

The fashion plate

Dressing for corporate success

By RUSTLE SHAND

"Fashion is fun, but corporate deals are not for fun," said author John T. Molloy.

"Most American women dress for failure because they let the fashion industry influence their choice of clothes; they often still view themselves mainly as sex objects; and they let their socioeconomic background influence their choice of dressing."

Author of "The Woman's Dress for Success Book," Molloy appeared at Hudson's Oakland Mall, promoting his book, which has been on the market for three weeks and already ranks 11th on the national best-sellers list.

He attributes the book's success to corporate training departments whose staffs, he says, are buying his book as a tool to educate the potential new woman executive who has not learned how to package herself for business.

His theory of packaging is not new. Much of his

advice is based upon surveys and statistics gleaned from women who have passed through home economics wardrobe classes; fashion career or finishing course; or through the expert hands of fashion coordinators or good fashion salespeople.

The title given to the dress category he stresses has changed over the years. What he calls the "uniform" for women in business used to be the "basic suit." It evolved into the blazer, back again to the suit and is now called the "investment wardrobe."

His book is not meant for women who learned good taste in dress at their mother's knee or who learned it on the college campus, he said.

The book is meant for women recently out of college with an MBA degree and a burning desire to become chairman of the board of a large corporation. Many of these women went to college wearing blue jeans and came out of college still wearing them.

In another era this woman might have studied clothing construction, meal planning and child psychology in preparation for her role as the corporate wife. Now, she is aiming at the presidency of that same corporation with a head full of accounting and legal facts but little knowledge on how to package herself for success.

Molloy's research has indicated to him that a woman will fall in her climb to the corporate top if she does not follow strict guidelines in dress.

He may be right, but as more women reach the pinnacle, rules may relax as they have in other areas.

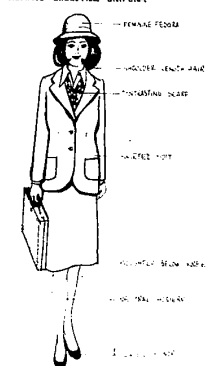
Dress can also be used to communicate respect for one another. Partygoers like to shed their everyday clothes and get "dressed-up" for the special occasion. Dress alters behavior on the part of the wearer and those with whom she comes into contact. It is a matter of good taste.

And good taste in dress is Molloy's premise. A woman with flowing hair wearing fashion jewelry and flowing clothing simply does not look as if she seriously intends to run a business any more than the man wearing a leisure suit or a shirt unbuttoned to the navel appears prepared to make corporate decisions.

Molloy's recommended "uniform" for the executive woman is a skirted suit, a man-tailored blouse, neutral hosiery, and a mid-heeled closed heel and toe pump. She should wear a sensible watch; carry an attache case; and use a gold or silver pen.

"If you want to be a liberated woman, burn your polyester pantsuit, not your bra," said Molloy.

WOMAN'S EXECUTIVE UNIFORM



fashion calendar

Monday, Nov. 28

The Fashion Group, Inc.—The Fashion Group of Detroit will present Robert L. Green, international fashion authority and designer, in a multimedia program depicting "The World of Robert L. Green." The program, which includes slides and models, will be held at the St. Regis Hotel, W. Grand Boulevard at Cass, Detroit, from 6-8 p.m. There will be hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Charge is \$10 for members, and \$12 for non-members.

Saturday, Dec. 3

American Business Women's Association—The association will sponsor "Fashions: A Forecast" with Marilyn Turner, formerly of WXYZ-TV. The show will be held at the San Marino

Club in Troy. Well-known designer selections from Ms. Turner's store will be shown. The program will begin with a cocktail hour at 11:30 a.m. (cash bar), followed by a luncheon at 12:30 p.m., and the fashion show. Tickets are \$8 per person. For reservations, call Delores Schoenher, 689-2608 or Doris Rife, 773-9501.

Sunday, Dec. 4

Super Cut '77—The annual Style-A-Thon, an area-wide effort by hair stylists and salon owners for the benefit of the March of Dimes, will be held today and/or tomorrow.

For information about the salon in your area, contact the Metropolitan Detroit March of Dimes at 863-3000.

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SPECIAL NOTICE: From 9 A.M. to 11 A.M., Priced Sale of Dresses, Gowns and miscellaneous household items at our Galleries.

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