

time and effort to make herself as attractive as possible is saying, in effect, "I have done my best to please you, and I expect you will treat me with equal kindness and respect." A sloppy woman, on the other hand, communicates this hostile message: "I'm a slob because I don't give a damn about you or anybody else. Who needs your approval? I'm independent." Often, this passive-repulsive type, as Dr. Weider calls her, may also be pathetically challenging people to love her, indirectly and defensively pleading with them to prove to her that she's not as worthless as she appears and unconsciously believes herself to be. Again, Dr. Alvin Friedland, staff psychiatrist at New York's Rockland State Hospital, describes two unlovely types whose message is also quite clear. One, the wallflower, dresses plainly and wears little make-up. Surprisingly, what she really wants from people is attention, but because every show of it always embarrasses her, she tells one and all not to give her any. The embarrassment, says Dr. Friedland, is really guilt over getting what she secretly wants so much. In her phantasy life, she sees herself as the center of attention, wearing daring clothes and exotic make-up. The other type, the conformist, indicates to everyone: "Don't bother about me. I'm just one of the crowd." She puts on make-up just to look like a female, but she isn't really interested and does a poor job of it. Her clothes are never outstanding, but never so styleless as to be conspicuous. She just conforms, drearily.

The Neurotic's Mode

The deliberately unbeautiful, the women who neglect their looks, are rarely enjoying the best of mental health. Neurotic women, for example, are notoriously poor dressers. "For them," Dr. Bergler wryly comments, "the styles do not really change. Regardless of the year or season, they go right on dressing themselves in their unconscious defense mechanisms." One of the many examples he cites is that of a Mrs. C., the daughter of a famous, "cosmetically ageless" beauty and former fashion model. Mrs. C. claimed that she was "disinterested in clothes," and she looked it. "Sartorially," says Dr. Bergler, "she was in the ranks of the indifferent dowdy." She bought clothes only when she needed them, and in her mind she only needed them to keep warm and covered. To complete her grim costume, she wore thick eyeglasses, even though her vision was normal. As Dr. Bergler explains it, the woman was neurotically resolving an anxiety-provoking childhood conflict. Way back then, she had been in competition with her beautiful mother for her father's affection. Guiltily, she "solved" her problem by



EACH OF THE WOMEN'S WARDS has a beauty room with mirrors, basins for washing hair, drier. In addition, women can request appointments at salon.

telling herself, "You have no right to be like Mother and replace her." Her drab clothing represented self-punishment, comparable to self-imposed penitential sackcloth without the ashes. Typically, however, her attire was also a sly, defensive rebuke to her mother which declared, "Only a stupid woman like you pays so much attention to clothes."

Dr. Bergler is convinced that all such tastelessness in dress, particularly in the case of color maniacs who favor eye-jolting color schemes, is "mostly an unconscious pseudo-aggressive and defensive attack on the enshrined mother image." In plain English, tasteless women go through life getting back at Mother for stealing Father away. Dr. Bergler, however, goes out on no limb defining just what constitutes good taste. He goes no further than calling it "the ability to achieve a visible effect without being conspicuous."

The Mind's Image of the Body

Unfortunately, some women strive for a particular sartorial and cosmetic effect that leaves them looking about as attractive as a female behemoth in a bikini. Psychiatrists believe the ghastly result is usually caused by a distorted body image. As defined by Dr. Schilder, a body image is "the picture of our own body which we form in our mind." The trouble is, the mind picture is not always an accurate representation of the body as other people see it. "The body image can shrink or expand," says Dr. Schilder, "and take on different shapes. Our own beauty or ugliness," he continues, "will not only figure in the image we have of ourselves, but will also figure

in the image of us which others build up and which will be taken back again into ourselves." Dr. Camilla M. Anderson, chief of the V. A. Mental Hygiene Clinic in Salt Lake City, shows what can happen as the result of this psychological phenomenon: "It is not uncommon," she says, "to find adults who regard themselves as ugly or unattractive or excessively fat or weak because their parents imbued them with those beliefs in regard to themselves when they were young, and no amount of contrary evidence can disabuse them." Since every article of clothing put on immediately becomes a part of the body image, clothes are selected to fit in with this image and not with the real appearance of the body. Thus, we have the fat woman who likes herself in slacks despite her husband's lament and the snickers of her neighbors; the potentially beautiful woman who dresses and makes up mously because her mother never thought she was pretty; and that small army of women who frustrate conscientious saleswomen coast to coast by invariably turning thumbs down on every becoming outfit while preferring a creation that would stop a clock.

Going Overboard About Beauty

A woman can, of course, go emotionally overboard about beauty even with the best of taste. "A woman's concern for her appearance can, unhappily, develop into a vice, an obsession with beauty that can never be satisfied," says Dr. Eric Riss.

Dr. Riss states that a surprising number of beautiful women put so much emotional stock in their appearance that they