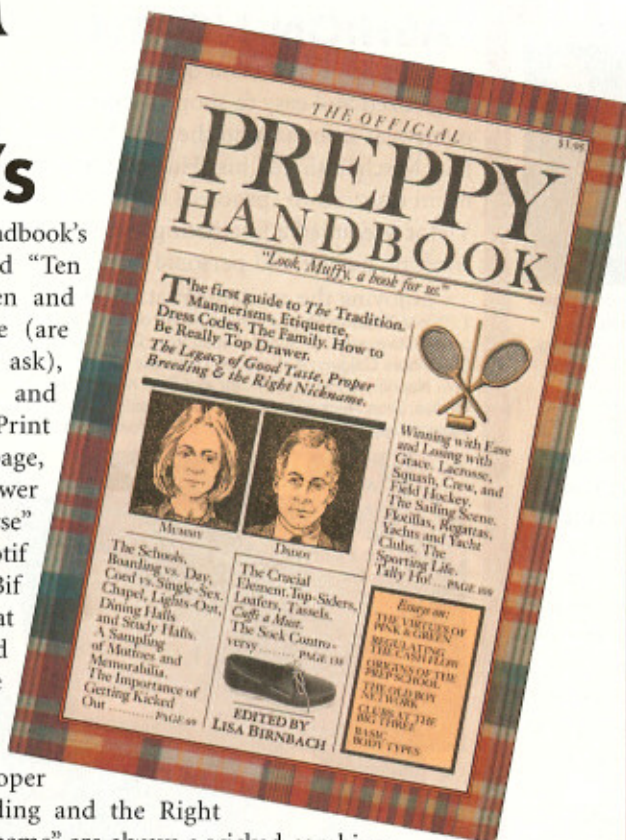


LOOK, SKIP, A TIE FOR US

Back in 1980, The Preppy Handbook's "Fashion Fundamentals" listed "Ten Underlying Principles for Men and Women." The top three were (are depending on whom you ask), "Conservatism, Neatness and Attention To Detail." "The Print Manifesto," on the next page, describes "1. The splashy flower print...for women only, of course" and "2. The small, repeating-motif print." I'm sure that Muffy and Bif would be astonished to see that neckties fitting the second description are back in style (Were they ever out?). The runaway success of Vineyard Vines proves that "Good Taste, Proper



Breeding and the Right

Nickname" are always a wicked combination. And now that fashion is moving into a neater, trimmer phase, suddenly witty pattern repeats just seem right. If your memories of the 1980's skew more toward "Miami Vice" than "On Golden Pond," check out the parrot and flip-flop patterns from South Beach Ties. Or if you're more of a Gordon Gekko kind of guy, check out Lee Allison's Wall Street or "Tie-coon" patterns. In any case, everyone at the club will think you're really top drawer.



IMPORTING TAILORS

"In America, our sons and daughters are not clamoring to be tailors," observes Joe Sugar, a third generation menswear merchant from St. Pauls, North Carolina whose store has been around for 89 years. About four years ago, Sugar participated in a program that sponsors skilled workers from Southeast Asia with at least two years of tailoring experience and English skills. "I was so happy with the people we got that I started prospecting to other merchants, including some larger chains. There is no fee to the employer and workers are specially trained in Korea and China for things like reading alterations tickets, using different machines, handwork, etc. These are top quality well-educated people who want to come to America; their wages here must be "customary" which means determined by an attorney and the labor department." (Editor's note: in rural North Carolina, that could mean \$6.50 an hour...)

"Without this kind of program, the only way to get good tailors is to steal from the competition," observes Sugar. "But the workforce is clearly aging."

For more information, call Sugar at 910-865-5149.



NECKWEAR'S NEXT MOVE?

In a move both magnanimous and smart, Harken's Bill Aron is opening up his domestic print facilities to the tie market in general. Aron bought out Studio Silk in 1983 and now owns the archives of Mantero USA including all art, films and screens. With prints projected to take on wovens in the near future, and with few print mills in Como remaining, tie makers need to explore their options.

Says Aron, "Like Zegna, we weave our own grounds to assure the luxury and dimension of upscale prints. Weaving is a mathematical process but you can't weave every design: odd angles, intricate details and movement are best attained with quality printing. Plus, while wovens incorporate a maximum of eight colors, our prints are done with 15 different screens."

For more information call Bill Aron: (212) 643-8883 ext. 104.