

Reactions of selected
Iowa State University students
to the dashiki and the Black Panther Party costume

by

Madeline Hunt Brown

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Signatures have been redacted for privacy

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INTRODUCTION

Where, . . . , differences of rank or office correlate pretty closely with differences of social standing, the same or a similar system of differences in clothing and ornament may come to distinguish different castes, classes, or professions. . . . some particular decorative feature of dress may come to be associated with almost any separate body of individuals bound together by certain common interests. Of lesser significance . . . are the peculiarities of dress that become associated with political parties or tendencies (e.g. the association of red with revolution and of white with reaction). (Flugel, 1969, pp. 31-32)

During the 1960's, all across the United States, Afro-Americans began to assert, anew, their right to be treated as full citizens of this country by rioting and forming black nationalist organizations. Most research sought to find reasons for the immense dissatisfaction among Afro-Americans; hence, the emphasis of most studies during this time period was on the violent, political, and socio-political aspects of the movements. Out of these occurrences, two costumes evolved, the dashiki and the Black Panther Party outfit, to have the uniqueness of being symbols of the incentives for black pride among Afro-Americans.

Because access to actual members was not possible at the time the study was made, individuals not directly involved in the movements or organizations were used as subjects instead. The purpose of this research was to determine through comparison the awareness, gained through the mass media and personal experiences, of the costumes by two racially different groups at Iowa State University. The two groups used in the study were white-American and Afro-American students.

Comparisons were made between two groups, white-American and Afro-American students, on their first impressions in viewing the drawings, whether they had seen anyone wearing the outfits, the meaning to the individual, feelings of ease in wearing the outfits, whether the outfits afford social status in Ames, the familiarity with costume names, the purpose and people the outfits serve, and the feeling evoked if the subject answering the questionnaire were approached by an individual wearing any one of the outfits.

The objectives of the study were to determine whether or not it would be supported that:

1. Afro-American students will be more familiar with the costumes than white-American students.
2. Afro-American students from large towns will

be more familiar with the costumes than Afro-American students from small towns.

3. white-American students from large towns will be more familiar with the costumes than white-American students from small towns.

4. age grouping will not be related to familiarity with the costumes.

5. the lower social class will be more familiar with the costumes than the middle social class.

Definition of Terms

A description of terms used in the study:

Dashiki: a loose fitting kimono-like shirt made of cotton fabric printed with contemporary African designs. This garment is illustrated as drawing A.

Black Panther Party outfit: a costume worn mostly by male members of the organization composed of black trousers, black leather jacket, black beret, black shoes, and a light blue turtle-neck sweater. Drawing C illustrates this outfit.

Outfit B: a bloused shirt with full short sleeves.

Outfit D: a western-style jacket and turtle-neck sweater; it is worn by the Black Panthers in some geo-

graphical locations. All drawings are illustrated on the second sheet of the complete questionnaire in Appendix A.

Assumption

The assumption in the study was: Individuals tested will have an awareness obtained through the mass media of the movements involved in this study. The factions are Pan-Africanism and the Black Panther Party.

Limitations

The limitations in the study were:

1. The study was generalized only to the Iowa State University students and community.
2. The sample size was limited to the number of Afro-American students enrolled at Iowa State University and the corresponding number of white-American students.

THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature is concerned with person perception and the communicative aspects of clothing. In reviewing a number of theses and articles for methods and content relative to this study, it was found that more research had been done on the perceptive than on the communicative aspects of clothing. Also, no research was found that related to the political communicativeness of clothing, in respect to the dress of Afro-Americans. One source, a study by Jones (1968), has covered the subjects extensively in the review of literature. A summarization of this course, along with other relevant sources not covered by the study, will be the essence of this review of literature. In addition, the review of literature will cover the selection and derivation of the clothing used in the study.

Theories and Studies

The study by Jones (1968) was designed to investigate: "(1) If clothing varies in its communicativeness in fashion when it is used as a [sic] media for assording esteem to others. (2) If viewers who differ in their perception of clothing as a [sic] media for accordance of

esteem when fashion is the clothing variable: (a) basic values or dominant interests; (b) level of security-insecurity; (c) level of interest in fashion." (Jones, 1968, p. 32) Two-hundred and twenty-seven women respondents used a rating scale to appraise the personality of drawings of faceless clothed figures, depicted in social situations appropriate for the clothing. Jones' findings indicated that clothing, when used as media for according esteem to others, varies in its communicativeness with variance in fashionableness.

Jones (1968), in her review of literature, adequately covered the two topics to provide a good insight into background information necessary for this study. Perception, in general, was defined as the process of forming impressions, the "sizing up" of an object. Person perception, then was "the process of forming impressions of personalities. Observations made about the intentions, attitudes, emotions, ideas, abilities, purposes, and traits of another person are a part of the person perception process." (Jones, 1968, p. 11) These observations, though intangible, are translated into meaningful words by the perceiver according to the behavioral mannerisms or actions of the perceived.

Perception theorists extend the point of view that

one perceives a personality at first contact not by fragments pieced together, but as a unitary perception or an organized entity, resulting from a complex pattern of inter-relating cues. The perceiver first observes an object identifiable as a person to whom certain properties are inferred from the cues presented by the object person which the perceiver notices. Overall attitudes toward a person are then based on an evaluation of the properties attributed to him. (Jones, 1968, p. 12)

Evaluations of personality attributes and adjustments to the formed judgments are necessary for successful interaction between the perceiver and the perceived.

Jones (1968) cited several factors that affect the interpretation of the perceiver's perception of a person. A synopsis of them is: (1) the situational or environmental field in which the perceiver and the perceived are a part; (2) the formulation of an organized entity through the narrowing or limiting of the field of vision by omitting, adding or supplementing, and arranging details within the field of vision; (3) the influence of cultural, personal, and social factors on what is perceived; and (4) the interplay of the basic and temporary values, needs, and particular interests of the perceiver. (Jones, 1968, pp. 13-16)

It has been pointed out that perceiver evaluations or judgments are made according to the behavior of the perceived in relation to his environmental situation.

"The dress of an individual is considered a part of the environmental field which, in addition to the person, provides sensory data for the perception."

(Jones, 1968, p. 17) Findings showed that dress, a form of expressive behavior, has considerable influence on the impressions conceived of another, when there is insufficient information about the person.

"Clothing is one of the primary things the perceiver notices, either consciously or unconsciously, when viewing another person for the first time. Therefore, it is likely to serve as a basis for attributing properties to the person who presents the cues."

(Jones, 1968, p. 17)

Jones (1968) further examined the literature related to clothing as far as communication was concerned. She found that both theoretical writings and empirical studies have definitely shown that "clothing is used as a [sic] media in interpreting the status and behavior of unknown persons." (Jones, 1968, p. 29)

Several writers have contributed to the communicative aspects of clothing. One theoretical writer, Erving Goffman (1951), wrote that status symbols are vehicles that "provide the cue that is used in order to discover the status of others and, from this, the way in which others are to be treated." (Goffman, 1951, p. 304) Dress is used as an identifying "symbol of membership" to individual of particular social groups, according to Goffman.

Jack Schwartz (1963), in his article concerning Afro-American men who used clothing as compensatory status symbols, presented the point of view that clothing is a medium for communication for different groups and individuals. (Schwartz, 1963, p. 224)

Denton (1970) reflected:

By studying the dress of a group of people one can gain knowledge of their culture . . . Clothes reflect the values and customs of a group of people. One can often tell why people act as they do by studying their clothing habits. (Denton, 1970, p. 15)

Empirical studies by Douty (1962) and Rosencranz (1960), in addition to the one by Jones (1968), serve to illustrate the importance of clothing as **a medium in**

perceiving and communicating with a person. Rosencranz's study on clothing symbolism used a modification of the Thematic Apperception Test, based on the premise that an individual interpreting an ambiguous social situation is more apt to reveal his own personality in the process. The projective technique sought to discover: "(1) The degree to which clothing is used as a guide in identifying the role and status of unknown persons; (2) The various shades of meaning attached to clothing in particular social situations." (Rosencranz, 1962, p. 18)

The test consisted of seven drawings depicting incongruities between clothing and the physical attributes of the characters, the clothing of the characters, and clothing and the background in the drawing. Clothing details in the pictures were drawn so that they did not emphasize current fashion. The Clothing TAT was administered to 82 married women who constituted a stratified random sample, based on the husband's occupation. Significant findings of the study concluded that "women with high awareness scores were of the upper social class, belonged to a greater number of organizations, had higher verbal intelligence, and had husbands in the white-collar occupation group.

. . . Social class and all of its related indices . . . were found to have significant relationships to clothing awareness." (Rosencranz, 1962, p. 22) She concluded that clothing is important in determining the role and status of unknown persons.

A study designed by Douty (1962) sought to determine the part clothing plays in structuring the perception of persons. In this study, clothing was viewed as an integral part of a person's perceptual field with a potential for affecting impressions of the person. Projected colored photographs of stimuli-persons were judged by women using a Personal Assessment Form, which rated personal traits and socio-economic status. Each of the stimuli-persons was rated in four different costumes selected from their wardrobes, in addition to a control costume. A distinct difference in the affective tone between the costumes was achieved by varying the color, the fabric, the styling, or the accessories worn with the costumes. Significant findings by Douty showed that definite differences in ratings of social status and personal traits could be associated with changes in clothing, and that, generally, clothing did have an influence on the judges' impressions of the stimuli-persons.

(Douty, 1963, p. 198, pp. 201-202)

The writings and studies presented have shown that clothing is a communication medium that is affected by perception and other factors. The opinions and reactions of the respondents in this study will be additional support to previous studies.

Selection of the Clothing Used

The costumes used in the study were derived from the researcher's imaginings and current fashion trends or were selected because they were seen most prevalent among Afro-Americans. The review of literature for the costumes will concentrate mostly on outfits A and C, the test costumes. Although no substantial evidence has been found, a hypothetical connection between the test costumes and the political factions associated with the costumes will be discussed. Derivations of the control costumes, outfits B and D, will also be discussed.

Outfit A, the dashiki, is believed to be a westernized version of the national costume of Nigeria, the dansiki. The Nigerian costume was popularized by politicians before and after that nation's independence.

Once a small tunic of hand-woven cloth,
it has now been much enlarged in length

and breath.[sic] Made from any kind of cloth, even transparent nylon, it is sometimes used in the villages as outerwear with loose matching trousers. It has four small pleats and very deep armholes with a pocket below each. A shorter version is also worn by farm workers over European shorts. (de Negri, 1962, p. 11)

With the independence of more African countries and the feeling of freedom among Afro-Americans, the concept of Pan-Africanism came to the forefront. Pan-Africanism is a movement of ideas and emotions that has the intention of uniting all peoples of Africa and of African descent. Because of this association of ideas and emotions, the researcher surmised that clothing worn by the Africans was soon assimilated by Afro-Americans.

Most of the sources relating to the Black Panther Party centered on the formation of the party and the systematic harassment and persecution of its members. The Black Panther Party is an organization "fundamentally interested in ... freeing all people from all forms of slavery in order that every man will be his own master." (Newton, 1969, p. 107) However, a few did mention the uniform in passing. One source commented: "Black berets are trademarks of Black Panther Party membership ..." (Newton, 1969, p. 111) Marine, in his book

on the Panthers, described the outfit:

You have seen them, at least on television or in newspaper pictures: black berets, powder-blue turtlenecks, black leather jackets, black pants and shoes (in Los Angeles, white T-shirts bearing the legend 'Black Panther Party') ... (Marine, 1969, p. 9)

Many times individuals wearing the outfit used guns as accompaniments. The Black Panther Party costume is represented in the study by outfit C.

Outfit B, described as a bloused shirt with full short sleeves, was developed to be an intermediary costume between outfits A and C. An enlarged conventional shirt was conceived to show some of the fullness displayed in outfit A and to show some of the classical lines seen in outfit C.

Outfit D is described as a western-style jacket. The outfit is worn by the Black Panthers in some geographical locations. This statement was ascertained by conversations with students from large cities. The costume was included to determine which costume (outfit C or outfit D) was most associated with the Black Panther Party. This outfit is often associated with the denim jacket known by the brandname Wrangler.

PROCEDURE

This study was designed to gather information from selected university students concerning their familiarity with two costumes, the dashiki and the Black Panther Party uniform. The development of the instrument, sample selection, and the methods used in collecting and analyzing the data will be discussed in this chapter.

The Instrument

The instrument used was a pictorial questionnaire composed of two parts: (1) drawings and questions related to the drawings and (2) background information about the respondents.

Drawings and questions

Because the questionnaire was to be sent to two racially different groups, the researcher decided upon a pictorial questionnaire which would probably achieve maximum objectivity from the respondents and avoid the possible effect or influence of an interviewer upon their answers. It was reasoned that people may respond more readily if they think they are operating in private.

The questionnaires were unsigned and were identified only as belonging to one of the two student groups.

Four faceless figures, line drawings in a uniform pose, were garmented to depict the theme of the questionnaire. Goings (1971), in her study, used full-figured line drawings to represent various skirt lengths and silhouettes to measure fashion change over a period of four months. The researcher assumed that this technique would be suitable for the purpose of her study. Line drawings of male figures were used to portray four outfits: a dashiki, the Black Panther Party uniform, a western-style jacket, and a bloused shirt with full short sleeves. A pose for the drawings was selected and rendered in pencil by a fashion illustration student on 8½ by 11 inch white paper. The pose was chosen to minimize conflicting factors such as: hair style; facial expression; any suggestion, other than clothing, of a particular person; and to emphasize the differences in the upper garments of the figures. The drawings were identified by the letters A through D.

Questions relative to the drawings constituted the rest of part one of the questionnaire. They were developed to obtain an idea of the students' actual recognition or awareness of the association of the

outfits gained through the mass media and personal knowledge. Items included: statements concerned with the recognition of the outfits used in political movements; questions about garments used by specific individuals; clues to familiarity of the students with the outfits; and the respondents' opinions as to whether the outfits were fads or were used to increase feelings of nationalism.

Background questions

Part two of the questionnaire was included to obtain an indication of the students' social backgrounds. Inquiry was made as to where they lived most of their lives, their parents' occupations and educational statuses. The students were asked to check their classification, sex, ethnic group, and to state the plans they expected to follow after graduation.

The drawings and questions were multicopied in sufficient quantities to allow each respondent to have a complete questionnaire. They were arranged in the form of a booklet for the convenience of the respondents. The drawings were arranged to face the questions so that the respondents could easily refer back to them when answering the questions. A letter with instruc-

tions was written for the front cover. Mailing instructions were given on the last sheet of the questionnaire. A complete questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

The questionnaire was pretested to determine how functional it was in procuring the information sought. Individuals similar to prospective respondents, members of the researcher's advisory committee, and a statistician were asked to answer or review the questions for corrections, deletions, additions, or further clarification of the questions.

Selection of Respondents and Data Collection

Directories compiled by university officials were the source used in selecting the initial sample grouping. The sample was composed of two ethnic groups, Afro-American and white-American students. One directory used was a compilation of the American blacks enrolled at the university. The other directory was an alphabetized listing of all students enrolled at Iowa State University following fall registration.

The samples of both groups were selected systematically after a random start. The first person on each list

was determined by selecting numbers arbitrarily from a table of random numbers. In order to get a broader representation, names were selected alphabetically at intervals until the desired number was attained. The researcher watched home addresses as names were selected to eliminate those students who were from a foreign country or who commuted to the university from outside Ames. The name below the eliminated student was selected instead.

For the Afro-American list, beginning from the selected random number, every other name was selected from the directory until 79 names were obtained. The representation for the white-American list was determined by selecting every 183rd student, beginning from the selected random number, until 100 names were compiled. Both lists were checked and compared to be sure there were no duplications and that all prospective participants were enrolled during the 1972 spring quarter. It was found that of the white-American group, 17 were not matriculated, thereby reducing the total list of prospective respondents to 83. Six Afro-Americans were deleted because of non-enrollment and the elimination of the researcher's name. This decreased the list to 73.

The source of data for the study consisted of replies from questionnaires returned by students enrolled at Iowa State University during spring quarter, 1972. Each student included in the population was either Afro-American or white-American. Those students excluded were foreign students or commuters from outside Ames.

Specifically, the population was composed of 156 individuals. Because a mailed questionnaire was to be the main instrument of data collection, the sample of students in the study consisted of those persons who responded to the mailing request--34 black Americans and 40 white-Americans.

The process of data collection was instrumental in determining the method of selecting the sample for this study. The first step was to mail the questionnaire to each of the first 60 individuals on both lists which compose the population of the study. The mailing of the first set of questionnaires was timed so that each of the 120 persons would receive the instrument prior to the Easter vacation. It was assumed that the students would have time to respond more readily to the questionnaire before rather than after the vacation period. The questionnaires were

mailed on a weekend in order that they might be delivered to the potential respondents well toward the beginning of the week so that the respondents could answer the questionnaires before the vacation period began on Thursday, April 6, 1972. The documents were mailed as first-class matter, including materials containing instructions, letters of request, and stamped self-addressed envelopes.

The mailing of the second set of questionnaires occurred two weeks later and was sent to all those whose names remained on the lists. Respondents were given one week to reply, after which the data collection was closed.

The return of the questionnaires was provided for through first-class mail. Envelopes that were stamped and addressed to the researcher were used for the return of the questionnaires. This procedure was used to encourage the potential respondent to cooperate.

Follow-up letters were sent to the first set of 120 potential respondents. Effort was exerted to get all of the first set of questionnaires returned, but the follow-up letters were not successful in getting many negligent respondents to return the questionnaires.

Approximately 74 questionnaires composed the total sample of the study, most of which were returned from the first set of mailings.

Of the 156 questionnaires sent out, 82 were not returned. It is surmised that the non-returns were due to negligence, lack of interest on the part of the questionnee, and lack of knowledge and contact with the subject of the thesis. Perhaps, with today's political harassment of such organizations as the Panthers, some of the respondents may not have wanted to become involved for fear of their attachment to the study which could prove harmful to them at some future date.

The researcher coded the replies and recorded them on IBM sheets to organize them into some comprehensive form for analysis. The closed questions were put into a tabular format. Answers to the open-ended questions were considered separately for each illustration of the outfits, A, B, C, and D. Responses to particular outfits were then categorized according to similarities and differences of opinions of the two groups of students. Findings from the open-ended questions were described in paragraph form and are presented in the following chapter.

FINDINGS

A presentation of the responses, obtained from 74 students, will be the focus of this chapter. The data collected will be discussed in terms of the description of the sample and the findings relative to the objectives of the study.

Two ethnic groups, white-American and Afro-American students, constituted the sample of 74 respondents. There were 46 male respondents, 27 whites and 19 blacks, and 28 female respondents, 13 whites and 15 blacks. Age ranges for the two groups ran from 18 to 39 years old for the white-Americans and from 18 to 44 for the Afro-Americans. There was representation from the five standard student classifications, plus one "other" for the Afro-American group; 29 of the white-Americans were classified as freshmen, juniors, and seniors, while 23 Afro-Americans were classified as freshmen and graduate students. Most of the white-Americans were from mid-western states, specifically Iowa, and from small towns whose populations were under 10, 000. The majority of the Afro-American respondents were from the north- and south-eastern states, such as

New York and South Carolina, and were from large towns whose populations were over 100, 000. Most of the respondents came from middle class backgrounds, according to their parents' occupations. Future expectations after graduation of the respondents ranged from pure speculation to specific vocations; most of them preferred to work in a commercial or industrial enterprise, teach, attend law, medical, or graduate school, or to become involved in specific jobs such as funeral director, veterinarian, research dietitian, and speech pathologist.

Familiarity Through

All the questions were used to find support for the premise that Afro-American students were more familiar with the costumes than white-American students. Responses from the open-ended questions will be presented as nearly as possible to the respondents' own words. Closed questions will be presented in tables along with explanations.

First impressions

Responses to the question on first impressions were categorized by her major professor and the

researcher into ten themes which were: (1) obvious recognition of costume (definite recognition of the outfit or group member), (2) partial recognition of the costume (general recognition of group member), (3) limited to the description of person and clothes (positive reaction to costume but does not recognize the particular outfit or group member), (4) limited to the description of clothes only, (5) limited to the description of person only, (6) favorable, positive, or complimentary responses (general descriptions), (7) unfavorable, negative, or uncomplimentary responses (general descriptions), (8) styles associated with geographical areas, (9) indifference and moderation, and (10) no response and no real first impressions. A summary of the responses used was presented to help clarify the presentation of the findings in regard to first impressions. (See p. 23b.)

Outfit C

Responses of first impressions for outfit C were varied among the white-American group. Only one respondent definitely recognized the outfit as being indicative of the Black Panther Party costume. Four respondents recognized the figure as being indicative of

Table 1. Summary of the responses used in the discussion of first impressions.

Categories	Outfit C		Outfit B		Outfit A		Outfit D	
	WA	AA	WA	AA	WA	AA	WA	AA
1. Obvious recognition of costume	1	4	0	0	1	7	0	0
2. Partial recognition of costume	4	4	0	0	2	6	0	1
3. Limited to the description of person and clothes	3	4	0	0	1	0	0	0
4. Limited to the description of clothes only	3	1	15	11	2	5	7	9
5. Limited to the description of person only	3	5	9	5	14	4	11	7
6. Favorable, positive, or complimentary responses	9	2	0	0	4	4	4	0
7. Unfavorable, negative, or uncomplimentary responses	5	1	0	0	4	0	4	0
8. Styles associated with geographical areas	4	4	0	0	5	2	0	0

Table 1. continued.

9. Indifference or moderation	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
10. No response and no real first impres- sions	6	9	8	11	5	7	8	13

Code: WA = White-American
AA = Afro-American

someone that is Black or Negro. Three respondents, under the category person and clothes, used the following replies: "Liberal spender with no cares," "rougher, not necessary violent person," and "pseudo-artist (thinks he's cultured)." In the description of clothes only category, three respondents described the outfit as being "warm," "groovy," "casual or informal." The same number described the figure as a "casual, cool dude with radical intentions." Under the category of favorable responses, nine respondents used such terms as "dressy," "sharp," "neat," "stylish," "wealthy," and "really like it" to give their impressions of outfit C. In the unfavorable category, five respondents used the term-"queer" and the phrases-"much too suave with a turned up nose," "don't like

it (concerned the outfit or particular garments)," and "expensive type 'stud' outfit for semi-dress up." Four respondents' descriptions, such as "East coast (or France) -Ivy League," "mod-more California," and "hat looks French or Italian," were categorized as styles associated with geographical areas. Two respondents were indifferent to the figure or felt that it was moderate. There were two "no responses" and four "no real first impression" answers.

First impressions among the Afro-American group were just as varied as those among the white-American group, but the outfit was definitely recognized by four respondents as being representative of the Black Panther Party costume. Furthermore, four respondents recognized the figure as being indicative of someone that is Black or Afro-American. Four respondents described the figure in regard to person and clothes as "cool," "super-cool," "trying to be cool" and as having "the effect of a sportsman." In limiting the description to the garments only, one respondent was impressed by the jacket and sweater. Five respondents gave these types of reactions to the description of person only: "'jet-set' attitude," "jazzing, partying, cool type of fella," "art student," "well-dressed dude," and "a brother (Afro-American) who

digs leather coats and apple hats." Two favorable responses were "very nice-distinctive" and "I like it." One unfavorable or uncomplimentary response, "I don't like it," was given. The four responses in which styles were associated with geographical areas were "English, connected with merchant marine," "mod-more California," and "a member of the French underground." No responses fell under category 9, which was indifference and moderation. There were two "no response" answers and seven "no real first impression" answers.

Comparison of the two sample groups' responses revealed some similarities and differences in their reactions. More Afro-Americans definitely recognized the outfit as being representative of the Black Panther Party costume or recognized the figure as being representative of a member of the Afro-American ethnic group. More white-Americans (9 to 2) responded with favorable answers; the Afro-Americans gave general answers, such as "very nice-distinctive" and "I like it," while the white-Americans' answers were more concrete, such as "dressy, sharp," and "really like it." Five white respondents, as opposed to one Afro-American, replied unfavorably to the outfit; they described it as being "queer" and "much too suave with a turned up nose."

Nine Afro-Americans, as compared to six white-Americans, did not respond to the question or had no real first impressions. The number of negative responses was attributed to the ordinariness of the outfit to most Afro-Americans.

Outfit A

For outfit A, the responses of the white-American group were placed under all ten categories; the Afro-American responses were placed under seven of the categories. Seven Afro-American respondents and one white-American respondent described the figure A as a "Black wearing a dashiki" or "Afro-American dashiki." Under category 2, two white-Americans recognized the figure as being someone who is Black and a student; six Afro-Americans recognized the figure as being someone who is Black and a student, an "Afro-American," and a "Black brother with cultural awareness." One white-American respondent used the term "super-cool" in describing the figure in respect to the person and clothes category. Under the category limited to clothing

description, two white-Americans responded with "scratchy top" and "unkempt; sloppy but comfortable;" five Afro-Americans responded with "comfortable, leisure and comfort," "shirt and bells," "natural dress for Black who is black-minded," and "dashiki stands out-makes outfit more interesting." Under the category limited to person description, six white-Americans recognized the figure as a "freak; hippie set;" one respondent replied with "non-conformist;" another responded with "colorful person; African descent and design;" one other described the figure as a "liberal person;" two more used the phrases-"a foreign student" and "foreign origin person;" one respondent answered with "youth culture member;" and, finally, two respondents used the phrase-"really for far-out individual." Under this same category, four Afro-Americans responded with "well-dressed dude," "believer in cultural nationalism," "colorful person; African descent and design," and "an awareness that the person is a part of a group seeking unity and recognition." Four white respondents and four black respondents gave favorable, positive, or complimentary responses. The same number of white-Americans responded unfavorably, negatively, or uncomplimentary to the question. Such

a term as "Oriental" and phrases as "mod-more California," "African revival or heritage," and "worn by foreign student from Africa or by Black American wearing a shirt imported from Africa" were responses of five white-Americans; while two Afro-Americans used "African revival or heritage" and "of African descent." Zero Afro-American respondents and two white-American respondents replied indifferently. Five Black Americans and three white-Americans responded with "no real first impressions." An equal number (2) of both groups did not respond.

Outfit B

Most of the responses for outfit B fell under two categories: (1) limited to the description of clothes only and (2) limited to the description of person only. Of the 15 white respondents, seven described the clothes as "plain or average," two described them as "unkempt; sloppy but comfortable," two more described the outfit as "comfortable or goof-off wear," one replied "shirt and bells," another used "work clothes" to answer, one other responded with "grubbies or casual wear," and, finally, one person answered "afraid to buy a new shirt; like the one he wore in high school." Eleven Afro-

Americans responded in these ways: "comfortable or goof-off wear," "unkempt; sloppy but comfortable," "shirt is too big (unable to afford a variety of clothes)," "nothing better to wear," "unique outfit," and "plain or average clothes." For the description of the person only, nine white respondents regarded the figure as being a typical student outfit, a "stock boy," "worn by foreign students with belled or straight pants," and a "fair or very conservative person." Five Afro-Americans regarded the figure as an "average person," as being representative of the Neighborhood Youth Corp, as a "very conservative person," and as a "white boy." Eight white-Americans and eleven Afro-Americans gave "no real first impression" responses.

Outfit D

On the whole, there were more different white-American responses for outfit D according to the categories than there were Afro-American responses. Categories 3 through 10 covered the white-American responses, with the most answers being in category 5. Seven white-American responses concerning the description of clothes were: "cowboy outfit," "plain or average clothes," "casual but good-looking," "comfortable or

goof-off wear," and "rather smart if not faded or worn out and patched." Eleven responded with the answers, "rougher, not necessary violent person," "my fourteen-year-old son," "fashion conscious person," "youth culture member," "typical student," "a classy university student," "typical of many farm-raised people in Iowa," and "average person," to the question concerning the description of person only. Four favorable, positive, or complimentary responses were: "really like it," "classy; sharp; neat; stylish," and "I like it." Four more responded unfavorably, negatively, or uncomplimentary, using such a term as "queer" and a phrase as "radical, very outspoken or unusual." Seven individuals responded with "no real first impression;" one did not answer at all.

Categories 2 through 6, 9, and 10 covered the Afro-American responses with most answers being in categories 4 and 5. Only one respondent recognized the figure as "Afro-American." In limiting the description to clothing only, nine respondents described the outfit as "all figures have black bell bottoms," a "prevalent contemporary dress," having "nothing better to wear," "a comfortable sporty outfit is the trend now or Wrangler suit," "plain or average clothes," a "jacket and sweater," and "grubbies or casual wear." Seven respondents

described the figure in terms of person only as having a "'jet-set' attitude or jazzing, partying, cool type of fella," as a "farmer," as a "hot rod," as a "fairly together brother (Afro-American) or white boy," "an awareness that the person is a part of a group seeking unity and recognition," and as a "fair or very conservative person." There were three "no responses" and ten "no real first impression" answers.

Meanings

The meanings of the two groups were summarized according to their recognition of the costume. To white-Americans, outfit C was "associated with the Black Panthers," was thought "to reveal either cultural or ethnic background," and was "the dress of a specific group." Outfit C, also, indicated "a sharp dresser," a "militant or 'street gang' type," "a 'cultured' person," or a "normal popular ISU student." It had the meaning of being a "mod, bold look" to one respondent. To Afro-Americans, outfit C symbolized "a sense of pride," an association with the Black Panthers," a "militant or 'street gang' type," "a person in the Afro-American movement," the "normal dress for an average middle-class American," and a "nice outfit."

It was, also, related "to the young Blacks in America both in and out of school."

The meanings that outfit A had to the white-American respondents were:

- (1) it seemed "to reveal either cultural or ethnic background"
- (2) it was "a symbol of black or African heritage, Black pride, or Black awareness"
- (3) it was an "impression of something African"
- (4) it was "something that would be worn by a Negro"
- (5) it symbolized "Black is beautiful"
- (6) it represented a "'freak' or extroverted individual" and signified "a calm person" because of "carefree clothes"
- (7) it looked "'hippie'" and was "liberal, 'in,' contemporary", and
- (8) it had "no particular meaning" to some individuals and was "typical for a culture which is foreign to most Americans."

The Afro-American respondents expressed "a sense of pride" in the "African print." To them it was "a symbol of black or African heritage, Black pride, or Black awareness." Other meanings were: "fairly

knowledgeable person about his heritage or history," "relates the culture of the so called American Negro to his native land," "something a Black brother or sister can wear knowing the clothes on his back were made by himself," "might suggest a person in the Afro-American movement," and "possibly mean Afro-American."

The meaning of outfit B procured these replies from white-Americans: "would indicate a sharp dresser," "a conventional or regular dude in a shirt," "comfortable and cool," "typical for a culture which is foreign to most Americans," and "conservative." Afro-American responses to outfit B were "comfortable and cool," "Neighborhood Youth Corp," "a conventional or regular dude in a shirt," "seems to identify with two groups: (1) the poor and (2) a small-time hood (not necessarily a criminal)," and "normal dress for average middle-class American."

White-Americans associated outfit D with the Black Panther Party and "the dress of a specific geographical area." The figure was described as an "average person," a "normal popular ISU student," and as a "wearer" who "would like to be a cowboy." The

outfit was a "mod, bold look" or "what" one respondent "sees most and would most likely buy." To Afro-Americans outfit D evoked the meanings that it "relates to the young Blacks in America both in and out of school," resembles the type of clothing one respondent's fiancé wears, and is a jacket that one respondent has always wanted. To them, the outfit meant the "normal dress for average middle-class American" and "style." One Afro-American respondent did not reply at all.

Some of the respondents gave answers that encompassed all the outfits. White-American responses were "rich kid trying to look common or poor kid trying to look rich," "clothes express the person underneath," and "tells what people or what type of people they are." One respondent had given his reply in question 2. The meanings to Afro-Americans were "their personality or how neat or sloppy they are," "style," and "the kinds of clothes that are in style." Two respondents in this group gave their replies in question 2. In spite of the comments made, the majority of the responses for both groups was "no particular meaning."

Feelings of ease

Question four was concerned with the feeling of ease of the respondent in wearing any one of the outfits among his peer group. The responses to the question were arranged under three headings: (1) those stating particular outfits, (2) those stating general opinions, and (3) those stating "yes" or "no" without explanations. As nearly as possible, comments under the first heading were summarized for each outfit. The comments under the second heading were summarized according to similarity of content.

The 14 white-Americans who responded to particular outfits gave diverse answers. For outfit B, most of the respondents felt comfortable wearing the garment, but generally did not feel at ease wearing the other garments. Three comments concerning outfit A were that particular circumstances determined which outfit might be worn, with A being the most restrictive, that the respondent felt at ease wearing the outfit, and that one respondent disliked it because he hated three-quarter length sleeves. Another respondent did not feel at ease wearing outfit C "because of its meaning to" him-"Black pride" while one other found outfits C and D to be "utterly ridiculous even if"

he "was in the Black Panthers." One respondent had negative feelings toward outfit C because he disliked hats; another dresses this way now, "casual but neat;" one other found outfit C to be "too 'classy' for" his "set." Most of the respondents who commented on outfit D would wear it with ease, but thought it "would be accepted as informal dress by most at this college" and was something "warm, smart looking and something I wouldn't mind getting dirty-can wash it." Two final comments of those grouped under the first heading were: (1) "Yes and no, A is farthest from my peer group and would cause discomfort; others are more conforming to peer group standards; (2) "No, I'd wear outfits B, C (minus the hat), and D. A looks like a bright flashy color which I don't like to dress in. I prefer something subtle." Of the 14, there were one "yes and no," two "no's," and 11 "yes" responses.

Of the sixteen white-Americans who gave general opinion responses, all except one felt at ease wearing any one of the outfits among their peer groups. The one respondent who did not feel at ease preferred "jeans." Most of them were of the opinion that they wore what they chose and that their peer groups would accept anything they chose to wear, if the choice was not too

unusual. All except one responded with "yes" before giving a comment.

In this sample group, there were ten "yes" or "no" responses with comments. Seven of the responses were "no's;" three were "yes's."

Afro-American comments under the first heading presented the viewpoints that outfit A was "very comfortable" and "would be acceptable to the group." One respondent's peer group wore these kinds of outfits, except C; another preferred to wear outfit B in his "plainer moods" and outfit D in his "moods of extravagance." Two respondents said that outfit D was "easily in style" and that "with slight modifications, C and D would be very attractive." One female respondent commented: "Yes, if I were a guy, I wouldn't care what anyone thought if I wore A, B, or D. If I wore the cap in C, I'd expect criticism." All of the six respondents replied positively to this question.

Pertaining to the general opinion heading, eight of the twenty Afro-American respondents generally agreed that all the outfits were "acceptable ways of

dressing among their peers." Several of the respondents felt that the opinions of their peer groups did not matter; they chose their clothing according to their personality and taste. While one respondent felt that "some of the outfits" were "appropriate and significant," another commented that "clothing is 'what's happening' in fashions these days" and "because they're a comfortable type of clothing." Two respondents were of the opinion that these were "everyday outfits" that most people wore; one considered the outfits to be fads. All of the 20 questionnaires responded positively to this question. Under the third heading, there were four each of the "yes" and "no" responses.

In relation to the question on the feeling of ease, the last question in the first part of the questionnaire inquired about special feelings (for example, fright) that the respondent might have if he were approached by a person in one of the outfits. A definite time period, "during the day," was inserted in the question to alleviate as many psychological conclusions as possible in respect to person perception and time of day. An unknown person is regarded quite

differently at night than he is during the day.

Table 4, found in Appendix B, has shown the positive and negative reactions of the two groups. Both groups were not affected or afraid of the person if approached in outfits B and D. For outfit A, 75 percent of the white-Americans and 88 percent of the Afro-Americans had no special feelings if approached by an individual dressed in this outfit.

Recognition and association

Questions 1, 6, and 7 were grouped together because they center on the familiarity of the costume by recognition and association. Question one asked if the respondent had seen anyone wearing the outfits illustrated. Approximately 90 percent of the white-Americans as compared to 100 percent of the Afro-Americans had seen individuals in such clothing as outfits A and D. Thirty-six of the 40 white-American respondents and 28 of the 34 Afro-American respondents had seen someone in outfit B. Ninety-four percent of the Afro-Americans as compared to 55 percent of the white-Americans had seen someone wearing outfit C. Data showing the result of the responses will be found

in Appendix B in Table 5.

Question six was concerned with the familiarity of the respondents with the terms, dashiki and Black Panther Party. Responses from both groups indicated that all of them, except one white-American, were familiar with the term Black Panther Party. All of the Afro-Americans were familiar with the term dashiki, while 32 of the forty white-American respondents were not familiar with the term. Table 2 illustrates the data.

Table 2. Familiarity with the terms dashiki and Black Panther Party

Costume	Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Dashiki	Yes	8	20	34	100
	No	32	80	0	0
	No response	0	0	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>
Black Panther Party	Yes	39	97.5	34	100
	No	1	2.5	0	0
	No response	0	0	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>

Question seven was concerned with the respondent's association of the terms with any one of the outfits. For the dashiki, outfit A, white-Americans associated the outfits A and C; the Afro-Americans associated the term with outfit A. Those white-Americans who associated the outfits with Black Panther Party chose outfits A and C. Those Afro-Americans who associated the outfits with the Black Panther Party chose outfit C.

Purposes served by the outfits

Outfit A

Another question was concerned with the respondent's opinion as to the purpose the outfits served. The white-Americans projected the points of view that outfit A demonstrated an expression of pride in "East African culture," in "something," in "black ancestry," and in "native culture;" that it "proclaimed the style of African heritage;" that it served to identify the wearer "according to his social class or the social class he wishes to identify with" or "with a social group;" that the costume symbolized a "hippie or flower child and is used "to impress people and to draw attention to the individual wearing it, possibly to express contempt for or nonsupport of the predominant value system

of society;" and that it served as casual, functional clothing, to make a person "look somewhat radical" or to make a "statement" of the person's "general liberalism."

Afro-American respondents were of the opinion that outfit A served "to show a sense of pride in our African heritage," as an "identification for black people," and to "represent the person's awareness and appreciation of African culture." From a functional point of view, they thought outfit A was comfortable and served the purposes of clothing the body, of occasional or informal wear, and of being "good for keeping cool in hot weather." Three respondents gave these distinct purposes for all the outfits: (1) "serves to make Afro-Americans think that clothing is a unifying force in itself-that they can continue to be ignorant of higher humanitarian ideals as long as they 'dress the part;'" (2) "serves as a repudiation of the western culture imposed upon the African-American and the adoption of a mode of dress more in time with his cultural heritage in order to instill in him pride and respect;" and (3) "serves to be politically orienting for persons seeing an individual wearing the costume and psychologically soothing for the wearer in identifying with his people's lifestyles and current

trends in thinking."

Outfit B

To ten white-Americans, outfit B served no particular purpose. To the others, it served functionally as casual wear or school clothes and to cover and protect the body. Comments concerning the purpose of outfit B also covered "dressed up grubbies," "to show freedom in dress," "good guy," and "associated with white-collar workers in Africa." Other respondents presented the viewpoint that the purpose was to serve as a means of identification for a person who wished others to regard him as belonging to a particular social class or social status group. To the Afro-American respondents, outfit B served the purpose of covering and protecting the body, the purpose of being "casual wear ... for a person who appreciates style changes," and the purpose of representing a "low income member." Several felt it served no particular purpose.

Outfit C

The white-Americans responded that outfit C served the purposes of "being slightly dressed up but still casual" and of being "casual for Blacks; more dressed up for whites." Outfit C is worn "to clothe

the body" and "to show that a person is 'with it' and has money to buy." Outfit C indicated militancy, especially with the beret; it also "serves as a uniform of sorts; identifies the wearer as probably a Panther." It served as a symbol "of the attire worn by the 'Black Panther Party'." To the white-Americans, outfit C served "to identify the person according to his social class (or group) or the social class (or group) he wishes to identify with."

Afro-American respondents thought that outfit C served the purposes:

1. helping, to some degree, young blacks as a group to establish self identity and pride
2. being a uniform or "symbolization of the attire worn by the 'Black Panther Party'"
3. indicating militancy, especially with the beret, and rebelliousness "against established society"
4. being "evidence of conformity to a group" and a reflection of "the liberal and perhaps radical outlook of the person who wears it"
5. satisfying "the necessity for clothing," and
6. being "clothing for a person who appreciates style changes."

Outfit D

Responses to outfit D showed that the white-Americans thought the outfit served as "something to wear" when "re-doing motorcycles" and "motorcycle driving." Functionally, outfit D served as regular, casual wear which is "serviceable and yet a person would be noted for good taste in dressing." It served "to draw attention to the individual wearing it (and possibly to express contempt for or nonsupport of the predominant value system of society." Another purpose served by outfit D was to declare "for the individual which social status group he wishes others to regard him as being a member of."

Afro-Americans' opinions as to the purpose served by outfit D varied from casual clothing that could be used for party-wear to being indicative of progressive thinking. It served to give "a rustic look, simplicity," as a "status symbol" or "symbolic of a group type." Outfit D was "worn for looks, trying to set style or keep it," or was "good for a gig when you don't want to go too dressy," or was worn by "a brother (Afro-American) sporting some of his 'bad-glad' rags." This outfit could "express the feelings of someone who feels no need to dress up or to put on fine clothes." Several

other purposes expressed were: (1) "evidence of conformity, probably middle class," and (2) "to identify young blacks as a group; to some degree helps them establish self identity and pride."

In conjunction with the question on the purpose the outfits served, another inquired as to what particular people in the United States did these outfits serve a useful purpose. Responses given were either "yes" or "no," along with the name of the particular people. There were 17 positive and 20 negative white-American responses to outfit A of this question; there were three "no responses." Ten of the respondents named Blacks or Afro-Americans as the particular people; two respondents related outfit A "to black pride in African heritage." Other groups named were "hippies, freaks," "pseudo-hippies," "Mexican-Americans," "native Africans," "those desiring recognition," "people who feel they must wear 'fashionable' clothing."

Afro-American responses to outfit A were 27 "yes's," five "no's," and two "no responses." The people they named were "Blacks," "cultural nationalists in the African-American community," "the back-to-Africa movement," "those interested in African styles and social practices," and "people who relate to the minority, poor and black

movement and are seeking unity and pride in their existence."

Responses of both groups were about half-and-half concerning outfit C. There were slightly more "no" answers, when compared to the "yes" answers, from the white-Americans; while there were slightly more "yes" answers, when compared to the "no" answers, from the Afro-Americans. The people most mentioned were "Blacks" and "Black Panthers." Other kinds of people mentioned by white-Americans were "those with ego problems," "militants," "people trying to act radical but cool," "people who feel they must wear 'fashionable' clothing," "rich and carefree people," "people that like nice clothes," and "style conscious 18 to 25 year olds." Other groups mentioned by Afro-Americans were "teens and college students," "the power structure of the United States also the clothing industry," "Black guys who like to dress really nice," "Black militants," and "revolutionaries."

For outfits B and D, the majority of responses from both groups was "no." Approximately 60 percent of the white-Americans and 68 percent of the Afro-Americans

responded negatively to outfit B. Approximately 60 percent of each group's answers were negative for outfit D. A reflection of these responses is shown in Table 3.

Nationalism

Some of the final questions in the questionnaire were concerned with the function of the outfits in increasing nationalism and whether or not the outfits were fads. Fifty-five percent of the white-Americans thought outfit A increased black nationalism; 53 percent of the Afro-Americans did not think the outfit increased black nationalism. Approximately 70 percent of each group was opposed to all the outfits as being functional in increasing national pride. Approximately 80 percent of each group thought these outfits were fads common to a particular people in the United States. The costume selected most by both groups to be a fad was outfit A. Tables 6, 7, and 8, showing these outcomes, will be found in Appendix B on page 84.

Social status

To determine what social status these costumes had in Ames, Iowa, a three part question was included in the questionnaire. The first and second parts

Table 3. Responses on whether the outfits serve a useful purpose for a particular people in the U.S.

Costume	Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Outfit A	Yes	17	42.5	27	79.4
	No	20	50.0	5	14.7
	No response	3	7.5	2	5.9
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Outfit B	Yes	12	30.0	8	23.5
	No	25	62.5	23	67.7
	No response	3	7.5	3	8.8
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Outfit C	Yes	17	42.5	19	55.8
	No	19	47.5	13	38.2
	No response	4	10.0	2	6.0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Outfit D	Yes	14	35.0	11	32.4
	No	23	57.5	20	58.8
	No response	3	7.5	3	8.8
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>

were concerned with whether wearing any one of these outfits would give an individual social status in Ames. Outcomes to these questions showed that 55 percent of the white-Americans responded that the outfits would give a person social status in Ames. They chose outfit C as the costume which would give the highest social status. Approximately 80 percent of the Afro-American respondents did not believe that wearing any one of the costumes would give a person social status in Ames. Table 9, showing the differences in the opinions as to whether or not the outfits give social status, will be found in Appendix B.

The last part of the question asked what did social status mean to the individual. The answers indicated some variations in meanings. Most white respondents felt that social status meant a social, economic, monetary, and respectable ranking or standing in a community, based on race, wealth, religion, parental standing, nationality, group membership, degree of involvement in the fine arts and literary pursuits, and educational and occupational attainments. Social status is regarded by some as "a false set of values based on a lack of independent thinking," "a silly abstract idea in proud people's minds," someone who

thinks he's better than others-disregarding human qualities and concern for others, and "being upper-middle-class, not exceptionally concerned with money- considers himself independent and 'groovy'." One respondent said that "youth have only a medium or low status in the Ames community." To two of the respondents, social status meant nothing; to others, it meant "acceptance by majority of peers," "being comfortable in most groups," "simply having friends," and "in fashion . . . something attractive which will stand out." One respondent felt that "outfit A gives the 'hippie' status." The viewpoint presented by several respondents was that clothing is used to estimate or reflect social status.

In response to the question, Afro-Americans had various interpretations. To most, social status meant the ranking or standing of an individual within the social stratification of society, based on community recognition in terms of the degree of acceptance, prestige, power, integrity, material wealth, education, income, personality, and life style. To some, it meant "acquiring the things that you want in life, whether they are necessities or wants," "having influence among your peers as well as those outside your peer group,"

"the section of society a person belongs to if any," and "trying to keep up with the establishments." To others, social status is meaningless; while to another, it is "a bunch of 'bull' that Americans are hung up on." One response was a "separation of people by race, financial standing, education, culture, etc., and placing one group after another (caste system)." Another implied that social status in Ames meant "wearing something that associates you with the 'hippies' (like smoking 'grass,' etc.). To one other, it meant "how much knowledge an individual contains and how well he can put it to use-clothes play no part." There were four "no responses" to the question.

Large Towns Versus Small Towns.

The second and third objectives of the study were to determine familiarity in relation to students from large towns and students from small towns. The analysis was made within the groups only of students who came from towns whose populations were under 10,000 and over 100,000. There were nine respondents from large towns and 20 respondents from small towns among the white-Americans. In the Afro-American group, 19

respondents were from large towns and five respondents were from small towns. Only the closed end questions were used to make the analysis.

The findings were:

1. The majority, approximately 90 percent, of the respondents from both groups had seen someone wearing all of the outfits except C. Six of the white-American respondents from large towns had not seen anyone wearing outfit C.

2. Seventy percent of the white-American respondents from small towns thought that wearing any one of the outfits would give a man social status in Ames; 56 percent of the white-American respondents from large towns did not agree. The outfit chosen was C by the students from small towns. Approximately 80 percent of the Afro-Americans from large and small towns did not agree that wearing any one of the outfits would give a man social status in Ames.

3. Fifty-six percent of the white-American students from large towns and 90 percent of the white-American students from small towns were not familiar with the term dashiki, but 95 to 100 percent of the combined groups had knowledge of the Black Panther Party. All of the Afro-Americans were familiar with the terms.

4. More white students from large towns associated outfit A with the term dashiki; while more white students from small towns associated the Black Panther Party with outfit C. The majority of the Afro-American respondents associated outfit A with the term dashiki and outfit C with the Black Panther Party.

5. Fifty percent of the white-American respondents from large and small towns thought that the outfits A and C were functional in increasing black nationalism. Fifty-three percent of the black students from large towns and 60 percent of the black students from small towns thought that the outfits were not functional in increasing black nationalism.

6. Students from large towns-68 percent white and 74 percent black-and students from small towns-85 percent white and 80 percent black-thought these outfits were fads common to a particular people in the United States. Outfits A and C were considered to be fads more so than outfits B and D.

7. Fifty-six percent of the white students from large towns and 65 percent of the white students from small towns thought the outfits were not functional in increasing national pride. Sixty-three percent of the Afro-Americans from large towns did not think the outfits

increased national pride; among the black students from small towns, 40 percent thought the outfits increased national pride, while another 40 percent disagreed.

8. Almost all of the white-American and Afro-American respondents from large and small towns expressed the opinion that no special feeling, such as fright, would occur if they were approached by an individual wearing one of the outfits.

Age Grouping

The fourth objective of the study was: Age grouping would not be related to familiarity with the costumes. The respondents were divided into two age groupings, "18 to 21" and "22 and over." Most of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25, with a few extremes such as 33, 39, and 44. On the whole, there was not a large variation in the answers within the groupings. One older respondent made reference to his children or other young people when answering the questions.

A discussion of the findings is presented in the following chapter.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The discussion will be concerned with the probable reasons for some of the similarities and differences in the answers received from the selected white-American and Afro-American students. A descriptive correlation between the background material for the study and the findings will be one aim of this chapter. The objectives of the study will be used as subject guides in presenting the discussion and conclusions drawn from the findings.

Different individuals may describe stimulus persons at varying levels of complexity, ranging from a simple or concrete impression to a mode of perception that is highly complex or abstract. Furthermore, individuals tend to exercise the economizing processes of "selective awareness" in determining which of the many cues presented will be recognized. . . . The way in which one perceives others depends upon one's own particular set of expectations and frame of reference. (Horn, 1968, pp. 125-126)

The conceptions, opinions, and reactions of the students substantiated the above statements. Perhaps the white-

American students who were not acquainted with black people who wore outfits A and C associated them with the dress of the hippies and the monetary rich, respectively. Outfits A and C being a part of the Afro-Americans' frame of reference could account for the ordinariness of the outfits to them. To the researcher, most of the writings and studies used for this research's background material is encompassed by the quotation.

Findings of the study supported the first objective: to determine that Afro-American students will be more familiar with the costumes than white-American students. On the whole, the data showed that the Afro-American students recognized and were more aware of the costumes than the white-American students, although many of their comments did not differ greatly from those of the white students. It is postulated that the Afro-Americans were more familiar with the costumes because they came from cities or states where there are large concentrations of black people. The researcher has observed that in the midwestern states contact with many Afro-Americans is limited; here they are usually concentrated in the major cities with few living in rural areas. This may account for the white students

being less familiar with the costumes.

Comparison of the groups' responses revealed some similarities in their reactions to the questions. On first impressions, more Afro-Americans definitely recognized the outfit as being representative of the Black Panther Party uniform or recognized the figure as being representative of a member of the Afro-American ethnic group. The majority of the respondents of both groups had seen someone wearing the illustrated outfits. The meaning of the outfits to the students was a connotation of blackness for outfits A and C and a connotation of "average clothes" for outfits B and D. Generally, both groups expressed that no particular feeling would be evoked if they were approached by an individual wearing one of the outfits. Most of the respondents felt that these outfits were not instrumental in increasing national pride but rather were fads (outfits A and C) among black people and groups that have deviated from the norms of society.

Major differences occurred in their opinions as to whether the outfits helped an individual to achieve social status in Ames, their association of the test costumes with their appropriate names, the function of the outfits in increasing black nationalism, and whether

or not the outfits serve a useful purpose for a particular people in the United States. Most of the white-American respondents did not associate outfit C with the Black Panther Party but rather thought of it as a symbol of social status. Most of the Afro-American respondents did not think the outfits gave a person social status.

Most of the white-Americans were not familiar with the word dashiki, but did recognize the term Black Panther Party. Those white-Americans who associated dashiki with any of the outfits chose outfit A while those who associated the Black Panther Party with any of the outfits selected outfits A and C. On the whole, the Afro-American students tended to recognize outfit A as a dashiki and outfit C as the Black Panther Party uniform more than the white-American students.

Most of the Afro-Americans did think that the outfits A and C served a useful purpose for people such as the Black Panthers and "cultural nationalists," but they did not think the outfits were functional in increasing black nationalism. On the other hand, the white-American respondents disagreed with the viewpoint that outfits A and C served a useful purpose for a particular people; they did think the outfits were

functional in increasing black nationalism.

Comments concerning the meaning of social status showed little differences in opinions. Both groups basically agreed that social status meant a position in society that was determined by wealth, prestige, race, cultural, educational, and occupational attainments. There was a tendency among the white-Americans to respond negatively in their comments. Among the Afro-Americans, while there were some negative connotations, many of the replies indicated that social status was a gratifying attainment. More of the white-Americans than Afro-Americans indicated that clothes reflect social status; one Afro-American stated that clothes play no part in determining social status.

The second objective of the study was: to determine whether Afro-American students from large towns will be more familiar with the costumes than Afro-American students from small towns. Data from the closed end questions did not support this hypothesis. It was found that 19 of the 34 respondents came from large towns and five from small towns. Nearly all of the Afro-Americans had seen someone wearing one of the outfits. Both groups agreed that wearing any one of the outfits would not give an individual social status in Ames.

There was unanimous recognition and association of the outfits with the terms dashiki and Black Panther Party. Although both groups agreed, more of the black students from small towns did not think the outfits were functional in increasing black nationalism. A larger percentage of the students from small towns thought the outfits were fads. The majority of the Afro-American students from large towns thought the outfits did not increase national pride; the students from small towns were equally divided in their opinions. Nearly all of both groups would not have been affected if approached by an individual wearing one of the outfits.

The third objective to the study was: to determine whether white-American students from large towns will be more familiar with the costumes than white-American students from small towns. It was found that half of the 40 white-American students were from small towns and that nine were from large towns. Most of the students from both groups had seen someone wearing all of the outfits, except C. A greater number of respondents from large towns had not seen anyone wear outfit C. The students from large towns (answered "no") disagreed

with the students from small towns (answered "yes") on the question concerning social status in Ames. Both groups were much more familiar with the term Black Panther Party than they were with the term dashiki. More students from large towns associated dashiki with outfit A; more students from small towns associated Black Panther Party with outfit C. The majority of both groups thought that outfits A and C were instrumental in increasing black nationalism. More white students from small towns than white students from large towns thought these outfits were fads. A larger percentage of the students from small towns thought these outfits did not help to increase national pride. The majority of the responses from both groups implied that no special feeling, such as fright, would be evoked if the respondents were approached by an individual wearing one of the outfits. **This hypothesis was neither rejected nor supported by the findings.**

The fourth objective of the study was: to determine **whether age grouping will be related to familiarity** with the costumes. Data showed that the largest number of students were between the ages of 18 and 25 for both groups. Checking a random sampling of these groupings revealed no significant deviations in their answers.

This was found for both the white-American and Afro-American students.

The fifth objective of the study was: to determine whether the lower social class will be more familiar with the costumes than the middle social class. Interpretations of the students' parents' occupation and educational status showed that most were from the lower- or upper-middle social class. Data for this objective was not examined because of the homogeneity of the sample. Homogeneity was determined by comparing the students' parents' occupation and educational status to the information and tables found in Bergel. (Bergel, 1962, pp. 270-274)

It was found that many of the respondents felt that clothing played no part in the treatment or acceptance of a person. The responses to the questionnaires have led the researcher to disagree with them. In answering some of the questions, the respondents made references to different kinds of people or stereotypes. One student had difficulty in answering the questions because he had no facial features with which to identify or to make an association.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommended the following:

1. a duplication of this study using an improved instrument and testing a larger sample of students to obtain more concrete conclusions concerning the costumes. The instrument could be improved by delimiting the subject-matter in an effort to eliminate as many general responses as possible. Maybe some of the questions could be restructured to modify their ambiguity. The letter of transmittal could have supplied more information to the respondents than it did. A larger sample could be obtained by using all of the Afro-American and white-American students enrolled at Iowa State University.

2. a cross-sectional (local, state, and national) study of people using these outfits or others that have evolved from social arousal

3. testing different groups in one area such as students in secondary, elementary, and primary schools, slum areas, and all phases of the working class for the impact or the degree of awareness the costumes have made on the individuals through the mass media and personal experience

4. testing Afro-American students from Iowa or other midwestern states. In the sample, nearly all of the Afro-Americans were not from Iowa or the midwest whereas a large majority of the white-Americans were.

5. testing different social classes among the Afro-Americans to see if it would produce significant differences in opinions

6. testing students' reactions from predominantly segregated schools might prove to be significant

7. testing the costumes separately

8. testing the costumes through a questionnaire and interview situation involving an Afro-American and white-American, then make a comparison

9. testing matched groups from similar locations

10. more detail in the letter of introduction

11. re-word question 5 to mean the same thing to all respondents--could possibly use a scale or word list

12. testing members of the organizations to determine the symbolic nature of the costumes to them.

SUMMARY

Out of the racial upheavals of the 1960's two costumes evolved to become symbols of the incentives for black pride among Afro-Americans. The costumes, the dashiki and the Black Panther Party uniform, were used as test items in a study that queried selected university students on their knowledge, gained from the mass media and personal experience, of these clothes.

This research was undertaken to determine (1) if Afro-American students were more familiar with the costumes than white-American students, (2) if Afro-American and white-American students from large towns were more familiar with the costumes than Afro-American and white-American students from small towns, (3) if differences in ages would be related to familiarity with the costumes, and (4) if the lower social class was more familiar with the costumes than the middle social class.

The instrument used in the study was a pictorial questionnaire. Part one consisted of the drawings of four figures clothed in a dashiki, a large loose shirt, Black Panther Party uniform, and a denim jacket, and

questions related to the drawings. Part two consisted of background questions relating to the respondent. The instrument was pretested to determine how functional it was in procuring the information sought.

The initial sample of the study was 156 students- 83 white-Americans and 73 Afro-Americans. They were enrolled as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students. The sample of the study was determined from the 74 questionnaires that were returned. Of the 74 respondents, 40 were white-Americans and 34 were Afro-Americans. These students ranged from 18 to 44 years of age. The majority were studying for careers in education and business.

The findings generally indicated that the Afro-Americans had more awareness of the costumes than the white-Americans. Age grouping and comparisons of students from large and small towns reflected minor differences in the respondents' opinions. Most of the students were found to be from the middle class. Generally, outfits A and C were associated with the black people of the United States; outfits B and D were considered to be average or ordinary clothing.

A significant conclusion of the study was that many of the respondents felt that clothing played no

part in the treatment or acceptance of a person. One of the recommendations made was that a cross-sectional study or a study of different groups of people using these outfits or others that have evolved from social arousal to test the impact or the degree of awareness the costumes have made on the individuals through the mass media and personal experience.

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APPENDIX A: THE INSTRUMENT

Note: The mailing directions on the last page of the questionnaire formerly read:

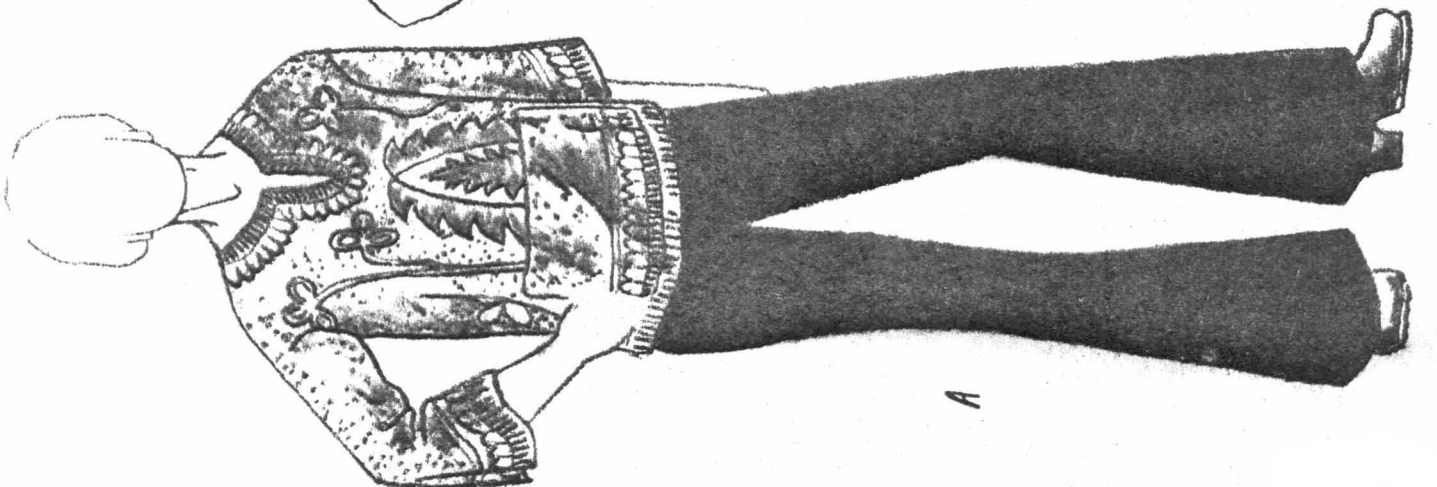
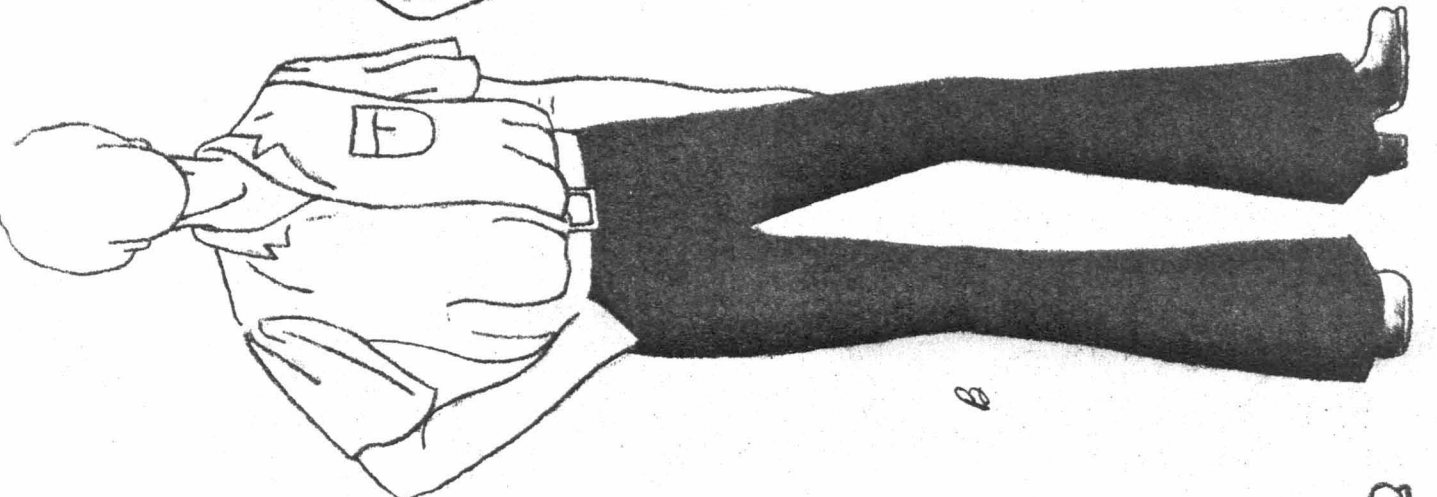
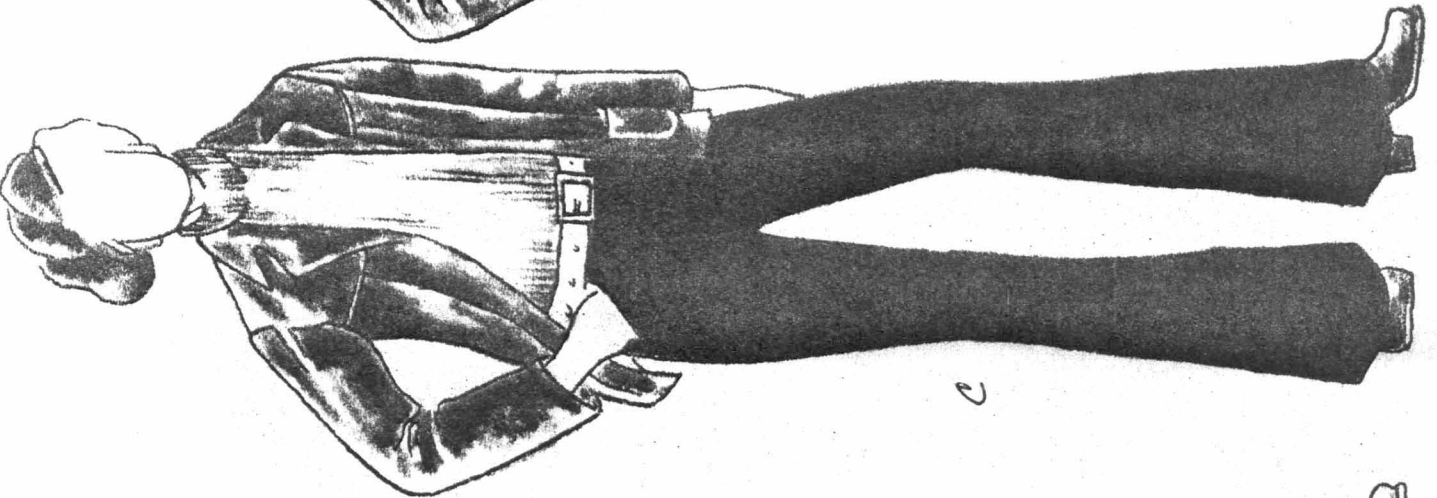
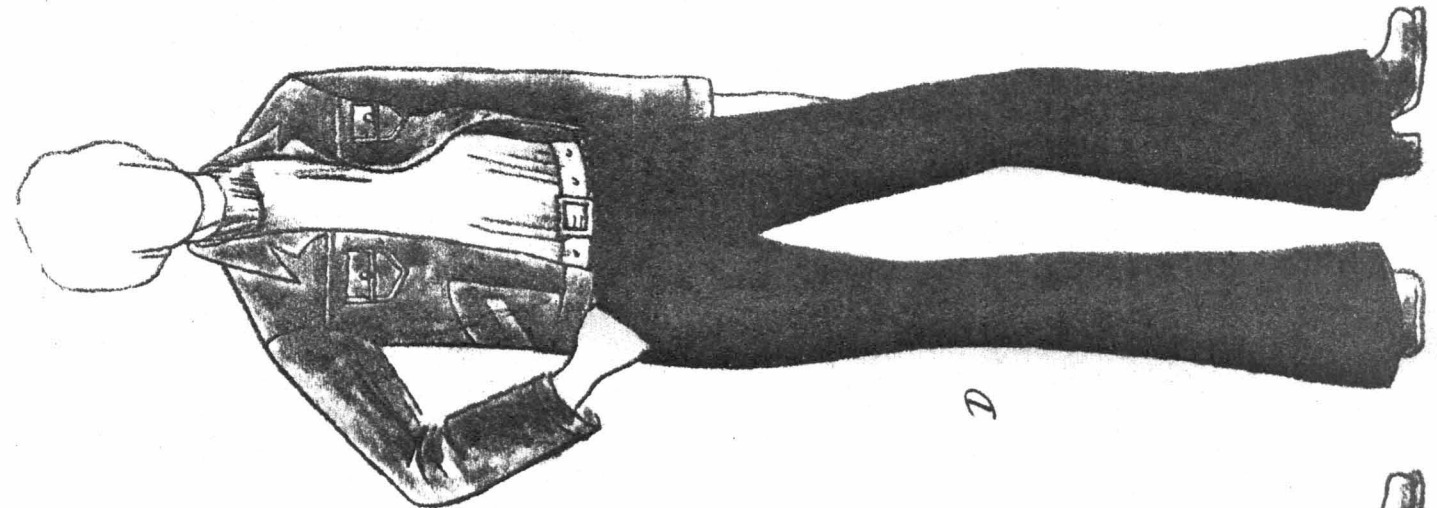
To facilitate evaluation, please mail the completed questions, minus the first two sheets. in the envelope provided before the Easter vacation begins (if possible, if not, send them in anyway).

!HELLO!

I'm Madeline Hunt, a graduate student here at the university. I am in the process of securing data for my research project. In that respect, I am asking you to be a participant. Your cooperation is eagerly sought to guard against biased research results. The questionnaire to be answered will take approximately ten (10) to thirty (30) minutes of your time. You could fill it out between classes or during a study break. You may write on the back of the pages if there is not enough space underneath the question.

Inside the packet, you will find a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please put the completed questionnaire inside and drop it in the nearest mailbox.

REMEMBER: ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS, PLEASE



QUESTIONS

PART I. WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

1. Have you seen anyone wearing the outfits illustrated in the drawings?

Outfit A? Yes___ No___

Outfit B? Yes___ No___

Outfit C? Yes___ No___

Outfit D? Yes___ No___

2. What first impression did you get from A?

From B?

From C?

From D?

3. Would any of the outfits have any meaning to you? If so, what? If not, why?

4. Would you feel at ease wearing any one of the outfits (or something similar) among your peer group? Yes___ No___ If so, why?

5. a. Would wearing any one of these outfits give you, or a man, social status in Ames? Yes___ No___

b. If you believe that garments show social status, which of these, A, B, C, or D, would give a man the highest social status in Ames?

A___ B___ C___ D___

c. What does social status mean to you?

6. Are you familiar with the term dashiki? Yes___ No___
Black Panther Party? Yes___ No___

7. If you associate any outfit, A, B, C, or D, with either of these terms, write the letter(s) of the outfit in the space after the term:

Dashiki_____

Black Panther Party_____

8. What purpose do you think these outfits serve?

A?

B?

C?

D?

9. Do any of these outfits serve a useful purpose for a particular people in the United States?

Outfit A: Yes ___ No ___ If yes, what people?

Outfit B: Yes ___ No ___ If yes, what people?

Outfit C: Yes ___ No ___ If yes, what people?

Outfit D: Yes ___ No ___ If yes, what people?

10. Do you think these outfits are functional in increasing Black Nationalism? Yes ___ No ___
If yes, which drawing(s) _____
11. Do you think these outfits are fads common to a particular people in the U. S.? Yes ___ No ___
If yes, which drawing(s) _____
12. Do you think these outfits are functional in increasing national pride? Yes ___ No ___
If yes, which drawing(s) _____
13. If a person approached you during the day in one of these outfits, would you have any special feeling (for example, fright) about this individual?

If in outfit A: Yes ___ No ___ Why?

If in outfit B: Yes ___ No ___ Why?

If in outfit C: Yes ___ No ___ Why?

If in outfit D: Yes ___ No ___ Why?

PART II. LET'S GET TO KNOW YOU.

Sex: Male _____
Female _____

Age _____

Ethnic group:
Afro-American _____
White-American _____

Student classification:

Freshman _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior _____ Grad _____ Other _____

Please place a check (✓) mark beside the figure which best indicates the size of your hometown:

Under 10,000 _____
10,000-25,000 _____
25,000-50,000 _____50,000-100,000 _____
Over 100,000 _____

Have you spent most of your life in a rural area? _____

What is your home state? _____

What do you intend to do when you graduate?

What are your parents' occupations?

Father _____

Mother _____

Guardian _____

Education of parents: (Write in grade)	Father	Mother	Guardian
Grammar (1-6)	_____	_____	_____
Junior high (7-9)	_____	_____	_____
High school (10-12)	_____	_____	_____
College (1-4)	_____	_____	_____
Graduate college (MS or PhD)	_____	_____	_____

To facilitate evaluation, please mail the completed questions, minus the first two sheets, in the envelope provided **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX B: TABLES

Table 4. Responses of special feeling evoked if approached by an individual wearing one of the outfits.

Costume	Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Outfit A	Yes	10	25	4	11.8
	No	30	75	30	88.2
	No response	0	0	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Outfit B	Yes	3	7.5	3	8.8
	No	37	92.5	31	91.2
	No response	0	0	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Outfit C	Yes	11	27.5	6	18
	No	29	72.5	28	82
	No response	0	0	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>
Outfit D	Yes	3	7.5	2	5.9
	No	37	92.5	32	94.1
	No response	0	0	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Table 5. Respondents who have seen someone wearing the illustrated outfits.

Costume	Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Outfit A	Yes	34	85.0	34	100
	No	5	12.5	0	0
	No response	1	2.5	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>
Outfit B	Yes	36	90	28	82
	No	4	10	5	15
	No response	0	0	1	3
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>
Outfit C	Yes	22	55.0	32	94
	No	17	42.5	2	6
	No response	1	2.5	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>
Outfit D	Yes	36	90	34	100
	No	4	10	0	0
	No response	0	0	0	0
	<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 6. Responses of those who think these outfits are functional in increasing black nationalism.

Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	22	55	16	47
No	16	40	18	53
No response	2	5	0	0
<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 7. Responses of those who think these outfits are functional in increasing national pride.

Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	8	20	12	35.3
No	28	70	21	61.8
No response	4	10	1	2.9
<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Table 8. Responses of those who think these outfits are fads.

Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	31	77.5	26	76.5
No	8	20.0	7	20.6
No response	1	2.5	1	2.9
<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Table 9. Responses on social status in Ames afforded by the outfits.

Responses	White-American		Afro-American	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	22	55	7	20.6
No	16	40	27	79.4
No response	2	5	0	0
<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>100.0</u>