



1860s Clothing in America

By: Lynna Levin
Faculty Sponsor: Angela Bacarisse



https://www.kci.org/archives/digital_archives/photos/72_sl_AC03863.jpg

Women's silhouettes were rounded at the shoulder's, closed into the waist and widened out into a full round skirt. The crinoline, helped keep a circular shape to the skirt which was previously done by petticoats. The shape of the skirt slowly transitioned into an oval with the overskirts trailing in the back. This look would continue and lead into the Bustle period.

My research focused on the Crinoline period which was a transitional period between the Romantic and Bustle Period. In addition, I explored clothing of slaves, and clothing during the American Civil War. There were clothing variations depending on wealth, class, and location. The most notable changes of this period were the use of the crinoline and Civil War uniforms. The transition of art from Romanticism to Realism and Impressionism illustrates the transition in clothing from flowy and delicate to that of a stiff and structured style.



Children's clothing, was distinct for infants and toddlers because when they were older their clothes reflected that of adults. For infants they wore caps to keep their heads warm along with long gowns for both boys and girls. All children wore short skirts until age of 5 or 6 when the distinction between boys and girls began. Girls kept wearing short skirts until they were older. Boys wore knickerbockers. Children's work and school clothes were used from worn out clothes or better clothing depending on the affordability of the family. Slave children were given long shirts until they were older.

There were many developments for women during this period. Bloomers, the princess seam and the emancipation suit were new ideas in clothing although not all were adopted. The Emancipation union or emancipation suit was an under flannel that combined the top chemise and drawers together.



<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/how-19th-century-activists-ditched-corsets-for-one-piece-long-underwear-180976774/>

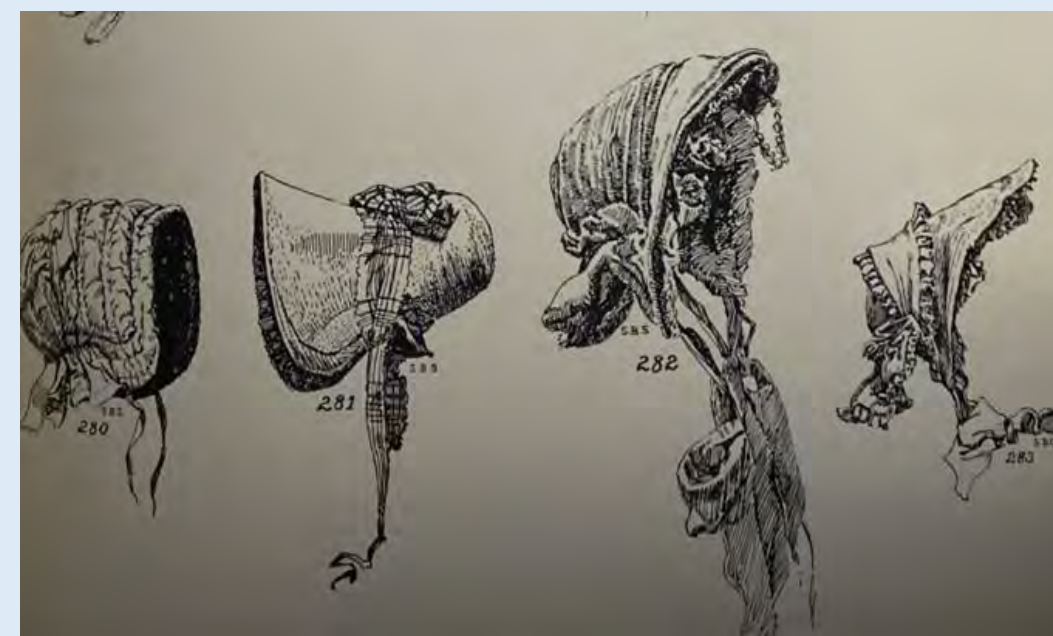
Men's clothing was like women's in that not much changed and differences were based on class, work and location during the war. The war influenced much of the Northern and Southern army's dress. Both sides regulated uniforms with different color meanings but as the war progressed strict uniform lessened due to shortages and other factors.



Levi's were used for miners, blacksmiths had leather aprons and rubber boots were worn by men panning for gold. Most men wore vests over their shirt with or without a jacket, even working men. The sack jacket was a loose jacket without a waistline, straight front and buttoned high. Instep straps went away, pants fit closer to the leg and suspenders were worn to hold up pants. Brogans were durable high-top shoes mostly worn by working men, slaves, and farmers that were made of tough leather that laced up the front with thick soles. The most common jewelry was the watch and watch chain.



<http://www.victoriana.com/bloomer-costume/>



Women also wore hats, bonnets or caps. Some women in the South braided straw to make bonnets if they did not have supplies or a milliner available. Women could change their bonnets affordably by changing the ribbons, bows or floral decorations of the bonnet.



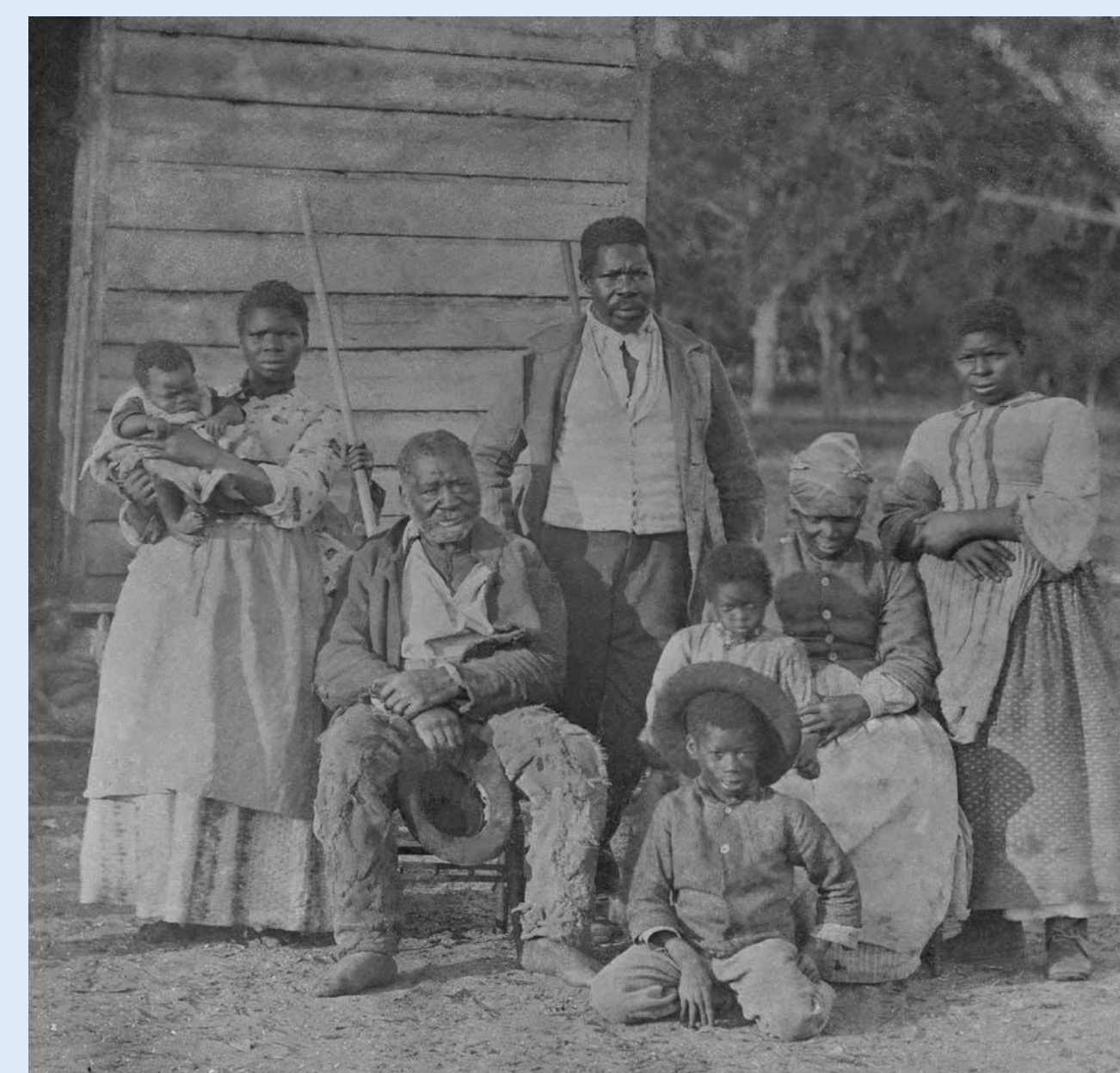
<http://www.costumecocktail.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/mas-51030002.jpg>



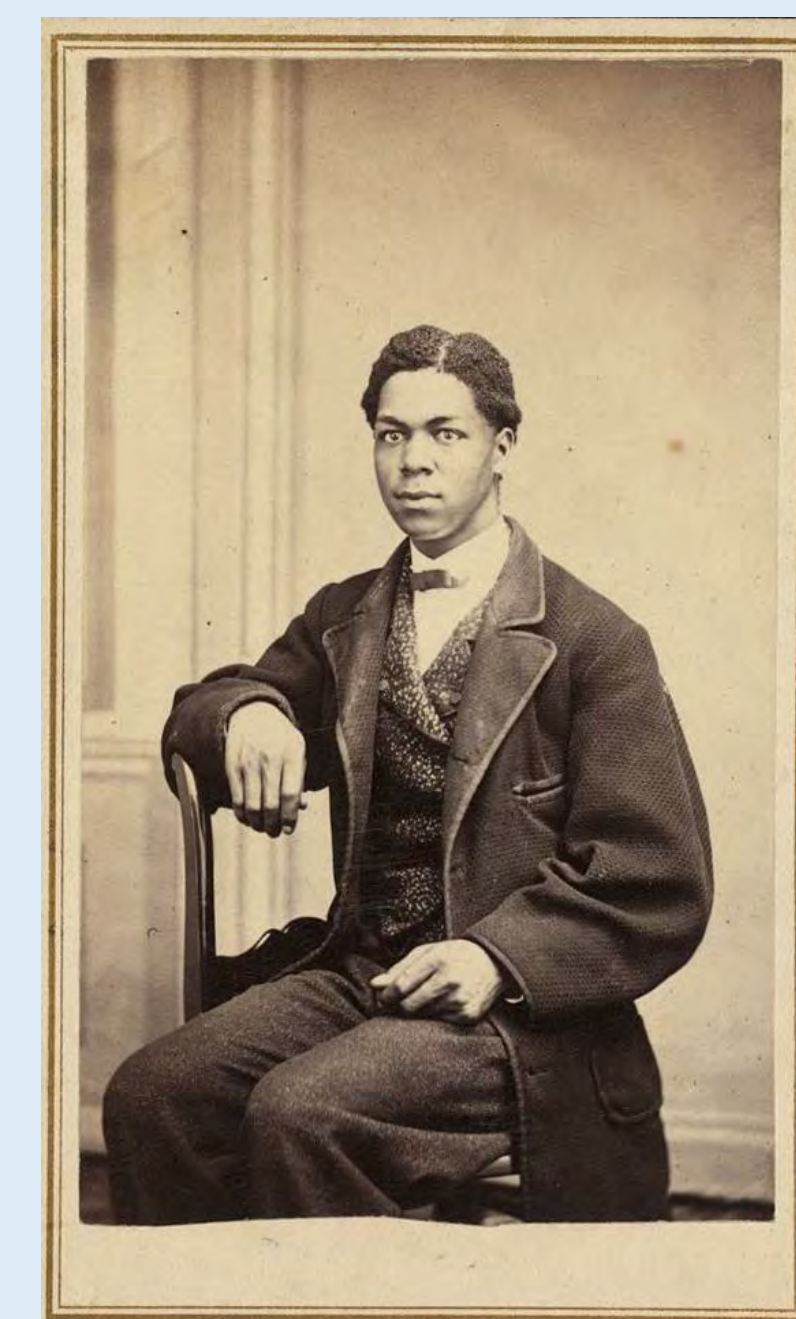
http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_t0WmgQEWfNg/T15yghyWII/AAAAAAAAABGM/gFjkJs_TJyw/s320/M5053MA_214X33X00002_L.jpg



<https://genologylady.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/bolero-jacket-1.jpg?w=438>



<https://images.theconversation.com/files/174276/original/1file-20170617-1205-r3twee.jpg?lib=rb-1.1.0&q=45&auto=format&w=926&f=clip>



https://tik.loc.gov/storage-services/service/ppp/ppmsca/11000/11034_150px.jpg

For free African American women their dress was similar to white American women. Although many did not have the means for new clothing. They were given coarse clothing with simple cuts made for durability and deindividualization of the person from their owners. Sizing of clothing was not a priority, so adjustments such as ropes were used to tie up the waist. They were given few new pieces of clothing for spring and fall seasons.. They wore a wrapped cloth headdress similar to a turban which allowed individualization in how it was worn. Women who worked in the house were sometimes given old garments of their owners. They could modify the clothing given to them to create their own style.



<https://nationalcowboymuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/1990.006-1.jpg>

Hats were worn as often as vests were worn. The top hat, wide awake, bowler, straw hat, and cloth caps were worn. In 1865, John B. Stetson, traveled in the West and made a felted broad brimmed, high crowned hat of beaver and rabbit skins. It was the cowboy hat, also called the "Boss of the plains hat", or Stetson hat which was a better suited hat for the outdoor elements. Slouch hats were military styled hats, along with Kepi and forage hats which were worn after the war.

A new jacket styled bodice called a basque was either sewn to the skirt or left apart. Garibaldi shirts were the newer and popular loose-fitting blouse worn especially by poor Southern women. A popular outer jacket was the Zouave jacket, which was cut like a bolero, with a high neckline and curved at the hem of the waistline. It was a popular open garment worn over a waist and it was influenced by military style jackets.