



# The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England

*John Styles*

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The material lives of ordinary English men and women were transformed in the years following the restoration of Charles II in 1660. Tea and sugar, the fruits of British mercantile and colonial expansion, altered their diets. Pendulum clocks and Staffordshire pottery, the products of British manufacturing ingenuity, enriched their homes. But it was in their clothing that ordinary people enjoyed the greatest change in their material lives. This book retrieves the unknown story of ordinary consumers in eighteenth-century England and provides a wealth of information about what they wore.

John Styles reveals that ownership of new fabrics and new fashions was not confined to the rich but extended far down the social scale to the small farmers, day laborers, and petty tradespeople who formed a majority of the population. The author focuses on the clothes ordinary people wore, the ways they acquired them, and the meanings they attached to them, shedding new light on all types of attire and the occasions on which they were worn.

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