Global Gateway
Dress Scholarship in the 21st Century

Abstracts 2012

Costume Society of America
38th Annual Meeting & National Symposium
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Telephone: 1-800-CSA-9447
908-359-1471; Fax: 908-450-1118
national.office@costumesocietyamerica.com
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Nimal De Silva and Priyanka Virajini Medagedara Karunaratne, University of Moratuwa

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Edward Hoyenski, University of North Texas
Joy Losee, Private Collector
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May 31st

1:30pm

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Carolyn Jamerson, Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising
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Professional Development: Teaching Costume and Dress History in a Virtual Classroom
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Professional Development: “Professionally Speaking II”: A Career in Costume and Fashion
Howard Vincent Kurtz, George Mason University
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June 2nd

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Professional Development: Colonial Williamsburg 18th Century
Linda Baumgarten, Neal Hurst, Mark Hutter, Brenda Rosseau, Janea Whitacre, and Sarah Woodyard, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Session Chair: Adam MacPharlain, Toy and Miniature Museum

June 2nd

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Scholars Roundtable: “Mind the Gap!”
Dr. Elizabeth J.W. Barber, Occidental College
Cynthia Cooper, McCord Museum
Mark D. Hutter, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

June 2nd

3:20pm

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Notes
Richard Martin Exhibition Award

American Woman: Fashioning a National Identity

Andrew Bolton, The Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

American Woman (May 5–August 15, 2010) was the first Costume Institute exhibition drawn from the newly established Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at the Met. It explored developing perceptions of the modern American woman from 1890 to 1940 and how they have affected the way American women are seen today. Focusing on archetypes of American femininity through dress, the exhibition revealed how the American woman initiated style revolutions that mirrored her social, political, and sexual emancipation. “Gibson Girls,” “Bohemians,” and “Screen Sirens,” among others, helped lay the foundation for today’s American woman.

Richard Martin Exhibition Award

Eco Fashion: Going Green

Colleen Hill and Jennifer Farley, Fashion Institute of Technology

Eco-Fashion: Going Green explored the evolution of the fashion industry’s multifaceted and complex relationship with the environment. By examining the past two centuries of fashion’s good—and bad—environmental and ethical practices, Eco-Fashion provided historical context for today’s eco-fashion movement.

Presented chronologically and featuring more than 100 garments, accessories, and textiles, the exhibition used contemporary methods for “going green” as a framework to study the past. The objects displayed each touched upon at least one of six major themes: the re-purposing and recycling of materials, fiber origins, textile dyeing and production, quality of craftsmanship, labor practices, and the treatment of animals.

Figure
Day dress, green silk faille and green chenille, circa 1865, USA, museum purchase. (Courtesy of The Museum at the FIT.)
Accessories to Modernity: Fashion and the Feminine in Nineteenth-Century France

Susan Hiner, Vassar College

*Accessories to Modernity* explores the ways that feminine fashion accessories, such as cashmere shawls, parasols, fans, and handbags, became essential instruments in the bourgeois idealization of womanhood in nineteenth-century France. Considering how these fashionable objects were portrayed in fashion journals and illustrations, as well as fiction, the book explores the histories and cultural weight of the objects themselves and offers fresh readings of some of the most widely read novels of the period. Through her close focus on these luxury objects, Hiner reframes the feminine fashion accessory as a key symbol of modernity while making a larger claim about the “accessory” status—in terms of both complicity and subordination—of bourgeois women in nineteenth-century France.
This research combines ethnography with historical analysis to interpret changes in design, materials, and construction methods of Nuu-chah-nulth ceremonial dress from early contact to present day. What does the production and use of ceremonial regalia—both historically and contemporarily—reveal about an ongoing history of colonialism and cultural exchange? How do Nuu-chah-nulth people today think about regalia, and how are individual and collective identities negotiated through dress?

The designation, Nuu-chah-nulth, refers to a collective of culturally affiliated, yet independent First Nations who have traditionally resided along the west coast of Vancouver Island. Historically, the abundance of terrestrial and marine resources in Nuu-chah-nulth haahuulthi (chiefly territories) meant that people could devote a significant amount of time to the production of carefully crafted cedar bark, sea grass and animal skin garments, carved cedar headdresses, masks, and other accoutrements. The complex social organization and ceremonial cultures on the Northwest coast are, as Wilson Duff has explained, “distinguished by a local richness and originally, the product of vigorous and inventive people in a rich environment.”

When Captain James Cook arrived on the west coast of Vancouver Island in March of 1778, he described the people dressed in furs and “some plant like hemp,” which was actually cedar bark. Cook made collections of these garments, as well as headresses and other materials. During the transaction, Nuu-chah-nulth people refused beads and cloth in favor of iron and brass, stripping every crewmember’s garment of its brass buttons. When the cedar bark shawls arrived in Europe, they were noted for the sea otter fur collar. This spurred an active period of trade until the 1820s when the sea otter was eradicated. Later in the nineteenth century, Nuu-chah-nulth people participated in seal hunting and became an important part of industrial wage-labor economies, such as logging and fishing, which provided seasonal work and funding to promote the potlatch, or prestige economy. Between 1860-1900 the federal government of Canada, through various legal and political devices, brought perhaps the deepest and most long lasting changes to Nuu-chah-nulth life. Among these were the creation of the 1876 Indian Act, which spurred the Indian Reserve System, the infamous Indian Residential School System, the potlatch ban (1884-1951), denial of citizenship, and laws prohibiting legal action on land settlement issues. The implication of such dramatic cultural upheaval affected ceremonial life and accompanying material culture, and continues to have an impact today.

This research interrogates the post-contact history of Nuu-chah-nulth people through the lens of dress. Nuu-chah-nulth collections at the British Museum, Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin, the Karl May Museum, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Peabody Museum Harvard, Peabody Essex Museum, Cornell Costume Collection, and the Alberni Valley Museum were surveyed and analyzed. Interviews were conducted with Nuu-chah-nulth people and private collections were examined. The researcher attended several feasts and potlatches, as well as preparatory dance practices and sewing groups (see figure). Bringing together multiple research methods illuminates the nuances and complexities of history, social organization, colonialism, and cultural change, as seen through regalia produced and used on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

Notes
“To Remaking Your Coat”:
The Story of a Coat in the Blair Family of Virginia, 1740-2011

Neal T. Hurst, College of William and Mary

The Blair family of Williamsburg, Virginia has a long and enduring history dating back to 1685 when the Rev. James Blair, DD arrived from Edinburgh, Scotland. In 1689, John Blair Sr., nephew of James, was born in Williamsburg. Blair grew up in the new capital and was educated at the College of William and Mary. On November 15, 1744, King George II appointed John Blair Sr. as a member of the Governors Council. This is about the time when he purchased his voided uncut velvet suit. Remarkably, the coat from this suit survives in the collection of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Unfortunately the history associated with the coat does not agree with the dating of the textile or the coat’s scars. Oral history has John Blair Jr. (1732-1800); son of John Blair Sr. (1689-1771), wearing the coat when he was confirmed by the United States Senate in 1789, as one of the first Supreme Court Justices. While the textile of the coat dates to the 1740s, it appears that his father had the coat made and later refashioned at least once if not two or three times in its history.

This paper explores how this coat traveled through the Blair family over at least three centuries. Countless hours have been spent on the reconstruction of the pattern of the coat from its manufacturing in the 1740s, to its remaking in the 1770s, and the further wearing in the nineteenth century. The coat is used to discuss the globalized marketplace of eighteenth century and the local tradesmen who refashioned the garment.

Letters from the Blair family may also suggest an extreme frugality that allowed the coat to survive over 200 years. This interdisciplinary study provides a unique look into the transformation of a garment within one family in Virginia.
Historic costume collections are filled with eighteenth century garments that have been reworked. These alterations help to tell a more complete story of the wearer: one of thrift, change of size, or in some cases, health and comfort. One such gown is stored at the North Carolina History Museum with provenance to the Mordecai family, a prominent Jewish family from Raleigh, North Carolina. This gown is distinctive in its cut, and sits somewhere between fashion and anomaly. This paper explores how the gown, though a unique style, originally and through insight into the wearer’s painful story, explains its anomalous style.

In studying the Mordecai family tree it seems likely that Judith Mordecai, married in 1784 to Jacob Mordecai, wore this gown. Studies of similar extant garments, portraits, and illustrations indicate that the gown was fashionable ca. 1790. This is supported by specific details of the gown, such as the sleeves, bodice back, back of skirt detail, and the drawstring ties at the bodice front. Yet, the drawstring closures from the waist to the hem are an unusual stylistic detail.

The cut of the garment from the waist down raises the question: why did the wearer add these drawstrings? There are multiple possibilities: comfort, health, pregnancy, fashion, or “just because.” An understanding of Judith’s history suggests a reason for this uncommon style choice.

In 1790, after her fourth child was born, Judith was struck with a severe illness. In one letter dated February 18, 1794 Judith writes that an “inflammation of the womb this attended with very painful and debilitating symptoms.” Her illness—with its subsequent pain—would create the need for a style of dress suitable to her situation. Tying a skirt around her middle would have been very uncomfortable, but slashing the gown up the front and adding drawstring ties would have eased pressure on her abdomen.

This study of one woman’s alteration of a gown, perhaps to allow her to ease the pain of a debilitating illness reminds scholars of the meaningful story unlikely styles and remade garments have to tell.
“Suitable for the Place and Season”: The Acquisition and Consumption of Clothing in Charleston, 1750-1775

Brenda Rosseau, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

This presentation illuminates current research on the clothing choices available to and made by the citizens of Charleston, South Carolina during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Beginning with the surviving clothing of Henry and Arthur Middleton—father and son signers of the Declaration of Independence—as examples of the dress of Charleston’s elite, I examine the choices available to all of its inhabitants. Evidence to the various methods of clothing acquisition are examined and explained, including imported bespoke, imported ready-to-wear, local bespoke, the sale of second hand clothing, and stolen clothing. The variety and abundance of fashion trade workers (staymakers, tailors, mantua-makers, and milliners) and the extraordinary variety of ready-made items and textile choices listed in advertisements in the *South Carolina Gazette* for this period certainly influenced the choices of colonial Charlestonians and is evidenced in their portraits by Theus, Wollaston, and Benjamin West. The clothing and fashion choices made by the inhabitants of this dynamic Atlantic port city define a specific “Charleston style,” illustrated in this presentation.

Selected Bibliography


This is a study of French fashion plates from the *Journal des Dames et des Modes* from the last two years of the Directoire. Following the turmoil of 1794-1796 with its scarcity of fashion prints, the *Journal* is founded in 1797 and will come to dominate the field until its dissolution in 1839.¹ Through access to excised plates from the collection of the Musée de la Mode et du Costume, Palais Galliera, in Paris, forty-seven plates from 1798-1799 are the primary research focus.² All but two of these plates include a right-justified sub-caption in a smaller font than the main caption, indicating in various ways a rendition from life.³ In addition to a descriptive caption that may include the time of day and status of the wearer, as in plate 17 from "an 6" depicting a working class "grisette" in morning undress, the sub-caption may mention a day, month or, more frequently, a place (see figure caption).⁴

This early form of fashion journalism with candid representations of women in the streets of Paris enables the study of this pivotal period of change with its intense focus on hair and accessories. Through comparison, the study attempts to see if this differed from what was presented to readers as styles to adopt in other plates. The study of this alleged reality offers insight into a specific time and place as well as a broader view of dress practices often reduced to stereotypes.

### Figure

### Notes
2. While there are missing plates, the collection is extensive and warrants this research.
3. The two plates are the last ones of the period and their main captions are "Vue de Tivoli" (An 7, plate #159) and "Vue de Frascati," (An 8, plate #166), which serve a similar function.

### Selected Bibliography


Not Simply Exotic: New Interpretations of Paintings by Marie Louise Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun, 1779-1789

Rebecca J. Kelly, Fashion Institute of Technology

The portraits painted by French artist Marie Louise Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842) have continually been categorized as beautifully rendered, charming, lush, and idealistic depictions of her subjects. When art historians discuss the clothing details of her portraits, the dress of her sitters is often very generally categorized as exotically inspired, and/or thought to be Vigée Le Brun’s own improvised creation. However, when the clothing in her portraiture is looked at in conjunction with extant garments in Paris and London-based collections, textiles, written descriptions of costume, fashion engravings—especially those of the Galeries des Modes, and other contemporary paintings it becomes apparent that her depictions of dress are more accurate and can give insight into the way fashionable clothing and accessories were worn at the close of the eighteenth century in Paris.

As well as the analysis and comparison of the primary source material, theoretical issues associated with Vigée Le Brun’s unique status as a woman artist working in eighteenth-century Europe are discussed. Her gender greatly affected her artistic education, and while her training followed a course that was similar to the way her few female colleagues were taught, it was much more limited than the indoctrination of her many male contemporaries. Her painting methods, which were, of course a result of her divergent training, played a role in the way she interacted with her mostly female clients and subsequently affected the way she rendered their dress.

For the purposes of this twenty-minute presentation this ongoing study has been narrowed to focus on a selection of Vigée Le Brun’s portraits painted just prior to the French Revolution, between the years 1779-1789.

Selected Bibliography


The Macaroni Male is historically perceived as a foppish, sartorially absurd caricature in England during the 1760s and 1770s. The term for these male fashions was first defined in 1764 by English politician, Horace Walpole, in describing the sons of the aristocracy on Grand Tour who belonged to the “Maccaroni [sic] club, which is composed of all the travelled young men who wear long curls and spying-glasses.” These worldly British youths were depicted as conspicuous consumers who returned from their international travels with a taste for continental pasta dishes and ostentatious courtly fashions—a deep contrast to the hearty beef steaks and somber countryside attire of England.

Consequently, macaronis were parodied and even ridiculed as self-indulgent, effeminate spectacles in English plays, poems, letters, songs, and most significantly, satirical drawings. They blurred nationality with the uncomfortable problem that “the macaroni was an Englishman who behaved like a continental—Italian or, worse, French.” Yet, these descriptive satires and writings are the very reason why the general dress identity of these “curled darlings” is so clearly defined. The macaroni was described as wearing tightly-fitting habit à la française in pea green, pink, or deep orange silks, often in contrasting colors and patterns. Coats with long waists and short skirts were trimmed with braids, frogs, and tassels, accessorized with chatelains, hanger swords, enormous nosegay bouquets at the lapel, high heels at the feet, and a small tricorne nivernois hat atop a tremendously tall toupee wig.

Strong research has already been established on the macaroni men of history, their social and political implications, and their popular depictions. However, extant garments worn by macaronis have not garnered the same attention, despite the fact that macaronis were clearly identified through their dress. This lack of object research is predominately due to poor provenance on true “macaronian” clothing. Furthermore, no major museum has utilized collected costume objects to replicate the macaroni image on an exhibition mannequin, as was done for other notable male archetypes of history such as the Sans-culotte, the Incroyable, and the Dandy.

By employing primary information from contemporary accounts, portraits of identified macaronis, and to some degree caricatures, this research seeks to reevaluate the men’s costume collection at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art for aesthetically macaronian dress with the intent of finally realizing a Macaroni Male mannequin. Extraordinary extant examples in LACMA’s collection include a pea green coat with a notably long waist and truncated tails; a green cut-velvet suit with frogging details of paste stones and paillettes, lined entirely in pink silk satin; and a deep orange silk waistcoat and breeches, trimmed with metallic-thread passementerie.

This object-based examination of probable macaronian fashions, coupled with the methodical recreation of the Macaroni Male using historic garments and accessories, provides us with a realistic view of the dress identity of this youthful subculture. This research and resulting Macaroni Male mannequin is essential to LACMA’s forthcoming 2014 special exhibition, Reigning Men: From the Macaroni to the Metrosexual.

Notes
“As Polite, Well Dressed, and Well Instructed as if They Had Been Repairing to the Capital of Great Britain”: Travelers’ Accounts of Clothing in the United States, 1795-1820

Ann Buermann Wass, Riversdale House Museum/ Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Scholars of Federal era dress rely on sources such as extant garments, portraits and prints, and written and printed materials, including newspaper advertisements, letters, diaries, legal documents, and instruction books for costume information. Each source has its limitations; therefore, it is incumbent upon the researcher to delve into as great a variety of sources as possible. Travelers’ accounts provide observations from contemporary observers that help piece together the picture. Some travelers recorded their observations for publication in book form. Others wrote for their own use or to share with family and friends, and, while these original documents may sometimes be found in manuscript collections, sometimes they have been transcribed and published. In this paper, I will show examples of how travelers’ accounts supplement other types of clothing information.

Among the points I consider are where the travelers came from and if they had any special motives for their observations. For example, many travelers from the British Isles came to the U.S. These included Morris Birkbeck, Henry Fearon, John Palmer, and Isaac Weld from England. Both Birkbeck and Fearon came to provide information for their countrymen who were considering emigration. Scotsman James Flint was particularly interested in lands to the West, and he therefore provides some insight into conditions on the frontier. Edouard Montulé came from France and Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz came from Poland. All of these travelers made some comments about the dress of residents they encountered, some general, and others highlighting small details. For example, Birkbeck wrote that a group in Richmond, Virginia, were “as polite, well dressed, and well instructed as if they had been repairing to the capital of Great Britain.” Weld and Montulé, among others, also described the dress of Eastern Woodland Indians, possibly because they seemed exotic or unusual.

Within the United States, people going from one part of the country to another documented their journeys. John William Devereux went from Georgia to New York, William Martin traveled from South Carolina to Connecticut, and Thomas Hill traveled from New Jersey to Pennsylvania. Devereux kept an account of his expenses, including clothing purchases, while Hill informatively recorded what he took with him, as well as noting that the combination of “rough fustian trousers” and “a hard trotting horse” gave him blisters.

Perhaps the best-known American travelers were the members of the Lewis and Clark expedition, who traveled from St. Louis, Missouri, to the Pacific Ocean. Among their meticulously detailed observations, their descriptions of the dress of various Indian tribes of the Northern Plains and the Pacific Northwest provide information on the dress of these peoples.

This paper demonstrates that a careful reading of travelers’ accounts rewards the costume historian with details of dress from eyewitnesses that supplement other research sources.

Notes
This was one of my first surprises, that the blacks, naked to the waist, brutal and beastly faced, marked with large scars (when they are Minas Negroes), the perspiration running down their body, impassible as statues, look at you without curiosity or surprise, and do not seem to trouble themselves neither about you nor anything else in the world, except eating or sleep.¹

Adele Toussaint-Samson, a Parisian living in Brazil in the nineteenth century, wrote these words, a reaction to her first encounter with black slaves in Brazil. Male and female European travelers in the nineteenth century embarked on adventures throughout the world and much like bloggers of today, recorded their experiences on a daily or weekly basis with the intention of others reading their words. Travel diaries held a place of esteem in the writing oeuvre of the early to mid-nineteenth century. First-hand reactions to sites and experiences that were literally and figuratively foreign to the viewer provided raw detail and palpable evidence on dress, culture, and political environment of countries many readers would never visit. While some twentieth-century scholars discredit such writing as minor evidence of a period and place, often based not in reality but with an eye to publication and satisfaction of public curiosity, this paper serves to continue the efforts of other scholars in re-establishing travel diaries as valid sources of evidence of cultures, place, and people deemed ‘exotic’ in the nineteenth century,² utilizing the vantage point of the viewer as outsider to the advantage in correlating a realistic representation of slave dress in Brazil in the early decades of the nineteenth-century.

Focusing on twelve diaries written by European travelers to Brazil between 1815-1840, the authors highlight perspectives towards slavery and the dress of the slaves by viewers who were from countries with strong anti-slavery movements and where slavery was outlawed. Authors range in gender, socioeconomic status, interest, and country of origin, which provides a global gateway for interpretation of Brazilian slave dress. The use of travel diaries as the main source of evidence merges international opinions of slavery between Europe, Latin America, and South America.

Analysis and interpretation of travelers’ words brings to light several levels of information on dress. First, are the dress items themselves. But beyond naming articles of clothing, the descriptions often provide detailed reactions to and communication of status, ethnicity, and gender, as well as how the dress of slaves was influenced by gender, social roles and attitudes of slave owners. However, reaction of the writers also often expresses negative sentiments toward Brazilian slave owners. This attitude of superiority must be acknowledged and considered when addressing the clothing descriptions. Furthermore, the clothing common to the slave class was often approached with attitudes of shock, disgust, and disbelief, which were then disseminated on a global level through publication of travel diaries.

Figure
AfroBrazilian slaves in Salvador as depicted by Johanne Moritz Rugendas. Rugendas used his images to express his strong anti-slavery views. Detail of San Salvador. Rugendas, Johann Moritz. Malerische Reise in Brasilien. Paris: Engelmann & Cie. 1835. (Photo courtesy of Kelly Gage.)

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1. Toussaint-Samson, A Parisian in Brazil, 27.

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This paper examines the contribution of print media through the reportage of Queen Victoria’s wardrobe and her representation in the contemporary press. Advances in the printing and dissemination of news as well as the recording and replicating of images coincided with the early years of Victoria’s reign, leaving behind a wealth of information regarding contemporary views of her and her wardrobe.

In her critical biography, Dorothy Thompson represented the Queen’s image as a natural and inevitable result of the juxtaposition of her long reign and the proliferation of the popular press. John Plunkett unpacked this idea, discussing her image, both as an ideological construct and as a physical reality, as well as her agency regarding this image, and stated that “the figure of Victoria never existed in itself. It was always for itself, always aware of its own being.” While she self-consciously worked to create her image, it was a reciprocal process between Victoria, the press, and the consuming public. Without the input of the public, her image would not have reached its full force, and without the wide dissemination of that image by the press, the impact would have been negligible.

I have used examples from both the written and illustrated press to examine the reception of and reciprocal creation of her image. Issues of The Illustrated London News—chosen for its wide circulation and its visual focus—were examined to test the longevity of the press’s interest in her clothing. Samples of the news coverage of Victoria’s civic visit to Ireland in 1849 are examined for the reports of her wardrobe to discern how this was received by the general public, and whether there were any palpable differences in the writings of conservative and liberal publications. A selection of cartoons from Punch are also examined to discover how she was represented outside of the frame of reality, and what aspects of her character were emphasized through her clothing.

These sources illustrate how Victoria’s image was created, altered, and strengthened by a machine outside of her grasp. It solidified her image as a middle-class wife, added the morality so important in the Victorian value set through her identification with governesses and teachers, and maintained her queenly aspect as well. The criticisms levied against her wardrobe were not against her supposed poor taste, but mainly against foreign purchases. Most interestingly of all, it is apparent that the political changes of the era were sometimes played out through discussion of her sartorial choices.
In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women in northwest Georgia began producing hand-tufted chenille bedspreads inspired by traditional candlewick textiles. As the process became increasingly mechanized, this cottage craft blossomed into the multi-billion dollar carpet industry for which the region is still known. Lesser studied—though also a strong a part of the American landscape—is the bedspread industry’s fashion counterpart. Chenille clothing ranged from handmade kimonos in the early 1920s to ocean-themed beach capes in the late 1930s to Rogers and Dale Evans by the 1950s. As the chenille fashion industry matured, a dichotomy developed between the apparel made for mass distribution and that made for sale in roadside stands, particularly along popular tourist routes such as the Dixie Highway. After mid-century, regional manufacturers shifted their focus from bedspreads to carpet, and some entrepreneurs experimented briefly with a similar transition in fashion, creating coats, hats, and purses made of carpet. While chenille fashion largely declined in popularity by the 1960s, it experienced a rebirth towards the end of the century and in the early twenty-first century as nostalgia and the DIY craze fueled an interest in repurposing old spreads to make new garments.

This presentation surveys the rich story of chenille apparel, addressing it within the contexts of the chenille industry, roadside tourism, and fashion history. The research, which is ongoing, relies on materials available in the Whitfield-Murray History Center & Archives in northwest Georgia and the Georgia Room of the University of Georgia’s Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library as well as surveys of period newspaper advertisements and a collection of vintage snapshots of women and children wearing chenille clothing.

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Betty Furness and Linda Ellerbee: What to Wear on Television

Nadine Stewart, Independent Scholar

In the early 1950s there was a revolution in American living rooms. Televisions, once considered exotic toys for the wealthy, began appearing in middle class homes across the country. According to media historian Marsha Cassidy: “The intimacy of the television camera permitted an unprecedented close-up look at post-war femininity, and millions of women tuned in to watch.” It was inevitable that they would draw fashion inspiration from the women they saw on the air.

One woman hit exactly the right note for her time—former model and actress Betty Furness who became the spokesperson for Westinghouse appliances in 1949. A sophisticated New Yorker, Furness resisted pressure from Westinghouse executives who wanted her to wear an apron so she would look more like a housewife. Furness refused and painstakingly selected her wardrobe. Her clothes helped her convey just the right look—a modern woman of the 1950s who used Westinghouse appliances to make housework simple. Women across the country watched her avidly and took fashion cues from her.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Furness’ polished style remained the norm for women on the air with one exception; NBC correspondent Linda Ellerbee. A true child of the 1960s when fashion originated in the streets, Ellerbee rebelled. She preferred wearing pants at a time when women were forbidden to wear them in the workplace. She fought network executives’ commands and tried to dress in a way she felt was practical. Her two best-selling books addressed the question of style, making her the only woman in network news to speak out on the subject. Today, with her own company, she chooses her own on-air clothes, just as Furness did in the 1950s.

Using primary sources, such as contemporary newspaper articles, interviews, video, and my own experiences in television news, I examine the evolving women who work in television by looking at the contrasting styles of Furness and Ellerbee and how their on-camera dress relates to women on the air today.

Notes

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Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988), born in Los Angeles to an American mother and Japanese father, lived in Japan from age two to fourteen before returning to the United States. He apprenticed as a cabinetmaker and studied Pre-medical courses at Columbia University. In 1924 he began studying sculpture, and later expanded into product design and stage sets for dance. Ultimately—while gaining prominence as an artist—it was his Japanese-American heritage and his unusual upbringing between these two diverse cultural worlds that defined his art. Embraced for the exotic traits of the other culture embodied in his work, he was celebrated as an artist during his lifetime, but has been forever defined with the modifier Japanese-American. Although accepted as an important artist by both cultures, he personally struggled to reconcile his internal relationship with these two separate cultural worlds, always aware that each culture viewed him as an outsider. Despite his inability to find a sense of belonging within himself he found acceptance in the New York art world, forging friendships with international artists and important name-makers of the day. More unusual and less known, he had connections to some of the emerging American women fashion designers during the 1930s. Muriel King (1900-1977), Elizabeth Hawes (1903-1971), and Valentina (ca. 1898-1989) were all independent women, all in the forefront of American design when it was emerging in prominence in the fashion world, and they each appear to have associations with Noguchi and his art. It is these unexplored relationships between the Japanese-American artist and these pioneering American couturières that this paper explores. All three couturières’ work is documented in the fashion press of the day alongside Noguchi’s art. And although none of the connections appear to be as straightforward as direct collaborations between the artist and designer, the designers and fashion press employ the images of Noguchi’s work to either represent their fashion designs or as a parallel artistic sensibility. This paper draws upon research from fashion periodicals, the Muriel King Archive at the SUNY FIT Library, the Brooklyn Museum’s Elizabeth Hawes Archive, and the Noguchi Museum Archives. Research methodology relies heavily on sourcing and documenting printed images and published material connecting these designers and Noguchi’s art as well as a more general exploration of Noguchi’s art used in fashion imagery. Fashion editorial images, designer generated advertisements—Elizabeth Hawes advertisements in particular—and references to Noguchi by the fashion press are all documented and analyzed. This paper highlights the different connections each of these American couturières had with Noguchi, resulting in an exploration of how the imagery of Noguchi’s art was appropriated by these designers and the fashion media to create a deliberate parallel between his status as an outsider obtaining prominence within his artistic field and the American designers’ fashion careers.

Figure
This Muriel King design was the inspiration for a small statuette by the sculptor Isamu Noguchi. (Muriel King, sketch for an evening dress, 1934. Image courtesy of Fashion Institute of Technology|SUNY, FIT Library Dept. of Special Collections and FIT Archives.)

Bibliography
Mercy Lavinia Warren Bump (1841-1919) married Charles Sherwood Stratton (1838-1883) in a lavish public wedding ceremony that took place at the Grace Church in New York City, during the winter of 1863. As celebrity dwarves under the employ of Phineas T. Barnum, their wedding captivated a global audience and drew abundant press coverage that was to continue throughout Lavinia’s lifetime. Within the photography and reportage that documents her public appearances, Lavinia’s identity is paradoxical. Although she was celebrated for her abnormality as an integral part of Barnum’s American Museum, she was also consistently admired on terms that praised her compliance to normative standards of beauty, perfection, and intelligence. Present in almost every reference to her is commentary on her small stature, an attribute which simultaneously defined her as extraordinary and disadvantaged.

At the peak of her fortune and fame, Lavinia dressed in the latest fashions, patronizing the French couturier Charles Frederick Worth and traveling throughout the courts of Europe. She and Stratton (more commonly known as General Tom Thumb) were received by the Prince and Princess of Wales; Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugenie of France; Her Majesty Queen Victoria and the royal family at Windsor Castle; and by the American President Abraham Lincoln and his family. This list is but a short glimpse into the many lives that courted favor with Lavinia Warren. As she notes in the introduction to her autobiography, while her husband Tom Thumb was rumored to have kissed more women than any other man alive, Lavinia counterclaims that she has shaken hands with more people than any other living woman. Throughout the trajectory of this highly public life, Lavinia actively cultivated an image that communicated her education and breeding, and which worked to showcase the success and culture that she had attained. As her appearance was constantly subjected to scrutiny, dress became an extremely important vehicle through which Lavinia was able to communicate these ideas. This presentation endeavors to illustrate the ways that fashion was a key area through which this identity was defined, while establishing the prominent role that clothing played in shaping Lavinia’s celebrity and positioning her as a tastemaker, albeit one on the fringes of mainstream fashion.

Figure
Lavinia Warren, ca. 1865. (Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy of Melissa J. Huber. Private collection.)

Notes
1. Lavinia M. Magri, Some of My Life Experiences, 29.

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In October 1989, when Belgian-born fashion designer Martin Margiela unveiled his collection for the upcoming spring in a vacant Paris parking lot—employing models with blackened eyes who trudged through blood red paint down a makeshift catwalk—the fashion industry was put on notice. Viewed as a backlash against the established excesses of fashions from earlier in the decade, this new style was one that, according to the New York Times, “offered a sort of asbestos ties.”

It was at this time that the word “deconstruction” was introduced into the lexicon of fashion history by street photographer Bill Cunningham, and contemporary fashion became increasingly relevant to the cultural dialogue of postmodernism. Concepts at the core of this philosophical movement—such as rejection, uncertainty, and indifference—have often manifested themselves in the timeline of fashion history, but in the twenty years since Margiela’s groundbreaking collection, fashion, and the way in which its products have been packaged and presented to its consumers, has taken on a progressively anxious, morbid, and severely disturbing tone. This study examines fashion editorials, advertisements, and runway presentations that demonstrate the predominance of three distinct elements in twentieth and twenty-first century fashions: Deconstruction—a dismantling of structures within the fashion system or the physical elements of garments themselves; Destruction—the use of imagery that connotes and glamorizes death and decay; and Reconstruction—the deliberate use of primitive construction techniques or salvaged materials which conjure up the image of a post-apocalyptic society literally picking up the pieces. These elements of the contemporary fashion dialogue can be found in almost every aspect of American popular culture. They are especially prevalent in the imagery of videos and performances produced by the moguls of the mainstream music industry, which have historically held strong ties to fashion’s pioneers of the avant-garde. What does our collective captivation with destructive fashion imagery suggest about our emotional stability as individuals? Perhaps most notably, what do these alarming preoccupations indicate about the physical structure and solidarity of our society as a whole?

**Notes**


**Bibliography**


Beyond the Princess Myth: More Sparkly Dress than Jungian? (Or, Without the Dress There is No Princess Myth)

Cornelia Powell, Independent Author

The “fairy princess myth” stirs deep in many women from an early age, sometimes overlapping into the dream of being a bride—a shimmering-in-white princess-for-a-day. The fantasy tugs at some women so fervently that dressing like a princess even drives their desire to have a wedding. But can the “princess myth” survive without the glamorous gown?

The Walt Disney Company—the international headquarters of “wish-upon-a-star” princess fairy tales—launched a line of wedding gowns in 2007 as part of their Disney Princess collection because, as their promotion insists, “every bride wants to look like a princess on her wedding day.”

What fuels the princess myth? What is at its heart? Caroline Weber, author of Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution, wrote in her review of Tina Brown’s The Diana Chronicles: “Ladies, let’s be honest: who really among us hasn’t dreamed of becoming a princess?” Women around the world, “sometimes against their better judgment,” fall entranced by the glamorous prospects and “redemptive metamorphosis that this particular myth promises.”

However, even Lady Diana Spencer herself, who as a dazzlingly beautiful bride became a real princess on her wedding day and lived her life as the most famous woman in the world, confirmed: “Being a princess isn’t all it’s cracked up to be.”

So if the life of a real princess is not always so great, why does the appeal to be one continue, like a call from the other side of the mirror? Is it the fascination hidden in the “dress-up” games from childhood—imaginative, creative theater—that goes to the core of being female?

Considering Princess Diana’s world stage life, would her charisma have been as alluring without her long, lean clotheshorse figure and photogenic fashion plate sensibility? Did the public flock to the exhibition and auction of Diana’s royal gown collection in an attempt to satisfy some deep “happily ever after” longing; or to see if the clothes themselves revealed the secret of the princess illusion?

In this presentation, I explore the “princess myth” in relationship to how clothes play their glamorous part in its perpetuation; how the “constructed public image” of royalty contributed to the magic of the myth; how weddings in our media-blitzed, celebrity-obsessed, reality television Say Yes to the Dress commercial culture fuel it; how little girls are affected (Peggy Orenstein asks: “Could today’s little princess become tomorrow’s sexting teen?”); how princesses and other royal figureheads—real and imagined—act as archetypes (Princess Diana “sought not merely to represent the archetypal glamour of royalty but to be it.”); and how the “princess myth” goes deep into our Jungian examined psyches and comes out dressed like a glittering fantasy.

Notes
In 1925, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan Incorporated opened a factory in Buckhead, on the North Side of Atlanta. The Klan’s “manufacturing division” was responsible for the mass production of robes and hoods for the organization’s rapidly increasing membership. *The Catalog of Official Robes and Banners*, released that year in full color, celebrated a modern organization with ever increasing social power, political influence, and economic capital. The familiar silhouette of the Klan robe still provides a powerful symbol of racial violence in America, tapping a legacy that extends back to the founding of the Kuklos Klan in 1865. Yet, such iconic resonance has also served to collapse distinctions between the numerous instantiations of the organization, masking the way that early twentieth century Klan leaders carefully exploited the logic of both costume and uniform dress in order to enhance the appearance of their power. The second Klan’s dress makes evident the central paradox of Klan ideology: the simultaneous construction and concealment of uniformity and difference.

Building a national fraternity of white, native-born, “100% American,” Protestant men depended on the ability to conceal difference within the Klan organization. For the outside world of “aliens” (non-Klansmen) this feat was achieved through the display of uniform silhouettes and the use of popular media to tie the Second Klan’s political project to the romanticized violence of the Reconstruction-era organization. William J. Simmons “revived” the Klan in 1915, drawing on the popularity of Thomas Dixon’s racist fantasia, *The Clansman* (1905), and D.W. Griffith’s film *Birth of A Nation* (1915), a dramatic adaptation of Dixon’s novel. Tellingly, Simmons chose to dress his new Klansmen not in the disparate costumes worn by nineteenth century Klansmen, but in the uniform robes and helmets depicted in Dixon’s novel and Griffith’s film. This uniformity clearly demarcated members from non-members, a crucial task as the Klan began to see cultural and physical violence beyond a racial binary of black and white, expanding their project to an intolerance of religious, ethnic, and national difference.

Yet, as *The Catalog of Official Robes and Banners* reveals, the Klan robe reproduces a uniform structure that highlights both similarity and difference. Traditionally, military and fraternal uniforms claimed to level class difference through the introduction of rank not explicitly based in class, yet the increasing cost of robes indicates that the second Klan’s hierarchy was not as egalitarian as it may have seemed. This paper explores how a central paradox of Klan ideology can be mapped onto the bodies of Klansmen through an examination of their mass-produced robes, in turn, demonstrating the importance of the study of dress to the deconstruction of seemingly monolithic social movements.

**Notes**

From Fashionable Modifications to Scholarly Intrigue: A Conservation Project

Danielle Killam, Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising

The FIDM Museum houses one of two Olympe Boisse ensembles known to survive. Madame Olympe was a successful modiste in New Orleans, LA. I was assigned to conduct a research project in preparation for the conservation of the garment’s skirt. Though in excellent condition, a nylon waistband and lining had been added sometime in the mid-twentieth century. This new and questionable addition caused the skirt to sit askew when dressed, cheating slightly to proper left. Detailed analyzing and record keeping of stitch marks, pleat creases, and fabric inserts transformed the task of simple observation into engrossing curiosity. What had happened to this skirt, by whom, and when?

Due to extensive research previously conducted by the FIDM Museum curator Kevin Jones, the garment can be accurately dated between 1866 to 1868. Daguerreotypes, tintypes, fashion plates, and other fashion-related documentation lent themselves to determine the skirt’s original silhouette. Janet Arnold’s work researching historic dress construction from the mid-nineteenth century gave insight as to what methods of tailoring, patterning, and cut were popular and practiced in the late 1860s. Certain markings began to make sense and found their place in the skirt’s provenance, while the question of the lining still needed to be addressed.

Before finding its way into the FIDM Museum Collection, the Denver Art Museum once housed and showcased this ensemble. Though it is not certain, it is assumed that the skirt was given its new waistband and lining during its time at the Denver Art Museum. A common practice of mid-twentieth century fashion archives was to show objects worn on live models. This type of display is no longer sanctioned due to its non-archival approach to textile and costume collections care. Understanding past museum practices and standards has put the sturdy, yet inaccurate, waistband and lining into context, as well as newly observed traces of its original construction elements.

Over the course of my research, many questions have been answered, while many still remain. Each construction detail observed left a trace of both the original design and the dress’s modified history. This paper discusses the embodiment and transformation of Madame Olympe’s ensemble from the epitome of high fashion to the bearer of ever-evolving standards of practice of scholarly institutions in the late twentieth century. In the end, this research project greatly informed the reconfiguration of the skirt to the more accurate shape Madame Olympe intended.

Selected Bibliography


Figure

For every rule, there are exceptions. Resisting traditional definitions of appropriate clothing for girls, generations of tomboys have insisted on pants, short hair and functional pockets. The last twenty-five years, in the face of an inexorable trend toward more gendered clothing for children in the United States, a growing number of parents have openly supported their gender non-conforming boys in wearing girls’ clothing and even adopting transgender identities.

In this paper, I discuss these phenomena in the context of children’s fashions (what is available and acceptable at any given time) and shifting psychological definitions and diagnoses of gender variance. For example, early child psychologists considered “tomboyism” to be a normal, healthy stage of female development, an attitude that helped make rompers and overalls popular for girls. In contrast, the conviction that effeminacy in little boys was evidence of sexual “inversion” or homosexuality is any more or less prevalent now than it was when boys wore dresses until they were five, or that lesbianism spiked among the first generation of girls to wear pants. Despite that evidence, children’s clothing in the United States clearly expresses a popular belief that sexuality is the product of nurture, not nature.

Bibliography
Dress and Context: A Historical View of Turkish Youth

Gozde Gonku-Berk and Marilyn DeLong, University of Minnesota

This study aims to demystify the forms of dress of Turkish youth by focusing on the socio-cultural, political and economic contexts in Turkish history. Examining the dress worn for different historical periods demonstrates how dress reflects interesting transitioning contexts within the Republic of Turkey.

Photographs of the dress worn by Turkish university students were examined in annuals of the two leading Universities located in Istanbul. The photographs were content analyzed using DeLong’s aesthetic framework of “form, viewer and context” and evaluated in relation to historical developments in the country. Analysis of the forms of dress revealed four distinct contextual periods: 1) 1923-1950: Evidence of Westernization in dress, 2) 1950-1980: Political ideologies and their expression in dress, 3) 1980-2000: Era of brands noted through dress, 4) 2000-Today: Abundance of styles in dress.

During the first period, university education was available to only a small male elite group educated in the early Turkish Universities. Male university youth were the pioneers of clothing reform regulated by the 1925 law to replace fezzes with hats and to spread the wearing of Western style suits. The male students in the annuals were mostly portrayed wearing suits, ties, and bow ties.

During the second period, student rebellions began with the desire to transform the structure of the educational system and in time became a polarization of ideological leanings. Additionally in 1971, Turkey faced a military coup and dress became a tool of political expression among university youth. Revolutionary leftist students were viewed wearing soldier parkas and blue jeans, while nationalists were identified with a single type of moustache, and conservative students wore baggy trousers.

During the third period, there was an increase of female students and an integration of Turkish society to the world. The Turkish government has traditionally banned women who wore headscarves from attending universities or working in the public sector. Many women who wore headscarves attended universities abroad or if attending classes in Turkish universities, they chose to wear a wig or a hat covering their headscarves. Logos and brand names were displayed on clothing of students.

The fourth period is discussed in relation to economic development of the country and the increase in consumerism. The demand for imported goods and the latest fashions, the newly opening shopping malls and internet shopping, have created an abundance of styles in this period. Traditional and modern, modest and exposed dress styles can be easily observed in juxtaposition.

Diversity in the dress of Turkish youth as depicted in university annuals demonstrates how form and context are interrelated. Analyzing Turkish dress within the context of the universities illustrates the journey from uniformity to diversity in how people appear, and from scarcity to abundance in availability of products to manage appearance.

Notes
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4. Oya Baydar and Derya Ozkan, 75 Yilda Değişen Yaşam Değişen İnsan, Cunhuruyet Modalari (İstanbul: Tanhı Vaabı, 1999).
In July 2011 I traveled to Port-au-Prince, Haiti as a volunteer textile conservator for the Smithsonian Haiti Cultural Recovery Project. As the only textile expert involved in the entire project, I was assigned to assist in the preservation of all textile-related objects in the Marianne Lehmann Vodou Collection. This 4,000-piece collection focuses on objects that were used in Haitian Vodou ceremonies, and has many textile-based artifacts including sequined flags, RaRa costumes, garments associated with the Loa (spirits), dolls, and life-size fabric-covered statues called Bizangos. Arguably the largest and most important Vodou collection in the world, the Lehmann Collection has been little researched, documented or even accessed by scholars. While its costume holdings are not encyclopedic with regards to the entire scope and history of Haitian Vodouism, Lehmann is renowned for having acquired particularly important historical and contemporary ceremonial artifacts due to the respectful and trusting relationship she has with Vodou practitioners and her desire to preserve these artifacts in Haiti for future generations of Haitians.

Since Haitian Vodou textiles and costume have been little studied or researched (with the exception of sequined flags and RaRa costumes), my unique position as the only textile expert to view the entire scope of the collection’s textiles and costume holdings meant that I was able to quantify, analyze, and categorize these previously inaccessible objects using material culture methodologies. I have assigned the clothing in the collection into four main categories. The first section includes garments that are used by ceremonial participants who are “mounted” (possessed) by the Loa. These garments are embellished with sequined and beaded veves (sacred symbols) along with pictorial imagery chosen to represent specific Loa invoked during the ceremony. The second category includes clothing worn during Vodou ceremonies by members of the Bizango secret society, a group which acts as a powerful informal shadow government. The clothing worn by Bizango members includes formal regalia closely tied to Freemasonry, which was a dominant political and cultural force during the development of Haitian Vodouism. The third category is the costumes worn by members of the RaRa street music bands, which are active during the religious period of Lent. Referencing Haiti’s Colonial history, RaRa costume includes religious-like vestments similar to chasubles, exemplifying the unique mix of Christian and African religious traditions that is characteristic of Vodouism. The last category discussed is the custom-made clothing placed on dolls and statues used in Vodou ceremonies. The dolls in the Lehmann collection are varied, and include ones that are both handmade and commercially-manufactured. The collection even includes a generic Cabbage Patch Kid doll, a Gremlin, and a Teletubby. The Bizango statues are spectacular lifesize personifications of the Loa invoked in ceremonies by the Bizango secret society. These statues consist of stitched red and black cloth tightly stretched like skin over human skulls, bones, and other stuffing of unknown origin. The red and black skin is then embellished with cords, chains, mirrors, sunglasses, hats, and other materials. All dolls and statues exhibit evidence of ceremonial use and have burns, accretions and stains from materials like mud, ash, wax, and blood.

Selected Bibliography
Sustainable Design Strategies in a Garment Lifecycle: Women’s Costumes in the Late Chosun Dynasty

Helen S. Koo and Seoha Min, University of Minnesota

As fad fashions have increased the harmful effects of the exploitation of resources on the environment, fashion designers should consider sustainability throughout the design process.1 How can designers create sustainable garments? The best way to ensure a brighter future is to learn from the past.2 Koreans in the Chosun Dynasty (1392–1910) learned numerous ways to live in harmony with nature, and this was reflected in their costume designs.3 The purpose of this research is to provide apparel designers with ideas regarding sustainable garment design by suggesting design strategies acquired from studying the trends and cycles of women’s garments during the Chosun Dynasty.

According to Appadurai, creators should consider all stages of an object’s life journey.4 In this study, a garment lifecycle was developed based on the following lifecycle models focusing on garment design: Alwood et al.’s lifecycle: material, production, transportation, use, and disposal; and Locker’s lifecycle: materials, garment design and production, distribution and transport, consumer use, and disposal, recycling, reuse.5 The new garment lifecycle—a recursive system—consists of four phases: material, garment design/production, consumer use, and rebirth.

The existing literature on costumes during the Chosun Dynasty and sustainable garment design were reviewed in order to develop sustainable garment design strategies in the lifecycle: 1) Material: Korean ancestors used degradable materials, such as linen and hemp;6 2) Garment design and production: First, Korean traditional patterns were such that the pieces were arranged similarly to puzzle pieces, thereby resulting in little waste, and second, undyed natural garments were of significant importance; 3) Consumer use: An item was able to be transformed in various ways, thereby serving multiple functions, ensuring practical value;7 and 4) Rebirth: The nonrestrictive features of the costume allowed it to be flexibly adjusted, allowing it to be reused for various body types.

Three prototypes were developed applying the sustainable design strategies, and 15 garment design experts were asked to evaluate the prototypes using revised Waite’s sustainable design criteria, including reusability, durability, resource efficiency, safety, and flexible usage.8 The results appear to indicate that all the mean scores of the five criteria were 74 out of 100. These design strategies, derived from the Chosun Dynasty, will guide garment designers to create sustainable designs and broaden their perspectives.

Notes
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3. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
After a violent, anti-immigrant riot on the beaches of southern Australia in late 2005, Aheda Zanetti—a fashion designer and immigrant of Lebanese origin—was called upon to create the world’s first officially sanctioned Islamic swimsuit. Combining the words burqa and bikini, she called her design the “burqini,” quickly making it available to customers worldwide through her website, ahiida.com. Already, the burqini has been widely copied by designers in the United States, Turkey, and Brazil, purchased by both Muslims and non-Muslims for reasons of modesty, protection from the sun, and even enhanced athletic performance.

For the people who wear them, full-body swimsuits like the burqini seem to be satisfying real physical, social, and religious needs. Although generally accepted in Australia, reactions in Europe have been much more hostile—a departure from “normal” swimming attire that calls to mind difficult questions concerning immigration, gender, and the limits of political correctness. Some Muslims think the burqini is not enough and should not be worn by women in mixed company; others believe it sets a dangerous new stereotype for female athletes who happen to be Muslim (that women “should” be covered from head-to-toe at all times in public venues). These debates are not just about the burqini itself—although details about the construction do sometimes enter in—but more pointedly about the symbolism: what does the “Islamic swimsuit” represent? Does it liberate women or impose unnecessary restrictions? Is it something tolerable in a democratic society, or does it signal a “radical” trend that endangers the secular state? And perhaps most importantly, who should decide whether the burqini is appropriate or not?

The purpose of this paper—which is based on a material culture analysis and participant observation of an authentic burqini as well as a much larger, ongoing virtual ethnography about contemporary Islamic fashion—is not to settle these debates, but to explore the populations, motivations, and concerns behind these conflicting points of view. As a design solution to the problem of creating swimwear for Muslim women, the burqini represents a new and fascinating case study in the aesthetics and global politics of Islamic dress.

Heather Marie Akou, Indiana University

| Figure |
| An authentic burqini from ahiida.com. (Photo courtesy of Heather Marie Akou.) |

| Selected Bibliography |
Westernization of Dress in the Late Ottoman Empire: An Examination of an Ottoman Armenian Dress

Melissa Moukeparian and Charlotte Jirousek, Cornell University

This paper discusses the insights gathered from a unique European style dress worn in Ottoman Kayseri by an Ottoman Armenian woman, purportedly for her marriage circa 1860. This dress is of special significance because the earliest known extant European style garments worn by upper-class Ottoman women date from a decade or more later. Sources indicate that as early as the eighteenth century, Turkish women in Istanbul were beginning to incorporate European fabrics into traditional garments. However, according to Micklewright (1987), the transition to completely European silhouettes was gradual and did not come about until the end of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, information derived from eighteenth century sumptuary regulations suggests that among non-Muslim Ottomans, many of whom were engaged in commercial activities with European merchants, adoption of Western dress occurred much earlier (Göçek 1987, 39). This dress confirms this assertion.

The documentation accompanying the donation asserts that the gown belonged to a very young bride from Kayseri, an important commercial town in south central Anatolia. Family history indicates that both families joined through this marriage were notable members of the commercial community in this city. Examination of the fine imported fabric and trims as well as the access to European tailoring techniques seen in the dress confirm the family history.

The dress is an interesting mixture of Ottoman and European styling that suggests this is the work of an Ottoman tailor trained in European construction techniques, not a foreigner sewing for an Ottoman customer. The cut is clearly European fashionable construction, which differs greatly from the unfitted seaming characteristic of Ottoman dress. The dropped armseye with large sleeves could suggest a date as early as the 1840s—or a tailor who was not up to date on all the latest details of fashion. However, the waistline, skirt, and other details do suggest the 1850s or early 1860s.

Without further examination, the European style of construction might suggest that the gown was purchased in Europe. However, the placement and style of the ornately hand embellished commercial trim, some of the secondary materials and details of sewing techniques in the understructure of the skirt confirm the dress’s non-European manufacture. Also, the dress is accompanied by an unfitted velvet jacket in Ottoman style that the family history asserts was worn with the dress. This dress provides material evidence of the early adoption of Western-style dress by minority groups in the Ottoman Empire.

Figure
Ottoman Armenian dress worn in Kayseri circa 1860. (Photograph by Melissa Moukperian.)

Bibliography
The nineteenth century preoccupation with death is evident in the mourning clothing and accessories worn after the loss of a loved one. However, an important question often remains unanswered. How were the deceased dressed for eternity? Unfortunately, few detailed written accounts exist and most garments that were buried deteriorated long ago. Well preserved examples of burial dress recovered from a South Louisiana cemetery have provided rare research opportunities and valuable information and artifacts that have been used to help answer this question. Early photographs also help to answer this question, as photographing the dead before burial was a common practice when memorial postmortem photographs became a part of the extensive paraphernalia of the mourning process.

An exhibition in the Louisiana State University Textile and Costume Museum is designed to showcase extant garments recovered from cast-iron coffin burials, as well as replication garments based on archaeological evidence. American postmortem photographs along with historical information on the culture, funerary industry, and burial practices common in the mid-nineteenth century South augment exhibited artifactual remains of coffins, burial specific textiles, and personal burial garments.

In the exhibition, post mortem photographs, nineteenth century death metaphors, recovery background, and historical information on the town, cemetery, and families are placed along the wall of the gallery. The case at the end of the gallery exhibits coffins and burial specific textiles along with information on religious artifacts and plant remains recovered in the burials. The second case exhibits the personal garments and accessories buried with two adult sisters and one of their sons. The third case exhibits the personal garments and accessories of a young girl.

The overriding goal of this exhibition is to inform the viewing audience about mid-nineteenth century life and death in the deep South. Information related to technology, gender, age, and socio-economic status are addressed. The study of burial dress provides evidence that is used to interpret the lifestyles, economic status, religious beliefs, and other socio-cultural aspects of those individuals and families. This exhibition combines information from material remains and a variety of historical sources to address the subject at hand. However, it is the rarely preserved and studied burial garments themselves that provide the most detailed and intimate information.

**Figure**

Dimity dress, embroidered bonnet, and gold embossed shoes from the 1852 burial of a young girl in South Louisiana. (Photograph by Jenna Kuttruff).

**Bibliography**


The Needle is Always at Hand: The World through the Eyes of Fanny Brawne

Lindsey Holmes, Keats House and The UK Museum Association

Dress, manners and carriage... a person must be a great beauty without them, but they are certainly within the reach of any body of understanding.¹

In the late 1700s Hester Chapone wrote “absolute idleness is inexcusable in a woman, because the needle is always at hand.” Yet for women like Fanny Brawne, sewing was more than just a socially acceptable way of passing the time, it was a form of creative expression. This virtual tour leads you through The Needle is Always at Hand, an exhibition of costume-based artwork based on Fanny Brawne’s life and shown in Keats House where she lived until her marriage in 1833.

Fanny Brawne (1800-1865) first met John Keats at Wentworth place—now Keats House—in 1818, where Keats and his friend Charles Brown were her neighbors. Keats fell in love with Fanny, who inspired many of his most memorable poems. Their relationship was short, troubled by Keats poverty and ill health. Fanny was devastated by Keats death and went into mourning for six years. Poems and letters ensure that their relationship is still considered one of history’s great love stories.

Fanny had a passion for clothes and channeled her intellect into her interest in fashion by designing and making her own clothes. The Needle is Always at Hand explores Fanny Brawne’s life at Keats House through her interest in dress. Blurring the lines between costume and art, visitors were invited to find each piece for themselves. They were able to discover more about Fanny Brawne, Regency fashions, and dress-making in London.

Each piece was designed to appear as part of the home’s former life and add to—rather than detract—from its beauty. Pieces first emerge as items ready to be worn or recently discarded. Everything was designed to be touched, handled, and even tried on. Each piece first appeared as a historically accurate costume replica, but all of the items yield more information the more the visitor interacted with them. Letters come to life and paper and fabric cross purposes as Fanny’s story is revealed.

The exhibition was the first ever held at Keats House after reopening in 2009 following a complete renovation. The Needle is Always at Hand was designed to capitalize on visitors’ interest in the home’s inhabitants, their habits, and the role dress played in their lives. It ran between June and August 2011 and although it was specifically designed for Keats House, following its success, it was adapted to undertake a tour across the UK in period houses and museums.

This virtual tour walks the audience through the exhibition at Keats House, exploring the historical context and my design processes. The audience interaction, response, and impact are explored through the evaluative data collected. The virtual tour finishes with a discussion on Keats House plans for further dress-related displays, workshops, and exhibitions.

Notes

Selected Bibliography
The greatest show on earth is fashion. Fashion provides a platform for our dreams and fears—a place caught between reality and fantasy. Fashion as a circus works within the realms of ambiguity, despair, and excitement thus allowing us to move through a labyrinth of time and space so that for a fleeting moment we become performance art.¹

In November 2010, we received a garment donation that contained a couture-quality evening dress (the label was cut out) made from silk jersey with a fitted top and wool felted skirt that featured multicolored silk ribbon trim running the length of the skirt. At the end of each ribbon was a large wool yarn pom-pom in a matching color. Upon seeing the dress, it became clear that we had a born.

The exhibit was set up to show how fashion creates an almost magical system of “show and tell” or “dress up” whereby we all become part of a circus that at times borders on the absurd and at other times allows us to be part of the audience. The five categories in our show were:

- **The Calliope:** in this ring, big girls play dress up and have fun. Crazy clown-like looks showed the wearer’s sense of humor.
- **The Grandstand:** historical exoticism meets couture. This category featured items such as a Victorian lace gown remade into a 1930s evening dress with a bear fur scarf.
- **Caged Animals:** every circus needs animals. In “Fashion’s Wild Kingdom,” animal prints, feathers, and fur compete for the survival of the fittest.
- **Le Cirque:** to counterbalance the absurd, this collection of black and white garments were worn by ladies who lunched in style.
- **Side Show:** along with the main show there are always those who push the limits of acceptability and set the stage for others to follow.

Fashion would not be a circus without ringleaders. Each of the above categories featured a fashion ringleader who was dressed to epitomize extravagance and style to make fashion the “greatest show on earth.” These ringleaders today would include the likes of Anna Wintour, Andre Leon Talley, Hamish Bowles, and Simon Doonan. Their capacity to captivate our imaginations can both tame and excite the fashion circus.

We worked with the Citizen Jane Film Festival, “Cirque du Cinema,” to host an opening event with acrobats, a bearded lady, juggling, and food and music. Co-director Paula Elias said, “Women in the circus had careers, were true athletes, could dress in a less conforming way.”³ The fashion circus is no different.

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Notes
The Art of Shibori: The History and Revival of a Dying Art

Mario A. Ayala, Brigham Young University

This exhibit presents historical factors that led to the development of various shibori methods including: Kanoko, Miura, Kimo, Nui, Arashi, and Itajime. This display will show the elegance, grandeur, and fashion that were developed through the textile designs by using the resist dyeing method. For example during the fourteenth century Muromachi period tie-dyeing became favored because of the following two reason: The appearance of the Kosode garment, which provided a preferred medium in which to tie-dye, and “technical progress...specifically, multicolor designs became possible and the nuishime-shibori technique was developed.” Suzuki Kanezo was born in 1837 to a “prosperous shibori producing family.” It is believed that he devised a new shibori process known as shirokage “white shadows” which is what we know as shibori today. He devised this method through the Itajime approach that involved a shaped-resist dyeing technique. Kanezo did this in a grave attempt to aid his village in adapting to a changing age “which had so far been their undoing.”

This exhibit illustrates fashion from the nineteenth century and will inspire both audience and designers with examples of shibori pieces through visual evidence and also through information regarding the development of shibori. These examples will demonstrate the elegance, grandeur, and fashion of the art of shibori.

I plan to demonstrate this study through the use of a PowerPoint presentation, a 4’ x 6’ poster board, pictures capturing images of shibori techniques, the recipe of the dye for shibori technique, the progress pictures of the technique from A-Z, and an actual silk shibori garment that I designed in Dye and Paint class at BYU.

Figure
Arashi Shibori scarf. (Photograph courtesy of Mario A. Ayala, 2011.)

Notes
3. Ibid.

Bibliography
The Brussels couture house Norine, active from ca. 1916 to 1952, was run by key figures of the Belgian avant-garde: the polymath Paul-Gustave Van Hecke (1887-1967) and his companion Honorine—Norine—Deschryver (1887-1977). Norine was the first, and for a long time, the only Belgian house offering original creations instead of copying Paris. Its avant-garde designs boldly transcended the Belgian’s conventionality in dress. Although Norine has been all but forgotten, its legacy is of great importance and not only for fashion.

From its inception, Norine pre-empted art into fashion. In Belgium, it was the only house working at this level. Like their Parisian counterparts, Van Hecke and Norine infused an avant-garde attitude into their work. Norine played an active part in the promotion of artists associated with Van Hecke. Its salons exhibited top modernists, commissioning some of these artists—René Magritte in particular—for its graphics for invitations, catalogues, and advertisements. Avant-garde at heart, Norine often played with the latest aesthetics surfacing in the world of art and incorporated its imagery into its designs. The cubist motifs of Norine’s signature creation of the mid 1920s, the “robe peinte,” were undoubtedly hand-painted by Magritte. And the house’s creations inspired by surrealism reveal embroideries based on works by Max Ernst and Man Ray.

No successful academic research has been conducted prior to this study, probably because the subject of Norine poses difficult methodological challenges, such as the lack of a functioning archive and the scarcity of preserved garments. Moreover, often overshadowed by the spectacular endeavours in the high-arts of Paul-Gustave Van Hecke, it never received the attention it deserves.

Yet, for almost forty years, Norine was at the intersection of various art disciplines and could count itself amongst the elite vanguard of European art and fashion. Its avant-garde attitude was unparalleled in Belgium until the arrival of the infamous “Antwerp Six” in the late 1980s. No account of the history of fashion would be complete without giving Norine a prominent place.

This exhibit unravels the important legacy of this Belgian avant-garde couture house.

Notes

1. Van Hecke was a renowned art critic, art dealer, exhibition curator, poet, essayist, editor, journalist, and a couturier.
2. Most of these have been brought to light during the course of this research.
The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) became Federal Law on July 26, 1990. It prohibits discrimination based on disability and guarantees all individuals equal opportunities and access to education and public spaces. American museums have adapted to the law's regulations, not only by making their buildings accessible, but also by approaching museum education in ways that are more inclusive to those with disabilities. Among the most challenging disabilities for museum educators are those related to visual impairments. Vision is a primary integrating sense which plays an essential role in education, therefore those fully or partially deprived of vision lack an essential element for understanding the world around them. Museums have developed raised drawings to convey the basic aspects of paintings and other objects based on the assumption that visually impaired people have a strong native ability to understand raised representations and that tactile pictures can assist in the development of essential concepts of representation and style. Research also indicates that people with visual impairments are able to perceive and find meaning in some 2D representations of 3D objects which have prompted institutions to create 2D replicas of objects ranging from sculptures to clothing pieces. Some museums have ventured further, creating full size or scaled replicas of objects, developing touch collections with pieces designated for that specific purpose, or organizing tours for those with visual impairments.

Tactile or haptic perception museum education materials provide an alternative to the exploratory or manipulative touch of objects—a preoccupation for museums concerned with preserving the integrity of delicate objects such as clothing and textiles. At our institution, we have worked for a few years developing museum education materials that provide a cognitive alternative to the visual experience of historic dress or textiles for visually impaired patrons. We have explored a variety of possibilities ranging from small size replicas of dresses to touch boards that provide information about texture, materials, embellishments, and other details of pieces in our collection that usually cannot be touched. We have explored a number of materials and techniques and tested some of our projects—while building a touch collection—as part of a continuous exploration of best practices and alternatives to convey the richness of historic dress and textiles to visually impaired patrons. As part of this presentation we will share several of the projects we have created along with some of the pieces they are supposed to offer information about. Visitors to our table are expected to explore our pieces and provide feedback about their perceived potential use.

Notes

Bibliography
Global Dreams, Local Realities: Oregon’s Linen Industry, 1920 to 1960

Vanessa A. Casad and Susan J. Torutore, University of Idaho

Oregon had a thriving flax and linen industry from mid-nineteenth century. Many dreamers and experts hoped this commercial linen industry would bring local financial success, creating a worldwide reputation and competitive market for quality linen products. By 1960, post-war textile innovations, geographic conditions, and lack of local and national political support, dashed all of these dreams. The role European immigrants played in the growth of Oregon’s linen industry is highlighted by the story of the researcher’s Irish great-grandfather. It illustrates how genealogy and oral history research methods make archival sources come alive.

Europe’s centuries-old linen industries were in steady decline by the nineteenth century as trained mill workers and supervisors immigrated to the United States. Oregon had several immigrant experts come to help establish and improve their industry. The researcher’s great-grandfather, J. J. Fitzsimons, is an excellent example of the dreamers who worked hard to build this industry and the talent migration from Ireland. Employed in Irish linen mills, he immigrated in 1921 to work in New York’s linen twine industry, and in 1927 moved to work at Oregon Linen Mills. Over the years he fostered technological improvements, conducted research, promoted industrial methods of production and marketing, and developed products that emphasized the characteristics of Oregon’s linen. His last position was as Superintendent of Industries at the State Penitentiary, one of the last holdouts of the dream for branding Oregon’s linen in a global marketplace. As the linen industry struggled financially after World War II, each mill closed. The penitentiary’s flax plant closed in 1955, the last of the fiber suppliers to the remaining mills. In the end, Oregon’s linen industry had no real, long-term chance of survival. A professional and family history timeline for J. J. Fitzsimons was created from archival and genealogical research sources to understand not only the nuances of his role but also how his role reflected the larger picture of the rise and fall of the Oregon linen industry.

Figure
J.J. Fitzsimons standing at a linen drawing machine. Linen tow sliver is drawn out for the spinning process. Salem Linen Mills, ca. 1930. (Photograph from collection of the author’s family.)

Bibliography
Fashion costumes are a form that reflects the spirit of a particular time, the zeitgeist of a civilization. Sri Lanka’s geographical situation, located at the tip of the Indian subcontinent, exposed it to the impact of many developments in fashion costumes. This exhibit studies styles in fashion costumes of court dancers described in poetry during the sixteenth century Kotte period in Sri Lankan history with an aim to identify salient dress features that have been assimilated by tradition and external fashion world.

In Sri Lanka, literature and the arts came to the fore during the sixteenth century. Pursuit of the art of dance became a regular and important feature of entertainment in the king’s court. Poets of that period excelled at local styles in poetry. In comparison to the world fashions of dance costumes, the Kotte period marked the culmination of an emerging novel fashion movement with unique features in Sri Lankan dress culture. The objective of this study was to reveal the unique method of arranging the long cloth—known as ‘drape to shape’—without any single stitching by emphasizing body contours. The structure, design, and form of the lower dress developed through a dynamic process that kept evolving with traditions. In addition to a deliberate attempt at design, the form and the structure were changed and organized by internal explicit design units as pleating, knotting, folding, frilling, and tucking, which made up for a rich set of possible combinations and, consequently, the authentic individualization of an outfit.

The research sequenced as follows: 1) Exploration of unique fashion elements of dance costume described in poetry; 2) Identification of the dance dress styles of Kotte as a unique fashion; and 3) Realization that the Kotte dance fashion styles sprung as a long lasting fashion trend in comparison with other dress fashions of the era. For this study we used qualitative research method to collect and analyze the data. Besides reading and gathering data from poetry, we carried out in-depth observations to grasp the subtle fashion characteristics in dance costumes in mural paintings, stone, wood, and ivory carvings of the era.

Bibliography
The leavers lace industry did not become established in the United States until the Tariff Act of 1909 allowed increased duty-free importation of machinery from England for seventeen months (August 1909 to December 1910), enabling southern New England to become the mecca for the leavers lace industry. This study outlines a brief history of the leavers lace industry and provides an account of the use of lace in women’s fashions from 1940 to 1969. An additional section addresses repairing damage in leavers laces, a topic virtually ignored in literature.

History of Leavers Lace and Its Incorporation in American Fashion: 1940-1969, explores the development of the most complicated machinery in the textile industry. City directories yielded names and locations of Rhode Island lace manufacturers, while advertisements from the Providence Journal, dress patterns, and garments illustrated how American designers and seamstresses incorporated lace.

Before World War II, lace was a popular fabric in women’s fashions. During the war, the use and popularity of lace dwindled. In the 1950s, the use of lace as trims and yardage for women’s evening and social attire increased, however major fashion changes and a growing youth market in the 1960s caused a decline for lace and many mills closed. Lace became a fabric reserved almost exclusively for wedding attire.

Repair of Twentieth-Century Leavers Lace, details a procedure for repairing machine-made lace. A microscopic examination of twentieth-century leavers laces in garments and yardage from the University of Rhode Island Historic Textile and Costume Collection plus garments found in local vintage clothing stores revealed how the lace yarns interact. Drawings and photocopies of laces aided in developing repair techniques that stabilize broken yarns and replace missing connections. This process is time intensive, and practice is essential. Finding suitable yarns for repairs is a major hurdle, but with patience and time, mesh damaged machine-made lace can be stabilized and repaired.

Notes

Bibliography
Students of costume history, re-enactors, and fashion aficionados often ask where the distinctively unusual headwear of the Middle Ages in Western Europe came from. What influenced their development? Who started these unique and divergent styles? More often than not, we hear the response that “no one really knows” and that it was “just the fashion.” We think we have a more probable answer to these questions.

Through a PowerPoint presentation, two presenters will showcase the significant influence that Middle Eastern cultures had on the headwear of the Middle Ages in Western Europe. Each presenter will discuss characteristics of the selected styles through a cultural lens. Side-by-side pictorial evidence from Middle Eastern and European art works will demonstrate the significant similarities in style of the turban, hennin, and reticulated head dresses. Draped effects of the European chaperone and wimple will be compared to similar head coverings of the Middle East. Other fashionable hats and headwear styles will also be pictured.

The pictorial evidence is striking. Middle Eastern Cultures had a significant influence on headwear of the Middle Ages in Europe. We feel that this presentation will enable attendees to favorably answer the often-asked questions about the origins of fashionable headwear of the Middle Ages.
When Brummell fell into disgrace, he devised the starched neckcloth... No one could conceive how the effect was produced... When B. fled from England, he left his secret legacy to his country; he wrote on a sheet of paper... the emphatic words, 'Starch is the man.'

Do clothes make the man? The phrase was "profoundly accurate in the nineteenth century. Men's clothes showed no sign of frivolity, femininity, or humor." The notion had developed that masculine dress should demonstrate strength, success, productivity, and practicality. Previously, both men and women used fashion to communicate social rank and wealth, but in industrialized Western culture, "maleness came to be defined in terms of avoiding effeminate pursuits, including the realm of involvement with fashion and concern with personal appearance."

Still, there are instances when male appearance is the driving force behind fashion. Called a “dangerous figure of transgressive masculinity,” the nineteenth-century dandy is a key example. The contemporary guido, as portrayed by MTV's The Jersey Shore, is another who "may live in one of the few realms of the world in which men are as preciously groomed as women." In this research exhibit, I will compare similarities between these two exclusively male styles of dress and question why, as anomalies to the Western male status quo, each came to exist.

From the milk baths taken by Beau Brummel to preserve his white skin to the tanning rituals of the guido, participants of these subcultures have devoted remarkable time and energy to their figures and fashion, while still asserting pride in their fundamental masculinity. Due to the inordinate amount of time disciples of these cultures dedicate to constructing their appearance, right down to categorical laundry techniques, I question not only if clothes, but indeed- starch- makes the man.

Notes
Louis XIV understood the economic possibilities of both fashion and food, capitalizing on these industries to synonymsize France with luxury. By the end of the seventeenth century, concepts of haute cuisine and haute couture came
to define France’s identity as an international arbiter of taste. A similar conception of luxury continues to influence the relationship between fashion and food. The rich and famous, socialites, and other tastemakers, often grace the pages of fashion magazines, pictured in designer garb at exclusive luncheons and dinners. Restaurants have long served as the backdrop for the social life of the fashionable elite, prompting Edmond Bory of Fauchon’s to assert: “Food is no longer simply a matter of gastronomy. It is now a matter of fashion.” The connection between fashion and food goes beyond social life with the incorporation of food motifs in fashion, textile, and accessory design. While fashion and food seem at odds given current critiques of the fashion industry’s idealization of wadish bodies, a closer look at twentieth and twenty-first century fashion design reveals a different picture. The oddness of this pairing is why designers have chosen to incorporate food motifs into their designs—the surreal absurdity, playful humor, and unlikely juxtaposition create appealing and commercial fashion moments. Everyday objects become something new: “the self is, to a some degree, a manufactured object, a social product. Over the past two centuries, people increasingly have defined themselves through the products they buy and use.” This research exhibit focuses on three periods: the 1930s, and Surrealist-inspired fashions; the late 1940s and 1950s, when whimsical “conversational prints” were prevalent in dress textiles; and the twenty-first century’s postmodern and Pop-art influenced fashion. Fashion photographs, both advertising and editorials, and journalism provide context for these objects.

Notes
The purpose of this research is to examine how Korean fashion designers targeting the global marketplace apply design elements from their cultural background into their designs. Four Korean fashion designers were selected to represent Korean designers who are targeting the global market: Doori Chung, Ricard Chai, and Hanii Yoon were selected, as well as collections of Lie Sang Bong whose work appeared in New York sponsored by the Korean Culture and Tourism Institute (KCTI). The backgrounds of these designers were examined, including demographics, education, characteristics of work, and price range. A total of 186 pictures from their 2012 S/S collections were accumulated from Style.com, Samsungdesign.net, Haniiy.com, and Seoulfashionweek.org. Design elements of Korean traditional dress were specified through reviewing the literature. Design elements of line, form, texture, and color were compared in Korean traditional costume and the designers’ work.

Of 186 images analyzed, Korean design elements appeared in 76 images (40.86%). Among 76 images, 8, 10.52% reference the lines, 13 (17.10%) the forms, 23 (30.26%) the textures, and 63 (82.89%) the colors of Korean traditional dress. Five representative images were analyzed to specifically explore how Korean designers’ ethnicity was revealed through the design elements.

These results may be interpreted as follows: Korean designers applied design elements from their cultural background (76 out of 186, 40.86%). Then too, each Korean designer applied Korean traditional design elements differently, depending upon their targeted brand. For example, Lie Sang Bong’s inspiration for 2012 S/S collection comes from traditional Korean architecture elements known as Dancheong, the decorative colors painted on wooden buildings and artifacts for the purpose of style. This inspirational source corresponds to his brand concept, geometric beauty. We conclude that referencing ethnicity through design elements is an influential factor for Korean designers and Korean design in promoting and strengthening national competitiveness as well as their potential role in the Hallyu—the Korean wave influencing Asia.

Notes
Nestled inside Buckingham Palace, amongst the masterpieces of the Royal Collection, resides the haunting beauty of Rembrandt’s Portrait of Agatha Bas. She exudes a quiet intensity, advancing from the dark background into the light, as if to greet each viewer. Her eyes make direct contact, unhesitatingly, yet she looks as if she were to speak it would be in a whisper. Unlike during her lifetime, when she existed as either the daughter in a prominent family or as the wife of Nicolaes van Bambeeck, whose portrait can now be found in Brussels, she stands in London alone in the spotlight. The outwardly antithetical pendant to Agatha Bas hangs prominently in The Louvre, Rembrandt’s Bathsheba. She sits lost in her thoughts, likely contemplating the letter in her hands. She is nude, neither hiding nor exploiting her body. She seems aware of her sexuality, the ease of her unabashed posture, while simultaneously appearing deep in thought. How does Rembrandt shift from detailed depictions of wealthy, well-dressed bourgeoisie to psychological studies in thick impasto? There are many factors that shaped Rembrandt’s progression towards his later style of broad, painterly brushstrokes that, inexplicably, express feelings of introspection and sensitivity. Perhaps it was his knowledge of Italian painting or financial and personal circumstances, most of which has been meticulously researched and published. I will propose an alternative view of Rembrandt’s late works, initially inspired by the book Fashion and Fancy by Marieke de Winkel. Her thorough examination of clothing and accessories in Rembrandt’s paintings reveal a hidden language of dress within such portraits as those of Agatha Bas, Jan Six, and Oopjen Coppit. I attempt to juxtapose such an interpretation of Rembrandt’s portraits, specifically the subtle implications of Dutch women’s conservative dress, by also considering the influence of the prosperous Dutch textile industry, which both Agatha Bas and Jan Six were affiliated, as were many of Rembrandt’s sitters. In Vexations of Art: Velazquez and Others, Svetlana Alpers, whose writings on Dutch art encouraged this essay, emphasizes the importance of the textile industry to the Dutch Golden Age, noting, “men working in textiles played a major role in achieving Dutch primacy in world trade.” In this presentation, I will attempt to link the thriving Dutch textile industry and the rituals of Dutch women’s dress between ca.1600 and ca. 1650 to a cultural shift towards naturalism and self-reflection, in turn, influencing Rembrandt’s depictions of women in his late works.

Figure
Rembrandt, Portrait of Agatha Bas. (The Royal Collection © 2012, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.)

Notes
In April 1942 the War Production Board issued the L-85 order to prohibit style details requiring excessive fabric needed for the war effort. The WPB helped create a style variation as wartime styles became slimmer than they had been with broad shoulders. An analysis of extant wartime garments revealed that the order wasn’t always followed. Thirty-seven extant garments were examined to evaluate their adherence to the order.

Seven garments violated the order; They had lengths and sweep circumferences in excess of the regulations, French cuffs, pant legs measuring 27.5 inches in circumference, well beyond the 19 inches allowed under the order, all-over pleated skirts and three coats exceeded the sweep allowed for box and fitted coats. Twenty-five garments fell within the guidelines of the order and generally reflected what is typically referred to as the “wartime styles.” However, five extant garments pushed the limits of the limitation order with button and loop closures, fabric covered buttons, metal ornamentations, shoulder pads, raglan sleeves, or excessive hem circumferences and ornamentation. While button and loop closures, fabric covered buttons and rick rack trim don’t require much fabric the garments could have been designed with different closures and ornamentation to save fabric. Similarly, thirteen garments have zipper closures though zippers became restricted to military and “the most essential use.”

The limitation order was designed to prevent rationing of wartime apparel by reducing the amount of yardage required for women’s apparel by 15%. Though the purpose of the L-85 order was to restrict material use for non-military apparel it was recognized in the popular media that style changes were minimal, and our analysis confirmed this perception.

Notes
2. “Pleating, tucking, or shirring” were prohibited when the use of these elements exceeded “the prescribed sweep of that particular size.” F. W. Walton, *Thread of Victory* (New York: Fairchild Publishing Co., 1945), 269.
3. “Old ‘zippers’ were reclaimed” from older garments. Walton, *Thread of Victory*, 139.
5. See note 1.
When the Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936, lawyer and diplomat Antonio Canovas del Castillo narrowly escaped with his life by fleeing to Paris. His father and brother were killed at the hands of revolutionaries. Without a family, money, or citizenship, how would Castillo survive?

In France, Castillo soon started mingling with the émigré society of Paris, befriending the famous art and design patron, Misia Sert. At her suggestion, Castillo started designing clothing for couture houses, including Chanel, Piguet, and Paquin. Soon, Castillo established himself as a significant fashion designer in both Paris and New York, dressing well-known women such as Gloria Guinness, Vivien Leigh, Grace Kelly, and Eleanor Lambert. His astonishing career includes executing Christian Berard’s designs for Cocteau’s Beauty and the Beast; a five-year period designing collections for Elizabeth Arden’s Fashion Floor, the couture branch of the cosmetics and fragrance house; a thirteen-year tenure at the House of Lanvin; the discovery and training of Oscar de la Renta; and an Academy Award for costume design.

Clearly, this resume is impressive. Castillo even publicly dueled over the fashion press with Chanel: “As usual, Chanel and Castillo presented their collections at the same time, forcing the press to choose between them. At a quick counting of heads, it would seem that Castillo got more of the press.” Yet Castillo has been long forgotten. My presentation on this enigmatic couturier highlights Castillo’s contribution to fashion history, his mastery of design, and insight on his personality and career.

Notes
The world of twenty-first-century fashion is ever evolving into new forms at a more rapid pace compared to clothing developments from several hundred years ago. Elements of previous fashion trends are constantly recycled into new clothing to appease the public's cravings. But, to whom does the public look for fashion inspiration? The “trickle down” theory suggests that lower classes look to the upper classes to find out what styles are in vogue at the moment. The advent of mass manufacturing with the inventions of the Industrial Revolution made it easier for lower-class people to adopt the clothing trends the upper classes were wearing, thus “trickling down.” Although emulation of upper-class fashions appears to have been happening for quite some time, it seems fashion inspiration was “kicked into high gear” with the glamorous effects and global outreach of American Hollywood cinema, beginning in the 1930s. When the American film industry boomed in the first half of the twentieth century, actors became the inspiration for fashion as well. Following the American stock market crash in 1929, the public used Hollywood films as an escape from the stress of dealing with the Great Depression. The glamour exuding from the Hollywood films produced during the 1930s inspired and influenced the clothing choices of the American public. Frequently, reproduction agreements were made with the studios, allowing copies of the actresses’ clothing worn in box office smashes to appear in stores within weeks.²

Well-known costume designers such as Gilbert Adrian, Edith Head, Travis Banton, Howard Greer, Walter Plunkett, and Orry-Kelly designed costumes and personal clothing for many of Hollywood leading ladies. Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer, Bette Davis, Claudette Colbert, Carole Lombard, Katharine Hepburn, Jean Harlow, and Kay Francis were some of the Hollywood stars whose costumes and personal wardrobes inspired the fashion trends of the 1930s. Previous research using issues of Vogue magazine has shown that Adrian’s designs influenced the clothing choices of American women.³

Notes
Historically, dress scholars have turned to magazines and fashion plates to conduct their research. The twenty-first century has seen these once tangible sources swiftly become digital, affecting how fashion trends are communicated. It seems that nearly everyone has access to digital cameras and the ability to report to a global audience; primarily through blogs, digital magazines, and e-commerce sites. However, many of these sources are overlapping and it is often difficult to distinguish who or what is in control. How as dress scholars do we determine who is curating the trends seen on these blogs? Is the blog merely a medium to disseminate the styles of the subjects? Is fashion finally in the hands of the common person? Or could it be that blogs, originally seen as an alternative to the established glossies, are just as contrived as the runway? And how do we determine the credibility of a blog when so many bloggers have agents and expect to be paid in more than free merchandise?

In order to identify the twenty-first century style setters, this research will examine the key players in blogging. It documents the subjects being blogged, but focuses primarily on the bloggers themselves. It also asks questions such as, how do the bloggers style themselves? Aside from their own sites, where do they appear? What sites do they endorse? Are they involved with other projects? What is the demographic of their subjects? Do their styles and that of their subjects’ pre or post date those seen in mainstream fashion? By conducting interviews, taking photographs, and through the use of blogs and newspaper articles this research project attempts to answer the questions posed and determine who are the twenty-first century style dictators.

Notes

Selected Bibliography
The assignment that I developed for my History of Costume class is a project in which the students are required to develop a corset as either a functional or a fantasy garment. Since this is an interdisciplinary course and not all the students have the ability to sew, I created a project that would give students from any major the opportunity to express themselves creatively while learning about the evolution of corsets throughout history. I have created this project-based learning assignment to promote creative as well as critical thinking.

The corset project has grown from an in-class project to an exhibit at the University, as well as a featured display at a high-end mall. Each year the students have come up with original and exciting concepts ranging from soft sculpture to welded steel, from Q-tips to ceramics, and every other material imaginable.

As we discuss the transition of dress from ancient draped garments to cut-and-sewn clothing of the Middle Ages, the students cut small scale tunics, dalmatics, and trousers from folded paper. This part of the assignment was developed using the article “Folded Fashions: Symmetry in Clothing Design” by Lisa J. Evered. The students then put together a full size paper corset from a pattern that I developed in order to see how a two dimensional surface becomes three dimensional to shape a woman’s body. We explore the various possibilities of the origin of the corset as indicated by Valerie Steele in The Corset: A Cultural History as well as many other sources and discuss the different ways corsets have modified the shape of the body. Finally, we take a look at how corsets can be used as objects of fantasy and look at modern interpretations by recent designers.

By actually making a “corset” of textile or non-textile materials, the students are actively participating in the process of dress scholarship and creatively supplementing the reading materials required for the course. By generating excitement through the use of this project-based learning tool, students are encouraged to look at the history of dress in a new way.

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**Bibliography**


With the growth of the industrial age in the United States, investing in the rubber boot and shoe industry during the second quarter of the nineteenth century was a potentially lucrative investment which, if successful, could provide the foundation for great wealth. Many inventors and investors scrambled to be at the forefront of this new and potentially profitable technology. The purpose of this research is to examine the successes and failures that occurred in the New England area as many men gambled their fortunes on rubber in the early nineteenth century.

This research was an exploratory study of the early rubber boot and shoe industry. Documents and manuscripts were examined to help delineate the public desire for rubber boots and shoes as well as the challenges the companies faced to provide customers with a quality product. The earliest rubber shoes sold in America were imported from Brazil and sold at New England ports in the 1820s. Demand rose for rubber boots and shoes as people in occupations both public and domestic realized their utility. Shoes continued to be imported from Brazil through the 1830s and early 1840s. By the 1830s, however, entrepreneurs experimented with making and selling rubber shoes domestically. In spite of the many challenges involved in creating a superior rubber product, by the 1850s the number of companies and the production of boots and shoes made in their factories grew exponentially, reflecting the increased improvement and importance of the rubber technology.

Notes

Bibliography
Fashion accessories made from precious corals are highly prized, but recent trends for coral create a series of complex questions for marine scientists, conservationists, coral producers, jewelry designers, and consumers alike. What coral is in the market and where does it come from? Is coral too precious to wear? These questions are about sustainability, but there are no easy answers. This paper explores how different industry sectors are trying to come to terms with coral as a fashion product within a sustainability perspective.

For example, the precious red *Corallium* corals from the Mediterranean and Pacific are no longer readily or affordably available, so new types—like dyed bamboo and resin-enhanced sponge corals—have been introduced to satisfy market demands. Once harvested, coral enters a highly labor-intensive chain, requiring 60% hand labor and 40% mechanization for lower-end production. Almost all coral beads and jewelry pieces in today’s market are made in two major industries—Taiwan, producing the most and widest variety of products, and Italy, producing high-end luxury products. China is producing precious coral “imitations” from bamboo and sponge corals. These are all informal cottage industries of long value-added production chains, comprised of multi-generational family-owned businesses. However, jewelers such as Tiffany are refusing to use natural coral in their products and ocean conservation campaigns are asking consumers to sign “no wear” pledges.

Dickson, Loker, and Eckman (2009) discuss the new “triple bottom line” as a measurement of sustainability—to recognize that “social and environmental performances are equally critical” along with economic profitability in the equation. Coral is more than just a commodity or threatened raw material. Coral is a cultural product, embedded with long-standing and changing meanings for multiple audiences in a global marketplace; producers, involved in their own cultural traditions, make products with specific significance for different markets. These are not just economic or natural resource issues; we have to sustain the resource to sustain the industries if we want to sustain our use and need for its significance in our lives.

**Bibliography**


During the last decade, Roller Derby experienced a renewed popularity throughout the world, both with its participants and fans. Currently, Roller Derby is an aggressive contact sport featuring female athletes wearing provocative and hyper-feminine uniforms. The beginnings of Roller Derby, however, were somewhat less of a spectacle. This sport has its origins in the North American endurance races on roller skates in the 1880s (Chicago Tribune 1884; 1885). Over the years, the sport evolved into variations of the race on skates, and eventually included women, and finally excluded men. In its current form, Roller Derby is a race less about endurance and more about strategy, humor, and dress.

Similar to other emerging sports, Roller Derby dress began by borrowing athletic clothing from other sports or everyday dress. In the 1950s and 1970s, the sport was exclusively women athletes in visually dynamic uniforms. Today, Roller Derby uniforms reflect historic costumes and uniforms with unique perspective.

Contemporary uniforms vary greatly from team to team, and even differ within each team according to individual athlete’s aesthetic preferences and assumed persona, reflecting their chosen Roller Derby name, such as “Charmed ‘n’ Dangerous” or “Molly McFracture.” Furthermore, the autonomy of the team and athlete over uniform design positions the Roller Derby uniform as a significant symbol of affiliation, resistance, agency, and identity.

In this paper, I investigate the origins, history, and evolution of Roller Derby dress, from its early “costume” to its current incarnation as a “uniform.” I begin by exploring the many variations of the sport, including its early years when mixed couples roller skated wearing coordinating costumes. I analyze historic Roller Derby dress in order to establish the importance and position of the contemporary uniform within this flourishing sport. For this analysis, I draw on firsthand ethnographic research collected from North American Roller Derby leagues, including Minneapolis, Minnesota; Bloomington, Indiana; Lansing, Michigan; and Iowa City, Iowa, along with extended research examples from leagues in Atlanta, Georgia; Houston, Texas; and Seattle, Washington.

Bibliography
“Remarkable roller-skating feat.” Chicago Daily Tribune, April 13, 1884.
“A six-day roller skate race.” Chicago Daily Tribune, March 2, 1885.

Figure
Contemporary roller derby gear as worn by Charmed ‘n’ Dangerous, a part of the Bleeding Heartland Roller Girls derby league, from Bloomington, Indiana. (Photograph courtesy of Theresa M. Winge, 2008.)
Panel & Professional Development

Exhibition Planning 101

Kevin Jones and Christina Johnson, Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising

Interested in mounting an exhibition, but don’t know where to start? Have the experience, but interested in ways to streamline the process? This session will take participants on a behind-the-scenes tour of Fabulous! Ten Years of FIDM Museum Acquisitions, 2000 - 2010, a recent exhibition produced by the FIDM Museum & Galleries, Los Angeles. Using Fabulous! as a case study, participants will be guided through the multiple steps required for producing innovative fashion and textile exhibitions. The three-part presentation will include selecting, organizing, and interpreting objects for display; publishing exhibition catalogues and generating corresponding documentary films; and installing/de-installing objects. All topics will include power point presentations and lively discussion.

Archival Felt Mounts for Historic Dress

Carolyn Jamerson, Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising

Creatively combining knowledge of patternmaking, sewing, and historical human proportion, felt mounts are hand sewn and custom made to fully support a garment’s structure and create a clean presentation. All materials used are archival, so the garments can be stored on their mounts long-term, or can be undressed and the mounts stored flat. Though the full mount process is labor intensive, the workshop will demonstrate how to create these mounts in a more simplified way using a replica of a ca. 1895 corsetiere’s model, a convenient prototype to show the basics of mount making. The workshop will demonstrate multiple steps such as patterning the garment and creating historical petticoats to finish off the mounting process.
Teaching Costume and Dress History in a Virtual Classroom

**Erica Hoelscher, Lehigh University and Northwestern University**

The increased presence of computer and digital technologies in the classroom challenges instructors to present course materials in a virtual environment. The leader will present techniques for modifying traditional classroom teaching methods to the virtual world based on successful best practices in teaching an online class in costume and dress history. Her pedagogy includes recorded lectures, quizzes, discussion boards, and more, through the use of software, PowerPoint, and other resources.

“Professionally Speaking II”: A Career in Costume and Fashion

**Howard Vincent Kurtz, George Mason University**

Panel and round table discussions focused on strategies, insight, and knowledge for emerging professionals in the diverse career areas of costume and fashion. Panels and break out groups will share ideas in a round table setting.

Colonial Williamsburg 18th Century

**Linda Baumgarten, Neal Hurst, Mark Hutter, Brenda Rosseau, Janea Whitacre, and Sarah Woodyard, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation**

As the eighteenth century world moves further into the past, are we moving closer to a better understanding of its dress and culture in all of its splendid facets? Time and information cause us to challenge and change our history. What does the future hold as we continue to explore the past? The panel will present six short case studies designed to provoke thought, stimulate conversation, highlight new research and challenge old understandings. Topics include: Revisiting remade or altered garments, reexamining what we think we already know, understanding single object studies, recognizing previously unidentified styles, pursuing multi-faceted approaches, incorporating new technologies in understanding old things.
The Texas Fashion Collection is housed on the University of North Texas campus in Denton, and offers a comprehensive resource for students, scholars, and enthusiastic visitors, who arrive with a variety of interests and expectations about what they might find. Most visitors make a connection to their own passion and pursuit of higher learning. As a University-based collection, there is both opportunity and necessity for nurturing mutually beneficial relationships, where education, collecting, cataloging, and donor relations intersect. When these relationships become thoughtfully interwoven, the potential for a unique reality.

In 2011, the Texas Fashion Collection received a donation of 27 non-Western, multicultural garments from private collector Joy Losee, who has been collecting costume for more than thirty years. Losee, who grew up in Asheville, North Carolina, and is now a Gainesville, Georgia resident, has a degree in cultural anthropology. She gathered many of the garments while visiting a myriad of markets around the world, such as Guatemala, Mexico, Egypt, India, Japan, and the Philippines. After several visits to the Texas Fashion Collection, Losee decided it was the right fit for her plan to give a number of garments over several years.

Upon receipt of the collection, it was decided to integrate the new acquisitions into a relevant research project for fashion history students. Each costume represents a story rich in history and cultural connections. This project marks the first time that a newly-acquired collection has been interpreted by students in the form of a research assignment. As students create a presentation based on their individual research, the information will be used to catalogue the particular garment on our database and will enhance the metadata for Digital Image Library.

This presentation provides an overview of the research done by students about the new accessions and teach aspects of museum-style cataloging, with particular emphasis on how non-Western garments can serve as a catalyst for design inspiration. Our Assistant Curator will discuss the process of photographing each item for digital record and presentation, and the challenges of properly dressing mannequins with non-Western fashion. Our Collection Manager will give an overview of cataloging methodology and comment on student contributions to the collection. Collector and donor Joy Losee will round out the panel discussion, contributing her knowledge and experiences as a private collector.

After the completion of the basic research, the student will then be expected to create an original design, using the garment she/he chose as inspiration. An exhibition of the Joy Losee Collection is planned for Fall 2012. The final phase of this project will feature live models wearing the students’ designs on opening night. This ambitious undertaking will create ties within the multicultural student population at the University of North Texas and the surrounding community. It will also increase awareness about the educational value of the Texas Fashion Collection and highlight the importance of working together with private collectors for multiple audiences.

Bibliography
Fragmentary evidence is a challenge to most scholars engaged in the study of dress history. It often requires that we be creative and resourceful in our research, yet we must always be mindful of the gaps in information. Such gaps can be frustrating, and perhaps too easily filled by extrapolation, but can also be the impetus for new and exciting inquiry. How do we cultivate integrity in research and presentation where the evidence leaves gaping holes in our knowledge?

This panel will discuss examples from our own research, with an emphasis on the importance of reassessing assumptions, making those assumptions clear, and accurately portraying what we have done and could not do.
Presenters’ Addresses

Heather Marie Akou
Indiana University
AMID - Memorial Hall E234
1021 East Third Street
Bloomington, IN 47405
E-mail: heatherakou@gmail.com

Mario Antonio Ayala
Brigham Young University
445 N University Avenue #10
Provo, UT 84601
E-mail: brotherelder@gmail.com

Elizabeth Barber
Occidental College
1226 N. Chester Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91104
E-mail: barber@oxy.edu

Jessica Marie Barber
Calvin Klein Collection Archive
221 Seaman Avenue, Apt. B2
New York, NY 10034
E-mail: jeckamarie@gmail.com

Linda Baumgarten
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Dept. of Collections, 309 First Street
Williamsburg, VA 23185
E-mail: lbaumgarten@cwf.org

Nele Bernheim
Universiteit Antwerpen
Prinsstraat 13 - D 308
Antwerp, 2000 Belgium
E-mail: nele.bernheim@ua.ac.be

Anne Bissonnette
University of Alberta
325 Human Ecology Building
Edmonton
AB, T6G 2N1 Canada
E-mail: anne.bissonnette@ualberta.ca

José Blanco F.
University of Georgia
235 Hill Street
Athens, GA 30601
E-mail: jblanco@fcs.uga.edu

Karin J. Bohleke
Shippenburg University Fashion Archives and Museum
1871 Old Main Drive
Shippensburg, PA 17257
E-mail: kjbohleke@ship.edu

Andrew Bolton
The Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10028

Ashley Callahan
Independent Scholar
140 Davis Estates Road
Athens, GA 30606
E-mail: adbcallahan@gmail.com

Vanessa A. Casad
University of Idaho
1239 Creekside Lane, #113
Moscow, ID 83843
E-mail: vcasad@vandals.uidaho.edu

Cynthia Cooper
McCord Museum
690 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, QC H3A 1E9 Canada
cynthia.cooper@mccord.mcgill.ca

Marilyn DeLong
University of Minnesota
Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel
351 McNeal Hall, 1985 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
E-mail: mdelong@umn.edu

Nimal De Silva
Faculty of Architecture
University of Moratuwa
Sri Lanka
E-mail: nimaldes@pgiar.lk

Clarissa Esguerra
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90036
E-mail: ceguerra@lacma.org

Mary H. Farahnakian
Brigham Young University
F-378 HFAC
Provo, UT 84602
E-mail: mary@byu.edu

Jennifer Farley
The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology
Jersey City, NJ 07310
E-mail: jennifer_farley@fitnyc.edu

Dawn Lamar Figueroa
Texas Fashion Collection, University of North Texas
1155 Union Circle #305100
Denton, TX 76203
E-mail: dawn.figueroa@unt.edu

Kelly Mohns Gage
St. Catherine University
301 Carlson Parkway, Suite 275
Minnetonka, MN 55305
E-mail: kkgage@stkate.edu

Denise Green
University of British Columbia
7950 Kekhout Crescent
Port Alberni, BC V0Y 8Y8
E-mail: dng22@cornell.edu

Martha Winslow Grimm
Textile & Costume Conservation Services, Inc.
4347 East North Lane
Phoenix, AZ 85028-4141
E-mail: mwgrimm@cox.net

Annie-Beth Ellington Gross
University of Rhode Island
1550 Trent Blvd., Apt. 2112
Lexington, KY 40515
E-mail: annie_beth@hotmail.com

Michaela Hansen
The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
3449 North Elaine Place, #308
Chicago, IL 60657
E-mail: michaela.a.hansen@gmail.com

Colleen Rachel Hill
The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology
36-16 24th Avenue, #4C
Astoria, NY 11103
E-mail: coleen_hill@fitnyc.edu

Susan Hiner
Vassar College
142 Old Post Road North
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520
E-mail: suhiner@vassar.edu
Erica Hoelscher  
Lehigh University  
Zoellner Arts Center  
420 E. Packer Avenue  
Bethlehem, PA 18015  
E-mail: ebh2@lehigh.edu

Lindsey Sarah Holmes  
Keats House  
32 Ferryview, Orton Wistow  
Peterborough  
Cambridgeshire, PE2 6XL  
United Kingdom  
E-mail: rompicollo@hotmail.com

Edward Hoyenski  
Texas Fashion Collection, University of North Texas  
1155 Union Circle #305100  
Denton, TX 76203  
E-mail: Edward.Hoyenski@unt.edu

Mellissa Jane Huber  
The Costume Institute at  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
1000 5th Avenue  
New York, NY 10028  
E-mail: mellissahuber@gmail.com

Neal T. Hurst  
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation  
Department of Historic Trades, Taylor Shop  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-1776  
E-mail: nhurst@cwf.org

Mark D. Hutter  
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation  
Department of Historic Trades, Taylor Shop  
PO Box 1776  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-1776  
E-mail: mhutter@cwf.org

Carolyn Jamerson  
Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising Museum  
919 South Grand Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
E-mail: cjamerson@fidmmuseum.org

Charlotte A. Jirousek  
Cornell University  
Department of Textiles and Apparel  
319 Martha Van Rensselaar Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
E-mail: caj7@cornell.edu

Christina Johnson  
Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising Museum  
919 South Grand Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
E-mail: cjohnson@fidmmuseum.org

Kevin L. Jones  
Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising Museum  
919 South Grand Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
E-mail: kjones@fidmmuseum.org

Emma Kadar-Penner  
Fashion Institute of Technology  
c/o Jayson Green  
73 Bushwick Ave, 2R  
Brooklyn, NY 11211  
E-mail: emmakpenner@gmail.com

Priyanka Virajini Karunaratne  
Department of Textile and Clothing Technology  
Faculty of Engineering  
University of Moratuwa  
Sri Lanka  
E-mail: virajinik@yahoo.com

Rebecca Kelly  
Fashion Institute of Technology  
15 Johnson Court  
Newport, RI 02840  
E-mail: rkelly328@yahoo.com

Danielle Laurel Killam  
Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising Museum  
919 South Grand Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
E-mail: dkillam6@gmail.com

Helen Koo  
240 McNeal Hall, 1985 Buford Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55108  
E-mail: helen.sm.koo@gmail.com

Howard Vincent Kurtz  
George Mason University  
4400 University Drive, MS 3E6  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
E-mail: hkurtz@gmu.edu

Jenna Tedrick Kuttruff  
Louisiana State University  
621 Albert Hart Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70808  
E-mail: jkutti@lsu.edu

Katherine Lennard  
University of Michigan  
716 N. 5th Avenue  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
E-mail: klennard@gmail.com

Joy Losee  
Texas Fashion Collection, University of North Texas  
1155 Union Circle #305100  
Denton, TX 76203  
E-mail: joylosee@bellsouth.net

Monica Philippe McMurry  
Stephens College Costume Museum & Research Library  
1200 E. Broadway, Box 2042  
Columbia, MO 65215  
E-mail: mmcmurry@stephens.edu

Kathryn McSweeny  
Queens College  
3026 35th Street, 4A  
Astoria, NY 11103  
E-mail: kathynmiriam@gmail.com

Seoha Min  
University of Minnesota  
1057 Everett Court, Unit #5  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
E-mail: spseoha@gmail.com

Melissa Moukperian  
Cornell University  
340 S Geneva Street  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
E-mail: mdv3@cornell.edu

Jennifer Mower  
Oregon State University  
1211 NW 26th Street  
Corvallis, OR 97330-2440  
E-mail: mower3@hotmail.com

Monica Dominique Murgia  
Centenary College  
118 E. High Street  
Hellertown, PA 18055  
E-mail: murgia7@gmail.com

Sarah Jane Olson  
St. Catherine University  
100 Birch Bluff Road  
Excelsior, MN 55331  
E-mail: saraholson@stkate.edu
Margaret T. Ordoñez
University of Rhode Island
55 Lower College Road, Ste. Suite 3
Kingston, RI 02881
E-mail: mordonez@uri.edu

Jo B. Paolelli
University of Maryland
4210 Underwood Street
University Park, MD 20782
E-mail: jpaol@umd.edu

Elaine Pedersen
Oregon State University
D. H. E. Department, 224 Milam
Corvallis, OR 97331-5101
E-mail: pedersee@oregonstate.edu

Ann Poulson
King’s College London
27a Aberdeen Place
London, NW8 8JR United Kingdom
E-mail: annpoulson@gmail.com

Cornelia Powell
Independent Author
Post Office Box 1476
Cullowhee, NC 28723
E-mail: cornelia@corneliapowell.com

Danielle Reaves
University of Alabama
13820 Neighbors Drive
McCalla, AL  35111
E-mail: reave003@crimson.ua.edu

Anne Reilly
The Costume Institute at
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
858 West End Ave, 5A
New York, NY 10025
E-mail: annekreilly@gmail.com

A. Newbold (Newbie) Richardson
The Costume and Textile Specialists
602 South View Terrace
Alexandria, VA 22314
E-mail: costumeandtextile@gmail.com

Brenda Deane Rosseau
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Costume Design Center
PO Box 1776
Williamsburg, VA 23187-1776
E-mail: brosseau@CWF.org

Sarah Scaturro
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
Smithsonian Institution
2 E. 91st Street
New York, NY 10128
E-mail: scaturros@si.edu

Erica Suzanne Scott
Independent Researcher
31 Monroe Street, 8C
New York, NY 10002
E-mail: ericasuzannescott@gmail.com

Pamela A. Sebor-Cable
Framingham State University
14 McAdams Road
Framingham, MA 01701
E-mail: pseborcable@framingham.edu

Arlesa Shephard
Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Department of Human Sciences
MSC 168, 700 University Boulevard
Kingsville, TX 78363
E-mail: joyceanna1822@yahoo.com

Nadine L. Stewart
Independent Scholar
355 Eighth Avenue, 7-E
New York, NY 10001
E-mail: nadineanddavid@rcn.com

Susan J. Torntore
University of Idaho
509 W. Taylor Avenue
Moscow, ID 83843
E-mail: torntore@uidaho.edu

Myra Walker
Texas Fashion Collection, University of North Texas
1155 Union Circle #305100
Denton, TX 76203
E-mail: myra.walker@unt.edu

Ann Buermann Wass
Riversdale House Museum
4811 Riverdale Road
Riverdale Park, MD 20737
E-mail: annbwass@aol.com

Janea Whitacre
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Department of Historic Trades,
Millinery
PO Box 1776
Williamsburg, VA 23187
E-mail: jwhitacre@cwf.org

Virginia Schreffler Wimberley
University of Alabama
3215 44th Place East
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
E-mail: vwimberl@ches.ua.edu

Theresa Marie Winge
Michigan State University
8600 Kingsland Highway
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827
E-mail: thersa.winge@gmail.com

Sarah Elizabeth Woodyard
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
PO Box 1776
Williamsburg, VA 23187
E-mail: swoodyard@cwf.org
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Howard Kurtz

ANGELS PROJECT
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For more information, contact co-chairs:
Shelly Foote (satalexandria@aol.com)
Inez Brooks-Myers (inezatthepoint@att.net)