Wardrobes and Soundtracks: Women's Narratives of Youth, Experienced and Remembered through Dress and Music

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PhD 2023

Wardrobes and Soundtracks: Women's Narratives of Youth, Experienced and Remembered through Dress and Music

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Manchester Metropolitan University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Manchester Fashion Institute

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Manchester Metropolitan University

2023

Abstract

The thesis connects styled dress and music listening as youth cultural practices. It examines how dress and music act as memory resources, as conduits or companions to personal and collective experiences of youth. The study centred around women's narratives of participation in youth culture, and the multi-sensory, cross-temporal experience of remembering youth in the present.

Focused on the period 1950 to 2000, the research is framed as post-war and pre-internet, when fashion and recorded music became widely available for young women, but before the spread of digital access. Youth was understood by the participants not as an age range, or a transition to adulthood, but as the time when they could access and participate in youth culture. The study transcended subcultural youth groupings, although some spectacular or alternative dress and music choices were included, to foreground everyday youth culture. In doing so, the female presence was made visible, questioning gender-biased assumptions about participation. Women were found to engage in both public (the dance hall, the café, the rally) and private spaces (family homes), extending the geographies of female youth culture.

The reflexive methodology relied on creative, narrative methods. Ten female participants from Northern England each prepared a 'memory toolkit' including clothing, snapshots of styled dress and music playlists for a 'Wardrobe and Soundtrack Interview'. This sensory interaction revealed how dress and music inhabit the body in material and imagined forms, capturing narratives of participation in youth culture, and the re-experiencing of youth through imaginative remembering. The mnemonic extension of the toolkit and the vivid memories of dress and music drawn upon in the mind, are conceptualised as the 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack'. These memory resources enabled the formation of the participants' youth stories presented in the thesis. Dress and music, experienced and remembered, were found to support biographical consistency, acting as markers or connectors to specific events or life periods.

The critical density of dress and music experiences in youth forge trans-temporal connections between past and present, providing personal affirmation or validation, as

what I have called 'tokens of youth'. Dress and music are both multi-temporal and cross the private and public sphere. As biographical objects that share our lives, they age themselves and reflect our own ageing over time. The research found that dress and music, as embodied youth practices, share the ability to connect emotion and memory. Creative remembering provided opportunities for the imagination to override facts to create new meanings and emotional resonance.

The thesis contributes to academic fields that acknowledge dress or music as biographical markers and emerging youth literature that argues for a focus on post-youth but takes a new stance, with youth as a dynamic touchpoint to which we return though dress and music across time. The thesis synthesises dress, music, youth and memory studies to reveal how through dress and music – youth lives with us.

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Chapter 1. INTRO

Figure 1.1 Me (second from right) and the blue T-shirt, Whitley Bay, c. 1990. Author's photograph.

> We all met in Cavendish halls of residence at Manchester Polytechnic in 1989. Every summer we made a road trip to a friend's mum's house in Whitley Bay. I think this is the summer of 1990 (Fig. 1.1), it is hard to date the photo from my clothes as I wore that navy-blue French Connection scoop neck for years. It is my favourite ever T-shirt, I still have it, in fact I have two the same. It was the perfect fit, with just enough space between me and the shirt, loose, but definitely not 'baggy'. I wore it all the time, with dark blue men's work jeans and Palladium shoes. We never dressed up, and would go straight from college to pub, to club, The Hacienda, PSV, Konspiracy and indie student nights. When I look at this image I feel the comfort of those clothes, the comfort of the group and I hear my soundtrack to that summer – 'Resurrection' by The Stone Roses.[1]

I begin this thesis with a reflection on my own youth. My impulse to connect the dots between those formative years, the music I listened to and what I chose to wear has shaped and directed my research. The thesis provides evidence to support and extend the hypothesis that dress and music work alongside each other as cultural companions and emotional guides to experiences and memories of youth. While personal

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[1] The Stone Roses (1989) 'Resurrection', UK: Silvertone Records.

experience provided a conceptual starting point for this work, this stimulus was reinforced by incidental connections between dress and music, and memories of youth related to me by female friends and acquaintances and expressed by women in public prominence. Appearing on *Desert Island Discs,*[2] artist Tracey Emin recalled a Margate disco from her youth, assembling what she was wearing in that moment with the soundtrack of 'I Feel Love'.[3]

> Emin: I remember wearing drainpipe jeans, silver dance shoes and a mohair jumper, and I was 14, and I was dancing.
> Lawley: And you were feeling good?
> Emin: I was feeling good, yeah (*BBC Radio* 2004: 13:33).

Around 2014, as I began my study, I noticed an influx of texts and exhibitions in popular culture that exposed the connections between music, dress and youth. This popular onset re-positioned the experience of women in youth culture, and especially those who broke societal taboos on femininity. Autobiographies were published by female musicians Patti Smith (2010), Viv Albertine (2014) and Kim Gordon (2015), offering alternative takes on feminine expectations. Women featured prominently in Nina Manandhar's *What We Wore* (2014)*,* exposing the subcultures of youth using family snapshots, and later Sam Knee (2017) published *Untypical Girls,* richly illustrated with photographs of women involved in the independent music scene.[4] During the London punk festival in early 2016, photographer Anita Corbin re-visited the young women she had photographed in the early 1980s (Corbin 2016), forming a body of work that went on to be shown in a national touring exhibition *Visible Girls Revisited* (n.d.), in the format illustrated in Figure 1.2.[5] The popular zeitgeist was suggesting that women were interested in reflecting on their youth, and that clothes, and music, were closely linked to experiences and memories from these years. As my research plan took shape, I drew inspiration from this growing area of popular culture and set out to capture women's experiences and memories of youth in the post-war period, in the North of England. I aimed to attract participants who had an interest in dress and music, including everyday female participation in youth cultures, not just women who aligned themselves with defined subcultures or distinct music genres.

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[2] Desert Island Discs is a BBC radio show that has run since 1942 inviting public figures to share personal soundtracks. The archives are available to the public (*Desert Island Discs* 2022) and have been used as a data set for academic research by Alexandra Lamont and Catherine Loveday (2020) in their work on memory and music preferences.
[3] Donna Summer (1977) 'I Feel Love', UK: GTO Records.
[4] Sam Knee's (2017) publication featured women from the US and UK between 1977 and 1993.
[5] The Visible Girls website showcases original images taken in the 1980s and reconstructions of these images, taken for an ongoing touring exhibition (*Visible Girls Revisited* n.d.).

Figure 1.2 *Visible Girls Revisited* (n.d. [online]), Nicole and Sue © Anita Corbin.

Evidence was to be sought through in-depth interviews integrating items of dress, photographs of styled dress and popular music soundtracks as cultural and emotional guides. Interviews would be conducted in the home with items selected by the participants, creating a multisensory interview environment rich with material, visual and audio stimulation. This thesis describes the journey from a fledgling hypothesis formed from personal experience to a series of academic findings that cast new light on the role that wardrobes and musical soundtracks play in women's youth stories, and how they are used as tools to enrich the present, to re-visit and edit the past, and to direct the future – how youth lives with us.

1.1 Format and Structure

The format of the thesis takes inspiration from vinyl music albums. It begins with this *Intro*, which like the intro tracks that set the scene on an album, provides context and tone for the content to come. Album Intros are usually discrete compositions, and this *Intro* forms the first chapter as well as warming up for the chapters that follow. It is a guide to the thesis, outlining the aims and objectives, theoretical framework, key definitions and approach to the literature. It also serves to position dress and music, in

the form of wardrobes and soundtracks, as central to the discussion. The second chapter *Youth in a Suitcase* provides an overview of the methodology and the approach to methods and analysis. *Sleeve Notes* (Chapter 3) acquaints the reader with the ten research participants, setting the scene and providing a point of reference for the analysis, much as a carefully considered sleeve note on a vinyl album can reveal the lyrics and provide background information.[6] These youth stories are enhanced with visual imagery, and a playlist link in the discography provides the reader with an audio experience if desired.[7] The thesis is designed to recognise, and welcome, interaction between the author, the participants and the readers with their own cultural reference points. Each will add their own layers of meaning in response to the narratives, images and soundtracks shared. Patricia Holland's observation of the multiple narratives and interpretations generated when using photograph albums to collate and preserve personal narratives provides a metaphor that makes use of the double meaning of 'album' and 'tracks':

> Family collections are never just memories. Their disconnected points offer glimpses of many possible pasts, and yet, in our longing for narratives, for a way of telling the past that will make sense in the present we know, we strive to organise these traces, to fill in the gaps. Each viewer makes their own tracks through the album.
> (Holland 1991: 1).

With Holland in mind, I refer to the sections in each chapter as tracks. The findings and discussion are concentrated in three thematic chapters; influenced by the notion of the concept album,[8] each brings research evidence together with cross-disciplinary ideas into a collective viewpoint. Like the musical concept album (or a family photograph album), the sequence of these three chapters reflects a linear passage of time, mirroring the anthropological life as 'lived', 'experienced' and' 'told', noted by Janet Hoskins in *Biographical Objects* (1998: 6). Yet, they also intersect and overlap, reflecting temporal connections across time. *Rock 'n' Roll Lifestyle* (Chapter 4) explores female participation in post-war youth culture through the lens of dress and music. Although this study is not grounded in feminist theory, it was important to me that I presented women, in response to the paucity of female voices in youth culture

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[6] 'An informative or critical note about a gramophone record, printed on the sleeve' (OED 2022 [online]; q.v. sleeve-note).
[7] The discographies section includes links to Spotify playlists for each participant.
[8] Defined by Roy Shuker as an album that brings together 'heterogeneous songs into a narrative work with a single theme' (2017: 8).

literature.[9] This was also influenced by my own experiences of being a young woman in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the entrenched gendered stereotypes associated with different music genres and their associated dress codes. *Memory Wardrobes and Memory Soundtracks* (Chapter 5) evaluates dress and music as conduits to memory and experience, focusing on the experience of remembering in the present using a multi-sensory toolkit. The findings frame the integration of memory and experience as a creative process.[10] The final thematic chapter exposes how *Youth Lives with Us* (Chapter 6), the role dress and music play in extending youth and the formation of youth stories across time. This chapter synthesises the analysis of past and present experiences of youth, recognising the temporal relationships between wardrobes, soundtracks and the self. The concluding tracks on vinyl albums are often titled *Outro* and the last chapter in this thesis (Chapter 7), bookends the analysis, summarises the contributions to knowledge and puts forward future directions for the research. The Outro is followed by a reference list, participant discographies (including links to playlists), illustration and table lists, and appendices. The appendices include reference materials such as the interview documents and inventories of the wardrobe or soundtrack items presented or referred to in the interviews.[11]

1.2 Research Question and Aims

The title of the thesis positions 'wardrobes' and 'soundtracks' as mnemonic and experiential resources. It reflects the focus on female youth cultural practices in alignment with the overarching research question that asks – how do dress and music act as conduits or companions to women's experiences and memories of youth?[12] The research aims have underpinned this question throughout the research process with only a few adjustments in wording to reflect the inevitable nudges to the focus that occurred over the seven-year period of part time study: refining the time-period and geographic boundaries, better reflecting the multisensory approach to methods and more closely mapping onto the thematic structure of the findings. The aims reflect the temporal progression from the past experiences of youth culture explored in *Rock and Roll Lifestyle* (Chapter 4) to the discussion around the continuation of youth in *Youth Lives with Us* (Chapter 6):

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[9] Answering Angela McRobbie's (1980) call for the validation of women's personal experiences in youth culture.
[10] Drawing on Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering's (2012) *The Mnemonic Imagination: Remembering as Creative Practice.*
[11] The wardrobe and soundtrack inventories (Appendices D and E) and transcripts (Appendix F) are only available for the examiners.
[12] Adopting Mary Bucholtz's term 'cultural practices of youth' (2002: 539), see Track 4.2.

Aim 1: To contribute to knowledge on female participation in everyday youth cultural practices in Northern England between 1950 and 2000.

Aim 2: To record and analyse women's responses to recorded music, dress artefacts and dress snapshots in the remembering of youth, from the perspective of the current self.

Aim 3: To explore the relationship between lived experience, memory and the self, in relation to the construction, documentation and articulation of narratives of youth over time.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The research process began with an academic literature review. Works in the popular domain were included to contextualise and locate the research in contemporary culture, including the examples noted at the start of this chapter. The literature review refined the question and aims, established significant groupings and gaps in the cross-disciplinary sources and manifested the context and theoretical groundwork. Academic texts and cultural references identified in the literature review are drawn upon within the three thematic evidence chapters rather than in a separate literature review. Each chapter takes a nuanced stance, rooted in a primary field or framework, starting with key definitions and contexts before drawing out cross-disciplinary comparisons and observations alongside the analysis of findings.

Rock 'n' Roll Lifestyle (Chapter 4) builds on previous literature in youth and cultural studies, supported by literature from dress, music and youth history. The analysis specifically reacts to the masculine bias in subcultural theory, initiated by the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in the 1970s (Hall and Jefferson [1975] 2006; Hebdige [1979] 1997). The chapter addresses the relative lack of female protagonists in academic studies of youth culture building on Angela McRobbie's early work (McRobbie and Garber [1975] 2006), and specifically her essay 'Settling Accounts with Subculture: A Feminist Critique' ([1980] 1990). In addition to highlighting problems in subcultural and post-subcultural theory, the chapter explains how the thesis will counter the lack of youth, dress or music literature that focuses on women's everyday practice, from the perspective of remembered lived experience. In

considering evolving definitions of youth debated in the fields of youth history (Osgerby 1998; Tebbutt 2016), the life cycle (Erikson ([1959] 1980), life course theory (Elder 1974; Hunt [2005] 2017) and gerontology (Kaufman 1986), the thesis extends understandings of youth beyond shortcomings in these concepts, in light of analysis of the evidence and the fluid parameters of youth that surfaced in the participants youth stories. The chapter also contributes to the limited literature on femininity in relation to youth, providing a new perspective through the lens of dress and music.

Memory Wardrobes and Memory Soundtracks (Chapter 5) is underpinned by memory studies literature (Kuhn 1995; Keightley and Pickering 2012), supported by references from memory science (Stevens 2015), dress theory (Woodward 2007; Slater 2014) and music literature (Green 2021). The chapter responds to the conceptual framework proposed by Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering (2012) in *The Mnemonic Imagination: Remembering as Creative Practice*. Rather than accepting memory as repetition of the past, memory is recognised as a transformative process in which past, present and future are mutually supportive (Keightley and Pickering 2012). My analysis extends their concept, situating the youth related experiences of the participants at the interface of their past, everyday lived experience and their future selves.[13] The literature suggests that music has a strong connection to memories of youth (Holbrook and Schindler 1989; Schulkind et al. 1999; Krumhansl and Zupnick 2013; Loveday, Woy and Conway 2020) and the evidence in this thesis extends this connection to dress and its interconnections with music. An expanded interview method harnesses sensory interactions with both dress and music providing a fresh cultural perspective on memory literature, but also correcting the deficit of youth, dress and music studies that draw on first-hand remembered experience.

Youth Lives with Us (Chapter 6) is underpinned by Erving Goffman's dramaturgical framework for the 'performance of self' across the private and public sphere (1959), and his conceptualisation of dress as part of an 'identity kit' essential to the formation of self (1961, 1995).[14] Experiences of youth form part of this 'identity kit', as the self is

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[13] Michael Pickering and Emily Keightley's (2015) work on *Photography, Music and Memory* also influenced the development of the methods and consideration of the power audio, material or visual stimuli have on the experience of remembering in everyday interactions with dress and music.
[14] The thesis draws on Erving Goffman's theories (1959, 1961, 1995), and aligned symbolic interactionist dress theory including Gregory Stone's (1962) writing on appearance and Joanne Eicher's (1981, 2021) work on dress.

defined and performed through dress and music, often long beyond the teenage years. The chapter builds on Keightley and Pickering's concept of the 'editorial self' (2012: 22), positioning dress and music as biographical markers connected to youth, underpinned by cultural theories of dress (Guy and Banim 2000; Woodward 2007; Skjold 2016) and music (DeNora 2000; Davidson and Garrido 2014; Green 2021). The chapter also contributes to emerging literature in post-youth studies (Holland 2004, 2012; Bennett and Hodkinson 2012; Way 2020a, 2020b, 2021), aligning the sociological standpoint of current literature with new insights activated through the dress and music lens on remembered lived experience. The focus on the everyday further extends the post-youth conversation beyond spectacular and alternative youth groupings, or defined age parameters in relation to youth.

The thesis benefits from examination of literature ranging across disciplines. Diverse theoretical approaches are drawn together alongside the analysis of visual, audio and oral evidence in the three thematic chapters. This symbiotic approach exposes the problematics of the literature, which are addressed in this thesis. The interconnectedness of dress, music and memory is largely ignored when they are treated as separate fields of study, and the synergies between dress, music and youth are also absent outside subcultural theory, which privileges the countercultural stance. The focus on everyday lived experience in this thesis avoids this omission. My original hypothesis, that the clothes and music we listen to in our youth remain an important influence throughout life, has limited coverage in the current literature, and this thesis aims to address this gap, contributing to the academic fields of dress, music and youth.

Working across theoretical disciplines required the setting of parameters and definitions to make the study manageable and alleviate confusion between nuanced approaches and meanings implied in different academic fields. The definition of 'youth' evolves throughout the thesis setting out the initial parameters for this study in Chapter 4 and returning as a reflection on the concept of youth in Chapter 6. The boundaries and application of memory theory are challenged and developed in Chapters 5 and 6. However, there are several key definitions and cross-cutting academic terms that require explanation early on, to set the context for the participants' youth stories in *Sleeve Notes* (Chapter 3) and the consequent chapters. First, I explain the focus on

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Reference is made to Goffman in relation to *The Everyday* (1.3.1), Reflexive Methodologies (2.1), women's visibility (4.3.3), resistance (4.3.4), and identity (6.1.1 and 6.1.2).

the everyday and how I have interpreted this for the analysis. The cultural resources under scrutiny, dress and music, are defined and contextualised in detail below, alongside consideration of the role that photographs play in this research.[15] Finally, I expound how dress and music are positioned as 'tokens of youth', and define 'memory wardrobes' and 'memory soundtracks', as key concepts that will inform the thesis.

1.3.1 The Everyday

The concept of everyday life initially proposed by Michel de Certeau (1988) has been explored in cultural theory (Bennett 2005), music theory (De Nora 2000; North, Hargreaves and Hargreaves 2004) and fashion theory (Buckley and Clark 2012, 2018). However, the complexity of the term is recognised, not least in the oxymoron that is *everyday* fashion. Cheryl Buckley and Hazel Clark describe everyday dress as 'a synthesis of new and old, bold and mundane' (2018: 9). Although this corroborates the diverse participation in everyday fashion and music practices described by the participants, it is not useful as a defining filter. Ben Highmore further complicates the matter by proposing that the everyday can also be home to the 'bizarre and mysterious' (2002a: 3). Nevertheless, Buckley and Clark (2012, 2018) acknowledged that fashion is a cultural phenomenon determined by everyday embodied practices and social interaction. In this thesis, the focus is on everyday practices (returning to Certeau's emphasis on practice) of dressing and music listening, without judgement upon the ordinariness or extraordinariness of the wardrobes and soundtracks under scrutiny. It highlights the dress and music choices made by the participants in negotiating everyday life, not their fashionability or popularity. The term 'everyday' is also applied to youth culture in this research to denote a move away from the spectacular, deviant or extraordinary foregrounded in subcultural theory. However, like the scale of fashionability signalled above, or the wide range of music genres an individual may listen to over a short period of time, participation in youth culture is understood to fluctuate between the mundane and extraordinary, within and across the participants' youth stories.

Highmore (2002b: 11) drew attention to Goffman's (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, describing how cultural expression is managed and manipulated in the

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[15] I use the term 'cultural resources' to describe dress and music drawing on Andy Bennett's (2005) positioning of fashion and music as 'cultural terrains' in the cultural practices of youth and recognising their potential as 'mnemonic resources' Michael Pickering and Emily Keightley (2015). See Track 5.2 and table 5.1 for further contextualisation of the terms.

performance of the self in different environments and situations. Consideration of these nuanced public and private everyday interactions are intrinsic to the analysis of the youth stories in this research. Highmore (2002a: 151) has described Certeau's (1988) theoretical approach to the everyday as making practices 'visible' and 'audible', to listen to the 'murmurs of everyday life' (2002a: 169). This understanding of the everyday has informed the development of the multi-sensory methods used in this research; and through the centring of the participant narratives in this study, these previously marginalised 'murmurs' become salient and instrumental.

1.3.2 Style-Fashion-Dress

The term 'dress', as used in the title, includes items worn on the body such as clothes, accessories, make up, or modifications and adornments, for example hairstyles, as defined by Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins and Joanne Eicher (1992). However, as a term, especially in noun form, it was rarely used by the participants themselves, who were more likely to refer to *fashion* or *style*. This also reflects the complex relationship between the academic fields that cover the study of what people wear, including dress, fashion and wardrobe studies, fashion theory, psychology and history. Lisa Skov and Marie Riegels Melchior (2008: 3) described dress and fashion as ''hybrid subjects' that synthesise diverse frameworks and approaches. However, dress, fashion *and* style can work together as an academic model. Carol Tulloch's (2010, 2016) concept of style-fashion-dress, adopted for this study, acknowledges the mutually supportive relationship between the three terms. 'Style' is particularly relevant to this research as the photographs of styled dress the participants share in the interviews represent the agency involved in the personal act of dressing. Style in this context is described by Tulloch (2010: 276) as 'the construction of self through the assemblage of garments, accessories and beauty regimes that may, or may not, be "in fashion" at the time of use'.[16] 'Fashion' is understood as the outside influences on sartorial choices denoting a more collective, external becoming as described by Susan Kaiser (2012: 1); it 'changes with each person's visual and material interpretations of who he or she is becoming and how this connects with others' interpretations'. Therefore, whilst dress can be understood as the artefacts and embellishments we use to display or communicate identity every day, where 'dress' is used in the thesis it should be read as the wider practice of style-fashion-dress.[17]

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[16] Not subcultural style as proposed by John Clarke ([1975] 2006) and Dick Hebdige ([1979] 1997).
[17] See 5.3.5 for style-fashion-dress in the context of personal memory and collective experience.

Within the literature, the role dress plays in lived experience and self-knowledge was first pioneered from a material culture perspective, analysing the contents of participants' wardrobes. The use of the wardrobe as a methodological approach was initially proposed by Alison Guy and Maura Banim (2000), extended in their edited volume with Eileen Green (Guy, Green and Banim 2001), and developed by Sophie Woodward (2005, 2007). More recently 'wardrobe studies' has emerged as a methodological approach (Klepp and Bjerck 2014; Fletcher and Klepp 2017).[18] Sandra Weber and Claudia Mitchell (2004: 4) also identified the ability of 'dress stories' to reveal personal and culturally constructed meanings. The focus in this thesis is on the experience of the wearer or what Efrat Tseëlon has described as the 'wardrobe approach', prioritising the '*internal*' dimensions of clothes experienced by the wearer, as opposed to the study of '*external*' fashion rules, defined as the 'stereotype approach' (2010: 155 [original emphasis]). In psychology Hajo Adam and Adam Galinsky (2012) coined the term 'enclothed cognition', acknowledging both the physical wearing experience and the symbolic meanings attached to an item of clothing. This has been extended by Rebecka Fleetwood-Smith, Kate Hefferon and Carolyn Mair (2019: 49) to 'personal' enclothed cognition in recognition of the symbolic and personal meanings imbued in worn clothing. In this research the multisensory interview methods bridge the symbolic and experiential when available items of dress or dress memorabilia enable a physical connection with the past through touch. Although in this thesis remembered garments or remembered experiences of dress are privileged above material artefacts.

1.3.3 Recorded Dress

Dress and music are the central components of this research, but the place of photographs also requires clarification. In *Photography, Music and Memory,* Pickering and Keightley (2015) revealed the power photography and music hold as mnemonic communication devices, yet in this thesis dress is positioned as the primary conduit to memory (along with music) with photography playing a supporting role, as a medium through which dress can be accessed. The photographs analysed for this study are not documentary photographs, or fashion photographs, with a few exceptions where

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[18] In popular literature Sheila Heti, Heidi Julavits, Leanne Shapton et al. (2014) and Emily Spivack (2014) have published collections containing personal narratives of dress told through the contents of the wardrobe and the rituals of dressing.

participants featured in styled fashion shoots or professional photographs captured on holiday or on a night out. Most are amateur photographs taken by friends and family, referred to here as 'snapshots' as explored by Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (2004), Annette Kuhn (1995) and Jo Spence and Patricia Holland (1991).[19] The position of the snapshot in this research is exemplified by Holland: 'Snapshots are part of the material with which we make sense of our wider world' (1991: 10).

In this research, snapshots manifest the embodied materiality of dress in visual form. Parallels between snapshots or family photographs and the materiality of our clothes have previously been evidenced in Kuhn's memory work (1995). Referring to a photograph of herself as a young girl, Kuhn (1995) described the material experience of wearing a particular dress, making comparisons between the multi-layered outfit and the multiple layered meanings the image holds. The dress snapshots in this study serve three important roles: firstly, they highlight the practice of 'self-styling'.[20] Rather than dress being reduced to a collection of individual items in the wardrobe, the snapshots provide evidence of how garments related to each other and to the wearer's body, how they were worn and complemented by hairstyles and make-up. In this way they provide evidence for the analysis of embodied dress practices (Entwistle [2000] 2015). They also act as 'surrogates' for dress; where items of dress have not been kept or are not available, they are remembered and analysed through the medium of the photograph. The use of dress snapshots also extends or acts as a surrogate for physical experience as the styled body of the past is visualised and re-experienced in the present by a body which has since changed.[21] Whilst the snapshots are described as surrogates here, that is not to diminish their importance, the dress snapshots are central to the methods. The use of snapshots privileges 'recorded dress' in relation to material dress. It is the styled dress that is the memory resource or conduit, rather than the physical dress depicted or the photographs themselves. As 'recorded dress', snapshots act as a storage device providing rich evidence extending beyond verbal description used as both tool and evidence in the thesis.

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[19] Michael Pickering and Emily Keightley use the term 'self-made' photographs but 'snapshots' is preferred in this analysis, as defined by Patricia Holland (1991).
[20] In previous work I have proposed 'self-styling', or dressing oneself in a styled look, as a methodological approach for the exploration and articulation of youth narratives (Jenkinson 2020: 95).
[21] Several projects have attempted to recreate the moments captured in a photograph, re-styling the moment for the present day (*Visible Girls Revisited* (n.d.); *The Guardian* (2021) or superimposing new photographs over originals (Jones 2012).

1.3.4 Recorded Music

As everyday dress practices are prioritised in this study, the music referred to in the title is defined as 'recorded music' that was commercially available in the public domain during the participants' youth, accessed through everyday means of radio, television and domestic playback equipment. Pickering and Keightley use the term 'self-chosen' music to define their focus on personal selection in music listening rather than music heard in public or broadcast spaces. This term applies to this study in reference to the personal soundtracks created for the interview but is less applicable to the remembered experience of the participants, for example in their youth most chose to listen to specific radio shows in the home, where direct control over listening was relinquished, but tracks still held 'value and significance' over time (Pickering and Keightley 2015: 7). Hence, 'recorded music' better defines the parameters for this study. This thesis is not concerned with the playing of instruments or the making of music, much as this is widely researched in relation to memory. The participants referenced the collective experience of live music in music halls, gigs or concerts, which is used to support the analysis of women's participation in youth culture; however, the methods focus on listening to recorded music in the home.[22] This focus on commercially recorded music is significant as these tracks provided stable access to auditory stimuli. Commercially recorded tracks are often available, aurally unchanged, throughout a lifetime of changing temporal, physical and cultural environments. Music was played in the interviews from both physical collections of original recordings and digital playlists. These analogue or digital modes of access may provide a different sound quality but the recording itself remains unchanged, unless remastered or reproduced.

The music literature aligned to the lived experience of dress focuses on everyday music listening (De Nora 2000; Rentfrow 2012), music collections (Giles, Pietrzykiwski and Clark 2007; Greasley, Lamont and Sloboda 2013) and the personal soundtracks that accompany our lives (Davidson and Garrido 2014; Williamson 2014; Rogers 2022). Everyday music experiences also relate to materiality and touch, for example where music artefacts such as records are present in the interviews (Greasley, Lamont and Sloboda 2013), but emotional responses to music are mostly documented in

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[22] Participants also referenced listening to recorded music in record shops, in other people's homes and youth clubs, which are considered in the analysis of participation in youth cultures in Chapter 4. However, analysis of the sensory or mnemonic impact of listening to music covered in Chapter 5 does not extend to outside the home within the parameters of this thesis.

academic literature as a reaction to the aural experience of music listening (Juslin and Sloboda 2001, 2010; Bicknell 2009; Hesmondhalgh 2013). These material and audio experiences work alongside each other in the interview experience designed for this research, with oral narratives of music listening, personal playlists and music memorabilia referred to in the interviews providing the content for analysis.

1.3.5 Dress and Music

A review of academic literature identified few examples where relationships between dress and music in everyday lived experience have been documented.[23] Sophie Woodward and Alinka Greasley (2017) provided the first analysis of dress and music that spoke to this research, as they allied their academic interests in everyday consumption through dress and music collections. This publication validated the use of the two comparative resources and provided a reference for the analysis of dress and music items, and how they are kept and stored in the home. They noted similarities in the dynamic ways in which items were added or discarded over time, and how collections were ordered and presented. However, they also observed key temporal differences as interaction with the wardrobe is a daily requirement, whereas music collections could lie dormant with no social requirement for daily access. Both dress and music however are subject to repetitive use overtime. Referring to the physical wardrobe contents under scrutiny in their study, they recognised that wearing clothes is an embodied experience. Arguably, music listening is also an embodied experience, described by Susan McClary (1994) as a cultural technology of the body.[24] This embodiment was evidenced when the participants sang or moved to music in the interviews. In a rare cross-disciplinary study of dress, music, and youth culture, Susan Atkin (2016: 91) conceptualised dressing for dance in 1990s club culture as 'fashion in motion', describing 'the carriage of the body in relation to dress' whilst listening to music. The sensual and embodied qualities that unite dress and music are key to their position in this thesis as conduits to experience and memory.[25]

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[23] Available literature on fashion and music, to which Janice Miller's (2011) work is central has focused on music performers and performances, collaborations between music and fashion creatives (Baron 2016), the synergy between the fashion and music industries (Strähle 2018) or the semiotic language of dress and music in film and media (Calefato 2001). Rachel Lifter (2020) focused on the UK indie music scene to explore the construction of feminine and masculine identities through fashion and music, which supports the discussion on gender and youth culture.

[24] See also Arnie Cox (2016) for evidence from a cognitive perspective.

[25] See Track *5.3.4 Embodied Memory and Meaning* for findings related to embodiment.

1.3.6 Dress, Music and Youth Culture

In the late 1990s, and in an earlier anthology covering style, fashion and music, Angela McRobbie (1989, 1999) was the first to consider the interplay between the cultural resources of art, fashion and music through the lens of cultural studies. In *Culture and Everyday Life,* Andy Bennett (2005) positioned fashion and music as 'cultural terrains' of everyday life, drawing on the relationship young people have as consumers with these mass-produced commodities.[26] Steve Miles recognised the importance of fashion and music as part of the 'jigsaw of consumer goods' young people used to assert and communicate their lifestyle preferences to others (2000: 138). However, it was the subcultural theorists of the late 1970s who first analysed music and style, together, as cultural resources in the context of youth culture. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (Hebdige [1979] 1997), and David Muggleton's (2000) post-subcultural response *Inside Subculture: The Postmodern Meaning of Style* both positioned dress (or style) and subcultures as 'joint primary variables', an equal footing rarely seen in contemporary youth cultures literature.[27] Monica Sklar et al.'s (2021) literature review distinguished this approach from publications where either dress or subculture was the primary focus, with the other merely providing context. Their findings on dress and subcultures could also apply for dress and music. One of the participants in this study, Jayne, described the mutual synergy between dress and music as fundamental to her choice of the mod subculture, as opposed to the 'casuals' subculture: 'I did get the mods because of the clothes and the music because it came together, but the Casuals, it was just like clothes and football' (Jayne 2018).[28] Rarely are dress and music considered together as co-equal variables in youth culture as they are positioned in this research.[29]

Bennett has argued that whilst subcultural theory has retained its influence as a framework for the relationship between dress, music and youth, the term subculture has become a 'convenient 'catch-all' term for any aspect of social life in which young people, style and music intersect' (1999: 599). However, he has since suggested that post-subcultural theory has enabled understanding of the cultural dynamics behind young people's 'everyday appropriation of music, style and associated objects, images

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[26] Andy Bennett positioned fashion and music as 'cultural terrains' alongside media and tourism (2005).
[27] See Paul Hodkinson (2009) for a literature review of youth, fashion and style.
[28] In their study of college students Youngjoo Na and Tove Agnhage (2013) also found that music and fashion style preferences often correlate, particularly for those with a strong interest in both music and fashion.
[29] Exceptions include Susan Atkin (2016) on dress and music in Manchester club culture, and Heike Jenss (2018) who integrated music into her analysis of mod style and youth culture.

and texts' (Bennett 2011: 494), by recognising the fluidity and multiplicity of identity associated within modern lifestyles and a less rigid relationship between dress styles and music tastes. Whilst this shift is often associated with the rise in popularity of dance music and club culture (Thornton 1995; Bennett 1999, 2000), it is already evidenced in the earlier post-war dress and music narratives in this study. This thesis asserts that dress and music remain important cultural resources in the study of youth culture from both historical and contemporary perspectives.[30] The use of everyday dress (style-fashion-dress) in this research enables a focus on everyday lived experience and recognises the fluidity of youth. It removes the problematic subcultural reliance on style-focused collective youth cultures yet acknowledges the relationship between cultural groupings and the construction of individual identity. Moving beyond the correlations between dress, music and youth found in the subcultural literature, this thesis responds to the surprising lack of contemporary research examining how these cultural components work alongside each other in lived *and* remembered experience, and how the two cultural resources – dress and music – interact and support each other in the formation of women's narratives of youth.

1.3.7 Tokens of Youth

To prepare the ground for the methodology and methods, a brief rationale for my term 'tokens of youth' is included here. Dress and music provide access points to memories of youth in the multi-sensory methods of the study. As everyday cultural resources dress and music also play a considerable role in young people's participation in youth cultural practices and are intrinsic to self-affirmation in youth. As tokens of youth this role appears to extend throughout the lifetime. 'Tokens' are understood in the sense of something that can remain as evidence or proof of something that existed, occurred or was experienced. Dress and music provide a tangible, and meaningful representation of youth for the participants in this research, during the process of remembering.[31] Examples of this in dress literature include Julia Twigg's observation of the practice of 'using the concrete particularity of dress to catch a historical moment' (2013: 76), and Guy and Banim's explanation that wardrobes 'represent a tangible connection' with the past (2000: 322). The term 'tangible' recognises the ability of dress and music to emotionally or physically 'touch' the person leading to the embodied youth

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[30] See Chapter 4 for further discussion on theoretical approaches in youth culture.
[31] Tokens are defined by the OED as 'something that serves to indicate a fact, event, object, feeling, etc.' (OED 2022 [online]; q.v. token).

cultural practices that feature in the participants' youth stories.[32] Physical collections of dress and music can manifest as tokens of youth. Russell Belk (1988) regarded personal possessions as storage devices for memory and feelings, that enable us to make tangible the intangible through having, being and doing. In this study, wardrobe and music artefacts conveyed intangible feelings and emotions in the present as 'biographical objects' (Hoskins 1998).[33] However, the symbolic and emotional are also made tangible, in the act of remembering, as dress and music connect past and present for the participants.

The close relationship between dress, music and the self, is a contributing factor in the potential dress and music have as tokens of youth. Clare Rathbone, Chris Moulin and Martin Conway (2008) found that memories that relate to self-image are more likely to be retained over time. In music literature it has been widely theorised that a strong connection to the music we listened to in our youth, is maintained in later life (Holbrook and Schindler 1989; Loveday, Woy and Conway 2020) and we are more likely to remember events, or music from between ten and thirty years of age. This phenomenon has been termed the 'reminiscence bump' (Rubin, Rahhal and Poon 1998).[34] This temporality maps onto dress literature that explores how past, present, and future selves co-exist,[35] and onto the findings of this thesis as dress and music are found to connect experience across time. Heike Jenss has suggested in her analysis of vintage dress and youth culture that 'through audio and visual records, the sound and look of the past circulate widely beyond the time context when they were produced, enabling listeners and viewers to enter into a sensuous exchange with the past' (2018: 65). The role dress and music play as symbolic, yet sensory, tokens were exemplified by Patrick Grant (*BBC Radio* 2015) who recounted while listening to a track from his youth, that we can 'see' our past in outfits.[36]

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[32] See Track 6.2.1 for further discussion on dress and music as tangible markers of youth.

[33] The term 'artefacts' is used broadly to include actual dress, dress snapshots dress, physical and digital playlists, dress and music memorabilia (including dress making patterns or magazines, scrapbooks, concert tickets and recorded music in analogue formats such as the compact discs, tapes and vinyl records included in the toolkits, and sometimes played in the interviews).

[34] See Track 5.6 for more discussion on this phenomenon.

[35] See Maura Banim and Alison Guy (2000); Alison Guy, Eileen Green and Maura Banim (2001); Sophie Woodward (2005, 2007).

[36] In Patrick Grant's appearance on BBC Radio4's *Inheritance Tracks* he describes his memory of losing his virginity and the vividity with which he remembers the outfit he was wearing (*BBC Radio* 2015).

Dress and music can also provide cultural agency in youth, and when cultural practices of youth are maintained later in life, as evidenced in the participant narratives.[37] This aligns with Sarah Thornton's (1995) concept of 'subcultural capital', referencing Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) 'cultural capital'. Thornton employs the term to club culture, yet it applies more broadly to the diverse representations of youth culture, through dress and music in this thesis:

> Subcultural capital can be *objectified* or *embodied*. Just as books and paintings display cultural capital in the family home, so subcultural capital is objectified in the form of fashionable haircuts and well-assembled record collections (full of well-chosen, limited edition 'white label' twelve inches and the like). Just as cultural capital is personified in 'good' manners and urbane conversation, so subcultural capital is embodied in the form of being 'in the know' (1995: 11 [original emphasis]).

As tokens of youth, dress and music play a significant role in the formation and articulation of the youth stories analysed in this thesis. They act as a conduit for remembered experience, connecting remembered youth with present-day experience in the interview, and provide self-affirmation. They exist inside and outside of memory, playing a lead role in lived experience and youth cultural practices, also acting as a conduit to memory and featuring in our memories of youth. As emotional and symbolic tokens they manifest and synthesise the multi-sensory experiences of youth across time.

1.3.8 Wardrobes and Soundtracks

To conclude the overview of key theories and terms, I will briefly explain the use of 'wardrobes' and 'soundtracks' in the thesis. The term 'wardrobes' is used in the text to describe the edited collection of dress items that were present in the interviews to include garments, accessories, dress snapshots and dress memorabilia, for example, magazines. 'Soundtracks', in the same context, are understood as the playlists played in the interview and music memorabilia that was present, such as CDs, tape and records, or live music tickets or programmes. I also use the two terms more broadly to include dress and music collections that are readily accessible in the home, in everyday life.

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[37] See *Sleeve Notes* for an example from Mo (3.3) and Helen (3.4).

These wardrobes and soundtracks were often extended in the interview process, to include remembered garments or styled looks, or musical tracks that were not listened to in the interview. These are documented in Appendices D and E, along with the dress and music artefacts present in the interviews in audio, material or visual form. Conceptualised as 'memory wardrobes' and 'memory soundtracks' in Chapter 5, these terms are integral to the findings and offer a contribution to the field of memory studies. In the 'memory wardrobe' memories of dress are metaphorically stored, triggered by tactile or visual stimuli in the present or imagined in the mnemonic process, often including long-discarded items. The 'memory soundtrack' includes the imagined soundtracks played in the mind alongside musical playlists experienced through analogue formats or digital technologies in the act of remembering (Davidson and Garrido 2014; Williamson 2014).

This chapter has positioned dress and music as everyday cultural resources that mutually support the lived experience of youth, the formation of memories of youth and the experience of remembering. As tokens of youth, they connect experience and memory and in doing so provide continuity of self. They represent the cultural, emotional, symbolic and the sensory qualities that are harnessed in the methods designed for the thesis, outlined in the following chapter.

Chapter 2. YOUTH IN A SUITCASE

Figure 2.1 Marian's records and music memorabilia. Author's photograph, 2018.

This chapter owes its name to one of the participants, Marian (2018), who claimed, in relation to the dress and music artefacts she had kept from her youth, 'I have got plenty of my youth in a suitcase' (Fig. 2.1). The methodology and methods for this thesis focus on two driving forces: the lived experience of the participants (past and present) and the multi-sensory power that dress and music have as conduits to that experience. Dress and music here move beyond their position as subject, becoming central to the methods. In this thesis experience, memory and narrative are intimately linked, and mutually supportive, in the interpretation and understanding of the biographical past, present and future. This is a study rooted in phenomenology, with the experience of the participants the central point of view. It foregrounds the experience and perception of the participants but also recognises that analysis is an interpretative process, making visible the researcher's impact on the findings (Lester 1999). This is reinforced by a hermeneutical (interpretive) approach,[1] drawing together mixed qualitative methods (interviews, transcripts, assemblies of images, artefacts and sounds) and interventions from the participants and the researcher.

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[1] 'The art or science of interpretation' (Malpas 2015: 1).

2.1 A Reflexive Methodology

Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg (2018) characterise the hermeneutic research process as one that constructs meaning through careful reflection and interpretation.[2] For them, hermeneutics recognises the role of empathy and imagination in interpretation, meaning making, and the understanding of data. Research data is therefore viewed as connected to the researcher, conceding the impact of the researcher's presence and preunderstandings. In hermeneutic research, the investigation itself is not separated from what is investigated, and both are of mutual importance in the analysis (Freeman 2008). This hermeneutic approach complements the 'narrative conception of identity' conceptualised by Douglas Ezzy (1998). Ezzy positions Erving Goffman's (1961) understanding of the temporally constructed 'self-story' where the past is in interpreted in the present, as a form of narrative identity (Ezzy 1998: 247). Alongside Goffman's viewpoint, Ezzy situates Paul Ricoeur's (1984, 1986, 1988) hermeneutic understanding of time and narrative, arguing that for Ricoeur 'the text, or narrative, has two "sides" that interface with the events of lived experience. Lived experience precedes a narrative, and narrative shapes practical action' (Ezzy 1998: 244). In this research this can be understood as the impact of the participants' past experiences and narrations on their interview experience in the present, but also how involvement in the research process impacted upon their developing youth stories and associated understanding of self.

A hermeneutic narrative approach informed the design of the methods for this research. Narrative inquiry is described by Jean Clandinin and Vera Caine (2008: 541) as 'both a view of the phenomena of people's experiences and a methodology for narratively inquiring into experience and thus allows for the intimate study of individuals' experiences over time'. As a methodological approach, it prioritises the lived experience of the participant, acknowledging the temporal aspects that come to light in this study as participants reflect on their youth. Shaun Gallagher (2015: 406) has suggested that the concept of the narrative self can support understanding of how identity, and the understanding of self, is subject to temporal fluctuation. The influence of narrative inquiry on this research can be seen in the construction of narratives across

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[2] Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg (2018: 10) use the terms 'reflective' and 'reflexive' synonymously, with reflexive interpretation understood as involving several levels of reflection. See 2.3.5, Table. 2.3 for how reflection was incorporated into various stages of the interview process.

the past and present of youth. These self-narratives, generated through multi-sensory interviews, align with Gallagher's definition of narrative as 'an interpretive account that selectively connects events across time on the basis of their significance or meaning to oneself and/or to others' (2015: 405). This plurality of meaning is central to the approach to analysis in this thesis recognising the multiple narratives at play in the research process.

2.2 Listening Methods

This thesis began in a reflective tone of voice, setting out my personal experience and motivations. In keeping with the reflexive methodology, it is important to locate myself in relation to the research. I am, sociologically-speaking, a 52-year-old, white, middle class (by profession), university educated (first generation), heterosexual, cis gender woman who grew up in the south of England. While I make every effort to represent the participants' voices from their position in the research and do their narratives justice, I also recognise that my interpretation is nuanced by my own experience, shaping my narrative and consequently practical actions.[3] As an academic, my developing research practice sits at the intersection of dress and fashion theory and youth studies. Until I started my doctoral research, my interest in music was as a fan and consumer. Whilst undertaking this research, I have tried to balance any perceived academic expertise, with the lived expertise of the participants. I am sometimes positioned as an outsider, for example all my participants were born in the north of England, but the thing that unites us – myself and the participants – as insiders, is our mutual interest, and personal authority, in dress and music.

In *The Art of Listening*, sociologist Les Back (2007: 21) states that 'listening is tied to the art of description', description being the way that the author presents the voices of others. He positions sociology's role as representing voices that are not usually heard, through the essential tasks of careful listening and critical scrutiny, rather than simply 'emptying people of their expertise and wisdom' (Back 2007: 8). This is echoed in perspectives within women's history, a field closely associated with the development of oral history and narrative methods (Gluck and Patai 1991). The importance of 'listening' claimed by oral historians has been described by Shehnaz Suterwalla (2013:

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[3] As suggested by Paul Ricoeur in *Time and Narrative* (1984, 1986, 1988).

168) as 'listening between the gaps of traditional sources'.[4] The methods developed for this research aimed to open these 'gaps' and respond to the call for closer, more intimate listening, and a detailed and authentic representation of the voices at the heart of the study. Oral history was initially identified as a potential method for listening to the voices of women and recording their everyday experiences of youth for this study, although the personal narratives that unfold in the interviews appear to be more aligned within the definitions of 'oral evidence', rather than oral history, a distinction proposed by Trevor Lummis (1987: 27). Lummis's definition considers the unique oral and aural qualities of the voice recording itself. The multi-sensory methods in this research consider the richness of language and speech and their relationship to meaning (Portelli 1998), and the retrospective capturing, first-hand, of everyday experience, for the participant, but also the researcher.

Back (2007: 21) stated that the best descriptions 'theorize as they describe and describe as they theorize'. This thesis weaves together the verbatim voice of the participants, the reflective voice of the researcher and the interpretive voice which provides the core narrative and maintains a critical standpoint. This triangulated approach relies on a respectful dynamic that goes beyond the 'recording' and 'analysing' set out in the research aims.[5] The intention is to create the most accurate representation possible of the narratives, ideas, and findings in the research and to activate the multiple and overlapping layers of meaning experienced by the participants, the author as participant, and the author as interpreter. The participant voice remains central to the thesis, whilst the reflective voice of the researcher appears as a participant experiencing the process, as someone both listening and to be listened to. The interpretive voice is used to critique and contextualise, but without assuming hierarchy of opinion, this voice represents others and has a responsibility to listen carefully to the findings and position them in the academic landscape. In this three-way dynamic the participant voice can also critique, while the reflective or interpretive voice listens, as Back (2007: 18) observes 'sometimes there is real value as a researcher in being made to feel a fool'. This provides important validation that feelings of discomfort are an accepted part of interviewing, and that the researcher feeling out of depth, or unfamiliar with a subject can impact positively on the interview experience,

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[4] See also Alison Slater (2011, 2014, 2020) for oral histories of dress and Clare Lomas (2000) for examples of oral history and fashion.
[5] Aim 2: To record and analyse women's responses to recorded music, dress artefacts and dress snapshots in the remembering of youth, from the perspective of the current self. See Track 1.2 for research aims.

levelling out hierarchies of expertise. This was evident in the interview with Linda, who drew attention to the importance of listening towards the end of her interview, articulating her appreciation. 'I love being listened to. And someone that really listens is great. Yeah, and I like hearing myself talk and thinking, "Oh God, that's true."' Linda also stated that it was important to her that I had responded to some of her ideas, validating her position. It was noticeable that towards the end of Linda's interview the conversation became much more two-way. Initially I worried about this, about contributing my experiences or opinions, in case it influenced a response, but throughout the interviews I have found it difficult to exclude myself from the participants' experience of remembering. I have recognised the importance of interaction between the researcher and the participant, as the experience is shared, and we trigger responses back and forth between each other during the process. Whilst listening, my mind was constantly interacting with Linda's narrative as I formulated ideas and produced (my own) meaning. However, it was clear in Linda's interview that we held different perspectives. I cannot claim to understand her position on race for example, but I feel a responsibility to preserve her viewpoint and attempt to present her narrative empathetically, as heard, seen and experienced.

Back (2007: 17) has described how in much doctoral research he has encountered the participant voices are carefully transcribed but lack the description, or sense of character, needed to experience the full narrative. In this thesis the participants' youth stories in *Sleeve Notes* (Chapter 3) provide the backbone to the research onto which I build the arguments and discussions throughout the thesis, as myself the researcher, and ultimately the reader gradually acquaints themselves with the characters at play. The participants also have a hand in the definitions that frame the analysis, not least the definitions of youth under scrutiny in Chapters 4 and 6.

2.3 Research Design

2.3.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study took place in early 2015, the results from which were presented at a conference at the University of Minnesota (Jenkinson 2015). The pilot included an audio recorded ninety-minute test interview conducted in the home of Marian (2015).[6] This provided an opportunity to evaluate an oral history interview format and test the

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[6] Marian's husband was also present in the interview. She was later interviewed alone, using the revised interview methods. See Marian's youth story (3.2) for further detail.

interview questions, research ethics forms and transcription process. The pilot interview enabled the testing of the hypotheses that clothes and music are integral to female youth cultural practices, and without prompt Marian provided photographs and garments to support her oral narrative. This pilot influenced the design of a mixed methods approach that focused on the interplay between oral narratives, snapshots, wardrobes, and soundtracks.

Following the pilot interview, the temporal aspects of memory, experience and imagination emerged as potential concepts and methodological considerations, challenging the use of oral history – as academically defined – as a methodological approach. The term 'history' aligns awkwardly with the temporally fluid approach to memory in this research where past and present experience overlap. Lummis (1987: 28) usefully differentiates between oral evidence or the raw personal testimony itself and the application of this testimony into history, the process of using the oral evidence to move from individual biography to the social dimension of a historical account. Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering (2013) have described memory studies as multidisciplinary but acknowledge the need to be more interdisciplinary, suggesting the potential for an adjacency between oral history and memory studies currently lacking in academic literature. The methods in this research have moved beyond oral history and have come to focus on remembering as creative practice, intended to capture the continuous movement back and forth between past and future in everyday human experience, building on the concept of the 'mnemonic imagination' proposed by Keightley and Pickering (2012). The reflexive, narrative approach of these methods and the focus on memory as an imaginative and creative process rather than a means to accurately capture events or evidence from the past, has led to use of the term 'oral narratives' in this thesis. Recognising the influence of oral history or oral evidence methods but refocusing on the construction of narrative, however loosely tethered to a temporal sphere or historical accuracy.

2.3.2 The Participants

Following the pilot study, I tested the use of internet sources to attract participants including a Facebook page, Twitter feed and website. The website proved useful when articulating the project to potential interviewees but did not attract any new participants. Joanna Bornat (2013) has highlighted the positive role online resources can play in disseminating oral histories to wider audiences but the ethics of sharing personal

biographies beyond traditional boundaries brings questions about research ethics, in response to contemporary debates about the 'right to be forgotten', as the past becomes ever present through social media and online sources (Ghezzi et al. 2014). For this reason, although I had permissions to publish images and excerpts online, I chose not to do this, and have since put the website on hold. Purposive sampling through word of mouth proved the most effective means of sourcing participants. I also distributed flyers at gigs, put an advert in the Textile Society (UK) newsletter,[7] emailed the call for participants to the local Manchester U3A group,[8] put posters in local community centres and posted the call on social media (Twitter). I interviewed all ten of the women who came forward, whose age and location fell within the scope of the research. The final group of participants are not representative of the diverse backgrounds of the women who would have been experiencing youth culture in the North of England at that time. It is recognised that in youth literature women are still less visible, and where female experience is included, the focus remains disproportionately on the white female.[9] My position as a white woman, interviewing mostly white women, does little to address the racial imbalance; as the purposive sampling created limitations, despite my efforts to be inclusive and the avoidance of any selection criteria beyond age and geographic location. The call for participants was aimed at women over 45 years old, who were willing to share their stories of youth for a research project and specifically:

- Spent their youth in Northern England
- Were available for interview in their home
- Had some photographs, clothes or memorabilia from their youth
- Were able to provide a list of music tracks that reflected their youth (or actual records if available).

The age range within which *youth* is defined forms an important argument within this thesis, but for the purpose of selecting participants eighteen was taken as a cultural

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[7] The Textile Society (2020) 'Textile Society History' [online]. Available at: https://www.textilesociety.org.uk/textile-society-history. [Accessed 28 July 2022].

[8] U3A (2019) 'Greater Manchester U3A network' [online]. Available at: https://u3asites.org.uk/gm-network/welcome. [Accessed 28 July 2022].

[9] I am currently working on a journal article with Fatima Khan, 'The Presentation of Young Muslim Femininities in Everyday Life: Fashion as Method', which analyses self-styled Muslim identities.

marker.[10] The participants in this study reached the age of 18 between 1954 and 1987 (Table 2.1).[11]

Table 2.1 Year of 18th Birthday and Associated Music and Style Cultures.

Participant	18th Birthday	QQ4. Did you actively participate in youth, style or music cultures during this time?
Olive	1954	Church groups, local dance halls, pop music
Marian	1960	Rock and Roll
Carole	1962	Pop music, Fashion
Heather	1968	Rock, R&B, Soul
Helen	1972	Mod, Motown, Beatles
Mo	1973	Tamla Motown and chart pop tunes
Linda	1977	Moss Side, Reno nightclub, Soul and Funk, Androgynous
Janet	1983	Mod, Punk and Indie
Kate	1985	Indie
Jayne	1987	Mod Subculture

This defined period meant that participants grew up post-war, a time which marked a substantial cultural shift for young women. It is also technologically significant as the period in which the soundtrack came of age after its beginnings in the first long-playing record of 1948, to the height of the 'Walkman' cassette player in the early 1980s. The close of the period of analysis falls before the point at which the sharing of music and photographs digitally online became common practice in early 1990s.[12] This was an essential consideration because digital technologies changed the way personal soundtracks and snapshots of youth were, and are, accessed and remembered. The geographical positioning of the study is 'northern' and is contained within the Northwest and Northeast of England.[13] This decision was partly practical, but it was also my intention to represent youth culture outside of London.[14]

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[10] While 18 is widely recognised as the inception of adulthood across European culture, it is used here purely as a point in time to frame the research within a historical period. It is not suggested that this is the average age of 'youth' or a significant milestone in youth. This meant participants over the age of 45, at the time of the call, would have been at least 18 in the 1990s. The definitions and parameters of youth are further explored in depth in Chapters 4 and 6.

[11] The narratives under scrutiny extend beyond these dates (1950 - 2000 as reflected in Aim 1), based on the participants' own definitions of youth.

[12] The ability to create social networks online started with the launch of *Friendster*, a US social networking site founded in 2002, *MySpace* a US social networking site was founded in 2003 and then *Facebook* a US online social media and networking service, founded in 2004 recently rebranded as *Meta*. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Timeline of Social Media' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_social_media. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

[13] One participant grew up in Staffordshire but spent the significant part of her self-defined youth in Manchester.

[14] See Katie Milestone (2018) for a critique of London's perceived centrality in youth culture literature, particularly in relation to the swinging 60s.

2.3.3 The Research Information Pack

As participants were identified, they were sent a research information pack (Appendix A). The pack included a participant information sheet and consent forms approved as part of the University ethics procedure, a questionnaire to be filled in and returned prior to the interview and instructions for assembling personal artefacts including dress snapshots and personal soundtracks for a 'memory toolkit'. Participants were briefed that the experiences and memories recorded would be used alongside existing literature to examine the interplay between dress, music and youth culture and the impact on our shifting identities as we age, offering the opportunity to reflect on, and document, their personal youth stories.

The questionnaire provided biographical context and identified critical variables impacting the participants' perspectives on their dress-and-music-related youth cultural practices. These variables included the age of participants, the cultural background at the time of their youth, the medium or devices through which music was consumed, prior experience and knowledge of dress and music, levels of involvement in dress and music (in youth and the present), perceptions of femininity and levels of participation in youth culture. The questionnaire also created a space for participants to consider their answers and check dates outside of the interview. The questionnaire provides context to the findings in the thesis, exposing the variables in the participants' pre-understandings, but also enabling the responses to be framed within a wider context and compared across the participant sample (Appendix C).

2.3.4 The Memory Toolkit

Following the pilot interview in which Marian produced original vinyl albums (Fig. 2.1), items of clothing and photographs from her youth, I developed a mixed methods approach that made these cultural artefacts integral to the interview method, embedding them into the research process. The ethnographic wardrobe methods pioneered by Alison Guy and Maura Banim (2000) and Sophie Woodward (2005, 2007),[15] and Jane Davidson and Sandra Garrido's (2014) focus on personal soundtracks were influential.[16] I drew confidence from Sandra Weber and Claudia

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[15] Later expanded by Kate Fletcher and Ingun Grimstad Klepp (2017) in *Opening up the Wardrobe: A Methods Book.* See Track 1.3.

[16] Jane Davidson and Sandra Garrido (2014: 6) have suggested that 'for many of us music offers motivation, structure and meaning.'. They take the adaptationist viewpoint that our relationship with music has evolved over time to fulfill a specific purpose, arguing against cognitive scientist Steven Pinker's controversial view that music is not necessary for life, described by Pinker as merely 'auditory cheesecake' (1997: 534).

Mitchell's positioning of dress (garments *and* photographs of dress) as an 'entry point' for personal narratives (2004: 4), and Nicola Allett's use of music elicitation in interviews to 'gain access' to 'feelings and sensory experiences' (2010: 2). Active engagement with wardrobes and soundtracks was built into the methods design to create an immersive interview experience that used recorded dress and recorded music as conduits to memory.

The research information pack sent to the participants in advance of the interviews asked them to prepare a memory toolkit, a self-edited selection of artefacts to be used in the interview and documented as part of the research process.[17] In her framework for sensory ethnography, Sarah Pink (2015: 79) suggests that researchers ask their participants to 'gather everything they need in order to communicate about the place they occupy in the world'. In this research the memory toolkit provides these communication tools. Participants were instructed that the toolkit should include:

- Clothes or accessories significant to your memories of youth.
- Photographs of you in your youth. Ideally showing an element of clothing. They don't have to be 'good' photographs, amateur snapshots are perfect.
- Albums or specific tracks that are significant to your memories of youth. This might be a physical collection (records or CDs), a digital playlist or simply a written list.
- Any other relevant memorabilia i.e., tickets, magazines, artefacts etc. that have a connection to the clothes you wore and the music your listened to in your youth.

The research information pack suggested a maximum of five garments, five to ten tracks, and five to ten photographs that were significant to each participant's memories of youth. Yet, the content of the toolkits varied considerably (Table 2.2).[18] The toolkits included physical and digital dress snapshots, clothing (actual garments and accessories) and other dress artefacts such as dress patterns or magazines. Music included playlists in the form of written lists, compilations, edited collections, digital

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[17] See Appendix A for the research pack sent to participants.
[18] See Appendices D and E for the wardrobe and soundtrack inventories, for further context see Track 2.4.3.

playlists, and music artefacts such as scrapbooks, gig tickets, and collections of CDs, tapes, and records.

Table 2.2 Memory Toolkit Contents.

WARDROBES	**Dress snapshots (physical)**	Janet, Marian, Mo, Helen, Heather, Kate, Jayne, Linda*, Carole, Olive
	Dress snapshots (digital)	Janet, Mo, Helen, Heather, Kate, Jayne
	Garments and accessories	Marian, Helen, Heather, Kate, Carole
	Magazines, catalogues, books	Helen, Heather, Jayne
	Dress Patterns	Helen, Heather
	Receipts and Tags	Helen, Jayne
SOUNDTRACKS	**Records**	Marian, Helen, Heather, Kate
	Written playlists	Mo, Helen, Jayne, Linda*, Olive
	CDs	Janet, Kate
	Compilations	Janet, Jayne
	Tickets	Heather, Jayne
	Newsletters	Jayne
	Programmes	Heather
	Autographs	Heather
	Press cuttings	Kate
	Equipment	Helen
OTHER	**Scrapbooks**	Heather, Kate, Jayne
	Letters	Helen
	Travel memorabilia	Jayne
	Other youth artefacts	Helen

Photographs or playlists from a public exhibition, not specifically prepared for the toolkit.

Nine participants had prepared toolkits in advance, only Linda did not have a toolkit, as her interview took place at the Reno exhibition in the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. Snapshots Linda referenced in the thesis are from the exhibition, donated by the community.[19] Only four of the participants had surviving items of dress from their youth (Marian, Heather, Kate, Carole). The prioritisation of snapshots was an indicator they were highly valued and deemed irreplaceable by the participants. Only Linda and Carole played no music in the interview, and of those that did, four played original records or CDs (Janet, Marian, Kate, Heather), and four relied on digital streaming services to play their selected tracks (Helen, Mo, Jayne, Olive). Garments, dress snapshots and the music played in the interview were the focus of the discussion however, the inclusion of other dress-and-music-related memorabilia bolstered the experience enriching the content and supporting the narratives. While there was flexibility in the brief, and individual interpretations were welcomed, some participants articulated how they had tried to meet the brief and find items that fitted the research.

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[19] The Reno project had a residency at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester in 2019. See Linda's Sleeve Notes (Track 3.8) for further detail. As part of the exhibition a photo wall was created with donated snapshots taken inside the club (Fig 6.11).

This raised the question as to whether a looser brief or less information about the project in advance may have returned a different selection of artefacts.

The approach to the toolkit and its content varied significantly with each participant. Some had linked dress (snapshots or garments) to music, focusing on key events or taking a chronological approach. Mo and Marian had very orderly toolkits that dictated the order of the interview, whilst Helen and Jayne (Fig. 2.2) both sorted their snapshots chronologically during the interview which guided their narratives.

IMAGE REDACTED
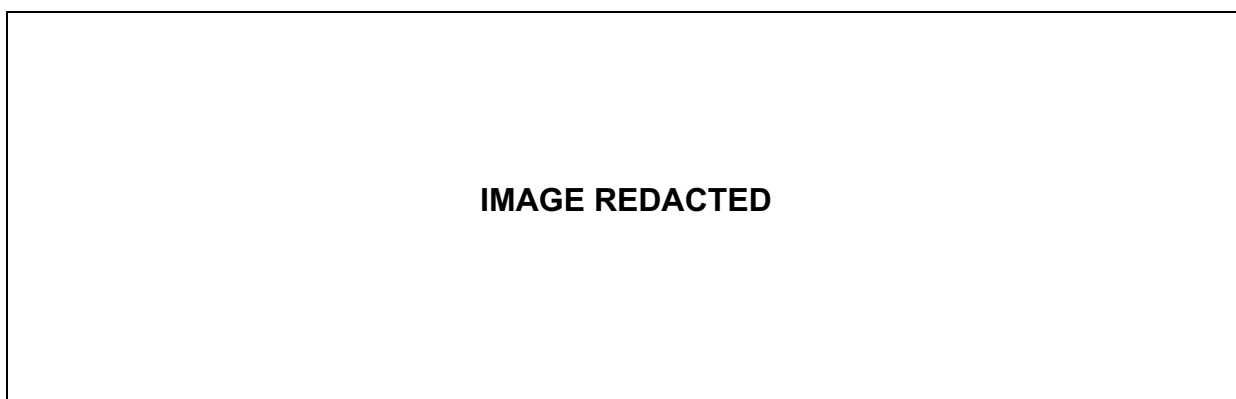
Figure 2.2 Laying out Jayne's snapshots in chronological order.
Original photographs © Jayne. Author's photograph, 2018.

Others set to the task with certain items in mind, selecting photographs of favourite clothes or music tracks they still enjoyed. Some participants had spent a considerable amount of time carefully selecting artefacts and compiling playlists in advance of the interview, others had far larger collections to navigate during the interview and were quite overwhelmed with choice, finding it hard to select items for the toolkit. For example, further editing of Heather's toolkit took place during the interview resulting in a more free-form interview process. Kate relied on her extensive record collection to provide tracks that came to mind during the interview, while Jayne drafted a playlist by hand as she flicked through tracks on a Mixcloud playlist on the PC (Fig. 2.3). Several participants relied on digital technologies during the interview to extend their memory toolkit, using Facebook for photographs (Kate, Jayne, Mo), Spotify (Janet, Mo, Helen) and Mixcloud (Jayne) for music, or used email to send digital photographs or playlists.[20]

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[20] There is not space in this thesis to consider the nuances of analogue versus digital photography, but Nancy Van House provides a good summary (2011). Similarly, the complexity of the interaction between '*analogue*' and '*digital*' technologies is not fully analysed here, but for a critique see Claes Thorén et al. (2019).
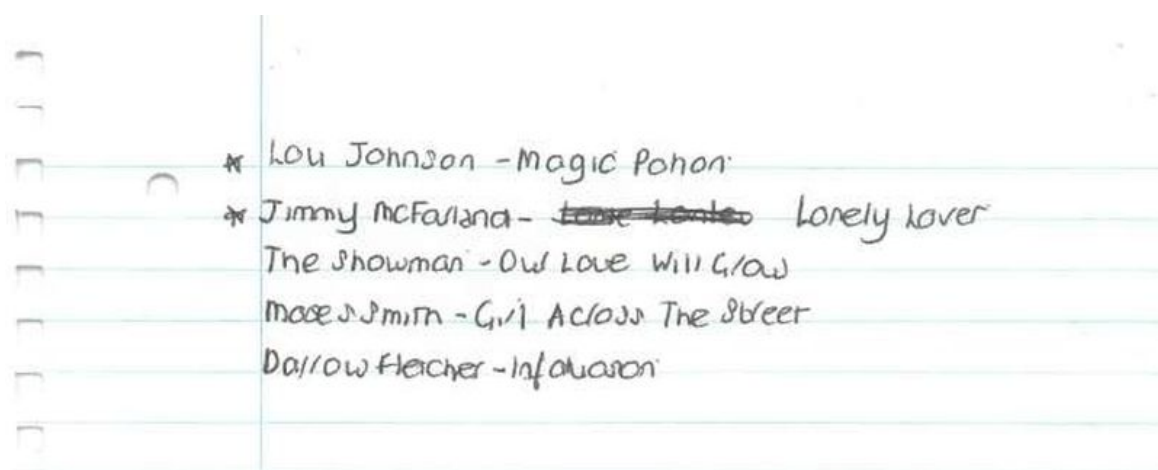
Figure 2.3 Jayne's playlist © Jayne. Scanned by author, 2018.

The physicality of interacting with props or soundtracks was intrinsic to the development of the 'memory toolkit' method, enriching the experience for both the researcher and the participants (including selecting and preparing the items for interview), and supporting the formation of personal narratives.[21] The toolkit enabled a sensory-rich interview environment that was conducive to the personal memories and shared experiences played out in the interviews in the participant's home.

2.3.5 Wardrobe and Soundtrack Interviews

Within academic literature visual and audio cultures are often considered in isolation but Keightley and Pickering challenge this, exploring music and photography as 'parallel forms of perceptual engagement, as are our own eyes and ears' (2006: 150). Connections are made between the capturing and 'recording' of experiences through photography and recorded music, and to this duality of experience past and present. However, Keightley and Pickering did not extend to the material experience of dress evidenced when participants brought actual garments into the interview. A gap in the existing literature is evident where all three components, music, dress, and dress snapshots are considered together in terms of audio, visual, and material sensory experiences. The science behind these sensory interactions is not central to this study but experimental psychologist Charles Spence (2015) has commented that scientific literature also tends to separate out the individual senses, when in fact our senses work together, our experiences being formed of complex combinations of sensory activity.[22] Paul Hodkinson (2012a) noted that how subcultures sound and feel has

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[21] The literature on the material qualities of dress, photographs and music is covered in Track 5.1.

[22] There are examples in scientific memory literature that allude to memory as multisensory (Brewer and Pani 1996; Reber 2013; Rubin 2005) supporting the hypothesis that dress items, dress snapshots and music soundtracks can support memory.

previously been neglected in youth culture literature, focusing his study on subcultural sensory experience. In the experiences of youth culture described in this thesis sight, sound and touch are so closely connected that the boundaries sometimes blur. In the words of the youth culture author and avid indie fan Sam Knee 'the look of music – the visual racket – has always allured me as much as the noise, perhaps even more so' (2015: 9).

The intermediality of physical artefacts, dress snapshots and music became a key concept of this research, traversing theoretical boundaries, and exploring sensory, cultural, or emotional commonalities between disciplines. The use of props within the interviews aligns with 'object interviews' as employed by Woodward (2016), in her ethnographic studies of denim jeans. In a more recent book, *Material Methods*, Woodward relates the importance of orientation in relation to 'things'; she challenges us to think of music as a 'thing' with materiality of the music manifested in the soundwaves that surround us (2020: 12). In this research a material culture approach (alone) was not appropriate, but I applied Woodward's understanding that while an object may trigger the visual or aural senses in the interview, such as a music track or photograph, the effect of the object's materiality cannot be ignored. In this research I use the term 'artefacts' to describe the objects or things used as props in the interview, whatever their material, visual and aural forms.

Woodward privileges the use of material props to provoke rich descriptions in interviews, which has much in common with sensory methodologies defined by Jennifer Mason and Katherine Davies (2009). They describe their process as 'creative interviewing', which includes the use of photo elicitation to create multisensory interviews that deal with the 'visible, audible, touchable', and the intangible of sensory imagination (Mason and Davies 2009: 601). For Mason and Davies 'sensory imagination' worked alongside the tangible sensory experience in their interviews (2009: 1). They advise that care is taken when using photographic props, arguing that photo elicitation or over reliance on 'things' in interviews can sometimes distract from the narratives being told (Mason and Davies 2009: 597). Yet, this research did not generally find such interference from the toolkit artefacts, with dress snapshots proving central to the participant narratives. Although, where snapshots or items of dress were absent, often the memory was still strong, much as music can play in the mind without a material or audio prompt. The findings in this thesis and the concept of the 'memory

wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack' extend beyond the use of physical props in interviews.

The interview methods employed for this study do not fit neatly into a fixed definition. As far as my survey of the literature has revealed, this is the first-time interviews have been designed to integrate interactions with material, audio, and visual props, at least at the same time. And narrative, sensory, or creative interviews, whilst common in social research, have not been widely applied to dress or music, and certainly not in combination. The interview techniques are described in the thesis as multi-sensory interviews recognising the material, audio and visual in the memory toolkit. But as an interview method specific to this research, I have defined them as 'wardrobe and soundtrack interviews'. Returning to the reflexive methodology that frames the approach to the methods and interpretation, Pink has described interviews as 'social, sensorial and affective encounters' (2015: 76), or what James Holstein and Jaber Gubrium have termed 'interpretively active', and central to meaning making for both the participant and researcher (1995: 9). The interview methods in this study aimed to enable reflexive interpretation, to build trust and facilitate participant-researcher interaction within and beyond the interview process. Table 2.3 below reveals how the research process enabled opportunities for reflection during the extended interview period.

Participants began this process of reflection prior to the interview when they responded to the questionnaire and complied the toolkit. This private, personal experience of preparing the toolkit influenced the interviews and was later reflected on in the interview itself. The interview was structured using a series of prompt questions (Appendix B), starting with a reflection on youth, past present and future. This first part of the interview was carried out without the memory toolkit or any props, to focus on the narrative, guided by the prompt questions. In Part 2a the toolkit was introduced. This part of the interview was largely free-form, and whilst I had prompt questions ready, I let the participants lead, engaging in the toolkit in the way that felt natural to them. During the interview I documented the dress artefacts and music memorabilia referred to in the interview, taking notes, photographing clothes and music memorabilia. I also scanned some of the participant photographs. Part 2b involved a series of questions to prompt reflection on the toolkit experience and Part 3 concluded the interview with a series of reflective questions, focusing on the interview experience,

including the preparation. I quickly engaged in the reflective process by writing up field notes post interview. Not long after the interview participants were given opportunity to read and comment on the interview transcripts. Their response is noted in Track 2.5.

Table 2.3 The Reflective Interview Process.

STAGE	FORMAT	PARTICIPANT	RESEARCHER
Preparation Reflection	Questionnaire	Reflects on their participation in youth culture.	Reflects on key variables. Begins to get to know the participants.
Preparation Experience Reflection	Preparation of the toolkit	Reflects on their youth whilst preparing edited toolkit.	Checks whether any support is needed, or technology to play tracks in the interview.
Simultaneous Memory Experience Reflection	**Interview Part 1a** – Identities of youth – past **Interview Part 1b** – Identities of youth – present **Interview Part 1c** – Identities of youth – future	Reflects on their participation in youth culture across time. Re-experiencing the past in the present.	Listens and reflects, directing the narratives back to the temporal structure. Little other intervention, aiming to privilege the participant narratives.
Simultaneous Multi-sensory Memory Experience Reflection	**Interview Part 2a** – The Memory toolkit	Interacts with the toolkit. instinctively working across the material, audio and visual stimuli. Memories and experience working together.	Interacts with the toolkit. aware of my own reaction to the material, audio and visual stimuli. Memories and experience also working together in reaction to any shared cultural references.
Reflection on Experience	**Interview Part 2b** – The memory toolkit experience **Interview Part 3** – Reflections on the remembering process	Reflections on the toolkit process and wider interview process.	Reflections on the toolkit process and wider interview process.
Reflection	Post-interview follow-up.	Re organises the toolkit, perhaps putting items away. Reflection continues.	Reflects on the interview experience. Writing up field notes straight after interview.
Experience Reflection Experience	Transcription	Reading the transcript, re-experiencing, the re-experiencing that took place in the interview. Opportunity to correct or redact.	Creating the transcript. Re-experiencing the interview.

The impact of the interviews on myself and the participants is comparable to Lena Wiklund-Gustin's (2010: 36) statement, 'it is not solely the researcher who leaves the encounter with a narrative on his/her recorder; both the researcher and the participant will leave with a somewhat changed self-understanding'. This understanding requires multiple levels of reflection on the part of the researcher to enable the reflexive

interpretation, as Alvesson and Sköldberg advise 'less concentration on the collection and processing of data and more on the interpretation and reflection' (2018: 324).

2.4 Analytical Bricolage

Memory and experience, through the lens of dress and music, have provided the evidence from which my research findings are formed. The content generated from the wardrobe and soundtrack interviews created a substantial body of evidence for each participant including the questionnaires, live audio recordings, photographs I took of garments or memorabilia in the participants' homes, scans of the participants' photographs, playlists, interview transcripts and my fieldnotes. With over 170,000 words of transcribed interviews, over 100 tracks and around 200 images the analytical process needed to be manageable for the researcher, but also penetrable for the reader. It also needed to respect the privileged access to the personal biographies of the ten women who took part. Adopting Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln's concept of the researcher as a bricoleur (2018: 11), textual analysis, visual analysis (photographs), object analysis (clothes or memorabilia) and audio analysis (music) were considered together in a hybrid approach.[23] As an interpretative bricoleur, I understand my analysis as an interactive process inseparable from personal histories and viewpoints of both me and the participants. The process of analysis was undertaken in a series of formal and informal stages (Table 2.4). This began with the writing up of my fieldnotes, and then transcription as I immersed myself in the interview once more, repeatedly listening to the audio recordings and starting to take notes and formulate ideas in response. Once the transcripts were completed, I collated the questionnaire responses (Appendix C) and drafted the 'wardrobe and soundtrack inventories' (Appendices D and E). These inventories document all the references made to dress and music in relation to youth, for each participant, including photographs I took, and those provided by the participants, quotes, and details of the tracks or albums played and referred to. The inventories, transcripts, notes and audio recordings, formed the data that would then feed into the formal stages of analysis – narrative and thematic analysis. However, this is not to diminish these formative processes, compiling these documents also presented opportunity for reflection, constituting an early stage of the analytical process.

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[23] The concept of bricolage is also adopted in relation to youth culture in Track 4.3.4.

Table 2.4 Stages of Analysis.

Stages of Analysis			
Informal analysis		*Formal analysis*	
1.Fieldnotes >>			
2.Transcription > >		5.Narrative Analysis >>	6.Thematic Analysis
3.Questionnaires > >			
4.Wardrobe and Soundtrack Inventories > >			

2.4.1 Transcription

The reflexive approach extended to the analysis and transcription of the interviews. David Silverman (2017) has been critical of qualitative interview methods that fail in their pursuit of the understanding of experience due to poorly analysed interviews. As Silverman advises, I was careful to keep interview transcripts verbatim, maintaining natural speech patterns, noting any interruptions and pauses and ensuring only 'those identities actually *invoked* by the participants' are included in the narratives (2017: 151 [original emphasis]). This was not an easy task as some participants spoke fast, in unfamiliar regional accents, sometimes with external noise pollution, but I tried to reflect the participant voices without cleaning up the transcripts too much. I set up my own transcription rules to ensure that each transcript was approached in the same way. I redacted secondary names in the interest of anonymity and decided to exclude non-emphatic 'ums' and 'ers', to retain clarity of the participants' core narratives. Where such editing was used, it was to assist coherence; the recordings were otherwise transcribed verbatim, as heard.

2.4.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaires enabled simple statistical analysis and provided a useful benchmark against which the occurrence of some of the themes identified through the narrative or thematic analysis could be cross-examined (Appendix C). It was noticeable however that the data from the interviews and questionnaires sometimes revealed opposing results, even within a single case, so whilst the mixed methods approach sometimes provided potentially reassuring triangulation, it also highlighted how temporal shifts along the research process could provide very different results from a single participant, dependent on the time and manner data is collected.[24]

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[24] For example, Mo defined her youth within a narrow age range on her questionnaire, yet her toolkit and youth story extended far beyond her teenage years. See Track 3.3.

2.4.3 Wardrobe and Soundtrack Inventories

For each participant, the transcripts, audio recordings and the toolkits (recorded as notes, scans and photographs during the interview) were considered in tandem to produce 'wardrobe and soundtrack inventories' (Appendices D and E). These inventories document the narratives of music or dress, whether physical, visual or remembered and the soundtracks that participants drew on in their minds or through digital or analogue technologies during the interview. Although some participants presented extensive toolkits, the inventories only include items that myself or the participant referred to in the interview. These inventories brought the visual, material and audio together with text from the transcripts to support holistic analysis of each participant's evidence for past and present experiences. Adapting Gillian Rose's (2016) model for a critical visual methodology, a series of prompts initiated the analysis of the toolkit artefacts, in terms of production, image (or artefact) itself, its circulation and audiences.[25] While Rose developed this model with the visual image in mind, the same prompts were adapted for all toolkit elements.

2.4.4 Narrative Analysis

The formal stages of analysis began with close reading and listening to the individual interview transcripts and audio recordings, supported by the questionnaire data and inventories. This process was informed by narrative methods (Riessman 2008), followed by thematic analysis to cluster common themes across the cases. The narrative framework as proposed by Catherine Kohler Riessman (2008) describes narrative analysis as a process that keeps the individual narrative of each participant intact. In this research this included visual analysis, layering the narrative elements of the image, sound and text to create multiple meanings for the participants, potential readers, and myself as researcher, as the narratives unfolded. 'Narratives invite us as listeners, readers, and viewers to enter the perspective of the narrator' (Riessman 2008: 9). The style of presentation encouraged by this method of analysis enables the audience to empathise and engage with the narrator through substantial verbatim written texts including descriptive commentary, interspersed with visual imagery and audio context.[26]

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[25] An earlier version (Rose 2001) was also adapted by Catherine Kohler Riessman (2008: 145).
[26] Playlist links are available in the discographies.

In response to Back's criticism that participant voices often lack any sense of character (2017: 17),[27] I approached the written and audio data taking the narrative approach. With the transcripts, audio recordings and the wardrobe and soundtrack inventories by my side, I worked on one participant at a time, in the order that the interviews took place. For each participant, I drafted their 'youth story', as presented in the *Sleeve Notes* chapter. These biographies serve several purposes. Firstly, they address Back's concern, providing an opportunity for the reader to get to know the participants and get a sense of their interview experience and the story they wanted to tell. They also expose the participant-researcher dynamic and the extended interview process. Primarily, however, they were a method of analysis, as they drew out the key narratives and concepts that would inform the subsequent thematic analysis and structure the thesis. Presenting whole, individual 'youth stories' in this way recognises the participants' ownership of the concepts they created, situating them in the context or narrative in which they were formed.

2.4.5 Reflexive Thematic Analysis

The creation of the youth stories, and the identified themes, informed a further interpretive stage of analysis – reflexive thematic analysis. Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke differentiate this from other forms of thematic analysis as 'a disciplined practice of criticality interrogating what we do, how and why we do it, and the impacts and influences of this on our research' (2022: 5). This ensured the reflexive approach was retained, whilst garnering the benefits of thematic analysis. Whilst the narrative analysis had enabled what John Collier and Malcolm Collier (1986: 171) have referred to as a cosmological approach to analysis design – keeping the participant narratives intact and their ideas and concepts distributed in the order and spaces where they emerged; common themes had also emerged and were urging the analytical process towards a comparative model. Hence, the data was revisited one more time. A simple manual coding system was used to identify commonalities, repetition and groupings that formed clusters and sub-themes related to the concepts that surfaced from the wardrobe and soundtrack inventories and extended biographies, but also remaining open to new patterns that were identified as the analysis took place. Thus, the thematic analysis helped identify patterns, structure the thesis, and provide a framework for conceptualising the research findings. This categorisation of the narrative themes

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[27] See Track 2.2 *Listening Methods*.

aligns with what Collier and Collier (1986: 171) have called a typological approach. They used the metaphor of picking up stones on a beach – removing them from where they had naturally settled (as seen in the narrative analysis) – to organise them by size or shape in relation to the other stones. This thesis has benefitted from such disruption, and comparison across the ten participants' experiences has strengthened the arguments presented. However, both approaches were needed, with the open structure of the narrative analysis producing novel, unanticipated findings that privilege the participant's story, whilst also providing direction for more structured thematic analysis, which provided the framework in which those novel ideas and viewpoints could be situated and valued in the broader research context.

2.5 Reflexive Ethics

Invited into participants' homes, amongst their personal possessions, witnessing responses to memories and the construction of often emotional narratives, several ethical implications came into play. I was aware that the use of artefacts in the interview had potential to provoke unexpected – even distressing – memories and emotions (Woodward 2020), particularly when playing soundtracks. While no participants exhibited distress in response to their toolkits in their interview, I was mindful of this potential and left it to participants to control which artefacts they focused on and to what extent. The research required a reflexive approach to ethical practice, attentive beyond usual academic procedures, ensuring consent to participants' representation yet aware of the limitations of informed consent as memories, meaning and circumstances change over time (Riessman 2008). The research information pack contained the required consent forms and participant information sheet (PIS),[28] and these were sent to participants prior to interviews. I took a multiple consent approach, providing options for consent for transcribed text and images and for varied potential uses: thesis, publications, web pages and social media,[29] so that participants could control how their narratives or images were shared in future. However, I sensed that the personal nature of the research required on-going re-negotiation of consent during the research process, or what Sarah Pink called 'staged consent' (2013: 63). Outlining ethical considerations in visual research, Claudia Mitchell (2017) observed that people are in a better position to decide on consent after they have taken part. I offered opportunity to redact images or parts of the transcript from the data set up to the point

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[28] See Appendix A for the information pack and track 2.3.3. for further background on this document.
[29] I later decided to avoid any digital dissemination, see track 2.3.2.

of the thesis submission, in case a participant's perspective or circumstance changed.[30] Although full permissions for the images were forthcoming, I would still seek fresh consent where possible for use of data beyond the thesis, and when drafting a recent book chapter (Jenkinson forthcoming 2023), new permissions were sought.

It was not possible to provide anonymity due to the use of personal photographs, and photographs of styled dress in context were essential to the analysis. Any attempt to universally disguise the participant's identity would have been futile as, even if the face is hidden, in personal snapshots dress can reveal identities to those who know the subjects (Wiles et al. 2011: 696). The participants were aware that they would be identifiable but were given the option to provide a first name of their choice to be used for reference to them in the text. Only one chose a pseudonym, a name she had always liked, but was still happy to provide identifiable personal photographs. No second names are used in the thesis and while references are made to local areas, care was taken to avoid the use of addresses that might support identification. I also redacted the names of others during the transcription process replacing them with [name redacted], or descriptions such as [my husband] where context was needed. While these measures lessened the likelihood of identification of others in the text, the use of personal snapshots required care. Where other people were present in photographs, I offered the option to crop or redact those images. These 'non-consenting others' appear in the thesis when referenced by the participants but are never included as subjects of my analysis (Mannay 2016: 122).

Each participant was sent a copy of any images photographed or scanned during the interview, and a copy of the transcript to ensure they were happy with the data set. Corrections were welcomed, most of which were minor typographical changes. However, one participant requested the removal of large chunks of text. I was naturally willing to respect the consent agreement and do this but reflected on my shortcomings in explaining the transcription process to the participant beforehand. My effort to retain the verbatim voice, was not what every participant expected to read. And this participant, who had been very open and generous in what was an illuminating interview, was uncomfortable with the level of detail in some of her narratives, particularly in relation to conversations that drew in others. This example highlights the

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[30] I received a request to redact two images whilst doing the final minor revisions and although I had full consent these images have been removed. Their setting and place have been retained to ensure minimal changes to the overall layout.

desirability of a reflexive approach to ethical practice and preparedness to adapt in response to each participant's experience of the process, notably considering how participants viewed my transcription and interpretation of their stories, practising what Braun and Clarke refer to as the 'ethics of representation' (2022: 214). Marie Hoskins and Jo-Anne Stoltz have pointed out the difficulties in preserving the 'relational values' of collaborative research without disrupting or misinterpreting participant voice, and of disseminating 'meaningful interpretative findings' (2005: 105). This important ethical consideration was the rationale for foregrounding the youth stories, enabling participants' contributions to be visible and credited. Although the best effort was made to present participants' narratives from their position, there was always a risk of misrepresentation, hence the importance of making visible how conclusions were formed and being clear that the youth stories that follow are my interpretation. I have kept in touch with participants, shared updates and welcomed redactions or changes, acting on the ethical framework but also instinct, as Wiles et al. concluded, 'ethical reflexivity is a matter of awareness and sensitivity' (2011: 703).

Chapter 3. SLEEVE NOTES

As a carefully considered sleeve note can draw in the listener, provide background, and enable a deeper connection with the tracks on a vinyl album, this chapter of sleeve notes engages with the past and present experiences of the ten participants, to create a series of 'youth stories'. These stories represent my initial narrative analysis. 'Stories' in this sense are understood as reflexive sites of 'exchange, dialogue and reflection' as observed by Keri Facer and Kate Pahl in their lexicon of collaborative research practices (2017: 217).

The youth stories in this chapter are each constructed using the same format, mirroring the interview experience, including preparation and follow up conversations. For each participant I draw on the pre-interview questionnaire and Part 1 of the interview, through this the scene is set using contextual information such as the period or place of their youth, their job, family or home environment.[1] Descriptions of key variables, including the importance of clothes and music, levels of consistency, and interest and interaction with dress and music follow, continued into a brief chronological narrative of past, present and future experiences of youth as presented by the participant. Following this, the stories mirror Part 2 of the interview process and the introduction of the memory toolkit. I consider the cultural resources used in the narratives, the toolkit artefacts, any technologies employed to access the soundtracks or images, the contents of the 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack' and how the participant interacted with and adapted the extended interview process.[2] The youth stories conclude with the participants' reflections on the interview process (informed by Part 3 of the interview transcripts) and my reflections on each interview, which I wrote up as fieldnotes directly after each interview.

These youth stories foreground the participant narratives, with little cross comparison, or alignment with existing literature. They are intended to provide a springboard for the thematic analysis that follows, where contextual comparisons form part of the analysis and discussion. Where concepts are introduced in the youth stories, it serves to credit the source (often the participants) and reveal the starting point of the key themes and findings. This methodological innovation reveals the process of creating the youth

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[1] See Appendix B for the guide used for interview structure and prompt questions.
[2] See Track 1.3.8 for a brief introduction to the terms 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack' and chapter 5 for discussion.

stories, and ensures that the participants' research credits are foregrounded, rather than erased. The youth stories that follow, presented in the order in which the interviews took place, were collaboratively crafted, edited by me, but belong to Janet, Marian, Mo, Helen, Heather, Kate, Jayne, Linda, Carole and Olive.

3.1 Janet (2018)

Figure 3.1 Janet aged 12/13, Manchester, c. 1975 © Janet.
Figure 3.2 Janet, The Jam Exhibition, Somerset House, London, 2015 © Janet.

At the time of interview Janet was 53, married with two children and working as a teaching assistant. The family includes a cat (who dropped into the interview). Janet's husband, whom she met at university, has played guitar and performed vocals in his New Wave Rock band since the late 1980s, and co-hosts an independent music programme on a local radio station. The interview took place in the front room of their red brick terraced house, in a Manchester suburb. A comfortable space with sofas, dark green walls, and wall mounted shelving holding books, music, tapes and CDs and a stereo (including turntable, CD and cassette deck). Postcards and other memorabilia were displayed on the mantlepiece. Janet situated her youth from aged 14 to 24 (1979 - 1989). She lived in Manchester during this time and was active in the mod, punk and indie scenes, an involvement that endures. Both clothes and music were important to

her in her youth and remain so, and she noted little adjustment in her style or musical preferences. In her youth Janet listened to music on the radio, records, and CDs; she still plays records and CDs but also uses Spotify and YouTube to stream music. Janet usually listens to music on her phone, while she is doing other things or on the bus, rather than sitting down to listen to an album or compilation.

The interview began with a question about the role of clothes in Janet's youth. She identified a 'Perry' phase, wearing stripy T-shirts, a 'Perry belt' and jeans towards the end of secondary school.[3] She recalled looking and feeling great wearing these clothes, and unprompted, connected this style of dress with the bands: The Jam and Squeeze. Janet did not conform to societal feminine ideals, describing in detail the androgynous mod style she adopted in her youth. Reflecting on what influenced her choice of dress and music during her youth Janet mentioned her parents, an older cousin, peers at university and her husband. Janet relayed a story about her Fidelity record player and visiting record shops with her father when she was young triggering memories of listening to Donny Osmond and Queen.[4] Later, she cited the impact of DJ John Peel on her music tastes.[5] Janet reflected on how she moved away from fashion and music for a while when she became interested in horses. But when she started University and met her husband, her interest in music returned, and this is the period that Janet reflected upon most in her interview. Music became a central preoccupation revolving around her husband's band, attending gigs, and learning to play the guitar – interests sustained to the present day.

When asked if there was a time or event that marked the end of her youth Janet described a 'pause' while her children were young, and she had less opportunity to engage in music or style cultures. This was reinforced by gaps in the photo albums identified later in the interview.[6] While Janet briefly pondered whether motherhood or buying the family home may have marked the end of her youth, she then revealed how her youth has since been re-ignited, as she has become more involved with her

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[3] Fred Perry is a sports brand founded in 1952 whose knitted cotton polo shirts with striped collar tips have been adopted by subcultures including mods and skinheads. Fred Perry (2022) 'Community' [online]. Available at: https://www.fredperry.com/community-our-company. Accessed 6 August 2022]. Janet described her 'Perry' belt as a woven webbing belt with a sliding buckle that allows the excess belt to fall free. Inspired by similar military designs and made popular as a fashion item in the early 1980s, usually worn with denim jeans.
[4] Fidelity produced a range of radios and record players between 1947 and 1974. Radio Museum (no date) 'Fidelity Radio Ltd; London' [online]. Available at: https://www.radiomuseum.org/dsp_hersteller_detail.cfm?company_id=6918. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[5] John Peel had a BBC radio show from 1967 until his death in 2004. Peel is widely credited with championing unknown, alternative musicians, many of whom featured in his 'Peel sessions', BBC (no date) 'Keeping it Peel' [online]. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/johnpeel. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[6] See Track *5.3.3* for analysis of how Janet fills these gaps in her memory wardrobe.

husband's band, and that she felt younger now than when her children were born. Janet was determined to stay true to herself, admitting a fear of becoming 'frumpy'. When asked how she imagined herself in future, she hoped she would not change and was comfortable with who she was, contrasting her consistency of style to her sister whose dress had become more formal as she matured. Janet articulated a slight anxiety about 'what a grandmother should look like – how a grandmother should behave', using Dr. Martens boots as a barometer, questioning 'how long can you get away with wearing Dr. Martens boots? I think that's it. How long can I get away with wearing Dr. Martens boots?' (Janet 2018).[7]

Janet reflects on her youth in everyday life, reminiscing with her husband and a work colleague who share similar music interests, using social media to share photographs (Facebook) and sharing music clips (YouTube). Asked if any unplanned encounters with music or dress had resulted in a distinct memory of youth, Janet vividly recalled finding a black tunic dress in her wardrobe that brought back a memory of her first date with her husband – a gig at the polytechnic, 'and the music comes flashing back as well for that. And I can see us dancing' (Janet 2018).[8] Janet was visibly emotional at this point in the interview.

3.1.1 Janet's Toolkit

Janet included music related artefacts in her memory toolkit (CDs, records and cassette tapes). She had not kept any clothes from her youth, although she referred to specific garments from her memory wardrobe, usually describing them in detail. 'I can see myself wearing the Perry belt dangling down the jeans and stripy T-shirt, and I can see me in the shirt and the mod tie' (Janet 2018).[9] There was a notable focus on accessories, several hats were mentioned; and Dr. Martens boots and sunglasses were central to the discussion. She also referenced changing hair styles as significant markers of growing up. Janet drew heavily on the photographs she selected for her toolkit, sometimes adopting images of others for her memory wardrobe, for example when talking about her mod tie and shirt, she referred to a photograph of her husband wearing similar clothes.[10] She had several photograph albums which she flicked

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[7] Dr. Martens is an Iconic British work boot brand, founded 1901, adopted by subcultures including punks and Skinheads. *Dr. Martens* (2022) 'The Beginnings of an Icon' [online]. Available at: https://www.drmartens.com/uk/en_gb/history. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[8] See Track 5.3.2 for analysis of this experience in relation to imaginative remembering.
[9] See Jayne in Figure 3.31 (Track 3.7) wearing an example of a 'mod tie'.
[10] See Track 5.3.5 for analysis of this 'borrowing' of styled dress that took place in the participant interviews.

through pulling out various snapshots as we talked; these albums, like much of Janet's narrative, were not presented chronologically. Janet enjoyed looking at the photographs of her friends and family but had fewer images of herself, particularly between 14 and 18, where clothes were 'worn out or gone' (Janet 2018), or photographs of her in those clothes did not exist.

Figure 3.3 Janet in Liverpool / on a ferry to France, date unknown © Janet.
Figure 3.4 Janet at home with Fenton Weill guitar, Manchester, c. 1995/6 © Janet.

When Janet referred to Figure 3.3, she stated it was taken in Liverpool yet some months later, when we met on her husband's radio show,[11] he corrected that it was taken on a ferry to France.[12] In relation to Figure 3.4 Janet described the sunglasses and pink silky trousers, she also sent this image in advance of the interview where she explained she was pregnant at the time and linked it to the memory track 'Dizzy' by Throwing Muses (1989).[13] Later in the radio show she related this same image to 'Echo Beach' by Martha and the Muffins (1980).[14] Likewise, in the interview, a snapshot taken

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[11] Several months after the interview I was a guest on Janet's husband's radio show 'Psonic Psunday' (*ALL FM 96.9* 2018), talking to Janet about her toolkit photographs and playing related tracks, also sharing my own memory tracks.

[12] This ambiguity is not important in the context of this research where facts and accuracy were not important to the participants or the focus of the research (see Track 5.4 *Forgiving Forgetting*).

[13] Throwing Muses (1989) 'Dizzy', UK: 4AD.

[14] Martha and the Muffins (1980) 'Echo Beach', UK: Dindisc.

in Portmeirion, Wales,[15] reminded Janet of the soundtrack to *The Prisoner,*[16] yet in the radio show she related the image to the musician Elvis Costello, explaining that when she looks at the images on separate occasions different soundtracks come to mind. Janet's reflection indicates the integrity of her responses, and her straightforward account of conflicting mnemonic experiences, temporal ambiguity and multiple memory triggers. For Janet, articulating a precise and chronologically accurate account was inconsequential as she immersed herself in the creative practice of remembering.

Janet referred to numerous tracks and artists during the interview. When asked about key tracks from her youth, she referred to a CD compilation she made for her 40th birthday,[17] signalling her favourites and recounting where she saw various artists perform live. Janet often referenced the lyrics and meanings of a song and demonstrated a deep and authentic appreciation of the bands and artists. When prompted to play her memory tracks Janet struggled to work the CD player but her son helped, and we played 'Reptile Smile' by Th' Faith Healers from the CD on her laptop.[18] Asked what year the track was released, Janet suggested 1982/83 only to be corrected by her son, it was released in 1992. The track reminded Janet of moving to university, yet she had finished her studies by 1992, again indicating that precise chronologies are not important in Janet's self-conception.

We were surrounded by memorabilia in the living room – books, posters, magazines, tickets, postcards – yet none were included in the toolkit. When I asked why she keeps this music memorabilia and the photograph albums, Janet explained that she enjoys having them around her and that it keeps her young, but much of it is also 'stuffed in drawers somewhere' or 'in boxes under the bed' (Janet 2018).

3.1.2 Janet's Reflections

> Me and my husband talk about [our youth] all the time. Because we have lived it in some ways, because we met quite young. But, yeah, then we always talk about what we listened to, and we've got photographs of what he looked like and what I looked like, and we

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[15] See Figure 6.1, at the start of chapter 6 for the snapshot of Janet.

[16] The Ron Grainer Orchestra (1986) *The Prisoner: Original Soundtrack Music from The TV Series,* UK: Bam-Caruso Records. *The Prisoner* was a British science fiction television series that first aired in 1967. Filmed at Portmeirion, Wales. *IMDB* (2022) 'The Prisoner' [online]. Available at: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0061287. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

[17] See Figure 6.10 for a photograph of the CD, showing the tracklist.

[18] Th' Faith Healers (2005), 'Reptile Smile' Track 3 on *Peel Sessions*, UK: Ba Da Bing. Originally released 1992 on *Lido,* UK: Too Pure.

were both looking through it the other night and we were like, 'Right,
okay. Yes. Not changed all that much' [laughs] (Janet 2018).

Reflecting on the interview experience Janet described feeling happy as she listened
to the music, and she had deliberately chosen music and photographs associated with
positive memories. The reflection triggered a further memory of a Suzi Quatro gig she
attended with her sister, which she recalled in vivid detail. This ability to vividly recall
her experiences of youth extended to a physical, sensory memory of the gigs she went
to in her youth, described as feeling hot and sticky, busy and noisy, and smelling of
beer.[19] Reflecting on the interview led Janet to conclude that her youth still lives with
her: 'I find it difficult to separate, now, I think, my youth from now… I'm not sure if I've
ever stopped being young or being part of a youth culture' (Janet 2018). Janet credits
this to her interest in music. She refused to be nostalgic, and her memory tracks were
emphatically experienced in the moment rather than as a conduit to memory. There
was considerable blurring between past, present, and future and it was not clear where
youth started or ended for Janet. This temporal fluidity held emotional meaning for
Janet as she reflected on how she does not plan to change as she ages.

3.1.3 Author's Reflections

I first met Janet when I handed her a flyer outside a Sonics gig at the Ritz in
Manchester, inviting her to take part in this research.[20] This shared experience, along
with our similar age and music tastes, enabled a natural flow of conversation. We had
further contact prior to the interview and Janet sent me five photographs, some of
which were referenced in the interview; for each she had provided a soundtrack and a
short text describing that moment in time. I regretted not printing these snapshots out
as prompts, as not all were presented again in the interview.[21]

As it was the first interview, I was grateful for Janet's total immersion in the process.
During the interview, listening to 'Reptile Smile', I continued to prompt and ask
questions while the track played. Janet asked if she could just listen to it, although I
still could not resist asking questions, uncomfortable with the 'silence' just listening to

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[19] See 5.3.3 for the full quote from Janet.
[20] The Ritz is a grade 2 listed Manchester music venue, with a sprung dancefloor, built in 1927 and still in use
today. Brown, B. (2022) 'Building Secrets: The Ritz', *Manchester's Finest* [online]. Available at:
https://www.manchestersfinest.com/articles/building-secrets-ritz. [Accessed 6 August 22]. The Sonics are an
American garage rock band that was formed in the 1960s and continue to perform today, although only one of
original band members, Rob Lind, is still touring with the band. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'The Sonics' [online]. Available
at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sonics. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[21] Janet sent Figure 3.1 by email in advance of the interview, but it was not referenced in the interview.

the music created. Janet explained that listening to this track, she did not feel like she was reminiscing, but was enjoying it in the moment. For me, this was an important observation but also a reminder of the importance of allowing space for the participant to experience the toolkit in the moment.

During the interview, listening to 'Echo Beach' also triggered a vivid youth memory for me of driving my blue Morris Minor to sixth form college with my friend Carole. Later, as I listened back to the interview, an emotive memory chain sparked by Janet's recall of her black tunic dress sparked a recollection for me of meeting an old boyfriend at the same venue, at the same polytechnic, whilst dancing to Dinosaur Junior's 'Freak Scene',[22] wearing a brown long-sleeved T-shirt, black oxford bag trousers and Palladium shoes.[23] This shared understanding of place and time nuanced the researcher/participant relationship, shaping the interview and the analysis of the data. We met again afterwards for a special edition of her husband's radio show, during which we interviewed each other using photographs and selected tracks from our youth (*ALL FM 96.9* 2018).

This was the first interview of the series of ten. It manifested how the continuum of youth can override any logical understanding of time. Janet revealed the ambiguity of youth and the role of imagination in mnemonic encounters. Her proposal that youth lives with us became a hypothesis I took forward into the other interviews, and adopted as one of the key concepts, and chapters, in this thesis.

3.2 Marian (2018)

The interview took place over several hours in the front room of Marian's semi-detached home in a Stockport suburb. We sat at a table, next to the stereo, which was housed in a wooden cabinet. Her husband of over 50 years, was working on a research project upstairs.[24] For Marian, the window of youth was quite short (14 - 18 years old), yet she had kept photographs, garments and music from that period, which she described as her 'youth in a suitcase' (Marian 2018). Marian grew up in Salford and had left school and started working by 15, when her 'own personal life began' (Marian 2018). She married four years later and started her family shortly afterwards. From

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[22] Dinosaur Junior (1988) 'Freak Scene', UK: Blast First.
[23] Palladium (2022) 'Pampa Oxford Originale' [online]. Available at: https://palladiumboots.co.uk/products/75331-060-m. [Accessed 17 September 2022].
[24] Marian's husband had recently graduated with a history degree from Manchester Metropolitan University.

1954 until 1960 Marian actively participated in youth culture, frequented dancehalls in Manchester and enjoyed jiving and rock and roll music, which she still listens to.[25]

Figure 3.5 Marian aged 14, Buile Hill Park, Salford, 1956 © Marian.
Figure 3.6 Marian aged 18, Lyme Park, Disley, 1960 © Marian.

While Marian has retained her music tastes, in her pre-interview questionnaire she recorded that the way she dresses has changed. However, she described the current style of dress she and her friends adopt as 'fairly up-beat, and quite modern' (Marian 2018), compared to their parents' dress at the same age. Marian acknowledged conforming to societal expectations, describing her approach to dress as typically feminine: 'I wasn't into the teddy girl look, I preferred the flowing skirts, and the stiletto heels' (Marian 2018).[26] Marian was not easily influenced by others but gave examples of teachers and friends she looked up to in the past. Her friends were especially important to her, and she was still in regular contact with friends from school, sometimes using social media (Facebook) to stay connected. She enjoyed reminiscing and remembered her youth as a positive time. Her consistent music tastes and

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[25] Referring to music she has on CD, which she keeps downstairs, rather than the original vinyl which is no longer kept on view.
[26] See 4.3.4 for the full quote and context around perceptions of femininity.

friendships were woven into her narrative as she reflected on the peak experiences of her youth.[27]

Marian's narrative was rich with examples and cultural context. She remembered her clothes in detail, where they were bought, when and by whom, and there was a sense that they were precious at the time, and remained important, and carefully preserved, in the memory wardrobe. Her mother bought her clothes until she started work, often with vouchers at key points in the year such as the Whit weekend.[28]

> When I was younger, you could only [pause], you only had things like Whit Week, and Christmas time, you know, got new clothes. And that was like up until I left school, to be honest, when I was fifteen, yeah, so that would have been 1957. Before that, my mother used to go to a place called Washingtons, in Manchester. She used to have a voucher, and she used to get your Whit Week clothes. In fact, that jacket that's in there is from there, as well. And then something at Christmas, and that was it. Everything else was second hand (Marian 2018).

Marian referenced the financial restraints on her and her family in those years and made comparisons to friends admired for their enviable lifestyles: 'I have got another one of her in a different dress but hers were all quite sparkly because they had a bit of money, you see' (Marian 2018). Marian also described restricted access to music in her home, visiting a friend's house whose parents let them listen to music in the front room.[29] Marian's narrative charted the rise of rock and roll explaining how she moved venue, from the Lyndale to the Plaza and the Ritz as the music swiftly changed from ballroom to rock and roll.[30] These places had special meaning for Marian 'that really just gave me a buzz every time, and even today, Manchester still gives me that buzz… I suppose it's because you recall your youth then' (Marian 2018). Marian's narrative placed her as a protagonist in youth culture at the time, influenced by fashion, buying her own records and dancing as much as possible. Marian kept pace with trends and her and a friend were 'the first two in the plaza to wear short skirts' (Marian 2018). Marian described the impact of her youth on who she has become and felt proud of

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[27] See Tracks 5.3.5 and 5.6 for analysis of 'peak experiences' (Green 2021).

[28] Whitsuntide is a holiday observed by Christians in the UK. In 1940s and 1950s it was primary point where people got new clothes and enjoyed showing them off at the whit walks, or parades (Slater 2011).

[29] See Track 4.3.5 *Sites of Youth* for a quote from Marion and further discussion.

[30] The Lyndale was a dancehall in Eccles, Manchester, UK, open during the 1950s and 1960s above the Burtons store the building is currently in use as a snooker hall. Edge, M. (2007) 'Lyndale Eccles', *The Francis Frith Collection* [online]. Available at: https://www.francisfrith.com/uk/eccles/lyndale-eccles_memory-14721. [Accessed 6 August 14]. The Plaza ballroom in Manchester, UK was popular in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Manchester Beat (2022) 'The Plaza Ballroom' [online]. Available at: https://www.manchesterbeat.com/venues/venues-manchester-cbd/the-plaza-ballroom. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

what she has achieved. Her kept items held immense value for Marian and in her narrative Marian described how these, her close friendships, and memories for place impact on her ability to recall memories and re-visit the past.

3.2.1 Marian's Toolkit

One of the few participants who had kept photographs, original garments, and music artefacts (with the technology to still play them), Marian had a substantial multi-sensory toolkit to draw on and demonstrated high emotional engagement in the process. Even before the toolkit was introduced in the interview, she described how musical tracks link with key life events. Yet Marian spoke as much about what was missing as about what she had kept and had a full memory wardrobe and rich memory soundtrack to hand. She had carefully curated the toolkit and we started the interview with a mostly chronological look through her photographs. Using these as a guide Marian recalled the stories behind the snapshots and commented on the outfits. There was a lot of laughter and amused self-criticism as she looked back on earlier dress snapshots such as Figure 3.5, 'I thought I was wonderful, but I mean, when you see it now, it's, "what a sight! What mother would let you out like that?"' (Marian 2018).[31]

The two-dimensional images were brought alive by descriptive references to active participation such as dancing, the places frequented and their atmosphere, weaving in memory tracks and specific remembered garments and how it felt to wear them. Marian added colour to the black and white photographs and accessorised the outfits depicted with missing details such as the white gloves worn with an evening dress.[32] She dated the images and remembered events, people, and places with remarkable clarity, and rarely questioned the accuracy of her memories. Marian often took on the role of historian and enjoyed dating and placing her experiences in a broader context. She acknowledged she is sentimental and kept relevant newspaper cuttings alongside her memorabilia, which enabled this accurate depiction of the social and cultural environment as she talked through her memories of youth. Many of those memories linked the photographs with key events such as Christmas parties or dates with her husband (Fig. 3.7). 'These were taken at Belle Vue. They had a big, the Elizabethan,

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[31] See 5.3.1 *Mnemonic Time Travel* for further examples from Marian.
[32] See Track 5.3.2 for more examples of this imaginative colouring of black and white photographs.

the Elizabethan ballroom it was wasn't it. Yes, that was the Christmas party from Coopers' (Marian 2018).[33]

Figure 3.7 Marian (left), aged 16, and friend, Belle Vue, Manchester, 1958 © Marian.

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[33] Belle Vue was an amusement park in operation between 1936-1982 in Manchester, UK. The New Elizabethan Ballroom at Belle Vue opened in the early 1960s. Williams, J. (2014) 'The Way We Were: Belle Vue - Showground of the world', *Manchester Evening News*, 5 Nov [online]. Available at: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/nostalgia/way-were-belle-vue---1209695. [Accessed 15 July 2022].

Having looked at the photographs, Marian took me through the vinyl records she had selected, and they played in the background as she narrated her memory soundtracks, including some original pressings, re-issued albums and more recent compilations, interspersed with the memory tracks triggered by the narrative.[34] These soundtracks evoked memories of people, places, films, events, and associated music tracks some of which Marian sang along to. Trying to recall the exact name of a Paul Anka track,[35] the physical act of singing corrected Marian's memory instantly.

> It was Diane, it was called Diane. Was it called Diane? [questions herself] I just can't bring the tune to mind, no, and it was a massive hit in '57/'58…
>
> I think he was only about 14 or 15 when he made it. He was, sort of, a child star at the time. I know he was only very young, and he was Canadian. Oh god, [sings] "You're so young and I'm so old. This my darling I've been told. I don't care just what they say, something. Oh, please stay by me Diana". That was it (Marian 2018).

When she played the first record her husband bought her, a 7" vinyl recording of 'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes',[36] Marian vividly recalled an image of going into Manchester on the number 89 bus, carrying a bag from her memory wardrobe. Looking back on that time in her life, her engagement, and her trips into Manchester to go dancing triggered an emotional reflection on the temporality of youth. At this point Marian brought in the final parts of her toolkit – a Windsmoor jacket from the late 1950s (Fig. 3.8) and a 1960s skirt suit. Marian tried on the treasured Windsmoor jacket she had kept in the loft for 60 years,[37] explaining that she lends them out as fancy dress/costume to members of the family, but it was clear the main reason they are kept is her nostalgic attachment to them.

3.2.2 Marian's Reflections

The reflective process with the toolkit was emotional for Marian, especially remembering people and friendships, but she enjoyed the experience and it had brought back things she had forgotten:

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[34] Figure 2.1, at the start of chapter 2 depicts a selection of Marian's original records.
[35] Paul Anka (1957) 'Diana', UK: Columbia.
[36] The Platters (1958) Smoke Gets in Your Eyes', UK: Mercury.
[37] The term 'treasured' is understood as the emotional connection and physical investment in clothing as defined by Sophie Wood (2019).

Especially that suit, when the photograph that I had, you know, of my friend and I, that was quite, what can I say with that? It was, sort of, the moment there, you know, I was, sort of, in that moment there with her…I think if you hadn't have been here and I just brought it out of the wardrobe, I don't think it would have been so emotional. But I think with everything put together it, sort of, brought back everything, you know (Marian 2018).[38]

Figure 3.8 Marian's Windsmoor suit jacket, late 1950s. Author's photograph, 2018.

The effort Marian had put into preparing the toolkit, impacted positively on the experience for both of us, as it provided a structure to the narrative and enabled a rich, unstilted dialogue. After the interview Marian reflected on her youth and how quickly she grew up, drifting back into memories of the music of the time. When asked about how and why she stores the toolkit items she made herself a promise to get the photographs out of boxes and into albums. Marian confirmed that the interview was an

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[38] Marian is referring here to Figure 5.10 in Track 5.3.3 which depicts her wearing the suit in a friend's garden.

accurate snapshot of her youth: 'everything's here which is me. You know. It's my life. As it was' (Marian 2018).

3.2.3 Author's Reflections

I had interviewed Marian and her husband two years earlier, prior to the start of this research, having met them at an event her husband took part in (Being Human Festival 2014). In that interview Marian produced original garments and vinyl records, unprompted, inspiring me to develop the memory toolkit as a method and refocusing my interest on everyday rather than spectacular youth culture. In this earlier interview, where I focused on local histories and cultures of youth, Marian and I had gained a shared understanding, based on living within a few miles of each other. The second interview was very relaxed, and Marian opened-up about her personal life. She had prepared her toolkit chronologically, tailoring her toolkit to what she thought I might be interested in, and made it easy for me, maintaining a logical order throughout the interview. I found Marian's interview very enjoyable, and the sensory elements of the toolkit were especially impactful. I expected more from the interaction with the original garments, but it was the combination of photographs and music that had the most impact on myself and Marian. The music played on the original vinyl format, and the quality and warmth of sound, filled the room with emotion and created a special atmosphere. It was a privilege to share the experience with Marian and writing up her narrative enabled me to feel close again to that experience, and the ideas that formed during the extended interview process. The interview provided some key concepts borrowed for this thesis including Marian's term 'youth in a suitcase' and her notion of her 'personal life' beginning as she transitioned towards her independence at the age of 15.[39]

3.3 Mo (2018)

At the time of interview Mo lived in a rural town in West Yorkshire; originally from Carlisle, she had moved to be nearer her family, but planned to move to Portugal. The interview took place in her cosy living room, at a table, by a window with a view overlooking the valley. Mo married and divorced early and had two grown up children and two grandchildren. In the pre-interview questionnaire, Mo defined her youth as

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[39] See Track 4.2 for further reference to this example in the context of parameters of youth and a quote from Marian (2018) referencing her 'personal life'.

between 14 and 18 years, when she had her first child. Yet her interview told a different story as Mo described her continued participation in music culture. The photographs she shared also suggested a longer period of youthfulness, depicting her between 16 and 52 years of age.

Mo considered clothes and music to have been important throughout her life. She was particularly knowledgeable about music from her youth, and contemporary artists she had discovered through her love of live music. Not one to conform to societal expectations, Mo felt she still participated in youth culture which she attributed to her consistent music tastes and her determination to enjoy life in the moment. However, she felt her approach to dress had changed over time, although she did not intend to fit in with societal expectations of a woman of her age and had nurtured friends and relationships with people of different ages. These relationships influenced her music tastes as her friends and her husband had when she was younger. Although she replicated popular styles in her youth, Mo was no longer influenced by other people's style of dress. She described herself as nostalgic and enjoyed reminiscing, focusing on positive memories of her youth, yet acknowledged that some music triggered memories of tough times. In her early 60s at the time of the interview, Mo had embraced modern technologies using Spotify and YouTube to listen to music but continued to foreground live music experiences.

The interview questions led the session and focused on dress and music. Mo gave full, descriptive responses, paying attention to events, places, and relationships, with less emphasis on her dress and music practices.[40] Mo commented on the societal change between the 1950s when she was born, and the 1970s when she had more access to music and clothes; describing her strict upbringing and her rebellious response to the constraints imposed by her parents and her school. While living at home, she mostly received new clothes for birthdays or Christmas or borrowed them from family members. Mo illustrated this with a story about borrowing a dress from her grandmother for her first disco. This focus on peak events was also illustrated by her reflection on buying her first album with the wage from her first Saturday job.[41]

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[40] The role of dress and music as conduit to the memories of youth in the interviews, rather than being the subject, is evidenced here.
[41] In Mo's interview she referenced the band The Kinks but didn't specify which album she bought.

Mo came across as resilient and independent but with a good friend network that she credited with supporting her when her second husband died. As Mo told her story there were many references to music experiences shared with friends and family, both in the home and at events but fewer about her own private experiences. These memories spanned her youth and more recent experience, and Mo was adept at weaving her past and present experience together with music providing the common thread. In her narrative she acknowledged this temporal overlap, recognising the cross-generational, shared experience she enjoyed when listening to music with her children or younger friends, and the subcultural capital this gives her.[42] In Mo's narrative many of her memories extended beyond her self-defined period of youth. However, the influence of her early years was part of who she had become and how she chose to live her life, 'if you class 22 as still your youth, which I suppose it could be, then yeah, that's what happened to me, then is what made me the strong person I am now' (Mo 2018). Mo's narrative suggested music was integral to her sense of self and gave access to her memories of youth and she explained that she planned to keep 'adding to [her] musical repertoire' in future (Mo 2018).

3.3.1 Mo's Toolkit

> Well, I pulled loads out and then I thought, 'Right, if I try and do it chronologically and sort of, per era if you like, because different eras was totally different music and I thought that would work. So, that's the basis on which I did it and then I just edited and got it down to my favourites (Mo 2018).

Mo had taken ownership of the toolkit process and decided to approach it as a chronological account across several decades. She laid out six photographs on the table and had drafted a list (Figs. 3.9 and 3.10), linking memory tracks to each photograph, with dates, and her age at the time. She played these, in the order of her list, on Spotify, on the PC that sat on the desk behind us.

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[42] Using Sarah Thornton's term (1995), see 1.3.7 for context, and 6.3.2 for a quote from Mo on this theme (2019).
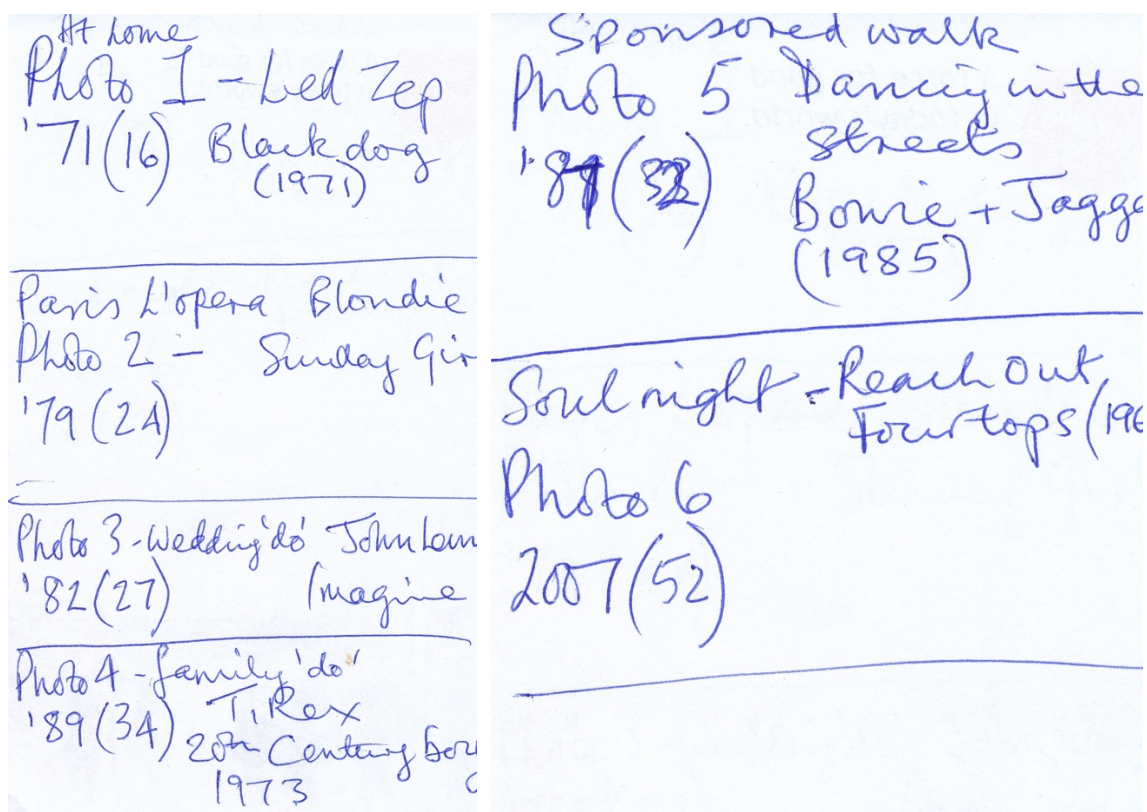
Figure 3.9 and 3.10 Mo's memory toolkit playlist © Mo. Scanned by author, 2018.

The toolkit snapshots were original prints she had kept in a box, but later in the interview Mo also shared some recent digital pictures on her computer. While some insightful references to dress were made, clothes were not always prominent, either in the photographs, or in the descriptions of the photographs. Where specific garments or outfits did feature in the memory wardrobe they did not link to the selected photographs. Mo had selected snapshots that primarily represented music memories rather than memories of dress. Although there were several references to hair or generic clothing choices, such as her preference for wearing black due to its versatility.

Music references were remembered in detail and Mo had instinctively matched tracks to photographs, apart from one (Fig. 3.11), for which she ignored the track that came to mind and assigned another track to the image that had a more positive association for her.[43] 'When I saw the photographs, tracks immediately came to mind… one of the tracks as well was 'Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue',[44] but I didn't like it, so I didn't choose it' (Mo 2018). This editing of her memory soundtrack gave Mo creative control of how she wanted to reflect on her youth; demonstrating how the spontaneous musical

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[43] Blondie (1978) 'Sunday Girl', UK: Chrysalis.
[44] Crystal Gayle (1977) 'Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue', UK: United Artists Records.

earworms or other sensory memory chains described in the interviews can be disrupted and 're-mixed' in the creative mnemonic process.[45]

Figure 3.11 Mo aged 24 on holiday in Paris, 1979 © Mo.

Mo gave the impression that she still felt youthful in the present but explained how her youth stopped short after an early divorce at 22. Only one of the photographs selected for her toolkit was from her youth as defined in her questionnaire response. However, the images that Mo selected, while not always depicting her 'youth', did act as a conduit to memories of those years, via the associated soundtrack. Mo linked the image (Fig. 3.13), taken at a Soul night in 2007, to the track 'Reach Out – I'll be There' by the Four Tops.[46] When the track was played it then reminded her of a bottle green leather coat from her youth. Mo's interaction with the photographs and the soundtracks demonstrated the complex, temporal shifting of personal soundtracks, as the original memory of listening to a track was later referenced as 'music of a time and place' years after its release date. Mo mostly selected snapshots of social events for her toolkit, where there was music present, echoing her tendency to reflect on shared

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[45] See Tracks 5.3.3 and 6.2 for further context on this over-writing of spontaneous memory.
[46] Four Tops (1966) 'Reach Out, I'll be There', UK: Tamla Motown.

experiences. 'I think the photographs elicit the memories of the music, if that makes sense, because I've chosen, mainly, photographs in social event situations so there was music all happening there' (Mo 2018).

Figure 3.12 Mo, aged 27, at a family wedding, 1982 © Mo.
Figure 3.13 Mo at a soul night, aged 52, 2007 © Mo.

3.3.2 Mo's Reflections

Mo had enjoyed preparing the toolkit prior to the interview and found it an emotional experience, especially when looking at photographs that triggered negative memories. She had specifically chosen images and music tracks that reminded her of good times for her toolkit, although these also made her emotional.

> I did have a bit of a cry when I was pulling them out, at some that weren't so positive. And even though [some of] the images were of positive things happening it was like a nostalgic, oh God, it's gone, kind of crying. Crying because of the good times if you like (Mo 2018).

Mo had not looked at her photographs for a long time; she reflected on how they were amongst a few irreplaceable possessions that had survived a flood and a fire:

> The photographs have survived because I always have those in a really safe place because to me the photos are something you can never replace. Whereas you can replace a jacket or a pair of shoes, so that's my thinking (Mo 2018).

Mo reflected that she often played the songs on her playlist, 'usually when I'm getting ready to go out, I put Spotify on and put a playlist on that I have, like a going out playlist' (Mo 2018). Looking back on the interview experience, Mo remarked how music transported her in time, ''I Heard It Through the Grapevine' I was right back in the common room hearing it for the first time there when I was talking about it' (Mo 2018).[47]

Mo was grateful of the opportunity to be interviewed and described it as a privilege to have her 'life experience' recorded. Her father had been photographed by a Swedish photography student and Mo reflected on the value of that documentation. She planned to take her daughter through the toolkit when she next saw her, and after the interview, having sent Mo the transcript, she shared it with her children. At the end of the interview, I asked Mo for a recent photograph of herself which led to Mo describing events depicted in the digital photographs shown on her desktop computer; reflecting on how she prefers to be the one behind the camera now. Afterwards, I asked Mo if she used social media to which she replied she did not always enjoy being in photographs that are shared online, limiting its use to close friends and family.

3.3.3 Author's Reflections

I was introduced to Mo by her son, at a party, some time before the interview and she was keen to get involved with the project. I was grateful to Mo for her limited, but organised, toolkit which was easy to work with in the interview. I let the interview take its own course, which tended to skew towards music with less emphasis on dress, reflecting Mo's priorities rather than mine. The narrative was less about 'youth' as Mo's toolkit, and the stories she chose to share, crossed distant and recent past with current experience. Mo articulated how music can transcend time and the continuity of experience and self-affirmation that can come from these temporal shifts. This contributed to the developing concept of how youth lives with us through peak music experiences.[48]

> The era in which the photograph was taken doesn't necessarily match the music, but it matches the music that was played at that time, if that makes sense. So, it could have been an old tune from the '60s but I've linked it to the '80s because that's when I was experiencing it (Mo 2018).

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[47] Marvin Gaye (1969) 'I Heard It Through the Grapevine', UK: Tamla Motown.
[48] See Track 5.3 for further reference to Mo's time travel.

After the interview I stayed for a cup of tea and we talked more about her plans to move to Portugal, and a recent trip to Amsterdam with friends. Mo challenged my expectations about age, having travelled with a group of friends aged between their early 30s and their early 60s, and I found her ageless approach to socialising inspiring. She described the place they all stayed as a 'party flat' and explained that getting ready is a big part of her going out. I wish I had captured this on tape as it illustrated her energy and pursuit of good times. I stayed connected with Mo afterwards and she did make the move to Portugal.

Mo's interview taught me to allow the participant to control the content, even though I regretted not asking more about dress or bringing the conversation back to her 'youth' more, it was an authentic reflection of how Mo saw her extended youth. The connection between music and photographs was explicit in Mo's narrative, but also easily resituated in time. This interview positioned memory as a creative process,[49] and questioned how youth is defined and remembered.

3.4 Helen (2018)
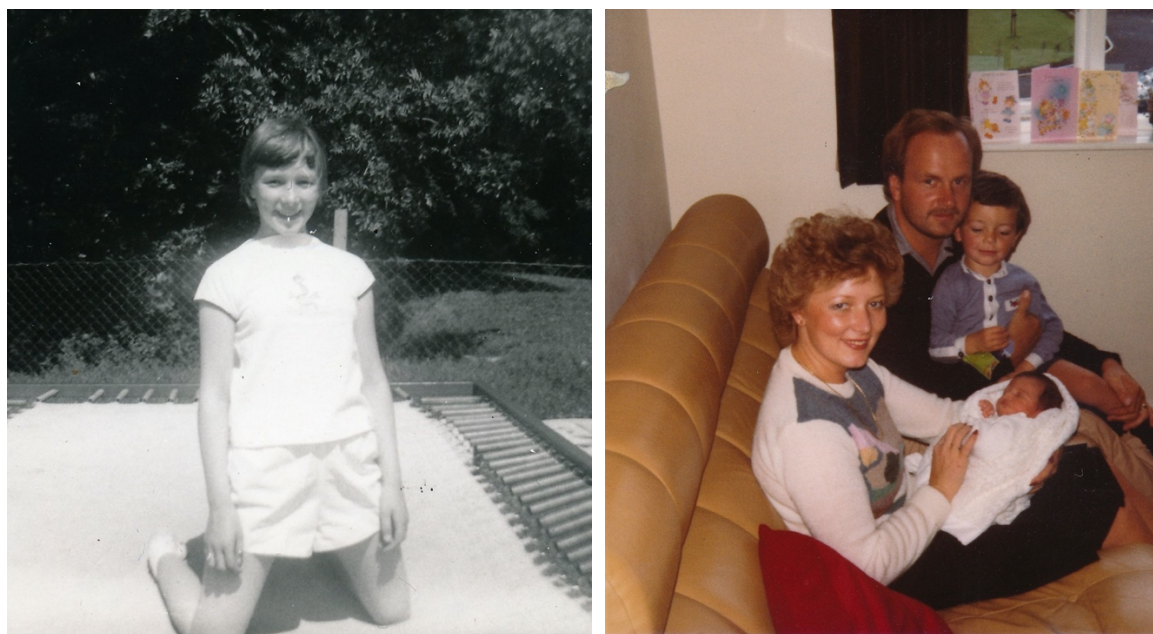
Figure 3.14 Helen aged 12, Trampoline competition, Butlins, 1966 © Helen.
Figure 3.15 Helen with her husband, niece and nephew, Manchester, early 1980s © Helen.

Helen's interview took place in the house she had lived in for over forty years, in a leafy North Manchester suburb. She had lived in the area most of her life; her two children

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[49] As defined by Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering (2012) in *The Mnemonic Imagination*.

also live nearby. We sat adjacent to each other at a table in the kitchen. The patio doors were open, looking out onto a beautiful garden. The homely space held family photographs and evidence of busy family life including toys for her grandchildren. Helen wore black and white dazzle print leather plimsoles with a black and white sleeveless pinstripe dress; her blond hair was cut in a short, side-parted bob.

Helen married in 1974, having met her husband five years earlier when she was fifteen. She defined her youth as starting at 14 in her questionnaire but in the interview explained that her participation in youth culture only began when she met her husband, following a strict upbringing, with her social life restricted to the church youth club and friends' houses. Music was important to Helen, and her tastes remained consistent from her youth, yet nowadays she is less likely to listen to music at home, preferring the quiet. Helen considered her youth to have continued into her early 30s when her children were young, even beyond in the sense of an attitude to life. She maintains an active social life and does not consider age to be a barrier to fashion or music choices. Despite her restrictive upbringing Helen was grateful for her education, which led to a career as a home economics teacher. Her interest in dressmaking started young, and her expertise in fashion punctuated the interview as she described the wearing or making of clothes in detail (including the outfit in Fig. 3.16).[50] Her love of clothes had stayed with her through different fashions, and distinct phases of her life.

Helen contextualised her style alongside popular cultures of the time, influenced by celebrities and her friends in her youth, including one who owned a dress shop. While less likely to be swayed by others now, Helen cites Vivienne Westwood as a continued influence – reflecting her own expertise in fashion, and lack of interest in confirming social expectations. While Helen had kept photographs, some recent clothes, and remembered her youth in a positive light, she was not nostalgic, choosing to live her life in the moment and not dwell on the past. This attitude to life is embedded throughout her narrative as she remained reluctant to describe her youth in past terms, but rather as 'a broad outlook' and willingness to 'have a go at anything' (Helen 2018). Helen identified with mod culture in her youth and was a fan of Motown and the Beatles, playing music at friends' houses and recording *Top of the Pops* on her Grundig reel to reel.[51] But her story began with her frustration at missing the collective youth cultures

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[50] See Track 4.3.3 for discussion on dress making.
[51] *Top of the Pops* was a British television programme that aired on the BBC from 1964-2006. *BBC* (2014) 'TOTP 1964-2006' [online]. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/totp/history. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

her peers enjoyed between the age of 14 and 20. The retrospective 'fear of missing out' (FOMO) she describes is still hard for her to let go of, fifty years later,[52] and the relief of her eventual independence is felt throughout her narrative: 'when I got my own house, I did have a record player, and I used to play records very loud, and dance on the table [laughs]' (Helen 2018).

Figure 3.16 Helen aged 13, Isle of Man, 1967 © Helen.
Figure 3.17 Helen aged 19 (2nd from left), Toronto City Hall, Canada, 1973 © Helen.

Helen described her school as forward thinking and felt it set her up well to be independent, aligning this with the societal shift as women started to have greater voice. She went on an exchange programme with an American university when she was 19, a turning point and peak experience in her memories of youth, with clothes very much at the fore of her narrative of that time (Fig. 3.17). Helen sees dress as a form of subcultural capital that enables her to interact with different people and social situations to feel 'integrated with society' and maintain friendships with younger friends (Helen 2018).[53] While she appeared to enjoy reflecting on her experiences of dress past and present, she was not interested in reminiscing or using 'intrusive' social media to look back on past events, stating that 'reunions are for people who have not moved

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[52] FOMO entered the OED (2022 [online]) in 2013 to describe the 'fear of missing out, anxiety that an exciting or interesting event may be happening elsewhere, often aroused by posts seen on a social media website'. The term was originally coined by Patrick McGinnis. McGinnis, P. (2004) 'Harnessing FOMO' [online]. Available at: https://patrickmcginnis.com. [Accessed 28 July 2022]. See Track 5.3.5 for further discussion on my term 'retro FOMO'.
[53] Using Sarah Thornton's term (1995), see 1.3.7 for context in relation to 'tokens of youth'.

on' (Helen 2018). She described her music tastes as consistent, but not nostalgic, and reflected on listening to music from the past: 'whenever I hear Motown music, I just want to dance' (Helen 2018).

3.4.1 Helen's Toolkit

Helen had compiled a digital playlist and been through items in the loft, stopping when she found artefacts from her time on exchange at an American University:

> I seemed to stop looking after I'd found my American stuff in the loft, and I'd found some younger stuff, I stopped looking at that point because I thought, "There's enough here to be going on with." And then, I was looking at it myself and hours were ticking by [laughs] (Helen 2018).

The toolkit part of the interview started with a rummage through a box of memorabilia including dress patterns, letters, a garment tag, a trophy she had won for trampolining, documents from her time in America and a selection of snapshots. Helen pulled out a snapshot of a holiday in Butlins, where she won the cup, flicking past this image declaring herself too young (about 12 years old),[54] and moving on to the series of images taken in America when she was 19. These images triggered vivid memories of dress, acting as surrogates for the items she had not kept. Helen describes wearing both her waxed cotton and checked wool coats on the plane as she took so many clothes with her. These pieces of outerwear stand out in her memory wardrobe as key pieces. Sharing two images of the checked coat, Helen remembered one being taken before she went to America (Fig. 3.18): 'that isn't in America, that's just before I went. I can't remember where that was, somewhere local to here anyway but oh that was the best coat in the world. It was from Wallis', although notes on the back (noticed later) suggested it was taken when she was away (Fig. 3.19).[55] This confliction was not typical in Helen's narrative as she had a strong memory for events and places and was quick to admit when no memory was present. One of Helen's favourite looks was a brown skirt worn with brightly coloured socks.[56] She looked back on this as the height of fashion, compared to the 'boring' American varsity look she wore in Figure 3.17. When asked if these images brought any music to mind, Helen listed popular bands of

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[54] See Figure 3.14 at the start of Helen's youth story for this snapshot.
[55] This aligns with Annette Kuhn's (1995: 14) observations as her and her mother noted conflicting place names on the back of a family photograph.
[56] See Figure 5.9 in Track 5.3.3 for this snapshot.

the time but explained there were no links between the music she selected and the photographs she picked out.

Figure 3.18 Helen aged 19 in her wool check coat,1973 © Helen.
Figure 3.19 Notes on the back of the photograph, Buffalo State University, USA © Helen.

However, later she returned to her favourite brown skirt when asked what she might have been wearing while listening to 'How Can I Tell You', by Cat Stevens.[57] Similar triggers played out as Helen looked back at the holiday snapshots from when she was thirteen (Fig. 3.16) as she spontaneously referenced several tunes that did not appear on her toolkit playlist and sung the lyrics aloud. This active connection with music in the present created a connection with the physical photographs that had not been pre-planned by Helen. Working her way through the photographs, describing the people, places and dress in detail, Helen illuminated the images, adding colour to a black and white photograph.[58] Returning to her box of memorabilia her old Grundig microphone triggered memories of listening to music, at which point Helen started to play the tracks on Spotify on her iPad, in the order of a written playlist she had prepared.

Her toolkit photographs ranged from 1966 through to the early 1980s when Helen was in her late 20s, yet her selected tracks fell within a narrower time frame (1966 - 1971),

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[57] Cat Stevens (1971) 'How Can I Tell You', on *Teaser and The Firecat,* UK: Island Records. See Track 5.3.3. for more discussion on this example.
[58] See Track 5.3.2 for more discussion on imagination colouring the snapshots.

when Helen would have been 12 to 17 years old, dates which do not align with Helen's self-defined parameters of youth (14 - early 30s). Yet, she has carried the music from these peak music years with her into her extended youth. While the music played, Helen talked about her experiences of dress and music in the past and present. She referenced several vinyl albums which she valued as material objects, even though she had nothing to play them on, reminded of how she listened to music when she was younger, with the radio pressed to her ear under the bedcovers. As we finished looking at the toolkit items, Helen brought in some late additions – two tailored jackets from the 1980s. These extended beyond the narrow period of youth Helen focused on for her music selection, to her early 30s in line with the parameters declared in her questionnaire. As she tried on the garments she experienced an olfactory memory of her perfume from that time, returning to her memory wardrobe to finish the outfit to go with the pink jacket, 'a black, pleated skirt, and black tights' (Helen 2018).

Helen described how she found it hard to keep up with digital photographs and enjoyed turning a physical page in an album, although she rarely looked at them, and her toolkit snapshots were removed from their albums. As we discussed the risks of deletion associated with digital photographs, Helen explained that although it would be a shame to lose the images, she felt she could find them somewhere else, once again indicating a lack of sentimentality.

3.4.2 Helen's Reflections

Helen described being absorbed when preparing the toolkit, with time ticking by unnoticed, stopping once she found the American memorabilia and photographs. 'I suppose subconsciously that was my, not my best time of life, but a time of life that I enjoyed, and [pause] that I remember' (Helen 2018).[59] She enjoyed the interview experience describing it as a 'domino' where one thing triggered another, enabled by the 'props'. She was surprised that she recalled so many memories and described feeling motivated by the experience. After the interview I asked Helen for a recent snapshot, however, she felt that few photographs show her true self in the way those from her youth did, as she was always with grandchildren, or her husband, and did not want to be defined as wife, mother, or granny. She pledged that she would find more time for herself in future. As she declared right at the beginning of the interview, 'I look

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[59] See 5.6 for the full quote and discussion.

back fondly on that [youth], but I don't look back and say, "I wish I was still there." I'm quite happy where I am. As long as I can live to 140 [laughter]' (Helen 2018).

3.4.3 Author's Reflections

Helen had put a lot of effort into her toolkit, and I enjoyed her in depth descriptions of dress. We shared an interest, and career, in teaching fashion and Helen drew on her expertise, referring to the clothes worn in photographs in detail, without prompting. Her 'tokens of youth' were perhaps more inclined towards dress and less towards music, but the mix of clothes, memorabilia and music created a rich sensory interview environment. I regret not taking time to look at the letters Helen had kept. I focused on dress and music as conduits due to time constraints. Helen had started the toolkit part of the interview with her own ideas of how it should run, and while I had a set of prompt questions, I let Helen lead the order which, while not entirely linear, felt natural and authentic, much like a rummage in the loft together.

Two of the items in Helen's toolkit triggered my own memories, as I was reminded of the Scholl sandals myself and my mother wore in the 1970s and working in a shop that sold Nicole Farhi (the brand of Helen's checked jacket) in the 1980s. The conversation was a relaxed two-way exchange, Helen would often ask my opinion, or if I had heard of a particular band or track for example. I enjoyed spending time with Helen and after the interview we went for dinner with her neighbour (the work colleague who had introduced us), and her husband who, like her, had a keen interest in fashion and a similar approach to enduring youthfulness, showing me a brightly patterned pair of Dr. Martens recently purchased for a wedding. Helen's narrative re-affirmed some of the themes that were starting to emerge and challenged assumed boundaries of youth, especially in relation to getting married, when, in contrast to some of the other participants, Helen's participation in youth culture began.

3.5 Heather (2018)

Heather has lived in her detached, suburban Manchester home for over forty years since she married at 28. She lost her husband in 2002. Her current partner, a friend from her youth, lives in the U.S. and Heather has become accustomed to spending part of the year there.

Figure 3.20 Heather (left) aged 14/15, c. 1964/5 © Heather.
Figure 3.21 Rainbow Dungarees in Jodi One-Off press shot, 1970s © Heather.

Heather was wearing a favourite washed out black T-Shirt with a faded white print for the interview. We sat opposite each other at a table in the kitchen, which was full of colour and memorabilia including photographs of friends. We moved around the house to where the elements of the toolkit were situated, before concluding back in the kitchen. We played music on my portable record player as Heather's stereo was not working. There were facilities to play cassette tapes and CDs, although these were not used. The technologies through which Heather enjoyed music had changed little since her youth, only her 8-track cassettes had become 'defunct'.[60] Heather does not own a computer, only an iPad, and does not engage in social media. The wealth of physical artefacts on display in her home were testament to Heather's attachment to material things and deep interest in both dress and music. A retired textiles academic, Heather made her first dress at the age of 10 and shared a studio with a friend in her early 20s designing clothes, many of which Heather kept.[61] A selection of these outfits had been acquired by a museum in America and at the time of interview Heather was preparing and documenting items for the curator. This expertise and vast material resource impacted on the narrative Heather shared. Her participation in music culture was also well documented and as a fan, rather than an expert, her reflections on music were personal and emotive.

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[60] The 8-track was a form of recording cassette tape in use from the mid 60s' to the early 1980s. *Wikipedia* (2020) '8-track tape' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8-track_tape#History. [Accessed 6 August 2022]. See 6.2 for further reference to Heather's 8-tracks.

[61] Clothes designed under the name 'Jodi One-Off' (see Fig. 3.21 for an example press shot).

Heather initially framed her youth between the age of 12 and 30, growing up in Staffordshire, and spending her late teens and 20s in Manchester. Heather has never conformed to societal expectations and continues to enjoy the music of her youth. Yet, her style of dress had changed over the years, becoming more 'background' but still an important part of her life. Heather valued the shared social experiences of youth, and regularly reminisced with old friends. She was an active participant in youth culture from an early age, particularly rock and roll, mod culture and R&B, becoming interested in disco in her 20s and sharing an interest in northern soul music with her husband.

There were long conversations before and after the interview as Heather and I were already acquainted and had not seen each other for a long time. Heather's narrative began chronologically as she described listening to the radio Luxemburg under the bedclothes at night in her early teens.[62] She had plenty of access to music in the home, with a Grundig recorder and a Dansette record player in her bedroom,[63] and the 7-inch singles she played formed some of her first memories. Heather went to live music events from an early age and kept the original tickets and programmes.[64] As her narrative unfolded – early experiences of youth, through art college, her studio, first job in education at the age of 22, her early years of marriage – Heather also used dress and music to express her experiences of extended youth: 'Quite often you would go and see bands that you'd seen before like the Rolling Stones. I mean, I first saw them in '63 and carried on seeing them into the 80s so you, kind of, don't think of your youth ending, I don't think' (Heather 2018).

Heather's cultural expertise was evidenced as she related the cultural and societal influences on young women in the 1960 and 1970s, not always in the first person.[65] The continuity of her own music taste and active involvement in the arts provided a personalised but authoritative view on youth culture during that period. Heather's narrative suggested active participation: dancing, attending concerts and clubs, youth club, making clothes and playing records with friends. The memories she recalled both

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[62] Radio Luxembourg was a commercial broadcaster, based in Luxemburg whose programmes were popular in Britain in the 1960s. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Radio Luxembourg' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio_Luxembourg. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

[63] Dansette was a British record player manufacturer popular in the 1950s and 1960s. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Dansette' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dansette. [Accessed 6th August 2022].

[64] See Figures 4.8 and 4.9 in Chapter 4.

[65] In Part 3 of the interview Heather shared handwritten notes she had prepared for the curator of the museum, which provided an in-depth social commentary of fashion at the time that complemented her personal narrative.

with and without the toolkit were vivid and descriptive and she demonstrated strong visual recall and memory in the present for dress and music, 'I hear the music and I'll go back to the ice rink because that's where I always heard that music' (Heather 2018).[66]

When prompted Heather was reluctant to imagine the future and recounted how she once collected 'wacky' printed shirts, imaging herself wearing them as an old woman. But she has since decided to get rid of them, and that image of an eccentric older self. Articulating an ageless view on youth, she describes her friends as 'young': 'You wouldn't really guess their ages, I don't think. I don't think you would' (Heather 2018).

3.5.1 Heather's Toolkit

The exploration of the toolkit began in Heather's large lounge which housed a wall of low-level cabinets, full of vinyl records. A selection of records, photo albums and other memorabilia including magazines and scrapbooks had been laid out on top of in preparation. Heather's exceptional interest in clothes and music was evidenced in the value she had placed on keeping these items in immaculate condition. Heather found choosing items for her toolkit difficult, and voiced concern about what I might want to see. This indecision was impacted by the many items that were already out on display in her home or hanging on rails in the spare bedroom.[67] We started with a scrapbook and some original programmes from live shows. These triggered a series of memories and excitement in the present: 'The Hollies and the Small Faces. Both on the same programme, how good is that!' (Heather 2018).[68]

> I've got programmes, I've got Rolling Stones, some bits and bobs. I've even got, because one of my favourite groups way back then was The Yardbirds, early Yardbirds – again, the R&B kind of connection – I've even got a little album where I used to cut things out of NME and put like where The Yardbirds were playing and stuff like this, and autograph books from my youth (Heather 2018).

Describing these events Heather introduced the photographs, presented in several large albums crammed with snapshots in chronological order. The photographs were not easy to remove so I attempted to document them with my camera as we talked.

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[66] See 5.3.5 *Personal and Collective Memories of Youth*, for a quote that illustrates Heather's vivid recollection of dress.
[67] 'Spilling out' of their designated storage space as described by Sophie Woodward and Alinka Greasley (2017: 668).
[68] See Figure 4.9 in Chapter 4.

Heather described the clothing in the snapshots in detail and when asked to consider the music she pulled out a Jimmy and the Vagabonds vinyl album that reminded her of her R&B years and what she referred to as her '*Ready Steady Go!*' frock (Fig. 3.20).[69] The album played on as we talked, this was typical in her interview, rarely were single tracks played or referenced. Heather continued looking at photographs, included a set of A3 colour prints taken by a student photographer that depict her wearing her own designs,[70] until the music stopped when she changed the record on the turntable after some indecision about what to choose.

> We could have the Wailers, reggae. I've got The Yardbirds here, wait a minute, Temptations, Drifters, The Hollies, Rod Stewart. Rod Stewart? He could be a good soundtrack. There's another good one from the early days. We could have Van Morrison, Earth, Wind & Fire. Let's think (Heather 2018).

We moved upstairs (off tape) to the spare bedroom where rails of clothes in garment bags and shoes in boxes were stored; and the office where several pairs of platform boots stood upright amongst the furniture. Together we selected some items which were brought downstairs in their plastic covers.[71] Back in the lounge Heather sorted through several packets of photographs that documented her dress collection for the museum. Soon the toolkit was in full swing with actual garments, photographs of those garments taken by Heather, snapshots and professional shots of Heather wearing the garments, music memorabilia and the original vinyl records playing on the turntable. Heather's toolkit also included dress memorabilia. For example, she had kept the *Vogue* dress pattern (Fig. 3.22), from which she made a mini dress in the 1960s (Fig. 3.23), an outfit she accessorised with boots from her memory wardrobe. 'There's, oh there's the dress, little dress, which you might want to [photograph] by the pattern, which was worn with white little Courrèges boots,[72] but I don't have those anymore' (Heather 2018).[73]

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[69] Jimmy James and the Vagabonds (1966) *The New Religion*, UK: Piccadilly.
[70] See Figure 6.14 in Chapter 6.
[71] I later regretted not recording the conversation upstairs or photographing the rooms or other items.
[72] Iconic patent leather zip up ankle boots launched in 1964, by the French fashion house launched by André Courrèges in 1961. The Met (2022) 'Boots ca. 1964' [online]. Available at: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/185390. [Accessed 6 August 2022] It is not known whether Heather's boots were originals or in the style of the Courrèges.
[73] Heather's Courrèges boots from her 'memory wardrobe' are working alongside the retained artefacts (paper pattern and dress) in the toolkit. This conceptualisation of the 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack' is fully explored in Chapter 5.

Figure 3.22 Heather's Vogue dress pattern, 1960s. Author's photograph, 2018.
Figure 3.23 Heather's print mini dress, 1960s. photographed for the museum, 2018 © Heather.

Figure 3.24 Rainbow Dungarees, 1970s, photographed for the museum, 2018 © Heather.
Figure 3.25 Heather aged 24, Manchester, c. 1974 © Heather.

The garments that received scrutiny in the interview were all made by Heather or the friend she shared a studio with. As we got them out of their bags, Heather played The Wailers' *Catch a Fire*.[74] Despite the wealth of garments in the room Heather tended to return to the photographs, particularly those she had taken of the clothes (Figs. 3.23, 3.24), to guide the narrative focusing on the production of the garments and associated memories. When asked if the clothes had any associated music memories, Heather associated her satin jumpsuit (Fig. 3.25) to a Rod Stewart album, and a rainbow jumpsuit (Fig. 3.24) to The Wailers.[75] As we wrapped up the toolkit part of the interview, I scanned photographs and photographed details on the garments before we moved back to the kitchen to finish Part 3 with a cup of tea.

3.5.2 Heather's Reflections

The experience of interacting with clothes and memorabilia from her youth was not unique for Heather, as she was surrounded by them in her living space and had invested time documenting her wardrobe. Off tape Heather referred to the photographing of her clothes as 'archiving'.[76] Collecting items from the past was so normalised for Heather that the interview was perhaps less emotional for her than other participants. Reflecting on the process of bringing clothes and music together Heather appreciated the role music had played:

> Well, the clothes are a visual, the music creates a visual, you know, doesn't it, if you're trying to associate it with your life. But just appreciating the music for music is good too. You were trying to make me conjure up, and I did, I did conjure up some extra things, didn't I, because of some of the music (Heather 2018).

Heather's focus on the 'visual' was seen in her tendency to rely on the music and photographs as props. Although the actual clothes were available there was less emphasis than I expected on the material aspects of the garments. For Heather music created the visual beyond the material. In fact, she stated, 'if I'd not been doing the clothes, I think it would have all been, probably, as much fun' (Heather 2018).[77] She described how her snapshots had most impact on her narrative, not only the images she reflected on, but also those that were absent (mid 1960s). Heather also recognised

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[74] The Wailers (1973) *Catch a Fire,* UK: Island Records.
[75] Rod Stewart (1971) *Every Picture Tells a Story* UK: Mercury.
[76] Heather also mentioned that she regretted not doing so earlier to record items she had not kept hold of.
[77] See 5.3.3 for discussion on the sensory overlap between audio, visual and material triggers and Heather's interpretation of 'visual'.

that the clothes she had pulled out were those that were more spectacular, the ones she was sending to the museum, rather than the everyday clothing depicted in earlier photographs (e.g., Fig. 3.20) that she described as 'boring'.

3.5.3 Author's Reflections

Interviewing Heather was enjoyable as her first-hand experiences and expertise in dress and music made for a fascinating conversation. It was a long interview and I struggled to keep to my prompt questions and interview plan. This may have been because I was relaxed in Heather's company, but also the toolkit was vast. Early in the interview Heather explained that it was hard to narrow the toolkit down to the suggested five items and at times due to the volume of items available and the constant movement between material, audio and visual; it became difficult to document Heather's story and track common narratives of youth across the different toolkit items. On occasion cross-conversations took place where we each settled our attention on different stimuli and began talking about different items that interested us in that moment. The interview process did not feel controlled by Heather or me, as we waited for each other to make the moves. My respect for Heather's expertise superseded my carefully planned structure, and consequently there were enjoyable surprises at every turn. Heather's descriptions were equally in depth in the first part of the interview, in the kitchen, when we were not surrounded by the memorabilia, music and clothes. Despite there being so many original clothes, the interview was still dominated by music and dress snapshots. It made me question whether material clothes are less connected to memories of youth than the visual depictions in the photographs.[78]

3.6 Kate (2018)

A Senior Lecturer in Sociology with an interest in gender and sport, Kate has played drums since her late teens. This active participation leant the research an insider viewpoint on the highly gendered alternative music scene of the late 1990s. Kate did not conform to societal expectations in her early youth, and before leaving home she was acutely aware of the greater level of freedom afforded her brother. Kate grew up in a rural town in High Peak, where she later trained as a chef, joining her first band when she was 18. She considered her 'meaningful' youth to have started from the age of 21 (1989) when she left home and moved to Manchester, focusing more on her

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[78] The styled outfits, as worn, include the youthful body and a wealth of contextual detail where perhaps empty clothing is less stimulating in comparison. See 5.3.1 for further discussion.

music before going to university in her mid-20s. Kate's music tastes have remained consistent, as has her approach to dress. However, she described a 'subtle shift', having become 'more conservative' in her tastes over the last decade or so (Kate 2018).[79]

Figure 3.26 Kate (left) with Polythene, 2000 © Kate.
Figure 3.27 Kate, Manchester, 2018 © Kate.

I interviewed Kate in the front room of her terraced house in South Manchester, which was undergoing renovation. Her toolkit garments hung on coat hooks by the front door; singles and memorabilia were stacked on the coffee table to the side. The room was furnished with a bookshelf, a row of trainers on the hearth and posters of her club night (Touch Me I'm Sick) in frames on the wall.[80] There were also shelves with records and books in the back room. Kate was wearing blue Levi jeans, a green Marks and Spencers T-shirt, a grey wool round neck jumper with a cable design and flat leather mules. Kate claims to have little interest in dress, but she has a distinct style, and a principled approach to dressing, shopping second hand where possible. Kate values her clothing and had kept favourite pieces.

Kate's expertise in music nuanced the interview, and she framed Sonic Youth and The Pixies as 'properly *indie* bands',[81] describing indie music as 'intellectual' music that 'makes you work' (Kate 2018). Kate began by defining the part she played in the alternative music scene, later citing examples of active participation into her 40s. She positioned her youth as peaking in her 20s and 30s, reflecting the constraints of living

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[79] Kate quickly clarified she did not mean this in a political sense.
[80] *Manchester Evening News* (2013) 'Touch Me time at Bar Saki' 12 Jan [online]. Available at: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/music/touch-me-time-at-bar-saki-1006798. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[81] 'Indie' refers to bands signed to independent record labels, as opposed to bands on major record labels.

in a small rural town as a teenager. Asked if she felt part of a defined youth culture back then, she answered: 'At the time when I was growing up? no, not even in the slightest' (Kate 2018). She described how her access to youth culture was limited by gendered societal expectations:[82]

> "Oh, hang on a minute," what's that difference there between me and my brother, where he's going and watching rock bands, before they all turned into, kind of, poodle perm rock bands and doing the figure of eights at the scout disco, the scout hut disco with their air guitars, and I'm still looking for something (Kate 2018).

Kate described falling asleep listening to the radio, crediting John Peel as an enduring influence. These early private explorations of youth culture developed when she had access to a record player, going into town to buy records. She bought her first record at 16,[83] and her first drum kit at 18, quickly joining her first band (Fig. 3.28).

Figure 3.28 Kate (second from left), Sweet Addiction press article, c. 1985/6.
Photographed by Gowlett, © unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.

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[82] These themes are further explored in Chapter 4, specifically Track 4.3.5. *Sites of Youth.*
[83] Tom Waits (1983) *Swordfishtrombones,* UK: Island Records.

Kate punctuated her narrative with these peak events, and her choice of items for her toolkit reflected this focus. Her narrative was told in relation to place, as much as chronological age, as the move away from home, to Manchester, had been pivotal in Kate's life. 'I couldn't bear being in a place that was so, just out of the way. Even though, physically, it's not that far away and it's accessible, for me it felt like a million miles' (Kate 2018).

As Kate described her experiences of youth it was clear that music and the likeminded friends that she met during her early 20s, provided temporal consistency. Shared experiences and continued opportunities for reminiscing were narrated nostalgically, triggering memories and stories, weaving in the experience of others in her peer group. When asked how she sees her future, Kate imagines listening to the first Sonic Youth record she ever bought: 'I'm probably sat on Brighton beach, retired, listening to *Sister* by Sonic Youth, or maybe *Strawberry Jam* by Animal Collective or *Peaches*, because that's possibly one of the greatest albums ever' (Kate 2018).[84] The location of her proposed 'retirement' is interesting as Kate again associates changing places with a change in lifestyle. Yet, Brighton is also symbolic of youth for Kate, the scene of a peak experience at a music festival she attended in 2006 described in her interview as 'like our Woodstock or something' (Kate 2018).[85]

3.6.1 Kate's Toolkit

Kate's toolkit included clothing, 7-inch vinyl singles and albums, scrapbooks, flyers, printed and digital photographs, press cuttings, letters and fan mail, CDs and even a BBC payment confirmation for a John Peel recording session. During the interview Kate also referred to further images on Facebook (on her laptop) which she later emailed to me. Kate began her narrative with a brown leather jacket and associated snapshots.[86] Leather jackets were an important part of her style, also supporting collective identity and a cohesive look as a band: 'I've probably had it about twenty years, yeah, and it was obviously second hand when I got it. Yeah. This, I just used to wear it all the time. We all had kind of various leather jackets of some sort' (Kate 2018).

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[84] Sonic Youth (1987) *Sister,* UK: Blast First; Animal Collective (2007) *Strawberry Jam* UK: Domino; Peaches (2002) *The Teaches of Peaches,* UK: XL Recordings.
[85] All Tomorrows Parties, ATP, is a music festival founded by Barry Hogan in 1999. The festival is curated by guest artists. All Tomorrows Parties (2022) 'What is ATP?' [online]. Available at: https://www.atpfestival.com/content/whatisatp. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[86] See Track 5.3.5 for discussion on the jacket in relation to the film *Fight Club* (IMDB 2022) depicted in Figure 5.13, and Figures 6.4 and 6.5, Chapter 6, in relation to archiving youth.

Trying the jacket on reminded her of a conversation with a colleague at work about leather jackets, prompting her to consider whether she could get away with wearing it to work. Along with the dress snapshots, the clothes, both physical and imagined, structured this part of the interview, with little reference to associated music tracks. Looking at the shoes lined up along the hearth Kate explained her enduring love of Converse, which sums up her consistent and ethical approach to dressing.

> I've still got a real love for Converse, but I'd wear them until they fell to pieces. And I'd have one pair I'd wear and wear and wear and wear. And they'd obviously go on the bottom and then the canvas would rip until I really, really couldn't wear them. You know, they'd get worn until they were really just falling to absolute pieces. I could tell you the pattern of how a pair of Converse falls to pieces because I've had that many (Kate 2018). [87]

As we talked Kate relied on dress to support the memories associated with the photographs, not only her own clothes but also bringing the dress of her peers into her memory wardrobe: 'I know that's Ed's arm because I can remember [laughs] I can remember what type of leather jacket he had' (Kate 2018). Despite claiming she had kept few clothes Kate was reminded of other garments as we talked and was able to locate a pair of Levi's trousers and two tops from storage upstairs.

After a long discussion focused on dress, Kate played her first memory track on my portable turntable – a 7-inch vinyl single on which she played drums with her band Polythene.[88] Whilst it played, Kate continued to relay her narrative using the photographs and memorabilia to guide her. Her scrap book of press cuttings supported her narratives of active participation in youth culture, such as a clipping from *City Life* in her scrapbook (Fig. 3.29). When asked to suggest a definitive track for this time in her life; she retrieved her favourite Sonic Youth album from the back room. Playing 'Schizophrenia', Kate pointed out the timeless quality to the track and how it did not sound dated to her at all 'one of the greatest songs ever recorded' (Kate 2018).[89] The music narrative continued moving back and forth between Kate's experiences of music listening, and her experiences in the band. She played a CD recording on her laptop of a session her band recorded in the U.S., but otherwise the music was played on

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[87] Converse All Stars, a basketball shoe originally released in 1917, adopted by musicians such as The Ramones in the late 1970s and Kurt Cobain in the late 1980s. Smith, M. (2020) 'A Brief History of The Converse Chuck Taylor All Star Sneaker', *Mr Porter* [online]. Available at: https://www.mrporter.com/en-ch/journal/fashion/history-converse-chuck-taylor-all-star-sneaker-icon-1276662. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[88] Polythene (1998) 'Low Frequency Loan Shark Radar' on *Pet Hates,* UK: Guided Missile.
[89] Sonic Youth (1987) 'Schizophrenia' on *Sister,* UK: Blast First.

vinyl. 'The actual physical act of taking the record out and putting it on a turntable is so much more pleasurable than if it's on, you know, a Spotify playlist or something' (Kate 2018).

Figure 3.29 Press cutting from City Life featuring Polythene, date unknown.
© unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.

3.6.2 Kate's Reflections

Looking at some of the artefacts for the first time in around twenty years Kate found the interview 'emotional' and 'gratifying', but also revelatory as she looked back on how she floundered in her teens, and how difficult it was for her to find her place in youth culture. For Kate dress and music proved to be useful conduits for remembering and important markers of youth. Looking back on experiences she was denied in her youth, Kate experienced retrospective 'FOMO'. Reflecting on her youth from her perspective as a mature feminist with academic knowledge of the gaps in youth literature, she still appears shocked and irritated at the gendered environment she grew up in. 'I still get called [my brother's] sister… I'm a grown woman now, I still don't have a name' (Kate 2018).[90] Although Kate described herself as a 'grown woman' and considered her youth to have 'stopped' she also articulated how her experiences of youth influenced how she chose to live and understood herself as an adult. The interview elicited mixed emotions for Kate; she found the reflections on dress positive and sentimental, but

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[90] See Track 4.3.5 Sites of Youth for more context on the disparity between Kate and her brother's youth experience.

music was more complicated as she enjoyed listening to the tracks but also recalled some of the tensions and raw emotions that accompanied the memories of producing her own music with a band. She still felt a strong association with 'Polythene' and towards the end of the interview suggested she would like to curate an exhibition with some of her artefacts, and other bands from the music scene at that time.

3.6.3 Author's Reflections

This interview drifted quite a bit from the format, but it felt like a natural conversation, influenced by our similar age, tastes and experience of that time, and as fellow academics. I was nervous beforehand as Kate was an experienced researcher, but I enjoyed and benefitted from her knowledge of the cultural and sociological context that she called on to enrich her narrative. It was useful that we had another conversation running alongside the interview narrative (Kate's research into cycling) so that the conversation continued whilst off tape without drifting into discussions I wanted to document. We also talked about our shared experience in the 1990s and often supported each other remembering details such as venue names in London and Manchester we were both familiar with.

Kate had carefully considered what to include in her toolkit, but I did not manage to document every item she discussed. There are photographs that I did not scan, and I regret not photographing the shoes on the hearth, unsure whether they were there for the interview or if that was where they were usually kept. It was also the first time I had been shown images on Facebook, so I had not thought how to capture this. Kate sent the images over by email after the interview, but some were missing. The interview was rich in content, bolstered by the breadth of the toolkit, although despite the presence of material, audio, and visual artefacts it was noteworthy that Kate offered few cross-sensory responses, or links between her memory tracks and memory wardrobe.

Kate's experience of female participation in youth culture, the constraints of her early years and how her first band acted as a catalyst for change provided valuable contributions, reinforcing the need to address the gender gap in youth studies. The advert for a drummer she first responded to with its collage of women, cigarettes and whisky aptly reflects the gendered environment described by Kate, providing the title and first image for Chapter 4 (Fig. 4.1). Kate's experience suggested active

involvement in music culture has the potential to extend youth. Yet as Kate pointed out, while she considered her 30s to be part of her 'meaningful' youth, there was still some discomfort around the appropriate age for a woman to be engaged in what could be perceived as an alternative lifestyle.[91]

3.7 Jayne (2018)

Jayne is founder and editor of www.soulandmod.com, a website dedicated to mod culture and soul music. Between the ages of 13 and 18 she participated in the mod revival of the 1980s, attending rallies and events. Jayne took a break from mod culture when she went to university in the late 1980s, focusing on her degree and consequent career in science.[92] Returning to the subculture in her mid-40s, social media provided the catalyst, as she reconnected with people from the scene through Facebook and Twitter. Jayne started attending events again and developed her website in 2017 'to put down some of my memories, some of my friends' memories' (Jayne 2018). Jayne described herself as nostalgic and her focus on collective experience and shared reminiscence featured in the interview, as she threaded stories of her friends and peers into her narrative.

Figure 3.30 Jayne (left) aged 18, The Assembly Rooms, Rotherham, 1987 © Jayne.
Figure 3.31 Jayne dressed for a mod event, 2017 © Jayne.

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[91] See Track 6.3 for a discussion on gender, youth and ageing.
[92] Moving from her childhood town signaled a change in Jayne's participation in mod culture, as she left behind the mod community to focus on her study. In contrast to Kate's experience (3.6), whereby moving away had enabled her to finally find her place in a defined youth culture.

After university Jayne settled in Nottingham and she has lived in her current home, with her partner since 1998. The interview took place in the front room and kitchen, with shelves full of CDs and books, and a PC on which Jayne showed me her website, Facebook page, and played her soundtracks. Music was of primary importance to Jayne although she considered dress and music to be mutually reflective of youth culture.

> I think obviously with a lot of these sorts of subcultures, the music and the clothing go hand-in-hand. So yeah, I think that played an important role. With me, it was always the music first and then the clothes, because that's what obviously got me into mod, then it was just the clothes from that (Jayne 2018).[93]

Jayne described her music taste as more consistent than her dress sense, which she has adapted over time to feel more age appropriate, yet still retaining mod elements (Fig. 3.31). She compared herself to other girls in the subculture who adopted a more typical feminine style, rather than the shirts, ties, and tailored trousers she wore in her youth.[94] In the interview Jane seamlessly linked her experiences of dress and music, using her engagement in mod culture to frame the narrative and bring her tokens of youth together. Her father, and the music he played at home was an early influence on her passion for the 1960s, and she benefitted in her youth from access to music and clothes from the period that her family kept and passed on. Jayne depicted her local mod scene in South Yorkshire in detail, explaining how participants kept abreast of the latest music and style influences at the youth club, local café, each other's houses, through club newsletters, rallies and events. The influence of older mods was important to Jayne, and she recalled a memory of an encounter at a local nightclub that instigated a turning point in her own style.

> I will never forget her. She had a black bob, and it was a really high inversion up in her neck here.[95] She had a dog-tooth skirt on, but below the knee, like a pencil skirt, a black, at that point when you could buy Tricel two pieces,[96] and a pair of Winklepicker shoes on and I remember The Style Council coming on and the floor cleared (Jayne 2018).

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[93] See Heike Jenss (2018) and Track 1.3.5 for the relationship between dress and music in youth culture.
[94] See Track 5.3.2 for a quote from Jayne describing her mod look.
[95] Inverted bob haircuts are cut high into the neck to create an A-line shape that hangs forward. See Figure 3.33.
[96] A manmade fibre, made from cellulose, often used for knitwear. Developed in the 1950s by Courtaulds, UK. Vintage Fashion Guild (2022) 'Crimplene' [online]. Available at: https://vintagefashionguild.org/fabric-resource/crimplene/. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

Jayne continues to be influenced by her peers and hopes to inspire younger mods. Reflecting on societal changes she compared the word-of-mouth communication of her youth to the online social networking that provided unprecedented opportunities to reconnect, collaborate and share her experiences when she rejoined the mod scene. Jayne described how in the 1980s young people tended to be part of a specific group or subculture, and collective experience remained central to Jayne's reflections. Jayne's preference for soul music has endured, and she also has happy memories of music originating from the late 1980s Manchester music scene. Jayne credited her consistent music tastes, her friends, and the internet for bringing her youth 'full circle'. Her propensity for reminiscence and desire for shared experiences has extended her youth with music keeping youth culture ticking over in the background, even while her participation in mod culture paused. When asked which memories of youth meant the most to her, Jayne cited three key events that she returned to throughout the interview – The Great Yarmouth rally, which took place a week before her 18th birthday in 1987 and two Scarborough weekenders in February 1987 and April 1988.
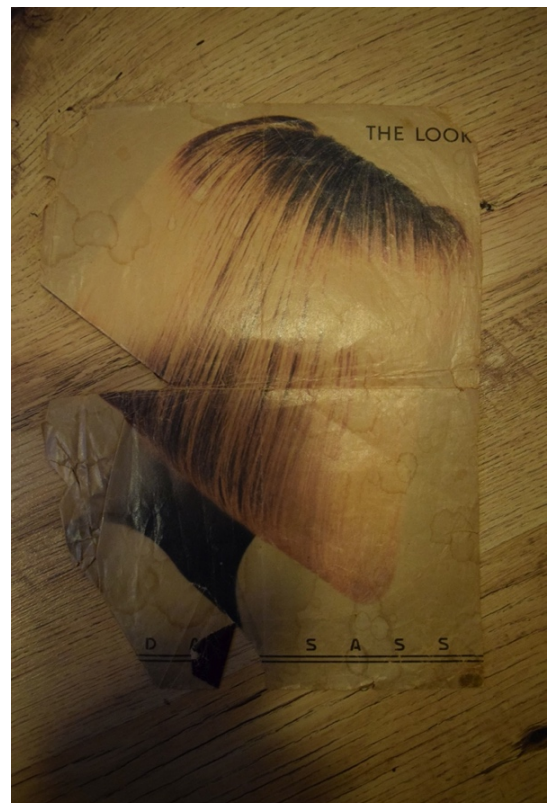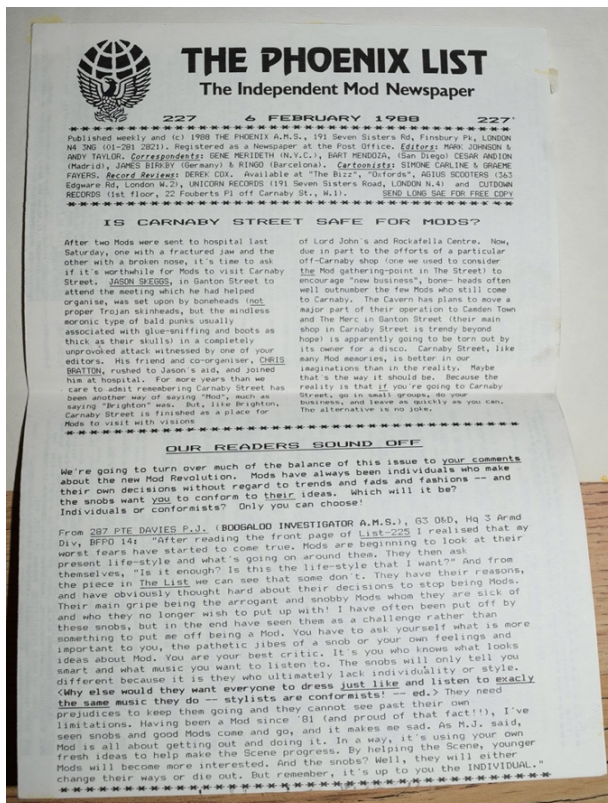
3.7.1 Jayne's Toolkit

Figure 3.32 Jayne's Phoenix newsletter, 1988 © Unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.
Figure 3.33 Jayne's coveted bob, 1980s © Unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.

Jayne had prepared a box of memorabilia including scrapbook pages, flyers, club memberships and snapshots, which we looked at in no set sequence. It included memorabilia from key mod rallies including tickets, club newsletters (Fig. 3.32), train tickets and a guest house receipt. It also included a page torn from one of her mother's hairdressing magazines showing the graduated bob she coveted and adopted in her youth (Fig. 3.33), and a receipt for a pair of trousers tailor made for her which she described in close detail. '[They had] like a little split and you used to have a couple of buttons and then a chain, coming. Believe it or not, I think my mum and dad have still got those trousers' (Jayne 2018).

Jayne shared a photograph she took of a group of girl friends at the Great Yarmouth rally in 1987. Although she did not feature in it, Jayne used the snapshot to illustrate how mod girls dressed.[97] This 'borrowing' of other people's looks for her own memory wardrobe is consistent with her vivid description of the girl's outfit she coveted in the nightclub. Jayne showed little tolerance for those that dress scruffily, failing to meet the expected mod standards or dress too youthfully for their years.[98] For Jayne adherence to a smart, authentic mod style remained important. Although there were no physical clothes to examine Jayne described photographed clothes in close detail. She had not kept clothes due to changes in body shape, but also had views about dressing appropriately with age. However, she had the same hair (a blond bob with a fringe) that she had when she was 14 and was dressed in a way that subtly suggested 'mod' in a roll neck sweater, tunic and ski pants. Surrounded by the toolkit Jayne volunteered extensive narratives of dress, particularly in relation to a black and white photograph of her at Barnsley Train Station, as she recalled not only the outfit depicted but also other clothes from the culture.[99] These were narrated in full colour with detail on the places they were purchased and worn. Jayne had not made a playlist in advance, relying instead on Mixcloud playlists made by a friend, based on old cassette tapes she had found in her loft. While we were talking Jayne noted down five tracks that were important in her youth, only one of which she played during the interview,[100] whilst another track she played in addition to the select five – 'Soul Poppin'[101] – reminded Jayne of the Lemon Tree Club music venue in Scarborough.

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[97] This image is discussed in Track 5.3.5 in relation to collective youth experiences (Fig. 5.14).
[98] See Track 6.3.1 for quote from Jayne on maintaining her mod style later in life.
[99] See Fig. 5.6 and Track 5.3.2 for further analysis of this snapshot.
[100] Lou Johnson (1963) 'Magic Potion', UK: London Records. See Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2.
[101] Johnny Jones and the King Casuals (1968) 'Soul Poppin', UK: MCA Records.

Jayne sometimes struggled to remember dates and often used tickets and other memorabilia to cross check her memories. There were some contradictions with dates and Jayne openly adjusted her memories as she uncovered evidence in the memorabilia. It became like detective work at times as she searched her toolkit for evidence to back up a memory. Jayne acknowledged that the gaps in her memory were supplemented by her kept artefacts which she engaged with frequently: 'I'm going to be completely frank with you, I can't remember what we went to see. I've got no tickets for that at all. I have no tickets' (Jayne 2018). She also relied on other people's memories, and the collective memories of the mod community. Jayne immediately recognised a photograph out of the box as Rotherham, 1988 (Fig. 3.30). When asked how she knew the place and date she responded: 'I know it's Rotherham because I've been told its Rotherham' (Jayne 2018). Jayne's knowledge and expertise around her personal and collective youth culture, as an author and publisher of memory artefacts, meant her interaction with her toolkit was different to that of other participants, as many of her personal memorabilia, especially photographs, were already shared in the public domain as a memory resource for others. Rather than scan the photographs myself Jayne offered to send them to me by email as she had already scanned them for use on digital and social media.

3.7.2 Jayne's Reflections

Jayne saw her website and social media channels as leaving a legacy, enabling and inspiring younger generations interested in the mod culture. As a memory resource for others her age, she described it as providing a respite from everyday life and the responsibilities of adulthood. Jayne also recognised the artefacts as a resource for her own memory.

> My memory is a blur for a lot of things unless I've actually got artefacts in front of me, or I've got actual photographs. There are certain aspects or certain events, friends, places that I've been to that I'll never forget. But then there are lots that I can't remember unless I'm prompted (Jayne 2018).

Jayne finds reflecting on her youth an enjoyable experience, although she looked back with regret at missed experiences and events. Jayne's retrospective 'FOMO' was fuelled by her online networks and the constant sharing of images and memories of events online. In this way the shared online youth culture that Jayne had returned to in her 40s differed from her prior youth experience.

3.7.3 Author's Reflections

I connected with Jayne through Twitter having seen a photograph she posted on Twitter, which she related to a music track, describing the clothes in the image. I was excited to see if this material, audio, and visual connectivity was present in the interview. However, while dress and music worked hand in hand for Jayne, she did not link specific tracks to events, images, or outfits. Mostly she referred to genres of music rather than specific artists, albums, or tracks. There was little music played during the interview, which focused the discussion on the visual and material artefacts. We looked at the memorabilia in the front room and listened to music on the PC in the kitchen which made it harder to link the two, and less of a multi-sensory experience. I enjoyed watching a short video of Jayne at a mod rally on YouTube (Cuntycarper 2012); similar in age to Jayne I could relate to that moment, reminded by the young people's dress of my own experiences of the youth club disco. Jayne's focus on collective experience, as non-distinct from her personal experience suggests an imaginative merging of remembering and rediscovering. Her documentation of youth as an archive for herself and others demonstrates the value of dress and music as cultural conduits to memory. In the interview Jayne's oral testimony was rich in content and wonderfully honest. When I later shared a copy of the verbatim transcript with her, she asked that several sections be redacted. These were mostly conversations that were off topic, or that disclosed personal information about others that were not required for analysis.

Jayne brought a new perspective to the research as social media was so intrinsic to her everyday experience and her memories of youth. I gained new insight from her experience of returning to the culture of her youth through social media following a hiatus of several decades. This temporal aspect was compounded by Jayne's experience of mod culture in the 1980s, already a revival of 1960s culture, experienced again in the early twenty-first century by Jayne and her peers. Dress and music provided the common thread of experience throughout the cultural shifts of the decades, with music especially able to retain its original qualities and be audibly re-experienced, albeit through different technologies. The interview with Jayne made a considerable contribution to the hypothesis that youth is not constrained by time. Neither can youth cultures be attached to a specific period or cultural environment, connected only to the places and timelines of an individual's life narrative.

3.8 Linda (2019)

Linda is an award-winning playwright and director who is also the driving force behind the Reno project.[102] The Reno project was exhibited in the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester in 2019, where Linda had a twelve-month residency. At Linda's request the interview took place at the gallery in a quiet event space away from the exhibition. The large room, set up in conference style, provided a peaceful location for the interview of which we undertook Parts 1 and 3, using the photo wall of the project as her toolkit, viewed together after the interview (Figs. 3.34 and 3.35).

Figure 3.34 Linda (left) with friends, Manchester, 1981 [Reno memory wall]
© unknown. Author's photograph, 2019.

Linda grew up in Manchester and played an active role in youth culture in the late 1970s and early 1980s, identifying with Soul and Funk music and the androgynous dress that was popular in the Reno nightclub, Moss Side. She stayed in Manchester, brought up a daughter and carved out a career for herself as a playwright before returning to her youth culture through the Reno project. This reconnected her with her peers and Linda described having to re-earn their trust and acceptance having not

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[102] *The Reno* (2016) project celebrates the Reno nightclub, in Moss Side, Manchester, and its community 1971-1981. The site was excavated in 2017 and had a 12-month residency at the Whitworth Gallery, Manchester, from March 2019.

been in contact for over twenty years. The project gave Linda opportunity to reminisce and reflect on her participation in youth culture of that time.

Linda described her youth as between 13 and 30 years and associated the end of her youth with the end of being lost, 'so it's kind of like when lost ended' (Linda 2019). Linda explained how she still felt young, and enjoyed telling people she was 60, and seeing their surprise. Linda was wearing a white short-sleeved T-shirt with a red Levi embroidery on the front chest. Over this she wore a light-wash dungaree dress, worn loose on the body, finishing at just above ankle height, exposing black Chelsea boots. Linda wore her hair scraped back held with a butterfly clip. She explained that she did not conform to societal expectation in terms of engagement with music or dress either in her youth or in the present and observed that clothes were just as important to her as they ever were, although she now had access to better quality clothes.

Music was less important to Linda although she had recently re-visited the music from the Reno during the excavation, making a collective playlist, linked to tracks on YouTube. The intensity with which she had been focusing on this period of her past for the project did not dull Linda's emotional responses to the interview questions. She was open and generous with her responses and while the narrative felt raw and authentic, flitting between stories, eras, or emotions, Linda's expertise in creative writing was evident in the vivid, lyrical vignettes that illustrated her narrative.

> And she came in, she rode up in a white spoke wheeled MG[103], looked like Mick Jagger,[104] got out of a car in jeans and a jumper, climbed on the roof of this building and repaired it with a hammer. So, we're all like, you know like a gang of us, "What the heck going on?" (Linda 2019).

Linda's feminist stance influenced her narrative, focusing on female protagonists and strong female influences such as the older neighbour described in the quote above.[105] Starting the interview, unprompted, with a detailed description of how her dress sense evolved into the androgynous style popular with the women attending the Reno, she

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[103] MG is a British Automobile Marque but here Linda is referring to the small two-seater sports cars, MGB, which was manufactured from 1962 until 1980. *Classics World* (2020) 'A Brief History of MG Cars' [online]. Available at: https://classicsworld.co.uk/guides/a-brief-history-of-mg-cars/. [Accessed 6 August 2022]

[104] Lead singer of British band *The Rolling Stones.* This an interesting comparison in relation to Linda's reference to androgynous style (Fig. 3.35).

[105] Linda (2019) described the influence of this older woman who moved the street, 'an utterly powerful woman', who drove a sportscar, ran her own business and even owned a lion cub at one point. See Track 4.3.2 for reference to this in relation to femininity.

went on to describe the gendered hierarchy in the club at the time, 'a lot of us made our name in the Reno by being somebody's woman'. This was reflected in her experience in the Reno project: 'when I did the Reno memoirs guys were up for doing them and girls were far more reticent. And guys had bigger stories to tell' (Linda 2019).

Figure 3.35 Linda at the Reno, Manchester, 1976 [Reno memory wall]
© unknown. Author's photograph, 2019.

When asked to reflect on the role dress and music played in her youth Linda described an early dress experience that contextualised her narrative and experience growing up in a working class, mixed-race household in the 1960s and 1970s, explaining how she was dressed by her parents, and how that related to racial prejudices at the time:

> I think that's linked to my colour as well because my mum is white, and my dad is black. And I think that it was like determined that I wouldn't be seen as nothing. So, if I was going on a day trip, I had brand new socks, brand new knickers, brand new dress. I remember even having a straw hat, you know, so I looked like, right out of place, you know, when everybody else just looked normal (Linda 2019).

In the comments section of her pre-interview questionnaire Linda also referred to her colour, in relation to her experience of youth, and how she was treated at the time, both positively and negatively. 'I think a lot of societal things hang on to me because of my colour. They are very much linked to how I was treated at the time' (Linda 2019). Linda's family background impacted on her access to music in her youth, but also her

memory of music in the present. She described music as upsetting, reflecting painful memories from her early youth, and became emotional when talking about music; she also found music emotive when associated with more positive memories linked to the Reno. Linda compared her experience of early youth with that of her best friends, and the influence of their 'progressive' mother who provided them with the tools and space to have a youth culture.

> In her front room – everybody else's front room had your display cabinet, and nobody went in there except if relatives visited, and my dad's relatives would come and have a whisky with my dad and things – but [her] front room belonged to [her daughters]. Then we would go in their front room and play records (Linda 2019).

Although Linda later reflects on the positive influence of her own mother, who taught her to read and write before she went to school, appreciating the value of that grounding, 'even though [they] have got music and a record player, they haven't got that' (Linda 2019). Linda then described how she married her husband at nineteen, having met at the Reno, and their turbulent journey until the late 1980s, when she felt her youth ended, as she started on a new path supported by daily meditation which she continues to practice.

Figure 3.36 Linda at the Reno dig, Moss Side, Manchester, 2017 © Linda.

Reflecting on her youth Linda recognised the impact and power of the Reno project, and how it had given her the confidence to use her authentic voice, and recognise her value, 'I absolutely pick up my youth now and wear it 100%, yeah' (Linda 2019). This journey to self-acceptance framed Linda's narrative depicting the long, sometimes erratic, journey of youth. Linda also referred to the temporal, cross-generational impact on those involved in or experiencing the project through the exhibition.[106] As Linda had not inherited any memorabilia or photographs from her parents, she appreciated the value of her treasured possessions, especially her collection of 1970s ceramics. Linda intended to start a 'legacy' by keeping things for her daughter. She also valued the collective memorabilia the Reno project has generated. Linda described keeping artefacts as a luxury, denied to those who lacked the physical space, family relationships or continuity of lifestyle to inherit or archive their possessions, 'it's a kind of a middle-class luxury to keep your youth' (Linda 2019).

3.8.1 Linda's Toolkit

There was no toolkit available in the interview. Linda had not kept any photographs from her youth but talked about the effect of the excavation on her memory, and the artefacts and photographs donated for the project. After the interview we visited the Reno exhibition together and spent 10-15 minutes looking at a collaborative photograph wall.[107] Linda picked out key images of her, taken by friends, to illustrate her narrative, which I later mapped to the transcript. Linda found it easy to date the images and I suspect had spent time discussing them previously. The absence of dress items or snapshots in the interview did not prevent Linda giving detailed descriptions of dress without reliance on supporting imagery; instead, she relied on her memory wardrobe for examples of the key looks and specific garments she adopted as she tried to 'cut' her own style. Prior to the interview Linda had sent me the soundtrack collated for the project, tracks had been submitted by the project participants, who voted for the top 25. In the interview Linda referenced two tracks that were of specific importance to her – the 'excavation track' 'Happy Feelin's',[108] and the 'end of the night' track '(Let's Go) all the Way'.[109]

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[106] See Track *6.2.3 Public Memory Archives* for analysis of this shared experience.
[107] See Figure 6.11 for a photograph of the wall, and Track 6.2.3 for discussion on public memory archives.
[108] Maze (1977) 'Happy Feelin's' on *Maze, featuring Frankie Beverly*, UK: Capitol Records.
[109] The Whispers (1978) '(Let's Go) All the Way' UK: RCA (1978).

3.8.2 Linda's Reflections

On entering the exhibition space after the interview Linda thanked me for the interview, thanked me for 'listening' and said she felt different coming back into the space having had the conversation. She had found the act of remembering very emotive and was tearful during several recollections, yet had enjoyed the opportunity to hear herself talk, to hear her own her story, and the conversation it triggered, 'I love being listened to' (Linda 2019). Linda realised she had become everything she wanted to be in her youth, using the example of affording to buy food from a local health food store to signal how she had retained who she was, but now with the access, not just to food, but to the clothes, artefacts and lifestyle she chose.[110]

3.8.3 Author's Reflection

Before the interview recording started, Linda shared with me the difficulty she has working with people she perceives as 'middle class', making it clear before and during the interview that her perspective is working-class. This focus on class and habitus led to some new insights into how material and cultural 'wealth' can influence experiences of youth and access to positive memories of youth.[111] Linda described keeping hold of artefacts as a 'privilege', or a 'luxury', which I had not considered before. Not everyone has the storage space to keep belongings no longer in use, and equally, I had assumed that people *want* to hang on to things, whereas music for example, was not a positive conduit to memory for Linda. While the conversation with Linda did not allow for exploration of memory through a memory toolkit, or 'fit' perfectly with my interview structure and methodology, it was interesting that she was archiving her youth as part of a collective experience. The Reno project appeared to impact positively on her identity in the present, giving Linda the opportunity to reminisce and share a collective remembering.

Linda and I originally made acquaintance when she contacted the University about the project several years ago, so I had some background going into the interview. Linda and I had quite different life experiences and perspectives, yet, despite this, the interview became more conversational as it went on, as I gained Linda's trust. At the

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[110] See 6.3.1 *Sustaining the Cultural Practices of Youth* for a quote from Linda on her youth in the present.
[111] Aligning with Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of cultural capital (1994).

end of the interview, I felt connected to Linda, and her project, and felt privileged to have shared her very honest account of her youth, but also a knowledge of the collective experience of the young people who attended the Reno between 1971 and 1981. Linda mentioned that she had avoided talking about her colour other than where it was necessary to contextualise her narrative, which triggered a brief conversation about race and racism at the end of the interview.[112] It was useful to understand Linda's perspective and why she chose to 'edit' that aspect of her lived experience. It also helped me understand the limits of my understanding and was a reminder that the interview process is two-way and the degree to which my own experience does, or does not, map onto that of the participant affects the experience of the interview for both.

3.9 Carole (2019)

Carole grew up in a small Cheshire town, just outside Manchester, and after a period living in London and Scotland, she returned in the 1970s having separated from her husband, to bring up her two daughters. Carole had lived in the same house for over forty years and had kept a selection of clothes and photographs from her youth which, she defined as between 16 and 20 years old. This period of youth spanned the time between leaving school and gaining more independence and moving to London during the swinging 60s where she worked as a sewing machine demonstrator. Her interest in textiles had endured and she was a keen collector of dress and textiles artefacts. The interview took place in the front room of Carole's terraced cottage, which was comfortably furnished with her collections displayed in frames on the wall and in a lit cabinet. These included a vintage sewing machine, lace collars stitched to a panel on the back of the front door, small samples of textiles/embroidery in gold frames, and a glass cabinet containing a collection of wooden bobbins and other textile related items including a cycling corset. On a small side table an illustrated manual of draping techniques for the display of textiles lay open next to a potted plant. The staircase wall was adorned with antique embroidered white work textiles and hand stitched garments including nightdresses, knickers, napkins and pillowcases.

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[112] While Linda avoided talking about race, her project – The Reno – makes visible the nuanced culture of a 1970s Manchester nightclub, a 'stronghold for us half-caste teens born in 1950s no blacks, no Irish, no dogs'. Cited in *The Reno* (2016 [online]).
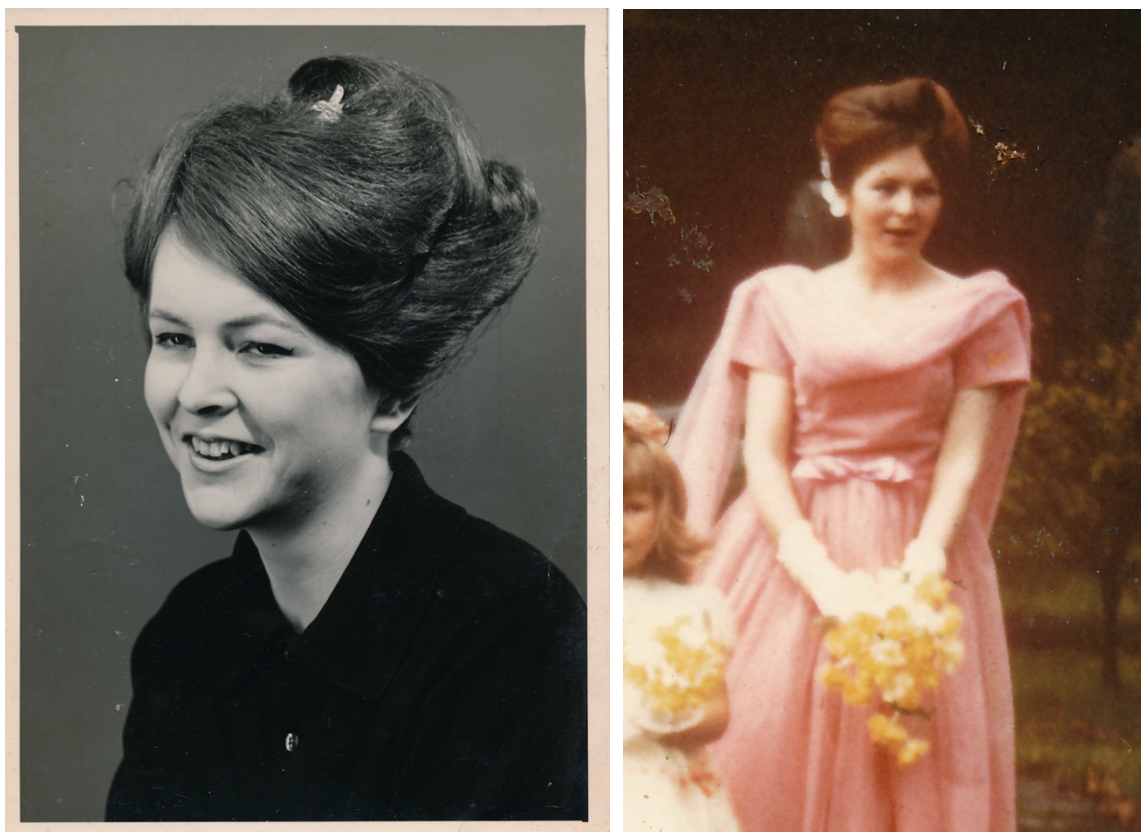
Figure 3.37 Carole in her navy-blue jumper, aged 17/18, c. 1961/2 © Carole.
Figure 3.38 (cropped) Carole in pink bridesmaid dress, aged 19, 1963 © Carole.

As we chatted prior to the interview Carole told me about her experience of interviewing people as part of her university degree in Applied Community Studies. Following a career in the professional clothing industry, where she was responsible for clothing at a large oil company, Carole had retrained for her second career, working in various public sector roles until her retirement. Fashion continued to be important to Carole, and although she felt she conformed to societal expectations of female dress, she was not influenced by others when it came to dress in her youth or in the present. However, her style had changed over the years in response to changing fashions. Carole enjoyed popular music in her youth, influenced by her friends and peer group, attending live concerts and dances, but she no longer listened to music at home and chose not to include any music or playlists in her memory toolkit. Carole had stated that she preferred to avoid music references in an email prior to the interview.

> I don't listen to music now other than if I'm in the car, when it's Classic FM. So, I just, I might hear it on the telly but that's, that's not my choice. I might listen to Bublé or somebody on the telly but it's not, it's not part of my life (Carole 2019).[113]

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[113] Canadian singer Michael Bublé, born 1975. A popular entertainer in both Canada and the UK. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Michael Bublé' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Bublé. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

Carole rarely reflected on her youth or looked at the photographs and dress items she had selected for her toolkit, nor did she use social media, or any engage in other deliberate acts of reminiscence. While Carole mostly avoided reflecting on the more personal or emotional aspects of her youth in depth, her love of textiles and technical expertise was notable when the toolkit items were introduced. The looks depicted in the photographs and particularly the technical aspects of the garments guided her narrative.

The interview began with Carole describing the role clothes and music had played in her youth, and how she had made her own skirts; full skirts for dancing and straight skirts which she wore for work, or when she wanted to look older, 'Well, I went to places I shouldn't go when I was under 18' (Carole 2019). The family had a record player and Carole remembered her first record – Tommy Steele singing 'Singing the blues'[114] – which reminded her of dancing to rock and roll at school. This was Carole's only reference to a specific music track from her youth, and she described buying records when she was younger that she hoped would be a hit, but often got wrong.[115] Despite several prompts throughout the interview Carole was not drawn into discussions about her personal music memories, although she stated that she could remember all the words from the popular songs from her youth. Carole briefly described going into central Manchester to visit coffee bars and the Twisted Wheel,[116] and seeing live bands in local venues. She explained how these music experiences had transitioned from ballroom to rock and roll, to blues, mapping this progression to the increased freedom she had when she moved to London aged 18, in 1962, before she had her first child at 22. Carole left school at 17 and hoped to be a beautician, working briefly in a chemist's shop, then a hairdressing salon, before becoming a manicurist.[117] This reflection led Carole to look back fondly on a favourite sweater:

> So you had to make clothes work harder, so if like I had a V-neck
> sweater, so to make it look different, I'd put it on back to front [pause]
> and I mean I remember and I must have been 15, I wanted a particular
> colour of sweater and I walked all the way down Market Street
> [Manchester], and went in every shop and I couldn't find it and I

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[114] Tommy Steele and the Steelmen (1957) 'Singing the Blues', UK: Decca. See Track 5.6 for the full quote from Carole.

[115] See Track *6.1.3 Self-Affirmation* for reference to this lack of confidence.

[116] The Twisted Wheel, a Manchester nightclub open from 1963 to 1971, known for playing Northern Soul music. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Twisted Wheel Club' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twisted_Wheel_Club. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

[117] Figure 3.37 was taken when Carole worked in the hairdressers.

finished up right at the bottom of Market Street, in a man's shop and I
found what I wanted there, and I wore it till it fell apart (Carole 2019).

Carole valued her clothes, buying little but keeping them a long time, giving the
example of wearing a dress the day before that she had owned since 1986. Her tastes
were consistent, but she followed fashion, and was able to manipulate dress to suit her
needs, for example power dressing when she worked in the gendered environment of
the oil industry or wearing a straight skirt when she wanted to look over 18 in her
teenage years. While the interview was focused on past experiences of youth, and
remembering them in the present, Carole was honest about finding that difficult, often
re-directing the narrative back from her past to present experience. Asked how often
she reflected on her youth she claimed 'well you've made me do it by looking at these
photographs, thank you very much [laughs]. No, I don't normally look back' (Carole
2019).

3.9.1 Carole's Toolkit

Carole estimated that she had not looked at her photographs for thirty years, or the
clothes she had pulled out for her toolkit for ten to fifteen years. She had selected four
photographs of her between the ages of 17 and 19. Three were at formal events, two
family weddings and a dinner dance, and one a studio shot taken of her as a hair model
(Fig. 3.37). All were taken by professional photographers. Later in the interview Carole
explained that she did not have a camera when she was younger, and when she
married her husband chose what to photograph. As we talked Carole worked between
the photographs and the five garments she had selected. One of the garments, a
bridesmaid dress (Fig. 3.39), also appeared in a photograph (Fig. 3.40).[118] Carole was
disappointed that she could not find the snapshots of her wearing a pair of beige linen
shorts she had kept, as she had come across them a few weeks before, but could not
locate them for the interview. She accredited this to taking them out of the album, which
she had not done with other photographs, other than four that I scanned. In the part of
the interview where the clothes were present, Carole's narrative came to life as she let
the garments, not my questions, direct the conversation. Her responses to my prompts
or questions became longer and more detailed with more emotion and feeling, this was
also the case for looks she held in her memory wardrobe. Describing the pink

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[118] These images illustrate how black and white photography can hide the richness of colour. See 5.3.2 for
imaginative colour added to black and white images.

bridesmaid dress she hated wearing (Fig. 3.38), she vividly described the outfit, she would rather be wearing: 'I couldn't wait to get it off and the thing that I had, I wore, afterwards, it's what they call ski pants, which are stretch and shocking pink and my navy-blue top with the V-neck and that's, that's what I was happy wearing' (Carole 2019).

Figure 3.39 Carole's green silk bridesmaid dress. Author's photograph, 2019.
Figure 3.40 Carole (second from left) in green silk bridesmaid dress, aged 18, 1962 © Carole.

When looking at the garments and discussing the dress experiences of her youth Carole was at her most relaxed. The garments, both physical and visual, appeared to unlock her narratives and remind her of the embodied experience of wearing them, as she described the fit of a pair of shorts, or the cut of a dress. I sensed that Carole was less interested in laying down, or remembering, her personal history. The technical aspects of dress – the fit, the cut and the manufacture – were important to Carole, above the cultural or emotional, personal contexts. This included a wonderful story about the untrained male relative who made her cherished green silk dress (Fig. 3.39), triggering another dress memory of a midnight blue and fuchsia pink outfit he made for his wife, that she borrowed for her own memory wardrobe. When I refer to one of the garments as a black dress, Carole added, 'it's not an ordinary little black dress' (Carole 2019), referring to the unique cutting technique at the front waist (Fig. 3.41). Carole's memory for dress was strong, she was able to date the garments and accessorise them with other items from her memory wardrobe of that time. Remembering the black stilettos, she once wore with the black dress; she ran upstairs and quickly retrieved the exact shoes (Fig. 3.42). Carole valued the materiality of the artefacts present, yet when

I asked if in fact the photographs were most likely to trigger a memory, Carole agreed, but no detail was volunteered.

Figure 3.41 Detail of Blanes' black wool crepe dress, c. 1961. Author's photograph, 2019.
Figure 3.42 Black stiletto shoes, c. 1961. Author's photograph, 2019.

3.9.2 Carole's Reflections

Carole's reaction to the interview was hard to gauge, where many of the previous participants were used to reflecting on their youth in their everyday lives, that was not the case for Carole, and indeed it was her preference not to look back. As we worked through the interview process Carole sometimes stopped to reflect, almost taking herself by surprise. Right at the start when describing the dirndl skirt that she made to go out dancing, she paused briefly before reflecting on how much she changed when she had children. For Carole, her self-defined period of youth was short, and while she did not demonstrate any nostalgia for those years specifically, she hinted that she mourned the freedom of her youth, which was cut short bringing up two young children on her own. 'Well, when you're young everything's bright and breezy, isn't it, and life's full of opportunities? They're not anymore. I mean, I can still do what I want but my horizons have limited, you know' (Carole 2019).

3.9.3 Author's Reflections

Carole responded to a call for participants that was published in the Textile Society newsletter. I sensed that Carole was mostly interested in talking about textiles and dress more broadly and we enjoyed an extended conversation after the tape was

switched off about her collection. As we were about to finish the interview, Carole went back for one last rummage in her memory wardrobe where she retrieved a dress from her youth that caused her embarrassment when it appeared sheer in the sunlight. She then went on to describe other more positive dress memories, using photographs from her albums that I later regretted not scanning. After the recorder was switched off the conversation continued as I photographed the garments. Carole gave more detail on the green bridesmaid dress (Fig. 3.39). We also returned to the black stiletto shoes (Fig. 3.42), and Carole tried them on, remembering that they were bought in Derber's shoe shop in Manchester. Carole also remembered the black wool 'Blanes' dress (Fig. 3.41) was bought from an independent boutique in Cheadle although she could not recall the name.

For Carole pulling together the toolkit had triggered memories to some extent but there was less evidence of this occurring in the interview itself. The interview felt less emotional than others I had undertaken, for both myself and for Carole, at least as far as I could tell. I wondered if the lack of music had impacted on the atmosphere in the interview. When I transcribed and analysed the conversation, I played the track Carole referenced which helped me feel more connected to that period, reflecting the importance of music to me as a cultural marker. I will never know whether the presence of music would have changed the interview experience for Carole, but it was interesting that it was off limits. On reflection it changed my experience of the interview as previously the participants' soundtracks had triggered my own memories, in the emotive atmosphere music provided. This has happened less in reaction to other people's clothes and photographs, leading me to reflect how, until now, music had provided a link between my experience, the participant's experience and our shared experience.

3.10 Olive (2019)

Olive's interview took place in a quiet living room at the back of her large, detached home, in a semi-rural Stockport suburb, where she had lived for around forty years with her husband, and one of her two sons. The room was spacious, bright, and comfortable, but not cluttered. There were French doors to the garden, beyond which were open fields. There were one or two photographs on the mantelpiece or side tables which Olive alluded to in her interview. Olive was wearing a neat blouse, with a cream background and a red/beige all-over diamond pattern with a pair of smart beige

trousers. Olive looked much younger than her years, telling me that neither her nor her friends, had 'gone into old lady mode yet' (Olive 2019).

Figure 3.43 Olive (second from right), Isle of Man, 1954 © Olive.

Raised in South Manchester, Olive trained as a secretary at college, briefly working for a solicitor, and then at an insurance company in Manchester. But for most of her working life she was a school bursar, until she retired aged 60. She was proud of her career, and often connected her dress narratives to this element of her life story. Defining her youth from the age of 14 until she got married at 22, followed by her first child at the age of 25. Between 1950 and 1958, Olive participated in local youth culture through church groups and dance halls, keeping up with pop music and fashion. She still enjoyed the music of her youth, listening to compilations made by her son and singing along in the car, and remained interested in clothes and fashion. Olive was aware of societal dress codes in her youth and throughout life, and dressing appropriately was important to her, she included examples of this in her narrative, particularly in relation to her work dress. Olive had started work at 16 and reflected on how her ability to dress appropriately landed her second job.[119]

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[119] See Sophie Woodward (2007: 143) on work dress codes and social interaction, and Laura Way (2021) for navigation of work dress from a subcultural perspective. Analysis of dressing for work can be found in Track *6.3.1 Sustaining the Cultural Practices of Youth.*

I was in, all in blue, and I had white cotton gloves on [laughs], and a blue-and-white handbag. And my mother turned me out to go for this interview, and ages later my boss said to me, "You got that job because of how you looked. You were useless when you first came" [laughs] (Olive 2019).

Before the interview started, I chatted with Olive in her kitchen while she made us a cup of tea. We made small talk and found common ground in the village where I live, as her sister had lived there until the 1990s. We also talked about her working life and the influence her parents had on her early career, persuading her to leave her job working in common law, deeming the narratives of adultery and divorce she was asked to type up unsuitable for a girl in her late teenage years. Imagining how her two granddaughters would react to such an instruction, Olive alluded to generational social change, comparing their experience of young adulthood to her own on several occasions in her narrative.

Olive described her youth as 'happy-go-lucky' as she progressed from church youth groups to dances in the parish hall. Olive remembered dancing the Volita and the military two-step,[120] with an interlude for rock and roll, until she was 18 and started going to the Rex in Wilmslow, and the Levenshulme Palais on a Wednesday and Saturday night, catching the last bus home at half past ten.[121] Olive described herself as a bit of rebel and recounted the story of sneaking a rare night out in Manchester at the Ritz. She also listened to music at home, and remembered having a Dansette record player, when she was about 16 or 17, buying her first record – Glenn Miller's 'Moonlight Serenade' – in a record store on Kingsway, Manchester where she also bought the gramophone.[122] She built up a collection of records and described the experience of record shopping: 'I worked in Manchester so there was a shop on Deansgate and you could go in booths and listen to them before you bought them, as though you didn't know what you are buying, which was crazy, really [laughs]' (Olive 2019). Reflecting on how she danced on her kitchen floor with her friends, Olive (2019) declared 'I had a very, very happy youth'.

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[120] Described by Olive post interview as an old-time sequence dance.

[121] The Rex cinema in Wilmslow, Cheshire, UK, opened in 1936 and remained in use until 1995. It re-opened as an independent boutique cinema in 2018. *Knutsford Guardian* (2018) 'Fascinating glimpse of the heyday of the Rex in Wilmslow' [online]. Available at: https://www.knutsfordguardian.co.uk/news/15920296.fascinating-glimpse-heyday-rex-wilmslow/. [Accessed 7 August 2022]. There is little information about the Levenshulme Palais de Danse available online, but the dancehall appears to have become a popular music venue in the 1930s. *Our Manchester* (no date) 'The Palais' [online]. Available at: https://manchesterhistory.net/LONGSIGHT/BUILDINGS/palais.html. [Accessed 7 August 2022].

[122] Glen Miller (1939) 'Moonlight Serenade' UK: Regal Zonophone.

Figure 3.44 Olive (second from right), aged 20, Isle of Man, 1956 © Olive.

As there were still post-war shortages in her early youth, Olive had her clothes made by a local seamstress,[123] spending most of the week worrying about what to wear to the Saturday night dance. Her toolkit included photographs of these simple, cotton dresses (Fig. 3.44).

> Because at 14, that would be, it would be, 1950. So, the war wasn't over that long ago and there was still a degree of rationing and so I had clothes made by a lady down the road who made cotton dresses, and it was important because I was just beginning to notice that there were boys in the world (Olive 2019).

Whilst in the memory wardrobe Olive was also reminded of her first 'proper' coat.

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[123] Clothes rationing ended in England in March 1949. *IWM* (2022) 'How Clothes Rationing Affected Fashion in The Second World War' [online]. Available at: https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/how-clothes-rationing-affected-fashion-in-the-second-world-war. [Accessed 7 August 2022].

> I can remember getting my first coat, proper coat after the war; it was made of suiting, was like a man's suiting, and I just thought it was wonderful. And it had a metallic belt that was sort of silver discs and then a bit of a chain and then a silver disc then this, you know, a silver thing hung down. And I just thought I was the cat's whiskers in that (Olive 2019).

Describing her limited access to clothes led Olive to describe her upbringing and the school where she first met her husband. She described the influence of her older sister and how she shopped at Marks and Spencer and C&A, becoming better dressed as she became more independent and established her own style.

Figure 3.45 Olive, Blackpool Pier, date unknown © Olive.
Figure 3.46 Olive aged 21, Scotland, 1957 © Olive.

Olive felt her style had been consistent, describing her look as 'smart-casual' and explained how clothes gave her confidence. 'I don't dress to impress anybody else. No, I don't dress to impress anybody else, but I do dress so that I feel that hopefully they feel I'm dressed right. But it's, it's my own self-confidence that I dress for' (Olive

2019).[124] Olive did not come across as overly sentimental and had not kept artefacts from her youth apart from the photograph albums that she and her husband had kept over the years. However, she described herself as nostalgic, enjoying retirement and still socially active. She enjoyed meeting up with old friends, many of whom still lived locally, and through this she remained in regular contact with her past. Olive stated that people were more important to her than objects. Relying on her friends and family, rather than artefacts, for her memory kit, supported by a strong friendship group from her youth and regular opportunities to reminisce. Olive also used Facebook to stay connected with family and had kept a diary, but only since her children were born. More recently Olive had been inspired to write down her life story for her family who had all read and enjoyed it.[125]

3.10.1 Olive's Toolkit

Olive had given thought to what she wanted to share, and we started the toolkit part of the interview with Olive's photograph albums. These included photographs going back to her youth, most of which were taken by her husband, and an album that her friends gave her on her 20th birthday:

> Oh yes, yes. I got them out because, you know, we've got tons of them, because everything – [my husband]'s a fanatic for putting them in albums. We've got dozens of albums. So, I said, "Well just get my old one out" [laughs] (Olive 2019).

She also showed me her wedding album and printed photobooks made by her son from which she shared a picture of her 60th wedding anniversary. Olive worked her way through the photographs pointing out the clothing, remembering locations and dates. She had photographs of the cotton dresses described earlier (Fig. 3.44), along with other key looks, photographs of her first house, her first cooker, and other key moments including other people's weddings and her own wedding day. Olive had also selected photographs of her honeymoon to show the outfits depicted.[126] As she described the clothes, Olive often referred to the fashion of that time, or related the looks to current trends, evidencing her expertise and self confidence in dress. Looking back at an outfit she wore on honeymoon she said 'I would still wear that. You know I would, I would not feel out of place in that sort of outfit' (Olive 2019).

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[124] See Sophie Woodward (2005) and Track *6.1.3 Self-Affirmation* for analysis.
[125] See *6.2.2 Personal Memory Archives* for a quote from Olive telling this story.
[126] See Figures 5.7 and 5.8, Track 5.3.2 for examples of snapshots from Olive's wedding album.

Prior to the interview Olive had sent me a list of music tracks from her youth so that I could play them on my laptop. I created a playlist on Spotify, some of the tracks were remastered versions of the original. Looking at the photographs did not trigger any music memories for Olive. When asked if any music came to mind, she did recall playing 'Unchained Melody' 'hundreds of times' while her husband was abroad on military services, and sang aloud the lyric 'oh my love, my darling'. Olive told me she had not listened to the track for fifty or more years.[127] We played the track from the Spotify playlist, and I asked Olive if she could recall what she might have been wearing when she listened to this track, to which Olive replied, briefly, that she was 'probably' wearing 'that dress', referring to one of her honeymoon outfits.[128] The connection between dress, music and the memory felt forced (by me) and subsequently contradicted as Olive connected the track with a different period of time to the associated outfit. We briefly talked about the tracks Olive chose for her playlist, while they played back-to-back on shuffle mode, going almost unnoticed as the conversation continued. When prompted Bill Hayley reminded Olive of dancing in her kitchen,[129] and then led her to reference 'Blue Suede Shoes' by Elvis Presley,[130] describing a recent family event where she danced to rock and roll with her old friend and kitchen dancing partner. As the music played on Olive turned her attention back to dress and how she made do by adjusting garments, including an unsuccessful alteration to her wedding dress, sharing clothes amongst friends, especially for holidays where 'whoever was going away on holiday took the best of our clothes' (Olive 2019). As the music drew to a close, Olive put the kettle on and I scanned some of the photographs, checking some of the detail with Olive when she returned with the tea.

3.10.2 Olive's Reflections

Olive had positive memories of her youth and was grateful to have had such a contented life. She apologised occasionally for what she perceived as an uneventful life story, but there was no sense that Olive regretted anything about her life choices. Reflecting on the preparation of her toolkit, Olive referenced the musty smell of the old albums that had been stored for many years, and later admitted it was her husband, not her, who managed, and perhaps most valued the photograph albums, and would

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[127] Jimmy Young (1955) 'Unchained Melody', UK: Decca (1955).
[128] See Figure 5.7 in Track 5.3.2 for snapshots of these outfits.
[129] Bill Hayley and His Comets (1954) '(We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock', UK: Brunswick.
[130] Elvis Presley (1956) 'Blue Suede Shoes', UK: His Master's Voice.

spend time looking at them. Olive enjoyed the interview and explained how it had helped her remember things she had forgotten. Reflecting on getting older Olive described how she found the changes in herself 'imperceptible' and as she looked back on the memory experience she described a connected past, present and future. Happy in her retirement, enjoying time with her husband and old friends in the present, and recalling her memories of youth. As the interview drew to a close we carried on chatting about family life and Olive stated that our discussion had given her quite a bit to think about.

3.10.3 Author's Reflections

I met Olive through Carole, who knew her from the amateur dramatics group where they both volunteered as wardrobe assistants. I had decided that this would be my final interview and it made a valuable contribution to the research, extending the period of youth covered by the participants to 1950 when Olive was 14. Olive's positive attitude to life and the interview experience made it a joyful experience for us both and Olive talked freely about her youth and life experiences. Her narrative, and life philosophy, centred on people – her family and close friends – rather than possessions, objects or memorabilia. However, Olive had a particularly strong memory for clothing, recalling detailed descriptions with or without an accompanying photograph, reflecting her continued interest in dress and fashion. It was interesting that for Olive the presence of the toolkit sometimes distracted from the narrative as her memories of dress and music from her youth were just as detailed without the presence of audio or visual prompts.

I regretted not scanning more images as one or two are missing that were referred to in the interview. I was absorbed in the interview and left insufficient time to scan and log them all. Some were also stuck in the photograph albums, and I was concerned about damaging them. Several months after the interview I sent Olive the transcript and an overview of the images I scanned with descriptions, and she kindly provided one or two corrections. Sadly, this was my last contact with Olive as in May 2020 I heard from Carole that both Olive and her husband had passed away. When I contacted her son to pass on my condolences, I was pleased to hear she had shared her transcript with her family.

3.11 Sleeve Note Refrains

The crafting of these youth stories provided a first stage of analysis. From each participant, key ideas and concepts arose, along with my observations, many of which appeared as repeats or 'refrains' across the participants' stories. These early commonalities and findings were used to map out the chapters that follow and structure the discussion.

Rock 'n' Roll Lifestyle foregrounds the active participation that emerged in all the narratives, including focus on the restricted experiences Kate and Helen described and accessible everyday participation such as listening to the radio in the bedroom (Helen, Heather, Kate). The youth stories exposed the parameters of youth however short (Marian, Linda, Carole, Olive) or extended (Janet, Mo, Helen, Heather, Kate, Jayne) and the 'pause' in youth culture described by Janet and Jayne. The notion of the 'personal life' beginning on leaving home was proposed by Marian and echoed by Kate's term 'meaningful youth'. There were also interesting contradictions as moving away from home signalled the beginning of Kate's youth culture, whilst Jayne's subcultural involvement was put on hold when she left for university. The concept of the *Memory Wardrobes and Memory Soundtracks* outlined in Chapter 5 emerged from the analysis of the youth stories. These stories exposed how through dress and music vivid memories are activated (Janet, Helen), becoming embodied (Helen, Heather) across temporal planes (Mo, Kate). The stories led to the concept of 'retro FOMO', the retrospective feeling of missing out reported by Helen, Kate and Jayne, and the importance of peak experiences of youth in relation to memory.[131] The stories draw out the impact of the toolkit and the ability of both dress and music to act as conduits, or even surrogates for memories of youth. The stories also suggest conflicts and inconsistencies of memory are common, but unimportant to the participants in the act of remembering. The final thematic chapter *Youth Lives with Us* was inspired by Janet's concept of enduring youth, repeated to some degree by most of the participants. The stories reveal the blurred parameters of youth and temporal consistency across time. Janet and Jayne described their youth as re-ignited, reflected and enabled through dress (Dr. Martens) and music (1960s Soul) worn and listened to over extended periods of time. Many participants had carefully stored or archived artefacts from their youth for themselves as a memory aid, or for others as legacy

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[131] See Track 5.3.5 for discussion on retro FOMO and Tracks 5.3.5 and 5.6 for analysis of 'peak experiences' (Green 2021).

records. Marian's term 'youth in a suitcase' was adopted for the methods chapter. Expertise in dress and music lent the stories confidence, subcultural capital (Mo, Helen) and impacted in self affirmation.[132] The stories bring to light the impact of youth across time and how these women are still 'getting away with it' (Janet, Kate).

These sleeve notes have introduced and credited the participants and opened the central themes for discussion in the analysis that follows, where they are considered alongside the key literature, drawing out the findings and contributions to knowledge. Forming a set of sleeve notes, the youth stories play a pivotal role in the analysis but have also enabled my reflection on the methods. They serve as a reminder to me throughout the analysis that the participants' voices are the focus. Yet, my own experience cannot be separated from theirs. Whilst I assumed an obvious connection with Janet and Kate, being of a similar age with shared music preferences, I found a shared understanding and fondness for all ten amazing women, having spent several years immersed in their youth stories. Their stories are here as both a reference and a springboard to the wider discussion that follows.

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[132] Subcultural capital as defined by Sarah Thornton (1995), see 1.3.7 for context.

Chapter 4. ROCK 'N' ROLL LIFESTYLE
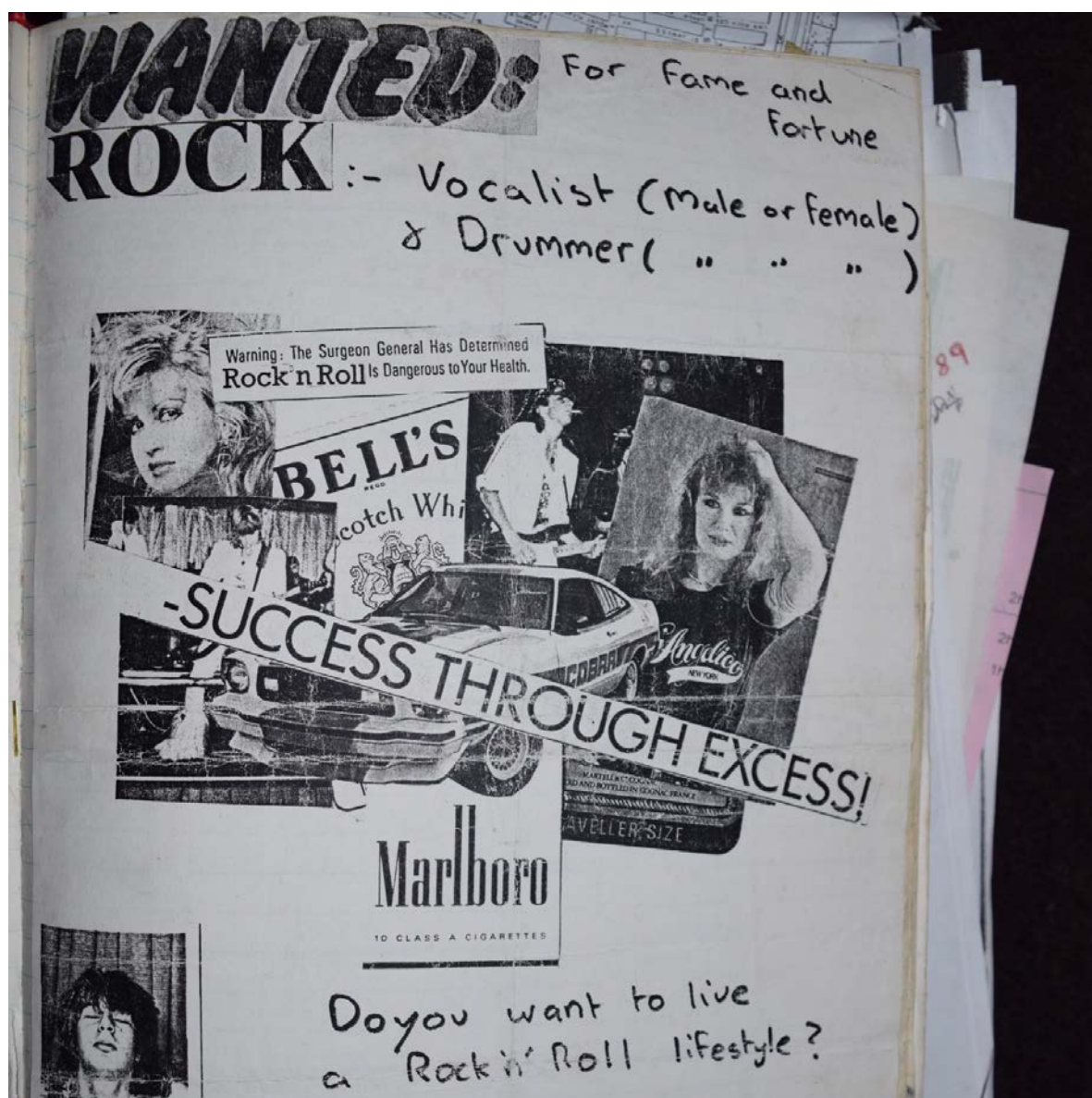
Figure 4.1. Advert, Kate's Scrapbook. Author's photograph, 2018.

This chapter takes its name from a photocopy advertisement preserved in Kate's scrapbook, an advertisement through which she was recruited as a drummer in her first band at the age of 18 (Fig. 4.1). Offering 'success through excess!', the advertisement employs the semiology of DIY punk graphics and collaged images read simultaneously as masculine and voyeuristic, *and* an invitation that welcomes women, offering the opportunity to join the band and 'live a rock 'n' roll lifestyle'. It serves to open the debate about female participation in everyday youth culture and concurrent perceptions of femininity.

The chapter begins with definitions of 'youth culture' and 'youth' framed in the literature, and the parameters of youth from the participants' perspectives. A critique of youth culture theory follows, and recollected experiences of youth are analysed in a historical and cultural frame. Drawn from the first part of the interviews and considering a broad set of experiences, dress and music narratives are used to render women's participation in youth cultures visible, presenting evidence from the interviews that corrects the lack of female participation recorded in existing literature. Historical perceptions of femininity are challenged through new evidence of the gendered experience of youth. The discussion considers the impact of social and societal influences on women's experiences of youth culture, and how these were accepted or resisted. The chapter concludes by exploring the public and private spaces that the participants inhabited.

4.1 Defining Youth Culture

The post-war half-century that the participant narratives sit within aligns with the cultural turn in youth studies, following the rise of the 'teenager' (Savage 2007; *Teenage* 2014), leisure consumption related to rising employment (Frith 1984; Tebbutt 2016; Osgerby 1998), and the Americanisation of youth culture (Horn 2009). The application of subcultural theory to youth can be identified as early as the mid-1950s in America (Cohen ([1955] 1971). However, it was the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in the 1970s that implanted youth subculture theory in British academia. Based at Birmingham University, the group published Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson's *Resistance Through Rituals* ([1975] 2006), an edited selection of essays that situated subcultures as a form of symbolic resistance for working-class youth including Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber's 'Girls and Subcultures' ([1975] 2006). This was followed by Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* ([1979] 1997: 92) which focused on spectacular subcultures including punks and Rastafarians, that 'breach our expectancies'. These texts are drawn upon in this thesis as the nucleus for academic discussion on female participation in youth culture, and the synthesis of dress, music and youth cultures.

Subcultural theory has received plenty of criticism, not least from post-subcultural theorists who rejected the reliance on reductionist semiotics and fixed typologies and lines of division imposed on identities (Redhead 1990; Bennett 1999, 2000, 2011; Miles 2000; Muggleton 2000, 2005; Hodkinson 2012a). This thesis considers youth culture

in broad terms rather than a singular focus on specific subcultural groups. It defragments youth culture to show that broader practices override seeming differences. Whilst a historical and social understanding of subculture provides contextual background, the aim of this thesis is to move beyond fixed tropes or spectacular subcultural groups, to focus on the experiences, emotions and memories of individuals who may or may not have fitted into one or more defined cultures in their youth. This is evidenced in the participant narratives. As Mo explains such movement between youth cultures was common in the 1960s and 1970s:

> I was born in the 50s, so I became a teenager in the 70s, so, in the 60s things started to change. So, really by the time I was a teenager, the rebels had changed things for me if you like in our age group, so I think it was easier for us to be more individual, and like more genres, rather than just be stuck in one, "You're a hippie, you're a mod, you're whatever". We sort of leapfrogged between and it was great. We had a great time (Mo 2018).

Jayne associated herself with the mod subculture in the 1980s and was firmly ensconced in the scene. Whilst Kate, a protagonist in youth culture through her involvement in the music scene, found no obvious subcultural fit for her participation in Manchester's music scene in the 1990s. Around the same time Janet flitted between the cultures that best matched her musical tastes, not tightly bound to one subculture, or a specific youth period.

> You did identify in a subculture because it was really like a clique of people who you hung around with. But when I was younger, yeah, there was quite a lot of, there was the mods, there were the skinheads, there were the punks. Not so many because that was obviously quite a bit earlier, and the casuals, definitely the casuals, football casuals (Jayne 2018).

> Like the clubbing scene and the house and acid, we were obviously never part of that. I was really just coming to Manchester then. Then when we were playing and getting going, it was all Stone Roses and Oasis. For what we were doing, which was very much at a complete tangent to that, and it gets missed. It gets totally missed (Kate 2018).

> I participated. I think it's ranged from kind of like mod to punk, back to mod, but I think the mod culture has always been there in the background (Janet 2018).

The work of the CCCS has received criticism for its male-centred approach, particularly from McRobbie who has argued that 'the attractions of a subculture – its fluidity, the

shifts in the minutiae of its styles, the details of its combative *bricolage* – are offset by an unchanging and exploitative view of women' (1980: 73). However, Christine Feldman-Barrett has proposed that subcultural theory provided 'an open-ended invitation to write women's experiences into subcultural history' (2020: 105). The gender imbalance of both the participant and academic voices in youth culture research has provided inspiration and a springboard for this research.

Despite the criticisms, subcultural theory has forged a valuable theoretical model in that it synthesised experiences of youth with both music and style, which are so often segregated into the distinct academic fields of fashion theory, popular music and youth studies.[1] This thesis extends that synthesis into the realm of everyday lived experience. It also draws on the subcultural concepts of resistance and bricolage, re-appropriating them within a framework of everyday life across gender, space and time. In this way whilst specific subcultures are not under scrutiny, subcultural theory has informed this thesis as a 'historical tradition' (Huq 2006: 20). The reflective approach in this thesis also differs from the work of the CCCS, serving to leverage the gap between past and present experience, and the self-knowledge that is applied in remembered experiences of youth.

The term 'youth culture' is used to avoid the limits of subculture or post-subcultural theories, remaining situated within cultural studies yet prioritising personal over group experience. The term is more inclusive of female experience, considering the distinctive cultural lives of girls for whom subcultures were not accessible or desirable (McRobbie 1980). Youth culture was defined by John Clarke et al. as the way young people 'develop distinct patterns of life, and give *expressive form* to their social and material life-experience' ([1975] 2006: 4 [original emphasis]). In this study the expressive forms under examination are the everyday cultural practices associated with dress and music listening.

In her call for an anthropological approach to youth studies, Mary Bucholtz proposed that framing youth in terms of its 'cultural practices' enables a 'dynamic' analysis of youth culture in the quest to document a broader scope of youth experience (2002: 539). The youth cultural practices under scrutiny in this thesis stretch from the mundane to the spectacular, extending the study of dress, music and youth into less

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[1] See Track 1.3.6 for a discussion on the positioning of this thesis within dress, music and youth literature.

visited territories such as material, visual and audio culture and memory studies, using reflexive, sensory methods that prioritise lived experience.

4.2 Parameters of Youth

Youth is a contested term; its meaning has continually evolved in line with societal change and remains subject to nuanced understanding according to social status, class, place, race, age, or gender. It has been shaped across cultures and histories by the fluctuating boundaries of childhood and adulthood, modern concepts of identity, changes in education, work and/or consumption habits and the emergence of teenage consumer culture in the 1950s and 1960s – a pivotal moment in the history of modern youth according to Melanie Tebbutt (2016). Tebbutt has suggested that 'age as a traditional lifecycle has become less important, and markers of youth and the life course established in the nineteenth century continue to erode' (2016: 193).

Psychologist Erik Erikson's widely referenced eight-stage 'life cycle' model places youth as a developmental phase somewhere between childhood and adulthood ([1959] 1980: 129), yet from a sociological perspective, age and youth are understood to be socially constructed. Mike O'Donnell described the study of age, and by default youth, as 'interdisciplinary', defining the life cycle as a biological concept that intersects with the psychology of the individual and the 'social construction of age' (1985: 8). Sociological approaches to the life course have evolved to recognise more transient and fluid boundaries that reflect diverse life choices and experiences. 'The once assumed "stages" of life and what they entail for life events are no longer "fixed" and predictable' (Hunt [2005] 2017: 4). Theoretical focus has shifted from the life cycle towards a 'life course' approach, originally proposed by Glen Elder (1974). The life course approach synthesises the experience of the individual with social life, and the impact of societal changes and environments on past and present experience. In life course theory, life changes are variable transitions associated with key life events or turning points such as leaving school or marriage, but it is acknowledged that these may take place at different periods or times of life or be experienced differently by people with different world views (Hunt [2005] 2017: 27). In this thesis the life course is reflected through the cultural resources of dress and music, which are often linked to biographies or key life events in academic literature. Dress has biographical significance and can unsettle the linear life trajectory as items are worn across time (Woodward 2007), and age-related social constructs have been disrupted through

freedom of choice or appropriation from the past (Hockey et al. 2014).[2] Music also participates in temporal unsettling. It accompanies us from the womb through to death (Davidson and Garrido 2014) and 'provides a device for unfolding, for replaying, the temporal structure' (DeNora 2000: 67).[3]

In youth studies, Bennett and Hodkinson (2012) recognised that the timing or order of life events no longer maps neatly onto cohorts of people of similar age, as increasingly these transitions are extended or delayed. In the introduction to their volume on *Ageing and Youth Cultures,* they suggest that 'there may be a case here for a recasting of youth culture, not merely as tied to an age-specific period of transition in the life course' (Bennett and Hodkinson 2012: 3). Returning to Tebbutt, youth can be understood as 'a state of mind or set of attitudes associated with people much older than the age range to which the term is conventionally applied' (2016: 3). In this thesis youth is perceived by the remembering self in mid- or later life. Rather than viewing the life course as a trajectory, or later life as a life stage, cultural anthropologist and social gerontologist Sharon Kaufman noted that in later life people 'express a sense of self that is ageless – an identity that maintains continuity despite physical and social changes that come with old age' (Kaufman 1986: 7).

The thesis builds on the cross-disciplinary literature relating to the life course, recognising the relationship between age and youth, but seeing psychological and social impacts on the temporal self as fluid, not bounded. The parameters of youth were initially examined in relation to chronological age, based on the participant perceptions of when their youth started and finished. This data was collected in the questionnaire and elaborated upon in the oral narratives, contextualising the participants' definitions of youth with the personal, cultural and social influences that shaped their life stories. However, the responses found that youth cannot be defined within a fixed time frame. Youth in the context of this thesis represents not an age range or developmental life stage but a period of increasing social freedoms, offering fresh life experiences, and opportunities for enjoyment of body adornment and musical stimulation, at whatever age this occurs for the individual. Marian (2018) described this transition as her 'personal life' beginning.[4] Chapters 5 and 6 extend this discussion

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[2] See Julia Twigg on 'age ordering' (2013: 25) in track 6.3.2 as an example of societal constructions of age and dress.
[3] See track 6.1 for discussion on the biographical power of dress and music.
[4] For Marian this began at 15 when she started work. See *Sleeve Notes* 3.2.

further, beyond youth as lived experience (past) to parameters of youth in lived experience (present) and the temporality of 'feeling' young. Everyday understandings of youth align more with its qualities and characteristics: 'youthful freshness or vigour; youthful wantonness, folly, or rashness; youthful appearance or aspect' (OED 2022; q.v. youth). The evidence presented here finds an understanding of youth that includes openness to new experiences and engagement with cultural practices associated with youth that can extend decades beyond the teenage years.

In the pre-interview questionnaire, the participants' self-defined period of youth ranged from 12 to beyond 30 years of age. Most participants described their youth beginning roughly from the time of puberty (13+ years). Half of the participants defined their youth as ongoing or extended beyond their late 30s (Table 4.1), and some participants recounted narratives of active participation in youth culture that extended into their 40s and beyond in their interviews.

Table 4.1 Self-Defined Parameters of Youth.
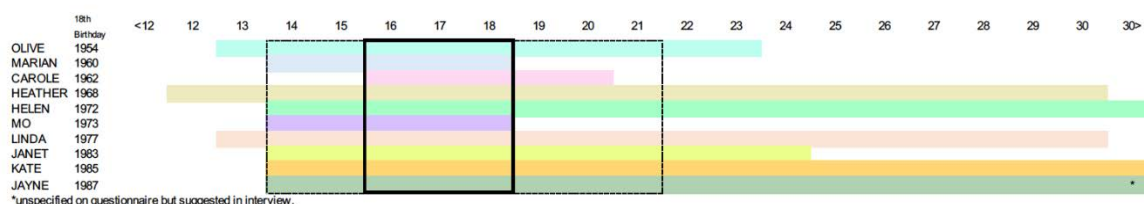
The participants all considered the period between 16 and 18 to be part of their 'youth'. However, it was notable that many considered their involvement in 'youth culture' to have begun much later, once they developed the independence or networks that enabled them to actively participate. Although, these parameters were potentially influenced by the scale I presented in the questionnaire, defined by the dotted line in Table 4.1 and illustrated below (Fig. 4.2).

QQ2. **Between what ages would you define your youth?**

Please add an x in the appropriate boxes

Younger?	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Older?
Please specify									Please specify

Figure 4.2 Question 2 from the pre-interview questionnaire (Appendix A).

As Table 4.1 and the quotes below illustrate the span of youth often reflected the cultural landscape at the time, as Marian found independence when she started work at 15 in the late 1950s, Carole moved to London in the swinging 60s, whilst Kate described her extended youth as a single woman in the late 1990s.

> When my own personal life began. You know when you've sort of, you've left your parents, type of thing, you know. I don't mean leave them physically but when you're sort of, you're more independent, you know, you become your own person then, don't you? I think, that, that was more, you've gone from a little girl to a grown up in no time, you know. From being, say, 13½/14 into 15, it doesn't seem a big gap, does it? But when you start work you've left a school behind and school friends so you, sort of, come from a schoolgirl to a mature person really in a matter of months, don't you? (Marian 2018).[5]

> 16 was when I left school and 20 [pause] was more independence because I'd moved to London by then and I was a mobile demonstrator of sewing machines… I could go anywhere and do anything and because I was then in the swinging 60s and you could do anything and lived, I was living in London anyway, away from home (Carole 2019).

> I say youth because I think it's interesting, when I was looking through the questionnaire, it was like, how do I define my youth and I probably didn't start faffing about, probably till about 10 years ago, 12 years ago. So, I'm 51 now, so late 30s. So, for me, it extends quite long, and I don't think my meaningful youth, as it were, probably didn't start till, I don't know what this is like for other people but for me, it kind of wasn't until probably about my 20s, my early 20s, when I'd, I thought I didn't really have that much definition as a teenager, it always kind of felt a little bit, like, ill-defined but when I, kind of, got into my 20s and I was playing drums and music and I met a lot of the people now, who are still my friends, who I've have now had, some for nearly 30 years. That's when it kind of became more definitive for me (Kate 2018).

The vast cultural and social landscape under scrutiny in the period extending across the participants is acknowledged, recognising that 'life experiences are influenced by the historical periods in which an individual's life course takes place' (Hunt [2005] 2017: 4). While there is no attempt in this thesis to relay a history of modern youth, instead

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[5] Compulsory education was extended to 15 in 1947, and the grammar school system was introduced. The school leaving age was then raised to 16 in 1972. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Raising of school leaving age in England and Wales' [online]. Available at:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raising_of_school_leaving_age_in_England_and_Wales#20th_century. [Accessed 18 September].

pointing to the work of others in that field (Horn 2009; Osgerby 1998; Tebbutt 2016),[6] historical evidence is generated. Julia Twigg suggested that photographs of dress 'visibly manifest' historical contexts and enable intersection of 'personal and historical time' (2013: 77). Both dress and music share this ability to mirror historical contexts, making them valuable conduits to youth cultural history, as Marian's account of growing up in the 1950s illustrates:

> And, then skiffle came along, and then rock and roll came along, and it was just, it just blew your mind then, you just thought, "Oh, this is great," you know. Because there was a big difference between, like, what was happening in the 50s to the late-50s. And it was the same with clothes, because the mothers and the daughters all looked the same, because the clothes were so old-fashioned and dated. And then, by the time it came to, like, mid-50s, things were changing, you know. Jeans and things like that, you know, and it was good, it was good to see the difference, because you thought it was never going to happen (Marian 2018).

The frame for analysis in this chapter is informed, not defined, by age or historical periods. Focusing instead on the individual conceptualisation of 'youth', its parameters, and the participants' descriptions of their involvement in everyday youth culture through dress and music. For example, all but one of the participants cited relationships as a factor in their self-defined parameters of youth. Yet, the impact varied according to the age at which they met their partners, societal norms at that time, and the nature of the relationship. In the quote below Marian references a brief window where her 'personal life' began as she left school in her mid-teens and started work. However, when she married aged 21 in 1961, she marked this as the end of her youth, 'because you are no longer a single person, are you? Because there is another person to think about, you know, other than yourself' (Marian 2018):

> I suppose, really, when I got married, you know, although I was still only a teenager. Because, although it was a young age, it wasn't particularly young then, because most people got married at nineteen, twenty, and twenty-one then, you know. And, if you hadn't got engaged by the time you were nineteen, you were considered as being left on the shelf [laughs] (Marian 2018).

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[6] Jon Savage's book *Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture* (2007) and the subsequent film *Teenage* (2014) lend the research a useful historic context prior to the post-war period alongside David Fowler's (1995) analysis of female youth activities in Manchester. See also David Fowler's *Youth Culture in Modern Britain* (2008) for a broader view of youth culture between 1920 and 1970.

Olive, who married at 22 in 1957, described her youth as 'happy go lucky' until she settled down with her husband and had her first child:

> My youth went till I was about 22, because I got married on my 22nd birthday, and until then, we just were happy-go-lucky. You know. We didn't buy a house; we went into rooms. We just wanted to be together, so we did, you know. So yes, my youth, as a sort of teenager, I think it started at 13/14, I had my first boyfriend at 14 – quite different to boyfriends of today. But [pause] yes, I would say my youth was 14 to 22…
>
> I felt that once I was married, yes, I'd moved on – I'd gone to the next stage of my life and tried to be sensible. And then I had [my son] when I was nearly 25, you know, so then it was, it's just been family life. So, anything that had gone on prior to 22, really, stopped, other than our friendships with people. And we then just started visiting each other's houses, rather than doing anything much else, you know (Olive 2019).

Both Olive and Marian accepted this termination of youth as a societal norm in the late 1950s and early 1960s, remaining happily married, and enjoying reminiscing on their youth with their husbands. Olive's comment above draws attention to both marriage *and* childbirth representing the end of youth cultural practices for some women.[7] Other participants found that getting married *extended* their youth, 'and then even, even when I was with [my husband] and got married, you know, I still see that as young' (Heather 2018). Marriage offered freedom from parental control for Mo and Helen in the mid-1970s.

> My youth didn't start until I was in my 20s, and I was married at 20, because I had a fairly strict upbringing. So, from being 14 to 20, I wasn't really allowed out. I didn't do clubs like all my mates did, I was really jealous about it and all that sort of thing. So, my youth, mainly was between 20 and 40…
>
> He was a bit older, well he's 69 in September so he's nearly five years older than me so, he used to bring me home for 10 o'clock or half past ten on Saturdays. And then he'd bugger off clubbing into Smiths into town and stuff like that. So yes, it went on quite a long time, until I was married. I think that's why I got married early, when I was 20, to get away [laughs] (Helen 2018).
>
> I wasn't [pause] encouraged to go out and maybe be as sociable as I wanted to be, because my parents were quite strict and obviously, they wanted me to fulfil my education and I wanted to go out [laughs], which

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[7] Angela McRobbie (1980: 68) points out that in fact the 'symbolic flights' of male subcultures were not only unavailable to women but also 'at the expense of women', particularly in motherhood. See Track 6.3.2 for Janet's experience.

>didn't go down too well in teenage years, but then, [pause] I don't
>know. I think getting married very young, probably a lot of people
>would say it was a mistake. I don't see it that way. I just went blithely
>through it and when it all fell to bits, I think that was the main [pause],
>that was what had the most effect on me. And if you class 22 as still
>your youth, which I suppose it could be, then yeah, that's what
>happened to me then is what made me the strong person I am now
>because I had to get through it (Mo 2018).

These viewpoints highlight the patriarchal society of the 1950s. By contrast, marriage offered Janet access to new cultural influences in the mid- late 1980s, by which time many women enjoyed later entry into work and the social opportunities afforded by a university education (Tebbutt 2016: 191).[8] McRobbie and Garber commented that education provided girls with the space to further develop their '*personal* style' away from the constraints on the working world ([1975] 2006: 185 [original emphasis]). Janet (2018) corroborates this, explaining that for her university was a place for sharing music with new friends.

>When I started Uni I met my husband, and he played in a band and,
>he was into the same, we realised we liked the same music, so that
>kind of re-ignited my love of music. And we went to gigs together and
>bands together, and I started playing guitar (Janet 2018).

But being of similar age does not always equate to shared parameters of youth.

>I sort of, like, realised then I had to sort of put that [mod culture] on the
>shelf sort of thing because I had to move on, because I knew I was
>going away to study you see, and that's I think really when I sort of
>thought that I had become a bit of a grown up (Jayne 2018).

Unlike Janet, who saw university as a conduit to youth culture, after years spent participating in the mod scene, Jayne had used higher education as a turning point, at which she (temporarily) left the mod youth culture aside. These narratives demonstrate the variance in transitions from one sociological stage of life to another in people of similar age (Hunt [2005] 2017: 25), reflecting the diverse life experiences, interpretations and choices of the participants.

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[8] Freely available contraception for married women in 1961 in noteworthy in relation to the impact of childbirth on continued engagement in youth culture. Iglikowski-Broad, V. (2022) 'Just a Pill: 60 years of the contraceptive pill on the NHS', *National Archives* [online]. Available at: https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/just-a-pill-60-years-of-the-contraceptive-pill-on-the-nhs/. [Accessed 7 August 2022].

4.3 Female Participation in Youth Culture

Figure 4.3 Elsie, Jean, Rose and Mary, 1955, photographed by Ken Russell (Horn 2009: 150).

While participation does not always take a highly visible form,[9] photographic essays have drawn attention to young women's involvement in youth cultures. Ken Russell's series 'Last of the Teddy Girls' depicted female participation in the 1950s, illustrated in Adrian Horn's (2009) analysis of youth culture in Britain. The photographs feature young women dressed in 'teddy girl' style wearing jeans and drape jackets (Figure 4.3). Predecessors of Alan Mead's (1988) *Skinhead Girl* and Anita Corbin's (2016) 'visible girls' from the 1980s, these images suggest a rejection of feminine societal norms and young women's active involvement in post-war youth culture. While these projects have been subject to recent media interest, there is limited academic literature about female participation in youth cultures.

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[9] In her analysis of photograph albums of two middle-class teenagers from 1956-65, Penny Tinkler suggested that while a photograph may not always show 'visible markers of youth culture' its absence cannot be assumed (2015: 94).

I initially planned to interview women who appeared to participate beyond mainstream female style, behaviour, or attitude, such as the women depicted in Russell's images. However, the definition of participation evolved during the research to describe women engaged in everyday youth culture through music or dress, whether on the streets (often considered a male domain), in venues, retail stores, or the home.[10] This change of tack responded to the lack of literature exploring beyond the spectacular typologies of youth cultures, and the potential of this field demonstrated by the pilot interview with Marian. While Marian described conforming to societal expectations of female behaviour at the time, in both dress and music choices, her accounts challenged my expectations of young women's active participation in 1950s youth culture and rendered 'mainstream' redundant as a measure of involvement.[11] For example, Marian described taking her turn-gramophone into work to play records and running to the Plaza for half-hour jives in her lunch hour, detailing what seems extraordinary within an ordinary working life (Marian 2015). The pilot interview exposed how my initial assumptions were unreliable as a measure of participation and missed the point that everyday experiences of youth are also participatory and worthy of scrutiny. Both Marian's initial testimony (2015), and each of the ten interviews analysed for this thesis evidenced active involvement in youth culture, although levels of participation varied dependent on the social norms and cultural settings of given periods, individual attributes, circumstances and interests (Appendix C). In this thesis I focus only on relevant experience variables, those drawn out of the narratives. These include levels of interest or expertise in dress and music, gendered restrictions or freedoms and levels of cultural access, which are considered alongside the narratives and toolkit items for analysis.

4.3.1 Female Representation

An exploration of visible and invisible female representation in youth culture began with an analysis of the literature, finding that many references to the participation of young women in post-war youth cultures assume women played a peripheral or subsidiary role. In Hall and Jefferson's edited volume ([1975] 2006), Rachel Powell and John Clarke modelled the marginality of working-class females pointing out that young working-class women were engaged in the 'same institutional structures' as their male

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[10] See 4.3.5 *Sites of Youth* for analysis of the spaces young women inhabited.
[11] I continue to use 'mainstream' more generally in the text when referring to perceived cultural norms but still recognise its fluidity of meaning.

counterparts, yet in 'different relations' ([1975] 2006: 191 [original emphasis]). However, in the same book McRobbie and Garber ([1975] 2006) suggested that the position of girls in subcultures is perhaps structurally different, rather than marginalised. They questioned whether girls were absent, inactive, or whether their participation was simply unreported, or misrepresented. McRobbie and Garber suggested it was easier for young women in the 1950s to consume the cultures of youth in the teenage bedroom or the home,[12] implying girls played a complementary but passive role as fans or collectors ([1975] 2006). Horn's (2009) analysis of women's post-war dress styles is a rare example of female inclusion in academic texts on mid-century youth culture. Horn suggested that while Teddy Girls were recognised in the mid-1950s, and young women quite possibly participated in street culture, their behaviour in public was deemed less threatening than that of young men at the time, and thus they were of little interest to the media. However, Horn drew attention to a rare exception, the 1955 *Picture Post* article that featured Russell's Teddy Girls (2009).

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Figure 4.4 Pat Wiles,1955, photographed by Ken Russell, (Dawoud 2013).
Figure 4.5 Iris Thornton and Pat Wiles, 1955, photographed by Ken Russell, (Dawoud 2013).

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[12] See Lincoln (2012), *Youth Culture and Private Space* and Track 4.3.5 in this thesis for discussion on the private spaces where youth culture took place.

These images have since been celebrated as post-war counter-fashion, yet Eve Dawoud's (2013) interviews with the subjects suggest these assumptions are flawed, as the women were partly styled by Russell (Figs. 4.4 and 4.5), questioning their accuracy as 'documentary' photographs, or press articles as reflections of ordinary lived experience:

> Ken asked us to wear those lace up sandals. The photos were taken in January, and we were absolutely freezing. He also instructed us not to smile, so we look really hard faced. Maybe he wanted to make us appear scary and intimidating (Iris Thornton cited in Dawoud 2013).

McRobbie (1980) has pointed to the importance of distinguishing generalised public stereotypes from documentation of lived experience. For example, William Osgerby's observation that 'stiletto-heeled and multi-petticoated girls' were accompanying the Teddy Boys to dances (1998: 36), is typical of gendered cultural tropes and the reporting of female youth participation as overtly feminine and secondary to male experience. However, this changed with the appearance of the skinhead girls of the 1970s, who replicated male dress and attitudes, as evidenced in Mead's *Skinhead Girl* (1988). These girls garnered more press attention, but this was potentially due to more visibility of women generally in the 1970s (McRobbie and Garber [1975] 2006). Still, traditional gender roles persisted as Mo's narrative about her first husband testifies:

> He was a very handsome bloke, very popular. So, I felt in order to sort of [pause] impress his friends and look right with him that I should dress in the similar sort of fashions that he wore. I wouldn't do it now, but when you're 16, you know, fitting in is very important I think, and yes, he did influence me greatly a lot (Mo 2018).

Mo explains the repressive influence of her husband in her late teens, describing how she used dress as a 'bridge' to fit in with his peer group (Barnard 2002: 40).[13] Osgerby suggested that young women were considered passive and inactive and a 'mere footnote' to the overtly masculine expression of the spectacular subcultures (1998: 55), at least until the punk era (Hebdige (1988). Mo corroborates this cultural shift:

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[13] Mo also explained how despite his influences, there were certain aspects of her style and music choices she maintained, see Track 6.1.2.

> Well, there were quite a few women coming up in, when the punk era
> started coming in in '76. I think that was when I first noticed women in
> a strong role in music and, I can't really, [pause] because up until then,
> I could be really wrong, but to me it seemed that before that women
> did have a voice, but it maybe wasn't heard, but with the punk
> movement they were going to be heard (Mo 2018).

McRobbie's feminist re-reading of *Subculture* acknowledged Hebdige's attention to race and style ([1979] 2007) but lamented the missed opportunity to unearth 'subculture's best-kept secret', and correct the silence created by the assumption 'that the style of a subculture is primarily that of its men' (1980: 73). Hebdige has since acknowledged the masculine bias in sociological accounts of urban youth cultures (1988), claiming 'Angela McRobbie's critique of the masculinist bias in *Subculture* is spot on: the book is all about the boys' (2012: 401). It was the passive status of women portrayed in the subcultural literature that most frustrated McRobbie. When David Muggleton interviewed his 'subcultural informants' decades later, only a quarter were women, and he concluded, like others before him, that women were more likely to be on the periphery of subcultural groups (2000: 153).[14] However many of the participants in this research described a strong commitment to the youth culture or cultures in which they engaged. When asked to what degree she participated in youth culture, Heather responded:

> Oh, I loved it. Loved it. Absolutely part of it. Loved it, and of course, it
> was all about music, too. Although I do have friends that weren't as
> involved in music at that time, they weren't proper mainstream, but
> they weren't as involved in some of the R&B club type of, type of thing,
> the mod culture (Heather 2018).

Back in 1975, McRobbie and Garber concluded that it was difficult to assess young women's participation in youth culture based on what was known at the time. They proposed new female-specific cultures such as the 'Teeny Bopper' could be worthy of academic scrutiny,[15] moving beyond subcultural theory focusing on the group, to a private space of less resistance – the 'culture of the bedroom' ([1975] 2006: 181).[16] While 'Teeny Bopper' has often been dismissed as a trivial and submissive culture it did offer young women opportunity to take part in 'symbolic displays of collective

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[14] David Muggleton (2000) compared his findings to those of Kathryn Joan Fox (1987); Stephen Baron (1989a, 1989b); Robert Sardiello (1998).

[15] A manufactured form of youth culture, focusing on male pop idols (McRobbie and Garber [1975] 2006: 186).

[16] See Siân Lincoln (2012) *Youth Culture and Private Space* and Track 4.3.5 in this thesis for further discussion on bedroom culture.

power' (Osgerby 1998: 60). Since McRobbie and Garber recognised girls' marginalisation in subcultures ([1975] 2006), the discourse has shifted towards how girls form distinct cultures of their own, and their consumption of popular culture (McRobbie 1997). This mirrored the position of theorists who have suggested cultural consumption practices provided insight into young people's lives (Muggleton 2000, 2005; Miles 2000). This was not simply about high street consumption however, but a reflection on the meaning of cultural commodities such as dress and music to young people, and the impact on them as individuals.[17]

As the example of Ken Russell's images highlights, the representation of women in youth culture within secondary sources or texts is hard to validate, hence the focus on first-hand experience in this study. The narratives are supported by personally selected soundtracks and photographs that the participants wanted to share, that 'reveal' their 'priorities, interests and aspects of their youthful agendas' (Tinkler 2015: 90). Endorsing McRobbie's statement that '*representations* are *interpretations*' ([1991] 2000a: 125 [original emphasis]), excerpts from the interviews in this thesis are left verbatim, uncut as much as possible, to provide authentic representation of everyday female participation in youth culture. The narratives of female participation from the interviews evidence acts of resistance, as well as the spaces – physical and experiential – occupied by or denied to the participants.

4.3.2 Perceptions of Femininity

There is a large body of literature on gender that recognises the social and cultural construction of femininity, notably Judith Butler's pioneering work that positioned gender as performative ([1990] 2006, 2004). Sandra Bem (1974) proposed a non-linear model of gender that enabled fluidity on a scale between masculine and feminine, suggesting that it was healthy for individuals to assume both masculine and feminine qualities. Butler however, noted that only by separating gender from sex, can it become fluid, 'that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one' ([1990] 2006: 9 [original emphasis]). Although the complexity of the term femininity is recognised, it is discussed briefly here to provide context to female participation in dress and music related youth cultural practices. In this thesis femininity and

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[17] See Track 1.3.7 on the meaning personal possessions (Belk 1988), and of dress and music as *Tokens of Youth*.

masculinity are understood as socially constructed through performed practices that are culturally supported. Butler (1990) saw culture as dictating the practices and characteristics that are deemed to be feminine. Drawing on Goffman's understanding of gender performance, Milestone and Meyer (2021: 14) suggested 'conventionalized portrayals of culture's ideation of femininity' persist, whereby women are 'denied femininity' when they do not conform, as when performing conventionally masculine practices such as football fandom. This applies equally to participation in conventionally masculine youth or music cultures, such as Kate's involvement in the alternative music scene. In this thesis, participants' youth stories foreground dress and music as 'cultural lenses through which we understand youthful femininities' (Jackson and Tinkler 2007: 252).

Reflecting on McRobbie's work ([1991] 2000a), Milestone and Meyer (2021) observed that teenage femininity *still* revolves around boyfriends and looking good, and that as women emerge from their teenage years, time becomes a constant threat in relation to social expectations around marriage and children, and maintenance of youthful beauty.[18] Mary Jane Kehily's research highlighted the 'contradictions of femininity that may be reshaped and reconfigured over generations' (2008: 51). Generational change in feminine social norms can be seen in this thesis, notably in participants' attitudes to relationships. This accords with Milestone and Meyer (2021) who found romance and relationships continue to be central to contemporary femininity, reinforcing traditional heterosexual milestones. However, Victoria Cann (2018) cautions that femininity remains subordinate to masculinity in the cultural worlds of young people; thus, young women often reject markers of traditional femininity such as romance. Cann's participants saw traditional feminine tastes as a sort of 'guilty pleasure' (2018: 147). Her findings challenge what is acceptable for girls,[19] echoing McRobbie's (1993: 25) question, 'what kind of image of femininity, for example, is being pursued as female ravers strip down and sweat out?'. Pointing to the relationship between class and femininity, Emily Nicholls suggested young women use traditional femininity to distance themselves from 'deviant categories' (2018: 16). This aligns in this thesis, for example with Marion's disassociation from the Teddy Girl look in the 1950s.[20] Hence,

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[18] See track 6.3.2 *Female Perspectives on Youth and Ageing.*
[19] It is important to note that Cann's (2018) participants all presented as cisgender, so the findings do not perhaps represent the breadth of gender identities in contemporary youth. Milestone and Meyer (2021: 26) focus on '*dominant* gender images and norms [original italics]', but in their updated second edition they surface the problematic relationship between gender ideals and race, heteronormativity, non-binary gender or ableism.
[20] See track 4.3.4 for a quote from Marion explaining her position on the teddy girl look.

subcultural femininities provide alternative feminine agency for those who participate and those who do not. The ten participants in this thesis demonstrate a wide spectrum of cultural tastes and interests that fluctuate between feminine and masculine. Yet, the findings also reflect the continued reinforcement of hegemonic gender ideologies in contemporary culture despite increasingly diverse femininities (and masculinities).

Focusing on alternative femininities, Samantha Holland (2004, 2012) paid attention to how women carry their alternative take on femininity with them as they age. From a similar subcultural perspective, Laura Way (2020a) homed in on *Punk, Gender and Ageing* recognising punk dress as resistance to normative femininity. Way has suggested 'that subcultural spaces can provide girls and women with opportunities for both resisting emphasised femininity and crafting new feminine forms' (2020a: 12). Way's (2020a) reference to Raewyn Connell's (1987) term 'emphasised femininity' describes subordinate compliancy, and the accommodation of male desires, which her female punk subjects rejected.[21] Shehnaz Suterwalla (2012) also explored resistance to mainstream femininities in alternative communities and groups and previously McRobbie highlighted the role both the punks and feminists played in overturning societal expectations of femininity, 'using similar stylish devices to upset notions of "public propriety."' (1980: 79). In this way feminism's influence disrupted mainstream ideas of femininity (Tebbutt 2016: 179),[22] yet, as McRobbie proposes 'the old binary opposition which put femininity at one end of the political spectrum and feminism at the other, is no longer an accurate way of conceptualizing young female experience', adding '(maybe it never was)' (1993: 15). This thesis adds to these progressive sources. Femininity in this research is understood as a social construction that can provide a springboard for resistance in youth culture *or* conformity to societal expectations, but with equal priority given to both normative and alternative femininities. Subcultural and mainstream approaches are not recognised as binary opposites or 'divisive categories' (Cann 2015: 159). The approach taken in this thesis recognises the full scope of youth cultural experience without attempt to categorise or define femininity. The participants' narratives, situated from the 1950s to the 1990s, reinforce fluid conceptions of feminine behaviour that mirror the findings in contemporary youth research.

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[21] There is further reference to Laura Way's (2020a, 2020b, 2021) work in the exploration of how *Youth Lives with Us* in Chapter 6.
[22] See Lauraine Leblanc (1999) for discussion on the constructs of femininity within the punk scene.

Kehily's analysis of three women from the same family found that in late modernity, feminine agency and lived experiences of youthful femininity were shaped by socio-cultural position, from 'the increased visibility of young women from marginal subjects defined by the domestic sphere to active participants in the public arena of education, work and leisure' (2008: 68). Penny Tinkler (2018) identified the interwar years as a time when modernity, femininity and youth aligned, opening comparison with later periods. In the 1950s and 1960s young femininities were re-defined by extended spatial mobilities, as young women were increasingly 'out and about', influenced by increased consumption and popular media (Tinkler 2021: 220). Tinkler, alongside Jackson, drew comparisons between contemporary and early twentieth century concepts of femininity in an analysis of the modern girls of the 1920s and the ladettes of the 1990s, both having been presented as 'troublesome youthful femininities' (Jackson and Tinkler 2007: 251). Commonality was found in the visible hedonism they demonstrated in public places, the wearing of boyish styles of dress, the prioritisation of career over marriage or rejection of caring roles. Jackson and Tinkler view these 'troublesome' femininities as agentic, enabling young women to make a claim on 'space, movement, opportunities and pleasures' (2007: 267). As Nicolls (2018) has pointed out, the 'girls' night out' in contemporary culture provides a window to the negotiation of femininity in public spaces. Likewise, many of the narratives in this thesis challenge perceptions of femininity and provide evidence of diverse feminine practices and behaviours, often in contrast to expected societal norms.

In both the literature and the youth stories in this thesis, levels of participation, and associated dress and music practices are often subject to highly gendered social constructs. The research participants' self-defined adherence to societal expectations of femininity were considered a variable, assessed via the questionnaire (Appendix C). Their diverse self-perceptions of feminine behaviour surfaced in the narratives, such as the examples below that range from the ongoing constraints of Olive's experience in the 1950s, to Kate's refusal to conform to stereotypical girlhood in the 1980s.

> The lads were more liberated than us, most definitely, definitely.
> Because [pause] if you were too liberated, you were "not a nice girl".
> [laughs]. Whereas lads were just sowing their wild oats, weren't they
> (Olive 2019).

> I never had dolls, I had one, I tried it and then I thought "this is a bit rubbish". I played with action men, I actually made myself a drum kit and my stepfather used to, he was a gardener on his allotment, and I got his bamboo canes and cut them into drumsticks and played, and that's from really young (Kate 2018).

These 'changing modes of femininity' reflect societal shifts and gender practices (McRobbie 1993: 14), reflected through dress such as Olive's narrative of being offered a job due to her 'appropriate' outfit,[23] and Kate's absolute refusal to wear a dress.[24]

> It was what was expected of a secretary in the 1950s. I then had a few years off so when I went to the school, I just went back to dressing what I thought was properly for the job (Olive 2019).

> But dresses, I pretty much dispensed with those, when I was about 14 [laughs], they were gone, when I was at school, it's like dresses, skirts, sorry school skirts, that's it I can't do it. And I tried it, and I tried wearing a dress when I was about 18 and I was like, I can't do this – dress and tights – I just cannot do it (Kate 2018).

A substantial body of literature on gender and dress provides background to gendered dress codes (Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele 1989; Barnes and Eicher 1992; Davis 1992; Garber 1997; Kaiser 1997, 2012; Crane 1999; Entwistle [2000] 2015; Wilson 2007; Cosbey 2008; Jenkinson 2017; Jackson 2020). The relationship between the fashion system, consumerism and femininity has been addressed by Cheryl Buckley and Hilary Fawcett (2002) providing further cultural context on perceptions of femininity. Susan Brownmiller's (1984) text *Femininity* included chapters on dress although it failed to challenge traditional perceptions and was mostly based on personal experience. The thesis builds on these texts to challenge perceptions of feminine dress in relation to youth. In the narratives dress was used to resist or disrupt traditional femininity, such as the androgynous styling that surfaced in several youth stories. Linda described how her style progressed from a 'classic' female style at a younger age, finding the confidence through connections at the Reno nightclub to adopt a more androgynous style (Fig. 3.35):

> Well, when I first was going out, I went to the Pop Inn, that was like, proper youth, youth, do you know like really young people. And you know that thing when you don't know how to dress, you've got terrible dress sense, you know, so, that was like then. And then I went to

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[23] See Sleeve Notes 3.10 for Olive's youth story.
[24] Kate was shocked to come across an image of herself in a dress during her interview (Fig. 4.6 in this chapter).

Genevieves which was, I'd be about 14 which makes it '75. And that was like pencil skirts, court shoes, you know like a really classic female look. But when I went in the Reno, there was this whole other type of girl. Right. Some of them were openly gay, you know, like in the '70s, and some of them just wore jeans and a jumper. And they were like my idols. And it took me possibly about twelve months to transcend from being a girl to cargo pants and boots, and kind of, obviously copying, but trying to cut my own style and thinking that it was alright, to be like that (Linda 2019).[25]

Janet and Jayne both position themselves as mods who adopted an androgynous style, adopting generic menswear garments rather than the mod girl look more in line with mainstream fashion at the time, or 1960s vintage dresses.[26]

The mod thing for me, it wasn't a little black and white dress. I did have a little black dress and I did wear it, but I also, the other mod culture for me, was the shirt and tie and maybe turning it on its head a little bit. So, kind of wearing the male version of the mod, of the mod outfit (Janet 2018).

In the 80s when I basically was into the mod subculture, I remember obviously a lot of girls who I knew, who weren't into any sort of subculture, it was just, it was high heels, it was pleated skirts, permed hair, heavy makeup, very, very, and obviously the shoulder pads, and very feminine. More feminine than, because the mod girl aspect was a little bit more masculine, a little bit more androgynous. Where at that particular point in the 80s, a lot of the girl, there were a lot of flowery dresses, that sort of thing that, you know, you'd expect women to dress like, sort of thing. It was like a stereotypical 'how a woman should dress', in my opinion (Jayne 2018).

The literature has recognised mod as a youth culture where women often adopted masculine dress codes (McRobbie and Garber [1975] 2006; Jenss 2018). In interviews with females who frequented coffee bars and discos in 1960s Manchester, Katie Milestone (2018) found evidence that women were starting to dismiss traditional feminine fashion, adopting more masculine styles. However, Heather, who like Milestone's interviewees attended the Twisted Wheel club in Manchester, saw the mod era as an opportunity for women to dress up and be flamboyant, on their own terms. The mod revival in the 1980s that Janet and Jayne took part in was experienced in a

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[25] The Pop Inn was a Manchester dance venue that opened in the 1960s, situated on Platt Lane, Rusholme. It closed as a venue in the 1970s. Manchester Beat (2022) 'The Pop Inn / Exit One (Platt Lane, Rusholme)' [online]. Available at: https://www.manchesterbeat.com/venues/rusholme/the-pop-inn-platt-lane-rusholme. [Accessed 7 August 2022]. Genevieves was a Manchester venue situated on Anson Road, Longsight, that later became the International 1. There is no information available online, but I am familiar with the venue as I worked at the International 1 as a student in the early 1990s.

[26] See Track 5.3.2 for Jayne's description of the men's shirts she wore.

different cultural climate to the original mod scene that Heather participated in during the 1960s:[27]

> More often than not, you identified stuff like the mod era with what the women wore, possibly more than what the men wore. Because I was, I was a woman, so, ah, I don't know, I think women had the chance to be more flamboyant because of the type of thing they could wear than men did. Except there were some very flamboyant men, particularly in the Bowie era and, you know, that transgender era and all that glam sort of rock thing. It went berserk then, then it was, it was, possibly even focused on the men I suppose, weren't it? [laughs] (Heather 2018).

This illustrates how within a given group culture there were variances in dress styles, and that the marked differences between the mod style adopted by Heather, Janet and Jayne in this study could be due to the different mod cultures they were active in at different times. This exposes the problem of the analysis of 'subcultural style', as these subcultures were experienced across time and place in very different ways, supporting the need for a broader analysis of youth cultures, as in this thesis.

Everyday female subordination through dress is evidenced within the narratives, such as Mo's husband's influence, the objectification of Olive's work outfit, but also the adoption of garments that restrict full participation in youth music cultures such as Marian's tight skirt.

> When we were fifteen it would be the flowing skirts with the jiving but when I met [my friend], you know, the one I said was wonderful, but everything was dead tight then. You know, you could hardly walk. It had to be the tightest was the better. That was that and then we used to jive but very sedately [laughs] (Marian 2018).

Evidence of the role everyday music experiences play in women's identities and perceptions of femininity has been lacking in the music and gender literature. Rosemary Hill (2016) has corrected this omission, exploring the lived experiences of female heavy metal fans in a culture considered to be sexist and male dominated. Where women's role in music culture has been addressed in music literature it mostly takes the perspective of involvement through participation in bands or performance on

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[27] See Figure 3.20 in Chapter 3, for a snapshot of Heather aged 14/15, c. 1964/5.

stage.[28] Further insight into first-hand music experiences can be found in recent biographies from female musicians (Albertine 2014; Smith 2010; Gordon 2015) who are known for their alternative take on societal feminine expectations. Although everyday music experiences are the focus of this study Janet and Kate were both actively involved in the production of music. Kate has played drums in various bands from the age of 18 (Fig. 4.6).

Figure 4.6 Kate with drumkit, date unknown © Kate.

Janet played guitar for leisure and remained actively involved in live music through her husband's band.[29] Both recognised the male dominance of the indie and alternative music scenes in the 1980s and 1990s.

> I think the music industry was still quite a male-dominated place, and so I guess women played probably, maybe a smaller part in the culture, but I think, when I think about my friends and going out, and my sister, I think we still had an influence. I think the fashions that we wore, despite music being a dominated [pause]. I think we had our place (Janet 2018).

> I'd always known I wanted to play the drums, so me, kind of, going into that was just, I just wanted to play the drums, I didn't think, oh it's unusual for a girl to do, I didn't think, it's just all blokes, it was just like

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[28] Angela McRobbie (1989); Gillian Gaar (1993); Lucy O'Brien (1995); Sheila Whiteley (1997, 2000); Mavis Bayton (1998); Helen Reddington (2007).
[29] See Figure 3.4 in Chapter 3 for a snapshot of Janet with her Fenton Weill guitar.

> I just want to play the drums and I went in and I did it and I got quite
> competent…
>
> Because, you know, in my head, I'm feminine, I'm maybe not
> everyone's idea of feminine but in my head, I don't think, I mean it's
> the same about playing the drums and stuff, it's not purposely trying
> to flout any convention, it's just how I feel comfortable (Kate 2018).

Holland (2004: 8) suggested that individual women often present multiple femininities, much as identities of youth are seen by the post-subculturalists as 'fluid' and less 'fixed' (Bennett 1999). This multiplicity is further evidenced in my work with contemporary youth groups where young people present multiple or hybrid identities (Jenkinson 2020).

Figure 4.7 Marian aged 14, Jeromes, Manchester, 1956 © Marian.

Marian referred to an image of herself where she is 'more of a Tomboy' (Fig. 3.5), in her interview she compared this image with a studio shot taken at the same age. Marian is 14 in both snapshots but looks much older in Figure 4.7 above: 'Well, it isn't me really. It's me in disguise isn't it [laughs]. I cringe at that one' (Marian 2018). These images represent the changes in style or perceptions of femininity that occur across a relatively short time during youth, reflecting experimentation with visual representation of self. Many of these changes were due to the influence of older more visible girls. Jayne (2018) recalled how she was influenced by older mods who had 'come from the back end of the revival in '79', including a formative encounter with a girl in a nightclub detailed in her sleeve notes.[30]

In her youth story, Linda recounts a woman moving into her street who she idolised for her androgynous style and glamour, 'at one point she had a lion cub and she had really gorgeous girlfriends. Do you know what I mean? Yes, she was an utterly powerful woman' (Linda 2019).[31] Within a society that remained constrictive for women, subversive or progressive styles of dress could have a strong appeal for young women who did not feel comfortable with current dress expectations, and music often formed the environment that enabled or supported style experimentation. These transformative brushes with alternative femininities suggest that across the post-war period of this research societal feminine norms were adhered to, resisted, manipulated or negotiated by young women influenced by social environment, but also reflecting their personal agency through dress and music practices.

4.3.3 Visible Girls

This track, 'visible girls', borrows its name from Anita Corbin's (2016, 2017) double portraits of young women photographed on nights out in the 1980s. Corbin felt compelled to capture these public, lived experiences, determined that young women should 'claim our place in photographic history' (Corbin quoted in *Visible Girls Revisited* (n.d. [online]). Efrat Tseëlon has proposed that women are '*culturally invisible while being physically visible'* (1991: 111 [original emphasis). Erving Goffman used the metaphor of the stage, and the actor behaving differently 'front' or 'backstage' (1959: 114). However, Tseëlon (1991) argues that women are constantly on stage performing

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[30] See Track 3.7 for the quotation in which Jayne recalls this peak event.
[31] See *Sleeve Notes* 3.8 for reference to Linda's influential neighbour.

for male audiences, and it is the presence of an audience that denotes visibility, not the structuralist notion of private or public spaces. Tseëlon (1991) problematised the assumption that an invisible position is powerless – visible and prominent equals powerful, yet visible and objectified renders women powerless. In this thesis 'visible' is understood as both on stage and culturally visible.

In the context of female participation in youth culture McRobbie and Garber explained the difficulty in understanding invisibility: 'Are girls, in fact, for reasons which we could discover, really not active or present in youth subcultures? Or has something in the way this kind of research is done rendered them invisible?' (McRobbie and Garber [1975] 2006: 177). One of the original drivers for this research was the hypothesis that women were more visible than implied in youth culture literature. The following narratives tell a story of active, dominant participation made visible through the lens of dress and music, starting with Marian's account, set in the 1950s.

> I think I were about 14, when I started going to the, it was called The Lyndale in Eccles. That was a dance place, always above Burton, they are always above Burtons these places. And I went there when I was about fourteen, and they started to teach you to do proper ballroom dancing, and within, sort of, six months that changed to rock and roll, you know. So, I went there after I left school, as well, I went there until, well, quite a few years, until we moved, until I actually went to work. Then I sort of progressed, I thought I was a bit better than The Lyndale in Eccles then [laughs]. So, we went to the Plaza then, in Manchester, you know, which was good, that was lovely (Marian 2018).

Marian provides an example of participation in everyday youth culture, she was not attached to a defined subculture, nor was she sat passively at home. Marian went out, a lot, from the age of 14. Decades later in the 1980s Jayne's experience of mod culture also started at a young age. She quickly progressed from reading newsletters and meeting in local cafes to attending events across the country.

> I sort of got into the subculture in '83, when I was about 13, 14, well it was the back end of '82, so I was about 13, 13 at the time. Then obviously, at that point there was the Phoenix rallies, and then that transformed into the CCI rallies. And then obviously, through meeting

different people, newsletters, correspondence and so forth, I started
then attending the events (Jayne 2018).[32]

The mod club newsletters were highly valued by Jayne as they enabled her
participation and visibility in the subculture.

> Do you know what though? Without this though, how would we have
> been informed? Do you know what I'm saying, there was no internet.
> You wouldn't have got to go on these events and then you wouldn't
> have got to meet all these people. You'd have been stuck with your
> local (Jayne 2018).

Jayne was an insider in the culture but as she explained, looking back on her
experience at a mod rally in Great Yarmouth in 1987, aged 17, she now realises how
naïve she was concerning the violence of her male counterparts:

> That [event] is prominent because it was a great night, but when we
> came out there were loads of casuals and there was lots of fighting.
> And in all honesty when I have been on events, I mean, I've heard
> again stories since of the last five, six, seven years from different
> people, "didn't you know that there was this, this went off, this fight
> went off?" and, this is what I'm talking about how naïve I was. I was
> oblivious to any of this because I think as well when you're in a group
> of lads, lads and girls together, the lads sort of shield you from it, do
> you know what I'm saying to you? But when I came out of that night,
> I'll never forget that. It was quite frightening that, but the night itself up
> to that point was fantastic. The band was brilliant (Jayne 2018).

Many of the participants described physical activities that contributed to their
experiences of youth culture. These included making clothes for Helen, Heather, and
Carole;[33] and making music for Janet and Kate. These activities signify active cultural
contribution. For Heather and Kate, who turned these interests into careers producing
clothes and music for others, it evidences a heightened level of cultural visibility.
However, the most prominent physical, participatory act described in the interviews
was dancing. Milestone recognised dancing as active participation in her analysis of
female youth culture in 1960s Manchester, as new dance styles negated the need for
dancing partners. Furthermore, young women no longer needed 'permission to enter'
the dancefloor (2018: 186). Almost all the participants in this research reported dance

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[32] The Phoenix mod rallies were organised by Tony Class, communicated by the Phoenix List newsletter (Fig.
3.32 in Track 3.7.1). These rallies evolved into the Classic Club International (CCI). The Modernist Society (2012)
'Tony Class - The Full 'Unabridged' Interview' [online]. Available at:
http://modernistsociety.blogspot.com/2012/10/tony-class-full-unabridged-interview.html. [Accessed 18 September
2022].
[33] See Cheryl Buckley on making clothes at home as 'a mechanism for the material and visual representation of
feminine identities' (1998: 168).

as a regular and pleasurable part of their active, physical participation youth culture. McRobbie has argued that dance was where girls were most visible in youth culture, and that both fashion and dance provided a medium through which young women could use style as a form of resistance (1984, 1994). Dance can also be seen as a feminine leisure pursuit as Carole (2019) describes, 'well, you know, if we were going dancing and you'd got, you'd got loads of net skirts and you were swirling about, it was, it was a nice thing'. There were many references to dance, but Marian and Carole's narratives below relay the intense physicality of dancing in the mid- late 1950s:

> I mean [pause] going to Manchester, so like, rock and roll but if you went into Manchester, there was a completely different dance and there was jive and there was, you know, when you got thrown (Carole 2019).

> My jiving partner, what was she called? [pause] She was brilliant. She used to toss me over her shoulder, and it was the time when your bust was just growing and it would really hurt if anybody, and when she went, oh God, it was a killer (Marian 2018).

McRobbie has alluded to dancing as an opportunity to be 'temporarily out of control, or out of the reaches of controlling forces', a form of 'fantasy, daydreaming and 'abandon' to be interpreted as part of a strategy of resistance' (1984: 134).[34] And in the examples above Marian and Carole are dancing for themselves, for their own pleasure, with no mention in the narratives of dancing for men. McRobbie stated: 'Dance is where girls were always found in subcultures. It was their only entitlement' (1993: 25). While there is evidence throughout the youth stories in this thesis that dance was often where female participation was consistently visible, this research found that dress gave everyday visibility, and local venues (cafes, clubs) provided further arenas for visible participation, usually interconnected by music tastes.

4.3.4 Everyday Resistance

The acts of resistance evidenced in the narratives that follow could be considered tame compared to the perceived exploits of the punks for example. However, Ben Highmore has pointed out that despite the focus on the spectacular, the everyday was also important to the CCCS theorists, as they drew out the 'micro tendencies' of spectacular subcultures, as a basis for resistance (2002b: 12). In this way the small everyday acts

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[34] Angela McRobbie (1993) has discussed this in relation to rave culture. Also see the reference to music as an emotional experience in Track 5.3.4 with a quote from Sarah Thornton (1995).

of resistance detailed by the participants in this study provide a revealing cultural insight. What the dress and music narratives make visible in this thesis are acts of everyday resistance:

> I mean, the most daring thing I did in going out one night was go to The Ritz in Manchester. I'd forgotten about this. But Denise and I went to church at half-past six, so it finished at half-past seven, we then got the bus outside church on Kingsway and went to The Ritz and danced until like half-past nine or something like that [laughs], you know, no time. We just had a wonderful time, got the bus, came home. My parents assumed I'd been to the Sunday Night Club – I hadn't – and I got away with it. And about a week later, my mother said, "Did you enjoy yourself at The Ritz last Sunday?" I said, "What?" She said, "Don't look at me like that." You know, so I said, "What do you mean?" And the insurance man had been that day – you know how the insurance man used to go round weekly and collect your premiums, and he'd said, "I saw your Olive at The Ritz last Sunday" [laughs]. And that was, so, I mean, I was absolutely banned from going again and I never went again (Olive 2019).

> My mum was an amazing woman, but she was very, very into, [pause] I would say she was a little bit shallow really [laughs], but she was very much about how you looked and how you, [pause] it was very important that I was well turned out because I was her daughter and I couldn't let the side down [laughs] and my dad was a Sergeant Major, so he was ultra-strict and when I started wearing make-up, which you can see, I mean I have got make-up on but it was very natural, and he used to say, "You can wash that off before you leave the house," and I would say, "Okay then dad that's fine, but I'll just put it back on, on the bus" (Mo 2018).

The everyday acts of defiance evidenced in Olive's tale of sneaking into Manchester to a dance at the Ritz and Mo's reaction to strict parental dress codes, provide evidence of active participation in youth culture. Although these young women were aware of gendered societal expectations, these are not passive responses, but micro-actions that give insights into female participation. This female agency was also evidenced in the home. As McRobbie has noted, during the evenings, BBC programmers shifted their emphasis from mainstream pop aimed at housewives to more progressive music genres such a punk, rock and roll or reggae – once the men were back from work ([1991] 2000a: 146). Three interviewees referred to secretly listening to late-night radio programmes as teenagers, either the BBC or the independent radio stations, providing early introductions to new music cultures that extended beyond music played in common areas of the home. Kate listened to John Peel's show in bed; while Heather (2018) tuned into 'Radio Luxembourg underneath the sheets at night-time, in secret,

on a Dansette radio'. Helen (2018) described listening to Radio Caroline and Luxembourg on her transistor, 'I remember having a little transistor radio, and it was blue, and it was inside a brown leather case with lots of little holes in. And you'd hold it to your ear like that under the bed covers'. These intensely private moments illustrate the bedroom culture referred to by McRobbie and Garber ([1975] 2006), representing young people's agency as they find ways to access new music.

Highmore (2002b) noted that Goffman's plurality of self is a useful concept in relation to everyday resistance (Goffman 1975),[35] as a person's propensity to resist or conform fluctuates in different situations and environments. This is evidenced in the contrast between Marian's lunchtime escapades with her record player, and her preference for maintaining a normative feminine appearance.

> Although it was the teddy boys' era, I didn't wear teddy girls' clothes, because I didn't think they were feminine enough. I thought they were too butch, you know. And, of course, they had a bit of a stigma with them, because you would be a bit, what can I say, a bit of a rough, although they weren't, but that's the impression that they gave you, you know. So, I wasn't into the teddy girl look, I preferred the flowing skirts, and the stiletto heels [laughs] (Marian 2018).

Horn has exposed the weakness of the subcultural focus on the spectacular and the disregard of broader female style codes in the literature. For example, he recognised the adoption of 'scruffy' clothes by middle-class women in counter-cultural groups, such as students and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in the late 1950s, as an act of resistance to ideals of femininity (2009: 154). However, Marian's narrative suggested that her own scruffy appearance in the 1950s was just a teenage phase and her small act of working-class rebellion. She describes styling her school blazer with a tight skirt bought in a jumble sale, 'I thought it was wonderful. I look a sight, don't I?... Yeah, you know [laughter]. That was my sort of rebellious time' (Marian 2018).[36]

Marian's self-styling could be considered an example of 'bricolage', a concept central to subcultural theory. Hebdige used the term to describe how subcultural styles were assembled, appropriating mainstream culture and challenging hegemony ([1979] 1997: 13). Buckley and Clark have also noted how acts of resistance used by teenagers create identities in response to mainstream fashion:

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[35] Ben Highmore references an earlier edition, Goffman, E. (1974) Harvard University Press.
[36] See Figure 3.5 in Marian's youth story (Track 3.2) for this snapshot of her aged 14 in 1956.

> Characteristic of self-fashioning and re-fashioning, this articulation of the everyday also recognises the possibility of reinvention and resistance as the fashion system is refused, re-cycled and re-defined from within the realm of the everyday (Buckley and Clark 2012: 23).

Shenaz Suterwalla (2012, 2013) employed oral history to get to the heart of the lived experience of women and their use of the situated bodily practice of style to resist gendered societal norms of femininity through bricolage. Surfacing the agentive action in the nuanced style practices of subcultural and alternative female groups, she recognised resistance against mainstream femininity in the hypersexualised dress of the punks, the layering up to resist the cold and political hegemony in Greenham Common, the reappropriation of menswear to disrupt the male gaze in hop-hop culture, or the mixing of the hijab with mainstream fashion to create new Muslim identities. Bricolage was central to these practices of dress and to Marian's example of disrupting her school uniform with the addition of her tight skirt. Mo explains below how important it was to have agency over dress at the weekends, and how she subtly changed her school uniform in the sixth form:

> I had to wear a school uniform every day for school, and that was very strictly enforced, and you had to wear your hat. If you were seen in the street without your hat, you got detention. It was very strict, all girls. So, clothes in the evenings, at weekends, were really, really important…
>
> Well, we did used to get around it by having the school shirt and tie on but putting a jumper over the top. Like a non-uniform jumper (Mo 2018).

Susan Kaiser has defined bricolage as the creation of new meaning through dress, creating, problem-solving and making do (1997: 469). Such bricolage was often a requirement of post-war 'making do' but the ability to dress-make, style or alter clothing empowered women to adapt and subvert mainstream styles (Horn 2009: 144). Such interventions were common in the narratives:

> I wear really long cardigans but really short miniskirts but I'm not wearing them because they're sexy, I'm wearing them because they're juxtaposed even though I wouldn't know that word then, and clogs (Linda 2019).
>
> I kept shortening these or lengthening them, whichever was the fashion, you know, because when I lived in London, you wore very

short skirts, come up here and they'd say, "oh". You know (Carole 2019).

Unlike Carole, who got away with wearing shorter and shorter skirts while living away in London in the 1960s, Helen (2018), who still lived at home at the time, described how her parents were not keen on the rising hemlines, so she 'hiked it up a bit or put a pin in the hem'. Dress was used to look older and enter places only accessible to those over 18, 'the dirndl skirt was for dancing and the straight skirts were either work or to make me look older' (Carole 2019). Small acts of resistance through dress were common whilst living at home, and like Mo's suggestion of putting on her make-up on the bus on the way out, Jayne defied her parents' attempts to dress her in a sensible coat as she went out to a mod all-nighter wearing her thin Harrington jacket.[37]

> I remember that day as clear as anything because I remember it chucking it down with snow. My friend phoning me up and saying, "Jayne, do you fancy coming to the all-nighter tonight?" and saying to my mum and dad, "Is it okay?" and my dad said, "Yes, go. We'll give you some money," because I was a student at that point. We met up at Littlewoods Cafe. I always remember my mum and my dad saying to me, "Jayne, you are not wearing that anorak today, surely not. It's absolutely chucking it down with snow," "No, I want to wear it." "Put one of your big coats on, Jayne." "No, I want to wear this." So yeah, I did, I turned up in that (Jayne 2018).

While only Kate and Linda declared a feminist position in their interviews, the examples above could be read not only as acts of resistance but as feminist assertions of power. Anoop Nayak and Mary Jane Kehily (2013) have suggested late modernity was characterised by the 'blurring of boundaries between feminine and feminist', and McRobbie suggested that feminists 'wage a similar semiotic warfare' to the subcultures depicted by Hebdige ([1979] 2007), through their everyday public actions such as breastfeeding or knitting in public (1980: 79). She likened the flight of leaving home and escaping the gendered pressures of the family to a political statement (McRobbie 1980), evidenced by Helen and Kate, for example, as they embraced their newfound independence on leaving home. In the narratives below Kate and Linda describe their perspective looking back at their youth, as feminists:

> Now that I'm thinking about it and I'm reflecting on it and when you start articulating it, it's like yes, how come my brother found [his youth culture] and I didn't? And that to me, now, when I look at it from the

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[37] A snapshot of Jayne wearing the jacket (Fig. 5.5) and her memory of the jacket are discussed in Chapter 5.

perspective of a feminist academic and a middle-aged woman, it's like "that's not fair" (Kate 2018).

It's definitely linked to feminism I think again, right. So, like there's pictures on the wall downstairs [in the Reno exhibition] where there are three women in a pub in the '50s or possibly the '60s. And they're sat in a certain way that says, "We are three women in a pub." And then there are pictures in the early '70s, which is probably less than 10 years later, where there's women like that in the camera, do you know, being really vocal, being confrontational. And I grow up in that era, do you know what I mean. So, so to be vocal in that camera, right, in my background, that means you can fight, that you've got a voice, do you know what I mean, that you're not scared of guys, that you're witty, that you've always got a comeback (Linda 2019).

Linda described the men in the Reno club as having 'bigger stories to tell' and that many of the girls were known only as 'somebody's woman'.[38] She described how for her, there was just a very small window prior to that where she could just be herself and that her 'look depended on that, you know, like your jeans and your leather jacket and your leather coat' (Linda 2019).[39] These examples of everyday resistance defy the default positioning of women in youth culture as passive, non-participatory or invisible. Some were deliberate acts of rebellion. Describing how she married at 17, against the advice of her parents and teachers, Mo (2018) stated, 'I was a rebel – nobody was going to tell me any different'. In this example the conformity of marriage for girls, usually seen as a barrier to female participation in youth culture (McRobbie 1980: 80), becomes an act of rebellion for Mo. Other acts were more subtle as skirts were gradually shortened or radios sneaked under pillows. The narratives expose how nuanced the gendered experience of youth can be across individual circumstances, time and space.[40]

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[38] See *Sleeve Notes* 3.8 for this example in Linda's youth story.
[39] See Figure 3.35 in *Sleeve Notes* 3.8 for an example of this look.
[40] See Track 6.3.2 for continued acts of everyday resistance later in life.

4.3.5 Sites of Youth
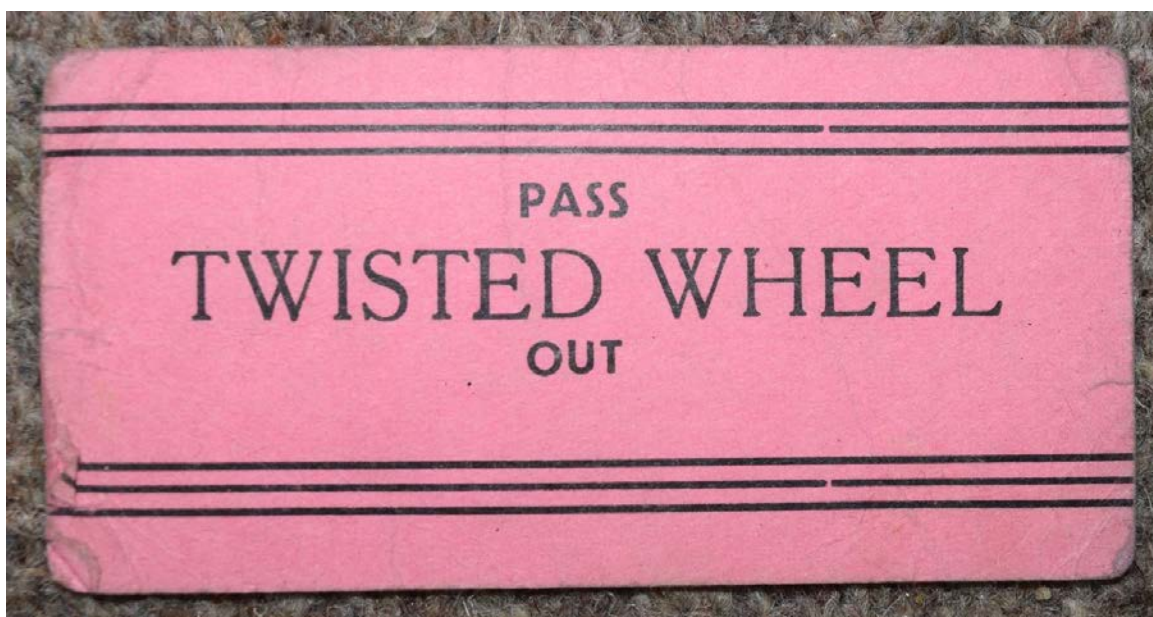
Figure 4.8 Heather's Twisted Wheel Ticket, 1960s. Author's photograph, 2018.

The spaces inhabited by young women in post-war youth culture are much contested. As discussed above women were often assumed to be invisible, but this thesis presents evidence of active participation across public and private domains. In music literature David Hesmondhalgh (2013) and Simon Frith (1996) have noted that music has a potent ability to cross private and public experience, and dress practices cross both spheres for young people (Eicher et al. 1991; Miller-Spillman et al. 2017; Jenkinson 2020).[41] Nevertheless, Andy Bennett has suggested the female absence in youth literature reflects how young women felt less comfortable going out to public music venues, preferring to consume music at home (2013: 39).

McRobbie and Garber, rather than seeking to correct or confirm the record of female visibility in public youth cultures, proposed the concept of bedroom culture ([1975] 2006). However, the evidence from the narratives presented in this thesis challenges the view that the home was the primary site for female youth practices. As Kate (2018) explains: 'What about, you know, what is of real interest and a real passion for me is women who transcend, transgress, those conventional private spaces and go out'. The most public of places, the street, is still primarily seen as a male domain in the context of youth. There were no accounts of hanging out on street corners in the narratives,

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[41] These studies develop Joanne Eicher's (1981) Public, Private and Secret Self (PPSS) model, later revised with Kimberley Miller (Eicher and Miller 1994).

but the participants were present in public places. Local parks provided a backdrop for several of the dress snapshots selected for the toolkits.[42] Public transport also featured, as a make-up zone for Mo, or providing independence for Marian and Olive as they travelled to Manchester's music venues in the 1950s. Manchester's public transport networks made the wide choice of music venues easily accessible as noted by Milestone (2018), and Marian:

> I mean I have been known to go home and change because to get the bus, it only took ten minutes on the bus and if I didn't like what I had put on I would go back home and change and come back again (Marian 2018).

The participants' toolkits provide further evidence of involvement in public as most of the snapshots shared were taken outside of the home, often at an event or on holiday. Participants also included evidence of participation such as concert tickets, programmes and flyers (Figs. 4.8, 4.9).[43] Osgerby (1998: 58) described how young women sought refuge in coffee bars in the 50s and 60s: 'Places where girls could see and be seen, coffee bars offered relative sanctuary from the confines of the home, the workplace and the official institutions of youth provision'. The disco later replaced these as public spaces where women could 'express a cultural identity' (Osgerby 1998: 58). The vibrant night-time economy in 1960s Manchester enabled young women access to new social spaces, dispelling the myth that the swinging 60s was only a London phenomenon (Milestone 2018). The youth stories in this study extend this evidence as participants spent time in a wide variety of dancehalls such as the Ritz (Marian and Olive in the 1950s), nightclubs such as the Twisted Wheel (Heather and Carole in the 1960s), the Reno (Linda in the 1970s) and gigs across the city (Kate and Janet in the 1990s). Many participants recalled live music experiences, whether watching local bands or as committed fans. 'I mean when I first went to see them [The Rolling Stones] in 1963, they did an afternoon performance and an evening performance, so you'd get tickets for both [laughs]' (Heather 2018).

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[42] For examples see snapshots of Marian Figs. 3.5, 3.6 and 5.1 and Helen Fig. 5.6.
[43] See Track 5.6 for Jayne's mod rally ticket (Fig. 5.16).

Figure 4.9 Heather's music programmes, 1963. Author's photograph, 2018.

This is not to assume the female fan as 'adoring female in awe of the male on a pedestal' (McRobbie and Garber [1975] 2006: 187), but to illustrate the active participation and visibility of women in music cultures. The record store is often, like record collecting, considered a masculine domain (Straw 1997). Nevertheless, many participants talked about visiting record stores to listen to and purchase new music, with several amassing sizable collections, some of which appeared in the toolkits. The record store was also a place to congregate and listen to music without buying.

> I think it was 13 and 11, and we used to go into the shop, it was called Binns locally but it was actually part of the House of Fraser group, and they had a record department in the basement and they had a little booth that you could ask the guy to put your record on and listen to it

with headphones, and it was fabulous because it was like 'try before
you buy' (Mo 2018).[44]

I can remember from when I was younger when I was allowed to go to
Manchester, I'd be going in and buying records, and you'd have a
record in the bag, and you'd take it on the train back to Whaley Bridge
and I'd be looking at the artwork (Kate 2018).

You could go in and listen to records, so I bought them in Manchester.
And there was also a shop on Kingsway, at the top of that lane, on
Kingsway, that sold radios and that's where I got my gramophone, and
they sold records as well so I got them from there, and I got them as
presents. I had quite a collection in the end (Olive 2019).

Milestone (2018) has suggested that young women in the 1960s had considerable
freedom, unrestrained by parental control. And although rigid parental constraints did
not feature in many of the youth narratives in this thesis, the participants had different
experiences of their teenage years. The age at which they could go out to public
venues varied, dependent on parental strictness. Both Helen and Mo reported strict
rules regarding public social activities or appearance in the 1960s.

Sometimes I'd sneak out and say, "I'm going to see my friend," and
she'd follow me and catch me at the bus stop. And she'd stand on the
side of the road like that and I'd think, "Oh God," and I had to follow
her home [laughs]. It was just the look. I knew I had to go, I couldn't,
no, it was awful. I remember that distinctly (Helen 2018).

Your mother and your grandparents, they were still in that era where,
"Oh, you shouldn't do that," and, "You don't wear make-up at that age,"
and all that sort of thing. They would look you up and down to see what
you had got on and, "You shouldn't be wearing that," you know (Mo
2018).

Some of these restrictions were highly gendered as parents tended to monitor their
daughters' leisure activities more than they did their sons' (Osgerby 1998: 56). Kate's
youth story made this explicit. Incensed by her brother's freedom to engage in rock
music culture, 'he used to go to Donnington with his mates' (Kate 2018), while she sat
at home listening to John Peel on the radio, Kate took matters into her own hands as
soon as she could and joined a band.

I never had that, no I didn't have that at time, definitely. I mean I can
remember clear as day, I think that only began to change when my

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[44] Binns was a British chain of department stores, later known as House of Fraser. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Binns
(department store)' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binns_(department_store). [Accessed 7
August 2022].

dad gave me a bit of money when I was 18, the first thing I did was buy a drumkit, which annoyed my mum, so I couldn't really play them at home, but I just thought, sod it. And I just started auditioning for bands, even though I could barely play, and I think a couple of lads took pity on me, they were just starting a band. And so they were based in Stockport, so I used to travel up to Stockport on Sundays and play the drums, in a, I guess, kind of a, I say a rock band, not rock as in the sort of stuff my brother was listening to, like metal, but kind of more Stooges type (Kate 2018).

Although the city has remained the perceived centre of 1960s youth culture, there is still a gap in research that surfaces youth culture outside of the large metropolitan cities, or certainly in rural locations such as the small peak district town where Kate grew up. Kate's restrictions were as much geographical and societal, as parental, growing up in a small rural town where there was no accessible youth culture for a teenage girl. Kate was limited not only by geographical distance but also less chance of finding others with shared interests and tastes. 'I bought my first Tom Waits record when I was 16, 'Swordfishtrombones' and I played it to my friends, oh listen to this, it's great and they just laughed at me, absolutely laughed at me' (Kate 2018). The spaces the participants accessed depended on what was available in the local area. Heather, Helen and Jayne all talked fondly of their local youth clubs, as places where they would dance:

The youth club days were all about jiving. So, at sort of 14, I think I had a flared skirt, you know, with a border print on it (Heather 2018).

Most people went to a youth club in the, when would that be, late '60s, yeah, mid to late '60s. And that was allowable because it was a church youth club (Helen 2018).[45]

I used to go to youth club, and at that particular point it was in the late, it was the back end of 1982, and The Jam were about to split up. So, at that time when you went to the youth club you used to hear The Jam, you used to hear the post-punk stuff, you used to hear New Wave, some of the mod revival music and I sort of liked that (Jayne 2018).

These controlled social spaces were accessible at an earlier age than commercial clubs and venues, and provided supervised spaces where young women, and men, could participate in youth culture prior to venturing further afield. Many of these youth clubs were affiliated with churches. As a site of youth culture, these spaces provided

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[45] See Track 5.3.2 for a further quote from Helen where she describes dancing at the youth club.

opportunity to gently test societal boundaries, such as sneaking in some rock and roll to the Parish Hall dances as described by Olive.

> Then on a Saturday, they had dances in the Parish Hall, and so us girls spent all week worrying about what we were going to wear on the Saturday night to go and do the Volita[46] and the military two-step. And eventually, we had a little session in the middle of the evening where we could rock 'n' roll, so we thought that was very, very updated…
>
> You can't believe it, can you? And then, and then I suppose it must have been records, somebody must have taken records because we then played music and we danced while everybody sat out and had a cup of tea (Olive 2019).

As a site of youth culture, school provided an everyday space where young people congregated and shared cultural experiences. While the participants were unable to experiment with dress at school beyond subtle self-styled alterations,[47] they described opportunities to share music, and even dance during the lunch breaks, or in the common room. 'At school, we used to, if it was raining, we used to do rock and roll in there, so people used to play music there' (Carole 2018). These interactions had significant influence, particularly for those that joined the sixth form: 'I don't think I got switched on to Motown until my teen years and that was like when I was in sixth form, and we had a common room and other people used to bring it in' (Mo 2018). But this was not only the preserve of the sixth form, as a mid-teen in the mid-1950s Marian managed to fit some rock and roll into the school day. 'Although, we was into Bill Haley, and all that, because that was when we were still at school, Bill Haley, you know, and, doing all your jiving in the break time' (Marian 2018).

The youth narratives presented here indicate that female youth culture had a significant public aspect, and there is plenty of evidence for regular attendance at public music venues – evidenced also in less documented, semi-public spaces such as school or youth club. Young women moved between the 'ordinary everyday' (i.e., school) and 'extraordinary everyday' (i.e., gigs), often using controlled public spaces, such as the youth club and the common room, to experiment with youth cultural practices away from parental control. Jayne describes below how she accessed mod culture in the homes of her peer group, in a local café and at large public events.

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[46] The Volita was described by Olive, when I checked post-interview, as an old-time sequence dance.
[47] See Track 3.4.3 for examples of appropriating school uniforms.

> The people I hung around with, there was a group of us, we used to meet up at Littlewoods Café in Barnsley on a Saturday afternoon for a couple of hours, and then we'd all congregate and walk around the record shops. Then buy records, then friends would do you tapes, then obviously there were the things you heard when your parents played their records at home. So, you picked up on it that way or really at events or if you went to each other's houses, which a lot of us did. Somebody would play a record, and that's basically how I listened to music (Jayne 2018).

Siân Lincoln (2102) has extended McRobbie and Garber's analysis of 'bedroom culture' ([1975] 2006), into an ethnographic study of contemporary youth and the private spaces in which youth culture is experienced. Lincoln (2012) notes that previously it was assumed acts of rebellion or resistance were absent within the domestic spaces of family life, while public space was the considered home of youth culture. This assumption applied to both young females *and* males, as Lincoln pointed out, 'there is no mention, for example, of the domestic life of the mod, but we are offered insights into *his* nights out on the town or clashes with the Rockers' (2012: 30 [my emphasis]).[48] In further support of the argument that divisions of gender are overemphasised in accounts of youth culture, Marian described spending time listening to music with friends at a male friend's home in the 1950s:

> We used to go to a boy we knew, as well, a few of us went to his house, because his mum and dad were quite, what can I say, quite easy going, and he was allowed to have all his friends in the front room there and listen to a lot of music in his house, you know, because, obviously, he had a record player, and more records than most of us, that's was it, yeah (Marian 2018).

This testimony positions the home as a site for youth cultural practices for both young men and women. Within the home the private space of the bedroom is considered a primary site of female youth culture, yet such practices often took place in place in communal areas as Marian describes. Few of the narratives in this study refer to time spent in bedrooms, beyond listening to music at night. Nor were there references to getting ready to go out, or to the bedroom as the social space described by Frith as 'the place where girls meet, listen to music and teach each other make-up skills, `practice their dancing, compare sexual notes, criticise each other's clothes and gossip' (1978: 64). Perhaps this focus was influenced by the snapshots in the toolkit,

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[48] Siân Lincoln (2012) is drawing on analysis by Angela McRobbie (1991a) and William Osgerby (1998) here.

which were rarely taken in the home, or as Milestone (2018) has suggested – young women felt the need to get out of the home, with one of her participants describing the bedroom as a cramped space shared with siblings rather than a sanctuary to be enjoyed with her own friends.

Mo explains how it was the shared spaces in the home where she accessed the important cultural resource that was music television, while Olive describes how her choice of music was received by her family:

> I used to have to sit in front of Top of the Pops and go, "shh," because I had a reel to reel and I was trying to record it, but it had to be completely, you know hushed, because we had one telly in the common room. People didn't live in their bedrooms then. You know, you just went to your bedroom to go to bed really, or maybe read a book (Mo 2018).

> Talking about Unchained Melody – I just used to listen to it at home because there was nowhere else to listen to it, I just played the record until my father went crazy – "Turn that bloody thing off!" [laughs] (Olive 2019).

These home-based media experiences were dictated by the technology available in the home. Nearly all the participants reflected on the availability or otherwise of a record player at home and the financial means to buy records:

> We didn't have a record player, because we lived in a house that didn't have electricity until 1958. So, I would be, like, 16, then before we had electricity. Then, we started to get a record player then, you know, and that's when we had as many records as you could afford to buy, you know, because, you know, when I started work (Marian 2018).

> I was certainly working, so I was practically 16 or even 17 before I got my first gramophone, which was a Dansette (Olive 2019).

> Eventually, I got a Dansette record-player, which everybody did, had it in their bedroom, got the singles out and played the same single over and over and over again, you know like, I dunno, all teenagers seemed to do that, didn't they, and drive their parents nuts (Heather 2018).

> We definitely didn't have a record player, not even a Dansette. We didn't have anything. We had a wireless [laughs] (Helen 2018).

Among those who had access to a record player, the interview evidence suggests that the hub of youth cultural activity in the home was wherever the record player was kept.

Records were easily transportable forms of cultural capital that dictated the spaces where youth culture played out both in the home and public spaces:

> We used to take records to each other, take records to the youth club and put them on the record-player in the youth club and jive. It was all to do with dancing, mostly (Heather 2018).[49]

> We used to dance and dance on our living room floor with my, my sort of best friend, and friend that's there right through all of this, [name redacted], and we just used to practice our jiving [laughs], you know, on our kitchen floor (Olive 2019).

Helen was the only participant to reference bedroom focused activity. Unlike her friends, and other participants in this study, Helen was not allowed to frequent public venues or clubs while she lived at home, nor did the family own a record player, so the bedroom provided her only space to explore youth culture.

> We used to go round to each other's houses and cut out pictures of the Monkees and the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and stick them on our walls, out of magazines. *Jackie* was a big influence (Helen 2018).[50]

Figure 4.10 Helen in her room, aged 19, Buffalo State University, 1973 © Helen.

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[49] See *Sleeve Note* 3.8 for Linda's comparison of the sociability of her friend's front room with her own.
[50] See McRobbie, A. ([1991] 2000b) for her essay on the influence of Jackie Magazine on teenage femininity.

For Helen whose youth culture was mostly home based, the opportunity to go to America on exchange was a formative time that featured dominantly in her youth story, and she included a snapshot of her university campus bedroom in her toolkit (Fig. 4.10).[51] This bedroom snapshot represents a welcome period of independence for Helen, in contrast to her bedroom at home where she felt constrained and removed from the cultural practices of her peers. Other participants recounted peak events away from the home or local area in their narratives. Janet and Heather remembered travelling to gigs and Jayne attended mod rallies all over the country. For Carole and Heather time spent in London in the swinging 60s whether living and working (Carole) or visiting (Heather) formed an important cultural reference. 'Well, my uncle lived just off the King's Road so when we were students, London was a big thing to do. You'd go down the King's Road, it was buzzing (Heather 2018).[52] It is apparent that dress and music transcended private and public space for the those taking part in this study, with female participation in youth cultures evidenced across both domains. Not distributed according to gender, but by individual circumstances, not least the degree to which parental and geographical barriers were in place. The youth narratives presented here provide further evidence of engagement and challenge any assumption that female post-war youth culture was bedroom bound.

The findings of this chapter extend academic understanding beyond the constraints of subcultural theory towards everyday youth culture, not disregarding subcultures, which are recognised as part of the experience frame for some of the participants. The focus on broader youth cultures recognises the fluidity and movement between youth styles, from the mundane to spectacular, and private to public reported by the participants, enabling women's voices, submerged in the subcultural accounts, to be heard. Through lived experience, perceptions of femininity or conformist behaviour are exposed, seen in the light of personal interpretation and external influences. Parameters of youth were defined by the participants, challenging age-related constraints in the conceptualisation of youth. In the interviews and subsequent interpretation, the cultural practices of dress and music surface in the personal youth narratives and make visible female participation in youth culture, describing its sites, temporalities, delights and frictions. These accounts of youth culture foreground

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[51] See Figures. 3.17, 3.18, and 5.9 for further snapshots of Helen's American exchange.
[52] Peak experiences of youth, music and dress are fully explored in Track 5.3.5 in relation to memory and in Track 5.6 in relation to the formation of self across time.

women's lived experience, yet they reflect perceptions of youth cultural practices only possible when viewed retrospectively, through the lens of memory. This perspective is explored in the following chapter, where the temporal positioning of youth culture is challenged by the experience of the participants in the present.

Chapter 5. MEMORY WARDROBES AND MEMORY SOUNDTRACKS

Figure 5.1 Marian aged 18, Lyme Park, Disley, 1958 © Marian.

The discussion in this chapter develops beyond retrospective narratives of youth to consider the experience of remembering youth in the present. It begins by confirming the theoretical positioning of memory in the research, framing the conceptual 'wardrobes' and 'soundtracks' of the chapter title in the context of memory and experience. The discussion evaluates wardrobes and soundtracks as mnemonic resources and reflects on the participants' interactions with the toolkit items and the 'memory wardrobes' and 'memory soundtracks' in the interview. It considers the experience of remembering from the perspective of the current self, how experience, memory and imagination work together in the mnemonic space; and how practices of remembering can create meaning across time, sensory domains and private and collective experience. Consideration is also given to the role forgetting plays in imaginative remembering before the discussion concludes by refocusing on the role dress and music play in memories of youth.

5.1 Memory in Context

Memory is a complex and multidisciplinary field of study and the academic literature on memory and its relations with dress and music originates from diverse approaches.

However, across the academic disciplines it is suggested that memories for dress and music are both in some way special. Sophie Woodward (2007) was amongst the first to consider dress and memory in *Why Women Wear What They Wear* and subsequent literature on dress and memory has mostly been explored from a material culture perspective (Chong Kwan, Laing and Roman 2014; Hunt 2014; Slater 2014; Buse and Twigg 2016). The materiality of music artefacts has also been recognised in relation to memory (Yochim and Biddinger 2008; Hogarty 2015; Bennett and Rogers 2016a). And although the focus is on dress and music in this thesis there are close parallels with the key texts on photographs and memory that also privilege the tactile qualities of the photograph (Kuhn 1995; Edwards 1999; Edwards and Hart 2004; Batchen 2004). In these contexts, materiality is understood not just as the artefacts, but their properties, capacities and effects (Woodward 2020).

Scientific literature on music and memory has been drawn upon where this serves to ground the discussion and contextualise the phenomenological findings.[1] These studies largely rely on generic samples of music in laboratory settings which renders them methodologically inappropriate for comparison. However, they have drawn attention to several phenomena that resonate with the participants' experiences of music listening in everyday life. These include Petr Janata's work on music-evoked autobiographical memories (Janata et al. 2007; Janata 2009),[2] and the study of earworms or Involuntary Musical Imagery (Williamson et al.2012; Williamson and Jilka 2014; Floridou et al. 2015).[3] No equivalent scientific evidence exists for memories of dress, but comparisons are invited. Memories triggered *by* music and memories *of* music triggered by other stimuli or narratives were part of the remembering experience for both researcher and participant in the interviews. As a music track can evoke an autobiographical memory, the evidence presented in this chapter also provides examples that illustrate how items of clothing, or snapshots of styled dress hold a similar power.

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[1] The focus is on personal memories evoked by popular music and memories of popular music, not the ability to remember the technicalities of the music structure or memories evoked by the acts of playing instruments or singing for which there are also substantial bodies of literature.

[2] Cognitive neuroscientist Petr Janata (Janata et al. 2007, Janata 2009) has tested the hypotheses that music and autobiographical memories work together in the medial prefrontal cortex, as a 'hub' for other areas of the brain to enable the integration of memories, emotion, and music. His work on music-evoked autobiographical memories is widely referenced, and his protocols have been adopted for further studies. See Jakubowski and Ghosh (2021) for a recent application taking a naturalistic approach.

[3] Defined as 'the experience of a short section of music that comes into the mind without effort' by Georgia Floridou et al. (2015: 29).

In *The Mnemonic Imagination*, Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering (2012) position memory as a creative practice. Working in the emergent, multidisciplinary field of memory studies, their treatment of memory, experience and imagination as parallel, interwoven and reliant on each other in the process of remembering sets their work apart from other memory literature and speaks to the aims and methodology of this research. This chapter aligns some of the key concepts in their work with the findings from my research to explore how dress and music interact with the mnemonic imagination, the ways in which memory and experience work together in the sensory-rich interviews, and the impact of imaginative engagement with dress and music on the temporal reach of youth. The wardrobe and soundtrack interview method enabled access to personal narratives of everyday life that are absent in laboratory-based methods. Cognitive psychologist Catherine Stevens (2015) highlighted the potential of such a combined approach seeing much to be gained from combining scientific knowledge about music and memory with the cultural, social and historical aspects of memory studies.

Reviewing the literature across diverse cultural and scientific disciplines reveals tensions arising from conflicting definitions and terminology. Even within the field of cognitive memory research, various scientific models, systems and classifications of autobiographical memory fail to agree in their terminology. To clarify the scope of this thesis I will define the key terminology to provide an anchor for the analysis. This thesis focuses on autobiographical or personal memories, although the mutually supportive relationship with popular memory will also be discussed. Autobiographical memories are a form of declarative memory which can be further divided into episodic (events) or semantic memory (facts).[4] It is episodic memory that is of primary interest in this thesis, although in my analysis I adopt William Brewer's term 'personal memory' (1986: 26), using the term episodic memory only where it is used in the literature.

Voluntary autobiographical memories are of primary relevance in this study as the participants were engaged in intentional remembering, in response to my questions and the memory toolkit. These differ to *involuntary* memories defined by Dorthe Berntsen as 'memories of personal events that come to mind spontaneously—that is,

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[4] This distinction was first noted by Endel Tulving (1972) who introduced the concept of episodic and semantic memory as two separate but parallel processing systems. Martin Conway's (2009: 2310) model for 'the embedding of episodic memories in autobiographical memory structures' has since clarified the relationship between episodic memory and autobiographical memory and provides the scientific evidence that Tulving (1986) had suggested was needed.

with no conscious initiation of the retrieval process' (2021: 1). Yet, the participants also experienced spontaneous memories triggered by artefacts in the toolkit, which in turn produced further autobiographical memories. In *The Mnemonic Imagination*, Keightley and Pickering summarise this symbiotic relationship, describing these unexpected mnemonic experiences as 'the nucleus of important passages of autobiographical recollection' (2012: 46). In this study these nuclei are reworked by the participant's imagination, to illuminate and extend their narratives of youth. The memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks bring these forms of remembering together, capturing instant vivid memories and those imaginatively recreated, as music tracks are assembled in the memory soundtrack or outfits styled in the memory wardrobe.

Asaf Gilboa (2004) has proposed that episodic memory involves the act of re-experiencing and the awareness of the experience of self through time. This is evidenced in the personal, temporal events and experiences described by the participants in this thesis. Martin Conway's work has been central to understanding autobiographical memory processes. Using neuroscientific evidence, he demonstrated that episodic memory 'locates memories and sets of memories in meaningful ways for the self' (Conway 2005: 622).[5] A key hypothesis of his work is the proposition that cognition is goal driven and thus memories are in some way motivated, that memories relating to significant life goals remain strongly associated with the self and are more easily accessible and come quickly to mind (Conway 2005). In their concept of the Self-Memory System, Conway and Christopher Pleydell-Pearce highlighted the significance of autobiographical memories for the sense of self, emotions and 'the experience of enduring as an individual, in a culture, over time' (2000: 261). This work paved the way for *The Remembering–Imagining System* developed by Conway, Catherine Loveday and Scott Cole (2016),[6] who found that recent memories can support imaginative simulations of near future events. These studies have exposed the role autobiographical memories play in the construction of self over time, providing context for exploring relationships between memory, experience and imagination. They provide evidence of the temporal interactions of autobiographical memory and support the hypothesis of the connection between memory, meaning and the biographical self, proposed in this thesis.

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[5] Martin Conway (2005) suggested, in a two-part memory system, the phylogenetically older system, episodic memory, sits under a newer system that is knowledge based and conceptually organized.
[6] This concept was developed in an earlier paper by Martin Conway and Catherine Loveday (2015).

The scientific research on memory retrieval provides context but to find a framework that supported the reflexive, creative methodology proposed for this research, there was a need to look beyond scientific approaches. My analysis of the participants' narratives of youth aligns with Keightley and Pickering's proposition that the mnemonic imagination enables synergies between past, present and future, and the personal and social (2012). Through the creative methods employed, including the multi-media memory toolkits, dress and music are evaluated for the role they play in the imaginative mnemonic process, how they serve to generate meaning in the present, and contribute to on-going life narratives. A subsequent Pickering and Keightley publication, *Photography, Music and Memory: Pieces of the Past in Everyday Life,* exposed the relationship between the personal use of photography and music as media technologies on processes of remembering (2015: 24). I draw on this work, to support my framing of dress and music as everyday conduits to memory, or in their words 'pieces of the past' (2015: 8).[7]

5.2 A Framework for Wardrobes and Soundtracks

Pickering and Keightley (2015) refer to music and photographs in varied ways as: 'technologies of memory' (1), 'communications technologies' (1), 'mnemonic resources' (1), 'conveyances of memory' (2), 'catalysts' (6), 'vehicles' (6), 'conduits' (8), 'pieces of the past' (8), 'cultural resources' (24) and 'cultural forms' (33). All of these are appropriate descriptors for dress and music, and I too have adopted a variety of relevant terms. For clarity, the position of 'wardrobes' and 'soundtracks' as 'memory resources' in relation to other concepts used in the thesis is visualised in Table 5.1.

The specific 'cultural resources' under scrutiny in this study are everyday dress and recorded music, rather than high fashion or live music for example, or other potential cultural resources such as literary fiction or sport.[8] Pickering and Keightley found music and photographs to be the two most reported 'technologies of remembering' in everyday life (2015: 1). This research harnesses the communicative powers of music and photographs but positions dress and music at the centre where their ability to act as conduits is heightened by their value as cultural artefacts and their relevance to the lived experiences of youth. Dress and music are positioned as 'tokens of youth', representing the participants' personal interests and preferences, enabling

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[7] I also reference a related journal article that precedes the book, see Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering (2006).
[8] See Tracks *1.3.3 Recorded Dress and 1.3.4 Recorded Music* for definitions.

communication of aspects of selfhood to others, and maintaining symbolic and emotional conduits to the re-experiencing of youth through memory.[9]

Table 5.1 Wardrobe and Soundtrack Framework.

Cultural Resources	**Everyday Dress**				**Recorded Music**			
Memory Resources	**Wardrobes**			**Memory Wardrobe** (immaterial)	**Soundtracks**			**Memory Soundtrack** (immaterial)
	Memory Toolkit (material)				**Memory Toolkit** (material)			
	Snapshots	Clothing	Other **dress artefacts**		Playlists		Other **music artefacts**	
Tokens of Youth	**Dress and Music as Symbolic and Emotional Connections to Youth**							

These wardrobes and soundtracks represent the material manifestations of dress and music used as memory resources by the participants in the interview and in everyday life.[10] The 'Memory Toolkit' is the personally edited selection of artefacts chosen by the participants to support their narratives of youth in their wardrobe and soundtrack interviews.[11] The toolkit items crossed visual, tactile, auditory and olfactory sensory modalities, providing multiple modes of mnemonic access to the wardrobes and soundtracks. The participants recounted how the toolkit artefacts acted as mnemonic conduits when preparing for the interview and in their everyday mnemonic practices. In the multisensory interview environment, these wardrobes and soundtracks were extended. Dress and music artefacts acted not only as conduits to memory, but also became subjects of remembering, activated by one another in the creative remembering process.[12] The mnemonic spaces accessed and drawn on through this imaginative remembering and re-experiencing are conceptualised here as the 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack', specifically encompassing items that no longer have a physical dimension. The interviews created an environment in which youth narratives from the memory wardrobe and memory soundtrack were

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[9] See Track 1.3.7 *Tokens of Youth* where this term is proposed.
[10] In the thesis 'material' is understood in the wider sense (sounds, sensations, imagery, touch etc.) as defined by Sophie Woodward (2020), see Tracks 2.3.5 and 5.1 for further references to materiality.
[11] See Track 2.3.4 for detail on the method and contents of the memory toolkits.
[12] Wardrobes and soundtracks have been evaluated as resources for memories of youth for a book chapter (Jenkinson forthcoming 2023).

constructed. The communicated content of the material and immaterial wardrobes and soundtracks were compiled for analysis (Appendices D and E).[13] Using the mnemonic imagination as a guide (Keightley and Pickering 2012), these wardrobes and soundtracks frame the analysis through which the power of dress and music as resources for memories of youth are scrutinised.

5.3 Experiencing Remembering

The lived experience of the participants is central to this thesis. Experience in this context includes both the remembered experiences that form the participants' narratives of youth and the experience of remembering in the present, particularly in the interview environment. However, these past and present experiences are not discrete; Keightley and Pickering (2012: 26) used the following terms to illustrate this temporal relationship: *Erlebnis* – 'experience in the moment it is lived', and *Erfahrung* – the continued reflection and learning from that experience, that informs the personal biography across time and creates meaning. For Keightley and Pickering 'experience as process (lived experience) and experience as product (assimilated experience – the knowledge crystallised out of previous experience)' are interconnected, as experience and memory work together (2012: 3). They propose that it is the 'mnemonic imagination' that enables 'experience as process' to become 'experience as product', as it 'animates the material on which it draws' (Keightley and Pickering 2012: 8). The interpretive methodology of this research adopts this paradigm, making use of dress and music as a lens through which the past and present of youth are experienced and remembered through the mnemonic imagination.[14] Experience is fundamental to the exploration of the themes of temporality, imagination, sensoriality, embodiment and the personal and social that emerged from the narratives and are discussed below.[15]

5.3.1 Mnemonic Time Travel

In the mnemonic space, dress and music enable cross-temporal experience, connecting past, present and future selves. As cultural artefacts dress and music carry memories with them; they record and reflect shared cultural experiences and collective memories, also acting as conduits to personal memories that carry meaning for the

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[13] See 2.4.3 for further context on the *Wardrobe and Soundtrack Inventories*.
[14] In their discussion on reflexive methodologies Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldberg (2018: 119) also refer to the German terms *Erlebnis* as providing the fundamental basis 'with which every exploration of reality or mental processes must *start'* and *Erfahrung* as the reflexive re-enactment of these lived moments (2018: 116).
[15] Sensoriality is understood as paying attention to the senses, in research and representation, to better understand and represent people's lives (Pink 2015: 3). See also Track 5.3.3 in this chapter.

individual.[16] The memory toolkit method privileges personal memories but recognises the relationship with popular memory,[17] focusing on dress and music as conduits rather than vessels for memory. As mass-produced consumer goods, they are not acquired as mnemonic devices, yet as memory resources they embed personal meaning over extended periods of time. Personal meaning is readily attached to dress and music as they are also personally significant symbolic resources or tokens of youth. This may explain why memories of dress and music related to youth are retained and preserved in such detail in the participant narratives, maintaining connection across the lifetime, particularly when associated with youth.

Personal memories of dress or music traverse different places, occasions and events and allow us to travel through a wide memory range, with the ability to generate a new memory each time. Mark Wheeler, Donald Stuss and Endel Tulving (1997: 331) use the term 'autonoetic consciousness' to explain the 'mental time travel' and consideration of oneself in the past, present and future that occurs in episodic memories. David Rubin asserts that autobiographical memories are not stored or retrieved as wholes but as components including images, narrative and emotions (1996). A music track or item of clothing (or styled snapshot) can be linked with past experiences but when worn, listened to, or viewed again; they are not only associated with the past, but are also re-experienced in the present, providing a trans-temporal experience of remembering. Keightley and Pickering (2012) also drew attention to these temporal changes in meaning. A memory does not literally return as an exact copy of past experience, rather the meaning we attach to clothes or musical soundtracks shifts over time, and memories are interpreted differently every time they are drawn upon as experience and perspectives change. When we listen to a track in a different era to when we heard it first, wear favourite garments over time, or pull a snapshot out of an album many years later, they hold different meanings for us. For example, when I listen to a *Pixies* track my mind may drift to the grunge years of my youth, yet I am just as likely to think of my husband whom I met fifteen years later at a *Pixies* reunion gig.[18] Simultaneously the soundtrack evokes my carefree years at university and the comfort of my married life. When Mo was asked if a photograph of

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[16] See Marius Kwint (1999: 2) for the relationship between objects and the past.
[17] See Track 5.3.5 for a definition of popular memory (Keightley and Pickering 2012: 109).
[18] The Pixies are an American alternative rock band formed in 1986, in Boston, US. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Pixies (band)' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pixies_(band). [Accessed 28 July 2022].

her aged 16 (Fig. 5.2) reminded her of any connecting events, she recalled the period in which the photograph was taken rather than a specific event.

Figure 5.2 Mo, aged 16, Carlisle, 1971 © Mo.

> Not so much particular specific events, but the *time*, the sort of [pause], meeting my husband-to-be, where we used to go, playing Led Zep at his house and my house and that sort of thing, but not a specific one thing (Mo 2018).

This example reflects the how participants' mnemonic experiences varied as to whether they remembered specific youth events or a more general era when interacting with the memory toolkit. Music genres and generic fashion trends were mentioned as well as specific tracks, albums, outfits or garments. Although dress sometimes belongs to a certain era, due to short lived fashions or changes in body shape, music is more loosely situated in time. A track or album can be accessed over extended periods of a lifetime, often many years later as Jayne explains: 'You'll hear a track and you'll have completely forgotten about it, you can't even remember it, and then you hear it for the first time in god knows how many years and it's just like, "remember that"' (Jayne 2018). Pickering and Keightley (2015: 71) noted that the 'feeling of being transported back' occurs less frequently with photographs than music, but in this study the multisensory toolkits provided opportunity for this connection. The

snapshots acted as surrogates for dress or music where the physical or audio forms were unavailable.

When dress is captured in the snapshot, or a snapshot brings a music track to mind, time travel is activated.[19] Music can connect experience across time and facilitate an instant plugging in; unlike dress, it has the advantage that it feels the same even though the body has changed. The fluid temporality of music was marked in the interviews when participants linked tracks to the year in which they remembered them, not necessarily the year they were released. Mo referred to a snapshot of her taken in the early 1980s (Fig. 5.3), that she associates with a favourite track from her youth, '20th Century Boy';[20] released in 1973 its meaning extended across time for Mo in the same way her perception of youth extended into her late 20s, and beyond.[21]

Figure 5.3 Mo, aged 27, at a family event, 1982 © Mo.

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[19] In *Sleeve Notes* Marian describes how a photograph 'brought back everything' (3.2.3), and Mo selected photographs that reminded her of music tracks (3.3.1).
[20] T.Rex (1973) '20th Century Boy', UK: T.Rex.
[21] For further context and a quote to illustrate this see Mo's *Sleeve Notes* 3.3.3.

This ability of music to transcend time and its effortless connection with an extended view of youth reinforces the understanding of memory as a temporally fluid and creative process. This occurred when music was played in the room, but also in the memory soundtrack. Reflecting on the toolkit process Olive described how the music had influenced her memory narrative:

> When you played Glenn Miller and 'Rock Around the Clock', immediately your mind goes back to where you were when it was important to you, and that was between 14 and 20 when it was really important. So yes, I reflected on those times (Olive 2019).

However, we did not play Glenn Miller in the interview, Olive had referenced it as her first record. In Olive's interview the memory soundtrack played in her mind ('Moonlight Serenade'),[22] and the music played in the room ('Rock Around the Clock'),[23] were equally valuable as conduits to youth. A music track can take us back to a series of connected experiences linked together by common meaning, whilst the wardrobe, specifically snapshots of dress, have potential to capture a specific moment of youth. When dress and music worked together in the mnemonic imagination, images of dress were bolstered by the personal soundtracks and the participants were able to look beyond the specifics of a snapshot. But also, like repetitive access to music across time, the clothing pictured may have been worn on many occasions, triggering multiple memories. In this way dress and music temporally extend a photograph's static reference to an event, place or moment in time. The soundtracks also stimulated memories of dress across time when dress artefacts or snapshots were absent. In Mo's interview we listened to a track from 1967 that she initially associated with a snapshot of her aged 52 in 2007.[24] When I asked her if the track brought any particular outfits or clothes to mind, her imaginative engagement with the memory soundtrack accompanied a rummage in her 'memory wardrobe', triggering a memory of a green leather jacket she owned in her youth, although no garment or snapshots of the garment were available.

> I remember I had a lovely bottle green leather coat that I went on and on at my mum to buy me and I was like, 'I'll wear it forever", because it was a big investment a leather coat. It was this sort of colour [dark green] and I did love it and I did wear it for ages. And then the fashion

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[22] Glenn Miller and His Orchestra (1939) 'Moonlight Serenade', UK: Regal Zonophone.
[23] Bill Hayley and His Comets (1954) '(We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock', UK: Brunswick.
[24] Four Tops (1966) 'Reach Out, I'll be There', UK: Tamla Motown.

was to have short ones. So, I got it cut short, and then I swapped it
with my friend at school for a long burgundy suede waistcoat. So,
that's kind of what it brings to mind, that green leather coat [laughs]
(Mo 2018).

The meaning an individual attaches to clothes or musical soundtracks resonates differently each time they are worn or heard. In this study the degree of conscious separation of past and present also varied in the participants' narratives. Some viewed their youth as a distinct period that had passed but for many, dress and music had provided continuity across time.[25] When Janet played her favourite song from her youth in in her interview,[26] it had resonance with her formative years, yet as she listened, she described being in the moment. The song connected her past and present.[27]

I don't think I'm reminiscing. I just don't, I don't think I do that. I think
it's just I'm just enjoying it. I'm enjoying it now. I think that's the way I
feel about it. I don't feel like 'Ohhh' It's more like, 'Yeah!' It's good. And
it's still good (Janet 2018).

Janet regularly listens to the music of her youth and her style of dress has been consistent, she is still wearing the same style of Dr. Martens boots that she wore then; 'I chose some of the photographs as I thought I quite liked what I was wearing at the time, so that had an influence on it, of course. Yeah. And I guess it does, it does bring back memories but it's also just because I like them now' (Janet 2018). In Janet's imagination the memory wardrobe and soundtrack provide the link between past and present, and memory and experience, that extends Janet's youth narrative, affirming the existence of the specific soundtracks or styles of dress across her life, as a continuum.[28] Using Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins and Joanne Eicher's definition (1992), dress includes hairstyles, an element of dress that is literally connected to the body. This perhaps explains why for some of the participants, memories for hair were particularly vivid in the interviews, and hairstyles were mentioned alongside the soundtracks in conversations about the continuity or extension of youth cultural practices. In the example below this temporality is played out as Jayne reflects on how her current dress and music practices provide continuity from the past into the future. In retaining her bob, she is retaining her youth, informed by her memory wardrobe and memory soundtrack:

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[25] See 4.2 and 6.4.2 for discussion on the parameters of youth.
[26] Th' Faith Healers ([1991] 'Reptile Smile', *In Love,* UK: Too Pure.
[27] See *Sleeve Notes* 3.1.3 for my reflection on this moment, as Janet politely hints that I should stop talking so she can listen to the Track.
[28] Continuity of dress and music is further explored in Chapter 6.

> I think I'll still retain my bob. I always will do. I'm sure I will do. I think soul will always be a part of me. It's been, it's been too much of a part of me for now 30, since I was 15, so what's that? I'm 49 now, 34 years. Music will always, always play an integral part in my life (Jayne 2018).

Likewise, the continuity of soul music was referenced by Mo as she described how the music accompanied her youth narrative over time:

> Motown was very much 60s music. So, even though the tracks, the first one I really, truly remember hearing, was 'I Heard it Through the Grapevine', Marvin Gaye and that was somebody brought it into school, in the common room at school.[29] So, it was quite old, but I think [pause] it just transcends all time, Motown. It's just, it's soul and it will last forever. So, I don't necessarily link it to a certain era because if you love soul, you just love soul and that's it (Mo 2018).

For participants who considered their youth as a distinct period in their past the mnemonic imagination still brought past, present and future together. Marian for example considered her youth to have ended at eighteen when she married, yet engaging with the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks instantly connected her past and present experience.[30] Looking at a snapshot of herself aged 15 on a night out with two friends at the Lyndale in Manchester (Fig. 5.4), Marian (2018) commented on the outfits and her permed hairstyle, separating her current self from her styled look asking, 'What do I look like?'. Marian also linked the image to a popular song of that time that she first heard at that venue. The track links not just to the moment caught on camera, but the snapshot 'always' reminds Marian (2018) of that track, providing continuity in her memory soundtrack. As she explained:

> 'A White Sport Coat and a Pink Carnation' was the song at the time, *The King Brothers*. So, every time I see that, because that was the first time I heard that, and it was in the Lyndale so that always reminds me of that one (Marian 2018).[31]

The trans-temporal experience of remembering in the interview environment prompted participants to reflect on their experiences of youth in the past and present, using dress and music to forge trans-temporal connections. This ability to transcend time makes these cultural resources invaluable in the maintenance of self.[32]

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[29] Marvin Gaye (1969) 'I Heard It Through the Grapevine', UK: Tamla Motown.
[30] See Figure 5.1 for a snapshot of Marian, aged 18, just before she got married.
[31] The King Brothers (1957) 'A White Sport Coat and a Pink Carnation', UK: Parlophone.
[32] This is further explored in relation to Erving Goffman's (1961, 1995) concept of 'identity kits' in Chapter 6.

Figure 5.4 Marian (centre), aged 15, The Lyndale, Manchester, 1957 © Marian.

This is a dynamic and continual process as Mo (2018) explained: 'I can't imagine that I'll ever not listen to what I've always listened to, but I hope that I'll carry on listening to new [music] as well and adding to my musical repertoire'. Keightley and Pickering proposed, 'we look backwards in order to see forwards' (2012: 198). This research found more complex temporal entanglements as the participants in this chapter drew on their experiences of youth through dress and music. Past and present worked in tandem as the participants better understood their past in the present, and used the past to support the current self, creating new meanings to carry them into the future.

5.3.2 Imagination and Memory in Concert

Keightley and Pickering assert that imagination and memory act 'in concert' (2012: 2). This synchronicity is evident in this research as dress and music, actuated through memory, experience and imagination, and guided by my interview prompts, worked in concert to provoke instant vivid connections to the past and provide meaning in the act of remembering. In the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks, memory and imagination activated each other in an interchanging process whereby the imagination reactivates the memory, and the memory stimulates the imagination (Keightley and Pickering 2012: 51). When the imagination is at play, it is through the reconstruction,

rather than retrieval of memories that the creation of meaning over time occurs (Pickering and Keightley 2015: 41).

The wardrobe and soundtrack interview process enabled instant vivid connections to the past. While these were mostly intentional acts of remembering, prompted by my questions or the toolkit items, some were unexpected memories. In everyday life earworms often relate to tracks that are insignificant or not even liked by the individual.[33] When unwelcome tracks came to mind for the participants whilst preparing the toolkit, they were able to swap out the track for a preferable memory soundtrack.[34] However, it was the conscious retrieval of music tracks imbued with personal meaning that commonly occurred in the interviews, and unlike an involuntary earworm, participants were moving back and forth between spontaneous and imaginative remembering in an environment designed to provoke memory. Victoria Williamson et al. (2012) found that earworms were triggered by another stimulus, such as a situation, person, non-musical sound or place, identifying the need to consider non-musical triggers in spontaneous musical memory. Dress appears to be one such trigger. In everyday life memories for dress can be just as spontaneous and unexpected, when we hear a track or smell a scent and are reminded of clothing from the past, accompanied by the sense that we can 'feel' those clothes and relive the moment worn. Instant recollections have been considered unique to music but while clothes themselves cannot replay like a song in the mind, through imagination they are able to act as a conduit to spontaneous music memories. When I asked Janet if she could describe any unplanned encounters with clothes or music that resulted in an immediate recollection of her youth, she recounted a story of finding a black tunic dress in her wardrobe. At the time the dress had triggered a vivid memory of the first date with her husband. Janet then switched to the present and the black dress of the memory wardrobe triggered a memory soundtrack related to her date. 'I think that [date] was the first gig at the Poly[35], the first time we went out properly together, and the music comes flashing back as well for that. And I can see us dancing' (Janet 2018).[36] In this

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[33] The *Earworm Project* at Goldsmiths University, London (in collaboration with BBC Radio 6) has generated a body of literature and scientific evidence that aims to explain episodes of Involuntary Musical Imagery, also referred to as spontaneous musical imagery, 'earworms' or the 'tune in the head'. The Earwormery (no date) [online]. Available at: https://earwormery.wordpress.com. [Accessed 23 September 2022]. See also Victoria Williamson et al, (2012); Williamson and Sagar Jilka (2014) and Georgia Floridou et al. (2015).

[34] See Mo's example in *Sleeve Notes* 3.3.1 where she swaps a Crystal Gayle track for a Blondie track. This finding also corroborates with those of Victoria Williamson et al. (2014) who found individuals use songs as 'cures' to override Involuntary Musical Imagery, supporting evidence of music's positive cognitive power.

[35] Manchester Polytechnic, now Manchester Metropolitan University.

[36] See Janet's *Sleeve Notes* 3.1 for further context on this memory and Track 3.1.3 for a memory it triggered for me.

example Janet is recounting a spontaneous memory from the past, experienced outside of the interview environment, but by bringing it in to her remembered narrative, encouraged by my questions and the toolkit methods, her imagination activates the memory wardrobe and memory soundtrack extending and enriching the memory.

In the interviews dress, music and snapshots sometimes supported remembering in tandem, but often a specific item or track initiated the start of a memory which then triggered sequential memory experiences that crossed the different cultural references arriving at an unexpected narrative. This was evident when Helen played 'Bend Me Shape Me' in her interview.[37] She described being at the youth club, dancing, and I prompted her further asking asked if the music took her back or if she visualised anything, to which she responded:

> Yeah, handbag in the middle, doing this round the thing and then going to get a Coke because there was no alcohol or anything and then whispering, "Who are you going home with tonight?" "Oh, I fancy him. Do you think he'll take me home," you know, that sort of girly talk. I had a blue herringbone coat with big lapels. I remember that. Youth club was only ten-minute walk from home. Yeah, it well takes me back [laughs], good days (Helen 2018).

My question, and the music, took Helen to a memory of dancing around her handbag at the youth club, but the memory quickly moved on, unprompted, away from the soundtrack to a description of the behaviour of her peer group, which provides imagined context, and then to the memory of the coat. This movement between cultural references facilitated an imaginative recollection, illustrating how dress and music can work together in the memory.[38] Access to the props and prompts in the memory toolkit, assisted by my questions, enabled this entry into an evolving narrative; the soundtrack propped open the door, then the imagination took over creating a mnemonic domino effect as described by Helen (2018), 'I've dug deep and found memories that I'd forgotten. So, things, it's a bit like a domino, when you see one thing and then you go onto others'. This has been described as a 'memory chain' by the psychologist John Mace (2014). However, dominos or a chain suggests a linear series of memory experiences, but the order of the multiple triggering here is branching and looping in unexpected directions.

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[37] Amen Corner (1969) 'Bend Me Shape Me', UK: Deram.
[38] A further example is found in *Sleeve Notes* 3.7 where Jayne vividly describes a mental image from her youth of a girl in a nightclub, who's style she admired, and the music that played at the time.

> Well, it's always easier with props because props trigger, trigger things. It may not be something to do with a particular thing you're holding, but that would trigger a memory from another time if that makes sense (Helen 2018).

> If a song comes on the radio or is on my [pause] USB, I sing along with it and I remember why it was important to me at that time or how much fun I had at that time, you know. It might spark off completely different memories, mightn't it, you know, just off that time? (Olive 2019).

Heather also danced around her handbag in her mnemonic imagination. When asked what she was wearing to this track*?* she related the soundtrack playing in the room, *The Temptations*,[39] to specific snapshots of her youth.[40] This in turn triggered two temporally diverse memories – the R&B clubs of her youth and a recent memory of a road trip with a friend:

> I'm into my mod'y gear I suppose. I'm into the black and white photos there, [claps to music] dancing round your handbag in the R&B club. Actually, this sort of music has got lots of memories, driving music, driving down to Cornwall (Heather 2018).[41]

The remembering that occurred in the interviews, whether unexpected or intentional, exposed the imaginative depth that dress and music provided to the participants' youth stories. Through recollections of dress, imagination was vividly at work. In the examples below Jayne (Fig. 5.5), Helen (Fig. 5.6) and Olive (Fig. 5.7) describe clothes that feature in black and white snapshots. The dress snapshot is acting as an entry point, then once in the memory space, the image becomes technicolour, supported by the mnemonic imagination and enriched in the retrospective present. This articulation of memory beyond the black and white image was common in these unprompted remembered experiences of dress; as experience, memory and imagination worked hand in hand.[42] Jayne describes an outfit worn to mod rally in Scarborough in detail, including a favourite jacket:

> It was an original one, a 1960s one, yes. It was like a pale beigy brown and then when you turned it inside out it was dark brown, but I never wore it dark brown. I always wore the beige colour…

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[39] The Temptations (1964) 'The Way You Do the Things You Do', UK: Stateside.
[40] When asked what she was wearing Heather referred to two images from the 1960s, including Fig. 3.20 in *Sleeve Notes* (Track 3.5).
[41] See Michael Bull (2003) for an analysis of soundscapes in the car.
[42] Heather (2018) also added colour to a black and white snapshot, 'The shoes, they were pale blue, patent, slingbacks'. See Figure 3.20 in *Sleeve Notes* (Track 3.5).

The ski pants my mum and dad, well not my mum and dad, my mum made me because I used to buy them, but my friend Jenny had a pattern. And she said, because she sewed, so my parents, my mum made me a brown pair, a black pair and a navy-blue pair and they are the black pair. The shirts I used to buy from Burtons, button down Ben Sherman. I had a variety. I had a white one. I had a peach, I think it was a peach'y colour, a yellow one, a pink one, a pale blue one. And if I rightly remember that is, I think that is the pale pink one I was wearing there (Jayne 2018, Fig. 5.5).

IMAGE REDACTED

Figure 5.5 Jayne (left) aged 18, Barnsley Train Station, 1987 © Jayne.

Jayne also remembered the Assembly Rooms in Rotherham prompted by a snapshot; she described her outfit in detail calling on her memory wardrobe to complete what could not be seen in the picture:[43]

The skirt, what I'm wearing there, that's a Marks and Spencer's kick pleat skirt. It had got, as you can see, a lot of the mod girls at that point, they wore skirts which were below the knee [Jayne gets up to pause the playlist on the pc]. They tended to be, is it midi length when they come to about here [gestures to knee]…

Kick pleats at the front. Generally, they used to have one either side. I think this particular one I had, I had several kick pleat skirts, if I rightly remember, it had three. So, it had one here, one here and one here…

Whatever is underneath, is that my white shirt?...

---

[43] See *Sleeve Notes* 3.7 for Figure 3.30, in which Jayne is wearing the outfit described.

> Yes, it's a white button down. And I had, over that, a suede cardigan. That was vintage. It was suede here [front]. There is a picture of it actually on my Facebook.

Helen accessorised a styled look, in colour, that was depicted in a black and white snapshot taken in a local park:

> Can I see, let's see what's on my feet? [studies photograph] Oh pink, pink peep toe shoes from Stylo with heels, bee's knees, and a slide just there. That was the thing to do. You had to have a slide just there, a little gold slide. You couldn't move fast because you'd show your knickers. And that handbag was pink and yellow beads, I remember...
>
> I remember making this dress as well, it was blue and yellow check (Helen 2018, Fig. 5.6).

Figure 5.6 Helen, aged 14, Heaton Park, Manchester, 1968 © Helen.

Referring to two images from her honeymoon over sixty years ago Olive describes the fabric and colour as if no time has passed:

> I remember that was a blue corduroy dress, bright blue corduroy dress (Fig. 5.7), and that was a blue two-piece that I had, that was wool. That's a top and a skirt and I put this white butterfly on it for some reason (Fig. 5.8) [laughs]. And that's how we walked around London [laughs] (Olive 2019).

Figure 5.7 Olive on honeymoon in blue corduroy dress, London, 1958 © Olive.

Figure 5.8 Olive (left) with her husband on honeymoon, London, 1958 © Olive.

In the memory wardrobe the colour, fabric and detail of the clothing depicted in the snapshots were vividly remembered. The mnemonic imagination brought the content of the memory wardrobe to life. This mnemonic materiality was facilitated by the toolkit methods, and the memory wardrobe or soundtrack, within which the material extended beyond experience in the present and beyond the 'actual'.[44] Mnemonic materiality occurred where diverse cultural props, real and imagined, worked together to create personal meaning across time and space.

In this way the experience of remembering was both cross-temporal and multi-sensory, enabling the articulation and interpretation of rich, personally resonant lived experiences of youth.

> It's really refreshed a lot of memories that I didn't even know were there. Like, the green leather coat [laughs] and the 'I heard It through the grapevine', I was right back in the common room hearing it for the first time there when I was talking about it (Mo 2018).

While the instant access to memories through music is upheld by scientific literature, there is no equivalent science-based evidence of how similar 'snapshot' memories of dress are formed.[45] There is evidence of dress-evoked autobiographical memories in the dress literature (Weber and Mitchell 2004; Heti, Julavits, Shapton et al. 2014; Spivack 2014), but there is scope for scientific research that evaluates how dress comes to mind as a memory. Nevertheless, while the scientific approach goes some way to providing hard evidence of access to memory through music, it lacks the focus on personal experience and meaning that is more common in dress memory research and foregrounded here.

5.3.3 Illuminating the Senses

The multi-sensory experience of dress has been explored by Joanne Eicher (2015, 2021),[46] and in youth studies Paul Hodkinson (2012a) has called for more studies that consider the sensory aspect of how subcultures sound and feel. The cross-disciplinary approach of this study has exposed evidence that indicates multisensory interactions with dress and music enable rich encounters with memories and experiences of youth.

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[44] I use the term mnemonic materiality here to explain the phenomenon of the imagined material qualities, not music acting as a '*mnemic materiality* through a whole series of disclosive actions *and* the production of a body with a particular capacity to be affected' as described by Ben Anderson (2004: 16 [original emphasis]).

[45] Although Hajo Adam and Adam Galinsky (2012) have tested the effect of wearing clothes on cognition.

[46] Joanne Eicher's work inspired Donald Clay Johnson and Helen Bradley Foster's (2007) volume on dress and the senses.

William Brewer (1986) found that personal memories often come to mind as strong visual images; likewise, my participants' youth stories often elicited vivid connections to past events that were often accompanied by a mental image. Below Janet relates her memory as if a scene is unfolding in her mind:[47]

> It was *Suzi Quatro* in Tameside.[48] And probably that was the first gig that we ever went to. My dad dropped us off and picked us up. My mum won tickets. But I do remember really enjoying it. She might not be a person I listen to now, though there's one song I do [pause] remember of hers because 'She's' – I think I did try and download it – 'She's in love with you'.[49] And that's the one I came back with from, and there were people at the front, running to the front, dancing and kind of like bowing to her, because they really like, you know, sort of like, were totally obsessed by her, and that was probably, that's brought back an image of me going out with my sister to our first gig (Janet 2018).

Keightley and Pickering criticise the tendency to refer to remembering as 'seeing' (2012: 47), pointing out that memory does not consist solely of pictures. Although reference to 'seeing' was common in the participants' narratives, this is a habit of speech. In the examples drawn on for this chapter the participants are engaging their imagination in the act of recollection. They are no more 'seeing' the original image than they are literally 'hearing' the imagined soundtracks in the interview or 'feeling' the fabric of an absent garment. But language aside, their narratives relay an imaginative, sensory experience of remembering, whereby this sensory experience is sometimes literal (with a snapshot in hand or a track playing in the room) and sometimes imagined within the memory wardrobe and memory soundtracks. The reports of vivid visual imagery occurred when artefacts or sounds were present, but also where the memory wardrobe and soundtrack were activated in absence of artefacts.

> I think I said before that between 14 and 18, I don't seem to have a lot of photographs. I can imagine what I was wearing. And it's not because I didn't want to share it, it's because I just haven't got it, and I would quite like to share it. I can see myself wearing the Perry belt dangling down the jeans and stripy T-shirt, and I can see me in the shirt and the mod tie (Janet 2018).

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[47] William Brewer (1986) drew distinction between image-based memories (personal, recollective or episodic memories) and non-image based (semantic memory or autobiographical fact). See also Brewer and John Pani (1996) who concluded that visual images were more dominant in recollective (episodic) memories.
[48] Tameside is an area of Greater Manchester. Home to the Tameside theater in the 80s, which according to the Manchester Evening News was a site of controversy when Suzi Quatro played. *Manchester Evening News* (2013) 'The 1980s', 12 January [online]. Available at: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/nostalgia/the-1980s-1153144 [Accessed 23 September 2022].
[49] Suzi Quatro (1969) 'She's in love with you', UK: RAK.

The toolkit plays an important role in this visual illumination of the participants' narratives of youth as Kate explains: 'it's much easier to explain something with, you know, something that's visual' (Kate 2018).[50] But the impact of the researcher also needs consideration. Janet was working hard in her narrative to share with me the styled looks she can so clearly visualise. The extended interview process was designed to elicit memories and Heather, for example, was acutely aware of this as she reflects on the interview experience.

> When we were talking about the coat that I wore and stuff like that which, you know, just on my own without the conversation, wouldn't have happened so that's interesting too. And instantly you come back in a visual way. You can see yourself in it, yes…
>
> It is easy bouncing off actual things, isn't it, sometimes, especially if you are a visual person. However, when we were talking about it, even just the conversation did it. I mean sometimes the conversation is a bit more stilted, isn't it, when you're, "Oh, look at this. Then there's this," you know because you're showing things or pointing out things…
>
> Well, the clothes are a visual, the music creates a visual, you know, doesn't it, if you're trying to associate it with your life. But just appreciating the music for music is good too. You were trying to make me conjure up, and I did, I did conjure up some extra things, didn't I, because of some of the music (Heather 2018).

Despite her awareness of the research process, the emphasis on music imagery is entirely Heather's own, she recognises the mutual relationship between dress and music, and for her music also creates a visual. Heather is not simply recalling an exact image, rather the mnemonic imagination is at work as the interviewer-participant dynamic stimulates imaginative responses to the real and imagined dress and music artefacts. In scientific studies, music experiences are sometimes defined as auditory 'images', although more commonly in reference to involuntary memories, rather than the mental visual imagery elicited by music listening in the interview environment described by Heather. Janata's work (2009) has provided evidence that the experience of listening to an autobiographically familiar song can evoke vivid images and consequently vivid, emotionally salient memories without any visual stimulating cues present. While his lab-based methods were unable to measure the nuanced effects of listening to personally selected soundtracks, in this research there is evidence of music

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[50] See Jayne's description in *Sleeve Notes* 3.7.2, where she explains how she relies on artefacts and photographs as prompts for memory.

stimulating visual imagery, and dress evoking music, with the multiple triggers creating a powerful sense of emotional connection.

Pickering and Keightley (2015) positioned music and photography as mutually supportive mnemonic devices, but when exploring the wardrobe, the focus and hierarchy shifts.[51] The inclusion of physical dress and music artefacts and printed snapshots of dress expands the experience into the realm of touch and tactile perception (Stewart 1999). The memory wardrobe and memory soundtrack extend this further into mnemonic materiality. Annette Kuhn's (1995) writing on the mnemonic power of photographs illustrates this perspective, as she uses the photograph to prioritize the haptic or material, articulating the feeling of the clothes she is wearing in an image:[52]

> Today, as I imagine myself at that moment, inside that dress, my body feels constrained, my chest tight. I can scarcely breathe. The clothes are uncomfortable, restricting. The belt squeezes, the collar chokes. The top half of my body feels cramped and immobile (Kuhn 1995: 63).

The toolkits that included material artefacts – clothes, music artefacts and a range of photographs – elicited strong emotions in the interviews, such as those with Marian and Kate who both valued the materiality of their dress and music collections. Both Helen and Heather, who described herself as a 'visual' person, referred to olfactory experiences alongside touch. But for Heather it is the permanency of touch and the stability of the visual image or material artefact that is important.

> I mean smell is important for some, for some clothes. I mean I remember after my husband died, that, you know, I used to get the smell but because smell doesn't last particularly, unless it goes into a fusty airless kind of situation [laughs]. Smells can come back to you in a sort of imaginary sense, to a certain extent. But yes, there is something about handling stuff, putting LPs on and all that kind of thing, yes (Heather 2018).

This research also found a tactile dimension to everyday practices of recorded music listening as Kate describes below, the sound of the vinyl records playing in her interview were richer and 'taller' than digital alternatives.[53]

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[51] Michael Pickering and Emily Keightley (2015: 5) referenced Geoffrey Batchen (2004) and Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (2004) in recognition of the tactile, material qualities of photographs, yet in their own work the communicative value of these visual and audio 'technologies' dominates over the haptic.

[52] This analysis of 'feeling' also relates to Track 5.3.5 where the embodied qualities of dress and music are discussed.

[53] Marian also provides an example in *Sleeve Notes* 3.2.2. where she explains that having the actual garments and the photograph of the garment in the interview made the memories more emotional.

> The actual physical act of taking the record out and putting it on a turntable is so much more pleasurable than if it's on, you know, a Spotify playlist or something. There isn't kind of anything that touches it. And also, the sounds, it sounds different as well because, you know, vinyl being analogue, the sounds are much more, they are a lot richer, they're a lot taller (Kate 2018).

In academic literature on dress and music material, visual and auditory cultures are usually considered in isolation.[54] However, in the wardrobe and soundtrack interviews it was the overlapping of visual, auditory and tactile experience that intensified these interviews. In the memory literature, Rubin (2005: 79) has proposed that the senses work together as a multimodal system within autobiographical memory to include 'vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and body sense or kinesthesis'. Stevens (2015: 263) has described music as 'multidimensional and multimodal' with auditory, visual, verbal and emotional dimensions. Likewise, Marie Kirk and Dorthe Berntsen (2018) found the use of multimodal objects as cues for remembering past events increased vivid memory recall in adults, as the memory toolkit demonstrates in this study. Extending beyond the mnemonic value of physical objects, this study found a picture of the object could provide a similar effect. The images of dress depicted in the snapshots often triggered vivid memories, even in the absence of physical garments. Like Johan Willander, Sverker Sikström and Kristina Karlsson (2015: 6) who studied the interaction between different sensory cues and concluded that 'multimodal retrieval of autobiographical memory is mainly driven by visual and auditory processes', this study found musical soundtracks and dress snapshots worked together without hierarchy in the mnemonic imagination. We observe and listen simultaneously; the visual influences how we experience sound and vice versa. Charles Spence (2007) found that visual and auditory cues can heighten perception of the tactile object. As the examples in the previous section illustrate, the use of music as a complementary memory resource often intensified the recollection of dress. When the track – 'How Can I Tell You' – played in Helen's interview, I asked what she was wearing, if she took herself back to first hearing this track. This prompted a visit to her memory wardrobe where she put together an outfit to go with the song, before returning unprompted, to accessorise the look with her brown crepe sole shoes.

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[54] Charles Spence (2015) has noted that this is also true of the literature surrounding the senses and that many books on the subject separate out the individual senses, when in fact our senses work together, our experiences being formed of complex combinations of sensory activity.

Figure 5.9 Helen wearing *the skirt* during her time at an American University, USA, 1973 © Helen.

> I'm wearing a sweater from 'Way In' in Manchester and I had three, all the same style but different colours. And this particular one was grey and it had buttons here [shoulder]. It had two lots of cherries here and it was short. And I had one in yellow and one in brown. I'm not sure what I'd be wearing with it. I don't think it was jeans. Probably a brown pleated skirt, *the skirt* (Helen 2018, Fig. 5.9).[55]

The skirt? I asked, to which she responded: 'or something similar, and crepe sole shoes. My particular favourites were brown patent with a creamy crepe sole' (Helen 2018). In this example, a snapshot (Fig. 5.9) provided content for the memory wardrobe, which was then drawn on to assemble a new outfit in response to the track and my question.[56]

The experiences of remembering youth discussed so far reflect Sarah Pink's (2015: 3) framework for sensory ethnography where she positions 'sensoriality' as 'part of how we understand our past, how we engage with our present and how we imagine our futures'. The interviews with the memory toolkit evidenced this multitemporal multisensory remembering. When Marian played her original vinyl single 'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes' in her interview, she described a striking visual image.[57]

> I see my little round blue plastic bag that I had when they first came out, and it used to fit the records in because it was round. And I remember getting on the 89 to come up to Alan's and I used to get it

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[55] For further context on this quote and the snapshot see Helen's *Sleeve Notes* Track 3.4.1.
[56] Cat Stevens (1971) 'How Can I Tell You'*. Teaser and the Firecat.* UK: Island Records.
[57] The Platters (1958) Smoke Gets in Your Eyes'*,* UK: Mercury Records.

in Albert Square that, with these records in, you know. I can't remember playing these at home. We did have a record player, or did we? Yes, we did. I think our Dennis bought one, that was it, Dansette. Yes, lovely [laughter]. It still gets me (Marian 2018).

As the music played in the background, it provided the soundtrack to the materiality of the handbag and its reimagined image, integrating visual, auditory and tactile experience. The image of the little blue bag was projected immediately into the foreground, triggered by the sound of the music played and the atmosphere it provided as the room was charged with emotion – 'it always gives me goose bumps, this' (Marian 2018).

Figure 5.10. Marian (left), aged 16, in her friend's garden wearing the Windsmoor suit jacket from her toolkit, Manchester, 1958 © Marian.

In her interview Marian also linked this track to a photograph (Fig. 5.10), a suit she had kept from her youth and memories of her husband who bought her the record, illustrating music's ability to connect events across time, triggered by or activating different stimuli. Dress and music share this ability to act as sensory memory resources, provoking reactions beyond their individual visual, material or auditory properties. Mo instantly transposed dress to music when looking at a photograph of herself aged 16 (Fig. 5.2): 'As soon as I saw the photograph I thought, "Right, Led

Zep"' (Mo 2018). In this study recorded dress (snapshots) and recorded music provided access points to the participants' memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks. The wardrobes and soundtracks made combined use of the visual and auditory cues that drive autobiographical memory processes, a synergy that generated the successful re-creation of vivid memories of youth.[58] When referring to snapshots in the toolkit, participants initially referred to the events or experiences captured in the image. Yet, snapshots were often elaborated upon and literally coloured by imagination, showing that an image can be translated in diverse ways under the influence of different sensory triggers: the 'never-ending process of making, remaking, making sense of, our selves – now', that Kuhn describes (1991: 22). Here the evidence indicates that the visually captured moments of a snapshot are more vividly recalled when accompanied by other memory conduits. Equally the items of clothing, dress snapshots or soundtracks played in the interview influenced the participants to fit a memory to what they could touch, see, or hear in that moment.

> I think looking at my own personal experiences in the photographs linked with the tracks made it easier for specific events to come back…
>
> The older you get, you remember certain things from certain days and certain times in your life, but you don't remember, you can't, you don't remember the minute detail. And I think that when you, like today, when I got the boxes out, you can pick certain things out and you can relate to what photographs they went to, and you remember. You remember a certain incident or a certain song or a certain person. So that's the sort of, the thing that happens when, with the memory thing, I think, keeping the artefacts and the photographs and music (Jayne 2018).

Multiple memory resources were not always required to activate strong memories. Often encounters with just one artefact or image from the wardrobe or a singular track triggered vivid, multisensory experiences. Sight or sound evoked touch as physical feelings were imagined or re-experienced in the present, in response to an image or musical track. Occasionally nothing came to mind for the participant in relation to a music track or dress snapshot beyond what was literally present in the image or sound, but in the multisensory interview environment rich, textured memories were reported even when the physical dress or music artefacts were not present. Pickering and Keightley assert that 'recorded images and recorded sounds can seem to make

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[58] See Johan Willander, Sverker Sikström and Kristina Karlsson (2015) for the science behind multimodal retrieval.

the absent present again' (2015: 49), and in Janet's interview the mnemonic imagination of the memory wardrobe filled the gaps in her photograph albums with vivid images of her Perry belt and stripy T-shirt, whilst the sensoriality of music played in the interview elicited physical feelings that crossed temporal domains and brought her experiences of youth into the present:

> It does help to have props, and it brings up memories a little bit more [pause]. I can see myself at gigs, feel myself at gigs…
>
> I think the clubs that we used to go to have a certain feeling, whether it was hot, sticky, the smells of the clubs. And we went to the Band on the Wall quite a lot, and that had a kind of feeling. I mean, from a very physical sense, it was a bit sticky, a bit grubby, in some ways, since it kind of got redeveloped, it's not quite the same. So yes, busy, noisy. Occasionally intimidating, if it was really, if the gig was very busy. But yes, things like that really – heat and noise and the smell of beer (Janet 2018).

This research found that the participants' sensorially rich, vividly described narratives of youth were imbued with feeling, and through imaginative engagement with the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks these experiences became embodied again in the present. The snapshots played an important role in this, as they provided the access to the memory wardrobe, supported by the soundtracks, and sometimes the material artefacts, providing multisensory triggers which served to illuminate and expand the image or dress memory.

5.3.4 Embodied Memory and Meaning

Dress, or dressing, is understood to be embodied, a means through which one can 'articulate the body in culture' as a sensory experience (Entwistle 2015: 216). Similarly, music listening is an emotionally intense experience (Hodkinson 2012a), and '*felt* to be involuntary, instinctive, visceral' (Thornton 1995: 113 [original emphasis]). In a phenomenological study of the relationship between dress and positive psychology, Christoph-Simon Masuch and Kate Hefferon focused on the embodied material experience of dressing, describing worn and stored clothing items as both 'aides-memoires' and 'the storage media of complex, self-relevant information' (2018: 347). There is evidence in this thesis that dress *and* music, particularly personal soundtracks, plays a similar dual role. Through dress and music, memory articulates the body in the cultures of past experience. This is evidenced in the examples in this chapter. Remembered experiences of youth, through dress and music are felt in the

present, through emotional or physical bodily engagement with the toolkit in the interviews.

When interacting with dress artefacts in their memory toolkits or drawing on them in the imagination, participants relived the moment worn, evoking strong emotion and meaning in the present. Unlike Kuhn's recollection of dress discomforts (1995: 63), my participants related mostly positive memories, avoiding lengthy narratives that focused on negative experiences. This reflected the selection of artefacts for their toolkits, which represented the positive tokens of youth and positive self-affirming experiences they wished to share. The participants described feelings that crossed past and present, and the memory of emotional feeling was apparent even when clothes were experienced though an image. Three participants – Heather, Helen and Mo – used the expression "the bee's knees" when recalling how they felt in the moments captured in snapshots of their youth, intensifying their account with an idiom from the past.[59] Where clothes were present in the toolkit, as material resources, visual images were triggered, which in turn provided imagined material feelings as part of the memory. Talking about the Windsmoor suit she had kept (Figs. 3.8, 5.10), Marian (2018) imagined herself back in the Belle Vue dancehall before describing the feeling of the outfit back then.[60]

> It reminds me of the Belle Vue really because we went to Belle Vue. We did dancing at Belle Vue then, and she [Marian's friend] lived near Belle Vue then at the time. I just think when you see these things and you think, "I really felt good in that", you know, you had that feel good factor (Marian 2018).

In relation to music, Ben Anderson (2004: 6) has argued that remembering is reliant on a range of embodied practices, quoting Edward Casey (2000: 147) who described music as 'intrinsic to the body, to its own ways of remembering: how we remember in and by and through the body'. When listening to music in the present, participants commonly experienced a strong emotional response. Kate reflected on her unexpected emotional reaction listening to music she recorded with her band, recalling difficulties encountered as a female musician; and Marian was moved as she listened to music that reminded her of when she met her husband over fifty years previously. The present-moment sensation evoked by music is of methodological interest as it not

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[59] See Alison Slater (2011) whose participants also reference this term. Olive also uses the term 'the cat's whiskers', see *Sleeve Notes* 3.10.

[60] How clothes feel in the present has previously been explored from both anthropological (Woodward 2005, 2007) and cognitive perspectives (Adam and Galinsky 2012).

only stimulated memories but also provided a sensory atmosphere that impacted on both participant and researcher. The music was around us and within us as we talked. This proximity to the body extends the impact of dress and music. It is this feeling through the body that makes memories of dress and music special. Although, the intense embodied materiality of music was not always welcome and both Linda and Carole chose not to play music in their interviews to avoid uncomfortable, emotional connections.

The sensory, embodied experience of dressing or listening to recorded music is central to the power dress and music have on the mnemonic imagination. These material or aural experiences motivated the participants to move their bodies, to actively engage with these tokens of youth. Physical engagement with the material, visual and audio dimensions of the toolkit enabled participants to immerse themselves in artefacts and soundscapes during the interviews. Kate, Marian, Helen and Carole all instinctively tried on clothes or accessories during their interviews.[61] But the music provoked the most physical reaction as the participants were drawn into moving with the music to demonstrate dance moves: 'You didn't move your feet, you just moved your shoulders [gestures and laughs]' (Helen 2018); or as an instinctive reaction to the music played: 'Notice I started dancing to *Jimmy James and The Vagabonds* straight away' (Heather 2018).[62] It was as though the music needed a physical outlet, and a connection with the body, much as wearing a certain garment can change the way we hold ourselves. Linda described this need as 'a moment and a feeling that's bigger than a thought, and a dance, they cause me to dance' (Linda 2019); referring to 'All the Way',[63] she explained 'it's like an end of the night track so by then you're stoned enough, you're drunk enough not to care, do you know what I mean. Everybody is your friend and it's just a great track. I can't hear that without dancing' (Linda 2019).[64]

When participants were motivated to sing during the interview, it took this bodily interaction to a higher level of engagement. Olive, Marian, Heather and Helen all sang along to tracks in their interview and in Marian's interview, only by singing was she

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[61] Reference to fit also enhanced the remembered narratives adding a physical dimension to the stories told. 'I used to make my own skirts, so rock and roll was the full skirt, then [pause] winkle pickers was the thing and also pencil thin skirts as well, which I used to make, they were so tight, I could hardly walk in them' (Carole 2019).
[62] Jimmy James and the Vagabonds (1966) 'Ain't Love Good. Ain't Love Proud', *The New Religion*. UK: Piccadilly.
[63] The Whispers (1978) 'Let's Go all the Way', UK: RCA.
[64] For examples of dancing in relation to female participation see Track 4.3.3 and a reference to McRobbie (1984).

able to recall the tune and correct the song title of *Paul Anka's* 'Diana': 'Isn't it funny how you can remember all the words from these?' (Marian 2018).[65] Heather clapped and sang along to *Jimmy James and the Vagabonds* reminded of ice skating in her youth and Helen was transported back to her youth club singing along to 'Bend Me Shape Me',[66] and 'Dock of the Bay'.[67]

> Yes, [sings] "And baby you know it" – Oh, I know all the words. So, this was a youth club. And Andy Fairweather Low was a Steve Marriott-type, like [The] Faces.[68] And he had the straggly hair down here and the mohair suit, yeah, well, [laughter] it takes me back (Helen 2018).

Anderson (2004) claimed that music can act as a mnemonic device through bodily practices, and this is evidenced in the participants' physical or emotional reactions to music in the interviews. There are commonalities here in dress. When viewed by the original wearer a dress snapshot has the power to invoke memory of the body of the past self and its embodied experiences. Through the snapshots dress connected the memory to the body, including the bodily elements of dress such as hair or make up that a garment cannot summon. The embodied practices of dress and music, articulated in the remembered narratives and sometimes reenacted in the interviews, reinforce memory and its emotional power. Dress and music were found to share the ability to inhabit the body, in present experience, and when activated by the mnemonic imagination.

5.3.5 Collective Experience, Personal Memories

Experience and memory have both personal and social aspects. Remembered experiences of youth, narrated through the lens of dress and music, are deeply personal and support introspective reflection on the self. However, dress and music are also used to communicate and integrate into the social world. Music and photographs are recognised forms of communication media (Pickering and Keightley 2015), and dress is also widely recognised as communicative (Barnard 2002), in terms of how we present ourselves to others (Stone 1962; Goffman 1961, 1995). In music literature Jane Davidson and Sandra Garrido (2014) drew a distinction between private

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[65] Paul Anka (1957) 'Diana', UK: Columbia. See Marian's *Sleeve Notes* 3.2.1 for further context.
[66] Amen Corner (1969) 'Bend Me Shape Me', UK: Deram.
[67] Otis Reading (1968) '(Sittin' On) The Dock of the Bay' UK: Stax.
[68] Andy Fairweather Low was the founder and lead singer of *Amen Corner.* See *Andy Fairweather Low* (2020) [online]. Available at: https://andyfairweatherlow.com. [Accessed 28 July 2022]. Steve Marriott was the lead singer of the Small Faces. See *The Small Faces* (2021) 'Steve Marriott' [online]. Available at: https://www.thesmallfaces.com/biography/steve-marriott. [Accessed 28 July 2022].

and public music experiences, while Simon Frith (1996) argued that music makes sense of the relationship between the individual and the social. David Hesmondhalgh (2013) posited that whilst many cultural products have potential to cross intimate and social realms, music has a particularly powerful ability to bring together private and public experience.

The mnemonic possibilities of music extend beyond the playing of music in the home, as recorded music is potentially present in all public surroundings. Public music experiences were also evidenced in unplanned public settings:

> So, it just hits you, you know, and you start dancing up the supermarket aisle to something or singing all the words [laughs]. Because it's amazing how much you actually do remember. As soon as, it's often to do with hearing, I think, the music (Heather 2018).

Although public music experiences are not the focus of this thesis, they impact on personal experience. Participants often referred to iconic local venues such as the Twisted Wheel (Carole and Heather), the Ritz (Marian and Olive) or Linda's memories of the Reno nightclub.[69] In their study of music scenes Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers found that 'collective memories become textured by particular venues' (2016b: 490). This research found collective experience, in public venues, 'textured' the personal memories recounted by the participants: 'I hear the music and I'll go back to the ice rink because that's where I always heard that music (Heather 2018).[70]

In the dress literature Woodward's (2005, 2007) wardrobe interviews suggest this power is not exclusive to music, and Eicher (1981, 2015) has exposed the relationship between private, public and secret selves in relation to dress. As tokens of youth with the ability to connect across time, dress and music also share the ability connect personal and collective experience. The use of Style-Fashion-Dress (Tulloch 2010, 2016) as a frame of analysis supports this symbiosis, with the personal dress choices always in negotiation with collective trends.[71] Analysing styled dress through the medium of the snapshot often situated the outfit worn in the photograph within a wider social or geographical frame, and many of the personal experiences of youth remembered by the participants took place in public settings. These recalled events

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[69] See Track 4.3.5 *Sites of Youth* for further context on live music experiences.
[70] Part of this quote also appears in Heather's *Sleeve Notes* 3.5.
[71] See Track 1.3.2 for definitions of style, fashion and dress.

were sometimes social occasions or collective experiences, but acted as a support to personal memory, stimulating the imagination. Public spaces depicted in photographs also impacted on personal memory; participants sometimes remarked on the location first before searching for personal connections to the image or place, as if looking for clues. When Kate reflected on a press shot from her band days (Fig. 5.11), she connected the aesthetic of the place depicted in the image with her outfit, which then motivated her to go upstairs and find an orange top she had kept from that time.

Figure 5.11 Kate (left) with her band *Polythene*, Salford, c. 1998 © Kate
(Press shot *Manchester Evening News*, photographer unknown).

> That's in a pub in Salford that, again, I don't think is there anymore. So, where those new flats are, that's it because we rehearsed down there and then we did this interview for the *Evening News*. It was doing photographs. So, we went in this pub, got a pint and they took that, really nice. I really like the background with the dartboard and the kind of, the live entertainment, '60s, '70s stuff, it's just the colours. I've still got this top. Actually, this is my other leather that I don't have any more. I've still got this orange top. It doesn't fit me of course, another crop top [Kate goes upstairs to find the top] (Kate 2018).

Although a photograph may appear to record a memory, memories of dress or music, are not fixed in space, they traverse different places, occasions, or events, both private and public. Through dress and music, multiple personal and popular or cultural memories are generated. José van Dijck's term 'personal cultural memory' aligns with the position of dress and music as tokens of youth in this thesis (2007: 2). Defined as '*the acts and products of remembering in which individuals engage to make sense of their lives in relation to the lives of others and to their surroundings, situating themselves in time and place*' (Van Dijck 2007: 6 [original emphasis]).[72]

I differentiate between personal memory and popular memory in this thesis. The term popular memory reflects the synthesis of the participants' past experience with the past experience of others (including myself), creating a space between personal and popular that 'allows the opportunity for historical critique, and action in the present based on it' (Keightley and Pickering 2012: 94).[73] This action in the present is the personal experience of remembering under scrutiny in this thesis. For Mo music was integral to her sense of self, but also a key touchstone in her social life. As Mo explained in her *sleeve notes*, many of the snapshots selected for the toolkit were taken at events or in social settings where music would have been playing.[74]

In music literature 'peak music experiences' have been defined by Ben Green as 'especially affecting, important, influential or even pivotal' personal experiences (2016: 2).[75] In wardrobe interviews conducted by Woodward (2007), Alison Guy and Maura Banim (2000), and in this study, participants remembered equivalent peak fashion

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[72] See also Van Dijck (2006) on popular music, and personal and collective memory.
[73] See also Helena Mills (2016) on the relationship between the personal and popular, referenced later in this chapter.
[74] See *Sleeve Notes* 3.3.1 for the quote from Mo.
[75] Psychologist Abraham Maslow (1964) was the first to define peak experiences in *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences.*

moments.[76] These peak experiences enable the exploration of feelings 'both as they occur and in memory' (Green 2021: 98). Green noted how the formation and articulation of personal memories is reliant on cultural influences, pointing to the potential of 'collectively significant' artefacts or past events as 'meeting points for individual experience and cultural memory' (2021: 32). Peak youth experiences remembered in the participant narratives were often social experiences and included marriage, a special concert or party attended, first dates, or more generic periods where memories of youth reach a crest such as the time Helen spent at an American University. In the mnemonic spaces of the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks the connection between personal and popular memory was played out in reference to these remembered peak events and experiences. Memories of peak events sometime triggered seemingly unrelated memories of dress or music. Heather described in detail a trip to an ice rink in Ayrshire on holiday,[77] following my question – what were you wearing? – Heather quickly focused on a different peak event memory, following with the red and black mohair coat from her memory wardrobe:

> I can remember exactly what I was wearing when I went to see The Beatles and queued up all night for Beatles tickets – 1963. I had this, oh God, I thought it was the 'bee's knees'. And it was a dark red and black mohair coat with big buttons down the front. Yeah, you see now, I'd forgotten about that coat until we just talked about it (Heather 2018).

It was notable however that important collective events became a source of anxiety for some of the participants when they had not been present. FOMO [78] has become a common concern since people began sharing their social lives on social media. Retrospective feelings of missing out were apparent in the remembering process: articulated by Helen whose strict parents held her back from engaging in youth culture; or Kate's frustration that she was unable to attend the music events her older brother took for granted and missing out on the TV show *The Tube*. This 'retro FOMO' was unique to the experience of reflecting on youth, enabled by the methodology and the synthesis of past and present experience. Retro FOMO was triggered when participants drew on collective or shared experience for their personal memories, but was also exacerbated by engagement with social media as explained by Jayne (2108):

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[76] Examples of clothes connected with key events include Helen's check coat (Fig. 3.18) 'oh that was the best coat in the world' (2018); and Jayne's anorak (Fig. 5.5) 'that's my favourite anorak. I wouldn't go anywhere without that anorak, Jo. It used to drive my parents potty' (2018).
[77] See Track 5.6 where Heather describes the ice rink memory that precedes this quote.
[78] FOMO - Fear of missing out – McGinnis, P. (2004) 'Harnessing FOMO' [online]. Available at: https://patrickmcginnis.com. [Accessed 28 July 2022]. See definition in footnote 52, Track 3.4.

> Back then was word-of-mouth, you didn't really hear and see all these collective, collective photographs because there wasn't the internet…
>
> You might see the odd photograph and be thinking "Oh, it was really good so and so was DJing or, so and so, this happened." But when you actually see pictures 30 odd years later and a collective number of pictures from different people, you think "I wish I'd have gone there now" …
>
> When you see photographs on Facebook and you realise, "Oh, I was going to go to that rally but I couldn't because I was revising or I'd got such and such on." And you think, "I bet that was really good that"' (Jayne 2018).[79]

Whilst this thesis focuses on personal rather collective experience it is apparent that the first-hand experience is intertwined with second-hand cultural media and the past experience of other people (Keightley and Pickering (2012: 86). Helena Mills (2016) observed this connection in her study of 1960s youth culture. Her participants compared their personal memories of youth with the common tropes of the swinging 60s that exist in popular memory. Similar comparisons can be seen in this study where participants reference wider societal trends or popular media in relation to their own experience. As shown in Chapter 4 these personal memories correct the collective record of female participation in youth culture. Of particular interest to this research is the role cultural artefacts or media play in bridging the gap between personal and popular. Keightley and Pickering (2012: 86) drew attention to Kuhn's description of personal (family snapshots) and public (films or press photography) media as inseparable in her memory work (1995: 4). My participants relied on the memory toolkit to support their personal memories in their interviews, but also used popular culture, including radio, film and media, to extend their personal narratives of dress and music. Most participants cited radio as an early influence and a conduit to memories.[80] Films were used to add cultural context or were cited as influences, such as Linda explaining how in her early teens her look was influenced by the Blaxploitation genre.[81] Reference was also made to films that were part of a remembered peak event such as the first film Marian's fiancé took her to, but also in reference to artefacts in the toolkits such

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[79] Further references to retro FOMO are made in *Sleeve Notes* 3.4 (Helen), 3.6.2 (Kate) and 3.7.2 (Jayne).
[80] See Track 4.3.4 for examples of radio listening in youth, and Olive describing in 5.3.2 how a song heard on the radio can trigger memories.
[81] A genre of films from the early 1970s, that featured black protagonists. See *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Blaxploitation' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blaxploitation. [Accessed 28 July 2022].

as Kate's *Fight Club* jacket. This 1970s vintage jacket was purchased and worn around the time of the film's release in the 1990s (Fig. 5.12, 5.13).

Figure 5.12 Brad Pitt (left) in Fight Club 1999 (*IMDB* 2022 [online]).[82]

Figure 5.13 Kate (right) approx. aged 30 in the *Fight Club* jacket, late 1990s © Kate.

Radio and TV shows were also referenced by the participants including *Ready Steady Go!* and the 'definitive' Channel 4 youth programme *The Tube* that Kate (2018) described in her youth story, frustrated that it was not accessible in her rural town.[83] These shows were cited as important influences in early youth, providing an access point to youth cultures not yet available to a young female teen.

> Well, in the early days, I suppose the most influence would have been *Ready Steady Go!* on the TV. I used to rush home from school, I think it was on about 6 o'clock, or maybe even 6:30 on a Friday night. And you'd, you'd always watch *Ready Steady Go*, with what they were wearing and what they, how they were dancing, and of course the groups that you liked were on (Heather 2018).

Heather remembered how important these TV shows were as a collective experience of youth, that enabled her to contextualise her personal tastes and interest within a bigger cultural scene. Whilst Janet's memories of watching television, triggered by the inclusion of TV theme tune in her 40th birthday CD,[84] were intimately social:

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[82] Image from Fight Club, a film featuring Brad Pitt, who's character, soap salesman Tyler Durden, wore a brown leather jacket. *Fight Club* (1999) [film]. Directed by David Fincher USA: Twentieth Century Fox.
[83] *Ready Steady Go!* was a British music show broadcast on ITV between 1963 and 1966. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Ready Steady Go!' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ready_Steady_Go! [Accessed 28 July 2022]. The Tube was a youth focused music show that aired on Channel 4 between 1982 and 1987. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'The Tube (TV series)' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tube_(TV_series). [Accessed 28 July 2022].
[84] See Figure 6.10 for a photograph of the CD.

> There were a few odd ones thrown in there [the CD], like the *M*A*S*H* theme tune. That's because I just loved the song. I used to watch the programme with my dad. We cried at the last one together (Janet 2018).[85]

Some toolkits included magazines or published media such as the magazine cuttings Heather, Kate and Jayne had collated as mementoes in scrapbooks.[86] The participants referenced specialist music magazines in their narratives such as *Shindig*, *New Musical Express, Melody Maker*,[87] and fashion and lifestyle magazines aimed at teens including *Rave, Petticoat* and *Mirabelle.*[88] Janet, Helen, and Heather all cited *Jackie* magazine which was published for nearly thirty years.[89] Yet these popular cultural media artefacts did not provoke the same physical reactions or embodied experiences as the dress items and snapshots or soundtracks. The research found that these artefacts lacked the personal connection and communicative powers that the wardrobe snapshots and dress items or musical soundtracks have as tokens of youth.

In the narratives the personal and collective were mutually supportive. The references to popular media extended the content of the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks, bolstering personal memories with popular context. Whilst personal memories elicited through dress and music triggered the narratives of female participation in collective youth cultures analysed in Chapter 4. This movement back and forth between the personal and popular was typical in the memories of youth relayed by participants. Van Dijck has described how memory can construct 'a sense of continuity between ourselves and others' (2007: 3). This was evident in the personal playlists and carefully selected toolkit items chosen to share with the researcher. Many items used for the toolkit had personal meaning imbued by people gifting the artefact, for example, Helen and Marian had kept records given by their husbands. Helen treasured the Leonard Cohen album her husband bought her, but had never played it,

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[85] *M*A*S*H* is short for 'Mobile Army Surgical Hospital', an American TV show set during the Koran war. It aired in the UK on BBC2 between 1973 and 1984. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'M*A*S*H (TV Series)' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M*A*S*H_(TV_series). [Accessed 28 July 2022].

[86] See Figure 4.1 in chapter 4, and figures 6.6, 6.8 and 6.9 in chapter 6 for examples.

[87] For background on these magazines see *Shindig! Magazine* (no date) [online]. Available at: https://www.shindig-magazine.com/?page_id=34. [Accessed 28 July 2022]; *NME* (no date) [online]. Available at: https://www.nme.com/magazine. [Accessed 28 July 2022]; *World Radio History* (no date) 'Melody Maker'. [online]. Available at: https://worldradiohistory.com/Melody_Maker.htm. [Accessed 28 July 2022].

[88] For background on these magazines see *Beat Chapter* (2022) 'Rave Magazine' [online]. Available at: https://www.beatchapter.com/rave-magazine-125-c.asp. [Accessed 28 July 2022]; *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Petticoat (magazine)' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petticoat_(magazine). [Accessed 28 July 2022]; Tebbutt, M. (2017) 'From 'marriage bureau' to 'points of view: Changing patterns of advice in teenage magazines: *Mirabelle*, 1956 - 1977', in A. Kidd and M. Tebbutt (eds.), *People, Places and Identities.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

[89] See Angela McRobbie's ([1991] 2000) chapter on *Jackie* magazine.

in her youth or more recently. The material and emotional qualities of the album held shared meaning even in the absence of playing it:

> It's tactile. I'm quite a tactile person but I don't know, literally, why I keep them if I can't play them. I don't know. And this, [my husband] bought me this because he knew I liked Leonard Cohen but I had nothing to play it on when he bought it me [laughs]. So that was the first present he ever bought me so when is that? That was 1967 (Helen 2018).

Another common form of sharing in the interviews was the borrowing of shared pasts to inform personal memory. Looking at a photograph of her husband, Janet referenced her husband's style of dress, appropriating his personal style for her own memory wardrobe. In her mnemonic imagination they shared the remembered look, 'I haven't got a picture of me looking like this; this is actually [my husband], but this is kind of like. I was wearing that shirt, a similar shirt and a little mod tie' (Janet 2018). Jayne included the dress of others in her toolkit to provide examples of the broader contexts of the mod culture, describing a photograph she included in her memory toolkit (Fig. 5.14) in which she does not feature:

Figure 5.14 Girls at the Great Yarmouth Rally, 1987 © Jayne.

> I chose obviously the ones that are prominent events that I went to that
> I remember. Also, because of the clothes as well that I actually wore
> at that particular time or friends wore to outline really what the
> interpretation was then, of the people who were actually into, into the
> mod culture (Jayne 2018).

These examples show how the mnemonic imagination connected personal and popular memory through dress in the toolkit, borrowing the styled dress of others to represent the self. References to the borrowing of clothing itself also featured in the participant narratives. Borrowed garments appeared in the memory wardrobe for example when Mo recalled wearing her grandmother's dress to a peak event of her youth, her first disco:

> The first disco I ever went to at 13, I just didn't have a thing to wear.
> So, I borrowed a gorgeous black velvet dress from my grandmother,
> who was a very glamorous woman, with a little, like, kaftan beaded
> collar and I just thought that I was the 'bee's knees' [laughs]. So, that
> was my first foray into sort of dressing to go out, was in the dress
> borrowed from my grandma (Mo 2018).

Figure 5.15 Jayne (3rd from left), Scarborough Rally, April 1988 © Jayne.

Social engagement was evident both within the memory narratives but also in how memories were shared in the interview and in everyday life. Past and present overlapped as the participants shared their experiences of dress and music in their youth, and the experience of reflecting on their youth in the company of others. Collective experiences later in life can also support personal memories of youth. Below Kate describes a festival she attended in her 40s with people she knew twenty years previously, watching her favourite indie bands from that time. Such transformational experiences are normally associated with the formative years of youth, but here Kate re-ignites her youth and is left feeling invigorated. The peak experiences of youth, like memories of youth, appear to transcend past and present experience.

> I mean it was just a phenomenal line up. And it was, it was basically, it was all of us. We went down and it was like the whole of Manchester had decamped there, all the people we knew, about 30 people. It was just, I don't know, it was like our Woodstock or something. And I remember coming back and just feeling absolutely untouchable. I was absolutely elated. I was so happy (Kate 2018).

The participants talked about how they shared cultural artefacts that relate to their youth for example posting memories on social media (Kate, Jayne), saving original clothes to lend to others (Marian), creating public playlists and websites (Jayne), donating clothes to a museum (Heather), creating mixtapes (Janet, Heather, Helen and Jayne) or putting on a public exhibition (Linda). Through her website Jayne has created a resource where her personal memories of youth and the collective remembered experiences are widely shared, connecting people's memories and experiences of the peak events of mod culture with her own (Fig. 5.15). Jayne describes the importance of legacy as motivation for the creating the website:[90]

> I would like to keep sharing, to keep that in my life. And also, if it brings joy to others because they can recollect or they can listen or they can meet up, to meet old friends, or reconnect with people they knew from the old days or whatever, because. And also, for the younger generation as well because some of the younger generation have said to me "It's great because it's nice to look at your photographs" and obviously lots more besides mine, "and your memories, because it gives us an idea on how to dress". So, it gives them ideas on, you know (Jayne 2018).

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[90] See Track 6.2.3 for further discussion around legacy and shared memory resources.

Sue Campbell (2008) has posited that sharing shapes memory, noting how the presence of listeners, plays a role in the formation of memories. In the interviews the interaction between me and the participants is part of the creative imaginative framing from which the youth stories are formed. The explicit sharing of memories of youth was also evident in the narratives, as participants mentioned reminiscing with others in person or online. This connection with people provides a means through which the experience of remembering intensifies and takes on a heightened value, when supporting others in their remembering or pitching our own mnemonic ability through interaction with others. Jayne (2018) describes, 'if it wasn't for those people prompting me or collectively coming together and telling me – those sort of memories – I think I'd lose them'. In this way other people can become part of the memory toolkit. Marian (2018) noted the impact her friend being in the snapshot of her Windsmoor suit had on her memory (Fig. 5.10), 'I was, sort of, in that moment there with her'. She also described how the interaction with myself, the interviewer, impacted on the emotional intensity of the memory, 'I think if you hadn't have been here and I just brought [the jacket] out of the wardrobe, I don't think it would have been so emotional' (Marian 2018).[91]

The reflexive methods in this research supported this crossing of private and shared experience. The participants articulated the memory to the interviewer, simultaneously developing understanding of their own past and how their past is understood by others. This was particularly explicit when a soundtrack was playing in the interview. When listening to music 'we are alone together' (Bull and Back 2003: 6).[92] This reflects the experience of myself and the participants in the interview, when listening to tracks had resonance to us both as the track generated personal meaning for each of us, but also a shared contextual understanding, particularly noticeable with participants of similar age and musical taste (Kate and Janet).

The interview methods supported the participants' experiences of remembering by bringing together experience and memory as a vehicle for time travel. Creative interactions with the multisensory memory toolkit led to vivid, embodied recollection, and engagement with the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks synthesised personal memory and collective experience. The foregrounding of imaginative

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[91] See Heather's quote in 5.3.3 where she recognises the impact of the interviewer on the remembering experience.
[92] Michael Bull and Les Back (2003: 6) relate 'this we-ness in music' to the work of Theodor Adorno ([1951] 2005).

remembering enriched the mnemonic experience and the memories themselves and enabled interpretive reflection.

5.4 Forgiving Forgetting

Dress and music have both been found to support recollection where memory is impaired or compromised. There is growing evidence from studies of dementia that listening to popular music from our youth can provide connection to long forgotten experiences (Cuddy et al. 2012, 2015; Baird and Samson 2015; Stevens 2015) and support the construction of self over time through its links to personal and cultural identity, personal life stories and important events (McDermott et al. 2014). This is mirrored in dress and dementia research where items of clothing are seen to provide access to memories and an essential sense of self to those with impaired memory (Twigg and Buse 2013, Buse and Twigg 2016). It is proposed here that the elevated emotional, embodied and communicative status that dress and music hold, as tokens of youth, enables this prolonged access to personal memory.

In this research, the remembering process was also a meaning-generating activity for the participants, supporting the reconstruction of their youth stories. Whilst the aim was to expose new narratives of female participation in youth culture, the research methods did not seek factual truth (accuracy), focusing instead on the emotional truth (what *feels* true) of lived experience and the experience of remembering itself.[93] The priority was the generation of personal meaning, not a retrieval process but a dynamic, creative practice. Dress snapshots, items of clothing, personal playlists or music artefacts were found to have salient mnemonic qualities, and when working together they enhance remembering. In the interviews the participants often used dress and music to validate their memories, to satisfy themselves and perhaps me that a memory was 'true', or to fill in gaps where a memory was incomplete or vague. Pickering and Keightley (2015: 8) proposed that music and photographs have the ability to act as 'an alibi for what we remember', and Alison Slater noted that more trust is placed in memories supported by physical artefacts such as photographs (2011). For the participants in this research, the snapshots removed doubt, and provided 'hard' evidence, but also sometimes led to confusion and interrupted the narrative or

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[93] This thesis is not concerned with the lack of accuracy in memory but there is significant literature in this area. See Daniel Bernstein and Elizabeth Loftus (2009) on false memory.

imaginative reconstruction of a memory, as Kuhn warns, a photograph can sometimes 'throw you off scent' (1995: 13).

In the interviews memories were often validated by the toolkit artefacts. For example, when Jayne remembered the 'all-nighters' from her youth her memory was supported by the entry tickets, rail tickets and even a Scarborough guest house receipt from one of these events. The participants placed considerable emphasis on dating the snapshots in their toolkits, as if chronology validated their personal biography and collective history. They were often able to 'date' a photograph and the associated memory through dress,[94] and hairstyles played a particularly dominant role as markers of time:

> We got married in '74 and I had the curly cut then and so did my bridesmaids so that can't have been that long after (Helen 2018).

> I can place it, pretty much because of who is in the photograph, where it was taken. It's much, much easier to do. Because you know "That's [him] so I know that's about '98" and "that's [him] so I know that's post 2000, 2001, 2002" (Kate 2018).

In the example above Kate (2018) describes how she relies on the people in the photograph to 'document' a period in her youth. In her narratives dress provided a prompt for remembering a friend who is out of shot in the photograph, as Kate recognised his leather jacket from part of his arm caught in the image. The way in which participants used the toolkit artefacts impacted on their remembering and brought clarity to fading memories. Jayne had kept all her tickets to the mod rallies she attended as well as other artefacts such as train tickets. Throughout her interview she continually cross mapped her memories of key events with these artefacts. It was notable that the memories Jayne referenced in the interview are mainly of key events rather than more intimate private moments, reflecting the type of artefacts she has chosen to keep.

> It was taken at Yarmouth that, on the Saturday. I wonder if I've got the actual tickets here. I can tell you what day it was [looks through the box] This needs sorting. Yes, I've got them here. So that was the James Taylor Quartet on the Saturday, it must have been the Saturday night. That might have been the Sunday then. I'm trying to work if that was a Saturday or a Sunday...

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[94] Julia Twigg also noted that a photograph can be dated through the styles of dress depicted (2013: 76), and Sophie Woodward also references fashion's ability for temporal specificity (2007: 120).

> I can't see any date on that. I've got written down 21st February 1987 and I've not written that recently so it must have been, that must have been that photograph. People keep saying that's 1988 but it can't, that must have been the first one then. Sorry, I do apologise (Jayne 2018).

In the first quote above Jayne is referring to the image of the girls at the Great Yarmouth mod rally in Figure 5.14, using the ticket to guide her memories (Fig. 5.16). The second quote, in which Jayne is referring to Figure 5.5, illustrates how she lost trust in her memory, as the toolkit artefacts confused rather than enabled the memory. Without the tickets Jayne lost all confidence in her ability to remember: 'I'm going to be completely frank with you, I can't remember what we went to see. I've got no tickets for that at all. I have no tickets. I don't know what I did with those' (Jayne 2018).

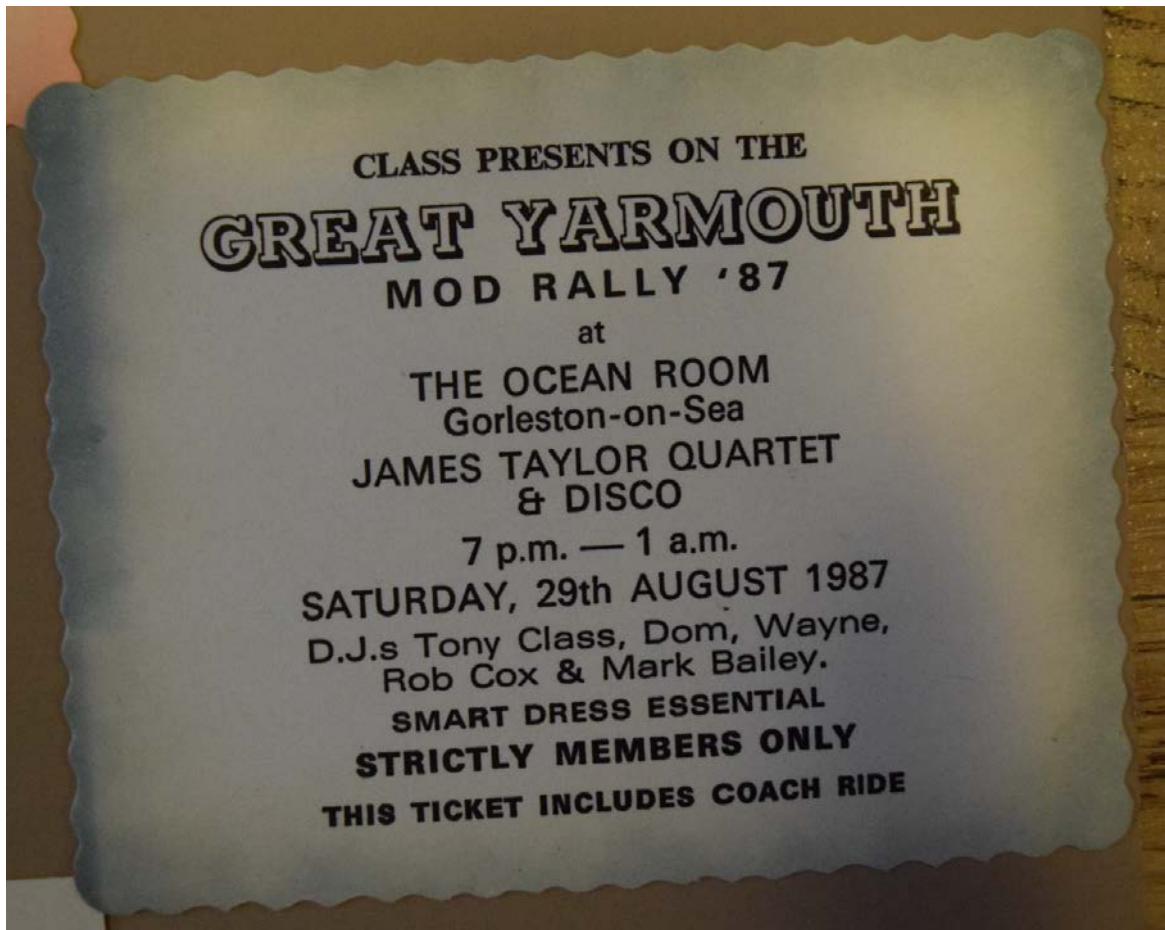Figure 5.16 Ticket for the Great Yarmouth Mod Rally, 1987. Author's photograph, 2018.

The flyers and tickets Jayne had kept provide factual event details and dates, as did other music artefacts such as original albums in the toolkits. She relied heavily on her toolkit to support her memory and construction of her youth narrative. This reliance on artefacts had motivated Jayne to put these memories and artefacts online, to fix them,

with as much accuracy as she could. Janet was less concerned with accuracy and was corrected by her son who came into the interview to help her play her CDs, as she referenced a track as from the 1980s that was not released until 1992. However, music artefacts were mostly seen as reliable resources for remembering in contrast to rather more ambiguous memory props such as clothes or dress snapshots that were only linked to specific dates when accompanied by hand-written notes.[95] Nevertheless, Carole confidently dated a pink wool dress she wore in 1965 and had included in her toolkit, and perhaps that factual knowledge increased its importance. Reflecting on the interview experience Heather (2018) claimed, 'I mean the photographs were there to prove it, weren't they really'. Although photographs tend to connect us to a fixed place, the imagination can disrupt that certainty. In her interview Janet confidently cited an image as being taken in Liverpool,[96] but later corrected her memory, when her husband suggested the snapshot was taken on a ferry to France. What really mattered in the context of this research was not the accuracy of the memory, but the value Janet placed on the snapshot as it depicts the sunglasses and Dr. Martens shoes that have been a constant in her life, supporting consistency of self and representing continuation of her youth: 'I quite like that one of me… I love the shoes' (Janet 2018).

Research found that validation was important to the participants, and the confidence with which events are remembered can help contextualise a memory and align it to identity and sense of self. The participants remembered who they were to construct who they are (Woodward 2007). However, dress or music can power the imagination, making us feel good, which is more personally valuable than 'true' memory. The interview method and questioning impacted on this, providing a space to explore memory focused on personal experience rather than historical truths. While the conscious creation of false memories was not evident in this research, Conway and Loveday have suggested that false memories can be of benefit to the maintenance of self for the avoidance of negative emotions (2015: 580). Here, participants selected what they shared, focusing mainly on positive memories, avoiding, or at least not dwelling on negative memories and choosing only memory artefacts that supported the narratives they wanted to share. Linda and Carole for example chose not to share a memory soundtrack, fearful of what memories the music may unleash. Keightley and Pickering have proposed that when remembering we act as author of our life narratives

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[95] Annette Kuhn (1995: 14) references the notes on the back of photographs as a source of conflict or confusion.
[96] See Figure 3.3 in Track 3.1.1 for the snapshot of Janet.

but also as 'editor in chief' or the 'editorial self' (2012: 22).[97] The position of the participants in this research aligns with this concept as they edited their toolkits, choosing what to include or leave out, and then repeated the editorial process in the interview as they crafted their youth narratives. Only in the memory wardrobes or memory soundtracks was this control relinquished as unexpected memories worked alongside intentional remembering directed by the toolkit. Creative remembering is supported by the mnemonic imagination as dress and music are edited and imagined in this way in everyday life as we chose what to wear or select music to listen to or use them as source material for the editorial self, in the construction of narratives of youth. The methodology enables this creative repositioning of memory. Forgotten detail, creative embellishment, re-imaginings and the editing of unwanted memories formed part of the remembering experience, supporting and affirming the current self.

5.5 Remembering Youth

The participant narratives illustrate that dress and music accrue value as tokens of youth, for lived and remembered experience. It was the more personal and intimate experiences of youth that most reinforced remembering, with the dress and music resources creating a critical density, around the key life events. The participants drew on significant dress and music related experiences such as buying their first record, what they wore on a first date, their first gig, disco or dance, when narrating their youth stories. Although Carole no longer listens to music for pleasure, she opened her youth narrative with a reference to her first music memory:

> Well the first [pause] when we got a record player which, and the first record would be Tommy Steele singing 'I never felt more like singing the blues' and [pause] so we had a record player and that was all pop, so that was my first memory and at school, we used to, if it was raining, we used to do rock and roll in there, so people used to play music there (Carole 2019).[98]

There were also references to significant artefacts, many of which were included in the toolkit such as Heather's (2018) 'favourite record of all time',[99] Marian's (2018) Windsmoor suit – 'it was my pride and joy that' (Fig. 3.8, 5.10) – or one of Kate's favourite snapshots (Fig. 5.11). These peak events or favourite items were important

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[97] See Track 6.2 for further discussion on the editorial self.
[98] Tommy Steele and the Steelmen (1957) 'Singing the Blues', UK: Decca. See *Sleeve Note* 3.9 for further context.
[99] John Holt (1973) *One Thousand Volts of Holt* UK: Trojan.

in the past, but also in the remembering present. The memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks also enabled significant items the participants no longer owned to be included in the youth stories such as Kate's long-lost jacket (Fig. 5.17). 'I got it in Newquay, but it was some sort of surf brand, I can't remember what. But it got pinched which I was really annoyed about because I've never really found a jacket since that, that I could really, dunno, that I really liked' (Kate 2018).

Figure 5.17 Kate wearing her favourite jacket, date unknown © Kate.

Music from adolescence has been found to evoke deeper emotional connection and stronger autobiographical memories than music first listened to later in life (Stevens 2015), and the content of the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks supports this hypothesis. Youth memories related to dress and music were specific and detailed, enriched in the mnemonic imagination by the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks.[100] The collective and personal meanings attached to peak dress and music experiences reinforce the power of wardrobes and soundtracks as mnemonic conduits to the lived and remembered experience of youth.

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[100] See Track 5.3.2 *Imagination and Memory in Concert* for examples.

There is also substantial evidence in the literature that memories from youth are particularly salient. There appears to be a strong mnemonic connection to the music listened to during youth (Holbrook and Schindler 1989; Schulkind et al. 1999; Krumhansl and Zupnick 2013; Loveday, Woy and Conway 2020) and vivid autobiographical memories are most likely to be recalled from the period between 10 and 30 years of age (Rubin, Rahhal and Poon 1998). In a recent large-scale study Kelly Jakubowski et al. (2020) found that this peaked at around 14 years of age. My findings mostly correlate with the scientific evidence but participants in this research were asked to define their parameters of youth in advance, in the questionnaires, so would have been directing their narratives and memories towards this age range in the interviews.[101] Consequently, few memories were recalled before 14 and some ranged beyond 30 years, but most of the interactions with the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks fell between 14 and 30 years with a peak around 16-18 for most participants, 'I've showed you those things when I was 13 or so. I do remember those times but not as vividly as my years between, say, 15 and 20' (Helen 2018).[102] This research corroborates Clare Rathbone, Chris Moulin and Martin Conway's (2008) work that found autobiographical memories relating to self-image are much more likely to be retained in later life. Here it was found dress and music support the formation of self-image, and in turn support memory and retrospective understanding of youth. The events and timescales referenced by the participants, show that with few exceptions,[103] the youth memories related to dress *and* music in the narratives peaked at a time when the participants developed confidence in their appearance, and gained autonomy over what they wore, where they went, or what they listened to. Access to cultural events and control over their social lives was cited as a reason the peak cultural practices of youth hold such significance in the present. The period that Marian described as when her 'personal life' began.[104]

Reflecting the concept of *Erlebnis* informing *Erfahrung,* this chapter has focused on the participants reflections on the lived experiences of youth that were documented in Chapter 4. Through scrutiny of the *experience* of remembering wardrobes and soundtracks were found to forge trans-temporal connections that provide personal

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[101] Figure 4.2 in Track 4.2 *Parameters of Youth* shows how the question appeared in the questionnaire question.
[102] See Table 4.1 in Track 4.2 *Parameters of Youth* for each participant's self-defined scope of youth.
[103] For example, Kate who described her 'meaningful' youth as starting in her 20s. See Track 4.2.
[104] See *Sleeve Notes* 3.2 and Track 4.2 for the quote from Marian about her 'personal life' beginning (2018).

affirmation or validation and create new meanings across time. Multi-sensory conduits in the form of the toolkit, imaginative remembering, and participant-interviewer interaction in the interviews brought the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks to life. These sensory interactions relied on the ability of dress and music to inhabit the body in material and imagined forms, re-living pasts moments worn or heard. The memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks provided textural narratives of peak events that traverse collective experience and personal memory. It is the experiences of remembering youth, and the learning from that experience that supports identity, and creates meaning into the future, through which concepts of youth endure as explored in the following chapter.

Chapter 6. YOUTH LIVES WITH US

Figure 6.1 Janet, aged 22, Portmeirion, Wales, 1987 © Janet.

When I interviewed Janet, the first of the ten 'wardrobe and soundtrack interviews', her inability to relate to the concept of youth as a finite period changed my perception of the parameters of youth and in turn the course of this investigation. Prompted by Janet's refusal to yield to nostalgia, her insistence that in her mid-50s she remained in her own youth culture, this chapter explores the ways in which youth lived with the participants. For all the participants youth was bound with current experience to some degree, and when engaging with their memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks, or items in the memory toolkit, they demonstrated how consistency of self, of youth, endured through dress and music. The temporal relationship between their past, present and future narratives provides the foundation for this chapter. Previous chapters explored past experiences of youth (Chapter 4), and the experience of remembering youth in the present (Chapter 5), yet, as the discussion in these chapters illustrated, past and present experience cannot be neatly separated. Rather, the symbiosis of past and present is central to experience. This application of experience to the ongoing life narrative is what Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering refer to as

the 'enduring past' (2012: 47). In Janet's (2018) words, 'I've got limited separation between who I was then and who I am now'. As tokens of youth, dress and music play an important role in this connection.

This chapter begins by considering how youth 'lives with us' through dress and music, evaluating wardrobes and soundtracks as biographical markers, and their impact on self-affirmation. The second part builds on the literature and findings from Chapter 5 to analyse how youth may endure through biographical possessions, and the construction of memory archives. I explore how the cultural practices of youth are sustained later in life and how women's relationships with clothes and music are maintained or adapted over time. Drawing on the findings and themes of biography, identity, gender and continuity developed in this chapter, the discussion concludes by revisiting the definitions and parameters of youth set out earlier in the thesis. Recognising the extended temporal span of youth and the diversity of lived and remembered experience.

6.1 Biographical Wardrobes and Soundtracks of our Lives

Within academic literature, dress *or* music are found to be integral to evolving personal biographies. Jane Davidson and Sandra Garrido (2014) suggest that as a soundtrack to a film reflects the storyline and changing atmospheres, personal playlists illuminate and intensify experiences and personal narratives. Tia DeNora described music as 'a "mirror" that allows one to "see one's self"' (2000: 70), as our wardrobes reflect our life experiences (Woodward 2007).[1] This research positions dress *and* music as constant companions throughout our lives, particularly in relation to evolving biographies of youth. I use the terms 'biography', 'life story' and 'life-narratives' interchangeably in this chapter, as they appear in the literature, but it is 'youth narratives', that do the biographical legwork in this thesis. The participant narratives confirm that dress and music provide a vehicle for the biographical time travel that arrives at self-affirmation.[2]

The chapter builds on two concepts from the literature that speak to the role dress and music play in youth narratives: Else Skjold's (2016: 136) 'biographical wardrobes', and

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[1] For other examples in music see Jeanette Bicknell (2009); David Hesmondhalgh (2013); Victoria Williamson (2014). For dress see Alison Guy and Maura Banim (2000); Alison Guy, Eileen Green and Maura Banim (2001); Sandra Weber and Claudia Mitchell (2004); Sheila Heti, Heidi Julavits, Leanne Shapton et al. (2014); Emily Spivack (2014); Else Skjold (2016).
[2] See 5.3.1 on time travel with dress and music.

Davidson and Garrido's 'soundtrack of our lives' (2014: 6).[3] The relationship between dress and the biographical self is well documented in dress theory. Julia Twigg found dress to 'capture the dynamic of life' and bring history and personal experience together (2013: 76). Skjold's participants sorted their clothing collections into timelines, evidencing continuity in taste preferences across the lifetime (2016). Skjold noted this continuity is opposed to contemporary perceptions of fashion as ever changing and focused on the new. Complementing this understanding, the findings of this study foreground consistency of youth-conditioned tastes, rather than the assumption that change, as we age, is inevitable. Janet continues to wear the Dr. Martens she wore in her youth,[4] and in the examples below Linda states that she has dressed in the same way since the age of 21, whilst Olive expresses that how she 'feels' has not changed.

> I believe in something good lasting a long time rather than loads of cheap things. So, I have shops that I love. Like I love Levi,[5] do you know what I mean, and I'll buy something from Levi every year and add it to things. So, and I've been like that for a long time. So, some of my clothes are 30 years old (Linda 2019).

> I've not changed an awful lot. Well, I have, you know, I've put sixty years on everything but I've not, I've not changed how I feel. I like to feel, dressed, you know, I'm comfortable like this. But I also do like getting dressed up and going out (Olive 2019).

Linda and Olive had very different youth experiences, in different cultural eras but for both, dress provides biographical continuity. Dress is understood to be both 'fundamental to and constitutive of' female biographies (Woodward 2007: 63), adapting to shifts in focus as we age. As Jayne describes below her interest in clothes had waned since her youth, yet she retained elements of her mod look:

> Clothes wise I don't know. I just, as I said, I don't try to conform, I don't try to follow a certain set "it's got to be like this", it's what I feel comfortable in. If it retains that 60s element or that mod look then so be it. If it doesn't, well, but I think now as I said more emphasis for me

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[3] In 2013 the Australian Research Council's Centre for Excellence for the History of Emotions and the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) collaborated on a project that aimed to expose how we use music throughout our lives, asking members of the public to upload playlists of music. The project culminated in Jane Davidson and Sandra Garrido's book *My Life as a Playlist* (2014). *ABC* (2013) 'My Life as a Playlist' [broadcast, online] *Available at:* https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/musicshow/my-life-as-a-playlist/4957210. [Accessed 5 August 2022].

[4] See Track 5.4 for Janet's reaction to a snapshot in which she is wearing her Dr. Martens (Fig. 5.16) and Track 5.5 for a quote from Janet illustrating how the 'memory wardrobe' or 'memory soundtrack' can support consistency and connection to youth. Else Skjold's participants also connected their youth to the present day, and one had worn the same style of shoes since his teenage years (2016).

[5] The Levi's jeans brand was founded in 1852. *LEVI'S* (2022) 'About us - Levi Strauss & Co. History' [online]. Available at: https://www.levi.com/US/en_US/features/about-us. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

is more music. It always has been with me, but it's not as prolific as it was for clothes when I was a teen (Jayne 2018).[6]

Alison Guy and Maura Banim were the first to explore the concept of clothes 'travelling' through the wardrobe in this way (2000: 322), and Sophie Woodward has since defined how women reflect, through dress, on how their past identities impact on who they are or who they hope to become – conceptualised by Woodward as 'personalized temporality' (2007: 51). As Kate (2018) described: 'I can look back now and understand why I am like the way I am'. By contrast, in response to a snapshot taken at 14, Marian (2018) describes how wonderful she felt at the time, but looks back on her appearance declaring 'What a mess!'.[7] Keightley and Pickering suggest that analysis needs to move beyond the 'has-been', 'now' or 'not-yet' to include the 'might have been' or may-be again' and the 'simultaneous habitation' of these various temporal domains (2012: 57). This chimes with Guy and Banim's 'co-existing views of self; 'The woman I want to be', 'The woman I fear I could be' and 'The woman I am most of the time'' (2000: 313), and suggests a new perspective for wardrobes studies, or indeed the analysis of personal soundtracks: 'the woman I was' and 'the woman I remain'.

Mapping out her participants' biographical wardrobes from teenage years through adulthood, Skjold recognised 'multiple phases of transformation as life goes on' such as parenthood, divorce or bodily changes (2014: 144). In *My Life as a Playlist*, Davidson and Garrido highlight the importance of music as 'markers of milestones' such as births, weddings or funerals (2014: 109). In this thesis such markers included significant changes across the lifespan such as leaving home, going to university, marriage or motherhood.[8] Helen described her time on exchange at an American University, aged 19, as a pivotal moment in her youth:

> I suppose, subconsciously, that was my, not my best time of life, but a time of life that I enjoyed, and [pause] that I remember. I've showed you those things when I was 13 or so. I do remember those times but not as vividly as my years between, say, 15 and 20. I don't suppose that was it because you were looking at youth culture and that was when I was young, even though, I think I'm still young (Helen 2018).[9]

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[6] See Figure 3.31 In *Sleeve Notes* Track 3.7 for a snapshot of Jayne dressed for a mod event in 2017.
[7] See Marian's *Sleeve Notes* Track 3.2 for outfit she is referring to in Figure 3.5, and Track 3.2.1 for a further quote.
[8] See Track 4.2 for example of marriage marking a biographical change and Track 4.3 for Helen and Kate's newfound independence on leaving home.
[9] Helen is referring to part of her memory toolkit which is a shoebox full of memorabilia from her trip. Part of this quote also appears in *Sleeve Notes* 3.4.2.

Significant experiences formed important markers in the participants' narratives and helped them define the parameters of their youth, using dress and music to illustrate key events. Ben Green asserts that peak experiences 'anchor and frame' the personally selected music soundtracks that accompany us through life (2021: 152). I have suggested that peak experiences of dress align with the peak experiences of music theorised by Green (2021),[10] and the narratives of female youth practices in this thesis are 'anchored' and 'framed' by peak experiences of dress *and* music. It is during youth that such peak experiences tend to proliferate, and impact significantly on the developing self: a period when we look good, have access to cultural events and control over our social lives. Peak youth experiences and reflection on those events through remembering, enable understanding of the self across time. Keightley and Pickering describe that recollection as metamorphosis, as events and experiences are woven together from different stages in our lives in the act of remembering (2012: 51). Peak outfits or tracks were found in the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks. Playing her favourite *Sonic Youth* track in her interview Kate (2018) claimed, 'it was one of the greatest songs ever recorded. Ever. You see, this doesn't, this doesn't sound dated to me at all'.[11] Yet, the track was over thirty years old reflecting the ongoing biographical significance of music and its role in weaving the 'biographical thread of self-remembrance' (DeNora 1999: 31). The wardrobes and soundtracks from youth that held special meaning for the participants in this study, provided this consistent biographical thread that centred their everyday experience.

6.1.1 Identity Kits

Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical framing of selfhood first proposed in the *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* has been adopted in this thesis. Goffman's concept of the staging of the self encourages the understanding that identities of youth can be played out differently across different temporal spheres, and private and public settings.[12] Goffman asserted that artefacts relating to dress and appearance, are part of an 'identity kit', essential for the everyday management of a 'personal front' (1961: 28). In previous research I developed this concept working with young people on the *Portrait Youth* project (2017), using styling and dress to articulate identities of youth (Jenkinson 2020). A 16 year-old participant described her understanding of dress as

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[10] See 5.3.5 for a discussion on peak experiences, illustrated by the participant narratives in this study.
[11] Sonic Youth (1987) 'Schizophrenia' on *Sister,* UK: Blast First.
[12] For private and public spaces where girls participated in youth culture see Tracks 4.3.3 and 4.3.5; for collective experiences of youth informing personal memory see Track 5.3.5.

part of her identity kit: 'I guess if I were to go somewhere new for the first time then I would wear an outfit that's really true to me and something which I really like, because I feel like an outfit allows you to interact with other people without actually talking' (cited in Jenkinson 2020: 89). While choice of music is not always related to personal appearance, this research suggests that dress *and* music both play in a role in how we understand ourselves and interact with others.[13] Mo describes below how music can connect people, especially music related to youth:

> I used to go and see a friend, we were both divorced, and I used to take an arm full of albums and get to hers. We used to swap and then we used to play like, name this album, and we would put it on – "You won't have heard this for ages," and it was like The Small Faces, "Oh yes." So, it was like, "You're in my tribe because you recognise my old tunes, and you love them like I do (Mo 2018).

Here Mo is positioning the music of her youth as an essential part of her identity kit that she has carried with her long beyond her teenage years, and through her biographical soundtrack she is able to define and perform her identity to others.

6.1.2 Defining Selves

In the supporting literature the terms 'self', 'identity' and 'self-identity' are used, appropriated across different fields and theories.[14] I use these terms as they are presented by other scholars, but in the presentation of my own findings I mostly use 'the self', which Ian Craib has justified as a preferred term as it subsumes identity (1998: 1). Just as identity is not fixed, the self is fluid and its expression contingent. This fluidity is present in the participant narratives as they reflect on the concept of youth. Some participants articulated limited separation between youth and the current self, while for others various youth identities were drawn on in response to emotional, environmental or mnemonic triggers. Keightley and Pickering suggest the mnemonic imagination plays a vital role in the formation and maintenance of 'self-identity' across different life periods relating our 'successive selves' to each other (2012: 8). In this study the *selves* of youth are in focus, as they interact with the evolving self.

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[13] See 5.3.5 for discussion on the collective experiences of youth culture and how private and public experiences of remembering overlap.

[14] See Chris Barker (2004a) for background on identity from the perspective of cultural studies. Barker (2004a [online]) states 'no single identity acts as an overarching, organizing identity, rather, identities shift according to how subjects are addressed or represented'. Defining self-identity Barker (2004b: [online]) states, 'self-identity can be grasped as a reflexive and discursive construction of self, a story we tell ourselves about our self'.

Dress and music enable different understandings of self in everyday lived experience. This role as played out in private, through the intimate personal experiences of dressing or listening to recorded music in the home, is described by Heather (2018): 'I have poignant moments on my own. You know, I'll have a Roy Orbison moment, I'll have a Van Morrison moment. I'll have reggae moments, you know, and northern soul moments'. Dress and music also facilitate social experience, as we use these cultural tokens to represent our public selves and communicate our interests and preferences to other people.[15] Influenced by Goffman (1961, 1995) and Gregory Stone (1962), dress theorist Joanne Eicher (1981, 2021) categorised this as dressing our private, public and secret selves.[16] This aligns with Goffman's 'front' or 'backstage' regions (1959: 114).[17] In this research, Goffman's dramaturgical metaphor lends a structure to analyse the role of dress and music in personal narratives, as played out in the 'biopic' of our lives; or in the backstage areas where the wardrobe and personal soundtracks play a fundamental role in how we understand our own life story.

Erik Erikson posits that 'identity *formation* neither begins nor ends with adolescence: it is a lifelong development largely unconscious to the individual and to his society' ([1959] 1980: 122 [original emphasis]). Yet the participants' self-defined youth was an important formative time of reference, when they developed cultural practices that have continued to influence their lives. For Jayne, the style and music of the mod subculture provided an important juncture in her formation of self that still endures. Olive on the other hand described a gradual realisation of her personal style as she matured.

> I think a lot of the attraction to subcultures at that age is because you're trying to, sort of, [pause] how can I put it? Sort of, gain some sort of individuality. It's not about being different, for people to stare at you and you thinking, you know, "look at me". It's just that you were trying to find your feet, so to speak. Musically and how you dress (Jayne 2018).

> I shopped at Marks and Spencer's and C&A and had things made, you know, so in the immediate, in the early 50s, as I got more established myself, I got better dressed – I just did. And I've always liked clothes and right until the day I retired (Olive 2019).

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[15] See Track 5.3.5 for the impact of collective experiences on personal memories.

[16] Joanne Eicher later developed the model to analyse adolescent dress (Eicher et al. 1991), revisiting the model again in 1994 (Eicher and Miller 1994). I have since developed this model in my own work with young people (Jenkinson 2020).

[17] For reference to Erving Goffman's 'front' or 'backstage' in relation to the everyday see Track 1.3.1, the female position Track 4.3.3, and resistance Track 4.3.4 (1959).

Woodward found that at some point in their biography women 'become themselves' suggesting that there is a key point at which certain items in the wardrobe or styles of dress are likely to be retained, while others may be resigned to a 'separated past' (2007: 61). In youth external influences and experimentation are significant, and the participants referenced different phases of expression. Janet (2018) 'went through' a short mod stage in dress, while the mod influence on her biographical soundtrack endured as she still follows the bands from that time.[18] She was also influenced by punk and indie, and these multiple *becomings* have stayed with her to some degree.

> Went through a kind of mod phase, but it wasn't a pretty dress mod phase; I had a shirt and tie – a very, very thin tie. Little checked shirt. It was kind of pink-ish and then a very thin tie. So, it that was kind of a mod phase. So yes, and from there, I've never been 'pretty' dressed up, but I have like some of the features. And I went through a bit of a punky sort of phase as well. Spiked hair. And because, kind of like, punk has always played a bit of a part in my life [unclear]. And even now, fashion is still quite important to me (Janet 2918).

Mo describes how she maintained an element of her hippy style whilst adapting to the new music cultures introduced by her husband to be.

> I always had very long hair and I always went towards the floaty, hippie type of music when I was very young. So, like from 13 to 15, and then I met my, well, he was my husband to be, when I was 16 and he was very much into soul. He was a fantastic dancer, so obviously I got into soul because of him, but it was more the old Motown and so instead of wearing my hair, I still had very long hair, but I used to tie it up, and wore denim jackets, and I did change my style a bit that way, but I think he belonged to that more than I did. I was a little bit of an outsider, but it didn't bother me because I like the music and I didn't feel I had to go and have all of my hair cut off just because, you know. And then I had other friends, who were still into the other like hippie type style of music. So, I like did both, yeah (Mo 2018).[19]

Mo's story illustrates that change is complicated, and not inevitable, and even at a relatively young age, consistency of dress and music choice can transcend external influences or lifestyle changes.[20]

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[18] Figure 3.2 in *Sleeve Notes* is a snapshot of Janet at an exhibition of The Jam in 2015, a band she has followed since the late 1970s.
[19] See Figure 5.2 in Track 5.3.1 for a snapshot of Mo at this time.
[20] See 4.3.1 for consideration of how the influence of Mo's husband reflected gender roles at the time.

6.1.3 Self-Affirmation

In *Memory, Narrative and Identity*, Nicola King asserts that articulation of a coherent life story is fundamental to 'our concept of identity' (2000: 23). The reflexive wardrobe and soundtrack method in this research enabled biographical narratives of youth to emerge throughout the interview experience. Participants described how important youth experiences are in the development of the present and future self, and the role youth narratives can play in self-realisation.

> I think your youth always plays a part, has played a part, in your life, because it's that point that gives you your direction of which way you are going to go in life, isn't it, you know. Yeah, I think my youth has taught me a lot, you know, of the person that I have grown up to be (Marian 2018).

> I've got one friend who, through her teenage years, she'd like to forget it altogether because it was part of, she didn't have a good family life. But I had a great family life. I had a dad that was great fun, who loved to dance, and go out dancing and everything else so there was never any [unfinished] it all sort of, kind of, gelled and everything went smoothly I suppose. And yet, I mean, all of that, that broad interest and anything else, and the career in, you know, as an art student and everything else and what I was interested in, I'm still interested in now. You know, I love to travel, I love to go to exhibitions, fashion exhibitions as well. "Oh, I want one of them." You know that kind of thing as well, so it's all part and parcel I think of who I am now. I feel, actually I feel it's very strong, who I am now (Heather 2018).

Heather shares the sense of affirmation she feels as she reflects on her youth, how maintaining interests from her youth (including fashion and music), and her positive experience of family life, enabled her to feel a strong sense of self and maintain connection to her youth as she approached her 70th birthday. Marian illustrates below how the reflexive methods enabled her to revisit her youth and reflect on her life story.

> I think what it is, is, like you know, it's all these memories that have gone so far back and they're, sort of, in the back of your head, aren't they? And you've, sort of, brought them all to the fore and this is what my life was, you know...

> Because it, sort of, released things I hadn't realised, you know, that had been locked away for a while. It, sort of, brought back a lot of things I hadn't realised I'd done (Marian 2018).

Marian acknowledges the role of the interview in this process confirming that the methods have value beyond constructing youth narratives. The research process

impacted on the participants' understanding of self and feelings in the present. The mnemonic imagination provided more than a conduit to youth memories, through creative remembering the participants generated meaning in the present (Keightley and Pickering 2012). When asked what effect the interview had on her memories or feelings, Kate explained how reflecting on her youth supported her understanding of adulthood.

> I don't feel, I don't think I'm quite as weird as I thought I was. I think maybe perhaps my experiences, there's probably a lot more commonality there but you don't always know because you don't necessarily have long reflections about going through your teens, to your, you know, through your 20s and stuff and then actually finding out that, yeah. I don't think my experience is that – I'm hesitant to use the word abnormal – but, no, I've got a nice kind of gratifying, warm, fuzzy feeling. I think understanding where I am now as an adult as well…
>
> I think the narrative was there, it was just getting the pieces to fit into it, wasn't it? But unless you've actually been asked to do that. So yes, when I was getting stuff out of the box last night, it was just kind of like, "I need the bits that I know are going to be useful," but I'd not sorted anything out. And then when you actually come to talking about it and, "oh well, there's this, just listen to this, right, this explains why this, this is how we dressed, this is the music." And that's been kind of, making those, making those connections has been really, it's been really nice for me (Kate 2018).

Like Kate, Janet (2018) had maintained an interest in the alternative music she listened to in her youth, still attending the gigs and describing music as a 'really important part' of who she is. Janet referenced similar continuity in dress, comparing it to her sister's style trajectory, when asked what part her experiences of youth play in who she is today.

> I've gone full circle a little bit, where, when the kids were small, fashion became a little bit less important because you're just getting through the day-to-day, the running of everything that was happening. So, yeah, I think it's still always been there, and I still love fashionable clothes, in a kind of quirky sort of way. So yes, I think, I think quite a lot of influence – it's still who I am or what I am today. I don't think I've changed very dramatically. My sister has kind of changed. We were quite similar in some ways, but I think she's kind of grown up a little bit more in a way that I don't think I've grown up. She's younger than me. Her clothes are a bit more formal. She wouldn't wear Dr. Martens boots. So, yeah, it's funny how I think I haven't changed as much as my sister has (Janet 2018).

The dress and music artefacts in the memory toolkit reinforced this self-affirmation. The findings align with Janet Hoskins's in *Biographical Objects* (1998), in that the narratives were far more intimate and personal when participants were asked about clothes, tracks or dress snapshots from their toolkits. The participants described how clothes and music *felt* in the moment, as the embodied experiences supported confidence and understanding of self.[21] Marian (2018) described this connection: 'I felt good in them, you know? There was a feel-good factor in them'; and for Olive (2019) they brought self-confidence: 'I think if you feel that you're turned out [pause] as well as [pause] not as possible, but that you feel alright in what you're dressed in, I think it gives you the confidence to do what you're going to do'. Dress and music are prominent in our memories of youth as both hold high cultural significance in relation to how we interact and communicate with others; because they offer reiterated experiences, they also provide self-affirmation.[22]

Figure 6.2 Helen aged 15, with her husband to be, 1969 © Helen.

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[21] See section 5.3.4 *Embodied Memory and Meaning,* and Sophie Woodward (2005) on 'feeling right'.
[22] See 1.3.7 for how dress and music relate to the concepts of 'subcultural capital' (Thornton 1995), and 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu 1984).

As the participants chose the music or clothes for the memory toolkit, they self-styled their youth, editing and creating, and applying their personal expertise.[23] As they talked about their interactions with dress and music in everyday life, this personal expertise reinforced active participation in dress and music practices, for example Helen's application of make-up, and the dress she made herself, depicted above in Figure 6.2.

> This is a crimplene dress that I made myself. So, it was the two tone, that was well in, and little pocket detail and the big eyes, the Twiggy eyes. I used to do all that, painting on the eyelashes [laughs] and false eyelashes (Helen 2018).

The dress and music narratives reflected the participants' levels of personal expertise, and thus the degree to which the cultural practices of dressing and music listening acted as conduits to youth or were carried forward in life. Helen, Heather and Carole had made their own clothes, and handmade garments or sewing patterns formed part of their memory toolkits, such as Carole's hand knitted cardigan (Fig. 6.3). Even where clothes were not made by the participant they were often adapted or styled, with personal expertise in fashion applied to dressing. Helen and Heather had taught fashion or dressmaking so had access to a deeper level of subject understanding, whilst Kate had high levels of expertise in music having played in a band since her youth. While she declared a low interest in clothes, she had kept key garments all of which evoked emotive but positive reactions, while her choices of music in her memory toolkit (some her own recordings) and her memories of music were more emotionally strained, reflecting a more complex investment in self formation.

While most participants were not experts in making music, several had high levels of amateur knowledge in their preferred genre. This level of music knowledge, or mastery is often considered masculine gendered (Straw 1997), but most of the participants created their own playlists and were able to recall and cite music facts, very much evidencing mastery in music appreciation and the application of this in their memory soundtracks. Lack of personal expertise, on the other hand, impacted on how youth experience was carried forward. Carole preferred not to include a playlist in her toolkit due to negative associations later in life, but also declared lack of confidence in her music choices in her youth, 'I tried to buy records that I thought were going to be a hit and I got, you know, I'd get them wrong, you know' (Carole 2019). This lack of

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[23] I use 'personal' expertise here to reinforce that this expertise is self-defined and self-understood, and not perceived expertise. See 2.2 regarding the intention to avoid any perceived academic expertise in the interpretation.

confidence in her youth had impacted on the limited role music played in her life story. Yet, her expertise in dress, as an accomplished dressmaker, lived with her, and she had kept dress items for over fifty years in immaculate condition, as a token of her mastery. These narratives demonstrate how personal knowledge, expertise and interest in dress and music accumulated since youth provide biographical consistency and self-affirmation later in life.

Figure 6.3 Cardigan hand knitted by Carole, c. 1960/61. Author's photograph, 2019.

6.2 The Editorial Self

In *Rewriting the Self,* Mark Freeman describes narrative as 'the process by which one's past and indeed oneself is figured anew through interpretation' (1993: 3). Likewise, Keightley and Pickering report that without narrative we are unable to maintain temporal continuity between the past, present and future (2012). In this thesis, narrative brings together the collective and private histories, recollections and cross-temporal experiences of youth that hold meaning for the participants, reconfigured

through the reflexive action described by Freeman (1993). This ongoing layering and editing of personal narratives of youth provides connection to the biographical self. Craib has argued that this reflexivity is central to understanding ourselves over time as 'we are constantly constructing and revising our personal stories and so reconstructing ourselves' (1998: 2).

Keightley and Pickering proposed that we retain consistencies of self, across the continual redrafting of our life-narratives, through the 'editorial self' (2012: 22).[24] In this chapter I extend this concept beyond the remembering self, as the participants not only authored and edited their remembered narratives during the interview process, but also took part, and still take part, in editorial dress and music practices related to their youth in everyday life. Annette Kuhn (1995: 17) noted that when reading a photograph with each 're-enactment' new details appear, whilst others drop off. Suggesting that memories provide the raw material for narratives of identity, Kuhn makes the point that what we edit out is perhaps as important as what we choose to share. Wardrobes and soundtracks are also subject to this continual editing and re-writing over time. Twigg has proposed that reviewing the wardrobe can play a role in acknowledging the ageing process (2013: 77), and Woodward suggests wardrobes can provide a means of manipulating personal biographies, by discarding or keeping clothing from the past (2007: 52). This editing of the biography through the clothes we keep or the music we still listen to reflects the developing self, and in this research, the selfhood of youth.

Sophie Woodward and Alinka Greasley (2017) compared kept items in personal dress and music collections, noting marked differences between the two cultural resources. A music track can provide a soundtrack through life (Davidson and Garrido 2014), yet music artefacts are often rendered redundant by changing technologies such as Heather's 8-track cassettes. However, the participants in this study had kept redundant music artefacts.[25] Clothes also 'have 'lives' that extend beyond the point of being worn' and are often kept despite changes in fashion or body size (Banim and Guy 2001: 204).[26] This is exemplified by Kate 'I've still got a pair of my boot cuts actually, that I'll get out, I've kept them, kind of thinking I'll get into them again' (Kate 2018). In everyday life we might return to a music collection and play an album we haven't heard for a long

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[24] See Track 5.4 in relation to the editing memories in the process of recollection.
[25] See Heather's Sleeve Notes 3.5 for this reference. Participants also kept records, tapes and CD that they could no longer play.
[26] See Saulo Cwerner (2001), Elizabeth Bye and Ellen McKinney (2007) and Sophie Woodward (2007) on unworn clothing.

time, come across a garment that has been hanging dormant in the wardrobe or a photograph of a favourite item of dress resulting in spontaneous recollection.[27] We also make deliberate dress and music choices, and what we embrace or leave out underpins self. Sometimes these choices are hidden from others, for example Linda described a liking for a genre of music unpopular in her peer group, 'I liked, secretly, I really like folk music' (Linda 2019). Woodward's (2007) participants kept items of dress to remind them of their former lives, and in this study the participants referenced kept items that related to peak experiences of youth.[28] Heather's memory below is of a peak experience, but also a treasured garment. The value imbued on the garment by the remembered peak youth experience retained its position in her physical wardrobe, and once discarded, in her memory wardrobe.

> I made a black leather full length coat down here [points to lower leg]. And we went down to stay with my Uncle Charlie in London, who lived just off the King's Road. And we were walking, when maxis first came out, maxi clothes and culottes and stuff, and that would be about 1968. And we were photographed down the King's Road. This photographer, because in those days it was Swinging London, came belting over, "I've got to take a picture of you girls, I've got to take a picture of you girls." And up until two years ago I had that leather coat (Heather, 2018).

Preparing the toolkit for the interview provided editorial opportunity as participants decided what to include, or not, as Heather describes: 'I mean I was having fun doing it when I was preparing it, so I was getting snapshots and trying to edit snapshots out and thinking, "Oh, it's very hard to make a decision about what I wanted you to see"' (Heather 2018). Janet's toolkit reflected her reluctance to separate past from present, simply choosing what she still liked and wanted to share.[29] Through these personal choices the participants were directing the course of their youth narratives mostly without conscious strategy, using experience as a guide. However, the desire to override recollection was sometimes present, at which point memory became a truly creative process as the editor adjusted the memory to suit their ideal portrayal of that time. While preparing her toolkit Mo had aligned her snapshots with a playlist. She was reminded of a track in relation to a photograph of her on a trip to Paris yet chose to override it as she did not like the track that came to mind.

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[27] See Tracks 3.1 and 3.5.2 for Janet's memory of finding a dress in her wardrobes and the memories it triggered.
[28] See Tracks 5.3.5 and 5.6 for peak experiences in relation to memory.
[29] See 5.3.1 for Janet's quote, where she explains that she chose snapshots of clothing she liked wearing at the time.

> When I saw the photographs, tracks immediately came to mind. That one, one of the tracks as well was 'Don't it make my brown eyes blue' but I didn't like it, so I didn't choose it… Because we stayed in a hotel and somebody across the way in an apartment just played that on a loop and I was like, "Will they just knock it off." So that wasn't positive, and I wanted everything to be positive, so I picked the uplifting Blondie track, to go with it (Mo 2018).[30]

The remembering experience is a messy combination of instinctive sensory reactions and conscious editorial construction that ensures our portrayal of youth reflects how we want to remember our younger selves and want others to see us. We interrupt the process and meddle with the archival order, in this research the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks were curated, eradicating negative reminders or images the participants did not wish to re-visit. Participants mostly focused on positive memories, snapshots they were happy with (and most people have enough they are not happy with), clothes that felt good, favourite garments and music that uplifts and motivates. The creative practice of the mnemonic imagination enabled editorial freedom in the selection and suppression of the memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks.

As biographical objects, the content of our wardrobes and soundtracks contribute to the fashioning of identity and construction of the self, as evidenced in archival dress and music practices referenced by the participants. In physical wardrobes or music collections,[31] we decide what to keep based on the meanings and emotions they evoke. Through our wardrobes and soundtracks, we can be who we want to be and circumnavigate the person we chose not to be. We control how youth lives with us through this editorial capacity. For the participants this editing was evident in the interviews as they decided what to include or omit, in preparation for the interview as they curated their memory toolkits, and in their reports of everyday dress and music practices. It is also important to recognise my role in the construction and editing of their youth narratives as 'my fictions blend with theirs' (Hoskins 1998: 4). My instructions, questions and reactions in the interview helped shape their stories, and the analysis and editing of their experience for this thesis is nuanced by my own experience, understanding and interpretation.

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[30] Mo referred to Crystal Gayle (1977) 'Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue', UK: United Artists Records and Blondie (1978) 'Sunday Girl', UK: Chrysalis. See Track 3.3.1 and Figure 3.11 for the snapshot taken in Paris.
[31] This includes curated digital playlists, on platforms such as Spotify on Mixcloud.

6.2.1 Archiving Youth

Pickering and Keightley positioned photography and recorded music as 'communications technologies' capable of recording or storing the past (2015: 33), and Russell Belk's (1988) idea of possessions as memory storage devices can be aligned with dress and music as tangible tokens of youth, but also as resources for the practice of collating and maintaining memory archives.[32] Christoph-Simon Masuch and Kate Hefferon have referred to worn and stored clothing items as receptacles for personal meaning (2018). Rebecka Fleetwood-Smith, Kate Hefferon and Carolyn Mair (2019) also draw on Belk's work (1988), using the term 'attachment clothing' to describe garments with emotional connection. Susan Schultz Kleine, Robert Kleine and Chris Allen (1995) suggested that possessions to which we have attachment help us narrate our life story, arguing that people have 'portfolios of attachments' that represent different aspects of their narratives in relation to both personal and collective identity, including both the me and 'not me' of their life stories (1995: 341). This is reflected in Guy and Banim's (2000) framework, Woodward's (2007) wardrobe studies and in this research where the narratives are constructed and edited to represent multiple personal and collective experiences of dress that fit the youth stories the participants wish to remember or share. In music psychology David Giles, Stephen Pietrzykowski and Kathryn Clark found that personal collections of records or CDs were tied to concepts of self and identity (2007), and Helga Dittmar found that women particularly emphasise emotional attachment through treasured possessions (1991: 182). Wardrobes and soundtracks provide these attachments, as dress and music are both multi-temporal and cross the private and public sphere, as biographical objects, that 'share our lives', as they age themselves and reflect our own ageing over time (Hoskins 1998: 8). In this way dress and music mirror our biographies in youth and throughout the lifetime. In their role as tokens of youth they are not static, but subject to perceived and actual change. They are material or immaterial and are called upon to store or display what we wish to retain or make visible from our youth.

Preparing the memory toolkits in advance provided the participants with opportunity to edit their youth, as they wished it to be performed in the interview. The selected items supported a reflective reconstruction of personal experience, facilitating a form of illustrated storytelling that enabled deep reflection on the participant's individual narrative of youth. The interview structure and prompt questions ensured that the

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[32] See Track 1.3.7 where dress and music are positioned as tangible tokens of youth.

participant narratives included discussion on this edit of artefacts and how the participants used memory props in everyday life. Responses mostly related to the frequency of interaction. Jayne, Heather and Linda were involved in a protracted process of updating and refining memory archives for external audiences, but most engaged less frequently with artefacts from their youth. Helen (2018) only viewed her snapshots 'every ten years', while for Mo (2018) they lay completely dormant in contrast to her online music archive: 'I've never looked at the photographs, most of them, for years because they were just in a box, not even in an album. But the tracks I listen to, [pause] usually when I'm getting ready to go out'. Kate had not listened to some of her music for a long time, despite having a large record collection on display in her home. 'I still really love the music. I've not listened to it for a long time. It still sounds kind of, quite you know, it's full-frontal stuff. It's quite aggressive, isn't it? [laughs]' (Kate 2018). The absence of a working record player perhaps hindered Kate, and Marian avoided playing her original LPs as new technologies made the effort seem unwarranted.[33]

> I've not played them for ages. I tend to go to the CDs because it's easier than getting the record. I mean, I used to have all these in there [stereo cabinet] at one time but then they don't fit in so, this is why they don't get played, I suppose, because it's too much trouble to go upstairs and get them, you know (Marian 2018).

Marian described how her archive of dress and music artefacts, her 'youth in a suitcase', is kept stored away and rarely looked at, unless family members asked to borrow them.

> I mean, these only come out really when people ask for them or, you know, if I'm looking for something else and I come across these and I think oh, that's you know, that's then and so and so, I wonder where they are now and what they're doing, yes. I don't just get them out just to look at (Marian 2018).

The storing of memory resources relies on time, space and inclination, and ever-increasing collections, both analogue and digital, hinder the practice of keeping music and photographs as potential memory resources.[34] The wardrobe presents an even bigger challenge as storing large physical dress items requires considerable space.

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[33] See Track 6.2 for music artefacts rendered redundant through technology.
[34] See Michael Pickering and Emily Keightley (2015) on music and photographs and Sophie Woodward and Alinka Greasley (2017) on dress and music collections.

We might gradually reduce the items we keep, have a clear out or decide to 'do something' with groups of items such as Heather's label patchwork project.

> I am bursting at the seams now, so I had to get rid. Bags of clothes have gone. And to remember the clothes, I've been cutting the labels out. So, I'm going to make some label cushions because my friend does that. All the clothes she gets rid of, she cuts the labels out. If they're going to be chucked out or if they're even going to the charity shop, you know, she cuts the label out and then she's got the memory of the clothes. So, I've got tins of labels upstairs that I can do the cushions of. So, memories happen in a single little unit instead of storing it in the wardrobe (Heather 2018).

However, when the garments are absent the memory wardrobe endures, and in this research the use of dress snapshots as surrogates for artefacts no longer kept supports this further.[35]

Figure 6.4 and 6.5 Kate's leather jacket. Author's photograph, 2018.

While the display of family snapshots in the home was common practice for most participants, their snapshots of youth remained in private albums or stored away, Dress items from youth were not on display in the home with the exception of Kate's leather jacket that had hung on the coat hook behind the front door for many years so that the leather had formed to the shape of being hung (Figs. 6.4 and 6.5).[36] And referring to a handwritten set list from a performance with her first band at the age of 18 (Fig. 6.6),

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[35] See Track 1.3.3 for photographs as surrogates for kept dress items.
[36] See Saulo Cwerner (2001) on clothes being kept behind doors.

Kate (2018) declared 'I've not looked at it for years, no. It's been stuck in a box for the best part of about, twenty years'.
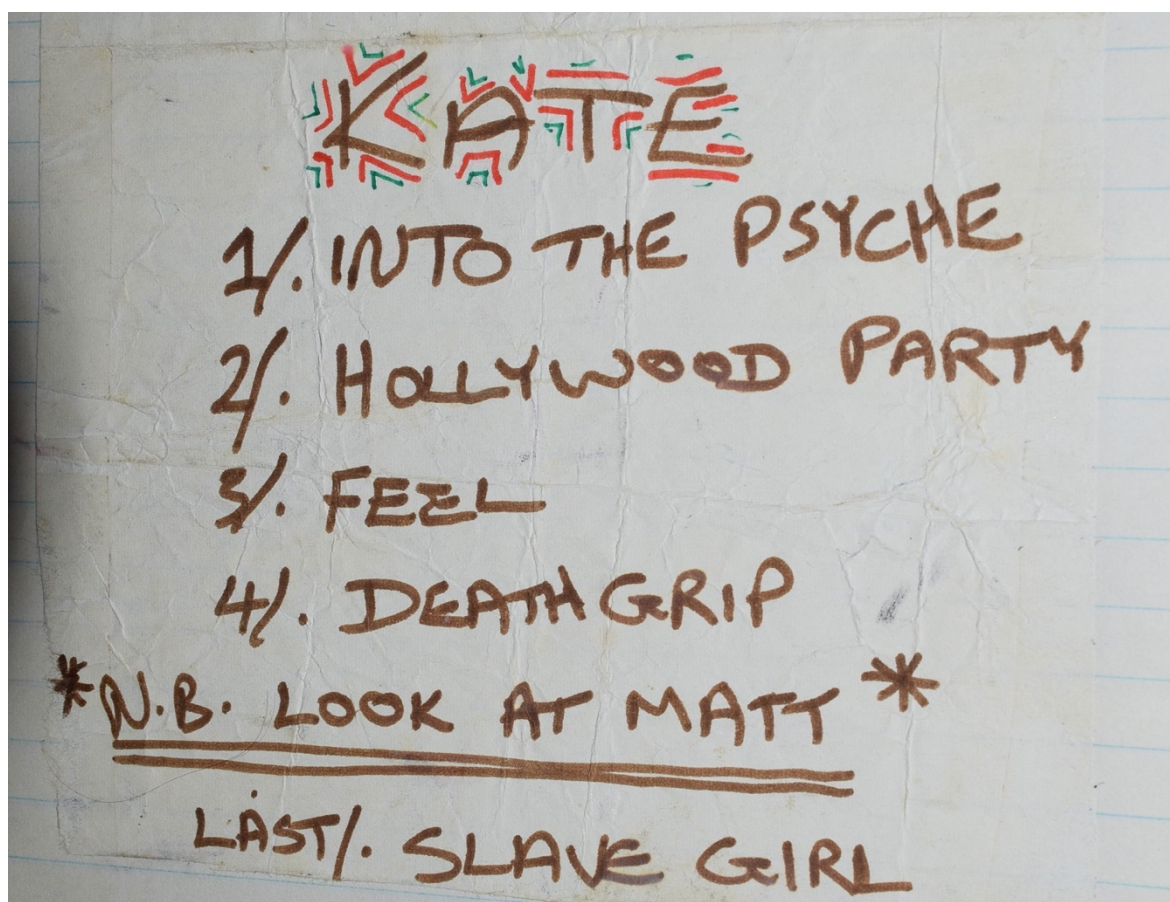

Figure 6.6 Kate's Set List, Xaverian College, Manchester, 1986. Author's photograph, 2018.

Although most participants rarely looked at the items they had chosen to store, all participants had engaged in the creation of collections or compilations that documented their youth narratives through dress or music in some format.[37] Perhaps, because memories of youth are maintained successfully in the memory wardrobe and soundtrack, these personal archives of youth lie dormant for much of the time, but act as a back-up server, if memory fails or needs a boost.

> You can't keep everything in your life, but do you know what I'm saying? I think it's like, you, it's because I don't want to forget. You never forget because it's always up here but when you've got artefacts, you've got pictures, you've got magazine cuttings, you've got photographs, you remember more (Jayne 2018).

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[37] Linda had not kept artefacts from her youth, but had created a public archive of youth, generating a collective edit which included photographs of her and a digital playlist of the music she listened to at the time.

6.2.2 Personal Memory Archives

Figure 6.7 Helen's Memory Box. Author's photograph, 2018.

The term 'personal memory archive' represents the practice of collating and archiving an edited selection of physical or digital artefacts to support memory in later life or to maintain nostalgic connection to a distinct period, in this case the participant's self-defined youth. I distinguish this from 'public memory archives' which describes practices, often rooted in personal narratives, that extend beyond close family and friends to engage with public audiences. The term 'archive' is understood in the popular sense, as an actively edited or curated selection of items with personal resonance,[38] rather than unselected accumulations over time such as a shelf of random records or the full assortment of clothing stored in a physical wardrobe. For my participants this curation commonly took the form of photo albums and personal playlists. Playlists were part of everyday life for most of the participants, whether made for them (Marian and Olive), created themselves for special events (Janet), or for everyday situations such as getting ready to go out (Mo). Kate referred to the practice of creating playlists onto cassette tapes in her youth, and the dominance of her favourite track in her personal

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[38] In their work on family archives, Anna Woodham et al. defined the contents of informal personal archives as 'curated personal possessions' (2017: 204).

soundtrack: 'You'd make a mix tape, and everyone would always put this track on, like beginning, middle, end, where it would always be on' (Kate 2018).[39]

The 'archives' described by the participants were often attached to peak periods of youth. When asked which items in her toolkit induced the strongest memories Helen referred to the box of items from her exchange to an American university.[40] This edit of memorabilia and snapshots whilst temporally situated in her youth, had been compiled, or re-compiled recently as a memory archive, evidenced by the contemporary shoe box holding the items (Fig. 6.7). Peak biographical events were often marked with photograph or music compilations, made by the participants, or received as gifts. Over time these became valued youth archives that facilitated continuity and connection to peak memories. Several participants had kept scrapbooks, created at the time of youth: chronological, visual documents evidencing their participation in youth culture and dress or music influences. These creative documents were closely related to the formation of self in youth. Jayne had kept loose pages depicting fashion and music references relevant to the mod subculture (Fig. 6.8). Heather documented her favourite groups from press cuttings and her own event tickets (Fig. 6.9).

Figure 6.8 Page from Jayne's scrapbook. Author's photograph, 2018.
Figure 6.9 Heather's scrapbook cover. Author's photograph, 2018.

Kate chronicled her early years as a musician, starting with the advert for her first band at the age of 18 that opens Chapter 4 (Fig. 4.1). Olive's original wedding album, deliberately kept as a memento for nearly sixty years, later became a personal archive of dress, signifying a pivotal time in her youth trajectory.[41] However, the detail of the

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[39] Kate is referring to Sonic Youth (1987) 'Schizophrenia' on *Sister,* UK: Blast First. See Bas Jansen (2009) on mixtapes and memory.

[40] See 6.1 for Helen's quote where she describes this as important time in her youth.

[41] Figures 5.7 and 5.8 in Chapter 5 illustrate snapshots from Olive's wedding album.

garments was preserved in her memory wardrobe, not the album, evidencing how material archives work hand in hand with memory archives.

> These were all taken on our honeymoon, we went to London. And that was my going away suit, which was black. It was very fitted. I got it in Kendals,[42] so I was moving up. And it had like a loose panel at the back as wide, you know as wide as that (Olive 2019).

Compilations relating to significant birthdays were common. Janet had co-created a 40th birthday playlist (Fig. 6.10) with three friends for a joint celebration, each choosing twenty tracks. Janet (2018) described this compilation as 'forty years of me'.[43]

Figure 6.10 Janet's 40th Birthday Playlist. Author's photograph, 2018.

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[42] Kendal's department store, Manchester, England. The store traded as Kendals until 2005 when it was re-named House of Fraser Manchester. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'Kendals' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kendals [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[43] See Track 3.1 in Sleeve Notes for Janet's youth story. Also, Bas Jansen (2009) on 'Tape Cassettes and Former Selves'.

Olive had kept a photograph album given to her by five friends, inscribed *To Olive, on your 20th birthday*: 'Can you see though, what it says… and they are still my friends. Isn't that marvellous?' (Olive 2019). Artefacts gifted by family members were also referred to, Olive received annual photobooks from her son which she shared in her interview; he also made her playlists: 'a lovely collection of 50s and 60s music, and so I play that and sing along to it, because it's got a lot of the ones that I know every word to' (Olive 2019). Marian referenced the Golden Wedding playlists made by her children: 'they played all the old records for us, you know. It was nice' (Marian 2018).

Olive (2019) explained that it was her husband who maintained the family photograph collection, and that he was 'a fanatic for putting them in albums'. There is an element of creativity, but also labour, in this laying down of memory, and it has been suggested that in relation to photographs this has become heavily gendered with women often taking on the job of storing and editing family albums as 'keepers of the past' (Pickering and Keightley 2015: 73).[44] This can be seen as a burden and there were many references throughout the interviews to the work needed to preserve personal memory archives as Marian describes:

> I've bought albums and I still haven't put them in, but they are just all in a box and they are all over the show. This is the trouble of trying to get them all together so that, because my daughters want me to do a [pause] like a catalogue of them and to name, you know, what date and who they are, so I really keep getting them out, but I keep losing a few on the way (Marian 2018).

As Marian explains one of the common motivations for archival practice was the sharing of memories with family or friends. These retrospective practices, often undertaken later in life, contrast to the inward-looking practice of scrapbook making in the participants' younger years. Olive admitted to having little interest in keeping artefacts or documenting the past yet told a story of how she was inspired to create a personal memory archive, writing her life story for her family.

> When we'd been married fifty years, we went on the Queen Mary to New York and sailed to New York and then had a holiday in New York, which I just loved. And we met a young lady whilst we were there and we were telling our story of how we'd known each other all our lives and had been married fifty years, and all that rhubarb. And she said to me, "Will you make me a promise that you'll write that down?" I said, "Oh" She said, "Honestly, people will be interested." So, when I came

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[44] See also Patricia Holland (1991: 9) in *Family Snaps: The Meanings of Domestic Photography*.

home, I wrote more or less my life story and to do that, I had to, you know, go back to my diaries and see when I did such-and-such and when I met John, so that was useful to do that little exercise. So just every member of the family has got a copy. One day, somebody might be interested in reading it, you know [laughs] (Olive 2019).

Sharing it with her close friends, Olive had rebuked their corrections, as they attempted to add their own memories and pointed out what she had missed. While Olive firmly retained ownership of her own recollection, these alternative collective narratives are part of the dynamic of creative remembering.[45] Linda inherited no artefacts from her parents and was determined to pass on childhood memorabilia to her daughter. 'Having started a legacy that I keep things, I've got my daughter's bloody belly button thing. I've got her first nappy pin' (Linda 2019), while Mo intended to keep her toolkit (dress snapshots and digital playlist) intact to share with her daughter: 'I think she'll find it quite interesting because she's into her music and she loves to dance' (Mo 2018). These editorial dress and music practices create personal memory archives that complement the mnemonic archives of the memory wardrobe and memory soundtrack. Used primarily for self-reflection, they are also shared with loved ones, aggregating private and collective experience.

6.2.3 Public Memory Archives

The use of personal memory archives demonstrates how youth lived with the participants, though selected and curated possessions, kept in private or shared in intimate groups. But three of the participants chose to extend personal archives that related to pivotal moments in their youth to public audiences beyond the immediate family and friendship group. Linda saw her Reno project as an opportunity to leave a legacy, to connect people and create opportunities for intergenerational reminiscing. But also, more poignantly by sharing her experiences of youth, Linda hoped to empower others and make their paths easier than hers was growing up.

> When people come to see the exhibition, if they went to the Reno that includes people who were students at the time, they love remembering… but also, people's kids and grandkids come and remember and get a shock at seeing their grandma or mum in pictures with all their friends and living their life in their time (Fig. 6.11). And their parent makes more sense to them...

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[45] See Annette Kuhn's (1995: 14) observations as her and her mother noted conflicting place names on the back of a family photograph.

I can save people loads of time… I have made this journey, and to a certain extent, I've enjoyed it and that's made me who I am as well, but I didn't have to make this journey. Do you know what I mean, like, those voices in the memoirs, those pictures of us, nobody telling us who we have to be not being looked at pornographically, do you know, really, like lots of great photographers do to someone from my background, that these are photos taken by us. No, it's absolutely powerful (Linda 2018).[46]
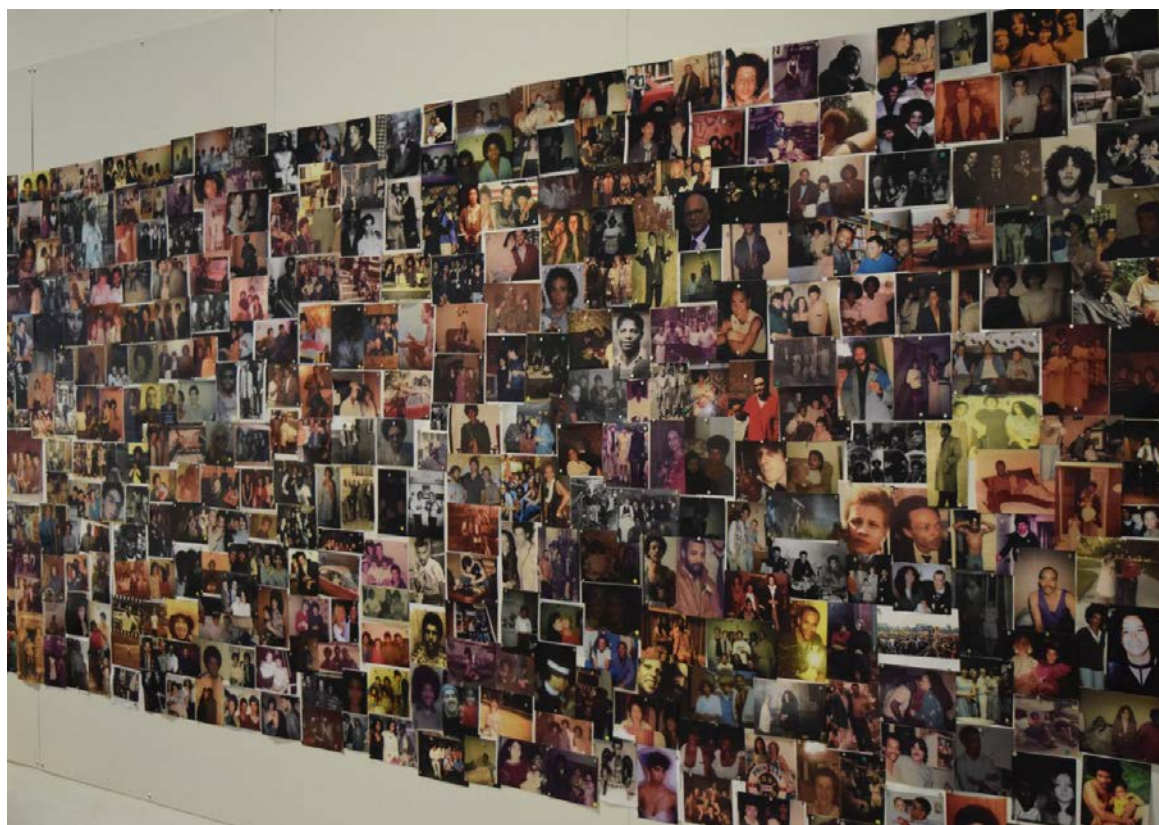

Figure 6.11 Photo wall at the Reno Exhibition, The Whitworth Art Gallery. Author's photograph, 2019.

Jayne saw her *Soul & Mod* website and the associated social media activity as a community, and an opportunity to leave a legacy and resource for others (Fig. 6.12).

You are creating something that is going to leave behind a documentation of that particular era which then can be used not only now but hopefully at a later date. And really, you're keeping, you're keeping that memory alive, you're not sort of just like shelving it and saying, "Well, that's something I did thirty years ago. That's the past, it's gone" … I look at it this way, if I can share that information, that then is allowing people to reminisce. It's giving them the opportunity through certain links, through certain articles, to comment, to probably reconnect with people, to reminisce, to give them a little bit of respite from normal, everyday life (Jayne 2018).

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[46] Linda is referring to the photograph wall that was created for the exhibition by people involved in the project. See Linda's *Sleeve Notes* for how Linda used these photographs in her youth story 2.8.1.
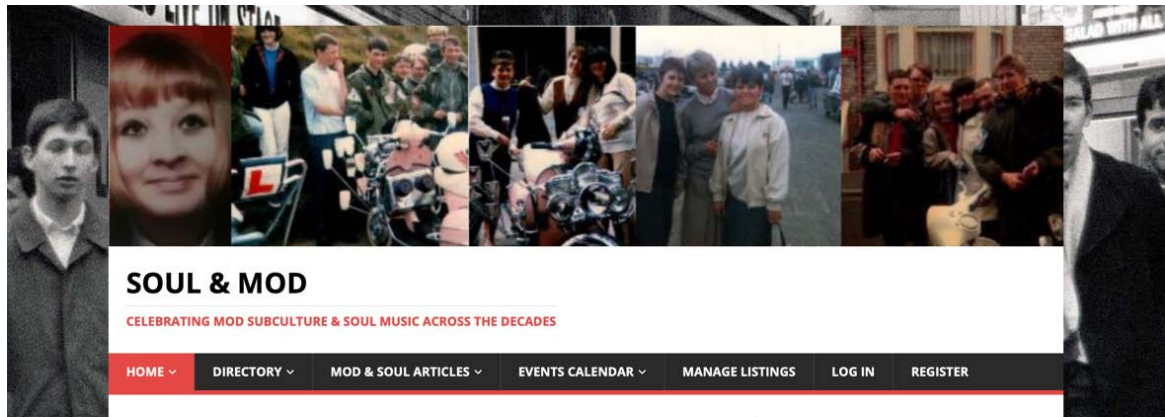
Figure 6.12 Screen shot from Jayne's website, *Soul & Mod* (2022). All content © *Soul & Mod*.

Heather had a large collection of dress items from the 1970s, which she was about to pass on to a museum (Figs. 6.13, 6.14).[47] The scale and specificity of the garments, many of them originals made by her, were both immensely personal, created as her own archive, and attractive to a museum curator: 'I'm just grateful that they're going to a good home and that they might be shown' (Heather 2018).

Figure 6.13 Heather's leather trousers. Made early 1970s and photographed by Heather 2018 © Heather.
Figure 6.14 Heather wearing leather catsuit, early 1970s. Photographer unknown. © Heather.

[47] See Figure 3.24 in *Sleeve Notes* illustrating a pair of rainbow dungarees, from the 1970s, that were also selected for the museum.

The exhibitions and websites described above were widely shared and became public resources, yet they started as private memory archives at the point of concept. Jayne produced public playlists of her personal memories on Mixcloud, which she purposefully undertook as a conduit to sharing memories. Heather shared her extensive wardrobe beyond the home, and Linda co-created her top 25 playlist with her collaborators in her Reno project and the collective photograph wall which she used to illustrate her personal narrative in the interview (Fig. 6.11). Digital technologies have made the sharing of personal memory archives more accessible in everyday life as Janet (2018) recounts: 'I've used social media to share. And also, more, I think so to share music, "Do you remember listening to this?" and putting it on from YouTube or whatever'.[48] But as Jayne explains above technology has enabled her to re-live and extend her youth practices, sharing her remembered experience widely in the digital community. In her youth she relied on printed newsletters to keep in touch with her mod subculture and these artefacts are now re-purposed as memory resources, shared online, as a conduit to collective reminiscence.[49]

6.3 Getting Away with It

> I'm quite comfortable with who I am. I don't think I feel like I've changed very much in myself in the last few years. And I kind of hope I kind of like stay like that, really. But what has flashed in my mind is what a grandmother should look like [laughs]. How a grandmother should behave. There's no sign of that on the way at the moment, but [my daughter] is 22, and at some point, it might happen. And I think would that be another time when I'd need to look back and think 'Right, I'm actually a grandmother now'. Potentially, I could be a grandmother. I could have been a grandmother a while ago. So, yeah, and then, would I? how would I need to change my hair? Would I still get away with it if it's grey? Would I dye it? I don't at the moment. Yeah, would I feel I like I'd need to wear even more 'grown up' clothes? Because how long can you get away with wearing Dr. Martens boots? I think that's it. How long can I get away with wearing Dr. Martens boots? (Janet 2018).[50]

The title of this section takes reference from Janet's quote above, and her concern about how much longer she can maintain the clothes and lifestyle of her youth and 'get away with' wearing the Dr. Martens Boots she associates as central to her past and

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[48] Video sharing site in operation since 2005. *Wikipedia* (2022) 'YouTube' [online]. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YouTube. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[49] For an example see Jayne's mod newsletter from the 1980s in Figure 3.32 (Track 3.7.1).
[50] Part of this quote also appears in Janet's Sleeve Notes 3.1.1.

current self.[51] Earlier in the thesis I addressed female representation in youth cultures and perceptions of femininity,[52] and I focus back on the female perspective here to recognise social expectations, gendered embodied experiences, family roles and concerns specific to women's experience in mid- and later life, notably how dress and music related youth cultural practices are maintained or adapted across time.

6.3.1 Sustaining the Cultural Practices of Youth

Over the last decade there has been a turn in subcultural and post-subcultural studies towards examining sustained participation in music and related style cultures. This thesis prioritises the everyday lived experiences of youth,[53] but builds on emerging literature about continuity in alternative or subcultural practices, particularly in relation to women's biographies. Samantha Holland was first to note how women sometimes retain alternative styles they adopted in their youth, acknowledging the lack of attention to the adult, and female, perspective in youth literature (2004, 2012). Andy Bennett extended the focus on sustained participation in style and music cultures, recognising the shift in focus from visual image to biographical importance for ageing punks (2006); developing this further in a series of case studies that drew on examples of toning down appearance, family dynamics, career choices, generational continuity or conflict and political orientation. However, Bennett (2013) paid little attention to the female perspective. Bennett pointed out that older music fans no longer need to meet in person and the internet has provided online communities for subcultures (2006: 223), such as the example of Jayne's *Soul & Mod* website in this thesis. Paul Hodkinson made a significant contribution to the debate, turning attention to the ageing Goth community (2011, 2012b). Focusing in on parenthood Hodkinson found that Goth culture remained intrinsic to identity, often sustained through friendship groups and networks, even if the intensity of participation decreased as responsibilities associated with older lifestyles took hold (2012c). Hodkinson identified opportunities for further exploration such as the importance of generational interaction and the passing on of knowledge (2013: 19), as the participants of this study demonstrate in their personal and public memory archives. He advocated more emphasis on the biographical span of youth cultures to progress the contested subculture/post-subcultural discourse in youth studies (Hodkinson 2016). A new understanding of youth culture as a continuum,

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[51] See Tracks 5.4 and 6.1 for further references to Janet's Dr. Martens.
[52] See Tracks 4.2.1 on representation and Track 4.2.2 on femininity in Chapter 4.
[53] See Track 1.3.1 for definition of 'everyday' in the context of this thesis.

rather than simply a reaction to the adolescent environment emerged from the work of Holland (2004), Bennett and Hodkinson (2012),[54] most recently developed by Laura Way in her study of ageing female punks (2020a, 2020b). Extending Holland's (2004) initial call for more focus on sustained female participation in alternative youth cultures, Way questioned how punk is maintained 'post-youth', and how female punk identities and attitudes are negotiated amongst societal expectations, the ageing body and significant life events. Noting these gendered complexities, Way also reported on how employment and punk dress codes are navigated by ageing punk women (2021).

Monica Sklar et al. noted 'an increasingly reciprocal, yet complex, interaction between subcultural styles and the mainstream' (2021: 3),[55] and although the texts above focus on defined spectacular youth or style cultures, they align with the findings in this thesis that reveal the temporal shifts in the self throughout a lifetime, and how everyday dress and music practices adopted in youth are maintained or returned to later in life. I extend the debate to everyday youth cultural practices, which prove to be as agentic and influential across the lifetime as the subcultural experience.[56] Removing the emphasis on subcultural or post-subcultural groupings impacted on the diversity of responses and extended the age of the participants in this study. The participants each reflected on between four and seven decades since their self-defined youth began. While much of the literature cited above focuses on middle age, the wider perspective in this thesis strengthens the debate, lengthening the participants' views on societal expectation, personal circumstances, and bodily change, into later life. Focusing on personal biographies of youth as opposed to collective youth cultures and recognising the interplay between memory and experience further extends the evidence.

From the perspective of dress, Twigg (2013) explored the role fashion plays in the narration of life and the trajectories of change as women age.[57] Jackie Goode (2018) used auto-ethnographic narrative to investigate fashioning the self in later life, and Woodward exposed how clothing worn across the lifetime enables continuity with the past (2007). I suggested earlier in this chapter that continuity of style supports

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[54] See Andy Bennett's and Paul Hodkinson's (2012) edited volume on ageing and youth cultures which synthesised emerging research in this area.
[55] Monica Sklar et al.'s (2021) review specifically comments on dress and youth scholarship since *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (Hebdige [1979] 2007) and *Inside Subculture: The Postmodern Meaning of Style* (Muggleton 2000).
[56] Julia Twigg (2013: 79) supports this view, yet still chooses to focus on 'distinctive' dress styles for her case studies.
[57] Cheryl Buckley and Hilary Fawcett (2002: 7) also noted that dress narratives are usually without closure as the wardrobe continually adapts to biographical shifts.

affirmation of the self, and for many of the participants elements of dress remained consistent across and beyond their self-defined youth as Jayne and Kate describe below.[58]

> I've always had a bob except for one year in 1990 when for some strange reason I decided, I must have just had a [laughs] I don't know what happened, but I decided to have it cut short and dye it red [laughter]. I'm laughing because I put this photograph up on Facebook the other day and I think some people were shocked because they've never seen it. I don't put it up because it's, I've always had a bob, yeah. I've always had a bob (Jayne 2018).

> I still always wear Levi's, always. I don't, kind of, and I guess that marks me out in age wise because young people don't do that, but I always remember the Nick Kamen advert and going into the laundrette and sticking the stones in and doing his stonewash thing, and for me, that's, I've always worn Levi jeans (Kate 2018).

Yet both Jayne and Kate were aware of the subtle shift in their dress practices as they aged. In the following quote Jayne aligns her bodily and cultural age. Echoing Way's findings (2020a, 2021), she explains how she adapted her mod style of dress for work, and to suit her changing body shape.

> I've always tried to have some sort of 60s element within how I dress, but obviously when you start working you've got to dress smart and, you know, you still have that element I think, but you don't, it's not like through, as you would have dressed say at eighteen if you went to an event. So, I've kept that element, but then obviously since, for the last eight or nine years I think I still do retain that element, but obviously there are things I don't wear anymore. I mean I wouldn't wear, and I can't wear because I've put weight on obviously. I don't, like I wouldn't wear a 60s dress because, for a start, I mean don't get me wrong there's a lot of girls who do on the events the old mod girls, a) that's not mod to me personally, but secondly, it's also I am not the size to wear those sorts of things. I try to dress more now for my age and for what I feel comfortable in, where before it would have been because I was a size 12 when I was 17, 18, it would have been, not to fit in, but to look, where now I like to think I retain the style, but I don't put that much emphasis on it like I used to if that makes sense (Jayne 2018).

Kate's working life, as a musician and then an academic, has enabled her to maintain her preferred casual style of dress, but she is still considerate of societal expectations. Below she describes the changes in her style as subtle, and gradual, noting that she

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[58] See Track 6.1.3 in this chapter and Sophie Woodward (2005, 2007). Also Track 5.6 for reference to the role memory wardrobes or memory soundtracks play in consistency of self.

has been able to remain loyal to her Levi's Jeans as their shape (perhaps as well as her body shape) has changed over the years.[59]

> I wouldn't kind of dress the way that I did, I think it's just shifted, but really subtly, I think I'm more, I think I'm more conscious, perhaps like if I've got to teach and I'm more conscious of you know, don't dress like a teenager anymore [laughs] or anything, but I think that's been a really, really subtle shift. I think I've gradually dispensed with things like leather jackets and things like that but stuck with the Levi jeans, whose shape has altered over 25 years…
>
> I still really like my trainers. Yes, I think I'm probably more conscious of it now, to be honest, I'm more conscious of not, [pause] I don't know, it's kind of difficult to explain and just sort of, I think those, sort of, transitions of, it's not like "I must stop dressing like this because I'm now this age", well that's kind of happened in quite a subtle sort of way (Kate 2018).

For Kate, Janet and Helen footwear has remained a constant. Perhaps due to slower trend cycles or less issues with fit over time than clothes, they provide an accessible way for the participants to wear their youth. Certain shoe styles are also synonymous with youth culture such as Kate's Converse or Adidas Samba trainers,[60] rendering them iconic tokens of youth.

> I mean there are things I wouldn't wear now that I wore when I was younger, but I don't feel uncomfortable sticking on my Converse or my latest pair of Adidas, I think I'm okay at my age, to wear those, to be honest (Kate 2018).

Rather than replicating full looks, styling practices such as Jayne's bob, or her tie pin, are easily maintained across time.[61] These styling devices bring past and present experience together: 'I used to wear a tie pin. In fact, I still wear tie pins now when I go to events' (Jayne 2018). But even when the participants didn't maintain their youth style in such a literal way, elements of youth still live with them as Helen explains:

> I wouldn't like to still be wearing crimplene dresses and flat sandals. I love shoes of all descriptions and I wear things from, well these stripy trainers to Doc Martens, and big crepe sole shoes. So, I think my love of fashion from being young has stayed with me, and I'm still very

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[59] Both Kate and Linda (Track 6.1) cite Levi's as a constant in their life, suggesting scope for anthropological studies of how 'youth lives with us' through denim brands (see Miller and Woodward 2012).
[60] Originally a football trainer designed in the 1940s and later adopted by the football casual subculture. Zakari, A.R. (2020) 'From the Icy Ground to a Timeless Classic: The History of the adidas Samba' *Urban Pitch,* 4th Sep [online]. Available at: https://urbanpitch.com/adidas-samba-history/. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[61] In Figure 3.31 (*Sleeve Notes* 3.7) Jayne is dressed to go to an event, wearing a tie pin.

interested, and I don't think I'm too young to wear any sort of fashion because I can adapt it (Helen 2018).[62]

Helen is happy to keep the crimplene dresses and flat sandals of her youth in the moment it was lived, yet she has developed a love of fashion that surpasses any notions of age.[63]

There is a growing body of research related to ageing and participation in music cultures (Vroomen 2004; Taylor 2010; Bennett and Taylor 2012; Bennett 2018). Although this thesis is more concerned with the playing of music in the home than attendance at events, raves or gigs, many of the participants referenced continued engagement with live music experiences, over protracted periods of time:

> Secret Affair.[64] We see them every year, they come to [questions herself] is it every other year? And we always go and see them, because they were both mine and my husband's favourite band from the time (Janet 2018).

> The Yardbirds [pause] and the Hollies, I went to see way back when, and went to see all the way, if they were playing, I would see them all the way through the '80s, you know, 20 years of going to see The Hollies, which was great, 20-odd years of going to see Rod Stewart (Heather 2018).

> I went to see Lightning Bolt, I'll show you the pictures, I'll play you some Lightning Bolt, they're amazing, it's a two-piece noise band from Providence, Rhode Island, they've been going for years, and it was so, it was noisy. I couldn't hear for about two or three days after and there's me and [my friend] there, still, you know, still kind of there but that's, I mean those things are few and far between, but I don't feel like I'm, you know, I think it's still okay to do that sort of stuff because I enjoy doing it (Kate 2018).

Kate is referring here to *Lightning Bolt* – who formed in 1994,[65] when she was 29, a period she still defined as her youth – who she continues to follow in her mid-50s. The description on their label's website states that they 'play with abandon that is unmatched and remarkably undiluted since the duo's formation 25 years ago' (*Thrill Jockey*, n.d. [online]). Kate's enthusiasm for the music also remains 'undiluted'. This

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[62] Helen probably means 'too old to wear' here but her slip perhaps reflects that she considers herself still young.
[63] See Track 5.3 for Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering's definition of the terms *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* (2012: 26).
[64] Mod band formed in the late 1970s by Ian Page and Dave Cairns. *Secret Affair* (no date) 'History' [online]. Available at: http://www.secretaffair.info/wp/history. [Accessed 6 August 2022].
[65] Cited as 'one of the loudest rock outfits in existence' in *Thrill Jockey* (n.d. [online]).

suggests that reconnection to youth though music is not necessarily a nostalgic re-visiting. Nor do people necessarily lose touch with new music as they age as suggested by David Hesmondhalgh (2005: 22); rather, new music can be adopted at various stages in the lifetime and sampled into extended youth biographies. For most participants old and new music coexisted: 'I can't imagine that I'll ever not listen to what I've always listened to, but I hope that I'll carry on listening to new as well, and adding to my musical repertoire' (Mo 2018).[66] But for a few participants new music was of less interest later in life; when asked why she chose to play only music from the early years of her youth,[67] Helen answered:

> I don't know why particularly, maybe because my taste in music is still the same and I don't know, although I listen to other music, I don't know who's singing it. I don't know who's singing it because I'm not that interested…
>
> I still like the old, in inverted commas, music, 60s, 70s music. My two sons are very into music and their taste is very eclectic and they introduced me to new people, but I still like, I still like what I liked when I was young. I don't know why (Helen 2018).

These examples show that the ongoing development of music tastes is deeply personal, as is an individual's definition of youth, but for Kate and Helen a connection to the music of their self-defined youth is retained. What varies is their individual conceptualisation of youth, and the status of music in their biographies. Hesmondhalgh has suggested that the prioritisation of youth in popular music research is an 'obstacle', and that youth studies and popular music studies should amicably part ways (2005: 38). But in studies of youth, particularly the study of memories of youth in this thesis, music is a powerful lens through which new cross-generational understandings of youth may emerge. Both Marian and Olive referred to recent experiences of jiving, encouraged by family members at family events, while Mo's love of soul music was shared with her grown up children.

> We embarrassed my son last year, or a couple of years ago. He was married for 25 years, and he had a do at the Golf Club, and he'd asked everybody to name tunes that meant something to them. I can't think of the name of the song [my friend] did now but we got up and we jived, and of course he'd never seen me jive [laughing]. He started the music, and we went on, and we did everything that we did, we could

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[66] See 5.3.1 for further context on this quote and mnemonic time travel.
[67] Helen is referring to tracks released when she was aged 12-16, such as those she included in her toolkit.

still remember, you know. I mean not that we go to dances now and
jive, but, you know, we did (Olive 2019).

I do tend to listen to a lot of stuff from my youth now because it's kind
of nice to be nostalgic and there's a big movement now like, [name
redacted] my son, and my daughter have both gone back to vinyl after
all the changes and it's nice for me that they really love soul, they love
Motown, because of their dad, and also, we can share it. It's a shared
love of the same music. So, we can go out and dance together (Mo
2018).

Asking the participants to reflect on their experiences of youth provided a unique
perspective of youth participation as a continuum. As her children had grown up Janet
had found herself with more time to reflect, listen to music, get involved with her
husband's band and attend gigs: 'I think it's interesting, again, how it's come a bit of a
full circle, that I feel like I'm in my own youth culture right now, at the moment' (Janet
2018).[68] Janet's description of coming 'full circle', aligns with Jayne's use of the term
below.

The music has always stayed with me. A lot of the friends who we
meet through our lives, some stay with you, some obviously although
you're still friends you don't contact each other quite a lot because
you've all got different lifestyles. Some have got kids, some have
moved away, some have got careers, whatever. But it's sort of come
full circle for me because now, again because of the internet, I've
reconnected with old friends (Jayne 2018).

Consistency in music listening practices directly related to the participants' narratives
of continuity of youth. Jayne's continued connection to a distinct youth subculture
intensified the impact. She described how she left the mod subculture in 1989, or at
least stopped attending events and rallies, and how her youth was reignited decades
later through social media as she reconnected with the mod community. This feeling
of arriving back at youth was not uncommon. After some difficult years during
adulthood, Linda (2019) explained, I absolutely pick up my youth now and wear it
100%, yeah'.

I love looking back at my youth. I am now who I wanted to be in my
youth. So, I'm all the really wonderful things that I was, street wise,
funny, witty, not scared, able to fight, able to stick up for myself, but I
can also eat *Unicorn* food. Do you know what I mean like, I can afford
to have *Unicorn* food.[69] I love my dress sense. I'm really comfortable,

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[68] See Track 6.1 for another example of Janet's describing her youth culture coming full circle.
[69] The Unicorn is a south Manchester co-operative grocery shop. Unicorn (2022) [online]. Available at:
https://www.unicorn-grocery.coop. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

you know, in who I am. I'm literally looking back at my youth for the
project and our youth and removing that shame. Yeah (Linda 2019).

Reflecting on their youth the participants were still aware of the passage of time: 'time
is ticking. Looking back to when I was 13, it only seems five minutes ago, that was fifty
years ago. Wow' (Helen 2018); 'That's what I really love about getting older, and you
start to kind of, you see things in a much more, you see a much broader perspective,
don't you?' (Kate 2018); 'Where have the years gone?' (Marian 2018). When Jayne
literally looks back at her youth, viewing herself in a crowd at a mod rally in
Scarborough in 1997, in a video posted on YouTube (Cuntycarper 2012), she finds the
experience unsettling, thirty years later, she experiences mixed emotions, from
nostalgia to sadness.

> There's a video on YouTube. There's not much to see on me, but you
> can see me. It's really weird actually and I've got my anorak on and a
> short bob, which is very odd looking that because when I first saw that
> about three years ago it's weird watching a video of people who you
> know now, but also yourself, seeing yourself, and again I was 17…
> going on for 18. So, I saw that three years ago, which is literally when
> I was about 47. So, it was thirty years later. It's very, very odd and
> what was very strange as well was, there were several people in that
> video who are now no longer here. So, it's a lovely, lovely nostalgic
> trip, but at the same time it's very sad. Does that make sense? Yeah,
> that weekend was fantastic. I have lots and lots of memories of that
> weekend (Jayne 2018).

This example illustrates that experiences of youth live with Jayne, as she remains in
touch with the mod community, retains elements of dress, still enjoys the same music
and facilitates reconnections through her website. Yet, it is not Jayne's youth that is
extended, rather her youth is part of her extended self, a youth she conceives as
closely bound, yet distinct to the present.

6.3.2 Female Perspectives on Youth and Ageing

Bennett's findings in *Music, Style and Aging: Growing Old Disgracefully* (2013),
perpetuate gendered views on female participation in music or style-based youth
cultures. He claims that that as a male researcher and musician, female participants
often assumed that he held more knowledge and was unlikely to take their views
seriously (2013: 39). This is problematic on numerous levels but reflects dominant
societal assumptions about female participation in youth culture, even later in life.
Bennett suggests women are less likely to invest in distinct genres of music in

adolescence and as such rarely maintain a strong connection to a particular genre as they age, but the participants in this study suggest otherwise. Bennett argues that older women are less likely to visit music venues and prefer to listen to music at home, 'either alone or in the company of a partner' (2013: 39). Here Bennett problematises home listening and the sharing of music in the home, both of which are found to be intrinsic to the maintenance of self and the continuation of youth practices in this thesis.[70] While Bennett's intention is to reflect the widely acknowledged gender gap in youth culture, these assumptions suggest lack of effort to move beyond gendered stereotypes and fixed ideas about participation and youth culture. Talking about how she imagined her future in her youth, Helen unknowingly reflects Bennett's (2013) book title,[71] 'I don't think I imagined a future. I, if I did imagine anything, it would be that I would grow old *not* gracefully [laughs]' (Helen 2018).[72]

The findings of this thesis reflect the female point of view that has been less visible in academic youth literature.[73] In popular music and dress theory more work is needed to reach the unheard voices and undo gendered assumptions that hinder understanding of how dress and music contribute to narratives of youth and ageing. This view is upheld by Anita Corbin (2017) in the introduction to the *Visible Girls* catalogue that accompanied her touring exhibition. She explains her mission to overturn 'our society's woeful inability to acknowledge and celebrate the magnificence of the older woman; more informed by her youthful experiences and innate energy than is commonly recognised'. The voice of the older woman was overlooked in dress literature until Twigg's work (2013),[74] and the female perspective remains less visible than the male viewpoint in youth literature, nearly fifty years after Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber ([1975] 2006) identified the imbalance. For Twigg toning down dress was 'part of a wider cultural process of becoming invisible as older women' (2013: 63). While Twigg noted the difficulties in resisting the societal expectations imposed on women as they age (2004: 48), subcultures such as punk, Way argues, offer an alternative to normative ideals of femininity, with punk values providing a means of

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[70] See Track 4.3.5 *Sites of Youth* for a discussion on youth culture in the home and public spaces.

[71] Andy Bennett's (2013) publication is titled *Music, Style and Aging: Growing Old Disgracefully.*

[72] Such gendered views also exist in fashion and dress literature where men are assumed to have less connection with fashion over time. Jackie Goode (2017) has corrected this in her study of older men's fashion narratives, finding that for many men clothing remains intrinsic to identity in later life. See also Julia Twigg (2020) on Masculinities and Age.

[73] Acknowledging the contributions of Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber ([1975] 2006); McRobbie ([1980] 1990); Samantha Holland (2004); Laura Vroomen 2004; Jodie Taylor (2010) and Laura Way (2020a).

[74] A body of work precedes Julia Twigg's book (2013), including a critical review on dress and age (Twigg 2007) and her early work on dress and dementia (Twigg 2010).

subverting social expectations of ageing and gender (2020a: 31). For Way's punk women 'toning down' manifested internalisation of punk values, that endured, just less visibly (2020a: 119). Holland's participants indicated that they intended to 'age differently' (2004: 117), reflecting the alternative femininity of their youth whilst perhaps 'toning down' their look (2004: 127). Likewise, Kate described her continuing distance from the 'typical feminine':

> I'm definitely not feeling that whole kind of typical feminine thing, at all. Yes, I'm not a, I never have been a really girly girl, I've just, even when I was a child, I was never like that and I'm not like that now and I think for me to kind of suddenly change and, you know wear, kind of, I guess what would be typically expected, I just think that would be a really, really weird thing for me to do (Kate 2018).

Clothing from Heather's youth was spectacular enough to feature in a museum collection,[75] yet she referred to the gradual re-positioning of her style later in life:

> You know, I mean, I don't really care what anybody thinks but I'm probably in more, I'm probably a little more in what I would call the sort of 'background look' now'…
>
> I mean I've always changed the way I dress. I've never been a totally 100% anything, and I've occasionally gone absolutely wacky. I mean when I look at some of my clothes, I think "I walked up Manchester High Street in this". It's, you know, it's amazing what I used to wear to go out. I can even remember getting turned away from one of the top clubs in Manchester because we were too outrageous – in the disco era! (Heather 2018).

Heather's music tastes from her youth had endured to a greater degree than her style of dress, and generally the participants in this study referred to societal expectations of dress far more than music. Despite the gendered societal expectations about music participation noted above, the advantage music has over dress, as an enduring token of youth is that it is less 'visible', and less subject to societal criticism. In early twenty-first century Britain normative dress for women as they age is often considered to be classic, neutral and devoid of either overt femininity or sexuality (Twigg 2013: 56).[76] Dressing appropriately for age, or 'age ordering' (Twigg 2013: 25),[77] was something

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[75] See Track 6.2.3. for further context on Heather's dress archive, and Figs. 3.24, 3.27, 6.13 and 6.14.

[76] Julia Twigg (2013: 27) points out that this is just one culturally specific example of age-coding, pointing to Alison Lurie's (1992) observation of the brightly coloured leisurewear adopted by American elders by way of contrast.

[77] 'The systematic patterning of cultural expression according to an ordered and hierarchically arranged concept of age' (Twigg 2013: 25).

that all the participants were aware of. Despite maintaining a strong connection to the music and style cultures of her youth Kate stops short of the pig tails, suggesting that their youthful femininity is no longer appropriate: 'I don't think I'll go back to the buns, pig tails, although I kind of like them. I wouldn't get away with that now' (Kate 2018).[78] Jayne also demonstrated an acute awareness of what is right or wrong for her age: 'You wouldn't turn up to a party dressed in something that looks stupid or that makes you look like you're trying to dress as an 18-year-old when actually you're 55' (Jayne 2018). Jayne has adapted her own dress with age, but also 'polices' the dress of others still active in the mod subculture (Holland 2004: 121).[79]

> [They] both carry it brilliantly. But they again, they're in their early 50s but they, they've retained that [mod] element, but they've retained that smartness. Do you understand what I'm saying? And they, they've also kept their figures. Where some, to me, dressed fantastically in the 80s, and now have gone the other way (Jayne 2018).

For Jayne it is the 'smartness' of mod that she has continued to replicate, suggesting that it is the attitude and styling of dress that is maintained above the style of garments themselves. Jayne is critical of the women who wear 1960s dresses, but it is a look she has never adopted in her youth or since. 'I'm one of the only girls who actually wears a tie still. Nobody wears them, this is why I can't get over some of the old people who I knew, because they don't wear ties anymore' (Jayne 2018). Acts of resistance were evident in the participants' continuation of their youth cultural practices and refusal to align with normative perceptions of ageing and dress. For Janet her Dr. Martens boots are an act of everyday resistance, as she queries societal dress codes for women of her age.

> But I do wonder sometimes whether, what people think at my age, walking round in little skirts and Dr. Martens boots. I don't care, but I do wonder that that's not the expectation of what I'm expected to dress like. When I go to work, luckily, I'm in quite a relaxed environment, so I can pretty much go in generally what I want to wear, which does include Dr. Martens boots, it does include little skirts. Yeah. I think there is, I think there is some expectation. I don't think I'd go down that road, but I have seen, looking at work, thinking, like, like I say, I'm terrified of being frumpy, I would never go down that road (Janet 2018).

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[78] Kate's pigtails can be seen in Figure 5.11, track 5.3.5.
[79] Samantha Holland uses the term 'policing' to explain the judgement women apply to themselves and other women (2004: 121).

Although Janet has no need to adjust her dress for work or engage in what Way has referred to as 'appearance labour' (2021: 467), Janet's response suggests she is aware of societal expectations of female dress in the workplace. Ingun Grimstad Klepp and Ardis Storm-Mathisen use the Norwegian term *Kjerring* to denote a matronly style of 'thoroughly feminine clothing and accessories that are devoid of sexual connotations' (2005: 335). Although this highly feminised style of dress is almost obsolete in the United Kingdom (Twigg 2013: 29), Janet sticks to dark coloured basics, with casual, youthful connotations (mini skirt, leggings, Dr. Martens boots) to avoid the frumpy women she fears she could become, aligning with Guy and Banim's anxiety-led categorisation (2000).

> Yeah, I think terrified of being frumpy, so it's generally black is the basic colour. I think I've always worn, generally, quite dark colours. Leggings, short skirts, that's kind of been a mainstay. I've probably got back more into that, again, within the last few years or so. Yes, so I think the mod culture is still there a little bit, well, a fair bit (Janet 2018).

For some participants the need for comfort or practicality overrode the fear of being seen to be frumpy, but as Carole explained, that does not mean that favourite styles of dress do not endure.

> I would wear trousers and they have to be pull on and, you know, tops have to be pull on and bras have to be front fastening and, you know, it just has to, everything has to be easy…
>
> But clothing has always been of interest, and it still is, you know, but it's comfort and wearability and some, the things I like, I still like. I mean I've got a dress that I bought in 1986, I still wear it (Carole 2019).

For Heather, the comfort is both emotional and physical, as she recoils at the physically restrictive garments of her youth and becoming more self-conscious with age.

> I get in a panic now if I have to dress up [laughs]. I just, I mean, I like clothes and I like to be reasonably fashionable [pause], certainly into more comfort, you know, in the old days, if you were in skinny jeans, they didn't have any stretch in or anything like that and when I look at some of the arms, you know, and things like that, and you think "actually, were they comfortable?" I never thought about them being uncomfortable. But, oh no, I mean, I have recently put on one or two things and thought "hmm, do you look right in this? It's a bit, is it mutton dressed as lamb? Oh no, I'll wear it". That kind of thing. But, no, I'm more self-conscious, and also more you know, I look at myself more

and think "do you look good in this?" And then there are certain things
I put on and I just feel comfortable (Heather 2018).[80]

Hodkinson (2011) has suggested that in style subcultures older participants may feel a sense of liberation from the physical discomfort of the associated clothing. But this pressure appears to be replaced by societal pressures as women age. Heather stated, 'I loved my 20s and 30s. I looked good, you know, I felt I looked good and could wear anything', but although she remained slim, clothes felt different on her older body. Klepp and Storm-Mathisen (2005: 338) suggested societal expectations in dress are less rigid when the female figure is retained, as Jayne suggested above, later explaining that changes in the body have affected her own dress choices over time. Twigg has suggested in this way dress can enable 'mediation between bodily and cultural forms of ageing (2013: 14)'. Marian, who was 79 at the time of interview and considered herself to be typical in terms of normative femininity, explains how societal expectations of ageing have changed in her lifetime, and how she and her friends resist the style trajectory of their own parents.

> I think that the people who are my age, we are still doing the same things and listening to, you know, I still have friends, and we are still the same, we still do the same things and listen to the same things, you know. And all of my friends that I still have from when I started work, and from school, we all dress, not as our parents would have dressed at 76, I think we are still all fairly up-beat, and quite modern in our [unfinished], and I think today, you've got the choices to be able to dress as nicely as you like, you know (Marian 2018).

Marian's testimony demonstrates that consistent dress and music tastes are not only found in alternative or spectacular youth cultures, or in mid-life. Although Marian has gradually adapted her style over the years, and criticised her choice of dress as a teenager,[81] she has resisted change in her style. Not all participants had experienced a consistent trajectory in youth practices. Jayne reflected on how she put her youth 'on the shelf' for many years before return to the mod community.

> I was quite outgoing when I was younger, but I still retain that sort of, those sort of basic principles of being, of the mod thing and it's never really left me, but now it's come again. Like I said, it was sort of, not buried, but it was put on the shelf sort of thing for a lot of years, but the music continued. But now it's come forth again so really a lot of that is identifiable with me when I was a teenager, but obviously I've got a lot

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[80] Mutton dressed as lamb is a culturally dated, but widely recognised, (UK) phrase that suggests the policing of older females' appearance as they age (Twigg 2013: 16).
[81] In response to Figure 3.5 Marian states 'what a sight' in Track 3.2.1, and 'what a mess!' in Track 6.1.

more experience, a lot more life experience should I say behind me
now (Jayne 2018).

Jayne articulates the value of experience and reflection over time. Although she was not actively involved in the mod scene for a while, it never left her, particularly the music. Jayne had not had children, but some participants experienced a similar pause in their dress or music cultures in relation to motherhood. Talking though her photograph albums Janet noticed the appearance of her children: 'that's probably when, for a period of time, the kind of culture kind of disappeared a little bit' (Janet 2018). For Janet this constituted a temporary break, and she returned to her youth cultural practices as her parental duties eased. But for Carole motherhood represented a significant shift in her personal circumstances. Having been in London where she could 'go anywhere and do anything' in the swinging 60s, when I asked if there was a time that she felt her youth ended, she responded quickly, 'having a child', at the age of 22 (Carole 2019). This experience reflects wider societal trends as women are more likely to withdraw or interrupt their participation in music and style related cultures following parenthood (Hodkinson 2012c). Hodkinson also drew attention to the transfer of subcultural capital from parent to child,[82] in the Goth community (2013: 19), although at the time the research was conducted his participants would mostly have had very young children, and less time to reflect than the mothers in this thesis who had adult children or grandchildren at the time of interview.[83] Mo explains this intergenerational hierarchy:

> My children are in their 40s and that kind of age group seem to be having this big retro thing where they are learning about all the bands that I used to love in the past. So, they think I'm quite cool because when it comes on, I know all the words and I know all of the history of the band and such like. So, it's great (Mo 2018).[84]

This example highlights how youth cultural practices and parental roles can co-exist and inform each other but also that understanding of the self is reliant on the relationship between past and present.

Much of the discussion has related to the past-present relationship but I also asked the participants to consider their future self, and how youth might live with them beyond

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[82] The term subcultural capital was coined by Sarah Thornton (2003), referencing the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984).
[83] Nicola Smith (2012) has also investigated parenthood in the Northern Soul Scene.
[84] See 3.3 where Mo explains the subcultural capital this provides.

the present. The responses demonstrate the constant negotiation between change and consistency, and resistance against, or acceptance of pre-conceived ideas of ageing and femininity.

> I certainly won't be wearing slippers and jogging pants. That doesn't come into me at all. I think I would still be interested in fashion. I'd still wear mad shoes, might be a bigger size, [laughs] a bit more comfy, but yes, I'll still be, I'll still be looking out and going to shops and looking online at what's in and not so much music, I think my music tastes are set, but I'm not against different types of music. I listen to that when we go out or at people's houses, but I always come back to my favourites (Helen 2018).

> I'm not going to do rinse dye, I know that, and my hair is going to go grey, I know it's going already but I'm actually waiting for it to go properly just white, no dye, nothing, properly grey hair and yes, I can't see that I will have finally succumbed to wearing a dress either [laughter] (Kate 2018).

> As far as fashion is concerned, I'll, you know, obviously still bother. I'm not going to become a big [unfinished], you know, I don't know what I'll become. I don't want to be an old lady. But, of course, people do look at you differently, don't they? So, I don't really like to think about it too much (Heather 2018).

This research found that 'getting away with it' or maintaining the cultural practices of youth is perhaps easier for women through music than it is through dress, as there is less public scrutiny or policing of female musical tastes. Dress is more visible, more vulnerable to bodily change and changes in fashion trends. Yet visibility renders dress powerful, enabling small acts of everyday resistance and self-affirmation, such as wearing the footwear associated with youth. Continuity in music tastes is less visible, less encumbered by societal influences and hence provides a steady beat of self-consistency when tastes are maintained across time.

6.4 Re-Positioning Youth

The final part of this chapter, and the thesis, returns to the definitions of youth culture and the parameters of youth established in Chapter 4. I reflect on developments in youth research, considering the participants' narratives, the reflexive methodology and new approaches to youth studies. Analysis of the participants' definitions of youth past and present, as seen through the lens of dress and music aligns this research with

emerging theory. The analysis supports a new understanding of youth as a lifelong project, building on the literature on youth culture and ageing.

Subcultural and post-subcultural theory are used as a benchmark in this thesis, as there are currently no other academic fields that bring together dress (or style) and music as cultural resources related to youth. But the multidisciplinary nature of this study departs from both the 'cultural' approach of the CCCS and the post-subculturalists, and the 'transitions' perspective in youth studies which foregrounds the relationship between education and work in industrial society. Paula Geldens, Siân Lincoln and Paul Hodkinson (2011: 347, 349) have noted the divide between 'cultural' and 'transition' approaches but there is opportunity to draw from both. Andy Furlong, Dan Woodman and Johanna Wyn have proposed that it is time to reconcile the differences and move towards a social generations approach – a perspective that recognises changing material and social conditions integrating the 'core foci of the 'cultural' and 'transitions' approaches' (2011: 361). Hodkinson has also advocated for combined theoretical approaches and a focus on youth culture as a part of the broader biography, moving beyond participation at a moment in time to the context of the rest of life (2016). He claims this offers an opportunity to consider 'ordinariness' alongside the spectacular and the interplay between personal biographies and collective cultures (Hodkinson 2016: 636). In these ways, this thesis answers that call. The evidence spans diverse academic terrains as the participants demonstrate varying degrees of subcultural, alternative or mainstream participation, that cross personal and collective, lived and remembered experience. Bennett noted the change in focus from visual image and semiotics to biographical importance in cultural youth studies (2006). The foregrounding of everyday lived and remembered experience in this thesis extends this further. Mary Bucholtz has suggested that 'an emphasis on the ordinary, everyday activities in which youth engage, then, may act as an important counterbalance to previous work' (2002: 539). This thesis acknowledges the variable levels of everyday involvement in youth cultures and the inter-temporal aspect of the subject, as youth does not sit alone as a silo of experience. The youth stories at the heart of the research foreground the participants' voices, the voices of older women, their reflections on youth *and* narratives of ongoing, active participation and engagement in youth cultural practices.

The concept of the mnemonic imagination, adopted here from Keightley and Pickering (2012), enables a new perspective on youth as a continuing reconstruction which is central to this research. Connections between past and present, or youth and age, are emphasised, suggesting potential for cross-generational studies. There is a close relationship between the research undertaken for this thesis, and my work with young people.[85] Neither the 'youth cultures' or 'youth transitions' approach can do justice to the scope of youth experience revealed when working across temporal fields and generational and cultural diversity. Reflections on youth, experienced through the lens of dress and music, enable memories that endure to take on new meaning across the lifespan. For most of the women in this study, youth was not separated from current experience, and through their memory wardrobes or memory soundtracks, they were able to formulate consistency of self and connection to their youth. Heather explains below how music from the late 60s transports her back to that time, yet she finds it hard to separate past and present, surprised at her own reflection in the car mirror.

> I've just been on a road trip with my friend from college who I'm still best friends with. She was a fashion designer. And we just had a ball, you know, we were singing away at soul records in the car and 1967, you know, Scott McKenzie, and things like that, just singing away in the car, absolutely being back to where we were in 1969. It was amazing [laughs], so no, but yes, yes of course I have. You know, I look at myself in the mirror or catch a glimpse at myself in the window and think "is that you?" [laughs]. It's weird. It really, it is I think, I think it's a shame for people to think it's come to an end, it just rotates, doesn't it (Heather 2018).

As tokens of youth and memory resources, dress and music connect us to our youth; through the mnemonic imagination, personally significant wardrobes and soundtracks endure across time, across private and public experience and sensory interaction. As Sharon Kaufman explains 'in the expression of the ageless self, individuals not only symbolically preserve and integrate meaningful components of their pasts, but they also use these symbols as frameworks for understanding and being in the present' (Kaufman 1986: 20).

The findings in this chapter support the positioning of youth as a continuum, rather than a linear trajectory.[86] Way (2020a) and other academics leading the debate in

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[85] *Portrait Youth* (2017); Jo Jenkinson and Kelly Joseph (2019); Jo Jenkinson (2020).
[86] See Track 4.2 for a background to the life course and the social construction of age.

sustained youth cultures have referred to 'post-youth',[87] but in common with the participants in this study, this is not to position youth as a passing phase or life period, but as an active and ongoing influence. The findings here confirm that dress and music are effective conduits to memories of youth, and that cultural practices of youth impact on the self across the lifetime. They also bring to light gendered societal expectations and changes in lifestyle attendant on work, motherhood or marriage that interrupt or alter youth practices. As Janet explained when asked if there was a particular time her youth ended:

> I think it's been re-ignited but, looking through the photographs, and I think it may have stopped a little bit for about four or five years. All the photographs are of me holding a child, feeding a child, doing stuff with a child, having less chance to go out. So, in a way, maybe, maybe having kids, and a little bit sort of like thinking 'I'm grown up now'. Buying a house. Buying this house, bit of responsibility, fixing up the kitchen – that needs doing again. Yes, maybe to a certain extent that. But having said that, I think since [my husband] started on the band[88] again, about three or four years ago, I've been partly the roadie, partly the manager, part of [unclear] So, I feel I've got into that youth culture again, even though, it's kind of re-ignited it a little bit. So, I feel younger than I did a while ago. I feel younger now than I did when the kids were born (Janet 2018).

Siân Lincoln has asserted that 'youth itself is no longer seen as the reserve of the young', referring to youth as a 'lifestyle choice' at any age (2012: 16). Bringing together memory and experience in this analysis exposed youth as unbounded by time, with past and present overlapping and influencing each other in the narratives. As Janet testifies *feeling* young is not something that gradually recedes over time, it can be re-ignited at any age, often supported by the cultural practices of dress or music. Mo explained that even though collapse of her marriage signalled an end to her youth at the time, she later felt more youthful in her mid-60s. 'I think my youth went when my marriage broke down because I was just so devastated, but I think I'm reliving it now to be honest. I think I feel more youthful now' (Mo 2018). Linda also described a unique youth trajectory:

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[87] Andy Bennett and Paul Hodkinson (2012: 6) defined the 'post-youth' 'cultural territory' as featuring 'tangible cultural connections to tastes and affiliations acquired during their teens and early twenties' that are retained in later life'. Laura Way (2020a) used the term 'post-youth' to distinguish her research from 'punk research'. The term was met with amusement in her participants. Perhaps because they too retained a strong connection to youth.

[88] The Speed of Sound – A Manchester based band fronted by Janet's husband, formed 1989. Big Stir Records (2021) 'The Speed of Sound, (Manchester, England)' [online]. Available at: https://bigstirrecords.com/the-speed-of-sound. [Accessed 6 August 2022].

> I associate youth with being lost, so it's kind of like when lost ended. But I still feel young in me. I love telling people that I'm 60 and I love hearing, "You don't look it," and I think, "Because I know I don't or I wouldn't have told you. Do you know what I mean, I'd have kept it to myself" [laughter] (Linda 2019).

Linda's position of a positive newfound youth is quite separate to her troubled youth. For Kate however the music practice of her youth had endured, 'I mean, there doesn't have to be a definitive age at which you do certain things. Playing drums shouldn't just be, you know, a youth thing' (Kate 2018). Kate's narrative aligns with Bucholtz's position that youth 'often marks the beginning of a long-term, even lifelong, engagement in particular cultural practices' (2002: 526). Definitive parameters or milestones, such as Klepp and Storm-Mathisen's finding that the age of 40 is an important crossroad in clothing practices (2005: 334), were not found in this research.

> I find it difficult to separate, now, I think, my youth from now. There have been phases. And of course, there was a time when I was younger, but like I said, I think it started, the first thing I'm reflecting, is my interest in music and it's kind of like almost starting again, sharing things with the boys. So, I'm reflecting, I don't know, I think I'm struggling to find when I was young, because I think it's quite a wide gap. I'm not sure if I've ever stopped being young or being part of a youth culture (Janet 2018).

By focusing on the participant voice, and privileging youth above *age*, obstructive social expectations of ageing are silenced. For example, focusing on ageing, Twigg's (2013: 57) participants reported crimplene's negative associations with old age. By contrast, this manmade fibre, revolutionary in its conception in the 1960s, provided a lens through which the youth-age dichotomy is evidenced. For Helen, although she would no longer wear garments made of the fabric, it represented youth, a positive memory of a favourite dress she made herself in a modern fabric (Fig. 6.2). For her the focus on youth (as opposed to age) is agentic, her memory of 'youth' is living with her, rather than reflecting 'age' happening to her. This exemplifies a necessary shift in perspective from youth as something fixed in the past, out of date and irrelevant, to youth as a joyous meeting point between biographical histories and current experience where new meanings are created.

Only through memory is this perspective possible, enabling stabilisation and continuity of self. The wardrobes and soundtracks of youth provide biographical consistency, as part of the identity kit through which we understand ourselves across time and perform

our identity to others. Memories of youth are subject to continual editing and renewal over time, supported by the mnemonic imagination, and editorial, archival, and reflective dress and music practices. Everyday cultural practices of dress and music adopted in youth are often maintained or re-ignited later in life, providing influence and agency across the lifetime, in the negotiation of gendered societal expectations of femininity and age. The first-hand testimony, gathered through wardrobes and soundtrack interviews, reflects positive, agentic interactions in youth cultural practices and makes the older female visible. These youth stories evidence how youth lives with us, bringing together experience and memory across time and age, from the spectacular to the ordinary, across cultural, social, geographical and academic divides.

Chapter 7. OUTRO

I set out to explore how dress and music might act as conduits to women's experiences and memories of youth, to see if the value that I placed on the dress and music practices of my youth was shared by others, and how this took form in their lives. I found evidence to show that dress and music play roles as both memory resources and companions to experience, and that they are mutually supportive in the development of the self. These findings centred around women's narratives of participation in youth culture past, and the multi-sensory, cross-temporal experience of remembering youth in the present, leading to the hypothesis that youth lives with us through dress and music. This outro will summarise the innovations and limitations of the methodology, key concepts and conclusions, and reflect on the position of, and potential for, the research.

7.1 Research Aims

Three aims guided the research, and their application can be seen in the structure of the thesis and thematic stance of the three evidence chapters. Aim 1 called for knowledge of women's participation in everyday youth cultural practices in response to the lack of female voices in youth culture literature.[1] The participant narratives provided ample new evidence of participation, highlighting the previously neglected everyday youth cultural practices of dress and music. Whilst the 'youth stories' themselves are of significant interest, the generation of the narratives through the interview process, from the perspective of remembered youth, was a crucial aspect. Aim 2 focused on analysis of the interview experience and the participants' responses to recorded music, dress artefacts and dress snapshots as they remembered their youth. The 'memory toolkit' helped to guide this analysis, in which both musical soundtracks and dress snapshots were found to be powerful conduits to youth experience, with capacity to stimulate new meanings in the present through imaginative remembering. Aim 3 took the investigation in the direction of lived experience, memory and the self in relation to the construction, documentation, and articulation of narratives of youth over time. This led to key contributions to knowledge: the concept of the 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack', and the archival practices employed in everyday life to support memory. These mnemonic and physical

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[1] A gap first identified by Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber ([1975] 2006).

archives were found to be intrinsic to youth, and to the developing self, impacting on the formation and articulation of personal biographies later in life.

7.2 Research Parameters

The first aim positioned the research in 'Northern England'; this northern perspective was applied to direct focus away from London,[2] but also for practical purposes. The methodology could be applied to any geographical area and there is scope for comparative studies. The complexities of place as a variable also emerged as some participants had moved around, for example Kate's rural upbringing and her moving to the city to join a band provided two starkly contrasting youth experiences. The findings suggest there is also potential to focus further on place, perhaps centred on a particular venue such as the Twisted Wheel frequented by Heather and Carole. These clubs, like dress and music, are a cultural resource, and potential lens through which personal experiences of youth could be scrutinised.

In the second aim, I used the term 'the current self' to describe the perspective of the participants during the interview. On reflection, this could appear to contradict the temporal complexities of youth that emerged. These snapshots of the current self, situated in mid- to later life, are part of a continually evolving perspective on youth and better positioned as the remembering self. The reflexive interview methods further complicate the capturing of a moment in time as they extended the analysis into preparatory tasks such as the questionnaire and toolkit, and into reflective practices. I had also met some of the participants beforehand or continued a relationship beyond the interview, extending the window of my interpretation and analysis.

7.3 Research Process

The wardrobe and soundtrack interviews aptly manifested the aims, placing dress and music at the heart of the interview experience. Engagement with the memory toolkit informed the memories and impacted on the narratives generated, providing a conduit to lived experience in the past and present. The toolkit brief, questionnaire and framing of the interview questions also shaped the evidence as the participants prepared or shared narratives that fitted with the research theme. This editorial process continued in my analysis and ultimately my choice of what to highlight in the thesis. The personal

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[2] Katie Milestone's (2018) work supports the misreporting of youth culture being a London phenomenon, using the example of the swinging 60s in Manchester.

edits of dress and music artefacts were chosen by the participants to represent their youth as they wanted it to be seen and heard. This directing and editing also occurs in the participants' continued dress and music practices. Only in the memory wardrobes or memory soundtracks, accessed via the toolkit, was this control relinquished as unexpected memories worked alongside intentional remembering directed by the toolkit.

The presence of music in the interview provided an emotional and sensory stimulation, while dress, especially in the form of the 'dress snapshot' simulated the embodied experience of styled dress. This use of photographs depicting dress in place of physical clothing not only provided a solution where dress items not been kept but conveyed the styling dimensions of the youthful body.[3] Sensory interactions with the toolkit and memory wardrobes and memory soundtracks triggered vivid memories, as the embodied and cultural meanings associated with dress and music intensified remembering and illuminated the youth narratives.

The first-hand accounts of female youth culture, narrated from the perspective of the remembering self, were presented initially as individual youth stories. These stories were informed by reflexive, narrative methods,[4] designed to ensure the origins of key concepts were visible and attributable to participants, before my researcher's hand manipulated them into thematic academic findings. Reflexivity between the participants and myself was privileged, recognising the impact of my methods, questions or interactions on their narrative, and my own reactions to their memories and selected cultural resources. These stories of dress and music rendered female participation in youth culture visible, moving beyond the semiotic approach of subcultural theory,[5] to the dynamics of lived experience laid bare. The voice of older women is front stage here,[6] acknowledging the impact of their voices in correcting the record of female youth cultural practices.

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[3] By privileging recorded dress (snapshots) there is potential to develop the discussion on kept clothing initiated by Maura Banim and Alison Guy (2001), Saulo Cwerner (2001), Elizabeth Bye and Ellen McKinney (2007) and Sophie Woodward (2007).

[4] Catherine Kohler Riessman's (2008) approach to narrative methods and Keri Facer and Kate Pahl's (2017) lexicon of collaborative research practices provided a touchpoint when designing the methods, especially in relation to materiality, messiness, translation, stories as sites of exchange and embodied practices.

[5] Building on early work from Albert Cohen ([1955] 1971), Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson's edited volume ([1975] 2006) and Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* ([1979] 1997: 92).

[6] Applying Erving Goffman's front and backstage metaphor (1959).

7.4 Summary of Findings

Initial analysis revealed a series of findings that were interpreted into overarching concepts that contribute to understanding of the biographical, mnemonic, embodied and participatory qualities of everyday dress and music and their relationship to youth.

Youth Lives with Us

Youth is re-positioned as a lifelong project that evolves and changes over time, contributing to recent developments in youth studies that focus on post-youth participation,[7] while introducing a new perspective that focuses on everyday dress and music. Youth itself is not extended, rather youth is part of the extended self. In this thesis, the dress and music practices of youth represent a presence that forms and reinforces self-knowledge, centring us and setting the tone for what we can or might do. These experiences of youth provide stability as we meet moments of change, as the openness and confidence of youth is drawn upon through the continuity of dress and music practices and/or remembered experiences.

Wardrobes and Soundtracks across Time

Dress and music were found to support biographical consistency and enable mnemonic time travel, acting as markers or connectors to specific events or life periods.[8] Peak experiences have been recognised in popular music studies;[9] however peak experiences of dress, situated in youth, had not previously surfaced in the literature. Participants reported 'retro FOMO' as they re-experienced the feeling of missing out on peak social events from their youth. The findings of this study extend understanding of the 'reminiscence bump' (Rubin, Rahhal and Poon 1998),[10] to the heightened value and salience of music *and* dress memories in the youth continuum. Dress and music were used as biographical markers to date or validate experience, but this also sometimes muddled the temporal ordering of events. Creative remembering provided opportunities for the imagination to override facts or re-write a memory to create new meanings, emphasising emotional resonance across time.

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[7] Andy Bennett and Paul Hodkinson's (2012) edited volume started the debate, extended by Samantha Holland (2004, 2012) and Laura Way (2020a, 2020b, 2021) who have turned attention towards female experience and provided a springboard for this research.

[8] The comparative analysis of biographical wardrobes and soundtracks draws on key texts from the separate fields of music (DeNora 1999, 2000; Davidson and Garrido 2014) and dress (Guy and Banim 2000; Woodward 2007; Skjold 2016).

[9] Ben Green's (2016, 2021) work on peak music provided a comparison to dress experiences.

[10] The 'reminiscence bump' refers to the phenomenon of remembering of events from early adulthood, identified by David Rubin, Tamara Rahhal and Leonard Poon (1998), and evidenced in music memory theory (Krumhansl and Zupnick 2013).

Locating Female Youth

The participant narratives not only transcended time, but also transcended space. Where female youth cultural practices appear in academic literature they are often located in private space, notably the bedroom.[11] The findings challenge this assumption as the participant experiences ranged beyond the personal to the collective, including subcultural mod rallies in addition to listening to John Peel on radio under the bedclothes, making female youth culture visible in a wider range of locales. The parameters of youth defined by participants depended on parental influences as well as geographies. Youth was understood by the participants not as an age range, or period of preparation for adulthood but as the time when they could access youth culture: a time when their 'personal life' began (Marian 2018) or what Kate described as her 'meaningful youth' which started in her twenties when she left home and joined a band. These findings challenge popular and academic definitions of youth and highlight the gendered, temporal and geographical implications of defining youth participation.

Everyday Spectacular

The lack of focus on everyday youth culture has concealed women's youth cultural participation. Although other authors have made important contributions to female subcultural participation,[12] looking at everyday experiences of youth across the post-war period has enabled an expanded approach. Studying youth more broadly produced a rich body of evidence that would have remained hidden through the spectacular filter. Few participants were committed to one subculture,[13] spectacular dress was not always connected to a defined subculture,[14] and small, joyous acts of rebellion gave insight into private youth cultural practices.

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[11] The bedroom as a site of female youth culture was originally noted by Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber ([1975] 2006).

[12] For an example of female subcultural participation in youth see Alan Mead (1988), and for an example of extended participation, into mid-life, see Laura Way (2020a).

[13] Only Jayne (2018) had remained committed to one subculture, mod, although she had a break from the culture while at university, returning to it later in life.

[14] Heather's (2018) style of dress was flamboyant and 'spectacular' enough to attract attention, such as her experience being stopped on the Kings Road (see Track 4.3.5), but she did not associate with a defined subculture, enjoying Rock, R&B, Soul and Reggae and a variety of different dress styles.

Material and Immaterial

Building on the concept of the mnemonic imagination (Keightley and Pickering 2012), the findings revealed the dynamic between material wardrobes and soundtracks, the artefacts played, viewed or handled in the interview, and the 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack'. This relationship between cultural artefacts and mnemonic practice surfaced in the interviews and forms a new framework for memory work with dress and music.[15] The research develops Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering's concept to focus on dress and music experiences, adapting the mnemonic imagination as a tool for retaining youth, as a life touchpoint and supportive companion, as well as an imaginative resource. The symbiosis of experience and memory leveraged the power of recorded music and styled dress (dress snapshots) at the time of youth, and as conduits when remembering youth experience. In the interviews, the materiality of the toolkit was not the focus of the analysis; it served to provide access to the immaterial 'memory wardrobe' and 'memory soundtrack'.[16] The privileging of imagination and memory over materiality sets this work apart from dress literature that relates to memory from a material culture perspective.[17]

Embodied Practices of Youth

The research found that dress and music, as embodied practices, share the ability to connect emotion and memory. Sensory engagement with dress and music was commonly reported as part of the lived experience as previously acknowledged in the literature.[18] However, the wardrobe and soundtrack interviews enabled a new perspective as embodied lived experiences were reinforced in the present by the connection to the original stimulus and its emotional power. In the mnemonic imagination dress and music re-inhabited the body synthesising past and present experience, generating new emotions and meaning. This embodied connection with dress and music anchors youth. As the physical body changes, these symbolic tokens of youth provide a stable and continuing touchpoint for the self across time.

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[15] The wardrobe and soundtrack framework is visualised in table 5.1, Chapter 5.
[16] These findings correlate with those of Sandra Weber and Claudia Mitchell (2004) and Nicola Allett (2010) who used dress and music respectively as access points to personal narratives.
[17] See Sara Chong Kwan, Morna Laing and Mario Roman (2014); Carole Hunt (2014); Alison Slater (2014); Christina Buse and Julie Twigg (2016); Sophie Woodward (2007).
[18] For examples in dress theory see Joanne Entwistle (2015), in cultural theory Sarah Thornton (1995) and crossing dress and youth culture Susan Atkin's (2016: 91) 'fashion in motion'.

Dress and Music as Tokens of Youth

Everyday dress and recorded music remain unconnected in most academic literature.[19] Yet the synthesis of dress and music explored in this research has revealed the commonalities which put them on an equal footing in relation to youth, and how they entangle, interact, reinforce and run parallel in lived and remembered experience. While they differ, they support and inform each other, connected through the peak experiences of youth. Together they render women's engagement in youth cultures visible, as narratives of dancing, for example, led to detailed descriptions of dress. Both dress and music are powerful connectors of past and present, they cross private and public experience, and are part of our evolving personal biographies, reflecting and supporting perceived and actual change or continuity over time.

The research brought out the significance of dress and music as biographical markers, and that their cultural value makes them both emotive and symbolic as 'tokens of youth'. Participant narratives confirmed the hypothesis that dress and music provide self-affirmation and represent personal expertise. Dress and music experiences and artefacts were also found to support cultural capital (Bourdieu 1994), and to maintain connection across generations. As tokens of youth dress and music bound collective experience with personal memories, surfacing the critical density and biographical significance of youth experience. It is this synthesis of the qualities of music and dress and their relationship with youth culture, as tokens of youth, that offers a new perspective.

7.5 Significance and Contribution

This thesis contributes to academic literature on dress and music practices in the fields of popular music, dress theory and dress history, particularly in relation to relation to youth. Despite the equal weighting given to dress and music in the analysis, an unconscious bias towards dress may be present in the analysis of findings, reflecting my academic and professional experience. But it is the combined forces of dress, music and youth that are of interest. These synergies serve to strengthen understanding and contribute to knowledge as theories or approaches from one field are applied with or compared to the other.

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[19] A notable exception being Woodward and Greasley's (2017) comparison of wardrobes and music collections. See Track 1.3.5 for a summary of dress and music literature.

The thesis builds on Keightley and Pickering's work in memory studies, extending their concept of the mnemonic imagination to consider music *and* dress as conduits to memories of youth. By applying their framework to dress, this study broaches the sensory realm of touch and the practice of dressing, drawing new comparisons with their treatment of music. The research also extends the use of the photograph proposed by Pickering and Keightley (2015), into a vehicle for the analysis of styled dress. This positions dress snapshots as more than a surrogate for physical dress, and the entry point to the 'memory wardrobe', with potential for further application in both memory studies and dress theory where it develops the established field of wardrobe studies,[20] into *memory* wardrobe studies.

Within dress theory, the thesis contributes to the established understanding of dress as an embodied practice (Entwistle 2015); this is developed to consider the way dress *and* music inhabit the body through imaginative memory. It builds on established literature that positions dress as a biographical marker (Guy and Banim 2000; Woodard 2007; Skjold 2016), making comparisons to key music literature (Davidson and Garrido 2014), but takes a new stance, with youth as a dynamic touchpoint to which we return though dress and music throughout our lives. The findings support Ben Green's (2016, 2021) analysis of peak music experiences and, by aligning the peak experiences of music *and* dress, contribute to the discussion across disciplines. The thesis also draws on the work of Julia Twigg (2013) and finds many commonalities, but the focus on dress and youth, rather than dress and age, brings a perspective that supports a new understanding of the continuation of youth into older age.

The relationships between style, music and youth culture were established in subcultural theory, but integrating dress theory to the study of youth cultures has moved the debate forward. For example, by drawing on everyday dress literature (Buckley and Clark 2012, 2018) and applying it more broadly to develop the concept of everyday youth culture, the lens of everyday dress (and music) generated rich findings and made female participation visible. This focus on the everyday is a new perspective for youth studies, particularly when viewed from the perspective of the remembering self. Applying a memory studies framework to the study of youth has

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[20] Developing the work of Alison Guy and Maura Banim (2000), Sophie Woodward (2005, 2007), Kate Fletcher and Ingun Grimstad Klepp (2017).

expanded understanding of youth and brings fresh insights by extending the viewpoint to retrospection.

These claims highlight the contribution to the various literature fields that the cross-disciplinary approach has supported. However, the approach to methods also crossed boundaries. The methodology combines diverse approaches from different fields building on established sensory methods,[21] collaborative research practices,[22] wardrobes methods,[23] and object interviews;[24] dress and music not only performed as conduit or lens, but also as a creative method. The memory toolkit and wardrobe and soundtrack interviews contribute new methods for youth studies, which is usually confined to the study of young people's lives, to harness remembered experience. The methods integrate dress and music into the interview experience, modelling a new multisensory interview environment. These creative methods have the potential to extend the research with different participant groups, for example the same study with men, or using different cultural resources such as TV shows or magazines.

7.6 Future Research

The reflection above highlights the benefits and opportunities of working with a broad multidisciplinary scope. Much of the scientific research into music and memory for example has no equivalent in dress. The vast scope of the literature and the tight parameters of the thesis has meant that there are gaps in the research as it stands, but with this comes many opportunities. For example, the broader role of photographs in remembering youth took a back seat to foreground the snapshots of styled dress, but this could be developed further and also extended to other cultural resources that like dress and music have embodied qualities, such as photographs of sport for example.

My research practice sits across fashion and dress theory and youth studies. I also work with young people on dress and style related research projects. Working with young people, whilst undertaking the interviews with older participants for this research

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[21] Building on the work of Jennifer Mason and Katherine Davies (2009) and Sarah Pink (2015).

[22] Using Keri Facer and Kate Pahl's (2017) lexicon for collaborative research methods as a reference point.

[23] While wardrobe methods were not adopted, the work of Alison Guy and Maura Banim (2000); Sophie Woodward (2005, 2007) and Kate Fletcher and Ingun Grimstad Klepp (2017) influenced the design of the memory toolkit method.

[24] The methods build on Sophie Woodward's work with objects (2016, 2020) and wardrobes (2005, 2007) to include soundtracks, moving the focus away from material objects towards multisensory mnemonic experience.

at the same time, has influenced my perspective on the temporality, scope and definitions of youth. There is opportunity for comparative or collaborative studies working across different generations or longitudinal studies that analyse attitudes to youth across a lifetime. The findings of this thesis only apply to those who were 18 before the year 2000 but working with younger groups would generate different findings as the use of social media and digital technologies became established after this time.

The methods would be applicable to new groups and could be employed to further close the gaps and expose more voices. While the female voice was lacking in youth culture research, in dress theory my participants are typical in a field that is dominated by white, middle class, female voices. In any future research a more inclusive participant sample group would be preferred. In dress research, men are often marginalised, and I have recently turned my attention to the misrepresentation of masculinity in youth research, applying the focus on the everyday that led this study to unheard narratives and comparing different geographical locations. Perhaps it is time to remove the gender divide in the study of youth culture.

I propose by way of concluding this thesis that youth narratives or youth stories*,* approached through the lens of dress and music, provide a way forward in youth studies that is not confined to young people or spectacular groups. Through personal narratives that draw on reflexive, creative methods, formative lived *and* remembered experiences reveal how our youth lives with us.

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[4] This article has since been published in McRobbie, A. ([1991] 2000) *Feminism and Youth Culture*. [2nd edition]. London: Macmillan Press, and Gelder, K. (2005) *The Subcultures Reader*. (2nd edition), London: Routledge.

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Discographies

The discography is presented by participant, including myself, in alphabetical order. UK release dates were checked using www.discogs.com. For each participant I have included a Spotify playlist. The tracks are the available versions (*marks tracks unavailable on Spotify). Details of the original formats of tracks or albums played in the interview are noted in the soundtrack inventory (Appendix E). Where albums were referenced by the participants, but specific tracks are not stated in the text, I have included the first album track (Track 1, Side 1) on the playlist.

Carole

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7uTG7MWNt5vBwhbqRJyNDL

Tommy Steele and the Steelmen (1957) 'Singing the Blues', UK: Decca.

Heather

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2YykAp65ztximJEdwaXGLI?si=331049e51f664def

Jimmy James and the Vagabonds (1966) *The New Religion*, UK: Piccadilly.
Jimmy James and the Vagabonds (1966) 'Ain't Love Good. Ain't Love Proud', *The New Religion*. UK: Piccadilly.
John Holt (1973) *One Thousand Volts of Holt* UK: Trojan.
Rod Stewart (1971) *Every Picture Tells a Story* UK: Mercury.
The Temptations (1964) 'The Way You Do the Things You Do', UK: Stateside.
The Wailers (1973) *Catch a Fire,* UK: Island Records.

Helen

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0lMig4jyJWV8Kuss5cE65a?si=437c584869a346d5

Amen Corner (1969) 'Bend Me Shape Me', UK: Deram.
Cat Stevens (1971) 'How Can I Tell You', on *Teaser and The Firecat,* UK: Island Records.
Otis Reading (1968) '(Sittin' On) The Dock of the Bay' UK: Stax.

Janet

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0ZTMV9um4AnJDU3VcXN5hB

Martha and the Muffins (1980) 'Echo Beach', UK: Dindisc.

Suzi Quatro (1969) 'She's in love with you', UK: RAK.

Th' Faith Healers ([1991) 'Reptile Smile', *In Love,* UK: Too Pure.

The Ron Grainer Orchestra (1986) *The Prisoner: Original Soundtrack Music from The TV Series,* UK: Bam-Caruso Records.

Throwing Muses (1989) 'Dizzy', UK: 4AD.

Jayne

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6gIXx7wTJatIOlomPxnlbl?si=47bced6a07104227

Lou Johnson (1963) 'Magic Potion', UK: London Records.

Johnny Jones and the King Casuals (1968) 'Soul Poppin'*, UK: MCA Records.

Kate

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3XviRSRJRf4VOuGUStHwPm

Animal Collective (2007) *Strawberry Jam* UK: Domino.

Peaches (2002) *The Teaches of Peaches,* UK: XL Recordings.

Polythene (1998) 'Low frequency loan shark radar'* on *Pet Hates,* UK: Guided Missile.

Sonic Youth (1987) 'Schizophrenia' on *Sister,* UK: Blast First.

Sonic Youth (1987) *Sister,* UK: Blast First.

Tom Waits (1983) *Swordfishtrombones,* UK: Island Records.

Linda

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/71pD6zPUGLrtYXjebFmOHX?si=e4eee6e0787d4754

Maze (1977) 'Happy Feelin's' on *Maze, featuring Frankie Beverly*, UK: Capitol Records.

The Whispers (1978) 'Let's Go all the Way', UK: RCA.

Marian

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1pYQbgk0p5wKt6qUbkCBV7?si=35114ea5c6914612

Paul Anka (1957) 'Diana', UK: Columbia.

The King Brothers (1957) 'A White sport coat and a pink carnation', UK: Parlophone.

The Platters (1958) Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*,* UK: Mercury.

Me

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3kYDPgJqdALh9i7yVgDDkY?si=feca0bbd8782427e

Dinosaur Junior (1988) 'Freak Scene', UK: Blast First.

The Stone Roses (1989) 'Resurrection', UK: Silvertone Records.

Mo

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0gCzR3nITjyTbf06gh67S2?si=1f2458c8db104060

Blondie (1978) 'Sunday Girl', UK: Chrysalis

Crystal Gayle (1977) 'Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue', UK: United Artists Records.

Four Tops (1966) 'Reach Out, I'll be There', UK: Tamla Motown.

Marvin Gaye (1969) 'I Heard It Through the Grapevine', UK: Tamla Motown [Released in 1968 in the US].

T.Rex (1973) '20th Century Boy', UK: T.Rex.

Olive

Playlist Link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7nJQGv18HRDkR7EEIojQlR?si=6dc1e46b404f4699

Bill Hayley and His Comets (1954) '(We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock', UK: Brunswick.

Elvis Presley (1956) 'Blue Suede Shoes', His Master's Voice.

Glenn Miller and His Orchestra (1939) 'Moonlight Serenade', UK: Regal Zonophone.

Jimmy Young (1955) 'Unchained Melody', UK: Decca (1955).

Illustrations

Intro

Figure 1.1 Me (second from right) and the blue T-shirt, Whitley Bay, c. 1990. Author's photograph.

Figure 1.2 *Visible Girls Revisited* (n.d. [online]), Nicole and Sue © Anita Corbin.

Youth in a Suitcase

Figure 2.1 Marian's records and music memorabilia. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 2.2 [Image redacted] Laying out Jayne's snapshots in chronological order. Original photographs © Jayne. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 2.3 Jayne's playlist © Jayne. Scanned by author, 2018.

Sleeve Notes

Figure 3.1 Janet aged 12/13, Manchester, c. 1975 © Janet.

Figure 3.2 Janet, The Jam Exhibition, Somerset House, London, 2015 © Janet.

Figure 3.3 Janet in Liverpool / on a ferry to France, date unknown © Janet.

Figure 3.4 Janet at home with Fenton Weill guitar, Manchester, c. 1995/6 © Janet.

Figure 3.5 Marian aged 14, Buile Hill Park, Salford, 1956 © Marian.

Figure 3.6 Marian aged 18, Lyme Park, Disley, 1960 © Marian.

Figure 3.7 Marian (left), aged 16, and friend, Belle Vue, Manchester, 1958 © Marian.

Figure 3.24 Rainbow Dungarees, 1970s, photographed for the museum, 2018 © Heather.

Figure 3.21 Rainbow Dungarees in Jodi One-Off press shot, 1970s © Heather.

Figure 3.26 Kate (left) with Polythene, 2000 © Kate.

Figure 3.27 Kate, Manchester, 2018 © Kate.

Figure 3.28 Kate (second from left) Sweet Addiction press article in scrapbook, c. 1985/6. © unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 3.29 Press cutting from City Life featuring Polythene, date unknown. © unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 3.30 Jayne (left) aged 18, The Assembly Rooms, Rotherham, 1987 © Jayne.

Figure 3.31 Jayne dressed for a Mod event, 2017 © Jayne.

Figure 3.32 Jayne's Phoenix newsletter, 1988 © Unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 3.33 Jayne's coveted bob, 1980s © Unknown. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 3.34 Linda (left) with friends, Manchester, 1981 [Reno memory wall] © unknown. Author's photograph, 2019.

Figure 3.35 Linda at the Reno, Manchester, 1976 [Reno memory wall] © unknown. Author's photograph, 2019.

Figure 3.36 Linda at the Reno dig, Moss Side, Manchester, 2017 © Linda.

Figure 3.37 Carole in her navy-blue jumper, aged 17/18, c. 1961/2 © Carole.

Figure 3.38 (cropped) Carole in pink bridesmaid dress, aged 19, 1963 © Carole.

Figure 3.39 Carole's green silk bridesmaid dress. Author's photograph, 2019.

Figure 3.40 Carole (second from left) in green silk bridesmaid dress, aged 18, 1962 © Carole.

Figure 3.41 Detail of Blanes' black wool crepe dress, c. 1961. Author's photograph, 2019.

Figure 3.42 Black stiletto shoes, c. 1961. Author's photograph, 2019.

Figure 3.43 Olive (second from right), Isle of Man, 1954 © Olive.

Figure 3.44 Olive (second from right), aged 20, Isle of Man, 1956 © Olive.

Figure 3.45 Olive, Blackpool Pier, date unknown © Olive.

Figure 3.46 Olive aged 21, Scotland, 1957 © Olive.

Rock 'n' Roll Lifestyle

Figure 4.1. Advert, Kate's Scrapbook. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 4.2 Question 2 from the pre-interview questionnaire (Appendix A).

Figure 4.3 Elsie, Jean, Rose and Mary, 1955, photographed by Ken Russell (Horn 2009).

Figure 4.4 Pat Wiles,1955, photographed by Ken Russell, (Dawoud 2013).

Figure 4.5 Iris Thornton and Pat Wiles, 1955, photographed by Ken Russell, (Dawoud 2013).

Figure 4.6 Kate with drumkit, date unknown © Kate.

Figure 4.7 Marian aged 14, Jeromes, Manchester, 1956 © Marian.

Figure 4.8 Heather's Twisted Wheel Ticket, 1960s. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 4.9 Heather's music programmes, 1963. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 4.10 Helen in her room, aged 19, Buffalo State University, 1973 © Helen.

Memory Wardrobes and Memory Soundtracks

Figure 5.1 Marian aged 18, Lyme Park, Disley, 1958 © Marian.

Figure 5.2 Mo, aged 16, Carlisle, 1971 © Mo.

Figure 5.3 Mo, aged 27, at a family event, 1982 © Mo.

Figure 5.4 Marian (centre), aged 15, The Lyndale, Manchester, 1957 © Marian.

Figure 5.5 [Image redacted] Jayne (left) aged 18, Barnsley Train Station, 1987 © Jayne.

Figure 5.6 Helen, aged 14, Heaton Park, Manchester, 1968 © Helen.

Figure 5.7 Olive on honeymoon in blue corduroy dress, London, 1958 © Olive.

Figure 5.8 Olive (left) with her husband on honeymoon, London, 1958 © Olive.

Figure 5.9 Helen wearing *the skirt* during her time at an American University, USA, 1973 © Helen.

Figure 5.10 Marian (left), aged 16, in her friend's garden wearing the Windsmoor suit jacket from her toolkit, Manchester, 1958 © Marian.

Figure 5.11 Kate (left) with her band *Polythene*, Salford, c. 1998 © Kate (Press shot *Manchester Evening News*, photographer unknown).

Figure 5.12 Brad Pitt (left) in Fight Club 1999 (*IMDB* 2022 [online]).

Figure 5.13 Kate (right) approx. aged 30 in the *Fight Club* jacket, late 1990s © Kate.

Figure 5.14 Girls at the Great Yarmouth Rally, 1987 © Jayne.

Figure 5.15 Jayne (3rd from left), Scarborough Rally, April 1988 © Jayne.

Figure 5.16 Ticket for the Great Yarmouth Mod Rally, 1987. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 5.17 Kate wearing her favourite jacket, date unknown © Kate.

Youth Lives with Us

Figure 6.1 Janet, aged 22, Portmeirion, Wales, 1987 © Janet.

Figure 6.2 Helen aged 15, with her husband to be, 1969 © Helen.

Figure 6.3 Cardigan hand knitted by Carole, c. 1960/61. Author's photograph, 2019.

Figure 6.4 Kate's leather jacket. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 6.5 Kate's leather jacket. Author's photograph, 2018.

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Figure 6.8 Page from Jayne's scrapbook. Author's photograph, 2018.

Figure 6.9 Heather's scrapbook cover. Author's photograph, 2018.

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Figure 6.11 Photo wall at the Reno Exhibition, The Whitworth Art Gallery. Author's photograph, 2019.

Figure 6.12 Screen shot from Jayne's website, Soul & Mod (2022). All content © Soul & Mod.

Figure 6.13 Heather's leather trousers. Made early 1970s and photographed by Heather 2018 © Heather.

Figure 6.14 Heather wearing leather catsuit, early 1970s. Photographer unknown. © Heather.

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Appendix C Questionnaire Data

Appendix D Wardrobe Inventories

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