

Levi's  
Marilyn Schiel

Marilyn Schiel's Levi's is an autobiographical essay in which she explores her childhood memory. The essay focuses on American social values about dresses for men and women in 1950s and 1960s. The author points out the rules of what dresses women can wear and what they cannot.

- The essayist talks about different categories of dresses for men and women and expresses her strong desire to wear the Levi's jeans. She talks about how her brother enjoys freedom in terms of dresses and other matters while she has to be content with certain dresses designed for women.

- Little girls as well as big girls did not wear blue jeans in 1950s. Her mother was a housewife and wore dresses of women. The jobs of men and women were different: women worked at home.

In 1953 their world changed. Her mother moved from home to business. Her transition from bread baker to bread winner taught her that women did not have to wear embroidered bunnies any more.

- The change was more evolutionary than revolutionary. Life style gradually changed. Function was more important than fashion.
- Her brother's Levi's were outgrown. Earlier they were put in boxes to send to other poor people.

- Mother's attitude changed and she gave a pair of old worn Levi's to her daughter. Next year they bought her a full size two wheeled bike. They also managed things for her fishing. They bought similar types of toys for sons and daughters.

- Along with change of time and change in roles of women in society, the rules, life styles and attitudes to dresses also got changed.
- The author's strong desire for a pair of blue jeans is the symbol of American women's desire of freedom and equality.