

Jenss, Heike (Ed.). (2016) *Fashion studies: Research methods, sites and practices*. London, England: Bloomsbury. ISBN: HB: 978-1-4725-8317-8; PB: 978-1-4725-8316-1.

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*Fashion studies* is an edited book of readings originating from the 2010 *Locating Fashion/Studies* symposium at Parsons School of Design, The New School. The purpose was to explore interdisciplinary research in examining the various aspects of fashion utilizing case studies of completed research. The book, with a postmodern orientation, contains ten chapters grouped in three sections that are not mutually exclusive: material culture (in this two-chapter section one chapter focuses on collecting and museum practices while the second chapter is heavily oriented to ethnographic methods), ethnographic methods, and mixed methods. While the primary focus of the book was on research methods; there are two chapters on the pedagogy of fashion studies. Christopher Breward wrote the foreword to the book, and Joanne B. Eicher concluded with a chapter on the “Methodology and Interdisciplinarity in *The Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*.”

There is a heavy leaning toward ethnography (a method found in at least one chapter in all three sections of the book) and other anthropologically inspired methods, not surprising given that almost two thirds of the authors were trained in anthropology. Relative to ethnography, readers are provided with descriptions of interviews, participant-observation (including the process of becoming a blogger), observation, and using field notes as well as comparative ethnographies, multiple site ethnography, ethnomethodology, and auto-ethnography. Other methods and techniques discussed and portrayed in the case studies were using clothes diaries, clothing life-history, oral history, content analysis, large sample survey with both quantitative and qualitative data collection, critical discourse analysis, and the critical paradigm diffraction method. Most scholars used multiple methods in their work.

In several chapters one learns about the potential difficulties of gaining access to the study population, and the reader is given an opportunity to view how method emerges and changes during a research project. The costs of research, especially for qualitative data collection, with regard to personal costs, time, and possible financial costs are discussed. The importance of being open to the unexpected is considered. Finally, several chapters contain discussions on research programs which are often not discussed in methods courses or texts. In most chapters, the “critical” terms were defined, and readers were presented with the “how to’s” of various methods in the context of actual research projects. There was also some discussion of different inquiry paradigms (most frequently labeled as approaches) and theory.

Though the division of chapters into material culture, ethnography, and mixed methods is somewhat unclear because those “topics” run across all ten chapters, *Fashion Studies* would be a very helpful read for graduate students and new researchers who should find the applied, case study approach to methods very useful. Additionally, although focused on methods, valuable insights into the fashion industry can be found in the various case studies. If used in a graduate research methods course, the book would be a good accompaniment to a more traditional research methods text. Because the individual types of methods are dispersed throughout the book, students may need help from their instructor in locating information on the various specific methods.