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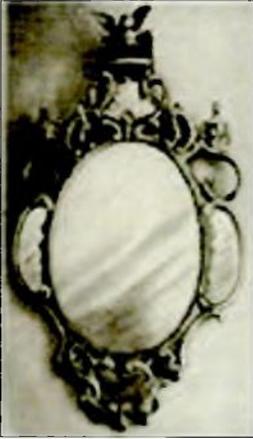
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# We Learned to Care from the Best

By Linsey Dillon



Ever since I was little, I have always wanted to change the way I look whether it was by playing dress up in princess clothes, wearing my mom's heels to make me a couple inches taller, or playing in her makeup. I was always concerned with the way I looked, just because I've grown up in a generation where people focus more on appearances rather than who a person is. It's all about what kind of clothes I buy, the way I fix my hair, how many hours I spend in front of a mirror, and the recent trend I see in a magazine.

When I turned sixteen, I was told I had to get a job. After being handed everything I could ever want, I finally had to work for the things I wanted. I decided to get a job in retail, and applied for a sales associate position at Maurice's. I never thought working in a clothing store would cause me to become such a shopper. Soon enough, I found myself spending my entire paycheck on clothes I've only worn once. Before working there, I never spent any of my own money. I was always used to taking my sister's clothes or getting money from my parents. After working there for a year, I soon realized I couldn't spend as much money on my appearance as I thought I needed to. I only spend a little bit now that I know what I can afford and what I can't in order to get by for the month. I've always cared about my clothes, but my hair is what really matters to me.

I was a natural blonde up until I was a freshman in high school. When freshman year rolled around, I wanted to do something different and rebel against my parents. They always told me to leave my hair color blonde because people paid to have my color of hair. But, that wasn't ever good enough for me. I always thought that I would look even better with dark hair. Now, being a senior in high school, I spend almost a hundred dollars every four to six weeks paying someone to color my hair for me. I never stopped at coloring it either. I wanted to cut it and get my eye brows waxed. Whatever I thought would make my appearance better, I'd try it out. Some days I wish I only had to cut my hair instead of coloring it all the time, yet once you

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start coloring you can't stop. Nowadays I find myself in front of the mirror trying to make sure my outfit and hair are just right before I leave my house.

If I could I would sit in front of the mirror all day. I can always find something wrong with my appearance if I sit there long enough from one strand of hair not being straight to a little blemish on my face. Today's society has taught me that I can't leave my house until my appearance is perfect. The night of prom, when it should have taken me only a couple hours to get ready, it took me nearly all day. I never knew how much I cared about my appearance until I sat down in front of my mirror and realized I had sat there for hours. Even when I was little, I thought every time I walked past a mirror I had to stop and look at myself. When in reality, I don't. I should feel comfort-



able with my appearance just the way I am, but the magazines I read always tell me something new.

I always find myself reading the tabloids just to see what new trend a celebrity is setting. When I'm checking out at the grocery store is the time I read them the most. Although after I read them, I always try to find something similar to wear. I almost have it in my head that I have to have an appearance just like a celebrity. But growing up, I'm learning I can set my own trends and feel just as good, if not better about my appearance. I know now my clothes don't have to be brand name or my hair perfect just because I saw something in a magazine.

Society has always made me think I had to look like a princess to attract a prince. Now that I'm older, I know I learned to care about my appearance from the best. I've also found that many people are unhappy with the constant pressure of trying to impress the world with their appearances.