

Fashion: A Very Short Introduction  
By Rebecca Arnold

The book provides insight into the structure of the fashion industry and how fashions are designed, promoted and consumed, in relation to relevant historical, social and cultural contexts. It is structured thematically, to look at the role and development of designers, the growth of shopping and the different businesses involved in making and selling fashionable clothes. Fashion's relationship to the wider culture is also explored, by considering its representation in art and collaborations between designers and artists, the moral controversies surrounding fashion, and attempts to produce ethical clothing, and the effects of globalization on the fashion trade.

Questions for thought and discussion

- What is fashion? And how does it differ to clothes?
- How significant is the relationship between a designer's own image, and that of the clothes they create?
- What role do wearers play in shaping fashions? And in creating style?
- Is fashion art? Does it matter whether it is?
- How can an understanding of fashion in a particular period add to our interpretation of portraiture?
- What is the relationship between producer and consumer in the fashion world? How has this changed over time?
- How important is the role of fashion magazines in spreading ideas of fashion? Has the internet affected this?
- What does shop design tell us about a particular designer or brand? Does it tell us about their customers too?
- How does celebrity culture impact upon our shopping impulses?
- What does criticism of particular fashions tell us about wider attitudes in a particular period?
- Is it ethical to wear fur?
- How has non-Western dress impacted Western fashions? What does this tell us about global relations within a particular period?
- How are local and global influences shown in the way we dress?
- Why did Teri Agins argue that fashion ended in the 1990s? Was she right?
- Is it important for cities across the world to develop their own fashion industries?

Other books by Rebecca Arnold

*The American Look: Sportswear, Fashion & the Image of Women in 1930s and 1940s New York*, (London & New York: I.B.Tauris/Palgrave, 2009)

*Fashion, Desire & Anxiety: Image & Morality in the 20th Century*, (London & New Brunswick: I.B.Tauris/Rutgers University Press, 2001, 2nd edition 2009)

Further reading

Tulloch, Carol, ed., *Fashion Photography Special Edition of Fashion Theory: Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, vol. 6, issue 1 (February 2002)  
Aoiki, Shoichi, *Fresh Fruits* (Phaidon, 2005).

Benson, John and Ugolini, Laura, *Cultures of Selling: Perspectives on Consumption and Society since 1700* (Ashgate, 2006).

Winkel, Marieke de, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Painting* (Amsterdam University Press, 2006)

Black, Sandy, *Eco-Chic: The Fashion Paradox* (Black Dog, 2008).

Clark, Hazel and Eugenia Paulicelli, eds., *The Fabric of Cultures: Fashion, Identity, Globalization* (Routledge, 2008).