

Fashion trends mirror economy

By TERESA BANAS

What would you say if you were told fashion trends correlated with the state of the economy?

You know — short skirts depict war years (possibly because of the shortage of resources) and long skirts herald an approaching recession (possibly to depict the long faces of economists).

These interesting tidbits come from Martha Cormie, a former fashion illustrator and present-day instructor of water colors.

"If you go back you could almost tell the state of the economy by the fashion," Mrs. Cormie said.

Mrs. Cormie is an instructor of water colors at the Redford Township YWCA. She is also a well-

known artist in her own right. She lives in Birmingham.

After receiving her early training at Detroit's Cass Technical High School, she went on to the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, the American Academy of Fine Arts and Cranbrook Institute.

She is allied to several local galleries, including Rochester's Objects and Images, which is an artists' cooperative. She is on its board of directors. She is a blue ribbon winner who has had her work displayed in such annual shows as the Creative Council Show, which is a marketing service for Michigan Artists.

BEFORE MRS. CORMIE concentrated on her work and teaching

of water color painting, she was a fashion illustrator for the J.L. Hudson Co. and Winkelman's Stores.

"The advertising manager picked the theme, and we'd work together on picking the costumes that illustrated well," she said.

About the styles of the early sixties, she said, "We're getting back to those styles."

"Skirts are going down, shoulder pads are in, and then there's hats and veils."

Mrs. Cormie said she prefers water colors to other mediums she has worked with because it best suits her personality.

"It's a medium that speaks to me because I tend to be very open, quick, energetic person," she said.

"I like the freshness and spontaneity of water colors. And it's always a nice surprise when it dries."

Mrs. Cormie said she has been fortunate in selling her paintings, implying that her pieces sell for \$65 or more. Most of her work deals with nature scenes.

And they are not hard to come by when one lives in the neighborhood of the Birmingham Nature Center. A painting she had on hand in her classroom this month was a scene she saw through her house's front window.

It's a colorful meshing of oranges, yellows, greens and purples bringing alive a view of underbrush between several birch trees.

MRS. CORMIE TEACHES two

classes, one in Birmingham and another at the Redford YWCA. She also volunteers her time at the St. Anne Meade Retirement home in Southfield. Her students range in ages from 17 to 97. Teaching all ages, she said, is rewarding.

Mrs. Cormie said some professional artists tend to look down on art students of YWCAs, calling them Sunday artists or hobbyists. However, she finds the experience enriching for any student as well as a stimulating experience for an artist-instructor.

Mrs. Cormie will be the guest speaker before the monthly luncheon of the Redford Suburban League at Vladimir's in Farmington March 14.



Martha Cormie, an artist and designer.

Top of the ladder is a tense position

It's not only lonely at the top; it's nerve-racking.

"Today's corporate manager must not only be concerned with everyday administrative tasks but company visibility, federal regulations, environmental issues, affirmative action and corporate review boards," said psychologist James D. Papsdorf.

"But most worrisome of all is the absence of predictability. The larger your area of responsibility, the more people you are dependent upon; the more things that can go wrong."

Papsdorf, a University of Michigan professor, cited the manager who arrives at work and is told he must have a certain report on the desk by 5 p.m. that day. Filing that report means getting data from four other people, lower in the hierarchy, who may or may not get around to giving it to him.

"One of the most common themes that run through our Management of Management Stress seminars is: How to deal with people you have to depend on but don't have any formal authority over," says Papsdorf.

"We suggest three kinds of tactics. The first is verbal persuasion, emphasizing the commonality between you and the person you're dealing with. 'I've got a problem and need your help; I'm sure you've been in a similar bind.'"

"The second is to emphasize you are making a routine request and the people you are calling should consider it part of their job to supply you with the needed information."

"The third resort is a veiled threat. 'I'm calling at the request of President...'"

It's difficult to employ any of these methods, however, if you're in a state of panic, Papsdorf said. He recom-

mends what he calls "cognitive coping" to help keep yourself in a calm, rational state of mind.

"Our lab experiments indicate that the way you label an event will determine your physiological reaction to it. 'Take the person who receives the memo about the report due by five o'clock. If he begins fretting and blaming himself ('If only I'd been prepared for this. I never do anything right'), he will likely trigger a number of physical reactions such as a rapidly beating heart, high pulse rate, perspiration, tight muscles and other symptoms of anxiety and tension."

"Recent studies on the central nervous system indicate that when this happens, a person is functioning from the right hemisphere of the brain, the side that is believed to control our emotional reactions," Papsdorf said.

"On the other hand, if he tells himself in a cool manner, 'This is an inconvenience but not a calamity,' he would be operating from the left hemisphere of the brain, functioning rationally."

We cannot always control our emotional behaviors, Papsdorf said. "When a car suddenly darts in front of ours, we may instantaneously swerve to avoid the accident. Seconds later, we begin trembling uncontrollably. Apparently in these situations, the rational brain takes precedence and the emotional side lags behind."

"Suppose, however, a threatening situation is approaching and we are aware of it, like a speech we must make in front of a board of trustees. We can either succumb to our emotional side, which keeps insisting 'I must not look stupid, I must not make a mistake,' and work ourselves into a frenzy."

Meals for little ones is topic of lecture

The task of providing wholesome meals that pre-schoolers will eat is the subject of a program sponsored by Nardin Park Community Nursery School.

"Meals for Little Folks" will be led by Cindy Crane, a home economist with

Michigan State University, at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 15, in Nardin Park Methodist Church, 2887 Eleven Mile. The program is given in observance of International Year of the Child as a public service by the nursery. There is no charge.

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