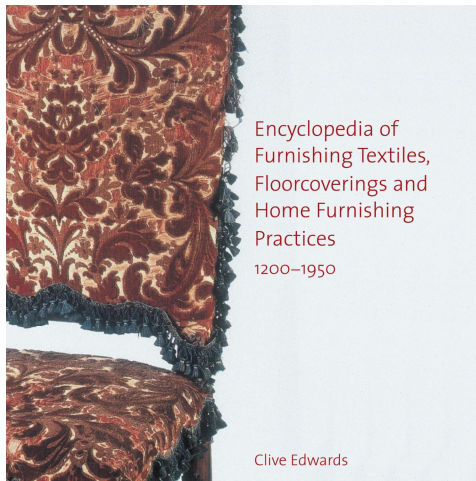


Encyclopedia of Furnishing Textiles, Floorcoverings and Home Furnishing Practices 1200-1950 / Clive Edwards.—Burlington, VT: Lund Humphries, 2007.—262 p.: ill.—ISBN 978-0-75463-265-8: \$150.00.



Edwards, a reader in the history of art and design at Loughborough University, has created another valuable reference work that is easily navigable. A-Z entries contain bold text words corresponding to other entry headings, and many entries conclude with suggestions for further reading or an abbreviated citation for one of the works listed in the book's extensive bibliography. Edwards focuses on Britain and America, as he did in his earlier work *Encyclopedia of Furniture Materials, Trades and Techniques* (Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2000).

Historians of furniture or interiors will welcome the addition of this work to their reference collections, and all readers will find the entries accessible. Edwards writes well, usually providing descriptions of not only the historical applications of particular materials, but also technical descriptions of how those materials have been produced and changes in production methods over time. Occasionally, as in the

excellent entry for Latex, Edwards includes details about marketing and adoption.

There are some noticeable gaps in the work. For example, Edwards' entry for Nylon conspicuously omits the material's invention by DuPont, despite the book's historical focus. And while the entry for Polypropylene states it is "an olefin petrochemical fibre," no entry for olefin points back to polypropylene as one can find in *Fairchild's Dictionary of Home Furnishings* by Emmanuel Hoffman (New York, NY: Fairchild, 1974).

There are relatively few images accompanying Edwards' hundreds of entries—twelve large color plates and 142 quarter-page or smaller black and white illustrations. Worse, many of the photographs are of questionable quality. Edwards concedes in his introduction, "As the book is a history rather than a guide to identification, the reader is referred to the many fully illustrated works that show images of textiles and their usage." Still, I was left wondering if the book would have been better off without them and in a smaller format.

Despite these minor problems, Edwards has assembled a fine, usable, and much needed reference tool. It well complements works such as *Encyclopedia of Furniture* by Joseph Aronson (New York, NY: Crown, 1965), *Dictionary of Furniture* by Charles Boyce (New York, NY: Facts on File, 2001), or *Complete Dictionary of Furniture* by John Gloag and Clive Edwards (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1991), none of which focus sufficiently on textiles. *The Encyclopedia of Furnishing Textiles, Floorcoverings and Home Furnishing Practices 1200-1950* will be an essential addition to interior design or furniture reference collections.

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