Creating Identity Through Fashion:
A Study of Mindful Consumption at Filippa K
"I don’t do fashion - I am fashion."

- Coco Chanel
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Creating Identity Through Fashion : A Study of Mindful Consumption at Filippa K

ABSTRACT

In recent years, fashion consumers have become increasingly aware of the concepts of mindful consumption, minimalism, and sustainability. One Swedish fashion company that is dedicated to these concepts is Filippa K. This thesis aims to explore how the woman Filippa K customer creates a sense of identity through fashion through the lens of these concepts. The study will be made up of a series of focus groups where we discuss the subjects of mindful consumption and identity, seeking to discover how consumers make decisions regarding what clothing to purchase. These focus groups will take place at the Filippa K head office together with the company’s sustainability team. The study will examine how the increased interest in these concepts has come to play an intricate role in the dynamics of identity creation through dress.

Keywords: mindful consumption, minimalism, identity, sustainability, slow fashion, dress, clothing, woman, Filippa K
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Women, identity & fashion
Throughout history, the elaborateness of dress has varied greatly, especially in regard to women’s clothing in the West. At times being used as a means of escaping reality, fashion allows us to step into different versions of ourselves, creating looks and identities as we see fit – in order to belong or to set ourselves apart from the crowd. Dress has been used as a marker of class, showing where in the social hierarchy one is ranked. From powdered wigs to extravagant dresses, wired underskirts to corsets, miniskirts to high heels, a woman’s body has historically been a canvas for every style imaginable – sometimes representing the woman’s individual tastes and preferences, and often times hiding her under a veil of societal norms and expectations. (Brown, 2011: 190)

Thankfully, this has in modern times, started to change. Women are still identified in terms of the garments they wear, and there is still a societal pressure to fit into certain norms and ideals in terms of appearance and dress; however, there is more freedom. The style of dress has become comparatively more simple and more functional. Women are today able to use fashion as a means of expressing something about themselves as individuals, instead of merely being expressions of societies expectations of what a woman is and should be.

The topic of creating identity through dress will be discussed in this paper. It will be discussed in terms of today, fashion, and the everyday dress of women. It will be analyzed through the lens of mindful consumption and theoretically analyzed with the help of theories relating to identity, the individual, and society as a whole.

1.2 The shift into simplicity
As mentioned, women’s fashion has varied greatly throughout history in terms of simplicity, functionality, and style. Now, one of the main concerns facing the fashion industry, and thus the fashion consumer, is sustainability. This, in turn, is encouraging a movement of mindful consumption. What does this mean for the woman consumer of fashion today?

As a major industry, fashion plays a huge part in the climate crisis, costing major resources, energy, water, and health. The global production of ‘fast-fashion’ has been recognized as being unsustainable, and we are gradually moving into a new era of ‘slow fashion.’

This shift into a slower-paced fashion climate requires changes being made from consumers as well as companies. It requires slowing down and simplifying. The Swedish fashion brand Filippa K is one that is encouraging this change of pace, basing their fashion concept on the core values of style, simplicity, and quality. (Filippa K 2020)

In researching the experience of everyday dress, and drawing a parallel between dress and fashion, I will look at the ways in which the woman Filippa K customer uses dress as a means of creating identity.
1.3 Fashion, dress & clothing
The terms fashion, dress, and clothing will be used interchangeably throughout this paper. As I use these terms, they all refer to the same basic idea of clothing or adorning the body.

1.4 Mindful consumption & slow fashion
As stated by Kate Fletcher, in her book Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys, “our present day is indexed by the forces of advanced capitalism and globalization and by consumerism, individualism, materialism, commodization, that define and shape our daily experience of them.” (Fletcher, 2013: 23) We live in a complex time of change, where we are being forced to examine the ways in which our reality is being shaped by these forces; as a society, as individuals, and as consumers.

Mindful consumption is a concept that recognizes this necessary change, and honors the weight of limiting our purchases as we learn to love and care for the garments we own.

As we grow more aware of the impact that we have on the environment and the weight of the choices we make as consumers, we are encouraged to re-think the way that we dress. ‘Slow fashion’ is replacing ‘fast fashion,’ moving forward.

The term ‘slow fashion’ essentially refers to sustainable fashion and has been defined by Jennie Johansson and Johanna Nilsson in their book Slow Fashion: Din guide till smart och hållbart mode, as “when quality goes before quantity,” and “when we prioritize fewer and finer garments with sustainable production and minimal negative impact on the environment.” (Johansson & Nilsson, 2016: 1) As an alternative to ‘fast fashion’, ‘slow fashion’ is incorporated into the ‘slow movement’ which also includes the concept of ‘slow food.’ This general idea of slowing down is also linked to the concept of simplicity and an overall simpler way of living.

1.5 The Filippa K brand
Since 1993, when Filippa K was founded by Filippa Knutsson and Patrik Kihlborg, the brand has been dedicated to delivering timeless pieces based around the values of style, simplicity and quality. (Eriksson Wärn, 2012: 169)

Filippa K has been a top brand in Swedish fashion since it was founded, has since grown internationally, and as stated on their website, is dedicated to “sharing a mission to approach fashion from a global perspective of mindful consumption by creating garments that are timeless in their quality and style, and luxurious in their simplicity.” (Filippa K 2020)

Karina Eriksson Wärn in her book Modebibeln. Den Svenska., describes the “timeless simplicity” of Filippa K’s clothes, stating that they live up to the world’s (as well as our own) expectations of what Scandinavian design is all about – clean lines, functionalism, and modernity. The timing of Filippa K’s streamlined look is partly what led to the brand’s immediate success. The early nineties in Sweden were a time when the mainstream consumer had grown tired of patterns, large prints, and visible labels. Filippa K offered a concept of high-quality garments that could be worn day to night, equally appropriate at the office and at parties. The pieces were minimal and clean – a look that perfectly fit the minimalism growing popular in Swedish homes, where white-painted walls and an overall clean aesthetic dominated. (Eriksson Wärn, 2012: 171)
1.6 Research question
How does the woman Filippa K customer create identity through clothing and mindful consumption?

CHAPTER 2 : THEORY & METHOD

2.1 Theoretical perspectives
This paper will, using Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of the habitus explore the manners in which one’s choice of dress signals an environmental consciousness and an awareness of the impact of mindful consumption.

The habitus refers to a way of being and the set of habits or behaviors that are acquired by individual(s) or a social group to constitute who that person or group ‘is’. In studying how woman fashion consumers at Filippa K make choices in regard to dress, the sense of individual identity as well as the identity of the social group can be analyzed through Bourdieu’s theory and how the habitus functions in regard to mindful consumption and our lifestyle choices.

As a complement to Bourdieu’s theory, I will reference Georg Simmel’s work on fashion, individuality, and differentiation. I will also be using Richard Sennett’s theories on individuality and revolt concerning how we view clothing in public and private spheres.

Cordwell & Schwarz’ anthropological texts on clothing will also be referenced in correlating the manners in which we dress to cultural structures.

Joanne Entwistle will be referenced in examining the ways in which we use dress to signal individual as well we societal values. Her theoretical work on fashion, the body, and how dress functions in the modern world have been an inspiration to this study; this includes her statement that academia needs more studies in the West that make a direct connection between fashion and dress. This paper aims to explore the connection between fashion and dress, examining the experience of fashion in the everyday lives of women. (Entwistle, 2015: 5)

Though the use of these theoretical perspectives, I will analyze how the woman Filippa K customer creates identity through clothing and mindful consumption.

2.2 Method & empirical material

2.2.1 Empirical research
The empirical research for this study will be conducted through a series of focus groups. The focus groups will take place at the Filippa K head office in Stockholm with the consent of the company. I will inquire how the informants make decisions in terms of dress based on the ideas of mindful consumption, minimalism, and sustainability. I will also, through questions and observations, seek to find out how the use of sustainable materials in clothing affects consumer choices and how the consumer identifies with these three concepts.

Through discussion with the sustainability team at Filippa K, as well as through the website, I will also seek to gain a deeper understanding of the company’s identity and values. In the focus group
process, with the participation of the sustainability team, I will find out how the company markets to individuals based on these values, and how the company sees this form of lifestyle marketing influencing consumers to identify with the concept of mindful consumption.

2.2.2 Organizing focus groups
For this study, I organized focus group events together with the sustainability team at Filippa K to gather informants for two nights with the objective to discuss the topic of mindful consumption.

The groups were made up of women who shop at Filippa K. They were informed about the focus group events through an online form that I created together with one of the copywriters. This form was sent out by e-mail to customers who live within the Stockholm and Uppsala area. The events were also marketed through Filippa K’s social media accounts, and customers could access the form through Facebook and Instagram. On the form, they were asked to enter their contact information, how long they had been a Filippa K customer, and which night would suit them best to attend.

After initial interest was shown, I made a random selection of informants to invite to the events. I contacted all of the women who had shown interest to let them know whether or not they had been selected to attend.

In total, 10 women were invited to each event. However, we had some last minute cancellations. The first night consisted of 9 informants, and 5 the second. At first, I thought this might affect the results negatively, seeing as I had fewer informants than I had initially planned for, but I quickly realized that this set-up of one larger and one smaller group might, in fact, add to the diversification of the data; the reasoning being that a larger group has a certain lively dynamic, while a smaller group perhaps offers a setting for deeper discussions.

2.2.3 Limitations of the focus group
There are some constraints placed on the focus group set-up as an empirical research method. Focus groups can be limited by the social restrictions of any group dynamic, yet also propelled by the contributions of those present at the meeting. A problematic effect of this set-up may be the unequal time allotted to each participant to speak and let their views be heard. Many factors may play in to this – at the very least, the personality of those involved in the focus group may affect how comfortable they feel speaking in a group setting. Some may also say they agree with opinions voiced by other informants even though that is not their own truth, in order to fit in, or because they simply do not wish to object at that time. Perhaps, the informants also would have liked to share certain thoughts, but were not able to do so because of the time constraints. If one informant is speaking, another may not wish to interrupt, and so, the conversation is largely dominated by those informants who are more talkative or feel they have more to share on the subject at hand. Thus, not all thoughts will be heard. This is one reason why the Mentimeter app may have helped us to hear from all of the informants. They were, during the events, asked to log in to the app with their smart-phones and answer questions about mindful consumption, sustainable materials, and so on. Their responses were then projected on a screen. This tool allowed us to hear from each individual, gathering statistical data as well as lengthier written responses which we could then look at together as a group and discuss in more detail.

My role as researcher being present at the events may also have affected the focus group discussion in general. Knowing this, my role was largely that of listener and observer. I aimed to
ask relevant questions and lead the discussion, while also allowing it to flow freely without too much interference.

2.2.4 Limitations of this study
Due to time constraints and the overall limited scope of this thesis, my discourse of a subject as complex as identity is limited to covering a small portion that merely scratches the surface of what could be said concerning this topic. My hope is that, in coming years, more research pertaining to the subject of creating identity through dress will be conducted. This sentiment applies, also, to research covering the topic of sustainable fashion, as I presume this topic is an essential part of the general future discourse concerning sustainability and the environmental impact of consumer choices. I hope that more companies will take interest in their customers views on mindful consumption, and based on these conversations, take action in making the changes necessary for a sustainable fashion future.

2.3 Existing research
In examining existing research on this topic, I have found that although there exists a fair amount of anthropological research concerning dress, there are few works that delve into the topic of how sustainable clothing as such is linked to cultural as well as personal identity. Due to the growing awareness of how our consumer behavior impacts the environment, a growing tendency toward mindful consumption, and the growing trend of minimalism in recent years, I find that this topic is both relevant and interesting as a subject for further study.

In her text “The World in Dress: Anthropological Perspectives on Clothing, Fashion and Culture,” Karen Tranberg Hansen discusses contemporary anthropological research on dress, arguing that anthropologists, in examining the dress of others and regarding it as fashion, are faced with “long-standing scholarly concerns that have marginalized research on dress. . .” which includes the “trivializing of consumers’, especially Western women’s interest in clothes.” (Tranberg Hansen, 2004: 371-372) My intention is to break such long-standing trivializations, examining women’s dress in a manner that honors the complexity that it holds as a creator of identity and self-expression.

CHAPTER 3: CREATING IDENTITY THROUGH FASHION

3.1 The habitus & identity
Madeleine - I don't feel like I necessarily have to stand out, like, independently on the occasion that it is, but I do feel the need to be wearing something that I feel reflects my personality and I could just be wearing all black, which I do very often, but I still have to feel like, I still want to look good and look cool and so on, but I just have to feel that it really reflects who I am.

I have researched how women who shop at Filippa K create a sense of identity through their choice of clothing. The mindful way in which they consume, the way in which they dress on a daily basis, the way in which they treat and care for their garments, and the way in which they
view the garments they own, all contribute to this sense of identity. This creation of identity is closely linked to Bourdieu's theory of the habitus, which I will used here in my analysis of the results from the focus groups.

In his book *Teorier om Mode*, Lars Holmberg argues that it is a person’s habitus which decides whether or they will like a particular product, style or hairstyle. This is a question of taste, where, with this perspective, the habitus serves as a foundation for all of the particular preferences that an individual may have in terms of taste or personal style. (Holmberg, 2008: 212)

3.2 Introducing the informants

In this section, I will include the informants’ personal introductions from both focus group nights. I have chosen to include this section, because I feel that including their own descriptions of “who they are” adds to the understanding of identity that is explored in this paper. All names have been changed.

3.2.1 Introductions, Day 1

Martina – My name is Martina . . . in general, I think, for many years I have been quite interested in Filippa K because the whole vision behind it and the values – I’m a designer actually, so, background – and still in school, I did many projects and one of them was really focused on the fashion industry and we did a lot of research on the fashion industry and all the chemicals. I think it’s the second biggest polluter in the world. Well, this project, the purpose was to create a brand, create awareness about nature and stuff, and I started thinking about ‘how can I change, how can I make an impact.’ I started thinking about fashion in a more sustainable way. And last year, we did a project with a product designer in Stockholm – she’s really focused on sustainability – and I was involved also to do a project with Filippa K . . . it was made from Tencel and naturally dyed with food waste. It was to close the circle in fashion creation. The purpose was to wear it like about three times and then it would go off to compost. And it’s like (laughs) no waste. So yeah, that’s a bit of my background.

Madeleine – My name is Madeleine. I’m from Portugal. I moved to Sweden around 7 years ago and I think that’s the first time I came across Filippa K. I’ve always been interested in clothes because my father was a textile engineer, so I visited the factory a lot and I thought it was quite an amazing thing as a child. And also the other side is that clothes go from generation to generation which I think is quite nice, and it becomes more of a personal attachment to things, which I think is quite important, but also only if the clothes are good enough that they survive generations. So that’s why I’m so interested in sustainability when it comes to fashion, I guess, and also because I work as an architect and at our job we talk a lot about sustainability and not only how can we reduce the impact of the buildings that we design, but also throughout their whole lifecycle and with all the products that we use while building it and after they are built. So, that’s I guess, both things together.

Fiona – Well, my name is Fiona, and I buy almost all my clothes at second hand. I rarely buy new clothes, but when I do, I buy them at Filippa K. And then I’m really, it takes a long time for me to buy a garment – I like to feel the fabric, I look at it many times and when I buy something I want to be sure that it’s something I will use for a very, very long time. So I have a lot of things that are very old. I think I bought my first garment 15 years ago, something like that, and I still have it in my wardrobe. So I’m really into that.

Sara – Ok, my name is Sara and I really like Filippa K clothes since I could afford it, since I started working like 9-5, 9-6 so I have had several pieces from that and a lot of the dresses I have had for many years.

Maja – Yes, my name is Maja and I started finding Filippa K when I was about 13 years old, when the stores opened, and if they had managed the rest of time, I would have been able to wear them now as well, but back then, it was just a lot of cotton in the making, so naturally, if they were your favorites, you washed them. So they faded in color, but I actually saved a few pieces, because I actually love the kind of easy design and its color, like simple solid colors, etc. So, I like the brand so much because I can wear it to work and I can wear it to jeans and like, casual, but I was really happy when you started producing a lot of the Soft Sport and the
Sofia – My name is Sofia and I think I have been a Filippa K customer for 20 years. I'm 45 and I work as a project manager for marketing.

Mathilda – My name is Mathilda and I think I have been a customer for 10 years maybe or something like that, and I work as a clinical trial coordinator at a pediatric oncology research unit.

Elsa – I'm Elsa and I think I have been a customer for 17 years. I remember when I saved up for that first purchase when I was in maybe 7th or 8th grade. I work in sustainability, I run my own company, so both in sustainable consumption but also social challenges – like sustainability challenges both when it comes to environmental and social – I work a lot with attitudes and transformation and youth, like how do young people want to change our world to make it better and kinder and more sustainable. That's what I do, yeah.

Sonja – My name is Sonja and I have been a REAL fan, I'm more like a newbie, for the last 5 years or something. And I'm a psychology teacher, work at a high school. I think that's it. (laughter)

Jannica – My name is Jannica. I'm 39 years old. Will be 40 next year, so that's a big number. (laughter) I have recently studied sustainability at Stockholm University. One year full-time studies – environmental and social aspects of consumption and production and ethics, politics, a broad area. And I think I have been a customer at Filippa K since I was in high school, so it's a couple of years. And I really like the simple and simplicity of the garment and the style.
3.3 Identity & influence

In her book *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, Elizabeth Wilson states that “for decades the idea that each woman expressed the uniqueness of her personality via her taste and preferences in dress influenced the way we all thought about fashion.” (Wilson, 2007: 125) Wilson seems to mean that this perception has changed, however, I would argue that this perception is still prevalent today, although perhaps not as explicit as it once was. And perhaps, it is true. In the discussion I had with the informants on both focus group nights, the women expressed a general desire for their clothing to reflect something about their personal identity: “Who I am,” as Madeleine states in the quote in the beginning of this chapter.

In the second night of focus groups, we discussed the concept of complimenting others on wearing the same pieces again. The conversation between two informants went as follows

Anne – The new way of complimenting someone: ‘I remember you having that one last year – I remember.’

Elsa – It stood out! I never do that, ‘is that new?’ anymore, instead, I do ‘oh my god, I remember when we went to that place and you were wearing that.’ Because I also have this weird memory where I remember this. (laughs) And then I give a compliment that they are wearing it, because maybe then they don’t feel the need of buying as much.

Annette – It’s a nicer compliment, actually.

As this exchange shows, we have the power to change our perception and others’ perception about what is fashionable, by simply changing the conversation. If a certain behavior or a certain style is given a positive review by our surroundings, that action is enforced and is more likely to be repeated.

Georg Simmel, in his article “Fashion,” states that

> It seems that there exists for each class of human beings, probably for each individual, a definite quantitative relationship between the tendency towards individualization and the desire to be merged in the group, so that when the satisfying of one tendency is denied in a certain field of life, he seeks another, in which he then fulfills the measure which he requires. (Simmel, 1957: 551)

This speaks to our inherent tendency to seek balance. The identity of the individual is part of the group identity to the extent that it “belongs” there, yet is unique enough that it separates itself from the group. If an individual conforms to the group through dress, perhaps he or she will seek individuality through hobbies or activities that are quite “special.” And vice versa. Simmel, in his text “Fashion,” argues that “two social tendencies are essential to the establishment of fashion, namely the need of union on the one hand and the need of isolation on the other.” (Simmel, 1957: 546) Simmel also means that fashion is dependent on the existence of both of these factors, stating that “should one of these be absent, fashion will not be formed.” (Simmel, 1957: 546)

In a similar sense, this differentiation also applies when it comes to class, forming a carousel where the upper classes adopt the latest fashions, only to be imitated by the lower classes, which in turn motivates the upper classes to come up with a new fashion, which is again imitated, and so on, and so forth. (Simmel, 1957: 545)

In the preface to her book *The Fashioned body: Fashion, Dress & Modern Social Theory*, Joanne Entwistle discusses how belief in fashion is generated and makes a statement that “we have to take account of the desire to be ‘in fashion’ that promotes consumption.” (Entwistle, 2015: xiv) I agree with this statement, and I think that the way to better understand consumption is to better
understand the consumer and what motives the consumer to consume. I would further say that, taking this statement into account, perhaps the way to promote mindful consumption, is to make mindful consumption ‘in fashion.’ If what moves people to act in certain ways in the way that they dress is impacted by the idea of being ‘in fashion,’ then, with this logic, if it becomes fashionable to consume mindfully, to consume less, then people will do this, with the motivating factor being a desire to be fashionable. Let us not diminish the effect which other’s opinions and actions have on us.

3.4 Sustainability & mindful consumption
Kate Fletcher, in her book *Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys*, discusses the benefits and positive effects of replacing conventional production methods of materials such as cotton, with more sustainable materials. Such alternatives include lyocell, hemp, organic or BCI-cotton. The benefits of using alternative materials such as these include a reduction of pesticides and a decrease in the amount of water needed in the production process. Opting for wool and other renewable and biodegradable fibers instead of polyester could reduce dependency on petro-chemical products and in turn bring a number of other benefits relating to healthier local agriculture, increase in local jobs, more regional fibers and an overall increase in the health of the environment. (Fletcher, 2014: 44)

In our discussion about mindful consumption, I found that the informants each had their own definition of the term. The informants shared their views, mentioning things such as buying classic pieces that do not go out of style. They discussed the concept of quality over quantity, thinking of each purchase as an investment, and the importance of recycling. One informant mentioned the term “awareness,” while another brought up the economic aspect and prioritizing quality pieces while on a limited budget. The common conception seemed to be an overall understanding of consciousness concerning what and how we consume, and how our behavior as consumers impacts the environment and the world at large.

On the following page, I have included the results from both focus groups, taken from the Mentimeter app. (Figure 3.1 & Figure 3.2)
Figure 3.1 Mentimeter result from Focus Group Day 1, informant responses

Figure 3.2 Mentimeter result from Focus Group Day 2, informant responses
In her book, mentioned earlier in this chapter, Fletcher discusses the key changes that must be made regarding different textile products and argues that for some products, such as frequently worn clothing, these changes come in forms of improved laundering practices and “for other textile products, like furnishings, where the production phase is the dominant source of impact, most benefit is brought by making products last longer by, for example, using design strategies that improve both physical and emotional durability.” (Fletcher, 2014: 45) The same benefit arguably holds equally true for clothing, where the same reference to durability can be used as a benefit – something shown in, for example, the results from the Wearability Survey conducted by Filippa K in the summer of 2019. (This survey showed positive results, and though these results will not be covered in detail here, I think they could be an interesting topic for further study.) Perhaps it is time to rethink the amount of usage we can get out of our garments and start viewing clothing in the same terms that we view furnishings, for example: as a long-term investment.

3.5 Minimalism

As stated by Entwistle, “fashion, dress and consumption provide ways of dealing with the problems of the mode world, characterized by increasing fragmentation and a sense of chaos.” (Entwistle, 2015: 138) One manner of doing this is by simplifying the chaos that surrounds us. Minimalism is a growing ‘trend’ and one in which the practitioner rids themselves of unnecessary material items. The Filippa K customer understands this, choosing to purchase fewer items in finer quality that will last longer. Thus, s/he has a smaller wardrobe with less items in better quality. This is essentially what minimalism is about. When ridding oneself of unnecessary items, the items one does own become a stronger identity-creator. In choosing only a few items to ‘define’ one’s personal style, it becomes a clear marker of who that person wants to be.

In choosing ‘slow fashion’ opposed to ‘fast fashion’, the consumer is also stating that they are a ‘mindful person’ who cares about the environment. This philosophy is mirrored by ‘mindful brands,’ for example, the Filippa K website states that the company’s vision is “fashion where sustainability is the guide to growth. Ecosystems and planetary boundaries are our inspiration. We want to be part of the solution rather than add to the problem.” (Filippa K 2018)

The ‘chaos’ that surrounds us, the environmental impact of our consumer choices which we are becoming increasingly aware of, shape the everyday choices we make; from the type of clothing or food to purchase, to how to carry our groceries/purchases home, to how adamant we are about recycling the packaging in which each product we purchase is delivered to us. We are being made increasingly aware of the impact that we as humans have on the planet. Every day, we are being told how important it is that we make mindful choices. When a consumer chooses to purchase clothing that is made sustainably, that customer is also in a sense stating that “yes, I care about the climate crisis. Yes, I am someone who cares about nature.”

The following exchange is an example of one informant’s views on minimalism

Jen – Interesting. So, to go back to the minimalism. . . is it the minimalistic feeling that makes it timeless, because it is so minimal? Is that what makes it a timeless piece?

Elsa - Yeah. It's minimalistic, but still so much thought to it. Like you can always find details, like tiny details that you may not see the first time you look at it. Like my dress for example, is asymmetrical in the chest area, but you have to really look to be able to see that “oh, it's asymmetrical, it's not symmetrical.” But it's tiny, minimalistic details that they can just create such a different feeling but it's not standing out to the point where it's like “oh, I can't have this in 5 years' time, because then it's not trendy anymore.” And like that one is also asymmetrical in a way, but it's so, the simplicity makes it beautiful.
This speaks to minimalism, not only as a sustainable choice, but also as an aesthetic preference. The less-is-more aesthetic is something that appears to appeal to the Filippa K customer, and something that keeps the customer coming back season after season.

3.5.1 The curated closet

I asked the informants about the concept of having a “curated closet.” A growing interest in the world of blogs has become a less-is-more approach to dressing. One such blog is called “Project 333” which in 2010 started the “333 Challenge” – the incentive being to inspire readers to limit their wardrobes to 33 pieces or less for 3 months. (Be More With Less 2020)

I asked the informants on Day 1 of the focus groups about this idea, how they would feel about having a limited wardrobe of carefully curated pieces, and they responded with this exchange

Fiona – I would love that.

Klara – I did that for like one week. Me and a friend did it. I don’t know if it was like 5 or 6 items that we were supposed to mix and match and use for a week, and it’s kind of, for me it was time saving, because you had to prepare and you had to think in like what can I wear and how can I mix this and how can I not wear the same clothing two times in a row. It was really nice and you had to be mindful of what you were picking. So, yeah, I guess if I would have a closet like that, I would have to be very mindful of what I bought, and I also wouldn’t buy something just because ‘yeah, this looks nice’ you would have to think ‘how will this one work with the rest.’

Jen – Exactly, you have to always be thinking about the whole closet and how things can combine with other things.

Fiona – Yeah, you will wear them all. Because I feel like, now, I have too much and I feel bad because I’m not wearing everything so I would really love that.

Linda – But I mean like, you can also share. Me and my friends and my sister, we share a lot of clothes, so we have them for a couple of weeks – I just got this skirt back – and you know, and then I gave it to someone else.

Jen – It’s a great idea, because, I mean, sometimes you just have things that hang in your closet for months at a time and they’re not being used, then they might as well be used in that time.

Stina – You just have to find friends and family in the same size (laughter)

Linda – Yeah, that’s how I choose my friends.

Stina – I will start that now. Same style and same size. (laughter)

I observed here that the women were generally positive to this idea of having a limited number of garments to choose from. They seemed to regard the idea of having fewer options as something positive, both as a means of encouraging them to buy less, and as a means of simplifying their morning routines and saving precious time. Their responses also reflected that they liked the thought of actually wearing and using everything that they own; as Fiona put it, not “feeling bad” because a garment is not being used.

This concept of a limited number of items to choose from is also something that Filippa K used as a campaign for their Autumn/Winter 2017 campaign. The campaign was called “Not That Complicated” with the slogan “in today’s complex world – simplicity is the purest form of
luxury.” The idea was that, using seven mindfully selected pieces, with the help of styling and different combinations, one could create eighteen looks. (Elle 2020)

If the concept of having fewer garments – perhaps even garments that will be shared with friends and family, as mentioned above in Linda’s comment – is regarded as something positive, perhaps this change in perspective allows for a slower-paced fashion climate.

3.6 Daily dress
In discussing their daily dressing rituals, the informants mentioned that they take anywhere from five minutes to a couple of hours getting dressed, depending on the occasion. The informants expressed that sometimes it would take longer to choose an outfit to wear because the “mood” was off, delaying the process. When asked how long they would spend selecting an outfit if attending a social event or something special, one informant on Day 2 responded

Sofia - Not that long, because I have this feeling for it. It’s the same thing when I lie in bed at night and think ‘tomorrow I’m going to wear this.’ I have this plan, and when I get up and if I have a different feeling, then I choose something else. Like, I have a plan B, because I don’t want to get stressed. It sounds crazy, but ok.

To which another informant responded

Mathilda – I think I agree with that. Because, I think sometimes you have a clear picture and then it can take five minutes to just think about and be like ‘oh, yeah, I’m going to wear that one.’ But when it doesn’t work - you have a picture of how it will look, but then it doesn’t feel right. Then I can spend hours, because then… you’ve entered it in the wrong way and then it feels like nothing works. And ‘I have nothing in my wardrobe.’ I think it depends a little bit. Sometimes I can spend hours, and sometimes it takes like five minutes.

I observed that most of the informants had had similar experiences to the ones Sofia and Mathilda describe above, at one time or another. The problem was having an initial idea of what they were planning to wear – what they were planning to look like, to feel like – but then, when the time came, it felt “off” for one reason or another.

This correlation between dress and mood is described in The Fabrics of Culture, where the author states that “personal adornment may reflect inner emotional states called mood. It may also reinforce, disguise, or create mood. An individual caught up in a certain mood may wish to externalize it so it can be conveyed to and shared with others.” (Cordwell & Schwarz, 1979: 8) From this perspective, clothing is used as a form of language, conveying things, perhaps subconsciously, that the wearer wishes to share with the outer world.

A similar conversation concerning mood was had during Day 1 of the focus groups. Here, the informants discussed the ability of their clothing to affect their moods altogether, choosing their daily dress in terms of needing something to help lift their mood. The exchange went as follows

Emma – I can use clothes to change the way I feel as well. Like, for example, if I feel like ‘oh, it’s a Tuesday.’ (laughter) You know that feeling? (general agreement) Then I don’t really go for the same denim and a pull-over, because then I feel like ‘Oh, it’s a Tuesday,’ instead I dress up or have a color or something that makes my clothes change the way I feel.

Madeleine - Yeah, Mondays are the difficult ones for me, too, and I realized looking backward that I usually go to work on Mondays with my working pajamas (laughter) like very soft clothing… and then I realized that maybe if I change that, it would change my mood, too, and so I started making the conscious effort of dressing up on Mondays and wearing heels or something, just something that makes it better somehow, and it to me at least, it helped just getting through the Monday.
In this instance, I noticed the informants are dressing in a particular way in order to contradict rather than support a certain mood. In order to banish feelings of boredom, feeling blasé, or melancholy (negative emotions), they are actively choosing dress that will lift their mood and create feelings of joy, ease, and self-confidence (positive emotions.) (Cordwell & Schwarz, 1979: 8)

Stina shared that she used to prioritize to dress up on Mondays, but not for the same reason as mentioned above. This was her reasoning

Stina – A long time ago, I used to work in a bank and meet customers, and I realized that they were especially, or well, less polite, on Mondays, they had been working up their anger and stuff, I guess, during the weekend, so if I dressed up and had a suit on or so on Mondays they were less bad to deal with.

In this situation, Stina had observed how her dress affected not her own mood, but that of her customers. If she dressed a certain way, the motivating factor did not have much to do with her own mood, expression, and so on, but rather that of those she was anticipating to meet that day. She had learned that if she “dressed up”, she would get one reaction (positive), and if she “dressed down”, she would get another reaction (perhaps negative). This observation says something about the language of clothing, the way clothing speaks for us and to us. It also says something about what we want to convey to others through our clothing and what motives we have in doing so.

In his discourse about fashion and semiotics, Holmberg argues that fashion has a certain similarity to linguistics in that it is synchronous, while having a dyachronous element, in terms of having a historical dimension. He means that clothes are a form of communication, which means that we send and receive messages through them. (Holmberg, 2008: 198)

This discourse by Holmberg on the communication of dress also touches on theorist, philosopher, and semiotician Roland Barthes’s analysis of the fashion system where the garment is analyzed in three parts: the real garment, the represented garment, and the used garment. This analysis goes beyond the parameters of what is directly relevant to this paper, however, I see it as an interesting subject for further study. This also includes another topic mentioned in Holmberg’s book, which pertains to Barthes’s thoughts on how certain colors and cuts signal certain things – each having a specific and clear meaning. We touched on this topic during the focus groups, but again, this will not be discussed in further detail here,. However, I do think it is a tangent worth researching further in terms of fashion and identity. (Holmberg, 2008: 199)

It could be argued that the interaction between Stina (the employee) and the customer (the stranger) is not merely occurring on an individual-to-individual basis, and is in fact much more complex than it appears. “The truth of the interaction is never entirely contained in the interaction,” (Bourdieu, 1957: 81-82) Bourdieu states, because the fact is that the individuals are merely participants in a situation where it is not the individuals as such that are interacting with one another, but instead it is “their present and past positions in the social structure” that are interacting, because these positions are carried at all times, by all individuals. It is unavoidable. These positions create space and a social distance between any social persons brought together for any reason, at any time. (Bourdieu, 1957: 81-82)
3.7 Garment care

The concept of mindful consumption ties into the idea of caring for what you already own. Caring for your garments will help them to last longer, something that Filippa K encourages. The informants I spoke with each shared their views on this matter. One of the informants, Maja, said that she bought cashmere sweaters because they would last season after season. She cared for her sweaters, washing them only occasionally, choosing to air them out instead. I observed that several other informants mentioned doing the same, opting for alternative methods to laundering – both in order to help the garments last longer, as well as to limit the environmental impact of excessive washing.

The informants were asked questions about how they care for their garments and what they as consumers expect from Filippa K in terms of communication – this includes communication regarding the make-up the material in general, as well as how to care for the garment to make it last as long as possible. The consensus was that the informants, as consumers, were quite happy with the materials, however, they wanted more information regarding its production and more detailed information regarding care upon purchase. The following quotes are taken from Day 1 of the focus groups.

- Madeleine – I think it goes back to communication, I wouldn’t have been disappointed in the fact that it started doing that (pilling), had I known beforehand. Then that would be totally fine.

- Sara – What should you do to prolong the lifetime? Can you do anything to prevent it to stop pilling, is it using the spray or?

- Klara - And I would like some information, if I bought something really expensive, like a coat, I would appreciate to get the information like, this is high quality, but it will start pilling, and if it does, then you can treat it this way to remove them and to prolong the lifespan of the garment.

Here, I noticed that the informants showed a genuine concern about their garments, wishing for them to last as long as possible. They were willing to take the precautions necessary to make this happen, and wanted the company to provide the information they needed. Most of the informants expressed a desire, and an expectation, for the company to provide more information about the materials used in the garments. In a way, I viewed this as a “team-effort,” where the consumer is willing to do their part to be mindful, if the company is willing to provide, as well.

In discussing the value of cloth in their text “Cloth and the Organization of Human Experience,” Jane Schneider and Annette B. Weiner argue for the value derived from its origins, stating that “symbolic meanings are further enlarged by the temporal dimension of the material, which, after all, derives a great deal of its value from the labor that it congeals.” (Schneider & Weiner, 1986: 179) As I observed in the focus groups, the extra time and attention given to each garment and its care, show an awareness and a consciousness that the women have concerning the value of each article of clothing. They seemed to realize how each garment had been produced, what had gone into its production, and that they were, therefore, adamant about taking care of it in the best way possible.

This realization, that each garment in its production has an effect on nature and people, leads to a sense of concern for making the garment last. The garment, with the knowledge of everything that has gone into its making, is seen as “special.” Seeing the value in material things, not simply because they are material – that we have spent money on them, and therefore desire to keep them looking nice – but because we see the value in the creation of this garment from nature and from the people that have put energy into its creation. This realization of what value means in terms of environment and people, the impact that our choices make, seeing the bigger picture.
that everything is connected and that it matters how and what we consume – this is what mindful consumption is about. (Schneider & Weiner, 1986: 179)

Filippa K insists that they as a company strive to help their customers with garment care as a means of lowering the environmental impact of each garment. The longer we are able to wear and enjoy our clothes, the less often we need to purchase new ones, thus minimizing consumption.

3.8 Relationship to garments & value
As discussed in the previous section, in terms of value, one can look at the material make-up of an item and the value derived from its making. One can also look at the personal and symbolic meaning that garments have. In this section, I will examine this aspect of value.

I observed, on Day 2 of the focus groups, that Elsa, in speaking about her clothing, referred to her garments as members of her family, or as close friends. She said this jokingly, but the sentiment was true, it seemed. The way in which she expressed the care she showed for her garments and the way she took pleasure from dressing and looking at her clothes, showed that she truly valued each item in her closet.

Viewing garments in ‘human’ terms, referring to them as ‘friends’ creates an interesting relationship between the garment and the wearer. The garment becomes, magically, not just a garment, but a trusted companion. One you can count on, one that brings you joy, confidence, and as Elsa put it: “power.” This unique ability for our clothes to empower us, or give us a much-needed boost of confidence, or mood, is something that has been overlooked, and also minimized, when fashion has been seen historically as somewhat frivolous or nonsensical. The meaning and value that clothing can truly add to our lives is something to consider as we move into an increasingly environmentally-conscious era. Imagine if we were all to change our perspective, start seeing the garments in our closet not simply as idle threads, but as meaningful companions. Would this not encourage us to treat them with more care, more respect, more value? If this shift in perspective can somehow shift our behavior, then I dare to say that perhaps this is something to seriously consider. One may not go so far as to refer to their garments as family members, may not start naming them, but the sentiment behind the thought of somehow ‘humanizing’ something material, gives it more value. If this is what is needed in order to shift our perspective, then seeing the value in, or assigning increased value to, items that we own (and this does not only apply to clothing) may help us to decrease the amount of items that we choose to ‘take on’, and also help us to increase our sense of appreciation for the things that we already have.

The informants laughed as they spoke of this, and one of the women said that “this sounds crazy,” as she was saying it, but perhaps this is not such a radical way of thinking. Mindful means being aware. Being aware means acknowledging; and acknowledging the worth of an object, in turn, adds value to that object. If we value, care for, and love the objects that we choose to consume, then this is an act of mindfulness. An act of love. Not only for the object in itself, but to expand, the action in acknowledging through awareness, the ‘sacrifice’ made by the environment, the work and energy it has taken to create the garment – this sense of awareness and care expands to a sense of care for the environment, a love for nature, and the people who have taken part in its production. The object thus becomes more than the object in itself, and takes on meanings deeper and more complex than could previously have been imagined – all on account of a change in perspective.
Value is a complex idea that is more than the sum of its parts. An object is not valuable to us simply because we have paid an economic price to have it in our possession – no, an object is valuable to us because of all the other things it represents. This can be an infinite number of things, ranging from the care and awareness I mentioned above, to the moments, memories, and experiences that are tied to that object. Perhaps it was a gift from a loved one. Perhaps it has “grown” with the wearer (as one informant shared during our discussion), becoming a part of that experience, a part of the resolution after the experience, a symbol of power or growth or self-love. These are all things that create value, add value, to items, and things that are deeply personal and not visible to the naked eye.

Imagine the value that an object holds for another person. That same object, that same sweater, may economically, in strict financial terms, hold value for you, too. However, this exact garment has a history, a story that gives the item more value than another person could know or understand. This is the complex thing about value, our objects that we “own,” because they have sentimental value, as well as financial value. This value is, of course, sometimes fleeting, or ever-changing. At one moment, an item may be valued highly, only to be cast aside a year or two later, for whatever reason; due to the initial beauty of the item being diminished through time and wear, due to the item losing its trend-factor, due to the item losing sentimental value through a break-up, a loss, and so on. Objects are often symbolically tied to our relationships with people, which naturally, give them more value. We may think of a special person when wearing an item of clothing that we own. We may remember someone who has been significant to us wearing a certain garment. Our clothing is deeply personal and represents so much more to us than just the cost. There are many aspects that tie into what makes an item valuable, some of which have been covered here, some of which are beyond reasoning and have not been covered in this text.

CHAPTER 4: PERCEPTIONS OF IDENTITY

4.1 Identities & hidden meanings

Taking into consideration the subjects of value and identity I have previously mentioned in this text, one can acknowledge that clothing is more than meets the eye. There is a hidden meaning, always, to what we wear. Identity is complex, mysterious, fleeting and perhaps undefinable. We may assume to know things about a person based on what that person chooses to wear. This assumption is, of course, ours to make freely, as our thoughts and perceptions are our own and we are free to judge as we please. The perceived identity of the subject in question, however, is highly more complex than that and ever-evolving. The perception one has of a subject may or may not correspond to/correlate to the perception that person has of themselves. Each perceiver will have, unmistakably, a different perception of the subject. What is true is in the eyes of the perceiver, of course, as we each have the right to our own truths. The acknowledgement, however, that there are truths beyond those which we each can perceive with our vision, beyond the initial judgment that is based on that one sense alone, also expands the truth of what fashion means, of what materialism means, and in turn, also expands the truth of the perceptions we have of one another.
4.2 Limitations of the habitus

Do not inquire too deeply into the truth of other people’s appearances, Chesterfield counseled his son; life is more sociable if one takes people as they are and not as they probably are. (Sennett, 1976: 68)

Throughout this paper, I have referenced Bourdieu’s theory of the habitus. The more I researched this topic, the more problematic it became. Not in the sense that it is faulty, incorrect, or difficult to understand. Rather, the habitus as such, as a thing that we as individuals, as a society, have to abide by or take into consideration. In this section of the paper, I will reflect on the limitations of the habitus.

The perception that we are able to read others based on their outward appearance is something that has time and time again come up throughout history. Richard Sennett, argues in The Fall of Public Man that “while there has been a steady revolt against the restrictive clothes of the Victorians, as part of a revolt against their sexual oppression, there has been no revolt against the source of these restrictions, the entrance of individual personality into the public domain.” (Sennett, 1976: 183) He goes on to argue that “clothes still are taken as a sign of character, and reading the personality of a stranger from the clothes he or she wears still depends on an aesthetic of details.” (Sennett, 1976; 183) The idea that we are, through outward appearances, able to somehow comprehend the inner workings of an individual, raises an interesting discourse which relates to the problematic nature of such a conception, as well as the nature of its origins. Why is it that we assume that the outward appearance of a subject somehow reflects their inner persona? Is it because we think that our own inner-self can be read by others based on our outward appearance? Or is it simply because, we as humans, use over-simplification as a means to understand that which cannot be fully understood. If we assume ourselves to be able to read individuals in this way, based on their clothing, demeanor, and so on, then we assume that we have somehow decoded them, understood them and are able to comfortably place them into whichever box that we personally see fit. This way of viewing the world makes it graspable, containable, understandable to us, and thus, the vast complexity of existence is momentarily deciphered.

If it were so simple, that we could contain individuals based on these simple terms, then we would not have to think of them as individuals at all, more as a separate other which we deem ourselves capable of understanding and can therefore comfortably dismiss. Or, on the other hand, if we wish to interact with an individual on a more personal level or start some kind of friendship, relation, love-based or otherwise, we have based this on the notion that we have successfully “read” them and therefore understand them, have placed this person into the box of “like-minded” or “like” us in some way, based on their choice of dress, outward appearance, and so on. Which, I suppose is fine, but perhaps the problem lies in the assumption that we are able to “read” individuals correctly based on such limited terms.

The problem here lies, also, in the notion that we hold from our habitus the necessary understanding of the workings of what we want and need in terms of relationship to others, trusting our habitus to “know” that some are interesting subjects for us to get to know, to start any form of relation with, and others not so, based on the habitus and our prior history of social interactions. We trust the habitus to tell us that some and not others are interesting to us. What would happen if we could free ourselves from the habitus completely? What kind of world would this open up? What possibilities? Would there be more freedom?

On the subject of freedom of expression, Sennett argues that “in a culture of personalities, freedom becomes a matter of not behaving and appearing as others are,” (Sennett, 1976: 190)
essentially saying that freedom on these terms is an act of deviance or abnormality, further stating that “freedom becomes idiosyncratic expression rather than an image of how humanity as such can live.” (Sennett, 1976: 190)

The boxing in of individuals, so to speak, to make them a part of a group rather than seeing them as the individuals that they are, creates for us a sense of safety, stemmed from a false sense of understanding of the other. We have learned so to trust our habitus, that we no longer see the present moment for what it is, and all experience is thus “corrupted” or tainted by the past – past history, our own or that of generations passed. Bourdieu argues that we are “inevitability” predominated by “yesterday’s man,” but I disagree. Yes, we are shaped by our past, but the past does not necessarily need to be the factor that decides the outcomes of the present moment.

The only plausible explanation for the present moment is that it exists at all, containing in itself the only reasoning behind its existence that it needs in order to exist. All else is merely history on top of history on top of history, attempting to form the means by which to understand a present moment that does not rely on the past, nor on the future, in order to exist. The habitus is a convoluted mess of histories intertwined within themselves, giving birth to themselves, and thus contriving the present moment, the present subjects involved within the present moment, and limiting them from the infinite possibilities of existence. The habitus limits us from experiencing the limitless possibilities of the now, and binds us to a pattern of repeating the same histories over and over, thus limiting ourselves, limiting others and limiting the collective as a whole. Bourdieu suggests that there is no present without the past. I would argue that this is not the case. The present moment can exist without the past, simply for the fact that it is only tied to the past because of our conscious awareness that there has been a past at all. This implies that the present moment needs us, the observer, the subject, the human, in order to exist. This is simply not true. The present moment does not rely on an “experiencer” of the moment in order to exist – it simply exists for the very reason that it is. It does not require anyone or anything to validate its existence. (Bourdieu, 1957: 79)

The notion that we need to justify the present moment’s existence through our own existence, gives way to the shaping of the habitus in the first place. The fact that we have throughout history created the habitus for ourselves and for others as a means to understanding this world, means that we have learned to understand the world in these terms, defined by the past and tied to the future outcome, never fully present, never truly free of past or future and constantly allowing the present moment to be shaped by both the former and the latter, in an attempt to put the human experience into terms that we can comprehend. If the present moment is simply a bridge between the past and the future, then we are never fully responsible for our actions within this present moment, as what we do is simply a means to an end – a way in which to get from the past into the future. In this way, we free ourselves from full responsibility of the present moment, the present self, and meanwhile in doing so, also imprison ourselves into the cage of past and future, repeating the same patterns, “safely” and predicting future outcomes based on the habitus that has shaped our way of experiencing reality. If we are never free of the habitus, we are never free to live a life in terms of presence alone.

So, how can all of this be tied to the idea of mindful consumption? In recognizing that we have a habitus, both individually and collectively, we can recognize the patterns and histories that shape the way in which we operate today, in this moment. If every moment presents us with a new choice, a new way of doing things, then, if freed from the habitus, we could operate in newer, freer realms of possibility, breaking patterns and creating new-ness in each present moment. This way, each action would be based not on the past or future, as if controlled by the habitus (the past-future), but in a new way entirely free of the habitus and its constraints, relying only on the
actions of the present moment. If this can be applied to consumption, then mindful living as an entirety, could shift the way in which we operate in all fields, including that of how and why we consume. Then materialism would cease to control us through desire, through notions of what we have been or strive to be, and instead of being a means to an end, could simply be what it is. Material. We could still consume, however, our intention behind the consumption would be based on something else - something new - something which we cannot yet fathom, because this has not yet come into existence.

4.3 Thoughts on mindfulness
As I have discussed in this paper, the habitus is based on a set of conventions which we adhere to, which we use to shape our realities from and through, each moment, each interaction, unconsciously or consciously, as we try to make sense of the world and others and their intentions. Say that we no longer, as a collective, live in a world where habitus exists. We no longer are bound to the past or future through a collective repetition of histories and projected outcomes, and instead experience each moment as if no prior moment has existed or will ever exist. Is this possible? What possibilities would open up for us, both individually and collectively? If there was no habitus, would society as we know it, even exist? It becomes difficult to fathom such a reality because the notion of habitus is so engrained in us that we assume that we need it in order to uphold the structures that we have formed and cling to. As Bourdieu states, habitus is “structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures. . .” (Bourdieu, 1957: 72) Perhaps, these structures are necessary. Perhaps not.

The judgements made upon ourselves and others are what we have learned to use in order to navigate the world, as we know it, and what would we be without these judgements? We want to “read” people, to understand them, as has been discussed in this paper through dress as a form of language. It becomes a matter of fear of the unknown – what we think we know, we can claim to understand – but that which we do not know, is a threat to ourselves, our egos. As society becomes more mindful, more aware of itself and its own actions, we can begin to move into a reality where habitus as we know it, does not hold a significant amount of power over us. As this idea of mindful awareness of ourselves, nature, the world that exists within and around each of us, grows and expands into all areas of society, we can begin to imagine a world where we are not slaves to the habitus and as we begin to unlearn, we can be free to reshape each segment of society, material and otherwise, and thus, be free to live within a present moment that is not simply a bridge between the past and the future, but instead, a meaningful moment that exists for the simple fact that it exists at all. If this happens, then we can also view individuals as what they are, instead of viewing them as a projection of an idea or a means to an end.

This begs the question: how would we dress if the habitus did not exist? If we were not tied to histories and conventions and projected future outcomes, what freedom if dress and general self-expression would that entail? Dress would presumably exist, but would ‘fashion’ exist? The concept of mass-produced fashion as it exists today would probably become obsolete. Perhaps we would start making our own clothes again, and perhaps a new surge of creativity would arise, free from conventions and the limitations of the conditionings of the habitus which we collectively create and re-create. (Bourdieu, 1957: 95)

4.4 Final thoughts
This study has covered the topics of identity, fashion, and mindful consumption, exploring these subjects through discussions with woman consumers at Filippa K.
In this study, I have found that the woman consumer at Filippa K creates identity through fashion, and she does so by dressing in clothing that she feels “herself” in, often choosing practical and comfortable garments that reflect who she is. She is a mindful consumer, expressing awareness of the shift into an era of ‘slow fashion.’ She is aesthetically drawn to the beauty in simplicity, finding that simple design details allow her to stand out from the crowd, while at the same time, allowing her to blend in and to follow a classically modern style of dress.
FOCUS GROUP EVENTS

Day 1: Monday, November 25th, 2019

Location: Filippa K head office, Stockholm
Duration: 2 hours, 22 minutes

List of informants (all names have been changed):

Informant 1: Martina – Filippa K customer for 3-5 years
Informant 2: Madeleine – Filippa K customer for 5-10 years
Informant 3: Fiona – Filippa K customer for 1-3 years
Informant 4: Sara – Filippa K customer for 15+ years
Informant 5: Maja – Filippa K customer for 15+ years
Informant 6: Klara – Filippa K customer for 3-5 years
Informant 7: Emma – Filippa K customer for 3-5 years
Informant 8: Linda – Filippa K customer for 15+ years
Informant 9: Stina – Filippa K customer for 15+ years

Day 2: Tuesday, November 26th, 2019

Location: Filippa K head office, Stockholm
Duration: 2 hours, 00 minutes

List of informants (all names have been changed):

Informant 10: Sofia – Filippa K customer for 15+ years
Informant 11: Mathilda – Filippa K customer for 5-10 years
Informant 12: Elsa – Filippa K customer for 15+ years
Informant 13: Sonja – Filippa K customer for 3-5 years
Informant 14: Jannica – Filippa K customer for 10-15 years

All data collected from the focus group interviews is stored with the author.
REFERENCES

Books


Articles


Websites