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School of Design

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures



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Everyday Fashion in Yorkshire 1939 - 1999

Dr. Kevin Almond, Lecturer
Elaine Evans, Senior Teaching Fellow
Dr. Bethan Bide, Lecturer



Leeds Museums & Galleries / Cultural Institute Cross-Disciplinary Research Project: Fashion in Yorkshire 1939 - 1999

- The research project was funded by the Leeds Museums and Galleries / Cultural Institute Cross-Disciplinary Research Fund.
- The project will use artefacts and information from both the Dress and Textiles Collection at Leeds Museums and Galleries and the Yorkshire Fashion Archive.
- The research will focus on local social history, particularly relating to womenswear, through the lens of fashion / dress.



Introduction to the Yorkshire Fashion Archive

- Origins of the collection
- Content of the collection
- Representation of 20th Century Yorkshire
 - family photographs and memorabilia
 - oral histories and reminiscences in donation interviews



- The 'reach' of the YFA collection



Good coverage in West Yorkshire, and a small amount of donations from North, South and East Yorkshire.

Leeds Museums & Galleries

Leeds Museums & Galleries Dress and Textiles Collection

- The collection represents the wider history of British fashion and contains items that have been collected for their excellence in cut or construction or for their aesthetic beauty
- A large part of the collection has a unique regional significance in that the items have been worn, bought or made in Leeds and the surrounding Yorkshire region.
- <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries/Collections/costume-and-textiles>





Aims of the project:

- To explore the relationship women had with their clothing in the period 1939 – 1999, relating to the quantity and quality of clothing and how these items were made, cared for and worn
- To test the hypothesis that involvement in making increases the value of relationships with clothing, both in commercial manufacture and domestic dressmaking
- To record these narratives and better understand the place that clothing had in the lives of 20th Century Yorkshire women.

Activities:

- A public workshop that will display selected garments from Leeds Museums & Galleries and Yorkshire Fashion Archive to explore the wearing, making and mending of everyday clothing in the Yorkshire region. Invitations have been extended to special interest groups





Methodology:

- Object-based research to examine relevant artefacts in Leeds Museums and Galleries collection and the Yorkshire Fashion Archive
- Archival research to uncover the stories of women's experiences of everyday clothing in both commercial manufacture and domestic dressmaking and how they were worn.
- Semi-structured focus groups and follow-up Interviews with participants from a public workshop in September 2019, to discuss narratives relating to the items of everyday clothing displayed at the workshop

Outcomes of the project:

- Written transcripts will be produced of the round-table discussions and individual interviews conducted at the public workshop
- Findings from the workshop and interviews will be used as data to produce a paper for submission for peer review and publication.





Benefits of the research for staff in the School of Design:

- Elaine Evans: pilot study for the first stage of PhD research
- Dr. Bethan Bide: enhances research as a fashion historian interested in social and cultural narratives
- Dr. Kevin Almond: develops previous archival research examining costume collections and regional identity



Benefits of the research for Leeds Museums & Galleries:

- Artefacts and data from the workshop will inform a planned exhibition at the fashion galleries at Lotherton Hall next year
- The project fits well with LMG wider strategic aims which include actively contributing to creative cases for diversity
- The research into the LMG and YFA archives and the outputs from the workshop (data collection and publication) fit the objective to “Manage Leeds Museums and Galleries collections to the highest possible standards and maximise their impact”

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Cultural Institute

Call for Participants: Fashion In Yorkshire 1939 – 1999

A workshop exploring women's experience of everyday clothing

Wednesday 11th September 2019, 12.15 – 3.45pm.

Leeds Discovery Centre, Carlisle Road, Leeds LS10 1LB

Supported by the Leeds Museums and Galleries / Cultural Institute Cross-Disciplinary Innovation Fund.

Do you have an interest in fashion and clothing? Were you involved in the Yorkshire clothes manufacturing industry? Or are you a home dressmaker? And do you like to shop for fashion or have fond memories of shopping in Yorkshire?

If yes then we want to hear about your experiences, stories and memories. This workshop aims to investigate the history of Yorkshire from the end of WW2 up to present day through the lens of dress and fashion.

RSVP to Elaine Evans (Email: E.L.Evans@leeds.ac.uk) by Wednesday July 31st 2019