

POCKETS OF EQUALITY

Let's make a new revolution. Not that we'll give up all the other worthy causes: world peace, health, and equality.

This is a matter of practicality, an issue of equity! It overwhelmingly affects females: working women, college students, little girls, new mothers and mothers-to-be, and older women, too. Wealthy, educated, successful, or not, we may be affected morning, noon, and night, at work and at play.

Better than even chance you've noticed the injustice, but haven't yet spoken out.

This inequality is in pockets.

Pockets, in our clothing. Pockets, *really not so much* in our clothing.



Nineteen out of twenty women say they need more and bigger pockets. I asked those twenty women myself, and the one who is content makes purses in her spare time. (I met her on the bus, she had samples in her purse.)

We women use the expressions just as much as men do:

"I pulled it out of my hip pocket."

"He's just lining his own pocket."

"Turn in your out-of-pocket expenses."

"Ask Shelly, she has deep pockets."

"Yes, that buck was burning a hole in my pocket."

"Got an idea in your pocket?"

As I say, I am revolting. Or rather, that's what my teenager says. I am beginning a revolution, and we need a slogan. See which one you like.

Pockets, pockets, give me more!

At work we absolutely need more pockets.

Just the other day, the boss called an "emergency" meeting. How quickly did everyone get there? Some stopped for coffee or the rest room, but over all the men got there first, because most of the women had to retrieve their phones and purses from their desks. And with that retrieval the women arrived juggling *things* in their hands.

If only we had ample pockets, those same women would not have been so disadvantaged compared with their male counterparts! We would not have seemed so clumsy, so unequal. Our colorful phone cases would not have been showing.

A pocket of equality!

Even if a woman chooses to carry a purse, like the individual in my slim survey, we shouldn't need to carry it from location to location at our workplace. Nor should we be required to juggle it with a teacup and a crummet, hold it with our chins to prevent it falling off our shoulder when shaking hands, or creatively fail to hang it from our oval-backed chair at lunch, all so we can have a tissue available should the fellow next to us spit in our eye. That tissue could fit into a pocket, if only we had one!

Men's clothing generally is designed with ample pocketry. (*Or is it "pocketation"? We must decide this, as it will name our revolution.*)

Author Sinclair Lewis, in his *Babbitt*, spent a whole paragraph describing what the title character carried in his many pockets, and the process of changing over into a different suit. Females may feel the need to *schlep* more things with us, but our clothing hasn't been designed with that facility since the days of the Orange Wench and her ample, pushed-up cleavage with storage space in the bodice. Instead, we have "accessories" to hold it all — wallets, pocketbooks, purses, bags. Even when we carry briefcases, we need "bags" to carry our change of shoes, as our shoes are really not made to withstand the weather, dirt, and other matter through which we must navigate to get to work. (But that will be my shoe revolution — and I'm a 5½ narrow, I've got experience complaining.)

What'll it be? Pocketry!

Right now, women's fashion is trending toward long, loose, and layered. That gives us plenty of room to design pockets into our clothing, in a way that the fabric will still "flow attractively." (We are told that this "flowing" is what we want from our clothes. Personally, I seek "warm," "appropriate," "concealing," even "individual," rather than "flowing.")

As for this "flowing," let's not even mention the difference among "women's," "misses," "juniors," and "petites," even though some "flow" more than the others. We shall be ignoring them wholesale — and retail — in our revolution. Suffice it to say that in creating those categories a group of know-it-alls must have stereotyped certain folks as wider, thinner, more buxom, or more lanky than others. They were entirely wrong to make those delineations, and we are now stuck with them.

Even with the tighter-fitting fashions called "misses" and "juniors," there is room for pockets. At the very least we need pockets for phones, which we carry at all times of the day and night.

Loose or tight, a pocket's right!

For phones, I propose the ***Thigh Pocket***. To the best of my recollection, this is the first thing

I've invented, and I'll stand inside it. The Thigh Pocket is a pocket to keep our cell phones away from our body core, thus protecting our innards, our unborn children and babes in arms from any radiation. Like wild-west lawmen (on tv) with their holstered guns at the ready, our reposing hands hover in the vicinity of our thighs, so the location provides easy access – to the phone, or to a gun or a slingshot, if that's your thing. Thigh Pockets can be built into pants, skirts, dresses, or leggings. Properly supported, such a pocket is highly preferable to hands or purses.

Hold the phone – not!

Carpenter's pants have such pockets, and so do cargo pants, and as a former carpenter I appreciate them greatly, but we can't wear them to work in an office because the pockets are sloppily slapped onto the outside. I'm talking about an inside pocket, with just a welt opening, properly braced against the side seam and suspended from the waist of the garment, with light boning on the opening if the fabric is soft. I am talking about a *demure* pocket, although use of such traditionally feminine terminology is annoying, especially in this case, because men could use a demure Thigh Pocket, too.

Of course, were we to have *two* such Thigh Pockets in an article of clothing, we could demurely carry personal items in one of them and no one would be the wiser.

Pockets for Freedom. Women for Pocketation! Equal pocketry!

When I build my own clothing, I make ample pockets. Sometimes I put a pocket inside a pocket, just to hold smaller items, or to keep one side from sagging or bulging. When I make pants, I put a sub-pocket inside the front pocket, against my hip, to hold smaller items: ID pouch, parking meter change, a Tylenol or two. This keeps those items higher up, so they don't bump my leg when walking, because I make my pockets deep.

I am astonished that we women have not yet begun this revolution.

Why would any clothing designer create a suit entirely without pockets? The fashion designer doesn't draw a pocket, does that mean there shouldn't be one? And what are designers thinking, anyway? Maybe this is a separate revolution, but why are so many suits in this modern age, for any gender, dry-clean only? If it's the lining fabric that needs to be dry-cleaned, they should have built some pockets out of it. Washing machines were invented in the 1600s. They run on electricity now. Since the 1930s, we've even had *dryers* to "save us from drudgery," so let's use them! I've got the laundry coins in my pocket.

Is it us, did we ask for this? Surely we're not all so vain, ostentatious, or gorgeous that we must have form-fitting suits with absolutely no capacity for carrying things. No, it isn't us.

We want pockets, and we want them deep!

Deep pockets, now there is an idea! No one could *call me* "Deep Pockets," but I'd love the person who *gives* them to me! Go to the store and look at any pocket, if you can find one. Designed into low-end or high-end modern women's clothing, it'll generally provide about two inches of depth at the deepest point, sometimes only an inch at the shallowest – just enough so that anything inside the pocket can work its way out when one sits, stands, and walks enough times in a day.

That partially used tissue on the floor? Oops, yes, that had been in my pocket. That \$20 bill I put in my pocket for a walk with friends? Gone probably three miles back, due to short pockets.

Pocketists unite!

While we're demanding, let's ask for more. How convenient would this be: an underarm pocket – either in the jacket lining under the arm, or inside the top of the sleeve – for certain feminine products. In fact, with an extra Thigh Pocket, we could be good for an entire morning without fetching a purse.

So, revolutionaries, let's go purseless! Who wants our valuables dangling away from our bodies, when our menfolk – ahem – keep theirs dangling close? A couple years ago, I nearly fainted when my son said he'd bought his girlfriend a \$400 purse; he could have just bought her a few sets of pockets!

There is a lot to demand in clothing. We also want all our clothes to be machine wash, tumble dry. We prefer them to be made in America out of American fabrics, or under a fair trade agreement from somewhere else. We might like to be somewhat stylish, and express ourselves. But all that takes a back seat to a good hip pocket.

My kingdom for a pocket!

I've got some sewing to do, and a revolution to steer. I'll be out of pocket for a while.

Pockets for All!

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The Revolutionary uses her Thigh Pocket.