

12-10-2019

## The role of nostalgia in retro sewing

Charity S. Armstead  
*Brenau University*

Ellen C. McKinney  
*Iowa State University, emckinne@iastate.edu*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/aeshm\\_pubs](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/aeshm_pubs)



Part of the [Family, Life Course, and Society Commons](#), [Fiber, Textile, and Weaving Arts Commons](#), [Other Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Politics and Social Change Commons](#), and the [Sociology of Culture Commons](#)

The complete bibliographic information for this item can be found at [https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/aeshm\\_pubs/130](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/aeshm_pubs/130). For information on how to cite this item, please visit <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/howtocite.html>.

---

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Apparel, Events and Hospitality Management at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Apparel, Events and Hospitality Management Publications by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [digirep@iastate.edu](mailto:digirep@iastate.edu).

---

## The role of nostalgia in retro sewing

### Abstract

This article explores the role of nostalgia as a motivation for retro sewing and the ways in which nostalgia shapes the practices of retro sewing. Retro sewers circumvent typical models of clothing consumption by opting out of the commercial fashion cycle, and instead creating clothing for everyday use that replicates or is inspired by styles from the past. As such, the practice of retro sewing is inextricably linked to one or more of the many forms of nostalgia. Previous studies on consumers and nostalgia have not considered the full breadth of how consumers interact with nostalgia. This article explains what types of nostalgia motivate the practice of retro sewing, using qualitative analysis of interview data collected as part of a larger study. Forms of nostalgia that motivate retro sewers include both connecting with the past and using the past in the present. Retro sewing is often motivated by an interest in history and personal nostalgia for childhood and family. Some retro sewers would like to live in the past, whereas others prefer to enjoy past fashions in the present. Retro sewers value aspects of the past as useful tools in the present; they collect and consume vintage items, maintain knowledge, refer to history as a guide for the present and future, and use and reinterpret aesthetics of the past in their clothing. Methods used in designing and sewing retro clothing vary depending on which types of nostalgia are most salient for the retro sewer for any given project.

### Keywords

Nostalgia, retro clothing, home sewing, vintage style, home sewers

### Disciplines

Family, Life Course, and Society | Fiber, Textile, and Weaving Arts | Other Arts and Humanities | Politics and Social Change | Sociology of Culture

### Comments

This accepted article is published as Armstead, C.S., McKinney, E., The role of nostalgia in retro sewing. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, December 10, 2019. DOI: [10.1177/1469540519893102](https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540519893102). Posted with permission.

# The Role of Nostalgia in Retro Sewing

## Abstract

This article explores the role of nostalgia as a motivation for retro sewing and the ways in which nostalgia shapes the practices of retro sewing. Retro sewers circumvent typical models of clothing consumption by opting out of the commercial fashion cycle, instead creating clothing for everyday use that replicates or is inspired by styles from the past. As such, the practice of retro sewing is inextricably linked to one or more of the many forms of nostalgia. Previous studies on consumers and nostalgia have not considered the full breadth of how consumers interact with nostalgia. This article explains what types of nostalgia motivate the practice of retro sewing, using qualitative analysis of interview data collected as part of a larger study. Forms of nostalgia that motivate retro sewers include both connecting with the past and using the past in the present. Retro sewing is often motivated by an interest in history and personal nostalgia for childhood and family. Some retro sewers would like to live in the past, whereas others prefer to enjoy past fashions in the present. Retro sewers value aspects of the past as useful tools in the present; they collect and consume vintage items, maintain knowledge, refer to history as a guide for the present and future, and use and reinterpret aesthetics of the past in their clothing. Methods used in designing and sewing retro clothing vary depending on which types of nostalgia are most salient for the retro sewer for any given project.

## Keywords

nostalgia, retro clothing, home sewing, vintage style, home sewers

In the fashion system, past styles are repeatedly reused and reimagined (Grainge, 2000; Mackinney-Valentin, 2010, 2013) into a new context, either obliquely or overtly copied. Retro sewers use marketer-produced fabrics, sewing patterns, and related items to create clothing that either replicates or is inspired by past fashions (typically 1920s through 1980s), to be worn for everyday use. Martindale and McKinney (2018) found that women who sew eschew typical retail-based consumption choices and behaviors. They sew to control their visual identity, including clothing style, fit, and quality. Although retro sewers may share some of these motivations, their creation of visual identity through interpretation and recontextualization of past styles may indicate unique motivations.

Since the 1970s, postmodernism has guided fashion consumption choices and behaviors. Modernism was characterized by a belief in linear progress created by advances in rational thought; this belief was expressed for decades in fashion as the idea that the latest styles were inherently superior to past styles, representing the progress of design (Morgado, 1996: 42, 44). Postmodernism may be defined as the rejection of modernism; in fashion, postmodernism is characterized by questioning established fashion rules, reusing past styles, dissociation of styles from their original meaning or context, and a rapid rate of stylistic change (Diehl, 2009; Morgado, 1996). Postmodernism in fashion enables the prioritization of personal preferences over social rules and norms, making retro style more socially acceptable.

Fashion has become a multidirectional, complex system with expressions arising from different combinations of factors (Mackinney-Valentin, 2013). When trends arise from a multifaceted system rather than a linear progression, no single factor can reasonably be identified as *the* motivating factor for retro sewing; however, researchers agree that nostalgia is a motivating factor for wearing vintage or retro clothing (Cassidy and Bennett, 2012; Cervellon et al., 2012; Veenstra and Kuipers, 2013). Through the lens of nostalgia, this research seeks to understand what motivates postmodern consumers to create retro clothing for themselves.

## The manifold definitions of nostalgia: Applicability to retro sewers' consumption choices

Holbrook defined nostalgia as “a longing for the past, a yearning for yesterday, or a fondness for possessions and activities associated with days of yore” (1993, 245). However, nostalgia may also be expressed as identity continuity, displaced/vicarious nostalgia, individualistic vs. collectivistic nostalgia, or aesthetic nostalgia. Further, social position may influence nostalgia. The connection between nostalgia and collecting is also discussed. Which type(s) of nostalgia motivate retro sewers in postmodern society?

### Nostalgia as a trend

Nostalgia, evidenced through the reuse and recontextualization of everything from television shows to clothing, began trending in the 1970s (Grainge, 2000), about the same time that postmodern fashion took hold (Farrell-Beck and Parsons, 2007). The multifaceted nature of 21<sup>st</sup>-Century trends (Mackinney-Valentin, 2013) suggests that nostalgic trends arise from multiple factors. Grainge (2000) argued that many attempted

explanations of nostalgic style are overly simplistic, as nostalgia cannot be adequately explained by narratives of loss or longing, instead resulting from social factors enabling the retrieval and reconfiguration of the past.

## Nostalgia as identity continuity

The idea of clothing expressing identity is linked to the idea of the extended self. Belk (1988) stated, “A key to understanding what possessions mean is recognizing that...we regard our possessions as parts of ourselves” (p. 139). Ahuvia (2005) took this idea a step further, asserting that the “things we love have a strong influence on our sense of who we are, on our self” (p. 171). Guy et al. (2001) found that clothing can provide a sense of continuity (or discontinuity) in women’s identities.

Consumers may perceive the past as stability in an ever-changing present (Davis, 1979, 197; Wilson, 2014). This reaction to the fast pace of modern culture may be expressed in the choice to wear vintage styles (Fischer, 2015, 63; Holland, 2018; Jenss, 2015, 143; Veenstra & Kuipers, 2013, 356). This type of nostalgia provides a means of maintaining identity continuity. Jenss (2015) explained that “focus[ing] on a particular era can, to some extent, immunize against the rapid change promoted by the fashion industry” (111). The concept of identity continuity can be linked to the idea of authenticity. Hahl (2016) observed that some retro trends are caused by consumer demand for authenticity, driven by the perceived inauthenticity of financial motivation. The authenticity of a vintage garment as an historic original is linked to its authenticity as a symbolic statement against mass production (Fischer, 2015; Mackinney-Valentin, 2010; Veenstra and Kuipers, 2013), which in turn links to authenticity as a form of self-expression.

## Displaced/vicarious nostalgia

Davis (1979) maintained that nostalgia is only applicable to times from an individual’s own life; however, other researchers argued that one can also be nostalgic for times that one has not personally experienced, a phenomenon known as *displaced nostalgia* (Wilson 2014) or *vicarious nostalgia* (Goulding, 2002). Vicarious nostalgia is caused by “frustration in the present, compared with an idealized image of a perfect past” (Goulding, 2002). This idealized form of nostalgia tends to reduce the past to the images found in popular culture, picking pleasing elements while ignoring the broader picture (Cervellon et al., 2012; Jenss, 2015; Wilson, 2013). People are selective about which elements of the past they choose to copy; they are more likely, for example, to emulate a 1940s movie star than a 1940s housewife. Vicarious nostalgia may be expressed through interest in objects, such as retro clothing; Belk (1988) said that people may view antiques as part of “a desire to identify with an era...to which we believe a desirable set of traits or values adheres” (p. 149).

## Individualistic nostalgia vs. collectivistic nostalgia

Zhao, et al., distinguish *individualistic nostalgia*, defined as “one’s own personal past,” and *collectivistic nostalgia*, which is “relationship-centered and revolv[ing] around

a past time, by-gone era, or generation,” which may or may not be expressed as vicarious nostalgia (Zhao et al., 2014). Membership in a group related to a specific time period (e.g. reenactment group or online vintage community) can influence collectivistic nostalgia and can motivate the purchase of nostalgic consumer goods (Sierra and McQuitty, 2007). Holland (2018) believed that the vintage community is a subculture; however, the characteristics of vintage as a postmodern style complicate viewing it as a subculture. Subcultural dress retains meaning beyond aesthetics, and rather than using vintage dress as “an intentional communication” of membership in a subculture (Hebdige, 2007: 257), people typically begin wearing vintage clothing on their own, only later joining vintage groups (Jenss, 2015: 80–81). Veenstra and Kuipers argued that vintage is “a form of consumption, rather than an expression of subcultural identity,” stating that the communication of subcultural identity is the point of subcultural dress; therefore, it is questionable whether or not vintage fits the category of subcultural dress, as the goal may not be to express subcultural identity (2013: 355, 361). However, people who wear vintage dress tend to form a community due to their common interest in vintage clothing; vintage becomes a point of connection. Entwistle (2000) explained the tendency of dress to connect people: “We can use dress to articulate our sense of ‘uniqueness’, to express our difference from others, although as members of particular classes and cultures, we are equally likely to find styles of dress that connect us to others as well” (138).

## Aesthetic reappropriation of the past

Veenstra and Kuipers (2013) stated that nostalgia is a “reappropriation and reinvention of consumer goods,” rather than “longing for the past”. A postmodern view suggests that vintage is worn for an appreciation of its aesthetics or qualities. Pickering and Keightley believed that nostalgia may not be a desire to return to the past, but a recognition of “aspects of the past as a basis for renewal and satisfaction in the future...a means of taking one’s bearings for the road ahead in the uncertainties of the present.” They took issue with the postmodern idea of the loss of meaning of the past, suggesting that people may not “passively accept” a postmodern view that strips meaning from the past (2006).

Time and space shape the way dress is perceived and the way in which dress is used to communicate identity (Entwistle, 2000; Kaiser, 2012). Whether retro style is a nostalgic endeavor or merely an aesthetic one (or some combination thereof), wearing a past style of clothing in today’s culture gives the clothing a different meaning today – both for the wearer and the observer – than it had historically (Grainge, 2000; Holland, 2018), thereby making any form of retro clothing an aesthetic reappropriation of the past.

By resituating both sewing and retro style in the present, the meaning may be changed to a feminist one. Third-wave feminism rejects the notion that there is one best way to be a feminist (Rowe-Finkbeiner, 2004; Stalp, 2015). Third-wave feminists counter the perception that feminism means giving up femininity by reclaiming feminine characteristics and activities as a form of power instead of a symbol of oppression (Chansky, 2010; Stalp, 2015).

Sewing and DIY have always encapsulated feminist characteristics by allowing the participant to challenge social norms and define their own visual identity (Gordon,

2004; Hackney, 1999). Recent studies have identified sewing as having the same characteristics as third-wave feminism (Bain, 2016; Martindale, 2017). Retro style is also used as a form of empowerment; vintage enthusiasts and retro sewers have observed that their adoption of retro style leads to better treatment from men (Hirsch, 2010; Rogers, 2013). Leveraging a feminine visual identity can be used to achieve some degree of advantage (Ross-Smith and Huppertz, 2010).

## Nostalgia filtered by social structure

Lyotard argued that postmodernism does not remove meaning; instead, meaning is determined by one's position in the social structure (Lyotard, 1984). Lyotard's ideas on postmodernism would suggest that, rather than having no meaning, meaning is instead derived from one's own experiences and social position, which would then mean that the role played by nostalgia in the practice of wearing vintage clothing would depend on the wearer's background. Rosenzweig and Thelen (1998) found that most White Americans focus on the past in relation to their personal lives and their families rather than their communities or larger cultural narratives, whereas African Americans and American Indians, although including their personal pasts and families, usually refer to a broader cultural narrative and a collective past as a guide for living in the present in a way that White Americans do not. Wilson stated that Caucasian Americans and African Americans have different perceptions of the past. She observed that her white participants did not look at the past in terms of race and viewed race relations in the 1950s as "nonproblematic," whereas race and Jim Crow laws were "indelible" in the memories of African Americans (2014, 72-73).

## Nostalgia and collecting

Zonneveld and Biggemann stated that, instead of replacing meaning with aesthetics, nostalgia in collecting behavior may be caused by a "synthesis of aesthetics and nostalgia" (2014, 327). Wilson identified three factors that motivate collectors: Associations with family members, memories of childhood, and nostalgia for particular historical period(s) (2014, 112). Wilson found that collectors have two goals: First, they want to keep the past from being forgotten and view their collections as a way to honor previous generations. Second, they "desire to imagine living in a different era," a form of displaced nostalgia (2014, 115). The collectors that Wilson studied believe that old things were made better but do not use the objects in their collection for their original purposes. According to Wilson, antiques are sometimes viewed as having "an aura," meaning beyond their actual purpose and that collecting antiques often inspires individuals to learn more about history (2014). Because there are multiple manifestations and meanings of nostalgia, this research seeks to define and explain the role of nostalgia for retro sewers.

## Understanding the role of nostalgia in retro sewers' visual identity-building behaviors

Postmodern societal values support “outside-the-norm” visual identities, such as “retro”. Using marketer-produced materials to sew one’s own clothing is an accessible way of achieving this goal. Nostalgia influences the valuing of and preferences for things from the past. Previous studies identify nostalgia as a motivator for wearing vintage (Cassidy and Bennett, 2012; Cervellon et al., 2012; Veenstra and Kuipers, 2013). However, little is known about how nostalgia influences the choice to create a personal retro visual identity through sewing for oneself. To understand the role of nostalgia in consumption choices and behaviors surrounding retro home sewing, 18 women from English-speaking countries recruited from the researcher’s personal network, from Facebook groups for retro sewing, and via snowball sampling participated in in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Participants were purposively selected from the 103 potential participants who filled out the prescreening survey to provide the maximum possible variation in age, race/ethnicity, geographic location, education level, preferred decades, and types of sewing patterns used. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and coded to find themes in the data. They were given a choice to use their real names or pseudonyms; all opted to use their real names. This manuscript reports on one of the major themes of a larger grounded-theory study about motivations and methods of sewing retro clothing – the role of nostalgia in retro sewing for oneself.

## The multifaceted role of nostalgia in creating a retro visual identity through sewing for oneself

Interviews revealed that nostalgia in retro sewing takes two primary forms. Each form has types within it. Some types of nostalgia expressed by participants support existing theories; however, other types contrast with existing concepts of nostalgia. The specific effects of nostalgia on retro sewing practices depend on which type(s) of nostalgia are most salient, and nostalgia salience may vary at different times depending on the goals of a specific sewing project. Nostalgia can be expressed in multiple ways in retro sewing and has a variety of different effects on the retro sewer’s choices in the design, construction, and styling of retro clothing.

The first primary form of nostalgia is *connecting with the past*. For these retro sewers, the past is integral to their identities and provides a sense of security and continuity, supporting Wilson’s (2014) findings about nostalgia. Nostalgia as connection with the past is expressed through an interest in history, personal nostalgia, connection with family, or a desire to live in the past. Retro sewing is often motivated by an interest in history and personal nostalgia for childhood and family. Some retro sewers would like to live in the past, whereas others prefer to enjoy past fashions in the present.

The second primary form of nostalgia is *valuing the past in the present*. Nostalgia as use of the past in the present is expressed by using objects from the past, using knowledge or techniques from the past, using history as a roadmap to navigate the present and future, and using aesthetics from the past in a way that may or may not be connected to other aspects of nostalgia. Retro sewers value aspects of the past as useful tools in the present; they collect vintage items, maintain knowledge, refer to history as a guide for the present and future, and use and reinterpret aesthetics of the past in their clothing.

Interestingly, few participants actually used the term nostalgia. Probably, participants did not use the term because the popular definition of nostalgia is a desire to return to the past, usually one's personal past (*Dictionary.com*, n.d.), and few of the participants directly linked retro clothing to their personal pasts. The complexity and variety of types of nostalgia expressed by the participants support the notion that nostalgia is a complex social phenomenon not limited to any one cause or expression (Grainge, 2000; Mackinney-Valentin, 2013).

## Connections with the Past

Participants showed strong connections with the past, expressed in different ways depending on the individual. First, many of the sewers interviewed are strongly interested in history, focusing on individuals and events to which the participants think that they can relate. Second, retro sewing may be used as a connection with the sewer's personal past, although that connection is usually more derivative or indirect, as discussed below. Linked to connections with one's personal past are connections with family, described by most of the participants as integral to their beginning retro sewing. Third, participants' relationships with their place in time are discussed. Some would prefer to live in the past; others are content with living in their own time and connecting to the past in alternate ways.

### “History on a human level”: The everyday stories of people and clothes

Many of the participants indicated an interest in history focusing more on everyday events and ordinary people than on grand narratives and notable historic figures. Julie observed, “It's fun to relate to history on a human level.” Lauren noted that “finding something within history that I can really relate to on a personal level is what makes history so interesting. Clothes are very much a tangible part of the history of who we were.” For some, interest in history specifically resulted from an interest in historic fashion, corresponding with Wilson's (2014) findings that collectors are sometimes inspired to learn more about history because of their collecting interests. Sandra commented, “To me, clothing and history have always been tied together very tightly. So when I think of historical events, I can actually put them in order because of what clothes were being worn at the time.” Lana recalled being bored in history class. When Lana told her teacher that she found only the clothes interesting, he redirected her to look at history using the clothing as a reference point. For Lana, this was the gateway into becoming interested in history. Lana explained, “You think about the clothes, and then you get involved in [the other aspects and] it snowballs.” Later in life, Lana ended up working with museums.

### I liked it as a kid: Nostalgia as connection with one's own past

Some retro sewers expressed an indirect nostalgic connection with their own pasts. The majority indicated that they sew clothing from decades related to childhood memories, rather than from decades in which they have lived. Cassidy linked her preference for 1950s dresses to her “princess girl” childhood infatuation with poofy skirts in the early 1990s. Eve-Lynn observed, “I find myself looking back nostalgically at all the stuff from the early 90s” and “reconnecting...with actresses that I really liked when I

was a kid.” However, the actresses she idolized as a child were Sophia Loren, Bette Davis, and Jean Harlow rather than actresses from early-1990s movies. Several participants referred to their grandparents or great-grandparents. Nina said, “I was raised by my great-grandmother [on a] big dose of Old Hollywood movies, so I think at some point that aesthetic must have just gotten stuck in my head.” These findings corresponded to the literature on nostalgia for one’s personal past (Wilson, 2014; Zhao et al., 2014); however, they differed in that these retro sewers connect with aspects of their childhoods in ways that lead to sewing and wearing clothing characteristic of eras predating their own lives.

### Dress like your grandma: Connection with family

The most-frequently-discussed aspect of nostalgia was connection to family, usually grandparents. In some cases, sewing retro clothing is a way to replace lost family heirlooms. Jane began sewing retro clothing when she discovered that her grandmother’s 1932 wedding gown had been lost; although Jane said that her wedding dress was very different from her grandmother’s, it was of the same period as the lost heirloom. Lauren enjoys making clothing like her grandmother’s: “She didn’t keep any of her personal clothes, so creating stuff of her era is kind of a way that I could enjoy her type of fashion.” Sewing garments inspired by lost family heirlooms corresponds with Wilson’s (2014) observation that collecting is often linked to family and that some collectors try to restore lost collections (or, in this case, lost garments).

Lauren cited family history and connection with her grandmother as motivations for retro sewing, “to create something inspired by the fashions that she would have been inspired by when she was younger....Seeing what she was like [in old family photos and home movies] when she was young was – just – really happy for me. So that’s why I enjoyed making things like that.” For some participants, retro served as a point of mutual interest and connection with older relatives. Lauren said that her grandmother “loved” seeing her sewing projects. Abby “started digging in Granny’s stuff” as a teenager and later transitioned into sewing retro clothing. Abby’s grandparents enjoyed reminiscing with her about the clothing; “it was a link between me and them and my great-aunt Rose.” Tiffany commented that her grandmother was the first person to show her how to sew, and that sewing makes her feel close to her grandmother.

For Carla, a Black woman from San Diego, retro as connection with family is part of a larger cultural narrative. In Black culture, the personal past is inextricably linked to Black history, and memory serves as a roadmap for navigating the present (Rosenzweig and Thelen, 1998: 147; Wilson, 2014). Carla linked her retro clothing to the Civil Rights Movement:

I just want to honor my family’s legacy and the legacy of all the black people that came before me, in regard to dressing wonderfully and looking my best....My grandmother said that style was used as a sort of survival. ...Even if they hate you, they’ll treat you a little bit nicer just due to how you’re dressed.

Carla applies this principle in her own life, noting that she is treated with more respect and receives better service when dressed in retro style. For these retro sewers, connection with family is expressed in retro sewing through physical objects that remind the sewers

of family members and serve as a point of connection with family members who are still living.

### “I’m not in the right time at all”: Living in the past

A few participants expressed desire to live in the past, a reaction to the perceived unpredictability, complexity, and fast pace of today’s world. The desire of these participants to live in the past corresponds to Wilson’s findings that nostalgia may be motivated by a desire for continuity and security expressed as displaced nostalgia (Wilson, 2014). Other studies have also found that wearing vintage or retro clothing can be a stabilizing reaction to the rapid changes of society (Fischer, 2015; Jenss, 2015; Veenstra and Kuipers, 2013). Tiffany and April both expressed that living in certain periods would provide them with a sense of “comfort.” April said, “I can’t just be happy existing in a modern world.” She would prefer to live in the 1970s – she views the period as a time when society had moved to an acceptable point (“Civil rights have pretty much taken over”) but before the rise of mass-production and electronic technology, which she views as drawbacks. Tiffany observed, “I don’t feel like I’m in the right time at all,” and would prefer to live in the late 1870s or early 1880s. She said, “I’d be totally happy, stay at home, baby on my hip, that sort of thing” and notes, “I think I would do better without all of the modern appliances.” Jane is slightly leery of living in the past, but concluded that she would be willing to live in the 1930s if she had the life circumstances of her grandparents: “You would have to own your own house” and live on a farm; weathering the Great Depression in other circumstances would have been very difficult. A desire to live in the past corresponds to the idea that nostalgia often involves an idealized version of the past (Cervellon et al., 2012; Jenss, 2015; Wilson, 2013).

Notably, desiring to live in the past does not necessarily mean that the sewer would prefer to live in the period(s) that they use in their retro sewing. Tiffany primarily sews clothing from the 1970s, although her favorite period is the 1870s/1880s, because she prefers to express her personal style while fitting within social norms; wearing the 1970s is a compromise.

### “I would have died of appendicitis”: Enjoying the fashion without living in the era

Most of the retro sewers interviewed decisively stated that they do not want to live in the past. These participants are aware of the less-appealing aspects of past decades. These findings contrasted with other studies that found that wearing vintage or retro clothing involves an idealized view of the past (Cervellon et al., 2012; Jenss, 2015; Wilson, 2013). Felicity summed up the general reaction of most of the participants to living in the past, saying, “All of the things I think make today good wouldn’t be here. So I will stay firmly in 2018, thank you very much, and...just enjoy the past from afar but without the rose-tinted glasses.”

Two participants gave medical reasons for preferring to live in the present; both cite life-threatening medical events (appendicitis and pneumonia) that could have been fatal. Julie explained, “I don’t wanna live in a period where I would’ve died at 24! You know, I’ve done cool things since then!” Technology was also cited as an advantage that makes life easier; Lauren noted that she enjoys having a computerized sewing machine, a vacuum cleaner, and a dishwasher.

Some noted that they would feel limited in the prescribed social roles for women in past decades. Julie commented, “I can wear all the historical clothes that I want, now, and still have the right to open a credit card in my own name.” Felicity believes that people who say they were “born 50 years too late” have not thought through the ramifications: “Really? *Really?* No. No. Women don’t have the vote, women don’t have access to birth control, you are your husband’s property, you don’t have access to your own land, you can’t vote, you can’t have a job, really? Why would you want all that crap? Now is good!” Carla observed that her grandparents’ situation in southern California was better than the racial issues encountered by Black people in the eastern United States, but said that socioeconomically, being Black in the 40s was not an ideal situation.

A few participants noted that the freedom to experiment with self-expression in dress is a characteristic of the present postmodern era that they would not like to sacrifice. Cassidy observed, “I’m happy to live now and have the ability to go to all sorts of reenactments and recreations...and wear my kooky 50s dresses without people thinking I’m too crazy.” Eve-Lynn explained, “I’m like a magpie. I like to be able to jump from style to style, from decade to decade, you know.... I like having those options.”

Several participants, however, expressed that they would like to visit the past briefly. Cassidy expressed surprise that anyone would *not* want to visit the past – “Don’t you wanna just visit it and see what it’s like for a day or two and *then* come back?” Nina, whose great-grandmother grew up in Nazi Germany, said that she would like to see Germany in the late 1920s “before the Nazis ruined everything.” Desire to visit the past is also motivated by scarcity of vintage clothing and sewing patterns. Micah said she would like to go shopping for clothes in the 1950s and then come right back home. Carla would like to visit to see her grandparents as young people and “to stock up on clothing and patterns.”

## Valuing the Past in the Present

The participants in this study expressed different ways in which they value the past in the present. First, they value objects and/or knowledge from the past, exemplified in the collections that all the participants maintain. Second, they use history as a guide for the present and the future. Finally, an aesthetic preference for past styles also informs the decisions made in retro sewing.

### “I buy it because it’s the good stuff!”: Valuing objects from the past

Every participant indicated that she values objects from the past and maintains some type of collection related to clothing and/or sewing. Retro sewers’ collecting practices are often influenced by the online retro sewing community, frequently through buying and selling on social media, but also by imitation (if one person posts a photo of a dress made by a pattern, other sewers may seek out that pattern), supporting the idea that nostalgia and collecting practices are influenced by group membership (Sierra and McQuitty, 2007; Zhao et al., 2014). Almost all started collecting and sewing retro on their own, prior to becoming involved in a retro community, supporting Veenstra and Kuipers’ assertion that rather than being subculture, vintage is rather “a form of

consumption” (2013: 355, 361). Retro sewers acquire marketer-produced patterns, fabrics, and notions not only to use in making garments for themselves, but also simply to have, as they value these objects from the past, two practices that are somewhat in contradiction to each other and do not quite fit existing literature on collecting or nostalgia.

Pattern collections for those interviewed ranged from 20 to 2500 patterns. Some collect sewing-related and fashion-related objects because they enjoy sewing. Jenn said, “I buy a fabric and I know it’s got a pattern that goes with it – I just haven’t found that pattern yet.” Others started using their collections (i.e., sewing with vintage patterns) to justify the existence and continuance of the collection. Tiffany explained, “I would buy all of the vintage patterns, and I had to justify them, so that’s when I started sewing with them.” The use of these collections contrasts with Wilson’s (2014) findings that collectors typically do not use collection objects for their original intended purposes; in many cases, these retro sewers are using collectible sewing patterns to cut out vintage fabric to be sewn on vintage sewing machines and finished with vintage buttons and zippers.

One reason that participants value objects from the past is their perception that old things were made better, corresponding with Wilson’s statement that collectors believe antiques to be better-made (2014: 114). Lauren explained, “The quality of old stuff exceeds the quality of things you can get today.” This idea was discussed in relation to furniture, buttons, zippers, sewing machines, and even style details in sewing patterns. Cassidy enjoys sewing on an 1891 Singer treadle sewing machine. She explained, “With the treadle, it’s very easy to control the speed....And then also it’s all metal. Things don’t break. You don’t have plastic parts on the inside. It’s pretty easy to...fix stuff that needs to be fixed.” Some participants acknowledged that the quality of old things may result from survival bias – Etta observed that “it’s the stuff that was made better that’s still here.”

Aligning with Wilson’s (2014) assertion that antiques may be viewed as having additional meaning and Hahl’s (2016) identification of pursuit of authenticity as a motivator for nostalgia, several participants stated that vintage things are more genuine or meaningful – more authentic – than new goods. April views vintage items as having “character and genuineness” lacking in today’s goods, stating that modern clothing “sends a cold chill up [her] spine”; she says, “It’s a heart and soul kind of thing.” Sandra stated that she “collect[s] stuff with meaning,” particularly treasuring items that belonged to her Nana. Participants’ collections also link to their sense of identity, corresponding to Belk’s theory of the extended self (1988). Jenn observed, “When we lose those things, it’s part of deleting part of your past. And you should celebrate history. And I think that’s what the retro community does; we’re sustainable because we want to preserve those pieces for future generations.” Objects may be valued for a sense of connection with their original owner, regardless of whether the current owner knows who the original owner was. Nina said that finding vintage patterns with their original owner’s handwritten notes is “just really fascinating and a really big joy to me.” In some cases, there was a sense of continuing the life of a person or the purpose of an object. Abby said, about wearing vintage garments, “I felt like I was bringing new life to it, and it was kind of like coming alive again.” Jenn said that she uses her vintage accessories and household goods because they were made “to be enjoyed.” These corresponded to

Wilson's findings that collectors are motivated by a sense of connection with family and/or a desire to honor past generations through their collecting (2014).

Most participants indicated feeling a sense of responsibility toward objects from the past, even if items are not rare or valuable. Jane avoids wearing her vintage hats for fear of damage: "I don't wanna wear something antique that I might ruin...I'm kind of a preservationist at heart, really." Most take special care with their vintage patterns – they often copy the patterns to avoid damaging the originals, store patterns in comic book sleeves with buffered backing boards, and/or keep them separate from modern patterns. Julie, discussing her treatment of vintage sewing patterns, said: "I'm like, 'No! I must preserve this for future generations!' It's not rare, it's not unusual, it's not special, but must preserve!" She views herself as a "custodian" of her sewing patterns and her vintage clothing, keeping them in archival-safe storage. She observed, "It's a little overkill, but in a hundred years, some conservator's gonna thank me...because those pieces will be intact and a lot of [other] stuff...won't be."

Objects from the past are also valued because of the techniques and skills that they contain. Julie maintains a collection of antique garments to show her students, as she feels this illustrates the proper use of specific stitches and techniques more effectively than telling the students what to do. Lauren collects objects with "a very high level of craftsmanship" as motivation to improve her sewing skills. She explained, "I think I'm a pretty good sewer, but I think that they have the upper hand on me, still.... And that's a motivator for me. To keep progressing and learning more."

### Learning what others have forgotten: Valuing knowledge from the past

Many of the participants view themselves and their retro sewing as keepers of past knowledge. Jenn said, "I think that's part of the retro community, is we learn about this stuff that people have forgot about." Lauren described learning old sewing techniques as a sort of "practical archaeology"; she observed, "There's so many treasures in these old sewing books that people probably haven't done in...years."

Because the sewers' collections of sewing and pattern books, patterns, and other fashion ephemera are actively used in constructing knowledge, these collections are a crossover between valuing objects and valuing knowledge. Sandra uses her collection of antique pattern-drafting manuals to research changing silhouettes throughout the decades: "As mass-production got going, everything got super-simplified. And we've lost a lot of that knowledge, so I like to go back and look at the older stuff to try and work it out." Nina observed that sewing "makes me feel quite connected to a skill that women have traditionally always held but have always been not given the same amount of reverence, perhaps, other skills have been given."

Valuing knowledge from the past is sometimes linked to feminism. Unlike the home sewers interviewed by Martindale (2017), several of these participants described themselves and their sewing as feminist. Expressing views common to third-wave feminists (Bain, 2016; Chansky, 2010; Stalp, 2015), some participants described their retro sewing as "subversive" because they use classic styles and traditional feminine pursuits (i.e., sewing) in a non-traditional way. Etta said retro sewing is "a reclaiming of something that was an expectation for women to be able to do.... It's no longer required, but that doesn't mean it's not valuable." Others (perhaps aligning more with second-

wave feminism) believe that retro sewing is not inherently feminist, despite their personal feminist leanings.

Possessing the knowledge necessary to sew retro clothing is empowering. Micah stated, “To feel I have that knowledge, you know, makes [me] feel powerful.” Sandra described teaching sewing as a means of “empowering” others by freeing them from the dictates of the fashion industry. Others view their retro visual identity as empowerment, corresponding to the observations of Hirsch (2010), Rogers (2013), and Ross-Smith and Huppatz (2010). Jenn described a difficult meeting in which her retro clothing gave her confidence:

I wore two crinolines with a big skirt...and I had the hair done, and the lipstick on, and *I knew I looked intimidating and confident*...and he had this attitude and he was going to tell us how things were going to be, and that's not what he got. There was a level of confidence there of ‘okay, I'm looking my best right now,’ and I noticed the other girls did it too that sit on the Board of Directors. Everyone came with their hair done. And before he got there...one of the girls was like, “Can I just sit there and look hot because I just feel amazingly powerful today and I just feel like I should just give him the ‘look, like we're not buying your crap, dude.’” And it is, *it's our war paint; it's our armor*. When we put on something that we feel beautiful or confident or strong in, we exude that.... In this case we were all dressed retro/vintage and had the hair in vintage styles, and had the makeup on in a vintage style...we were all laughing about it – and the heels, and whole nine yards, and sitting there in front of somebody else, and dealing with them, it was like, “Oh, I'm not squashable; you're on my turf, this is our organization, this is what we built; this is what we do for women; you don't get to make these decisions, and we're not going to take it anymore.” [emphasis added]

### “The past repeats itself”: History as a roadmap

Many of the participants believe that past can be used to help navigate the present and the future, corresponding with Pickering and Keightley’s observation that nostalgia may be a “means of taking one’s bearings for the road ahead in the uncertainties of the present” (2006). Eve-Lynn believes that understanding “old ways of doing things” enables better understanding of newer methods. Lauren enjoys evaluating the effectiveness of historic sewing techniques, noting, “Sometimes you find out there’s a reason why things got forgotten, like they were a real pain in the butt to do and there’s an easier way, but sometimes it’s just really fun to just discover a way to do something new – that’s really old.” Jenn stated that she is interested in history “because the past repeats itself, and you learn from it,” adding that “the only way you can plan for the future is to know your past.” For Jenn, examining patterns and problems from the past is necessary to handle present and future problems.

### “Achieving a look”: Aesthetic preference for the past

Many participants indicated that aesthetic preference for the past motivated their retro sewing, corresponding to the idea of nostalgia as aesthetic appreciation and reinvention (Goulding, 2002; Veenstra and Kuipers, 2013). Many choose a favorite

period based on body shape, combined with an appreciation for specific style details. Carla said,

Fifties, I like the silhouette. [laughs] I first started sewing 50s clothing for myself. I...love the nice nipped-in waist, the nice flare that goes on, the beautiful little shoulders and necklines and whatnot. And the early 60s, just that carryover from the 50s, before it starts to become sort of Mod-ish. It just -- I dunno, something about it just screams 'adorable' to me.

Sewers' aesthetic preference for the past is linked to one or more other forms of nostalgia, similar to Zonneveld and Biggeman's (2014) finding that collecting is based on a combination of aesthetics and nostalgia; in most cases, retro sewing seems to be a result or expansion of other historic interest or nostalgia. These findings contrast with Goulding (2002) and Veenstra and Kuipers (2013), in that reappropriation and reinvention of vintage style is typically intertwined with other types of nostalgia rather than disengaged from them. Only one participant, Demi, indicated that her interest in the period she sews is limited to the aesthetic appeal of the clothing; she explained,

I don't actually know that much about the era at all. Not even -- not at all. Not -- I couldn't tell you anything about it, honestly. I know that it's a period that's often romanticized a lot. Because there were some, like, hard times for colored people and for women in 50s and whatnot. But, you know, what can I say, I just look at the fashion there, I don't get bogged down in details.

Retro sewers who express an aesthetic preference for the past are more likely to value personal style over historic authenticity in their retro sewing choices. Etta noted that she likes to use vintage patterns with modern fabrics, explaining, "It's not about creating necessarily a historically-accurate garment, because you're not creating a costume and you're not being a reenactor. You're being inspired by the aesthetic that you like." Julie enjoys sewing retro silhouettes in novelty print fabrics to differentiate herself from others. She described her personal style as "subverting the vintage norm and also subverting modern fashion at the same time," explaining:

I don't like to dress like everybody else, obviously, and I don't follow trends. I like what I like. And I'm a giant nerd, and I love animals, and I love really kitschy things. And so I have fabric with kitchen appliances, and I made a lobster dress.... So it's a lot of fun to have people do a double-take in the grocery store and say, "Are those penguins in hot air balloons on your dress?" And yes, yes they are. And nobody else has one like this in the state of Ohio, I will bet you.

For Julie, self-expression is more salient than historic authenticity, leading to an aesthetic that is neither current nor entirely historical, yet is informed by the aesthetics of past decades.

Micah stated that her focus on aesthetics determines her choices in sewing patterns: "If it gets me to the end result of the style that I want, reproduction's fine." Demi focuses on the style details of historic garments and prefers the look of vintage Modes Royale and Vogue Couturier patterns that have complex construction and unusual

styling. Demi prefers using these vintage patterns, as most reproductions tend to be simpler designs. She explained,

I want something that you can't make from another pattern, you know. Like [Vogue 817], with all the ruching down the side and the flowers [see Figure 1]. [I prefer] something really crazy.... I don't want 'insert dart here, insert dart here, side zip, pleat.

### [Insert figure 1]

Although she prefers vintage sewing patterns, Demi does not necessarily use historic construction techniques in her garments; she clarified:

I know that there are now better ways of doing certain things. Like, there'll be certain instructions on vintage patterns, and you'll be like, 'What the hell, why would they even ask you to do that?' when there are better methods, better tools, whatnot, for the job nowadays. And for me, the end result is just achieving a look. I'm not too worried about how that look is achieved, so...if everything is structurally sound and fitted well, then I don't mind how that is achieved.

Aesthetic preference for the past is also expressed in the choice of styling one's retro look. Participants who prioritize historic authenticity typically dress head-to-toe in one era per ensemble; those who prioritize personal expression mix and match eras to achieve their desired look. Sometimes, retro sewers' styling depends on the situation; for events, historic authenticity may take priority over self-expression. Carla explained,

I'll mix and match every so often unless, like, it's a specific event. But I'll take elements from the 30s, 40s, and 50s and mix 'em all together and go on about my day. Or...some days if I'm just feeling glum I'll just put on a hat.

Retro sewers show high aesthetic appreciation for the past, expressed in their clothing, corresponding to the findings of Veenstra and Kuipers (2013).

## **Influence of nostalgia on retro sewing choices and behaviors: Implications for production of retro goods**

**The findings of this study extend existing theoretical insights into the productive aspects of consumption within the context of retro sewers. These consumers (retro sewers) actively rework and transform symbolic meanings found in both new and vintage material goods (patterns, fabrics, and notions) to further their retro identity and lifestyle goals. Building upon the work of Martindale and McKinney (2018), we find that retro sewers desires for a counterculture identity and lifestyle are enabled by their sewing skills. Rather than depending on existing marketplace clothing offerings, they can create the clothes to achieve the look that matches their desired identity and lifestyle. This reinforces the importance of DIY skills in reworking meanings of material goods in identity building projects.**

**The findings have demonstrated that different types of nostalgia motivate retro sewers to desire an identity and lifestyle associated with a past time period.**

**This supports Grainge’s (2000) argument for a more nuanced understanding of nostalgic style, stemming from the understanding that nostalgia results from social factors enabling the retrieval and reconfiguration of the past. Further, most sewers concurrently demonstrated more than one type of nostalgia. The influence of nostalgia on consumer’s interest in retro identities and lifestyles is complex and multi-faceted.**

**We have also seen in the sewing behaviors of retro sewers how the varieties of nostalgia influence the ways that consumers transform material goods in their identity building projects. For example, contrasts between the valuing of authenticity versus valuing aesthetics can lead to contrasting choices of materials and construction methods in retro sewing. The most significant form of nostalgia for a given consumer directs their choices of methods and materials when transforming consumer goods.**

**Various types of nostalgia can motivate consumers to desire a retro identity and lifestyle. How consumers transform consumer goods to create this identity – whether with an emphasis on aesthetics or on authenticity—is guided by the type of nostalgia most salient to them personally. DIY skills, such as sewing, enable consumers to transform material goods in specific ways to meet their desires, rather than being dependent on marketplace offerings. This study furthers our understanding of the importance of DIY skills in manifesting desired identities by illuminating the complex roles of multiple forms of nostalgia in retro identity building projects.**

### **Funding**

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## **References**

Ahuvia AC (2005) Beyond the Extended Self: Loved Objects and Consumers’ Identity Narratives. *Journal of Consumer Research* 32(1): 171–184. DOI: 10.1086/429607.

Bain J (2016) “Darn right I’m a feminist...Sew what?” the politics of contemporary home dressmaking: Sewing, slow fashion and feminism. *Women’s Studies International Forum* 54: 57–66. DOI: 10.1016/j.wsif.2015.11.001.

Belk RW (1988) Possessions and the Extended Self. *Journal of Consumer Research* 15(2): 139–168.

Buszek ME (2006) *Pin-up Grrrls: Feminism, Sexuality, Popular Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Cassidy TD and Bennett HR (2012) The Rise of Vintage Fashion and the Vintage Consumer. *Fashion Practice: The Journal of Design, Creative Process & the Fashion* 4(2): 239–262. DOI: 10.2752/175693812X13403765252424.

- Cervellon M, Carey L and Harms T (2012) Something old, something used: Determinants of women's purchase of vintage fashion vs second-hand fashion. Wigley (ed.) *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management* 40(12): 956–974. DOI: 10.1108/09590551211274946.
- Chansky RA (2010) A Stitch in Time: Third-Wave Feminist Reclamation of Needed Imagery. *The Journal of Popular Culture* 43(4): 681–700. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-5931.2010.00765.x.
- Cliff M (2015) Miss Vintage UK says dress like a lady to be treated like one. *Daily Mail Online*, 4 February. Available at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2939375/If-dress-like-lady-treated-like-lady-Miss-Vintage-UK-says-dressing-retro-style-gain-respect-men.html> (accessed 9 August 2017).
- Davis F (1979) *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia*. New York: Macmillan.
- Dictionary.com* (n.d.) Nostalgia. Available at: <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/nostalgia> (accessed 1 March 2019).
- Diehl N (2009) Post-modernism in fashion | Grove Art. *Grove Art Online*. Available at: <https://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/view/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.001.0001/oao-9781884446054-e-7002082725> (accessed 2 September 2019).
- Entwistle J (2000) *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Farrell-Beck J and Parsons J (2007) *20th-Century Dress in the United States*. New York: Fairchild.
- Fischer NL (2015) Vintage, the First 40 Years: The Emergence and Persistence of Vintage Style in the United States. *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research* 7(1): 45–66.
- Gordon SA (2004) 'Boundless Possibilities': Home Sewing and the Meanings of Women's Domestic Work in the United States, 1890-1930. *Journal of Women's History* 16(2): 68–91. DOI: 10.1353/jowh.2004.0045.
- Goulding C (2002) An exploratory study of age related vicarious nostalgia and aesthetic consumption. *ACR North American Advances*. Available at: <http://www.acrwebsite.org/search/view-conference-proceedings.aspx?Id=8719> (accessed 20 July 2017).
- Grainge P (2000) Nostalgia and Style in Retro America: Moods, Modes, and Media Recycling. *The Journal of American Culture* 23(1): 27–34. DOI: 10.1111/j.1537-4726.2000.2301\_27.x.
- Guy A, Green E and Banim M (eds) (2001) *Through the Wardrobe*. Dress, Body, Culture. Oxford: Berg Publishers. DOI: 10.2752/9781847888921.

- Hackney F (1999) Making modern women, stitch by stitch: Dressmaking and women's magazines in Britain 1919-39. In: *The Culture of Sewing: Gender, Consumption and Home Dressmaking*. Oxford: Berg, pp. 73–96. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/9781847888884/CULTSEW0009>. (accessed 2 April 2017).
- Hahl O (2016) Turning Back the Clock in Baseball: The Increased Prominence of Extrinsic Rewards and Demand for Authenticity. *Organization Science* 27(4): 929–953. DOI: 10.1287/orsc.2016.1072.
- Hebdige D (2007) Style. In: Barnard M (ed.) *Fashion Theory: A Reader*. New York: Routledge, pp. 256–266.
- Hirsch G (2010) Do Men Find Vintage Sexy? (Do We Care?). In: *Gertie's Blog for Better Sewing*. Available at: <http://www.blogforbettersewing.com/2010/07/do-men-find-vintage-sexy-do-we-care.html> (accessed 9 August 2017).
- Holbrook MB (1993) Nostalgia and consumption preferences: Some emerging patterns of consumer tastes. *Journal of Consumer Research* 20(2): 245–256.
- Holland S (2018) *Modern Vintage Homes & Leisure Lives*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jenss H (2015) *Fashioning Memory: Vintage Style and Youth Culture*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Kaiser SB (2012) *Fashion and Cultural Studies*. London: Berg.
- Kempson M (2015) 'My Version of Feminism': Subjectivity, DIY and the Feminist Zine. *Social Movement Studies* 14(4): 459–472. DOI: 10.1080/14742837.2014.945157.
- Lyotard J-F (1984) *Postmodern Condition The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Mackinney-Valentin M (2010) Old News? Understanding Retro Trends in the 21st Century Fashion. *Multi: The RIT Journal of Plurality & Diversity in Design* 3(1). Available at: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=19423527&AN=67029052&h=ISpkD3v8ZanqTgee8vm522kzVWeSLV69qtgI97C%2B3B407xIII8Cg4v6DN8jNVgC7XLNfcRQnkHsaDmhMOgE3bw%3D%3D&crl=c> (accessed 20 July 2017).
- Mackinney-Valentin M (2013) Trend Mechanisms in Contemporary Fashion. *Design Issues* 29(1): 67–78. DOI: 10.1162/DESI\_a\_00197.
- Martindale A (2017) Women's motivations to sew clothing for themselves. *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*. Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/15364>.

- Martindale A and McKinney E (2018) Self-sewn identity: How female home sewers use garment sewing to control self-presentation. *Journal of Consumer Culture*: 1469540518764238. DOI: 10.1177/1469540518764238.
- Morgado MA (1996) Coming to terms with postmodern: Theories and concepts of contemporary culture and their implications for apparel scholars. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 14(1): 41–53.
- Pickering M and Keightley E (2006) The Modalities of Nostalgia. *Current Sociology* 54(6): 919–941. DOI: 10.1177/0011392106068458.
- Reed J (1997) Roseanne: A ‘killer bitch’ for Generation X. In: Heywood L and Drake J (eds) *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 122–133.
- Rogers E (2013) Perks of Being a College Student That Wears Vintage. In: *Flashback Summer*. Available at: <http://www.flashbacksummer.com/2013/12/perks-of-being-college-student-that.html> (accessed 25 January 2018).
- Rosenzweig R and Thelen D (1998) *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Ross-Smith A and Huppatz K (2010) Management, women and gender capital. *Gender, Work & Organization* 17(5): 547–566.
- Rowe-Finkbeiner K (2004) *The F-Word: Feminism in Jeopardy: Women, Politics, and the Future*. Emeryville, CA: Seal.
- Sierra JJ and McQuitty S (2007) Attitudes and emotions as determinants of nostalgia purchases: An application of social identity theory. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 15(2): 99–112.
- Stalp MC (2015) Girls Just Want to Have Fun (Too): Complicating the Study of Femininity and Women’s Leisure. *Sociology Compass* 9(4): 261–271. DOI: 10.1111/soc4.12260.
- Veenstra A and Kuipers G (2013) It Is Not Old-Fashioned, It Is Vintage, Vintage Fashion and The Complexities of 21st Century Consumption Practices: Vintage Fashion and Consumption Practices. *Sociology Compass* 7(5): 355–365. DOI: 10.1111/soc4.12033.
- Wilson E (2013) *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*. New York: I.B.Tauris.
- Wilson JL (2014) *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Publishing. Available at: [https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/189216/Nostalgia\\_fulltext.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/189216/Nostalgia_fulltext.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) (accessed 6 October 2018).

Zhao G, Li W, Teng L, et al. (2014) Moderating Role of Consumer Self-Concept on the Effectiveness of Two Nostalgia Appeals. *Journal of Promotion Management* 20(1): 1–19. DOI: 10.1080/10496491.2013.829157.

Zonneveld L and Biggemann S (2014) Emotional connections to objects as shown through collecting behaviour: The role of ardour. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)* 22(4): 325–334. DOI: 10.1016/j.ausmj.2013.10.002.

NO. 817

VOGUE  
COUTURIER  
DESIGN



EXCLUSIVE DESIGN CREATED BY VOGUE

COPYRIGHT 1954, THE CONDÉ NAST PUBLICATIONS INC.

## Figure Captions

Figure 1. Forms of nostalgia found in retro sewing

Figure 2. Vogue Couturier Design 817. © Beverly Yvette Jennings, VSPC Galleria. Reproduced by permission of Beverly Yvette Jennings. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.