

The Aura of *(Extra)*ordinary Clothes

Exploring relationships with garments that are hard to part with

by

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“Fashion, an armour:
a sheeting for the soul.
Façon, a wound:
a cut that heals,
leaving a scar of belonging.”

- Gillis Görll

(von Busch, 2014, p. 19)

Abstract

This thesis aims to build a theory as to why some garments become difficult to part with. The researcher employs a set of mixed methods to investigate garments that have achieved this state of attachment to their current custodians. The theoretical framework of the thesis is built upon several collections of storied garments and emotional durability in design. The goal of the thesis is to identify the different qualities that cause a garment to become difficult to part with. The result of the investigation is the creation of the theory of Aura, used to describe the power emanating from the garments this thesis investigates. The theory of Aura is supported by four main categories of qualities. These are Narrative Markers, Wearability, History, and Emotional Attachment.

The insight this thesis provides might contribute to a greater sensitivity when developing design strategies that aim to create sustainable garments that emphasise durability and longevity. This thesis proposes that longevity and durability is connected of a complex matrix of different qualities in the relationship between a custodian and their garment.

Abstrakt (Norwegian)

Denne masteroppgaven tar sikte på å utvikle en teori som forsøker å forklare hvorfor noen klesplagg er vanskelige å kvitte seg med. Forskeren buker et sett med blandede metoder for å undersøke plagg som har oppnådd denne tilstanden av tilknytning til sin nåværende formynder. Det teoretiske rammeverket for masteroppgaven er bygget på en rekke samlinger med historiefylte plagg og design for emosjonell holdbarhet. Målet med masteroppgaven er å identifisere de forskjellige kvalitetene som gjør at et plagg blir vanskelig å kvitte seg med. Resultatet av denne undersøkelsen er skapelsen av teorien om Aura, brukt for å beskrive kraften som stråler ut fra plaggene som denne masteroppgaven har undersøkt. Teorien om «Aura» er støttet av fire hovedkategorier med kvaliteter. Disse er Narrative Markører, Brukervennlighet, Historie og Følelsesmessig Tilknytning.

Innsikten denne masteroppgaven gir kan bidra til en større sensitivitet i utviklingen av designstrategier som tar sikte på å skape bærekraftige plagg som vektlegger holdbarhet og lang levetid. Denne masteroppgaven tar til orde for at levedyktighet og holdbarhet er koblet til et komplekst nettverk av forskjellige kvaliteter i forholdet mellom et klesplagg og klesplagget sin formynder.

Declaration of Authorship

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and that all research sources referenced have been appropriately attributed herein.

I declare that this thesis has been wholly completed during the period of candidature for the qualification Master i Estetiske Fag and that it has not been submitted, in full or in part, in application for the award of any previous academic or professional qualification.

Place: Oslo

Date: 20.04.2022

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. G. ...', written over a horizontal line.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Thesis Structure

This thesis can be divided into three main parts.

Chapters 1-2, contains the problem statement, research methodology and theoretical background of this thesis. Chapter 1 starts with an introduction of the Painted Jeans, followed by the thesis problem statement that this thesis seeks to investigate, and a brief introduction of the research methodology that this thesis employs. Chapter two provides the theoretical background of the thesis, in relation to sustainability and emotional durability in design, followed by the literature review.

Chapters 3-6 make up the main body of the thesis. These chapters detail the three investigations that are conducted to answer the research question. Each chapter starts with a detailed introduction of the method, followed by how that method was employed to investigate the research question.

The thesis ends with Chapters 7-8. Chapter 7 discusses the results of the investigations, and the implementation of the theory that describes the phenomenon this thesis investigates. The ideas for the practical aesthetic project are outlined here as well. Chapter 8 summarizes the findings of the thesis, and points to further research.

1.2 The Painted Jeans



Figure 1 The Painted Jeans

I bought these jeans (*Figure 1, The Painted Jeans*) at H&M sometime between 2011 and 2012, in the store where my sister worked. I think they cost about 399NOK. I pretty sure I got my sister's staff discount too, so I probably only paid about 299NOK for them. The jeans did not look like this when I bought them. Back then, the jeans were plain indigo blue, with some light patina to make them seem slightly used. The style was called "&Sliq", which was a low-cut, straight legged jean style. Sometime between 2012 and now that style got discontinued or renamed, and I have not been able to find jeans with this cut at H&M since.

I am not sure why I bought them. At the time I was exclusively wearing skinny fit jeans in black or grey. It might have been my sister that persuaded me to buy them, in hopes that I would start wearing more "normal" jeans. That never happened unfortunately. These jeans usually stayed in the back of my closet. They only got worn on laundry days when I had nothing else to wear. And it was on one such day that I managed to spill some paint on them.

I remember I was attending a course in arts at Solborg Folkehøgskole at the time. I was painting a chair that I had made from an old suitcase, a pair of curtains, and a mattress for a DIY crafts project. All my other pants were in the laundry bin, even the sweatpants that I usually wore for messy projects. So, I had no other choice than to wear the jeans while painting the chair. And in the middle of painting, I managed to spill two large drops of yellow Bengalack paint on my right thigh. From that moment on, I decided to start using the jeans as my go-to pair for messy projects. I almost never wore them anyway, and at the time I felt the stains made them inappropriate for normal everyday wear. Today, the jeans are covered in paint stains, after having been used to clean my brushes and hands in multiple messy projects over the years.

Using the jeans this way has changed them quite a bit. They fit much looser than they used to, and the material is starting to become extremely worn. The paint has made the pant legs stiff, which has made the jeans more difficult to take off. I need to use force to get them off my legs. I usually have to pull them down to my shins, and then step on the pant legs to pull my legs free. That is one of the reasons why the material has started tearing in several places too. The crotch has ripped multiple times, as well as the back of each thigh and both knees. The holes make the jeans challenging to put on as well. I have to make sure to not put my feet through the torn openings and be careful not to rip the holes further if I accidentally step into them. I have patched the holes and tears as they have happened, haphazardly, just to keep the jeans functional. But because the material is getting so worn, it keeps ripping open in the same places over and over.

I do not remember when exactly, but at some point, I started wearing the jeans as part of my everyday clothes as well as using them for projects. They have gotten much more colourful with each project they have been a part of, to the point where they started fitting in with the other colours of my wardrobe. And I keep getting compliments from people when I wear them out. People find them interesting, and often ask if I bought them like this or if I made them myself. Even though the jeans are getting threadbare and difficult to put on and take off, they have a certain quality to them that makes me want to keep wearing them.

The fact that I have kept these jeans for over 10 years now isn't very unusual for me. Most of the clothes that I wear day to day are between 6 to 15 years old. I rarely buy new clothes, and when I do, I usually take good care of them and wear them often. But the unique thing about the jeans, is the fact that they have visibility changed over time as I have used them. The

stains and holes expose the fact the jeans have been through something that has altered their appearance. I have other clothes in my wardrobe that have specific memories tied to them too, but you cannot really tell just by looking at them. The jeans, however, are literally stained with memories.

The jeans function as a sort of map of my creative career. Looking at specific stains, I can recall the exact project I was working on at that time. The same goes for the holes, tears, and repairs too. Every stain and hole is tied to some form of memory or experience. Sometimes the jeans even help me to remember things that I have made or done that I had completely forgotten about.

The jeans have been an effective conversation starter in many occasions. I have found that their unusual appearance invoke curiosity about the jeans' history. And whenever someone comments on them, it gives me the opportunity to tell stories from my life and my creative endeavours. The different stains on the jeans acts as a sort of archive of memories that I can draw from to tell my stories. And I really like that about them. I think that is also why I find it hard to imagine myself ever getting rid of them. It is the reason why I keep repairing them, getting them back to a functional state. If I threw them away, I would feel like I threw away the memories as well. I am too invested in the jeans to do that. I want to keep wearing the jeans and add to their story.

I did not really realise how much I cared about the jeans before Ragnhild Brochmann asked me about them.

1.3 Problem statement

The text in the previous section was written by the researcher during the first year of the masters-programme at OsloMet. The text was written shortly after a lecture, given by fashion historian Ragnhild Brochmann. Brochmann had given her students an assignment, asking them had to bring two garments to the lecture: One garment the student was fond of, and one garment the student was ashamed of. As part of the lecture, the students were asked to present their two garments to their fellow students and explain the reasons for the fondness and the shame.

For this lecture, the researcher decided to bring the Painted Jeans as the garment that he was fond of. The researcher chose the jeans because they were the oldest garment in the researcher's wardrobe at the time. Beyond that, the researcher was not aware of how deeply

he cared about the jeans before the presentation. The presentation allowed the researcher to reflect on the relationship he had to the Painted Jeans and revealed that they meant more to him than what he initially thought.

The researcher has chosen to dedicate this thesis to investigating the relationship he shares with the Painted Jeans. The researcher believes there is something valuable to be learned from the relationship that can be utilised to give direction to his emerging practice as a fashion designer. This thesis seeks to discover what qualities the Painted Jeans have that facilitate this relationship, by posing the question:

What are the common qualities of garments that are difficult to part with?

The scope of the research goes beyond the Painted Jeans. The research question is investigated through an object-analysis of the Painted Jeans, five narrative interviews, and the review of literature related to storied garments, emotional durability, and patina. The findings from the investigation are synthesized into a theory, which aims to answer the research question.

1.4 Research Methodology

The thesis incorporates a multi-disciplinary methodological approach, using a selection of qualitative research methods. These methods are Objects Based Research, described by and Mida & Kim, Narrative Interviews, described by Brinkman & Kvale, and Grounded Theory Coding, described by Corbin & Strauss. Each method introduced at the beginning of Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3, immediately followed by how the method was employed. The review of literature was conducted throughout the research process, and is presented in the following chapter.

2 Theoretical Background

This thesis contributes to the growing body of research into the importance of emotional durability to clothing longevity. Reducing consumption by using clothing for longer in preference to buying new garments, has been identified as a key strategy for achieving sustainability within the fashion sector (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Of particular relevance is the body of literature that connects personal narratives generated through worn experiences to clothing longevity. Key texts that have informed this study are described below.

The literature review starts with an introduction of the books *Worn Stories* by Emily Spivack and the article “The Significant Outfit” by Haidee Findlay-Levin, followed by *The Craft of Use* by Kate Fletcher. Terms that are used throughout the thesis are explained, with reference to literature from Anja Cronberg, Grant McCracken, and Jonathan Chapman.

2.1 Sustainability

As the researcher knowledge of the sustainability struggles in fashion matures, so does the realisation that it’s necessary to do more than just making the production of fashion more sustainable. There needs to be a change in the consumerist culture of fashion as well. The prevailing “use and discard”-culture, championed by fast fashion, makes sustainably produced garments unsustainable in use.

The research can be read in relation to one of the four principles found in Ellen McArthur report, *A New Textiles Economy: Redesigning Fashion’s Future*. The report outlines four principles to achieve a circular economy in the fashion and textiles sector, wherein the second principle declares the need to break away from the disposable nature of garments.

The report states that increasing the number of times a garment is worn is the most powerful reduce fashions impact on the environment. Of particular relevance to this project, the report calls for models that assist in making durability more attractive.

Conventional design for durability focuses solely on ensuring longevity through physical endurance (Chapman, 2009, p. 34). These types of design methodologies adopt a “symptom-focused” approach, aiming to fix the symptoms of the ecological crisis, rather than the actual causes of the crisis itself. This lack of philosophical depth leaves deeper strategic possibilities overlooked. (Chapman, 2015, p.13-15). This thesis is particularly interested in design for *emotional* durability.

In short, durability is user-based rather than product-based, though played out in material form.

2.1.1 Emotionally Durable Design

Emotional durability in design is the idea of creating deep and sustainable bonds between people and their material things, where “The ultimate aim is to reduce the consumption and waste of resources by increasing the durability of relationships between consumers and products” (Chapman, 2015, p.21) Having a higher level of attachment to a garment increases its potential lifetime. Being attached to a garment the potential to make the wearer more invested in care and repair practices, to keep their garment in use.

Emotional durability is a user-agency focused perspective on design. The perspective seeks to challenge inter positivity that promotes consumerism through developing design strategies that enhance the relationship between garments and wearers by emphasising memories, and personal stories. (*Von Busch, 2019, p. 305*). There are few practical working methods, tools or design frameworks that are able to develop or integrate emotionally durable characteristics in garments (Chapman, 2009, p. 32). Thesis aims to yield important insights the qualities of the relationship between a custodian and their garment, that makes the garment difficult to part with. Awareness of these qualities, and how they are interconnected, can be utilised to develop the tools and design frameworks in future research, beyond this thesis.

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 Investigating storied garments

The book *Worn Stories* by Emily Spivack is a collection of stories related to garments, not unlike the researcher's relationship with his jeans. The book contains a total of 67 stories, from 68 contributors. The stories were collected in different ways. Most of the contributors told their garments' story to Spivack, who then wrote them down. A few contributors wrote down their garments' story themselves and submitted it. Most of the contributors to the book are writers, entrepreneurs, artists, and other types of creatives, that Spivack either knew or admired. The intent of the book was to prompt the reader "to reconsider of the role of clothes" in their own life. (Spivack, 2014, p. 6-7).

The book was a part of a larger project, driven by Spivack's curiosity regarding the stories tied to certain garments, and her desire to record and preserve these stories (Spivack, 2014, p. 6-7). Since 2010, the project has grown to include a webpage, several books, and, as of April 1, 2021, a limited documentary series on Netflix.

Spivack claims that having a garment that one "just can't part with" is a universal experience and that this experience is caused by the garment being "full of memory and meaning" (Spivack, 2014, p. 6). She also presents three notable discoveries she made during the project, that she lists in the book *Worn Stories*:

1. Clothes can be a rich and universal storytelling device
2. She was much more interested in the clothing-inspired narratives of others than in her own.
3. If the stories aren't captured, they disappear.

(Spivack, 2014, p. 6-7)

Spivack's discoveries correlate with those made by Haidee Findlay-Levin, described in the article "The Significant Outfit", published in *Vestoj* in 2009. Findlay-Levin's article explores how context can change the perception of garments, and how garments can be loaded with material memories. In the article, Findlay-Levin writes about the artists Harrell Fletcher and Miranda July, and their web-based project "Learning to love you more". As part of this project, the artists invited their webpage visitors to participate in different assignments, with simple instructions. One of these assignments was "Assignment 55: Photograph a Significant Outfit". Participants were instructed to photograph an outfit that was tied to a significant moment in the participants' life, and submit the photo accompanied by a short text that

explained the significant moment that the outfit had been a part of (Findlay-Levin (2009), p. 88).

The instructions specified to avoid outfits that were tied to inevitable memorable moments, such as weddings, graduation, or Halloween. The outfit itself did not have to be significant, but rather that it had been worn during an emotionally significant moment. The participants were instructed to lay their outfit flat on the floor, arranged as if it was on a flat person, and take a picture of it from above (Findlay-Levin (2009), p. 88). The artists asked for the accompanying text to be as short as possible as well.

In her reflection on Harrell and July's project, Findlay-Levin notes how the perception of the outfit changes when the accompanying text is read. On their own, the outfits seemed nothing out of the ordinary, unremarkable, and insignificant in detail and style with little to no historical or fashion references. However, the accompanying text revealed how each outfit was imbued with personal history (Findlay-Levin, 2009, p. 88-89). The outfits' significance to its wearer became immediately understandable. The outfits were loaded with material memories, connected to an emotional experience, expressed through the combination of text and photography. This reflection correlates with the findings of Spivack, in that garments can be a rich storytelling device, and that the stories make the garment interesting, even when the garment belongs to someone else.

Add 1 or 2 sentences to connect this back to your thesis- what did you take away from this? Ideas? Research methods?

These two texts are of particular interest to this thesis, as they provide a potential framework for how to collect stories related to garments. The interview format and instructions that Spivack and Harrell & July used in the collection of their stories was reworked to create the framework for the interviews in this thesis. This framework is presented in Chapter 4.

2.2.2 Craft of Use, Kate Fletcher

Similar to *Worn Stories* and "Assignment 55: Photograph a Significant Outfit", the book *Craft of Use* by Kate Fletcher also describes relationships between wearers and garments. The book is a collection of interviews that were conducted by Fletcher. The interviews provide insight into the different use practices of different people across three continents, documented through text and photography. Each chapter of the book is centred on one specific use practice and starts with an introductory text by Fletcher. These texts summarize the use practice of the following interviews and puts them into context of fashion and sustainability.

Of particular relevance to this project, is Fletcher's comments on ageing. Fletcher's findings challenge the presumption that garments reach an old age because of their ability to resist change and maintain their original condition. She discovered that the durability of a garment is not an inert quality or experience, but a lively process of on-going change that affects both the garment and its wearer (Fletcher, 2016, p.185)

Fletcher's assertion that durability is not only measured by the endurance a garment's physical properties, is supported by the findings in this thesis as well. This study shows that the perception of what makes a garment durable is tied to more than the garment's physical endurance, suggesting that the idea of durability is part of a complex matrix of practices and use ideologies.

2.2.3 Patina

In this section the term "patina" is explained, and some key functions of patina throughout history are presented. The concept of patina is important to this thesis because it describes the way that the accumulated marks of age and use can become desirable aesthetic qualities of an object, like the Pained Jeans. McCracken identifies patina as a physical property of material culture, and a result of an accumulation of small signs of age on the surface of objects. The signs of age, like dents, chips, or oxidation transform the surface of the objects, signifying the objects' gradual transition away from its original pristine condition. The signs of age transform the objects surface, which is described as the object "taking on patina".

(McCracken, 1990, p.32-34)

Historically, in western societies, patina was used to differentiate old wealth from new money. The patina served as visual evidence that demonstrated the age of the object it adorned, which would indicate that the objects' owner has had a certain financial stability over time (Cronberg, 2009, p.127, McCracken, 1990, p.32-34). While it would still be possible for persons from new money to acquire objects that correlated with those from old money, the lack of patina on their newly purchased objects would betray their newcomer status. Patina served to uphold a certain social rigidity and immobility (McCracken, 1990, p.32-34). However, the function of patina varied with the introduction of the fashion. McCracken explains that when people moved from "face-to-face societies" to "anonymous societies", a person's status had to be inferred from said individuals' physical possessions (McCracken, 1990, p.33). This, coupled with the reversal of the relationship between designers/couturiers and clients of fashion in the latter part of the 19th century (Kawamura, 2004), made it possible to

appropriate the fashions of the elite, thus increasing social mobility. The elite groups of society were forced to adopt new fashions to maintain their status, making patina obsolete as an indicator of status (Kawamura, 2018).

Even though patina no longer is applied to social ranking today, Anja Cronberg argues that patina still plays a role as an indicator of authenticity. Furthermore, Cronberg also argues that the value of societal status has been replaced by the desire for authenticity, and that status now lies in authenticity (Cronberg, 2009, p.127). However, the problem with using patina as an indicator of authenticity is that it is entirely possible to fabricate patina. Cronberg gives the example of fabricated patina on jeans. While the patina on a pair of jeans can give the impression that they have suffered rough use, the prevalence of factory-patinated jeans available on the market has made it difficult to separate authenticity from artifice. This way, instead of being a marker of authenticity, the patina becomes marketing ploy that reduces its function to “pure commercial nonsense” (Cronberg, 2009, p.128-129).

To summarize, patina is understood as the signs of use that accumulate on an objects’ surface over time. These signs of use have historically been used as a proof of status, to differentiate old wealth from new money, but has lost this symbolic property over time. The concept of patina provides a lens through which to analyse the Painted Jeans, and further garments investigated in this study. The concept of patina suggests an alternative strategy of sustainability in fashion through garment longevity, if the ageing of garments is perceived as desirable. Potentially this can offer an antidote to the wastefulness of fast fashion consumption.

2.2.4 Garment Lifetimes

Garment use can be understood as a garment “lifetime”. In 2001, Klepp investigated typical patterns of garment use, to develop a model of a general garment lifetime (Figure 2). This lifetime model creates a framework for discussing the different phases of a garment’s lifetime. This thesis investigates how garments that are difficult to part with relate to Klepp’s model.

Klepp conducted a survey, interviewing 24 women in Norway about 329 garments, to investigate why they stopped using their garments, and what made them wish to discard their garments. Through the investigation, Klepp identified that garments go through three main phases in a person’s custody: an “on-hold” phase, an “actual use” phase, and an “at mercy” phase (Klepp, 2001, p.23). The On hold-phase is situated after the acquisition of the garment,

and before the first time it is worn. The active use-phase is when the garment is an active part of the wardrobe. This phase can be interrupted by periods of rest where the garment is taken out of use temporarily. The rest periods end when the garment is reinstated into the wardrobe. When the garment is taken out of use for the last time, it reaches the final phase; “at mercy”. During this final phase the garment is no longer an active part of the wardrobe and is considered for disposal. The phase ends with the garment being disposed of.

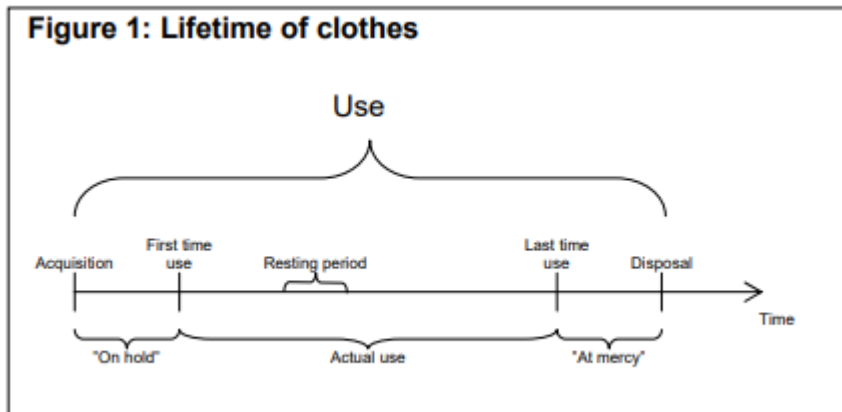


Figure 2 Klepp's lifetime model, showing a garment's different phases in use. (Klepp, 2001, p.23)

2.2.5 Custody

“Custody” implies transitory responsibility, which can be applied to the temporal nature of ownership and wear of garments, and investment in their care and maintenance. It implies an awareness and therefore consideration of the previous and next custodian of an object. For this reason, the word “custodian” will be used in place wearer/user/consumer.

The adoption of this word is inspired by Joanne Cramer’s use of the term in her dissertation *The Living Wardrobe: Fashion Design for an Extended Garment Lifetime*, published in 2019. In her dissertation, Cramer uses the term custodian to reframe ownership of garments as a temporary relationship of shared responsibility in the lifetime of the garment. Cramer’s framework assigns the term custodian to all participants in the garment’s lifetime, including the garments designer, producer and retailer (Cramer, 2019, p.219). In this thesis, the term custodian is used to refer to any wearer/user of the garment past the point of its initial acquisition, as discussion of design and production are beyond the scope of this study.

3 Part 1: Object-based Research

3.1 About the method

Object-based research is a method that is often used as a part of an interdisciplinary research methodology in fashion studies. The method comes from the fields of anthropology and art history, and is often employed by art and costume historians, and museum curators. (Mida & Kim, 2015, p.18, Kawamura, 2018, p.131). The history of object-based research in fashion studies is brief compared to its fields of origin, and there is no singular framework or clear systematic approach to object-based research on clothes specifically. (Mida & Kim, 2015, p.18) However, Mida & Kim offer a process of object-based research centred on the analysis of garments, separated into three phases. These phases are Observation, Reflection, and Interpretation (Mida & Kim, 2015, p.27). Each of these phases will be explained below and detailed in relation to the Painted Jeans.

Observation is the first phase of analysing a garment. The goal of the observation is to provide a rich description of the garment, regarding the garment's construction, the textiles it is made of, its labels, and other details such as wear, alterations, and signs of use. The textual description should be rich enough to provide a visual image of the garment (Mida & Kim, 2015, p.28-29).

The second phase is reflection. This phase is about contemplation, using innate knowledge of how the garment would feel on the body, and gauging the desire to wear it. This phase attempts to identify cultural and personal biases towards the garment by engaging with it in an emotional and sensory way. (Mida & Kim, 2015, p.29-31) This phase also includes a gathering of contextual material related to the garment, such as photographs, textual records, and garments that are similar or exist within the same collection.

The final phase is interpretation. This phase synthesises the information from the observation phase and reflection phase. The descriptive information and the emotive and sensory information are combined to form a hypothesis, based on what the research aims to achieve (Mida & Kim, 2015, p.31). In this case, it is an exploration of the researcher's relationship to the Painted Jeans, and an attempt at explaining the extraordinary status the jeans have achieved in the researcher's wardrobe.

Mida & Kim offer a checklist for the phases of observation and reflection. The Painted Jeans were analysed using relevant points from those checklists. The observation segment provides a rich physical description of the Painted Jeans, a table containing general information, and

relevant detail images. The reflection segment builds on the introduction of the Painted Jeans in the beginning of the thesis and presents a series of tables containing a collection of images of related garments, objects and locations that are linked to the Painted Jeans. The analysis ends with an interpretation of the findings and how it they were applied to the research.

3.2 The Painted Jeans Analysis


| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Garment type: | Denim jeans |
| Brand: | H&M |
| Style: | &Sliq (Low waist, Slim Leg) |
| Size: | 32/34 |
| Material composition: | 100% cotton |
| Care Label Instructions: |  |
| Made in: | Bangladesh |
| Year of acquisition: | 2011-2012 |
| Price (at time of acquisition): | Between 399 NOK and 299NOK |
|  |  |
| <i>Original condition as of January 24th, 2012</i> | <i>Condition as of April 7th, 2022</i> |

Table 1, General information about the Painted Jeans.

3.2.1 Observation (Physical Description):

The Painted Jeans are a pair of low-waisted menswear jeans. The jean legs are slim, tapering from the waist to the knees, before falling straight from the knees to the bottom hem. The jeans feature a three-buttoned fly and a tack button at the waistband closure. All the buttons are embossed with a half-circle wreath motif, comprised of the “&”-symbol in various sizes. There are two rounded pockets at the front, with an additional coin pocket tucked into the pocket on the right-hand side. The back features two carpenter-style pockets.

The front pockets are riveted on both ends of the pocket. The rivets are adorned with a small ”&”-symbol. The watch pocket and right back pocket feature one rivet each, on the left side and right side respectively, adorned with a larger, offset “&”-symbol. The waistband features five belt loops: two at the front, two slightly angled ones at the sides, and one at the centre back. All care tags and size labels are intact and mostly legible.



Figure 3 Image of the button fly, tack button, and rivets of the Painted Jeans



Figure 4 Image of the care tags of the Painted Jeans

The denim textile of the jeans shows signs of heavy wear. The photos of the Painted Jeans' original condition shows that the jeans had a deep and solid indigo colour. This colour appears faded overall but has maintained some saturation in the creases near the waistband at the front, inside the back pockets, at the bottom of the legs near the hem, and in the creases of the various seams all over the garment. The original colour is also obscured by various stains that cover most of the garment.

The stains are most prominent on the legs of the jeans, starting just below the pockets at the front, and reaching all the way down to the hem. The stains are almost exclusively comprised of various types of dried paint, the only exception being of a group of black silicone stains, found on the left jean leg at the side of the thigh, on both back pockets, and on the back yoke on the right-hand side. The largest paint stains are off-white in colour. These stains wrap around both jean legs, starting below the knees. The other stains vary in size and colour, including shades of red, pink, magenta, lilac, light blue, light green, yellow, ochre, orange, burgundy and black. Most of the stains are layered on top of each other. The paint has made the material significantly stiffer, especially in the areas at the front of the thighs and around both the lower jean legs.



Figure 5. Image showing how the lower jean legs can stand upright without support, due to the stiffness induced by the paint stains.

There is a total of 16 tears in the fabric across the entire garment that have been inflicted on the jeans during its lifetime. There is a tear just above the bottom hem at the back of each of the jean legs. There is a cluster of four holes in the fabric along the inseam of the right jean leg, near the bottom hem. There is a tear in the fabric across the right knee, starting approximately one inch from the inseam stretching all the way to the outer seam. There is a similar tear on the left knee, with an additional two holes above it. There is a major gash in the textile at the back of each of the thighs, about one inch below the back pockets. The gashes start near the outer seam on both sides, and run all the way across the back, and approximately two inches down the inseam. There is one larger hole right below the fly seams at the crotch, and a smaller hole on the right side of the crotch seam. There is also two smaller holes on both sides of the crotch seam in the back. The textile at the seam of the front pocket on the right-hand side is heavily frayed.

The jeans have been patched and mended several times, using a variety of backing materials, thread types and stitching techniques. Several holes have been patched using a wide and tight zig-zag machine stitch with an orange thread. This technique is found on both knees, in the crotch area, along the crotch seams and across the back of both thighs just below the back pockets. The repairs below the back pockets have been reinforced with a heavy, unbleached

canvas material, which was hand stitched in place using basting stitches and a black thread before it was machine sown using the wide and tight zigzag stitch with an orange thread. The crotch has been reinforced with a blue and gold denim material, stitched in place using a looser and narrower zigzag machine stitch with a navy-coloured thread. One hole near the right-hand side of the crotch seam has been repaired using a combination of light blue basting stitches by hand, and straight stitches on a machine using an orange thread and backed with a lighter unbleached canvas material. This technique has been used to mend a tear running from the fly down to the inseam on the left jean leg as well.



Figure 6 Image of the Painted Jeans turned inside out, showing the various repairs made to the crotch.



Figure 7 Image showing the repairs made to the knees of the Painted Jeans.

The front pocket linings have been replaced, using the same heavy unbleached canvas material that was used to reinforce the repairs below the back pockets. The new pocket linings are square, and crudely sown into the garment using a combination of zigzag stitching and straight stitching.



Figure 8 Image of the Painted Jeans turned inside out, showing the replaced pocket linings.

3.2.2 Reflection

The reflection part of the analysis builds on the text about the Painted Jeans, found in the introduction of this thesis. The introduction covers the emotional and sensory engagement with the Painted Jeans. This section focuses on the dates, objects, photographs, and other garments related to the Painted Jeans. This section starts with an introduction of the jeans' different purposes during its lifetime, mentioning a few notable key dates. The section then continues with an exploration of other garments that have been worn in conjunction with the jeans. The section finishes with an exploration of the different objects and locations related to the jeans. The information in this section is supported by the researcher's own photo- and video archive, diary entries, and recalled memories. The researcher's archive contains a total of 26,659 files, reaching back as far as 2010.

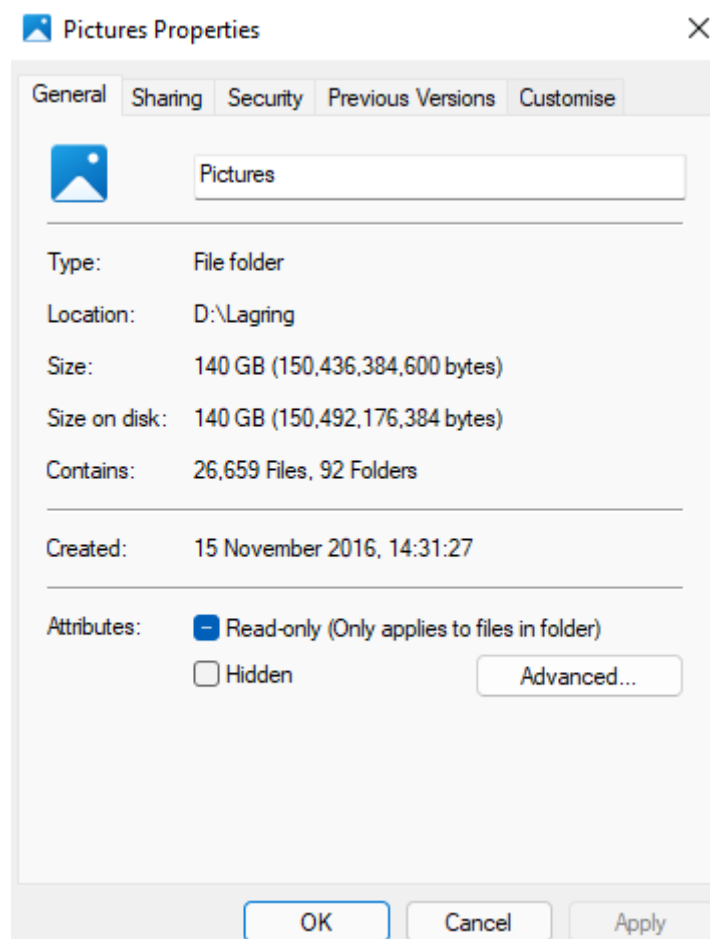


Figure 9 Screenshot of the Property-window of the researcher's archive folder. The folder was created in 2016 but contains files that date back to as early as 2010.

3.2.2.1 *Photographic timeline*

The Painted Jeans have had a variety of different purposes during its lifetime. And they were not always “painted”. The jeans were bought at H&M sometime before January 24th, 2012. Back then, the jeans were a solid indigo blue, with no fabricated patina. They were infrequently worn since they did not “go with” the rest of the researcher’s wardrobe at the time. This kept the jeans in “as new” condition, until they were accidentally stained with paint, sometime between April 4th, 2013, and October 23rd, 2013. From October 23rd, the jeans were worn almost exclusively while painting and seen as unfit for everyday use. The jeans’ new designation as workwear continued, up until August 30th, 2018, when the jeans started getting used as part of an everyday ensemble. However, even though the jeans were now deemed fit for everyday use, they still maintained their function as a workwear garment. The jeans were still worn when working on painting projects and other creative endeavours, in addition to getting worn as part of the everyday wardrobe. *Table 2* contains a Photographic Timeline, showing the jeans’ transition from its original condition in 2012 into its extraordinary appearance today.

Photographic Timeline



First found image, January 24th, 2012



In service as workwear, October 31st, 2013



Worn during a performance, September 21st, 2016



Worn while building a home studio, July 4th, 2017



Worn while painting walls at Luck Oslo, October 2nd, 2017



Worn as part of everyday ensemble, August 30th, 2018



Worn to work at Luck Oslo, January 16th, 2019



Used as a painter's rag while painting, January 28th, 2019



Worn while painting a room, March 23rd 2019



Worn as part of everyday ensemble, February 15th 2020



At the start of the thesis, May 7th, 2020





At the end of the thesis, April 7th, 2022

Table 2, Photographic timeline

3.2.2.2 Garments related to the Painted Jeans

The Painted Jeans have been worn in conjunction with a collection of other garments during its lifetime. These garments have been identified by investigating the researcher’s wardrobe, looking for garments with similar stains or signs of use. Other garments were also identified through the documentation in the researcher’s archive. The garments presented in the *Table 3* are limited to the ones that are still in the researcher’s possession. The table includes a short description of the evidence that links the garment to the Painted Jeans, and some notable dates in that garments’ lifetime.

| Collection of related garments | Description |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p data-bbox="464 1205 523 1227"><i>Boots</i></p> | <p data-bbox="810 725 1034 757">Notable Date(s):</p> <p data-bbox="810 779 1091 810">September 21st, 2016.</p> <p data-bbox="810 833 1362 909"><i>Worn during the performance “The Hour”, at Oslo National Academy of the Arts.</i></p> <p data-bbox="810 981 1152 1012">September-October, 2017.</p> <p data-bbox="810 1034 1241 1066"><i>Worn when painting walls at Luck Oslo.</i></p> <p data-bbox="810 1137 948 1169">Evidence:</p> <p data-bbox="810 1191 1225 1223">paint stains, photographs, video.</p> |
|  <p data-bbox="421 1749 571 1780"><i>Leather Jacket</i></p> | <p data-bbox="810 1370 1034 1402">Notable Date(s):</p> <p data-bbox="810 1424 1152 1456">September-October, 2017.</p> <p data-bbox="810 1478 1241 1509"><i>Worn when painting walls at Luck Oslo.</i></p> <p data-bbox="810 1581 948 1612">Evidence:</p> <p data-bbox="810 1635 1225 1666">paint stains, photographs, video.</p> |



Woollen undershirt

Notable Date(s):

September-October, 2017.

Worn when painting walls at Luck Oslo.

Evidence:

paint stains, photographs, video.



Tank

Notable Date(s):

September 21st, 2016.

Worn during the performance "The Hour", at Oslo National Academy of the Arts.

Evidence:

paint stains, photographs, video.



T-shirt

Notable Date(s):

March 2019.

Worn when painting a room.

Evidence:

paint stains, photographs, video.


| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Boxer-briefs</i></p> | <p>Notable Date(s): March 2019. <i>Worn when painting a room.</i></p> <p>Evidence: paint stains, photographs, video.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 3, Collection of related garments

3.2.2.3 Objects and Locations related to the Painted Jeans

The Painted Jeans are connected to many different objects and locations. The connections to these objects and locations were discovered by investigating the patina on the jeans and finding evidence in the researchers archive that helped link the patina to specific moments from the jeans’ lifetime. The table below shows a collection of objects and locations that are related to the Painted Jeans. The table includes a short description of the evidence that links the object or location to the Painted Jeans, and notable dates related to the object or location. The evidence that supports the connection includes drawings, sketches, illustrations, and other objects that are connected to the specific moment in time, in addition to the documentation found in the researcher’s archive. Unlike *Table 3*, this table does include objects and locations that the researcher no longer has access to. The accessibility is described under “Status”.

| Collection of related objects | Description |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>Object: DIY Suitcase chair.</p> <p>Notable date: April 4th, 2013.</p> <p>Evidence: paint stains, photograph, concept drawings of the chair.</p> <p>Status: Discarded, 2014.</p> |

April 4th, 2013



October 24th, 2013



October 27th, 2013



November 2nd, 2013

Object:

“Untitled”, painting.

Notable date(s):

October 24th – November 2nd, 2013.

Evidence:

paint stains, photographs, concept drawings of the painting, paint swatches.

Status:

Gifted to parents, 2014.



October 31st, 2013

Object:

“Untiled”, painting.

Date:

October 31st, 2013.

Evidence:

paint stains, photographs.

Status:

Gifted to sister, 2014.



May 22nd, 2015

Object:

“OLJE”, costume collection.

Date:

May 22nd, 2015.

Evidence:

silicone stains, photographs, inspiration materials.

Status:

In researcher’s possession.



September 21st, 2016

Object:

“EVIL”, the sculpture made during the performance “The Hour”.

Date:

September 21st, 2016.

Evidence:

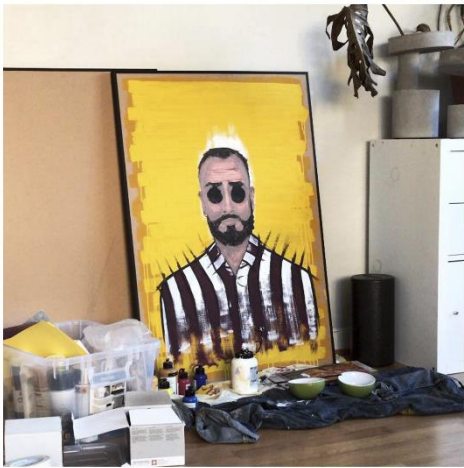
paint stains, photographs, video, inspiration materials.

Status:

Lost, 2018.



January 24th, 2019



February 8th, 2019



April 5th, 2020

Object:

“Portrait”, painting.

Date:

January 24th, 2019 – May 4th, 2020.

Evidence:

paint stains, photographs, paint-stained pillow, inspiration material, paint swatches diary entry.

Status:

In researcher’s possession.

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>January 23rd, 2020</i></p> | <p>Object: Thread, used in repairs.</p> <p>Date: January 23rd, 2020.</p> <p>Evidence: repairs, diary entry.</p> <p>Status: In researcher's possession.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 4, Collection of related objects



| Collection of related locations | Description |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>October 8th, 2017</i></p> | <p>Location: Luck Oslo, Concept store</p> <p>Date: October 8th, 2017.</p> <p>Evidence: paint stains, photographs, video.</p> <p>Status: Publicly accessible.</p> |
|  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>March 23, 2019</i></p> | <p>Location: Old apartment, Monradsgate 17D, 0560 Oslo</p> <p>Date: March 23, 2019.</p> <p>Evidence: paint stains, photographs, video, diary entry.</p> <p>Status: Inaccessible to researcher.</p> |

Table 5, Collection of related locations

3.2.3 Interpretation

This section details the findings of the object analysis of the Painted Jeans. The discoveries that were made during the Observation phase and Reflection phase are described here. The discoveries led to the identification of relevant literature to further the research. The literature is presented in the literature review at the beginning of the thesis. This section ends with a description of how the Object Based research informed the next step in the research project.

3.2.3.1 *The discoveries*

This analysis has yielded a few notable discoveries. Firstly, the jeans' changing function over time. The Painted Jeans started as an undesirable garment in the wardrobe, were demoted to workwear, and were then reintegrated into the wardrobe over time. The reinstatement of the jeans into everyday wear was not done consciously. The researcher believes that reinstatement was due to the positive attention the jeans received during the painting of Luck in 2017. The positive attention altered the way the researcher perceived the jeans, making the researcher comfortable wearing the jeans as part of the everyday wardrobe. This suggests that the Painted Jeans have a flexible functionality, in that they have served multiple purposes over time and simultaneously.

Another significant find was the complete disregard for the care instructions found on the care tags (see *Table 1*, and *Figure 3*). The Painted Jeans were being maintained on the same level as any other garment in the researcher's wardrobe. No extra considerations were taken when it was worn, and repairs had been done only to get the jeans back to a physically functional state. However, these discoveries need to be interpreted in relation to the type of garment that the Painted Jeans are: namely denim jeans.

Denim's position in fashion is near ubiquitous and found everywhere from fast fashion to haute couture (Cronberg, 2014, p.209). This could suggest that the flexible functionality is not unique to the Painted Jeans, but rather a trait of denim jeans in general. It also sheds light on how the jeans were cared for and maintained. Denim can endure rough use and does not require a lot of maintenance in general. This could also be the reason why the Painted Jeans were reintegrated into the wardrobe after they had been subjected to patina. Patina on denim is widely accepted, and in some cases almost expected. There is even a prevalence of factory-patinated jeans available on the market. However, the patina on the Painted Jeans did serve an important purpose during the analysis.

The patina on the Painted Jeans proved to be a fertile source of information. The various stains, holes, and repairs made it possible for the researcher to recall specific moments from the jeans' lifetime. The researcher was able to deduce an approximate timeframe for when the patina appeared on the jeans, which in turn made it easier to find photographs, videos and/or diary entries in the researcher's archive.

The various forms of documentation found in the researcher's archive ended up being a great source of detailed information. The archive made it possible for the researcher to identify key dates, related objects, locations and other garments that were related to the painted jeans, without having to rely on memory alone. Some of the documentation that was found in the archive helped remind the researcher of moments from the jeans' lifetime that they had forgotten about completely as well.

The photographs, videos, other objects, and other garments added a visual context to the recalled memories from the Painted Jeans' lifetime. The visual context acted as proof or evidence, adding credibility to the memories. This strengthens the perceived authenticity of the Painted Jeans, and their history.

3.2.3.2 Shaping further research.

The object-based research provided the researcher with a framework to conduct a survey, to investigate if the qualities of the Painted Jeans could also be found in other types of garments. The decision was made to conduct a series of interviews, with people who have garments that they also find difficult to part with. The findings of the analysis were used to shape the interview questions in the following section.

The analysis uncovered some key themes that were later used to develop the codes and concepts in the analysis of the interviews in section 5.2.3 and 5.2.4. These themes provided the framework for Category 4: Narrative Markers in the analysis (see chapter 6.5, section 6.5.1 - 6.5.4).

4 Part 2: Narrative Interviews

4.1 About the method

As part of the interdisciplinary research methodology, a series of five narrative interviews were conducted. A narrative interview is a form of semi-structured qualitative interview that focuses on the stories told by the interview subjects. The researcher may initiate the interview with a prompt, such as “Can you tell me the story of this garment?” The role of the researcher is to listen to the interview subjects’ story, with as few interruptions as possible, and allow the interview subject to speak as freely as possible. The researcher only asks questions for clarification or to assist the interview subject to structure their stories (Brinkman & Kvale, 2019, p.73-88). This method also allows the researcher to adapt the questions for each interview subject when necessary.

4.2 The Interview Framework

The following sections describe the framework of the interviews. It explains how the interview subjects are sourced, how the interview prompt and questions are phrased, the setting of the interviews, and the tools that are used to record and document the interviews. The Interview Guide, Interview Invitation and Consent Form, and the interview transcripts are available in the Appendix, in Norwegian. (The interviews were conducted in Norwegian)

4.2.1 Sourcing the interview subjects

The interview subjects are sourced from the researcher’s personal network. This was done by bringing up the topic of the thesis in casual conversation with friends, family, and colleagues. The researcher mentioned that he is doing research into garments that are difficult to part with, and referred to the Painted Jeans as an example. Persons in the network who reported having a similar experience with garments in their own wardrobe were invited to be interviewed as part of the thesis. Six people from the researcher’s network were formally invited to be interviewed, and five of them accepted the invitation.

The interview subjects were sent a Formal Interview Invitation and Consent Form, and the Interview Guide. The Formal Interview Invitation and Consent Form state the purpose of the interview and give instructions on which garment to bring to the interview. The Interview Guide detail the different stages of the interview, including a list of questions that will be brought up during the interview.

4.2.2 The interview prompt

The phrasing of the interview prompt is worded with great care. The researcher takes a different route than Spivack, Harrell & July. Instead of asking for garments that are part of a significant moment or had a story, the prompt asks the interview subject to bring a garment they would “never imagine ever getting rid of”. (see section 10.2 in the Appendix)

This phrasing is chosen to avoid making the interview subjects feel pressured to bring a garment that has a premeditated and cohesive story related to it. By switching the focus away from significant moments or stories, the interview subjects can decide to bring a garment that they do not want to get rid of for any given reason. The role of the researcher is to explore their relationship to the garment together with the interview subject, to discover qualities that the interview subjects are not consciously aware of, that influence their unwillingness to discard or dispose of the garment.

4.2.3 The interview questions

The research questions build upon the object-based research framework, and the findings from the analysis of the Painted Jeans. The questions are designed to investigate if the qualities of the Painted Jeans are present in other types of garments. The researcher believes that the interview subjects are likely to answer most of the interview questions through simply talking about their garment, without having to be asked the questions directly. The questions serve as points of reference, to make sure that the interview subjects touch upon the topics the researcher wants to investigate. The questions can also help maintain the flow of the interview. If the interview subject gets stuck or goes too far off topic, the researcher can refer to the questions to help them get back on track. The English version of the interview questions is listed in *Table 6*, together with a description of what the researcher wants to get out of the question. The questions in Norwegian can be found in the appendix.

| Interview Questions | Question Description |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. How long have you had the garment? | These questions seek uncover the garments history and to provide some general information about the garment. |
| 2. Where does it come from? | |
| 3. Do you remember anything from when you got it/bought it? | |
| 4. What is the garment made of? | |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>5. This is a garment you do not want to get rid of. Why not?</p> | <p>This question seeks to provide an explanation as to why the interview subject does not want to get rid of their garment. This is the main question of the interview, and the one that all the interviews start with. It allows the interview subject to explain, in their own words, what reasons that make the garment difficult to part with.</p> |
| <p>6. Does the garment have any marks of use/patina? (If yes, ask if they remember what caused the mark of use/patina. Remember to photograph!)</p> | <p>This question seeks to uncover the effect of patina on the interview subject's garment, and if the patina has any similar or additional qualities than those identified by the analysis of the Painted Jeans.</p> |
| <p>7. Do you have a story related to the garment? (Only ask if it does not naturally from question 3, 4, or 5.)</p> | <p>This question seeks to uncover if the interview subject has any specific stories related to their garment, and if the story is part of the reason why they do not want to get rid of the garment.</p> |
| <p>8. Do you wear the garment?</p> <p>a. If no; why not? And would you consider starting to wear it again? In that case, would it take?</p> <p>b. If yes; ask about its use, and how it affects the feeling of not wanting to get rid of the garment.</p> | <p>These questions seek to identify the reasons why the garment is or is not used, and how it relates to the reason why they do not want to get rid of the garment. They also seek to reveal if the interview subject makes any special considerations when wearing or maintaining their garment.</p> |

Table 6, Interview Questions and Question Descriptions.

4.2.4 The interview setting

As part of the prompt, each interview subject is asked to have the garment at hand during the interview. Having the garment present in the room allows the interview subject to use the garment to tell their story. It also allows the researcher to make his own observations of the garments, as well as observing how the interview subject chooses to handle the garment in the

setting. To make this as easy as possible for the interview subjects, most of the interviews are conducted in the interview subjects' homes. The setting also has the added benefit of allowing the interview subject to fetch photos and other objects related to their garment's history, which enriches the interview situation.

Having this sort of access lead the first two interview subjects to bring out a secondary garment during the interview. The secondary garment shared a connection to the original garment they had chosen for the interview. For that reason, the researcher decided to include the secondary garment as part of the research as well.

4.2.5 Audio recording

The interviews are recorded using an audio recorder issued by OsloMet. In the interview setting, the audio recorder is turned on and placed on a flat surface between the interview subject and the researcher. The researcher wants the interview subjects to forget that they are being recorded, to help them speak as freely as possible. For that reason, the researcher avoids touching, holding, or moving the audio recorder as much as possible during the interview, to make the interview subject as comfortable as possible.

4.2.6 Interview Checklist and field notes

The researcher uses an Interview Checklist, to make sure that the interview subject has touched upon all the topics the researcher wants to investigate. The checklist is a summary of the interview questions, grouped into three categories: History, Acquisition and Garment. The researcher uses this checklist during the interview, ticking off the topics as they are brought up by the interview subject. The Interview Checklist also serves as a way for the researcher to make notes during the interview. The researcher writes down any key information, phrases, and/or ideas, using shorthand. The notetaking is done quickly, to avoid disrupting the flow of the interview.

4.2.7 Photo documentation

The interview subjects' garments are photographed in a similar fashion as in Harrell & July's "Assignment 55: Photograph a Significant Outfit", lying flat on the ground and shot from above. The researcher also takes photos of specific patina on the garment if it is brought up during the interview. The photos are taken immediately after the interview.

4.3 The Interview Subjects' Garment Profiles

The interview subjects' Garment Profiles are presented over the next few pages. The photo of the garments is presented together with a summary of general information about the garment.

Each of the garments have been assigned a name, similarly to the Painted Jeans. The name was chosen based on how the interview subjects chose to refer to their garments.

4.3.1 The Mother's Dress


| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | <p>The Mother's Dress</p> |
| <p>Current custodian:</p> | <p>Sara Skogøy</p> |
| <p>Previous custodian(s):</p> | <p>Sara's mother</p> |
| <p>Year of acquisition:</p> | <p>2017</p> |
| <p>Mode of acquisition:</p> | <p>Gifted</p> |
| <p>Material quality:</p> | <p>100% silk jersey</p> |
| <p>Status:</p> | <p>In stasis</p> |
| <p>Interview setting:</p> | <p>Sara's home</p> |

Table 7, *The Mother's Dress Information Profile*

4.3.2 The Emo T-shirt


| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|  | <p>The Emo T-shirt</p> |
| <p>Current custodian:</p> | <p>Sara Skogøy</p> |
| <p>Previous custodian(s):</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>Year of acquisition:</p> | <p>2010</p> |
| <p>Mode of acquisition:</p> | <p>Bought online (eBay)</p> |
| <p>Material quality:</p> | <p>100% cotton jersey</p> |
| <p>Status:</p> | <p>In use</p> |
| <p>Interview setting:</p> | <p>Sara's home</p> |

Table 8, The Emo T-shirt Information Profile

4.3.3 The Armani Trousers


| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
|  | <p>The Armani Trousers</p> |
| <p>Current custodian:</p> | <p>Davide Bertelli</p> |
| <p>Previous custodian(s):</p> | <p>Davide's father</p> |
| <p>Year of acquisition:</p> | <p>2004</p> |
| <p>Mode of acquisition:</p> | <p>Gifted</p> |
| <p>Material Quality</p> | <p>100% Cotton twill</p> |
| <p>Status:</p> | <p>In stasis</p> |
| <p>Interview setting:</p> | <p>Davide's home</p> |

Table 9, The Armani Trousers Information Profile

4.3.4 The Grandfather's Sweater


| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>The Grandfather's Sweater</p> |
| <p>Current custodian:</p> | <p>Davide Bertelli</p> |
| <p>Previous custodian(s):</p> | <p>Davide's grandfather Davide's grandmother</p> |
| <p>Year of acquisition:</p> | <p>2004</p> |
| <p>Mode of acquisition:</p> | <p>Gifted</p> |
| <p>Material quality:</p> | <p>100% merino wool Real leather Unknown lining.</p> |
| <p>Status:</p> | <p>In use</p> |
| <p>Interview setting:</p> | <p>Davide's home</p> |

Table 10, The Grandfather Sweater Information Profile

4.3.5 The Army Trousers


| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>The Army Trousers</p> |
| <p>Current custodian:</p> | <p>Lena Knudsen</p> |
| <p>Previous custodian(s):</p> | <p>Unknown</p> |
| <p>Year of acquisition:</p> | <p>1993</p> |
| <p>Mode of acquisition:</p> | <p>Bought 2nd hand (store)</p> |
| <p>Material quality:</p> | <p>100% cotton twill</p> |
| <p>Status:</p> | <p>In use</p> |
| <p>Interview setting:</p> | <p>Lena's home</p> |

Table 11, The Army Trousers Information Profile

4.3.6 The Yellow Jacket


| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>The Yellow Jacket</p> |
| <p>Current custodian:</p> | <p>Tina Haagenen</p> |
| <p>Previous custodian(s):</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>Year of acquisition:</p> | <p>2007</p> |
| <p>Mode of acquisition:</p> | <p>Self-made</p> |
| <p>Material quality:</p> | <p>100% silk 100% viscose (lining)</p> |
| <p>Status:</p> | <p>In Stasis</p> |
| <p>Interview setting:</p> | <p>At OsloMet</p> |

Table 12, *The Yellow Jacket Information Profile*

4.3.7 The Prada Cardigan


| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | <p>The Prada Cardigan</p> |
| <p>Current custodian:</p> | <p>Ole Henrik</p> |
| <p>Previous custodian(s):</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>Year of acquisition:</p> | <p>2007</p> |
| <p>Mode of acquisition:</p> | <p>Bought in store</p> |
| <p>Material quality:</p> | <p>100% merino wool</p> |
| <p>Status:</p> | <p>In Stasis</p> |
| <p>Interview setting:</p> | <p>Online, via Zoom</p> |

Table 13, The Prada Cardigan Information Profile

4.4 COVID-19 Challenges

COVID-19 had a significant impact on how the interviews were conducted. Because of the threat of lockdown, the researcher was forced to conduct as many interviews as possible in within a short timeframe. The first two interviews, with Sara and Davide, were conducted on the same day, only two hours apart. The third interview, with Lena was conducted within the same week. The last two interviews were postponed several times, due to lockdowns and COVID-19 regulations and restrictions. This tight schedule left little time to transcribe or analyse the interviews in between sessions, which impacted the implementation of the Grounded Theory Coding method. How this affected the analysis of the interviews is further explained in section 5.2.1.

The interview strategy had to be adapted to comply with the COVID-19 regulations to ensure the safety of the researcher and the two remaining interview subjects.

The interview with Tina was conducted on the OsloMet campus. This meant that Tina had to bring her garment with her to campus, and that she did not have access to photos or other objects related to the garment's history. In order to circumvent the loss of this access, the researcher took note of any mention of photos or other objects during the interview. After the interview, the researcher requested Tina to email him any photos that she felt were relevant to the garment's history.

The interview with Ole Henrik had to be conducted via Zoom. This was the last interview, and the one that had to be adapted the most. The interview was recorded with both audio and video using Zoom's built-in recording feature. The internet connection was secured using the eduVPN-service, provided by OsloMet. Ole Henrik had the garment available during the interview. However, conducting the interview over a video call made it difficult for the researcher to make any observations about the garment of his own. Ole Henrik also had to photograph his garment himself submit it. The researcher provided Ole Henrik with written instructions and example photos, to ensure that the photo was taken in a similar fashion as the others. Ole Henrik was also requested to submit any additional photos that he felt were relevant to the garment's history, similarly to Tina.

4.5 Discoveries

An unexpected result of the interviews was the level of insight the researcher got into the interview subjects' life story. The aim of the interviews was to gain insight into the relationship between the interview subject and their garment. However, the conversation tended to veer into deeply personal stories from the interview subjects' life when they were

talking about the experiences that their garment was a part of.

In some cases, it gave some deep insight into the custodian's life and some really personal experiences, with an unexpected ease.

One interview subject had to stop himself from going into detail about certain experiences from his youth, which were conjured up by talking about the garment and its history. He felt compelled to talk about them but stopped himself since he felt what he had to say fell outside the scope of this specific project.

Another interview subject had a sudden emotional reaction that took them off guard when they were telling their story. Whenever these situations occurred, the researcher did their best to help guide the interview subjects back on topic or offered to take a break from the interview.

The discovery that narrative interviews about garments provide a quick entry into the interview subject's life presents an opportunity for future research, where one can use garments as way to access personal experiences from specific moments in a person's life.

5 Part 3: Grounded Theory Coding Analysis

5.1 About the method:

This research project uses Grounded Theory Coding to analyse the data from the interviews. Grounded Theory Coding is an explorative, inductive method of analysis that allows for a creative and flexible analysis of the data, using the researchers' sensitivity and intuition to generate meaning and understanding (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 1-18). Grounded Theory Coding also allows for an open outcome, as it can be adapted to both develop (grounded) theories, and/or delineating basic themes or rich descriptions based on the data.

In Grounded Theory Coding, the data from the interviews is codified before concepts are derived from the codified data. The concepts are then organized into categories. The final stage of the analysis is the development of a core theory, unifying the categories and concepts. Strauss & Corbin defines theory as "a set of well-developed categories (themes, concepts) that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explains some phenomenon" (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 263-274).

Together, the codes, concepts and categories make up the theoretical framework that explains the phenomenon with which this research is concerned. The codes, concepts and categories can be organized into a radial hierarchal structure, with codes, concepts, and categories at three different levels of abstraction, with the theory in the centre.

The use of Grounded Theory Coding in this thesis was inspired by Namkyu Chun's adoption of this method, as part of one of the sub-studies in his dissertation "Re(Dis)covering Fashion Designers" (Chun, 2018, p.75-91). Chun conducted a series of interviews with Finnish fashion designers, to build a theory on what constitutes as "fashion design thinking" (Chun, 2018, p.17). Chun analysed the interviews using Grounded Theory Coding, and the data from the interviews were presented in a radial chart (see *Figure 10*) that illustrates the hierarchy of the data (Chun, 2018, p.88-89). The researcher chooses to adopt Chun's manual coding process, and to organize the code, concepts, and categories in a similar radial hierarchal structure.

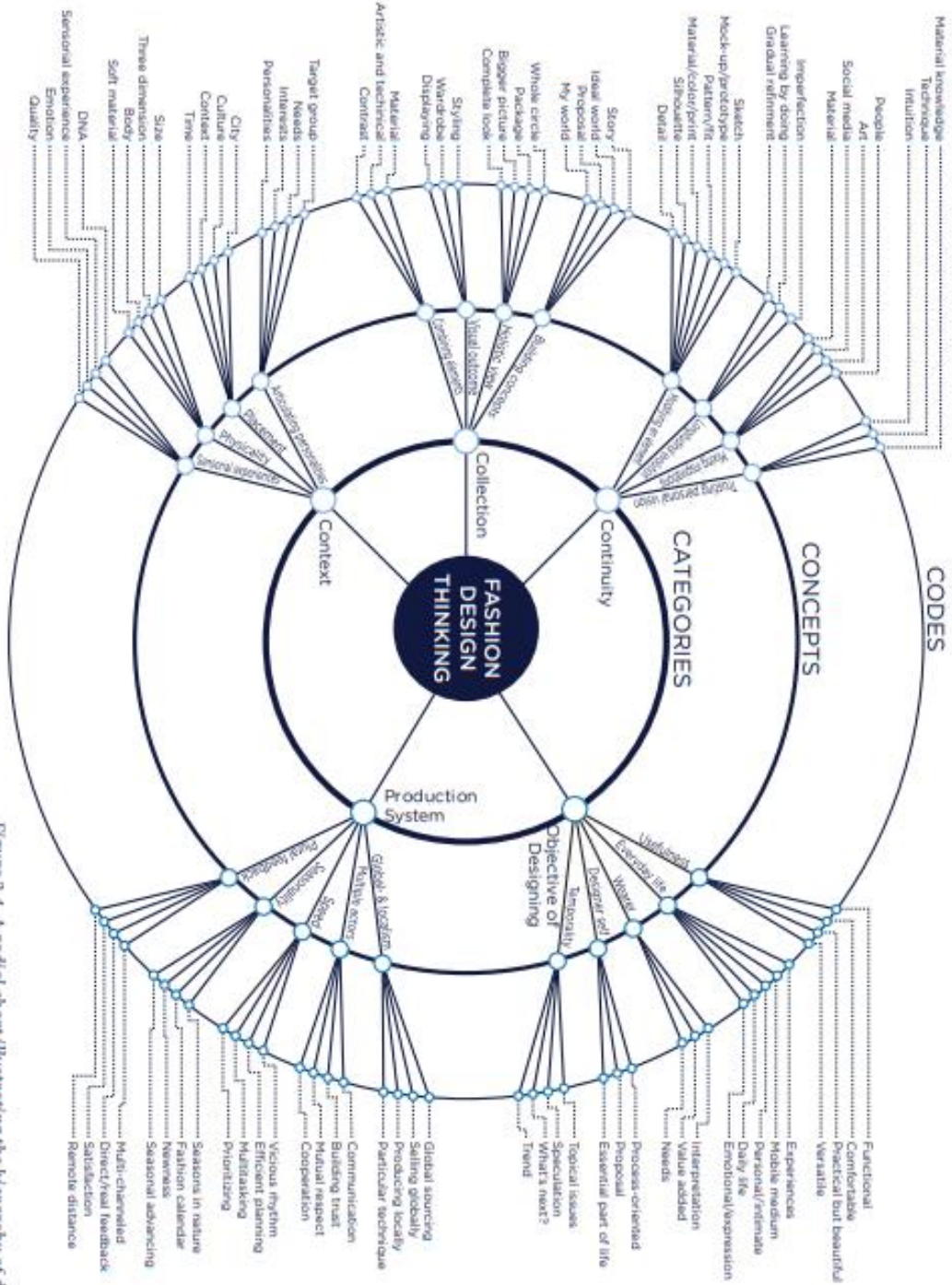


Figure 3.4. A radial chart illustrating the hierarchy of data.

Figure 10 Namkyu Chun's radial chart illustrating the hierarchy of data (Chun, 2018, p.88-89)

5.2 The Analysis Process

5.2.1 Immersion strategy

The interviews for this research project were conducted during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, which necessitated an amendment to the analysis process. When doing Grounded Theory Analysis, it is recommended that interviews should be transcribed and analysed continuously throughout the interview process (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 65-86). However, COVID-19 made this impossible. Firstly, the tight interview schedule of the three first interviews left little time to transcribe the interviews in between each session. Secondly, the last two interviews were postponed multiple times. In the end, the researcher had no choice but to make modifications to the interview strategy, to allow the interviews to be conducted in accordance with the COVID-19 restrictions and regulations. Making the modifications took time, which left less time to transcribe and analyse the interviews that had already been conducted.

To counteract this potential threat to the analysis, the researcher opted for an immersion in the data, to increase the researchers' sensitivity towards the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 19-44). This turned out to be unexpectedly beneficial to the research project. The immersion was done by listening to the audio recordings from the interviews and reading the accompanying field notes. As the sensitivity to the data increased, several new themes were identified. These themes were explored using existing literature and helped identify new applications of the literature as well. Being immersed in the data made the researcher more intimately familiar with the interviews, which sped up the transcription process, and the following coding process.

5.2.2 Preliminary sorting

Because of the length on the interviews, it became necessary to take some considerations before the coding process could begin. Delineating context is important to minimize the chances of distorting the meaning or intent of the data being analysed (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 45-64). Therefore, as part of the analysis process, statements from the interviews went through a preliminary sorting before the coding began. The researcher opted for a manual process, using sticky notes and paper, as described below.

First, each of the interview questions were printed out on individual sheets of A3 paper.

Then, the transcribed interviews were printed out, one-sided, on sheets of A4 paper.

The A3 Interview Question papers were spread across a table and marked with an interview

subjects name and a small photo of their garment. The correlating transcribed interview was then read through in search of relevant statements that related to the research questions. The statements were cut out and placed onto the correlating A3 Interview Question paper. (see Figure 9)

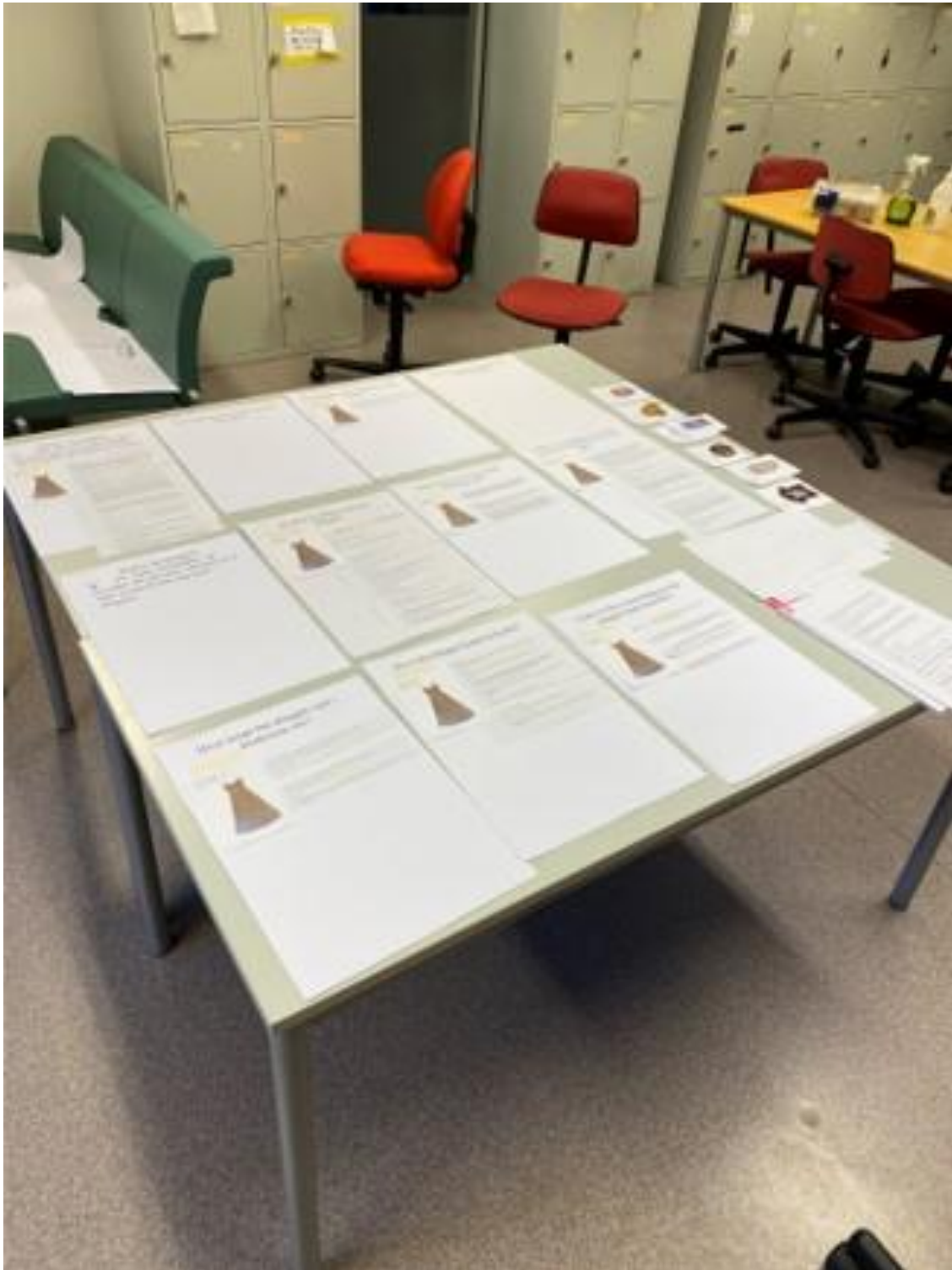


Figure 11 Manual coding process, showing the preliminary sorting of statements from the interviews.

After all the relevant statements were extracted and placed, the statements were read through again in relation to the interview questions, to verify the correlation. Misplaced statements were reconfigured and placed under the research question that correlated better. Statements that fell outside the scope of the research were taken out of the analysis entirely. This process was repeated for each of the interviews, with minor adjustments in relation to two interviews in particular. Davide and Sara's interviews were treated as "two interviews in one", by the fact both interview subjects introduced a secondary garment during their interview. Their interviews were processed twice, focusing on the original garment first, and then repeating the same process for the secondary garment.

This preliminary sorting helped give context to the interview subjects' statements, as well as focusing the research on possible topics to which to pay extra attention (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 65-86). It also streamlined the coding process significantly, in that it removed data that fell outside the scope of the research. All the interviews were processed like this before the coding began.

5.2.3 Coding

The analysis continued with the coding process. The sorted statements from the interviews were questioned, compared, and investigated to derive codes for the data they represented (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 65-86). The sorted statements were analysed in chronological order, starting with The Mother's Dress, and ending with the Prada Cardigan. The statements were read through thoroughly, distilling the essence of the statements, and mapping out potential themes. The researcher identified recurring themes between the analysis of the Painted Jeans and the analysis of the interview statements. Several unique themes, unrelated to the Painted Jeans-analysis was identified as well. The distilled themes were assigned a code, representing the essence of the statement it was derived from. The codes were written down on small sticky notes and placed next to the statement it was distilled from. The codes are listed on the outside perimeter of the radial hierarchal structure, illustrated by *Figure 13*. The codes continuously revised and refined as the analysis progressed, before moving on to the next phase of the analysis: Conceptualization.

5.2.4 Concepts

The next stage of the analysis was to derive concepts from the codified data. Conceptualizing the data helps provide a language for talking about the data and can range from lower-level concepts to higher-level concepts (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 159-194). For this stage, the small sticky notes with codes were grouped together, and placed onto a larger sticky note. The larger sticky note was marked with a conceptual name that represented the codes. This process was done for each of the interviews, using the same order as in the coding-phase. As the analysis continued, the concepts went through a process of comparisons, identifying similarities and/or differences which, in turn, aided in developing new concepts and expanding existing ones (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 45-64). The concepts that were identified in the beginning varied in levels of abstraction, and their position in the overall hierarchy was not immediately obvious (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 45-64). To avoid jumping to conclusions too quickly, both the codes and the concepts were analysed and reconfigured continuously, before moving on to the next phase of the analysis. The analysis of the Painted Jeans was consulted at this stage as well, to identify potential recurring themes at the conceptual level.

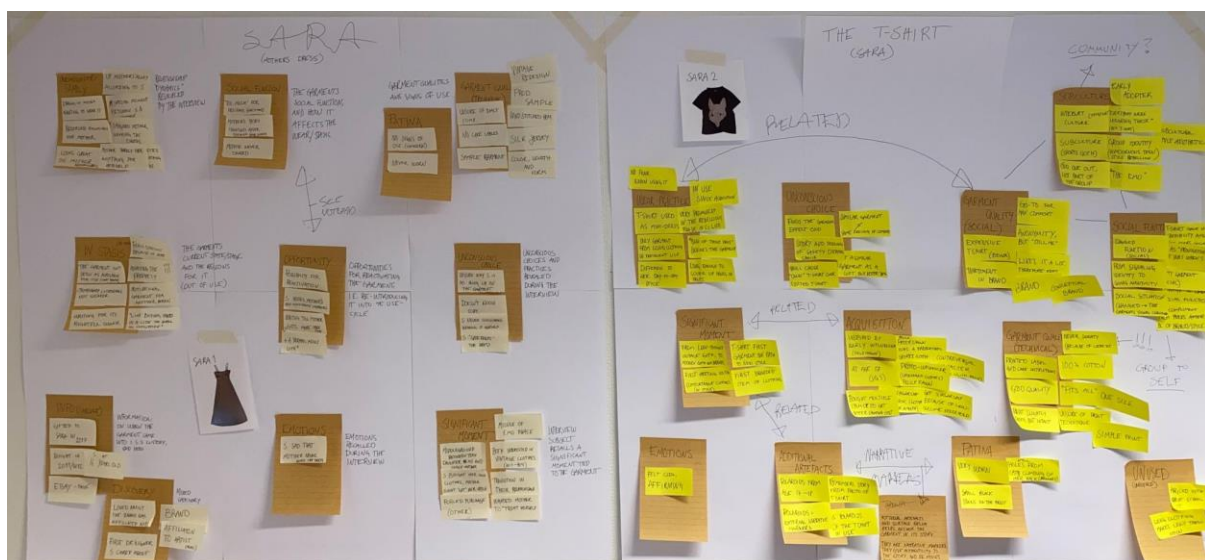


Figure 12 Image showing the Conceptualization-phase of the Mother's Dress and the Emo T-shirt.

5.2.5 Categories

The penultimate stage of the analysis was the development of categories. Categories group together the lower-level concepts into overarching themes. (Corbin & Strauss, 2012, p. 159-194). At this stage, the sticky notes with codes and concepts were put onto a large sheet of paper that was hung on the wall. (see Fig. 12) The concept-sticky notes were moved around and grouped together in different configurations, leading to the development of four categories. Even at this stage, the codes and concepts were continuously revisited and revised. The photographic documentation below captures the evolution of the analysis process.



Figure 13 The second stage of the manual coding process.

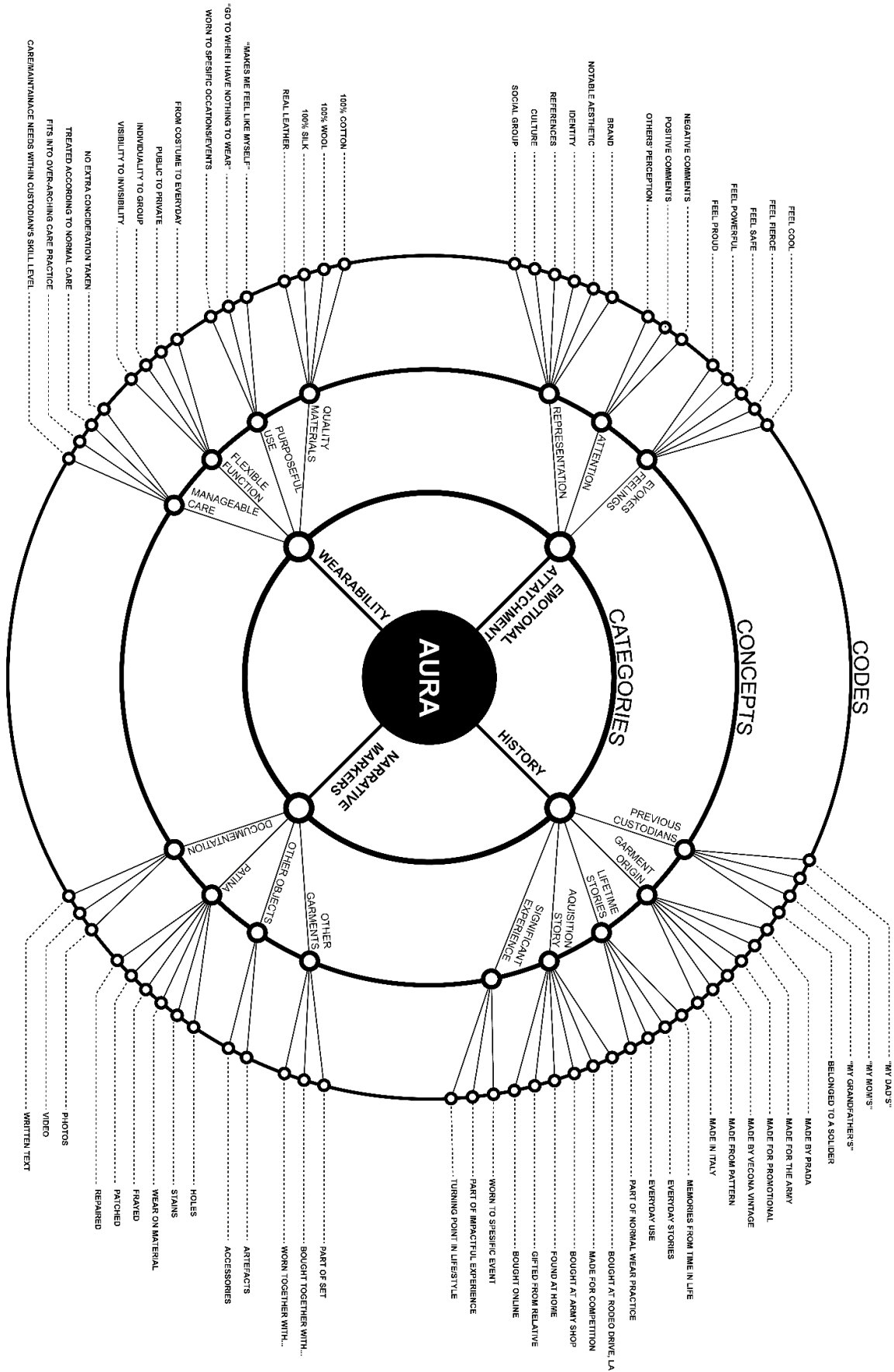


Figure 15 A radial hierarchal structure of the data, supporting the theory of Aura.

6 Analysis findings

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis. The theory of Aura is explained, and the categories and concepts that make up the framework of the theory are presented. This thesis concludes with the proposal of Aura as a means to better understand the connection between garments and their custodians.

6.1 The Theory of Aura

The result of the analysis is the creation of the theory of “Aura”, which attempts to sum up all the qualities that make a garment hard to part with. The term is appropriated from Walter Benjamin, from his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, where he describes aura as an artwork’s “presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be”, that gives the artwork a “uniqueness” and “authenticity” that is irreplicable (Benjamin, 2008, p. 5-9). The garments that were studied as part of the research had a similar uniqueness and authenticity to them, identified as the qualities that make a garment difficult to part with. The aura is what increased the garments emotional durability and its resistance to being disposed or discarded. Therefore, it can be argued that the term “Aura” lends itself well to the findings in this research. The theory of Aura is built up of four main categories, which summarize fifteen concepts that were derived from the interview data. Each of these categories and the concepts within are presented in the table below and will be further explained in the following sections.

| Categories | Concepts within the category |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Emotional Attachment | Representation Attention Evoked Feelings |
| Wearability | Quality Materials Purposeful Use Manageable Care |
| History | Garment Origin Previous Custodians Acquisition Stories Lifetime Stories Significant Experiences |

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Narrative Markers | Patina Other Garments Other Objects Documentation |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 14, An overview of the categories and concepts in the Aura-framework

As a noun, aura can refer to an “invisible emanation or field of energy believed to radiate from a person or object” with a “distinctive but intangible quality.” (The American Dictionary for English) An aura is an invisible force. It is invisible to the naked eye, except to those who claim to be able to see auras.

This thesis argues that the different qualities that make a garment difficult to part with are also invisible to the naked eye, but still a distinctive force that can be felt. In order to feel the aura, one needs to be attuned to it. This attunement is achieved through being made aware of the garment’s history, authenticated by the garment’s narrative markers, as well as understanding the garments wearability and its emotional attachments. The attunement to the aura provides a positive shift in consciousness in the attitude towards the garment, enabling the garments longevity.

Such a shift in consciousness is exemplified by Emily Spivack and Haidee Findlay-Levin, presented in the literature review (see Chapter 2.2). Both report a shift in consciousness towards the garments they investigated. Being made aware of the garments’ history, which is just one part of the Aura, had a distinct effect on them, shifting their perspective and initiating an empathic response towards the garment. The garments’ uniqueness, and presence in time and space became apparent, and the reaction was a sense of awe and fascination and care.

Achieving this attunement to the aura is dependent on being made aware of one or more of the qualities of the garment. This access is given in different ways. Emily Spivack, Miranda July and Harrel Fletcher, and Kate Fletcher were made aware of the garment’s qualities through various surveys about stories and use. The interviews in this thesis achieved awareness in a similar way. This practice of telling stories about garments is also found in everyday culture. When one inherits a garment from a family member, the garments is usually passed on with a story attached, revealing information about the garments original acquisition or details from the life of the garment’s previous custodian. Even this seemingly mundane action can foster an attunement to the garment’s aura, helping to establish a

relationship with the garment from the moment of acquisition. The more accessible the information about the garment's history, narrative markers, wearability, and emotional attachment is the more pronounced and understandable the aura of the garment becomes. It becomes easier to relate to the garment and understand the desire to keep it.

The creation of the aura is done through use of the garment and is not an inherent quality instilled through design. The garment's uniqueness and authenticity comes from the practices of use. The use of the garment has imbued it with aura, and the aura sets the garment apart from any other garment, even in the case of mass-produced copies. This is exemplified by the Painted Jeans. The jeans were bought at H&M, meaning that the jeans have a million identical copies. However, the researcher's use of the Painted Jeans has imbued them with aura over their lifetime, making them transcend their identity as a mass-produced fashion item. The jeans have ascended into uniqueness, through use. This offers the Painted Jeans an uncopiable authenticity.

Attempts at copying the Painted Jeans would ultimately fail, as the aura is unable to be accurately replicated. Any pair of jeans can be stained with paint and torn holes in. But it is not the patina alone that is the key to the aura. The patina is tethered to an array of other objects, locations, and other garments, each with their own story attached. The Painted Jeans have endured use, and the patina is the result of real experience, and not just decoration. Even the most perfect replication of the Painted Jeans, patina and all, would lack the connection to the real experience that left their mark on the garment originally. The replica would only be connected to the person who attempted the replication, and the tools they used to do it.

This thesis identifies patina as one of many qualities that make a garment difficult to part with. The following section discusses each of the categories determined through analysis of the interviews. Each category is explained through a discussion of the qualities that make up that category. The significance of this analysis is then presented in the Discussion chapter.

6.2 Category 1: Emotional Attachment

Emotional Attachment is concerned with how the custodian feels about the garment. This category groups together the concepts that are related to how the garment evokes feelings and emotions in their custodian, and what mechanisms shape, support, and/or counteract these feelings and emotions.

There is an emotional attachment-baseline in this research, by the fact that the custodians of the garments do not want to dispose or discard their garment. However, Emotional Attachment, like the other categories, still affects whether the garments stay in use or go out of use. Emotional Attachment impacts, and is impacted by, the other categories in this structure as well. The emotional relationship between the custodian and the garment seems to impact the garments Wearability, the perception of the garments History, and the attitude towards the garments Narrative Markers.

This category is comprised of three concepts, which are Representation, Attention, and Evoked Feelings.

6.2.1 Representation

The concept of representation is related to what the garment represents for the custodian and to their immediate community/culture. The concept deals with the emotions that are felt and expressed by what the garment represents emotionally, aesthetically, and socially. What a garment can represent varies greatly. An example is Sara's Emo T-shirt, and how it represents affiliation to a specific social group. According to Sara, the t-shirt's brand *Long Clothing* was prevalent among the persons within the "emo" social group, and Sara wore her t-shirt to represent her alignment with this social group publicly.

Sara's example also shows how brands are a part of this concept. Brands carry a representational value, which can affect the custodian's attachment and care towards the garment. This is exemplified by Ole Henrik and the Prada Cardigan. Ole Henrik bought the Prada Cardigan in his teens when he was a self-proclaimed fashion lover. The Prada Cardigan represented his love for fashion, and he has kept the garment in a near pristine condition since he bought it in 2007.

However, what a garment represents can also change over time. In Sara's case, the Emo T-shirt no longer represents her affiliation to the "emo" social group, but rather represents the memory of that time of her life. This type of representation is more private, representing a moment in the garments' history. The same type of transition happened with Ole Henrik's

Prada Cardigan as well. The cardigan now represents his tenacious teen self, more than an affiliation to Prada's fashionable branding.

6.2.2 Attention

The concept of Attention is related to the feedback and comments the custodians have received during their custody and wear of the garment. How other people have reacted to and interacted with the custodians have had vastly different impacts on the emotional attachment to the garment. Positive attention can lead to the reinstatement of the garment in the wardrobe, as the analysis of the Painted Jeans suggests. An unexpected discovery was made when comparing Tina and Lena, and their reactions to negative attention.

Both Tina and Lena report having received mostly mixed or negative attention when wearing their garments. Tina explains that the unusual look of the Yellow Jacket attracted attention that made her uncomfortable with her style choices and self-expression. This led to her taking the Yellow Jacket out of use.

Lena had the opposite reaction. The negative attention she received when wearing the Army Trousers made her want to wear the trousers even more, as an act of defiance.

A related discovery was made in relation to Davide and the Armani Trousers. Davide reports that the Armani Trousers attracted comments on his sexuality, when wearing the garment in Plymouth. He attributes this attention to the look of the trousers and how their appearance is affiliated with femininity and homosexuality. The comments he received were intended to be negative remarks, however, Davide found them affirming, seeing that he positively identifies with the proposed affiliation.

This suggests that negative attention is not necessarily detrimental to the emotional attachment to a garment. Negative comments can potentially strengthen the emotional attachment, depending on the custodian's reaction.

6.2.3 Evoked Feelings

The concept of Evoked Feelings is concerned with what the custodians feel towards their garment, when seeing, wearing and/or touching it. The feelings the garment evokes can be separated into two sub-categories: Passive feelings, and Active feelings.

Passive feelings are feelings that do not impact the use or wear of the garment in any significant way. These feelings are usually related to the aesthetic of the garment. Phrases like "The garment makes me feel pretty" fit under this description.

Active feelings have a more significant impact on the use and wear of the garment. These feelings are much stronger, to the point that they can be used to help the custodian embody new characteristics and traits. An example of this is Lena's Army Trousers. Lena reports how the trousers imbue her with strength and confidence, and that she uses this to her advantage in situations where she needs it. This suggests that the feelings a garment can evoke can be designated a purposeful use.

Another example of an Active feeling is found in the Grandfather's Sweater, and how it makes Davide feel connected to his grandfather, despite never getting the opportunity to meet him while he was still alive.

However, some garments can also evoke negative feelings. Davide also reported that the patina on the Armani Trousers evoke such a strong negative feeling, that he has taken the garment out of use. Another example is Tina, who reports that the attention she receives when wearing the Yellow Jacket imbues her with a feeling of insecurity that she is not comfortable with, which lead her to taking the garment out of use.

6.3 Category 2: Wearability

Wearability pertains to the practical qualities that make the garment desirable to wear. These qualities range from the material properties of the garment to the garment's function in different settings. As mentioned in Emotional Attachment, all the garments in the survey are similar in that their custodians do not want to get rid of them, whether the garments are still in use or not. Although some of the garments in this study are out of use, this category helps shed a light on what makes the garments wearable in the first place. This insight can be used to identify what might have caused the garment to be put out of use. The qualities in this category range from the garment's physical material properties to its designated functions in use.

This category is comprised of four concepts. These are Quality Materials, Purposeful Use, Flexible Function and Manageable Care.

6.3.1 Quality Materials

The concept of Quality Materials relates to the custodians' subjective experience of the garment's material quality. While all the garments in the study are made from 100% natural fibres, the quality of the materials are not assessed by fibre purity alone. Lena appreciates the quality of the Army Trousers by the fact that the material takes patina from use in a pleasing way. Tina appreciates the heft and stability of the material that the Yellow Jacket is made from. Overall, the common qualities that shape the custodians' perception of quality are that (1) the materials do not cause any frustration and (2) that they perform as expected for their designated purpose.

6.3.2 Purposeful Use

The concept of Purposeful Use pertains to how the garment is being worn to fulfil a custodians' specific desire or need. "Purposeful" implies a type of use that is meaningful for the custodian, in addition to any intended use, prescribed by the designer, brand, society at large and so on. The purposes can vary greatly. Some purposes are related to fulfilling an emotional need. The purpose of Lena's Army Trousers is to mask her insecurity in stressful social settings. The feelings the trousers evoke in her help her feel grounded and safe. Sara's Emo T-shirt has a similar function. Sara wears the Emo T-shirt in public when she wants to dress anonymously, while still retaining a sense of self.

Not all the garments in the survey have a specific purpose. Some are part of a rotation of garments that serve the basic purpose of just being "something to wear".

The garments that are out of use do not have an expressed purpose related to wearability at all. However, the garments do serve as a physical representation of a memory, which can be interpreted as a type of purpose in its own right. An example of this is Ole Henrik's Prada Cardigan. Ole Henrik no longer wears the Prada Cardigan, due to issues with the fit, but the garment still reminds him of the tenacity of his teen self, and the memories from that time in his life.

6.3.3 Flexible Function

The concept of Flexible Function relates to how a garment can be used in multiple different settings, serving distinct functions. While some garments may have multiple concurrent functions, like the Painted Jeans functioning as both workwear and everyday wear, others might change functions over time. Analysis of the interviews suggests that how, when, and why a garment changes function is dependent on many distinct factors.

One of them is a change of preferences, exemplified by the Emo T-shirt and the Army Trousers. Sara used to wear the Emo T-shirt in public as a teenager, to signify her relationship to the "emo" social group. As Sara got older, her style evolved and the t-shirts' function changed. She now wears the Emo T-shirt mostly at home, or when she wants to be anonymous in public.

Lena initially bought the Army Trousers to wear as a costume for an army-themed party in the 90's but decided to integrate the trousers into her wardrobe.

The function of a garment can also change in between custodians. Lena bought the Army Trousers second-hand, at a store for army memorabilia. This means that it is likely that the Army Trousers have been used by a soldier, before ending up as a fashion item in Lena's wardrobe. Davide's Armani Trousers have also gone through a change in function between custodians. Davide's father bought the Armani Trousers with the money his first big paycheck and wore them as part of his everyday ensemble. When Davide inherited the Armani Trousers, Davide chose to wear them to signify his queerness while living in Plymouth.

6.3.4 Manageable Care

The concept of Manageable Care relates to all forms of care practices, ranging from wash and stain removal, to repair and maintenance. "Manageable" implies that the practices are within the custodian's skillset and/or level of access. A common quality among the garments in the survey is that the custodians do not take any extra consideration when washing their garment,

sometimes in complete disregard to the garments' care label instructions. The garments are washed according to the custodians own standard practice, though the complexity of the practices varies greatly between the custodians.

Maintenance needs that fall outside of the custodians' skillset, such as removing stubborn stains or mending holes in the fabric, do seem to cause noticeable frustration. These maintenance needs are either accepted as part of the garment's patina, or the custodian have sought "professional help" to have the garments' needs met. In the case of Davide's trousers, the rust stains were a contributing factor to the garment going out of use.

6.4 Category 3: History

History is the category represents information, related to the known history of the garment. The category pertains to information about the garment, such as its origin and acquisition, and stories from the garment's lifetime, recalled and told by the garment's custodians. Despite being focused mainly of information, this category is deeply connected to the other categories in the Aura-framework. Parts of a garments' History can be recalled through its Narrative Markers. History can serve as the source of the Emotional Attachment, and as a record of how and why the Wearability of the garment has changed over time.

This category is comprised of five concepts. These are Garment Origin, Previous Custodians, Acquisition Stories, Lifetime Stories and Significant experiences

6.4.1 Garment Origin

The concept of Garment Origin relates to information about where the garment was produced, by whom, and for what purpose. It is a summary of information, related to the garment's country of origin, brand, intended purpose or function and so on. It serves as the garments background, detailing the time before it was acquired by a custodian.

The level knowledge about the garment's origin varies greatly between the different interview subjects. Most of the interview subjects rely on the garment's care tags and labels to identify the garments origin. If there are no care tags or labels that can give this information, the interview subjects must rely on the garment's acquisition story to provide an approximate origin of the garment. This is exemplified by Lena's Army Trousers. The garment has no tags but was acquired at a store selling second hand army gear and memorabilia. This allows Lena to speculate that the Army Trousers' origin is related to a sort of military production, and that its intended purpose was to be worn in combat.

An outlier in this part of the survey is Tina, who made the Yellow Jacket herself. Tina is able to recall information predating her garment entirely, knowing when she made the first draft for the jacket's pattern and the person who taught her how to make it.

6.4.2 Previous Custodians

The concept of Previous Custodians relates to the current custodian's knowledge of the garment's previous custodian(s), in the cases where this is applicable. The category also includes any assumed previous custodians as well.

Of all the garments in the survey, four garments have one or more known and identifiable previous custodians. These are Davide's *Grandfather's Sweater* and *Armani Trousers* and

Sara's *Mother's Dress*. These garments were previously owned by family members of Davide and Sara. Davide and Sara have inherited their garments from them, albeit under different circumstances. Tina's Yellow Jacket has had multiple short term custodians during its lifetime. For a while, the jacket was in the custody of Polhem PR, who loaned it out to various stylists and celebrities. The jacket was ultimately returned to Tina and has remained in her custody since.

An example of an assumed previous custodian is found in the *Army Trousers*. Lena assumes that the *Army Trousers* have had one or more unknown previous custodians. She bases this assumption on the fact that the garment was purchased in a second-hand store, and that it had visible patina when she bought it.

6.4.3 Acquisition Stories

The concept of Acquisition Stories relates to how the garment came into the current custodian's possession. It concerns the moment surrounding the event of the acquisition, and the custodian's experience of that moment. All the interview subjects in this survey are able to recall, to varying degrees of accuracy, when and where they acquired their garments.

The garments in the survey have been acquired in a variety of ways. Tina's Yellow Jacket is self-made. Lena's Army Trousers were bought second hand. Ole Henrik's Prada Cardigan was bought in a physical store. Sara's Mother's Dress and Emo T-shirt were both bought online. And finally, Davide's Armani Trousers and Grandfather's Sweater were both inherited.

The significance of the moment of acquisition varies greatly between the interview subjects. For Ole Henrik, the acquisition of the Prada Cardigan happened as a part of a Significant Experience. Sara reports a similar experience, surrounding the purchase of the Mother's Dress. These examples stand in contrast to Davide's acquisition of the Armani Trousers. Davide found the Armani Trousers in the closet of his childhood bedroom when he was visiting his parents and simply decided to take the trousers with him when he went back home.

6.4.4 Lifetime Stories

The concept of Lifetime Stories relates to non-specific moments from the garment's lifetime. The stories are related to identifiable periods of time in the custodian's life that the garment is a part of in some way. The category also details stories of everyday use. An example of this is

Sara's Emo T-shirt, and how the garment was worn extensively during the "emo-phase" of her teens. The garment is heavily featured over a period of Sara's life.

Although some Lifetime Stories may not be perceived as important or significant by the garment's custodian, they are still a part of the garment's overall history. For instance, stories of everyday use may shed light on how a garment acquired a certain patina. This is exemplified by Tina, who recalls how she often paired the Yellow Jacket with red lipstick. Although this memory does not represent a significant moment in Tina's custody of her garment, it does help explain the red lipstick stains that were found on her garment during the interview.

6.4.5 Significant Experiences

The concept of Significant Experiences relates to specific and notable moments from the garment's lifetime. In contrast to Lifetime Stories, this concept concerns shorter periods of time that the garment has been a part of. The significance of the experiences varies, but the common denominator is that the experience has left some sort of impression on the custodian and/or the garment. The experiences include specific events, notable occasions, and pivotal moments in the custodian's life. These experiences are the ones that come easiest to the interview subjects' minds when they are asked if their garment has a story tied to it.

This is exemplified by Tina. Tina vividly recalls wearing the Yellow Jacket during an event at the French Embassy. During the event she received compliments on the jacket from the French ambassador's wife.

Another example is Lena, and the Army Trousers. The first time Lena wore the trousers, they were part of a costume. She was attending an Army-themed party, and Queen Sonja of Norway was attending a concert in the venue next door.

Some of the interview subjects report that the moment of acquisition is a significant experience for them. In Sara's case, the Mother's Dress was the first garment that both Sara and her mother aesthetically agreed upon. For Sara, the dress represents the discovery of an aesthetic common ground between her and her mother, which impacted their relationship. Ole Henrik also considers the acquisition of his garment as a significant experience. Ole Henrik bought the Prada Cardigan at a Prada store on Rodeo Drive in LA. He describes the experience of being surrounded by renowned fashion brand stores, for the first time in his life, as formative for both his self-expression, and his future spending habits.

6.5 Category 4: Narrative Markers

Narrative Markers are visual aids that help the custodian remember moments from the garment's lifetime. The term "narrative marker" was coined by Professor Venke Aure (after Schwandt, 1994 p.245). Aure suggests that the term "narrative marker" can be applied to patina and objects that have a referential function. (V, Aure, personal communication, March 2022) This referential function can be used to access moments (stories, memories) from the garment lifetime.

The researcher suggests making a distinction between Ingrained Narrative Markers and External Narrative Markers. Ingrained Narrative Markers are visibly present on the garment, generally in the form of various types of Patina. External Narrative Markers are objects that are separate from the garment physically but are in some way related to moments from the garment's lifetime.

The Narrative Markers lend credibility to the garment's History, to varying degrees. The stories and memories conjured from the Narrative Markers can vary from presentational to representational (Schwandt, 1994, p.245), and is dependent on the custodians' ability to recall and retell the story tied to the Narrative Marker. Talking through the specific moments and memories tied to Narrative Markers is almost like jumping across skipping stones in a stream, where one narrative marker leads to another, and so on. The analysis of the interviews suggests that the Narrative Markers strengthen the authenticity of the garment's History. Some Narrative Markers help add context and/or details, while others add a more grounded credibility. This is further explained in the following concepts.

This category is comprised of four concepts. These are Patina (the Ingrained Narrative Markers), and Other Artefacts, Other Garments and Documentation (the External Narrative Markers).

6.5.1 Patina

The concept of Patina relates to signs of use, wear, and age that have visibly altered the surface and/or structure of the garment. Holes, stains, material fraying, visible mending and repair are examples of Patina.

The interview subjects showed varying degrees of awareness related to the patina on their garments. This is exemplified by Davide and Tina.

Davide was aware that both the Grandfather's Sweater and the Armani Trousers have patina. The lining of the Grandfather's Sweater has been repaired by Davide, after it started fraying.

The Armani Trousers have a smattering of rust stains on one of the trouser legs, near mid-thigh. Davide explains that he has an approximate knowledge of where the stains originated from, and that he is unable to remove them.

Tina became aware of the patina on her garment during the interview. Tina noticed that the Yellow Jacket had a small collection of red lipstick stains on one of the bows. She suspects, and the researcher agrees, that the busy pattern of the Yellow Jacket might have obscured the stains.

Discussing the origin of the patina provides insight into the garments History, relating to both Lifetime Stories and Significant Experiences. This correlates with the findings in the analysis of the Painted Jeans which suggests that Patina can be used as a fertile source of information (See 3.2.3.1). In addition to being related to the garments History, Patina is also related to the Emotional Attachment and Wearability of the garment.

The interview subjects show different attitudes toward the patina on their garments. While Davide feels intense frustration toward the rust stains on his Armani Trousers, Sara does not mind with the holes in her the Emo T-shirt, made by her cat Mulder climbing on her back. This suggests that the attitude towards Patina is related to the garments intended function, and that there are different levels of tolerance towards patina, dependent on the garment type, style, and overall appearance. If this level of tolerance is exceeded, and the custodian does not have the necessary skillset to manage the patina, the garment may end up being taken out of use. This is exemplified again by the rust stains on Davide's Armani Trousers. Davide does not know how to remove the stains, and the frustration has led to the garment being taken out of use.

6.5.2 Other garments

The concept of Other Garments is related to secondary garments that are in some way related to the original garment's lifetime. These are garments that the interview subjects discussed in the narrative about the garment they had identified as being difficult to part with. These secondary garments include any garments that were used as part of a set or outfit, garments from the same brand, garments that were acquired in the same time period, and so on. The criterion is that the garments share an identifiable connection, either through Documentation, or recollection of Lifetime Stories and Significant Experiences. This is exemplified in *Table 3* in the Painted Jeans Analysis.

6.5.3 Other Objects

The concept of Other Objects refers to objects that are related to the garment in a significant way. These objects share a connection to the garment in at least one of two ways: Either (1) by being the source of identifiable patina on the garment, and/or (2) by being identifiably linked to Lifetime Stories or Significant Experiences from the garment lifetime. These objects add context to the garment's Patina and History.

The analysis suggests that the Grandfather's Sweater, the Army Trousers and the Yellow Jacket are all connected to other objects through their patina. The different types of thread that have been used to repair the Grandfather's Sweater and the Army Trousers are considered objects that are related to the garments' patina. Similarly, the red lipstick that made the stains on the Yellow Jacket is seen as related to the garment through the patina as well.

An example of an object that is related to Lifetime Stories, is found in Sara's Emo T-shirt. Sara explains that she was a skateboarder in her teens, and that she often wore the Emo T-shirt while skateboarding. This makes the skateboard a related object, by being identifiably used in conjunction with the garment during its lifetime.

The relationship to other objects is dependent on evidence from the other categories and concepts in the Aura-framework. Other objects do not necessarily have a reciprocal referential function either. The garment might refer to the object through patina, but the object might not refer back to the garment without support of additional evidence.

6.5.4 Documentation

The concept of Documentation refers to photographs, video, written texts and other forms of documentation that are related to the garment. Out of all the concepts in the category of Narrative Markers, Documentation is the one to add the most credibility and plausible authenticity to the garment's History.

Photographs give insight into how the garments were worn, at a specific place and time. It can show what the garment looked like in use and removes the need for imagination. It also documents the garments condition and can be used to assess how and if the garment has changed over time. Video has the same function as photographs, but with the added benefit being able to show the garment in motion.

Written texts that are about the garment, or that refer to the garment in some way, add a similar type of insight. This is exemplified by Davide, who asked his mother and grandmother about the history of the Armani Trousers and Grandfather's Sweater after the interview. They sent him written texts, detailing how the garment came into his grandfather's and his father's custody, and how they had worn the garments. The texts gave valuable insight into the garments' Previous Custodians.

7 Discussion

This chapter discusses the theory of Aura, and relating it to the literature review. The theory's connection to Emotional Durability is explained. The discussion goes on to suggest an additional end of use phase within Klepp's lifetime-model, situated before the "at mercy" phase, called "stasis". Further the chapter explores the threat of losing aura in the transfer of custody, and a discussion of patina as a quality that adds value, reframing wear as something that adds value to a garment.

7.1 Aura and Emotional Durability

As mentioned in the introductory chapter on sustainability, Chapman remarks that conventional design for durability focuses solely on ensuring longevity through physical endurance (Chapman, 2009, p. 34). However, this thesis shows that garment custodians are willing to engage with and care for garments that lack physical durability, provided they are aware of, and connected to, the garments' aura. The relationship the custodians have with the garment is the driving force behind the garment longevity in their custody.

7.2 Stasis: Conflict within the Aura

The framework of Aura is helpful because it assigns language to the relationship that is felt between a custodian and the garment that they do not want to part with. However, the existence of an aura does not prevent a garment from falling out of use, as exemplified by Davide's Armani Trousers.

The Armani Trousers have been taken out of Davide's normal wardrobe cycle. The trousers have been taken out of use. When asked why, Davide identifies that the patina on the trousers, a smattering of small rust stains, evokes a feeling of anger within him. He explains that the stains contrast with the trousers' off-white colour too much for his liking, and that it makes him angry. In addition to the patina, he also explains that the trousers do not fit him the way he wants them to. They too fit loosely around his waist, and the length of the trousers' legs make them pile up around his ankles. In reference to Klepp's *Lifetime of Clothes* diagram (Figure 2), Davide's trousers' can be described as being at the end of their active use phase, and therefore "at mercy" of being discarded. However, this research finds that garments that are not being used, are not necessarily "at mercy" because their powerful aura keeps them in the wardrobe, in stasis. The garment is deemed unfit for wear or use, but is still *not* considered for discard or disposal. The custodian still maintains a feeling of

responsibility towards the garments. The state of stasis is an equilibrium of opposing forces within the Aura.

When asked what would make him start wearing the trousers again, Davide proposed two ideas: (1) incorporating the stains into a design, and (2) having the trousers fitted. However, Davide also expressed that he does not feel confident in his own abilities to act on his own ideas. This suggests that Davide still feels a sense of responsibility towards the garment, even though the garment frustrates him.

Therefore, this research suggests an additional end of use phase within the garment lifetime, that comes before the “at mercy” phase: that of “stasis”, in which the garment is no longer worn but maintains a significant relationship with the wearer such that disposal is not yet being considered. Further research into the conflicts within the Aura and the state of stasis can potentially lead to new (re)design practices. These types of practices can have the ability to reintroduce garments in stasis back into use, through designer intervention, with a sensitivity that maintains the garments overall Aura.

In Davide’s case, the conflict is found in the Patina and Evoked Feelings-concepts, and Wearability-category, within the Aura framework. The patina on the trousers evokes a negative feeling, and the lack of proper fit compromises their wearability. Correcting these problems is outside of Davide’s skillset, creating conflict within the concept of Manageable Care as well. These conflicts can possibly be addressed through design intervention. However, if the design intervention is not sensitive to the overall Aura of the garment, it might affect the Aura negatively. For example, unsuccessful attempts to correct fit might advance the garment from being in a state of stasis to being “At Mercy” of disposal, at which point, the aura is tarnished, beyond repair.

Some states of stasis cannot be addressed through design intervention, as reason for the stasis is caused by the custodian’s self-perception. Tina’s Yellow Jacket and Sara’s Mother’s Dress are considered as being in a state of stasis for these reasons. The Yellow Jacket’s striking appearance evokes a feeling of insecurity in Tina, making the garment too emotionally demanding to wear because of the attention the garment receives. The Mother’s Dress is in Sara’s custody, but the intended wearer of the garment is Sara’s mother. Sara’s mother loves the garment, but her current lifestyle and level of self-confidence stops her from taking the garment into use. Sara was assigned as the temporary custodian of the Mother’s Dress, awaiting the day her mother’s self-perception changes and she wears the dress for the first

time.

The opposing forces within the Aura of the Yellow Jacket and Mother's Dress is different than the ones in the Armani Trousers, but still identifiable through the Aura-framework.

These conflicts are found in the Evoked Feelings and Purposeful Use-concepts.

The feelings of insecurity and the lack lifestyle that allows for a purposeful use leaves the garment in a state of stasis. A change in self-confidence and lifestyle is required if the garment is to be reinstated into its current custodian's use. If that is not possible, a solution would be to transfer of the garment to a user who does not experience the same limitations as the garment's current custodians. However, this transfer of custody could lead to a loss of aura, as described in the section below.

7.3 Loss of Aura in transfer of custody

Because a garment's aura is not a physical property of a garment, but rather an emotional connection individual to the custodian, it can be lost or diminished in the transfer of custody.

The aura is created through continued use. The process of wearing the garment over time creates the aura. If a garment with aura is assigned to a new custodian, this process is reset.

However, a second-hand garment can be "pre-loved" and take some of its past aura with it when it is transferred to a new custodian. This might be as simple as passing on a garment to a family member with a story attached. This is exemplified by Davide's Grandfather's Sweater. Davide never got to meet his grandfather but feels a sense of connection to him through the garment. This emotional connection comes from various stories about Davide's grandfather, told by family members. This research suggests that providing a new custodian with a sense of the garment's previous aura, has the potential to foster a stronger emotional connection more quickly with the new custodian, thus contributing to the garment's longevity.

Gaining access to the aura can be done in different ways, aside from oral storytelling.

Spivack and Harrell & July's projects are examples of this. *Worn Stories* and *Assignment 55: Photograph a Significant Outfit* document the garments History, allowing access to the garments' aura through text and images. This access preserves the aura to some degree, making it possible to transfer the effects of the aura in between custodians.

Examples of this can also be found in contemporary redesign practices, as exemplified by designers Eugenie Schmidt and Mariko Takahashi. Schmidt & Takahashi's design practice

revolves around “recycling stories that linger in garments”, by recycling and resuscitating donated garments (Branders Group AG, 2022). The garments are collected through donation boxes. The donation boxes are placed in a curated selection of boutiques, art schools and design studios, which ensures that the donated garments are “of a certain quality”. The donated garments are cleaned, photographed, and sorted according to colour and type. The information about the donated garments is stored in an archive. When redesigning the donated garments, the design duo intentionally leaves in defects they find in the donated garment. The designers view the patina as traces of use that turn the garment into a sort of “database of memories”. This frames patina as a valuable resource, which is similar to the discovery that was made by the researcher in the analysis of the Painted Jeans.

Whenever a donated garment is redesigned or upcycled into other products, it is linked back to its information profile in the archive. This provides a garment “pedigree”, showing the garment’s original condition from when it was donated, and what it was turned into by Schmidt & Takahashi. This pedigree is digitally accessible for both the person who donated the garment, and the customer of the redesigned product. The archive provides the garment’s former custodian access to the fate of the garment they disposed of. It also provides the custodian of the redesigned garment with some residual history from the garment’s former life. Schmidt & Takahashi have considered expanding this archive to include texts from the donors, which they can add to the archive as well.

7.4 Patina: Wear as a value-creating practice

Without context, patina serves no distinct purpose other than being a sign of wear or use. However, as this thesis has shown, patina can be used to access memories and detailed information from the garment’s lifetime. Reframing of patina as a tool that can be utilised to access the garments aura can potentially reframe the ageing of garments as desirable. This can in turn increase the garments longevity and emotional durability.

7.5 Practical Aesthetic Project

For the practical aesthetic project that accompanies this thesis, the researcher returns to the Painted Jeans, seeking to make the Aura of the Painted Jeans visible to the exhibition audience. This is explored by creating an installation, drawing inspiration from all the various frameworks of documentation of garment history that are presented in this thesis. This installation’s intended function is to be a visualisation of the aura of the Painted Jeans,

presenting a curated selection of memories from the garment's lifetime. Each memory is accompanied by related garments and objects, as well as written texts, photos and video.

The goal is to make the exhibition audience aware of the aura of the Painted Jeans, showing how complex a relationship to a garment can become over time.

8 Summary / Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to identify the different qualities that make a garment difficult to part with, as the researcher believes that this insight can give direction to his emerging practice as a fashion designer. This thesis contributes to the growing body of research on the importance of emotional durability by analysing the characteristics that make some garments difficult to part with. These qualities are described as the garment's "Aura". The concept of garment "Aura" constitutes the significant contribution of this study to the field. Aura describes a range of intangible qualities that have been defined through an grounded theory analysis of a series of interviews and an object based analysis of the researchers own Painted Jeans.

The object-based analysis of the Painted Jeans provided the researcher with a framework for the thesis, as it identified some core themes. These themes were explored in the literature review, which provided a theoretical framework for the thesis: that of sustainability through emotional durability. The object-based analysis of the Painted Jeans also identified a necessity to go beyond just jeans and investigate other types of garments that are difficult to part with as well. This investigation was done through conducting a series of narrative interviews.

The researcher used the interview structure and instructions from Emily Spivack's *Worn Stories* and Miranda July and Harrell Fletcher's *Assignment 55: Photograph a Significant Outfit* to develop a framework the narrative interviews. The interview subjects were sourced from the researchers own network, and five people were chosen to be interviewed about a garment they did not want to get rid of. The interviews identified a diverse array of qualities that make garments difficult to part with. In addition, the researcher identified a sub-phase of Ingunn Grimstad Klepp's lifetime model, the phase of "stasis". Garments in this phase are out of use, but not considered for dispose or discard.

In order to assign names to the identified qualities, the researcher adopted the method of Grounded Theory Coding, inspired by Namkyu Chuns employment of the method in his dissertation *Re(Dis)Covering Fashion Designers: Interweaving Dressmaking and Placemaking*. The identified qualities were codified and organized into concepts and categories and compared with the findings from the object-based analysis of the Painted

Jeans. The codes, concepts, and categories were organized into a radial hierarchal chart, supporting the overarching theory of Aura.

The theory of aura attempts to summarize the diverse array of qualities that make a garment difficult to part with. The term was appropriated from Walter Benjamin, from his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, and is used to describe the invisible force of authenticity and uniqueness that radiate out from garments that are difficult to part with.

The framework of aura allowed the researcher to assign language to the feeling of not wanting to get rid of a garment. The framework also provided a way to identify why some garments moved into the state of “stasis”, and the challenges of moving garments out of this phase without tarnishing the garments aura. Challenges related to the transfer of aura between custodians was also explored, using the example of Eugenie Schmidt and Mariko Takahashi’s redesign practice.

The theory of aura and the framework it provides can be further developed in future research projects. Some of the concepts and categories are more developed than others, as is the nature of this type of research. Further research can help define the concepts and categories more clearly and provide a more cohesive theory of Aura. However, the framework does already provide a few interesting concepts that can be seen as avenues that can be used to develop interesting speculative design practices.

The researcher wants to explore these avenues in his emerging design practice. The first step is the practical aesthetic project, where the researcher attempts to make the Aura of the Painted Jeans visible, through making an interactive installation of curated memories from the garment’s lifetime.

The researcher hopes that this insight might contribute to a greater sensitivity when developing design strategies that aim to create sustainable garments that emphasise durability and longevity. Knowing that longevity and durability is connected of a complex matrix of different qualities in the relationship between a custodian and a garment, is equal parts opportunity and adversity. However, the researchers hope is that further research into this complex matrix can further develop our understanding of the mechanisms that make us care. Because caring is key.

“Fashion is burning,
with hopes and expectations,
attraction, fuming passion,
ripples topped with consuming desire.

Alone,
I left fashion,
singing.”
- Gillis Görll

(von Busch, 2014, p. 20)

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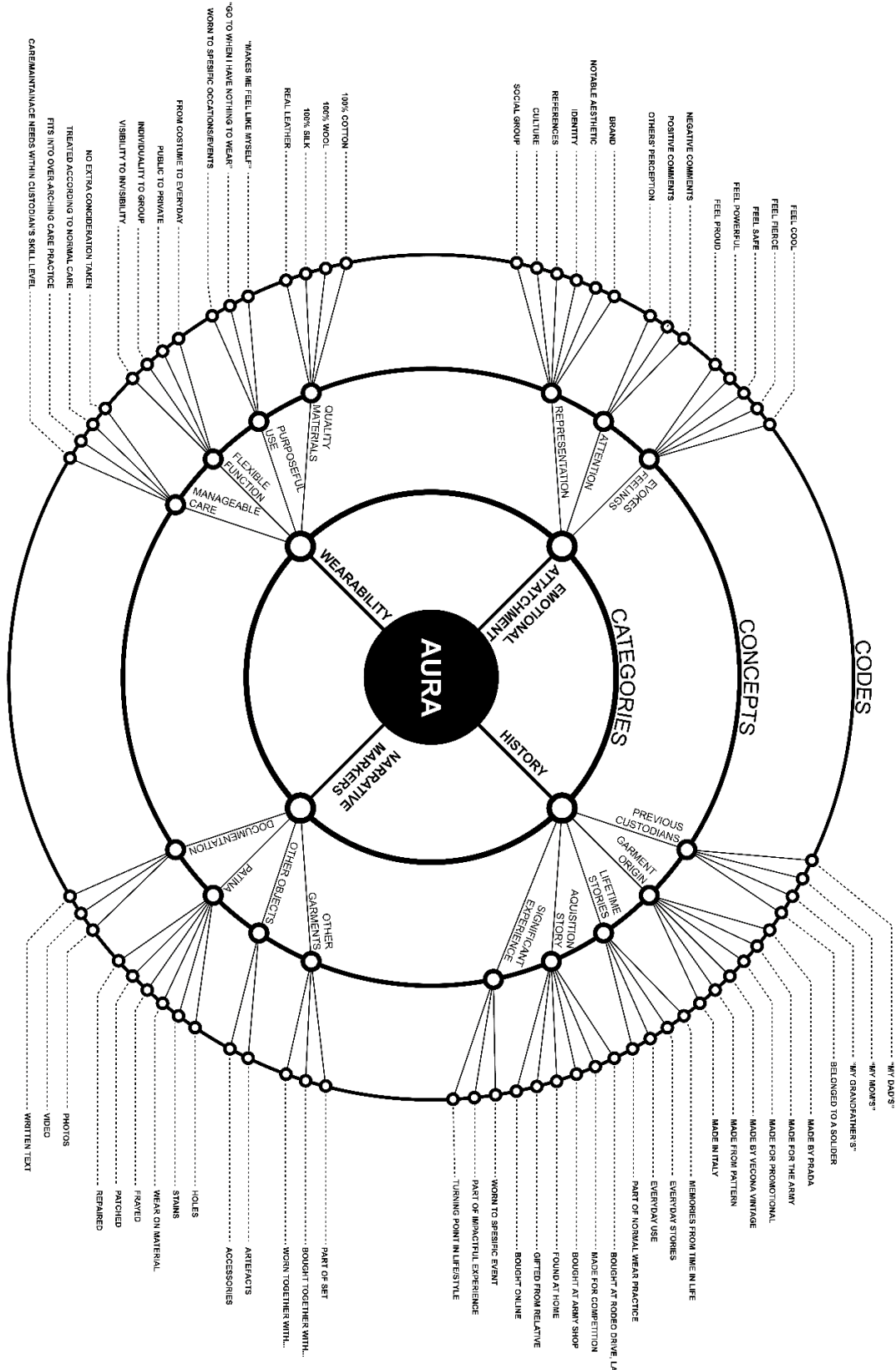
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10 Appendix

10.1 Radial hierarchal structure of Aura and its Categories, Concepts and Codes



10.2 Interview Guide Document (3 pages)

Intervjuguide for masterprosjekt:

“Materielle minner og hva vi som motedesignere kan lære av de”

av Aleksander Sahr

(semi-strukturert intervju med et utvalg klesbrukere).

1.0 Innledende samtale.

Den innledende samtalen blir gjort på bakgrunn av følgende punkter:

- Bakgrunn og formål med intervjuet.
- Fortelle litt om meg selv som forsker og hvor jeg plasserer meg i motefeltet.
- Forklare hva intervjuet brukes til og snakke om taushetsplikt/anonymitet.
- Informere om bruk av diktafon, lagring av materiale mm.
- Spør intervjuobjektet om noe fremstår uklart.

Deretter startes opptaket som gjøres på fysisk diktafon og/eller UiOs digitale diktafon.

2.0 Bruker forteller om plagget de har valgt.

I denne delen av intervjuet starter jeg med å be brukerne om å finne frem klesplagget de har valgt ut til intervjuet.

Klesplagget skal være fysisk tilstede under intervjuet. Dersom intervjuet må foregå via videokonferanse ønsker jeg at intervjuobjektet plagget tilgjengelig i umiddelbar nærhet slik at intervjuobjektet kan vise plagget frem under intervjuet.

Intervjuet starter med at brukeren forteller om plagget på den måten de selv ønsker.

Etterhvert som brukeren forteller om plagget sitt, sjekker jeg om brukeren er innom de tre områdene som jeg fokuserer på i oppgaven.

Eventuelle oppfølgingsspørsmål kommer fortløpende.

3.0 Fokuserende spørsmål.

Dersom brukeren ikke beveger seg innom et område som jeg fokuserer på, kan jeg stille brukeren spørsmål her for å få brukeren til å snakke om dette.

Eventuelle oppfølgingsspørsmål fortløpende

4.0 Oppsummering, avsluttende kommentarer.

- Summere opp funnene fra intervjuet
- Oppklare om man har forstått svarene riktig.
- Spør intervjuobjektet om noe fremstår uklart.

Opptaket avsluttes og lagres forsvarlig

Spørsmålsliste:

1. Hvor lenge har du hatt plagget?

2. Hvor kommer det fra?

3. Husker du noe fra da du fikk det/kjøpte det?

4. Dette er jo et plagg som du ikke klarer å kvitte deg med. Hvorfor ikke?

5. Har plagget noen bruksmerker/patina? (Hvis ja; Spør om de husker hva som skapte bruksmerket/patinaen. Husk å fotografer!)

6. *Har du en historie knyttet til plagget? (Bare spør dersom det ikke kommer naturlig frem gjennom spørsmål 3, 4, eller 5.)*

7. Bruker du plagget?

- a. Hvis nei; Hvorfor ikke? Og kunne du tenke deg å begynne å bruke det en gang? Hva skal til i så fall?

- b. Hvis ja; Spør om bruken, og hvordan det påvirker følelsen av å ikke kunne kvitte seg med plagget.

SJEKKLISTE

1. Historie

- a. Hvor lenge har plagget vært i brukerens eie?
- b. Har brukeren en historie knyttet til plagget?
- c. Har brukeren noen tanker knyttet til plagget?

2. Anskaffelse

- a. Hvor ble plagget kjøpt/anskaffet?
- b. Under hvilke omstendigheter ble plagget kjøpt/anskaffet?

3. Plagget i seg selv

- a. Hvilken kvalitet er det på plagget?
- b. Har det bruksmerker/patina?
- c. Føler brukeren noe spesielt når de bruker plagget?

10.3 Formal Interview Invitation and Consent Form (4 pages)

Forespørsel om å stille til intervju i masterprosjektet ”Materielle minner”.

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke materielle minner i klær og hvordan de oppstår.

I dette skrivet får du informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

I dette prosjektet skal jeg se nærmere på materielle minner i klær og hvordan de oppstår.

Formålet med dette er å utvikle nye designmetoder og strategier som kan tilføre eller å forvalte materielle minner i klær, basert på funnene i prosjektet. Bakgrunnen for prosjektet er en fascinasjon for hvordan tilsynelatende tilfeldige klesplagg får en sterk immateriell verdi for brukeren sin, og et ønske om å utvikle en mer autentisk designpraksis basert på dette.

Prosjektet startet opp i august 2020, den skriftlige oppgaven leveres 15.april 2021 og det hele avsluttes med en utstilling i løpet av våren 2021.

Undersøkelsen består av:

1. Dette intervjuet om klær med materielle minner.
2. Dokumentanalyse av et utvalg tekster fra boken *Worn Stories* av Emily Spivack.
3. Dokumentanalyse av materiale fra “Assignment #55 Photograph a significant outfit”, fra nettsiden learningtoloveyoumore.com.
4. Dokumentanalyse av teksten “The Art of Jeans”, publisert i journalen *Vestoj, On Slowness*.
5. Analyse av relevante teoretiske perspektiver.

Den foreløpige problemstillingen min er:

Hva er materielle minner, og hva kan vi som motedesignere lære av de?

Prosjektet har generelt sett en åpen tilnærming hvor mye av prosjektet formes underveis i prosessen. Per i dag er det ikke tenkt å bruke materialet som kommer frem i intervjuene til noe annet enn min masteroppgave. Dersom dette skulle endre seg, vil du få forespørsel om dette. Det kan være for eksempel for å jobbe videre med temaet i en annen forskningskontekst.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

OsloMet er ansvarlig for prosjektet. Min veileder fra Institutt for estetiske fag er førstelektor Lillegerd Hansen. Min andre veileder er professor Kristin Bergaust, også fra Institutt for estetiske fag ved OsloMet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Til dette semi-strukturerte intervjuet har jeg valgt ut seks (6) personer som skal intervjues. Disse er plukket ut fra eget nettverk, basert på at disse personene tidligere har antydnet at de eier et plagg som kan ha materielle minner.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Dersom du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer dette at du blir intervjuet av meg. Det vil ta om lag 30 minutter, og helst møtes i samme rom med smittevern hensyn ivarettatt.

Jeg vil be deg om å velge ut ett (1) klesplagg som vi skal snakke om i intervjuet i god tid før vi møtes. Dette klesplagget skal være et plagg du ikke kan tenke deg å noensinne kvitte deg med.

Jeg ønsker at du har plagget tilgjengelig under intervjuet.

I intervjuet skal vi snakke om hvorfor du ikke kan/ønsker/klarer/orker å kvitte deg med plagget. Plagget du velger skal dokumenteres av meg med fotografi. Jeg kommer til å ta ett overblikksbilde av plagget liggende på gulvet, og detaljbilder av alle relevante detaljer på plagget.

Intervjuet er semi-strukturert som betyr at jeg har forberedt noen tema som vi skal innom hvor du kan prate ganske fritt uten å være låst til for mange satte spørsmål. Disse temaene er for eksempel: anskaffelse, levetid, kvalitet, og om plagget har en historie.

Jeg vil også be deg om å si noe kort om hvem du er. Svarene du gir vil bli tatt opp av en diktafon, transkribert og lagret forsvarlig.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg. Ikke nøl med å ta kontakt om noe kjennes feil for deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Jeg vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene jeg har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Jeg behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Det er kun jeg som behandler opplysningene dine. Mine to veiledere vil tidvis ha tilgang til materialet. Dine kontaktopplysninger vil bli lagret forsvarlig slik at uvedkommende ikke får tilgang.

Disse personopplysningene vil bli brukt i oppgaven, og i publikasjonen av oppgaven:

- Fornavn
- Kjønn
- Alder
- Yrkesstilling

Øvrig kontaktinformasjon og personvernssensitive opplysninger vil ikke være en del av publikasjonen. Siden sitater fra intervjuet skal være en del av publikasjonen vil du også bli tilbudt sitatsjekk før oppgaven publiseres.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når jeg avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Personopplysningene dine anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er sommeren 2021. Opplysningene slettes høsten 2021.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg, og
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke. På oppdrag fra OsloMet har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med: Veileder OsloMet Lillegerd Hansen. *E-post: Lillegerd.Hansen@oslomet.no. Tlf: 481 09 574.*

Masterstudent/forsker Aleksander Sahr. *E-post: s341393@oslomet.no. Tlf: 40102207.*

Personvernombud OsloMet Ingrid S. Jacobsen. *E-post: personvernombud@oslomet.no. Tlf: 67235534.*

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til NSD sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:

• NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS på e-post (personvertjenester@nsd.no) eller på telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

Lillegerd Hansen
(veileder)

Aleksander Sahr
(masterstudent)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet "Materielle minner", og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- å delta i et semi-strukturert intervju
- at intervjuet tas opp med diktafon
- at plagget jeg tar med til intervjuet dokumenteres med fotografi
- at opplysninger om meg publiseres slik at jeg kan gjenkjennes i masteroppgaven og i publikasjonen av masteroppgaven (bilde og tekst)

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)