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SELF-CONCEPT OF APPEARANCE AND RELATED  
ADORNMENT BEHAVIOR OF NEGRO  
AND WHITE ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
Isabelle Mushka Lott  
1966

THESIS

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## ABSTRACT

### SELF-CONCEPT OF APPEARANCE AND RELATED ADORNMENT BEHAVIOR OF NEGRO AND WHITE ADOLESCENT GIRLS

by Isabelle Mushka Lott

The objective of this study was to explore the differences in appearance concerns between Negro and white teenage girls within an interactionist frame of reference. Specifically, appearance was examined under two aspects; namely, adornment and physical attributes. The primary independent variables employed were race, a Negro Race Rating and social class status.

Based upon the classical assumption that Negroes internalize the ideal Caucasoid type as their model image, four broad hypotheses were proposed:

1. Negroes will demonstrate less confidence in appearance than whites.
2. Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar referent relationships for appearance.
3. Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar grooming behavior.
4. Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar color-wearing preferences.



Accordingly, a questionnaire based on previous related research was developed to test the proposed hypotheses. The final instrument was administered to 349 tenth grade girls who attend a school in the Detroit school system.

To measure some of the variables involved, operational techniques were required. These included a Guttman type, unidimensional attitude index to measure self-conceptions of adornment, a ranked mean to ascertain self-conceptions regarding physical attributes, and Warner's seven point Occupational Ratings to indicate social status. Probability statistics utilizing the chi-square test of significance and the contingency coefficient were the statistical techniques used in this research.

The results of this investigation proved, contrary to the hypothesis, that Negroes possessed a higher self-conception of their physical attributes than did their white classmates. However, self-conceptions regarding adornment were not found to be associated with race. Further, teenagers of both races who possessed a high self-concept of their physical attributes also tended to possess a high self-concept regarding their adornment behavior.

Race was not related to the choice of significant others for adornment or the choice of a model for physical appearance emulation. However, when the choice of model for dress emulation was considered, Negroes tended to make less use of mass media models than whites.

In their grooming behavior, each race appeared to choose items which had the greatest potential for the aesthetic enhancement of their particular facial and tonsorial attributes. There was some indication that Negroes and whites were using a common aesthetic model for their grooming activity, i.e., the ideal Caucasoid type. Negroes, only, demonstrated an inhibited use of lipstick if the self-conception of the adequacy of their lips was low. Also, Negroes indicated greater usage of hair straightening techniques.

Color-wearing preferences of the races differed considerably in the choice of favorite colors but not in the least favorite colors. Although both races prefer blue and pink, Negro teenagers tended to prefer more of the warm, advancing colors, yellow and red, while whites showed some greater preference for the dark, dull shades of navy and black. Also, in all color choices, percentage distributions of the races differed.

Neither the Negro Race Rating nor the Occupational Ratings of Warner demonstrated any significant association with the dependent variables.

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicated that some of the proposed hypotheses were not entirely tenable, and others were completely untenable. And the findings demonstrate that certain definitive differences do exist between the races with respect to self-concept of appearance and related adornment behavior.

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ADORNMENT BEHAVIOR OF NEGRO AND  
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By

Isabelle Mushka Lott

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

Central to the cultural ethos of American society is the ideology of success.<sup>1</sup> Mass media and educational institutions place constant emphasis on this ideology.<sup>2</sup> Because individuals of all socio-economic backgrounds have access to these sources of information one can assume that, at some point in their lives, all individuals in American society become conscious of the value orientation to success.

Recently, social scientific literature has emphasized the fact that some minorities within the population have certain of their success channels blocked.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the mode of attaining recognition must be transferred to the

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<sup>1</sup>Robert K. Merton, "Social Structure and Anomie," American Sociological Review, 3 (October, 1938), p. 674; R. A. Cloward, and L. E. Ohlin, Delinquency and Opportunity, (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), p. 82.

<sup>2</sup>Cloward and Ohlin, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>Cloward and Ohlin, p. 150; P. Johnson, "Negro Reactions to Minority Group Status," American Minorities, ed. Milton L. Barron, (New York: Alfred A Knopf Co., 1957), p. 192; Joseph S. Himes, "Negro Teen-Age Culture," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 338 (November, 1961), pp. 92-93.



other channels which remain open. In addition to illegitimate or deviant modes, Merton and others have suggested that many additional legitimate modes of adjustment are possible, e.g., if the channel to occupational success is blocked, an individual might chose to obtain success through material competition.<sup>4</sup>

The American Negro is such a culturally stigmatized minority group. Because of his race the Negro's subordinate status is highly visible, and certain of his success channels are blocked.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is speculated that the Negro will be greatly concerned with his appearance and will attempt some demonstration of success through emphasis on material goods related to appearance, i.e., clothing and grooming apparatus.<sup>6</sup>

The purpose of this study is to investigate the manner in which the Negro is concerned with his appearance and appearance-related factors. To explore this area the researcher chose to compare a Negro and a white sample with respect to self-concept of appearance, referent relationships for appearance, grooming behavior and color preferences.

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<sup>4</sup>Merton, p. 676; Johnson, p. 200; Cloward and Ohlin, p. 86.

<sup>5</sup>Margaret Brenman, "The Relationship Between Minority Group Membership and Group Identification in a Group of Urban Middle Class Negro Girls," Journal of Social Psychology, 11 (1940), p. 181.

<sup>6</sup>Himes, pp. 93-94; Bertram P. Karen, The Negro Personality, (New York: The Springer Publishing Co., Inc., 1958), p. 8.

Throughout the study, the following definitions apply to these primary variables. The terms "self-concept" or "self-conception" connote "the directive attitude which defines and regulates the behavior of an individual in a social context."<sup>7</sup> The term "referent relationship" refers to "any relationship with which a person psychologically identifies himself."<sup>8</sup> "Grooming behavior" refers to the usage of items to artificially enhance the facial and tonsorial area<sup>9</sup> of the body. "Color preference" refers to a preference to wear, or not wear, the color, as differentiated from simply liking or disliking colors.

A sampling of tenth grade girls of the working class background was chosen for two reasons:

1. The majority of the Negro population is found within the working classes;<sup>10</sup> and
2. There is much evidence that appearance and self-concept are of crucial concern to the adolescent, especially to girls.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>M. Sherif, Group Relations at the Crossroads, ed. M. Sherif and M. O. Wilson, (New York: Harper, 1953), p. 20.

<sup>8</sup>Alfred Lindesmith and Anselm Strauss, Social Psychology, (New York: The Dryden Press, 1956), p. 24.

<sup>9</sup>Tonsorial area refers here specifically to hair on the head.

<sup>10</sup>Morton Grodzin, "The Metropolitan Area as a Racial Problem," American Race Relations Today, ed. Earl Raab, ("Anchor Books"; New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1962), p. 96; Johnson, p. 213.

<sup>11</sup>S. S. Silverman, Clothing and Appearance--Their

Specifically this study is designed to explore the appearance concerns of a Negro teenage girl as compared with that of a white teenage girl, both of whom come from a working class background in an urban northern community.

### Review of Literature

From the vast amount of literature, both academic and popular, one can obtain a neat stereotyped picture of the American Negro today. As a minority group member, by his racial heritage, he is forced into second class citizenry. Relegated to the lower classes of society, he is the last-hired and the first-fired. Unstable incomes breed unstable marriages, female-headed households, fatherless children, poor housing, poorly brought up and educated children, in a vicious, never-ending circle. This, coupled with the cultural background of slavery and its deteriorating effect on the familial structure of the American Negro, has wide implications.

These elements, coupled with others inherent in being born into this particular minority group, cause one to wonder how the Negro views his physical uniqueness.

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Psychological Implications for Teen-Age Girls, (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1945), p. 23; James S. Coleman, "Peers and the Adolescent Culture," Finding a Place in Contemporary Mass Society: A Problem of Roles, (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1962), p. 70.

It is the Negro's racial heritage which forms the highly visable segregating factor in his life.

Although numerous studies have been carried out on the Negro population, relatively few have been found to deal directly with the appearance self-conceptions of the Negro. Many have fragmentary references after the fact. Others deal with some part of the area of appearance self-conceptions but not with the whole frame of reference.

For instance, in a hospital situation with almost a thousand male Negro psychotic patients, Myers and Yochelson<sup>12</sup> were amazed to find that delusional material involving the denial of color and ancestry was not uncommon. They concluded that the insecurity involved in being a Negro necessitates the development of certain security operations or expressions. One such security expression is the desire for whiteness which manifests itself "in the social ordering of the Negro community, in the use of skin lighteners and hair straighteners, in the dreams and fantasies of the Negro, in the phenomenon of 'passing,' and also in the psychotic reactions of the Negro patient."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Henry J. Myers and Leon Yochelson, "Color Denial in the Negro," Psychiatry, 11 (1948), pp. 45-46.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 39.



Other studies in the earlier 1940's dwelt on the aspect of skin color values. Parrish,<sup>14</sup> Seeman<sup>15</sup> and Bovell<sup>16</sup> all noted the advantages and prestige attached to "whiteness" and the lowness attached to "blackness." Parrish's study was carried out within the Negro community and encompassed teachers, sororities and Negro employees, while Seeman worked with third and fourth grade children. Few authors fail to make similar observations. The classic sociological study by Dollard<sup>17</sup> states that white skin represents full personal dignity and full participation in the American society, while dark skin represents limitation and inferiority. Negroes are sufficiently a part of American society to want to be fully human as Americans and, thus, prefer to be as light as possible. Myrdal,<sup>18</sup> too, remarked on the permeation of cliques, clubs and social life with color preference.

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<sup>14</sup>Charles H. Parrish, "Color Names and Color Notions," Journal of Negro Education, 15 (1946), p. 13.

<sup>15</sup>M. Seeman, "Skin Color Values in Three All Negro School Classes," American Sociological Review, 11 (1946), p. 315.

<sup>16</sup>Gilbert Bovell, "Psychological Considerations of Color Conflicts Among Negroes," Psychoanalytic Review, 30 (1943), p. 447.

<sup>17</sup>John Dollard, Caste and Class in a Southern Town, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1937).

<sup>18</sup>Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1944).

The Clarks<sup>19</sup> have found that as a result of this color preference and color denial within the Negro population, Negro preschool children have problems of identifying themselves correctly in terms of race. Children as young as three years of age were shown to be able to recognize the concept of race. But Negro children were shown in many instances to tend to prefer white dolls and friends, or even identify themselves as white, and/or refuse to acknowledge that they were Negro. Kenneth Clark further feels that the most serious injury seems to be in the concept of self-worth which is directly related to the skin color.<sup>20</sup>

Brenman,<sup>21</sup> working shortly after Dollard and somewhat prior to the Clarks, also found confusion of racial identification. She explored a group of twenty-five urban middle-class Negro girls via intensive interview, life histories and direct observations. She noted these young adults had either a keen sense of race awareness or a conscious rejection of this awareness. In the latter group she found that this rejection of race awareness was more often closely connected to strong identification or association with whites rather than simply connected to a light

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<sup>19</sup>Kenneth Clark and Mamie P. Clark, "Racial Identification and Preference in Negro Children," Readings in Social Psychology, ed. Eleanor Maccoby et al., (New York: Hold, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1958), pp. 602-611.

<sup>20</sup>Kenneth B. Clark, Dark Ghetto (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1965), p. 65.

<sup>21</sup>Brenman, p. 181.

personal skin pigmentation. This would seem to be an indication that referent relations may be more significant than skin pigmentation in some cases.

[These are examples of research which show that throughout his life, the color of his skin may prove to be a source of difficulty for the Negro with respect to his adjustment. This alleged stigma may cause feelings of inferiority, shame and self-hatred. Concurrent with this is the obsession with "whiteness" which develops in childhood and continues into adulthood.<sup>22</sup>

It is commonly held that the prejudice Negroes experience affects not only their concern with their skin color, but also other race-related physical features. The widespread use of hair straighteners and skin bleachers may illustrate the devaluation the Negro has for his physical features.<sup>23</sup> A perusal through recent popular Negro publications may yield anywhere from twenty to thirty advertisements promoting the use of these cosmetics.

However, finding studies which deal explicitly with a self-evaluation of physical attributes by the Negro, as compared with his white counterpart, has been an impossibility. There are, however, some anthropometric studies

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<sup>22</sup>St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City ("Harper Torchbooks"; New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), pp 495-506.

<sup>23</sup>Leonard Broom and Norval Glenn, Transformation of the Negro American (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 34; Clark, Dark Ghetto, p. 64.

which deal with ascertaining differences in physical attributes between Negroes and whites. Rose,<sup>24</sup> in reviewing studies concerned with ascertaining these racial differences, cited Herskovits' study<sup>25</sup> as the best study available, since Herskovits tried to determine the representativeness of his sample--an objective overlooked by other researchers. Rose, nonetheless, attempted a summation of all those physical traits reported by more than one anthropologist to distinguish the American Negro<sup>26</sup> from old Americans.<sup>27</sup> He reported that, at best, the following descriptive statements are qualitative rather than quantitative. This is, they are concerned with average differences of which neither the actual quantity of difference or deviation from the average is known.

Thus the average Negro, compared to the average white man in America, seems to exhibit the following physical traits: head slightly longer and narrower; cranial capacity

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<sup>24</sup>Arnold Rose, The Negro in America: The Condensed Version of Gunnar Myrdal's An American Dilemma ("Harper Torchbooks"; New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1964), p. 49.

<sup>25</sup>Melville J. Herskovits, The Anthropometry of the American Negro (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930).

<sup>26</sup>Rose, p. 50. The American Negro was defined as the average individual whose traits are predominantly mulatto since the mulatto forms the majority of the American Negro population.

<sup>27</sup>Rose, p. 49. The Old American was defined as "the white population most often used for furnishing a standard set of measurements. This group is composed mainly of Americans whose ancestors came from Britain, Germany and Scandinavia, and includes a disproportionate number of persons of high socio-economic status. It is not at all representative of the general American population."

slightly less; hair wavy, curly, frizzly or wooly; distribution of hair less; interpupillary distance greater; nose broader; nose shorter; nasal depth greater; external ear shorter; lips thicker; prognathism (jaw projection) greater; torso shorter; stature shorter; pelvis narrower and shorter; arms and legs longer; more sweat glands; skin with greater amount of black pigment; a larger proportion of brown eyes, black hair and sacral pigment spots.

Many of these traits represent only slight variation between the races, nearly all overlap in both races. Other traits, although sometimes nearly lacking in some individual Negroes, are outstanding and easily visible in most Negroes, i.e., dark skin, woolly hair, broad nose, thick lips and prognathism. These latter form the basic traits of the Negro's "social visibility."<sup>28</sup>

The owner-operator of a charm school for Negroes<sup>29</sup> felt that along with skin color and hair quality differences in grooming, the Negro girl had two other problems. One was the difference of her conformation which made it impossible for the Negro girl to develop the ideal white figure (bust and hips equal in width, waist ten inches smaller). From her Powers Charm School training she had gleaned that the Negro buttock was narrower in width but more protruding in

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<sup>28</sup>Rose, pp. 49-50.

<sup>29</sup>Interview with Lottie Barnes, Charmed Circle Finishing School, Detroit, Michigan, February 20, 1965.

derriere. This resulted in a larger all around hip measurement.

The second problem was the Negro myth with conditioned Negroes to the idea that they were not to be seen. To achieve this end her clients felt the darker their skin, the darker the color they should wear. Along with this was the stigma attached to red or bright colors and as a result she found it difficult to promote their wearability.

Conclusive evidence regarding this particular theory of hip conformation was difficult to find. For example, Rose, as previously noted, would substantiate the narrowness of hip but not the derriere protrusion.<sup>30</sup> LaBarre seemed to confirm the hip protrusion but failed to mention narrowness in width. He stated that both in the lumbar curve in the small of the back and in buttock protrusion some Negroids surpass all other human races. As an example he used the South African Negro, the Hottentot, whose "buttocks project from the lumbar almost horizontally, like a shelf."<sup>31</sup> From this it is inferred that LaBarre was speaking of the Negro race in general and not of the American Negro to which Rose referred.

References on Negro color-wearing preferences were, again, random and somewhat incongruous. Himes referred to "field reports from all regions" which indicated that the

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<sup>30</sup>Rose, pp. 49-50.

<sup>31</sup>Weston LaBarre, The Human Animal (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 137.

dress, grooming and ornamentation of Negro teenagers were extreme and faddish. Girls were reported to wear heavy eye make-up, light matching shades of lipstick and nail polish, usually chosen to match some color of the outfit which may have included bright unharmonious colors.<sup>32</sup> This contradicted the information obtained from the personal interview with the operator of the charm school.

Rose, on the other hand, tended to feel that love for the gaudy, the bizarre, the ostentatious, was another trait, connected with emotionalism, which was exaggerated in reference to the Negro. He felt that most Negroes cannot economically afford to be ostentatious and that others, who can, prefer to be conservative in dress and public behavior.<sup>33</sup>

Pettigrew also referred to the Negro's usage of ostentatious clothing or conspicuous consumption as a means of symbolic status striving, i.e., the oppressed seek the culturally-defined tinsel facade of success but not true success itself.<sup>34</sup> He felt that this was a form of reaction to oppression. This symbolic status striving could be termed a "reaction toward the oppressor," i.e., and integration wish, or could be "movement against the oppressor," i.e., an aggressive assertion of personal dignity.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Himes, p. 94.

<sup>33</sup>Rose, p. 303.

<sup>34</sup>Thomas F. Pettigrew, A Profile of the Negro American (Princeton, N. J.: D. VanNostrand Co. Inc., 1964), p. 34.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

Broom and Glenn state that most Negroes of different socio-economic levels do spend more for clothing than whites of comparable levels. Contrary to popular impression, there was no firm evidence that they buy more luxury or status items. However, these authors do feel it would be feasible to expect more conspicuous consumption among Negroes of middle and high income levels, since most have only recently moved up from lower levels. Also, the Negro may feel a need to compensate for the low status which his physical appearance symbolizes. They conclude, though, that the evidence is tenuous.<sup>36</sup>

Frazier contended that conspicuous consumption was central to the Negro middle class and, in this, he agreed with the projection of Broom and Glenn stated previously. Frazier believed this to be a desperate attempt by the Negro to gain recognition within the ghetto since it was denied him in the larger society.<sup>37</sup>

Prior to and during the 1930's, studies regarding color preferences made no reference to wearing preferences but were solely concerned with esthetic preferences. Of those which considered racial differences three are found applicable: Hurlock,<sup>38</sup> who studied 400 Negro and white

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<sup>36</sup>Broom and Glenn, pp. 28-29.

<sup>37</sup>E. Franklin Frazier, Black Bourgeoisie (New York: The Free Press, 1957), pp. 200-208.

<sup>38</sup>Elizabeth B. Hurlock, "Color Preferences of White and Negro Children," Journal of Comparative Psychology, 7 (1927), pp. 389-404.



children; Mercer,<sup>39</sup> who studied some 2,000 Negroes and whites of various ages; and Eysenck,<sup>40</sup> who made a comparison of about fifty studies, including racial studies, completed up to 1940.

Comparison of these studies is difficult since it is not clear how they relate in methodology--especially with respect to their techniques of questionnaire development, interview construction and methods of observation. Nonetheless, their conclusions are strikingly similar. Mercer found some differences between Negroes and whites which were only slightly significant. Hurlock reported insignificant differences between Negroes and whites. Eysenck proposed no difference in color preferences among all races of man.

These studies by Hurlock, Mercer and Eysenck were used as the prime guide to this study, since their conclusions were based on empirical research. The previously cited writings of Pettigrew, Rose, Broom and Glenn, Clark and Frazier, while highly respected, did not have an empirical base for their speculations regarding color-wearing preferences. Instead they were based on impressions gained from general knowledge of the American Negro.

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<sup>39</sup>Florence M. Mercer, "Color Preferences of 1006 Negroes," Journal of Comparative Psychology, 5 (1925), pp. 109-146.

<sup>40</sup>H. J. Eysenck, "A Critical and Experimental Study of Colour Preferences," American Journal of Psychology, 54 (1941), pp. 385-394.

This review, then, permits the following deductions: the physical appearance of the Negro is the basis for his discrimination. This causes problems for personal adjustment. He feels inferior, he finds it difficult to identify with his race, and this tends to devalue his physical appearance. This frustration manifests itself in compensatory actions. Where appearance is concerned, facial and tonsorial cosmetics are used to assume white characteristics, along with large quantities of clothing to simulate success. The white race has become the Negro's model or referent for appearance.

However, some projections for the present day Negro should be added. Recent developments have enhanced the Negro's self-esteem and may have altered his perception of a seemingly hostile world.<sup>41</sup> Broom and Glenn list the contributing factors as: "the emergence of the free Negro states in Africa, the publicity given to the scientific view that Negroes are not innately inferior, and the more benevolent policies of the federal and many state governments."<sup>42</sup> In addition, they concur that "increased self-esteem . . . has tended to make the Negro ambitious, more optimistic, and less willing to submit to discrimination, and may lead to a revaluation of racial characteristics."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Pettigrew, pp. 6-15.

<sup>42</sup>Broom and Glenn, p. 34.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

Pettigrew,<sup>44</sup> Broom and Glenn,<sup>45</sup> and Clark<sup>46</sup> related this devaluation of the Negro appearance directly to his self-esteem or concept of self-worth. Thus, to measure the amount of this devaluation it would seem logical to use some measure of self-esteem which is related to appearance. However, in a recent conference regarding the Negro self-concept, Gramps<sup>47</sup> commented on the work of Wylie<sup>48</sup> on self-concept:

Interestingly enough, a recent comprehensive review and evaluation of the research in the area of self-concept does not include any discussion of research that considers race as an aspect of self-concept, though research relating to other factors, such as sex, religious affiliation, social-class status, is discussed. Blindness to, or avoidance of, the implications of the caste system on the self-concept of the Negro, and of the white, which is thus seen to occur at the most- and least-sophisticated levels of society, is symptomatic of the difficulty in dealing with color discrimination in American life and thought.<sup>49</sup>

Recent research dealing with Negro youth does give us some insight on self-conceptions in general, though few deal directly with self-concept of appearance, per se. Lott and Lott, in an extensive southern study, showed that even

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<sup>44</sup>Pettigrew, p. 9.

<sup>45</sup>Broom and Glenn, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup>Clark, Dark Ghetto, p. 65.

<sup>47</sup>Jean D. Gramps, "The Self-Concept: Basis for Reeducation of Negro Youth," Negro Self-Concept, W. C. Kvaraceus, et al. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1965), pp. 11-30.

<sup>48</sup>Ruth C. Wylie, The Self-Concept (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1961).

<sup>49</sup>Gramps, pp. 14-15.

when innate capacities and higher socio-economic familiar position should indicate higher achievement motivation, Negro youth selected lower goals and performed below their capacity levels. Lower class status and lower caste seem to go hand-in-hand.<sup>50</sup>

Campbell, Yarrow and Yarrow felt that the self-perceptions of children, Negroes especially, was significantly affected by an integrated camp situation. While another study by Fishman gave indications of a lowering of a Negro child's view of himself after school desegregation.<sup>51</sup>

In a recent Master's thesis, Morse compared Negro and Caucasian eighth graders for self-concept of ability, significant others and school achievement. This study bore out a symbolic interactionist based theory which states that self-concept of ability is a functionally limiting factor in school achievement. Of specific importance here are the following findings: Although Negro students indicated a higher level of motivation to achieve, their mean score for all actual achievement variables was significantly lower than whites. And on all but three variables investigated,

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<sup>50</sup>Albert J. Lott and Bernice E. Lott, Negro and White Youth (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1963), p. 163.

<sup>51</sup>John D. Campbell, Leon J. Yarrow and Marian Radke Yarrow, "A Study of Adaptation to a New Social Situation; "Acquisition of New Norms: A Study of Racial Desegregation"; Personal and Situational Variable in Adaptation to Change"; and "Leadership and Interpersonal Change," The Journal of Social Issues, 14, No. 1 (1958), pp. 3-59.

the mean scores obtained by Caucasian students were significantly greater than the mean scores obtained by Negro students.<sup>52</sup>

In a brief consideration of the significance of ethnic group status and self-esteem Rosenberg made unexpected findings. He found the self-esteem of Negroes to be only slightly below that of the whites--certainly "not nearly as low as one might expect if general societal status were a determinant of self-esteem"<sup>53</sup> Upon further investigation of his data, he found no unusual social characteristics which could have biased the findings. Indeed, the Negroes in the sample were predominantly of lower class status, had poorly educated parents, were less likely to be taking academic course programs and came from small towns.<sup>54</sup>

It is perhaps significant that the two latter studies, which singled out the Negro in relation to self conceptions, used self-rating scales based on the interactionist approach. This approach "makes clear that the individual's self-appraisal is to an important extent derived from reflected appraisals--his interpretation of others' reactions

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<sup>52</sup>Richard J. Morse, "Self-Concept of Ability, Significant Others and Social Achievement of Eighth Grade Students: A Comparative Investigation of Negro and Caucasian Students," (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Education, Michigan State University, 1963).

<sup>53</sup>Morris Rosenberg, Society and the Adolescent Self-Image (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 303.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 304.

to him."<sup>55</sup> In addition to these two sociological studies, a recent psychopathological study of Negroes by Kardiner and Ovesey<sup>56</sup> used this phenomenon as its basis. Indeed, hardly an authority failed to mention the fact that the racial prejudice of the American culture effects a negative self-valuation within the Negro. Though not always utilizing an interactionist framework, few authorities would negate this as a reflexive appraisal on the part of the American Negro.

#### Focus of the Study

That the literature is somewhat contradictory in many of the areas with which this study is concerned is evident. Therefore, a basic assumption is necessary as a premise to this research. For purposes of this study we shall assume that American culture uses as its model image the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. This is the model which the Negro internalizes but which he cannot possibly attain. In an attempt to gain some measure of success most Negroes will conform where possible to the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant standard of appearance.

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>56</sup>Abram Kardiner and Lionel Ovesey, The Mark of Oppression: Explorations in the Personality of the American Negro, (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1962).

The basic objective of this study is to determine whether any difference exists in appearance concerns of the Negro and white teenage girl. Specifically, comparison will be made of their:

- a. self conceptions regarding appearance,
- b. referent relationships for appearance,
- c. grooming behavior, and
- d. color-wearing preferences.

The broad hypotheses guiding the study are as follows:

1. Self Concept of Appearance:

Negroes will demonstrate less confidence in appearance than whites.

Forced to accept subordinate status due to his race, the Negro will transfer his inferiority feelings to his race and his appearance. This is evident in the fact that Caucasian rather than Negroid features and skin color have been apparently valued by the Negro race in America for centuries.

2. Referent Relationships for Appearance:

Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar referent relationships for appearance.

Significant others and models of emulation for appearance will be similar to that of the American teenage culture rather than peculiar to the particular race of the teenager in the American Culture.

3. Grooming Behavior:

Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar grooming behavior.

Negroes will emulate whites in their grooming behavior.

4. Color-Wearing Preferences:

Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar color-wearing preferences.

There is some indication in the literature that there is no difference between the races in simple color preferences. When the aspect of wearing a color enters, Negro preference is likely to be similar to that of whites, based on fashion preferences or fads popularized by the mass media.



## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

#### Selection of Method

In formulating the research method for this study, careful consideration was given to a study of the sub-cultures of both the Negro and the adolescent. In particular, self-attitudes, appearance concerns, referent relationships for appearance and grooming behavior of the female sex were considered.<sup>1</sup>

Related studies were analyzed in terms of their data procurement devices. As a result a standardized, group-administered questionnaire was chosen as the most amenable research instrument. The main considerations governing this decision were as follows:

1. The information sought was of a personal and highly sensitive nature. Impersonality of the research device was necessary to allow respondents anonymity and hence to reduce the possibility of bias.

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<sup>1</sup>Being part of a larger study, these were the areas of particular concern to this thesis. The larger study included aspirations for education, occupation and spouse; self-conceptions and involvements in social ability, family relationships and academic ability.

2. A quantity of specific information was desirable from a large number of respondents, since broad statistical analysis was intended.
3. The questionnaire is commonly used in studies of the adolescent, due to the facility with which it can be used in the school situation.

Thus, a questionnaire was the most feasible instrument to employ.

#### Development of the Questionnaire

Data were collected relevant to the problem area through the following methods:

1. Insights were gained from related substantive studies, particularly those of Vener, Bjorngaard, Coleman, Brookover, and Parker and Kleiner.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Arthur M. Vener, "Adolescent Orientations to Clothing: A Social-Psychological Interpretation" (unpublished Doctoral thesis, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Michigan State University, 1957); Arlene Bjorngaard, "The Relationship of Social Class and Social Acceptance to Clothing and Appearance of a Selected Group of Ninth Grade Girls" (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Textiles, Clothing and Related Arts, Michigan State University, 1962); James S. Coleman, The Adolescent Society (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961); Wilbur B. Brookover, et al., "The Relationship of Self-Images to Achievement in Junior High School Subjects" (East Lansing, Michigan: Office of Research and Publications, Michigan State University, 1962); Seymour Parker and Robert J. Kleiner, Mental Illness in the Urban Negro Community (New York: The Free Press, 1966).

2. Informal interviews were conducted with selected Negroes on the topics of appearance, clothes, grooming and appearance referents. Those interviewed were Negro coeds of undergraduate and graduate levels, a Negro sociologist, and an owner-operator of a charm school for Negro girls of working class status.
3. A sampling of magazines for the Negro public was collected. The purpose was to gain insight into appearance-related ideas being promoted for the Negro consumer.
4. For many years, direct observation of adolescent clothing and appearance have been a focal professional concern of this researcher.

From the above a file of questions which would probe the areas of concern was developed. Several drafts of the questionnaire were revised before an actual pre-test schedule was reached. In its various stages the questionnaire was evaluated by the following types of people: professors in the areas of Textiles and Clothing, and Sociology, graduate students in Textiles, Clothing and Related Arts and residents of Owen Graduate Center, undergraduate women of undeclared majors, adolescent girls of the researcher's acquaintance and the Research Supervisor of the Detroit Public School System.

During its creation, care was taken to make the instrument applicable to adolescent girls of working class background. Precautions were also taken to avoid any racial implications in the wording and the structure of the questions. This was necessary since school systems are reluctant to participate in studies with racial overtones due to the current sensitivity of this area.

Since this thesis is but a segment of a total study, the questionnaire developed by the researcher included items additional to those explored here. The original design was established to obtain as much information as feasible on topics of particular concern to the Negro teenager. Additional questionnaire items attempted to probe other self-conceptions, aspiration-expectations and involvements in social, familial and academic areas.

### The Pretest

The schedule was administered to approximately forty tenth grade girls (two classes) in a Lansing, Michigan, High School. Of the forty girls, thirty-five were white and only five were Negro. The school was situated in a working class, racially mixed neighborhood. Thus, except for the racial percentage within the pretest group, these factors simulated the desired controls for the study. It was recognized that having only five Negroes take the pretest may have biased the results. Nonetheless, upon examination, the results were assumed to be adequate.

The purposes of the pretest were to determine:

1. The length of time needed to complete the questionnaire.
2. The meaning implied by each item.
3. The response distributions for specific items.
4. The specific responses to open ended questions.
5. The necessity of visuals for the color preference items.
6. The feasibility of the race coding when the questionnaires were handed in.
7. The familiarity of the researcher with the administration of the questionnaire.

To achieve these ends, students were encouraged to ask questions during the pretest when any item or portion of an item was unclear to them. Also, following the pretest, the class was interviewed as a group regarding the readability and understandability of each question. Students were encouraged to write any additional comments next to the particular questions or on the back of the questionnaires.

The pretest resulted in the following observations and actions. Several items were revised in wording or format. The length of time required to administer the questionnaire ranged from fifteen to twenty-five minutes. The open-end items did elicit usable responses. It was decided that visuals were not necessary for color preference ratings. While the questionnaire was being answered, the researcher

did have sufficient time to make decisions prior to the race rating. This, coupled with the fact that individuals completed the questionnaire at different rates and handed them in sporadically meant that the researcher had adequate time to make this judgement. In all, the questionnaire was well received and proved to be quite satisfactory for the research requirements.

### Reliability

Reliability of a questionnaire refers to the extent to which repeated administrations of the instrument would yield the same results. In other words, reliability is a problem of stability.<sup>3</sup> In this case, the reliability of the questionnaire would depend on the extent to which repeated administrations to similar groups would result in similar response data. Therefore, because this questionnaire was administered only once, the reliability was not directly ascertainable. However, other studies have employed identical or similar items to those used in this study and have obtained comparable results.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the responses obtained from the final pretest questionnaire were comparable to those of the final schedule, even though some alteration did occur as a result of the pretest. /Furthermore,

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<sup>3</sup>W. J. Goode and P. K. Hatt, Methods of Social Research (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1952), pp. 152-161.

<sup>4</sup>Coleman, Vener, Bjorngaard, Brookover, Parker and Kleiner studies.

the fact that some of the items were scalable provides evidence of internal consistency and, therefore, some degree of reliability.

### Validity

The validity of an instrument refers to "the degree to which a measurement procedure measures what it purports to measure."<sup>5</sup> According to Verner "for all science, validity can be determined only through reliability. In short, the findings of a study are valid only to the extent that the procedures employed in the study can be repeated and comparable conclusions result."<sup>6</sup> As was stated above, this study can claim limited proof of reliability and, therefore, limited validity.

Nonetheless, it is assumed that the method of developing the questionnaire contributed to validity. This assumption was based on the fact that following the pretest and during the development of the instrument, a number of adolescents, both Negro and white, were interviewed to determine whether or not their interpretation of the questions was the same as that intended by the researchers. Questionnaire items were subsequently modified in order to

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<sup>5</sup>Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations (New York: The Dryden Press, 1951), p. 109.

<sup>6</sup>Vener, p. 27.

convey the intended interpretation. As was previously mentioned, the responses obtained from the pretest questionnaire were very similar to those of the final instrument.

### The Community Setting

The larger community from which this sample was derived was the city of Detroit. Located in the southeastern corner of Michigan, Detroit is the largest major city in the state. It is the center of a highly industrialized area where the major industries are associated with automobile manufacturing.

Since this kind of community is a typical residential area for large numbers of Negroes, Detroit was an ideal choice for this particular research. The fact that 486,996 out of a total population of 1,670,144 were nonwhites as of 1960, further substantiates the choice. Residence in this community offers the Negro many advantages, among which better income and education are of major importance.

In 1960, nonwhites of Detroit possessed more education than other nonwhites in urban Michigan or urban United States. Nonwhites 25 years of age and over had completed a median of 9.2 years of school in Detroit but only 9.1 years of school in urban Michigan and 8.7 years of school in urban United States. The education of the general population of Detroit though considerably depressed from that of urban Michigan and urban United States, was still



above that attained by the Negro. The median years of school completed by all persons 25 years of age and over was 10.8 in Detroit but 11.0 in urban Michigan and 11.1 in urban United States.

Nonwhites in Detroit have better incomes than other nonwhites in the nation and comparable incomes to those of the state. In 1960, nonwhite, urban families received a median income of \$4,366 in Detroit, \$4,444 in Michigan and \$3,711 in the nation. Differential treatment is again realized when the statistics for the general populace are viewed. The median income for the urban family is \$6,482 in Detroit, \$6,590 in Michigan and \$6,166 in the United States. Thus, even though the margins between the races are narrowed in Detroit, nonwhites have still not achieved full comparability.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>The statistics for the general United States discussed within the Community Setting were obtained from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of Population: 1960, General Social and Economic Characteristics, United States Summary, Final Report PC (1)-1C (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962). The median urban family incomes were obtained from page 1-225. The median years of school were obtained from page 1-207. Statistics for Michigan and Detroit were obtained from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of Population: 1960, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Michigan, Final Report PC (1)-24C (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962). The median income of urban Michigan families was obtained from page 24-206. The median years of school of urban Michigan residents was obtained from page 24-191. Income and education for the total population of Detroit residents were on page 24-260 while comparable statistics for the nonwhite population of Detroit residents were on page 24-273. Total and nonwhite populations of Detroit were obtained from page 24-224.

### Selection and Description of the Sample

Six major factors guided the selection of this sample: race, racial composition of the school, size of community, social class, age/grade and sex.

#### Race

With respect to race, the most important variable, two controls were attempted. The first was to obtain equal representation of both the white and Negro races. This was almost exactly obtained since the final sample contained 172 whites and 177 Negroes. The second control was the coding of the Negro students according to the degree of Negroid characteristics. The Negroes were classified on a numerical continuum of one to five. The number one denoted a very Caucasian-looking Negro, typified by light skin, straight or wavy dark hair, narrow to medium-broad, high-bridged nose and thin or moderately thin lips. The number five denoted an ideal-type of Negro individual, typified by a very dark skin, curly or woolly hair, a broad or flat nose and with some prognathism and thick lips. This rating was assigned by the researcher after each respondent returned her questionnaire. This method was suggested by a physical anthropologist as a means of drawing minimal attention, if any, to the coding process. In an attempt to exclude bias, all coding was done by one researcher.<sup>8</sup> The

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<sup>8</sup>Due to the profession of the researcher, a Home Economist specializing in the area of clothing and textiles,

subjective element of this coding was recognized but any rating of this sort is still an observation and subjective regardless of other aids used to assist the observer, e.g., Munsells' color chips. Very few individuals were rated at one and five levels, most fell between levels two and four. Thus, for purposes of analysis it became more meaningful to combine level one with two and level four with five.

### Racial Composition of the School

For the purposes of the study an equal representation of both races was necessary to give a stable basis of comparison. Due to limitations of time and funding, choosing one school which could supply equal representation in adequate quantity became desirable. It is realized that this purposive sample may not be representative since a percentage of 80/20 is more typical of the racial distribution within Detroit schools. This limitation was accepted in light of the advantages offered in data collection.

### Size of Community

A community of over 100,000 in population was chosen because this is the most typical size of community in which the American Negro presently resides.<sup>9</sup> Detroit was, therefore, a desirable and most convenient choice.

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it was assumed that an analytical approach to appearance had been cultivated. Through further reading and personal observation the researcher attempted to augment this facility in order to achieve the capacity to rate physical race characteristics more accurately.

<sup>9</sup>Grodzins, pp. 85-123.

## Social Class

An attempt was made to obtain the majority of the sample from the common man level. This was designated by Warner as the lower-middle class and the upper-lower class.<sup>10</sup> This decision was reached for two reasons. First, it was desirable to exclude the effects of economic deprivation which might be characteristic of the lower-lower class. This was fairly well achieved in this sample since only seven percent of the whites and eight and one-half percent of the Negroes stated that their family received support from social security, pension or welfare agencies in addition to the income of the main wage earner of the family. Of the total sample, 70.2 percent fell into the fourth, fifth and sixth levels of Warner's Occupation Ratings, while only 11.5 percent fell into Warner's seventh and lowest level. Further, there was no significant difference between the races in the proportion who received agency assistance or the percentage found in each occupational level.

The second reason was to make the sample group more representative of a fairly large percentage of American Negroes. The common man level satisfied this requirement

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<sup>10</sup>Lloyd Warner, Marchia Meeker and Kenneth Eells, Social Class in America (New York: Harper and Row, 1960).

since almost half of the Negro community falls into the middle classes while the remaining half falls into the lower classes.<sup>11</sup>

Since authorities have agreed that occupational status is the major element in determining social class status,<sup>12</sup> the occupational status of the adolescent's main source of support was considered a valid criterion for delineating social class status for the purpose of this study. Warner's seven point Occupational Ratings of his Index of Status Characteristics was chosen to rate the social class background of the adolescent.<sup>13</sup> This index has been shown to be the most reliable when compared with other stratification indexes.<sup>14</sup>

The researcher is aware of the claims made that there exists in America a Negro class system separate from that of the white.<sup>15</sup> The data illustrated this possibility

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<sup>11</sup>Office of Policy Planning and Research, United States Department of Labor, The Negro Family, the Case for National Action (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 29.

<sup>12</sup>J. A. Kahl and J. A. Davis, "A Comparison of Indexes of Socio-Economic Status," American Sociological Review, 20, No. 3 (June, 1955), pp. 317-325.

<sup>13</sup>W. Lloyd Warner, et al., p. 185. This rating is one of four ratings of Warner's Index of Status Characteristics measuring social class status. Note, also, that no one of the other three, namely source of income, house type and dwelling area, is given as much weight as occupation when computing the Index.

<sup>14</sup>Kahl and Davis, pp. 317-325.

<sup>15</sup>E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro in the United States (rev. ed.; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1957), pp. 289-305.

may exist for this sample in that there was a significant difference in education between the races even though no significant difference existed between the races in relation to occupation. The significantly higher education of the Negro in relation to occupation also tended to support the theory of differential opportunity previously stated in the Introduction to Chapter I. Since some basis for comparison was necessary and since no interracial system of classification was known to the researcher, it was decided to combine both the Negroes and whites into a single rating system.

#### Age/Grade

To minimize scope, the study was limited to one grade. A grade rather than a particular age was chosen because it facilitated data collection. The tenth grade was chosen for two reasons. First, this age/grade has been shown to be quite concerned about self-conception.<sup>16</sup> Second, after this grade, school dropout is found to increase sharply. Since the dropouts are primarily of the lower classes, a class bias favoring the upper class results.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Coleman, et al., "Peers and the Adolescent Culture," Finding a Place in Contemporary Mass Society: A Problem of Roles, p. 73.

<sup>17</sup>Verner, p. 29.

## Sex

Only girls were chosen mainly to control the size of the study and also because of the researcher's greater familiarity with their concerns and habits.

## Other Background Factors

Of particular interest to this study were three other factors which are commonly stated as characteristic of the Negro population. These were residence in urban centers, recent migration from a rural environment and large families.<sup>18</sup>

Urban residence proved typical of both races of this sample. There was no significant difference between their residential background. Over 80 percent of both races spent most of their lives in a city like Detroit or Chicago, and only approximately three percent of both races spent most of their lives in a small town or rural area. This further seemed to indicate a minimum of mobility or of recent migration from rural areas.

A significant difference between the races in the numbers of brothers and sisters substantiated the claim that Negroes come from larger families. Thirty-two percent of the Negroes as compared with 13 percent of the whites claimed more than two sisters, while 36 percent of the Negroes as compared with 15 percent of the whites acknowledged more

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<sup>18</sup>Grodzins, pp. 85-183.

than two brothers. Thus, while class level might be augmented by the higher education of the parents of the Negro sample, the standard of living might be lowered for the Negro due to the larger family size.

### The Sample

Since most tenth graders of the selected Detroit school participated in physical education classes, arrangements were made to administer the questionnaire in place of one day's schedule of gym classes. Thereby a sample of 349 tenth graders was obtained from the high school.

The researcher administered the instrument with the help of one assistant. Upon completion of the questionnaire, students were asked to return their questionnaires in person to the researcher. This facilitated the race coding of each questionnaire. Due to the sensitivity of the nature of the research, the exact nature of the coding was not made known to either teachers or students.

### Method of Analysis

#### Measurement of Variables

To facilitate the testing of the proposed hypothesis indexes were employed to measure the variables involved in these hypotheses. These measurements were developed and based on 100 questionnaires pulled randomly from the sample prior to coding.



### Self-Conception of Physical Attributes

To achieve a unit measurement of the self-conceptions of physical attributes for each individual, mean scores were taken on questionnaire items 80 through 105. These scores were then placed into a continuum of twelve categories of equal size. This continuum was further collapsed into four categories of high, medium high, medium and low self-conceptions.<sup>19</sup> In the analysis the twelve categories were termed the Mean Rank of Physical Attributes, while the collapsed version is referred to as the High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes.

### Self-Conception of Adornment

It was felt that there were three items related to self-conceptions of adornment which were unidimensional in nature. Rather than relying upon assumption, a scaling device was used to check the internal consistency of these items. The Cornell Technique for Scalogram Analysis had proven valuable in developing a scale of clothing awareness by Verner.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the researcher felt it feasible for use in this similar situation.

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<sup>19</sup>These categories corresponded to the following means: high - mean 1.00-2.24, medium high - mean 2.25-2.74, medium - mean 2.75-2.99, low - mean 3.00-3.75+.

<sup>20</sup>Arthur M. Vener, "Stratification Aspects of Clothing Importance," (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Michigan State University, 1953).

Accordingly, questionnaire items 25, 28 and 29, relating to self-conception of clothes, grooming and ability to dress properly, respectively, were tested by the four criteria set up by Guttman. The results of the test were as follows:

1. The coefficient of reproducibility was .93, thereby meeting the Guttman lower limit of about .90.<sup>21</sup>
2. Number of items and responses categories:  
Since dichotomization<sup>22</sup> was used, the three items did not meet the minimum of ten items required for a scale. The marginal frequencies did, however, fall well within the stipulated 30 percent to 70 percent range required for a scale of less than ten items.<sup>23</sup>
3. Range of Marginal frequencies: As stated above, extreme frequencies have been avoided and, thus, spuriously high reproducibility avoided. Further, Guttman's criterion that

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<sup>21</sup>Louis Guttman, "A Basis for Scaling Qualitative Data," American Sociological Review, 9 (1944), p. 140.

<sup>22</sup>Each of these questions was of the five response type, with the answers ranging from "much above average" to "below average." All three questions were dichotomized giving a weight of two to the responses "much above average" and "somewhat above average" and a weight of 0 to the remaining responses. An individual's self-conception of adornment was determined by totalling the weights he received in response to the three questions. A score of "6" indicated a high self-conception, "0" a low self-conception.

<sup>23</sup>They were #29 - 53/42; #28 - 47/48 and #26 - 36/49.

the reproducibility of an item should never be less than the largest frequency of its categories, was also met.

4. Pattern of Error: The pattern of error was found to be random for the most part. Non-scale types were found in solid segments of not more than five per column outside the cutting points. Furthermore, no category had more errors than non-errors.

For the most part, the criteria of scalability were met. The only divergence was that the minimum of ten items was not achieved. Nonetheless, this does indicate a unidimensionality of the three items alone. For the purposes of this thesis it is feasible to utilize these three items as an index of one dominant dimension, i.e., the self-conception of adornment.

#### Statistical Techniques

Probability statistics utilizing the chi-square test of significance were used in this study since variables were both qualitative and quantitative, continuous and non-continuous in nature. In those cases where, in addition, it was desirable to compare the degree of association between variables of similar tests, the coefficient of contingency was used.

For this study, a probability of .05 or less will be designated a significant relationship, or one that was not likely to have occurred by chance alone. Throughout the thesis, the degree of significance will be indicated as follows:<sup>24</sup>

1. When probability is greater than .05--not significant--NS.
2. When probability is .05 or less, but greater than .01--moderately significant--P .05.
3. When probability is .01 or less, but greater than .001--highly significant--P .01.
4. When probability is .001 or less--extremely significant--P .001.

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<sup>24</sup>The last three of these qualifying adjectives were originally used by George W. Snedecor, Statistical Methods: Applied to Experiments in Agriculture and Biology (4th ed.; Ames: Iowa State College Press, 1946), Reproduced in Margaret J. Hagood, Statistics for Sociologists (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1952), p. 325.

## CHAPTER III

### SELF-CONCEPTIONS REGARDING APPEARANCE

The focus of this study is a comparison of the appearance concerns of Negro and white teenage girls to determine their differences and similarities. In the ensuing chapter the hypothesis that Negroes will demonstrate less confidence in appearance than whites is considered.

For the purposes of this study, two main aspects of appearance are employed as a test of this hypothesis. These aspects, self-conceptions regarding physical attributes and self-conceptions regarding adornment, are considered separately.

#### Self-Conceptions Regarding Physical Attributes

Information regarding self-conceptions of physical attributes was achieved by employing a series of questions which asked, "Compared to others your age, how would you rate the appearance of your hair, eyes, ears, cheeks, lips, etc." Respondents rated themselves through choice of the following phrases "much above others," "somewhat above others," "same as others," "somewhat below others" and "below others." The initial interest here was to compare the

self ratings on the Individual Physical Attributes Items to ascertain where the differences of concern occur between the races.

Table 1 summarizes the associations between each of the self-conceptions of physical attributes and race. With the exception of two items, the association ranges from moderately significant ( $P .05$ ) to extremely significant ( $P .001$ ). In each case the Negro teenage girls' self-ratings are higher. The hypothesis that Negroes will demonstrate less confidence in appearance than whites is not supported by any item. Contrary to the indications of the literature, the Negro teenage girl of this sample regards her appearance as being comparatively better than the comparable self-ratings of her white classmates.

When a comparison of individual items is made, other interesting details arise. The major purpose of listing the items individually is to test the literature regarding the items which form the "social visibility" or stereotype of the American Negro, i.e., hair, nose, lips, complexion and skin tone,<sup>1</sup> hips and thighs. These items have been discussed in some detail previously.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>It would be more desirable to use the term "skin color" instead of the terms "complexion" and "skin tone." Because of the sensitivity of the school systems to the racial issue, it was not possible to do so.

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter I, p. 10.

Table 1. A summary of associations between self-conceptions regarding the Individual Physical Attributes Items and race.

Individual Physical Attributes Items	Race		
	Probability	Contingency Coefficient	Direction*
Hair	.01	.208	N+
Forehead	.05	.156	N+
Eyes	.05	.160	N+
Nose	.001	.222	N+
Cheeks	.01	.187	N+
Ears	.01	.211	N+
Lips	.01	.198	N+
Teeth	NS	--	--
Chin	.01	.204	N+
Facial Shape	.001	.234	N+
Complexion	NS	--	--
Skin Tone	.05	.177	N+
Neck	.001	.260	N+
Shoulders	.01	.197	N+
Arms	.01	.184	N+
Hands	.05	.172	N+
Bust	.05	.158	N+
Waist	.01	.193	N+
Stomach	.01	.196	N+
Hips	.001	.308	N+
Thighs	.001	.255	N+
Knees	.001	.221	N+
Calves	.05	.155	N+
Ankles	.05	.159	N+
Feet	.01	.181	N+
Figure	.01	.194	N+

\* N+ designates that the self-conceptions of the Negroes were higher than the whites in each case.

## Individual Physical Attributes Items and Race

Table 1 shows that the association between race and the items contributing to the stereotype is very significant with the exception of skin tone and complexion. Race and skin tone are only moderately significantly associated ( $P .05$ ), while race and complexion show no association (NS). Since these items were designed to probe feelings regarding skin color, they are especially interesting. Skin color is by far the most alluded to of all the racial characteristics in both the scientific and popular literature. Therefore, it seems significant that in relation to the other stereotyped items, the Negro teenage girls of the sample feel comparatively less confident about their complexion and skin tone. But their confidence in their skin was still greater than the confidence expressed by the white teenagers. Thus, these data do not comply with most indications given in the literature with regard to self-conceptions regarding the social visibility or stereotyped items of the American Negro. Before further speculation as to the reasons for these results, the data were searched for additional information.

When the contingency coefficients for all the stereotyped items in Table 1 are compared, additional information becomes evident. The highest coefficient is in the hip-thigh area, then neck, facial shape, nose and knees, in order of descending significance. In fact, these are all the



items which have extremely significant ( $P .001$ ) relationships with race. Anthropometric studies indicate that in comparison to the Caucasian race there are physical differences in the hip-thigh, facial shape and nose of the Negro, and this could account for the degree of concern demonstrated here. However, neck and knees are not included in these areas of difference.<sup>3</sup> That all these items received such a consideration might indicate a strong value difference between the races for these body areas.

In summary, no support has been discovered for the hypothesis that the Negroes maintain a lowered self-conception regarding their appearance than their white counterparts. In fact, for this sample, the complete reverse is evident.

#### High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes and Race

To corroborate the findings of the Individual Physical Attributes Items and to facilitate further statistical comparisons, a ranked mean of physical attributes<sup>4</sup> was calculated for each respondent from all of the Individual Physical Attributes Items.<sup>5</sup> Table 2 shows a very strong association

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<sup>3</sup>See Chapter I, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup>Refer to Chapter II, "Method of Analysis," for the development of this mean.

<sup>5</sup>It was later discovered that because the Mean Rank of Physical Attributes contained twelve categories, it could not be subjected to the chi-square statistics with a sample size of 349. Every analysis had theoretical frequencies

Table 2. The association of self-conceptions based on the High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes and race.

High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes	Race		Totals
	White	Negro	
High	11	35	46
Medium High	45	42	87
Medium	59	46	105
Low	56	51	107
Totals	171	174	345
$\chi^2$ 14.443	P .01		df 3

between the High-Low Rank of Physical Attributes and race. This further supports the statistics of the individual attributes items. It is consistent to find that this association is very significant (P .01) because all but two of the individual attributes were significantly related to race. For the same reason it is consistent to find that Negroes exhibit a higher self-conception of their physical attributes than do their white counterparts. Further examination of Table 2 shows that a far greater number of Negroes rated themselves in the highest category than did the whites, while in the three lower categories the whites exceeded the Negroes. The data show, again, that Negroes show greater confidence in appearance than whites.

below the required limits for each cell. Therefore, throughout the discussion of the results, the High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes became the unit measure for the self-conceptions regarding physical attributes.

Individual Physical Attributes Items  
and the Negro Race Rating

Table 3 below shows no statistical significance (NS) between the Negro Race Rating and the self rating of physical attributes. The one item which does show some association is just at the significance level (P .05). The fact that the item is "ears" further seems to negate the meaningfulness of the association with the rating. It would appear that for this sample, based on the observations of this researcher, the Caucasoid-Negroid continuum shows no relationship to self-conception of the Negroes regarding their physical attributes. This, again, is contrary to most indications in the literature.

High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes  
and the Negro Race Rating

Table 4 is a further attempt to see if physical appearance had anything to do with self rating, i.e., did lighter, more Caucasian-looking Negroes rate themselves more highly than the darker more Negroid-appearing Negroes? This table indicates no significant association (NS) between these variables. Closer examination shows that the group of Negroes with medium, mixed characteristics has the greatest proportion of its group in the high self-rated category. This would seem to oppose both conventional feelings of "white is right" and the new racist feelings of "Black Supremacy."

Table 3. Summary of associations between self-conceptions regarding the Individual Physical Attributes Items and the Negro Race Rating.

Individual Physical Attributes Items	Negro Race Rating		
	Probability	Contingency Coefficient	Direction
Hair	NS	--	--
Forehead	NS	--	--
Eyes	NS	--	--
Nose	NS	--	--
Cheeks	NS	--	--
Ears	.05	.282	Medium, mixed characteristics
Lips	NS	--	--
Teeth	NS	--	--
Chin	NS	--	--
Facial Shape	NS	--	--
Complexion	NS	--	--
Skin Tone	NS	--	--
Neck	NS	--	--
Shoulders	NS	--	--
Arms	NS	--	--
Hands	NS	--	--
Bust	NS	--	--
Waist	NS	--	--
Stomach	NS	--	--
Hips	NS	--	--
Thighs	NS	--	--
Knees	NS	--	--
Calves	NS	--	--
Ankles	NS	--	--
Feet	NS	--	--
Figure	NS	--	--

Table 4. The association of self-conceptions based on High-Low Mean of Physical Attributes and the Negro Race Rating.

High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes	Negro Race Ratings			Totals
	Light, Caucasoid Character- istics	Medium, Mixed Character- istics	Dark, Negroid Character- istics	
High	5	15	15	34
Medium High	9	9	24	42
Medium	12	13	21	46
Low	12	11	28	51
Totals	38	48	88	174
NS				

#### High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes and Social Class

Is social status a contributing factor in the self-rating of appearance? Table 5 indicates that it is not, since no significant association (NS) was found between Warner's seven levels of Occupational Ratings and the High-Low Mean rank of Physical Attributes. Even when each race was held constant, no significant relationship was noted between social class and the self ratings of physical attributes. (Tables 6 and 7).

Table 5. The association of self-conceptions based on High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes and Warner's Occupational Ratings.

High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes	Warner's Occupational Ratings*					Totals
	1-3	4	5	6	7	
High	5	3	7	20	6	41
Medium High	10	24	15	24	8	81
Medium	11	22	16	36	15	100
Low	14	21	18	36	11	100
Totals	40	70	56	116	40	322
NS						

\* Ranks 1-3 were combined into a single column, Column 1, for computation of the chi-square.

Table 6. The association of self-conceptions based on High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes and Warner's Occupational Ratings for whites alone.

High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes	Warner's Occupational Ratings					Totals
	1-3	4	5	6	7	
High	1	1	2	5	2	11
Medium High	7	12	8	12	5	44
Medium	4	17	9	17	9	56
Low	10	13	10	18	1	52
Totals	22	43	29	52	17	163
NS*						

\* This statistic is not completely valid since 6 of the 20 cells had expected frequencies lower than 5.

Table 7. The association of self-conceptions based on High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes and Warner's Occupational Ratings for Negroes alone.

High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes	Warner's Occupational Ratings					Totals
	1-3	4	5	6	7	
High	4	2	5	15	4	30
Medium High	3	12	7	12	3	37
Medium	7	5	7	19	6	44
Low	4	8	8	18	10	48
Totals	18	27	27	64	23	159
NS						

### Self-Conception of Adornment

The Adornment Index was developed to explore self attitudes regarding grooming, clothes and dressing abilities of the teenage girls.<sup>6</sup> This differs from the previous aspect of appearance in that physical attributes deal with inherited bodily properties while adornment deals with the individual's ability to beautify or enhance these inherited qualities.

### Race

Table 8 shows race and Self-Conception of Adornment Index to have a non-significant relationship (NS). In this sample it would seem that in both races there are comparable

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<sup>6</sup>Refer to Chapter II, "Method of Analysis," for a discussion of the development of this index.

feelings of positive and negative self-conceptions regarding adornment. Stated another way, race does not appear to be a determining factor of one's abilities of adornment or, further, race does not limit one's feeling of adequacy with respect to adornment.

Table 8. The association of the Self-Conception of Adornment Index and race.

Self-Conception of Adornment Index	Race		Totals
	White	Negro	
Very High	42	57	99
High	45	45	90
Medium	30	26	56
Low	53	48	101
Totals	170	176	346
NS			

#### Negro Race Rating

No significant association (NS) is found when the Negro Race Rating is related to the Self-Concept of Adornment. Table 9 designates that the physical appearance of the Negro does not limit her feelings regarding adornment, i.e., a light Caucasian-appearing Negro girl may feel just as inferior about her ability to adorn her body becomingly as does her darker, more Negroid-appearing classmate.



Table 9. The association of the Self-Conception of Adornment Index and the Negro Race Rating.

Self-Conception of Adornment Index	Negro Race Rating			Totals
	Light, Caucasoid Character- istics	Medium, Mixed Character- istics	Dark, Negroid Character- istics	
Very High	9	23	25	57
High	13	6	26	45
Medium	6	8	12	26
Low	9	12	27	48
Totals	37	49	90	176
NS				

## Social Class

An examination of Tables 10, 11 and 12 indicates that no significant relationship (NS) exists between social class and the self-concept of adornment. This is true for not only the total sample (Table 10) but also when controlling for each race (Tables 11 and 12).<sup>7</sup> Thus, neither social class nor race are associated with self-conceptions regarding adornment. Or, stated another way, those of the upper echelons of class felt no more self confident of their adornment than those of the lower echelons--regardless of race.

<sup>7</sup>The chi-square test cannot be used when more than 20 percent of the expected frequencies have a value of less than 5. Tables 11 and 15 have 25 percent of the expected frequencies below 5 and, as such, the chi-square statistic is not completely valid. For purposes of this research it does, however, give reasonable indications of a non-significant association.

Table 10. The association of the Self-Concept of Adornment Index and Warner's Occupational Ratings.

Self-Conception of Adornment Index	Warner's Occupational Ratings					Totals
	1-3	4	5	6	7	
Very High	12	18	16	35	12	93
High	10	21	19	24	9	83
Medium	7	12	10	19	5	53
Low	11	19	13	37	13	93
Totals	40	70	58	115	39	322

NS

Table 11. The association of the Self-Concept of Adornment Index and Warner's Occupational Ratings for whites alone.

Self-Conception of Adornment Index	Warner's Occupational Ratings					Totals
	1-3	4	5	6	7	
Very High	6	11	8	9	6	40
High	6	13	9	10	4	42
Medium	4	8	4	13	1	30
Low	6	12	8	19	5	50
Totals	22	44	29	51	16	162

NS

Table 12. The association of the Self-Conception of Adornment Index and Warner's Occupational Ratings for Negroes alone.

Self-Conception of Adornment Index	Warner's Occupational Ratings					Totals
	1-3	4	5	6	7	
Very High	6	7	8	26	6	53
High	4	8	10	14	5	41
Medium	3	4	6	6	4	23
Low	5	7	5	18	8	43
Totals	18	26	29	64	23	160
NS						

Therefore, for this sample, it would appear that neither caste nor class plays a determining role in the individual's self-conceptions regarding adornment. Consequently, no support has been gained for the hypothesis that Negroes are less confident regarding their appearance than are whites.

#### High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes

The analysis of the association of the Self Conception of Adornment with the High-Low Mean of Physical Attributes is found in Tables 13, 14, and 15. Table 13, based on the total sample, shows this association to be extremely significant ( $P .001$ ). Table 14 deals with the Negro portion of the sample only, and it, too, is extremely

Table 13. The association of the Self-Conception of Adornment Index and High-Low Mean of Physical Attributes.

Self-Concep- tion of Adorn- ment Index	High Low Mean of Physical Attributes					Totals
	High	Medium	High	Medium	Low	
Very High	28	28		26	16	98
High	6	26		28	30	90
Medium	6	19		13	17	55
Low	6	13		37	43	99
Totals	46	86		104	106	342
$\chi^2$ 47.409	P .001				df 9	

Table 14. The association of the Self-Conception of Adornment Index and High-Low Mean of Physical Attributes for Negroes alone.

Self-Concep- tion of Adorn- ment Index	High-Low Mean of Physical Attributes					Totals
	High	Medium	High	Medium	Low	
Very High	22	12		13	9	56
High	6	12		7	20	45
Medium	4	11		6	4	25
Low	3	6		20	18	47
Totals	35	41		46	51	173
$\chi^2$ 39.274	P .001				df 9	

Table 15. The association of the Self-Conception of Adornment Index and High-Low Mean of Physical Attributes for whites alone.

Self-Conception of Adornment Index	High-Low Mean of Physical Attributes					Totals
	High	Medium	High	Medium	Low	
Very High	6	16		13	7	42
High	0	14		21	10	45
Medium	2	8		7	13	30
Low	3	7		17	25	52
Totals	11	45		58	55	169
$\chi^2$ 25.563	P .01				df 9	

significant. However, the white portion of the sample, Table 15,<sup>8</sup> shows the relationship between adornment and physical attributes to be only a very significant relationship (P .01). Why the white portion of the sample has a lesser association is not clear.

Since all are at least very significant relationships it would seem to support the assumption that if one has a feeling of well-being regarding one's physical attributes, feelings regarding the embellishment of one's physical structure will be similar.

<sup>8</sup>See footnote 6, p. 52.

### Summary and Conclusions

Throughout the chapter the analysis of the data has repeatedly negated the major hypothesis that Negroes will demonstrate less confidence in appearance than whites. The Individual Physical Attributes Items in all but two of the twenty-six items show the Negro teenager to be significantly higher than the white teenager in her feelings of esteem of her physical self-attributes. Building upon these Individual Physical Attributes Items, the High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes completely corroborates these results.

No significant association is noted between the Negro Race Rating and self-conceptions of physical attributes. This, too, is an unexpected finding due to the indications of Dollard, Myrdal, and Clark, to mention but a few, who cite the prestigious value of lightness and Caucasian features within the Negro race. But neither are there indications that the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction to the point of the Black Nationalist or Black Supremist perspective.

Tied in with the above is the amazing discovery that, for this sample, occupational status has no bearing on the self-attitudes regarding physical attributes. The sample is predominantly common man level, but does have small percentages of upper and lower classes. Evidently the class of the majority influences all within the sample, or the youth culture wipes out the effect of social class.

As was indicated in the section on methodology there is no significant difference in occupational status between the races. Thus, these findings give due cause for speculation.

Perhaps the Negroes of this study are at a higher level of their caste group whereas the whites are at the lower end of theirs, even though occupational levels of both races are essentially the same, the class structure within each race may differ. From indications given by Frazier,<sup>9</sup> the majority of the Negroes within this sample may very well fall within the middle class instead of the lower-middle or upper-lower class of the whites. Education of the parents seems to further support this assumption. As alluded to in the methodology section, Negro parents are significantly better educated than the white parents.

Further, the Negroes' salient referents may not be white, but Negro. Thus, the Negroes of this sample group may feel that in comparison to the vast numbers of lower-status Negroes, they are relatively superior.

Most of the references in the literature were made before the Negro may have had a definitive sense of identification as a group. Maybe this study fulfills some projections stated by Broom and Glenn<sup>10</sup> that recent developments have enhanced the Negro's self-esteem and have brought about a Negro identity.

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<sup>9</sup>Frazier, The Negro in the United States, p. 301.

<sup>10</sup>Broom and Glenn, p. 34.

The literature may be guilty of overgeneralization. Bias may have been built into the previous studies since most were concentrated on the lower classes of the Negro American. Socio-economic deprivation may, therefore, have been confused with race. This study has attempted to control for the deprivation factor by using the common man level as its focal class.

In summary, then, any of three possibilities may account for the findings that Negro teenage girls of this study feel more confident about their appearance than do their white classmates:

1. These Negroes may be of a higher class within their caste than the whites
2. There may be a change in present-day Negro self-attitudes regarding his identity.
3. The controls of this study may have been rigorous enough to prevent the biasing effect of socio-economic deprivation.

In summarizing the findings regarding the Self-Conception of Adornment Index, one major aspect stands out. This index shows a nonsignificant relationship with race and social class, while the physical attributes show a very significant association with race. Underlying elements provide a basis for speculation. Adornment differs from the physical attributes in that adornment connotes ownership of material possessions, not a part of the body.



These material possessions permit the activities and abilities of dressing and grooming. Ownership of material possessions presupposes value orientations, personal goals and buying habits. Therefore, if both races of teenage girls have similar self-conceptions regarding adornment then both may have similar values, similar spending patterns, similar activities and abilities. This, in turn, probably denotes that this is an area where the youth culture supercedes the effects of both race and class.

While adornment is not significantly related to race or class, it is strongly related to self-conceptions regarding physical attributes. This degree of association of these variables does, however, allow for the involvement of other unknown factors. It does, nonetheless, show that positive or negative feelings regarding one's body probably carry through to feelings regarding the grooming of that body, and those feelings comprise a total positive or negative attitude toward one's total appearance.

## CHAPTER IV

### REFERENT RELATIONSHIPS FOR APPEARANCE

The literature infers that the Negro uses the white race for his appearance referent. Consequently, it would be desirable to ascertain empirically the actual race of this appearance referent. The desirability of such information becomes even more evident when it is discovered that Negro self-conceptions regarding appearance are higher than those of their white classmates.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, due to the sensitivity of the matter, direct pursuance of this information was impossible. However, it was possible to compare the general kinds of persons who are referents for both races and thereby gain insight into racial appearance referents.

Vener,<sup>2</sup> in his study of adolescent clothing orientations, investigated personal referents in clothing behavior. His main concern was with salient referents of clothing behavior. These could also be termed the most prominent significant others with regard to the teenagers clothing behavior. This significant other is usually

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter III.

<sup>2</sup>Vener, "Adolescent Orientations to Clothing: A Social Psychological Interpretation." Chap. IV, p. 64-76.

considered as that referent of intimate association whose opinions form the basis of one's behavior, in this case with regard to clothing. He also investigated another type of referent termed a model of emulation. This referent is the person whom the adolescent wishes to emulate in his clothing behavior.

Since Vener established whom these referents were in both of these cases, it was most appropriate in this instance to build upon his findings and conclusions. Accordingly, referent relationships for appearance were pursued on two levels, the significant others and the models of emulation. Vener's questions were slightly modified on the basis of his suggestions to make them more applicable to this study.

#### The Independent Variables and the Appearance Referents

An attempt was made to discover the relation between the appearance referents and the Negro Race Rating, and between the appearance referents and Warner's Occupational Ratings. In only one of the cases was the chi-square statistics applicable because the number of expected cell frequencies fell below the required limits. Despite this, in all cases, the relation showed no statistically significant trends. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to assume that neither the race rating nor the occupational ratings had any influence upon appearance referents in this sample.

Vener also found no relationship between the occupational ratings of the father and the saliency of the individual referents. These findings would seem to corroborate those of Vener. Because of inadequate frequency distributions, the appearance referents are discussed in detail only in relationship to Negro-white differences.

### Significant Others for Adornment

Students were asked the question, "Whose opinion counts most when deciding what to wear?"<sup>3</sup> To respond they had a choice of "brother," "sister," "father," "mother," "boyfriends," "girlfriends," "other persons (explain who)" and "no one."<sup>4</sup> When the raw data were analyzed it was discovered that the choices of "brother," "father," and "other persons" were seldom chosen and these were excluded to permit the use of chi-square statistics. The choices remaining were very similar to the salient referents ascertained by Vener.

### Race

Table 16 shows no significant association between race and significant others for adornment. In both races the most salient referent is the mother but an almost equal number of each race spread their choices among the sister,

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<sup>3</sup>Item 72 of the questionnaire.

<sup>4</sup>These were somewhat of a revision from the choices offered by Vener.

boyfriends, or girlfriends. These latter groups could possibly be termed as peers. Thus, in this case, peers and mother share almost equally as a significant other to both races.

Table 16. The association of Significant Others for Adornment and race.

Significant Others	Race		Totals
	White	Negro	
Sister	18	20	38
Mother	52	59	111
Boyfriends	22	16	38
Girlfriends	22	14	36
No One	36	49	85
Totals	150	158	308
NS			

It is surprising to find such a large number of both races who indicated they had no significant other for adornment. Perhaps, as Vener indicated, these teenagers have matured to the point where norms related to dress behavior are well internalized. They may have developed a sufficient "generalized other" and therefore there may be less necessity to consciously refer to a specific person.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Vener, p. 74.

In summary, there is no indication of any significant association between significant others for adornment and race. Vener's findings that mother and peers are the most salient referents are also substantiated for both races.

### Models of Emulation for Appearance

These referents were broken into two categories again on the two aspects of appearance, i.e., the appearance of the physical body and the adornment of that body. On the questionnaire these questions appeared as follows:

If you could look like any one person you know or have ever heard of, who would it be and why? (EXPLAIN AND NAME THIS PERSON)."

If you could dress like any one person you know or have ever heard of, who would it be any why? (EXPLAIN AND NAME THIS PERSON)."<sup>6</sup>

For ease of discussion the first referent shall be termed the "Look-Like Referent" and the latter the "Dress-Like Referent."

Due to the free response nature of these questions a coding system was required. This was achieved by tabulating the responses of 100 questionnaires pulled randomly from the total sample. Then the response to each question was coded into one of the following: "celebrity or mass media"; "peer, same sex"; "mother"; "self"; "no one, I don't know";

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<sup>6</sup>Vener used the latter of these two questions. Since a dual focus with regard to appearance has been previously discussed in Chapter III, it was decided to build on this dual focus and parallel the dress-like referent with a look-like referent. Thus the adornment and the physical attributes segments of appearance were accounted for.

"not interpretable"; "fashion model"; "female acquaintance"; "male acquaintance"; "no response."

Sample size for these questions was reduced from 349 to around 250 for several reasons. A major portion of these were omitted because of no response. Other responses were not interpretable or received too few choices. Accordingly, the following codes were dropped from the statistical analysis--"non-response," "not interpretable," "mother," "fashion model" and "male acquaintance." In addition, the codes, "self" and "no one, I don't know" were combined into one because of their similarity of connotation. It did not seem probable that racial bias might result from this shifting of data since the races seemed equally represented in each code.

#### Look-Like Referent and Race

The association between the Look-Like Referent and race is insignificant as demonstrated (NS) in Table 17. Of particular interest is the fact that about one-half of each race choose no model of emulation but indicate that they prefer to look like themselves. When the respondents do choose someone whose appearance they would like to emulate, racial differences are somewhat in evidence. Whites choose a celebrity in preference to a peer while Negroes prefer peers to celebrities. However, these tendencies are not strong enough to be significant.

Table 17. The association of the Look-Like Referent and Race.

Look-Like Referent	Race		Totals
	White	Negro	
Celebrity	34	19	53
Peer	27	26	53
Self, No One	61	72	133
Female Acquaintance	8	9	17
Totals	130	126	256
NS			

In summary, then, only approximately half of each race, more whites than Negroes, indicate that they would prefer to look like someone else. Of these respondents the most salient referents are divided between a glamorous mass media model and a person of one's intimate association, usually a peer. Although there are some tendencies toward differences between the races, these tendencies are not significant.

#### Dress-Like Referent and Race

Table 18 shows the association between the Dress-Like Referent and race to be moderately significant ( $P .05$ ). As was noted with the Look-Like Referent, the greatest divergence between the races seems to be on the choice of a celebrity referent. More Negro teenagers express a preference



to dress like themselves than emulate anyone else. Further, Negro teenagers choose peers in preference to celebrities. Whites, although they also express a strong desire to dress like themselves, choose celebrities somewhat before their peers as a dressing referent.

One possible explanation for these racial differences may be due to the fact that there are comparatively fewer female mass media Negro personalities for the Negro teenager to choose as a referent. Thus if she chooses a referent, the Negro teenager chooses one of her peers.

Table 18. The association of the Dress-Like Referent and race.

Dress-Like Referent	Race		Totals
	White	Negro	
Celebrity	37	20	57
Peer	34	33	67
Self, No One	50	59	109
Female Acquaintance	8	12	20
Totals	129	124	253
$\chi^2$ 6.532	P .05		df 3

### Summary and Conclusions

The hypothesis that Negroes and whites will have similar appearance referents have been only partially substantiated by this study. Only in the Dress-Like Referent was any

significant difference noted between the races. However, these findings do not designate whether or not the Negro's referent for appearance is white.

The findings of Vener have been substantiated by this study. Certainly the most salient significant others are mothers and peers, although mothers have more influence than any other single type of peer. It was also found that the models of emulation most often chosen are celebrities or peers.

There is an interesting difference in the response to the Dress-Like Referent and the Look-Like Referent questions. Both races seem to feel more free to emulate someone's dress than to emulate someone's appearance, since more students of both races choose referents for dress than appearance.

Another interesting facet is the large numbers who express no need for either significant others or models to emulate. Vener hypothesized that these may be mature students who have already internalized dress behavior norms and no longer need a conscious specific other for reference or emulation. This tends to be more true of the Negro than of the white in this study. It is therefore speculated that this may be due to the comparative lack of female mass media personalities for the Negro teenager to emulate.

## CHAPTER V

### GROOMING BEHAVIOR

It has been hypothesized that Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar grooming behavior. It was assumed that if Negroes value Caucasian appearance, they would use available grooming facilities to achieve an appearance which would approximate the appearance of the Caucasian race. Negro publications, replete with advertisements for hair straighteners and skin bleachers, would seem to support this assumption.

This chapter will explore racial differences in grooming behavior in an attempt to support the aforementioned hypothesis. The exploration will be handled in three parts as follows: the useage of facial grooming items; the usage of tonsorial items; and the total number of grooming items used regularly.

#### The Usage of Facial Grooming Items

To investigate the grooming habits of these teenagers, students were asked to indicate which of the specified items they used daily for facial grooming. The items listed were those in common usage and readily available at cosmetic

counters. All students were assumed to have had previous contact with them.<sup>1</sup>

### Race

Table 19 is a summary of the associations between the usage of facial items and race. Contrary to the hypothesis, we find the two races showing very significant (P .001) differences in grooming behavior on all but two items--lipstick and eyebrow pencil. In the instances where there are significant differences between the races, it is only in the usage of face cream where Negroes surpass the whites in consumption. The strongest divergences between the races exist in the usage of mascara and the usage of face make-up. Negroes use these items very much less than do their white classmates.

Perhaps it is not inconsistent to find such a divergence in the cosmetic usage of these two races. Physical appearance varies between the races and to achieve equivalent aesthetic effects, differing techniques may need to be used. Negroes may need to add little emphasis to their eyes with mascara, eyeshadow or eye liner since their eyes are usually naturally surrounded by dark lashes. Face cream blends into the face readily and improves its texture but other face make-up is colored and is applied to the

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<sup>1</sup>See Table 19 for an itemization of these cosmetics or number 78 of the questionnaire.

surface of the face which in turn must match or blend with skin color. Because face make-up or face powder, rouge and eye shadow fall into this category they may be difficult for the Negro to purchase, mainly because most of these items are geared for consumption by the white race.

Table 19. A summary of the associations between Facial Item Usage and race.

Facial Item Usage	Race				
	Prob-ability	Contingency Coefficient	% White	% Negro	Direction*
Mascara	.001	.451	56.4	9.0	N-
Eye Liner	.001	.259	44.8	19.8	N-
Eyebrow Pencil	NS	--	52.3	48.0	--
Eye Shadow	.001	.174	11.1	2.3	N-
Rouge	.001	.183	15.7	4.5	N-
Lipstick	NS	--	54.1	57.6	--
Face Cream	.001	.164	19.2	33.9	N+
Face Powder or Face Make-Up	.001	.461	78.5	26.6	N-
Other (Specity)	NS	--	4.1	3.4	--

\* N+ designates that more Negroes than whites use the grooming item. N- designates that less Negroes than whites use the grooming item.

It is not meant to give the impression that the Negro teenager does not employ some of these items. She does, however, use considerably fewer of most grooming items

than the white teenager. Looking at the percentages in Table 19, a preferential order is also noticeable.

The item worn by almost 80 percent of the whites is face make-up or face powder. Approximately 50 percent also use lipstick, mascara, eye liner and eyebrow pencil, whereas only 10-20 percent wear eye shadow, rouge and face cream.

On the other hand, only a little over 50 percent of the Negroes wear lipstick and almost 50 percent wear eyebrow pencil. Face cream is worn by a little better than 30 percent while face make-up is worn by more than 25 percent. Some 20 percent wear eye liner but less than 10 percent wear mascara, eye shadow or rouge.

In conclusion, several reasons may account for racial differences in facial grooming habits. Of primary consideration is the basic difference in conformation and coloration of facial features. Coupled with this is the white orientation of the American cosmetic industry which makes usage of similar items for the Negro inexpedient. Therefore, the hypothesis that Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar grooming behavior is untenable.

#### Negro Race Rating

The association between facial item usage and the Negro Race Rating is summarized in Table 20. Items receiving little usage from the entire Negro group, such as mascara,

rouge or eye shadow, are omitted. Nonetheless, no significant relationship is found among the variables. The indication here is that the Negro's physical appearance does not govern her facial grooming behavior.

Table 20. A summary of the associations between Facial Item Usage and the Negro Race Rating.

Facial Item Usage	Negro Race Rating		
	Probability	Contingency Coefficient	Direction
Eye liner	NS	--	--
Eye brow Pencil	NS	--	--
Lipstick	NS	--	--
Face Cream	NS	--	--
Face Powder or Face Make-Up	NS	--	--

The Usage of Selected Facial Grooming Items<sup>2</sup>  
and Self-Conceptions Regarding the Particular  
Physical Attribute Being Groomed

Thus far it is established that there is a difference in the facial grooming behavior between the racial groups but no difference when only the Negro group is considered. Of next interest is whether grooming of particular physical attributes is influenced by the self-conception of

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<sup>2</sup>All facial grooming items were not employed here since some items were used too little to be able to compute chi-square statistics.

that particular attribute. In addition, differences in the association of this variable between the races is explored.

### Self-Conception and Grooming of Eyes

Table 21 summarizes the associations between eye make-up usage and the self-conception rating of eyes. Obvious from the table is that none of these associations are significant. Usage of eye liner or eyebrow pencil is therefore not related to self-conceptions regarding eyes. This is true for all students and for each race separately.

Table 21. A summary of the associations between eye make-up usage and the self-conception rating of eyes.

Self-Conception Rating of Eyes and Usage of Eye Liner	Eye Make-Up Usage		
	Probability	Contengency Coefficient	Direction
All Students	NS	--	--
Negroes Alone	NS*	--	--
Whites Alone	NS*	--	--
Self-Conception Rating of Eyes and Usage of Eyebrow Pencil			
All Students	NS	--	--
Negroes Alone	NS*	--	--
Whites Alone	NS*	--	--

\* In the computation of the chi-square the two lowest categories of the self-conception variables were combined.



Self-Conception of Lips and Teeth  
and the Usage of Lipstick

An interesting finding emerges with observation of Table 22. Here a positive, moderately significant, association ( $P .05$ ) is observed between the self-conception of lips and the usage of lipstick. A low self-conception of lips influences a nonusage of lipstick. From the racial breakdown, it is evident that this is true only for Negroes and not whites. Here is the first indication of the study that Negroes may be sensitive to the particular conformation of their lips.

Self-conceptions regarding teeth, on the other hand, appear to have no association with lipstick usage. This is true for both races.

Table 22. A summary of the associations between lipstick usage and the self-conception ratings of lips and teeth.

Self-Conception Variables	Lipstick Usage		
	Probability	Contingency Coefficient	Direction
Rating of Lips			
All Students	.05	.169	Positive
Negroes Alone	.05	.246	Positive
Whites Alone	NS*	--	--
Rating of Teeth			
All Students	NS	--	--
Negroes Alone	NS	--	--
Whites Alone	NS	--	--

\* In the computation of the chi-square the two lowest categories of the self-conception variable were combined.

Self-Conception of Complexion and  
Skin Tone and the Usage of Face Cream

In Table 23 it appears that the usage of face cream is not related to the self-conceptions of either complexion or skin tone. Since the purpose of face cream usage can vary with the type of cream used, one might assume that some students may use cream to preserve a beautiful complexion or to improve a poor one. From these data it is impossible to infer any connection between incidence of dark skin and the usage of skin bleaching creams on the part of the Negro.

Table 23. A summary of the associations between face cream usage and the self-conception rating of complexion and skin tone.

Self-Conception Variables	Face Cream Usage		
	Probability	Contingency Coefficient	Direction
Rating of Complexion			
All Students	NS	--	--
Negroes Alone	NS	--	--
Whites Alone	NS*	--	--
Rating of Skin Tone			
All Students	NS	--	--
Negroes Alone	NS	--	--
Whites Alone	NS*	--	--

\* In the computation of the chi-square the two lowest categories of the self-conception variables were computed.

Self-Conception of Complexion  
and Skin Tone and Usage of  
Face Powder or Face Make-Up

Table 24 shows that there is a moderately significant association ( $P .05$ ) for all students between the self-conception of complexion and the usage of face make-up. Upon division of the sample racially, it becomes evident that this is true only for the whites. Since the direction of the association is negative, this indicates that the higher the self-conception of complexion, the less the usage of face make-up. Conversely, usage of face make-up may be a compensatory action to a poor self-feeling regarding the appearance of complexion.

Table 24. A summary of the associations between face powder or face make-up usage and the self-conception rating of complexion and skin.

Self-Conception Variables	Face Powder or Face Make-Up Usage		
	Probability	Contingency Coefficient	Direction
Rating of Complexion			
All Students	.05	.151	Negative
Negroes Alone	NS	--	--
Whites Alone	.01	.263	Negative
Rating of Skin Tone			
All Students	.01	.181	Negative
Negroes Alone	NS	--	--
Whites Alone	NS*	--	--

\*This association has 25% of the expected frequencies of cells below 5.

There is also a very significant association (P .01) between the self-conception of skin tone and the usage of face make-up. This is true when all students are considered but does not appear to hold when the races are considered separately. Therefore, for some students of both races there appears to be some association between the usage of face make-up and a lowered self-conception of skin tone.

#### The Usage of Tonsorial Grooming Items

A racial trait of most Negroes is the possession of curly or wavy hair. If it is assumed that Negroes emulate whites, then Negroes should desire possession of less curled hair and will tend to employ some mode to straighten the hair. Tonsorial items were developed to elicit information regarding use of these hair straightening techniques as well as other contemporary modes of hair grooming. As with the facial grooming items, these items were listed and the student asked to identify which items they used regularly.<sup>3</sup>

#### Race

The hypothesis that Negroes and whites will have similar tonsorial grooming habits is not upheld. Table 25 indicates that Negroes differ from whites in their tonsorial

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<sup>3</sup>See Table 25 for an itemization of these cosmetics or number 79 of the questionnaire.

grooming on almost every item. The surprising exception was in relation to usage of a permanent to curl hair. Very few whites use this item but some Negroes do use it.

Table 25. A summary of the association between the Tonsorial Item Usage and race.

Tonsorial Item Usage	Race				
	Prob- ability	Contingency Coefficient	% White	% Negro	Direction*
Permanent to Curl Hair	NS	--	4.7	5.1	--
Permanent to Straighten Hair	.05	.116	2.3	7.3	N+
Rollers	.001	.251	90.7	70.1	N-
Heat Set	.001	.389	1.7	34.5	N+
Coloring Solutions	.001	.212	16.3	3.4	N-
Hair Condi- tioners	.05	.125	19.7	10.7	N-
Other (Specify)	NS	--	4.7	2.8	--

\* N+ designates that more Negroes than whites use the grooming item. N- designates that less Negroes than whites use the grooming item.

The most striking difference between the races is the extremely significant (P .001) relation between race and the usage of a heat set. Over 30 percent of the Negroes indicate that they use this technique which is primarily intended for straightening hair. In contrast only two percent of the whites indicate usage of it.

Usage of rollers also shows an extremely significant relationship ( $P .001$ ) with race. Even though fewer Negroes than whites use rollers to set their hair, a surprisingly large percentage (70 percent) use them regularly. In fact, rollers are by far the most universally used tonorial grooming item in this sample. This may be due to the fact that rollers are inexpensive, readily available and easy to use. Besides they are equally effective in relaxing tightly curled hair as in curling straight hair.

The association of race and the usage of coloring solutions is also extremely significant ( $P .001$ ). Here whites, though less than 20 percent in number, exceed Negroes who apparently seldom use coloring solutions. The low usage of this item on the part of both Negro and white girls may be due to the cost or troublesome procedures involved. The Negroes, in particular, may use these coloring solutions less than the whites because they may feel that it is incongruous with respect to other physical attributes.

Hair conditioners and race are also related but only at a moderately significant level ( $P .05$ ). Whites again are greater users than Negroes although less than 20 percent of each race uses a hair conditioner to make hair more manageable.

More Negroes than whites use a permanent to straighten hair. This association is only moderately significant ( $P .05$ ). Relatively few, 7.3 percent, Negroes use

this method of controlling hair curl. Due to the probable requirement of professional beauty parlor treatment, this technique may be economically prohibitive to teenagers. On the other hand, there may be few within the sample who feel they require this technique of straightening hair.

Other tonsorial items demonstrated very low frequencies of usage and are not significant when related to race. In summary, therefore, the vast majority of both races use rollers regularly. Whites use more coloring solutions and hair conditioners than Negroes, but Negroes use more permanents and heat sets to straighten hair than whites.

This indicates a significant difference in tonsorial grooming but it also indicates an emulation of white standards of appearance. Thus, although whites and Negroes do not demonstrate similar grooming behavior, the data seem to indicate grooming behavior which is aimed at a similar standard of hair appearance; i.e., that of relaxed hair curl more typical of the Caucasian race at the present time.

#### Negro Race Rating

Since rollers and the heat set were the only tonsorial grooming items used by sizable percentages of Negroes, these were the only items that could be statistically associated with the Negro Race Rating. Nonetheless, neither of these two tonsorial items shows a significant relationship

with race rating. A possible explanation for this is that race characteristics obviously are not inherited as a unit. Very curly hair can be found on very Caucasian-looking Negroes as well as more Negroid-appearing Negroes. Use of a straightening technique may not, therefore, be confined to any particular type of Negro. (See Table 26.)

Table 26. A summary of the associations between the Tonsorial Item Usage and the Negro Race Rating.

Tonsorial Item Usage	Negro Race Rating		
	Probability	Contingency Coefficient	Direction
Rollers	NS	--	--
Heat Set	NS	--	--

Total Number of Grooming  
Items Used Regularly

This variable was attained by totalling all the facial and tonsorial items each respondent indicated she used regularly. This gave insight into the quantity of grooming items used in general by teenagers.

Race

The association of the total number of grooming items used regularly and race shown in Table 27, is extremely significant ( $P .001$ ). The fact that whites use more grooming



items regularly than Negroes is evident from this table. Whereas as many as 62 whites use six or more grooming items regularly, approximately only one-third (21) of the Negroes regularly use as many. This again does not support the hypothesis of similar grooming behavior for both races.

Table 27. The association of the total number of grooming items used regularly and race.

Race	Total Number of Grooming Items Used Regularly									Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 or more	
Whites	11	15	23	34	25	22	22	9	9	170
Negroes	25	39	35	28	27	9	6	5	1	175
Totals	36	54	58	62	52	31	28	14	10	345
$\chi^2$	41.325				P .001				df 8	

### Summary and Conclusions

The hypothesis that Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar grooming behavior has not been substantiated. Some evidence has been gained for the assumption that Negroes emulate whites in appearance. The general appearance referent toward which grooming is directed appears to be similar for both races. Negroes may be sensitive about their lip conformation and hair structure. As compensatory actions they may omit the use of lipstick or use hair straightening techniques.

The Negro Race Rating shows no relation to the usage of grooming items. It is probable that physical attributes vary considerably within each category and thus any variety or combination of items may need to be employed to achieve a similar effect.

Negro students of this sample would not fall into Himes' description<sup>4</sup> as conspicuous consumers whose grooming is extreme or faddish and typified by the use of heavy eye make-up. This is contradicted by the fact that few Negroes of this sample wear many facial cosmetics beyond lipstick, eyebrow pencil, face cream, face powder or sometimes eye liner. As a matter of fact, when the total number of grooming items is considered, Negroes as a group, use a fewer number of these items for adornment than the white group.

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<sup>4</sup>See Chapter I, p. 11.

## CHAPTER VI

### COLOR-WEARING PREFERENCES

The purpose of this chapter is to test the hypothesis that Negroes and whites will demonstrate similar color-wearing preferences. The empirical studies were searched for methods that had been found successful for testing color preferences. Some limitation was imposed on this study since the method had to be usable within a questionnaire.

It was decided to use Hurlock's method because of its ease of administration and because of the rationale offered for the method. Her method was simply to list the colors, have the respondent peruse the list and then designate the color most preferred. The rationale for her method was twofold. First, the respondent is free to choose the color preferred without any association or thought of its suitability for a specific purpose. Second, when colors are shown on charts or slips of paper, the possibility exists that the specific colors shown are not the shades preferred of a particular hue, and another color may be given first preference instead.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hurlock, pp. 392-393.

Some revision of her list of colors was made to make it more current with modern fashion colors. Crimson and violet were omitted and beige, turquoise, maroon, pastel blue and navy were added. In addition, respondents were asked to make two choices for the colors they liked to wear most and two choices for the colors they liked to wear least.<sup>2</sup> This, it was hoped, would provide more basis for differentiation of the two races.

Because of low frequencies in a number of cells the chi-square statistic could not be employed in all comparisons. Rather than omit certain color codes to validate the use of these statistics, percentages were compared instead. Omission of certain codes would have made it difficult to compare tables.

#### Colors Most Preferred to Wear

The first and second color most preferred are shown together in Table 28. Although the colors most preferred by each race are similar, there are pronounced differences especially in regard to the first chosen color. The associations between race and the most preferred first and second color choices tend to show significant differences.

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<sup>2</sup>See questions 72 and 73 of the questionnaire for the exact format.

Table 28. The percentage distribution by race of the responses to colors most preferred to wear.

Color Most Preferred	Race			
	First Choice		Second Choice	
	% Whites	% Negroes	% Whites	% Negroes
Pink	13.5	17.7	11.8	10.9
Red	7.1	20.6	4.7	6.3
Orange	0.6	0.6	0.0	3.4
Yellow	7.7	18.9	8.3	13.1
Beige	2.9	2.3	2.4	1.7
Brown	5.3	1.1	7.7	2.9
Green	5.3	5.7	7.7	5.1
Turquoise	0.0	0.0	0.6	2.9
Pastel Blue	7.1	3.4	7.7	3.4
Blue	23.5	13.1	15.9	25.7
Navy	15.3	3.4	8.3	5.7
Purple	0.6	0.0	1.8	0.6
Maroon	2.4	5.7	5.9	2.3
Grey	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.6
White	1.8	4.6	6.5	7.4
Black	7.1	2.9	10.1	8.0
Number of Respondents	170	175	169	175

First Choice Color Most Preferred  
to Wear and Race

The colors receiving the highest percentage of white teenage choices are blue, 24 percent; navy, 15 percent; and pink, 14 percent. For the Negroes the choices are red, 21 percent; pink, 18 percent; yellow, 18 percent; and blue, 13 percent. This would certainly seem to indicate a racial difference. Further divergence becomes apparent when it is realized that only three percent of the Negroes choose navy, seven percent of the whites choose red, eight percent of the whites choose yellow and only half as many Negroes as whites choose blue.

Second Choice Color Most Preferred  
to Wear and Race

Here the colors receiving the highest percentage of choices remains somewhat the same. For the whites, blue receives 16 percent of the choices; pink, 12 percent; black, 10 percent and navy, nine percent. Thereafter the second choice is spread among several colors. The Negroes on the other hand show some change in the colors receiving the highest percentages of second choices. Here blue receives an overwhelming, 26 percent; yellow, 13 percent; pink, 11 percent. Red receives only six percent as a second choice.

### Colors Least Preferred to Wear

The two choices of colors least preferred are indicated in Table 29. A tendency toward difference is noted between the first least preferred choice and race, but no such tendency is noted between the second least preferred choice and race. The colors chosen as least preferred are similar but the percentage distributions for these color choices differ markedly in some cases.

#### First Choice Color Least Preferred to Wear and Race

The colors receiving the highest percentage of white teenager choices are orange, 28 percent; purple, 15 percent; grey, 14 percent; and maroon, 10 percent. Negroes choices are purple, 19 percent; grey, 17 percent; and orange, 15 percent. Thus, the major difference is that orange is much less offensive to Negroes than to whites, while grey and purple are less offensive to whites than to Negroes. Also maroon tends to be disliked by whites. From simple aesthetic reasons, it is probably very easy to see that colors which look unbecoming with a light skin may not appear so on dark skin, and vice versa. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note the remarkable similarity between the races for colors disliked for wearing purposes.

Table 29. The percentage distribution by race of the responses to colors least preferred to wear.

Color Least Preferred	Race			
	First Choice		Second Choice	
	% Whites	% Negroes	% Whites	% Negroes
Pink	2.4	4.7	0.6	3.5
Red	7.7	6.9	4.8	3.5
Orange	27.9	14.5	22.9	13.5
Yellow	2.4	3.5	6.0	5.3
Beige	1.2	3.5	3.0	4.1
Brown	0.0	6.4	2.4	7.1
Green	5.9	2.3	6.0	4.7
Turquoise	2.4	5.8	7.8	4.7
Pastel Blue	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.6
Blue	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.6
Navy	0.6	1.7	1.8	1.8
Purple	15.5	19.2	18.7	21.8
Maroon	10.1	3.5	6.6	5.9
Grey	13.7	16.9	13.9	17.1
White	2.4	0.6	1.8	1.2
Black	6.6	8.1	3.6	4.7
Number of Respondents	168	172	166	170



Second Choice Color Least Preferred  
to Wear and Race

Here the order of least preferred is the same for both whites and Negroes and the percentages have changed only slightly from the first choice least preferred. The only tendency toward difference is that many more whites than Negroes chose orange as least preferred.

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, it appears that no support has been gained for the hypothesis that Negro and white color-wearing preferences will be similar. Blue and pink are the colors for which both races indicate similar desirability. After that the races diverge. The Negroes show considerable preference for red and yellow while whites indicate interest in navy and black.

Thus, the Negro teenagers tend to prefer more of the warm, advancing colors, yellow and red as well as pink, than do their white classmates. Whites show some tendency to prefer darker duller shades, navy and black, than the Negroes. It should be kept in mind that these preferences are the colors chosen as most preferred to wear.

It would appear that these findings tend to substantiate the observations of Himes, Pettigrew, Broom and Glenn, Clark and Frazier presented in the review of literature, even though the Negro's love of bright colors has

not been established by this study. In no way do the data of this study support the myth perpetuated by Barnes. Negroes of this sample do not seem to be conditioned to wear dark dull colors. They definitely show no aversion to wearing red or yellow which are generally thought of as bright colors. The choice of these warm advancing hues on the part of the Negro may further express the self-confidence of these teenagers in their appearance.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The major concern of this study was focused upon an exploration of the differences in appearance concerns between Negro and white teenage girls utilizing an interactionist frame of reference. An investigation of self-conceptions regarding appearance was carried out through variables dealing with physical attributes and adornment. Referent relationships for appearance were explored via the identification of significant others and models for emulation. Grooming behavior was evaluated through the usage of both facial and tonsorial items. Color-wearing preferences were investigated through the identification of colors most preferred and colors least preferred. The major independent variables of the study were race, a Negro Race Rating and social class status. Broad hypotheses which encompassed these variables were proposed.

In order to test the proposed hypotheses and also to gather information related to the problem area, a questionnaire was developed. Accordingly, 349 tenth grade girls, from a school within the Detroit school system,

responded to the final instrument. The data necessitated the development of some operational techniques, means and indexes, to measure some of the variables involved. The significant findings of the study may be summarized as follows:

1. Self-Conceptions Regarding Appearance

- a. For the teenagers of this sample, race was found to be very significantly associated with self-conceptions regarding physical attributes. Negroes possessed a higher self-conception of their physical attributes than did their white classmates.

- b. Race was not found to be significantly associated with the Index of Self-Conceptions regarding Adornment.

- c. A very significant association was found for both races when the High-Low Mean Rank of Physical Attributes was related to the Index of Self-Conceptions regarding Adornment. Teenagers of both races who possessed a high self-conception of their physical attributes also tended to possess a high self-conception regarding their adornment ability.

2. Referent Relationships for Appearance

- a. Race was not significantly associated with the choice of significant others for adornment.

Teenagers of both races indicated that their mothers or one of several peers were their most salient significant others.

- b. No significant association was found between race and the choice of a model whose appearance was desirable for emulation. Models of emulation for appearance were primarily celebrities and peers for either race.
- c. A moderately significant association was noted between race and the choice of a model whose mode of dress was desirable for emulation. Fewer Negroes than whites chose models to emulate. When models were chosen by Negroes, peers were preferred over celebrities, whereas whites chose celebrities somewhat in preference to peers.

### 3. Grooming Behavior

- a. Various levels of significance were noted between the association of race and the usage of various grooming items. In general, each race chose those items which had the greatest potential for the aesthetic enhancement of their particular facial and tonsorial attributes. There was some indication that the Negroes and whites were using a common aesthetic model for their grooming activity,

i.e., the ideal Caucasoid type. Only Negroes demonstrated an inhibited use of lipstick if the self-conception of the adequacy of their lips was low. Negroes also indicated a greater usage of hair straightening techniques in their grooming behavior.

- b. An extremely significant association was found to exist between race and the total number of grooming items used regularly. Negroes habitually tended to use fewer grooming items than did whites.
- c. A moderately significant association was noted between the self-conception of lips and the use of lipstick. Negroes, specifically, tended to wear less lipstick if their self-conception regarding their lips was low.
- d. A significant association was found between the self-conception of complexion and the usage of face powder or make-up. Whites, only, were more likely to use face powder or make-up if their self-conception of their complexion was low.

#### 4. Color-Wearing Preferences

Race and color-wearing preferences showed tendencies toward significant associations. The races differed considerably in their choice of favorite

colors. Where they did favor the same color, the percentage distributions differed. The races did not markedly differ in their choice of least favored colors. However, the percentage distributions of each race that least preferred a given color were also dissimilar.

5. The Negro Race Rating

The Negro Race Rating showed no significance in any of the associations with variables dealing with self-conceptions of appearance, referent relationships for appearance and grooming behavior.

6. Social Class

The Occupational Rating of the teenager's father demonstrated no significant relationship with any of the variables dealing with self-conceptions of appearance and referent relationships for appearance.

### Implications

The most significant finding of this study is the discovery that the Negroes of this sample possess a better self-conception of their appearance than do their white classmates. This may be an indication that as a result of the Negro revolt and the attendant social change, a Negro identity is showing signs of development. It is also recognized that other factors are in operation here which may

be associated with these findings. Some of these additional factors may be that the Negroes of this sample have a relatively stable family background with economic security, attend a school whose population is equally integrated and reside in a northern urban community which has been relatively free of disturbance in the midst of extreme racial tension elsewhere.

Some of the findings of this study are in direct opposition to a major portion of the related literature. It is only in some of the most recent other research that similar findings are in evidence. When class position is controlled, many of the differences alluded to by the major portion of the literature indicate extreme relative deprivation on the part of the American Negro. However, as in this study, where class is controlled, these relative deprivations are not observable. In fact, in some instances the whites show greater relative deprivation than the Negroes, e.g., self-conceptions of physical attributes.

These findings may anticipate the already established effects of the rapidly improving socio-economic conditions under which American Negroes are living. It may be that the literature of the 1960's, based on the research of the previous decade, is already obsolete.



### Recommendations for Further Study

Due to the complexity of this problem area, any one of a number of avenues may be pursued to further explore the major findings of this study. For example, a study which encompasses boys as well as girls, men as well as women, would be desirable. The Negro American has a history of a matriarchal family structure where males tend to be subordinated. Due to the Negro revolution, up-to-date information would help establish if this revolution has affected any change in the self-perceptions of male Negroes.

Schools of equal racial integration such as the type from which the sample of this study was selected, tend to be atypical of the American society. Therefore exploration within schools of varying percentages of integration would provide valuable information for comparison. Perhaps schools of different degrees of integration have differential impacts upon self-conceptions of Negroes.

Other studies have shown that the tenth grader is acutely concerned with appearance factors. However it might be desirable in a comparison of Negroes and whites, to investigate a broader age-grade range.

This study focused on the common man level, i.e., the upper-lower and lower-middle classes. It would be of interest to obtain a larger number of those who are in the more privileged classes along with the economically disadvantaged in order to explore the variables of this study more extensively.

An urban community was used for this study since this is the most typical residence of the northern Negro. Focus on a different community size and/or a different area of the country would be desirable to provide a more comprehensive view of the appearance concerns of the Negro American.

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## APPENDIX

### THE QUESTIONNAIRE



GRADE \_\_\_\_\_.

0 1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3

### OPINIONNAIRE

#### WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT

Michigan State University is doing a study of the opinions teenage girls in Michigan have about themselves and their clothing.

You can help us by answering the following questions as clearly and carefully as you can.

If there is something you do not understand, ask questions. You will be given as much help as possible.

No one you know, not even your teachers, will ever see what you have written.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Most of the questions can be answered by circling a number before the answer you choose. Circle only one answer unless the question tells you to do otherwise. In those cases where you are asked to write out your own answer, space is provided for you to do so.

#### REMEMBER

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers (except for a few questions about your age, school, etc.). We want to know what your opinions are. Different people have different opinions.

- |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|
| <b>Brothers</b> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | more |
| <b>Sisters</b>  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | more |

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

1 . . . . . Your father

2 . . . . . Your mother

3 . . . . . Some other person (EXPLAIN WHO THIS PERSON IS:  
AN UNCLE, YOUR BROTHER, ETC.)

---

6. How far did the person mentioned in question #5 go in school?

1 . . . . . no schooling

2 . . . . . some grade school

3 . . . . . graduated from grade school

4 . . . . . some high school

5 . . . . . graduated from high school

6 . . . . . some college

7 . . . . . graduated from college

8 . . . . . other (EXPLAIN) \_\_\_\_\_.

9 . . . . . don't know

7. What does this person do for a living? (WRITE THE COMPLETE NAME OR  
TITLE OF HIS OR HER JOB, AND THE COMPANY HE OR SHE WORKS FOR.)

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8. Describe what this person makes or does on the job. (FOR EXAMPLE:  
SHE SUPERVISES THE WORK OF 150 OFFICE CLERKS; HE SELLS FROM DOOR-  
TO-DOOR; HE WORKS ON AN AUTOMOBILE ASSEMBLY LINE; ETC.)

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9. Does your family receive financial support from any other person or source?

1 . . . . . Yes

2 . . . . . No

IF NO -- GO ON TO QUESTION #13.

10. If YES, explain who (MOTHER, BROTHER, SOCIAL SECURITY, PENSIONS, ETC.)

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11. What does the person mentioned in question #10 do for a living?  
(WRITE THE COMPLETE NAME OR TITLE OF HIS OR HER JOB, AND THE  
COMPANY HE OR SHE WORKS FOR.)

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12. How far did the person mentioned in question #10 go in school?

1 . . . . . no schooling

2 . . . . . some grade school

3 . . . . . graduated from grade school

4 . . . . . some high school

5 . . . . . graduated from high school

6 . . . . . some college

7 . . . . . graduated from college

8 . . . . . other (EXPLAIN) \_\_\_\_\_

9 . . . . . don't know

13. Do you intend to graduate from high school?

1 . . . . . Yes

2 . . . . . No

14. Whether you intend to graduate from high school or not, how much more schooling do you expect to get?

1 . . . . . Business school or other occupational training school

2 . . . . . Community or junior college

3 . . . . . College

4 . . . . . None

5 . . . . . Other (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

15. What type of job do you expect to get when you leave school?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. When you get married how much education do you expect your husband to have?

1 . . . . . no schooling

2 . . . . . some grade school

3 . . . . . graduated from grade school

4 . . . . . some high school

5 . . . . . graduated from high school

6 . . . . . some college

7 . . . . . graduated from college

8 . . . . . other (EXPLAIN) \_\_\_\_\_

9 . . . . . don't know

17. What kind of job do you expect your future husband will have?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. Where do you expect to live when you finish school?

- 1 . . . . . on a farm
- 2 . . . . . in a rural area
- 3 . . . . . in a small town
- 4 . . . . . in a city smaller than Lansing or Flint
- 5 . . . . . in a city about the size of Lansing or Flint
- 6 . . . . . in a city larger than Lansing or Flint, but not  
as large as Detroit
- 7 . . . . . in a very large city like Detroit or Chicago
- 8 . . . . . in the suburbs of a city

AFTER EACH QUESTION, CIRCLE THE NUMBER BELOW THE ANSWER WHICH BEST SATISFIES YOUR FEELINGS.

How important are the following to you?	very important	fairly important	slightly important	not important
19. The amount of education you get	1	2	3	4
20. The type of job you get	1	2	3	4
21. The amount of education your husband has	1	2	3	4
22. The type of job your husband gets	1	2	3	4
23. The place you live after schooling	1	2	3	4
24. The neighborhood you live in	1	2	3	4

AFTER EACH QUESTION, CIRCLE THE NUMBER BELOW THE PHRASE WHICH BEST COMPLETES THE SENTENCE FOR YOU

Compared to others my age, I feel my . . .	much above average	somewhat above average	average	somewhat below average	below average
25. dancing ability is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
26. clothes are . . .	1	2	3	4	5
27. reputation is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
28. grooming is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
29. ability to dress properly is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
30. dating life is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
31. relationship with my brother(s) is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
32. popularity with the boys is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
33. grades in school are . . .	1	2	3	4	5
34. participation in school activities is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
35. intelligence is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
36. relationship with my mother is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
37. relationship with my teachers is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
38. participation in any activities related to sports is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
39. popularity with girls is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
40. relationship with my father is . . .	1	2	3	4	5
41. relationship with my classmates . . .	1	2	3	4	5
42. study habits are . . .	1	2	3	4	5
43. relationship with my sister(s) is . . .	1	2	3	4	5

44. How do you rate yourself in school ability compared with your close friends?

- 1 . . . . . I am the best
- 2 . . . . . I am above average
- 3 . . . . . I am average
- 4 . . . . . I am below average
- 5 . . . . . I am the poorest

45. How do you rate yourself in school ability compared with those in your class at school?

- 1 . . . . . I am among the best
- 2 . . . . . I am above average
- 3 . . . . . I am average
- 4 . . . . . I am below average
- 5 . . . . . I am among the poorest

46. Where do you think you would rank in your class in high school?

- 1 . . . . . among the best
- 2 . . . . . above average
- 3 . . . . . average
- 4 . . . . . below average
- 5 . . . . . among the poorest

47. Do you think you have the ability to complete college?

- 1 . . . . . yes, definitely
- 2 . . . . . yes, probably
- 3 . . . . . not sure either way
- 4 . . . . . probably not
- 5 . . . . . no



48. Where do you think you would rank in your class in college?

1 . . . . . among the best

2 . . . . . above average

3 . . . . . average

4 . . . . . below average

5 . . . . . poorest

49. In order to become a doctor, lawyer, or university professor, work beyond four years of college is necessary. How likely do you think it is that you could complete such advanced work?

1 . . . . . very likely

2 . . . . . somewhat likely

3 . . . . . not sure either way

4 . . . . . unlikely

5 . . . . . most unlikely

50. Forget for a moment how others grade your school work. In your own opinion how good do you think your school work is?

1 . . . . . my work is excellent

2 . . . . . my work is good

3 . . . . . my work is average

4 . . . . . my work is below average

5 . . . . . my work is much below average

51. What kind of grades do you think you are capable of getting?

1 . . . . . mostly A's

2 . . . . . mostly B's

3 . . . . . mostly C's

4 . . . . . mostly D's

5 . . . . . mostly E's

AFTER EACH QUESTION, CIRCLE THE NUMBER BELOW THE ANSWER WHICH BEST SATISFIES YOUR FEELINGS.

How important are the following to you?	very important	fairly important	slightly important	not important
52. being a good dancer	1	2	3	4
53. having clothes	1	2	3	4
54. having a good reputation	1	2	3	4
55. being well-groomed	1	2	3	4
56. knowing how to dress properly	1	2	3	4
57. having a good dating life	1	2	3	4
58. getting along with my brother(s)	1	2	3	4
59. being popular with the boys	1	2	3	4
60. getting good grades in school	1	2	3	4
61. taking part in school activities	1	2	3	4
62. having intelligence	1	2	3	4
63. getting along with my mother	1	2	3	4
64. getting along with my teachers	1	2	3	4
65. participating in any activities related to sports	1	2	3	4
66. being popular with the girls	1	2	3	4
67. getting along with my father	1	2	3	4
68. getting along with my classmates	1	2	3	4
69. having good study habits	1	2	3	4
70. getting along with my sister(s)	1	2	3	4

71. Which category comes closest to your feelings about yourself?

- 1 . . . . . I don't like myself the way I am: I'd like to change completely
- 2 . . . . . There are many things I'd like to change, but not completely
- 3 . . . . . I'd like to stay very much the same; there is very little I would change.

72. Whose opinion counts most when you are deciding what to wear?

1 . . . . . brother

2 . . . . . sister

3 . . . . . father

4 . . . . . mother

5 . . . . . boyfriends

6 . . . . . girlfriends

7 . . . . . other person's (EXPLAIN WHO) \_\_\_\_\_

8 . . . . . No one

73. If you could look like any one person you know or have ever heard of, who would it be and why? (EXPLAIN AND NAME THIS PERSON.)

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74. If you could dress like any one person you know or have ever heard of, who would it be and why? (EXPLAIN AND NAME THIS PERSON.)

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75. On the basis of your experience so far, how satisfied with your life are you?

1 . . . . . very satisfied

2 . . . . . fairly satisfied

3 . . . . . slightly satisfied

4 . . . . . not satisfied

76. From the list below, choose the 2 colors you like to wear the most.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

pink	beige	pastel blue	maroon
red	brown	blue	grey
orange	green	navy	white
yellow	turquoise	purple	black

77. From the list above, choose the 2 colors you like to wear least.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

78. As part of your daily facial make-up do you use...(CIRCLE ALL THOSE YOU USE.)

1 . . . . . mascara

2 . . . . . eye liner

3 . . . . . eyebrow pencil

4 . . . . . eye shadow

5 . . . . . rouge

6 . . . . . lipstick

7 . . . . . face cream

8 . . . . . face powder or face make-up

9 . . . . . other (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

79. What do you usually do to your hair? (CIRCLE ALL THOSE WHICH APPLY TO YOU.)

1 . . . . . get a permanent to curl you hair

2 . . . . . get a permanent to straighten you hair

3 . . . . . set your hair in rollers

4 . . . . . use a heat set

5 . . . . . use coloring solutions

6 . . . . . use hair conditioners

7 . . . . . other (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

Everyone rates the attractiveness of her appearance by comparing herself to others in her group. How would you rate the following characteristics?

(AFTER EACH QUESTION, CIRCLE THE NUMBER BELOW THE ANSWER WHICH BEST SATISFIES YOUR FEELINGS.)	much above others	somewhat above others	the same as others	somewhat below others	below others
80. Hair	1	2	3	4	5
81. Forehead	1	2	3	4	5
82. Eyes	1	2	3	4	5
83. Nose	1	2	3	4	5
84. Cheeks	1	2	3	4	5
85. Ears	1	2	3	4	5
86. Lips	1	2	3	4	5
87. Teeth	1	2	3	4	5
88. Chin	1	2	3	4	5
89. Facial Shape	1	2	3	4	5
90. Complexion	1	2	3	4	5
91. Skin tone	1	2	3	4	5
92. Neck	1	2	3	4	5
93. Shoulders	1	2	3	4	5
94. Arms	1	2	3	4	5
95. Hands	1	2	3	4	5
96. Bust	1	2	3	4	5
97. Waist	1	2	3	4	5
98. Stomach	1	2	3	4	5
99. Hips	1	2	3	4	5
100. Thighs	1	2	3	4	5
101. Knees	1	2	3	4	5
102. Calves	1	2	3	4	5
103. Ankles	1	2	3	4	5
104. Feet	1	2	3	4	5
105. Figure	1	2	3	4	5