

<p>Institution: UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 34</p>
<p>Title of case study: Fashion and Textiles Sustainability at the University of the Arts London.</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>University of the Arts London (UAL) is a pioneer of research into both design-led practice and the theoretical concepts underpinning sustainability across the fashion and textile sectors. Work focuses on design strategies for sustainability, textile recycling and upcycling, new manufacturing practices, systems and processes, greater understanding of consumer behaviours, and how to develop informed consumer engagement with fashion and textile products and their use. Research aims to empower designers through education and innovative best practice to make better informed decisions and choices, to question the status quo, create significant improvements and foster radical changes to the existing system. Publications and collaborative projects have impacted on industry, influenced policy debate and practice within Government, and enhanced public understanding of issues surrounding fashion and textiles sustainability.</p> <p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>This case study relates to the work at the forefront of the field of sustainable fashion and textiles by UAL researchers Professors Sandy Black and Rebecca Earley, Dr Kate Fletcher (Reader) and Dilys Williams (Director Centre for Sustainable Fashion). Work is based within two of UAL's Research Centres; Centre for Sustainable Fashion (CSF) and Textile Futures Research Centre (TFRC), with the underpinning research being undertaken at UAL between 2002 and 2010. The impact described in this case study mobilises research insights in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a deeper understanding of the synergistic and holistic nature of fashion and textile design, production, use and consumption systems and how understanding of these can help designers to make better informed choices. • The articulation and application of sustainability within a fashion and textile context. <p>Earley (UAL) and Fletcher (then Goldsmiths) collaborated on <i>5-Ways</i> (2002) exploring the relationship between fashion/textile design and design for sustainability concepts. <i>5-Ways</i> showed that conceptual eco design principles found in other design disciplines could be applied to fashion and textiles. Fletcher joined UAL in 2008 soon after the publication of <i>Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys</i> (2008), which for the first time brought together information about lifecycle sustainability, the impacts of fashion and textiles, practical alternatives, design concepts and social innovation. Fletcher continued to demonstrate the importance of taking a holistic and interdependent view of all aspects of the cycle of production and consumption. Her <i>Local Wisdom</i> project (2009–), supported by the Leverhulme Trust, emphasises material or design development and cultural, personal and political issues, while <i>Fashion and Sustainability: Design for Change</i> (2012) presents sustainability as an opportunity for fashion innovation, suggesting new ways for designers to work outside of the traditional production and consumption cycle.</p> <p>Black's <i>Eco Chic: The Fashion Paradox</i> (2008) was a direct outcome of the <i>Interrogating Fashion</i> research cluster (2005) which brought together a group of 38 academics, artists, designers, scientists and technologists (including Fletcher, Earley and Williams), in which <i>The Fashion Paradox: transience and sustainability</i> was a major theme. <i>Eco Chic</i> examined the fashion life cycle from fibre to finished fashion and disposal, offering design strategies for improved sustainability, with case studies setting the eco-fashion movement in a contemporary context. <i>Eco Chic</i> and <i>Design Journeys</i> (Fletcher) were the first academically focused books in this area, acting as pathfinders for others who have followed. Black was PI on the <i>Considerate Design for Personalised Fashion Products</i> (2006 –2009) with Co-I Dr Claudia Eckert (Open University) and Philip Delamore, Dr Frances Geesin, Dr Penelope Watkins (all UAL), Dr David Wynn (Engineering Design Centre, Cambridge University) and Steven Harkin (bag designer). The project examined</p>

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the design process behind producing a *considerate* bespoke product, reducing waste by personalisation, utilising new technology, and user engagement to prolong longevity of use. Black's *Sustainable Fashion Handbook* (2012) is the most comprehensive study on the subject to date and includes essays by Fletcher and Williams. It examines all aspects of the fashion industry, outlines future scenarios, and further positions sustainability within a fashion context.

The AHRC funded *Worn Again: Rethinking Recycled Textiles* (2005–2009) proposed environmental improvement through the creation of innovative, high quality, upcycled artefacts. It explored textile recycling in combination with new technologies, ethical production, short-life and long-life design strategies and systems and services. It ultimately led to the creation of TED's *TEN* (2010) a set of strategies to help designers navigate the complexity of sustainability issues and offer them practical ways to design lower impact products. The research team included Earley (PI), Fletcher (then an external consultant), and UAL staff Professor Kay Politowicz, Lucy Batchelor, Melanie Bowles, Lorna Bircham, Dr Francis Geesin, Dr Kate Goldsworthy, Dr Emma Neuberg, Gary Page, Kathy Round, and Caryn Simonson.

Shared Talent: India (Williams) funded by Defra, applied sustainability thinking and values to fashion design and development. Stressing the contribution of all actors in fashion creation, working collectively to generate a more human systems-based approach, thus challenging the dominant reductionist focus on discrete parts of the process. *Shared Talent: India* (2009) involved a programme of cooperative design workshops for UK/Indian designers, makers and communicators, culminating in ten days of active design participation and collaboration in Delhi. Outcomes were exhibited at the launch of *Esthetica* at London Fashion Week and Delhi Fashion Week (2009). The project won the EAUC Green Gown Award for Social Responsibility 2011.

3. References to the research

Key outputs and related research council awards are listed below:

1. Black, S. (2008) *Eco Chic: The Fashion Paradox* [Authored book]. 2nd ed. 2011. London: Black Dog Publishing. Listed in REF2.
 2. Black, S. (2012) *Sustainable Fashion Handbook* [Edited book]. London: Thames & Hudson. Listed in REF2.
 3. Earley, R. & Fletcher, K. (2003) *No Wash Sweatshirt*. [Design item from 5-Ways project]. UAL on request.
 4. Earley, R. (2007) *Ever and Again: Rethinking Recycled Textiles* [Exhibition]. London: Triangle Gallery, Chelsea College of Art and Design. UAL on request.
 5. Fletcher, K. and Grose, L. (2012) *Fashion and Sustainability Design for Change* [Authored book]. London: Laurence King. Listed in REF 2.
 6. Williams, D. (2009) *Shared Talent: India*. [Project]. Outputs include: Williams, D. and Fletcher, K. (2010) *Shared Talent: An exploration of the potential of the 'Shared Talent' collaborative and hands-on educational experience for enhancing learning around sustainability in fashion practice*. In: *Sustainability in Design Now! Challenges and Opportunities for Design Research, Education and Practice in the XXI Century*. Proceedings LeNS Conference Bangalore, 29 September–1 October 2010, ed. by Ceschin, F. Vezzoli, C. & Zhang, J.; Higginson, H. Saio, N. Swinnerton, A. Williams, D. (2010) *Promoting Sustainable Indian Textiles: Final report to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs* (Defra), London, UK [Report]; *Designer Resource: Shared Talent India* (2010) [Online resource]; creative outcomes and film showcased at London and Delhi Fashion Weeks (2009). Funded by Defra and the Indian Government. UAL on request.
- UAL, PI Earley, B. *Five Ways* (05/2002 –12/2002) £5,000. AHRB.
 - UAL, PI Black, B. *Interrogating Fashion* research cluster (2005) £49,669. EPSRC/AHRC Designing for the 21st Century.
 - UAL, PI Black, S. *Considerate design for fashion products* (04/2007 – 06/2009) £231,190. EPSRC/AHRC Designing for the 21st Century.
 - UAL, PI Earley, B. *Worn Again: Rethinking recycled textiles* (10/2005 -11/2009) £122,120. AHRC.

4. Details of the impact

The body of work and expertise created by UAL researchers has helped position the UK as a leader in the field of Sustainable Fashion and Textiles. Impact is demonstrated through work with the UK government, industry bodies, corporations, and via exhibitions and publications, that have raised awareness of the issues with the wider public and industry.

Research has influenced UK government policy through work with Defra on the *Sustainable Clothing Roadmap and Action Plan* (commenced in Sept 2007 and first Action Plan published in Feb 2009, subsequent updates in Sept 2009 and Feb 2010) that brought together over 300 UK fashion and textile organisations. Williams and Black worked closely with Defra on this initiative, with *Shared Talent* informing its development and being cited eight times in the Action Plan (2010 update). UAL researchers (Black, Fletcher, Goldsworthy and Williams) were represented on four out of five strands investigated (with associated projects) by Defra under the initiative. The Sustainable Clothing Roadmap and Action Plan were awarded *The 2013 Global Leadership Award in Sustainable Apparel* by the Swedish fashion industry. CSF (Fletcher, Williams) is co-secretariat to the *All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Ethics and Sustainability in Fashion* chaired by Baroness Young of Hornsey, providing agendas and content for the group and debates. Fletcher has twice given presentations to the APPG (2009 and 2011), and wrote a briefing paper for Baroness Mackintosh for the first debate on ethics and sustainability in the House of Lords (03/11). Williams wrote a briefing paper for Baroness Young of Hornsey for a second House of Lords debate (03/13), who opened with *'Special thanks go to Dilys Williams, the head of the CSF, for bringing me up to date on key developments.'* Internationally, representatives from Sweden's MISTRA Foundation for Environmental Research consulted UAL researchers, when formulating their sustainable fashion research programme in 2010 (now in progress with collaboration from Earley and TFRC).

TED's TEN has been used to encourage new thinking in organisations such as the VF Corporation, USA and H&M, Sweden. Since 2011 Earley has delivered training programmes for H&M based on *TED's TEN*. *'TED's ideas offered a really informative, inspiring and accessible way for our designers to grasp the broad landscape of sustainable design. In a short space of time we found creative ways to make product and service innovations.'* (Johan Ward, Head of Sustainability, H&M). Earley has worked with 28 Swedish and Danish brands (2010–2013) via the Sustainable Fashion Academy, Stockholm (SFA). *'When empowering key people in fashion companies [...] with TED's tools, companies realise that working with sustainability can lead to tangible, commercially viable results, quite quickly.'* (Mike Schragger, SFA, Stockholm). During 2011 and 2012, VF Corporation commissioned Earley (with Politowicz) to develop a series of exhibits, workshops and lectures for the VF Summit, USA, demonstrating approaches to sustainable textile design products based on *TED's TEN*. In 2011 Earley and Politowicz delivered a sustainability workshop to the top 20 leaders of VF, including the CEO and group presidents. Work with the Nordic Fashion Association's *Nordic Initiative Clean and Ethical (NICE)* resulted in *TED's TEN* becoming part of the NICE educational programme and being included in *NICE Code of Conduct and Manual for the Fashion and Textile Industry* (2012).

Approaches developed through *Shared Talent* were utilised by CSF in the £1.4 million ERDF funded *London Style* project. In collaboration with Newham College of Further Education, East London Design Show and Holts Academy of Jewellery, the project provided specialist business support to SMEs to enable them to access new markets through sustainable fashion practice. CSF focused on skills development relevant to sustainability to help businesses meet growing demand for products with high ethical and environmental standards. As a result of the project, 198 out of the 346 businesses adopted an active environmental policy and/or used an environmental management reporting tool. CSF collaborated on Nike's *Mobilize Makers* project (led by Williams), drawing on understandings of the interconnected nature of the industry. The project resulted in Nike *MAKING App* (07/13) allowing designers and makers to innovate through sustainability, using resources that reside within our ecological limits.

Creative outputs have helped raise awareness of issues with regard to fashion and textiles

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sustainability. For example, UAL researchers were an integral part of the Science Museum's exhibition *Trash Fashion: Designing Out Waste* (06/10–09/11) seen by an estimated 700,000 visitors (Source: Science Museum). Earley (with UAL staff Geesin, Round and Bowles) produced new exhibits which demonstrated design-led concepts on the re-use of old clothes and textiles. Black was commissioned to produce a *considerately designed* seamless one-piece sweater, shown alongside a film of its making produced by the Science Museum. CSF (Williams and Fletcher) have worked with Marks and Spencer to raise public awareness of their *Shwopping* programme via events and installations. Publications have contributed to raising general and industry awareness. Reviews for *Eco Chic: The Fashion Paradox* (Black) include 'a fascinating account of the fashion industry's attempts to balance the conflicting demands of style-hungry consumers and the impact it has on the planet' (*The Ecologist*), and Black's *Sustainable Fashion Handbook* covers the industry from micro businesses to high end designers and major companies and includes academic essays by over 100 industry contributions, interviews, and perspectives.

The significance of UAL research in the field is evidenced by representation on high-profile bodies and at events including: the British Standards Institute Sustainable Design Group, Soil Association Textile Standards Committee and Member of the Advisory Panel for NICE (Fletcher), with Earley and Politowicz are also advisors to NICE; Steering Group for Fashioning an Ethical Industry, Reducing the Impact of Textiles on Environment (RITE), expert judge for fashion category of The Observer Ethical Awards from 2009 to 2011 and fashion category of Earth Awards 2010 (Williams); keynote at *Towards Sustainability in the Textile and Fashion Industry Conference*, Copenhagen, 2011 (Fletcher); and participation in the *Copenhagen Fashion Summit* in 2012, (Williams, Earley, Fletcher and Politowicz), a conference gathering 1,000 fashion professionals and leaders from 27 countries to discuss the importance of making the fashion industry sustainable. This included Williams' joint leadership of the associated Youth Summit where 80 young people from across Europe worked to articulate their demands for the future industry, which they then presented to the main conference.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

Evidence of impact on industry

1. Testimonials from H&M, Nordic Initiative Clean and Ethical (NICE), and Sustainable Fashion Academy, Stockholm available from http://www.tffc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Client_Testimonials.pdf
2. Statement from Citizen Mobilization Director, Nike. UAL on request.

Evidence of impact on policy debate and practice

3. Statement from Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Ethics and Sustainability in Fashion. UAL on request.
4. Clothing Industry: Ethical and Sustainable Fashion Debate in the House of Lords (2011) available from <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/110303-0003.htm#11030374000178>
5. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Sustainable Clothing Action Plan (update 2010). UAL on request.
6. Code of Conduct and Manual for the Fashion and Textile Industry available from http://www.nicefashion.org/files/NICE_Code_of_Conduct_and_Manual.pdf (p71 and 109)

Evidence of impact on raising awareness of issues with regard to fashion and textiles sustainability

7. Statement from Science Museum in relation to *Trash Fashion*. UAL on request.
8. CSF and M&S *Shwop Lab* at <http://social.marksandspencer.com/latest/joanna-lumley-and-ms-launch-shwopping/> and <http://social.marksandspencer.com/fashion-2/ms-to-launch-sustainable-fashion-lab/>