Psychlogy Of Fashion Essay, Research Paper

It has been said that individuals act out the roles that are associated with their identities and positions in society. This statement clearly relates to the case studies provided in the assignment package. It states that we have to look the part to play the part. This is an ingenious statement because what we look like is often controlled by society and it’s positions we take. An example would be the career positions that we usually desire to occupy. If we do not own businesses, we tend to want to work for large companies. Such companies, admired by us, are usually image-controlled. Disney employs 32000 people on Orlando and it operates the most obsessive image-control program outside of military. Companies, including Disney want their employees to have proper appearance management in order to look successful.

Conservative attire such as Traditional Business Wear is perceived as the most successful look for an individual. The companies want individuals to act the role of successful employee to display the success and professionalism of the company.

For the reason that we perceive ones who are not playing roles that are associated with their positions in society as being improper and unsafe, we tend not to trust them and be very careful by managing what we do or say around such persons. If an employee is perceived in such a way, the result of the customers’ responses will be anything but positive, and the retailer will feel the impact caused by negative feedback towards the employee.

To succeed in today’s society most people have to work, and seeking employment is not an easy task, especially if an individual has set high goals for him/her self, but does not know how to manage own appearance and the message becomes unfocused. Since wrong first impressions are irreversible, an individual’s knowledge, attitude, character, etc, will not be attention worthy, and therefore, the desired employment will be given to someone with a better wardrobe and personal appearance management. Outcome for that would be that the employers cast by appearance rather then hire. The reason for the employers to enforce the image-control programs now becomes clearly understandable.

A good example taken from the second article of the assignment package would be a woman dressed in masculine attire. We stereotype that woman as someone attracted to the same sex, or a tough woman who can stand up for her self in almost any situation.

The society’s expectations for women are that women appear feminine and manage their appearance in such way. However, women began to adopt masculine look since it was approved by society for them to wear pants. This adaptation process is still progressing; and women now are adapting to the disregard for wearing makeup, styling hair, and even wearing men’s attire such as neckties. Places like McDonald’s have adapted a uniform that entails wearing a necktie for both sexes. A necktie is associated with responsibility, intelligence, sophistication, and status. Women needed a symbol that would send the message stating those social positions. There is neckwear that is targeted for women; and that is a scarf. These body enclosures are not only used as a form of protection, but also as an item of identity display (the adornment theory). It is a good idea to make use of women’s neckwear to go along with the procedures of feminine grooming for a job interview, because as I stated before, it demonstrates responsibility, intelligence, sophistication and status. Those are the main social positions an individual would want the employer to perceive.

All human beings have different interests, styles, and appearances. However, when it comes to responsibilities it all narrows down to categorizing humans by age, gender and income. One of our main responsibilities is working after getting a job.

Our parents encourage us during our childhood and adolescence to be ourselves. However, when time arrives to actually seek employment we learn that the larger companies manipulate our parents’ efforts.

The way in which we dress is one of the many forms of expression that makes one an individual. When we go to seek employment, our appearance has to be managed thoroughly. Thus, the only way an individual can be him/her self is through knowledge. Nevertheless, to the employers, first impressions are not perceived with knowledge, but rather comes from the appearance. An example of that statement would be a part-time position I held within a doctor’s office.

Dr. Pliamm appreciated my unique appearance and he had offered me a front desk reception position in his office because of that fact. I had accepted the job offer and began working before the commencement of summer. I have held the position for two weeks and did the assigned job well. I occupied the evening shifts in the office, but on one hot day I wore a short summer dress during the day and did not have time to change before work. Therefore, I had to appear at the office in my favorite dress. That same day, the doctor approached me about my appearance, and the next evening, I was let go.

Similar situation occurred at Ardene Accessories, when I went to the job interview.

I had done my hair in a certain way, that I later found out appealed to the supervisor -Mario that interviewed me at the time, therefore I got the job. I worked at Ardene for approximately three months, during which period I had my hair down and wore almost no makeup. Whenever the supervisor came in to the store, I felt as though he was stereotyping me as a ” dumb blonde ” who did not know her rights. On being terminated I learnt from Mario I was the victim of appearance casting. Since I gave up on my artificial look and only wanted to be natural and more comfortable within the bounds of the dress code applied by the company and obeyed by me within the work environment, Mario decided to dismiss me before the end of my probation period. Well, at least he was honest!

Various styles of dressing make me an individual. My clothes represent my feeling as they do for most of us. During the game of the socialization process I had played several different roles. I still love to shock and impress people by the flamboyant way in which I dress. This is in fact what I have in mind as I get dressed each day. Once I leave the security of my home for the outside world, I am unfortunately made to regret my appearance management due to negative feedback I receive from the society. People refuse to understand that I have the charisma to wear something different and outstanding.

I am one of the trendsetters and I still have the clothes and people’s vows to prove it. For example six years ago pastel pink was my favorite color to wear when everyone else was afraid to let go of his/her black, white and denim attire. In my highschool I established a reputation as being the funkiest and most outstanding dresser.

Recently, I visited Northview Heights and I was extremely surprised to find most of the school kids wearing the clothes that I wore so many years ago; which at the time was perceived as bizarre. Back in those days one could only see people dressed as I did in certain underground clubs, which are now well known to everyone as Raves. I still have not lost my style of dress but unfortunately now I no longer stand out as much. Now that I am 21 years old, I no longer feel that the society will accept my unique way of dressing. I only go out of my way to stand out when I go to raves. I know that at least there, I will be perceived as one the most authentic individuals.

On the other hand I love to dress sexy. This is the side of me that illustrates that I am a high-self monitor and I am not very self-confident. Therefore, a lot of sensual everyday outfits appeal to me as well; especially if the majority of modern fashion is very similar to the unusual style that appeals to me. When I dress sexy I enjoy receiving a great deal of positive feedback from both sexes.

For males, a woman that dresses in an appealing mode becomes a challenge on how to attain sexual intercourse. However, for certain females – an attractive woman becomes competition and is automatically perceived as promiscuous.

Personally as well as professionally, I do not care to manage the appearance of my co-workers, unless s/he wears something unacceptable by the company, because this is not my job and I have to concentrate on what is. Unless I occupy a retail management position, I refuse to judge people that I have to interact with on a daily basis by the way they dress. However, if I in the management position I will not discriminate people by their appearance and will give individuals a chance to express their knowledge and experience.

I believe that if every retailer went with that kind of strategy for the hiring process, the society would have a lot less problems with unemployment and homelessness. How are people with no money suppose to keep up with the changes of fashion trends when the fashionable garments are so expensive? I think they deserve a chance as much as the ones that can afford to look good. Nevertheless, employers have to keep in mind the individuals’ lifestyles and legal records in order to prevent theft as well as drug and alcohol influence on the job.

When a job requires opposed interaction with customers the most important facts to consider are hygiene, as well as knowledge and confidence of the product and corporation. Personally, during my working hours I choose to look good as well as feel comfortable. Because if an employee does not feel good about him/her self-the motivation level is lowered significantly and the customers will not accept the opinions of someone that has no desire or patients to dedicate his/her time to the shopper in order to make a purchase. Energy has to be perceived in the retail industry. Unfortunately, not all employers seem to hold these views; instead they care perhaps too much about the fashion perspectives, and this is when individuality is discriminated.

Fashion is truly in the eye of the beholder and should therefore be cherished rather than looked down upon.