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ON THE INTERPRETATION

OF OTHER PEOPLE'S DRESS

In everyday life, the way people dress is thought to furnish the attentive observer with information about them. In ethnomethodological terms, we would say that clothing is a source of "social information," allowing subjects to form an idea of the "social and personal identity" of other people. For the sake of convenience, albeit simplifying somewhat, we may distinguish three aspects of this phenomenon: the dress observed, the interpretative process, and the results of the interpretation. This article is concerned with the process of interpretation itself. What I am trying to aim at is this: how to represent this process in a metalanguage, by means of a kind of artificial mechanism capable of simulating it adequately. And I shall be arguing that semiotics can provide a worthwhile conceptual framework for such a metalanguage.

Having thus stated my general aims, I ought now to restore a sense of proportion to this study and add that I shall be confining myself in this article to a presentation of some general consid-

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erations regarding the various elements (concepts and rules) that might go to make up the metalanguage in question. What follows, then, are merely some preliminary thoughts concerned with identifying—from a bird's-eye viewpoint, I might add—those groups of problems that a hypothetical future "grammar of recognition" of dress would, at some risk, have to study in detail.[1]

I. INDICES OF APPEARANCE

1.1 *An indexical mechanism.* First let us assume E. Goffman's distinction between the indices a person supplies about his social identity, and those he supplies as to his personal identity.[2] It is commonly thought that clothing is a good indicator of a person's social identity. We speak of "a City gent's suit," a "bookmaker's suit," of someone's being dressed like a "bumpkin," or a "Kensington mum," of "arty clothes," or "shop assistant's attire," for instance; and humanity has dreamed up any number of proverbs relating to dress (see plate 1). Second, let us assume that an observer interprets by relating dress to a given type of occupation or social position. For instance, we have this comment, from a reader of a women's magazine, in reply to the question: could the woman in the picture be an executive?" (plate 2):

[1] I shall not be trying, here, to arrive at a new description of actually recorded observations of dress. Which is why I have confined myself to utilizing here some relatively banal observations concerning the information supplied by dress. The facts to which I shall be referring form an heterogeneous corpus, consisting of observations recorded directly by myself, or drawn from a series of qualitative interviews (semi-directive, with projective tests using photographs) supposedly representative of the middle or upper classes; scenarios and accounts of behaviour, either imagined or found in a variety of books, films and women's magazines. I have drawn heavily on Erving Goffman's descriptions, hypotheses and concepts.

[2] An element is said to be an index of an individual's social identity when it enables an observer to identify this individual as a member of one or more broad categories: social class, place of residence, occupational category, ideological ties, etc. This type of identification consists in spotting the characteristics that make this individual similar to all members of the category to which one ascribes him. To look for a subject's personal identity, on the other hand, is to find what marks him out from all others, what makes him incomparable. (Cf. Goffman, 1975).

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"Too relaxed, slovenly, non-conformist appearance.
Might do for a secretary, but not for a female executive."

To form an idea of the process whereby an individual infers a social characteristic from an item of clothing, we may employ the concept of "index," in the sense in which Prieto uses it (1975, 15-23). In this sense, the observer reads an index by lining up what in logic we would call two "types of meaning", namely: a) the attire actually worn by the woman, and all the other possible attires, form the "sphere of denotative meaning"; b) the social category to which the person being observed actually belongs or is thought to belong, along with all the other categories to which he might belong, *given the observer's mental picture of the socio-occupational structure of society*, meanwhile, go to make up the "sphere of denoted meaning." Having assigned a given style of attire to a certain class within the sphere of denotative meaning, one can then infer the observed individual's membership of a particular class within the sphere of denoted meaning, due to the existence of correlations between certain class features which, in the observer's experience, are verified on all occasions.

1.2 *The identity of clothing.* I shall now attempt to spell out what is meant by "recognizing that a given attire belongs to a certain class in the sphere of denotative meaning."
   We need to distinguish between, on the one hand, the object "clothing" (in our example: creaseless trousers + shapeless jacket + tee-shirt + scarf), and on the other the class to which

[3] This example is taken from a survey carried out by the women's monthly *Marie-Claire* (August 1979, n. 324). This magazine proceeded as follows: "We began by dressing, hairstyling and making-up a single model in six ways that seemed to us to symbolize clearly six different types of woman. We then took six photographs, which we sent to a hundred different firms whose managers had agreed to help us with the survey. Our accompanying letter explained: 'Assuming these six women have the same qualifications and are all equally competent to hold an executive position (departmental head, for example), we should like to know which, in your view, most closely matches your company's profile, in other words, which one you would be most likely to hire'." This test does introduce a slight bias—although I do not attach much importance to it—in terms of the problem I am discussing, in as much as the reader is asked to choose the woman most likely not so much to *be* an executive as to *become* one.

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this object is assigned (i.e.: "slovenly" dress, "non-conformist"). The object "clothing" is itself complex. It is a combination₁ of items of clothing (e.g. sandals + trousers + jacket + acces- sories). Each item is itself the result of a combination₂ of pos- sible forms and shapes (trousers may be bell-bottomed, baggy, tight-fitting), of colours and patterns, of fabrics (a man's suit may be made of tweed, alpaca, denim). Each of these variants can be assigned some "value" in the social imagination (or in areas of it, cf. 1.3 below), expressed by an adjective. Together, these adjectives form the sphere of denotative meaning. For example, we speak of an old-maidish, modest or provocative shape; a gay, strict, romantic or pure colour; a tender, sophisti- cated or abrasive fabric; an item of clothing may be traditional, sensual, may be reminiscent of wartime, or suggest sport, the Roaring Twenties, etc.; a combination₁ may be inventive, discreet, elegant, vulgar, and so on. The fashion weeklies are a major source of this vocabulary (cf. Barthes, 1967, for a detailed account).[4]

1.3 *Identity of clothing and point of view.* The object "clothing" as described here is an aggregate of several characteristics (shape, colour, fabric, etc.). Now, each of these can be classified in several different ways in the sphere of denotative meaning. For instance, a dark brown suit may be identified with reference to the combination₁ ("it's an elegant outfit"), or on the basis of the colour variant ("it's drab"). Consequently, a single outfit may have several different identities, depending upon which feature the observer decides is most pertinent. But, as Prieto points out (1975, 145-148), "under no circumstances does the pertinence

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[4] The existence of these conventional relations between items of clothing and predicates gives rise to a more direct mechanism of meaning than the one examined here. Observers may, by means of a metonymy, transfer the predicate from the clothing to its wearer, that is, attribute to the individual an ego having the qualities of the clothing. The person will then be considered strict, sophisticated, conventional, traditional, vulgar, etc. One example, taken from the same *Marie-Claire* survey: "A straitlaced woman, with a knife-sharp trouser- crease, her handbag strap taut as a bow (...). She looks as if she'd give you a parking ticket even if your car had broken down." In this respect, clothing plays a similar role to facial and hand gestures and bearing, which are also metonymies of the person, to the extent of entering our everyday language: straitlaced, tense, haughty, pouting, smiling, to look like one's swallowed a hatstand: to throw out one's chest, etc.

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Clothing maketh the man (Greek proverb)

In my land, my name; in a foreign land, my garments
(Hebrew)

Costly apparel shows poverty of mind
(Mediaeval Latin)

A featherbrained woman is known by her clothes
(17th cent. French)

It's the tailor that makes a great lord (German)

*In the man one knows, one respects his virtue; in the man
one does not know, it is his clothing one looks to*
(Chinese)

*Take care that your garments show you not as you are but
as you should appear to be* (Spanish)

Fine feathers make fine birds (French)

Clothes change both manners and look (French)

A monk is not made by his habit (French)

The bird owes much to his plumage (French)

Frayed clothes, credit in tatters (Italian)

Looks lie, smiles betray, but garments never deceive
(French)

Plate 1
Proverbs about clothing, from M. Maloux,
*Dictionnaire des proverbes, sentences
et maximes, Paris,* Larousse, 1971.

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of the characteristics determining this identity depend on the object itself; (...) pertinence always depends on the standpoint from which the subject considers the material object (...). The standpoint that makes the way one regards an object pertinent is always supplied by the subject. But, it should immediately be added, by a subject belonging to a social group in which what we might call a 'symbolic power' confers some legitimacy upon specific viewpoints." According to this argument, a given outfit may be assigned different identities by different observers, depending on the relations between each observer and the reigning symbolic power(s).

1.4 *The identity of the person observed, and points of view.* Let us now come back to the problem of the correlations which observers establish between certain classes of clothing and certain social classifications. The important point is that these correlations are not governed by any arbitrary convention: clothing has no equivalent in the dictionary. So the question is: how is this "knowledge" acquired and transmitted. One answer would be to say that the subjects' grammar of recognition is closely conditioned by their own clothing habits.

This hypothesis is borne out by the following observation. We know that cultural practices, e.g. clothing practices, are also class practices. They are shaped by specific and distinctive norms. In the case of clothing, these norms govern the types of combination, $_1$ and $_2$, regarded as acceptable or unacceptable within the class being considered. The following are examples of bourgeois norms: "These are indefeasible rules... with a dinner jacket, one wears a black tie; with evening dress, a white tie"; "wearing one's watch and chain in one's trouser pocket is the kind of thing a stable-lad might think elegent" (Trévières, 1929). Examples of distinctive norms for executives (this is a personal observation): one strategy "intellectual" executives adopt in the services sector (researchers, consultants, advertising men anl journalists), to stand apart from their "technocratic" counterparts in industry (engineers, accountants and sales managers), might be to spurn the two or three-piece suit at work in favour of casual wear (this 'battle of the outfits' may even be fought out inside a single firm if this should happen to have "creative" and managerial

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and commercial departments working alongside each other, as is the case in newspapers, advertising firms, consultancy firms, publishers, etc.). So there are not *one*, but *several*, systems of differentiated norms bearing on clothing. If the assumption of a close link between the practice and the interpretation of clothing is correct, then two individuals subject to different clothing norms are liable to place different interpretations upon the outfits they are reading.[5] And this is what in fact happens. Thus, in the example quoted above (Marie-Claire, August 1979), all the observers placed the outfit in the class of "casual clothes." But some of them associated this denoter with the denotation "can't be an executive," while others replied "executive." Now, these different readings flow from the different clothing habits customary among their respective groups, since everyone giving the second answer belonged to "advertising agencies or garment firms, where the casual look is not only acceptable but positively encouraged." It follows from this that the grammar of recognition in clothing will need to incorporate these sociological variables; in other words, it will have to contain contextual mechanisms which may in some cases prevent, and in others permit, one or more interpretations of an outfit.

II. Indices of Manner

2.1 *The time and the place.* We may distinguish two broad categories of sign capable of furnishing social information about an individual. First, there are the "indices of appearance," among which we have included clothing, which reveal the social status of the actor. Then we have "indices of manner," which offer more elusive indices, such as the position, the attitude or opinion of the actor towards events occurring within the setting. It is well known, for instance, that the fact of deliberately dressing

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[5] The variation in question is not comparable to that mentioned in § 1.2. In the first case, we were dealing with differences relating to the identity of the object "clothing," i.e. with its classification within a given sphere of denotative meaning. Here, though, we are concerned with variations in the identity ascribed to the wearer, i.e. with variations in the correlations that the observer establishes between denoter and denoted.

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differently from the other participants may, in certain situations, amount to such an index. Some examples follow:

a. "In the country, at breakfast, gentlemen may also appear in suitable, sober pyjamas, except for the master of the house, who would do well to wear a simple, strict morning jacket, to set the tone and show that, despite his easygoing outlook, he wants these friendly, relaxed gatherings to remain respectable" (Trévières, 1929, 107).

b. A managing director, having for once asked his executives to attend a Saturday meeting at the office, decided to appear jacketless and in an open-necked shirt, his sleeves rolled up, to show the others that he meant this to be a relaxed occasion (personal observation).

c. After a number of unlucky tries, young D. chose to marry a cousin of his, daughter of the family L. The husband's father disapproved of this consaguineous—and moneyless—marriage. Here is what he did to indicate his disapproval; although morning dress was stipulated for the day of the marriage, he turned up in a tweed suit, to show that he personally did not think this a sufficiently important ceremony to warrant more elegant attire (personal observation).

The problem them is to know what types of notion and operation need to be introduced into the grammar of recognition in order to simulate the reasoning by which the observer induces the denoted "subject's opinion of the situation" from the denoting "dress." To this end, I shall employ three concepts: "unofficial definition of the situation," "scales of formality" and "relations of scales."

2.2 *The unofficial definition.* When several people attend a preplanned, non-fortuitous gathering, their behaviour may be viewed as performing certain roles. The important point is that not all roles are equally possible in a given situation. This may be taken to mean that there is such a thing as an unofficial definition of the situation, that this is known to those taking part, and that it lays down the types of role expected of them and the self-images to be observed or avoided. In general, the definition of the

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situation embraces the dress to be worn as well. On occasion, these rules of dress may be explicit, as in "lounge suits" on invitations. In other cases, there are people on hand to ensure that this unwritten law is upheld, as in the case of nightclub doormen, head waiters in luxury restaurants (who sometimes have a stock of ties for absent-minded customers), or personnel managers in big firms. Most of the time, these rules of dress are tacit, but they are none the weaker for that: one merely has to think of those scenes in literature, in which a guest arrives unwittingly "overdressed" or "underdressed" at a dinner party, and of his feelings of embarrassment. So, when we speak of an "unofficial definition," this really must be taken, in the context that interests us, to indicate a system of norms which a) participants are meant to be conversant with and, b) associates certain classes belonging to the world of clothing with certain classes belonging to the world of situations.

2.3 *Scales of formality.* We may regard each of these worlds as consisting of a series of classes ranked in a hierarchy of formality, which is itself a representation of the way the subjects rank different situations (from the most intimate or down-to-earth to the most ceremonial) and different types of dress (from the most everyday to the most elegant). For example, subjects may classify situations in the following manner (the symbol $X<Y$ indicating that situation X is less formal than situation Y):

—Alone at home $<$ at home with one's wife $<$ with close friends $<$ with one's husband's boss $<$ marriage of one's eldest daughter $<$ etc.

Similarly, concerning the world of dress, the top half of men's clothing is generally acknowledged to be ranked as follows:

—Pullover $<$ jerkin $<$ non-matching jacket $<$ jacket and tie $<$ lounge suit $<$ dark suit $<$ dinner jacket etc.[6]

[6] Erving Goffman puts forward a similar hypothesis when classifying situations in relation to the "front and back" axis (cf. 1973, 106-136). James Laver, referring to dress, postulates a similar classification to establish the law that bears his name, which may be summarized as follows: let there be a hierarchy of dress: sport$<$casual$<$formal$<$ceremonial. Historical evolution generally moves in the same direction: one age's sportswear becomes the next age's casual wear, and the casual wear which it supplants becomes promoted to

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2.4 *Relation of scales.* The hypothesis that these scales are related amounts to saying that the two classifications are correlated, and that the correlations inform individuals as to which class of dress is appropriate to the class of situation they are about to be confronted with. There is no lack of examples of such correlations. For the sake of convenience, I shall present a handful of excerpts from an old already out-dated "*Treatise on how to dress*" (Trévières, 1929), although one could find equally clearcut examples in Barthes' analysis of fashion talk (1967, 31-32):

—In the 1920s, it was important to dress according to the kind of theatre one was going to: it made a difference whether one was going out to a big theatre or a subsidized one, or to a genre theatre, a Shaftesbury Avenue theatre, a small theatre, or an upstairs theatre (p. 51).

—To dance the foxtrot or the tango, one should always wear patent-leather shoes; but if one is to dance before dinner, between 5 and 8, then the appropriate dress is the tipped and seamed patent-leather shoe; whereas if one plans to do justice to the fashionable new Blues and Charleston after dinner, then just a plain, shiny patent-leather shoe, without seams or tips, would be infinitely more chic (p. 37).

—Climbers may complete the outfit with a knitted silk tie, which may be removed once the hotels have been left behind. In its place, a good neckerchief and scarf would be appropriate (p. 139).

2.5 *Interpreting the index.* The existence of unofficial rules laying down the appropriate type of dress for each type of situation gives rise to a first category of index. For, as subjects are obliged to dress before they can actually participate in the situation, they have to guess its position on the scale of formality (§ 2.3), giving practical shape to their guesses in the way they finally decide to dress. Where the subject has misjudged the actual situation, observers will have little trouble working out,

the role of formal wear, yesterday's formal wear becomes today's ceremonial wear, and what used to be ceremonial attire is put on show in a museum. This accounts for the respective careers of men's and women's suits, in particular (Laver, 1963).

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through identification of his outfit, the kind of advance assumptions the subject must have made about the situation. The outfit in question (= denotative) thus reveals to the observer (cf. §§ 2.3 and 2.4) the subject's advance guess (= denoted) about the situation.[7]

A similar interpretative mechanism is at work in examples *a*, *b*, and *c* above. Let's take case *c*. Basing themselves on the position of the "tweed suit" in the scale of formality, and referring to the relations of scales, observers will infer that D... took his son's marriage to be only a middlingly elegant situation: at any rate, he placed it lower in the scale than did the remainder of the wedding guests, including the bride's father. But it needs to be pointed out that this anecdote, like *b* and *a*, differs from the foregoing in the sense that D could not have been unaware of the prescribed rules of dress for the occasion. The disagreement could not be passed off as a mistake: it had to be deliberate. Consequently, the observer is driven to acknowledge two indices simultaneously: on the one hand, the subject's idea of the situation; and secondly, the fact that if his dress is inappropriate to the situation, it is not because of a misjudgement but because he deliberately wishes to communicate his idea of the situation to the observer.

III. INTENTIONALITY

The observer's recognition of the nature—intentional or otherwise—of the indices supplied by the subject's attire must therefore form part of his interpretative activity. The problem then is to characterize the slightly hazy notion of "intentionality," in order subsequently to be able to relate it to the mechanisms discussed above.

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[7] Unlike other indices of manner, clothing offers only very limited opportunities of rectification. Still, there are a few minor stratagems to which one can resort. For instance, a man can take the risk of wearing a neckerchief while carrying a tie in his pocket, allowing him to execute an about-face should the need arise. This is less uncommon than one might imagine. It is practically an institution at the French newspaper *Le Monde*, where many journalists keep a tie in their desk-drawer in case they should suddenly be summoned to the Chief Editor's office.

Photo n. 1
The casual
creative look.
Only 8% of
respondents chose
this photo, while
one company in
ten rejected it out
of hand.
Those that rejected
it said the
image was utterly
incompatible with
their idea of a
female executive.
Why? Well...
"Too relaxed;
looks slovenly,
she would neither
want to receive
orders nor to give
them. It might do
for a secretary, but
not fot a female
executive." One
businessman who
disliked photo n. 1
even wrote that he
"hoped our survey
would convince women
of the need to look
neat, tidy and
reliable." On the
other hand, the
people who chose this
photo wrote to tell us
that what attracted
them was the woman's
"natural, unsophisticated,
relaxed, easy-mannered"
appearance.
interestingly, this last
category consisted
exclusively of
advertising agencies
and ready-to-wear
makers, where a
relaxed, casual look
is not only
considered acceptable
but actually
encouraged.

August 1979
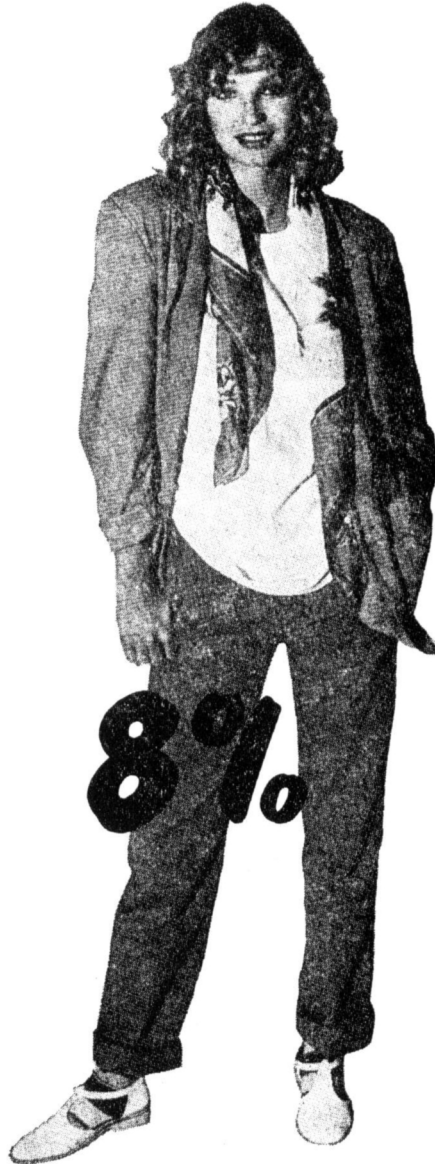*Marie-Claire*,

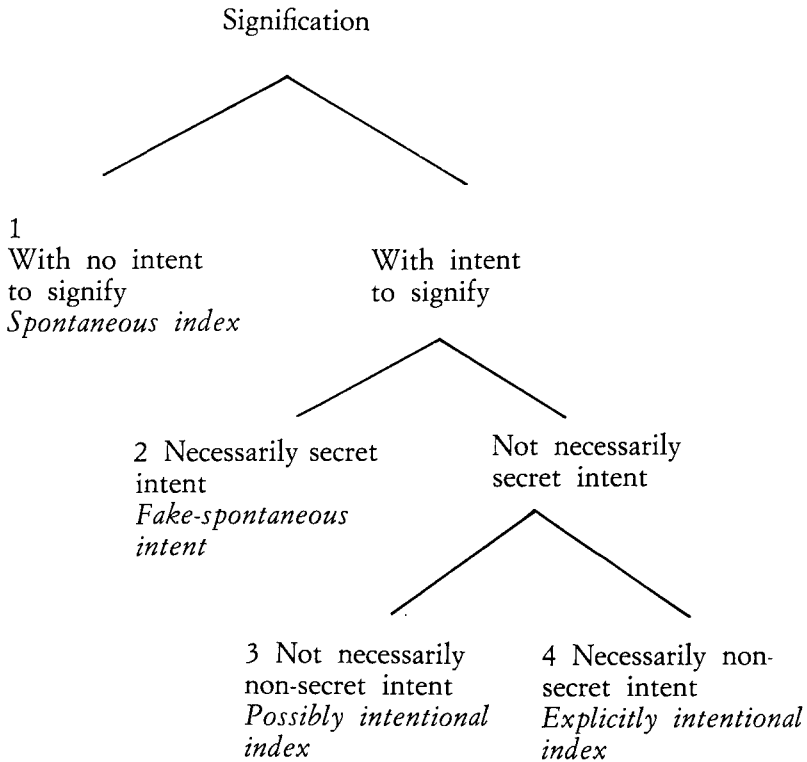188   Plate 2

Photo Marie-Claire/Mary Russel.

3.1 *Four types of index.* We habitually distinguish several general categories of index. The first, that of spontaneous indices, consists of involuntary gestures or utterances, or ones produced with some intention other than to denote anything whatever. This is the case with pathological symptoms or a reddening of the forehead. Similarly, someone who inserts a skeleton key into a lock clearly reveals, by this deliberate act, his intention of robbing the house; but equally obviously his act is not supposed to indicate this intention. A second category consists of fake-spontaneous indices, produced with the deliberate intention of supplying certain indices which, in order to succeed, must not allow this intention to surface: such indices must be presented as involuntary and spontaneous. This is the case with bluffing at poker, or with lying in general which, to get people to go along with one, need to be perceived not as artifices but as spontaneous gestures or utterances. Spies, confidence tricksters and *femmes fatales* are experts at this sort of duplicity.

A third category is represented by explicitly (and conventionally) intentional indices, by deliberate gestures or utterances produced for the purpose of supplying indices, and which only achieve this end if they are recognized as having been produced for this purpose. An example of this would be the cairns on mountain tracks, little heaps of stones placed there to point the way, and which can only supply this indication if the walker knows they have been put there for that purpose. This was the case too with Tom Thumb's pebbles, strewn along the path to help him find his way home: the stones could obviously have provided this information only if the interpreter realized that they had been thrown down deliberately. Finally, and above all, this is the case with explicit linguistic communication, according to H.P. Grice. One last category, akin to the foregoing, consists in those indices for which the observer's recognition of the originator's intention is independent of how he interprets the index: the latter would remain unchanged whether or not he realized its intentional origins. This is the case, for example, if A tries to inform B that he is rich by wearing a very costly jewel. It makes no difference to the result being sought by A whether B interprets the message as intentional ("A is wearing this jewel on purpose") or spontaneous ("A always wears this jewel").

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Which gives us the following diagram:[8]

Signification

1
With no intent
to signify
Spontaneous index

With intent
to signify

2 Necessarily secret
intent
*Fake-spontaneous
intent*

Not necessarily
secret intent

3 Not necessarily
non-secret intent
*Possibly intentional
index*

4 Necessarily non-
secret intent
*Explicitly intentional
index*

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[8] The four-class typology presented here is taken from that proposed by H.P. Grice, as stated in Recanati, 1979 (pp. 174-178). Luis J. Prieto proposes one containing only three classes: spontaneous fake-spontaneous and explicitly intentional (Cf. Prieto, 1975, pp. 15-16). Erving Goffman, meanwhile, employs a dichotomy or indices, between "explicit" (=intentional) expressions and "indirect" (=spontaneous) ones. (Cf. Goffman, 1973, pp. 12-16).

3.2 *Dress and intention.* This typology allows us to progress in our analysis of the recognition of clothing indices. For the attentive observer, reading an outfit consists in hunting for indices capable of belonging simultaneously to the four classes in this typology. From this layered interpretation there flow a number of distinct types of "social information": thus, for example, one's conclusions (and hence the way one behaves towards the actor) will differ according to whether the source of the information deduced lies in spontaneous indices or, alternatively, in patently fake-spontaneous ones.

We shall now take a look at some examples illustrating the different ways in which observers may interpret other people's attire. Let us begin by imagining someone about to ask his bank manager for a loan, and that he decides that the best strategy is to look sober, conventional, sound, in his behaviour as well as in his references. For his meeting with the bank manager, the most appropriate dress would be a dark three-piece suit, with a fairly conservative tie. Now, if our man really wishes to impress his bank manager with his seriousness, he must avoid giving him the simultaneous associated impression—which goes hand in hand with intentional indices—that he has deliberately put on a suit designed to convey the idea of a sound fellow. For the bank manager might conclude that, if this individual is capable of so far controlling his appearance, then he must also be capable of disguising himself and that, consequently, the index cannot be altogether reliable. He will, in that case, try to verify its accuracy by other means. In this example, clothing can only be an index of seriousness if the banker is able to postulate its spontaneousness.

Let us now take a look at the—by no means unusual—case of the public's remaining sceptical in the face of such behaviour. For instance, if I am in the habit of wearing "casual" outfits, this may be because I wish to persuade you that my disdain for stricter wear is an index of genuineness, of the depth of my personality and of my concern for more "permanent values." That is the index I lay before you. But I may fail to take you in; you may suspect some deception, and spot beneath this pseudo-index my efforts to appear deep; you may persuade yourself that, if I am making an effort to look it, then it must be

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because I am not it, and you will conclude that I am acting in bad faith. Thereafter, you will interpret my behaviour as producing fake-spontaneous indices. (Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, Eng. trans. 1969, contains two models of this type of scepticism, one concerning a café-waiter, p. 59, the other a young woman being seduced, p. 55).

These fake-spontaneous indices are so commonplace that they have even bred warning proverbs such as "a monk is not made by his habit." In most cases, though, it is hard to deny that the fact of wearing one kind of outfit rather than another is the outcome of a deliberate act. In other words, for both the subject and the people with whom he is dealing, the intention presiding over his choice of dress may (though not necessarily) be "public knowledge," in the sense that the participants are aware of the intention, know that the others know, and know that the others know they know. So, I may know that this young woman has put on a black silk dress with the intention of presenting herself as a *femme fatale*, and yet, despite having penetrated her designs, she still looks to me as she wants me to see her, and produces the desired effect on me. The conclusion I draw from this is that there exists a category of indices that achieve their aim even though they are patently premeditated. (As an illustration of this last category, that of explicitly intentional indices, I refer the reader to the strategies examined in § 2.1).

So, as we have seen, other people's dress can supply indices according to each of these four modes. The important point is that interpreting an outfit entails looking for indices in accordance with several of these modes at once. Thus, let's take another look at the general example of the subject who unwittingly misjudges the situation he is about to encounter. Let us imagine him turning up for a "casual" dinner in an over-formal outfit. For example, he may be wearing 1979's fashions, i.e. 60s-style wear, with a tiny tie-knot, a narrow collar, drab colours, short jacket with narrow lapels, narrow-bottomed pleated trousers. The observer may deduce from this outfit that: a) the subject is refined, sophisticated, "with it," on the basis of indices that are presumed to be intentional (hence open to doubt) supplied by the identity of the object "dress"; and that b) the subject is a "blunderer," "clumsy" and ridiculous, on the basis of the spontaneous index

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supplied by the subject's misapprehension. If he feels so inclined, the observer may thus form an impression of a subject whose actions belie his appearance, of a contradictory and ultimately ridiculous character, by combining two different (from the stand-point of intentionality) types of index in his interpretation.

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