

HISTORICALLY-INSPIRED DRESS AS A PERSONAL STYLE CHOICE

by

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(Under the Direction of José Blanco)

ABSTRACT

While elements of *Retro* or *revival dress*, or for the purpose of this study, historically-inspired dress are considered characteristic of postmodern fashion, there are some individuals who appropriate retro/revival dress not due to its popularity but as a result of sartorial symbolisms (Barnard, 2002; English, 2007; Vinken, 2005; E. Wilson, 1985). Qualitative case studies were performed to explore the motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress on a daily or near-daily basis. Two approaches were utilized based on previous literature. Historically-inspired dress bears or does not bear significant meaning in connection with the time period in which it is associated. Findings indicated that one approach alone was insufficient in explaining this practice. Findings also indicated that historically-inspired dress had less in common with historic costume and/or reenactment dress because participants do not use it to portray a historic or semi-historic persona. Instead, it serves as an alternative style choice.

INDEX WORDS: Motivations, Historically-inspired Dress, Costume, Persona, Retro/Revival dress, Communication, Expression

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my sister and best friend, Dana Elise Smith, who dedicated her first award-winning film to me and who always acknowledges me in her accomplishments no matter how small a part I play.

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I would first and foremost like to thank God for challenging me to have the courage to follow my dreams. I would also like to acknowledge my family for the support I have relied upon these last two years. I also thank my friends who made sure I had fun throughout my academic journey.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Some individuals choose historically-inspired dress as their personal clothing style choice. The term *historically-inspired* describes retro or revival dress that is intentionally worn for its sartorial symbolisms. It refers to a part of a garment or entire ensemble that resembles the cut, length or embellishments of garments worn in prior time periods. While elements of retro or revival dress are often seen in twenty-first century fashion there are some individuals who appropriate these dress forms not due to their popularity but as a result of their sartorial symbolism. Historically-inspired dress includes fashionable dress that is sold in mainstream venues. For the purpose of this study, historically-inspired dress also included authentic historic dress replicas and historic costume. Historic costume is a form of *fantasy dress* which is worn to express creative imagination. Reenactors wear historic costume with the intention of communicating a historic persona at reenactment events. Wearers of historically-inspired choose to dress this way in a variety of social settings on a daily basis or a near-daily basis as some situations do not allow the opportunity. For instance, those who are required to wear a uniform for their occupation chose to dress this way in all other situations except work. This indicates an ideology that differs from that of mainstream society.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the individual motivations for using historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis. Theorists' have claimed that retro/revival dress is commonly seen in fashion due to socioeconomic factors and nostalgia that runs rampant in popular culture. However, there are currently no studies to my knowledge that examine whether or not these factors influence individuals to wear this style of dress (Barnard, 2002; Davis, 1979, 1992; Evans, 2003; Vinken, 2005; E. Wilson, 1985).

Objectives

The study included the following objectives:

- To explore the motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis
- To explore the meanings of specific period styles of historically-inspired dress to the wearer which include ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed/communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress
- To explore other identity markers that aid in constructing the wearers' identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material culture) and their connection with the wearer's dress style

Methodology

Qualitative case studies were performed to explore personal motivations of individuals who use historically-inspired dress. I attempted to locate participants through networking via various organizational sites in which members wear historically-inspired dress and recruit

participants via email, letter mail, and telephone conversations. However, all three of my participants were identified through existing social relationships. Data was collected in multiple forms including semi-structured in-depth interviews, observations, photographs, and wardrobe samples. Data analysis took place in the form of narrative analysis in which common themes were identified, categorized, and compared among the data.

Limitations

Three participants, two male and one female, United States residents who wear historically-inspired dress were interviewed in depth and observed in their personal settings which primarily included the living rooms of their homes. This was done to gain insight into their personal motivations for using historically-inspired dress as a daily or near-daily aesthetic.

Significance

This study is of great personal interest to me. My fascination with historic dress could not be satisfied by adopting medieval costume only on weekend reenactment events and wearing historically-inspired dress occasionally. Because of this, I found ways to express my interest in history and historic dress by integrating historic elements into daily life, such as hanging paintings of renaissance knights and ladies on the walls of my home and even choosing dinnerware that reflects a former era. My love of history has become very much a part of my “self” and I am continually searching for ways to express it to others. It is interesting that despite a general lack of social permission to sport some historic dress forms (for instance, bustled nineteenth century gowns), and its impractical nature (one would not be able to comfortably drive a car), there are some individuals who use historically-inspired dress and integrate it into their daily aesthetic.

Justification

There are no studies to my knowledge that have explored motivations of the individual wearer who chooses to appropriate historically-inspired dress as part of their daily personal aesthetic. Miller (1998) researched the motivations of individuals who wear historic and other forms of costume on a regular basis, such as historical reenactors, science fiction convention attendees, renaissance fair attendees, and dance groups. Strauss (2003) explored the symbolic nature of reenactment dress, finding that dress was central to reenacting as a hobby. Miller (1998) and Strauss (2003) approached the wearing of costume as a means of taking on completely new identities, but did not explore how the ideologies expressed through these identities carry through into individuals' daily lives. Albo (2009), a writer for the *Gentleman's Quarterly*, recognized that men in Brooklyn began wearing late nineteenth century dress styles on the street in the latter part of 2009. Albo stated that "the aesthetic moved beyond a Halloween costume into a lifestyle" (p. 122). To my knowledge, there is presently no research exploring the motivations of these individuals and others like them.

Subcultures such as Goth, Punk, Steampunk, the Japanese Harajuku Lolitas and Gothic Lolitas wear historic dress forms (English, 2007; Ewen, 2010; Goodlad & Bibby, 2007; Grossman & Moskowitz, 2009; Rowe, 2008; Spooner, 2004; Steele & Park, 2008). There have been studies examining the motivations behind these subcultural groups adopting historic forms of dress and retro/revival dress. These groups wear historical styles of dress, which appear costume-like or theatrical outside the socially-acceptable venues for wearing costumes (Goodlad & Bibby, 2007; Steele, 2001). However, there have not been studies conducted on motivations of individuals that do not ascribe themselves to such subcultures.

This study aimed to fill the void in research and add valuable knowledge to the field of socio-cultural aspects of dress. Reenactment studies have viewed wearing a costume as an escape from the pressures of modern-day life, creating for participants an alternate reality of leisure for this escape which is a result of postmodern society (Allred, 1996; Belk & Costa, 1998; Hall, 1994; Handler & Saxton, 1988). Eicher (1981) and Miller (1997) wrote that costume serve as an outlet for expressing creative imagination. While Miller (1997) explored the preliminary motivations for wearing costumes, Strauss (2003) explored the symbolic nature of Confederate Civil War costume, finding that it allowed wearers to express personal beliefs and ideals, thus adding information to the field regarding the symbolic nature of costume. Scholars in the field of dress have acknowledged nostalgia and a desire for a fictional time and place to bring about revival fashion-fashion inspired by past styles-claiming its tendency to draw from the past to be characteristic of postmodern fashion (Barnard, 2002; English, 2007; Vinken, 2005; E. Wilson, 1985).

I was not seeking to determine if dressing in costume and filling their homes with décor inspired by history on a daily basis is an attempt to construct an alternate reality. Instead, my interest lay in the way this form of dress is a viable part of the participants' modern social reality and identity. For this study, Symbolic Interactionists' frameworks served as an approach in which historically-inspired dress obtains significant meaning and symbolic value. These frameworks include *Miller's Expanded Model of Eicher's (1981) Framework of Dress and the Public, Private, and Secret Aspects of the Self* (as cited in Miller, 1998), anthropologist Gregory P. Stone's (1962) framework *Appearance and the Self*, and Sociologist Erving Goffman's (1959) framework of identity role/theory as utilized by Strauss (2003).

Dress scholar Mitchell Strauss (2003) drew on sociologist Erving Goffman's (1959) approach to examine identity construction among Confederate Civil War reenactors in order to determine their motivations for reenacting and dressing in costume. Strauss (2003) examined reenactors' dress, manner, and settings and found that the Confederate uniform held great personal meaning based on its original historical association. In this study, Strauss's approach served as an assumption that wearers of historically-inspired dress were essentially full-time reenactors. Using this assumption, I explored the symbolic nature and ideological expressions of wearers who adopt dress inspired from a variety of time periods. I focused on the appeal of historically-inspired dress by participants in constructing and expressing their modern-day identities.

In this study, I also drew on postmodern fashion theory. This served as an opposing approach in which historically-inspired dress does not hold significant symbolic value and association with the past. This theory suggests that historically-inspired dress is a result of socio-economic changes and nostalgic images in popular culture. Additionally, because theorists have claimed that postmodern fashion commonly draws from the past, it would seem that historically-inspired dress is insignificant in terms of symbolic value. Postmodern theory has also been applied to studies regarding the dress of subcultures (Hebdige, 1979; Polhemus, 1994). Muggleton (2000) did not rely on postmodern theory to explain the dress behaviors among members of the Punk subculture. He chose to explore the true motivations behind the dress of individual members by using a Weberian approach which credits cultural values as a driving force behind the style, rather than social factors. Muggleton's (2000) study also served as a framework for my study in that participants held the cultural values of individualism, freedom, pleasure and play exhibited by members of the Punk subculture.

Definition of Terms

Anachronistic: “The state or condition of being chronologically out of place” (“Merriam-Webster.com,” 2010).

Challenged Self: The wearer’s self is challenged when the reviewer’s anticipation and interpretation of the wearer’s program does not match that of the wearer’s (Stone, 1962).

Consumption Enclave: A community whose identity is constructed and dependent on acquisition of specific types of material objects. For example, Belk and Costa (1998) described the Mountain Man community as a consumption enclave because it was dependent on consuming historically authentic tools, clothing, housing, etc. to create an alternate reality that mirrored life of fur trappers in the nineteenth century.

Consumption Enclave Model: A framework used by Belk and Costa (1998) to study communities whose existence is dependent on consumption of specific items.

Cosplayer: An individual who goes to corporate and/or fan-run conventions and express “fandom,” the state or attitude of being a fan (“Merriam-Webster.com,” 2010), through dressing up as fictional characters from popular culture films such as *Star Wars* and television series such as *Star Trek* (Duchesne, 2005).

Costume: Eicher and Roach-Higgins (1992), defined this term as clothing for “‘out-of-every-day’ social role or activity” that include ‘dress for the theater, folk, or other festivals, ceremonies, and rituals’” (p.3).

Dress: A process that involves dressing the body and actions undertaken to modify and supplement the body in order to address physical needs and to meet social and cultural

expectations about how individuals should look. This process includes all five senses of seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, and tasting-regardless of the society and culture into which an individual is born” (Eicher, Evenson, & Lutz, 2008, p. 4).

Ethos: “The distinguishing character, sentiment, moral nature, or guiding beliefs of a person, group, or institution” (“Merriam-Webster.com,” 2010).

Fandom: “The state or attitude of being a fan” (“Merriam-Webster.com,” 2010). More specifically, it is a wish to be associated with something or someone (for example, science fiction and fantasy characters from popular culture).

Fashion: “A prevailing custom or style of dress, etiquette, or procedures and internalized sense of the modish style of the time; appearances, styles of behavior, and social status; a clothing system denoting occupation, gender, ethnicity, and status; clothing habits that are subject to changes of style in a short space of time” (Craik, 2009, p. 326).

Fantastic Costume: A form of fantasy dress based on fictional characters either established in popular culture or created by the individual.

Fantasy Dress: Dress worn to express creative imagination and communicates all parts of the self depending on the setting and activity (Miller, 1997). For the present study, fantasy dress includes fantastic and historic costume.

Fantasy-Prone: The tendency to have vivid, high imaginative involvement in activities (Lynn & Rhue, 1986).

Fantasy-Prone Personality: “Individuals . . . who fantasize a large part of the time, who typically “see,” “hear,” “smell,” “touch,” and finally experience what they fantasize” (S. Wilson & Barber, 1983).

Fun Dress: Dress that communicates the private self and is worn for leisure activities or within settings among close friends and family (Miller, 1997).

Historic Costume: A costume that is authentically constructed to resemble dress of an earlier time period.

Historic Persona: An alter-ego constructed to appear as if the individual is from an earlier time period. This persona is constructed through historic costume or historically-inspired dress.

Historically-Inspired Dress: For the purpose of this thesis, the term “historically-inspired” will be applied to a garment or part of a garment that has a cut, length, waistline placement, and/or aesthetic elements such as ruffles, lace, embroidery, or beading similar to garments worn in prior time periods. It may be a modernized version of a whole garment such as a corset or dress or only one element of the garment that may have been inspired by the past.

The term can also describe the styling of ensembles. A model or wearer may not only don a dress with a high lace collar and a full skirt inspired from Victorian era, but also may accessorize it with jewelry and a hairstyle modeled after those of the same period.

Historically-inspired dress is intentionally worn due to its historical influences and/or sartorial meaning.

Historicism: A term that has been associated with architecture in which Merriam-Webster.com defined as “a style (as in architecture) characterized by the use of traditional [historic] forms and elements.”

Identity construction: The process of constructing identity through the use of behavior, dress, settings, and props. Individuals use “identity kits” to mold and manage their “personal front” for each varying social situation (Goffman, 1961).

Identity Markers: Tangible objects that symbolically communicate one’s identity or identities such as dress, home décor, etc. For example, tartans and kilts are dress items that are associated with Scottish identity (Nicholson, 2005).

Love of history: One of the top motivations for dressing in costume, especially among men (Miller, 1998; Strauss, 2003). This usually is a term used to describe a strong interest in historical time periods and events.

Nostalgia: “An emotion of longing for the past” (Wilson, 2005, p. 36).

Private Self: “The self that we let close friends and family know” (Miller, 1997, p. 223).

Public Self: “The self that we let everyone know” (Miller, 1997, p. 223).

Reality Dress: Dress worn to express the public self by communicating age, sex, and occupation (Eicher, 1981; Miller, 1997).

Retro/Revival Dress: Historically-inspired dress that is usually fashionable sold in mainstream venues and not always intentionally worn due to its historical influences and/or sartorial meaning.

Reenactor: “Individuals who publicly recreate historical events and eras by donning historical dress and emulating period behavior” (Strauss, 2005, p. 92).

Secret Self: “The self that we may not let anyone or only intimates know” (Miller, 1997, p. 223).

Self: “A composite of an individual’s identities communicated by dress, bodily aspects of appearance, and discourse, as well as the material and social objects (other people) that contribute meaning to situations for interaction” (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992, p. 5).

Self concepts: “The mental image one has of oneself” (“Merriam-Webster.com,” 2010).

Semi-historic Persona: Alter-ego constructed to make an individual appear slightly as if they are from an earlier time period or from a fantasy time period. For example, an individual may wear nineteenth century corset with modern pants. This persona is constructed through historically-inspired dress.

Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA): According to O’Donnell (2004) it is the “world’s largest medieval history group” (p.2). “The SCA is an international organization dedicated to researching and recreating the arts and skills of pre-17th century Europe” (The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc, 1995-2010, para. 1). Members do this by sewing their own period dress, constructing their own armour, weapons, tools, pottery, etc.

Style: A term that describes the physical aspects of a garment such as cut, length, waistline placement, and/or aesthetic elements which include ruffles, lace, embroidery, beading, etc. According to E. Stone (2004), style differs from fashion in that, “A style is usually a creation from an artist or a designer . . . a style may be old or new, beautiful or ugly, good or bad. A style is still a style even if it never receives that slightest acceptance” (p.6).

Symbolic Interaction: The process of actively constructing impressions based on the shared meanings of symbols which are continually redefined through social interaction, developing and giving meaning to the self (Goffman, 1959, Stone, 1962).

Symbolic Interactionism: A theory that the self is socially constructed through communication with the use of symbols.

Symbolism: The application or use of the underlying meaning of a tangible object. A tangible object is a symbol when it represents something intangible (i.e. A cross in some cases represents redemption) (“Merriam-Webster.com,” 2010).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature discusses material related to possible influences and motivations of individuals who choose historically-inspired dress as their own personal style. Because this study explored the use of historically-inspired dress as an expression of the self, the style should not be solely attributed to external influences. Therefore, this study utilized two approaches. The first approach was to recognize its symbolic nature and association with the past, and the second was to view it as a product of and a response to uncertainties in postmodern culture and society. Previous studies following the first approach include Miller's (1998) exploration of the motivations of individuals who wear costume on a regular basis, such as historical reenactors, science fiction convention attendees, and dance groups and Strauss's (2003) exploration of the symbolic nature of reenactment dress. The dress of subcultures who wear historically-inspired dress has also been explored (Brill, 2008; Burstein, 2007; English, 2007; Ewen, 2010; Gagnier, 2007; Grossman & Moskowitz, 2009; Guizzo, 2008; Hantke, 1999; Kendrick, 2009; Latham, 2009; Plessis, 2007; Polhemus, 1994; Schraffenberger, 2007; Spooner, 2007; Steele, 2001; Steele & Park, 2008; VanderMeer & VanderMeer, 2008). Several scholars followed the second approach by utilizing postmodern theory. They studied how fast-paced social, political, and economic changes bring about nostalgia, which is believed to bring about retro/revival and pastiche styles that draw influence from the past and exhibit characteristics of postmodern

fashion (Barnard, 2002; Davis, 1979; Evans, 2003; Muggleton, 2000; Tortora & Eubank, 2010; E. Wilson, 1985).

Included in this review of literature is theoretical background and a review of related studies. This study utilized *Miller's Expanded Model of Eicher's (1981) Framework of Dress and the Public, Private, and Secret Aspects of the Self* (as cited in Miller, 1998) and Sociologist Erving Goffman's (1959) framework of identity role/theory as utilized by Strauss (2003). These frameworks draw from the works of symbolic interaction theorists such as Sociologist Herbert Blumer (1969) and philosophers Langer (1942) and Mead (1934) who believed that symbols communicate the self and wrote that the self is constructed through social interaction. Miller's (1997) framework builds on both anthropologist Gregory P. Stone and dress scholar Joanne B. Eicher's frameworks. A brief overview of these frameworks is necessary to understand how they proposed that the self is built and maintained through different types of dress.

Theoretical background

Symbolic interactionism.

Stone.

Scholars in the field of dress have credited Stone (1962) as the first to add appearance and dress to symbolic interactionism (Miller, 1997; Miller & Jasper, 1993; Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). According to Stone (1962) appearance and dress includes “non-verbal symbols as gestures, grooming, clothing, location and the like” and plays a role in the establishment of a sense of self (p. 21). Stone explained his framework in terms of the roles of the wearer and the reviewer in which the wearer has a “program,” an identity communicated through dress and makes up a part of the self (Eicher & Baizerman, 1991; G. P. Stone, 1962). The reviewer

evaluates the wearer's program by analyzing the wearer's appearance. The reviewer's evaluation either validates or challenges the wearer's program. The program is validated when the reviewer's anticipation and interpretation of the wearer's program matches the program the wearer intends to communicate. Dress scholar Strauss (2003) explained that when this happens the self is given meaning and the wearer establishes a sense of self. The wearer's program is challenged when the reviewer's anticipation and interpretation of the wearer's program does not match that of the wearer's. This is communicated by a negative response from the reviewer such as a lifted eyebrow, a blush, or withdrawal from communication. This reaction may cause the wearer to change something about and reevaluate the self. When this occurs the program is challenged and the self may need to be altered to project an appropriate program or call for a "redefinition of the challenged self" (G. P. Stone, 1962, p. 22). The identity is not granted shared meaning. Stone's framework is relevant to this study because it demonstrates the role that appearance and dress plays in establishing identities and a sense of self.

Within his framework, Stone (1962) also discussed socialization which refers to the acting out of roles and its relationship to identity construction. He explained two types of socialization: anticipatory and fantastic. "Anticipatory socialization" includes the acting out of roles that can be "adopted or encountered in later life" (Stone, 1962, p. 31). Stone provided examples of anticipatory socialization which includes parental or occupational roles which are regularly acted out by children. Anticipatory socialization for adults includes graduating from college and entering the job market, marriage, baptism, and institutionalized recognition of death (Stone, 1962). "Fantastic socialization" is the one relevant to my study and refers to the acting out and dressing for roles "that can seldom, if ever, be expected to be adopted or encountered in later life" (G. P. Stone, 1962, p. 31) or "when individuals play non-realistic roles" (Miller, 1997,

p. 224). Examples of these roles are cowboy and Indian and Superman or Wonderwoman (Miller, 1998; G. P. Stone, 1962). It can be said that wearers of historic costume and historically-inspired dress are acting out fantastic roles as their identities are anachronistic, meaning they are out of their original time and place ("Merriam-Webster.com," 2010). Stone (1962) wrote that fantastic socialization occurs in public for children and private for adults, "in the bathroom, behind closed doors, and before a secret mirror" (p.36). However, Eicher and Miller's frameworks would prove that fantastic socialization which includes the wearing of costume as a form of fantasy dress occurs in private and public settings as well.

Goffman.

The idea of the three selves (public, private, and secret) expressed through dress, seen in Eicher and Miller's frameworks originated in Goffman's (1959) framework. Before exploring these origins, it is essential to examine Goffman's approach to identity construction. Like Stone, Goffman (1959) wrote that appearance and dress in social interaction played a key role. In his approach he applied dramaturgical principles, and as a result, his theory has been referred to by numerous scholars as "dramaturgy" (Kaiser, 1985). In the preface, to his book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1959) wrote, "The perspective employed in this report is that of the theatrical performance; the principles derived are dramaturgical ones" (p.iii). Goffman (1959) drew the parallel between actors on a stage and the way individuals present themselves in everyday life. Actors create their characters in theater by dressing and acting a part based on the expectations of their role. Goffman explained that manner, appearance, and setting contribute to the construction and management of an individual's identity. Strauss (2003) drew on Goffman's (1959) idea of identity kits and utilized his framework to analyze confederate Civil War reenactment dress. Strauss (2003) wrote, "Appearance was created from stage props such as

dress and hairstyle, whereas manner consisted of elements including behavior, gestures, content of discourse, and style of speech. Components of the identity kit could be manipulated and experimented with as a form of self exploration” (p. 150). All these things make up identity kits which consist of “cosmetic and clothing supplies, tools for applying, arranging, and repairing them, and an accessible, secure place to store these supplies and tools” (Goffman, 1961, p. 119). The setting is the place in which interaction takes place. Strauss (2003) explained that in Civil War reenacting, a campground decorated with props such as Confederate flags, period furniture, cookware, weapons, and other accessories serves as a setting and helps transform the reenactor into a historical character (p. 156).

Front and back regions.

In addition to examining how identity is constructed through appearance and manner, Goffman (1959) also recognized that individuals create identities according to their roles within different social environments. Goffman marked out the *front region* and the *back region* where interaction occurs (1959). These regions are the precursors to the public, private, and secret selves in that he defined the settings in which each self is presented. Goffman defined the front region when he wrote, “Given a particular performance as a point of reference, it will sometimes be convenient to use the term ‘front region’ to refer to the place where the performance is given” (p. 66). The front region usually refers to public settings where an individual acts politely and displays his/her best behavior. Eicher would later write that the self portrayed in this region is the public self (as cited in Miller, 1997). Goffman used a living room of a house as an example of a front region as it is usually the cleanest part of the house in order to welcome any guests. He described the back region as a place purposely hidden away from the front region to maintain an impression. The back region refers to private settings and is where all the items used to create an

impression are revealed. Goffman (1959) stated, “Here the performer can relax; he can drop his front, forgo speaking his lines, and step out of character” (p. 70).

In addition to the front and back regions, Goffman (1959) mentioned that there are settings where people completely change out of character, for instance when taking a bath, an individual wears no clothing and therefore sports no specific identity. Their behaviors significantly differ in secret settings such as bathrooms and bedrooms where individuals perform hygiene and sexual practices. Eicher would later refer to the self in this region as the secret self who was revealed to few if none other individuals (as cited in Miller, 1997).

Prasad (2003) pointed out that the dramaturgical framework is useful when examining social situations that are “underwritten by a potentially interesting frontstage-backstage dynamic” (p. 51). By analyzing appearance and manner along with discourse, a researcher can better understand underlying dynamics of face-to-face interaction. This framework was useful in identifying ideals, ideologies, values, beliefs, ethos, that lay beneath the motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress.

Strauss’s framework.

As mentioned before, Strauss (2003) drew on Goffman’s (1959) framework by examining their personas which were comprised of appearance, manner, and discourse of Confederate Civil War reenactors. Whereas Goffman (1959) applied his framework and stage metaphor to everyday individuals, Strauss (2003) used Goffman’s framework more literally, viewing reenactors as performers who presented themselves in a “quasi-theatrical manner” (p.150). Civil War reenactors refer to these Civil War personas as “impressions.” These impressions are synonymous with a separate identity-an alter ego or persona or theatrical character. American

literature scholar Randal Allred (1996) defined this term as “a character, historical, or hypothetical, upon whom he [the reenactor] models his uniform, equipment, weapons, and even facial hair” (p. 3). Strauss’s use of this framework served as an assumption in the present study in which wearers of historically-inspired dress were thought to have utilized both appearance, which includes setting and manner, to communicate a historic or semi-historic persona and a somewhat theatrical, historical character.

In applying Goffman’s framework, Strauss (2003), described how the reenactors’ behavior differed between the front and back regions. He explained that in the front region reenactors would speak and act in character and present themselves to outsiders and answer their questions about reenacting while in the back region reenactors talked among themselves and their conversations related to individual views and opinions pertaining to the Civil War. By analyzing discourse in both the frontstage and backstage of reenacting, Strauss (2003) was able to determine the true motivations for engaging in Confederate Civil War reenactment and wearing the Confederate Civil War uniform. He wrote, “Though many of the reenactors I met claimed a purist’s love of history as their main inspiration for involvement, further examination of the hobby and its participants indicated other underlying motivations as well (p.152). In the frontstage or before the non-reenacting public, reenactors stated that they were motivated by a purist love of history, whereas in the backstage their verbal discourse, which included debates and discussions about civil war history, indicated that many were motivated by the romantic idea of fighting for a lost cause (Strauss, 2003).

Eicher's framework.

As mentioned before, Eicher expanded Stone's (1962) and Goffman's (1959) frameworks by proposing that there are three aspects of the self and a type of dress that corresponds directly to each one (Eicher & Baizerman, 1991; Michelman & Eicher, 1991). The three aspects of self include the public self, the private self and the secret self (Eicher & Baizerman, 1991; Michelman & Eicher, 1991). According to Eicher, the public self is defined as the one we let everyone know. It communicates identities such as occupation, age, and sex through reality dress. Eicher also wrote that the private self is the aspect of self we let close friends and family know and is communicated through fun dress which is worn for "the boudoir, the garden, around the house, barbecues, picnics, parties, and casual sports activities" (as cited in Miller, 1997, p. 223). Eicher asserted that the "secret self may or may not be revealed to another person" and is communicated through fantasy dress (as cited in Miller, 1997, p. 223). Fantasy dress includes sexual dress such as lingerie or men's tight trousers, garments that the wearer owns but never wears such as bold colors, or costumes that hide an individual's true identity in public (as cited in Miller, 1997).

It is important to note that in studying the relationship between dress and identity, Eicher expanded Stone's (1965) framework so that it accounts for sex differences (as cited in Miller, 1997). Davis (1988), Stone (1962), and Eicher hypothesized that men have less social permission to express themselves through dress, particularly fantasy dress, due to a lesser amount of fashion styles available to them. Miller, Jasper and Hill (1991) explained, "Obviously, women can choose among dresses, blouses, jackets, skirts, and pants in colorful fabrics, while men are limited to shirts, jackets and pants in less colorful fabrics. Also, men's dress changes more slowly than women's fashions thereby limiting their options for creative expression through

dress” (p. 227). Although this aspect of the framework is valuable to the field of dress, it is outside the scope of this study. Differences in gender between participants wearing historic costume or historically-inspired dress will not be addressed in the present study.

Miller’s framework.

Miller’s study, *Dress: Private and Secret Self-Expression* ultimately led to the expansion of Eicher’s framework. In her study Miller (1997) interviewed people who wore costumes on a regular basis such as historical reenactors and dance groups that perform historic dances such as English and Scottish Country Dancers. This study provided insight into the reasons why individuals dress in costume; for instance, whether they do so for fun or fantasy and express the private self and public self, respectively. Miller also inspected age, sex, and income’s effect on dressing for fun and fantasy. Her findings showed that respondents found it troublesome to distinguish between fantasy and fun dress as they are defined by Eicher’s framework (Miller, 1997). For example, the respondents in Miller’s study related “Dress and Fun” to the “Private self” which would mean a type of dress worn at home or around close friends. Participants felt that fun dress could also be worn for other activities. The “Dress and Fantasy” questions were designed according to Eicher’s framework where fantasy dress supposedly only expressed the secret self. This included dress worn to act out “occupational fantasies, athletic fantasies, and sexual fantasies” (Miller, 1997, p. 227). Many participants, however, felt that fantasy dress was both fun and fantastic. These results led to Miller’s (1997) conclusion that Eicher’s framework was not adequate to address the complexities of dress and self-expression because it insisted that each self (public, private, and secret) corresponded with only one type of dress (reality, fun, and fantasy). Miller’s model which is entitled, *Miller’s Expanded Model of Eicher’s (1981) Original Framework of Dress and the Public, Private, and Secret Aspects of the Self* demonstrated that

fantasy dress could also include expressions of the public self and private self (Miller, 1998). According to Miller (1997), costumes express the public self when they are worn in public and do not hide the wearer's true identity. Costumes express the private self when they are worn among friends and express childhood memories of dress. By finding that costume can be expression of the public and private self in addition to the secret self, Strauss (2003) was able to study Civil War reenactment dress as an expression of the public self. Drawing from both Miller's expanded framework of costume as an expression of all three selves, and Strauss's application of Goffman's framework, I will explore the motivations of individuals who wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near-daily basis.

Dress as a Time Machine

As Strauss (2003) found, Civil War reenactors rely on costume and props to create the illusion of being a part of the Civil War. Philosopher W.D. Joske (1967) explained that "nonmaterial things are frequently associated with material objects. Such nonmaterial things include "pains, dreams, thoughts, flashes of color, bursts of sound, and whiffs of smell" (p. 1-2). These material objects are symbols of the culture of a society within a specific point in time. Reenactors rely on associations to the culture of former time periods embodied in material objects to create the illusion of travelling back in time.

Historic costume is among the material objects that can provide a sense of time travel. Because a culture's social habits, behaviors and customs change over time, dress as it is styled embodies these elements. Authors Smith and Topham (2005) wrote, "Fabric, color, cut and even the way in which garments are fastened and attached to the body all play significant roles in expressing a society's social habits at a particular moment" (p. 80). This connection between

style and a specific time period is a result of the zeitgeist's influence. Dress historian Phyllis G. Tortora and Historian Keith Eubank (2010) defined the zeitgeist as "the spirit of the times" or "artistic spirit" that is evident in many material forms such as art, architecture, and fashion in which there exists similarity in design among the works of many artists of the same time period (pp. 7, 412). Because dress embodies elements of a specific culture during a specific time, Strauss (2003) found Confederate Civil War uniforms were central to reenacting the Civil War. He wrote, "Without the uniform [Confederate Civil War uniform], there would be no reenacting. The uniform was used to step into character and to drape history over the shoulders of the reenactor. Without the uniform, the stage upon which history was replayed evaporates . . ." (p. 150). The Civil War could not be reenacted simply with period props. Costume makes it possible.

Because retro/revival dress is modeled after specific time periods, it too can be associated with the past. Fashion theorist Caroline Evans (2003) applied this concept of time warp to retro/revival dress and stated that such designs reference something found within the culture of an earlier time. She stated, "The world of fashion is a place of ghosts, figures of the past who reconvene in the present" (p. 50). Just as historical reenactment costume holds associations with past time periods, retro or revival garments-though usually partially styled after garments from distant time periods-successfully express associations with the past, and sufficiently provide a sense of time travel.

The Value of Authenticity

The more historically authentic a garment is, the more it can accurately portray the past and therefore assists in time travel. Anthropologist Richard Handler and Philosopher William Saxton (1988) hold the following belief:

For living history practitioners, ‘authenticity’ means historical accuracy or, in our terms, token isomorphism. An authentic piece of living history is one that exactly simulates or re-creates a *particular* place, scene, or event from the past. In practice this entails acting out the past, that is, taking on the role of historic personages in an authentic setting (such as a battlefield or historic house) and using authentic props (either originals or replicas) to make the past ‘come to life’ (p. 243).

Folklorist Rory Turner (1990) defined authenticity as, “...an aesthetic of painstaking detail and accuracy, a real accomplishment of economic wherewithal and patient labor” (p.127). To achieve authenticity in dress would be to construct it in the same way someone living in the original time period would have done. This would mean using similar patterns, materials, and even tools.

To appear as if they are actually in the past, reenactors rely heavily on authentic dress and other forms of material objects accurately resembling those of the era in which they are reenacting (Allred, 1996; Belk & Costa, 1998; Gapps, 2009; Hall, 1994; Strauss, 2001, 2002, 2003). In Civil War reenacting, dress items include uniforms, hats, footwear, and accessories (Strauss, 2001). The authenticity of their impressions is better aided by props such as period housing and furniture, cookware, weapons, and other accessories. Authentic objects and dress have also been utilized by producers of the *House* series, reality shows referred to as time travel experiments such as *1900 House*, *1940’s House*, *Frontier House*, *Manor House*, *Colonial House*, *Regency House Party*, *Texas Ranch House* (Taddeo & Dvorak, 2007) in order to replicate the past. The experience of living in the year 1900 would not be complete without wearing period

apparel. In the television miniseries *1900 House*, (Barker & Ross-Pirie, 2000) a family was involved in a three month time travel study that required them to live in a house of the period, use authentic tools, utensils, and household items. The participating family, the Bowler family brushed their teeth with bicarbonate of soda, cooked period recipes on a period stove, used period utensils, and soaps, and donned apparel constructed to resemble garments worn in the year 1900 (Barker & Ross-Pirie, 2000). The women wore corsets and drawers forgoing their more comfortable modern undergarments. The family even ordered wool swim outfits of the period when they chose to swim recreationally in order for the experience of living in the year 1900 to be as realistic as possible.

Belk and Costa (1998) pointed out that as long as a historic dress item is perceived by others as authentic it will accurately contribute to the illusion of being in the past. Belk and Costa (1998) conducted a study on the dress of Mountain Men, a reenactment group who emulates the life of nineteenth century Rocky Mountain fur trappers. These individuals camp in wooded areas using period shelter and tools, prepare and eat period foods, and wear dress similar to that worn by the original nineteenth century Rocky Mountain fur trappers. Belk and Costa (1998) discussed that teepees and traditional Indian costumes are not authentic to mountain man life in the nineteenth century, but are accepted in the reenactment community because of their romantic image. Many retro/revival dress styles have similar elements as historic styles and are accepted to hold some historical association despite its tendency to be less authentic. Because many individuals may deem historic costume or retro/revival dress authentic without examining many details of the dress, authenticity is not the focus of my study. Participants may or may not value authenticity or believe it necessary to project a near perfect historical identity through costume.

Postmodern Fashion Theory

Whereas the above topics explain the significance of historically-inspired dress by illustrating the connection between it and the past, the following discusses historically-inspired dress within the context of postmodern culture. The concept of simulacra can be applied to historically-inspired dress as it can be seen as copies of past styles that are often indistinguishable by postmodern individuals. Historically-inspired dress may be nostalgic, as it is often associated with postmodern culture because it is thought to be a feeling produced by fast-paced, social, economic, and political changes which distinguishes the postmodern time period from previous time periods. Historically-inspired dress may be considered characteristic of postmodern fashion, since both historically-inspired dress and postmodern fashion possess the tendency to draw from the past for inspiration.

Historically-Inspired dress as simulacra.

Scholars have labeled imitation of the past as simulacra, “imitation copies for which there exist no originals” (Jameson, 1984, p. 66). Research on Civil War reenactment led American literature scholar Dennis Hall (1994) to describe the term differently, as in the case that the copy replicates the original to the point where the two cannot be distinguished. In describing the *House* series popular culture theorists Ken Dvorak and Julie Anne Taddeo (2008) defined simulacra as the “image rather than the reality” (p.3). All these sources point to one fact: that the object or action seen is not the truth but a fake. Davis (1992) explained that fashion revivals derived from past styles could never fully replicate the original no matter how authentic it is. He admitted that similarities between both the copy and original can be seen despite the time that has elapsed between the original’s and copy’s creation. For this reason Fashion theorist Barnard

(2002) applied Jameson's (1984) definition of simulacra to nostalgic or retro styles of dress. For example a modern top with a long flowing sleeve may resemble those from the Middle Ages in which large sleeves were in fashion, but because it is present in this time period, it could not be the original medieval sleeves.

Because historic costume or historically-inspired dress is only copies, they create an entirely new time, one that is romanticized and ideal, as opposed to traveling to the actual past. Vinken (2005) applied this notion to retro/revival fashion. She referred to designs and collections inspired by history as "*mode de cent ans*" and "*démodé*" which is translated "method of a hundred years" and "no longer fashionable" respectively ("Merriam-Webster.com," 2010; SDLFreeTranslation.com," 2000-2009). Vinken (2005) stated, "Hence the tendency of the *mode de cent ans* to flee the everyday world into idylls, in which time stands still, or to displace itself into other times and other structures of time, into a time outside of a time" (p. 67).

The concept of simulacra is often associated with Baudrillard (2006) who explained simulacra in terms of signifiers and signifieds. Signifiers are representations of the signified. Signifiers are representations of physical objects such as dress or cars, while signifieds are the intangible objects the signifiers refer to and could include social status or position. Baudrillard stated that there are only signifiers and no signifieds. These signifiers are symbols that refer to themselves and do not reference anything other. Simulacra is a term that refers to the separation between the two (signifier and signified).

Drawing from Jameson's (1984) definition of simulacra, copies with no originals, Baudrillard (2006) contested that these copies or simulacra are in fact reality. Baudrillard explained that in postmodern society individuals are submerged within a realm of hyperreality.

Copies exist without originals and the image becomes more real than the reality. Copies are then perceived as real and equal in value to any original because the two are indistinguishable. This is particularly true of mass media. Klages (2006) provided the example of music on cd's. Because there is no difference between an original song and its copies, postmodern individuals often perceive objects to be the original or reality. Because postmodern individuals accept copies as real, they do not question the reality of other objects. To the Confederate Civil War reenactor, the replicated uniform becomes real, hyperreal. Because the replica closely resembles the original, the replica is accepted as the original Confederate uniform.

Characteristic of postmodern fashion.

Morgado (1996), Barnard (2002), and E. Wilson (1985) demonstrated that the tendency to draw influence from the past is a characteristic of postmodern fashion and reflects postmodern culture. This is just one of the elements of postmodern fashion. Apparel scholar Morgado (1996) described the elements of postmodern culture and how they are evidenced in fashion. These elements are briefly reviewed to illustrate how they align with postmodern theory. These elements include *rejection of authority, suspicion of narratives, heteropia* and *radical incommensurability, death of art, decentering, death of progress, bricolage, and pastiche.*

The first three elements of postmodern culture are connected in some way to a general distrust. According to Morgado (1996) when individuals believe that artifacts and documents serve different purposes than they appear, they are rejecting authority. The *rejection of authority* is expressed through fashion by following an unstable aesthetic code in which colors, styles, and types of garments are purposely uncoordinated. Rejection of authority is also found in the acceptance of street styles as fashion over styles that are professionally-designed. Related to the concept of rejection of authority is the *suspicion of narratives* in which Morgado (1996)

described as a distrust of the truth claims of art, literature, politics, and education or any other established form of expression. Suspicion of narratives is evidenced in fashion through the disappearance of meaning and references of signs that once pointed to status, affiliation, race, gender, time, and occasion. This suggests that individuals dress to achieve a look or an image for the sake of the look or image rather than their symbolic significance. Morgado (1996) also explained that *heteropia* and *radical incommensurability* was a pattern of social order which consists of irreconcilable differences. These are evidenced in fashion through the popularity of diverse clothing styles as well as the lack of unity and harmony in combinations of dress, styles, and designs.

Death of art, decentering, and deconstruction are elements of postmodern culture that reveals a shift or change in value. Morgado (1996) described the *death of art* as is a reaction against the belief that some art forms are superior to others. In fashion, this refers to the “collapse of distinctions between elite, mass, and street fashions” (p. 46). *Decentering* means to encourage reevaluation of the significance of a central element through devaluing it and directing attention to some other hidden element. In fashion this is evidenced by the legitimization of street fashion over other forms of fashion and the profound appearance of ethnic and subcultural styles that were once set apart from the mainstream. Morgado (1996) depicts deconstruction as an analytic method in which assumptions of truth are called into question in order to unveil hidden fictions. In fashion deconstruction is evidenced through wearing clothing differently from what has previously thought to be proper (Morgado, 1996). Morgado (1996) provided the examples of wearing trousers oversized, misbuttoning shirts, or wearing underwear as outerwear. Deconstruction is also a construction technique that overtly exhibits this characteristic of

postmodern culture in which seams that were once hidden are placed on the outside of the garment, rips or tears and exposed zippers are part of the design, (Vinken, 2005).

The elements of postmodern culture evidenced in fashion that relate to historic styles include the *death of progress*, *bricolage*, and *pastiche*. According to Morgado (1996), the *death of progress* means that there has been a loss of confidence in the assumption that progress will lead to a better life. Morgado explained that this belief in the death of progress is partly responsible for the recycling of past looks in fashion and the end of original design inspiration. This perhaps originated from Jameson's (1984) suggestion that all objects in this world draw stylistic influences from things from the past. He believed that there is nothing new under the sun. Morgado described the concept of pastiche as "one of the most characteristic features of postmodern culture" (p.45). She defined the term as something that is imitated out of its original context without irony.

Dress scholars Barnard (2002) and Wilson (1985) applied the term pastiche to retro/revival styles. Barnard (2002) described fashion as pastiche as "the irrational or random cannibalization of all the styles of the past" (p. 178). By this description, there is no implicit significance behind retro/revival fashion. Morgado (1996) described bricolage as a concept related to pastiche and defined it as "the integration of incongruous elements in a work of art" (p. 46). She stated that bricolage and pastiche are evidenced in fashion by an emphasis on ornament and decoration rather than simplicity and function and the placement of opposing style elements in a single outfit such as a tutu and a leather jacket. Morgado (1996), unlike Barnard, did not relate pastiche to historical styles, but wrote that using historical styles out of context is characteristic of bricolage. She pointed out the difference that in the use of historical styles bricolage illustrates playfulness, irony or parody, whereas pastiche does not. Barnard (2002)

clarified the difference between the two terms. Bricolage, unlike pastiche, which carries no meaning, assigns the dress item an entirely new meaning, transforming the style from a historical one to a present one. The item is thus up-to-date and embodies postmodern culture (Barnard, 2002; English, 2007; E. Wilson, 1985). In either case, pastiche or bricolage, the original cultural, historical, and social meaning of the style is lost and the garment is stripped of its historical association and significance.

Wilson (1985) explained that pastiche and retro has depicted the fashion industry since the 1960's. Before the 1960's there had been many times throughout history fashion had drawn on primarily one or two eras of past styles. According to Farrell-Beck and Parsons (2007), fashion began to draw influences from multiple time periods in the 1960's which marked the beginning of the postmodern era (Farrell-Beck & Parsons, 2007). My analysis of fashions in *Vogue* (1968 and 1969) magazine found elements inspired by the Empire Period (1804-1819), Edwardian Period (1900-1909), and 17th century (D. Smith, 2010). However, E. Wilson (1985) and Barnard (2002) noted that fashions of the early nineteenth through the early twentieth century drew influence from past periods such as Renaissance and 17th century styles. The greatest change in fashion during the 1960's was that there was no overreaching and definitive fashion ideal. Fashion conformity no longer existed and fashion began to draw on a multitude of influences creating a large range of styles and the rise of style tribes (Tortora & Eubank, 2010).

Nostalgia.

Barnard (2002), Hall (1994), and E. Wilson (1985), have claimed that forms of fantasy dress such as costume, reenactment dress and retro/revival (depending on the wearer's motivation is essentially historically-inspired dress) are influenced by a nostalgic response to

fast-paced social, political, and economic changes. Fred Davis (1979) defined nostalgia as an emotion like love, jealousy, and fear. Sociologist J.L. Wilson (2005) defined this feeling as a “wistful longing for the past” (p. 23). This feeling is perhaps what Evans (2003) referred to when she stated, “When fashion quotes from the past its backwards looks might be simply nostalgic” (p. 298). However, Hall (1994) believed nostalgia to be a much deeper emotion when he declared that nostalgia is “not simply longing for the past, but a response to conditions in the present” (p.9). Nostalgia is a collectively shared feeling as evidenced by the abundance of nostalgic images in western popular culture (Barnard, 2002; Davis, 1979; E. Wilson, 1985; J. L. Wilson, 2005). Such nostalgic images come from film, music, and literature. For example, in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand, a popular form of music is one that mixes bluegrass with popular Lanna songs which is accompanied by the performer wearing United States cowboy dress (Ferguson, 2010). Northern Thai experiences a collective nostalgia for the Wild West brought about by western movies featuring cowboy dress and music. According to English (2007), the television show *Little House on the Prairie* from the 1970’s not only influenced Laura Ashley’s 19th century pioneer dresses, often referred to as *granny dresses or peasant dresses*, but spiked sales in classic literature which included such novels as *Little Women* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Nostalgia is communicated and spread by mass media and communications such as television, radio, the world wide web, and other high-tech venues (Davis, 1979).

Hall (1994) believed this collective nostalgia to be “manifestations of a sense of powerlessness in the face of rapid changes in the structures with which we make sense of our lives” (p.9). This sense of powerlessness causes individuals and groups to seek comfort in the past. Industrialism, urbanization, rapid technological change, and social instability have been the cause of rapid social change (Evans, 2003). Magelssen (2007), in his study of living history

museums, described these changes as a source of discomfort especially in western society. As a result, individuals or groups turn to a past that seems less stressful and less problematic than the present. Wilson (2005) wrote, “It would seem that nostalgia is especially likely to exist when a society is under pressure, providing a framework for people to think about what is going wrong and what should be done about it. In this instance, nostalgia is ideological to the degree that images of the past are appealing (albeit distorted) and individuals buy into past visions without a great deal of critical appraisal. Rather than deal with reality today, we can retreat to a comfortable past that never existed or that belonged to someone else” (p.45). Individuals do not tend to question the romanticized visions presented to them. It induces a good feeling in which people latch onto. A characteristic of the nostalgic feeling is that individuals tend to overlook the problem areas and issues of society of the time they are romanticizing about (Taddeo & Dvorak, 2007). Because of this tendency, looking to the past is continually appealing.

Nostalgia was an evident influence of the historical designs of the 1990’s by fashion designers Alexander McQueen, Martin Margiela, Victor & Rolf, John Galliano, Comme de Garcons, and Vivienne Westwood who drew from an array of historical periods, particularly the 19th century, as they overtly expressed society’s “anxieties and concerns in the present” (Evans, 2003, p. 10). Other fashion lines that used history for inspiration have resulted from a collective nostalgic feeling. Women’s studies scholar Molloy (2004) wrote that the nostalgic and edgy looks of New Zealand designer collections of the late 1990’s to early 2000s, were influenced by socio-cultural changes. These changes included the Maori renaissance and Asian migration that led to opposition, tension and political reforms imparted by New Zealand’s neo-liberal National Party as it brought about a “marked rise, and even an official adoption of nostalgia” (p.485).

Among the cultural changes experienced in postmodern times, technology, materialism and fast-paced schedules are targeted for being an influence on nostalgia. Dvorak and Taddeo (2007) recognized that “Surveying other types of contemporary heritage projects, some scholars suggest that the past offers comfort to those of us grappling with identity in a multicultural, hi-tech society” (p. 26). This expresses the common belief that the past is a place of fewer complications than the present. The perceived simplicity of the past, specifically its simpler technology, often influences participants’ decisions to participate in the *House* series (Dvorak & Taddeo, 2008, p. 36). Perhaps the more technical an individual’s surroundings, the more prominent their feelings of nostalgia. According to the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) website (1995-2010), many of the medieval reenactment society’s members are those who work in high-tech environments. Such individuals are more compelled to spend their weekend in a setting free of those complications.

Davis (1979) hypothesized that nostalgia is more characteristic of the present than the past. This tendency to seek comfort in the past provides symptoms of the idea that the present is insufficient or unfulfilling which demonstrates an overreaching desire for change. Evans (2003) communicated that when fashion references past times, as seen in retro/revival dress, through emulating past styles of dress, it communicates this desire by indicating a connection or disparity between the past culture’s ideals and those of the present society or culture (Arnold, 2009; Evans, 2003; Lehman, 2000). Many times this refers to societal values that are no longer held (Davis, 1979, p. 99). Because of clothing’s sartorial associations with such times, costumes and historically-inspired dress could be seen as a desire for an ideal lacking in present society (Lehman, 2000). This could express a want for idyllic social values and customs, and political and economic systems. Strauss (2003) found that the Confederate Civil War uniform was

symbolic of the United States government at that time which was less intrusive and controlling before the proclamation to end slavery. This insinuated that the nature of this government led the South's rebellion against the North during the Civil War. According to Strauss (2003), wearing the uniform was a way of expressing these attitudes against a government that is still perceived as intrusive and controlling.

While drawing from the past is characteristic of postmodern fashion and simultaneously a nostalgic response, research has demonstrated there are deeper motivations for wearing historic forms of dress. Turner (1990) and Allred (1996) felt that reenacting was motivated by more than just external social factors. By looking in-depth at Civil War reenactors' motivations, Strauss (2003) demonstrated that reenacting is more than just a postmodern impulse. In his study of the punk subculture, Muggelton (2000) found similar results when he sought to explore the true motivations behind the dress of individual members. Subcultural members were more motivated by their desire for self-expression than the influence of the social factors surrounding them as social theorists had believed. Literature has also revealed that there are a range of motivations for wearing historic styles of dress including retro/revival dress (historically-inspired dress among reenactors, participants in the *House* series, postmodern subcultures such as Goth, Steampunk, and Japanese youth subcultures such as the baby doll Lolita and Gothic Lolita look) (English, 2007).

Motivations for Wearing Historically-Inspired Dress

Motivations for wearing non-reenactment costume, reenactment costume, and postmodern subcultures are discussed in the next section. Motivations uncovered from the

literature provide insight into the possible motivations of participants in my study for wearing historic costume or historically-inspired dress as their personal, everyday style of dress.

Non-reenactment costume.

Some dress studies provided insight into individuals' motivations for dressing in non-reenactment costume. Miller et. al. (1991) found college students dress in Halloween costumes to celebrate the holiday which contributes to the holiday's success. Halloween is a well-known time in which people wear costumes. However, there are other opportunities throughout the year for others to dress in costume aside from historical reenacting and living history museums. Duchesne (2005) wrote that some individuals dress in costume to express *fandom*. These individuals dress up as characters from popular culture films or television shows such as *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Lord of the Rings*, and *Pirates of the Caribbean* at Science Fiction and *Cosplay* (which literally means costume play) conventions (Duchesne, 2005, p. 17). *Cosplay* costumes are usually based more on fantasy characters than on a historic persona. Although participants may also dress in fantastic costume, the focus of my study is narrowed on historic, rather than fantasy, form of dress.

Reenactment costume.

Miller (1998) was the first to explore motivations for wearing historic costume and reenactor dress (Strauss, 2003). Miller (1997, 1998) uncovered individuals' motivations for wearing recreational costume on a regular basis, including historical reenactors and English and Scottish Country dancers who perform historic dances. She accomplished this by designing a survey of seven possible motivations and providing a space for the participants to list others. Among the answers she provided, top responses were love of history, an opportunity to assume another

persona, and an opportunity to escape/ reinforcement of an illusion/fantasy. Miller (1998) wrote that answers provided by the respondents in the “Other” blank included: required by outside source as some participants were required to wear costumes for their professions, fun/enjoyment, sewing skills/handmade costumes, historic aspect of costume/project, comfort/sensory/tactile. For example, some participants were required to wear a medieval merchant costume if they were merchants selling recreated medieval merchandise. Others felt it was just for fun, while some found it was a way of showing off their sewing skills. Some claimed they liked the historic aspect of a specific project, while others felt it was therapeutic. This shows that there is a wide range of personal motivations for wearing costume and reenacting.

Because Miller’s focus was on sex differences in motivations of wearing costume, she pointed out that love of history was the top motivation among male reenactors. Miller speculated further, testing Belk’s (1990) hypothesis from his Halloween study that men seek out socially permissible venues for wearing costume. She found that reenactment even allowed them to express themselves creatively in a way American men’s wardrobes do not. Miller believed that for men, the love of history motivation, served as a veil so they would not have to admit to the appeal of what is thought of to be the feminine activity of dressing up. According to Miller (1998), women felt less reluctance to admit they dress in costume to assume another persona or to escape or reinforce an illusion or fantasy as these motivations were more related to “playing dress-up” which men marked as a feminine activity. Miller (1998) wrote that to assume another persona was among the top-ranked motivations for women dressing in costume. Although this is valuable information in examining socialization of adults, my study will not examine differences in motivations among genders.

Love of history.

Miller's (1998) conclusions that love of history, social bonding, and to express cultural heritage were later supported by Strauss's (2001) study. Strauss found these motivations to be three of the four primary motivations for wearing Confederate Civil War reenactor dress which additionally included an opportunity to play a role "larger than life." These motivations are discussed in depth in the next section as they are evidenced in other reenactment studies.

Both Miller (1998) and Strauss (2001) found that love of history is among the top motivating factors for dressing in historic costume. In an earlier study, Hall (1994) stated that reenactors simply have an interest in the past or wish to preserve history. In the television miniseries *1900 House* (Barker & Ross-Pirie, 2000) participants dressed in turn of the century apparel. They claimed love of history and interest in the past to be their primary motivations for entering into the project.

Individuals could be motivated to dress in historic costume or historically-inspired dress by romanticized views of the past. Dvorak and Taddeo (2007) found this to be true among participants of the *House* series and reported, "many of the volunteers begin their experiments eager to escape their, busy, materialistic lives" (p. 26). Belk and Costa (1998) wrote that the mountain man reenactors are driven by a romanticized set of beliefs that exalts simpler times and values. The romantic appeal of the noble savage living free in the wild draws some mountain men to camp in a teepee in secluded woodlands (Belk & Costa, 1998). The "romantic appeal of the 'underdog' fighting in a 'lost cause' draws some individuals to Civil War reenacting (Strauss, 2003, p. 158). According to Strauss (2003), the South is thought to have been the underdog due to limited resources such as manpower and material and the "lost cause" referred to maintaining

white hegemony. The South not only lost the Civil War, but was viewed to have little chance of winning in the first place. Because of this, the southern soldier can be seen as nobler than the northern soldier (Strauss, 2003). These romantic notions of the past could contribute to their interest in history and drive them to wear the dress of the times they romanticize.

A larger than life role.

Among the top motivations for reenacting Strauss (2001) found that for participants it was “an opportunity to play a role ‘larger than life,’” (p. 150). Through costume, reenactors can take on a role that allows them to express a part of themselves that daily life does not allow. Strauss (2003) found this to be true and described it in relation to Goffman’s (1959) idea that the part of the self we reveal is dependent on one of the many roles we play. Strauss (2003) stated, “Confederate reenacting could be viewed as a way of expressing a particular dimension of an individual’s self- the one unhappy with the erosion of white hegemony in United States” (p.150).

As reenactors seek to express a part of themselves, they express through dress underlying mythologies, ideologies, beliefs and ethos. Strauss (2001) found that the symbolic nature of reenactment costume-as it allows for the expression of these things-alone serves as a motivating factor. Belk and Costa (1998) wrote, “Donning mountain man clothing is more than pretending to step back in time; it is seen as partaking of a deeply rooted American mythology. This mythology emphasizes values of freedom and independence more than worldly success and material achievement” (p.234). According to Belk and Costa (1998) mountain men reenactors express their desire for a more rugged and mystical way of life through objects, dress, appearance, manner, and grooming, all of which are signs of their ethos or guiding beliefs. Belk and Costa (1998) stated, “This ethos involves a desire for natural open spaces in the mountains,

as well as freedom from government, bureaucracy, rushed schedules, and imposed obligations” (p. 235). My participants, like mountain men, may use historically-inspired dress to partake to express ethos or mythologies.

Through reenacting some seek to express a nobler or ideal self (Belk & Costa, 1998; Hall, 1994). Other reenactors admitted they want to be closer to who they truly are (Handler & Saxton, 1988; Miller, 1998; Strauss, 2003). In both cases, there exists a search for self (Belk & Costa, 1998; Handler & Saxton, 1988, p. 243; Turner, 1990, p. 134). Because costume allows individuals to express certain ideologies, values, and beliefs that they are unable to in modern, daily life, individuals gain an ideal sense of self through wearing costumes of the time in which they would ideally live. Turner (1990) argued that, “This is a process of self-exploration and confirmation. What the Civil War was about-the issues it raised, the world it encapsulated, and the sense people have made of the world-form themes of this self-examination. Within this vast realm of meaning individuals discover the themes that apply to themselves and their lives. Individuals’ values find expression, and reenacting becomes an important celebration of each person’s identity” (p. 134).

Belk and Costa (1998) recognized that mountain man ethos is not just communicated during reenactment as some aspects of appearance and manner are retained in their daily lives. For example, mountain men maintain long hair and beards outside participation of mountain men events and rituals, and by doing so they are symbolically communicating these ideals and preferences (p. 235). In other words their ethos is a lasting part of the self that is communicated through dress whether they are in full costume or not. Participants in my study may be similar in that they-like mountain men- could choose to create an identity based on the past through dress and appearance and incorporate it into their overall, lasting self. Thus when individuals dress in

costume, they may be communicating underlying opinions and beliefs that could potentially be self-concepts. Through historic costume, mountain men and Confederate reenactors, were given the opportunity to symbolically present hidden parts of the self: beliefs, opinions, mythologies, and ethos. My study explored the aspects of the self such as ideologies, values, and ethos, etc., that historically-inspired dress reveals.

Other motivations.

Other motivations found among reenactors was social bonding and to express cultural heritage (Miller, 1998; Strauss, 2001, 2003; Turner, 1990). The Confederate uniform allows reenactors who themselves or their ancestors were born and raised in the South-to celebrate their ancestry (Strauss, 2001, 2003). Some individuals reenact simply to spend time with friends. Belk and Costa (1998) explained that reenactment actions such as dressing in mountain men clothes, eating period food, and speaking differently within a group than they would outside of it create a sense of community within modern mountain men settings (p. 231). Turner (1990) was the first to recognize this as a motivation for reenacting when he wrote, “For some it is a political statement, for others an affirmation of cultural identity, a complex and intriguing game, an opportunity to go camping and get drunk with friends, an alternative to a dreary existence, a ‘thing to do’ in a social set, or a fascinating window on a world they know from books and photographs but have never participated in as an experienced reality”(130).

Reenactors reenact for a variety of reasons: love of history usually based on romanticized views of the past to become an ideal/nobler self, to express a part of themselves through a distinguished role such as a Confederate Civil War reenactor, and/or to spend time with friends, and/or to express cultural heritage. It must be noted that motivations for reenacting and the

wearing of costume are not clearly delineated. Costumes are usually worn in clear socially-acceptable venues in the case of Halloween where costume is coupled with celebratory behaviors and reenactment settings where individuals not only wear costume but partake in behaviors such as mock battles (Miller, et al., 1991). To my knowledge no research has been conducted on costume that is worn out of context; outside the settings in which society has deemed acceptable. Exploring the motivations of subcultures who wear historical styles outside of the settings of reenactment, science fiction conventions, and Halloween celebrations can provide insight into why individuals adopt a historical style as a personal style of dress.

Motivations of historically-inspired dress among subcultures.

Subcultures can be defined by Polhemus's (1994) description of style tribes, the term he used for subcultures. He stated that members of style tribes share similar ideas and ideals as well as clothing style choices. Barnard (2007) explained that subcultural members use dress to both construct their identity as well as communicate the cultural values and beliefs they share. Scholars have explored the symbolic nature of historical styles of dress among subcultural groups (Brill, 2008; Burstein, 2007; English, 2007; Gagnier, 2007; Plessis, 2007; Schraffenberger, 2007; Steele, 2001). Goth, Japanese Gothic Lolita, and Steampunk, among others, appropriate garments inspired from history. Literature on the Goth subculture provides the most extensive information regarding motivations for appropriating historical styles of dress. Although there are a range of Goth styles, the subculture is most noted for its appropriation of garments inspired by the nineteenth century (Gagnier, 2007; Steele & Park, 2008). According to Brill (2008) the Middle Ages Goth in Germany draw fashion and music influences from the Middle Ages time period.

Goths, like reenactors, have an interest in the past. However, their interest stems not so much from history and historical events, but from an interest in historical art forms such as fine art, literature, architecture, music, and films of the past (Plessis, 2007). This interest is reflected in their fashion. The Gothic novel *Dracula*, whose lead character, “Dracula,” is an important figure in the subculture and Goth dress is usually inspired by the nineteenth century, the era in which the tale is set (Gagnier, 2007, pp. 293-304). Popular dress items among the subculture include corsets, trench coats, and Gothic crosses (Burstein, 2007).

Spooner (2004) found that Goth dress is not merely a reflection of their interests but is central to their gothic identity and psyche. For this reason examination of Goth dress is beneficial to the present study. This interest in historic art forms suggests Goth’s find the aesthetic of the past appealing. Brill (2008) wrote that there are different kinds of Goth. One group differs from the better-known nineteenth century-inspired Goths in that they exert a strong interest in the Middle Ages time period, medieval costume, and music. The one thing Goth and Middle Ages Goth groups have in common is an aesthetic of the past. In an interview with Burstein (2007), Valerie Steele, a prestigious scholar in the field of dress, described Goth dress as having an “old-world” feel:

The clothing elements tend to draw on a couple of historical paradigms, one being a kind of medieval-Renaissance, ‘old-world’ thing. But that’s less important than Victoriana. That seems to be as far old-world as most Goths [sic] are really interested in. The idea is something not modern, old fashioned (264).

Steele and Park (2008) pointed out that Gothic dress’s reference to the past is “deliberate pastiche” (p. 37). In addition to their general interest in the past, Ted Polhemous (1994) a scholar who specialized in the study of style tribes, claimed that the extravagant historical styles were a translation of fetishism. Within the subculture members tend to appear more feminine or

androgynous, since some men wear make-up and skirts (Steele & Park, 2008). This aesthetic is also seen as a different ideal of beauty. In an interview with a Goth, Evan Michelson, reported by Steele and Park (2008), found that the Goth aesthetic “is about an alternative kind of beauty that was never acceptable in mainstream society” (p.47).

Schraffenberger (2007) analyzed this interest in a past aesthetic, hinting that Goths are not inspired by aesthetic alone, but are motivated by a desire for another world. Schraffenberger (2007) wrote:

The use of the macabre in goth [sic] should be understood as expressing a desire for some other world, rather than for the extinction of self that actual death implies. Goth style anesthetizes the world, permitting its adherents to live a fantasy of beauty and adventure where men can wear lace and women can wear leather pants and corsets, where renaissance and romantic-era clothing are seamlessly combined with piercings and tattoos (p. 139-141).

The aesthetic expresses a desire for a better world, where individuals can freely express themselves. This better world could be seen as the fictional past in which Vinken (2005) described *mode de cent ans* as a style that in addition to retreating to an ideal time, it retreats into another place. She described the style by adding, “It delights in the evocations of the kind of distant exotic fairytale lands” (67). English (2007) argues that some Japanese street styles such as the baby doll Lolita and Gothic Lolita that draw influence from the Victorian era also exemplifies this retreat to a fictional past. According to Steele and Park (2008) a typical outfit for an Elegant Gothic Lolita would include a ruffled knee-length Victorian-style dress worn with crinoline, parasol, bonnet, and platform mary-janes. Men who adopt the style are referred to as an Elegant Goth Aristocrat and wear a Victorian-style coat, top hat, black nail polish and jewelry. Wearers of this type of dress are largely those who listen to visual-kei, Japanese pop

rock groups that wear costumes on stage and/or participate in Cosplay and are usually young women (Steele & Park, 2008).

Another subculture that wears historically-inspired dress is Steampunk. Literature on Steampunk has largely been conducted on the subculture's literature in which the subculture originated as a science fiction subgenre (Guizzo, 2008; Hantke, 1999; Kendrick, 2009; Latham, 2009; VanderMeer & VanderMeer, 2008). One article discusses the technological artifacts of the subculture (Guizzo, 2008). Steampunk novels use the Victorian time period as a setting which creates an imaginary/fictional past and focuses on technology (Hantke, 1999). Within these novels the nineteenth-century English, highly romanticized and technological aesthetic is vividly described (Guizzo, 2008). Some scholars as well as popular press/publication magazine articles have recently turned their attention to Steampunk dress, recognizing how it reflects the aesthetic Steampunk literature describes (Ewen, 2010; Grossman & Moskowitz, 2009; Rowe, 2008; Steele & Park, 2008). The style is a mix between Victorian and Edwardian-inspired dress items and industrial materials such as wood, brass, and leather (Ewen, 2010; Grossman & Moskowitz, 2009). Steele and Park (2008) wrote that Steampunk is also an outgrowth of Goth and Cyberpunk (a more industrial Goth style in which wearers exhibit an interest in technology) that originated in Seattle and Portland. Steele and Park stated, "The Steam Punk [sic] look is one of the Victorian dandy, the Victorian tradesman, the lady of flight, all filtered through industrial steam technology and Punk" (p. 106). Members of Steampunk typically wear antique goggles worn on top of hats, flight caps, and Victorian-style clothing in heavy black canvas or leather (Steele & Park, 2008).

Ewen (2010), Grossman and Moskowitz (2009), and Steele and Park (2008) speculated about socio-cultural influences for the Steampunk aesthetic. Ewen (2010) reported that the do-it-

yourself (DIY) element is brought about by the recent recession. She also hinted that members express countercultural ideals when she stated, “Steampunk is a whole new kind of retro rebellion” (Ewen, 2010, p.199). Grossman and Moskowitz (2009) suggested that the Steampunk aesthetic is a reaction against the compact, clean, simplistic designs of modern technologies. They explained that Steampunk members redesign iPhones and other consumer appliances in period-specific materials such as brass and wood exposing pipes and gears. Grossman and Moskowitz (2009) reported that Steampunk novelist Scott Westerfeld stated his opinions of the motivation behind this aesthetic, “We miss that visceral appeal of the machine” “Plus, those Victorians dressed a lot better than we do” (p. 84). This suggest that technology and present-day dress are characterized by clean sharp lines requiring little artistic imagination and that some feel Victorian dress is more beautiful than that of present-day. Steele and Park (2008) hypothesized that the motivation behind the style was more than mere aesthetics, “Steam Punk [sic] is not a nostalgic evocation of upper-class neo-Victoriana but rather an aesthetic technological movement with anarchist undertones, linking punk’s aggressive do-it-yourself ethic with an evocation of an ancestral gallery of absinthe addicts, dandies, and mad inventors” (p. 108). To date, there is little scholarly information focusing on Steampunk dress. However, existing information regarding Steampunk literature and technology provides some insight into the subcultural members’ motivations.

While it is clear that subcultures such as Goth and Steampunk share values and aesthetic ideals, Muggleton (2000) found that individuals among the Punk subculture were hesitant to ascribe themselves to any one subculture, claiming that they were mostly communicating their individual identities. Among those Muggleton (2000) interviewed, the values of individuality, freedom, and the romantic sensibilities of pleasure and play were evident among participants in

his study. He explained “It [sense of individual freedom] is derived from the cultural belief system of Romanticism, in which emphasis is placed on giving full expression to the creative potential of the unique individual” (p. 160). Muggleton (2000) also explained that individuals with this sense of individual freedom exercise the values of license and liberation when experimenting with dress, “License can be understood here as the freedom to express oneself. Liberation is the freedom from those social and cultural constraints that inhibit and prohibit this self-expression (p.159). This sense of individual freedom is usually accompanied by the romantic sensibilities of pleasure and play (Muggleton, 2000). Sensibilities of pleasure and play further motivated the participants to create their own style through experimentation. This creation of style among subcultural members is often one that carries the do-it-yourself (DIY) aesthetic. This is what Vainshtein (2009) referred to as *self-fashioning* in which individuals may make their own clothing or alter them to suit their tastes. It was thought that participants of the present study might have illustrated these sensibilities through fashioning and developing their historically-inspired style of dress.

Summary

This review of literature has sought to provide insight into the possible influences and motivations of individuals who chose historically-inspired dress as a continual expression and part of the self. It has also demonstrated that specific historical styles hold significant personal meaning to the wearer and communicates ideologies, values, beliefs, and ethos held by the wearer. In addition, the review of literature discussed that other identity markers such as period furniture aids in communicating and constructing a historic persona.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Objectives

I performed qualitative case studies to achieve the following objectives:

- To explore the motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis
- To explore the meanings of specific period styles of historically-inspired dress to the wearer which include ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed/communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress
- To explore other identity markers that aid in constructing the wearers' identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material culture) and their connection with the wearer's dress style

Methodology

Qualitative case studies were performed to explore individuals' personal motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress, to explore the meanings of historically-inspired dress, and to explore the connection between the individuals' natural settings and dress styles. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) defined a case study as "A type of qualitative research in which in-depth data are gathered relative to a single individual, program, or event, for the purpose of learning more about

an unknown or poorly understood situation” (p.108). Case studies usually involve one or a very small amount of subjects within their natural settings in order to study them in-depth (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). This case study involved three participants. Case studies are ideal for research of dress, especially regarding the relationship between dress and identity. Rawlins (2006) conducted a case study interviewing four mother/daughter pairs to determine the role mothers play in their daughter’s fashion choices and subsequently their daughters’ construction of identity. The study found that the mothers mediated the type of clothing worn within distinctive public and private settings.

Case studies were chosen as a methodology to examine the meanings of and motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress because they could yield unexpected results about the relatively unexplored phenomena. Lomas (2009) used a case-study approach to examine the dress and shopping influences and experiences of three gay men in London in the 1950’s through the 1970’s. By using this approach, Lomas found several unanticipated conclusions. For instance, she found their shopping influences and experiences were not shaped primarily by their gay identity, but also due to socio-cultural and economic factors and overall changes in the menswear industry. Because historically-inspired dress as a personal style choice is a new topic in the field of dress, these case studies revealed some information unanticipated by the researcher.

Data collection

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), a range of data collection methods are used for case studies and include “observations, interviews, appropriate written documents and/or audiovisual material” (p.146). My chosen methods of data collection were triangulation and full

field notes. The collection of multiple forms of data is referred to as triangulation. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) defined triangulation as, “multiple sources of data are collected with the hope that they will all converge to support a particular hypothesis or theory” (p. 99). By analyzing and cross checking different forms of data, for example, clothing samples, videos, photographs, and interview notes, themes or patterns were more evident.

Flynn and Foster (2009) defined full field notes as “mental notes, jotted logs/notes, and other data including observation notes, photographs, transcribed interviews, notes taken in an interview” (p.306). Full field notes have been used in studies in dress utilizing an ethnographic approach. Baxter and Marina (2008) studied the dress of an African American male youth subculture within a New Orleans high school to understand notions that styles of dress which involve saggy pants were expressions of resistance and deviance against school officials. The researchers collected data via full field notes that included transcribed taped interviews and personal observations which upon analysis lent proof that the style was much more complex. According to Baxter and Marina (2008), “Subcultural styles like wearing sagging black pants manifest an ambiguous cocktail of resistance and acceptance of hegemonic ideals and reveal the contradictory fashion and behavioral codes of contending status orders that validate identities” (p. 93). Although, my study was not an ethnographic study, full field notes were beneficial in providing a more complete understanding of the case studies.

In my study, three individuals were observed. I conducted semi-structured, in depth interviews to explore their motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress and if it was important in portraying their identity. I also observed the participants in their homes, mostly their living rooms. This was done to examine other identity markers that aid in constructing their identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material

culture). In addition, participants were asked to present photographs and wardrobe samples and discuss in detail the motivations for selecting them. Kim and Farrell-Beck (2005) was successful in determining relationships between cultural values and appearance in the United States and South Korea in the 1970's by using multiple means of data collection which included personal interviews, photographs, and clothing samples.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), multiple methods of data collection are more likely to reveal unanticipated information. By utilizing such sources as the retail trade publication "Men's Wear," along with participant interviews, photographs and apparel samples, Lomas (2009) found that class, occupation, and age, in addition to sexuality, were factors that influenced where they chose to shop. By using interviews along with observations and photographs, I gained greater understanding of the individuals' personal motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis and the meanings of pieces of historically-inspired dress to the wearer. I also used the data to explore the ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed/communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress and other identity markers that aid in constructing the wearers' identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material culture) and their connection with the wearer's dress style, and also to ensure validity by cross-checking these forms of data.

I attempted to locate participants through networking via various organizational sites in which members wear historic styles of fantastic dress and costume regularly. These websites include *Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA)* (1995-2010) *Yahoo!* groups and *Facebook* (2010) fan pages and of subcultural groups such as Goth and Steampunk, as well as other social networking sites for history lovers such as *The Asylum for the Chronologically Dislocated* (McCracken, 2011) and *Blogspot.com* (1999-2010). Although I tried to recruit potential

participants via email, letter/regular mail, or telephone conversations, all participants were found and contacted through existing personal relationships.

Data analysis

Data analysis took place in the form of narrative analysis. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010) methods of data analysis for case studies include “categorization and interpretation of data in terms of common themes or synthesis into an overall portrait of the case(s)” (p. 146). This organization of data or results is often referred to as coding involved categorizing pieces of data to narrative statements known as codes representative of themes that emerge from the data itself (Flynn & Foster, 2009; Kim & Farrell-Beck, 2005; Watson Freeman, Blanco, Hunt-Hurst, & Medvedev, 2010). In Watson Freeman, et al.,’s study, “Data were coded looking for common themes, categories, or characteristics obtained by repeated readings of the data on a word-to-word, line-by-line, or incident-to-incident basis” (p. 962). Another form of coding is open coding which involves categorizing and breaking data or results into broad themes. The constant comparative method is as a way to compare themes among the data or results. Kim and Farrell-Beck utilized open coding along with the constant comparative method to identify and compare themes among individuals in the U.S. and Korean cultures.

Coding was also used to analyze full field notes that contained descriptions of the individual’s home décor in their natural setting. These field notes were analyzed to determine any relationships between the wearer’s environment and dress style. For instance, objects in the home including furniture, art, linens, etc., were noted if they appeared to be similar in style or influenced by similar time periods as the individual’s style of dress.

I used a data analysis method described by Yin (1994) to draw overall conclusions for the study. This method analyzes multiple case studies in which each unit of data is examined within each case individually and then compared across each case. Yin (1994) wrote, "...The conclusions drawn for the multiple cases can become the conclusions for the overall study" (p. 120). In analyzing my results I first examined each individual's motivations regarding historically-inspired dress. I also identified the specific time periods from which their clothing is inspired, the meaning they attached to their dress, and analyzed any connection between the individual's natural setting and dress style. I then categorized the results into themes. After examining each case individually, I compared the data among all cases to draw overall conclusions. This included identifying shared characteristics among all the participants. These characteristics included the underwriting of ideologies, values, beliefs, ethos, and other motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress, the use of historic associations of specific period styles to attach and communicate personal meaning to the individuals' dress, and the connection between the individuals' dress styles and natural settings.

Interview protocol

The interview protocol questions were designed to collect data relative to the first two objectives of my study: 1) To explore the motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis and 2) To explore the meanings of specific period styles of historically-inspired dress to the wearer which include ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed/communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress. The results from observations and field notes were analyzed to fulfill the third objective: To explore other identity markers that aid in constructing the wearers' identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material culture) and their connection with the wearer's dress style.

The interview protocol for this study is located in Appendix B. Some interview protocol questions were based on Miller's (1997) findings of common motivations for wearing costumes which include love of history, an opportunity to assume another persona, and an opportunity to escape/reinforcement of an illusion/fantasy. These were used to collect data that led to the exploration of the motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis. These questions are indicated by an asterisk (*). Questions were drawn from Muggleton's (2000) study where he found that participants who dressed in subcultural styles valued individualistic self-expression, and did not identify themselves with any one subculture. Muggleton's (2000) interview questions provided insight into subcultural members' personal motivations for wearing Punk dress styles. These questions were used in my study to explore the motivations and personal meanings of specific period styles of historically-inspired dress to the wearer. These questions were also used to explore ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed/communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress. These questions are indicated by a bolded asterisk (*).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Case studies were performed in which three participants, two male and one female, all United States residents were interviewed in depth and observed in their residences. Participants were selected because they either wear clothing that is similar in cut or design to those of other time periods or wear modern garments with historical styling and/or intentionality. They also draw from the past to develop their clothing style or select clothing pieces based on their original meaning. Although there were no limitations based on age, the three participants fall within the age range from 24-35 years. I will briefly describe the findings in narrative form. Complete transcripts are provided Appendix C-E. The objectives of the study were to explore the motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis, to explore the meanings of specific period styles of historically-inspired dress to the wearer which include ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed/communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress, and to explore other identity markers that aid in constructing the wearers' identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material culture) and their connection with the wearer's dress style.

Data analysis took place in the form of coding, a form of narrative analysis where common themes that emerge from the data will be identified, categorized, and compared. This study utilized a form of coding described by Maxwell (2005), in which the results were categorized into broad themes. The results from both the interviews and observations were

categorized to narrative words or statements known as codes representing themes that emerge from the data itself (Flynn & Foster, 2009; Kim & Farrell-Beck, 2005; Watson Freeman, et al., 2010). These codes are presented as headings which include the names of each participant, *Lane*, *Lara*, and *Devin*. The headings beneath each participant's name are specific results to the individual it proceeds. These codes include *stylistic influences*, *motivations*, *meanings*, *communication*, and *other identity markers*.

In addition to coding, I used the case study analysis method described by Yin (1994), in which multiple case studies are analyzed individually, then compared with other cases to arrive at overall conclusions. In analyzing my results, I first examined each individual's motivations regarding historically-inspired dress. This involved identifying the specific time periods from which their clothing is inspired, the meaning they attached to their dress, and what they intended to communicate. I also identified connections between the individual's natural setting and dress style. I then categorized the results into themes and compared the results among all cases, which ultimately led me to draw the overall conclusions. These conclusions are listed as Finding 1, finding 2, etc.

Lane

Lane's style of dress consists of a range of historically-inspired styles. Because 1930s and 1940s influences are the most evident in his dress as well as his most prominent and favored style, it was the main focus in his narrative. Lane also draws from other time periods such as the 1970s. In addition, Lane also chooses to wear kilts with peasant tops as a casual alternative. This outfit is pictured in Figure 4.1.

Although the present study does not focus on the physical aspects of dress items, it is worth noting that Lane described his clothing as "modern" while explaining that he draws on

historical influences to achieve a 1930s and 1940s styling. These influences are evident in both Figure 4.2 and a description of a different suit, his four-button FUBU suit with “ghost stripes.” For example, he described it as “extremely modern” then explained that he would wear it with a pair of spats over a pair of well-shined shoes, a hat, and a cane (Appendix C, p. 158).

Lane wears historically-inspired dress on a near-daily basis. He serves as a First Lieutenant in the Mississippi Army National Guard in which requires him to be in uniform during working hours. In addition, he works as a security manager at a casino. Because the casino’s dress code is business casual, he exhibits a level of freedom of expression in his dress. However, Lane communicated that he was asked to tone down his dress because the suit he wore to work, his “gangster stripe” suit in which he usually applies 1930s-1940s-styling, is not professional. Lane believes the suit makes him look like he is “going to go rob a bank” rather than do business (Appendix C, p. 166). This suit is pictured in Figure 4.2.

Stylistic influences.

Lane’s style reaches beyond historical ones. Characters from popular culture played a role in developing his historically-inspired dress style. His style began with a decision to wear black suits with black ties like those of *The Blues Brothers* (Landis, 1980), Agent Smith from *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999), and *Men in Black* (Sonnenfeld, 1997). He explained that the versatility of the black suit appealed to him. For example Lane explained:

There’s little things you can do. Like Agent Smith always wore snazzy sunglasses and a gold tie clip, ah, the blues brothers had a Ray-Ban Wayfarer sunglasses and white socks when they dressed up... *Men in Black* (Sonnenfeld, 1997) just wore the same thing throughout every movie so, I guess, you know, the black suit was a great place to start, cause you can go to a funeral, you can go to a party, equally, you could be equally well-dressed for either one (Appendix C, p. 143).



Figure 4.1

Kilt paired with a peasant top.



Figure 4.2

Lane's 1930's/40's-inspired "gangster suit."

Lane demonstrated that his style was progressive as he explained that he began to add color, pattern, and new accessories such as hats. He also began buying and wearing items that he felt “looked really good” (Appendix C, p. 142). Although Lane could not name any other individuals or popular culture icons that influenced his dress style, it became clear throughout the interview that his self-styling was influenced by his perceptions of 1930s and 1940s criminals which was the focus of his narrative.

Motivations.

Lane has four motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. Lane always likes to look his best. Lane feels he can achieve this through historically-inspired dress. For Lane, this care over his appearance is a sign of self-respect, a quality that is important to him. He also uses historically-inspired dress to convey what he believes to be attitudes from 1930s and 1940s, the time periods in which he models his dress. Individualistic self-expression and the ability to assume another persona are also among Lane’s motivations. It should be noted that on the day of the interview, Lane was dressed casually, wearing his favorite t-shirt and a pair of boot-cut jeans. He explained that although it was one of two days off, he was busy with tasks around the apartment in which he was preparing for his work-week.

Lane chooses to dress in 1930s and 1940s-inspired suits because he feels they serve as an adequate medium for him to look his best as they allow him to present himself publicly in a more formal manner. Lane demonstrated that he prefers to “dress up” in suits, rather than wear casual t-shirts and jeans. This was made evident with his comments regarding his casual outfit he wore on the day of the interview, “Um, well you see what I’ve got on now, and I, you know, honestly just didn’t have anything else to wear. I wouldn’t go out like this” (Appendix C, p. 144) and “I

won't go outside the door like I am now. If I didn't have so much to do, I would make sure I was dressed properly to receive a visitor" (Appendix C, p. 150). Lane feels that his formal style communicates self-respect. He explained:

Well. I look back at the thirties and forties back when if a man wanted to go outside and go do something he had, he had to put on a suit and a tie, wear a hat, and he would, you know, he would present himself to the world in, in, in his best, looking his best. Always (Appendix C, p. 141).

Lane often finds the dress style of criminals of the period appealing and explained that he thought even criminals' dress of the time communicated a sense of self-respect, "I mean, the criminals of the thirties wore flashy pinstripe suits that were always cut to fit correctly...I miss the days when people respected themselves whether they were criminal or legally-minded" (Appendix C, p. 141).

Past attitudes also serve as a motivation for Lane to adopt this style of dress. Lane feels that in the past people generally upheld more optimistic attitudes. He feels these attitudes contrast with negative attitudes and feelings of uncertainty that people tend to exert and experience today. Lane expressed his opinions regarding the attitudes of both the past and present:

There was a very grim determination back in those days that yes, the times were bad, but . . . we are going to tackle them. We're going to deal with them like grown-ups instead of whining about how dysfunctional everybody is and take Prozac (Appendix C, p. 151).

Lane also uses historically-inspired dress for individualistic self-expression. When asked "Is there something more to all this/ the way you look?" Lane initially responded by stating, "I don't know. I don't know. I think everybody's got reasons for wearing what they want to wear" (Appendix C, p. 162). His response included several hypothetical questions regarding why subcultures such as Ravers and Emos wear the things they wear and why women engage in body

piercing, etc. While he feels that many people dress a certain way to fit into a group, he stated that he does not dress this way for that reason. Instead Lane dresses in historically-inspired suits to express himself individualistically, “For my own part, I don’t really care whether or not I belong to a certain group. I just like dressing the way I dress because that’s how I feel best in any given time” (Appendix C, p. 162).

Although Lane’s most common styling is one of 1930s/1940s gangster, Lane sometimes changes the styling of his suits to assume another persona. Lane identified his style of dress as a “personal statement” (Appendix C, p. 144). He jokingly explained, “If I’m in a suit and I wanna look like a gangster or a pimp or, or a businessman or a preacher or whatever, um, you know, I know how to dress to convey those impressions” (Appendix C, p. 144). Lane described his favorite outfit, his four-button FUBU striped suit, in terms of the impression it allows him to portray:

That’s the suit. If I were really, if I were really a criminal and wanted to wear something in which to beat the living snot out of somebody, that’s the suit I would pick. I’ve also got a pair of spats, ah, that I wear over a pair of some well-shined shoes, and I, I’ve got that. I bought a hat...that suit with that hat with a pair of spats and get my cane and just take delight in beating somebody senseless. Because that would be the suit to do it in (Appendix C, p. 158-159).

Evidence suggests that Lane wears his kilt to assume another persona as well. He admitted that when he wears a kilt, he feels like a Scotsman of the past, “I just want to walk hacking and slashing into a platoon of Englishman with a six foot broad sword in which I’m the only one left standing” (Appendix C, p. 145). It must be noted that Lane does not intend to, nor does he take on the violent actions he describes. In fact, his descriptions of these actions provided insight into his perceptions of 1930s and 1940s gangsters and Scotsmen which account for why he may feel

he can take on these figures' images by wearing their clothes. Also, when he described what his feelings gained from wearing various clothing styles, he did so in a humorous tone.

Meanings.

Lane's dress carries personal meaning. First of all, dressing in suits enables him to express his value in being human, "The suit basically marks me as a human being. . . A person who is, whose got intrinsic value . . . by virtue of his humanity. Um I, I dress in a suit, I feel human" (Appendix C, p. 149). It also reflects Lane's ideal that there is more to being human than accepting the mundane. Lane described himself as "Don Quixote, Lord of La Mancha," a character who believes in things that do not or rarely exist today such as chivalry (Leigh, Wasserman, & Darion, 1966). When asked why he described himself this way he responded:

Because I believe that it is a lot more effort . . . to bring about the unrealistic ideals than it is to simply accept the hum drum and every day. Especially when acceptance comes at a price of basically giving up everything it means to be a person and just becoming a statistic (Appendix C, p. 140).

Secondly, Lane indicated that the idea of self-respect is something he values the most:

The whole thing about self-respect though, I, it's important to me because for the longest time, I didn't really have a whole lot of self-respect, which in and of itself is a pretty sad thing, but the fact of the matter is, I didn't know that I had self-respect. So...once I realized both that I was missing it, and it was a thing I hadn't had much of in the first place, it was like a revelation, then when I found my self-respect again. I was amazed. It was one of the greatest days of my life" (Appendix C, p. 159).

For Lane, his 1930s/1940s style is meaningful to him because it symbolizes self-respect. Lane's kilts are meaningful to him because they make him feel "superhuman" and "the most dangerous man alive" (Appendix C, p. 149).

Communication.

It is clear that Lane intends to communicate self-respect through his dress. When asked what he was intending to say through dress, Lane's response was "I'm really not trying to say much of anything other than, I guess, 'Hey look at me! . . . You can look like this too IF YOU respect yourself!'" (Appendix C, p. 159). However, responses to the questions "Do you feel like you are traveling back in time when you dress this way?" and "Does it make you feel like you are part of a different /better world or place?" suggest that he also means to challenge others to adopt attitudes and ideals from a different time and dress in a way that exhibits self-respect. Lane feels like he is an "an ambassador from another time" by bringing back the attitudes of the time in which he is dressing (Appendix C, p. 148). He feels that if he can "catch some people's imaginations" and get them to think that change is due, then some of the older attitudes can be revived, as well as help others "find their self-respect" (Appendix C, p. 147). Lane felt that by dressing from a former time, he could encourage others to adopt attitudes connected to that time, which could lead them to finding their self-respect, which to Lane, may mean adopting a more formal, self-respecting form of dress.

What Lane means to communicate is not always what people perceive. When asked, "So what do you think these clothing say about you...what do you think others say when they see you walking down the street?", he responded, " Well I've been asked if I'm a preacher. I've been asked if I'm a businessman. I've been asked if I'm selling something. I've been asked if I'm Jewish" (Appendix C, p. 160). He said that others would describe him differently than he would describe himself:

Oh, I've been, ah, people called me the suit guy all through college. And some still remember me that way. I've also been called the kilt guy. Um, chances are if you go to

USM [The University of Southern Mississippi] and ask somebody about the suit guy you would run into somebody or somebody who knew or somebody who knows the stories. ‘Yeah, there’s this guy who wears a zoot suit every day’ (Appendix C, p. 161).

Lane explained that he has never owned a zoot suit (although he had always wanted to) but others would mistake his 1930s and 1940s styling for a zoot suit. He also stated that others would say that he looked like *The Blues Brothers* (Landis, 1980).

Other identity markers.

With the exception of a medieval-looking dagger mounted on a wood plaque on his right wall, Lane did not have any identity markers within his living space that connected to his historically-inspired dress style. Most of Lane’s personal belongings were placed in the study/laundry room of a three bedroom apartment apart from the living room, a space that was primarily utilized by his roommates. Within this space sat a couch, an ironing board, coffee table, and a big screen television. The washer and dryer were situated on the right wall below the dagger. On the left wall was a window with a small book and media case below it.

Lara

Lara’s personal style draws from a range of time periods that include her favorite time period 1876-1883, but also the 1690s, the 1930s, the 1950s, and “bits and pieces of any other time period” (Appendix D, p. 184). At times her outfits consist of corsets, long skirts, or one of her two bustle dresses. Examples of these styles are pictured in Figures 4.3 and 4.4. Lara stated that she dresses in 1930s-inspired dress most often. Some of her 1930s-inspired dress items include vintage pieces from the 1970s with influences from the period. 1930s-inspired clothing includes bias cut dresses, dresses, pants, and a robe. She is pictured wearing some of these dress items in Figures 4.5-4.7. Figure 4.8 shows Lara wearing a typical outfit with influences from

multiple time periods. Recently Lara has found herself dressing in 1950s styles consisting of short skirts in which she wears her nineteenth century corsets beneath to add to the fashionable silhouette of the period.

Stylistic Influences.

Lara's wardrobe is comprised of a mixture of vintage pieces, contemporary pieces and a few home-made historically-inspired pieces. Lara achieves her historical-inspired style mainly by altering the pieces she has bought or inherited to fit her and combining them in a way that makes them appear to be historical. Lara's hairstyle is also historically-inspired. Because her hair is currently four and a half feet long, she wears it in a 1930s style in which a braid is wrapped around her head and tied into a bun in the back. She soon plans to get a 1940s style haircut that will enable her to execute fashionable styles of that era such as pin curls and victory rolls as well as 1930s finger waves.

Motivations.

Lara claimed that she wears historically-inspired dress because she prefers the historic aesthetic. She takes interest in history and historic fashion. She stated these interests are primarily a result of childhood influences. Lara claimed she was motivated primarily by the aesthetic value of historically-inspired dress. When asked, "Why do you dress this way?" Lara responded, "Well, I find it aesthetically pleasing... I feel like a lot of the aesthetics of the past are just in line with mine" (Appendix D, p. 168). When asked if there was more to it than the way she looked, Lara reiterated that her fashion choices were just another area of life in which she applied the "lenses of history" (Appendix D, p. 184). Later in the interview, she was asked how she compared the aesthetic of past styles versus present day styles.



Figure 4.3.

Bustle dress.



Figure 4.4.
Corset and long skirt.



Figure 4.5

Double-breasted 1930s-inspired dress.



Figure 4.6.
1930s- inspired dress.



Figure 4.7

1930s-style pants Lara sewed herself.



Figure 4.8
Typical outfit.

She responded by saying that she prefers to wear historical styles over contemporary ones primarily because they are more interesting in design, cut, and style.

Lara's greatest interest is in historic fashion which is evident in her own style of dress.

Lara explained that this was a subject in which she has always taken a great interest:

Well, to tell you the truth historical fashion has been my main focus since about thirteen years old. I remember in history class I didn't even like many of the history projects that were available to choose from, so I said can I do it on 1940s fashion. It was all twentieth century fashion and he said okay. And, ha, gosh, it's always been something I've pursued" (Appendix D, p. 172).

This pursued interest is not only evident through her dress style but her academic career. Lara received her Master of Arts degree in Historic Fashion at The University of London and has since gained experience teaching fashion history.

This interest in fashion led to an interest in history Lara stated, "It was really when I got fascinated by historic fashion-that really kind of lit my fire in studying history and that's when I pretty much learned history through fashion which is very different than most people" (Appendix D, p. 169). Lara not only expressed she had an interest in history but that history was "embedded" in her and that she views everything, including her fashion choices, through the "lens of history" (Appendix D, p. 184).

Lara also credited childhood influences as a reason for wearing historically-inspired dress. Because history was an interest shared by her entire family, she was surrounded by historical objects such as antiques and old photographs. Her family also collected vintage dress items such as hats, gloves, hair accessories, and wedding dresses. She inherited clothes and jewelry from her great grandmother, and aunt and "fancy gowns" from her grandmother which became Lara's dress-up gowns (Appendix D, p. 168). In addition, Lara claimed that the books

containing “pretty dresses of days gone by” that her mother brought home from Europe sparked her interest in historic fashion (Appendix D, p. 167).

Lara stated that she would not be able to create her style without having a sewing machine in the house. At the age of thirteen or fourteen, novels by Anne Rice (1976), such as *Interview with a Vampire*, led her to sew her own historically-inspired clothes throughout high school. Additionally sewing with her best friend was a significant influence as they shared an interest in historic fashion.

Meanings.

When asked how important her dress was to her, Lara answered, “It’s pretty important to any woman who likes the way they dress” (Appendix D, p. 183). Although Lara values her dress, Lara denies any symbolic value and meaning. When asked what her style means to her she responded, “Well I think it’s really frivolous when it comes down to it. It’s just aesthetically pleasing, um, I don’t know if it means anything else above that” (Appendix D, p. 180). When asked to describe her favorite outfit or piece, she explained that she liked the corset in general not because of what it symbolizes but because of its aesthetic value:

It changes the person so much into an aesthetically-pleasing, and I would like it for any person not just me . . . it just changes your body so much to where anything you drape over it is going to look fantastic. So that’s why I like it the best. Because no matter what you put over it, even if it’s a burlap sack, as long as you can take it in, or if you can see the shape through it, is going to look great (Appendix D, p. 186).

She stated that her favorite outfit always changes and will usually select new items as her favorite, valuing novelty over symbolic meaning as well.

This lack of deeper perceived meaning is evidenced by the fact that Lara spoke of her favorite time periods, 1876-1883-84, 1930s, and 1690s, solely in terms of their fashions. When

asked about anything other than dress that she liked of her favorite time periods, Lara's first part of the response was that she liked "parts of it" but did not provide any details (Appendix D, p. 184). However, later she lamented for social activities such as dancing, "we've lost a lot of the social activity at this day and age and we have no dancing of this generation" (Appendix D, p. 189). In the second part of this response Lara admitted that she dislikes the conservatism of Victorian culture and that she instead values being different from the mainstream:

So against my current standing, I, it's funny because I think if I actually did live in that time period, I wouldn't have dressed in modern dress. I would have been one of the dress reform people or aesthete, you know, or something. Um, I would not have, I would not have been one of the people back then because my mom had asked me that, 'Would you have worn corsets if you had lived in that time period?' Hm, probably not. I would probably go against grain, I think, even then. Um, accept I would have been the pre-Raphaelite movement, I don't know, been obsessed with medieval fashion. You know... something like that (Appendix D, p. 185).

Lara also demonstrated that creative interpretation is more important than mechanically recreating the past. She admitted that there was a time when she cared more for historical accuracy in films and a desire to reflect her interest in history by recreating it exactly. For example, when she talked about film she explained that she now values creativity over historical accuracy, "I'm more relaxed about it. Well, being like, its art. Never in history have we tried to make something exactly the same and I'm glad people are just getting inspired and doing the style" (Appendix D, p. 176). When she spoke of her plans to take photographs of her long hair in various styles, Lara made it clear that she would not do strictly historical hairstyles but modern interpretations of eighteenth century inspired hairstyles:

I want to do something weird and artsy. I don't want to do just a copy as the past. Now I am much more about being part of future and actually looking at history and . . . reading about people who were really interesting in history. . . They obviously made their mark (Appendix D, p. 185).

Communication.

Lara stated that she does not intentionally try to communicate anything through her dress. Most of her responses relating to communication of her dress focused on the visual/physical aspects of her dress instead of the symbolic aspects. For example, when asked about what others may think of her based on her clothing style, she felt that they gathered ideas about her sewing and design talent in creating her look, “I think people think I’m a lot more talented than I am . . . that whenever people meet me and I say I sew they have incredible ideas of what I am able to do” (Appendix D, p. 18). Lara does not feel others perceive that she intends to send messages through dress. She said others tend to describe her dress style as Victorian based on the physical attributes of her dress-cut, styling, etc.

It was clear that many of Lara’s interests were reflected in her dress. When asked to describe herself and who she was, “historical fashion,” “eco-friendliness,” “travel,” and “having the lenses of history looked through at everything in life” were among the terms Lara used to describe herself (Appendix D, pp. 173, 176, & 184). In addition to drawing from prior time periods for fashion inspiration, Lara is beginning to collect dress items from other cultures to reflect her interest in travel. Lara explained that her wardrobe reflects “eco-friendliness” because she rarely buys things new, shopping at thrift or second hand stores and utilizing dress items that were given to her (Appendix D, p. 177).

Lara explained that looking through the “lenses of history through everything in life,” (Appendix D, p. 184) influences not only her fashion choices but her conversation, hobbies such as historical dance, and even the substances she uses to clean her home (Appendix D, p. 177). When asked if there were any attitudes of the majority of people she didn’t like, she responded

that she wished “they knew a bit of history” and feels that many of today’s “questions, problems, arguments, concerns” specifically in modern-day politics could be solved if others would look at them through the “lenses of history” (Appendix D, p. 190). At the same time, Lara feels that it is good that there are a variety of cultures, lifestyles, and attitudes among Americans. This suggests that she does not intend to use historically-inspired dress to persuade others to view everything through the “lenses of history,” but simply to communicate her own personal view (Appendix D, p. 184).

Other identity markers.

For Lara there is a definite connection between the way she furnishes her home and her dress style. This was evident by looking around her historical house: her living room alone contained a wood stove, historical photographs and portraits on the walls, a wardrobe which contained many of her more historical looking pieces such as a medieval gown, bustle dresses, her husband’s 1830s overcoat, etc. Lara explained that she prefers a historical aesthetic for furniture, other decorative objects, and even the houses she rents:

I just don’t like normal, boring couches. They look ugly to me...even when I look for a house to rent or something I look through ads or prices ads or whatever and if its normal you know, 1980s, 90s etc., actually anything from the fifties onwards, I will not accept it. I think it’s way too boring, and I need something with character (Appendix D, p. 182).

Devin

When given the opportunity, Devin wears what he referred to as “late nineteenth century British gentleman’s attire” which includes a nineteenth century-inspired cape, top hat, pocket watch, and cane (Appendix E, p. 192). This ensemble is pictured in Figure 4.9. He informed me that if he had more resources he would own a “whole set” (Appendix E, pp. 200 & 201) which would include a nineteenth century jacket and waistcoat as well as costume pieces from other

time periods such as “the Roman time period, medieval time period and revolutionary civil war [English Civil War]” (Appendix E, p. 197-198). Because Devin spends much of his time in a work uniform working as a grocery clerk and preparing for a position in retail management, he does not wear his cape and hat often. His pocket watch is the only piece he is able to wear daily.

Stylistic influences.

Devin also drew on popular culture influences to create his style in which he described as the “quintessential gentleman” (Appendix E, p. 193). He began creating his style based on Pierce Brosnan’s performance of Phileas Fogg in Disney’s Television Mini-series *Around the World in 80 Days* (Kulik, 1989). This character particularly served as a model of what a British gentleman would look like:

The character of Phileas Fogg is always a gentleman all the way through and its probably the earliest point for me where I had . . . image of a gentleman and the fact that I was supposed to be a gentleman and so that’s really what nailed it down for me. This is what I’m striving to be (Appendix E, p. 192).

Devin later indicated that he also draws styles from the British Imperial Era.

Motivations.

Devin had three main motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. He prefers the aesthetic of historically-inspired dress to present-day dress, feels that historically-inspired dress enables him to differentiate himself from others, and uses historically-inspired dress to assume the persona of the “quintessential gentleman” which simultaneously symbolizes an aspect of himself (Appendix E, p. 193). Devin favors the aesthetic of his style, nineteenth century gentleman’s attire. He claimed, “It’s just very elegant, very proper.



Figure 4.9
Devin and his nineteenth century-inspired cloak, top hat, and pocket watch.

On a whole it looks, when you put it altogether, it looks very impressive. I can't think of a cooler [laughs] outfit to wear" (Appendix E, p. 192). He demonstrated that he prefers the aesthetic of historical dress over modern dress by stating that his style is more "elegant" and by comparing it to women's jewelry, "Some people just put on as much and the largest that they can....it's not beautiful, it's not tasteful, it's gaudy" (Appendix E, p. 196).

Devin also stated that he dresses this way "to appear different" (Appendix E, p. 193). He explained the personal importance of his style of dress:

It helps with self-identity...again so many people act, dress, behave in certain ways. I don't want to be seen as the same. But I don't want to be seen in what's popular. . . The idea of individuality by following the crowd seems to me a little lacking thought" (Appendix E, p. 194).

This became more apparent when Devin referred to his style of dress as a "personal idiosyncrasy" (Appendix E, p. 195).

Devin uses this style of dress to portray that he not only appears different from others but he behaves differently as well. When he dresses this way, he assumes another persona. To Devin, his dress, the dress of a quintessential gentleman, embodies the Victorian ideals, social rules, norms, and behavior which includes the formalization of social interactions, treating others whether socially above or below oneself with respect and holding one's temper, and treating a lady with respect. Devin stated that these ideals are in line with his personal, religious, ideals, "the beliefs, the ideas about both things have become both interchangeably melded to me, so that is a huge part of being a gentleman is being a good Christian" (Appendix E, p. 199).

Meanings.

Devin expressed that his dress holds personal meaning. Because his dress symbolizes the way a Victorian gentleman should act, it holds potential to guide his own behavior:

It helps to have a physical reminder of what goal or image you're trying to portray you know. It's easy to say I'm a gentleman but to have that reminder when someone frustrates you or something you know you're about to lose, lose it at somebody and just remember, you know how should I approach this rather than how do I want to approach this. How do I want to handle this situation? I think it helps (Appendix E, p. 196).

Although Devin does not have an entire set of gentleman's attire, he feels his pocket watch is a step in acquiring it as well as serves as a daily symbol of his ideals and a reminder to behave like a gentleman in a society where few men do.

Communication.

Devin feels that his dress would be perceived by others as being very theatrical and even eccentric. Devin responded to the question, "How do you think others would describe you?" by stating:

I think, well first thing I would be asked is what play are you performing in, but, ah, I don't know. . . I think most people would find it interesting, they would think it a little odd, [laughs] but . . . I would normally, when I do anything along the lines of dressing time period, I've gotten positive responses, for the most part...and a few negative ones, oddly enough from older women" (Appendix E, p. 201).

Devin stated that people usually are not aware of what he means to portray which is to "visually remind people of social of how social norms have changed" (Appendix E, p. 201). Devin feels that he is more aware than others in society of the values society has lost and dislikes how crude society has become and communicates that through his dress.

Other identity markers.

Devin's living space contained items that revealed his interests in history and gaming. He resides primarily in the bottom floor of a family home which consists of a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and living room which contained his desk and study area. Decorative items relative to his historically-inspired dress items were decorative objects like a model ship, posters, and maps on the walls which included the map titled "The United States and Confederate states, 1861." Other identity markers took the form of books in which history was the subject.

Themes

For this study, I approached historically-inspired dress from two perspectives based on literature regarding historic costume and retro/revival dress. As I explained in the review of literature, dress inspired from the past, costume or retro/revival fashion, either holds significant symbolic value and association with the past or is merely a product of postmodern culture in which the original symbolic meanings are diluted and/or given new meanings. Frameworks relating to dress and identity were used. These included Eicher's (1981) *Miller's Expanded* framework regarding dress for reality, fun, and fantasy, *Model of Eicher's (1981) Original Framework of Dress and the Public, Private, and Secret Aspects of the Self* (1997), Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework, and Strauss's (2003) utilization of Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework. In addition, postmodern theory presented by Morgado (1996), Barnard (2002), and E. Wilson (1985) was utilized to analyze the motivations and meanings of historically-inspired dress. The same frameworks were used to determine any relationships between the wearer's home environment and dress style.

In this section, I will discuss findings in relation to the objectives of the study. The first objective was to explore the motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis. The results showed that participants' motivations were underwritten by emotions, attitudes, ideals, ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos. The second objective was to explore the meanings of specific period styles of historically-inspired dress to the wearer which include ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed/communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress. It was found that historic associations and personal meanings of specific period styles did and did not serve as motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. Communicating meanings also did and did not serve as motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. The final objective was to explore other identity markers that aid in constructing the wearers' identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material culture) and their connection with the wearer's dress style. The findings showed a connection between participants' dress styles and other identity markers within their living space, particularly their living rooms. An additional finding is included in this discussion. Because not all participants used setting and manner in addition to appearance to construct their historic or semi-historic personas, historically-inspired dress is less costume, and more of a personal style choice.

Theme 1.

First, I found that motivations were underwritten by emotions, attitudes, ideals, ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos. Strauss's (2003) utilization of Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework in particular proved to be a worthy framework in exploring motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress as it encourages the researcher to look beyond the surface and identify underlying motivations. Using Goffman's (1959) framework, Strauss (2003) identified the

underlying motivations of reenactors' for engaging in Confederate Civil War reenactment.

Strauss (2003) wrote, "Though many of the reenactors I met claimed a purist's love of history as their main inspiration for involvement, further examination of the hobby and its participants indicated other underlying motivations as well" (p.152). Strauss found that the motivation "love of history" to wear the Confederate uniform was underwritten by emotions such as "to reflect their empathy with the value system of the antebellum South" and "a disaffection with the U.S. government" as well as ethos such as a "Lost Cause mythology" (pp. 152, 154, & 157). In the same way, Lane, Lara, and Devin's motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress were underwritten by emotions, attitudes, ideals, ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos. In addition, some motivations seemed to be a result of gender socialization. Each individuals' underwritten motivations will be discussed under subheadings presented below the participant's name. For example Lane's first motivation is *opposition to dressing down*.

Lane.

Upon further examination, it became clear Lane preferred formality and *good taste* in dress. It may be that Lane feels historically-inspired dress naturally possesses these qualities and as a result opposes the "megatrend" of dressing down (Agin, 1999, p. 404). According to Agin (1999), this trend has existed in fashion since the 1980s. This trend consists of two components. The first component of the trend of dressing down is that individuals no longer dress up or dress formally on a daily basis in the United States. This is a particular reference to men's suits in general whether it be a business suit or a formal suit. Hamilton (2001) wrote that outside some professional job occupations such as banking, and law, the suit is presently worn only for ceremonial and special occasions such as weddings, funerals, or important meetings on the job. Hamilton (2001) felt that making daily use of the suit is a thing of the past, describing the lack of

customers in a men's suit department as "archaeological, an awesome and monumental reminder of a bygone age" (p. 191). The second component of this trend of dressing down is that there is a lack of conventional good taste in modern-day fashion (Agin, 1999; Hamilton, 2001). Agin (1999) wrote, "Indeed, it seemed as though not only dress-up clothes, but good taste, had fallen by the wayside as millions of Americans sank into sloppiness, wedded to their fanny packs, T-shirts, jeans, and clunky athletic shoes" (p.406).

These two components of the dressing down trend are evident in Lane's narrative. Lane's statement, "Well I look back at the thirties and forties back when if a man wanted to go outside and go do something he had, he had to put on a suit and a tie, wear a hat" (Appendix C, p. 141) suggests that in addition to his styling he draws his practice of wearing suits on a near-daily basis from past clothing or sartorial practices. Second, his narrative implies that to dress with self-respect means to dress with good taste.

It is essential to understand what Lane means by self respect. To him, it means to care about oneself and to be mindful of the image he/she projects. It seems that Lane believes there is a direct connection between dressing with self-respect and good taste. By examining Lane's narrative, dressing with good taste refers to what is worn as well as the way it is worn. Comments regarding the outfit he wore on the day of the interview (t-shirt and jeans) would suggest that casual clothing is not suitable or proper attire for the public eye. Lane illustrated a preference for good taste when he compared the fit of 1930s and 1940s criminal clothing to that of today's criminals:

I mean the criminals of the thirties wore flashy pinstripe suits that were always cut to fit correctly. . . They always looked good. That was the thing about them. And people [today] who call themselves [criminals], came dressed in a very sloppy, slovenly manner just not even caring about their appearance where. . . a lot of them try to wear their pants

to show their underwear that the clothes they chose are always high-name and expensive but very ill-fitting (Appendix C, p. 141).

Lane is motivated to wear historically-inspired dress because the dress of the past seems to exhibit good taste, even for criminals, that is lacking in present-day dress. In wearing historically-inspired dress Lane shows opposition to the trend of dressing down.

Moral attitudes.

Moral attitudes may also lie beneath Lane's motivation to communicate self-respect through dress. According to Ribeiro (2003), moral attitudes are personal beliefs about what is improper and proper behavior or what is right and wrong within society. Throughout his narrative, Lane exhibited common moral concerns regarding men and women's dress. Ribeiro (2003) wrote that women's dress is often believed to be too revealing while men's dress is too disheveled. These concerns became apparent when Lane shared his opinions about present-day criminals and present-day women. When Lane stated that present-day criminals dress in a "sloppy, slovenly manner," it may have been his way of stating the common moral concern that male dress, particularly among criminals, is too disheveled (Appendix C, p. 141). In addition, Lane feels that women in the past who "wanted to be rebellious," through dress still dressed with self-respect whereas women today in general dress without self-respect (Appendix C, p. 147). Using women starring on reality television as an example, he argued that they were wearing styles which he felt were "too tight" and subsequently too revealing (Appendix C, p. 147). Lane explained that he felt that even though rebellious women in the past (i.e. flappers, hippies, etc.) wore clothing that was "outrageous for the time" they "kept themselves largely covered up" (Appendix C, p. 147). In other words, Lane feels that women today should take cues from those of the past and dress more modestly. Therefore, he locates his choice of historically-inspired

dress in the framework of historic periods where dressing was associated not just with good taste but also with appropriateness and normal principles even for those of questionable lifestyle or morality.

Nostalgia for past attitudes.

Another motivation for Lane to wear historically-inspired dress is to convey past attitudes. It is possible that this motivation is underwritten by nostalgia for cultural attitudes of the 1930s and 1940s. Nostalgia in this sense refers to a feeling of loss towards an ideal that is lacking in present society and can only be found in the past (Davis, 1979). He believes that attitudes of the past in general were more optimistic in comparison to cultural attitudes today. Lane feels that this lack of optimism in today's culture has led to a "breakdown . . . in the country and the world at large" (Appendix C, p. 149).

Lane's narrative suggests that he opposes some aspects of postmodern culture. First, Lane recognizes that optimism could be achieved by accepting an over-arching truth. What he possibly is referring to here is the *suspicion of narratives* in which there is a distrust of claims of truth. He explained that he felt this distrust was not evident in the past:

We [society] knew that we didn't know things, we were aware that we didn't know them. And we were fairly certain of that. Nowadays we, we claim to know everything . . . by demon, by trying to show that no one knows anything and therefore, you know, what we know was more valuable than what others felt, which was really stupid way I think to look at things (Appendix C, p. 149).

Second, he may feel that because no one is willing to agree on truth there will be no positive change or progress. It seemed that Lane expressed disdain for *the death of progress* or the "loss of confidence in the assumption that progress will, in fact, lead to a better life" (Morgado, 1996, p. 43). The attitudes that Lane could be nostalgic for are those of the Modernist period, a time

where people were certain about the future and human progress. The time periods Lane draws clothing inspiration from, the 1930s and 1940s, are considered part of the Modernist period.

Individualistic self-expression.

Lane is also motivated to wear historically-inspired dress to express feelings and to assume another persona. These two motivations are related as they involve a desire to express a part of the self through dress. These motivations are possibly underwritten by a sense of individual freedom as well as the romantic sensibilities of pleasure and play (Muggleton, 2000). These sensibilities further motivated Lane to create his own style through experimentation. This process of creating a style can also be referred as *self-fashioning*. A motivation found among all three participants. Lane demonstrated the sensibilities of play and pleasure by stating that he enjoys spending hours in stores shopping and combining different colors and styles of shirts with suits and pocket handkerchiefs.

Muggleton (2000) linked these sensibilities to “the quest to *be oneself*” (p. 160). The search for self is evident as an individual assumes other personas. Dressing individualistically to express oneself can be compared to dressing in historic costume as in the case of reenactments. The personas an individual assumes can allow him/her to be a nobler or an ideal self or allow him/her to be their real self (Belk & Costa, 1998; Hall, 1994; Handler & Saxton, 1988; Miller, 1998; Strauss, 2003). Lane’s experimentation with dress can be considered a search for self since different combinations of elements while wearing his suit allow him to assume the personas of gangster, pimp, businessman, preacher, etc. Each of these personas could also be seen as expressions of parts of his self. Two of Lane’s personas, the 1930s or 1940s gangster and the Highlander are directly tied to historic associations of the garments used to construct it. These

associations will be discussed later under Finding 2 as it explores the coding theme *historic associations*.

Lara.

Socialization.

Gender socialization is possibly the primary reason for Lara to dress in historically-inspired dress. Although, differences in motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress among genders is not the focus of this study, it is necessary to recognize that this may account for Lara's motivations as she was the only female subject in the study. Lara is the only participant that mentioned how childhood influences played a major role in adopting historically-inspired dress. Childhood influences could be the effect of gender socialization. Miller (1997) found that women had more childhood memories about dress than men and suggested that, "Since women are socialized from a young age to focus on dress and appearance, it would logically follow that they would have more memories about dress than men" (p. 231). Lara mentioned that her interest in historic fashion began when she was a child when her mother brought home books featuring the "pretty dresses of days gone by" (Appendix D, p. 167). These interests escalated when she was a young teenager as she began to sew corsets with her best friend at the time. Socialization may also account for the reason she wears a wide range of historically-inspired styles drawing from the period 1876-1883, as well as the 1690s, 1930s, and 1950s. Within this range of time periods lies an array of sleeve styles, hemlines, necklines, etc. Because different styles of sleeves, hems, necklines, etc., were fashionable within each particular time period, Lara can choose from more available style options. According to Eicher (1981) women today have many more dress items with various styling to choose from than men. By

drawing from multiple time periods, Lara is able to build a wardrobe that consists of a wider range of skirts, blouses, and dresses, compared to a wardrobe of the average individual or the wardrobes of the other participants.

Individualistic Self-Expression/Self-Fashioning.

Like Lane, Lara demonstrated a sense of individual freedom and the romantic sensibilities of pleasure and play and participating in self-fashioning. It seems that Lara's sense of individual freedom is more of what Muggleton (2000) referred to as "a feeling of inner difference" (p. 55). Throughout her narrative Lara referred to herself as "weird" (Appendix D, p. 182). It is possible that Lara is motivated to wear historically-inspired dress not to be or because she wants to be different from others, but because she feels that she is different. She explained that when she was younger, being and dressing differently from others was not something she embraced and was even a source of ridicule when she was in junior high and high school. This would lend evidence to Muggleton's (2000) idea of inner difference. This strong sense of difference could have provided the motivation for her to continue her style. Lara admitted that while she was in college, she intended to separate herself from other students by refusing to drink beer and hosting wine parties at her house. However, she explained that more recently she has developed a desire for normalcy, particularly because she does not want her difference to negatively affect her son. She mentioned that if he asked her to, she would dress normal. No matter how complex this motivation may be, it seems that a sense of individuality is a factor for Lara in wearing historically-inspired dress.

Self-fashioning, which involves the sensibilities of pleasure and play, may also be a motivating factor for Lara wearing historically-inspired dress. Vainshtein (2009) wrote that self-

fashioning may be a pleasurable experience as it focuses on the process of dressing and not the outfit that results from it. In other words, it is not the end product that is valued but the creation of it, “The art of self-fashioning is largely a discursive strategy, the ability to fictionalize the trivialities of daily life and produce a narration out of ephemera” (p.105). Lara demonstrated throughout her narrative that she derives pleasure through sewing, creating new garments, or altering store-bought ones. She also mentioned that shopping at thrift and second-hand stores is “more of a treasure hunt” (Appendix D, p. 177). However, it seems that she enjoys the outfit as well as the process. Given her interest in studying historic fashion, along with her desire for aesthetic interest in clothing, it is likely that the outfit serves as a reward once it is fashioned.

World View.

To say that Lara is motivated to wear historically-inspired dress by mere interest in both history and historic fashion is an understatement. Throughout her interview, Lara stated that she looks through what she calls the “lenses of history” at everything in life (Appendix D, pp. 184). The “lenses of history” is a term she used to describe her world view. Hallowell (2002) briefly mentioned the link between cultural objects and a culture’s world view using Anthropologist Robert Redfield’s (1952) concept of world view in which he applied on a more individual level. Redfield (1952) explained that world view is connected to the self:

‘World view’ attends especially to the way a man, in a particular society, sees himself in relation to all else...It is, in short, a man’s idea of the universe. It is that organization of ideas which answers to a man the questions: Where am I? Among what do I move? What are my relations to these things? (p.30).

Lara’s world view is one in which she perceives everything around her in relation to the past. This world view became evident when Lara pointed out lifestyle practices that either are in line with the past or inspired by it. She hosts events and group meetings in her neighborhood in

which she believes is a historic social activity. She also explained that eco-friendliness is a historical act and that she borrows ideas for eco-friendliness from the past:

It has only been the twentieth century that we have only been so indulgent and so wasteful in our, in throwing away everything and it's only been the nineteenth and twentieth century that we have been so industrial. So I look at this that the majority of history we have been eco friendly. . . We need to get back to that and that is a historical way to look at that. So I mean they used to recycle everything in the eighteenth century-waste not, want not . . . I think it's going back to that as well. And that is a big thing and right now I compost. I recycle seventy-five percent of my trash. I use all cloth I don't use any paper except for toilet paper. . . I view a lot of my eco-friendliness around the house as I get a lot of my ideas from the past. I mean, I clean my stove with baking powder and vinegar today because . . . first off I don't want to use chemicals because it's a bad thing. I have a small child in the house but also that's what they used to use. It makes sense because it works and it's not going to kill anyone. It kind of harks back to that" (Appendix D, p. 172-173).

Like her interest in eco-friendliness, Lara's historically-inspired dress style could simply be a product of her world view. Lara indicated this herself when she described both herself and her dress as "weird" (meaning different from others, inspired from history) and stated that she had a "different way of looking at things" (perceiving all things in relation to the past) (Appendix D, p. 182).

Devin.

Ideology of individualism.

Among Devin's motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress is the desire to "to appear different," or to differentiate himself from others (Appendix E, p. 193). Within his narrative, it is evident that Devin embraces individuality which Muggleton (2000) defined as a "cultural value upon which different social actors can place varying degrees of emphasis" and that for some individuals individualism is an ideology (p.78). Because Devin strives to be different from others, it could be said that he possesses an "ideology of individualism" in which

being an individual is of very high value to him (Muggleton, 2000, p. 78). For Devin, dressing in historically-inspired dress may be an attempt to allow him to stand out in a homogenous society.

Opposition to dressing down.

When asked to compare the aesthetic of clothing of the past to today's styles, Devin chose to describe his dress as inspired by the nineteenth-century gentlemen's attire. He described his dress as "elegant" and "proper," and used current women's jewelry as a point of comparison, describing it as "not tasteful" (Appendix E, pp. 191 & 195). It seems that Devin, like Lane, feels that past styles exhibit good taste, whereas present-day dress does not. Merriam Webster (2011) defined the term "elegance" as "a tasteful richness of design or ornamentation," whereas the term "proper" is defined as "marked by suitability, rightness or appropriateness." By describing his dress as tasteful and appropriate, Devin indicates that he, like Lane, opposes the current trend of dressing down, opting to present himself in a more formal way. This opposition drives him to choose historically-inspired dress over modern-day styles.

Theme 2.

It was also found that historic associations and personal meanings connected to specific period-inspired styles did and did not serve as motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. In Strauss's (2003) study of Confederate Civil War reenacting, reenactors utilized the historic associations of the Confederate Civil War uniforms to build an *impression* or persona. Historical associations refer to the time and place in which the dress item originated. For example, the Confederate uniform is associated with the South during the Civil War. Strauss (2003) found that reenactors attached personal meanings to the Confederate Civil War uniform and therefore communicated a part of the self. This led to his conclusion that "Confederate

reenacting could be viewed as a way of expressing a particular dimension of an individual's self – the [sic] one unhappy with the erosion of white hegemony in United States” (Strauss, 2003, p.159). It was an assumption of the present study that participants would also utilize historic associations and attach personal meaning to specific period-inspired dress styles. This assumption held true for Lane and Devin. For them, historic associations and the personal meanings they attached to them served as motivating factors to adopt specific period-inspired styles.

Lane.

Historic associations.

Lane utilizes the historic associations with the kilt and the 1930s and 1940s gangster styling of his suits. Lane's comment, “slashing into a platoon of Englishman . . .” (Appendix C, p. 145) was a reference to the kilt's historic association with the Scottish military. According to Trevor-Roper (1984), the kilt became a military garment after 1747 when it was adopted by Scottish Highland regiments. There are also associations of the kilt in relation to masculinity within its military context in popular culture. The films *Braveheart* (Gibson, 1995) and *Rob Roy* (Jones, 1995) romantically portray Scotsmen in kilts as robust, militaristic heroes (Munroe, 2000). In addition to its portrayal in film, the kilt has remained a symbol of masculinity, at least for men of Scottish descent, who still wear it on special occasions such as weddings outside of Scotland and in numerous other occasions in Scotland. Fry (2007) wrote, “The kilt is a powerful symbol of masculinity, connecting the wearer with constructions of the Scottish Highlander, who embodies aspects of masculinity, toughness, stoicism, courage and embracing a life outdoors” (p. 8). When Lane wears the kilt, he does so with the knowledge that it was once a military garment,

but also acknowledging that it is a symbol of masculinity among those of Scottish descent and portrayed as such in popular culture.

Lane seems to be idolizing historical characters like Al Capone and other famous criminals of the past when he styles his suits to appear as a 1930s and 1940s gangster. In doing so, he seems to glorify criminal activity. Alford (2009) believed there is a connection between criminal activity and the zoot suit, explaining that it was adopted by delinquent youths to “disguise themselves from criminal activity” and as a result, became associated with criminals (p.35). It is possible that Lane utilizes Alford’s (2009) perceived connection with the zoot suit and criminal activity when he wears his FUBU suit with “ghost stripes” and “gangster suit,” inspired by suits of the late 1940’s whose pin-stripe patterns were influenced from the plaid stripe or hounds-tooth prints of original zoot suits. However, it is more likely that Lane is unaware of the Alford’s parallel and instead draws inspiration to style his suits by images of criminals and/or villains found in popular culture and film. For example, Agent Smith is the villain in the film *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999), a character from whom Lane originally drew influence in developing his style.

Personal meanings.

The historic associations with the 1930s and 1940s gangster suits and the kilt allow Lane to attach relevant personal meanings to them. These personal meanings in turn allow Lane to express a part of his self. For Lane, these garments seem to allow him to express his masculinity which served as a motivation for wearing them. The meanings Lane attached to these clothing items were identified by examining the way in which they made him feel and the tasks they potentially could empower him to take on. Later he described what the kilt meant to him, “I dress

in a kilt I feel superhuman. I feel I am capable of taking on any tasks...anybody could possibly assign me. . . I feel like I am the most dangerous man alive when I'm in a kilt" (Appendix C, p. 149). Lane's feelings are valid as they align with Fry's (2007) of other tasks that the kilt empowers one to do:

The activities undertaken by men while wearing kilts are congruent with masculinity. Men wear the kilt at the football, when out to attract a partner, when getting married, while playing the loud and powerful bagpipes, to compete in the 'strong men' competitions at Highland Gatherings, where they lift and throw heavy objects (p. 8).

For Lane, the kilt is a symbol of masculinity based on both its historical and present military context and its current standing as a masculine garment. Likewise Lane's FUBU suit combined with a pair of spats and a cane allows him to take on yet another masculine persona, the 1930s/1940s gangster which would make him feel as if he could take on masculine behaviors such as "beat[ing] the living snot out of somebody" and "beating somebody senseless" (Appendix C, pp. 158-159).

Why does Lane take on these male personas by adopting historic masculine styles and/or items of dress? Miller (1998) theorized that in reenacting men are drawn to historic or military costumes due to the way American men are socialized as children. Such masculine styles of costume allowed male reenactors to participate in masculine behaviors like carrying weapons and fighting in reenactment wars and deflect attention away from the fact that dressing up is coded as a feminine behavior (Miller, 1998). It would make sense that Lane chooses to wear clothing that is inspired from the past and is masculine. From Miller's (1998) standpoint, Lane's choice of masculine dress could be an attempt to disguise the feminine activity of dressing up or caring about fashion, it seems more likely that these masculine personas provide Lane the opportunity to assert his masculinity. Huun (2008) stated, "The need for men to define their masculinity has long been an inescapable bane" (p. 33). She argued that women's changing roles

in the workplace and at the home, as well as the adoption of male garments by females, have contributed to this need. This need to assert masculinity may lie beneath Lane's motivation for adopting masculine forms of dress such as the kilt, or what he perceives to be masculine, a suit styled to portray a 1930's and 1940's criminal.

When Lane adopts these historic masculine personas such as a gangster or Scotsman, he seems to be participating in fantastic socialization by taking on unrealistic roles through dress (Miller, 1997; G. P. Stone, 1962). Lane may be fantasizing of being a 1930s or 1940s criminal or Scottish warrior. Such fantasies are usually connected to the secret self. Instead of acting out these fantasies in secret, as Stone's (1962) framework would imply, he acts them out publicly. This supports Miller's (1997) framework which contends that costume can be an expression of the public and private self, rather than just the secret self, as Lane expresses secret desires and ideals publicly through dress.

Devin.

Historic associations.

Smith and Topham (2005) wrote, "Fabric, color, cut and even the way in which garments are fastened and attached to the body all play significant roles in expressing a society's social habits at a particular moment" (p.80). Devin utilizes historic associations of the nineteenth-century gentleman's attire by expressing interest in and adopting Victorian rules, social norms, behavior and formalized social behavior. Devin recognizes that his dress harks back to these things. The social habits and behaviors that Devin embraces include treating those who are socially either above or below you with equal respect, holding your temper, and treating a lady with gentility (Appendix E, p. 199).

Personal meanings.

Devin attaches these nineteenth-century social behaviors and norms to his own dress inspired by gentleman attire of that era. His dress is also meaningful to him because it serves as a symbol of how he should behave. Devin stated that his dress serves as a reminder to behave like a gentleman. By adopting both dress and behavior of a nineteenth-century gentleman, Devin takes on the persona of one. In Devin's case, his motivations for adopting historically-inspired dress is driven by historical association and personal meaning attached to it.

Like Lane, Devin expresses part of the secret self such as ethos publicly through dress. Because Devin models his dress after that of a nineteenth century gentleman, it would seem that he, like Lane, participates in fantastic socialization. However, because he made it clear that he strives to both act and dress like a gentleman, it could be that he participates in anticipatory socialization as he works to fulfill the role of a gentleman. It seems that Devin is striving to be something closer to his real self, a gentleman, rather than a fantastic character such as a gangster or Scotsman which Lane wishes to portray.

Lara.

Historic associations.

Lara's case did not follow the assumption that the historical associations of specific period dress styles contributed to her motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. The only exception is those period-specific styles in which Lara adopts for dance and reenactment events. She explained that she was part of a 1920s dance troupe called the Deco Belles in which she performed wearing wool bathing suits (Appendix D, p. 180). She also attended Victorian events in San Francisco such as The Great Charles Dickens's Christmas Fair and bimonthly balls

in which she wore Victorian gowns (Appendix D, p. 180). Lara explained that accurate period-inspired attire is valuable in terms of its function while participating in historical dance, “wearing the appropriate attire is very important cause [sic] it makes you walk right, dance right, turn right” (Appendix D, p. 179).

While describing dress’s connection to dance, Lara expressed nostalgia for dance as a social custom. Although Lara said that she easily finds opportunities to partake in historical dance, she mourns for the fact that it is no longer a custom in which nearly every member of society partakes:

We have no dancing of this generation . . . I’m gonna be like, *Field of Dreams* (Robinson, 1989), like, I’m gonna build the dance hall and they will come. . . I want to do this because I know everyone wants to dance. We watch people dance. We listen to music, but we have no place to do it and it frustrates me beyond anything that only weird people dance these days” (Appendix D, p. 189).

This nostalgia for a non modern life style perhaps has influenced her to participate in historic dance and motivated her to wear the necessary dress.

Although reenactment and dance events as well as nostalgia for dance as a social custom served as initial motivations for adopting period-specific styles, dress items used for such events made their way into her daily wardrobe. For example, she mentioned she made the bustle dress pictured in Figure 4.3 for one such event but wears it outside costume events. However, she admitted the frequency of wearing these period-accurate dress styles is dependent on the location:

I do have two bustle dresses, but I never really wear them very often. I would... like to do that more often. People do stare around here [Durham, North Carolina]... In San Francisco, I could wear them every day and it wouldn’t bat an eye... here it’s a little bit harder” (Appendix D, p. 177).

Personal meanings.

Lara's dress held personal meaning for her. However, the meaning was not directly connected to historic associations of garments within her wardrobe. As mentioned before, her dress is an outgrowth of her worldview and by looking at everything in life through the lenses of history. Like Lane and Devin, her dress is a public expression of values, ideologies, etc., that are connected to the secret self.

The only time Lara felt the historic association connected to specific historically-inspired pieces was when she wore it for historic dance. Lara dislikes many aspects of the time period in which her dress is inspired. She particularly indicated disdain for the conservative ideals and attitudes of the Victorian era which her corsets, long skirts, and bustle dresses may reflect. This denial of historic association matched with her claim that her dress is "just aesthetically pleasing" (Appendix D, p. 179) suggests that her dress is pastiche, a concept originated by Jameson (1984) where there is a recycling of past looks without referencing their original historic and cultural meanings (Barnard, 2002; E. Wilson, 1985). By underplaying the origins of her historically-inspired dress style, the connection her dress bears to the past is merely aesthetic.

However, it seems that Lara does attach meaning to her dress. She seems to engage in bricolage through which she gives her dress new meaning. According to Morgado (1996), bricolage can be evidenced in historical styles as they illustrate playfulness, irony or parody. This engagement can be first observed in Lara's narrative. She explained that her style of dress was not authentically Victorian. This is in part due to the fact that she draws from multiple time periods, but more from the fact that the styles she wears are interpretations, not reproductions of past styles. For instance, she explained that she used a modern, stretchable material to sew the

bodice of the bustle dress pictured in Figure 4.3, a material not used in gowns during the time period 1876-1883. Additionally, Lara expressed an appreciation for creativity in developing hairstyles that were inspired by the past, but new. In the desire for a new style based on an old one, Lara seems to exhibit irony through her dress. Instead of referencing ideals, values, etc., from the past through the use of these styles, Lara's dress may be representative of her desire to be a part of the present:

I really want to be the current, in the current Bloomsbury group or the current . . . aesthete movement or something. . . I just want to be a part of current history. Rather than just . . . study history and recreating the past, I'd rather be taking hold of my time period now" (Appendix D, p. 185).

Lara stated that if she had lived in the Victorian era she would not have dressed in the fashions of the times. She was initially inspired by Audrey Morelle, who like herself, dresses differently than those in mainstream society and holds a unique world view, "I was, like, gosh, I need to be like her and live a crazy life not just study the past and live in books" (Appendix D, p. 185). Lara also mentioned that people tended to remember her more because of the way she dresses. Her dress can be seen as a way to stand out from the mainstream and by doing so, make her mark on history. Bricolage assigns the dress item an entirely new meaning, transforming the style from a historical one to a present one (Barnard, 2002). The item is thus up-to-date and embodies postmodern culture (Barnard, 2002; English, 2007; E. Wilson, 1985). Lara's possible engagement in pastiche and/or bricolage in which the original historic and cultural connections with the garment are erased, supports the claim that styles inspired by history are characteristic of postmodern fashion.

Theme 3.

The third finding was that communicating meanings also did and did not serve as motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. Like historic associations and personal meaning, communication served as a motivation for wearing historically-inspired dress for Lane and Devin. Both had hidden agendas behind their dress, whereas Lara claimed to not have any communicative intentions. Lane indicated that he wanted to communicate self-respect and remind others of older attitudes to a point that he could induce others to “discover their self-respect” (Appendix C, p. 148) Similarly, Devin means to remind people how values and social norms have changed. Devin’s desire to communicate these messages also serves as underlying motivation for wearing historically-inspired dress. As mentioned before, Lara’s dress reflects her interests in historical fashion, eco-friendliness, and travel. It also reflects her world view of looking through the “lenses of history” (Appendix D, p. 176). These lenses are not just aesthetic, but tools Lara uses to aid her daily decision-making to serve as a reminder of lessons learned in the past when facing problems and challenges of the present. Like Devin and Lane, Lara holds interesting unique values and ideals, but she does not intend to use dress as a tool for encouraging other people to adopt similar values, ideals, world view, etc. Lara actually celebrates personal and cultural differences:

I think it’s great that we have all different cultures in America, all different lifestyles, all different attitudes, and as long as. . .they are not hurting anyone, as long as you’re enjoying it,. . .it’s not hurting anyone in any way, I’m pretty laissez-faire about it (Appendix D, p. 190).

According to Feinberg, Mataro, and Burroughs (1992), “Not all clothing should be expected to be related to identity/personality. Thus a researcher should not conclude that clothing is or is not related to identity on the basis of looking at any one particular item of clothing” (p.22). This was particularly true of Lara. Looking only at her favorite dress item, the corset,

failed to illustrate a complete picture of her worldview. The range of period styles more accurately represented her general interests in historic dress. She draws from many time periods because there are many “bits of history” in which she is interested (Appendix D, p. 184). Although she did not clarify, these “bits” likely refer to aesthetic clothing elements concerning silhouettes, details, fabrics, fit, etc.

For Lane and Devin, however, I was able to ascertain meaning from their historically-inspired dress because they drew from a lesser amount of time periods. Each variation in style for Lane may be a projection of a different part of the self. This includes the hyper-masculine kilt and masculine, self-respecting gangster styles. Devin’s nineteenth-century dress possibly projects a part of the self that is associated with a classic gentleman. Both Lane and Devin felt these styles were essential and accurately represented these parts of themselves. In the same ways Confederate uniforms allowed Confederate Civil War reenactors to portray their values, ideals, ethos, etc. Strauss (2003) found that many Confederate reenactors were unwilling to switch sides (the Union) because the Confederate uniform more accurately allowed them to project a part of the self, “Reluctance to wear non-Confederate uniforms suggested that the Confederate uniform was an essential element for the projection of the Southern empathy integral to their identity” (p. 154).

Lane and Devin indicated that others rarely understand the messages they intend to send through their dress. Because Devin dislikes how crude society has become, his dress can be seen as a stand against that. However, many people do not perceive him as the “quintessential gentleman,” but view him as a theatrical character or just think he is odd (Appendix E, p.193). Because his dress has induced a range of positive and negative responses, it is clear that not all perceivers are on the same page. He does seem to accurately communicate a character that is out

of the present time. Belk and Costa (1998) pointed out that traditional Indian costumes are not authentic nineteenth-century garments but are often perceived as such. In the same way, Devin's dress although not entirely authentic to the nineteenth century, still comes across as a style out of place in the modern world.

Because Lane wears current style suits, not everyone catches on that he draws inspiration from the past. Because it is a suit, he receives questions regarding his occupation and religion. For example, Lane stated that people ask him if he is a businessman, preacher, or Jewish. When they do pick up on the historical styling, they mistake his gangster look for a zoot suit. As mentioned before, suits of the late 1940s took inspiration from zoot suits in their use of pattern, which may account for why it is mistaken (Alford, 2009). Lane also stated that he is often mistaken as someone who is attempting to mimic the *Blues Brothers* (Landis, 1980). Although he admitted to drawing influence from the film, he explained that he does not try to mock their style, "People have said I look like a Blues Brothers (Landis, 1980) even though the blues brothers never wore ...three-button suits. They wore polyester two- buttons with white socks and Ray-Ban wayfarers. I've never worn Ray-Ban wayfarers" (Appendix C, p. 162).

Lane and Lara are similar in this aspect. Lara claimed that most people describe her as *Victorian* despite the fact that she draws on an array of historical styles. Lane and Lara's concerns with authenticity suggest that they are trying to accurately convey the source of their inspiration (1930s, 1940s, 1876 to 1883-84, 1690s, etc.). The challenge is that many others lack the precise knowledge of historic dress and fail to make the connection to the culture of those times and/or to understand the meanings they are trying to convey with their dress. Miscommunication is perhaps the most problematic aspect about wearing historically-inspired dress. It can be perceived as theatrical, strange, or weird, because people simply misunderstand

the connections to social habits, customs, and culture of past time periods and individual world views.

Theme 4.

Finally it was found that because not all participants used setting and manner in addition to appearance to construct their historic or semi-historic personas, historically-inspired dress is less costume and more a style choice. I also used Goffman's (1959) framework to analyze results regarding other identity markers. Strauss (2003) explained that Confederate Civil War *impressions* or personas are made up of setting and manner in addition to appearance. He mentioned reenactors purposely presented these impressions in a quasi-theatrical way using these three things to create one unified identity. Prasad (2005) defined setting as "the physical elements of the social scene against which the public performance is taking place, and includes the décor, choice, and arrangement in furniture (p. 46). All three participants' personal settings were observed to see if any of these, décor, furniture, etc. related to their dress style and assist in constructing their historic or semi-historic personas. As previously explained a semi-historic persona is constructed using historically-inspired dress and can be read as an alter-ego to make an individual appear partly as if they are from an earlier time period. However, dress is only a small component of a performed persona. In Civil War reenacting, a Confederate Civil War soldier would not only wear the confederate uniform, but use a campground decorated with props such as Confederate flags, period furniture, cookware, weapons, and other accessories that serve as a setting and help transform the reenactor temporarily into a historical character (Strauss, 2003, p. 156). The reenactor would further construct his persona using manner. According to Strauss (2003) manner includes "behavior, gestures, content of discourse, and style of speech" (p.150). Smith (2006) wrote that it also includes a "well-turned phrase, a tone of

voice, a look of the eyes, or a posture” (p. 35). Any use of manner by the participant to enhance their historic or semi-historic persona was also noted during the interviews.

Setting.

The findings showed that there was a connection between participants’ dress styles and other identity markers within their living space. Each participant had at least one object relating to their dress style in their home. A historical-looking mounted dagger was the only piece of home décor that could be reflective of Lane’s dress style when wearing the kilt. There were no objects relating to his 1930s or 1940s gangster persona. This may be that Lane’s personal setting was both limited in space and temporary. On the day of the interview, Lane indicated that he had plans to go apartment hunting and within a few weeks he had relocated. Observations in a more permanent setting would provide more information regarding his use of setting as a means of identity construction. It should be acknowledged that only some parts of the house were seen. This was a limitation. Observations took place mostly in the living rooms of participants’ settings. The bedroom is usually a more intimate space where other significant elements may be placed. While Devin and Lane’s bedrooms were observed, most identity markers relating to their dress style resided in their living rooms.

Lara’s living room was decorated with a similar historic aesthetic as her dress style as it contained antique furniture and antique photographs and paintings of family members/ancestors. Devin’s living area also contained decorative items such as model ships, books, and maps that related to his interest in the nineteenth century and his nineteenth century-inspired dress style. This supports my prediction that participants’ sense of décor would in part match their dress style. In their study of mountain men Belk and Costa (1998) found that their setting

communicated the same beliefs, opinions, mythologies, and ethos as their reenactment dress, “It is evident from the homes of these men and their families that they are mountain men... We found that décor of the buckskinner homes commonly enshrines mountain man artwork, artifacts, and books on Indians and mountain men” (p. 235). Jess (2005) also found that the private living spaces of members’ of a contemporary mod and sixties scene reflected their 1960s style dress style, “the sixties stylists like to be surrounded by the design they appreciate. Nearly all of them give their homes a sixties flavor” (p.188).

While these objects related to Devin and Lara’s dress styles and helped communicate their interests in history, it did not seem from my limited observation of their setting that participants intentionally used setting and props to construct historic or semi-historic personas and fulfill theatrical or quasi-theatrical roles. Unlike reenactors, the participants did not intend for their setting to create the illusion of traveling back in time. When Lara was asked if her antique was placed in her home specifically to create this illusion, she simply responded that she chose it because it was more aesthetically-pleasing than “normal, boring couches” (Appendix D, p. 182). It appears that their setting is a reflection of their interests in history or other aesthetic interests and not one purposely constructed to portray a historic or semi-historic persona.

Both Devin and Lara indicated that they have experienced the feeling of time travel, but never have done so in their home setting. This feeling is what Miller-Spillman (2008) referred to as magic moments in which she defined as “the moment when an individual is no longer reenacting but feels as though he or she is participating in the actual moment in history” (p. 445). Devin stated that it is only when he is participating in theater and on the stage where he experiences these “creative moments” (Appendix E, p. 195). Lara explained that she experiences magic moments at reenactment events where all other individuals were dressed appropriately and

carried period props. This exposure happened at places such as Bath, England, and Colonial Williamsburg where Lara explained she could “feel the history” (Appendix D, p. 181). In Devin’s descriptions of “creative moments” and Lara’s descriptions of times in which she was able to “feel the history,” it is apparent that the presence of other individuals as well as the appropriate historic set or background are necessary to experience magic moments. It is not just the objects in the home that helps construct a historic or semi-historic persona, but other “players.”

Manner.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted in part to ascertain whether or not the participants behaved “in character” while wearing historically-inspired dress. None of them seemed to present themselves in a theatrical way. For instance, when Devin put on his cape, top hat, pocket watch, and held his cane, he did not begin speaking in an English accent. Previous encounters with Lane in which he wore his FUBU suit with 1940s gangster styling or his kilt did not reveal that he acted more aggressively or more masculine as his gangster and highlander personas may imply nor did he use a different style of speech. Since there was only one encounter with Lara, it is difficult to state whether her manner or behavior differs as she takes on a variety of specific period-inspired styles. For instance, would her manner while wearing a corset and long skirt differ from wearing a 1950’s short dress? Based on my observations of Lane and Devin, however, it doesn’t seem like her manner would differ at all as she dressed in different types of period styles.

Information from the participants’ interviews would imply that their manner is altered as a result of wearing their dress. Devin was the only participant who indicated that his dress

influences his behavior on a daily basis as it serves as a reminder to behave like a gentleman. Although, Lane claimed he felt empowered to take on masculine behaviors when he wears some historically-inspired styles, he does not mean to actually act out that behavior. As mentioned before, it is possible that Lane is partaking in fantastic socialization as the fictional roles he is attempting to take on are likely never to be fulfilled. Lara pointed out that dress styles will alter manner in some scenarios such as historical dance. As mentioned before, Lara stated, “wearing the appropriate attire is very important cause it makes you walk right, dance right, turn right” (Appendix D, p. 179).

The participants’ manner could potentially reflect the feelings produced by their form of dress. Devin and Lane stated that their dress gave them positive feelings. Devin felt “proud” or like a “symbol of a lost cause” (Appendix E, pp. 196-197). Lane derived from his dress feelings of significance when he stated his suits made him feel “human” and his kilt made him feel “superhuman” (Appendix C, p. 149). Lara was the only participant that stated she felt ashamed sometimes, “I still feel embarrassed, or ashamed, or over-the-top” (Appendix D, p. 179). Although these feelings are not always apparent in their manner, minor differences in posture were noted. When Lane wore his FUBU suit with gangster styling he seemed to stand up straighter and incorporated the use of his cane in his stance. He also adopted a more confident demeanor during a visit with him at home in which he wore his kilt with military boots. Devin’s posture and facial expression differed greatly when he donned his cape, top hat, and cane versus his work attire which included a uniform shirt and black pants. It was clear that when Devin put on his historically-inspired dress, he developed a more confident air.

Historically-inspired dress was accompanied by a distinct manner, but it was very minor. Participants did not take on a completely different and/or theatrical character when wearing

historically-inspired dress like Confederate Civil War reenactors do. Stone's (1965) framework acknowledges the roles of other individuals in the construction of these historic personas. It may be that the participants do not adopt extremely theatrical behaviors, gestures, style of speech, vocabulary, facial expressions, etc., because other individuals would be unwilling to "play along."

Reenactors validate and challenge each others' Civil War identities in order to appear more authentic and therefore project a more convincing impression. Part of Strauss's fieldwork (2001) was to reenact himself. He found that throughout the duration of his fieldwork, fellow reenactors often corrected him regarding his behavior and appearance. His appearance included wearing the uniform correctly while practices involved period cooking, camping etc.; Strauss (2001) shared the particular scenario in which one reenactor wiped pork grease on his uniform in order to appear more authentic stating that real soldiers in the war would have soiled uniforms. Other reenactors took on the manner in which they were unconcerned with keeping their uniforms clean and even engaged in behaviors that would ensure their uniforms would not remain clean. When the other reenactors told Strauss (2001) that his uniform was too clean, they covered it and his gear with "red Georgia mud" (p.150). In Stone's (1965) terms, Strauss's initial program was challenged when the others corrected him resulting in a change to a more authentic appearance. This adherence to authenticity was among the dominant themes Strauss found in his study. This lends evidence to the fact that reenactors aid each other in the construction of their identities carrying out their roles in reenacting. In other words, reenactors work together to put on a better performance. Like reenactors, Lane, Lara, and Devin are building historic personas. Unlike reenactors, individuals around Lane, Lara, and Devin are not encouraging them to fulfill their semi-historic or historic roles. Without others around performing similar roles while

validating or challenging their performances, Lane, Lara, and Devin may find it difficult to fully assume their historic or semi-historic personas by adopting different behaviors, gestures, speech, etc.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore individual motivations for using historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis. This study aimed to add valuable knowledge to the field of socio-cultural aspects of dress. Reenactment studies have viewed wearing a costume as an escape from the pressures of modern-day life, creating for participants an alternate and leisurely reality (Allred, 1996; Belk & Costa, 1998; Hall, 1994; Handler & Saxton, 1988). Eicher and Miller (1997) wrote that costume serves as an outlet for expressing creative imagination. While Miller (1997) explored the preliminary motivations for wearing costumes, Strauss (2003) explored the symbolic nature of Confederate Civil War costume, finding that it allowed wearers to express personal beliefs and ideals, thus adding information to the field regarding the symbolic nature of costume. Scholars in the field of dress have acknowledged nostalgia and a desire for a fictional time and place to bring about revival fashion-fashion inspired by past styles-claiming its tendency to draw from the past to be a characteristic of postmodern fashion (Barnard, 2002; English, 2007; Vinken, 2005; E. Wilson, 1985).

In this study, I drew from two approaches, one containing multiple frameworks, based on the literature reviewed to explore the motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. One of the frameworks was Strauss's (2003) utilization of Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework.

According to Prasad (2003), this framework allows a researcher to gain insight to what is hidden by an individual's public performative actions, "Goffman's dramaturgy is appealing because it goes beyond the surface interactions of everyday life in order to uncover the hidden dynamics behind work, home, professional, and community performances" (p. 47). By using the dramaturgical framework in this study, analyzing appearance and manner, along with discourse, I found that participants' motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress were underwritten by emotions, attitudes, ideals, ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos. Discourse was analyzed by narrative analysis in which results were coded by themes. Full field notes describing the participants' setting and manner were also coded to understand the participants' motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress, the meaning they attach to it, and what they wish to communicate through it. Other frameworks used were those relating to dress and identity which included Eicher's (1981) framework regarding dress for reality, fun, and fantasy, *Miller's Expanded Model of Eicher's (1981) Original Framework of Dress and the Public, Private, and Secret Aspects of the Self* (1997). These were used to explore the public expression of secret aspects of self. This collection of symbolic interaction frameworks serve as an approach in which dress obtains significant meaning and symbolic value. Postmodern theory as presented by Morgado (1996), Barnard (2002), and E. Wilson (1985) served as an opposite approach in which historically-inspired dress does not hold significant symbolic value and association with the past, because the original symbolic meanings are diluted and/or given new meanings. Both Strauss's (2003) utilization of Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framework and postmodern theory assisted in interpreting Lane, Lara, and Devin's motivations. The findings indicate that one approach alone was insufficient in explaining the practice of wearing historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis.

Objectives

Both the dramaturgical framework and postmodern theory helped to achieve the first two objectives. The first objective was to explore the motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis. As previously mentioned, the findings showed that all three participants' motivations to wear historically-inspired dress were underwritten by emotions, attitudes, ideals, ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos. Lane's underwritten motivations included opposition to dressing down, moral attitudes, nostalgia for past attitudes, and individualistic self-expression. Lara's use of historically-inspired dress was found to be a product of gender socialization, self-fashioning/individualistic self-expression, and world-view. Devin was motivated to wear historically-inspired dress by an ideology of individualism and opposition to the recent trend of dressing down.

The second objective was to explore the meanings of specific period styles of historically-inspired dress to the wearer. These meanings include ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos expressed and/or communicated to others by wearing historically-inspired dress. Lane and Devin were motivated to adopt specific period-inspired styles such as 1930s or 1940s gangster suits and nineteenth century gentlemen's attire because of the historic associations attached to them. These historic associations served as a base in which Lane and Devin attached additional personal meanings. For instance, the historic connection between Lane's styling of 1930s or 1940s gangster suits and criminal activity, allowed Lane to assert his masculinity as criminals often engage in masculine behaviors such as "beat[ing] the living snot out of somebody" and "beating somebody senseless" (Appendix C, pp. 158-159). These findings reflect Strauss's (2003) assertion that these associations and meanings served as motivations themselves. For instance, Lane chose to adopt historically-inspired dress because he felt it would allow him to

communicate self-respect. In addition, Lane and Devin were motivated to wear historically-inspired dress due to its communicative abilities set in place by the dress style's association with the past.

Lara's responses, however, did not fully support Strauss's (2003) use of Goffman's dramaturgical framework. Miller (1998) and Eicher's (1981) dress and identity frameworks provided insight into Lara's motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress which included gender socialization and her worldview in which she tends to view everything in life through the lenses of history. With the exception of achieving authenticity in dress for dance and reenactment events, the personal meanings Lara attached to specific period-inspired dress items was not based on the styles' historic associations. She also did not mean to communicate her dress's reference to a past culture's norms, values, etc. Her motivation for wearing historically-inspired dress and the meanings she attaches to it supports the claim that styles inspired by history are characteristic of postmodern fashion as they reflect the elements of postmodern culture of bricolage and pastiche.

Morgado described the concept of pastiche as "one of the most characteristic features of postmodern culture," and defined the term as something that is imitated out of its original context without irony (p.45). Barnard (2002) described fashion as pastiche as "the irrational or random cannibalization of all the styles of the past" (p. 178). By this description, there is no implicit significance behind historically-inspired dress as the wearer is not meaning to reference any of the garment's historical associations and carries no meaning. Lara's dress can be seen as pastiche since she denied personal meaning of her dress and claimed it was merely aesthetically pleasing. Other evidence that her dress is pastiche is her denial that she communicates anything through her dress.

Lara implied that through dress she expresses a desire to be part of the present and not just relive the past. It would seem that her dress then is given a new meaning—one in which symbolizes her desire to be a part of the “current Bloomsbury group” or “aesthete movement,” and her mark on history (Appendix D, p. 185). Therefore, Lara’s dress can be seen as bricolage. Barnard (2002) explained that bricolage, unlike pastiche, which carries no meaning, assigns the dress item an entirely new meaning, transforming the style from a historical one to a present one. The item is thus up-to-date and embodies postmodern culture (Barnard, 2002; English, 2007; E. Wilson, 1985). Lara means for her dress to speak of the time and place she lives today rather than the times and places in which her dress draws influence. By erasing the historic associations connected to her dress items and giving them new meanings, Lara is utilizing the concept of bricolage.

Lane and Lara related feelings of nostalgia which is often linked to postmodern culture and said to be present in postmodern fashion (Evans, 2003; Molloy, 2004). The nostalgia the participants described best fits Hall’s (1994) definition of it. Hall (1994) claimed that nostalgia is “not simply longing for the past, but a response to conditions in the present” (p.9). Lane expressed nostalgia for cultural attitudes of the 1930s and 1940s while simultaneously demonstrating that he opposed some aspects of postmodern culture: *suspicion of narratives* which is evidenced by his want for an over-arching truth and the *death of progress* in which he felt that there will be no positive change or progress. Lara demonstrated that she felt nostalgic for dance as a social custom. The presence of nostalgia among the cases supports that their style choices are influenced by reactions to cultural changes in addition to the personal meanings they assign to their dress. A sense of individual freedom is a characteristic found among members of postmodern subcultures (Muggleton, 2000). All three participants possessed some level of

individualism. Therefore, some forms of Lane and Lara's dress-the dress Lara sews for dance and reenactment events, for instance, are a reflection of postmodern culture. Once again this shows that relying on dress and identity frameworks alone or postmodern theory alone would have been insufficient in gaining a complete understanding of the participants' motivations.

The third objective of this study was to explore other identity markers that aid in constructing the wearers' identities (for example, historic art, antiques, décor, furniture, and other forms of material culture) and their connection with the wearer's dress style. The findings showed a connection between participants' dress styles and other identity markers within their living space, particularly their living rooms. These identity markers included the historic home itself, furniture such as a nineteenth century couch, weaponry such as a medieval dagger, maps of nineteenth century U.S. territory, history books, and other decorative elements that appear historical such as model ships.

Historically-inspired dress as a personal style choice

This study was initialized with the assumption that historically-inspired dress had much in common with historic costume as both held the potential to project a wealth of symbolic meaning and communicative intention. In other words, this study approached wearers of historically-inspired dress as full-time reenactors. This assumption was problematic in that the participants never stated that fully assuming a historic persona was their goal. According to Strauss (2003), fully assuming a historic persona would involve careful manipulation of dress, props, and setting, and manner. In addition, reenactors wear their dress less frequently, causing it to be categorized as costume. According to Eicher and Roach-Higgins, (1992) costume is defined as clothing for “‘out-of-every-day’ social role or activity” that include [sic] ‘dress for the

theater, folk, or other festivals, ceremonies, and rituals” (p.3). Because the participants wear these styles on a daily basis or near-daily basis and they are not trying to portray a historic or semi-historic persona through the use of manner and setting, historically-inspired dress is not costume, but an individual style to express the self. In other words, the participants choose the historically-inspired dress style to portray their personal identities and not fulfill a quasi-theatrical role in the way that historical reenactors do. Therefore, historically-inspired dress is instead a personal style choice. Jenss (2005) found that members of the contemporary mod or sixties scene preferred to construct their identities and differentiate themselves from those who dress in mainstream fashions by using actual vintage clothing from the sixties as well as retro fashions. As a result, Jenss (2005) described the style tribe’s dress as “identity wear” explaining that it stemmed from an aesthetic preference for anything sixties which includes music and sixties style fashion (p.194). In the same way, historically-inspired dress can be seen as “identity wear,” a style preference which Lane, Lara, and Devin use to express their identities.

Limitations

Three participants, two male and one female, United States residents who wear historically-inspired dress were interviewed in depth and observed in a variety of their natural settings to investigate their personal motivations for using historically-inspired dress as a daily or near-daily aesthetic. Several unanticipated limitations emerged throughout the data collection phase. The purpose was to observe the participants in-person wearing historically-inspired dress and to scope out any other identity markers that related to the participants’ dress styles. Because I met with participants informally in their homes, they were not dressed in the style of clothing that I had come to investigate. The observations were operating on a flawed assumption that participants would wear public dress despite the fact that the interview was taking place in their

private setting. When observed, Lane and Lara were casually dressed in lounging clothes while Devin was outfitted in his work uniform. However, this provided a surprising advantage. Although I was not able to observe them wearing historically-inspired dress throughout the duration of the interview, the participants' references to their casual, dressed-down appearance provided more insight into their motivations. For instance, Lane's reference to his casual appearance led to the conclusion that opposition to the trend of dressing down was an underlying motivation for wearing historically-inspired dress. In addition, only some parts of the participants' home environments were seen. Observations took place mostly in the living rooms of participants' settings. The bedroom is usually a more intimate space where other significant elements may be placed.

Observations were also limited in time and frequency. Multiple visits with each participant would have been beneficial and provided opportunities to observe the participants in a wider variety of settings as well as gain a larger amount and richer data. Each participant was observed only once due to time constraints of both the researcher and the participants. All three participants were located out of state in Mississippi, North Carolina, and Indiana requiring 6-9 hours of travel time. Due to work schedules and prior engagements, each participant only had 2-3 hours available to share. Lane's interview took place on one of his only two days off from work within a span of two weeks. Devin had planned to spend an entire non-working day with the researcher but was called into work unexpectedly that afternoon. Likewise Lara's afternoon plans and the researchers' travel and weather complications limited the amount of time spent in observation.

Recommendations for Future Research

In my study there was a gender imbalance in which two male participants and one female took part. More similarities were found among the two males, Lane and Devin. Future studies should involve an equal number of male and female participants to distinguish whether or not shared characteristics are connected to gender. For instance, Lane and Devin, drew influence from a smaller range of time periods and wore specific period styles because of their historical associations, whereas, Lara, the only female participant, drew from a range of historical styles. Should this difference be attributed to differences in gender? Or should Lara's tendency to draw from multiple time periods indicate fallacy in the assumption that period-specific styles are worn due to their own specific historical associations? It was unforeseen that a participant would draw on a large range of period-inspired styles holding an array of historic associations. More research should be conducted regarding individuals similar to Lara who engage in this practice.

Case studies proved to be a sufficient methodology in exploring the motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress on a daily or near-daily basis. Semi-structured, open-ended interview questions allowed the participants to obtain rich data pertaining to the study's objectives. Follow-up interviews are suggested because they would provide both clarification and more data. However, participant observation failed to yield the expected data. To combat the limitations experienced in this study, it is recommended to plan observations in public spaces and not just the private homes of the participants. This should be done in order to observe their public appearance and ensure observing the participant wearing the style of dress in which he/she is researching. Future studies could limit the study to an in-depth study of one participant so that time constraints limit the frequency of observations. This will ensure there has been enough time to collect a greater range of information. Multiple observations of all three participants would

have been ideal. However, because data was only collected within an eight week period, multiple visits to multiple participants would have been very difficult. Three observations of one participant may be worth a very rich, in-depth look at the one individual's motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. Perhaps the settings in which participant observations took place should be reexamined. Participants were hesitant to let the researcher see the entire house/living setting, particularly in private areas of the home such as bedrooms. Perhaps the participants felt those spaces were too intimate for an unfamiliar person to explore. Alternative personal spaces should be considered for observation such as offices, cubicles, or the participants' workplace. Although connections between dress style and settings other identity markers were visible in the participants' home settings, these observations did not seem to add further insight into the participants' motivations for wearing historically-inspired dress. It could be that observation is not necessary as a data collection method to explore individuals' motivations behind his or her dress style and interviews alone may be sufficient.

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APPENDIX A

“HISTORICALLY-INSPIRED DRESS AS A PERSONAL STYLE CHOICE”

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in a voluntary study conducted by Ms. Dina Smith and Dr. Jose Blanco in the Department of Textiles, Merchandising, and Interiors at The University of Georgia. For this study, I will conduct interviews to explore motivations for wearing clothing that is inspired by historic styles of dress.

All information obtained will be treated confidentially and participants have the right to withhold use of their actual name and to use a pseudonym. You may elect to let us use your name in any publications resulting from this study.

For this project, you will take part in a semi-structured interview regarding your daily or near-daily personal clothing choices. These interviews will take place in your home, workplace, or any other location that you prefer. Within this setting (home, workplace, etc.), I will observe elements from your living environment and ask you to describe how they relate to your dress style. In addition, I will ask you to share and describe photographs and garment samples.

The interview and observation session is expected to last 1-2 hours. We will audio tape or video tape your responses to the interview questions during our session and transcribe them at a later time. These audio or video tapes will not be publicly disseminated. Upon transcribing them, the tapes will be destroyed. The transcripts will be kept in a locked file in a locked office on campus for which we have access. Photographs in which you will be identifiable (images will not be blurred or altered to avoid identification) will be publically disseminated unless you indicate otherwise.

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts due to your participation in this project. If you become uncomfortable with your participation in the project, you may stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may benefit from the opportunity to reflect on your choice of dress and from learning, upon publication of the results of the study, how your choices relate to those of other individuals who dress similarly. This study may offer practical information to the retail industry and encourage retail companies to consciously market retro/revival dress to interested individuals.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact Dina Smith at (719) 432-7653. I can also be contacted at dinajid@uga.edu. I look forward to communicating with you regarding your dress experiences. Thank you for assisting us in this project.

Sincerely,

Dina C Smith
Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors

Please choose and mark one of the following statements:

I do not want the researchers to use my name. The results of my participation will be reported as anonymous or using a pseudonym. The only people who will know that I am a research subject are members of the research team. No individually-identifiable information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others.

My identity and the results of this participation will be made public in any publications. The researchers can use my name when discussing my answers to the research question.

Please choose and mark one of the following statements:

I grant consent for the researchers to publicly disseminate photographs where I am identifiable.

I do not grant consent for the researchers to publicly disseminate photographs where I am identifiable.

Please sign both copies, keep one copy and return one to the researcher.

Signature of Researcher Date

Signature of Participant Date

For questions or problems about your rights please call or write: The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-mail address irb@uga.edu

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- I. Greetings and Introductions. Procedural aspects, review of consent form and research goals.
- II. Motivations of an individual to wear historically-inspired dress on a daily or near daily basis
 - i. How old are you?*
 - ii. To what would you attribute your interest in dressing in this type of dress?
 1. Do you enjoy studying/reading about history? *
 2. Where is your ancestors/family from?*
 - a. Do you dress to be like them? *
 - iii. Does dressing this way make you feel more significant/better person? *
 - iv. Do you feel this style of dress sets you apart from others? *
 - v. Do you have friends that dress this way?*
 1. Do you think they influence the way you dress?
 2. How do the way your friends influence the way you dress?
 - vi. Can you describe the level of beauty of past styles versus present-day styles?
 - vii. Would you tell me about your interests?
- III. To explore the meanings of historically-inspired dress

- a. General meanings
 - i. How would you describe yourself? Who are you? *
 - ii. How would you describe your dress or clothing style?
 - iii. What about this style appeals to you?
 - iv. What made you choose the way you look, your style? *
 - v. What were the main influences for you? Where did you get your ideas about the style from? *
 - vi. Can you tell me what this style means to you?*
 - vii. How does this style of dress make you feel?
 - viii. Do you feel you are going back in time when you dress this way?
 - ix. Does it make you feel like you are part of a different world or place?*
 1. Is this place better than the real world?*
 - x. How important to you is this way of dressing?
- b. Specific period styles
 - i. What time periods does your clothing draw influence from?
 - ii. What about those time periods do you find interesting? For example, events, mores, etc.?
 - iii. Can you describe favorite clothing piece/outfit and explain why it is your favorite?
 - iv. What does this outfit/piece of clothing mean to you?
- c. Expression/ communication of ideologies, values, beliefs, or ethos
 - i. What are you trying to say with your style? *
 - ii. What do you think your clothing says about you?

- iii. How do you think others would describe you based on your dress?
- iv. Is there more to it than the way you look?*
- v. In what way do you think you are similar to or different from conventionally dressed people?*
- vi. Is there anything about the attitudes of the majority of people that you don't like?*

IV. Final business and contact information for researchers provided.

APPENDIX C

D. All right, this is just, ah, a protocol question, how old are you?

L. 35.

D. Really?

L. Yeah

D. Amazing! Okay. How do you describe yourself as a person, like, who are you?

L. I am Don Quixote, Lord of La Mancha.

D. Hm. Alright. Hmm. Why do you describe yourself that way?

L. Because I, ah, I believe that, ah, it is a lot more effort to expand one's effort to bring about the, ah, to bring about unrealistic ideals than it is to simply accept the hum drum and every day especially when acceptance comes at a price of basically giving up everything it means to be a person and just becoming a statistic. (Guitar plays).

D. All right. That's good. How would you describe your dress or clothing style?

L. Oh. (Gasps). Well. I like to dress like, I ah, like I care about my appearance, and lately that hasn't been feasible, but I'm always, ah, I'm always in the best that I can find at the moment. (Guitar plays).

D. Mmkay. What about the historical style that you dress in? What about that appeals to you?

L. Well. I, ah, I look back at the thirties and forties. Ah, back when if a man wanted to go outside and go do something he had, he had to put on a suit and a tie, wear a hat, and he would ah, you know, he would present himself to the world in, in, in his best, looking his best. Always. I mean the, the, the criminals of the thirties wore flashy pinstripe suits that were always cut to fit correctly. Ah they, they, they always looked good that was the thing about them. And people who call themselves came dress in a very sloppy, slovenly manner just not even caring about their appearance where their, a lot of them try to wear their pants to show their underwear that the clothes they chose are always high-name and expensive but very ill-fitting, and they don't look like criminals who care about themselves. They look like, you know, their just, they, they look like criminals you really couldn't respect. And I miss the days when people respected themselves whether they were criminal or legally-minded. (Guitar plays).

D. All right. So what made you choose the way you look and your personal style?

L. (Guitar plays). Well um. It was ah, well after my wife had left me, ah, my self-respect was completely non-existent. And I was just really; really depressed for a couple of months, and, ah, it was from a November of 2000 to March of 2001. And on St. Patrick's Day, I woke up with a completely different mindset. It was like I had been completely reborn so I decided I needed a new look. From then on, I decided I would wear black suits exclusively. After awhile, I, after a couple of years, I liked the black, but I kind of wanted to try on some new colors so I began experimenting with color and pattern and I always, always loved wearing hats. After a while, um, my, if, ah, all my suits were at the cleaners or if it was laundry day or something, I remember, I always wanted a kilt so I bought one at a renaissance fair, and I just, I put it on just to have something to wear when I was doing laundry. And my, one of my roommates had asked me to drop her off at work so I went out and drove her to work. It was August so it was really hot

and I was wearing a kilt, and it was really cool and I was, ah, “Wow, this is extremely comfortable! I should do this more often.” And I did. (Guitar plays).

D. Cool. Okay. What were the main influences for your style of dress?

L. Originally, ah, *Men in Black*, *Agent Smith* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999), ah *Blues Brothers* (Landis, 1980). You know, the whole black suit black tie thing, and eventually it kind of spread off to other things. (Takes a deep breath). Don’t really remember who though. Don’t really remember who I wanted to, ah, start looking like, but I saw something that just looked really good to me, I’d, I’d buy it and wear it. (Guitar plays).

D. All right. Um so what are your general interests?

L. Guitar plays. Um, politics, religion, music, ah weapons, ah, any combination thereof-menswear.

D. Do any of these influence your dress style?

L. Huh I, ah, not really. I mean, ah, religion doesn’t really have a whole lot to do with how I dress. Um, politics well you have to look good in a suit to get into politics. That kind of goes without saying. Ah, phh. Weapons. Today’s suits really aren’t well suited for being armed. Ah, the only gun I currently possess is a, is a cap and ball revolver which is much too large to be concealed in a suit pocket. Um, also today’s clothes are largely designed for an unarmed populace. They just, it’s just not seen as something you’ll need to have. (Guitar plays).

D. That’s a good point. (Chuckles). Um, some of these might be repetitive because I haven’t really refined the interview, but um, to what would you attribute your interests in dressing in this type of dress? Sounds like the same as before?

L. Um, phh. Yeah, ah, just the black suit, black tie, and white shirt look is, it's an all-purpose look. It's a very versatile one, ah, and done correctly is actually quite snazzy. Ah, course done just off the cuff it looks unimaginative or even uniform. (Guitar plays). But I, I don't know there's little things you can do like *Agent Smith* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) always wore snazzy sunglasses and a gold tie clip ah the *Blues Brothers* (Landis, 1980) had a Ray-Ban Wayfarer sunglasses and white socks when they dressed up. Um then, ah well, *Men in Black* (Sonnenfeld, 1997) just wore the same thing throughout every movie so I guess a, you know, the black suit was a great place to start cause you can go to a funeral, you can go to a party, equally you could be equally well-dressed for either one. (Guitar plays).

D. Oh, okay. So do you enjoy studying and reading about history at all?

L. Oh yeah, history is, ah, something I am very well interested in, and I believe if you look into the past you can see the future. (Guitar plays).

D. So, um, tell me about your ancestry, and how your dress style might reflect it at all.

L. I honestly don't know a whole lot about my ancestry. I know that, ah, my mom was a Holden from Massachusetts, and my dad was a Russell, and according to him, our branch of the Russells first landed in the Carolinas somewhere and then migrated across to the Ozarks and then ended up in the west for some reason or another. He wasn't able to go into too much detail about it, but my granddad on my dad's side was a rancher of some kind. I think, ah, my mom's dad was a, ah, was a navigator in the military/merchant marines. Um, my dad actually, when he dressed up he was really snappy, but mostly he preferred the, ah, the kind of urban cowboy look, you know, the cowboy boots, blue jeans, ah he used to wear cowboy hats back in the seventies, but, ah, in the eighties he started favoring ball caps, ah, khaki work slacks. (Guitar plays).

D. Okay for you what is your style of dress? What is it to you?

L. It's like, ah, a personal statement you know? It's like, you present yourself to the world, ah, you know, there's all kinds of things about. How you shouldn't judge a book by its cover, how you shouldn't judge people by how they look. But the fact of the matter is how we look is a choice of how we present ourselves to the world. We dress a certain way because we want to be judged a certain way, and, ah, instinctively we know that. When I wear a kilt, I have to deal with all kinds of silly questions about what I am wearing under it. Well, it would be kind of stupid to get mad at the people who ask you because a normal question that everyone is gonna ask is out of curiosity. Because people don't see people in kilts everyday so if, ah, you know, I, ah, when I wear a kilt, I'm aware of what this says to the people that don't know me, and I am prepared to, ah, to deal with anything they ask me but if I'm in a suit, and I wanna look like a gangster or a pimp or, or a businessman or a preacher or whatever, um, you know, ah, I know how to dress to convey those impressions. (Guitar plays).

D. Okay some of this might sound competitive [repetitive] but why do you dress this way?

L. Well, because I enjoy it really. Um, well, you see what I've got on now, and I, you know, honestly just didn't have anything else to wear. I wouldn't go out like this. Um, this is, this is just (Yawns). Oh excuse me, just so I don't, you know, have to walk around the house naked.

L. It wouldn't be a problem if I were living alone and didn't have company, you know. If I didn't have people in the house, you have to consider, you know, their comfort level and everything.

D. Yep.

L. I gotta say if my roommates started walking around naked, I'd be mighty disturbed.

D. I think I would too (Laughs). Okay, does dressing like this make you feel more significant as a person?

L. (Guitar plays). Oh, undoubtedly yes. Ah, when I'm in a suit, it's usually the only time I feel human. Ah, when I'm in a military uniform, I feel very business-oriented. Ah, I actually feel like I'm part of something far larger than myself when I'm in uniform. When I'm in a kilt, I just want to walk hacking and slashing into a platoon of Englishman with a six foot broad sword in which I'm the only one left standing. Ah, there's something very masculine about a pleated plaid skirt.

D. (Chuckles).

L. Um, yeah the way I dress affects the way I feel and vice versa.

D. I'm sorry.

L. Ah, no go ahead. You're doing fine. (Guitar plays).

D. All right. Do you feel that this dress style sets you apart from other people?

L. Well, it, ah, it certainly leads other people to believe, ah, to believe I am set apart, but also, it, ah, brings a lot of us together. I've met several people who were just intrigued by the way I dress, and then we started hanging out and became friends. So it was, ah, yeah, it's been more of a bridge-builder than anything. (Guitar plays).

D. All right. Let me see. Would you say that your friends influence the way you dress?

L. (Guitar plays). Not really.

D. You influence them? (Laughs).

L. Um, in small ways, almost imperceptible ways. I mean, ah, here have been times I've taken . . . out shopping for some suits. And he looks good when he is dressed up, but he's more comfortable in a t-shirt and a pair of slacks. He doesn't get the same thrill out of dressing up that I do. Ah, then there's other people that, you know, they, I, they come to me for advice if they want to buy a suit or if they want to know what goes with what so I, I can influence them that way. But pretty much, ah, well then your sister did buy me my, ah, first pair of boot-cut jeans which I've actually, ah, grown quite fond of when I'm too, when I've eaten too much to fit into my suits. And if you get a nice shirt and a proper sport coat, it actually looks kind of snazzy.

D. Um huh. Okay. Can you describe to me the level of beauty past styles have versus today's styles? I know you've already touched on this, but-

L. Well in the past, as I said, people cared a lot more about their appearance than they do today. And that reflects, in my opinion, a basic level of self-respect people used to have. I mean back in the twenties when women wanted to be rebellious, they, ah, they wore short skirts, short one-piece dresses, bell-shaped hats; ah, they covered up their eyes, and wore a lot of beads. That was just outrageous for the time.

D. Hm.

L. Then when they wanted to be rebellious again in the sixties, they wore an interesting and amazing variety of styles, ah, some of which were actually less rebellious than they actually were hip and trendy, but ah, like a lot of, a lot of women, ah, even in dressing rebelliously kept themselves largely covered up so that the point wasn't so much, ah, what you were showing as to, ah, you know, the fact that you were actually wearing something interesting. But nowadays women don't care largely. I'm not gonna say this is universal women's style, but women largely

don't care about being rebellious or about conforming, ah, they largely seem to be, ah, determined to, ah, put themselves on the meat market, and I say that it's rather uncharitable, but I say that because of this god-awful television program I am subjected to that's called *Rock the Bus of Love with Brett Michaels [sic]* (Maquire & Kozek, 2007-2009). And there were these bleach blonde women that were, ah, universally so, um, they were, ah, dressing in clothes way too tight for them. They weren't fat by any stretch of the imagination, but the tightness of their clothes made them look like they were fat and trying to hide it. Ah, I have no idea of the woman's approximate age. I'd have to say that they were around 25. Ah, but they dressed as if they didn't have any self-respect. They conducted themselves in front of the camera in a completely mercenary fashion. And this would not bother me. I mean when they were together they were all so supportive and comforting, and then when they were individually in front of the camera they were cutting down the women in their group, and this wouldn't bother me except that this is currently being held up by society as the model for female behavior. This is how you are supposed to act if you are a woman. Ahhhhum. Which is I find a very de-humanizing ideal.

D. Um huh.

L. It's not one that I approve of at all.

D. I have to agree with you. That's good. Um. (Guitar plays). Do you feel that you are going back in time when you dress in your suits?

L. More like I'm trying to bring those times back to this present one. Um, I think that, ah, I mean it's not possible in any sense really to go back in time. Um, because your still surrounded by the same jerks ah in society no matter what you wear. But if you can catch some people's imaginations, ah, and get them to think, "Hey, you know, maybe ah, maybe a change is due,"

that'd maybe a change is in order for the way things are. Um, you might actually be able to move somebody to, to do something constructive maybe, ah, bring back a few of the older attitudes, ah, and help somebody discover their self-respect. (Guitar plays).

D. Okay. Does it make you feel like you're ever part of a different world or place?

L. Well kinda like I'm, kinda like I'm an ambassador from another time, but then that's a largely illusory feeling. I, I was born in the seventies, raised in the eighties, ah, grew up in the nineties, and I'm living in the two-thousands it's, ah, you know, not really anything can change that fact. Now we can bring back attitudes of the thirties and forties in the coming decades-that's possible but, um, but we're stuck in the time we're born in. (Guitar plays).

D. Well, do you think that time and place is better than the current real world? Hmm?

L. Well, in the attitudes of the people, certainly. Um, in the past there was a lot more optimism and a lot more, ah, ah, certainty about, um, well about everything really even the fact that we knew that we didn't know things we were aware that we didn't know them and we were fairly certain of that. Nowadays we, we claim to know everything by, ah, by demon, by trying to show that no one knows anything, and therefore, you know, what we know was more valuable than what others felt which was really stupid way I think to look at things. Um, this, this attitude, I think, has led to, to a breakdown, um, ah, a breakdown in a, well, in the country and the world at large. I think that back in the days when it was okay to be American. When America was the best country in the world, and we all knew it. Ah, we were a lot happy as people. Even when the times were worst. Nowadays we have high-speed wireless internet access. And, ah, video games delivered to your door, and, you know, I'm staring right at a huge flat screen TV that's the last remnant of eighties projection-style technology, but that doesn't make anybody happy. People

are just, people are allergic to more things now than they've ever been. People have more psychosis to choose from. Um, there's a lot of uncertainty going on about, ah, anything you could think of really. And nobody's willing to come to any kind of conviction because everybody's afraid of being wrong. So yeah, the old ways, the old days are definitely better in that sense. Now in the sense that, you know, medical science was still fairly primitive even seventy years ago, um, and that, ah, communication was extremely slow, and the electric guitar as we know it hadn't really been widely invented until, oh, thirties and forties, and, ah, music was still very, very tame back in those days. Well, I think today we have it a lot better in that sense. We've got better stuff, but our mindsets are shot.

D. Um, kay. (Shuffling). (Guitar playing). All right. Okay. Can you tell me what each of your styles like the suits and the kilt specifically means to you personally?

L. Well personally, the suit basically marks me as a human being. Ah, a person who is, whose got intrinsic value, ah, by virtue of his humanity. Um I, I dress in a suit, I feel human. I dress in a kilt I feel superhuman. I feel I am capable of taking on any tasks, ah, that anybody could possibly assign me. I feel like I could just, I feel like I am the most dangerous man alive when I m in a kilt. Ah when I'm in a military uniform, I feel like I am part of something that is just timeless and eternal and just totally really awesome. Um, I feel like I am part of an ideal rather than a part of an organization. So an, and when I'm dressed like this, I feel like a bum.

D. Hmm. (Guitar plays). Hmm, okay. I think you answered this question. How does this style of dress make you feel? I think you've done that. Um, but overall, like, I guess this is a more generalization of your different styles. They all make you feel different. Okay.

L. Now if I had a Victorian outfit to wear, I would undoubtedly feel much more elegant than anything. (Guitar plays).

D. How important is it to you that you dress this way?

L. Ah, very important. Ah, because without good reason, I won't go outside the door like I am now. (Guitar plays). If I didn't have so much to do, I would make sure I was dressed properly to receive a visitor.

D. Ah ha! (Laughs). Okay, compared to what a lot of other people are wearing leggings and sweatpants on the street now.

L. (Muffled agreement).

D. You look fine. (Guitar tuning). What time period does your clothing draw influence from? You said thirties and forties is that it?

L. Ah, sometimes I do feel kind of seventies-ish. Ah, I would like to get a, a shirt with a butterfly collar and a leather jacket, a leather suit jacket, just to kinda let that come out. But ah, that's not very often. But, ah, the kilt you really can't pin a time on because as it were, the scholars, the kilt, as we know it wasn't a historical garment.

D. That's true.

L. Well I've come across people who recipherously [sic] dispute that point so since I wasn't there I'm never going to know for sure.

D. Hm. (Guitar plays.) It's slow revolving. I think it's more seventeenth century. Hmm, huh. But your right, it's more traditional. Okay. What about the thirties and forties you find interesting? Not just the just the seventies, each period?

L. Well the thirties and the forties, ah course, we were coming out of the great depression which Roosevelt's disastrous economic policies were doing more to prolong than anything else. Um, but there was a very grim determination back in those days that yes the times were bad, but we are going to, ah, but we are going to tackle them. We're going to deal with them like grown-ups instead of whining about how dysfunctional everybody is and take Prozac. Which Prozac wasn't available back then but that's hardly beside the point, ah, the ah, the hard times in the thirties, well the twenties and the thirties really gave rise, ah, amongst black Americans in the Mississippi delta to the blues which then migrated to the places like Chicago and Texas, so in all throughout the South really, ah, black Americans began this style of music that basically said, "life sucks but we're gonna deal with it."

D. Yeah, I hear you.

L. Now white Americans were actually doing the same thing except that music was called country music, which is why I think they created such an explosive combination. When, ah, when rock and roll came about in the fifties, now the, ah, the forties saw us come out of the depression after the end of World War II and began an unprecedented economic boom in a time when optimism, scientific discovery, ah, and revolutions, ah, in, ah, and just the amount of available facts now, ah, well, the forties saw the invention of the jet engine, ah, which the Germans actually invented for World War II, but we, the Americans popularized, um, for, for transport, now, ah, the, the forties and the fifties, the thirties and the forties, the style of dress

remained relatively static. Um, the forties more people began wearing suits because more people could afford them. Ah, because work was just everywhere, wages were high, and the dollar was strong. And we had just kicked the living crap out of Germany. Um, then in the fifties, ah, things began to relax a little but the youth of America gained a consciousness, they, they realized that they were young, that they were ah, that they had a place in American society, see prior to the twentieth century, there was no such thing as a teenager no, but you were a child and then when you were like thirteen you got a job and you became a young man, ah, although since you were still young you were fairly well frowned upon but after, you were usually an apprentice to somebody and then you became a journeyman in whatever trade you were put in and then you did that for the rest of your life. You work for a company for the rest of your life, you'd put in thirty years, and then you would retire with a nice fat pension. Um the fifties, ah, the fifties was when the teenager really began to come into his own with his own music, his own movies, ah, there were teenagers who could afford by hook or by crook to drive their own cars which was just phenomenal back then, and then, ah, in the sixties people stopped caring about how they dressed they, they did not stop caring, they started dressing to antagonize what had been the norms up until then and that led to some interesting, some interesting fashion choices but mostly, ah, just a lot of crap came out of the 60's, ah, you know, stylistically speaking. It was a great decade for rock and roll though-marvelous decade for rock and roll. Ah, that and the seventies both but the fashion choices just plummeted. Ah, then the seventies saw the advent of polyester suits in colors like lime green which are not meant to be worn by human beings. Ah, yet what I find most fascinating about the seventies is that there was a sexual revolution during which every participant was wearing clothes that basically guaranteed they would never get laid. So that it was, ah, maybe it was one of those things that you were just, like, "You have got to be kidding

me!” Ah, white guys with afros, huge collars, ah, shirt unbuttoned to show a gratuitous amount of chest hair, large medallion, and ah, polyester jackets and polyester bell-bottom pants with platform, thick shoes. Yeah, no self-respecting person would ever think he looked anything like anything but a cartoon dressing like that. And yet that’s how people dressed in the seventies. Then people kinda figured out in the eighties that, you know, dressing like a clown belonged, you know, made you belong in a circus. So they traded in their leisure suits for stuff made out of actual wool fibers rather than polyester. The eighties were a glorious time for fashion. At least, the early eighties were but when Don Johnson started popularizing, ah, pastel-colored suits, I think we took another hit. Then in the nineties with Seattle and the whole grunge thing, dear god!

D. (Laughs).

L. The day Nirvana released their first item, to me, that was the day music died. (Guitar plays).

D. Okay, so what about, kay, so you said a lot about the things you don’t like, um, what about the periods that you dress in that you find the most interesting? Let’s say for you that would be music?

L. Well the, ah.

D. So I think also like events, their mores, their beliefs, what about, along those lines, what do you find the most interesting?

L. Well, the, you listen to the music of the thirties and the forties, ah, well the thirties, I think was when Cole Porter got started, and his music, I think is rather, it’s a lot of fun to listen to. It had to be very tedious to write cause its very repetitive and, you know, he has a habit of going up step-by-step in his scales and not taking very large leaps. Um, his song-writing was actually quite

cumbersome if you look at it, ah, but it was a lot of fun to listen to. It's fun to sing, um, but you listen to, ah, in the south, you had the blues, and you had country music, and there was the determination to deal with and make the best of times that were not going to get any better, especially if you sat on your butt and whined about it. Like grunge-players did in the nineties.

D. Hmm.

L. Ah, just the fact that we're gonna, life sucks, but we're gonna deal with it like grown-ups, ah, was an infinitely more desirable mindset than when Kurt Cobain came out in the nineties. Ah, the, ah, the attitudes of the times were a lot more mature and a lot more, ah, just, ah, there was the possibility that if you did get up off your ass and do something you could actually get something done. Nowadays, everybody wants to do focus groups, ah, group therapy and sit around and talk and talk and talk endlessly about nothing, and then they wanna pat themselves on the back, and I, if I wanted to, I could make thousands of dollars a day, for instance, doing sensitivity training, and I have no credentials to do that whatsoever. But I don't need them. I can just make money telling people to be nicer to each other, that's, you couldn't get by with that in the thirties, you just couldn't, try charging two-thousand dollars a day to tell people, ah, not to call each other bad names, or to respect other people in the workplace, o my god, you'd be laughed out of town. (Guitar plays).

D. Here's a little different turn. Um, describe your favorite clothing or piece or outfit and explain why it is so. This is more geared to specific things that you own. Hmm.

L. Well, I've had to throw away several things that I own. Ah recently, but ah, until I had to throw them out, ah, my favorite things were my suits from Britain. That I brought back because ah, well they were British, and they were far superior. Um, actu-interestingly, suits, good quality

suits in England, are slightly cheaper than suits of comparable quality in America. Um, don't know exactly why that is, but you can walk into, ah, I literally walked in looking like a dock worker on my first, my second day in England and walked out of the suit shop looking like a businessman. Ah, because they, the suits they, they had for me, were they were ready to wear right off the rack, I, I didn't have to have them hemmed or anything.

D. Hm.

L. And that just amazed me. So if you need something on short notice, then England is a great place to go. It's not like in America where you have to wait two weeks for someone to get around to hemming your pants for you. Um, I still have some of the shirts; I've got from England though. One of my favorites is still in the washer. It's this white shirt, this white cotton shirt that it has a very light brown, blue striping. Um, but the weave of it is very, ah, very intricate weave, and I'll dig that out of the washer right now, but some of my favorite articles, and, ah, let me dig that out of the dryer.

D. Hmmm.

L. (Dryer door opens). My other favorite pieces are neckties because neckties pull an outfit together in ways that are quite unexpected. If, ah, if you're not used to seeing them, you can have a suit in one color and a shirt of another. Ah, here you go.

D. Um huh. Okay.

L. And you see in between the stripes, yeah, the pattern of the cloth woven differently between these two stripes its diagonal. Between these two. It's some kind of star-type pattern, and then there's the diagonal stripy again, but then there's that star pattern again.

D. Yep.

L. Um. I would love to know how they did that, but here you can also see the seams are double-stitched...apparently they folded the seams and stitched in which usually you see that in higher quality garments.

D. Um huh.

L. It results in the seam of unusually high strength and then some of the stuck this blue ribbon edging, but I don't even know if that there is any significance of the brand name, but I rather like it.

D. Um yes. So you like it because of the quality?

L. Oh yeah. This is another one of the shirts I got in Britain. You can see how well-woven that is.

D. Oh yeah, uh huh.

L. Yeah, they do that same blue edging in the collar. I don't even know what that's for. I mean you, you can tell the thickness of the cloth.

D. I think it's just to, ah, just to help, probably like an interfacing.

L. It looks nice.

D. Uh huh.

L. Umm, of course the, you got the same fold-over, seam stitching. This the yoke on this shirt doesn't have it, but I think the white one, they do a two-piece yoke. Um, that's something they do in higher-quality shirts. Now. (Dryer closes.) I do for, uh, for solid color shirts, I prefer

Jeffrey bean over every other brand, uh, and you can see here, this is an old black Jeffrey bean black satin shirt, and you see how the collar is wearing the edges and what-not, but the fabric and color is just as black as the day I bought it. These shirts don't fade. In fact, they seem to grow softer with time.

D. Um huh.

L. You know, they of course, I'm gonna have to throw this out later you got that little, I don't know what that is, but.

D. Pilling?

L. You got pilling here, you can see the, ah, the facing through the, uh, through the collars worn out and it's probably going to show up on the cuffs too. But being even for that, the, ah, the shirt is still serviceable...the only black shirt I've ever had that's never faded. Um see here, do I have any other favorites?

D. Of the suits that you have, what was your favorite?

L. Well I still got a four button Fugu? Fubu striped suit. Um, it's the oldest suit I have currently, and it's my favorite suit. I've even gone as far as, ah, the pants got caught in a friend's, ah, seat belt one day and had a nice rip in the seat of the pants. I took them to a tailor, and begged them to fix them in any way possible. And the job actually doesn't look half bad. And if you, and if I wear the coat, you'll never notice it was ever torn. But, ah, I love that suit, and I'm going to wear that thing until it is no longer serviceable, because I can't find it anywhere.

D. Uh huh.

L. Anymore. It's like just when I find something I really like they have to, ah, they have to discontinue that pattern.

D. Uh huh.

L. So since I never will have another one, I have to make sure I keep that one as long as I possibly can.

D. Now when you wear that one is it, do you, is it like historical-looking at all?

L. No.

D. Just very modern?

L. Um hum. It's extremely modern, it's got four buttons, ah, which is highly unusual for a fashion suit. Cuffs instead of having a series of small buttons along the edges of the suit, ah, they have one large one, the pants are box-pleated which I've never seen on pants before, ah, but I think is really snazzy-looking, so.

D. Okay, so what is that suit other than the quality, what is it mean to you, like is it?

L. It's just awesome.

D. It's just awesome?

L. It is. That's the suit. If I were really, if I were really a criminal and wanted to wear something in which to be at the living snot out of somebody, that's the suit I would pick. I've also got a pair of spats. Ah, that I wear over a pair of some well-shined shoes, and I, I've got that. I bought a hat when I was in Arizona that's cement white, which is kind of an off-white color, but it's not dark enough to be considered cream or ecru, but, ah, that, that's my hat, unfortunately it's spotted, and

stained. Um, and I don't know where to go to get it cleaned, but it, it's just my hat, and I would wear that out. That suit with that hat with a pair of spats and get my, ah, and get my cane, and just take delight in beating somebody senseless. Ah, because that would be the suit to do it in.

D. Do you have a picture of you wearing that at all?

L. No.

D. Okay.

L. I mean, I can show you the suit, but I don't have a picture of me wearing it.

D. I might at the end of the interview take a few pictures with my camera of the suit to have a reference, um, so what are you trying to say when you wear these suits and kilts? Like, what do you say with your style in general?

L. I'm really not trying to say much of anything other than I guess, "Hey look at me, ah, you can look like this too."

D. Hmm.

L. IF YOU respect yourself! The whole thing about self-respect though, I, it's important to me, because for the longest time, I didn't really have a whole lot of self-respect which in and of itself is a pretty sad thing, but the fact of the matter is, I didn't know that I had self-respect. So once I realized both that I was missing it and it was a thing I hadn't had much of in the first place it was like a revelation, then when I found my self-respect again, I was amazed. It was one of the greatest days of my life.

D. So what do you think these clothing say about you? What do you think others say when they see you walking down the street, huh?

L. Well I've been asked if I'm a preacher, I've been asked if I'm a businessman, I've been asked if I'm selling something. I've been asked if I'm Jewish. Um, I've been, I've actually sold suits, I sold suits for nine months when I was in Florida, and when I came home to Mississippi. Ah, you know, it's nothing for me to hang out in Dillard's for a couple of hours just looking at stuff I wanna wear. And I've sold suits at places I don't even work.

D. (Laughs.)

L. I'll be, like, well, there's this thing here. Now check out these suits here, and let's put together these shirts in combination with, and your gonna want a pocket handkerchief, because that's what's gonna set right off.

D. (Laughs.)

L. And they say, "Oh that's great! We'll buy it! and I say, "Good. Let me find a representative."

D. (Laughs.)

L. Let me find somebody who works here, and I, you know, "Hey dude, easiest commission you'll ever make right over here!" and that just blows people's minds and then, of course, ah, if I wear a kilt, it seems to be saying I'm not wearing any underwear.

D. (Laughs.)

L. Which I should clarify that, yes, when I am inside the city, I do wear underwear when I'm in a kilt because there's the health and safety of everybody around me to consider. I don't believe in

going traditional, especially when restaurants are not gonna want you to wipe your bare ass on their, on their seats. That's just rude.

D. (Laughs). Not thinking of what other people, what you think other people might think, what do you think your clothing says? You. I think it's very similar to other questions but-

L. Ah, basically the same thing as the other questions. It says basically, "Hey look at me. I respect myself. You can too." Um, "I feel awesome. I am awesome. You can be this awesome."

D. Kay.

L. "Hey, I'm from the forties."

D. (Laughs).

L. "I should learn how to Jitterbug."

D. (Laughs).

L. I really should learn how to dance (Guitar plays).

D. Well how do you think other people would describe you based on your dress?

L. Oh I've been, ah, people called me the suit guy all through college. And some still remember me that way. I've also been called the kilt guy. Um, chances are if you go to USM [The University of Southern Mississippi] and ask somebody about the suit guy you would run into somebody or somebody who knew or somebody who knows the stories. "Yeah, there's this guy who wears a zoot suit everyday.'" (Guitar plays.)

D. Would you say that this is an actual zoot suit, or people just buy into it because it looks that way?

L. They just buy into because it looks that way. I've never worn an actual zoot suit, although I've always wanted one.

D. Hm. (Guitar plays.)

L. People have said I look like a Blues Brother even though the Blues Brother never wore three-button, ah, three-button suits. They wore polyester two-buttons with white socks and Ray Ban Wayfarers. I've never worn Ray Ban Wayfarers. Ah, I always, my look was always supposed to be *Agent Smith* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999) *Men in Black* (Sonnenfeld, 1997) more than *Blues Brothers* (Landis, 1980), but that's what people identify the black suit with, especially with the hat.

D. Huh, alright. Is it enough just to wear this style, or is there something more to all this, the way you look?

L. Um Phhhrr. I don't know. I don't know. I think everybody's got reasons for wearing what they want to wear. Ah, you know, I asked you earlier if you considered why it is that ravers wear such obnoxiously large jeans.

D. Hmm.

L. Ah, there doesn't seem to be a reason, to, it, it's just kind of a cultural symbol for that. Why do Goths wear all black even when they are not depressed? Ah, why do Emo people dye their hair silly colors and pierce themselves in inconvenient places? Um you know every, everybody has a reason for the way they wanna look. Why do beautiful women want to mar their natural

beauty by sticking metal in their faces where metal was never meant to go? These are questions that are going to dog us that don't really have any specific answer. But mostly, I think it is, it is because they want to belong to a group. For my own part, I don't really care whether or not I belong to a certain group. Ah, I just like dressing the way I dress because that's how I feel best in any given time. (Guitar plays).

D. Okay, so in what ways do you think you are similar or different from the way other people dress?

L. Well, similar in the fact that I wear pants and shirts. Ah, different in that I consider my appearance to have some kind of meaning. I don't think people consciously acknowledge that the way they dress sends a certain message about themselves. I don't think that they, ah, I don't think that they consciously acknowledge that if you dress a certain way, that people will think of you in a certain way. I think they just put on whatever they want to put on, and, ah, they don't really consider the consequences of the way they look.

D. Hmmm. Okay. Is there anything about the attitudes of the majority of people that you don't like?

L. It would be harder to find anything about the attitudes of the majority of people that I do like.

D. Hm.

L. Ahh.

D. Well, you can tell me that! (Laughs.)

L. Ah, the fact is, ah, the majority people today, they don't think, they're not, you know they, they're not any kind of, they are not trying to be conscious of themselves or the world around

them, they don't question their own mindsets, they're not given to introspection. They don't think to themselves, "What if I am wrong?" They just take it for granted that everybody else is. Um, that's not, you know, that's not a healthy mindset. Particularly when it comes to dress. Um, there's women, for instance, who wear ridiculously revealing fashions, ah, that send the message, "Hey sailor, you new in town?"

D. Huh.

L. Then they get upset when men respond to those fashions. Well, although I do believe men do need to be thinking with their heads, with their brains actually, um, rather than, um, rather than, ah, their reproductive organs.

L. I say, "Hey wait a minute this is not," you know, this isn't the internet, this is a woman who has thoughts and feelings and may have an opinion as to she may or may not want to have sex with you. "Maybe I should consult her before I try this." The clothing that most women will choose does not put forth that message, and women should be aware if you dress in a certain fashion a certain segment of the population is going to react to the way you dress. Like, I saw a poster once that said just because you dress like a slut, doesn't make you a slut, because I act like a racist, doesn't make me a racist

D. Uh huh.

L. Um, I don't necessarily agree with that, but that is the way a lot of people think, and I think that to, ah, disregard that, because they don't think that's the way it should be is a very a very stupid thing to do. (Guitar plays.)

D. Okay. The last set of questions is the last one, um the diff, your differences between work dress, and I already know the answer to some of these questions, but for the record Ill I ask you, um, what job or otherwise do you do now ?

L. I, right now, I am a security shift manager at the . . . casino, ah, I'm also, ah, lieutenant in the Army National Guard.

D. Lieutenant. Kay, if you did not have dress codes at these work places, would you choose to dress your own personal style? In suits?

L. Well certainly. Certainly. I, but, ah, the thing about, the thing about the casino is they actually asked me to tone down my style of dress. Being a security supervisor means I get to wear my own clothes instead of what the casino furnishes me, so I'm already inclined to dress professionally when I come in. Of course, the only clothes I had for awhile that was serviceable was, ah, my, ah, was my gangster stripe suit. And I had to wear that for two weeks solid until I got my first paycheck. Um, but they said, you know, we need something a little bit more professional, and as soon as I get paid, I will definitely tone it down a little, ah, when I'm at, when I'm at work, ah, a suit jacket or a blazer, ah, a nice pair of slacks, and a button-down shirt is what they, ah, is what's required and is what I would wear anyway. Uh, the thing about being in the Guard though, is that when you are on active duty in a time of war, you are required to wear a uniform, Um, it's, it's the Geneva convention. It's the law. You have to be able to identify yourself to the enemy as the enemy, and, you know, I, the army for the longest time had the god-awful polyester green uniforms that I just could not stand, ah, because they were green and they were polyester. Well now they have made the entirely sensible decision to go back to the dress blues, which, I think, are far more elegant and far more attractive. Then the green class

a uniform they had, um, because the, ah, the blues actually hark back to what the army was wearing in the civil war when they rampaged through the south (Guitar plays).

D. Okay. So what was the changes you make to tone down yourself? You said they, they wanted you to, but how would you do that?

L. Um, what was the question?

D. What changes would you make to your style if you wore it to work?

L. Well, um, although the gangster stripe got many positive reviews from customers, ah it, it says more I'm going to go rob a bank rather than I'm here to do business so, you know, just more solid colors and more business-oriented colors like navy with grey pinstripe would have been, ah, you know, if I'd had it to wear if my, ah, if my navy blue British suit hadn't, pants hadn't ripped on it, I would have been wearing that most of the time, but, ah, just a good solid-color pair of pants.

APPENDIX D

D. Alright. Alright, then. Alright, so this is part of the interview. I'm Dina. Um, I'm doing my thesis on historically-inspired dress and what motivates you to do so or like, what, wha- why you do so and why you're interested in it and just so and just various questions of the like. Um, so I'm gonna start off with your age. How old are you?

La. I'm 29

D. Alright. Yay! I'm almost your age. (Laughs). Um, so what would you attribute your interests in, in dressing the way you do?

La. Well, I think that I always had been interested in it. Um, seeing that when I was a child, when my mom brought home books from her, she went on a few trips to Europe and stuff I always was interested in looking at the pretty dresses of days gone by and stuff like that, but then when, um, when I was a teenager, um, I got interested in Anne Rice and, um, *Interview with a Vampire* (Anne Rice, 1976) and learning about history through *The Vampire Chronicles* (Anne Rice, 1976-2003) and then just getting into history as well through, ah, my own interests. I started dressing in that way when I was probably about thirteen or fourteen? And then, um, made a lot of my clothes all through high school and always made that choice for fashion, up until today. Never, the phase never passed, to my parents chagrin, possibly.

D. Second question very related note...

La. Yes?

D. Why do you dress this way?

La. Well, I find it aesthetically pleasing, um, I just don't think I look right in a lot of modern clothes, um, and I don't know I jus, I just I feel much better in long skirts, and, ah, I feel prettier in corsets.

D. Yeah?

La. And, you know, it's just I feel like a lot of the aesthetics of the past are just in line with mine. Um, I don't know of a specific reason.

La. Um, but, I just think it looks nice.

D. Right.

La. It comes down to that.

D. That's really good.

La. I was lucky to have a lot of historic fashion influences growing up being that my whole family was interested in history, and my family saved a lot of things. So we had old hats, old gloves, hair accessories, old wedding dresses. Um, I mean I was definitely the little girl who liked to dress up, and my great-grand- my great grandmother died when I was four so we inherited all of her, um, very fancy gowns, um, when I was very little, and those were my dress-up gowns, and so I think that having those influences very young as well really came through.

D. Hm.

La. Um.

D. Alright. You said you enjoyed studying/reading about history.

La. You know what it's weird. I only got into history after I got into historic fashion. I knew about history, didn't really care a whole ton about it, fascinated by, um, I was actually m, much more into science as a kid.

D. Hmm.

La. And it was really when I got fascinated by historic fashion that really kind of lit my fire in studying history, and that's when I pretty much learned history through fashion which is very different than most people.

D. Um huh.

La. So when I started researching historical fashion, kind of made the puzzle pieces starting falling into place around what I was learning about historic fashion, and, um and, that's what made it enjoyable, and knowing, and I think that's what, um, truly lied at the heart of, um, what I was interested in, and therefore was, was how people lived and what they were wearing, and once I knew that, that made me understand history in a better way.

D. Um huh.

La. Because I knew what they were wearing, what shoes were hitting the streets, um, and what take, took part in their daily lives.

D. Uh huh. Alright. Still running that's good. That's really interesting. Um, how if any way does this style of dress reflect you ancestry?

La. Hmm, well I've inherited a lot of things from my grandmother, great grandmother, and my aunt, my, one of my mom's sisters. Um, and I think that's cool whatever I'll say, "Yeah, this is so-and-so's outfit or jewelry or your skirt that was made in the seventies," or you know anything like that, um, I think, um, is very fun to have a story with it.

D. Uh huh.

La. Um, About my ancestry in particular. I must admit, um, going through photographs that my mom, she's really into genealogy and has kept all these photographs and family records going back over a thousand years, um, I'm always asking her for pictures of interesting-looking people, most of them are pretty dour looking and I'm not really too interested in them, but whenever she does find a really pretty picture of a young woman being that I was interested in this since I was a teenager I'm pretty excited to see it, but pretty much my favorite time period which is 1876 to 1883 or 84, I don't know of any young women in our family that I have photographs of which is such a shame, cause I would love to have someone in my family history that I have a picture of being a little, but unfortunately don't.

D. Alright, does dressing this way make you feel like a more significant or, or better person?

La. I think that I'm more memorable which is kind of cool, um, just for little things, like if they remember my name, but otherwise for majority of time that I've dressed this way or more significantly when I started dressing this way was, it was, I did not feel better whatsoever. I, everyone called me names, everyone was so mean to me in high school and junior high school that, um, I'm surprised I kept doing it, but I, I really think that it was, I was compelled to do so, and didn't feel right otherwise that I, I really wanted to, ah, continue doing it. It was just a surprise when I got to college and the first time in my life people complimented my, the way I

dressed, and that was so different, because any other time it was, um, a source of negative remarks. That was so cool to get to college and people were grown up and were really a lot nicer then.

D. Do you feel this sets you apart from other people?

La. Yeah, I do think it has, and because of my personality going along with my interests in looking at things in a historical way because I look at anything, any choices I make in a historical view now after studying it, um, and I also look at culture in a historical view and have a long-term vision that, um, it always influences my conversation, and also during years, in college for example, when I went to Florida state University it was the number one party school, and I definitely didn't want to, did not want to be like the normal kids, so I decided not to drink beer the whole time in college and only had fancy wine parties at my house. So, I was, um, being different. And now I'm making up for it. I want to meet everyone and be on every level because I don't want to miss every part of life. Because I think I put myself on a different level and now I don't want to be that way. Especially having a son now, I don't want him to miss out on everything either.

D. Well has your dress, have you changed your dress in order to do that at all, since?

La. Well, I'm cutting my hair. My hair is four and a half feet long. And I haven't cut it since I was nine years old, and I'm cutting it in May. And I'm, don't know if I'm doing it to be normal, I'm actually doing it for, for reasons more like now that I have a son it's kind of hard to have time to do my hair, um, in the Victorian ways I normally do it, um, I just want to have it a little easier to manage, uh, which has totally be against most, my ideals have been. I'll just pick the hardest outfit to wear, the hardest dress to wear, the hardest hairstyle. Um, so I'm kinda going for

something a little bit easier but I, ah, want to get a 1940's haircut. I want to do something still historical. I don't want to do something modern-day. I'm gonna learn how to do pin curls and victory rolls and things like that. It's still gonna be historical just not as far back.

D. I used to have long hair and tried to do a lot of updo's with the curls of the empire period, and it bleached out by the sun, and I had to get it all cut off, and I was like, "No!" But that's a big deal.

La. Yeah, it's, it's, um, everyone's kinda sad I'm cutting my hair, but it's been plenty long time that I've had it long. It's um yeah very long.

D. Well tell me, ah, a little bit generally about any other interests that you have or the same ones.

La. Well, to tell you the truth historical fashion has been my main focus since about thirteen years old. I remember in history class I didn't even like many of the history projects that were available to choose from, so the teacher said can I do it on 1940s fashion. It was all twentieth century fashion, and he said okay. And ha, gosh, it's always been something I've pursued.

Recently, I, um, my interest to be eco-friendly which is also something I've been since I was a child. I was on the recycle team and stuff like that in second grade, and, um, to do things like that has come to the forefront, and when I lost my job teaching history of fashion I wanted to get a green job, something I can work in the environment. I helped with, um, getting solar energy to people I assist with solar advisor. I didn't sell solar, I just helped people understand how it worked. Um, and I also worked at green peace and greenhome.com and, you know, it's funny, I really believe it's a historical way of viewing the world, because it has only been the twentieth century that we have only been so indulgent and so wasteful in our, in throwing away everything. And it's only been the nineteenth and twentieth century that we have been so

industrial. So I look at this, that the majority of history we have been eco friendly. Um, and we need to get back to that, and that is a historical way to look at that. So. I mean, they used to recycle everything in the eighteenth century-waste not, want not. Um, I, I think it's going back to that as well. And that is a big thing, and right now I compost, I recycle seventy-five percent of my trash. I use all cloth. I don't use any paper except for toilet paper. Um, um, and I view, I view a lot of my eco-friendliness around the house as I get a lot of my ideas from the past. Um, I mean I cleaned my stove with baking powder and vinegar today because I, (laughs), first off, I don't want to use chemicals because it's a bad thing. I have a small child in the house, but also that's what they used to use. It makes sense because it works and it's not going to kill anyone. It kinda harks back to that.

D. Do you have friends that dress this way?

La. I wish I had more, um, when I first started sewing and getting into historical fashion my best friend was into it, and I wore all black, she wore all white, we were like yin and yang, and, ah, we would sew, we would make corsets together. She had an old Victorian sewing machine with a turtle foot. We thought it was so cool we could sew on the Victorian sewing machine. Um, she is now a fashion designer, but she is now into modern fashion, and she is great at styling things definitely, but she is into a different style than mine now, but we can still talk about sewing and design and everything like that, um, and then outside that, I had met certain people when I worked at Dark Garden which is a custom corset shop outside San Francisco. Um, I thought I would meet more people like me, I guess, and I did, but considering I wore corsets a lot, and some people there don't, or they don't like to do it every day, its only a special occasion thing, um, I never found someone who made such an effort every day, but not today [referred to the lounging clothes she was wearing]. And, um, I always try to make an effort, because I never

leave the house without eyeliner and my hair done. Um, yeah, so you had caught [sic] me at a very un-presentable time. Yeah, I usually am all dressed up and everything. But, I, ah, life has definitely changed since had a kid.

La. I have met certain people who, actually one of my friends in Williamsburg . . . she does wear corsets everyday because she works at colonial Williamsburg, and she is a seamstress there so she does wear eighteenth century clothes every day for her job, and enjoys it. Outside of work she wears 1940s stuff, and she's just so used to wearing stays, and, you know, it's work, and she's very used to it, but, yeah, it is kinda funny when she meets people who sew, and totally different world that she comes from, but, yeah, she is traditional in a lot of ways, and I don't follow those things. I'm very modern/liberal in mindset. Um, which I know people have been throughout history, totally different ends of the spectrum too. It is interesting that we meet in history which is pretty cool, yeah . . . anyone who dresses up every day, it's a pretty cool thing.

D. That's really neat. It takes a lot resources and time. I try to collect things with a historical flair like this.

La. Well, the most important things that everyone says is that "I'm always wearing jeans and t-shirts." Well, I say get rid of the jeans and t-shirts, and I only have things that are interesting. I don't have many boring things. Many things I have to choose from is interesting in my opinion because that's what I like, and most people, the number one thing they look for is comfort which doesn't fall in the interesting category, but I like to find things that are comfortable and interesting if I want something like that.

D. So you said you once had a friend who influenced you in?

La. My biggest influence was my friend, . . . , when we first started sewing together. Um, my boyfriend in high school was gothic, so I dressed more gothic then.

D. I was wondering when you said Anne Rice if there was any connection there.

La. Well, I was adamant that I was Victorian, but I look back at the pictures, and am like, wait, I look pretty gothic. And then once I broke up with him, we were together for two years, that's a long time, but I was much more colorful after then, even though I still wore black, cause it was easy. Um, but, I'm trying to think of anyone else in particular. Not really, um, and my husband, I would like him to influence me more about what he would like to see me in, but he's, he's actually every woman's dream saying you look good in no matter what you wear, which is so sweet of him, but I'm like, "Are you sure can you give me any clue?" Yeah, it's very good of him to keep his mouth shut, but yeah, I don't, I can't think of anyone in particular otherwise. It's always been my own research, I guess.

D. Okay, um, you said you like the aesthetic of past styles more, um, how do you compare those versus present day styles, in your opinion.

La. Oh my gosh, I used to be such the critic! And now I'm much more open-minded, but I would walk through stores in the nineties, and since then everything's become much more interesting in cut and decoration, I think, since the nineties. But in the nineties, I would scoff at everything in the stores I would be like, "Why would people wear this stuff? It's fitted so terribly, and, um, there's nothing interesting in cut and style about it." But, oh well, yeah, I was definitely the critic, but I definitely think in this past decades it's definitely increased in cut, style, design to be a little bit more interesting, but anything interesting is really what I'm for. Whatever it may be the nineties was definitely the antithesis of my style, and, um, I, I used to be a big critic against

historical films, going “They didn’t wear that! Blah, blah, blah,” but now I’m more relaxed about it, well being like, its art never in history have we tried to make something exactly the same, and I’m glad people are just getting inspired and doing the style, and it should just be left at that because it’s a movie and, and, the only thing I don’t like about it is if it teaches someone something wrong, and people quote it forever. Um, like a lot of people quote *Gone with the Wind* (Fleming, Cukor, & Wood, 1939) which came out in 1939, and, um, people say, “Didn’t everyone have an eighteen-inch waist?” and I’m like, “Argh!” That’s all that stuff. Yeah, it’s, um, if they are teaching someone wrong, that’s bad. It’s getting creative about it, it’s great.

D. So how would you describe yourself and who you are.

La. Um.

D. It is a hard question.

La. Yeah, um, well, pretty much on my resume I’ll say historical fashion and eco-friendliness. I guess, I am, those are the two aspects of life right now. Um, and I think being a mom is one thing right now, because that’s a new thing and a big focus. Um, but, ah, I like having the lens of history looked through at everything in life, um, and I think travel is important which is very funny, because I think in history people really didn’t travel a whole ton, but, um, I’m also very interested now in other cultures and other cultural styles. I’m trying to get into, my husband is going to Sri Lanka in three weeks, and I told him to bring me back just silks and any fashion he can find there, and that I can have fun with. And we would love to live in other places in the world, and I would love to blend in. I would love to get into, you know, I just worked on the, *The Lion King* musical that was visiting here in Durham. And Africa, and I would love to go visit Africa. But I’m a white girl. I can’t blend in anywhere, and, um, you know, my husband’s half

Thai, and he can blend in anywhere, because he has dark skin, dark hair which is most the world. With my light skin, light hair, you know, I can't blend in culturally as much as I would like to. To learn about the cultures of this present day, to be a part of them in the present. I don't necessarily want to blend in just to blend in. I, because I look so different, I think it is just so hard to get them to trust me, but I want to hear their music, dance their dances. Everything I kinda like about history. Is still think there is history now in modern time just where I am now here what I am used to, I always want to break out of my bubble is what I want to do.

D. This is a little redundant. Describe your dress and clothing style.

La. Um, even though people think, "Oh she's so Victorian," I really am not. I'm so not. Because ninety percent of what I wear is modern day stuff that I've altered or bought at thrift stores, and that's another thing that I'm very eco-friendly in that I don't buy anything new. I buy it at thrift stores or second-hand or altered or given to me, um, just because I find that more of a treasure hunt in a sense as well, but the way I combine it, the things I pick to put together, and I think that's what people think looks Victorian. Um, and I also chose 1930s things I love, 1930s as well, so I have a lot of bias cut dresses and chose that a lot, and maybe when I cut my hair I can do some 1930s finger waves without a big bun in the back like I have to do.

Now and, and, yeah, I just, um, I would love, love to dress in favorite time period every day- that would be fantastic, but I even thought I sew, I haven't had the mot, the motivation to make a whole ward, wardrobe for myself, um, maybe I will, I mean, I do have two bustle dresses, but I never really wear them very often. I would like, like to do that more often. People do stare around here though. In San Francisco, I could wear them every day, and it wouldn't bat an eye, but here it's a little bit harder.

D. Alright, um, so what about these different styles that you wear? 1930's, the bustle period, which of these appeal to you the most?

La. Oh yeah, 1876-1883 to 84, that's my favorite time period, and I like the 1930's second best. 1690s are really nice as well, and I like the, of course they look like bustle dresses anyway too. That's why I like them. I'm getting more into eighteenth century. I think I've been getting worn out by nineteenth century, and how I think it's normal to me now, cause after living in a lot of Victorian houses, and getting into something that's older, pre-sewing machine, pre-industrial revolution, I feel like it's a little more interesting now. But so eighteenth century seems like the next step, but also I wear a lot of 1970s clothes because they have a lot of 1930s influences, and I can find them a lot.

D. So you discussed historical fashion as one of your influences. Is there anything else that inspired your look, style of dress?

La. Um, anything but history? I'm trying to think of anything like movies or anything like that. No, I think it was all childhood influences. Which I think bring into a lot of people of what they get into. Just, we always had antiques in the house. We always had history in house, and it felt very strange. I was almost embarrassed of it parts of my life. It's like, "Oh, why do we have to care about this stuff?" That's are, how kids are, they don't appreciate it until later on. Um, and my mom always talks about family history. Always, and, um, I don't know, it's been really interesting to start appreciating things like that, and we always had historical photos to look through and the stories told that go along with them by, um, and she also, we had a sewing machine in the house that let me create what I wanted, you know. If I didn't have that it would have been a lot harder. I think maybe my dream would have been squashed a little bit easier if I

didn't have that. I would sew what I wanted, be creative, frustrated not finding anything I liked in the store. Um, I don't know if there are any other specific influences other than me being able to pursue it, you know.

D. Alright. Kind of a repetitive question, won't ask that one, what about this style means to you?

La. Well, I think it's really frivolous when it comes down to it, it's just aesthetically pleasing, um, I don't know if it means anything else above that.

D. Okay.

La. Yeah.

D. Okay, before mentioned it makes you feel nice. Are there any other feelings you experience while wearing this style of dress?

La. Well, um, because I had done historical dance, wearing the appropriate attire is very important cause it makes you walk right, dance right, turn right, um, but I, I still feel ashamed sometimes. Especially like living in Durham now rather than living in San Francisco. If I leave the house in something, I think that's a little bit over-the-top, I feel a little bit ashamed, "Gosh, I feel embarrassed that I'm wearing this. Is this ok?" I've always felt, um, ever since I was fourteen and wearing funny clothes, my dad, you know, I had to change under the stairs after I left my house cause my dad wouldn't let me wear crazy stuff to school, you know. It's kind of harking back to that. Um, but yeah, I still feel embarrassed or ashamed or over-the-top. Um, but what really boosts my confidence like everyone else is when someone says, "Oh, I really like your dress," I feel a little more confident about it, and its funny that I push myself to those levels, you know. I'm going to wear this even though I know I'm going to feel really embarrassed do it.

Um, I think I look nice, but I know not many other people will, and, um, or their gonna talk about me, but I'm going to try not to listen, but still do anyways.

D. Do you feel like you are going back in time when you dress this way?

L. Not when it's just myself, um, there were a few events in San Francisco where people made a good effort to everyone dress-up. There was a 1920s picnic that I used to go to, 1920s, 1930s, and it was required that you dress appropriately and had the correct attire, picnic equipment. It couldn't be plastic, everything had to be in glass, also no paper, but cloth, you know, and, um, and everyone was dressed appropriately, and I used to be on a 1920s dance troupe there called the Deco Bells. We all wore wool bathing suits, and it was great to really feel more the time period, and there was also some dance, that I would do at the great Charles Dickens Christmas Fair in San Francisco which was pretty much like a renaissance fair but in Victorian England, um, and I remember there was a guy who asked me to dance, and it really did feel like, um, I don't know, no time had gone by, and it was so formal, and I didn't even know his name. It might, um, but I was married at time, but it was really fun to get enamored by situation, and, and, um, got me into dance. He taught me a lot of dance, and we got to know each other pretty well, you know, just there in that time, otherwise no. Um, I guess, when I lived in London, I tried to imagine it more. I tried to feel it. I tried to imagine the shoes on the street. But, um, and in Bath, when we lived in Bath, England, my husband always wore top hat around, and the 1830s overcoat that I made him, which I loved. I'm so glad I conned him into wearing that stuff which was great! It, it was appropriate in Bath, you know. It looked right, though that was very nice, um to see that, and, you know, for me to be connected with him and see that vision. I would like to feel it more. Um, but I do find that a lot of the reenactors or the people do want to do that are very over the top, very cheesy, and I'm just not with, at the Charles Dickens Fair, everyone

wants to do the cockney accent, and I'm like, "Why?!" It's a fun accent, so everyone tries very hard to do that, but I would just like it to be everyday life, um, I think colonial Williamsburg, that's another place that I feel the history is there. Um, just because even though the people who work there aren't normally trying to have an accent. They are working there, and they might have some modern materials, but their vocabulary that they use because they are always doing eighteenth century, um, lines of work, the vocabulary that they use, um, kind of brings you back a little bit. They are talking matter-of-factly. They are not doing an act, they are doing their job. And it is just like I said, its life. Like my friend, she puts on her stays, um, walks there, um, it's all very eighteenth century life that's really fun to be there and to visualize, but I really need it to be a whole in-depth surrounding for it to really happen and be authentic.

D. Is that why you have this kind of couch here?

La. Yeah, I just don't like normal stuff. I'm very cheap and I'm very, don't like normal stuff. So like this couch, yes you can buy a used couch if you want that's like a hundred dollars. Just a boring couch, yeah very boring, and so we found this historical couch that's falling apart. You can tell it's a cat lady couch, there's a bunch of scratch marks, but everything, but it was eighty-five bucks, but we would rather have this in our living room that's old and interesting rather than something that's boring and new for the same price, and yeah, I can normally find something that's interesting for a good price.

D. So not connected to trying to immerse yourself in historical surroundings?

La. I think it's just, it comes down to aesthetics again. I just don't like normal, boring couches. They look ugly to me. Um, um, jeans and t-shirts just don't cut it for me. I just, um, naturally choose those things, I guess, and even when I look for a house to rent or something, I look

through ads or price ads or whatever and if its normal, you know, 1980s, nineties, etc. Actually anything from the fifties onwards, I will not accept it. I think it's way too boring, and I need something with character. And as much as I want to buy a house in my future, it has to be older, even if new house built, you know, what goes with complication and headache of buying an old house, and, um, me and my husband have talked about this. Even if a new house was built exactly like old house I will not like it. That is so weird! That is why history is embedded in me, you know, I have to know, I have to have the feeling of it being old and the feeling of it, especially with a house, you know, cause it can last so long, I would not accept a new house built like a Victorian or an eighteenth century house, because it would still be a new house.

D. Um, related to time period, Do you feel like you are in a different world or place? You mentioned in some cities.

La. Yeah it's not, it's kind of funny it's not, now that I'm so used to dressing this way, I sometimes try to jump into normal people world? You know, like me being a mom, and now I have a mom's group I meet up with. I sometimes forget that I'm weird, you know, like I show up and I forget that I dress weird, and have a different way of looking at things, and then, but luckily, I'm finding that there is more people who do sewing and, and crafts nowadays it's kind of a new trendy thing. So I have things to talk about, like teach people sewing and things like that. So, um, I'm being able to connect with normal people more. But, I've always had normal friends. If you saw the people I went to prom with me and my bustle dress and my boyfriend in the top hat with very, very normal 1999 couple. Um, so I've always had friends who have, who have dressed in the regular time period. Um, I've always just been the odd one out I guess I'm very, very used to it.

D. How important?

La. (Breathe). It's pretty important to any woman who likes the way they dress. Um, I just remember. When I was younger, and every time I flew on a plane, I just thought of my luggage being lost. And that would be, like, tragic to me. It's not money. I have very inexpensive clothes, aside from my few pairs of shoes and corsets, most of my clothes don't cost much but it was the hunt, the alterations, the time spent, the coordination, um, that I knew that they were just only one of kind items to me, and it would be hard to replace them, um, and I don't know, I feel like ever since I had my son last year, I feel a little bit more relaxed and almost changed. I have become a mom and I'm going, "I have different priorities, and oh, if I lose my luggage, I'll just buy all saris. You know, I'll do something strange. I don't think I'll ever dress normal though. If my son asks me when he's in elementary school, if his friends start making fun of him cause I'm picking him up at school, and I dress weird, I will dress normal for my son. Because my mom was very strange with me growing up, and I know how it feels for people to make fun of your mom, but I don't want to do the same to him. I don't want any of me having an effect on him socially at school. If his friends thinks it cool, awesome, but I remember when I was walking, when I was working at an elementary school when I was in high school, the kids said the most terrible things about me. I was in high school and they were in second grade. They said terrible things to me. I know kids can be mean even to adults.

D. What time periods does your clothing draw influence from?

La. 1876 to 1883, um, 1930s, 1690s. I'd like, but I don't think I could dress like that all the time. I probably dress more 1930s than anything, and I've been dressing more 1950s lately. A lot more

short skirts which is really strange. I still wear a corset with the 1950s stuff though just because it adds to the silhouette.

D. Alright. Any others you could name?

La. Oh bits and pieces of any other time period. I always have an era that I like. I wouldn't mind wearing all modern John Galliano. I would not mind that at all, because he takes so much from history, but if he's taken all my favorite bits of history, and put into a dress I would totally wear that, but, um, yeah, it's such a shame that Alexander McQueen is gone, because he is great at that as well, and he, and that is why I so enjoyed studying in England was because history is embedded in each person. You can talk to your taxi driver about the fourteenth century, it was just great, I loved it! Cause here in America it is so hard to find someone to talk about history. Anytime I find somebody I can do that with, I talk their head off. Like I do when I go to Colonial Williamsburg and hang out with my friends there. I'm starved for conversation and looking at things through the lenses of history, so, but it was common over there [England].

D. Um, anything about these time periods, other than aesthetic, you find interesting?

L. Um, parts of it. I actually don't like Victorian culture because of the conservativeness [sic]. I guess towards the later part of the period, things were a little better, but early Victorian, oh my god, please get me away from that! So against my current standing, i, it's funny, because I think if I actually did live in that time period, I wouldn't have dressed in modern dress, I would have been one of the dress reform people or aesthete, you know, or something. Um, I would not have, I would not have been one of the people back then, because my mom had asked me that. "Would you have worn corsets if you had lived in that time period?" Hmm, probably not. I would probably go against the grain, I think even then. Um, except I would have been the pre-

Raphaelite movement, I don't know, been obsessed with medieval fashion. You know, um, something like that.

D. I love pre-Raphaelite art. It's my fav!

La. With my hair being gold, I always wanted to be like the mermaid, John Waterhouse mermaid. Where she has it, she has it laid down on the ground. I was always wishing to have hair that long, now that I do, I never wear it down, but, um, I plan on taking some historically-inspired photographs of my hair before I cut it off. So doing some eighteenth century style or something like that, but they're all going to be modern-inspired designs, which I'm fine with. I want to do something weird and artsy. I don't want to do just a copy as the past. Now I am much more about being part of future and actually looking at history and, um, reading about people who were really interesting in history that we read about now. They obviously made their mark. Um, I, I kind of got frustrated, and I was living in Bath, and I was reading about Audry Morelle who was this lady who dressed so crazy, and had a really interesting life, um, and I was like, "Gosh I need to be like her, and live a crazy life not just study the past and live in books." And that was something really great about moving to San Francisco, because life was very alive there. I felt like I was at where I was supposed to be at. Actually, I felt like I missed it a bit with the whole 1990s boom that happened there was amazing, and I felt like I missed the boat there, but I really want to be the current, in the current Bloomsbury group or the current, ah, aesthete movement or something, I don't know, I just want to be a part of current history. Rather than just, just study history and recreating the past, I'd rather be taking hold of my time period now.

D. Can you describe your favorite outfit or piece and why it is your favorite?

La. Hmm, oh, favorite outfit or piece. Well, the corset in general has always been my favorite, um, I don't know if I have a favorite corset that I own. Possibly, um, just because it changes the person so much into an aesthetically-pleasing, and I would like it for any person not just me, um, it just changes your body so much to where anything you drape over it is going to look fantastic. So that's why I like it the best because no matter what you put over it, even if it's a burlap sack, as long as you can take it in, or if you can see the shape through it, is going to look great, so that's what my number one favorite piece is, um, ah, I love wearing this bustle dress that has, which is so funny, I bought a jacket to make part of, of a bodice out of, because this was made for a really quick, I made it pretty quickly for an event, um, the jacket had spandex in it, and it's so funny, because I want it to be historically accurate, but when you think about it, what if they had spandex back then, they would totally be all over it. They would have totally woven it into their tight bodices. Dancing in that outfit has been great! It looks accurate, but the fabric is modern so you could actually enjoy.

D. They were tight right, like they couldn't really move their arms?

La. Well, no they could, it was tight. It was not low on the shoulder like in the early Victorian period. It was regular-height but it was a tight bodice, um, yeah, just moving with a little bit of spandex in the weave was just so cool.

D. Alright.

La. Um, favorite outfit, um, it always changes. I always have a favorite outfit that I feel like I look good in at the time, so.

D. Alright, second question, what does it mean to you?

La. What does it mean to me? Well, I must admit novelty/something new is always at the top of my favorite choice of the day. So I do think I have that vein of normalcy in my body of anything that's new and new to me, it doesn't have to be new and fashionable but, um, new to me, recently acquired. That usually makes the top of my current outfit of the day.

Di. Kay, Alright. Are you trying to say anything with style of dress, like, to others?

La. No, um, no.

D. What do you think your clothing says about you?

La. Um, what people may perceive is that I spend a lot of time on things than I actually do. Um, I think people think I'm a lot more talented than I am cause, because I wear interesting clothes, and I alter them to make them fit me well that whenever people meet me, and I say I sew they have incredible ideas of what I am able to do. Um, which is nice for getting jobs, I guess, other than that I feel really bad. For example, my brother will boast very highly of me which is very nice of him, but, um, I try to bring him back down to earth, going, "I can't do that, or I've never done that." Everyone says I'm a fashion designer. I'm not. I actually don't design things very well. I can sew if someone tells me what to sew. I'm good at that, but designing I don't think is my big forte.

D. Um, how do you think other people describe the way you dress?

La. Oh, Victorian they always call me Victorian. Yeah, which is funny because I get really mad at the word Victorian, and I don't like using it particularly well. Because I don't really, when I was teaching history of fashion, when people say, "Oh it's so Victorian."-What part of Victorian? Because when I was teaching my students, I want them to know the different parts of

the Victorian period, because 1837 to 1901 is a long part of history that's just, just saying 1931 to 2001. Can you encompass everything of those decades in the same words? Because fashion did change as much, so I um, I, I do wish it was more specific, I guess, but, um, and I actually don't think I am Victorian, but, um, and actually my hairstyle is more 1930s as well, so I think um, no not typical 1930s, but I have seen some women with this hairstyle which is one of the few times in history when it was used, so.

D. Okay. This is a little redundant. Is there more to it than the way you look?

La. Well, I just I study it, and I put that lens through everything in life. Um, and yeah, I don't think there's more to it other than that's the way I view everything I guess.

D. Sounds good. You touched on this a lot. In what ways do you think you are similar or different than other people?

La. I think. oh, I have always been weird my whole life in general, so it's hard for me to think that I'm normal. I guess from the get-go since beginning school I've always been singled out in some way as strange, something I'm trying to overcome, and I feel like I am normal nowadays, at least that I can have decent conversations not seem like a weirdo. Um, but, um, yeah, also being a parent and seeing parenting styles. I, um, again, I feel like a weirdo for doing one thing or the other, um, but finding kindred spirits are like gold in this world, and when you find them, it makes all the difference. Just finding someone I can talk about acupuncture with, which is something I'm interested in, or like talking about gardening each one of my friends currently I have similar interests with, even though very different minds we have and styles we have, um, I can always relate to other people. People think I'm always very social. I'm kind of the social resident of this neighborhood. I'm always holding events or group meetings, stuff like that, so

um and that's a very historical thing, we've lost a lot of the social activity at this day and age, and we have no dancing of this generation and you know, like, I'm gonna be like field of dreams like I'm gonna build the dance hall, and they will come, like, I want to do this, because I know everyone wants to dance. We watch people dance, we listen to music, but we have no place to do it, and it frustrates me beyond anything that only weird people dance these days, so I can find, I can find dancing groups, but I wish everyone would. But there's nowhere to do it socially, we just need like the assembly rooms where they actually do it.

D. Like the Pubs in Ireland.

La. Somewhere not a class. You find classes everywhere. San Francisco was great for dancing, there was a lot of, a lot more there. There was a Victorian bi-monthly ball, and not everyone dresses up, and there is a Victorian ball happening at the end of the month here which I'm so excited about!

D. Yeah?

La. Yeah, but again, not everyone dresses up which I'm fine with. Obviously, it's not easily available, but dancing, oh gosh, that is probably the one bit of history I miss the most but, um, of history, so.

D. Okay, the last question. Is there anything about the attitudes of majority of people you don't like?

La. Well, I wish they knew a bit of history. I think that it would help them just looking at, because I'm interested in modern-day politics, and, um, I wish they could look at it through the lens of history. Because I think that could solve a lot of our questions, problems, arguments,

concerns. Um, but I don't know, I'm kind of, um, a to-each-his-own kind of person. I think it's great that we have all different cultures in America, all different lifestyles, all different attitudes, and as long as its, they are not hurting anyone, as long as you're enjoying it, um, it's not hurting anyone in any way, I'm pretty laissez-faire about it.

APPENDIX E

Di. Alright. Okay. First question. It's really hard. How old are you?

De. Twenty-four.

Di. Twenty-four, okay. So how do you describe yourself, like, who are you?

De. Ah, I describe myself as, uh, young gentleman. Um, muh, not entirely sure I understand the question (Laughs).

Di. Okay. I think you answered it, it's good.

De. I just wasn't sure what you were looking for.

Di. How would you describe your dress or clothing style?

De. Um, the period pieces I'm interested in, um, I shoot for, what is it, um, late nineteenth-century British gentleman's attire. Um the, it seem to be, like the Victorian era seem to be, seems to be the quintessential style for gentleman. So, that tends to be a big part of what I focus on, so whenever I can incorporate a piece of a time period clothing into my attire I try to.

Di. All right, what about the style appeals to you, generally?

De. Um, it's just very elegant, very proper. On a whole it looks, when you put it altogether, it looks very impressive. I can't think of a cooler (Laughs) outfit to wear. Yeah, I never wanted to

look like, you know except for when I was, like, six, as I got older I never wanted to look like Batman or Superman or anything like that, I wanted to look like Phileas Fogg.

Di. That's cool. Ah, okay, so what made you choose the way you, the way you look and your style?

De. Really I've had two. I started with um Pierce Brosnan's performance of Phileas Fogg in *Disney's Around the World in 80 Days* (Kulik, 1989). And the, the character of Phileas Fogg is always a gentleman all the way through, and its probably the earliest point for me where I had the conf, had the image of a gentleman, and the fact that I was supposed to be a gentleman, and so that's really what nailed it down for me . This is what I'm striving to be.

Di. Um huh.

De. And so the appearance is also tied up in that.

Di. Okay you mentioned that the movie was an influence for you, what other influences were the main ones?

De. Ah. Well, a large part of it has to do with the f, how, I love history, and, um, really I'm absolutely fascinated with British, the British imperial era, and just, hm, how what what's the term? They stumbled into empire.

De. Ah, it's just a fascinating time period. Say, well, the, these are rules, the social norms, the social behavior, um, I can't really say they were major influenced by England at the time, but in a way they were around the world. I can say that the world was influenced by Europe. Social behavior at the time (laughs). Since Europe was essentially the center of the world.

Di. Yes, alright, well generally what are your interests? What are your general ...?

De. Oh, my general interests? Ah, let's see, history.

Di. I know some of these [questions] sound redundant.

De. Ah, yeah, yeah, it's, ah, history, gaming, ah, let's see, um, what is it fantasy, especially novels, let's see, oh, and politics. Can't leave that one out.

Di. Yay! Politics!

De. Yes.

Di. Okay, um, this is not as redundant. To what would you contribute to your interests in this style of dress?

De. Um, it, it goes back to being interested in being a gentleman in a time where I feel like there are very few gentlemen, so you feel like you're very much a minority, and to emphasize that.

Di. Um huh.

De. To appear different. So drawing on, you know, here is a quintessential gentleman this is what he wore.

De. So, I'm going to behave and wear the same.

Di. Okay. I'm not gonna ask you this because you already said yes. Okay. Okay, how in any way does your style of dress reflect your ancestry?

De. Well that would be my ancestry. My ancestors were Norwegian.

De. So I'm, hmm, I don't know to what extent it reflects my ancestry. The Reishuses were Norwegian, but on my mom's side, I've got everything in Irish, English, Scottish, I know I don't

have German, that's the one I know I don't have. Ah, but it, it's more concept of image rather than ancestry.

Di. Okay for you what is this style of dress, like, what is it to you of importance or ...?

De. It's, it helps with self-identifica-identity. I, again, so many people act, dress, behave in certain ways. I don't want to be seen as the same. But I don't want to be seen in what's popular. I don't want to, being expressed as an individual. The idea of individuality by following the crowd seems to me a little lacking thought.

Di. Another redundant question, why do you dress this way?

De. Pretty much for the reason I expressed before.

Di. Okay. Actually this helps me know what to throw out later. Does dressing this way make you more sig, feel more significant, like a better person or?

De. I don't know about a better person, it, you know, when I wear my cloak, you know, nobody wears a cloak anymore. Yea it's fun to, you know, strut. I wore it several times on campus, and to be able to stride across campus, you know, everybody's going "what the heck is he doing?"

De. Yeah, I get a lot of pleasure out of that.

Di. Okay, so you feel this style of dress sets you apart from other people?

De. Yes.

Di. Very much so? Okay, so do you have friends that influence the way you dress at all?

De. Um. Well let's see. I would say my sister as an influence, because she and I both think these styles are cool. Um, I think, most my friends think that this style of dress is just a personal idiosyncrasy.

Di. Okay, can you describe what you think the level of beauty of past styles is versus modern styles?

De. Ah.

Di. Or coolness?

De. (Laughs). The, ah, as far as the style that I'm interested in as opposed to today's the elegant, is elegant, and today, you know, nobody, well not nobody, most people don't strive for that. I mean, there's, it's like jewelry almost. Some people just put on as much and the largest that they can.

De. It's not beautiful, it's not tasteful, and it's gaudy. Its, it's kinda hard to put into words.

Di. I got it. Do you feel like you are going back in time when you dress this way?

De. I, hmm, maybe not as much as I'd like. Ah, I'm a history major, so to really go back in time, yes, it would be amazing!

Di. I agree. Okay, does it make you feel like you're part of a different world or a different place?

De. Hm, ah, maybe I should remember to add to my interest. Another interest I have is theater. And I would say when I get to the, in my choice of attire, that's when I feel the most like I'm in a completely different world in a completely different time period. You get to experience that creative moment however you can. It's not exactly quit like that?

Di. Okay, um, so when you are in that moment, is it better than the real world?

De. Ah, I don't know. I don't know, better? I'd say I definitely derive the most enjoyment from moments like that. I spent too long studying politics and better is a.

Di. Oh.

De. It's a hard word to use for me.

Di. I can tell every time I have said something is better you're like, "Ah"? Um, okay. Let me see. Sorry. Okay, so can you tell me a little more about what this style personally means to you? Is there more to it?

De. It's, it's definitely a self-image thing, um. It helps to have a physical reminder of what goal or image your trying to portray, you know, it's easy to say I'm a gentleman, but to have that reminder when someone frustrates you, or something, you know, you're about to lose, lose it at somebody and just remember, you know, "How should I approach this?" rather than "How do I want to approach this? How do I want to handle this situation?" I think it helps.

Di. Okay, all right, that's cool. So how does this style of dress make you feel when you are wearing it?

De. Ha-ha that's a good question, ah. (Pause).

Di. You can always tell me you don't have an answer. Don't feel pressured to give me one.

De. Ah, proud. Um, shoot, like I guess like I hmm, it sometimes feels like being a symbol of a lost cause, but the even if it is a lost cause, you're not going to let it slip away without fighting.

Di. Hm, all right, that's good. How, how important it is, would you say, to dress like this for you?

De. Hugely important, I, it wouldn't, I would still be the person I am if I didn't dress that way, and but it still, I guess, sets me apart, it, people respond more to a visual symbol than just another person who behaves differently.

Di. Okay, you said that before, your mostly late nineteenth century.

De. Um huh.

Di. Are there any other periods that you draw from?

De. Um. Let's see. Well, there's a lot of other periods I would like to draw from. I just don't have the resources to. I gotta focus on what, I, what interests as far as, um, let's see, you know, I would love to, what's it? I guess, I would love to have piece costumes, for, I guess, I don't know if I'd wear them out, but having piece costumes for the Roman time period or Medieval era, the revolutionary civil war . Um, just any time period I'm interested in. There's, there's so much tied up in those cultures with dress that if you can recreate that, you know, it gives you more insight into, just more insight into that time period.

Di. Uh huh. All right. It does take a lot of resources.

De. Yeah it does.

Di. I know I do medieval reenacting, so it's an ordeal, ha-ha, um, what about those time periods do you find interesting particularly. You said, obviously it's tied with stuff. So what is that stuff?

De. Um, specifically, um, are we just talking about the late nineteenth century?

Di. Um, you can talk about that and any others. And this includes events like social mores, social norms, whatever.

De. I, ah, what is it? Trying to remember what it's called, the, ah, Queen Victoria's, what's it the Grand Jubilee [sic] [Diamond Jubilee (Hammerton & Cannadine, 1981)] ? Just the demonstration of the height of the empire of that time period, the, um, just looking at the height of civilization and what's the phrase "everything was going splendidly."

De. I, um, and then, I guess, countering that the, ah, South African War and the final collapse of World War I, you just, even though people think they have perfection, you know, what lay right around the corner? And how, just how human behavior and human intentions and what. I, I love cause and effect. I'm not being very coherent.

Di. It's okay.

De. It's just, it, I just find it fascinating. I definitely study history from people.

Di. I think I know what you're getting at. I've researched, like, yeah. I read a lot about the Victorian era and the difference between the Victorian era and now, and your, I gotcha.

De. It's the nice thing about talking to somebody else who studies history. It's like, you make the translation at certain points.

Di. I read a lot for this thesis, so, um, so what about the social norms what is part of being a gentleman? Exactly?

De. I, um. Well, that, that's also he being raised to be a gentleman and being Christian at the same time, the beliefs, the ideas about both things have become both interchangeably melded to me, so that a huge part of being a gentleman is being a good Christian, so but, um, I guess, more

of the offshoot, more of the ideas I draw from the Victorian ideal than would be at least, I think, would be how you treat others, ah, as far as treating somebody who is socially above you or socially below you. The respect involved, um, the, ah, the importance of holding your temper, ah, course how you treat a lady.

Di. Hm.

De. It's a hugely important to that concept. Ah. I guess, I like the concept of social interactions formalized, cause you have none of that, unless you get, unless you get way up in, in political classes.

Di. Uh huh.

De. You still have that in upper and political classes. But anywhere in between you really don't have that anywhere. I mean, to a certain extent that was true back then too. The time period of the people I'm looking at are primarily, ah, upper-class. I guess, since I, on the offshoot, I identify what I do also with what I wear, so I've been trying to accumulate pieces of, like, factory worker from that time period or a laborer pieces of that time period to actually take and wear to work.

Di. Uh huh.

De. It's more appropriate I guess.

Di. Uh huh. Okay.

Di. Yay! Um, okay, what is your favorite outf, clothing piece or outfit? And explain why it is your favorite.

De. Favorite piece?

Di. It could be an entire outfit or just a piece.

De. I would love to have, I don't have, but I would love to have the full attire of the top hat, waistcoat, jacket, the whole, the whole set, but, um, cane, yachty yahty yahta but I would say the most, the one I wear the most, and I find to be the piece that catches people's attention the most is my pocket watch.

Di. Yeah.

De. And, ah, always wanted to wear one but could never justify spending the money on it until I started working um as a grocery clerk and I snapped six wristbands.

Di. Oh no!

De. Or three wristbands in six months and finally gave up and bought a pocket watch, and I've had it over a year now. We, ah, its better suited for my workplace.

Di. Yeah?

De. And, ah, since I've started wearing that, I've had three or four other people started wearing pocket watches.

Di. So what does the pocket watch, other than practical reasons, mean anything symbolic to you?

De. Um, I guess to me it's, because I'm trying to acquire a full set of, it's one more step towards that. Um, I guess, I use it as a symbol, you know, since I don't have a whole set, it's a symbol to me that I can wear all the time and yeah.

Di. All right, cool! How do you think others would describe you if they see you wearing other things that you wear? So if you had that full set, how do you think others would describe you, and what do you think about your pocket watch also? That's a lot of questions.

De. Yeah, um. I think, well, first thing I would be asked is, "What play are you performing in?" but, ah, I don't know, I think, I think most people would find it interesting, they would think it a little odd, but, um, I would normally when I do anything along the lines of dressing time period, I've gotten positive responses, for the most part, and a few negative ones, oddly enough from older women.

Di. That's weird.

De. That's what I thought. But I don't think they recognized what it was supposed to be. Um, her, what was the last part of the question?

Di. Oh it was just, I added a lot of stuff just to help you understand the first one. But it was what do you, how do you think others would describe you?

De. Oh yeah, I don't know.

Di. Do you mean to communicate to other people, what do you want others think of you? It's kind of the other way around from, like, personal but pretty much, what are you trying to say to others by wearing this style of dress?

De. Um. I guess, I'm trying to hopefully visually remind people of social, of how social norms have changed, how the, ah, what is it? The concept of social behavior and values we are losing, and just hope to maybe, to get people to think about it a little bit.

Di. Okay this might sound redundant, but what do you think your clothing says about you?

De. Eccentric history major (Laughs).

Di. (Laughs). All right, sounds good to me. All right, I already asked that question, in what way do you think you are similar or different from conventionally-dressed people?

De. Um, I'd say, I'm similar in the fact that I'm just as removed from what I am idealizing as they are. Um, I'm, I live, I work in the same world and the same society, and while I have problems with a lot of things in today's society, at the same time I, I don't know that I would still chose to live, I don't know. That's a hard question. I guess it would be really cool but, but at the same time, I think, I think there's a lot of good here, but, um, as far as different. I'm more aw, I feel I'm more aware of the things we have lost as a soc, a society.

Di. All right, so are there any thing about the attitudes of the majority of people you don't like?

De. More, how crude our society has become. In my work I, I get to see probably the worst. Now I get to see some of the best, and I get to see some of the worst that society has to offer, and it's, a lot of time it's very saddening.

Di. Uh huh, so your line of work is retail management, retail, just retail?

De. Retail, I would just say retail.

Di. Okay.

De. I'm not quite to management yet.

Di. Okay.

De. I'm working on that.

Di. I understand completely, I've had years of experience, oh man, ah, okay, I think that's going to be the last one for you. Oh yeah. That's all the questions I have.