

An Open Book

CAFTCAD LIBRARY COMMITTEE

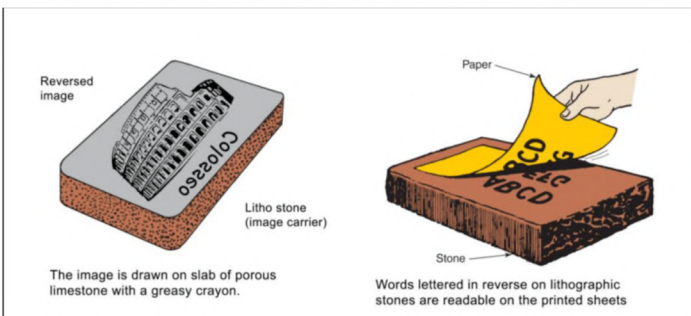
SHOP, SHOP, SHOP WHAT SHALL I WEAR TODAY?

By Isabel Bloor and Mariana Sandoval-Angel

The influences on our fashion choices have evolved with historical events and societal observances. How that information reached each individual was often through the transitional development of fashion plates, magazines and catalogues.

Join fashion historians & collectors, **Ian Drummond** and **Ivan Sayers** for a glimpse into the pages of "What TO Wear !"

Getting dressed for function is one thing but to dress in the latest styles is another. Let's take a quick look at what a fashion plate is and how it developed into an important social commentary on fashion.



Picture: Scientific Figure on ResearchGate. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-lithography-process-uses-a-stone-made-of-a-porous-material-containing-a-reversed-figure10_262191438 [accessed 27 Nov. 2022]

In this context, a Plate generally refers to the process of Lithography. The lithography process uses a stone made of a porous material containing a reversed image. Every lithographic creation requires a pressure of the stone on the paper support, with a subsequent impact on the crayon image reported on it. 1*

A Fashion Plate "is an illustration demonstrating the highlights of fashionable styles of clothing." 2*



First fashion plates to appear on a magazine: Le Mercure Galant, issue Extraordinaire 1678. Image from "Fashion Plates 150 Years of Style" by April Calahan.

The first fashion plates can be traced back as early as 1678 in the journal **Mercure Galant** featuring fashion plates of both men and women in the latest styles. These included information on where the depicted styles could be bought, and detailed descriptions of the current trends.

Images of clothing existed earlier, but their function was to provide information on various forms of national, regional, military, theatrical, or court attire and not necessarily the current fashions worn by the elite class or nobility of Paris. 3*

This fashion special edition "extraordinaire" made founder, **Donneau de Vise**, the first journalist to turn fashion into an event worth reporting. This edition was not just a first in subject matter, it boasted an additional first, its target audience. Before this edition, women had not been targeted by the press. He also introduced the fashion seasons to the world. 4*

FOOTNOTE: 1 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262191438_Smartphone_Sensors_for_Stone_Lithography_Authentication?enrichid=frreq-c0a938466fc797bea4022c4713acc212XXX&enrichSource=Y2922XJOYWdlOz12MjE5MTQzODtBUzoxNzYwODgzMTE0MDY1OTNAMTQxODk5NDEzMyZyNA%3D%3D&el=1_x_3&_esc=publicationCoverPdf. 2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fashion_plate 3 <https://www.mdhistory.org/a-brief-history-of-the-fashion-plate/> 4 <https://thefashionglobe.com/fashion-journalism>



Ian Drummond

Ian has been a passionate collector of vintage clothing for over 35 years, at first just shopping for himself, and then worldwide to stock his first vintage clothing store, 20th Century Fox - the foundation for the Ian Drummond Collection.

Ian began his career in the Toronto film industry in the early 1990s, and continues to this day via his rental house. A member of IATSE 873 since 1997, he's worked as an Assistant Costume Designer on numerous projects; on Hairspray and Cinderella Man as the Extras Coordinator (responsible for the costuming of 3000+ background performers in each film.) As well, Ian was the wardrobe buyer on Chicago, an Oscar winner for costume design.

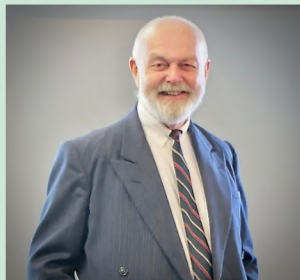
Ian is currently the Board Vice-Chair for the Fashion History Museum and was a founding member & former treasurer for CAFTCAD. When asked why he got into the rental business his answer is simple:

"It satisfies two urges: to shop AND to keep!"

<https://www.instagram.com/iandrummondvintage/?hl=en#>

Ivan Sayers

Ivan Sayers is a fashion historian who specializes in the study of women's, men's, and children's fashions from 1700 to the present.



He has collected period costumes for over 50 years and now has one of the largest and most comprehensive private collections of historical clothing in Canada. Ivan worked at the Museum of Vancouver as Curator of History from 1970 to 1990 leaving to become a Museum consultant and lecturer.

He now produces Historical Fashion shows and Museum exhibitions across western & central North America with lectures at several local universities and colleges. Ivan is also the Honorary Curator of the Society for the Museum of Original Costume and has received awards from the Western Canadian Designers and Fashion Association, the Vancouver Historical Society along with a distinguished service award by the British Columbia Museum.

<http://www.ivansayersevents.com/>

Ian : "The influence of fashion plates was that the detail in images gave insight into the type of fabric, pleating placement, where the hem line was or what embellishment looked liked. They were stylized renderings but you could still imagine how that garment would look on you. These plates were all limited edition prints because it was expensive to produce but all levels of society began to know who were setting those trends."



Clockwise: 1. La Belle Assemblee, or Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine, 1816 - Parisian Court Dress, 87.2. Journal des dames et des modes, 1834 - Ewing, History of Children's Costumes, 13. 3. Journal des Demoiselles, Modes de Paris, 1880 - Perrot, Fashioning the Bourgeoise, 59. 4. La Moda Elegante Ilustrada, Madrid, 1890 - Houghton, "Mable Houthgon's Diaries". 3. Images from "Fashion Plates 150 Years of Style" by April Calahan.

While fashion plates depicted the latest fashion trends, the extremes of those trends were also being shared in satirical fashion plates by artists such as **Isaac Robert Cruikshank** and **James Gillray**. These Theatrical type images became social commentary to fashion vanity extremes in both women and men along with identifying the differences between the upper and lower class in fashion.

Ivan : "Even in early development of the satirical plates, the style of the day was clearly conveyed and the nuances of that cut of clothing would still offer the reader an image of perhaps a few elements they would, or would not, want to incorporate into their own level of fashion."



Figure: James Gillray "And catch the living Manners as they rise..." 1794 hand-colored etching Image from V & A archive <https://teainateacup.wordpress.com/tag/poke-bonnet-satire/>

With the industrial age, fashion journalism grew and so did the way that information was presented to the target audience. Opening a magazine was like walking into a "store of knowledge". 5*

The first dedicated fashion magazines appeared in England and France in the late 18th century. In the 19th century, fashion magazines—such as the French *La Mode Illustrée*, the British *Lady's Realm*, and the American *Godey's Lady's Book*—proliferated and flourished. 6*



Top to Bottom: 1. Laceine [sic] a Dandy January 26, 1819 Image from: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/384283>, 2. The Flower Garden. Hand-colored etched engraving published by M Darly in 1777 Image from: <http://bibliodyssey.blogspot.com/2009/09/waiter-theres-hair-in-my-satire.html>

Ivan: "All the European magazines and certainly the American *Godey's* magazine, shared fashion plates and articles that were selling a lifestyle. In the 1780s the plates were stark, but they later became fashion portraits essentially, presented in settings or with backgrounds to help give context and connection of fashion to cultural or social activities such as a woman in walking attire on a promenade."

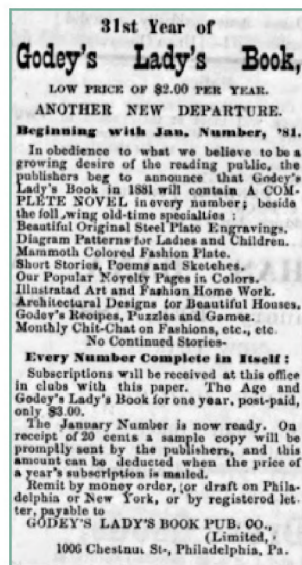
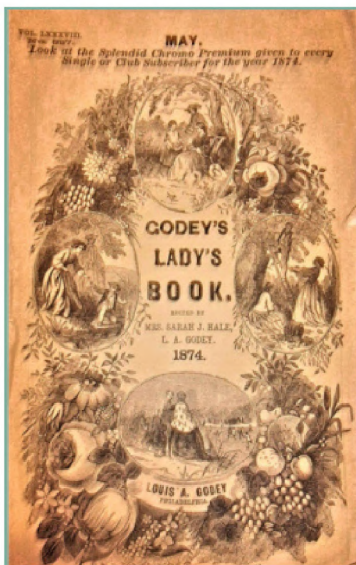


Figure: Godey's Ladies Book image from: <http://www.pioneerirl.com/blog/archives/13257>



Figure: Fashion Plate No. 1 of the Ladies Book. Image from: <https://www.accessible-archives.com/collections/godeys-ladys-book/>

FOOTNOTE: 5. "She is a Fashion Plate, an interview with Antoine Bucher and Nicholas Montagne". Dressed: The History of Fashion Podcast. <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/dressed-the-history-of-fashion/id1350850605?i=1000414652846> 6. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Godey%27s_Lady%27s_Book

In the early twentieth century, fashion photography was starting to replace fashion plates. **Paul Poiret** incorporated illustrations as the medium to present his collections. Illustrations gave an artistic touch to his designs, more than how photography could. In 1908, he paired up with artist **Paul Iribe** and created an album/book with these illustrations. Paul Poiret sat a new trend in fashion illustration by blending art and fashion.



Figures above: LES ROBES DE PAUL POIRET RACONTÉES PAR PAUL IRIBE - 1908. Images from:
<https://library.si.edu/donate/adopt-a-book/les-robres-de-paul-poiret>
<https://archive.org/details/lesrobresdepaulpo00irib/page/n7/mode/2up>
<https://www.palaisgalliera.paris.fr/oeuvre/les-robres-de-paul-poiret-racontees-par-paul-iribe>

Ivan: "By providing portraits of social lite women's fashion, Godey's and other magazines were encouraging people to aspire toward improving their lives through a type of associated credibility to what the image was presenting. You have to remember that in context, society still had definitive, though evolving roles for business or social opportunities for men and women. Wearing a tie, or having the correct length evening glove all communicated social status of some kind."

DID YOU KNOW?

Customers would often write to **Eaton's** to request an item that did not appear in the catalogue. To meet this need, Eaton's employed young women to work as "**personal shoppers**." It was their job to search the store for such requested items, going from counter to counter with letter in hand.

The Shopping Service grew quickly and allowed customers ease of mind; they placed requests for items not pictured in the catalogue knowing that their order would be filled with good judgement. In the rare instance when the choice made on their behalf proved to be unsatisfactory, the customer needed only to return the unwanted item for exchange or full refund.

Eventually, The Shopping Service started to interfere with the regular store operations. There were more than **100 clerks filling mail orders in 1890**. By 1900, there were sometimes so many personal shoppers filling orders for distant customers that they crowded the floor and elevators, making it difficult for in-store shoppers to do their shopping. 7*

7. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/postal-heritage-philately/canadian-mail-order-catalogues/Pages/catalogues-history.aspx>

Ivan: "As far as other magazines, *Vogue* was an institution! For many in agricultural settings, it offered that fantasy of being associated with the top level French fashion aesthetic."



The December 17, 1892, and September 2017 issues of *Vogue* illustration by A.B. Wenzell. *Vogue*, December 17, 1892. Portrait by John Currin. *Vogue*, September 2017

Ian: "20th century Magazines like Harper's Bazaar's for example, began to present a mix of fashion, art and literature that started to have a tone of content and images aimed for the emerging modern woman. This, of course, coincided with historical events like WWII and the changes that occurred in the economic workforce and availability of supplies.

Magazines like The Delineator and McCall's Home Journal all had fashion sections where descriptions for a dress were shared that made you wonder about the copy writers- were they sewers themselves? There was just so much detail listed.

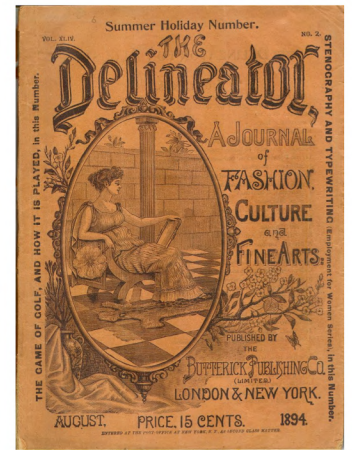


Left to right: 1. McCall's Magazine January 1905 - Photo via Tom Folio Image from <http://www.msi940mccall.com/2012/01/queen-of-fashion.html> 2. McCall's March 1953 Image from <https://mrmagazine.wordpress.com/2020/09/04/the-magazines-and-i-womens-service-journalism-magazines-chapter-four-part-two/>

These magazines also helped us segway more into advanced Sewing Pattern Books like Butterick and Simplicity. By the 1970's you could get six looks in one pattern with options for adjusting fit. It was great! Looking at these books for research is still indispensable for tracking backward to see line, buttons, hem and sleeve length options.



Left to right: 1. Butterick Magazine Spring 1954 Image from <https://www.wolfganes.com/vintage-magazines/butterick-pattern-book/vintage-magazine/QMS22374.html> 2. Simplicity Pattern Book 1969 Image from https://vintagepatterns.fandom.com/wiki/Simplicity_Pattern_Book_Spring_1969



Left to Right: 1. The cover of the first issue. To be truly fashionable, Bazar intimated, was to be immersed in the culture and ideas of the moment. COURTESY HARPER'S BAZAAR Image from: <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/features/a18658/history-of-harpers-bazaar/> 2. The Delineator, August 1894 cover Image from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Delineator

Though the current day fashion photography in magazines has its place, it tends to convey a "feeling" rather than the realism for duplication we look for in costuming and modern dress project research. A great example of ordinary life and real people images is the August Sander exhibition I saw in Paris, with photographs from 1890-1956. It is "real" photojournalism with regular people, portraiture, families and group settings. Not an easy book to track down here but I am glad I did.

AUGUST SANDER PEOPLE OF THE 20TH CENTURY



aperture

August Sander: People of the 20th Century: A Cultural Work in Photographs by Gabriele Conrath-Scholl (Contributor), Susanne Lange (Contributor), Cologne Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur (Editor), August Sander (Photographer)"

DID YOU KNOW?

"After the Second World War, in 1954 Montreal's designers created the **Association of Canadian Couturiers**, with Raoul-Jean Fouré as the president to establish a Canadian couture industry. Capped at 20 members, the association produced its first all-Canadian couture fashion show at the Ritz-Carlton in Montreal.

It travelled to Vancouver and Ottawa, and then to New York, showcasing Canadian designers. Due to a lack of originality and limitations with Canadian-made textiles, the group disbanded in 1968.

Though short-lived, its legacy lived on as similar groups, such as the **Fashion Designers Association of Canada** established in 1974 and the **Fashion Design Council of Canada** established in 1999 have continued to make headlines and encourage the promotion of Canadian designers throughout the decades." 8*



8. <https://nuvomagazine.com/style/montreals-garment-district-past-and-present>
Image from: <http://www.clothingcanadafashion.com/150-plus-1940-2017/98-1957-canadian-couturiers/>

"Shop, shop, shop" would not be complete without looking at the Mail-order catalogues and how they became: "A great city store in your home". 9*

"Industrialization made mass production and distribution possible. Mail-order catalogues, primarily affiliated with large department stores in Montreal and Toronto, reached markets in rural Canada with paired down trends from Europe". 10*

Ian: "Catalogues cast the widest net so they didn't necessarily have the fanciest looks. But they did put it all together for you! It was often the starting point for your fashion choice with copyright that conveyed all you needed to know to make an informed decision. You could have a 1920's walking suit in black, brown or navy, with shoes to match only a few pages back."

For people living in isolated rural areas, catalogues provided a cultural link with the outside world. "They allowed people to keep up with the trends in fashion, were a new avenue for conversation, eased loneliness and created needed stimulation in many homesteaders communities". 11*

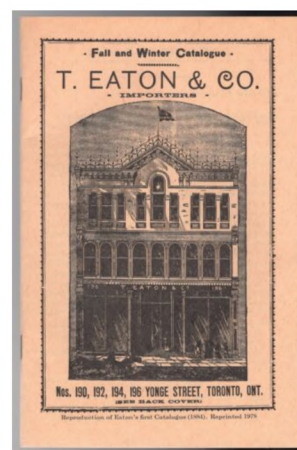


Figure: Eaton's Catalogue 1884. Image from: <https://www.museedelhistoire.ca/cmcc/exhibitions/cpm/catalog/cat1001e.html>

"In 1884 **Timothy Eaton** produced a small, pink, 32-page catalogue listing items and prices and distributed it to visitors at the Industrial Exhibition (now known as the Canadian National Exhibition) in Toronto. The next spring, a 6-page flyer announced Timothy Eaton's new mail order department." 12

FOOTNOTE 9. (The Simpsons slogan, "A Great City Store in your Home" from the Fall/Winter 1934-1935 catalogue) 10. <https://www.museedelhistoire.ca/cmcc/exhibitions/cpm/catalog/cat1001e.html> 11. <https://www.hbcheritage.ca/history/social-history/catalogues> 12. <https://www.museedelhistoire.ca/cmcc/exhibitions/cpm/catalog/cat1001e.html>

Ivan: When the catalogues arrived there was great celebration. “ Did you see the dress on page 12 ? If I buy it I’ll have to take the bow off and maybe change the sleeve”. Women would order a burlap bag or two of fabric scraps matching for quilting or a new dress detail. Fabric was valuable. Early on, the square loom widths determined everything for yardage for dress making.

You would take that into consideration as you scanned the dry goods pages lists of Patterns. For many women, at least in the beginning, the extent of their dress collection was a matter of ‘ one on and one in the wash’.

Catalogues opened the door to new possibilities right where you lived."



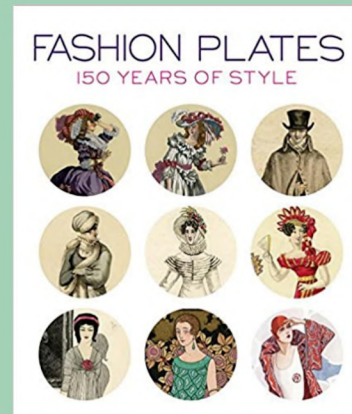
Figure: 1974 Sears Fall Winter Catalog, Page 121. Image from: <https://christmas.musetechical.com/ShowCatalogPage/1974-Sears-Fall-Winter-Catalog/0121>

How fashion and trends have appeared on the street or in a cafe has in most cases been a case of who and how it was worn first. Communicating that moment and how it was influenced by historical events to the masses has been a unique evolution of technology and ingenuity.

Ultimately though, the key to interpreting that trend and making it your own has always been by allowing “what YOU wear” be the expression of "Who You Are".

Additional Resource Suggestions :

- 1892 vs. 2017: What’s Changed, and What Hasn’t, Since the First Issue of Vogue Was Published
<https://www.vogue.com/article/vogue-125-1892-2017-compare-and-contrast-now-and-then>
- Fashion Plates: 150 Years of Style - by April Calahan



- FHM: Fashion History Museum
<https://www.fashionhistorymuseum.com/digital-exhibits>
- On Collecting for Museums with Ivan Sayers
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iH-LOZWOPM>
- The Met: Costume Institute Fashion Plates
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/libraries-and-research-centers/watson-digital-collections/costume-institute-collections/costume-institute-fashion-plates>
- Catalog: An Illustrated History of Mail-Order Shopping by Robin Cherry

