

From Cleopatra to the Duchess of Cambridge: A Complete Fashion History

Bronwyn Cosgrave

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Stacey Lizotte: My name is Stacey Lizotte and I'm Head of the Adult Programming here at the Museum and I am so pleased to welcome you tonight the Boshell Family Lecture Series on Archaeology. This season we'll welcome archeologists, historians and authors to the Museum to discuss a wide variety of topics and we hope you'll join us again in the New Year on Thursday, January 5th, for the next lecture in the series "The Hindu Art of Love: Illustrating the Kama Sutra" with our own curator Dr. Anne Bromberg. We would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Ned Boshell and the Boshell Family Foundation for underwriting this lecture series and would like to recognize our partners at the Adolphus Hotel for their support as well.

So welcome also to the members of the Dallas Fort Worth Chapter of the AIA or Archeological Institute for America and many thanks to Kathy Windrow and her colleagues for their partnership to present and promote this lecture. So now it is my pleasure to introduce tonight's speaker Bronwyn Cosgrave. Bronwyn is a broadcaster, curator, and author of three critically acclaimed books including *Costume and Fashion: A Complete History*, and *Made for Each Other: Fashion and the Academy Awards*. Following her talk tonight she will be available to sign copies of *Made for Each Other: Fashion and the Academy Awards*, which is available for purchase in our store.

She has written several articles which have appeared in Vogue and Stylist among other magazines and she is the Editorial Director of Swarovski TV where she has made of series of films in New York, London, and Milan about the designers with whom Swarovski collaborated with the for the Autumn/Winter 2011 season. She is also the founding chairperson of the Dorchester Collection Fashion Prize, which is up into up and coming North American designers. Tonight she will discuss the history of fashion from ancient Egyptians to the current Duchess of Cambridge. So I hope you'll join me in welcoming Bronwyn Cosgrave.

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Thank you. It's a huge honor to be in Dallas tonight. I grew up in Toronto watching *Dallas* on television. So, I got a random email from Stacey back in September and she said to me, would you like to come to Dallas and do a lecture on,

actually, the first book I wrote and it kind of threw me. I didn't get much publicity for it because it was a rather dense subject matter but when she explained that this was an archeological series I thought well, I do get paid, I have built a career on digging around and I thought, why not? And we kind of brainstormed the title of this talk on the telephone and I thought about Cleopatra, obviously because of Elizabeth Taylor. I researched her career in depth and wrote her obituary for vogue.com actually and also because there is a best selling book right out now on Cleopatra by Stacey Schiff.

So I figured she would be a good person as jumping off point. The Duchess of Cambridge as you will all know is probably today considered the best dressed woman in the world. I commentated and covered the royal wedding for a series of Canadian broadcast TV channels this year and have to be on camera so often that of the last points I thought what I can actually say about her that I haven't already said. But at the end of the talk I will explain why I think she is as revolutionary as Cleopatra, Nefertiti, Elizabeth I.

She has formed a dress mode which is iconic and my talk when I went back to actually this book I have written I wrote about hundreds of figures, possibly because I had to write a 100,000 words or else I wouldn't get my paycheck. And I really stretched it out and I went back and started reading this book two months ago and thought, okay, I have got to really come up with a handful of figures who really did change fashion. Now, I am going to start with a film clip of Cleopatra and explain why, after, she was important.

[Film Clip - 0:04:45 - 0:05:48.5]

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Julius Cesar by Rex Harrison. Traditional costume historians would probably rap me on the knuckles for playing Hollywood movies because you can see from the women in Caesar's court they are wearing very contemporary clothing which is starkly different to actually what ancient Egyptians and ancient people wore. Most dress for ordinary people and wealthy was really formed from a simple piece of cloth. The Egyptians loved color and developed dyes so that they would be elaborately gowned, but certainly they didn't have the sophisticated cuts that Irene Sharaff knocked off on the back lot 20th Century Fox.

Although the elaborate gold costume you can see there is a reference to a famous bird costume that Cleopatra, who believed she descended from Isis, actually wore. Historians turned to artifacts such as this which is a cave painting or in Grecian urns or statuary and jewelry to figure out what people wore. Howard Carter discovered King Tut's tomb. Tombs in Crete were uncovered and excavated and what really was remarkable about the ancient Egyptians work was their ability to revolutionize techniques of jewelry

making that are still with us today. They developed techniques for hardening gold and for developing colored golds such as yellow gold and pink gold. They also developed things that we take for granted today like gold chain and a technique called lost wax casting which is pouring molten gold into wax forms and coming up with these kind of elaborate sculptural pieces.

This is Nefertiti who I discovered after I was commissioned to write a historical feature about gold. She was one of the first to wear elaborate gold jewelry and earrings. She pioneered the practice of wearing hoops and studs. This is Cleopatra, and as Stacy Schiff points out, it is incredibly difficult to pinpoint what Cleopatra actually wore because there are probably two artifacts left that were effigies of her and even those are suspect. A lot of paintings and statuary was really propaganda and meant to accentuate say the beauty or the masculinity of a ruler. But I turned to other books on Cleopatra when I was researching my talk and she did actually—what I deduced was that she did really forge a mode of power dressing and it wasn't really like that, she did go in for an elaborate head gear, but she actually dressed like this, which was upon assuming the throne, she adopted the guise of male pharaoh and brandished a bare chest which was completely fine and what you call a schenti, which is loin cloth style wrap. And if you look at this, this was originally or very like a kilt and this was probably the forerunner of this skirt today.

If you looked, if you recall the scene that I just played on with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, definitely they did not wear a patterned what you see Richard Burton wearing that, a patterned kind of tunic, it was called the tunic, which resembled a t-shirt kind of dress today.

But the toga is probably the most iconic garment from ancient times. I would classify it as sort of the ancient equivalent to the men's business suit. Women were forbidden to wear it. Emperors decreed that it had to be worn on special occasions. Trousers actually did exist back then, but they were only considered fit for barbarians. There were striped togas, the toga to the left the dark colored one that would be worn on as to a funeral, black togas were worn at funerals.

You might recall this picture of Muammar Gaddafi. I wondered all along why did he dress like this, was he simply insane? But actually no, Libyans believe they descended from ancient Rome. And on the streets of modern day Tripoli, you can actually see men wearing togas.

Sandals were the oldest form of footwear, and you can see, these are Egyptian sandals. Prada, for example, has copied these and Chanel almost authentically, and it's quite

remarkable. But the form has not changed since ancient times. Footwear has always been a status symbol. And as far back as ancient Rome the profession of a cobbler was considered respectable and the rich commissioned elaborate footwear to be worn.

This is a statue from Crete, the top hat she is wearing is considered a plant pot shape. And when it was excavated it was considered evidence that hats originated in Crete and that the earliest form of beret hat actually developed there.

This is Katharine Hepburn playing Eleanor of Aquitaine, she won an Oscar for the role in 1969. And we are going to see a scene right now from the film *The Lion in Winter*.

[Film Clip - 0:12:36 - 0:13:16]

You might wonder why I've shifted from say the tropics of Egypt to the freezing cold terrain of medieval France. And really in my book it followed where power shifted and civilizations progressed. And in these places were the centers where fashion also progressed.

Eleanor of Aquitaine was the richest woman in medieval Europe. She controlled -- she was queen of England and France. Her biographer Alison Weir claims that she was a leader of fashion and spent profligately on clothing.

This mosaic displays silk gowns. The production of silk in Constantinople in the 5th century BC was really a landmark event in fashion history because it allowed silk robes to be produced simply. And the monarchies that were forming all across Europe began to display their wealth by wearing silk.

Eleanor actually developed a form of dress that kind of tailored these long kind of blanket style clothing that much of the populous wore. She adopted a fitted brocade gown with an ankle-dusting skirt. You can also see that she has got a white kerchief over her head. This was a wimple, it's almost nun-like. And it really signifies the attitude of modesty that prevailed during the Middle Ages; so little was known about the human body that it was draped and covered.

And you can see here this gentleman is wearing a long fur cape. And during the Middle Ages fur really became adopted really as a means of warmth but also as a display of wealth.

These shoes are known as a poulaine or poulaines and because the body was covered the only form of expression during the Middle Ages apparently was a footwear. And long pointed toe shoes were commandeered simply to show a sign of intrigue or sex

appeal. They grew to such lengthy proportions that a law in England had to be passed to temper the length of shoes and only rich upper classes could wear long pointed shoes.

This is Henry VIII. He was a leader, he was the king of England also his style of dress is evocative of Renaissance costumes. The Renaissance was a time of awakening in Europe. Henry displayed his power by wearing jewels and by commissioning elaborate portraits. His portrait painter was Hans Holbein the Younger, who not only displayed him in the best possible light but also created the jewelry that he wore. And he wore masses of jewels. Still trousers, as you can see, were not adopted by men, men wore hose because they actually showed off their legs to a greater extent.

Henry's daughter, Elizabeth I is considered the greatest English ruler of all time. And you can see that she is wearing pearls. Pearls were a form of displaying power for women. Elizabeth wore several strands at once, sometimes seven as you can see and some as long as her knees.

This is Louis XIV, who created France to be Europe's super power in the 17th century and also the center of fashion. If you think of big brands today like Louis Vuitton or Hermes, they can really trace their origin back to Louis XIV because his Minister of Finance Jean-Baptiste Colbert really planted the seeds for the luxury goods industry to thrive in France. He did this by banning the import of anything needed to make clothing and established centers in France that really pioneered the craft of luxury goods. He did this with silk in Lyon and lace-making in Alençon. And the best lace was originally bought in Italy, but the French really flourished at the craft, and consequently Europe looked to France for luxury goods.

This is the Palace of Versailles, I don't know if any of you have visited. Louis built this to be the seat of his government and one of the largest palaces in the world. This is the Hall of Mirrors and really it was a back in the 17th and 18th century almost like a runway. Louis loved fine clothes and because he loved fine clothes and ruled by divine right, everyone in his court had to wear new clothes when he said they had to or on special occasions. And he installed a set of iron fisted etiquette that meant that dressing up became this long prolonged affair which you will soon see in the scene from *Marie Antoinette*.

Another way of making him all powerful and a trendsetter was that in Paris, an industry developed of making pint size mannequins in his likeness, they were dressed up in clothing that he liked to wear including red leather footwear with sort of Cuban heels, these were exported across Europe and rival courts actually started to dress in his manner, which solidified his power and made France rich.

Also the French were the first to start to chronicle fashion change in newspapers and because their newspapers were exported across Europe, people started to consider France the center of the fashion world. This is Marie Antoinette, she married Louis XIV grandson in 1770. She was 14 and as you can see from the next film scene, she was suffocated by the culture at Versailles.

[Film Clip - 0:21:16- 0:23:44]

So Marie Antoinette, if you look at this picture, she became infamous for her extravagance and I think the obvious example of that is her skirts which jutted out several feet from the hip, because of panniers that were worn underneath. Those were baskets and were named after a style of basket that was actually put on to a donkey for carting goods. But there is ample evidence that suggests Sofia Coppola's film wasn't exactly hailed for its historical accuracy but the costume actually, the costume designer won an Academy Award and it is fairly authentic but she did, Marie Antoinette did try to change fashion so that it was less restricting.

She attempted not to wear a corset but was scolded by her mother and really, she is said to have adopted lavish clothing to display her patronage for her adopted country, she was Austrian by birth. She was also—that scene is quite accurate in the way when she arrived, she was considered incredibly uncouth by the French and was stripped of her clothing and offered the services of a dressmaker named Rose Bertin and this is the atelier of Rose Bertin in Paris. She is really considered the forerunner of what we know today as the couturier.

She developed a habit of monogramming her clothing which is really the forerunner to—her monogram was the forerunner to the dress label or the designer logo. She visited Marie Antoinette twice a week, they became friends, she bought a lot of clothing from her, and it is noted that her dresses were said to cost 20 times that of an average person's annual salary. With Leonard who was Marie Antoinette's hair stylist, Rose Bertin developed a hair style known as the pouf and this was yet another sign of the extravagance that ruled prior to the French revolution. Marie Antoinette did famously model pouf hairstyles, but also it is said that she preferred to wear her hair loose and down and really favored unelaborate clothing.

Nevertheless, she was guillotined before an angry mob in 1792 and -- it's, you know, it is, looked back I think probably with some regret, French fashion magazines did

champion her as an icon, but you know, over time it is always those controversial figures that seem to push fashion forward.

This is Jacques-Louis David's depiction of the coronation of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1804. He crowned himself Emperor of France. You can see his first wife kneeling beneath him, that's Josephine. And after the French Revolution, the textile industry had faltered. Napoleon, one of his aims was to redevelop France as a center of fashion and he did so really by just picking up where Louis XIV left off. As you know it's often a political strategy that a new government will come in and just do the exact same thing as the old government, but champion it as something new, which is what he did.

To stimulate the textile trade, he also decreed that new clothes had to be worn, French society women who frequented his court were forbidden to arrive at the Tuileries in dresses that they had worn before, they had to wear a new dress if they were coming to visit him, this stimulated the textile trade and Josephine alone is said have bought 900 dresses during her first year as empress. She also was one of the best models for a dress style which is still with us today, which is called the empire line. It had a heyday in the 1960s it actually hailed back to ancient Greek costume as a Napoleon's, during Napoleon's era, classical Greece was a reference point for all matters of design.

This is Bon Marché in Paris. It was one of the first department stores, it opened in 1852 and really stimulated the opening of many others including Wanamaker's in Philadelphia which opened in 1861. Department stores completely changed the way people dressed and shop for clothes. All through history clothes were really made at home. As I said in the beginning, people simply draped a piece of cloth around their body then women were charged with designing clothes. Louis XIV started a dressmaker's guild in France which attracted both men and women to the profession. He also gave people that he favored perks like free lodging in the Louvre. So gradually the system evolved and what department stores really did was, concentrate all matters of dress under one roof.

And also rather than having displayed goods behind glass, things were out in the open to go and try on, pick and choose. This is Charles Frederick Worth. He was English by birth, moved to France and really worked his way up through fashion to be considered the greatest couturier and the most ground breaking one by apprenticing. He won a fashion contest which really has become kind of a way of making your name in fashion. And after he did that he became the favorite designer of both European aristocrats and Americans, Dollar Princesses, for example, like Consuelo Vanderbilt she bought her trousseau at Worth.

Worth really opened the first true boutique and was the first designer to sell -- to devise collections of fashions rather than just making up a dress to order. He produced them seasonally which was also pioneering. And women could go to his boutique on Rue de la Paix in Paris and try on gowns in an atmosphere that was similar to where they would wear their clothes. So for example one room was lit by gas lamps so they could see how they would look in the evening.

His clothes were extremely elaborate. You can see after the empire line that Josephine innovated, they went back really to the style of Marie Antoinette. They were completely uncomfortable and supported by corsets, which were painful to wear but accentuated this hour glass female form, which was considered the epitome of elegance.

This is Coco Chanel who, like Marie Antoinette, really loathed the corset but actually came along really just the right time to get rid of it. I am actually writing a book about Chanel at the moment, and the extraordinary thing is how she was a peasant by birth and grew up in an orphanage and just by sheer force of will propelled herself, probably, I would say, to be the most influential figure certainly of the 20th Century, if not of all time. I think -- I was getting off at the airport at Dallas/Fort Worth when I arrived and I can't count how many Chanel hand bags or imitation Chanel hand bags I saw.

The quilted hand bag is just one piece that she produced that she produced that continues, its popularity just seems to increase every year. She also innovated the little black dress, the collarless coat, but really I would say her big contribution to women's fashion was comfort.

She really felt she saw innovations coming like say the advent of the motorcar, women riding bicycles, the First World War women going to work in trousers and really sought to create a wardrobe of expensive clothing that was based on comfort and functionality. You see here her style of -- she was adamant about not changing designs and really through her career, which spanned -- her heyday was in the 1930s, and she passed away in 1971, and really changed her style of dress very little. And this led to problems in 1936, she was practically wiped out by rival Elsa Schiaparelli who innovated very elaborate, artistically collaborated dresses. You might recall the Duchess of Windsor was her -- sort of the dress she wore just after her wedding had a lobster print, that's an Elsa Schiaparelli dress. She was a rival of Chanel's.

But another thing Chanel managed to do was create a look that suited women of all ages. Anyone, if you see -- 14 year-olds today want to wear Chanel and look as good as a 70 year old, but her clothes really did make women look youthful and modern.

This is Edith Head. I researched her career for my book *Made for Each Other: Fashion and the Academy Awards*. She certainly wasn't the best costume designer in Hollywood, but managed to promote herself relentlessly and is known in Hollywood, I discovered, for turning up at the opening of an envelope. She catered to film stars that she dressed, she was costume Designer in Chief at Paramount Pictures and worked her way up from the position of a sketch artist, which she took on in 1924 and continued at Paramount until 1967.

One of the ways that she really established herself as influential was by realizing that the Academy Awards were an incredible marketing tool, not only did she win 8 Academy Awards which is more than any woman and any costumer designer, she also really developed the concept of red carpet dressing which we know today ad nauseam every time you open a magazine you see a starlet be it a legitimate star or wanna be on a red carpet wearing a designer dress.

She started dressing actresses for the Oscars in a manner that was regal and considered. She realized that they would be on television and created gowns that looked good from every angle. One of her greatest Oscar dresses was actually not even made for the Oscars, but it was Grace Kelly's aquamarine satin gown that she wore to the premier of her Oscar nominated film called *The Country Girl*. And that dress continues to be copied memorably: Uma Thurman when she was nominated for Pulp Fiction in 1994 wore to the Oscars in 1995. Gwyneth Paltrow, when she won for *Shakespeare in Love*, accepted her Oscar in a pink dress that completely referenced that style.

I would say costume designers have always been eclipsed by fashion designers simply because they are not brands, but Edith Head, really the dresses she made say for Elizabeth Taylor in *Suddenly, Last Summer*, the vacation clothes she made for Audrey Hepburn in *Roman Holiday* and the Grace Kelly wardrobes for the Alfred Hitchcock's films *Rear Window* and *To Catch a Thief* continued to inspire fashion designers.

This is Yves Saint Laurent and entourage Loulou de La Falaise to his left, Betty Catroux to his right those women were his muses. Yves Saint Laurent, Chanel would say, was the best next thing to her. What he really did to was create a modern wardrobe. He really had a flair, it might sound trivial but, for color. He also gave women the opportunity to wear a trouser suit known as Le Smoking you can see she is smoking a cigarette and when we are -- when I was putting this slide presentation today, JD who is up in the tech department said, "Oh that's Annie Lennox from the Eurythmics." And I said, "No that's 1967 Yves Saint Laurent." And this is the design that's changed very little.

His muse Loulou de La Falaise actually just passed away a month ago and she went to work for him and started making jewelry. And I interviewed her probably a year ago, and today you see these incredibly elaborate costume jewelry that's produced by every single brand Lanvin, Missoni, you name it, well, that culture really grew up in the house of Saint Laurent. And he didn't just slap his name on a licensed product and let someone else create it, he applied his artistic vision to absolutely everything be it shoes, be it jewelry, hats, you have it, and really they continued a form of jewelry making that was produced in little ateliers across Paris and kept that craft alive until very recently.

This is Anna Wintour who is the editor of American *Vogue*. She became the editor in 1988 and really changed the business of fashion. We are just going to watch a little film clip about her now.

[Film Clip - 0:40:13 - 0:42:01]

You might wonder why I put that little vignette in about Anna Wintour's personal history and about her father, I think she probably could have stayed in London and ruled by divine right there. But I think what is remarkable about her was that she left London and moved to New York and really worked her way up. She was fired from one of her jobs, because her fashion styling wasn't considered up to snuff. But she really did work her way up at American *Vogue* and -- I went to work at British *Vogue*, it was probably about 10 years after she had started and I had encountered her at several fashion shows. And everyone was always saying how scary she was, and she has become increasingly scary. But when I was a junior reporter, I used to just go up to her and ask her questions and she would tell me everything about fashion that I needed to know in about three minutes.

I think what she has done is not only propel *Vogue* from being a magazine, she has made it a brand, but she has also extended her power in a way to control fashion for better or for worse. It started back in the early 90s when there were some designers from London casting around John Galliano, Alexander McQueen. She really used her power to propel both of those designers who were gifted, but I can tell you about ten designers who are equally gifted now that are just not in the right place at the right time, but she got behind them and really made sure their brands had backing and that they got the jobs by whispering into say Bernard Arnault's ear, who controls LVMH which is the most powerful luxury goods conglomerate, and really propelling John Galliano to take over Christian Dior which is the most powerful fashion brand in the world.

You probably saw the headlines, he has been deposed from his job. She still seems to be behind him; he appeared in the September issue of *Vogue* at Kate Moss's wedding. She has also inspired a book called *The Devil Wears Prada*. And when that book came out, I bought it, read the first page put it down, gave it to my mother, and she said, was it really that difficult working at *Vogue*? I said it was 10 times worse. But also what she has done is developed a strand in fashion history, where she is, she works, she is behind the scenes at the Costume Institute, she is Chairman of the Costume Institute Ball, which she has developed and what they call the Oscars of the east. And it happens in May and it celebrates exhibitions of fashion like you see here, like the Gaultier one, not as big or elaborate.

And really those exhibitions that she gets behind, you will always see, say six months after they are staged or say a year, you will see these collections that come out from designers that are completely influenced by the shows that Anna Wintour is behind. She also dresses actresses. She will say, okay I don't want Jennifer Lopez turning up in some scanty outfit at the Met Ball Gala and will say, you know, I recommend you wearing this. Also when she is introducing young designers to her pages, she will literally work with designers to develop, would work with them to develop clothes which she thinks are *Vogue*. And when you do go to the New York collections now, it's a very restrained atmosphere I feel because lot of young designers are so eager and desperate to get into her, get on to the pages of *Vogue* that they create these very safe collections, because everyone is sort of worried and you know nervous will Anna like it.

This is a picture, my assistant actually when she was helping me put together this slide show, actually put that photograph in of this girl dressed in sun glasses Manolo Blahnik shoes and a chinchilla coat and said, oh that's Anna Wintour. I said no, that's a model dressed like Anna Wintour and that will display her influence. This is Michelle Obama and I really considered, you know, First Lady of America, the American First Lady which one is really the most influential. And, you know, obviously you think Jackie Kennedy certainly, she was incredible but I really think Michelle Obama has done something that was gutsy when she got into power and that was reject Oscar de la Renta as the designer who was going to create her look for the White House.

What she did was she came to power when the Great Recession was on, as you know, and really patronized young designers, she used her position of power, almost to be a walking advertisement for these young designers that were struggling to get brands and not just, you know, any young designers but designers from, you know, ethnic

minorities, Narciso Rodriguez, a Cuban, Isabel Toledo who made her outfit that she wore on inauguration day is Cuban. Jason Wu who designed her very elaborate white gown on inauguration night is Taiwanese. So she really kind of shifted the culture of fashion to champion the new and the young and outsiders.

Every First Lady has got a look as you know she has adopted Barbara Bush's pearls which can be traced back to Elizabeth I and actually Cleopatra. But also, she adopted this cardigan, she is not wearing one there, but it was really considered controversial when she turned up at Buckingham Palace in a cardigan and it was considered, you know, inappropriately casual. I think it makes her, her role as a mother, and as a woman who turns up to soup kitchens and feeds, you know, the hungry, even more convincing.

This is the Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton who I will end with. And she hung around—her nickname was Waity Katie—and she hung around for a long time. I think she was Prince William's girlfriend for 10 years and her style was never considered a talking point or interesting at all. She was branded "sloaney" which is a sort of very conservative, preppy style of dress in England. But when she became engaged, she started to develop a look and did it very cautiously and slowly. And the great thing that she did was prove that to be a royal or a monarch didn't mean you have to dress in an un-relatable expensive way.

She has developed this very democratic style of wearing clothes that any girl, a secretary even, could go out and afford to buy. This is really -- honestly re-branded the royal family, if you think back to say Diana, who was a fashion plate, fashion model and a great humanitarian, but she spent a lot of money on clothes. The Duchess really has this subtle way of making of dressing appropriately. Interestingly here she is not wearing anything from a chain store, she is wearing for tour and this is on the royal tour of Canada and the US.

And I think what was really remarkable because she has this habit of wearing affordable clothes that you can't really pin from say a designer's runway or she actually is also known as the royal recycler and will wear pieces that she has had in her wardrobe for almost ten years, it's quite amazing. I mean public figures always wear brand new clothes when they are being interviewed or going to a public -- to an important occasion, high profile occasion, simply because new clothes look better when they are photographed. But she has changed the game. And I really hope that her style of democratic dressing will prevail. Thank you.

Now I have left out a lot of facts because I refuse to speak from notes when I give a talk, so if anyone has any questions, please, yes.

Audience Member: How would you compare Diana Vreeland to Anna Wintour?

Bronwyn Cosgrave: I did consider that. I think what Diana Vreeland did was really shake up the culture of *Vogue* and made it more avant-garde. And she wasn't governed by the kind of commercial constraints that any editor of *Vogue* had to consider. I think what she did like Anna Wintour -- she did develop the Consume Institute actually as a forum for fashion. She can take the credit for that. But Anna Wintour went back and revived that.

And also I think she really did develop, Diana Vreeland, her contribution is really kind of developing photographers and models as stars. And like if you think about David Bailey or Marisa Berenson or even the hairstylist Alexandra of Paris, she put them in the magazine as featured subjects. But I think really Anna Wintour really did go back and pick up where she left off. Does that answer your question? Yes.

Audience Member: How does one actually learn from the [inaudible] books that I was thinking about during the talk [inaudible] *The Essence of Style* and it talks about [inaudible].

Bronwyn Cosgrave: The first book I actually used a condensed, an article from the first book that you reference for this talk and it's excellent actually. The second book I wanted to take a look at but I was too busy, but I have read extensively about -- it's Caroline Weber's book. Yeah it's definitely worth reading. I mean it takes a long time, it's another thing about books, it takes a long time to write books.

I wrote this book in a year off, while I was working my first year at *Vogue* and my Oscar's book took me three years to write. And people think, oh fashion it's really easy, or you might -- everyone always says to me about my Oscar's book, "You must have had so much fun writing that." I always say, "It's complete pain, torture and agony," because you've got to really -- with fashion it's not like art, where people think it's worthy, it's still considered somewhat frivolous. But there is depth to it, but to create the depth and make it kind of engaging and entertaining you've to work harder at it and push it and also mix it, which Caroline Weber's book does, with culture. And I think that's when you have an interesting fashion book. Yes.

Audience Member: [Egyptian fashion... inaudible]

Bronwyn Cosgrave: She was possibly, possibly.

Audience Member: You showed [inaudible].

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Nefertiti?

Audience Member: Yes, is also a black woman –

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Sure, I mean it's people – I mean that's –

Audience Member: I like to see me....

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Sure, well Nefertiti, I mean that's the bust that's in the museum in Germany which I actually visited. I mean it's speculative, were they black? I mean it's not completely proven that they were. You didn't think I had enough black people in my presentation?

Audience Member: No, [inaudible]

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Yeah I mean honestly I -- what I found is that it's never really been proven. I mean she did her hair, Cleopatra she wore this melon style, she revived this melon style of hairstyle, which I can actually show you here, which could suggest that she was black with her hair, it had to be oiled, but it isn't really, it hasn't really been deduced -- there she is. You can see her hair slightly like an Afro, kind of combed back, does that answer your question? Okay, yes.

Audience Member: [Illustrations from book...inaudible]

Bronwyn Cosgrave: All of these illustrations?

Audience Member: About ten back...

Bronwyn Cosgrave: The illustrations from this are from my book actually and I have an incredible picture -- researcher who spent a year of finding assembling the illustrations. So they are actually all from primarily from my first book.

Audience Member: [Inaudible]

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Oh, right--

Audience Member: [wonder what influence the media had on fashion...inaudible]

Bronwyn Cosgrave: Huge, I mean magazines, magazines developed and newspapers as I explained started to chronicle fashion in the 17th century. It did change very little. There wasn't sort of pace of trends that we have today. But certainly Marie Antoinette, her extravagance was promoted as aspirational in magazines and I would say from the

time of Napoleon it certainly started to become magazines, there was a magazine culture that developed in France and later in England and in America, *Vogue*, late -- turn of the century really. So, I think they were incredibly influential. Yes.

One more question? We okay?

I think we've got it.

[applause]