

# THE ROLE OF APPEARANCE IN SORORITY MEMBERSHIP SELECTION

by

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(Under the Direction of Soyoung Kim)

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the significance that clothing and appearance has on impression formation and hence, membership selection during the sorority recruitment process. Personal characteristics such as self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, and self-esteem behaviors were studied and tested as predictors and influences of impression formation. A total of 140 surveys were completed by sorority members. Pearson Correlation analyses were used to test the relationships among the variables. Results indicated significant relationships between the individual independent variables (self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, and proximity of clothing to self) and impression formation as they relate to clothing and appearance. Self-esteem characteristics had no considerable impact on impression formation. Regression analyses were used to determine which variables had significant influence on membership selection. Fashion clothing involvement, materialism, proximity of clothing to self, and impression formation were found to most significantly impact sorority membership selection.

**INDEX WORDS:** Sorority, Self-Monitoring, Materialism, Fashion Clothing Involvement, Proximity of Clothing to Self, Self-Esteem, Impression Formation, Membership Selection

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

For many college women, sorority culture is responsible for much of the transition into womanhood. Regardless of the dynamics of a college campus or peer group, the college sorority contributes to much of the growth and enrichment of many young women. This development is evident scholastically, socially, and emotionally, and especially physically. Image and physical attractiveness are not only very important concepts to college women, but also undeniably significant to sorority women. The “Sorority Look”, an often idealized image, is one of the most notorious aphorisms associated with Greek life. This so-called “sorority look” consists of physical attributes such as hair, cosmetic use, and most importantly clothing. These characteristics can often give insight into one’s personality, socioeconomic background, and behavior. In this study, the researcher determined how this type of idealized image was upheld throughout the recruitment process in both membership selection and active member presentation. Furthermore, the researcher narrowed the focus of the study to how clothing and physical attractiveness affected and contributed to this environment. After all, because the recruitment process is based on miniscule moments of time, clothing and appearance can significantly impact initial impressions.

Because today’s consumers are more savvy and educated, clothing and personal appearance have become more important in all aspects of life. Personal presentation can be a critical indicator of success not in only the business world, but also in social environments. Because there are so many resources and outlets to better educate consumers, the importance of

maintaining clothing trends is increasing. Hence, it is not surprising that this sort of appearance maintenance is evident in the college sorority and its recruitment process. In fact, many college campuses publish a “How To, Guide to Recruitment” to relay what clothing is appropriate for each house visit. Pearls, sweater sets, and t-shirts with Greek letters are among the many staple items that contribute to the “famous” sorority look. Again, this sorority look is reiterating that sorority membership can become an integral part of college women’s identities (Allison & Park, 2004). We are told that “a sister does not become what her group is; the group becomes what each sister makes it” (“Sorority membership recruitment,” 2006, p. 1). However, the researcher indicated that with so many stereotypes surrounding sororities, selection and grooming into a particular sorority culture is a reality. Furthermore, selection into these groups and the subsequent behavior modification after acceptance encompass many characteristics, especially clothing and personal appearance.

The National Panhellenic Conference boasts approximately 3,773,156 initiated members and 2,908 undergraduate chapters over 620 college and university campuses in the United States and Canada (National Panhellenic Conference, 2006). The NPC believes that a fraternity is “a social experience based on the fundamental right of free people to form voluntary associations and is one of the enrichments of college life” (National Panhellenic Conference, 2005, p. I-4). The University of Georgia’s Fall 2006 Sorority Membership Recruitment Registration Guide states:

Through sorority membership, you are able to make lifelong friends, develop leadership abilities, serve national and local philanthropies, become involved in campus organizations, develop your scholastic abilities, and, most importantly, achieve your own individual goals with confidence. (p. 1)

Because all of these aspects promote the desire to obtain sorority membership, acceptance into these groups is very competitive. Thus, examining the components of sororities’ acceptance

criteria is imperative to understanding this competitive process. Clothing, a very visible component, was focused on in this study. Hence, the researcher found that the influence of clothing on the formation of first impressions and, consequently, membership selection was evident.

### ***Recruitment***

One week before fall semester begins; hundreds of female freshmen begin a process which could determine the next four years of their lives. Sorority recruitment, also known as Rush, allows for sorority members to meet prospective young women to become members of their sorority (McLean, 2003). Recruitment provides an opportunity to familiarize one's self with sorority life and to join a sorority through carefully planned and scheduled activities ("Sorority membership recruitment," 2006). Rush is considered ideal at the beginning of the fall semester and is held as close as possible to the start of the academic year (National Panhellenic Conference, 2005). The National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) regulates that the recruitment period should be conducted in as short a period of time as possible, and recruitment functions should be held in chapter houses whenever possible (National Panhellenic Conference, 2005). This is beneficial to the rushees because they are able to gain insight into the personalities and lifestyle of the different sororities in a short period of time. The NPC governs many different membership recruitment styles depending on the number of sororities on each college campus. Because this study focused on a large college campus with many sororities, the formal recruitment schedule is more specific and occurs on consecutive days. This allows both the rushers and rushees to narrow their choices gradually (Mongrell & Roth, 1991). Round One, also known as the "water parties", is open to all rushees. This round is very brief and is essentially a "meet and greet" (Thornton & Thornton, 1999). After each round, the number of

sororities a rushee can attend is reduced (Mongrell & Roth, 1991). Hence, Round Two consists of fewer parties of longer time intervals which are by invitation only. These parties allow for more in-depth conversations between active and potential members. Entertainment describing a house's sisterhood, philanthropies, and social events is often provided (McLean, 2003; Thornton & Thornton, 1999). Round Three is again invitation only, and consists of longer parties with fewer rushees returning. Sorority house tours are often given. Also, relationships between active and potential members are developing. Preference Round is the final step in the membership selection process. The parties are reduced to two or three and those invited back are being considered for membership (McLean, 2003). During these parties, sororities often share segments of their ritual with potential new members. After the Preference Round, rushees indicate their choices by ranking and signing the Membership Recruitment Acceptance Binding Agreement. This agreement explains that a woman must be willing to accept a bid from any sorority that she lists on the agreement, and a sorority should be willing to issue an invitation for membership to any woman who is invited and attends its preference event (National Panhellenic Conference, 2005). Also by signing this agreement, a rushee who declines membership into the sorority to which she was matched, is not permitted to join another sorority for one year (Mongrell & Roth, 1991; National Panhellenic Conference, 2005). The culmination of the entire recruitment process is Bid Day when a rushee becomes a pledge, and is welcomed into the Greek community (National Panhellenic Conference, 2005).

After each round, sororities engage in membership selection sessions. During this time, sorority members review each girl that attended their house that day. Most houses use a ranking system and compose notes about each rushee. This is beneficial and often a necessity when assessing the positive and negative characteristics of a potential new member. Block cutting is

often used in earlier rounds (Thornton & Thornton, 1999). Block cuts are often comprised of low evaluations and inadequate scholarship. However, as the recruitment process progresses, the selection and evaluation of potential members becomes more critical. Potential new members are assessed on a number of attributes. Typically, traits that are important are personality, extracurricular activities, honors and awards, and scholarship (McLean, 2003). However, the researcher proposed that clothing and personal appearance play a significant role in forming impressions for certain individuals, thereby affecting their selection decisions.

### *Purpose*

The purpose of this study was to measure how clothing affects impression formation during sorority membership selection. In an attempt to determine the significance of appropriate clothing during the sorority recruitment process, the researcher examined how certain personal characteristics of a sorority member were related to her use of a potential member's appearance as a non-verbal cue during the membership selection process. The characteristics identified through the literature review were self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing, and self-esteem.

Browne and Kaldenberg (1997) argued that materialism, self-monitoring, and fashion product involvement are all linked. Materialists have been associated with using possessions, including clothing, for portraying themselves and managing impressions (O'Cass, 2001). Similarly, those who are high self-monitors, individuals sensitive to social cues by indicating socially appropriate behavior and using those cues to modify their self-presentation, are capable of impression management using clothing and appearance (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997). Proximity of clothing to self is a variable known to be associated with high levels of fashion clothing involvement, which, in turn, may influence the use of clothing in impression

management. In this study, the researcher proposed that those who exhibit higher levels of materialism, self-monitoring, proximity of clothing to self, and fashion clothing involvement were more likely to rely on clothing as a non-verbal cue in membership selection during sorority recruitment. Likewise, the researcher suggested that those individuals who have high self-esteem will be less likely to judge others based on their clothing and appearance.

Little research has been published on the relationship between these five variables and the use of clothing in impression management. In addition, the relationship between clothing and sorority membership selection has not yet been studied. Arthur (1999) is one of the few scholars who researched sororities focusing on how sororities engage in the social construction of femininity. Therefore, by examining the link between clothing presentation and sorority member selection, this study contributes to the knowledge of impression formation and clothing as a non-verbal cue.

### ***Objectives***

The main objective of this research study was to determine the significance of clothing and appearance and sorority membership selection. A clear description of the impact that clothing has on membership selection during sorority recruitment was determined in order to identify how certain characteristics or beliefs held by sorority members can impact new member selection. Specific objectives were as follows:

1. The first objective of this study was to examine bivariate relationships between impression formation and the following variables: self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, and self-esteem.

H1: Sorority members who are high self-monitors will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

- H2: Sorority members who are highly materialistic will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.
- H3: Sorority members who experience high fashion clothing involvement will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.
- H4: Sorority members who have high proximity of clothing to self will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.
- H5: Sorority members with high self-esteem will be less likely to form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members with low self-esteem.

2. The second objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between impression formation and membership selection.

H6: Sorority members who form impressions based on clothing and appearance will be more likely to select new members based on their clothing and appearance.

3. The third objective was to determine which of the selected six variables (self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, self-esteem, and impression formation) had significant influence on membership selection when other variables were controlled.

### *Definitions*

**Active Member** is defined as a member of the sorority who is in good standing and has complete membership education and has been formally initiated (McLean, 2003; Thornton & Thornton, 1999).

**Bid** is defined as an official invitation to join a sorority (McLean, 2003).

**Fashion Clothing Involvement** is defined as the extent to which the consumer views the focal activity as a central part of their life, a meaningful and engaging activity in their life (O’Cass, 2004).

**Impression Formation** refers to the collected knowledge one person possesses about another which results from directly observable behavior, information about background and history, as

well as inferences generated by the perceiver with regard to personality, attributes, goals and ideals (Johnson, Schofield & Yurchisin, 2002).

**Materialism** relates to an individual's belief that possessions symbolize one's identity and to the importance attached to possessions as objects (Richins & Dawson, 1992). It is also the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions. "At the highest levels of materialism, possessions assume a central place in a person's life and are believed to provide the greatest sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in life either directly (as an ends) or indirectly (as a means to an end)" (Belk, 1984, p. 291).

**National Panhellenic Conference (NPC)** is the national governing organization composed of 26 member women's fraternities that make rules and regulations for the sororities in the Panhellenic conference (McLean, 2003).

**New Member/Pledge** is defined as a woman who has accepted the bid offered by a sorority but has not been initiated into the sorority (McLean, 2003).

**Potential New Member/Rushee** refers to a prospective sorority member (McLean, 2003).

**Proximity of Clothing to Self** is defined as the centrality and psychological linkage of a person to their clothing which results from using clothing as a tool for validation of the self (Sontag *et al.*, 1997).

**Recruitment/Rush** is defined as a series of events hosted by sororities during a given period scheduled by and governed by college Greek Life offices in which sororities choose new members through a mutual selection process (McLean, 2003).

**Self-Esteem** is defined as one's feelings of self-worth (Kaiser, 1985). It is also described as a function of perceived appraisals from significant others and the individual feelings of competence derived from that feedback (Lorr & Wunderlich, 1986).

**Self-Monitoring** is defined as the tendency to notice cues for socially appropriate behavior and modify one's behavior accordingly (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997).

**Social Identity Theory** is defined by Tajfel as part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership ("Social identity theory," n.d.)

**Sorority** is defined as a women's fraternity also called a Greek Letter Sisterhood (McLean, 2003).

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

Many factors play important roles in the sorority membership selection process. The following sections outline behavioral characteristics and personal traits of sorority members that may affect sorority recruitment and acceptance. If sorority members possess these characteristics, they may recruit potential new members who reflect their ideas of acceptable appearance and behaviors.

#### *Attractiveness and Social Acceptance*

Many would like to adhere to the concept that attractiveness is not conducive to a positive perception of another. However, a great deal of research has been conducted on the degree to which attractiveness affects social acceptance and popularity. Even though this idea may be frivolous and superficial, it occurs throughout society, and especially on the college campus. Indeed, sororities make a significant contribution to this notion. It has been proven that physical attractiveness is more important to a woman's social experience than for a man's (Berscheid & Walster, 1974). Prestia, Silverston, Wood, and Zigarmi (2002) discussed how the "beautiful is good" stereotype reveals that many positive traits are associated with attractive people. They further explain that others view physically attractive people as more intelligent, successful, confident, assertive and happy (Prestia *et al.*, 2002). Hence, many assume and recognize that attractiveness is related to increased popularity and social acceptance. Goldman and Lewis (1977) indicated that attractive people are more successful in social areas. Also, they tend to entertain more positive judgments and responses than the unattractive do. Most research

pertaining to the effects of physical attractiveness on social acceptance and popularity has been based on “facial” attractiveness. This research analyzed another aspect of appearance, that is, clothing. More specifically, the researcher determined how significant this variable is during sorority membership selection.

### ***Self-Monitoring***

Snyder defined self-monitoring as the tendency to notice cues for socially appropriate behavior and modify one’s behavior accordingly (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997). Many researchers have identified attributes of high self-monitors over the years. Auty and Elliott (1998) described high self-monitors as those who are sensitive to the social cues around them. Gangestad and Snyder (2000) explained that these individuals are highly responsive to social and interpersonal cues of situationally appropriate performances. O’Cass (2001) described their strong concern for appearance and image. He further explained that they are aware of impressions or messages that fashion clothing sends to others about them. Hence, personal motives, such as social approval, are strong drivers for fashion choices. Browne and Kaldenberg (1997) did an extensive study on how self-monitoring is linked to materialism and product involvement. They found that high self-monitors are sensitive to social cues by indicating socially appropriate behavior and using those cues to modify their self-presentation. Hence, because these individuals can manipulate self-presentation through clothing, they are very conscious of the messages that their appearance sends to others. They referred to them as “chameleons” because of their ability to alter themselves, and be different people in different situations. This consciousness and versatility is positively related to success in Browne and Kaldenberg’s study. Atlas and Morier (1994) even stated that “those who are high self-monitors should be skilled at generating favorable impressions in the sorority rush context” (p. 347).

Low self-monitors, on the other hand, are more likely to suit themselves whatever their social surroundings (Auty & Elliott, 1998). These individuals often do not engage in expressive control (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000), and they tend to be insensitive to social cues (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997), thus, maintaining a consistent self-presentation across situations.

Conformity is another way of describing self-monitoring. Davis (1984) defined conformity as “the change in an individual’s behavior or attitudes towards those advocated by a group as a result of real or imagined group pressure” (p. 671). Davis also presented the concept of self-consciousness and its subscales, private and public self-consciousness. Like high self-monitoring, public self-consciousness reflects those who are concerned with social appearances and impressions conveyed to others. In contrast, private self-consciousness focuses on more personal aspects of the self (Davis, 1984).

This study primarily focused on self-monitoring through clothing and personal appearance. Maintaining one’s desired social presentation can be easily attained through clothing management. Because clothing is often used for its symbolic value, it is used by high self-monitors to modify their self-presentation (O’Cass, 2001). Auty and Elliott (1998) explained:

Fashion involvement is likely to be associated with differences in sensitivity to social surroundings in that those who are highly motivated to fit into a particular group will need to be aware of the fashion cues not just of that group but of other less desirable groups so that the “wrong” cues may be avoided. (p. 110)

Hence, self-monitoring through clothing has a significant effect on impression formation and management. O’Cass (2001) argued that self-monitoring characteristics in people can be seen in their product and brand choices because of concerns for prestige and appearance. He also explained that products that are used as props to convey images of the self are staple

characteristics of self-monitors (O’Cass, 2001). While low self-monitors tend not to focus extensively on clothing, high self-monitors value self-representation through clothing. In fact, high self-monitoring females are more likely than low self-monitors to be opinion leaders in clothing selection and to use clothing to attain social approval (Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997). Hence, fashion clothing is commonly used as a social outlet for displaying success and status.

Francis (1992) reported how self-monitoring through clothing affects social participation among high school students. Francis found that students who experienced clothing deprivation tended to be non-social. The reasoning for this lack of social participation and group membership can be applied to college students as well. Like teenagers, young adults (i.e. college students) who do not adhere to clothing norms may not experience high levels of social acceptance. Therefore, self-monitoring through clothing may be vital to the success of women going through the sorority recruitment process.

Past research has concluded that high self-monitors are individuals sensitive to socially appropriate behavior coupled with strong concerns for appearance and image. Hence, these individuals have been found to use clothing as modifiers of their personal appearance. Women who are high self monitors tend to place high importance on their clothing and the clothing of others. Therefore, the researcher proposed that sorority members who are classified as high self-monitors will be more likely to use clothing and personal appearance as key determinants when forming impressions, and consequently, making their membership selection decisions.

### ***Materialism***

According to Richins and Dawson (1992), materialism relates to an individual’s belief that possessions symbolize one’s identity and to the importance attached to possessions as objects. As one of the most avid researchers of this concept, Belk (1984) defined materialism as:

The importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions. At the highest levels of materialism, possessions assume a central place in a person's life and are believed to provide the greatest sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in life either directly (as an ends) or indirectly (as a means to an end) (p. 291).

O'Cass (2001) explained that the important aspects of possessions for materialists are utility, appearance, financial worth and ability to convey status, success and prestige. Materialists find possessions to be signs of success, and derive happiness from the acquirement of them. For materialists, possessions and their acquisition are at the forefront of personal goals, and they value this more highly than most other matters and activities in life (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Materialists tend to use possessions for portraying and managing impressions (O'Cass, 2001). Hence, fashion clothing, a highly visible social outlet for personality representation, is a common way to manage and gain positive reactions.

Auty and Elliott's (1998) research proposes fashion clothing as a major contributor of stereotyping and impression formation. Hunt, Kernan, and Mitchell (1996) concluded that possessions serve as primary indicators of personal substance for the materialist, and that materialists perceive people in terms of their possessions rather than internal qualities or accomplishments. They also referred to Kelly's 1955 theory of personal constructs by explaining that materialists categorize others largely on their external appearances and what they have. Richins (1994) suggested that those with stronger materialistic tendencies use clothing for impression management, and value products that are consumed publicly and possess public meaning. This again reaffirms Browne and Kaldenberg's (1997) argument that materialism and self-monitoring are positively related. Both of these concepts are associated with using possessions for impression management and formation.

The most commonly identified factors that comprise materialism are acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and possession-defined success (Hunt *et al.*, 1996; O’Cass, 2001; Richins, 2004; Richins & Dawson, 1992). In this study, the researcher examined how materialism affects how people attach possessions to success and status. More specifically, the researcher focused on the impact of materialism on clothing. Much research has concluded that highly materialistic individuals use possessions for impression management by indicating success and status (Belk, 1985; Hunt *et al.*, 1996). Richins and Dawson (1992) determined that materialists particularly use their possessions to indicate their achievements. Many individuals equate success and status with impressive possessions and objects. A highly materialistic individual is characterized by these types of behaviors. This type of behavior is very evident with high-end products such as designer handbags and shoes, expensive watches, etc. Hence, judgments are based on observations, not personal interactions (Hunt *et al.*, 1996). Even though much research has been done on the concept of materialism, this study concentrated on the levels of materialism among college sorority women linking the evidence of materialism to the sorority recruitment process. Previous studies have shown that materialists will emphasize people’s possessions (cars, houses, and clothing) or appearance when making assessments of others. Because of these behaviors, this research proposed that those who are highly materialistic will be more likely to use clothing than those who are less materialistic to form impressions, which will in turn affect their selection decisions.

### ***Fashion Clothing Involvement***

Clothing is one of the simplest ways to enhance one’s appearance or express one’s personality. Fashion clothing can provide an outlet for expressing one’s personality, impressing others, and even indicating social aspirations. Fashion clothing involvement is defined as the

extent to which the consumer views clothing as a central part of their life, a meaningful and engaging activity in their life (O’Cass, 2004). In this research, fashion clothing involvement is identified as one of the most significant variables that contribute to impressions formed by people and their counterparts based on their clothing and appearance. Much research has been conducted on fashion clothing involvement. Thus, focusing on fashion clothing involvement can be very important when studying impression formation management. Clothing can project not only social values, but economic values as well. O’Cass (2004) explained that “individuals define themselves in terms of their possessions, and consequently, these possessions come to serve as key symbols for personal qualities, attachments, and interests” (p. 869).

Gender and age are factors that affect levels of fashion clothing involvement. Women are typically more involved in fashion than men (Auty & Elliott, 1998; Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997; Tigert, King & Ring, 1980). Laurent and Kapferer (1985) also referenced that women have high levels of apparel product involvement. Hence, one can understand the importance of determining fashion clothing involvement among groups of women and consequently, the admittance of new members into these groups based on clothing and appearance. Age also shapes fashion clothing involvement. O’Cass (2004) explained that because clothing occupies a more central position in the life of the young, younger people will be more involved in fashion clothing than older people. Mason and Bellenger (1973-1974) also found during their study of college women and the adoption of the midi dress that younger women have a very high interest in fashion. Again, the application of fashion clothing involvement to a college sorority is significant when determining group acceptance.

An exceptional relationship exists between fashion clothing involvement and fashion opinion leadership. Chowdary (2000) referred to fashion opinion leadership as “the extent to

which an individual serves as an informant for other people” (p. 152). Workman and Johnson (1993) compiled many common characteristics and descriptions of fashion opinion leaders from past research. Compared to others, these fashion conscious individuals are more apt to try new products, perceive themselves as knowledgeable about women’s clothing styles, and experience more media exposure and social participation. Furthermore, social participation is one of the strongest drivers of fashion clothing involvement. Even though clothes satisfy functional motives such as warmth and durability, image motives are more often sought. Chowdary (2000) found that fashion leaders had higher social participation than non-leaders. Hence, social approval motives tend to be the strongest influences of fashion clothing involvement (O’Cass, 2001).

A result of high levels of fashion clothing involvement is increased product knowledge. Selnes and Gronhaug (1986) defined product knowledge as “product related information stored in memory, such as information about brands, products, attributes, evaluations, decision heuristics and usage situations” (p. 67). This knowledge comes from the media, family, and especially, peer groups. Furthermore, because clothing styles change at such a fast pace, one who is highly involved in fashion clothing will emphasize maintaining and “keeping up” with these trends. Accordingly, the selection and exhibition of appropriate clothing could help to ensure social acceptance.

The more fashion clothing occupies a key position in one’s life, the greater the involvement in a product such as fashion clothing (O’Cass, 2004). O’Cass’ (2004) research also found fashion clothing involvement, expertise, and the ability to make decisions regarding fashion clothing to be significantly related. Hence, the measurement of the sorority members’ levels of fashion clothing involvement is extremely relevant to proving that judgments and

impressions of potential new members based on clothing is a reality during recruitment.

Therefore, it would seem that sorority members who have high fashion clothing involvement will be more likely to use clothing to form impressions of others. As a result, membership selection decisions based on clothing and personal appearance should increase.

### ***Proximity of Clothing to Self***

As noted in research of fashion clothing involvement, clothing is one of the simplest ways to enhance one's appearance or express one's opinion. Clothing is also a way to maintain and enhance consistency between desired and actual projection of self-images. Proximity of clothing focuses on the effect clothing has on an individual's inner self. According to Sontag, Peteu and Lee (1997), proximity of clothing is the centrality and psychological linkage of a person to their clothing which results from using clothing as a tool for validation of the self. Proximity of clothing to self is characterized by six dimensions measuring the psychological closeness of clothing to self: (1) clothing in relation to self as structure, (2) clothing in relation to self as process-communication of self to other, (3) clothing in relation to self as process-response to judgments of others, (4) clothing in relation to self-esteem-evaluative process dominant, (5) clothing in relation to self-esteem-affective process dominant, (6) clothing in relation to body image and body cathexis (Sontag *et al.*, 1997). The first three dimensions were addressed in this study.

*Clothing in relation to self as a structure* is referred to as a "mirror" that reflects image, personality, values, attitudes, beliefs, or moods of a person. One that scores high on this dimension believes that clothing contributes to a sense of unity and constitutes part of her identity (Sontag *et al.*, 1997). *Clothing in relation to self as process-communication of self to others* is characterized by individuals sending messages of themselves through clothing. The

images conveyed by these messages can pertain to age, gender, or occupation. These individuals consciously select clothing to achieve self-defining goals (Sontag *et al.*, 1997). Proximity of clothing suggests that individuals will use clothing as a tool to achieve desired outcomes in certain situations. If this occurs, the individual may evaluate clothing based upon its ability to achieve a desired effect. *Clothing in relation to self as process-response to judgments of others* is based on the evaluations of one's image by others. People form personal standards for their clothing if they receive compliments or criticisms about their clothing from others (Sontag *et al.*, 1997).

The importance of clothing on adolescents' social acceptance has been widely studied (Francis, 1992; Lachance, Beaudoin & Robitaille, 2003). Sontag *et al.* (1997) determined that adolescents who have high proximity of clothing to the self may anticipate that their clothing should help them gain a sense of personal competence or make them feel good about themselves. Although the majority of past research focused on the adolescent population, this study examined young adults, specifically collegiate females. Sontag *et al.* (1997) explained that even for adults, clothing contributes to a sense of well-being or quality of life. Kwon (1994) found that when college students felt good about their clothing, they felt more competent in work, more sociable, and more positive. Also, for women, clothing facilitates their creativity and expressiveness, their ability to have fun, their perceptions of beauty and attractiveness, as well as meeting some of their social and emotional needs (Sontag & Lee, 2004). During the sorority selection process, many potential members are attempting to achieve a desired image with their clothing. Proximity of clothing is often used to measure one's dependency on clothing by obtaining a sense of belonging. This desired feeling of acceptance and its impact on one's self can also be seen in Tajfel's social identity theory. Furthermore, by incorporating the Proximity of Clothing

to Self scale with this study, the researcher was able to further emphasize the impact of clothing during the sorority membership selection process. One can generalize that if clothing is very important to individual sorority members, they will use it to measure and judge other individuals. Therefore, it would seem that individuals who have high proximity of clothing to self will also be more likely to use clothing to judge and form impressions of others.

### ***Self-Esteem***

Self-esteem is described as a function of perceived appraisals from significant others and the individual feelings of competence derived from that feedback (Lorr & Wunderlich, 1986). More specifically, self-esteem is defined as one's feelings of self-worth (Kaiser, 1985), and the motive to seek experiences that enhance or protect the self-concept (Banister & Hogg, 2004). Much research has linked levels of self-esteem to clothing and appearance. Chowdary (2000) concluded that apparel significance is positively related to self-esteem. Self-esteem has also been found to be an important motivational drive for clothing involvement (Banister & Hogg, 2004). Clothing appearance can affect body image perception which in turn improves one's self-esteem (Tondl & Henneman, 1994). Yurchisin and Johnson (2004) described how individuals with low self-esteem strive to achieve social status with purchasing, and hence, become compulsive buyers. Crocker (2002b) explained that an individual, whose self-esteem is contingent upon being attractive, may place considerable emphasis on clothing and appearance. Therefore, clothing and appearance can significantly impact the evaluation of one's self, and consequently, the evaluation of others.

When people form impressions or judgments of others, it may be a result of how they perceive themselves (Krueger & Trussoni, 2005). Lorr and Wunderlich (1986) explained that self-esteem is related to the acceptance of others. Therefore, one may generalize that those with

high self-esteem will be more likely to positively judge others than those with low self-esteem. Campbell and Fehr (1990) found that low self-esteem individuals evaluated others more negatively than high self-esteem individuals. However, Krueger and Trussoni (2005) found that individuals with overall high self-concepts will not have more positive impressions of others compared to people with low self-concepts.

Stereotyping has also been found to enhance or restore one's self-esteem. Fein and Spencer (1997) explained that negatively evaluating others has the potential to rebuild positive self-images. Therefore, threats to an individual's positive self-image can create negative evaluations of others (Fein & Spencer, 1997). Stereotyping and self-esteem can also be related to group behaviors. Thus, individuals who believe stereotypes about themselves to be true will endorse group stereotypes as self-descriptive (Hippel, Hawkins, & Schooler, 2001). This again correlates to the social identity theory's in-group enhancement of self-esteem. However, some individuals may distance themselves from their group stereotypes. Relating to this study, those considered "counterstereotypic" (Hippel *et al.*, 2001) will be those sorority members who do not focus on clothing during impression formation. Instead, these individuals focus on other attributes like personality. Basing self-esteem on external qualities such as appearance and accomplishments is related to a variety of negative mental health outcomes (Crocker, 2002a). Instead by basing self-esteem on more internal qualities such as personality, outcomes will significantly be more positive. It may appear that those high self-esteem sorority members, who are truly self-confident, may focus more on personalities than on clothing and appearance during impression formation, and consequently, membership selection.

### ***Impression Formation***

Research proposes that fashion clothing is a common way of stereotyping and impression formation (Auty & Elliott, 1998). When people meet, they immediately begin forming opinions of each other. Often times, the easiest and most available evaluations of a person begin with her clothing. Rosencranz (1962) studied the importance of clothing symbolism, and found that clothing is used as a guide in identifying the role and status of unknown people. First impressions are referred to as initial judgments made about another person based upon observable characteristics and behaviors as well as inferences made about the person's personality, behavior, and characteristics (Johnson, Schofield & Yurchisin, 2002). When difficulty assessing an individual arises, one often looks to other outlets for judgment, such as clothing. Hence, clothing inevitably and often unconsciously impacts first impressions made of that person. Davis (1984) found that clothing cues have the greatest impact on impressions in first impression situations.

Researchers have also concluded that clothing is a form of non-verbal communication (Johnson, Schofield & Yurchisin, 2002). Clothing transmits information about age, sex, personality traits, socioeconomic status, values, political ideologies, and interpersonal attitudes, such as, aggressiveness, availability, gracefulness, and arrogance (Satrapa *et al.*, 1992).

Auty and Elliott (1998) referred to Noesjirwan and Crawford's work by stating:

Clothing is primarily a means of communicating, not personal identity, but social identity. Clothing is symbolic of that social identity and the values espoused by the group. The same values serve as a yardstick for judging the clothing worn by others and the social identity symbolized by it (p. 109).

O'Cass (2001) proposed that fashion clothing says how important an individual is, how much status the individual has, and what the individual is like. Johnson's *et al.* (2004) research determined that people do form impressions of others based on their dress at least some of the

time. They also stated that their participants felt that other people used their dress cues to form impressions of them.

Age and gender also affect the extent to which impression formation is based on clothing and appearance. Belk, Mayer, and Bahn (1981) found that college students tend to make stereotypes of people based on consumption-based cues more often than older subjects. Their work concluded that college students associated success with the owners of nice houses and cars. These findings can be easily applied to impression formation based on clothing. McCracken and Roth's (1989) findings suggested that women are better at interpreting clothing, and more sensitive to fashion cues. They also found that age is a significant factor when interpreting fashion.

The impact that clothing has on sorority women seems undeniable. Hence, the importance of clothing and appearance and presentation during the sorority recruitment process may be imperative to success during this time. Women who partake in recruitment expect certain levels of appearance and dress, not only from potential new members but also active members. Previous research has concluded that impressions can be formed from non-verbal cues such as clothing and appearance. Therefore, it would seem that sorority members who use clothing during impression formation will be more likely to select new members based on their clothing and appearance.

## Chapter 3

### Theoretical Rationale

Some social groups, such as the college sorority, engage in competitive membership selection and retention. In order for these groups to be successful, they must maintain a high degree of group commitment. Because membership into these groups is often considered by some an achievement, they must attain higher levels of social competitiveness to survive. Compared to an assigned group affiliation, people tend to feel more committed to self-selected or achieved group membership (Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999). Tajfel explained that we favor our own group because it increases our self-esteem (“Tajfel, H.”, n.d.). Because a positive link between social and personal self-esteem has been proven, one can see how the need to maintain a positive social appearance is critical for some groups, and especially, some individual members.

The social dominance orientation is defined as “the desire to have one’s own in-group considered better or superior to out-groups” (Sidanius, Pratto, & Mitchell, 1994, p.153). This type of behavior is no doubt uncommon among college sororities. According to Tajfel’s social identity theory, individuals seek positive social identities so that they will, in turn, receive increased self-esteem. Many group members attempt to distinguish themselves from other groups by emphasizing their status. This again increases their perceived social appearance and individual self-esteem. Group membership allows a person to reap all the advantages and positive aspects that are associated with a particular group, such as status (Nezlek & Smith,

2005). One of the most common ways college sororities achieve this type of status is by emphasizing personal appearance.

However, to ensure this supremacy, it is imperative for sororities to experience successful recruitments. This provokes the question of what ensures a successful recruitment. What characteristics secure social supremacy for sororities on the college campus? It would appear that group attractiveness is one of the most significant measures of social/campus acceptance and superiority. Hence, the vitality of maintaining group attractiveness is often carried throughout to the recruitment process. Arthur (1999) explained that the main images sororities encourage their members to project is that of pretty, happy women. Hence, sororities may only want to recruit and maintain girls with the same ideals and status. This study examined how important clothing and appearance is to the acceptance and selection of members to a group.

### ***Social Identity Theory***

The main theory presented in this study is the magnitude to which social identity and social consciousness affect rejection and acceptance among groups and individuals. Tajfel described the social identity theory as part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership ("Social identity theory," n.d.). A person has not one "personal self" but rather several selves that correspond to widening circles of group membership ("Social identity theory," n.d.). Tajfel goes further by stating that our self-concept is derived from both our membership of a group and the value and emotional significance of that membership. Social identity reflects the importance people attach to their public persona regardless of the extent to which they are concerned about others' evaluations of them (Christopher & Schlenker, 2004). Social identity enhances our self-esteem (Rubin & Hewstone,

1998). Once individuals attain membership into a group, they tend to seek self-esteem and security by differentiating themselves from others by some valued dimension: appearance, intelligence, popularity, etc. College sororities are no different. Furthermore, it is common that members within a group value different qualities. As this research suggested that many members of college sororities uphold clothing as a determining characteristic of membership selection, many other members do not. Another key component of Tajfel's theory is the extent to which people identify with a particular social group that determines their inclination to behave in terms of their group membership (Ellemers *et al.*, 1999). Hence, while the majority of the group may encourage judgment based on exceptional clothing, other members may find these types of qualifications trivial and meaningless. Again, this is attributed to the degree to which members identify and are committed to their corresponding group.

Social identity theory, as it relates to sororities, is the self-categorization created from sororities that creates in-group favoritism. This theory suggests that people favor their own group over other groups in an effort to boost their group's status, which in turn boosts their own self-esteem (Fein & Spencer, 1997). Meaning, sorority members will likely derive some of their sense of identity from their sorority and with that make comparisons to individuals outside the group. This comparison often times will be based upon non-members dress appearance and clothing. Sorority members who use clothing to identify with their sorority will likely select new members based upon their clothing and how it adheres to their perception of their current sorority. These inclinations could also be attributed to the degree to which each individual sorority member exhibits self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, and self-esteem characteristics.

## *Objectives*

1. The first objective of this study was to examine bivariate relationships between impression formation and the following variables: self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, and self-esteem.

H1: Sorority members who are high self-monitors will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

H2: Sorority members who are highly materialistic will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

H3: Sorority members who experience high fashion clothing involvement will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

H4: Sorority members who have high proximity of clothing to self will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

H5: Sorority members with high self-esteem will be less likely to form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members with low self-esteem.

2. The second objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between impression formation and membership selection.

H6: Sorority members who form impressions based on clothing and appearance will be more likely to select new members based on their clothing and appearance.

4. The third objective was to determine which of the selected six variables (self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, self-esteem, and impression formation) had significant influence on membership selection when other variables were controlled.

## Chapter 4

### Methodology

This study was designed to gain a better understanding of the significance of clothing and appearance during the sorority membership selection process, recruitment. This study, based on quantitative data, measured the levels of self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, and self-esteem behavior as they influence impression formation and membership selection. This chapter describes the survey instrument created, as well as, data collection methods and sample descriptions.

#### *Sample*

The participants used in this study were sorority women enrolled at the University of Georgia. The sorority members surveyed in this study were chosen based on convenience and willingness to participate in the survey process.

#### *Description of Survey*

The instrument was a survey in the form of a questionnaire. The survey focused on the significance of clothing on membership selection and acceptance during sorority recruitment. To collect data for this study, a questionnaire entitled “Sorority Members’ Clothing Behavior” (Appendix B) was developed by the researcher. The survey asked questions based on behaviors surrounding: (1) self-monitoring, (2) materialism, (3) fashion clothing involvement, (4) proximity of clothing, (5) self-esteem, (6) impression formation and (7) sorority membership selection. Demographic information was also included. Each topic was based on a previously developed scale, except for sorority membership selection behaviors.

The first section of the survey contained four demographic questions relating to age, ethnicity, year in the chapter and year in school. The next section asked questions pertaining to a sorority member's evaluation of her chapter. These questions were considered relevant for measuring group commitment and satisfaction, components of the social identity theory.

Self-monitoring characteristics of sorority women were collected using Snyder's scale (O'Cass, 2001). This scale differentiates between those who are high self-monitors (people who are sensitive to the social cues around them) and those who are low self-monitors (people who are more likely to suit themselves whatever their social surroundings). Snyder's scale has been used a great deal in past research (Auty & Elliot, 1998; Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997; O'Cass, 2001). This scale was taken from O'Cass 2001 study on self-monitoring, materialism, and fashion clothing involvement. O'Cass' scale was modified by focusing only on self-monitoring ability. The scale consisted of six items on a five-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

Materialism characteristics were measured via the Material Values Scale (Richins, 2004; Richins & Dawson, 1992). Even though Richins and Dawson's original scale incorporated three dimensions of materialism (acquisition centrality, possession defining success, and acquisition as the pursuit of happiness), items in this scale focused only on possessions as it defines success. Six items were presented on this five-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The scale focused on judgments and impressions individuals form based on possessions, a premise which is undeniably linked to the idea that sorority women use clothing as a component of membership selection.

Two scales were combined to assess fashion clothing involvement. A modified scale taken from O'Cass' study (2000, 2004) was used. The scale consisted of 11 items measured on a

five-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). This scale signifies the degree of fashion clothing involvement present in each sorority member's life. Fashion clothing product knowledge, a result of fashion clothing involvement, was assessed by a modified version of Flynn and Goldsmith's (1999) and O'Cass (2004) scales. Without measuring fashion clothing product knowledge, there would be no justification for or credibility of judgments based on clothing during sorority membership selection.

The Proximity of Clothing to Self scale used in this study was developed by Sontag and Lee (2004). This scale was used to establish how important clothing is to the individual sorority members. The 17 items presented measured clothing in relation to self as structure, as communication of self to others, and as response to judgments of others. The responses were based on a five-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Each item stated a relationship between clothing and the self.

Self-esteem characteristics were measured via Conseur's (2004) scale, which combined Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale coupled with questions measuring self-esteem as it relates to personal appearance. This scale consisted of 12 items that measure attitudes of approval or disapproval toward the self. Rosenberg's scale which has been widely used (Chowdary, 2000; Pelham & Swann, 1989; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998) consisted of ten items measuring overall self-esteem. The remaining two questions measure self-esteem as it relates to personal appearance (Conseur, 2004). The responses were based on a five-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Impression formation behaviors were determined by a scale modified from the recent study by Johnson, Schofield, and Yurchisin (2002). This six item scale was originally presented

as an open-ended interview/questionnaire, and it was adapted to a Likert format to maintain uniformity throughout the survey.

Components of sorority membership selection based on clothing and appearance were measured on a six-item scale. This scale, developed by the researcher, more specifically focused on “choosing” candidates based on their personal appearance. The responses were based on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

The researcher received permission to implement the survey and collect data from the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board. The surveys were hand delivered by the researcher to two sorority houses before the chapter meetings. The survey was distributed to 163 sorority members with 146 surveys returned, resulting in a 89.6% response rate. Of the 146 surveys returned, 140 were deemed usable as the remaining six were discarded because of missing data. Members were asked to complete the surveys by the end of the meeting. The survey took no longer than thirty minutes to complete. The surveys were picked up after completion. No incentives were offered for participation in the research.

### *Statistical Analyses*

Modifications, i.e. reverse coding, on certain questions were made before any of the data were analyzed. Exploratory factor analyses were then performed to examine the variables being measured, to determine if any underlying factors existed. Some of the factors were rotated to give a clearer picture of the factor loadings. Cronbach’s Alpha was then calculated reflecting each scale’s reliability. All sections of the survey analyzed reflected good reliability ( $>0.6$ ), as all were greater than 0.70.

Pearson’s correlation analyses were then applied to examine correlations among variables. Finally, multiple regression analyses were used to test which of the variables (self-

monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, self-esteem, and impression formation) significantly influenced membership selection based on clothing.

## Chapter 5

### Results

The data collected were analyzed using SPSS software. Factor analyses, reliability tests, correlation analyses and regression analyses were performed on the data.

#### *Participant Demographics*

Table 1 represents a summary of participants' demographic characteristics. All of the respondents were female college students, which were determined by the fact that the survey was administered only at college sorority houses. Overall, 97.9% of the respondents were Caucasian American. The sorority members' ages ranged between 18 and 22, with a mean age of 19.7. All of the respondents were undergraduates; 25.0% were freshmen, 31.4% were sophomores, 25.0% were juniors, and 18.6% were seniors. The sorority members who participated reflected 25.0% first year members, 34.3% second year members, 24.3% third year members, and 16.4% fourth year members.

#### *Preliminary Analyses*

A less significant portion of the survey, Section 1, was first analyzed to measure a sorority member's evaluation of her chapter. These questions were considered relevant for measuring group commitment and satisfaction, components of the social identity theory. A mean score of 4.5 was measured indicating that sorority chapter evaluations were high among the participants of this study.

Table 1  
Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Characteristics	Frequency	%
<i>Age</i>		
18	18	12.9%
19	45	32.1%
20	37	26.4%
21	37	26.4%
22	3	2.1%
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
African American	-	-
Hispanic American	-	-
Asian American	1	0.7%
Multi-Ethnic	2	1.4%
Caucasian American	137	97.9%
Native American	-	-
<i>Year in Chapter</i>		
First	35	25.0%
Second	48	34.3%
Third	34	24.3%
Fourth	23	16.4%
<i>Year in School</i>		
Freshman	35	25.0%
Sophomore	44	31.4%
Junior	35	25.0%
Senior	26	18.6%

All percents may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### *Factor Analyses*

For a scale including numerous items, factor analysis was used to examine the multi-dimensionality of the scale, as well as, to measure the validity of scale items. Results indicated that fashion clothing involvement, Section 2, was uni-dimensional. The questions in this section were labeled B1-B16. Factor loadings for these items (shown in Table 2) ranged from .71 to .92, with a variance explained of 72.12% for eigenvalues over 1. The Cronbach Alpha for the scale was .97 as shown in Table 3 reflecting high internal reliability. The findings associated for items B1-B11 are consistent with O’Cass’ (2000) study further proving the validity of the scale.

Materialism characteristics, Section 3, were determined by a portion of the Material Values Scale (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Richins, 2004). This study only incorporated the MVS sub-scale: *possession as it defined success*. Scoring was reversed for items C3 and C5. Factor analyses revealed a two-factor structure. The first materialism factor, comprised of items C1, C2, C4, and C6. The factor loadings (shown in Table 2) ranged from .71 to .83, with a reliability of .81. The second materialism factor, comprised of the only two reverse-coded items, C3 and C5 (“I don’t place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success” and “I don’t pay much attention to the material objects other people own”). This factor was dropped from further analyses because the negative wording of the questions might have produced an artificial response factor. The first factor explained 42.47% of the total variance.

Factor analyses indicated that self-monitoring, measured by Snyder’s scale (O’Cass, 2001), was also uni-dimensional. Items in Section 4 were labeled D1-D6, with factor loadings ranging from .71 to .80 (Table 2). Item D4, which was reverse coded, was dropped from further analyses due to its low factor loading. Table 3 reflects a Cronbach Alpha of .80 which indicates high internal reliability. Also, total variance of 51.87% was explained by the factor.

Table 2Factor Analyses of Constructs

<u>Fashion Clothing Involvement</u>		<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Eigenvalue</u>
			11.54
B1:	Fashion clothing means a lot to me.	.79	
B2:	Fashion clothing is a significant part of my life.	.83	
B3:	I consider fashion clothing to be a central part of my life.	.86	
B4:	I think about fashion clothing a lot.	.90	
B5:	For me, personally, fashion clothing is an important product.	.87	
B6:	I am very interested in fashion clothing.	.90	
B7:	Fashion clothing is important part of my life.	.92	
B8:	Fashion clothing is important to me.	.91	
B9:	I would say fashion clothing is central to my identity as a person.	.79	
B10:	I am very much involved in/with fashion clothing.	.87	
B11:	I pay a lot of attention to fashion clothing.	.83	
B12:	I am very familiar with fashion clothing.	.83	
B13:	I feel I know a lot about fashion clothing.	.85	
B14:	I know how to judge the quality of an article of clothing.	.71	
B15:	I am an experienced user of fashion clothing.	.88	
B16:	I would classify myself as an expert on fashion clothing.	.83	
<u>Materialism</u>			2.59
C1:	I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.	.79	
C2:	Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.	.83	
C4:	The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.	.71	
C6:	I like to own things that impress people.	.80	
<u>Self-Monitoring</u>			3.11
D1:	In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for.	.80	
D2:	I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them.	.77	
D3:	When I feel that the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change it to something that does.	.71	
D5:	I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation in which I find myself.	.80	

D6: Once I know what a situation calls for, it's easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly. .79

Proximity of Clothing: *Clothing Reflecting Personality*

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8.94

E1: What I wear is consistent with who I am. .67  
 E2: My clothing is a part of me, not just a simple possession. .60  
 E5: My clothing reflects how I feel about myself. .78  
 E6: I am a certain type of person, and my clothes reflect that. .81  
 E7: My clothing gives others an idea about my interest or activities. .75  
 E8: My clothing shows others how I think and feel about myself. .77  
 E9: I try to project a certain image of myself to others through my clothing. .66  
 E12: What I wear and the way I wear it shows others my attitudes. .69

Proximity of Clothing: *Clothing for Acceptance*

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1.54

E14: How I look in my clothing is important because I want others to accept me. .74  
 E15: It matters to me that people make judgments about the type of person I am by the way I dress. .81  
 E16: I care about what other people think of how I look in my clothes. .74  
 E17: I'm careful in wearing certain styles or brands of clothing because they affect how people respect me. .82

Impression Formation

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3.52

G1: I form impressions of others on the basis of their appearance and clothing. .74  
 G2: I can tell things about other people based on their appearance. .81  
 G3: The impressions I form tend to be accurate. .68  
 G4: People form impressions of me based on my appearance. .72  
 G5: People can tell things about me based on my appearance. .87  
 G6: People's impressions of me based on my appearance should be accurate. .76

Membership Selection

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4.45

H1: When I interview candidates for my sorority, I pay attention to how they are dressed. .65  
 H2: I believe that my selection decision is based on how a candidate is dressed during the interview. .85  
 H3: During membership selection, I choose candidates who dress like me. .87  
 H4: During membership selection, I choose candidates who are physically attractive. .93

H5:	During membership selection, I choose candidates who dress well.	.93
H6:	During membership selection, I choose candidates who dress in a certain style.	.92

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Table 3

Results of the Cronbach Alpha Test

Variable	Items	Reliability
Chapter Evaluation	3	.76
Fashion Clothing Involvement	16	.97
Materialism	4	.81
Self-Monitoring	6	.80
Proximity of Clothing: <i>Clothing Reflecting Personality</i>	8	.91
Proximity of Clothing: <i>Clothing for Acceptance</i>	4	.85
Self-Esteem	12	.89
Impression Formation	6	.86
Membership Selection	6	.93

Analysis of the factor structure found proximity of clothing, Section 5, to be two dimensional (shown in Table 2). The questions which loaded under the first factor of proximity of clothing suggested clothing as a reflection of personality. Factor loadings for the questions included in this section, *clothing reflecting personality*, (E1, E2, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9 and E12) ranged from .60 to .81. A Cronbach Alpha of .91 suggested high reliability. Questions which loaded under the second factor of proximity of clothing represented clothing as it relates to social

acceptance. Factor loading for the questions included in this section, *clothing for acceptance*, (E14, E15, E16, and E17) ranged from .74 to .82, with a reliability of .85. Total variance explained equaled 61.64% with both factor loadings rotated using Varimax. The remaining questions (E3, E4, E10, E11, and E13) were eliminated either because they loaded almost equally on both factors, or because they did not load strongly on either factor.

Factor analyses proved impression formation, Section 7, to encompass one factor. The items in this section were labeled G1-G6. The factor loadings, as seen in Table 2, ranged from .68 to .87, with a reliability of .86 (shown in Table 3). Thus, a high coefficient was representative of the reliability of the items. Also, a variance of 58.62% was explained for impression formation.

Finally, membership selection, Section 8, was also found to load under one component. The items in this section were labeled H1-H6. These questions, which were developed by the researcher, reflected high reliability with a Cronbach Alpha of .93. Factor loadings for these items ranged from .65 to .93, with a total variance of 74.23% explained.

#### *Pearson Correlation Analyses*

Relationships among the variables were analyzed using Pearson's correlation. Table 4 represents the relationships between fashion clothing involvement, materialism, self-monitoring, proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality* and *clothing for acceptance*), self-esteem, impression formation, and membership selection. The two most significant correlations were proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality*) and fashion clothing involvement ( $r=0.64$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality*) and impression formation ( $r=0.64$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). The relationships between self-monitoring and fashion clothing involvement, and between self-monitoring and self-esteem were only positively correlated at  $p<0.05$ . Also,

positive correlations were measured for self-esteem and fashion clothing involvement ( $r=0.24$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), self-esteem and impression formation ( $r=0.26$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), self-monitoring and materialism ( $r=0.22$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and self-monitoring and membership selection ( $r=0.23$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). All other variable combinations denoted significant positive correlations at  $p<0.001$ , thus, verifying the prediction capabilities of these variables.

Table 4  
Relationships among the Variables

	Fashion Clothing Involvement	Materialism	Self- Monitoring	Clothing Reflecting Personality	Clothing for Acceptance	Self – Esteem	Impression Formation	Membership Selection
Fashion Clothing Involvement	1.00							
Materialism	0.43***	1.00						
Self- Monitoring	0.20*	0.22**	1.00					
Clothing Reflecting Personality	0.64***	0.47***	0.36***	1.00				
Clothing for Acceptance	0.45***	0.57***	0.30***	0.58***	1.00			
Self-Esteem	0.24**	0.32***	0.21*	0.38***	0.57***	1.00		
Impression Formation	0.57***	0.45***	0.31***	0.64***	0.52***	0.26**	1.00	
Membership Selection	0.54***	0.49***	0.23**	0.46***	0.53***	0.30***	0.55***	1.00

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

### ***Hypothesis Testing***

In order to test Hypotheses 1 through 6, Pearson's correlation analyses were performed to assess the relationships between self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, self-esteem, impression formation and membership selection. Hypothesis 1 measured the relationship between self-monitoring and impression formation. According to Pearson's correlation analyses (Table 4), self-monitoring was positively, yet somewhat weakly, correlated to impression formation at ( $r=0.31$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Hypothesis 2 represented the relationship between materialism and impression formation. Results of the correlation analyses (Table 4) indicated that materialism significantly affected impression formation at ( $r=0.45$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Hypothesis 3 stated that sorority members who experience high fashion clothing involvement will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not. As denoted in Table 4, fashion clothing involvement was found to be positively related to impression formation ( $r=0.57$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Hypothesis 4 forecasted that sorority members who have high proximity of clothing to self will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not. Correlation analyses (Table 4) resulted in strong positive correlations between both factors, *clothing reflecting personality* ( $r=0.64$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and *clothing for acceptance* ( $r=0.52$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and impression formation. The relationship between self-esteem and impression formation was represented in Hypothesis 5. Correlation analyses (Table 4) did show a positive relationship with impression formation; however, the significance was weak ( $r=0.26$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Hypothesis 6 measured the relationship between impression formation and membership selection as it relates to clothing and appearance. According to correlation analyses (Table 4), impression formation and membership selection were positively related at ( $r=.55$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

### ***Regression Analyses***

In order to test Objective 3, regression analyses were performed on the variables. The significance of the variables on membership selection was tested with two different models under one regression analyses using the Enter method. Model 1 analyzed the prediction significance of fashion clothing involvement, materialism, self-monitoring, proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality* and *clothing for acceptance*), and self-esteem for membership selection. The results ( $F(6, 133)=15.80; p<0.001$ ) indicated that these independent variables explained a significant amount of the variance in membership selection ( $R^2=.42$ ). Because variables, as shown in Table 5, are significant if  $p<0.05$ , Model 1 indicates fashion clothing involvement ( $p=0.000$ ), materialism ( $p=0.029$ ), and proximity of clothing (*clothing for acceptance*) ( $p=0.013$ ) to be significant predictors of membership selection.

The second model under the regression analyses measured the predictability of the same set of independent variables, as well as impression formation, on membership selection. Again, the results ( $F(7, 132)=15.43; p<0.001$ ) indicated that the entry of impression formation into the equation increased the amount of the variance explained only by three percent ( $R^2=.45$ ). Model 2, like Model 1, revealed the significance of fashion clothing involvement ( $p=0.002$ ), materialism ( $p=0.049$ ), and proximity of clothing (*clothing for acceptance*) ( $p=0.043$ ) on membership selection. The predictability of impression formation ( $p=0.005$ ) on membership was also found to be significant. Addition of impression formation into the equation did not significantly change the predictabilities of other independent variables.

Table 5  
Influences of Independent Variables on Membership Selection

	Membership Selection					
	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	Beta	t-value	B	Beta	t-value
Fashion Clothing Involvement	0.33	0.34	3.89***	0.27	0.29	3.24**
Materialism	0.19	0.18	2.20*	0.17	0.16	1.99*
Self-Monitoring	0.61	0.04	0.62	0.03	0.03	0.36
Clothing Reflecting Personality	-0.01	-0.01	-0.09	-0.12	-0.10	-0.99
Clothing for Acceptance	0.23	0.25	2.52*	0.19	0.20	2.05*
Self-Esteem	0.02	0.01	0.11	0.06	0.03	0.37
Impression Formation				0.31	0.26	2.85**

Model 1:  $R^2=.42$

Model 2:  $R^2=.45$

\* $p<0.05$ , \*\* $p<0.01$ , \*\*\* $p<0.001$

## Chapter 6

### Discussions and Conclusions

This chapter discusses the results of the study by accepting or rejecting the hypotheses, as well as, determining which variables (self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing, self-esteem, and impression formation) significantly influenced membership selection. Implications for future research and a summary of the research are also presented.

#### *Pearson Correlation Analyses*

**Objective #1: To examine bivariate relationships between impression formation and the following variables: self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, and self-esteem.**

The first five hypotheses were evaluated using correlation analyses between variables.

H1: Sorority members who are high self-monitors will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

According to Pearson's correlation analyses (Table 4), self-monitoring was positively, yet somewhat weakly, correlated to impression formation at ( $r=0.31$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Hence, as self-monitoring characteristics increased, impression formation based on clothing increased as well. In other words, those who were more sensitive to social cues were more likely than others to use clothing and personal appearance to form impression of others. Evidence further suggests that high self-monitors may not only form impressions of others based on clothing, but impression management of themselves, relating to clothing, is a likelihood. These results further coincide with Brown and Kaldenberg (1997) by confirming that high self-monitoring females are more

likely than low self-monitors to use clothing to attain social approval. High self-monitors are known to perceive cues from their environment and adjust their image accordingly. As expected, individuals in this study who were considered high self-monitors appeared to believe that clothing and appearance influences the impressions they form about others. Further confirming past research, O’Cass’(2001) study explaining that self-monitoring characteristics are evident through an individuals brand choices because of concerns for prestige was reaffirmed by high self-monitoring sorority members forming impressions of others based on their clothing. Thus, results indicated that Hypothesis 1 was accepted because a positive relationship existed between self-monitoring and impression formation.

H2: Sorority members who are highly materialistic will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

Results of the correlation analyses (Table 4) indicated that materialism significantly affected impression formation at ( $r=0.45$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). These findings were consistent with Richins and Dawson (1992), Richins (1994) and Belk (1985) who found those with strong materialistic tendencies use clothing for impression management, and consequently, formation. These findings appear logical, as those who place significant importance on possessions that signify status will seemingly judge others based on the ownership of those types of material goods. This conclusion is consistent with impressions formed by high self-monitors. High levels of both self-monitoring and materialism are known to be associated with judgements based on possessions such as clothing. In fact, Table 4 shows that self-monitoring and materialism are significantly related, further confirming a study by Browne and Kaldenberg (1997). These findings also suggest that those who are highly materialistic emphasize clothing when forming impressions of others because they are very in-tune with the images conveyed by the ownership

of particular status goods. Hence, Hypothesis 2 was accepted revealing that sorority members' materialism characteristics affect impression formation.

H3: Sorority members who experience high fashion clothing involvement will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

As denoted in Table 4, fashion clothing involvement was found to be positively related to impression formation ( $r=0.57$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). These results revealed that the more a sorority member is involved with fashion clothing, the more likely she is to form impressions of others based on fashion clothing. Results were also in alignment with Auty and Elliot's (1998) research proposing fashion clothing as a major contributor of impression formation. Browne and Kaldenberg's (1997) argument that self-monitoring, materialism and fashion clothing involvement are all related concepts was again confirmed. Results showed that all three variables were significantly related with materialism and fashion clothing involvement having the highest correlation. Again, individuals who scored high in these characteristics significantly emphasize how clothing symbolizes status and reflects personal beliefs or values. Results also indicated how important fashion clothing is to women, further supporting past research (Auty & Elliott, 1998; Browne & Kaldenberg, 1997; Tigert, King, & Ring, 1980). Thus, results supported Hypothesis 3. As a result of this correlation, sorority members who experience high fashion clothing involvement characteristics may consequently emphasize the clothing and appearance of potential new members during the sorority recruitment process.

H4: Sorority members who have high proximity of clothing to self will more likely form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members who are not.

Factor analyses of proximity of clothing also revealed it to be a two-dimensional variable, *clothing reflecting personality* and *clothing for acceptance*. Pearson's correlation was performed

on both of the proximity of clothing factors. Correlation analyses (Table 4) resulted in strong positive correlations between both factors, *clothing reflecting personality* ( $r=0.64$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and *clothing for acceptance* ( $r=0.52$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and impression formation. It is not surprising that those who believe that clothing reflects personality and those who use clothing as a means to seek social acceptance were also likely to use clothing to form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance. Hence, results supported Hypothesis 4. Furthermore, past research (Sontag *et al.*, 1997) explaining that proximity of clothing is related to the signaling and receiving of positive perceptions of others based on clothing and appearance during impression formation was confirmed. As predicted, sorority members who have high proximity of clothing to self will likely be more inclined to form impressions of potential new members based on their clothing and appearance. Also, strong relationships existed between self-monitoring, *clothing reflecting personality*, and *clothing for acceptance*. All three concepts involve the use of clothing to modify or express one's self. Thus, if individuals score high in these characteristics, then they will likely evaluate others based on the importance they place on these types of modifications or representations.

H5: Sorority members with high self-esteem will be less likely to form impressions of others based on clothing and appearance than members with low self-esteem.

Factor analyses of self-esteem were not reported due to the well-established reputation of Rosenberg's Self-Esteem scale. However, correlation analyses were performed to examine the effects of self-esteem on impression formation in reference to clothing and appearance.

Correlation analyses (Table 4) did show a positive relationship with impression formation; however, the significance was weak ( $r=0.26$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Generalizations of how those with high self-esteem will be more likely to positively judge others than those with low self-esteem were refuted. The results further disputed Campbell and Fehr's (1990) research suggesting that low

self-esteem individuals evaluated others more negatively than those with high self-esteem. In fact, the results reflected that members with high levels of self-esteem are not excluded from focusing on clothing and appearance during impression formation. Instead, Crocker's (2002b) study explaining that individuals, whose self-esteem is contingent upon being attractive, place considerable emphasis on clothing and appearance was supported. Hence, Hypothesis 5 was not supported. These findings were consistent with past research (Krueger & Trussoni, 2005). Possible reasons why self-esteem levels could not be considered significant predictors of impression formation based on clothing and appearance could be the age, maturity, and competitive nature of these college sorority women. Also, because the survey was not completed in a controlled environment, false response factors could have resulted.

***Objective #2: To investigate the relationships between impression formation and membership selection.***

H6: Sorority members who form impressions based on clothing and appearance will be more likely to select new members based on their clothing and appearance.

According to correlation analyses (Table 4), impression formation and membership selection were positively related at ( $r=.55$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). As impression formation relating to clothing and appearance increases, membership selection based on clothing and appearance is likely to increase as well. Hence, it is correct to assume that sorority members, who generally form impressions based on appearance, and also believe that their impressions to be accurate, are more likely to make membership selections based on the candidates' appearance. Thus, Hypothesis 6 was supported. Because women are better at interpreting clothing and more sensitive to fashion cues (McCracken & Roth, 1989), selection into certain groups is affected by clothing and appearance. A positive group social status is extremely important for college sororities. Hence,

group attractiveness is vital to attain high levels of social status. Sororities do encourage their members to project an image of pretty, happy women (Arthur, 1999), and evaluate potential new members based on their clothing and appearance. Sorority members will consequently select members who meet their expectations of acceptable clothing and appearance, thus, further encouraging stereotypes among these groups of women. The social dominance orientation, “the desire to have one’s own in-group considered better or superior to out-groups”, is especially evident among college sororities. This is done almost exclusively through recruitment because it is an easy way to ensure this type of superiority. Hence, if a sorority focuses on portraying an image surrounding clothing and appearance, then it will recruit women who score high in those aspects of vanity. Results of this study showed a strong relationship between clothing and appearance and impression formation. Because the importance of clothing and appearance was evident among these sorority women, one can conclude that clothing and appearance go hand in hand with sorority membership selection.

### ***Regression Analyses***

**Objective #3: To determine which of the selected six variables (self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, self-esteem, and impression formation) had significant influence on membership selection when other variables were controlled.**

Regression analyses were used to determine the significance of self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, self-esteem, and impression formation on membership selection. Two models were used; Model 2 represented the addition of impression formation. When other variables were controlled in Model 1, only fashion clothing involvement, materialism, and proximity of clothing (*clothing for acceptance*)

significantly affected membership selection. Model 2 resulted in the same significant predictors of membership selection. Also, impression formation became a significant predictor variable of membership selection.

Self-monitoring, proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality*), and self-esteem were not found to be significant under either models. This could be a result of previously established correlations with the significant predictor variables of membership selection (fashion clothing involvement, materialism, proximity of clothing (*clothing for acceptance*), and impression formation). In fact, self-monitoring was significantly related to both proximity of clothing (*clothing for acceptance*) and impression formation according to Pearson's correlation analyses. Significant correlations were seen among proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality*) and fashion clothing involvement, materialism, proximity of clothing (*clothing for acceptance*), and impression formation. Self-esteem was also significantly correlated with three significant predictors of membership selection: materialism, proximity of clothing (*clothing for acceptance*), and fashion clothing involvement. Hence, self-monitoring, proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality*), and self-esteem may only be related to membership selection at all because of the positive correlations they have with other significant predictors of membership selection. Also, according to Pearson's correlation analyses, self-monitoring results in the least significant relationship with membership selection, followed by self-esteem, and proximity of clothing (*clothing reflecting personality*).

Questions concerning multicollinearity were disregarded after examining Pearson's correlation analyses for relationships between the variables and membership selection. None of the variable correlations ( $r$ ) were above .75, which is a sign of possible multicollinearity ("Problems with Multiple Regression," n.d.). A result further refuting the possibility of

multicollinearity was the addition of impression formation in Model 2 of regression analyses. Usually, the addition of another independent variable to the regression equation will result in radical changes of the Beta coefficients. However, no such significant changes among the original predictor variables from Model 1 were apparent. Hence, multicollinearity was not a problem in this study.

Overall, fashion clothing involvement was the most significant predictor of membership selection in both Model 1 and 2. These findings were consistent with assumptions that those who are highly involved with fashion clothing will be more likely to form impressions of others based on acceptable clothing appearance, or lack thereof. Consequently, group membership selection is likely to be a result of impression formation based on fashion clothing involvement.

### ***Summary***

By identifying the impact that clothing and personal appearance has on female social membership group selection at the collegiate level, this study examined the role that a potential new member's clothing plays in her acceptance into a sorority. The importance of individual attributes, self-monitoring, materialism, fashion clothing involvement, proximity of clothing to self, and self-esteem, was examined as it relates to developing first impressions and managing group acceptance. This study was important in identifying behaviors which may provide valuable insight for women seeking membership into a sorority. Participants of the study, active members in sororities, may also benefit from this research study by understanding how clothing affects their judgement and decision making during the sorority recruitment process. These conclusions may affect future feelings toward sorority recruitment, as well as other aspects of sorority life.

***Limitations***

1. This study was limited to two college sororities at one southern college campus.  
Findings may not be generalizable to other female groups and their membership selection and acceptance.
2. This study was limited to Panhellenic sororities. Hence, the findings may not be generalizable to Pan-Hellenic sororities (African American sororities).

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A  
Consent Form

Jennifer Rebecca “Becky” Miller  
1109 Lenox Park Circle NE  
Atlanta, GA 30319  
(478) 494-4382  
cocomiller13@hotmail.com

Dear Participant:

I am a graduate student in the department of Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors at the University of Georgia. I’m conducting a research study titled “Sorority Members’ Clothing Behavior” under the direction of Dr. Soyoung Kim from the department of Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors (706-542-4887). To assist in my research, I have enclosed a survey to measure the significance of dress and clothing behavior during the sorority recruitment process, and, therefore, membership selection.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary; you can stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. You can ask to have information related to you returned to you, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

You will not benefit directly from this research.

If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be asked to do the following things:

- 1) Fill out a survey that will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete before or during a chapter meeting.
- 2) The survey will ask you about sorority life and recruitment.
- 3) The survey will ask you about the importance of clothing/dress.
- 4) You will be asked to give demographic information.

No discomforts or stresses are expected from completing the survey. No risks are expected from participating in this study.

Please **do not** write your name on the questionnaire. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain anonymous and will be disclosed only with your permission unless required by law.

I will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at: 478-494-4382.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Rebecca “Becky” Miller

*Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The IRB Chairperson, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu.*

Appendix B

Sorority Members' Clothing Behavior Survey

## Sorority Members' Clothing Behavior Survey

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### Demographic Information

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Ethnicity:     African American             Hispanic American  
                   Asian American                 Multi-Ethnic  
                   Caucasian American        Native American  
                   Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Specify)
  
3. What year are you currently in the chapter?  
  
     First  
     Second  
     Third  
     Fourth
  
4. What year are you currently in school?  
  
     Freshman  
     Sophomore  
     Junior  
     Senior

Please check the answer that best describes how you feel about each statement.

- 1=Strongly Disagree  
 2=Disagree Somewhat  
 3=No opinion  
 4=Agree Somewhat  
 5=Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
<b>Section 1</b>					
1. I am proud of my sorority.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel like I “fit in” in my chapter.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am an active participant in the life of my chapter.	1	2	3	4	5

### Section 2

*\*Note:* Fashion clothing here represents clothing that is in the current mode or is the current style of dress.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. Fashion clothing means a lot to me.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Fashion clothing is a significant part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I consider fashion clothing to be a central part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I think about fashion clothing a lot.	1	2	3	4	5
5. For me, personally, fashion clothing is an important product.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am very interested in fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Fashion clothing is important part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Fashion clothing is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I would say fashion clothing is central to my identity as a person.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am very much involved in/with fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I pay a lot of attention to fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am very familiar with fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I feel I know a lot about fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I know how to judge the quality of an article of clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I am an experienced user of fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I would classify myself as an expert on fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5

- 1=Strongly Disagree  
 2=Disagree Somewhat  
 3=No opinion/doesn't apply to me  
 4=Agree Somewhat  
 5=Strongly Agree

### Section 3

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I like to own things that impress people.	1	2	3	4	5

### Section 4

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I feel that the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change it to something that does.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation in which I find myself.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Once I know what a situation calls for, it's easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly.	1	2	3	4	5

- 1=Strongly Disagree  
 2=Disagree Somewhat  
 3=No opinion/doesn't apply to me  
 4=Agree Somewhat  
 5=Strongly Agree

**Section 5**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. What I wear is consistent with who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My clothing is a part of me, not just a simple possession.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Clothes help me become the person I want to be.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The clothes I wear help me to be who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My clothing reflects how I feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am a certain type of person, and my clothes reflect that.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My clothing gives other an idea about my interest or activities.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My clothing shows others how I think and feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through my clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I often wear certain clothing to let people know what kind of person I am.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I want my clothes to make a statement about me without any need for words.	1	2	3	4	5
12. What I wear and the way I wear it shows others my attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Through my clothing, I can show my values to others.	1	2	3	4	5
14. How I look in my clothing is important because I want others to accept me.	1	2	3	4	5
15. It matters to me that people make judgments about the type of person I am by the way I dress.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I care about what other people think of how I look in my clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I'm careful in wearing certain styles or brands of clothing because they affect how people respect me.	1	2	3	4	5

- 1=Strongly Disagree  
 2=Disagree Somewhat  
 3=No opinion/doesn't apply to me  
 4=Agree Somewhat  
 5=Strongly Agree

**Section 6**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
<b>1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. At times, I think I am no good at all.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6. I certainly feel useless at times.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7. I feel that I'm a person of worth.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>9. All in all, I am inclined to think I am a failure.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>11. When I look good I feel good about myself.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>12. My appearance is unrelated to how I feel about myself.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

- 1=Strongly Disagree  
 2=Disagree Somewhat  
 3=No opinion/doesn't apply to me  
 4=Agree Somewhat  
 5=Strongly Agree

**Section 7**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. I form impressions of others on the basis of their appearance and clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can tell things about other people based on their appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The impressions I form tend to be accurate.	1	2	3	4	5
4. People form impressions of me based on my appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
5. People can tell things about me based on my appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
6. People's impressions of me based on my appearance should be accurate.	1	2	3	4	5

**Section 8**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	No Opinion	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. When I interview candidates for my sorority, I pay attention to how they are dressed.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I believe that my selection decision is based on how a candidate is dressed during the interview.	1	2	3	4	5
3. During membership selection, I choose candidates who dress like me.	1	2	3	4	5
4. During membership selection, I choose candidates who are physically attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
5. During membership selection, I choose candidates who dress well.	1	2	3	4	5
6. During membership selection, I choose candidates who dress in a certain style.	1	2	3	4	5

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Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.

Jennifer R. Miller