

OFF THE SHELF

Books and guides that have the fashion world covered

By Chandra Orr

Creators News Service

The modern woman is much more than the clothes she wears, but it certainly doesn't hurt to have a great style. Whether your look is corporate chic, eco-conscious or couture clotheshorse, the latest how-to handbooks offer plenty of insider advice to make the most of your fashion sense.

-- "Career and Corporate Cool: How to Look, Dress, and Act the Part at Every Stage of Your Career" by Rachel C. Weingarten (John Wiley & Sons, \$22).

Dressing for the office poses its own distinct challenges, but Weingarten expertly explains how to artfully combine great style with good business. She offers advice on adapting to corporate culture without losing your individuality, dressing for after-hours work functions and packing for out-of-town business trips, and presents ways to look good even when you work from home. With chapters on professional and polished makeup, selecting accessories that set you apart from the pack and quick fixes for common office attire mistakes, this snappy career handbook leaves nothing uncovered.

-- "Vogue Covers: On Fashion's Front Page" by Robin Derrick and Robin Muir (Little, Brown Book Group, \$75).

Capturing nearly a century of classic style and changing trends, this stunning coffee-table retrospective is a virtual who's who of fashion. With more than 200 illustrated and photographic covers dating back to 1916, this hefty tome showcases the iconic magazine's rise to the top of the newsstands and offers a historic look at the designers, supermodels, celebrities and photographers that shaped the styles of their era. Halston and Hermes, Twiggy and Kate Moss, Helmut Newton and Bruce Weber, all make an appearance.

-- "Green is the New Black: How to Change the World with Style" by Tamsin Blanchard (Hodder & Stoughton, \$25).

Change your wardrobe, change the world? From biodegradable shoes and organic cotton to ethical diamonds and fair-trade fashion, this green survival manual is a must-have for the eco-conscious fashionista.

Blanchard answers the big questions: Does our shopping addiction contribute to climate change? What's so special about organic cotton? What exactly is eco-couture? She explains the principles of ethical fashion and gives readers easy-to-live-with advice for growing a green closet, like hosting a "swishing" party to trade clothes with friends.

-- "Makeup: The Ultimate Guide" by Rae Morris (Allen & Unwin, \$30).

Australian makeup artist Rae Morris unveils her top techniques for transforming celebrity clients like Cate Blanchett and Jessica Biel into radiant beauties -- starting with the eyes. Unretouched photos and detailed instructions reveal dozens of looks in detail, from classic daytime combos to over-the-top glamorous gazes. She lays out all the tricks of the trade, from crafting gorgeous brows that take years off your look to applying false eyelashes with ease, and shows how the right makeup application can defy age.

-- "Crazy About Jewelry! The Expert Guide to Buying, Selling and Caring for Your Jewelry" by Susan Eisen (Full Circle International, \$17).

Ever wonder how to transform a brooch into a pendant? Eisen offers fresh new ideas on ways

to restyle grandma's heirlooms into something you'll actually wear, how to make those pretty pieces more comfortable and how to choose the right necklace based on neckline. With chapters on organizing and insuring jewelry, buying the basics and proper cleaning, care and storage, this little book is a treasure trove of useful advice for all of your favorite accessories.

-- "Not Just a Pretty Face: The Ugly Side of the Beauty Industry" by Stacy Malkan (New Society, \$16).

The average person uses up to 20 beauty products a day, and Malkan was no exception. After discovering that she was exposing herself to some 230 harmful chemicals each morning, this self-proclaimed former makeup addict started asking questions. In her quest, Malkan discovered mascaras that contain neurotoxins, lipsticks that contain lead and deodorants that contain hormone-disrupting parabens. Her expose dishes on the hidden dangers lurking in medicine cabinets and tells the inside story of her five-year campaign to give the beauty industry a well-needed makeover.

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