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Assignment #1



Day Dress

American, 1862–64

White cotton piqué with black soutache

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Chauncey Stillman, 1960 (C.I.60.6.11a, b)

Fashion has been around for many years. Fashion doesn't stay the same. It's always evolving from time to time. Designers create new garments to give an opportunity to show society what people would like to wear based off of what is currently trendy (or at least set their own trend) with their unique sense of creativity. How society dress today isn't the same as before. For the middle and upper class, women who wore garments like the picture shown on the first page are considered to be wealthy. Those garments are expensive with lots of details and specifications of fabric being used. Women change over 2 times a day because each outfit is used for specific time during the day. For example this outfit is a day time dress. It is a white cotton piqué with an embellishment of black soutache at the bottom of the dress and topped with a light jacket to complete the outfit. This look was in between the years of 1862 to 1864. Based on the year and where this dress was made (America) this silhouette is a crinoline cage. It creates a slight puff of the dress. It doesn't really show an exaggeration of fullness. This type of crinoline demonstrates a maximum support for a voluminous shape. From the image shown above, the crinoline cage is narrow over the hips, has a flat surface from the front view, and from the back view it almost looks like a bustle, but it's less padding.

The material of the garment looks like it's heavy weight. Since it is a cotton pique, pique's weave has a cotton yarn and it features parallel cords or fine ribbing. It gives the material a specific pattern and texture that can be seen up close. Nowadays, there are many outfits with lots of comfort from man-made products such as the development of spandex and much more. For my 10 minute experiment, I tried on a loose-fitting garment. I wore an xl t-shirt with

leggings. My t-shirt is very oversized. The t-shirt is a bit big but it feels soft and has a comfortable feel. Although leggings are a tight fitting garment, it's very light-weight and breathable. Since the fabric is cotton and a spandex mix, I was able to do yoga positions such as the butterfly and more without feeling any discomfort. Afterwards I tried on a tight fitting garment, a girdle with tight jeans. I could sit down but I wasn't comfortable enough. I couldn't criss cross my legs. Any movement of discomfort leads me to avoid physical activities.

Experiencing this activity made me realize women received pain a lot worse than I did. Women were in such pain to wear enormous amount of layers with corsets and the different types of framework they had to put on. There's definitely a huge difference in materials of clothing. In the 21st century there's a lot more options for women as to women who lived in the 19th century they were limited to wear tight fitting garments only. It's pretty amazing to see the evolution of what is attractive from the past and what is currently attractive.