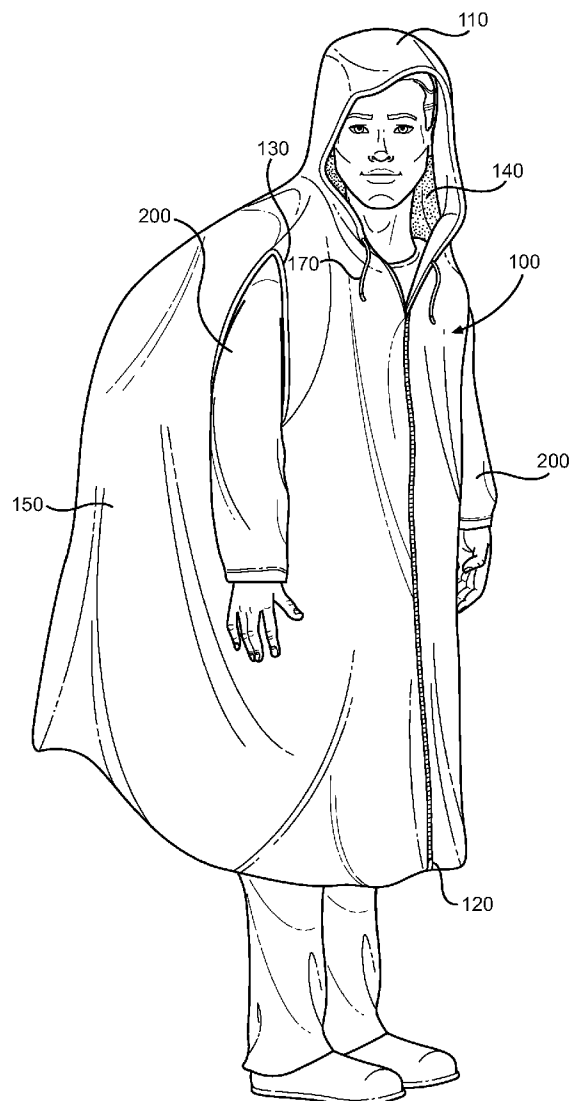




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29, 2012.(57) **ABSTRACT**

A moisture-resistant outer wear garment is provided for keeping a wearer and his accoutrement dry. The garment is a rain cape having a hood and a unibody drape. Two armholes are disposed in the sides of the drape to facilitate a full range of motion of the user's arms. In the front of the drape, a zipper closure extending from a hood down to the bottom opening of the drape provides easy access to the interior volume of the garment. The body drape is oversized so that it can fully cover a user and a backpack, briefcase, or other carrying case, when in use.



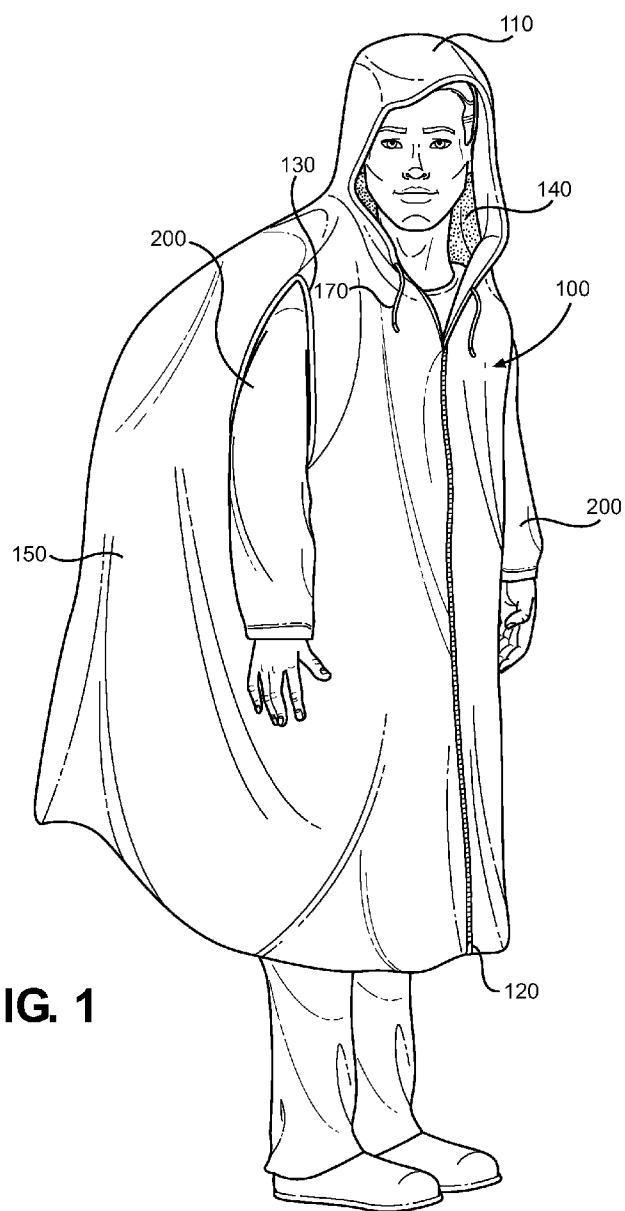


FIG. 1

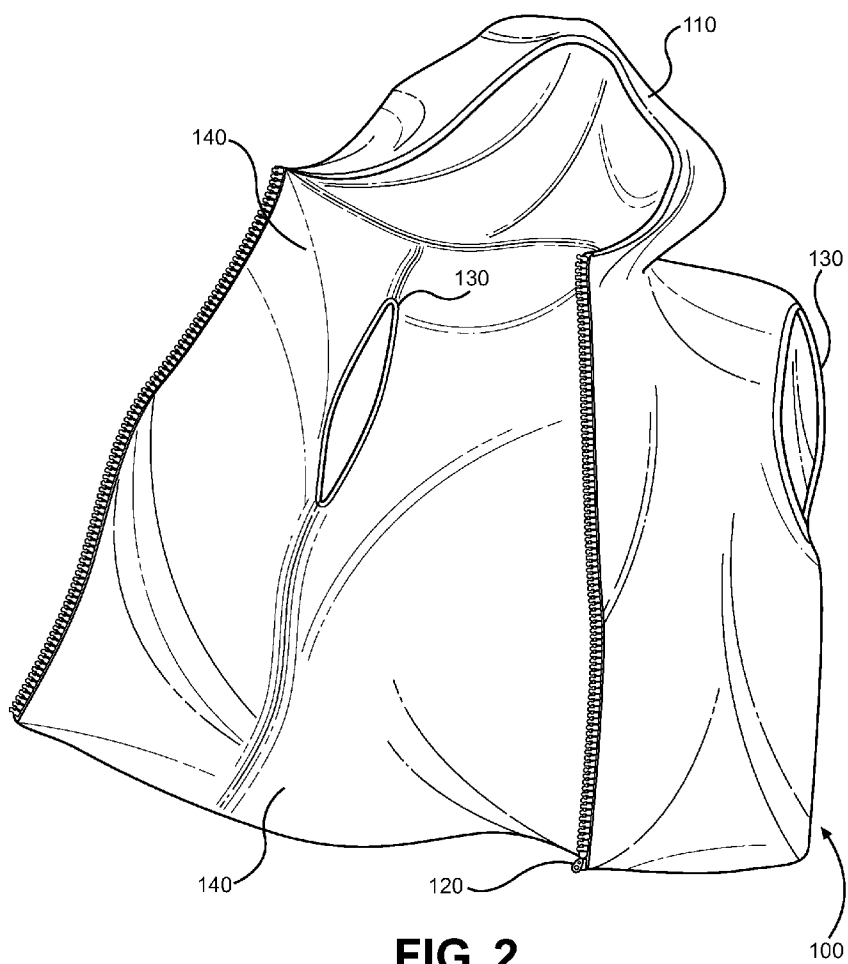
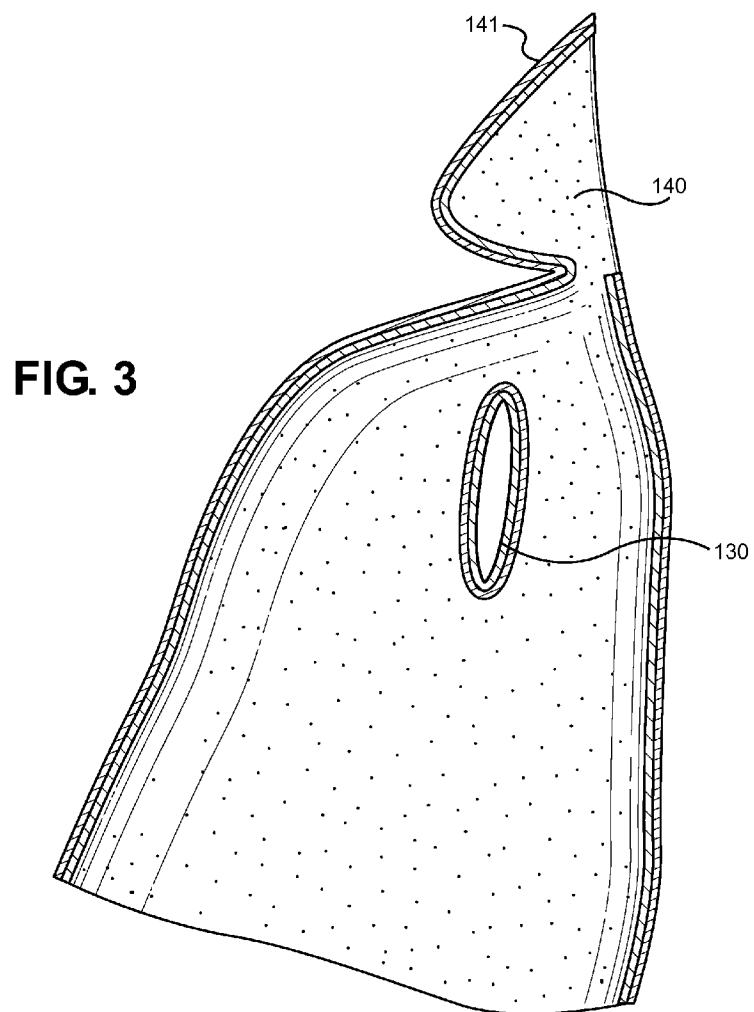


FIG. 2



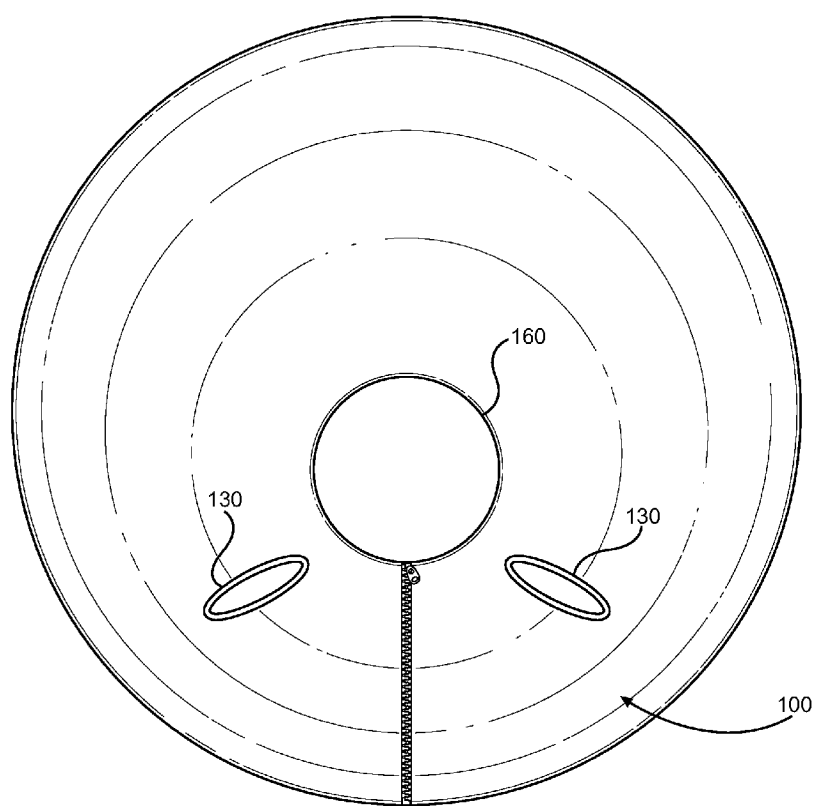


FIG. 4

MOISTURE-RESISTANT CAPE**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/652,580 filed on May 29, 2012, entitled "Rain Cape." The patent application identified above is incorporated here by reference in its entirety to provide continuity of disclosure.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to an outerwear garment. More specifically, the invention relates to a cape-style garment made of a water resistant material and a liner. The garment comprises a hood, an oversized body region to accommodate the wearer and his luggage, and armholes to vent air and provide the wearer with free use of his hands. In use, the garment is donned over top of the user's clothing and accoutrements. Rain, snow, sleet, or other moisture is blocked by the moisture resistant outer surface, leaving the wearer and his accessories dry.

[0004] Inclement weather has long been a source of consternation for travelers. Early humans wore animal pelts and oil treated leather to keep moisture off of their skin and to maintain warmth. With the birth of textile production, oil cloth and other moisture rich cloths began to be used as outer wear. These fabrics wick water off their surfaces rather than absorbing it. Capes, shawls, and head wraps made from moisture-rich materials were used as early rain coats.

[0005] Freedom of movement is important to people moving out of doors. Travelers must be able to walk and carry luggage. Hunters must crouch, stand, sit, and move their arms while hunting. Event spectators must be able to stand and move their arms to clap and consume concessions. Rain coats and traditional ponchos do not permit the wearer full range of motion and access to their clothing pockets. These garments are undesirable because they limit essential tasks and make some movements uncomfortable.

[0006] Maintaining body heat is another prominent problem with modern inclement weather apparel. Many outer wear garments are made of thin plastics, or coated materials. Lightweight water resistant materials are useful in keeping rain, snow, and other precipitation, but do not retain body heat. Such garments are not ideal for use in cold weather without the use of a jacket or other outer wear item underneath the rain protection garment. A rain protection garment is needed that provides users with a full range of motion and further provides thermal insulation capabilities is needed to address the shortcomings of currently known devices.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

[0007] The present invention is a moisture-resistant outer wear garment that is worn over clothing, backpacks, purses, laptop bags, and the like. A hood is provided to keep rain and moisture off the wearer's head, and a large body region is provided to cover the body and luggage. Reinforced armholes allow the user to have free use of his arms. A front closure separates the forward part of the garment into two panels, making removal of the device easy. In some embodiments the liner is removable and may be laundered. The following prior art is a list of devices deemed most relevant to the present disclosure.

[0008] A sleeping enclosure that converts to a poncho is disclosed in Hinshaw, U.S. Pat. No. 5,257,427. The enclosure has both an inner and outer bag that are separate. The intermediary space can be filled with removable thermal insulator. A slit in one side of the enclosure accommodates a user's face while keeping the head surrounded. To prevent bugs from entering the bag, a netting flap may be extended down over the head slit. Bottom edges of the bags may be opened to permit the user's arms feet to stick through. In this way, the enclosure can be worn as a poncho, but unlike the present invention it does not provide armholes or a front closure/opening.

[0009] Another outer wear garment is disclosed in Hartfield, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2009/0031473. The device has a front and back portion joined together at the top and sides and open at the bottom. A hood is joined to the front and back portion along a break in the top edge. The garment thus resembles a poncho with a hood that covers the wearer's head. Apertures in the side edges serve as armholes for the user's hands and arms. Arms may extend through the holes or be kept within the enclosure for added warmth. Each portion of the garment has a water resistant exterior and a thermal fleece inner surface. A zipper separates the front portion into two halves for easy donning of the garment. Unlike the Hartfield device, the present invention is made of a single portion that is substantially larger than the user's body so as to cover both the user and his luggage.

[0010] Bowers, U.S. Pat. No. 5,101,513 discloses another outer wear garment. The garment has a hood attached to a circular upper portion. The circular upper portion has a perimeter circular frame from which a drape extends downward. Slits in the front of the drape permit the user's arms to pass therethrough. The overall appearance of the device is a shower curtain with a hood. Unlike the present invention, the Bowers device does not have a front closure means or an interior liner. Another outer wear garment without a front closure or lining is disclosed in Palmer, U.S. Pat. No. 3,522,612. Palmer is constructed of a single rectangular sheet with a slit cut in the body. The slit is used to form a facial opening and hood configuration when in use. Palmer does not disclose armholes and is essentially a blanket with a slit in the body that can be draped over a user for warmth or protection from the weather.

[0011] Lastly, Baena, U.S. Pat. No. 5,099,526 discloses a simple rain coat made from a single rectangular sheet. It is folded around the user's body and head to protect the torso and head from rain. The sheet has a plurality of cuts along one half, which form long strips that can be used to tie the sheet to the user's body when in use. Baena does not disclose a device having a liner or a front closure means. The present invention addresses these needs.

[0012] These prior art devices have several known drawbacks. They do not teach a unitary body construction that can easily be wrapped around a user and his backpack, knapsack, shoulder bag, or other luggage. The present invention is a large, unibody all-weather cape with a lining for comfort and warmth. It substantially diverges in design elements from the prior art and consequently it is clear that there is a need in the art for an improvement to existing outer wear weather protection devices. In this regard the instant invention substantially fulfills these needs.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] In view of the foregoing disadvantages inherent in the known types of water resistant outer wear now present in

the prior art, the present invention provides a new unibody construction and insulating liner wherein the same can be utilized for providing convenience for the user when keeping a wearer dry and warm during use.

[0014] The present invention is a moisture-resistant outer wear garment that covers a wearer's head, body, and luggage when in use. The body of the garment is a single sheet having an outer surface and an inner surface. A hood having the same construction is connected to the top edge of the body. Drawstrings or other cinching means may be integrated into the hood to facilitate resizing of the open facial portion. A body closure means extends from the bottom of the hood, down the entire length of the body, separating the front of the garment into two portions. The closure may be a zipper, buttons, hook and loop fasteners or hook and eye clasps.

[0015] To accommodate a variety of inclement weather conditions. The outer layer is a water resistant material such as a rubber blend, a coated fabric or the like. A liner is secured on the interior of the water-resistant material to improve comfort during wear and increase thermal insulation. Fabrics such as cotton, microfiber, thermal fleece, faux lamb's wool and the like are ideal for use of interior liners. Different versions of the garment will include different liner fabrics, thus providing the user with a precipitation protection garments for all types of inclement weather.

[0016] It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a new and improved moisture-resistant outer wear garment device that has all of the advantages of the prior art and none of the disadvantages.

[0017] It is another object of the present invention to provide a versatile outer wear garment that is large enough to cover both the wearer and a knapsack.

[0018] Another object of the present invention is to provide an outer wear garment that is easy to don and remove via a front closure means.

[0019] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide an outer wear garment that utilizes a variety of different liner types, thereby providing users with a versatile all weather selection of garments.

[0020] Still another object of the present invention is to provide a moisture-resistant outer wear garment that permits users full range of motion of their arms and legs.

[0021] Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DRAWINGS

[0022] Although the characteristic features of this invention will be particularly pointed out in the claims, the invention itself and manner in which it may be made and used may be better understood after a review of the following description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein like numeral annotations are provided throughout.

[0023] FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of the garment in use. The moisture-resistant outer wear garment is worn by a person and covers both the wearer and the wearer's backpack.

[0024] FIG. 2 shows a front view of the outer wear garment with the front closure unfastened. The interior liner is exposed and an armhole aperture is visible from an interior view and a side view.

[0025] FIG. 3 shows a cross-sectional view of the outer wear garment from the side.

[0026] FIG. 4 shows an overhead view of the body of the outer wear garment with the hood detached.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0027] Reference is made herein to the attached drawings. Like reference numerals are used throughout the drawings to depict like or similar elements of the moisture resistant outer wear garment. For the purposes of presenting a brief and clear description of the present invention, the preferred embodiment will be discussed as used for keeping a wearing and his luggage dry. The figures are intended for representative purposes only and should not be considered to be limiting in any respect.

[0028] Referring now to FIG. 1, there is shown a man wearing the outwear garment of the present invention. The garment **100** has a large unibody drape **150** formed from a single sheet. In the figure, a hood **110** is formed integrally with the drape. Alternative embodiments of the garment may include a single sheet drape and a hood that is secured to an upper aperture in the drape. Overall shape of the garment is the same in both embodiments.

[0029] The hood has an open front to allow the wearer full use of his or her normal field of vision. A drawstring **170** is optionally secured around the facial portion of the hood. Diameter of the facial opening can be cinched via the drawstring, thereby reducing the area of the user's face exposed to precipitation. Like the rest of the garment, the hood **110** is lined on the inside by an interior liner **140**. It may be of the same material as the interior liner of the drape portion or may be a different material. By way of example, the drape interior liner may be cotton while the interior liner of the hood is a soft microfiber that won't abrade the wearer's face.

[0030] The garment is oversized with an extended back portion that accommodates a backpack, or satchel carried by the user. Many rain protection garments cling to the wearer's body or are form-fitting, thus preventing the user from keeping articles underneath the protective garment. Conversely, the present invention has an enlarged body drape that can shield any luggage the user is carrying on his or her person. The drape is adequately sized to permit the wearer full freedom of movement while carrying a bag and wearing the garment.

[0031] The wearer's arms **200** extend through armholes **130** in the body drape **150**. These armholes may be reinforced with a trim of water resistant material to prevent moisture running off the outer surface from soaking into the interior liner at the armholes. Users can bring their arms inside the interior volume of the body drape to keep their arms dry, and warm, or can extend them through the armholes during periods of light precipitation. In this manner, the user has the optional full range of motion of his arms while wearing the garment. The wearer's feet and legs extend through the bottom opening of the body drape. Though the precise length of the drape will vary, it should extend to approximately mid calf on the wearer. This prevents the garment from dragging on the ground while still covering the bulk of the wearer's legs.

[0032] Referring now to FIG. 2, there is shown a frontal view of the outer wear garment **100** with the front closure unfastened. A front closure **120** such as a zipper (shown in the figures), a series of buttons, hook and eye clasps, or hook and loop material separates the front of the garment into two halves. This closure extends from the bottom of the hood **110** to the bottom opening of the drape. One side of the body drape **150** is opened while the other is folded into the in use position.

Armholes **130** are shown from the inside and the side perspectives. The interior liner **140** covers the entire inner surface of the garment, from the hood to the bottom opening.

[0033] Turning now to FIG. 3, there is shown a cross-section of the garment from the side. An interior liner **140** is secured to a water-resistant outer layer **141** to create a shell that can be worn over clothing, backpacks, and other accoutrement. The outer layer may be made of a variety of water-resistant materials that cause water to bead and run off the surface. Materials, chosen for the interior liner should be non-abrasive, comfortable and optionally thermally insulating. Warm weather embodiments of the device will employ lightweight materials, whereas cold weather versions of the garment will be constructed of heavy weight materials that trap heat within the interior volume of the body drape. Armholes **130** disposed on the sides of the drape are excellent ventilation apertures, permitting some heat to escape. This will be appreciated in the warm weather garments.

[0034] Shown in FIG. 4 is an overhead view of the body drape in a flattened position. The drape **150** is a single sheet having a circular perimeter. An off-center circular cut-out is an upper aperture **160** that encircles the wearer's neck when the garment is worn. Armholes **130** are positioned on either side of the upper aperture and should not extend too far apart as this will cause an unnecessary bunching of material in the front and a lack of adequate play in the back portion. An angle of separation between **100** degrees and **180** is ideal.

[0035] As shown in the figure, the portion of the drape lying behind the armholes is substantially larger than the portion in front. This asymmetrical distribution of material ensures that the front of the garment has a smooth, non-billowing fit, while the back portion has ample material to cover backpacks, satchels or other carrying bags, without becoming tight or stretched. A goal of the invention is to provide adequate coverage for both a wearer and his luggage, thus it is ideal that the back portion be substantially sized to fit a wearer of a specific clothing size, i.e., small, medium, large, etc, and to additionally include room for a satchel.

[0036] A hood (not shown) is secured to the perimeter of the upper aperture during manufacture. In other embodiments the hood may be integrally formed into the body drape. Between the hood and the outer perimeter extends a closure means **120** that makes it easy for users to don and remove the garment when in use.

[0037] In use an individual puts on weather appropriate clothing and any backpacks, messenger bags, or other carrying cases. The garment closure is then unfastened and the body drape is placed over the user's shoulders. The drape is adjusted so that it fully covers both the wearer and his backpack. Next the closure means is connected, bringing the two separate portions of the garment front together. The user then pulls the hood up over his head and cinches the drawstring as necessary. Finally, the user walks outside into inclement weather, where he and his backpack are protected by the outer wear garment.

[0038] The present invention is thus a moisture-resistant outer wear garment for protecting both a user and his luggage from outdoor precipitation. It has a water-resistant outer layer

and a comfortable interior liner. A hood portion covers the wearer's head, keeping rain out of the hair and face. The body drape of the garment is oversized to accommodate both a wearer and his luggage. Various types of lining materials can be used to create a versatile all-weather garment.

[0039] To this point, the instant invention has been shown and described in what is considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiments. It is recognized, however, that departures may be made within the scope of the invention and that obvious modifications will occur to a person skilled in the art. With respect to the above description then, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

[0040] Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

I claim:

- 1) A moisture resistant outer wear garment, comprising:
 - a body drape formed from a single sheet having a circular perimeter and having an outer surface and an interior liner;
 - a hood extending from an upper aperture in said body drape, wherein said upper aperture is an off-center cut out in said body drape;
 - a pair of armholes extending through said body drape, wherein said armholes are a pair of cutouts in said body drape, disposed between said upper aperture and said perimeter of said body drape, and positioned at no more than **180** degrees apart;
 - a closure means extending from a bottom edge of said hood down to said perimeter of said body drape and providing access to an interior of said body drape.
- 2) The device of claim **1**, wherein said hood is integrally formed into said body drape.
- 3) The device of claim **1**, wherein said outer surface is water resistant.
- 4) The device of claim **1**, wherein said closure means is a zipper.
- 5) The device of claim **1**, further comprising a drawstring secured around an outer edge of said hood and operable to cinch the diameter of said outer edge of said hood.
- 6) The device of claim **1**, wherein said interior liner is made of a fabric material.
- 7) The device of claim **1**, wherein the portion of said body drape lying distal from said closure means and behind said armholes is larger in area than the area of said body drape encompassing said closure means and lying between said armholes.

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