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IMAGINATIONS

REVUE D'ÉTUDES INTERCULTURELLES DE L'IMAGE ■ JOURNAL OF CROSS-CULTURAL IMAGE STUDIES

***FASHION CULTURES AND MEDIA:
CANADIAN PERSPECTIVES***

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INTRODUCTION: FASHION MEDIA CULTURES

KATRINA SARK

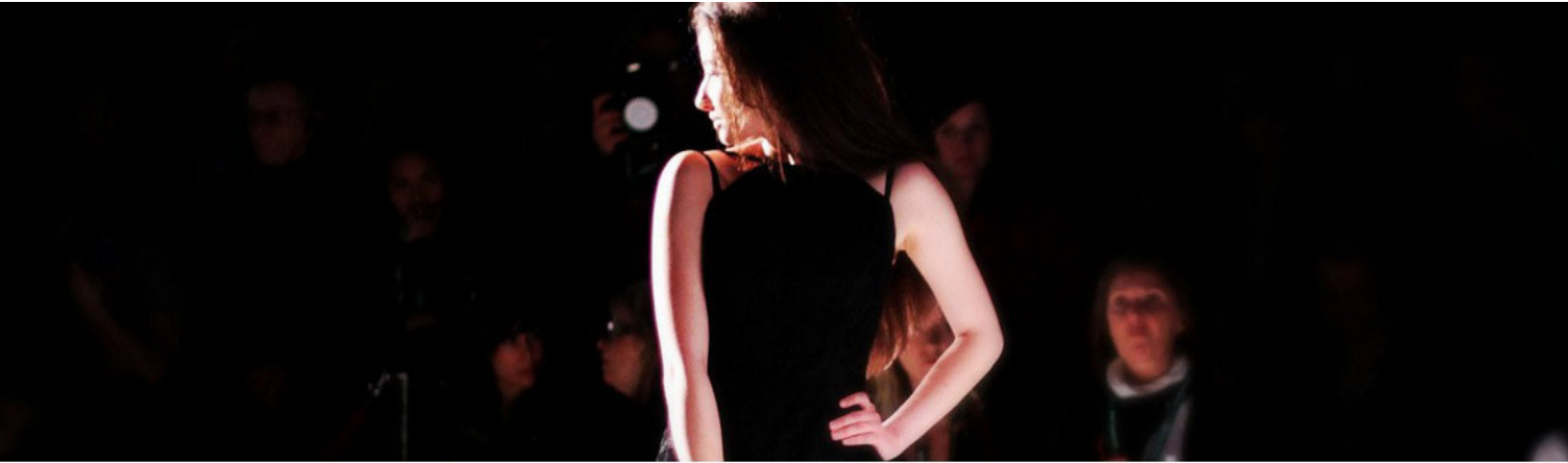


Figure 1 Montreal Fashion Week, 2010, photo by K. Sark

This special issue on *Fashion Culture and Media* is the first digital collection of scholarship and artistic contributions by the members of the Canadian Fashion Scholars Network. In my contribution to this issue I detail the history and objectives of this network, while the other articles address the representation of fashion across a variety of media—from hockey broadcasts to comics, novels to advertising campaigns, and films to urban imaginaries—and engage critically with various constructions of fashion cultures. My co-editor Elena Siemens and I decided to focus on both

fashion media and fashion cultures for this issue because they are inextricably linked, as the scholarly and artistic contributions to this volume demonstrate. The network's goal is to foster a stronger community of fashion scholars and to expand the discipline of Fashion Studies across Canada. I believe that critical engagement with fashion media and fashion cultures is still largely underrepresented in Canadian Fashion Studies and would like, through this volume and other activities of the network, to foster and expand these fields of inquiry.

THE CANADIAN FASHION SCHOLARS NETWORK

KATRINA SARK

Studying fashion culture entails examining representations, networks, mediations, imaginations, and scenes in their urban contexts. The Urban Chic book series, which I co-founded and have published in, develops a methodology of fashion culture as the foundational amalgamation of a city's fashion identity, history, industry, manufacturing practices, labour conditions, gender and identity issues, scenes, and media representations. Analyzing fashion cultures locationally requires an understanding of fashion and culture as complex frameworks that are multifaceted and contradictory and often challenge our (inter)disciplinary training as historians, theorists, literary and media scholars, and feminists.

As a feminist cultural analyst, I look at various types of cultural production across a range of media to examine representations of empowerment and power struggles. For instance, the growing representation of warrior women in mainstream cinema—for example, the action movies *Wonder Woman* (dir. Patty Jenkins, 2017) and *Atomic Blonde* (dir. David Leitch, 2017) have protagonists whose clothes, shoes, and accessories are mobilized and incorporated into their body as armour—takes on added significance at a time when the U.S., Canada, and the globe experience a resurgence of women's movements, protest, organizing, and political and social mobilization after the defeat of a female U.S. presidential candidate in November 2016—for example, the global Women's Marches that began in January 2017 and the #metoo and #timesup campaigns of 2017 and 2018. The

figure of Wonder Woman, as Jaclyn Marcus explores in depth in her article in this issue, has been claimed and re-claimed both by corporate capitalism and feminists alike. Wonder Women graced the cover of the feminist *Ms. Magazine*, was made the U.N. Ambassador for the Empowerment of Women and Girls, and then re-branded in Petty Jenkin's film in the gaze-friendly person of Gal Gadot. Marcus reads fashion and clothing in these mainstream representations through the metaphors of armour (denoting protective powers or even invincibility), as weapons (used for defense and offense), but also as codes of hyper-femininity in contrast to gender-defying strength and power narratives. It is also significant that these representations of empowerment in mainstream culture are still limited to white cis-women. Intersectional representations of empowerment through clothing and fashion (of people of colour, transgender protagonists, the LGBTQ+ community, Muslim women, Indigenous women, women with varying abilities, and others) are still very underrepresented, and are the topics of my forthcoming edited volumes on *Ethical Fashion and Empowerment* (in 2019) and *Fashion, Protest and Empowerment* (in 2020).

It was my interest in ethics and empowerment that led me to create the Canadian Fashion Scholars Network in 2014. A network, in today's digital world, implies instant access, connectivity, communication, exchange of ideas and resources as well as possibilities of creation and collaboration. The technological innovations of the past decade have made it easier to stay

connected through social-networking platforms and create online communication and research hubs that foster creative and academic collaborations. Technological innovation also makes it possible to create new networks relatively quickly and inexpensively, without relying on expert programmers or IT support. One can build net-



conversations. It is commonly accepted that communities are only as strong as the collective efforts of their individual participants. They require organizational leadership, as well as communal contribution and dedication. Professional and academic associations and organizations usually come together on an annual basis to ex-



Figures 1 and 2 Colour Block Party at the Montreal Musee des Beaux Arts with designs by local designers, and Montreal Fashion Week 2012, photos by K. Sark

works that spread widely and even globally in conjunction with other established networks and social media platforms.

Forming a community, by contrast, is more about bringing together people with common goals and needs, addressing these collectively and pragmatically. It requires time, effort, and planning, and, in lieu of available funding, a lot of creative thinking, fundraising and volunteering. First and foremost, community-building requires people to come together on a regular basis to establish connections and conversations in person. Neurologically, we are wired to connect and empathize with people, which is essential in community building and in finding creative solutions to collective goals, but this can only happen in the off-line world through non-mediated interpersonal communication, mutual understanding, common values and needs, collective brainstorming, and solution-based

change ideas that further knowledge, strengthen the field, and foster and sustain a sense of community among participants.

No such community existed in the field of fashion in Canada until 2014; the individual members or clusters of this community were present but fragmented across the country, not always communicating with each other, often not even aware of each other's work, and certainly not gathering in person on a regular basis to exchange ideas or to collaborate with other scholars and professionals from all across Canada.

My first experience working collaboratively and trying to establish a sense of community through research came when Susan Ingram (a contributor to this issue) and I decided to publish a book on Berlin fashion together, out of fashion research I conducted for Susan while completing my M.A. on academic exchange in Berlin.

Out of this productive collaboration grew a series of conference papers, articles, a book, and eventually a book series that began with our first volume *Berliner Chic: A Locational History of Berlin Fashion* (2011). The second book, *Wiener Chic: A Locational History of Vienna Fashion* (2013) was co-authored by Susan Ingram and Markus Reisenleitner, who is now the ed-



met with many fashion scholars, curators, archivists, designers, and other fashion professionals in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver and other cities in Canada. What became immediately apparent to me at that time was the lack of connectivity between all these cities and their research and design clusters, and the great need and desire for such a community.



Figures 3 and 4 Montreal Fashion Week 2012, and Vancouver Fashion Week, 2015, photos by K. Sark

itor-in-chief of *Imaginations*. The third volume was *Montréal Chic: A Locational History of Montreal Fashion* (2016), which I co-authored with Sara Danièle Bélanger Michaud, a francophone Comparative Literature scholar, who contributed the “Symbols” and “Music” chapters and helped map out the French literature on Montreal fashion. I focused my research on the history of fashion in Montreal, the fashion collections and exhibitions housed at the local museums, the complex fashion economy, the vibrant fashion scene with incredibly talented designers, the intersections of fashion and film, as well as the emerging field and community of fashion and technology based in Montreal. Through this work, I not only gained a better understanding and appreciation of the Canadian fashion landscape but also recognized the need to connect and generate visibility for the tremendous work of others. During my research for this book, I

I founded the Canadian Fashion Scholars Network in 2014, while completing my PhD at McGill University in Montreal, in the hope of bringing together scholars, curators, and fashion professionals from across the country in order to build a scholarly community and encourage nation-wide collaboration and exchange. I soon discovered that while small and localized communities of fashion scholars and professionals had formed all across Canada, especially around universities, fashion schools, and fashion collections housed in museums, universities, and independent archives, there was no nation-wide network or collective interaction. In October 2014, I organized the first Canadian Fashion Symposium at the McCord Museum in Montreal. It featured the work of twenty-two scholars and curators from across Canada. The Symposium was open to the public and very well attended, bringing together francophone

and anglophone scholars, as well as many members of Montreal's vibrant fashion scene. The overwhelmingly positive response to this Symposium from all participants and attendees confirmed the collective need for this network, inspired further events and community-building efforts, and established the beginning of a new community.

The following year, in November 2015, we reconvened at the Museum of Vancouver for our second annual Fashion Symposium, where I also had the opportunity to curate and organize my first fashion show, entitled *Fashion Avant-Garde: Now and Then*. This time I collaborated with



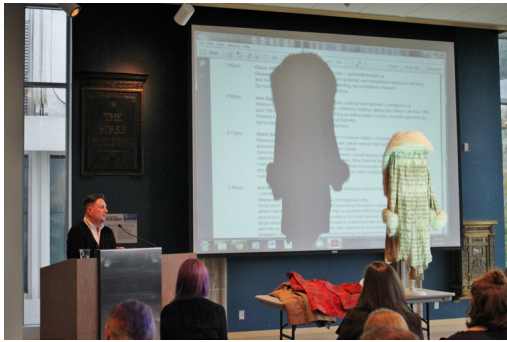
Figure 5 First Fashion Symposium at the McCord Museum in Montreal, 2014, photo by John Cruz

the museum, Vancouver's avant-garde, eco-conscious, and Indigenous fashion designers, and the renowned fashion collectors Ivan Sayers and Claus Jahnke. The historical and vintage couture pieces from Ivan's collection were complemented thematically, visually, technically, or conceptually by the new contemporary and innovative designs made in Vancouver. The fashion show juxtaposed the cutting edge of fashion design of today with older styles, as well as high tech and low-tech fashion trends and concepts. The show culminated with *Electric Heart*, an innovative design by Suzi Webster (the Vancouver-based artist and designer featured as the guest artist in

this volume, whose work deserves to be known across Canada), a work that visualizes and displays the transmitted heartbeat of the wearer (or their partner) through bluetooth transmission onto a LED screen on a tailored dress. The show was a great success and furthered our goal of fostering and sustain a community of scholars, designers, and organizers. That year, I also designed and launched our website and social media platforms, which I created to highlight the work of Canadian fashion scholars, their publications, exhibitions, programs, projects, and to assist in communication and collaboration.

The third Fashion Symposium took place at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto in October 2016, with twenty-seven Canadian participants presenting their work on fashion. It was the largest gathering to date and included new and returning scholars, fashion curators and archivists, textile and fashion professionals, designers, and, as always, graduate students. Alternating the locations of the annual symposia between eastern and western Canada allows new participants to discover the network and to present their work. So far, we have been extremely fortunate to be hosted by Canadian museums that have fashion collections, fashion exhibitions, and a mandate to attract new and younger audiences, that are not only interested in art but fashion as well. That year, I collaborated with Ingrid Mida and Alexandra Kim on compiling a *Bibliography of Canadian fashion* to help fashion scholars in Canada do their research and to map out the growing scholarship in this field.

In September 2017, we returned to Montreal, where we were hosted by the Montreal Fine Arts Museum, with a special presentation by curator Thierry-Maxime Loriot and a tour of his Jean-Paul Gaultier "Love is Love" exhibition. We also got a tour of the studio subTela fashion and



Figures 6 and 7 Second Fashion Symposium at the Museum of Vancouver with Claus Jahnke, Ivan Sayers, and Suzi Webster as presenters, 2015, photos by K. Sark



Figure 8 Third Fashion Symposium at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto, 2016, photo by K. Sark



Figures 9 and 10 Fourth Fashion Symposium at the Montreal Musee des Beaux Arts and the tour of the Jean Paul Gaultier Love is Love exhibit with curator Thierry-Maxime Loriot in 2017, photos by K. Sark

technology labs at Concordia University, organized by Barbara Layne and Joanna Berzowska. That year, we began to collaboratively conceptualize ways to showcase and represent the work of the members of the network at national and international conferences, to promote and circulate existing publications, and to generate new publication venues for new research. I introduced our *Events* page, which I update regularly with announcements of events, exhibitions, and workshops all across Canada, and our *Call for Submissions* page, which includes calls for chapters and volume submissions, including this special issue of *Imaginations*. I also created a page to showcase our students' work and projects that they designed in our fashion courses. With the growth of the network and the website, I decided to actively shift focus towards creating more platforms for fashion publications in Canada.

Our fifth anniversary Symposium took place in September 2018 at the Department of Human Ecology at the University of Alberta, in collaboration with the newly relocated Royal Alberta Museum in downtown Edmonton. Both institutions house incredibly rich collections of clothing and textiles pertinent to Canadian history. Julia Petrov, the Curator of Western Canadian History at the Royal Alberta Museum and a

contributor to this issue, showed us rare and important pieces of clothing from her fashion collection. We also got a special tour of the Anne Lambert Clothing and Textile Collection housed at the Human Ecology Department. Many of the participants that year have contributed to this fashion issue of *Imaginations* and other collections and volumes I am currently editing.

Since its conception five years ago, the Canadian Fashion Scholars Network has grown substantially in participation, collaboration, exchange of ideas, creative projects, and now publications. Our *Resources* page now includes a *List of Fashion Schools*, both private and public, in Canada. Our membership continues to grow each year, attracting scholars, students, curators and fashion professionals working on Canadian fashion in and outside of Canada.

Next year, in September 2019, we will be hosted by the School of Fashion at Ryerson University in collaboration with the Textile Museum of Canada in Toronto. I look forward to expanding the network to include the new generation of students in the graduate programs at Ryerson and other universities in the GTA, and to collaborating with the Ryerson Centre for Fashion Diversity and Social Change.



Figures 11 and 12 Anne Lambert Clothing and Textile Collection at the Department of Human Ecology at the University of Alberta, 2018, photos by K. Sark



Figures 13 and 14 Toronto Fashion District, 2014, photo by K. Sark and Claus Jahnke's collection, Vancouver 2015, photo by K. Sark

THE RUBY SLIPPERS ACROSS TIME, SPACE, AND MEDIA

ELENA SIEMENS

Abstract | This article discusses representations of Dorothy's magical shoes in diverse media—from the original text by L. Frank Baum (1900) to classic MGM film (1939) to Vogue's 2005 fashion shoot by Annie Leibovitz. According to Salman Rushdie, "the real secret of the ruby slippers is not that 'there's no place like home', but rather that there is no longer any such place as home." Canadian designer John Fluevog shares this point of view, as exemplified most prominently by *The Cosmos: Meteor shoes* (2016), which celebrate the road as the destination itself. I compare Fluevog to Gucci's flamboyant *Star Trek-inspired* campaign *GucciandBeyond* (2017), as well as the Gucci's more recent *Utopian Fantasy* campaign (2018). The essay cites, among others, Alain de Botton and Andy Warhol, both professing their fascination with air travel. Additional critical sources include Dick Hebdige's pioneering work on style subcultures, and MOMA's recent volume on *Fashion Is*. The essay's concluding sections discuss commercial appropriation of fashion, as well as fashion's open-ended definition.



Elena Siemens, *Fluevog Vancouver* (2016)

Résumé | Cet article discute des représentations des souliers magiques de Dorothée à travers divers médias—depuis le texte original de L. Frank Baum (1900), en passant par le film classique de MGM (1939), jusqu'à la série de photos d'Annie Leibovitz dans *Vogue* en 2005. Selon Salman Rushdie, "le vrai secret des chaussures rouges n'est pas que 'there's no place like home' mais plutôt que le 'home' n'existe plus." Le dessinateur de mode canadien John Fluevog partage cette opinion comme le montre de façon remarquable la collection de chaussures *The Cosmos: Meteor* (2016), qui célèbre la route comme la destination en elle-même. Je compare Fluevog à la campagne

haute en couleur de Gucci inspirée par *Star Trek*, *GucciandBeyond* (2017), ainsi qu'à la campagne plus récente de Gucci, intitulée *Utopian Fantasy* (2018). L'essai cite, entre autres, Alain de Botton et Andy Warhol, qui ont tous deux professé leur fascination pour le voyage aérien. D'autres sources critiques incluent le travail de Dick Hebdige, un des pionniers dans l'étude des subcultures du style, ainsi que le

récent volume du MOMA, *Fashion is*. Les paragraphes de conclusion discutent de l'appropriation commerciale de la mode ainsi que de l'aspect constamment renouvelé de ce qui définit la mode.

"Fashion is fluid" —

Fashion Is...
(*The Metropolitan Museum of Art*)

The "real secret of the ruby slippers," Salman Rushdie argues, "is not that 'there's no place like home,' but rather that there is no longer any such place *as* home" (57). Intended as a critical introduction, this essay traces the ruby slippers' fascinating journey from the original text by L. Frank Baum (1900) to MGM's classic film (1939) to *Vogue's* 2005 fashion shoot by Annie Leibovitz. I further discuss a more recent interpretation of the ruby slippers, The Cosmos: Meteor shoes by Canadian designer John Fluevog (Spring/Summer 2016). Their soles inscribed "Created in the Cosmos, Worn on Earth," the Meteors also celebrate the road as the destination. I compare Fluevog to Gucci's Star-Trek inspired campaign *GucciandBeyond* (Fall 2017) and the brand's equally out-of-this-world *Utopian Fantasy* campaign (Spring/Summer 2018). My critical sources include Alain de Botton and Andy Warhol, who both profess their fascination with air travel (and airports), as well as Benedict Anderson's writing on "imagined communities" and Dick Hebdige's foundational work on style subcultures. The essay's concluding sections discuss the commercial appropriation of fashion, as well as fashion's open-ended definition.

Fluevog Vancouver

Fluevog's store on Granville Street in Vancouver, its whimsical façade adorned with gilded angels and neon lights, recalls a world of magic and fantasy. One of the city's oldest and longest streets, gritty Granville stands "in sharp contrast to Vancouver's modern, 'city-of-glass' architecture" (Siemens,

Theatre 77). Subject to flamboyant gentrification in recent years, this street still preserves some old-fashioned landmarks, such as two venerable entertainment venues, the Orpheum and the Vogue (dating from the 1920s and the 1940s, respectively). The Fluevog store (opened in 1973) initially "was an elaborate bedroom, with shoes gracing a giant bed" ("Our Story—About Fluevog"). As described on the brand's official website, one of John Fluevog's first designs was The Pilgrim (1970), its "boldness [...] was completely against the mainstream of the time, and John has kept it unconventional ever since!" ("Our Story—About Fluevog"). Fluevog has attracted such celebrity customers as Robert Altman, Alice Cooper, Madonna, Beyoncé, and Lady Gaga. In 2013, Fluevog shoes became the official footwear of flight attendants on AirCanada Rouge. The brand's site comments: "John's always toyed with the idea of 'Flying Vogs'" ("Our Story—About Fluevog"). The audacious Cosmos: Meteor shoes further attest to Fluevog's fascination with travel on this planet and beyond as a preferred mode of living.



Elena Siemens, *Fluevog Vancouver* (2016)

Celebration of Escape

In his BFI volume on *The Wizard of Oz*, Salman Rushdie challenges the traditional interpretation that the ruby slippers deliver Dorothy the gift of returning to her family home in Kansas. “The Kansas described by L. Frank Baum,” Rushdie points out, “is a depressing place, in which everything is grey as far as the eye can see – the prairie is grey and so is the house in which Dorothy lives” (16). “The Kansas of the film,” he continues:

is a little less unremittingly bleak than the Kansas of the book, if only because of the introduction of the three farmhands and Professor Marvel, four characters who will find their “rhymes”, their counterparts, in the Three Companions of Oz and the Wizard himself. Then again, it is also more terrifying, because it adds a presence of real evil: the angular Miss Gulch, with a profile that could carve a joint, riding stiffly on her bicycle with a hat on her head like a plum pudding, or a bomb, and claiming the protection of the Law for her crusade against Toto. Thanks to Miss Gulch, the movie’s Kansas is informed not only by the sadness of dirt-poverty, but also by the badness of would-be dog murderers. (17)

Rushdie asks: “And *this* is the home that ‘there’s no place like’? *This* is the lost Eden that we are asked to prefer (as Dorothy does) in Oz?” (17). He emphatically says “no” to both of these questions. Instead, he insists that *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*:

is unarguably a film about the joys of going away, of leaving the greyness and entering the colour, of making a new life in the “place where there isn’t any trouble.”

“Over the Rainbow” is, or ought to be, the anthem of all the world’s migrants, all those who go in search of the place where “the dreams that you dare to dream really come true.” It is a celebration of Escape, a grand paean of the Unrooted Self, a hymn—the hymn—to Elsewhere. (23)

Vogue’s Take

Vogue’s 2005 take on *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* delivers a similar message. Styled by Grace Coddington and photographed by Annie Leibovitz, this photoshoot employs the same Technicolor palette as the classic 1939 film. Vogue’s Dorothy is portrayed by Keira Knightley, who famously played leading roles in several screen adaptations of literary classics, including Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* (dir. Joe Wright, 2012), which was awarded an Oscar for its costumes by Jacqueline Durran. Durran followed the director’s suggestion that “the costumes should be 1870s in shape but have the architectural simplicity of the 1950s” (qtd. in Siemens, *Street* 10). The only instance when Durran remained faithful to Tolstoy was Anna’s black dress from a key scene in the novel. In *Street Fashion Moscow*, I cite Wim Wenders’ poetic passage on the “narrative power” of clothes:

A crispy ironed shirt!
A woman’s life her entire life showing the
sufferings of a dress!
(qtd. in Siemens, *Street* 10)

I further refer to Anne Hollander’s *Seeing Through Clothes*, which discusses the relationship between “clothes in the works of art” and “clothes in real life” (qtd. in Siemens, *Street* 11). According to Hollander, “the way clothes strike the eye comes to be mediated by current visual assumptions made in pictures of dressed people”



Elena Siemens, *Fluevog Vancouver* (2016)

(qtd. in Siemens, *Street* 11). She points out that starting from the 20th century, cinema and photography have become dominant in providing inspiration and guidance for the way people dress.

Vogue's savvy *Wizard of Oz* photoshoot similarly aims to inspire the reader, as well as sell fashion. In it, Dorothy wears designer clothes and a series of ruby slippers by, among others, Balenciaga, Oscar de la Renta, Rochas, Lanvin, and Chanel Haute Couture. Grace Coddington, then the Creative Director of *Vogue*, also enlisted a group of diverse contemporary artists, from Jasper Johns (best known for his iconic Flag paintings) to Jeff Koons (the author of monumental

puppy sculptures and inflatable rabbits, featured more recently in Louis Vuitton's 2017 fashion campaign), to take part in the shoot. *Vogue* leaves out the "greyness" of Dorothy's family home in Kansas; instead, the campaign focuses exclusively on the brilliant Technicolor Land of Oz, where "the dreams that you dare to dream really come true."



Elena Siemens, *Fluevog Vancouver* (2016)

The Cosmos: Meteor 2016

The Cosmos: Meteor by John Fluevog can also be seen as a contemporary interpretation of the ruby slippers. The Meteor's product description reads: "It's not always easy to wish upon a falling star, but thanks to this Cosmos Family beauty, it's easier than ever to walk up on one" ("Cosmos Meteor"). The Meteors were the "result of careful research into what a Mini design might look like after being sent to the moon and back" ("Cosmos Meteor"). Unlike the ruby slippers, which promise the wearer a safe return home, the Meteors celebrate the road as the destination itself. The opening spread of *Fluevog Post* from Spring/Summer 2016 announces: "Somewhere Out There: Starting This Spring: The Cosmos: Meteors" (*Fluevog Post* S/S 2016).

Reminiscent of Rushdie, Fluevog's sensibility is characteristic of today's mobile and unsettled world, where home/shelter is frequently a transient space, such as an airport, its vagabond dwellers forming, to borrow Benedict Anderson's term, an "imagined community." In *The Art of Travel*, Alain de Botton writes about the comfort he draws from visiting Heathrow airport:

When feeling sad at home, I have often boarded a train or airport bus and gone to Heathrow, where, from an observation gallery in Terminal 2 or from the top floor of the Renaissance Hotel along the north runway, I have drawn comfort from the sight of ceaseless landing and take-off of aircrafts. (35-36)

De Botton finds it "pleasant to hold in mind" that at any time, on some random afternoon "when lassitude and despair threaten, there is always a plane taking off for somewhere, for Baudelaire's 'Anywhere!'" (39). Baudelaire, by his own admission, "felt more at home in the transient places of travel than in his own dwelling" (qtd. in De Botton 35).



Elena Siemens, *Fluevog Vancouver* (2016)

De Botton also references T. S. Eliot, who "proposed that Baudelaire had been the first nineteenth-century artist to give expression to the beauty of modern travelling places and machines" (qtd. in De Botton 35). According to Eliot, Baudelaire "invented a new kind of romantic nostalgia" – "the *poésie des départs*, the *poésie des salles d'attente*" (35). De Botton adds that the list can be extended to include "the *poésie des station-service* and the *poésie des aéroports*" (35).

Gucci in the Sky

"Today my favorite kind of atmosphere is the airport atmosphere," Andy Warhol writes in *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol* (160). He elaborates:

Airplanes and airports have my favorite kind of food service, my favorite kind of bathrooms, my favorite peppermint Life Savers, my favorite kind of entertainment, my favorite loudspeaker address system, my favorite conveyor belts, my favorite graphics and colors, the best security checks, the best views, the best perfume shops, the best employees, the best optimism. (160)

Warhol confesses: "The atmosphere is great, it's the idea of flying that I question. [...] I'm embarrassed that I don't like to fly because I love to be modern, but I compensate by loving airports and airplanes so much" (160). More recently, the fashion brand Gucci has also professed its fascination with the atmosphere of air travel, or, more precisely, that of intergalactic voyages. Photographed by Glen Luchford, the brand's Fall 2017 campaign *GucciandBeyond* "is placed in an intergalactic world inspired by sci-fi motifs from the 1950s and 1960s. The brand also took heavy inspiration from 'Star Trek,' recreating the show's signature elements, like the

Enterprise, its transporter and bridge for a Gucci'd out Starfleet crew" (Bobila). Jonathan Ho's review, titled "[Star Trek] Gucci Fall 2017 Campaign Goes Where No Fashion Brand Has Gone Before," points out:



Elena Siemens, *Fluevog Vancouver* (2016)

In Gucci's vision of retro-future, one can be thankful that Seinfeld's and Star Trek's vision of the one-piece uniform with boots never comes to pass, instead, human characters toggled out in a dazzling array of textures and colours which comprise of the Gucci Fall 2017 campaign greet extra-terrestrials and battle dinosaurs on Earth's pre-history before being beamed up to psychedelic starship juxtaposes high fashion with sci-fi in a wild, never before seen fantastical composition which underscores how brilliant the commentary is. (Ho)

The review adds that Gucci's campaign "begs you to take a leap to the fashion frontier, instead of exploring brave new worlds, it's an exploration of adventurous sartorialism" (Ho)—a sentiment reminiscent of Andy Warhol, who preferred the airport atmosphere to flying (Ho). Gucci has continued its "exploration of adventurous sartorialism" with the *Utopian Fantasy* campaign (Spring/Summer 2018). For this equally over-the-top campaign mixing Renaissance art with Snow White, Gucci traded in "glossy photographs for digital paintings" by Spanish artist Ignasi Monreal (Urbina). In addition to producing recreations of the old masters, Monreal also starred in the dreamlike video for the aptly titled *GucciHulluciantion* campaign (Spring/Summer 2018). In contrast to Gucci's enthusiastic use of digital technology, John Fluevog stubbornly continues to print his *Fluevog Post* (and other promotional paper products, such as postcards)—yet another evidence of the designer's maverick stance.

Be Separate from the Crowd

Reminiscent in some aspects of Anderson's "imagined communities," style subcultures unite individuals (either within or outside national

boundaries), who share common cultural and sartorial preferences. In his seminal work on style subcultures, Dick Hebdige focuses on:

the expressive forms and rituals of subordinate groups—the teddy boys and mods and rockers, the skinheads and the punks—who are alternately dismissed, denounced and canonized; treated at different times as threats to public order and as harmless buffoons. (Hebdige 431)

Inspired by Jean Genet's *The Thief's Journal*, Hebdige is "intrigued by the most mundane objects—a safety pin, a pointed shoe, a motor cycle—which, none the less, like the tube of vaseline [in Genet], take on a symbolic dimension, becoming a form of stigmata, tokens of a self-imposed exile" (431). Hebdige later realized that he "had underestimated the power of commercial culture to appropriate, and indeed, to produce counter-hegemonic styles" (Hebdige 429). The "market-savvy" punk exemplifies this particularly well (Hebdige 429).

The Wizard of Oz, and the ruby slippers in particular, have also been the subject of active commercial appropriation—by the film industry, fashion magazines and various fashion brands, as well as individual designers. The Meteors by Fluevog present a different case, as they allude to the ruby slippers only indirectly: the shared reference to travelling beyond the imaginable, "somewhere over the rainbow." John Fluevog, who frequently follows his personal preoccupations and discoveries, is best described as an auteur designer. For example, The Wearevers Danke shoes were first conceived in Berlin, where Fluevog was "mesmerized" by Berlin's "burgeoning modern art," and the city's "ultra-functional urbanity" ("Wearevers Danke"). Inspired by Berlin's architecture, Fluevog "drew up the

designs for a simple, but functional chelsea bootie on the comfy custom molded Wearever sole" ("Wearevers Danke"). Each pair of Fluevog shoes comes in a soft cotton bag inscribed with the following advisory by John Fluevog:

Always hold on to the truth. Don't let others sway your heart. Don't compromise yourself for the sake of temporal grooviness. Be separate from the crowd that's awash with normality by standing on a firm foundation. Never waver in your love or faith, and in all you do, please wear my shoes.

Fashion Is...

The MET's volume on *Fashion Is...*, from which this essay derives its epigraph, contains "nearly two hundred definitions of fashion [pairing] simple descriptions with a range of costumes, artifacts, and works of art from the Metropolitan Museum's encyclopedic collection, including The Costume Institute" (Tribble). The book's preface points out:

The descriptions given are subjective observations that are open to discussion. Fashion is a ruffle, fashion is a crease. Fashion is for the head, fashion is for the feet. Fashion is denim, fashion is diamonds. Some of the responses speak to the technique, while others are descriptive and evocative. (Tribble)

This provocative volume solicits active participation: "Because fashion has no limits, readers are encouraged to react, to think, and to create their own definitions of "fashion" (Tribble). The book contains a number of definitions relevant to my essay: "fashion is fantasy," "fashion is advertisement," "fashion is photographed," "fashion is illustrated," "fashion is the past," and

THE RUBY SLIPPERS

“fashion is the future” (Tribble). In addition, my discussion of the ruby slippers’ head-spinning journey across time, space, and media suggests several other entries, such as: “fashion is the

Yellow Brick Road,” “fashion is imagined,” “fashion is lived,” “fashion is air travel,” and “fashion is the Fluevog store on the rain-swept Granville Street in Vancouver.”



Elena Siemens, Fluevog Vancouver (2016)

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READING GLAMOUR IN PHYLLIS BRETT YOUNG'S *THE TORONTONIANS*

KATHRYN FRANKLIN

Abstract | This article explores the relationships between fashion, glamour, celebrity, and Canadian literature, focusing specifically on Toronto, Canada. I argue for the value of “reading glamour” into Toronto’s literature by examining how glamour provides a socio-cultural insight into character and plot development and, moreover, elevates the character of the city itself. No doubt certain authors conjure up a glamorous cachet with their coterie of bohemian intellectual and literary salons but the writing itself rarely approaches the same level of glamorous celebration. However, reading glamour—that is, following Brown, tracing the language and grammar of glamour as a literary form linked to modern mass culture—extends the potential for literary and cultural expression of the text. As Gundell and Castelli argue, glamour is typically associated with the urban and cosmopolitan, and this paper explores how Toronto has historically engaged with its own sense of burgeoning celebrity, fashion, and glamour. By focusing on the work of Phyllis Brett Young’s *The Torontonians* (1960), I examine how glamour as a corollary to fashion challenges preconceptions of “Toronto the Good,” not only within the local urban imaginary but also on national and global levels.

Résumé | Cet article explore les relations entre mode, glamour, célébrité et littérature canadienne en se concentrant plus spécifiquement sur Toronto. J’entends prouver la valeur de la lecture du glamour dans la littérature de Toronto en examinant comment le glamour offre une interprétation socio-culturelle du développement de l’intrigue et des personnages et, de surcroît, élève le personnage de la ville elle-même. Il va sans dire que certains auteurs créent un cachet glamour grâce à leur coterie de salons intellectuels et bohémiens, mais l’écriture elle-même atteint rarement le même niveau de célébration glamour. Cependant, lire le glamour—c’est-à-dire, à la suite de Brown, suivre le langage et la grammaire du glamour comme une forme littéraire liée à la culture de masse moderne—élargit le potentiel d’expression littéraire et culturelle du texte. Comme le montrent Gundell et Castelli, le glamour est typiquement associé à l’urbain et au cosmopolitain, et cette communication explore comment Toronto s’est historiquement impliqué dans son propre sentiment grandissant de célébrité, de mode et de glamour. En me concentrant sur le livre de Phyllis Brett Young, *The Torontonians* (1960), j’examine comment le glamour, comme corollaire de la mode, challenge les préconceptions de “Toronto la bonne” non seulement à l’intérieur même de l’imaginaire urbain local, mais aussi aux niveaux national et global.

And all the time, you pound your little Remington amid the office debris and push your copy through the cigarette-smoke barrage encircling the city editor's desk—and wonder, "What do they mean GLAMOUR?" – Nielsine Hansen, "What About Glamour?" (1929)

Introduction: The Language, Grammar and Challenges of Reading Glamour

The relationship between glamour and literature is not often immediately apparent. Glamour, for one, is not so easy to pin down. It is often referred to as an “elusive concept” (Wilson, “A Note on Glamour” 95) or more definitively as “a formal category and an experiential site of consumer desire, fantasy, sexuality, class, and racial identity” (Brown 1). The grammar of glamour inserts itself into the rhetoric of those intangible qualities that once demand and defy definition. Glamour’s associative range of qualities complicate its meaning. For all its vivid depictions in magazines, film, and art, the realm of glamour is exclusive to the broad scope of the imagination, lending its essence to works that reflect its ephemerality. Indeed, glamour has historically been linked with sorcery and metamorphoses; it is precisely glamour’s manipulation of reality that makes its essence so seductive.

Glamour’s etymology traces back to the old word “gramarye,” an alteration of the word grammar that connotes learning as well as the mystifying effects of magic or the act of being charmed. The word glamour was popularized in English by Sir Walter Scott in 1805 with the publication of his long narrative poem, “The Lay of the Last Minstrel.” Glamour, Scott wrote, “Could make a lady seem a knight; / The cobwebs on a dungeon wall / Seem tapestry in lordly hall.” Scott’s use

of glamour was an Anglicized version of “glamer,” which according to *An Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1897) referred to “the supposed influence of a charm on the eye, causing it to see objects differently from what they really are” (qtd. in Gundle and Castelli 3). In tracing glamour’s origins, its literary connections are evident. Glamour emerges as a literary form (Brown 9) in the modern era that communicates the language and grammar of transformation through its ability to stir desire and create the illusion of an eternal moment. In a *New Yorker* article discussing the glamour of famed Brazilian author, Clarice Lispector, Benjamin Moser affirms glamour’s power of transfiguration by reflecting upon Lispector’s particular literary glamour. He notes that her distinct brand is “dangerous” citing an anecdote from one of her friends that warned her readers that “it’s not literature. It’s witchcraft” (“The True Glamour of Clarice Lispector”).

Certainly, celebrated works of fiction carry glamour’s lexical charm. In her study of glamour as an aesthetic symbol of modernity that emerged out of the industrial revolution, Judith Brown maintains that glamour has ties to progress and mass culture and can be used as a methodological tool to assess literature, photography, celebrity and commodity culture. She makes the case for *reading* glamour in works of modernist literature by arguing that:

If critics have generally ignored the concept of glamour, modern writers at times explicitly invoked its magical powers, finding in its effect an expressive capacity akin to that of literature; among those who actually use the word and invoke its power are Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, and Virginia Woolf (9).

For Brown, glamour is an aesthetic property of modernist literature that has come out of the United Kingdom and the United States; yet her practice of reading glamour extends the potential for reading practices across literary movements, temporalities, and nationalities. This article builds upon the complexities and practice of reading glamour, as suggested by Brown, and turns toward a Canadian context that focuses on reading glamour in Phyllis Brett Young's 1960 novel *The Torontonians*. Young's text offers a particularly striking starting point into the discussion concerning glamour's expression in the city by focusing on a moneyed and upper-class Toronto of the 1950s. As Coral Ann Howells argues, we can understand that "*The Torontonians* [is] a product of Canadian cultural nationalism of the '50s and '60s, reflecting a new era of prosperity and consumerism" (56). I would extend her point to include glamour as a particularly national component of Young's text and one that challenges the 1960s perception of "Toronto the Good." To be sure, glamour's talisman-like quality often lends itself to narratives that seek to challenge the borders of convention and good taste. Glamour, therefore, is Janus-faced. On one hand, it is routinely yoked together with celebrity culture, which conjures up nostalgia for images of Hollywood's Golden Age, and on the other hand, glamour belies a genuine terror for the natural world. Glamour's outward appearance is generally a reaction against the seemingly mundane or the absolutely horrific, recalling Shakespeare's famous line from the *Merchant of Venice* that "All that glitters is not gold" (2.7.73).

This article, therefore, considers how reading glamour in *The Torontonians* is an exercise in challenging the preconceptions of the city, as the language, grammar, and challenges of glamour are used to de-stabilize assumptions and

attitudes surrounding post-war Toronto while simultaneously acknowledging the anxiety of the developing modern city. Through Young's protagonist, Karen, a feminized urbane glamour emerges, thus building and expanding upon the dimensions of Canadian urban writing.

Finding Glamour in the Margins in Toronto's Literature

Northrop Frye's conception of the "garrison mentality," that is, the sense of hostility towards nature by earlier Canadian settlers, has had a profound influence on the country's literature. While the trope of the Canadian landscape and wilderness has long dominated literary discourse, the Canadian urban novel has had a powerful, albeit often invisible, history, articulating a counter-narrative to the myth of the land (Iverson and Edwards 10). Nevertheless, for many years Torontonians maintained an intense bias against their own writers resulting in a cultural negation of the city's literary heritage. This "persistent self-loathing" (Harris 19) extends as far back to the turn of the century, as outlined in "Literature in Canada" (1899), an essay by novelist and critic Robert Barr:

The bald truth is that Canada has the money, but would rather spend it on whiskey than on books. [...]. What chance has Canada, then, of raising a Sir Walter Scott? I maintain that she has but very little chance, because she won't pay the money, and money is the root of all literature. The new Sir Walter is probably tramping the streets of Toronto to-day, looking vainly for something to do. But Toronto will recognize him when he comes back from New York or London, and will give him a dinner when he doesn't need it. (qtd. in Harris 19)

In summoning Scott, the patron of glamour, Barr inadvertently addresses a longing for glamour's expression to radiate not simply within the pages of the city's literature but also in its celebration of literature as a national good.

Prior to the 1970s very little Canadian fiction was actively situated in Toronto. For example, Margaret Atwood's *The Edible Woman* (1969) is notorious for taking place in a nondescript and anonymous urban landscape only vaguely hinting that the downtown she describes may be Toronto and not a nameless American metropolis. Yet in the decades after, particularly in the early aughts, Toronto as a tangible space imbued with its own sense of culture and mythology became increasingly popular in fiction by Toronto authors.² Justin D. Edwards and Douglas Ivison, the editors of *Downtown Canada: Writing Canadian Cities* (2005), similarly champion the rise of the Canadian urban novel with their cri de cœur to honour the country's downtown spaces in its national literature:

No longer are we content to engage in thematic studies which privilege the wilderness, rural areas, or the small town as the place upon which Canadian identity is constructed. Instead we seek to bridge the gap that exists between the lived experiences of most Canadians, who overwhelmingly live in urban environments, and the public mythology of Canada and critical production on Canadian literature and culture, which has, until recently, largely focused on rural and wilderness spaces and small towns. (6)

The literary shift that began to assert itself toward the latter part of the 20th century to the present highlights Canadian cities as spaces equally worthy of celebration and critical

discourse. Toronto-based literature continues to contribute and shape the production of the city, and arguably the city has contributed and shaped the production of literature (Edwards and Ivison 9). A similar sentiment is taken up in Amy Lavender Harris' *Imagining Toronto*, arguing that Toronto is a textual city, and her work seeks to interpret Toronto literature against the backdrop of the city itself. Harris writes in her introduction:

This book is predicated on a belief that rather than comparing Toronto to the world's other great literary cities and finding it wanting, we should instead realize that Toronto's literature reflects an entirely new kind of city, a city where identity emerges not from shared tradition or a long history but rather is forged out of commitment to the virtues of diversity, tolerance and cultural understanding. (14)

Harris' approach to the city reflects my interpretation of the relationship between glamour and Toronto. Whereas prominent textual cities such as Paris, London, New York City, and Los Angeles are instinctively associated with glamour in the global imagination, Toronto is consistently negotiating its literary glamour as the city continues to develop and change.

Glamour, of course, is not a word that immediately comes to mind in discussions of Toronto literature. At one point in *The Torontonians*, Karen jokingly remarks, "Toronto itself, in spite of what the rest of Canada seemed to think of it, had been a lovely city to live in. At the time nobody would have dreamed of calling it the New York of Canada" (101). Caroline Rosenthal further corroborates this claim: "In an international perspective, Toronto lacks not only the glamour but also the darker aspects of New York.

It is commonly regarded as the safer, cleaner, and more tolerant, albeit duller, of the two cities” (31). The use of “glamour” in this context is clearly instructive in its suggestion that Toronto, within the urban imaginary, is completely devoid of glamour, especially compared to the much-mythologized New York City. Rosenthal continues: “As an imaginative city, Toronto is still in the process of becoming, not because there has been no fiction set in Toronto earlier in the twentieth century, but because it is only now that it is being discussed as a significant corpus of literature and as a way of symbolically building the city” (33). Reading glamour, therefore, in Toronto literature becomes an exercise in challenging these preconceptions of the city and of the city’s literature entirely.

In the Summer 2017 issue of *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Brandon McFarlane discusses the emergent Canadian fiction of 2015 and its tendency toward post-industrialist fiction. McFarlane draws upon Richard Lloyd’s investigation into the rise of neo-bohemian spaces under the “grit-as-glamour” aesthetic that “suggests that some [Canadian] authors are breathing new life into old myths while creating radically new, transnational aesthetics that can mediate the disruptions and opportunities presented by the era of post-industrialism” (4). Nevertheless, prior to the grit-as-glamour prose, which has become more pervasive in recent Canadian fiction as the country’s major cities have become more global, Phyllis Brett Young was embarking upon her own creation myth for Toronto, using the transformative language of glamour to demonstrate how Toronto was a burgeoning city with a new sense of identity “perched at the edge of modernity” (Harris 289).

Upon first blush, the language of glamour mixed with the spirit of modernity may make

for strange bedfellows, yet the two are intrinsically tied. Charles Baudelaire famously coined the term “modernity” in “The Painter of Modern Life” (1864) to convey the aesthetic and relative nature of time: “By ‘modernity’ I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable” (13). Glamour, as Brown states, is “produced in the glance backward, now cedes itself to the future, where it may acquire new dimensions in a different language” (19). Both concepts are further reflected in the “mental life” that Georg Simmel outlined in, “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” concerning the *modern* urban metropolis and how industrialism and rapid urbanization affects the spaces, both mental and physical, of its citizens. Certainly, Baudelaire’s Paris and Simmel’s Berlin occupy differing concerns from their separate geographies and eras, yet the 1950s post-war culture in Toronto exhibited in Young’s text brims with cautious optimism and genuine desire to embrace the modern.³

Toronto was a boom town where, with the easing of the liquor laws, you could at last buy a drink in public. That is, a real drink, something stronger than four-point beer. A cocktail in a place like the Cork Room, or the Silver Rail, cost you three times what it would have cost you at home, but you went to the bars in spite of this because the bars represented glamour and novelty. (60)

Glamour is broadly defined by its various combinations of fashion, beauty, luxury, celebrity, and wealth; however, early conceptions of glamour were associated with the fascination of the early modern city and modernity itself (see Gundle and Castelli). Young acknowledges Toronto’s puritanical past by highlighting its harsh liquor laws but invokes the glamour of the bar as a fashionable space of conspicuous consumption

that reflects the changing mores of the modern city.⁴ While *The Torontonians* is not considered a modernist text, albeit, it is a text that considers modern themes, it nonetheless bristles with domestic existentialism as Karen, too, recognizes the potential for her own personal glamour that correlates within the fashionable space that Toronto portends.

Phyllis Brett Young and the Glamour of *The Torontonians*

In 2007, McGill-Queen's Press re-issued *The Torontonians*, thus reviving the name Phyllis Brett Young in Canadian literary discourse. In the introduction to the novel, Nathalie Cooke and Suzanne Morton demonstrate that while Phyllis Brett Young is not a common name in the Canadian literary canon, in the early 1960s she was an internationally regarded author alongside notable Canadian writers of the time such as Hugh McLennan and Mordecai Richler. Young was born in Toronto in 1914 and between the years 1959 and 1969 she published four novels, a memoir, and a thriller published under the pseudonym Kendal Young. *The Torontonians*, her second novel, was an instant bestseller both in Canada and the United States, where it first appeared in hardcopy in October 1960. Certainly, this was no small feat for a book that is exclusively and unreservedly very much about late-1950s suburban Toronto. Young was so deeply committed to showcasing Toronto as a vibrant city that she had to fight with her publishers to keep the title. American and British publishers, however, were not persuaded. According to Young's daughter, Valerie Argue, "In those days for a novel, or movie, to be set in Canada (and especially Toronto!) was the kiss of death for international sales" (x). Instead, Young's novel was renamed for the international market under two different titles, *Gift of Time* in the U.S and Europe and *The*

Commuters in Australia, ensuring no immediate reference to Canada's largest city (Argue xi). Nevertheless, when the novel was released local Toronto bookstores were experiencing "unusually large sales" (Fulford qtd. in Grewal) and *The New York Times* professed: "In a growing catalogue of books that have been proving the sweet life of suburbia, Mrs. Young's stand out as both wise and witty" (qtd. in Grewal), thus guaranteeing Young a modicum of celebrity.

In the foreword to the 2007 reissue, Valerie Argue writes, "It was not just Toronto and Torontonians but Canada and Canadians that Phyllis Brett Young wanted to put on the map, and in each of her works she tries to do just that. As she said in an *Ottawa Citizen* interview (7 April 1960), 'I write because I love Canada and I wish more and more people would write about Canada as it is today'" (xi). Through Karen, Young offers meditations upon the development of the city that are filled with worldly insight and solid criticism acknowledging that Toronto is in the process of becoming a city of the imagination:

After Geneva, you were more critical of Toronto than you had been in the past, but paradoxically you loved it more than you ever had, and you were damn proud of it. It was not London, and it was not Paris, but it was Toronto, and that was more than good enough for you. You were terribly excited about this St. Lawrence Seaway thing they had started to talk about, because you could see that if it went through, your city, your Toronto, could become one of the great inland seaports of the world. (149)

Through Karen's judicious perspective, *The Torontonians* unfolds like a creation myth that explains the essence of the city to the rest of the

world offering a glimpse of its own particular urbane glamour.

Young's novel begins: "Early morning sunlight warm against the thin, smooth contour of one cheek, Karen sat in the breakfast-room and thought about suicide" (7). This opening sentence faintly echoes Ezra's Pound's famous imagist poem "In a Station of the Metro"⁵ with its simple yet profound meditation of the morning. The cool, detached narrative style and stony prose develop like a photograph in a dark room, slowly setting the tone for the rest of the novel. The inherent sheen of glamour is apparent in the untouched beauty of the "Early morning sunlight," an alluring spectre, followed by the description of Karen's slick cheek as if she were a brand-new sports car. Meanwhile, Young's opening line hints at the sinister elements of the novel with its casual suggestion of suicide revealing Karen's darker desires. The nonchalant approach to self-harm is faintly reminiscent of a 1929 journal article from *The Iowa Homemaker* titled, "What About the Glamour?" in which the author Nielsine Hansen bemoans that "there will be days when your public will ring in kicks from morning until night until suicide looks like the primrose path" (3); yet despite the annoyance and despair she concludes "Isn't there some glamour in that?" (3).

Phyllis Brett Young's Toronto exists through a lens of post-war ennui, where ladies lunch and men work on Bay Street and come home to cooked dinners made by their wives—living up to its reputation as "Toronto the Good." Karen Whitney, the protagonist of Young's proto-feminist novel,⁶ dreams of being more than just a mother and wife in a nicely manicured, Leaside-type home. Her psychological struggle to achieve a sense of purpose beyond her socially prescribed role forces her to reflect upon certain

events that happened in her life while growing up in the city. As Karen carefully examines her past, Young expertly weaves Toronto developmental milestones into the narrative, such as the opening of the Yonge subway line in 1954 and plans to construct the new City Hall. This *pas de deux* reveals as much about Karen's personal growth as that of the city's, intrinsically linking the two. The sense of optimism that concludes the novel reads as a forecast for the city that insists there is potential beyond Toronto's simple "good" moniker.⁷

The cover of the 1960 Canadian version of *The Torontonians* (Fig. 1) features a sketch of the new Toronto City Hall in the background while at

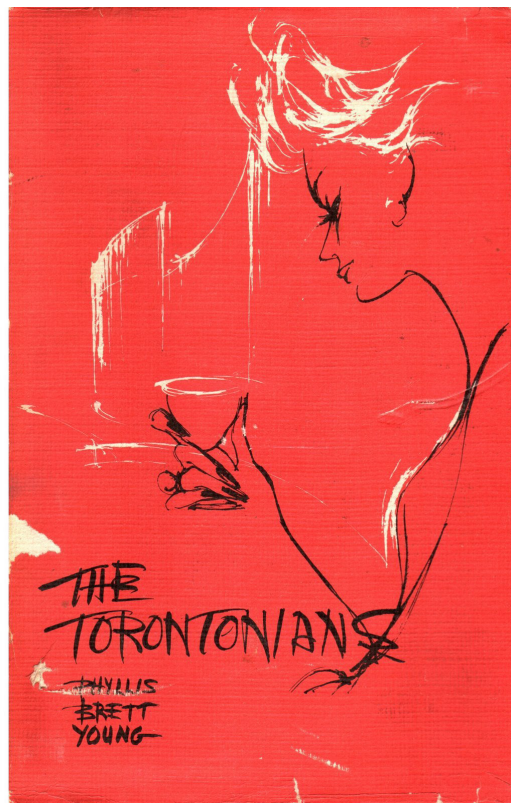


Fig. 1 Cover of the 1960 Canadian version of *The Torontonians*

the fore is an outline of a stylish woman drinking from a martini glass. The construction of the new city hall in 1965 by the Finnish architect Viljo Revell was a feat of modernist architecture and a nod toward the future of the city. With its two curved asymmetric towers, the new City Hall ushered in an era of enthusiasm and pride for the city. Revell had won an international competition to construct the building that would define the city. Many Toronto firms had put forth their own designs but were rebuffed by the public for looking too plain and boring.⁸ In a *Toronto Star* article celebrating the 50th anniversary of the construction of the new City Hall, Ryerson University architecture professor George Kapelos explained why the competition was so important for the city:

It wasn't just about Toronto, but a convergence of a whole lot of issues that catalyzed here in this city. People were agitating for newness and modernity. Around the globe, interest in rebuilding cities was intense. Issues such as decolonization, monumentality and national identity were on everyone's mind. The timing was amazing. (qtd. in Hume)

The juxtaposition of City Hall's blueprints alongside the silhouette of a woman in the foreground conveys the grammar of glamour in its nod toward futurity and inaccessibility. The woman is presented as an ephemeral figure of beauty and fashion, yet "glamour goes beyond mere fashion. Although the concept of glamour includes fashion, it ultimately involves more than what a woman puts on her body. It deals with the lady herself" (Basinger qtd. in Steele 38). *The Torontonians* is a text that *deals* with the transformation of a city and the anxieties and desires that lie within. Indeed, both City Hall and the woman

on the cover of *The Torontonians* are rendered as apparitions that are waiting to *be*.

The Modes of Female Glamour

The Torontonians was serialized in the pages of *Chatelaine* appearing in three instalments in the October, November, and December issues of 1960. According to Cooke and Morton, "in the 1960s *Chatelaine* explored the very issues at the heart of Young's novel—the roles and choices available for women in a changing world and the possibilities and anxieties caused by change—in a number of formats within each issue" (xxv). As a distinctly feminine text—one that was featured in a woman's magazine devoted to "female issues,"⁹ including fashion and lifestyle advice—*The Torontonians* exemplifies a glamour that is specifically female.

Glamour, I propose, manifests itself differently in male- and female-driven narratives. For men, glamour is typified by a desire for success. Arguably, one of the most glamorous characters in the English-speaking language from the past one hundred years would be Oscar Wilde's demonic dandy, Dorian Gray. For Dorian, success is measured by his eternal youth and beauty: "And when winter came upon [the portrait], he would still be standing where spring trembles on the verge of summer. When the blood crept from its face, and left behind a pallid mask of chalk with leaden eyes, he would keep the glamour of boyhood" (72). A comparable American counterpoint would be the iconic Jay Gatsby who relies on glamorous excess in order to entice his beloved Daisy Buchanan with his success: "To the young Gatz, resting on his oars and looking up at the railed deck, the yacht represented all the beauty and glamour in the world" (107). A similarly classic example of a Canadian exhibition of male glamour within the country's

literary canon is Robertson Davies' Dustan Ramsay in *Fifth Business*. The entirety of the text reads as a defence of Ramsay's success while celebrating his glamorous exploits.

The modes of glamour take on a different narrative when the central character is a woman. Female glamour is made evident by the character's longing for circumstances different from her own. Carol Dyhouse notes, "glamour was often linked to a dream of transformation, a desire for something out of the ordinary, a form of aspiration, a *fiction* of female becoming" (3, added emphasis). One may be reminded of Gustave Flaubert's Emma Bovary poring through fashion magazines day-dreaming of a more glamorous life away from her boring husband. That *The Torontonians* appeared in the pages of a fashion magazine is by no means incidental. As Howells argues, "Young's emphasis is on fashionable body images of women and glamour" (58), the staple features of women's fashion magazines. More to the point, Young emphasizes women in Toronto in the 1950s who occupy one of Canada's preeminent cosmopolitan spaces. For women reading Young's text in the pages of *Chatelaine* magazine in the far reaches of Canada's smaller town and rural communities, Toronto's glamorous position as a growing modern cosmopolis would have been keenly understood. In *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*, Valerie Korinek goes into detail about one particular article from 1954 that describes how a young woman from northeastern Nova Scotia was magically transformed into "The Cinderella from Pugwash" while getting a head-to-toe makeover in Toronto. When she returns to her small town with her new hairdo and sophisticated fashion her family is shocked by her transformation, if not a little put off by her new cosmopolitan style. As Korinek remarks, "the meaning was obvious in this

piece: style and glamour triumphed over down-home values and the natural look" (201). So too, does Young's text reveal the ways in which glamour in the city is a chimera that is both fanciful and frightening in its ability to change public personas and ambitions.

Much of the narrative focuses on Karen fantasizing about her life as a younger woman with her lover in Geneva when the world seemed to be full of possibility instead of limited by her current life circumstances as a homemaker in the fictional Toronto suburban neighbourhood of Rowanwood. Certainly, *The Torontonians* would have resonated with the readers of *Chatelaine* at the time, many of whom would surely have shared Karen's frustrations:

If you had been a stranger from another planet, you might have wondered if Rowanwood was inhabited at all. You would not have understood the phenomenon of mid-morning doldrums. You had to live in Rowanwood to know that the men had all left the boxes in which they lived for other boxes in the business section downtown; to know that the women were either hidden inside cleaning the former, or had gone off in smaller mechanized boxes to the shopping plaza. These things explained to you, you, the stranger from another planet, would still fail to understand why the women should spend so much time shut up in their boxes. You would, if you had come equipped with any knowledge of the civilization you had invaded, wonder how on Earth women had allowed themselves to be hoodwinked into believing what the manufacturers wanted them to believe—that they had never had it so good. (55)

Judith Brown refers to “The Moment of Glamour,” the point where the character exists as a moment distinct from the ordinary passage of time: “There will be no reckless galloping forward of narrative time but the unsteady interplay of past, present, and future that become layered, almost inseparable” (78). Young’s narrator often breaks into the second person, effectively blending the passage of time and sense of place. The speaker’s tone is at once sympathetic and accusatory, prompting us to wonder if the speaker is admonishing Karen or the reader when she reflects:

You did not at the time realize what was happening to you, because when you were really young, rather than “still young” as the magazines now put it, you were resilient. Incredibly so. It wasn’t until much later, when you found yourself thinking of death as a restful state, and saw your friends leaning on barbiturates, whiskey, and tranquilizers, that you began to understand that, somehow, mechanical evolution had outstripped any social evolution as it might apply to you and most of your generation. (13)

The narrative shift from omniscient to second person is simultaneously intimate and alienating—an effect that reveals part of the grammar of glamour in its “unsteady interplay” of narrative points of view. Ilya Parkins similarly muses that “the glamorous feminine figure might be better understood to complicate the chain of binaries on which modernity rests” (192). In this regard, Karen’s slow mental breakdown ultimately challenges the prevailing associations and binaries of man/culture/city and woman/nature/home.

Glamour, Brown notes, is “the ache for the beautiful thing just out of reach” (87) and in reading

glamour the narrative must effectively convey the “beautiful thing” as far from the reader’s grasp as possible. Brown further argues “Glamour is starkly aligned with the coldness of technology, the rush into the future [...], and therefore bears a relationship to reality, although its reality is nevertheless one of masks and illusion” (106). *The Torontonians*, at its core, is about the “mechanical evolution” of the city and the hesitancy with which the characters accept its steady development into a cosmopolitan urban centre. In this, the reader cannot fully identify with Karen without potentially acknowledging their own deeper desires and anxieties that the second-person narrative demands.

Glamour, no doubt, can be cruel and oppressive to women. At the start of the novel Karen is 40-years old and has two grown daughters who are away in university. She married her husband, Rick, right out of college and immediately had children at a young age. She then stayed home to take care of her children while her husband was away, all the while looking the part of the “executive’s wife in a fish blue cotton dress, its utility denied by a wide collar and a frivolously full skirt” (46). Karen’s speech is often imbued with the tropes of glamour: fashion, beauty, and youth. At one point she looks in the mirror and remarks: “I look [...] as if I had stepped out of *Vogue*. A cardboard doll cut out of nothing. I am a success. I have conformed to the pattern, and I wish to God I hadn’t. How have I let this thing happen to me? When did it begin, and where?” (47). Karen’s frustrations were certainly not endemic to Toronto women of the 1950s, but the acknowledgement that she was “simply losing a battle with Helena Rubinstein” (47) demonstrates that Torontonian women shared a sophisticated knowledge of the punishments and indignities that they often must endure.¹⁰

Glamour's Blithe Spirit

Certainly, *The Torontonians* exhibits a very white and wealthy expression of glamour echoed by Karen's recollection of some social doggerel she reads in *Saturday Night*: "Toronto has no classes, / Only the Masseys and the masses" (144). Indeed, who are the Torontonians in *The Torontonians*? Howells further asks, "who are these people designated by the novelist as representative of the city and its values?" (58). Certainly, there is a whiff of *chutzpah* in a title that suggests the definitive text of the city. Moreover, Howells' work suggests that Young's title is ironic given that "the spatial conception of Toronto is focused almost entirely on the new burgeoning suburbia" (59). Karen refers to this area as "The Hill," referring to the geography of the neighbourhoods north of Bloor Street. Rowanwood, while fictional, would have resembled the tonier uptown neighbourhoods such as Rosedale, Forest Hill, and Leaside.

The concept of glamour has rightly been criticized for its focus on wealth, and whiteness, and the exoticization of certain cultures and people,¹¹ but of course, *The Torontonians* is also a product of its time. Laura Mulvey provides further context by referencing American mass consumption in the 1950s:

It was a time when, in the context of the cold war, advertising, movies and the actual packaging and seductiveness of commodities all marketed glamour. Glamour proclaimed the desirability of American capitalism to the outside world and, inside, secured Americanness as inspiration for the newly suburbanized white population as it buried incompatible memories of immigrant origins. (96)

Beyond glamour's common material components of beauty, youth, and wealth lies less charming elements such as class division, commoditization, and envy. However, there are many different types of glamour that extend beyond fashion and luxury. As Virginia Postrel notes, "Glamour is an imaginative process that creates a specific emotional response: a sharp mixture of projection, longing, admiration, and aspiration. It evokes an audience's hopes and dreams and makes them seem attainable, all the while maintaining enough distance to sustain the fantasy" (140). For Young, writing in the 1950s and 60s, Toronto had the potential for glamorous escape much in the same way that narratives that feature prominent textual cities such as New York, Paris, or London offered its characters the experience of seduction and enchantment. Nevertheless, Young was also aware of the tensions between "old" and "new" Torontonians. In *Imagining Toronto*, Harris addresses one of the more overtly satirical moments in the novel when one of Karen's obnoxious neighbours, Millicent, phones and insists that Karen partake in the charity bridge tournaments she's organizing to help "New Canadians":

You could trace the history of the world back across a good many years just by remembering Millicent's brief but forceful enthusiasms. The Koreans, the Israelis, the evicted Egyptians, the Hungarians. Without even looking at a newspaper, you could be quite certain that things were relatively quiet in foreign parts if Millicent could find nothing more alarming with which to concern herself than the difficulties, if any, of New Canadians. (14)

The joke, Harris points out, is that Millicent fails to recognize Rowanwood's homogeneous population, made up entirely of white Anglo-Saxons,

where the motto of its inhabitants is “everybody should live in ranch-style bungalows and be just like themselves” (21).

The Torontonians is indeed a novel of manners, and arguably, a novel of *manors* as well given how much attention is placed on the nicely manicured lawns and interior designs of the houses in Rowanwood. The language exhibited in the text often verges on high modernism with its change in narrative tone and imagistic tendencies, yet simultaneously the text frequently reads like a Noël Coward play² set in the suburbs of Toronto instead of Manhattan, featuring a cast of well-heeled sophisticates exchanging witty *bon mots*:

“But don’t you love it darling?”
 “That might be putting it a little strongly,”
 Rick said.
 “You’re not a woman.”
 “I think somebody once pointed
 that out to me before.” (70)

The charming interplay among the characters is interspersed among the various social gatherings they are either hosting or attending, thereby exhibiting a constant air of sophistication and glamour. Sophistication and glamour plainly share many similar traits, although Faye Hammill is quick to point out that “The word ‘sophistication’ undoubtedly has a much longer and more etymologically complex history than ‘glamour’; I would also argue that the idea of sophistication as a desirable quality goes back a little further than the idea of glamour” (19-20). Young, for her part, made a point to treat Toronto as the “sophisticated, cosmopolitan city it is” (qtd. in Grewal), and as such she created characters that reflect a Toronto imbued with the tenets of glamour and sophistication in popular fiction. In this regard, she effectively shifted the

discourse away from the wilderness and ravines and embraced the beauty, desires, and tensions of the modern city.

Conclusion: Finding the Glamour of Home

The Torontonians, for the modern reader, is a fantasy of a bygone era in Toronto that elevates the narrative’s textual glamour. Indeed, glamour and nostalgia share similar aesthetic properties as expressions of the untouchable and distant past. Elizabeth Wilson notes, almost tautologically, that the “longing of nostalgia has a glamour or a sweetness of its own” (*Cultural Passions* 35), which resonates in the pages of Young’s text as she glosses over decades of the city’s development. The layers of glamour and nostalgia work in tandem in *The Torontonians*, as the modern reader may yearn for the glamour of the past while Karen comes to understand that she has glamorized her past in Geneva and is slowly recognizing the possibility that the modern city offers. Toward the end of *The Torontonians*, Karen walks towards Queen’s Park and makes the realization that the freshly manicured homes of Rowanwood are not for her:

A city with a future, like an individual with a future, could never remain static for long, could not afford to expand indefinitely along the lines of least resistance. The suburbs, as they now existed, were the city’s lines of least resistance. The towering buildings to the south were the real yardstick of its stature. (319)

To be sure, Toronto has had prior difficulty accepting its stature and potential as a glamorous cosmopolitan space. In a *Toronto Star* article discussing the use of the Toronto Reference Library as the site for a music video by The Weeknd, a popular Scarborough-raised singer,

Edward Keenan writes, “Sometimes you need something like a music video to make you look at your own city with new eyes. See the glamour of your home.” Indeed, Wilson attests that, “The appearance of glamour resides, though, or is created in combination with dress, hair, scent, and even *mise en scène*” (“A Note on Glamour” 107). As a matter of course, definitions of glamour are slippery and mutable as well as personal. The language of glamour that infuses the *The Torontonians* communicates a distinctly white middle-class feminine desire to move beyond the suburban domestic sphere of the 1950s into the developing and lively bustle of the urban core that the city promises. Certainly, Phyllis Brett Young’s work offers a window into an exciting time in the city’s history, seemingly showcasing the glamour of home. However, the Toronto of *The Torontonians* has vastly changed since its publication. The current expression of glamour in the city reveals itself in the celebrity of Drake and The Weeknd, both racialized people, underscoring how the glamour of home is a partial reflection of Toronto’s vibrant multiculturalism. Young’s work does not anticipate the increased diversity of the city’s growing population nor does it foresee the patina of glamour that paints the city during spectacular events such as the Toronto International Film Festival, the Toronto Pride Parade, Caribana or fashion week; however *The Torontonians* does assume an innate glamour for the city that, much like definitions of glamour, remains fluid.

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Notes

1 The “good” moniker is attributed to William Howland, the 25th mayor of Toronto from 1886-87, who coined the phrase “Toronto the Good” in an attempt to rid the city of all manner of vices including gambling, drugs and prostitution.

2 See Russell Smith *Noise* (1998); Dionne Brand *What We All Long For* (2005); Stephen Marche *Raymond and Hannah* (2005); Michael Redhill *Consolation* (2006); for a comprehensive list and celebration of the city’s literature see the now defunct, but still available, website “Reading Toronto” <http://readingt.readingcities.com/index.php>

3 In *Modern Realism in Canadian Fiction* Colin Hill acknowledges that while scarce, there is a tradition of modernist fiction in Canada, however a modernist literary history of Canadian writing has yet to be written (5).

4 In “Parsexuality and Glamour: The Victorian Barmaid as Cultural Prototype” Peter Bailey relates glamour to modernity and identified it as a property involving public visibility of a desirable object such as the Victorian barmaid who functioned as a distancing mechanism fuelling desire and envy from her patrons.

5 “The apparition of these faces in the crowd; / Petals on a wet, black bough.” (Pound: 1913).

6 Phyllis Brett Young’s daughter, Valerie Argue, acknowledges in the foreword to the 2007 reissue of *The Torontonians*: “My mother was not a feminist. However, she undoubtedly would have been had she been born in 1944 instead of 1914. In *The Torontonians* one can see her attempt — played out through her heroine Karen — to come to terms not only with post World War II materialism but also with the strong social

pressure on a woman to find fulfillment as lady of the suburban manor” (viii).

7 A version of this section has appeared in *Descant* 162, “Beyond Toronto the Good and Banal,” 2013.

8 Many of these designs were exhibited recently in 2015 at the Paul Cocker Gallery for their exhibition “Shaping Canadian Modernity” as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of City Hall. See also George Kapelos’ *Competing Modernisms: Toronto’s New City Hall and Square* (2015) and *Civic Symbol: Creating Toronto’s New City Hall, 1952-1966* (2015) by Christopher Armstrong for further exploration into the construction and competition of Toronto’s City Hall.

9 Many issues that were tackled in the pages of *Chatelaine* in the early 1960s are rather progressive given the context of the era. In the “Features” section women wrote articles exploring difficulties in and out of the home including frank discussions about the ambivalence of motherhood which included the line that another pregnancy was as “welcome as the income tax” (Cooke and Morton xxv).

10 Young’s invocation of Rubinstein is fitting given her feud with the Ontario-born, Elizabeth Arden.

11 Stephen Gundle’s chapter on “The Hollywood Star System” in *Glamour: A History* (2008) provides in depth detail into ways that Hollywood’s golden age made “room for diversity” by ensuring that “ethnic difference was turned into exotic spectacle” (182).

12 Faye Hammill’s *Sophistication: A Literary and Cultural History* (2010) and John Potvin’s *Bachelors of a Different Sort: Queer Aesthetics, Material Culture and the Modern Interior in Britain* (2014) provide excellent analyses into the grammar of glamour in the works of Noël Coward.

"A CLEAN SHARP IMAGE": DON CHERRY'S SUITS AS SARTORIAL STATEMENTS

JULIA PETROV

Abstract | Canadian sports commentator Don Cherry is notorious for his outspoken opinions and flamboyant style, both attracting popular attention. This article examines his attention-grabbing on-air style as an extension of both his values for the game of hockey and his view of himself as a working-class boy made good. I argue that Cherry deliberately uses his suits to embody his social and personal values. Drawing on fashion studies approaches, I show that while not exactly fashionable in terms of trendiness, Cherry's suits are examples of the ability of clothing to be indexical of working-class personality transformed.

Résumé | Le commentateur sportif canadien Don Cherry est célèbre pour ses opinions fracassantes et son style haut en couleur qui captent tous les deux l'attention du public. Cet article examine son style accrocheur devant la caméra comme une extension de ses valeurs pour le sport du hockey et de l'image qu'il a de lui-même comme celle d'un enfant de la classe ouvrière qui a réussi. J'avance l'idée que Cherry utilise délibérément ses tenues pour symboliser ses valeurs sociales et personnelles. Utilisant les approches des études sur la mode, je cherche à montrer que bien qu'elles ne soient pas véritablement du dernier cri en termes de mode, les tenues de Cherry sont des exemples de la capacité du vêtement à représenter la transformation de personnalité de la classe ouvrière.

The Canadian sports broadcaster Don "Grapes" Cherry is a fixture of national broadcasting and cultural life. He is best known for his segment "Coach's Corner," broadcast during intermissions in NHL games on CBC, CityTV, and Sportsnet channels. His weekly game commentary has earned the attention of a nation, and he was even voted the 7th Greatest Canadian in a national televised contest (Jubas). His legendary status seems to be as much due to his knowledge of the game as his garb: "loud as the jackets he wears" (Rush), as the *New York Times* put it. Indeed, he has become not only iconic because of his longevity as a media personality, but also iconic because his outfits have become conventionalised references to themselves.

To a casual observer, Don Cherry's championing of an aggressive, working-class masculinity in his "Coach's Corner" segments on CBC's *Hockey Night in Canada* may seem to be at odds with his custom-tailored, flamboyant style. Cherry's sartorial choices have been the amusing subject of countless interviews, YouTube compilation videos, Reddit threads, and even BuzzFeed quizzes, but, unlike his contributions to discourses around sports, Canadian national identity (Knowles; Dallaire and Dennis), violence (Gillet White and Young; Allain, "Real Fast and Tough"), and masculinity (Jubas; Allain, "A Good Canadian Boy"), the statements made by his suits, though widely acknowledged as being part of his popular appeal, have not been the sustained and singular subjects of academic

study. This article, then, will build on this earlier work and provide a fashion studies description of his style, drawing on Cherry's own words to get at the meanings of his outrageous on-air outfits.

Inspired by Julie Rak's analysis of Cherry's construction of himself in the context of Canadian celebrity, this article examines his suits from a cultural studies perspective, analysing Cherry's construction of his public image through the details of his iconic look. Far from just a strategy to draw visual attention to himself as a television personality (often at the cost of his conservatively dressed co-anchor, Ron MacLean), it is clear that Cherry is proudly savvy about the semiotics of his suits, and knowingly rejects mainstream menswear. His assertive provisioning of his own fabrics, the hyper-masculine cut of his jackets, the old-fashioned details of his collars and cuffs, and the brash prints that match his bold tone are all symbolic extensions of his expressed values for the game of hockey. While his stiff high collars and triple-breasted jackets cannot be called fashionable in the sense of following or setting trends, I argue that Cherry's style belongs to a tradition of working-class male sartorial self-definition, from 19th-century dudes, mashers, and swells, to 1950s teddy boys and the fashionable rappers of today, updated for a mediated modern visual culture that thrives on the projection of personality.

Cherry's Look

A former hockey player and coach, Don Cherry has been a fixture of sports commentary on Canadian television for nearly 40 years. Since 1986, he has been partnered with veteran sportscaster and referee Ron MacLean, who provides a gentle foil to Cherry's brash appearance and opinions. MacLean dresses professionally on air, in

a suit and tie, and his clothing choices are deeply conservative: blacks, blues, greys, and khaki colours predominate, with subdued patterns in stripes, dots, or checks only periodically introduced. He prefers single-breasted jackets, and generally eschews decorative details like pocket squares and tie clips. Overall, MacLean seems generally uninterested in promoting his personality visually; indeed, his style might be considered retiring even for a news reader or a politician. When studying video of the two hosts together over time, through clips made available online, a deliberate pattern of rhetorical opposition seems to emerge, with MacLean's drabness serving to further illuminate Cherry's flamboyance. Sometimes, the two men's outfits even seem coordinated, as though they had communicated beforehand which colours or patterns Cherry would wear, so that MacLean could wear something (usually a tie) to match or contrast with his costar.

In the early days of "Coach's Corner," Cherry would stand out less due to the patterns of his jackets (the early 1980s being a period of bold fabrics in fashion) and more for their cut (not the loose and unstructured sports jackets as were then popular), as well as his eccentrically old-fashioned shirts with their tall starched white collars and often contrasting patterned body. His ties, too, would frequently be the subject of comment on- and off-air. Yet as time went on, Cherry began to revel in increasingly more outrageous prints, which have, with the advent of the social network, been the fodder of blogs, YouTube compilations, and other internet commentary (Fig. 1). His jackets in particular are so closely watched that he brings them to the studio in a garment bag, putting them on only just before filming his segment (Poplewell). Part of this is so that he looks as neat as possible

(Cherry, *Hockey Stories* 82) but there is also a theatrical element to the anticipated reveal.

The classic Don Cherry look is readily classifiable. He wears two- or three-piece suits, often in a bright solid or extremely large-scale pattern. His jackets always have very wide shoulders, aggressively angled notched lapels, and can be single-, double-, triple-, or even quadruple-breasted. He accessorizes with pocket squares and a flower in his lapel (usually a rose, in honour of his first wife). Sometimes, he will also add a pin—a Remembrance Day poppy or a Support the Troops gold ribbon. His shirts (only ever worn once) may be white or patterned, but always with very high starched collars (3 ½ inches), the tabs held by a bar, and monogrammed wide cuffs, usually with prominent sports-themed cufflinks. A large wristwatch and heavy diamond ring on his left hand accentuate his gesticulations on screen. He does not wear tie bars, apparently because he often untucks his tie to demonstrate its design on screen: these are sometimes custom-printed for him and feature sayings or animals of which he is fond; alternatively, he also wears ties with sports franchise logos, cartoon characters, or in patterns that match his jackets. These are tied in a single Windsor knot, in a unique reverse method Cherry shares with his idol, hockey legend Bobby Orr (Pearce).



Figure 1: "The many suits of Canadian hockey commentator Don Cherry," Reddit, uploaded by used ihateyourband, 15 Jan 2013, <http://imgur.com/gallery/zT2H1>

Unlike some celebrities who assemble their outfits from available ready-to-wear garments, Cherry's suits are not off-the-rack. Starting in 1985, Cherry's suits were custom-made by Frank Cosco, an experienced Toronto tailor to professional athletes, until shortly before Frank's death in 2007. Since 2010, Cherry's main tailor has been John Corallo at the North Toronto boutique The Coop (Deacon). The bespoke approach to building

Cherry's suits is, like his shirt collars, outside the conventional fashion system. Cherry purchases his own fabrics (usually discount upholstery material from the national chain store Fabricland) and takes them to Coop for tailoring to his own specifications. Both the fabric and the fit are important to Cherry, as he revealed on his Twitter account in 2013: "Well, I go

to a store called Coop on Yonge Street. John, my tailor does a great job. I've been going to him for 3 years. I just give him material and I don't have to worry. They fit like a glove. Tight and that's the way I like them. It's very difficult to work with the material I give him as you know they aren't made for suits" (qtd. in Cowan). Thus, everything about his outfits is unique: their material, fit, and style.

The blog *Don We Now Our Gay Apparel*, dedicated to the subject of Cherry's on-screen looks, suggested that he looks like a 1920s gangster ("Is Don Cherry a Code Name?"). This is an apt metaphor, because, like Cherry, the enduring image

of these petty criminals, as portrayed in classic Hollywood films, is of working-class boys who maintained their image with casual violence, snappy dialogue, and occasional bigotry. Although Cherry's exaggerated suits are a long way away from the casual elegance of James Cagney, there is some similarity to the wide lapels, tall collars, and sharply tailored silhouettes of the early-20th century. The starched collars Cherry wears were a feature of menswear around 1905-1915. Indeed, his preferred combination of a white starched collar and patterned shirt can be seen in advertisements for Arrow Collars of that period (Fig. 2). Indeed, Cherry's use of patterned cloth, such as large-scale checks, tartans, or bold-coloured stripes is also a feature of Victorian and Edwardian sportswear, the fabrics of



Figure 2: "Arrow collars & shirts. Saturday evening post, April 12, 1913." The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1895 - 1917. The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Art & Architecture Collection, The New York Public Library. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-90e6-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

which were considered more informal than the solids and pinstripes worn for business or evening occasions. However, the emphasis on the chest and shoulders seen in Cherry's jackets is more characteristic of 1930s menswear (Fig. 3). While his jackets are, in general, cut higher, the placement of the buttons opening wide across the chest and narrowing towards the waist, as

well as the peaked lapels that point to aggressive shoulder pads, are throwbacks to that decade's fashion. Indeed, when interviewed by the national newspaper *The Globe and Mail* about his style in 2002, Cherry stated: "I consider my style that of the men of the 1930s, where men had an elegant style, tight suits, tight collars, lots of jewellery, a clean sharp image" (Pearce). Cherry was born in 1934, and his stated role-model is his father, Del Cherry—an amateur baseball and



Figure 3: Menswear 1930s - American, Plate 020. Gift of Woodman Thompson. Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art. <http://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15324coll12/id/9072>

football player—whose custom-tailored, dandy style was also derived from that era. Indeed, in his autobiography, Cherry captions a photograph of his father holding him as a toddler with the rhetorical question, "Doesn't he look like he should be in *Boardwalk Empire*?" (Cherry, *Cherry Straight Up and Personal* n.p.)—alluding

to the HBO series centred on criminal activity in Atlantic City, N.J. during the 1920s and 1930s. When interviewed for the Canadian lifestyle talk show *Steven and Chris* in 2012, Cherry reiterated: “I go back to 1936—the way [people] dressed back then. I thought they were the sharpest dressers of all” (“Backstage Q&A”).

Yet exaggerated collars, bold prints, and accentuated waistlines were also revived in the male fashions of the 1970s, the decade of Cherry’s coaching career. His son Tim suggests that the outrageous jackets date back to 1979, when Cherry was interviewed by American journalists wearing a crushed velvet burgundy or purple jacket: “To me, that was Dad’s first over-the-top jacket. It was pretty tame compared to some of the jackets he wears today” (Cherry, *Hockey Stories Part 2* 305). According to Cherry, however, he began wearing the high collars and plaid jackets that are synonymous with his style as early as 1971, when he was coaching in Rochester, N.Y. It is unsurprising, then, that he should choose to reference the fashions of his coaching days in his Coach’s Corner outfits.

Semiotics and Values

Cherry has been conscious of his clothing for a long time. In his books, he recalls what he wore at important junctures: writing about his earliest Coach’s Corner segments, he remembers his outfit: a tan ultra-suede jacket (Cherry, *Hockey Stories Part 2* 41). Remembering the challenges of presenting in Sochi during the 2014 Winter Olympics, he concludes: “I don’t know if ‘Coach’s Corner’ was good or not, but the suits were and Canada won both golds in hockey—that was the main thing” (Cherry, *Straight Up and Personal* 90). The syntax of the sentence makes it difficult to determine whether he is prouder of his and

Ron MacLean’s suits or the double gold medals won by the Canadian hockey team. Evidently, Cherry is also conscious of whether his clothing achieved its desired effect; reminiscing about his coaching days, he recalls wearing a plaid jacket whose flattering fit was not accurately recorded by a journalist: “So there I was with a nice jacket on, sort of a light brown plaid. I had black pants. I looked pretty good. [...]. The next day in the paper, a woman reporter really ripped us. [...]. She said, ‘Not only that, Cherry had a very bland jacket on.’ [...]. She didn’t say that I had a nice plaid jacket. [...]. Never let the facts get in the way of a good story” (Cherry, *Hockey Stories Part 2* 112-113). Although this incident took place in 2001 or 2002, Cherry remembers it bitterly. In his autobiography, he captions a photo of himself as a coach in the 1970s in a dark three-piece suit with a pocket square, watch chain, and pin nipping his tall collar behind a snowflake printed tie as “Looking sharp behind the bench in the Boston Garden” (Cherry, *Straight Up And Personal* n.p.).

Hockey, to Cherry, is not an excuse for mere play or casual violence; as he points out, “when you’re going to play hockey, you’re not going to see your friends, and you don’t want to look like a bunch of thugs” (Cherry, *Don Cherry’s Sports Heroes* 53). Even the violence that is, to Cherry, an important part of the game, comes with its own set of sartorial rules; Cherry considers one of his main contributions to hockey to be redesigning clothing to be more conducive to fights. He claims to have loosened elbow pads for swinging punches, tied down sweaters like sock garters to prevent being ambushed when another player would pull it over his head, and cut a slit in the neck of his jersey to save his neck from injury when it would get pulled (Cherry, *Straight Up And Personal* 162-4). In this context, the adapted hockey uniform is a means to

achieve the kind of aggressive play that Cherry equates with the game—the kind of behaviour that Kristi Allain has called “hegemonic Canadian hockey masculinity” (“Real Fast and Tough” 473).

To Cherry, wearing a suit—or at the very least, a shirt and tie—is part of the professional image required for hockey. Apart from having a uniform and special equipment to play the game, he frequently encourages both amateurs and professionals to wear formal clothing to delineate the sport as a distinctive activity and to civilize their behaviour. The game is special, and he believes that formality is part of hockey’s heritage. A care for image and protocol is, for Cherry, aligned with professionalism, team spirit, upward mobility, and Canadian culture (Cherry, *Don Cherry’s Sports Heroes* 54). Honesty and respectability are also important hockey values for Cherry, something he believes is expressed through dress:

One night on “Coach’s Corner,” I showed some basketball players walking into their game dressed like slugs, and then I showed some hockey players walking into their game dressed like they just stepped out of Esquire, and then I showed Evander Kane of the Winnipeg Jets in an interview, and he looked like a male model. I was making a point. Hockey players have respect for themselves and respect for the game. In many ways—the way they act and the way they dress. (Cherry, *Straight Up And Personal* 159)

He credits the lack of drugs and crime in hockey (as opposed to other sports) to this uniformed courtesies, and thinks this is something that starts at a young age in amateur hockey:

It does my heart good to see them [minor midget players] with their team jackets and their shirts and ties. What sport in the world has young players wearing shirts and ties to and from their games? The same as our junior teams—90 per cent shirts and ties. I remember in the American Hockey League, we’d travel ten hours on the bus, but when we’d get off, we would have shirts and ties, respect for the game and respect for ourselves. (Cherry, *Straight Up And Personal* 161)

As a television commentator on hockey, therefore, Cherry strives to maintain the same sartorial standard on screen. Setting a public example through his dress in demeanor hearkens back to a Renaissance ideal of the courtly gentleman with a moral imperative to dress according to his station, as a historian of the suit David M. Kuchta writes: “bravery in dress was justified by bravery in battle. Conspicuous consumption was a rightful and manly honor bestowed upon him by his noble status and position at court” (503-504). Just like his Renaissance predecessors, Cherry’s self-fashioning is a social and professional obligation.

Cherry’s consciousness about clothing has become part of his performance as a commentator. He is purposeful with his image and visibility, as he explained in an interview on *Steven and Chris*:

When I was in Boston I got a new suit and everybody in the papers were saying: “Oh, what a beautiful suit.” So I thought, “Well, if they like this suit, let’s get a plaid.” So I got plaid. It then got to a point where people were tuning in to see what I was wearing, not what I was coaching. Then I got into television. I remember they all wore

blue jackets. I said, "I don't have to wear one of those jackets." So I got into the plaid and everything else. Now I go out and get drapery and everything. I think the kids get a big kick out of it too. ("Backstage Q&A")

He frequently discusses his outfits on air, pointing out details to the camera. When he does, he highlights them as a costume; they permit him to express his allegiance to particular hockey teams through his choices of colours or logos, or to appeal to "the kids" with cartoon ties. In 2008, he gave fans a comic look into his style process with an appearance on the CBC satirical program *Rick Mercer Report* (Fig. 4). Cherry took the host through the drapery section at Fabricland, choosing a zebra print. The duo then proceeds to fittings at his tailor, and all the while Cherry signs autographs. In the last scene, Cherry adjusts his tie in a mirrored door, from behind which Mercer emerges wearing a copy of



Figure 4: Screenshot from "Making a suit with Don Cherry." YouTube, uploaded by Rick Mercer Report, 18 Nov. 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFpuMzza9hk>.

Cherry's suit in the zebra print, with a high-collared shirt, wide tie, and pocket square (but sans Cherry's signature rose in his lapel). In effect, Mercer is Cherry's mirror image—if Cherry is an effete, but heterosexual hypermasculine man, Mercer is openly gay, but heteronormative in his self-presentation; the joke is that according to stereotypes Mercer (who usually wears open-collar white shirts and black suits) should be wearing outrageous outfits. Yet I would argue that Cherry's suits are exaggerated symbols for what he perceives as his authentic self: a proudly well-tailored working-class athlete. Furthermore, as Rak suggests, his suits allow him to align himself with the costumed fan audiences for hockey, but also, in his self-aware outrageousness, as an outsider to the wealthy elite who control the media and the game.

Working-Class Dandy

It is very important to Cherry to stay close to his roots. He devotes a section in his autobiography to what he calls his "minor leaguer" ways—the lingering sense that his fame and success are fleeting. He describes feeling guilty flying first class, eating out, or buying expensive consumer items; he envies Ron MacLean's ability to treat himself and thinks about what it felt like to work an insecure job in construction or in minor-league hockey. He lives in a small house and drives old cars. He insists that this is a conscious consumer choice, rather than a character trait: "I am not cheap, I pay my rounds" (Cherry, *Straight Up And Personal* 106). Indeed, over and over again in interviews he underscores the fact that he sources and pays for his clothing himself. In an interview, the newspaper *Globe and Mail* asked him, "Where do you shop? Any special people who help you out—salespeople, friends, family? Do you have any sponsors?" (Pearce). In an age of celebrity stylists and endorsement

deals, such a question is natural. Yet Cherry bristled, and emphasized his independence in his reply: “I buy my own clothes, nothing is given to me, except the odd ties that a fan will send to me. Nobody picks out my clothes but me!” (Pearce). Eleven years later, in a series of tweets, he reiterated this point: “I pay for my shirts, suits, ties, jackets, cars etc. I pay for everything. I do not get anything for free. That’s just the way it has to be. As my dad used to say... there is no free lunch in this world” (qtd. in Cowan 2013). It seems that this sartorial independence is not merely a statement of his individuality, but also related to his sensitivity about his class roots.

As Kristi Allain has noted in her discussion of Cherry’s sports commentary, “A Good Canadian Boy,” the former coach champions a nostalgic vision of a primarily rural, working-class, aggressive masculinity within hockey, with its own wholesome morality policed through hard work and fair play. Yet there are many contradictions inherent in his avowed identities—his lucrative roles as spokesperson for leading brands and his fame put him far apart from the hard-scrabble country boys he identifies with. Furthermore, although his style harkens back to a tougher version of heteronormative masculinity, he himself recognizes that its performative flamboyance may be seen as camp: “I must admit my style has been called foppish, but I like it. I also heard on the radio the other day that I looked like a gay because everything was so clean and neat and all jewellery. Love it!” (Pearce). Indeed, more than one Twitter user has noted a similarity between his style and that of the camp gay icon Sir Elton John (CBC News; @Pegger3D). Homosexuality and eccentric or extravagant dress are aligned in heteronormative stereotypes because of their association with effeminacy. Susan Sontag has suggested that both are expressions of mediated popular modernity; in “Notes on Camp” (1964),

she writes: “Camp is the modern dandyism. Camp is the answer to the problem: how to be a dandy in the age of mass culture” (528). Her position has more recently been reasserted in Fabio Cleto’s definition of camp as an aesthetic, centering on carnivalesque flouting of conventions, especially in the decoration of the body through fashionable excess (9-10). While there are certainly elements of camp’s ironic frivolity in Cherry’s wardrobe choices, his fastidiousness about his appearance is, however, less related to a performance of sexuality and more closely aligned with a long tradition of working-class preoccupation with appearance as a declaration of cultural capital.

In his seminal 1979 text, Dick Hebdige analyzed the uses of dress by working-class youth subcultures in Britain, noting a tradition amongst many of them towards a kind of dandyism. The use of the term “dandy” may be a misnomer—generally, dandies are men who practice extreme self-restraint in their search for fashion perfection as opposed to being flamboyantly vulgar. However, in popular usage, the term does refer to men who display above-average concern with self-fashioning and the highly visible performance of style, in opposition to normative (casual) attitudes to clothing (see Breward for a definitive overview of dandyism). Likewise, in Hebdige’s case studies, these often-marginalized groups used dress to distinguish themselves. Hipsters, teddy boys, mods, Rastafarians, skinheads, and punks to varying degrees all appropriated nostalgic and aspirational aesthetics to locate their own imagined identities. While James Gillett, Philip White, and Kevin Young suspected that Cherry’s dandyism was a caricature and part of an act (61), a comparison between subcultural style and Don Cherry’s dress reveals compelling similarities. Cherry has fashioned himself into an icon:

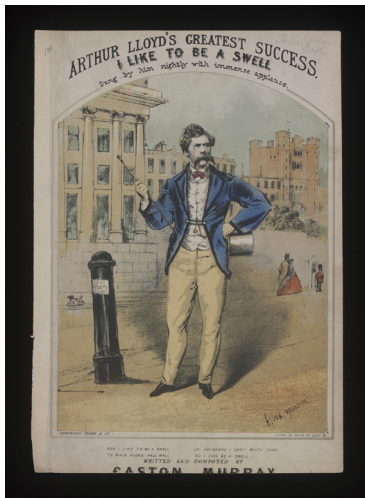


Figure 5: Alfred Concanen, Music sheet cover for 'I like to be a swell', written by Gaston Murray, sung by Arthur Lloyd, 19th century, lithograph, 33.5 x 23.5 cm, Gabrielle Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1249920/i-like-to-be-a-sheet-murray-gaston/>



Figure 6: Tiller family marionette company, marionette representing a young 'masher' brandishing a beer bottle, 1870 to 1890, carved wood with paint and fabric, 71 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O57558/marionette-tiller-family-marionette/>

like the players he coached, he uses his body as capital. This self-awareness of sartorial performance has a long history: Monica L. Miller identifies it in Black dandyism (219), its roots in the dress of the working classes, diasporic Africans, and sports figures of the early-20th century. Even earlier than that, the swells, mashers, and dudes of the 19th century were working-class men who dressed in upper-class styles, often in highly patterned and heavily accessorized suits to attract attention. These men were associated with various disruptions of middle- and upper-class social norms, with their affected clothing, slangy speech, preoccupation with leisure



Figure 7: "Cockney" and "Bowery" from World's Dudes series (N31) for Allen & Ginter Cigarettes, 1888, Commercial color lithographs, 7 x 3.8 cm each, The Jefferson R. Burdick Collection, Gift of Jefferson R. Burdick, Metropolitan Museum of Art. <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/411306>, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/411240>

pursuits and alcohol, as well as their propensity towards assault: the swell (Fig. 5) betrays his pretensions to a higher status with his showy dress and extreme facial hair; the masher marionette (Fig. 6) holds a beer bottle in his hand, and such young men were known for sexually harassing barmaids and music hall actresses; and Fig. 7 shows a brutish yet stylish man from

the Bowery, an area of New York City notorious for gang activity.

All these classes of men, across time, have co-opted dominant cultural status symbols to overcome their own disenfranchised status—which Roopali Mukherjee has identified as a basis for hip-hop style (the alliance between rappers and luxury brands as a form of social positioning). Yet it can also be said to be true for other groups, such as the white working classes of the late-19th and early-20th centuries. And so, it seems, also for Don Cherry: he is able to use his platform to signal the values of those from backgrounds such as his and to give them cultural visibility.

But Is It Fashion?

Cherry's outfits garner a lot of public attention: there are blogs, Tumblrs, Twitters, and Pinterest boards dedicated to his "style," though most are tongue-in-cheek homages to his most outrageous looks. His jackets even have been screen-printed as designs for hockey jerseys, usually for charity games—the medium has become the message, as Cherry's outfits have come to stand in for the man himself. Some players, such as Montreal Canadiens defenceman P.K. Subban and Edmonton Oilers captain Connor McDavid, have worn Cherry-style suits as cheeky tributes to the legendary commentator (Subban actually borrowed one of Cherry's jackets for an on-air impression in 2015). His co-host, Ron MacLean, also riffs on Cherry's looks sometimes—wearing a double-breasted jacket on his return to "Hockey Night in Canada" in 2016 (Mudhar), or borrowing one of Cherry's jackets (in saffron-yellow raw silk) in 2002 ("Hockey Night in Canada"). Surprisingly, it fit him rather well through the shoulders and arms, although Cherry appears to

be much heavier than MacLean, which demonstrates how the suits are calculated to emphasize and enlarge Cherry's appearance.

Cherry points out that he has two wardrobes: one for his public appearances as a television personality and another for his private life. He writes: "All those fancy suits and jackets. Honestly, I treat them as costumes. I feel more at home with a T-shirt, cut-off sleeves and Crazeewear [American athletic-wear brand] pants" (Cherry, *Straight Up And Personal* 105). Yet this casual look is also costume-like. Indeed, candid images of Cherry out-and-about show him almost undercover in oversized trench coats or baggy football jackets, heavy boots or trainers, loose pants, and flat-caps worn low. Even when trying to be inconspicuous, he maintains a distinct visibility.

With his deliberate references to 1930s style, Cherry stands apart from the contemporary styles embraced by modernity. Yet he is not the only famous silver-haired male to wear anachronistic clothing. The eminently fashionable Karl Lagerfeld also wears extremely high collars (as high as four inches, custom-made for him by the London tailors Hilditch and Key), accessorizes with heavy jewelry, and does not shy away from bold pattern or outspoken opinions. He is equally aware of its theatricality; in 2007 he said of his style, "I am like a caricature of myself and I like that. It is like a mask. And for me the Carnival of Venice lasts all year long" ("Karl Lagerfeld's Quotes"). It is perhaps more appropriate to call both of their looks a style rather than fashion—while it is imitated, it is not commercially popular in the way that mass-market fashion is, and imitations tend to be loving humorous parodies of Cherry or Lagerfeld as personalities rather than wholesale attempts to copy a look for its aesthetic appeal. Karl Lagerfeld has even

integrated aspects of his look for fashion collections (such as white collared shirts for his ready-to-wear Fall 2017 collection) for those who wish to playfully masquerade as the designer, whose brand is his own appearance. Indeed, Cherry discourages would-be imitators; when asked on *Steven and Chris*, “What’s your number one fashion tip?” Cherry replied: “I don’t recommend anyone to wear what I’m wearing, especially the shirts. They’re very uncomfortable. As my Dad told me one time: it’s better to look good than feel good. You have to feel uncomfortable” (“Backstage Q&A”). Indeed, to suffer for fashion seems to be, for Cherry, another way to express his masculine strength and fortitude.

Cherry’s style might be called kitsch: it is iconic but irreverent. Indeed, Rak has suggested that there is an element of irony within Cherry’s wardrobe choices, a knowing nod to his fans and an idealized past (162). However, despite its seeming outlandishness, Cherry is totally committed to his look, and this consistency makes it seem sincere. Although he was named Canada’s “worst-dressed man” in 1994 (Smith), he actually produced a surprisingly sensible list of tips for wearing suits and ties for *Macleans* magazine in 2013, exhorting male readers to press their clothing and consider its fit and appropriateness to the occasion. Yet, for the 10th and final tip, he admits that while a casual look may be appropriate to some occasions (such as travelling by air), it is not for him. Likewise, in his autobiography, *Straight Up and Personal*, Cherry discusses his flight to Afghanistan:

It seems we are flying forever, and I can look around and everybody looks so comfortable in their casual wear. Why do I have to be so vain that I must travel in a suit, shirt and tie? Ron [MacLean] and I are the only ones in the media who travel in suits and

ties. Much to our regret, when the finals run into late June and we’re in the heat from places like L.A. and Tampa, the shirt looks uncomfortable—and they are, but you are who you are. (47)

No matter how outrageous he may seem to others, or how out of touch with contemporary trends, Cherry has a deep need to be authentic to his own vision of himself.

Conclusion

In the early 2000s, the “Coach’s Corner” segment was sponsored by men’s clothing brand Moore’s. As Thom Workman has pointed out, the contrast between their conservative, cut-price styles and Cherry’s flashy outfits presented an apparently ludicrous contrast (37). Yet as this article has shown, the company’s “Well Made, Well Priced, Well Dressed” slogan also fits well with Cherry’s ideas about respectful, humble, frugal, working-class hockey and, if we are to take his own words at face value, about himself also. Any expression of identity, including through dress, is inevitably informed by the intersecting gender, class, and other social contexts of the individual, and so Cherry’s suits are a performance of self and all-at-once reference: his father and the decade of his birth; traditional sportswear; the self-made working-class background he identifies with; his coaching career; the professional masculine image of Canadian hockey; his personal aesthetic; his late wife; and his performative role as an on-air commentator. Cherry is a master of the language of clothes; like him, his suits are loud, and like his on-screen opinions, their message is bold and straightforward. While undoubtedly calculated to make the maximum visual impact for media dissemination, they are also authentic to his sense of his own identity.

Don Cherry's significance as a Canadian public figure and his appeal to hockey fans and Canadians at large is due not only to his knowledge of the game but also to his skillful and sincere sense of style. The apparent paradox of his outlandish outfits and his conservative views and identity is resolved by viewing Cherry in light of the history of working-class dandyism. Furthermore, as he is perhaps the only Canadian public figure to generate so much media attention for his clothing, an analysis of Cherry's style is a contribution to the field of Canadian fashion studies and the ways in which dress and identity are uniquely aligned in this context.

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Image Notes

Figure 1: “The many suits of Canadian hockey commentator Don Cherry,” Reddit, uploaded by used ihateyourband, 15 Jan 2013, <http://imgur.com/gallery/zT2H1>

Figure 2: “Arrow collars & shirts. Saturday evening post, April 12, 1913.” The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1895 - 1917. The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Art & Architecture Collection, The New York Public Library. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-90e6-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

Figure 3: Menswear 1930s - American, Plate 020. Gift of Woodman Thompson. Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art. <http://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15324coll12/id/9072>

Figure 4: Screenshot from “Making a suit with Don Cherry” YouTube, uploaded by Rick Mercer Report, 18 Nov. 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFPUmZz9ghk>.

Figure 5: Alfred Concanen, Music sheet cover for ‘I like to be a swell’, written by Gaston Murray, sung by Arthur Lloyd, 19th century, lithograph, 33.5 x 23.5 cm, Gabrielle Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1249920/i-like-to-be-a-sheet-music-murray-gaston/>

Figure 6: Tiller family marionette company, marionette representing a young ‘masher’ brandishing a beer bottle, 1870 to 1890, carved wood with paint and fabric, 71 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O57558/marionette-tiller-family-marionette/>

Figure 7: “Cockney” and “Bowery” from *World’s Dudes* series (N31) for Allen & Ginter Cigarettes, 1888, Commercial color lithographs, 7 x 3.8 cm each, The Jefferson R. Burdick Collection, Gift of Jefferson R. Burdick, Metropolitan Museum of Art. <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/411306>, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/411240>

WONDER WOMAN'S COSTUME AS A SITE FOR FEMINIST DEBATE

JACLYN MARCUS

Abstract | In this article, I examine how much of the fierce debate and discourse around Wonder Woman has centred around her costume. While several academics have addressed the relationship between Wonder Woman and feminism, my article engages with these works to examine the arguments surrounding Wonder Woman's dress, particularly in the context of comic books and graphic novels that feature the character. The article argues that it is Wonder Woman's apparel, and not her status as a superhero, that is the site of the controversy surrounding her persona and role as a feminist figure.

Résumé | Dans cet article j'examine comment les âpres débats et dialogues suscités par Wonder Woman sont en réalité centrés sur son costume. Alors que plusieurs chercheurs se sont penchés sur la relation entre Wonder Woman et le féminisme, mon article utilise leur travaux pour examiner les arguments concernant le costume de Wonder Woman, en particulier dans le contexte des bandes dessinées et des romans graphiques qui mettent en scène ce personnage. L'article défend l'idée que c'est en fait l'habit de Wonder Woman, et non pas son statut de super héros, qui est au centre de la controverse qui entoure sa personnalité et son rôle d'image féministe.

As the first female superhero to ever receive her own comic book, Wonder Woman has existed in popular culture for 75 years. She is typically depicted wearing a golden tiara, blue star-covered shorts, and a red bustier with a golden eagle on the front. She carries a golden lasso that, when wrapped around its victim, has the ability to make them tell the truth, and her golden bracelets can deflect bullets. According to DC Comics Wonder Woman has “been a feminist icon since her star-spangled intro in 1941” (“Wonder Woman”). Wonder Woman has superhero strength and speed, but it is her costume that allows her to be recognizable as an icon in society, the press, and scholarship. By the same token, her clothing—its design, fit, length, colouring, and even accessories—has also been leveraged in these same arenas to prove why she is or is not a feminist icon (figure 1). Yet why is it that the character can only be reinvented through her clothing? Moreover, why have male superheroes not historically undergone the same relentless scrutiny of their clothing and its changes? I will understand the history of Wonder Woman as aligned within the tradition of women, both real and fictional, who have been defined and even restricted through their dress within patriarchal structures, due to the multiple, nuanced meanings ascribed to their appearances. For Wonder Woman, costume is one of the most significant aspects of her persona. It is tied not only to recognition of her character, but to questions of morality surrounding her worth as a role model for girls and women.

Wonder Woman's relationship with feminism has sparked debates on a number of topics: these include whether or not Wonder Woman should be seen as a feminist role model, whether she was created for male or female enjoyment, and, most recently, whether she should serve as the United Nation's Ambassador of the Empowerment of Women and Girls. To combat these controversies, Wonder Woman has undergone multiple changes, for example, her loss of costume and superpowers in the late 1960s and her recent makeover in 2010, which had her wearing long pants and a leather jacket as opposed to a strapless top and shorts. Julie D. O'Reilly writes that, "Central to Wonder Woman's legend is the questioning of her status as a hero because she is subject to the approval or disapproval of her Amazon mother and sisters" (275). Even in her own fictional world, Wonder Woman has inspired debate and had to prove her worth as a superhero. In the real world, however, Wonder Woman's worth has been inextricably tied to her costume and its reflection of her feminist values.

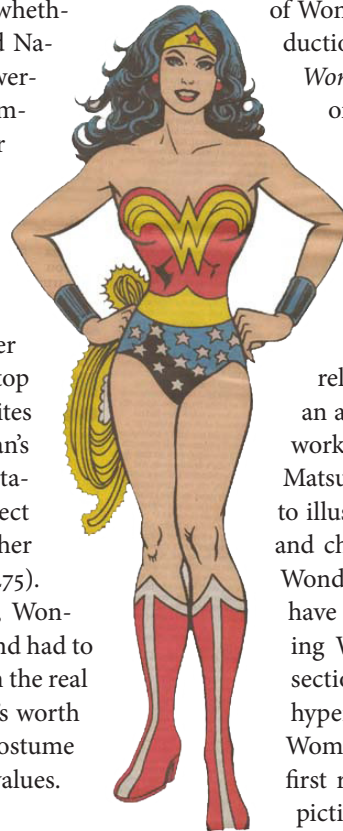


Figure 1. Wonder Woman in one variation of her costume. JJ_Dread, Wonder Woman, 11 December 2015, Flickr, www.flickr.com/, accessed 24 October 2018.

Wonder Woman's clothing is an inescapable part of her character; her costume helps to define who she is. This is illustrated in her first-ever story arc, "Introducing Wonder Woman." As O'Reilly explains, Wonder Woman's final trial to prove whether or not she is "worthy" of "fight[ing] for liberty and freedom and all womankind" is a game of "bullets and bracelets," where her gold accessories deflect

the gunshots aimed at her (273). Wonder Woman's accessories literally define whether or not she may stand as a representative and protector of other women. Jill Lepore also cites fashion's importance for feminist interpretations of Wonder Woman's character in the introduction of her book, *The Secret History of Wonder Woman*: "Wonder Woman isn't only an Amazonian princess with badass boots. She's the missing link in a chain of events that begins with the woman suffrage campaigns of the 1910s and ends with the troubled place of feminism fully a century later" (xiii). While a number of academics have addressed the relationship between Wonder Woman and feminism, in this article I review works by Edward Avery-Natale, Ann Matsuuchi, and Jill Lepore, among others, to illustrate how much of this controversy and change have been addressed through Wonder Woman's costume. To do so, I have divided the controversies surrounding Wonder Woman's apparel into subsections: the creation of Wonder Woman, hypersexual representations of Wonder Woman, her depiction as a consumer, her first rebirth, her second rebirth, and depictions of Wonder Woman in the twenty-first century.

As we will see, it is Wonder Woman's costume and not her power and agency as a superhero that is the site of the debate

surrounding her character and role as a feminist figure. Fashion plays a pivotal role in the reception of the Wonder Woman character, particularly regarding her position as a feminist role model.

The Creation of Wonder Woman

Since her “birth,” Wonder Woman’s costume has been central to her character. Though clothing has long been understood as a key influencer of social identity (see Barry; Entwistle; and Wilson), for women fashion takes on even greater importance. In discussing the impact of fashion on plot and character, Bruzzi and Church Gibson write that “traditionally [it has] been women whose character, identity and femininity have been understood through their mode of dress and self-presentation” (116). In the case of Wonder Woman and her inventors, her costume was one of the first aspects of her character to be developed; nuances of her personality and superpowers were defined through her clothing.

Wonder Woman was created in 1941 by Dr. William Moulton Marston, an academic who also invented the lie-detector test. Marston hired artist Harry G. Peter to illustrate the first drafts of the superhero. Lepore explains how, in 1941, Peter sent sketches to Marston that included Wonder Woman’s red shirt, tiara, gold bracelets, and skirt, instead of the shorts that became a part of her more classic outfit. Lepore notes that “Marston liked everything but the shoes.” One of the first critiques of Wonder Woman’s dress was thus made by the creator himself. Marston also pointed out in a subsequent illustration “that the collar on [Wonder Woman’s] halter top would look dated quickly” (Lepore). Strict instructions regarding how Wonder Woman should be dressed continued to accompany her creation: “Everyone agreed about the bracelets [...] she’d wear a tiara [...] she had to be super patriotic. Captain America wore an American flag [...] Like Captain America—because of Captain America—Wonder Woman would have to wear red, white, and blue, too. But ideally, she’d

also wear very little” (Lepore 196). Regardless of her feminist origins in Marston’s ideals, Wonder Woman had parts of her costume modelled after what male superheroes at the time were wearing. We can also see that her bracelets were initially one of the least censored aspects of her costume, despite Wonder Woman’s later links to bondage leading to criticism of her accessories. This account highlights how much detail and discussion went into each piece of her outfit, illustrating its importance.

Wonder Woman’s connection to fashion can also be found in her familial history. Lepore explains that Wonder Woman’s mother, Hippolyte, “recounts for her daughter, Diana [Wonder Woman’s alter-ego], the history of the female race,” citing her magic girdle as the reason she was able to beat her nemesis in one-on-one combat and secure the Amazon women’s freedom (Lepore 199). However, her girdle is then stolen, and the Amazon women are captured by men (Lepore 199). When they are finally freed, it is decided that they “must always wear these bracelets fashioned by our captors, as a reminder that we must always keep aloof from men” (qtd. in Lepore 199). In this account, the very history of femininity and Wonder Woman is tied to materiality; it is from clothing—a girdle—that all their power is sourced, and their future depends on jewelry, which serves as a symbol of their values. It is also Wonder Woman’s mother who “stitches for her a red, white, and blue costume,” linking Wonder Woman’s matriarchal past with clothing (Lepore 200). Entwistle argues that “Women have long been associated with the making of clothes,” in part as a means of gaining financial independence from men (146). That Wonder Woman’s mother, a ruler over a land of women exclusively, crafted Wonder Woman’s costume illustrates materiality’s importance in the superhero’s legend and aligns her with this real-life

history. Here, clothing is depicted as responsible for maintaining women's freedom, feeding into both positive and negative readings of fashion's impact and its relationship with feminism.

Once she was created, representations of Wonder Woman as a feminist figure can be seen through the first press release surrounding her character. Lepore's description of the release again cites fashion as an important aspect of her character and values: "Wonder Woman has bracelets welded on her wrists; with these she can repulse bullets. But if she lets any man weld chains on these bracelets, she loses her power" (220). Here, Wonder Woman's accessories reveal her status as independent from men, as per her familial history. Although the press release seems to imply that Wonder Woman was created as a positive figure, in March 1942, one year after her creation, Wonder Woman was placed on the National Organization for Decent Literature's list of "Publications Disapproved for Youth" because "Wonder Woman is not sufficiently dressed" (Lepore). The organization does not specify the meaning of the word "sufficiently;" her clothing is defined as indecent for youth without further explanation. As we shall see, accusations eventually took on additional force, particularly surrounding what was understood as her character's sexual nature.

Hypersexual Representations of Wonder Woman

Descriptions of Wonder Woman's character often include her clothing, which in turn is often tied to her sexuality: "She wore a golden tiara, a red bustier, blue underpants, and knee-high, red leather boots. She was a little slinky; she was very kinky" (Lepore xi). For Wonder Woman scholar Mitra C. Emad, the superhero can be read as hypersexual based on representations of her clothed, physical figure,

"marked by a large amount of flowing hair" and "large breasts and a costume that barely covers her body" (975-6). Emad is not the first to point out the relationship between Wonder Woman's clothing and her sexuality. A female editor of *Wonder Woman* commented that "There has been a tendency in the past to play up WW as a rather sexy creature [...] Her costume may be one of the reasons why she creates this impression," followed by the suggestion that she wear a skirt as opposed to shorts (qtd. in Lepore 239). Here, Wonder Woman's costume is specifically mentioned as a reason she may be viewed as hypersexual. Similarly, according to Edward Avery-Natale, a female writer for *Wonder Woman* "requested that the character's breasts be reduced in size to make her more realistic, but her request was denied" (75). These instances indicate that Wonder Woman was created as a purposefully hypersexual character. As Michael R. Lavin explains in "Women in Comic Books," the "contradiction is that between women as role models and as sex objects [...] they are invariably depicted as alluring objects of desire, wearing the scantiest of costumes" (94). While Marston intended Wonder Woman to be a feminist figure, her character ended up as an object created for heterosexual male pleasure because the male writers of Wonder Woman rejected the suggestions of their female co-creators.

Another aspect of Wonder Woman's character that helped to create her hypersexual reputation was her connection to bondage. As Avery-Natale explains, "female characters, particularly Wonder Woman, are often portrayed in bondage, frequently, though not exclusively, to other women, promoting a kind of heterosexual male, lesbian fantasy" (76). Marston himself was criticized for often including panels where Wonder Woman was tied up or restrained using links, chains, and ropes (Lepore 236). Along

with her golden bracelets, other accessories such as her lasso link Wonder Woman to themes of tying, restraining, and binding. However, in using and controlling her lasso Wonder Woman can also be understood as an active participant in bondage, implying that it is not just for male pleasure, but for her own as well. Additionally, Wonder Woman can be read as a dominatrix figure (Brown 65). Wonder Woman's costume and accessories are evidence of her construction as both a hypersexual character created for heterosexual male pleasure and as a figure who uses her sexuality for her own pleasure and in her own right (figure 2). Because of the many representations of Wonder Woman available, the reader's interpretation of these iterations and their overall motivation and meaning may vary in response to visual and textual constructions of her persona.

Wonder Woman as Consumer

Given the tendency in patriarchal capitalism to stereotype women as naturally inclined towards shopping, particularly in the realm of fashion, it is unsurprising that there are allusions in Wonder Woman's history to her character as a consumer. As Joanne Entwistle explains in *The Fashioned Body*, "For centuries woman has been associated with 'fickle' fashion, vain display and indulgent narcissism"; women are both encouraged and discouraged from spending time and resources on how they look, despite being read through the lens of appearance (145). In the 1950s comics, alter-ego Diana Prince is employed as a fashion model (Lepore). Moreover, in *Wonder Woman #203*, Diana is approached to endorse a department store as her *celebrity* alter-ego, Wonder Woman. According to Ann Matsuuchi, the store-owner's plan is to "appropriate the image of Wonder Woman and of women's liberation for commercial purposes,"

playing on Wonder Woman's status as a feminist figure and its potential negative consequences (130). For Wonder Woman, consumerism dilutes the strength of her feminist message.



Figure 2. Wonder Woman restrained with chains in the *Wonder Woman: Earth One* series. Grant Morrison (w) and Yanick Paquette (a), *Wonder Woman: Earth One* (April 2016), DC Comics; Richard Guion, "Wonder Woman- Yanick Paquette," Flickr, 1 April 2016, www.flickr.com/, accessed 31 July 2018.

In attempting to escape moralistic judgements of the character's appearance and dress, Wonder Woman's writers have created changes to her costume. However, Avery-Natale argues that for many female superheroes, these costume changes "[display] their supposed love of fashion and frequent changing of their minds with regard to clothing" (89). Wonder Woman's

fictional character's position as a feminist figure is compromised each time her dress is modified, regardless of the style or functionalism of these changes, as I will demonstrate in the next two sections of this article. These moments of extreme change can be categorized as "rebirths," and though they have sparked controversy, they also offer key insights into the ways in which Wonder Woman's costume has shaped feminist interpretations of her character and the pivotal role her dress plays in these interpretations.

Wonder Woman's First Rebirth, or, the "Diana Prince Era"

Clothing changes in both reality and fiction were often prompted by all-too-real political and social events. Wonder Woman's first rebirth began to take shape during the aftermath of World War II. Americans began to worry about the effects that comic books were having on society, particularly on youth, and Wonder Woman's costume was once again heavily analyzed and criticized. Lavin explains that a 1948 symposium on the "Psychopathology of Comic Books" resulted in the creation of "the Comics Code Authority, a voluntary industry group which established a written code of acceptable comics publishing guidelines" (96). This major event in comic book history occurred only seven years after Wonder Woman's creation (Lavin 96). One year later, Wonder Woman was depicted being carried over a stream by a man, as opposed to previous covers that displayed battle scenes. This moment reflects the beginning of a slow, subtle shift in her persona: "Instead of her badass, kinky red boots, [Wonder Woman] wears dainty yellow ballerina slippers" (Lepore 271). A change in Wonder Woman's character mirrors changes in both costume and society.

Released in 1968, *Wonder Woman #178* was the beginning of the "Diana Prince Era," when Wonder Woman lost both her costume and superpowers (Lepore). With the change in clothing, Wonder Woman transforms into a mod Diana Prince, stripped of any references to her past self (Lepore). Interestingly, this phase in Wonder Woman history has been cited as not being feminist, in particular because Wonder Woman is perceived as not being true to herself (Matsuuchi 129). The biggest contention surrounding her role as a feminist icon appears to have been the loss of her costume. Despite these criticisms, it was during this time that an attempt at a feminist plotline was launched (Lepore). The first cover of this story arc, released in December 1972, depicted Wonder Woman in a white unitard and long sleeves and long pants (Lepore). This was a shift from her short shorts and strapless top, though the tight fit remained. Lavin writes, "Some feminists applauded the change, especially now that Diana had lost the provocative costume [...] others complained she had been stripped of her strength" (97). This reaction prompted DC Comics to abandon the new storyline, returning her to her former character powers, and costume.

Wonder Woman's Second Rebirth

The credit for Wonder Woman's second rebirth and return to her most iconic costume goes to the readers who identified as feminists and were angry about the changes made to the beloved superhero they had grown up idolizing (Matsuuchi 134). To these women, including icon Gloria Steinem, Wonder Woman's costume was an essential part of what defined her as a feminist figure, and they employed several strategies to encourage its return: "In 1972, the founding editors of *Ms.* put Wonder Woman on the cover of the magazine's

first regular issue. They hoped to bridge the distance between the feminism of the 1910s and the feminism of the 1970s with the Wonder Woman of the 1940s, the feminism of their childhood” (Lepore). Co-founded by Steinem, “*Ms.* was meant to be an organ for a revived feminist movement,” making Wonder Woman’s return to her original costume on its cover particularly relevant (Lepore 283). Wonder Woman’s clothing was seen as key symbol of the second-wave feminist movement.

Thanks to these women’s efforts, in 1973 Wonder Woman reappeared with her superpowers, accessories, and costume restored in *Wonder Woman #204* (Matsuuchi 134). This time period is popularly known as the *feminist* rebirth of Wonder Woman’s character (Matsuuchi 134). However, it is important to note that her first rebirth had originally been intended to be feminist as well; both of these stages are open to readers’ own interpretations and opinions of her apparel, informed through the context of the comics themselves. Nevertheless, “This chapter in Wonder Woman’s history [...] provides a revealing insight into the relationship between American comic books and second-wave feminism” (Matsuuchi 120). Wonder Woman was a lens through which to view the feminist debates occurring at the time. Referring to these conflicts, Lepore writes, “In that battle Wonder Woman wasn’t caught in the crossfire; Wonder Woman was the ammunition” (290). This sentiment summarizes the idea that Wonder Woman, *and her costume*, were used to reflect feminist values and debates. These conflicts continued through twenty-first-century representations of her character, shaped by contemporary conflicts, debates, and forms of representation in new media.

Wonder Woman Today

The chapter “Wonder Woman & Black Canary Fight the Gender War” from the 2008 graphic novel *Justice League: The New Frontier* includes Wonder Woman’s breastplate catching on fire, prompting her to pummel her male opponents with her burning bra (Matsuuchi 138). This image of Wonder Woman as a “bra burner” is an overt reference to her feminist ties, represented through an engagement with fashion and her costume. Gloria Steinem is referenced in the comic as well, linking her both to the icon and the character’s feminist background. In this interpretation, Wonder Woman is understood as a part of feminist history, signaled to readers through her dress.

Despite this, Wonder Woman remains a polarizing figure in relation to feminism; her clothing continues to be reinterpreted, as do the undertones and debates surrounding her costume. In 2010, for the 600th issue of *Wonder Woman*, artists chose to revamp her apparel. This time, they placed her in tight black pants, a red tank top, a navy jacket, and flat black boots. Her accessories—the bracelets, tiara, and lasso—remained. According to Deb Waterhouse-Watson and Evie Kendall, the purpose of this makeover was to “celebrat[e] the Amazonian superhero’s longevity in print media”; however, they also mention that the new costume was “less revealing” (114). As they explain, the character’s “shift to more practical, less sexualised wear arguably reflects changing attitudes about gender and the growing female presence in the comics industry. Nevertheless, the change prompted some controversy online amongst fan communities, again highlighting the problematic history of the representation of women as powerful figures” (Waterhouse-Watson and Kendall 114). Despite the fact that costume choice was meant to reflect

contemporary, female-positive sentiments, once again analysis, debate, and controversy followed. This may be the reason that Wonder Woman is still most often shown dressed in her iconic apparel.

An additional reboot followed in 2011, resulting in the reappearance of the 1970s Diana Prince comics. In this version, Wonder Woman appears dressed again in her all-white costume, which she describes as “(o)ne of the outfits I wore after I renounced my powers [...] before I realized who I really am” (Matsuuchi 138). Here, she is once more without superpowers or her original costume. In this representation, a “confusing final panel points to [the idea that] despite the intentions of the men and women who created her, Wonder Woman remains an uncertain, complicated icon, claimed by a legion of fans with widely disparate needs and expectations” (Matsuuchi 138). In *Adorned in Dreams*, Elizabeth Wilson argues that “we may view the fashionable dress of the western world as one means whereby an always fragmentary self is glued together into the semblance of a unified identity” (11). Wonder Woman’s identity is constantly being recreated with each costume change, preventing a coherent, stable perception of the character.

Media interest in Wonder Woman continues today, even outside of the realm of comic books and graphic novels. Twenty-first-century representations largely interpret Wonder Woman’s character as feminist, though debate surrounding her clothing persists. The character continues to be referenced across multiple forms of media, from the popular television series *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life* to fashion catwalks (figure 3). In another example, Lux Alptraum’s article “30 Halloween Costumes for Badass Feminists” (2016) claims that “Wonder Woman’s

been inspiring girls and women for decades [...] now that she’s got the option to wear trousers, she’s even more feminist than ever.” Statements such as this one within popular media illustrate the significance of Wonder Woman’s clothing in constructing her position as a feminist figure.

The 2017 *Wonder Woman* film brought on further discussion of Wonder Woman’s iconic apparel and how it should be represented today (figure 4). In “The ‘Wonder Woman’ Costumes Are A Celebration of Female Empowerment” by Fawnia Soo Hoo, costume designer Lindy Hemming relayed the extensive research and effort that went into creating a costume that would harken back to Wonder Woman’s original outfit while avoiding hypersexualizing the character; as the designer, Hemming was thoughtful, even cautious, when creating Wonder Woman’s costume. Hemming outlined the careful balance she aimed to strike between historically maintaining Wonder Woman’s iconic dress and allowing herself to be influenced by current fashion trends such as athleisure and modern interpretations of the character (Soo Hoo). Much like the debates which took place between various comic book artists as they created Wonder Woman’s original characterization, Hemming touched upon the changes she made to the Wonder Woman costume, which she had “tweaked since its debut” in the *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* film in 2016 (Soo Hoo). Given that *Wonder Woman* is an action movie, her apparel had to be functional on screen, prompting Hemming and her team to remake the costume in lighter materials and to “re-[design] Wonder Woman’s over-the-knee boots into a sportier sandal-boot hybrid” (Soo Hoo). Even today, it is not just Wonder Woman’s character that is subject to change, but her dress as well. Adjustments to Wonder Woman’s clothing are in part what allow her to

remain an icon for the modern-day consumers who engage with her.



Figure 3. Students adorn superhero symbols and costumes. Elena Siemens, Student Models at "Superhero Fashion Catwalk," University of Alberta, September 2016.

In 2016, Wonder Woman was assigned both her biggest and potentially most controversial role yet: as United Nations Ambassador of the Empowerment of Women and Girls. As Veronica Arreola writes, this appointment sparked intense debate: "While many are fans of Wonder Woman, they would rather see the UN finally select a real-life woman to lead the global entity." Importantly, Wonder Woman's costume was cited as one of the concerns with the appointment. Again, Wonder Woman is described as being "scantily clad," making her "not suitable for an ambassador" (Arreola). The United Nations' Wonder Woman campaign had been accompanied by slogans, such as "Think of all the wonders we can do: stand up for the empowerment of women and girls everywhere" and "The women and girls who rise up for a better world, and the men and boys who support and stand



Figure 4. Gal Gadot in the Wonder Woman costume created for the 2017 Wonder Woman film. Brenda Rochelle, Wonder Woman Featured, 5 June 2017, Flickr, www.flickr.com/ accessed 24 October 2018.

with them, are superheroes in their own right" ("Stand Up"). It is interesting to note that the photo that accompanied Wonder Woman's webpage was cut off at the neck, potentially attempting to negate any criticism about her clothing and costume, along with criticism of her body itself (Aizenman). Only her tiara and the top of a cape and top can be seen. The United Nations' hashtags #RealLifeWonderWoman and #WithWonderWoman further moved the controversy surrounding the superhero as a feminist figure forward into the twenty-first century. Despite efforts to maintain the success of the campaign, Nurith Aizenman explains that Wonder Woman was unceremoniously removed from her role

“less than two months later” due to the above criticisms. This final, most recent example encapsulates the conflict that has dogged Wonder Woman's character since first inception, of which clothing is a part.

Wonder Woman's costume is an essential part of her superhero character. Even without it, as Diana Prince, a new costume is created in the old one's stead. The treatment of the clothing of this fictional female superhero illustrates the important role fashion plays in the realm of feminism and more widely in popular culture as well. Clothing is the lens through which these characters are created, designed, and redesigned as values and motives shift. In reframing the academic works that have studied Wonder Woman, feminism, and fashion, it is clear that her costume has been the key focus of the debates surrounding her character and her validity as a feminist icon. With the recent United Nations controversy and film release, these discussions continue.

Conclusion

Wonder Woman remains caught up in a conflict that women have faced for centuries. As I have illustrated throughout this article, Wonder Woman is judged based on her appearance and clothing, forcing her to consistently shift and change based on the perceptions and criticisms of others. Dress, it seems, is more influential even than Wonder Woman's bracelets or lasso, and has the power to reduce her from a woman to be admired to a woman scorned. Because of her controversial apparel—too sexual, too traditional, too modern, too unrealistic—Wonder Woman's position as a role model is contested. The conflicts surrounding Wonder Woman as a feminist

figure have centered on her dress, and each costume change allows a new perspective on feminism, female role models, and representations of women within popular culture to unravel and be recreated.

Whether readers choose to understand Wonder Woman as a feminist figure or not, interpretations of her character are difficult to separate from her dress. As the superhero Hawkman says upon first meeting Wonder Woman in *All-Star Comics #11*:

“Diana Prince—why, you must be Wonder Woman!”

“Why, how did you know?”

“The Justice Society manages to learn many things!”

Diana changes into her Wonder Woman costume and joins the fight” (Lepore 204).

It is only once she has changed into her costume that Wonder Woman is ready for battle.

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Image Notes

Figure 1. Wonder Woman in one variation of her costume. JJ_Dread, *Wonder Woman*, 11 December 2015, *Flickr*, www.flickr.com/, accessed 24 October 2018.

Figure 2. Wonder Woman restrained with chains in the *Wonder Woman: Earth One* series. Grant Morrison (w) and Yanick Paquette (a), *Wonder Woman: Earth One* (April 2016), DC Comics; Richard Guion, "Wonder Woman- Yanick Paquette," *Flickr*, 1 April 2016, www.flickr.com/, accessed 31 July 2018.

Figure 3. Students adorn superhero symbols and costumes. Elena Siemens, *student models at "Superhero Fashion Catwalk"*, University of Alberta, September 2016.

Figure 4. Gal Gadot in the Wonder Woman costume created for the 2017 *Wonder Woman* film. Brenda Rochelle, *Wonder Woman Featured*, 5 June 2017, *Flickr*, www.flickr.com/, accessed 24 October 2018.

WHERE THE BOYS WHO KEEP SWINGING ARE NOW: LOCATIONAL RELATIONALITY IN HEDI SLIMANE AND HELMUT LANG¹

SUSAN INGRAM

Abstract | This article illustrates the mechanisms by which Berlin and Vienna have come to figure differently in the global fashion imaginary. It establishes the stylistic locational relationality of Hedi Slimane and Helmut Lang, two fashion designers known for distinctive styles that resist the mainstream of bourgeois respectability. The relational nature of their locational identities—Slimane’s attraction to Berlin and Lang’s rejection of Vienna—is tied to the cities’ urban imaginaries, which work by making particular periods and styles of the cities’ histories hegemonic.

Résumé | Cet article illustre les mécanismes par lesquels Berlin et Vienne en sont venus à figurer différemment dans l’imaginaire mondial de la mode. Il établit la relation locale stylistique de Hedi Slimane et Helmut Lang, deux dessinateurs de mode connus pour leur styles distinctifs qui résistent aux normes prévalentes de la respectabilité bourgeoise. La nature relationnelle de leurs identités géographiques—L’attrait de Berlin pour Slimane et le rejet de Vienne pour Lang—est liée à l’imaginaire urbain des deux villes, ce qui se manifeste en rendant hégémoniques des aspects particuliers des époques et du style de l’histoire des deux villes.

Some cities lend themselves to better comparisons than others. As the capitals of the two German-speaking empires (the Prussian and Habsburg, respectively), Berlin and Vienna are well positioned for comparison, particularly due to the very different ways the two cities have come to figure in the global popular imaginary on account of their very different historical trajectories. Upstart Berlin with its background as a *Garrisonstadt* (garrison city) has become the “poor but sexy” clubbing capital of Europe (see Bauer and Hosek), while *Residenzstadt* Vienna—the city that effectively served as the capital of the Holy Roman Empire from the time the Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand II established his residence there in the early 17th century to its dissolution by Napoleon in 1806 and as home to the Habsburgs for most of the past millennium—, steadfastly remains a capital of faded imperial splendor (Figures 1 and 2). These imaginaries inform the ways in which these two cities’ respective fashion systems have responded to contemporary global pressures brought about by flows of capital, goods, and people, as well as the way the global fashion system has engaged with them. As of the time of writing, the Sartorialist *still* had not visited Vienna, while there are 40 images from Berlin on his site.²

The mechanisms by which Berlin and Vienna have come to figure differently and the role of visual style culture in both forming and greasing the circuits underpinning their respective

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On the Street.....Mitte, Berlin



Figure 1 On the Street... Mitte, Berlin (thesartorialist.com)

urban imaginaries are the subject of this contribution. Building on both Doreen Massey's argument about the identity of modern places being constituted as much by their relation with other places as by anything intrinsic to their location (Massey) and Rosi Braidotti's understanding of a place as "an embedded and embodied memory: it is a set of counter-memories, which are activated by the resisting thinker against the grain of the dominant representations of subjectivity" (Blaagaard and Tuin 2013), I juxtapose the career paths of two designers whose work resists the mainstream of bourgeois respectability: Hedi Slimane (Figure 3) and Helmut Lang (Figure 4). I show how their relations have, in the case of Slimane and Berlin, and have not, in the case of Lang and Vienna, come to play a role in constituting these cities' global identities.

The relational nature of these locational identities and their (visual) styles is thus shown to be intimately tied to the cities' urban imaginaries, which work by making hegemonic particular periods and styles of the cities' histories. In positioning Lang's or Slimane's work as resistant, I am not contesting their prominence as fashion designers but rather pointing to the relation between the radical nature of their visions and their associating, or not, with the urban imaginaries of Berlin and Vienna. As Bradley Quinn pointed out in his review of the *Radical Fashion* exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in 2001-2002, radical is a relative concept that, when applied to uncompromising collections



Figure 2 Café Griensteidl on the Michaelerplatz in Vienna (photo: M. Reisenleitner)

such as Lang's, "implies a sudden thrill of meanings that themselves quicken, mutate, rupture,



Figure 3 Hedi Slimane (Victor Soto)

fissure, or collapse. Fashion designers working in this vein reshape the body, design according to philosophical and intellectual concerns, push boundaries, challenge perceptions, and usurp conformity to give form to extravagant projects of the imagination” (Quinn 442). What interests me here is not so much the collections themselves, about which Fashion Studies scholars have made many insightful observations (Rees-Roberts, “Boys Keep Swinging”; Bowstead; Arnold, “Heroin Chic”),³ but rather the relations between the imaginations underpinning these works and the cities in which they came into being. In the trend-setting work of both Slimane and Lang:

Conspicuous consumption is refused in favor of dress strategies that are disquieting and unknowable by those outside



Figure 4 Helmut Lang, 2008 (courtesy of HL-ART)

the coterie of youth culture, a form of resistance to imposed definitions of identity and lifestyle. They emit a feeling of being adrift from society as a whole; the youth culture that fashion was drawing upon becomes a series of satellites that deny inclusion in establishment ideals. (Arnold, “Heroin Chic” 286-87)

Yet Berlin’s urban imaginary has been able to take that resistance into its own urban imaginary, while Vienna’s has not. As importantly *illustrated* here, the experiences of these designers and their relations to these cities can help us understand, and *see*, why.

Helmut Lang is the fashion designer associated with Vienna to have achieved the greatest renown internationally, but he did not do

so as a specifically Viennese fashion designer. While Lang may have started out in Vienna with a boutique called Bou Bou Lang in 1979, he used the success that his use of unconventional materials and minimalist utilitarianism in designs garnered as a springboard to get to Paris, not to mention his “Viennese-ness,”⁴ which is not intended as a stylistic marker but simply a reflection of his background. The connection helped him to show a collection in 1986 in conjunction with the monumental “Vienne 1880-1939: L’apocalypse joyeuse/Vienna 1900/Traum und Wirklichkeit” exhibition at Centre Georges Pompidou that brought a renewed appreciation of Vienna’s Jugendstil/art nouveau cultural heritage and popularized it elsewhere (Ingram and Reisenleitner, *Wiener Chic* 162). In Paris, he founded his own label and showed his first ready-to-wear collection before decamping for New York, where “in April 2000, he became the first non-American designer to become part of the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), a group which had named him Best International Designer of the Year in 1996” (162), and began working with Jenny Holzer on the design of his boutiques (Figure 5). Now a prominent component of the Fashion Studies canon for his experimental *séances de travail* and early use of the internet, “it was Lang’s cool, urban silhouettes, marrying basic shapes with edgy color combinations and advanced technological fabrics, which were both the crucial look for fashion insiders, and the key influence on other designers, eager to find a new vision of the modern” (Arnold, *Fashion, Desire and Anxiety: Image and Morality in the Twentieth Century* 20, qtd. in Rees-Roberts, “Raf Simons and Interdisciplinary Fashion from

Post-Punk to Neo-Modern” 14). However, Lang quickly grew disenchanted by the growing consolidation of the fashion industry into conglomerates. When the Prada Group sought to consolidate its position as a leading luxury conglomerate at the end of the 1990s by acquiring labels and came knocking at Helmut Lang, he first ceded 51% of his company in 1999 and the remainder in 2004. He left the company the following year, retired from fashion, and has since been devoting himself to his work as an artist. As we argue in *Wiener Chic*, Lang’s refusal to kowtow to global fashion’s powers-that-be, maintaining instead a relationship to the fashion world resolutely on his own terms,⁵ is indicative of, and in keeping with, the larger Viennese fashion system, just as the rest of the city’s non-high culture, tourist-oriented cultural production exists



Figure 5 Helmut Lang boutique in Westbourne Grove, London (photo: S. Ingram)

in a state of relative invisibility globally (Ingram and Reisenleitner, *Wiener Chic* 161).

Just as forces propelled Helmut Lang out of Vienna, so too did others attract Hedi Slimane to

Berlin. Slimane's fashion path ran more immediately through Paris than Lang's. Having studied art history at the École du Louvre, his initial participation in the fashion world was in the early 1990s as an assistant on a Louis Vuitton project to reimagine the brand. After a formative period with Yves Saint Laurent, during which he rose to the position of artistic director, Slimane, like Lang, gained fame by pioneering a rebellious, tight-legged look.⁶ While Lang had brought a "punk, distressed look to the catwalk" in the 1990s (Arnold, "Heroin Chic" 286), "Slimane's reputation is founded on having streamlined and rejuvenated the male silhouette through the promotion of a skinny style appropriated from youth subcultures" during his tenure at Dior from 2000-2007 (Rees-Roberts, "Boys Keep Swinging" 7).⁷ Rees-Roberts emphasizes, "Of [Slimane's] collections for Dior Homme, those in 2005 and 2006 are emblematic of his transposition of the revival English mod look made famous by the designer's unofficial muse at the time, musician Pete Doherty" (Rees-Roberts, "Boys Keep Swinging" 9), but he also cannot help but note "the figure of David Bowie looming large over Slimane's luxury transposition of street style, particularly the singer's incarnations in the mid- to late 1970s" (Rees-Roberts, "Boys Keep Swinging" 13). Calling on the evidence of Slimane's early photography, Rees-Roberts identifies the attraction as based on "[t]he retro allure of Eastern European militarism" (Rees-Roberts, "Boys Keep Swinging" 14), a regional focus that effaces the influence of Berlin and its urban imaginary.⁸ After all, it was to Berlin that Slimane relocated after YSL was taken over by Gucci in 1999 and he learned he would have a new boss:

Tom Ford, the creative director at Gucci, who insisted that Slimane report to him. "It was a totally new idea to me, this story of

'reporting,'" Slimane told me. (His English is good but not perfect.) "I might have never heard the word 'reporting' before. Reporting to Tom was not going to happen." Bergé objected to the arrangement, too. "I was absolutely against it," he told me. "Tom Ford is not my cup of tea. I don't respect him, not at all. He is not a designer. He is a marketing man." After meeting with Ford at the Ritz ("The situation became unpleasant," Slimane said), Slimane resigned. (Paumgarten)

Between 2000 and 2002 Slimane undertook an artistic residency at the Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, which resulted in his first photography book, *Berlin*, a glossy publication by Editions 7L/Steidl (the L stands for Lagerfeld), which contains images he took during his tenure in the city.

The importance of Bowie to Slimane, and of Berlin to that relationship, is not to be underestimated. In "Changes: Bowie's Life Story," her contribution to the *David Bowie Is...* catalogue, Oriole Cullen includes a quote by Bowie "[d]iscussing his approach to fashion in 2005": "Explaining that he was currently wearing clothes by one particular designer, he said, 'I just rely on Hedi Slimane [...]. I've always been extremely lucky that there's always been some designer or other who wants to give me clothes. For the last little while Hedi Slimane has wardrobe me'" (Cullen 258). Apparently Slimane sent some early designs to Bowie, who commented that "The stuff was apparently influenced by the film *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, and it was all that very slim-line black, and it's very much become his signature look" (qtd. in Cullen 258).⁹ The *David Bowie Is...* catalogue includes images of the 2002 blue silk suit that Slimane designed for Bowie's *Heathen* tour, the same kind of skinny suit that

Karl Lagerfeld famously lost 90 pounds in order to be able to wear (Figure 6). When Slimane won the Council of Fashion Designers of America award for international designer in 2002 (the award Helmut Lang won in 1996), Bowie was there to present him with it.



Figure 6 Slimane-designed suit for Bowie
(photo: S. Ingram)

The week Bowie died, in January 2016, Slimane posted images of Bowie that he had taken as part of his *Stage* project, which point to a decided sense of loss (Figure 7).¹⁰ He also published a touchingly personal tribute to Bowie in the 2016 spring issue of the Victoria & Albert Museum's *V&A Magazine*, in which he confesses that Bowie was something of a talismanic, god-like figure for him:

July 1975.

I open my birthday present and I meet David for the first time, at the age of seven. David Live, recorded in Philadelphia one year before, is about to change my life.

My sister's best friend, Veronique Jamin, puts the vinyl on my low-fi turntable. Veronique is fifteen, the prettiest thing. She wears a black vinyl jumpsuit and puts blue glitter on her eyes. She plays and sings along: Aladdin Sane. I am used to seeing her dancing, throwing back her beautiful hair, but this time it's different. This is about Bowie. I lie down on the bed and observe the double album cover, the powder-blue suspended suit of Freddie Buretti. The pale figure, the heroic posture, the slick electric hair. I look at David. I am not quite sure if it is a boy or a girl. I don't care. I am the same anyway. From this day, 5 July 1975, Bowie will protect me.

8 June 1983. Hippodrome d'Auteuil. My first concert.

There are about 100,000 people. I am excited and scared at the same time by the raw energy of the crowd.

I will never forget how I felt that day.

I became a teenager when I walked into that venue.

David takes the stage: The Jean Genie.

100,000 girls and boys like an ocean under a storm.

Modern Love, and it's over. I will never be the same.

My life was ahead of me.

David died and left us alone.

I lost my childhood, I lost my youth.

Nothing will ever be the same. (Allwood) (cf. Victoria and Albert Museum).¹¹

The anecdote depicted in the initial part of the poem seems to have been common knowledge, given that it was used to open a 2006 piece entitled “Pretty Things” in the *New Yorker*:

Hedi Slimane sits alone in his room, in a pleasant but not very fashionable part of Paris, mooning over an album cover. He has just turned six. The year is 1974. The record, a birthday gift from a friend of his older sister, is “David Live”—David Bowie, recorded at the Tower Theatre in Philadelphia. The friend, Véronique, likes to put on a blue jumpsuit and imitate Bowie. She does a good Mick Jagger, too. Slimane is captivated by her. He is also captivated by the album cover, which features a photograph of Bowie onstage, dressed in a powder-blue double-breasted suit: the jacket is cut short, with narrow but square shoulders, and the pants, although pleated and billowy in the legs, are tight at the crotch. Bowie looks bloodless and emaciated, well on his way to his “Thin White Duke” phase, during which he subsisted, as he later said, on “peppers, cocaine, and milk.” Taste has to come from somewhere. Thirty years later, after

Slimane has become a celebrated fashion designer who occasionally claims that he has no precedents or influences—who declares, “I have no nostalgia”—he allows that his sensibility owes a lot to “David Live” and to the early sight of this cool and cadaverous androgynous striking an angular pose. “When you’re a kid, you stare at things like

this,” he says. “There is a moment of isolation in your room—a moment, maybe, of boredom.” There are many things that can contribute to a boy’s sense that another world exists out there, but, in 1974, nothing quite beat album covers, David Bowie, or older girls in blue jumpsuits (Paumgarten).

In his poetic tribute to Bowie a decade later, Slimane returns to this scene to correct the year and his age—it was 1975 so he was seven not six, and the colour scheme—it was Veronique’s eye glitter that was blue, not the jumpsuit, which was black vinyl. Calling her “the prettiest thing”



Figure 7 One of the images from *Stages* that Hedi Slimane republished on the occasion of Bowie’s death. (“Hedi Slimane’s Tribute to David Bowie”)

both harkens back to and makes explicit the reference in Nick Paumgarten’s title to Bowie’s “The Prettiest Star,” one of the tracks on the 1973 *Aladdin Sane*. Its cover is the one featuring the colourful thunderbolt makeup that was selected from all of Bowie’s albums for the cover of *David Bowie Is...* catalogue, but repurposed so that the eyes return the viewers’ gaze for the catalogue

instead of remaining downturned as they were on the album cover.¹²

These connections encourage us to return to Slimane's Berlin residency. While he, like Bowie, had also lived in Los Angeles and New York, it is not those cities but rather the influence of Berlin and a key part of its urban imaginary that can be shown to provide a germinal link between the two. The images of Bowie that Slimane reproduced as a tribute were first taken in 2003 for his Stages project, that is, the year after his Berlin stay, after he had designed Bowie's *Heathen* tour suit, and Bowie had presented him with the Council of Fashion Designers of America award for international designer. Slimane's experiences during his artist residency in Berlin from 2000 to 2002 bear a striking resemblance to Bowie's heady stay in the city from 1976 to 1978. In both cases the artists were escaping situations that were not good for them (Bowie, Los Angeles; Slimane, YSL), and Berlin proved a fertile space for innovation. Slimane's Berlin stay resulted not only in the first of several photography books, but also exhibitions at the Kunstwerke, MOMA/PS1 in New York, and the Koyanagi Gallery in Tokyo. Like Bowie, Slimane was able to find inroads into the kind of locals he could relate to in Berlin, but not only in Berlin, of course. As noted in *The New Yorker*:

Slimane also collects places. Paris bores him; it lacks a youth culture, or a sense of energetic disenchantment. He lives there because it is his home, and couture's. (He has an apartment on the Quai Voltaire, overlooking the Seine and the Louvre.) And so for stimulus he chooses other cities. Like David Bowie's humanoid alien in "The Man Who Fell to Earth," who came here to procure water for his own planet, Slimane spends a lot of his time in this or

that town, quietly observing its citizens and ways, in order to extract its visual resources. In recent years, it's been London. He distills some kind of Londonness, filters it through a Paris atelier, and offers it back, in suspenders and fancy boots (Paumgarten).

When he first began at Dior, Slimane sent the locals he encountered in Berlin down the runway to change the look of men's fashion just as decisively as Bowie's Berlin albums changed the sound of pop music:

Slimane is said to have transformed the male silhouette. He produced jackets that were cut short, with narrow, square shoulders, and teamed them with very skinny trousers - exquisitely made, super-tight tailoring that was designed with rock stars in mind, but was greeted with so many standing ovations on the catwalk that pretty soon everyone from Versace to Topman referenced Dior Homme in their collections (Davis).

No less an authoritative fashion figure than international editor Suzy Menkes claims to have sensed "an undercurrent of Berlin's unsettling history" in Slimane's Dior Homme shows, "and especially in [his] photographs—there is: dense darkness, danger, Weimar decadence, a grinding Communist regime, brutal buildings, shady cellars, nihilistic depravity" (Menkes), something that can also be heard in *Low*, "Heroes," and *Lodger*, which are credited, in their experimental minimalism, with picking up on the dark currents that fascinated Bowie about the city and had brought him there (cf. T. J. Seabrook).

Bowie's influence on Slimane is reminiscent of Christopher Isherwood's on Bowie. Bowie was captivated by what had taken Isherwood to

Berlin in the 1930s, just as Slimane was by what had taken Bowie there in the 1970s. However, while Bowie was attracted to the dark historical elements of Berlin that Menkes describes, which he found in Isherwood's work as well as in German expressionist art,¹³ Slimane seems to have



Figure 8 *Christiane F. Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*
(Images © 1981 Solaris Film, Maran Film, Popular
Filmproduktion, CLV-Filmproduktions, Süddeutscher
Rundfunk)

been attracted to the look emanating from Bowie's connection to the city, specifically the 1981 film *Christiane F./ Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*. Christiane Felscherinow's teenage experiences with drugs and prostitution were first turned into a bestselling reportage by two *Stern* reporters, which Uli Edel then turned into a cult film that memorably featured a Bowie concert and soundtrack. Felscherinow has garnered, if not exactly enjoyed, a certain measure of renown ever since and recently published a memoir in an attempt to advocate for support and assistance for drug dependency, something she still

struggles with (Felscherinow and Vukovich; cf. Ingram).

Befitting Felscherinow's cult status, it is not difficult to find images of her younger self online, and it is also not difficult to ascertain her lifestyle from them.¹⁴ It is not just the case, however, that Felscherinow belonged to a slightly earlier version of the Berlin scene from which Slimane drew his inspiration. Rather, as is apparent from images online from *Christiane F.: Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*, it was the film version of her story, which features a cult-inducing soundtrack by Bowie, including "Heroes/ Helden" and "Boys Keep Swinging," from which Slimane drew his aesthetic inspiration (Figure 8, Figure 9). That so many black-and-white images of a *colour* film circulate online via Google images speaks to the broader popularity of this aesthetic, highly influential on Slimane and others.

While Slimane does not seem to have written any poems about the film or commented on it in



Figure 9 collage from Slimane's Berlin collection (S. Ingram)

interviews, one can see from the following images that it is not merely the heroin chic look of *Christiane F.* that is at issue, but rather a stance



Figure 10 *Christiane F. Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*, looking at Bowie poster (Images © 1981 Solaris Film, Maran Film, Popular Filmproduktion, CLV-Filmproduktions, Süddeutscher Rundfunk)

(Figure 10, Figure 11), one clearly associated in *Christiane F.* with Bowie and Bowie fandom—shooting from the back over the shoulder, a look which has become one of Slimane’s trademarks (Figure 12, Figure 13).

In adopting this stance as one of his signature aesthetics, Slimane was making a *locational relation* to Bowie premised on a stylistic connection to “poor but sexy” Berlin, which served to establish him as the same kind of resisting artist as Bowie, interested in creating images and styles that run counter to representations of the dominant bourgeois order and that similarly propelled him to stardom.¹⁵

This notion of locational relation can also help us to gauge the imaginative distance between Berlin and Vienna. I am not suggesting that

Vienna has not, or cannot, serve as a site of counter-memories that work against the grain of the dominant representations of subjectivity. Indeed, *Wiener Chic* details where many such locations are to be found, which would have provided Helmut Lang with the type of fashion space he was seeking had they existed while he lived there. Whether the detectives in *Soko Donau*, who solve crimes involving people and substances trafficked into and out of Vienna and its surroundings (Figure 14); the Iranian migrant in *I Love Vienna* (Houchang Allahyari, 1991), who has to help his sister and son find their way in their new and not exactly hospitable environment (Figure 15); or the musician who has to extricate himself from shady dealings involving pirated Whitney Houston CDs in *Blutrausch* (Thomas Roth, 1997, Figure 16); they all find themselves in locations that work against the grain of, rather than in conjunction with,



Figure 11 *Christiane F. Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*, at the concert (Images © 1981 Solaris Film, Maran Film, Popular Filmproduktion, CLV-Filmproduktions, Süddeutscher Rundfunk)

the city’s dominant representation of imperial splendour. When they take to land, the *Soko Donau* detectives do not ride in the kind of style



Figure 12 One of the images of Bowie from the back from the Stage collection that Slimane republished on the occasion of Bowie's death



Figure 13 random collage of Slimane photos (S. Ingram)



Figure 14 Soko Donau on water (Images © 2008 ZDF and ORF)



Figure 17 Soko Donau on land (Images © 2008 ZDF and ORF)



Figure 15 arriving at the Südbahnhof in I Love Vienna (Images © 1991 epo-film)



Figure 18 leaving the hotel in the 2nd district in I Love Vienna (Images © 1991 epo-film)



Figure 16 the Beisl in Blutrausch (Images © 1997 Dor Film Produktionsgesellschaft/ Österreichischer Runkfunk (ORF)



Figure 19 concert in the Arena (Images © 1997 Dor Film Produktionsgesellschaft/ Österreichischer Runkfunk (ORF)



Figure 20 irreverent treatment of statue in *I Love Vienna*
(Images © 1991 epo-film)

one traditionally associates with the city: the Fiaker or horse-drawn carriage (Figure 17); the Iranian migrants find themselves housed in one of the city's seedier districts with prostitutes for neighbours—the 2. Leopoldstadt, which has in the meantime undergone substantial gentrification (Figure 18, cf. Suitner); and the *Blutausch* musician, who is played by Ostbahn Kurti, one of Vienna's most colourful countercultural characters, ends up in bondage after being abducted at a punk concert at the Arena (Figure 19). Even when tourist sites do appear in these productions, they are rubbed against the grain to show how little the imperial histories they stand for matter in the lives of contemporary residents from and on the peripheries (Figure 20).

However, because these popular culture productions have remained peripheral to Vienna's high-culture reputation, on which its tourist status as a European capital of culture rests, they have not been able to provide an enticing enough environment to lure Lang back to Vienna from the idyll of Long Island, where he has resided since retiring from fashion and devoting himself to art.¹⁶ At least not yet permanently. Lang's most recent solo exhibition, "Various Conditions," was in the Stadtraum Gallery in Vienna and the Sammlung Friedrichshof in

the Burgenland in the summer and fall of 2017 (<http://www.h-lang.studio>), so it is not impossible that he may relocate back to Austria at some point, just as Veruschka returned to Berlin from Brooklyn in the aftermath of 9/11 with the second Bush presidency.

Urban imaginaries are by no means static constructions. The gentrification Berlin is currently experiencing may eventually undermine its "poor but sexy" reputation. The Ramones Museum in Berlin is now in its third location and may well end up having to decamp yet again to a more affordable space, either on the city's periphery or outside the city altogether (Figure 21).¹⁷ What seems certain at this point is that the likeliness of its moving to Vienna is comparable with the likeliness of Helmut Lang returning to the city—for precisely the same reason: they would not feel comfortable with, or want to be seen as aligned with, the contours and shadings of the faded splendor of Vienna's imperial imaginary, which still remains largely untouched by the Viennese productions mentioned here and stuck in "the world of yesterday" that once housed great writers such as Zweig, Wittgenstein, Freud, and Schnitzler, and from which a resistant fashion designer such as Helmut Lang has in the past gone to great lengths to distance himself.¹⁸ That Berlin has bought into the understanding of itself as a place in Braidotti's sense of a set of counter-memories can be seen in its championing of its Bowie connection: the building at Hauptstrasse 154-155, in which Bowie lived during his stay in the city in the 1970s, now has a commemorative plaque on it and the street is now called "David Bowie Strasse," at least on postcards (Figure 22). Indeed, given the centrality of the countercultural imaginary of Berlin that attracted Bowie and Slimane in motorizing the city's current gentrification, one has to question in how far it can truly be considered



FLO HAYLER

Figure 21 Flo Hayler in front of the original Ramones Museum location in Kreuzberg (courtesy of Flo Hayler)

countercultural and not simply imaginary, in the psychoanalytic sense—that is, the realm through which the ego is constituted in a fantasy-driven process of narcissistic identification. What can be concluded is, as has been demonstrated here by illustrating this contribution as lavishly as it has been, no matter how Berlin’s and Vienna’s urban imaginaries continue to evolve, the stylistic index of fashion will be able to help establish their locational relationality.

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Figure 22 a postcard showing a street sign at Hauptstrasse 154/155, taken in January 2016 by Ute Volz (photo: S. Ingram)

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Notes

1 My work on Berlin and Vienna has been bolstered over the years by more conference engagement than can be enumerated here, but I would like to acknowledge the support of the co-editors of this special volume, Katrina Sark and Elena Siemens, as well as general editor Markus Reisenleitner. *Imaginations'* extremely well informed peer reviewers were also very helpful in getting me to nuance and expand on key aspects of this piece and, in particular, to clarify its focus on the cities and not the designers. I hope it is now clear how this focus supports the piece's implicit feminist, new materialist approach. I should also mention that the title is a deliberate mashing of the titles of two David Bowie songs: "Boy Keep Swinging" and "Where are We Now?" My title is therefore not a plagiarizing of Rees-Roberts, "Boys Keep Swinging"; rather, it is the case that we are both alluding to the same song.

2 To provide a sense of how these statistics fit in in terms of Europe: as of December 2016, there were over 1400 images on the site for both Paris and Milan, 535 for Florence, 327 for London, 129 for Stockholm, 42 for Rome, 36 for Madrid, 31 for Moscow, 21 for Barcelona, 10 for Munich, and 9 for Hamburg, 6 for Brussels, and 2 for St Petersburg. Outside of Europe, there are 48 for Sydney, 16 for Melbourne, 61 for Tokyo, 9 for Beijing, 5 for Shanghai, 12 for Los Angeles, and 7 for Santa Fe. In the Canadian context, there are 4 for Toronto, 3 for Vancouver, and 1 for Montreal. That Scott Schumann's home base of NYC has the most (1531) of any city I checked is, of course, what one would expect.

3 My thanks to *Imaginations'* reviewers for suggesting I explicitly engage with these works. They proved very helpful in clarifying my focus.

4 Lang's associations with Vienna are enumerated in the "Designer Chic" chapter of the Vienna volume of the Urban Chic series (Ingram and Reisenleitner, *Wiener Chic*). I do not want to be misunderstood to be suggesting that Lang has come to be known as either a "Viennese" or an "Austrian" designer. On the contrary, it is his particular form of cosmopolitanism and its lack of relation to either Vienna or Austria that I am seeking to clarify here. If one wants to locate his lack of connection to the city, one could do so by noting that he has described the adolescence he spent in the city with his father and mother-in-law as "the most unhappy period of my life" (J. Seabrook, qtd. in Ingram and Reisenleitner, *Wiener Chic* 161).

5 An example of Lang's intransigence is his not appearing in person to accept CFDA's Menswear Designer of the Year award in 1996, which "was not taken kindly by the industry: 'We all have to do things we won't want to sometimes,' said André Leon Tally, the editor-at-large of *Vogue*. Anna Wintour described Helmut's decision as 'a mistake. [...]. If I had known he wasn't coming, I would have called him. It was discourteous not to turn up" (J. Seabrook qtd. in Ingram and Reisenleitner, *Wiener Chic* 162–63).

6 Slimane's penchant for reinventing brands is indeed, as one of the peer reviewers mentioned, noteworthy: first, "rebranding [...] the Dior menswear line (from the fusty Christian Dior Monsieur to the hip Dior Homme" (Rees-Roberts, "Boys Keep

Swinging” 7), then updating Yves Saint Laurent to the slicker Saint Laurent, and most recently redesigning Céline’s logo to remove the accent.

7 Another designer relevant to the discussion of post-punk subculture’s influence on fashion, as Nick Rees-Roberts has noted, is Raf Simons (Rees-Roberts, “Raf Simons and Interdisciplinary Fashion from Post-Punk to Neo-Modern”).

8 This is not to deny that Berlin was a base for Bowie’s orientation to Eastern Europe, which one can see perhaps most clearly in “Warszawa” (Gliński), but only to insist on Berlin’s centrality.

9 Again, I would not want to be misunderstood as suggesting that the Slimane-Bowie relationship was exclusive. Of course, Bowie wore clothes by other designers, just as Slimane designed for other singers and bands. What I am trying to flag as significant is the historical moment of their intersection and the role of Berlin on that relation.

10 They can all be viewed at “Hedi Slimane’s Tribute to David Bowie”. A few also appear in “Stage 2, June 2003” Rock Diary, Hedi Slimane.com (<https://www.hedislimane.com/diary/>).

11 I reproduce the poem in whole not only because it is not easy to come by but also so that others can expand on the limited reading I can offer here, as my topic is their Berlin connection. There is much more work to be mined from Bowie’s influence on Slimane and the shift to English that this poem represents.

12 For the power of Bowie’s early LP covers, see Breward.

13 His paintings in this style were on display in the Berlin room of the “David Bowie Is...” exhibition.

14 More difficult to ascertain is the copyright status, so instead of reproducing them, I refer readers to a site where they are collected: www.pinterest.at/pin/558094578794512261/.

15 Not all celebrities aspire to bourgeois values like the Kardashians. While it is true that Bowie did “settle down” in the final part of his life, he did not do so in a suburban Calabasas way but rather skewered that lifestyle in his late work, such as the video for “The Stars Are Out Tonight.” Neither do Slimane or Lang ascribe to suburban family values. Both encourage the practice of non-mainstream critically artistic existences.

16 It is intriguing, as one of the peer reviewers noted, that Lang retreated to the American east coast, while Slimane has gravitated toward the west coast, spending his break between Dior and Saint Laurent in Los Angeles, where he completed the photography collection *California Song*, and then moving the majority of Saint Laurent’s design studio to the city during his stint as the label’s creative director (Ingram and Reisenleitner, *L.A. Chic* 3). Putting Arnold’s and Rees-Roberts’s work on punk and post-punk together, one could make an argument for the importance of generation. That Lang is 12 years older meant that he was confronted with the onset of the consolidation of the global fashion system into conglomerates such as LVMH (see Mavrody) after he had already established his own brand and was therefore in a position to walk away from the industry to a sheltered, upscale artist’s studio in a setting that reminded him of his happy childhood in the Austrian alps. Slimane, on the other hand, had to make his way through the throes of this consolidation and uses the fact that he does not have his own fashion label to take time out between his fashion gigs to cultivate his artistic pursuits, particularly photography.

17 See Ingram and Sark 172–74 for an account of the first two locations.

18 An example of an Austrian fashion designer who has embraced that world of yesterday is the Graz-born Lena Hoschek, who is known for her fashion-forward dirndls.

SUZI WEBSTER INTERVIEWED BY KATRINA SARK

SUZI WEBSTER

What inspired you to be an artist and fashion designer, and your interest in fashion and technology?

S·W·: As a little kid, I used to spend hours making dresses for paper dolls. My mother was a dressmaker for a while and I think I learned to sew just by being around her, a little bit like osmosis. My path to becoming an artist was very circuitous: as I first got a joint law and literature degree, and I had to overcome a lot of limiting beliefs about what art could be, or what I could be. When I first went to art school, I just wanted to learn to paint like Rembrandt, because I thought that that is what real art was. I have always loved fashion, clothing, and its relation to performance, identity, and the body. I find that there is a lightness to fashion that is refreshing after an art world that takes itself very seriously, that can allow for more playfulness. Fashion and technology have an intrinsic relationship to the new that I find interesting as well as problematic. I enjoy some of the relationships and juxtapositions between ancient technologies like weaving and webs to the more current technologies, and I feel that as an artist living at this time of massive technological change that it must impact the work that I make.

Was your approach to fashion—through art and through technology—unusual at the time when you were a student? What were some of the challenges you faced in your journey?

Yes and yes—the challenges have been many! I was lucky to have done some research on

wearable technologies while an undergrad student at Emily Carr, and so when I went to London to the Slade, I was right in the centre of what was going on in London at the time, related to fashion, technology, smart materials, and more. Even though wearable technology was not related in any way to the Slade, the art school there was very open and unrestricted, and I had access to the Dana Centre for science, all sorts of interesting talks put on by Central St Martins College of Fashion, and I could meet all sorts of other curators, artists, and designers working in similar arenas. As someone working at the intersection of art, fashion, technology, and science, I have often been told that I am not a real artist, or a real designer, or a real tech person, so that is frustrating—for example my work is often shown in science museums or fashion museums rather than art museums. I have also found that it can be expensive and unwieldy to find interdisciplinary teams to work on poorly funded art projects, and so I feel very grateful to people like Dr. Walter Karlen, who donated some of his programming and research on heart sensors to help me create Electric Heart. When I first began in this field of wearable technologies, I was excited by the possibilities of technology that could be soft, woven, responsive to the body rather than rigid and hard, tethered to a screen. I have always seen that the best technology has a strong relationship to magic, as does fashion and art, but often the best visions become compromised by the limitations of the engineering, or the materials, or of current understanding. I think that that is why I've always been inspired by people like Buckminster Fuller and Nicholas Tesla.

What do you find most rewarding and inspiring about your work?

I love the freedom of being an artist. I feel that it is a great privilege, and the very best part of that is getting to share what I have made with the world and engaging in dialogue around the ideas that are generated. I also really love the opportunity to work with envisioning things that have never existed before and bringing them into reality.

Do you identify more as a multimedia artist or a designer, and how do you distinguish between the two?

I love this question! I feel that currently the boundaries between art and design are quite blurred, particularly with conceptual design and the way retail fashion mimics the aesthetics of the art gallery, but I would say that I identify more as an artist because I am not setting out to solve a design problem for a client or to create a line of reproducible garments. In the past I might have said that art asks questions, and design provides solutions, but this line has also become more complex.

Can you please describe your design process?

One of my very first sculptural pieces as a young art student was an “enlightenment machine.” The idea of turning breath into light is not so far from that notion, and I have long been interested in the elisions and intersections between magic, consciousness, and technology. One of the biggest hurdles to overcome in the piece was the means to turn breath into light. The breath sensor required a bit of a hacker approach to repurpose existing technologies for a different function, and I was lucky enough to find elumin⁸. LED technology is very advanced and

affordable today, but elumin⁸ was the closest to providing a flexible matrix with their silkscreen processes. The company was also very supportive of young artists and designers, which was amazing.

Can you please describe how you conceptualized the Electric Heart?

Electric Skin was the first in the series, followed by *Electric Dreams* that looked at turning thought into light. This was both technically and aesthetically way too far ahead of its time to fully realize. When I started on *Electric Heart*, I was thinking not only about the relationship between the wearer and the garment, but about how a garment might reflect the relationship between two individuals. This was just before the advent of the smart phone, and I think that if we look now at how this technology has impacted how we interact this was part of the impetus behind the creation of *Electric Heart*. I have become increasingly concerned about the ways in which technologies are becoming more and more disembodied, more and more isolated/isolating, which is a strong counterpoint to the evolution of the garment. With this piece I was completing the trilogy.

You are based in Vancouver and have worked and taught at several art schools there. How would you describe the Vancouver fashion scene, its fashion schools, and the cutting-edge design that is produced there in terms of eco-fashion and innovative technology?

I was instrumental in assisting Emily Carr University to set up its wearable and interactive products lab, and taught the first interactive wearables class there for a few years, but that was more through the lens of art than fashion. There are a number of institutes in Vancouver offering

diplomas in fashion design, but to the best of my knowledge the only four-year fashion degree program is offered through Kwantlen's Wilson School of design. Despite the prevalence of yoga wear, there is a keen interest in fashion in Vancouver, particularly in alternatives to mainstream fashion, with events like Vancouver's Alternative Fashion week and Indigenous Fashion Week that showcases First Nations' designs and models.

How would you describe the emerging fashion scholarship and fashion communities in Canada?

As a member of the Canadian Fashion Scholars Network, I have been really interested in the diversity of people coming together around fashion, whether as fashion scholars from a range of disciplines from literature to sociology, to artists and designers, to curators. I think that many regional fashion conversations are fairly well established, particularly in Toronto and Montreal, but a national dialogue is still very nascent, and I see it as a field where there is still lots of opportunity.

What advice would you give to young fashion designers?

My best advice is to stay true to your own vision, to unearth your own voice. Get the best training you can, whether at Ryerson or KPU, travel as much as possible to see what is going on in the rest of the world, and don't be afraid to try for things like the Toronto Fashion Incubator, which hosts an annual competition with a prize valued at \$90,000, Re\Set Fashion, FashionCan, and the Canadian Arts and Fashion Awards, which help to recognize, nurture, and mentor Canadian talent.

And what advice would you give to young fashion scholars?

Follow your passion, your curiosity, and your critical analysis; find that place or question where those three intersect and start to mine your ideas there. Even if we are living in a time awash with information, wisdom and original thought are in as short supply as ever.

What are you currently working on?

For the last year and a half, I have been working on two commissions for the permanent collection of the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago and for an upcoming exhibition on the future of wearable technologies. The museum was interested in *Barking Mad*, which is an urban survival coat that helps shy, stressed people deal with situations of urban overcrowding. Proximity sensors respond to infringements on personal space with the sound of barking dogs. The coat barks like a small poodle if the space infringement is not too severe, if a rottweiler or someone gets too close. This piece was first shown in Vancouver for the 2010 Olympics. It has been an interesting experience to revisit this work ten years later and to see the improvements in technologies that are now available, such as laser sensors and much faster micro-processing capacity. Of particular excitement to me is the possibility to finally fully realize *Electric Dreams* with the assistance of the Museum. When I first created this work, the technology was not yet available for me to do what I wanted to do, but it seems that it is now within reach. *Electric Dreams* is a hand-molded felt headdress and garment that makes the relationship between light and thought tangible and visible. EEG electrodes monitor the dreamer's brainwaves and the private and fleeting daydreams of the dreamer are transformed into a

shifting and ephemeral display of light and colour. Side-lit fibre optics carry these light impulses into the body of the garment to emphasize the distributed and networked nature of the nervous system throughout the skin of the body, not just the head.

My piece *Distributed Networks* was featured in the “Coded Threads” exhibition at the Western Gallery in Bellingham, curated by Seiko Purdue. It’s a departure from the technological aspects of my work and a response to some of the challenges I experienced in realizing *Electric Heart*. Weary of disembodied hours spent on the computer, and the growing technological alienation that I see all around us, I wanted to visualize the complex web of information architecture and data flow of the internet in a tangible, tactile way. The work draws from the diagram of a distributed network designed by Paul Baran as

a communication network that would survive a nuclear attack, and that formed the schematic for the internet. The network was assumed to be unreliable at all times and to operate while in tatters. The work uses upcycled textile waste to weave a complex web of physical engagement with the space and invites the viewer to enter and play with notions of tension and release, connection and disconnection, entrapment and motion. This installation was a visual meditation on the relationships between bodies, technologies, and the potentials and responsibilities of interconnection.

If you could collaborate with anyone in the world, who would you like to work with?

Alexander McQueen, Nep Siddhu, and Husseyn Chalayan.

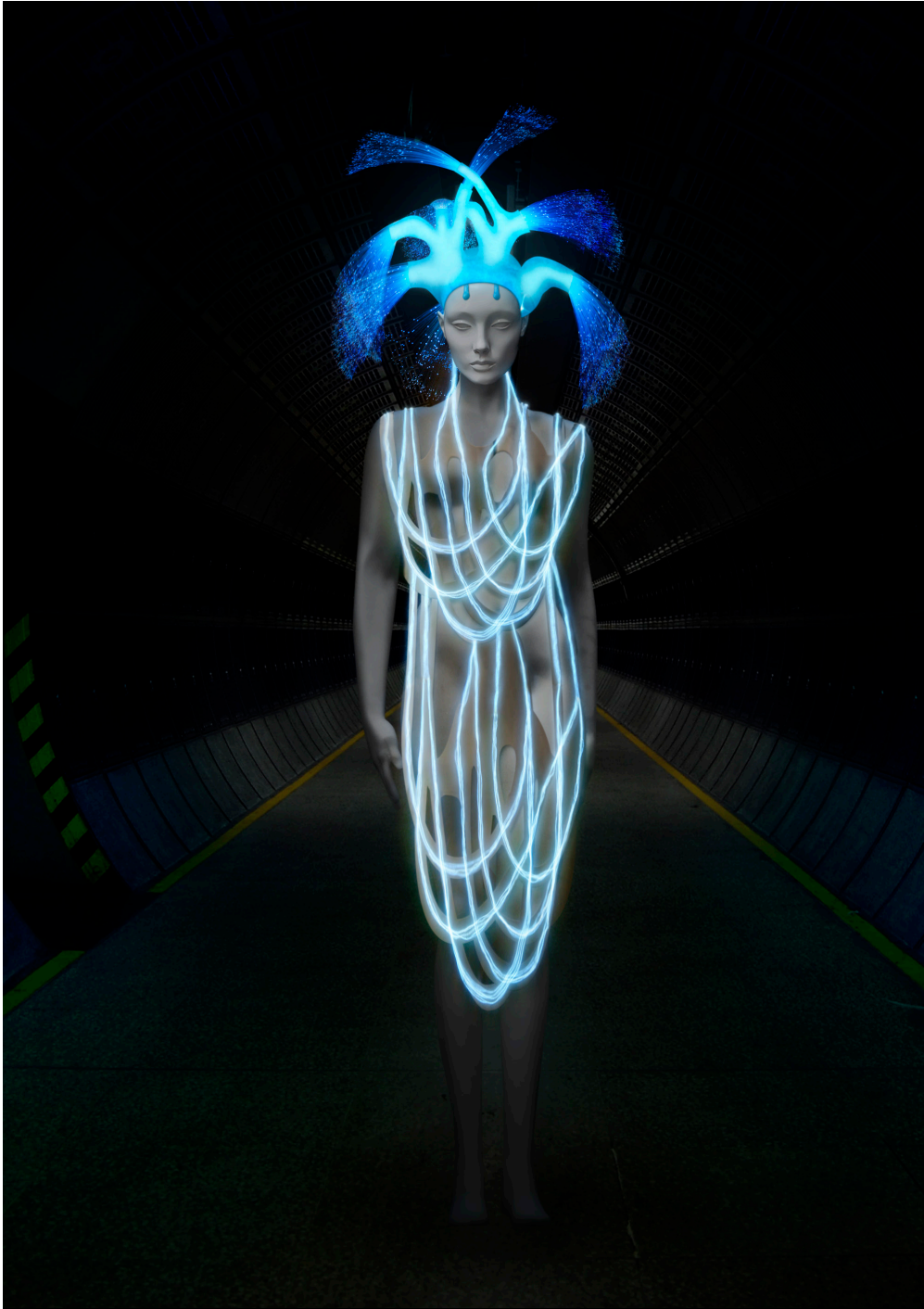
SUZI WEBSTER: PORTFOLIO



Suzi Webster premieres Electric Heart at the Fashion Scholars Symposium at the Museum of Vancouver in 2015



Barking Mad, Proximity sensors, speakers, dog barks, 2010



Electric Dreams
Day dreams, eeg sensors, fiberoptiks, felt 2009



Electric Skin, breath, silk, silkscreened electroluminescent panels, electricity, Vancouver Olympics 2010



Electric Skin, breath, silk, silkscreened electroluminescent panels, electricity, Woburn Square 2007



Electric Skin, breath, silk, silkscreened electroluminescent panels, electricity, Backgallery Project Vancouver 2009



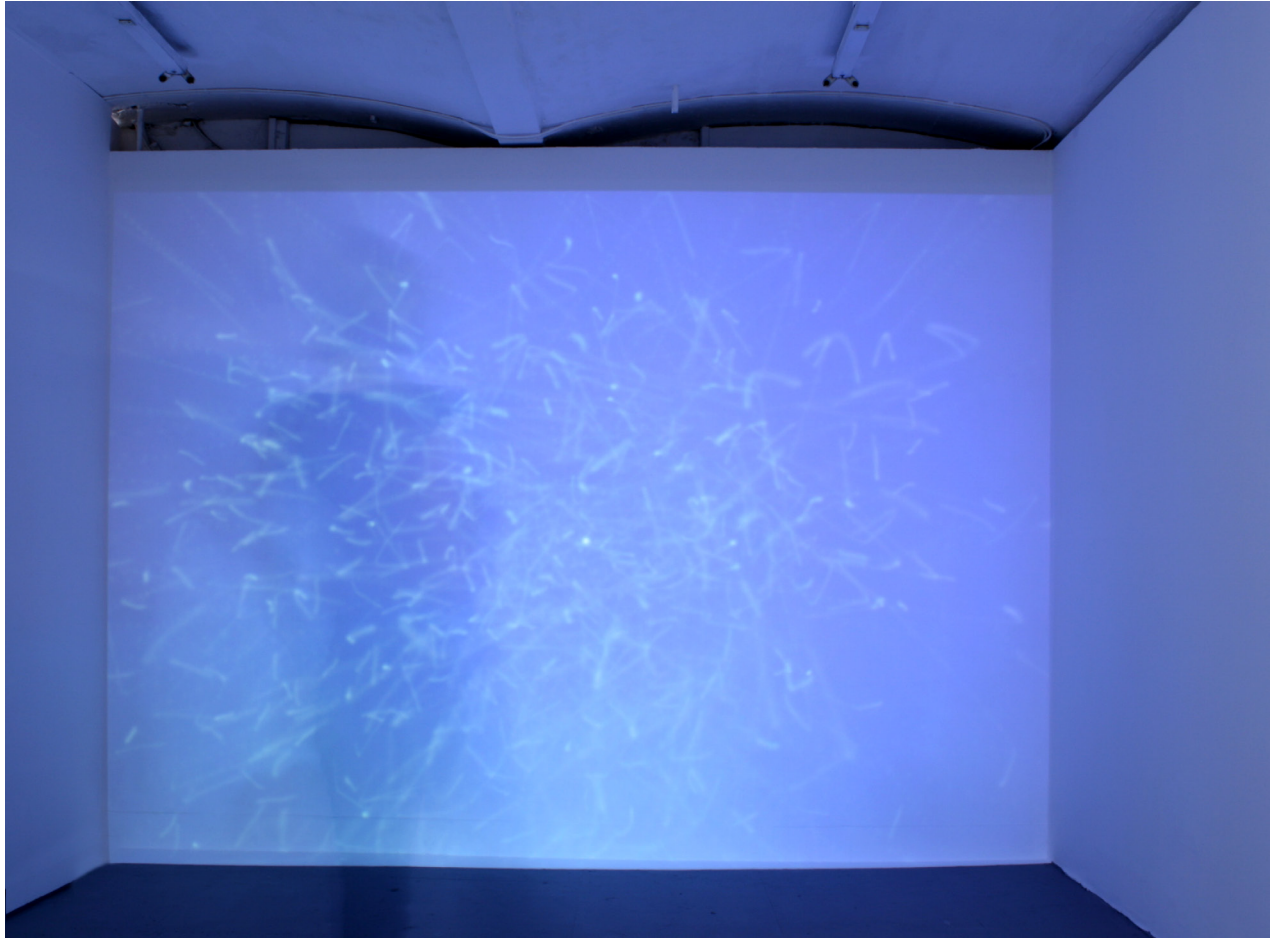
*Electric Skin, breath, silk, silkscreened electroluminescent panels, electricity,
Science Gallery, Dublin, 2011*



Electric Heart
Absent beloved, heart beat, pulse oximeter, leds, iphone app 2014



Electric Heart
Absent beloved, heart beat, pulse oximeter, leds,iphone app 2014



Following you, Interactive installation using projections and twitter feeds, 2012



Oneiric Lab - public daydreaming unit 1, copper woven hammock, geodesic dome, observer, 2014



Distributed Networks, Upcycled textile waste, Western Gallery Washington, 2017



Distributed Networks, Upcycled textile waste, Western Gallery Washington, 2017



Felt, copperwoven wire, mp3, micromotors, 2008



Suzi Webster, 2017

FAUX REAL

JILL HARBIN



Faux Real examines the use of fur in fashion. Originating from the necessity for warmth in a winter climate, fur pelts turned into hats and coats have since become high-fashion items. The exploitation of fur for fashion has sparked great controversy, sparking debates and protests around its ethics, culture, and cruelty. Faux Real incorporates a mixture of pictures: high-fashion Vogue covers, women from the 1940's sporting fur coats, and fashion campaigns in which models are holding up signs protesting against the use of fur. I placed historical fashion articles as the background- to represent a historical/ "past" layer. On top, I've placed modern-day pictures- including my self photography- to represent both the controversy, and lingering popularization of fur in today's fashion industry. In my self portrait, I'm wearing one of my grandmother's old fur coats to imitate the photo of the ladies dressed in their fur. My grandmother would have been a part of a similar era, one in which middle-class women would wear fur as a sign of familial wealth. The collage's dominant colors are orange, red, and brown, corresponding to the physical colors of many animal furs. Last but not least, I used the fur from an old teddy bear to cut out the letters "Faux Real.", a play on words from the phrases "Faux Fur.", "For Real.", and "Real Fur."

CONTRIBUTORS

Katrina Sark teaches Cultural Studies, Gender and Media Studies, and Germanic and Slavic Studies at the University of Victoria. She is the Founder of the Canadian Fashion Scholars Network, and organizes the annual fashion symposia across Canada. Her overview of the Canadian Fashion Scholars Networks focuses on the importance and challenges of building networks and communities of scholarship and collaborations, the history of establishing a network of fashion scholars and professionals in Canada, and the importance of championing Canadian fashion studies, fashion design, and fashion culture nationally and internationally.

Katrina Sark enseigne les Etudes Culturelles, les Etudes du Genre et des Médias, et les Etudes Slaves et Germaniques à l'Université de Victoria. Elle est la fondatrice du Canadian Fashion Scholars Network. Son travail au Canadian Fashion Scholars Network met l'accent sur l'importance et les difficultés d'établir des réseaux et des communautés de recherche et de collaboration, sur l'histoire de l'établissement d'un réseau de chercheurs et de professionnels de la mode au Canada, et sur l'importance de promouvoir les études canadiennes de la mode, le dessin de mode et la culture de la mode aux niveaux national et international.

Elena Siemens is Associate Professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Alberta. Her research and teaching address Visual Culture, Urban Spaces, Performance, Fashion Media, Creative Non-Fiction, and Critical Theory. Her recent publications include *Street Fashion Moscow* (2017), *Theatre in Passing 2: Searching for New Amsterdam* (2015), and edited collections on *Subjective Fashion* (2017) and *Stirred Memories and*

Dreams (2016). Her recent curated student exhibits include *Café Counterculture* (2018), *Revolution 100* (2017), and *Fashion Lounge* (2016). Currently, she is working on her next exhibit dealing with travel and migration, writing a conference paper for a theatre translation conference in Estonia, and plotting a new book entitled *Staging Fashion*.

Elena Siemens est professeure agrégée dans le département de Langues Modernes et d'Etudes Culturelles de l'Université d'Alberta. Sa recherche et son enseignement concernent la Culture Visuelle, les Espaces Urbains, le Spectacle, la Création non-romanesque et la Théorie Critique. Ses publications les plus récentes incluent *Street Fashion Moscow* (2017), *Theatre in Passing 2: Searching for New Amsterdam* (2015), et l'édition des collections *Subjective Fashion* (2017) et *Stirred Memories and Dreams* (2016). Elle a également dirigé des expositions d'étudiants qui incluent *Café Counterculture* (2018), *Revolution 100* (2017) et *Fashion and Lounge* (2016). Elle travaille actuellement sur sa prochaine exposition qui traitera du voyage et de la migration, elle rédige également une communication pour une conférence sur la traduction théâtrale qui se tiendra en Estonie et elle prépare un nouveau livre qui sera intitulé *Staging Fashion*.

Kathryn Franklin is a Ph.D. candidate in the Humanities at York University and works as an Instructor at the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the University of Toronto, Scarborough campus. Her research explores how the language of glamour permeates the narratives of various cities, with a specific focus on Toronto. Her work has been featured in *Transcultural* (2016), *International Journal of Fashion Studies* (2016), *The Journal of Curatorial*

Studies(2013), and *World Film Locations: Berlin* (2012). She also served as a co-editor at *Descant Magazine* and guest-edited its 2014 special issue on Berlin. She is the 2018-19 Christopher Isherwood Fellow at the Christopher Isherwood Foundation.

Kathryn Franklin est doctorante en Humanités à l'Université York et enseigne au Center for Teaching and Learning à l'Université de Toronto, campus de Scarborough. Sa recherche explore la manière dont le langage de la mode imprègne la narration de plusieurs villes, avec une concentration spéciale sur Toronto. Son travail a été présenté dans *Transcultural*(2016), *International Journal of Fashion Studies*(2016), *The Journal of Curatorial Studies*(2013) et *World Film Location: Berlin*(2012). Elle a travaillé comme co-éditrice à *Descant Magazine* et a été invitée à éditer son numéro spécial de 2014 sur Berlin. Elle est la détentrice de la bourse Christophe Isherwood à la Fondation Christophe Isherwood pour 2018-2019.

Jill Harbin is completing her undergraduate degree in English and Psychology at the University of Alberta. Her interests include creative writing, particularly free verse poetry, and abstract collage art. She also loves photography, travel, and dance.

Susan Ingram is Associate Professor in the Department of Humanities at York University, Toronto, where she coordinates the Graduate Diploma for Comparative Literature and is affiliated with the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies and the Research Group on Language and Culture Contact. She is the general editor of *Intellect Book's Urban Chic* series and the co-author of the volumes on Berlin, Vienna, and Los Angeles. A past president of the Canadian Comparative Literature Association,

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Susan Ingram est professeure agrégée dans le département des Humanités à l'Université York de Toronto où elle est coordinatrice du Diplôme Supérieur de Littérature Comparée, elle est également affiliée au Centre Canadien des Etudes Germaniques et Européennes ainsi qu'au Groupe de Recherche sur le Contact de la Langue et de la Culture. Elle est éditrice-en-chef de la série *Intellect Book's Urban Chic* et co-auteur des volumes sur Berlin, Vienne et Los Angeles. Ancienne présidente de l'Association Canadienne de Littérature Comparée, sa recherche s'intéresse aux institutions de la modernité culturelle européenne et à leur héritage.

Jaclyn Marcus is a Ph.D. candidate at Ryerson University and York University's joint Communication and Culture program, conducting research focused on the intersections between fashion and literature. Under the supervision of Dr. Irene Gammel, Jaclyn conducted research on the impact of dress on the friendships and social identities of young female characters in 20th-century literature as part of her M.A. in Fashion at Ryerson University. Jaclyn joined Ryerson University's Modern Literature and Culture Research Centre in 2016 and holds the role of editorial assistant for *Fashion Studies*, co-founded and co-edited by Dr. Ben Barry and Dr. Alison Matthews David, the first open-access journal in the transdisciplinary field of fashion.

Jaclyn Marcus est doctorante dans le programme commun de Communication et Culture de l'Université Ryerson et de l'Université York, sa recherche se concentre sur l'intersection entre la mode et la littérature. Sous la direction du

Dr. Irene Grammel, Jaclyn a poursuivi un projet de recherche sur l'impact de l'habillement sur les amitiés et les identités sociales chez les personnages de jeunes femmes dans la littérature du XXe siècle dans le cadre de sa maîtrise sur la Mode à l'Université Ryerson. Jaclyn a rejoint le Centre de Recherche sur la Littérature et la Culture Modernes de l'Université Ryerson en 2016 et occupe la position d'assistante-éditrice pour *Fashion Studies*, co-fondé et co-édité par les Drs. Ben Barry et Allison Matthews David, le premier journal académique à accès libre dans le domaine interdisciplinaire de la mode.

Julia Petrov is Curator of Western Canadian History at the Royal Alberta Museum. Her research interests include the tensions between liveliness and deathliness in museum displays of fashion, the representation of dress in texts and images in the long 19th century, and gendered dress norms. She co-edited the Routledge volumes *The Thing About Museums*(2011) and *Narrating Objects, Collecting Stories*(2012) and edited a special issue of the journal *Clothing Cultures* in 2016. Another co-edited volume, *Fashioning Horror*, was published by Bloomsbury in December 2017.

Julia Petrov est curatrice de la section de Western Canadian History au Royal Alberta Museum. Sa recherche s'intéresse aux tensions entre les références à la vie et à la mort dans les expositions de mode des musées, à la représentation de l'habillement au cours du long XIXe siècle, et aux différences de normes dans l'habillement masculin et féminin. Elle a co-édité les volumes *The Thing About Museum*(2011) et *Narrating Objects, Collecting Stories* (2012) chez Routledge, et édité un numéro spécial du journal *Clothing Cultures* en 2016. Un autre volume co-édité, *Fashioning Horror*, a été publié chez Bloomsbury en décembre 2017.

Suzi Webster is a Vancouver-based contemporary multi-media artist and designer, an innovator of fashion, technology, and conceptual fashion, and an educator at Langara College in Vancouver. Most of her work explores technology, being, and the body. Interdisciplinary in nature, Webster's sculptural pieces critically investigate intersections between object and performance, fashion and computing, the body and its context, public and private. Webster's work has been exhibited and published internationally in Europe, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and North America. She completed an MFA Media at the Slade in London, UK, holds a BFA from Emily Carr University, and a diploma from Langara College. Her recent work, entitled *Disturbed Networks*, was recently on display at the *Coded Thread* exhibition of textiles and technology at the Western Gallery in Bellingham, Washington. She is currently working on two commissions for the permanent collection of the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago with an exhibition opening in March 2019.

Suzi Webster est une artiste et dessinatrice de multi-médias contemporaines basée à Vancouver. Innovatrice dans les domaines de la mode, de la technologie et de la conceptualisation de la mode, elle est également enseignante au Langara College à Vancouver. La plupart de son travail explore le rapport entre la technologie, l'être et le corps. Interdisciplinaires par nature, les oeuvres sculpturales de Webster examinent de façon critique l'intersection entre l'objet et le spectacle, la mode et l'informatique, le corps et son contexte public et privé. Le travail de Webster a été exposé et publié internationalement en Europe, au Royaume-Uni, en Afrique du Sud et en Amérique du Nord. Elle a complété un MFA sur les Médias à la Slade School of Fine Arts de Londres au Royaume-Uni et détient un BFA de l'Université Emily Carr ainsi qu'un diplôme

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de Langara College. Sa création la plus récente, intitulée *Disturbed Network* récemment été présentée dans le cadre de l'exposition *Coded Threads* consacrée aux textiles et la technologie à la Western Gallery de Bellingham dans l'Etat

de Washington. Elle travaille en ce moment sur deux oeuvres commissionnées pour la collection permanente du Musée de la Science et de l'Industrie de Chicago dont l'exposition s'ouvrira en Mars 2019.

IMAGINATIONS
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