

## Preface

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This book appears on the occasion of our colleague and friend Anneke Smelik's retirement as Professor of Visual Culture. It is meant to honor her pioneering work as a cultural studies scholar and to thank her for her intellectual leadership and companionship.

Anneke's vast oeuvre encompasses visual culture in the broadest sense of the term. Following her dissertation on feminist cinema, *And the Mirror Cracked: Feminist Cinema and Film Theory* (1998), she wrote engagingly about a wide range of topics, including multiculturalism in film and television adaptations of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the (hairless) body, the cyborg, Dutch fashion, techno-fashion, the scientific imaginary in visual culture, new media and education, fashion and memory, and, most recently, fashion, sustainability, and materiality. Anneke always sought ways to share her innovative and thought-provoking insights with colleagues in the field of cultural studies, her students, and the larger public.

In recent years, Anneke's interest in fashion shifted from the visual to the material culture of fashion, particularly to the material dimensions of the clothing we wear and toward the cultural conditions that would allow a more sustainable practice of fashion in an age of technological innovation. Without letting go of her concerns with matters of representation, Anneke's critical thinking about materials and materiality in fashion in her articles and as co-editor of the journal *Critical Studies in Fashion and Beauty* sets the agenda for the next generation of fashion scholars.

It is this critical legacy that we wish to celebrate with this volume. Together with twenty-five colleagues and friends of hers from Radboud University and around the world, we have collected a variety of case studies showing how important it is to give materials more attention than we have done in the past. Demonstrating the entangled relationship between materials and meaning in culture, as Anneke's work on fashion does, *Materials of Culture* advocates for a materials-based approach in cultural studies and thereby honors her invaluable contribution to the field.

Nijmegen, January 2023  
The Editors

