

# Earth shoes, scarves, blazers — conformity is favorite apparel

By SHERI POLIS  
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The scene fades in on a college campus. Robert Redford, looking dashing in his letter sweater, gazes longingly at Barbra Streisand in a baggy sweater and frumpy, long-pleated skirt. That was the way they were.

But what really does determine today's college "chic"?

Today's students are perhaps more fashion conscious than their 1960s counterparts. Aurelia K. Adams, assistant professor of clothing and textiles, says tough job competition forces students to impress interviewers—and clothes can "close the deal."

Aurelia K. Adams, assistant professor of clothing and textiles, says college styles have changed consistently during the 23 years she has taught at the University. Adams says that she now sees a trend towards wearing better clothes. She attributes this to the fact that "fewer jobs are available so there is

more competition to get the jobs and to make a better impression on interviewers."

Opinions expressed to Adams by students in the Man-Environment Relations course she teaches, reveal that college students do not dress to fit their personalities, but rather to conform.

Sue Jacobs (7th-microbiology) says, "I don't like following trends. I don't want to see anyone else wearing my clothes." Jacobs says that she rarely buys clothes in State College because "the stores are too over-priced and the clothing selection is very limited."

Charles Petnick, manager of the Mr. Charles shop on College Avenue, says he makes no adjustments in choice of clothing when purchasing items from the manufacturer for a college campus. He says, when referring to the college student, "if they see something they like, they'll buy it."

Ellen V. Piers, associate professor of psychology, says the biggest influence on the student's choice of clothing is what the other students are wearing. "Students are alerted to fashion. They feel the desire to be fashionable on the college campus," she said.

Bob McKinley (8th-community development) claims he buys clothes for practical reasons. He says he purchases "durable clothes that I can get a lot of use out of and clothes that are easy to take care of."

Adams says that because this is the "era of doing your own thing, people don't like being dictated to buy what is fashionable."

The results of a survey of 30 students (15 males, 15 females) in West Halls, measuring the relationship between fashion and personal appeal showed only a slight correlation between them. Beth O'Brien (8th-individual and family studies), creator of the survey, says that although dress does influence amount of appeal, "attractiveness is not based solely on dress."

Student opinions reveal that they do not dress to suit their personalities, but rather to conform. One psychology professor suggests that the biggest influence on the student's choice of clothing is what the other students are wearing.

To the college student, fashion trends are an important influence on the campus scene affecting such things as job interviews and personal appeal. Yet, it is inevitable that 30 years from now, when describing the blue jeans, hooded sweaters and earth shoes she wore, the University student will shake her Gucci scarf-wrapped head and say, "Never succumbed to trends? Yes, that's the way we were."



Photos by Andy Gumberg

Dressed for the recent period of chilly weather, two students display the long and short of today's campus fashions. Myra Block (5th-individual and family studies), at left, dons boots and knee-length skirt and heads for class on Pollock Road. At right, Kim Nickerson (7th-liberal arts) takes a "shorter route" to class in plaid skirt, hooded jacket and Earth shoes.



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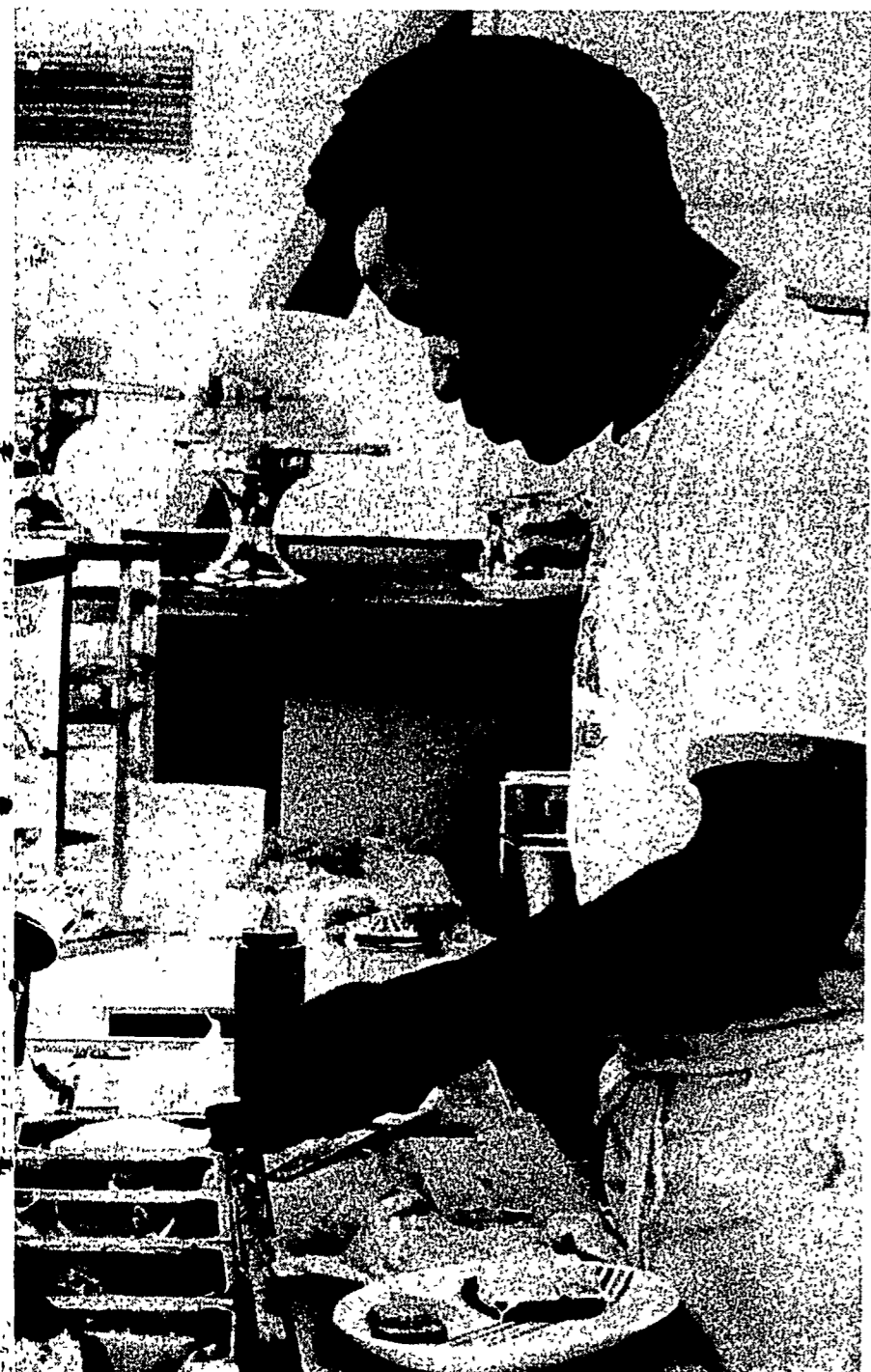


Photo by Sally Hunter

Roger Lundy efficiently handles a noon-time rush at Munchies and skillfully prepares a short-order delicacy for a hungry customer.

# Mmmm, good!

Despite limited time and elbow room, short-order pros fill some tall orders. They CAN stand the heat—and they definitely don't want out of the kitchen.



By GEORGE OSGOOD  
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It happens to all of us at one time or another. We may be red-eyed and ravenous from run-ins with the evil weed, driven to distraction from hours of poring over the books or just on a lark from the ritual of dining hall food.

Somehow, sooner or later, we all end up in the domain of the short-order cook, ready to assault our innards with everything from tater tots to tacos.

State College, with an abundance (some say an overabundance) of fast-food restaurants, naturally has a large number of short-order cooks. It is to these individuals we trust our appetites.

They are pretty much a mixed bag: some are university students, some jacks-of-all-trades and some are full-time professionals in the finest sense. What they have in common is a desire to do their job right and give the customer what he wants and the way he wants it.

"I work real hard to please the customer; that's a big part of my job," says Jack Kustaborder, a cook at the Penn State Diner. "I guess it just comes down to pride, in the end. A lot of people nowadays don't seem to care about their jobs and do things poorly. If you do your job right, the way it should be done, then you have a right to be proud."

And there's a lot of work and thought that goes into pleasing the customer. It's more than just getting what you ordered within a reasonable amount of time.

James W. Carelas, "Pop Jr." of Pop's Mexi-Hot, says that customer service is as important as what goes on the plate. "A good short order cook gets things to the customer as hot and as quickly as possible," he says. "Things have to be done a certain way, and of course, foods must be properly cooked. The thing I hate most is giving a customer a sloppy sandwich. I think I owe it to the customer to give him a product that not only tastes good, but looks good, too. People say that a lot of the eating is done with the eyes, and I believe it."

There are a number of little ways to make things better for the customer, things that often go unnoticed. "We do a lot of things just for customer courtesy," says Roger Lundy, a short order cook at Munchie's. "For instance, when we make a cheeseburger, we either serve it open-face or we don't melt the

cheese all the way across the top of the burger. Because if the customer wants to put mustard or catsup on it, he would otherwise have to pull the whole sandwich apart. It makes the cook look bad and the customer look foolish, and we don't want that."

Carelas says that he uses only top quality foods, from beef to mustard, and that everything is fried in pure butter rather than in oil or margarine.

"We could use cheaper stuff and most customers wouldn't even notice, but there is some difference in taste and, also, the higher quality foods are easier to work with and cook up better."

Cooking professionally is a tough job. It's not something that you can just walk in off the street and do right. Lundy has been cooking since he was in ninth grade, Kustaborder has been at "off and on" for 11 years, and Carelas is in his fortieth year of "dogs all the way and eggs over light."

"I started out as a pot and dish washer and gradually cooked more and more," Lundy says. "Coming up through the ranks that way you absorb knowledge and gain experience. You do something wrong and you remember it and do it differently the next time."

Kustaborder, too, came up the hard way. "I started out scrubbing floors in a diner after school and cooked a little now and then to help in a rush," he says. "My first night as a full-time cook I got a single order for 128 eggs over easy. I went a little nuts, but after awhile I got them out all right. Looking back, it was a good experience, because after that I figured I'd seen the worst and could handle anything that came up."

With experience and training come precise skills and a full knowledge of how things are done around the grill, according to Lundy.

"The greatest single skill a short order cook can have is a good sense of timing, and that comes only after a lot of hours on the job," Lundy says. "In fact, I don't think a person can be considered a good short order cook without this sense. Pretty often, I'll be working on six or seven orders at once, and planning three or four moves in advance. You've got to keep things straight in your mind and plan it so that each part of a single order comes off the grill and out of the fryolator at the same time."

Lundy says that once a cook gets that sense of timing, the job gets a lot easier and the motions become almost mechanical. Just as timing comes with experience, so does the ability to function under the pressure of a Saturday midnight rush at Munchie's or the Penn State Diner, or a noontime dog rush at Pop's.

"At first, the pressure is bad, and unless you know how to deal with it, it can carry you away," Lundy says. "When it gets crowded, the most important thing is to maintain a steady rhythm. The biggest part of doing that is that the waitresses must bring orders up one-two-three, like that, rather than all at once. If you get the rhythm going good you can just flow along and the pressure doesn't get to you."

He says that on several occasions he has stood at the grill without sitting down from 11 Friday night until five Saturday morning, and that if the rhythm is maintained, fatigue usually doesn't appear until the end of the shift.

The cooks take all the shortcuts they can afford without affecting the quality of the food, according to Lundy. There are a few tricks common to all good short order cooks that make their job a little bit easier.

"One trick I use is when toast comes out of the toaster I just butter one piece, turn it over and lay it on top of the other piece and it butters that one by itself," he says. "Another thing I do is put mayonnaise on just one side of a hoagie roll with one swipe of the spreader. Some guys put it on both sides, but there's no need for that; the customer is going to get mayonnaise in every bite anyway."

"This may not seem like much, but there are a lot of other things, too, that save a few seconds here and a few seconds there," Lundy says. "Every second adds up and in the end it means a lot of time. My campaign is 'save your butt,' and these things are one way of doing just that."

Lundy and Kustaborder agree that the arrangement of utensils around the grill is very important. Before a rush, Kustaborder will place things around the grill in such a way that he doesn't need to take unnecessary steps. Lundy says that he likes to have plates, foods and utensils arranged so that he can just reach for them without ever looking up from the grill.

Even with their experience and cool under fire, there are some orders that cooks hate to see come in when the restaurant is especially busy. For Kustaborder, the worst is the club sandwich, which he says takes time because it has to be prepared, sliced and garnished a particular way. For Lundy, the enemy is the Marian's omelette, a concoction of eggs, milk, ham, green peppers, onions, mushrooms and provolone cheese.

"It was a black Sunday when Marian thought up that monstrosity," Lundy says. "It takes a whole lot of time to mix up those ingredients the right way. Sometimes I get three or four at a time and that can really put me in a hole. The problem is that while I'm taking care of those, other orders keep coming in and piling up and I get further and further behind."

Complaints from customers about the quality of the food served to them are rare, according to Lundy. He says that when a customer complains it is almost always about service or portion size, things which are beyond the cooks' control. The cooks take care in preparing the foods and strive to do the best job they can.

"If time permits, I'll go and ask a customer if he enjoyed his meal," Kustaborder says. "In fact, if someone orders a steak, I make a point of asking the customer if he liked it. If the customer says that anything was wrong, I'll go out of my way to make things right with him. We like our customers and want to keep them, that's part of the reason, but also, I like to think I do my job well and I want to find out if the customer thinks so, too. You can always improve and learn from any mistakes you make."

Quick but careful preparation of food is the aim of the short-order cooks, whether the customer is a businessman in for a snack or a partied-out muncher looking for anything to satisfy his hunger. They work hard at a hard job, and rarely get thanked for it; in fact, they are usually taken for granted or cursed for being too slow to suit the customer. But for them it's a worthwhile profession—the culinary art at its finest.

"I think it's an art and a challenge," Kustaborder says. "There are an infinite number of things you can do to food to dress it up and improve it. We do everything we can to quickly serve people good looking food that tastes as good as it looks."