From Paper Patterns to Patterns-on-Fabric

Home Sewing in Sweden 1881–1981

Törnvall, Gunilla

Published in:
Costume

DOI:
10.3366/cost.2023.0245

2023

Document Version:
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

From Paper Patterns to Patterns-on-Fabric: Home Sewing in Sweden, 1881–1981

By GUNILLA TÖRNVALL

From the end of the nineteenth century and one hundred years onward, home sewing was an important part of many women's duties, but it was also a pleasure, something that existed parallel with the emerging mass-produced ready-to-wear industry. The paper patterns used for home dressmaking were often sold and distributed through women's magazines. These pattern sections were both a kind of reader service and a conscious strategy to capture the female target group. This article, based on an analysis of three Swedish magazines, is the first in-depth survey of patterns for home sewing of women's clothes in Sweden. The study shows how the magazines adapted to changes in society with increasingly easier patterns and ready-cut fabric for their readers. By highlighting women making their clothes in the home, this article contributes to an often-neglected area of women's memory and fashion history.

Keywords: dressmaking patterns, home sewing, women's magazines, pattern magazines, garment production, twentieth-century fashion, Sweden

INTRODUCTION

When the Swedish women's magazine *Femina* ceased to offer patterns for home dressmaking in 1981, it marked the end of a century-long tradition of pattern distribution. The magazine, originating in 1881 under the name *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning* (Nordic Pattern Magazine), was the most long-lived pattern

Costume 57.1 (2023): 55–81
Edinburgh University Press
DOI: 10.3366/cost.2023.0245

När moderna växla.

Allt är underkastadt förgängelse, moderna icke minst. Ständigt hasta vi fram på detta område, ständigt kräfves nya moder. Låt blott de gängse moderna blifva några få månader gamla: vi önska se de nya. Vår illustration ger ett slående bevis härpå. Efter 6 månaders förlopp bränna vi nämligen obarmhärtigt hvad som till den tiden ligger kvar på våra hyllor af färdigklippta tillskärningsmönster. Girigt slukar ångpannans stora eldgap allt det, som, användt i verkligheten, skulle hafva gifvit form åt lätta sommarklädningar, eleganta baldräkter eller varma, tjocka kappor. — Det är moderna, som växla.

Figure 1. The pattern magazines had an ambition to follow fast-changing fashion right from the start. *Allers Mönster-Tidning* (Aller's Pattern Magazine) already in 1910 illustrated how the remainder of the magazine's dressmaking patterns, after six months of storage, were 'mercilessly' burned in the steam boiler, under the heading 'När moderna växla' (When Fashion Changes). Appendix to *AM-T*, 7 (1910).

magazine published in Swedish. These one hundred years can be called the glory days of home sewing in Sweden.[1] They began when most Swedes lived in the countryside, continued through growing industrialization and then into modernity, as Sweden became one of the leading industrial nations. Traditionally in Sweden, women's clothing was usually made by professional dressmakers or at home, and ready-made clothing did not become common until after the Second World War.[2] Right up to the 1980s, when the textile and clothing industries moved to countries outside Europe for lower production costs, home sewing was the cheapest and often fastest and easiest way to dress fashionably (Figure 1).

The invention of commercial paper patterns and the sewing machine in the second half of the nineteenth century enabled many women to make their own and their children's clothes at home, complementing or replacing the work of professional dressmakers.[3] In Sweden, as well as in other western countries, magazines played an important role in the production, distribution and consumption of fashion and patterns during a major part of the twentieth century. While Paris fashion was the model for all classes, a clear difference was that magazines intended for the lower classes also had patterns adapted for home sewing. For those who were poor but skilled at sewing, the patterns offered

the chance to emulate the style of high fashion and the opportunity to climb the social ladder.[4] All the main pattern companies were connected to magazine publishers, and the pattern sections were both a kind of reader service and a conscious strategy to capture the female target group.[5] Although many pattern magazines were bestsellers, they have attracted limited scholarly attention.[6]

In this article, I will highlight these magazines in order to help them find their rightful place in fashion and media history. Although home sewing has begun to receive international consideration in recent years, this is the first extensive study on Swedish home sewing as well as patterns in magazines in Sweden.[7] With an approach from the discipline of book history, I have investigated how the conditions and limitations of the market and the media affected what was communicated and expressed in magazines during this period.[8] Taking a case study of three Swedish pattern magazines, published 1881–1981, I will show how the publishers tried to navigate a changing societal and media climate in order to attract readers and increase circulation.

The ambivalent concept of 'home-made' can refer both to something that is more tailored and unique in relation to ready-made clothing, as well as to more ill-fitting and eccentric items, depending on the skill of their creator.[9] Regardless of the status of home sewing, it deserves a place in twentieth-century fashion history, partly because it shows what ordinary people produced and consumed, and partly because fashion is not something that only spreads from top to bottom. Elite fashion often draws inspiration from everyday street wear or traditional clothing as well as vice versa.[10] Fashion exists in a global market, and by closely studying pattern production in one country, important contributions can be made to international fashion studies. My survey shows how the Swedish magazines imported and adapted ideas from foreign fashion centres, especially Paris, and contributed to fashion production of everyday clothing. Fashion was gradually translated and developed, by often anonymous pattern designers, from the fashion centres to the local, based on materials, technology, taste, climate and social codes. An example of this is that of Valborg Aller (1881–1948), at *Allers Mönster-tidning* (Aller's Pattern Magazine), who took a course in ladies' tailoring to be able to adapt the new French designs, the better to fit the Nordic 'not quite as sleek figures'.[11] The study thus contributes to the shift in focus that has taken place in fashion studies in recent years, that is from research on luxury consumption to everyday clothing.[12] Societal changes over one hundred years become visible in the study of home sewing in the magazines, whose aim was to facilitate and guide the woman in the home, whether she was a full-time housewife or gainfully employed. Such an approach, I will argue, is central to understanding everyday fashion of the last century.

The main sources for research on dressmaking patterns in Sweden are the clothing designs for which one could order patterns, which were shown in pattern magazines and women's magazines. Thanks to the Swedish law for legal deposit, most issues of the printed magazines are preserved at the National Library of Sweden, Stockholm, and at Lund University Library in Lund. Due to the large format of the dressmaking patterns, these were mainly offered by mail order,

and are generally not preserved. Furthermore, separate pattern packets have been regarded as packages and are not systematically kept in public collections. There are some home-made dresses preserved in museum collections, for example in the Textile Museum in Borås, Skansen Open Air Museum and the Nordic Museum in Stockholm, but very often without any record of the paper pattern used. In the Kulturen Open Air Museum in Lund, there is a small collection of patterns and home-made clothes, where a few items are interrelated (see below, Figures 11 and 12).[13]

This study of three important Swedish magazines with patterns over a long period of time has revealed significant changes in the practice of home sewing and pattern distribution. The magazines were produced by three different publishers and their names have changed during the years:

1) Aller, whose pattern magazine was the most long-lived, with its own patterns until 1981 in *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning* (1881–1898)/*Allers Mönster-Tidning* (1899–1944)/*Femina med Cosmopolite och Allers Mönster-Tidning* (1944)/*Femina* (1945–).
2) Holm and Nyblom/Åhlén & Åkerlund/Bonnier, which published *Husmodern* (The Housewife) (1917–1988), a women's weekly with its own pattern department established in 1920. In 1941 the publishers started *Stil-mönster* (Style-Patterns), the largest producer of Swedish pattern packets until 1982. In 1950, *Stil-mönster*, partly distributed through *Husmodern*, sold four million pattern packages. That corresponded to every Swedish woman buying an average of two *Stil-mönster* per year.[14]
3) *Kooperativa Förbundet* (the Cooperative Association), whose pattern magazine was a kind of catalogue to promote their own pattern packets, *Vi-mönster* (We Patterns), from 1940 to 1990: *Vår mönstertidning* (Our Pattern Magazine) (1940–1971)/*Vi modemönster* (We Fashion Patterns) (1972–1982)/*Sy & Sticka* (Sew & Knit): *Vi modemönster* (1983–1990).[15]

These magazines, in which designs for dressmaking patterns constituted an important part of the content, were on the market for a long time and reached diversified and huge target groups. They existed in a competitive market, and this study has shown that the publishers changed their magazines constantly over the years in order to attract readers and advertisers. Different pattern series came and went for longer and shorter periods, often without warning, which means that a large number of issues have to be investigated in order to identify when changes occurred.[16] The various designs in the three magazines examined included outerwear, everyday and evening dresses, underwear, some menswear and to a large extent children's wear. There were clothes for women who worked at home and those employed in a range of industries; and were intended for everyday life and parties as well as for sports and leisure. This article is a historical overview, which highlights the launch of the magazines and other crucial themes in this extended period of home sewing.

ALLERS MÖNSTER-TIDNING FROM 1881 UNTIL THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The rise of the popular press at the end of the nineteenth century was to a great extent stimulated by the development of new image printing techniques that both facilitated appealing magazines and attracted advertisers to finance them.[17] The oldest of the three magazines in focus, *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning*, renamed *Allers Mönster-Tidning* (*AM-T*) in 1899, is an example of this. It began as *Nordisk Mønster-Tidende* (Nordic Pattern Magazine) in Denmark in 1874, published by the Danish lithographer Carl Aller (1845–1926) and his wife Laura Aller (1849–1917). It was the first magazine of the family-owned publishing house Aller Media, which is still an important firm in the Nordic popular publishing industry. Carl Aller contributed a knowledge of printing, especially of images. Laura Aller added her skills in foreign languages and handicraft, and also a female network that could supply her with material, all of which were crucial to a successful women's magazine. Foreign fashion and handicraft magazines were the model, especially the German *Der Bazar* (1855–1936), which, after its modernizing in 1857 with text-integrated wood-engraved images, had become the archetype of many international fashion magazines. In 1881, Aller decided to publish a Swedish edition, and in 1894 a printing house with an editorial office was started in Helsingborg, Sweden.[18]

In the beginning, the fortnightly *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning* consisted of one large sheet of paper, corresponding to eight folio pages (590 × 790 mm), with wood-engraved designs for women's and children's dresses, embroidery, knitting and crochet, with short instructions on one side.[19] On the verso, there were full-sized dressmaking patterns with brief sewing instructions. From 1897 the number of pages doubled, with the patterns placed on a separate sheet (Figure 2). Each issue now also contained a few recipes, and sometimes more elaborate sewing instructions, inspirations for hairstyles, weaving and handicrafts. Advertisements were published separately in an appendix to some issues from 1898 until 1907, when they were integrated in the main magazine. In 1902, the printing house installed a machine for cutting patterns, which was to serve the company until 1948. From then on, the subscribers could order pre-cut patterns on tissue paper for some of the designs. The business was said to accommodate requests from 'dressmakers in the big cities, from seamstresses in the country and from busy housewives', which illustrates the scope of the readership.[20] For a few years, starting in 1912, the magazine offered plain summer dresses with the dressmaking and embroidery pattern marked on fabric. These forerunners to the later ready-cut fabrics were said to be easy to sew even for the beginner.[21] From 1913, *AM-T* went beyond the model of *Der Bazar* and presented a few designs from the American pattern magazine *Pictorial Review*. The print run, which in 1898 was 26,000 copies, in 1914 had increased to 50,000 copies. The latter can be compared to the 180,000 copies of the publisher's bestseller, the family magazine *Allers Familj-Journal*.[22]

In 1916, *AM-T* was remade to a modern sixteen-page magazine, stapled and in a smaller size with a four-colour printed cover, but the content remained about

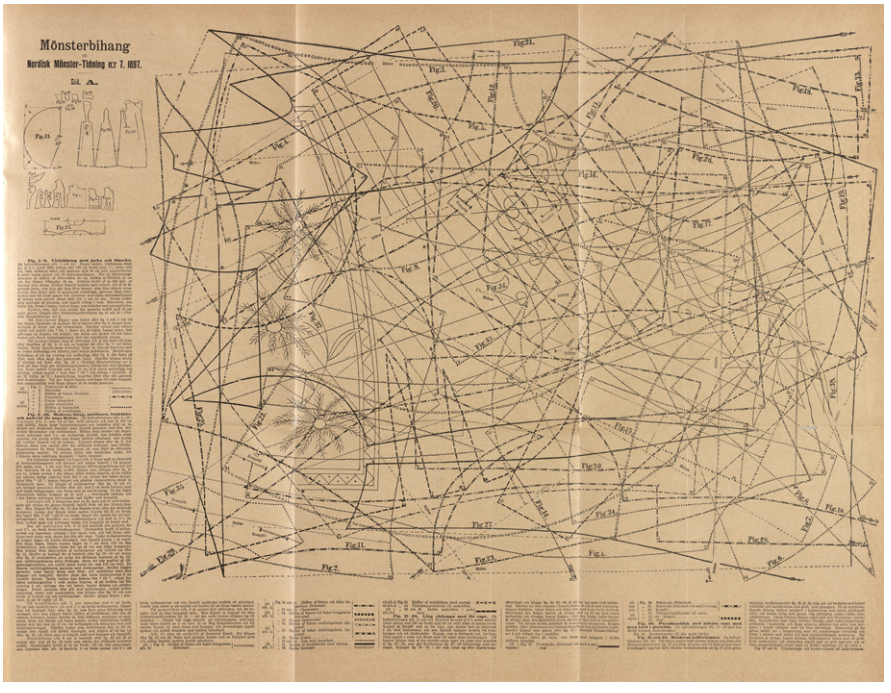


Figure 2. Free full-size dressmaking patterns were offered from 1881 in *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning* (Nordic Pattern Magazine). These patterns, with their jumble of dashes and dots, required quite a competent home sewer. From 1902, pre-cut patterns on tissue paper could also be ordered by mail. *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning*, 7 (1897), pattern appendix (*c.* 59 × 79 cm).

the same. Every other week it offered around fifty dressmaking designs, with a few free patterns printed in the magazine. At this time, the depopulation of the countryside had finally begun in Sweden. Especially during the 1910s and 1920s, an increasing number of young women left the countryside for work in industry and the service sector in the cities. This led to both a new working class and a new middle class. Women began to work in modern offices, which required a new kind of attire, and the magazines offered patterns for smart blouses, aprons and dresses for business wear (Figure 3). At the same time, women's unpaid household work increased in the home. The formerly bourgeois family ideal with a male breadwinner and a female housewife spread to lower social groups, through magazines among other things. When the First World War broke out, though not directly involved, Sweden was poorly prepared and strongly affected by reduced export and import conditions. This led to sharp changes in prices and income distribution, with concomitant shortages of goods and social conflicts.[23] Still, women had to dress appropriately and with the increasing number of housewives in combination with rationing there was a market for a new women's magazine.

Figure 3. For modern women, working in offices and businesses, a new kind of garment was offered, as seen here in *AM-T*, design 38: 'practical dress for home or business use', and 39: 'blouse with vest collar, apron in a simple, becoming style'. *AM-T*, 1 (1917), 12.

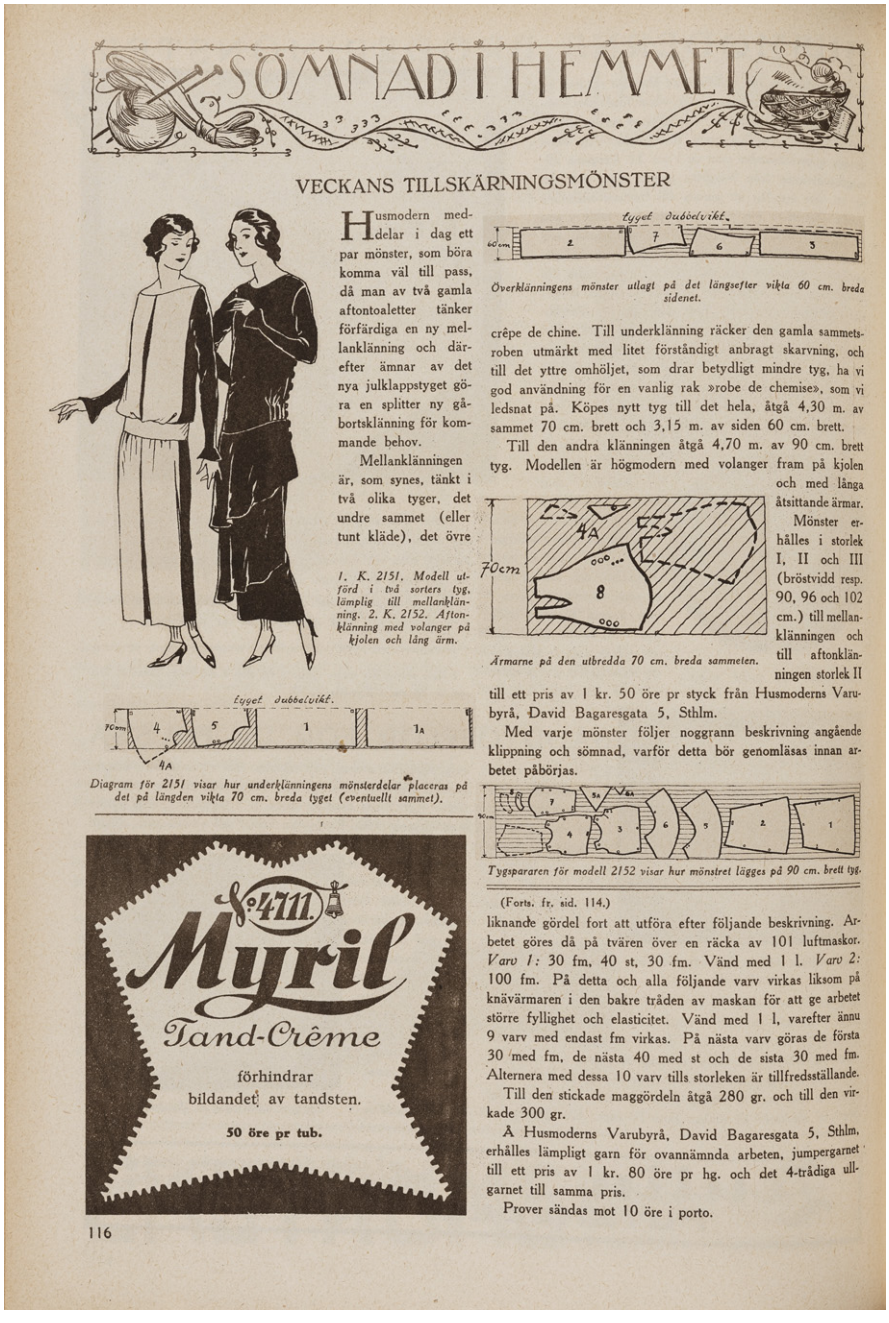
HOME SEWING AS PART OF A HOUSEWIFE'S WORK SCHEDULE, 1917–1939

The second magazine in this study, the women's weekly *Husmodern*, was started in 1917 by the *hemkonsulent* (domestic science consultant) Thora Holm (1881–1970) and the journalist Elsa Nyblom (1890–1956) as a kind of trade magazine for housewives. Its aim was to offer 'direct practical benefit', but also pleasure, during the 'worrying living conditions' of the First World War.[24] Home sewing of garments was only a small part of all the domestic subjects that *Husmodern* would cover, which also included recipes, home care, short stories and needlework. By 1920, *Husmodern*'s financial situation had improved. That year, it was taken over by Åhlén & Åkerlund's publishing house, and in 1929 was bought by Bonnier's publishing house, which thus took a big step towards becoming the media conglomerate it is today.[25] The new publishers invested in making a more elegant magazine with colour images, fashion reports and regular home sewing projects.

When industrial production once more received an impetus in Sweden in the early 1920s, it resulted in an increased number of wage workers and shorter working hours. Purchasing power improved and the mass production of standardized goods led to lower prices, new consumption habits and more uniform, fashionable clothing, which was spread through magazines, newspapers and mail order sales. The clothing industry, which largely employed women, was particularly expansive, though the market for ready-made women's clothing was still small. During the 1930s the cost of paid help at home, such as maids and sewing help, increased.[26] This made it more economically advantageous for the growing numbers of housewives to spend time sewing clothes not only for their children but also for themselves.

In 1920, *Husmodern*'s dressmaking department was established. It produced designs and paper patterns that could be ordered through the magazine, which from now on offered a few patterns for home dressmaking of women's or children's clothing every week (Figure 4). These were presented as a generous offer to the readers and were sold at cost price. The original ambition to offer only suitable outfits for the housewife, and not to follow changing fashions, changed with time and the change of publishers. The role of the housewife as such underwent major changes during the twentieth century, and the magazine tried to follow the needs of its readers. Eventually, regular fashion spreads were established, both with and without patterns. With its aim to help reduce household expenses without lessening comfort and well-being, by the mid-1920s *Husmodern* had become the biggest women's weekly in Sweden, with an edition of nearly 250,000 copies.[27]

During these years, *AM-T* continued to be a dedicated pattern magazine, but expanded with fashion reports and other features. The number of articles with sewing instructions, to help the novice, increased. Free full-size dressmaking patterns were included in every issue until the mid-1930s, when they gradually became less common, and finally were replaced by mail order and at times



SÖMNAD I HEMMET

VECKANS TILLSKÄRNINGSMÖNSTER

Husmodern meddelar i dag ett par mönster, som böra komma väl till pass, då man av två gamla aftontoaletter tänker förfärdiga en ny mellanklänning och därefter ämnar av det nya julklappstyget göra en splitter ny gåbortsklänning för kommande behov.

Mellanklänningen är, som synes, tänkt i två olika tyger, det undre sammet (eller tunt kläde), det övre crêpe de chine. Till underklänning räcker den gamla sammetsroben utmärkt med litet förståndigt anbragt skarvning, och till det yttre omhöljet, som drar betydligt mindre tyg, ha vi god användning för en vanlig rak »robe de chemise», som vi ledsnat på. Köpes nytt tyg till det hela, åtgå 4,30 m. av sammet 70 cm. brett och 3,15 m. av siden 60 cm. brett.

1. K. 2151. Modell utförd i två sorters tyg, lämplig till mellanklänning. 2. K. 2152. Aftonklänning med volanger på kjolen och lång ärm.

Tyget dubbelvikt.

Överklänningens mönster utlagt på det längsefter vikta 60 cm. breda sidenet.

Till den andra klänningen åtgå 4,70 m. av 90 cm. brett tyg. Modellen är högmodern med volanger fram på kjolen och med långa åtsittande ärmar.

Ärmarne på den utbredda 70 cm. breda sammeten.

Mönster erhålles i storlek I, II och III (bröstvidd resp. 90, 96 och 102 cm.) till mellanklänningen och till aftonklänningen storlek II till ett pris av 1 kr. 50 öre pr styck från Husmoderns Varubyrå, David Bagaresgata 5, Sthlm.

Med varje mönster följer noggrann beskrivning angående klippning och sömnad, varför detta bör genomläsas innan arbetet påbörjas.

Tygspararen för modell 2152 visar hur mönstret lägges på 90 cm. brett tyg.

Tyget dubbelvikt.

Diagram för 2151 visar hur underklänningens mönsterdelar placeras på det på längden vikta 70 cm. breda tyget (eventuellt sammet).

(Forts. fr. sid. 114.)

liknande gördel fort att utföra efter följande beskrivning. Arbetet göres då på tvären över en räcka av 101 luftmaskor. *Varv 1:* 30 fm, 40 st, 30 fm. Vänd med 1 l. *Varv 2:* 100 fm. På detta och alla följande varv virkas liksom på knävärmaren i den bakre tråden av maskan för att ge arbetet större fyllighet och elasticitet. Vänd med 1 l, varefter ännu 9 varv med endast fm virkas. På nästa varv göras de första 30 med fm, de nästa 40 med st och de sista 30 med fm. Alternera med dessa 10 varv tills storleken är tillfredsställande.

Till den stickade maggördeln åtgå 280 gr. och till den virkade 300 gr.

A Husmoderns Varubyrå, David Bagaresgata 5, Sthlm, erhålles lämpligt garn för ovannämnda arbeten, jumpergarnet till ett pris av 1 kr. 80 öre pr hg. och det 4-trådiga ullgarnet till samma pris.

Prover sändas mot 10 öre i porto.

Figure 4. In *Husmodern* (The Housewife), from the 1920s onwards, dressmaking patterns to order were offered at cost price every week. Sewing instructions and diagrams were printed in the magazine. Here are two dresses, one *mellanklänning* (an afternoon dress), sewn from two older *aftontoaletter* (evening dresses), and one *splitter ny gåbortsklänning* (brand new evening out dress) sewn from *det nya julklappstyget* (the new Christmas present fabric). *Husmodern*, 4 (1924), 116.

Figure 5. From 1937 until the early 1940s, *AM-T* offered free patterns in the form of a reduced diagram, for which paper patterns could also be ordered at full scale. This is a diagram pattern for a tennis dress, *Allers Mönster-Tidning*, 10 (1940), 34.
© Courtesy of Lund University Library

small diagram patterns printed in the magazine (Figure 5). The number of colour illustrations and photographs increased gradually, as in *Husmodern*. Dressmaking was a way for the housewife to save money and at the same time acquire more fashionable clothing.[28] However, women could undertake dressmaking only when all other home duties were done. Before new garment production could start, there were other sewing projects that were more urgent: mending and alteration. These were activities that became even more important throughout the next war.

HOME SEWING DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

During the Second World War, home sewing increased and women were expected to sew their own and their families' clothes as part of military preparedness. As in other neutral countries, fashion news from Paris and other fashion centres could reach Sweden quite regularly. These were shared in the magazines. As the war proceeded, restrictions and rationing took place as in Great Britain and the USA, albeit to a lesser extent; in Sweden there was no restriction of pockets, pleats or the length of skirts. The domestic production of synthetic fibres increased and eventually met most of Sweden's textile needs.

Even though fabric was available, engaging a seamstress often cost as much as the material. As a result, there was significant money to be saved for the home sewer. A sewing machine was considered indispensable and with the help of the patterns most people would be able to sew their own clothes, according to the pattern magazines.[29]

Mending and fabric saving and reuse gained increased space in the pattern magazines. A common design, called *ändringsmodell* (alteration design), was a dress sewn from two different fabrics, where remnants or parts of two older garments could be used. These practices had been common even before the war, as the purchase of garments was a carefully balanced investment. It was a matter of course to see old clothes as raw material that could be reused. The wardrobes of most Swedish women were much more limited than today and the rationing of the number of garments was not in itself a major problem.[30] Closed borders forced the use of Swedish garments, which is considered to have led to a breakthrough for Swedish ready-made women's clothing after the Second World War.[31] This took place in parallel with increased home sewing. Home sewers needed simple patterns, just as mass production required it for reasons of rationalization. According to the magazines, the restrictions led to a plainer and more practical fashion. Good taste and timeless style became more important than fast-changing fashion.[32]

In the autumn of 1940, the third magazine in this study, *Vår Mönstertidning* (*VM*), was started by the Cooperative Association, which at this time was closely associated with the Swedish labour movement and the governing Swedish Social Democratic Party (Figure 6). The magazine was published in two issues per year, presenting about eighty designs each. It functioned primarily as a kind of product catalogue for the Cooperative's patterns, which were named *Vi-mönster* after the organization's weekly journal *Vi* (We). In addition to descriptions of designs, *VM* contained a few pages with fashion advice, practical tips, embroidery patterns to order and a free knitting pattern. The patterns were sold in the Cooperative's stores, but could also be ordered through the magazine. Until 1960 *VM* was printed at the Aller printing house, on the same kind of paper as *AM-T*, and in some cases the same pattern design can be found in both magazines.[33]

As opposed to *AM-T* and *Husmodern*, which both expected that their readers at times also consulted professional seamstresses, *VM* was aimed directly at home sewers. The designs presented were said to be plain, practical and easy-to-sew.[34] The magazine offered patterns at cost price for 25 öre, which was less than half the standard price in *AM-T*, 60–80 öre, and the same as for the 'free/advertising pattern' in *Husmodern*.[35] *VM*, which was probably distributed free of charge in the Cooperative's stores, advertised their own products, such as fabrics, sewing machines and sewing accessories. This differentiated it from *AM-T* and *Husmodern*, which were aimed at a different market and depended on advertisements directed at the better-off middle class, although some of their readers also could be in the aspiring lower middle class and working class.[36]

In 1940, about a third of the content of *AM-T* consisted of designs for dressmaking, presenting about forty dressmaking patterns for women's clothing

Figure 6. Two women laying out patterns on fabric, from the cover of the first issue of *VM*, Autumn (1940). By this time the patterns were cut, and the markings punched, on tissue paper in one size.

every other week. As before the war, the magazine also contained patterns for children's clothing, embroidery, knitting and crocheting, plus fashion news, home furnishing advice, recipes and advertisements.[37] In 1944, the number of patterns gradually decreased when the magazine merged with the fashion magazine *Cosmopolite* and was renamed *Femina*, a new, glamorous and elegant magazine. *Femina* was modelled on *Elle*, *Mademoiselle* and other similar foreign magazines, aimed at an affluent middle-class readership.[38] *Femina* became a weekly in 1946, offering only one or a few dressmaking designs each week.

During the Second World War, *Husmodern* had three different types of pattern series with a total of about fifteen pattern designs per issue. The first and most elegant series was presented in the so-called fashion spread. Almost every week, reports and images from Paris and other European fashion houses as well as from American film companies were published. Alongside the foreign designs, the Swedish fashion designer Göta Trägårdh (1904–1984) was house illustrator from 1939 to 1953. Dressmaking patterns for these designs were ordered according to personal measurements, for about 2–4 SEK.[39] Through the anonymous fashion editor, the reader was given instructions on what was appropriate clothing based on their figure and age, and how the designs could be adapted to fabric availability and Swedish tastes and needs. It was recommended

that the most difficult designs should be sewn by a professional seamstress. The second pattern series in *Husmodern* featured 'free' or 'advertising patterns' pre-cut in one size for cost price. In 1941, they were supplemented by the publisher's *Åhlén & Åkerlund's Stil-mönster*. These included more detailed work instructions, were more expensive, and were also sold as individual pattern packets in selected stores.[40] As a way of maintaining the important connection with the readers, *Husmodern* also had a third pattern series, which consisted of direct responses to reader requests.

When home sewing increased during the war, the pattern magazines tried to assist home sewers with easy-to-sew designs and detailed instructions. The magazines offered designs that were fashionable but adapted to the particular difficulties of the war. Alteration designs and fabric saving had existed to a large extent previously, and the main differences during the Second World War were an increasing focus on practical fashion, for war-preparedness and for cycling, as well as an increased use of synthetic fibres. During the war, the Swedish pattern manufacturers and their often-anonymous house designers had grown strong. Restrictions and rationing were to remain throughout the 1940s.

PRINTED PATTERNS AND PATTERNS-ON-FABRIC, THE 1950s–1970s

After the war, there was a shortage of labour and domestic help, but expectations were high that this would be met by new technology and new appliances. Inexpensive dressmakers gradually became fewer. According to a state investigation from 1947, the ready-made clothing industries had taken over most of the production of menswear and women's coats. However, the investigators thought that women's indoor clothing and especially children's clothing were best produced in the home, as well as alteration and mending. They pointed out that it was not only about economic benefits but also about home-working women being allowed to 'do work that they think is "fun" and that gives clear results and triggers their creative desire'.[41] This was analogous with how the magazines presented their home sewing sections.

The period between 1950 and 1975 was characterized by strong and stable economic growth in Sweden. Production and consumption were doubled in a short time, and working hours were shortened, with free Saturdays and longer holidays. The years around 1950 saw the peak of the housewife in Sweden, corresponding to one third of total employment. Subsequently, the expanding official sector, in particular education, health and social care, led to an increase in gainfully employed women, and a following increase in working mothers.[42] During the period 1950–1980 home sewing was at its height, not only in Sweden, but also internationally. Mending of old garments decreased, while dressmaking increased until the early 1980s.[43] Home sewing was still more economical than buying ready-made clothing, as is stated in the Cooperation's *Vi modemönster* in

Figure 7. This outfit on the cover of Aller's *Femina* in 1965 was inspired by the French designer André Courrèges, adapted by Ulla Skjöldebrand and photographed by Olle Bogren (compare Figure 8). The heading says: *tycker ni om den här COURRÈGES-DRÄKTEN? ni kan sy den själv* (do you like this COURRÈGES-SUIT? you can sew it yourself).
Femina, 19 (1965).
© Courtesy of photographer Olle Bogren and Lund University Library

1979: 'You have probably already discovered that sewing is not only a fun hobby but also more profitable than ever'.[44]

In *Husmodern*, the housewife, who was previously the norm and the ideal reader, was replaced in the 1960s by the working mother, often living in the countryside.[45] At the same time, *Femina* had become a wide-ranging weekly magazine, like *Husmodern*, but with a different target group; it was aimed at urban women, and also men, who were interested in culture and fashion. Both *Femina* and *Husmodern* offered dressmaking patterns almost every week during the 1950s and 1960s, for women or children, and sometimes for men. Until 1971 the Cooperative's *Vår Mönstertidning* remained about the same as from the start, but alternating between more or less textual content at intervals. In 1972 it changed its name to *Vi modemönster*, primarily illustrated with images from the pattern packets. Even though the three magazines had different target groups, the inspiration for the designs were the same, as well as for ready-made clothing, that is, from Paris and other leading fashion centres. For example, designs inspired by and adapted for home sewers by the French fashion designer André Courrèges (1923–2016) could be seen both in the fashionable *Femina* (Figure 7) and in the

Figure 8. The Cooperative Association's version of the Courrèges suit, design 2932, see also designs 3001 and 5001. *VM*, Autumn–Winter (1965–1966), 36–37.

less elitist *VM* (Figure 8), and suggestions to sew it yourself in the more down-to earth *Husmodern*.[46]

During these years, competition in the weekly publication market increased, with greater demands for colour images and more distinctive magazines. New media were added: there were more radio channels and television appeared on the scene in 1957.[47] Radio could be easily listened to while sewing clothes, whereas watching television was more compatible with knitting or crocheting. The publishers of the magazines in this study adapted their publications to double-working women's limited time, diminishing sewing skills, and the competition from the ready-made clothing industries. They met their readers' need for easier dressmaking patterns in several different ways.

Firstly, home sewers were helped by fashion being simpler and adapted to more casual living, for example sportswear, influenced by the American style. New synthetic fabrics as well as knitwear were introduced and praised in the magazines. These were iron-free, elastic and easy to work with. In combination with the standardization requirements of the ready-made clothing industry, a fashion that required a lesser fit was followed, and was also easier to master for home sewers.[48]

Secondly, patterns became easier to use. In 1948 both *Femina* and *VM* changed from cut and punched paper patterns to patterns with printed instructions (compare Figures 6 and 9). The printed patterns facilitated both cutting and sewing, and also allowed for patterns of more than one size on the

Bra att veta . . .

NÄR det det gäller nyanskaffning av kläder och därmed sammanhängande frågor, händer det nog, alltsom oftast, att vi står ganska tveksamma. Ja, det finns vissa moment, som faktiskt vållar oss riktigt huvudbry. För somliga kanske svårigheten är som störst, när det gäller att välja tyg och modell. Andra åter tycker, att det är ryskligt svårt att lägga ut mönstret och klippa till tyget, och för en tredje är det kanske vissa sömnadsmoment eller provningen, som är besvärligast.

Från och med detta nummer av Vår mönstertidning, kommer vi att införa korta artiklar med goda råd i olika klädd- och sömnadsfrågor, under rubriken "Bra att veta . . ." Den här gången skall vi tala litet om mönster och speciellt om våra egna Vi-mönster, som finns till samtliga modeller i denna tidning.

Är det verkligen nödvändigt att använda mönster, då man skall klippa till ett plagg? Kan man inte bara klippa, så där på ett ungefär, och sedan prova? Jo, visst kan man, men tänk så mycket tyg man skövlar, och så många gånger man får prova. Ett tillförlitligt mönster spar oerhört mycket, både tyg och tid, såväl för amatören, som yrkessömmerskan. Innan man börjar lägga ut mönsterdelarna på tyget, bör man förvissa sig om, att mönstrets längder och vidder passar till den person, man skall sy åt. Kontrollera och justera detta först. Sedan gäller det, att man noga följer mönstret och markerar väl efter detsamma. Har man nu verkligen givit sig tid till dessa förberedelser, passar plaggen i regel riktigt bra redan vid första provningen. Prova måste man ändå göra ett par gånger, och små justeringar är ofrånkomliga, vilket mönster man än använder, och hur väl man än förarbetar det hela. Det är så få av oss, som har den riktiga ideal- och normalfiguren, som allt passar på med en gång.

Vid köp av mönster, såväl som andra varor, bör man ju se till, att man väljer det, som är b r a. Hurudant skall då ett bra mönster se ut, och vilka krav har man rätt att ställa på detta?

Det skall ha god passform, vara väl provat, och utarbetat efter ett bra tillskärningssystem, som passar just vår folktyp.

Det skall ha tydliga och tillförlitliga anvisningar på varje mönsterdel. Så skall t. ex. veck, inprovningar m. m. vara angivna på sin rätta plats.

Med varje mönster bör följa en bild av modellen, samt diagram, som visar hur mönsterdelarna lägges ut på olika tygbredder.

En kortfattad och lättförståelig sömnadsbeskrivning, med så många goda råd och anvisningar, som möjligt, är också nödvändig.

När Vi-mönstren utarbetas, är det just ovan angivna mycket viktiga synpunkter, som är rättesnöret, ty Vi-mönstren vill hjälpa våra hemsömmande kvinnor att åstadkomma välsittande, klädsamma, praktiska och moderna plagg åt hela familjen.

E. J—n.

3

Figure 9. In 1948 *VM* changed from cut and punched patterns in one size to printed patterns in several sizes on the same sheet, called *Vi-mönster* (compare Figure 6). The printed patterns cost about three times as much, but were easier to use and became very popular. *VM*, Autumn (1951), 3.

Figure 10. *Husmodern* started to offer patterns drawn on fabric in 1948. From 1966 the service was offered as ready-cut fabric, as presented here, in *Husmodern*, 47 (1966), 37. *© Courtesy of Lund University Library*

same sheet of paper. The new patterns in *VM* cost about three times as much as the punched ones.[49] Also in 1948, *Husmodern* launched a new paper pattern series 'intended also for those who have not dared to sew for themselves and their children', but its publisher's brand, *Stil-mönster*, carried on with cut and punched patterns well into the 1960s.[50]

Thirdly, to facilitate home sewing even further, both *Husmodern* and *Femina* eventually changed from paper patterns to offering ready-cut-out fabric.[51] This eliminated several time-consuming steps. It was argued, as previously in 1912 in *AM-T*, that it was so simple that even a beginner could sew the garments easily, quickly and safely. *Husmodern* had already started to offer their first *mönster på tyg* (patterns drawn on fabric) in 1948, and from 1966 they offered ready-cut fabric (Figure 10). In *Femina* ready-cut fabric was offered from 1956 and, unlike *Husmodern*, all *Femina* designs could also be ordered as paper patterns (Figures 11, 12). Both magazines presented their ready-cut designs as an inexpensive way to get the latest fashion. In *Husmodern* they often were presented together with ready-made clothing, while *Femina* frequently presented them on the cover, but separate from the other fashion news. In both magazines they were seen as a special service to the readers.[52] The fabric was cut to order. An issue of *Femina* from 1969 shows the estimated demand for a pre-cut woollen dress: they had enough fabric for 300 dresses in

Figure 11. These dresses, from 1968, offered pre-cut in 'the newest new in fabric', a paper-like material made in Sweden of 50 per cent rayon and 50 per cent nylon. The fabric, designed by the Swedish artist Carl Johan de Geer (1938–), was also offered by the metre for home decoration projects. Designs by Ulla Skjöldebrand, photographed by Anna-Lisa Kallos. *Femina*, 29 (1968), 52–53.
© Courtesy of photographer Anna-Lisa Kallos and Lund University Library

each of two colours, but also had good opportunities to acquire more fabric if more orders were to come.[53] Occasionally, the design in *Femina* could be bought ready-made, at twice the price.[54] In the second half of the 1970s both *Husmodern* and *Femina* replaced their ready-cut fabric service with easy dressmaking projects, with patterns in special appendices or as diagrams in the magazines.

Fourthly, the pleasure in making your own unique clothing was increasingly emphasized. This was also pointed out by appliance producers. In 1957 the Swedish leading sewing machine manufacturer Husqvarna accentuated the economic reasons for sewing at home. Two years later, enjoyment was already the main reason: 'Get yourself a new fun hobby/it's easy/it goes fast/it's so fun to sew on.'[55] A hobby required leisure. Dressmaking at home could only become a hobby when it was not a necessary practice, and when the home was no longer the sole workplace for women. In Sweden, boys and men had engaged in hobby projects at home to a greater extent since the end of the 1920s, in connection with the industrial society's clear division of work and leisure, shorter working hours and longer holidays. Only when the norm had become to buy ready-made clothes could it be called a hobby to do it yourself.[56]

To sum up, during the post-war period, *Femina*, *Husmodern* and *VM* met their female readers' need to sew at home through printed patterns and ready-cut

Figure 12. Home-made garments with accompanying patterns are rarely preserved in public collections in Sweden. This dress was sewn by Ulla Andersson in 1969, from the pattern shown in Figure 11, *Femina*, 29 (1968). She made it for her cousin's wedding and wore it only on that day. She also sewed curtains, lampshades and a drapery in the same fabric. Kulturen in Lund (KM 82502).

fabric. The modern casual fashion was easier to sew, and the requirements for customizing had already been lowered due to the ready-made clothing industries. In the 1970s, the magazines still stressed both the economic benefit and the pleasure of home sewing.

THE END OF THE GLORY DAYS OF HOME SEWING, THE EARLY 1980s

After the industrial golden years, when Sweden was at its zenith in an international perspective, development slowed down. The downturn in industry in the second half of the 1970s strongly affected the textile and clothing industry, which was mostly relocated to countries outside Europe where workers were paid lower wages. During the 1980s, women became more highly educated and the proportion of full-time working women increased. This resulted in the number of women who were housewives decreasing by fifty per cent between 1970 and 1990, a reduction of just over half a million women.[57]

Eventually Sweden's ready-made women's clothing industry got its final breakthrough. The fact that the market for cheap, ready-made clothes increased

did not immediately mean that home sewing declined. Instead, the total consumption of clothes increased, with both home-made and ready-made clothes existing side by side. Machines had simplified household chores, but gainful employment had increased and thus work doubled for many women. The time saved by modern household appliances had been used to meet higher demands on cleaning, washing and consumption of clothing and other goods. An investigation from 1982/1983 shows that Swedish married or cohabiting women devoted about as much time to sewing as to washing dishes or clothes. However, during this time, sales of sewing machines and fabrics finally began to decline.[58]

The beginning of the 1980s saw two important events that taken together marked a significant moment in the long era of home sewing in Sweden. In 1981, *Femina* ended its offer of dressmaking projects, and in 1981/1982 Bonnier's *Stil-mönster*, initially started by *Husmodern*'s pattern department, began a cooperation with the German brand Neue Mode at Modeverlag Arnold GMbH, that ended the design production in Sweden.[59] Many towns and smaller communities still had fabric stores that sold patterns, and home sewing continued, albeit at a diminishing scale. Financial hardship was no longer an essential motive for women to sew their own and their children's clothes, nor was dressmaking an important part of what a mother was expected to do for her family. Nevertheless, the ambition of *Stil-mönster* was, in 1983 as well as from its start in the 1940s, that clothes sewn from their pattern packages should cost about half of the retail price.[60] Based on quality, it was still possible to save money, but creativity and the possibility of making something unique, which had been a motive throughout, were now the main impetus for home sewers.

In 1981, *Femina* was redesigned into a glossy and exclusive monthly magazine. Following this, only knitting and crochet patterns remained for those readers who wanted to make their own clothes at home. Patterns for knitting and crochet had been an important part of the handicraft section since its early days, as well as in *Husmodern* and *VM*. Knitting and crochet were more portable and easier to carry out, and the patterns and instructions could be more easily printed in the magazines.

By this time, *Husmodern* no longer included patterns for home sewing on a weekly basis. Occasionally, garments sewn from *Stil-mönster* were shown, complemented by easy and quick sewing projects, that could be made from diagram patterns in the magazine (Figure 13). A woman in 1981 still had to save money, but the time for sewing was lacking. Preferably, the project should be able to be finished in one evening.[61] *Husmodern* was eventually affected by declining readership figures and finally ceased publication in 1988.[62]

VM had changed its name to *Vi modemönster* in 1972, but by then it was only a catalogue presenting pattern packets to order. In 1983 it expanded its knitting pattern section and was renamed to *Sy & Sticka: Vi modemönster*. In 1990, the Cooperative Association's catalogue and pattern manufacture was finally discontinued, thus ending large-scale pattern production for home sewers in Sweden.[63] Sewing and dressmaking had always been the last thing to do in the home, for the housewife or working mother, after all other duties were finished. Once economic benefits were no longer the main driving factor, other leisure

Figure 13. Waistcoat with a diagram pattern in *Husmodern*, 18 (1981), 34–35. Designs by Irma Grandinson, photographed by Kjell Andrén.
© Courtesy of photographer Kjell Andrén and Lund University Library

activities took over and patterns ceased to be bait to sell women's magazines. Finally, home sewing became the specialist hobby that it is today.

CONCLUSION

During the hundred years in focus here, home sewing changed from being a necessity to a hobby, something to do for fun and for the sake of individuality and creativity.[64] This survey of three Swedish magazines with patterns for home sewers has highlighted home sewing as an important fashion practice which existed parallel to the transition from professional seamstresses, via domestic ready-made clothing, to the mass production of clothes in low-wage countries.

Throughout the heyday of home sewing, the magazines' pattern departments transformed fashion into easy-to-sew patterns and distributed them to a large section of Swedish women. The editors had to predict and decide what their female readership wanted to sew. Besides a kind of democratization of the more elitist fashion, the pattern magazines gave crucial instruction on how to dress, whether you sewed garments yourself, or employed your seamstress sew them for you, which contributed to their popularity. This study illustrates how an often neglected but important part of garment production and fashion distribution functioned before the ready-made clothing industries came to dominate the market. The women's efforts created unique, but anonymous, garments which are rarely preserved in public collections. Even though the magazines do not show the clothes that were actually sewn, but instead what the editors considered appropriate clothing for their readers, these magazines are important sources for a broader understanding of twentieth-century fashion in Sweden.

The patterns in magazines clearly show how sewing skills and female expectations changed over time. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the designs were often aimed at a professional seamstress or a skilled home sewer. Then, gradually, fashion and designs became simpler. With the help of easier patterns and more advanced sewing machines most women were expected to be able to sew garments during the 1940s and 1950s. To assist the busy woman in the 1960s and 1970s, the magazines offered patterns on ready-cut fabric and easy diagram patterns. As the century progressed, women sewed their own garments to a lesser extent, and by the 1980s, dressmaking patterns ceased to exist in women's magazines, leaving more space for patterns for knitting and crochet.

Home sewing did not end when pattern distribution ceased in Swedish women's magazines. It eventually diminished, but has lived on with foreign pattern companies, hobby magazines, the DIY movement and different communities on the internet.[65] During the closure of society throughout the pandemic in 2020–2022, home sewing as well as knitting and other home handicrafts flourished. Today's societies, combatting the global climate crisis, have much to learn from older traditions of seeing clothes as raw material that can be mended, updated and remade several times in order to save resources. Hopefully, this will lead to both an upgrading of fabric and sewing quality, as well as an improvement in the status of home-made clothes.

ORCID


Gunilla Törnvall http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4600-1247

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my colleagues and friends for valuable comments on an earlier version of this research, presented at the Research seminar on History of Ideas and Sciences and Book History, Lund University, especially John Hennessey for proofreading; the Fashion seminar, Lund University, especially Pernilla Rasmussen; and the Centre for Textile Research, Copenhagen University, especially Eva Andersson Strand and Marie Louise Bech Nosch. Thanks also to Kulturen in Lund, especially Anna Sanfridsson, the staff at Lund University Library, and all others who have shown interest and commitment to my study in various ways. This study has been financed by the Swedish Research Council.

REFERENCES

1. This article is part of my research project 'Reading Patterns: Women, Clothes and Print Culture in Sweden 1881–1981', financed by the Swedish Research Council, registration number 2018–01632. The main purpose is to examine the function and impact of print culture on the production, distribution and reading of dressmaking patterns for home sewing in Sweden from the perspective of book history.
2. By tradition, women's clothes were often sewn at home, unlike men's clothes; for context, see Pernilla Rasmussen, 'Creating Fashion: Tailors' and Seamstresses' Work with

Cutting and Construction Techniques in Women's Dress, *c*. 1750–1830', in *Fashionable Encounters: Perspectives and Trends in Textile and Dress in the Early Modern Nordic World*, ed. by Tove Engelhardt Mathiassen et al. (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), pp. 49–71. On the emergence of Swedish ready-made women's clothing, see Ulrika Kyaga, *Swedish Fashion 1930–1960: Rethinking the Swedish Textile and Clothing Industry* (Stockholm: Stockholms Universitet, 2017).

3. See Anita Nyberg, 'Med symaskiner syr man mer: Kvinnors förvärvs- och hushållsarbete på1930-talet', in *Dagsverken: 13 essäer i arbetets historia*, ed. by Alf O. Johansson, Susanne Lundin and Lars Olsson (Lund: Historiska Media, 1994), pp. 256–89; Kathryn E. Wilson, 'Commodified Craft, Creative Community: Women's Vernacular Dress in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia', in *The Culture of Sewing: Gender, Consumption and Home Dressmaking*, ed. by Barbara Burman (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1999), pp. 141–56 (p. 145).
4. See Christopher Breward, 'Patterns of Respectability: Publishing, Home Sewing and the Dynamics of Class and Gender 1870–1914', *The Culture of Sewing*, pp. 21–31 (p. 23); and Margareta Berger, '"Experimentet är slut!" (Femina 1975–77)', in *Veckopressen i Sverige: Analyser och perspektiv*, ed. by Anita Ahrens et al. (Löderup: Mälarhusgården, 1979), pp. 317–46 (p. 327). See also Barbara Burman, 'Made at Home by Clever Fingers: Home Dressmaking in Edwardian England', in *The Culture of Sewing*, pp. 33–53; Wilson, 'Commodified Craft, Creative Community', pp. 141–56; Rachel Moseley, 'Respectability Sewn Up: Dressmaking and Film Star Style in the Fifties and Sixties', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 4.481 (2001), 473–90. By class, I mean above all a social construction that can be used to categorize people in different groups. For an in-depth discussion on the class concept, see Ulrika Holgersson, *Populärkulturen och klassamhället: Arbete, klass och genus i svensk dampress i början av 1900-talet* (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2005), pp. 24–43, and Ulrika Holgersson, *Class: Feminist and Cultural Perspectives* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011).
5. See Joy Spanabel Emery, *A History of the Paper Pattern Industry* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2014); Margaret Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own?: Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine 1800–1914* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 67. See also in the publisher Åhlén & Åkerlund's house journal: Lilian Meiland, 'Störst i Norden tack vare mönsterpress', *Då & Då: Aktuell information från Åhlén & Åkerlunds Förlag*, 9 (1983), 4–5, 21. Compare Fiona Hackney's study on the British magazines *Home Chat*, *Woman's Weekly* and *Woman*, in 'Making Modern Women, Stitch by Stitch: Dressmaking and Women's Magazines in Britain 1919–39', in *The Culture of Sewing*, pp. 73–95; Margareta Berger's study on *Husmodern* in *Fruar och Damer: Kvinnoroller i veckopress* (Stockholm: PAN/Norstedts, 1974), and Barbara Burman, 'Home Sewing and "Fashions for All," 1908–1937', *Costume*, 28.1 (1994), 71–80.
6. Pattern magazines are mentioned rarely in media history and women's history research; see Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own?*, p. 190; David Reed, *The Popular Magazine in Britain and the United States 1880–1960* (London: British Library, 1997), pp. 141–42; *Women in Magazines: Research, Representation, Production and Consumption*, ed. by Rachel Ritchie et al. (New York: Routledge, 2016); Anna Gough-Yates, *Understanding Women's Magazines: Publishing, Markets and Readerships* (London: Routledge, 2003). In research on fashion journalism, there are some references to magazines that contain patterns, but the focus is on other issues. See, for example, Kate Nelson Best, *The History of Fashion Journalism* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 7. One exception is Marianne Van Remoortel, 'Women Editors and the Rise of the Illustrated Fashion Press in the Nineteenth Century', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 39.4 (2017), 269–95. For a discussion on twentieth-century Swedish fashion magazines, see Emma Severinsson, '"Det finns fashion i allt": Svenska modetidningar och modets demokratisering', in *Modevetenskap: Perspektiv på mode, stil och estetik*, ed. by Emma Severinsson and Philip Warkander (Stockholm: Appell förlag, 2021), pp. 123–42; Leif Runefelt, 'The Corset and the Mirror. Fashion and Domesticity in Swedish Advertisements and Fashion Magazines, 1870–1914', *History of Retailing and Consumtion*, 5.2 (2019), 169–93.

7. Home sewing is mentioned briefly in Berger, *Fruar och Damer*; Viveka Berggren Torell, *Folkhemmets barnkläder: diskurser om det klädda barnet under 1920–1950-talen* (Göteborg: Arkipelag, 2007); and Louise Waldén, *Genom symaskinens nålsöga: Teknik och social förändring i kvinnokultur och manskultur* (Stockholm: Carlsson Bokförlag, 1990). More detailed studies of home sewing include *The Culture of Sewing*; Barbara Burman, '"What a Deal of Work There Is in a Dress!" Englishness and Home Dressmaking in the Age of the Sewing Machine', in *The Englishness of English Dress*, ed. by Christopher Breward, Becky Conekin and Caroline Cox (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002), pp. 79–96; Emery, *A History of the Paper Pattern Industry*; Sarah A. Gordon, *'Make it Yourself': Home Sewing, Gender, and Culture, 1890–1930* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Amy Twigger Holroyd, *Folk Fashion: Understanding Homemade Clothes* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017); Kevin L. Seligman, *Cutting for All! The Sartorial Arts, Related Crafts, and Commercial Paper Pattern* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern University Press, 1996); Kevin L. Seligman, 'Dressmakers' Patterns: The English Commercial Paper Pattern Industry 1878–1950', *Costume*, 37 (2003), 95–113; Margaret Walsh, 'The Democratization of Fashion: The Emergence of the Women's Dress Pattern Industry', *The Journal of American History*, 66 (1979), 299–313.
8. On book history, see Robert Darnton, '"What is the History of Books?" Revisited', *Modern Intellectual History*, 3 (2007), 495–508; D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 12–13, 32–49.
9. Cheryl Buckley, 'On the Margins: Theorizing the History and Significance of Making and Designing Clothes at Home', in *The Culture of Sewing*, pp. 55–71 (p. 66); Burman, *The Culture of Sewing*, p. 12.
10. Jennifer Craik, *The Face of Fashion: Cultural Studies in Fashion* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 14–15. See also Holroyd, *Folk Fashion*, pp. 1–3.
11. 'for blandt andet att være i stand til at faa de nye franske modellers lidt sydlandske damefaconer til at passe bedre for nordiske, knapt saa smækre figurer', Valdemar Aller cited in Sven Bergquist, *Allers förlag 100 år: 1894–1994: En kulturhistoria* (Helsingborg: Allerföretagen, 1994), p. 85.
12. See, for example, Kevin Almond and Elaine Evans, 'A Regional Study of Women's Emotional Attachments to the Consumption and Making of Ordinary Clothing, Drawing on Archives in Leeds, West Yorkshire, 1939–1979', *Costume*, 56.1 (2022), 74–100; Cheryl Buckley and Hazel Clark, *Fashion and Everyday Life: London and New York* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017); John Styles, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Anna Hedtjärn-Wester, *Män i kostym: Prinsar, konstnärer och tegelbärare vid sekelskiftet 1900* (Stockholm: Nordiska museets förlag, 2010); and Marie Ulväng, *Klädekonomi och klädkultur: Böndernas kläder i Härjedalen under 1800-talet* (Möklinta: Gidlund, 2012).
13. I have been in direct contact with the Nordic Museum and Skansen in Stockholm, the Textile Museum in Borås, Kulturen in Lund and Kalmar County Museum, and also Swedish textile conservators via the Swedish Association for Textile Conservation, in September 2022.
14. Linto, 'Mönsterfabriken', *Då & Då*, 2–3 (1950), 5–6, 12. This is the only circulation number of patterns found, so far, though the print run of the magazines at times can be found in the literature.
15. Patterns were produced and distributed by more publishers, but not on such a large scale or as long lasting. American, French, British and German patterns and magazines were also distributed in Sweden during this period.
16. I have examined a minimum of every tenth number of the fortnightly/weekly *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning/Allers Mönster-Tidning/Femina* 1894–1981 and the weekly *Husmodern* 1917–1981, and all issues of the biannual *Vår Mönstertidning* 1940–1982. I have studied all issues of the magazines at Lund University from specific periods: in 1917 when *Husmodern* starts, in 1940 when *VM* starts and throughout the Second World War, in 1965, and finally in 1980/1981 when *Femina* ceased to offer patterns. The issues of *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning* 1881–1883 have not been saved at any known library or archive in Sweden or Denmark. The issues of 1884–1893 are stored at the National Library

of Sweden in Stockholm, but they are not allowed to be studied due to their fragile condition. The Danish edition *Nordisk Mønster-Tidende* is stored at the Royal Danish Library, Copenhagen.

17. On the importance of advertising for the increasing use of images, see Marie-Louise Bowallius, 'Advertising and the Use of Colour in *Woman's Home Companion*, 1923–33', in *Design and the Modern Magazine*, ed. by Jeremy Aynsley and Kate Forde (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 18–36. See also Leif Runefelt, *Den magiska spegeln: Kvinnan och varan i pressens annonser 1870–1914* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2019).
18. On *Nordisk Mønster-Tidende* and the Allers, see Kjeld Damgaard, *Danmarks ældste ugeblad: Om bladets start samt med glimt af bladets historie i øvrigt* (København: Aller Holding, 2013); Esther Grølsted, 'Laura Aller og Nordisk Mønster-Tidende', *Dragtjournalen*, 9.13 (2015), 17–23; John Lindskog, *Aller: Sådan har én familie gennem fem generationer bevaret magten over Nordens største bladkoncern* (København: Børsens Forlag, 2004); Bergquist, *Allers förlag 100 år*; and Birgit Petersson, 'Tidningar som industri och parti (1880–1897)', in *Den svenska pressens historia, 2. Åren då allting hände (1830–1897)*, ed. by Dag Nordmark, Eric Johannesson and Birgit Petersson (Stockholm: Ekerlid, 2001), pp. 236–342 (pp. 322–25). On *Der Bazar* and its influence on the illustrated fashion press in Europe and beyond, see Van Remoortel, 'Women Editors', pp. 269–95. On early female journalists, see also Margareta Berger, *Pennskaft: Kvinnliga journalister i svensk dagspress 1690–1975* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söners förlag, 1977), pp. 69–75, 201.
19. The measurement is according to the author's private copies: *AM-T*, 21 (1904) and 19 (1907), since the copies in Lund University Library are folded, bound and partly cut.
20. Citation from *AM-T*, 19 (1902), p. 149: 'från klädsömmerskor i de stora städerna, från syflickor på landet och från starkt upptagna husmödrar'. On the new equipment, see also Bergquist, *Allers förlag 100 år*, p. 86. All translations in the text from the magazines are by the author.
21. See appendix to *AM-T*, 8 (1912).
22. Appendix to *Nordisk Mönster-Tidning*, 16 (1898), and Bergquist, *Allers förlag 100 år*, p. 90.
23. Lennart Schön, *Sweden's Road to Modernity: An Economic History* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2017), pp. 200, 239–40, 258–59, 274–76, 308. Compare Burman, 'Made at Home', pp. 41–43.
24. The purpose is clear from 'Anmälan' (Announcement) and advertisement for subscription, in the first issue of *Husmodern*, 1 (1917), 1. On *Husmodern*, see Berger, *Fruar och Damer*, and Waldén, *Genom symaskinens nålsöga*, especially pp. 214–19. Berger compares the role of women in the two women's magazines *Husmodern* and *Idun* for the years 1930, 1945, 1961 and 1971. Waldén studies sewing in *Husmodern* for the years 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960 and 1965.
25. Per Rydén, 'Guldåldern (1919–1936)', in *Den svenska pressens historia 3: Det moderna Sveriges spegel (1897–1945)*, ed. by Gunilla Lundström, Per Rydén and Elisabeth Sandlund (Stockholm: Ekerlid, 2001), pp. 142–265 (pp. 212–13).
26. Schön, *Sweden's Road to Modernity*, pp. 216, 259–99.
27. According to *Husmodern*, 1 (1923), 4–5; *Husmodern*, 51 (1924), 1832–33.
28. As is pointed out in *Husmodern*, 8 (1917), 93.
29. See Gunilla Törnvall, 'Culottes and Warm Pyjamas: Patterns for Home Sewing in Sweden during World War Two', *Mémoires du Livre/Studies in Book Culture*, 13.1 (Spring 2022), 1–30. https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1094129ar. See also *Paris Fashion and World War Two: Global Diffusion and Nazi Control*, ed. by Lou Taylor and Marie McLoughlin (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).
30. *Husmodern*, 3 (1942), 11. See also *Femina med Cosmopolite och Allers Mönster-Tidning*, 8 (1944), 3.
31. Kyaga, *Swedish Fashion*, pp. 206–10.
32. See for example *AM-T*, 1 (1940), 5, and *Husmodern*, 3 (1942), 11.
33. See design nos 41632 and 41634 in *VM*, Hösten (1940), 4–5, and in *AM-T*, 17 (1940), 12–13.

34. See *VM*, Hösten (1940), 3. Compare *AM-T*, 2 (1940), 28.
35. 25 öre in 1940 correspond to about 7 SEK (*c*. 0.7 EUR) in March 2022, according to official statistics: <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/prisomraknaren/> [accessed 19 April 2022]. In comparison, a single copy of *Husmodern* in autumn 1940 cost 40 öre, and *AM-T* 35 öre.
36. Compare Hackney, 'Making Modern Women', pp. 74–75.
37. The statistic builds on a survey of *AM-T*, nos 9 and 10 (1940). In no. 9 just under 17% of the pages are occupied by advertisements and 31% by designs. In no. 10 just under 18% are advertisements while 38% are designs (supplements, front and back cover excluded).
38. Berger, '"Experimentet är slut!"', pp. 319, 321, 327.
39. 2 SEK in 1940 correspond to about 54 SEK (*c*. 5 EUR) in March 2022 according to <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/prisomraknaren/> [accessed 19 April 2022].
40. *Husmodern*, 1 (1941), 36–37; *Husmodern*, 15 (1941), 34.
41. Utredningen för hem- och familjefrågor, *Betänkande angående familjeliv och hemarbete*, SOU (1947), 46. Citation on p. 30: 'göra arbeten som de tycka är "roliga" och som ge påtagligt resultat och utlöser deras skaparlängtan'. See also Waldén, *Genom symaskinens nålsöga*, pp. 30, 170–72.
42. Schön, *Sweden's Road to Modernity*, pp. 314–25, 344.
43. See Anita Nyberg, *Tekniken — kvinnornas befriare? Hushållsteknik, köpevaror, gifta kvinnors hushållsarbetstid och förvärvsdeltagande 1930-talet–1980-talet* (Linköping: Linköping University, 1989), p. 209. According to Emery, home sewing had a boom period in the 1960s, *A History of the Paper Pattern Industry*, p. 178. See also Sherry Schofield-Tomschin's study of American home sewing in 'Home Sewing: Motivational Changes in the Twentieth Century', in *The Culture of Sewing*, pp. 97–110 (pp. 98, 102).
44. 'Du har säkert redan upptäckt att det inte bara är en rolig hobby utan även mer lönande än någonsin att sy själv', *Vi modemönster*, Hösten/Vintern (1979), 2.
45. Berger, *Fruar och damer*, pp. 185, 202.
46. See *Femina*, 15 (1965), 6–7; *VM*, Hösten–Vintern (1965–1966), 7; *Husmodern*, 1 (1966), 48.
47. Berger, *Fruar och damer*, p. 170.
48. Emery, *A History of the Paper Pattern Industry*, pp. 159, 180–87; Waldén, *Genom symaskinens nålsöga*, p. 222.
49. See *Femina*, 28 (1948), 23; *VM*, Hösten (1948), 2; *VM*, Våren (1950).
50. 'avsedda även för dem som hittills inte vågat sy åt sig själva eller åt sina barn', *Husmodern*, 52 (1948), 20.
51. Also other Swedish magazines, for example *Damernas Värld* and *ICA-kuriren* offered ready-cut fabric to their readers at this time.
52. See, for example, *Husmodern*, 32 (1965), 22–27; *Femina*, 48 (1966), 66–68. In 1965 ready-cut fabric designs are presented on 23% of the covers of *Femina*.
53. *Femina*, 21 (1969), 42–43.
54. See for example, *Femina*, 35 (1965), 96–97.
55. Compare Husqvarna ads in *Femina*, 11 (1957), 56, and *Femina*, 11 (1959), 75: 'Skaffa Er en ny rolig hobby/det är lätt/det går fort/det är så roligt att sy på.'
56. About the hobby phenomenon and its spread in Sweden, see Jochum Stattin, *Hobbyentusiaster och folkhemsbyggare* (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2007), pp. 13–23.
57. Schön, *Sweden's Road to Modernity*, pp. 408–15.
58. See Nyberg, Tekniken — kvinnornas befriare?, pp. 2, 6, 94–95, 125–27, 208–09. For the investigation from 1982/1983, see *Tids nog. . . : En undersökning om svenska folkets tidsanvändning: 1983 och 1984* (Stockholm Konsumentverket, 1986), table 6. Compare Schofield-Tomschin, 'Home Sewing', p. 99.
59. With thanks to Stina Dahlin, employed at Bonnier's Stil-mönster 1978–1982, interview 24 September 2021, and Britt Darke, designer, collection and marketing manager at Bonnier's Stil-mönster 1970–1982, interview 31 March 2022, for information on the merge with Neue Mode.
60. Meiland, 'Störst i Norden tack vare mönsterpress', p. 5.

61. See, for example, *Husmodern*, 2 (1981), 32–33.
62. Ingemar Oscarsson, 'Nöjsamt och nyttigt: Svensk veckopresshistoria i koncentrat', in *Veckovis: En antologi om svensk veckopress*, ed. by Peter Carelli and Ulf Dahlström (Helsingborg: Dunkers Kulturhus, 2005), pp. 11–22 (p. 19); Waldén, *Genom symaskinens nålsöga*, p. 228.
63. The end of the magazine is based on information in the Swedish library catalogue LIBRIS, <http://libris.kb.se/bib/3619408> [accessed 9 February 2022].
64. This is consistent with Schofield-Tomschin, 'Home Sewing', pp. 97–110. See also Emery, *A History of the Paper Pattern Industry*, p. 214.
65. See, for example, Holroyd, *Folk Fashion.*

GUNILLA TÖRNVALL is a researcher in Book History at the Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences at Lund University, Sweden, where she gained her PhD in 2013 — *Botaniska bilder till allmänheten* (Botanical Illustrations for the Public), (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2013). She holds an MA in Art History from Lund University and an MSc in Conservation from the University of Gothenburg. Currently she is studying the function and impact of print culture in the development, diffusion and reading of paper patterns for women's clothing production in Sweden.

Your short guide to the EUP Journals Blog http://euppublishingblog.com/

A forum for discussions relating to Edinburgh University Press Journals

1. The primary goal of the EUP Journals Blog

To aid discovery of authors, articles, research, multimedia and reviews published in Journals, and as a consequence contribute to increasing traffic, usage and citations of journal content.

2. Audience

Blog posts are written for an educated, popular and academic audience within EUP Journals' publishing fields.

3. Content criteria - your ideas for posts

We prioritize posts that will feature highly in search rankings, that are shareable and that will drive readers to your article on the EUP site.

4. Word count, style, and formatting

- Flexible length, however typical posts range 70-600 words.
- Related images and media files are encouraged.
- No heavy restrictions to the style or format of the post, but it should best reflect the content and topic discussed.

5. Linking policy

- Links to external blogs and websites that are related to the author, subject matter and to EUP publishing fields are encouraged, e.g.to related blog posts

6. Submit your post

Submit to ruth.allison@eup.ed.ac.uk

If you'd like to be a regular contributor, then we can set you up as an author so you can create, edit, publish, and delete your *own* posts, as well as upload files and images.

7. Republishing/repurposing

Posts may be re-used and re-purposed on other websites and blogs, but a minimum 2 week waiting period is suggested, and an acknowledgement and link to the original post on the EUP blog is requested.

8. Items to accompany post

- A short biography (ideally 25 words or less, but up to 40 words)
- A photo/headshot image of the author(s) if possible.
- Any relevant, thematic images or accompanying media (podcasts, video, graphics and photographs), provided copyright and permission to republish has been obtained.
- Files should be high resolution and a maximum of 1GB
- Permitted file types: *jpg, jpeg, png, gif, pdf, doc, ppt, odt, pptx, docx, pps, ppsx, xls, xlsx, key, mp3, m4a, wav, ogg, zip, ogv, mp4, m4v, mov, wmv, avi, mpg, 3gp, 3g2.*