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## Dress Design-Color

Azalea Linfield

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DRESS DESIGN-COLOR

by

Azalea Linfield  
Clothing Specialist

EXTENSION SERVICE  
South Dakota State College  
W.F. Kumlien, Director.  
Brookings, S. Dak.

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home  
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## DRESS DESIGN -- COLOR

"Right dress is that which is fit for the station in life and the work to be done in it; and which is always graceful, becoming, lasting, healthful, and easy; on occasion splendid; and always as beautiful as possible.

Beautiful dress is chiefly beautiful in color, in harmony of parts, and in mode of putting on and wearing. Rightness of mind is in nothing more shown than in the mode of wearing simple dress".....John Ruskin.

Being well dressed does not depend so much upon the amount of money spent for clothes as it does upon one's ability to select designs, materials, and colors suited to one's self and to the occasions on which they are worn.

In order to be well dressed at a reasonable cost, you must carefully plan your whole wardrobe before purchasing any garment so that the whole outfit will be complete, appropriate, and harmonious. When you decide what you need, buy carefully and slowly. Take your time to pick out what you want so that you will get your money value. Too many persons buy on the spur of the moment. They attend the bargain counter and squander their money on things they do not need. Nevertheless, in many cases extraordinary good values may be found at pre-inventory or end-of-end sales, because the shopkeeper does not wish to carry over the stock. After the wardrobe is complete, constant care is necessary to keep the garments looking well. It is said that the Americans are recognized abroad by their run down heels. To be well dressed one must always be neat and clean.

CLOTHES HAVE AN ECONOMIC VALUE

Correct clothes give self-reliance. To be successful appear successful. When we see a person for the first time, our first impressions are gotten not from what they say, or the tone of voice, not from what they do, but from their personal appearance. So it is of vast importance that we are always correctly clothed.

Appropriate dressing includes artistic dressing. To be dressed artistically is of great value to society. Artistic dress cultivates an appreciation for that which is good in line and color. It gives an appreciation of the finer side of life.

Color is one of the factors which characterizes good taste in dress.

Color is one of the first things which attracts or repels, in a costume. The color of your clothes expresses refinement and culture or the opposite. Therefore, select colors very carefully. Color in dress expresses feeling, it gives life, it displays personality, and therefore should be given a great deal of thought

RELATION OF COLORS TO THE INDIVIDUAL

The big designers of the country all say, "Choose the color that suits you". But how rarely is this advice followed. For instance, the stores display a trying color like "Harding Blue" and in a few days the streets are flooded with wearers of this color, regardless of their build or complexion. The following month the shops display an entirely different color, for instance pea green, and soon everyone is wearing that color.

A wise woman, however, will study carefully the effect of the color against her complexion before choosing it for a gown. The color of the hair, the eyes, the complexion, the size of the figure, the appropriateness to the season of the year, and the occasion for which the garment is to be worn are all important factors in the choice of color in a dress. For instance, the color of the hair and eyes may be emphasized by the same color in the dress. Blue eyes will be emphasized by a blue dress, hazel eyes will appear more green on the wearing of a green color, and auburn hair will be emphasized by a reddish-brown garment.

#### Size of Individual:

Bright colors serve to accentuate size. A stout woman wearing a bright red dress will appear very much larger than her natural size. The general background or the atmosphere is a neutral gray. Colors like fire, red, yellow and orange are said to "advance". They throw the figure into sharp relief against the usual background and because it becomes conspicuous it appears larger. Colors like the sky and water, those with blue predominating, are "receding colors". They melt into the background. The stout woman should, therefore, select her colors from the grays, gray brown, black and the neutral shades of blue and green.

The material too must be taken into consideration. Large checks, plaids, or figures of contrasting color should be avoided by the stout figure. In this same connection, waists and skirts of different colors should be avoided. A stout person will always look best in a one-piece dress.

#### Season of the Year:

The season of the year must be considered in choosing colors. Yellow, red, orange, and red brown are too warm to be worn on hot summer days. Cool green, blues, and lavenders should be worn in the summer and the warmer colors left for the colder days.

Science tells us that white clothes are cooler for summer wear than dark ones, as white has the power of reflecting the sun rays, and black absorbs them. This explains why we instinctively like to see light clothes in summer and dark ones in winter.

#### Appropriateness to the Occasion:

The occasion for which the garment is to be worn is another consideration in choosing colors. Custom prescribes certain colors for certain occasions because of certain properties in the colors themselves. White, because of its purity is most often selected as a bridal costume. Black because of its air of dignity has become the costume of mourning in most countries. The dark, retiring neutral colors are most appropriate for street and business wear, while the bright colors are reserved for evening clothes or outfits which are worn on certain occasions. Dashes of bright color may be used for summer sports wear. Summer home dresses should be cool, light, colors.

#### TEXTURE OF MATERIAL:

Texture must be considered in selecting color. A color may be rich in one material and look cheap in another. For instance, a color which looks rich in a pile material such as velvet may be hard and cheap looking in a serge. Often more intense colors may be obtained in silk than in other fabrics and for this reason the stout figure can wear a color in wool when she would not wear it in a shiny surfaced silk. Shiny surfaces emphasize the figure.

Size of Income:

In selecting colors the income must be taken into consideration. Bright, warm colors cannot be worn as long as cool, dull, colors because they are conspicuous and are tiring to others as well as to the wearer. It is always more economical to have all the clothes for the season of one predominating color. That is so that one hat may be worn with suit, coat, dress; or, that the shoes, hat, and coat look as well worn with one dress as another.

Psychological Effect:

Different colors are known to produce different sensations, due to their effect on the optic nerve. Red has an exciting, gay, effect and would not do for continual wear any more than the wall of a living room. Blue has a cool, calm, and quieting effect. This color is abundant in nature with the blue sky and the blue-gray waters. Yellow gives one a feeling of sunshine and happiness. Green is very restful because it is a combination of blue and yellow, it both soothes and cheers.

Helen Comstock in her article on Color in Clothing says, "Since colors appeal differently to different people: some are fond of one color and some of others, and so long as the color is becoming to the wearer there is no reason why she should not wear the color she likes best. People can always work better and be happier where surroundings are pleasing to them, and color can have a very definite effect on them. If there is a color which you never liked and which you feel is unbecoming, it can have a depressing effect upon you. The effect of ugly clothing need not be argued as there is no denying the moral support which is given by the feeling of being well and becomingly dressed".

SOURCE OF COLOR

Light is the source of color. That sunlight or any other white light consists of a number of rays of colored light is very easily determined. For example, when sunlight passes through drops of rain the white light rays are bent aside from their course and broken up into several colors, thus forming the rainbow. A more satisfactory demonstration of the breaking up of white light into its several parts is to place a prism in a dark room so that a single ray of sunlight may fall upon it. The white light will then be divided into several colors, violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red. These colors are called the spectrum.

Although the union of red, blue, and yellow of the spectrum produces white, the union of red, blue and yellow pigment will produce gray or black. If we had pigments that were as pure in color as those of the spectrum, the mixture would also yield white.

COLOR TERMS

In order to speak of color intelligently and to understand it thoroughly it is necessary to know the various terms commonly used.

- Pure Color -----One that cannot be formed by any combination of other colors. These are then pure colors, red, blue and yellow.
- Normal Color-----May be a combination of two or more colors such as orange, green, violet brown, etc.
- Tone of Color---- If a pure or normal color is changed by the additions of black or white, this change is designated by the term tone.
- Tint of a Color--This term is applied to a mixture of any pure or normal color and white. A tint is accordingly a light tone of a color.

- Shade of Color-----This Term designates the mixture of any pure or normal color with black in any proportion. A shade is accordingly a dark tone of a color.
- Hue of a Color----- This term designates the modification which a color undergoes by the addition of a comparatively small proportion of any other color.
- Intensity of Color-----The difference in brightness and dullness of a color.
- Value of a Color----The difference in lightness and darkness of a color.

#### HARMONY OF COLOR

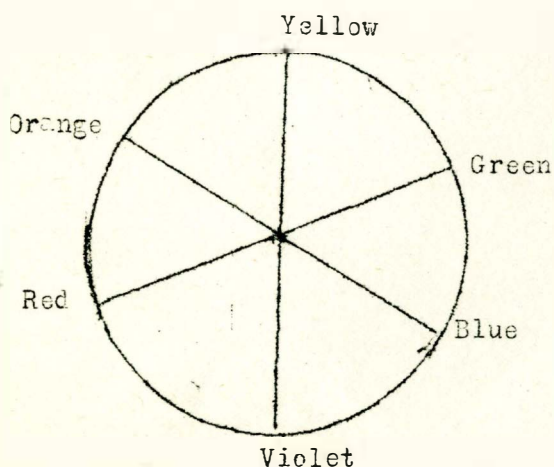
Color harmonies are arranged in two families, Harmonies of Contrast and Harmonies of Analogy, both of which are of the greatest interest and importance in dress.

#### HARMONY OF CONTRAST

There are various theories on the number of primary colors, authorities varying from one to seven colors. For our use in this study we will use the Brewsterian Theory, that is the three color theory, red, yellow, and blue constituting the primary colors. These are considered pure colors because they cannot be produced by any combination of other colors. Combining the primary colors into pairs, the secondary colors are derived.

The absolutely perfect contrast of any color is its true complementary color. In the case of the primaries it is noteworthy that the perfect contrast of each one of the three is the color produced by the combination of the two remaining.

- a. Red and blue form violet.
- b. Red and yellow form orange.
- c. Yellow and blue form green.



Across from these colors we find the complement of the color, that is the complement of red is green, of yellow is violet, of blue is orange and vice versa. These two opposite colors furnish the greatest contrast to each other, and when used together each makes the other more intense. The eye demands the presence of the three primary colors. Therefore, after looking at a bright pronounced color the eye when turned away, often unconsciously see the complement of the color. For this reason a red garment will give a pale face a greenish cast, green may give color to pale face and the woman with a palid complexion will seem more flushed if she wears a decided green. An intense blue or violet may make a pale face appear sallow. These effects may be changed by using white, gray or cream about the neck.

## EXPERIMENTS IN COLOR CONTRAST

Look for some time at a small blue square in a white ground and then turn the eye away from this and fix it upon the white ground. It then perceives the image of its complementary color.

Look for sometime at a red square on a yellow ground. Turn the eye away and fix it upon the yellow ground. What do you see?

## CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH MODIFY A COLOR

A given color, red for instance, may experience many modifications so as to appear very different from what it really is, according to the circumstances under which it is viewed. It may be modified in its color-----

1. By being placed in contact with blue--red appears more yellow,
2. By being placed in contact with yellow-- red appears more blue.
3. By being placed in contact with green -- red appears purer and brighter,
4. By being placed in contact with black--red appears duller,
5. By being placed in contact with white---red appears lighter, and brighter,
6. By being placed in contact with gray -- red appears brighter.

Color may also be modified in intensity and tone. Thus if a dark color is placed beside a different but lighter color, the dark color appears deeper and the light color lighter. This is the result of contrast of tone.

Both the tone and hue of a colored object are modified by the quality of light by which it is illuminated. For instance under electric lights yellow is brightened and orange is enriched; red is lightened and brightened; crimson is enriched toward red; green is darkened and made more yellow; blue is inclined toward violet; purple is injured and becomes lightened and made more red in hue.

HARMONY OF ANALOGY

Although the harmony of contrast in costume is effective and valuable, still more useful are the Harmonies of Analogy. There are two principal harmonies of analogy, namely Harmony of Tone, which is produced by the association of two or more different tones of the same colors more less closely approximating. Harmony of Hue is produced by the association of tones of about the same value belonging to closely allied colors.

## LIST OF COLOR HARMONIES

Blue and orange----a perfect harmony  
Blue and gold-----a rich harmony  
Blue and maize-----harmonize  
Blue and straw color---Harmonize  
Blue and salmon----harmonize  
Blue and gray ----cold harmony  
Blue and brown----harmonize  
Blue and white----harmonize  
Blue and black----dull harmony  
Blue; orange and black--harmonize  
Blue; scarlet and purple-harmonize  
Blue; orange and green---harmonize  
Blue, brown, crimson and gold--harmonize  
Blue and pink -----weak harmony  
Blue and lilac-----weak harmony  
Blue and fawn-----weak harmony

Red and green-----perfect harmony  
Red and gold-----bright harmony  
Red and blue-----dull harmony  
Red and gray-----harmonize

Yellow and purple---a perfect harmony  
Yellow and blue----harmonize  
Yellow and violet---harmonize  
Yellow and deep crimson----harmonize  
Yellow and brown-----harmonize  
Yellow and black----pronounced harmony  
Yellow, purple, scarlet and blue---harmonize  
Yellow and white---a weak harmony

Green and scarlet ----harmonize  
Green and russet---harmonize  
Green, blue and orange---harmonize  
Green (deep) and gold----harmonize  
Green and black---dull harmony  
Green and white---cold harmony  
Green, scarlet and blue---harmonize  
Green, crimson blue and gold----harmonize

In adopting either Harmonies of Contrast or Analogy for dress it is always desirable to have one color greatly in excess of the one selected to harmonize with it. The color in excess may be the material of the dress and the lesser color may serve as the trimmings or subordinate features.



In deciding what color you can best wear no rules can be given. The problem differs with each individual. Only by careful study and experimentations with various colors on the individual can one be sure of what color looks best on one. Following are a few suggestions on colors for various types.

Suggestions for Colors for Various Types.

I. Black or dark brown hair, brown, gray or blue eyes can usually wear:

- |          |            |                       |
|----------|------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Black | 5. Yellow  | 7. Blue of all shades |
| 2. White | a. Mustard | 8. Red (dark)         |
| 3. Cream | b. Amber   | 9. Blue (shell)       |
| 4. Ivory | 6. Brown   | 10. Gray (All shades) |
|          | a. Golden  | 11. Blue Gray.        |
|          | b. Tan     |                       |

II. Brown or black hair, blue or gray eyes, olive skin

1. Black (only with cream or touch of bright color).
2. White (creamy or pure)
3. Brown (chestnut or gold)
4. Blue (navy)
5. Gray (only warm shades).
6. Red (crimson)
7. Yellow (amber)
8. Pink (old rose)

III. Dark sallow type

Must choose from dark and dull shades, with touches of bright color in trimmings (touches of rose, flame, or orange are particularly good)

IV. Elderly women with gray hair

Black, white, dark blue, gray and violet in all shades and tints are very becoming. Touches of bright colors may be used in trimmings or accessories to give needed life to the costume.

V. Auburn hair, blue or brown eyes.

1. Black (especially in transparent material)
2. White (cream, ivory, pure)
3. Brown (rich, deep, dark shades)
4. Blue (gray, navy, peacock)
5. Green (dull and dark shades, green can be worn when skin is white)
6. Gray (pearl and dove)
7. Violet and lavender.

VI. Sandy hair, blue or brown eyes

1. May wear any colors given for auburn hair
2. Brown (deep, dark shades and avoid all others).

VII. Sallow blondes (must be careful in choosing colors)

- 1. Creamy white
- 2. Gray ( in soft rich tones combined with burnt orange or ecru lace)
- 3. Dark red with cream lace.
- 4. Navy blue with touches of red trimming.

VIII. Black or brown hair, black or brown eyes, dark skin with color

- 1. Black ( especially with touches of color or ecru lace.)
- 2. White ( cream or ivory)
- 3. Brown ( golden or tan)
- 4. Blue ( pale or dark)
- 5. Green ( dark shades)
- 6. Reds ( crimson, clear red, cardinal).
- 7. Yellows ( any shade)
- 8. Pink ( coral, pale or old rose)

IX. Flaxen or golden haired, fair skin and blue eyes

- 1. Black ( very becoming with touches of cerise).
- 2. White
- 3. Brown ( only very dark shades)
- 4. Blue ( all shades)
- 5. Green ( both dark and light)
- 6. Grays ( warm shades, pearl and dove)
- 7. Red ( dark shades)
- 8. Yellow ( very delicate, almost cream)
- 9. Pink ( pale or old rose)

X. Light or golden brown hair, blue or gray eyes, high color in lips and cheeks

- 1. Black ( but not blue-black)
- 2. White
- 3. Brown ( very dark shades)
- 4. Blues ( dull, old blues)
- 5. Green ( dark and light shades)
- 6. Gray ( very pale shades)
- 7. Violet ( dull tones)
- 8. Yellow ( only palest buff)
- 9. Pink ( very palest)

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