



MILLENNIAL FASHION



What's in your Closet?

Graphic Design Thesis Process

Oregon State University | Spring 2014



What's in your Closet?

"It's a new era in fashion; there are no rules. It's all about the individual and personal style, wearing high-end, low-end, classic labels, and up-and-coming designers all together."

Alexander McQueen _ fashion designer

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This process book displays six months of research on the successful business strategies of fast fashion companies. The purpose of the thesis project was to formulate an argument that can be proven through various research methods. In order to establish a framework for the remainder of the project, the first portion of the research involved writing a paper. Within this research paper, I have proven that the majority of the success of fast fashion companies is due to the fact that they excel by taking advantage of current runway fashion trends through rapid production of relatively inexpensive clothing.¹ This strategic technique creates a high demand among the consumers and plays a huge role in generating billions of dollars in revenue for fast fashion companies each year.

Through further investigation of fashion marketing theory and trend analysis, I decided to create a fashion awareness campaign specifically targeted towards Oregon State University students. By utilizing these various fashion marketing strategies and applying basic principles of photography and design, I have successfully created a set of visual products that is relevant to all students on campus. Whether people view themselves as "fashionable" or not, everyone has their own sense of style that is a reflection of their personality, emotions, or even current mood. Creating a heightened awareness of what others are wearing gives people a frame of reference for their own behaviors.² A project of this magnitude has never been introduced to the Oregon State community, until now.

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1

Thesis Research

I was very excited about exploring all of the possibilities of this thesis topic in hopes to discover the psychology of fashion trends and how marketing / advertising strategies play an active role in consumer capitalism. I hope to discover something "ground-breaking" in order to create something that makes a difference in modern society.

Areas of Interest:

- Street / Fast Fashion Brands
- Advertising Techniques
- Cultural Fashion Trends
- The Age of Technology (Internet, Social Media, Apps)

List of Research Sources:

- Books
- Fashion Magazines
- Articles
- Interviews (Fashion & Marketing Professionals)
- Online and physical survey, forums, blogs, etc.
- Apparel Design Professors/ Grad Students

Greatest Research Challenges:

Finding secondary research that pertains to exactly what I was trying to examine and being able formulate a claim, was probably one of the greatest challenges that I was faced with. My topic was, so broad that it was difficult to pinpoint what I wanted to prove.

Research questions to drive thesis:

- 1 How has the emergence of the Internet and Social Media outlets, within the last 15 years, shaped various marketing techniques?
- 2 How do street fashion trends start, and how do they affect consumer capitalism?
- 3 What kind of advertising strategies are utilized in order to sell mid -market (street fashion) clothing?
- 4 How do all of the above variables contribute to the "Brand Image" of middle market fashion companies?

research

- 1.1 Free Writing Inspiration
- 1.2 Mind Mapping
- 1.3 Thesis Research Paper



Free Writing Inspiration

I have never thought of myself as the most fashionable or stylish dresser, but like many others, I have always felt the need to fit in. I went to Catholic school for thirteen years, so up until high school, I had to wear mandatory uniforms. I believe the reason that the administration mandated uniforms was because they knew that fashion was a huge part of our culture and typically segregates middle to high class kids. Think about it. Kids can be so cruel and will pick on others for being different. If you weren't up to speed with the fashion trends, you were considered an outcast. By forcing us to wear similar uniforms, they were trying to reduce the amount of ridicule and segregation through fashion.

Even though we all had to wear very similar polo shirts (navy blue, black, white or red) and slacks, we always found ways to create fashion trends with the options that we had. Our fashion emphasis was no longer directed towards graphic T-shirts and stylish jeans, but the "way" we wore our untucked polo shirts. There was a HUGE emphasis on our shoes and coats. Those were really the only option that we had for personal freedom and expression of individuality. It's funny how we try so hard to be individuals and stand out, but also try to blend in and be accepted by the "popular" group at the same time.

"You don't buy clothes, you buy an identity."

"Fashion Brands" _ Mark Tungate



This is one of the main reasons why I want to explore the topic of psychological fashion branding and the various cultural contexts associated with consumerism. I have always found it very interesting how people will spend thousands of dollars a year to "fit in" with the "popular" crowd in order to be accepted or differentiated. The mentality and thought process starts when you are a child. I've noticed that there seems to be a point in everyone's life where they want to fit in and try to conform with the rest of the world. Either they "successfully" conform with the rest of the "popular kids", or they go the opposite route and start their own fashion trend. It is my belief that most people want to be individuals and define who they are as a person, but there are certain individuals who are brave enough to venture out of the conformity box and really express their personalities through various types of expression. A lot of that starts with fashion.

Some of the most famous fashion trends start from individuality. I find it interesting how people say that "history repeats itself". I find that to be true in several ways, especially in fashion. Take the 80's for example. It was all about bright, neon, pastel colors. During the 90's, it was no longer considered "fashionable" to wear super bright colors or mom jeans. Fashion colors mellowed out and focused more on graphics. It seemed that around the turn of the century, the bright colors and graffiti style fonts seemed to be making a comeback, especially with the young crowd. With the emergence of mainstream social media and the Hip-Hop and Electronic culture at its most popular, there were new fashion styles being marketed all over the world, especially North America and Europe. It is very interesting to observe how these Pop Culture movements and economic statuses affect the fashion industry and the branding associated with it.

The main reason I gravitated towards fashion and branding was the fact that I really enjoyed the branding and identity systems class and also finding out that branding was MUCH more than just "logo design". There is so much more psychological analysis involved. As a photographer, I love thinking about fashion photography, because I am so passionate about the process and love the collaboration involved with developing an idea into a tangible concept through the science of photography and design. It is the planning, research and collaboration with other like-minded individuals that gets my adrenaline going. (Models, Hair stylists, MUAs, photographers, apparel designers, set designers, stylists, etc.) I love to conceptualize an idea with imagery and be able to create art with light, color, form, texture, position, etc. I wanted to figure out how to tie all of these concepts together into one cohesive thesis project and potentially discover something that no one has ever thought of before. That is my ultimate goal with this project!

I'm sure some of the information that just flowed through my fingertips, from my past experiences and observations might not be true, but at this point, they don't really have to be. That is the beauty of infinite knowledge out there. I am a sponge and just waiting to soak up whatever piece of information that I can get my hands on and I WILL LEARN AS MUCH AS I POSSIBLY CAN..... OR DIE TRYING!

Differentiation

Collaboration

Innovation

Validation

Cultivation

"The Brand Gap" _ Marty Neumeier

1.2

Mind Mapping

Mind mapping is probably the most important part of the research process. The mapping allows researchers to literally 'map' out their thoughts, using associations, connections and triggers to stimulate further ideas. These maps visually display all of the possible routes that the research could lead in order to arrive at the conclusion of the main topic. By visually laying out all of the possible connections to the main topic, it allows the brain to make stronger associations with certain ideas and create a heightened awareness for a wider range of execution strategies.

Throughout my research process, I must have changed my main topic about five or six times, narrowing the search each time. My research began with advertising of fashion editorials, because I have always been interested in fashion magazines and until I started experimenting with fashion photography a few years ago, I had no ideas how difficult and complex the process is. I have found a new appreciation of how photography and mood affects the way a product or service is advertised. Throughout my analysis, I realized how broad the topic of fashion was and had to figure out a way to narrow down my research even more. The process of mind mapping has allowed me to focus on a set of guidelines, so I can maximize the efficiency of my research and not waste my time in the process.

"I have so many ideas buzzing around in my head. How else could I capture all these mini inspirations, quickly, without the simplicity of Mind Mapping?"

Dominic O'Brien, 9 time World Memory Champion

Branding - Identity - Product - Customer
Marketing - Advertising - Media - Print - TV
Design - Graphics - Photography - Strategic Planning
Fashion - Street - Models - Fast - Trend - Distribution
Psychology - Trend Analysis - Fitting in - Conformity -

Resources

- Books
- Magazines
- Articles
- Peer Review
- Interviews (Fashion Pros)
 - Primary
- Survey, Forum, Blog

The resources list was an integral part of the research process, because it listed all of the possible resources that were available to me, in order to collect all of my information.

1.3

Thesis Paper

Fast fashion is a concept that is based on the quick response production of “runway style” clothing at an affordable price, in order to capture current fashion trends. By analyzing the effects of fashion trends on mainstream consumers, fast fashion companies have been able to successfully maximize profits through various design, production, and distribution processes. By implementing business strategies such as quick response production and planned obsolescence, fast fashion companies have been able to manipulate consumer behaviors so they feel the need to purchase new products to replace the old ones. This paper focuses on the business strategies of fast fashion companies and how they benefit from fashion trends through consumer capitalism.

Keywords: Fast Fashion, Business Strategies, Quick Response, Planned Obsolescence, Consumer Behavior, Consumer Capitalism, Fashion Trends

“A brand benefits from increased awareness, more prestige, and a stronger, more complete image as a result of its own retail presentation.”

Pierre Malleveys, Getting The Luxury Fashion Business Model Right



Fast Fashion Success

In today's fast-paced fashion society, fast fashion companies take advantage of the consumer need to have the latest fashion by mastering the rapid production of stylish, runway-inspired clothing lines at affordable prices.¹ According to Dr. Leslie Burns, a professor in the School of Design and Human Environment at Oregon State University, fast fashion companies implement very similar marketing strategies to other ready-to-wear apparel companies such as J.C. Penney, Target, and Sears. The difference is their quick response time from design concept to retail store and the strategy of not replenishing merchandise at the retail level.² This strategy of planned obsolescence, in which the lifespan of a product is planned and built into it from its conception, prevents consumers from being able to wait until the clothing item goes on sale or on the retail rack.³ So, in a sense, this is fast fashion's way of having more control over consumer decisions. In the competitive field of fashion, if other ready-to-wear apparel companies do not find more efficient ways to design, produce and distribute their clothing lines, they will eventually lose their market share to trendier, fast fashion companies such as H&M and Zara.

The concept of fashion is evident of all cultures around the world. It is embedded in our minds since birth, either subliminally or noticeably, that in order to be accepted in society, we need to have the latest style of clothing, shoes, and products. According to Mark Tungate, an accredited fashion journalist and author of several fashion-oriented books such as *Fashion Brands: Branding Style from Armani to Zara* and *Branded Male: Marketing to Men*, “You don't buy clothes – you buy an identity.”⁴ There are those who are natural trend setters and differentiate themselves from the rest of the mass consumer culture, and those who feel the need to fit in with the “fashion expectations” established by trend setters. The latter have been known to spend thousands of dollars in order to purchase an identity and follow the latest, popular trends. Dr. Jennifer Baumgartner, clinical psychologist, refers to this type of consumer as a “trend chaser”.⁵ Fast fashion companies thrive on the masked insecurities of these so-called “trend chasers” by taking advantage of the psychological aspects of consumerism.



Image Source: www.nypost.com
It is claimed that Zara needs just two weeks to develop a new product and get it to stores, compared to the six-month industry average, and launches around 10,000 new designs each year.⁶



Image Source: www.dreamstime.com
H&M takes advantage of the social aspects of shopping malls and provided retails stores in shopping malls all over the world.



Trend Psychology / Influence

In order to evaluate the success of fast fashion companies, one must understand the most important concept behind fast fashion – the trend itself. There are many different factors to be considered when it comes to the theory of trend psychology. Some of the most successful studies, specifically geared towards consumer behavior and trend psychology, have been used for marketing purposes in order to sell consumer products. Fashion companies use these psychological findings to advertise their products to their intended target market. So how do fashion trends start? In order to answer this complex question, one must ask how the brain reacts to trends in general.

According to a neurological study conducted in 2006, researchers Nico Bunzeck and Emrah Düzel discovered that novelty items stimulate the reward-seeking division of the brain.⁷ The study states:

The major 'novelty center' of the brain -- called the substantia nigra/ventral tegmental area (SN/VTA) -- might be activated by the unexpectedness of a stimulus, the emotional arousal it causes, or the need to respond behaviorally. As the subjects' brains were scanned using functional magnetic resonance imaging--they were shown a series of images of the same face or outdoor scene.⁸

Through the research findings, these scientists concluded that the human brain is positively stimulated by newly introduced, novelty items; therefore, people actually feel a sense of accomplishment from purchasing new products. Dr. Jennifer Baumgartner reiterates this concept with her own interpretation of trend psychology by inferring that consumers love trends because they are “fast acting, short lived blasts of novelty.”⁹ Additionally, a similar reaction ensues in the brain when a new product line comes out on the market. This is great news for the fast fashion industry.

It is difficult to pinpoint the specific influences that start certain trends, as there are many different factors to consider when conducting trend analysis. Crispin Argento, the Founder/Creative Director of a small apparel company, PINO Portland, explained during an interview that “depending on the product, trends tend to come from everywhere: the street, the runway, designers, celebrities, pop culture, art, etc.”¹⁰ As a fashion designer, Crispin has been influenced not only by runway shows, but also by exploring street fashion, hoping to be inspired by what he observed to be popular among Portland consumers.

There are several theories in the fashion industry as to how trends begin, who sets them, and whom they influence. Keith Nishida, a doctoral candidate and instructor in the School of Design and Human Environment at Oregon State University, provided some insight into theories that are currently circulating in the design world. He explained that there are three possible theories: The Trickle Down Theory, The Trickle Up Theory, and the Trickle Across Theory.¹¹ The Trickle Down Theory is a concept that is widely used by luxury brands, such as Gucci, Prada, and Louis Vuitton. These companies advertise their products being worn by cultural icons, such as wealthy celebrities, in order to appeal to the middle-class consumer, and eventually to the lower class.¹² The Trickle Up Theory is the opposite concept, deriving from the fashion of the streets. Industry professionals and designers such as Crispin Argento might notice certain fashion patterns displayed on the streets and incorporate those trends into their designs. Bill Cunningham, a well-known street-style photographer for NY Times Style Magazine, reinforces this theory by stating, “The Fashion show has been on the street. It always has and it always will be.”¹³ In the film, Bill Cunningham: New York, Bill explores the streets documenting the latest fashion trends. His photos have given insight to many high fashion designers as to what is popular on the streets.

The last common trend theory is the Trickle Across Theory. This concept is centered on the idea that within every social group there are certain people who influence trends, as much as in any of the other theories.¹⁴ These individuals are usually considered to be popular and admired by the people they interact with. Mark Tungate refers to this kind of consumer as a “brand ambassador”.¹⁵ He also describes some of the Trickle Across trends as strongly influenced by fashion bloggers. These “new fashion journalists” have a very influential impact on consumer decisions as they do not have the same biased opinions about fashion products as editors tend to have in magazines such as Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, and NY Times Style. Many of these fashion editorials cannot be neutral about certain fashion products and apparel, because those companies sponsor them. These bloggers have changed the way people write about fashion by including gossip, likes, dislikes, etc.¹⁶ It would seem that consumers would give bloggers more credibility, because they have freedom of speech and can be honest about which clothing lines and products are worth buying or not.

Advertising

Advertising is a very important aspect of marketing and possibly the greatest expense of any marketing campaign. According to Kenneth Roman and Jane Maas, the authors of the book, *How to Advertise*, the first and most important process of advertising is "positioning" the product. These authors consider the marketing plan to be the overall master plan, but the advertising plan is the creative plan. In order to position the product, these experts

advise covering 5 key points: Objective, Target Audience, Key Consumer Benefit, Support, and Tone & Manner.¹⁷ They continue, "When you position your product, you place it a certain way in the consumer's mind." Professor Justin Lewis, of Cardiff University, describes

"You do not merely want to be considered just the best of the best. You want to be considered the only one to do what you do."

Jerry Garcia

that through media blasts and subliminal messaging, advertising sends one message: "Any form of human happiness comes from the world of consumption. It is propaganda for organizing our lives through consumerism."¹⁸ This idea of "happiness

through consumption" is an inculcation technique that has been implemented through virtually every media outlet: the film industry, modern technology devices, social media, etc. People literally cannot walk down the street of a busy, metropolitan city without being exposed to some sort of advertisement: billboards, bus stops, newsstands, etc. This kind of subliminal/psychological advertising has the ability to affect the purchasing decisions of the mass consumer market.

By analyzing specific fashion editorials and marketing campaigns, it is apparent that most of these companies share very similar advertising strategies. Within magazines such as *Vogue Magazine*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *NY Times Style Magazine*, about 75% of the content include advertisements. Most of these advertisements utilize the Trickle Down Theory of fashion marketing. Luxury brands such as Dolce and Gabbana, Prada, and Louis Vuitton either display cultural icons or attractive, young people in order to portray an image of success and elegance. According to Mark Tungate, the idea behind this advertising strategy is strictly to validate the brand of the company.¹⁹ Displaying famous people wearing their products and designs not only sends a message to the rest of the industry, it also boosts the morale of the staff. People like to think that they work for a prestigious company that only deals with important individuals. For example, *NY Times Style Magazine* did an article on Jay Z, a popular hip-hop icon and entrepreneur. The article traces Jay Z's rise to fame.²⁰ Displaying his struggles along the way creates an emotional narrative that middle and lower-class consumers can relate to. His story demonstrates that fame is attainable even for the poorest minority. Throughout the article there are subtle advertisements for the clothes that he was wearing, by Gucci and Calvin Klein. This kind of advertising has allowed fashion companies to position their products to consumers, even if some of the items were a little too expensive for the middle-class consumer. This marketing strategy is a good brand-building technique and generates product value.

Image Source: clashmusic.com
The Trickle Down Theory of fashion marketing explains why several magazine editorials include celebrities within their advertisements.

Brand Building and Strategic Alliances

Brand image is arguably the most important part of a company. It displays the company's core values and elicits an emotional commitment from the consumer. According to Brian Solice, digital analyst and author of the book, *Screw Business As Usual*, brand image is mainly based on consumer experience.²¹ No amount of marketing can change a bad experience. For example, if a consumer has a bad interaction with an employee at a retail store, he/she might never shop there again. Within the fashion industry, brand image is the difference between failure and success. Marianne Bickle describes this concept in her book, *Fashion Marketing: Theory, Principles and Practices*. As the consumer views strength in the brand, the value of the company dramatically increases. Marianne quotes Jerry Garcia: "You do not merely want to be considered just the best of the best. You want to be considered the only one to do what you do."²²

There are several factors that need to be considered when building a fashion brand: business practices, product quality, customer service, retail space, and brand image. According to Mark Tungate, "Photographers have an enormous influence on the branding process."²³ A recent interview with Katie Korinsky, international model, provides insight into the perspective of an international model and how certain modeling and photography techniques affect brand image. Katie describes the difference between modeling for a catalog photo shoot and a high fashion photo shoot. According to her, "a catalog model is supposed to look like the girl next door and be very inviting so the audience can relate to her. The high fashion model has a completely opposite mentality. In a high fashion shoot, the model typically does not smile, because he/she is supposed to be 'above' everyone else and sell the story more than the look."²⁴ These opposing photographic styles can manipulate the consumer's interpretation of a brand image.

In order to build brand value, a few fast fashion companies have formed alliances with well-known, high fashion designers. In an article in *Business of Fashion*, Eugene Rabkin, editor-in-chief of *StyleZeitgeist Magazine*, mentioned that the first strategic alliance between a high fashion designer and a mass retailer was ten years ago between H&M and the designer of Chanel, Karl Lagerfeld.²⁵ This campaign was so successful that it started a trend of collaborations between high fashion designers and fast fashion retailers. Rabkin expresses his distaste for this collaboration by stating, "What is called 'the democratization of fashion' is really the bastardization of fashion; that is, taking a designer's ideas and watering them down for mass

consumption."²⁶ This statement might be true to some fashion critics and designers, but in a strategic alliance, both parties benefit. This kind of mutual partnership sends a message to consumers that high fashion designers understand how to design street style fashion and also demonstrates that fast fashion companies, like H&M, can come up with innovative designs, offer the best quality at the best price, and conduct efficient logistics.²⁷ In order to add further value to their brand, H&M has embarked on a sustainability campaign over the past 4 years. The company has raised the quality of life for its employees, created an awareness campaign around consumer use of water while washing clothes, and started using organic cotton in order to reduce the amount of pesticides used on cotton fields. With the growing concerns of fast fashion production and the genuine lack of sustainability, this campaign is a great way for H&M to enforce its brand image. Karl Persson, CEO of H&M, demonstrates his pride in their business strategy: "I'm really happy to see that our customers and colleagues show such interest in sustainability. This opens great opportunities to strengthen our customer offering, build our brands and attract & retain the talent we need for our continued growth."²⁸ This strategic shift in company policy has contributed to H&M's many successes and will continue to generate brand value.



Lagerfeld for H&M Ad (2005)



Shift in Consumer Behavior

With the emergence of the Internet and social media outlets, middle and lower-class consumers have become more independent and less influenced by traditional advertising. With various Online product reviews, consumers have the ability to view brands that they normally would not know about, due to the competitive nature of advertising. According to Forbes Online Magazine, the new generation of young consumers are "brand aware, but less brand loyal."²⁹ Due to the recent economic crisis, middle and lower-class consumers have been forced to adapt to more conscious purchasing decisions. Through this economic hardship, the term "hybrid consumer" has emerged. This term refers to the picking and choosing of clothing from various markets.³⁰ Fashion guru, Jean-Jacques Picart, addresses this concept: "It's not enough to be fashionable – one wishes to appear intelligent as well."³¹ Picart points out the fact that there have been two shifts in fashion. No matter what the economic status is, there will still be that divide between the upper and lower classes, and luxury brands will continue to create luxury goods. The interesting thing about the shift in behavior is that the middle-class consumer might save up and buy an expensive Christian Dior bag and will go to H&M the same day and buy a T-shirt for \$10 and be OK with wearing both products. This type of thinking shows that the consumer is capable of making intelligent choices and is in charge of their purchasing decisions.³² This consequential effort to save money but still remain fashionable has created a new trend style of mixing high fashion and basic retail fashion.

- Lavender tank top (Target)
 - White, denim jean-shorts (Nordstrom)
 - Necklace (Pinecone moonstone)
 - Sunglasses (Prada)

Fast Fashion Response

Fast fashion companies have been incredibly successful through economic hard times. Through calculated business strategies, these companies have been able to successfully capitalize on this shift in consumer behavior. One of the most successful fast fashion companies in the world is Zara.³³ Stephen Denning, author of the book, *The Leader's Guide to Radical Management: Reinventing the Workplace for the 20th Century*, explains how Zara has overcome certain challenges attributed to this behavioral shift, reclaiming control of their target consumers. As previously mentioned, with the emergence of the Internet and consequent globalization, consumers gained back control

"Understanding the relationship between Cause and Effect is the first step in designing strategies where ROI (return of investment) represents Realization of Influence."

of purchasing decisions and found strategic ways to capitalize on sales and clearance items. Denning describes how this new technology has shifted the way consumers think and how it affects company profits: "Organizations operating in the old mode are dying faster and faster. The rate of return on assets and investor

capital is ¼ what it was in 1965. It's down to just over 1%."³⁴ Most ready-to-wear companies, such as J.C. Penney and Target, send their designs to China for production. This process usually extends the manufacturing time, and quality tends to be sacrificed in order to maximize profits. To solve this issue, Zara has established design, manufacturing and distribution centers in one spot, close to the target market. This strategy is very successful, giving the consumers exactly what they want while maximizing profits through quick response production.³⁵

In a fast paced society with resultant high demands, fast fashion companies such as H&M and Zara have proven that they have been able to develop solid business strategies in order to survive and thrive in the competitive world of fashion. Brian Solis, data analyst, explains why these strategies have worked so well: "Understanding the relationship between Cause and Effect is the first step in designing strategies where ROI (return of investment) represents Realization of Influence."³⁶ Through the implementation of the aforementioned business strategies, these companies have been able to regain control of their target markets in order to maximize profits. If other ready-to-wear fashion companies do not implement more effective business strategies, they will fall to the wayside of more successful fast fashion companies.



Image Source:
www.nytimes.com
 Zara factory

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2

Design Experimentation

2.1 Research Strategy

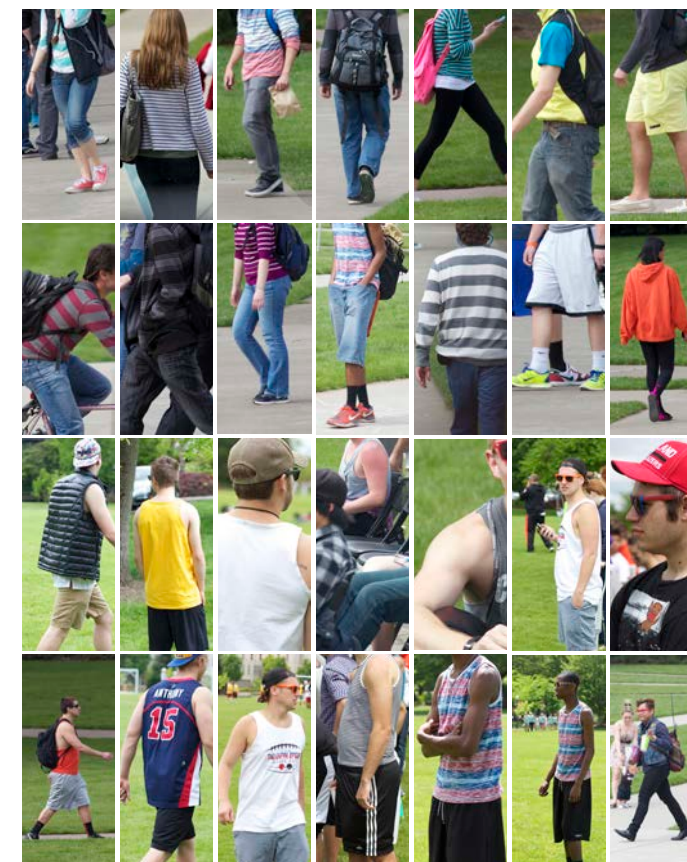
2.2 Experiment 1

2.3 Experiment 2

2.4 Experiment 3

This section focuses on the application of the comprehensive research to the field of graphic design. In order to expand on the acquired knowledge of the successful business strategies of fast fashion companies, I conducted a series of experiments that focus on fashion trend analysis. I wanted to design a campaign that creates a heightened awareness of fashion, relevant to a mass community. The most obvious target audience was Oregon State University students, ages 18-25. As an OSU student, I am constantly interacting with students from different backgrounds on campus. As the Director of Photography for DAMchic magazine, Oregon State's premier fashion magazine, I wanted to create something that displays what students are wearing on campus and the style choices associated with that behavior. Instead of creating articles like a fashion editorial, the content would be coming from the students.

I am very interested in trend psychology and wanted to analyze consumer behavior by documenting the style and purchasing choices of students on campus. The experiments conducted were a series of qualitative, quantitative, and observational research methods. By analyzing the fashion trends on campus and creating a catalog/book that utilizes fashion marketing theories, I hope to spark the interest of the student body and create a fashion social dialogue. I directed a team of fashion enthusiasts and effectively created a heightened awareness of the fashion trends on campus. If this project proves to be successful, I will continue this campaign and potentially receive sponsorship from clothing companies, through product placement. This project could potentially be sold to the university to show future students what the university is all about. The university would be nothing without it's students, so a product like this is beneficial to the OSU social environment.



After 2 weeks of observational research, I came to the conclusion that there were 4 main trends on campus.

2.1

Research Strategy

My goal is to create a seasonal trend campaign for Oregon State University students. By conducting a series of research experiments, I hypothesize that with the use of the fast fashion business strategy of rapid production and the use of trickle-across marketing tactics, I can potentially influence a new trend or fashion social network on campus.

Who is the intended audience for this project?

The target audience is the low income, Oregon State student body. (Ages 18-25)

What do I hope to learn from your first experiment?

I hope to receive qualitative and quantitative research that will help me decide learn what style of clothing the average college student is interested in and why they made that decision (consumer behavior).

What is the "plan B" if I cannot complete the project as I intend to?

I have formulated a team of creative minds (apparel designers, photographers, entrepreneurs) to help with the research of the project. The final project will be a multi-channel marketing campaign. The main product will be a spring fashion trend book of Oregon State campus trends. To market and document the trend book, I will create a fashion trend blog/phone app combo, so the students can see what the latest trends are on campus. If I run out of time, I will scrap the mock phone application, but I would like to create all of the aforementioned deliverables.

Week by Week Timeline

Week 1: Figure out what I want to prove and produce and create a plan on how to execute this project

Week 2: Distribute a Qualitative/Quantitative survey among Oregon State peers.

Week 3: Surveillance / Observation Research; Begin blog documentation; create marketing materials to promote trend look book. Try and have the barometer cover the project for further marketing

Week 4: Controlled Survey/ Trend Documentation

Questions: What fashion styles/brands are students wearing?

What factors influenced them to wear these clothes?

Week 5: Set up photo shoots for trend look book

Week 6: Design mock app layout and concept.

Week 7: Further marketing and documentation; assign specific fashion elements (color, article of clothing, style, etc.) for the week and focus on just that style, color, etc.

Week 8: set up design for the trend book.

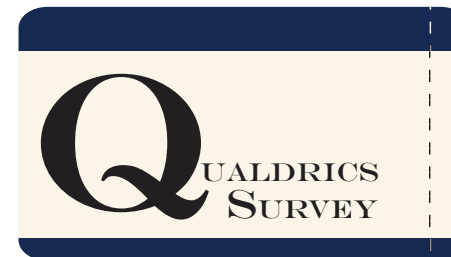
Week 9: Further marketing of trend book release and design refinements.

Week 10: Design Process book with collected results.

Week 11: Launch the digital, spring trend book.

Visual Research Diagram

Experiment 1



-Conduct a Qualitative and Quantitative Survey among OSU students

-Generate questions based on style trends in order to receive subjective feedback.

- Incorporate fashion marketing tactics in order to document what influences student purchasing behavior.

Experiment 2



-Gather a team of volunteers to conduct observation research in order to document (photograph) the current trends on campus.

-This experiment will be discreet in order to collect data that will help to come to some sort of conclusion on what kind of spring trends are surfacing on campus, without direct contact from the subjects of the experiment.

-With the help of my team, we will come up with different styles of clothing to focus on for each week.

Experiment 3



-With the help of my volunteer team, we will approach students and ask them what kind of brands they are wearing and what inspired them to wear that specific outfit.

-I hope to find out exactly why people made the decisions they did to wear a specific type of clothing.



Marketing Campaign

I will create a series of marketing materials and utilize marketing outlets such as the Daily Barometer, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. in order to market the trend blog and announce the OSU Trend look book. Through issuu.com, I can record how many people have viewed the look book.

OSU Trend Blog

This will be the documentation portion of my trend campaign. This is where I will post the daily fashion trend and set specific styles for the week.
Ex: Designate colors, textures or styles for the week.

OSU Trend Book

This will be a compilation of fashion styles that are present on campus during the spring term. This look book will display what people are wearing on campus and why.

OSU Trend App

This will be a mock App that people could download onto their phones and follow the latest trends of the month, week, or day.

2.2

Experiment 1

Qualdrics Survey: Quantitative Research

Questions:

- 1) How important are trends to an Oregon State college student?
- 2) What influences have an impact on the fashion style of an OSU student?
- 3) What kind of clothing is worn on a day-to-day basis?

Results:

- 45% of the people who filled out the survey said that trends are semi-important to follow.
- Out of 8 options, the 3 most important factors when purchasing a fashion product are: *Necessity (1), Price (2), and Quality (3)*.
- The participants were asked what influences impact their purchasing decisions. 50% said that nothing influences their decisions and that they set their own trends.
- Out of 8 styles, the 2 most popular brands were H&M and NIKE. It is interesting that 0 people picked J.C. Penney, but later in the survey, they were shown a series of images with people wearing different styles of clothing and asked to decide which style of clothing was the most appealing. The brand names were concealed and the brand that was picked most often for men happened to be J.C. Penney. This might be proof that brand image is important in purchasing decisions.
- The average age of the participants was 24. (66% women, 34% men)

Data Results

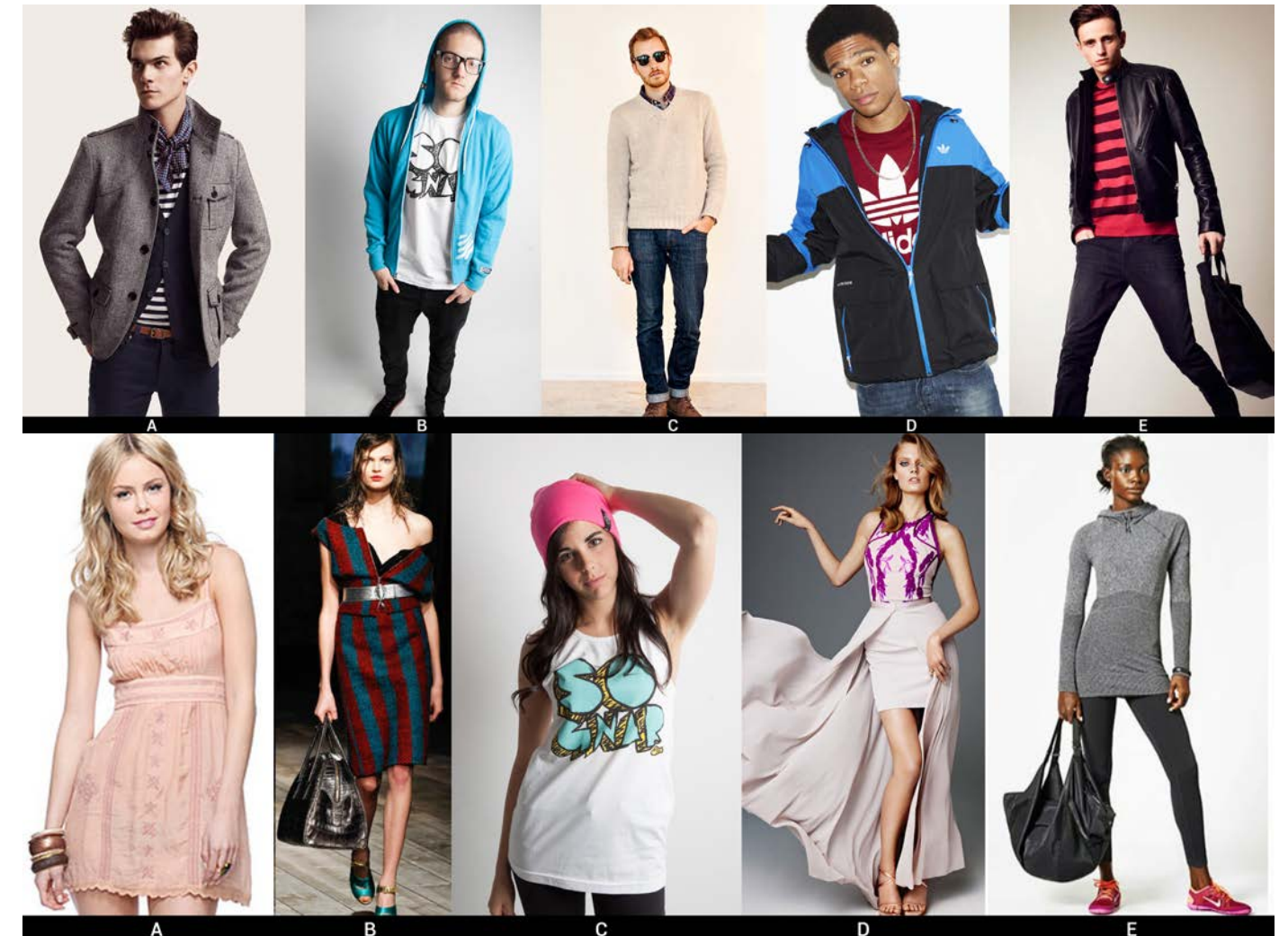
Out of the following brands, which brand is the most appealing?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	J.C. Penney	0	0%
2	NIKE	12	23%
3	H&M	11	21%
4	Forever 21	9	17%
5	Vans	5	9%
6	Calvin Klein	2	4%
7	Louis Vuitton	6	11%
8	The North Face	8	15%
Total		53	100%

How important is it to stay up to date on the latest fashion trends?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Not important at all	4	8%
2	Sort of Important	23	45%
3	Important	18	35%
4	Extremely Important	6	12%
Total		51	100%

What style of clothing would you wear on a day-to-day basis?



Depending on whether they are male or female, students were asked to pick which style of clothing they would wear on a day-to-day basis. The majority chose (C) for the men and (A) for the women.

2.3

Experiment 2

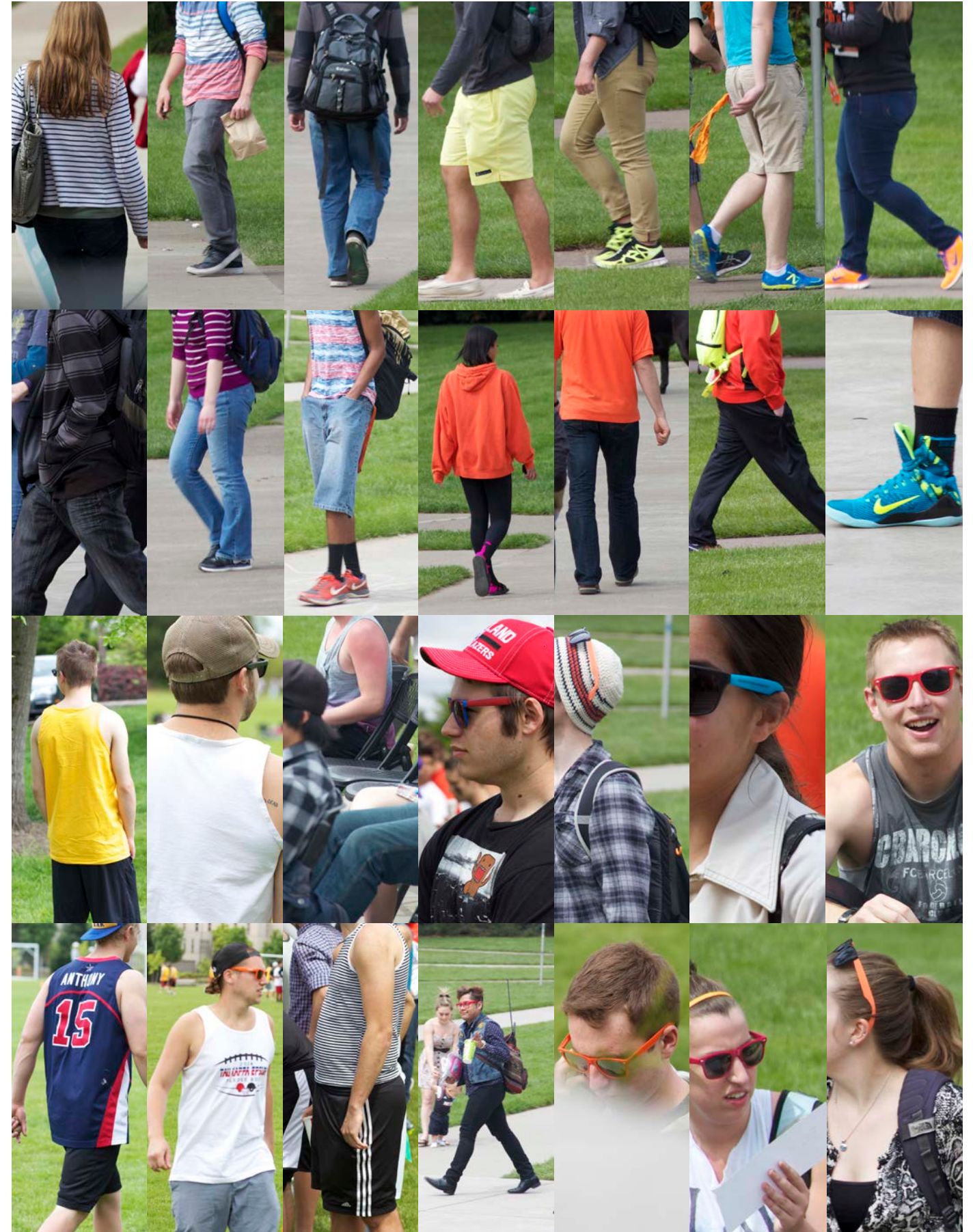
Surveillance: Observational Research

Questions:

- 1) What are some recurring styles on campus? (trend?)
- 2) Does the weather have a significant impact on the way students dress?
- 3) What kind of style is most commonly worn on campus? (week-by-week)

Results:

- I have noticed that tank tops, or what most students consider "bro-tanks" (fraternity lingo), have been a common trend during the sunny days.
- I have also noticed a dramatic shift from neutral colors in the winter to bright, neon colors (shoes, shirts, sunglasses and pants).
- I'm not sure if there was an event recently, but I have noticed a lot of students wearing wayfarer sunglasses, with neon colored temple bars (part of sunglasses that the ear holds up).
- Horizontal stripes seem to be another common trend on campus.



2.4

Experiment 3

Interviews: Qualitative Research

Questions:

- 1) What kind of decisions are students making when choosing clothes to wear?
- 2) What kinds of brands are OSU students wearing on campus?
- 3) How does mood affect the style choices?


Results:

- A lot of female students wear clothing that is "cute and comfortable"
- I have noticed a lot of responses that relate to mood when it comes to style choices. (Ex. "I wore these clothes because they make me feel good and happy")
- Most of the male participants didn't have much of an opinion about their fashion. They either just rolled out of bed and grabbed something to wear or they just wanted to wear something comfortable.
- There is a relationship between the students' major emphasis and the style of clothing that is worn. (Ex. Political Science majors tend to wear business casual)

EMILY VAN BRONKHORST
Major: Political Science
Year: Senior

Attire:
 - Striped dress (Anne Taylor)
 - Patten black shoes (Mary Jean)
 - Fairtrade sunglasses

Style Inspiration:
 I chose to wear this outfit, because today is my birthday and stripes make me happy. I enjoy wearing clothes that make me feel comfortable and stylish at the same time. I am proud to wear something that people can aspire to wear.

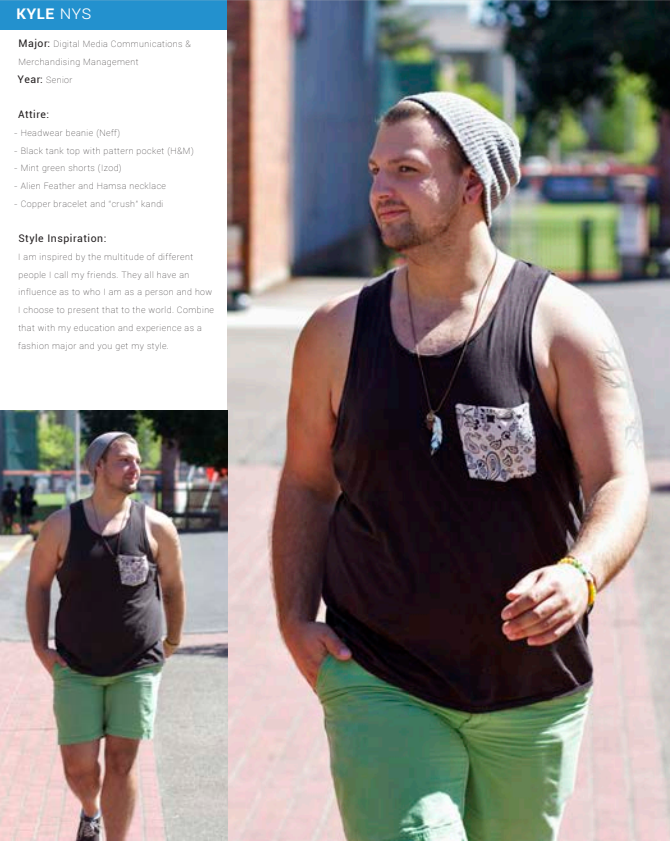


HORIZONTAL STRIPES

KYLE NYS
Major: Digital Media Communications & Merchandising Management
Year: Senior

Attire:
 - Headwear: beanie (Neff)
 - Black tank top with pattern pocket (H&M)
 - Mint green shorts (Zoo)
 - Allen Feather and Hamza necklace
 - Copper bracelet and "crush" kandi

Style Inspiration:
 I am inspired by the multitude of different people I call my friends. They all have an influence as to who I am as a person and how I choose to present that to the world. Combine that with my education and experience as a fashion major and you get my style.



MILLENNIAL SOCIETY

AUSTIN RUSSELL
Major: Graphic Design
Year: Senior

Attire:
 - Horizontal striped, long-sleeve shirt(Zoo York)
 - Neon orange and black, dry-fit shorts (NIKE)
 - Neon Free trainers (NIKE)

Style Inspiration:
 I am usually wearing neutral colors that complement my brown hair, but now that the sun is coming out, I really like seeing all of the neon colors showing up all over the place. Wearing neon lately has made me feel good and hopeful that the weather will continue to stay clear and sunny.


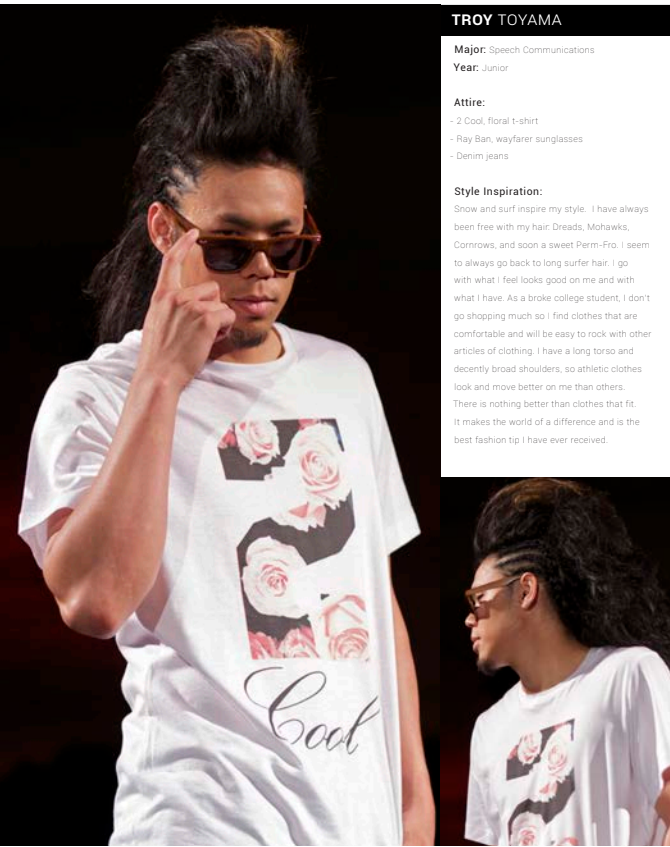


Photo Credit: Alex Howell
MILLENNIAL SOCIETY

TROY TOYAMA
Major: Speech Communications
Year: Junior

Attire:
 - 2 Cool, floral t-shirt
 - Ray Ban, wayfarer sunglasses
 - Denim jeans

Style Inspiration:
 Snow and surf inspire my style. I have always been free with my hair Dreads, Mohawks, Cornrows, and soon a sweet Perm-Fro. I seem to always go back to long surfer hair. I go with what I feel looks good on me and with what I have. As a broke college student, I don't go shopping much so I find clothes that are comfortable and will be easy to rock with other articles of clothing. I have a long torso and decently broad shoulders, so athletic clothes look and move better on me than others. There is nothing better than clothes that fit. It makes the world of a difference and is the best fashion tip I have ever received.



MILLENNIAL SOCIETY

3

Marketing Campaign



Objectives

Create a marketing campaign and campus awareness of all the fashion trends that are occurring on the Oregon State campus. Use several marketing tactics to create a demand for student viewing in hopes that this trending campaign will catch on.

- 1) Have KBVR create exclusive segment video (marketing)
- 2) Design trend book
- 3) Design mock phone app interface
- 4) Create Blog / Website
- 5) Design Process Book

Weekly Schedule

- Week 6:** KBVR interviews, finish campaign branding, start putting look book together.
- Week 7:** Finish App and blog display, start putting process book together, work on trend book
- Week 8:** Finish and print trend book. Post trend book Online Barometer and KBVR Marketing
- Week 9:** OSU Thesis show
- Week 10:** Design Process book with collected results.
- Week 11:** Launch the digital, spring trend book.

Millennial Fashion is Oregon State University's premier fashion awareness campaign. This campaign analyzes and displays the spring fashion trends that are currently happening on the Oregon State campus.

Barometer Marketing

3.1 Fashion Trend Book

3.2 Website / Blog

3.3 Phone Application

3.4 Multimedia / Social Media

3.1

Fashion Trend Book

Millennial Fashion is Oregon State University's premier fashion trend book. This Online book analyzes and displays the spring fashion trends that are currently happening on the OSU campus.

Fashion is an extension of a person's personality, emotions, or even current mood. Regardless of whether we think we are "fashionable" or not, everyone has their own sense of style. As the season changes from winter to spring, so do the fashion styles all over campus. There have been a few fashion trends that have been circulating among the Oregon State student body, among which are:

- Horizontal Stripes
- Wayfarer Sunglasses
- Tank Tops
- Bright Neon Colors

It would make sense that these items would become very popular after a long winter season. What little sun we have inspires hope for sunny summer days.

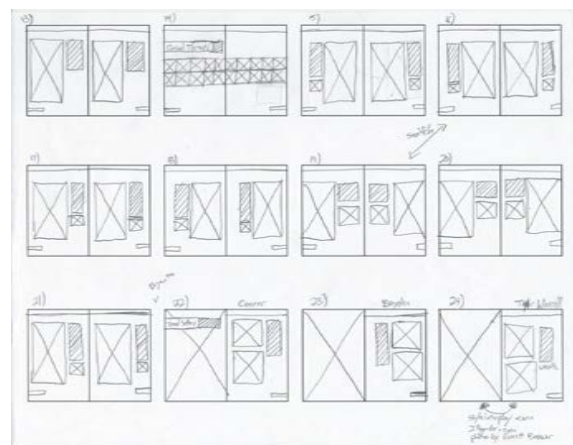
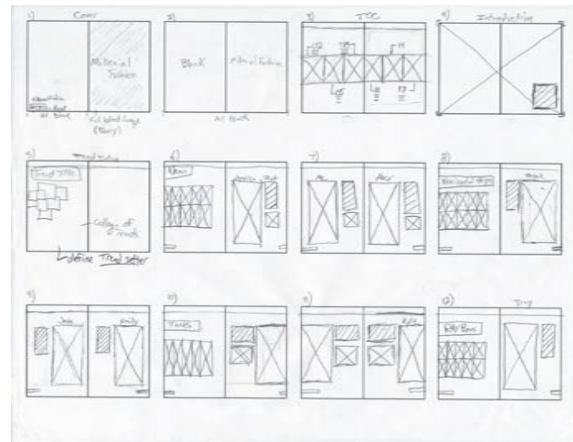
Millennial Fashion Trend Book: <http://www.issuu.com/millennialfashion>

Typeface

Roboto

Roboto *Roboto* **Roboto**
 Roboto **Roboto** *Roboto*

Color pallet



Creating thumbnail sketches to lay out the book was an integral part in the process and was beneficial to the overall design of the book.



MILLENNIAL FASHION



(16"x12") vinyl cover; Print

3.2

Website / Blog

The Millennial Fashion website is the main site that the majority of the Internet traffic will be circulating through. This website has blog postings where students can post their fashion 'selfie' of the day and their style tips. It also has a link to the Online trend book. The gallery displays all of the photos that are not in the trend book. This is the site where students can find out information on Millennial Fashion and how to get involved. This website is also linked to the MF social media via Facebook and Instagram. Hopefully with the constant introduction of new pictures and information, students will want to be more engaging and participate in Millennial Fashion activities and contests.

MILLENNIAL FASHION Blog About Contact Gallery

Weekly Updates on the latest fashion trends on the Oregon State campus. Fashion collaboration with DAMchic Magazine.

DAMchic Magazine

The Millennial Fashion trend book is here!
06/01/2014 0 Comments

Introducing, Oregon State University's first fashion trend book:
www.issuu.com/millennialfashion

Millennial Team
The Millennial Fashion team is here to document the latest trends on the Oregon State campus. Let us know if you have noticed any new trends happening on campus and we'll be there to capture it!

MILLENNIAL FASHION Blog About Contact Gallery

MILLENNIAL FASHION Blog About Contact Gallery

Fashion Trending On Campus

TRENDING ON CAMPUS

BEAVER NEWS

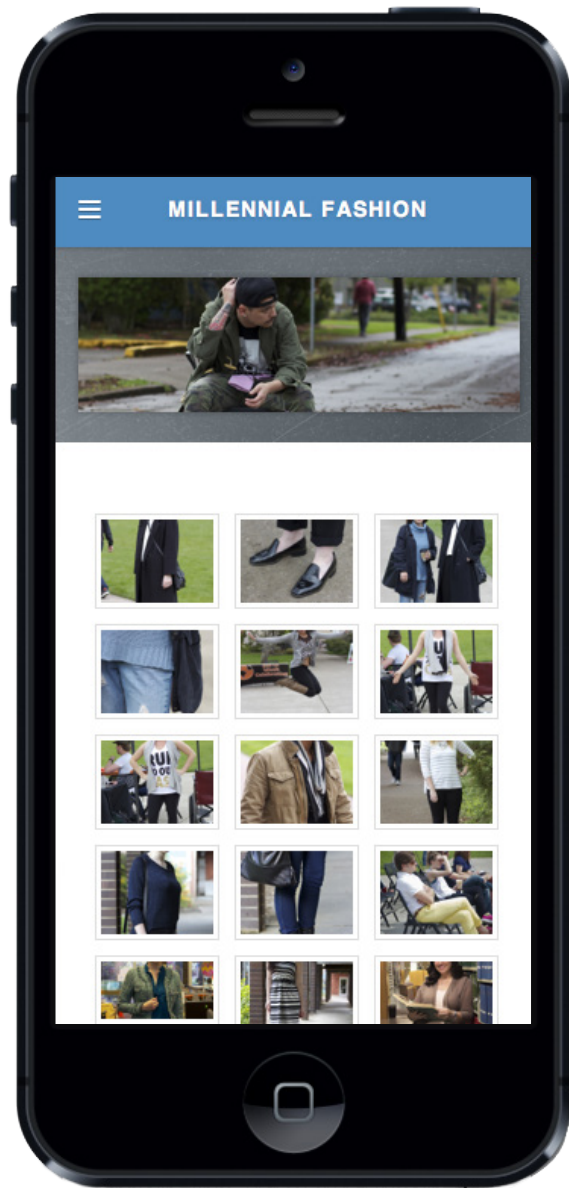
This website displays all of the products: the link to the trend book, the KBVR video, and other images.

3.3

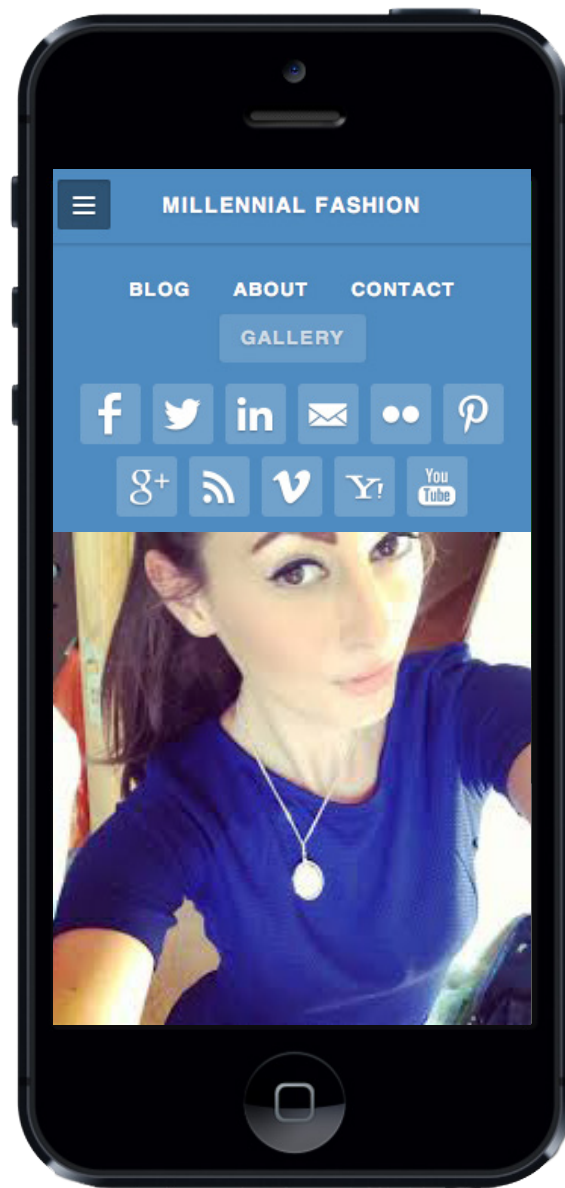
Phone Application

With the Millennial Fashion phone app, students can log in with their student I.D. numbers and have access to viewing bio-profiles of Oregon State students of all cultures showing off their fashion style.

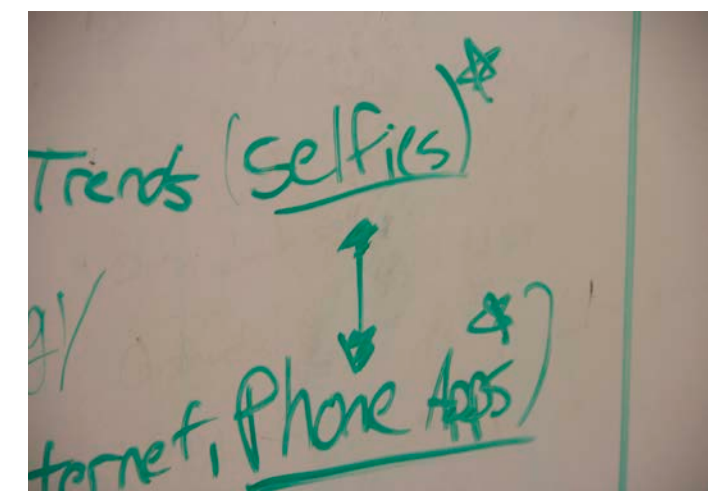
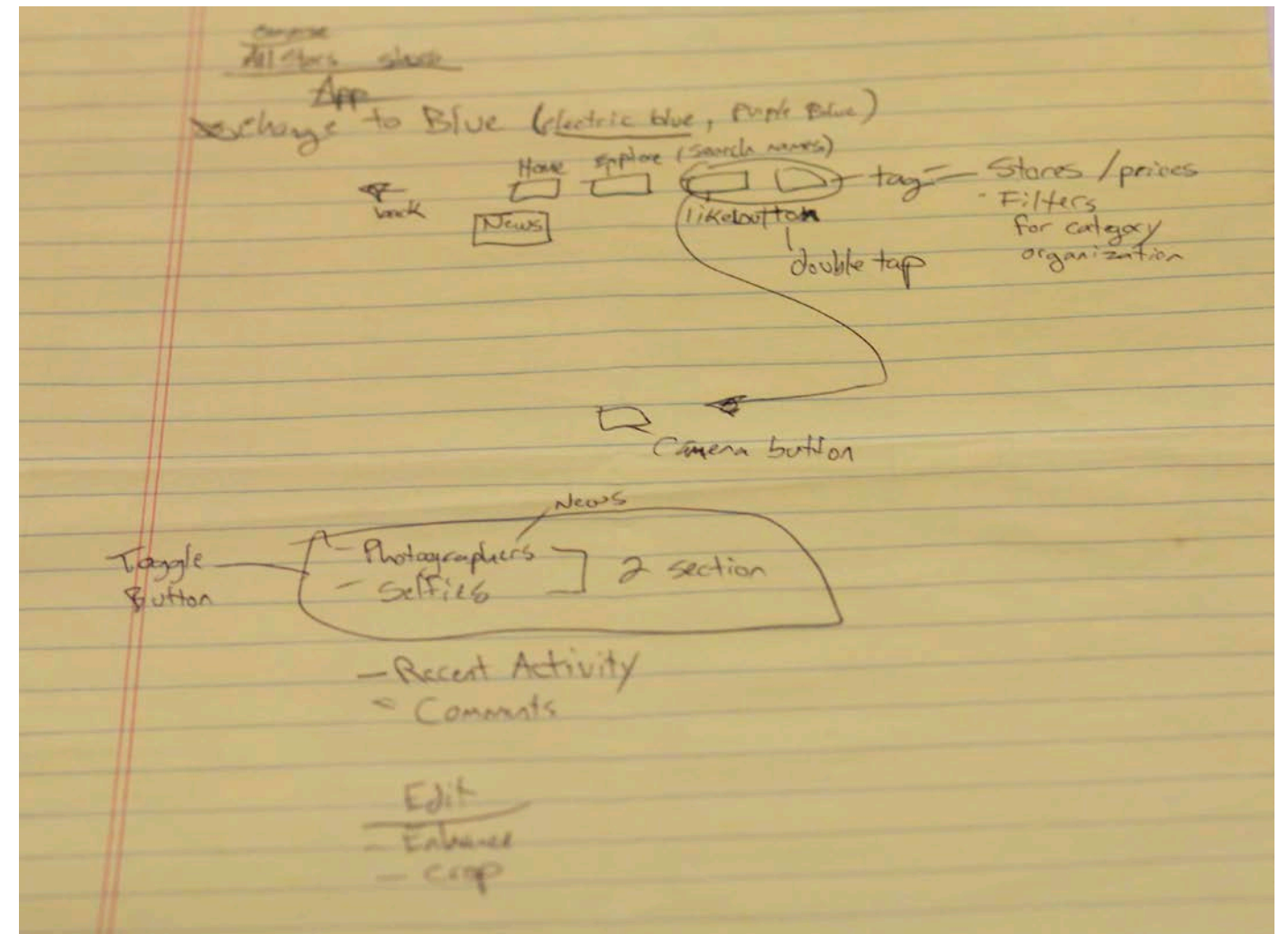
With the Millennial Fashion phone app, students can follow picture posts from other students, check out some of the gallery photos by the Millennial Fashion photography team, and take 'fashion selfies' of their own daily attire. This kind of heightened awareness of what other students are wearing gives current or future students a frame of reference for their own style choices.



Millennial Fashion Gallery



Fashion Selfies



These sketches map out the interface of the phone application. It is meant for OSU students to interact with one another with a fashion oriented dialogue.

3.4

Multimedia & Social Media

Social and Multimedia outlets are some of the most integral steps in the marketing process. No one would know about the trend book if there wasn't a strong social media presence. The media outlets utilized are: KBVR, The Daily Barometer, College of Business website, the Memorial Union screens, Facebook, and Instagram. This is also a way to record how many people have visited the Website or Facebook page. Facebook is probably the most beneficial social media outlet, because of the tagging algorithm.

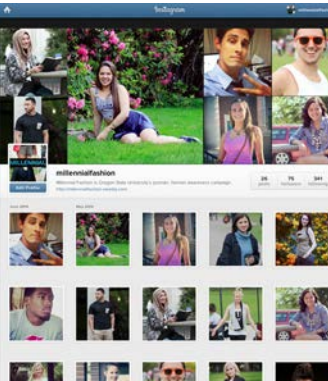
This video was an informational video produced by Holly Clausen of KBVR. It has an explanation of Millennial Fashion and interviews with Dr. Leslie Burns and GTA Keith Nishida.



Millennial Fashion Video: <http://www.millennialfashion.weebly.com/about.html>

Interview Questions

- 1) What is your title at Oregon State University? Area of Emphasis?
- 2) How long have you been a part of the Oregon State community and in your time at OSU, have you ever noticed certain fashion fads/trends on campus? Any re-occurring trends?
- 3) How does popular culture influence fashion trends?
- 4) Has there ever been any fashion trend analysis conducted at OSU before? If so, what kind of results did it yield?
- 5) With your experience in consumer behavior, what kind of impact do you think an OSU fashion trend book would have on the student body? (Positive, Negative, None?)
- 6) Do you think it is a good idea for students to be able to view/showcase what others are wearing on campus? With that kind of fashion awareness, would you predict more conformity or individuality among style choices?
- 7) With the emergence of the Internet and popularity of social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, from 1-10, how would you rate the success level of a phone app, specifically targeted to OSU students, if it utilized popular trends like selfies, friend following, and status updates? Why?



Instagram page



College of Business FB page

Facebook and Instagram posts are most effective with guerrilla marketing tactics. I have created a series of mini posters with each of the different photos from the trend book and post them on the page at different times as not to be so repetitive in my Online posting.

What's in your closet?

I want to thank everyone who was involved in this thesis project. I couldn't have completed this book without each one of you. Thank you to all of the beautiful people that modeled their awesome threads. Thank you to the talented photographers who helped to make this trend book visually appealing. This has been an amazing experience for me and am very proud to display work that was a result from months of hard work and dedication. You all inspire me to continue to promote fashion awareness, not only on the Oregon State campus, but potentially to schools all over the nation. Keep the ball rolling!

Austin Russell

MILLENNIAL FASHION