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# 'Fashion' not a trendy matter, but an individual resolution

By Jennifer Johnson  
 Staff Reporter

What is fashion anyway? Most people think fashion is fluff, and that careers in fashion are truly for all of the blond airheads in the world. Or maybe they think that people who work in the fashion field just aren't serious about life.

I was hesitant when I first decided to study fashion along with journalism. I'll admit it; I was afraid that people would look down on me. In the past few years I've learned otherwise.

It's not that people's attitudes have changed -- I've changed. I'm proud of what I study because it's equally as relevant as anything offered at this university.

True, an Azzedine Alaia dress won't save the world, but fashion affects everyone every day.

Fashion is both a reflection and a response to what is happening in our society. The best example of this is the '60s movement. We had hippies and flower children making love, not war, in response to Vietnam. Sex was becoming more casual and drugs were more free-flowing. Psychedelic drugs brought us psychedelic clothes.

Presently we are moving toward a more global and hopefully peaceful society. Hence, Bennetton's cross-cultural campaign. Fashion magazines are venturing to Russia, Germany and Spain for photo shoots instead of sticking to the United States and Paris.

First ladies are always influential. Jackie Kennedy was probably the biggest trendsetter, but think of the increase in red suits and gowns during Nancy Reagan's years in the White House. Now we have Barbara Bush to thank for the emergence of faux pearls.

Events outside of the U.S. also affect us. Remember Charles and Lady Di's big day? A knock-off of Di's wedding gown was finished within an hour and a half after the wedding and was one of the best-selling styles in the U.S. that year. I won't even talk

about her haircut.

We can also thank MTV for spreading new trends via music videos and VJ's. Videos have greatly decreased the saturation time of new styles because MTV reaches people in cities otherwise far from fashion centers.

Madonna's impact on fashion has been incredible. Lingerie sales haven't been better since the debut of the "Open Your Heart" video. "The Blonde Ambition Tour" may as well have been called "The Breast Ambition Tour," but hey, it had an impact on a lot of people. Bustiers are available at all levels of fashion from Madonna's main man Jean Paul Gaultier down to the discount store imitations.

But what is fashionable?

The definition of fashion states that it is a way of behaving, temporarily adopted by a certain social group, appropriate at a certain time and place.

Essentially that means that there is not just one way to be fashionable.

We all have passed through our different fashion phases, especially in high school, and there are probably some phases we'd like to forget. When people get to college though, the image of the "group" tends to lessen in importance and the individual shines through.

Some people would argue that groups still have a major impact on clothing choices in college as in the case of fraternities, sororities or other organizations. But as the definition of fashion states, people choose fashion for their appropriateness of the situation, so naturally there are going to be some similarities in close-knit groups.

The key is to wear what you want and not be affected by an ever-looming sense that you are not fashionable because you don't wear or can't afford what is "in."

Who decides what is in anyway? The media, that's who. The problem is that magazines get all of their money

from advertising and are going to recommend money-wasting new things for you. Magazines do their best to make you feel guilty that you don't look like Julia Roberts or Rob Lowe, but they ARE willing to recommend everything you can spend your money on to look that way.

Authors Miriam Cordwell and Marion Rudoy in their "Complete Book of Hairstyles, Beauty and Fashion" say:

"Good taste and fashion are entirely different elements in fashion know-how. A woman (and a man!) shows good taste when she adopts only things that are best for her in each new fashion trend. . . She (he) needs to select what is most comfortable for her way of life."

I think that their statement is basically true. I would much rather see someone who seems comfortable in what they're wearing, no matter if it's combat boots or penny loafers, than see someone who jumps into the newest clothes from the Post and Nickel or The Limited out of a sense of obligation to the fashionable world.

So even if you're one of those people who says "I'm not into fashion," you are affected by it in some way.

You may not be into the trendy scene or care about what's new in Paris, but we're all affected by the industry.

The fashion industry is one of the largest employers of workers in our country including factories, retail, textile design and fiber research.

These different fields in fashion affect not only how we look, but how we live. Textile research has created new fibers that keep us warm while weighing less. Also, fibers that are fire retardant, and others that replicate fur that otherwise is acquired by the senseless killing of animals, have been created.

So you see, fashion isn't all fluff. That would be like saying journalism is just the National Enquirer.

## Getting a little Glamour

# Magazines assist fashion search

By William Rudolph  
 Staff Reporter

Muslims follow the Koran. Christians study the Bible. Journalists abide by the teachings of The Associated Press Stylebook.

But people who worship fashion turn to the gospel according to Vogue, Glamour and Harper's Bazaar.

Just like other disciples, many deeply religious fashion followers accept the words of these publications as sacred truth. But there are options besides the mandates of fashion journalism's Holy Trinity mentioned above.

In fact, today even can be called a New Age of fashion journalism. Just by looking around, readers interested in style can find the magazine that's right for their needs.

Almost anyone who has been past a news stand has probably recognized magazines like Vogue. But these heavyweights also publish foreign editions that can give new and different twists on this season's look.

Foreign fashion magazines are typically bigger than their U.S. counterparts, which means more pictures and ads to study. Even if you can't read the language, the pictures show what's going on in other parts of the world because our magazines usually only concentrate on New York. And as we all know, New York and Nebraska do not always move in synch.

Besides strictly fashion magazines, other foreign publications on style in general are particularly useful. Better yet, the looks in these pages do actually appear on real people instead of models who make several thousand dollars an hour. i-D magazine details life on the cutting edge in the music, fashion and club scenes in London, a major source of street fashion that eventually hits the United States in a very watered-down form.

Unfortunately, its out-of-focus orange and green fashion spreads and smug "first-naines-only" copy

threaten to alienate all but the most dedicated avant garde readers. Better bets are Blitz and 20/20, which offer the same information in a clearer, more balanced manner.

One of the best bets in foreign magazines is Spanish Vogue, the newest and freshest of the fashion giant's family. Long considered backwards in fashion, Spain is rapidly becoming a cutting-edge center for fashion, film and style since the death of General Franco.

If you can't afford to spend \$15 on an issue of Paris Vogue, don't worry. According to Rebecca Bernthal, liaison for the College of Home Eco-

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**Instead, by comparing fashion choices from different periodicals . . . the reader can figure out what seems possible instead of fantastical.**

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nomics, the C.Y. Thompson Library on East Campus subscribes to the Journal Officiel de la Couture et de la Mode de Paris, as well as back issues of French magazines like Collections, Couture and Elegant. Closer to home, the library currently carries Women's Wear Daily, Bernthal said.

As a rule, men's fashion magazines have been a lame field. Most men are familiar with GQ. Unfortunately, not every college student necessarily wants to adopt the executive look and conservative Republican mix of fitness, corporate-ladder strategies and erection etiquette GQ advocates.

Most college students couldn't even afford or obtain GQ's clothing choices, which seem more appropriate for Yuppies with upwards of 40 grand a year to lavish upon themselves.

On the other end are cheesy, wanna-

be publications like MGF (Men's Guide to Fashion) and International Male, which feature embarrassing layouts of bikini underwear and suits stuck in a Miami Vice time warp. There is nothing that caters to the average fashion-conscious college student who's interested in a realistic look.

Let's not even mention Details, which recently shed its Downtown New York club "Who do we know" format. The new Details for men uses sloppy layouts pinched from i-D or blurry acid-green and purple \$700 suits interspersed with so-called avant garde comic strips and macho investigative pieces on the collapse of Panama. To round things out, there's the occasional drool piece over Sheryllyn Fenn from "Twin Peaks."

The major problem with men's fashion magazines today is that they're afraid to concentrate on fashion -- maybe because "real men" aren't supposed to be interested in clothing after it nets them that babe.

A better bet are magazines like the British editions of Vogue and Elle and France's Vogue Homme, which contain men's fashion pages without the added ingredients that constitute American men's fashion magazines -- although the U.S. DRM (Daily Report for Men) considerably bypasses its competition.

The trick is not to accept any single magazine's word as fact. Instead, by comparing fashion choices from different periodicals -- even from different countries -- the reader can figure out what seems possible instead of fantastical.

More importantly, by figuring out for whom the magazines is aimed, fashion-minded folk can decide whether a look is right for them.

Vogue, for example, sometimes leans heavily toward rich society women like Ivana Trump, while Harper's Bazaar is fine if you like

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