

Lanz nightgowns: Sexy way to cut fuel expenses?

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by Tryntje Seymour
Staff Writer

“Mr. Carter's real problem is to bring about a change of fashion, and this he is eminently qualified to do. The task is to make Americans start wearing long, heavy, winter underwear. Once that occurs, thermostats will be set back spontaneously without oratory from Washington.”

Thus, in a New York Times article that appeared Jan. 29, Russell Baker stated his solution to this winter's heating-fuel shortage. He offered his proposal as an alternative to President Carter's appeal to Americans to set back their thermostats to 65 degrees.

Smith students, in coping with the heating problems and long, cold winters at the College seem to have come up with their own solution: Lanz nightgowns.

“I didn't have any warm nightgowns,” said a freshman in Jordan House who has bought two Lanzes since she has been at the College. “I never needed them at home, but since the houses are so cold I thought it was a good investment.”

Of 136 students asked, 83 said they owned at least one Lanz nightgown. Many said they had between two and six, and one student, Anne Bolanis '79, said she owned eleven Lanzes — six winter style and five summer style.

“I like them because they are well made, very comfortable, and warm,” said Bolanis, who has been wearing Lanz nightgowns for ten years. Yet she expressed surprise about their abundance at the College. “When I first came to

Smith I was shocked at the amount of Lanz nightgowns, but even more amazed at the status attached to them! I understand why people like them, but I don't understand how they could become such a status item.”

Those who wear Lanz nightgowns do so, they said, because Lanzes are warm, comfortable, well-made, and heavy enough to be worn without a bathrobe.

Lauren Breakiron '80, discovered another value of Lanz nightgowns. “This may sound strange, but I'll usually wear the long one if a guy I don't know too well spends the night in the room. It's the only long nightgown I have. I usually don't wear any. I must admit, I was surprised at the number of these nightgowns I've seen at Smith. It's as if they're the thing in town. They're just nightgowns—what's the big deal?”

A freshman from Albright expressed similar concern over Lanz status at the College. “I own other flannel nightgowns. They're just as warm, soft, and cuddly but don't have the status. All I need to do is change my no-name flannels to Lanz and I'll be accepted into the Smith image. I went to a prep school and they didn't wear Lanzes there, so it's not a prep school syndrome but a Smith one.”

“I dislike Lanz nightgowns because they are basically ugly,” protested another student. “The patterns are bland. My roommate's last year was grey — it was disgusting. Lanz specializes in vapid, undistinctive patterns. My ‘fakie’ is a rich red, far more at-

tractive than the genuines and more expensive, which is more important at Smith College.”

Mary Heidbreder '80, disagrees. She considers Lanz nightgowns “very practical, reasonable, and common sensical. By the way,

but no longer does, vehemently expressed her opinion—opposing that of Bottum. “I am sickened by the mindless preppies whose sense of security is so non-existent that it undermines their choice of what they wear to bed, forcing them to

costly. In addition they are recyclable, being eminently suitable for wear on one's wedding night. The woman who presents herself to her lover/husband garbed in a bit of cotton flannel printed with cattle both behorned



they're very feminine looking. Is that so terrible?”

Maggie Bottum '80, who doesn't own any Lanz nightgowns, also approves of them, and finds no status attached to them. “In Utah, where many of my friends never even considered going to college, and where status symbols are refreshingly absent, almost every teenage girl wears Lanz nightgowns. They are very pretty, feminine, warm, and extremely well made.”

Priscilla Baybutt '79, who wore a Lanz nightgown at the age of six,

sport sexless, unattractive garments which invariably end up wrapped around one's throat at 4:00 a.m. causing a disturbance in the REM stage of dreaming and acute discomfort, as well as a visual blight during our cheerless breakfasts. Why my sensibilities have to be assaulted early in the morning by such atrocities as poached eggs and Lanz nightgowns remains inexplicable.

“Is it status? Then why don't the Smithlets of my acquaintance appear in satin-de-lys or lace negligees? They are infinitely more

and beudered appears androgynous, stuffy, and misinformed as to the anatomical variances of the secondary sex characteristics of both humans and animals.”

Nevertheless, a fair number of students feel that Lanz nightgowns are not preppie or status symbols. As Karen Cole '80, stated, “I was wearing Lanz nightgowns before I even knew what preppie meant, and I resent it when people look at my Lanz and say ‘Oh, a preppie!’”

Lynn Croteau '80, agreed with Cole, reminding us of the value Russe! Baker would most likely give to Lanz nightgowns. “They are warm, and necessary when sleeping next to the window that lets the North wind in. They are comfortable. And I think all this concern of preppie status is for the birds!”

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