

A closet full of clothing —but not a thing to wear

By LORRAINE McCLISH

Faces, figures and fashion are the hallmarks of Marlene Coffey, who offers a two-session workshop in the Farmington Community Center in March called "Fashion Awareness."

"It's designed for the woman who can't force one more blouse into her closet," she said, "but still can't find a thing to wear for the next shopping trip."

"Women buy out of habit. They buy because it's spring. So you have to buy something for spring, right? They buy something in one of the new colors or one of the new fads."

"But the woman who has nothing to wear is buying nothing that can be coordinated," she added.

Mrs. Coffey has a test for the doubters.

She tells participants in her class to do a little homework in the way of a list which numbers all the clothes one has worn in the last three months.

"It won't be much work and it won't be a long list because you'll find that you have been wearing the same things over and over again," she said, "yet you keep on buying."

The class is a lecture and demonstration, with the second half the most animated, "because I've given them all sorts of things to think about and they have so many questions for me," she said.

MRS. COFFEY is a professional model who began teaching in the center after she volunteered to give model walk lessons to others who had never modeled.

After the crash course on how to walk down a runway, she helped the same women with their makeup the day of the show.

This evolved into her classes, "Pretty Faces" and "Teen Modeling."

The bulk of her students in "Fashion Awareness" are graduates of the "Pretty Faces" course.

"During the last session we got to talking about scarves, to compliment the face, and some accessories," she said. "So it was sort of a natural evolution into 'Fashion Awareness.'"

She maintains one does not need a



Martha Cipullo, a student in fashion awareness, tries on a matching cloth hat and bag set. Her instructor credits the hat as the finishing touch on the total dress-up look.



Marlene Coffey illustrates how the same basic jumper and blouse can change their look with a scarf and different jackets. The former professional model is adamant that one does not need a lot of clothes to be well dressed.



Monday, March 5, 1979

Farmington Observer

Suburban Life

(F)1B

great many clothes to be well dressed.

Accessories, and knowing how to use them, play a big part of her workshop, but the big thrust, she emphasizes, is learning how to build a wardrobe.

Two keys are learning colors that are flattering to the individual, and learning to buy or keep the clothes that are going to fit into one's present life-style.

AS TO COLORS, Mrs. Coffey has another quick test. If you tan, look to the warm colors. If you burn, lean toward the cool colors.

If you are buying red, for example, the warm-colored woman should lean toward the yellow-red; the cool-colored woman should lean toward the blue-red.

She told a story of one of her students who wore a very good looking outfit comprised of a navy blue suit and bright green blouse. The student had received an unusual amount of compliments on how well she had put the two colors together.

"The problem was," Mrs. Coffey said, "that nobody told her how well she looked. She didn't get any compliments for herself, only for her dress."

"When she changed her blouse to a turquoise, the compliments went to her and how well she looked, not to her dress."

Fads play a big part in stuffing the closet with clothes women don't wear, Mrs. Coffey said.

There are a lot of maroon and purple numbers hanging in closets that were bought last year when that color caused a rush on the fashion scene. Women are unhappy with it now, but not sure why.

"It's because they are uncomfortable with the color or uncomfortable with the style," Mrs. Coffey said. "I hope to make them aware of these things in my class."

HANGING ONTO past lifestyles is another facet that comes into play for the unaware shopper.

"Often the retired working woman won't have anything to clean the walls in, but is still buying out of habit as though she were still going to work everyday," Mrs. Coffey said.

"And the reverse holds true for the woman who has been a housewife now setting off on a career."

Mrs. Coffey thinks of clothing accessories as the icing on a cake.

"You can take the same cake and put Valentine hearts on it, or an Easter bunny or a Santa Claus and have three different cakes."

"It's the same thing as decorating or dressing up or down a basic suit."

"The important thing is to be comfortable and be ready to go, anywhere, at a moment's notice," she said. "This comes with knowing what to look for when you are buying."

Mrs. Coffey's two session workshop runs from 1-3 p.m. on Tuesdays, March 13 and 20. The fee is \$9 and registrations are necessary through the center at 477-8404.

"I put a limit on my 'Pretty Faces' and 'Teen Modeling' classes because so much individual attention must be given to each person," Mrs. Coffey said.

"In this class all of the information is very general and what I have to say pretty much applies to everybody. We can take all comers."

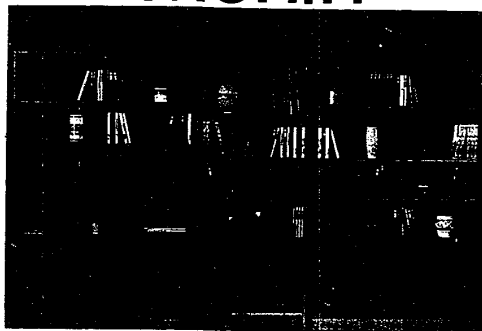
Hats can cover up a wilting hairdo while they dress up a modest outfit. Two or three of them, especially in a travel wardrobe, are musts for Marlene Coffey.



Polka dots are a big fashion item this spring and can be used as effectively in an accessory as in a new spring outfit. Marlene Coffey shows Betty Vincent some tricks in tying and finding the best size and shape for her needs.

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