SEXUAL POLITICS IN WOMEN'S FASHION

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How is Women's Clothing Entrenched in Sexual Politics and What are the Implications?

By Louise Perkins-Chapman

All works cited in this research project are fully referenced at the end of the text, including images, citations and resources used. See appendix for interview transcripts, survey results and other information gathered throughout this project.

LPC

C&C

Research Project 1 Declaration

This submission is the result of my own work. All help and advice other than that received from tutors has been acknowledged and primary and secondary sources of information have been properly attributed.

I confirm that this work has gained ethical approval and that I have faithfully observed the terms of the approval in the conduct of this project.

Should this statement prove to be untrue I recognise the right and duty of the board of examiners to recommend what action should be taken in line with the University's regulations on assessment contained in its handbook.

signed ....

date Friday, 20th January, 2023 ....

Content Warning

This dissertation discusses issues about inequality surrounding the female gender. Images include nudity and highly sexualised images. I will be analysing sexism and inequality regarding gender, as well as body image and esteem. Themes of sexual assault, rape, sexual violence, consent and disability are discussed. This content and information could be potentially triggering, harmful and upsetting to anyone who has experienced any of the discussed topics. A signposted list of support services and advice networks are included at the end of the text.

This research is not advised to be viewed by anyone under the age of 18.

Ethics are considered in all aspects of this research project, overseen by Nottingham Trent University. See Appendix 1 for declaration and full ethical approval.

I am a facilitator for Nottingham Trent's Student Union '*Consent is Everything Program*', through the program I received training and advice from professionals about sexual consent, violence, stigma and supporting victims. I am now applying what I have learnt to my own practice.

Contents

5,322 Words

INTRODUCTION

In this research, I will explore 'sexual politics' in womenswear and the implications/consequences for women and young girls. Investigating various societal structures and the negative effects of stereotyping on people. I have chosen to investigate this area to inform my practice as a designer. I would like my work to reflect different approaches to perceiving and portraying femininity and gender, by demonstrating effective forward-thinking design solutions within my practice. Choices I make in my everyday life are affected simply because of my genders constructs in the western world, my choice not to shave due to having psoriasis, not wear makeup every day. To be a feminist and sexual consent ambassador, are all judged upon and stereotyped. Join me in my investigation whilst finding creative solutions within my discipline.

What is Sexual politics?

A sociological theory which argues that sex and sexuality is an essential structure of society. According to the *European Consortium for Political Research* "Sex and sexuality are a core feature of life, a social, societal structure entangled with gender, race, class, religion, power, and control." (ECPR, 2022). This directly influences how people interact, view, organise and understand one another. Sex and sexuality are complex, evoking questions surrounding reproduction and identity, raising discussions about morals and legitimacy. "Many authorities, social groups, and industries, heavily invest in influencing what people do or do not do with their bodies and desires." (ECPR, 2022). This could either be for control or capitalistic reasons. During this introduction and first chapter I will be introducing a range of key theories from various disciplines, providing explanations and evidence of this complex political structure. So, what is capitalism and how does it operate?

Capitalism

Karl Marx, a German philosopher, was one of the first theorists to examine capitalism. According to Marx the first key thing to understand about capitalism is the industrialisation of the western world. This industrialisation created a "commodity-producing society" (Bottomore, 1985, p4), meaning consumers are conditioned to want items, to buy and consume more than needed. Developed over time by the western consumer being removed from the manufacturing process, with the death of the UK industry. Meaning consumers now have no knowledge or value of labour and materials. This combination created the leisurely shopping culture we know and love today. Evidenced through fast fashion companies profiting off unethical production, "human labour is a source of material wealth" (Bottomore, 1985, p4). A cost on factory workers and the planet, unknown to the everyday consumer. "Unlike any other industry, fashion is integrated into the global economy, with lack of transparency over the most basic information" (Harding-Rolls, 2022). I argue fashion is profiting from capitalism here. The key to understanding capitalism and how it works, is that it benefits from the consumers misinformation and education, taking advantage of the consumers naivety. Leading us into chapter one, investigating how this happens through human subconscious desires and validation psychology.

Chapter One

THE MALE GAZE'S VALIDATION
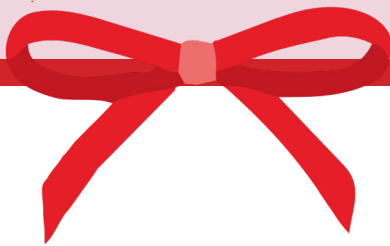
What is 'The Male Gaze' and why is it important?

Firstly, I am going to explore the term 'The Male Gaze', for context. The male gaze is a perspective of women from a male point of view in patriarchal society, which empowers men and diminishes women. In the natural world we are biologically driven to reproduce by choosing a mate, deciding a potential suiter by evaluating each other. The male gaze twists this natural urge, for male advantage. "Turning women into possessions and objects to conquer and use as props. This concept is not just about how women and their bodies are used to satisfy male fantasy, but also how it makes women feel about themselves" (Vanbuskirk, 2022). This statement explains the male gaze's impact on women, and how women are subconsciously conditioned to please it, effecting how they view each other, and their bodies. British feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey described this concept of the male gaze in her 1973 essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* "The female body is shown through a heterosexual male lens, secondary to male characters", (Mulvey, 1973). An example of the way women are portrayed in the media.

The male gaze can be seen today within video games, sexualising female characters for the gaze of male players. Evidenced in famous video game 'Tomb Raider', where the main character Lara Croft is portrayed as the ideal sexy woman. With large breasts, abdominal muscles, hour-glass figure, hot pants, cropped-top and thigh straps, (See Figure 2) described as gaming's biggest "adolescent fantasy" and "Sex icon" (Meltzer, 2013).

I would argue this creates expectations of the female appearance. By allowing young men to consume this ideal woman in; game, pornography, film, television and music videos, causing men to view women in an unrealistic way which is harmful.

Figure 2: Character Lara Croft in game
Shadow of the Tomb Raider released in 2018

Today's women are fighting against this gaze, questioning this 'beauty standard'. Much has been written on the capitalism behind the beauty standard. "Companies that sell cosmetics, diet products, plastic surgery, fitness programs and fashion, profit from these unrealistic beauty standards" (Pater, 2016, p114). See figure 3 for an example of this, the advert from Vogue magazine 1981, shows a naked woman advertising dieting, the language "owes it to herself" insinuates a women's worth is based upon her attractiveness and "stays younger longer" suggesting age defines beauty. This is known as dieting culture and ageism.

BEAUTY POWER

a woman owes it to herself to be fit today. The rewards: a stronger, more attractive body that stays younger longer, and the sense of well-being to enjoy it

Figure 3: American Vogue April 1981, Advertisement, The New American Body in Beauty and Health, 'Beauty Power'

"The Male Gaze has sexualised our bodies so much they are ashamed of their inherent functions" (Given, 2020, p69). Relating to this idea that ageing and gaining weight are negative when in fact natural. This quotation is from Florence Given's book *Women don't owe you pretty*, which went viral in lockdown 2020, in this chapter Given talks about the male gaze. Given is a very influential feminist author, with a huge Instagram following and podcast teaching women about feminism. This however comes with its own issues, causing divided arguments with women online and raising questions about authenticity.

An earlier example from 2017 is YouTube creator Emily Clarkson and her channel *Pretty Normal Me*, in her book *Can I Speak to someone in charge* she breaks down her thoughts about beauty "No matter how liberal we think we are, most of us spend hours removing hairs proving the pressure is bigger than ever" (Clarkson, 2017, p73). Both are examples of how the male gaze affects lots of women in numerous ways. The impact of social media enhanced this, we are fed with information and images constantly, comparing ourselves to each other from content that's not always authentic. Idealising celebrities, influencers and characters who portray this ideal woman. Now with added pressure to be a confident liberal feminist who shouldn't care and shouldn't participate within the ideal. Conflicting information and I question the implications of this on young girls today. The male gaze is seen here in beauty standards, creating feelings of validation in women, we can investigate the psychology behind this.

What is Validation and Why is it Relevant?

Psychology evidences that all humans need validation. Having our thoughts and feelings validated creates feelings of security and happiness, "When someone validates our actions the brain releases dopamine which attracts us to that feeling" (Edwards, 2021) this concept can be derived from any aspect of life. For example, validation from a partner creates feelings surrounding; love, sex, connection, intimacy, reproduction, and safety. Or, from a job; financial security, ambition, achievement, and reward. Evidenced in famous psychology theory, *The Hierarchy of Needs*, by American psychologist Abraham Maslow. The well-known theory is a pyramid of human needs (See Figure 4) starting at the base with basic survival needs, gradually rising to the top from essential needs to desires. "The Hierarchy shows motivational theory, needs at the lower end of the pyramid must be satisfied before reaching needs higher up" (Mcleod, 2022). Linking to previously discussed human desires for both material objects and the need to receive validation from the male gaze. Both fit within the pyramid toward the top end - love and belonging, esteem and self-actualisation. A connection can also be made to sexual politics and capitalism, why it is so powerful and how it can control us through these subconscious needs and desires.

Figure 4: The Hierarchy of needs pyramid,
Simply Psychology, April 2022

In order to understand the complexities of validation psychology in the context of womenswear, we must turn back to capitalism; we know capitalism benefits from consumer miseducation. It also relies on validation psychology to tap into the consumer mindset. Capitalist conglomerates, in the fashion industry, know your subconscious wants, needs, and desires via Maslow's theory. Evidenced though advertising and marketing strategies, explained in *Ethics in Marketing*, by Craig Smith.

Capitalism encourages and persuades you to buy items, by tapping into the hierarchy of needs, usually associated with the top three categories. Through these categories of needs and desires, brands show you in an advertisement how a certain product will help you achieve these desires (See figure 5). Hence the reason we buy into 'gimmicks', because we all subconsciously want to achieve the categories on the hierarchy.
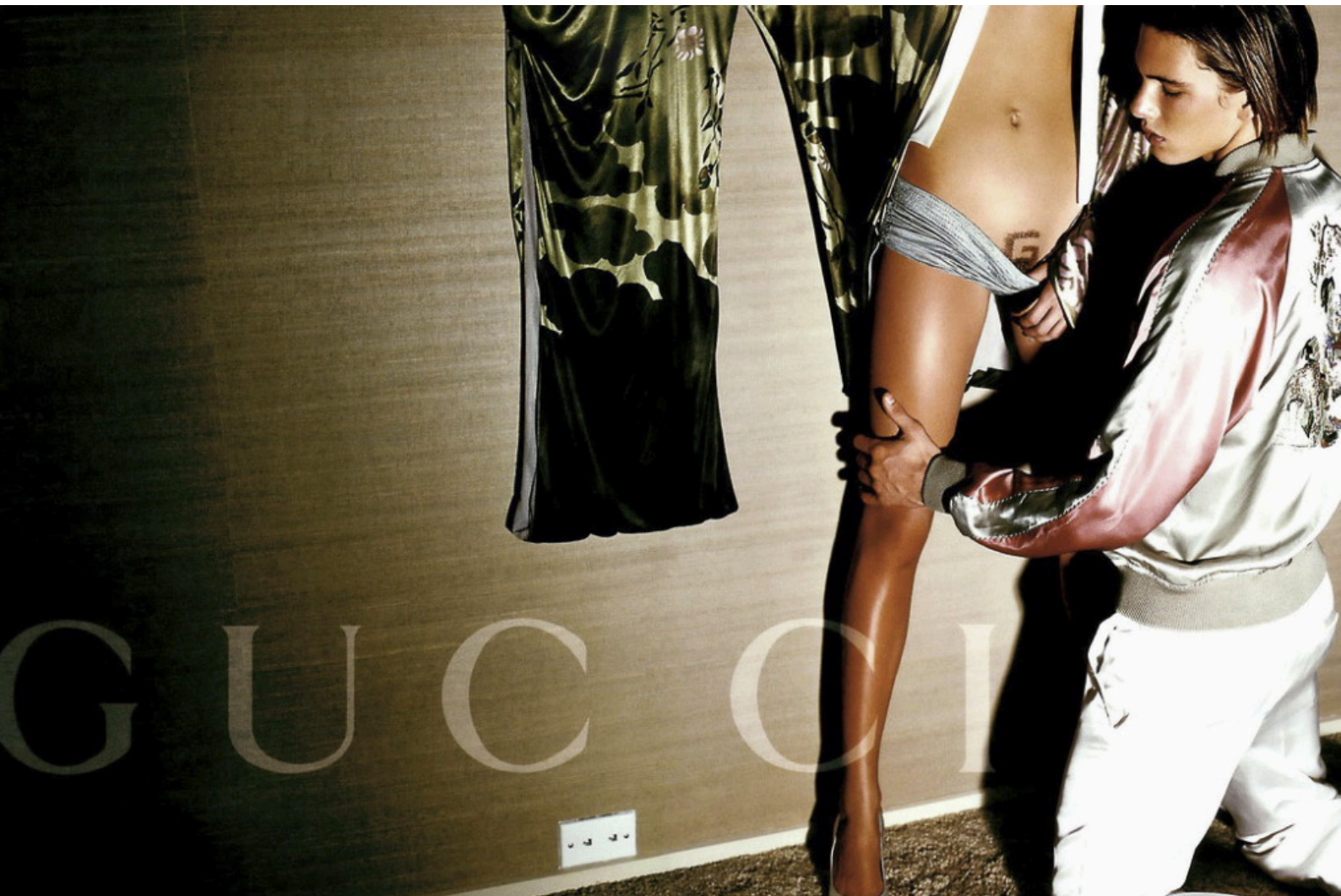

Figure 5: Gucci advertisement photography 'Public Enemy' by Mario Testino, 2003

The Advertisement figure 5, features model Carmen Kass exposing the letter 'G' shaved into her pubic hair, which was banned in the UK in 2003. Gucci by Tom Ford in the 1990s-2000s intended to make Gucci a daring, sexy and provocative brand. "The 90s was big on sex, an era of sex appeal, supermodel culture and sexualisation of women" (Angel, 2021). In this advertising campaign, the advertising scheme of this era 'sex sells' is being used to appeal to consumers, tapping into the love and belonging tier of the pyramid. The position in which the models are stood creates drama, curiosity and attraction whilst using nudity as a shock factor to hold the consumers interest. The female is only viewed via her exposure, sexualising her is portrayed as worth more than viewing her face, dis-associating her identity, making her an object of sex appeal. The male is placed in a powerful dominant position suggesting he is in control. This advertisement provides evidence of how the male gaze is used to sell products through capitalistic strategies, at the cost of women. I am now going to explore the history behind this dynamic between men and women, through what's known as heteronormativity.

Chapter Two

A WORLD OF HETERONORMATIVITY

What is a Heteronormative Society?

The term heteronormativity comes from heterosexual, used to describe 'straight' sexuality or cis identity. Heteronormativity describes our society as being made for and conditioning heterosexual people with the assumption it's ideal and 'natural'. A privilege, undermining other sexualities. Described as "effortless superiority" (Johnson, 2011) in a journal about challenging the heteronormativity of marriage. Marriage is an example of heteronormative societal structure and sexual politics. Entrenched in law, politics, and religion, marriage controls what people can and cannot do with their bodies and desires. Marriage is designed for men and women, we are taught from an early age by cartoons, films, TV and other media that marriage is happily ever after, forever, a dream and a goal to aspire to, see figure 6, 7 and 8 for examples. Young girls are taught this is the ultimate fantasy and achievement in life. The beautiful ivory dress that symbolises virginity, being given away by a father to another man's possession. These are examples of the male gaze; the possession of

a female as a pure wife for a husband's enjoyment. Although this may be a traditional view of marriage, which to some, may differ in today's western culture, marriage is still rooted in control, misogyny and heteronormativity throughout history, remaining so in many cultures around the world today, see Action Aid UK for more information.

Figure's 6, 7 and 8: Most influential children's films, the Disney Princesses of different eras, Cinderella (Cinderella, 1950), Jasmine (Aladdin, 1992), Rapunzel (Tangled, 2010), showing their weddings, marrying the male protagonist at the end of the film. 'Happily, Ever After, The End' - Walt Disney Studios.

How Heteronormativity Effects What We Wear

Heteronormativity can be seen in clothing. Gender stereotypes and norms created by heteronormativity, pressure us to dress a certain way to fit our genders constructs. For instance, boys wear shorts so they can play, and girls wear skirts, so they look pretty, an assumption of gender roles. Like dressing babies in pink and blue to identify their gender (see figure's 9 & 10), or boys playing with dinosaurs and girls playing with barbies. A social experiment conducted by the BBC explores this, *Girl toys vs boy toys: BBC Stories*, showing adults assuming the gender of babies from their clothing then choosing stereotypical toys for them to play with. This shows how heteronormativity conditions us from an early age. An article from UMKC Women's Center, investigating gendered colours and clothes, states "retailers realised they could capitalise on selling specific content tailored for each gender" (Michael, 2018). This statement provides a view about how we shop for our clothes today and suggests why different garments are associated with certain genders.

Figure's 9 & 10: New range of Matalan baby grows, Pink 'Daddy's girl' with heart print, and blue 'Mummy's boy' with star print - Matalan 2023

Clothing holds many stereotypes influencing how we view each other. Different aesthetics and styles have assumptions attached to them about a person's character or attitude. For example, alternative style stereotypes 'goths' as mean and scary or street style as 'chavvy' and 'rough'. Clothing affects how people see you, like an interviewer for a job, might not accept you, if you look 'scruffy', reflecting an assumption of your working ability.

This is evidenced in a study from March 2019, by authors Oh, Shafir, and Todorov at New York and Princeton University. People were presented with faces paired with either expensive or cheap upper-body clothing and asked to judge these people based on this. The investigation found that faces paired with richer clothing were judged as more competent.

These principal findings can be applied to womenswear, if we think back to the male gaze, which affects how women are viewed and perceived. Clothing is a key factor in how we view and organise attractiveness, as shown in the study, clothing holds judgements or pre-conceptions about someone's identity or personality. I will now be moving on to investigate sexualisation in women's clothing, how assumptions are made about a woman's character via her clothing, creating a stigma about consent. This next chapter discusses sensitive topics about sexual violence.

Chapter Three
SEXUALISATION, CONSENT AND TABOO

Sexualisation in women's clothing.

After investigating the complexities of sexual politics in capitalism, validation and heteronormativity, I will now apply this directly to womenswear. The male gaze's convolutions create hostile, confusing expectations and judgements for women and girls. The negative implications and consequences of this can be extremely damaging. We know from sexual politics that sex is surrounded with control and shame. This creates stigma and taboo for women and girls all over the world. "Women and girls experience violence and discrimination in every society, simply because of their gender." (Action Aid, 2022) An intimidating reality to face as a female, you might be wandering why this is relevant to clothing…. so, let's find out.

From conclusions drawn in the last chapter, clothing is a tool in society we use to define pre-concepted assumptions about each other. We also know from advertising and marketing strategies that women are often sexualised to sell products. In an anonymous online survey, I asked what women's clothing is sexy (see appendix 2). Answers included; short skirts and dresses, stockings, lace, lingerie, "when they are skimpy and suggest the body underneath" (Anonymous, 2023). I also asked, 'Do you think what someone wears reflects their personality?' with the majority saying yes. We can see a correlation here between clothing's stereotypes and perceptions with character. With evidence of associations with stereotypical sexualised views towards women's clothing. Where do we get these assumptions from?

In my opinion it's from the media we consume. Evidenced in advertising as discussed in chapter 1 and in the media, we watch and read, discussed in chapter 2. Social media and the internet feeds us this information, via cookies and adverts. If you search google for 'sexy clothes for women' the first links brought forward are underwear, bodycon dresses and push up styles, with search tags like 'The Top 16 Outfits Guys Find Most Attractive' or 'How to dress sexy but still look classy and elegant' (See figure's 11 and 12 for examples). This shapes our opinions about women's fashion, language like 'classy', 'elegant' used here suggest that if you dress sexy, you're not? Does that mean you should be treated differently? What's the effect of these perceptions?

Figure's 11 & 12: Google search results for key words 'sexy women's clothing' and questions most frequently asked. Images feature clothing advertisements, 'cut out', 'harness', 'backless', 'vinyl', 'corset' and 'lingerie' styles.

The Implications.

Following the evidence and investigations discussed so far, we have reached a point where we can see evidence of womenswear being entrenched in sexual politics, and why. What are the implications of this?

The male gaze effects how people view femininity, affecting our perceptions of sex and body image. As evidenced in the survey, there are certain clothes we believe to be sexy and provocative. Sex in many cultures is shameful, surrounded with taboo and stigma. Taboo is a term used to describe something that is frowned upon or avoided, a subject, word, or action, usually for religious or cultural reasons. The implication of creating taboo is the negative stigma it produces; stigma causes harsh feelings of disapproval from others in society who believe it is wrong. As a result, people can be shamed, outcast from their livelihoods, convicted and even punished. When we apply this to sex, sexuality and sexiness, it creates complexities and differences in opinions by varying generations, cultures, religions, laws and politics all over the world. Sexual politics can be seen again with its power over large amounts of people.

A common taboo today is sexual assault and rape. Statistics evidence that violence is experienced by 1 in 3 women from ages 16 to 34 across the UK (Action Aid, 2021). The stigma created surrounding sexual violence, effects victims accessing help and support, preventing justice so the root cause cannot be dismantled. One of these stigmas is known as **victim shaming**, happening across the globe every day. "Survivors face ridicule and judgment for stepping f orward and speaking out. Shaming can come from anonymous commenters on the internet, but also family and friends" (Bayston, 2017). Victim shaming is a way to excuse an assault or find a reason for its occurrence, often involving attempting to blame the victim and not the perpetrator. This is also referred to as 'rape culture', established by activist Tarana Burke's highly influential and controversial #METOO movement. An example of victim blaming, is through clothing, victims are often asked 'what were you wearing?' suggesting their choice of clothing caused the assault. This perspective assumes the victim had a choice, that only 'promiscuous women' get sexually assaulted. In many scenarios people want to distance themselves from violence, thinking if they don't dress in a sexy way, it won't happen to them. This unjust stigma has created an anxiety in many women today, preventing some from ever coming forward for support after an assault has occurred, suffering PTSD and depression alone.

So, what clothing 'gets you assaulted?' A Swiss Human Rights organisation, *Teree De Femmes*, produced a campaign of images showing the clothing and areas of a women's body where sexual exploitation most commonly occurs. The campaign is called *Don't Measure a Woman's Worth by Her Clothes* (see figure's 13, 14 and 15).

Figure's 13, 14 and 15; Art campaign images of an exposed woman with a layer of measurements, showing the concept of clothes shaming and exploitation.

Is there a correlation between clothing and sexual assault?...... No! Proven in a 2013 art project by Jen Brockman. Brockman is the director of sexual assault prevention and rape education at the University of Arkansas. Her installation collected stories of sexual violence, by survivors submitting their stories anonymously. University students replicated the outfits described in the stories, for the exhibit. The exhibition clearly points out that there is no trend to the clothing worn, no reoccurring theme, no specific style or aesthetic, just typical garments and outfits, see figure's 16 and 17 for exhibition images.

Figure's 16 and 17; "The Art Exhibit Powerfully Answers the Question 'What Were You Wearing?' The installation proves that clothing has nothing to do with sexual assault" (Vagianos, 2017).

This toxic victim blaming culture in some cases has been used in a court of law as evidence against the victim. In 2018 a rape case in an Irish court saw the underwear worn by the victim, during the assault, held up as evidence. Suggesting it implied consent as it was considered a sexual undergarment. "You have to look at the way she was dressed. She was wearing a thong with a lace front" (BBC News, 2018). The described thong is a typical piece owned by most women, which to me is scary. Sadly, the victim took her own life shortly after, which her mother said, is due to the shame and embarrassment she felt by having her underwear shown in court. This is an example of how harmful the implications of stigma, taboo and stereotyping can be. See figure 18 for image of the outcry occurring after this event.

Figure 18: Women marching in protest against women's violence, Dublin.

What I have learnt and recognised from being a consent and sexual violence support volunteer at university, is that often the root cause is poor education about sex, relationships and a lack of support for victims. Most people do not even talk about these topics, so when it happens, they are unsure how to react and what to do. In an interview with retired foster career, Susan McCallum, (see appendix 3) Sue states in many cases 'learnt behaviour' is also a root cause, from upbringing and learning from poor role models. Sue explains in the interview that this was very harmful to foster children, "he didn't understand social cues like flirting or female friendships and relationships" (McCallum, 2023). Showing the negative effect on men. I have observed men easily get caught up in 'toxic masculinity' not realising its negative impact on women but also on themselves. The repercussions stop men expressing true feelings out of fear, denying them of healthy happy friendships and relationships. I'd also like to acknowledge men get sexually assaulted too, the consequences for men can be harder as men aren't received with the same support as women, due to stigma surrounding male emotion. Sue mentions men haven't been given the opportunity to learn how to seek and receive help because of this stigma.

I am aware this information can be hard to read, I have listed recourses at the end of the text to various support services if you have been affected by any of the topics discussed. In the final chapter I will be exploring how we can work to prevent these implications by creating inclusive design for future generations.

Chapter Four
DESIGNING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Pushing Back Against Stereotypes.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge that change is hard, change requires difficult conversations, has setbacks and takes a long period of time. However, it is undeniable that society has changed a lot compared to even ten years ago, people are becoming more accepting of change, this provides me with hope and motivation for the future. With climate-anxiety and social media mental health becoming very prominent, fears of the future have developed, meaning we've been put in a position where change is crucial. Following on from the pandemic we are facing the cost-of-living crisis, a housing crisis, climate change and workforce strikes, creating generations who are fighting battles with a lot of different worries. I think that's what makes us so aware and 'opinionated' as the positive side of social media educates us on what's happening, meaning we can question things and provoke change much easier.

Creating change within my discipline requires pushing back against stereotypes, capitalism and overconsumption. The term 'push back' in the fashion industry refers to the response received by innovators redefining the norm. The difficulties of setting up an inclusive, adaptive, ethical, sustainable brand or proposal is often received with push back, especially when designing for a highly stigmatised demographic or ideology. The reason being, designing for this market requires extensive research, people, time, and resources, which is expensive so the industry views this as not profitable. Often companies do not want the responsibility and pressure, especially if it's perceived as incorrect, bad press or backfire could affect the brands reputation. Fashion designer Vongai Noreen Ruzive explained this in a talk I attended (see appendix 4), she explained the importance of counteracting the push back to create change. Iterating not giving up, continuing to develop and experiment with new design ideas. This inspirational concept shows the impact of good research and how important it is, time must be allowed for this process by designers.

From the research and information I have gathered throughout this project, at university and as a 'consent is everything' volunteer, I can begin to implement design solutions into my practice to push back against negative stereotyping in womenswear.

Future Fashion for Functional Female's

Designing for the future of womenswear requires different approaches, the first being functionality, women's clothing is never very functional, with a lack of practicality, reality, and comfort. From my research we have proven that womenswear is designed with aesthetics in mind for 'face value' rather than practicality. For example, there are many documents about how sexism decides if a garment gets usable pockets or not. Menswear always has huge spacious pockets provided and womenswear has small pockets, if any at all. Referred to as the politics of the pocket.

There have been many influential movements over the past 100 years bringing function and liberation to women's fashion. The women's suffrage movement abolished the painful organ crushing corset in the 1910s, with more comfortable freeing flapper styles trending in the 1920s and Coco Channel inventing the first female suit in 1925 (see figure 19). Moving into the wild fashion of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, with hugely influential female designers like Mary Quant and Vivianne Westwood emerging, this showed that women's fashion could be rebellious and fun. Quant's miniskirt became an international symbol of London's youth culture in 1960, representing women's sexual liberation (see figure 20).

Today we see designers taking a liberal inclusive approach by dismantling the 1990s and 2000s toxic supermodel culture, described by Natasha Walter as *the return of sexism*. Pop star Rhianna dismantles this with her lingerie brand 'Fenty', featuring models of all races, sizes, ages and disabilities (see figure 21). The history of womenswear has taken a liberating path in the last century; however, we can see from my research there are still systematic sexist views holding back women's fashion.

Figure 19: Women wearing the famous Channel lady's tweed suit in 1925.

Figure 20: Mary Quant's famous, scandalous mini skirt, a contribution to women's liberation.

Figure 21: A look from Rhianna's Savage x Fenty's A/W 2018 collection, featuring pregnant models.

Fashion has been proven to be a highly influential platform for change, as evidenced above. I feel we must combine this with communicative methods to reach goals for re-inventing womenswear, starting by educating the masses about sex, relationships and consent. The way we advertise needs to change, we can no longer afford to promote overconsumption for the sake of our planet and the creation of unethical stereotypes. Advertising needs to represent real people in real-life scenarios. This is also more likely to sell products as more people can visualise themselves with that item. Sue mentions in the interview (see appendix 3) that "the likes of her" isn't represented in advertising, but if models appeared in a wider range of ages and sizes she'd be more likely to buy the product. Many brands have now begun advertising with more authentic models, famous model Ellie Goldstein, who has Down Syndrome, features in many fashion advertisements today, including George for ADSA's recent campaign (see figure 22). Many new influencers and celebrities are beginning to emerge, who have various disabilities, raising awareness and breaking stereotypes.

Figure 22: Model Ellie Goldstein in George at Asda S/S 22 campaign.

The latest statistics from the *Family Resources Survey* estimate that "14.6 million people in the UK had a disability in the 2020 - 2021 financial year. This represents 22% of the total population" (UK Parliament, 2021). That's a considerable amount of people who aren't currently recognised by the fashion industry. This gap in the market is beginning to be addressed by disabled influencers, powerful campaigns, protests and petitions, there is undeniable evidence to support this backed up by a large amount of people. British brand Marks & Spencer are leading the way in the UK market, a historical, impactful brand which has the respect and acclamation to develop innovative products. Ranges in 'Kids Easy Dressing' and 'Menopause Products' aim to solve daily functional disadvantages for millions of families across the UK. "We'll help you navigate through menopause confidently, tailored to support you. Lingerie and bedding feature Cool Comfort technology adapting to your body temperature to fight hot flushes" (M&S, 2022). An impressive leading example of design for the end users' function, assisting an uncomfortable stigmatised process for billions of women. An implausible instance of functional female fashion.

To Conclude

During this research investigation, I have drawn conclusions and reasoning's using highly influential theories, images and research methods. Looking into sexual politics in women's fashion and the determinist mentality behind it. Discovering uncomfortable realities about the fashion industry and the way we perceive clothing and femininity. Evidence provides demonstrations of how sexual politics and doctrine beliefs are used to control how we view sex and sexuality, effecting how we organise one another. Seen through the male gaze deciding how women are treated by society and subsequently represented in the media. My background is predominately in creative disciplines so I am not a qualified psychologist or sociologist; therefore, theoretical knowledge allowed me to draw and define rounded intellectual explanations in this field. The data collected in my research came from a large number of female participants which allowed me to make accurate connections to womenswear and feminine identity. However, I would recommend, if given further time for this research that male and other gender participants be included to provoke interesting sentiments from another perspective. This would prevent a potential bias occurring.

The sensitive topics addressed within this research reflect a relevant issue that affects large amounts of people in today's society, it is important we address this by undertaking research and having difficult conversations. This is a preventative method dismantling inequality. The research methods used within this dissertation offer an example of effective research methods; gathering a range of information creates the foundation for great design. The definition of 'great design' is problem solving and usability, this is my goal as a young designer, using this mythology and platform will allow me to do so. As I mentioned in the introduction, gender constructs affect me personally as I identify as a woman and have recently received a diagnosed of psoriasis. My response to this and my research dissertation is the approach I am taking in my final fashion collection. My final design aims to create functional fashion for psoriasis suffers as well as women with other skin conditions and disadvantages, whilst creating functional contemporary fashion.

Get Help & Support

Signposted is a list of various resources available in the UK for assistance and support with mental health, sexual violence and suicide. Different organisations provide different services for different cases and people, including male and female and LGBTQIA+.
If you feel you need support, please reach out, you are never alone.

Mind.org.uk

Samaritans.org

NHS.UK/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault

TheSurvivorsTrust.org

MensAdviceLine.org.uk

RapeCrisis.org.uk

SexualAbuseSupport.campaign.gov.uk

Sarsas.org.uk

Galop.org.uk

SafeLine.org.uk

WomensAid.org.uk

ActionAid.org.uk

You can also anomalously report crime via CrimeStoppers-uk.org

All the listed charities and organisations accept donations if you felt inspired by my dissertation to make a difference, you can also volunteer for local shelters or contact any of these services asking how you can help.

Please always support victims in any way you can.
Thank you

Glossary

Cisgender : used to describe a person whose gender matches the body they were born with. - Cambridge Dictionary

Conglomerate: A large scale company that owns several businesses whose products or services are usually quite different. - Cambridge Dictionary

Consumer: Customer, a person who buys goods or services for their own use - Cambridge Dictionary

Convolution: Something that makes an explanation or story, complicated and difficult to understand - Cambridge Dictionary

Determinism: the theory that everything that happens must happen as it does and could not have happened any other way - Cambridge Dictionary

Doctrine: a belief or set of beliefs, especially political or religious ones, that are taught and accepted by a particular group - Cambridge Dictionary

Dopamine: A hormone (= chemical substance) That is made naturally in the body and may also be given as a drug. - Cambridge Dictionary

Gimmick: Something that is not serious or of real value, that is used to attract people's attention or interest temporarily, especially to make them buy something. - Cambridge Dictionary

Heteronormative: suggesting or believing that only heterosexual relationships are normal or right and that men and women have naturally different roles. - Cambridge Dictionary

Heterosexual: Sexually or romantically attracted to the opposite sex, men if you are a woman, and women if you are a man. - Cambridge Dictionary

Materialism: The belief that having money and possessions is the most important thing in life. - Cambridge Dictionary

Misogyny: Feelings of hating women, or the belief that men are much better than women. - Cambridge Dictionary

Patriarchal: Ruled or controlled by men, relating to a patriarchy, the idea that men are more important than women. - Cambridge Dictionary
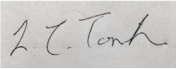
Stigma: A strong lack of respect for a person or a group of people or a bad opinion of them because they have done something society does not approve of. - Cambridge Dictionary

Taboo: A subject, word, or action that is avoided for religious or social reasons. - Cambridge Dictionary

Appendix

Appendix 1
Ethics application declaration signed by tutor with full ethical approval received from the Art and Design faculty ethics board on 11th November 2022

Section 11: Declaration	
11.1	**To be completed by the module leader/tutor:** Please indicate whether you recommend a favourable ethics opinion be granted or would like to seek advice from the Ethics Committee on the ethical dimensions of the student's proposed project.	Recommend favourable ethics opinion / Seek advice from Committee
11.2	**To be completed by the module leader/tutor:** I have discussed the ethical issues arising from this project with the student. I have read this form and associated documents and confirm that all the ethical issues have been covered accurately, fully and frankly. I am confident that the student understands the guidance in the Student Research and Practice Ethics Fact Sheet and that she/he is competent to conduct the project. If the student is undertaking research/practice of a sensitive nature, she/he has the skills and expertise necessary to conduct the project. Any further comments: Name (module leader/tutor): Leanne Tonkin Signature (module leader/tutor): Date: 4 November 2022	
11.3	**To be completed by the student:** I have read the Student Research and Practice Ethics Fact Sheet and confirm that I have completed this application accurately, fully and frankly. My module leader/tutor has completed sections 11.1 and 11.2, above. Name (applicant): **Louise Perkins-Chapman** Signature (applicant): Date: **17.10.22**	

Louise

Please note the Ethics committee have reviewed your application and advised

Favourable Opinion:
I am delighted to confirm that your application has received a favourable opinion from the School Ethics Committee.
On behalf of the Committee I would like to wish you every success with this project.

Thankyou
Gillian Wilson
Subject Administrator
Fashion Communication and Promotion
Nottingham Trent University, 50 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham. NG1 4FQ
Telephone: +44 (0)115 848 4815
Email: gillian.wilson@ntu.ac.uk

Appendix 2
Anonymous Survey Results
Conducted via google forms, distributed over social media on 9th January 2023

What clothing makes a woman sexy?

15 responses

I personally like formal clothing I think that it makes a women look strong and well put together.

when they are skimpy and suggest the body underneath

Short skirts and dresses. Stockings.

A personal style, character, red, skin tight/ curves, bows

Any Clothing that makes a women feel confident and good about themselves, this could be anything from loungewear to lingerie. It's all about how you feel when wearing it

Something she feels attractive in

something that makes her feel confident in her body

Lingerie

It's been presented that women's clothing such as underwear, short skirts, crop tops and tight formed

Why might certain clothing appear sexy?

15 responses

Showing leg, easier access for sex

Show off the body in a positive, confident light, making the wearer feel good about themselves

Because certain clothing is designed to compliment the body shape and has typical 'sexy' elements to it such as lace or certain cuts that show off parts of the body, but I think clothing being sexy is subjective to who is wearing the item.

If it's revealing or skimpy

something revealing skin and female sexual organs can trigger sexual thoughts and assumptions from others. this has nothing to do with the wearers opinion of the intention of their outfit.

Because they accentuate parts of the body

I feel this has been created through social media and generations of men telling women that their clothing makes them sexy. I feel like underwear has been created to be "sexy"

Revealing

More revealing, shaped

The way it's worn. How it accentuates the figure and body shape. The amount of flesh it shows.

Certain colours used and the shape

Corset/ lingerie

Reflects underwear

Do you think what someone wears reflects their personality?

16 responses

Yes

Yes

yes people wear what they feel confident in and it's a way to express themselves

Yes, unless it's basic/plain clothing.

Yes, it shows their character the way they choose to be perceived, but showing skin or wearing provocative clothing is only to make the wearer feel good about themselves, not suggest anything else

yes most of the time

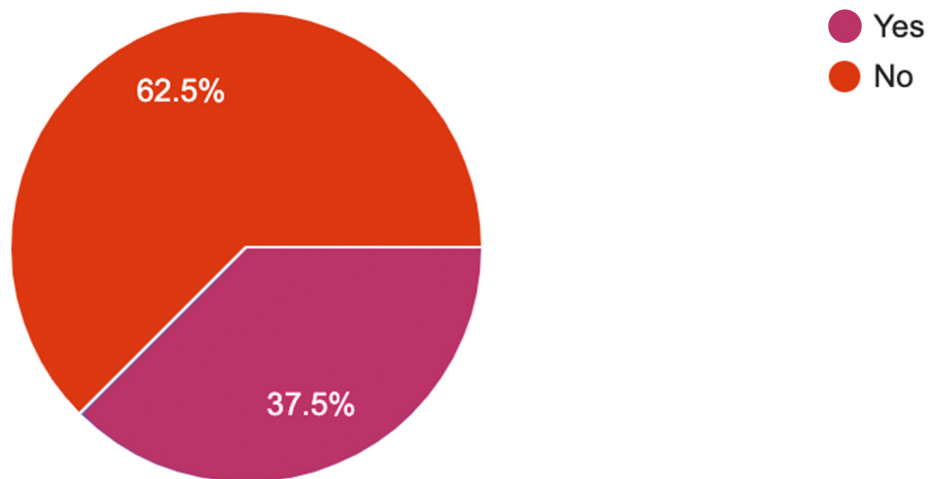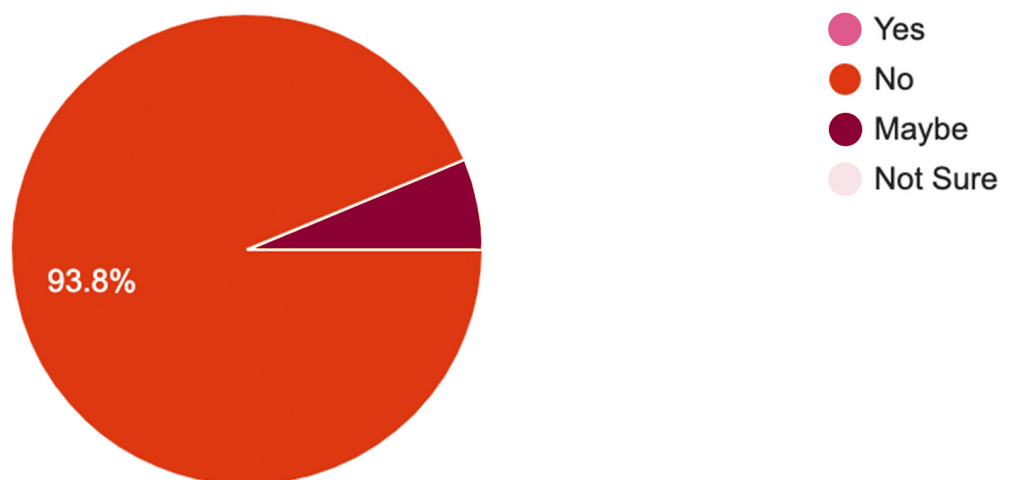Yes definitely

Not always

sometimes but often not

Do you think 'sexy' clothing is suggestive?

16 responses

- 62.5%
- 37.5%

Legend:
- Yes
- No

Does clothing provide consent

16 responses

- 93.8%

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Not Sure

Appendix 3

How would you describe your relationship with clothes?

Love and hate. I hate it being a struggle to find clothing to fit me or that I don't look silly in. If you're a certain age, you cannot wear what's available, and that isn't good. I don't want to wear age related clothes and a lot of manufacturers still do that. You reach a certain age, or you reach a certain size and automatically your choices are
really, really limited. Like women with a larger bust don't have much choice and struggle to get good fit.

How would you describe your ideal female or the ideal woman?

I don't think there is an ideal one. I think every one of us is or should be an individual. We've all got different personalities, different quirks, different lights. We like, dislike different things. There, to me is not an ideal woman. It's hyped up by things like Facebook and other media, shops, and manufacturers, which then makes somebody who isn't deemed attractive feel like a second-class citizen. What about the millions of men and women in this world that are not considered to be attractive.

Do you think that fashion and beauty companies portray women in a particular way?

Oh, definitely. Social media, that added pressure especially for women, to follow a norm, everything you do is going to be frowned upon or critiqued. I think it causes a lot of damage. There are pressures about what you wear, how you look. If your hair is the right color, if you're a little bit overweight or a little bit skinny, it's all going to have a knock-on effect to how you think about yourself. Young women and children should be allowed to be children, otherwise they end up being damaged.Who are they doing it for? Are they doing it for themselves? Are they doing for the media? Are they doing it for men? Women want to look attractive, and a lot of the time it's for men. It's to impress men or to catch them or to keep them. In the animal world, it's the males that have to impress the females like in birds. You see that in David Attenborough. Look at the pheasant. The male pheasant has absolutely beautiful colors, and the woman, it's all dowdy and brown. That's because she needs to camouflage and nature the babies.

Why do you think that brands might profit off portraying women in a particular way?

Whenever you see clothing advertised in a magazine it is always a very slim person there, a very attractive person. They haven't got the likes of me in there. I'm not in their magazine, because I wouldn't sell the clothes. If you're not a certain age, a certain weight, a certain heigh or certain figure. I don't think companies want to know you. They're all about making money and they'll do it however they want and can.

What clothing do you think makes a woman sexy or attractive?
Sexy is in each and everyone's individual mind. What I call the stereotype sexy clothing. It's sexy underwear and short skirts and things that are deemed to be sexy. But I think a woman can be sexy in whatever she wears. It's how I think a woman feels about herself and her body. Confidence she carries herself and how she talks to people.

Do you think what a woman wears reflects her personality, or the way others see her?

No, I personally don't think it does. But I feel a lot of people think it does. For example, one of my foster children learned from his father that if a woman or a girl, whether they were old or young, middle-aged, it didn't matter. You'd judge them by the clothes they were wearing. So, if a young girl was out with her mates and they'd all got miniskirts on and little vest tops that type of thing, then they were a prostitute. He also didn't know about signals. He thought if a girl touched him, gave him a friendly cuddle. Then it was an invitation to go further and that she must really like him, fancy him. I had to teach him no. And that was all there was to it. He didn't know any better. You learn from your parents, don't you? And that's what he'd learned. So, I had to undo that way of thinking. But we did succeed, it was only because he wanted to unlearn it. He was quite happy to learn, but it was hard for him.

Do you think that those beliefs and views of a female came from anywhere?
Do you think it might have come from the media, the way that media portray women or the way that clothing is portrayed?

Not in this particular case, his dad had been brought up in the care system, and again, with having no parents to guide him and being shoved around, it damaged his dad. He was a victim. I think that has a knock-on effect. Especially for men as well, men aren't seen to be as sensitive as women, so they don't get as much support that they need. They also don't know how to receive it. They're brought up to be big, strong men. Men don't cry, men don't do this. You can track it back and then you can see the damage. Even now. I think there's still that about to a certain degree.

What do you think I can do as a designer to break womenswear stereotypes?

Portraying, you know, real bodies would be part of that. Do a big range in sizes. Show the models of those sizes as well as the slim ones too. I have noticed some of the big companies are now using models that have got physical disabilities, and I think that's great. Everybody has got something about them that makes them beautiful. I do believe in that.

CONSENT FORM

Louise Perkins-Chapman
BA Fashion Design Dissertation
Project Title: How Women's Clothing is Entrenched in Sexual Politics and What the Implications are?

Please read and confirm your consent to being interviewed for this project by ticking the appropriate boxes and signing and dating this form.

1. I confirm that the purpose of the project has been explained to me and I have been given information about it in writing. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project and these have been answered satisfactorily. ✓

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw at any time until 20th January without giving any reason and without any negative implications. ✓

3. I give permission for the interview to be audio recorded and I understand that the recording will be destroyed at the end of the project. ✓

4. I wish my data to be anonymised. I understand that quotations from my interview may be used in the student's Dissertation/ professional portfolio / website and social media/ other publications. But that I will not be identified. ☐

   or

   I waive my right to anonymity and wish for my name to be included in this study. I understand that quotations from my interview may be used in the student's Dissertation/ professional portfolio / website and social media/ other publications. And that I will be identified by name. ✓

5. I am over the age of 18. ✓

6. I agree to take part in this project. ✓

Susan McCallum   09.01.23   S . E Mccallum
Participant's name   Date   Signature

Louise Perkins-Chapman   09.01.23
Student's name   Date   Signature

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Appendix 4

Attended talk about adaptive fashion and inclusive design on 16th March 2022
Speaker Vongai Noreen ruzive

A British womenswear fashion designer currently based in Paris, France. MA in design for Social Impact, Von has worked with French Collection, and featured in Vogue.

Notes during talk: Von's lecture was very eye opening to me, I felt it reinforced some things I may have been too scared to implement into my practice due to lack of confidence or fear of failure. Von talked about branding and marketing strategies for online retail, taking risks when developing adaptive clothing and the challenges faced in setting up an inclusive brand. She mentioned the importance of social media and how we as designers can use platforms to market and advertise our designs, clever use of cinematography, photography, and Instagram.

Von emphasised the difficulties of setting up an inclusive brand and the 'push back' received by the industry, especially when designing for a highly stigmatised demographic. She talked about the importance of not giving up and continuing to develop and experiment design ideas to counteract the 'push back'. This is very inspirational, but it also proves how important research is and how we as designers must allow time for this. Something that resonated with me is her research methods, she confidently stops people on the street, waits in coffee shops or messages people on social media to get as much primary research as possible. This is something I lack confidence to do but can be easily build up through practice, resulting in very effective and inclusive research.

Appendix 5

Document sent to interview participants.
Explaining the project and ethical requirements with contact details and Information about this research.

Dissertation Interview

Student: Louise Perkins-Chapman
Project: BA Fashion Design Level Six Dissertation
Title: How Women's Clothing is Entrenched in Sexual Politics and What the Implications are?
Dates: September 26th, 2022 – January 20th, 2023

Introduction: For my final year dissertation of my degree in fashion design, I will be investigating how fashion and clothing is surrounded by politics and capitalism and how this impacts women and girls. Themes include 'The Male Gaze', 'Post-modernism', 'feminism', 'Sexual politics' and 'Heteronormativity' looking in depth into how the fashion industry's structure goes hand in hand with these themes. For example, trends, media coverage, beauty, runway, modelling. This is important to me as I grew up in a predominately female household and anything I produce in the industry I do not want to be promoting these societal issues. I am a facilitator for the student's unions 'Consent is Everything Program', through the program I received training and advice from professionals on responding and helping victims of violence and stigma. This taught me a lot about sexism, and I am now applying what I've learnt to my own practice.

So, I can ensure my dissertation is unbiased I will need interviews from a wide demographic of people, different ages, races, genders, and backgrounds. I will not be asking intrusive personal questions. This information will be used in my dissertation, as quotes, back up points, counter arguments, and evidence. It will also allow me to understand how people feel about certain issues and ideologies.

I will need participants to sign consent forms so I can use the information they give me respectfully, consensually, and confidentially, this will be over seen and ensured by Nottingham Trent University. Participation would be much appreciated, at any point during the project you have a right to withdraw without explanation, your data will be kept in a password protected drive. I will be the only authorised personnel to this information. It can be requested to be destroyed at any time. This interview will be used with guidance from my personal tutors, Lisa Shawgi and Leanne Tonkin. They will not have access to the personal data, they will be assisting me with implementing my findings into an effective outcome. Information about consent forms is below.

Any questions about the project please feel free to ask me or contact my personal tutors!
Personal Tutor: Lisa Shawgi, lisa.shawgi@ntu.ac.uk
Dissertation Tutor: Leanne Tonkin, leanne.tonkin@ntu.ac.uk

My Details: louisechapman200@gmail.com or N0912829@my.ntu.ac.uk
Website: https://www.louisedesign.net/ Instagram: @louise_design_
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/louise-perkins-chapman2002

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Figure 9: New range of Matalan baby grows, Pink 'Daddy's girl' with heart print, and blue 'Mummy's boy' with star print - Matalan 2023. Boys Blue Mummy Sleepsuit (2023) Matalan. Matalan. Available at: https://www.matalan.co.uk/product/detail/s2938368_c128/boys-blue-mummy-baby-grow-tiny-baby-18mths-blue (Accessed: January 5, 2023).

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Figure's 16 and 17: The Art Exhibit Powerfully Answers the Question 'What Were You Wearing?' The installation proves that clothing has nothing to do with sexual assault.
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C&C

Name/Course: <u>Louise Perkins-Chapman</u>
BA Fashion Design
Working title/Option:
Feminism and Stigma in Womenswear
<u>**Sexual Politics in Women's Fashion**</u>

Week 9 – Seminar, Lisa Shawgi 30th September	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
Use the sourcing and research handbooks on the NOW for help with various references, citations, which orders and layouts they must be in with examples which can help with accurate referencing. Don't use all types of research, think about how this will affect time management and create too much overwhelming information causing irrelevant content in writing. Use google scholar, google books, library search pages, ask the library staff for help, book appointments with them. Make the most of all research recourses available.	Print all briefs, ethics fact sheet, resource help sheets and handbooks from the NOW and go through them to keep throughout writing as refreshers. Screen Grabs from documentaries to analyse, make sure they are relevant. <u>Complete ethics toolkit on NOW and check list to see if full application is needed.</u> Consider layout of poster presentations and Dissertation, no chaotic backgrounds, and layouts. Good image quality, InDesign layout effective and appropriate for reader and theme

Week 10 – Kickstart Poster Presentation, Leanne Tonkin 7th October	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
More academic sources needed suggestions from group feedback. Book Ideas- The invisible women, living dolls, theories of modern capitalism Social media suggested could be used as a great tool for communicating ideas, getting evidence and references or key trends – use it as a tool in research to back up ideas. Images could help too. More subject terminology, Key words to consider as appropriate topic related language, power scale, exploitation, oversexualisation.	Investigating in the library at the great sources available. Getting several quotes from the chosen books which could be chosen to fit accordingly into my writing. <u>Ethics application is recommended due to potential sensitive topics, Start doing a full ethics application, filling out the form, creating interview questions to submit with application to board.</u> Look into some exhibitions, like barbie, 'what I was wearing' research into barbie more to fit with body image and the male gaze maybe. Get appropriate images from social media platforms to back up points

Week 11 – Seminar, Lisa Shawgi 14th October	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
## Signposting - What is signposting and why/how do we use it in academic writing - Introduces the reader to important relevant topics - Sectioned within a chapter using the sandwich structure, Top slice, Filling, Bottom Slice. This helps the writing flow better for the readers understanding. - Titles, headings, captions, glossaries, and appendix' are all ways of signposting the reader - Guide the reader to other sources they can investigate themselves. - Never assume the reader knows what you are talking about!!	Begin to plan the key points, theories, quotes, subject terminology which is necessary for my writing. Create a plan as to how I will effectively sign post the reader and which chapters, headings, sub-headings they fit in best. – This will help build up ready for the chapter plan presentations Starting points include – 3 chapters, (not too many restricting word count) 4 key theories to explain/back points, capitalism, hierarchy of needs, sexual politics and the male gaze. All need to be well explained and thought-out to the reader.

Week 12 – Seminar, Lisa Shawgi 21st October	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
Building upon poster prestation feedback, on quality of sources, structure, key words, and terminology. The chapter presentation should include punchy headings and sub-headings which glide the reader through your topic in an effective way. Ultimately getting the overall point across naturally. Avoid writing in 1st person as personal onions and "sweeping statements" will discredit the writing. Make sure all images, quotations, theories, fit in the right chapter. This help create a flow to the writing for the readers understanding, also keeping them interested. Grab their attention!	Plan layout ideas for chapter structures, try different variations to see which works best and fits well with working title. Introduction Chapter 1 – theory Chapter 2 - background Chapter 3 – Point made Positive Design Solutions/ Push back Conclusion Mind mapping this layout structure with headings and topic ideas to see if they all, think together well and flow naturally.

Week 14 – Chapter Presentation, Leanne Tonkin 4th November	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
Feedback from group after presentation.	CHAPTER PLAN Presented:
The introduction and first two chapters are good for creating that evidence and foundation for the argument point. They will give the reader that background knowledge and understanding so they can draw the conclusion I have guided them too.	Introduction
	A bit about me, Sexual Politics, Capitalism in the fashion industry
	Chapter 1 – Validation Within the Male Gaze
	Chapter 2 – A world of Heteronormality
	Chapter 3 – Sex Consent and Taboo
The fourth chapter feels irrelevant and like a whole dissertation topic on its own. This would require a lot of investigation and words you don't have so maybe leave it out. Keep it relevant and punchy so your argument and points land and the overall title question is answered clearly.	Chapter 4 – Fashion, Sexualisation and fetishism
	Conclusion
	Push back explained Positive proactive Design Solutions
	Create more punchy titles that really draw in the reader these feel more like captions or bullet points. Remove chapter 4 and ensure chapter 3 gets my point across well as that finishes my argument with evidence of implications.

Week 15 – Seminar, Lisa Shawgi 11th November	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
Draft submission seminar prior to writing week. – Ethics Approved.	What to include in the draft submission following chapter plan feedback and seminar.
Ethics committee reviewed my application and advised, Favourable Opinion: "I am delighted to confirm that your application has received a favourable opinion from the School Ethics Committee. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to wish you every success with this project." In addition, they have suggested you may want to remove the prompts under your questions for you to get the best research data. They advise you review the content on the participant info sheet. If there is too much detail on the slant of the project and if the participants read that first it may influence how they respond. - Gillian Wilson, Subject Administrator 11/11/22 14:31 outlook ART Ethics	Review draft submission brief on NOW. Include an Intro, Rational and content warnings required for ethics. Max 2,000 words. INCLUDE referencing, images, citations, and bibliography. Consider Title page ideas which fit with theme, (Not assessed at this point but required for final) as well as Page numbers and layouts, line scaping. An updated chapter plan/title which will most likely develop throughout writing.

Week 16 – Writing Week Draft Submission 14th – 18th Nov

Comment – What did you learn in this session?	Tasks – what will you do following this session?
1:1 Leanne Tonkin 16th Nov Great start so far to writing, introduction is looking interesting. Remember to not overwhelm the reader to much at the start by throwing loads of theory straight in, this could be off putting or complicated causing loss in interest. Be careful with your content warning, only include things that are discussed and necessary for ethics, this could seem daunting to the reader otherwise and dangers irrelevance. Make sure your points flow into sentences. Link your data together with use of commas and full stops at the end of statements. Make stronger links - use your reading to your advantage.	Dissertation Writing Week Notes and developments Introduction plan: Why I am writing about this topic, why its relevant to my practice and the fashion industry. Why it's important to me and how I want the design I produce to be forward thinking 'pushing back' stereotypes and stigmas. Introduce main themes of sexual politics and capitalism. Chapter One Validation and the Male Gaze Introduce validation and where is comes from- Marlow's hierarchy of needs explain how this then links to the male gaze and fashion advertising/marketing. Make sure the links are clear to the various theories this is the evidenced foundation of my question.

Week 19 – 1:1 Leanne Tonkin, Draft Submission Feedback 9th Dec

Comment – What did you learn in this session?	Tasks – what will you do following this session?
Good start to your dissertation with a good selection of key quotes, images, and relevant references/sources to support the direction of your argument. Watch your referencing in the text (Citations aren't in the right places or order) use the C&C handbook for help. Use spell check to help with grammar and spelling. Perhaps briefly introduce why you have selected Marx and Maslow for your research in the introduction – this will help the reader know what to expect when you dive deeper into their work later. You have a clear direction of your chapters. In the first chapter you talk about validation and then the male gaze, consider switching this order around as it helps the reader for context and flows better.	*No interviews or primary research has been conducted yet, this will attach to the relevant chapters - **Primary Research Skills** - Show the ability to identify and compile primary information relevant to your topic. **Use/Analysis of Primary Research** - Show the ability to analyse relevant images and other primary research material to extend your insight.* **Critical Enquiry:** the backing is there with my images, theories, explanations, definitions etc. Convince the reader by using various topic relevant sources drawing convincing solutions. Revisit and strengthen discussion around Figure 1 – did this well with the later images. Make sure to bind/synchronise theories and discussions within writing rather than explaining them as separate things - they clearly link to discussion well – let this happen in the writing, with the good signposting of my images - keep this up as writing gets better. "Your analysis of the Gucci image is very good – use this as a baseline for your image analysis"

Week 24 – Writing Week 9th – 13th Jan	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
1:1 Leanne Tonkin 11th Jan Any extra information must be in the appendix, it signposts the reader and helps with professionalism. Include key sections from each interview, with key questions. Ethics approval and consent forms included too. Survey screenshots included here too, in text refer to answers "see appendix 1" Referencing much be font size 11 in Calibri for the bibliography. Make sure the rest of the text is easy to read, make sure nothing breaks up the text to stop reading flow. Put the glossary at the back and indicate to the reader at the beginning there will be a glossary.	Following the 1:1 I am going to start building my appendix numbering pieces in order they appear in the text. 1-Survey 2-interview, 3-interview, 4-consent forms, 5-Ethical approval. Work on my layout, making sure it's effective, images must be large and good quality. Design must reflect topic, colours, fonts, structure must reflect themes. Review how the pages flow into each other, readability. Write up key points from interviews, with key questions. Reference correctly in text and refer to correct appendices. (Sign posting the reader) Professional approach.

Week 25 – Writing Week 16th – 20th Jan	
Comment – What did you learn in this session?	*Tasks – what will you do following this session?*
1:1 Leanne Tonkin 18th Jan I'm finalising, prof reading and writing my conclusion, do you any advice for writing my conclusion? First, summarise what you've learnt from the research and how this impacted you and your practice moving forward. Talk about the data you collected, assess the pros and cons here. Mention how you could improve your research; recommend further research you would do given more time. Be upfront and rationalise, this comes across extensive and professional. **You address a very relent topic so mention this too, the content warning and appreciation to such a difficult topic really shows professionalism.**	Read final information on the now and use this to help address any prof reading errors, such as floating quotes, citations, references. Make sure the conclusion is punchy and well-articulated using these key points as a reference. Make sure it isn't too long as this isn't necessary. Hitting the whole word count isn't always the best outcome as you want the text to be decise and to the point without waffle. Submit text to Turtin after this process to ensure there's no accidental plagiarism, this will provoke any further changes needed. Then ready to finalise in InDesign.

How is Women's Clothing Entrenched in Sexual Politics and What are the Implications?

By Louise Perkins-Chapman

This dissertation is decided to survivors of sexual exploitation, dismantling ideologies, stereotypes, stigmas and taboos can help protect others. I have explored these topics within my discipline of fashion design to provide explanations, based on doing what I can as a designer to push back against these issues. I truly believe that change in systematic mindset is possible. PS - I believe and support you.

Thank you Louise xx