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A remembering of culture and community:

An exploration of the ambiguity and significance of everyday affordable sustainable clothing.

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## ABSTRACT

Individuals ‘experiencing poverty often find it difficult to partake in contemporary consumption behaviours,’ consequently budget consumers are often left out of the sustainable fashion conversation.<sup>1</sup> The design and making of a socially equitable clothing collection questions the inequalities related to the unaffordability of sustainable fashion and challenges the stereotypes often associated with consumers of budget clothing. Now that sportswear is a universally acceptable part of popular culture, the newly formed acceptable social boundaries associated with these types of clothes can be designed to move beyond their current understanding. Beyond the object, clothes can confirm a person’s social status (due to their known affordability) or somehow work to represent a remembering of culture and community and by doing so establish new purpose and experiences of clothes. As a response to the realities of deindustrialisation, ongoing austerity and the associated impacts of poverty in the United Kingdom, my interest lies in the space between self-expression, and at the same time, belonging. This body of work, an interchangeable affordable sustainable clothing collection, is an exploration of the ambiguity and significance of everyday affordable budget clothing and the associated negative impacts of social class positioning and stigma that can arise from this.

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<sup>1</sup>Tracy Shildrick and Jessica Rucell, Joseph Rowntree Foundation. “Sociological Perspectives on Poverty: A review of sociological theories on the causes of poverty”, June 4, 2015, accessed October 13, 2019 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/sociological-perspectives-poverty>

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## ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

'I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published by another person (except where explicitly defined in the Acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other higher learning'.

Signed: Leica Johnson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leica Johnson', with a stylized, cursive script.

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# INTRODUCTION

My sense of identity as 'northern working class' is moored to memories involving dialect, landscapes, plates and pottery. As a 'Northern' English female who resides in New Zealand, I am neither English nor New Zealander. Since childhood, clothes have formed a part of my identity. As a child in working-class England, when visiting grandparents, attending a birthday party or any occasion that took me outside the day-to-day norm, I was required to 'look my best', a tradition that spans back centuries in working-class British culture.<sup>2</sup> From these early experiences, I learned that clothes have the potential to 'act as a crutch to allow us to present an idealised version of ourselves to the world.'<sup>3</sup> In order to achieve this better version of myself I made new clothes out of old ones by adapting existing clothes and garments bought from jumble sales, essentially up-cycling them.

One hundred and fifty years ago, our clothes were possibly the most valuable things we owned, often signposting who we were and where we were from. Stories were literally held in the materiality of clothing simply because they were most likely passed down to us from our parents. Now, clothes mostly hold little value; fashion has become a symbol of the modern age of consumerism. The globalised copycat culture of the dominant high street fashion industry, known as fast 'throwaway' fashion<sup>4</sup>, has led to the devaluation and dematerialisation of clothes. This type of clothing holds little value beyond that of stories told by multiple influencers via social media whose primary purpose is to encourage over consumption. The result is a homogenised globalised formal language of clothing that can quickly become transient, holding no sense of connection to self, culture or place.

As the unsustainable practices of fast fashion develop and grow, so too do ethical and ecological concerns around the production of clothing. Fashion is now an industry that advocates sustainable practices and is in a period of transition from a linear to a circular economy<sup>5</sup>. Circular initiatives focus mostly on the object itself, the materials it is made from, the amount of energy embodied in it and its ability to be recycled. These initiatives concentrate on the impacts of textiles on our

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<sup>2</sup> Donning your 'Sunday Best' clothes when at the weekend church service was a working-class social necessity.

<sup>3</sup> Vestoj, "Issue Four: On Fashion & Power", accessed June 26, 2019 <http://vestoj.com/issues/issue-four-on-fashion-and-power/>

<sup>4</sup> The phenomena of fast 'throwaway' fashion emerged in the late 1990s in the wake of globalization. Responding to trends as quickly as possible, fast fashion is a material-intensive industry that reflects and re-enforces patterns of excessive consumption. As a result, unsustainable and unethical textile and clothing manufacturing practices have recently forced the sustainable and ethical agenda of the fashion industry into the public eye.

<sup>5</sup> Circular economy is an approach to sustainability that uses minimum negative environmental impacts and recycles or up-cycles all raw materials.

environment.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, this object-focused approach supports the production of more products by using less resource, thereby reflecting and continuing to reinforce patterns of excessive consumption. If we are to continue to clothe the growing population and reduce our environmental impacts, consumption will need to slow down, requiring a significant cultural change from within the fashion industry and consumers alike.

Tony Fry is a philosopher, design theorist and architect whose writing investigates the relationship between design, unsustainability, and politics. His philosophical approach of 'Design Futuring'<sup>7</sup> is usually adopted in planning big scale architecture projects or town planning. This type of work requires the designer to plan for the future in order to understand current and subsequent impacts of a building on people, culture, history and the environment. When adopting Fry's approach for fashion design, the designer is required to consider and understand the far-reaching consequences of design practice and the over consumption of clothes from this. To date, approaches to sustainable fashion design are primarily driven by the impulse to create a desire in the end-user with aesthetics while at the same time working to reduce the environmental impacts of this. This approach is contradictory. When positioning oneself within the framework of 'Design Futuring'<sup>8</sup> the core ethos of design is political, social and cultural in addition to environmental. At a time when the fashion industry is at a point of requiring profound cultural change, this philosophy can catalyse the advancement of approaches to, and the purpose of, fashion design practice. Meaning, that as a sustainable fashion designer located in New Zealand, I can move beyond the mainstream fashion industry environmental impacts of textiles concerns (object-focused) towards new approaches and practices that, in addition to supporting and nurturing our environments, also work to support our society.

A review of design history and practice underpins what Fry describes as a 're-directive'<sup>9</sup> approach to design. This retrospective approach has enabled me to recognise that to date I have only designed clothes for a Eurocentric middle-class consumer. This realisation points my attention towards buyers of budget brands, which is akin to fast fashion. Society 'subjects the spending habits and patterns of those in greatest poverty [the budget consumer] to stigmatisation' yet sustainable fashion is prohibitively expensive<sup>10</sup>. The fast-fashion consumer has been identified

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<sup>6</sup> 70% of a garment's environmental impact is caused by the manufacture of textiles and production of the garment in relation to the textiles. European parliament, Environmental impact of the textile and clothing industry: What Consumers Need to Know, January 2019. Accessed October 2019.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633143/EPRS\\_BRI\(2019\)633143\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633143/EPRS_BRI(2019)633143_EN.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Tony Fry, "Design Futuring: Sustainability, Ethics & New Practice". (London: Berg Publishers, 2008)

<sup>8</sup> Fry

<sup>9</sup> Fry

<sup>10</sup> Shildrick

as the least likely to adopt progressive, sustainable ways of consuming clothes.<sup>11</sup> By placing my attention beyond the object (a physical garment) I can work to add value to the way a garment is framed by establishing new value (purpose and experiences) of clothing for consumers of fast fashion thereby renewing and redefining what sustainable fashion is and could be. The result is the rematerialisation and reimagining of budget clothing, a new form of value creation via the pioneering of cultural expression. How can the philosophical framework of 'Design Futuring', whose primary concern is to preserve our society and future environments, inform the design and making of a socially equitable clothing collection that establishes new values and approaches for fashion design practice? Informed by the philosophical framework of Design Futuring, this body of work, an interchangeable affordable sustainable clothing collection, is an exploration of the ambiguity and significance of everyday affordable budget clothing and the associated negative impacts of social class positioning and stigma that can arise from this.

*"The echelons of value and power in fashion tend to be reproduced in order to ensure that the tastemakers in our culture remain unchallenged. In this sense, fashion reflects, rather than renews, society. Fashion promotes a set of values only if those values reflect the current trends in our culture. With this in mind, one might argue that while fashion creates a sense of innovation and constant renewal, its inherent structure is harder to challenge or change. For fashion to be truly radical, we need to question its very systems and structures. Only here lies the potential for truly pioneering cultural expression."<sup>12</sup>*

Vestoj, a platform for critical thinking on fashion, Issue Four: Fashion and Power, 2012

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<sup>11</sup>W Gwozdz and K Nielsen, Field Report: Consumer Survey, A Mistra Future Fashion Report, 2019, accessed June, 2018. [http://mistrafuturefashion.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Annual-Report\\_Mistra-Future-Fashion-2017\\_-PDF.pdf](http://mistrafuturefashion.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Annual-Report_Mistra-Future-Fashion-2017_-PDF.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Vestoj

## CONTEXTUAL REVIEW

When working within a Design Futuring philosophical framework, my focus moves beyond solely environmental impacts of fashion towards an engaged process that places value on social and cultural histories. I am therefore obligated to change my habits, approaches and understanding of what clothing is and can be in order to move beyond the usual concerns of the environmental impacts of textiles and clothes. A Design Futuring redirective practice asks the designer to first review personal cultural and structural conditions that precede fashion design practice. A personal retrospective helps an individual to understand how lived experiences from the past shape approaches to design activity today. Despite my current location in New Zealand, my approach to why and how I wear my clothes remains from my childhood and young adult life. The practice of wearing my 'best' clothing when I am out in the world prevails today.

*"Memory matters. It matters because memory brings the past into the present and opens it up to the future."<sup>13</sup>*

Professor Laszlo Muntean on the interrelation between memory and materiality, 2016.

The place of my childhood, the post-industrial town of Stoke-On-Trent, North West Staffordshire, UK, affectionately once known as the 'Potteries', has been significantly affected by globalization. In its heyday in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, more than 100,000 workers were employed by the pottery industry. At the time, the local landscape was littered with over '2,500 coal-fired ovens and kilns' earning it the inauspicious title of 'Smoke-on-Trent'<sup>14</sup>. In the 1990s, in the wake of recession and globalization, when manufacturers started to outsource pottery production, only 10,000 workers remained. Three decades later, the pottery industry has been replaced by distribution, retail and service industry jobs. This type of low paid work combined with ongoing government austerity measures have attributed to rising poverty in the area; this is the reality of deindustrialization in Britain today.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Laszlo Muntean, *Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*. (Routledge 2016).

<sup>14</sup> Mervyn Edwards. *Memories of the Staffordshire Potteries*. (Berkshire UK :Countryside Books, 2009), 17.

<sup>15</sup> UK government austerity measures have reduced public spending and the role of the welfare state since the early 2000s. Following the Welfare Reform Act in 2012 the number of children living in poverty in the UK increased, food collected from foodbanks during 2012 to 2019 tripled compared to the previous seven years. Richard Hilton, Signal Radio. "Stoke-on-Trent food bank sees record demand for food parcels at the start of 2019" (22 March 2019): accessed 7 June 2019.

<https://www.signal1.co.uk/news/local/stoke-on-trent-foodbank-sees-record-demand-for-food-parcels-at-start-of-2019/>



Figure 1. Industrial landscape featuring Garfield pot bank, Stoke-on-Trent, UK.

Rex Wailes, *Garfield Works*, 1968, photograph, The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent, UK, <https://www.search.staffspasttrack.org.uk/Details.aspx?&ResourceID=6896&PageIndex=1&Keyword=Garfield&SortOrder=2>



Figure 2. Industrial landscape featuring Moorcroft pot bank, Stoke-on-Trent, UK.

*Moorcroft Works Cobridge*, 1973 - 75, photograph, The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent, UK, <https://www.search.staffspasttrack.org.uk/Details.aspx?&ResourceID=6650&PageIndex=1&Keyword=moorcroft&SortOrder=2>

The study of material culture, in particular the environments of working-class people in Britain in the past and present day, gives context and weight to this project. A retrospective critical analysis and reflection of the social constructs surrounding poverty in Britain acts as a vehicle to further redirect approaches and values of fashion design. Over the last three decades, post-industrial cities in the United Kingdom like Stoke-on-Trent have been marginalized by the British tabloid press who openly blame unemployment and inequality on the individuals that are most affected by it, suggesting that 'poverty is a result of personal choices.'<sup>16</sup> The underclass of Britain, the poor and unemployed, are regularly shamed and blamed for their position in society by politicians and mass media, yet very little is said of the decline of an industry that was such an intrinsic part of the culture of a town like Stoke-on-Trent. British based author and social activist Darren McGarvey writes with insight in his book *Poverty Safari*, a first-hand account of the constructs that precede poverty in modern-day Britain and the ensuing devastating effects of this. He writes of the regional deindustrialization of local industry leading to unemployment, that has led to a lack of motivation of

<sup>16</sup> Joe Bennett, "Chav-spotting in Britain: The Representation of Social Class as Private Choice", *Social Semiotics*, 23:1, (2012) 146-162, accessed April 15, 2019. DOI: 10.1080/10350330.2012.708158.

individuals, and ultimately, the demoralization and repression of people and community en masse<sup>17</sup>. He states that the impacts of poverty in modern-day post-industrialised areas (like Stoke) cannot be underplayed, they move beyond the physical into the physiological, cultural and social; a statement I can attest to. Poverty impacts a person's sense of safety, their mental health and well-being and the ability to gain employment.<sup>18</sup> McGarvey writes of his lived experience; 'the sense that you are being repressed extends to almost every means that you have of expressing individuality. Which is why nearly everybody dressed and spoke the same.'<sup>19</sup> In contrast to this, although I have an implicit understanding of McGarvey's writing, when growing up, my clothes were one of my few means of self-expression.

*"The use of dress [is used] as a way of expressing and reinforcing position in the social hierarchy."<sup>20</sup>*

Sociologist George Simmel on the social and political aspects of dress in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, 1890.

Throughout history, clothes in Britain have been used as a means of expressing social mobility and at the same time, acted as a delineation between the classes. In 1890, German sociologist George Simmel's theory of fashion proposed the upper classes continuously changed and reset the fashions of the day as a means to distinguish themselves from the lower classes, who consistently copied them.<sup>21</sup> At the time, the relationship between employer and employee was often communicated through the clothes each social group wore, the urban poor were either given clothes by their employees (when in household service) or wore charity hand me downs supplied by the middle and upper classes. The introduction of uniforms at the end of the Victorian era, served to 'reinforce and support social class divisions and distinctions' in British culture.<sup>22</sup> Copying the upper classes signified a form of social mobility for the poor. Simmel speculated that fashion unites people of a particular

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<sup>17</sup>Darren McGarvey, *Poverty Safari: Understanding the Anger of Britain's Underclass* (Pan Macmillan: 2018)

<sup>18</sup> "The Children's Society: What are the Effects of Child Poverty?" accessed October 6, 2019.

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/ending-child-poverty/what-are-the-effects-of-child-poverty>

<sup>19</sup> McGarvey, *Poverty Safari*, 16

<sup>20</sup> Georg Simmel. Fashion. *American Journal of Sociology* 62, no. 6 (The University of Chicago Press: 1957): 541-558 , accessed October 5, 2019 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2773129>

<sup>21</sup> Simmel

<sup>22</sup> Shildrick

social class and by doing so segregates them from others, noting that 'in each social relation there are two forces at work: one pushing us to bind ourselves to others through imitation, and another pushing us to unbind ourselves from others, to undo the social network, through distinction'.<sup>23</sup>

*"Chav is a young person of a type characterized by brash and loutish behaviour and the wearing of designer-style clothes . . . usually with connotations of low social status."*<sup>24</sup>

The word 'chav' as defined in the Oxford English Dictionary

In the early 2000s, at the inception of fast 'throwaway' fashion, it was generally deemed taboo to wear cheap clothing; luxury brands were king. As a result, the negative appearance-based stereotyping of individuals wearing budget brand clothing of the time, known as 'chav-spotting' became permissible in the popular tabloid press throughout Britain.<sup>25</sup> Chav is a derogatory term used to describe a young person of low social status. This type of stereotyping was mostly a result of the impacts of poverty and the inability of individuals to afford to buy any other type of clothes. Sportswear, the type of ubiquitous clothing worn by chavs at the time including sweatshirts and sweatpants, hoodies, track pants and jackets, marked the beginning of fast fashion. For the first time, these types of clothes were copied and reiterated from branded well-known sports labels for as little cost as possible and quickly became a reflection of lower-class status; a clear delineation of the classes, the under-class. The vilification of sportswear united those who wore it while segregating them from those looking down on them.

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<sup>23</sup> Simmel

<sup>24</sup> Oxford English Dictionary

<sup>25</sup> Sunday People. Daily Mirror Online UK. How to Spot a Chav. February 22, 2004. Accessed June 19, 2019. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/how-to-spot-a-chav-1597537>



Figure 3. Photographs of budget brand sportswear; a t-shirt at \$4.75, a hooded sweatshirt at \$15 and sweatshirt at \$14.

K Mart, 2019, photograph, New Zealand, Plain crew neck t-shirt, fleece hoodie and fleece sweatshirt, <https://www.kmart.co.nz/product/plain-crew-neck-tee/2433803>, <https://www.kmart.co.nz/product/printed-crew-neck-sweatshirt/2438846>, <https://www.kmart.co.nz/product/active-basic-fleece-pullover-hoodie/2503819>

Contemporary streetwear is described in the Oxford English dictionary as a ‘casual clothing of a style worn especially by members of various urban youth subcultures.’<sup>26</sup> In the context of this project, the term streetwear is not contained to a specific subculture and is inclusive of the most affordable clothes, high end brands and sportswear. Streetwear refers to clothes that people wear on the street to express themselves.

Fashion designers Gosha Rubchinskiy and Demna Gvasalia are representative of a contemporary anti-fashion movement known for making the ubiquitous desirable.<sup>27</sup> Incorporating hoodies, t-shirts, white trainers and sportswear, clothes that were symbolic of chav culture with central elements to their own culture growing up in the 1990's post-Soviet states, onto the high-end runways of Paris. Initially, what set out to be a statement on the hierarchy of the then high-end fashion industry, their work became so popular, sportswear now features in most high-end clothing collections, working its way from the street to the high-end runway. Breaking down the traditional class structure of clothing, what was once a clear delineation of the classes, streetwear has become both the every-day and the desirable.

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<sup>26</sup> Oxford English Dictionary. Accessed October 30, 2019 <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/streetwear>

<sup>27</sup> Anti-fashion is a movement started in the 1990s that opposed the then fashion establishment. Showroom, “What Anti-Fashion Means Today,” August 14, 2017, accessed November 3, 2019 <https://www.shwrm.com/themagazine/anti-fashion-means-today/>



Figure 4. Young men wearing branded Champion sweatshirts in urban environment.

Michael Mayren, photograph, <https://metalmagazine.eu/en/post/article/michael-mayren-vulnerable-and-raw-natasha-dilini>



Figure 5. Young male wearing Gosha Rubchinskiy branded Fila sweatshirt on the runway.

Hypebeast, photograph, 2016, <https://hypebeast.com/2016/8/fashion-experts-post-soviet-russia-explain-gosha-rubchinskiy>

Established in 1856, the quintessential British luxury brand Burberry created its classic Scottish beige check with accents of black, white and red, for coat linings. A century later, in the 1960s, the Burberry check scarf was created.<sup>28</sup> In the mid 1990s, the company banned and removed the same check from production due to its popularity and association with chavs. At the time, chavs were deemed as the 'other', symbolic of low social status, their clothes signifying an objectionable sub-culture. In 2018, in collaboration with Burberry, the company classic check was restyled by Gosha Rubchinskiy while simulating a 'chav-like' appearance. The history of the vintage check that vilified and excluded chavs and then appropriated their style of wearing clothes, demonstrates the often inauthentic and fickle nature of fashion that has no connection to culture or place.

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<sup>28</sup> Brenden Gallagher, "The History of Burberry' Check," Hypebeast, December 7, 2017, accessed October, 2019 <https://www.grailed.com/drycleanonly/history-of-the-burberry-check>

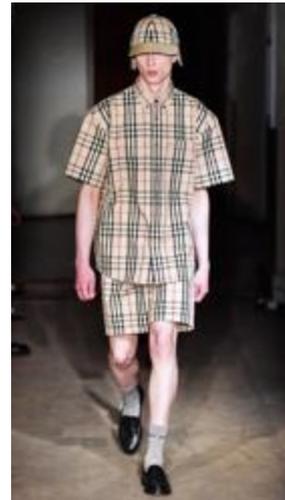


Figure 6. Burberry vintage check as worn by a 'chav' in the early 1990's.

"CHAV" Apparel, photograph, 2001 – 2005,  
<http://simonevalsecchi.blogspot.com/>

Figure 7. Gosha Rubchinskiy collaboration with Burberry, Spring-Summer 2018.

Victor Boyko, *Gosha Rubchinskiy x Burberry*, photograph, 2017  
<https://www.vogue.com/article/best-fashion-collaborations-of-2017>

Clothes 'have the power to transform one's embodied appearance and thus reconfigure one's social status'<sup>29</sup>. This statement refers to the potential for clothes to transform an individual, to provide a kind of social mobility. 'One in five people [living in the UK today] do not have the resources to meet their minimum needs'<sup>30</sup> and it is now known that experiencing poverty as a child impacts health through adult life, regardless of social mobility.<sup>31</sup> Our clothes have the potential to be a means of personal (how we feel in them) and public (what they communicate to others) autobiography, if we can afford it. In our society, the act of consuming allows a person to build their individual identity, yet poverty prevents a person from buying clothes<sup>32</sup>. How can a person feel empowered and able to express themselves when they can't afford to do so?

<sup>29</sup> Rosie Findlay, "Such Stuff as Dreams are Made On", *Cultural Studies Review* 22, No.1 (2016): 78-94

<sup>30</sup>Helen Banard, "UK Poverty 2018." The JRF Analysis Unit, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, December 4, 2018, accessed October 13, 2019. <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2018>

<sup>31</sup> Michaela Benzeval, "How does money influence health?" Joseph Rowntree Foundation, March 10, 2014, accessed October 13, 2019. <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/how-does-money-influence-health>

This research identifies four main ways money affects people's wellbeing: Material: Money buys goods and services that improve health. The more money families have, the better the goods they can buy. Psychosocial: Managing on a low income is stressful. Comparing oneself to others and feeling at the bottom of the social ladder can be distressing, which can lead to biochemical changes in the body, eventually causing ill health. Behavioural: For various reasons, people on low incomes are more likely to adopt unhealthy behaviours – smoking and drinking, for example – while those on higher incomes are more able to afford healthier lifestyles. Reverse causation (poor health leads to low income): Health may affect income by preventing people from taking paid employment. Childhood health may also affect educational outcomes, limiting job opportunities and potential earnings.

<sup>32</sup> Shildrick

'Eternally Yours,'<sup>33</sup> a positioning paper published in 1997 for Dutch product design students, laid the foundation of the most developed form of design for sustainability; design for durability. Fashion design for sustainability to date has focused on the durability of a garment in reference to its material value. When compared to the 'design for obsolescence' nature of fast throw-away fashion, design for durability makes sense. A made to last garment physically lasts as long as its weakest component therefore garments need to be made from strong, durable textiles and quality components using high-quality construction methods.

To make full use of the made to last longer life span of a garment, the designer relies heavily on the consumer changing their user habits during the user stage of an item's lifecycle. Dr Johnathon Chapman developed Emotionally Durable Design,<sup>34</sup> an approach to design that involves encouraging consumers to form attachments to products to promote sustained use. Recent studies show that relying on an emotional attachment to extend the user life of a product does not necessarily yield the optimum use of a product over its lifespan. 'In cases where [emotional] attachment was identified, new products were no less likely to be purchased; attachment merely led to accumulation and storage of seldom-used items.'<sup>35</sup>

Reducing consumption by product durability and emotional attachments alone are limited. These approaches to design pay little attention to 'the deeply social nature of fashion: what one person chooses to wear, and to wear for a long time, is also affected by the decisions and actions of others.'<sup>36</sup> Ethnographic research shows that a person's lifeworld and social interactions play an intrinsic part in the lifespan and use of a garment. 'Things do not have social lives, rather social lives have things'<sup>37</sup> meaning that the durability of a garment is determined by the personal expressions, behaviours and habits of the people wearing them more so than its material or emotional value. This theory reflects McGarvey's lived experience of needing to conform to the acceptable code of dress of his peers. These types of social relationships and exchanges are difficult to determine at the 'design phase' of a product.

Promoting feelings of satisfaction from use, using resourcefulness (like mending) is known to engage users with their clothes for longer periods of time.<sup>38</sup> This approach aligns to those used by

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<sup>33</sup> Ed van Hinte, "Eternally Yours: Position Paper for Design Institute," November, 1993

<sup>34</sup> Johnathon Chapman, *Emotionally Durable Design: Objects, Experiences and Empathy*. (London: Taylor & Francis Ltd 2015).

<sup>35</sup> Evans, S. and T. Cooper, "Consumer Influences on Product Lifespans" *The Fashioned Self* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2010) 319.

<sup>36</sup> Kate Fletcher, "Durability, Fashion, Sustainability: The Processes and Practice of Use" *Fashion practice* 4, 2012.

<sup>37</sup> Tranberg Hansen, K. 2003. "Fashioning: Zambian Moments." *Journal of Material Culture* 8 no3 (2009): 301–9, accessed September 8, 2019. <http://www.transitionnetwork.org/>

<sup>38</sup> Hansen

workers of Britain during the Victorian era when individuals modified their clothes in rudimentary ways in order to suit a particular type of work. The rich heritage of clothing and its relationship to rural occupation throughout working-class Britain reflected local culture and histories of place. During the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, women wore fashionable clothing of the day made from a low-cost locally supplied fabrics typically used by the working-class. The value in these types of clothes comes from regionalized modifications combined with local fabrics that became a localised form of clothing, creating a unique fashion vocabulary based on the geographical context and occupational purpose of the clothes.



Figure 8. Photograph of Newhaven Fisher woman wearing modified occupational clothing.

David Octavius Hill, Unknown Fisherwife – Newhaven 18, 1843, photograph, National Galleries Scottish, UK.  
[https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/27693/unknown-fishwife-newhaven-19?inspire%5B37915%5D=37915&search\\_se t\\_offset=27](https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/27693/unknown-fishwife-newhaven-19?inspire%5B37915%5D=37915&search_se t_offset=27)

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Figure 9. Photograph of Lancashire Pit Brow woman wearing modified occupational clothing.

Herbert Wragg, *South West Lancashire Pit Brow Woman*, photograph, 1866, Victorian Working Women: Portraits of Life

As a result, the identification of occupation and place became synonymous with the description of the work, like the ‘Newhaven Bait Catchers’ and ‘Lancashire Pit Brow Women’. This historical precedent provides the rationale for approaches to fashion design practice that speak to aspects of the region, its culture and history.

Further research of fashion history reveals the social story of The Utility Scheme. During the Second World War, in 1941, the British government's Board of Trade devised the British Utility Scheme as a means to clothe the population at an affordable price. Known as CC41, the scheme was

implemented in three ways – rationing, utility and austerity. Rationing clothes at this time quickly led to inequalities. The wealthy continued to buy good quality clothing while scarcity affected the working-class wardrobe. As a response, The Board of Trade improved on rationing logistics and devised a socially equitable formal legislation controlled by central government; the British Utility Scheme was introduced to address the distribution, costs and quality of clothing. Fixed prices were instigated by the government to regulate trade, based on 'cost plus 5%', meaning that working-class civilians could afford good quality clothing.<sup>39</sup> At the same time the Utility Scheme was introduced, austerity directives were issued to manufacturers and designers to save on cloth, labour and manufacturing costs.<sup>40</sup> Inspired by the Utility scheme, this body of work aims to reflect a moment in time that prioritizes our natural resources and includes those who are usually left out of the sustainable clothing conversation, the budget brand consumer.

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Figure 10. Advertisement showing how to make a skirt and jacket from your husband's unused suit during WWII.

*How to Make a Women's Suit from a Man's Suit*, 1944, photograph, Wartime Fashion: From Haute Couture to Homemade.

Figure 11. Skirt made from blackout curtains during WWII.

*British Hand Knitted Sweater, Black Rayon 'Montgomery' Beret, and Black Cotton Skirt Made from Blackout Fabric*, photograph, 1945, Wartime Fashion: From Haute Couture to Homemade.

Figure 12. Advertisement showing how to upcycle a wedding dress during WWII.

*Singer Sewing Machine Advertisement for Remaking the Bride's Mothers Wedding Dress*, 1943, photograph, Wartime Fashion: From Haute Couture to Homemade.

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<sup>39</sup>To manage this the government took over the importing and distribution of raw material and restricted profit for all concerned. The number of factories that could manufacture clothing was consolidated; local manufacture and distribution helped to save on fuel.

<sup>40</sup> Austerity measures restricted the amount of cloth and trims (like buttons and zips) used in a particular type of garment. Unnecessary decorations like embroidery and lace were banned. Also, designers were tasked in simplifying the design of every piece of clothing by employing a limited number of seams per garment type and reducing unnecessary details like pockets or pleats.

Rationing during World War II naturally reduced the consumption of fashion as civilians were encouraged to make new clothes from old ones and repair worn garments. Out of necessity and the motivation to look fashionable, women adaptively re-used existing garments and the action of mending gave way to personal expression. Due to the war effort, there was a change in attitude towards Utility clothing from the general public; it became acceptable to wear it. In contrast to the financially driven commercial design environment of today, The Utility Scheme, that designed and produced garments within the guidelines of austerity measures, resulted in affordable, good quality clothing that had a purpose. Additionally, users engaged with their clothes, by mending and upcycling thereby increasing engagement with their clothes. In contrast to a personalised clothing relationship, budget fashion lacks material, emotional and social value. The re-imagining of the Utility Scheme in a contemporary context has potential to engage users with their clothes. New value is added to contemporary rationed budget clothing due to their durability and symbolic meaning of belonging (to culture and place).

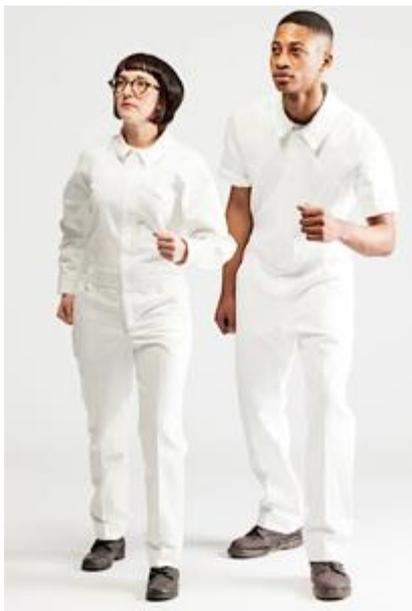


Figure 13. Members of The Rational Dress Society wearing jump suits.

Photograph, <https://www.jumpsu.it/>

In light of rising populations globally and the over-use of our finite natural resources, rationing and austerity measures that historically emerged from war time, are of value in a contemporary fashion context. Design activists, The Rational Dress Society of America describe their jump suits as an 'experiment in counter-fashion,' the society is a group project that has political focus as a response to overconsumption. Each member wears the same jumpsuit every day for all occasions; a contemporary form of rationing. Choosing to wear a jumpsuit addresses environmental issues surrounding the production of fashion, works to reduce an individual's consumption and addresses the social nature of clothing - the action of wearing a type of uniform unites people in a common cause. However, I believe the uniformity of this approach to fashion does not address possible needs of self-expression.

In 2009 British product and lighting designer Tom Dixon, showcased a small interchangeable collection of clothing in collaboration with sportswear brand Adidas that could be adaptively used for short international aeroplane trips. This adaptive approach to fashion design limits the number and types of clothes featured in the collection, a modern-day form of rationing.<sup>41</sup> An interchangeable wardrobe has the potential to reduce the cost of buying sustainable clothes simply because the consumer needs to buy less.



Figure 14. Tom Dixon collaboration with sport brand Adidas.

Adidas x Tom Dixon

[https://www.tomdixon.net/en\\_gb/story/post/announcing-adidas-by-tom-dixon/](https://www.tomdixon.net/en_gb/story/post/announcing-adidas-by-tom-dixon/)

<sup>41</sup> All clothes and products were restricted in size, weight and numbers and had to fit into a small carry on case for a short European flight.

In September 2019, the charity Smart Works,<sup>42</sup> who supply second-hand clothes to women for job interviews in the UK, launched an affordable interchangeable capsule wardrobe known as the Smart Set.<sup>43</sup> Similarly to CC41, the Smart Set clothing collection is readily available in the British high street, designed for a purpose (job interviews) and advertised as affordable. In light of the uncertainty in the UK over the possible impacts of a no-deal Brexit, rationing may be once again a real possibility.<sup>44</sup> Limited wardrobes (only consuming what is required) that work cohesively can be a viable contemporary form of rationed dressing.

Symbolic of a breakdown in the traditional class structure of fashion, sportswear that was once vilified, is now an intrinsic acceptable part of streetwear. Moving from the ambiguous to the significant. Beyond the acceptable social boundaries of ubiquitous garments like the sweatshirt and sweat pant, a new formal language of streetwear has emerged from my research and design practice. The stories of social histories, held in the materiality of the garments, have potential to connect the wearer to them, promoting a sense of satisfaction from use allowing for new purposes and new experiences of clothes.

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<sup>42</sup>Smart Works <https://smartworks.org.uk/who-we-are/>

<sup>43</sup>Omid Scobie, "How Duchess Meghan Brought the Smart Works Fashion Collection to Life," *Harpers Bazaar*, September 12, 2019, accessed September 15, 2019. <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/celebrity/latest/a29018292/meghan-markle-smart-works-explained/>

<sup>44</sup> No-deal Brexit refers to the possibility of the UK leaving the European Union in October 2019 without any trade deals put into place. This could negatively impact the importing and exporting of trade between the UK and the rest of Europe.

## METHODOLOGICAL STATEMENT

The philosophy of 'Design Futuring'<sup>45</sup> and practice-based enquiry form the methodological approaches to contemporary fashion design practice that supports and directs the design and production of this clothing collection.

In addition to focusing on the environment, Fry suggests the designer focus on 'process (over object) as a socio-politically engaged process (not just the design process).'<sup>46</sup> When working within a Design Futuring philosophical framework, my focus moves beyond purely object focused (the environmental impacts of textiles and clothes) towards a socio politically engaged process that places value on social and cultural histories. This philosophical approach requires a revision and critique of the structural and cultural conditions that precede and shape design activity today. 'New knowledge/ theory emerges by making explicit the informal knowledge of everyday life.'<sup>47</sup> Practice-based research supports this approach and moves my design practice from simply being a designer, towards a 'designer-practitioner- researcher,'<sup>48</sup> meaning that I am able 'integrate my discoveries about my own practice, with its broader connections to innovative and new projects.'<sup>49</sup>

Practice-based research requires both experimental and reflective inquiry at all stages of design development. Intuition can shape my practice, for instance, if I have a 'gut' feeling about an outcome, I will explore this through experimentation. 'When there is a difference between the anticipated and actual results this gives rise to reflection and creates a consciousness to my actions.'<sup>50</sup> I am able to gain insight into actions and activities of practice through experimental inquiry. Informing the process of identifying new actions and activities required to do so, reflective inquiry assists the progression of design practice.

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<sup>45</sup> Tony Fry, "Redirective Practice: An Elaboration" *Design Philosophy Papers 5 no1* (2007), accessed October 5, 2019 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/144871307X13966292017072>.

<sup>46</sup> Fry, "Redirective Practice: An Elaboration".

<sup>47</sup> C Argyris and D Schon. *Theory in Practice* (San Francisco CA: Wiley Company, 1974).

<sup>48</sup> Laurene Vaugan (Editor) *Designer/ Practitioner/ Researcher* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017),16.

<sup>49</sup> Vaugan, 16.

<sup>50</sup> D Schön, "The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action" (London: Temple Smith, 1983)

Criteria and limitations are established for fashion design practice from developing 'Design Futuring redirectives.'<sup>51</sup> There are three areas of focus for a 'redirective'<sup>52</sup> practice:

1. Adaptation in the face of what has to change to counter the unsustainable.
2. Elimination of what threatens sustainment by designing things away.
3. Prefiguration of design thinking in order to redirectively deal with what is coming.<sup>53</sup>

The three objectives assist in taking me from where I am, object focused, to where I want to be, values focused. New values for design practice can work to reduce consumption and eliminate the appearance-based stereotyping of people wearing budget clothing. Each of the three 'redirective'<sup>54</sup> objectives, inform and align with historical rationing and austerity methods. Acting as a counter to overconsumption and the current unsustainable impacts of the fashion industry on our environment,<sup>55</sup> Utility rationing supports the aim of reducing the consumption of fashion in a contemporary context. Working within this methodology, I was able to plan at the design phase to eliminate and reduce the environmental impacts of a garment at all stages of its lifecycle.<sup>56</sup> By applying austerity measures like those used during WWII, that simplified the design of garments, the amount of natural resources used to make it were reduced. In addition to simplifying design, in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, future sustaining elements can be prefigured into a garment enabling end of life reuse or recycling.

The development of my thoughts and approaches concerning the redirective objectives of adaptation, elimination and prefiguration and how they relate to and inform rationed and austerity methods, are illustrated in the 'Redirective Led Rationing and Austerity Methods Developed for Fashion Design' chart (Fig. 15).

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<sup>51</sup> Fry.

<sup>52</sup> Fry.

<sup>53</sup> Fry.

<sup>54</sup> Fry.

<sup>55</sup> In 2018 it is estimated that 80 to 100 billion garments were manufactured for 8 billion people. In the same year, the United Kingdom sent 23 million items of clothes to landfill. London Sustainability Exchange, "What, Why, How and When"? The Textile Issue, 2018, accessed September 15, 2019 <http://www.lsx.org.uk/blog/textile-issue-london-textile-forum-2018/>

<sup>56</sup> There are four categories of a garment's lifecycle - textile production, garment production, garment use and garment recovery.

Figure 15. Redirective led rationing and austerity methods developed for fashion design informed by a 'Design Futuring' framework.

DESIGN FUTURING REDIRECTIVE OBJECTIVES	'1. ADAPTATION to counter the unsustainable.'	'2. ELIMINATION of what threatens sustainment by designing things away.'	'3. PREFIGURATION of design thinking to redirectively deal with what is coming'.
REDIRECTIVE OBJECTIVES DEVELOPED FOR MY FASHION DESIGN PRACTICE	Adapt fashion design approaches and practices to counter overconsumption - design to reduce consumption.	Eliminate what is not necessary from fashion design practices in order to reduce environmental impacts.	Prefigure future sustaining elements into fashion design approaches and practices to enable reuse or recycling and end of life recovery
REDIRECTIVE LED RATIONING & AUSTERITY METHODS DEVELOPED FOR MY FASHION DESIGN PRACTICE	<p>Only consume what is required within a specific context.</p> <p>Design for the budget consumer.</p> <p>Adaptively re-use budget garments and household goods to make new ones.</p>	<p>Simplify design by reducing seams.</p> <p>Limit or eliminate trims: No buttons - Buttons are expensive, often made from plastic and costly to apply.</p> <p>No zips – Zips are made from plastic or metal combined, are not biodegradable. Recycled zips are expensive. Applying a zip into a garment is costly.</p>	<p>Use mono materials that can be recycled or ideally biodegrade.</p> <p>No elastics - Elastane is not biodegradable and cannot be recycled.</p> <p>No polyester – Polyester textile can be recycled in New Zealand, yet due to the ambiguous nature and impact of polyester micro-fibres on the environment, are not recommended.</p>

## METHODS

Action research allows a designer to identify real world, practical problems or issues and try to develop and validate solutions or answers to them.<sup>57</sup> The project involved multiple areas of research involving the environmental impacts of the fashion industry and the social, cultural, historical and political aspects of clothing. Annotated mind maps allowed for multiple points of reference to coalesce and form succinct ideas at the embryonic stage of design.

Once the project focus was established, additional historical research of occupational clothing and how these related to lived, or work experiences was conducted. I was able to take environments of the past, clothes and people, and re-situate them into present-day urban environments using photographic collage and sketching. A type of visual survey, the action of repositioning allows for new interpretations of clothing.

The methods of austerity and rationing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century worked to keep the cost of a garment down to a minimum and at the same time reduce its environmental impacts. Historical research of social design revealed that WWII British Utility Scheme austerity measures restricted the amount of cloth and trims (like buttons and zips) used in a particular type of garment.<sup>58</sup> By adopting and defining my own set of austerity measures that worked within the adaptation, elimination and prefiguration objectives of a redirective practice (please refer to Figure. 15), I designed for limitations as opposed to adding them in post design. Led by austerity derived constraints that reduced seams, eliminated trims and informed the type of fabrications used, the stripping back of trims and details coalesced to inform and define the aesthetics of the clothes. Setting the scope and boundaries of design practice, in lieu of detail, attention was placed on the form of the clothes (the silhouette, proportion and fit) while the action of co-opting new budget garments and household goods and adaptively re-using them to make new ones, informed the type of fabrics the clothing collection was made from.

Journaling, sketching and storyboarding supported the development of two-dimensional illustrated and photo-collaged designs into three-dimensional prototypes. The practitioner can go through many cycles of development, revision and evaluation to 'figure out how to bring about change in design practice, [therefore] action research tends to be subjective, flexible, iterative, emergent and very context bound'.<sup>59</sup> In the context of developing a design into an affordable, sustainable,

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<sup>57</sup> Edwards, Claudia, and Jerry W. Willis, *Action Research: Models, Methods, and Examples*. (Information Age Publishing, 2014) 48.

<sup>58</sup> Unnecessary decorations like embroidery and lace were banned. Also, designers were tasked in simplifying the design of every piece of clothing by employing a limited number of seams per garment type and reducing unnecessary details like pockets or pleats.

<sup>59</sup> Edwards, *Action Research: Models, Methods, and Examples*, 48.

contemporary garment, the process of 3D visualization (making calico toiles) was repeated multiple times until a solution emerged. Tacit knowledge allowed me to know when the desired outcome was reached. The process moved in cycles of prototyping, fitting, analysing, refining and remaking garments interjected with periods of reflective journaling and contemplation.

## ANALYSIS OF PRACTICE

The term 'Embodied Cognition,' explains how the relationship between an individual's thoughts and body are a two-way street, what we think affects our body and how we hold our body impacts our thoughts.<sup>60</sup> Known to change how we feel about ourselves, power poses can increase our testosterone and decrease our cortisol levels in the brain making us feel calmer and more confident.<sup>61</sup> In contrast, a slumped rounded posture encourages feelings of 'hopelessness and helplessness,'<sup>62</sup> feelings linked to the psychological impacts of poverty. Reviewing photographic and painted historical portraits of women at work, I notice the posture of each. The photograph taken of the industrious woman in the pot bank (Fig. 16), sitting upright is a contrast to the slightly rounded deportment of the peasant girl in the George Clausen painting (Fig. 18), yet both convey ease and purpose.<sup>63</sup> The soft shoulders of the young peasant girl relate to an image of a young contemporary female wearing sports clothes in an urban environment (Fig. 17) whose assertive deportment symbolises the space in-between expressive (in her body language) and conforming to an acceptable code of dress (by wearing sportswear).

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<sup>60</sup> Samuel McMerney, "A Brief Guide to Embodied Cognition: Why You Are Not Your Brain", Scientific American: November 4, 2011, accessed October 19, 2019

<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/a-brief-guide-to-embodied-cognition-why-you-are-not-your-brain/>

<sup>61</sup> David Biello, "Science. Inside the debate about power posing: a Q & A with Amy Cuddy". February 22, 2017, accessed October 13, 2019. <https://ideas.ted.com/inside-the-debate-about-power-posing-a-q-a-with-amy-cuddy/>

<sup>62</sup> "The Surprising and Powerful Link Between Posture and Mood. Why feeling taller tricks your brain into making you feel more confident and why your smartphone addiction might be making you depressed" January 30, 2015, accessed October 13, 2019 <https://www.fastcompany.com/3041688/the-surprising-and-powerful-links-between-posture-and-mood>

<sup>63</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Stoke-on-Trent photographer, William Blake, took thousands of photographs of urban and industrial landscapes and people at work throughout the pottery industry. During the same period as Blake, George Clausen (1852 to 1944) captured the social history of working life, in Europe and Great Britain, in his paintings of rural landscapes and peasants at work.



Figure 16. Female working pot bank sitting upright and at ease.

William Blake, *Paintress Decorating China*, 1900, photograph, Staffordshire Past Track, <https://www.search.staffspasttrack.org.uk/Details.aspx?&ResourceID=11954&PageIndex=1&KeyWord=woman&DateFrom=1837&DateTo=1901&SortOrder=2&ThemelD=69>



Figure 17. Female in an urban environment wearing contemporary sports clothes with assertive deportment.

Hiverminer.com <https://hiveminer.com/Tags/chav%2Cthug>



Figure 18. Young peasant girl posing for her portrait, appearing relaxed at ease.

George Clausen, *Normandy Peasant*, oil on canvas, 1887, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent, UK, <https://www.artuk.org/discover/artworks/normandy-peasant-19786>

As a counter to the negative feelings associated with poverty my intention is to convey the opposing aspects of each of the three women in the designed and made clothes – expressive and assertive and at the same time relaxed and at ease. These attributes cannot be contained to a particular person or place and speak to women of all ages and nationalities who wish to be a part of the sustainable fashion conversation while shopping on a budget. Due to the rationing methodology and consequent removal of all trims and decoration, the silhouette and proportion of the designed clothes become the primary means of communicating the opposing aspects of the three women.

The silhouette of a garment relates to its outline when worn in relationship to the body. A garment's proportion can relate to the body itself or refer to the relationship of the garment to its environment. Therefore, proportion is how a sleeve relates to an arm, a collar to a cuff or how big or small a garment is in relation to the body. Proportion and silhouette can work in synchronicity with each other or be used to oppose each other. The opposition of silhouette and proportion have potential to mirror the subtle opposing aspects of the three women.

## INITIAL DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Historical research reveals the Victorians obsession with patents, ensuring the intellectual property of their inventions and clothing designs. The 1884 sketch of a boy's jacket patent registration is drawn as if lying flat, not as clothes when worn on a body (Fig. 19). The soft shoulder line and two-dimensional flat forward-facing nature of the sleeve on the illustrated jacket are reminiscent of both the soft shoulders of the Clausen peasant girl and the deportment of the young woman set in an urban environment. With the intention of conveying the formal qualities of what is soft, round and easy in opposition to the appearance of embodying assertiveness and expressiveness, I place a men's tailored jacket onto a female dress form back to front. I develop a sleeve shape from the jacket using cycles of making and reviewing quarter and full-scale toiles (Fig. 21 and 22).<sup>64</sup> The developed sleeve is awkward in nature, falling flat against the front of the body, and slightly intimidating due to its exaggerated size in relation to the body. The awkward flat, forward-facing new sleeve represents the commonalities and opposing factors of the three women and becomes a starting point of design practice for all upper body garments throughout the clothing collection. Extending on this idea, bold rounded silhouettes and proportions that exaggerate the size of the upper torso were used to convey the expressive, unapologetic demeanour of the contemporary young woman.

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<sup>64</sup> 3D prototype made in an unbleached woven cotton fabric

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Figure 19. Illustration of Victorian jacket with soft shoulders and forward-facing sleeve.

Barrans of Chorley Lane, *Boy's Jacket with Cloth Bands*, Leeds, 1884, *Victorians Unbuttoned*.

Figure 20. Illustration of contemporary female with soft shoulders, and expressive demeanour.

Leica Johnson, illustration, 2019.



Figure 21. Photographs of 3D development (toile) of flat forward-facing sleeve.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 22. Multiple photographs of initial 3D developments of flat forward-facing sleeve.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

The industrial landscape of Stoke-on-Trent dominates my childhood memory of, attachment to, and understanding of home. I am able to look back at a time of industriousness through an auto ethnographic lens. This review allows for a sense of belonging and place, connecting me to my childhood remembering of the pottery industry and associated cultures. The narratives of my upbringing and first-hand accounts of people working on pot banks allows for the imagining of how it was to be productive and industrious in the pottery industry. When reviewing photographs of female potters at work, it is apparent that clothing, occupation and location are tied together. The relationship between occupation and clothing and its connection to place was prevalent throughout Britain leading up to and during the Victorian era and cannot be contained to the pottery industry and Stoke alone. In a contemporary setting, occupational clothing serves as a remembering of the community and industriousness of industry. Aimed towards those who have been affected by a loss of industry, including myself, deindustrialisation is a multi-generational, multi-cultural global theme that is not exclusive to me or Britain. The action of remembering reinvigorates budget clothing, informing a new formal language of streetwear.

The socio-cultural heritage and formal values of occupational clothing attends to approaches and ideas related to historical research. I am able to re-imagine streetwear through the lens of Victorian occupation via the historical enquiry of work carried out by women during this period - the Bait Girls of Filey (1873), the Bondage Women of West Pilton (1890), the Newhaven Fisher Girls (1843), the Wigan Pitbrow Girls (1867) and, synonymous with historical female occupation, the maid. Each occupation informs the silhouette and proportion of the designed and made garments. The stories of occupation have potential to connect the wearer to place and inform the imagining of what it was to wear these types of clothes. This imagining informs the value I place on the developed forms representing what it was to be industrious in Victorian Britain and the connection to community that has since been lost.

The Bait Girls of Filey were required to climb over cliff tops down onto the rocks below to collect fish bait for fishermen; this work could not have been achieved when wearing floor length skirts. As an alternative to wearing trousers, women would often breach their skirts by gathering them up from the back to front through their knees and tying them into their waists and wrapping tape around each knee to 'breach' it (Fig. 23). When I 'breach' a skirt the same way as the Bait Girls, it feels cumbersome due to the amount of fabric held in it. By making and fitting multiple calico toiles in quarter scale and then full scale, I reduce the amount of fabric until they are comfortable to wear

while retaining full movement (Fig. 24). The historical process of breeching a skirt has been modified to form the basis of a sweat pant made from one pattern piece. The one pattern piece makes the garment quick to sew which in turn reduces the make cost of the garment thereby supporting an austere approach to clothing design and manufacture. Through the process of breeching historical enquiry and austerity methods have been adaptively re-used to recuperate a sense of identity and place for the budget consumer in contemporary Britain.

Figure 23. Photo of a 'Bait Girl of Filey', 1873.

Walter Fisher, *Fishergirl, Filey*, 1873, photograph, *Victorian Working Women: Portraits of Life*.

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Figure 24. Photocollage of initial 3D breeched sweat pant developments.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 25. Using the depiction of the contemporary young female, from earlier analysis as a drawing template, sketches and photographs illustrate the 'breeched' sweat pant worn with an 'awkward' sleeved top.

Leica Johnson, illustration and photo-collage, 2019.

To gain employment as a labourer on farmland in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, a man was required to supply a woman. The Bondage Women of West Pilton, known as 'bondager women', were required to help with the harvesting (Fig. 26). Bondagers (field workers) wore skirts made from readily available sacking and a shawl worn around the shoulders to keep warm. Reminiscent of the shawls worn in the photograph, a sleeve is engineered from multiple prototypes to fold forward from the neck. I overemphasise the dominant sleeve when compared to the skirt by increasing the length of the body. This action changes the proportion of the top to the skirt adding to the large scale of the sleeve. From multiple toiles, the triangle shape of the sacking skirt in the photograph is developed into 3D, yet due to the soft nature of the toile fabric, the new skirt collapses against the body (Fig. 27). Formally, the soft nature of the skirt is in opposition to the exaggerated new sleeve, acting as a counter to it. Sketches and photographs of the final toiles illustrate multiple ways of wearing the skirt and top thereby supporting individual expression when wearing the new clothes. The formal qualities of the dominant sleeves and proportion of the top to skirt are overbearing, representative of young female's energy from the urban environment.

Figure 26. Bondager Women of West Pilton, 1890.

*Bondage Women of West Pilton*, 1890, photograph,  
Working Dress: A History of Occupational Clothing.

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Figure 27. Photo-collage of  
initial 3D bondage dress  
developments.

Leica Johnson, photograph,  
2019



Figure 28. Using the  
deportment of the  
contemporary young  
female, from earlier  
analysis as a drawing  
template, sketches and  
photographs illustrate  
the soft A line skirt worn  
with the overbearing  
'awkward' sleeved top.

Leica Johnson, illustration  
and photo-collage, 2019.

Acting as a counter to the known negative impacts of social class positions and the stigma that can come from buying budget clothing, rounded silhouettes can give a sense of protection and therefore safety, simply because the wearer of the clothes is cocooned by them. The head coverings and shawls worn by the Newhaven Fisher Girls (Fig. 29 and 30) inform the silhouette of the developed three-dimensional hooded top and skirt. The hood and slanted shoulders in the engineered toiles merge into one, becoming a softened single form in contrast to the exaggerated silhouette (Fig. 31). The overstated silhouette combined with the soft shoulder line and flat forward-facing sleeve are in opposition to each other formally, yet conceptually they relay a visual language that is representative of the deportment of the three women from earlier analysis – ‘expressive and assertive and at the same time relaxed and at ease’. This new form carries an impression of its historical origins and when photo collaged and sketched with a pair of pants, further enhances the formal qualities of a contemporary hooded sweatshirt.

Figure 29. Newhaven Fisher Girls, 1843.

David Octavius Hill, Two Unknown Women: To Hail the Bark That Can Never Return, 1843, photograph, National Galleries Scottish, UK. [https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/27703/two-unknown-women-hail-bark-never-can-return-newhaven-26?inspire%5B37915%5D=37915&search\\_set\\_offset=29](https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/27703/two-unknown-women-hail-bark-never-can-return-newhaven-26?inspire%5B37915%5D=37915&search_set_offset=29)



Figure 30. Victorian Fisher Girls, 1866.

Punch, *Victorian Fisher Girls*, 1866, photograph, Occupational Costume in England: From the 11 Century to 1914.

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Figure 31. Photo-collage of initial 3D hooded sweatshirt developments.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

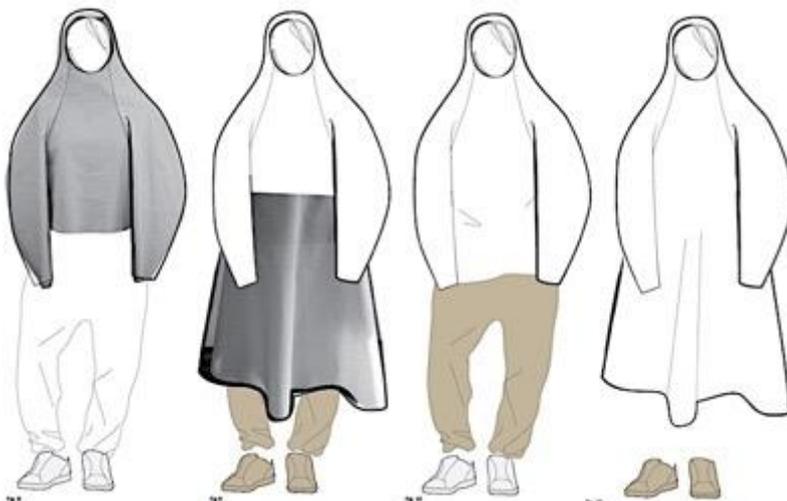


Figure 32. Using the department of the contemporary young female, from earlier analysis as a drawing template, sketches and photographs illustrate the 'awkward' sleeve on the exaggerated silhouette of a hooded sweatshirt.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

In 1842 a bill was introduced in England prohibiting the employment of young children and women working underground in coal mines. Before this, men and women carried out similar work in the colliery and wore similar clothes. Following the introduction of the bill, women were only allowed to work on the surface of the colliery, this became known as ‘pit brow’ work. The Wigan Pitbrow Girls (Fig. 33) defied societal expectations of the day by wearing trousers, yet when part of a tradition or culture, within the group, it was deemed an acceptable code of dress.<sup>65</sup> Today trousers are synonymous with sportswear for women; it seems almost implausible that they caused such a stir. Within this collection of clothing, trousers are symbolic of the defiant pit brow women and their contemporaries today, like that of the young woman in the urban environment (Fig. 17).

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Figure 33. Wigan Pit Brow Girls, 1867

T. G. Dugdale, Pit Brow Girl Standing by Coal Truck, 1867, photograph, Working Dress: A History of Occupational Clothing.

Figure 34. Using the deconstruction of the contemporary young female, from earlier analysis as a drawing template, sketches and photographs illustrate the developed hooded sweatshirt worn with trousers of a similar flat nature.

Leica Johnson, illustration and photo-collage, 2019.

<sup>65</sup> In the town of Wigan in North West England, it was custom for women working in collieries, known as ‘Pitbrow Girls’, to wear trousers when working on the mine’s surface, in the neighbouring town of St Helen’s, the wearing of trousers was looked down upon, simply due to local custom. Diane De Marley, “Working Dress: A History of Occupational Clothing” (Batsford, 1986).

The black dress and white apron, that are synonymous with the maid's uniform, were introduced during the Victorian era as a means to separate employer from employee. Prior to this, women in household service wore the same clothes as their employees made from a more affordable fabric. Formal elements of the illustrated Victorian maid's dress (Fig. 35) - the high position of the waist, the voluminous sleeve, the length of the skirt, are sketched with contemporary garments – sweatpants and trainers (Fig. 37). During the development of multiple full-scale toiles, the engineered flat sleeve is overlaid onto the historical proportions and silhouettes (Fig. 36). The developed dress worn with the sweatpants in the sketched illustrations emerges from the hybridised elements of historical and contemporary clothing representative of a new formal language of streetwear beyond the sweatshirt, t-shirt and sweat pant.

Figure 35. Smart House Maid, 1829.

W. heath, Smart Housemaid, 1829, illustration, Occupational Costume in England: From the 11 Century to 1914.

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Figure 36. Photo-collage of initial 3D dress developments.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 37. Using the department of the contemporary young female, from earlier analysis as a drawing template, sketches and photographs illustrate the 'awkward' sleeve and formal elements of the maid's dress worn with trousers.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

By analysing and adaptively re-using approaches to wearing occupational clothes, the formal qualities of the clothing collection are defined. The exaggerated silhouettes and proportions of the two-dimensional sketched and photo collaged garments convey the unapologetic demeanour of the contemporary young woman and the soft department of the peasant girl. Both allow for the clothing collection to sit in a space between self-expression and at the same time conforming; communicated in exaggerated soft, rounded forms and flat sleeves worn with garments that are recognisable as contemporary streetwear (hooded sweatshirt, sweatpants and trainers).

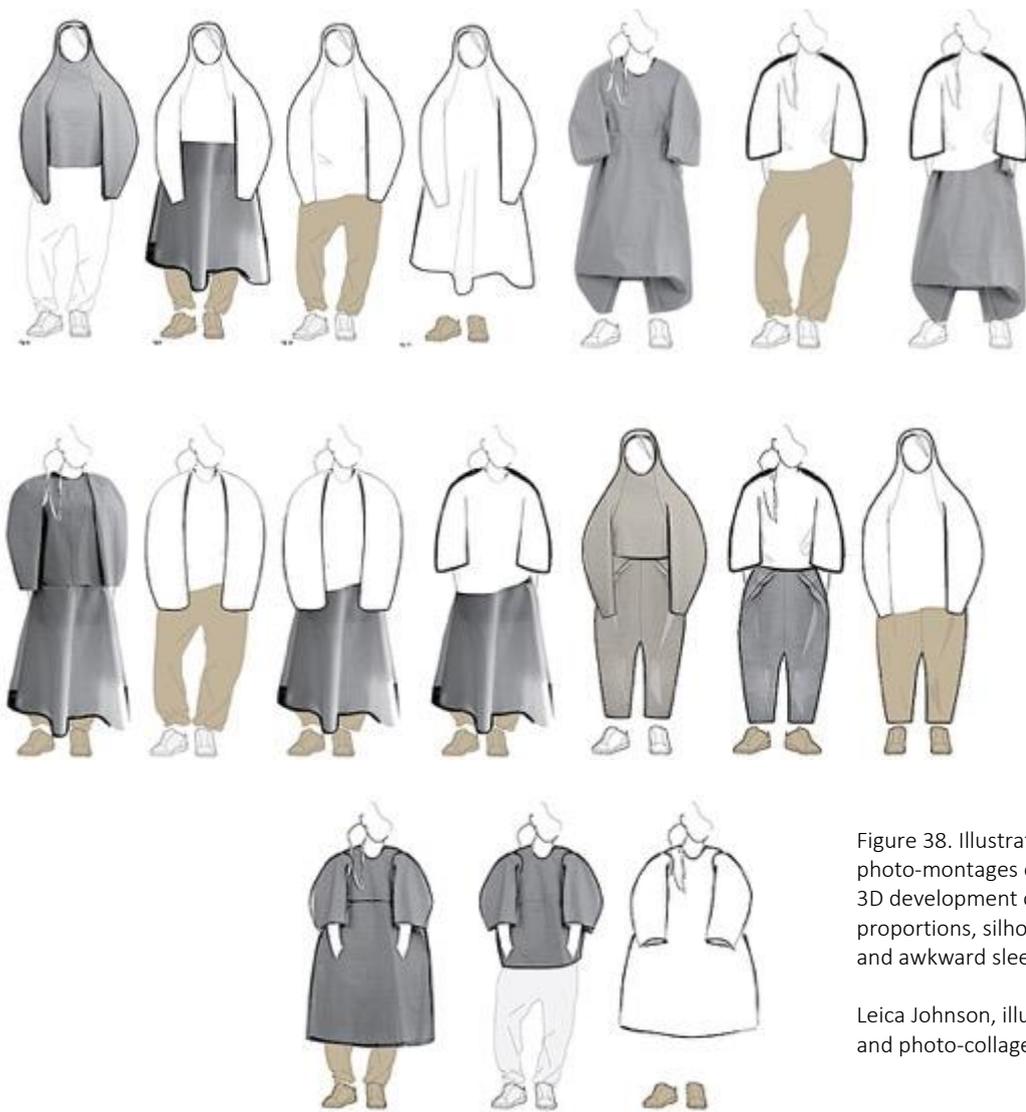


Figure 38. Illustrations and photo-montages of 2D and 3D development of proportions, silhouettes and awkward sleeves.

Leica Johnson, illustration and photo-collage, 2019.

In order to establish an overview of the type of garments that form the clothing collection, a review of the developed 2D and 3D silhouettes and proportions take place. In a scarcity economy, the historical adaptive approach to wearing occupational clothes serves design thinking today. Adaptive interchangeable wardrobes like that of the 'Smart Set'<sup>66</sup> capsule collection and Tom Dixon's collaboration with sports brand Adidas, allow for multiple uses from a limited number of clothing. Known as a range plan, this practical tool allows the designer to plan for time limitations and fabric requirements. In this instance the range plan also allows the designer to work out the types of interchangeable garments that support maximum personal expression and individuality when shopping on a budget. Each silhouette is assigned to a garment type, the range plan must include t-shirts, a hoodie, a sweatshirt, and sweatpants in order to represent contemporary streetwear. Dresses, woven pants and tops, like those worn by the featured women of occupation, expand on the collection.<sup>67</sup> Contemporary garments like the sweat pant and sweatshirt have been modified at the design phase and explored beyond their current use; the sketched clothes begin to represent a new kind of streetwear. Individual garments from the range plan (Fig. 40) are illustrated as five full 'looks' (known as a line-up) forming the clothing collection in its initial stages of design (Fig. 39).

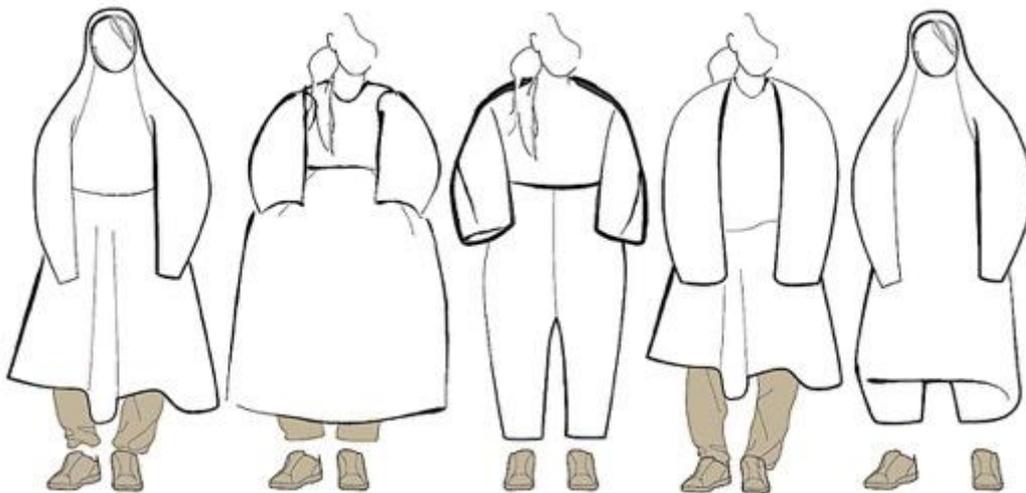


Figure 39.  
Initial line-up of  
five full looks.

Leica Johnson,  
illustration and  
photo-collage,  
2019.

<sup>66</sup> Smart Set is an interchangeable clothing collection developed by the charity Smart Works in the UK. The charity helps dress women working to a budget, enter back into the workplace. "How Duchess Megan Brought the Smart Works Fashion Collection to Life".

<sup>67</sup> Track pants and jackets are removed at this stage due to the time required to develop a water-proof fabrication.

T-shirting



T-shirt

T-shirt

T-shirt

Sweat-shirting



Hoodie



Sweatshirt



Pants



Pants



Dress

Woven



Top



Dress



Skirt



Pants



Pants

Figure 40. Range plan.

Leica Johnson, illustration and photo-collage, 2019.

## FABRICATIONS

War time rationing approaches are adaptively updated when combined with innovation and 21<sup>st</sup> century problems. A critical review of the current model of sustainable fabric use in New Zealand reveals that imported organic fabrics are prohibitively expensive, demand high minimums and do not support the design and make of an affordable clothing collection.<sup>68</sup> There are no affordable sustainable fibres grown and processed into textiles for fashion in New Zealand today. Tariffs on imported fabrics increase the material and therefore retail cost of garments. Finding alternatives to imported organic materials involves rethinking what sustainability can be in a contemporary setting. Using what is readily available and considering the environmental impacts on the four stages of a garment's lifecycle, a new approach to upcycling is adopted that supports the production of an affordable sustainable clothing collection. The 'Affordable Sustainable Fabrications and Trims' chart (Fig. 42) highlights current popular approaches to the use and benefits of sustainable fabrications and, when based in New Zealand and working to a budget, the limitations of these on fashion design practice and outcomes. The chart highlights Design Futuring<sup>69</sup> and austerity led alternative approaches to the identified limitations and how they are used within this body of work. Alternatives include adaptively sourcing Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) approved cotton mono-material from budget brand superstore, K-Mart<sup>70</sup> - upcycling new BCI sheets is the most accessible, cost effective method of making clothes sustainably for a clothing collection with small minimums. Additionally, organic sweat shirting is donated to make the hoodie, sweatshirt and sweatpants and second-hand vintage wool blankets and merino batts<sup>71</sup> are sourced locally to make accessories. When designing for limitations in this way, the limited colours of sustainable fabrics available for use in New Zealand - black, white, grey marle and the natural tone of pure wool, inform the aesthetics of the clothes. Colours I associate with the neutral monochromatic earthenware and the industrial landscape of Stoke-on-Trent.



Figure 41. Fabric Swatches.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019.

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<sup>68</sup> High minimums refer to the minimum number of meters required to purchase a specific fabric from suppliers.

<sup>69</sup> Fry.

<sup>70</sup> Mono materials are fabrics made from one type of fiber making them easier to recycle.

<sup>71</sup> Batts are wool fibers that have been cleaned and carded ready for spinning. What Are Batts, Tops, Roving and Spinning? Abby Yarn, August 10, 2007. Accessed November 2, 2019 <https://abbysyarns.com/2007/08/whats-are-batts-top-roving-and-so-forth/>

Figure 42. Affordable Sustainable Fabrications and Trims chart.

FOUR stages of a garment's lifecycle	CURRENT APPROACHES TO SUSTAINABLE FABRIC USE		MY APPROACHES FOR SUSTAINABLE FABRIC AND TRIM USE		
	WHAT	WHY	WHAT	WHY	HOW
<b>1. Textile production</b>	Option 1. Use locally grown and made organic mono-materials.	Reduce emissions, support local economies.	Use natural mono-materials.	Organic fabrics are not grown or made in NZ.	Use dead-end stock bought locally at retail and wholesale. Must be donated or cost \$3 per meter or less.
	Option 2. Use imported organic mono-materials.	Reduce emissions; fabrics can be upcycled or are biodegradable.	Use natural mono-materials, use Better Cotton Initiative fabrics.	Imported organic fabric is expensive and duties on fabrics brought into NZ add to the cost of the fabric per meter.	Upcycle new bought K-mart products: t-shirts, sweatshirts and sheets.
			Rationing - Use upcycled fabrics.	Organic fabrics grown and knitted in Australia are expensive with high minimums (500 meters per colour).	Garment companies donate disused bulk approval lengths of fabric.
			Upcycled fabrics have unknown origins and due to textile and garment production and distribution unknown emission history.	Reduce negative environmental impacts of fabrications.	Use donated disused tents for materials. Would require local drop off points.
<b>2. Garment production</b>	Option 1. Manufacture locally.	Reduce emissions, support local economies.	Austerity - simplify design.	Local manufacture can be limited due to a loss of knowledge and expertise (due to a diminished industry)	Reduce seams in some garments. Reduces retail garment retail cost.
	Option 2. Low manufacture costs, manufacture off-shore.	Affordable retail price.	Austerity - simplify the make.	Local manufacture can be expensive due to local labour costs and high demand (due to a diminished industry)	Eliminate trims. Reduces retail garment cost.
<b>3. Garment use</b>	Make clothes for product longevity.	Reduce consumption.	Make clothes for product longevity.	Reduce consumption.	Make the garment as durable as possible to enable a longer life span.
<b>4. Garment recovery</b>	Enable the recycling of fabrics at the end of life recovery.	Reduce negative environmental impacts of fabrications.	Enable the recycling of fabrics at the end of life recovery - design for disassembly.	No national system or New Zealand based companies in place for the recovery of fabrics or trims for recycling (that do not remake and mix with polyester).	All garments are made from fabric that can be recycled and do not have trims.

## DETAIL and ACCESSORY DEVELOPMENT

Each garment is ready to be developed beyond purely form; silhouette and proportion. A low-tech, labour-intensive process that has hardly changed in the last one hundred years, the production and manufacture of clothing are driven by cost and price. When designing, and making affordable clothes, the method of austerity supports and directs the removal of all hardware, as a result, every trim (buttons and zips) and detail (like pockets and seam lines) adds to the retail price of a garment. Leading up to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century working class people of occupation used a minimum amount of hardware on their clothes due to cost, as indicated in the 1845 photograph of the 'Newhaven Pilot', garments were simply held in place with ties (Fig. 43). The 1945 Japanese military trouser uses a similar approach (Fig. 44), a fabric tie is used to hold the trousers in place. In lieu of zips and buttons, the historical method of tying clothes to hold them in place is used throughout the clothing collection. The action of austerity reduces the make cost of the garments and at the same time further informs the aesthetic of the clothes, the ties add a layer of texture to the flat nature of the confirmed fabrications.



Figure 43. Man, with tied jacket, 1845.

David Ocatvius Hill, A Newhaven Pilot, 1845, photograph, National Galleries Scottish, UK.  
[https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/27681/newhaven-pilot?inspire%5B37915%5D=37915&search\\_set\\_offset=22](https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/27681/newhaven-pilot?inspire%5B37915%5D=37915&search_set_offset=22)

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Figure 44. Tied pants at waist, 1945.

*Japanese Military Suit*, 1945, Vintage Menswear, A Collection from the Vintage Showroom.

Historical precedents and the method of austerity further informs the aesthetic of the clothes. When designing for limitations that result in the removal of all trims from the garments, how do I design and make durable clothes that don't look austere? Value can be added to the rationed designs by adding more surface texture (prints and embroideries) and pockets. Each additional detail equates to an increase in the make price of the garment and so cannot be used. The generous silhouettes of occupation and ample amount of fabric held in the developed prototypes, help to give the impression of abundance, yet without pockets the garments will not function as contemporary clothes.

Similar to the purpose of the handbag today, from the 17<sup>th</sup> to late 19<sup>th</sup> century most women owned a pair of pockets that would attach to their underwear and were accessible via small slits in the sides of their skirts. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when attachable pockets went out of fashion, women of occupation started to wear them on the outside of their clothes (Fig. 45 and 46). I update and adapt the detachable pockets by making them into a type of bag that is sturdy enough for multiple use and can be exchanged from garment to garment. The pockets are made from affordable locally made materials - recycled vintage New Zealand made woolen blankets felted onto New Zealand grown merino batts (Fig 47). Adding a much-needed layer of texture, the pocket bags add a practical value to the rationed garments, performing the practical role of both a pocket and bag in a contemporary context and are able to be worn with multiple garments (Fig. 48 and 49).



Figure 45. Pair of pockets, 1875.

Pair of Pockets, 1875, photograph, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O108018/pair-of-pockets-unknown/>

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Figure 46. Pockets on man's apron while carrying water, 1863.

Working Dress: A History of Occupational Clothing.



Figure 47. Initial felting trial.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 48. Trial of pocket placement with sweatpants and sweatshirt.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 49. Trial of pocket placement on apron.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

During and leading up to the Victorian era people of occupation interchanged the sleeve cuffs, collars and bibs of shirts (Fig. 53 and 54). Owning a few shirts with interchangeable elements was an affordable way of looking clean and respectable day to day. Patent garment registrations of Victorian shirt bibs (Fig. 50 and 54) inform the provisional ideas for a back-pack type of bum-bag<sup>72</sup>. The contemporary bum-bag is developed to be worn over the developed flat sleeve and designed to enhance the awkward nature of it (Fig. 51 and 52). An additional affordable accessory that is both practical and decorative, the bum-bag adds value to the collection of clothing that could otherwise seem austere and overly simplified.

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Figure 50. Victorian patent registration for chest expansion devices, used to form the basis of a back-pack type bum-bag.

Charles Cross, 1871, *Device for Expansion of the Chest*, illustration, Victorians Unbuttoned.



Figure 51. 3D development of backpack type bum-bag.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 52. 3D development of backpack type bum-bag worn with hooded sweatshirt.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 53. 3D development of detachable collar.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

<sup>72</sup> Bum-bag is a small bag worn around the waist

Throughout history in Britain, aprons and smocks (Fig. 55) have been worn to protect clothing from the grime and dirt of occupation, indicative of a person working. In a contemporary setting, the smock and apron serve as a mechanism to convey a sense of occupation and history. The smock is adapted for a contemporary environment by the process of making and reviewing three-dimensional toile developments (Fig. 56 and 57). Designs based on an apron and smock add a layer of texture that allows the wearer to experiment with their clothes, swap them around, style them with other garments and consequently becoming a means of personal expression when shopping on a budget.

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Figure 54. Victorian patent registration for removable shirt bib.

Thomas Riachard Barlow, 1858, *The New Uniform shirt Front*, illustration, *Victorians Unbuttoned*.

Figure 55. Women 'turner' in pot bank,

William Blake, 1900, *Turner*, photograph <https://www.search.staffspasttrack.org.uk/Details.aspx?&ResourceID=11970&PageIndex=5&Keyword=turner&SortOrder=2>



Figure 56. 3D development of pron.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019



Figure 57. 3D development of smock.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

## DESIGN REVIEW

Collars, aprons, smocks and removable pockets are styled with the developed prototypes. This stage of styling requires flexibility in thought to allow for the looks, that until now have referred to specific occupations, to converge with each other, forming an interchangeable contemporary clothing collection.



Figure 58. 3D developments of initial prototypes, showing pockets, aprons, sweatshirt and breeched sweat pant.

Leica Johnson, photograph, 2019

Multiple toiles were made of all garments in the collection from materials similar to the final fabrics (Fig. 58). This remaking allowed any fit issues to be addressed that can occur when transferring garments from calico, which is quite rigid, to final fabrics. From this exercise, I was able to obtain a clear understanding of how the varied textures of materials used in the garments work both practically and aesthetically while developing the detail and finish of the clothes. The designed and made collection provides clothes for consumers, who like me, want to shop sustainably and ethically but cannot afford a high-end garment that is made to last.

## FINAL IMAGES

Figure 59. Hidden.

Heyes Johnson, photograph, 2019.



Item 10. Hood worn over Item 15. Smock and Item 12. Sweatpants.

Accessorised with Item 1. Mini pocket bum bag, worn with white cotton canvas Converse high tops.

Figure 60 Expressive.  
Heyes Johnson, photograph, 2019.



Item 9. Sweatshirt worn with Item 11. Breeched sweatpants.  
Accessorised with Item 18. Collar and Item 4. Big pocket bum bag, worn with Converse high tops.

Figure 61 Expressive I.  
Heyes Johnson, photograph, 2019.



Item 13. Bondager dress worn over Item 8. Loose fit pants.  
Accessorised with Item 5. Waist-coat with bum bag, worn with white Converse high tops.

Figure 62. Occupation.  
Heyes Johnson, photograph, 2019.



Item15. Apron worn over Item 17. Top and Item 7. Front fold pants.  
Worn with Converse high tops.

Figure 63. Occupation I.  
Heyes Johnson, photograph, 2019.



Item 16. Smock worn over Item 12. Sweatpants.  
Worn with Converse high tops.

Figure 64. Conforming.  
Heyes Johnson, photograph, 2019.



Item 17. Top worn with Item 7. Front fold pants.  
Worn with Converse high tops.

## CONCLUSION

Designing and making affordable sustainable clothes for people shopping on a budget, like myself, challenges stereotypes associated with social class positioning. From this research my design practice has moved beyond purely fashion design towards clothing design, practice and research that highlights both the environmental and social issues surrounding the fashion industry today.

In the last decade, in a contemporary commercial environment, the role of fashion designer has transitioned to 'product designer'. A product designer typically constructs ranges of clothing from researching 'trends' and trawling the most recent runway or trade shows online. A styling exercise at best, this type of role requires minimum creative effort to yield mediocre material results and the greatest profit. Having worked in a sustainable commercial environment as a fashion designer, with a pronounced lack of connection to locality and purpose beyond a global marketing exercise, I was left feeling disengaged and dissatisfied. This type of commercial sustainable design concentrates solely on the object and limits its focus to the impacts of textiles on the environment. By engaging in actions that speak to my values, the research and development of the clothing collection has moved my design practice beyond an object focused practice towards a process that is both socially and politically engaged. The reconnection to the socio-cultural heritage of the place of my birth, has given me a greater sense of belonging to place and a renewed sense of purpose.

The global theme of deindustrialisation and ongoing austerity measures, on what were once industrious cities, has negatively impacted the lived experiences of the people affected by it. When shopping on a budget, the ambiguous nature of affordable clothing results in limitations for the user. The globalised homogenous high street offering of fast 'throwaway' fashion can result in our having to conform to prescribed acceptable ways of dress. The social nature of fashion, the stories clothes tell, 'communicate both our private and public autobiographies'.<sup>73</sup> The designed interchangeable collection of sustainable clothes provides a space for both personal expression and a sense of belonging for those usually left out of the sustainable clothing conversation, the budget consumer. Expression and belonging, when combined with durability, have potential to slow down a person's consumption.

Clothing design has become a practice that requires political engagement. Radical new approaches to both fashion industry commerce and design are required if we are to truly encourage change in

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<sup>73</sup> Findlay, "Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made On: Encountering Clothes, Imagining Selves."

the shopping habits of the fast-fashion consumer. As a means to slow down the consumption of fast fashion both the fashion industry and local governments have an ethical responsibility to provide affordable, designed, sustainable clothing to individuals that shop on a budget. The production of textiles and garments is a globalised multi-faceted process with complex supply chains that make it difficult for an individual or establishment to take full responsibility for the negative environmental and ethical impacts of fashion. Growing textiles and manufacturing locally makes sense. Similar to Utility measures, in a contemporary environment, the future of fashion requires 'support from the government, [fashion] industry voices need to be more visible within the likes of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.'<sup>74</sup> This approach could serve the production of accessible locally made sustainable clothes.

The research and studio-based practices of this project have afforded me the opportunity to establish new value and purpose in my role as designer. Having critically evaluated the social histories of the fashion industry, I have gained a deeper understanding of the relationship between present-day social inequalities and fashion related activities. Beyond the symbolism of clothes and what they represent to the wearer, my interest lies in producing affordable sustainable product that provides both an emotional and functional purpose. The word fashion requires an object to be transient, therefore, working sustainably requires an evolution in language and practice - fashion design now becomes clothing design. The question asked by Charles and Ray Eames, 'how do we get from where we are to where we want to be'?<sup>75</sup> reflects the philosophy of 'Design Futuring',<sup>76</sup> both of which align to a functional approach to design. Moving forward, the practice of design becomes an exchange of ideas shared by multiple disciplines and design practices. Sustainability becomes a way of being and living in the world and moves far beyond a person's actions 'where a change in our consumption habits and a new approach to understanding and acting, is driven by being and caring, as opposed to having and needing.'<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Emma Gleason, "Fighting Fast Fashion, The Struggle to be Made in NZ", Radio New Zealand, May 10, 2018, accessed October, 2019. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/on-the-inside/356994/fighting-fast-fashion-the-struggle-to-be-made-in-nz>

<sup>75</sup> William Cook, "Charles and Ray Eames: The Couple Who Shaped the Way We Live," BBC, December 18, 2017, accessed November 3, 2019. <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20171218-charles-and-ray-eames-the-couple-who-shaped-the-way-we-live>

<sup>76</sup> Fry

<sup>77</sup> John R Ehrenfeld, *Flourishing: A Frank Conversation on Sustainability* (Stanford University Press, 2013) preface.

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APPENDIX  
a, Price List

Cost  
+ 5%      Cost  
+ 200%

Item 1	Mini pocket bum bag	\$24	\$48
Item 2	Small shoulder pocket bag	\$24	\$48
Item 3	Medium shoulder pocket bag	\$26	\$52
Item 4	Big pocket bum bag	\$38	\$76
Item 5	Waist coat with bum bag	\$26	\$52
Item 6	Short sleeve t-shirt	\$25	\$50
Item 7	Front folded pant	\$61	\$122
Item 8	Loose fit pant	\$66	\$132
Item 9	Sweat shirt	\$50	\$100
Item 10	Hood	\$72	\$75
Item 11	Breeched sweat pant	\$50	\$100
Item 12	Sweat pants	\$50	\$100
Item 13	Bondager dress	\$70	\$140
Item 14	Maid dress	\$65	\$130
Item 15	Apron	\$74	\$148
Item 16	Smock	\$61	\$122
Item 17	Top	\$50	\$100
Item 18	Collar	\$20	\$40

b, Fabrications key

Natural mono fibres			Sourced locally	
Organic			Compostable	
Upcycled			Affordable	

c, Fabrications

Felted merino fibre + upcycled New Zealand vintage wool blankets \$24 per meter					
Japanese selvedge denim \$20 per meter					
Cotton calico remnants (origin unknown) no cost					
Australian grown cotton Approx. \$8 (from K Mart sheeting)					
Organic cotton sweat shirting, China \$20 per meter					
Merino sweat shirting. Origin unknown					
55% hemp, 45% organic cotton, China \$22.27 per meter / 148 wide/ 186 gsm					
55% hemp, 45% organic cotton, China \$17.27 per meter/ 148 wide/ 305 gsm					
55% hemp, 45% organic cotton, China \$22.27 per meter / 148 wide/ 350 gs					