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## **TRACING THE HISTORY OF THE APPAREL & TEXTILES DISCIPLINE 1840-1940**

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The purpose of this research was to trace the 19th and early 20th century antecedents of the apparel and textiles discipline by a content analysis of women's journals, housekeeping books, the Journal of Home Economics, and textbooks, among others.

Results showed that professionalization led to a more systematic accumulation of know-ledge, a focus on curriculum content and teaching methods, and a concern for quality research. Early research was of the survey type and focused on pragmatic concerns such as consumer issues and assessing societal clothing needs. By the 1920s the focus changed from clothing production to consumption, incorporating aesthetic, scientific and economic concepts.

A few well-developed textbooks began to appear in the 1880s; textile and clothing subject matter began to be grouped together in the 1890s, with the first book entirely on textiles appearing in 1912. "Clothing" began to replace "sewing" as a problem-solving approach replaced a skills approach to the subject matter.

A wide range of professionals were involved in shaping the discipline which became involved in public policy issues such as "pure textiles," garment labeling, factory labor, and standardization of pattern sizes. By the 1920s the A&T discipline was focused on moving from a craft status (teaching sewing and weaving) to a professional one, preparing women for careers.