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Introduction: Negotiating the Everyday

Bethan Bide, Jade Halbert and Liz Tregenza

In June 2019 a group of historians, researchers and curators came together at the Universities of Huddersfield and Leeds for a conference entitled *Everyday Fashion: Extraordinary Stories of Ordinary Clothes*. Over two days, many theories were posed about what exactly 'everyday fashion' was and how it could be defined. Although no set meaning was agreed on, the conversations themselves revealed the importance of reflecting on what counts as 'everyday' in order to interrogate the way we think about what counts as 'fashion', who gets to create and participate in it, and who, what and where is excluded from any definition. These conversations raised the importance of orientation and process as key ways of conceiving of the everyday.[1] For example, while high-end, bespoke and designer fashions lie beyond what many would consider to be everyday, even the most expensive bespoke garment might be experienced as everyday by the specialist maker who is intimately familiar with the garment's materials and how they need to be manipulated as a result of repeated acts of making; or for the designer salesroom assistant who fits numerous clients in luxury fashions every day when they come to work.[2]

That the everyday is not a question of content but perspective is well established in the field of material culture. Ben Highmore considers the everyday not as category of things but as 'a form of attention that attempts to animate the heterogeneity of social life, the name for an activity of finding meaning in an impossible diversity'.[3] It is in this diversity that Daniel Miller

finds material culture's potential, excited by the possibility that its interdisciplinarity, inclusivity and tendency towards experimentation and originality offer. For Miller, it is these very qualities that empower material culture's ability to draw us back from universalism, towards the diversity, complexity and messiness of everyday lived experience.[4] Judy Attfield more explicitly considers the value of everyday processes in the study of material culture, highlighting how objects and their meanings are transformed throughout their biographical journeys. For Attfield, looking at material culture allows us to examine the process of consumption by which individuals transform material goods into 'the stuff of everyday life that have a direct involvement with matters, both literally and figuratively, of identity'.[5]

Exploring the connections between material culture and the everyday practices of life in a consumer society reveals the transformative power of the everyday. As Michel de Certeau argues, it is through the everyday practices of life in a consumer society that we find agency to individualise mass culture (which is to say, personalise and meaningfully interact with the hegemony of mass culture), and through this take ownership and create change within that society.[6] This volume is inspired by Michel de Certeau and Henri Lefebvre's calls to resist the temptation to view the everyday is as boring, repetitive and inauthentic, but instead as a powerful force that demands attention.[7] As Lefebvre reminds us, just because something is familiar to us through regular encounters, does not mean we necessarily know it, and there is much to learn from looking again and critiquing the structures that direct our everyday existence.

This call to look again at the everyday and what it does has been widely heeded and in recent years there has been a growing interdisciplinary interest in the transformative power of the everyday. It has been widely discussed in studies related to modernist literature, which calls attention to the relationship between daily routines and the ordinary, highlighting the way the

everyday is made special by the attention paid to it by modernist authors.[8] The everyday has also been a growing subject of interest in geography disciplines, which have seen trends towards exploring emotion and effect through everyday routines and spaces.[9] Many of these studies foreground proximity and intimacy using this focus to explore how researching the local everyday can illuminate our wider understanding of the global.[10] This volume picks up on these themes and further demonstrates the value of embracing the interdisciplinary possibilities of paying attention to our everyday practices and encounters with fashionable things.

Conceptualising the everyday as practice rather than category demands an approach that also considers fashion as practice. In recent years, fashion theorists have drawn from sociology to explore the relationship between fashion, society and the physical body. As Merleau-Ponty argues, if the body is the medium through which we experience the world, then in societies where dressed bodies are the norm, that experience is shaped and mediated by what we wear.[11] Phenomenological perspectives on fashion as a 'haptic experience' have led scholars – most notably Joanne Entwistle – to call for a recognition that dress is an embodied practice.[12] Agnès Rocamora has further explored how Pierre Bourdieu's Field Theory provides a framework for understanding how practices of fashion are interrelated, connecting the material and symbolic production of fashion objects and discourses in order to highlight how meaning is made from this field of production.[13] Furthermore, as Entwistle indicates, to understand fashion we must look at the relationships and indeed networks between 'different bodies operating in fashion: fashion colleges and students, designers and design houses, tailors and seamstresses, models and photographers, as well as fashion editors, distributors, retailers, fashion buyers, shops and consumers'.[14]

Yet in spite of these calls to consider the interconnected practices that construct fashion more broadly, much fashion research still centres around the narrow activities of designing, selling and consuming expensive clothes. This reflects broader cultural prejudices that have ascribed the value of fashion to certain types of labour deemed to be creative, as exemplified by Angela McRobbie's research into the way trainee fashion designers rejected the commercial in favour of the artistic in their practice.[15] Much of the work which set the boundaries of creative fashion so narrowly has been explicitly undertaken in order to exclude particular individuals and processes from our understanding of what counts as fashion, and in doing so has ensured that certain groups are not credited for their contribution to creating fashion and fashion cultures.[16] In order to challenge this it may be helpful to further interrogate the distinctions between that which is understood as 'fashion' and that which is understood as 'dress'.

Fashion Versus Dress

There are various ways we might describe the garments that cover our bodies, from clothing to costume, dress to fashion. In this book, we have chosen to use the word 'fashion' over 'dress'. Fashion is a mutable word, and its various meanings can in some ways operate in opposition to one another. The word 'fashion' may be used to imply a popular style, or the processes of making (the verb 'to fashion'), or even more broadly as a descriptor of the system within which all clothing emerges and circulates. The editors of this book are all twentieth century specialists, a century defined, encompassed and awash with fashion – in this century (and indeed, the twenty-first century) it is easy to understand fashion and the everyday as happy bedfellows.

However, studies that concentrate on garments produced prior to this period will often use the term ‘dress’ instead of ‘fashion’. We are not suggesting that ‘dress’ is a misnomer in this context, rather, that the same qualities we understand in twentieth- and twenty-first-century everyday fashion can also be understood in earlier styles too. We reject, for example, Elizabeth Ewing’s 1985 argument for privileging ‘dress’ over ‘fashion’:

> Fashionable dress […] has always been the style of dress favoured at a certain time and place by a privileged group of class proclaiming its special identity by its choice of clothes. Such clothes were valued and treasured and often kept for posterity […] relatively few people through the centuries in any country have worn fashionable dress, or been able to do so.[17]

Ewing’s work posits a fairly typical idea that ‘fashion’, until the nineteenth century, was the preserve only of the rich and elite. Yet, certainly by the mid-nineteenth century – thanks to rapid industrialization and the increased availability of clothing (particularly ready-made) – fashion was something accessible to a broader spectrum of society. Ewing’s view is outdated, and when we consider the individual stories of men and women across the class system, we can see an engagement with fashionable practices long before the nineteenth century. During the sixteenth century there was a change in the way the word ‘fashion’ was understood; it transitioned from meaning the process of shaping material objects to a word that encapsulated change. This fluctuating use of the word ‘fashion’ occurred alongside a related linguistic shift in meaning of the word ‘consumption’, which transitioned between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries from a term related to destruction through use and the production of waste, to a word associated with creative possibility.[18] In the evolution of the meaning of ‘fashion’, English found a simple

word to define a complex thing, and in trying to define 'everyday fashion' it might be useful to return to this shift in language and ask: what is the relationship between fashion and fashioning?

Fashion as a term has oxymoronic qualities. What is 'fashionable' is inconsistent and forever changing, but also fixed in time, implying something is specific to a period. Typically, 'fashion' has been defined in relation to change, but this book suggests it can perhaps better be understood as a feeling of being 'in the moment'. The chapters in this volume suggest that fashion is about pleasure and power, that fashion implies excitement – little luxuries and clothes that bring us joy. This pleasurable feeling associated with clothes is one that can be seen long before the nineteenth century. Most importantly, this book demonstrates that fashion is deeply enmeshed with personal experience, often the most visually-obvious way a person might perform their identity. Ultimately, what is, or what is not 'fashion' or 'fashionable' is a personal judgment, subject to deemed aesthetic value and taste. Furthermore, as Fred Davis makes clear, fashion is 'context-dependent'. He suggests that 'what some combination of clothes or a certain style emphasis "means" will vary tremendously depending on the identity of the wearer, the occasion, the place, the company and even something as vague and transient as the wearer's and the viewer's moods.'[19] Indeed, fashion, as Yuniya Kawamura argues, provides 'extra added values to clothing, but the additional elements exist only in people's imaginations and beliefs. Fashion is not visual clothing but is the invisible elements included in clothing. Fashion encompasses the value added to clothing'.[20]

Examining how clothes are consumed, used and produced everyday collapses the distinctions between dress and fashion. While it is arguable that not all dress is fashion, there is much to learn from questioning where the line might be, and how the distinction has been used to exclude certain people and places from fashion. 'Dress' has typically been used as a less loaded

term. But the exclusion of non-western clothing from the 'fashion' narrative is, unquestionably, deeply problematic. As Heike Jenss writes,

> One indicator which also points to the idea of the exclusiveness of fashion to Euro-modernity was the avoidance of the use of the temporality- and change-implying word 'fashion' or 'mode' in relation to non-Western (and nonurban) contexts, and instead the use of the apparently more neutral, or universal term 'dress' – to describe the human practice of adorning the body.[21]

The more we interrogate the boundary between fashion and dress, the more apparent the importance of the storytelling process for the production of fashion becomes. The way we talk about what is and what is not fashion, and where we look for those stories, has a powerful gatekeeping function. But if fashion is indeed both a 'material and discursive reality', then we have the ability to re-write those exclusionary stories.[22] As a starting point, this book asks: what is the impact on equality in fashion if we create a more expansive understanding of what fashion is and how fashion practices shape cultures, societies, economies and material experiences?

Everyday Fashion and Britishness

The very concept of 'British fashion' is contentious. It is not easy to pin down what the phrase means and in attempts to articulate its characteristics we often reach for semiotic shorthand and take comfort in the well-known and self-congratulatory signs, symbols and signifiers of what fashion histories have traditionally defined as 'British fashion'. These can include (in no particular order and of course representative of our own personal cultural positionings): anarchy, eccentricity, neatness, tweed, creativity, bohemia, tailoring, rebellion, insouciance, cashmere,

street style, elegance, inventiveness and individuality. These are familiar tropes, rather like the lazy clichés of French fashion (trench coats, red lipstick, silk scarves, marinière tops), but what is interesting is the sheer volume and variety of signifiers associated with 'British fashion' and furthermore, that – unlike the unmoving semiotic pillars of French fashion – they seem curiously unfixed and potentially mutable. This shifting character, this mutability makes 'British fashion' an exciting starting point from which to explore the constant flux of everyday fashion because it provides space to challenge the familiarity of semiotic tropes that determine fashion as a fixed culture associated with national identities rather than as an evolving culture associated with the chaos of ordinary life and individual personal style.

This national fashion identity has often been one which is built on the concept of tradition, but as a number of scholars have pointed out, this heritage is manufactured to a point. Stephen Daniels suggests that the idea of Britishness is 'coordinated around, and often largely defined through, cultural iconography or by representations of legends and landscapes, by stories of golden ages, enduring traditions, heroic deeds and dramatic destinies located in ancient or promised home-lands with hallowed sites and scenery'.[23] However, the concept of Britishness, has often been Alison Goodrum makes clear (following the work of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger), a 'product of invented tradition seen to be rooted in the remotest of antiquity, yet actually originating only in the recent past of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century'.[24] Traditions, however, are perhaps easier to invent if you construct them from the outside. Some fashion professionals who have most successfully invented British fashion traditions were not necessarily born in Britain. For example, Hans Juda (1904–1975), the editor of the influential British trade journal *The Ambassador*, was, as an émigré 'able to take a wider view of what

Britain meant to the outsider, to see its strengths and weaknesses', and thus to construct new, highly-potent versions of 'British fashion'.[25]

The tensions between these oppositional constituencies in fashion studies (which is to say, the realities and the invented realities) have long inhibited the field. Preoccupation with 'elite' fashion consumption and spectacle has meant that the rich seam of potential inherent in the study of the everyday has gone largely unnoticed. This volume recognises that discussions about diversity in fashion are currently enjoying a resurgence, but often these discussions barely scratch the surface of the complexities of what is understood as diverse in the history of British fashion, and indeed in Britain itself. Focus on diversity often switches between gender, sexuality and race with little attention paid to how these issues intersect with issues of class diversity. This is surprising, given the enduring prominence of class issues in British society.

Of course, there are exceptions. John Styles' superior work on the everyday dress of ordinary people in eighteenth century England represents a landmark study in this regard; his mastery of unconventional but revelatory sources sheds brilliant light on the everyday fashion practices of people who have traditionally been absent in the historical record.[26] Similarly, Vivienne Richmond's work on clothing the poor in nineteenth century England highlighted the power of fashion in multiple contexts in shaping our understanding of the everyday in British fashion.[27] With respect to class, the work of Rachel Worth provides keen insight into this glaring issue as a structural issue within in the history of British fashion, while a growing number of scholars are paying attention to the previously neglected area of mass-market fashion.[28] Other authors have also been important. Christopher Breward's work on London fashion and Englishness in dress has added important new dimensions to our knowledge about the national character and identity.[29] Carol Tulloch has challenged the traditional and insular boundaries of

'British fashion' in her work on the Caribbean diaspora and its substantial contribution to everyday fashion cultures and, more significantly, to British fashion culture more generally.[30] This is important because this volume does not restrict itself either geographically or theoretically to the four nations of the current United Kingdom; indeed, as recent politics indicate, and as Raphael Samuel reminds us, 'The geography and politics of Britain are often out of sync' and its 'frontiers are typically porous'.[31]

Fashion itself has little regard for national identities, borders or frontiers and information about fashion and knowledge about what is fashionable in any given place has always found routes – some clear, others wonderfully complicated – through even the most challenging obstacles.[32] Notwithstanding this, the locus of Britain and the historiographical frameworks of British history represent a useful starting point from which to interrogate what is meant by Britishness in the context of fashion, because they allow us to range across centuries, colonies, Empires and conflict to arrive at a clearer definition and understanding of Britishness in fashion than has previously been possible. This volume provides that starting point from which to negotiate new critical perspectives on Britishness in fashion by interrogating the everyday through a range of lenses: the four nations of the United Kingdom, the violence and turmoil of colonisation, the pink creep of Empire and sartorial connections within the Commonwealth to name a few. As Stuart Hall has argued so eloquently and so persuasively, the familiar constant of the everyday has unique power to reveal hitherto unreachable histories and uncomfortable truths hiding in plain sight, whether in our national museum collections, on our high streets, in our own wardrobes or in Hall's case, in our kitchen cupboards:

> I am the sugar at the bottom of the English cup of tea. I am the sweet tooth, the sugar plantations that rotted generations of English children's teeth. There are

> thousands of others beside me that are, you know, the cup of tea itself […] Because they don't grow it in Lancashire, you know […] Not a single tea plantation exists within the United Kingdom. This is the symbolization of English identity – I mean, what does anybody in the world know about an English person except that they can't get through the day without a cup of tea? Where does it come from? Ceylon – Sri Lanka, India. That is the outside history that is inside the history of the English. There is no English history without that other history.[33]

How to Read this Book

This book is divided into two sections, each of which follows a broadly chronological order. The first section is a showcase for some of the myriad innovative and creative approaches researchers can take to the study of everyday fashion, celebrating the diversity of sources and methods that can be used to uncover new historical perspectives. In this section, our authors combine more familiar and conventional modes of research commonly used in the study of dress and textiles (archives, visual sources, objects, etc.), alongside imaginative and accessible new approaches especially suited to the study of the everyday as applied to fashion: reconstructive methods; analysis of quotidian but rich sources such as photograph albums, postcards and the instructive accounts of home dressmaking manuals; the practice of oral history; analysis of pocket contents; and the autoethnographic experience of wearing vintage everyday fashion and what that means for our understanding of the history of fashion more broadly. The approaches used in these chapters demonstrate the creativity of researchers working in this field and the accessibility of everyday fashion histories through sometimes unconventional but always imaginative routes. We hope that this section inspires researchers to look beyond the museum and the archive to consider

everyday fashion histories in more diverse and accessible contexts; to see, for example, the potential of your grandmother's wardrobe as a unique and potent record of everyday fashion history just as interesting and valid as any museum collection.

The second section of the book considers everyday fashion in practice, redefining and testing our understanding of the everyday and where it is found. Here, our authors look beyond the conventional to showcase the depth and breadth of everyday fashion thereby demonstrating how fashion reaches into everyday lives and illuminating the people involved in the everyday fashion world. Here is de Certeau's individualizing power in action.

Woven between the chapters are a series of object biographies. Four of these come from the keynotes who spoke at our original conference: Beatrice Behlen, Christopher Breward, John Styles and Lou Taylor, all scholars who have pioneered studies of materiality and everyday fashionable experience. The others are written by curators and museum professionals. For these, we purposely prioritised regional, social history collections, both due to the historical focus on non-elite clothing in these collections and a desire to decenter British fashionable geographies. We asked each contributor to pick either an item of their own, or one from the collection they work with which, for them, is representative of 'everyday fashion'. It is striking that the majority of objects chosen were made in the twentieth century and can be understood as mass-produced. This highlights that, typically, twentieth century everyday fashion is both better represented in museum collections, and also more likely to be documented as 'everyday'. It also is suggestive of how we might understand everyday fashion and its disruptive qualities in collections.

The power of everyday fashion to disrupt stems from the tension between official, universalizing historical narratives and extant material objects, which reveal the messier (and sometimes contradictory) details of individual interactions and processes.[34] The object

biographies that punctuate the chapters in this book remind us of the ways that objects are transformed through use over time, and that these everyday interactions with things often individualize the mass-produced and alter its meaning. The small material details that mark these processes of transformation are thus capable of subverting and challenging accepted historical tropes, making fashion objects ideal material through which to tell 'history from below'.[35] These encounters with objects invite the reader to participate in the research process by asking how objects might be 'read' in multiple ways that reveal the diverse, and even divergent, nature of experiences of everyday fashion. Perhaps more importantly, they also serve as reminders of the inevitably partial nature of this volume, and the many stories still to be told about everyday fashion from different times and communities.

The Spaces and Places of Everyday Fashion

If fashion is to be understood as an embodied practice, then logic dictates that it must also be situated in place and space.[36] With this in mind, it is little surprise that the ability of fashion to provide a lens through which we can build deeper understandings about how people live, work and consume within and between places has been of growing interest to economic, urban and cultural geographers and historians in recent years.[37] This work recognizes that fashionable spaces are created from processes of making and performing fashion and that large numbers of individuals –whose labour is usually uncredited – contribute to these processes.[38]

Place has long been important to the fashion industry. Agglomerations of designers and makers in certain places and times have allowed for skills sharing and the development of new techniques and designs, driving fashionable change.[39] Looking at place can help us understand

how the fashion industry has changed over time, for example revealing how global fashion capitals have shifted from being centres of production to places which are more symbolically significant.[40] Beyond the activities associated with the fabrication of material fashion objects, place is also important for defining fashion. The fashion industry has 'actively used strategies of association and dissociation' with certain places to create and maintain symbolic value.[41] The rewards for places with high fashion capital are significant – today the small 'oligarchy' of global fashion capitals not only support fashion businesses but the broader cultural and leisure industries in those cities too.[42] But it also conceals the importance of other spaces – often those less-glamorous sites of manufacture – in order to maintain fashionable reputations.[43] This place-making is possible because of the dual realities of fashion as both fabricated material objects and the stories we tell about them.[44] In this way, fashion overlaps with Doreen Massey's conception of places as plural and continually in the process of becoming: as she has noted, 'if space is rather a simultaneity of stories-so-far, then places are collections of those stories, articulations within the wider power-geometries of space'.[45]

Thinking about the places and spaces of everyday fashion helps us further unpick how the stories around where and by whom fashion is practiced are constructed, and who they benefit. We can understand everyday fashion by drawing on non-representational theory, which suggests focusing on the 'everyday routines, fleeting encounters, [and] embodied movements' that shaped lived experiences in order to provide a different perspective on a research subject.[46] Thinking about these everyday routines and the embodied practices of making, consuming and wearing fashion takes fashion out of the designer's studio and off the catwalk. It reminds us that fashion is messy and multiple, that it happens in salons and photographers' studios, but also in back rooms, on kitchen tables, and in the space between desire and being on the wrong side of the

shop window. As a result, understanding the importance of embodied experience and routine can help us celebrate the contribution that the seemingly everyday makes to innovation and change. As Cheryl Buckley and Hazel Clark have argued in the case of London, it is often 'the rawness of everyday life' that inspires innovative fashion.[47] This raises significant questions about how the narratives about place and fashion often serve to gatekeep who gets credited as part of fashion's creative cultures.

Focusing on the value of embodied everyday experiences invites contemplation of how objects have been fabricated, circulated and used, and confronts us with the forgotten lives and labour that have shaped them.[48] It also invites us to look beyond the urban spaces of fashion. Exploring the everyday practices of making, wearing and consuming fashion has a particular power to materialize the connections between places, showing us that the geographies of fashion are more connected than often described. Following the journeys taken by fashion products and designs reveals that, although contemporary global commodity chains may be longer and more complex than in the past, they are not anything new.[49] As Marie McLoughlin and Lou Taylor's recent edited collection on Paris fashion under Nazi occupation demonstrates, taking a small-scale focus on lived experience and process also has the power to disrupt the nationalist cultural narratives fashion's stories often serve.[50] Using an everyday focus to make connections between urban fashion centres, suburban and rural fashion networks and international commodity chains, challenges the narrow conception of what counts as 'British' fashion, demonstrating how Britain's shifting borders over the past 500 years have shaped and reshaped fashion.

Although numerous fashion scholars have discussed the need to re-place fashion, this book demonstrates the particular importance of considering how everyday practices – from the fabrication of fashion materials to the wearing of seemingly ordinary clothes – shape wider

fashion spaces and, through this, create fashionable places. Looking at everyday practices of fashion and the types of material, archival and oral sources that reveal these allows us to find fashion in a wider variety of places and spaces than are often explored in fashion histories. While the contributions to this book do examine fashion practices in shops and fashion magazines, they also consider what can be learned from turning to spaces that are not usually associated with fashionable practice. In her exploration of how older women catered for their sartorial needs by engaging in home dressmaking in the middle decades of the twentieth century, Hannah Rowe demonstrates the value of asking why certain people feel excluded from the established spaces of fashion. She finds that, while many older women felt excluded from fashionable shops and the ready-to-wear fashion industry due to financial barriers and their non-standard body shapes, the act of making fashionable garments in their own domestic spaces gave them considerable fashion agency, and that this agency was facilitated by the producers of home dressmaking instruction kits.

Cyana Madsen finds agency in the way clothes can be used to negotiate space and our place within the world by investigating how Francis Golding used the intimate bodily space of the pocket to store and curate the ephemera of his life, from newspaper clippings to ticket stubs. By focusing on space at the micro level of the pocket, Madsen argues that memories can be embodied and made tangible in garments. Golding's acts of selection and retention transformed everyday disposable ephemera into treasured memento, and his curated pockets became spaces that collapsed the past and present. Now that Golding's clothes and pocket contents have entered museum collections, Madsen raises questions about how to curate the deeply personal and intimate, bodily aspects of everyday clothing habits in a public space.

On a macro level, using the everyday to re-place fashion stretches existing historical geographies of fashion out from global fashion cities to suburbs, regional urban centres and rural areas. Jenny Gilbert asks us to look again at the importance of regional fashion centres, demonstrating how twentieth century Birmingham wholesalers acted as 'active agents in the creation, distribution and diffusion' of fashion, both in Birmingham but also in the working-class communities of surrounding industrial towns through their networks of independent shop keepers. By highlighting the importance of these wholesalers as disseminators of new fashions in communities that were underserved by department stores and multiple retailers, Gilbert confronts us with how biases towards sources focused on the higher-end of the fashion industry have blinded us to the importance of other actors as sources of fashion creation and agents of fashionable change in our lived experience. Eliza McKee's chapter takes us even further from fashionable metropolitan centres, uncovering how travelling tailors and shoemakers, who moved around the Irish countryside making clothing and footwear in homes, served the fashion needs of rural non-elites. McKee dispels myths that the clothing they produced served purely practical needs, finding that the arrival of these travelling makers and their accompanying outside knowledge was met with considerable excitement. Although the pace of change in the clothing styles they produced was slow, McKee finds evidence that these clothes were understood as fashionable within the class communities and local areas travelling makers serviced. Not only does this chapter demonstrate how fashion happens beyond the borders of what have previously been considered fashionable spaces, it also highlights the importance of considering how movement and the circulations of fashion practices between places shape our lived experience.

Aditi Khare makes the case for looking beyond the geographical borders of the British Isles to understand how a long history of global connections have shaped British fashions. By

looking at everyday practices of making and consuming Chintz in the seventeenth century, Khare reveals inextricable connections between Indian artisans and British consumers. While noting that these relationships are clearly bound up with colonial power imbalances, Khare argues that examining everyday lived experiences of consumers and makers can help us recognise the complexity of the cultural entanglements between Britain and India and find Asian agency in the global Chintz trade. Khare also notes how the everyday consumption of the 'exotic' commodity of Chintz demonstrates how global fashion connections shaped Britain's understanding of itself through its ability to own and commodify international design cultures as part of its colonial activities. The way that Britain's colonial history has shaped fashion practices is also discussed by Rianna Norbert-David, who considers how successive generations of diasporic Caribbean communities in London since the 1940s have used clothing to negotiate their sense of belonging in space. Members of the community have used practices of 'dressing up' as a way to claim legitimacy within the spaces of the city and to carve new spaces for their own community. Norbert-David charts these fashion practices through the liminal spaces of music scenes – from Sound Systems to pirate radio stations – raising questions about what counts as British fashion and who gets to define it.

Production, People and the 'Back-Region' of Fashion

The production of everyday fashion in Britain has always been multifarious and tied up with notions of place, class, gender and hierarchy. These exist within the very structures of production (whether that be a city, a neighbourhood, or an individual building) but also stretch beyond these confines to contain other taxonomies within the ever-expanding and contracting world of mass-produced fashion. Manufacture is a site of contradiction, at once associated with the archaic

horrors of the sweatshop and the sleek modernity of the post-war factory; the drudgery of repetitive machine-based manual labour and the pride of the legend 'Made in Britain'. Of course, these are overly-simplistic analyses reliant on stereotype and tabloid understandings, which (although frustrating) is understandable; most well-known accounts of actually making clothes rely on unusual examples made notorious by publicity. For example, the starving garret seamstresses of the nineteenth century, the mercury-poisoned hatters of Belle Époque Paris, and the sweated seamstresses of dark Dickensian London loom large in the imagination as powerful tropes warning us about the evils of fashion and consumerist vanity.[51] The reality, of course, is much less sensational, but far more interesting; careful analysis of everyday production of fashion has much to add to our knowledge and understanding about things relating to, within and beyond fashion.

There are many ways of making clothes but if we take the post-Second World War period when production was at its peak in Britain as an example, there are some clear trends: you could make clothes for yourself or your family at home by hand (sewn or knitted), by sewing machine, from self-drafted pattern or from commercial paper pattern; at home for money (outwork); in a department store; in a tailor's shop (bespoke, made-to-measure, multiple); in a dressmaker's shop; or in a factory (small cut, make, trim serving myriad clients or larger industrial and vertically-integrated).[52] Since the 1960s the factory has been the dominant locus of everyday fashion production, both in Britain and around the world, and this makes it a compelling vantage point from which to examine the hectic flux of everyday fashion at its point of origin because it is also a site of action and negotiation around which key fashion actors coalesce.[53] Here is Erving Goffman's definition of the 'back region' in action, in all its thrilling haste and daring-do.[54]

Suzanne Rowland's chapter in this volume is dedicated to the exploration of the back region through the lens of 'capable women' – blouse designers in the wholesale fashion trade in the first decades of the twentieth century. Here, she provides critical new context for our understanding not only of class and gender roles in the production of everyday fashion but also the rapid development of mass-manufacturing in this period. This was a time of increased unionisation, greater gender parity and expansion of the role of the designer in this mass-production context. Rowland argues that the 'capable women' of the wholesale trade were much more than just designers of everyday fashion: they were also mediators and disrupters of design hierarchies, an argument that has profound implications for our understanding of the power and autonomy of the 'back region' in not only producing everyday fashion, but actually shaping it.

Bethan Bide also reveals much about the inner-workings of rich back region activities from the vantage point of the factory floor in her chapter. She uses a precious and unusual source – the voices of factory workers themselves – to consider the agency of garment workers to create fashion cultures in the 1950s and 1960s and thereby challenge our understanding of where fashion happens.[55] Here, she argues that everyday labour practices of cutting, sewing, pressing and packing clothes shaped local fashion cultures by influencing the way the women employed to do them used fashion in their own lives.

While Rowland and Bide's chapters argue for creativity as inherent within cultures of production, Sarah Bendall's chapter shows that the mass-production of everyday garments can galvanize trade, innovation and creative change before the advent of the factory. Drawing on a range of visual, written, and material sources, Bendall demonstrates how whalebone became part of everyday fashion in seventeenth century England. Through this, she argues that increased trade and the expansion of the material world (therefore, availability) and innovation in making

practices among artisans stimulated the use of whalebone, turning it from elite matter in the sixteenth century to a central part of everyday fashion within a short hundred years.

The production of everyday fashion is of course about more than the act of manufacturing clothes. It is also about the processes of manufacturing meaning and identity through the selection and wearing of everyday garments. In her chapter in this volume, Vic Clarke examines the use of characteristically 'working class' fashion cultures as a mode of political persuasion and action in the Chartist movement during the 1840s. Using the example of Feargus O'Connor, the 'gentleman leader' of the Chartists and his use of the fustian jacket as a means of crafting a class-bound message of political solidarity, she explores the visual and textual aspects of Chartist material culture as a means of building community and creating intimacy between geographically disparate, but politically alike activists, and thus reveals the power of everyday fashion to produce meaning as powerful as machinery.

Design, Dissemination and Display

The relationship between fashion and design is often represented by stories of the solo 'genius' designer. These proliferate in glossy fashion books and blockbuster fashion exhibitions. Although individual designers do indeed participate in fashion practices through their work and lives, it is notable that there are no stories of the solo designer in this book. Instead, we see the designer situated in negotiation with wider fashion networks and the meaning of designed garments remade by those who experience and use them. Stories of co-design emerge as garments are worn and altered over time.

Constructions of the everyday are often deeply personal, and thus the relationship between design and everyday fashion is often best understood not only through physical garments themselves, but in conjunction with their associated stories and how individuals chose to consume and wear specific things. This perspective undermines definitions of everyday dress as something necessarily belonging to the working and middle classes, rather than the elite. Serena Dyer's chapter uses dress diaries from the eighteenth century to explore how elite women experienced everyday dress – that which they wore habitually, rather than on exceptional occasions – revealing how life writing can help us understand experiences of garments which were not preserved and collected due to processes of survival bias, which privileged the spectacular and exceptional. Jenny Richardson's chapter also discusses a type of clothing that rarely survives: the workwear worn by female munition workers during the First World War. Richardson illustrates the power of photographic postcards to capture not just the material details of these lost garments, but the ways munition workers used them in processes of self-fashioning and identity formation. By styling their workwear, posing for the photographs and then circulating them, these women found ways to express the deep friendships and new sense of self they gained from war work.

The study of latter twentieth century fashion can offer opportunities to access the stories of those men and women who designed, disseminated and consumed everyday fashion more directly, through interviews and the collection of oral histories. In her chapter Jade Halbert illustrates the value of using oral history methodologies to collect everyday fashion histories using the example of her own oral history focused study into the Marion Donaldson company. Halbert demonstrates the importance of making space to hear the voices of both interviewer as well as interviewee in order to access multi-layered stories using this methodology. Danielle

Sprecher also uses oral history as a methodology in order to advance the discussion of both the design and consumption of men's suits from the 1950s to the 1970s. This chapter unpicks the way the suit has been perceived as sartorially bland due to men's everyday routines of wearing it for work, leisure and special events. Sprecher challenges these assumptions through the stories of three men and the everyday and mutable role that suits played in their lives, showing how they enacted fashion through their suit choices and used this as a method of identity construction.

The relationship between everyday practices of wearing clothes and identity construction can also be seen in Liz Tregenza's chapter. Using an auto-ethnographic approach and a wearing methodology, Tregenza explores her own everyday style and considers her intimate relationship with her vintage wardrobe. She explains how the clothes she wears mark her, and how she, in turn, marks them. Reflecting on the power of clothes to affect change – both physically and on our identity – Tregenza highlights the importance of collecting stories of wear as well as objects in order to understand everyday embodied experiences of fashion.

The stories not told about fashion provide the subject of Emily Taylor's chapter. Taylor explains how the stories told about men's fashion are shaped by limited narratives, such as Flügel's notorious 'Great Masculine Renunciation', and that in trying to find fashionable stories that represent those narratives, studies of masculinity and men's fashion are typically disconnected from the clothes men actually wore. Focusing on collections held by National Museums Scotland, Taylor looks intimately at everyday working men's dress of c.1730–1880 to reframe the history of menswear and everyday masculinities, revealing the dormant potential of men's stories in museum collections. Emily Taylor's chapter demonstrates that little has changed since 2002 when Lou Taylor noted that fashion publications and exhibitions concentrate 'on the most glamorous levels of clothing production'.[56]

Although the value of sartorial biographies and non-elite clothes to tell engaging stories is more widely-recognised than it was twenty years ago, narratives of the genius designer and the lure of pristine, elite garments are still the foci for most displays and exhibitions about fashion. This book does not necessarily set the everyday practices of making, wearing and consuming fashion in opposition to this, but it does point to the way these intimate and personal stories of engagement can illuminate our understanding of fashion and its 'star' designers. This potential was demonstrated by the use of personal stories by curator Jenny Lister in the 2019 *Mary Quant* exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum. This book also exemplifies the value of imperfections in material objects and the way these can connect us to human stories from the past. This was evidenced especially well in the digital video displays that revealed details of the internal construction and wear of garments featured in the 2022 exhibition *In America: An Anthology of Fashion* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Foregrounding the value of everyday fashion practice and how it manifests in material objects has the potential to enrich future fashion collections by showing would-be museum donors the value of their everyday garments. Widening our definitions of where, how and by whom fashion is practiced enables fashion displays and publications to engage with new audiences. But it also allows fashion to be more readily engaged with outside of formal academic and curatorial practice. Because everyday fashion can be accessed through domestic wardrobes, charity shops and conversations with family and friends, it provides an accessible way for people to connect with the human stories of the past. The skin-like quality of clothes that are worn, loved, re-used and worn out connects us to our histories. It helps us understand where we have come from and how our communities have used fashion to negotiate identity. By foregrounding a range of different stories that encapsulate the myriad ways people experience fashion, we hope

this book will help encourage new scholars who may not see themselves represented in existing studies, exhibitions and collections to explore the field of fashion history without fear.

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