

LAURA ON LIFE

# The Feeling of New Jeans

You know that feeling you get when you buy new clothes and wear them for the first time? Don't you feel great? When you wear new clothes, it feels as if you are a new person.

It's the same feeling you get after your house has been freshly painted. It feels like a new home.

Not that the old you was so bad, but the new you can conquer the world. It shows in your attitude. It's written all over your face. People might even comment that there is something different about you... and it's not just your clothes.

So if new clothes make you feel so good, why do we go to so much trouble to make sure nobody knows they are new?

When I was growing up, getting a new pair of sneakers was cause for a private celebration. But what did we do? We took

those sneakers out in the yard, rolled them in dirt and beat the stuffing out of them with a baseball bat until you could tell someone you'd had them for months and they would believe it. It was apparently okay to allow one's friends to think they were not very observant.

When we acquired a new pair of jeans, we were ecstatic in spite of the amount of effort and laundry detergent required to make them look like they weren't... a new pair of jeans.

"New? Nah, I've had these for years." I believe the idea here was to make your friends think you had lost so much weight you could fit into your old jeans again.

It made sense that getting your sister's hand-me-down jeans would be the best scenario: "new" jeans without all the work. Unfortunately, we

— like teenagers everywhere — did not make sense at all. Hand-me-downs were an embarrassment to be avoided at all costs. You'd go naked before you'd allow your sister to comment on "her" jeans within earshot of your friends.

What should we blame for this lack of common sense? In my opinion, it all started with Permanent Press shirts. We didn't want the work of ironing shirts, but to wear one with wrinkles meant you were probably brought up by wolves. Permanent Press meant you never have to iron shirts again, right? Not really. But it was all the excuse we needed.

Present day, if there are a few wrinkles in your shirt (even Permanent Press) you are considered "cool." If your hair has the Just-Rolled-Out-Of-Bed look, you're



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not lazy, you're fashionable. If you also haven't shaved in three days, you are nominated for Man-of-the-Year.

Shortly after Permanent Press came pre-washed jeans. New jeans without the work! The collective cry went up: Huzzah! They were more expensive, but to many of us, they were well worth it. When we got holes in them, our moms put patches on them.

That soon became a fashion faux pas just like hand-me-downs. So rather than making patches the "in" thing, we made holes the "in" thing. What?!

Now we can buy jeans, pre-frayed and perforated with lots of holes, and they cost MORE money than perfectly intact jeans!

Similarly, in the case of bikinis, the less fabric there is, the more it costs. Ooh! That really burns my bagels!... Not that I could wear a bikini anyway.

It's only a matter of time before we will be able to buy pre-smudged eyewear at twice the price of the spotless pair.

We can look forward to buying premium bathtubs with soap scum rings permanently engraved into the enamel and mirrors with pre-etched water spots.

How about cars that come with the "rusted look" option? Only \$300 more! Another \$200 if you want the "rear-ended look." Shopping-cart dings are \$50 each.

The most sought-after china pattern will have gravy stains and risotto decorating the rims.

Premium carpeting will come with Kool-Aid stains and pet hair. And Macy's will sell men's underwear with skid marks embroidered in them.

However, only those people with the most discerning tastes will buy these items. They are, of course, those people with more money... and less sense.

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The identity of the featured celebrity is found within the answers in the puzzle. In order to take the TV Challenge, unscramble the letters noted with asterisks within the puzzle.

ACROSS

- \_\_\_ Jr.; actor on "Happy Endings"
- Role on "Two and a Half Men"
- \_\_\_ Gay; WWII bomb dropper
- "One \_\_\_ at a Time"
- Word before Paulo
- "\_\_\_ be in England ..." (Robert Browning)
- Actress on "NCIS: Los Angeles" (2)
- Classic Pontiac
- Word with code or rug
- Mindy of "The Facts of Life"
- And so forth: abbr.
- 90 degrees from WNW
- Plants
- Fraternity letter
- Roswell sighting, for short
- "Dancing With the Stars" judge (2)
- Egypt's boy king
- Presidential monogram
- Ming-Na's "ER" role
- Owner's paper
- TV recording device
- "Suburgatory" actress (2)

DOWN

- Maui greeting
- "The \_\_\_ the Beast"; 1995 Eric Roberts film
- Acapulco affirmative
- "The Taking of Pelham \_\_\_ Three"; 1974 Walter Matthau movie
- Actor \_\_\_ Chaney Jr.
- Tic \_\_\_; breath mints
- "\_\_\_ Last"; Paul Simon song
- "To Tell \_\_\_"
- Network for Suze Orman
- "3rd Rock From the \_\_\_"
- Bandleader Shaw
- With 3 Down, role on "The Beverly Hillbillies" (2)
- First murder victim
- Setting for "The Sopranos": abbr.
- Clamor
- "Our Miss Brooks" star
- Derek and Diddley
- Initials for Felix's portrayer on TV's "The Odd Couple"
- Note of the scale

Solution  
Jon Cryer



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