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## FASHION, A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL HISTORY

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FASHION, A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL HISTORY

An Essay Submitted  
to the Office of Graduate Studies  
College of Arts & Sciences of  
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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

By  
Teresa M. Keyes  
2017

## **Introduction**

Judeo-Christianity teaches that the first humans on earth were Adam and Eve and, at the outset, they traversed the earth in the nude. According to theologians, they did not realize they were naked until they sinned against God. They began to cover their bodies because they were ashamed of what they had done, as illustrated in Masaccio's *Expulsion* (See Exhibit 1 on page 28). Adam and Eve were thus arguably the first fashion icons. Just as the major event of sinning against God was a life-changing moment that brought about the necessity for clothing, major events in life, history and popular culture influence how, when and if humans choose to cover themselves. Coco Chanel, a fashion entrepreneur of the 1920s and 1930s, famously said, "Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street, fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening" (Hennessy 1). Understanding fashion requires an investigation of social history and artistic design. I will be examining fashion as it occurred in France in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to demonstrate how central yet unrecognized it is. Fashion is not considered an intellectual subject; therefore, it is sometimes viewed as a matter of little importance. I argue in fact that fashion is everywhere and it is central to the human experience. I intend to demonstrate as well as illustrate my claim that fashion is ubiquitous by using a number of concrete examples including Marie Antoinette, Napoleon III, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, and Edith Wharton. It is through these historical figures that I demonstrate the influence of fashion on politics, theater, the visual arts, the literary arts, and social reform.

After a brief analysis of the movement of fashion leadership from Italy to France in the seventeenth century, this essay will consider the meaning of fashion for the French

monarchy and politics from Louis XIV to Napoleon III including the fashion changes inaugurated by Marie Antoinette through her adversities as Queen. Then we will investigate the use of fashion in the art of Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres to illustrate how fashion is essential to art because it often says more about the subject than one might initially imagine. Finally, we will explore the appearance of fashion and its ability to illuminate the literature and philanthropic efforts of Edith Wharton. We will thereby demonstrate fashion's unacknowledged importance and its ubiquity.

### **Background**

The populace depends on fashion designers to use artistic designs and fabrics to provide interesting lines of clothing. Designers must be attuned to the culture and customs of the country where they live to attract a chosen patron. They should be well informed about the past and the period in which they live. Designers must be aware of the society which surrounds them, including tastes, preferences and needs, in order to create marketable designs. Designers must master a craft but must also be educated about how life works and possess an understanding of the world. Fashion is kept alive by continuous changes in the world. Fashion also keeps the economy functioning because the consumer will throw away old objects and garments and purchase new items.

Preference or taste is drawn from such elements of life such as conflict, economic changes and political fluctuations. One's palate is not developed purely on the basis of beauty; style can be influenced by physiology and association. Tastes influenced by physiology are based on a person's perception and attraction to certain forms and objects. Where one person may be drawn to a straight line, another may find a curved line more appealing at a certain time in the life cycle.

Consumers look to fashion leaders to create fashion norms. It is often presumed that France has always been the leader in fashionable attire. This assumption is false in that in the fifteenth century Italy was the country that inspired new styles and fabrics. Changes in economics and societal structures spearhead changes in dress and adornment. The Italian Renaissance occurred following the Black Plague in the fourteenth century. After the plague wiped out so many people, those who remained experienced a renewal and began to become interested in humanism. There was a surge of interest in Greece, mythology, architecture and art. New city-states were developed and the middle-class prospered. A growing middle class could afford to hang art in their homes and wear fine clothes. Italian cities such as Milan, Venice and Florence began to flourish while France had yet to reinvent itself. The bourgeois woman was not a trendsetter, but a follower of fashions which were coming to life first in Italy. The Italians first encouraged the short doublet and tights worn by a man to display his manhood. The ladies lowered their neckline to expose voluptuous décolletage. Nonetheless, despite Italy's early lead, by the eighteenth century France became the fashion capital as a result of import and export of fabrics and the influence of various monarchs, including King Louis XIV (reigned 1643-1715) and later Queen Marie Antoinette (reigned 1769-1792).

### **Fashion, Politics and Class**

Prior to the French Revolution, monarchs set the example for dress and adornment. King Louis XIV's reign was a vital moment in fashion because politics and fashion became intertwined, as he felt the only way to get the people to respect the court was to dress and behave in a courtly manner rather than to conduct oneself as a

commoner. Costume is an integral component of politics used to differentiate the leaders from the followers. Louis XIV was known as the Sun King<sup>1</sup> (Louis XIV). He stated, “I am the centre of France; I am the navel of the world” (Zweig 32). According to Louis XIV “...the sun was henceforth to shine upon his kingdom. Versailles was built to give France a tangible demonstration that the people was nothing and the king was everything” (Zweig 32). He deemed lavish clothing and an opulent lifestyle necessary to remind the populace of the court’s position as second only to God himself. The reverence they held for God was also to be held for Louis XIV, his queen and members of the Court of Versailles. The promotion of lavish clothing and opulent lifestyle continued with Louis XV and Louis XVI, the Sun King’s successors, and the rest of the world endeavored to mimic the French in their mannerisms and clothing style.

Marie Antoinette acquired her title as fashion innovator after she married Louis XVI (reigned 1774 – 1793) and began implementing new trends in hairstyles, silhouettes and jewelry in an effort to command the respect of the lower classes and gain political power (See Exhibit 2 on page 29).<sup>2</sup> The most notable successor to Louis XIV in promoting fashion as a means to power was Maria Antoinette (reigned 1769 – 1792).

Queens were selected to build alliances between countries and to provide heirs. The circumstances of Marie Antoinette’s life led her to experiment with fashion and change the world’s view of proper attire. First of all, the desire to repair the relationship between Austria and France was not agreeable to most of the nobility; only

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<sup>1</sup> His parents Louis XIII and Ann of Austria were married for 23 years before he was born. He was considered to be a gift from God (Louis XIV).

<sup>2</sup> Some scholars have claimed Marie-Antoinette’s lavish wardrobe (See Exhibit 3 page 30) only increased her image as frivolous spendthrift, one of the principal reasons why she was disliked by some French people.

King Louis XV and one of his ministers supported the union. Secondly, Marie Antoinette did not conceive in the early years of her marriage, failing to perform her royal duty. Those who disliked her endeavored to use her inability to provide a male heir as leverage to send her back to Austria and choose a more suitable mate for the king. Her barrenness was not her fault since Louis XVI did not consummate the marriage for seven years. Her misfortune of being childless and being despised by the Court and the population led Marie Antoinette on a quest to create her own celebrity through fashion.

Marie Antoinette belonged to the Bourbon-Hapsburg dynasty of Austria and had been groomed from an early age to marry within the European royalty. As a result of an epidemic in 1767, her mother Maria Theresa had fallen ill and was unable to contribute to her rearing. “Her mother remarked that although she was lazy and a tomboy she had a gift of tact, of receiving everyone with a smile and a graceful word” (Mayer 10). Abbé Vermond was chosen to groom Marie Antoinette and determine the likelihood of her becoming a respectable dauphine. Vermond concluded, “The way she holds herself and walks have a note of nobility and majesty which is astonishing for her age.... In short, a child who seemed singularly gifted for the place destined for her” (Mayer 11, 12).

Once she became Queen in 1769 at the age 14 her mother, Maria Theresa, assured that she fit into the French Court and its expectations dating back to King Louis XIV in the following ways:

1. Marie Antoinette ‘s physical appearance was enhanced by significant dental procedures (void of anesthesia) to make her teeth straight and her smile perfect. In addition, Maria Antoinette was taught how to wear powder on her face to maintain a porcelain white complexion.

2. Maria Antoinette learned how to walk in a manner befitting a queen from her dance teacher. This manner of walking came to be known as the Versailles glide. The glide consisted of “tiny quick steps so that the folds of the gown were not disarranged” (Mayer 12).
3. Finally, and most importantly, Maria Theresa hired Parisian designers to make over Maria Antoinette’s wardrobe (Weber 3).<sup>3</sup> The practice of dressing well only on special occasions changed, and her understanding of public appearances became evident as Marie Antoinette stated: “I am very sensible of the necessity of appearing in public...I try to find ways of doing so, and will take any and every occasion” (cited by Heidenstam 166).

One would not think that the fact that someone is childless would lead to changes in fashion; however, fashion became therapeutic for Maria Antoinette. With no children to attend to she would leave Versailles and travel to Paris, just 12 miles away, to get a glimpse of the French life outside of Versailles. French styles were new and exciting to her as a new queen and she hired stylist Rose Bertin (1747 – 1813) to help her reinvent the grandeur of an empress. Her *robe à la polonaise* (average size 53 inches in length, 46 inches in width) (See Exhibit 5 on page 32) was a garment that dared to expose her ankles and exaggerate a plunging neckline. Marie Antoinette began to make some daring fashions. Gone was the *robe à la française* (See Exhibit 6 on page 33) with the whalebone panniers extending as much as three feet away from the body.<sup>4</sup> Always the rebel, she also chose to wear a form-fitting garment that pulled the fabric to the back in a

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<sup>3</sup> The mother spent a minimum of today’s equivalent of \$2 million to remake her daughter’s wardrobe, and it took about 18 months to teach her how to walk in her new dresses.

<sup>4</sup> Women had to walk sideways through a doorway when wearing this dress.



bustle (See Exhibit 4 on page 31). In adherence to protocol the sleeves were below the elbow, but to add a touch of her own style they were tight and embellished and edged with a lacy finish.

In addition, the Queen gave clothing seasons and times of day. She had a garment for morning, daytime and evening wear. As the seasons changed, Marie Antoinette was able to change her use of fabrics. She set the tone for modern day dressing. Today we wear a lightweight linen or cotton in the summer. In the winter we prefer a heavier cotton or wool. Thus, although Marie Antoinette may not have been the sole trendsetter for contemporary fashion, she can be cited as a noteworthy contributor.

Marie Antoinette also changed the sporting costume for women. Her attire when horseback riding was one way she spotlighted her fashion choices. At the age of 15 and out of boredom, Marie Antoinette learned to hunt and ride horses and became a passionate equestrian. In the event of inclement weather, she rode indoors. As a young lady who was expected to continue the lineage, she was cautioned by her mother to keep her riding at a restrained trot. In the event she became pregnant she was advised to cease riding altogether. Marie Antoinette not only rode how and where she pleased, she also hunted boar and other game although it was understood that women were restricted to hunting deer. “She could gallop to her heart’s content, free of her mother, ....., free, for the moment, of the cares of her situation and of fretful thoughts about her future” (Weber 81). She was also criticized for discarding the long feminine skirt when riding a horse sidesaddle. Instead, she wore men’s trousers and straddled the horse.

Marie Antoinette’s choice of fashion made her appear to be a rebel against the etiquette of the French monarchy. Traditionally, riding ladies wore breeches made of

silk, wool and velvet beneath their petticoats. The purpose of the breech/petticoat combination was to preserve modesty in the event the female rider fell from her horse. The French court was also displeased with the fact that she refused to wear corsets that would give her good posture and make her look more regal. The corset cinched the wearer's waistline and enhanced the breasts to augment the feminine form. A waistcoat fit over the corset and a jacket was worn to complete the ensemble. Expressing disdain for the traditional riding uniform, Marie Antoinette shed the petticoat and wore breeches that fit tightly on the legs and the waistline. The breeches she wore were not dissimilar to the male version of breeches. Her riding costume was offensive because she was deviating from her role as a woman. It was felt that wearing breeches without a petticoat "permitted women to assume the poses and gestures of men, to swagger, stride, swing the arms, and put hands on hip" (Crown 121). Her intention may well have been to build her own self-confidence and prove herself praiseworthy as Queen of France, yet one aristocrat described her as someone who had launched a "veritable revolution in fashion" (Hennessey 149).

Fashion was not just about fabric and silhouette. Hair was an important element in style that had to change along with the new image of the eighteenth century noblewoman (See Exhibit 7 on page 34). In 2016 hair is everything to the fashion conscious woman. Just like Marie Antoinette, ladies color their hair, cut it, stuff it with artificial hair, and add extensions, flowers and jewelry to it (See Exhibit 2 on page 29). The bourgeois women of the 1770s preceded Marie Antoinette in creating headwear and garnishing the hair with noteworthy objects to make an outfit new and fresh. The pouf was introduced in 1774 by Monsieur Léonard who worked with stylist Rose Bertin and

wives of aristocrats and actresses. His flair for flamboyance made him popular among the rich who wanted to be flashy in their style. The foundation of the pouf was a scaffold made of wire. The lady would have her hair entwined with gauze and other fabrics. It was then curled and stuffed with artificial hair to add height and volume. Flour which could have been used for the poor to make bread was used to powder a lady's hair, changing its color and texture. Commemorative miniatures could be added to the ensemble to express important events.

Similarly, Marie Antoinette took excess to a new level which included detailed attention to the hairdressings that rebirthed the pouf coiffure. Women who preceded Marie Antoinette with exaggerated hairstyles were quite creative; however, a queen attracts the most attention and yields more followers. Her predecessor, the Duchesse de Chartres, celebrated the birth of her son by donning an excessive headpiece. The piece consisted of “not only her African page and her parrot, but also a nursemaid seated in an armchair, clasping a newborn baby to her breast” (Weber 104).

Sometimes Marie Antoinette added vegetables to her hair because she loved gardens. Sometimes she added flowers, ostrich feathers and silk ribbons. Marie Antoinette also invited actual contamination by using food to enhance her hairstyle. This usage of scarce foodstuffs like flour for ornamentation would not have earned her any fans among the poor. One might even argue that Marie's extravagant lifestyle contributed to the French people's annoyance with the nobility, and that ultimately her spendthrift behavior might have contributed to her demise. That speculation, however, would require far more documentation and thus falls outside the scope of this essay.

What does seem clear, however, is that some people were at least able to copy the Queen's dress by becoming consumers of manufacturers who mass-produced clothing. "The more prosperous and more educated members of the bourgeoisie shared the lifestyle of the nobility..." (Popkin 13) which included fashionable attire. Production companies also maximized domestic trade with ready-to-wear apparel. The lower classes purchased long-lasting clothing as well as more trendy items (Popkin 11).

### **Fashion, Advertising and Media**

Since clothing had to be advertised and displayed, trends influenced the development of the clothing magazine. "Marie Antoinette is responsible for the birth of the French fashion media. The first fashion magazines developed to meet the public appetite for knowing what Marie Antoinette was wearing at any given public Parisian ball or promenade" (Weber 20). In the beginning dolls known as *poupées* were transported to clients and dress shops locally as well as internationally, arriving in full modern costume. The dolls were life-size as well as miniature figures. The *poupées* were limited in outreach and slow to reach the populace. But, as the literacy level of the population began to improve, magazines became a medium which could be utilized to reach non-noble women.

Women needed to be kept abreast of the rapidly changing styles. It was said: "A woman who leaves Paris to go and spend six months in the country returns as antiquated as if she had been gone thirty years" (Chrisman-Campbell 17). To ensure the style-conscious lady did not fall behind in the changes Marie Antoinette was making, the

magazine *Cabinet des modes* was delivered every 15 days and later every ten days.<sup>5</sup> The first widely-read magazine published was entitled *The Gallerie des modes*<sup>6</sup> (Chrisman-Campbell 17). Writers of these magazines referred to themselves as “Missionaries of Fashion” (Chrisman-Campbell 17). An almanac was also made available once a year, serving as a convenient holiday gift. The almanac was more cost-effective than the magazines. Access to the queen’s latest novelty as well as other pertinent information provided a connection to high-class court costume.

Much more changed than just mass production and fashion magazines. The very role of the bourgeoisie became permanently altered and transformed. In pre-revolutionary days, during the reign of Louis XV, the style of the court was different from that of Louis XVI. Madame de Genlis is attributed with the quotation “The spirit of the magnificence of that time was somehow substantive and beneficial...Luxury had grandeur. Mediocre fortunes could not attain it; so there was a distinction” (Chrisman-Campbell 19). The court was held sacred and highly revered. But by the time Louis XVI took the throne, the extravagance of the court had lost its exclusivity and the rise of the bourgeoisie in France triggered modifications in fashion.<sup>7</sup>

The French bourgeoisie was the originator of the bridge line.<sup>8</sup> In the 1770s, the bourgeoisie of France began to alter royal styles in an effort to make them their own. The

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<sup>5</sup> Modern day *Vogue* magazine is printed in several languages for various countries including France, Brazil, Italy, Australia, China, Germany and United States. London born Anna Wintour has been editor-in-chief of American *Vogue* since 1988.

<sup>6</sup> The magazine began around 1778.

<sup>7</sup> The fashions introduced by the court were well publicized and easily reproduced by lower social classes “In fact, while fashion may have been driven by the elite, it was produced and increasingly imitated lower down the social scale.” (*Fashion Victims* 19)

<sup>8</sup> In today’s society there is a line of clothing called the bridge line. It means the purchaser is not super wealthy; however, she is not lower class. Her clothing is fashionable and of high quality. She is upper middle class and she will purchase a \$300 skirt because a \$1,000 skirt is above her price point.

different design gave the garment the identity of the bourgeois. They were not permitted to copy the noble styles; therefore, they hired merchants known as *marchandes de modes*<sup>9</sup> to add unique decorations, edging and frills to make the garment distinctive. They were in the same category as seamstresses until women began to be more interested in creativity than practicality when it came to clothing. Business for the *marchandes de modes* grew thanks to Marie Antoinette because she brought fashion to public awareness and others sought to imitate her at a lesser expense.

After she married King Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette learned that proper court dress was a powerful tool. Within three years of her marriage she began to make visits to Paris to keep abreast of the latest fashions. She came to know the best way to remain up-to-date, and even unique, was to hire a *marchande de modes*. She hired Marie-Jeanne “Rose” Bertin. Marie also provided a residence for Bertin at the palace although permitting lower classes to live at the palace had never been done. *Marchandes de modes*, known as fashion merchants, were members of a lower class. Bertin’s business grew because the bourgeoisie wanted to maintain a wardrobe as close to Marie’s as possible.<sup>10</sup>

With Bertin’s close proximity, Marie was able to wear new fashions daily despite the rising cost. Her wardrobe advisor, Madame d’Ossum, alerted her that Bertin was charging exorbitant fees for clothing simply because she knew Marie was royalty. Acting contrary to Madame d’Ossum’s recommendation, Marie increased her spending. Marie spent 258,002 livres in 1785 (equivalent of \$5,160,040 in 2016), doubling her budget

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<sup>9</sup> The English translation is fashion merchant.

<sup>10</sup> The new generation desired to be admired for novelties and temporary glory and thus their fashion came to be known as “false and extravagant” (Chrisman-Campbell 19).

allowance. This amount included Bertin's salary of 85,597 livres (equivalent of \$1,711,940 in 2016) for a single year. Marie-Antoinette did not adhere to a budget and her excessive spending earned her the name "Madame Deficit" (Weber 183). Her fashion extravaganza may well have contributed to her demise, and to that of the monarchy.

### **Fashion and Theater in Nineteenth- Century France**

Entertainment, luxury and merriment was a staple in the Parisian way of life even after the Revolution. Nineteenth-century Paris was a metropolis displaying wealth, art and fashion. One could find a little bit of Paris in the parks, the bars and in the ballrooms. The French valued pleasure and frivolity, and they dressed according to rank and status when participating in entertainment. "In other capitals, the stranger has to go in quest of amusement. In Paris, he cannot stir a step without coming in contact with the clashing cymbals of the votaries of pleasure" (Steele 153). Indulgences of the "high life" (Steele 153) included an afternoon horse race, an evening ball or a twilight opera. The theater was especially symbolic of class distinction, and it represented the modernity of Paris. It was here that the actresses were celebrated for their costumes and acting talent. In the nineteenth century, unlike the eighteenth, they were fashion leaders because they were dressed by the best courtiers.

The actresses had enormous faith in the designers. Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923) only wore garments designed by courtier Jean Philippe Worth (1856-1926). Actress Eltona Duse (1858-1924) once expressed to Jean Philippe Worth: "When you do not help me, the magic leaves my roles" (Steele 154). The actresses understood that the costume is just as important as the script. In the *Gazette*, a paper that covered high profile social events, fashion

writer Victomesse de Renneville wrote, “In most cases the theater can be certain of crowds when sumptuous dresses can be seen on stage” (cited by Steele 154).

The theater was not just about the production. It was a social event, and it was very important for the spectators to be able to observe one another. People gathered in foyers and atriums to mingle before and during the opera as well at intermission. Attendees were aware of their social rankings and conducted themselves accordingly in theater location, dress and seating arrangements. The crowds attending the shows included people of various classes. Individuals of the lower classes attended performances at theaters located on boulevards of lesser repute. Their level of wealth allowed them to experience amusement; however, they were not fortunate enough to be able to participate in current fashion trends.

Wealthy citizens of Paris were like citizens of no other cosmopolitan cities. They may not have been born into the aristocracy, but they have created new nobility. Theater patrons frequented the Paris Opera where status was determined by seating. If one could afford private or loge seating, he was considered higher on the scale of superiority. Furthermore, this new nobility was based, in large measure, on dress.

The Paris Opera at Boulevard des Capucines, built by Charles Garnier, was famous for its grandiose appearance. The Opera House was decorated with chandeliers, ornate balustrades and paintings by renowned impressionists like Edgar Degas (1834-1917) and Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) (Exhibit 9 page 36). The most elite of society such as diplomats were private, proscenium box patrons whose wives wore ballgowns to the theater. Orchestra seating belonged to merchants and was occupied by men only. The middle class had less disposable income; thus, they only attended the



grand opera twice a year. Proper attire at the opera was paramount. The wife of a stockbroker, for example, was expected to wear fine things such as a gold scarf or other delicate fabrics from India, a testament to the importance of foreign trade to fashion. Theater patrons dressed fashionably because they were spectators of one another as much as spectators of the production; thus the Paris Opera was called “one of the temples of fashion” (Steele 154). The culture of Paris culminated beautifully in the Opera House, and it was there that the audience and the spectator became one.

Artists began to sketch paintings of the social interactions. The famous artist Mary Cassatt painted a portrait of a lady spying on her comrades entitled *The Loge* (See Exhibit 8 on page 35). Eugene Lami sketched an illustration of a private box setting showing how the theater dictates costume and behavior. The painting impressed *The American in Paris* writer Jules Janin who stated, “Even now I hear Eugene Lami, the tempter, calling me to the splendid enclosure. ‘Come,’ says he, ‘come the [foyer] is brilliant with light; the ladies are beautiful and well-dressed.’” (Janin 34) Although many could not afford the Paris Opera, members of all classes were interested in the arts. The lower classes frequented the Gaité, a smaller theater located on boulevards of lesser repute.

### **Fashion in the Second Republic and Second Empire**

Fashion continued to be influenced by political figures and their families. The “father of haute couture,” Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895), had Napoleon III and his wife Eugenie to thank for his fame. Although Worth was born an Englishman, his fortune was made in France during the reign of Napoleon III when his wife and an active economy brought attention to Worth’s craft. Louis Napoleon III, the nephew of

Napoleon Bonaparte, was loved by the people. A direct popular vote put him in office as the first president of France's Second Republic (1848-1852). When he attempted to serve a second term, Parliament and the constitution hindered him. The constitution of 1848 allowed a person to serve only one four-year term. Napoleon made an attempt to have the rule amended in order to accomplish more for the country economically. Parliament feared a longer term would give him too much power. Determined to serve a second term, on December 2, 1851 Louis Napoleon formed a coup d'état and acquired the throne in 1852. The Second Republic was dissolved when he made himself emperor and then changed his name to Napoleon III. The government was no longer constitutional; it was imperial.

Napoleon's Second Empire (1852-1870) served as the backdrop for Worth's career as a style tycoon. It was during Napoleon's reign that France was transformed into an economic machine that greatly affected the costume and dress of multiple social classes. Since the economy was strong, the population had expendable income to spend on frivolity as well as necessity. As France's new leader, Napoleon III brought wealth to the country by building elite boulevards and parks. In addition, Napoleon promoted the railways and stabilized a sewer system. Schools were built and France became an exporter of agriculture. He reconstructed Paris by inspiring citizens to secure their money in savings banks and consider investment opportunities.

Rebuilding France was a difficult feat and Napoleon made connections that would help France prosper, including a wife from an aristocratic family. To support him as a modern leader, Napoleon wisely married Eugenie de Montijo de Guzman (1862-1920), a Spanish Countess. Empress Eugenie dressed in the flamboyant style of Marie

Antoinette. Designers were eager to design for her because they knew that the public would want to copy her. Worth was the designer of Eugenie's \$3,000 gown made of silk with gold embroidery. The gown was shown at Exposition Universelle in 1855, a major lifestyle event in Paris. Worth won a medal for the dress and afterward opened his House of Worth establishment. Eugenie's support and networking efforts made his store at 7 rue de la Paix one of the most famous locations in France. Haute couture became essential to lifestyles of the wealthy in Europe as well as the Americas.

### **Fashion in the Visual Arts**

Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) was a French artist who gave fashion its position in art. Artists such as Ingres realized the necessity of the knowledge of fashion in order to give their paintings personality. Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres was especially detailed with regard to costume and was astute at using strokes of paint to give the viewer a historical context and to represent innate emotion and the social class of the sitter and/or the setting.

On the softer side of the nineteenth century, popular culture viewed women as objects of beauty. Fashion in formal portraiture became popular as the middle class increased in financial standing. They were able to afford to purchase paintings to be displayed in homes and businesses. The bourgeois were also able to spend more on fashion and they naturally wanted to see the fashions displayed in the paintings they purchased. French novelist and scriptwriter Honore de Balzac (1799-1850) said: "Fashion is the expression of society... fashion is, all at once, a science, an art, a custom, a sentiment" (cited in Groom 18).

The genre of art depends upon fashion to give substance to a scene or a sitter. Fashion is important for art to tell the history behind the sitter or the subject being presented. One's lifestyle, culture, financial status could be determined by a conspicuous cut of fabric or dazzling jewelry. The nineteenth century artist Ingres was astute at capturing the spirit of the sitter through costume and adding all the necessary accoutrements to define one's rank in society. During the nineteenth century the focus of fashion was geared more toward women than men. Ingres' knowledge of clothing allowed him to paint his women in memorable portraits. Other artists could not compete with him as they were not experts in costume and the female form. The poet Charles Baudelaire writes in his essay *The Painter of Modern Life* that portraits:

are clothed in the costume of their own period. They are perfectly harmonious because everything – from costume and coiffure down to gesture, glance and smile (for each age as a deportment, a glance and a smile of its own) -- everything, I say, combines to form a completely viable whole (cited by Ribeiro 1).<sup>11</sup>

Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres used his artistic expertise and fashion to give voice and rank to sitter. Ingres was the portraitist for King Louis Philippe (1783-1850).<sup>12</sup> The craftsmanship of other artists was measured against portraits for King Philippe painted by Ingres. Artists such as Ingres realized the necessity of the knowledge of fashion in order to give their paintings personality; he was especially detailed with regard to costume. His sketches were like patterns created by a seamstress. The paintings illustrated lining, construction, fabric and seams (cited by Grooms 19). Ribeiro

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<sup>11</sup>Dr. Aileen Ribeiro is was born in 1944. She is a fashion historian and author several books. She has a strong background in costume and the French Revolution. Dr. Ribeiro is currently professor emeritus at the University of London.

<sup>12</sup> King of France from 1830-1848.

felt that Ingres was so specific about every minute detail that he gave the costume a separate body of its own.

Ingres was not concerned with the appropriate costume in his portraiture based on politics; however, he did concentrate on the appropriate display of detail. His contemporaries were not able to infuse the warmth and stylishness that he did. The details of the hair, the face and the accessories make the portrait come alive. Curator Madeleine Delpierre stated, “The costume seems to move on the person it clothes” (cited by Groom 44). A portrait that comes alive is one of those portraits that the viewer cannot stop looking at. Ingres’ portrait of Josephine-Élénore is one of those portraits that seem to be a living, breathing person (See Exhibit 13 on page 40).

The crest (See Exhibit 11 on page 38) mounted on the wall indicates the viewer is in the presence of royalty and the wainscoting on the wall is a common interior design feature for an elegant theme. As a viewer, one can see the care he has given to be sure she is fashionable. Her hair is smooth and perfectly parted just as Marie Antoinette’s hair was a vital element of her stylishness. Hair is still to this date an important component with regard to a person’s dress. The princess’s hairstyle is a predecessor to the modern day pageboy (See Exhibit 18 on page 45). Women wear this hairstyle when they want to be stylish yet elegant at the same time. The head of the princess is tilted as though she is open to listening. Her headdress can be a symbol of the crown she wears. Her nose, lips, rosy cheeks, porcelain skin and long neck are idealized, giving the appearance of a flawless princess (See Exhibit 15 on page 42).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Elite women are still presented in a three-quarter or full length pose with idealized features and beautiful ball gowns illustrated in Exhibit 12 Page 39 and Exhibit 16 Page 43.

She looks directly at the viewer as though she is inviting us in; however, there is a mixed message here in that crossed arms usually mean the person is protecting himself or herself. The princess is leaning on the gold chair with the scarf that looks imported and the hat that appears to be a man's hat (See Exhibit 15 on page 42). One might interpret her leaning on the chair and the objects in the chair as representation of the royalty status which stabilizes her. There is sadness in her eyes, but her lips have a slight smile. One can look at the eyes and wonder what the sitter is thinking. What kind of life does she have? We know she is a woman of affluence; yet, there is a mysteriousness in her eyes that makes the viewer want to know more about her. Ingres' detail is exquisite. He uses shadow to create a distinct collar bone. The gold necklace rests on her chest and seems to complement the gold in the brocade chair and scarf.

The pleated trimming shapes her shoulders and is mated with the delicate lace. Ingres intricately etched the floral pattern in the lace. The transparent fabric appears to be just firm enough to hold its shape though lightweight enough to move with her body. One can see the dent of her underarm and a point in the lace as the lace appears to move forward with her bosom. The viewer only gets to see one hand which also makes one think of mystery. Ingres liked to accessorize his subjects. Both bracelets as well as the wedding ring are ornate pieces (See Exhibit 16 on page 43). The red bracelet has an exotic flair reminiscent of the imported jewels which were a fashionable accessory among the well-to-do. Imported jewels continue to be a staple in an affluent household. It is difficult to imagine the tiny brush he must have used to create the pearls and the stone clasp that so gracefully fall from her wrist. The dress is full in the back since it is gathered into a bustle. He was skillful in his ability to paint the dress so that it

appears to float away from the body. The painting almost looks like a photograph (See Exhibit 14 on page 41).<sup>14</sup>

As illustrated by this portrait of Josephine, fashion had become important in Paris during the mid-to late nineteenth century as an integral component of artistic portraiture. Portraits began to focus not simply on the physical attributes of the body but also on its material representation in her dress. Following Ingres, and beginning with the growth of the upper-middle class, artists like Monet, Manet and Van Gogh began to paint regular people as well as the elite class. Everyone had to wear some type of garment; therefore artists used fashion to explain their subjects, their character, their social class and occupation.

The fashion industry and international markets worked together. Distributors of lace and cashmere from India worked with manufacturers and department stores. These magnates took an interest in artists such as Monet, Manet and Boudin. Textile manufacturer Jean Dollfus purchased *The Loge* by Renoir (1841-1919) in 1875 (Exhibit 9 page 36). As marketing experts, the merchandisers would purchase paintings that reflected the fashions they would sell in their store. It was genius to have skilled artists paint a work that would serve as an advertisement as well as a work of art. Store owners and impressionists were both gaining financially through this partnership.

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<sup>14</sup> Princess Diana of England had a photograph taken which resembles the royal portraiture of the nineteenth century.

## **Fashion, Literature and Social Reform**

Members of the fashionable elite society enjoyed the arts with regard to literature as well as theater. Edith Wharton (1862-1937) was a Pulitzer Prize winning nineteenth century author. She wrote about the lives of people during the Gilded Age, a time in the early 1900s when industry excelled and the wealthy relished. Some of her most celebrated novels included *The Age of Innocence*, *Custom of the Country*, *The House of Mirth*, *French Ways and their Meaning* and *Life and I*. In her book *Edith Wharton and the Making of Fashion*, author Katherine Joslin describes clothing as “the closest sensation of the body,” illustrating that fashion is indeed a vital component of one’s existence (Joslin 1). Scholars are enamored with the mind, and they don’t often see fashion design as an art or a subject worthy of study. But fashion played a major role in Wharton’s writing and in her personal life because dress adds drama to the body. Edith Wharton used style and clothing to tell her story. She dressed her characters in a style that could tell the reader about the character’s emotional state, political standing and social status. Edith Wharton was likely to talk about how clothes were made in her novels rather than discuss the designing of lush European gardens that the upper-class commissioned. In Wharton’s *House of Mirth*, the protagonist Lily Bart meets an ill-fated end. Wharton expresses her moments of despair by describing the character’s attachment to her clothing. Fashion and aesthetics enhance reading by making the characters more authentic and believable.

The character Lily Bart unpacks her precious Parisian gowns which remind her of the days of finery. As she gazes upon the lines and drapes that form her delicate garments, she feels she is envisioning a work of ostentatious art. As her eyes looked on



the embroidery and her skin experienced the texture of the lace, moments of her past entered the forefront of her thoughts. As her eyes fall on a mound of white fabric, she remembers wearing the garment at an evening party. The dress still held odors of violet flowers from the garden and the scent took her back to the romance of the evening. The haute couture gowns created by Jacques Doucet and Charles Worth she is packing away represent the identity of a New York elitist she will no longer maintain. As she buries her old self in the trunk along with her gowns, “Lily sees herself as rootless and ephemeral, mere spin-drift of the whirling surface of existence” (Joslin 1).

Wharton begins to contemplate her own existence after viewing a painting of a family in a beautifully embroidered wedding dress. When she speaks of her mother and her mother’s generation she states:

I know less than nothing of the particular virtues, gifts and modest accomplishments of the young women with pearls in their looped hair or cambric ruffs round their slim necks, who prepared the way for my generation. A few shreds of anecdote, no more than the faded flowers of leaves between a great-grandmother’s Bible, are all that remain to me (Wharton 15).

She realizes the sitter is not celebrated for her accomplishments or virtue. She is only praised and known for her fashion. Edith knew the value of style as she herself mimicked her ancestors by using embellishments of expensive dog collars and fine silk to display her wealth. She wove pearls in her hair similar to the looped pearls she saw in the paintings. Wanting to also be known for her intelligence, she cleverly dressed her protagonist in *The Age of Innocence* in a Directoire gown, a favorite of Josephine, the wife of Napoleon Bonaparte. Not only did she understand style, but she knew how to capture the attention of an audience and maintain an exclusive readership. She used the influence of her

heirloom paintings to tell her stories and combine beauty and achievement. Wharton understood the importance of adornment; however, she preferred to be appreciated for her literary talent.

Wharton was able to combine her love for writing with fashion because she was well acquainted with Paris designers Charles Worth and James Doucet. Wharton's *The Fruit of the Tree* is a story about the garment industry and conditions in the factories. In order to get an accurate depiction of the trade for her novel, she toured the Berkshire Cotton Mill. The mill was in Adams, Massachusetts, five miles from her home in Lenox, Massachusetts. The mill was located in a town along the Hoosac River that developed after the war of 1812 prevented the import of cotton from England. Farmers began to produce their own cotton there.

The connection between fashion and war was the increased production of a staple fabric in the clothing industry. In 1814 the Adams South Village Manufacture Company opened with 708 spindles and 26 looms situated on three floors. The Berkshire Mountains became a hub for the production of textiles and shoes. By the 1860s the railroad was the largest entity for the transport of goods. The shipping of fashion goods escalated when a tunnel through Hoosac Mountain was built. This direct route to New York amplified the manufacturing business and the Berkshire Manufacturing Company was built in 1889 (Berkshire).

During her tour of Berkshire in approximately 1908 Wharton noticed carding machines that were compacted too tightly together. Because they were so close, injury was imminent. The carding process involved brushing, meshing and washing fibers. Handling the fibers between the rollers required skill, and a hand could easily be

severed in the machine. Wharton was aware of the effect the First World War had on American and European society. Although Wharton wrote a lot about affluence, she considered the ethics surrounding the war and refused to ignore the plight of the less fortunate. She was aware of the tragedies that plagued workers. One such tragedy involved the death of 146 workers in a fire when the doors of the workshop had been locked to encourage continuous labor. Rose Schneiderman, a social activist, spoke at a memorial service regarding the deaths and stated; “This is not the first time girls have been burned alive in the city. Every week I must learn of the untimely death of one of my sister workers. Every year thousands of us are maimed. The life of men and women is so cheap and property is so sacred”<sup>15</sup> (Baxandall 177).

Wharton was also aware of the effect the first World War had on American and European society. Although Wharton wrote a lot about affluence, she considered the ethics surrounding the war and refused to ignore the plight of the less fortunate. She spent time in France during World War I visiting the front lines and assessing needs in order to determine her role in the war effort. Instinctively in tune with fashion, she chose to lend assistance to the war in the field of garment production. Her familiarity with Berkshire and the New York garment industry made her aware of the workplace problems she needed to address in Paris such as unemployment, safety in the factories and health benefits. Wharton was a leader in the cause to support Northern France and Belgium. Wharton and her supporters provided schoolhouses and shelter for war refugees from these countries.

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<sup>15</sup> *America's Working Women, A Documentary History 1600 to the Present.*

Women who had no financial support from a spouse were given jobs in workrooms. By providing work she aided hundreds of seamstresses in France who found themselves unemployed when the Paris couture houses closed for periods of time due to the war. Wharton and her old New York contemporaries had, prior to the war, shopped in the rue de la Paix at the fashion houses. At the House of Worth or Doucet dresses were made two to three years in advance and mailed to their homes in Boston or New York. Such special amenities for the rich could not be offered because of the closing of couture houses. Seamstresses could not feed their families if the couture houses were permanently closed. Wharton raised money from her wealthy New York contemporaries to reopen and continue support for those fashion houses.

Wharton did not want to be recognized as a philanthropist, but she did want to find a way to use her wealth and influence to be an asset to the war effort. Fashion was the door by which she felt she could be useful. She responded to a request from Countess d'Haussonville to provide a sewing room for women. She enlisted the Vanderbilts, Roosevelts and Astors to donate to these charities. Volunteerism became fashionable prior to this time. The Red Cross was one of the most popular volunteers (Wharton 93). However, women working the Red Cross were making baby clothes which did not directly affect the war effort.

Wharton chose to go another route and offer her services in the field that spoke to her, the garment industry. It took her only two weeks to raise \$2,000 for unemployed seamstresses in France (See Exhibit 10 on page 37). In 1915 Wharton wrote to the *New York Times* reaching out to her comrades; this was about the time the fashion houses were closing. She had hoped to convince donors to give money in order to compensate the

women and purchase fabric as well as provide residences. Ultimately, she felt it would be most lucrative to sell the garments. By selling the clothing the women would always have a job. Wharton stated:

At first, my plan was to collect money for the purchase of materials and payment of the women's wages and board and to give away all the garments we made, .... This plan is still in practice in a number of Paris workrooms, but when the hope of a speedy victory disappeared it seemed to me more sensible to sell our garments at a very moderate profit and try to make the work nearly self-supporting (Wharton New York Times).

The benefits of working in one of Wharton's sewing rooms were many. As the first person in Paris to operate a paying workroom, she paid 20 cents for a six-hour work day and provided a daily meal because she was also concerned about their health. The women were guaranteed two months of employment. After two months, they were assigned a piecework position. While doing piecework they were afforded the opportunity to look for a job elsewhere. Wharton was generous; if a person could not secure other employment, they could start their rotation again. Wharton was proud of her ability to use fashion to support her workers who could produce fine lingerie made of silk and lace. She was to keep 90 women employed and hoped to do so until the war was over. The purpose of Wharton's philanthropic efforts was to support the laborers in the sewing industry by providing employment that offered consistent income in a health conscious environment.

One can conclude that literature could also benefit from style and it was through Edith Wharton that the soul of a person was exposed through costume. Wharton always had a passion for fashion. When she was a child she was spending time with her Aunt when her Aunt asked her:

What would you like to be when you grow up?" and on my replying in all good faith, and with a dutiful air: "The best-dressed woman in New York," she uttered the horrified cry: "Oh, don't say that, darling!" to which I could only rejoin in wonder: "But, Auntie, you know *Mamma is*" (Wharton).

As she grew older, she realized fashion was not just about vanity; and that clothing could provide employment for the less fortunate. This realization led her to be able to help women in France during the war maintain employment. She understood that clothing did not exist without life and life did not exist without clothing.

### **Conclusion**

Fashion reflects social history because life changing events related to war and/or economics lead to innovations and variations in style or dress. Clothing gives voice to fabric, style, cut and color, with each of these elements making a statement about the wearer. Although the French were not the first fashion leaders, an economic turn and Louis XIV's role as Sun King placed the country in the forefront of style leadership. When Marie Antoinette attempted to fit in as queen, she changed her Austrian way of dressing and began a revolution in fashion. The country's attempt to mend the relationship between France and Austria through the marriage of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette is an historical event that left-handedly spearheaded changes in fashion. It was Marie Antoinette's personal pain due to being ostracized that led to dresses with bustles and outrageous hair. We also know that politics can lead to changes in dress as she took a political stand by wearing breeches and riding side saddle when according to protocol only men should do such things. Another marriage that had an effect on fashion was that of Napoleon III and Eugenie. Since Napoleon was leader in a war and married a woman of royal status, designers wanted to work with

them. Designers such as Charles Worth became a prominent figure in fashion and dictator of style.

The artist Ingres demonstrated an ability to capture the spirit of a person in a painting through fashion and intricate details<sup>16</sup> (See Exhibit 16 on page 43). Art was an essential tool used to introduce hairstyles and accessories that add to a woman's natural beauty.

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<sup>16</sup> The artist captures the spirit and femininity of Princess Diana in the painting illustrated in Exhibit 17, page 44.



Exhibit 1  
Expulsion of Adam and Eve  
1424-27  
Artist: Masaccio (1401-1427)





Exhibit 2  
Portrait by Jean-Baptiste Gautier Dagoty, 1775.



**Exhibit 3, c. 1767-68**

Marie Antoinette

Artist Martin van Meytens



**Exhibit 4**

**Robe à la Polonoise**

**Date:**ca. 1780

**Culture:**French

**Medium:**silk

**Dimensions:**Length at CB (a): 69 1/4 in. (175.9 cm) Length at CB (b): 37 in. (94 cm)

Metropolitan Museum of Art



**Exhibit 5**

**Robe à la Polonoise**

**Date:**ca. 1780

**Culture:**French

**Medium:**silk

**Dimensions:**Length at CB (a): 69 1/4 in. (175.9 cm) Length at CB (b): 37 in. (94 cm)

Metropolitan Museum of Art



**Exhibit 6**

Vintage Gowns, Museum Of Art, French Silk, Fashion History, 1770S Fashion, Metropolitan Museum, 18Th Century

Dress (*robe à la française*) | France, 1775-1800 | Material: silk | This gown shows the silhouette most associated with 18th century dress: the conical bodice and the rectangular skirt. This silhouette was made possible through the use of the underpinnings of stays and panniers | The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Robe a la francaise [French]



**Exhibit 7**

c. 1775

**Medium:** Etching

**Dimensions:** sheet: 9 9/16 x 7 7/16 in. (24.3 x 18.9 cm)

**Classification:** Prints

**Artist:** Marie Louise Adélaïde Boizot (French, Paris 1744–1800 Paris)

**Artist:** After Louis Simon Boizot (French, Paris 1743–1809 Paris)



Exhibit 8, 1878

Medium: Fresco

*The Loge*

Artist: Mary Stevenson Cassatt



Exhibit 9  
*In The Loge*, 1874  
Artist Pierre Auguste Renoir



# The New York Times

## MAGAZINE SECTION

NEW YORK,  
NOVEMBER 28, 1915.

SECTION FOUR  
TWENTY PAGES.



Children in the Day Nursery of the American Hostels.

## My Work Among the Women Workers of Paris

Noted American Novelist Tells How Her Ouvroir Gave Support to an Army of Women Left Without Employment by the War--How Hostels Aid Refugees

By Edith Wharton

**A** COMPREHENSIVE study of Paris war charities should be made by a detached looker-on; any sincere report by a worker can deal only with the particular patch of misery he or she has tried to relieve. I therefore write without apology in the first person singular, and head my opening paragraph:

### My Workroom.

When the war broke out an immense number of benevolent and unoccupied women in Paris felt a violent but vague impulse to "help." This impulse found its chief expression in the traditional pursuits of making lint, hemming towels and crocheting baby jackets. Such activities are harmless and even commendable in days of peace, but in war time any unpaid industry encroaches on the rights of the unemployed, and this fact was so promptly understood in France that I can claim only by a few weeks' priority the honor of having founded the first paying workroom in Paris.

My *ouvroir*, which started tentatively and on a small scale, was at first meant only to supply work for a few seamstresses of my own quarter, but with the temporary paralysis of trade such a wave of misery swept over Paris that the most prudently circumscribed charities had to enlarge their borders and take their chance of finding the means to exist. It was impossible to confine my aid to seamstresses when typists and accountants, nursery governesses and dramatic artists, cooks and concert singers were all pleading for help, but I kept, and have continued to keep, to one of my original rules: that no one I employed should be in receipt of what is called the "military allowance." All over Paris in those early days workrooms were being opened to help the widows and mothers of soldiers; wives, widows and young girls without near relatives in the army were not ungenerally overlooked, and it was for their benefit that my workroom was started.

My first step was to appeal for help to my compatriots in Paris. In spite of the prepossessions of those first distracted days, I collected over \$2,000 within a week or two, and with that sum the foundations of the work were laid. I bought a large supply of materials, made arrangements to have my women



Mrs. Wharton in Her Garden.

fed in a neighboring restaurant, and put over my door the sign of the Red Cross, under whose auspices the work was begun. The plan then laid down has been followed ever since. The women receive 20 cents a day and a good mid-day meal in return for six hours' work. On Thursdays they have a half-holiday with full pay, but whenever there is a sudden call for hospital supplies or any urgent order they cheerfully give up their Thursday afternoon.

When a woman applies for work she

shows her papers, gives references, and is asked to prove that she is not receiving either the "military allowance" or what is called the "assistance to the unemployed"—though we give work to those in receipt of the latter stipend (from 15 to 25 cents a day) if they have children or infirm relatives to support. The woman's statements are verified by inquiries at her *mairie*, and if the report is favorable she is engaged for two months.

The two months over, she has to leave,

but if she chooses we give her piecework at home for a month. At the end of the month, if there is a vacancy, she can return to the workroom for another two months, and so on. This system of rotation was established as soon as it became evident that the war was to last a long time, and the result has been satisfactory. The fact that the women are not engaged for more than two months stimulates them to look for regular employment, and with the gradual revival of business many have found it, especially, of course, the skilled seamstresses and the typists. Still, there are always fresh cases of want coming up, and for many months past we have given work to an average of over sixty women, sometimes as many as ninety, and have always had a long waiting list ahead.

At first, my plan was to collect money for the purchase of materials and the payment of the women's wages and board and to give away all the garments we made. This plan is still in practice in a number of Paris workrooms, but when the hope of a speedy victory disappeared it seemed to me more sensible to sell our garments at a very moderate profit and try to make the work nearly self-supporting. We still make gifts to needy hospitals or to refugees in distress whenever materials are given us, but with the material we buy we make clothes which we sell, charging about 5 per cent. profit on the cost and the woman's wages. This has enabled me to keep my workroom going for fourteen months without clamoring for donations. My refugee charities cannot be made self-supporting, and for them I must clamor, and shall keep on clamoring, till we can send back to their own land the homeless and ruined people we are sheltering, but my workroom has proved its ability to live almost entirely by its own resources, provided we get enough orders.

The whole point is there. If the friends of the Paris workgirl will continue to send me orders as generously as they have hitherto my ninety seamstresses are safe till the war is over and they can take up their normal work. And as the second war-winter begins I venture to remind our benefactors what every order, even of a few dollars, means to our workwomen: the chance to go on earning a little more money for a new pair of shoes, or coal for a cold room, or warm gloves for the baby, or a



**Exhibit 11**

Ralph Lauren uses a crest on his clothing as a design element.

Ralph Lauren [http://global.ralphlauren.com/en-us/style/men/rlclassics/pages/navy\\_blazer.aspx](http://global.ralphlauren.com/en-us/style/men/rlclassics/pages/navy_blazer.aspx)



**Exhibit 12**

Photo of in a royal setting



### Exhibit 13

**Joséphine-Éléonore-Marie-Pauline de Galard de Brassac de Béarn (1825–1860),  
Princesse de Broglie**

**Artist:** Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (French, Montauban 1780–1867 Paris)

**Date:** 1851–53

**Medium:** Oil on canvas

**Dimensions:** 47 3/4 x 35 3/4 in.  
(121.3 x 90.8 cm)

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, the neo-classical French artist par excellence, painted this masterpiece toward the end of his life when his reputation as a portraitist to prominent citizens and Orléanist aristocrats had been long established. Pauline de Broglie sat for the artist's final commission.

Ingres captures the shy reserve of

his subject while illuminating through seamless brushwork the material quality of her many fine attributes: her rich blue satin and lace ball gown, the gold embroidered shawl, and silk damask chair, together with finely tooled jewels of pearl, enamel, and gold. The portrait was commissioned by the sitter's husband, Albert de Broglie, a few years after their ill-fated marriage. Pauline was stricken with tuberculosis soon after completion of the exquisite portrait, leaving five sons and a grieving husband. Through Albert's lifetime, it was draped in fabric on the walls of the family residence. The portrait remained in the de Broglie family until shortly before Robert Lehman acquired it. – Metropolitan Museum of Art



**Exhibit 14**  
Artist:  
Ingres



**Exhibit 15**  
Artist: Ingres



**Exhibit 16**  
Princess Diana 1985  
Photograph by Lord Snowdon



**Exhibit 17**  
1986  
Artist Richard Foster





**Exhibit 18**  
Glamorous Look With Modern Day Page Boy Hairstyle  
Actress Katie Holmes

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