



Faculty of Design

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Expanding Style Horizons: Slow, local and collective care as an intervention to fast fashion cycles

Maione, Donna

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Expanding style horizons: Slow, local and collective care as an intervention to fast fashion cycles

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About



DONNA MAIONE

4th year, PhD Candidate

Transition Design

Career as clothing designer for multi-national brands of mass produced clothing.

Moving from product to experience

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Slowing fashion cycles toward longer more engaged usage to benefit the wearer and the environment through deeper self expression and by reducing textile waste

HOW I DO THIS

Experiment and collaborate on new ways of making and remaking clothing that will last through fads

Using the excess of garments we already own, I expand the notion of designer to include the role of the home sewer or amateur crafter toward agency in a local fashion making future.



Overview

- Invisible and forgotten clothing
- Second hand flow and generational garments
- Methods: Weaving in Interventions
- Care and the social fabric of repair
- Conclusions (interpretations)
- Implications (Future of fashion care)
- Discuss and questions



A close-up photograph of a light-colored fabric, possibly a shirt, featuring intricate embroidery. A needle is visible, positioned diagonally across the fabric. The embroidery includes a circular pattern and a dense, textured area. The image is partially obscured by a white background on the right side.

Transition design from product to engagement

Slowing the flow and extending garment life





The Disposable Nature of Fashion





11,000,000 tons

Textile go to landfill



Invisible and forgotten stage of clothing

Producer

US lags behind EU, beginning to set Extended Responsibility policies (EPR)

Advocates in New York are making inroads on a state level, pushing legislation to control clothing waste

Acquisition

US consumer purchased roughly 35 garments 2021

Accumulation of clothing through impulse purchases fueled by consumers' fleeting need for social belonging.

Consumer

Wardrobe assemblage-present/past styles, sizes, utility, identities,, which are distanced from daily use. Often forgotten by spatial boundaries



Second-hand flow and generational garments

- Second-hand clothing market on the rise
- Spectrum of generational garments - multiple tiers
- Recalled materials, disassembled garments reconfigure new styles
- Subsequent generational garments contain mix / hybrid garments
- Significantly slower than mass production,
- Cannot keep up with the pace of used material flow

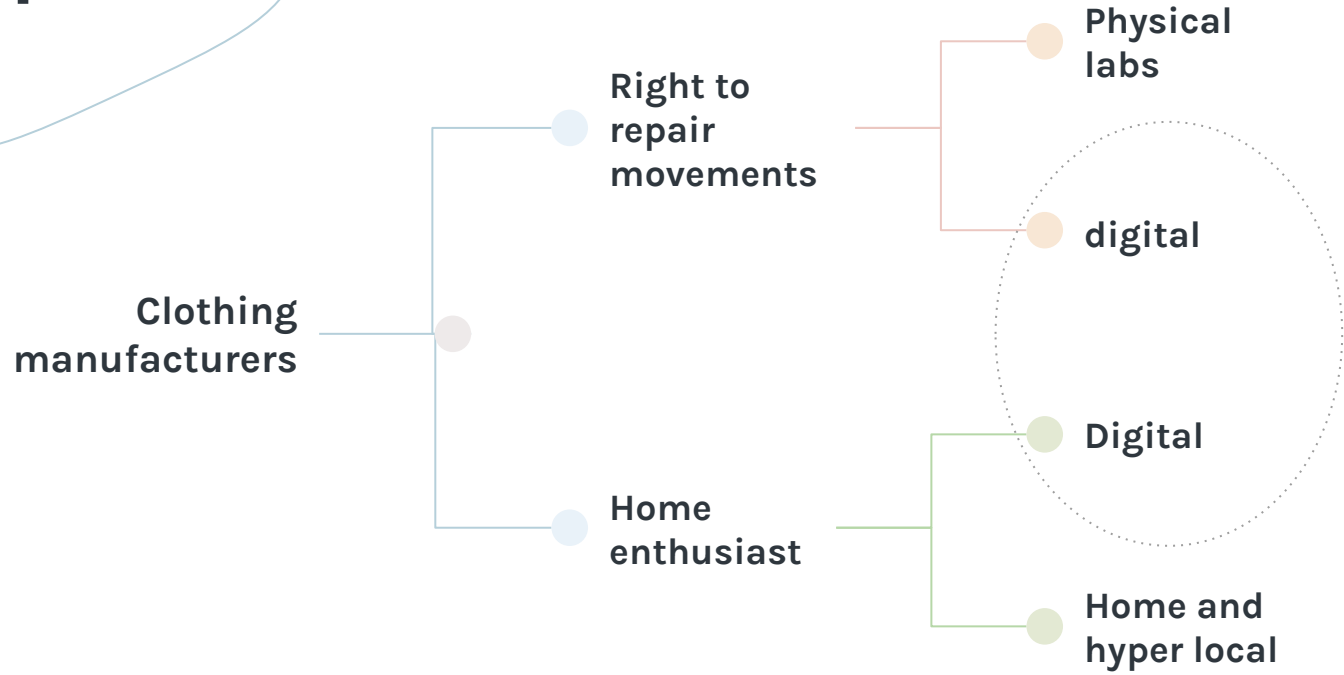


Weaving in Interventions



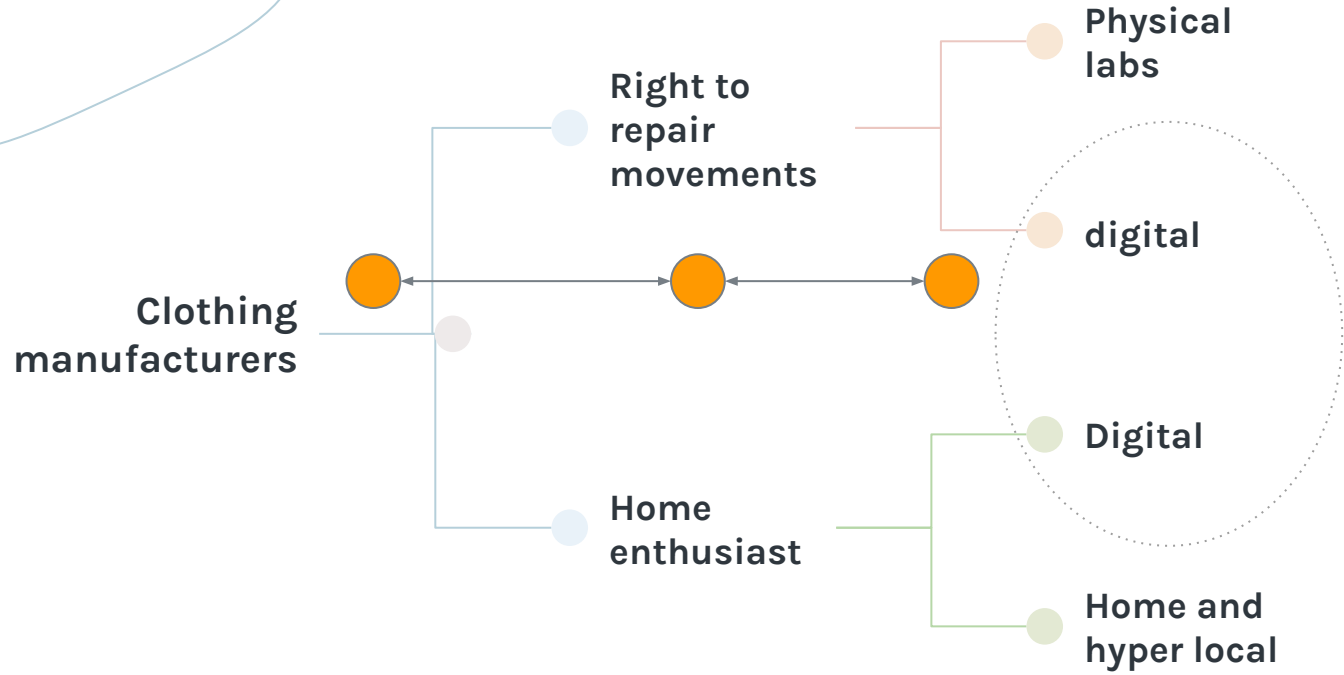
LOCAL TEXTILE WASTE

Care and the social fabric of repair



Conclusions

Making tangible imbalance of mass-produced clothing, designers navigate across scales, from systems thinking to product thinking to service design, to gain emerging perspectives that connect across these dimensions.



Strengths and limits of system thinking in a design practice

Strength

Designers who use systems thinking as a research method for future planning have an advantage in that they can move in and out on scalar levels.

Weakness

Additional time is required in the design cycle to allow for discoveries of interconnectivity, which may not be appropriate in all design settings.



Finding pace between two ways of designing



Next Steps

Ongoing research

- Examines plural pathways **alternative clothing experiences** (Fletcher, 2016)
- **Transition Design frameworks** (Irwin, 2015)
- **Cosmopolitan Localism principles** - complex long-term initiatives, locally rooted solutions (Kossoff, 2019; Manzini, 2005; Manzini & M'Rithaa, 2016).
- Approaches aim to illuminate multiple to **circular economy** (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017).
- Assemblage of solutions creates **emergent efficiencies of materials, ecological rebuilding** with **networks** between individuals, communities, and social cohesion (Vuletich, 2015; Hirscher et al., 2019).



Future of Fashion Care

Design opportunities
for interventions

- **Reverse supply chains**
- Smaller, regional circles
- Designing for Repair (DfR)
- Engaging Community
- Overlapping first-generation and subsequent garments
- Regional style differences
- Expanding style horizons
- Slowing fashion arc



Takeaways

Questions for Discussion

To collaborate or not to collaborate with first-gen clothing brands? Seeking other forms of design activism, design for social engagement through textiles.

Engaging with social norms and clothing on a local level, seeking ways to scale as nested interventions

From a systems design perspective

What other disciplines may be engaged here for interacting?

Ideas for engaging with colliding forces over social norms?



Thank You

Donna Maione

You can find me at dmaione@andrew.cmu.edu

