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Anne Fogarty

Perpetually Paradoxical Fashion

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Anne Fogarty presented paradoxical views and fashions throughout her career. She initially gained success by designing ready-to-wear dresses for American women that mimicked Dior's New Look. Known as the "queen of petticoats" for her full-skirted, trim-waisted silhouette, she became a significant figure in the American fashion industry. Her guidebook, Wife Dressing: The Fine Art of Being a Well-Dressed Wife*, set forth rules instructing women to dress to please the men in their lives. Later in her career, she founded her own company and adopted a dramatically different viewpoint on women's societal roles. Subsequently, she designed fashion that suited a broader range of women, not just those who were thin and petite. This critical analysis of Fogarty's work uses a feminist lens to explore and interpret her evolving views on fashion. It also includes a*

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material culture analysis of multiple extant Fogarty designs to gain a deeper understanding of her approach to fashioning women.

Keywords Anne Fogarty, American fashion, feminism, male gaze, New Look, ready-to-wear

Introduction

"DON'T LOOK LIKE a steam-fitter or a garage mechanic when what you are is purely and simply a wife," said American fashion designer Anne Fogarty (1919–1980) in her 1959 book, *Wife Dressing: The Fine Art of Being A Well Dressed Wife*.[1] *Wife Dressing* targeted married women or those seeking a husband, advising them on how to secure and maintain one by dressing in a manner that, according to Fogarty, was appropriate for their gender. Figure 1 exemplifies her approach, depicting a dress of quilted cotton, complete with "those famous Fogarty cachets," including a tiny waist that spills out into a full skirt supported by layers of petticoats.[2] This signature silhouette and her 1959 book reinforced traditional gender roles of the era, positioning women as wives and mothers rather than individuals. Yet two years after publishing her book, which focused on dressing to appease men, Fogarty opened her own business and dramatically changed her silhouettes.[3]

Fogarty's career spanned three decades, from 1949 to approximately 1980. During this time, she successfully designed and wrote about the idealized concept of femininity. However, in her personal and professional life she was "proud to be one of the few woman pioneers in the fashion business," a level of independence and achievement that starkly contrasted with the advice provided in her book or embedded in her early design work.[4] Though she perpetuated ideals of matrimony, she married and divorced several times throughout her life.

Anne Fogarty thus presents an interesting fashion paradox. Her idealized silhouettes and glorification of domesticity contrast with her work as a successful woman designer and business owner at a time when such pursuits were antithetical to societally prescribed concepts of womanhood.

This article examines the progression of her career from assistant designer to the owner of an eponymous label, analyzing her story to contextualize how Fogarty's early designs shaped American femininity in a postwar landscape, while allowing for a nuanced consideration of how she found empowerment as both a designer and a woman. Examining Fogarty from a feminist perspective illuminates the contradiction between her changing perspectives on women's roles and her successful career as an American fashion designer; she often simultaneously reinforced and challenged conventions throughout her career.

Initially, Fogarty's traditional silhouettes enhanced her credibility as a fashion designer, as society viewed women's beauty through the male gaze—a concept described by Laura Mulvey as presenting women as objectified beings.[5] This aligned with the generally accepted notion of women's roles in the postwar period that prioritized being a wife and mother. However, the later years of her career welcomed a change in silhouette—with more columnar dresses, pants, jumpsuits, and shorts. Over time, the dramatic shift in Fogarty's designs and philosophy created an enduring paradox. Despite having an untraditional life for a woman in the mid-twentieth century, she encouraged traditional femininity through her writing and designs. Ultimately, Fogarty's ability to capitalize on the ever-changing landscape of the fashion industry also demonstrated her adept business acumen.

The impetus for this study emerged from analyzing newspaper and magazine articles from fashion and mainstream media during Fogarty's era. Many

1 Anne Fogarty, *Wife Dressing: The Fine Art of Being a Well Dressed Wife* (Victoria and Albert Museum, 2011), 110.

2 See Anne Fogarty, "Dress," rayon, leather, holiday 1950–51, C.I.51.95.2a,b, The Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Anne Fogarty, "Woman's Evening Dress and Petticoat," silk net, rayon, metallic thread, silk taffeta, ca. 1953, 1956–41-1a,b, Philadelphia Museum of Art; Anne Fogarty, "Cocktail Ensemble," velvet, silk, metal, ca. 1951, v.66.30.03a-c, LSU Textile & Costume Museum; "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty (Margot, Inc.)," *Vogue*, February 1, 1952, 131.

3 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing.*

4 Bernadine Morris, "Anne Fogarty, Designer of American Look," *New York Times*, January 16, 1980, D19.

5 Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Indiana University Press, 1989), 16–17.

Figure 1. An example of Anne Fogarty's work for Margot dresses, *Vogue*, February 1, 1952, 131.

secondary sources contextualized primary source material, especially *The Hidden History of American Fashion: Rediscovering 20th-Century Women Designers*, edited by Nancy Deihl; Caroline Rennolds Milbank's *New York Fashion: The Evolution of American Style*; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibit and accompanying catalog, *Women Dressing Women*.[6] Extant garments from various points in Fogarty's career provided a firsthand understanding of her approach to design. Material culture serves as a valuable tool in the study of dress history. Art historian Jules Prown defines it as "the study through

6 See Nancy Deihl, *The Hidden History of American Fashion: Rediscovering 20th-Century Women Designers* (Bloomsbury, 2018); Caroline Rennolds Milbank, *New York Fashion: The Evolution of American Style* (Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989); Melissa Huber and Karen van Godtsenhoven, *Women Dressing Women: A Lineage of Female Fashion Design* (Yale University Press, 2023).

artifacts of the beliefs—values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions—of a particular community or society at a given time."[7] Fashion scholars Ingrid Mida and Alexandra Kim, who interpreted Prown's approach, provide a framework for the object-based research employed in this paper.[8] The LSU Textile & Costume Museum (TCM), with its holdings of twenty-nine extant Fogarty pieces, enabled the authors to perform a material culture analysis.[9]

While Fogarty's designs are preserved at TCM and in various museum collections across the country, published considerations of her impact are rare.[10] Indeed, there is a dearth of scholarship regarding the history of women fashion designers, and fashion historians often ignore American ready-to-wear. This research hopes to enhance understanding of both topics by exploring Fogarty's work. Many women fashion designers exist in the margins of fashion history, if at all, compared to their male counterparts. This research joins an emergent inquiry into the history of women fashion designers.[11]

As a Jewish woman who owned her own business, the intersections of Fogarty's identities further obscure her history. According to feminist scholar Judith Butler, it is impossible to separate gender from the multiple layers of a person's identity.[12] As such, Fogarty's intersecting identities—woman and Jewish—certainly made her success in the business world even more notable. Fogarty began her career at a time when both groups were marginalized and oppressed by a patriarchal society that fostered sexism, antisemitism, and segregation.[13] However, by supporting concepts of beauty rooted in systemic sexism, coupled with an embrace of domesticity in her writing, Fogarty launched a successful fashion brand in the mid-twentieth century.

Early Life and Career Beginnings

Anne Fogarty was born in Pittsburgh in 1919 (Figure 2).[14] Before her birth, her family relocated to the United States from Cape Town, South Africa, in 1908.[15] Like many Jewish immigrants seeking to assimilate and avoid antisemitism, they changed their family name (from Gruskin to Whitney) upon moving to America. Her family settled in Pittsburgh, where her father, Robert, worked as a shopkeeper. Fogarty had three older siblings, and her eldest sister, Poppy Cannon, became a well-known food editor for different magazines, including *Ladies Home Journal*, and a cookbook author who wrote such titles as *The Bride's Cookbook* in 1954 which told women how to "precisely and exactly . . . set before her husband and guests perfection."[16]

Both Gruskin sisters took a non-conventional approach to marriage for the time, as Fogarty married three times, with two marriages ending in divorce.[17] Cannon married four times, most notably in 1949, in an interracial marriage to Walter White, the president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, to whom she also dedicated her 1954 *Bride's Cookbook*. At this time, interracial marriage was illegal in many

Figure 2. Photograph of Anne Fogarty, "Anne Fogarty," n.d. Courtesy of the Fashion Institute of Technology | SUNY, Gladys Marcus Library Special Collections and College Archives.

7 Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," *Winterthur Portfolio* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 1.

8 Ingrid E. Mida and Alexandra Kim, *The Dress Detective: A Practical Guide to Object-Based Research in Fashion* (Bloomsbury, 2015), 27.

9 The LSU Textile & Costume Museum holds twenty-nine extant Fogarty designs. To browse the collection, see: <https://lsutcmcollectionsearch.rediscoverysoftware.com/MHomed.aspx?dir=LSU>.

10 For examples of Fogarty's extant designs in museum collections, see Anne Fogarty, "Dress," rayon, leather, ca. 1950–51, C.I.51.95.2a,b; Anne Fogarty, "Dress," silk jacquard taffeta, ca. 1954, 76.29.39, Museum at FIT; Anne Fogarty, "Woman's Dress," plain weave cotton, ca. 1968, 1973-34-19, Philadelphia Museum of Art; Anne Fogarty, "Mini Dress," synthetic brocade, lurex, 1965/1969, 2004.003.001, Texas Fashion Collection.

11 For example see: "Anne Lowe: American Couturier," Exhibitions and Collections, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, <https://www.winterthur.org/ann-lowe-american-couturier>; "Claire/McCardell, Exhibitions, Maryland Center for History and Culture," <https://www.mdhistory.org/exhibitions/claire-mccardell-exhibition/>; Nancy Deihl ed., *The Hidden History of American Fashion: Rediscovering 20th-Century Women Designers* (Bloomsbury, 2018).

12 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Routledge, 2007), 4–5.

13 See "Civil Gains Urged by Freedom House: Officers Call for End of Race Bias, Aid to Persons Under Congressional Inquiry," *The New York Times*, January 2, 1949, 41.

14 Milbank, *New York Fashion*, 188.

15 "Walter Francis White and Poppy Cannon Papers," Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University Library, last modified June 2, 2009, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170320232922/http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/about/blogs/african-american-studies-beinecke-library/2009/06/02/walter-francis-white-and-poppy>.

16 Poppy Cannon, *The Brides Cookbook* (George J. McLeod, Ltd., 1954), ix.

17 Morris, "Anne Fogarty," D19.

states, so the couple eloped in India.[18] This contrasted with the societal norms of the mid-twentieth century, which frowned upon divorce.[19] Fogarty kept her married name from her first union in 1940 to an artist, Thomas A. Fogarty, throughout the remainder of her life.[20] The sisters exhibited a far more progressive perspective on marriage and family dynamics; yet, both pursued careers built on advising other women on how to achieve and maintain a traditional, perfect union. We cannot precisely know why or to what degree Fogarty's personal and professional belief systems differed. However, feminist literature guided an effort to analyze and better understand these stark contradictions, such as the concept of empowerment through accommodation, which suggests that by conforming to beauty standards, a woman may achieve personal or professional success.[21]

Fogarty gained experience with fashion by repurposing hand-me-downs from her older sister to suit her style. This instilled a love for fashion that propelled her to pursue an education in theater at the Carnegie Institute of Technology.[22] A significant factor in her decision to pursue an acting career was that she could wear different costumes. Fogarty's Jewish identity also assuredly contributed to her affinity for fashion. Jewish immigrants to the United States often associated fashionable dress with aspirational social status. Furthermore, as early as the nineteenth century the American garment industry, from production to retail, provided numerous opportunities for Jewish Americans to succeed.[23]

Her connections in the theater led to a position as a fit model for Harvey Berin, a Seventh Avenue dress manufacturer who produced one-price dresses starting in the 1920s.[24] At Berin, Fogarty met colleagues she followed to Sheila Lynn, another Seventh Avenue dress manufacturer founded in 1932.[25] Although she worked as a fit model there, the company promised her a position as a designer. Unfortunately, Fogarty's dreams of becoming a designer did not come to fruition at Sheila Lynn; instead, she cultivated her knowledge of the fashion industry in various jobs, such as copywriting, styling, and advertising.[26] She also worked with Cohama, a textile firm whose name combined Cohn, Hall, and Marx, who were "commission merchants and converters of cotton fabrics."[27] A colleague at Cohama informed her of a new junior apparel brand called Youth Guild, which opened in 1946.[28]

Fogarty yearned to channel her creative energy into fashion design. "I'll die if I don't start to design soon," she said after attending the "Fashions of The Times" production, a fashion show *The New York Times* produced in 1942 to highlight the growth and originality of the American fashion industry during World War II.[29] Fortunately, an opportunity to be an assistant designer at Youth Guild arose. Youth Guild manufactured dresses in the stylish silhouette of the time, making fashion influenced by French couture available in styles and sizes suitable for teenagers.[30] *Women's Wear Daily* illustrated three early examples of Fogarty's work for Youth Guild in 1947. With their nipped-in waists and full skirts falling just below the knee, they interpreted Dior's fashionable silhouette for the American junior market.[31]

Women adopted this silhouette following World War II as more than a fashion statement. This "emphatically womanly" silhouette employed body-molding undergarments, proving more restrictive than styles worn during the war.[32] It represented a stylistic reversion, shifting from the boxier, more masculine silhouettes favored during wartime. Fashion historian Christopher Breward criticized the New Look, a style designed by Christian Dior and coined by Carmel Snow, then editor of *Harper's Bazaar*.[33] In wearing Dior's nostalgic silhouette, women took a step backward from the sartorial freedoms of increased mobility and practicality they experienced during the war. Moreover, according to Breward, the New Look was problematic due to "its overt and

18 Morris, "Anne Fogarty," D19

19 Kristin Celello, *Making Marriage Work: A History of Marriage and Divorce in the Twentieth-Century United States* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 7.

20 Bernadette Morris, "Anne Fogarty: Designer of American Look," *The New York Times*, January 16, 1980, 91.

21 Keila E. Tyner and Jennifer Paff Ogle describe this concept as "The notion that women also may achieve empowerment by accommodating dominant cultural norms of beauty." See Keila E. Tyner and Jennifer Paff Ogle, "Feminist Theory of the Dressed Female Body: A Comparative Analysis and Applications for Textiles and Clothing Scholarship," *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 27, no. 2 (2009): 98–121.

22 Milbank, *New York Fashion*, 188.

23 Eric Silverman, *A Cultural History of Jewish Dress* (Bloomsbury, 2013), 76, 78.

24 "Dresses: Berin-Henle, Inc. New Dress Firm: Harvey Berin And Stephen Henle Will Make One Priced Line on Premises," *Women's Wear Daily*, November 11, 1927, SIII11. One-price dress manufacturers set a standard price for all their merchandise.

25 "Sheila Lynn Dresses New $10.75 Firm," *Women's Wear Daily*, February 5, 1932, 13.

26 Milbank, *New York Fashion*, 188.

27 "Advertisement: Lorraine (Contal Broadhurst Lee Co., Inc. and Others)," *Women's Wear*, August 1, 1913, 11.

28 See Milbank, *New York Fashion*, 188; and "Children's Wear: Soft Dressy Touches on Cottons—Feature of New Sub-Junior Line: Stripes Big," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 2, 1946, 16.

29 See "War Style Parade to Aid Army Relief," *New York Times*, September 15, 1942, 26; Virginia Pope, "Patterns of The Times: American Designer Series: Full Skirt Is a Part of Dress Philosophy of Anne Fogarty," *New York Times*, June 2, 1952, 18.

30 "Children's, Girls', Teen-Wear: Pastel Cottons, Ombre and Iridescent Colorings Share Honors in Teen Designer's Group," *Women's Wear Daily*, November 12, 1947, 33.

31 "Children's, Girls', Teen-Wear: Plaids and Checks for Teen Customers: Belts Give the New Look to Skirts," *Women's Wear Daily*, June 5, 1946, 24.

32 Morna Laing, *Picturing the Woman-Child: Fashion, Feminism, and the Female Gaze* (Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021), 50.

lascivious sensuality and its entrapment of women as objects of desire and decoration."[34] However, American downmarket interpretations of this style, such as Fogarty's work, were notably less structured than Dior's silhouette.[35]

While Dior and Fogarty's silhouettes shared similarities, their price tags differed vastly. Dior's iconic bar jacket alone cost 59,000 francs, nearly $500 in 1947, more than $7,000 today.[36] The practice of looking to the French for design inspiration was not new. For decades, American department stores featured French or French-inspired fashions, while newspapers and magazines showcased the work of renowned couturiers.[37] Price is where Fogarty found a niche among American designers. For example, in 1951, *Vogue* advertised a white organdy evening dress by Anne Fogarty for $50 or $620 today.[38] The same year, a similar Nettie Rosenstein dress of the same fabrication retailed for $425, over $5,000 today.[39] Although the silhouettes are very similar, minor differences in the necklines and skirt fullness distinguish them.

While Fogarty's conformity to traditional beauty standards was evident in her designs from the early 1950s, she did not stand alone in subscribing to these notions of female beauty within American fashion. Ceil Chapman, for example, typically designed her cocktail and eveningwear in an hourglass silhouette. Chapman, a celebrity-favorite designer of icons such as Debbie Reynolds and Marilyn Monroe in the 1950s, capitalized on the trend for tiny waists and full skirts.[40] As did Rosenstein, a favorite designer of First Lady Mamie Eisenhower in the mid-twentieth century.[41] While Dior introduced the bell-shaped skirt silhouette favored in the early to mid-1950s, American ready-to-wear women designers like Fogarty, Chapman, and Rosenstein interpreted and perpetuated the trend for American consumers. Additionally, department store catalogs promoted this style to the masses.[42] Fashion historian Valerie Steele asserts that in the US, postwar silhouettes and conservative ideas of gender developed due to Anne Fogarty more so than Dior.[43]

Feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir argued in her 1949 book *The Second Sex*, "The majority of women resign themselves to their lot without attempting to take any action."[44] While that may be true, at least when Beauvoir wrote it, in this scenario women who welcomed the regressive silhouette also turned away from the destruction and instability caused by war. The nostalgia inherent in a traditionally feminine silhouette enabled middle-class women to regain a sense of normalcy and return to their comfortable domestic roles from before the war.[45] Also, the socially constructed definition of a woman relegated them to the domestic sphere and made them objects of desire. Hence, adopting old-fashioned dress styles, rooted in historic silhouettes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, fulfilled predetermined societal roles once wartime horrors subsided.[46] For example, *Coronet*, a general interest magazine, published an article about American Olympian Babe Didrikson Zaharias. Initially, she was criticized for her mannish fashion choices, but after she married and adopted a more feminine appearance and domestic role, some looked upon her more favorably.[47]

However, the fashion press of the mid- to late 1950s prompted a shift away from this rhetoric. Fashion magazines, such as *Vogue*, promoted individuality in women's appearances, rather than adhering to a predetermined style. This approach advised American women to reshape their wardrobes to match their lifestyles and interests. By the late 1950s, *Vogue* reframed fashion and grooming information, offering suggestions rather than dictating trends. In some regard, this line of thinking was a precursor to second-wave feminism of the 1960s and signaled a shift in society's view of women.[48]

Betty Friedan explored women's lives in the private sphere in her seminal work, *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, which was based on interviews

33 "Dior's Revolution: Carmel Snow Hails the Arrival of Christian Dior's 'New Look'," *Harper's Bazaar*, March 2017, 182.

34 Christopher Breward, *The Culture of Fashion: A New History of Fashionable Dress* (Manchester University Press, 1995), 191.

35 See "Fashion Significances of Sportswear for Fall: The Country Wear Idea Pervades Line and Fabric," *Women's Wear Daily*, April 8, 1949, 3.; and "College Fashions: The Time Has Come for College Girls to Learn: Of Curves and Flares and Crinolines ... of Petticoats and Things," *Women's Wear Daily*, June 6, 1951, SII2.

36 Christian Dior, "Bar," silk, wool, taffeta, T.376&A-1960, Victoria & Albert Museum.

37 Milbank, *New York Fashion*, 10.

38 "Fashion and Beauty: The Kidskin Shoe: Colouring for a Summer Evening," *Vogue*, May 1, 1951, 164; Data regarding inflation for this work came from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator. See "CPI Inflation Calculator," Data Tools, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed May 28, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm>.

39 "Fashion: 57 Ways to the New Soft Look," *Vogue*, March 1, 1951, 150.

40 "Advertisement: Julius Garfinckel & Co. (Julius Garfinckel & Co.)," *Vogue*, April 1, 1953, 19.

41 For an example of Rosenstein's work see, "Advertisement: Frost Bros.," *Vogue*, October 1, 1951, 8; Rosenstein designed frequently for First Lady Mamie Eisenhower including her 1953 inaugural gown.

42 See "4-Piece Polka Dot Wardrobe," *Sears Spring/Summer Catalog* (1951), 67; and "Party Fare with Fashion Flair," *Montgomery Ward Spring/Summer Catalog* (1956), 12.

43 Valerie Steele, *Women of Fashion: Twentieth-Century Designers* (Rizzoli, 1991), 119.

44 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 119.

45 See Jill Fields, *An Intimate Affair: Women, Lingerie, and Sexuality* (University of California Press, 2007), 263–64; and Angela Partington, "Popular Fashion and Working Class Affluence," in *Chic Thrills: A Fashion Reader*, ed. Juliet Ash and Elizabeth Wilson (Pandora, 1992), 154.

46 Janice Doane and Devon Hodges, *Nostalgia and Sexual Difference: The Resistance to Contemporary Feminism* (Methuen, 1987), 3.

47 See Lawrence Lader, "The Unbeatable Babe," *Coronet*, January 23, 1948, 158; Joanne Meyerowitz, "Beyond the

she conducted with her classmates at Smith College in 1957 about their personal lives.[49] She learned that many were disillusioned with a society dominated by the patriarchy, which fostered unrealistic expectations of beauty and dress. She explored these perspectives in her book, where she also critiqued women's compliance with male-contrived ideals.[50] According to Friedan, the media perpetuated the concept that women's achievements and personhood were more acknowledged when they had a perfectly groomed and feminine appearance.

Fogarty certainly subscribed to this glorification of beautiful women. "The kitchen is your natural setting as a woman and you should look beautiful, not bedraggled in it," she said when discussing appropriate dress for housework.[51] Throughout her book, Fogarty emphasized a life of domesticity, discussing the importance of dressing to match the decor and maintaining a certain level of comfort for housework while remaining put-together. Pants and coveralls were acceptable, provided they were pretty and well-fitting. Fogarty and Friedan, two women of Jewish heritage, divergently advised other women, yet achieved similar professional outcomes, both attaining remarkable success and national prominence. Perhaps being Jewish was a common denominator among the two women that led both to seek independence and develop strong personas, albeit in different ways. As early as the nineteenth century, Reform Judaism advocated for expanded roles for women, and women have been Rabbis since the early twentieth century.[52] Possibly, for a Jewish American woman of the mid- to late twentieth century, imagining a life beyond the household was not impossible, regardless of how it was achieved.

Success in the Junior Market

Despite her success with Youth Guild, Fogarty parted ways with the company in 1950 to design for Margot Dresses, Inc., a New York-based junior's and petite label founded by Louis M. Weber in 1938.[53] At the time of the firm's establishment, Margot Kops, "one of America's most brilliant designers of dresses for the Junior Miss," served as the designer.[54] Kops left her namesake brand shortly after it opened due to a legal battle with a business partner.[55] After Fogarty joined Margot Dresses, she debuted a collection in the Young New Yorker shop at Lord & Taylor department store. Dorothy Shaver, President of Lord & Taylor, created the Young New Yorker shop to promote American designers, particularly women such as Anne Fogarty, Nettie Rosenstein, Fira Benenson, and Claire McCardell.[56] The fashion press described Fogarty's collection for Lord & Taylor as "neat, trim, moulded [sic]; [and] her color . . . exclamation points in the right places; her look . . . complete with perfectionist details."[57] A scoop neck velveteen dress became an immediate best-seller, an example of which TCM holds (Figure 3).[58] The dress is a sleeveless, slip style with a sweetheart neckline and knee-length skirt, paired with a matching long-sleeve bolero with an attached scarf of off-white silk crepe.[59] Fogarty's designs for Margot Dresses ranged in price from $40 to $50, or $497 to $621 today (Figure 4).[60]

Fogarty's first years at Margot Dresses received positive reception from customers and critics, resulting in several awards. First, *Mademoiselle* magazine named Fogarty Young Woman of the Year in 1950. This award recognized women in their twenties to thirties "who have already made a distinctive mark in their fields and are expected to achieve even greater heights."[61] Then, in 1951, she received the prestigious Coty Awards for "prettiest dresses," especially her Paper Doll silhouette, which brought a "fresh new flavor" to the market when she popularized the petticoated skirt for daywear.[62] The Paper Doll silhouette had a deep V-neckline, similar to cut-out paper doll dresses, and a high-waisted, full-skirt. A 1952 version of this silhouette was a pink-striped cotton batiste

Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946–1958," *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 4 (March 1993): 1455–82.

48 Anna Lebovic, "'How to Be in Fashion and Stay an Individual': American *Vogue*, The Origins of Second Wave Feminism, and Mass Culture Criticism in 1950s America," *Gender and History* 31, no. 1 (March 2019): 178–94. Also, for an example of the shifting advice in *Vogue*, see "Fashion: Travel Formula," *Vogue*, May 16, 1947, 68–73; in comparison to "Beauty: How to Be This Summer's Beauty," *Vogue*, May 15, 1955, 28–33.

49 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (Dell Publishing Co., 1964), 7.

50 Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 7–8.

51 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 32.

52 For example, aside from Orthodox Judaism, female Rabbis were permitted since 1935. See Gabriel Popkin, "Overlooked No More: Regina Jonas, on Whose Shoulders 'All Female Rabbis Stand'," *The New York Times*, August 19, 2022, n.p.

53 "Incorporations: New York State," *Women's Wear Daily*, December 21, 1938, 26.

54 "Advertisement: Arkay Junior Frocks (Margot Dresses, Inc.)," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 10, 1939, 8. The history of Margot Kops is another example of a woman fashion designer and entrepreneur overlooked by historians.

55 See "In the Courts," *Women's Wear Daily*, December 15, 1939, 42; "Margot Joins Rentner-Miller," *Women's Wear Daily*, May 20, 1940, 11.

56 "Lord & Taylor Management Decentralized: Mrs. van Wesep, McAllister, and Per-Lee Named Vice-Presidents to Oversee Merchandising Activities," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 10, 1947, 1, 5.

57 "Lord & Taylor Plays Up Junior Designer," *Women's Wear Daily*, August 21, 1950, 3.

58 "Lord & Taylor Plays," *Women's Wear Daily*, 3.

59 Anne Fogarty, "Cocktail Ensemble," velvet, silk crepe, ca. 1951, v.66.30.03a-c, LSU Textile & Costume Museum.

60 "Fashion: By and for the Young," *Vogue*, March 15, 1951, 138–39.

61 "Anne Fogarty Given Award by Magazine," *Women's Wear Daily*, December 12, 1950, 4.

62 The Coty American Fashion Critic's Awards, or simply Coty Award, was bestowed to American fashion designers annually from 1942 to

1985. It lent prestige to and supported the development of American fashion. It was first introduced by Stanley Marcus of the Neiman Marcus department store in 1942, shortly after America entered World War II, to shift consumer focus from European to American designers; see "Fashion Award Plans Unfolded by Coty: To Receive Plaque and $1000," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 8, 1942, 44; "Coty Fashion Awards Discontinued," *New York Times*, June 4, 1985, A18; "One-Piece Dresses, Full-Skirt Suits At Belmont Opening: Critics' Award, 1951, Is 'To The Ladies'," *Women's Wear Daily*, September 25, 1951, 3.

63 "Anne Fogarty Wins Bonwit Fashion Award," *Women's Wear Daily*, September 17, 1951, 4.

64 Millbank, *New York Fashion*, 188.

Figure 3. Anne Fogarty, "Cocktail Ensemble," consisting of a slip-style dress and matching bolero with an attached silk crepe scarf, ca. 1951. Velvet, silk crepe. v.66.30.03a-c. Baton Rouge: LSU Textile & Costume Museum/The Valentine Costume & Textiles Collection. Photo by Kevin Duffy.

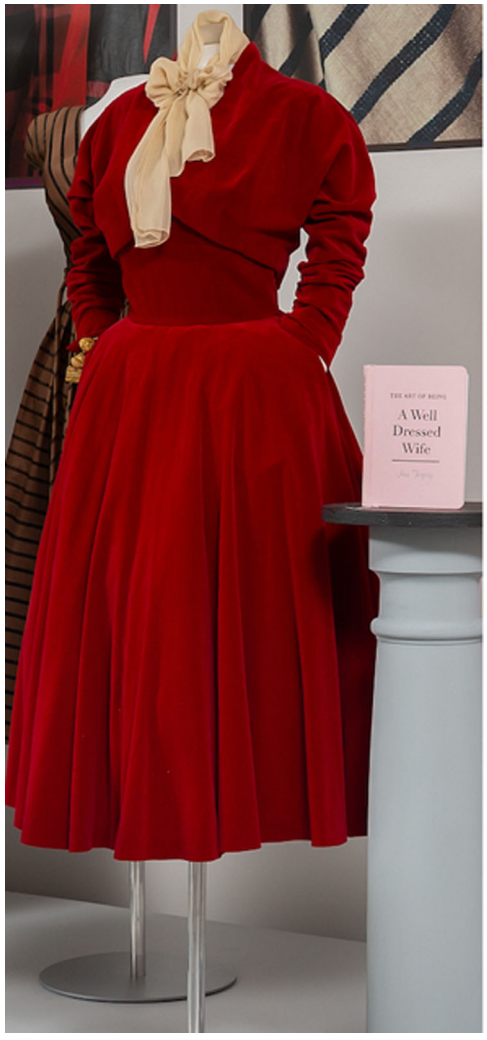
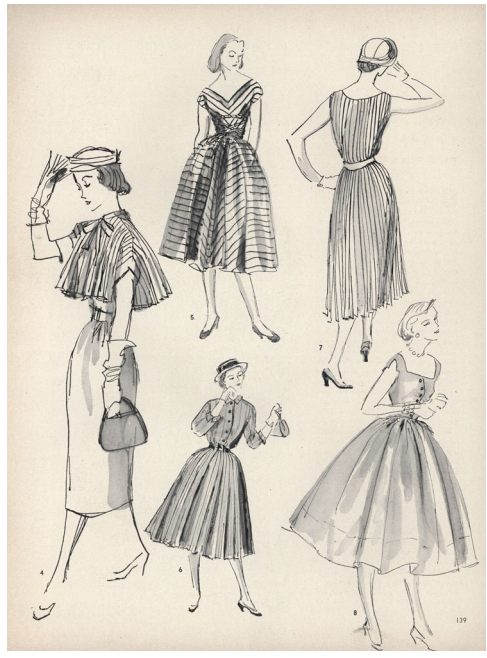


Figure 4. Illustrations of various Anne Fogarty dresses for Margot Inc. The dress numbered five below is the same style as the extant artifact depicted in Figure 6 of this paper. "Fashion: By and For the Young," *Vogue*, March 15, 1951, 138–39.



(Figure 5). The same year, Fogarty earned another award from Bonwit Teller, a New York-based women's retailer, for her "originality and achievement in the creation of young fashions."[63]

An example of a Fogarty Paper Doll dress, ca. 1952, appears in Figure 6. Side-by-side images show the dress on a form and laid flat to demonstrate the amount of material used for the skirt, comprising nearly four and a half yards of fabric. This dress is also illustrated in the advertisement found in Figure 4. The fabric is copper silk, embellished with small, raised dots of black velvet that appear to be adhered to the surface, forming horizontal stripes that wrap around the skirt. The stripes repeat on the bodice surrounding the V-neckline. Here, the diagonal stripes match at the seams. A long, padded self-cord wraps around the bodice multiple times, further shaping the waist and emphasizing the large skirt. The skirt is comprised of four panels, each measuring twenty inches wide at the hem, gathered at the waist to create fullness. The entire dress is unlined, with seams that are pinked and pressed open. Practical pockets are in the skirt's side seams, and the dress closes with a fourteen-inch side zip.

In 1954, Fogarty's silhouette changed slightly to a tight bodice from the neckline to below the waist that spilled out into a full skirt.[64] Dubbed the "tea cozy" silhouette, the marginally evolved style reportedly created "charm, whimsey [sic], and a lady-like look" in what the

Figure 5. Anne Fogarty's Paper Doll silhouette is characterized by its cinched waist and full skirt. *Vogue*, April 15, 1952, 30.

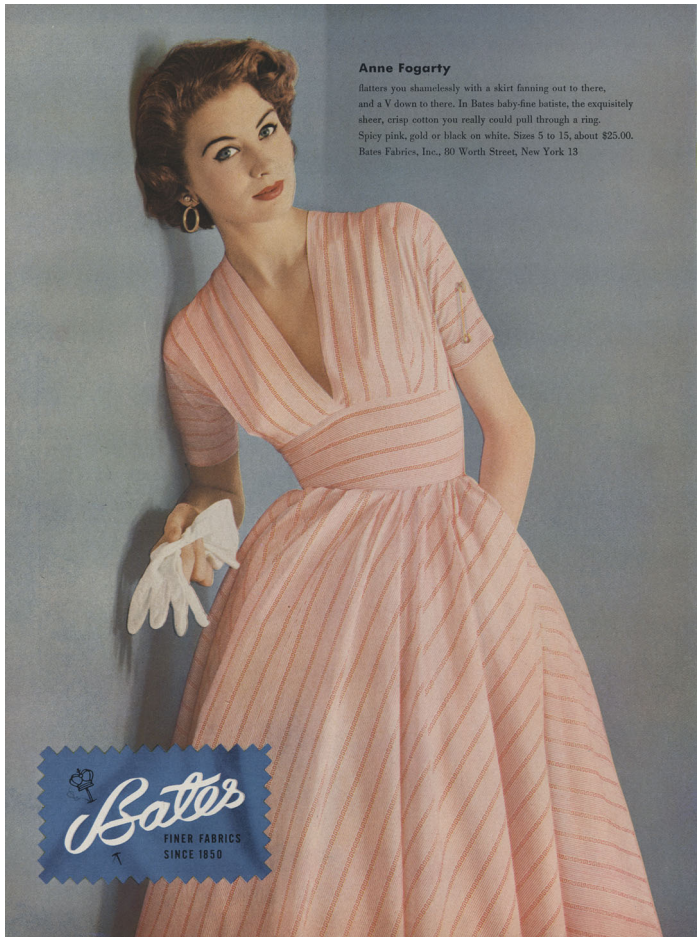
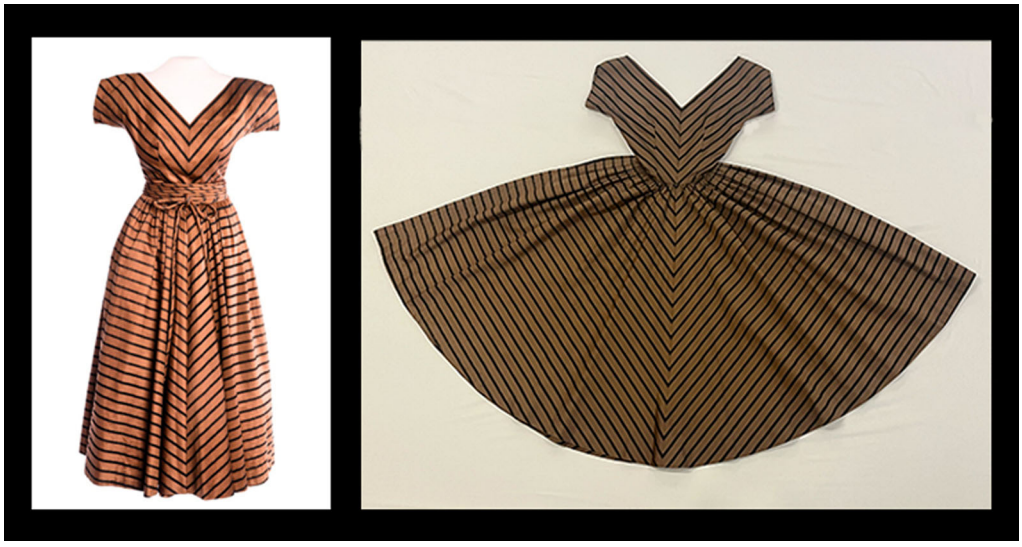


Figure 6. An extant Anne Fogarty Paper Doll dress. Done in copper silk with raised dot velvet stripes and padded cord self-belt. "Dress," ca. 1952, silk, v.93.43.07a,b. Baton Rouge: LSU Textile & Costume Museum/ The Valentine Costume & Textiles Collection. Photo by Kevin Duffy (left), and Morgan R. Strzynski (right).



fashion media dubbed a "high tea collection."[65] It retailed for $35–$50 and came in various fabrications, including acetate mixed with rayon at $35 and silk taffeta for $50 (Figure 7).[66] As a tea cozy envelopes a teapot, this design covered the wearer snugly from neck to waist. The tradition of serving tea is steeped in nostalgia and is typically carried out by women.[67]

Historian Ulrich Lehmann explores the relationship between nostalgia and clothing and posits that clothing embodies "now-time, providing an open reference to the past [which] can claim to constitute a beckoning future."[68] In other words, a nod to the past instills a sense of hope and longing for good times. During times of war or economic downturn, feelings of nostalgia can quell public anxiety, creating a sense of continuity amid widespread uncertainty.[69] By reinstating the roles and aesthetics of traditional femininity, designers such as Fogarty refashioned postwar America with a nod to the past. According to Lehmann, "fashion is granted substantiality when related to a past as an eternalized ideal."[70]

An extant Tea Cozy dress, ca. 1952, held by TCM, is of black cotton and rayon (Figure 8). It differs from the Paper Doll in its bodice, featuring a high neckline and a snug fit, from the standing band collar to the ruched waistline. This dress personifies its namesake, completely enveloping the wearer. A series of five functional buttons adorn the center front, ending with a tie closure at the neckline. The textile weave combined cotton and rayon threads arranged in alternating stripes. This provided a subtle sheen, as rayon can have a lustrous appearance. The ruched waistline adds interest and dimension to the silhouette, creating a cummerbund effect across the bodice—a stylistic component often associated with the Gibson Girl influence on fashion of the early 1900s.[71] The skirt, composed of four panels, each measuring thirty-nine inches in width at the hem, is tightly gathered at the waist to create fullness; inseam pockets are also present.

The most noticeable difference between the two silhouettes is the bodice shape. The Paper Doll dress features a bodice that forms an upside-down triangle and is wider at the shoulders, narrowing at the waistline, and ending in a full skirt. Conversely, the Tea Cozy hugs the body closely from the standing collar to the waistline, which falls slightly below that of the Paper Doll dress. Both skirts use considerable fabric, allowing the wearer to layer one or more petticoats underneath, and measure thirty inches long from waist to hem, falling below the knee. Another similarity between the two dresses is the kimono-style sleeves. The sleeves of the Tea Cozy dress have a circumference of only nine inches at their opening. Compared to set-in sleeves, these kimono-style sleeves are small in scale and likely impede movement.

Both dresses have tiny waists: the Paper Doll dress measuring twenty-two inches, and the Tea Cozy twenty. Fogarty encouraged using undergarments to achieve her silhouette.[72] There is disagreement surrounding the analysis of body molding undergarments for women. Historians such as Jill Fields explain girdles have a centuries-old history as a sartorial enactment of oppression: undergarments restricted women's bodies and signified their subordinate status within patriarchal societies.[73] Yet other fashion historians, such as Valerie Steele, assert that women actively embraced corsets to shape their bodies in a conventionally attractive way, providing physical comfort by supporting their breasts.[74] Regardless, body contouring undergarments expanded following World War II to support a nostalgic silhouette.[75] Though body-shaping garments were a necessity to achieve the desired silhouette during this period, the small sizes of Fogarty's dresses were not necessarily out of the ordinary, as she designed for juniors' labels.

The proliferation of body-shaping undergarments in the late 1940s and early to mid-1950s reflected a societal

65 See "Display Ad 23—No Title," *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1954, A2; and "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty (Margot, Inc.)," *Vogue*, February 1, 1954, 96.

66 See "Display Ad 1—No Title," *Los Angeles Times*, March 13, 1954, 2; "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty (Margot, Inc.)," *Vogue*, February 1, 1954.

67 See Millicent Fenwick, *Vogue's Book of Etiquette* (Simon & Schuster, 1948), 289; and Emily Post, *Etiquette: In Society, in Business, in Politics and at Home* (Funk & Wagnallis Company, 1923), 167–69.

68 Ulrich Lehmann, *Tigersprung: Fashion in Modernity* (MIT Press, 2000), 236.

69 Fred Davis, *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia* (The Free Press, 1979), 103–4.

70 Lehmann, *Tigersprung*, 9.

71 Joshua Simon and Michael Mamp, "Nostalgic Elegance: The Enduring Style of the Gibson Girl," *Dress* 47, no. 1 (May 2021): 61–77.

72 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 117.

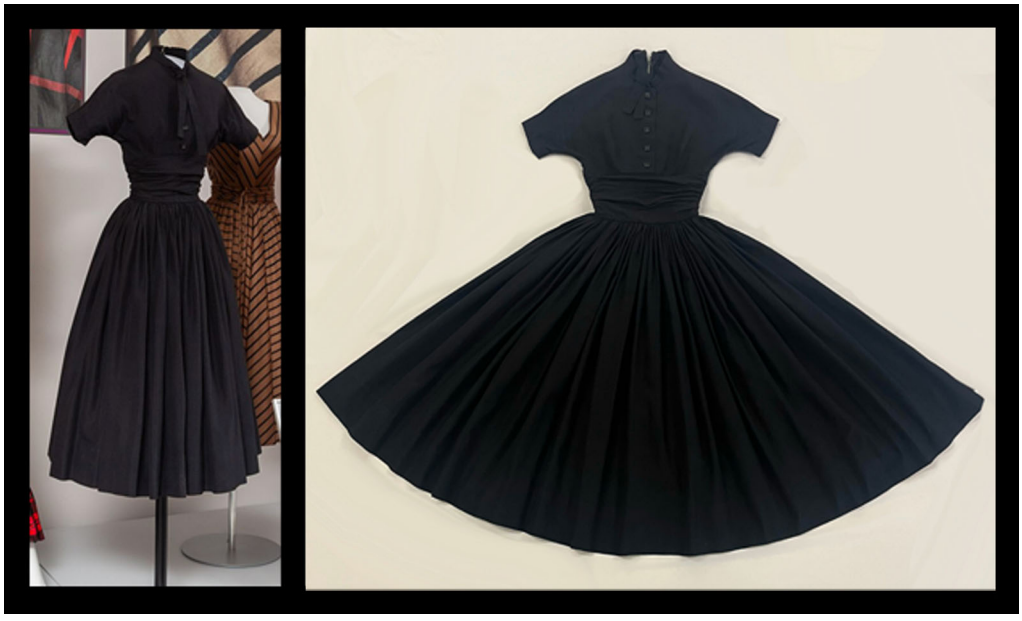
73 Fields, *An Intimate Affair*, 48; and Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (W. W. Norton, 1963), 11.

74 Valerie Steele, *The Corset: A Cultural History* (Yale University Press, 2001), 54.

75 Steele, *The Corset*, 262.

Figure 7. Fogarty's signature Tea Cozy silhouette, *Vogue*, February 1, 1954, 96.

Figure 8. An extant Tea Cozy dress in black with cummerbund style ruching at the waist, tiny kimono sleeves, and a standing collar. "Dress," cotton, rayon, ca. 1950, v.92.43.10. Baton Rouge: LSU Textile & Costume Museum/The Valentine Costume & Textiles Collection. Photo by Kevin Duffy (left), and Morgan Strzynski (right).



shift in which women were objectified in postwar fashion.[76] Friedan suggested that pursuing femininity was a woman's central vocation, a virtually impossible task as beauty standards were fleeting.[77] After World War II, ideals of femininity included passivity and subordinance as women returned to the domestic sphere. The resurgence of restrictive undergarments, fueled by designers like Fogarty, emblematized the entrapment of women as objects of desire, held in sartorial constraint, and perpetuated unrealistic ideals of beauty.[78]

In addition to body shaping undergarments, Fogarty also advocated for using petticoats to support her full-skirted silhouettes. "I am particularly partial to petticoats . . . be sure you wear the proper fullness under each dress," wrote Fogarty in her book *Wife Dressing*.[79] She wore up to four petticoats to achieve her desired silhouette, earning her the moniker "the queen of crinoline."[80] Her affinity for underpinnings opened the door for collaborating with Gracette, a New York-based lingerie company while working at Margot Dresses. With help from Gracette, Fogarty created petticoats that paired with her dresses made from Crinolast, a durable yet flexible stiffened cotton that

76 Elizabeth Ewing, *Dress and Undress: A History of Women's Underwear* (Drama Book Specialists, 1978), 161.

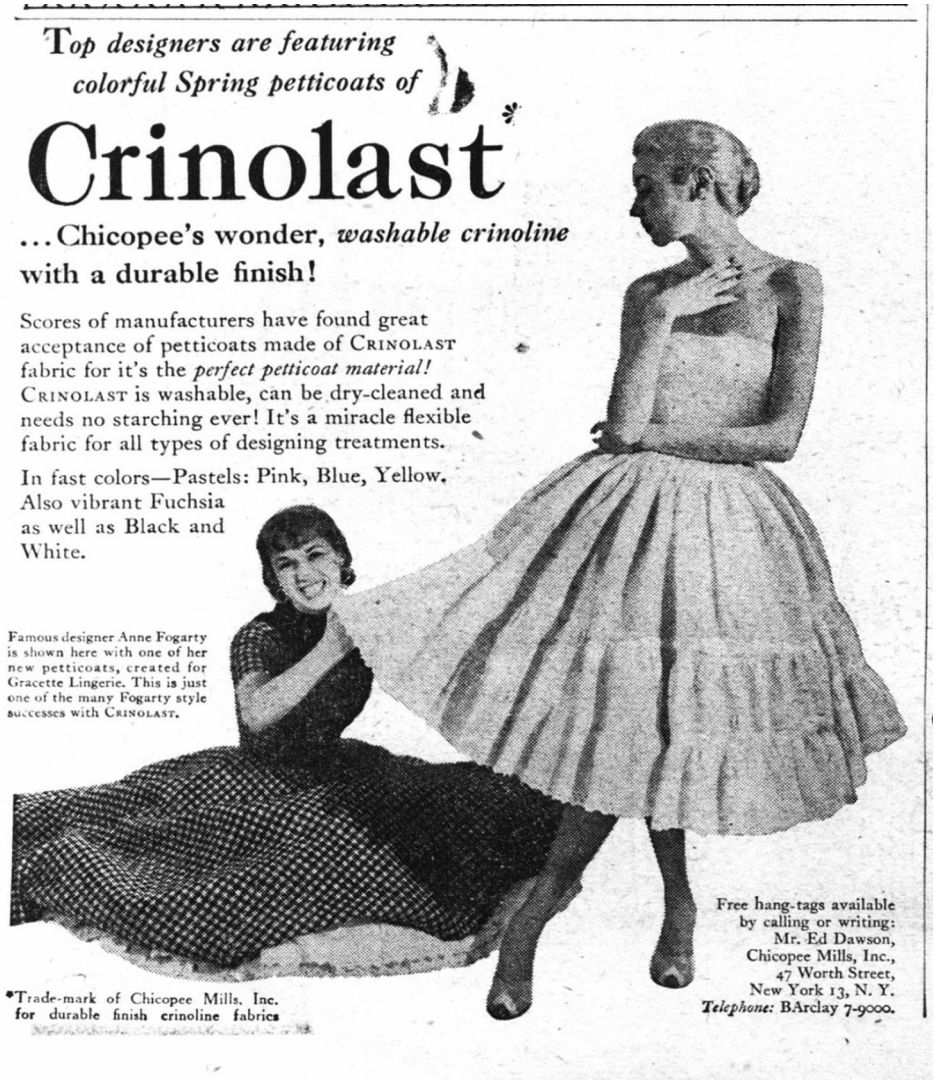
77 Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 18.

78 Laing, *Picturing the Woman-Child*, 50.

79 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 30.

80 "Advertisement (Life)," *Women's Wear Daily*, October 19, 1951, 23.

Figure 9. Fogarty (seated) and model, both wearing petticoats made of Crinolast. *Women's Wear Daily*, January 10, 1952, SII20.



retained its shape and allowed for frequent laundering (Figure 9).[81]

A petticoat that could withstand repeated washing and wearing became a crucial component of her woman's wardrobe. Additionally, she urged women to match their petticoats with whichever designer they wore.[82] Creating her petticoat line allowed her to exert additional control over her signature silhouette and generate revenue, as some consumers would purchase Fogarty petticoats and dresses as pairs. An example of Fogarty's affinity for full skirts appears in a gold evening dress she designed and wore to an event at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1953 (Figure 10). The dress features a silk net embroidered with rayon thread layered over a lining and an underskirt of gold silk taffeta.[83] A sizeable petticoat provided fullness to the skirt with a waist of only eighteen inches. Notably, in the advertisement in Figure 9, she is wearing a similar style to that of her model. This is a testament to the application of her design philosophy in crafting her image.

Fogarty's early career accolades centered on her embrace of traditional gender presentations. While critics celebrated her for a fresh new point of view, her dresses drew heavy inspiration from historical fashions, particularly the crinoline period of the 1850s to 1860s.[84] Lehmann describes the crinoline silhouette of the mid-nineteenth century as "imbued with an almost sublime beauty."[85] To be sublime is to inspire admiration or awe; in the case of the female form, it can lead to objectification. Fogarty's award-winning designs perpetuated a look steeped in historicism and nostalgia that was far from new.

Récamier Revisited

In 1958, Fogarty introduced a looser silhouette than her Paper Doll and Tea Cozy dresses from earlier in the decade. While she still offered full skirts, the bell-shaped and heavily underpinned look no longer held the starring role.[86] The narrowed silhouette included a high-waisted empire style she named the Récamier dress. It drew inspiration from French socialite and iconic beauty of the neoclassicism movement, Madame Juliette Récamier. During the First French Republic (1792–1802), following the revolution, Récamier adopted a style of dress, inspired by Greco-Roman garments of the ancient world, with columnar empire-waisted cotton muslin gowns. She was immortalized in portraits and sculpture by many masters of the period, including Jacques-Louis David, François Gérard, and Antonio Canova.[87] In early nineteenth-century France, the adoption of looser-fitting garments was both an aesthetic and political expression.[88] In various fabrications, lengths, and prints, Fogarty's Récamier dress followed a columnar line, with an empire waist often tied at the back, requiring no petticoats or form-fitting bodice. Set-in cap sleeves took on a delicate puff shape, extending the shoulder line in an easy-to-wear look.

An extant example of the Récamier, ca. 1958, resides in the TCM collection. It is made of gold metallic brocade with a self-belt just below the bust, accentuating the empire waistline with a floor-length skirt. It is shown alongside a *Vogue* advertisement in Figure 11. The model in the image reclines against the back of her chair, reflecting the placid nature of Madame Récamier's poses, as seen in her many portraits—where she leaned on chairs or chaises in a casual, somewhat seductive manner—demonstrating that neither her body nor her sexuality was confined. Muriel McAuley first donated it to the Valentine Museum of Richmond, Virginia, before it came to TCM. McAuley was Anne Fogarty's friend and model, who later opened a theater in Richmond.[89] Fogarty made versions of this dress throughout the next two decades, as demonstrated in the fashion media and extant artifacts from various museum collections.[90]

While the Récamier was a significant change in Fogarty's silhouette, a year later, in her book *Wife Dressing*, she still

81 See "Advertisement: Beaunit Fabrics (Beaunit Mills, Inc. and Others)," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 10, 1952, 38; "Chiopee Adds Crinolast," *Women's Wear Daily*, August 30, 1951, 36; "Advertisement: Crinolast (Chicopee Mills, Inc.)," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 10, 1952, SII20; "Fashion: Crinolines, All Spring," January 1, 1952, 166.

82 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 30.

83 Anne Fogarty, "Women's Evening Dress and Petticoat," ca. 1953, silk net, rayon and metallic thread, silk taffeta, 1956–41-1a,b, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

84 Daniel James Cole and Nancy Deihl, *The History of Modern Fashion* (Laurence King Publishing, 2015), 24–25.

85 Lehmann, *Tigersprung*.

86 See "Advertisement: Celanese Fabrics," *Vogue*, May 15, 1956, 23; and "Fashion: Black: The Small Economy Size/Grey: Served in Junior Portions," *Vogue*, September 15, 1956, 23.

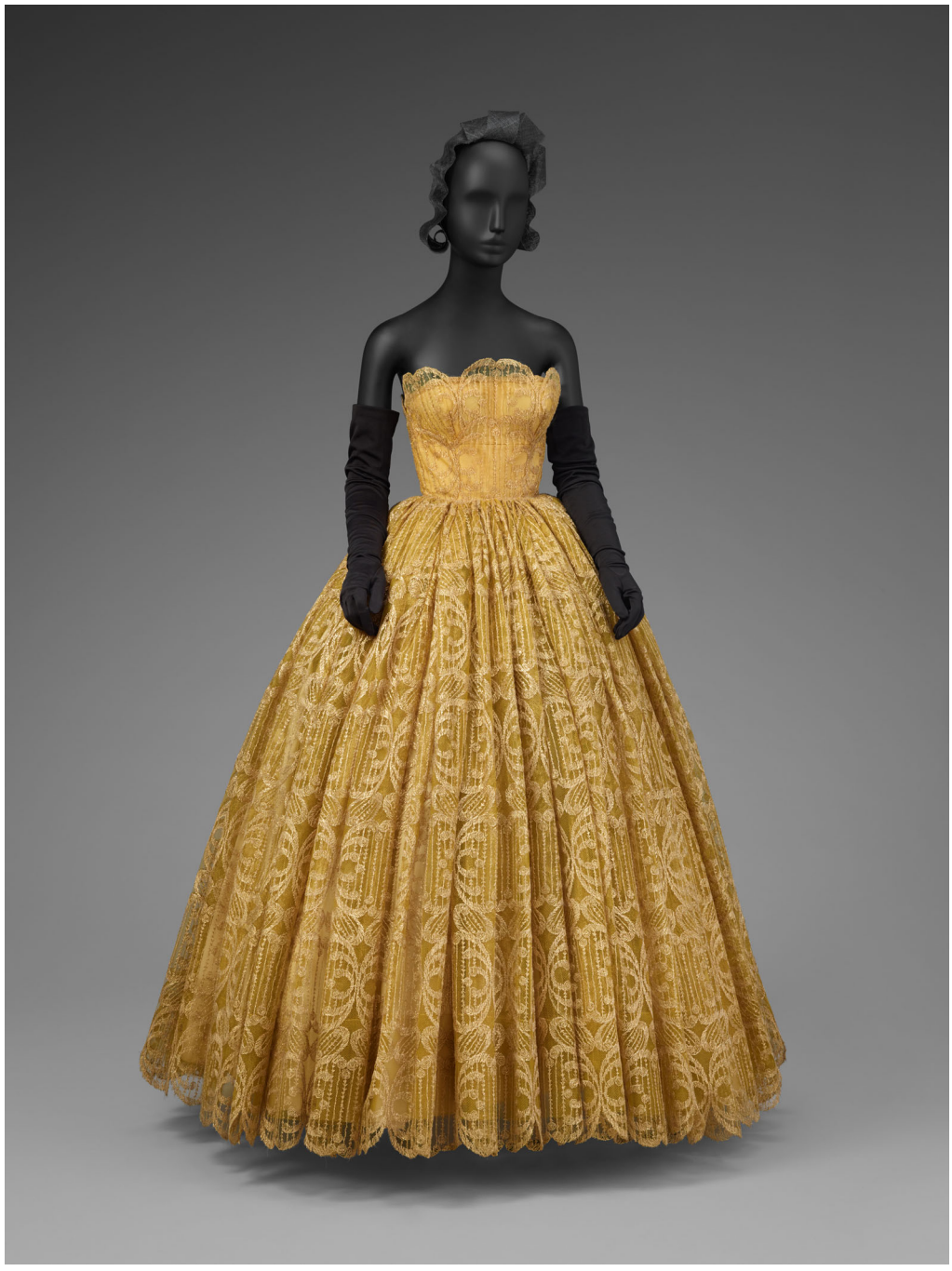
87 See M. J. Sydenham, *The First French Republic, 1792–1804* (Berkeley, 1974), 3, 285. For various portraits of Madame Récamier, see François Gérard, "Portrait de Juliette Récamier, née Bernard (1777–1849)," oil pant, canvas, ca. 1801, P1581, Musée Histoire de Paris Carnavalet; Jacques-Louis David, "Portrait of Madame Récamier," oil on canvas, 1800, INV3708, The Louvre; Firmin Massot, "Juliette Récamier," oil on canvas, 1807, Museum of Fine Art; Also see Anne Higonnet, *Liberty Equality Fashion: The Women Who Styled the French Revolution* (Norton, 2024), 201.

88 See Justine de Young, "Visual Representations," in *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion in the Age of Empire*, ed. Denise Amy Baxter (Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 165; and Akiko Fukai, "Rococo and Neoclassical Clothing," in *Revolution in Fashion: European Clothing, 1715–1815* (Abbeville Press, 1990), 114–16. The neoclassical style developed after the French Revolution. During this period, Greco-Roman inspiration was infused into fashion, a sartorial reflection of supposed democracy in the new French republic.

89 "Virginia Rep: Good News Friday," Virginia Repertory Theatre, last modified January 7, 2022, <https://wfly.co/q1J6Z>.

90 See Anne Fogarty, "Dress," ca. 1960s, synthetic fibers, 1987.353.1, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Anne Fogarty, "Dresses (Garments)—Shawls," ca. 1969, cotton, rayon, v.95.46.04a,b, The Valentine Museum; Anne Fogarty, "Woman's Dress," ca. 1968, 1972-113-1a,b, Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Museum of Art.

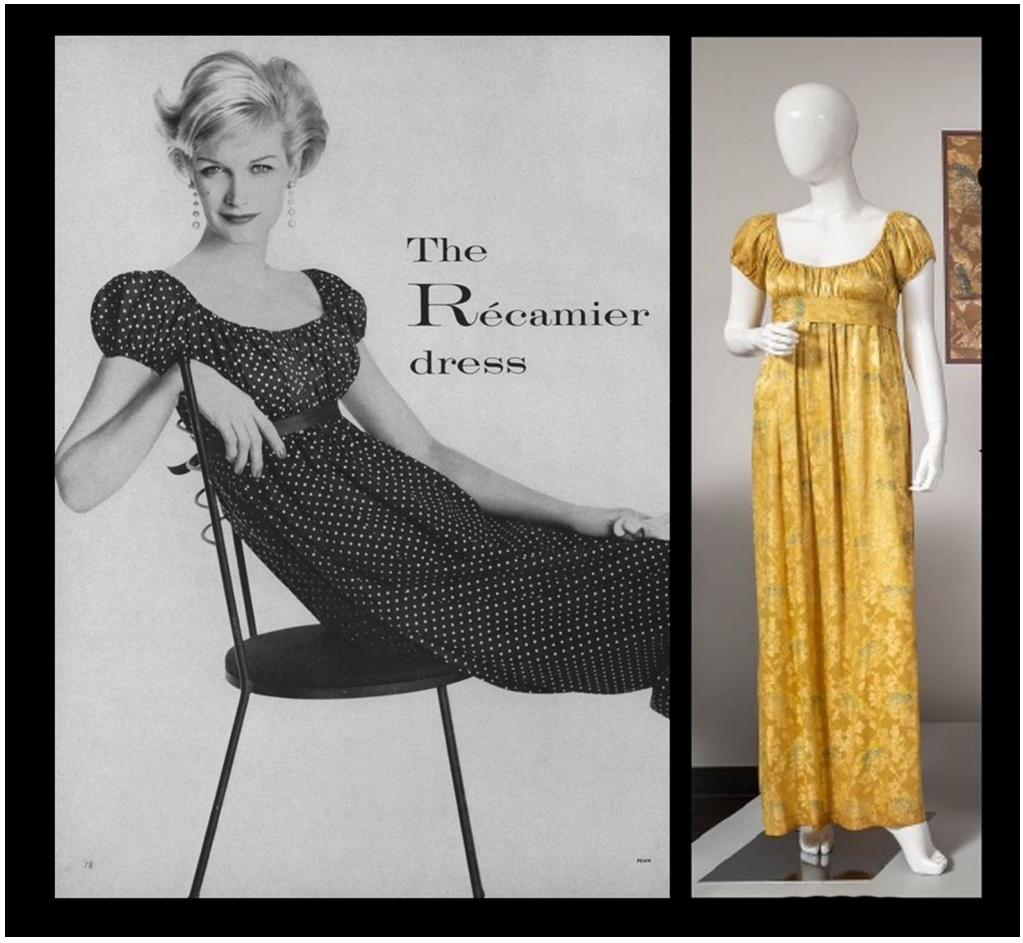
Figure 10. Anne Fogarty, Strapless evening gown designed and worn by Fogarty to receive an award in 1953 at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. "Women's Evening Dress and Petticoat," ca. 1953, silk net, rayon, and metallic thread, silk taffeta. Philadelphia Museum of Art: Gift of Anne Fogarty, 1956-41-1a,b.



advocated tight-fitting garments and full skirts for the well-dressed wife, significantly contradicting herself in just one year. Still, the Récamier represented the beginning of a radical shift for Fogarty.

The dress also reflected popular trends of the late 1950s as the hourglass look fell from favor, such as the short-lived sack-dress of 1957–58, adapted by several designers, perhaps most notably

Figure 11. Advertisement for the Récamier dress, *Vogue*, June 1, 1958, 78 (left), beside an extant example of gold metallic brocade with an empire waistline and cap sleeves (right). Anne Fogarty, "Récamier Dress," ca. 1958, rayon, metallic thread, v.92.43.08. Baton Rouge: LSU Textile & Costume Museum/The Valentine Costume & Textiles Collection. Photo by Kevin Duffy.



in the fall 1957 collections of Balenciaga and Givenchy. The sack dress was a loose, chemise-style garment, dramatically different from the New Look. Many designers copied the style, which proved both popular and polarizing, with criticism focused on its lack of overt femininity.[91] The fashion press recommended a series of foundational undergarments to help wearers achieve a desirable look, suggesting that sack dresses were "cut to move with the figure inside, and to make it clear there is a figure inside."[92] Perhaps the Récamier was Fogarty's response to the sack dress. Yet she also warned women, "If you're very thin, don't think a loose belt is going to make you look fuller. You'll only look like a potato sack."[93]

Mainstream Success

By the late 1950s, Fogarty was a well-known designer of an American ready-to-wear brand. Major department store Saks Fifth Avenue offered her a contract to design collections labeled "Anne Fogarty Exclusive to Saks Fifth Avenue."[94] These were sold nationwide; however, the contract also stipulated that her collections could be franchised in cities without a Saks location where the garments bore the label "Special Editions by Anne Fogarty."[95] Andrew

91 David E. Lazaro, "Getting the Sack: The Controversial Late 1950s Fashion," *Costume* 58, no. 2 (2024): 226–54.

92 "Chemiserie Self-made—from Vogue Printed Patterns," *Vogue*, December 1, 1957, 138–39.

93 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 111.

94 "Dresses: Saks 5th to Show Fogarty Line in May," *Women's Wear Daily*, February 3, 1958, 33.

95 "Dressses: Saks," *Women's Wear Daily*, 33.

Arkin, a New York-based dress manufacturer, produced the Fogarty exclusive for Saks Fifth Avenue lines. He believed that contracting a designer to create styles for Saks allowed the retailer to be "identified with a certain look."[96] This partnership with a prestigious department store chain brought Fogarty to the attention of a larger market, furthering her career and prominence as a fashion designer of the time. Her first collection for Saks debuted in May 1958 and consisted of both day and evening dresses, priced from $29 to $49, or $321 to $543 today.[97] Her work received a positive reception from customers. Initially, the Saks buyers ordered 3,500 units, but after just three days of selling, they placed an additional order for 5,000 units to meet the high demand.[98] Enthused by this success, the executives of Saks Fifth Avenue extended Fogarty's contract for ten years in November of 1958.[99]

While working for Saks, Fogarty expanded her collections with accessories, such as hats and shoes, to coordinate with her garments (Figure 12). Later, in the summer of 1959, she entered a joint agreement between Saks and sportswear brand Loomtogs, Inc. to create a collection labeled "sports editions."[100] Established in 1930, Loomtogs manufactured sweater suits, knitwear, infants' and children's clothing, junior apparel, and specialty wool jersey loungewear.[101] The new collaboration consisted of cotton dresses, swimsuits, and beach jacket ensembles described as possessing a "lilting, feminine-but-clean-cut character" and retailed for $3.75 to $23.75, or $41 to $262 today.[102] Fogarty's expansion into casual sportswear at various price points expanded her brand's appeal. Furthermore, it marked a significant shift in her design philosophy, demonstrating a move towards comfort and practicality.

Figure 12. Advertisement for Fogarty's exclusive line at Saks Fifth Avenue, *Vogue*, September 1, 1958, 15.

Yet, despite this evolution of style, comfort, and fit, in 1959, to celebrate her tenth anniversary as a designer and her ten-year contract extension with Saks Fifth Avenue, Fogarty published *Wife Dressing: The Fine Art of Being A Well Dressed Wife*, which retailed for $3.[103] *Wife Dressing* was a fashion guidebook to educate readers on shopping, styling, and maintaining a wardrobe. She described the act of wife dressing as "An art. A science. A labor of love. A means of self-expression. And, above all, a contributing factor to a happy marriage."[104] Throughout the book, Fogarty discussed how women should curate their wardrobes in a way that would not only please their husbands but also serve as an extension of themselves.

Fogarty's book was not alone in providing rules for women to follow regarding beauty and fashion in the 1950s. Publications such as these were available from many authors, perhaps most notably Amy Vanderbilt, who also married and divorced multiple times.[105] Another example is Lily Daché, the famous milliner who published her *Glamour Book* in 1956. In it, she discussed glamour and how it helped her achieve many things, such as her career, her friends, and "most of all importantly," her husband's love.[106] Other fashion designers like Elizabeth Hawes and Claire McCardell also published books about dressing

96 Bernadine Taub, "Meet the New, Young 'Miss Fashion': Concerted Drive," *Women's Wear Daily*, April 11, 1958, 5.

97 Taub, "Meet the New," *Women's Wear Daily*, 33.

98 See "Table of Contents," *Women's Wear Daily*, May 6, 1958, 2; and "Dresses: Response to Saks, Fogarty Collection Brings Reorders," *Women's Wear Daily*, May 6, 1958, 19.

99 Earl Dash, "Dresses: Seen and Heard in the Market," *Women's Wear Daily*, November 4, 1958, 25.

100 "Advertisement (Anne Fogarty)," *Women's Wear Daily*, February 11, 1959, 32.

101 See "Textile—Apparel Real Estate News: Loomtogs, Inc., in Herald Square Bldg.," *Women's Wear Daily*, March 25, 1930, 20; and "Lingerie and Negligees—: Milton J. Cohen Now with Loomtogs," *Women's Wear Daily*, September 28, 1933, 8.

102 See "Sportswear and Separates: Fogarty to Design for New Firm Set Up by Loomtogs," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 28, 1959; and "Sportswear and Separates: Feminine, Dressmaker Look for Summer at New Source," *Women's Wear Daily*, February 13, 1959, 12.

103 "Executive Changes: Anne Fogarty Gives a Word to the Wives on Proper Attire," *Women's Wear Daily*, April 21, 1959, 19.

104 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*.

105 For another example of a similar fashion guidebook/etiquette book see Amy Vanderbilt, *Complete Book of Etiquette; A Guide to Gracious Living* (Doubleday, 1954).

106 Lilly Daché, *Lily Daché's Glamour Book*, ed. Dorothy Roe Lewis (J. B. Lippincott Company, 1956), 12.

and maintaining a wardrobe.[107] While Hawes and McCardell advocated for fashion that supported modernity, Fogarty's book positioned women as wives rather than individuals.

Fashion scholars Keila Tyner and Jennifer Ogle state, "women may also achieve empowerment through accommodating dominant cultural norms of beauty."[108] It seems clear that Fogarty adopted this approach in her work. While she coached her readers to use clothing to highlight their personalities, the book emphatically prioritized the male ego. For example, despite having independence and a successful career, she stated, "It's still very much a man's world, and I, for one, couldn't be more happy about it."[109] Yet, there was a practical element to her viewpoint. Without male approval, Fogarty asserted, women would not spend millions of dollars each year buying items to maintain their beauty.[110]

When examining Fogarty's designs and writing from a feminist perspective, conflicting ideas become more comprehensible. While Fogarty achieved empowerment and independence, she did so by accommodating the male gaze in her designs. Feminist scholar Joanna Frueh explains that women's visibility, achieved by adhering to traditional beauty standards, results in "greater personal and professional confidence and power."[111] With this in mind, it is plausible that Fogarty gained leverage in the industry by appealing to concepts of femininity contrived by men.

Fogarty was not alone in her approach. Other influential women of the mid- to late twentieth century instructed women to achieve empowerment and success by appeasing men. For example, Helen Gurley Brown, editor-in-chief of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, discussed this idea in her 1963 book, *Sex and the Single Girl*, where she provided a wealth of advice about dressing, applying makeup, and managing one's appearance.[112] In 1964, she published *Sex and the Office*, arguing that dressing in a way that appeals to men was key to success in a male-dominated workplace.[113] While this book was published after *Wife Dressing*, it demonstrates why some successful women adhered to societally prescribed concepts of femininity well into the 1960s. Gurley Brown, a successful woman with a high-profile career, encouraged readers to retain their femininity and allure even at the office. In this context, it appears that Fogarty understood the feminist ideologies of the time, which emphasized pursuing a life outside of marriage and motherhood, but simultaneously reinforced beauty norms to navigate a male-dominated social landscape.

Gloria Steinem, a key player in second-wave feminism, challenged traditional gender roles because of their association with an oppressive patriarchal society. However, Steinem also understood that women could be empowered by appearing attractive without succumbing to patriarchy and recognized how women could benefit from embracing their beauty.[114] For example, she was quoted in a 1974 *Ms.* magazine article stating that in a political setting, a woman dressed "in a print dress and pearls" is more effective than one in blue jeans because the former has a higher chance of acceptance.[115] This reinforces the idea of empowerment through accommodation and demonstrates how a prominent second-wave feminist interpreted it. Fogarty, an adept business owner, likely anticipated the reactions of male investors, publishers, and ultimately the husbands of her customers. It is therefore understandable that her book encouraged women to consult their husbands when choosing fashion. As Steinem explained, a woman who embodies traditional femininity is much more likely to gain credibility in a male-dominated society.[116]

Anne Fogarty Inc.

By the late 1950s, Fogarty offered more than the "prettiest dresses."[117] Following

107 See Claire McCardell, *What Shall I Wear?: The What, Where, When and How Much of Fashion* (Simon & Schuster, 1956); and Elizabeth Hawes, *Fashion is Spinach* (Random House, 1938).

108 Tyner and Ogle, "Feminist Theory of the Dressed Female Body," 108.

109 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 120.

110 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 120.

111 Joanna Frueh, *Monster/Beauty: Building the Body of Love* (University of California Press, 2001), 25.

112 Helen Gurley Brown, *Sex and the Single Girl* (Pocket Books, 1963).

113 Helen Gurley Brown, *Sex and the Office* (Bernard Geis Associates, 1964), 22-25, 59.

114 Sydney Ladenstohn Stern, *Gloria Steinem: Her Passions, Politics, and Mystique* (Carol Publishing Group, 1997), 147, 253.

115 See Trucia Kushner, "Finding a Personal Style," *Ms*., February 1974, 85; and Einav Rabinovitch-Fox, *Dressed for Freedom: The Fashionable Politics of American Feminism* (University of Illinois Press, 2021), 159.

116 See Kushner, "Finding a Personal Style," *Ms*., 85; Rabinovitch-Fox, *Dressed for Freedom*, 159.

117 "Advertisement: Skinner (William Skinner and Sons)," *Vogue*, November 15, 1955, 57.

her collaboration with Loomtogs, she became a designer of mix-and-match separates in the sportswear category.[118] Despite being new to sportswear, she earned another award, *Sports Illustrated* Designer of the Year, in 1960, along with Helen and Jack Lazar of Kimberly Knitwear.[119] This award honored designers "who, during the past year . . . made the most significant contribution to sportswear."[120] The magazine reported that

For doing housework Mrs. Fogarty believes in wearing coveralls; so she designs coveralls that are made like a garage mechanic's but are embroidered with pink and red carnations . . . well known for her petticoated dresses, which whirled her to fame . . . [she] signed a contract with Saks Fifth Avenue . . . [who] licenses manufactures and vendors Fogarty designs, ranging from dresses, coats, suits, lingerie, hats, shoes and jewelry to sportswear. The sportswear is manufactured by Sports Editions and includes pants, shirts, skirts, coveralls, jackets and swimsuits.[121]

This shift is ironic, considering Fogarty's advice in *Wife Dressing*, which cautioned women not to dress like a steamfitter or a garage mechanic less than a year prior. In addition to coveralls inspired by manual laborers, Fogarty's sportswear collections during this period included two-piece separates made from muted leopard cotton, silk watercolor print, and candy-striped denim, with prices as low as $11.95, approximately $130 today.[122] As the 1950s ended, the conservative nature of the decade lost much of its stronghold over America. This, coupled with a greater focus on individuality, contributed to the dramatic shift in Fogarty's silhouette.[123]

In 1962, Fogarty left Saks to start her own business, a bold move considering her lucrative long-term contract. Fogarty's approach to women's fashion underwent a drastic shift after she launched her business. The 1960s ushered in a new era of silhouettes and styles. While the first few years of the decade continued many trends from the 1950s, boxy and A-line silhouettes soon dominated daywear, with eveningwear adopting simple shapes in luxurious fabrics such as satin and lace, featuring embellishments like beading, embroidery, feathers, and fur.[124] In addition to new silhouettes, hemlines rose throughout the decade, and mid-thigh dresses permeated retailers by 1965.[125] Fogarty's collections featured varying skirt lengths as the 1960s progressed, from minis, some paired with separate bloomers or pantaloons, to ankle-length styles.

Her first independent collection featured shift dresses and separates. Described as "sophisticated, contained, young," Fogarty initially designed for juniors and petites, a demographic she knew well.[126] She dedicated her first collection to the "Young Rulers, U.S.A.," who Fogarty described as "the best-dressed, busiest women in the world. They require clothes that move."[127] This outlook was antithetical to the lifestyle she discussed in *Wife Dressing*, which encouraged women to mold their bodies to please men. The fashion media praised her first collection for its "young, good taste look."[128] Eventually, the newly formed Anne Fogarty Inc. offered clothing in misses sizes from four to fourteen, a departure from her focus on the petite or junior market. Prices ranged from $30 to $35, or approximately $320 to $374 in today's money.[129] Misses sizing allowed for a fully developed body, with more ease in the chest, hips, and shoulders.[130]

This shift in style and fit raises questions about whether Fogarty's design philosophy evolved due to her beliefs about the roles of women or as a strategic response to the ever-changing, competitive landscape of American fashion. Fogarty likely adapted to the shifting perspectives of women's appearance as her position as a respected designer and fashion authority was cemented. Changing lifestyles and the evolving expectations of women called for a new silhouette that encouraged movement and comfort—her designs of the 1960s embraced this.

118 "Sportswear, Separates: Coordinated Costume of Flannel and Cotton," *Women's Wear Daily*, July 22, 1959, 26.

119 "Advertisement (Anne Fogarty and Others)," *Women's Wear Daily*, May 11, 1960, 39; "Sportswear and Separates Active & Casual Outerwear, Blouses, Knitwear, Swimwear: Lazars, Anne Fogarty Win Sports Illustrated Awards," *Women's Wear Daily*, April 20, 1960, 20.

120 See "Display 106—No Title," *New York Times*, April 24, 1960; and "3 Win Fashion Awards for Polished Sportswear," *New York Times*, April 20, 1960, 35.

121 Jo Ahern Zill, "The Winners of our 1960 Elections," *Sports Illustrated*, April 25, 1960, 35.

122 "Carefree Play Clothes Are Styles for Summer's Shadow and Sun," *New York Times*, April 26, 1960, 33.

123 See Laura Schooling, "Social Evolution & Hemline Revolution," in *60's Fashion: Vintage Fashion and Beauty Ads*, ed. Jim Heimann (Taschen, 2007), 1; and Lebovic, "'How to Be in Fashion," 178–94.

124 Cole and Deihl, *History of Modern Fashion*, 275.

125 Cole and Deihl, *The History of Modern Fashion*, 275.

126 "The Sportswear and Leisure Living: Top Designers' New Ventures," *Women's Wear Daily*, September 7, 1962, 33.

127 "Dresses: New York: Anne Fogarty," *Women's Wear Daily*, February 14, 1962, 21.

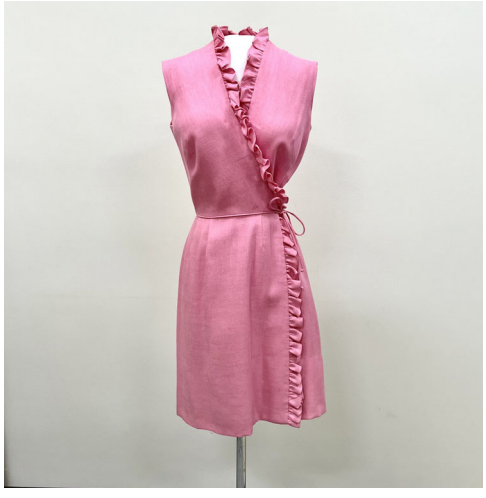
128 "Dresses: New York," *Women's Wear Daily*, 21.

129 "Confirm Formation of Fogarty Firm," *Women's Wear Daily*, February 2, 1962, 18.

130 Tonia Cook Kimbrough, "Juniors and Misses Sizes—Five Key Differences," *Wearables*, April/May 2010, 40.

One example of Fogarty's work from the mid-1960s is a pink linen wrap-style day dress, ca. 1965, that falls just above the knee. A ruffle applied to the neckline follows the edge of the wraparound front and ends at the hem. The dress closes with small snaps and includes a self-belt, a significant change in silhouette from her designs of just five years earlier (Figure 13).[131] Another example of Fogarty's designs from the mid-1960s is a sweater dress and coat ensemble (Figure 14). The grey knit dress has an A-line silhouette that falls above the knee, fashioned from knit fabric. It is lined in synthetic fabric but left unlined at the neckline, which allows for a more comfortable fit. A band collar stands two inches tall with a circumference of ten inches. A yellow and grey oversized plaid synthetic mohair coat includes a zipper at the center front. The most notable feature is the substantial sleeves, a dramatic departure from her early designs, many of which had small sleeve openings with a kimono-style construction that limited movement and influenced posture. This ensemble was part of another Fogarty line, A. F. Boutique, launched in the mid-1960s.[132] By this time, Fogarty's collections also frequently included pants or jumpsuits.[133]

Figure 13. Anne Fogarty, Pink day dress with ruffle and corded self-belt, "Day Dress," ca. 1965, linen, v.70.309. Baton Rouge: LSU Textile & Costume Museum/The Valentine Costume & Textiles Collection. Photo by Kevin Duffy.



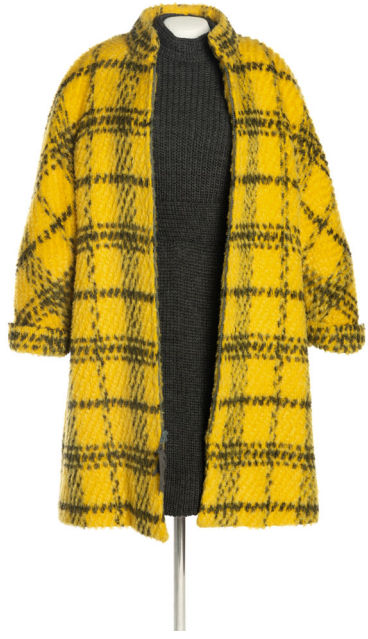
Our research revealed a sketch of a Fogarty jumpsuit design in pink and blue lace with coordinating sequins arranged in a swirling pattern (Figure 15).[134] This jumpsuit's lightweight material and shapeless silhouette are evidence of the unconstrained style that Fogarty adopted in the 1960s. According to Fogarty, in 1966,

There's really no one way of dressing for an occasion anymore. Long or short, black or white—rippling through space in embroidered ribbon on net, or intensely dramatic in sequin lace knit. The one that's most self-expressive is the one that's right.[135]

By this time, Fogarty's work included easy-to-wear, yet glamorous, sheath dresses and stretchy body-hugging eveningwear, which expanded to accommodate a woman's figure and, through carefully placed embellishment, flattered a variety of body types (Figure 16).

This was another monumental shift from *Wife Dressing*, published just seven

Figure 14. Anne Fogarty, Sweater dress and oversized coat from the A. F. Boutique line. "Ensemble," ca. 1965, wool, synthetic fabric, 2023.005.0001a-b. Baton Rouge: LSU Textile & Costume Museum. Photo by Kevin Duffy.



131 Anne Fogarty, "Day Dress," linen, ca. 1965, v.70.309, LSU Textile & Costume Museum.

132 Milbank, *New York Fashion*, 222.

133 Anne Fogarty, "Jumpsuit," rayon, v.92.43.05, LSU Textile & Costume Museum.

134 Anne Fogarty, "Jumpsuit," sketch, ca. 1966, Fashion Institute of Technology.

135 "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty (American Airlines)," *Vogue*, December 1, 1966, 28.

years before. In 1966, Fogarty argued that women's clothing should be "effortless . . . unencumbered."[136] This contradicted her Paper Doll and Tea Cozy silhouettes of the early 1950s, which required underpinnings to achieve the desired look.[137] Also in 1966, she described one of her dresses as "so natural you forget you're wearing anything unusual."[138] However, in *Wife Dressing*, she insisted that clothing "should be perfectly fitted at all times, and the feeling of after-five wear especially should be one of constraint rather than comfort."[139] In a short span of seven years, Fogarty's point of view regarding the silhouette and fit of women's fashion evolved drastically. While she once favored a tightly cinched style, her later published statements and work proved her perspective shifted toward comfort and practicality, solidifying her paradoxical approach to fashion over approximately thirteen years.

While Fogarty's precise motivations for the significant shift in silhouette may never be known, our analysis provides some insight. By the time she started her own business, Fogarty had enough credibility and power that pandering to men was no longer required for success. Additionally, the changing roles of women in the 1960s encouraged more relaxed designs and a greater emphasis on versatile modes of dress.[140]

Moreover, the 1960s was a period of diversified styles and trends. Examples of these diverging styles included clean, minimalist looks inspired by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, mod styles derived from pop art and British subculture influences, an emphasis on futurism due to the space race, and the youthquake, which highlighted the growing influence of the younger generation on politics, media, and fashion.[141] Fogarty, an experienced designer, certainly capitalized on these shifting trends. It is also possible that an interest or awareness of feminist thought influenced her decisions, as second-wave feminism was in full effect.

The drastic changes in her designs mirrored the social climate of the time. During the 1960s and 1970s, second-wave feminism and the Women's Liberation Movement sought equality in the workplace, in sexuality, in politics, and within the household.[142] There was a push to rethink the ways fashion functioned for women. This did not mean

136 "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty," *Vogue*, 31.

137 "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty," *Vogue*, 29.

138 "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty (Anne Fogarty)," *Vogue*, April 15, 1966.

139 Fogarty, *Wife Dressing*, 116.

140 Jonathan Walford, *Sixties Fashion: From Less is More to Youthquake* (Thames & Hudson, 2013).

141 See Cole and Deihl, *History of Modern Fashion*, 271–77; "Jacqueline Kennedy, Potential Style Leader," *Women's Wear Daily*, July 13, 1960, 5; Heimann, *60s Fashion*, 1–2.

142 Brigitte Studer, "Introductory Remarks," in *The Woman's Liberation Movement: Impacts and Outcomes*, ed. Kristina Schulz (Berghahn Books, 2019), 15–17.

FIGURE 15. Anne Fogarty's sketch depicting a jumpsuit. "Jumpsuit," sketch, ca. 1966. Courtesy of the Fashion Institute of Technology | SUNY, Gladys Marcus Library Special Collections and College Archives.

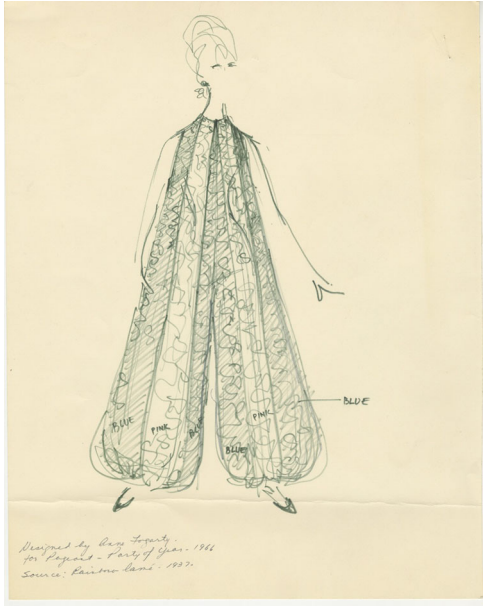


FIGURE 16. A radical new take on femininity and beauty by Anne Fogarty in an American Airlines advertisement, *Vogue*, December 1, 1966, 3.

abandoning all concern for one's appearance, but rather challenging long-standing beliefs.[143] For some second-wave feminists, cinched silhouettes symbolized systemic oppression and adherence to antiquated notions of embodied femininity. Fogarty's shift to a silhouette that no longer required body-shaping undergarments reflected an evolving societal conception of femininity that emphasized clothing with greater freedom of movement. Assuredly, Fogarty also saw the potential financial gain that a change in her approach could generate.

Fogarty's style evolution was fully realized in a crimson maxi evening dress, ca. 1974, with abstracted floral motifs (Figure 17). The stylish dress is completely wearable and comfortable, with a waist circumference of thirty-three inches. Made from easy to wash and wear synthetic knit jersey, it hangs loosely on the body, measuring fifty-five and three-quarter inches from the shoulder to the hem, which ends at the ankles. A slit running from the knee to the ankle not only added style but also provided greater freedom of movement. Additionally, the set-in sleeves were generously fitted compared to previous designs, with a circumference of seventeen inches at the armscye and eight and a half inches at the wrist.

Fogarty retired in 1974, and Leonard Sunshine, Inc. assumed ownership of her business.[144] While the company's name changed to Leonard Sunshine, some divisions continued under the Anne Fogarty label.[145] Following her retirement, Fogarty did freelance design work until she died in 1980.[146] Collections released under her label after her passing were designed by Harold Stone of Shariella.[147] Paradoxical until the end, her funeral was held as a Catholic mass despite her Jewish identity.[148]

Conclusion

Anne Fogarty emerged as a fashion designer when women were expected and encouraged to devote their lives to domesticity, and she laid the foundation of a successful career by supporting these ideologies. She established herself as a fashion authority with her guidebook, perpetuating limiting ideas of womanhood in the mid-twentieth century. As her career progressed, she evolved past the idealized, ultrafeminine silhouette that catalyzed her early achievements.

Her career, when viewed through a feminist lens, demonstrates an intriguing dichotomy and is an example of how some women achieved empowerment through accommodation. She upheld traditional beliefs about a woman's role, as evidenced in her book and the overtly feminine silhouette of her early designs, which allowed her to become a prominent figure in mid-to-late twentieth-century American fashion. Her intersecting identities further intensified the complexities of Fogarty's designs and ideas about dress.

Fogarty's story highlights the contradictions in her work, particularly her advice to women, which at different times both limited and expanded their potential as human beings. Fashion and culture scholars Susan Kaiser and Denise Nicole Green explain that studying fashion as a cultural symbol is often a both/and process in which meanings are "complex and even contradictory."[149] Fogarty's design work and writing were both liberating for her as a woman pursuing a career, and potentially restrictive to those women who attempted to follow her advice. While second-wave feminism championed freedom of sexuality and beauty management, some women of the time, such as Helen Gurley Brown and Gloria Steinem, also discussed the benefits of embracing femininity to propel one's career or to achieve personal or professional goals by making them more appealing in the eyes of a patriarchal system.

Fogarty's story is interesting and vital within the history of American fashion and ready-to-wear of the mid- to late twentieth century. Until now, her

143 Rabinovitch-Fox, *Dressed for Freedom*, 155.

144 "In Brief …: Sunshine Changes Anne Fogarty Name," *Women's Wear Daily*, January 30, 1974, 12.

145 "In Brief," *Women's Wear Daily*, 12.

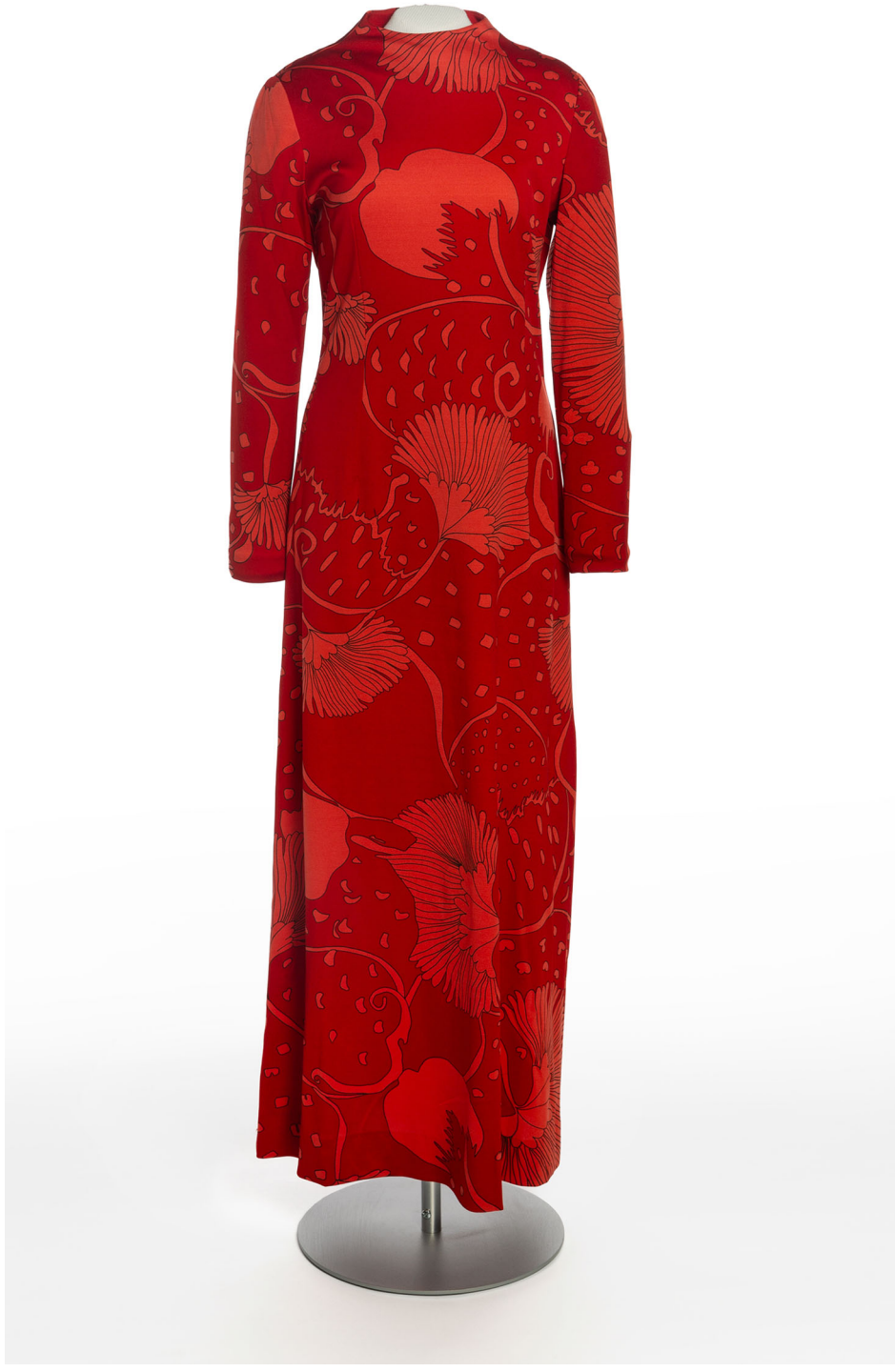
146 Morris, "Anne Fogarty," D19.

147 "Advertisement: Anne Fogarty, Inc. (Harold Stone)," *WWD*, April 19, 1980, 79.

148 See Morris, "Anne Fogarty, Designer of American Look," D19; "Walter Francis White and Poppy Cannon Papers," Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University Library, last modified June 2, 2009, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170320232922/ http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/about/blogs/african-american-studies-beinecke-library/2009/06/02/walter-francis-white-and-poppy>.

149 Susan B. Kaiser and Denise N. Green, *Fashion and Cultural Studies* (Bloomsbury, 2021), 17.

Figure 17. Crimson maxi dress with floral motifs for the Collector's Items by Anne Fogarty line. "Dress," ca. 1974, synthetic jersey, 2024.012.0001. Baton Rouge: LSU Textile & Costume Museum. Photo by Kevin Duffy.



achievements existed only in the margins of fashion history.[150] As a successful fashion designer who worked with major firms and founded her own company, Fogarty's paradoxical approach to fashion across time reflected shifting societal norms. When viewed in its entirety, the contradictory nature of her work suggests that Fogarty played by the rules but was either influenced by or aware of feminist thought during the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. This research clarifies the contributions, contradictions, and impact of Anne Fogarty, a designer who left an indelible mark on American fashion and women.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

150 bell hooks explored this topic in her writing, which influenced this research. hooks defined the margin as "part of the whole but outside the main body"; see bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (South End Press, 1984): ix; hooks, born Gloria Watkins, adopted the name bell hooks in honor of her maternal grandmother. She chose to use lowercase letters for her name to shift the focus away from her identity to her ideas; see Min Jin Lee, "Small Letters, Big Ideas: A Tme to Praise the Uplifting Works of bell hooks," *New York Times*, March 1, 2019, C15.