

## Diffuse knowledge and practices for fashion education: perspectives from a podcast series

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This paper presents a reflection on Fashion education in relation to the diffuse knowledge of educational practices of clothes sewing, or the university triangle: education, extension and research. It starts with the reports collected from the podcast series specially elaborated and carried out for the purposes of the "Arts and Crafts/UDESC" Research Project and discusses the relevant highlights for thinking about these practices and this education. The main objective of the paper is to present the perspectives reported by those who were interviewed for the series and discuss the approaches and singularities of those contributions. The methodology used includes non-systematized bibliographic research, audio recording of semi-structured interviews and the analysis of discourses compared with the teaching experience of the authors. The results achieved include the perception of continuities and ruptures in the history of Fashion education by those interviewed professionals and the publication of the podcast series in the audio aggregators for free.

The research project is focused on considering Arts and Crafts Lyceums as potential bases to feed in the curriculum of Design and its interface with Fashion in Brazil. Teaching paths for Design and for Fashion Design may be close to one another, but we wonder if they would be the same. We noticed from recording the episodes and from the team meetings, there are nuanced distinguished paths of formal education for men and for women, which seems to have had an impact on the Fashion education curriculum. This bond was subtly noted by the recurring mention of sewing and embroidery activities associated with maternal memories.

The authors have observed from this project that, essentially, there are objective and subjective aspects which should be considered in order to integrate the fragmented contents within Arts, Design and Fashion education. The central objective of this research was to register the different perspectives coming from a selected group of experts on the current education in Fashion and its relations with the Arts and Design. Later, with the complete series in hand, we discussed the similarities and diversity within the narratives in the episodes.

Our perception from the episodes is that practices of clothing production and technologies are losing ground in undergraduate courses for a theorization of the field of Fashion. The dichotomy between theory and practice, the segregation between technical/technological training and academic training are important elements for a review of Fashion and, especially, Fashion Design curriculum in higher education in Brazil.

The initial idea of the Arts and Crafts series for the Other Seams Podcast was to investigate the permanence and innovations in relation to the origins of Arts and Crafts education for those who study, research and work in the field of Fashion. From the interviews, we were able to identify how those interviewed professionals were introduced to fashion and the ways in which they perceived the curriculum of the courses they work in in comparison to the education they have had.

As methodology, the authors did not define a specific protocol such as (net)ethnography for the set of episodes, but we started from the exercise of asking, approaching, humanizing discussions, considering individual particularities, which, due to the scientific need for objectification, sometimes gets lost. However, it is worth mentioning that the paper does include approaches to the methodological practice of netnography, considering that the information was collected from digital media and can provide deep understanding of cultural meaning (Kozinets, 2010: p.1).

In order to design the content of the series and select the interviewees, we have considered not only the aims of the main project at UDESC, but, especially, the perspective from Home Economics and the Visual Arts which could impact Fashion education nowadays.

From the different trajectories and perspectives presented by the interviewees, it was possible to identify the dimensions perceived as essential for Fashion education in technical, undergraduate and graduate levels, which favor strategies to reintegrating practice and theory, as in experimenting with materials and reconciling teaching practices and methodologies which bridge academia and a broader social life.

The series is composed of eight interviews (Table 1), which were published from May 10th to August 16th 2021. The invitations were made, as previously mentioned, considering the network of contacts and the contents aligned with research project Arts and Crafts at UDESC. The questions were designed so that the interviewees could explore more freely their professional and even personal trajectories, focusing on arts, textile arts, sewing or fashion.

**Table 1.** Episodes from Podcast *Outras Costuras* - series Arts and Craft

Ep. 1	<i>Introdução à “Série Artes e Ofícios”</i> : the authors approached the Domestic Economy education and clothing production in Brazil.
Ep. 2	<i>“O projeto de Pesquisa Artes e Ofícios”</i> : guest Prof. Dr. Mara Rúbia Sant’Anna (UDESC), reported on the motivations to create the Arts and Crafts research project.
Ep. 3	<i>“Da Educação Artística às Artes Populares”</i> , the guest Prof. Dr. Lêda Maria Guimarães (Head of Arts and Visual Culture Postgraduate Program at Universidade Federal de Goiás, Brazil) presented her experience on EaD.
Ep. 4	<i>“A Formação em Tecnologia do Vestuário”</i> guest Prof. Maria José da Silva Pereira (Senai-PE), talked about her 38 years experience on fashion technology education at Senai.
Ep. 5	<i>“Rotas de Aprendizagem da Produção de Vestuário”</i> , guest Prof. Flávio Sabrá (IFRJ), reported on his career as fashion producer and educator.
Ep. 6	<i>“Artes, Ofícios e Afetos”</i> , com a profa. Maria de Jesus Farias Medeiros (UFPI), que é uma das principais ouvintes do <i>podcast</i> , também é membro da pesquisa e dentre tantas vivências trouxe, inclusive, interseções de trabalho com a Economia Doméstica.
Ep. 7	<i>“Das Artes Práticas à Economia Doméstica”</i> , guest Prof. Edilene Souza Pinto (UFRPE), commented on her education on Practical Arts at UFPE, in the 1970s and 80s.

Source: *PodCast Outras Costuras* - Arts and Crafts series, 2021.

The narratives which could be observed from those episodes reveal two fundamental practices: 1. Recognize and value the non-academic experience and beyond “Fashion” education, seeking to dialogue with “everyday” knowledge by considering and including family trajectories in academic contexts and education. Valuing people and their legacy in different processes and levels/types of teaching-learning practices fashion education; 2. Maintain or increase the teaching of textiles and dress techniques and technologies, also based on tactile experimentation, as well as carrying out actions during training that dialogue with social demands.

Thus, it is important to think about teaching practices and methodologies in Fashion education which may include clothing production and handmade threadwork. That means to consider that there is knowledge and stimuli that come from the family background, often not considered or relegated because they have the mark of “common sense” and of domesticity. It is also important, as mentioned by participants, acknowledging contributions from other knowledge fields, such as Home Economics.

This research project allows us to consider that the fashion courses which follow the guidelines for Design, according to national legislation for higher education, are the ones that apparently applied Arts and Crafts heritage to the curriculum. This work also allows us to think of a methodological path which bridges the present to the past, based on a study of successful teaching trajectories, so that one can design new strategies to deal with current challenges and issues concerning fashion education. To this end, the podcast is not only a way to scientific communication, but it can also be a tool to explore a broader interface between academic and non-academic practices, bringing universities and other educational institutions closer to social needs and values.

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