals
	No	Yes	Sometimes	I Don't Know	No, Mother Doesn't Make Suggestions	
Upper Social Class						
Group Members	4	36	15	1	21	77
Isolates	0	7	4	0	1	12
Lower Social Class						
Group Members	0	7	2	0	3	12
Isolates	0	2	1	0	2	5
Totals	4	52	22	1	27	106

More than one-third of the mothers made suggestions about the correct combinations of clothes to be worn to school. Other suggestions of the mothers about clothes worn to school referred to appropriateness for individual or occasion and also fashionableness of the garment. Fashionableness of garment was often expressed in reference to skirt length. The type of suggestions mother makes about clothes worn to school are given in Table 25, page 103.

The girls were asked if they thought that the manner in which their best friend dressed was a reflection on them (Appendix B, Question 17). Thirty-four per cent of the girls thought they were judged by the manner in which their best friend dressed. Fifty per cent of the upper social class isolates and all of the lower social class isolates did not think they were judged by the manner in which their best friend dressed. This response may be indicative of the fact that they do not have a best friend and as a result do not see the impact of the clothing behavior of others. One of the girls said she did not have a best friend, as is shown in the illustration on page 104.

When asked why they felt they were judged by the manner in which their best friend dressed, the response the girls most frequently gave was in reference to reputation by association. This reason was mentioned in thirty-two out of forty responses, as is shown in Table 26, page 105.



Table 25.--Association of appearance responses to social class and social acceptance to type of suggestions mother makes about clothes worn to school.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance Responses							Totals
	Combinations	Appropriateness	Fashionable	Fit	Improving Appearance	Helps Select Clothes	No, Mother Doesn't Make Suggestions	
Upper Social Class Group Members	34	21	18	5	14	4	21	117
Upper Social Class Isolates	8	6	1	2	2	1	1	21
Lower Social Class Group Members	7	5	3	1	4	0	3	23
Lower Social Class Isolates	2	1	2	1	1	0	2	9
Totals	51	33	24	9	21	5	27	170

One girl summed up the attitude of the girls very well as she said, "Generally if she is your best friend you spend so much time together that people associate the two of you in their mind. If she were to dress poorly, they would judge me as approving of this and accordingly I would fall into the category of a poorly dressed person."

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Whether Others Judge You by Manner Best Friend Dresses				Totals
	No	Yes	I Don't Know	No Best Friend	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	50	26	1	0	77
Isolates	6	4	1	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	6	6	0	0	12
Isolates	5	0	0	0	5
Totals	67	36	2	1	106

### Summary

There were a predominance of appearance comments to all the "appearance questions" but discourse comments were made to nearly all the "appearance questions." It seems significant that discourse comments are continually being made, even to "appearance questions." Money was a frequent discourse response in this section. Chapter III had more discourse responses than appearance references concerning

Table 26.--Association of social class and social acceptance to why others judge you by manner best friend dresses.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	I Don't Care that Much	Reputation by Association	Influences Acceptance	I Don't Know	Other	No, Do Not Judge by Manner Best Friend Dresses	
Upper Social Class Group Members	0	24	3	0	0	50	77
Upper Social Class Isolates	1	3	0	1	1	6	12
Lower Social Class Group Members	0	5	1	0	0	6	12
Lower Social Class Isolates	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
Totals	1	32	4	1	1	67	106

acceptance and popularity, when questions not focusing on clothing were asked. However, even in those general questions on acceptance, appearance as an important factor in acceptance by groups came to the forefront. In this chapter, this importance was reinforced.

Similarities in social class and social acceptance were more prevalent than differences. This was also evident in Chapter III in response to questions pertaining to general acceptance. There was general agreement on the following categories. There seems to be a relationship between clothing and acceptance. Clothing was said to influence a girl's popularity. In Chapter III it was found that "dressed well" was the characteristic that best described the popular girls. Differences were noted in the clothing of the popular girls as contrasted with that of other girls in the ninth grade. The most popular girls were also named as best dressed.

Girls in all categories of social class and social acceptance saw some of the girls in the ninth grade as not dressing right. However, girls of lower social class were more apt to be thought of as not dressing right. Here again, as in Chapter III, there seems to be an apparent relationship between clothing, social acceptance, and social class. The girls named as popular and best dressed were from upper social class and the girls who were named as not dressing right were predominantly from the lower social class. Girls

who did not dress right were considered to have few, if any, friends or only friends of their own type.

The greatest percentage of the adolescent girls would like to have their parents approve of their clothing. However, the lower social class isolates would rather have girl friends approve of their clothing. Mothers made suggestions about the clothes worn to school. Most of the girls followed the suggestions made by their mothers.

There were a few differences that were evident between social class and social acceptance categories. For example, upper social class group members made more appearance responses describing the characteristics necessary to be the best dressed girl at school.

Another difference was that upper and lower social class isolates did not think they were judged as much by the manner in which their best friend dressed as the upper and lower social class group members did. In Chapter III the lower social class isolates made few references to appearance in response to questions on popularity and acceptance. They often made only discourse responses. This may be indicative of a low clothing awareness.

Upper social class girls tended to feel better dressed than lower social class girls. This is not so surprising in view of the fact that upper social class girls were those named as popular and best dressed; whereas the lower social class isolates tended to be referred to as not dressed right.

The next chapter will be concerned with an analysis of the relation of social class and social acceptance through the use of situational stories as a modified projective technique.

## CHAPTER V

### SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

To delve more deeply into adolescents' feelings on clothing and appearance in relation to social acceptance, a modified projective technique of situational stories was included in the interview schedule. Three stories of situations involving clothing, appearance, and acceptance were written for this study. The stories were concerned with appearance and clothing of new girls coming into the East Lansing High School. Questions were asked in reference to both individual and group acceptance of these new girls. The situational stories were used to determine whether appearance and discourse would be spontaneously referred to in these situations. Many of the ideas for stories developed from the themes which were written explicitly for this research project in the ninth grade guidance class. Each situational story will be presented, followed by an analysis of the responses. Responses to the stories will again be analyzed by using Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse.

The situational stories and questions asked regarding stories are in Appendix B, pages 170-171, and each is given verbatim before the analysis of responses.

Combinations of Clothing and Acceptance

The first story was:

Jean is a new girl in the ninth grade in the East Lansing High School. Her appearance is neat and clean. Her favorite combinations are plaid skirts and flowered blouses.

When they were asked if they considered Jean well dressed, all but six of the 106 girls said she was not well dressed in this combination, as is indicated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Whether a Student Is Considered Well Dressed			
	No	Yes	Sometimes	Totals
Upper Social Class				
Group Members	74	2	1	77
Isolates	11	1	0	12
Lower Social Class				
Group Members	11	1	0	12
Isolates	4	1	0	5
Totals	100	5	1	106

It is refereshing to note the imagination shown by one girl as she said, "I don't feel flowered and plaid go together well unless it is made so the flowers have the same plaid in them as skirt." Of the 100 girls who said Jean was not well dressed, eighty-five indicated combinations did not go together and fifteen phrased it a little stronger by saying



the plaid and flowered combination was not acceptable. The categorical breakdown for this data is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Why a Student Is Not Considered Well Dressed				
	Combinations	Combinations	Poor	Answered	Totals
	Not Acceptable	Don't Go Together	Taste	Yes	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	13	61	1	2	77
Isolates	1	10	0	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	1	10	0	1	12
Isolates	0	4	0	1	5
Totals	15	85	1	5	106

Seventy-six of the 106 girls said they would invite Jean into their group. Twenty-one per cent of the girls said they would not invite Jean with the combination she was wearing. Seven girls were uncertain if they would invite her, as is illustrated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Inviting a Student Into a Group If She Is Not Considered Well Dressed				Totals
	No	Yes	I Don't Know	No Group	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	16	56	5	0	77
Isolates	2	8	2	0	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	3	9	0	0	12
Isolates	1	3	0	1	5
Totals	22	76	7	1	106

Discourse only comments were prevalent in examining association of types of comments made about inviting Jean into group if she was not considered well dressed, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories					Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Comments	No Group	
Upper Social Class						
Group Members	5	38	3	31	0	77
Isolates	1	4	0	7	0	12
Lower Social Class						
Group Members	0	5	0	7	0	12
Isolates	1	1	0	2	1	5
Totals	7	48	3	47	1	106

There were only ten appearance responses but several discourse responses for the reasons for their acceptance or rejection of Jean. Discourse responses given were "depends on personality" or "depends on kind of person" and "accept her but give suggestions about combinations later." Giving suggestions about combinations is technically discourse about appearance. Table 27 shows these appearance and discourse responses.

When the girls were asked if the group would agree with their decision of accepting or rejecting Jean, thirty-six of the seventy-six girls who said they would accept her felt that

Table 27.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to inviting a student into group if she is not considered well-dressed.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance				Discourse				
	Notice First	Clothes Not that Important	No Responses	Totals	Depends on Kind of Person	Depends on Personality	Make Suggestions Later	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	2	7	68	77	14	25	12	37	88
Upper social class isolates	0	0	12	12	0	3	1	9	13
Lower social class group members	0	0	12	12	2	2	2	8	14
Lower social class isolates	1	0	4	5	1	0	0	4	5
Totals	3	7	96	106	17	30	15	58	120

the group of which they were a member would not (Table 28). The proportion of isolates who felt they would accept Jean but that group would not was higher than the group members who felt they would but the group would not. This may suggest that isolates are eager to have friends and will accept a new girl even though she does not conform to peer-group norms. Forty-eight of the seventy-six girls felt that the group would agree with the decision to accept Jean.

There were very few responses related to reasons for group agreeing or disagreeing with decisions to accept Jean, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourage Only	Both Appearance and Discourage	I Don't Know	No Group	No Comments	
Upper Social Class							
Group Members	3	9	0	1	0	64	77
Isolates	1	1	2	0	0	8	12
Lower Social Class							
Group Members	0	1	0	0	0	11	12
Isolates	0	2	0	0	1	2	5
Totals	4	13	2	1	1	85	106

Forty-two per cent of the girls felt that other groups would not agree with their group and accept Jean. This feeling seemed to be stronger with both upper and lower social class members than with upper and lower social class isolates (Table 29).

Table 28.--Association of social class and social acceptance to group agreement or disagreement with individual decision on acceptance.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	No, Group Wouldn't Agree; I Accept, They Wouldn't	No, Group Wouldn't Agree; I Would Not Accept, They Would	Yes, Group Agree; We Accept	Yes, Group Agree; We Would Not Accept	I Don't Know	No Group	
Upper Social Class Group Members	26	4	35	10	2	0	77
Upper Social Class Isolates	6	0	4	0	2	0	12
Lower Social Class Group Members	2	0	8	2	0	0	12
Lower Social Class Isolates	2	0	1	1	0	1	5
Totals	36	4	48	13	4	1	106

Table 29.--Association of social class and social acceptance to other groups agreement or disagreement with own groups decision on acceptance.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	No, Other Groups Wouldn't Agree; We Accept, They Wouldn't	No, Other Groups Wouldn't Agree; We Would Not Accept, They Would	Yes, Other Groups Agree; We Accept	Yes, Groups Agree; We Would Not Accept	I Don't Know	No Group	
Upper Social Class Group Members	35	14	4	23	1	0	77
Upper Social Class Isolates	3	2	1	4	2	0	12
Lower Social Class Group Members	6	3	2	1	0	0	12
Lower Social Class Isolates	1	1	0	2	0	1	5
Totals	45	30	7	30	3	1	106

More of the girls gave appearance type of response as their reasons for their acceptance and other group not accepting Jean, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Comments	I Don't Know	No Group	
Upper Social Class							
Group Members	29	24	18	4	2	0	77
Isolates	4	3	3	2	0	0	12
Lower Social Class							
Group Members	5	3	3	0	1	0	12
Isolates	3	1	0	0	0	1	5
Totals	45	29	22	6	3	1	106

Appearance reasons given were that "some judge only on dress" or "some are more interested in appearance." Discourse responses indicate that the reasons for group agreement or disagreement focused on the feeling that every one has a different idea. Nearly one-third of the discourse responses referred to the fact that the popular group would not accept Jean on the basis of her clothing (Table 30). Comments made were much like this. "The very popular groups are too 'snobby' to accept anyone who does not make the best kind of appearance." Others indicated, "I think the 'kids' from Towar Gardens would accept her in spite of her poor taste."

Table 30.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to other groups agreement or disagreement with own groups decision on acceptance.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse									
	Notice Clothing	First Thing	Some Judge Only	Others More Inter- ested in Appearance	Some May Like	Combinations	She May Change	No Comments	Totals	Depends on Kind of Person	We are More In- terested in Personality	Everyone Same Idea	Everyone Differ- ent Idea	Make Suggestions	Popular Group Won't Accept	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	3	30	15	10	1	34	93			3	5	3	15	2	13	36	77
Upper social class isolates	1	4	1	0	0	6	12			0	0	0	3	2	1	6	12
Lower social class group members	0	6	4	2	0	4	16			1	0	0	4	0	1	6	12
Lower social class isolates	0	2	0	0	0	3	5			1	0	0	1	0	0	3	5
Totals	4	42	20	12	1	46	126			5	5	3	23	4	15	51	106



Colored Bobby Socks and Acceptance

The second story was:

Michelle recently moved to East Lansing from California. Her first day at East Lansing High School she noticed that she was the only girl wearing colored bobby socks which were popular in California. She came home and told her mother that she had to buy heavy white socks so that she would be like all the other girls. Her mother thought this was rather foolish since all her colored socks matched her outfits.

To focus on the importance of conformity, girls were asked if they felt it was important for Michelle to have white socks like the other girls. Sixty of the girls thought that it was. Of the sixty who felt this way, fifty were upper social class group members. This seems to indicate that upper social class group members are more concerned than others with the importance of conformity. The breakdown for each category of class and acceptance concerning importance of white socks is found below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Whether or Not It Is Important for a Student to Have Bobby Socks Like the Other Girls				Totals
	No	Yes	Sometimes	I Don't Know	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	25	52	0	0	77
Isolates	7	3	1	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	9	3	0	0	12
Isolates	3	2	0	0	5
Totals	44	60	1	1	106

Hurlock indicates that it is important to the adolescent to conform to the standards and be accepted by the group.<sup>1</sup> Horrocks states that an important factor in the group's acceptance or rejection of an individual is the extent and the manner in which he conforms to the ways of the group. Fads become important and refusal to accept them may mean group exclusion.<sup>2</sup>

More than one-half of the answers were discourse responses to this "appearance question." An importance of bobby socks is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	Did Not Answer Yes	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	6	32	14	25	77
Isolates	1	1	1	9	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	2	1	9	12
Isolates	0	0	2	3	5
Totals	7	35	18	46	106

The girls who said that it was important to have socks like the other girls gave the appearance response that colored socks were not worn (Table 31). One girl said, "If I were Michelle I would want heavy white socks too."

<sup>1</sup>Hurlock, Psychology of Dress, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>Horrocks, op. cit., p. 151.

Table 31.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to why it is important for a student to have bobby socks like the other girls.

	Appearance				Discourse									
	Colored Socks Not Worn	I Wouldn't Wear Colored Socks	No Responses	Totals	If She Thinks It Is Important	If Group She Wants to Get Into	Important to Conform	Easier to Adjust It Like Others	Important to School as a Whole	Socks Not Expensive	Conformity Gives Self-Confidence	No Responses	Totals	
Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories														
Upper Social class group members	17	0	33	50	17	3	30	12	9	1	8	3	83	
Upper social class isolates	1	1	2	4	2	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	6	
Lower social class group members	1	0	2	3	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	4	
Lower social class isolates	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Totals	20	2	37	59	20	3	35	14	9	2	8	4	95	

The discourse responses indicated that it was important to conform and it was easier to adjust if like others. Twenty of the ninety-one discourse responses referred to the fact that it was important for Michelle to have white socks only if she thought it was. These discourse responses are found in Table 31.

The responses of those who did not consider bobby socks important were nearly all appearance only, and tabulations can be seen below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	Did Not Answer No	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	15	6	4	52	77
Isolates	7	0	0	5	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	8	0	1	3	12
Isolates	3	0	0	2	5
Totals	33	6	5	62	106

The girls who said that socks were not important indicated that socks do not make so much difference if they go with the outfit. Nearly one-third of the appearance responses indicated that she might start a fad. This information is found in Table 32. Of the girls who said socks were not important, only six made discourse responses (Table 32). These

Table 32.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to why it is not important for a student to have bobby socks like the other girls.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse					
	Socks Aren't that Important	May Start Fad	Goes With Outfit	Cute Idea	Buy White Socks When Worn Out	Others Understand She had Her Ward- robe	No Responses	Totals	Financial Implications	Personality Important	Depends on How She Feels	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	10	7	5	2	1	1	5	31	3	1	6	18	28
Upper social class isolates	1	2	4	0	1	0	1	9	1	0	0	7	8
Lower social class group members	2	3	3	0	0	1	0	9	0	0	1	8	9
Lower social class isolates	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	3	3
Totals	14	13	14	2	2	2	6	53	4	1	7	36	48

discourse responses referred to Michelle's attitude toward having colored socks and to money.

When girls were asked what difference it would make if she did not get heavy white socks, 34 per cent of the responses indicated "none" (Table 33). Four of the five low social class isolates responses referred to "none." This may indicate again that they are not as aware of clothing conformity. A similiarity is found here to the lower social class isolates responses to Questions 1, 3, and 5 which were analyzed in Chapter III on general acceptance. The lower social class isolates made reference to discourse only when asked how a new girl would get into popular group, characteristics in choosing a friend, and things which are important to do to be popular in own group.

Some of the responses suggested that Michelle would not get into some of the groups or at least not be accepted as quickly as if she were wearing white socks. The attitudes of the girls are reflected in these statements. "I think she would be ridiculed by the other 'kids.'" "Anything that is different around here is rejected." "This is not the kind of school where new innovations made by outsiders are accepted. One is expected to conform."

When asked why they felt this way regarding the difference it would make for Michelle, both appearance and discourse were referred to more than either appearance only or discourse only, as illustrated on page 126.

Table 33.--Association of social class and social acceptance to outcome if the student does not get bobby socks like the other girls.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories							Totals
	None	She Will Not be Accepted as Soon	May Not Get into Some Groups	Some Difference	Will Not be Accepted	Become Self- conscious	Depends on How She Feels	
Upper Social Class Group Members	24	8	19	13	9	8	3	84
Upper Social Class Isolates	4	3	2	1	0	1	1	12
Lower Social Class Group Members	6	1	1	4	0	0	0	12
Lower Social Class Isolates	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
Totals	39	12	22	18	9	9	5	114

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Comments	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	21	20	31	5	77
Isolates	3	1	4	4	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	7	2	2	1	12
Isolates	1	1	1	2	5
Totals	32	24	38	12	106

The girls who said "none" gave the appearance response that socks were not important. The appearance responses of those who felt it would make a difference indicated that clothing and socks were important and the socks would make a difference to Michelle's acceptance. The upper social class group members and upper social isolates emphasized this (Table 34).

One-half of the discourse responses indicated that it was important to conform (Table 34). All but two of these comments were made by upper social class group members. Their response again focuses attention on the importance placed on conformity by upper social class group members.



Table 34.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to reasons for the outcome if the student does not get bobby socks like the other girls.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance					Discourse									
	Socks Aren't that Important	May Start Fed	Does With Outfit	Clothing is Important	No Responses	Totals	Financial Implications	Personality Important	I Don't Think that Way	Important to Conform	Depends if Important to Her	Other	No Responses	Totals	
Upper social class group members	26	3	3	24	24	80	3	10	8	29	0	2	27	79	
Upper social class isolates	2	2	0	3	5	12	0	2	1	1	1	0	7	12	
Lower social class group members	6	3	0	1	3	13	0	1	1	1	0	1	8	12	
Lower social class isolates	1	1	0	0	3	5	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	5	
Totals	35	9	3	28	35	110	4	13	10	31	2	3	45	108	

Expensive Clothes, Messy Hair,  
and Social Acceptance

The third story was:

Lynn dresses very neatly for school. She has many expensive clothes; however, her hair is usually messy and unkempt.

The girls were almost unanimous in their opinion when asked if they thought messy hair played an important part in Lynn's appearance. Ninety-nine girls said "yes," four girls said "no," and three did not give a definite opinion on this "appearance question," as is shown in the following tabulation:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Whether or Not Messy Hair Plays an Important Part in a Student's Appearance				
	No	Yes	I Don't Know	No Comments	Totals
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	1	75	0	1	77
Isolates	1	9	1	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	2	10	0	0	12
Isolates	0	5	0	0	5
Totals	4	99	1	2	106

Ninety-four of 106 were appearance only responses to the reasons for messy hair playing an important part in Lynn's appearance. The relation of appearance only, discourse only, and both appearance and discourse responses are shown on the following page:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	Did Not Answer Question	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	68	5	3	1	77
Isolates	11	0	0	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	11	0	1	0	12
Isolates	4	0	1	0	5
Totals	94	5	5	2	106

When asked why they thought messy hair played an important part in Lynn's appearance, more than one-third of the responses indicated that one looked at the entire appearance, not only clothing (Table 35). The other appearance responses indicated that hair was an important part of appearance and that messy hair was an indication of poor grooming.

Only six discourse comments were made and these indicated that if Lynn could have expensive clothes she also had money to afford to care for her hair (Table 35).

When girls were asked to rank what was more important, expensive clothes or neat hair, 85 per cent said neat hair. Seven girls from upper social class said expensive clothes and eight girls (two lower social class isolates and six upper social class group members) said that they were both equally as important. These figures are illustrated on page 131.

Table 35.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to reasons for messy hair playing an important or unimportant part in a student's appearance.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance							Discourse				
	Hair Important	Notice Face First	Neatness More Important than Expensive Clothing	Hair Messy, Poor Grooming	Look at Entire Appearance	Everyone Can do Hair Something with It	Other	No Responses	Totals	Have Money to Afford Care	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	30	10	4	27	40	6	2	1	120	4	73	77
Upper social class isolates	4	0	1	2	6	0	2	1	16	0	12	12
Lower social class group members	4	0	1	5	5	2	1	0	18	1	11	12
Lower social class isolates	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	5	1	4	5
Totals	38	10	6	34	54	9	6	2	159	6	100	106

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Ranking Importance of Expensive Clothes or Neat Hair					Totals
	I					
	Expensive Clothes	Neat Hair	Both as Important	Don't Know	No Comments	
Upper Social Class						
Group Members	5	64	6	1	1	77
Isolates	2	10	0	0	0	12
Lower Social Class						
Group Members	0	12	0	0	0	12
Isolates	0	3	2	0	0	5
Totals	7	89	8	1	1	106

Fifty-nine per cent of the girls would like to have Lynn as their girl friend. However, twenty-two of the girls were uncertain and did not know whether they would like Lynn as their girl friend. One-fourth of the lower social class group members and one-fifth of the upper social class group members did not want her as their friend. All of the isolates said "yes" or "I don't know." This may indicate a desire on the part of isolates to have friends or suggests that they do not place the same emphasis on appearance as girls who already have their established cliques. The tabulations for wanting someone like Lynn as a friend are given on the following page:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Whether or Not One Would Like to Have Someone with Expensive Clothes and Messy Hair as a Girl Friend				
	No	Yes	I Don't Know	No Comments	Totals
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	16	41	18	2	77
Isolates	0	11	1	0	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	3	8	1	0	12
Isolates	0	3	2	0	5
Totals	19	63	22	2	106

Of 106 responses to comments about having Lynn as a friend, fifty-two were discourse only which indicates that they thought appearance by itself was not enough to form judgment on.

Another factor which should be pointed out is that Lynn was not a "new" girl like the other girls in situational stories. The figures for wanting Lynn as a friend are illustrated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	Did Not Make Comments	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	1	44	1	31	77
Isolates	1	3	1	7	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	5	1	6	12
Isolates	2	0	1	2	5
Totals	4	52	4	46	106

Table 36 gives only six appearance responses in regard to wanting Lynn as a friend. Thirty-nine out of sixty-four discourse responses indicated "it would depend on personality" whether they wanted someone like Lynn as a friend. Nearly one-half of the upper social class members placed this emphasis on personality. There were fifteen discourse responses about appearance in reference to giving Lynn suggestions about her hair (Table 36).

Sixty-five per cent of the girls would invite Lynn to "run around" with their group, although only 59 per cent would like to have her as a friend. This distinction may indicate that they would like to have Lynn in group but would not care to have someone like Lynn as a best friend. Twenty-two of the girls did not know whether they wanted to invite her to join their group. Twenty-seven per cent of upper social class group members and 25 per cent of lower social class group members would not invite Lynn into their group, as is illustrated below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Responses Referring to Inviting a Student into Group if She Has Expensive Clothes and Messy Hair				
	No	Yes	I Don't Know	No Comments	Totals
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	21	48	7	1	77
Isolates	1	9	2	0	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	3	9	0	0	12
Isolates	1	3	1	0	5
Totals	26	69	10	1	106

Table 36.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to reasons for wanting or not wanting someone with expensive clothes and messy hair as a girl friend.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance					Discourse						
	If She Would Fix Hair	Father have Friend with Neat Hair that Expens- sive Clothes	Other	No Responses	Totals	If Nice	Depends On Personality	Depends if Like that All the Time	Give Suggestions	Other	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	2	0	0	66	68	5	34	1	9	2	36	87
Upper social class isolates	1	0	1	9	11	0	3	0	1	0	9	13
Lower social class group members	1	0	0	7	8	1	1	0	4	0	10	16
Lower social class isolates	0	1	0	3	4	1	1	0	1	0	3	6
Totals	4	1	1	85	91	7	39	1	15	2	58	122



When asked if everyone in group would agree with their decisions, 43 per cent said group would agree and accept her. Previously, 65 per cent of the girls had indicated that they would invite her into group. The number who said that the group would agree and not accept Lynn is approximately the same in the situational stories involving both Jean and Lynn. Twenty-seven per cent of the girls said they would accept her but their group would not (Table 37).

Sixty-eight per cent referred to discourse only regarding group agreement or disagreement with individual decision on acceptance of a student with expensive clothes and messy hair. Of the appearance responses made, a greater portion were made by upper social class members. They seem to respond consistently and be more aware of clothing and appearance. As in previous situations, four lower social class isolates referred to discourse only, as is shown below:

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Comments	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	10	45	17	5	77
Isolates	1	9	1	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	0	10	1	1	12
Isolates	1	4	0	0	5
Totals	12	68	19	7	106

Table 37.--Association of social class and social acceptance to groups agreement or disagreement with individual decision on acceptance of a student with expensive clothes and messy hair.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	No, Group Wouldn't Agree; I Accept They Wouldn't	No, Group Wouldn't Agree; I Would Not Accept, They Would	Yes, Group Agree; We Accept	Yes, Group Agree; We Would Not Accept	I Don't Know	No Comments	
Upper Social Class Group Members	23	3	28	14	7	2	77
Upper Social Class Isolates	4	0	7	0	1	0	12
Lower Social Class Group Members	1	0	8	3	0	0	12
Lower Social Class Isolates	1	0	3	1	0	0	5
Totals	29	3	46	18	8	2	106

When the girls were asked why they felt this way, appearance responses indicated that they thought some of the girls were more interested in appearance. "Some girls judge a girl just on appearance" was the manner in which one girl phrased it. Reference was also made to the fact that one could not expect to be accepted if not neat. One girl stated it in this way, "Just as actions speak louder than words, so do looks" (Table 38).

Discourse responses were nearly equally divided between the two responses, "everyone has same idea" and "everyone has different idea" (Table 38). Nineteen discourse responses that indicated judgment on personality not clothing. Fourteen responses indicated that the girls could accept Lynn and give her suggestions for improvement.

Of 106 girls, sixty-one said that other groups would not agree with their group, thirty-two said that although they accepted, others would not; and twenty-nine said they would not accept, but others would (Table 39). All the categories of social class and social acceptance were about equal in percentage of responses to the above comments.

More than one-half of the responses were discourse only concerning the reasons girls felt other groups would or would not do the same as their group, as is shown by the figures on page 140.

Table 38.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to groups agreement or disagreement with individual decision on acceptance of a student with expensive clothes and messy hair.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance						Discourse							
	Some More Inter- ested in Appear- ance	Can't Expect to be Accepted if Not Neat	Hair of Little Importance	Neat, Clean Hair Is Important	No Responses	Totals	Everyone has Dif- ferent Ideas	Everyone has Same Idea	Judged on Personality	If She Is Nice	Accept Everyone	Give Suggestions For Improvement	No Responses	Totals
Upper social class group members	14	9	2	4	40	69	18	22	12	3	1	10	22	88
Upper social class isolates	2	0	0	0	7	9	3	1	2	0	1	3	5	15
Lower social class group members	0	1	0	0	10	11	1	4	4	1	0	1	2	13
Lower social class isolates	0	1	0	0	4	5	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	5
Totals	16	11	2	4	61	94	23	28	19	5	2	14	30	121

Table 39.--Association of social class and social acceptance to other groups agreement or disagreement with our groups decision on acceptance of a student with expensive clothes and messy hair.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories						Totals
	No, Other Groups Wouldn't Agree; We Accept, They Wouldn't	No, Other Groups Wouldn't Agree; We Would Not Accept, They Would	Yes, Groups Agree; We Accept	Yes, Groups Agree; We Would Not Accept	I Don't Know	No Comments	
Upper Social Class Group Members	21	22	11	15	7	1	77
Upper Social Class Isolates	4	4	3	0	1	0	12
Lower Social Class Group Members	5	2	3	2	0	0	12
Lower Social Class Isolates	2	1	0	1	1	0	5
Totals	32	29	17	18	9	1	106

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Response Categories				Totals
	Appearance Only	Discourse Only	Both Appearance and Discourse	No Comments	
Upper Social Class					
Group Members	12	40	17	8	77
Isolates	0	10	1	1	12
Lower Social Class					
Group Members	1	8	3	0	12
Isolates	1	3	0	1	5
Totals	14	61	21	10	106

In explaining why the girls felt this way, 34 per cent of the appearance responses indicated that they felt other girls were more interested in clothing and appearance. Fifteen per cent of appearance responses indicated that some of the girls do not care about appearance. Seven-eighths of the girls responding in this manner were upper social class members. "Some of the groups are sort of messy and would accept her like this" was typical of the comments made (Table 40).

Two-thirds of the discourse responses referred to every group having different ideas (Table 40). Reference was made to the fact that the popular group would not accept Lynn. One of the girls said, "A less popular group would be more apt to accept her than my group."

Table 40.--Association of appearance and discourse responses to social class and social acceptance to other groups agreement or disagreement with own groups decision on acceptance of a student with expensive clothes and messy hair.

Social Class and Social Acceptance Categories	Appearance										Discourse									
	Some More Inter- ested in Clothing and Appearance	If Clothes Nice, Hair Doesn't Matter	Some Don't Care About Appearance	Appearance Important	Expensive Clothes Impres- sive	No Responses	Totals	Everyone has Dif- ferent Ideas	Popular Group Won't Accept	Judged on Personality	Do Not Judge on Personality	Everyone has Same Idea	Give Helpful Suggestions	No Responses	Totals					
Upper social class group members	14	8	7	3	4	34	70	34	7	4	2	5	11	26	89					
Upper social class isolates	1	0	0	0	0	10	11	6	3	2	0	0	1	2	14					
Lower social class group members	2	0	1	0	0	9	12	7	0	3	0	1	0	1	12					
Lower social class isolates	1	0	0	0	0	4	5	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	5					
Totals	18	8	8	3	4	57	98	49	10	9	2	7	12	31	120					

Summary

The girls' responses to the situational stories emphasized the importance of clothing and appearance in the teenage culture. Two of the situational stories received almost unanimous agreement in their responses. There was consensus that a girl would not be considered well dressed in a combination of plaids and flowers. There was also agreement regarding the importance of messy hair in Lynn's appearance. The response to situation with colored bobby socks was split with an emphasis on the importance of conforming and wearing white socks. However, there was a difference here as the upper social class members placed greater emphasis on conformity to white socks than did the other categories of social class and social acceptance.

It also seems significant that even in situational stories there were discourse only responses to "appearance situations." In Chapter IV there were discourse responses to strictly "appearance questions."

The fact was often emphasized that the girls as individuals or as a group felt they would respond differently than others in group or other groups. Some emphasized that others placed a greater importance on clothing and appearance than they did. Yet in the analysis of Chapter III there were more appearance than discourse responses concerning the characteristics by which a new girl would be judged. Many girls seemed reluctant to admit that they would place this importance on



clothing. The popular group was often referred to as judging girls only on appearance and clothing. This may be a correct appraisal since popular girls seemed to be from the upper social class and upper social class girls in this study emphasized conformity and had a high clothing awareness. In addition, the popular girls were the girls also considered to be best dressed by all of the categories of social class and social acceptance.

On the other hand, the lower social class isolates seemed to make a stronger reference to discourse only in situational stories. They also referred to discourse only in Chapter III in reference to general acceptance and popularity (Questions 1, 3, and 5). The analysis of Chapter IV pointed out that the lower social class isolates did not place as much emphasis on best friend's appearance being a reflection on the individual. All of these factors point to the fact that lower social class isolates may have a lower clothing awareness.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary and Conclusions

This exploratory study was carried out to determine the relationship of social class, social acceptance, and behavior related to clothing and appearance.

Ninth grade girls of East Lansing High School were selected for this study. Upper and lower social class members and upper and lower social class isolates comprised the selected group of 106 ninth grade girls from the 154 girls in that grade. East Lansing is an atypical, highly educated, high income, white collar community. However, working class residents of Towar Gardens, an adjoining area, send students to the high school. Thus, East Lansing High School presented a setting of social class extremes.

The sample was selected on the basis of a sociometric question and Warner's Index of Status Characteristics. This background information was obtained by an opinionnaire which was portion of a larger study being conducted at Michigan State University at the present time.

Data were collected by interviewing the selected sample at the East Lansing High School. The structured interview schedule contained open-ended questions pertaining to general acceptance, clothing and acceptance, clothing and self-satisfactions, and clothing confidence. A modified projective technique was also included. The girls were asked to react to stories about the appraisal and acceptance of a new girl in school based on her clothing and appearance.

Data pertaining to general acceptance and clothing and appearance were analyzed descriptively for similarities and differences between the independent variables. The variables were upper social class group members, upper social class isolates, lower social class group members, and lower social class isolates. Stone's theoretical framework of appearance and discourse was utilized for the analysis.

Appearance has been a neglected element in symbolic interaction. Stone states appearance must be considered in social transaction. It is a part of communication. Stone is one of few who has indicated that "self is established, maintained, and altered in transaction as much by the communication of appearances as by discourse."<sup>1</sup> Stone has provided a vocabulary and framework upon which to build empirical research in the study of appearance.

The researcher intended to use the chi square test of significance in the analysis but this was not possible

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<sup>1</sup>Stone, "Appearance and the Self," p. 117.

because more than 20 per cent of the theoretical frequencies were under five.

The results of this study show a general consensus among the upper and lower social class group members and upper and lower social class isolates in many of the responses. These girls were more alike than different. A look at the similarities gives a view of the values, norms, and customs of these ninth grade girls. For example, the following points of agreement existed on the importance of clothing and appearance in being accepted by the girls of the sample regardless of social class position or social acceptance categories:

1. There was a strong consensus that appearance was important in acceptance. Appearance responses were frequent in judgment of a new girl.
2. The characteristic most frequently used to describe the popular girls was the appearance response, "well-dressed."
3. The girls named as popular were also referred to as "best dressed." The clothing of the popular girls was said to differ from the clothing of the other girls. The girls named as popular and best dressed were generally upper social class group members.
4. Girls in all categories of social class and social acceptance saw some of the girls as not dressed right. A higher percentage of girls who were not dressed right were from the lower social class. These girls were considered to have few friends. Their friends were referred to as not dressing right.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gordon points out that dress is a major source of social differentiation because of its high visibility. Gordon, op. cit., p. 114.

5. The higher standards of the popular group in relation to clothing and appearance were emphasized throughout the entire interview by all categories of social class and social acceptance. The situational stories as well as the sections on general acceptance and clothing and appearance emphasized the similarities of the adolescent girls' opinions. This seems to point out the fact that most of the girls, regardless of social class position or social acceptance category, actually have similar values.

There were, however, areas which pointed up differences in viewpoints or values of girls in contrasting social class positions and social acceptance categories. For example:

1. Upper social class girls tended to feel better dressed than lower social class girls.
2. Upper and lower social class isolates did not think they were judged as much by the manner in which their best friend dressed as did the upper and lower social class group members.
3. Upper social class group members seemed to be more aware of clothing and placed a greater emphasis on conformity.
4. Lower social class isolates did not seem to be as aware of appearance. Many of their responses even to "appearance questions" were discourse only.

This study was done in the area of social class, social acceptance, and clothing and appearance in adolescent life. This study was exploratory because little knowledge is available about the relationship of these factors. An exploratory study may develop hypotheses and establish priorities for further research.<sup>1</sup> The results of this exploratory research show some possible hypotheses which should be

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<sup>1</sup>Selltiz, et al., op. cit., p. 51.

tested by further study. They are:

1. A positive relationship exists between girls referred to as popular and girls referred to as best dressed and social class.
2. An inverse relationship between not dressing right and social class position.
3. Social isolates are more likely than group members to want girls as friends who do not conform to standards or norms of appearance of adolescent culture.

#### Contribution of Study

This researcher feels that the main contribution of this study was the analysis of responses to the theoretical framework of appearance and discourse. According to Stone, this framework means that: "(1) every social transaction must be broken down into at least two analytic components or processes--appearance and discourse; (2) appearance is at least as important for the establishment and maintenance of the self as is discourse."<sup>1</sup> This study is of value in its attempts to show appearance in its perspective of symbolic interaction in the teen-age culture. The use of Stone's theoretical framework as a base combined with the use of an interview which allowed free response, put appearance and clothing in proper perspective so that they may be viewed in relation to other elements of the society.

Both appearance and discourse references are evident through the entire interview. "Appearance questions" usually

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<sup>1</sup>Stone, "Appearance and the Self," p. 87.

received some discourse responses. Discourse references often pertained to having a good personality, being friendly, being nice, and family background criteria. The latter was usually in reference to money or the section of town in which one lived. Even though not placed in Stone's frame of reference, Coleman found the same responses prevalent in the ten schools he studied.<sup>1</sup>

The appearance responses indicated that clothing and appearance were important in acceptance and a very realistic aspect of the value system. One girl's comments signifies this: "It's just one of the main interests of our school. If you do not dress well, you're just not with it." If acceptance is important to the adolescent girl, appearance becomes an important element, too. This is revealed by the fact the same girls were viewed as popular and best dressed. Reference was also made to the fact that girls not dressed right did not have many friends.

Appearance is important for acceptance in this class of ninth grade girls in the East Lansing High School. It must be kept in mind that this is only one school and that East Lansing is an atypical community in that it has a highly educated, high income, professional, and mobile population. A similar study might well be conducted in a community with a more representative distribution of occupations and social class to determine whether the same emphasis is placed on

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<sup>1</sup>Coleman, op. cit., p. 37.

appearance and discourse. Coleman found that value systems vary from school to school and that "well-dressed" will have a different meaning in a working class school than in a suburban school.<sup>1</sup> However, the consensus of responses of appearance and discourse in this study are in agreement with findings of Coleman about the values of the adolescent culture.

This study may be of value to educators and others who work with adolescents because it provides information for increased understanding of the adolescent culture as related to social class, appearance, and acceptance. It places the elements of clothing and appearance in perspective so that they may be viewed in relation to other elements of a society.

#### Suggestions For Further Study

The present study has been exploratory research. It has touched upon aspects of appearance and clothing behavior in relation to social class and social acceptance. It needs to be tested for definite proof in other studies.<sup>2</sup>

Further research on this phase of clothing and appearance might be carried out in these ways: (1) the use of Stone's theoretical framework on a larger population; (2) comparison of data from this study with data from research

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Festinger and Katz, op. cit., p. 74.



of a similar nature in a community with a more representative distribution of occupations and social class backgrounds; (3) comparison of data from this study with data from a similar study, with adaptations, administered to adolescent boys; (4) comparison of data from this study with similar research on a high intelligence group; and (5) comparison of data from this study with similar research on social deviants.

#### Methodological Recommendations

Several changes could be made to refine the instrument used in the situational stories. A more complete comparison of the situations could have been made if they had all been structured alike. This could have been done in the following ways: (1) All the situational stories should have specified that a new girl was being appraised. Question 32 did not. (2) All of the situational stories could have had a similar question related to individual and group acceptance of each girl in the story. Question 31 did not have any reference to acceptance or rejection of Michelle with colored bobby socks. (3) "Why do you think so?" should have been asked after all questions pertaining to individual and group acceptance.

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## APPENDIX A

1. Your name \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
last first middle

[illegible]

Brothers	0	1	2	3	4 or more
----------	---	---	---	---	-----------

Sisters	0	1	2	3	4 or more
---------	---	---	---	---	-----------

4. Who contributes most to the financial support of your family?

Your father

Your mother \_\_\_\_\_

Some other person \_\_\_\_\_ (Explain who this person is. For example, "my brother," "my uncle."

5. How far did this person mentioned above go in school?

No schooling

Some grade school

Graduated from grade school

Some high school

Graduated from high school

Some college

Graduated from college

Don't know

Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What does this person do for a living? (Write in the complete name or title of his or her job, not the company he or she works for.)

<sup>1</sup>Wass, op. cit.



7. Describe as accurately as possible what this person makes or does on the job. (For example: he supervises the work of 15 office clerks; he sells from door to door; he operates a farm of 160 acres; etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
8. Does any other person contribute to the financial support of your family? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
- If yes, explain who. (mother, father, brother, etc.) \_\_\_\_  
What does this person do? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What church do you go to? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How many clubs or organizations in school and outside of school do you belong to?

None \_\_\_\_\_  
One \_\_\_\_\_  
Two \_\_\_\_\_  
Three \_\_\_\_\_  
Four or more \_\_\_\_\_

11. Please list the clubs and organizations you belong to:
- 

12. What is the name and location of the grade school you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

13. The people with whom we share secrets and spend most of our time are usually referred to as our "best friends."

Write the names of your two "best girl friends" in the 9th grade in the East Lansing High School. (If you only have one person you consider a "best friend," write her name only.)

1.  
2.

If you have more than two "best girl friends" in the 9th grade, write the other names in the spaces below.

1.  
2.

If your "best girl friends" are in another grade or in another school, write their names in the spaces below.

Other Grade

1.  
2.

Other School

1.  
2.

REVISED SCALE FOR RATING OCCUPATION<sup>1</sup>

Rating Assigned to Occupation	Professionals <sup>2</sup>	Proprietors and Managers	Business Men
1	Lawyers, doctors, dentists, engineers, judges, high-school superintendents, veterinarians, ministers (graduated from divinity school), chemists, etc. with post-graduate training, architects	Business valued at \$75,000 and over	Regional and divisional managers of large financial and industrial enterprises
2	High-school teachers, trained nurses, chiropidists, chiropractors, undertakers, ministers (some training), newspaper editors, librarians (graduate)	Business valued at \$20,000 to \$75,000	Assistant managers and office and department managers of large businesses, assistants to executives, etc.
3	Social workers, grade-school teachers, optometrists, librarians (not graduate), undertaker's assistants, ministers (no training)	Business valued at \$5,000 to \$20,000	All minor officials of businesses
4		Business valued at \$2,000 to \$5,000	
5		Business valued at \$500 to \$2,000	
6		Business valued at less than \$500	
7			

<sup>1</sup>Warner, op. cit., pp. 140-141.

## REVISED SCALE (Continued)

Clerks and Kindred Workers etc.	Manual Workers	Protective and Service Workers	Farmers
Certified Public Accountants			Gentle- men Farmers
Accountants, sales- men of real estate, of insurance, post- masters			Large farm owners, farm owners
Auto salesmen, bank clerks and cashiers, postal clerks, secre- taries to executives, supervisors of rail- road, telephone, etc. Justices of the peace	Contractors		
Stenographers, book- keepers, rural mail clerks, railroad ticket agents, sales people in dry goods stores, etc.	Factory Foremen, electricians, plumbers, carpen- ters, watchmakers, (own business)	Dry cleaners, butchers, sheriffs, railroad engineers, and conductors	
Dime store clerks, hardware salesmen, beauty operators, telephone operators	Carpenters, plumb- ers, electricians (apprentice), time keepers, linemen, telephone or tele- graph, radio repair- men, medium skill workers	Barbers, firemen, butcher's appren- tices, practical nurses, policemen, seamstresses, cooks in restaurants, bartenders	Tenant Farmers
	Moulders, semi- skilled workers, assistants to carpenters, etc.	Baggage men, night policemen and watchmen, taxi and truck drivers, gas station attendants, waitresses in restaurants	Small tenant farmers
	Heavy labor, migrant worker, odd-job men, miners	Janitors, scrub- women, newsboys	Migrant farm laborers

<sup>2</sup>Professors and associate professors were given an occupational rating of one; assistant professors and instructors were given an occupational rating of two; graduate assistants, secondary and elementary teachers were given an occupational rating of three.

SCALE FOR RATING DWELLING AREA<sup>1</sup>

1--Very high. In Jonesville, as in most towns and small cities, this includes but one area. Residents, aware that this area has a high status reputation, remark that "no one can live here unless his family has lived in the community for at least three generations." The best houses in town are located in such an area. The streets are wide and clean and have many trees.

2--High. Dwelling areas felt to be superior and well above average but a little below the top. There are fewer mansions and pretentious houses in such districts than in the first. However, the chief difference is one of reputation.

3--Above average. A little above average in social reputation and to the eye of the scientific observer. This is an area of nice but not pretentious houses. The streets are kept clean and the houses are well cared for. It is known as a "nice place to live" but "society doesn't live here."

4--Average. These are areas of workingmen's homes which are small and unpretentious but neat in appearance. In these areas live "the respectable people in town who don't amount to much but never give anybody any trouble."

5--Below average. All the areas in the group are undesirable because they are close to factories, or because they include the business section of town, or are close to the railroad. There are more run-down houses here because there are people living in these areas who "don't know how to take care of things." They are more congested and heterogeneous than those above. It is said that "all kinds of people live here, and you don't know who your neighbors will be."

6--Low. These areas are run-down and semi-slums. The houses are set close together. The streets and yards are often filled with debris and in some of the smaller towns like Jonesville, some of the streets are not paved.

7--Very low. Slum districts, the areas with the poorest reputation in town, but only because of unpleasant and unhealthy geographical positions--for example, being near a garbage dump or a swamp--but also because of the social stigma attached to those who live there. The houses are little better than shacks. The people are referred to by such terms as "squatters along the canal," and are said to be lazy, shiftless, ignorant, and immoral. This general reputation is assigned to most people living in such sections regardless of their abilities or accomplishments.

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<sup>1</sup>Warner, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

REVISED SCALE FOR RATING HOUSE TYPE<sup>1</sup>

1--Excellent houses. This includes only houses which are very large single-family dwellings in good repair and surrounded by large lawns and yards which are landscaped and well cared for. These houses have an element of ostentation with respect to size, architectural style, and general condition of yards and lawns.

2--Very good houses. Roughly, this includes all houses which do not quite measure up to the first category. The primary difference is one of size. They are slightly smaller, but still larger than utility demands for the average family.

3--Good houses. In many cases they are only slightly larger than utility demands. They are more conventional and less ostentatious than the two higher categories.

4--Average houses. One-and-a-half to two-story wood-frame and brick single-family dwellings. Conventional style, with lawns well cared for but not landscaped.

5--Fair houses. In general, this includes houses whose condition is not quite as good as those houses given a 4 rating. It also includes smaller houses in excellent condition.

6--Poor houses. In this, and the category below, size is less important than condition in determining evaluation. Houses in this category are badly run-down but have not deteriorated sufficiently that they cannot be repaired. They suffer from lack of care but do not have the profusion of debris which surrounds houses in the lowest category.

7--Very poor houses. All houses which have deteriorated so far that they cannot be repaired. They are considered unhealthy and unsafe to live in. All buildings not originally intended for dwellings, shacks, and over-crowded buildings. The halls and yards are littered with junk, and many have an extremely bad odor.

---

<sup>1</sup>Warner, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

Optimum Weights for I.S.C., to be used when data are missing on one characteristic.<sup>1</sup>

Status Characteristic to be Used in Index	Weights to be Used If Ratings On One Characteristic Missing			
	Occupation Missing	Source of Income Missing	House Type Missing	Dwelling Area Missing
Occupation . . . .	--	5	5	5
Source of Income . .	5	--	4	4
House Type . . . .	4	4	--	3
Dwelling Area . . .	3	3	3	--

<sup>1</sup>Warner, op. cit., p. 185.

## APPENDIX B

## C O N F I D E N T I A L I N T E R V I E W \*

What this is all about

The youth of a community are in many respects, the most important element of our society.

There is a great deal written and said about this age group, but much of it is not based on facts.

This study is intended to supply important information about the opinions young people have about themselves.

I need your help for without it this study cannot be done. You can help best by answering the questions as clearly and carefully as possible. I would like your honest reaction to what adolescents think. You may think about the question and take your time in answering it. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what your opinions are. Different people will have different opinions.

This information is confidential. Your name will never be used and no one you know will know what you have said.

---

\*Appendix B reduced to one-third of original interview schedule which allowed adequate space for recording responses.



Now I would like to begin by asking you some questions about what would happen if a new girl came into your grade at school.

1. If a new girl came to East Lansing High School and wanted to get in with the popular girls, what would be the best way to do this? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What characteristics do you think a new girl would be judged on? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What characteristics do you use in choosing a friend? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you think it is difficult to make friends in East Lansing High School: \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes If yes, why do you think so? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. With the group you go around with, what are some things which are important to do in order to be popular? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What are the characteristics of the most popular girl in the ninth grade? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Who is the most popular girl in the ninth grade? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Does the clothing of the popular girls in the ninth grade differ from the clothing of the other girls? \_\_\_No \_\_\_ Yes If yes, how does it differ? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you think clothing influences a girl's popularity at East Lansing High School? \_\_\_\_\_No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. How do your clothes compare with other girls in school? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. How does the group you go around with compare in dress to other groups at school? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. What are the characteristics that are necessary to be the best dressed girl in school? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Who do you think is the best dressed girl in the ninth grade? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Is there anything about yourself you would like to change? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes. If yes, what would you change?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Anything else? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you think you would make a different impression on others if you could make these changes? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes, If yes, why do you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 If yes, do you think it would be easier to make friends if you made these changes? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes. If yes, why do you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
15. Whose approval of your clothing means the most to you?  
 Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
16. Do some clothes give you more self-confidence than others? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes. If yes, which ones? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
17. Do you think that the manner in which your best friend dresses is a reflection on you? By that I mean, do others judge you by the way your best friend dresses?  
 \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes. If yes, why do you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
18. Are there any girls in the ninth grade who do not dress right? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes. If yes, why do you think their clothes are not right? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 How would you describe these girls who do not dress right? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Can you tell me more about them? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Would you mind telling me who they are? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do they have many friends? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes
19. Do you have any friends that are not dressed right? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes. If yes, what's wrong with the way they dress? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

20. Have you ever come to school dressed differently from the other girls?        No        Yes. If yes, how did you feel when you were dressed differently from everyone at school? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

21. If you heard that everyone on "dress-up" day was going to wear a sweat shirt to school and at the last minute they changed their minds but you were not notified and wore one to school; what would you do when you saw them dressed differently? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How would you feel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now I am going to ask you several questions about yourself.

22. Are you usually satisfied with your general appearance?        Yes        No. If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

23. Are you usually satisfied with your hair?        Yes        No. If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

24. Are you usually satisfied with your complexion?        Yes        No. If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

25. Does your mother make suggestions about the clothes you wear to school?        No        Yes. If yes, do you follow her suggestions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what kind of suggestions does she make? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I would like you to answer the next four questions with one of these responses. (Give interviewee card with responses.)

26. Do you enjoy wearing your clothes if your friends don't like them?

       Almost always  
       Often  
       Sometimes  
       Seldom  
       Never

27. Do you feel ill at ease at school because of your clothing?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost always  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Seldom  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Never

28. Do others compliment you on the way you dress at school?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost always  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Seldom  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Never

29. Have you felt embarrassed about the clothes you wear to school?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost always  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Often  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Seldom  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Never

If you have felt embarrassed about your clothes, why?

---

I would like your opinion on the stories about these high school girls.

30. Jean is a new girl in the ninth grade in East Lansing High School. Her appearance is neat and clean. Her favorite combinations are plaid skirts and flowered blouses.

Would you consider her well-dressed?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No. Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Would you invite her into your group even if you do not feel she is well-dressed? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Do you think everyone in your group would agree with you? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Do you think all the groups in school would do the same as your group? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Why do you think so? \_\_\_\_\_

---

31. Michelle recently moved to East Lansing from California. Her first day at East Lansing High School she noticed that she was the only girl wearing colored bobby socks which were popular in California. She came home and told her mother that she had to buy heavy white socks so that she would be like all the other girls. Her mother thought this was rather foolish since all her colored socks matched her outfits.

Do you think it is important for Michelle to have bobby socks like the other girls?

\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes. Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

If she does not get heavy white bobby socks, what difference do you think it will make? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_

32. Lynn dresses very neatly for school. She has many expensive clothes; however, her hair is usually messy and unkempt.

Do you think messy hair plays an important part in Lynn's appearance?

\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes. Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think is more important--expensive clothes or near hair? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to have Lynn as your girl friend?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Would you invite her to run around with your group?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Do you think everyone in your group would agree with you?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No. Why do you think so? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think all the groups in school would do the same as your group?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No. Why do you think so? \_\_\_\_\_

## RATING APPEARANCE OF INTERVIEWEE

Clothing:       neat  
                   clean  
                   pressed  
                   fit  
                   appropriate for school  
                   fashionable

Figure:          tall  
                   average  
                   short

                  heavy  
                   average  
                   slender

Hair:            neat  
                   clean  
                   unkempt

Style--          simple  
                   elaborate

Complexion:     good  
                   fair  
                   poor

Make-up:	None	Some but not obvious	Obvious
----------	------	-------------------------	---------

Eyes

Lipstick

Make-up base

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