Lower to Middle Classes

Applying this Today

Our modern-day interpretations for the schools & the public
**Elements of Men's Dress**

**Breeches**

Late 18th to early 19th century men wore breeches as their lower body garment. Forms & lengths changed. By mid-18th century they were noticeable beneath short waistcoat and open coat, to cut of breeches became tighter & narrower. They were made in a great variety of silk, cotton, linen, wool, flax, and leather.

**Trousers or Overalls**

During 18th-century breeches were worn by all levels of society, but middle & upper classes usually wore trousers. Trousers cut with straight leg, went to ankle or slightly shorter. Occasionally, they were made of more than one.

**Gentlemen's Frock Coat**

Wastcoat - sleeved or sleeveless

**Details**

- [Image of details]

- [Image of hat]
**Elements of Mens Dress**

The **shirt** was worn as a man's undergarment, covering the body from neck to knee. Most were made of white linen which could be very fine or very coarse. A gentleman's best shirt may have ruffles (ruffs) at the wrist and/or breast. A laborer's shirt was sometimes made of untumbled linen or small patterned checks and stripes. A plain shirt might serve as a nightshirt.

This was generally the only undergarment worn though there are records of drawers worn at time. These were like breeches linens.

**Elements of Accessories**

Accessories, The Cape & Cloak

Accessories
Mrs. John Winthrop, 1773.
Note Rushing, bows, lace, cap.
Elements of Ladies Dress

The Gown
The sack-back gown or robe à la française
Elements of Ladies Dress

Petticoats
In addition to the upper petticoat which was meant to be seen, there were also one or more petticoats underneath which were regarded as underwear.

Elements of Ladies Dress

The Bodice
Lightly fitting corset-shaped waist. 17th century may have attachable sleeves. Often trimmed the waistcoat (with or without sleeves).

Elements of Ladies Dress

The Bed, Jacket, & Short Jacket

Caraco, Jacket Linen
This fashionable jacket (circa 1770–1790) is gently curved with no waist seam. It may be laced in front with twill tape or tied with individual silk ribbon bows.
Elements of Ladies Dress

The Shift
The shift was the bottom undergarment worn under all others. It was usually of linen or cotton and in appearance was something like a calf-length nightgown. A woman in only her chemise was considered "naked."

Elements of Ladies Dress

Stays
Thin or large, old or young, all ladies wore them. They were worn under the gown but over the chemise.
Purpose: create erect posture, force breasts up & together into position known as "rising moons."
It was simply feminine; being a woman. But to reveal the ankles or legs was another matter entirely.

Elements of Ladies Dress

Front

Back

Panniers
Farthingale
Pocket
Bum Roll
Fabrics

- Homespun versus Imported
- Fibers natural, both animal and plant
  - Wool, linen (flax), hemp, silk, leather, cotton
  - Fustian - linen warp w/ cotton weft
  - Linsey-Woolsey (linsey, linen) linen warp and woolen weft

Elements of Ladies Dress

The Layers
The Backcountry

- Appalachians, between the areas settled earlier by Europeans, & the native Americans (from English border area to American one)
- Think Andrew Jackson, Patrick Henry, Daniel Boone
- Think hunting jackets, simple work clothes
- Fought to protect honor
The Delaware Ways of the Quaker

- Quaker ethic: "Go Plain in the World" - burning of the "brownyes" (wigs and ruffs)
- Emphasis on virtue, love, and kindness, not lust, strong family
- Clothing as emblem of Adam's fall. Penn: "White of last innocence ... guilt brought shame and shame an apron and a coat." Clothing should only be what was needed to cover their shame.
- Believed in fashion to arouse sexual passion which they feared and despised. It also created envy and was divisive.
- Simple dress derived from folk costumes of England's North Ridland
  - Leather breeches, simple trousers, leather apron
  - Common fabric homespun "horden gray"
  - Worn against broad hems, deep cuffs, false shoulders, superfious buttons, fashionable creases, wide suits or cocked hats
  - No white aprons or striped or brocaded fabric or silk - no bright dyes or dark dyes (could not tell cleanliness)

The Cavalier Influence in the South

- Wealth was for display
- Viewed as English for 6 generations.
- Sumptuary laws different from Puritans - "clothes were to honor their wearer's standing in the community." Slaves often liveried better than tradesmen. Common differences:
  - Hats vs Caps
  - Coats vs Jackets
  - Red vs Black heels
  - Breeches vs Trousers
  - Silk vs Worsted stockings
  - Jewels, earrings (even for men), lace

- Planters took cue from fashions of the gentry of south England
- The "Cavaliers" in England tried to replicate the English class system
- Hierarchical. Ruling families were non-first-born sons of eminent English gentry
- "These Virginians are a very gentle, well-dressed people, and look perhaps more at a man's outside than his inside." 1737
- Elite wore fragile fabrics, perishable colors and impractical designs, like the gentry of England
- Doublets quilted, slashed sleeves, but never as extreme as the Walter Raleigh's of the mother country
The Four Folkways

- East Anglia (England) to Massachusetts, 1620-1640: Puritans
- North Midlands (England, Wales) to Delaware Valley (Pa, De, NJ), 1675-1725: Quakers
- South & West England to Virginia, 1642-1675, Anglicans/Episcopalian
- Borderlands (north England, Scotland, Ireland) to the Backcountry, 1718-1775, Presbyterian

The Puritan Influence on NE

- Inspiration from East Anglia - Easterner, middle of English society, CHOSE immigrants. NO aristocracy, NO felons, poor discouraged
- Strong views on clothing. NOT to be worn for sensuous display.
- Used "sadd colors" - not black but liver, de Boys, tonney, russet, purple, French green, ginger, lyne, deer color and orange etc. Black was used for rank and age. "sad" - wise, discrete, serious, settled, steadfast, firm
- Sumptuary laws of the Bay Colony were very strict - 1634 - forbade long hair and "new" fashions. e.g. one slash per sleeve, no ordinary wearing of silver, gold, silk laces, girdles, hatbands and "immoderate great sleeves", wigs
- Later in the century they began to define rank by clothing. Selectmen of the towns judged whether a person's clothing exceeded their "ranks and abilities"

Portrait of Roger Sherman, 1st Treasurer of Yale
Note SADD Color of Suit & Simple Design
Dress in the Colonies

18TH CENTURY

Four British Folkways of America
Setting the Style
Source: Alison's Jed, David Hackett Fischer