



The Journal of Dress History

Volume 2, Issue 2, Summer 2018

Front cover image: Redfern, in *La Gazette du Bon Ton*, Rugby - Suit, April 1914, illustration by George Barbier, <https://theredlist.com/wiki-2-23-1249-1251-view-1900s-profile-redfern-3.html>, accessed 8 July 2018.

The Journal of Dress History

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The logo of The Association of Dress Historians is a monogram of three letters, ADH, interwoven to represent the interdisciplinarity of our membership, committed to scholarship in dress history. The logo was designed in 2017 by Janet Mayo, longstanding ADH member.

The Journal of Dress History

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Welcome

Dear Distinguished Colleagues,

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *The Journal of Dress History*, which contains five academic articles and 12 book reviews.

Two of the academic articles in this issue were written by winners of the recently established ADH prize and award. Nora Ellen Carleson, the 2017 winner of The Stella Mary Newton Prize from The Association of Dress Historians, has written the article, "Harry Collins and the Birth of American Fashion, 1910-1950." Sarah Magill, the 2017 winner of The Association of Dress Historians Award, has written the article, "Standardised or Simplified? The Effect of Government-Imposed Restrictions on Women's Clothing Manufacture and Design during the Second World War." We congratulate Nora and Sarah on winning the prize and award. More information regarding ADH prizes, awards, and grants is available on the ADH website.

Also included in this issue is a new section, titled, *A Guide to Online Sources for Dress History Research*. Online sources for dress history research have been increasing in scale and quality. This guide documents online sources that are of a professional quality and that play a role in furthering the academic study of dress history. This guide will be updated and published in every issue, moving forward. Additions and corrections to *A Guide to Online Sources for Dress History Research* are warmly encouraged.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge Scott Hughes Myerly, a member of The Association of Dress Historians and the Advisory Board, whose editorial expertise was essential to the publication of this issue.

As always, if you have feedback on this issue or an interest in writing an academic article or book review for future publication consideration, please contact me at journal@dresshistorians.org. I look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards,

Jennifer Daley
Managing Editor, *The Journal of Dress History*
Chairman and Trustee, The Association of Dress Historians

Harry Collins and the Birth of American Fashion, 1910–1950

Nora Ellen Carleson

Abstract

Harry Collins (1884–1980), a New York fashion designer, was highly celebrated as a “dress artist” during 1910–1950 yet ignored by scholars for decades. Not only was he a designer for the stage, screen, and shop, he was also a creative author, critic, and inventor who sought to bring an art to the dress of the everyday American woman. This paper will explore Collins’ multi-faceted career, which uniquely bridged the gap between the worlds of high fashion and that of the everyday American woman.

While it may seem there has always been a feeling of exceptionalism present in the mind of the American people, for the majority of the nation’s history it had nothing to do with the clothing that men and women wore. It was not until the twentieth century, however, that a distinct American style was created. In her seminal text, *The American Look: Fashion, Sportswear and the Image of Women in 1930s and 1940s New York*, Rebecca Arnold claims the “American Look,” as it would come to be called, was a fundamental switch to a “New York style” of dress that was dominated by the rise of sportswear.¹ This look, epitomised by the New York Street fashion photographs of the 1930s and 1940s and clothing by designers such as Claire McCardell, was comprised of casual fashions made of soft and sturdy fabrics that allowed American women a freedom to move in their everyday life, from work, to dinner, and even leisure activities.² Though the creators of the American Look sought the creation of a style, they believed it should be obtainable for all classes of women.³ For decades scholars have asserted that a fundamental shift in American cultural and fashion history occurred in the 1930s and 1940s.⁴ These scholars have credited Dorothy Shaver of Lord and Taylor as the first proponent of the style who promoted a small corps of men and women in New York City as the original wave of American designers.⁵ As a result, the leaders of fashion who rose to prominence in America during the first two decades of the twentieth century have been ignored.

A truly exceptional example, who had a nearly 50-year career, was Harry Collins. Responding to the evolving American fashion industry, Collins transformed from an import fashion embroiderer, to a ready-made designer, couturier, Hollywood costumer, and home sewing proponent, and finally to a renowned fashion theorist and commentator. Though he was not the sole designer of American fashion in the early years of the twentieth century, Collins became a marshal of American clothing design by the time Dorothy Shaver and her American designers were at the forefront of fashion. Yet, Collins has been forgotten and has never been the subject of a scholarly work. Through examination of the garments and accessories Harry Collins designed as well as the plentitude of materials through which he advanced them, including advertisements, photographs, newspaper articles, and the books and memoir he authored, this paper places the work and career of Harry Collins in the greater context of American fashion during the first half of the twentieth century. Collins was one of the first to begin to forge a connection between ideas of democracy and American exceptionality, crafting them into new styles of modern dress shaping American women’s daily lives. Through the creation of his theory of Art in Dress, Collins helped construct a style of dressing obtainable for nearly all American women, an idea of ubiquity which would be a keystone of the American Look.

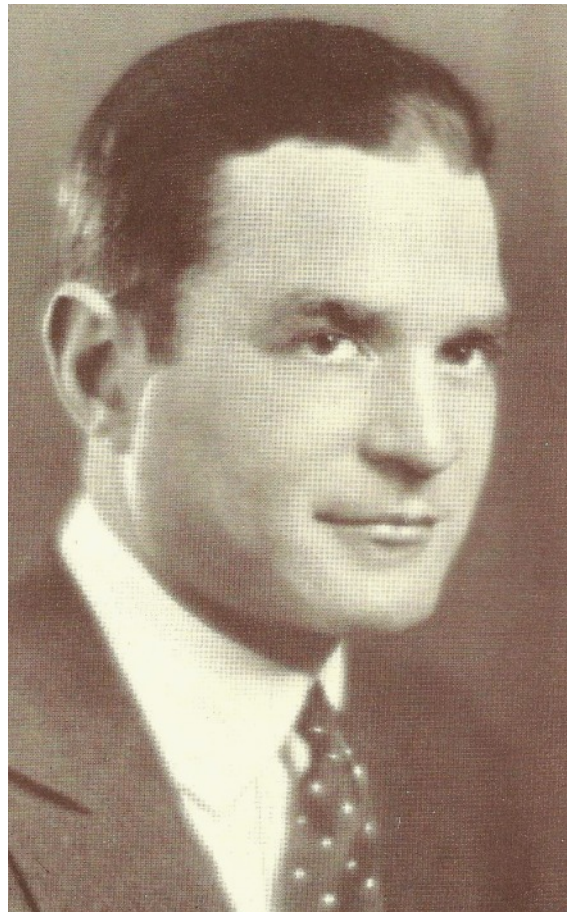


Figure 1
Harry Collins,
published in
Harry Collins:
The ABC of Dress,
The Condé Nast Press,
Greenwich, United States,
1923.

Harry Collins was born in New York City on 13 August 1884, to English immigrants Joseph and Mary Collins (Figure 1).⁶ By the age of 26, Harry had opened his own embroidery business.⁷ Located in the heart of New York's garment district on 38th Street, Collins' business catered to wholesale companies and individuals alike. At this time, there was no commonly accepted American style. French creations were disseminated across the globe and were accepted as both the standard and most desirable clothing of the period. The designs were so pervasive that the French fashion industry could affect the global clothing industry with even the smallest alteration.⁸ Knowing the extent to which French designs could influence his bottom line, Collins began designing clothing specifically for the American woman. He believed that if he could create something that women in the United States desired, he, as well as the American woman, could move away from their dependence on foreign design and he could secure his future in the fashion industry. Harry's first venture at creating a garment for the American woman was an embroidered chiffon blouse, though neither shirt nor sketches appear to survive. When Gimbels department store opened its flagship store in New York in 1910, \$3500 worth of Collins' blouses were ordered and sold. From this embroidered chiffon blouse, Collins began work as a designer, opening his own atelier as an American fashion designer.⁹

Collins' work was able to build off of the popular American Fashion for American Women Movement (AFFAWM), a movement that begun in the last decade of the nineteenth century and heralded by Edward Bok, the editor of *The Ladies Home Journal*. Members of the AFFAWM sought to promote American-made fashions and stop women from supporting the European fashion industry. Furthermore they believed French and foreign fashions were intrinsically unsuitable for the egalitarian, athletic, and democratic women of the United States. Members of the AFFAWM believed that foreign fashions were an extension of all things un-American and were too closely linked with European ideals of entitlement, indulgence, laziness, and rigid social structure, and representative of women of leisure, not that active, go-getting American lady. However, by the end of the 1910s, Collins, who was clearly influenced by the movement, saw the AFFAWM movement lose strength as he began his career and as American designs gained recognition.

Emerging in the 1890s, the “fashion play” was a dramatised live display of fashion plates taking place in ateliers and theatres.¹⁰ They were part entertainment and part fashion show; often having a story with sparse dialog and simplistic plot.¹¹ Seeing the effects of the shows in Europe, Americans began to adapt the events for their markets. Held at the Palace Theatre in New York at 1564 Broadway (in the Theatre District, which is near the Garment District), Tully’s Fashion Show fashion programme of April 1915 represented American and European fashions in the “fashion play” style.¹² Designers highlighted included European designers with houses in New York such as Lucile, Redfern, and Lanvin; important fashionable department stores such as Bonwit Teller; and rising American fashion designers like Harry Collins.¹³ In an article published in the June edition of *Vogue* titled “Vogue Plays a New Role,” the conservative high fashion magazine illustrated gowns shown in “Tully’s Fashion Show” including those of Lucile, Lanvin, Hickson, and Collins.¹⁴ The acceptance of Collins’ work alongside those of well-established and sought after designers of the period provides insight to his rising popularity of his American fashions. Additionally, Harry Collins’ work in fashion plays brought new opportunities to dress stars on Broadway. From 1917 to 1923 Collins created costumes for at least eleven Broadway productions.¹⁵ As with much of the work of renowned fashion designers of the period, Paul Poiret and Lucile, Collins’ stage costumes appear to be lost or destroyed.

While still a relatively new American designer, Collins began to plan a conference for American fashion designers, much like those that regularly took place in France, where they could meet and discuss the future of fashion design in their country.¹⁶ This 1914 conference, which Collins called the Conference on Modes, was perfectly timed as war struck western Europe and the French fashion market was threatened by the effects of war. Drawing on nationalistic views expressed in the popular colonial revival style, Collins suggested that designers look to their colonial past for inspiration. The American Silk Journal, an important fashion trade publication in its day, crowned the Conference on Modes as one of only two significant moves towards American-made fashions to date.¹⁷

The most significant fashions Collins created for the Conference on Modes was the “George Washington.”¹⁸ Though there are no extant copies of the gown, one can look at the sketches of garments in *The American Cloak and Suit Review* as well as the design patent of the gown by Collins (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 2
George Washington
Costume of Grey, Harry
Collins, “New York Press
Accepts the Collins
Collection as Original
and Correct,”
*The American Cloak and
Suit Review*,
January 1915, 116B.



Figure 3
George Washington
Dress Design Patent
(detail), Harry Collins,
US Patent 47,256,
filed 27 January 1915,
issued 27 April 1915.

The George Washington was a sheath style dress with a colonial military inspired jacket, with long lapels and large round buttons, a high, turned down collar, and deep, folded cuffs. Below the jacket a waistcoat appears over the bottom of the dress. In comparison to portraits of George Washington by American artists Charles Peale Polk and other artists, one can see similarities and inspiration for the design. Cognisant of the rampant plagiarism in the fashion world at this time, Collins took precautions and patented the design of the dress.¹⁹ It does not appear that Collins patented his other colonial inspired designs such as his "Paul Revere," "Puritan," or the "John Paul Jones" dresses.²⁰ He may have chosen to patent the "George Washington" because of its evident popularity. The garment was copied by designers for The Ladies Home Journal who created patterns for home sewers while Collins appears to have been given no credit or payment for his design (Figure 4).²¹

The New Spring Ready-Mades
Selected by the Fashion Editors
Drawings by Edward A. Poucher

READY-MADE clothes for spring are smart yet conservative; comfortable while embracing all the newest features of fashion; serviceable yet having a dainty feminine touch which immediately lifts them into a class all their own and definitely settles the question of the American designer's ability to dress American women.

The suits and dresses shown on this page were selected from the workrooms of representative makers of women's clothes, who have generously allowed their garments to be copied in patterns, so that if one does not desire to purchase a ready-made suit or dress one's particular choice may be less expensively made at home.

That the dress requirements of American women have been conscientiously considered is quite apparent in the simple lines, the conspicuous absence of unnecessary decoration and the trig fit of these spring clothes. They have been made to suit our busy life, to send us out to our daily tasks of business, both social and commercial, with the pleasant confidence of being well and appropriately dressed, without which knowledge no woman is at her best.

That admirable poise for which our women are famed is without doubt largely built on their ability to choose and wear with grace and dignity the right clothes on all occasions.

INSPIRED by the uniform of the Continental Army, the dress in the center of the group below was most appropriately named the "George Washington" by its clever designer, Mr. Harry Collins. This garment is a happy conception of the new popular coat dress, and the original was very effective in gunpowder-gray broadcloth, with blue vest and silver buttons. The pattern is No. 8781.

Mr. C. H. D. Robbins designed the dress (Nos. 8772-8771) shown at the extreme right in this lower group, the ready-to-wear garment consisting of a black-and-white-checked cloth skirt; and a smart black taffeta bodice has any appearance of severity removed by the neck and wrist ruffs of white plaited organdie—an effective combination, suggesting wonderful possibilities to the home dressmaker who surely will see how short lengths of harmonizing or good-taste contrasting materials may be successfully combined.

YOUTHFUL and in excellent taste is the covert-cloth suit (Nos. 8770-8771) pictured above. This suit was designed by Mr. Eric Sterritt. That the designer had the needs of the active American woman in mind there can be no doubt. Notice the loose-fitting plaited jacket so suited to our athletic womanhood, the front of which is plain and fastened with one large button at the waist, giving a long, graceful reverse effect to the notched collar.

Circular-shaped is the two-piece, flare skirt, the back gore laid in a broad double box-pleat, affording room for the swinging stride of the healthy, energetic American girl.

In the center group is pictured a smart coat suit designed by Mr. Richard J. Hickson, and ready for home duplication by the use of patterns Nos. 8773-8774. A rather loosely woven black cloth, with a pronounced striping of white, was selected for this garment. The collar, of black satin, is fashioned after the collar on a man's dinner jacket, and from this fact the suit has very aptly derived its name of "Tuxedo."

The graceful new flare of the coat is repeated in the slightly raised circular skirt, the cleverly shaped inset yoke of which is concealed when the jacket is worn.

ONCE more we have the practical seven-gored skirt—this time with a slightly raised waistline and a graceful flare at the hem, which, unlike the flare on seven-gored models of past seasons, does not start below the hipline but above it.

This ever-popular skirt completes the trig walking suit (Nos. 8776-8741) shown above, and was designed by Madame Steinhilber.

Sand-colored cloth, relieved by a collar of dark velvet, was employed for this attractive suit, which surely is practical enough for general wear yet has an air of distinction which lifts it completely out of the commonplace and makes it a garment suitable for any occasion—the kind of suit we busy American women need.

The smart hat with this suit was designed by Mrs. M. H. Tuck, and were all the other attractive hats shown on this page, with the exception of the clever Continental shape shown on the "George Washington" dress (No. 8781). This hat was designed by Anne Jardine.

NOTE—We shall be glad to advise you further about either the garments themselves or the patterns by which they can be made if a stamped, addressed envelope is sent with your request. Address the Fashion Editors, The Ladies Home Journal, Independence Square, Philadelphia.

PATTERNS (including Guide-Chart) for the designs shown on this page can be supplied at fifteen cents for each number, post free. Patterns Nos. 8770 and 8771 come in seven sizes: 32 to 44 inches bust measure; and No. 8774 comes in eight sizes: 22 to 36 inches waist measure. Order from your nearest dealer in Ladies Home Journal patterns; or by mail, giving number of pattern, bust or waist measure, and enclosing the price to the Pattern Department, The Ladies Home Journal, Independence Square, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

(Page 78)

Figure 4

A copy of Collins George Washington dress (bottom centre), no credit is given to Harry Collins, The Ladies Home Journal, Volume 32, March 1915, p 73.

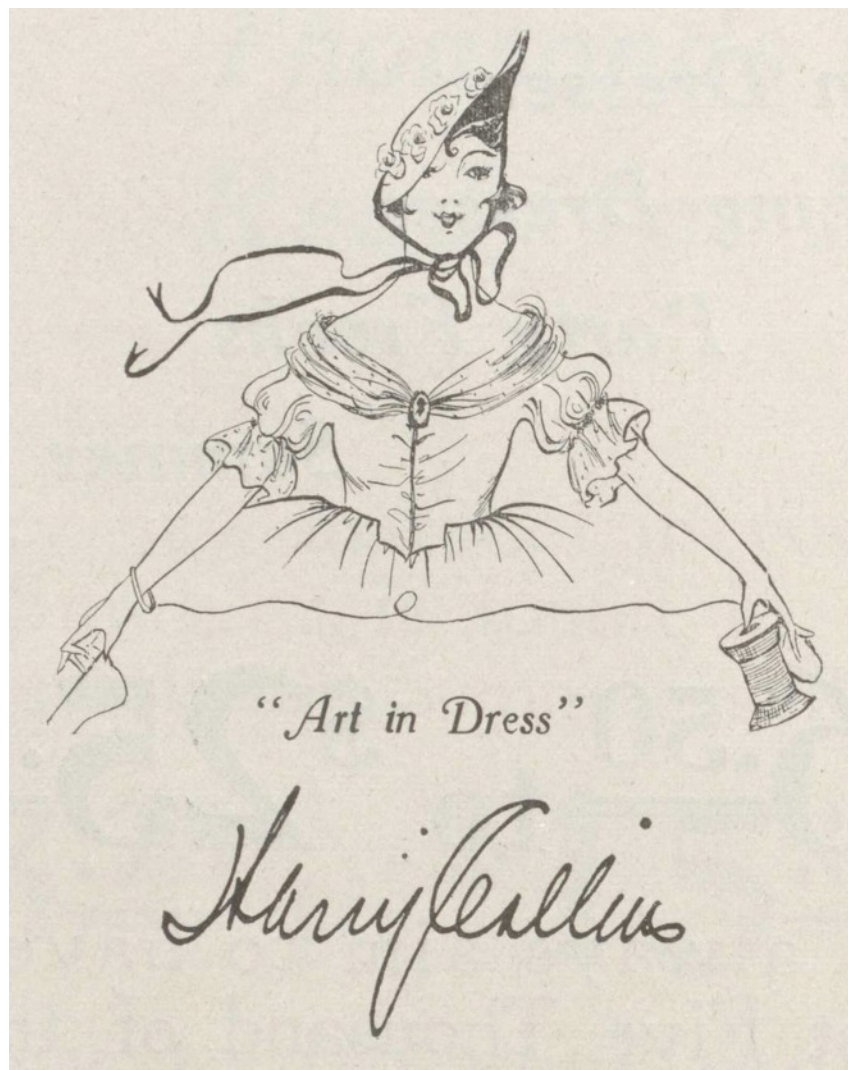


Figure 5

Harry Collins advertisement, *American Cloak and Suit Review*, Volume 9, Number 5, May 1915, p 100.

Looking back, Collins thought his designs were “frightful examples of a first try,” but to the press, this was truly the first moment they began to see a new collection in the United States independent from Europe and representative of the nation’s past.²² *Women’s Wear Daily* cited the Collins work as a movement of Art in Dress in America.²³ From this article Collins took his motto, a representation of the fundamental ideology behind his fashions and he dubbed himself the “Creator of Art in Dress” (Figure 5).

Following the Conference on Modes, Harry Collins was inaugurated as a leading figure in American fashion and promoted as the Poiret of America.²⁴ He gained further importance as the fashion landscape changed quickly as war broke out in Europe and Collins’ ideas of American dress cemented and his designs gained popularity. During the First World War, western Europe had to focus on defending itself and not on creating and selling new fashions. This is not to say that European fashions were non-existent at this time nor were they completely unavailable, as many important Parisian and English fashion houses also had boutiques in New York. However, the surge to wear American-made garments during the war, a time of heightened nationalism, and the rising force of the American fashion designer created a perfect atmosphere for Harry Collins to promote his fashions and gain nationwide notoriety.

It was at this time that Collins dressed some of his most important elite clients, including Mrs Matilda Rausch Dodge Wilson, the widow of John Dodge, founder of Dodge Motors of Detroit, Michigan. Today, Mrs Wilson’s home, Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester, Michigan is a historic house museum.



Figure 6
Black chiffon evening gown
accented with jet beads and tassels,
Harry Collins, 1917,
Meadow Brook Hall and Gardens,
Rochester, United States, 01_04_17.

In the museum's vast costume collection are five dresses from Harry Collins, which are the earliest extant garments yet to be found. The earliest of the five garments is an evening gown of black chiffon adorned with black beading dated to 1917 (Figure 6).

Harry Collins did not design clothing for American women with only monetary gain in mind. To Collins, dress was an art form and he sought the creation of an identity and a way of self-expression in the garment not for himself, but for the women who wore them. He firmly believed that since what he created was art, it transcended the quick and changing fad of contemporary fashion. Harry Collins espoused his principles on dress in interviews, speaking engagements, editorials, and articles as well as through the creation of his fashions. In writing, Collins often drew on nationalistic sentiments in relation to fashion using terms such as "emancipation" and "slavishness" when discussing the creation of an American look separate from foreign styles.²⁵ The language Collins chose articulated and reinforced notions of historical power and submission, albeit in relation to the foreign and domestic fashion industries. It evoked powerful images of the nation's past and followed many of the sentiments expressed by the AFFAWM.

Expanding his reach beyond his new semi-fitted and ready wear departments further into American society and culture, Collins reached the home sewer through the creation of patterns and articles in ladies' magazines. While contemporaries of Collins such as Madeline Vionet and Coco Chanel created unique and successful designs for pattern companies like McCall's, these were merely designs with a sketch packaged and sold by American pattern companies. Harry Collins, on the other hand, consistently offered clothing in conjunction with dress education, even with his home sew patterns. Collins first wrote a series of 12 articles on dress for the *The Ladies Home Journal* in 1920, receiving a salary of \$25,000 for the year.²⁶ The articles Collins wrote centred on his personal philosophy of art in dress, including those on democracy in dress, simplicity in design, individuality in dress, and economical dress.²⁷ There appears to be no records of the success or failure of these designs, however upon completion of his contract with *The Ladies Home Journal*, Collins began writing for another ladies' magazine, *Modern Priscilla*, where he was promoted as one of "New York's most famous costume designers" adding that his articles were "of such import to the women of America that they [would] constitute practically a college course in dress appreciation."²⁸

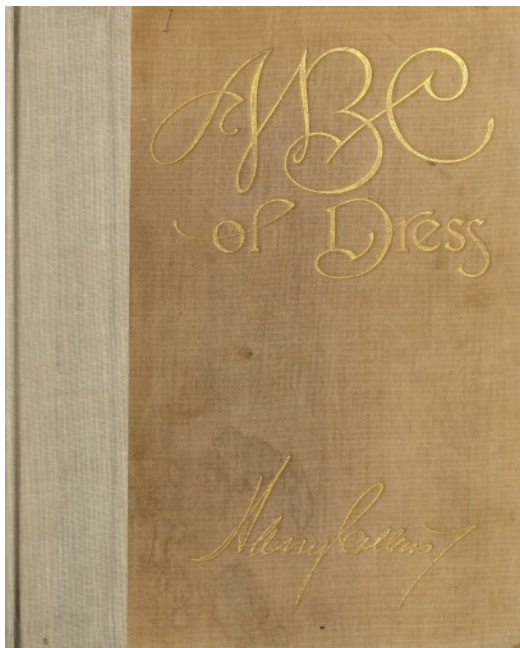


Figure 7
Book cover, Harry Collins,
The ABC of Dress,
Modern Modes Corporation,
New York, United States, 1923.



Figure 8
Florence Harding Inaugural
Gown Design,
Harry Collins, The ABC of
Dress, Modern Modes
Corporation, New York,
United States, 1923.

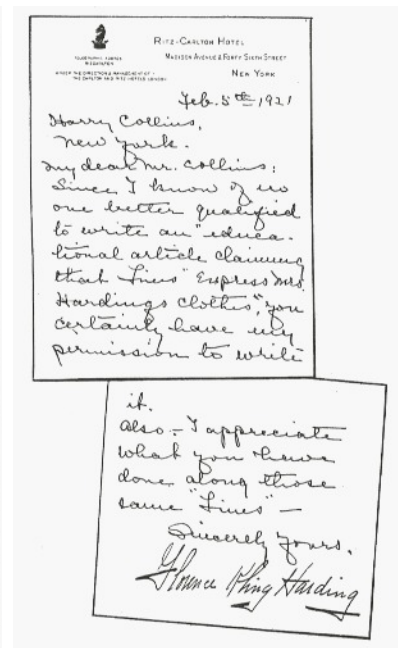


Figure 9
Letter from Florence Harding to
Harry Collins regarding the use
of the Inaugural Gown Design,
Harry Collins, The ABC of
Dress, Modern Modes
Corporation, New York,
United States, 1923.

In 1923 Collins moved on from writing for ladies' magazines when his book, *The ABC of Dress*, was published by the Modern Modes Corporation, part of Conde Nast Press (Figures 7-9).²⁹ Much like his magazine articles, Collins' book was one of thousands of educational textbooks in the field of fashion and home-sewing published at this time. The books were used in homes, high schools, women's colleges, and vocation schools specialising in fashion. However, Collins' book appears to have stood out not only because of his popularity, but because it was a representation of his democratic ideas of American dress. Collins' book seemed all the more American as it was endorsed by First Lady, Florence Harding, his devoted and prominent patron whom he dressed for three years acting as friend and advisor and creating some of the only extant clothing from the First Ladies' Wardrobe; including dresses and hats in the Smithsonian and Ohio Historical Society collections (Figures 10-12).



Figure 10
President Warren G Harding and
First Lady Florence Harding,
National Photo Company,
circa 1920, Library of Congress
Prints and Photographs Division,
Washington, DC, United States,
LC-USZ62-32916.

*Figure 11*

Hat, Harry Collins, circa 1920–1924, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, United States, #H55485, photograph by Nora Carleson.

*Figure 12*

Interior label of hat, Harry Collins, circa 1920–1924, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, United States, #H55485, photograph by Nora Carleson.

At the same time Collins was opening his impressive new show rooms at the prestigious New York intersection of Park Avenue and 57th Street, and dressing the First Lady of the United States, he was opening grand new shops in Palm Beach, Florida; Los Angeles, California; Havana, Cuba; and at Selfridges in London, one of the most fashionable department stores in the world, renowned for its promotion of French and English fashion houses.³⁰ During 1918–1930, the designs of Harry Collins could be found across the entirety of the United States as well as abroad. Even so, the majority of Collins' few surviving works are found in the heart of Middle America. They are now found in former major industrial cities such as Philadelphia, Columbus, Cleveland, and Detroit. Through these garments one can not only see the similarities in construction and design, but in those who purchased the gowns and their representation of American democracy and opportunity.

In comparison, the works of Collins in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s only exist in articles, film, and advertisements today. Starting with silent films in the 1910s and 1920s in New York, Collins began creating costumes for films in a similar way to his Broadway and Vaudeville creations.³¹ Records are scarce for costumers in the first decades of film in America and there appear to be no listings of the early films on which Collins worked. However, by the early 1920s Collins' work was highlighted in film trade and fan publications as well as newspapers in association with his film costuming for Fox Studios and recognising him as a national authority on fashion.³² Even so, Collins' work and career becomes difficult to define at this point as he shifts out of focus during the Great Depression.

It is interesting to note that it was at this time that Dorothy Shaver was named Vice President of styling, publicity, and advertising at Lord and Taylor, an established department store in New York. Having previously mounted a significant show of French Decorative Arts at Lord and Taylor, Shaver had begun to look at the opportunities available in American design and manufacturing. Eventually, in 1932 Shaver created a programme called "The American Look." This programme was created to specifically produce and promote a uniquely American style of fashion and design.³³ With new waves of graduates from the fashion and arts schools founded in the 1910s and 1920s, there was a new wealth of educated designers in New York, some of whom likely studied from The ABC of Dress.

Some of the designers promoted by Shaver and Lord and Taylor include fashion names such as Adrian, Clare Potter, Bonnie Cashin, Claire McCardell, Germaine Monteil, and Hattie Carnegie. They highlighted good construction, moderate prices, and casual styling, which Shaver promoted as unique American qualities.³⁴ There was little to no comparison of Shaver's ideas and those of the AFFAWM or the philosophy of dress advocated by Harry Collins. Collins appears to have had no response to

Shaver being credited for the creation of an America style of fashion in his day. In fact, during 1930–1942 there was almost no information, designs, or advertisements for Harry Collins fashions. Collins, along with clothing and his ideology of dress, do not reappear until 1942, when he was showing his new designs alongside many of Shaver’s “American Look” designers at a Luncheon–Fashion Show at the Waldorff Astoria hotel.³⁵ Four years later, in 1946, *The Christian Science Monitor* wrote an article examining his nearly 40-year career in the fashion industry.³⁶ The article discussed his previous fame and New York origins but clearly alludes to his decline in the fashion industry.³⁷

It is unclear as to what truly ended the nearly 50-year fashion career of Harry Collins. He would go on to live 30 more years, passing away at the age of 96, in 1980. One can perhaps look at a series of events that coincided to cause his star to fade. Perhaps the combination of the Great Depression as well as an over-extended company, reaching across of the nation and abroad, deeply affected the business. Or maybe, seeing his dream of an American style of clothing, to which he had been instrumental in creating, whether properly recognised or not, come to fruition allowed him the opportunity to pursue other interests. Perhaps while Collins’ theories on dress were revolutionary, his fashions were not. While he had designed for the socially and financially elite as well as the everyday woman, the clientele that financially supported him, the gilded age heiress and business tycoons, were no longer living in the same way they had, and the American public was no longer looking to the wealthy elite for their fashion guidance. What is clear is that Harry Collins built upon systemic beliefs in American exceptionalism and nationalistic fervour in the first decades of the twentieth century to help craft a new way to look at fashion and craft it in the image of the wearer. Though he has been excluded from the narrative of American fashion to date, it is clear that the fashions of Harry Collins, and his philosophy of American democracy in dress, had lasting effects on the fashion industry in the United States.

Endnotes

- ¹ Rebecca Arnold, *The American Look: Fashion Sportswear and the Image of Women in the Late 1930s and 1940s* New York, I B Tauris, New York, United States, 2008, p 13.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Ibid, p 1.
- ⁴ For more on the American Look see Sandra Stansbery Buckland, “Promoting American Designers, 1940–1944: Building Our Own House,” in Linda Welters and Patricia Cunningham, eds, *Twentieth-Century American Fashion*, Berg, New York, United States, 2005, pp 99–121; Bonnie English, *A Cultural History of Fashion in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries: From Catwalk to Sidewalk*, second edition, Bloomsbury, London, England, 2013; Donald Albrecht, ed, *Paris–New York: Design, Fashion, Culture 1925–1940*, Museum of the City of New York, New York, United States, 2008; and Patricia Mears, *American Beauty: Aesthetics and Innovation in Fashion*, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, United States, 2009.
- ⁵ It is important to acknowledge the difficulties in using the term “American.” It is fully realised that the term is contested by some scholars; however, this paper will examine the importance of the identification of American by Harry Collins as well as other designers and thinkers of the period, especially in opposition to France.
- ⁶ “Harry Collins, US World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918, New York, New York, Roll 1766148, Draft Board 125,” Ancestry.com, accessed 15 September 2017.
- ⁷ “Harry Collins, 1910 United States Federal Census, Manhattan Ward 12, New York, New York, Roll T624_1026, Page 10A, FHL Microfilm 1375039m,” Ancestry.com, accessed 15 September 2017; Michael Collins, “Re: Harry Collins,” email message to Nora Carleson, 28 June 2013; Harry Collins, *Autobiographical Writings Part One*, unpublished typescript, private collection, undated, p 8.
- ⁸ Ibid, pp 13–14.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Caroline Evans, *The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900–1929*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2013, p 58.

- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Ibid, p 91.
- ¹³ Marlis Schweitzer, *When Broadway Was the Runway: Theatre; Fashion, and the American Culture*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, United States, 2009, p 179.
- ¹⁴ "Vogue Plays a New Role," *Vogue*, 1 June 1915, p 33.
- ¹⁵ "Harry Collins," Internet Broadway Database, <http://ibdb.com/person.php?id=414360>, accessed 27 December 2016. Records for theatre productions in the nineteenth century and first few decades of the twentieth century are still incomplete. Though it is known from remaining material that Collins designed costumes or at least provided clothing for 11 theatre productions, he may have been involved in a far greater number of productions as either a costume designer or by providing gowns to stars.
- ¹⁶ Evans, op cit, p 30.
- ¹⁷ "American Designer's Fashion for Spring," *The American Silk Journal*, Volume 23, Number 12, December 1914, p 31.
- ¹⁸ "The New Spring Ready-Mades," *The Ladies Home Journal*, March 1915, p 73.
- ¹⁹ Harry Collins, Design for a Dress, US Patent 47,256, filed 27 January 1915, issued 27 April 1915.
- ²⁰ "American Design's Fashions for Spring." There are no other images of the historically inspired dresses created by Collins for the Conference on Modes.
- ²¹ New Spring Ready-Mades, op cit, p 73.
- ²² Collins, *Autobiographical Writings Part One*, op cit, p 12.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ibid, p 16.
- ²⁵ Harry Collins, "Art in Dress: As Much in It as in Painting or Poetry," *Los Angeles Times*, 6 April 1919, p 29.
- ²⁶ Harry Collins, *Autobiographical Writings Part Two*, unpublished typescript, private collection, undated, p 13.
- ²⁷ Harry Collins, "Lines! Lines! Lines!," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, March 1920, p 49; Harry Collins, "Dress and Character," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1920, p 49; Harry Collins, "The Dress of Yesterday And the Vision of To-Morrow," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, May 1920, p 48; Harry Collins, "The Harmony of the Costume," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1920, p 49; Harry Collins, "Democracy and Aristocracy in Dress," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, July 1920, p 49.
- ²⁸ "Display Ad 14," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, 5 July 1922, p 16.
- ²⁹ Valerie Watrous, "Stylist Comes to Gown Films: Harry Collins to Direct Fox Costuming," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 March 1928, B7.
- ³⁰ "Harry Collins, the Pioneer of a Great Movement: An Effort At Last Which Links the South American Demand with North American Supply of Modish Dress," *The American Cloak and Suit Review*, February 1920, p 165; Olive Gray, "Exclusive Shop Opens for Women: Harry Collins, New York Designer Makes Debut in Los Angeles," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 April 1930, B25; Collins, *Autobiographical Writings Part Two*, op cit, p 15; "Fall Modes in Dresses Ready for Wear," *Vogue*, 15 September 1922, p 2.
- ³¹ Michelle Tolini Finamore, *Hollywood Before Glamour*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, United States, 2013, p 115.
- ³² Inez Klumph, "The Film Flapper Says," *The Washington Post*, 29 October 1923, p 4; "Style Cannot Be Explained: Varying Views as to What is Meant by the Word 'Chic,'" *Los Angeles Times*, 14 March 1925, A17; Faith Service, "Who Are the Best-Dressed Women on the Screen – and Why?," *Motion Picture*, October 1926, p 22.
- ³³ Anne T Keene, "Dorothy Shaver," American National Biography Online, <http://www.anb.org/articles/10/10-02304.html>, accessed 5 December 2016; "Dorothy Shaver (1893-1959): The First Lady of Retailing," The Smithsonian Institution, http://amhistory.si.edu/archives/WIB-tour/dorothy_shaver.pdf, accessed 5 December 2016.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ "Display Ad 29," *The New York Times*, 6 October 1942, p 6.

- ³⁶ Barbara E Scott Fisher, "Harry Collins' Emphasis on 'Line' Important in his Career as Designer: Early Dressmaker: Type Fashions Contrasted With Changing Custom-Made Styles of Today," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 19 September 1946, p 16.
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Standardised or Simplified? The Effect of Government-Imposed Restrictions on Women's Clothing Manufacture and Design during the Second World War

Sarah Magill

Abstract

The Second World War necessitated the transferral of labour and supplies from civilian manufacture to war production. Orders initiated by the government, in an attempt to make economical use of limited resources, severely affected the clothing industry from production to consumption. As a result, many contemporaneous sources and contemporary scholars claim that civilian dress was standardised. Scrutiny of trade journals, government documents, Mass Observation records, extant garments, and sewing patterns demonstrates that though manufacturing methods were standardised and simplified, there continued to be a range of styles in women's dress.

As well as conscripting men and women into the services to serve and protect Britain and its allies, the conditions of the Second World War demanded that all non-essential industry be concentrated in order to clear factory space and labour for essential war work, resulting in reduced manufacture of civilian goods, including clothing. The government department, The Board of Trade, drafted orders and directives such as the Utility scheme, austerity regulations, and clothes rationing, which impacted the clothing industry from production to consumption and, thus, the way women dressed during the 1940s.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the impact of wartime restrictions on the manufacture and design of women's civilian dress during the Second World War, with a focus on the cut and construction of dress. A range of primary sources, including government documents, trade journals, the Mass Observation Archive, and sewing patterns were used to determine whether and to what extent dress was standardised in this period as a result of government orders. This paper goes on to argue that although styles were simplified as a result of wartime restrictions, there was not a homogenisation of dress under the regulations. Women demanded variety in dress and manufacturers were obliged to comply.

The Board of Trade (henceforth the BoT) was responsible for controlling supplies and manufacture in industry. Orders included the control of raw supplies, production quotas, and price control.¹ However, these steps did not limit production and consumption to satisfactory levels and clothing prices rose steeply, so clothes rationing was implemented on 1 June 1941, lasting until 1949.² The system was devised on a quantity rather than value basis, providing everyone with an equal number of coupons (initially 66) enabling consumers of differing socio-economic backgrounds to purchase garments suited to their budget.³ A coupon pointing was allocated to each garment based on the approximate amount of fabric required to make it.

"As a basis for the points calculations a yard of woollen cloth 30 inches or so wide counted as three coupons and a yard of any other material as two coupons."⁴ For example, in 1943, a woollen dress cost 11 coupons, a cotton dress seven, and a rayon dress five.⁵ This implies that there were approximately



Figure 1

Weldon's So-Easy sewing pattern for a pretty frock, early 1940s, private collection. This pattern required $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards of material for a size 34 inch bust.



Figure 2

A group of women wearing Berketex Utility dresses designed by Norman Hartnell, 1942, ©The Drapers' Record, 1942.

$3\frac{1}{2}$ yards of cloth in a woollen or cotton dress and $2\frac{1}{2}$ in a rayon dress. However, larger or smaller quantities would be required for different sizes. Yardage charts in period sewing patterns, such as that in Figure 1, indicate that a size 32-inch bust required under $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards, on average, and a 40-inch bust required more, but this was dependent upon the cut of the garment.⁶

In September 1941, the Utility Scheme was introduced, which initially focused on the manufacture of cloth. Utility cloth was manufactured to strict specifications devised in collaboration with the British Standards Institute in a variety of qualities to supply the population's needs.⁷ Specifications included: width of fabric, threads per inch, weight, and finish.⁸ The Utility Clothing Scheme followed and was primarily designed to keep down the cost of living in order that the whole population could afford clothing.⁹ Utility cloth was allocated to specific Utility garments, which bear the CC41 label (see Figure 2 for examples of Utility dresses). Utility was manufactured to larger quotas (approximately 80% of manufactured civilian clothing), which gave the government majority control of the clothing industry.¹⁰

Simplified styles of clothing (or austerity regulations) were introduced to save labour and materials in 1942 and most were in force until 1946.¹¹ Regulations dictated the simplification of manufacture for Utility and non-Utility clothing alike and applied to manufacturers, tailors, and professional dressmakers. Within the orders, the number of seams, pleats, and pockets were limited and decoration was eliminated: certain styles, such as double-breasted jackets were also prohibited. In amendments to the orders, standards of manufacture were prescribed including seam finishes, minimum stitches per inch, and minimum seam allowances.¹² For example, French, double-stitched, overlocked, or taped seams were prescribed for shoulder and armhole seams of blouses, presumably because these seams suffer the most strain and these methods might prolong the lifespan of a garment.¹³ The minimum amount of seam allowance was more for wool and rayon dresses than cotton ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch on main seams of wool and rayon, compared to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch on main seams of cotton dresses).¹⁴ These fabrics are more likely to fray than cotton and clothes had to last much longer than they did before the war. Women's blouses and dresses also

had to conform to standard sizes, devised in collaboration with the British Standards Institute. Parameters were provided, within which garment measurements had to conform. The aim was to provide the population with well-fitting garments that would not require alteration after purchasing.¹⁵

Consequently, it has been suggested by many contemporary scholars and in contemporaneous accounts, that clothes of the 1940s were standardised. Lant suggests that due to restrictions imposed on dress, Utility resulted in “a subtle uniformity of the nation.”¹⁶ Wood states, “The impression is always one of a nation of women in a kind of civilian uniform, all looking very much the same.”¹⁷ McDowell concurs, asserting that it was “the nearest thing to a civilian uniform for women in the history of dress.”¹⁸ In *Utility Furniture and Fashion*, clothing is referred to as “almost entirely utilitarian.”¹⁹ More recently, scholars, such as Howell have suggested, “While the austerity measures did not formally restrict creative freedom, they limited the number of design options available.”²⁰ Therefore, the overall impression of women’s dress in the 1940s is one of uniformity and utilitarianism.

Contemporaneous sources also reflect a growing concern for standardisation of dress. In the Mass Observation Clothes Rationing Survey, one man commented on a shop-window display, “Oh yes, standardised I suppose.”²¹ In 1943, Goldsmith wrote, “Utility dresses, the simple lines of which are certainly an education in good taste, are continuing the process of standardisation.”²² An article in *The Drapers’ Record* stated, “Control of specifications, whether of materials or make-up, must lead to stereotyped manufactures and standardisation of design.”²³

Despite the previous arguments that suggest fashion was adversely affected by the austerity regulations, couturiers welcomed the simplified styles, which focused on cut rather than decoration. Hardy Amies reflected that he and Edward Molyneux had been making Utility for years.²⁴ Digby Morton described making dresses that were “rather tailored and plain.”²⁵ He also revealed that he was making dresses out of 3 yards, rather than 3½–4 pre-war.²⁶ In an interview in *Vogue*, Charles Creed stated that simplicity “has always been the keynote of my clothes.”²⁷

The public began to agree: “Women too have found that ornament and undue elaborateness of dress is unnecessary and are beginning to believe that simplicity is both more becoming and more economical.”²⁸ *The Drapers Record* publicised the Utility Scheme positively in an article in 1942, comparing Utility to pre-war garments, demonstrating there was little difference between the two.²⁹ However, the BoT found that manufactures of Utility were paying large amounts to designers, despite the fundamental principle of price control.³⁰ This could suggest that manufacturers were concerned women might not find Utility clothes appealing.

To combat the negative attitudes towards Utility, the BoT promoted the clothing through the Couturier scheme.³¹ A group of couturiers designed a range of garments, the patterns for which were sold to manufacturers. Reaction to the scheme was not always favourable, however, as the group only designed 32 garments (eight styles of suits, coats, dresses, and blouses), which the public thought might further endorse standardisation of clothing. In addition, of the 1400 designated Utility manufacturers, only 100 initially bought the patterns.³²

In spite of the simplification of clothing styles and the allocation of cloth to garments, the range of qualities of cloth manufactured was not limited. For women’s dresses alone, there were 13 cotton cloth specifications, 51 rayon, and three mixtures.³³ Cloth can also be decorated in various ways through dyeing and printing, not to mention the way it is cut and constructed into a garment (Figures 3 and 4). A Pathé film from 1942 demonstrates how one dress design can be interpreted in countless ways using a variety of different cloths in various colourways.³⁴ In addition, a maximum of 50 styles of women’s dresses were permitted per manufacturer per annum.³⁵ Given the need for economy this seems a generous number and one might question why the number was so large. One reason could be that the government understood the demand for variety by the public.



Figure 3
Early Utility rayon dress in a tree print, circa 1941-1942, Alex Magill, private collection, Bournemouth, England.



Figure 4
Utility dress in burgundy rayon with an abstract print, circa 1942-1945, Alex Magill, private collection, Bournemouth, England.



Figure 5
Laura Lee, tartan day dress with bias-cut skirt, 1942, ©The Drapers' Record, 1942.

Although the BoT simplified clothing manufacture, it never dictated cut or yardage, except in women's overalls and underwear, where maximum yardage was stipulated per dozen garments.³⁶ This still allowed manufacturers the freedom to use patterns of their choosing. However, McNeil intimates, "The amount of fabric allowed for a garment was strictly controlled, resulting in shorter skirts, and a reduction of pleats."³⁷ Cawthorne concurs, stating, "The total amount of cloth in each garment was strictly fixed" and that maximum widths of skirts also dictated.³⁸ The restrictions stated that skirts could have no more than six seams and two inverted/box or four knife pleats, with pleat width prescribed, but the style and length was never referred to.³⁹

From a manufacturing perspective, fabric had to be used more economically than before the war, since coupons were also used by manufacturers to purchase cloth. This may have encouraged simpler cutting, since the machining and finishing of six seams could equate to more time and labour than a skirt with four seams and, potentially, more fabric, depending on the style. However, in *The Drapers' Record*, there are several examples of skirts with bias cut panels, which is an uneconomical use of fabric compared to cutting panels on the straight of grain (Figure 5).⁴⁰ In addition, a four-gore flared skirt in *The Drapers' Record* shows, "An example of the generous cutting that can be achieved within austerity."⁴¹ Furthermore, when compared to late 1930s bias-cut skirt styles, early 1940s skirts were usually cut in fuller, A-line styles suggesting economy of fabric was not a concern.⁴² More significantly, BoT documents from 1943 reveal it was debatable what savings had actually been made by limiting seams in skirts to six.⁴³



Figure 6

Utility blouse in red-and-white striped rayon with chevron pocket detail, Marks and Spencer, circa 1942–1949, Hampshire Cultural Trust, Winchester, England, C1996.17, Photography by Sarah Magill, 2016.



Figure 7

Utility blouse in red-and-white striped rayon with bias-bound cuff detail, Marks and Spencer, circa 1942–1949, Hampshire Cultural Trust, Winchester, England, C1996.17, Photography by Sarah Magill, 2016.

In *Utility Reassessed*, Reynolds also states that the austerity regulations “limited the amount of material and trimmings manufacturers, tailors and commercial dressmakers were allowed to use.”⁴⁴ She suggests that a Marks and Spencer blouse demonstrates economical use of fabric through bias edgings and offcuts used for the pocket.⁴⁵ Examination of the same blouse in a red and white stripe rayon at Hampshire Cultural Trust revealed that, in fact, both details are cut on the bias. Even if made from offcuts, these details would be more laborious to piece together and apply then cutting on the straight of grain, particularly as the pocket is strategically cut to create a chevron effect (Figures 6 and 7).

Incidentally, the blouse referred to has eight buttons. From 1942 to 1946, under the austerity regulations, only seven buttons were permitted on a long-sleeved blouse.⁴⁶ This suggests the blouse pre- or post-dates the regulations or that the manufacturer evaded them. Since Marks and Spencer were known to have worked with the BoT on Utility specifications, the latter is unlikely.⁴⁷ The label has a British Standards Institute size, suggesting it was made during or after 1942 when standard sizing was introduced. The austerity regulations were designed to save labour and materials, which included the removal of decorative elements. It is arguable that the bias trim on the collar and cuffs is decorative, rather than functional, since the raw edges of these components could be finished using a much quicker process. In addition, the careful piecing of the pocket could also be deemed decorative, as it could have been cut from a single piece of cloth.

Similarly, a Utility blouse in The Museum of London collection cleverly uses stripes to add detail, but these elements are predominantly cut on the straight of grain.⁴⁸ The collar is cut in two parts, so that the stripes are perpendicular to each other. The cuffs are also cut at 90 degrees to the sleeve, creating the same effect. Cutting these elements on the straight of grain, as opposed to the bias, would have utilised fabric more economically. The blouse also has four buttons (less than the permitted five for a short-sleeve blouse), suggesting it was possibly made within the timeframe of the austerity regulations.⁴⁹

BoT records reveal that manufacturers did evade the restrictions.⁵⁰ Reluctance to conform could reflect a negative attitude towards perceived standardisation and to provide more variety in dress. An article in *The Drapers' Record* suggested, "The greater the number of controls, the greater the incentive and opportunity for evasion and subversive activity."⁵¹ A record of complaints made by members of the retail trade were investigated by technical officers, often resulting in no action if the evasion was unremarkable.⁵² This suggests that the austerity regulations were vague and not easy to enforce. The most common infringements were ruching, gauging, frills, applique, and rouleau, which suggests that manufacturers believed plain, tailored styles were not desired by all consumers.⁵³

In 1945 frills were causing a "minor crisis" and a "wholesale evasion and sabotage of the order" was likely.⁵⁴ Frills were not banned in the orders, but ruching and gauging were, unless used to add fullness; in other words, gathered frills were not permitted.⁵⁵ However, a frill can be produced using a circular piece of material, which was not banned, such as those in a Dorville advert from the September 1944 issue of *Vogue* (Figure 8).⁵⁶ However, in this example, it is clear that the frills were used purely as decorative trimming and not used to add fullness. The BoT agreed, stating that "a frill is a cheap way of giving variety to an otherwise commonplace frock."⁵⁷

In April 1945, government Technical Officers visited 30 shops in London to carry out inspections of garments to investigate infringements. Of these, only three shops sold garments evidencing no infringements.⁵⁸ In other words, the majority of retailers at this time were selling garments that did not conform to austerity regulations. Contradictory to the finding, the BoT stated that, over a three-year period, the majority of manufacturers conformed to the restrictions.⁵⁹ The BoT clearly realised the difficulty of policing the regulations, as some terms were vague and manufacturers used imaginative terminology to evade the restrictions.



Figure 8

Dorville advertisement showing a dress with circular frill detail, *British Vogue*, September 1944.

An example of a complaint made to the BoT by the British Mantle Manufacturers' Association regarding two double-breasted "effect" jackets advertised in national newspapers confirms the vagueness of terminology.⁶⁰ The first jacket, by Whiteley Ltd, was investigated and found not to be an infringement as it was only "semi-breasted," a style not banned in the restrictions. The second jacket, in the Technical Officer's opinion, was a double-breasted jacket. However, in correspondence to the complainant, the jacket did not constitute contravention of the style restrictions, explaining that there were differences in opinion of what constituted a double-breasted jacket: two rows of buttons or the amount of wrap at the front. Had the restrictions been more prescriptive, more prosecutions might have been made. In 1943, there were 140 prosecutions of manufacturers.⁶¹

Another method of evasion was through home dressmaking. The austerity regulations did not apply to home dressmakers, but coupon pointing of fabric and a 25% purchase tax was applied to paper patterns as a deterrent.⁶² This suggests the government wanted to encourage civilians to buy Utility clothing, rather than making their own from an unlimited amount of yardage. Although paper patterns never followed restrictions, discussions took place between the BoT and pattern manufacturers about styles complying.⁶³ However, according to *The Drapers' Record*, 78% of styles were within coupon value and comparable to austerity styles, which was confirmed through the examination of yardage charts and styles of period patterns.⁶⁴ Reminders were also printed on sewing patterns to ensure professional dressmakers complied with the simplifications.⁶⁵ This meant home dressmakers could evade Utility styles if they found them too plain, adding extra pockets, buttons, frills, and pleats, as seen in Figure 9, which features eight inverted pleats (six more than the two permitted in manufactured styles). In contrast, the Make-Do and Mend scheme was promoted through publications, magazine articles, Pathé films, and sewing classes offering advice on remodelled or reusing clothes by replacing sleeves and yokes of dresses or taking apart a man's suit to make a woman's suit. In addition, patching fabric was coupon-free and the amount increased from half a square foot to a full square foot in 1942.⁶⁶ Mending and repurposing was encouraged, whereas home dressmaking from new, often scarce, materials was not.



Figure 9

Economy Design, sewing pattern for a box-pleated skirt, early 1940s, private collection.

Manufacturers were clearly limited by the amount of cloth available to them and by the austerity regulations, which simplified the production of clothing. The BoT succeeded in standardising clothing through the allocation of Utility cloth to specific garments, prescribing manufacturing methods, and regulated sizing. However, the removal of embellishment and decoration may have made garments simpler or plainer, but it could be argued that cut, colour, and print was then the focus of dress design. The regulations were never prescriptive enough to dictate the cut of a garment enabling significant variety of style within the limitations. Flouting of the regulations by manufacturers suggests that variety was required, but the BoT claim the majority did not, suggesting designers were able to creatively work within the limitations. Home dressmakers could also evade the regulations, but the sewing patterns published at the time were comparable to Utility styles. In addition, manufacturers were able to make 50 different cuts of dress per annum in at least 54 specified cloths. Therefore, countless possibilities could be fashioned.

Endnotes

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- ³ Ibid, p 314.
- ⁴ Ibid, p 308.
- ⁵ Ibid, p 339.
- ⁶ Weldon's: 154503, 155853, 157303, 155893; Weldon's So-Easy: No.98, No 128; Butterick: 2986, 2222, 3178; Leachway: No 11,541, No 11,831A, and Vogue: 9871, S-4508.
- ⁷ Hargreaves and Gowing, op cit, p 432.
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- ⁹ Ibid, p 424; Sladen, op cit, p 21.
- ¹⁰ Hargreaves and Gowing, op cit, p 434.
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- ¹² "Simplified Style Specifications," *The Drapers' Record*, 13 June 1942, p 23.
- ¹³ Ibid, p 29.
- ¹⁴ Ibid, p 23.
- ¹⁵ *Draper's Record*, 25 April 1942, p 1.
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Emperor Maximilian I and Empress Charlotte Hapsburg: Their Impact on Mexican Dress, 1864–1867

Rosa Edith Moya and Angela Bernice Kennedy

Abstract

In the chaotic, insecure nineteenth century, México experienced various forms of government without achieving stability. The foreign monarchy known as the Second Empire (1864–1867) imposed Maximilian I and Charlotte (Maximiliano and Carlota) Hapsburg as Emperor and Empress and stands out for its cultural impact. Mexicans were bitterly divided over a return to European rule or to forge their own national identity. This work analyses newspaper accounts and memoirs to study the monarchy's influence on fashion that mirrored this duality. The royal couple wore formal European court dress but fostered a two-level sartorial culture on the country during their short reign by also adopting indigenous dress, an influence that became iconic for the national identity.

National dress has been addressed in Alexander Maxwell's *Patriots against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions*, but outside of Europe and the United States of America, aside from studies of such modes as tribal and ethnic dress, the subject has received less scholarly attention.¹ This article addresses the adoption and fostering of Mexican dress, including plebeian styles, by the short-lived imperial dynasty of Maximilian of Hapsburg and Charlotte of Belgium (1864–1867), modes which became established as the national dress.

This dynasty was imposed on México by European states after decades of political instability. México gained independence in 1810 and became a republic in one of Latin American's many revolutions. Yet there were also attempts to establish a monarchy as Liberals and Conservatives fought, resulting in protracted, chaotic conflict without the emergence of a stable government. The Liberals claimed that México needed to become a republic to achieve stability, while the Conservatives wanted an authoritarian government similar to the old Spanish regime. These conflicts came to a head in the mid century, when the country was torn by political turmoil. The moderate Liberal, Ignacio Comonfort, was elected president in 1855 at the head of an unstable coalition of moderates and radicals, but after the promulgation of the Reform Laws of 1857 Army generals and the Catholic Church resisted, resulting in the overthrow of the regime, and Comonfort fled the country.

The Liberal, Benito Juárez, temporarily assumed the office of president but was ousted by General Félix Zuloaga in a coup d'état, who then seized México City, established a Conservative government and moved it to Guanajuato state. Yet the country remained weak and divided and further chaos erupted when the Liberals launched the Reform War of 1857–1860, which resulted in Zuloaga's overthrow by Juárez and the Liberals in early 1861. European states became involved after Juárez suspended México's considerable foreign debt to European bankers as part of his attempt to establish stability and revive the damaged economy. The bankers appealed to the French Emperor Napoleon III to assist them, and he demanded payment from México. Juárez' government had no means to pay and the political instability made it vulnerable, especially since Mexican Conservatives had appealed to European regimes for help to reinstate a monarchy.

Ordinarily, any European intervention in México would have been opposed by its powerful northern neighbour; in 1823 the United States of America had instituted the Monroe Doctrine as an “America is for Americans” policy to prevent European countries from interfering in the western hemisphere, thus implicitly giving itself the exclusive right to meddle with its neighbours. Yet from 1861 the capacity to enforce this policy was considerably weakened by its Civil War, which opened the way for European intervention. Spanish troops landed in December 1861, to be followed by a French army early the following year. After negotiations broke down between Juárez’ government and European representatives about loan repayment, military action commenced and in June 1863, French troops entered México City and proclaimed the new Mexican empire but creating a *de facto* client state.

Napoleon III’s imperial candidate had to be ambitious and brave enough to undertake this risky venture; he chose Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian of Austria, Prince of Hungary and Bohemia, the 32-year-old second son of the Emperor Franz Joseph I, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, and Princess Sophie of Bavaria. At an early age Maximilian acquired a passion for the arts and later served as a successful naval officer in the Austrian Navy, which he commanded by the age of 22. On 27 July 1857 he married Charlotte of Belgium, the only daughter of King Leopold I and during 1857–1859 they gained ruling experience as the Regents of the Austrian-controlled Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia in the upper Italian peninsula, though the Austrian Emperor later dismissed him for pursuing progressive policies. In late 1861, Napoleon III proposed that he become Emperor of México and claimed that the Mexican people wanted him as their ruler. Maximilian accepted the offer and accompanied the French military invasion of México that was initially supported by the Spanish and British navies, which soon withdrew from this “regime change” operation. The installation of Maximilian and Charlotte launched the Second Mexican Empire, yet Juárez and the Liberals continued to fight it.²

México was quite a new experience for Maximilian; it differed considerably from Austria and his knowledge of the country was dangerously limited, especially in politics. He believed the French Emperor’s dubious claim that the Mexican people wanted him to rule them. Much of his knowledge had been acquired from reading Alexander von Humbolt’s Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain, that described Colonial México 60 years before during a 1803–1804 visit.³ Ángeles González Gamio notes “his understanding of the project was mainly based in (this) history” which was not just problematic and out of date, but dangerous.⁴ Even worse, Maximilian believed that he had a legitimate claim to the throne as a member of the Austrian cadet branch of the Spanish Hapsburg dynasty, México’s former colonial rulers. Yet Maximilian passionately embraced his new role and learned Spanish so that he could communicate with *his people*. Upon arrival in Veracruz, México on 28 May 1864, he appealed for unity:

Mexicans: you have wanted me! Your noble nation, by a spontaneous majority has designated me to watch over it! I surrender with happiness to this calling ... (to which I am) United, Loyal and Firm. God will give us strength to reach the prosperity we seek ... Mexicans! The future of our beautiful country is in our hands. Speaking for myself, I offer you my sincere will, loyal and firm intention to respect your laws and make them respected with an impartiality ... Let us unite to reach our common goal, let us forget the shadowy past, let us bury the hatreds of all (political) parties in the dawn of a deserving peace and happiness that shall be brightly reborn over the new empire.⁵

Yet, he had to win popular support. To promote this, the new monarchy used public sartorial images of themselves which went through three distinct phases: before, during, and after their accession to the throne. The first image was embodied in the photographs the future monarchs made before their arrival, taken by the most prominent photographers in the field including Robert Jefferson Bingham and André Adolphe Eugène Disdéri. Most photographs were from their marriage and were sold to the public. Figure 1 is typical, showing a rather ordinary couple with no indication of their royal status.



Figure 1

Archduke Maximilian and Archduchess Charlotte, 1857,
Royal Collection of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium.

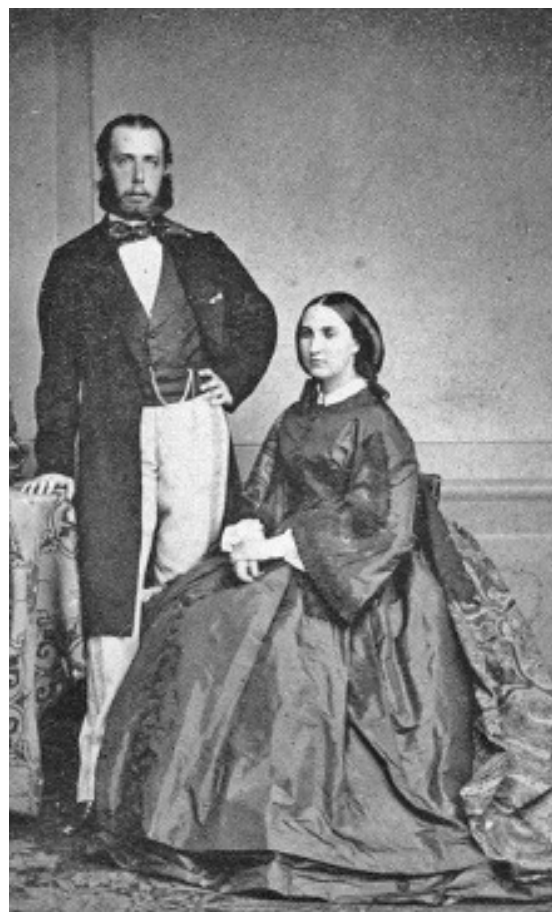


Figure 2

Emperor Maximilian and Empress Charlotte,
Ghémar Frères, 1866, carte-de-visite,
The Charlotte and Maximilian Collection,
1846-1927, Woodson Research Centre,
Fondren Library, Rice University,
Houston, United States.

Aguilar Ochoa notes, of the second stage, that, “the intention of the official pictures, more than trying to show their physical appearance, was to promote the Emperor and Empress. That is why the new image of the Empress started to circulate almost at the same time of her arrival.”⁶ These consisted of official photographs taken during and after the June 1864 coronation. Figure 2 illustrates an 1866 photograph of the royal couple. A third stage consisted of commemorative images taken after the monarchy’s fall, which is outside the scope of this paper.

Soon after arriving in México City on 12 June 1864, the royal couple also began to promote their public image with dress that influenced fashion, as described by their Private Secretary, José Luis Blasio:

Maximilian was wearing that morning a black frock coat and on his chest was the (Order of the) Golden Fleece hanging from a wide moiré ribbon. His illustrious consort was wearing a lilac silk dress, covering her shoulders with an elegant black shawl made of silk: her hat was also black, and the Emperor wore a grey top hat. This fashion spread some time later among the rich people in the capital city.⁷

This severe, formal style was thus adopted by the upper classes who had earlier rejected Spanish fashions and embraced French modes.⁸ A later embellishment to win public approval was the dress Empress Charlotte wore for the Mexican Independence Day celebration on 16 September 1864. She “went to

the theatre wearing a (broad) shoulder band with the three national colours (green, white, and red) over a white dress.”⁹

The Emperor soon issued a decree to establish the official court ceremonial and dress code, which was mainly disseminated through the press. The official government newspaper, *El Diario del Imperio* (The Imperial Daily) printed the Imperial Dress Code which included wear for the court, official mourning, on national holidays and the army uniform. Anyone who sought an audience with the emperor had to follow this guide, which thus required enough money to buy it or the influence to borrow the proper outfit.

In a typical example of traditional nineteenth-century European royal custom, on 10 January 1866, a national mourning was adopted on the death of King Leopold I of Belgium; the court “will mourn for three months, from 6 January to 6 April 1866.”¹⁰ Full mourning was imposed until 6 March when courtiers would wear “the military uniform or the court costume, with black crepe on the left arm, white tie and white gloves; the morning suit was all black with black crepe on the hat.”¹¹ The next two months of half-mourning required “a black suit, black gloves and a black tie, without the hat crepe” and in April quarter-mourning was adopted, the only difference was that the suit could be either black or grey with matching gloves.¹²

The mourning costume for court ladies was more rigorous, with different coloured dresses according to the corresponding mourning phase. The first month required “a black wool dress with black jewellery.”¹³ The black jewellery may have referred to ebony or black glass or jet. The second month required a silk or velvet dress with diamond jewellery; no coloured stones could be worn. From March to April it was “black, purple, or white silk with ornaments matching the same colour with any kind of jewellery.”¹⁴ As was customary for European armies, between January and April the soldiers wore “a black crepe armband on the left arm.”¹⁵ The court thus followed European conventions in these etiquette forms.

The Emperor also utilised dress to assert authority. By the early nineteenth century it had become customary for European monarchs to wear uniforms at court and the emperor wore them to assert his martial authority.¹⁶ Aguilar notes that “Maximilian appeared in the orders of the Eagle, Guadalupe and the Golden Fleece.”¹⁷ But he also used art to disseminate this image; he soon had himself painted in European attire and “ordered (Santiago) Rebull to paint him on horseback together with another of himself on foot with the Imperial cloak and dressed in his Mexican general’s uniform.”¹⁸ In keeping with a custom of the fanciest European cavalry regiments, he further enhanced his martial aspect by acquiring horses of a uniform colour.¹⁹ Yet on the street, the emperor added a distinctly Mexican touch; Blasio notes that he customarily went out “dressed in his military uniform and wearing a sombrero” (Figure 3).²⁰ Since Mexican headgear was conspicuously absent from army uniforms, he thus forged a more Mexican personal look, but whether this pleased the public remains obscure.

The monarchy also made stronger public sartorial appeals by adopting the richly decorated suit worn by wealthy rural landowners. Decades earlier, Madame Calderon de la Barca described it as:

... the bright-coloured sarapes, the dresses of the gentlemen ... with their handsome horses, high Mexican saddles, gold-embroidered anqueras generally of black fur, Mexican hats ornamented with gold, richly-furred jackets, pantaloons with hanging silver buttons, stamped leather boots, silver stirrups, and graceful mangas (sleeves) with black or coloured velvet capes.²¹

But in addition to promoting formal European court dress and elite Mexican garb, the monarchs also adopted more plebeian indigenous styles at court and for national festivals and celebrations. For everyday dress the emperor and his aides wore clothing based on the charro or Mexican cowboy outfit (Figure 4). Blasio described a typical day where:



Figure 3
Maximilian in a hat, 1867,
albumen silver print, Instituto Nacional de
Antropología e Historia,
Castillo de Chapultepec, México City.



Figure 4
El Ranchero (charro), 1854, engraving,
Hilarión Frías y Soto, *Los Mexicanos Pintados por si*
Mismos. Tipos y Costumbres Nacionales,
[*Mexicans Painted by Themselves:*
National Types and Customs], M Murguía y Comp,
Portal del Águila de Oro, Mexico, 1864, facing p 191.

... At nine o'clock in the morning the Emperor left the castle, dressed in a charro outfit and mounted his beautiful horse, Oríspelo. All of us who followed him ... also wore typical charro outfits, mounted on good horses with Mexican saddles.²²

This garb also included the poncho (jorongo) a popular cold weather outer garment (Figure 5). The royal couple used this garment to promote Mexican styles abroad too, and sent jorongos to Europe; La Sociedad reported an:

Imperial Gift — Protection to México's Industry — Mexican fashion in Vienna and Paris — Her Majesty, our gracious and beautiful Empress, with the goal of offering to the courts of Europe a testimony of México's industry and the elegance of some of its original costumes, sent the gift of a magnificent Mexican jorongo made of silk and gold to Her Majesty the Empress of Austria. These Mexican jorongos are the latest fashion set by their Royal Majesties last winter and today they are a great success in the principal courts of Europe, especially with young people who are eager to acquire them in those countries.²³



Figure 5
Chargé d'affaires of Peru in
México wearing a charro
suit, sarape and sombrero,
circa 1863, José R Benitez,
El traje y el adorno en
México, 1500-1910,
Guadalajara, México,
Universidad de Guadalajara,
México, 1946, p 189.

Due to this promotion, the poncho became more than a local plebeian garment and emerged as a European fashion. The loose fit accorded nicely with the current reaction against the very tight gentleman's clothes which had prevailed from the late eighteenth century into the mid nineteenth century, when looser cuts became popular. Even early on when tightness still prevailed, Europeans admired the looser Mexican dress. In 1827, French sea-captain Auguste Duhaut-Cilly while at the Pueblo of Los Angeles in Mexican California, observed that the men, "to protect themselves against the cold, carry a cloak, which is nothing more than a piece of material with a hole for the head to pass through, a garment ... called a poncho and ... (it) is far from lacking grace or brilliance," adding that "its chief advantage is in allowing complete freedom of movement."²⁴

But the versions sent abroad were made with rich fabrics and gold embroidery and were hardly what ordinary Mexicans wore, and the European response shows that their appeal was distinctly elite.

The principal members of the courts have requested new jorongos to be sent from México, just like the ones Their Imperial Majesties wore last Winter in Vienna and Paris; and because it's not easy to make jorongos due to the characteristics of the fabric and the uniqueness of the patterns, there's no fear that the Mexican industry will lose sales. It is also difficult to make them both flexible and warm, which only the local makers know how to do; there is much curiosity about and zeal to obtain a variety of these sumptuous, authentic garments.²⁵

By launching this trend for Mexican fashion and textiles, the Emperor and the Empress thus promoted the country's exports to benefit the clothing and textile industries, while also attempting to win public acceptance. La Sociedad reported that:

... the Empress Charlotte with the fine taste that has always distinguished her and the delicate grace of her feminine figure, has managed to greatly interest her august cousins, the two Empresses of the principal countries of Europe, to adopt dress which is exclusive to Mexican industry, and H[is]M[ajesty] the Emperor has done the same by wearing an elegant and original "Charro" outfit during his first visit to the Department of the Interior.²⁶

He also adopted additional humble Mexican garments, but likewise of richer material. Researcher Ester Acevedo studied a series of popular portraits of Maximilian on horseback and determined that another indigenous outfit was the calzonera, a fine suede jacket worn with gold and silver embroidered shoes. The era's journals describe its:

... buttons (that) displayed the Mexican and French eagles ... (and) the emperor wanted the members of the court to feel proud to wear that outfit; he made his servants wear it every day ... though he introduced some variations on the trousers, the hat and the jacket.²⁷

The Emperor dressed courtiers and servants in Mexican styles too, including his long-time Viennese steward Vernish and, according to Blasio, his table waiters. When travelling he was accompanied by "eight servants, some were Mexican, some were foreigners ... all ... wore Mexican charro outfits with black trousers, silver buttons, jackets, and a sombrero."²⁸ His carriage driver, footmen and lackeys also were dressed in charros of chamois leather with silver embroidery and wide-brimmed gaudy grey hats.²⁹ His secretary's memoir confirms that on several occasions additional imperial personnel wore charro suits, including the secretaries and other servants and "the emperor ordered that hereafter he will always ride his Arabian horse with a Mexican saddle" and another horse when he wanted "to show off my charro suit."³⁰ Dressing the entire court in Mexican costume was thus a significant departure from the traditional, well-established Old World practice of clothing royal servants in traditional liveries, which shows the extent of the Emperor's attempt to use clothing to appeal to the public when the regime was primarily propped up by foreign troops.

Blasio promoted the idea that Mexicans approved of the royal dress:

Our majesties with many powerful proofs have revealed their true love of all Mexicans in a vehement desire to adopt the customs of our country ... (and) the Emperor wishes to take advantage of México's resources to show that the culture of those who have been ignored for so long will now become part of the imperial agenda.³¹

The charro had different versions and had not yet stabilised into a standard style, but the emperor's promotion of it caught on; Silvano Hernandez notes that:

... by mid-nineteenth century there was still not a general charro suit. The Hapsburg Emperor Maximilian ... adopted this Mexican suit using black coloured cloth, silver braid, and a black headscarf; this dress model was adopted by the urban jockeys (dandies), who complemented it by wearing suede pantaloons at home at their ranches and haciendas, in a version that lasted until the beginning of the twentieth century.³²

Yet the public royal display of what were essentially plebeian garments was unexpected and not everyone approved; Benitez notes that:

... the charro outfit reached its highpoint when “by decree” Maximilian declared it to be the Imperial Costume and wore it officially for his triumphant entrance into Leon de los Aldama (Guanajuato) which was the same costume that he had worn with admiration at court and in the streets of México City on 4 January 1865 when accompanied by Charlotte wearing a coarse lowland jorongo instead of a coat.³³

The latter deliberately appealed to the common people, yet instead of being admired “they were mocked by the rabble.”³⁴

The Emperor was also severely criticised when “every morning he would appear wearing the national costume of the lower classes, (with) a wide sombrero, trousers ... (and) leather jacket.” It had “expensive silver buttons ... lace and embroidery, ... (but) instead of pleasing the people they found it odd and it was not unusual to hear them say, “look, here comes the Austrian pulque” — a vulgar reference to low-status Indians.³⁵ The poor may also have believed that this was a deliberate ridicule of their dress, yet Maximilian and Charlotte persisted in wearing the poncho and charro outfits, which they promoted as informal attire. *El Diario del Imperio* stated that “the benevolent face of the Emperor was especially notable when he dressed casually, and with the amiable manners which he uses to charm those he speaks with.”³⁶ But despite the glamorised plebeian dress being presented as casual wear, some still rejected it.

Just how successful these sartorial efforts were in promoting the regime are unclear, but the Second Mexican Empire suffered an abrupt demise. After the American Civil War ended in 1865, former President Juárez asked for help from the United States to reinstate him to power. The United States pressured Napoleon III to withdraw his troops which he did by mid 1866, which left Maximilian to fend for himself. In July 1866 Empress Charlotte travelled to Europe to seek help and tried to induce Napoleon III to keep his commitment. Charlotte also sought help at the Vatican but found none.

Maximilian faced considerable danger and fled México City in early 1867 to Queretaro but was captured on 15 May by Juárez’ forces. Many prominent Europeans and Mexicans pleaded for Maximilian’s life, but Juárez wanted to forcefully demonstrate that foreign interference in internal affairs was completely unacceptable and so on 19 June, Maximilian and three of his loyal aides were executed at El Cerro de Las Campanas in Queretaro. After Charlotte heard of his death she lapsed into insanity and had to be institutionalised for the rest of her life.

Yet ironically, despite the Second Empire’s dramatic failure and the popular ridicule of its Mexican court dress, the monarchs’ promotion of indigenous dress thrived, as the versions adopted by young elites spread more widely. The splendid charro suit was Maximilian’s most popular sartorial image (though sometimes with a top hat and omitting the chinaco) and has become a Mexican icon. Although the colours, designs, and the embroidery on the outer trousers vary, as stipulated in the Manual of the Federación Mexicana de Charrería (Mexican Federation of the Charrería), it remains a national dress.

Endnotes

- ¹ Alexander Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe’s Age of Revolutions*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, England, 2014.
- ² Andrés Lira and Anne Staples, *Nueva Historia General de México* [*New General History of Mexico*], El Colegio de México, Mexico, 2011, p 468.
- ³ Alexander von Humbolt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, 4 volumes, John Black, trans, Longmans, Rees, Orme and Brown, London, England, 1811.
- ⁴ Ángeles González Gamio, “El Segundo Imperio y la Ciudad de México” [“The Second Empire and Mexico City”], in *El Imperio Napoleónico y la Monarquía en México* [*The Napoleonic Empire and the Mexican Monarchy*], Patricia Galeana, ed, Siglo XXI, Puebla, Mexico, 2012, p 553.

- ⁵ “Advenimiento de SS MM II Maximiliano y Carlota al trono de México. Documentos Relativos y Narracion (sic) del viaje de nuestros soberanos de Miramar á (sic)Veracruz. Y del recibimiento que se les hizo en este ultimo (sic) puerto y en las ciudades de Cordoba, Orizava (sic), Puebla y Mexico (sic).” [“The Arrival of their Majesties Maximilian and Charlotte to the Throne of Mexico. Relative Documents and Narration of the Voyage of our Royal Highnesses from Miramar to Veracruz and their Reception there and at Cordoba, Orizava and Puebla, Mexico”], Edición La Sociedad, Mexico, 1864, pp 155–157, <https://ia800203.us.archive.org/31/items/advenimientodess00unse/advenimiento dess00unse.pdf>, accessed 10 August 2017.
- ⁶ Arturo Aguilar Ochoa, *La Fotografía durante el Imperio de Maximiliano* [*Photography during the Empire of Maximilian*], Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Mexico, 1996, p 33.
- ⁷ José Luis Blasio, *Maximiliano Íntimo: El Emperador Maximiliano y su Corte. Memorias de un Secretario Particular* [*Maximilian Intimate: The Emperor Maximilian and his Court: Memoirs of a His Secretary*], Librería de la Vda de C Bouret, Mexico, 1905, p 7, http://cdigital.dgb.uanl.mx/la/1080028691/1080028691_MA.PDF, accessed 10 August 2017.
- ⁸ M Romero de Terreros, “Maximiliano y el Imperio según correspondencia” [“Maximilian and the Empire from His Letters”], in José R Benitez, *El traje y el Adorno en México 1500–1910* [*Costume and Ornaments in Mexico, 1500–1900*], Universidad de Guadalajara, Mexico, 1946, pp 141–182.
- ⁹ Konrad Ratz, *Correspondencia inédita entre Maximiliano y Carlota* [*The Unpublished Letters of Maximilian and Charlotte*], Fondo Económico de Cultura, Mexico City, Mexico, 2000, p 138.
- ¹⁰ *El Diario del Imperio*, 10 January 1866, p 1.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Philip Mansel, “Monarchy, Uniform and the Rise of the Frac 1760–1830,” *Past and Present*, Issue 96, August 1982, pp 102–132.
- ¹⁷ Arturo Aguilar Ochoa, “La mujer durante la intervención francesa,” [“Women During the French Intervention”] in *Sociedad y Cultura en México durante el Segundo Imperio*, [*Society and Culture in Mexico during the Second Empire*] Universidad de Guadalajara, Mexico, 2000, p 34.
- ¹⁸ Blasio, op cit, pp 148–149.
- ¹⁹ Dafne Cruz Porchini, “Al Principio Fue el Chinaco,” [“In the Beginning it was the Chinago”], in Jaime Castruita Padilla, *Charrería, Origen e Historia de una Tradición Popular*, [*Origin and History of a Popular Tradition*], Federación Mexicana de Charrería, Mexico, 2010, p 39. The famous Royal North British Dragoons of the British Army were also known as “the Scots Greys” from having uniformly grey horses; some regiments even painted their horses to achieve uniformity.
- ²⁰ Blasio, op cit, p 380.
- ²¹ Calderon de la Barca, *Life in Mexico During a Residence of Two Years in that Country*, R Clay and Sons, Bungay, England, 1937), pp xxxvii – xxxviii. De la Barca lived in Mexico during 1839–1842. Anquera — a stamped gilt leather saddle edged with little bells. Sarape (jorongo) — a more or less fine woollen blanket with a hole for the head, similar to a poncho.
- ²² Blasio, op cit, p 108.
- ²³ La Sociedad [Society], 6 September 1865, Hereroteca Nacional Digital de México [México’s National Digital Newspaper Archive] <http://www.hndm.unam.mx/index.php/es/>, accessed October 2017, p 2.
- ²⁴ Auguste Dehaut-Cilly, *Voyage to California, the Sandwich Islands and Around the World in the Years 1826–1829*, August Frugé and Neal Harlow, trans and eds, University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 1999, p 147. The poncho is triangular with mangas (sleeves) whereas the jorongo is square with only a suggestion of sleeves.
- ²⁵ *El Diario del Imperio*, *El Diario del Imperio* [The Daily Empire], 14 September 1865, Hereroteca Nacional Digital de México [México’s National Digital Newspaper Archive] <http://www.hndm.unam.mx/index.php/es/>, accessed October 2017, p 1.

- ²⁶ La Sociedad, op cit, p 2.
- ²⁷ Cruz Porchini, op cit, p 39. Charros (chinacos) were worn with calzonera, trousers made with fabrics of varied richness. Chinaco is the word for a soldier in the post-1810 wars, who was succeeded by the charro cowboy as the national emblematic figure.
- ²⁸ Blasio, op cit, p 17.
- ²⁹ Ibid, p 18.
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ La Sociedad, op cit.
- ³² Silvano Hernandez, *Ser Charro es ser Mexicano*, [To be Charro is to be Mexican], Secretaría de Cultura-Gobierno de Jalisco, Jalisco, Mexico, 2010, p 55.
- ³³ José R Benitez, *El traje y el Adorno en México 1500-1910* [Costume and Ornaments in Mexico, 1500-1900], Universidad de Guadalajara, Guadalajara, Mexico, 1946, pp 194-195.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Juan de Dios Peza, "Perucho, Nieto de Periquillo," ["Perucho, Grandson of the Parrot"], Mexico Editors Award, second series, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, Secretaría de Educación Pública, *Cultura*, Mexico, 1986, Number 12, p 123; cited in Esther Acevedo, "Las Artes y la Imagen Imperial" ["The Arts and the Imperial Image"] in E Lorena Cortés Manresa and Laura Ibarra García Coordinación, eds, *Sociedad y Cultura en México durante el Segundo Imperio* [Society and Culture in Mexico during the Second Empire], Universidad de Guadalajara, Guadalajara, Mexico, 2000, p 56. The prehispanic pulque drink was strongly equated with despised Indians.
- ³⁶ "Baile en Puebla," *El Diario del Imperio* [The Daily Empire], 24 June 1865, Hereroteca Nacional Digital de México [Mexico's National Digital Newspaper Archive] <http://www.hndm.unam.mx/index.php/es/>, accessed October 2017, p 502.

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“A New Kind of Menswear for a New Kind of Man:” Constructs of Masculinity at JW Anderson and Loewe, 2008–2017

Georgina Ripley

Abstract

Once radically dividing critics with his lace shirts and knee-high boots for men, JW Anderson’s conscious cross-pollination of menswear and womenswear elements has earned his eponymous label a cult following, precipitating a dizzying ascent. In 2013, LVMH investment in his label coincided with his appointment as Creative Director of the Madrid luxury house, Loewe, where his ingenious interweaving of the masculine and feminine has brought modernity and vigour to the heritage brand. With feminised menswear now a pervasive trend at fashion weeks, Anderson’s oeuvre reflects how gender ambiguity is a broader cultural issue. This article explores Anderson’s agenda-setting designs as a catalyst for provocative experimentation in menswear, and how his singular vision is redefining notions of masculinity on the catwalk.

Introduction

Jonathan Anderson’s meteoric rise, from head of a fledgling eponymous label to an agenda-setting industry leader, has made him one of fashion’s most feted designers. Bursting onto the scene with his namesake label in 2008, the former Prada apprentice broke new ground with his radically unisex clothing, dividing critics with his lace shirts and leather knee-high boots for men. His conscious cross-pollination of menswear and womenswear elements earned his label a cult following and precipitated a dizzying ascent: he launched womenswear in 2010; became Creative Director of heritage basics brand, Sunspel, in 2011; designed a sell-out collection with Topshop in 2012; and a collection for the Versace diffusion line, Versus, in 2013. That same year, LVMH investment in his label coincided with his appointment as Creative Director of the Madrid luxury house, Loewe, and in 2015 Anderson became the first-ever person to win British Designer of the Year in both womenswear and menswear categories at the British Fashion Awards.

As the designer most widely associated with giving men permission to wear feminine things, a trend now so pervasive it is a menswear catwalk norm, Anderson’s body of work reflects how gender ambiguity has become a bigger cultural issue in our wider society. The New York Times reported that if 2015 was the year unisex became a trend in fashion, 2016 may be the year the question of gender and dress enters an entirely different dimension.¹ Tim Edwards was correct in 1997 when he wrote that “men’s fashion is ... something to take seriously in itself ... as a microcosm of the macrocosm of men, masculinity, and society.”² Today, a quick scroll through Instagram shows male models sporting floral-print, kick-flared suits, pussy-bow blouses, and skirts; while women’s fashions champion menswear-inspired, oversized tailoring. This article sets out to explore to what extent Anderson’s agenda-setting designs were a catalyst for this provocative experimentation in menswear, considering the cultural context that renders

Anderson's approach so innovative, and the role his singular vision has played in redefining constructs of masculinity.

JW Anderson: The Early Years

Described variously as “[the] wake-up call that sounds the trumpet for extremity at London’s menswear week,”³ the “must-know, must-watch name on the contemporary London fashion scene,”⁴ and “a cunning strategist and a brilliant poster boy for meaningful fashion in the age of Instagram,”⁵ JW Anderson is one of London’s most sensational fashion brands. However, at first his unique “appropriation and recombination of imagery,” didn’t deliver critical or commercial results.⁶ His debut collection in September 2008, which intentionally addressed gender confusion, was subject to such negative attention that Anderson himself admitted he briefly considered giving up fashion altogether. Speaking to *Dazed* about his inauspicious start, Anderson questioned whether, “A few years ago, maybe society wasn’t ready. Or maybe my concept was too hard core and not refined enough. Or maybe both.”⁷

Nevertheless, he now refers to this show as his most important one, identifying gender as a cultural issue even then, and keenly feeling the designer’s duty to reflect the issues that surround us. His response was to strive to give the customer something they did not even know they wanted — indicative of his subsequently proven talent for reading his customer.⁸ Anderson has honed his idiosyncratic approach to blending gender codes across subsequent collections, with feminine sartorial signifiers permeating his menswear. The Autumn/Winter 2011 menswear catwalk showed a flash of wrist revealed by an awkwardly shortened cardigan sleeve, the use of saccharine pink and bright turquoise, bold jacquard prints, sequinned embellishments, and skirts for men; all evidence of Anderson’s postmodern play with conventional gender norms. Anderson said, “I feel like menswear has gotten to a point for me where it had to be thrown out the window and dragged back in. There’s something that has gone stale for a while in men’s, and I think you have to blow it up — then you’ve spawned a look.”⁹

Masculinity as a Socio-Cultural Construct

The idea that men could embrace their feminine side is not new. The eighteenth century was characterised by extravagantly embellished garments for men, while Christopher Breward’s research reveals that men were enthusiastic consumers of the dandy aesthetic from 1790–1840.¹⁰ Tim Edwards turns to an earlier period in history, to consider that there is no “intrinsic masculine essence to men’s clothes,” but that “they develop masculine meanings and associations when worn upon the male physical form.”¹¹ His argument focuses on some of the most effeminate eras of men’s dress: the grandiose extravagance of the Renaissance man’s doublet, trunk hose, and plumed headwear, for example, Figure 1.



Figure 1
King Henry VIII,
Workshop of
Hans Holbein the Younger,
circa 1537, oil on panel,
2390x1345mm, Walker Art Gallery,
Liverpool, England, WAG 1350.

The flowing locks and falling ruff of the early seventeenth-century cavalier were replaced later that century with Louis XIV's image of masculinity, which included powdered wigs and painted faces, complete with beauty spots. Fast forward to the latter half of the twentieth century, and Mods and Rockers had their individual interpretations of dandyism, while 1960s' counter culture brought an upsurge of androgynous dressing to coincide with the women's liberation movement. Mick Jagger wore a white dress designed by Mr Fish for a Rolling Stones gig at London's Hyde Park in 1969, while Marc Bolan and David Bowie became the poster boys for androgynous beauty, and Jean Paul Gaultier put skirts on men's catwalks in 1984. By the early 2000s, the metrosexual male was, according to Diana Crane, "normalising rather than marginalising the dandy," with Hedi Slimane's collections for Dior Homme a key catalyst for renewed interest in menswear.¹² The slim-tailored aesthetic, Slimane proposed, renounced the athletic muscularity of the Nineties catwalk, promoting a new prototype for men's fashion throughout the subsequent decade.¹³

In the recent past, luxury houses such as Hermès, Lanvin, Gucci, and Prada have introduced men-only flagship stores, and menswear sales are reportedly growing at nearly double the rate of womenswear.¹⁴ With an increased focus on menswear, new questions are inevitably being asked around masculine codes of dress. In 2015, journalist Lindsay Baker asserted that, "'The girlfriend look' is all the rage on the catwalk ... for the devotedly fashion-conscious man it is currently all about feminisation."¹⁵ That same year, Selfridges launched their "Agender" floor, which featured gender-fluid labels such as Ann Demeulemeester, Yohji Yamamoto, and the unisex line, Nicopanda. Zara released their 16-piece capsule collection, "Ungendered," the following year, and in March 2017, H&M rolled out a collection of unisex denim. In today's luxury fashion industry, the traditional catwalk model is crumbling, with some designers moving towards a see-now, buy-now model; others, the integration of menswear and womenswear lines into one blockbuster collection. Ruth La Ferla's perception of this shift is that it "reflects a rising receptivity, if not an outright prurient fascination, with topics that were once strictly off limits."¹⁶ Boundaries are seemingly beginning to break down in other ways, too, with transgender narratives entering the mainstream, spearheaded by the success of transgender models Andreja Pejic, Lea T, and Hari Nef, who fronted Gucci's Spring/Summer 2018 advertising campaign.

What does this mean for masculinity? If the catwalk is anything to go by, the new masculine ideal is "lithe limbs, cheekbones that could cut glass, and long, flowing hair."¹⁷ According to Rebecca Gonsalves, writing for *The Independent*, "It's fair to say that many modern models don't conform to old-fashioned ideas about masculinity, and, these days, nor do the clothes they're paid to show off."¹⁸ Men's fashion has only been perceived as a lucrative consumer market since the 1980s, when menswear was first introduced to the international fashion week circuit and men's fashion magazines became established, with the arrival of *GQ* and *Arena*. Marketing discourse at that time created what was termed "The New Man," in response to second-wave feminism, and which was closely followed by the Nineties' "New Lad," and the "Metrosexual" of the early 2000s, a new generation of male that took conscious control of their image.¹⁹

Gender had become a polarising issue and "masculinity of the late 1980s and 1990s was located as a crisis-ridden space."²⁰ The same period sparked academic interest in gender and a proliferation of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of sex, gender, and sexuality. Most appear to agree that while "maleness" might be considered a biological factor of difference, masculinity is a cultural construct, with the suggestion that gender is not something we *are*, but something we *become*. This is at the heart of Judith Butler's seminal text *Gender Trouble* (1990), which introduced the theory of performativity to explain how gender is socially constructed through fashion, and that "seemingly stable gender expressions are actually the result of constant negotiations between an individual's sense of self and the feedback acquired through social interactions."²¹ The overriding consensus is that there are, in fact, a plurality of coexisting and diverse masculinities, with differences of experience felt according to the interaction of various cultural patterns of oppression, such as race, social class, and sexual orientation.

Masculinity is not a concept easily unpicked. One of the problems in doing so is Jo B Paoletti's observation that "many cultural manifestations of 'masculinity' ... are based on a binary, heteronormative view of sex."²² Gender fluidity can be equally misconstrued, and is less about androgyny than it is about fluctuating between a multitude of socially constructed genders. While the trend for androgyny has certainly influenced current modes of menswear, the new sartorial construct of masculinity is neither androgynous, nor metrosexual, but characterised, in the words of Llewellyn Negrin, by "a greater reciprocity in the crossing of gender borders" and "freewheeling play with the binary logic of gender distinctions."²³

John Beynon writes that "Perhaps what we are currently witnessing at the start of the twenty-first century is nothing less than the emergence of a more fluid, bricolage masculinity, the result of "channel-hopping" across versions of "the masculine."²⁴ This is particularly pertinent to what The Business of Fashion describe as Anderson's "cultural cut-and-paste" approach.²⁵ However, Anderson refutes the suggestion that he is preoccupied with gender, telling *Fantastic Man* that "Nothing is more boring than the idea of that ... I hate androgyny. That's something that really bugs me."²⁶ Instead, he is driven by the impetus to create something of cultural value. However, his contrary approach has often gone against the grain of commercial viability. He confessed:

I have major issues with menswear ... Not in a negative way, but is it relevant anymore? ... With women you can build a character and architecture and a woman will take the risk. I don't see any woman who buys my clothing would sleep with a man who is wearing my menswear. My issue is believing in men in fashion ... I would rather exercise extremities, obscurities, and ugly on men.²⁷

In many ways this statement subverts Anderson's assertion that he is not obsessed with gender, as challenging our perception of traditional sartorial signifiers of the sexes seems to be at the crux of his entire approach. Certainly, borrowing from womenswear is part of the progression of Anderson's style. Referring to his Spring/Summer 2012 show, Jo-Ann Furniss noted that by "splicing together the genetic codes of clothing ... he seemed almost to be genetically modifying menswear and womenswear," building the architecture of one into the other.²⁸ This synergy between his women's and men's collections is clearly illustrated by the strikingly similar knitted dresses that appear in both the Pre-Fall 2012 ready-to-wear collection and his Autumn/Winter 2012 menswear line. Equally, the frilled hemlines and knee-high boots of the men's Autumn/Winter 2013 line (Figure 2) are found in both the Spring/Summer 2012 ready-to-wear and the Pre-Fall 2013 womenswear collections; the similarities between the two collections serving to emphasise the cultural differences.

Critical Reception

Despite his clarity of vision, during these years JW Anderson's work received a mixed critical and commercial reception. Reporting on Spring/Summer 2013, Matthew Schneier wrote, "It's not that Anderson is creeping close to the edge with his menswear collections. He's already pushed well off of it."²⁹ With men in coats teamed with bare legs, sandals and headscarves, or sporting lace onesies, not to mention an abundance of organza and taffeta borrowed from womenswear, it was not financially successful. An oversized bright pink coat buttoned on the bias to reveal an acre of thigh was intended by Anderson to express machismo, with his view that "the thigh is a part of a man that's quite macho, like a rugby player's thigh;" but instead it was interpreted as wholly effeminate.³⁰ The tabloids made fun of it and others inevitably pointed out comparisons to Jean Paul Gaultier, whose transgressive fashions crossed boundaries between cultures, subcultures, and the sexes.³¹ Incidentally, when Gaultier showed skirts on men for the first time, fashion editors walked out en masse in protest. Similarly undeterred by his critics, Anderson proceeded with ruffled neoprene lederhosen-inspired shorts and leather tabards for Autumn/Winter 2013 (Figure 2). It attracted a particularly scathing review in the *Daily Mail*, reflecting that, for the most part, the world was still not ready for Anderson's peculiar approach:



Figure 2
British top and shorts of
neoprene, boots of leather,
JW Anderson,
Menswear Autumn/Winter 2013,
image courtesy of JW Anderson.

At JW Anderson the humiliation of the models was made truly complete, as the designer sent out his clan of put-upon male beauties wearing frilly shorts, leather dresses, and frill-trimmed knee-length boots ... One blonde looked so down in the dumps it's a wonder he didn't tear the offending garment off and run for the hills.³²

By the time Burberry sent lace shirts down the men's catwalk for Spring/Summer 2016, it received a far more favourable reception. Tim Blanks acknowledged that "Lace shirts and ties paired with precisely cut jackets and pants made for a subtly dandified look. And a lace collar on a trench was a timely way to update a Burberry classic."³³ Lace has become something of an accepted trend for menswear, with Alessandro Michele embracing it for his Autumn/Winter 2015 debut as Creative Director at Gucci, and Alexandre Herchcovitch seemingly taking direct inspiration from JW Anderson for his men's oversized white lace shirts for Spring/Summer 2015. This is partly in deference to the fact that, as Vanessa Friedman notes, society has been "in a renewed ferment about genders, with culture wars raging over bathrooms, and the notion that men or women have to choose one of two fixed genders."³⁴

When Anderson set his Spring/Summer 2015 menswear catwalk on a pink carpet and claimed "the personality of the bourgeois woman" as his inspiration, Blanks felt it to be "scarcely a promising scenario for a collection of *menswear*," but that it yielded clothes "whose softness and languor were ... *oddly* appealing, especially in the bias-cut tops that slipped off the shoulder or the hip into loose scarf-ties."³⁵ This collection perverted classic men's shapes, with coats morphing into coat dresses, and cable knit cardigans cropped and zippered with disconcertingly low scooped necklines. However, it was not the first to do so, the latter detail being referential of Hedi Slimane's groundbreaking menswear silhouette at Dior Homme, described by Charlie Porter in *The Guardian* in 2001 as "provoking a radical rethink in the stagnating ateliers of menswear."³⁶ The comparison is telling, for a decade later it is Anderson

who is shaking up the status quo of menswear. By 2016, Nick Carvell reported for *GQ* that while some designers are “still getting a handle on the current gender-bending that’s gripping menswear, JW Anderson has been doing it for seasons, and honed it to a fine art.”³⁷

This acceptance is evidence of wider socio-cultural changes, and the reciprocal relationship between fashion and culture. As fashion designer Alessandro Michele contemplated, “What is truly original? A language — whether it be verbal, visual or gestural — doesn’t develop in a vacuum, but originates from a sort of chemical reaction sparked by something already existing.”³⁸ Trend forecaster Geraldine Wharry observes that with men’s silhouettes now being updated with floral embellishments, impractical handbags and off-the-shoulder silhouettes, “Menswear has become a pool for new ideas and fashion paradigms; twisting dogmas and preconceived notions of virility, body image, tailoring and casuals.”³⁹ However, she believes it has already reached tipping point, with what was once considered eccentric now assimilated into the mainstream, resulting in commercial success endorsed by the high street and the luxury markets.⁴⁰ This is evidenced by the recent overwhelming success of Gucci, where Alessandro Michele’s sexually ambiguous menswear has led to a year-on-year sales increase, reportedly up 49.4% on a comparable basis for the third quarter of 2017.⁴¹ According to *Vogue*, Gucci has become “the encyclopaedic temple of narrative and maximalist fashions ... that glorifies outcasts, skanks, queers, and beautiful freaks.”⁴² From his debut Autumn/Winter 2015 show, featuring distinctly feminine-coded ensembles comprised of chiffon and lace, pussy-bow blouses, and high-waisted flares, to the “blooming gender-fluid image” presented for Spring/Summer 2018, Michele has asserted a “very deliberate sissiness,” for which there was already an existing framework in place, arguably thanks to Anderson.⁴³

The Reinvigoration of Loewe

Michele’s success was preceded by Jonathan Anderson’s debut for Loewe. The London-based, Northern Irish Anderson seemed an unpredictable match for LVMH-owned Loewe. Founded in 1846, it is a favourite of the Spanish Royal family, and best known for its luxury leather goods. Yet Anderson’s ingenious interweaving of the masculine and feminine has brought modernity and vigour to his Loewe lines, articulating his desire to “make it a brand that articulates the period I am in now.”⁴⁴ In marrying his avant-garde approach with Loewe’s 170-year heritage, Anderson is breathing new life into the world-famous brand: clothing sales at the house reportedly increased 380% following Anderson’s overhaul of everything from the logo and branding, to the progressive redesign of the retail spaces.⁴⁵

His Spring/Summer 2015 menswear debut was critically well received. Notes of JW Anderson crept into the new Loewe lines, with evidence of his characteristically off-kilter pattern cutting and Tim Blanks identifying “a jolt of Andersonian ambiguity in a piece as frankly feminine as the two striped silk scarves sewn together to create a top.”⁴⁶ He followed it up for Autumn with a collection combining knitted palazzo pants, and Lurex-threaded mint tweeds which Blanks felt were “provocative expressions of his feminised masculine ethos.”⁴⁷ However, more traditional elements drew on Loewe’s leather legacy, such as a hand-painted motor-cross jacket, a navy nubuck trench, and a shearling-collared coat in napa leather.

For the critics, it is “the confidence with which Anderson straddles both worlds” that is “the mark of a major talent.”⁴⁸ His Spring/Summer 2016 collection for Loewe was described as “Menswear? Not as we know it,” comprising as it did Disney images, princess motifs, and manga graphics, accessorised with gold potato chip brooches; these humorous touches contrasting with carefully researched new fabric technologies.⁴⁹ Autumn/Winter 2016’s cardigans with trains and slouchy, oversized leopard-shearling beanies, not to mention Spring/Summer 2018’s striped summer shirt dresses for men, are hallmarks of Anderson’s purposefully obtuse approach to menswear. But despite this, his self-confessed mission at Loewe is to find new classics, and by-and-large his overhaul of the label is considered a long-awaited show of relatable clothing. Before Anderson, Loewe didn’t have a menswear collection; under him, is emerging a culturally relevant and authentic brand, accessible to a new generation. As Sarah Mower observed:

Somehow, Anderson's ability to enrich the pleasures of product with meaning, tactility, and things to learn has transformed Loewe into the first brand to realise that human, experiential values are the antidote to a high-tech era ... Loewe, under Anderson, has beaten everyone else to the post.⁵⁰

JW Anderson's Legacy

Inspired by trailblazers as diverse as Raf Simons, Hedi Slimane, Vivienne Westwood, Comme des Garçons and Miuccia Prada, Anderson and his peers have created a menswear catwalk which consistently experiments with notions of masculinity. It is now less unisex, and more outright borrowing from the opposite sex. In Thom Browne's Spring/Summer 2018 menswear collection, the clothes were adapted from Browne's seasonal womenswear collection, and included skirts of all varieties, short shorts and culottes, cropped jackets and long dresses. The twist lay in their being rendered in typically "masculine" grey and traditional menswear materials, such as seersucker, wool, and poplin, which, as Luke Leitch reported, "[increased] the impact of the garments" transgressiveness, and simultaneously, also made it feel much less like drag.⁵¹

Other provocateurs who have toyed with the gender divide include Saint Laurent, Prada, Louis Vuitton, and Givenchy, who have all shown menswear collections with skirts, high heeled boots, chiffon blouses, and a general prevalence of pink. Labels such as Charles Jeffrey's Loverboy, Grace Wales Bonner, Meadham Kirchhoff, and Astrid Andersen, who is "injecting gender confusion" into the essentially macho culture of street style, are among those now carrying the baton for new representations of masculinity.⁵² Rad Hourani's "Unisex" couture, tailored to fit the anatomy of both sexes, is exceptional for the fact that it is backed by the establishment: Sidney Toledano, Chairman and CEO at LVMH fashion group, and formerly the longstanding President of Dior, has been mentoring him. Meanwhile, Jeremy Scott has long been defined by his irreverence for normative sartorial definitions of gender, and urban luxe labels such as Hood By Air, Public School, and brand-of-the-moment Vetements, have pushed gender-neutral streetwear to the fore, worn by everyone, no matter what it says on the label.

Equally, the influence of Anderson and his peers is permeating the work of recent graduates, including Central Saint Martins alumni Joshua Walter and Robert Wallace. Walter's collection of genderless garments under his 3Mån label "seeks to subvert modern ideals of beauty by proposing a new relaxed, purposeful and gender-neutral silhouette."⁵³ Wallace completed his BA in womenswear before switching to menswear for his MA; consequently, his graduate collection is inherently representative of the current synergy between male and female codes of dress. It features trousers made from wool and the boning from a corset, paired with distinctly feminised T-shirts, no doubt informed by his undergraduate womenswear internships at JW Anderson in London and John Galiano in Paris. Interestingly, what links the new generation of emerging designers is a marked shift towards a fearless but arguably less experimental, more nuanced and altogether more sophisticated blurring of men's and womenswear, which reflects new constructs of masculinity for a new generation. Nick Paget believes that "Unlike fashion fads before it, this feels like it is not just the preserve of art school experimenters, tooth-pick thin and donning more-than-just-a-cuban-heel and a bit of boho chic in the wake of Gucci's new aesthetic."⁵⁴

JW Anderson's trademark gender-fluid style has earned him a reputation for the unexpected. His Autumn/Winter 2016 collection was streamed live on the gay dating app Grindr, and included chokers for men, satin pyjamas in pastel colours, and cropped floral bed jackets worn with knitted trousers. It made good PR sense: according to the company, the platform has one million active users worldwide every minute, and many of Anderson's fanbase are gay or bisexual men.⁵⁵ To Lauren Cochrane, writing for *The Guardian*, this collection was significant because it demonstrated that Anderson, who "pioneered androgynous trends," was still "leading the way when it comes to all things gender and sexuality."⁵⁶ Three years into LVMH investment and following his appointment at Loewe, and the tides showed no sign of turning, or of Anderson succumbing to the pressures of retail and commerce. It is interesting then, to see a definitive shift in his work over the last few seasons away from gender blending, towards something



Figure 3
British T-shirt
and shorts of cotton,
JW Anderson,
Menswear Spring/
Summer 2018,
image courtesy
of JW Anderson.

much more inherently gender neutral. Speaking to *Elle* magazine in 2016, Anderson said, “The minute you see that everything is going one way, you get the hell out.”⁵⁷ Granted, a homoerotic awareness remains the lynchpin of his menswear catwalks, but there is now, in the words of Nick Carvell, “an inherent masculinity in even the most feminine items.”⁵⁸ Perhaps we ought not to be surprised by the sudden cultural shift to “no-fuss fashion basic-ness” for his tenth anniversary collection in Spring/Summer 2018 (Figure 3).⁵⁹

Reporting on the show, Sarah Mower questions what it takes to shift the needle on what men will want to wear, asking, “Ought directional fashion be operating on the level of taboo-breaking avant-garde, like frilled neoprene shorts and one-shoulder evening tops?”⁶⁰ Anderson’s transgressiveness now lies in setting himself apart from an industry which has latterly embraced his earlier gender fluidity, promising an unpredictable future for menswear in his hands. As Mower observes, “The ease of ordinariness ... is an avant-garde trend just waiting for someone as revered as Anderson to declare it okay.”⁶¹

Conclusion

In reality, constructs of masculinity through fashion are influenced by a number of factors; not least changing socio-economic conditions and the prevailing hegemonic masculinity, which shifts according to cultural context and thereby resists eradication.⁶² In the past three decades a body of literature has emerged to reveal the links between fashion and broader social and cultural processes. However, Jay McCauley Bowstead concludes that “they have tended to underplay the significance of fashion as an *authored* text in which the designer, in particular, may consciously employ dress not only to reflect upon but to actively intervene in culture.”⁶³ The catwalk, much like the red carpet, is a safe and artificial space, which to return to Butler’s concept of performativity, allows men, or the menswear designer, a brief opportunity to present alternative modes of dress. Marc Jacobs famously wore a black lace dress by Rei

Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons to the Met Gala ball in 2012. Kanye West has been photographed in a leather kilt on stage in Hyde Park, while the male actor and rapper Jaden Smith appeared in women's clothes for Louis Vuitton's womenswear advertising campaign in 2016. It may seem reassuringly progressive, but as Nick Paget is quick to point out, "It's not ... going to matter much beyond the trendier inner-city enclaves, nor will it carry much truck on provincial streets on a Saturday night,"⁶⁴ and men must still engage in "a high level of self-reflexivity to manoeuvre gender norms."⁶⁵ Yet diversification of men's fashion, cultural shifts, and a postmodern, freewheeling attitude to gender distinctions have renewed interest in men's fashion, opening a new dialogue around masculinity for a new generation. As Jo-Ann Furniss remarked, in her review of Anderson's Autumn/Winter 2013 collection, "Womenswear has known this kind of experimentation for years. Now it is time for boys to have their turn, or otherwise be doomed to the terminal boredom of the standard men's wardrobe."⁶⁶

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Coding/Recoding/Defining/Redefining: Discussing Boundlessness and Anticipation in the Fashion System, 1998–2011

Rainer Wenrich

Abstract

The article presents the boundlessness of the fashion system and its various references by analysing the label, fabrics interseason, through which Wally Salner and Johannes Schweiger infused the fashion world from 1998 to 2011. The designers represented a deconstructive idea as a base for an international meshwork embracing art, fashion, graphic design, and electronic music. A concurrent and ongoing activity was the interpretation and translation of fashion codes. Fabrics interseason anticipated a number of upcoming fashion experiments using the musical technique of sampling as the contemporary modus operandi.

“Thinking through fashion, like thinking through any cultural processes and experiences, is an exciting and challenging exercise.”¹

Introduction

The following elaboration is based on a selection of concepts and theories taken from philosophy and cultural sciences, paving the road for an emerging history of fashion studies as part of cultural studies, which has been ongoing since the 1970s. These ideas will serve to clarify the work of an exemplary artistic and design team from Vienna, Wally Salner and Johannes Schweiger, and their fashion label, fabrics interseason. The label was introduced on the fashion plateau in the late 1990s. By centring and analysing selected garments within the interseason portfolio, the concept of critical studies is used as a blueprint for research, with its foci on interdisciplinarity and the philosophical implications of discursive thinking.²

When the German philosopher, Walter Benjamin, discussed fashion as an indicator for the dawning modernism at the end of the nineteenth century,³ he framed a chapter in his unfinished Arcades Project (written between 1927 and 1940) and stated,

Yet fashion is in much steadier, much more precise contact with the coming thing...Whoever understands how to read these semaphores would know in advance not only about new currents in the arts but also about new legal codes, wars, and revolutions.⁴

Benjamin here used the word, semaphore, as a synonym for a group of signs, or in a broader sense, a carrier of signs or codes. Apparel is a container of codes and these thoughts mean more than only intending to contour the anticipative potential of fashion. From that very moment on, fashion was coined and positioned as a social marker, a considerable system of codes, and an iconologic signature to explain and to complete the manifold facets of cultural history.

Long before the concept of fashion studies was gaining its way into the research discourse of the humanities in the 1990s and helped (at least partly) to rescue fashion from the vivid maelstrom of blunt

frivolity, Benjamin's ideas empowered a valuable discussion of fashion as a cultural practice. His anticipative way and mode of thinking, therefore, became one of the most sustainable commonplaces in the theoretical approaches to fashion.

The next step in forming an intellectual foundation refers to the French philosopher, Michel Foucault, and his theory of the discourse. In Foucault's framework, titled, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, the philosopher introduced the definition of the discourse, which can be transferred in usage when analysing fashion as a cultural practice and garments in general. If one takes fashion as a complex and dynamic system of signs and codes as already mentioned above, and eventually as a Foucauldian discourse, then fashion research is, as Foucault described, "... a task that treats discourses not as an entity of signs ... but as practices, that systematically form the items they are talking about."⁵

Fashion, therefore, is equipped with the potential to be regarded as a serious and profound academic topic, and garments can be analysed as a system of signs and codes. Over and above, and again in a Foucauldian sense, fashion can also be regarded as a heterotopia, an ephemeral system of the feast or celebration. Foucault continued by also naming it *chronic heterotopia*.⁶ This is the opposite of an accumulation of time (eg, in a museum, library, or archive) insofar as the garment as an object of analysis forms a specific type of heterotopia. It accumulates time in other ways. Fashion can be regarded as an interdiscursive cultural topic, and there are many reasons for doing so.⁷ One will find this issue as another important central theme of current research work in fashion studies and fashion theory. It is framed by many aspects, such as the garment as an artisan's signature and a visual dialogue along with art- and costume-historical, sociological, political, and philosophical facts and issues concerning gender and diversity.⁸ These are all mingled together with the presentation of costumes in various kinds of unusual exhibition and presentation contexts.⁹

Fashions studies theorist, Heike Jenss, stated that Elizabeth Wilson's *Fashion and the Postmodern Body*, published in 1992,¹⁰ was a key moment for fashion studies and is *in statu nascendi*:

...Wilson contextualises the rising academic interest in fashion and dress with the discourse around postmodernity and the end of grand narratives: the breakdown of totalising narratives and overarching theories underpinning the idea of western modernity and civilization from the eighteenth century onward, in which fashion and its idea of continuous change had been conceptualised as a sign of the progress and modernity of the West and its superiority and distinctiveness from the rest.¹¹

fabrics interseason: A Fashion about Fashion

With a close and sharp focus on the Viennese label, fabrics interseason, Wally Salner and Johannes Schweiger started in 1998 to explore clothing codes through a sociopolitical approach to fashion rituals. Although the label embarked on the fashion system in 1998 and closed in 2011, their nuanced criticality still echoes today, in contrast to the hyperexposure of the volatile fashion industry.¹² It is important to mention that the work of fabrics interseason appeared in the hurly-burly of fashion at a turning point after a decade of bold logo-centrism. When fashion studies was initiated as a serious academic discipline, it was accompanied with specific academic programmes at universities and art colleges among the Anglo-American scientific community. In an extensive and revealing overview, fashion studies researcher, Elke Gaugele, localised the beginning of the fashion studies in the mid-1980s and named a group of theorists providing the incentives for this growing academic field.¹³

When it comes to displaying garments, Andrew Bolton, head curator of The Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, positions the presentation of fashion as a marriage of connoisseurship with cultural theory, and sees his interest in fashion within a wider social and psychological context.¹⁴ Together with the theoretical framework elaborated above, the latter is an additional and useful focus to iteratively open layer upon layer of the discussed garments.

The timeframe of the last two decades of the twentieth century gave way to the near amalgamation of art and fashion when the border between pieces of clothes, art, and fashion photographs and exhibiting them seemed blurred. Looking back to the protagonists of contemporary fashion of the 1980s and 1990s, one considers Japanese fashion designers, Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, and Rei Kawakubo with her label *Comme des Garçons* (Like the Boys) and their opening doors to the conceptualisation of fashion. This became obvious when observing the designers' clothing modified to galleries presenting clothes as art. Some Japanese fashion designers collaborated with artists, including the likes of Cindy Sherman, Helmut Lang with Jenny Holzer or Louis Vuitton with Takashi Murakami, amongst others. At the close of the twentieth century, the fashion system as such opened the window fancying influence between art, society, and politics. In doing so, fashion was sometimes recognised as a pacemaker for all creatives and so could also serve as a role model for the multidisciplinary of the creative process at the dawning of the twenty-first century. Art, fashion, pop culture, cultural and gender studies all became part of the cultural sciences. Artists and designers were more and more respected as researchers with the results of their work as the culmination of a process of cognition.

It seemed to be the perfect moment in time when artists and designers, Wally Salner and Johannes Schweiger, entered the art and fashion world in 1998 with their label, *fabrics interseason*. The aesthetic production of *fabrics interseason* was therefore localised in a timeframe wherein the scientific discourse on fashion was in an atmosphere of departure.¹⁵ The label, *fabrics interseason*, reached an intensive level of debate, expanded boundaries of fashion practices, and anticipated fashion tendencies and research practices regarding fashion theory and fashion studies.

fabrics interseason: The Conceptual Framework

The label, *fabrics interseason*, had a strong focus on socially relevant topics, using empirical research methods, and, thus following Foucault's discourse theory, a way to contour the topic by discussing it. "We permanently try to burst the various structures of the fashion system," was the credo of Wally Salner and Johannes Schweiger as conceptual artists, trained at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and founding partners of the label, *fabrics interseason*.¹⁶ With the blending of different frameworks of reference, Salner and Schweiger created incisive signals. The quote mentioned above was also meant as a deconstructive impulse that became a core theme in fashion concepts of the late 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century. Sometimes this was taken for a bold attitude without content. With *fabrics interseason* it was something different and that was giving the label a certain exclusiveness. *fabrics interseason* was from the very first moment an international artistic network that consisted of fashion, art, graphic design, and electronic music.¹⁷

By using sampling as a method, *fabrics interseason* analysed multiple appearances and codes for coding and recoding, defining and redefining.¹⁸ In an interview with the author, Wally Salner stated:

Curator and theoretist, Tanja Widmann, cited (in a catalogue for *fabrics interseason*) a lyric by Daft Punk, buy it, use it, break it, fix it, trash it, change it, mail upgrade it, charge it, point it, zoom it, press it, snap it, work it, quick erase it... A deconstructive or quoting approach (dissecting, remixing, copy/cut/paste, morphing, sampling) is an artistic and stylistic device in my work to gain similarity and deviation at the same moment. This repetition of repetition forms difference.¹⁹

By using sampling as one of the core instruments in designing the garments, the result was not only the production of pieces at the interface of art and fashion, it was much more. Eventually, it was a discourse of fashion with fashion itself as the core topic – and fashion about fashion. Fashion history, trends, styles together with social, political and philosophical aspects were analysed to form an ongoing process of discussing fashion semiotics. This meant coding and recoding, defining and redefining garments. It formed a sustainable practice of producing garments that is still visible in many of the current fashion concepts.

Wally Salner reasoned the concept of coding and recoding, as follows:

My practical and theoretical approach to fashion was/is coined by a semiotic analysis and the deconstruction of the contemporary communication system, its surfaces and bodies. If you try to read contemporary fashion, its system, its production and its goods, then you will find codes, clusters, regularities of a contemporary modernism, its forms and the material language that will give you information about social, political, and ethical development processes. These codes will deplete, switch, or differentiate. They are not static signs but transform or lose their function, and then form a depleted (political) ornament. This process of surveillance (of codes and their transformation) mirrors my artistic process of designing fashion and my thinking of fashion.²⁰

Picking up the various influences, fabrics interseason took up sampling, a method used by musicians, and began to analyse the countless phenomena and codes in society, presenting them in the form of clothes. Wally Salner and Johannes Schweiger, trained as artists, had the artistic and manual background to produce (un)wearable clothes. Nevertheless, they entered the fashion world with their products backed up with elaborate concepts and the use of research methods from the social sciences.

fabrics interseason: The Collections through the Looking Glass

In the early summer of 1998, fabrics interseason presented its first collection in a parking garage near a train station in Vienna. CaSH fabrics, the name of the collection, followed the presentation of a perfume called CaSH, with the scent of money. The presentation was accompanied with the idea of limited editions and prototyping, thus, confirming the idea of sustainability of their concepts and ideas (Figure 1).²¹

What came next was another close view of socio-economic phenomena, such as consumption. This was also the case with the collection, titled, Shinjin Rui, in 1998. The shinjin rui were trendsetters with their focus on brands. The collection, Shinjin Rui by fabrics interseason was presented in a refrigerated storage house. The idea of the collection was the fact that shinjin rui had a lead position in the society, on the level of consuming goods, especially fashion brands. Therefore, this collection was a descriptive example for fabrics interseason's working process by taking a closer look to the phenomena that interfuse our society:



Figure 1

CaSH lookbook, fabrics interseason, Summer 1998, Vienna, Austria,
http://www.fabrics.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=53.



Figure 2

Shijin Rui lookbook, fabrics interseason, 1998, Vienna, Austria,
http://www.fabrics.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=53.

In the early 80s the yuppies in Japan were called shinjin rui. ...They differ from otaku,²² because of their focus on external appearance. They are hyperconsumers following trends and suffering from label-syndrome. The latest trend for the shijin rui is a tanned left arm that shows that the driver possesses an imported car with the steering wheel on the left side.²³

Based on the theoretical concept of the collection Shinjin Rui, and, at the same time, as a general explanation of fabrics interseason's processing, Wally Salner stated:

The system of the limited editions by fabrics interseason is based on the variable, wearable, or unwearable coordinates. With the help of these variable coordinates, the position of a point on a playing field, in space and time, can be focused. fabrics interseason sees itself as an interseasonal label aside from the ritualised or frequented fashion week rush hours (Figure 2).²⁴

Another collection was called Equinox, presented for the Autumn/Winter 2000/2001 season, in Vienna. Mourning dress was the signature topic of this collection, and it was presented in a religious parade-like performance. Wally Salner and Johannes Schweiger entered terra nova in the intermingling of art and fashion, but, most importantly, in the international context of the fashion system. The exchange of some of the well-established modes of presentation and the development of sign systems as an irritation of the familiar patterns of perception, more and more repeated ideas and concepts used in contemporary art and interwove them with an ongoing effect.

Keeping these ideas in mind, it becomes clear that fabrics interseason redefined fashion as a Foucauldian discourse by starting this process in the late 1990s. Their coining of new semiotic and semantic systems was, in the best sense, an anticipation of many ideas that belong to the ingredients of past, current, and future fashion productions (Figure 3).

With a close a look at the collection FEM in 2001, one can observe the bursting of the well-established runway presentations in favour of a sociological motivated dealing with the model of femininity in our society. Women were interviewed wearing the pieces by fabrics interseason.²⁵ The traditional runway presentation and the established aesthetics of fashion photography was suspended in favour of dealing with a specific and socially coined perception of women. The collection FEM was presented by using video interviews. The following results of the design process were based on intensive research on social political issues and discourses. The presentation of FEM also echoed the widely known Maison Martin Margiela shows of Spring/Summer 1998 where the pieces were brought in on clothes rails accompanied by a film and a clarifying text (Figures 4 and 5).²⁶



Figure 3

Equinox lookbook, fabrics interseason, Autumn/Winter 2000/2001, Vienna, Austria,
http://www.fabrics.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=53.

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noise FEM fabrics interseason

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feminist dress codes

The 2001 Spring/Summer collection of **fabrics interseason** explores how feminists represent themselves through fashion. A conscious attempt was made to direct attention to external appearance and to deconstruct the idea of a "natural feminist look." In the process the following questions arose:

- How is feminist consciousness or a political viewpoint expressed through clothing and/or outward appearance?
- What does outward appearance mean to feminists? What kind of relation do feminists have to their bodies?
- Which criteria determine their choice of clothes (power, visibility, intransigence, vulnerability, physical and psychological comfort or constraint, body type, etc.)?
- Do feminist dress codes still exist, as manifested in aesthetic trends or codes of affiliation (such as the lilac overall, blue stockings, or suffragette hairstyle of feminist history)?

The presentation of (visual noise) FEM fabrics interseason forges the customary visualisation of clothing in the form of details and photo-series. It was the intention of fabrics interseason to approach the representation of fashion on a verbal, discursive, level. To this end, feminists were invited to model and to address the above questions in interviews – similar to a sociological investigation. The video footage of the interviews can be seen (at www.fabrics.at) as a surrogate for the (visual noise) FEM fabrics interseason fashion show.

Interview with Christa Benzer, freelance writer

Her choice: print dress / big breast dark, long sleeve; pumps, blackout.

fabrics interseason: Do you think a feminist consciousness is outwardly manifested?

Christa Benzer: No, I don't really. But that's also very difficult to answer because feminism is a political point of view. When I recall the statements made by the wife of the new Women's Minister – who was recently to be seen on television with short red hair and a suit – I have to think that nothing is unequivocal anymore anyway.

On the surface she looks like a "typical" feminist. But what she says contradicts that image completely. Do you think such an image exists?

On the surface yes – short hair for example.

But lots of women have short hair.

I mean more the asymmetrical haircut that at least used to be a clear-out external statement. As is well known, the mainstream has assimilated all codes of the sub-cultural or counter-cultural movements. This of course is accompanied by a particular depoliticization.

Can one construct identities with clothing?

Of course. Obviously clothing is a kind of construction, in as far as one co-produces, presents, and constructs the body.

Which means that clothing mediates certain intentions outwardly?

Yes, definitely. But I don't think that one can dress decidedly feminist. There are so many feminisms coexisting that operate simultaneously and not parallel to one another. There's not only the short-haired feminist, but also the feminist with long blond hair and raver attire... but I think that there are closer circles where...

Is it important for you to be noticed by your clothes or would you rather disappear in the crowd?

Well, I definitely don't want to disappear! But individualism is no easy matter either. I don't really make an effort especially to individualise myself... or to dress conspicuously.

How do you prefer to present yourself in public?

It doesn't work that way! There are simply too many publics that I present myself to, or at least several contexts I'm involved in. There are always situations where I ask myself: What am I going to wear? Feminist contexts, for example, where I'm more likely to think about what I should wear – whether or not to wear a skirt or a dress.

Is a skirt problematic in that context?

It's very, very difficult. It seems pretty absurd to say that, because a lot has changed. But "women," dresses, and skirts are part of a tradition that had to be broken. Of course that has changed, but I still associate wearing dresses with a certain posture or pose. When wearing trousers for example, I tend to be more dominant. To connect feminism with fashion presents a dilemma because an aspect of feminist politics was and still is to explode the classical patriarchal reduction to bodies or body surfaces. I think it's very interesting that you're investigating feminist dress codes... that's also connected to the fact that one woman alone cannot be a feminist and that solidarity is naturally expressed through externalised codes.

Interview with Grace Marta Latigo, public relations / singer

Her choice: linen cape / spaghetti choker, mustard & white.

fabrics interseason: You chose this cape. Is there a particular reason why?

Grace Marta Latigo: I choose clothes the same way I choose jewellery. And for me this cape is a piece of jewellery. I like to wear simple things, but gorgeous, extravagant things as well. When I go to the theatre tonight, I'll wear this cape, and underneath it, a very plain black dress. The cape speaks for itself. I like it when my style speaks for me. Then I don't constantly have to justify why I'm such an extravagant woman.

So you like eye-catching clothes?

That's why I chose this cape. The cape would take its meaning from me because I consider myself to be pretty complicated – as complicated, say, as the cape.

According to what criteria do you pick out your everyday clothes? In the morning, for example, when standing in front of your wardrobe.

Normally I orient myself according to what I have to do. I work in a theatre, in public relations, and sometimes have to secure funding, therefore I have to take into account what my schedule is on any given day. I ask myself: How are my energy levels? How do I feel? What clothes will do the job? So if I have an appointment with the ÖVP (the conservative Austrian People's Party), I'll dig around in my black collection. And if I have to go see the Greens, I'll stay cool and alternative and put on my old Converse shoes. When I go out, I like to be my own woman. That is, I'll consider what I want that evening. If I want to be let alone by both men and women, I'll dress especially garishly and apply striking makeup – 80% of the time, they'll want to talk to me, but in the end I'll have my peace.

(...) My favourite materials are jersey or satin. Flowing fabrics compliment slightly oversized women. I don't particularly like trousers. And when I wear trousers, they have to be leather. Leather suits my figure.

What kind of attitude do you have toward your body?

It couldn't be better. See, I'll look at the trends and think to myself that not every woman can possibly conform to these stereotypes and standards. It suddenly occurred to me that I'm evolving into singularity. That is, the more standard the models appear, the more glowing I appear. That way I come across as a powerful, rounded woman. My positive attitude towards my body is proof that this obsession with slenderness is absurd. I did try to lose weight once, but it made me feel incredibly tense and anonymous – I felt I was getting pushed about. I decided then, never again. I like to be a little more substantial. And besides, I like eating. And by eating I don't mean gorging. I can tell by my colleagues that I eat normally. And if one eats normally, one can't be thin, unless a woman has the necessary metabolism. Given what my colleagues eat, no wonder they're always ghoulish.

Do you think that a feminist consciousness is reflected in a woman's appearance?

I don't want to be pigeonholed – that's what constitutes individuality. I'm not going to wear green just because it's current and everyone's wearing green. The entire city's running around in social contract clothes! Feminism for me is coming to terms with fashion and with myself. I mean I know why I wear certain clothes. This cape, for example, I can answer for, and that majestically.

(...) Classical women's fashion communicates a fortune, defenceless being daintily tripping through life.

Do you think there's a stereotype, an image of a feminist that can be recognised in her exterior?

Well, that is a big problem. I've noticed in Austria that there's a fashion signalling inclusion, which presents a problem for those individuals and feminists who have no desire to go along with it. What I'm referring to is a kind of tomboyishness. That doesn't interest me at all. But that image cannot actually be pinned down. Either I'm dealing with clichés or I meet people I never would have taken for feminists. They have very different looks and many of them don't visually communicate anything. On the whole I work with women, and I was surprised to find that many of them had no sense of fashion whatsoever. They simply wear whatever they feel like wearing, absolutely indifferent to the dictates of fashion. I find that inspiring.

(...) I would ask all women to dress for themselves, and not solely to please men. They should feel good in the clothes they wear and not allow themselves to be influenced in this respect. I buy my lingerie, as well as my other clothes, for myself. I enjoy being pretty for myself. In crazy attire! Here in this cape stands Queen Turandot! And these are the first things that don't remind me of Hitler.

Figure 4

(Visual noise) FEM look book (detail), fabrics interseason, Spring/Summer 2001, Vienna, Austria,
http://www.fabrics.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=53.



Figure 5

Still from the presentation video, (Visual noise) FEM, fabrics interseason, Spring/Summer 2001, Vienna, Austria.

With the collection **LODGE**, Autumn/Winter 2001/2002, the label kept on track with their principle of coding and recoding. The secret societies, the lodges, became the epicentre of this collection:

There have probably been secret societies since the first homo sapiens formed the first community. Whether based upon principles of religion, politics, or philosophy, these societies all have certain common characteristics of structure and function. They are, by their very nature, exclusionary; they tend to have secret ways of recognising fellow members; they tend to have secret initiation rituals; and they usually develop their own myth-based histories and symbology.²⁷

The collection **LODGE** consisted of balaclava hats, frock coats, and dummy bellies made from fibreglass. Again one can also recognise intentional fractions, sudden approaches, and combinations (Figure 6).

Presenting Otherness

The well-established defilés on the runway were more and more exchanged by fabrics interseason presenting their fashion concepts at unusual locations or staging elaborated fashion-mediatectures. The often so-called superficial aestheticism of fashion was replaced by a differentiated concept of otherness and the deconstruction of fashion that was on the surface contaminated by luxury and glamour. Looking at exemplary fashion performances by Alexander McQueen, eg, *The Horn of Plenty* (Autumn/Winter 2009) ideals of beauty, functionality, and usability of the respected apparels in our society were



Figure 6

Lodge lookbook, fabrics interseason, Autumn/Winter 2001/2002, Vienna, Austria,
http://www.fabrics.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=53.

questioned with radical means.²⁸ McQueen destroyed the fête champêtre of haute couture by presenting his collection in the environment of waste products of civilisation and the remains of past presentations. The designer also dissected the signatures by Christian Dior and Hubert de Givenchy. The models wore robes made from precious materials, they walked on high-heels and so raised fashion to the next level in the ongoing fashion circus. Fashion designers such as Alexander McQueen or Hussein Chalayan, who found their work positioned at the interface of art and fashion, took up the manifold possibilities offered by their system of creativity. They designed clothing and irritated the rhythm of collections, mimicked dress codes, used conventional materials and at the same moment unusual fabrics and patterns percolated with a complexity of meanings and cultural inscriptions. Wearing this apparel also meant an extensive process of recoding.

Felix Chabluk-Smith serves as another outstanding example of the young generation of designers. His Master Collection at the Royal College of Art in London, 2013, was partly purchased by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Chabluk-Smith presented a masterly and unconstrained handling with the history of fashion. With his collection called, *Disjecta Membra*, he used the collage as a *modus operandi* for his historic compositions. He used subtle cuttings and precious fabrics (Figure 7).²⁹



Figure 7

Felix Chabluk-Smith, *Disjected Membra*, 2013, Royal College of Art, London, England,
<http://fashionshowimages.com/wp-content/gallery/felix-chabluk-smith-rca-ma-13/dsc0568.jpg>,
 accessed May 2018.

Conclusion

fabrics interseason used the modules of the fashion system, eg, the defilés, and transformed them to something completely new. The result, accompanied by intellectual rigour, was a kind of evidential reasoning based on sociological research and the limitation of availability as an issue from the very beginning. Wally Salner also referred to the paradigm of sustainability:

...With a relation to the discursive object on the side of the consumer, follower, fan ... sure, the object needs to be loaded as a desirable fetish. It isn't a quick consuming, but a steady, discursive process of loading by a cyclical, seasonal movement while the production of fashion and handcrafted limited editions, accessories, texts, exhibitions in the art context.³⁰

The designer regarded fabrics interseason with the focus on limitation but also as an artistic extension of thinking and producing of contemporary fashion, its forms and norms.

fabrics interseason replaced the runway presentation, the defilé as the established presentation loop of the fashion system, by introducing uncommon locations, without any enigmatic aesthetics, with a bursting and at the same time questioning the luxurious superficiality of fashion. The effect of this fashion concept

by fabrics interseason was constantly crossing borders. It was enriching the fashion system regarding the discourse in the Foucauldian sense; meaning, treating fashion as a serious, semiotic, and semantic area lined with theoretical and empirical research. The apparel thereby functioned as a perfect hub for visual communication in various directions. Its manifold semantic appearance and the historical, iconographical, and iconological influences that were inscribed in its shape and seams anchored it in the context of fashion but also provided an opportunity to discuss it with a binocular view of a piece of cloth as an image as well as an example of a costume-driven history of art.

What one finally detects are some interfaces between a language of fashion³¹ and the results of analysing the nexus of apparel, artistic signature, visual language,³² and art-, culture-, and costume-historical coordinates. Therefore, the multidimensional discourse helped to gain transparency and made it clear that the manifold dimensions of the presented apparel made visible the transformation of an artistic and societal coherence to a clothing-oriented and visual topology.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, fashion is a topic full of prestige and frivolity,³³ and to make it a decent topic of formalistic and image-scientific research is a process in the midst of humanities' stream of thoughts.³⁴ Art history, philosophy, semiotics, and finally sociology have paved the way since the beginning of the twentieth century to deal with all kinds of visual phenomena.³⁵ This is a crucial fact for the constitution of an interdisciplinary fashion theory that sees the academic concern with fashion as an aesthetic and ordinary phenomenon and foremost cultural practice as a core topic.³⁶ One can take the latter as a convenient blueprint so as to use the many aspects of coding/recoding/defining/redefining discussed in this paper.

Endnotes

- ¹ Agnes Rocamora and Anneke Smelik, eds, *Thinking through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*, I B Tauris, London, England, 2016, p 1.
- ² Elke Gaugele and Jens Kastner, eds, *Critical Studies: Kunst- und Sozialtheorie im Kunstfeld*, [Critical Studies: Art- and Social-Theory in the Art-Field] Springer VS, Wiesbaden, Germany, 2016, p 2.
- ³ Ibid, p 191. In this sense fashion is seen by Benjamin as a model of modernity, an idea coined by Charles Baudelaire who regarded the ongoing change as one of the core characteristics of fashion. According to Gaugele, Benjamin turned the continuous change of fashion into one of its constants. In doing so he confirmed the idea of fashion as a paradigm of modernity.
- ⁴ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, United States, 1999, p 64.
- ⁵ Michel Foucault, *Archäologie des Wissens*, [Archaeology of Knowledge], Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 1981, p 74.
- ⁶ Michel Foucault, "Andere Räume," ["Different Spaces"], in Karlheinz Barck, Peter Gente, and Heidi Paris, eds, *Aisthesis. Wahrnehmung heute oder Perspektiven einer anderen Ästhetik*, [Aisthesis. Reception Today or Perspectives of a Different Aesthetic], Reclam, Leipzig, Germany, 1990, p 44.
- ⁷ Georg Simmel, "Philosophie der Mode, 1905," in Sonja Eismann, ed, *Absolute Fashion*, Orange Press, Freiburg, Germany, 2012, pp 47–57; Thorstein Veblen, "Theorie der feinen Leute, 1899," ["Theory of the Leisure Class"] in Gertrud Lehnert, Alicia Köhl, and Katja Weise, eds, *Modetheorie. Klassische Texte aus vier Jahrhunderten*, [Fashion Theory: Classic Texts from Four Centuries], transcript, Bielefeld, 2014, p 94.
- ⁸ Rainer Wenrich, "Postmodern Apparel and Visual Dialogue in the Works of Alexander McQueen," in Michael F Zimmermann, *Dialogical Imaginations: Aisthesis as Social Perception and New Ideas of Humanism*, Diaphanes, Zurich, Switzerland, forthcoming 2018.
- ⁹ There is ongoing and fruitful research on the presentation of fashion and its history, context, and affiliation with the art system. See Caroline Evans, *The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900–1929*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2013.

- ¹⁰ Elizabeth Wilson, "Fashion and the Postmodern Body," in Juliet Ash and Elizabeth Wilson, *Chic Thrills*, University of California Press, Berkley, United States, 1992, pp 3–16.
- ¹¹ Heike Jenss, ed, *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*, Bloomsbury, London, England, 2016, p 7.
- ¹² http://www.flashartonline.com/2017/02/promesse-du-bonheur-___fabrics-interseason/, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ¹³ Elke Gaugele, "Fashion Studies," in Elke Gaugele and Jens Kastner, eds, *Critical Studies: Kunst- und Sozialtheorie im Kunstfeld, Critical Studies: Art- and Social-Theory in the Art-Field* Springer VS, Wiesbaden, Germany, 2016, p 196.
- ¹⁴ Charlie Porter, "Andrew Bolton: The Man at the Met," <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/d5ec8f46-c12d-11e5-9fdb-87b8d15baec2.html>, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ¹⁵ On the occasion of an exhibition by fabrics interseason at the Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig (29 September 2002–5 January 2003). See <http://www.gfzk-leipzig.de/?p=711>, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ¹⁶ Based on an interview between the author and Wally Salner, 21 June 2001 during her teaching as a guest professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich.
- ¹⁷ www.fabrics.at, accessed 30 November 2017. The extensive website gives many examples of the work of fabrics interseason with countless audio-visual hyperlinks with regard to the past collections.
- ¹⁸ Salner and Schweiger founded fabrics interseason and the record label, Ego Vacuum Records, with the musicians, Franz Pomassl, Susanne Brokesch, Grace Marta Latigo, and Phillip Quehenberger. They were in charge of the audio concepts of fabrics interseason's presentations.
- ¹⁹ Wally Salner, email interview with Rainer Wenrich, 2017.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ With the perfume CaSH (with the scent of money!), Sabotage Communications try to answer the question whether there really are people with the odour of money. The perfume was offered in selected boutiques and the Bank of Austria, [https://www.europeana.eu/portal/de/record/2048208/](https://www.europeana.eu/portal/de/record/2048208/OBJ29356.html) OBJ29356.html, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ²² In Japan young adolescents were called otaku due to their extensive use and obsession with multimedia devices. They very often lived in complete social isolation.
- ²³ www.fabrics.at/, op cit.
- ²⁴ Wally Salner, *Fast Forward, Mode in den Medien der 90er Jahre, [Fashion in the Media of the 1990s]*, Künstlerhaus, Vienna, Austria, 1999, p 18.
- ²⁵ *3. Berlin Biennale für Zeitgenössische Kunst*, Ausstellungskatalog, Berlin, Germany, 2004, p 69. For extensive information on all the collections of fabrics interseason see http://www.fabrics.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=53, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ²⁶ Maison Martin Margiela, *Street Special Edition*, Band 1, Tokyo, Japan, 1999.
- ²⁷ <https://www.europeana.eu/portal/de/record/2048208/OBJ29353.html>, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ²⁸ Alexander McQueen, documentation, http://www.alexanderMcQueen.com/experience/en/en/alexanderMcQueen/archive/?years=2009#id_article=254, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ²⁹ Madelaine Levy, "The Past is Present," *Disegno*, No 6, Spring/Summer 2014, pp 28–29. See: <http://www.felixchabluksmith.com>, accessed 30 November 2017.
- ³⁰ Wally Salner, 2017, op cit.
- ³¹ Roland Barthes, *Die Sprache der Mode*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, Germany, 1985.
- ³² From the perspective of an interdisciplinary image-science syntax, semantics and pragmatics are seen as landmarks. Klaus Sachs-Hombach, *Das Bild als Kommunikatives Medium. Elemente Einer Allgemeinen Bildwissenschaft, [The Image as Communicative Medium: Elements of a General Image Science]*, Herbert von Halem, Cologne, Germany, 2003.
- ³³ Pierre Bourdieu, "Haute Couture und Haute Culture, 1974," in Sonja Eismann, ed, *Absolute Fashion*, Orange Press, Freiburg, Germany, 2012, p 117.
- ³⁴ Jan Kedves and Barbara Vinken, in Jan Kedves, *Talking Fashion – Von Helmut Lang bis Raf Simons: Gespräche über Mode, [Talking Fashion – From Helmut Lang to Raf Simons: Talks About Fashion]*, Prestel, Munich, Germany, 2013, p 55.

- ³⁵ Sigrid Schade and Silke Wenk, *Studien zur Visuellen Kultur. Einführung in ein Transdisziplinäres Forschungsfeld*, [Visual Culture Studies: Introduction to a Transdisciplinary Research Field], transcript, Bielefeld, 2011, p 50.
- ³⁶ Gertrud Lehnert, *Mode. Theorie, Geschichte und Ästhetik einer Kulturellen Praxis*, transcript, Bielefeld, 2013, p 15.

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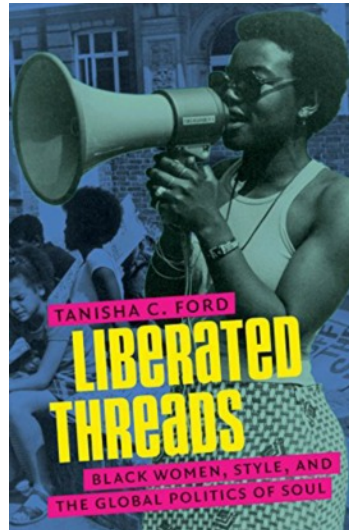
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Book Reviews

Tanisha C Ford, *Liberated Threads: Black Women, Style, and the Global Politics of Soul*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, United States, 2015, 26 Black-and-White Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index, 256pp, Hardback, £43.89.



Liberated Threads: Black Women, Style, and The Global Politics of Soul breaks new ground by bringing fashion studies and civil rights history into a highly productive scholarly dialogue. In addition, readers of *The Journal of Dress History* can celebrate the arrival of a text that challenges the persistent whiteness of dress history and of studies of the dressed body.

Tanisha C Ford's transnational historical analysis of "soul style" as a political-cultural commodity exchanged via dress and hair styles, will be of great interest to dress historians and fashion studies scholars. Each chapter in Ford's book works to explicate the meanings and material examples of "soul style," covering a geographical range from southern Africa, to the United States, and the United Kingdom, and a temporal range from 1954 to 1994.

Chapters 1 and 2 document the impact in the United States of key black women entertainers, such as Nina Simone and Miriam Makeba, whose hair and clothing style choices asserted their affinities with black Africa, in resistance to the dominance of non-black styles among the growing African-American middle class in the postwar era.

Chapters 3 and 4 form the analytical and geographical heart of the book in that they foreground the roles played by young African-American women in popularising the politics of "soul style," and placing themselves at risk by doing so. These chapters also document how the currents of style influences from Africa in the 1950s and early 1960s really took hold in the United States from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s and then, after American refashioning, crossed the Atlantic back to Africa and to the UK.

As Ford shows in her third chapter, "SNCC's Soul Sisters," the young women activists of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) sought to align their political mission with their gendered daily apparel. The tension the young activists encountered pitted student activism and black feminism against black southern sensibilities of appropriate dress for educated, non-labouring women. The latter centred on the politics of respectability, showing respect towards a church-going rural black population they wished to empower in the exercise of their civil rights violently suppressed by white supremacists.

Choosing rough denim jeans and overalls, instead of pressed blouses, skirts, and dresses, choosing natural hair over straightened hair, comprised politically important acts for the young women. But older generations of black men and women, whose doors they knocked on, found such dress choices difficult to accept. Why would college educated young black women *choose* to adopt the drab clothing required of agricultural labourers when they had the class status and educational advantages to forever avoid the working uniform (and labour) of the black southern poor?

College students who could not enter the fray of civil rights politics by organising for SNCC nevertheless achieved a lasting impact within their campus environments and beyond by championing “soul style,” as Ford demonstrates in her fourth chapter. These women, Tanisha C Ford’s mother Amye Glover shown as an example, shared the politics of dressing “soul style” via the posters on their dorm room walls of black liberation leaders such as Angela Davis, by wearing their hair in the “Afro” styles they had seen on Davis and Kathleen Cleaver, and turning the “dressed down” look of denim-clad SNCC workers into a “dressed up” college casual style. Ford examines the role played by *Essence* magazine, a publication for the black community that challenged the dominance of *Ebony* and *Jet* by appealing to youthful readers and profiling fashions on college campuses. While the magazine initially focused on women attending “historically black colleges and universities” (referred to in America as HBCUs) such as Spelman College, their feature stories and photographs of campus “soul sisters” were eagerly consumed by the growing number of black women, such as Amye Glover, attending predominantly white institutions in the Midwest, North East, and Western states.

In her last two chapters, Ford follows soul style as it circles back to Africa and to the United Kingdom. In Chapter 5, Ford shows how black women in decolonising African countries mingled European and American fashions with local fabrics and dress styles to complete the transnational soul style circuit. Doing so brought criticism from not only older generations but also postcolonial leaders whose nationalist agendas sought to expunge all evidence of European or American influence. Dress became a battleground in some places, particularly for women. Postcolonial politics took shape in London with the emergence of the British Black Panther Party and other alliances between Caribbean, African, and South Asian diasporic populations struggling against entrenched racism that denied black youth, in particular, a meaningful future in Britain.

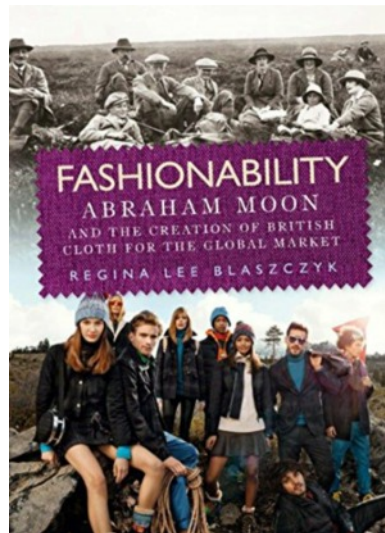
As in all her chapters, drawing on interviews and an array of local archival photographs and documents, and close attention to racial geographies, Ford shows how soul style and black activist politics combined in London to produce sites of resistance based in record stores and other locations where black British youth congregated in the 1960s and 1970s. Her analysis of the clothing style and body politics of Olive Morris, initially a teenaged activist in the Brixton area in the early 1970s, subject to extreme police brutality, offers a sobering example of how authorities (state and otherwise) monitor race, gender, and clothing to target and punish dissent.

Tanisha C Ford’s *Liberated Threads* represents scholarship that will resonate for many years through dress history and twentieth-century African American historiography. Tanisha C Ford joins scholars Keisha N Blain, Ashley D Farmer, Sasha Turner, Ibram X Kendi and others of their generation who form a legacy of excellence produced by an earlier generation of black scholars who fought for their place in the academy in the 1980s and 1990s. In her gracious Epilogue, Ford situates herself consciously as a progenitor of scholarship on black women’s body politics, writing for a generation now entering or planning to enter undergraduate studies. The scholarly threads Ford has grasped and woven she now pulls forward, handing them on for further fashioning by scholars whose work we can happily anticipate.

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Regina Lee Blaszczyk, *Fashionability: Abraham Moon and the Creation of British Cloth for the Global Market*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, England, 2017, 79 Black-and-White and Colour Illustrations, Foreword, Preface, Acknowledgments, Notes, Bibliography, Index, 360pp, Paperback, £25.



Business history is one of the most understudied and undervalued topics in the wider field of fashion historiography. Partially, this is due to the lack of records with which to work as companies that go out of business rarely have the foresight to ensure the survival of their corporate archives. Mainly, though, business history is a discipline that is often absent from our educational institutions. This book, *Fashionability: Abraham Moon and the Creation of British Cloth for the Global Market*, weaves the story of one particular Yorkshire textile company, Abraham Moon & Sons, established in 1837, that has managed to survive (and thrive) when neighbouring mills fell around them. In this regard, the work tells the story of an outlier, of a survivor, and therefore is not a representation of the business of the English wool trade since 1837. With that being said, it does not negate the importance of the story.

It should be noted that most business histories are commissioned by the businesses that are the centre of the story. This is indeed the case for this one as well. Therefore, the book does have a partiality when it comes to how the story is told. There exists an inherent survival bias. On the other hand, because this book was a commissioned work, Professor Blaszczyk has been able to utilise the entire corporate archive to draw upon for reference. The fact that Abraham Moon commissioned this work allowed a story to be told in a properly funded manner, which is unusual and fortunate, because otherwise this research may not have made its way into our libraries and references.

Unlike so many corporate histories, Blaszczyk has presented an extensively researched story that also puts the company in its place in several spheres. Firstly, the book will be of particular interest to the well-read dress historian. Additionally, because of the importance of the company, it is well worth a read for those who study Yorkshire and/or British History, the history of trade, the history of wool textiles, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This book is also well worth a look for business students in general. It is these latter students who, although not the probable intended audience, may actually find this book most useful. Due to the technicalities of British business, and in particular the wool trade, over almost two centuries, there are many insights into how Abraham Moon traded that are unfortunately not taught in your typical MBA programme.

With nine chapters, and additional material such as an introduction and more, spanning 360 pages, the storyline of this book travels from 1837 to well into the 2010s. The rarity of such a complete corporate archive is in itself an extremely commendable situation. Additionally, there are well over 1000 endnotes, which provide concise information as to the precise location of references. Sources are also varied, from newspaper articles of local, national, and international publications, to trade documents, to extant objects. Because of this varied group of sources, a great deal of bias that is often associated with corporate histories has been negated.

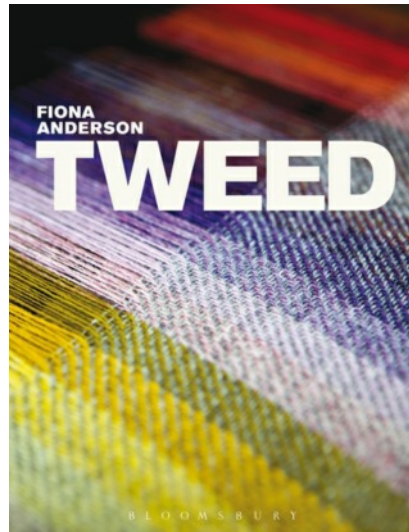
If there is a criticism of the book, it must be that there is actually so much data involved that it is often head-spinningly detailed. For the vast majority of the readers, the detail is simply too minutiae. As a reader, maintaining the overarching themes and the details can, at times, be difficult to keep straight.

Overall, the book fills a necessary section of historiography. It is a worthwhile read for a wide area of history as well as business studies. It is a well thought out and well researched book. It would also make a useful starting point for how to successfully write a similar corporate or industrial history as great examples are rare, especially with textile themes.

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Andrew Breer holds a PhD from King's College London, an MA from Austin Peay State University, and a BA from The Virginia Military Institute. Andrew's research has spanned several mediums, including military uniforms, global trade, and technology transfer of textiles. He is currently writing a book about British manufacturing during the First World War.

Fiona Anderson, *Tweed*, Bloomsbury Academic, London, England, 2016, 22 Colour Illustrations, 55 Black-and-White Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index, 220pp, Paperback, £19.99.



Tweed is the fifth publication in a series edited by Linda Welters, titled *Textiles that Changed the World*, published by Bloomsbury Academic. Offering an information-packed yet succinct introduction to the history, evolution, and cultural significance of this familiar fabric, Fiona Anderson's *Tweed* is a lively and enlightening read.

The book is divided into short chapters, each with a clear introduction and conclusion outlining the author's scope, sources, and findings; making her arguments clear, concise, and compelling. The first three chapters explore the cloth's origins, the emergence of the term, tweed, and its entry into fashion up to 1850. Anderson also provides an extended explanation of what is meant by the term, tweed, making the important point that it refers to a diverse "family" of fabrics.

The following four chapters discuss the development of tweed in fashion from 1851 to 1952 with specific reference to the cultural understanding of the cloth in relation to gender identity. For example, in Chapter 5, Anderson explores the cultural perceptions of tweed alongside contemporary ideals of masculinity in the late nineteenth century. Similarly, Chapter 7 surveys the relationship between sportswear and tweed in women's wardrobes during the first half of the twentieth century. The two final chapters investigate the continued use of tweed in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, highlighting its adaptation and subversion through the past six decades of fashion.

Aside from previous studies on specific aspects of tweed manufacture (such as Janet Hunter's *The Islanders and the Orb: The History of the Harris Tweed Industry, 1935–1995*), *Tweed* is the first major academic publication to focus solely on this particular fabric since Clifford Gulvin's 1973, *The Tweedmakers: A History of the Scottish Fancy Woollen Industry, 1600–1914*. Anderson's book is an excellent addition to an area of textile history and design that is arguably overlooked and understudied. Meticulously debunking some of the myths and misconceptions around tweed, the book places the textile vividly within the wider contexts of economic, social, and design histories. An exploration of the trade connections between British textile manufacturers and French fashion houses in the twentieth century provides a particularly fascinating analysis of design exchange.

Anderson employs an assortment of fertile and varied sources ranging from literary and textual references, advertisements, business archives, pattern book and sample collections, extant objects, and portrait and fashion photography. Illustrations of these visual sources, in particular an impressive selection of historical photographs, are used effectively to underline the author's arguments. Highlights include an early (circa 1927) Chanel tweed suit, now in the house's archives, and samples in an order book from the Linton Tweeds archive, Carlisle. Paired with analysis of business archives and contemporary fashion literature, the reader is offered an excellent narrative of the varied and evolving material nature of tweed cloth. Together with object- and material-based research, the book draws on a rich array of cultural, social and fashion history and theory, successfully demonstrating the complex and constantly evolving meanings that can be tied to one textile.

Tweed delivers coherent and precise conclusions that are testament to the thorough research that it contains. Inevitably, there is more to tweed than can be covered in one volume and so its scope is necessarily tight. Tweed focuses largely on the trade in Scotland with brief mentions of the significant output of Yorkshire and other areas of Britain. The topic of class is discussed throughout, and the majority of the book focuses predominantly on tweed in high fashion, upper class and upper-middle class wardrobes with limited examination of the lower end of the market. Tweed is an excellent and much-needed introduction to the topic that lays a strong foundation for other channels of research and interrogation of this fascinating textile.

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Constance Karol Burks is assistant curator of Furniture, Textiles, and Fashion at The Victoria and Albert Museum. She has a Master's degree in History of Design from the Royal College of Art and previously worked as research assistant on the V&A exhibition, *Fashioned from Nature* (April 2018–January 2019). From 2011 to 2017, Constance assisted in the set-up and running of the London Cloth Company, a "micro-mill" weaving on rescued and refurbished machinery dating from 1870 to 1970.

Kate Strasdin, *Inside the Royal Wardrobe: A Dress History of Queen Alexandra*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London, England, 2017, 17 Colour Illustrations, 23 Black-and-White Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index, 175pp, Hardback, £67.50.



Queen Alexandra (1844–1925), a Danish-born princess, was married to Edward VII, who succeeded to the British throne on the death of his mother, Queen Victoria, in 1901. He reigned for just nine years, so Alexandra’s public role was mainly spent as Princess of Wales — for 38 years from her wedding in 1863 — and latterly as Queen Mother for the last 15 years of her life. So, for over six decades she needed clothes for both an active social life and major state occasions. Kate Strasdin has been able to locate more than 130 surviving pieces, now scattered about the world in various collections and in this book she analyses the queen’s wardrobe, using object-based research to not only further our knowledge of royal dress history but also to illuminate some hitherto unexamined aspects of Alexandra’s personal life. Strasdin’s research has included a range of original sources from letters and memoirs to wardrobe accounts and tailor’s ledgers, first explored for her PhD on this subject. The book is a fitting addition to the Bloomsbury Dress and Fashion Research series which the publisher describes as “an outlet for high-quality, in-depth scholarly research on previously overlooked topics and new approaches.”

The nine chapters examine Alexandra’s wardrobe arrangements, covering the day-to-day management of her clothes, her planning of “milestone” dresses (for her wedding and coronation) as well as mourning and fancy dress ensembles, her “working” wardrobe and more practical travelling and leisure clothes, most notably the tailor-made costumes for which Alexandra was famous. A final, fascinating chapter on the “Dispersal of a royal wardrobe” examines how such personal items were sold to private collectors and public institutions in this country and abroad.

The role of the royal dressers is of particular interest and has received little attention until now. The author has identified many of Alexandra’s dressers by name and provides a vivid picture of their duties and responsibilities, not least the gruelling work (and intense boredom) of continually packing and unpacking for the royal couple’s largely peripatetic life. There is an arresting portrait of Marianne Skerrett (a chalk sketch by Rosa Koberwein, 1880, from The Royal Collection), who was principal dresser to Queen Victoria for many years and this immediately brings such royal servants out of the shadows.

Alexandra, the woman, emerges from this study as both beautiful and lively, even mischievous at times. Interestingly, Strasdin draws a parallel between Alexandra and Diana, a later Princess of Wales, “Not

least for the shrewdness with which they managed their public appearances, centred around clothing choices, using dress as a non-verbal communicator at times in their lives when they might not articulate verbally but could convey their situation through dress" (p 139). An example of Alexandra's "eye for an occasion" was the plain black mourning dress she wore for the first State Opening of Parliament in 1901, simply set off with diamonds and a small diamond crown with a flowing crepe (sic) veil. One observer, Lady Monkswell, thought it "all so perfect and beautiful and unlike common life that, if it had not been for the strong sense of reality that never left one, we must have thought we were at the play" (p 121). Earlier in her life, Alexandra took amusement in wearing matching outfits when on occasional public view with her younger sister Dagmar, the czarevna of Russia. For sisters to dress alike was not unusual in the nineteenth century but for two high-profile royal wives and mothers this was a calculatedly eye-catching performance.

There is occasional repetition and over-emphasis of the author's conclusions, for instance in her perception of Alexandra as highly organised and controlling of her outward image and her clothing. This might perhaps, in hindsight, be reading a little too much into her decisions. There is a sense that Alexandra was more pragmatic than unconventional though she was happy to make use of other people's taste and effort, as indeed she might, in her position. When planning her splendid coronation gown she commandeered the elegant (and surely equally busy) Mary Curzon, Vicereine of India, to organise its design and execution. The gold net overdress was embroidered in India and in a letter to her mother, Lady Curzon describes how she slaved over the templates of national emblems to be worked: "I have cut them all out on the floor and traced the design through marking paper on to the stuff till my back has nearly cracked" (p 134).

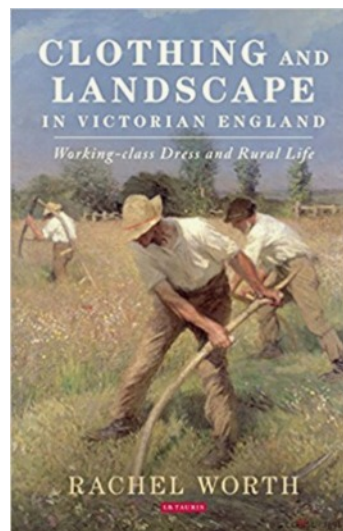
Dress history is such a visual subject that it is disappointing when the illustrations do not quite match the quality of a book's text. The colour plates are bunched together in one section and are strangely undersized. Similarly, the monochrome images within the text are often small and sometimes indistinct. When (on p 87) a comparison is made between the fancy dress costumes worn by Alexandra and her daughter, Maud, to the Devonshire House Ball of 1897 there is a photograph of Alexandra as Marguerite de Valois but no picture of Maud's gown, even though it survives and was featured in an exhibition at the V&A. This is frustrating as Strasdin uses their similarity to argue that Alexandra's unlabelled dress could have been made, like Maud's, by Morin Blossier.

On the whole the book has been well designed and produced though some minor errors have slipped through the editing process. For example, on two occasions the same name is spelled differently in the same paragraph (pp 90, 115). Quibbles apart, this book represents an important piece of object-based research and contribution to the history of royal dress. It will be of interest to fashion historians and museum curators and may demonstrate to non-specialists the wealth of information to be uncovered from a careful study of such material culture. I will value my copy and would certainly recommend it to readers of this journal.

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Rachel Worth, *Clothing and Landscape in Victorian England: Working-Class Dress and Rural Life*, I B Tauris, London, England, 2018, 15 Colour Illustrations, 80 Black-and-White Illustrations, Acknowledgements, Notes, Bibliography, Index, 212pp, Hardback, £72.



This book offers an introduction to dress worn by the rural working classes in Victorian England. Through various methodological approaches, including research into painting and portraiture, photography, literature, and a few existing items of clothing, Rachel Worth has provided insight into the understudied topic of working-class dress. Within these contextual references of culture and economics, the book covers the following thematic chapters.

Chapter 1, Change and Transition in Victorian England: The Rural Context, emphasises the context of cultural and economic shifts that occurred in England during the reign of Queen Victoria, 1837–1901; for example, from agricultural to urban living, and from homemade clothing to the rise in manufacturing that enabled less expensive clothing and textiles for the masses. Worth writes, “The move from village to town could be perceived as something to be aspired to, with its apparent promise of employment and perhaps greater freedom, but simultaneously, and subsequently, rural life would be seen as something that was being lost” (p 8). With this transition came, in the minds of city dwellers, a nostalgic interest in the countryside and rural dwellers. Nineteenth-century novelists, such as Elizabeth Gaskell and Thomas Hardy, cultivated this city/country divide in their writing. The development of the railway network from the 1840s onward enabled city dwellers access to the countryside, which fuelled awareness and interest in rural dwellers, and, eventually, their clothing.

Chapters 2 and 3, both titled, Women’s Work, Education, and the Domesticity of Dress: Surveying and Documenting the Rural, Part 1 and 2, respectively, show the role of women in the rural economy. Worth writes, “By the 1860s, strong views had emerged on the ‘morality’ and the appropriateness of the idea of women working in agricultural pursuits outside the home” (p 28). Citing Parliamentary enquiries of 1843 and 1867, Worth paints a picture of a society that is increasingly concerned with the position of women in the agricultural community, due to the long hard hours of labour involved. Women should, it was argued at the time, focus instead on their family, domesticity, and education. Worth writes, “Working-class women ... should be the makers and providers of a ‘decent and respectable’ home and, as corollary, and evidence, of this, of ‘decent and respectable’ clothing” (p 49).

Chapter 4, *Painting Nostalgia: Dress and the Vision of a Vanishing Rural World*, demonstrates the rise in painting and portraiture with rural, countryside themes. Worth asserts that for some artists, the "... landscape became the repository of spiritual and religious values. For others, it represented the bounty of God's creation, with representations of harvesting and harvest themes especially popular throughout the nineteenth century" (p 70). As people appeared in many of these paintings, so too did their clothing. Through paintings, into the greater society was the clothing of rural working-class people disseminated. Smocks and sun bonnets were particularly prevalent in depictions of rural life.

Chapter 5, *Photography and Rural Dress: "Work of Art" or Documentary Realism*, exposes the relationship between photography and painting, both often depicting a romanticised rural life. This chapter maintains a focus on the photographer, Henry Peach Robinson (1830–1901), who staged his photographs to show an idealised version of rural life. The chapter also includes a foray into photographic depictions of fishermen and the clothing of fisherfolk.

Chapter 6, *Clothing and the "Counter Myth" in Images of Rural England*, discusses the artistic school that portrayed more realistic representations of rural life, which included the photographer, Peter Henry Emerson (1856–1936), who "... attempted objectivity, even if he was ultimately unsuccessful in this endeavour" (p 103). This chapter maintains a focus on clothing depicted in the works of Emerson as well as the painters, Henry Herbert La Thangue (1859–1929) and George Clausen (1852–1944).

Chapter 7, *Thomas Hardy: Tradition, Fashion, and the Approach of Modernity*, investigates a literary line of research into the writing of Thomas Hardy (1840–1928) and his descriptions of dress. Worth asserts that Hardy used clothing to set a scene, provide context and characterisation, to denote occupation, and more (p 132). Just as with painting and portraiture, Hardy used, in his writing, clothing to portray his version of English rural life and labour. Worth asserts that Hardy had issues with the development of clothing and textile manufacturing in the nineteenth century as ready-to-wear clothing cut the link between the wearer and their physical environment or landscape (p 137).

Chapter 8, *Rural Working-Class Dress: Survival, Representation, and Change*, includes surviving examples of rural working-class dress in museum collections, and the obstacles in such research. This chapter includes images of a pair of boots, a hat, a coat, a pair of pattens, and a few smocks, which were a type of long shirt associated with rural workers. The smocks, in particular, receive attention to detail, and this chapter includes a brief overview of the different colours of smocks and clothing manufacturing sites that produced smocks.

Overall, this is an interesting book on an interesting topic, but it is not without flaws. The reading experience was more frustrating than enjoyable. For example, as this book was based on the author's doctoral thesis, one would expect a PhD-level bibliography that separates primary and secondary sources, which would then, in turn, enable the reader to fully comprehend the origin of sources. The book's existing bibliography is also flawed in that some notable authors are oddly absent.

In Chapter 4 and elsewhere, the author discusses, in detail, the clothing in many paintings; these paintings are referenced with title, artist, and date (but no museum or gallery location, or any additional information in the text); however, images are often not provided. And therein lay a fundamental issue with this book. The referencing system is lacking. It is unreasonable to require the reader to hunt for sources. Likewise, several image citations were incomplete, such as "Fig 8.7 'Drabbet' smock" (p 151). Partial citations like this are common in the book and a frustration to the reader, who needs to understand, at a glance, the full reference of any and all images in the text.

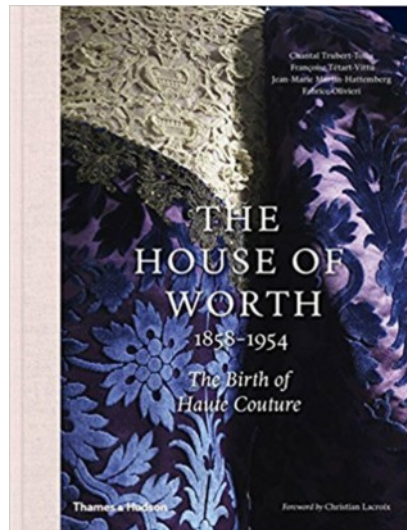
Such a highly visual topic as clothing and landscape demands a highly visual format. More (and larger) images would have contributed to the overall impact of this book. It is unreasonable to require the reader to abruptly stop reading the book in order to conduct a computer search to identify a painting that the author has been discussing in detail. This becomes vexing for the reader. Moreover, the often tiny image format (for example, p 96, et al) does nothing to add to the discussion. Considering the steep price of £72, it is disappointing that this book has embraced a small format. Nonetheless, this book is a useful

reference to those with either an interest in the understudied subject of working-class dress or an interest in the wider topic of nineteenth-century English rural history.

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Chantal Trubert-Tollu, Françoise Tétart-Vittu, Jean-Marie Martin-Hattemberg and Fabrice Olivieri, *The House of Worth, 1858-1954: The Birth of Haute Couture*, Thames and Hudson, London, England, 2017, 324 Colour Illustrations, 162 Black-and-White Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index, 336pp, Hardback, £65.



This project is a collaboration between many people but notably, Chantal Trubert-Tollu, the great-great-granddaughter of Charles Frederick Worth, and the dress and textiles historian, Françoise Tétart-Vittu. The history of the House of Worth is a celebration of the talents and achievements of Charles Frederick Worth although the story is told by examining the successive generations of directors who maintained the firm until its sale to Paquin Ltd, in 1954. At first sight, this is an enormous tome but the text is easy to navigate and many pages are filled with supporting images. The content could have been divided into several books and is less detailed about the later period up to the closure of the house. However, the advantage of having all sections together is that it gives the reader a clear idea of how the fashion house was passed on to family members and developed over nearly 100 years.

This longevity of a family business is significant to an understanding of how reputation was gained and maintained in a competitive fashion industry. Crossing four generations, one of the strengths of the book is that the growth of the maison is placed in its political and social context from the Second French Empire of Napoleon III, the Third Republic of 1870, two world wars until its final phase during the Fourth Republic. Throughout the nineteenth century the network of clothing suppliers continued to increase and the authors refer to Worth's competitors as well as the contribution to the industry of earlier suppliers of luxury clothing, the fashion merchants, Bertin and LeRoy (p 10). As a brief aside, there was a small error in the Notes when my work on LeRoy was credited to my PhD thesis rather than my Master's dissertation (p 322).

The contents of the first four chapters of this book are organised to focus mainly on each generation of Worth's owners. Each chapter starts with a brief biography of the different men who ran the house between 1858 and 1954. In each pair of siblings, one was the business manager and the other the designer with a range of skills, responsibilities and achievements, including the regulation of the fashion industry. The position of women in the lives and businesses of the different directors is only dealt with in detail for Marie Worth, who was stated as being the founder's muse, model, and advisor (pp 22-23). There were at times female descendants but they appear not to have entered the business, although Jacques Worth (manager, 1922-1941) had a partner, known as Madame Jacques who, intriguingly "brought the

fashion house up-to-date” and “worked at the heart of the couture house” (p 256). Throughout the book there are references to the house style at different periods being perceived as old fashioned. Strategies for dealing with changes to the age and lifestyle of their clients included hiring Paul Poiret for about two years in 1901 (p 195). The chapters also discuss business history and partnerships with fabric suppliers and the jeweller, Cartier, clients, and styles of clothing supported by several pages of impressive photographs showing surviving garments plus designs with fabric swatches or house photographs.

These archival pieces have formed the basis for another recent work on Worth by Amy de la Haye and Valerie Mendes – *The House of Worth: Portrait of an Archive*, V&A, 2014. This work covers similar ground but although it traces the history of the fashion house it mainly examines the V&A photographic archive from the 1890s under Gaston and Jean-Philippe Worth. Generally, the much earlier work by Diana de Marly has been the main source for the House of Worth in English, *Worth: Grandfather of Haute Couture*, Elm Tree Books, 1980. The text was detailed and covered the different generations but used fewer images than contemporary publishing, particularly in colour. Françoise Tétart-Vittu has written in French about Charles Frederick Worth in exhibition catalogues, *Sous L’Empire des Crinolines*, Musée Galliera, Paris, 2008 (pp 178–183) and *Au Paradis des Dames: Nouveautés, Modes et Confections*, Musée Galliera, Paris, 1993, (pp 36–39), where Piedada da Silveira also examined Worth’s early career and contribution to Maison Gagelin (pp 40–43).

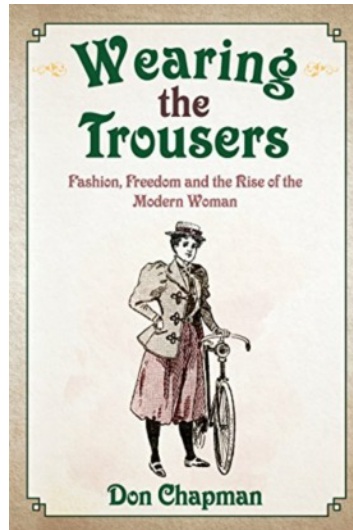
In relation to previous publications, the scope of Trubert-Tollu’s book is a more wide-ranging study of the public and private worlds of the successive directors of Worth. The range of sources is impressive, from business and notarial documents to photographs, fashion plates, and articles from newspapers and periodicals. It is claimed that for the first time the full story of the Worth family is told and that full use is made of Jean-Philippe’s memoirs which were translated by Ruth Scott Miller in, *A Century of Fashion*, Little Brown & Co, Boston, 1928 (p 10). As the creative person controlling the house style from 1895 he has been rather neglected by historians as many people looking at an image from around 1900 assume they are looking at the founder’s designs whereas it is his son’s work. It is remarkable that each generation was able to offer the creative and business skills needed to continue the house and seem not to have considered opening their own businesses rather than continuing the brand. The last chapter of the book briefly examines perfume and beauty products showing that the launch of the house’s first perfume in 1924 has continued the existence of the Worth name today, half a century after the couture house closed.

This book is an important addition to the scholarship on the House of Worth and a reminder of how fascinating the nineteenth-century French fashion industry was: there were so many challenges to navigate but also many opportunities for those working in the luxury clothing sector. Certain issues are touched on in relation to Worth and this is a reminder that wider research is still needed into the term haute couture (p 10 and p 80), gender and power within production, consumer markets, sales techniques, and the way clothing was advertised.

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Don Chapman, *Wearing the Trousers: Fashion, Freedom, and the Rise of the Modern Woman*, Amberley Publishing, Stroud, England, 2017, 38 Black-and-White Illustrations and Photographs, Notes, Select Bibliography, Index, 336pp, Paperback, £16.99.



Wearing the Trousers charts the development of the women's movement through contemporaneous fashions. Arranged chronologically, the book documents the frustratingly slow and small changes to women's clothing in their journey towards becoming liberated women able to work and play in comfortable garments that did not restrict movement and impinge on their health. Chapman's account of this journey records the numerous struggles and outcries of disapproving dress reformers and these brave "trouser-wearing women" had to endure. Predictably, men of the period saw women in bifurcated garments as a "threat to male authority" (p 13) and an assertion of female independence. And many British newspapers accused women of aping men and becoming "latter-day Amazons" (p 21).

Chapter 1 starts in the 1850s with Mrs Bloomer and Bloomerism. Emelia Bloomer, editor of *The Lily*, became famous and "immortalised her name, and the bloomer costume" (p 19) by adopting a short dress and trousers. The subject of bloomers extends to Chapters 2 and 3 which then concentrate on the introduction of the bloomer to British soil and consequently the economic aspects of making, selling, and wearing bifurcated garments.

Chapter 4 "Taking the Mickey" (p 54) is a thought-provoking read for a historian living in modern times. I found myself both outraged and amused at the same time. It details the ridicule that women were often subjected to for wearing bloomers or trousers. Included in this chapter is the extremely witty poem, "A Bloomer's Soliloquy" (pp 56–57) published in Jackson's *Oxford Journal* in 1851. Set to iambic pentameter and based on Hamlet's "To be, or not to be" soliloquy it starts, "Trousers or no trousers — that's the question" (p 56). Additionally, Chapman includes derogatory rhymes and published letters of complaint about the rise of Bloomerism as proof of the public's (men's) disapproval of the said item. However, many female proponents of bloomers lectured on the health benefits of wearing bifurcated garments.

The middle section of *Wearing the Trousers* focuses its study on the reform of dress and the introduction of women into sporting activities such as walking, archery, and cycling. Chapman extensively assesses women's undergarments (namely the crinoline and the corset) and asserts that changes to women's dress were essential to facilitate easier movement. These chapters are supported with a plethora of primary

sources and personal testimony as to the benefits of modified female fashion and the termination of tight lacing.

This leads seamlessly into the next few chapters which concentrate on the rational dress movement and the key players who rallied and lectured to reform women's dress. Here, Chapman manages to place his research into the wider social and political context of the period by addressing such themes as the Contagious Diseases Act, female employment, economics, and health. He draws from legislation, consumer and retail literature, and The National Health Society to build a picture of the emergence of more hygienic, comfortable, and healthier dress for women. Interestingly, Chapman also writes about funeral dress reform and its connection to overall dress reform for both men and women. I found this a fascinating argument which I had not considered in the context of female dress reform.

Cycling, the divided skirt, and female emancipation are the subjects that occupy the latter chapters of *Wearing the Trousers*, (from the 1890s). This section interested me by far the most – I could have done with this when I was writing my Master's thesis on Cycling and Emancipation. Furthermore, Chapman regales the reader with stories of topical court cases and demonstrations against trouser-wearing cycling women where his use of humour is welcomed and adds to the enjoyment of the book. The overarching message in this section is that "the adoption of short skirts and knickerbockers for cycling is not merely a matter of fashion, but one of utility and safety" (p 212). However, there still continued to be strong opposition to the acceptance of women wearing trousers as demonstrated through the numerous incidents where women were refused service in inns should they be wearing a bifurcated cycle skirt. The proprietor of the White Horse had even stated that "women in that disgusting dress [trousers] were not to be admitted to his coffee room because they were objectionable ... [and] if anyone took out a summons against him ... let the magistrates decide the matter" (p 219).

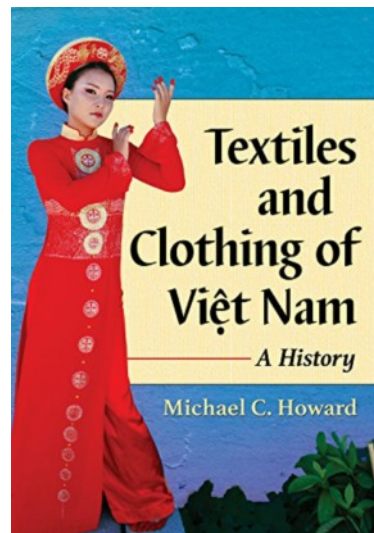
Chapman's attention to the use of interesting and diverse primary sources is to be commended. He draws from private papers, letters, and memoirs; newspapers and magazines; novels and plays; and visual sources such as photographs and comedic illustrations. Detailed references are provided and the select bibliography is thorough and precise, enabling researchers to see the extensive range of primary and secondary sources available. Chapman's use of images and contemporary photographs is a welcomed addition as it enables the reader to view the remarkable bifurcated costumes worn by these modern women and how they developed. He even includes some illustrations of the Lancashire Pit Brow Lasses, the subject of my own research. Throughout, Chapman uses local material and specific case studies positioning them within the wider historical context of women's emancipation and social change in the period. Illuminating "stories" and incidents, especially of female cyclists, add an interesting hook for the reader and a lighter side to the rational struggle.

Overall, this book is an excellent study of the relationship between women's fashion and freedom during the mid nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. It details the numerous key players in the women's movement and the rational dress movement with an encyclopedic knowledge that adds to the academic rigour of the book. I would certainly recommend this publication to anyone particularly interested in women's history, cycling history, and fashion history but more generally to anyone with an interest in the social history of the nineteenth century, an excellent informative body of research.

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Michael C Howard, *Textiles and Clothing of Viet Nam: A History*, McFarland and Company, Jefferson, United States, 2016, 18 Colour Illustrations, 73 Black-and-White Illustrations, Chapter Notes, References, Index, 211pp, Paperback, £32.



Viet Nam is becoming a popular tourist destination and although the attractive cover of *Textiles and Clothing of Viet Nam: A History* might tempt the casual visitor or general reader, it will really only satisfy those seeking specialist information and an in-depth historical background to the rich textile culture of Viet Nam. Howard, the author or editor of more than 30 books, takes the reader back some 2000 years and forward into distinct contemporary dress designs. He traces in minute detail how dress, especially among the many Northern and Southern ethnic minorities, reflects Viet Nam's history of wars, invasions, conquests, migrations and flights, and the country's close ties with China and Thailand. He quotes the use of Dong Son bronzes and carved stone figures found on Khmer temples to identify early clothing styles and decorations, eg, 15 styles of hip-wrappers, and how feudalism, especially before and during the reign of the Nguyen lords (1802–1945), fostered Chinese court dress and customs and continued sumptuary laws favouring the elite.

Proximity to neighbouring countries and trading links with India, China, and Japan, is shown to have brought the influences of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. Trade goods included textiles, with yellow raw silk, silk fabric, and damask silk yarn particularly prized in Japan. The arrival in 1774 of French Catholic missionaries paved the way for French colonialism (1884–1954), increasing urbanisation and the gradual westernisation of dress. In 1950, the division of Viet Nam into the communist north and non-communist south, profoundly affected both the supplies of textiles and dress styles associated with their beliefs. Passionate textile collectors and historians, like Howard, horrified by the aftermath of the Vietnam Wars, are determined to preserve and record Viet Nam's precious dress and textile heritage.

Howard starts by looking at the antiquity and types of looms used, including “back-strap, combination back-strap and frame, and frame looms.” He singles out one unique to Cham specialist weavers for weaving narrow strips of cloth. Hand weaving, though still prized, was affected by the French introduction of power looms and continued only in remote areas. Among the fibres he mentions the use of bark-cloth (before the introduction of weaving), silk, cotton, ramie, banana, hemp (especially among the Hmong), asbestos, bast fibre and the making of kapok thread by splicing.

Although cloth was often worn in its natural state, colours obtained from natural or commercial dyes came to be associated with status, eg, yellow and royalty, particular ethnic groups, eg, brown obtained from dye yam (*Dioscorea cirrhosa*) with lowland Kinh, and events and occasions such as weddings, funerals and New Year. Black, dark and pale blue are particularly common, and, curiously, the same word is used for blue and green. Sometimes wearing white was considered a capital offence.

If the reader is unfamiliar with the Vietnamese language and its nine diacritical marks, Howard's tendency throughout the book of including every possible name and aka, hinders one's enjoyment of the profusion of textile details he presents. While language, dialects, historical background, and culture serve as key identifiers of distinct groups, Howard also systematically examines how types of textiles, and styles of dress, separate northern minority tribes including the Kadai, Tai, Mon-Khmer, Hmong-Mien, and Tibeto-Burman, and the mainly Khmer and Cham southern groups. Identity may be established through the colour of a woman's skirt and whether the tube or wrap skirt consists of two or three pieces. If a blouse is worn, on what side is it fastened? Has it got sleeves or not? Are they tight, decorated, or not? How long and wide are the loincloths? Do trousers have decorated hems? Are they white or tight? How many waistbands (up to three) do they have? Are sashes, blankets, or aprons part of the ensemble? How do headdresses, hats, and headcloths differ?

Difference may also be indicated through such decorative features as supplementary warps or wefts (with a needle traditionally made from the hair of a hedgehog), and dragon, peacock, heron, and spotted deer motifs. Embroidery, as well as simple beads (glass in the past, now plastic), Job's tears, objects, and coins (silver in the past, now metal), may be put on garments, with pleats, fringes, pom poms (usually red), and tassels further extending the range. Howard also shows how a variety of patterns, many geometric, may indicate rank and ethnic differences.

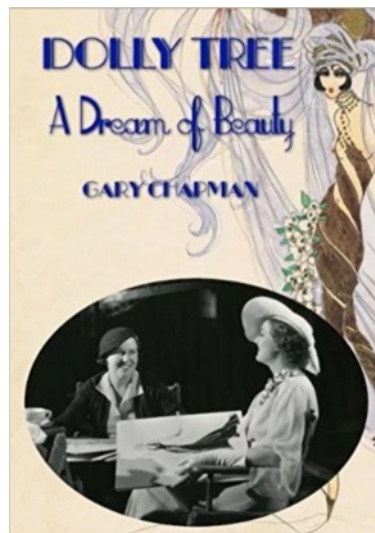
Textiles and Clothing of Viet Nam: A History aims to be a comprehensive guide. It has an incredible number of references, comprehensive chapter notes, a useful administrative map and quotes recent population figures for all the minority tribes. The many black-and-white illustrations are clearly captioned, but poorly reproduced, and a table of dates and list of major dynasties and rulers would have been helpful. By drawing attention to the diversity and wealth of Viet Nam's ethnic textiles and clothing, enthusiasts like Howard hope to ensure the preservation and revival of traditional skills in their production, albeit as attractive tourist souvenirs. If it is not too heretical a suggestion, might a simpler, more general, version of this book, not prove an instructive attraction to younger Vietnamese and tourists alike?

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Marion Maule has been a passionate collector, lecturer, and teacher for more than 40 years. She has travelled widely, speaks several languages, and has curated many specialist exhibitions in Bedfordshire. Her Asian Arts Diploma and a particular interest in Asian textiles, fans, and wedding customs continue to fuel her research and lead to memorable encounters. Marion is an active member of The Association of Dress Historians.

Gary Chapman, *Dolly Tree: A Dream of Beauty*, Edditt Publishing, Stroud, England, 2017, over 600 Black-and-White Illustrations, Endnotes, Credits, 333pp, Paperback, £30.



The name, Dolly Tree, is rarely, if ever, mentioned when we think of Hollywood costume designers of the first half of the twentieth century. Overshadowed by those who were her contemporaries and colleagues — Gilbert Adrian (1903–1959), Edith Head (1897–1981), Travis Banton (1894–1958) — Tree’s name is known only today by historians of the period and of the subject matter. Yet in the 1930s Tree dressed Judy Garland for nearly all of her MGM films, created outfits for 18 of Myrna Loy’s films, and was the designer chosen to transform Jean Harlow’s image from sex siren to serious actress. So why then has Tree’s work, career, and life been largely forgotten — and does she deserve to be remembered?

Born Dorothy Marian Isbell in England, she took the stage name Dolly Tree when embarking on an acting career in years before the First World War. This is the first book dedicated to her and it is the author’s hope that it will bring Tree out of costume-design wilderness and into wider appreciation. And Tree has largely been absent from reappraisals of Hollywood designers. There was no mention of her in the Victoria and Albert Museum’s 2012 exhibition and publication, *Hollywood Costume* or from the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s 1977 exhibition and publication, also called *Hollywood Costume: Glamour! Glitter! Romance!*

Chapman’s book delineates Tree’s career chronologically through 12 chapters; from her early life and work in Britain as a poster artist, actress and costume designer, to her design work in Paris in the first half of the 1920s, Broadway in the second half, and Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s. Chapman also includes chapters on Tree’s style (including strapless gowns, evening gowns, suits) and a chapter on 11 of the actresses that Tree designed for. Although the author is not a dress or textile historian (he studied archaeology at university and worked in publishing), he describes the cut, construction, and textiles of Tree’s work in depth and with knowledge and understanding.

The book is exhaustive with the author acknowledging that it “has been a labour of love” (p i) and Chapman’s love of his subject is clear. With over 600 images (all black and white) and its encyclopaedic account of Tree’s life and work, it is an approach that the author acknowledges, “Some readers may ... find ... too detailed” (p i). Yet perhaps the book could have been more detailed. Additional and expanded references would have been appreciated (no page numbers are included in the endnotes) and the

inclusion of an index and bibliography. Chapman's asserts that Tree worked as a couturier for Jean Peron Couture (a name largely absent from fashion's history) which was "one of the major European couture houses" (p 74) and that, "Peron was described as court dressmakers" (p 74). By whom? A reference would have greatly assisted not only in further research into Jean Peron Couture but also Tree's career within this company.

Tree's work was often described by the press of the day as having a taste for "simplicity and elegance" (p 153), a reflection of a real woman's wardrobe. In contrast, Myrna Loy described the work of fellow MGM designer Adrian as "more flamboyant and theatrical" (p 267). Although Chapman's book clearly illustrates Tree's ability to create equally "flamboyant and theatrical" outfits for the stars of the 1930s, her reputation for the more prosaic may have helped to move her to the sidelines of people's consciousness. Tree also did not design costumes for some of the most memorable MGM films of the 1930s, such as *Letty Lynton* (1932) and *The Wizard of Oz* (1937); Joan Crawford and Judy Garland's iconic costumes were designed by Adrian. Do any of Tree's outfits still exist in museum collections or held by private collectors? Chapman's images are fashion illustrations or photographs of actresses in Tree's creations.

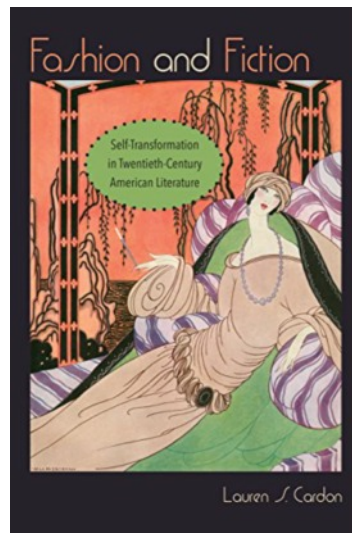
As a costumier who dressed some of the biggest stars of Hollywood's Golden Age, Dolly Tree is a name that should be more widely known. Her work typifies an age of simplicity in women's fashion and acts as an antidote to the more well-known costumes designed by her contemporaries. Chanel's career in Hollywood was short lived (only three films) due to her aesthetic for the understated. It is questionable whether Tree could be considered "one of the great British designers of the twentieth century" (p i) but Chapman's book gives a voice and an image to a largely forgotten costume designer who deserves to take her place amongst her contemporaries: Adrian, Travis Banton, and Edith Head.

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Martin Pel is curator of fashion at the Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton and Hove. He has published books on Biba and 1920s fashion. Martin worked on the exhibition, *Gluck: Art and Identity*, for Brighton Museum (18 November 2017 to 11 March 2018) which was cocurated by Professor Amy de la Haye (University of the Arts, London). For the exhibition, Martin and Amy worked closely with Diana Souhami, Gluck's biographer, cultural historian Elizabeth Wilson, art historian Gill Clarke, exhibition maker Jeff Horsley, and creative director of Pallant House Simon Martin. *Gluck: Art and Identity* was published in 2017 by Yale University Press. Martin is a member of the Advisory Board of *The Journal of Dress History*.

Lauren S Cardon, *Fashion and Fiction: Self-Transformation in Twentieth-Century American Literature*, University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, USA, 2016, 15 Black-and-White Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index, 213pp, Paperback, £28.



This book explores the connections between twentieth-century literature and the American fashion industry. During this time, American fashion was moving away from being ruled primarily by French designers and being very class conscious, and moving towards a model that was more democratic and commercially oriented. Using literary analysis of influential twentieth-century American writers such as Edith Wharton, F Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and more, Cardon shows how these writers used clothing in their character and narrative development and maps the changes in the American fashion industry through its depictions in these novels.

Cardon argues, “Clothing, in these texts, becomes a mechanism through which authors conflate the historical, economic, and sociological realities of the American fashion industry with the genre themes of self-fashioning and transformation” (p 4). Additionally, Cardon demonstrates the ways that, “the authors use clothing as a barometer for achieving American ideals of upward mobility and the pursuit of happiness, defined here as the pursuit and expression of individual desire” (p 5). The book is divided into seven chapters, including the introduction, five case studies, and conclusion, and features black-and-white images of historical dress and relevant artwork and advertisements from the time periods being discussed.

The introduction lays out Cardon’s scholarly framework and the position from which she is analysing the literature. The five case studies feature a wide variety of authors and topics. Chapter 1 explores two works by Edith Wharton and the tensions within the American upper class that would eventually lead to a more democratic American fashion industry. Chapter 2 examines novels by Abraham Cahan and Theodore Dreiser that depict the rise from poverty into a life of luxury alongside the rise of ready-made fashion and mass consumption. Chapter 3 focuses on the immigrant struggle in America and uses case studies by the author Anzia Yezierska. Chapter 4 turns to the subject of the modern woman and the changing silhouette and uses case studies by F Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, and Ernest Hemingway to reveal how the changing styles for women changed the way female characters were constructed and presented. The final case study, Chapter 5, contextualises fashions of the late 1920s and early 1930s within a discussion of the Parisian avant-garde, American culture, and issues of primitivism and black culture during the Harlem Renaissance. She concludes with an exploration of the Great Depression

and the rise of American fashion designers. The book is well structured and Cardon's arguments are easy to follow and understand, even if the reader is not familiar with literary analysis. The themes and topics covered throughout present a fairly comprehensive study of American life in the early twentieth century, including various aspects of gender, sexuality, race, and class.

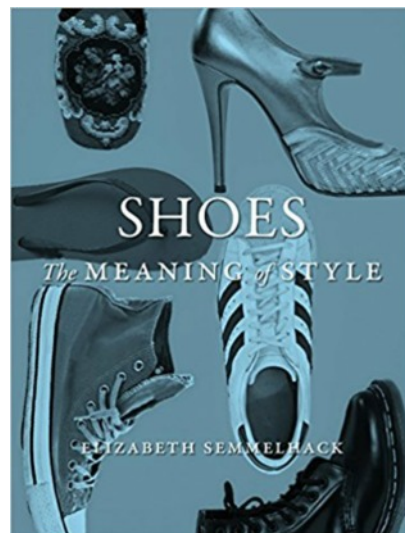
Cardon has chosen a strong selection of literary texts to explore, each one rich with descriptions of historical dress, the fashion industry, and life of the characters. The reader does not need to be familiar with the texts Cardon is analysing in order to follow her examples and arguments. She quotes judiciously from the texts she is working with, which provides the reader with a good sense of the original material and to judge if they agree with Cardon's conclusions. Her writing style is very clear and she avoids unnecessary obtuse language. Ultimately, her arguments are solid and she presents a very convincing case with her analysis and compelling examples.

This book is relevant for literary, cultural, historical, and fashion studies, particularly for those who are less familiar with American history and literature in the early twentieth century. For those who are very acquainted with American history and fashion during this time period, some aspects might be redundant, but there are still likely parts that will provide new insight due to its inclusion of so many different social, political, and economical aspects of American life. This book would not be appropriate for readers interested solely in fashion history; however, for those looking for a comprehensive illustration of the early American fashion industry and the various ways dress works as a form of personal expression and identity construction, this book is an excellent option.

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Andrea J Severson is a PhD candidate in the Writing, Rhetoric, and Literacies programme in the English Department at Arizona State University in Tempe, United States, focusing on fashion rhetoric and material culture. She has taught at Arizona State University and the Maricopa County Community Colleges since 2010 and has worked previously as a costume designer on various theatrical and film projects. She is a member of the Arizona Costume Institute and served on its Board of Directors from 2011 to 2014. Andrea's work has been featured in *For His Eyes Only: The Women of James Bond* (2015).

Elizabeth Semmelhack, *Shoes: The Meaning of Style*, Reaktion Books Ltd, London, England, 2017, 159 Colour Illustrations, Index, Appendices, Bibliography, 368pp, Hardback, £25.



Given that the fascination with shoes is at an all-time high, the author presents a timely exploration of the frequently asked question, “What is a shoe?” Looking far beyond the obvious practical considerations, this book explores the complex and ever-changing reasons why we wear the shoes we do and how these shoes play a central role in the construction of our social identity. By honing in on specific styles, the book examines how the same style can symbolise a variety of different meanings to many diverse people over shifting time. Shoes can uphold power structures and maintain the status quo as well as being worn to protest against cultural expectations. Shoes allow the wearer to present a multiplicity of different identities. Who we are — at work, at leisure, playing sport, going out or simply living — can be communicated through the different types of footwear we consciously choose to wear or are subconsciously and quite often overtly channelled to wear.

The subject of footwear is a very large one and covers many areas worthy of a book in their own right: the shoe industry, shoe retailing, branding, and designer monographs, to name but a few. With such a diversely rich subject, it is both realistic and practical, if a little frustrating at times, to narrow the focus. As a result, the author concentrates at looking at four main archetypes of footwear: sandals, boots, high heels, and sneakers bookended with an introduction and conclusion.

Chapter 1, Sandals: Eccentricity, investigates the reintroduction of the sandal into western fashion at the end of the eighteenth century and how the term, sandal, has been used to describe a wide variety of footwear that by today’s standards would not be called a sandal. Through historical and contemporary examples, the author charts how sandals have been worn as fashionable, practical, and overtly feminine summer or evening wear, but have also represented the footwear of “personal eccentricity and radical politics” (p 12) and have been closely aligned with health.

Chapter 2, Boots: Inclusivity, examines how boots represent power, masculinity, domination, and uniformity, from both a practical and fashionable viewpoint. Moving from male boot wearing domination with a nod to the all-American cowboy, the author looks at how at the end of the nineteenth century boot wearing by women was increasingly eroticised. The chapter also explores in the twentieth century how boots have been adopted by many different subcultures to express identity and cohesion.

Chapter 3, *High Heels: Instability*, explores the origins of the high heel from male western Asian horse riders to the heel's adoption and adaptation in western fashion from the 1590s onwards for both men and women. The author covers how the heel developed into an icon of feminine desirability encompassing functionality or lack of it, gender politics, women's suffrage, eroticism and pornography, celebrity high-heeled designers before coming back to the current gender fluidity of men again in high heels.

Chapter 4, *Sneakers: Exclusivity*, highlights the development of the humble and functional sports shoe in the nineteenth century to its celestial rise as a lifestyle choice, an extension of the wearer's personality, interests, attitude, and style taking in eugenics and fascism in the 1930s, celebrity endorsement, technological innovations, and changing perceptions in masculinity and the acceptable role sneakers play in men's participation in fashion consumption.

The conclusion explores how the move from bespoke handmade shoes to factory working and increased mechanisation has influenced as well as challenged how social identities are constructed. In a climate of mass production and the domination of world brands, individual self-expression is still very important to many of us.

Each chapter is a smörgåsbord of historical and contemporary examples, anecdotes, and stories revealing how each style has evolved as a result of cultural, economic, historical, political, and global consumer pressure to be worn by such diverse groups to represent so many different beliefs, social ideas, and lifestyles, and how they have come to play a central role in the construction of our social identity. It is a roller coaster of a read with each chapter packed full of content. It is certainly fascinating how certain styles of footwear, as well as specific brands, have come to encapsulate social ideas to such a degree that we accept much of what we see and wear as a given, sometimes begging the question: Do we need to talk about shoes or just wear them? It is also interesting that what appears as an immense and diverse contemporary range of footwear created for, and sold by, both instore and online retailers from a style point of view, it can be narrowed down to four distinctive types. Though, of course, there is debate on how many styles actually exist.

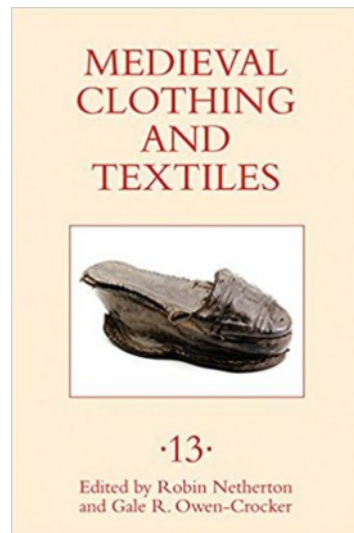
The author acknowledges that the book had to be focused and certainly each style could warrant longer chapters, not to mention their own dedicated book, so with such a lot to get through it is inevitable that detail in some areas is perhaps not as comprehensive. Terms for certain styles and features were also used without acknowledging other well-known alternatives, but perhaps this is particular to my own perspective and would not be so noticeable to a general reader. As the author states at the end of the introduction, "The goal of this work is to shed light on why we choose the shoes we do, and what we think we are saying through our choices."

This book provides an extremely good introduction to the vast and complex subject of why we wear the shoes that we wear. It is a very timely addition to the cannon of shoe books and provides a good platform for further study. It certainly provides enough for those with a degree of specialist knowledge, but also will be invaluable for the general reader and those interested in social history and identity.

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Rebecca Shawcross has been the shoe curator at Northampton Museums and Art Gallery since 1998. She is responsible for the Designated Shoe Collection, which includes collections management, exhibitions, research and enquiries, talks, and advising other museums and the media. She has published various articles including "I Stand Corrected? New Perspectives on Orthopaedic Footwear," a research paper for the publication, *Rethinking Disability Representation in Museums and Galleries*. In November 2014 her book, *Shoes: An Illustrated History*, was published by Bloomsbury, London.

Robin Netherton and Gale R Owen-Crocker, eds, *Medieval Clothing and Textiles, Volume 13*, Boydell Press, Woodbridge, England, 2017, 12 Colour Illustrations, 44 Black-and-White Illustrations, Notes, Illustrations, Tables, 161pp, Hardcover, £40.



The volume brings together a group of specialists from various disciplines working with different primary sources. The authors are clearly well acquainted with their subject matter and add an array of nuances and detail to the existing literature. The primary sources are analysed expertly and convincingly. The book begins with a preface, providing a brief insight into individual chapters and their correlation, with focus on medieval dress as a prominent indicator of identity, including gender, class, and ethnicity. The rest of the book is divided into six chapters.

As a contribution to the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings and the Norman conquest of England, Gale R Owen-Crocker distinguishes garments clearly with regard to gender, social status, and ethnicity in “The Significance of Dress in the Bayeux Tapestry.” The author analyses specific forms of dress, their construction, colour, and role in the society within the following categories: English Male Dress, Foreign Dress, Rulers’ Dress, Special Dress, Armour, The Dress of Tonsured Figures, Women’s Dress, and Nakedness. The research is supported and complemented by previous studies and with analogous historical artefacts. But the most important contribution of this work is the discovery that some of the presented garments on the Bayeux Tapestry were manipulated for particular effects by the artists who put the cartoon onto linen or by individual workshops and embroiderers.

In “How Long Is a Launce? Units of Measure for Cloth in Late Medieval Britain,” Mark Chambers provides a significant and thorough insight into several systems of measuring units for textile and fur from medieval British texts. He supports his assumptions about ancestry by archival sources, manuscripts, and etymology of the terms. The end of the chapter presents a table for measures of cloth, fur, and related goods, based on the synthesis of definitions from relevant dictionaries.

In “Robes, Turbans, and Beards: ‘Ethnic Passing’ in Decameron 10.9,” Ana Grinberg examines an exchange of indicators of identity arising from Muslim-Christian interaction, as well as a disguised social status in one of Boccaccio’s stories in his Decameron. Through her analyses, she exposes the complexity of medieval ethnic identity in relation to textiles and garments.

Owing to records of political events, commercial transactions, court records, and private documents from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Christine Meek allows a new insight into the history of footwear in the Tuscan city of Lucca in her chapter, "Calciamentum: Footwear in Late Medieval Lucca." She skilfully explains the historical circumstances of supply and demand of footwear, the nature and features of different kinds of footwear, and the meaning of terms used in the nomenclature.

Furnishings are the topic of "Bene in Ordene et Bene Ornate: Eleonora d'Aragona's Description of Her Suite of Rooms in a Roman Palace of the Late Fifteenth Century," by Jane Bridgeman. She discusses an aristocratic bride's letter home in which she enumerates the splendours of the apartment prepared for her as a Pope's guest in Rome. The appendix of her article is the first English translation of a letter written by Eleonora D'Aragona, Duchess of Ferrara, on 10 June 1473.

In "The Lübeck Wappenröcke: Distinctive Style in Fifteenth-Century German Fabric Armour," Jessica Finley provides a detailed analysis of the artefact that represents a unique style in armour fashion found only in Germany. She offers a detailed description of the textile material, methods of construction, weaving techniques, and chemical analyses of the black paint used to decorate the back of the padded military garment. She also discusses peculiarities in the tailoring of this garment that could help in future research.

This is an excellent collection of articles, which enable new insight into specific historical artefacts and sources. In line with the aims of the Medieval Clothing and Textiles series, it provides both new information and new perspectives on studying the medieval clothing culture through a comparative and interdisciplinary approach. The book is intended for an international audience and specialists interested in clothing items, upholstery fabrics, footwear, units of measurement for textiles and fur, consumption, and ethnic identity in the medieval period.

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Katarina Nina Simončič, PhD is an Assistant Professor of Fashion History at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Textile Technology in Croatia. She attained her PhD at the Department of Art History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb with her thesis, *Fashion Culture in Zagreb at the Turn of the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Century*. Her research interests focus on the relationships between genres, including portrait painting, printmaking, photography, and fashion artefacts of the sixteenth to twentieth centuries. She is the author of several publications related to the cultural history of fashion and the connection between fashion and tradition.

A Guide to Online Sources for Dress History Research

Online sources for dress history research have been increasing in scale and quality. This guide documents online sources that are of a professional quality and that play a role in furthering the academic study of dress history. Categorized alphabetically per country, the following online collections reflect the interdisciplinarity of dress history research that can be accessed through searchable banks of images, objects, and text. To be included in this guide, the museum or archive must offer online sources for dress history research that can be officially referenced at an academic level; for example, the image must include an accession number or museum identification and full citation information.

The purpose of this guide is to provide a comprehensive list of online sources for researchers and students. This guide will be updated and published in *The Journal of Dress History* twice per year. Additions and corrections to this guide are warmly encouraged. Please email journal@dresshistorians.org.

Australia

The Australian Dress Register, Ultimo

The Australian Dress Register is a collaborative, online project about dress with Australian provenance. <http://www.australiandressregister.org/browse>

The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney

The museum is home to the material heritage of Australian culture, history and lifestyle. There are more than 500,000 separate items in the collection, including dress and fashion. <https://collection.maas.museum>

The National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

The National Gallery of Australia is the Commonwealth of Australia's national cultural institution for the visual arts and is a portfolio agency within the Department of Communications and the Arts. <https://artsearch.nga.gov.au>

Belgium

Fashion Museum of Antwerp and The University of Antwerp, Antwerp

This online collection was compiled for the sole purpose of being accessible to study, research, training, and inspiration. <http://128.199.60.250/omeka/items/browse>

Canada

The McCord Stewart Museum, Montreal

The online collection includes clothing and accessories belonging to Canadian men, women and children, covering three centuries; garments from Montreal designers, manufacturers, and retailers; quilts, coverlets, and other hand-made domestic textiles. <http://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/collections>

Ryerson University, Fashion Research Collection, Toronto

This collection offers a wide selection of fashion and textiles. <http://ryersonfashion.pastperfectonline.com>

The University of Alberta, Anne Lambert Clothing and Textiles Collection, Edmonton

Founded in 1972, the collection includes everyday wear and designer clothes for men, women and children from different continents and spanning over 350 years of history.

<https://clothingtextiles.ualberta.ca>

The University of Calgary, The Theatrical Scene and Costume Design Collection, Calgary

This collection features designs dating back to the mid nineteenth century.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/costumedesign>

Chile

Museo de la Moda, Santiago

This online database offers a timeline of fashion with descriptive information and images.

<http://www.museodelamoda.cl/linea-de-tiempo>

England

Art UK, London

This searchable database is a compilation of public art collections within the UK.

<https://artuk.org>

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

The Ashmolean has embarked on a major project to digitise its collections with an initial target of making 250,000 objects available online by 2020.

<http://collections.ashmolean.org>

The Bank of England Archive, London

On this page, select Online Catalogue. The Bank of England Archive contains over 88,000 records relating to all aspects of the Bank's history and work, dating from when the Bank was founded in 1694 to the present day.

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/archive>

Bloomsbury Fashion Central and Berg Fashion Library

This is one platform that offers instant access to scholarly research, iconic images, and quality textbooks. To gain comprehensive access, login by subscription, which may be available through an affiliated educational establishment or public library.

<https://www.bloomsburyfashioncentral.com>

The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle

The online database includes an array of dress and textile artefacts, including items from the wardrobe of Empress Eugenie and other pieces from the Blackborne Lace Collection.

<http://bowes.adlibhosting.com/search/simple>

Bridgeman Images

This online collection has over two million art, culture, and historic images.

<http://www.bridgemanimages.com>

Brighton & Hove Museums Costume Collection, Brighton

Brighton & Hove Museums' comprehensive costume collection is of considerable national significance. It embraces men's, women's, and children's dress and accessories from the sixteenth century to the present day.

<https://brightonmuseums.org.uk/discover/collections/fashion-and-textiles>

British History Online

This is a digital library of key printed primary and secondary sources for the history of Britain and Ireland, with a primary focus on the period between 1300 and 1800. BHO was founded by the Institute of Historical Research and the History of Parliament Trust in 2003.

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/using-bho/subject-guides>

The British Library, London

The website contains many images available freely online, which could support dress history research, such as illuminated manuscripts.

<https://www.bl.uk>

The British Museum, London

On this page, a search box enables a comprehensive search through over four million objects.

<http://www.britishmuseum.org/research>

The Burgon Society, London

The following website contains a list of the items of academical dress owned by the Burgon Society, with many images of gowns and hoods.

<http://www.burgon.org.uk/society/wardrobe/uk.php>

Central Saint Martins, London

This searchable online collection includes art and design of Central Saint Martins alumni and images from the British Artists' Film and Video Study Collection.

<http://collections.arts.ac.uk>

Chertsey Museum, The Olive Matthews Collection, Chertsey

This collection features many items of national significance. It contains over 4000 men's, women's and children's fashionable clothes dating from circa 1700 to the present.

<http://www.chertseymuseum.org.uk>

The Costume Research Image Library of Tudor Effigies

This is a Textile Conservation Centre project now hosted by The Tudor Tailor and J M D & Co. The website includes images of sixteenth-century effigies in churches in the English counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Sussex, and Hampshire, including the Isle of Wight. This resource is useful to anyone interested in the cut and construction of sixteenth-century dress.

<http://www.tudoreffigies.co.uk>

The Courtauld Gallery, London

The following website includes the complete collection of paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, and drawings, as well as a selection of prints.

<http://www.artandarchitecture.org.uk>

The Fashion Museum, Bath

There are almost 100,000 objects in the Fashion Museum collection, some items of which can be accessed on the following website.

<https://www.fashionmuseum.co.uk/collection>

Goldsmiths Textile Collection, London

The Collection, founded in the 1980s by Constance Howard and Audrey Walker, comprises textile art, embroidery and dress.

<http://www.gold.ac.uk/textile-collection>

Historic Royal Palaces Image Library, Hampton Court Palace

This online database includes images of fashion, caricature, art, portraits.

<http://images.hrp.org.uk>

The John Bright Historic Costume Collection, London

This website is a catalogue of key items from the collection of original garments and textiles belonging to award-winning costume designer, John Bright.

<https://www.thejohnbrightcollection.co.uk>

Knitting in Early Modern Europe

This online database provides photographs and technical details about knitted caps from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries held in European collections. It offers opportunities to comment on the material and participate in experimental archaeology which is attempting to match the characteristics of the fulled knitted fabric from the era.

www.kemererearch.com

Marks and Spencer Archive Catalogue, Leeds

The M&S Company Archive holds thousands of historical records from the days of Michael Marks' Penny Bazaar to the present. It is possible to browse themes, such as Lingerie and Sleepwear, Textile Technology, and Wartime.

<https://archive-catalogue.marksandspencer.ssl.co.uk/home>

The Museum of London, Dress and Textiles Collection, London

Our unique collections include over a million objects from thousands of years of London's history. The Dress and Textiles Collection focuses on clothes and textiles that were made, sold, bought, and worn in London from the sixteenth century to the present. The Paintings, Prints, and Drawings Collection, as well as the Photographs Collection, support research in dress history.

<https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/collections>

The National Archives, Kew

Browse over 75,000 images available to download immediately, spanning hundreds of years of history from The National Archives' unique collections, from ancient maps to iconic advertising.

<https://images.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

The National Army Museum, London

This online collection holds a large image gallery that could be useful for research in dress history.

<https://collection.nam.ac.uk>

The National Trust

Discover great art and collections and explore over 200 historic places (and 921,731 items online) in the care of The National Trust.

<http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk>

People's History Museum, Manchester

The collections span four centuries of the history of working people in Britain with the majority focusing on the last 200 years. The museum holds one of the largest collections of historic trade union and political banners in the world and is the UK's leading authority on the conservation and study of banners.

<http://www.phm.org.uk/keemu>

The Public Domain Review, Manchester

The Public Domain Review is a not-for-profit project dedicated to works that have fallen into the public domain, which are therefore able to be used freely. To find dress history images and text, insert “fashion” into the search box at the top of the page.

<http://publicdomainreview.org>

The Royal Collection, London

The “Search the Collection” tool is easy to navigate through thousands of images to support research in dress history.

<https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection>

The Underpinnings Museum, London

The Underpinnings Museum is an online archive dedicated to the history of underwear. The goal of the project is to provide free access to an oft-neglected area of fashion study. Each object is accompanied by detailed imagery, technical and contextual information.

<https://underpinningsmuseum.com>

The University of Brighton, The Dress History Teaching Collection, Brighton

The aim of the Dress History Teaching Collection is to offer all students and staff at the University of Brighton direct access to closely examine and photograph historical and world fabrics and garments while encouraging the use of the collection within material culture research.

<http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/projects/teaching-collection>

The Victoria and Albert Museum, Textiles and Fashion Collection, London

The V&A holds the national collection of Textiles and Fashion, which spans a period of more than 5000 years. The Clothworkers’ Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion is the location at which items can be studied in person.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk>

The Wedgwood Museum Collections, Stoke-on-Trent

The searchable, online collection includes some interesting images of historic dress, from Wedgwood portrait medallions to a woman's shoe designed with a Wedgwood heel.

<http://www.wedgwoodmuseum.org.uk/collections/search-the-collection>

The Wellcome Collection Library, London

The Wellcome Collection, one of the world’s major resources for the study of medical history. The online collection offers free downloads of high-resolution images of paintings, drawings and caricatures, photographs, films, posters, books, pamphlets, archives, and sound recordings.

<https://wellcomelibrary.org/collections>

The William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow

The William Morris Gallery holds the most comprehensive collection of objects relating to all aspects of Morris’s life and work, including his work as a designer, a writer and a campaigner for social equality and the environment.

<http://www.wmgallery.org.uk/collection/browse-the-collection>

France**The National Centre for Stage Costume, Moulins**

This collection includes costume for performing art, theatre, opera, ballet, dance, and street theatre productions.

<http://www.cnsc.fr/explore-collections>

The Palais Galliera, Paris

This fashion museum offers a comprehensive online collection that includes many images to support dress history research.

<http://www.palaisgalliera.paris.fr/en/collections/collections>

Germany

The Munich City Museum, Munich

Access the Fashion and Textiles Collections through the main website. Founded in 1888, the museum collection includes fashion and textiles from everyday clothing to haute couture from the early eighteenth century to the present day.

<https://www.muenchner-stadtmuseum.de>

Hungary

The Museum of Applied Arts, Textile and Costume Collection, Budapest

The 17,000 items in the Textile and Costume Collection are mainly from Europe, and some from overseas, representing a wide range of techniques and periods of textile art. Complementing the textiles themselves is a historical collection of equipment used to make them.

<http://www.imm.hu/en/contents/28,Textile+and+Costume+Collection>

Ireland

National Museums Northern Ireland, Ulster

The museum has several collections, which include art, costume, and textiles.

<https://www.nmni.com/collections/art>

Italy

Europeana Fashion International Association, Florence

Explore fashion from more than 30 European public and private institutions. Digital images include historical clothing and accessories, contemporary designs, catwalk photographs, drawings, sketches, plates, catalogues and videos.

<https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en/collections/fashion>

Valentino Garavani Virtual Museum, Milan

Take a virtual tour through this museum, dedicated to the fashion design of Valentino (1932-).

<http://www.valentinogaravanimuseum.com>

Japan

The Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo

This is a specialised library for fashion and clothing. The library collects rare books, magazines, fashion plates, etc, from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century.

http://digital.bunka.ac.jp/kichosho_e/index.php

Kyoto Costume Institute Digital Archive

Searchable online database with images, from 1700 to today.

http://www.kci.or.jp/en/archives/digital_archives

New Zealand**The New Zealand Fashion Museum**

This is a museum dedicated to the curation of New Zealand's rich fashion past, making it relevant for the present and future. Established in 2010 as a Charitable Trust, it records and shares the stories of the people, objects and photographs that have contributed to the development of New Zealand's unique fashion identity.

<http://nzfashionmuseum.org.nz>

Scotland**The Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow**

The Archives and Collections are available online and include images of art, design, photographs, textiles, and more.

www.gsaarchives.net

Heriot Watt University Textile Collection, Edinburgh

The Textile Collection of archives, fabric, and apparel, charts the evolution of the Scottish textile industry from the mid eighteenth century to the present day.

<https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/heritage-information-governance/textile-collection.htm>

The National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh

This online source includes art and design images, medieval manuscripts, maps, photography, sport, theatre, war, and more.

<https://digital.nls.uk/gallery>

National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh

The museum has over three million objects and specimens, ranging from the earliest times to the present day. The online collections database includes a range of fashion and textiles.

<http://nms.scran.ac.uk>

Spain**The Virtual Fashion Museum of Catalonia**

This website is a platform to present historical and period costumes of public collections in Catalonia, Spain. More than 6000 pieces of period clothes are held in these collections and this platform tries to expose them to a wider audience. There are 642 costumes digitalised in this online catalogue.

<http://www.museudelamoda.cat/ca>

United States**The American Antiquarian Society, Worcester**

The AAS library today houses the largest and most accessible collection of books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, periodicals, music, and graphic arts material printed through 1876 in what is now the United

States. The Society maintains an online inventory and visual resource designed for researchers. The online inventory includes painted portraits, miniatures, sculpted portrait busts, as well as other artefacts that could be useful for dress historians.

<http://www.americanantiquarian.org>

The Art Institute, Chicago

The Department of Textiles contains more than 13,000 textiles and 66,000 sample swatches ranging from 300 BC to the present. The collection has strengths in Pre-Columbian textiles, European vestments, tapestries, woven silks and velvets, printed fabrics, needlework, and lace. The Institute also offers digital collections of European painting and sculpture, prints and drawings.

<http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/textiles>

Brooklyn Museum Library, Fashion and Costume Sketch Collection, 1912-1950, New York

These images are found in The Digital Library Collection, which also holds additional collections that could be beneficial in dress history research.

<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/archives/set/198>

Brown University Library Collections, Providence

This page lists the many different collections that the library has compiled, many of which contain interesting images of dress. A search box at the top, right-hand corner allows a comprehensive sweep of the whole Brown Digital Repository. Brown University also holds The Anne S K Brown Military Collection, the foremost American collection of material devoted to the history and iconography of soldiers and soldiering, and is one of the world's largest collections devoted to the study of military and naval uniforms.

<https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/collections/library>

<https://library.brown.edu/collections/askb>

Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia

Colonial Williamsburg, an eighteenth century living heritage museum, hosts a vast selection of online resources, a digital library, and special collections. There are both textual and visual objects in this collection.

<http://research.history.org/resources>

Columbia College, Fashion Study Collection Online Database, Chicago

The Fashion Study Collection (FSC) at Columbia College Chicago is an exceptional collection of designer garments, fashion history, and ethnic dress. A hands-on, academic, and inspirational resource for students and the public, the collection was founded in 1989 and has grown to house more than 6000 items.

<http://fashioncolumbia.pastperfectonline.com>

The Commercial Pattern Archive, University of Rhode Island Library Special Collections, Kingston

This is a wide collection of vintage sewing patterns.

<https://copa.apps.uri.edu/index.php>

The Costume and Textile Collection, Cornell University, Ithaca

This collection includes more than 10,000 items of apparel, accessories and flat textiles dating from the eighteenth century to present, including substantial collections of functional clothing, technical textiles, and ethnographic costume. To view images, scroll down the page and select the link, online catalogue database. Then, select guest account, which will take you to the searchable database of costume.

<https://www.human.cornell.edu/fsad/about/costume/home>

Drexel University, Historic Costume Collection, Philadelphia

This is a searchable image database comprised of selected fashion from the Robert and Penny Fox Historic Costume Collection (FHCC), designs loaned to the project by private collectors for inclusion on the website, fashion exhibitions curated by Drexel faculty and fashion research by faculty and students.

<http://digimuse.westphal.drexel.edu/publicdrexel/index.php>

Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM), Los Angeles

The collections of the FIDM Museum and Galleries span more than 200 years of fashion history, from Parisian haute couture to iconic film costumes and one-of-a-kind accessories.

<http://fidmmuseum.pastperfectonline.com>

The Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC

The Folger Shakespeare Library holds the world's largest collection of Shakespearean art, from the sixteenth century to the present day, as well as a world-renowned collection of books, manuscripts, and prints from Renaissance Europe. The Digital Image Collection includes some stage costumes and other dress images.

<https://www.folger.edu/works-of-art>

HathiTrust Digital Library, Ann Arbor

HathiTrust is a partnership of academic and research institutions, offering a collection of millions of titles digitised from libraries around the world. These books are especially good for textual evidence to support dress history research. Photographs and pictorial works can also be searched in this database.

<https://www.hathitrust.org>

Iowa State University, The Textiles and Clothing Museum, Ames

This online collections database includes dress, dating from the 1840s to today.

<http://tcmuseum.pastperfectonline.com>

The J Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

The collection of the J Paul Getty Museum comprises Greek, Roman, and Etruscan art from the Neolithic to Late Antiquity; European art (including illuminated manuscripts, paintings, drawings, sculpture, and decorative arts) from the Middle Ages to the early twentieth century; and international photography from its inception to the present day. The images are fully searchable.

<http://www.getty.edu/art/collection>

Kent State University, Gallery of Costume, Kent

This online collection includes an impressive array of dress and historic costume from the eighteenth century through the twentieth century.

<https://www.kent.edu/museum/gallery-costume>

The Library of Congress, Washington, DC

The Digital Collection holds a wide array of images that can be utilised in dress history research, including The Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. There are several categories from which to choose, or a separate search box at the top of the page can be utilised.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections>

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles

This LACMA website includes a link to a collection, titled, Fashion, 1900–2000. The following two websites are most important for dress history research.

<https://collections.lacma.org>

Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles

There are several different collections that are freely available and searchable, including travel posters, movie posters, book plates, and fashion plates. The Casey Fashion Plates Collection included over 6200 hand-coloured, finely detailed fashion illustrations produced between 1780 and 1880 for British and American fashion magazines.

<http://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/visual-collections>

Margaret Herrick Library Digital Collections, Hollywood

The database contains more than 35,000 digitised images about American cinema, including original artwork and Hollywood costume design.

<http://digitalcollections.oscars.org>

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Thomas J Watson Library, New York

The following address is the main page, which lists the vast array of items held in the Met's digital collection, including The Costume Institute and the Irene Lewisohn Costume Reference Library at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Searchable image databases include dress, fashion plates, textual references, and more.

<http://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm>

The Museum of Chinese in America, New York

The Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) has amassed a nationally-significant collection of materials documenting Chinese life in America, including fashion and textiles.

<http://www.mocanyc.org/collections>

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The David and Roberta Logie Department of Textile and Fashion Arts offers a wide range of online materials for dress history research. Scroll down the page to see the links to the Textiles and Fashion Arts Collection. The museum also holds a large collection of prints and drawings, containing almost 200,000 works that range from the beginnings of printing in the fifteenth century to today.

<http://www.mfa.org/collections/textiles-and-fashion-arts>

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

The museum contains almost 200,000 works of modern and contemporary art, more than 77,000 works of which are available online.

<https://www.moma.org/collection>

Newport, Rhode Island Cultural Institutions Online Collections

This database includes items from participating cultural institutions in Newport, Rhode Island, including the Doris Duke Fashion Collection of Newport Restoration.

<http://newportalri.org>

The New York Public Library Digital Collections, New York

The New York Public Library offers many different online collections, including Fashion Collections and an Art and Picture Collection.

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/lane/fashion-collections>

New York School of Interior Design Archives & Special Collections, New York

A collection of 23 boxes of material including correspondence, drawings, publications, articles, project specifications, photographs and miscellaneous items documenting the careers of both Sarah Tomerlin Lee (1910-2001), advertising executive, magazine editor, author and interior designer, and her husband Thomas (Tom) Bailey Lee (1909-1971), noted designer of displays, exhibits, sets, and interiors.

<http://nysidarchives.libraryhost.com/repositories/2/resources/2>

Ohio State University, Daphne Dare Collection, Columbus

The Ohio State University Libraries' Jerome Lawrence and Robert E Lee Theatre Research Institute includes costume and scene designs from more than 50 productions by British designer, Daphne Dare (1929-2000).

<http://drc03.drc.ohiolink.edu/handle/2374.OX/3>

Ohio State University, Historic Costume and Textiles Collection, Columbus

This collection is a scholarly and artistic resource of apparel and textile material culture, including the Ann W Rudolph Button Collection. The site all includes lesson plans for its programme, Teaching History with Historic Clothing Artefacts.

<http://costume.osu.edu>

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia

Many objects from the Museum's collection of over 240,000 are available in the online collections database, include dress historical images with complete citations.

<http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/search.html>

Philadelphia University, The Design Center, Philadelphia

Tapestry is an online resource that catalogues thousands of historic fabric swatches from Philadelphia University's vast textile collection.

<http://tapestry.philau.edu>

Phoenix Art Museum, Fashion Collection, Phoenix

The Fashion Collection is comprised of more than 4500 American and European garments, shoes and accessories. It houses important fashions from the eighteenth to late twentieth centuries and emphasises major American designers of the twentieth century.

<http://www.phxart.org/collection/fashion>

Shippensburg University, Fashion Archives and Museum, Shippensburg

The Fashion Archives' 15,000-item collection, comprised mostly of donations, consists of clothing and accessories worn by men, women and children, dating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. Primarily focused on middle- and working-class Americans, clothing from all walks of life is represented in the collection.

<http://fashionarchives.org/collection.html>

Smithsonian Libraries, Washington, DC

In the search box, insert "fashion" for a variety of fashion plates, shoes, and more.

<https://library.si.edu/image-gallery>

State University of New York, Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York

The address is for the digital collections of the FIT Library's Special Collections and College Archives. On the main page, there is a search box into which any term can be inserted. Images are of high resolution and easily downloaded. At the top of the page, select Images or Collections to view a variety of sources for research in dress history.

<https://sparcdigital.fitnyc.edu>

State University of New York, Geneseo

This is a guide for finding primary source material for costume images.

<http://libguides.geneseo.edu/c.php?g=212661&p=1403638>

Staten Island Historical Society, New York

The Staten Island Historical Society's collections tell the story of the American experience through the lives of Staten Islanders.

<http://stateniland.pastperfectonline.com>

The University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Many different digital collections are listed on this page, including the Motley Collection of Theatre and Costume Design, containing over 4000 items.

<https://digital.library.illinois.edu/collections>

The University of Michigan, Digital Collections, Ann Arbor

On the left-hand column, highlighted in yellow, searches can be run through many different filters. In that yellow column, select Image Collections to access applicable research for dress history.

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu>

The University of North Texas, Texas Fashion Collection, Denton

The collection includes over 18,000 items, and is an important element to the fashion programme at the University of North Texas.

<https://digital.library.unt.edu/explore/collections/TXFC>

The University of Pennsylvania Libraries, Philadelphia

The Online Books Page is a website that facilitates access to books that are freely readable over the Internet.

<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu>

The University of Texas, Harry Ransom Centre, Austin

There are many collections accessible, representing just a sample of the diverse holdings in literature, photography, film, art, and the performing arts, with many images to support research in dress history.

<https://hrc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital>

The University of Washington, The Costume and Textiles Collection, Seattle

The Henry Art Gallery's Costume and Textile Collection is a unique resource to be utilised for the study of construction, design, and pattern found on clothing and textiles. These collections reflect trends in historic fashion, preserve information about traditional ethnic dress, and provide important clues about how colour and pattern on clothing is used to structure social groups.

<http://dig.henryart.org/textiles/costumes>

The University of Wisconsin Digital Collection, Madison

This digital collection includes images of millinery, dressmaking, clothing, and costume books from the UW-Madison collections.

<https://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/HumanEcol>

The Valentine, Richmond

This address is the main page for the Costume and Textiles Collection at the Valentine, which comprises over 30,000 dress, accessory, and textile objects made, sold, worn, or used in Virginia from the late eighteenth century to the present day. On this page, there is a menu on the right that lists links to the Collections Database Search page and the Archives page.

<https://thevalentine.org/collections/costume-textiles/>

Wayne State University, Digital Dress Collection, Detroit

There are several different collections on this page, however, the Digital Dress Collection is the best for dress history research. The Digital Dress Collection contains images of clothing worn in Michigan during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The collection offers insight into Michigan life and society. The items shown here are held in the collections of Wayne State University, The Henry Ford, Detroit Historical Society, and Meadowbrook Hall.

<http://digital.library.wayne.edu/digitalcollections/allcollections.php>

We Wear Culture, Mountain View

This project is part of the greater Google Arts and Culture Project, which includes a wealth of information and images, all fully searchable.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/fashion>

Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, Winterthur

Winterthur's collection of nearly 90,000 objects features decorative and fine arts made or used in America from 1630 to 1860. The collection is organised in several main categories: ceramics, glass, furniture, metalwork, paintings and prints, and textiles and needlework.

<http://museumcollection.winterthur.org>

Yale University, Cushing/Whitney Medical Library, New Haven

The Prints and Drawings Digital Collections contains interesting images for dress history research.

<http://whitney.med.yale.edu/gsdll/collect/prntdraw>

Yale University, The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, New Haven

The Yale Centre for British Art holds the largest and most comprehensive collection of British art outside the United Kingdom, presenting the development of British art and culture from the Elizabethan period to the present day. Together with the Reference Library and Archives, the Centre's collections of paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, rare books, and manuscripts provide an exceptional resource for understanding the story of British art.

<https://britishart.yale.edu/collections/search>

Other**Archive Grid**

This is a searchable database for archival collections in the United States.

<https://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid>

Digital Public Library of America

This is an all-digital library that aggregates metadata (or information describing an item) and thumbnails for millions of photographs, manuscripts, books, sounds, moving images, and more from libraries, archives, and museums across the United States. DPLA brings together the riches of America's libraries, archives, and museums, and makes them freely available to the world.

<https://beta.dp.la>

Getty Images

Royalty-free historic images can be filtered in the search tool.

<https://www.gettyimages.co.uk>

The Internet Archive

This is a non-profit library of millions of free books, images, and more. On the top menu, click on the images icon to search for images. In the search box in the centre of the page, insert "fashion plate" to view and download a wide variety of historic fashion images. Scroll down the homepage to view lists of the top categories.

<https://archive.org>

North American Women's Letters and Diaries

This database is the largest electronic collection of women's diaries and correspondence ever assembled, spanning more than 300 years. This database is searchable with a free, 30-day subscription; otherwise, access is advised through an academic institution or library.

<https://alexanderstreet.com/products/north-american-womens-letters-and-diaries>

Open Culture

Browse a collection of over 83,500 vintage sewing patterns. On this page there is also a list to links of art and images, which could be useful in dress history research.

<http://www.openculture.com/2017/06/browse-a-collection-of-over-83500-vintage-sewing-patterns.html>

Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg offers over 57,000 free eBooks, many of which could support research in dress history, such as the complete 1660s diary of Samuel Pepys.

<http://www.gutenberg.org>

Vintage Sewing Patterns

This searchable database includes images of sewing patterns, printed before 1992.

<http://vintagepatterns.wikia.com>

The Visual Arts Data Service (VADS)

This is an online resource for visual arts that contains many different collections that would be useful for dress history research. The search tool on the main page allows global searches across all collections; otherwise, individual collections can be searched.

<https://vads.ac.uk/collections>

WorldCat Library Database

WorldCat connects you to the collections and services of more than 10,000 libraries worldwide.

<https://www.worldcat.org>

Advisory Board

The following biographies represent the members of the Advisory Board of The Journal of Dress History, in alphabetical order.

Sylvia Ayton, MBE, *Independent Scholar*

Sylvia Ayton received a very thorough training at Walthamstow School of Art and Royal College of Art. Her early work as a fashion designer included designing BEA air hostess uniforms in 1959, clothing for B Altman and Co (New York), Count Down and Pallisades stores (London). In 1964, she formed a partnership with Zandra Rhodes to open Fulham Road Clothes Shop in London. She joined Wallis Fashion Group as outerwear designer in 1969 and remained until 2002. In 1990 she was awarded the MBE for services to the fashion industry, whilst continuing to work as an external examiner and part-time lecturer to many BA (Hons) fashion courses. In 1980 she became a Fellow of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts Manufacture and Commerce, and was a Member of the Jury of RSA Student Design Awards (Fashion). She is also a former Chairman of the Costume Society.

Cally Blackman, MA, *Central Saint Martins*

Cally Blackman is the author of *100 Years of Fashion Illustration* (2007); *100 Years of Menswear* (2009); and *100 Years of Fashion* (2012); and coauthor of *Portrait of Fashion* (2015) for the National Portrait Gallery. She has published articles in peer-reviewed journals, *Costume and Textile History* and contributed to exhibition catalogues for The Victoria and Albert Museum and Palais Galliera. She has written for *Acne Paper*, broadcast on BBC Radio 4 and lectured widely. She has taught on the Fashion History and Theory BA Pathway at Central Saint Martins for over a decade, contributes to MA programmes at CSM, London College of Fashion, Sothebys Institute, and the The V&A Education Department. She was Chairman of CHODA (Courtauld History of Dress Association) 2000–2005 and a Trustee of the Costume Society, 2005–2010.

Penelope Byrde, MA, FMA, *Independent Scholar*

Penelope Byrde read Modern History at St Andrews University before specialising in the history of dress for her MA from the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. She was a curator at the Museum of Costume and Fashion Research Centre in Bath for almost thirty years until she retired in 2002. She was joint editor of *Costume*, the dress studies journal published by the Costume Society, for five years and she is an Associate Lecturer at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London where she specialises in dress in eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature. She has written several books on the history of fashion: *The Male Image: Men's Fashions in Britain 1300–1970*; *A Visual History of Costume: The Twentieth Century*; *Nineteenth Century Fashion*; and *Jane Austen Fashion*.

Caroline de Guitaut, MA, MVO, AMA, *Royal Collection Trust*

Caroline de Guitaut is currently Senior Curator of Decorative Arts, Royal Collection Trust, London. She is a curator with more than twenty-five years' experience of caring for, displaying, and researching one of the world's greatest art collections. She is curator of high profile exhibitions of decorative arts and fashion at The Queen's Galleries in London and Edinburgh and at Buckingham Palace since 2002.

Her publications include books, exhibition catalogues, and articles in peer-reviewed journals. She is a regular lecturer in museums and galleries in the UK and internationally. She is a Member of the Victorian Order, an Associate of the Museums Association, and a Trustee of the Royal School of Needlework.

Thomas P Gates, MA, MSLS, MAEd, *Kent State University*

Thomas P Gates attended the Cleveland Institute of Art and Case Western Reserve University, receiving a bachelors' degree in art history from the latter. He received a masters' degrees in art history and librarianship from the University of Southern California. He also received a masters' degree in art education from the University of New Mexico. After receiving a Rockefeller Fellowship in museum and community studies at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, he assisted with exhibitions at the museum's Downtown Centre and curated a mobile exhibition for the US Bicentennial in 1976 sponsored by the California Historical Society. In 1996 he developed the June F Mohler Fashion Library for the School of Fashion Design and Merchandising, assuming responsibilities as head librarian when it opened in 1997. He achieved rank of tenured associate professor in 1998. Gates' interest in the history of the built environment and American mid-century high-end retail apparel resulted in published as well as invitational papers in scholarly organisations such as The Society of American City and Regional Planning History; Western Reserve Society of Architectural Historians; The Costume Society of America; The Art Libraries Society of North America/Ohio Valley Chapter; The Association of Architecture School Librarians; and The Association of Dress Historians.

Alex Kerr, PhD, FBS, *The Burgon Society*

Alex Kerr has spent much of his career as a lecturer in medieval studies, later combining this with academic administrative roles. He holds a BA in medieval and modern languages from Oxford University, and an MA and a PhD in medieval studies from Reading University. Since 2001 he has also been director of a consultancy providing training courses in communication skills. From 2001 to 2013 he was Managing Editor of the journal, *Contemporary Review*. So far as dress history is concerned, he is an independent researcher and has published several articles on the history of academic dress. He is a Trustee and Fellow of The Burgon Society, an educational charity for the study of academic dress, its design, history and practice. He was editor of its *Transactions*, an annual scholarly journal, from 2003 to 2010, and is now the Society's Secretary.

Jenny Lister, MA, *Victoria and Albert Museum*

Jenny Lister is Curator of Fashion and Textiles at The Victoria and Albert Museum, from 2004. She has curated their exhibitions *60s Fashion* (2006) and *Grace Kelly: Style Icon* (2010). Her publications include *The V&A Gallery of Fashion* (2013), with Claire Wilcox; *London Society Fashion 1905-1925: the Wardrobe of Heather Firbank* (2015) and *May Morris* (2017), with Anna Mason, Jan Marsh, et al. Her other research interests include the British shawl industry and Mary Quant.

Timothy Long, MA, *Museum of London*

Timothy Long is Curator of Fashion and Decorative Arts at the Museum of London. His career began at the Chicago History Museum in 1999 as a costume collection manager, before becoming curator of costume in 2006. In 2011, He returned to school for an MA, History and Culture of Fashion at London College of Fashion. Following the completion of his degree, he became a curator at the Museum of London in 2013. His publication record includes Chicago History Museum exhibition catalogues – *Dior: The New Look*; *Chic Chicago*; *Charles James: Genius Deconstructed*; and *I Do! Chicago Ties the Knot* – and investigations on Etruscan dress for the *British Museum Technical Bulletin* (2014). More recently, he wrote a book titled *Charles James: Designer in Detail*, and a chapter on the same

designer for *London Couture: British Luxury 1923–1975*, both through V&A Publishing (2015). For more information, please visit www.Timothyalong.com.

Jane Malcolm–Davies, PhD, *University of Copenhagen*

Jane Malcolm–Davies is a Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellow at the Centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen. She is codirector of The Tudor Tailor, which researches and retails publications and products aimed at improving reproduction historical dress for pedagogical projects. She was a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of the Highlands and Islands (Centre for Interpretation Studies) and the University of Southampton. She lectured in entrepreneurship and heritage management at the University of Surrey, introduced costumed interpreters at Hampton Court Palace (1992 to 2004), coordinated training for the front-of-house team at Buckingham Palace each summer (2000 to 2010) and is currently coaching guides for the new National Army Museum.

Scott Hughes Myerly, PhD, *University of Southern Indiana*

Scott Hughes Myerly was born in Des Moines, Iowa and has a Bachelor's Degree in European History from the University of California at Los Angeles. He earned a Master's Degree in American History and Museum Studies from the University of Delaware, and a Doctorate in Military History from the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign. His book, *British Military Spectacle from the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimea* (Harvard University Press, 1996), was a finalist for the Longman/History Today Book of the Year. He is now retired and specialises in British Army dress, circa 1783–1857.

Susan North, PhD, *Victoria and Albert Museum*

Susan North is the Curator of Fashion before 1800 at The Victoria and Albert Museum. She has a BA in Art History from Carleton University in Ottawa, an MA in Dress History from the Courtauld Institute and a PhD from Queen Mary, University of London. She worked for the National Gallery of Canada and the National Archives of Canada, before joining The V&A in 1995. She has coauthored several V&A publications relating to early-modern dress, as well as cocurating *Style and Splendour: Queen Maud of Norway's Wardrobe* in 2005.

Martin Pel, *Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums*

Martin Pel is Curator of Fashion and Textiles at Royal Pavilion and Museums in Brighton and has curated for them a number of exhibitions, including *Subversive Design* (2013) and *Fashion Cities Africa* (2016). He has published on dress and fashion history including *The Biba Years 1963–1975* (2014, V&A Publishing) and has coedited *Gluck: Art and Identity*, with Professor Amy de la Haye, published by Yale in 2017 to accompany an exhibition of the same name.

Anna Reynolds, MA, *Royal Collection Trust*

Anna Reynolds is Senior Curator of Paintings at Royal Collection Trust, where she has worked since 2008. She is part of the curatorial team with responsibility for temporary exhibitions at The Queen's Gallery in London and The Queen's Gallery in Edinburgh, as well as the permanent display of approximately 8,000 paintings across royal residences including Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Her exhibitions and accompanying publications include *In Fine Style – The Art of Tudor and Stuart Fashion* (2013), *Royal Childhood* (2014), *A Royal Welcome* (2015) and *Portrait of the Artist* (2016). In 2017–2018 she will be the Polaire Weissman fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York studying John Singer Sargent and fashion. Anna holds an

undergraduate degree from Cambridge University, a Diploma from Christie's Education, and a Masters in the History of Art from the Courtauld Institute.

Aileen Ribeiro, PhD, *Courtauld Institute of Art*

Aileen Ribeiro read history at King's College, London, followed by postgraduate study (MA and PhD) at The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. She was Head of the History of Dress Section at The Courtauld Institute from 1975 to 2009; appointed Professor in the History of Art at the University of London in 2000, she is now Professor Emeritus. She lectures widely in Great Britain, Europe and North America, and has acted as costume consultant/contributor to many major exhibitions. These include Reynolds (Royal Academy of Arts, London: 1986); Winterhalter and the Courts of Europe 1830 to 1870 (National Portrait Gallery, London: 1987 and the Petit Palais, Paris: 1988); Goya: *La imagen de la mujer* (Prado, Madrid: 2001 and National Gallery of Art, Washington: 2002); Whistler, *Women and Fashion* (Frick Collection, New York: 2003). Recent contributions to exhibition catalogues include an essay on Renoir's use of fashion in his painting *La Loge*, in *Renoir at the Theatre: Looking at La Loge* (Courtauld Institute 2008); an essay on Gainsborough's portrait of Ann Ford in *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman* (Cincinnati Art Museum 2010); an essay on Gustave Caillebotte's painting *Paris Street, Rainy Day* for *Impressionism, Fashion and Modernity* (Paris, New York and Chicago 2012), and an essay on dress in Liotard in *Jean-Etienne Liotard* (National Gallery of Scotland and The Royal Academy of Arts 2015). In addition, she has published many books and articles on various aspects of the history of dress, including *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750–1820* (1995); *Dress and Morality* (2003); *Fashion and Fiction. Dress in Art and Literature in Stuart England* (2006); *Facing Beauty. Painted Women and Cosmetic Art* (2011) and (with Cally Blackman) *A Portrait of Fashion. Six Centuries of Dress at the National Portrait Gallery* (2015). Her most recent book is *Clothing Art: The Visual Culture of Fashion 1600–1914* (2016).

Georgina Ripley, MA, *National Museums Scotland*

Georgina Ripley is Curator of Modern and Contemporary Fashion and Textiles at National Museums Scotland (NMS). Her research interests currently include Jean Muir (fl. 1962–1995), contemporary menswear, and new technologies in fashion. She is working towards a major temporary exhibition for NMS in 2020. She was the lead curator for the permanent Fashion and Style gallery which opened at the museum in 2016 and cocurated *Express Yourself: Contemporary Jewellery* (2014). She has contributed to exhibitions at NMS including *Jean Muir: A Fashion Icon* (2008–2009) and *Mary Queen of Scots* (2013), and *The House of Annie Lennox* (2012), a V&A Touring Exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. She has previous experience working with the Royal Academy of Arts, the Warner Textile Archive, Museums Galleries Scotland and the National Galleries of Scotland.

Gary Watt, MA, NTF, *University of Warwick*

Gary Watt is a Professor of Law at The University of Warwick, a National Teaching Fellow, and cofounding editor of the journal, *Law and Humanities*. Specialising in performative rhetoric, he was named UK "Law Teacher of the Year" in 2009 and has led rhetoric workshops for the Royal Shakespeare Company for many years. Professor Watt's monographs include *Equity Stirring* (Oxford: Hart, 2009); *Dress, Law and Naked Truth* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2013); and *Shakespeare's Acts of Will: Law, Testament and Properties of Performance* (Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2016). He has written for *The Times Literary Supplement* and collaborated with composer Antony Pitts for BBC Radio 3 and for The Song Company of Australia.

Rainer Wenrich, PhD, *Catholic University, Eichstaett-Ingolstadt*

Rainer Wenrich, PhD, Professor and Chair of Art Education and Didactics of Art, Catholic University Eichstätt–Ingolstadt. He achieved his PhD on the topic of Art and Fashion in the twentieth century. His research interests are visual studies, costume history, and fashion theory. As a Professor for Art Education he lectured at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich and as a visiting scholar at Columbia University, New York. He is the author of many articles and books in the field of art education and fashion studies. In 2015 he edited *The Mediality of Fashion*, published by Transcript, Bielefeld, Germany.

