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# The Relationship between Dress and Socio-Economics

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**The Relationship between Dress and Socio-Economics**

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**A Research Paper  
Presented to  
The Faculty of the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies  
Old Dominion University**

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**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirement for the Degree  
Masters of Science in Occupation and Technical Studies**

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**by**

**Tiffany A. Machado  
July 2006**

## **APPROVAL PAGE**

This research paper was prepared by Tiffany A. Machado under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Occupation and Technical Education. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Occupation and Technical Studies.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Perceptions are developed from two sources, factual conclusions or assumptions. Factual conclusions are developed from the interoperation of truths. Assumptions are drawn from prior knowledge and experiences. Perceptions provide an immediate method through which one can create an instantaneous conclusion about individuals or situations (Heffner, 2001). Many individuals' perceptions are processed into opinions impacting choices one makes concerning a corresponding situation (Godfrey, 2004). This study takes a deeper look into perceptions, through the relationship between dress and socio-economic classification.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine Old Dominion University undergraduate students' opinions on whether selection of dress identifies them with a particular socio-economic classification.

### RESEARCH GOALS

The objectives of this study were established to guide an answer to this problem.

- Identify the socio-economic status of students that attend Old Dominion University.
- Measure the opinion of Old Dominion University's students toward their selection of attire.
- Project the relationship between socio-economic status and favored dress.

## BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Industrial Revolution gave way to various technological advancements that affected the manufacturing industry, including the fashion industry. During the height of the Industrial Revolution, a variety of machines were produced that increased the production rates of fibers, fabrics, and clothing. Consumer needs and the economy of production led to the mass production of various goods. The mass production of fashion garments amplified the production of prêt a port, known as ready to wear. Ready to wear was originally developed in France to meet fashion needs of sailors after returning from sea in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Frings, 2005). With the advent of the Industrial Revolution ready-to-wear began to flourish in the late nineteenth century. The inventions of mail order catalogues by Aaron Montgomery Ward and further utilized by Sears, Roebuck and Company increased the accessibility and popularity of ready-to-wear clothing to more rural areas (Frings, 2005). Yet, it was not until the earlier part of the twentieth century when ready to wear became an item of widespread popularity.

In 1920, ready to wear started to become an item of demand for higher social classes. Designers like Poiret, Chanel and Vionnet popularized ready to wear by producing their one of a kind designs for the masses. The garments bore a designer label, which increased the demand for garments. With a nationwide expansion of department stores like Nordstrom, ready to wear became available for all social classes. The accessibility of a garment that bore brand names propelled the correlation between brand names and economic status.

As ready to wear evolved throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, designers began branding their names with staples in consumer wardrobes. Brand names like IZOD glorified the

basic polo shirt into a name brand item. In the 1970s the popularity of jeans became a mainstream trend. Calvin Kline capitalized on the new infatuation and branded his name to jeans, creating the first designer jeans (Diamond & Diamond, 2002).

At the end of the seventies athletic wear became a popular choice of dress outside of sporting events. Nike, a popular athletic company from the seventies, began branding their apparel as athletic and casual wear (Steele, 2000). In the early to mid-1980s the hip-hop phenomenon further propelled the correlation of athletic apparel as casual wear. The introduction of MTV in 1983 featured hip-hop videos with DJs and musicians wearing Nike apparel as casual wear. As hip-hop progressed into a more aggressive form of music known as rap, the athletic movement faded. Yet, sneakers remained a staple in all forms of dress. Rappers of the late eighties and early nineties personified their rags to riches stories through their music. Rappers associated their Nikes and other brand name apparel with achieving a high socio-economic status. This fashion largely influenced African-American youth. The desire for a pair of \$120-\$230 sneakers created a wide spread distortion of consumers buying motives (Dixon, 1996). Clothing purchased by consumers of lower socio-economic status became driven by emotional motives. In 1992, youth in urban cities of lower socio-economic areas began killing for Nikes and other labeled apparel.

The following passage describes the extent of the crime occurring over Nike apparel.

In 1990, Jesse Jackson and the civil rights group Operation PUSH charged that Nike sold more than 40% of its shoes to members of the black and minority communities, yet little of that income remained in the communities. PUSH was

outraged at reports of African-American youth killing each other to steal shoes that they could not afford, saying that Nike targets poor urban kids in its hard sell. Surveys show that 77% of teenage men in the US want to wear Nikes. More than half of all Nike's sales and 75% of its basketball shoe sales are to people younger than 25 (Dixon, 1996, para. 12).

The relation of one's opinions of dress and perceptions of a socio-economical status is an important topic to a broad variety of subject areas. The systematic collection of data determined the general factors that impacted the relationship between these two variables, thus filling the gap of knowledge between the correlation of dress and perceptions. Furthermore, the generalization of this study will further advance the relationships between dress and socioeconomics. For example, this study can be generalized into the relationship between dress and first impressions. Which in turn, can be applied to research to discover optimal dress for varying job interviews.

#### LIMITATIONS

The limitations created for this study were as follows:

- The participants of this study were students from Old Dominion University enrolled in OTS 110, Technology and Your Career, in Spring 2006.
- Students chose the course from a selection of required general education courses.
- The course filled a required science and technology perspective for university general education.

## ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made in this study:

- The participants were from various socio-economic backgrounds but predominately from second-generation college students.
- The participants associated dress with a socio-economic status.

## PROCEDURES

The development of this study was complied through literature review and survey. The literature review was conducted in the fields of history, current events, and related to the research variables of socio-economics and fashion. The review of literature supplied the researcher with a knowledge-base of breadth and depth surrounding the subject areas. This enabled the researcher to make educational decisions pertaining to the research method.

An anonymous survey was developed to generate findings in relation to the research goals. Survey questions were developed to determine the socio-economic background of the participants within the research study and measure their opinions on whether selection of dress identifies them with a particular socio-economic classification.

The survey was disbursed at Old Dominion University within the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies, in OTS 110T, Technology and Your World. The instructors of OTS 110T provided the students with individual survey packets. The survey packets were dispersed one for each student. Each packet contained the following: a cover letter, instructions, survey, and answer sheet. After completion, students placed their survey and answer sheet into the survey packet envelope, returning it to the front of

the classroom. The surveys were returned to the researcher within the same day they were proctored by a student. The researcher then tabulated the findings and made comparisons.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following definitions were imperative to the field the research was studying.

Couture – “is the French term for original designs that are custom made once for a particular individual. These garments are hand crafted out of the finest fabrics, trimmings and findings” (Diamond & Diamond, 2002 p. 89).

Perceptions – “are bias assumptions one draws about their surrounding elements and or individuals through their prior knowledge and senses” (Godfrey, 2004).

Prêt-à-Port – “is the French term for ready to wear, it literally translates into ready-to-be-carried. This term is used to describe garments that are mass-produced rather than custom made” (Diamond & Diamond, 2002, p. 90).

Social Stratification- the social ranking of individuals from higher to lower classes (Tortora & Eubank, 2005).

Sumptuary laws- regulations that obstructed citizens use of particular goods based upon their social status (Tortora & Eubank, 2005).

Socio-economic – “of, relating to, or involving a combination of social and economic factors” (Anges, 2003, p. 612).

### OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter I introduced the background and significance between dress and socio-economic status identification. It has been concluded that many individuals create biased opinions about unknown individuals through dress and appearance. Research goals, limitations, assumptions, procedures, and fundamental definitions were presented.

Research goals were developed to determine the socio-economic background of the participants and develop a means to measure the opinion of the students toward their own selection of attire. A limitation of this study was that only Old Dominion University students were studied. Assumptions developed determined that Old Dominion University students were from varied socio-economic background, second-generation college students, and choose this technology-based course to fulfill a general education requirement. Fundamental definitions such as prêt a port, dress, and socio-economics were presented to determine their meaning in relation to this study.

In Chapter II, the researcher conducted a literature review to further gain knowledge in the content areas of socio-economic status and fashion trends. Within this chapter the researcher unites pertinent readings from journals, web documents, and textbooks. This chapter provides a deeper understanding for the background and current information relevant to dress, society, and economics.

In Chapter III the researcher used information gathered from Chapter II to develop a survey that would measure the relationship between dress and socio-economics. This chapter provides further details and explanations regarding the implementation and methods used to conduct the research.

Chapter IV reports the findings from the conducted research. In Chapter IV, conclusions and recommendations are drawn from the research. Conclusions are drawn about students' opinion toward their own selection of attire and their socio-economic background. This relationship is further developed and recommendations are made regarding the generalization of the findings to various related fields.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

When analyzing the relationship between economic class and dress selection, it was important to review other research on these topics. In this chapter the following topics will be discussed: 1) a history of socio-economics and society, 2) socio-economic classifications, and 3) psychological need of dress.

#### A HISTORY OF SOCIO-ECONOMICS AND SOCIETY

In the past, socio-economics have been used as means to create an apparent division between varying groups by social and economic factors, through social stratification and sumptuary laws. The use of social stratification began in ancient Egypt as a way to develop social order. In ancient Rome, the first regional sumptuary laws were created to preserve a division amongst social classes (Wolfman, Quirke, & Shiode, 2005). The Roman rules of the Lex Valrai Rundayana were the first laws produced to restrict the purchases of fabrics and fine stones based on socio-economics. In England King Edward III developed the first national sumptuary laws to restore social order. King Edward III instilled sumptuary laws to expand the division between lower classes and aristocrats (Kippen, 2004). Eventually, national sumptuary laws swept throughout Europe and the thirteen colonies. During James I reign they began to weaken. However in the thirteen colonies sumptuary laws and similar acts flourished due to Puritan beliefs (Wolfman & et al, 2005). James I used Parliament to eradicate sumptuary laws. At the same time, Puritans in the thirteen colonies enforced similar laws within their religious culture.

The social stratification of ancient Egypt was used to classify citizens through a variety of factors such as kinship, locality, gender, age, ethnicity, and social class

(Wolfman, et al, 2005). The social stratification system of Egypt can be compared to the structure of a pyramid. The majority of the society was supported by the base, which consisted of lower class citizens. As the social pyramid narrowed to a peak, citizens of higher stature were identified by their careers.

An Egyptians' occupation dictated their economic and social status, which in turn influenced their dress. For example, pharaohs wore elaborate garments constructed from the finest fabrics. Depending on the season, pharaohs would wear accordion pleated wraps or robes. Their ensemble was additionally accompanied by ornate jewelry, sandals, wigs, make-up, and perfumes. In contrast, slaves and peasants only wore lion cloths, since their work was labor intensive and provided meager wages. Egyptian law did not regulate what was to be worn by the various social classes. However, dress was shaped by one's career, which was linked to their social status. Although ancient Egyptians did not generate laws to distinguish the varying social classes, "The social differences between the different groups were expressed in various ways but were always very clearly visible, and important for the social identification of the individual" (Wolfman & et al, 2005, p. 445). It was not until 215 B.C in Rome when the first laws to govern a individuals dress were established (Wolfman & et al, 2005).

In ancient Rome sumptuary laws were developed to govern individuals based on "social, religious, or moral grounds directed against overindulgence of luxury in diet and drink and extravagance in dress and mode of living" (Lassegé, 2005, p. 29). The first sumptuary laws were established under Lex Valrai Rundiana (Kippen, 2004). Lex Valrai Rundiana governed a variety of dress regulations, such as restrictions on fabrics, trimmings, details, and color selections for varying social classes. Lex Valrai Rundiana

was implemented as a means to end unmoral and decadent behavior with the intent of creating a better society. For example, Lex Valrai Rundiana regulated the length to which a Roman woman could wear or lift her dresses.

In Rome, color was the primary visual indicator used to differentiate social classes. Common color restrictions distinctively separated the upper class from the lower class. For instance, the color purple was only to be worn by royalty (Baird, 2000). Scarlet, a bright crimson red, was only to be worn by royal family members and noblemen (Kippen, 2004). Additionally, the sumptuary laws regulated the number of colors one could wear, depending on their social and economic status; peasants only wore one color, officers wore two colors, commanders wore three colors, and members of the royal house could wear up to seven colors (Kippen, 2004).

Various rulers throughout Rome's history altered sumptuary laws to further separate social classes. Emperor Aurelain ruled that the colors purple and scarlet were only to be worn by himself and his sons. He additionally ruled that women could only wear shoes in the colors of yellow, white, red, or green (Kippen, 2004). Emperor Hellogabalus additionally banned all women from embellishing their shoes with precious metals and gems. Emperor Gaius Valerius Diocletianus created a classification system using shoe color as a way to define the assorted social classes (Kippen, 2004). The sole purpose of the sumptuary laws in Rome was to create a distinct division between the social classes. Regional sumptuary laws continued to be used throughout ancient civilizations until the medieval time period when national sumptuary laws were developed in England.

King Edward III's personal interest in the development of the textile and jewelry

industries influenced the progression of national sumptuary laws. His commitment to the textile industry increased the production of many fabrics, such as broadcloth (Baldwin, 1923). Broadcloth, a plain weave textile constructed from cotton or wool, was durable, and easy to dye and construct into a garment. The increased production of broadcloth lowered the price of the material, making it readily available for the lower and middle classes. This enabled many citizens to create reproductions of garments worn by noblemen and aristocrats.

In addition, King Edward III supported jewelry making and gilding, enhancing the evolution and efficiency of these processes. Jewelry making and gilding was further influenced by increasing the amount of precious metals and stones brought back from England's victorious battles won in France (Kippen, 2004). These two factors increased the availability of fine jewelry for middle class citizens (Baldwin, 1923).

During the King Edward III's throne the Black Plague killed a large majority of the British population. This increased the variety of careers that needed to be fulfilled to maintain a functioning nation. In turn many citizens took on occupations of higher stature, which increased the middle class. This labor shortage increased wages and purchasing power of the middle class citizens. With the increased availability of fine garments and jewelry the distinction between social classes began to blur, creating the illusion of socio-economic equality. As a result, upper class citizens were not pleased with the less than distinctive separation of social classes. Therefore the first nationwide sumptuary laws were enacted to restore the separation of social classes.

According to Baldwin (1923), in 1337, King Edward III initiated the first nationwide sumptuary laws to serve the following four purposes: preserve social classes,

stifle unmoral acts, sustain the economy, and maintain conservative values throughout England. First, King Edward III limited the amount of fur one could own or wear depending upon their yearly wage. This law affected the consumption of clothing since a large variety of citizens had to replenish their winter wardrobes due to the restriction on furs (Kippen, 2004). As a result, this preserved the visual distinction between social classes. Citizens wearing fur were acknowledged as higher-class citizens, since the restrictions were indicated by yearly wages.

In 1355, King Edward III developed another sumptuary law that was used to discourage unmoral acts and maintain the conservative society of England. He developed laws that declared prostitutes must establish a visible indication that identified their occupation. This created a social and moral division among prostitutes and female citizens in England. This re-affirmed through clothing that one would be subjected to public ridicule if they committed unmoral and non-conservative acts (Kippen, 2004).

King Edward III created additional sumptuary laws that further classified citizens through dress restriction. During this narrow time period, elongated, pointy shoes were in vogue. King Edward III regulated how long the point could extend dependent upon ones' social status. Noble men shoes were allowed to reach 24" in length, gentlemen were allowed 12" in length and merchants were allowed 6.5" in length (Kippen, 2004). The sumptuary laws of King Edward III served several purposes, but ultimately they restored social order regardless of their original purpose. Juedwine states, "The medieval society has been defined as a democracy founded upon the principal of aristocracy" (Baldwin, 1923, p. 29).

At the end of King Edward III's reign, the use of sumptuary laws steadily continued, until the death of Queen Elizabeth. Shortly after Queen Elizabeth's death, Parliament passed a ruling that negated previous sumptuary laws developed by herself and her predecessors. On July 25, 1603, James I was crowned the King of England. The following year with a new Parliament, James I revealed his intentions to "make law to prefer the common advantage to private ends" (Baldwin, 1923, p. 248). Consequently, James I swayed Parliament to develop laws that led to the permanent end of sumptuary laws (Baldwin, 1923). In 1607 during James I rule, the first of the thirteen British colonies were established. The Puritans that inhabited the thirteen colonies quickly adapted England's lingering sumptuary laws, although they lost popularity and power in England. As years passed during James I rule, sumptuary laws prohibiting the freedom of dress diminished. On the contrary, citizens of the new colonies praised past sumptuary laws and continued the use of similar acts in the thirteen colonies.

The Puritans and Pilgrims of Colonial America believed it was necessary to restrict one's dress to ensure social order. In 1634, the Massachusetts General Court passed laws forbidding the purchase of wool, silk, linen, gold, silver, and lace for particular social classes (Mintz, 2003). Fines or jail time were used to deter individuals from committing infractions (Avery, 2006). Overtime these general rules transformed into laws that restricted dress according to Puritan beliefs.

Unlike ancient Rome and England, Puritans believed in conformity amongst all citizens, regardless of social and economic status. One's social status in the Puritan society was established upon their level of commitment to Puritan beliefs. Puritans developed laws similar to sumptuary laws as a way to spread and instill their "strait-

laced” virtues (Keller, 1971, p. 115). Puritans believed in conformity and the denial of all pleasures viewed as immoral through biblical readings such as overindulged and extravagance. Through plain uniform dress and activities, Puritans believed they could maintain their moral and divine society (Keller, 1971). Puritans developed cruel, strict, and unusual laws and punishments to reinforce their way of life. Common punishments were branding, body disfigurements, and body contortion (Keller, 1971). For example, if swearing or foul language occurred in the public, a likely punishment would be forcing a hole through the offenders tongue. Infractions produced from unmoral acts resulted in the use of their clothes to publicly display their offense. Puritans made the offenders wear a letter that was symbolically associated with the committed crime, like an A for adulterous, a D for drunkenness, and a T for theft (Keller, 1971).

The Puritan beliefs and society continued throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth century sparking many odd and heinous events such as the Salem witch trials. In the early nineteenth century the Puritan lifestyle began to disband, as new social and political issues arose. Puritan rules, laws, and acts were the last to infringe upon American’s social, religious, and moral overindulgence in “luxury in diet and drink and extravagance in dress and mode of living” (Lassegé, 2005, p. 29).

In the nineteenth century the role of dress and socioeconomics evolved, as the result of societal changes. In the early nineteenth century the disbandment of Puritanical beliefs ceased, eradicating the use of laws to govern dress. Yet, in the early to mid twentieth century factors like income and occupation impacted one’s dress, emerging as a new approach to define one’s class within the American public. In the later portion of the nineteenth century new developments in the fields of fashion, merchandising,

manufacturing, and publications increased the availability and purchasing of ready-to-wear garments. The increased use of ready-to-wear garments blurred societal classes set in the mid nineteenth century.

In the mid-nineteenth century during the disbandment of Puritanism, ones' social position was defined by the laborious nature of their responsibilities at work and in the home. The income of one's home additionally influenced their choice of dress, creating visible symbols of social division through silhouettes (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). This relationship can be viewed through defining the two main silhouettes of women's attire for house parties, a popular form of entertainment in the mid-nineteenth century.

Women of all income levels held house parties in which dancing, drinking, and eating took place. Typically the women of the household would arrange and organize these social events. The extent to which women were expected to participate in the arrangement and organization of their house party varied upon their wealth (Tortora & Eubank, 2005).

Wealthy women did little with the physical aspects of their parties. Typically their servants would arrange and organize labor-intensive aspects of the party planning, such as cooking the food and preparing the household. As a result, the women's responsibility was to comfort and entertain the guests. Their physical appearance was an extension of their responsibilities; these women wore elaborate garments defined by a bouffant silhouette (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). These garments consisted of several layers of undergarments, including a corset (Diamond, 2005). The corset physically bound the upper and mid-bodice into an hourglass shape. The skirt portion of the silhouette was large and created by bustles or hoops. Bustles and hoops were constructed from wiring,

horsehair, and/or straw. The undergarments were an intricate part of this silhouette, for they gave a shape to the dress. Dresses of such detail were very expensive and restricted the bodice. The combination of the body-constricting corset and awkwardly large skirt limited the wearer of any laborious activities.

Women of lower economic wealth were expected to entertain guests and complete more physical tasks (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). These women would garden, purchase goods, prepare meals, clean, and accomplish other preparatory tasks (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). Therefore, their clothing served more functional purposes and was constructed from a tubular and A-line silhouette. The tubular silhouette was loose, creating the bust and mid-section. The skirt portion of the garment was still larger, but not to the extent of the wealthier women which consisted of an A-line silhouette (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). The tubular and A-line silhouette did not require as many undergarments, such as bustle or hoop, making the garments affordable for lower economic classes (Diamond, 2005). Additionally, the combination of a tubular bodice and A-line skirt allowed for more movement and freedom for the wearer.

Even though the Puritan age ended, the American public began to create a social division amongst varying classes through each citizen's economic standing. This was identifiable through women's silhouettes during the early nineteenth century. Within the mid and late portion of the nineteenth century developments within fashion, merchandising, manufacturing, and publications emerged (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). Developments such as these reduced the use of dress as an indicator of social classes.

In the mid nineteenth century Levis Strauss and Charles Fredrick Worth developed garments that defined a new form of fashion. In 1850 Levi Strauss developed

pants made from denim to create a sturdy and durable pant for miners in California (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). The jeans became popular because of the durability they provided miners, farmers, and other individuals in labor trades. Consumers of Levi jeans began to associate Levis with blue jeans (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). In turn, Levi Strauss' pants became the first brand name for a generic fashion garment (Diamond, 2000). Later in the 1850's, Charles Fredrick Worth emerged as the world's first fashion designer creating one of a kind garments for royalty and wealthy citizens, known as couture (Diamond, 2005). The ideology behind a brand name and designer labels from the nineteenth century began to slowly change the role of fashion in the consumers' mind and as a business.

Inventions and improvements from the Industrial Revolution further impacted garment production during the nineteenth century, leading to the mainstream production of read-to-wear garments. This increased the availability of clothing. In the early nineteenth century Ebenezer Butterick invented the first sized paper patterns, ending the need to resize patterns before cutting took place (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). Additionally, the first cutting machine was developed providing a way to mass cut garments (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). Prior to this, one would have to individually cut out each garment. Power looms and new chemical processes such as weighting and mercerizing improved the quality, production, and availability of fabrics, which inversely decreased the price of fabrics. With the increase of production and decrease in material cost near the end of the nineteenth century, men and women wore at least one ready-to-wear piece in their daily ensemble (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). Many Americans embraced the idea of ready-to-wear because it made fashionable garments available to all social classes, by diminishing

the social barriers (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). Still, wealthier citizens used dressmakers to construct more elaborate and unique garments (Tortora & Eubank, 2005).

The quick improvement in fashion production created a need to store and sell ready-to-wear garments. In the 1860's large department stores were developed to carry ready-to-wear and custom garments. In 1872, Aaron Montgomery Ward created Montgomery Ward, allowing consumers that lived in rural communities to purchase ready-to-wear garments on a regular bases (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). With the availability of magazines like Harper's Bazaar and Vogue, American citizens became able to follow current fashion trends (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). This provided a quick and accurate flow of fashion communication enabling consumers to purchase up to date garments from catalogues offered by Montgomery Ward (Tortora & Eubank, 2005).

The developments made within the realm of fashion, manufacturing, merchandising and publications during the nineteenth century lead to the development of fashion as an organized industry and form of business. Levi Strauss and Charles Fredrick Worth defined the new classification of dress with designer labeled merchandise and couture garments (Diamond, 2005). The Industrial Revolution improved and increased the production of ready-to-wear garments, thus creating the need for new merchandising avenues like department stores and catalogues. The introduction of Harper's Bazaar and Vogue provided current fashion information to guide consumers in the purchasing of ready-to-wear garments. The nineteenth century developments in fashion, manufacturing, merchandising, and publications laid the foundation for the developments that occurred within the fashion industry in the twentieth century.

In the twentieth century the social divisions began to blur with the introduction of ready-to-wear; popular fashion items became easily accessible to consumers at varying income levels. The increased popularity and production of ready-to-wear continued to develop. Dress was used as an indicator to define the varying social subcultures that emerged within the twentieth century.

In the 1920's the flapper look by Paul Poiret became the first look that was purposefully adopted by a particular group of the American public, identifying a movement between varying social classes (Diamond, 2005). The look was defined with a tubular silhouette that flattened the bust and exposed the shoulders, chest, and lower leg. Young American women embraced the flapper look to distinguish themselves within a social circle that represented the freedom and liberation of women's rights (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). Within the American community the Flapper ensemble became associated with independence, rebellion, and speakeasies (nightclubs that sold alcohol during prohibition) (Diamond, 2005). Despite the association women continued to wear Paul Poiret's design because it was also a sign of independence and liberation. In the 1930's American's endured the great depression, which eliminated the flapper look. From the Great Depression another sub-culture emerges using dress as an identifier.

Near the end of the Great Depression in the 1930's and into the late 1940's, African American male youths of lower economic standing began to popularize the Zoot suit (Tortora & Eubank, 2005), becoming the first subculture of lower economic status to popularize a fashion. The Zoot suit was a single-breasted suit and pant that was loose fitting. The pants were high waisted tapering tightly at the ankles (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). The suits were very loose allowing for free movement, which allowed the wearer

to jitterbug. A Zoot suit became associated with one's ability to jitterbug, becoming a sign of status within the lower socio-economic African-American youth (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). In the 1950's the popularity of the jitterbug diminishes with the emergence of new 1950 dances and styles. As a result, the Zoot suit lost popularity with the young African American males.

In England during the 1950's , the first cult-like fashion known as the Teddy Boys surfaced. Unlike the Flapper and Zoot suit looks, the British youth took different garments and created their own style instead of adopting a designer created fashion (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). The suit jacket was oversized, with broad shoulders and an extended duck like tail. The pants were tight, high-wasted and short exposing the socks (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). A vest was also worn with the ensemble (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). The Teddy Boy style was different but wholesome, therefore losing its popularity with the free and deconstructive styles of the 1960's.

In the 1960's the social movements and war breed a new generation of American youth, the hippies. They were defined by attitudes of anti-capitalism, peace, and love. Hippies were not in tune with fashion statements or superficial luxuries, often creating or rendering their garments from thrift store purchase, unknowingly developing a movement identified through their clothing (Steele, 2000). Fashion designers and designer labels were receptive to the free spirit and unique nature of their clothing. They began to mimic popular styles found in the hippie subculture, introducing America to hippy fashions. In turn, this popularized hippy fashions and attitudes throughout young Americans of various socio-economic statuses (Steele, 2000). This look continued into the 1970s creating a change in the fashion world and the role of dress and socio-economics.

The consumer popularity of the 1960's mini and maxi skirt remained constant throughout the 1960's and well into the 1970's. Fashion designers decided to change the look of fashion despite consumer demands and developed the midi skirt. The midi skirt was longer than the mini skirt and shorter than a maxi skirt falling at mid calf (Steele, 2000). Fashion designers pushed the new design into retail outlets for the fall season of 1970 despite the ongoing popularity of the mini and maxi skirts (Steele, 2000). Although designers pushed this design into fashion, consumers were not receptive. A large majority of these skirts ended up on the clearance racks by the end of fall; retailers lost a large majority of their fall-projected profits (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). This event in the early seventies changed the flow of fashion inspiration from designer driven creations to consumer driven demands. "In August of 1971 *The New York Times* declared that women had the right to wear any length they choose" (Tortora & Eubank, 2005, p. 480). This statement amongst the public acknowledged the transformation from designer driven to consumer driven fashion, which further diminished the relationship between dress and socio-economics. Consumers began looking beyond famous designers for the next fashion trend and looked inward upon their own social circles.

In the 1970s the use of designer labels and brand names began to flourish with designers like Calvin Klein. Klein changed the image of brand name jeans once popularized by Levi's. Calvin Klein formed a new category of jean apparel, developing the first designer pair of jeans (Diamond, 2005). This was achieved by labeling the jeans with his already distinguished name and raising the price point synonymous with other designer apparel. The popularity of Calvin Klein jeans was only received by individuals of a higher socio-economic standing. In the 1980s the ongoing popularity of designer

jeans and apparel began to strengthen the relationship between dress and socio-economics.

The increasing popularity and production of designer labeled merchandise began to change the buying patterns of the American public. America adopted a buy now pay later attitude, in turn, strengthening the use of dress as a socio-economic indicator. In the 1980's a new societal group, the yuppies, emerged and utilized the high price of dress to determine the members within their social circle (Steele, 2000). This subculture was identified by young, wealthy, white-collar workers. Yuppies used the buy now pay later attitude to establish their visible wealth with luxurious purchases (Tortora & Eubank, 2005). They identify members of their social circle through one's visible wealth, determined by socio-economic factors such as education, income, and occupation. This can be identified through popular 1980s pop culture. For example, the popular 1980s movie *Pretty in Pink* identifies this social circle and their use of socio-economic factors to determine one's acceptance within their social circle. In *Pretty in Pink*, the main character was rejected by the yuppie crowd based upon her lack of visible wealth. These visible signs of wealth were generated by her father's low waged, blue-collar occupation that was reflected by his poor education. The American public began to confront their credit card debt which occurred with the buy now pay later attitude. As a result, the yuppie social sub culture gradually diminishes in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The use of designer labels maintained their popularity within varied sub-cultures. Additionally, the increasing popularity of celebrities transpires. Subcultures began to associate with celebrity dress and attitude to establish their social circle.

The first use of celebrities dress and attitudes to establish a subculture was found within the urban African Americans youth. In the early 1900s the popularity of gangster rap appealed to young urban African American men that once listened to rappers like Run DMC. The increasing popularity of the music lead to the upper movement of many poor young urban African American males into high society (Steele, 2000). Gangster rap glorified images of violence and the negative aspects of the urban street culture.

Gangsters also glorified their purchase of luxury items such as NIKE apparel as a sign of success. Young African Americans males began to mimic the association between luxury items and success, creating chaos within urban cities throughout the 1990s (Steele, 2000). In the early 90s the chaos reached a low point, when killings occurred over Nike and other labeled apparel. Within the later portion of the 1990s and into the twenty-first century the popularity of mimicking famous rappers continued (Steele, 2000). In the later portion of the 1990s and early 21<sup>st</sup> century jewelry became a hot fashion item associated with wealth and prestige. Within each subculture that existed from the 1990s to the mid twenty-first century, celebrities dress and attitudes were followed to identify subcultures.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century dress was used as an indicator, defining the varying social subcultures that emerged within the twentieth century. In the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the Flappers and Zoot suit looks were adopted designer trends used to associate an individual with a particular subgroups. In the 1950s and 1960s fashions were not adapted, but garments were used to generate new forms of fashion. In the 1970s a large change in the flow of fashion occurred defining the consumers freedom to choose what “will be” fashionable. The attitude of the 1980s yuppies used dress to determine one’s socio-economic status and acceptance within their subculture. The popularity of gangster rap in

the early 1990s identified sub cultural association with celebrities' fashions and attitudes to define their own subcultures.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATIONS

Americans see themselves through the means of varying social and economical factors. The division exists because of a variety of working systems such as education, business, and politics. Social factors are generally defined through one's education, occupation, and income. Economic factors are determined by one's annual salary.

According to Jay and Ellen Diamond (2000), the authors of "The World of Fashion", there are three divisions of classes that exist with the socio-economic system. They are the upper, middle, and lower class; these groups are further divided into two subdivisions, the lower and upper. The following information is presented in relation to the consumption of fashion merchandise.

Upper-class citizens account for three percent of the population within the United States (Diamond, 2000). The two subdivisions are the upper-upper and lower-upper class. The upper-upper class wealth is generational. Quality and one of a kind items such as couture garments and designer labels drive purchases. The lower-upper class is considered the *nouveau riche*, a French term that means new rich (Diamond, 2000, p. 71).

The lower-upper class purchases less one of kind items such as couture garments and purchase better known designer labels. These purchases are driven by brand recognition of popular high dollar designer labels. They use designer labels and extravagant purchases to distinguish their wealth (Diamond, 2000). An example of the *nouveau riche* is apparent in the current pop culture television programs like MTV *Cribs*. *Cribs* features pop celebrities, touring their homes and showing off their extravagant

boats, cars, and clothes. Celebrities featured on this program are usually music artists, actors, and other celebrity types. Rap artists such as Nelly featured his extravagant homes, cars and other luxury items. In this episode he recognized that his assortment of luxury items were symbols of success in the music industry. The “nouveau rich” generally flaunt these items and references them as symbols of success.

The middle class consists of forty-two percent of the American population (Diamond, 2000). The subdivisions within this class are upper-middle and lower-middle class. The upper-middle class desires to wear apparel similar to the lower-upper class but are cautious spenders. They typically purchase bridge/better wear, which is typically a designers' secondary line. These garments are not of the same quality or exclusivity as couture or designers primary lines. The upper-middle class purchases bridge/better wear because it gives the illusion of quality and luxury. Lower-middle class consumers purchase moderate private label merchandise, which is typically a replica of bridge/better wear. Moderate private labels are of lesser quality and do not bear a designer label, yet duplicate trends seen in designer and bridge wear, again providing the illusion of quality and luxury. Overall middle class purchases are typically driven by the want to duplicate the look of higher price garments worn by the upper class.

The lower class makes up fifty-five percent of the America's population (Diamond, 2000). The subdivisions in lower class are the upper-lower and lower-lower class. The upper-lower classes are price consciousness consumers, always searching for a bargain. Since cost is a determining purchase factor, the lower-upper class is inclined to be fashion lagers and adapting trends at their decline. These consumers purchase budget merchandise at stores like Wal-Mart, K-Mart and Target. The lower-lower class purchase

clothing to fulfill a need. The lower-lower class is not concerned with current trends or fashion; they are more focused on daily survival.

The motivating factors that influence fashion merchandise purchases varied among the different socio-economic divisions. The upper-lower to middle-lower class uses dress to fulfill many superficial desires. Typically the lower-upper, middle-upper, and lower-middle classes replicate the upper-upper class's fashions and trends. As a result the upper-upper class is typically less concerned about what other people are wearing.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED OF DRESS

Dress fulfills three needs for all individuals regardless of their socio-economic classification: self-expression, self-presentation, and self-identity (see Figure 1). Dress additionally serves as a symbol that internally defines and projects one's expression, presentation and identity into a society (see figure 1)(Warwick & Cavallaro, 1998). One's self-presentation shares a deeper relationship with the materialistic and symbolic perception of an individual's self-image and body image (see figure 1) (Warwick & Cavallaro, 1998). These relationships are further examined through the 1970s punk culture, interview attire, and the emergence of African American Greek life at Cornell University.

One's dress can be used as an expressive instrument to communicate beliefs, thoughts, emotions, opinions, and ideologies (Warwick & Cavallaro, 1998). For example, during the mid-1970s in London, the economy was unable to support or provide progression for the working class youth (Nordquist, 1991). This caused frustration amongst a large portion of London's youth. As a result, they expressed their frustrations

through the development of the punk lifestyle (Nordquist, 1991). Punks used their clothing as a billboard of self-expression, often adorning their clothes with hand drawings of anarchy symbols or swastikas. The look was classified as dark and satanical. Their dresses mirrored this image through dark color choices, torn and dirty clothing, and purchased from thrift stores. Their clothing were often held together with safety pins. Punks also displayed odd piercings, tattoos, haircuts, and hair colors. The clothing could be used as a form of self-expression projecting one's beliefs, emotions, opinions, and ideologies.

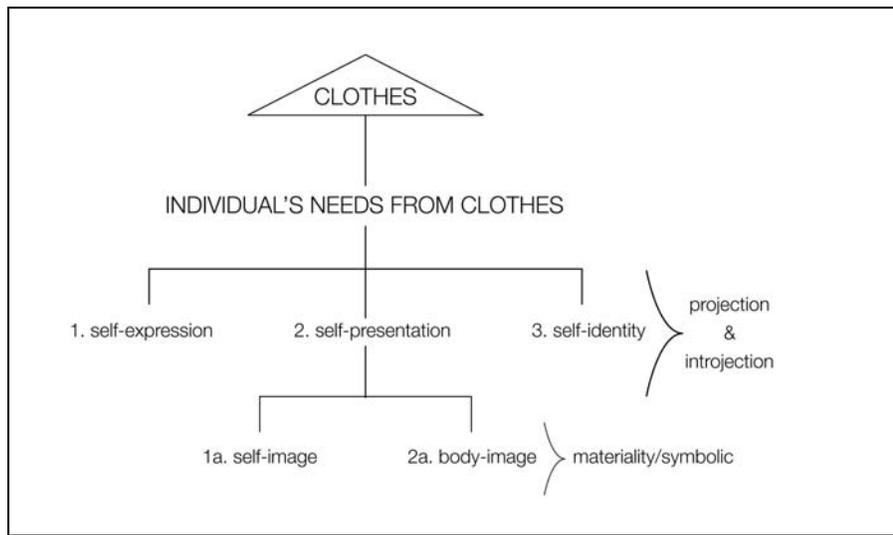


Figure 1. The Clothes in Question

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“Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and the Body,” by A. Warwick and D. Cavallaro, 1998, *The Clothes in Question*, p. 193. Copyright 1998 by Oxford International Publishers Ltd

The relationship between presentation and self-image is apparent when one is determining appropriate attire for a job interview (Keenan, 2000). An interviewee will formulate assumptions based upon learned knowledge gained about the business's culture. From this assumption the interviewee projects how the interviewer will receive different forms of selected attire, choosing their dress accordingly. For example, when a

woman is interviewing for a conservative career such as a lawyer, it is suggested to wear a suit. In women's wear there are two types of suits, the pantsuit and skirt suit. Each suit projects a different message about one's self and body image. A pantsuit projects a self-image of an individual that is conservative and work oriented. A skirt suit projects a self-image of an individual that is less conservative. In a conservative profession such as law, a pantsuit would be the optimal selection of dress.

The relationship of body image can be seen in relation to the selection of interview attire. For instance, the selected silhouette of a pantsuit or skirt suit can be used as an indicator of body image. An individual with a positive perception of their body image many choose a pant or skirt suit with a more form fitting and structured blazer to tastefully accentuate. An individual with poor self-presentation may choose a less structured blazer to hide their figure. The relationship between one's presentation and self and body image can be identified through selected apparel. Furthermore it can be assumed that an individual can present himself or herself in a particular way based upon their self-image and body image.

In 1906, at Cornell University, African American students developed all African-American Greek Sororities and Fraternities (Holloman, 1991). They developed sororities and fraternities to create a stronger and unified self-identity (Holloman, 1991). The African-American sororities and fraternities utilized their wardrobe as a non-verbal communication tool to project their self-identity into the community at Cornell (Holloman, 1991). This included the use of symbolic letters, colors and garments.

One can identify particular social groups in a society through unified dress. One's self-identity can be shaped through the selection of an ensemble that interjects and

projects one's desired identity (Warwick & Cavallaro, 1998). Dress serves as a communication tool between individuals and a society, allowing for one's expression, presentation, and identity. This relationship was identified through various cultures.

## SUMMARY

In Chapter II, the researcher reviewed literature related to dress and socio-economics. This review provided the reader and researcher with a deeper understanding concerning the areas of dress, economics, and society.

In Chapter III the researcher used the information from Chapter II to develop a survey that would measure the relationship between dress and socio-economics. This chapter provides further details and explanations regarding the implementation and methods used to conduct the research.

## CHAPTER III

### Methods and Procedures

The problem of this study was to determine Old Dominion University undergraduate students' opinion on whether selection of dress identifies them with a particular socio-economic classification. The methods and procedures developed with in this chapter were used to generate findings about Old Dominion University students' socio-economic status and their opinion of selected attire. Included with this chapter are

sections on population, instrument design, methods of data collection, and statistical analysis.

### POPULATION

The population of this study were students attending Old Dominion University enrolled in one of five classes of OTS 110, Technology and Your World, in the Spring 2006 semester. The students were participating in the chosen course to fulfill a general education requirement. In whole 96 students were participants in the study. The study population consisted of male and female undergraduate students.

### INSTURMENT DESIGN

The instrument used to generate findings was an anonymous survey. The instrument was structured using closed ended questions pertaining to student's socio-economic status and opinions of selected attire.

The first set of questions identified participant's socio-economic classification, using a multiple-choice format. The remaining set of questions measured students' opinions toward selection of attire. These questions were developed using the Thurstone method of attitudinal assessment. First, the researchers used the information gathered during the literature review to establish questions that would measure the students' socio-economic status and collect data regarding their opinion of dress and socio-economics. Then theses questions were presented to a panel of experts in the subject areas of dress and socio-economics. The panel of experts reviewed the survey determining the validity of the statements and questions; revisions were made accordingly. This information was then used to project a relationship between dress and socio-economics. See Appendix A.

### METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Participants were selected by examining the student body of Old Dominion University. The course, OTS 110, Technology and Your World, was chosen to represent the Old Dominion University undergraduate student body. This course provided a true sampling of Old Dominion University undergraduate student body, since it was a course that met a general education requirement for all degree-seeking undergraduates.

The researcher provided the instructor of each section of the course with twenty-four survey packets for each class. The instructor then distributed a survey packet envelope to each student at the beginning of the class session. The survey packet included a cover letter, instructions, survey, and answer sheet. The students were instructed to read the cover letter, instructions, and then complete the survey. After completion the students returned the survey and answer sheet into the survey packet envelope, returning it to the front of the classroom. Once all the survey packet envelopes were returned to the front of the classroom, a student gathered and delivered them to the researcher.

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Following the collection of surveys, data regarding students, and panel of experts socio-economic status and opinion of selected attire were tabulated and recorded. The Thurstone method was used to determine the mean of the panel of experts and students' socio-economic standing and opinion of selected attire. The relationship between the panel of experts and student's findings were used to project the relationship between dress and socio-economics.

### SUMMARY

Chapter III outlined the methods and procedures used to generate data to answer the research goals. The population of the study was students from Old Dominion

University enrolled in OTS 110, Technology and Your World, in Spring 2006 semester. The instrument used to generate findings was a close-ended question survey presented in multiple-choice format and Thurstone attitudinal assessment model. The multiple-choice format determined students' socio-economic level; the Thurston model assessed the students' opinion of selected attire. These findings were then used to determine the relationship between dress and socio-economics.

Chapter IV reports three sets of findings from the conducted research. The first set of findings revealed in Chapter IV, illustrates the students' individual and collective socio-economic status. The second set of findings reveals the relationship between students' and panel of experts' opinions of dress and the socio-economic factors of income, education, and occupation. The last set of data shows the relationship between students of various socio-economic levels and the panel of experts' opinion of dress and socio-economic factors of income, education, and occupation.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

The problem of this study was to determine Old Dominion University undergraduate students' opinions on whether selection of dress identifies them with a particular socio-economic classification. This chapter presents the findings of this research. In this chapter the following sections of findings are presented: the overview of responses, student socio-economic survey analysis, Page B Business Attire, Page C Street Attire, Page D Punk Rock Attire, Page E Leisure Attire, and Comparative Analysis.

## OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

The participants in this study were students enrolled at Old Dominion University and a panel of experts within the fields of fashion and socio-economics. Participants from Old Dominion University were students enrolled within five of the six classes of OTS 110, Technology and Your World, in the Spring 2006 semester. In each class twenty-four surveys were distributed; a total one hundred and twenty surveys were distributed. Of the one hundred and twenty surveys, ninety-six surveys were completed and returned to the researcher. Out of the ninety-six surveys three were omitted due to error with the students' responses. In total, ninety-three student surveys were used in the completion of this study.

The remaining portion of participants in this study consisted of a panel of experts. They were subject matter experts in the related fields of fashion and socio-economics, within the broader fields of education and industry. The researcher distributed five surveys to subject matter experts. Four of the five surveys were properly completed, returned, and used in the completion of this study.

## STUDENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY ANALYSIS

The following data were extracted from Page A of the survey. This portion of the survey measured the students' family income, education, and occupation with three multiple-choice questions determining Old Dominion University students' individual and collective socio-economic status. Subject matter experts worked with the development of questions and a measurement system for the data. A ranking system was devised as a means to classify the students' socio-economic status. The ranking system scoring was nine through one for family income, education and occupation level. Then the responses

for each question were listed in accordance with the ranking system, from highest to lowest scoring responses. In order to determine the student's true individual and collective socio-economic status the questions were weighted equally when the mean was determined to find the student's individual and collective socio-economic status.

The first set of questions found on Page A, Family Income, determined the following about Old Dominion University student socio-economic status. The mean income level of the participants was \$30,001- \$80,000, with a mean value of a 4.92, a middle class income.

The mean education level of the participants was a Bachelors Degree, with a mean value of 6.09. The mean occupation of the participants was white-collar working families, with a mean value of 7.54. The mean of the students' socio-economic factor determined that the students are in the higher portion of the middle socio-economic status bracket, with a mean value of 6.29. See Table 1.

Table 1. Student's Socio-Economic Status

Income	Education	Occupation	Socio-economic Status
4.9	6.09	7.54	6.29

STUDENT AND PANEL OF EXPERTS SURVEY ANALYSIS

The remaining portion of the survey, Pages B-D measured the students' and panel of experts attitudes toward dress and socio-economics. Each page contained two pictures of a male and female in the same dress category followed by directions, three questions, and the Thurstone scale. The students and panel of experts were instructed to choose a number that corresponded with their opinion of the individuals' education, income, and occupation level based upon the pictures. The eleven-point Thurstone scale was employed for this portion of the survey. The scale ranged from 0, the lowest score, to 10,

the highest score. The mean was generated for the students and panel of experts responses to each question.

After the collection and analysis of the data, a t-test was administered to determine if there was significance between the rating scores of the two groups. The students and panel of experts opinions of individual education, income and occupation level were used in the t-test. The raw data were used to measure the significance difference between the relationship of the students and the panel of experts responses to their opinions of dress and socio-economics.

#### PAGE B, BUISNESS ATTIRE

Page B, Business Attire, images were used to measure the students and the panel of experts opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation levels based upon dress. The findings were used to extract the mean of the students and the panel of experts. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significant difference existed between the students' and panel of experts' opinions. See Figure 2



Figure 2. Page B Pictures, Business Attire

The first question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the pictured education level. The students mean score for this question indicated they placed the individuals in a lower-upper education level, with the score of 7.29. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that the panel of experts placed the individuals in a lower-upper education level, with the score of 7.5. The t-test produced a t value of 0.2671. See Table 2.

Table 2. Students and Panel of Experts Data for Figure 2, Page B, Business Attire

Question	Students' Mean Scoring	Panel of Experts Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	7.29	7.5	0.2761	No
2 Income	7.26	7.5	0.2877	No
3 Occupation	7.53	7.25	0.3826	No

The second question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the individual income level. The students mean score for this question indicated they placed the individuals in the lower-upper income bracket, with the score of 7.26. The panel of experts means score for this question indicated that the panel of experts placed the individuals in the lower-upper income bracket, with the score of 7.5. The t-test conducted determined a t value of 0.2877. See Table 2.

The third question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the individual occupation levels. The students mean score for this question indicated they placed the individuals in the lower-upper occupation level, with the score of 7.53. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in

the lower-upper occupation level, with the score of 7.25. The t-test conducted determined a t value of 0.3826. See Table 2.

#### PAGE C, STREET ATTIRE

Page C, Street Attire, images were used to measure the students and the panel of experts opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation level based upon dress. The findings were used to extract the mean of the students and the panel of experts. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significant difference existed between the students and panel of experts opinions. See Figure 3.

The first question measured the students and panel of experts opinion of the picture's education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-middle education level, with the mean score value of 3.84. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in an upper-lower education level, with the score of 3.25. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.7376. See Table 3.



Figure 3. Page C Pictures, Street Attire

Table 3. Students and Panel of Experts Data for Figure 3, Page C, Street Attire

Question	Students' Mean Scoring	Panel of Experts Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	3.84	3.25	0.7376	No
2 Income	3.86	4.0	-0.1718	No
3 Occupation	3.32	4.0	-0.7953	No

The second question measured the students and panel of experts opinion of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 3.86. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with a mean score of 4.0. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.1718. See Table 3.

The third question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the individuals occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated the that they placed the individuals in the upper-lower occupation level, with a mean value of 3.32. The panels of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle occupation level, with the score of 4.0. The t-test conducted determined a t value of -0.7953. See Table 3.

#### PAGE D, PUNK ROCK ATTIRE

Page D, Punk Rock Attire images were used to measure students and the panel of experts opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation level based upon dress. The findings were used to extract the mean of the students and the panel of experts.

In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significant difference existed between the students and panel of experts opinions. See Figure 4.



Figure 4. Page D Pictures, Punk Rock

The first question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the pictures education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower middle education level, with the score of 3.95. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-middle education level, with the score of 4.5. The t-test conducted determined the t value to be -0.6099. See Table 4.

Table 4. Students and Panel of Experts Data for Figure 4, Page D, Punk Rock Attire

Question	Students' Mean Scoring	Panel of Experts Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	3.95	4.5	-0.6099	No
2 Income	4.12	4.25	-0.1367	No
3 Occupation	3.69	4.5	-0.8909	No

The second question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the individuals income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 4.12. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 4.25. The t-test conducted determined the t value to be -0.1367. See Table 4.

The third question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the individuals occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower middle occupation level, with the score of 3.69. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower middle occupation level, with the score of 4.5. The t-test conducted determined that the value was -0.8909. See Table 4.

PAGE E, LEISURE ATTIRE

Page E, Leisure Attire, images were used to measure the students and the panel of experts opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation level based upon dress. The findings were used to extract the mean of the students and the panel of experts opinions. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significant difference existed between the students and panel of experts opinions. See Figure 5.



Figure 5. Page E Pictures, Leisure Attire

The first question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the pictures education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-middle education level, with a mean score of 4.04. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-middle education level, with a mean score of 4.0. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.0484. See Table 5.

Table 5. Students and Panel of Experts Data for Figure 5, Page E, Leisure Attire

Question	Students' Mean Scoring	Panel of Experts Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	4.04	4.0	0.0484	No
2 Income	3.94	5.0	-1.2179	No
3 Occupation	3.86	5.0	-1.3260	No

The second question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the individuals income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower middle-income bracket, with a mean score of 3.94. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the middle-income bracket, with the score of 5.0. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -1.2179. See Table 5.

The third question measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the individuals occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower middle occupation level, with a mean value of 3.86. The panel of experts mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a middle occupation level, with a mean score of 5.0. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -1.3260. See Table 5.

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The researcher further analyzed the data to study the relationship between the students of varying socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinion of dress. The students socio-economic status was determined from a one through nine scale that was previously used when acquiring data regarding students income, education, and occupation level. The scale was divided into three sections: 1-3 low socio-economic status, 4-6 middle socio-economic statuses, and 7-9 high socio-economic statuses. The

researcher then classified the participants into these categories. The researcher followed the same format used in prior analysis to determine the mean score of students within various socio-economic statuses opinions toward selected attire and socio-economics factors. The researcher also conducted t-tests to determine if a significant relationship existed between the students of varying socio-economic statuses and panel of experts opinions.

### STUDENTS OF LOW SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Page B, Business Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a low socio-economic status opinion of education, income, and occupation based upon the dress of those imaged in the photographs. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students within low socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students of a low socio-economic status opinion and the panel of experts opinions.

The first question measured the student opinion within the low socio-economic status toward education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-upper education level, with the mean score of 8.36. The t-test conducted determined that this class of students had a t value of 2.1170 when compared to the experts. See Table 6.

Table 6. Students of Low Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page B, Business Attire

Question	Students' of	T-test Scoring	Significance
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	Mean Scoring		
1 Education	8.36	2.1170	No
2 Income	8.2	0.8819	No
3 Occupation	8.2	1.1025	No

The second question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individual income. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-upper income bracket, with the score of 8.2. The t-test determined that the t value was 0.8819. See Table 6.

The third question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-upper occupation level, with the score of 8.2. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 1.1025. See Table 6.

Page C, Street Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students within low socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students of a low socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 3.

The first question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle education level, with the score of 4.4. The t-test conducted determined the t value to be 0.9681. See Table 7.

Table 7. Students of Low Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page C, Street Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	4.4	0.9681	No
2 Income	5.0	0.9860	No
3 Occupation	4.0	-7.4685	No

The second question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the middle-income bracket, with the score of 5.0. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.9860. See Table 7.

The third question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-middle occupation level, with the score of 4.0. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -7.4685. See Table 7.

Page D, Punk Rock Attire images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a low socio-economic standing opinions of the individuals education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students of low socio-economic status. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students of a low socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 4.

The first question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a middle education level, with the score of 5.25. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.5435. See Table 8.

Table 8. Students of Low Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page D, Punk Rock Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	5.25	0.5435	No
2 Income	3.2	1.3332	No
3 Occupation	3.2	0.4524	No

The second question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the upper-lower income bracket, with the score of 3.2. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 1.3332. See Table 8.

The third question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the upper-lower occupation level, with the score of 3.2. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.4524. See Table 8.

Page E, Leisure Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a low socio-economic status opinion of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a low socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between the students of a low socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 5.

The first question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that

they placed the individuals in a middle education level, with the score of 5.25. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 1.0916. See Table 9.

Table 9. Students of Low Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page E, Leisure Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	5.25	1.0916	No
2 Income	5.0	0.0000	No
3 Occupation	4.6	-0.3600	No

The second question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the middle-income bracket, with the score of 5.0. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.0000. See Table 9.

The third question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle occupation level, with the score of 4.6. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.3600. See Table 9.

#### STUDENTS OF MIDDLE SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Page B, Business Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a middle socio-economic status opinion of the individuals education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a middle socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students of a middle socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 2.

The first question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in an upper-middle education level, with the score of 7.06. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.5356. See Table 10.

Table 10. Students of Middle Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page B, Business Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	7.06	0.5356	No
2 Income	6.89	0.6579	No
3 Occupation	7.34	0.1061	No

The second question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in an upper middle-income bracket, with the score of 6.89. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.6579. See Table 10.

The third question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-upper occupation level, with the score of 7.34. The t-test conducted determined the t value was 0.1061. See Table 10.

Page C, Street Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a middle socio-economic status opinion of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a middle socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed

between students of a middle socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 3.

The first question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle education level, with the score of 3.70. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.5019. See Table 11.

Table 11. Students of Middle Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page C, Street Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	3.70	0.5019	No
2 Income	3.70	-0.3435	No
3 Occupation	3.06	-1.0679	No

The second question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 3.70. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.3435. See Table 11.

The third question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in an upper-lower occupation level, with the score of 3.06. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -1.0679. See Table 11.

Page D, Punk Rock Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a middle socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference

existed between students of a middle socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 4.

The first question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals at a lower-middle education level, with the score of 3.68. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.9398. See Table 12.

Table 12. Students of Middle Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page D, Punk Rock Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	3.68	-0.9398	No
2 Income	3.89	-0.3921	No
3 Occupation	3.44	-1.1770	No

The second question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 3.89. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.3921. See Table 12.

The third question measured the students of low socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the upper-lower occupation level, with the score of 3.44. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -1.1770. See Table 12.

Page E, Leisure Attire images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a middle socio-economic standing. In

addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students' of a middle-economic status and the panel of experts' opinions. See Figure 5.

The first question measured students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals at the lower-middle education level, with the score of 3.89.

The t-test conducted determined that the level of significance was  $-0.1136$ . See Table 13.

Table 13. Students of Middle Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page E, Leisure Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	3.89	-0.1136	No
2 Income	3.85	-1.3341	No
3 Occupation	3.91	-1.2521	No

The second question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 3.85. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was  $-1.3341$ . See Table 13.

The third question measured the students of middle socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle occupation level, with the score of 3.91. The t-test conducted determined that t value was  $-1.2521$ . See Table 13.

#### STUDENTS OF HIGH SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Page B, Business Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education,

income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a high socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students of a high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 2.

The first question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-upper education level, with the score of 7.39. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.1568. See Table 14.

Table 14. Students of High Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page B, Business Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	7.39	-0.1568	No
2 Income	7.58	0.1392	No
3 Occupation	7.68	0.6794	No

The second question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated they placed the individuals in a lower-upper income bracket, with the score of 7.58. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.1392. See Table 14.

The third question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in a lower-upper occupation level, with the score of 7.68. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.6794. See Table 14.

Page C, Street Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured students of a high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a high socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students' of a high socio-economic status and the panel of experts' opinions. See Figure 3.

The first question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle education level, with the score of 3.95. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 1.0160. See Table 15.

Table 15. Students of High Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page C, Street Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	3.95	1.0160	No
2 Income	3.90	-0.1320	No
3 Occupation	3.53	-0.5796	No

The second question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 3.90. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.1320. See Table 15.

The third question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in an upper-lower occupation level, with the score of 3.53. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.5796. See Table 15.

Page D, Punk Rock Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in a high socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students of a high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 4.

The first question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals at a lower-middle education level, with the score of 4.12. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.4067. See Table 16.

Table 16. Students of High Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page D, Punk Rock Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	4.12	-0.4067	No
2 Income	4.21	-0.0361	No
3 Occupation	3.82	-0.7516	No

The second question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 4.21. The t-test conducted determined that the t-value was -0.0361. See Table 16.

The third question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated

that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle occupation level, with the score of 3.82. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -0.7516. See Table 16.

Page E, Leisure Attire, images were used to gather collective data that measured the students of a high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education, income, and occupation based upon their dress. These findings were further analyzed to determine the mean opinion of the students in high socio-economic standing. In addition, a t-test was administered to determine if a significance difference existed between students of a high middle-economic status and the panel of experts opinions. See Figure 5.

The first question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' education level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals at the lower-middle education level, with the score of 4.07. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was 0.0855. See Table 17.

Table 17. Students of High Socio-Economic Status Mean Scores and T-test Results, Page E, Leisure Attire

Question	Students' of Mean Scoring	T-test Scoring	Significance
1 Education	4.07	0.0855	No
2 Income	3.92	-1.2432	No
3 Occupation	3.55	-1.5124	No

The second question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' income level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle income bracket, with the score of 3.92. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -1.2432. See Table 17.

The third question measured the students of high socio-economic status opinions of the individuals' occupation level. The students mean score for this question indicated that they placed the individuals in the lower-middle occupation level, with the score of 3.55. The t-test conducted determined that the t value was -1.5124. See Table 17.

### **SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the findings extracted from a survey used to discover the relationship between Old Dominion University students opinions of dress and socio-economics. The first set of data revealed Old Dominion University students' socio-economic background and status. The second set of data illustrated Old Dominion University students and the panel of experts opinions of an individuals' socio-economics status dependent upon dress. In the following chapter, Chapter V, a summary of the research is provided along with conclusions and recommendations drawn from the data provided in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECCOMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents a summary of the research conducted. Conclusions are drawn based upon the findings. Recommendations are constructed based upon these conclusions presented within this chapter.

#### **SUMMARY**

For centuries dress had played an intricate role in societal classifications. As society has evolved dress became a method to suppress or classify individuals based upon the socio-economic factors of income, education, and occupation. During the establishment of the United States government regulations were produced as means to create this form of classification. It was not until the early nineteenth century that societal events, such as the Industrial Revolution created an environment of dress equality, blurring the line of societal distinction. This has made the modern relationship between dress and socio-economics unclear.

The purpose of this study was to determine the current relationship between Old Dominion University student opinions toward dress and socio-economics. There were two sets of participants in this study. The first set of participants were Old Dominion University students enrolled in sections of OTS 110, Technology and Your World, Spring 2006 semester. The other set of the participants was a panel of experts from surrounding fields of dress and socio-economics.

A survey was the tool used to gather data to address the research goals; it was developed using a Thrustone scale. The established research goals were employed to determine the direction of the research and composition of the survey. These goals were

to determine Old Dominion University students socio-economic status and opinion of analyzing dress. As a result the survey measured two key items: the students individual and collective socio-economic status and the relationship between the students and the panel of experts opinions of dress and socio-economics. The researcher used the findings from the administered survey to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

## CONCLUSIONS

The research determined if there was a relationship between Old Dominion University students opinions of dress and socio-economics with that of experts. Data were further gathered in relation to the three research goals of this study. The data were used to draw conclusions for the following research goals.

- The first research goal of the study was to identify the socio-economic status of students that attend Old Dominion University. The students' socio-economic status was measured from the mean of three factors: income, education, and occupation. The mean of these factors concluded the following to be true about Old Dominion University students. Their average family income level was in the bracket of \$30,00-\$80,000 with a mean score of 4.09, the highest education level achieved was a bachelors degree with a mean score of 6.09, and the majority of students were from a white collared working family with a mean score of 7.54 for occupation. The combined mean score of this data was a 6.29, which determined that Old Dominion University students' socio-economic status was the upper-middle status. This data were determined from one through nine scales.

- The second research goal was to measure the opinion of Old Dominion University students toward their selection of attire. A t-test was administered to determine the significance difference between the students and the panel of experts opinions toward selected attire. The t-test measured students and panel of experts opinions toward selected dress in the categories of Business Attire, Street Attire, Punk Rock Attire, and Leisure Attire based upon three socio-economic factors of education, income, and occupation. The t value for this data was measured at the .05 level of significance. The students and the panel of experts t values for the selected images of Business Attire were the following: 0.02761 for education, 0.2877 for income, and 0.3826 for occupation. The t value measuring the relationship between the students and the panel of experts opinions of selected images of Street Attire were the following: 0.07376 for education, -0.1718 for income, and -0.7953 for occupation. The students and the panel of experts t values measuring the relationship between their opinions of the selected image for Punk Rock attire were the following: -0.6009 for education, -0.1367 for occupation, and -0.8909 for income. The determined t values that measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the chosen images of Leisure Attire were the following: 0.0484 for education, -1.2179 for income, and -1.3260 for occupation. The t values from the set of t-test determined that there were no significance difference in the relationship between students and panel of experts opinion toward dress.

As a result, the researcher concluded that Old Dominion University students and the panel of experts share the same opinions toward dress and socio-economics. Furthermore, this data revealed that Old Dominion University students and the panel of experts are equally conscious of generating preconceived notions regarding ones socio-economic status based upon their selection of attire. The researcher further concluded that the students and the panel of experts used dress as a non-verbal indicator of ones socio-economic status.

- The third research goal was to project the relationship between socio-economic status and favored dress. The researcher drew upon the findings that determined if a significant relationship existed between students of low, middle, and high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of dress and socio-economics. The following results were extracted from the t-tests measuring the relationship between these various socio-economic statuses and their opinion of dress.

The first series of t-tests were conducted to measure the significance in the relationship between students of low socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of ones socio-economic status based upon dress. The students and panel of experts measured selected images the education, income, and occupation level within four dress categories of: Business Attire, Street Attire, Punk Rock Attire, and Leisure Attire. The t values were measured at the .05 level. The first t-test measured the students and the panel of experts opinion of the selected images of Business Attire, the t values were the following: 2.1170 for education, 0.8819 for income, and 1.1025 for occupation. The second t test measured the students and panel of expert opinions of selected images

of Street Attire, the t values were the following: 0.9681 for education, 0.9860 for income, and -7.4685 for occupation. The students and panel of experts t values were found for the selected images of Punk Rock Attire, the t values were the following: 0.5435 for education, 1.3332 for income, and 0.4524 for occupation. The last t-test in the series measured the students and panel of experts opinions of the selected images for Leisure Attire, the t values were the following: 1.0916 for education, 0.0000 for income, and -0.3600 for occupation. The t value determined that there were no significance difference in the relationship between students of low socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinion toward selected attire.

The second series of t-test were conducted to measure the significance in the relationship between students of middle socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of ones socio-economic status based upon dress. The students and panel of experts measured selected images of education, income, and occupation level within four categories of dress: Business Attire, Street Attire, Punk Rock Attire, and Leisure Attire. The found t values were measured at the .05 level. The first t-test measured students of middle socio-economic standing and the panel of experts opinions of the selected images dress for Business Attire, the t values were the following: 0.5356 for education, 0.6579 for income, and 0.1061 for occupation. The next t-test that measured the students of middle socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of the selected images of Street Attire, the t values were the following: 0.5019 for education, -0.3435 for income, and -1.0679 for occupation. The third t-test measured the students of middle socio-economic status and panel of experts opinions of the selected images of Punk Rock attire, the t values were the following: -0.9398 for education, -0.3921 for income, and -1.1770

for occupation. The last t-test t measured the students of middle socio-economic status and panel of experts opinions of the selected images of leisure attire, the t values were the following:  $-0.1136$  for education,  $-1.3341$  for income, and  $-1.2521$  for occupation. The t values that measured the students of middle socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of dress determined that there was no significant relationship between opinions of dress and socio-economics.

The last series of t-tests were conducted to measure students of high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of ones' socio-economic status based upon dress. The students and panel of experts measured the selected images of education, income, and occupation level within four categories of dress: Business Attire, Street Attire, Punk Rock Attire, and Leisure Attire. The determined t values were measured at the .05 level. The t values that measured the students of high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of the selected image of business attire were  $-0.1568$  for education,  $0.1392$  for income, and  $0.6794$  for occupation. The determined t values that concluded the relationship between the students of high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of the images of street attire were  $1.0160$  for education,  $-0.13620$  for income, and  $-0.5796$  for occupation. The t values established that measured the students of high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of chosen images of punk rock attire were  $-0.4067$  for education,  $-0.0361$  for income, and  $-0.7516$  for occupation. The t value that measured the students of high socio-economic status and the panel of experts opinions of the chosen leisure attire images were  $0.08555$  education,  $-1.2432$  for income, and  $-1.5124$  for occupation. The t values for the students of high

socio-economic status and the panel of experts determined that there was no significance in the relationship of their opinions of dress and socio-economics.

From the findings the researcher concluded that no significance existed between these varying socio-economic classes and the panel of experts. From the findings the researcher further concluded that ones socio-economic status does not indicate their selection of favored attire.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher has developed recommendations based upon the conclusions of this study and those of other researchers. The relationship between Old Dominion University students and panel of experts opinion of dress and socio-economics confirms that people will draw conclusions based upon ones selection of attire. The generalization of this study will aid in future research in varying fields surrounding the areas of dress, perceptions, and socio-economics.

This study was conducted at Old Dominion University, therefore the participants are predominately United States citizens. Therefore the researcher recommends a study similar in nature be conducted on an international scale. It is recommended that participants be from top international universities. This study would determine if there is a relationship between cultural differences, dress, and socio-economics.

The researcher additionally recommends a follow-up study that examines the accuracy of participants' perceptions of other individuals. This study would measure the participants' perceptions of ones socio-economic status based upon dress. The researcher would compare these data to the individuals' true socio-economic status. The research conducted in this study only determined the relationship between the participants opinion

of dress and socio-economics. A study of this nature would provide data regarding reality behind participants perceptions of others based upon dress.

This study measured the perceptions one made about an individuals income, education, and occupation based upon dress. The researcher recommends the generalization of this study to determine the relationship between employees dress and work performance. A study of this nature could determine the need or effectiveness of work dress codes.

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**APPENDIX A**

**The Relationship between Dress and Socio-economics**

Survey Packet

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

Tiffany Machado  
Old Dominion University  
228 Education Building  
Norfolk, V.A. 23529

Spring, 2006

Dear Students,

Your voluntary participation in this survey will aid the completion of my research requirement for the masters program at Old Dominion University within the Department of Occupation and Technical Studies. The survey will measure your socio-economic status and your opinion of others socio-economic status based on dress. The findings gathered will determine the relationship between students' opinion of dress and how it relates to their opinion of socio-economic status. Your participation is needed to determine this relationship within Old Dominion University students.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. Your choice to participate will not affect your grade in this course. Disclosed information will not be shared or linked to the participation. To further protect your identity it is important that you do not place your name or any identifying markings on the survey packet or answer sheet.

Your participation and honesty are greatly appreciated. Please follow the instructions provided.

Thank you,

Tiffany Machado

## **INSTURCTIONS**

- 1) First, make sure the following are provided in your survey packet envelope: 1) a cover letter, 2) instructions, 3) survey, and 4) survey answer sheet.
- 2) The answer sheet is separate.
- 3) You are to respond to the survey questions on the answer sheet provided; please **do not** place any markings on the survey packet.
- 4) When you are completed with the survey, please place the survey and answer sheet back into the provided survey packet envelope.
- 5) Then return the envelope to the front of the classroom.

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.  
Thank you.**

**PAGE A**

Answer the following regarding your personal or family's socio-economic status.

1. Your personal or family yearly income is considered
  - a. Upper-Upper class (higher than \$300,000)
  - b. Lower-Upper class (\$150,001 up to \$300,000)
  - c. Upper-Middle class (\$80,001 up to \$150,000)
  - d. Lower-Middle class (\$30,001 up to \$80,000)
  - e. Upper-Lower class (\$15,001 up to \$30,000)
  - f. Lower-Lower class (lower than \$15,000)
  
2. Within your family what is the highest degree held by members of the family
  - a. Doctoral degree
  - b. Masters or Educational Specialist degree
  - c. Some graduate work
  - d. Bachelors degree
  - e. Associate degree
  - f. Some college education
  - g. High School diploma
  - h. High School diploma (GED)
  - i. No high school diploma
  
3. Your personal or family members' career(s) can be defined as
  - a. White Collar (Medical, Education, Architecture, Management)
  - b. Blue Collar (Trade, Crafts, Labor)

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

**PAGE B**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low					High					
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

**PAGE C**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low						High				
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

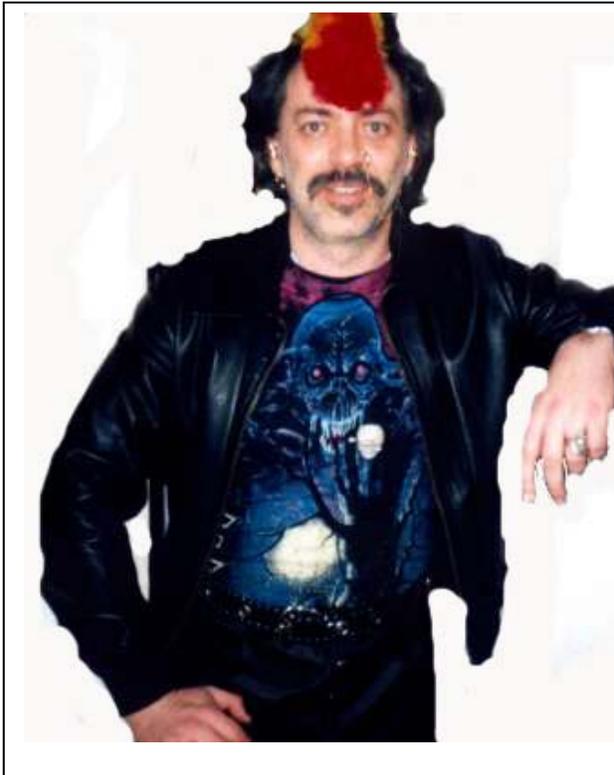
Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

**PAGE D**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low											High
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

**PAGE E**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low					High					
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

## APPENDIX B

Tiffany Machado  
Old Dominion University  
228 Education Building  
Norfolk, V.A. 23529

Spring, 2006

Dear Participants,

Your voluntary participation in this survey will aid the completion of my research requirement for the masters program at Old Dominion University within the Department of Occupation and Technical Studies. I am conducting a study that will determine Old Dominion University undergraduate students' opinions on whether selection of dress identifies them with a particular socio-economic classification. The survey will measure your expert opinion of socio-economic status based upon dress. The findings gathered will determine the relationship between your response and students' opinion of dress and socio-economic status. Your participation is needed to determine this relationship within Old Dominion University students.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous. Disclosed information will not be shared or linked to the participation. To further protect your identity it is important that you do not place your name or any identifying markings on the survey packet or answer sheet.

Your participation and honesty are greatly appreciated. Please follow the instructions provided.

Thank you,

Tiffany Machado

**PAGE B**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low					High					
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

**PAGE C**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low										High
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

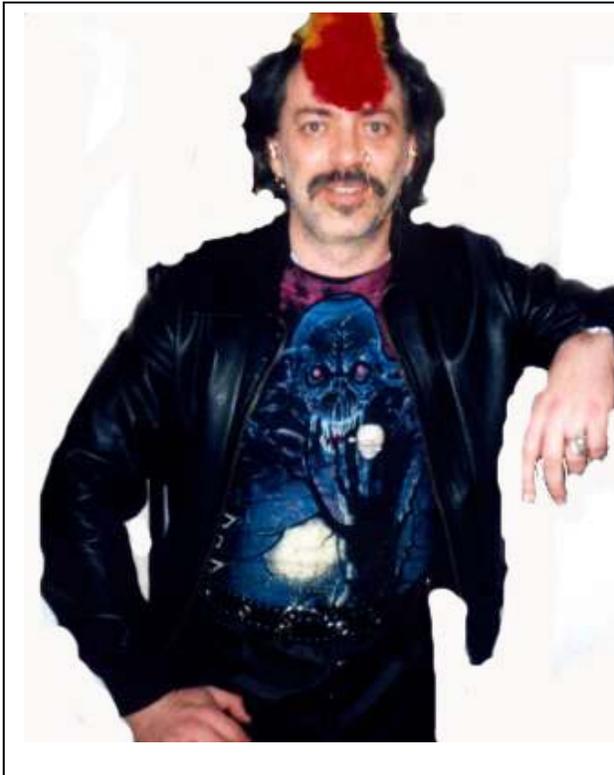
Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

**PAGE D**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low											High
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**

**PAGE E**

Answer the questions below with the scale provided. You are to choose a number that corresponds with your opinion of the individuals' education, income and occupation level.



Low										High	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Place your response on the answer sheet provided.

1. Where would you place these individuals related to their educational level?
2. Where would you place these individuals related to their income level?
3. Where would you place these individuals related to their occupation level?

**Please do not write your name or place any markings on the packet.**