

Essay on The Clothes We Wear

It sounds strange to say that of all the animals on Earth, only human beings wear clothes. Well, we cannot deny this. Anyone who walks around without clothes will probably be quickly apprehended and sent to the nearest asylum. So we all wear clothes, basically to protect our bare bodies from the elements and from unwanted attention from our fellow humans.

We also wear clothes to project an image of what we think we are or represent. Most of us would not have the guts to wear anything outside our assumed social standing. As far as I can remember my grandmother has always worn the traditional Chinese samfu. It is so much a part of her image that she would wear nothing else. It would indeed be a shock to us if she suddenly wears a skirt for instance. That is very unlikely to happen.

However, my mother who is one generation younger would never be found wearing the old-fashioned samfu. She would not dare to be that brave. For her, like her friends, skirts and jeans are the acceptable norms.

My sister, a further generation down, would wear clothes that shock even my mother. Some of my sister's latest clothes defy classification. They are a combination of skirt, jeans and pyjamas all sewn together like rags. Well, that is according to me anyway. For her, it is the very latest in fashion. I really cannot argue on that. One girl's fashion is another's rags. In our country where so many races live together, each day we can see various types of clothes worn by different people. A typical Muslim woman is almost totally covered from head to toe. An Indian lady wears the body-hugging sari with her midriff exposed. An old Chinese man walks around in his striped shorts-cum-underwear and singlet. A tall Punjabi stands prominently with his huge turban covering his head.

Early in the morning before nine, young executives in business suits can be seen seated with labourers in T-shirts at various tea-stalls around town. Though the clothes they wear are very different, they would just as happily sit down together for a glass of Teh Tarik.

Students, of course, do not have much choice about the clothes they wear in school. Once outside, however, it is a totally different story. Colourful clothes that are both cool and practical are favoured by teenagers. These younger people seem to have discarded the traditional clothes of their ancestors for modern trendy ones. Well, I suppose it is an inescapable consequence of modernisation.

Judging from what I have seen on films and in magazines; the clothes worn by people of other nations are far different from ours. One thing is clear though, people wear clothes to suit the conditions they live in. As for me, I normally wear T-shirts and jeans for they are the most practical clothes to wear in this hot climate. This is all right for a teenager. I can see that when I begin to work in the future, I will have to wear different clothes to suit the situation. Well, when the time comes, I will know what to wear.