

Charles Farrar: "Looking The Part Is Being The Part"

By Jalyne Strong
Post Staff Writer

Influenced by a couple of impeccable professors while he was a student at Virginia State University, Charles Farrar has never forgotten their often uttered maxim, "Looking the part is being the part."

"I respected them and thought them right then—and now," says Farrar. And since Farrar attests that he "identifies closely with the professional side of his life," his formula for "looking the part" is to dress conservatively.

"I'm conservative from the bone," Farrar laughs. He has been thoroughly indoctrinated by those professors, Farrar admits, and by now conservatism in dressing is second nature to him.

But it does him good. Employed by Southern Bell in long range planning, Farrar works in an office setting where a tie and jacket are expected and his traditional style of dressing fits right in.

Farrar is most comfortable in suits rather than slacks and sports jackets. "They eliminate the concern about matching," he points out. As far as color, his wardrobe of suits and shirts are mainly in blues, grays, and browns and he likes pin-stripes for variety. If this sounds conventional, Farrar is the last person to deny it. But with a little prodding, he does confess that he'll get a little daring with his ties. "I tend to be more expressive with them," he claims. "I



Charles Farrar
.....Gets daring with ties

have my red one, and a yellow polka dot, and bold stripes."

For a sleek suit he owns that is gray with ultra-thin pin stripes of blue and pink, Farrar purchased a fashionable paisley tie with pink accents. "It was my way of letting up," he smiles. "Plus with this tie I was able to pick up the pink in the suit without having to

wear a pink shirt." Pink shirts are taboo for Farrar.

This brings up another adage he remembers from one of his college professors: "He told me," Farrar recites, "Businessmen never wear yellow shirts to the office." Now I see a lot of men who wear yellow shirts and look great. But it's something I can't bring myself to do.

"My son is always trying to drag me into, what he calls, 'the 20th century,'" Farrar chuckles.

But Farrar sticks to his own style for more than one reason. Not only does dressing conservatively suit him personally but it also feels good on his wallet, he claims.

"Dressing conservatively allows you to get a half step behind the style and still make it," he relates. "Trying to be stylish requires constantly laying out new dollars."

Self-described as "frugal" in his approach to shopping, Farrar says, "I shop wherever I can find a decent product for a good price." Yet he is not chintzy. "Basically you get what you pay for. If you put \$69 in a suit, you'll only get \$69 worth of wear out of it," he surmises.

"One has to be smart about the investment in

clothes. I buy an outfit that will hold up and last since I wear my suits regularly." When shopping, Farrar will consider how an outfit has to be worn before purchasing. "I even think functions, for example, can I wear it to business presentations and after hours?" Farrar is affiliated with several organizations which host after-five and formal black tie functions so his suits usually must do double duty. And he wears tuxedos regularly.

Concerning leisure clothes, Farrar replies, "Need more of"—implying that his cache of casual clothes is almost non-existent. "My son waged a strong campaign to get me into those loud, loud, loud shorts (jams)," Farrar laments. "But when I wear casuals they will be solid colors."

He's certainly not a

trendsetter. Neither is he flamboyant in his style. So what makes Farrar stand out as a best dressed individual? Primarily it is his well matched, coordinated, though conservative dressing and ultimately the ease in which he wears his clothes.

"I dress with my position in mind," attests Farrar. "But I strive for comfort."

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