



# TRAPPINGS

## Stories of Women, Power and Clothing

By Two Girls Working: Tiffany Ludwig and Renee Piechocki

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What do you wear that makes you feel powerful? How about the woman next to you at the bank? In line with you at the store? Think about your mother. What would she put on to reveal her power source to the world? These are the questions that inspired Tiffany Ludwig and Renee Piechocki to embark on an interview journey across the United States. Over a period of six years, they talked with more than 500 women and girls, ages four through ninety-two, who ranged from office workers to drag-kings, stay-at-home moms to attorneys, fashion industry executives to elected officials, students to cowgirls.

It is these women's sensitive, funny, and always revealing thoughts that are at the heart of *Trappings*—a book that although begins with a question about clothing is not about fashion at all. Here, clothing is simply a vehicle to access a larger dialogue about a diverse range of issues women face related to power and identity, including what expectations and limitations are placed upon them by their affiliation with a specific gender, culture, race, class, or profession. A complex spectrum of responses include discussions about the importance of clothing's comfort and practicality, how clothing can facilitate women's movement through class and social strata, how sex is used strategically in business and social settings, and how clothing can be used to empower women by connecting them with cultural or personal history.

Complimented by 149 color and black-and-white photographs, the visual and written portraits in this book reveal much more than the contents of women's closets. Through the intimate lens of clothing, Ludwig and Piechocki expose the very personal ways that power is sought, experienced, and projected by women.

**Tiffany Ludwig** is an artist and media consultant. She received her BFA from the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University and currently lives in Glen Ridge, New Jersey. **Renee Piechocki** is an artist and public art consultant. She received her BA from Hunter College of the City University of New York and currently lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

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