Fashion and Cultural Studies

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Bodies in Motion through Time and Space: Age/Generation and Place

Gender, sexuality, class, race, ethnicity, nation and other subject positions do not happen "on the head of a pin" (Cresswell 2004: 27). Rather, they happen or, more accurately, we *do* them in the larger contexts of time and space. Intersecting, embodied subject positions are not just about *who* we are becoming; they are also about *when* and *where* we are becoming. Time and space are abstract and yet crucial—concepts that shape how we style-fashion-dress our bodies, and what we know (and how we know it) about ourselves in relation to others. Tying together how we look and how we think, time and space influence how we mind and manage our appearances (Kaiser 2001). This chapter begins with a consideration of the Möbius-like interplay between time and space, enabling us to place in contexts the intersecting subject positions discussed throughout this book. Then it proceeds to consider two subject positions introduced in the Venn diagram in Chapter 2 (Figure 2.2): age/generation and place, which constitute how we experience time and space as we move through them in our styled-dressed-fashioned bodies. Then, I offer some Möbius-like closing/opening thoughts regarding the future interplay between fashion studies and feminist cultural studies.

TIME AND SPACE

How do we make sense of both "where we are" and "when we are"? Style-fashion-dress supplies some strategies to do so. To the extent that resources allow, body fashionings articulate not only the intersectionalities across our various subject positions, but also the interface between time and space. Personal style enables a sense of subjectivity in a visual way—representing to those around us, and to ourselves—some tentative idea about who we are and are becoming. Ultimately, time (memories of the past, tentative ideas about the present, hopes and anxieties regarding the future) cannot be separated from space.

One of the problems with modern Western thought and history has been a tendency to think of time as linear: as a narrative or story that plays out from a beginning to the advanced present (toward an even more advanced

future). As noted earlier in Chapter 2, the hegemonic Western narrative of fashion goes something like this: it "started" in proto-capitalist fourteenth-century Italian city states, as young men competed with one another through street styles (Steele 1988). Although rarely highlighted in the narrative, subject positions such as gender (masculinity), ethnicity, class, age, and location are important to the plot. As the narrative continues, the "rise" of fashion then occurred in major European capitalist cities (especially Paris) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The focus turned to upper class and bourgeois women, and Paris became the hegemonic center of feminine fashion, whereas London became the hegemonic center of menswear. Of course, as we have seen, style-fashion-dress has been historically located all around the world, but euromodern *representations* of hegemonic fashion have generally tended to emphasize bourgeois and upper class women's attire as the site of newness and "now-ness." In contrast, other nations/cultures/spaces were depicted as static and exotic—as fixed in past time.

By the end of the twentieth century, the hegemonic "center" of the euromodern narrative could not hold. By this time, cities around the world were vying to be included in the handful of top world fashion cities. Who were these cities? Paris, New York, Milan, London, and Tokyo were frequently cited, but one could also look to Shanghai, Mumbai, Moscow, Dakar, Los Angeles, and San Francisco for their contributions to the global fashion stage (Gilbert 2006). Formulaic checklists for urban development emerged to enhance cities' fashion reputations (Scott 2002), and fashion weeks became a common representational strategy. Recalling the circuit of style-fashion-dress, introduced in Chapter 1, however, systems of production (complicated by outsourcing), distribution, and consumption remained key to a city's vitality in the world of fashion.

The restructuring of the world economy in the 1980s had fostered globalization and digital technologies, ushering in new relations between production and consumption, human and machine, local and global, and present and future. In the process, time and space have become smashed together, so to speak, like compressed Möbius strips. Cultural theorist David Harvey (1990) argues that the significance of place increases, paradoxically, with globalization, which threatens place with the speed and flexibility with which money and goods flow across national boundaries. He and others have called this phenomenon *time-space compression*.

As globalization blurs and threatens national boundaries, new circuit of production-distribution-consumption relations ironically also offer new opportunities to articulate national and local identities. In the transnational, twenty-first-century context of digital design and communications, flexible manufacturing (e.g., the outsourcing of garment manufacturing) and time-space compression—key assumptions about fashion and space/place—face major challenges. Clearly, fashion does not only emerge from a limited set

of world fashion cities; and, further, fashion is not necessarily only urban. If one wants to design, market, or purchase clothing, there is little reason to be confined to certain spaces. Digital technologies (e.g., computer-aided design/manufacturing and Internet marketing and shopping) hasten and flatten processes of production, distribution, and consumption. Materials and garment labor, however, are tangible, and their flows and efforts also need to be understood within transnational circuits of style-fashion-dress. They have routes.

Feminist geographer and space theorist Doreen Massey (2005) argues that we need to explore thinking through time and space with open and multiple *routes*, not just singular *roots*. In other words, journeys of production, distribution, consumption, subject formation, and regulation involve navigations through space. These routes are not just linear or straightforward. Rather, they twist and turn, detour, and entangle with other routes, through and beyond certain world fashion cities.

The clothing company Moods of Norway (see Figure 8.1) represents a good example of new fashion routes and centers. Headquartered in the small rural town of Stryn, Norway (population 6,750), the company was founded by two local designers, Simen Stallnacke and Peder Børresen, after they had spent some time studying and traveling abroad. Together with Stefan Dahlkvist, CEO, they developed the company into a transnational firm with distribution in urban and smaller town boutiques in Norway, Sweden, Benelux, Switzerland, Spain, Japan, and the United States, among others. Moods of Norway has its own retail stores in cities throughout Norway and in Los Angeles: "If you come at the right moment you are more than likely to be offered a homemade Norwegian waffle that will tickle your culinary senses and give you enough carbs to take you through the night." The company's logo is a hot pink tractor; and rural, local, and Norwegian national themes permeate its branding and imagery. The Website (moodsofnorway.com) includes panoramic and picturesque scenes of the landscape surrounding the company headquarters. Male and female models wear bright, plaid, and playful clothing ironically ("camp-ily") cast in grassy rural settings with tractors, pitch forks, and other nonurban props, framed by stunning glacier-capped mountains in the background. Mood of Norway's website describes their mission as follows:

> Moods of Norway has been doing the hibbedy-dibbedy on the international fashion dance floor for 6 years now, the philosophy is still the same even though the Norwegian oil price is as flexible as a Bulgarian gymnast after 14 tequila shots. Our main goal, besides making our grandmas happy, is to make happy clothes for happy people around the world. (moodsofnorway.com)

Fashion studies scholar Lisa Skov (2011) indicates that in the first decade of the twenty-first century, new fashion sites such as Moods of Norway

Figure 8.1 Moods of Norway articulates time and space together by resituating fashion/rural. http://scandinavianfashion.net/2011/08/17/norways-happiest-fashion-brand-does-women/ (August 17, 2011).

emerged in small nations within Europe (as well as many other sites around the world). Using a model that is oriented more toward transnational validation than hegemonic power, Skov argues that companies such as Moods of Norway articulate new formulations with imagery that slides between local and national, and fashion and rural (folk) representations. We can also consider ways in which the fashion imagery in Figure 8.1 articulates gender, ethnicity, place, age/generation, class, and so on. Intersectionalities can be interpreted through an analysis of time and space together in a Möbius-like interplay.

The space theorist Henri Lefebvre (1991) emphasized the importance of thinking about time and space together. He indicates that "time is known and actualized in space, becoming a social reality by virtue of a spatial practice. Similarly, space is known only in and through time" (219). Time and space can be distinguished conceptually from one another, but they cannot be separated. The same—as we have seen throughout this book, and as represented

in the Venn diagram in Figure 2.2 in Chapter 2—can be said of all of our subject positions. We move through time and space through our physical and perceptual, embodied experiences—in our style-fashion-dress—as we *become* through subjectivity.

From a feminist perspective, Massey (2005) agrees with Lefebvre's call for the need to think about time and space together, but she delves more deeply into the binary power relations. A fundamental part of the problem, she indicates, is the way binary oppositions have been used in modern Western thought to construct boundaries—rather than interconnections—between time and space, as well as global and local, space and place, urban and rural, and so on. Philosophical binary oppositional thinking about time and space has contributed to a complex "geometry of power" (Massey 2005) in which space becomes constructed as "second fiddle" to time. In this geometric formulation, time is seen as the dynamic stuff of history, whereas space is viewed as rather dead or lifeless. Euromodernity became a way of envisioning the process of evolving or getting better through time. "Other" spaces became constructed as those that were outside of this linear narrative of time; they were fixed or fossilized in the past. The same may be said about rural or folk dress, but images such as Figure 8.1 cause a rethinking of such fossilization and moves instead toward revitalization (Skov 2011).

Another example of revitalization is a Chinese luxury fashion firm, Shanghai Tang, which also addresses the theme of time/space. A Hong Kong entrepreneur, David Tang, founded the company in 1994. According to fashion studies scholar Hazel Clark (2009), Shanghai Tang used "a nostalgic and self-Orientalizing approach in its brand image, merchandise, and retail environment," playing off the imagery and imaginary of Shanghai in the 1930s during its heyday as a modern, international city—similar to Hong Kong in the 1990s (Clark 2009: 180). Actually a Hong Kong-based, rather than Shanghai-based, company, Shanghai Tang capitalized on the skills of the original Shanghai tailors who arrived in Hong Kong in the 1940s and 1950s as refugees, to a bespoke (custom made-to-order) tailoring service. Garments included the cheongsam or *qipao*, a popular dress that originated in Shanghai in the 1930s but became identified with Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s. Blending elements of the majority Han gown with euromodern dress, the cheongsam or qipao was itself a complex Chinese modern women's garment. Target customers were local expatriates and international tourists seeking representation of Chineseness.

Clark (2009) indicates that what "was being retailed was a playful, even theme-park, vision of China" (182). A similar, almost campy yet luxury-oriented play on time and space can be seen in Shanghai Tang's contemporary "Mandarin Collar Society." This society includes male members who (at least upon

occasion) wear Shanghai Tang's collarless men's shirts in lieu of a collared shirt and tie. A typical Shanghai Tang collarless shirt features orange buttonholing and stitching details that make a statement without the aid of a tie.

Shanghai Tang cites the mission of the society as follows:

"Reorient Yourself"

Instead of the traditional necktie, the Shanghai Tang Mandarin Collar Society champions the modern, chic alternative of the mandarin collar. Shanghai Tang Executive Chairman, Raphael le Masne de Chermont, said, "It is a club with the goal to promote an elegant Chinese-inspired style for men. It's an alternative that allows you to reorient yourself, to be stylish while being yourself."

The World's Leading Men United for One Mission

The timely, compelling and slightly cheeky initiative unites men who are shaping the world in diverse fields, such as sports, business, politics and the arts. To spearhead the effort, Shanghai Tang has appointed MCS Ambassadors, including British sprint champion Linford Christie, Michelin star chef Pierre Gagnaire, world renowned pianist Lang Lang, Gavin Newsom mayor of San Francisco among others. (shanghaitang.com/mcs, accessed September 16, 2011)

The Mandarin Collar Society's "slightly cheeky" challenge to euromodern hegemonic notions of bourgeois masculinity refuses to fix Chinese menswear in the past. Rather, it freshens and modernizes it, offering a Chinese modern alternative to a collared shirt with a tie. Shanghai Tang articulates time and space in a way that expands concepts of transnational modernity while revitalizing the Chinese modernity of the 1930s in Shanghai.

As the story of Shanghai Tang reminds us, stories of fashion are not only modern; they are also inevitably urban. In a euromodern context in the nineteenth century, sociologists such as Max Weber and Georg Simmel inextricably linked fashion with urbanization and euromodernity's "decisive break with the past" (Wilson 1985). As part of a larger European fascination with memory and history, a "cult of the past" led to an obsession with capturing "authenticity" (Tuan 1977: 194). Dress historian Lou Taylor (2004) indicates that between 1850 and 1914, European museums collected rural dress in order to document history and to "locate" the "country" in the past. Perhaps some of the fervor for cultural preservation could be attributed to cultural anxieties about losing authenticity in the context of industrialization and urbanization. Taylor argues, however, that rural peasant attire was never really static; rather, it constantly shifted as individuals (mostly women) modified their clothes slightly when they made new ones (201).

In addition to constructing time-space binary oppositions such as urban (dynamic) versus rural (static), euromodern history has had a tendency to represent time as linear (i.e., increasingly modern) since the original, "decisive break with the past" (Wilson 1985). But fashion—as flux in time—complicates this linear representation. Instead, it articulates cyclical or circuitous ways of thinking about time (Riello and McNeil 2010: 2–3). The circuit of culture through style-fashion-dress, discussed in Chapter 1, reminds us that production, distribution, and consumption are not part of a straight line but rather are part of a more complex and interdependent circuit.

A second way in which we can recognize how fashion time is circuitous is to consider how fashion plays with the past. Fashion studies scholar Heike Jenss (2004) studied the sixties scene in Germany and explored how/why people aged sixteen to their thirties relate so deeply to clothes, hairstyles, makeup, and accessories from the 1960s, which were before their time. Influenced heavily by the British mods (e.g., the Beatles) of the 1960s and larger international revivals since the 1970s, participants in the German sixties scene strive for a sense of authenticity in the cut and materials of their clothes. They either buy 1960s clothes from vintage sources or make their own using patterns derived from this decade. Jenss notes that contemporary bodies differ from bodies 40 years prior; bodies in the early twenty-first century tended to be taller and more muscular. However, individuals in the 1960s scene are able to incorporate an array of 1960s styles (e.g., op or pop art, psychedelics, hippie dress) into their everyday lives. Jenss (2004) explains that retro "epitomizes the idea of space/time compression in dress, evoked through globally circulating images of other times and places" (398).

Jenss's research is a helpful reminder that individuals experience time subjectively. Style-fashion-dress can function as a kind of retro recycling, as well as periodic punctuations in anticipation of the future. The cultural theorist Walter Benjamin (1968) referred to fashion's ability to make a "tiger's leap into the past" to grab and appropriate styles and somehow rearticulate them to appear fresh. How might individuals vary in their responses to these newly renovated, fresh styles through their overlapping subject positions?

AGE/GENERATION AND PLACE

Processes of subject formation are located in time and space in an embodied way, in the form of the subject positions of age/generation and place, respectively (recalling the Venn model in Figure 2.2 in Chapter 2). Time is the more abstract cousin to embodied *age/generation: when* one lives and develops/ages; space is the more abstract cousin to physical *place: where* one lives. Through interlocking, overlapping subject positions, we experience

age/generation and place as they intersect with gender, ethnicity, class, and other subject positions. Age/generation locates different stages in life as we move through time with a cohort of others in the same generation (e.g., baby boomers, Generation X, millenials). The concept of place includes *where* we are geographically—in a city? In the country? Or a suburb? The cultural geographer Tim Cresswell describes place as "space invested with meaning in the context of power":

> This process of investing space with meaning happens across the globe at all scales and has done [so] throughout human history. It has been one of the central tasks of human geography to make sense of it. (Cresswell 2004: 12)

We experience age/generation and place, and their more abstract versions of time and space, respectively, together. Like other subject positions, age/generation and place need to be analyzed within the larger context of cultural discourse, along with everyday habitus. And age/generation and place—just as time and space—need to be contemplated together.

As an army brat, I totally connect time with space or, more personally, age/generation with the many places (in the United States and in France and Germany) where I lived growing up. To me, the question "What grade (i.e., when) was that?" cannot be separated from the question "Where was I?" Figure 8.2 comes from my first grade experience in San Antonio, Texas. One of my sisters recently came across the photograph and shared it with my sisters and me. It was 1959, and although we cannot place the exact month, I was almost or barely six and in first grade. My oldest sister Linda (far left) was in eighth grade, my younger sister Pam (held by my father) was nearly or barely one year old, and my sister Jeanette (in the red and white checked dress, and with my mother's arm around her) was in the sixth grade. I have a variety of memories from that year, but disappointingly, I don't recall the suspendered skirt and blouse I was wearing, although I really like it! What I do remember is Jeanette's red and white checked dress, because she wore it in a sixth grade elementary school presentation that my first grade class attended. She needed to represent a farm girl in a skit, and this dress became her costume. It was apparently the closest costume available in the marketplace at the time to do so. It made quite an impression on me; I loved that dress (and so did she). So much so, on my end, that when my first grade class was drawing and drafting thank you notes to her class, I recall focusing on her and her dress, diligently drawing in the red and white checks on her dress. This dress became invested with meaning in the context of places (e.g., our home's backyard; our elementary school; San Antonio, Texas) that were themselves invested with meaning. And this dress became a costume to represent a different, imaginary place (a farm) or its more abstract, spatial cousin (the country).

Figure 8.2 Benke family in San Antonio, Texas, 1959. Photo from author's family collection.

My sisters and I are all part of the baby boom generation, born between 1946 (after World War II) and 1964. However, our age differences contribute to our recollections of the same events when we lived in various places (despite our shared family background, gender, ethnic, class, and other subject positions). Our subjectivities and perspectives are "softly assembled," to use Fausto-Sterling's concept discussed in Chapter 6.

A photograph is a snapshot of a certain time and space, experienced in an embodied and meaningful way as the intersectionality between age/generation and place. Fashion becomes a factor in interpreting a photograph. In terms of mainstream fashion, my father's crew-cut hairstyle and the length of our skirts all point to the late 1950s. Skirt silhouettes at the time were full or gathered (especially for young girls) and either full or narrow for adult women. The boundaries between the 1950s and 1960s, as with any decades, are not clear cut. Sociologist Fred Davis (1984) wrote about how "decade labeling" (e.g., the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s) rarely captures the experience of time, which does not avail itself to easy delineation, nor to clean breaks in years ending with a zero.

Not everyone was dressing this way in 1959, however. What else was going on in terms of style-fashion-dress? A more bohemian alternative in the United States (especially New York and San Francisco) was the "beat" movement or subculture. Although the roots (or routes) of the movement or subculture

date to the late 1940s, the original use of the term "beat generation" has been attributed to Jack Kerouac (1922–1969), who used it in his 1950 book, *The Town and the City*. The beat generation rejected elements of hegemonic masculinity and questioned the ideals of the American Dream. Their motto, according to Feldman and Gartenberg (1958) was "dig everything" and "implicitly want nothing." Claiming that life should be "authentic," they experimented with writing, drugs, sexuality, and Eastern religion. By the late 1950s, some of the beat movement's claims to authenticity—including appropriations of African American and working class culture—had been appropriated, in turn, by popular media discourse. In 1958 Herb Caen of the *San Francisco Chronicle* coined the label "beatnik" as a synthesis between the "beat" movement and the Russian satellite Sputnik. Now beatniks were caricatured as marijuana-smoking, coffee-drinking existentialists who wore only black: black jeans, black leather jackets, black berets, black tights for women (Kaiser and Looysen 2010). The popular television situation comedy, *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis* (1959–1963), featured a beatnik character Maynard G. Krebs (played by Bob Denver) as the sidekick to the lead: the more straight-laced character Dobie. Krebs wore a goatee and generally had an unkempt or bohemian appearance and an aversion to the word "work."

What else was happening in 1959? Popular culture was replete with themes of gender, ethnicity, race, and class. Mattel introduced Barbie Doll No. 1, inspired by (appropriated from) a German doll introduced in 1956. The sexy Hollywood comedy *Some Like It Hot* was released in 1959, starring Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, and Jack Lemmon. Curtis and Lemmon dressed in drag to pass as women so that they could join an all-female band to escape the mob. As noted in Chapter 7, there had been considerable cultural anxiety—and hence cultural humor as a release—regarding gender and sexuality in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Also in 1959, the African American singer Ray Charles (1930–2004) had a hit song, "What'd I Say," banned on some mainstream radio stations for what was perceived as sexual innuendo through lyrics, moaning, and wailing. The play *Raisin in the Sun* opened on Broadway; it was the first Broadway production to be written by an African American woman—Lorraine Hansberry. The play was based on the experience of an African American family in a Chicago community.

Also in 1959 in England, the physicist and novelist C. P. Snow (1905–1980) warned about how the "two cultures" in modern societies—the sciences and the humanities—were a problematic binary opposition that would make it more difficult to address complex world problems (Snow 1959). Meanwhile, also in Britain, literary scholars Raymond Williams (1921–1988) and Richard Hoggart (b. 1918) were in the process of developing the field of cultural studies, bridging the humanities and social sciences in critical studies of class, culture, and society, as well as political activism. Hoggart (1957) had published

The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working Class Life, in a class-conscious critique of mass, popular culture; Williams (1958) had authored *Culture and Society*, in which he detailed how culture is "ordinary" and everyday, not only for the upper classes.

World events in 1959 provide insights on space within time. Civil rights activists Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968) and Coretta Scott King (1927–2006) traveled to India. Invited by the Gandhi Peace Foundation, the Kings discussed Mohandas K. Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhi had used a nonviolent approach against British colonial rule, and the success of this approach influenced the course of the U.S. civil rights movement (King 1993). Meanwhile, in China, there was a famine and considerable starvation. The Tibetan people rebelled against the communist Chinese government, and the Dalai Lama fled to India (Chen 2006). Soviet forces entered Afghanistan, and the Cold War raged.

In 1959 U.S. vice president Richard Nixon went to the USSR and engaged in the "Kitchen Debate" with the Russian president Nikita Khrushchev. The debate was cultural, political, and economic: Whose standard of living was higher? Americans or Russians? At the American National Exhibit in Moscow, an appliance-saturated modern kitchen, along with fashion, toys, cars, and voting machines were all displayed in an attempt to convince the Russian people that democratic capitalism contributed to a higher quality of life, fostering a binary opposition between Western capitalism and Eastern communism. The argument in the Kitchen Debate was that American women were being "liberated" by modern kitchen conveniences. (Recall that this was before the feminist movement of the 1960s.) Russian visitors to the exhibit, however, were not uniformly positive. Their review of the exhibit included comments that the exhibit was designed for "bourgeois tastes," rather than "culture." Americans may be wealthier, some Russian reviewers argued, but Russians were more "cultured." Moreover, the reviewers resisted "the unrecognizable and unflattering ['backward'] subject position the exhibition assigned to them" (Reid 2008). On the other hand, in research with Russian women who had migrated to Canada between 1992 and 2004, there were frequent comments about the scarcity of products in the former Soviet Union:

> At our stores there was nothing. They were empty, or things were so ugly. Because mostly the budget of the whole country went to weapons in the Soviet Union, so there was nothing in the stores. (Katerina, age sixty-three, quoted in Korotchenko and Clarke 2010)

From San Antonio, Texas (a major center for the U.S. military) to Moscow, the "binary cold war epistemology" (Reid 2008) shaped and limited popular thinking about world problems in 1959. The issue came closer to home when

Communist Party leader Fidel Castro assumed power in Cuba that year (and a few years later, the Cuban Missile Crisis was to put the U.S. public into a state of panic).

Also in 1959, on the world stage, the famous Swedish diplomat Sverker Åström (b. 1915) was working on cold war international policies. I am indebted to fashion and queer studies scholar Dirk Gindt (2010) for his work on Åström, who at the age of eighty-seven on September 14, in 2003, came out publicly as gay. To announce the occasion, he wore a well-tailored business suit befitting his illustrious career. It was actually his socks that he used to announce his queerness: one red sock and one green sock. A number of explanations can be offered: as always, style-fashion-dress offers up ambiguities and ambivalences that require navigation and negotiation. Clearly, however, his articulation with the use of contrasting, complementary colors on the color wheel, represents some kind of both/and, ironic or even campy statement, rather than simply an either/or opposition. It seems that he was saying "I can be this (a well-respected Swedish diplomat representing the nation) *and* that (a gay man who is comfortable in his own skin, and given the times we live in and my age, "I'm now able to come forward"). This both/and articulation, without necessarily attributing any particular meaning to any particular color, helps us to think through the many shades and blendings that intersectionalities and complex transnational entanglements entail. As summarized by Åström himself:

> All my life, I lived a double life, but I have never been a security risk. [In an exclusive interview with *Svenska Dagbladet's* (reporter) Karin Thunberg, the diplomat Sverker Åström, 87, tells the secret of his life: that he is gay. Only his bosses at the Department of State were informed. They shrugged their shoulders. (Thunberg, quoted in Gindt 2010: 234)

As Gindt (2010) details so well, Åström's life story is a lesson in the secrecy of transnational, cold war politics as they intersected in a particular time and space with a gay sexual subjectivity and subject position. At the height of the Cold War, in which Communism and homosexuality were equated and feared in euromodern nations, Åström worked diligently to craft and enact Sweden's policy of neutrality through representative diplomatic positions in the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as France, England, and Sweden. During World War II, Åström was a member of the Swedish delegation in Moscow; he then held a number of positions in Swedish governmental agencies in Washington, DC; London; New York City (at the United Nations); Paris; and so on. In the interview in *Svenska Dagbladet*, Åström was about to introduce a new edition of his biography, with an updated afterword in which he acknowledged being gay and expressed some regrets about the times in which he has lived,

which did not allow for him to be more open in his sexual subjectivity and subject position:

> I have exclusively loved men. Some happy relationships I have had, but sporadically and short-lived. The relationships never developed into the legitimate partnership which I could have legalized with the new legislation. (Åström, quoted in Gindt 2010: 235)

Gindt (2010) notes how Swedish sexual politics since the mid-1990s had enabled possibilities for registered gay partnership, and public discourse had included the coming out of a number of celebrities. Gindt observes, however:

> Unfortunately, while Sweden was busily affirming itself as a sexually liberated and tolerant state, this did not involve a critical reassessment of the country's post-war history—something that became very clear in the media discourse surrounding Åström's coming out. Dismissing the importance of the diplomat's public coming out would belie what this unique case can reveal about Swedish gay history and the political dimension of the proverbial closet. (Gindt 2010: 236)

A Norwegian study entitled "Reading Fashion as Age: Teenage Girls' and Grown Women's Accounts of Clothing as Body and Social Status" (Klepp and Storm-Mathisen 2005) also focused on age/generational issues in relation to gender and sexuality. Females in both age categories that they studied had to negotiate how they represented their sexuality in relation to age. Young teenage girls did not want to look too young or babyish ("sweet, asexual"); but at the same time, they often realized that they needed to be careful about looking too sexualized (like a "babe") for their age. They were ambivalent about the babe concept; it wasn't all bad, and they did want to be sexually attractive. By the age of forty or so, the grown women were also at a crossroad. They wanted not only to look respectable but also to show that they were still sexual beings. In other words, they did not want to look like they were "on the make"; nor did they want to look "over the hill" (Klepp and Storm-Mathisen 2005).

Sociologist Julia Twigg (2010) has remarked that age is "simply not fashionable or sexy" (475). As a topic and subject position in fashion studies (and to some extent feminist cultural studies), the process of aging becomes sublimated under a mythic ideal of "ageless style" in hegemonic fashion discourse (e.g., UK *Vogue*). Despite the fact that the older adult population is substantial and growing as a sector of the market, the fashion industry and academics alike tend to shy away from a topic that generates considerable anxiety and denial. It seems that fashion and age "do not fit easily, or happily together" (Twigg 2010: 472) in a discourse that revolves around imagery of young girls made up to look older and adult female models airbrushed to eliminate any signs of maturity. How do older women feel about seeing primarily young (even prepubescent) females representing what it means to be fashionable? Fashion studies scholars Kozar and Damhorst (2008) conducted research with 163 women in the United States, ages sixty through eighty. They found that the women perceived older-looking models to be more attractive and more fashionable than the younger-looking models, and the women studied indicated a higher preference to purchase the clothes the older-looking models were wearing.

We found somewhat similar results in the masculinities research conducted at UC Davis. Although our sample was not as old as Kozar and Damhorst's study of older women (ours ranged in age from eighteen to sixty-five), we did find that the older men we interviewed or surveyed were interested in seeing more male fashion models who had bodies and ages that were more reflective of their own experiences. They tended to be weary of sexualized images of young athletic men, with bodies they felt that were unrealistic for them to achieve.

As a case in point, consider the case of the opening of an Abercrombie & Fitch (A&F) store on the famous Champs-Élysées Boulevard in Paris in May 2011. Young men of a different (younger) generation gathered for the opportunity—as models—to shift from being unmarked to marked in a very visible way. The American apparel company A&F opened the store with tremendous fanfare. Known for and branded through the imagery of shirtless male models, A&F hired 101 male models to line the sidewalk outside the store and the upper levels of buildings across the street. All shirtless and well-toned, the models wore low-rise, distressed A&F jeans with wide belts and brown A&F flip flops. Needless to say, the publicity created quite a stir, as did the opening of the store itself: a beautiful old building with impressive wrought iron gates and with casual, luxury merchandise for young men and women. Hundreds of shoppers, mostly young women, lined up to enter the store and to have their photographs taken with the male "greeters" (Clifford and Alderman 2011).

An online video includes interviews with a few of the male models, as they stand shirtless along one of the most famous streets in the world. We get some sense of their subject positions and their subjectivities. As they speak, we are reminded that they are not just there to be looked *at*. They are subjects, as well as objects. Two are British; one is black and has been to Paris many times before. His mother is originally from Mozambique and is French speaking. When asked why he is in such great shape, he explains that he is on his university's track team and also rows. But even before being asked this question, he had already identified himself as a physics major. The second British model is white and explains that he stays in shape as a rugby player. He has never been to Paris before but really likes it; he talks about the beauty of the

women and the buildings. A third model is Italian; he is a college student and a swimmer. All three of the models are quick to let us know that they are not primarily models—this is a "side job" with their other pursuits. They "all do something else (first)." They are all probably in their early twenties, at most. This would place them in the generation of millenials (born after 1983 or so). This locates them in time and in the ages of their bodies. Of course, what they have done to get their bodies in such shape has been largely of their own doing in their recent years of life, but they did not get to have any say with respect to *when* they were born. Neither did they have any control over *where* they were born (or into which family and its genealogy, including issues of race and class). Similarly, doctors assigned their genders (male or masculine) at birth based upon biological, embodied indicators. Their sexualities (or sexual desires) were something they probably began to realize during middle childhood or adolescence. And then there is the issue of place: *where* are they currently? They're on a famous street that has a lot of historical meaning in Paris and beyond. They come from other places. But in terms of the more abstract concept of space, they can be seen as bodies in motion.

But what happens when a place has already been endowed with value, and then seems to become undifferentiated through globalization? The A&F opening is an interesting case study at the intersection of globalization, subjectivity, space, place, time, and age. Cultural anxieties arise in the face of encroachment from other nations. Subject positions such as age and generation intersect with Frenchness (nation) to influence responses to the splashy arrival of an American retailer in a special French place. We can get a sense of shoppers' and onlookers' subjectivities from the *New York Times* (Clifford and Alderman 2011) account. A French male and female couple in their late fifties paused as they walked past the A&F store on the opening day: "American culture is okay, but we still must safeguard the French culture," said the woman. "We have traditions that are very important." A seventeen-year-old French female shopper waiting in line had a different perspective: "Globalization might have been an issue for our parents, but it is not a problem for us," she said as she perused an A&F blog (in English). Transnational marketers are likely to agree with her assessment of generational differences. For example, the president of a Milan-based luxury goods and retail consulting firm indicates that young European consumers are "becoming more cosmopolitan, living contemporary lives that are in tandem and no longer as a continuous fight among cultures" (Clifford and Alderman 2011). Clearly there is a need to reimagine time and space as interconnected concepts in a transnational economy. Still, the importance of place needs to be affirmed in an ongoing manner.

At the same time, the need to think through issues of intersectionality is compelling. These issues require unpacking using a variety of methods and perspectives. The 2008 U.S. national survey among male consumers,

conducted at UC Davis and described earlier, revealed some intriguing intersectionalities, some of which are counterintuitive. We looked first to see if there were any differences among the men we surveyed, according to age (and there were, as might be expected, with younger men, and of a more recent generation, being more interested in issues of appearance and fashion than their older counterparts, by and large). We also found a "main effect" for place, as self-identified by the men we surveyed: Urban men expressed the most interest in style-fashion-dress overall, followed by suburban and rural. The surprise factor in the findings occurred in the interactions/intersectionalities. Gay rural men expressed the most interest in style-fashion-dress issues, whereas urban bisexual men were most concerned about navigating how to be unmarked through their style-fashion-dress (i.e., not to stand out too much). We are pursuing these complicated intersectionalities further and see these findings as just an opening in a larger door opening to the intersectionalities between place and sexuality, as well as other possibilities. We had a relatively small number of men in our U.S. national survey (1,952 total) who self-identified as both rural and gay (17) and as both urban and bisexual (23), but the statistical significance of the interaction effects raises questions for further study.

Following are representative self-descriptions of the rural gay men's style; these were the men who were most in agreement with statements about being interested in style-fashion-dress. They described their own style as follows:

"Casual, neat, colorful" (twenty-seven-year-old white male in a committed relationship)
"Relaxed, stylish, comfortable" (thirty-eight-year-old single white male)
"Casual, traditional, comfortable" (thirty-nine-year-old single white male)
"Country boy" (forty-one-year-old white male in a committed relationship)
"Casual, coordinated, fashionable" (forty-seven-year-old white male in a committed relationship)
"Conservative, comfortable" (fifty-three-year-old single white male)
"Quality, conservative, colorful" (fifty-six-year-old single white male)
"Classic, ageless, modern" (fifty-six-year-old single white male)
"Relaxed shag" (fifty-nine-year-old male in a committed relationship)
"Business, social, sophisticated" (sixty-three-year-old single white male)
"Colorful, casual, comfortable" (sixty-five-year-old single white male)

Self-descriptions by the urban bisexual men are included below; these are the men who were most in agreement with statements about the need to be unmarked. They are more diverse and eclectic in nature, as might be expected in an urban setting, but they clearly desire not to stand out too much. So there is some irony—if not campy ambiguity—suggested in their representations of themselves:

"Alternative/indie" (twenty-one-year-old white male in a committed relationship)
"Sexy, thin, short" (twenty-one-year-old Asian American male)
"Comfortable, unique, very casual" (twenty-one-year-old white single male)
"Fetish, tight, urban" (twenty-four-year-old Asian American male)
"Modern, casual, sharp" (twenty-four-year-old Latino single male)
"Punk, goth, eclectic" (twenty-four-year-old white single male)
"Sporty, workout, fashionable" (twenty-four-year-old white single male)
"Fierce, daring, bold" (twenty-five-year-old white single male)
"Classic, own, unique" (twenty-seven-year-old black single male)
"Neat, casual, fun" (twenty-nine-year-old white single male)
"Random, eclectic, color-coordinated" (twenty-nine-year-old white single male)
"Casual farm chic" (thirty-year-old white male)
"Casual, serious, traditional" (thirty-three-year-old Asian American single male)
"Hip hop traditional mix" (fifty-three-year-old white single male)
"Casual, stylish but fairly conservative" (fifty-five-year-old white married male)
"Plain, old fashioned, neat" (fifty-nine-year-old white divorced male)
"Casual" (sixty-year-old white married male)

Although it is rarely possible (given time and money constraints) to document every intersectionality in a quantitative or statistical sense, the conceptual interplay among subject positions and subjectivities requires ongoing investigation—qualitatively or otherwise. Clearly, something interesting is going on in the intersectionalities between sexuality and place.

As individual bodies plow through time, in various places, issues of style-fashion-dress help to ground where and when they are. Bodies develop and age. They go through stages, and the apparel industry is pleased to comply. The sociologist Daniel Cook (2004) has documented how the emerging children's wear industry in the 1920s and 1930s capitalized on age/stage development, and he and I have collaborated to extend issues of age and generation to the "tween" consumer—in between, and largely gendered and sexualized anxiously as female (Cook and Kaiser 2004). Age/size stages become especially complicated in the toddler and tween years, and require considerable navigation of ambiguities between the mind and body. The gendering of the subject positions in these and other stages is very clear, however; the binary opposition between masculine and feminine is alive and well (Paoletti 2012).

Why does the euromodern, at least, style-fashion-dress of children engender such a desire for certainty, when the world itself is complex and open ended in so many ways? As the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1980)

said over 150 years ago, cultural anxiety is future oriented, like "a feeling in the bones that a storm is approaching" (Kierkegaard 1980). The themes or topics that generate a great deal of cultural anxiety (and censorship) include explicit sexual content and violence; yet these are also the kinds of themes that sell. Because children represent the future, which is uncertain, and because there is generally strong cultural consensus both to prepare and to protect them, cultural anxieties abound when it comes to thinking about children. Kierkegaard (1980) described the close relationship between innocence and anxiety. Children become a metaphor for both, because they represent both the innocence of the past (as people recall their own childhoods and look back) and the anxiety of the future (as people anticipate uncertainty). Issues of gender (discussed in Chapter 6) and sexuality (discussed in Chapter 7) intersect with other subject positions, including age, to generate cultural anxieties regarding a "loss of innocence":

> Our children are sacrosanct. We do not think of them as sexual beings, yet we do think of them very distinctly as boys and girls. Their gender is important to us. We believe strongly that all children are innocent and must be kept that way for as long as possible. (Spencer 1995: 404)

The art historian Anne Higonnet (1998) notes how images of children are at once common, sacred, and controversial in cultural discourse. Contradictory cultural impulses play out on the bodies of young children: We want to preserve their childhood innocence, and yet we also want to prepare them for an uncertain adulthood, knowing as we do that the future will be different. Hence, both innocence and anxiety involve a variety of mixed emotions:

> bittersweet, nostalgic recollections of times gone by that coexist with symbolic detachments from the past in the name of progress and modernity; and a sense of anticipation or even hope that coexists with uncertainties and fears about the future; respectively. (Kaiser and Huun 2002)

Kierkegaard (1980) went on to say:

> This is the profound secret of innocence, that it is at the same time anxiety . . . The anxiety that is posited in innocence is in the first place no guilt . . . *In all cultures where the childlike is preserved as the dreaming of the spirit, this anxiety is found. The more profound the anxiety, the more profound the culture.* (41–42, emphasis added)

If childhood becomes a metaphor for nostalgia about the past and anxiety toward the future, then the question arises: How do cultures vary in their representations of children—including how adults dress their children? How do

they vary in their representations of older adults? There is neither the time nor the space to delve deeply into this issue at this point, but let's leave the possibilities open to complicate the idea that childhood, older adulthood, and non-Western cultures alike can be "fixed" in the past.

To come back to issues of place/space as they intersect with time, the cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) describes space and place as interdependent concepts: They rely upon one another. Space is the more abstract and open concept; it is the geometric opening that makes movement and freedom possible. Place is part of space but can be considered a pause with reflection. Tuan suggests that what begins as "undifferentiated" space "becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value" (Tuan 1977: 6). Both Tuan and feminist geographer Massey argue for both/and connective thinking.

We cannot simply talk about place; we also have to talk about space—the idea of a cultural site that can be abstract and even transnational and that enables a sense of belonging and connection. So, hip hop style may be found—especially among urban youth—in a number of locations around the world. The music and the clothes associated with hip hop style may enable a sense of identification and belonging that transcends national, racial, and religious boundaries. Similarly, people of similar religious backgrounds, such as Islam, may express their identification with Islam in a number of ways (consider the differences in head coverings or veiling among Muslim women). Yet they share some common principles and ideas about what is appropriate and why. Processes of identity and difference are ongoing; complex; and generally fluid, not fixed.

It is in and through place, Tuan (1977) notes, that we are able to pause—at least temporarily—in our movements. Place is part of space, but place allows us to locate ourselves, knowing at the same time that there is still a larger space out there to explor. Place is where we reflect, and in the process abstract or undifferentiated space becomes a concrete place that becomes "filled with meaning" (Tuan 1977: 199). In personal experience, "space and time coexist, intermesh, and define each other" (130). If time is about "flow or movement," then place is a "pause" in that movement (198). And, abstract space becomes a concrete place with that. Yet as Massey (2005) argues, space is still open to be experienced in a variety ways through multiple subjectivities. In order for the future to be open, space, too, must be open; it involves an array of loose ends and missing links. It cannot be captured in a single hegemonic narrative, such as the euromodern story of fashion's beginnings.

In a number of locations around the world, a sense of space/place has shaped how people dress. In villages in Guatemala, for example, the woven patterns of the fabrics people have used in their clothing has represented a

sense of social location. Similarly, in most high schools in the United States, there are subgroups—often with names that further help to categorize difference (e.g., punks, goths, skaters)—that differentiate themselves in terms of style. These groups may even have certain locations around the high school grounds that they use to mark their sense of space/place. So the concept of cultural belonging in terms of space/place may have long and deep roots that lie in clearly identified locations (for example, a village) and in the materials they use to dress themselves (and how they do this). But in a highly globalized world, when people can see, and even identify with, clothes as well as people in physical locations beyond their own, a sense of belonging can span beyond a given location.

OPEN INTERSECTIONALITIES: FURTHER SUBJECT POSITIONS

The Venn diagram in Chapter 2 opens up the possibility of a lot of circles (2-D) and globes (3-D). How do we know when to stop adding circles/globes? This question is open ended because subjectivity is embodied, knowing that there are multiple possibilities, as fashion studies and feminist cultural studies alike remind us. Fundamentally, the combination of these fields of study move us beyond hegemonic ways of thinking about subject positions and other topics in binary terms: together, these fields require us to resist either/or thinking in favor of both/and or, better, multiple ways of thinking about being and becoming. We can always add circles or globes, because subject positions and subjectivities are always emerging and changing. Like fashion, they are unfolding. Time and space, in the process, cannot be essentialized as static or fixed, because just as people grow and change across time and space, so does fashion—through bodies.

Religion, for example, is an important subject position for some individuals and deserves its own deeper analysis. It may be a salient subject position that intersects with national, ethnic, or gendered subject positions, for example, as we have seen. Especially helpful in exploring religion as a subject position in relation to dress are fashion studies scholar Linda Arthur's edited books of readings (1999, 2000) and anthropologist Emma Tarlo's (2010) recent multimethod, in-depth analysis of British Muslim women's style-fashion-dress.

Physical ability/disability or other bodily considerations (e.g., height, weight, facial or somatic features) might be another circle/globe that could be added. This, too, is an important area of scholarship at the interface between fashion studies and feminist cultural studies. We could easily add more and more circles for meaningful subject positions, and multiply intersectionalities in the process. Space does not permit here to pursue as many possibilities as I would like.

Style-fashion-dress is a complex right at the center of important debates about the body, subjectivity, and culture through time and space. Style-fashion-dress constitutes the bridge; styled-fashioned-dressed bodies are "soft assemblages" (Fausto-Sterling 2003). We are born into our bodies and cannot really choose some of our subject positions fully, but we do have the agency to explore other subject positions. Subjectivity cuts across this process of navigating subject positions.

Most of the time, most of us are probably somewhere in between subject positions. These are the spaces that we inhabit: That's how we make sense of who we are and how we are becoming. The issues will vary by context or situation, but the cultural anxieties and ambivalences associated with processes of becoming are likely to influence the everyday choices that we make—whether we are dressed to impress, dressed to be "unmarked," dressed to avoid looking someone else, or dressed to navigate in-between spaces critically and creatively. Perhaps it is the process of navigating or negotiating itself that compels us to connect dots that might not otherwise be joined. Such is the contribution of style-fashion-dress: subjectivities across subject positions.

As discussed throughout this book, feminist, fashion studies, and cultural studies scholars have contributed to deeper understandings of social life and power relations by breaking down binary oppositions (e.g., masculine versus feminine, gay versus straight, black versus white). The fashion studies scholar Joanne Entwistle (2000) rightfully notes how bodies are central to the cultural studies circuit of culture. Bodies are pivotal to production, distribution, consumption, and other processes within the circuit of culture. These bodies, whether they are producing, distributing, or consuming are styled-fashioned-dressed. In short, they both *do* and *appear*, across time and space.

In a contemporary world of digitized imagery, social networking, Internet shopping, and global retailing, in some ways it becomes easier to think about time and space together. On the other hand, there is a danger of losing sight of time and space altogether, and place may become especially endangered. Some fashion Websites, for example, offer little sense of *where* a company is located, where the clothes are produced, and how long they have been in business. So, we have a delicate challenge here: to think integratively about time and space, and space and place, but not so abstractly as to obscure our ability to perceive and analyze them at all.

It is through the styled-fashioned-dressed body that individuals subjectively experience and navigate time and space. Bodies are in motion, and they are located in time and space. How do bodies manage? I continue to submit that it is through a process of "minding appearances" (Kaiser 2001) that individuals bridge mind and body issues, and style themselves in ways that articulate their most recent thoughts about who they are (becoming). To the extent that resources allow (e.g., one's bank balance or credit limit, aesthetic

know-how, or accessible shopping venues), the system of style-fashion-dress offers a way to bridge across subject positions, manage power relations, and sort through visual and material cultures to see what just might be the best possible articulation of self at the moment. "Moment"—the root word of momentum—has a certain energy implied in its framing. Hence, time is moving, and, if anything, the pace has accelerated with globalization. And, all of this movement happens within spaces that are located geographically. In a contradictory manner, style-fashion-dress is locally constructed but yet is global in its circuit of culture.

CLOSING/OPENING THOUGHTS

> To underrate clothing and fashion as political statements would be to refuse to look at history—and to deny ourselves a lot of fun. (Garber 1995: 23)

> The eternal, in any case, is far more like the ruffle on a dress than some idea. (Benjamin 2004)

These quotes address, in complicated ways, the idea of time. They both address how the material aspects of style-fashion-dress intersect or become entangled with the feminist cultural studies concept of articulation through ideas/concepts that are cultural, political, and social in nature.

Cultural theorist Marjorie Garber's quote articulates the connections between politics and pleasure, pointing out how style-fashion-dress is embedded in subject positions, cultural discourses, and power relations that need to be understood historically; yet there are also possibilities for creative resistance, subversion, and play. Such is fashion subject formation. As we have seen throughout this book, intersecting subject positions (structure) and subjectivity (agency) can be seen as one in the ongoing process of subject formation—like a journey along a Möbius strip (Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1). Subject formation through the styled-fashioned-dressed body has its political pitfalls, but it also offers opportunities for critical hope, as well as fun. We experience and enact the politics and pleasures of style-fashion-dress together as one convoluted (nonlinear) path through time and space.

The quote (written more than sixty years earlier) by cultural theorist Walter Benjamin emphasizes the articulation between (tangible) material culture and abstract ideas. Brilliantly, as well, he points out the ways in which textiles turn and twist upon themselves, creating ways of thinking about not only time, but also space. He recognizes that style-fashion-dress, as part of material culture, has a certain kind of staying power. But this staying power is not static or fixed; it is not an essence, but rather a flexible vehicle for articulation and

representation. Benjamin also seems to be saying, as I see it, that the paths of cultural history and individual subjectivity are not linear or straight; they have detours, they twist, and they fold back on themselves.

As metaphors or models at the interface between fashion studies and feminist cultural studies, the Möbius strip, the ruffle, the Venn diagram, the circuit, and the knot all contribute different ways of thinking about style-fashion-dress. They all work against essentialist, binary oppositional, and linear frameworks. Each metaphor or model explains something, but each has its limitations—hence, the need for multiple metaphors or models, so that no single metaphor will need to be pushed beyond its limits.

Cultural discourses also have their limits, and they define or structure subject positions. However, individuals exercise agency as they articulate their subjectivities through (a) the intersectionalities among these subject positions, (b) the spaces in between subject positions, and (c) entanglements with other subjects.

Subjectivity, as we have seen throughout this book, becomes visual and material through style-fashion-dress. Individuals navigate within and across overlapping subject positions (e.g., gender, sexuality, nation, class, race, ethnicity, age/generation, place) to represent the process of *becoming* in everyday life. Together, fashion studies and feminist cultural studies enable us to understand how subjectivity becomes embodied and negotiates power relations as we move through time and space. These two fields of study, in tandem, remind us that power is complex, multilayered, and nuanced. Through style-fashion-dress, power tends to operate less like a hammer and more like ongoing intersections, entanglements, and flows. Mixing metaphors, working through ambiguities and anxieties, and moving through time and space in a nonlinear manner, styled-fashioned-dressed bodies tell political, creative, cultural stories whose endings escape our grasps and extend our reaches.

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