



NOW



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**this is what
young girls
are told to
dress like
as advits.
is this
what we
want the
young generation
aspire to look
like???**

My Thoughts

Halloween has always been the most exciting day of the year for me growing up in a spirited household. Trick-or-treating and decorating the house filled me with excitement and joy, like no other holiday would provide. However, my favorite part of this holiday was picking out my costume. I would always beg my mom to take me to the closest Halloween store to find the perfect costume. I would tell her I need to be “scarier than all of my friends.” She would give me a few options, however, I would always end up with the wicked witch costume. After picking out my costume, I would have no further tasks or worries.

In my mind, I was the scariest witch walking through my neighborhood in search of candy. No other costume would compare. Getting ready for this year's Halloween really showed me the widespread conformity to society young girls face. Instead of focusing on trying to be the “scariest,” teenage girls focus on trying to be the “best dressed.” When my friends and I entered the Halloween store this year, I heard comments like, “I will look fat in this” and “this is too conservative for Halloween.” Teenage girls tend to place more of an emphasis on looking provocative or wearing a costume that attracts the opposite sex.

As young girls become teenagers their priorities evolve as well. The youth tends to idolize and therefore choose a costume that they love and satisfies themselves. As we grow up, this is not the case. Teenage girls are much more likely to choose a costume that someone else would love. Potential reasons for this could be a chance to impress a guy, an opportunity to look sexy, or simply a night out that you can look prettier or skinnier than other girls. The holiday of Halloween itself

has not changed, just our perception of it as we grow up. The best part of Halloween when you are younger is trick or treating and collecting candy with your friends, whereas the best part as you grow up is going to a party and likely not even trick or treating.

As immoral and unethical this concept makes me feel, I am no exception. As an 18 year old freshman girl at college, I did not go to the Halloween store looking for a broomstick and mask...I went looking for something a little more attractive that would show off my body. In the moment, I had not even realized my change in perception; I had just acted as any other teenage girl would the week before Halloween.

The way we choose to dress on Halloween in reality is no different than the way we choose to dress on a regular basis. Each day and night we contribute to the reputation we create for ourselves. Researching the evolution of Halloween costumes as girls mature has given me major insight into the self-image and worth we each perceive of ourselves everyday and how quickly it can diminish based on the values of society. While these values in childhood on Halloween were centered around simply innocence and joyful experience with friends, as we grow up they revolve around the perception of others. Personally this concept makes me think twice about the clothing I choose to wear in terms of not only how society will judge me but also how I will judge myself based on my own self-image and worth. I believe teenage girls should focus on celebrating our uniqueness in a world where we define what's beautiful.

Society Killed the Teenager

Society killed the teenager.
What did we expect?
That the words would roll off their shoulders?
No responsibility to collect?

Society killed her.
They said she wasn't pretty enough.
While on the inside she was starving,
on the outside she looked so tough.

Society killed him.
Depression overtook his mind,
no one ever noticed.
Until the day his gravestone shined.

Society killed them.
On the outside they looked so put together.
Everyone wanted to be in their group,
and then lies brought their friendship a storm it
could not weather.

Society killed us.
It made us something we're not.
How we should act, feel, and look.
But ourselves is what we forgot.



"How would you express the Halloween costumes during your time growing up?"

"My recollection of the details is somewhat vague but I do recall that we had costumes which were put together at home and never purchased. Costumes were not the focal point of Halloween; it was more about playing tricks on one another and collecting candy. I remember my friends and I would compete for the most creative costume. We would brainstorm for hours upon hours until we came up with the perfect costume. Usually costumes were reasonable and comfortable and not revealing. It was not a holiday where children, adolescents and teens wore little or pretended to be sexy as often occurs today." Linda Kotz, age 59.

"How would you express the Halloween costumes during your time growing up?"

"When I was younger I remember Halloween costumes as being something that showed the difference in social class. The richer people were able to buy their costumes, which would be based on whatever was popular, etc. For those of us with less money, they were homemade costumes. Again- things that were popular in pop culture. A lot of times people chose to do things as a group. Costumes were innocent and covered way more than now a days!" Amit Kotz, age 31.

"How would you express the Halloween costumes during your time growing up?"

"Halloween is a very stressful time for girls my age because of the competitiveness among girls. I would always come up with my own costume because the ones in stores have barely any coverage. I think it's ridiculous stores would promote teenagers to wear these type of costumes. Many girls I know do not see the fault in wearing costumes of this sort. Every time Halloween comes around, my mom reminds me that Halloween was not like this growing up during her time. This year celebrating Halloween away from home, my mom reminded me to "dress appropriately." Sara Sefret, age 18.



Why is it that women feel compelled to be a "sexy officer/nurse/computer character" while men get to be the comedic/humorous version of a movie we ever see or man walking around on halloween showing off their body in revealing clothing? Is this what society considers "equal"?



HALLOWEEN COSTUMES

BOYS

Halloween costumes made for men are meant to trigger a laugh. Many costumes present men in a comical way. Many stores sell full suits for men. They are very modest and conservative.

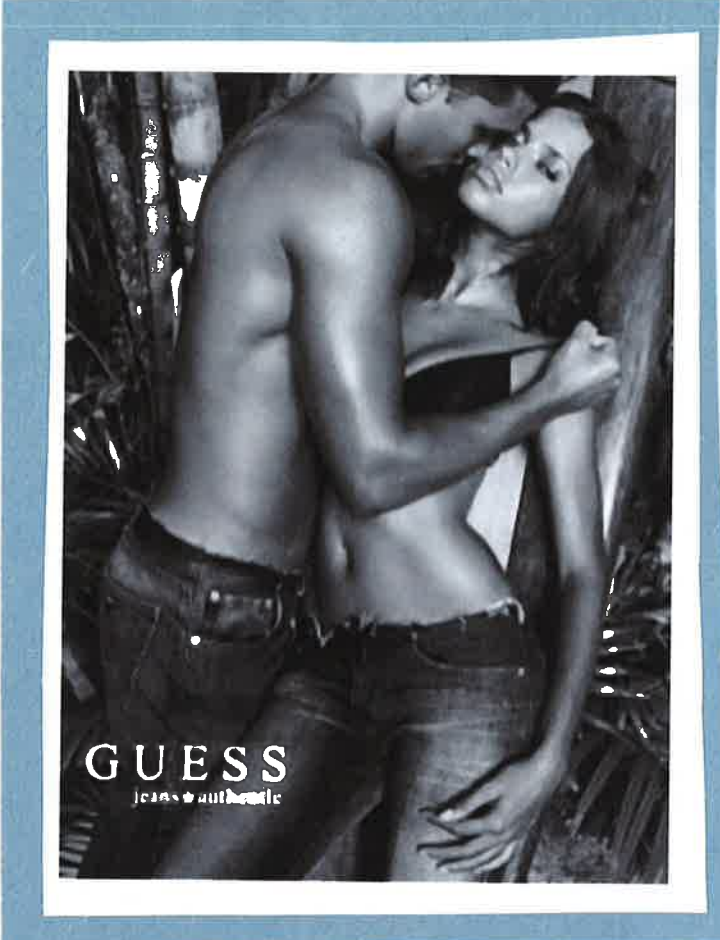
GIRLS

Halloween costumes made for women are meant to trigger a different type of attention. Many costumes are meant to trigger attraction. In stores, women will find costumes that have very little coverage. They are meant to show off the woman's body/figure. These costumes put a sexy spin on uniformed occupations (or anything.) Most costumes for women are skin tight, revealing and sleeveless.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS: THESE PHOTOS PUT INTO HOW WOMEN ARE REPRESENTED IN SOCIETY. THEY ARE SHOWN AS OBJECTS AND TOYS FOR MEN. YOUNG GIRLS SEE THESE PHOTOS AND GET THE MESSAGE THAT THEY NEED TO FIT THIS ROLE WHEN THEY ARE OLDER.

THIS SHOULD BE THE LEAST OF THE WORRIES IN THE MINDS OF YOUNG GIRLS

WOMEN



WOMEN

Innocence Transformed

In conclusion, I think it is

important to understand the evolution of Halloween costumes to better understand the changing values of society. Mean Girls. The movie, brought the issue to the forefront when Cady Heron said, "Halloween is the one night a year when girls can dress like a total s---t and no other girls can say anything about it." This statement has been taken very literally to our generation. This past Halloween was the first time I pondered this issue. Prior to picking out my costume, I entered various Halloween stores, and was appalled by the sights I saw. Not only were the costumes smaller than ever, there were exact costumes mimicked for toddlers and pre-teens. It caught my attention that this is the only thing young girls see and are surrounded by, therefore, they have no other option but to choose the "sexy costumes." While interviewing my mom and older sister, I learned that this has not always been the case. They both told me while growing up, costumes were all about being creative and funny. They never felt the need to impress others, let alone the opposite sex. After researching and interviewing my mom and the opposite sex. After interviewing people of different ages I was able to finally understand that the evolution in Halloween costumes from cute and scary to revealing and provocative is simply due to the change in values over time. Children initially value innocence and pure fun while teens value appearance and recognition. This transformation has allowed me to delve more into issues teen girls/women face daily, in terms of body image, insecurity and intentions of impressing the opposite sex. I think it is important to spread awareness of these various issues in order to prevent more serious issues in the future and to fix society's values.

N X J Y S T R E N G T H H O W A Q S Z
 U S P O I X O B J E C T I V I T Y E O
 Y P O F T Z E L Z F S M N V N V X L T
 V E M C F I S D Z E E Y A E Q G Y F Y
 L E O L I W L I M E D S E F R C U I V
 F R T F K E F U T D M W H P S O J M Y
 Z P J H Q P T S V I O V Q N N N H A F
 Z R D M A S E Y I L Q Q L X O F C G D
 N E K X O F V L L L H U E D T O X E C
 P S C C L Y P A Y A G A L G Z R I L O
 C S S E H L H T X R E X Q C W M Z A N
 K U S U B R U P J Z V F T T C I F Z F
 S R B M Z A M E D D G N E S O T I Y I
 V E T V E D Y G W A V V O F H Y B J D
 S P F B C E A E J D C K N V A W I O E
 H C D G P K P F W Y K H V O S U Q I N
 Y Y B E P S R O K J T Q Z W Z Z G A C
 L G F K Z P S O X C F I K H P B C K E
 Y P E Z B P K S N R C A A N B R L C V

- peer pressure
- objectivity
- self esteem
- confidence
- conformity
- self image
- halloween
- costumes
- strength
- society
- beauty

BOY VS GIRL

HALLOWEEN COSTUME

BOYS

GIRLS



Mandy Morlette News Journal