

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA:
HOW INSTAGRAM & SNAPCHAT ARE REVOLUTIONIZING THE FASHION INDUSTRY

by

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Abstract of the Major Research Paper
submitted to Ryerson University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Social media has been revolutionizing our ways of learning, engaging, and sharing information on the latest trends within the fashion industry. This research project focusses on two social media platforms that are highly relevant and influential in the fashion industry. Instagram, a social media application that was originally created to share photos between intimate social networks, has now become a powerful marketing platform. Now, one can carefully curate one's profile and sell an aesthetically pleasing image of oneself/item, all through strategic techniques such as framing, editing, or simply using the filters provided by both Instagram (e.g. Sepia, Valencia) and Snapchat. Snapchat, a social media application originally used to share selfies amongst one's intimate social group, intended to "express yourself, and reflect individuals based on a moment" (Evan Spiegel, CEO of Snapchat, 2016). The company now also promotes their app as a marketing tool and an advertising platform that targets more than 100 million active users daily between the ages of 18 and 35 years old. Initially, these two apps were intended to be used as entertainment tools, however, now they are also used to help re-structure a brand's busi-

ness model and approach. The purpose of this research is to investigate the effects of both Instagram and Snapchat, on traditional practices within the fashion industry, with a primary focus on the runway and advertising.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Overview

Social media is rapidly reassembling industries ranging from fashion to entertainment and even empowering social and political movements. Today's researchers such as Phua, Jin and Kim (2016) found that "Instagram has over 400 million users, and Snapchat has over 200 million active users" (p.412). Instagram and Snapchat have given greater value to one's live footage because of the unique perspective every user brings to the platform. Those who are invited to elite fashion events use these platforms to show their level of privilege by sharing their experiences and posting live coverage. These two social media platforms have challenged the importance of hierarchy and status within the fashion industry. They made content that was previously private very accessible to users. Social media has provided consumers with a platform to give direct feedback and to have their voices heard on any controversial issues and topics related to design or advertisement. For the first time, it has given consumers a powerful voice, and therefore affecting the process in which a company handles a situation (for e.g. response timing and chosen channel of communication). However, scholars Loader and Mercea (2011) question whether social media is truly creating a democratic forum of online participation, or whether it is controlled by a 'higher unknown party' which resulted in limiting the potential to do good.

The fashion industry is witnessing dramatic changes in traditional practices, particularly in selling clothes, advertising a brand and communicating to customers. In addition, the goal, the structure and the audience of fashion shows have also changed as Instagram and Snapchat have challenged the traditional practices, and slightly devalued formerly exclusive access to the pres-

tigious fashion shows. The focus has shifted from appreciating the opportunity to watch a live show to that of obtaining the best footage. This has in turn created new concerns and worries for fashion designers surrounding issues of fraud. Fast fashion retailers not only have the production facilities to replicate the latest runway styles prior to the actual release date but they also have quick turnaround capability. As a result, this forces fashion designers to launch their collections online and on the runway simultaneously to avoid losing profit, or credit for their original designs, and have more control over their brand.

The power of social media has been forcing fashion designers to redirect their time, their efforts and their budgets from traditional marketing and advertising to the cost-effective ones such as social media (Instagram, Snapchat). This also puts into question the importance of certain positions that have previously been held in the fashion industry. Traditional positions are pushed back to the second row, with new careers and titles emerging through social media such as bloggers and influencers. Fashion bloggers, influencers and savvy social media employers have begun to acquire high cultural capital and credibility within the industry and therefore have been disrupting traditional institutions such as *Vogue*. Scholars Pihl and Sandstrom (2013) have argued that “in some industries, blogs have become powerful intermediaries between firms and consumers, reaching more readers than regional newspapers” (p.310). Companies are now competing against one another to appear on a blogger’s news feed or social media page. A blogger’s social following has become immensely valuable to fashion brands who are looking to enlarge their mindshare and marketshare in today’s competitive industry.

Context

Instagram and Snapchat, are rapidly revolutionizing the fashion industry's traditional ways of practice, and the ways in which industry experts and consumers are engaging, interacting and sharing information. As Auger (2013) has argued, "today, individuals and organizations are using various platforms including social media to promote and persuade anyone who has access to the internet" (p.369). Snapchat and Instagram are dramatically affecting the way people share and consume fashion, and they offer convenient ways for companies to market their brands to their consumers.

Instagram, an app that was originally created to serve as a platform for photo sharing between friends, has recently become a marketing tool (Instagram, 2016). Now, one can carefully curate one's profile and sell a lifestyle, a persona, or an item. However, the question remains, whether these images are authentic or just for show. Kevin Systrom, the CEO and co-founder of Instagram, believes that this app was made to "inspire creativity through solving problems with thoughtful product design" arguing that "it has also become the home for visual storytelling for everyone from celebrities, newsroom and brands, to teens, musicians and anyone with a creative passion" (Instagram, 2016).

According to CEO of Snapchat, Evan Spiegel, Snapchat was an app originally created for sending selfies to one's intimate social group, and was also intended to open a new avenue for individuals to express themselves (Snapchat, 2016). However, the company has recently begun promoting the app as a strategic marketing tool and advertising platform that targets more than 100 million active daily users between the ages of 13-34 years old (Snapchat, 2016). In 2012, scholars Joinson and Piwek (2016) reported that Snapchat had been growing at a tremendous

speed, growing from 10 million active users in 2012 to 100 million active users in 2015. As a result, Burberry was one of the pioneering fashion brands to risk their advertising through Snapchat, thereby encouraging other companies to follow by relocating or dispersing their budgets from traditional advertising strategies to social media platforms.

Brands quickly recognized that social media is the most cost effective platform for selling and marketing their products and image(s) to consumers. Therefore, brands are also creating larger public networks within their companies, to not only respond faster and more strategically to negative online comments but also communicate directly with their customers. Scholars Neudecker, Barczewski and Schuster (2015) have examined the fashion industry before the disruption of social media, and found that “brand management used to solely be influenced by those within the companies and their brand managers” (p.71). Consequentially, the marketing of a brand has always been important for its full and continuous potential and success. With Instagram and Snapchat, the fashion industry is rapidly learning how to use ‘influencers’ and ‘bloggers’ to reach their customers and sell their products. Goldsmith (2012) points out that numerous companies are taking advantage of famous social media bloggers and influencers to change their marketing strategies by “giving personalities or human-like attributes to their brands to distinguish themselves from rival brands” (p.11). In fact, these personality traits play a very important role to help engage and to establish a certain level of trust between the consumer and the brand. Through social media (‘influencers’, bloggers), brands do not only portray a positive image, but also benefit from the interaction on their pages through higher view counts, likes, and pleasant comments. With such discussion, it is evident that fashion bloggers and influencers can exert a great deal of influence within the fashion industry, which has in return given them front row ac-

cess to the most exclusive fashion shows and events alongside some of the most powerful industry people.

Contribution

Instagram and Snapchat are constantly updating their software, changing functions to meet users' demands. Therefore, it has been a challenge to study their effects as well as to collect reliable data for analysis. With regard to Snapchat, there is another challenge of capturing the visual data because its images and videos disappear after 24 hours. The data collection of this particular application is more challenging than that of other social media platforms, unless screenshots of images are taken with their total reach (amount of likes, comments and views) and then posted on other social media platforms. In addition, it should be well noted that since the beginning of this research study, Instagram has added the 'story' (August 2016) and the 'live story' (January 2017) features to its software, which may have potentially influenced users' response for the purpose of this study. It may have also influenced participants' online behaviour. Hence, some of the results are not exactly in line with my expected outcomes.

The purpose of this study is to understand how and in what ways social media has affected the fashion industry. It is important to undertake further research on the growth and influence of social media in correlation to consumers' daily practices because it can help consumers to think more critically about their consumption and the intensity of social media use, specifically Instagram and Snapchat. It could also challenge users to question their behavioural changes in communicating with people, and the amount of time they spend online versus in the real world.

Due to limited empirical research on examining the relationship between social media and the fashion industry, this research study was undertaken to collect data from Snapchat's and

Instagram's users for further analysis. This study adopted a mixed research approach, a quantitative survey, and qualitative in-depth interviews with industry experts. Listed below are some key questions used for data collection:

Survey questions

- Do you feel like the content you are exposed to on the current version of Instagram's search page is 'democratic' and that you are exposed to a variety of different contents and different perspectives?
- Where do you find inspiration for your style, the way you dress and for all of the latest trends in fashion?
- Which social media platform do you find their advertisements are most effective or persuading to 'buy the product or service' (between the following options: Snapchat, Instagram, both, none, other)?
- How important is posting your images on social media and how does it relate to your business or career?

In-depth interview questions

- Do you believe that Instagram is a democratic or free space to post whatever you want and access a wide variety of content. Please explain your answer.
- Have you witnessed issues related to quality control of fashion runway? (e.g. cheaper fabrics, less detail).
- In your case, do you find that Instagram and/or Snapchat are translating into direct sales and are effective advertising platforms? Please explain.

- Has Instagram and/or Snapchat opened up any career opportunities for you in terms of recognition, followings, advertising, going viral etc. Please elaborate.

Definitions

Snapchat

Snapchat can be defined as:

The process of sharing on Snapchat works as follows: the sender makes an image/video using the Snapchat smartphone app and then choose how long the image/video will be viewable by the receivers' device (between 1 and 10 s, as of April 2015). Sequences of images/videos can also be sent. When the sender posts an image/ video to the receiver, this image/video automatically vanishes from the senders' smartphone. The only information that persists on the senders' device is a timestamp of when the snap was send. The receiver now has an option to view the content but the viewing time is limited to the specific duration chosen by the sender (i.e. between 1 and 10 s). After the receiver views the image/video for this particular duration, the image/video disappears from the receivers' phone. (Joinson and Piwek, 2015, p.359)

It is an application that also keeps users up to date with the most current and popular culture stories and events around the world through so-called 'bubble stories' or other users' live stories. Some of these bubble outlets vary depending on one's country, however in Canada, some of these outlets includes *The Daily Mail*, CNN, Buzz feed, MTV, *National Geographic*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *People*, along with many others.

Bubble Stories

In the context of Snapchat and Instagram, 'bubble stories' are known to be sections within each platform that users can post live coverage from an event of any kind. While Snapchat has the fea-

ture of adding comical and mostly 'childish' filters to one's story bubble, Instagram has the option of posting live coverage.

Instagram

Instagram is an online platform that enables users to share photos and videos. It allows users to tag photographs and videos with a hashtag (#) that makes them discoverable by like-minded users. While similar to Facebook, Instagram continuously updates its options and offers a number of unique filters that users can use to change the colours and resolutions of the photographs before posting them. Scholars Sheldon and Bryant (2016) found that as of August 2015, 28% of online adults use Instagram, and there are more women than men of this sample. In addition, one's home search page in the app is an assemblage of selected images: "based on people you may know", "based on people you follow", "similar to accounts you interact with", meaning that the content is aggregated from users with similar perspectives and interests as you ("Instagram", 2016).

Blogs

A blog can be defined as an online platform ran by an individual who publishes content on a particular topic on a regular basis. This individual can carefully curate their blog, balancing both content and images depending on their targeted audience. Two authors by the name of Pihl and Sandstrom (2013) found that its' "contents are often of a personal nature both in terms of style and ownership" (p.310).

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

Why do people spend so much time on Instagram and Snapchat? Why are these social media platforms continuously growing on a global scale and how are they affecting the fashion industry? From a financial perspective, one could argue that individuals are simply taking advantage of the accessibility and benefits of these tools. According to a study conducted by Phua, Jin and Kim (2016, p.412) “Social Media Examiner found that over 96% of businesses use SNSs to market their brands and products, due to their ability to increase brand exposure, attract website traffic, develop loyal fans, and gain marketplace intelligence”. Furthermore, Phua, Jin and Kim (2016) argue that traditional marketing has dramatically changed because of social media’s “capacity for greater user interactivity; when users ‘like’ or ‘follow’ a brand, they will receive updates and posts by the brand on their newsfeed. The user can then ‘like’, share, or comment on the post, which would further propagate it on their friends’ news feeds, whose own interactions with the post would, in turn, be rebroadcasted to their networks” (p.413).

Both Sheldon and Bryant (2016) have looked at the reasons why individuals use Instagram. In their research, they asked whether those who used Instagram were unhappy with their own lives, whether they needed an ‘escape’, whether they used Instagram to express their identity or used it as a surveillance tool for their surroundings (for e.g. friends and family). Further, Sheldon and Bryant (2016) investigate the meaning hashtag, and how the individual could contribute to the larger social media community by using them. Based on their research, they found that the motivated factors of using Instagram included documenting an individual’s life, expressing their creativity, staying “cool” with the latest trends, and keeping surveillance on others.

They also highlight that the amount of time spent on Instagram was correlated with one's level of narcissism. To further one's understanding on this particular area, the study also delved into a person's social media 'post' to uncover their underlying motives or rationales.

When researching the purpose of usage of Snapchat, Utz, Muscanell and Khalid (2015) saw that Snapchat was used to maintain friendly but private relations that exerted less pressure on users than other social media sites to perform a perfected version of the self. In their study, they pointed out that Snapchat was understudied and called for more research on behavioural changes in relation to channels of communication. Utz, Muscanell and Khalid (2015) have also argued that one's Snapchat's network is relatively smaller as compared to Facebook or Instagram. This may be related to the fact that it is 'newer' and not because people wish to keep their networks in a smaller circle. Consequently, Phua, Jin and Kim (2016) conducted an empirical research study that focused on both Instagram and Snapchat, and found that in general Snapchat was mostly used for passing the time, improving social knowledge (what friends and family are doing) and sharing one's problems, whilst Instagram was used for showing affection, following fashion and demonstrating sociability.

In addition, scholars Piwek and Joinson (2016) determine that Snapchat is associated with 'bonding' in an intimate setting rather than bridging social capital and making connections with the industry. Scholars Sashittal, DeMar and Jassawalla, (2016) also studied Snapchat and discovered that there was a general sense that this particular social media service was more comfortable for people to use partly due to its consequence-free and effortless characteristics. According to their study, Snapchat made users feel empowered, whereas Facebook made them feel narcissistic. Sashittal, DeMar and Jassawalla (2016) also believe that Snapchat is a social media

network that is here to stay because it is constantly changing with the newest trends and 'better-ing' itself.

Scholars Bayer, Ellison, Schoenebeck and Falk (2016) found that the use of Snapchat was often related to sharing enjoyable moments (since the visual image expires after 24 hours) which provided the highest 'positive mood' engagement in comparison to other social media platforms; this is probably related to the fact that nobody can 'like' or publicly comment on something posted on Snapchat. The same scholars also suggested that Snapchat was generally used in spontaneous moments of reduced self-presentational consciousness. This research paper intends on demonstrating how Snapchat has become a safe zone for users to share honest content, partly due to no pressure for a need of approval and friendly branding. As a result, advertisers for fashion brands can see the potential in entering a less cluttered space, and benefit from Snapchat to help building trust between brands and their consumers.

In addition, Cheong, and Park (2015) also conducted a comparative study of using social media such as Facebook and traditional media. They found that since the explosion of social media in 2005, its effects on daily practices within Western culture and people's behaviour have been under-researched, despite their obvious influence on consumer purchasing patterns. They reported, however, that traditional media like TV, radio, newspaper and magazines were still the major media channels. As a result of this study, this research paper will challenge the value of traditional forms of media and communication, and will ask participants which platforms they find advertisements to be most persuasive and effective in relation to fashion. It will also pursue one's chosen channel of communication for inspiration in relation to fashion and style content.

Whiting and Williams (2013), employed a gratification theory, to investigate the reasons behind the use of social media, and found that social media marketing resulted in greater returns. They also found that users use social media based on specific themes, such as entertainment. Through their findings, they discovered that social media networks such as Facebook were used primarily for social interaction; however Instagram and Snapchat were neglected in their study.

Social media and Democracy

For the purpose of this research paper, a basic understanding of the definition of democracy was established. Munck (2016) captures an overall understanding, of the complex meaning of democracy by analyzing its meaning in terms of its 'quality'. Munck (2016) does a comparison between several selected scholars and compares their definitions by decomposing how they define democracy. While all the scholars in his study have a unique understanding of the meaning of democracy, only a few themes were selected to help formulate the definition used for the purpose of this research paper. These themes include but are not limited to 'equality', 'free press', 'freedom of the press', 'freedom of opinion', and 'freedom to participate' (Munck, 2016).

Loader and Mercea (2011) approach the concept of democracy from different perspectives, while discussing 'democratic governance', 'internet democracy' and 'digital democracy. In their study, Loader and Mercea (2011) agreed that the concept of democracy could be characterized as having "public spaces and equal deliberation between citizens" (p.757). Loader and Mercea (2011) also believe that social media is further democratizing Western culture, for example: "disclosing government secrets through Wikileaks" (p.759). In addition, Loader and Mercea (2011) highlight how "social groups play central roles that help shape Western society" (p.760). Lastly, they highlight the importance of the hashtag and how it enabled the start of several im-

portant political movements that also improved ‘political participation’ on a global scale. However, Loader and Mercea (2011) question to what degree can social media be democratic. Their study cautions social media users, (specifically users who frequently use Google, Facebook or Youtube), since generally these platforms control their content according to collected users’ data which is not only surveilled but also sold to marketing companies.

The democratization of fashion is a key consequence of the prevalence of social media. Durmaz (2014) found that social media has changed the way people consume content, that people no longer look at traditional sources (e.g. magazines, runways) for inspiration because ‘non elitist’ forms of fashion blogs are more consumer-friendly. As a result of this study, this research paper will further examine where people are finding their inspiration for fashion and whether bloggers and influencers are influencing consumers’ purchasing behaviour. Boyd (2015) also pointed out that women previously turned to fashion magazines for trends and beauty tips, but now they can search for information and make their own fashion choices through a variety of content that is available on social media.

Today, industry professionals such as fashion bloggers and designers have learned how to use their smartphones to their benefit. One can now use social media to not only progress in one’s career by networking with others, but one can also use social media to advertise a business or a lifestyle. For example, once a blog becomes established, brands and public relation companies quickly notice the increasing number of bloggers by tracking their social influence, due to the amount of likes and comments per post. As a result, companies quickly leap on the opportunity to either pay or send free products to public figures, celebrities and bloggers in exchange for photographed or sponsored posts. With such practice, it raises a concern regarding a blogger’s amount of authentic content versus curated and commercialized content. At some point, Insta-

gram users were able to trust bloggers that they voluntarily and willingly chose to follow, but now many are left feeling skeptical about the content. This research paper will not only address whether social media has become the new dictating platform for fashion trends, but it will also look at whether bloggers and influencers are influencing consumers' purchasing habits and behaviour. Do users truly believe that Instagram is a platform in which enables them to share fashion related content and engage freely with users and brands? Is Instagram devaluing prestigious and hierarchical positions in the fashion industry, or do attributes such as wealth and social capital remain essential in one's ability to succeed? These are all questions that this paper seeks to address.

Page (2012) has argued that social media presents some characteristics of democracy. On one hand, it has become collaborative, with great potential for opening dialogue and active participation. On the other hand, it is not neutral and the content is not evenly distributed. Furthermore, she argues that market forces and industry hierarchies not only control online content by paying for more space on the internet but also shape the way we interact with one another.

A writer for online *InStyle UK* (2016), Chloe Mac Donnell interviewed Eva Chen, the head of Fashion at Instagram on how social media challenges the fashion industry to be more 'diverse' in its content and images. In this interview, Eva Chen claimed that Instagram has a global perspective and that it could inspire people of different backgrounds, body sizes and nationalities. Chen believes that Instagram has encouraged bloggers to globally share with their followers their ideas of cultural beauty norms, which has as a result affected the fashion industry's overall beauty ideals. Today, the industry is making space for plus-size bloggers who are currently in the spotlight and redefining ideals of 'perfect bodies'.

Stefan Siegel, (CEO of *Not Just A Label*) told Tabi Jackson Gee (2016) from *Refinery 29*, that he was thrilled that social media was launching the potential platform for fashion bloggers. He mentioned that it would engender transparent conversation. However, Siegel also argued that Instagram has rapidly become a platform for “narcissism paired with a devotion to corporate branding”. Tabi Jackson Gee (2016) also spoke to photographers who were at major fashion events, before social media was prevalent during fashion shows. One of the photographers was Yvan Rodic, the founder of *Facehunter*. He found that the effects of social media were revolutionary. Rodic claims that before social media was created, people would be surprised if they were asked to be photographed. Justifiably, there was less content shared online since those with cameras would have to go through a longer process of uploading pictures.

Social Media and the Runway

In the past, only persons with prestigious titles, industry connections or famous family names retained the exclusive privilege of front row seats at fashion shows. Now, these coveted chairs are also being reserved for bloggers and influencers. This raises one question, whether the runway still has a lot of exclusivity. Scholar Kjelin (2015) has examined the change in front row seating; Formerly reserved for buyers, now they are given to social media bloggers due to their high social followings and influence on consumer’s consumption for products in the fashion industry. Prior to the launch of Snapchat, backstage access to fashion shows were merely for a pre-selected group of industry professionals. Individuals had to be personally invited by designers to witness the newest collections on the runway. Today, Snapchat allows individuals to stream events live, thus allowing any user direct access. As a result, this research paper will also explore how Instagram and Snapchat have influenced one's experience of viewing a fashion show based on the collected data from in-depth interviews.

With the significant presence of smartphones during fashion events, fashion designers like Michael Kors are also learning new tactics to attract the attention to an event or fashion show by starting hashtag trends. Gonsalves (2012), a writer from *The Independent* website wrote that companies are making an extra effort to create relationships with their customers through social media because something viral can quickly affect a company's image in seconds. She argues that designers now have to negotiate with social media in order to keep up with their consumers.

Further, Givhan (2015), a writer for the *Boston Globe*, has raised numerous concerns surrounding runway shows such as the change in 'finale' walks. While some designers have remained traditional in their finale walks, many have substituted their finales with carefully curated shots leaving guest with the opportunity to take the perfect picture to post on social media. Taroy (2015), an editor for the website *Fast Company*, highlights the change in colour and designs in garments. He argues that designers are avoiding black clothing on the runway because the details of such garments would not show in pictures or videos when posted on social media. Taroy says "it's just not about clothes, it's about how it looks on the screen" ("How Instagram is Democratizing Fashion", 2015). To add further insight in relation to this discussion, this paper will ask fashion industry experts whether they have witnessed changes or personally altered and designed their garments while acknowledging how it would appear on a tablet device.

Moreover, a writer for *The New York Times*, Schneier (2014) has investigated what is being lost in the 'Instagram age' since fashion shows are being curated to suit the Instagram screen. Schneier (2014) talks about fashion designers like Phoebe Philo (creative genius behind Celine's success), and how she has banned the use of cellphones during runway shows to avoid "copycatting or over exposure" ("Fashion in The Age of Instagram", 2014).

OFlaherty (2014) , a London-based designer, a writer and a photographer, published an article for *Business of Fashion*, where he suggested that smartphones were killing the fashion industry and that fashion week had become a “ridiculous, narcissistic and nauseating selfie” (“Are Camera Phones Killing Fashion”, 2014). He believes that fashion shows used to be exclusively for those who worked in the industry, whereas now they are streamed and watched by anyone and anywhere, thus devaluing the event itself. He adds that shows have become “redundant” and that it has simply become a circus for bloggers and celebrities to be seen and have their pictures be taken. In addition, Macy (2012), an educator and author for *The Huffington Post*, suggested that the fashion industry was getting a makeover via social media. She finds that users are finding inspiration based on the latest trends seen on the people (mostly bloggers) at fashion shows, which has now been labelled as ‘street style’ and trending under hashtags such as OOTD (outfit of the day). Macy (2012) claims, that those who attend these shows are aware of their outfits going viral on social media and therefore carefully curate their outfits. Macy also believes that “fashion itself has gone viral” (“How Social Media Is Giving the Fashion Industry an Extreme Makeover”, 2012).

Gee, (2016) of *Refinery 29* has reminded people what fashion week used to represent and what it looked like before social media. Gee (2016) talks about the shift in fashion shows through time, and how these exclusive, closed-door events have become these all-access entrance events that are then publicly shared for the following couple of weeks through several different media platforms. He also briefly mentions the issues surrounding curated ‘street style’ photos. Originally, one could argue that street style was a very liberal platform of communication through clothing in which labels and names were unnecessary and not important. While now outfits are very carefully thought out. Interestingly, Gee (2016) mentions that fashion writers have

shifted their attention on producing content surrounding the importance of those attending the shows and sitting in the front row, instead of commenting and sharing their opinions on the actual garments. He also disassociates with today's audience members because they are too focused on filming the finale catwalk instead of appreciating fashion designers' garments and their efforts in setting a mood.

Social Media and Advertising

Research on social media and advertising has been widely studied from a variety of perspectives within the fashion industry. While this paper acknowledges that there is a great deal of scholarly research in the changes within luxury brands in relation to their traditional business models, there is still a lack of information in many other areas including the power of bloggers and the shift from traditional to modern advertising through social media. Evidently, the millennial generation is witnessing a powerful shift in luxury brands moving slightly away from 'regular models' to familiar faces. This includes anyone who has a mass social media following and online attention, from popular culture figures, bloggers and social media influencers. Based on their online presence, sometimes they are selected as the face of a new campaign.

One of the first studies that this research reviewed was a research conducted by Piwek and Joinson (2016), who found that Snapchat was frequently used between intimate social networking circles and serves as an alternative form of communication that is more intimate than other social media platforms. Both scholars argue that there is not enough research on the use of Snapchat, therefore, more research should be conducted particularly based on its purposes from the users' perspective. Further, Piwek and Joinson (2016) believe that Snapchat is taken less seriously than other social media because of its 'playful' characteristics, animation and filters. However, with its space now available for sale by advertisers, users are once again left with ads play-

ing in between story feeds. In addition, Paton (2016), a writer in *The New York Times*, rightfully questions such as what extent one can accurately measure the commercial value of campaigns that vanish within 24 hours. She believes that the purpose of using Snapchat is less for driving short-term sales but more for building long-term brand equity. This is demonstrated with celebrities and companies who use Snapchat as a platform not just to sell a specific product, but to sell a continuous lifestyle and a brand by posting content on a daily basis.

Mohr (2013) has examined luxury brands and studied how social media has become a strategic marketing tool for controlling consumer buying habits and brand interest. However, she does not address whether or not luxury brands' use Instagram or Snapchat to advertise to their clients as much as other fast fashion or mainstream brands. Furthermore, Sherman (2016), a writer for *Business of Fashion* highlights the obvious switch from TV advertisements to URLs that companies are making to stay on trend. For example, Burberry took the initiative of being the first in the luxury market to launch the first advertorial on Snapchat's 'Discovery' channel, making them risk their brand's reputation and credibility. Designer brands are also taking this opportunity to discover alternative and more cost effective ways of generating in higher revenue in comparison to traditional advertising platforms. Sherman (2016) also points out that if brands like Hermès only focus on their traditional advertising strategies and do not invest efforts on social media, they could lose sales and attention in this 'digital age'. Sherman's work is relevant and has inspired some of the questions that were raised in this research study; specifically when participants were asked, "Which channel of communication they find is most persuasive and effective to them in correlation with today's advertisements in the fashion industry?"

In addition, other scholars such as Kim and Ko (2012) have researched the correlations between social media and its effects on luxury brands' advertising, branding and quality of inter-

action with consumers. In their empirical study, they found that social media was a platform used for direct and friendly communication with their consumers and clients. Furthermore, they encourage luxury fashion brands to engage via social media because their findings indicated that the customer satisfaction was correlated to purchasing behaviour.

Dhaoui (2014) studied luxury brands, and analyzed whether their marketing strategies have changed through social media. Based on her empirical research, she found that the number of posts on Facebook depended on specific 'pillars', such as whether the luxury brand posted an image with a public figure, or how much money they invested in their public relations department. However, Dhaoui (2014) also found that every luxury brands' situation was unique within the market, therefore creating limitations since many designers do not publicly share a company's information, financial statements or records. Nevertheless, her study was limited to branding through Facebook pages, thus ignoring other factors that could affect the marketing strategies of a luxury brand such as personal experience within a retail store, social media influencers, and one's e-commerce experience.

In addition, Anderson, Sims, Price and Brusa (2011), looked at how brands have had to move away from traditional advertising to creative ways to build stronger loyalty and trust with their customers. This research paper was also inspired by their study. Through in-depth interviews, research participants were asked whether they had witnessed or personally experienced social media's ability to turn 'likes' into 'buys'.

Moreover, Manikonda, Venkatesan, Kambhampati and Li (2016), argue that the aesthetic structure of one's social media page is paramount in attracting other users to click on their bio link and go on to a brand's website. They discovered that the structure of certain websites are

starting to mirror the structure and layout of one's Instagram profile. It is evident that websites are now more focused on visuals over text, to attract more customers to their websites.

Scholar McCarthy (2013) also conducted a study on how social media has influenced the fashion consumption practices of female college students, in particular more so than their male counterparts. However, today this may have changed and could be a topic of research for future students interested in studying fashion and gender studies.

Furthermore, Latiff and Safiee (2015) have emphasized the importance of researching the current effects of Instagram and how they are generating profitable revenue or even equivalent sales in comparison to an e-commerce business model. This paper was inspired by their study, especially on the research area of today's value of investing time and money into an e-commerce website. Latiff and Safiee (2015) also conducted interviews with individual business owners who used Instagram to help their marketing and branding strategies. They found that the marketing budgets for companies have been efficiently allocated towards social media. Moreover, Latiff and Safiee (2015) found that companies are switching from traditional strategies to social media practices for several reasons, one of them being that conventional online marketing like direct mail is often ignored by consumers, either deleted before reading or redirected to the spam box. Their findings inspired me to dive into the opinions of interviewees on this subject in relation to their unique business model. Their research also found that advertising through social media was evidently cheaper. Lastly, their data found that Instagram was most effective as it facilitated 'on-line word of mouth', which then attracted followers and boosted business growth.

Scholar McNely (2012) conducted research based on the kinds of images companies are likely to post on their Instagram page(s). Based on his coding scheme, he found that 'humanizing', 'showcasing' and 'interacting' were the most frequent characteristics in an image posted.

For example, he found that posting a ‘humanizing’ image of a CEO or leader of a big company allowed customers to have a more ‘personal’ relationship with them and therefore to relate more closely to the brand. The idea of humanizing meant reminding customers and followers that the rich CEO is just a ‘normal’ person, that they also have a family or take public transit, all of which reinforces a positive brand image. This study however, lacks perspective on the fashion industry’s use of ‘humanizing’ for example, wealthy and abnormally thin models as regular people who also shop at mass retailers like H&M and or Joe Fresh.

In addition, Strugatz (2014) believes that Snapchat is an important factor to be considered when now examining a company’s success and its business model. Rebecca Minkoff, Victoria’s Secret and Nasty Gal are just a sample of the companies that are actively using Instagram and Snapchat to sell their products. Her research highlighted how Nasty Gal, for instance, live streams their runway shows and post incentives and opportunities to win free products. Strugatz found that designers like Rebecca Minkoff had even ‘Snapchatted’ their collections moments before they would hit the actual runway. Today, many fashion designers like Burberry and Calvin Klein are doing this to avoid issues surrounding fraud and have control over their designs.

Similarly, Holmes (2015) also found that many high-end designers were joining this social media phenomenon by advertising their social media ‘bubble stories’ with their latest collections. She referenced brands like Valentino, Stella McCartney and Michael Kors, all of whom have given ‘behind-the-scenes’ glimpses of their collections straight off the runway. She found that Micheal Kors had embraced the new approach and received positive feedback with 14.6 million views in 24 hours via Snapchat. Holmes (2015) also demonstrated how Valentino had used Snapchat: by sharing a video of how a calligrapher created the invitations backstage to advertise the brand’s collaboration with (the premiere of) *Zoolander 2*. However, Holmes (2015) questions

Snapchat's position in the fashion industry and argues that it has not been taken seriously because of its filters and 'cartoon like' use of emojis, as stated earlier in this paper.

Scholars Roncha and Thomas (2016) conducted a case study in which Instagram was used as a platform to create value for a TOM shoes campaign. They argued that Instagram was a brand's best platform to build brand 'communities' and add value to their brand. Roncha and Radclyffe's (2016) findings led them to believe that Instagram not only lowered the cost(s) of marketing, research and development, but also helped to build a stronger customer relationship because Instagram allows for a two-way communication stream and feedback. Ultimately, both scholars found that Instagram enhances a company's image if they continuously maintain day-to-day communication and interaction with their customers. Carlson and Lee (2015) also researched social media's efficacy in enhancing a business' success and growth. Their survey focused on demonstrating the power of marketing through 'followership' on social media. Carlson and Lee (2015) discovered that brands seeking to reach a younger demographic, particularly American college students, between 18 and 24 years old, could do so most effectively, through social media. They also found that traditional marketing methods were being downplayed, or even replaced by text, pictures, videos and links on social media.

For companies that already had an online presence such as a website, Kuofie, Gholston and Hakim (2015) looked at the potential advantages in expanding that presence by opening social media accounts. They found that the extent of a brand's 'reach' was the first requirement for success in an industry, and that social media sites were where their customers were "hanging out". They found that small businesses could increase their exposure by making their business more visible to potential customers via social media networks. Kuofie, Gholston and Hakim's (2015) research findings demonstrate the correlation between a small business's level of success

and their engagement with their customers. They mentioned that seeking consumers' feedback on products was more important than simply focusing on increasing sales. However, their research is limited to Facebook and Twitter. This research paper will invite industry experts to express their experiences with social media, and explain whether they have experienced any benefits of investing their time in creating Instagram and Snapchat accounts for their brand.

Meanwhile, Moon, Lee, and Sung (2016) believe that Instagram is an effective advertising platform for individuals who seek to advertise themselves. In return, this has created a generation of narcissistic social media users who promote themselves and their behaviour. These scholars also conducted an online survey in Korea and found that individuals who were more 'narcissistic' tended to post a lot more 'selfies' and updated their social media accounts more often in comparison to their counterparts (friends and family members). They discovered that the rise of narcissism among millennials was correlated with a variety of different social media sites, Facebook was one of them. Yet, they asserted that limited research has examined the correlation between narcissism, consumer behaviour and newer social media sites such as Instagram.

Philine, Meister and Klante (2014) focused on how social media influences apparel purchasing behaviours and found that word-of-mouth communication affects consumers' attitudes, and their online purchasing decision process. They believe that through social media individuals can be either 'leaders' or 'followers' in fashion, in which they base their buying habits. Philine, Meister and Klante (2014) found that social media influences consumers at specific moments during the shopping and buying process, in particular at the points of style inspiration and comparing a product with alternatives. This research paper will pursue questions such as whether Instagram and Snapchat have affected a consumers' shopping experience.

Ultimately, Philine, Meister and Klante (2014) mention that social media ‘leaders’ (e.g. bloggers and influencers) are the tastemakers in the fashion industry who become reliable sources and guides for online shoppers. Their research revealed that this led to direct sales. However, users did not post images about their purchase as would a famous blogger, but they would then ‘follow’ the famous blogger’s social media account that inspired the purchase.

Social Media and Career Opportunities

Fashion bloggers, influencers and social media employers can be considered as some of today’s powerful titles in the industry. Their highly credited positions have completely disrupted the fashion industry’s traditional institutions and hierarchies. Scholars Pihl and Sandstrom (2013) argued that “in some industries, blogs have become powerful intermediaries between firms and consumers, reaching more readers than regional newspapers” (p.310). Now, companies compete against one another to appear on a blogger’s news feed or social media page. A blogger’s social following has become exceedingly valuable to fashion brands who are looking to expand their mindshare as well as the marketshare in today’s competitive industry. In Pihl’s study (2013), he puts emphasis on the ability of an individual to make money from blogging, by balancing between private and commercial content. Further, he claims that bloggers have customer *intimacy*, which is a characteristic that big fashion companies are beginning to realize that building brand *intimacy* and *loyalty* is important to keep a strong relationship with their customers. In addition, Pihl (2013) focused on the boundaries between amateur and professional photographers and how these boundaries are blurring in the fashion industry because of smartphones and apps like Instagram. For fashion companies to stay relevant, Pihl believes that they have to keep up with the latest trends even if it means stepping outside their comfort zone. In this study, interviewees were

asked whether they have felt the need to conform to any social media pressures to stay relevant, even at the risk of not being true to their brand or image.

In addition, Cocharane (2016), a writer for *The Guardian*, has found that celebrities with larger social followings are actually opening more business opportunities for themselves. As consumers seek more trustworthy faces and brands they can rely on to deliver quality garments and services, brands are also looking to offer those faces money in exchange for collaborations in their ad campaigns. Celebrities are prospering in their careers and acquiring more 'deals' because of their mass social influence on Instagram. Similarly, Hope (2016) a writer for BBC News, reports that campaign models are chosen based on their influence and likeability on social media. Hope (2016) specifically talks about Brooklyn Beckham, the son of famous soccer player David Beckham, who was chosen as the main photographer for one of Burberry's campaigns not only because of his popularity but because of his huge social media outreach through Instagram. In addition, Hope (2016) found that companies with greater engagement through Instagram, tended to boost their online sales much faster than companies employing traditional marketing strategies. She also questioned whether traditional luxury brands like Hermès are going to get 'kicked out' if they do not follow the social media trends.

Park, Ciampaglia and Ferrara (2015) also found that brands wanted familiar faces to represent their campaigns and the models who were chosen are often based on their social media engagement and followers on Instagram and Snapchat. These scholars focused on understanding the 'ingredients' necessary for models to achieve success in the age of Instagram.

In addition, Cartner-Morley (2015), a writer for *The Guardian*, reported that the most powerful people within the fashion industry were no longer sitting at the front row of fashion shows, but were instead actually walking the catwalk themselves. She argued that social media

has opened up career opportunities for anyone who was able to amass huge social followings and influence. Gigi Hadid, one of the most followed models on Instagram, with over 30 million followers (as of February 2017) has dominated every catwalk from Donatella Versace to MaxMara. Today, she has had numerous opportunities to land on the covers of Vogue. Is this a coincidence? Does it link to the decline of magazine purchases?

Morley (2015) explained that industry insiders and fashion designers not only selected models based on their social media power but on their ability to stream in revenue. As she cited in her research, a specific instance was Gigi Hadid's ability to summon her followers to a public appearance at MaxMara's flagship store within hours. It became so packed that police had to block the centre of Milan. The use of social media has not only opened up several business opportunities for Gigi Hadid, but it has also given her a public platform to express herself.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this study, a mixed methods approach was used. This research study included two phases: (phase one) a quantitative study in the form of an online and paper survey, and (phase two) a qualitative study through in person and online interviews. Both of these approaches investigated how Instagram and Snapchat have revolutionized and implemented the fashion industry's practices and its new ways of doing. A mixed methods approach was determined best suitable because of its ability to effectively collect applicable data, while offering the greatest variety of responses. Creswell (2009, p.4) confirms this idea: "the core assumption of this form of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone".

Method

An online survey with 26 questions was distributed through a URL link sent by email within the School of Fashion at Ryerson University, which includes professors, teaching assistants and students. In addition to an online survey, packages of paper surveys were personally distributed through pre-selected classes to achieve a sufficient amount of data. The second approach of this study focused on obtaining elaborated responses to specific research questions. Thus, 30 selected industry experts were invited to take part of this research study, and as a result in-depth interviews were conducted with eleven fashion industry experts. These participants were contacted either through email, Instagram messenger or Facebook messenger. Research has shown that social media is an effective platform to access data for qualitative research, as scholars Patino, Pitta, and Quinones (2012) argue, "qualitative research is now translating to the on-

line environment. The industry has recognized the importance of social networking and user-generated content. They are well established and are virtually an open portal to detailed consumer information that was not accessible in the past” (p.3). The 30 fashion industry experts were selected based on their past or current relationship with Ryerson University, their current residential location, and or through personal industry connections. While interviewees were invited to answer very similar questions to one another, each interview also consisted of designated questions that corresponded to their individual profession and experience in the fashion industry.

Sample

As a result, a total of 200 surveys were collected and completed for the first phase of the quantitative approach. Any incomplete surveys were removed from the data set. In addition of the survey, 30 industry experts were approached for an in-depth interview, and eleven participants agreed to participate in this research study. Information and pictures of each interviewee can be found in the appendices.

Phase One

Quantitative Study

This research study began by collecting quantitative data in the form of a survey consisting 26 questions (see appendices). The purpose of this phase-one study was to “employ large and random samples, reduce complex phenomena to a few variables, and...aim for objectivity and causal inference” (Bergman, 2011, p.100). Any member from the faculty of fashion at Ryerson University, and in my personal group of ‘Facebook friends’, were able to voluntarily participate and fill out the survey online. The link to the survey was not only posted on my private Facebook page in the form of a ‘status’, but it was also sent to all faculty members and students in the

School of Fashion at Ryerson University via email. A study conducted by Ilieva (2002), demonstrated that “different modes of online and postal surveys complemented each other and that there were increased advantages in them being used together rather than applied separately” (p. 362). Consequently, this research study provided both methods while taking into account the concerns surrounding its accessibility and its capability of reaching a more diverse pool of participants. Greenlaw, and Brown-Welty (2009) emphasize the benefits of using a “mixed-mode survey approach because of its ability to provide opportunities to compensate for the weaknesses of each method” (p.466). Both scholars Greenlaw and Brown-Welty (2009) believe that “respondents then have the option to choose either the paper-based format or the Web-based format to complete the survey”, which as a result, allows for higher responses to a study (p.475).

While conducting this research, it was evident that Facebook collected the least amount of responses. However, researchers at Princeton University provide a possible explanation for this outcome: According to scholars Cannarella and Spechler (2014), “Facebook has already reached the peak of its popularity and has entered a decline phase, as evidenced by the downward trend in search frequency after 2012” (p.6). Both Cannarella and Spechler (2014), agree that Facebook is ‘dying out’. Currently, Facebook is notably cluttered with videos and advertisements. Hence, a simple status is not sufficient enough to seize a person’s attention.

Beauchamp (2013) puts emphasis on the “decreasing click-through rates and negative consumer perceptions of Facebook” due to the clutter, ads and spam (p.91).

In light of the high cost of printing, specifically four pages for one survey, this research study focused on achieving as many online surveys prior to conceding to print, while acknowledging the target of 200 responses. As Greenlaw and Brown-Welty (2009) explain, “the costs

associated with each survey mode become an important variable; one that must be measured” (p. 465). The quantitative research focused on individuals between the ages of 18 and 35 years old, of all gender, who used both Snapchat and Instagram. This research study focused on this specific demographic not only because they were convenient to recruit on campus but because according to scholars Patino, Pitta and Quinones (2012), this is the age group that uses social media the most. Scholars Patino, Pitta and Quinones (2012) argue that “millennials embrace all aspects of social media and are more likely to be highly engaged” (p.10). Some of the questions that were in this research study’s survey focused on a user’s source for inspiration for fashion and whether they felt that Instagram was replacing the catwalk (see appendices for survey).

Phase Two

Qualitative Approach

Accordingly, the quantitative approach was followed by the qualitative approach which consisted of interviews with eleven industry experts (e.g. fashion designers, models and journalists) in person, over the phone, through Facebook or by exchange of email. The initial objective was to reach a minimum of eight participants because according to McCracken’s (1988) suggestion, he suggests that eight in-depth interviews is considered as a sufficient pool to justify one’s research. Moreover, the questions in the interviews sought further in-depth answers than the quantitative research questions. Here is a sample of interview questions used in this phase: Do you find that Instagram and Snapchat have changed the value of a fashion show invitation or experience? Do you feel like the runway has changed in its lighting, stage structure, location, seating placement, and final model walk? And, in your opinion do you think that social media has

revolutionized the fashion industry in any ways, and if so how would you say it has...please elaborate your answer.

Information Analysis

The online survey was accessible through a software provided by Ryerson University called Opinio. Once a total number of 200 completed surveys were collected from both the on-line and the paper format, the paper responses were then manually entered into Opinio's software to the final results on one platform. Any incomplete survey was by default discarded. Any questions that were determined no longer useful or relevant based on the findings of the study were not discussed in this paper.

Ethical Considerations

This research study was conducted using a mixed research methods that involved human subjects, and therefore obtained approval from Ryerson's Research Ethics Board (REB) by completing a certificate from the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE) (see appendices). The quantitative data did not ask participant's first or last name, and therefore protects their full confidentiality. Any online participant was automatically coded as a number in the Opinio software, while participants who filled out a paper survey also remained anonymous. A selection of random classes were pre-arranged, and copies of the survey were personally distributed on each student's desk. A box with a slit, was then placed at the front of the classroom. All students were asked to fold and return the survey by placing it into the box, regardless of their participation. Once the copies were distributed, and the purpose of the study was read to students, I stepped out of the class-

room with the professor. This allowed participants to choose whether they wanted to participate in the research or anonymously decline without feeling any pressure.

Prior to the commencement of survey administration, an informed consent form was also presented to the participants. They were informed that by answering and submitting the questionnaire survey (paper or online), they were giving full consent for their responses to be used in this research study. It is worth mentioning that participants were allowed not to indicate their gender, skip any questions and/or stop participating in the survey at any point in time. Persons who agreed to participate in phase two of this study were also aware that their full name, professional status and a photograph of their face would be inserted in this paper.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Demographics

Based on the results of phase 1, 81.5% of participants who participated in the survey were female, 17.5% were male and 0.5% did not want to disclose their gender. While this research study did not focus on gender, McCarthy's (2013) study that was previously discussed in chapter two, is somewhat reinforced. She argues that social media influences female college students' fashion consumption much more than the men. In light of these findings, women took the time to express their opinion and their use of both Instagram and Snapchat. However, this study also acknowledges the possibility of the findings being different based on the method of distribution. Survey participants were not asked to report their age, however, participants must have some experiences with both Instagram and Snapchat in order to participate in this study. Therefore, based on the statistics released by the Snapchat's official website, participants in this research study were aged approximately from 18 to 35 years. In terms of the qualitative interviews, a total of 5 males and 6 females agreed to participate in this research study. Interviewees were not asked about their age because of issues concerning disrespect and discomfort.

Instagram-findings

User's perspectives: When, where and why do people use Instagram?

In order to understand when the Instagram application was used during the day, participants were asked some specific questions. According to the results, 46% of participants used Instagram mostly during the evening, 22.5% used it in the morning, 15% used Instagram in the afternoon and 16.5% selected the 'other' option, with 29 participants specifying they used it

throughout the whole day. Similarly, to better understand Instagram's purpose of use, participants were asked their general location of use. As a result, 58.5% of participants revealed that they liked to check their Instagram account when they were "in bed, right before they went to sleep or when they woke up", while 12.5% participants selected the option 'other' with 14 participants specifically indicated that they used it throughout the day. Based on these findings, one can assume that Instagram is basically a type of leisure 'activity': waking up, falling asleep, and getting back to one's 'reality' (e.g. going to work or going to school).

The survey also suggested that one of the reasons why a user may actively use Instagram was related to their Instagram account setting: switched to public or to private. Based on the study's findings, 50.5% of participants left their Instagram account public. While the decision process for choosing to leave one's account private or public is particularly related to an individual's situation or preference, 23.5% of participants did specify that they wanted to leave their Instagram account open because it allowed one to "share his/her thoughts and interests with others (including strangers)". Correspondingly, when participants were given the option to explain their decision of leaving an account private or public, 16% of all who participated explained that they chose to leave their Instagram account public "to receive followers, likes and awareness towards their posts".

Snapchat-findings

User's perspectives: When, where and why do people use Snapchat?

While Instagram and Snapchat have very similar features, this survey aimed at finding what differentiated them. When focusing on Snapchat, results from the quantitative study showed similar findings, with 56.5% of participants reported that they used it during the evening.

This question also determined that 19.5% of Snapchat users used the application most frequently during the afternoon, while 13.5% participants used it mostly in the morning, and 10.5% answered ‘other’: with 10 participants specified that they used the application throughout the day. In an attempt to highlight the whereabouts of Snapchat users, a total of 38% of participants said that they used the application “in bed right before they went to sleep or when they woke up”. Research also showed that 35% of participants used the application mostly during their leisure time (e.g. social atmosphere, shopping, at a party), while 10.5% of participants most frequently used Snapchat while in public transportation. Based on these findings, Snapchat’s geographic use was more equally divided than Instagram’s location of use. Snapchat was either mostly in one’s private sphere (such as in one’s bed), or in a public sphere (such as at a party).

The fundamental reasons behind a user’s use for Snapchat were distinguished by whether a user would add ‘strangers’ (this could include for e.g. celebrities, public figures or fashion brand accounts) or let strangers add them on the application. The current study found that 88.5% of participants said ‘no, they would not let strangers add them’, which meant that users only communicated with people they knew on the application, keeping the network personal and private. However in a follow up question, 46% of participants said they would add strangers on Snapchat, which meant that one could use Snapchat as a tool to keep surveillance on others (e.g. friends and celebrities), and absorb content (e.g. bubble news stories) but could still maintain privacy. Consequently, when participants were asked who are your Snapchat friends, 66% of participants said “mostly my friends, family and people I’ve met in real life”. These results demonstrate how Snapchat is not only a platform for instant messaging between one’s closer network-

ing group, but it can also act as a form of surveillance on friends, and content for news and popular culture.

While both applications are mostly used in ‘the evening’, and mostly ‘before going to bed or waking up’, what differentiates them is their content. In light of Instagram updating its current software, both applications have very similar features, (e.g. geographic filters and instant messenger). However, this study may offer a new reason for why Snapchat is used differently than Instagram. While Snapchat’s playful and ‘cartoon like’ filters are unique to its software, this study also shows that one’s use of Snapchat may be correlated to one’s source for daily content. Snapchat’s ability to gather one’s intimate network of friends, and offer a variety of content through ‘bubble stories’, all while being less cluttered than Instagram is what gives it value. Snapchat users are able to keep some form of intimacy with their individual networks while keeping surveillance on their preferred surroundings for content. Today, many celebrities, popular culture figures and fashion brands use Snapchat to show the fans and the consumers’ daily content, or exclusive behind the scenes footage of a project.

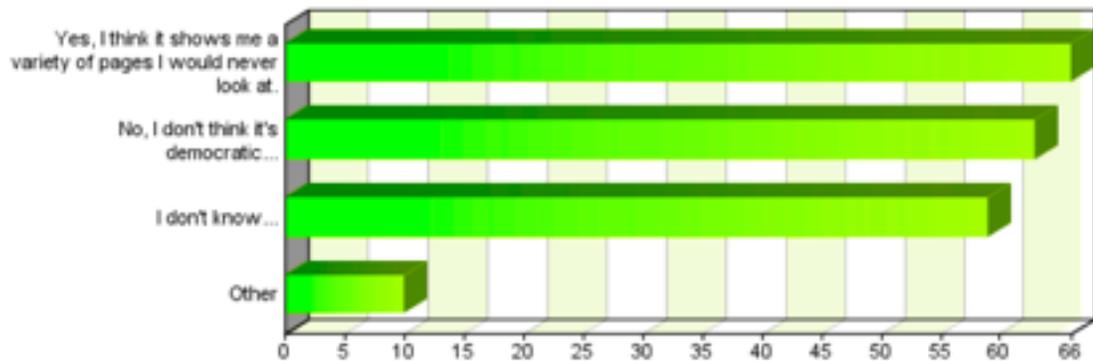
Social Media and Democracy

Social media has become an effective platform for users to voice their opinion on popular culture and on current political and social movements. In light of this, one of the themes that was addressed in this study was Instagram’s relationship with the ideology of democracy. In both, the first and the second approach, participants were asked whether they perceived the current version of Instagram was a democratic platform. Subsequently, they were asked whether they felt like they were exposed to a variety of different content from diverse perspectives. Based on the quan-

titative findings, 33% of participants said yes, 31.5% said no and 29.5% of participants answered ‘I don’t know’ (Figure A).

Figure A: The Level of Perceived Democracy of Content Exposure on Instagram

Do you feel like the content you are exposed to on the current version of Instagram’s search page is ‘democratic’ and that you are exposed to a variety of different content and different perspectives?



While this question was very general, many participants in the first approach took the opportunity to explain their answer. One of the participants said “yes, and no, it shows me a variety of different types of user accounts but the accounts that are shown are targeted to match my interests and therefore are not significantly different than the usual accounts I interact with...”. Another participant said “No, it’s not democratic because I find their cookies are showing you similar things that you’ve looked at before and it can be repetitive and irritating”. While one participant explained, “I think it just shows me what I want to see, or friends of friends, based on previous activity or likes...I wouldn’t say it’s democratic, simply more catered to what Instagram thinks I want to see...”. Accordingly, participants were not asked about their thoughts on whether Snapchat was democratic because it was irrelevant for this part of the research study.

Ultimately, there were very few parallels between the quantitative and the qualitative findings. Every interviewee had a unique perception of their understanding of the relationship between democracy and social media. Consequently, there were few consistencies in the responses. Two participants agreed that Instagram had democratic characteristics or attributes.

Yes, I feel you can get lots of opinions and views from Instagram. A lot can be said just from a photo. The Woman's March organization is a great example of this. (Alison Gordon)

It is definitely great for discovering trends. When I was a teenager and loved fashion I had to spend a lot of money to buy international fashion magazines but now it is all at your finger tips and free. (Matthew Gallagher)

One interviewee felt that Instagram had many limitations that prevented it from being considered democratic.

My Instagram feed is full of the same shit! Where is the creativity? I want to see different things...I think the way Instagram is built, the fact that you can't show nudity...and the way that they monitor, it takes away from some of the actual fashion!

But, I also think if users want access to quality fashion content, and different perspectives...all they have to do is search for it and it's available to them in seconds... I, myself like searching out local designers, in Toronto. So, I'll go out of my way and search under hashtags on Instagram to find a new designer, to try to discover things that nobody is wearing yet. (Myles Sexton)

Two interviewees had mixed thoughts on whether Instagram could be considered as a democratic social media platform:

Yes and no. Fashion for the most part is a form of art and expression. Fashion and Art can be perceived in so many ways and much, which can offend someone or a group of people. With social media, you are limited to what you can express because of backlash, rules and what society deems as acceptable. i.e nudity can be beautiful and artistic but can also be offensive and the content may be removed from social media. (Candace Daniela)

I wouldn't say Instagram is democratic. There is definitely a hierarchy. The rich get richer on Instagram, the rich being those with big accounts. Not to mention there are trolls out there to bring you down. There is tons of spam. I guess in having everything you could call it democratic. It is democratic in the sense that anyone with an account can post whatever they want (but IG also deletes pictures of nipples, they

censored the #pussypower hashtag and ban images that show women menstruating so that's food for thought). But I would call it the Wild West with a big brother watching from his glass tower. It's more like a panopticon. (Jet Set Justine)

One participant felt that Instagram used to be a democratic social media platform but that is now no longer democratic:

I mean again it's constantly changing, I don't think there will ever be a rule book or set stats...I do think in the beginning it was more democratic because people who had a certain number of followers were considered the influencers in the early days. They were posting things about things they looked good in and things that they liked, places that they liked to eat. But now social media has become a business, and I do notice that there a certain people that you can recognize right away that you go 'I don't really know if this sort of fits their brand' or questioning whether they're getting paid for that...(Anya Nordstrom)

While there is a fundamental understanding of the concept of democracy in Western culture, one may conceptualize it differently based on one's education, culture, religion, and upbringing. Essentially, the responses from interviewees were unique to their identity and lifestyle. However, there were still visibly similar themes and ideas throughout their responses. Two respondents felt that Instagram was a beneficial tool to use towards social movements. Both, Alison Gordon and Jet Set Justine highlight Instagram's ability to push forward feminist movements, by having public conversations through posts containing hashtags.

Similarly, two interviewees talked about its financial advantages. According to fashion designer Matthew Gallagher, the transition from print to social media has benefited the consumers because one does not have the obligation to purchase expensive magazines anymore to have access to fashion content. One can now access free fashion content online, and through social media. Today, users have access to an unlimited variety of blogs and social media influencers. While they have unlimited access, this does not have a significant impact on their buying

habits. One can now follow a person or an inspiring page, without the obligation of spending money or translating a desire into a purchase. Through accounts that educate, such as DIY (do it yourself) movements, and pages that inform consumers of the negative effects the fashion industry has on the planet (e.g. pollution), users now have access to a realistic and less glamorized side of the fashion industry. In light of this, consumers now have more knowledge before making a choice. As a result, this study also found that only 23% of users were influenced to purchase an item from a fashion blogger or social influencer. Therefore, while users may be influenced to like an item, it does not oblige them to translate a 'like' into a direct online purchase. Moreover, fashion blogger Jet Set Justine argues that one's financial position in society is reflective of one's tangible access to fashion trends and one's ability to succeed on social media. She argues that there is a hierarchy in Instagram and that "the rich get richer".

Lastly, one of the reoccurring points throughout the interviews was Instagram's limitations, such as Instagram's no nudity policy. While one could argue that nudity has always been an essential characteristic in the Western fashion industry, some may find it offensive. Hence, many interviewees expressed that Instagram itself has its own rules and hierarchal system. One participant even made a comparison between Instagram and Michel Foucault's (1975) theory of the panopticon, by highlighting Instagram's level of surveillance on its users.

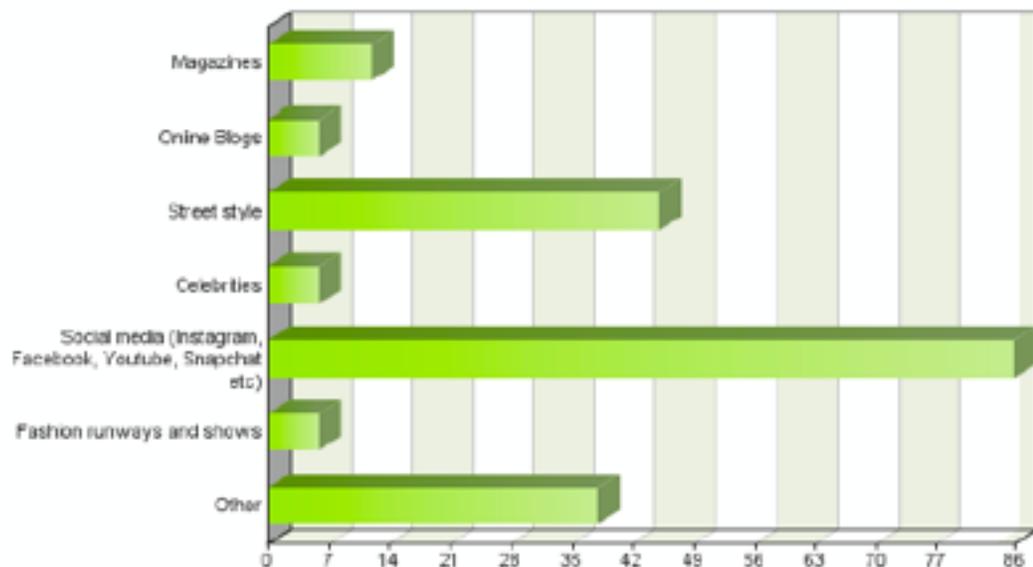
Social media and The Runway

The fashion industry has witnessed many changes surrounding the runway. This research study focused on the relationship between social media and the runway by observing and highlighting its progression. While there are several issues concerning the runway, this research study focused on questions such as, what are the exact changes that the catwalk is facing in correlation

to social media's presence in a space, and how are industry experts reacting to it. In the first approach of this research study, participants were asked where they found their inspiration to dress. They were also asked where they found inspiration for their style and the latest fashion trends. As a result, 43% of participants selected social media (for e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Snapchat and Pinterest) as their primary source for fashion content and inspiration, while 22% of participants selected street style and 19% chose 'other' with many participants specifying that they found inspiration in all of the options listed in the question (fashion shows, magazines, on-line etc). (Figure B)

Figure B: Inspiration for one's Style

Where do you find inspiration for your fashion taste and personal style?



Similarly, this research study also focused on asking industry professionals, their perspective on whether they felt that social media was affecting one's primary source for fashion related

content. Hence, interviewees were asked whether they felt that Instagram and Snapchat had replaced the catwalk for one's 'go to place' to find inspiration for the latest trends and on how to dress. Fashion designers were also offered to answer this question from their perspective: where do you find ideas and inspiration for your latest collections. Here are the participant's responses:

I don't think social media has replaced the fashion runway. I think it just presents it in a different way. As opposed to people turning to magazines for inspiration, they now turn to Instagram and Pinterest, but the inspiration is still the same. (Jennifer Braun)

I think Instagram is a great place to get inspired on how to dress but I believe that most of the style bloggers are not actually doing anything new - they are almost like the human form of Zara. They can inspire people to create looks inspired by their looks. I'm not sure if people who have an income to afford luxury brands are really devoting their time to Instagram shopping. I think when you do it that way you lose the rush that you get from actually shopping. Also, if someone is going to pay \$5,000.00 for an article of clothing, I think they like the treatment they get in a boutique. In some ways it makes it even more worth it. As for inspiration, I have to travel. I personally find Toronto and Canada in general very uninspiring. No real stylistic or cultural identity. I go back to Italy at least once a year and usually there or any other places in Europe I am visiting at the time, help me muster up enough ideas for a couple of seasons. I can also find inspiration in art or film, but for me it is always a feeling that starts the ball rolling. A certain neighbourhood in Milan for instance with grand Palazzo's and perfectly coiffed women in mink coats can set the mood for an entire collection. (Matthew Gallagher)

I don't know about replacing the runway. I still get inspiration from the runway. It's more like, a place to get a quick idea. Like, if I see something I like (on Instagram), how someone styled a camel coat and white sneakers, then I can quickly copy it. I don't have to wait for the garment to be produced and then sold in stores next season. I can recreate it instantly. But, there is value in new ideas as well. I think the downside of Instagram is that people start to all dress the same. If I have to see the Gucci Marmont bag one more time, I think I will vomit. Instagram is a place where trends are created, and also, where they go to die. (Jet Set Justine)

I think more Instagram, not much Snapchat. The information shared on Snapchat is really fast while Instagram the pictures are always there. You can do more research looking at the pictures. Pinterest is another really good place to find inspirations. (Joao Paulo Guedes)

I don't know if I could say it has replaced the runway because the fashion runway has always been a very exclusive thing. I know being a New Yorker, New York fashion week was always something that I liked...it's where I learned how to be a publicist and how to run runway shows but again I think that's for a very exclusive group of people. I think the general consumer may not be involved in fashion or doesn't have the opportunity to attend fashion presentations or runway shows...so there's probably people that they follow to inspire their style so they kind of see what they're doing, what they're wearing, and where they're going...(Anya Nordstrom)

While the majority of the interviewees felt that Instagram has become a considerably new source for fashion related content and trends, none of the participants felt that social media had completely replaced the runway for one's primary source of inspiration. Based on these findings, Instagram seems to be presenting fashion in a different way, not offering anything new for the industry. Canadian fashion blogger Jet Set Justine, believes that Instagram is a great source for a quick idea. However, she argues that the downside of Instagram is that people are all starting to dress the same. "Instagram is a place where trends are created, and also, where they go to die" (Jet Set Justine).

Results show that participants from the quantitative study and industry experts from the qualitative study feel differently about this topic. While industry professionals may not feel like the runway is replaceable, this study found that a participant's primary source for fashion inspiration is via social media. This may originate from social media's ability to access the same content for free, from the convenience of one's tablet. Furthermore, Snapchat was only mentioned by fashion designer Joao Paulo Guedes, who felt that the information shared on the application has a short lifespan, thus makes it complicated to observe and appreciate the content.

The fashion industry has always valued exclusivity. Today, social media may challenge this because it offers users access to all of the latest trends and exclusive fashion content from a

variety of perspectives. Consequently, interviewees were asked about how they felt regarding this matter. Specifically, whether they felt that Instagram and Snapchat, have changed the value of a fashion show invitation and/or one's experience.

I would say yes...but I would say there are both negative and positive effects...I think the positive is that designers, through the people that are attending their shows, are getting much wider reach, they could be putting on a show here in Toronto, but they could have people watching their shows from Brazil and have followers from France or Spain or New York...so social media does give them a lot of press...The negative thing is social media takes away the importance of exclusivity of a runway show. It's like when someone says "omg did you hear what Jean Paul Gauthier just did on the runway, you would have to search to find it, and it was kind of like a hunt" and only dedicated fashion people would try to see the pieces and see the runway show, and now because it's so out there, you type out the hashtag and you can see most of it...but again it's not a bag thing. (Anya Nordstrom)

Yes and no. We see there's this big discussion happening on how social media makes these events more inclusive and less exclusive. It's good for diversity and to make fashion more inclusive, but it also takes away a certain lustre from the industry in my opinion. Still, as someone who's been to more exclusive events, it's always fun to have an invite and really live the action. Sure you can see it online, but it's not the same as being there. (Jennifer Braun)

For sure! Everybody now can be part of the show. The customers can even buy the products right after the runway is finished! How incredible is that? (Joao Paulo Guedes)

I mean because you can live stream everything now, I think that it's like added a new element to the runway shows, I really think it's hard. I mean unless you're 'someone' it's hard to get in...or have a lot of money to see those shows. I think it's exciting that everyone can access these high end designers now and kind of experience them because I do think that exclusivity is kind of overrated now a little bit...I think the person that I think it's the hardest on, is the designers, sometimes...either it's really good for them because they're going to get a lot of sales out of it, or if it's a small niche, or exclusive product it can also make the brand go down. I think it depends on their business plan...(Myles Sexton)

I don't feel like it has negatively changed the value of a fashion show. In fact, I feel that as an emerging designer, you are able to reach out to a larger audience and one that is more diverse. Most buyers, stylists and media will still attend your show but for those who are not able to attend, they have the option to view or stream it live

elsewhere. I think as a young designer, it is good to be wary of the shift towards social media and find ways to use it to our advantage even with fashion shows. (Candace Daniela)

No, I think that people still want to go to the show and sit front row. There is still a visceral value to that. Maybe seeing it on Instagram and Snapchat actually makes you want to attend the show even more. Hello, FOMO! (fear of missing out). (Jet Set Justine)

In terms of the experience, I don't think so...I put a lot of effort into choosing lighting and music for a show because for those 10-15mins I want everyone to feel what I am feeling about the collection. That isn't something you can replicate on social media. Also, seeing clothes in real life coming down a runway can really bring the pieces to life. A lot of times a beautiful dress may fall flat in a photograph because you need to see how it flows and how the light catches the textile. (Matthew Gallagher)

According to these findings, each interviewee felt differently regarding this question.

However, similar themes did appear throughout their responses, such as the ability for a brand or a fashion designer to reach a wider audience. Canadian fashion designer Candace Daniela, believes that social media is a beneficial tool, and has actually helped designers reach a wider audience, including herself. In today's competitive fashion industry, she claims that "as a young designer, it is good to be wary of the shift towards social media and find ways to use it to our advantage even with fashion shows". From a fashion designer's perspective, one can understand the value of investing the time and the financial means to create a collection that will be appreciated and credited for its quality and attention to detail. However, while social media offers a larger platform to display and possibly sell one's work, fashion designers are also left competing with that many more designers in an international market. Canadian fashion designer Daniel Torjman explains how "it's good for buyers, but as a brand things are a lot more competitive—It's nice that we now have a global market and people from Australia and Japan are buying our prod-

ucts daily on our site. But it also means that they have the ability to do that with every single brand in the world”.

Fashion designers are also left questioning the type of budgets that should be invested into a collection that may be shared immensely through a screen on social media, but not valued for its detail, its quality, or choice of fabric. Are consumers going to appreciate a more appealing social media page, or a different style of presenting a runway collection? Traditional ways of doing are changing, and fashion designers are having to reevaluate and restructure their runway shows, in terms of its presentation style, their budgets and their time.

Social media, has become a powerful form of free press for one’s designs on a global scale. Through Instagram and Snapchat, local Canadian designers can not only share their work, but they can also sell it to individuals from other countries. Hence, the second noticeable theme was “exclusivity versus inclusivity”. Fashion designer and makeup artist Myles Sexton argues that “exclusivity is overrated”. Meanwhile, Canadian fashion journalist Jennifer Braun believes that the runway is witnessing positive changes such as inclusivity and diversity, yet, at the same time social media has taken away the fashion industry’s “lustre”.

Social media has completely changed the way people, especially young adults, think about their behaviour and their physical appearance (for e.g. weight, beauty, clothing), specifically before stepping out into the public sphere. Essentially, Instagram and Snapchat have become powerful tools of surveillance between friends, family and even strangers. To what degree can one overthink of one’s way of dress. To what extent can young adults stress the importance of an outfit being shared online, a very controversial and universal space. This research study focused on understanding social media’ influence on the consumer’s perspective when purchasing cloth-

ing. Today, fast fashion retailers encourage young adults to purchase numerous garments, by pricing individual pieces at insanely low prices. As a result, consumers are reassured by buying more garments, they can avoid repeating an outfit and have it shared on social media. During the first approach, survey participants were assessed on their purchasing behaviour, in relation to whether it would look good in a picture. While this study aimed at proving that social media had negatively influenced one's purchasing behaviour (for e.g. consumers purchasing based on quantity and low prices, versus quality), only 14.5% of participants expressed that they shopped for clothing while considering how it would appear in a picture or on a mobile device (smart phone and tablet). At the same time, 45.5% said they did not make purchasing decisions while considering how it would look in a picture, yet 20% said sometimes. Meanwhile, fashion industry experts were asked whether they had witnessed fashion designers alter their runway garments differently in light of the majority of the audience sharing a runway collection through social media on a smartphone. As a result, two industry experts felt that designs had not changed in terms of quality control:

I don't think so. The clothes on the runway need to be styled really well and also be more over the top to generate impact. (Joao Paulo Guedes)

I don't think that social media has changed the way designers design or will stop them from using any specific types of fabrics, but there is a discussion happening around the fact that the runway schedule might need to change due to the way images are shared so rapidly. (Jennifer Braun)

One interviewee, felt that designs actually had changed.

Yes, especially with the introduction of e-commerce. I know for a fact that things shoot differently on screen to in real life and especially with the cheaper brands, things like quality of fabric doesn't get shown through photos. A lot of the time I will shoot in something that's so obviously see through or poorly made but when the pho-

to is taken you wouldn't be able to tell. That's one of the dark sides of the industry is the exploitation of consumers I think... (Jennifer Atilemile)

While other industry experts had mixed opinions and thoughts on this question:

That is a good thought actually. To be honest I haven't ever thought about that but it could make sense for sure. I think what I've noticed most is the rise of "instagram worthy" designers. A lot of shows now look more as though a stylist came in and mixed and matched a bunch of stuff you can already buy. I think this is maybe similar to when designers in the past were inspired by street style and now its inspired by social media style. (Matthew Gallagher)

I mean, yes and no. I think there are two different markets. I still think there is a luxury market that is shopping at boutiques, where you sit drink champagne and designer clothes are brought to you...I think that it's more with like the disposable fashion.

I think Zara and H&M are more about having a whole outfit that looks expensive, but when you touch it and hold it, you realize that for example the zipper doesn't actually open, so they take away the details that more of a high end designer would actually take the time and invest in their designs... (Myles Sexton)

I think it depends on the designer, legitimate designers with real character and history and specific aesthetic wouldn't change the way that they're thinking because of social media because the garment speaks for itself...But of course, it's something that people think about...I have noticed that with the whole blogger fashion week front seat thing, a lot of designers who have done previously couture pieces at higher price points, and that you could only buy at specific locations and that you could maybe only find in a specific colour, or style, or boutique...I have seen those designers approach a different consumer, by making more sports wear, like t-shirts and sweat pants...things that could be purchased by women or men, that sizes are not too difficult. But, I also think that that's important to the Canadian designer because it is very expensive to put on a show, produce a sample collection prior to getting any orders, so if they are recognizing that some of their couture pieces aren't doing huge in sales in Canada or on e-commerce, I think filling in the blanks with more traditional t-shirts or classic items, or essential pieces that you can carry more season to season are probably going to make more sales...When comparing a designer dress for over a thousand dollars, or a sweatshirt for 200\$, I think a young millennial who wants to own something from that collection, who wants to invest in that collection, have that investment piece will buy the 200\$ sweatshirt, rather than buying the thousand dollar dress that they'll only wear once. (Anya Nordstrom)

Based on these findings, every interviewee had a unique perspective on this subject, which may be related to their profession. Canadian fashion designer Joao Paulo Guedes felt that he did not alter his collections because of the presence of smartphones during a show. While he does not elaborate on his response, he explains that designers should be enhancing the quality of their garments “to generate impact” and make their presence aware in the fashion industry.

Moreover, Canadian model Myles Sexton highlighted the importance of distinguishing two markets in the fashion industry: the luxury and the disposable. Sexton talks about fast fashion brands such as Zara and H&M and how these companies focus on the look of a garment on the runway, versus the quality. For example, Zara may add a faux zipper on a garment (that does not actually open), but a luxury brand that may price a garment much higher, will actually invest attaching a zipper that will last a lifetime. While this study did not focus specifically on a brand’s e-commerce website, it does acknowledge the high quality e-commerce websites of fast fashion brands such as Zara that have made shopping extremely convenient, fast and affordable for consumers on a global scale.

In light of fast fashion brands focusing on their social media presence, and their e-commerce websites, more so than on the quality of their garments, some interviewees felt that consumers are having a harder time to shop today more than ever. Australian plus-size model Jennifer Atilemile personally witnessed the quality of the garments become cheaper. Based on her experience, she argues that the garments that appear on an e-commerce website, do not accurately reflect the actual quality of the garment she models during photoshoots. As a result, she warns consumers to be more careful to deceptive advertisements, and become smarter shoppers because of many brands solely selling through social media and online.

Canadian publicist, Anya Nordstrom also mentions that while she does not think that designers are changing the quality of garments that hit the runway, they are changing their targeted audience and the variety in the garments themselves. She highlights the transition in luxury brands shifting into more 'ready to wear' and sportswear collections, since there is a shift in Western consumer behaviour to invest in perhaps more comfortable and 'smarter' clothing. In this case, smarter clothing is defined as durable garments that will last a lifetime. She argues that while one may want to invest in a thousand dollar designer garment from a luxury collection, most young adults may not be able to afford, and therefore they invest a lot more on affordable t-shirt.

By trying to outperform one another, luxury fashion brands are selecting unique geographic locations to obtain international social media attention (such as Fendi's 2016 couture collection on Rome's Trevi fountain). Subsequently, interviewees were asked if they had witnessed fashion designers curate their runway shows differently, because of social media and the presence of smartphones.

Four participants felt that the presentation of runway had changed since the presence of social media:

Definitely, I have an agency that helps with this and ensures that the finale walk, lighting, backdrop and stage will look best for photos, videos and the audience. Unfortunately, some of the shows do not allow for too much customization, but I am definitely looking forward to seeing what the new TFW (Toronto Fashion Week) will allow in terms of creativity of seating and stage structure. (Candace Daniela)

For sure! I think there are a lot of things that designers are incorporating into fashion events and runway shows to promote social media. We always include a show hashtag for all of our shows that we produce so we have one place to see what everyone is posting. I also think there is a lot of appeal to doing a fashion presentation vs a runway show...it's just too much of the same repetitiveness, same people, same

number of models per show, one after the other. So I think that doing an off set presentation allows a lot of networking, allows media, influencers, buyers and press to get to have a moment and talk personally to the designers, ask them questions, get close to garments see how they move...and it's kind of a longer format. People are just tired of the same, and they want something new and different. (Anya Nordstrom)

Yes!!! Two things have been done. One designer had the models walk the runway and then also had taken a row of seats out half way up the stands and had them walk this aisle as well. This allowed for more people to get better up close shots. Suddenly those 4th row seats were also second row. Another thing I have seen, which is also a way to cut costs, is not doing a show, but instead doing an installation. Models stand on the runway, often on boxes and the audience is invited to come in and stroll around. This allows everyone to get up close and personal and get very close shots.

Not always easy though when it gets crowded. (Stephen Thomas)

I think that what is exciting about social media, with the exposure of everything...is we see that runway shows have changed, designers are showcasing collections on the runway and on their websites for sale at the same time. I think that because of the accessibility of taking taking a picture on your phone, companies like H&M and Zara, could re produce the same garments again fast...so I think it's forced designers to release collections right at that moment to avoid replication. Also, I think it's just less about the prestige look, it's more about creating an environment or a mood. The last show that I did...I filled the venue with tropical plants, changed all the lighting to create a whole environment and made the room really a part of the show's experience. I think we've seen it with a lot of designers, they're trying to create a moment in time as opposed to just creating a runway and go!

(Myles Sexton)

One interviewee felt that it had not changed, but wished it did:

Unfortunately, no. But they should! Oh man, I wish! Sometimes the models walk so fast you can't get a decent picture. I guess some designers have tried to incorporate 'Instagrammable' moments into their shows like Tommy Hilfiger's Spring 2017 collection at the Navy Piers. He erected an amusement park dedicated to his #Tommy-Now #TommyxGigi extravaganza. It was very cool, and definitely provided ample Snapchat and Instagram moments. (Jet Set Justine)

One participant felt that there was a change in locations and a focus on setting a mood that would translate through people's devices:

I've seen the location of shows change, especially I think it was the Louis Vuitton resort show in Cuba, and the Fendi show in Italy on the fountain but that was done to

be big thing and out do one another...because they're trying to get the attention on themselves...If things like Instagram and snapchat didn't exist there wouldn't be the need for such lavish showings I think...but because they do, it's kind of cool, but you have to think too at times at what point does it distract from the clothing. (Jennifer Atilemile)

According to these findings, runway shows are changing because of social media, specifically Instagram and Snapchat. Particularly, Canadian fashion designer Candace Daniela, who admitted to altering the lighting, the backdrop and the stage structure. She took into consideration how it would look for the audience but also how it would look in pictures and in videos. Stephen Thomas, a writer for The Huffington Post, has also personally witnessed an innovative way of presenting garments through installations. He argues that designers are finding ways not only to attract audience to take a closer look to their collection, but also spend a longer time to take great pictures of the garments. Similarly, publicist Anya Nordstrom has also mentioned the shift from runway shows to presentations. These presentations, not only benefit the press, but buyers and the consumers are then able to pay more attention to the garments. Moreover, another similar theme that both publicist Anya Nordstrom and Canadian fashion blogger Jet Set Justine mentioned was the use of the hashtag. The hashtag not only creates a space to see the same content from different perspectives, but it also creates social media attention. Blogger Jet Set Justine mentions how fashion designers are mostly focused on getting “Instagrammable and Snapchat” moments during the shows, such as Tommy Hilfiger’s latest Navy Piers collection, by using Gigi Hadid as the face of the collection and integrating several hashtags.

It should be highlighted that this research study acknowledges the differences among interviewees’ responses due to the variance of their budget, a brand’s image, and the current level

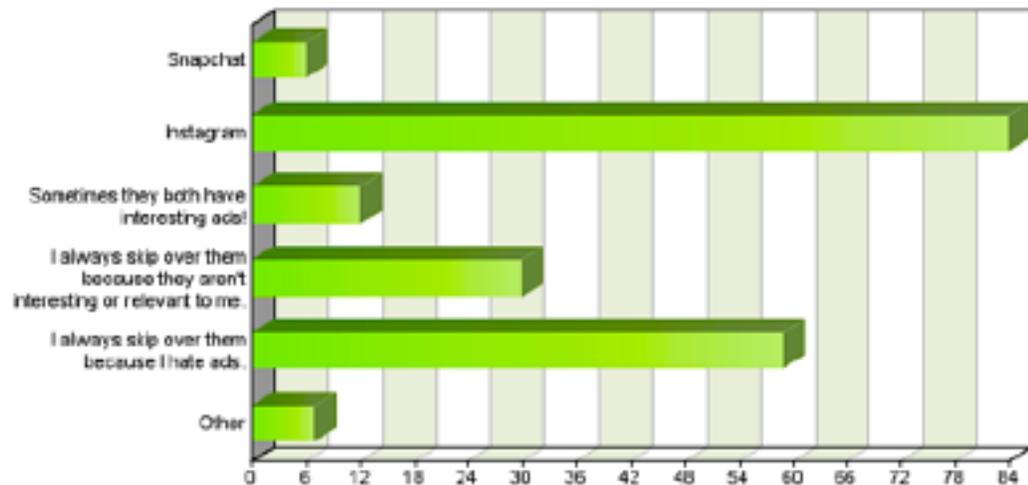
of financial success in the fashion industry. Indeed, these factors are important when developing collections, the style of presentations and one's runway budget.

Social Media and Advertising

Advertisement strategies and techniques vary based on the industry, the product or service, and the consumer demographic. While this study acknowledges the larger issues surrounding advertisements in the fashion industry, this paper focused on assessing the most effective channel of communication from the consumer's perspective. In the first approach, survey participants were asked which social media platform perceived as the most persuasive ads: that translated a like into a purchase. As a result, 42% of participants voted for Instagram and 3%, voted for Snapchat. This question also gave the opportunity for participants to choose neither of these options. This resulted with 29.5% of participants reported that they did not like the advertise-

Figure C: Advertising: Instagram vs. Snapchat

Which social media platform do you find their ads most effective or persuading to 'buy the product or service'?



ments provided by Instagram and or Snapchat because “they hate advertisements” in general (Figure C).

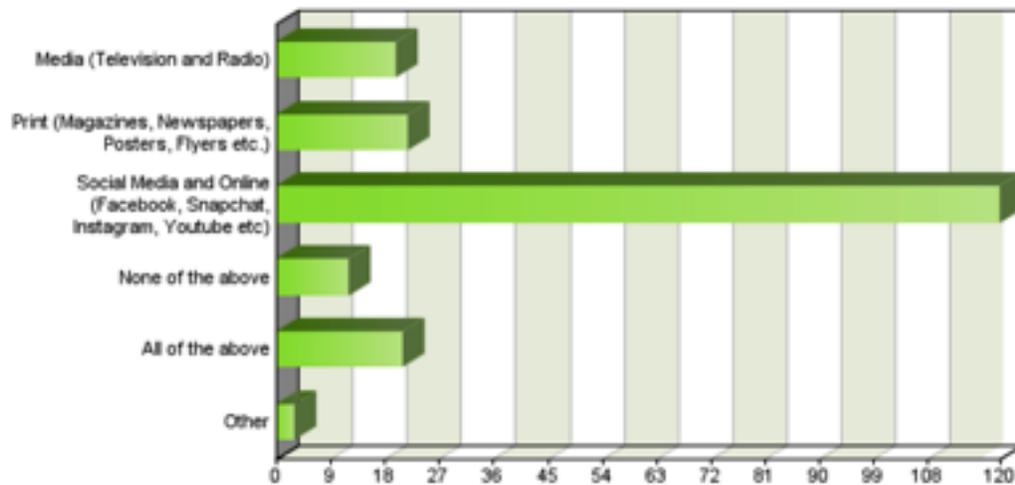
Social media has become a primary platform for one to display one’s purchases and one’s income status. While there are many reasons to explain why consumers are shopping more frequently than previous generations, this study aimed at revealing whether social media affected consumers’ shopping time and behaviour because of their use of social media. According to the quantitative data, when participants were asked whether Instagram influenced their shopping practices or their shopping experience, 41.5% admitted yes, while 33.5% said no. Specifically, when participants were asked whether Instagram had influenced their frequency of shopping (e.g. with the worry of posting images of themselves while wearing the same outfit), 62% felt indifferent, 15.5% of participants said yes, 11.5% answered sometimes and 2.5% were not sure.

The chosen ‘medium’ of communication is essential when trying to create an effective advertisement. Famous for his theory “the medium is the message”, Canadian intellect Marshall McLuhan (1964) reminds one of its importance when trying to communicate a message. While the fashion industry has traditionally invested a lot of money in print media, such as magazines, to communicate to a specific demographic, the industry is witnessing a movement towards modern ‘medium’, such as social media (p.5). Thus, when participants were asked which platform they found was the most effective and relevant advertising tool to the fashion industry, 60% said social media and other online websites such as Youtube, 11% of participants selected print media and 10% chose TV programs and radio (Figure D).

Consequently, social media has encouraged luxury, fast fashion and slow fashion brands to restructure their business plan and strategy to reach a specific audience. In light of these re-

Figure D: The Most Effective Platform for Fashion Advertisements

Which ads in the fashion industry do you find are currently most effective or persuasive?



sults, industry experts were asked the same exact question: Which ads in the fashion industry do you find are currently most effective or persuasive? According to the responses, eight out of nine interviewees selected social media, while one participant selected the option ‘other’.

Oh! I think brands have predominantly shifted from print to social media, especially towards the 'celebrity endorsement'. The best example of this is, I think what's been called the Kylie Jenner effect. She's had so many brands work with her on her social media, that her followers think that because she's worn something, or used something they need to have it! (Jennifer Atilemile)

I would for sure say social media. I think it's the most accessible, from a company's perspective it's the cheapest, it's the quickest, you know you can get more messages out quickly in a day to a larger audience and that is very, very specific as well. (Daniel Torjman)

To be honest, I think the most information that I get is from my newsfeed, it's from my friend groups through Instagram and Facebook. I don't think it's a paid ad source, but I'll see something my friends liked or commented on, or are sharing, and I'll go click on it whether it's old or new news. I just find my information there I guess because that's where I look the most... (Myles Sexton)

I think right now social media is the best platform because our audience can easily access content over and over again, share with friends and save it. Print on the other hand is great but I feel that sometimes the audience sees it (i.e. at a salon or on the

newsstands) and may forget or find it hard to access the content again after a few months even with apps like Texture. (Candace Daniela)

From an advertising standpoint, I would say social media – It's real life and fast paced. It's what the new generation is attracted to. They want to see what that celebrity is wearing today, what people are buying right now, and they want to be able to access it within a couple of clicks. It also caters directly to the users' interests, whereas other platforms aren't able to cater directly for their customer in the same way. Print also requires months and weeks in advance to relay their information, which most social media users are already 'over' by the time it's out. (Alison Gordon)

Instagram and social media. The images you shot for that magazine or tv commercial can be shared for a lot less money and if you have the right followers you have a chance to interact with them. Try live chatting through a newspaper. (Stephen Thomas)

I think Social media is great because it can reach an audience outside of your bubble and the other thing I credit with having a lot of help growing my following is doing runway shows. You have so many different people coming and posting photographs of your work and that photo then goes to all of their followers and then if they repost it goes to their followers etc. It can spread like wild fire. (Matthew Gallagher)

Um, I guess I would select 'other' other because I think all of them do great things for fashion products. Print, the industry is changing quite a bit but I still think specifically the September, October and November issues are the strongest for sales. There are a lot of people looking at what is in the market for gifting and I think a lot of the people who are in a certain financial bracket, they definitely see things in a magazine and they will buy it. Social media, yes it's definitely a sales tool but all of the sales that we do through social media, go directly to our clients' e-commerce platforms. So we at Nordstrom Matte are not getting sales through social media directly but when certain people post about our products we do see correlations between the time of that post and the number of orders that come directly after. (Anya Nordstrom)

Based on these findings, most of the interviewees selected social media, with many of them highlighting the replacement, if not add on from print to social media. Fashion model Jennifer Atilemile, expressed the importance of 'celebrity endorsements' on social media, mentioning Kylie Jenner as an example. While fashion brands cannot accurately collect how many number of views per each print advertisement, or a billboard image, Instagram and Snapchat offer

companies the exact number of “views”, “likes” and “comments” of each post. This gives brands an idea of how consumers are responding to a runway show, a collection and or an advertisement.

Industry findings also reveal how designers and brands are reacting to this shift. Canadian fashion designer Daniel Torjman, explains that social media benefits both the consumer and the designer at least in two ways first, it has become much more accessible to the consumers in terms of product search and purchases; second, it reduces the advertisement costs for companies and/or designers. Similarly, journalist Stephen Thomas argues that social media offers a feature of interaction that print media cannot. Through Instagram and Snapchat, consumers are able to express their opinions about the products directly to the companies. Hence, an advertisement can quickly gain a massive reach around the world, and “can spread like wildfire” as expressed by Matthew Gallagher.

Canadian fashion designer Candace Daniela, also explains the differences between advertising through print media versus social media, and how it has simply become less convenient to purchase a magazine. Now, one can find anything online, from the creator of a garment, to which locations carry a certain product. Through social media, one can ‘save’ an item or follow a direct URL link to purchase that item, while with print it may be easy to forget about an item, or challenging to find it. Fashion illustrator, Alison Gordon explains that print media simply cannot keep up with social media and today’s millennials because they want everything now.

One of the fundamental questions that must be addressed by a company or a designer- Would it be beneficial to them if they invest their time to build a strong social media presence? With such perspectives, interviewees were asked whether they believed that having an Instagram

account would translate into profit and or direct sales. They were also asked a follow up question: Is social media account play a relatively more effective role than e-commerce website in terms of generating revenue or profit? Many interviewees felt that Snapchat was not a tool that they would consider using today because of time investment. Some interviewees felt that investing time in Snapchat may not benefit their brand. Although, every interviewee had a unique business model, they all expressed the importance of having social media presence.

Well in terms of social media, Instagram is the most important, it is for us. Does Instagram translate to direct sales? Sometimes, not always. It's important to have a big Instagram following, but I think the most important thing still is to really have a strong mailing list because you know Instagram can be misleading, you could have 50 000 followers, but you don't know if every single one is your customer. Maybe they just like the pictures that you post, with no intention of ever buying anything. So, Instagram ideally it acts as 'the foot in the door' rather, that's where they first discover you but then they do deeper deeper research, and then they'll find your mailing list, so maybe Instagram acts as your introduction... Also, having an online store is very important now, so not only having a good website, but having your website work on a mobile device, it's become the norm, and what people expect. So it's good for buyers, but as a brand, things are a lot more competitive, it's that much harder. It's nice that we now have a global market and now people from Australia and Japan are buying our products daily on our website...but it also means that they have the ability to that with every single brand in the world. Which means that—that's why it's even more important now more than ever for you to really be on top of your game. (Daniel Torjman)

We use Instagram to show new designs, editorial photoshoots and new upcoming events. It is a really good tool for the fashion industry. Usually we like to post 3 pictures to have a better and clean layout. People love when you tell a story... We have made many connections using Instagram with stylists, stores and people from the fashion industry worldwide. We do not have a snapchat account but must of the designers are using it to adversity products and show live events (Joao Paulo Guedes)

I think it's both, because you can't sell on Instagram. I think it's important to have just a very basic website, but don't invest so much money on creating this crazy website. Allow the product to just be sold but then, I think just focus hard on connecting with people on social media. It's just like yesterday, I posted this thing for my friend on Instagram, it's this brush that make up artists use. I just posted the picture and tagged him and you know hundreds of people were like sending him in-

quires to his Instagram page wanting to purchase it, so it's just as simple as that!
(Myles Sexton)

Instagram definitely generates more awareness and buzz. Although, I do not sell anything from my Instagram page, I use it to direct users to my website. I prefer Instagram because people can find my brand easier by seeing their connections or similar likes. The one thing I find difficult about my e-commerce website is that sometimes people misspell my name or enter .ca instead of .com which can cause some confusion. (Candace Daniela)

Yes I do feel Instagram is the best choice for marketing to my customer. Mainly because it's 99% a visual platform. My followers would probably favour Instagram as well, as it's a great space to be creative and be inspired by new beautiful images that are happening every moment. From a creative standpoint, it is a fast paced way to stay updated on everything you love and can inspire you in seconds. (Alison Gordon)

I definitely use Instagram more to promote my brand as a model. I love Snapchat as it's a candid view into my everyday life, I occasionally show on set and that sort of stuff which I think is cool because you see the person behind the poses and makeup and all that stuff but the professionalism and 'model' as such is on my Instagram.
(Jennifer Atilemile)

It really depends on how you measure it. For a new brand yes Instagram can drive sales much more than just sticking up a site. Instagram is a traffic driver. For more established brands it can still attain sales, but it also is just one of the many legs holding up the marketing table. I had one designer admit he does not care if Instagram get his sales directly. For him it is more about if the client is researching him he wants them to find quality content and visuals and Instagram is a great way to do this. It helps the client have more confidence in the brand. Bottom line, whether it directly gets you the sales or not, when dealing with a visual product you need to have visuals and Instagram is the platform for this so you are forced to be there.
(Stephen Thomas)

Yes, I don't know about more than an e-commerce website, but I know that we more specifically do a lot of Instagram influencer outreach...and we see a direct correlation to when those people post about the product to when we see direct sales from those posts...Nordstrom Matte currently doesn't have Snapchat, but it's not because we don't want too or don't think it's beneficial...it's just that it's a time issue. If I want to do it, I want to do it right...and I don't think now I have the time to do all the platforms. (Anya Nordstrom)

According to these findings, Instagram has demonstrated its ability to help a brand generate traffic, make industry connections and serve as a visual portfolio for one's work. However, Snapchat did not appear useful for most of the interviewees in this research study. Fashion model Jennifer Atilemile, was the only one to express Snapchat's advantages. She believes that Snapchat is great for showing her 'followers' her daily lifestyle and uses it for self promotion.

Similarly, Candace Daniela and Stephen Thomas argue that while Instagram may not generate direct sales, but it is an effective "traffic driver" and he describes Instagram as "one of many legs holding the marketing table". These findings are similar to scholars Phua, Jin and Kim's (2016) findings from Social Media Examiner: 96% of businesses use social media to attract website traffic.

However, Canadian fashion designer Daniel Torjman highlights the pros and the cons of Instagram. Torjman argues that while designers can benefit from having a much broader reach in international markets, designers "will have more competitive advantages". He also mentions that while one may have thousands of Instagram followers, it is difficult to identify a fan from a customer. When it comes to sales, he believes that his mailing list is what works for his specific business model.

Social Media and Career Opportunities

The fashion industry is one of the most competitive industries in the world. Today, it is already extremely challenging for individuals to find internships (usually that are unpaid), let alone find a respectable position in a company. In light of this situation, those with high aspiration, creativity and ambition to succeed have taken advantage of the power of social media. This research study found that one's use for social media as a tool to help push forward one's career or

display one's work, was closely related one's profile settings to 'public' or 'private'. The survey found that 50.5% of participants left their Instagram account public, while 38% left it private (Figure E).

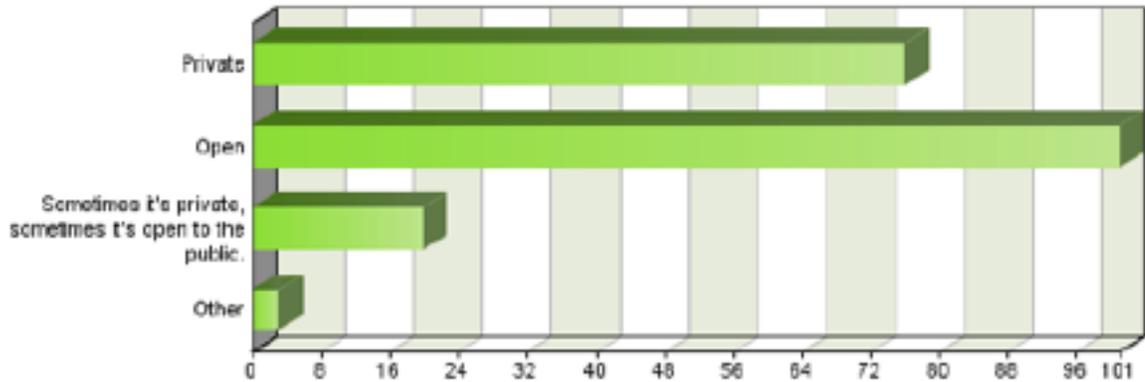
The decision process that goes behind leaving one's Instagram account 'public' or 'private' is unique to one's situation and purpose of use for the application. However, while one may have a unique reason for choosing to leave their Instagram account setting and switch to 'public', 12 participants felt similarly, and expressed how they used Instagram as "a working portfolio for potential employers", "to help promote my business of fashion designs" and "to use it as an on-line portfolio".

Both Instagram and Snapchat have undeniably helped many users pursue their careers in the fashion industry by acquiring social media attention or through networking. To further this argument, industry experts were asked whether they found that social media, specifically Instagram and Snapchat, had helped them grow their brand, their Instagram fame, their audience reach, or their overall company's success.

Definitely! Social media, has been a huge part of the traffic for Nord Magazine. I mean when you look at the conversion from social media, most of it's traffic is from social media! Which is great, but I think we also just wouldn't have the magazine if it wasn't for social media. My whole platform around the magazine was this idea of being able to connect Canadian fashion and Canadian talent on an international scale because I felt like that was a missing link in the industry here, because all of these other magazines are just so focused on international talent and never on Canadian talent, and it's not bridging. So I think that collaborating with social media on this was a huge reason why we started the magazine because we were able to showcase Canadian talent along side international talent in a matter of seconds! On a global scale, and our followings shock me because there are countries that have viewed the magazine, and I'm like I don't even know where that country is in the world! I'm like how did they find us! But then I'm like it must have been through social media. So it's so crazy how powerful it can be!—I felt like I started Snapchat a little too late...you know I feel like that now that Instagram has started the Instagram 'story'

Figure E: Instagram Profile Settings

Is your Instagram open to the public or private?



feature, it's like it has heavily affected Snapchat. I'm just not getting the same amount of response as I used too. I feel like a lot of people have just switched over to Instagram, and I feel like it has monopolized a bit. Obviously, there are people out there who still rule Snapchat and have a huge Snapchat following, but I think that my followers are more of an Instagram base. I think that Snapchat is becoming a little outdated, I think that either they're going to have to transition out or they're going to have to add some new changes or features to get people to come back to again. It's kind of like Boomerang, I feel like Instagram is just smart, they keep just buying the things to put them on Instagram, while the others are just starting up. I feel like all my response is just on Instagram these days. (Myles Sexton)

Since I work online, my online presence is very important to my job, so when it comes to my personal Instagram account, I am very selective about the type of content I share". She also argues that "being present on social media is super important for Picoum's business because that's how they reach their consumers. (Jennifer Braun)

Definitely, I wouldn't have been able to reach so many people if it weren't for Instagram. A lot of collaborations and connections started from Instagram because people found me through the hashtags and using their 'Explore' tab. I have not been using Snapchat much for my business. I do use It personally and am aware that some business contacts to have me on snapchat. I ensure that none of my personal posts would offend any of my following and ensure it still positively reflects my brand. (Candace Daniela)

I already had a very loyal and amazing following on my blog before Instagram came out. My blog readers are the best. They leave me long comments, they are super engaged. I love that the most about what I do and is why I will always bill myself as a blogger first and foremost. I don't identify with titles such as "content creator" or "influencer" because I don't consider myself necessarily good at those things. I'm good at blogging, though, and that's what I do professionally. Instagram is just a means to an end. Also, I used to use Snapchat a lot until Instagram stories happened. Now, I find it more organic to just film a story without having to leave and open a whole different app. (Jet Set Justine)

As models we can often get booked for jobs through Instagram, and I've got to a level where I've started to receive free gifts in return for a mention on social media. It's made my life very easy- things from facials, to food, even accommodation when I travel for work! I recently booked a campaign from my Instagram which I was pretty stoked about, but can't currently mention since it's still in the process! (Jennifer Atilemile)

Yes, definitely. I am able to market to a wider audience across the world. My online store actually gets more orders from the US than anywhere else, and I believe that is because of social media. I currently don't use Snapchat. At the moment, I am a solo entrepreneur, so I have only so much time to dedicate to this part of the business. Therefore, I try to keep to more mainstream platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. (Alison Gordon)

Yes of course instagram has helped. The fact is that you can have amazing blog content but most people won't read it... they know about it though because of instagram. Snapchat... I used to have it and it was more behind the scenes, this is what's really happening, come inside my world. These days though I have abandoned it and moved to Instagram stories where my following is larger and more active. (Stephen Thomas)

...I did dress Lady Gaga because of instagram. Her stylist saw a dress by me and they contacted me after seeing it on instagram. I personally don't use snapchat for my business, I choose not to use it because I would want there to be consistent and interesting content and when you are a very small brand it is hard to have this daily view of what is going on that also doesn't cheapen the brand and make you look amateur.. (Matthew Gallagher)

Yes, I mean there is a fair amount of networking that comes through social media. I'm always kind of looking to see you know events that I'm going too or if there are people that I feel I should be following...we definitely follow a lot of stylists, other publicists, designers, kind of influencers from the Toronto market. We also do a lot

of work in the U.S. so we try to follow a lot of U.S. based Instagram influencers. I do think that most people now a days check you out on social media before contacting you. So we are pretty cognoscente that if a potential client were to be referred to us, that they would get a positive impression of us based on who we are on Instagram.
(Anya Nordstrom)

Based on these findings, Instagram has demonstrated its ability to help one progress in one's career in the fashion industry. Myles Sexton, for example, argues that he would not have even created Nord Magazine if Instagram did not exist. The purpose for why he created his magazine was to help bridge the Canadian fashion industry online with the rest of the world. Similarly, Canadian fashion designer Candace Daniela highlights how Instagram has not only helped her building connections, but it has also helped her launching collaborations with individuals she met directly through the social media application. Meanwhile, another Canadian fashion designer, Matthew Gallagher expressed his gratitude for Instagram because through this application he "got to dress Lady Gaga". Gallagher explains how Lady Gaga's stylist saw his work on his Instagram account and contacted him directly through the application. Finally, plus size model Jennifer Atilemile, highlighted that "as models we can get booked through Instagram", because it serves as an online portfolio.

Social media seems to be the primary platform that one searches for an individual before a meeting, to get an idea of an individual or a brand. While all interviewees had unique responses, the most common theme was that of, the benefits that Instagram provided for one's career. The majority of the interviewees expressed the benefits of using Instagram and how the application had helped them in their specific situation. Some of the examples include, but are not limited to, Instagram's ability to advertise one's brand, reach a wider audience at no cost, and make connections with other fashion industry people.

Lastly, a lot of interviewees felt that Snapchat was losing its purpose of use as a result of Instagram's current software also offering a 'live story' feature, and therefore not wanting to use both applications. They also expressed lack of time, as one of the main reasons they did not use Snapchat for their business model. While this study focused on providing the benefits of using both Instagram and Snapchat to help push forward one's career, these findings show that Snapchat did not help or benefit any interviewees. It should be noted that results are unique to these interviewees and the findings to the present study should not be generalized due to the diverse demographic profile of the interviewees.

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

Social media, specifically Instagram and Snapchat have influenced several industries, from entertainment to transportation. Today, it has significantly revolutionized the fashion industry in several ways. It has given some form of a 'democratic' platform for users to express themselves, although there are some limitations and room for improvement. It has also driven fashion designers to be more creative in terms of their runway presentations and designs. In addition, Instagram and Snapchat have significantly changed the advertising industry, and the way how brands and designers connect with their customers. Consequently, this is creating a two-way form of communication. Based on this study's findings, Instagram has demonstrated its power to positively influence one's career opportunities in terms of sales, exposure and international outreach. This research study demonstrates that one is able to benefit from social media, not only to improve profit and drive traffic to one's e-commerce website, but also to gain international exposure at no cost.

Future Research

This research study acknowledges many different ways the relationship between social media and the fashion industry could be developed. While this study aimed at providing as much results from both Instagram and Snapchat, the interviewees did not seem to fully realize Snapchat's potential and this may be directly related to their profession. Hence, future researchers are encouraged to focus on investigating the effects of expertise's profession and the use of Snapchat. As previously mentioned, it seems that public figures, bloggers and models seem to use Snapchat the most.

In an attempt to answer a large variety of research questions, some were too broad for the time frame of this research paper. Future researchers can focus on whether Instagram truly devalues the prestigious and hierarchal positions in the industry. Researchers should further examine whether one's wealth and social capital is essential to one's ability to succeed in the fashion industry. One can also take an empirical approach, and interview different industry experts. In addition, a study of fashion bloggers and designers, could be meaningful in order to find out whether their career opportunity or social media success is related to their initial wealth or family's financial support.

Furthermore, the idea of curating could be another research study. It would be interesting to see parallels drawn from both the idea of curating an installation at a museum versus the curation of one's social media profile, such as Instagram. Similarly, one could also research the thought process that goes into curating an Instagram profile and its effects on one's perception of a fashion brand. The study of the salient impact of colours, the use of space, the content, the captions, the actual posts (pictures, videos, boomerangs), and overall visual aesthetic could be an interesting research study.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: FASHION INDUSTRY INTERVIEWEES (in alphabetical order)

Figure F: Anya Nordstrom (2017)
Publicist and co-owner of Nordstrom Matte Public
Relations
Retrieved from: <http://nordstrommatte.com>



Figure G: Alison Gordon (2017)
Fashion illustrator for Alison Gordon Studio
Retrieved from: <http://www.agstudiodesigns.com/about/>



Figure H: Candace Daniela (2017)
Canadian Fashion designer
Retrieved from: <http://www.candacedaniela.com/about.html>



Figure I: Daniel Torjman (2017)
Canadian Fashion designer for 18 Waits
Retrieved from: <https://18waits.com/pages/about-us>



Figure J: Jennifer Atilemile (2017)
Australian plus size model for Bella Management
Retrieved from: <http://www.bellamanagement.com.au/female/curve/862701/jennifer-atilemile/>



Figure K: Jennifer Braun (2017)
Canadian freelance writer and editor for Picoum boutique
Canadian fashion correspondent for fashionnetwork.com
Retrieved from: <https://mlc.ryerson.ca/news/personnel/jennifer-braun-joins-mlc>



Figure L: Joao Paulo Guedes (2017)
Canadian Fashion designer
Retrieved from: <http://www.joaopauloguedes.com/about1/#about>



Figure M: Jet Set Justine (2017)
Canadian Fashion blogger
Retrieved from: <http://jetsetjustine.com>



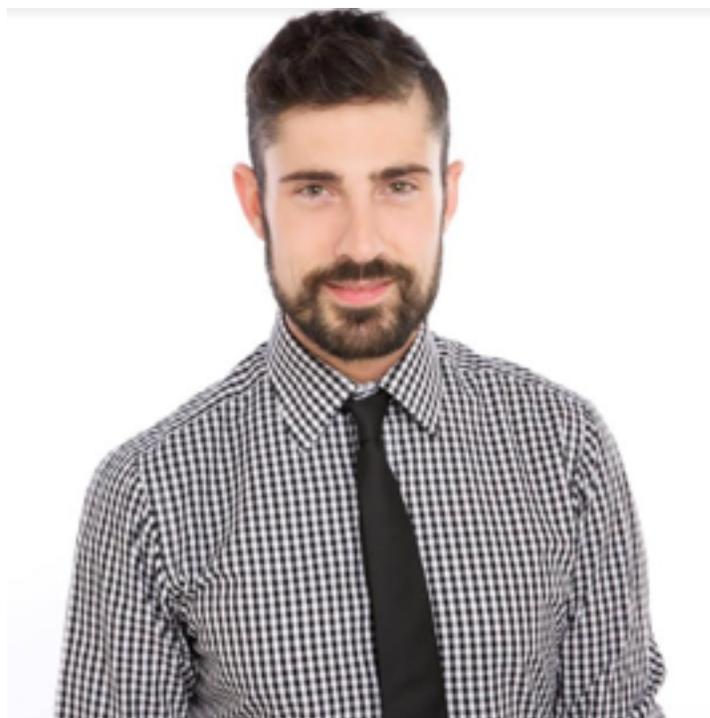
Figure N: Matthew Gallagher (2017)
Canadian Fashion designer
Retrieved from: <http://www.matthewgallagherstudios.com/new-page-1/>



Figure O: Myles Sexton (2017)
Model, Lancôme's National (Canadian) make-up
artist
Co-creator of Nord Magazine
Retrieved from: <https://www.instagram.com/my-lessexton/?hl=en>



Figure P: Stephen Thomas
Fashion blogger and reporter/creator for The
Huffington Post
Retrieved from: Personal communication through
email



APPENDIX B:REB LETTER OF APPROVAL



To: Deniz Arabi
Fashion

Re: REB 2016-309: The impact of Social Media: How Instagram and Snapchat are
Revolutionizing the Fashion Industry

Date: September 19, 2016

Dear Deniz Arabi,

The review of your protocol REB File REB 2016-309 is now complete. The project has been approved for a one year period. Please note that before proceeding with your project, compliance with other required University approvals/certifications, institutional requirements, or governmental authorizations may be required.

This approval may be extended after one year upon request. Please be advised that if the project is not renewed, approval will expire and no more research involving humans may take place. If this is a funded project, access to research funds may also be affected.

Please note that REB approval policies require that you adhere strictly to the protocol as last reviewed by the REB and that any modifications must be approved by the Board before they can be implemented. Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication from the Principal Investigator as to how, in the view of the Principal Investigator, these events affect the continuation of the protocol.

Finally, if research subjects are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research.

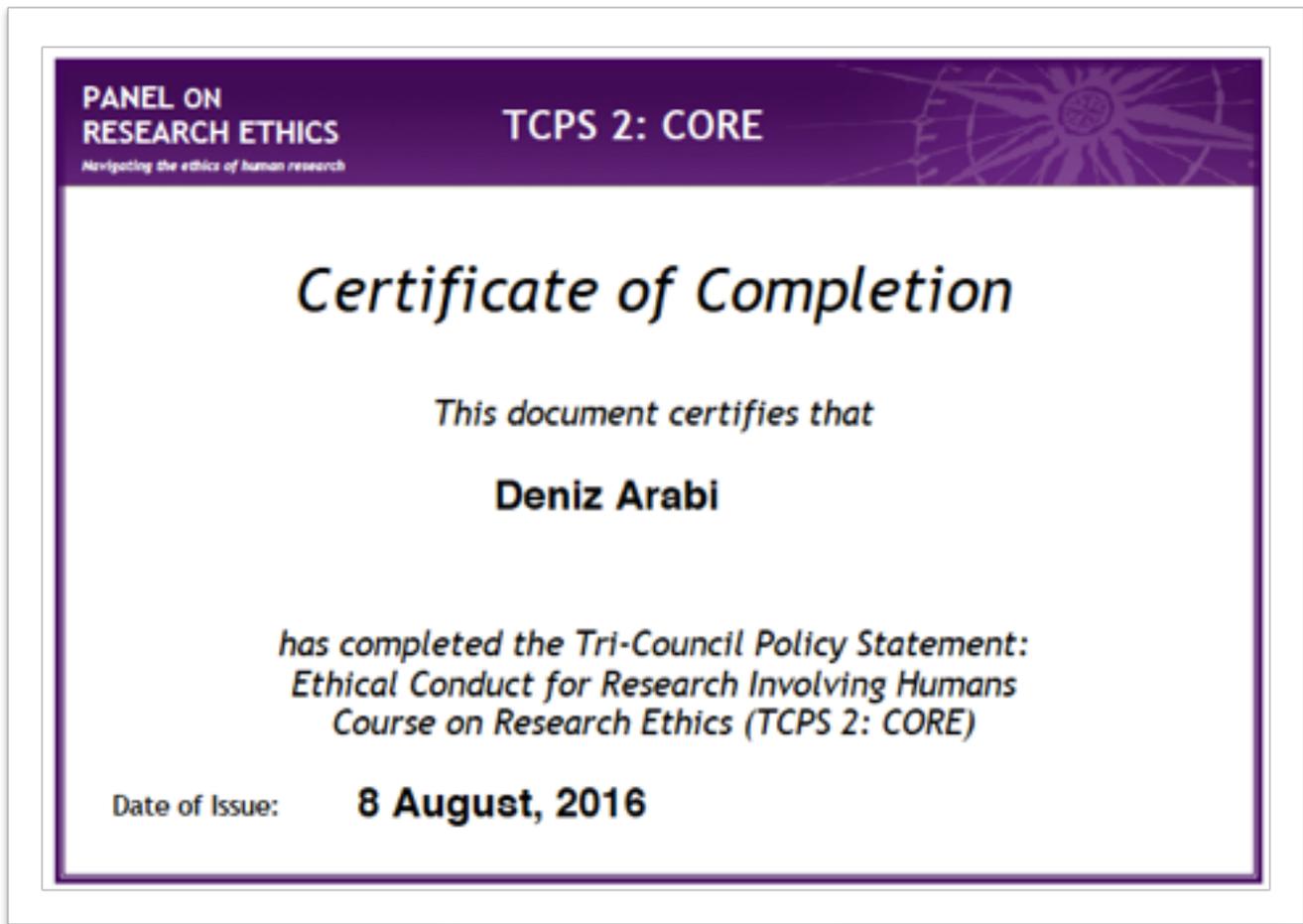
Please quote your REB file number (REB 2016-309) on future correspondence.

Congratulations and best of luck in conducting your research.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Lavallée".

Lynn Lavallée, Ph.D.
Chair, Research Ethics Board

The Following protocol attachments have been reviewed and approved.



APPENDIX D: SURVEY QUESTIONS

- Question 1:** Please identify your gender.....
- Question 2:** When do you find yourself using Snapchat the most?.....
- Question 3:** At what point during the day do you find yourself liking and browsing through Instagram?
- Question 4:** Is your Instagram open to the public or private?.....
- Question 5:** If your Instagram page is open, why do you leave it open?.....
- Question 6:** If you keep your Instagram private, why have you chosen so?.....
- Question 7:** How many times do you think you check your Instagram from the moment you wake up, until t.....
- Question 8:** Where do you usually find yourself spending the most time on Instagram?.....
- Question 9:** Where do you usually find the time to go on Snapchat?.....
- Question 10:** How many times do you think you go on Snapchat during a day?.....
- Question 11:** On a scale of 1 to 10, how much of what you post on Instagram is a reflection of who you.....
- Question 12:** How important is the content you post on your Instagram page?
- Question 13:** Do you let strangers add you on Snapchat? *strangers being people you have never met in
- Question 14:** Do you add strangers on your Snapchat? *Strangers can include celebrities, politicians,
- Question 15:** Who are your Snapchat 'friends'?.....
- Question 16:** Do you follow strangers on Instagram? *this includes fashion brands, people you have n.....
- Question 17:** Where do you find inspiration for your fashion taste and personal style?.....
- Question 18:** Do you shop for clothing and shoes based on whether they will look good in pictures, and.....
- Question 19:** Which social media platform do you find their ads most effective or persuading to 'buy t.....
- Question 20:** Which ads in the fashion industry do you find are currently most effective or persuasive.....
- Question 21:** Do you think sponsored or live events on Snapchat and Instagram (paid ads) are as effect.....
- Question 22:** Does Instagram influence your shopping practices or experience? (For e.g. searching
- Question 23:** Does knowing your Instagram picture or video will be seen by your followers, influence y.....
- Question 24:** Do you find that social 'influencers' and bloggers that are paid to talk about products
- Question 25:** Have you ever purchased a garment that you didn't like on you, knowing that you could la.....
- Question 26:** Do you feel like the content you are exposed to on the current version of Instagram's se.....

APPENDIX E: GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Could you tell me a little about yourself...(city of birth, current residence, education, career history etc.)
- Could you tell me a little about how and what made you get into this line of business?
- Do you use Snapchat? If so, do you use it for business purposes or personal? Could you please explain...
- Do you find that Instagram has opened up any career opportunities for you?
- If you use Instagram, would you say a lot of work goes into carefully curating your Instagram page? Please explain as much as you can in terms of detail to the thought process, time and effort that goes into it...
- Do you financially benefit from using social media?
- Can you tell me what are some of your favourite brands and where you currently find inspiration to dress? Do you find that social media influences the way you dress? Where do you find inspiration and ideas...
- In your opinion, do you feel like Instagram has replaced the fashion runway in any ways for people's 'go to place' to find inspiration for trends and ideas? What are your thoughts on this?
- Do you feel like Instagram is a 'democratic' platform to share, express and communicate ideas on content related to fashion? And, do you feel like Instagram is a good platform to interact with your followers, if so could you give an example of how you have responded to previous comments, views or likes...
- Do you feel like Instagram and Snapchat have changed the value of a fashion show invitation ?
- Based on your experience, have you witnessed fashion designers change the structure of their runways because of the presence of Instagram and Snapchat and everyone filming the show versus watching it live.
- In your opinion do you feel like the quality control has changed of garments? More specifically, do you think that the fabric, the colours, or the amount of detail has changed in runway garments because of designers knowing that their product will mostly be seen through a tablet or screen versus in person?

- Do you think that social media has revolutionized the fashion industry in any ways...please explain your answer.
 - Do you find that fashion companies are generating more sales through social media or their actual e-commerce website?
 - Do you think that Instagram is an effective platform to reach as many audience as possible in this current day? Or do you find there are better ways to reach your audience? Are there any other social media platforms that you use for your brand at this moment?
 - Which one (based on below 4 options) would you say has the most effective or persuasive ads related to the fashion industry? Please explain your choice...
- A) Media (TV and Radio)
 - B) Print (Magazines, Newspapers, Posters, Flyers etc)
 - C) Social Media Online (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Youtube etc)
 - D) Other (explain)

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