

Harper's April 1975 BOUNDWRAPAROUNDWRA

of the future could fire cultural epoch. fundamental idea, revolutionary when his first industrial in 1929, was de the inside out. He uct around its tech- re, letting function, efficiency determine ce. This clean-lined "as sometimes criti- rab," but Dreyfuss gs were beautiful if well and were pat- omically and psych- n a human scale. was devoted to de- usefulness and ap- products: he sold department store, ne stores to study and shoppers, and rounds as a tele- rman to learn more ay phones fitted in- ironment. (His job n ended the day he n the service ele- fashionable apart- he'd been a dis- nner guest a few r.) His telephone reted in the Bell Sys- cradle phone, as well line, Princess, and telephones. Drey- ted that each call Tone dial saved six ling up to over 150 hours annually in one.

liners *Constitution* uence Dreyfuss de- interiors, from the de- into to the silver- ie top deck, he sug- imming pool. This the conservative World War II, and was considered lux- extreme. Further- ural problems made ssibility: the pool oo heavy for that ship. Noting that heavy wooden deck planned for the top uss redesigned them ght aluminum. He enough weight to ool, and the alu- chair has been with e.

arcity has made the loing more with less ecessity, and Drey- of function has be- ious.

—Sasha Cavander
er, a free-lance writer, is ook entitled *The World* fuss.



Flathead Indians from the Fraser River country of British Columbia

CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT

In the nineties and the early 1900s, gold teeth were as much a part of the fashion scene as peg-top trousers, choker collars, and chatelaine watches. There were, of course, certain practical reasons for this popularity. From the viewpoint of the average dentist, gold-shell crowns provided a simple method of securely anchoring artificial teeth; at the same time they covered ugly, broken-down, and discolored natural teeth, as well as much inferior dental work. And to the patient, gold seemed to represent the most in value received.

—Charles I. Stolfoff
Natural History
February 1972



X ray of a Chinese woman's bound foot

What a Piece of Work is a Man!

The basic design of the human body has been a sort of aesthetic stumbling block for many centuries. Most of the body's internal arrangements have always given reasonable satisfaction, but the look of it has perpetually cried out for some kind of improvement. Stylization, decoration, and exaggeration have always been called into play to reorganize God's handiwork. The aim of dress, anthropologists say, is not so much protection of the shivering, hairless ape from the weather as making him look more important, beautiful, or alluring. Artists have always been necessary collaborators in this aim, obligingly rendering images of man that have stylized and idealized his appearance, all the more effectively among the half-naked groups. African sculpture, for example, makes potent, vigorous abstractions out of naked bodies, as if to demonstrate how they really ought to look. Similarly, classic Greek sculptors created idealizations of nudity so exquisitely subtle that less well-designed beings could identify with them.

In chilly Western Europe, however, clothing has always seemed the best way to edit the look of bodies. What we call fashion, which was invented sometime in the thirteenth century, has taken the covered rather than the bare body for its medium. Representative art has provided a kind of parallel guide to this phenomenon: the history of fashion in the West manifests the vast invention with which men and women have tried to mold themselves into works of art. The late Middle Ages, devoted to attenuation, used long pointed shoes for men, long pointed head-dresses for women, and the first instance of tight corseting for both sexes. Fashions in the Renaissance and the early Baroque period abandoned slenderness and its extensions in favor of bulk. Enormous sleeves and padded doublets magnified the puny human torso, and huge ruffs thickened the neck; by the mid-seventeenth century, elegant men and women had become waistless mountains of satin, topped with abundant curls. The Van Dyck portraits give the best version of how they were supposed to look.

Perhaps the most interesting and ingenious effort to redesign the human body through dress was the invention of modern masculine tailoring at the end of the eighteenth century. This amazing conception made it possible for men to look formal and natural, displayed and hidden, sexy and sober, all at the same time. It was carried out to perfection by the likes of Beau Brummell and his fellow Regency dandies, but it has been continued (with variations, of course) down to the present day. Subtle padding augments shoulders and chest so slightly that it looks like natural musculature, while tubular sleeves and trousers can mask deficiencies as they reveal structure. It was a great idea: its long life in the fickle modern world bears witness to that.

—Anne Hollander

Anne Hollander is writing a book on the clothed image in art, to be published by Viking in 1976.

Designing Women

The most industrious designers I've ever known were the girls I grew up with. The summer between sixth and seventh grades, Linda, Janis, Pattie, and Carole start wearing bikinis, streak their hair with peroxide and say it was the sun, and suddenly they're invited to boy-girl parties. Judy and I go to slumber parties. She practices round, fat penmanship and changes her name to Judi.

Linda and her crowd sing in the choir at the Presbyterian church, practice with makeup, slant their handwriting to the left, dot the i's with circles: Judie and I sit through *Tom Jones* four times.

In ninth grade "their crowd" wears garter belts, stockings, and color-coordinated Villagers. Linda goes steady with a senior. Her mother beams. "When the boys want to settle down they will choose wholesome girls like you," Judee's mother emphasizes. We wear socks and do not date. "You're a late bloomer," my mother says. The optometrist asks me, "What happens if your boyfriend wears braces, too?"

At sixteen the unknissed braces come off, my father says I'm old enough for contact lenses, and I straighten my hair for the first time. "The boys must beat a path to your door," says the dentist, chuckling. Judy and I

"When people are free to as they please, they usually imitate each other."

—Eric Hoffer
The Passionate State of Mind

buy two-piece bathing suits, fifteen.

We try harder. Judé lets hair grow indefinitely. I copy a copy of *Ulysses*. We avoid beach, and spend Saturdays Greenwich Village with Margaret, the civil-rights activist. We buy turtle-necks, sandals, silver earrings. I enter an award essay in the American Legion Memorial Day Contest.

By senior year Linda is cheerleader and plays my daughter-in-law in the school play.

At the summer camp where I'm a counselor, my peace-shirt is confiscated. I refuse salute the flag. I stare at McCarthy poster next to my and count the days, grateful to be in the army.

I go to NYU; Margaret attends the New School. I blow my hair to frizz—the frizzy Orphan Annie in the Village dress in jeans and workshirts don't even own a skirt. Margaret, braless, sings her own songs and plays guitar in GI coffee houses for a while, then a sugar cane in Cuba and returns a feminist. By the time I graduate, Margaret is a radical lesbian and we are no longer friends.

Linda, upon graduating from a genteel college for women marries a fraternity man. grad school I meet up with Judy, who has not cut her hair since we last met. I see Margaret on the street sometimes. She greets me: "Hare Krishna." I day I am twenty-six; my mother tells me I've bloomed.

—Melanie Pulik

Melanie Pulik is on the staff of Harper's.

