

Daria: Fashion Character

NEW YORK — Sixteen-year-old Daria Morgendorffer knows the importance of fashion. After all, she's a high school student — by definition immersed in a highly competitive, extremely clothes-conscious environment.

Starring in her own hit cartoon before she's old enough to join the army or drink a glass of champagne could be overwhelming, but Daria doesn't get caught up in the hype of being a star on MTV. After all, she got her start as a minor character on "Beavis and Butt-head" before branching out into her own series last year, so she can hold her own with the best of them. Her brand of brainy, sarcastic humor and her laid-back look of oversized eye-glasses, short skirt, jacket and boots, have touched a chord with viewers across the country.

Daria took time out from her busy schedule of tapings, homework and hanging out at the pizza parlor to share her opinions on fashion.

WWD: You act blasé about fashion, but we know you're smarter than that. What's your opinion about fashion and its role in our society?

Daria: I believe fashion has a very important role in society, allowing us to capture the attention of potential sexual partners while signaling our social status to potential sexual rivals. It serves roughly the same function as the brightly colored pads on a mandrill's buttocks.

WWD: Even people who profess not to have an interest in fashion end up making a state-

adults imposing their will on teens?

Daria: My mother told me that when she was in high school, the students staged a walkout over the right to wear jeans. They felt oppressed by rigid dress requirements. Now school uniforms are coming back because students feel oppressed by rigid stylishness requirements. Something seems to have gone very, very wrong in the last 30 years, but at least we got rid of Nixon.

WWD: When asked by fans why you never change your outfit, you mentioned that on cable you don't have the kind of budget they have on the big networks. If you had an unlimited clothing allowance, what would you wear and why?

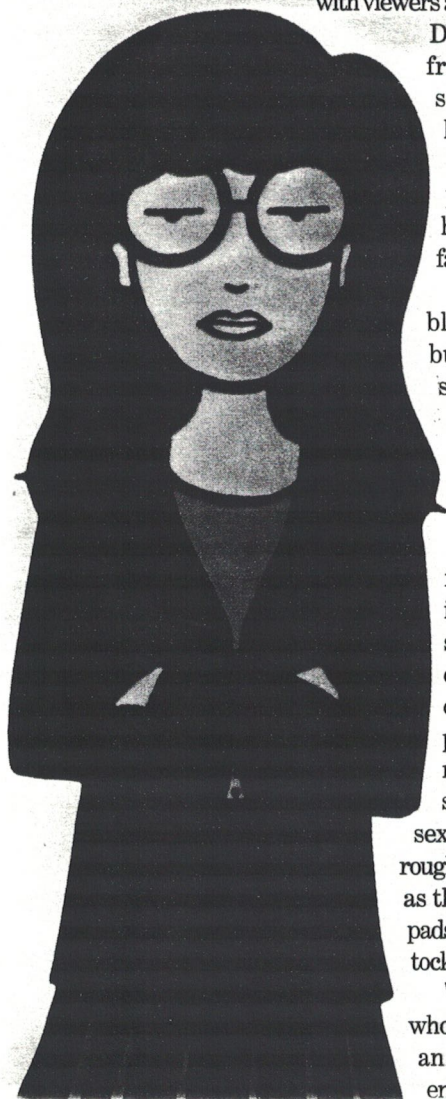
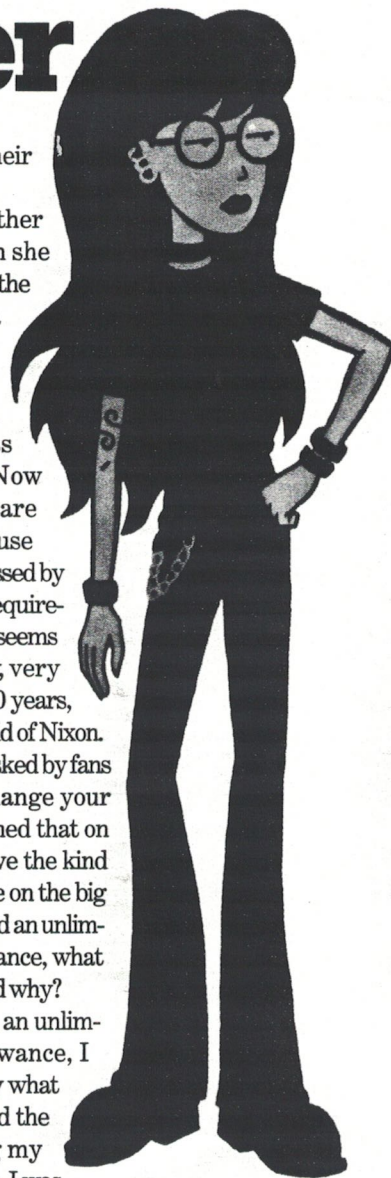
Daria: If I had an unlimited clothing allowance, I would wear exactly what I do now and spend the money equipping my private army. Oops, I was going to keep that a **What she'd wear on a date.** secret.

WWD: How do you reconcile your skepticism about our consumer society and aversion to rampant consumption with the fact that your own image appears on a number of licensed products?

Daria: I'd like to answer with a little parable. "I wept because I had no shoes...until I met a man who had no DARIA(TM)(c.1998 MTV Networks) (Official Licensed Dariawear) socks." Believe me, if it were up to me, there'd be no licensed Daria gear at all. But let those sniveling little South Park brats stop first.

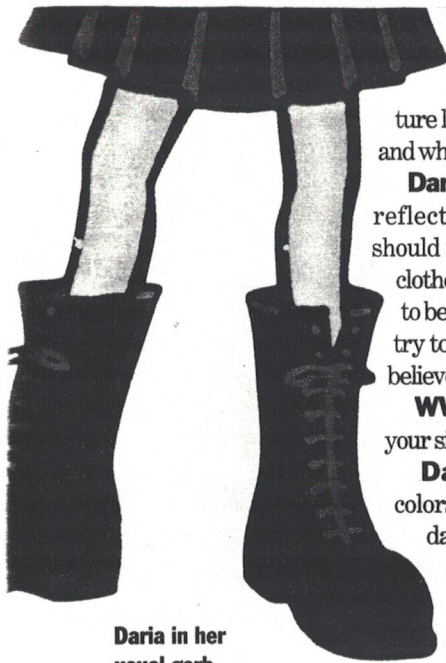
WWD: Your hair has just the right combination of bounce and hold. Share your styling secrets.

Daria: Well, I try to eat at least two slices of pizza a day to give my hair shine. I read a lot of books because it promotes blood flow to the scalp. I have my split ends trimmed biannually without fail. And, because I believe you're only as beautiful outside as you are on the inside, I never go to bed angry unless I have a pretty good idea of how I'm going to exact my revenge.



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Despite the no



Daria in her usual garb.

when my parents are talking. My boots send a clear message: "I can kick you." And my skirt is pleated so that it flares nicely when I'm ballroom dancing and my partner whirls me.

WWD: Why do you think smart people often feel they cannot have an interest in fashion?

Daria: It's not that smart people feel they can't have an interest in fashion. It's just that, like Superman, they often feel compelled to use their powers for good instead of evil. So they think it's more important for them to ponder the human condition, than, say, what's going to replace itty-bitty handbags next year.

WWD: Your style seems like a cross between Carrie Donovan and The Spice Girls. Who has influenced the way you dress?

Daria: Oh, Eva Peron, Imelda Marcos, Lucrezia Borgia...the usual role models. And in the area of color; Gumby.

WWD: What's your opinion on school uniforms for teens? Do you think they would reduce the pressure to be "fashionable" or would this be just another example of

ment with their clothing choices. How does your signature look reflect who you are and what you believe in?

Daria: My signature look reflects my belief that you should not be judged by your clothes. And if you are going to be judged by your clothes, try to pick clothes that don't believe in the death penalty.

WWD: How did you put your signature look together?

Daria: I choose dark colors to reflect my general dark outlook and camouflage pizza stains. I wear a jacket loose enough to pull up over my ears and zip closed

WWD: Do you know who Manolo Blahnik is?

Daria: Sure, she was the star of "Blossom." Good show!

— Catherine Curran



Daria's dream outfit for the the Cable Ace Awards.

makes it all the more

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