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History of costume : the consumption, governance, potency and patronage of attire in colonial Western Australia

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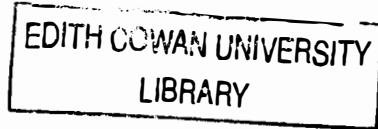
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**History of Costume:
The Consumption, Governance, Potency
and Patronage of Attire in
Colonial
Western Australia**

**Damayanthie Eluwawalage
B.A. (Hons)**

**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of
Doctor of Philosophy at the Faculty of Community Services,
Education and Social Sciences**

**Edith Cowan University
Western Australia**

August 2004

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Abstract

This dissertation represents a new departure in the study of dress in colonial Western Australia, focusing on the rationale behind individual and collective clothing practices in the new society. As a study of significant social and cultural practices, rather than an account of fashion, this research contributes to the understanding of previously disregarded elements in colonial Western Australian ethno-economic and social histories.

The study investigates the internal and external influences which impacted upon colonial inhabitants' ways of dressing, their societal attitudes and social demeanour. The research compares the influences on attire and finery in colonial Western Australian society with the British/European context. This thesis examines the influences caused by world-wide dominant events, ideas and social groups, and their effect on societal and cultural attitudes in the colony.

The thesis examines clothing as a symbolic indicator of status which influenced the class distinction in colonial Western Australian society. Also the function of dress as it relates to class consciousness and identification. The research focuses on the ambiguities associated with colonial clothing and the way in which social class and status were negotiated through wearing apparel in the colony. This thesis examines colonial Western Australian fashion and attire in the context of social stratification, social conditions, power relations and cultural formation, in order to comprehend sartorial consumerism and social practise in the colony.

Fashion's ultimate function of signifying power and prestige, which linked with financial capability, and its impact on society and societal practise, is significant. The research examines the affiliation between colonial clothing and the economic growth of Western Australia in the context of the development of the colonial clothing economy and the influence of affluent colonists and traders who controlled the clothing behaviour in the colony.

One of the primary purposes of this study is to examine the meanings encoded in colonial dress and adornment. The function of clothing and its adornment was often used for more than its utilitarian purpose. For example, the analysis of gender in clothing reflects the sociological differences and the power relations

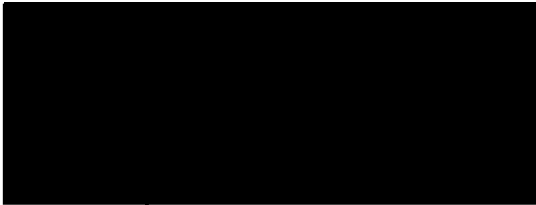
between sexes. In that context, this dissertation discusses colonial attire as an aesthetic experience, as well as a social and cultural expression of the period by examining Veblen's Leisure Theory and Simmel's Trickle-down Theory.

Colonial characteristics such as different societal and climatic conditions as well as the way of life brought about a society dissimilar to that in Britain but symbolic to its colonialism. This research investigates the unique social and cultural qualities which applied in the colony and which resulted in a tendency towards distinctive dress codes in early Western Australia. This study explores the consumption governance, potency and patronage of attire in colonial Western Australia within the context of social, socio-economic and fashion philosophies.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
- (iii) contain any defamatory material.



Damayanthie Eluwawalage
August 2004

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Abbreviation

British Weights and Measures

Money:

12 pennies = 1 shilling

20 shillings = 1 pound (£1)

Example:

Amount	Written as
two and half pennies	2 1/2 or 2 1/2d.
two shillings	2/- or 2s.
2 shillings and 10 pence	2/10 or 2s. 10d.

Farthing	= a quarter penny, last made in 1956
Penny	= The basic unit of currency from around 775 AD
Groats	= 4 Pence. Made from 1836 to 1888
Florin	= 2 shillings. Made from 1848
Half Crown	= 2 shillings and 6 pence
Crown	= 5 shillings. Still made
Half Sovereign	= 10 shillings. Gold.
Sovereign	= 1 pound. Gold.

Volume and Capacity:

20 fluid ounces = 1 pint

4 gills = 1 pint

2 pints = 1 quart

Ale Measures:

9 gallons = 1 firkin

4 firkins = 1 barrel

Wine Measures:

52 1/2 gallons = 1 hog shead

26 and 2 thirds fl. oz. = 1 bottle

Units of Weights:

16 drams	= 1 ounce
16 ounces	= 1 pound
7 pounds	= 1 clove
14 pounds	= 1 stone
364 pounds	= 1 sack
2240 pounds	= 1 ton

Abbreviation

for Table 25 and Table 26

GB.	Great Britain
US.	United States of America
NSW.	New South Wales, Australia
SA.	South Australia
Sin.	Singapore
Cey.	Ceylon
Vic.	Victoria, Australia
Ind.	India
Mau.	Mauritius
HK.	Hong Kong
Chi.	China
Jav.	Java
Tim.	Timor
Fra.	France
Que.	Queensland, Australia
NZ.	New Zealand
Tas.	Tasmania, Australia
CGH.	Cape of Good Hope

Glossary of Materials

- Alpaca.** A material of plain weave, a cotton warp and a wool weft.
- Beaver.** Woven from fine grade wool.
- Blonde Lace.** Silk lace of two threads in hexagonal mesh.
- Bombasine.** A black fabric with twill weave. Usually worn for mourning.
- Book muslin.** A very light cotton fabric of gauze weave. Stiffly finished.
- Broadcloth.** A stout wool cloth. Sometimes used to describe clerical clothes.
- Brocade.** A silk fabric with a raised pattern produced by threads of gold or silver.
- Broche Velvet.** A figured silk material with an additional velvet pattern.
- Calico.** Plain or printed, heavy and coarse cotton.
- Cambric.** A very fine white linen.
- Canvas.** An open mesh fabric, usually of linen.
- Cashmere.** Originally woven entirely from the wool of the Cashmere (Indian) goat.
- Chamois.** A soft leather from the antelope, or sheep, goat or deer.
- Chiffon.** A plainly woven fabric of silk.
- Chintz.** The Eastern name for a printed cotton.
- Crepe.** A puckered and crinkled semi-transparent fabric. Usually dyed black.
- Crepe de Chine.** A very soft China silk crepe.
- Crinoline.** Material woven from horsehair and cotton yarns (for stiff petticoats).
- Damask.** A fabric with woven geometric or floral patterns.
- Dimity.** A firm cotton fabric with raised cords forming strips.
- Felt.** A material produced by the matting and pressing together woollen fibres.
- Foulard.** A very soft lightweight silk with twilled weave.
- Fustian.** A coarse cotton of drab colour.
- Gaberdine.** A waterproof fabric woven with a cotton warp and a worsted weft.
- Holland.** A fine linen fabric of plain weave.
- Homespun.** A coarse cloth of tweed character.
- Jean.** Dyed or bleached twill cotton for shoe linings and corsets.
- Lama.** Fabric woven from the wool of the lama.
- Lawn.** An exceptionally fine lightweight linen.
- Merino.** A fine quality twilled cloth woven from the fleece of the Merino sheep.
- Mohair.** A fine camlet woven from the Angora goat.
- Muslin.** A term used for all thin cotton varieties of lawn, mull and cambric.
- Nankeen.** A cloth woven from a cotton yarn with a natural yellow tint.
- Ottoman.** A stout silk with a thickly corded weft.
- Pique.** A firm cotton fabric woven with a raised rib.
- Plush.** A fine quality silk and cotton fabric.
- Print.** A term used for a plain fabric which has a printed design.
- Sarcenet.** A thin silk, plain or twilled.

Satin. A silk cloth with the warp predominating over the weft.

Serge. A wool cloth woven in twill weave.

Stuff. Plain woollen cloth.

Surah Silk. A soft and strong Indian silk.

Taffeta. A thin glossy silk of plain weave.

Tarlatan. A very fine open muslin with a stiff finish.

Tulle. A gossamer net fabric made from silk yarns.

Tweed. A cloth woven from soft woollen yarns.

Velvet. A closely woven fabric with a short dense pile on the upper surface.

Velveteen. A fabric woven from cotton in imitation of silk velvet. Originally, silk woven into a cotton backing

Voile. Either all wool or all cotton, light weight open textured fabric.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Society is a process. It is never static. Even its most apparently stable structures are the expression of an equilibrium between dynamic forces. The social historian's duty is that of recapturing that process. -Keith Wrightson¹

This dissertation explores the consumption, governance, potency and patronage of attire in colonial Western Australia in the context of social, socio-economic and fashion philosophies. The research represents an important contribution to the study of dress in colonial Western Australia and Australia generally and to the rationale behind individual and collective clothing choices in that society. The meanings encoded in the dress, adornment and social order of early Western Australian society, have yet to gain comprehensive academic and scholarly credibility. This thesis addresses that need.

Clothing is one of the cardinal social practices which emphasises the social position and social domination of the wearer. Therefore, this study is informed by Rene Konig's hypothesis that fashion accomplishes and accompanies power in the colonial context.² The study will argue that social structure, standing and inheritance were reflected in and impacted on clothing in colonial Western Australia. The thesis also argues that the transference of power and status from Britain to the colonial outpost of Western Australia went through significant transformation and adaptation. For example, the research questions the way that isolation, social/geographical environment and climate, as well as the effects of inter-colonial and international factors, brought about the distinctiveness and uniqueness of early Western Australian clothing. The study analyses the industry of clothing, resources and materials, and the economic environment of the colony, and also addresses the impact of gender on clothing in colonial Western Australia through the influences of class, power, inheritance and culture. The research focuses on the period from 1829 to 1901. The following section provides the historical, geographical and demographical context for the period under research.

¹Wrightson, K. 1982, *English Society 1580-1680*, Rutgers University Press, New Jersey.

²Konig, R. 1973, *The Restless Image: A Sociology of Fashion*, Allen and Unwin Ltd, London. pp. 142-143

'Clothing', 'costume', 'apparel', 'attire' and 'dress' are used synonymously in this thesis. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that each contains subtle differences in meaning and perception. Clothing is frequently used as a generic term for any covering for the human body. Apparel is also defined as a body covering, but with the added connotation of a decorative covering. In general, the term apparel is used in the industry to refer to actual constructed garments. The term 'attire' is defined as a rich or splendid garments, especially for special occasions, ceremonials etc. The term 'dress' is the most inclusive as it represents all coverings and ornamentations worn on the human body. Also, in the Museums' and Historical Societies' vocabularies, the word 'costume' refers to historic or antiquated clothing.³ These distinctions have not been maintained in the current research.

The Colonisation of Western Australia

In March 1606, Captain Willem Janszoon and the crew of the *Duyfken* landed in Australia near present day Weipa in Cape York. This represents the first documented contact between Australia and the rest of the world. Moreover their landing literally put Australia on world cartographic maps. The oceanic exploration and settlement of the island continent of Australia began early in the seventeenth century, although prior to this documented history, there may have been Asian contacts and other exploration. The initial explorers, the Australian Aborigines, have inhabited the continent for over forty thousand years.⁴ British colonisation in Australia began in New South Wales in early 1786, but evidence of exploration of the western coast of the continent began in 1616 when Dutch helmsman, Dirk Hartog, disembarked on the north-west coast. Buccaneer-navigator, William Dampier, was the first Englishman to visit Western Australia in 1688 and another Dutchman, Willem de Vlamingh, explored Western Australia in 1697 and named the Swan River, *Swarte Swanne Drift* (Black Swan River) due to the sighting of black swans.⁵ In 1791, British Lieutenant George Vancouver explored the south-west of Western Australia and claimed the area for the British Empire. Nevertheless, it was not until December 1826, that Governor Phillip Darling of New South Wales despatched Major Edmond Lockyer to establish a military

³Sproles, G.B. & Burns, L.D. 1989, *Changing Appearances, Understanding Dress in Contemporary Society*, Fairchild Publications, New York.

Roach, M. E. and Eicher, J. B. (eds) 1965, *Dress, Adornment, and the Social Order*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, London, Sydney.

The Macquarie Dictionary

⁴Appleyard, R. T. & Mansford, T. 1979, *The Beginning: European Discovery and Early Settlement of Swan River*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 3
Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1974, William Benton, London.

⁵Calder, M. E. 1977, *Early Swan River Colony*, Rigby Ltd, Perth. pp. 11

outpost at Albany.⁶ The following year, Captain James Stirling made an exploratory voyage to the Swan River and in May 1829 Captain Charles Howe Fremantle claimed formal possession of the whole of the western coast of New Holland for his Britannic Majesty George IV.⁷ On the first June 1829, Lieutenant Governor Captain James Stirling and the first settlers disembarked from the *Parmelia* and the new township was named *Perth* in honour of the Secretary of State for the Colonies who was the Member for Perth in Scotland.⁸ In 1850, Western Australia became the final penal colony in the British Empire when 9,653 convicts arrived. The transportation of convicts continued until 1868.⁹ During the 1880s, the discovery of gold in Western Australia generated an enormous transformation and reformation in both the social and economical structures as well as increasing the population. In 1901, Western Australia became a federated state. Throughout the colonial period, the majority of colonists were mostly British-born or of British descent, who transported their culture, tradition, custom and inheritance to their adopted land.

Climate of Western Australia

Climatic conditions determine the way of dressing and the materials/styles used. Therefore, it is important to understand climatic differences when studying clothing history.

Western Australia has a wide ranging climate and various geographical regions ranging from the tropical north to the temperate south. The general rainfall range is 24-31 inches and falls mostly between April to October. Summer daytime temperatures range from 24-41C. Summer temperatures peak in February. This contrasts with the climate of Britain where averages range from 4C for the coldest month to 17-18C for the warmest. It is obvious, therefore, that the climatic conditions impacted on the way people dressed in the Western Australian colony, which in turn, prompted different clothing practices in the colony.

⁶Battye, J. S. 1924, *Western Australia: A History from its Discovery to the Inauguration of the Commonwealth*, Oxford Press, London. pp. 13-73

Calder, M. E. 1977, *Early Swan River Colony*, Rigby Ltd, Perth. pp. 9-10

⁷Fremantle, C. H. 1829, *Diary and Letters, of Admiral Sir. C.H. Fremantle. GCB Relating to the Founding of the Colony of Western Australia 1829*, Hazell, Watson and Viey, London. pp. 23-24

⁸Battye, J.S.1924, *Western Australia: A History from its Discovery to the Inauguration of the Commonwealth*, Oxford Press, London. pp 85

⁹Statham, P. 1979, *Dictionary of Western Australians: Early Settlers 1829-1850, Vol 1*, University of Western Australia Press, Western Australia. pp. 607

Society and Demography in Nineteenth-century Britain

In pre-1900 societies, clothing provided precise information of the wearer's status, gender, occupation and religious affiliation. Therefore, in researching the history of attire, an understanding of prevailing societies and social classes is necessary.

British society has been established on a hierarchy of power, especially over the last four hundred years. It was a society in which social status followed upon the inheritance and acquisition of property, especially the possession of land. In the nineteenth-century however, English social order underwent rapid transformation. According to David Englander,¹⁰ the notion of *class* was generated in Britain during the Industrial Revolution. Until the end of the eighteenth century, social recognition had come with the conferring of ranks, orders or degrees. By 1830, however, it was also customary to refer to different classes such as working, middle or lower. In this pyramidal social structure, hereditary aristocracy and nobility were situated at the apex, while the proletariat was at the base.¹¹ Hereditary aristocracy (ie, the supremacy of privileged order or the ruling body of nobles) and the plutocracy (ie, the ruling class of wealthy) were regarded as the upper-class or landed society.¹² These two Victorian class hierarchies of inheritance and wealth formed a social fellowship called *society* which was based in London and was notorious for its exuberance and pleasure-seeking.¹³ In Victorian England, a person who wanted to be received into 'society' had to conform to a strict code of behaviour and appear correctly dressed.¹⁴ The gentry or the middle order stood between the wealthy upper-class and the lower-class. This middle-class appeared during the latter part of the century as a result of the Industrial Revolution which brought about the emergence of democracy and economic transformation. The subsequent weakening of the old concept of status, offered

¹⁰Englander, D. (ed) 1997, *Britain and America, Studies in Comparative History 1760-1970*, Yale University Press, New Haven. pp. 32

¹¹Perkins, H. 1969, *The Origin of the Modern English Society 1780-1880*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Cannadine, D. 1999, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain*, Columbia University Press. New York.

¹²Cannadine, D. 1980, *Lords and Landlords: The Aristocracy and the Towns 1774-1967*, Leicester University Press, Leicester.

¹³Horn, P. 1992, *High Society: The English Social Elite 1880-1914*, Alan Sutton Publishing Co, Stroud. pp. 1

Perkins, H. 1969, *The Origin of the Modern English Society 1780-1880*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London. pp. 29-30

¹⁴Merseyside County Council. 1971, *High Society: A Display of Formal Dress for Fashionable People*, Merseyside. pp. 1

opportunities for people who did not own land and who came from non-manual occupational groups.¹⁵

The third social class was the proletariat (ie, the working-class, labouring-class or lower-class). The working-class was graded into two classifications according to aptitude and expertise: highly skilled workers, recognised as *artisans*, and lower skilled workers. According to Read¹⁶, the artisans segregated themselves from the rest of the working class by their occupations, income, spending patterns, literacy levels and their social involvement. The lowest classes of the English social structure were peasants and slaves. Peasants were involved in agricultural and non-agricultural work, while the slaves, predominantly dark-skinned people, remained at the bottom of social structure.¹⁷

Intra-class hierarchy featured in every class, as each was structured with different layers. For example, just as royalty, aristocracy and nobility formed a multi-layered upper-class hierarchy, artisans, labourers, servants and slaves established a lower-class hierarchy. According to Horn, in every nineteenth-century large household there was a clearly established hierarchy among the staff.¹⁸

Class differences had an enormous influence on religious practice in the nineteenth century.¹⁹ The Christian Church, particularly the Anglican Church, supported the class system. For example in 1843 Archdeacon Samuel Wilberforce claimed that “God has ordained differences of rank”.²⁰ Therefore the idea of a God-given hierarchical society was accepted by influential religious institutions whose theological teachings maintained that the order of human society was established by God. Thus, religious Britons generally accepted the inequality of society and hereditary social stations.

¹⁵Mingay, G. E. 1976, *The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class*, Longman, London.

¹⁶Read, D. 1979, *England 1868-1914: The Age of Urban Democracy*, Longman, London. pp. 33

¹⁷Mills, D. R. 1980, *Lord and Peasant in Nineteenth Century Britain*, Croom Helm, London. pp. 43-44

Walvin, J. 1992, *Black Ivory: A History of British Slavery*, Fontana Press, London.

¹⁸Horn, P. 1992, *High Society: The English Social Elite 1880-1914*, Alan Sutton Publishing Co. Stroud. pp. 105

¹⁹McLeod, H. (ed) 1996, *Religion and Society in England 1850-1914*, Macmillan Press, London. pp. 2

²⁰Roberts, D. 1979, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, Croom Helm, London. pp. 151

Colonial Western Australia

The English pattern of social stratification was transported to colonial Western Australia. According to the Census of 1839, approximately ninety-nine per-cent of the Western Australian population was British. The notion of class was evident in the discourse of the day. For example, in 1828, colonist James Henty spoke of 'ranks': "... immediately we get there, we shall be placed in the first rank in the society",²¹ and by 1840 the notion of multiple classes was firmly established. For example, "The various classes of our society ..." expressed *The Inquirer*²²; "... there should be different classes of people..." stated the *Perth Gazette*²³; and Col. Irwin wrote to England in 1848, "The Perth Gazette circulating among all classes".²⁴

The terms 'gentry' or 'upper-class' were used to specify the dominating class within the colony. Wealth was the main factor to determine membership of this class, whether it was brought from Britain or procured in the colony. Reece for instance notes that, "Fremantle society during the 1860s and the 1870s was sharply demarcated into economic-classes"²⁵ and Brown's study of elite merchants in the late nineteenth century portrays a vivid picture of the evolution and development of a distinct colonial social system and gentry in colonial Western Australia. Traders, including John Bateman and his son, John Wesley, J. H. Monger, James Lilly, William Marmion, William Moore, William, George and James Pearse, Lionel Samson and sons, Mary Higham and sons, and Charles Manning and son established an effective and powerful business empire in early Fremantle which became the major port of Western Australia. Their undertakings extended to importing/exporting, wholesaling/retailing, shipping/shipbuilding/shipping operations, whaling, pearling and farming.

Significantly, the group formed a close-knit community in kinship, commerce and social position between 1870-1900. However, they were not socially homogeneous in the traditional manner, being Catholic, Jewish and Protestant and gentry, servant and convict in origin. Thus, many elite Fremantle traders ascended from humble origins. For instance, Mary and John Higham arrived in Fremantle in 1853 and commenced a baker's and confectionery business which expanded to become a

²¹Bassett, M. 1955, *The Hentys: An Australian Colonial Tapestry*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne. pp. 35-36

²²*The Inquirer*, 24 February 1841

²³*Perth Gazette*, 10 July 1847

²⁴Russell, E. 1980, *A History of the Law in Western Australia and its Development from 1829-1979*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 75

²⁵Reece, R. H. W. 1983, *A Place of Consequence: A Pictorial History of Fremantle*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle. pp. 29

very successful mercantile establishment. The older members of the Pearse, Marmion and Lilly families had affiliations with the inferior orders in Britain and Ireland. William Pearse (senior) and Patrick Marmion arrived in the Western Australian colony as indentured servants and John Higham as lower middle-class. J. H. Monger was a sawyer by trade and an indentured servant, and James Lilly was the son of an expirée. Inter-marriage compelled families to become closely connected, but also enabled them to be more influential and powerful.²⁶ The evolvement of the Fremantle merchants distinctly illustrates the nature, progression and development of a unique Western Australian social structure.

In relation to religion, the majority of colonists were Christians, ie, Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Protestants or Catholics. The Church of England was the dominant religion in the colony. Therefore, as in the English society, the colonial church supported a classed society. As expressed by colonial Western Australian settler, Rev. John Ramsdan Wollaston in December 1842, "Society will never work unless there is a station for each class according to God's ordinance".²⁷

According to English traveller Nathaniel Ogle, in the 1830s there were two distinct social orders in very early Western Australian society, the superior investing class and the labouring class,²⁸ but as in Britain there were subclasses within these two main classes.

In relation to the colonial working-class, the Swan River Colony's first workers were indentured labourers, bound by agreement to the wealthier settlers who brought servants to the new colony as part of their capital.²⁹ The Census of 1848, 1859 and 1870 classified occupations of the working-class in the colony as:

²⁶Brown, P. 1996, *The Merchant Princes of Fremantle*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 1-159

²⁷Burton, C. A. 1975, *Wollaston's Picton Journal (1841-1844)*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 129

²⁸Ogle, N. 1839, *The Colony of Western Australia: A Manual for Emigrants*, James Fraser, Regent Street, London. pp. 82-83

²⁹Westralian History Group. 1985, *On this side: Themes and Issues in Western Australian History*, Bookland Pty. Ltd, East Perth. pp. 70

Table 1:**Western Australian Occupations (Industrial)**

Occupations	Census 1848	Census 1859	Census 1870
Farin servants	X	X	X
Farin labourers	X	X	X
Overseers		X	X
Shepherds	X	X	X
Hutkeepers		X	X
Stockmen	X		X
Blacksmiths	X	X	X
Boot and shoe makers	X	X	X
Bricklayers		X	X
Brickmakers		X	X
Carpenters	X	X	X
coachmakers			X
Wheelwrights		X	X
painters/Graziers			X
Sadlers			X
Sawyers	X	X	X
Tailors	X	X	X
Bakers		X	X
Butchers		X	X
Whalers			X
Fishermen			X
Pearlers			X
Miners		X	X
Teamsters			X
Boatmen	X	X	X
General labourers	X	X	X
Mariners			X
Domestic servants	X	X	X
Gardeners		X	X
Vine dressers			X
Masons		X	X
Millers		X	X

Source: Census Western Australia 1848-1870

Collated by author Damayanthie Eluwawalage

The working-class consists of those working in manual occupations. The 'upper working-class' consisting of skilled workers and the 'lower working-class' is made up of those in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs, for which little training is needed.³⁰

³⁰Giddens, A. 1993, *Sociology*, Polity Press, London. pp. 226

Scarcely any British upper-class inhabitants migrated to colonial Western Australia, so Swan River settlers were predominantly of middle-class origin.³¹ For example, "The earliest colonists were composed of persons belonging to the middle and upper-middle classes, whose prominent idea seemed to be that of founding a settlement of gentlemen" recorded colonial settler, Mrs Edward Millett.³² The middle classes therefore were the top social level and had the opportunity to call themselves the gentry which was possible in colonial societies but impossible in Britain.

Obviously, as transplanted English men and women, most of the early settlers accepted social hierarchy. This is evident in numerous descriptions and accounts of the time such as that of Charles Bussell who wrote in December 1831 that, "The only neighbours we possess at present of our class, are a Captain and Mrs. Molloy."³³ In January 1833, Georgiana Molloy expressed her distress at the social situation, for instance, "How would you like to be three years in a place without a female of your own rank to speak to or to be with you whatever happened?"³⁴ and Gerald Lefroy, in 1845, complained of the deficiency of social equals in the colony.³⁵ This well-established superiority was clearly outlined in the *Perth Gazette* in 1847 in the following comment, "It was ordained from the beginning of the world that there should be different denominations and classes of people, in order that each nation should preserve its own internal peace. It was ordained from the beginning that there should be masters and servants."³⁶

Hierarchy within the inferior working classes and transported convicts was also evident in colonial Western Australia. It seems that, especially prior to the convict arrival, pioneering Western Australian working-classes were identified according to their race, nationality and occupation, as George Fletcher Moore recorded in April 1837, "I have hired a black fellow (a lascar) at 30 shillings a month as a servant."³⁷ and in March 1843, Rev. Wollaston wrote, "Plenty of Indian servants of both

³¹Smith, B. J. 1961, 'Early Western Australian Literature: A Guide to Colonial Life', *University Studies in History*, vol. 4, no 1, pp. 29

³²Millett, E. 1980, *An Australian Parsonage or the Settler and the Savage in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 314

Supported by: Stannage, C. T. 1979, *The People of Perth, A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City*, Perth City Council, Perth.

³³Jennings, R. J. 1983, '*Busselton*' *Outstation on the Vasse 1830-1850*, The South West Printing and Publishing Company, Bunbury. pp. 53

³⁴Hasluck, A. 1955, *Portrait with Background: A Life of Georgiana Molloy*, Oxford University Press, London. pp. 104

³⁵Garden, D. S. 1977, *Albany: A Panorama of the Sound from 1827*, Thomas Nelson Limited, Melbourne. pp. 34

³⁶*Perth Gazette*, 10 July 1847

³⁷Moore, G. F. 1884, *Diary of Ten Years: Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, M Walbrook, London. pp. 305

sexes.”³⁸ Undoubtedly, the English working-classes were at the apex of their own hierarchy as Moore recounted in November 1831, “Our Irish servants are beginning to be just as saucy as the English ones, who expect to live here as their masters did at home.”³⁹ In contrast, non-English or Irish-born labourers (Chinese, Afghanis and Aborigines) were allocated to the lowest rank in the colony. However, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the working-class structure in Western Australia was remodelled with the commencement of convict transportation. Although convicts, ticket-of-leave men and ex-convicts were low in the social structure, they were still above the non-English or Irish-born residents.

According to British Parliamentary Papers, exiled transportees were assorted into four classes as first, second, third and fourth and the classification depended on the report of personal character, discipline and general conduct since conviction.⁴⁰ Mrs. Edward Millett, a wife of an Anglican clergyman during 1863-1869 explained the differences between these colonial classes, “The country chaplains had been accused [sic] (accustomed) to regard their flocks as being composed of three classes; free settlers, ticket-of-leave convicts and served expirees. The chaplains perceived settlers and the ‘freed men’ as their honourable parishioners and treated the prison restraint convicts as a distinct and separate class.”⁴¹ As Stannage describes, the convicts and ex-convicts were prohibited and precluded from associating with agricultural societies, from attending Mechanics’ Institutes or from attending the social functions of the gentry, especially dances.⁴²

The Victorians were not reticent about social and class differences. For example, in Victorian England, railway trains were divided into three classes and church and chapel seating was often separated into rented pews for the wealthy and free pews for the poor.⁴³ Employers often assessed their employees based on their physical characteristics, especially the male servants.⁴⁴

³⁸Burton, C. A. 1975, *Wollaston’s Picton Journal (1841-1844)*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 147

³⁹Moore, G. F. 1884, *Diary of Ten Years: Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, M Walbrook, London. pp. 87

⁴⁰*Transportation, British Parliamentary Papers*, vol. 13, Irish University Press, Dublin. pp. 155

⁴¹Millett, E. 1980, *An Australian Parsonage or the Settler and the Savage in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 347

⁴²Stannage, C. T. 1979, *The People of Perth: A Social History of Western Australia’s Capital City*, Perth City Council, Perth. pp. 101

⁴³Read, D. 1979, *England 1868-1914: The Age of Urban Democracy*, Longman, London. pp. 23

⁴⁴Lorimer, D. A. 1978, *Colour, Class and the Victorians: English Attitudes to the Negro in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*, Leicester University Press, Leicester. pp. 104

Similar segregation was evident in Western Australian society throughout the nineteenth century. For instance, in January 1852 Alfred Hawes Stone explained the existing class distinctions of the society, "There was a cricket match between the Gentlemen and Tradesmen, won by the latter."⁴⁵ Traveller and journalist Victor Courtney observed the class-distinction in Western Australian society during the 1880s. He described the agricultural and grazing province of York, where the local *yeomanry* had accepted the white chalk line which segregated the floor at annual dances into their own dancing space and that reserved for the *gentry*, until in 1887 the young farm labourers deliberately danced over the borderline and "Finally the chalk line had gone forever."⁴⁶

The English practice of segregated church and chapel seating according to class was also evident in Western Australia. For instance, Mrs Millett described in the 1860s, "On Sundays the inmates of the convict depot were marched once a day to church, where sitting on the benches, especially appropriated to their use, and wearing their best suit of white arrow marked jackets..."⁴⁷ In 1864, visiting journalist Howard Willoughby observed,

"In other penal colonies the free population have made no marked distinction between themselves and the emancipated class. The children of both have been educated together, and have intermarried, and thus any possibility of a collision has been prevented. In Western Australia no such amalgamation has taken place. A deep gulf, as that between Dives (typical name for rich man) and Lazarus, (poor man) separates the two classes. To such an extent is the feeling carried, that no decent labourer will hobnob in the pothouse with a 'ticker'."⁴⁸

⁴⁵Stone, C. H. 1929, 'The Diary of Alfred Hawes Stone,' *Early Days*, vol. 1, part. 6, pp. 43

⁴⁶Courtney, V. 1956, *All I May Tell: A Journalists Story*, Shakespeare Head Press, London. pp. 160-161

⁴⁷Millett, E. 1980, *An Australian Parsonage or the Settler and the Savage in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 345

⁴⁸Willoughby, H. 1865, *Transportation: The British Convict: A Visit to the Swan River Settlement*, Harrison & Sons, London. pp. 46

This observation was also supported by the Western Australian colonists themselves. For example, in the 1870s W. H. Knight wrote: "There are still, and for some time to come will continue to be, class distinctions in the social circles of the colony. There is a definite line of demarcation between the emancipated convict and the free emigrant, which strongly affects the intercourse of private life."⁴⁹ Joseph Reilly in the 1900s, merely half a century after the initial transportation claimed that, "A convict system in Western Australia was a pronounced success." He summarised the colonial ideology in relation to upper-classes and lesser-classes as, "the colony enormously benefited the industrious existence of the convicts, whilst preventing them from acquiring a real independence or ascendancy in the social scale."⁵⁰

As Crowley explains, the existence of the indentured labour system and the evolution of a legal code to facilitate and regulate the masters' and servants' relationships, was utterly in favour of the masters. This designated the existing society, its class structure and its social attitudes. A stern and punitive statutory regulation was the obvious consequence when one class was determined to maintain its social superiority.⁵¹

Education in nineteenth-century Western Australia was regarded as a privilege rather than a fundamental human right.⁵² Class distinction meant that education was confined to the colonial ruling classes. However, a broader view of education was evident in the colony, for instance, the Greenough Member of Parliament in 1880 noted "The tendency of the present system of education was to transform the young, who in the future were to recruit the ranks of the physical labourers of Western Australia, into clerks."⁵³

⁴⁹Knight, W. H. 1870, *Western Australia: Its History, Progress and Condition and Prospects and its Advantages as a Field of Emigration*, Perth Gazette and Western Australian Times. Perth. pp. 74

⁵⁰Reilly, J. T. 1903, *Reminiscences of Fifty Years Residence in Western Australia*, Sands & McDougall, Perth. pp. 41

⁵¹Crowley, F. K. 1949, 'Master and Servant in Western Australia 1829-1851', *Early Days*, vol. 4, part. 5, pp. 94

⁵²Spring, J. 1998, *Education and the Rise of the Global Economy*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, London. pp. 190-216

⁵³*The Victorian Express*, 22 September 1880

The use of convict teachers also reflects the class distinction. As Charles Bateson explains, Western Australia received more educated transportees than the eastern colonies.⁵⁴ The government policy of appointing convicts as schoolmasters commenced in 1851. Over one hundred convict schoolmasters and tutors were assigned during 1850-1890, especially for remote and unsatisfactorily attended schools. Many convict teachers, however, were subjected to discrimination and prejudice. Regardless of their qualifications and service they were often treated as condemned criminals.⁵⁵ This segregation between free and bond classes concerned some settlers. For instance, in September 1864 Bishop Matthew Hale, the chairman of the General Board of Education advised Governor John Hampton,

“We admit that it would seem quite natural to condemn absolutely the practice of employing men who have been convicts, as the Instructors of the children of the Colony. If such a state of things should hereafter arise in this colony, as that men should set themselves Class against Class, the free against the bond, and the bond against the free ... this would be a state of things injurious in the highest degree to the interests and happiness of the Colony.”⁵⁶

In Western Australia, labouring classes differed from their English counterparts in relation to social position and privileges. Much of the colonial working-class derived from those counties of England most affected by agricultural and industrial transformation, where the traditional relationship of master and servant was most strongly under threat.⁵⁷ For upper-class colonists the ‘servant problem’ was a frequent topic of discussion throughout the early settlement period.⁵⁸ Contrary to traditional English working-class, labourers transformed themselves into proprietors and often ascended in the social hierarchy. A situation captured by colonial employer George Fletcher Moore who wrote, “Masters here are only in name; they are the slaves of their indentured servants”.⁵⁹ The attitudes of these new proprietors towards the landed gentry differed markedly from those of their English counterparts. For example, pioneering labourer Henry Trigg described the prevailing stance of the industrious classes, “Whilst here the mechanic or tradesmen

⁵⁴Bateson, C. 1969, *The Convict Ships 1787-1868*, Brown Son & Ferguson Ltd. London.

⁵⁵Leahy, S. M. 1993, *Convict Teachers and the Children of Western Australia, 1850-1890*, Unpublished Thesis, Edith Cowan University, Perth. pp. 26-87

⁵⁶Colonial Secretary's Office Records on Education, Battye Library, Perth. No 538, pp. 48-53

⁵⁷Mazzarol, T. W. 1978, 'Tradition. Environment and the Industrial Labour in Early Western Australia', *Studies in Western Australian History*, vol. 3, pp. 30-37

⁵⁸Stannage, C. T. 1979, *The People of Perth: A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City*, Perth City Council, Perth. pp. 206

⁵⁹Moore, G. F. 1884, *Diary of Ten Years: Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, M Walbrook, London. pp. 59-60

is the most independent men in the colony, not caring for any Gent as all are glad to be served by him.”⁶⁰ Shortly after the establishment of the settlement, George Fletcher Moore predicted the forming of a workers’ club as having a detrimental effect on the control held by the upper-classes, “They have too much control over their masters already; and club-law would be a terrible exercise and increase of their power.”⁶¹ During the early settlement years, the labouring classes experienced low stipends and poor conditions.⁶² Less than six months after the foundation of the Swan River Colony, the Master and Servants’ Act [4 Victoria No.2.] provided for the legal settlement of disputes between masters and servants.⁶³ However, English traveller, Richard Twopeny observed during the 1870-1880, that “Australian labouring classes were ten times improved and superior than their British counterparts”⁶⁴ and Lady Anna Brassey, an author who travelled Western Australia during 1887, noted that the existing labouring stipends were greater than the gentlemanly professionals. “The schoolmaster was dressed like [a] gentleman, but earns less than the labourer.”⁶⁵

From these records emerges a complex portrait of social structure and class in the late nineteenth-century Western Australia. Towards the latter part of the century, working-class conditions improved and the protocols of the upper-classes mutated to some degree. As Veblen notes, when society changes, everything associated with it is also subject to mutation.⁶⁶ Thus, the distinctive characteristics of colonial society caused noticeable transitions in the later years of the nineteenth century.

⁶⁰ *Letters of Henry Trigg*, (Typescript, no 6, 18/04/1830) Battye Library, Perth.

⁶¹ Moore, G. F. 1884, *Diary of Ten Years: Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, M Walbrook, London. pp. 91

⁶² Mazzarol, T. W. 1978, ‘Tradition, Environment and the Industrial Labour in Early Western Australia’, *Studies in Western Australian History*, vol. 3, pp. 30-36

⁶³ Crowley, F. K. 1949, ‘Master and Servant in Western Australia 1829-1851’, *Early Days*, vol. 4, part. 5, pp. 110-111

Russell, E. 1980, *A History of the Law in Western Australia and its Development from 1829-1979*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 19-20

⁶⁴ Twopeny, R. 1976, *Town Life in Australia 1883*, Penguin Books, Melbourne. pp. 71

⁶⁵ Brassey, A. 1889, *The Last Voyage to India and Australia*, London. pp. 177

⁶⁶ Veblen, T. 1899, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Unwin Books, London. pp. 21-28

Historical Context of the Study

The Victorian Era

The Victorian era corresponds with the reign of Queen Victoria in England from 1839 to 1901. It was an optimistic time in which scientific and industrial invention developed and thrived. The Industrial Revolution revolutionised transportation, communication and mass production. Developments in technology produced steam engines, textiles and sewing machinery. Developments in printing produced a proliferation of Victorian scrap art, cards and magazines. There were also notable developments towards gender and racial equality during this era. The slave trade was abolished and women were allowed to vote.

The Time Span

The time span covered in this thesis is from approximately 1829 to 1901. This covers the initial Western Australian settlement in 1829 through to the Federation of Australian States in 1901: an obvious rationale for the cessation of Western Australian colonial status. This study therefore focuses on the clothing and fashion of early immigrants, predominantly of European descent, encompassing all classes of pioneers and convicts from Great Britain and the British Empire generally.

Application and Utilisation of Sources and Evidence

The narrative of clothing portrays the human affairs of human society, such as social divisions, social attitudes, social behaviour and social desires, perhaps more than any other scholarship. Researching social history can be likened to a jigsaw puzzle with many distorted pieces which mainly result from the absence of or restriction to related information. It also results from what has survived and what is available. A complete understanding of the social history in any given society in any historical milieu therefore requires the contribution of many disciplines.

Documentary and iconographical materials as well as surviving costumes are the primary sources of evidence for this study. Documentary records, such as census materials contain demographic information as well as data regarding occupation, status, dwellings, capital, and household information. Therefore, census documents are important statistical chronicles of colonial Western Australian social history. Official information, such as judicial records, taxation records, commerce and production figures, official export/import records, shipping data, school registers and hospital records are also valuable. Newspapers and magazines of the time are

indispensable sources of information as they document the major political and economic events, societal and recreational activities, descriptions of social environment, community announcements, advertisements and reports. In relation to fashion and clothing information, commercial newspapers in Western Australia, from the 1870s onwards, published descriptive fashion statements and articles, often with illustrations. In particular, information from clothing advertisements in newspapers presents invaluable evidence. Newspapers, therefore, are of historical and sociological relevance in the study of Western Australian social history.

Diaries and letters, like those of *Georgiana Molloy*, *George Fletcher Moore*, *Eliza Brown*, *Isabella Ferguson* and *Rev. John Wollaston*, written by people both great and humble, are another prominent documentary resource which reveals the particulars of everyday life.

Most of personal correspondence in colonial Western Australia was written by the upper-classes. At that time, children (especially those from the upper-classes) were taught letter-writing as an art.⁶⁷ In nineteenth-century English society, women (especially those from the lower-classes) were prohibited from attending schools or universities, performing any public functions or establishing professions.⁶⁸ The medical profession also expressed its objection to women's literacy, claiming that writing and reading were bad for women's health and could result in a range of diseases, and that women's brains would even burst if they were exposed to the risks of literacy.⁶⁹ As Mary Gilmore explains, there were 'scientific' reasons for limiting girls' education, ie, " ...that a woman breathed differently from a man, and that 'no female' could ever be a doctor or a lawyer, as only men could reason or had the faculty of logic."⁷⁰

According to Vincent, the percentage of literate and illiterate in England was almost exactly balanced at the end of the 1830s.⁷¹ Therefore, most of the lower-classes, especially lower-class women, who arrived in colonial Western Australia would have been illiterate, hence there is a dearth of lower-class literature and in particular of lower-class women's literature, especially personal correspondence.

⁶⁷Cowan, P. (ed) 1991, *A Faithful Picture*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle. pp. 1

⁶⁸Clark, P and Spender, D. 1992, *Life Lines Australian Women's Letters and Diaries 1788 to 1840*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney. pp. 21

⁶⁹Dyhouse, C. 1981, *Girls Growing in Victorian England*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.
McCrone, K. E. 1988, *Playing the Game: Sport and Physical Emancipation of English Women, 1870-1914*, The University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky.

⁷⁰Gilmore, M. 1934, *1870s from: Old Days, Old Ways*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney.

⁷¹Vincent, D. 1989, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750-1914*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. pp. 22

The excessive cost of postage was another influencing factor. For example, “We pay 4d. postage for every letter from the Swan,”⁷² wrote Rev. Wollaston. Although Penny Postage was inaugurated in 1840, it was only accessible in the Western Australian colony from 1854. Until then the cost of postage varied according to distance. Rates charged for the delivery of letters included 4d for every letter received from overseas and delivered to the port of arrival, and 6d for delivery elsewhere.⁷³ A letter of more than one sheet was charged double.⁷⁴ Moreover, the cost of postage could never be calculated accurately by the sender. There was the rate from York to Fremantle, which at least was known, then there was an amount to be paid to the Captain of the vessel carrying the mail and this varied. Then another rate was charged on arrival in England. If the letter went overland through Europe, there was another charge.⁷⁵ As a result, writing criss-crossed the pages to save space. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1:

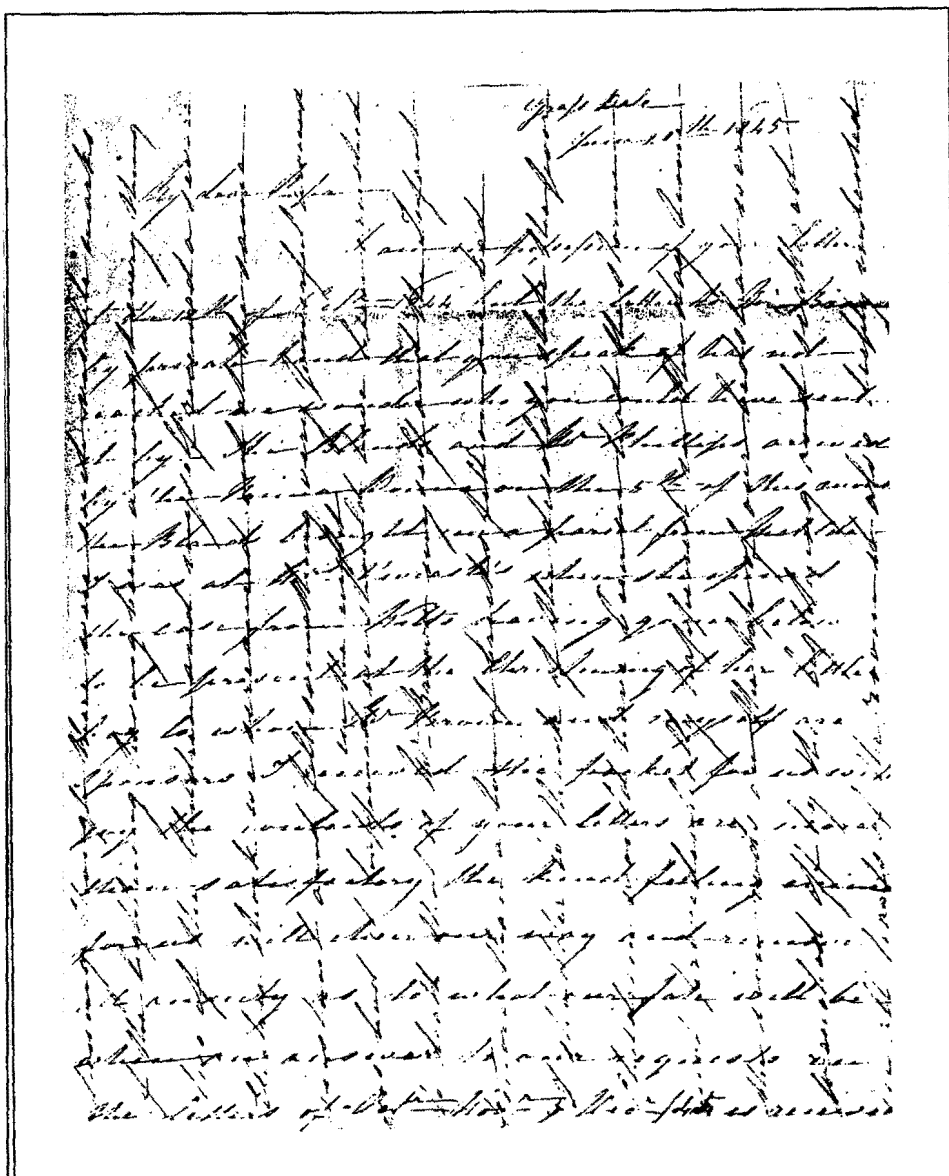
Letter written by Eliza Brown

⁷²Burton, C. A. 1975, *Wollaston's Albany Journals Kept by Rev. J.R. Wollaston*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 108

⁷³Russell, E. 1980, *A History of the Law in Western Australia and its Development from 1829-1979*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth. pp. 56-57

⁷⁴Cowan, P. (ed) 1991, *A Faithful Picture*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle. pp. 100

⁷⁵Cowan, P. (ed) 1991, *A Faithful Picture*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle. pp. 8



Source: Cowan, P. (ed) 1991, *A Faithful Picture*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle.

The above letter, written by Eliza Brown on 20 June 1845⁷⁶, for instance, reflected the artistry, literacy and maximum usage of writing paper by colonists. This system of letter-writing was evident in much colonial correspondence throughout the century.

⁷⁶Cowan, P. (ed) 1991, *A Faithful Picture*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle.

The most important sources of evidence are provenanced surviving costumes which tell the period, style and wearers' positions. Nonetheless, "Many scholars overlook the importance of such 'objects' in the creation of knowledge. Yet of all the methodologies used to study fashion history, one of the most valuable is the interpretation of objects."⁷⁷ Surviving clothing (ie, collections in museums, historical societies and private collections) provides researchers with a powerful tool for historical and contemporary socio-cultural investigation. As many costume historians and writers acknowledge (eg, Steele, 1998, Prown, 1980, Fleming, 1973), object-based research provides an incomparable resource for the historical research of clothing. In the course of this study, I have photographed and technically sketched approximately 200 provenanced items and approximately 500 copies of photographs of Victorian costumes.

The study of surviving clothing also enhances the other approaches of colonial social history of Western Australia. For example, the magnitude of clothing importations in the nineteenth century has been disregarded in Western Australian economic histories which is surprising given that approximately 25% of the colonial importations were clothing or similar commodities. Studying surviving clothing also increased the consciousness of gender-related issues in Victorian Western Australia.

As many costume historians acknowledge, object-based research provides an incomparable perception into the historical research of clothing. As clothing reflects the wearers' social standing both individually and collectively, the study of clothing is an excellent method for analysing socio-cultural differences.

Surviving costumes enable the study of construction and sewing techniques, textile weaving techniques and the structure of fibres in the nineteenth century. Construction techniques, ie, embroidery, stitching and trimming detail, cut and construction methods, ie, pattern shapes and dressmaking methods as well as the shapes of clothing vary from century to century. Therefore, it is paramount to identify surviving costumes according to their construction. The examination of construction and sewing techniques can authenticate the similarities or differences in clothing in respective cultures. After examining approximately ninety-eight per-cent of the surviving Western Australian clothing and some English surviving clothing, it was clear that colonial settlers' attire appeared similar, but not identical to that of the British, in terms of extravagance and refinement. Most clothing was less decorative as was also observed by, colonist Charlotte Bussell who wrote of

⁷⁷Steele, V. 1998, 'A Museum of Fashion is More than a Clothing-bag', *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, vol. 2, Issue. 4, pp. 327

another colonist Georgiana Molly's clothing: "She was dressed in a dark blue print very plainly made..."⁷⁸

Style is inescapably culturally determined and the surviving clothing has value as cultural evidence.⁷⁹ The majority of less ornate Western Australian attire reflects the general social conditions of the colony, ie, privation and destitution (especially in the pioneering period) which suggests major differences between the societies of Western Australia and Britain. On the other hand, some Western Australian costumes were strikingly similar to English costumes, suggesting the availability of English patterns, the imitation of English fashions and styles through the influence of English and colonial fashion literature.

Surviving costumes also tell us about the size of their wearers. The surviving costumes, ships/vessels, armour, houses and furniture indicated a slightness of build of the early colonists. Measurements on nineteenth-century dressmakers' patterns reveal the relatively smaller body dimensions as do the very low decks and inner compartments of the nineteenth-century vessels, eg, *Brig Amity* (displayed in Albany, Western Australia). *Strawberry Hill* in Albany, a residence of Governor Sir Richard Spencer and *Patrick Taylor Cottage* in Albany, erected in the nineteenth century, have small rooms, low ceilings, low doorways and living areas compared with present day dwellings. Western Australian surviving dresses range from size eight to fourteen in Australian standard dress sizes with the majority of dresses appearing to be equivalent to size eight to ten. The surviving nineteenth-century parasols, gloves and shoes were also small, as well as diminutive men's waistcoats.

A further source of evidence is pictorial such as paintings, portraits, engravings, tapestries and photographs (since 1840).

Research Design

Model, Methodology (Chart)

⁷⁸Pickering, W. G. 1928, 'The Letters of Georgiana Molloy', *Early Days*, Vol. 1, Part. 2, pp. 68

⁷⁹Steel, V. 1985, *Fashion and Eroticism*, Oxford University Press, New York. pp. 329

Research Model An Overall Framework

History of Costume: The Consumption, Governance, Potency
and Patronage of Attire in Victorian and early Edwardian
Western Australia

Literature Review

Research Questions

1. What were the major social and geographical impacts on early Western Australian clothing?

2. To what extent does Western Australian colonial clothing reflect the social structure, standing and inheritance of Victorian Britain?

3. How did the industry of clothing, resources and materials impact on the consumption of clothing in colonial Western Australia?

4. Is the chronological evolution of fashion in colonial Western Australia consistent with the concurrent fashions in Britain and other Australian colonies?

5. Did colonial clothing negotiate gender boundaries in the nineteenth century?

Multiple Case Study /Comparative Approach

Comparative/ Multiple Case Study Approach

Quantitative/Comparative/ Multiple Case Study/ Approach

Comparative/ Multiple Case Study/ Observation Approach

Observation & Case Study Approach

Analysis

Reporting the Findings

In addressing the research question, 'What were the major social and geographical impacts on early Western Australian clothing?', the study examines the variable messages encoded in colonial dress. In examining whether the international factors, ie, British influence, French influence etc, had an impact on colonial clothing, this study investigates the effectiveness of British ideology in the colony. In analysing clothing influences in the colony, it is important to understand the connection between prevailing fashion trends and the range of materials imported to the colony. This provides a rich form of evidence to understand how and why subtle but significant changes in clothing occurred, particularly adaptations made in response to the new environment.

The study examines the clothing of every section of colonial society, eg, upper-class, lower-class, working-class, convicts etc. This provides a foundation for an analyses on how clothing reflects and influences the social structure and class inheritance of Victorian Britain.

In addressing the research question, whether the industry of clothing, resources and materials impacted on consumption of the Western Australian clothing, the study examines resources and materials utilised in the development of the Western Australian clothing economy, such as importing, manufacturing etc.

Examining the attire of men and women in private, public and work environments will assist in understanding how nineteenth-century clothing behaviours were influenced by gender. In examining gender in colonial attire, the study includes discussions of gender in the British and colonial societal context in order to understand the expression of gender in colonial clothing.

The study commences with a review of the literature as well as the theoretical frameworks employed in the research. As MacRaild explains, all history is comparative, either of individual or collective disciplines. Without drawing comparisons, the relationship between unique and general can never be known. Moreover a comparative investigation assists in posing new questions, defining new problems and identifying broader patterns.⁸⁰

Therefore, it is paramount to understand Western Australian colonial attire within the nineteenth-century British context, primarily because of the British involvement with the initial settlement and the subsequent ancestry and inheritance of its initial colonial inhabitants. Comparison with Britain provides the opportunity to identify and analyse adaptations and changing social structures within colonial Western

⁸⁰MacRaild, D. M. 1997, *Studying History*, Macmillan Press, London. pp. 85-122

Australian society. The study of the nineteenth-century British context assists with the interpretation of the primary evidential sources in Western Australia. The study includes multiple case studies to address issues such as the economics of clothing, such as, clothing workers, the clothing industry and clothing importation, etc.

Aim

The aim of this research has been to analyse the economic and sociological history of the consumption, influence and power of fashion and clothing in Victorian Western Australia.

Objectives

1. To examine the broader historical, cultural, sociological, economical and environmental impacts on early Western Australian clothing;
2. To evaluate theories in relation to the fashion and finery discipline;
3. To analyse the traditions, inheritance, and class distinctions as reflected in colonial Western Australian apparel; and
4. To identify clothing as an effective cultural practice in relation to the statement of style and fashion.

Research Questions

The proposed study will address the following research questions which have been developed from the above objectives:

1. What were the major social and geographical impacts on early Western Australian clothing?
2. To what extent does Western Australian colonial clothing reflect the social structure, standing and inheritance of Victorian Britain?
3. How did the industry of clothing, resources and materials impact on the consumption of clothing in colonial Western Australia?
4. Is the chronological evolution of fashion in colonial Western Australia, consistent with Victorian fashion in Britain and other Australian colonies?
5. Did colonial clothing negotiate gender boundaries in the nineteenth century?

The Significance of the Study

The dearth of publications, evident in only two journal articles⁸¹ relating to clothing, fashion and finery in Western Australia and the fragility of surviving evidence has inspired this study. The comparison of styles of clothing with the Old World will provide an understanding of the impact of inherited traditions and customs in colonial Western Australian clothing. The research will also examine the geographical, economical and sociological influences on Western Australian clothing to uncover the effects on dress, adornment and social order in this society. This study seeks to arouse interest in a neglected area of Western Australian cultural heritage. Using clothing as a significant social and cultural practice, this study will contribute to current understandings of colonial Western Australian social and economic history.

Limitations of the Results

The parameters of this research include Western Australia, not Australia generally and not other British colonies. The study does not include under-clothing, footwear and accessories, Aboriginal clothing or children's clothing.

In spite of the boundaries established for this study, other limitations also hindered the collection of evidence. For example, in the course of my research, I experienced many setbacks such as restricted and limited access to costume collections held in museums or by historical societies. Like others, I frequently found that "Holdings in galleries and museums remain virtually uncatalogued, and items of dress are not easily accessible to the scholar. Many of these garments are likely never to be provenanced".⁸² Unfortunately, in Western Australia, a few of the museum costume collections (significantly government-funded institutions) remained unaccessible or restricted. By contrast, in Britain, especially in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Museum of Costume in Bath, there was an abundance of facilities, unlimited access and assistance available for educational and research purposes. Nevertheless, university contacts assisted me in gaining access to some of the Western Australian museums and historical societies.

⁸¹Cowan, E. 1928, 'Early Social Life and Fashions', *The Western Australian Historical Society Journal*, Vol 1, Part 3, pp. 1-17

De Fircks, T. 1988, 'Costumes in the Early Years of Western Australia', *The Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 9, Part 6. pp. 27-37

⁸²Maynard, M. 1994, *Fashioned from Penury: Dress as Cultural Practice in Colonial Australia*, The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, Cambridge. pp. 5

Theoretical Context

The psychology and sociology of costume is intricate and is discussed by econo-sociological authorities such as Thorstein Veblen and Georg Simmel. The work of these theorists will inform this study.

Veblen's Leisure Theory⁸³

Veblen's Leisure Theory addresses modes of conduct, especially those of the nineteenth century. Veblen's theory of 'conspicuous consumption' explains the fashion follower's motivation. His theory of economic consumption is based on the idea that people choose their clothing primarily to indicate their status to others. In the *Theory of the Leisure Class*, Veblen proposes, "The valuation of persons in respect of worth" (pp. 34) which defines who is to be regarded as inferior and who as superior. He explains this difference in terms of employment, that is the distinction between 'exploit' and 'drudgery'. Employment which is classified as exploit is deemed 'honourable, worthy, noble' (pp. 15), whereas those tasks which actually involve work are deemed 'unworthy, debasing, ignoble' (pp. 15). Therefore, Veblen bases his Leisure Theory on the emergence of the distinction between exploitative work and ordinary productive work and its application to the organisation of the economic order. In Veblen's time, exploitative work brought financial success enabling property ownership as a conspicuous indicator of achieved status and entitlement. (pp. 25-26). A consequence of exploitative work was the delegation of tasks to those one employs. This then enables leisure time for those in control. The term 'leisure' for Veblen, means the "non-productive consumption of time" (pp. 43). But he also points out that "Conspicuous leisure wastes potential production and generates resistance to economic or social change. Conspicuous leisure is reflected in conspicuous consumption" (pp. 68-101). Conspicuous consumption occurs when members of that society spend money on leisure and the appropriate clothing and services for leisure activities. This skews production to meet the demand for luxury goods and services. At the same time, the leisure class imposes guidelines, ie, the way of dressing, for the lesser-classes. Dress and fashion therefore demonstrated both conspicuously and vicariously that the wearer was not only wealthy, but also was a member of the leisure-class.

⁸³Veblen, T. 1899, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Unwin Books, London.

Simmel's Fashion Simulation Theory

In his Fashion Simulation theory, Simmel outlines the role of fashion in nineteenth-century societies, where social structure had distinct classes. Simmel's theory advocates a 'trickle-down process' of fashion, whereby styles that were first created and exhibited by the upper-class, were later adopted by the middle-class and lower-classes. According to Simmel, fashion is a form of imitation. Fashion is also an indication of internal social cohesion as people dress in a similar manner to identify with each other. Fashion thus differentiates one social stratum from another. However, according to Simmel, this is an ever changing process. Each time the elite initiate a fashion and the masses imitate it in an effort to obliterate the distinction of class, the elite then abandon that style for an even newer mode to re-establish class distinction. This process also quickens with the increase of wealth. Fashion is therefore, according to Simmel, an initiation of class distinction which does not exist in tribal or classless societies.⁸⁴

Acknowledging the Historical Distinctiveness Between the Centuries and Epochs

In applying the above theories, I have selected those developed in the era of investigation for several reasons. Arguably, as many experts have accepted, in any historical study literary texts should be interpreted within the appropriate historical context. For example, in his tome, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*,⁸⁵ Jerome Carcopino states, "If 'Roman life' is not to become lost in anachronisms or petrified in abstraction, we must study it within a strictly defined period."

The differences between centuries are significantly varied in the context of human deportment, customs, traditions and attitudes.⁸⁶ In fact the pursuit of etiquette has been a societal concern for centuries. For example, Martin Luther published a book on table manners in the sixteenth century and there were at least sixty etiquette books published in nineteenth-century England.⁸⁷ Manners and deportment are constantly transformed with changing society, therefore these social behaviours should not be regarded merely as details of little consequence; they are an expression of a particular era as much as any other outward manifestation. Thus, in

⁸⁴Simmel, G. 1957, 'Fashion', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LXI 1, Number 6, pp. 541-558

⁸⁵Carcopino, J. 1941, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*, Penguin Books. pp. 9

⁸⁶Wildeblood, J. 1965, *The Polite World: A Guide to English Manners and Deportment*, Davis Poynter Ltd, London.

⁸⁷*Australian Etiquette: Rules and Usage of the Best Society*, 1980, J. M. Dent, London.
<http://www.geocities.com/Paris/Cafe/4150/rules/etiquette.html> (04/12/2002)
<http://www.fortunecity.com/victorian/conway/286/properties.html> (04/12/2002)

accordance with Roland Barthes, "When we examine how clothes define an individual, we must also set the man or woman within the context of their place and time"⁸⁸ as the differences in clothing styles between the centuries are significant. This applies not only to upper-class clothing, but also to some sections of the lower-classes. As Cunnington explains, the classification of household servants, for example, their titles, occupations, and livery, is unique to each century from the Medieval period through to pre-twentieth century.⁸⁹ Cutting and construction techniques also varied considerably from century to century as each era produced its own unique decorations and silhouettes. Although these changes were gradual and usually evolved from a previous style, the distinctiveness of each century is still perceivable. In fact, Kroeber suggests that the fundamental changes in European fashion developed on an average cycle of approximately one century.⁹⁰

Clothes represent an art form ascending out of a particular period and environment. According to Francois Boucher,⁹¹ costume and, its application and meaning, has varied with each period. Carl Kohler argues that the significant differences between the stature of people of the earlier centuries has also contributed to costume change, that is, clothes of the Empire period seem small to us today and those of the sixteenth century even smaller.⁹² Men and women in the twentieth century have grown stouter and taller, when compared with the pre-nineteenth centuries.

Differences in fashion theories also reflect different eras. For example, nineteenth-century theorists, such as Veblen and Simmel, regarded differentiation and stratification as essential pre-conditions of fashion. Whilst twentieth-century theorist, Herbert Blumer, regards fashion as an expression of collective behaviour, that is, the fashion mechanism appears not in response to a need for class differentiation and class emulation, but in response to a wish to be in fashion.⁹³ This thesis, however, follows the stance held by Veblen and Simmel.

⁸⁸Cited in: Hollander, A. 1995, *Sex and Suits*, Alfred A. Knoff, New York.

⁸⁹Cunnington, P. 1974, *Costume of Household Servants from the Middle Ages to 1900*, Adam and Charles Black, London.

⁹⁰Wills, G. & Midgley, D. 1973, *Fashion Marketing: An Anthology of View Points and Perspectives*, Allen and Unwin Ltd, London. pp. 12

⁹¹Boucher, F. 1966, *A History of Costume in the West*, Thames and Hudson, London. pp. 5-6

⁹²Kohler, C. 1963, *A History of Costume*, Dover Publications, New York. pp. 50

⁹³Blumer, H. 1969, *Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection*, The Sociological Quarterly, Vol. 10. pp. 275-291

Literature Review

There is a considerable body of literature on clothing which has been published in the universal context. These works delve deeply into the societal and cultural significance of nineteenth-century clothing, ie, Bell (1976), Perrot (1994 and 1937); the evolution of styles and fashions in the nineteenth century, ie, Blum (1974), Buck (1961), Cunnington (1959), Cunnington (1937) and Laver (1929); and nineteenth-century men's fashion, ie, Chenoune (1993) and De Marley (1985). Specific types of costume, such as working-class clothing, have been investigated by Barfoot (1961); Charity clothing by Cunnington & Lucas (1978); Household servants' dress from the Middle Ages to 1900 by Cunnington (1974); and Everyday dress by Ewing (1984). Other studies have focussed on leisure costumes, (Cunnington & Mansfield, 1969); Occupational costumes (Cunnington & Lucas, 1967); and Working Dress (De Marley, 1986) and Mourning costumes (Cunnington & Lucas, 1972, and Taylor, 1983).

'Clothing' is defined as a generic term for any covering for the human body. However, the term 'fashion' has many meanings. For example, fashion is, the mode of dress; the prevailing custom especially in dress; the prevailing style at any given time; the prevailing or accepted style often embracing many styles at one time and the particular line or construction, as of a garment.⁹⁴ The term 'fashion' is used in the same broad sense in this thesis.

The utilitarian purposes of clothes have attracted controversy. Social theorists and psychologists generally agree that clothes serve three predominant objectives: decoration, modesty and protection. However, Flagella and Carlyle argue that the primary purpose of clothing is decoration: "The first purpose of clothes was not warmth or decency, but ornament. The first spiritual want of barbarous man is decoration."⁹⁵ It has certainly been noted that primitive people dressed for decoration and not primarily for protection as with the many tribal peoples who decorate their bodies with painted designs on ceremonial occasions. For example, notwithstanding of their harsh living conditions, the natives of *Tierra del Fuego* did not use clothes for protection.⁹⁶ Langner supports the notion that the invention of clothes did not necessarily arise from the need for protection.⁹⁷ However, in

⁹⁴Oxford English Dictionary

Nystrom, P. 1973, 'Character and Direction of Fashion Movements', in *Fashion Marketing*, eds G. Wills & D. Midgeley, Allen and Unwin, London. pp. 4

The Fashion Dictionary

⁹⁵Squire, G. 1974, *Dress Art and Society 1560-1970*, Studio Vista, London. pp. 13

⁹⁶Laver, J. 1969, *Modesty in Dress*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. pp. 1

⁹⁷Langner, L. 1959, *The Importance of Wearing Clothes*, Hastings House, New York. pp. 21

contrast, Roach and Eicher⁹⁸ and Perrot⁹⁹ claim that protection is the prime and universal purpose of clothing.

The psychology and sociology of costume are complex issues which have been reviewed extensively. Carl Flugel has studied the motives and rationalisation of fashionable attire,¹⁰⁰ while Quentin Bell has focused on the morality, consumption and nature of fashion.¹⁰¹ Moreover, according to Bell,¹⁰² the transformative and mutative characteristics of fashion furnish the process of competitive emulation, while Alison Lurie¹⁰³ has stated that clothing is a non-conversational dialect which is correspondingly associated with taste, culture, social identity and the emotions and attitudes of the exhibitor.

Social theorists have argued that fashion is a powerful, influential, effective and authoritative force in society, for instance, Bell asserts that

“fashion for those who live within its empire is a force of tremendous power, fierce, and at times, ruthless in its operation, it governs our behaviour, informs of our sexual appetites, colours our erotic imagination, makes possible, but also distorts, our conception of history and determines our aesthetic valuations”.¹⁰⁴

Konig holds a similar view in that fashion accomplishes and accompanies power.¹⁰⁵

In the context of sociological interest in fashion and clothing, Bell writes, “Our whole conception of the world must be deeply influenced by the changing appearance of our fellow creatures”.¹⁰⁶ According to Roach and Eicher, appearance enables recognition and identification¹⁰⁷ and Veblen points out that the greater part of the expenditure incurred by all classes for apparel is incurred for the sake of a respectable appearance rather than for the protection.¹⁰⁸ Moreover,

⁹⁸Roach, M. E. and Eicher, J. B. (eds) 1965, *Dress, Adornment, and the Social Order*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, London, Sydney. pp. 10

⁹⁹Perrot, P. 1994, *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey. pp. 9

¹⁰⁰Flugel, J. C. 1930, *The Psychology of Clothes*, Hogarth Press, London.

¹⁰¹Bell, Q. 1976, *On Human Finery*, The Hogarth Press, London.

¹⁰²Bell, Q. 1976, *On Human Finery*, The Hogarth Press, London. pp. 113

¹⁰³Lurie, A. 1981, *The Language of Clothes*, William Heinemann Ltd, London. pp. 4

¹⁰⁴Bell, Q. 1976, *On Human Finery*, The Hogarth Press, London. pp. 62

¹⁰⁵Konig, R. 1973, *The Restless Image: A Sociology of Fashion*, Allen and Unwin Ltd, London pp. 142-43

¹⁰⁶Bell, Q. 1976, *On Human Finery*, The Hogarth Press, London.

¹⁰⁷Roach, M. E. and Eicher, J. B. (eds) *Dress, Adornment, and the Social Order*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, London, Sydney. pp. 221

¹⁰⁸Veblen, T. 1899, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Unwin Books, London. pp. 119

research into social prejudice has revealed the importance of even trivial features of outward appearance as triggering discrimination.¹⁰⁹

In the social context, fashion is utilised as a powerful influential factor which reflects social structure. Bell argues that, "Fashionable dress is tied to the competition between classes"¹¹⁰ and for Perrot, (fashionable) clothing reveals differences, hierarchies and solidarities according to a code guaranteed and perpetuated by society and its institutions.¹¹¹ Bell identifies status as a central factor in understanding dress.¹¹² a view that was also taken by Veblen.¹¹³ Simmel's fashion simulation theory explains how the aristocracy and plutocracy abandon any style when it evolves to the popular classes.¹¹⁴ For example, upper-class fashions were readily accessible and were embraced as new styles by the lower-classes. The importance of imitation in the context of fashion is, therefore, significant and is supported by several scholars. Tarde regards imitation as a basic principle of social life,¹¹⁵ a view also favoured by Spencer¹¹⁶. Tarde, Spencer and Simmel see lesser classes, by their imitation, as compelling the upper classes to preserve the distinction between them. Bell explains that emulation occurs where status is challenged as a consequence of the forceful and assertive ascent of the middle class and proletariat.¹¹⁷ Konig argues further that fashion is a regulator in its own right; it becomes a 'pacemaker' of social change, in the course of which customs and styles reach their boundaries so that different interpretations of styles are subsequently initiated.¹¹⁸

In relation to the gender distinction in attire, Geoffrey Squire argues that, prior to the fifteenth century, gender distinctions in dress were less designated or perhaps almost indistinct. Regardless of their gender, aristocracy and plutocracy in the eighteenth century dressed and adorned with extravagant fabrics, embellishments

¹⁰⁹Konig, R. 1973, *The Restless Image: A Sociology of Fashion*, Allen and Unwin, London. pp. 175

¹¹⁰Bell, Q. 1976, *On Human Finery*, The Hogarth Press, London. pp. 155

¹¹¹Perrot, P. 1994, *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey. pp. 8

¹¹²Bell, Q. 1976, *The History of Clothing in 19th Century*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey. pp. 15-24

¹¹³Cited in Bell, Q. 1976, *The History of Clothing in 19th Century*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey. pp. 15

¹¹⁴Simmel, G. 1957, 'Fashion', *Fashion and American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LXII, Number. 6. pp. 545

¹¹⁵Tarde, G. 1903, *The Laws of Imitation*, Henry, Holt & Company, New York.

¹¹⁶Spencer, H. 1892, *The Principles of Sociology: Vol. 2*, D. Appleton & Company, New York. pp. 174-210

¹¹⁷Bell, Q. 1976, *On Human Finery*, The Hogarth Press, London. pp. 115

¹¹⁸Konig, R. 1973, *The Restless Image: A Sociology of Fashion*, Allen and Unwin Ltd, London. pp. 45

and ornaments.¹¹⁹ According to Bell¹²⁰ and Konig,¹²¹ gender distinct apparel appeared with the social and industrial transformation of European societies.

The adaptation, mutation and transformation of fashion and attire is the result of complex interactions between many factors such as economic conditions, political conditions, social conditions, psychological conditions and technology. According to Kroeber and Richardson, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the fundamental features and proportional changes in fashion developed slowly, reaching extremes on an average cycle of approximately one century. They examined women's formal dress from 1605 to 1934 using six dimensions (vertical and horizontal measures from fashion plates of skirts, waist and décolletage). They conclude that, in relation to the width of skirts for instance the 'fullness' was visible every one hundred years, alternately with the relative narrowness of skirts. This implies that every fifty years there is visible change.¹²² This study focuses on fashions between 1829 to 1900 during which time the narrowness of the Empire period was replaced by the fullness of skirts by the 1860s and then returned to narrowness with the bustle style of the 1880s and further narrowness which replaced with the styles of the early 1900s. A range of style and shapes of Western Australian clothing during the period studied can be reviewed in **Appendix 3**.

Historical and Contemporary Literature in Western Australia

The main sources of literature in the Western Australian context between 1829-1833 are early settlers' letters and official documents such as shipping information. From 1833 onwards, newspapers, such as the *Perth Gazette*, presented information ie, exploration, settlements, discoveries, transportation and politics, as well as less serious matters such as the way of life, fashionable attire, etiquette, food and entertainment of the colony.

The pioneering social analysis, Nathaniel Ogle's¹²³ *The Colony of Western Australia: A Manual for Emigrants to that Settlement or its Dependencies* was primarily a guide for investors and immigrants, but the emerging historiography of

¹¹⁹Squire, G. 1974, *Dress Art and Society 1560-1970*, Studio Vista, London. pp. 113

¹²⁰Bell, Q. 1976, *On Human Finery*, The Hogarth Press, London. pp. 92-93

¹²¹Konig, R. 1973, *The Restless Image: A Sociology of Fashion*, Allen and Unwin Ltd, London. pp. 84 - 94

¹²²Kroeber, A. L. C. & Richardson, J. 1973, 'Three Centuries of Women's Fashions', in *Fashion Marketing: An Anthology of View Points and Perspectives*, eds. G. Wills and D. Midgley, Allen & Unwin, London. pp. 47-104

¹²³Ogle, N. 1839, *The Colony of Western Australia: A Manual for Emigrants*, James Fraser, Regent Street, London.

the era, primarily relating to society, social structure, economics, politics and religion is portrayed in a stream of publications. The narratives of pioneer settlers, such as Moore (c1830-c1850),¹²⁴ Wilson (c1830),¹²⁵ and Millett (c1860-1870)¹²⁶ are embedded in collections of personal correspondence. Pioneering, exploration, adventure and colonial life has also been described in *Wollaston's Picton Journals 1841-1856*.¹²⁷ Rev. Wollaston's work on colonial Western Australia provides a portrait of the privation and courage of the pioneer settlers and the constant inconveniences experienced by them. Significantly, as an Anglican clergyman at the apex of the social stratum, Wollaston's annals reflect the segregation of society. Generally, Western Australian official historical literature focuses on government, public and collective affairs, while attire, food and housing have been ignored. As a review of Western Australia's past, Stannage,¹²⁸ in *The People of Perth*, describes the political, economic and sociological history of Perth and Western Australia, from its foundation and colonisation to federation, analysing gentryism, convictism and the development of the Swan River colony.

There are no publications of substantive merit on colonial clothing in Western Australia. Only two documents relate to general fashion and clothing in nineteenth-century Western Australia.¹²⁹ These were papers read before the Royal Historical Society meetings. Both Cowan's *Early Social Life and Fashions* and De Fircks' *Costumes in the Early Years of Western Australia* discuss fashions as described in letters and diaries which are not referenced. De Fircks' evidence came from a few surviving costumes. Also, terminology and periods for instance, are inconsistent, especially when compared to documents published outside Western Australia.

In Australia, twentieth-century literature in relation to fashion and clothing was restricted. There were only a few books relating to colonial fashion and clothing, such as, *Fashioned From Pemury: Dress as Cultural Practice in Colonial Australia* (Maynard, 1994), *Breeches and Bustles: An Illustrated History of*

¹²⁴ Moore, G. F. 1884, *Diary of Ten Years: Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, M Walbrook, London.

¹²⁵ Wilson, T. B. 1968, *Narrative of the Voyage Around the World*, Dawson and Pall Mall, London.

¹²⁶ Millett, E. 1980, *An Australian Parsonage or the Settler and the Savage in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth.

¹²⁷ Wollaston, J. R. 1975, *Wollaston's Picton Journal (1841-1844)*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth.

¹²⁸ Stannage, C. T. 1979, *The People of Perth: A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City*, Perth City Council, Perth.

¹²⁹ Cowan, E. 1928, 'Early Social Life and Fashions', *The Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal*, Vol 1, Part 3, pp. 1-17

De Fircks, T. 1979, 'Costumes in the Early Years of Western Australia', *The Royal Western Australian Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 9, Part 6, pp. 27-37

Clothes Worn in Australia 1788-1914 (Scandrett, 1978), *Costume in Australia* (Fletcher, 1984) and *Clothes in Australia: A Pictorial History 1788-1980* Flower, 1984). In reviewing these publications, the shortcomings below are justifiable.

The differences between colonial Australian settlements were complex and unique (Each colony of Australia had its own class structure, social behaviour, demographics, patterns of economic growth and climate) in the context of clothing and have not been addressed by Maynard¹³⁰, Scandrett¹³¹, Fletcher¹³² or Flower¹³³. These authors have investigated fashion and finery in the context of the collective Australian social history, regardless of the significant distinguishing factors between the Australian colonies.

These include firstly, time difference: the Western Australian colony was established approximately forty years after the initial Eastern settlement, therefore, the eastern settlements were in a different stages of societal development to Western Australia.

Secondly there was status difference: as the Western Australian colony was established as a Crown colony while most eastern colonies were penal colonies and therefore, accommodated different classes of people with different behavioural patterns.

Although the authors intended the content to reflect the general trends of Australian clothing, the contribution by the Western Australian colony is almost entirely disregarded, except in Maynard's *Fashioned From Penury*, where it is referred to on a few occasions.

Margaret Maynard's *Fashioned from Penury* examines colonial Australian attire, its distinctiveness and its cultural and historical implications in the context of colonial Australian social history in general. Notwithstanding the anomalies which encompass the mode and dress, Maynard argues in favour of the uniqueness and distinction of colonial Australian apparel regardless of the wearers' social, political, economic status or gender. However, the differences between Australian colonies in relation to clothing have not been delivered. Convict clothing, for instance, explained in a general context and Western Australian correctional attire, is scarcely mentioned.

¹³⁰Maynard, M. 1994, *Fashioned From Penury: Dress as Cultural Practice in Colonial Australia*, The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, Cambridge.

¹³¹Scandrett, E. 1978, *Breeches and Bustles: An Illustrated History of Clothes Worn in Australia 1788-1914*, Pioneer Design Studio, Victoria.

¹³²Fletcher, M. 1984, *Costume in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

¹³³Flower, C. 1984, *Clothes in Australia: A Pictorial History 1788-1980*, Kangaroo Press, Sydney.

Similarly, Elizabeth Scandrett, Marion Fletcher and Cedric Flower have discussed fashion and finery in the context of collective Australian colonial social history. The authors, ie, Flower, Scandrett and Joel, who have engaged in the discussion of fashion and clothing, have exclusively assembled a general survey of fashionable attire (using surviving clothing as primary sources), as Maynard expresses, the major emphasis has been placed on pictorial imagery and the texts are often somewhat trivial and ill documented.¹³⁴ For example, *Breeches and Bustles* and *Clothes in Australia* are illustrated histories of clothes worn in Australia. Again there is scarcely any information relating to either the Swan River Settlement or the Western Australian Colony. Perhaps this may have been caused because of their ignorance regarding the uniqueness among the colonies in relation to demography and geography, or the scope of their research confined to the eastern colonies. This study aims to address these omissions. The emphasis of this thesis is conditional on the mode of clothing in the social context as a cultural practice rather than a prevalent survey of fashion and style. In this study, the greater prominence has been given to Western Australia and examined on its own terms against the background of international interpretation and theoretical explanation.

¹³⁴ Maynard, M. 1994, *Fashioned From Penury: Dress as Cultural Practice in Colonial Australia*, The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, Cambridge. pp. 4

Outline of Thesis

Chapter 2 reviews the factors which influenced attire and finery in colonial Western Australia. This chapter addresses issues such as whether social/geographical environment and climate affected colonial Western Australian clothing, whether Victorian Western Australian apparel and vogue influenced by inter-colonial and international factors? whether the dominating events (wars, conflicts, Industrial Revolution), commanding ideas and authoritative groups (royalty, nobility) affected early Western Australian clothing (directly or indirectly)? and whether colonial Western Australian attire reflect unique and distinct characteristics?

Chapter 3 introduces the fashion and attire of colonists in colonial Western Australia, within the dynamics of social stratification, social conditions and cultural formation. It also explains the role of British social standing, class structure, societal attitudes, social demeanour and social convention in the Western Australian context.

Chapter 4 analyses the impact, effectiveness and potency of clothing in the context of economic history. It provides a comprehensive account of the development of Western Australia's colonial clothing economy; the resources utilised such as, human resources (ie, dressmakers, tailors, seamstresses, whalers, wholesalers, importers, retailers, shop-keepers); technical resources (ie, fashion magazines, paper patterns, machinery); as well as imported, recycled, ready-made and locally manufactured or constructed clothing and clothing materials/textiles and attire.

In chapter 5, I have addressed the expression of gender in clothing in an interdisciplinary (sociological, psychological and anthropological) and cultural context. To examine gender only within one discipline is to isolate it from the other disciplines of which it is a part. Therefore, to understand 'gender' appropriately, I have endeavoured to weave the work of sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists into the historical material. Changes in cultural perspectives on gender inequality make it significant to examine gender in attire.