1991

Consumer perception and evaluation of fashion magazine advertisements

Patricia Anne Kimle
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd

Part of the Fashion Design Commons, Journalism Studies Commons, and the Public Relations and Advertising Commons

Recommended Citation
https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd/16734

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Retrospective Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Consumer perception and evaluation
of fashion magazine advertisements
by
Patricia Anne Kimle
A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
Major: Textiles and Clothing

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
1991
Copyright © Patricia Anne Kimle, 1991. All rights reserved.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ................................................................................ 1
A Holistic Approach in the Study of Advertising .............................. 2
Purpose ......................................................................................... 5
Objectives ..................................................................................... 6
Definitions ..................................................................................... 6

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ......................................................... 8
The Current Fashion Advertising Scene ....................................... 8
History of Fashion Illustration ..................................................... 8
History of Fashion Photography ................................................ 13
The Experience of Viewing Advertising ....................................... 17
Fashion Art Comparisons: Illustrations and Photographs ............. 19
Dominance of photography in current practice ............................ 19
Information clarity ....................................................................... 20
Realism versus abstraction ......................................................... 22
Meaning in fashion advertisements ............................................ 24

Textual Information in Fashion Advertising .................................. 28
Visual Perception of Advertisements .......................................... 29

Factors Affecting Aesthetic Preference ........................................ 30
Fashion involvement as a mediator of perception and preference ... 32

METHOD ...................................................................................... 35

Instruments .................................................................................. 35
Interview schedule ....................................................................... 35
# Table of Contents

**Questionnaire** ............................................. 36  
- Satisfaction with information .................................. 36  
- Personal information ........................................... 37  
- Fashion involvement measures .................................. 37  
- Stimuli ......................................................... 38  

**Participants** ............................................. 39  

**Procedure** ................................................ 40  
- Pretests ......................................................... 40  
- Conduct of interviews .......................................... 40  

**Data Analysis** ............................................ 42  
- Qualitative data analysis ....................................... 42  
- Comparison of responses to illustrations and photographs .......... 44  
- Analysis of ratings of satisfaction with information in ads .......... 45  

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION** .................................. 46  

**Participants** ............................................. 46  
- Demographic information ....................................... 46  
- Fashion information sources and amount spent on clothing ........ 47  

**Patterns of Perception and Response** ......................... 50  
- Global vs. specific responses to ads ................................ 50  

**Dimensions of the Viewing Experience** ......................... 53  
- Source of visual focus or attention ................................ 54  
- Style .......................................................... 55  
- Color .......................................................... 56  
- Style detail .................................................... 56  
- Accessories .................................................... 56  
- Designer name .................................................. 57  
- Store name ..................................................... 57  
- Setting of ad ................................................... 57  
- Layout/design of ad ............................................ 58  
- Verbal copy ..................................................... 58  
- Features of the model .......................................... 59
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Age of participants ......................................................... 47
Table 2. Top ten magazines reported by participants ......................... 48
Table 3. Participants reported annual expenditures for apparel ............... 50
Table 4. Frequency of responses identifying elements of visual focus in advertisements ..................................................... 55
Table 5. Evaluative criteria applied to the garments in fashion advertisements .......................................................... 63
Table 6. Fashion advertisement evaluative criteria .................................. 68
Table 7. Informational cues desired from fashion advertisements ............... 77
Table 8. Informational cues used by participants in estimating the price of garments in advertisements ............................................. 81
Table 9. Rationale for preferences for photographs or illustrations in advertisements .......................................................... 83
Table 10. Responses to color in fashion advertisements .................................. 85
Table 11. Responses to the setting in fashion advertisements ..................... 86
Table 12. Frequencies of visual interest responses to illustrations and photographs in fashion advertisements ................................. 93
Table 13. Frequency of visual interest responses by ad for significant responses 94
Table 14. Frequencies of evaluative responses to illustrations and photographs in fashion advertisements ......................................... 96
Table 15. Frequency of evaluative responses to illustrations and photographs by advertisement .................................................. 98
Table 16. Overall rank and mean satisfaction with information scores by item .. 102
Table 17. Analysis of variance results for satisfaction with information in ads 104

Table 18. Bonferroni groupings of ads according to mean scores on satisfaction with information 105

Table 19. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between satisfaction with information items and subject variables of age, education, fashion involvement scores and annual clothing expenditures 112
INTRODUCTION

In U. S. culture, mass media advertising is a major means of promoting new products. Mass media channels and personal channels are used to spread information about product innovations to potential adopters (Rogers, 1971). An important source of information about apparel innovations is the fashion magazine. Print ads and editorial information in fashion magazines and newspapers are the most common forms of marketer-dominated media used by females as a source of information about clothing and appearance innovations (Chowdhary, 1989).

Advertising of fashion products is highly competitive and expensive, so it is important for advertisers to recognize the effectiveness of various forms of information in ads. In 1990, the advertising rate for a full page black and white ad in Vogue magazine was $29,870. For a four-color full page ad the rate was $43,000 (Standard Rate and Data Service, 1990). The competitive arena for fashion advertisements is no longer limited to traditional fashion magazines such as Vogue, Harper’s Bazaar, Elle, and Mirabella. Fashion designers, manufacturers and retail store advertisers have recently begun to aim at a wider audience by placing their ads in magazines which are oriented toward more general 'lifestyle’ content such as Cosmopolitan, Self, Vanity Fair, and Town and Country (Pfaff, 1986). There is a great deal of diversity among the popular women’s magazines, and fashion information is connected with health, fitness, and other 'lifestyle’ content. According to Pfaff (1986), there is very little overlap among the readers of these magazines and advertisers are finding it important to spread their advertising coverage over the broad range of
publications on the market. Each of these magazines has a slightly different target consumer; these consumers differ in characteristics such as age, income, lifestyle and level of fashion interest. It is important for advertisers to identify how different consumers perceive and evaluate advertising and what types of information consumers want from advertising in order to tailor their advertising images to the different types of consumers. Research investigating experiences of viewers of advertising, including studies of the type of information consumers perceive and want to learn from fashion advertising, is limited; fashion advertising is deserving of further study.

A Holistic Approach in the Study of Advertising

Damhorst (1990) urged researchers investigating information communicated by dress to try to take a holistic perspective and to include in their study aspects of the situation in which perception occurs, the stimulus, and perceiver variables. This, she believes, will build a more comprehensive understanding and facilitate theory building. A holistic perspective in the study of fashion advertising perception should also include examination of the formal characteristics of the stimulus, the context or situation in which the stimulus occurs, individual characteristics of perceivers, and the influence of those personal variables on the perceptual process. In the present study, the formal characteristics of the stimuli, the visual and verbal information contained in ads was examined. The context of viewing was constant; all stimuli were advertisements found in fashion magazines. The perceiver variables measured were fashion involvement and demographic characteristics.
In previous work examining the formal aspects of ads, I have defined three main components in fashion print advertising (Kimle, 1990). They are the visual representation or form of 1) the product; 2) the space or setting surrounding that product; and 3) the verbal information which accompanies it. The visual representation of the product and setting is usually in the form of an artist’s illustration or a photograph of a model in the apparel product. The setting for the model ranges from blank space to a realistic indoor or outdoor scene. The verbal information can include store and designer information, a description of the garment, its price, and other text including an affective appeal. Examples of affective appeal include statements about the success of a style, or the character of the style or the potential wearer; affective appeals are often puns or contain a "play on words." All of these components contribute to the information that viewers of advertisements may perceive and process in the viewing experience. These components each have the potential to influence the viewer’s perception and evaluation of both the ad and the garment represented.

A dichotomy seems to exist in advertising research which views information-processing and aesthetic experiences as opposites. When studying the use of advertising by consumers, previous studies have tended to view the experience of advertisements only within the framework of a practical or functional information search and not as an aesthetic experience complete in itself. Many previous marketing and psychology studies have focused on information processing of either verbal or pictorial stimuli. These works generally associate verbal information with information-processing models of consumer behavior and propose that perception and evaluation of the product is a logical assessment of the functions
or features of a product that leads to a purchase decision. Visual information is more closely associated with aesthetic perception and gestalt processing effects (Holbrook & Moore, 1980). No research has been found which investigates viewers' holistic response to both verbal and visual information in actual ads.

An aim of this study was to approach the viewing of advertisements as a consumption experience and to identify and explore the various dimensions of that experience. Holbrook (1980) suggested that consumer behaviorists have achieved some success in understanding the consumption of low-involvement products, those for which the consumer has little personal stake and for which experiences are based upon logical processing of utilitarian or functional features of the product.

What has not been thoroughly investigated is the aesthetic experience of products which elicit more emotional, personal, or aesthetic responses from consumers. Holbrook (1987) defined consumer aesthetics as "the appreciative responses to works of art or to other products that give rise to experiences valued for their own sake beyond whatever extrinsic value they might possess as a means to some other end." However, one cannot study the aesthetic response in isolation; the nature of the aesthetic response must be considered in relation to the functional aspects of the object (Holbrook, 1980). This study attempted to explore both the consumers' response to functional, utilitarian, or practical factors as well as the aesthetic features of both the garments and the form of the ads themselves.
Purpose

The purposes of this study were to explore how fashion advertisements are perceived and evaluated by consumers during a viewing experience and to define the dimensions of that experience. The study investigated consumers' perception of and response to verbal and visual information in fashion advertising. A review of the history of fashion advertising employing photography and illustrated artwork, current trends in fashion advertising, research on advertising perception and information processing, and aesthetic preference theory provided the background for this study.

A combination of qualitative naturalistic inquiry methods and quantitative measures were used to support the research approach. Naturalistic inquiry is a holistic approach to understanding human behavior in context. The goal of this type of research is to explore and describe a particular phenomenon (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Very few studies have been done using naturalistic methods to investigate the visual perception of clothing stimuli. Qualitative data were collected from interviews with participants to explore their perceptions, their preferences and their experiences when viewing fashion ads. The study explored consumers' motives for viewing fashion advertisements, the range and types of elements of information in ads to which the viewers responded and the types of information viewers wanted to learn from the ads. Quantitative measures included two measures of subjects' fashion interest and involvement, a rating scale for subject's evaluation of ads on the basis of information content, and a limited amount of demographic information.

The set of ads viewed by participants in this study contained a variety in type and
amount of verbal and visual information. Both illustrations and photographs were used as stimuli, in color and black and white. The amounts and types of verbal information, such as the price of the garments, descriptions of fabric and fiber, and affective appeals, varied across ads.

Subjects were asked to describe their viewing experience, to evaluate the advertisements, and to evaluate the garments presented in the ads. A measure of the subjects' fashion interest was taken to compare the responses of individuals across a range of fashion involvement or interest.

Objectives

1. To explore the viewing experience of fashion advertising, the components used by viewers in the perception and evaluation of ads, and identify the information which is important, interesting or salient to viewers.

2. To compare viewers' responses to illustrations and photographs in fashion advertising.

3. To explore viewers' satisfaction with the visual and verbal information in ads and identify elements which viewers find deficient in ads.

4. To compare the responses to fashion advertising of individuals with different levels of involvement with fashion.

Definitions

Fashion Advertising: Advertising which promotes apparel products to consumers through magazines and newspapers. An ad generally includes the heading, the visual representation
of the garment, text copy, and the store logo.

**Fashion Illustration**: A composition which is based on an artist’s rendering, through various media, of apparel for advertising, editorial or decorative use.

**Fashion Photography**: A composition which is based on a photograph of apparel for advertising, editorial or decorative use.

**Visual Elements**: The elements of line, shape, form, color, and texture which are combined in the design of the advertising layout.

**Visual Representation**: The two-dimensional physical form of the illustration or photograph which represents the garment in the ad.

**Visual Analysis**: The process of observing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating visual material (DeLong, 1987).

**Fashion Involvement**: The perceived relevance of fashion products to individuals based on inherent needs, values and interests (Fairhurst, Good, & Gentry, 1989).
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Current Fashion Advertising Scene

There are two forms of fashion art which are used to visually represent garments in advertising, the fashion photograph and the fashion illustration or artist's rendering. Fashion illustration was the first form of garment representation used in fashion advertisements. The development of artistic representations of clothing and fashion figures in advertisements and in editorial copy coincided with the emergence of modern fashion magazines around the turn of the century (Packer, 1980). In 1932, the first photograph appeared on the cover of Vogue (Prior-Miller, 1981). Once introduced, photography gradually and steadily became the dominant form of media used for fashion advertising. In the years 1960 to present, there have been markedly few prominent illustrators and limited use of illustration either editorially or for advertising purposes (Danielson, 1986). Over the past two decades, advertisers have occasionally used illustration to convey an "image" for a collection but the use of illustration has been generally sporadic at best ("Illustration: The Look," 1984; DeNeve, 1976a; Peer & Whitman, 1975). Today, 90% of consumer and trade magazine apparel advertisements employ photography (Bride, 1990).

History of Fashion Illustration

For over 400 years, the "mode of the day" has been represented pictorially for the purpose of spreading information about current fashion among potential consumers. Fashion promotion by pictorial means began in the 16th Century and was known as
"Trachtenbücher," which is German and means "clothing book" (Ginsburg, 1980). Fashion plates were circulated as a means of promoting the fashion industries of Europe and communicating information to the patrons of these industries. The plates were printed with wood block or later copper plate engravings. Throughout the 17th, 18th, and 19th Centuries, the prints were circulated as sets or books, but the publications were very expensive and they reached a very limited, elite audience (Ginsburg, 1980).

Around the turn of the 20th Century, the first illustrator to have a major impact on fashion, Charles Dana Gibson, appeared with his archetype "Gibson Girl." While Gibson’s drawings of fashions appeared in publications other than fashion journals, he nonetheless had a major impact on the public and its view of fashion, as did some of the true fashion illustrators who came after him (Danielson, 1989).

In 1912, La Gazette du Bon Ton, a French publication appeared which was the first true fashion magazine to reach a wider audience (Ginsburg, 1980). Its pages were filled with Art Nouveau styled fashions. These illustrations were produced by staff artists including Paul Iribe and Georges Lepape, who made their debuts in the fashion world in 1908 and 1911, respectively, illustrating fashion books for Paul Poiret (Barnes, 1988). La Gazette du Bon Ton was purchased in 1925 by Condé Nast, the publisher of the American magazine Vogue. Condé Nast later introduced French Vogue, and from then on has been the acknowledged leader in the employment and patronage of almost all of the major fashion illustrators (Barnes, 1988; Packer, 1983). Harper’s Bazaar also employed illustrators and retained Erte on an exclusive contract until the late 1930s (Ginsburg, 1980).
The golden age of fashion illustration spans three decades, ending in 1939 (Barnes, 1988). During this time, the styles of the illustrations mirrored the Art Nouveau movement of the 1910s, and the Art Deco movement of the 1920s. Other influences which were assimilated in the graphic styles of illustration included Cubism, Constructivism, the Bauhaus and De Stijl, although they took longer to impact the fashion pages (Packer, 1983). Some of the most notable early artists were George Plank, Helen Dryden, Douglas Pollard, Benito, and of course, Erte.

The 1930s saw a new turn toward Romanticism, and the fashion illustrations of the time became softer, more fluid and dreamy, reflecting the influences of Impressionism (Packer, 1983). The acknowledged masters of this style were Carl Erickson (known professionally as Eric), and René Bouët-Willaumez (RBW) who were competitors at Vogue (Packer, 1989a; Packer, 1989b). Other notable artists of this time were René Bouché, René Gruau, Marcel Vertés and Christian Berard.

Whereas it is generally acknowledged that the age of fashion illustration is past, authors differ about the exact date of the end of the age. Ginsburg (1980) claims the end of the age to be 1939, coinciding with the post-WW2 prominence that was achieved by the artist-photographers. Barnes (1988), Danielson (1989), and Packer (1989a; 1989b) extend their closing dates to the 1960s in deference to the vestige careers of Eric, RBW, and Bouché. RBW left Vogue in 1954. Eric and Bouché each continued working until their deaths in 1958 and 1963, respectively, but the quantity of illustrated work (their’s or that of other illustrators) published either in editorial or advertising format diminished throughout
the 1940s and 1950s (Packer, 1989a; Packer, 1989b).

Very few illustrators bridge the span of 1960 to the present. René Gruau, a contemporary of Eric and Bouché, remained active at an international level.

Other artists of note whose careers spanned the 80s include Women’s Wear Daily artists Kenneth Paul Block and Steven Stipelman, the ultra-realist George Stavrinos, Fred Greenhill for Lord & Taylor, and the free-wheeling Joseph Eula and Mats Gustavson. The most significant artist of this time span, however, is--or more accurately--was Antonio Lopez. (Danielson, 1990)

Known simply as "Antonio," he was the only fashion artist to be frequently featured in either editorial space or advertising in fashion magazines. His career was brilliant, his extraordinary talents (and perhaps his sole competitive edge against the camera) lay in his ability and penchant for changing his signature style frequently. His work spans many styles including Op Art, Pop Art and Photo-realism (Peterson, 1976).

The use of illustration by any other artists during this period is highly sporadic. A few retail chains have maintained staff artists, some whom have achieved some amount of acclaim. One such retail chain was Lord & Taylor who retained Dorothy Hood on staff for many years. Hood’s style was distinctly commercial; her emphasis was an accurate portrayal of the merchandise. After her death, Fred Greenhill continued the Lord & Taylor look. With these noted exceptions, most illustrators made their way working in veritable anonymity for stores and publications which used illustration only occasionally (Danielson, 1986).

On the international scene, there seems to be an interest since the late 1980s in a revival of fashion illustration. Publications are emerging which are either exclusively devoted to use of illustration, or at least equally disposed towards illustration and
photography, including *La Mode en Peinture*, a French magazine, and the Italian version of *Vanity* (Drake, 1987). These magazines may be interested in cashing in on the artistic qualities associated with illustration.

Fashion illustration places a major emphasis on the creation of mood or an expressive quality in the form. The talent of an illustrator lies in his ability to interpret the intent of the fashion designer and offer information about the design in an expressive manner which is designed to evoke an emotional response (Bride, 1990). The illustrator wants to communicate with the viewer, but the final illustration leaves room for the viewer to interpret the form and respond to it. Expression is the indication of feeling or emotion; expressive works carry meaning for individual viewers to experience. In eliciting a response from the viewer, the illustrator is playing on emotional or aesthetic features in his or her craft.

Fashion illustration's history is intimately linked with the artistic styles of the day. Illustrated works, being the product of an artist's hand are often viewed as or referred to as art as well as a tool for the communication of information. DeNeve (1976a) stated:

> Although not in the true spirit of documentary, it has served as a kind of journalism, notes on the passing of time and style in civilization. Beyond the obvious record of costume, many drawings reflect the art movements popular at the time, with Cubism and Pop Art being notable influences. (p.23)

This affinity provides a character through which an illustration can be instantly identified with its own era. "Designed only to catch the fleeting moment, these intensely personal images point the mood [sic] and spirit today with a poignancy which photographs could never match" (Drake, 1987, p.16).
History of Fashion Photography

Although photographic processes were developed over 160 years ago, they were not employed in advertising imagery until the 1880s or 1890s (Hall-Duncan, 1979). Initially, photographs closely mimicked the illustrative styles which were common in ads using the drawn image. Photographs were highly product oriented; their goal was purely to 'illustrate' the features and characteristics of a product, (Atkinson, 1981). Stapely and Sharpe (1937) note that the photographer of this early period was "at pains to conceal as much as possible the character of his medium and endeavored to make his work resemble that of the painter" (cited in Atkinson, 1981, p. 300). The photographs were posed according to the conventions of the fashion plates and were often heavily retouched to look as much like a fashion plate as possible (Hall-Duncan, 1979).

Fashion was the first arena in which the advertising photograph’s goal became the creation of 'appeal' for the product, rather than merely illustrating the product. In 1914, Vogue began regularly featuring the work of Baron Adolphe (Gayne) DeMeyer, the first acknowledged fashion photographer. DeMeyer adopted a Pictorialist style in which his concern was with the composition and layout of the photo rather than strict concern with demonstration of the features of the garment. He photographed society women in their own elegant clothes; "his concern was far from selling garments, [it was] with promoting fashion and 'style' and a dedication to showing elegance and beauty in all his pictures" (Atkinson, 1981, p. 301). Throughout the 20s and 30s, photographers followed DeMeyer's lead and the emerging look of fashion photographs mirrored the conventions established by the Art
Deco movement (Takano, 1988).

After DeMeyer, the next photographer who had a major influence on advertising photography and who also happened to work often in the fashion field was Edward Steichen. Steichen’s Modernist approach, due to emphasis on clean geometric lines and strong focus, was again much more product oriented (Hall-Duncan, 1979). Steichen wrote of his work in the 1930s at Vogue:

My first contribution to the fashion photograph was to make it as real as possible. I felt that a woman, when she looked at a picture of a gown, should be able to form a very good idea of how that gown was put together and what it looked like... I felt that, when a great dressmaker like Vionnet created a gown, it was entitled to a presentation as dignified as the gown itself and I selected my models with that in view. (Atkinson, 1981, p. 301)

This comparison of DeMeyer and Steichen demonstrates opposing styles and emphases among photographers in their final products. DeMeyer’s emphasis was concern with creating strong visual compositions which were artistic or aesthetically pleasing, whereas Steichen was concerned about being true to the facts and details about the garment; his intent was to create photos which were informative and straightforward. In most fashion photos, the intent of the photographer is to create an image which combines some elements of both styles. Depending upon the needs or wishes of the client, photographers try to combine enough clarity and information with an aesthetically pleasing image.

Upon the heels of Steichen came photographers whose work continued to be innovative while following the movements and experiments in art and photography in general. Photographers to note and their styles include George Hoyningen-Huene, who
brought to his compositions a strong architectural flavor and the use of multiple figures; Alfred Stieglitz and Realism; Man Ray, known for Surrealist compositions; and Cecil Beaton who brought the cinematic innovations of Hollywood to the fashion photo, Scavullo and Norman Parkinson (Hall-Duncan, 1979). Underlying the stylistic innovations over this time period is the fact that photographs for ads became more persuasive, using suggestive appeals and subtle innuendo. In 1939, W. G. Briggs made no bones about the manipulative effort behind the advertisement:

[The photographer] must learn to play upon mankind's known strengths and frailties. ... Emotionalism is his bow - his strings are human sympathies, loves and fears; parental and sexual love; the major fears of old age, illness and destitution; the many vanities inherent in keeping up appearances; the underlying state of snobbishness from which few men are free; the all-pervading desire for possession. (cited in Atkinson, 1981)

Along with this manipulative approach, layout became simpler in the 40s and 50s and photographs were taken in locations which were relevant to the clothing, creating a look of chic sophistication (Takano, 1988). As differentiation among fashion products and price ranges developed, Briggs advised the photographer that:

The lower the price of the garment, the more, as a general rule, does the [photographer] have to concentrate on the texture and quality of the material. This is understandable as with the expensive garment the quality of the material is taken for granted and is merely a side issue - the main point being exclusiveness of design, and an elusive 'something' in the cut and air; for garments such as these the photographer must concentrate entirely on atmosphere - the photograph being also a portrait is quite secondary. (cited in Atkinson, 1981)

These two points which Briggs makes about advertisements, the manipulative effort of the ad and the character of the visual image of the garment in relation to its cost, are elements
which may still exist in today’s fashion advertising (see also pp. 26-27).

In the later 1950s advertising began targeting younger and more middle income consumers. Images took on new, direct 'fast-living' styles (Atkinson, 1981). Models no longer had the upper class look about them; rather, an everyday look in an ultra-modern environment became important. In the 1960s, as photography came into its almost total eclipse of illustration, ads became very individualistic; the main goal was to create an outrageous image. Along with taking their cues from Pop Art and Op Art, photographers continued to simplify their designs in terms of their layout, line and form (Atkinson, 1981).

The 1970s seem to have been a rather nondescript decade in fashion photography. Trends of the 60s continued with less emphasis and less originality. The decade seemed to be a dampened extension of the dynamic trends of the 60s (Atkinson, 1981). Into the 1980s, advertising again turned to the use of more subtlety in creating appeals. Fashion advertising in the 80s turned to assertive and sensual images (Takano, 1988).

Atkinson (1981) credits David Bailey, a photographer working during the 60s onward, with the introduction of sex into fashion photography. DeNeve, (1976b) in reviewing the history of the fashion photography, states that "sex in photography is nothing new, sex was always at least subliminal in fashion photos" (p. 24). Perhaps the images in the 1960s of sexuality in fashion photographs became more obvious or acceptable due to the societal changes associated with the sexual revolution of the late 1960s and early 70s.

The evolution of fashion photography throughout its brief history demonstrates both the influences of advances in the technology of the photographic process, and the creative
photographers who constantly strove to test and expand the limits of technical possibility and the social constraints of their times. Discovery and change are the keys to expansion of both the technical and social limits of the times. As Takano (1988) stated:

Taking a sensual trip through an almost century long history of fashion photography, one becomes aware that changes in women’s images in advanced world [sic] became crystallized in the encounter with the ideologies of the establishment and creative desire of artists. (p. 80)

The Experience of Viewing Advertising

Although the discipline of aesthetics began as the philosophy of art or beauty, 20th Century philosophers are often more concerned with aesthetic experiences rather than art objects. Dewey (1934) sought to disconnect the view of aesthetic experience from art and to integrate the aesthetic with potentially any experience in everyday life. Following Dewey’s lead, aestheticians explore the aesthetic experience not only in specific arts, but also in the way we live, learn, and interact with each other and the world around us (Kupfer, 1983). Based on this approach to the aesthetic experience in our everyday lives, consumer behavior researchers have begun to examine the aesthetic aspects of products in consumer experiences. This view focuses on the symbolic, hedonic, and aesthetic nature of consumption (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Hedonic consumption includes experiences with a product which are more subjective; hedonic facets of consumption are the multisensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of experience (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). The experiential approach gives insight into consumer behaviors in the realm of the aesthetic nature or use of products, multisensory aspects of products, feelings, and the pursuit of fun
and enjoyment through the use of products (Holbrook, et al., 1982). This approach considers the aesthetic nature or features of the product intrinsically valued, regardless of its logical fulfillment of other purposes.

The more traditional approach to marketing and consumer behavior theory is based on an information-processing model in which the consumer uses logic to solve problems and make purchasing decisions; consumers use factual information about the properties and nature of the product to make choices about products. In the information processing model, the emotive or affective aspects have been considered only as the preference factor of consumer choice. This traditional approach focuses on consumers’ marketplace behavior and purchase decision activities. The affective preference or liking for a product is considered as only one of any number of factors leading to a purchase decision; it is not viewed as the outcome of a product experience. Consideration of both the traditional and experimental approaches can yield a better understanding of consumer behavior.

Fashion advertising, as a visual medium and as part of some consumers’ experiences, has the potential to arouse an aesthetic response. A perceptual process occurs which can lead to a consumer seeking out a product, daydreaming about a product, or appreciating the aesthetic qualities of the product. Fashion advertising can be examined as aesthetic or hedonic consumption and/or an information source in a consumer choice process. In the following section, I will compare the two major forms of fashion ads and explore the possibilities for practical/functional experiences and aesthetic experiences in viewing advertising.
Dominance of photography in current practice

Danielson (1986) identified explanations for the predominance in use of photography over illustration in fashion editorial art. More than 50 of over 100 artists and illustrators were asked about their views of trends in fashion art. Their replies were often applicable to fashion advertising as well as the editorial use of art in fashion magazines. Some of the artists Danielson surveyed suggested that the dominance of photography is due to the following factors: a lack of imagination to interpret artistic or stylized representations of fashions on the part of the consuming public and advertising art directors; the immediacy or lack of interpretation necessary in the perception of the photographic image; the range of choices allowed by photography; the existence of a "camera age" in society, where photographs are part of our everyday lives; and technical, practical, and financial considerations in advertising production (Danielson, 1986).

The practical and financial advantages of photography are disputed by Peer and Whitman (1975) who state that illustration is easier and cheaper to use in an ad. In an informal study of the issues involved in the use of illustration and photography and the production of advertising, I contacted advertising directors or managers and art directors (ADs) at 44 of the major department stores across the United States. Twelve of the 18 ADs who responded felt that illustration would be cheaper to use than photography. Some of these advertisers feel however, that they must use photos because 1) the photo is thought to be more effective and more easily interpreted by the consumer and 2) since everyone is using
photography, they must do so also to remain competitive. Perhaps the ease of interpretation of the photographic image is also related to the advertisers' need to communicate basic information about the physical form of the product, leading to a viewing experience focused on the physical properties of the garments in the ad.

Fashion advertising in general has been criticized for several reasons. Each of these criticisms, whether they apply to illustrations or photographs or both, fall into broader categories such as 1) questions about the clarity of the information contained in ads and consumer responses to that information; 2) the degree of realism or abstraction employed by illustrators and photographers and its effect on viewers; and 3) the meanings of the images perceived in advertisements.

Information clarity

Both illustration and photography have been criticized because they have become stylized to the point where they can convey little information about actual garments; advertisers are more concerned with presenting a "mood" or "image". This has been a recurrent complaint of manufacturers and designers who feel that their garments are not being given enough attention or emphasis in recent fashion art (DeNeve, 1976a). There are however, designers who have taken the opposite view, feeling that they have devoted fans and customers and enough name recognition to allow them to use advertising which is more than mere documentation ("Illustration: The Look," 1984). In this case, the designers were turning to illustrated work to "convey the spirit of the clothing, and an outfit's line,
dimension and personality". Having an established reputation, these designers may have been trying to elicit an aesthetic response in the viewers and were less concerned about providing detailed information.

Most art directors who responded to my informal survey feel that the consumer wants to see a detailed photograph in advertisements. They feel that the consumer responds to the immediacy of the photograph and that they have more trust in the photograph as a true reflection of the real garment (L. Algueseva, Art Director, Younkers, Inc., personal communication; March, 1990). This supports the feeling that advertising directors "only believe in the implacable evidence of sales research and the idiom that the camera, of course, never lies" (Packer, 1989a).

From the perspective of visual perception, it can be argued that the advantage of clarity in the presentation of the garment is not always on the side of the photo. Some specific fabrics, such as those with matte textures and dark colors, do not lend themselves to the presentation of detailed information in photographs. Garments of these fabrics appear in photos as flat blocks of color with no interior line or detail.

Lighting and setting can influence the clarity of and amount of garment detail which appears in ads. By using extreme lighting and unique placement of or activity by the models, photographers can achieve a more romantic or dramatic image in their ads. "Their settings range from the real and the filmily [sic] romantic to the everyday, but with the twist that the models are usually engaged in doing or feeling something, which could seem to overshadow the garments or products advertised" ("Fashion: Romance," 1981, p. 23).
Realism versus abstraction

Both illustration and photography can be used in a realistic or an abstract manner, depending on the talent and the inclination of the artist or the photographer. The main task of the illustrator is to abstract from reality; they isolate and emphasize the main elements or feeling of the garment. Bride (1990) classified retail promotional illustrations (which includes advertisements) into three different styles. The first is stylized-realism, an approach which is highly detailed, depicting the features of the model and the garment very accurately and mimicking the look of the photograph. George Stavrinos is well known for popularizing this style. The second style is the edited-sketch. This is a loose, flowing, romantic style which is closely related to the Impressionistic art style. The figures in this style are elongated and less detailed due to the use of ink or color wash techniques. Two artists known for their edited-sketch styles are Kenneth Paul Block and Steven Stipelman. The third style is graphic simplification. Figures in this style are very two dimensional, linear, and give the impression of solid mass and color. The proportions of the figures are nearer to realistic proportions, but scale relationships are not maintained between multiple figures in the layouts. These three styles of illustration range between highly naturalistic to highly abstract presentation of detail and figure proportion.

Photographs in fashion advertising are often considered realistic because the photographic process reproduces the visual image of real human models. Our culture seems to maintain a naive view that photography produces a neutral, uninflected and unmanipulated image (Coleman, 1989). The photograph offers the expression of reality, and that expression
is just as compelling as reality itself (Ewen, 1988). It is viewed as the reflection of reality because it has roots in a real "captured" moment in time from which it is abstracted. The artist is perceived to have more options to abstract from reality because the image exists in the artist's mind and his medium is the pencil. In truth, the photograph also reflects the biases of the photographer's intention and the capabilities and limitations of the photographic process (Coleman, 1989). The photographic image can be manipulated according to the photographer's talents and inclinations just as the drawn image. As Ewen (1988) points out:

The photographs that serve as the centerpiece of style are shot under carefully planned conditions. Photographers follow the detailed instructions of an art director. The photograph is then passed on to the touch-up artist, who will...do whatever is necessary to create the effect of immaculate conception. (p. 87)

Therefore, one cannot simply equate photography with realism and illustration with abstraction.

Illustrations are usually considered art by viewers, although some feel that illustrations are slighted within the art community due to their alliance with commercial art (Packer, 1989a). Photography suffers from the same discrimination (Wollen, 1989). Visual forms (both photography and illustration) can be considered or appreciated as art if we view them as having the power to induce aesthetic experience as well as to be informative (Wollen, 1989).

These two points that I have made here are only philosophical, they have had no empirical testing. I do not claim that an individual viewing an ad acknowledges an equality between illustrations and photographs in terms of their potential to be realistic or abstract;
art or information. Indeed, the viewer may be operating on naive assumptions about realism and abstraction in photography and illustration and consider illustration more artistic than photography. This is one of the points examined in the data analysis. I have attempted to determine the assumptions made by consumers about the visual forms of illustration and photography when they experience advertising.

**Meaning in fashion advertisements**

Advertising functions not only as a medium for the communication of information, "guiding the perception process so that the viewer sees a product in a given, predictable way" (White, 1959), but also as a medium for the communication of cultural meaning (McCracken, 1986). Some of the ways in which audiences respond to advertising include relating elements of the advertisement to their backgrounds and experiences, distorting information, making attributions, and both deriving meaning from and ascribing meaning to advertisements (Friedmann & Zimmer, 1988). The interpreted meanings can be part of both aesthetic and functional experiences. Holbrook (1987) defined the aesthetic component as an experience of a product valued intrinsically. Interpretations of the social meanings of products, such as status, prestige, or group membership, are therefore non-aesthetic experiences because the product functions as a means to some end. An example of an aesthetic experience intrinsic to the meaning of a fashion ad is the appreciation of the expressive qualities of the composition or the color of the image strictly as a visual form.

The nature of visual communication does not allow meanings conveyed to be highly
specific: the image is open to as many possible interpretations as there are viewers. Although the advertiser wants to communicate a specific meaning, the interpretation by each viewer is never exactly the same but only (hopefully) approximate (Mick & Politi, 1989). In this respect then, there are a host of potential meanings which are available to viewers of advertisements, and only shared group or cultural meanings can be explored on a general level.

The sources of information in fashion advertising are the three components of the ad identified earlier: the presentation of the garment, the situation in which the model appears, and the visual representation of the form. All of the visual elements of a composition have an impact on the mood of the total composition and affect the perception and interpretation of the whole visual image (Baker, 1961). In other words, an interaction occurs in the perceptual process between the viewer and the form; the interpretation by the viewer is based on the actual information in the representation of the garment and the meanings, both cultural and aesthetic, which are implied in the form. As information is perceived by the viewer, it is encoded and meanings are also interpreted. Some meanings which might be salient for individuals viewing fashion advertising include the fashionability, functionality, and practicality of the garment (DeLong, 1987). The meanings we associate with objects affect our evaluation of those objects (Mandler, 1982). Therefore, the meanings which consumers attach to ads may influence their evaluation of those ads. For example, a garment interpreted as impractical may be evaluated negatively.

As a genre, fashion ads generally represent the apparel in the ad on the figure of a
person (real or drawn). This practice provides at least three potential sources of meaning for the viewer: that of the media used, identification with the model, and the cultural ideal portrayed by the clothed model. According to McLuhan (1964), there is a meaning inherent in every media irrespective of the content of that media. Following this thesis, the meanings inherent in photographs and illustrations are different because their images are different and the media used to produce those images are different. The presentation style of the ad, either illustrated or photographic may have different associated meanings for viewers. A few ADs commented that they felt the photograph reinforced a fashionable image and that photographs seemed more up-to-date. On the other hand, some commented that they felt that illustration, sometimes associated with designers' sketches, was considered to indicate high-priced fashion. This meaning in turn can elicit positive or negative evaluations depending on the individual’s perspective.

Questions of the consumer's ability to identify with the image of the model have been a concern for advertisers (L. Algueseva, personal communication, March, 1990). According to the experiential view, one’s association with a product, and imagining or fantasizing about ownership and use of the product are important in stimulating consumption behavior (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). A viewer of an illustration may feel more able to imagine herself in the garment because the drawn image has a less concrete identity than a model in a photograph. Conversely, illustrations may be too abstract for some consumers and limit their ability to identify with the model or the ad. These consumers may need concreteness to know what the garment would look like on a real human body even though they may not
have the same figure as the model.

Advertising images use cultural ideals to make consumers associate the product with who or what they want to be (Belk & Pollay, 1985). The use of models with beautiful figures and faces in photography presents an ideal of feminine beauty; the apparel product is shown in a "perfect" or idealized position. This may negatively affect the consumer when she compares herself to that "perfect" image and feels inadequate (Hart, 1985). In this manner, fashion advertising can produce painful or alienating experiences. Fashion contributes to American women's unhealthy pursuit of attractiveness, physical obsession with thinness, and terror of aging (Mitchell, 1991).

Fashion photography is also criticized because sexism, racism, and "looksism," are sometimes apparent in the content and symbolism of the perfect, beautiful white model or the setting around her (Hart, 1985). Freitas and Damhorst (1991) examined fashion magazine ads for images of minority women and found that women of color were greatly underrepresented, and when shown, the image was often stereotypical. Consumers who are sensitive to or recognize these connotations may be alienated by the advertisement. Sexist images and images of feminine beauty are viewed by some as directly conflicting with values of feminism and undermining women's achievements during the 20th Century (Mitchell, 1991). A negative assessment of fashion's influence on the images of women is not new. It has been the basis of the women's movement efforts for fashion change and dress reform since the 19th Century.
Roles, like fashions, change continually. There is an ongoing effort to maintain harmony between roles and appearance. People generally agree that the attire of a man or woman should somehow reflect, or at least not contradict, the meaning of being a man or a woman. A good deal of conflict over fashion is the result of the clash between those who want to change the meaning and those who want to maintain the existing meaning. (Lauer & Lauer, 1981, p.126)

Models in fashion illustrations may not have concrete identities like real models and the settings of illustrations are generally very simple or abstract spaces with few situational cues. Therefore, these issues of racism and sexism may be of less concern.

**Textual Information in Fashion Advertising**

Fashion advertising in *Vogue* magazine has become less verbally descriptive and more dependent on information conveyed in the visual image alone over the past 20 years (Kimle, 1990). Verbal copy, which includes verbal text describing the garment fabrications, design features, sizes and price, has decreased in use. Ads are therefore relying on the visual representation of the garment and the surrounding information to convey the necessary information to persuade the consumer to seek out the garment. For consumers who are interested in the physical form, structure, and price of the fashion, this trend toward the inclusion of less verbal information may cause more uncertainty in viewing and interpreting illustrations and photographs in ads. No literature has been found which discusses the effects of this trend on the consumer when viewing fashion advertising.
Visual Perception of Advertisements

The ad viewing experience, the perceptual process and resultant intellectual, functional or aesthetic experiences begin with the sensory perception of the ad. Viewers take in information through visual perception of the elements of the garment and the ad. The visual representation or form of the garment can be broken into its parts or visual elements including line, shape, form, color, texture, and content (DeLong, 1987). Viewers of advertising must observe information about the visual elements of the garment and analyze that information in order to understand the form of the garment. This process is largely unconscious.

DeLong and Larntz (1980; DeLong, 1978) studied the visual perception of clothing using empirical methods, including a semantic differential based on bi-polar descriptive terms. DeLong (1987) has developed and refined a system and language for the visual analysis of dress. With training in DeLong’s system of visual analysis, individuals become conscious of the process of visual analysis and can then objectively respond to clothing based on the properties of the form as it is perceived within its environment.

Even though DeLong (1987) encourages analysis of the relationship of the form to its surrounding space, the stimuli included in many studies of clothing perception have been presented to respondents with few or no surrounding cues, i.e., isolated on plain or blank backgrounds. A study using empirical methods compared the visual perception and evaluation of garments represented in photographs and line drawings (Whisney, Winakor & Wolins, 1979). However, this study also used stimuli of isolated garments and did not
include the types of settings and verbal information usually included in advertisements. Results from studies of clothing perception using isolated stimuli may not be directly generalizable to advertisements because of the lack of advertising context, including a setting, the brand or store name, and copy, in the presentation of the stimuli.

**Factors Affecting Aesthetic Preference**

Aesthetic preferences are the emotive, subjective, or affective responses to sensory stimuli. Preferences are usually expressed in terms of like and dislike, or as ratings of value or goodness. In fashion advertising, preference judgements can be made on the basis of the garment promoted in the ad or the visual form and content of the ad itself. In either case, the following discussion may be applied.

Studies in experimental or empirical aesthetics frequently focus on the factors leading to preferences in various forms of the arts. These studies can be divided into two groups (which may not be mutually exclusive); one body of literature examines preferences based on characteristics of the stimuli while the other examines characteristics of the perceiver.

The formal composition of visual elements influences viewers’ aesthetic preferences for those forms. The degree of complexity or order in composition was the main effect identified in a study of subjects’ preferences for contemporary abstract art (McWhinnie, 1987). In this study, subjects rejected absolute complexity in favor of simplicity and order. Although the subjects in this study were rating abstract art and not advertisements, the findings might be applied to fashion advertisements to a limited degree, perhaps predicting
that ads with simple layouts may be preferred over ads with more complex layouts.

In examining the evolutionary nature of stylistic changes in product design, Coates (1979) proposed a theory of "concinnity." Concinnity is the degree to which a new product design is similar to an old or familiar product. The degree of difference between the new and old designs are termed the "aesthetic impact." The aesthetic impact must be great enough to create an arousal state, but not too great as to cause rejection before the aesthetic impact is absorbed or appreciated. DeLong, Minshall, and Larntz (1986) applied this concept to fashion products and termed it "schema theory." Schemas used by consumers may be influenced by the individual's level of familiarity with fashion products (see p. 32).

In a review of empirical studies of aesthetic preferences, Yaffe (1972) discussed many of the characteristics of the perceiver which have been found to influence preferences. These characteristics include aspects of personality, social attitudes, cultural differences, and the level of formal training in art. Although personality is a difficult concept to measure or study, findings indicate that a correlation exists between subjects' scores on the Introversion-Extroversion dimension of personality measures and the degree of complexity which is preferred. A similar relationship has been found between some social attitudes such as political liberalism and conservatism. These studies find introverted and conservative personality traits to correlate highly with preferences for less complex designs.
Fashion involvement as a mediator of perception and preference

Personal involvement with fashion is the degree to which an individual is concerned with fashion and apparel in her personal life. An individual’s personal involvement with fashion may affect her perception and evaluation of ads. Persons with higher personal involvement may actively seek fashion information in order to make purchase decisions or simply for personal satisfaction and leisure activity (Fairhurst, Good, & Gentry, 1989). This may be carried out by frequent use of fashion magazines and newspaper fashion sections which may expose the individual to editorial and advertising material about fashion. Frequent exposure may lead to a higher level of familiarity with fashion and advertising. Individuals personally involved and familiar with fashion may need less information to evaluate garments in ads than would someone who is less involved and familiar with fashion.

The more familiar an individual is with fashion, the more their evaluations or personal taste may be influenced by the perceived fashionability of the garment. In a study of viewer response to architecture styles, Purcell (1984) found correlations among personal interest, familiarity, ratings of attractiveness, and preference for architectural styles. These findings suggest that familiarity with a form (such as architecture or garments) and knowledge of accepted standards of value affect an individual’s judgments of attractiveness and preference.

Consumers’ familiarity with fashion may also affect their cognitive processing of advertising information. Familiarity with a type of object is the frequency of prior encounters with a class of events or items. It is intricately involved with judgments of value (Mandler, 1982). A person who is familiar with fashion may have a better developed
cognitive schema of "fashionable" or more fashion related information in her memory to easily interpret new information.

The existence of categories or schema in consumer responses to clothing has been investigated by DeLong et al. (1986). The researchers concluded that there is a well developed set of characteristics about clothing goods in the memory of the viewer; these sets of characteristics, or schemas, are relied upon to analyze new information. Schemas in the consumer's memory are continually fed by new information to move the "fashionable" schema forward. The interested and familiar consumer with the up-to-date "fashionable" schema in mind may use different criteria to evaluate garments in advertisements.

There are several existing measures of fashion involvement and interest. Creekmore's Clothing Interest Scale (Creekmore, 1971) which was tested and refined by Gurel and Gurel (1979) is a classic measure. It was developed to identify multiple constructs involved in what is alternately called clothing interest, fashion interest, or fashion involvement. Tigert, King, and Ring (1976) developed a five question Fashion Involvement Index (FII) in which each question was developed to tap one of five dimensions of fashion involvement: innovativeness, fashion information in interpersonal communication, interest, knowledgeability, and awareness and reaction to fashion change. The Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) refined and validated for use in measuring fashion interest by Fairhurst, Good and Gentry (1989) is a twenty item bi-polar semantic scale which was developed to measure the personal relevance a product has for individuals. The PII and the FII differ from the Clothing Interest Scale in their intent. The Clothing Interest Scale and adaptions of it are
designed to identify the multiple dimensions of interest in clothing (no all of which are necessarily fashion related) and differentiate individuals on those dimensions. The PII and FII are designed to provide an aggregate measure of interest in fashion components of dress and shopping and differentiate between individuals on the level of interest in a category of products. For this reason, the PII and FII were adapted for use in this study to provide a means of differentiating among participants on levels of involvement.
METHOD

The purpose of this study was to explore consumers’ experiences when viewing fashion print advertising. The study compared viewers’ responses to illustrated and photographic advertisements containing a variety of visual and verbal information. The responses of individuals having higher or lower levels of fashion involvement were compared.

The procedural steps used in this study included the development of an interview schedule and a measure of viewers’ satisfaction with information contained in ads, selection of ads from recent fashion magazines for use as stimuli, conduct of interviews with women in a midwestern city, and statistical and content analysis of the data.

Instruments

Interview schedule

The first objective of the study was to explore the participants’ experiences of viewing advertisements, including the identification of the components of ads perceived by viewers and the criteria viewers used to evaluate the ads. The second objective was to compare responses to illustrated and photographic ads. Free response interviews with actual ads as stimuli were conducted to meet these objectives.

The interview schedule developed for this study (see Appendix A) consisted of three parts. Parts 1 and 2 consisted of questions accompanied by a set of actual ads used as stimuli. In Part 1, the participants were asked to identify the elements of the ads or the
garments which were immediately salient or attracted their visual focus while quickly viewing each ad. Part 2 included a set of questions pertaining to the viewers’ evaluation of the garments in the ads, their evaluation of the ads themselves, and their assessment of the effectiveness of the ads in gaining or maintaining their attention. Part 3 was a set of general questions pertaining to the subjects’ use of fashion advertisements and their preferences for specific elements contained in ads.

Questionnaire

The third and fourth objectives of the study were to determine viewers’ satisfaction with visual and verbal information in advertisements and to compare the responses of individuals with high and low fashion involvement. These objectives were met through the three-part written questionnaire (see Appendix B).

The three-part questionnaire contained a measure of the participants’ satisfaction with the information contained in the stimuli, a measure of demographic information, and two measures of fashion involvement adapted from other measures.

Satisfaction with information After Parts 1 & 2 of the interview schedule were completed, participants were asked to view the stimuli a third time and evaluate satisfaction with the information found in the ads. This measure consisted of a nine item rating scale. The first eight items were phrased uniformly asking, "Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s -----?", inserting the terms price, design details, lines, shape, color, texture, fabric type, and fiber content. The ninth question was "Do you get an idea
about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?" This question was designed to assess viewer's need for or ability to use situational cues in advertisements. The scale was repeated for each of the eight ads. The nine items were rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale with "1" indicating yes and "7" indicating no. The scores were reversed during analysis so that higher scores indicated higher satisfaction.

**Personal information** The second part of the questionnaire consisted of several personal data questions including age, marital status, household size, occupation, spouses occupation, education, and the amount the participant spent on clothing per year.

**Fashion involvement measures** Two measures of fashion involvement were adapted for use in this study. The first was an adaption of Tigert, Ring, and King's (1976) Fashion Involvement Index (FII). The FII consisted of five questions assessing participants' fashion involvement behavior. Participants responded to the FII by checking one of three answers to each question which they felt best described themselves. For instance, the first question was "In general, when do you buy new clothing fashions?" The three responses available were "When a style is very new," "After I see a few people wearing a new style," and "When I see a lot of people wearing the style." The answers were scored with one point for the highest involvement responses, two points for the average involvement responses and three points for the lowest involvement responses. Simple sum scores across all five questions resulted in a five to fifteen point continuum from high to low involvement.

The second fashion involvement measure was the Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) (Fairhurst, Good & Gentry, 1989; Zaichkowsky, 1985). This measure consists of
twenty bi-polar word pairs placed on a seven point scale. The items are arranged in random order and one half of the items are reverse scored. Participants were asked to respond by circling the number between each word pair which they felt most adequately described fashion apparel. Summing the score for these items resulted in a 20 to 140 point continuum between high and low involvement.

Both measures were used to compare individuals responses to fashion advertisements because the FII is a measure of behavior, specifically measuring individuals’ position in the adoption cycle, and the PII is a measure of individuals’ attitudes towards fashion as a conceptual category.

Stimuli

Twelve apparel advertisements were chosen from fashion magazines from 1988 to 1990 as stimuli for this study. The ads were selected on the basis of garment style, photographic or illustrated form, color or black and white, and the amount of verbal description, including price, garment description, and affective appeal. Two graduate students and one textiles and clothing faculty member served as expert judges to select eight final ads from the initial twelve. The ads chosen were somewhat similar in garment styles, and had a variety of verbal information which viewers could respond to. The garments were judged to be appropriate or have appeal for a broad age range and for the midwestern population from which the sample was taken (See Appendix C).

The ads selected displayed garment ensembles composed of jacket and skirt, jacket
and dress, or jacket and pants to include several garment styles within the range of semi-dressy to semi-casual. These garment styles were selected because some were judged appropriate for business or professional situations and others were appropriate for more casual occasions.

Four ads were illustrations and four were photographs, three in full color, one in black and white in both media. The illustrations and photos were approximately paired in similarity of presentation style and/or in garment ensemble. Two ads had prices included in the descriptive information. All ads had department store or boutique logos and designer names. Six ads had verbal descriptions and affective appeals; five included the fabric type or fiber content in the description. The ads were uniformly mounted on medium value grey mat board so that they would be easy to handle when viewing.

Participants

Due to the exploratory nature of the study and the naturalistic approach, the use of a convenience sample was determined to be expedient and acceptable. The targeted participant was a woman who is established in the community and in her career, has financial means to be involved with fashion, and is personally interested in fashion, particularly through the use of fashion magazines. To approximately target this ideal participant, professional and career women involved in community activities were sought. Three women’s civic clubs were identified through a directory of local organizations. Two chapters of the American Business Women’s Association (twenty participants and eight participants,
respectively) and the Ames Women's Club (eight participants) were contacted to participate in the study. Eight additional participants were solicited through personal acquaintances or random calls to female employees of Iowa State University leading to a total of 44 participants.

Procedure

Pretests

Two trial interviews were conducted with personal acquaintances to test the interview schedule and the questionnaire. One of these interviews was conducted in my home and the other in the participant's home, and both were tape recorded. It was determined during the pretests that the entire interview could be conducted within 30 to 45 minutes and that the participants had no difficulty answering any questions. After transcription of all interviews, the pretests were judged by the researcher to be similar to the actual interviews; therefore the two pretests were also included in the final data analysis.

Through the pretests and the initial few interviews, it became apparent that the price information in ads was very important to viewers in the sample. Two follow-up questions were added to the interview schedule to explore the importance of price information for participants when viewing fashion ads.

Conduct of interviews

Potential participants were contacted by telephone and asked to participate. I introduced myself as a graduate student in Textiles and Clothing at Iowa State University,
explained that I was contacting the members of their organization to participate in the study, and that a donation of $2.00 would be given to the general funds of their organization for each member who participated. The goals and procedure of the study were explained and the women were assured that participation was voluntary, confidential, and would take about 30-45 minutes. A meeting place and time was arranged with individuals who agreed to participate. The meetings took place at the participants' homes or work places, my home, or a public meeting place.

The interview began with introductions, a review of the goals of the study and a brief outline of the procedure. The participants were asked to feel free to express their personal opinions and were assured that their responses would be confidential. I explained to the participants that I had selected a set of eight ads from recent fashion magazines and that I would have them look through the ads three times: the first time, I wanted them to identify what caught their eye or attracted their attention in the ads, the second time they should tell me what they liked or disliked about them, and the third time they would fill out a questionnaire. I explained that the questionnaire also asked them about themselves and their interest in clothing and that I would have a few brief questions to complete the interview.

After the interview was completed, each participant received a mailed note thanking them for their participation and reminding them of the contribution to the charitable cause of their organization. Individuals who were contacted through personal acquaintance or randomly selected from the Iowa State University telephone directory received the note of thanks and $2.00 at the end of the interview.
The audio tapes from the interviews were transcribed into a computer word processing program and later converted to a format acceptable for use with the Ethnograph, a computer program designed for the analysis of text-based data (Qualis Research Associates, 1988). Apparent technical difficulties rendered one tape unusable, therefore the total number of transcripts used in the qualitative data analysis was 43. (The total number of subjects in the analysis of the questionnaire data remained at 44.)

The interview data was analyzed using content analysis methods to identify the dimensions of participants’ viewing experiences and to compare participants’ responses to illustrated and photographic ads. Participants’ scores on the information satisfaction questionnaire were analyzed to determine the ads which were rated most and least satisfactory in information content. The participants’ scores on the PII and FII were totaled, and analysis of variance was performed using the involvement scores and the information satisfaction scores.

Qualitative data analysis

Using a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), themes in the data were identified and organized into categories and applied to the data in a constant comparative method. A coding system was developed using the categories of themes which emerged from the data during the initial stages of analysis and was continually revised and refined as it was applied to subsequent data (see Appendix D). The categories of the coding guide encompass
the dimensions of the experiences of the participants in viewing these fashion advertisements identified in the first objective of the study.

The transcript format used allowed the responses to each individual ad and each follow-up question to be maintained as an independent unit. The response units were identified within the transcript according to the specific ads or questions which prompted them. The individual responses were used as the main unit of analysis for content analysis. Separate ideas expressed within one response were divided and coded separately.

Initial themes from the data were identified from a random sample of 10 transcripts. These themes were organized into superordinate and subordinate categories of response. The organization of the categories and themes were continually re-arranged and refined during the coding process in order that the final coding fit the complete set of data. The final coding guide consisted of 12 superordinate and 81 subordinate categories.

The coding process was performed by myself and another textiles and clothing graduate student. The interview transcripts were divided into five approximately equal sets and coded. After coding each set of transcripts independently, the researchers compared and negotiated all coding incidents. Inter-coder reliability was computed after each set of coding was completed using the formula (Touliatos & Compton, 1988, p.122):

\[
\frac{\text{Number of agreements}}{\text{Total agreements} + \text{disagreements}} \times 100 = \text{% reliability}
\]

This formula was applied by counting agreements and disagreements at the superordinate and subordinate levels of the coding guide. At the subordinate level, specific codes were strictly
compared for agreement and the researchers achieved inter-coder reliability of 67%. At the superordinate categorical level, considering all codes within the broad category as agreements, a reliability of 79% was achieved.

Reliability was modest due to several factors. First, the codes developed in the coding guide are not mutually exclusive. For instance, a response explaining an individual’s preference for a garment may contain a mention of a specific feature of the garment. This response would be coded as an incidence of garment preference and also as a response containing the identification of an element of visual focus. This overlap of categories produced some degree of noise in the coding reliability. Another factor contributing to the low reliability is the large number of codes (14 categories and 90 specific codes) in the coding guide. Lastly, the data themselves were often ambiguous. For example, the coding categories were designed to differentiate between elements such as preference for ads and preference for garments in the ads. However, responses were often phrased in such a manner that this differentiation was difficult or impossible to achieve in coding. One such response was "I don’t care for that one at all. Maybe for someone else, but there is nothing there that attracts me."

Comparison of responses to illustrations and photographs  The second objective of the study was to compare the responses to illustrations and photographs. In addition to coding of the themes identified in the analysis, responses to each ad were identified and coded according to the ad number and all codes were entered into the Ethnograph program. The Ethnograph then identified and sorted all responses to illustrated and photographic ads.
The category themes applied in each response were recorded for further analysis. The frequency of occurrence of the dimensions of experience identified by the category themes were totaled and compared across responses to photographic and illustrated ads. Fisher’s Z test for comparison of proportional differences was used to compare the frequencies of responses (Guilford & Fruchter, 1978).

Analysis of ratings of satisfaction with information in ads

The third objective of the study was to explore viewers’ satisfaction with information in ad. Means of the information satisfaction ratings for each item per ad were calculated and compared across ads. The rank order of ads based on their overall satisfaction rating was examined to determine which ads were most satisfactory and what types of information the most favored ads contained.

A repeated measures analysis of variance procedure with Bonferroni t-tests of differences between means were performed to identify significant differences between ads on each of the nine items. Pearson Correlation Coefficients were calculated to compare among the nine items in the satisfaction ratings, and the effects of participants’ ages, educational level, reported dollar amount spent per year on apparel, and PII and FII scores. The correlations were performed to compare the responses of individuals at differing levels of involvement in accordance with the fourth objective of this study.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are presented and discussed in six sections. The first two sections present a description of the participants, and the participants’ patterns of perception and response to the ads in the during the initial viewing experience. Each of the following sections discusses the results which are relevant to the four objectives of this study. These sections discuss the dimensions of the experience of viewing advertising identified through the development of the coding guide, the comparison of responses to illustrated and photographic ads, the results of the analysis of the satisfaction with information measure, and the comparison of the ratings of individuals with lower or higher fashion involvement.

Participants

The participants in this study were 44 females working or residing in Ames, Iowa, who agreed to participate after a telephone invitation. The women were either members of one of three women’s civic groups or were employees of Iowa State University. The following sections report selected demographics and the participants’ reported use of fashion publications as sources of fashion information.

Demographic Information

The ages of the participants ranged from 22 to 87 years with a mean age of 51.4 years. The distribution of ages of the participants is presented in Table 1. Participants who were over the age of 60 comprise 43% of the total. This is due to the fact that a large portion of the membership in the civic groups used as a sample were retired women.
Table 1. Age of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Percent of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69 years</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of the large number of retired participants contacted through the women's civic groups, the last several interviews were conducted with women selected randomly from the Iowa State employee directory in order to achieve a more balanced distribution of ages among the sample. Ten of the participants reported having completed high school, 29 had attended college, and 5 had attended graduate or professional school. Thirteen of the participants were single, whereas 31 were married. Thirteen of the women stated that they were retired, one was unemployed at the time of the interview. The remaining participants' occupations included eleven clerical positions, five realty and insurance sales, five were mid-level management or administrative positions, four service positions, including hair styling and childcare, three medical positions, one business owner and one homemaker.

**Fashion information sources and amount spent on clothing**

Question 1 of the personal data section of the questionnaire (see Appendix B) asked participants to list the magazines they look at for information about styles and fashions.
Many of the respondents had difficulty naming publications which they felt that they used specifically for fashion information. In response, the researcher asked them to list any publications they could and include mail-order catalogs which they received and looked at frequently. The following is a description of the participants’ reports of publication usage:

- 16 participants did not list any women’s magazines, but 7 of those listed catalogs.
- 18 participants listed women’s magazines and no mail-order catalogs.
- 10 participants listed both magazines and catalogs.

These findings indicate two possible ways in which this question was interpreted. Participants who listed women’s magazines were reporting the publications which they received or frequently looked at regardless of their relevance as sources of fashion information. Table 2 indicates the publications reported most frequently by the participants. Many of the publications reported were not actually fashion magazines but general women’s

Table 2. Top ten magazines reported by participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>No. of participants listing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ladies’ Home Journal</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vogue</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCall’s</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamour</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Housekeeping</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper’s Bazaar</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redbook</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman’s Day</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mademoiselle</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
magazines, including *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Redbook*. These general women's magazines may contain clothing information, but they do not promote "high fashion" or clothing for the early adopters in the fashion diffusion cycle. Of the 28 participants who listed women's magazines, 15 included at least one fashion magazine, including *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, or *Glamour*.

Participants who listed mail-order catalogs were reporting contact with retail sources which could lead to actual fashion seeking or shopping activities. Catalogs listed by participants included Sears, J.C.Penney, and Speigel, Lands' End, Avon Fashions, and L.L. Bean. In addition, five participants listed publications for home sewers such as *Vogue Patterns* and *Sew*. Most participants listed between one and four magazines and/or catalogs; two listed six magazines and four listed more than four catalogs.

Participants were also asked to give an estimate of the total amount of money they spent on apparel for themselves each year. Most participants found this question very difficult to answer. Many commented that their apparel spending was not something they kept track of and most stated that their estimates were probably low. Amounts reported by the participants ranged from $150 to $3500 with an average of $908. Table 3 illustrates the distribution of the participants’ reported apparel spending per year.
Table 3. Participants reported annual expenditures for apparel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount reported</th>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Percent of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$150-500</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$501-1000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1001-1500</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1501-2000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2001+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Patterns of Perception and Response**

According to the naturalistic paradigm of research, data are the constructions of the interaction between the researcher and the sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this interaction, the participant gives the researcher information which is salient or has meaning for him/her in a "natural language". While conducting the first few interviews, it became apparent that the participants were not interpreting certain questions in the same manner and that their responses were not producing the type of information which the questions had been designed to access. By allowing participants' interpretation of the questions to shape the subsequent interviews, unexpected insights into the participants' perspective of advertising were developed.

**Global vs. specific responses to ads**

The opening question in the interview schedule asked the participants to identify the elements that they saw in the ad first, second, third, etc. The original intention of this
question was to investigate the viewer’s perceptual experience when initially viewing the ads. This information would have allowed exploration of visual perception, such as linear, random, or gestalt viewing patterns, and an examination of the features of the ads which were most frequently reported as points of focus. During the first few interviews, I tried several different approaches to explain the intent of this question. I settled on a brief description in lay terms of oculometry, in which machines measure and record eye movement and fixation, explaining that I wanted them to simulate this type of testing by simply telling me "What do you see in this ad; what catches your eye first, second, third, etc? The participants were asked to view the ads very quickly and told that they would be able to take more time and tell me if they liked the garment or the ad, the second time they looked through the ads. It became apparent that participants who were able to identify what caught their eye would usually only identify one focus and not be able to verbalize the specific movements of their focus through the ad.

In addition to identifying just the first element on which they focused attention, only 15 of the participants actually did identify specific elements of the ad or the garment which they perceived. Examples of typical statements identifying specific elements of focus are:

"I see the jacket first."

"The color of the jacket attracts my attention."

"I immediately see the polka dots."

In contrast, 17 participants were less inclined to specify features of the ad or garment which attracted their attention; they immediately began to make global assessments, evaluations or
associations about the garments or the ads, even though they were told that they would do this the second time they viewed the ads. Responses to the fashion ads for these participants were more general or global. The following are typical global responses:

"This first one I see comes from Nordstroms which tells me it is expensive. It is an elegant suit. Beautiful material."

"I like the lines in this. It is attractive to me. I would stop and take another look at it and I like the way it is presented because none of the background takes away from the garment and I am interested in this format. I like very much the way it is presented. I like the blend of the colors. I would probably think 'hum, I would like to try that on'."

"Classy is my first response. Sophisticated ad."

"Crazy yet. It hurts to look at that one."

Eleven participants tried to identify what they were looking at as asked, but apparently could not resist making evaluations right away or commenting on aspects of the ad. Their responses range between specific and global responses such as:

"I see the style of a suit and I like the neck line of the suit very much."

"This looks like a nice comfortable outfit, what would be more for my granddaughter who is 16 years old than for me, but I am sure they would enjoy that very much."

"I don’t like it but it is bright with a lot of contrast too. I used to shop at Saks when I lived in San Francisco a long time ago. This is really awful."

"Polka dots. Very modern furniture which is kind of nice. I am not sure what the lady standing in front of modern furniture has to do with Elizabeth Arden, but that is nice."

The differences between the types of responses may be due to the fact that clothing is a very integral part of our daily experiences. People see others in clothing every day, but
they may not pay specific attention to how they perceive the clothed form. Perception of clothing, and perhaps also advertisements, is so automatic and immediate that it is difficult for an individual to verbalize initial perception or to separate the perceptual process from other mental processes of recognition, association, and evaluation. These response differences may also be due to differences among individuals in the manner in which information is processed.

Dimensions of the Viewing Experience

The first objective of this study was to explore the viewing experience of fashion advertising, including the components used by viewers in the perception and evaluation of ads, and the information which viewers found important or interesting. These dimensions of the viewing experience encompass all of the category themes identified through content analysis of the interview data (see Appendix D). The categories of themes were developed from the participants' free-responses to the stimuli ads during Parts 1 and 2 of the interview, and also to specific questions about the visual and verbal elements of ads posed by the researcher during Part 3 (see Appendix A). Due to the unstructured nature of the interviews, the types of responses given during Part 1, 2 and 3 overlap to a great degree. For instance, a participant may have discussed reasons for liking a particular ad during any of the three phases of the interview. Because of the overlapping nature of the responses to the three parts of the interview, the responses to each individual interview question will not be discussed separately.
Source of visual focus or attention

Nine elements were identified by participants as the features which attracted their attention or were the central focus of their responses. These elements were the overall style of the garment, the color, style details of the garment, such as trims, buttons or surface design, the accessories combined with the garment, the designer name listed in the ad, the name of the store listed in the ad, the background or setting in the ad, the layout or graphic design features of the ad, and the verbal text included in the ad. The models in the ads were both a focus of attention for participants and a feature of the ads about which they made various interpretive statements and attributions.

Comments about the focus or interest in the ad were most frequently elicited during the first phase of the interview when participants were asked to identify what they saw in the ads. Other responses referring to an interest or focus were made in relation to the evaluation of the garment or ad or during the follow-up questions; therefore the analysis of visual interests used data gleaned throughout the entire interview. Table 4 demonstrates the elements which participants mentioned as providing a focus of attention, the number of respondents who mentioned each element, and the total number of times the response category was used.

Color, garment style, the model, layout/design features of the ads and garment style details provided focal points for more than 80% of the participants and were mentioned by participants in reference to several ads. Accessories were also mentioned by 80% of the participants, but the total number of times the element was mentioned demonstrates that fewer
Table 4. Frequency of responses identifying elements of visual focus in advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element providing visual focus</th>
<th>No. of participants identifying the element</th>
<th>Percent of total participants</th>
<th>Total no. of times element was identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color of garment or ad</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of garment</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features of the model</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout/design of ad</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style details of garment</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting of ad</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store name</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer name</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal copy</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ads had accessories which effectively caught participants’ attention or that some people are less interested in accessories. The use of unique accessories in ads may be an effective means for advertisers to attract attention to their ads in magazines. The following sections explain the individual elements. Text from the interviews demonstrates the type of comments which were coded in each category.

**Style** Responses citing the style of the garment as a focus of their attention were given by 38 participants. The style of the garment was cited 134 times in response to all the ads. The following are some examples of statements referring to the style as the focus of attention:

"I saw a poor fitting jacket. Lovely jewelry and pretty girl. But the jacket doesn’t fit."

"I suppose I notice the white blouse with the black jacket."
"My eye immediately goes to the vest."

"This one, the outfit. It is beautiful."

**Color**  Color was the most salient visual element which the participants focused on; 40 participants gave 175 color-related responses. These responses were referring to both the colors of the garments and in the overall design of the ads such as:

"I like the colors and I like the dressing, in particular the turtleneck and jacket on top of pants."

"This I like a great deal. I like the color combinations."

"I must admit the two colors are a good combination. The pink and the black."

"I like the colors, the way it is presented and it is tastefully done. Is this tangerine or orange? I have seen a lot of it. I like the colors."

**Style detail**  Style details, such as trims, buttons and surface designs, created a focus for 35 participants who made comments about various details in response to all the ads. The following are examples of comments demonstrating a focus on the style details of the garments:

"I do like this ad. I don’t know why, I guess because I like polka dots…"

"[I see] her jacket and the sequins on her blouse."

"I think it catches your eye because it is black and white and the polka dots on the garment."

**Accessories**  Elements in the ads such as jewelry, belts, gloves, and handbags were the focused on by 36 participants. Some examples of statements which were coded as a focus on accessories are:
"I would have to say [I notice] the white gloves."

"The buttons are pretty and her jewelry is lovely but I don’t like the white glove."

"The pose... the kind of jewelry she has on, things like that usually catch my eye."

**Designer name**  The name of the designer was the focus in at least one of the ads for 15 participants. These comments include:

"Liz Claiborne, I caught that right away. I know her."

"The Liz Claiborne I would really look at long and hard."

"...The jacket and the shorts and probably the name Episode."

**Store name**  The name of the store featuring the ad was mentioned by 13 participants in comments like the following:

"I think this is very good. Is that Lord & Taylor? Yes, it is."

"On this particular one from Nordstrom, I guess really for myself, I may just flip the page."

"This is Saks! I definitely would look at this...."

"Lord & Taylor. It used to be a favorite store of mine. Very nice..."

Participants gave responses referring to the name of the store frequently when they were familiar with the store, shop at those stores when on trips or visiting family in cities where these stores are located, or used to shop those stores when they lived in other cities.

**Setting of ad**  The setting or elements in the space surrounding the model were mentioned by a total 23 of participants. Comments focused on the setting include the following:
"More conservative. You could use the same kinds of polka dots. They could use a better background to show it off more."

"I like the blue. I like the background. I think that they did a good job to bring out the colors."

"I wish that these were just a little, not quite so much in the background of the flowers. I like this and that and I like a little background, but [this is] a little too much."

Comments about the setting related to the effect of the surrounding space on the overall composition of the ad, and to its effect on the perception of the garment.

**Layout/design of ad**  The graphic design, the layout or qualities of the ads' overall design were the focus of attention for 35 participants. Examples of these comments are:

"It is very attractive. It is an interesting composition. The way her clothes are presented, especially the shawl."

"This is overdrawn of course that is what it is for, to attract individuals attention. I am afraid that I would not be attracted to this one except out of curiosity if I was going through a magazine. I must admit the two colors are a good combination."

"The ad display is very good. It looks like a very expensive piece of furniture. Nice proportioning. It almost looks like a photograph framed."

"Dark and cartoonish."

These responses were related to or influenced both positive and negative evaluations.

Participants discussed how the layout affected their perception of the ad as well.

**Verbal copy**  The text describing the garment, giving price or fabric/fiber information, or the affective appeals in the ad were only commented on by 15 participants in responses such as the following:

"...there is more particulars like what type of fabric, the sizes, and that kind of thing
about it so I would be more inclined if I were looking through this and in the market for some kind of outfit or just even if it caught my eye to go to a store and say "here is the ad, I would like to see this outfit" vs. some of the other ones that didn’t give that kind of description."

"...once I read the words which I hadn’t noticed before, maybe it is effective except that I didn’t really see the words before."

Features of the model  The models in the ads were the subject of responses from 40 participants. Participants were interested in the model for a variety of reasons. Some were interested in the appearance of the model in both photos and illustrations, commenting on aspects of the model's hairstyle or makeup:

"Her hair is kind of out of it as far as I am concerned, but otherwise it is pleasant."

"Her bangs need to be trimmed."

"The hairstyle looks like that of the 40s."

"Boy, I see her lipstick, first."

Several responses to the illustrations referred to the model as a person, i.e., "the lady" or "she", rather than as a drawing, but the representation of the features seemed to bother participants:

"I think it is because it is abstract and the lady doesn’t have a face. I don’t care for it."

"I guess it doesn’t appeal to me at all. Her head is so small and her neck is so long and the shoulders are so huge..."

"The model doesn’t have any eyes."

These comments seem to support the position that consumers respond to photographs more positively due to the realistic proportions of the model and the fact that the representation of
the model is the representation of a real human person.

Participants responded to the poses of the photographed models and their facial expressions, usually appreciating those aspects of the ad. They even attributed occupational and personality characteristics to the models:

"I like her pose, the 'mischievous look' in her eyes."

"She is happy, she seems like a businesswoman. Relaxed picture."

"...the woman is very pleasant and cheerful and it would make me laugh."

In some of their more detailed responses, the participants were making inferences about the model’s character, feelings or emotions expressed through their facial features or their poses.

"I think it would catch your eye but actually it is kind of contrasting in a way because the outfit looks professional and it is a fine quality and yet the expression on her face is more of a sensual or sexual expression and she is not giving a real professional look. She has the look in her eyes and she is adding a bit of sex to the picture."

"I suppose if you look at it, that kind of stance that she has maybe and she looks very assertive and like her own woman type of thing so I think it would catch your eye because of her posture."

These comments and assessments of the model indicate that the participants were responding to the model as a real person with a specific identity with whom they associated a range of psychological characteristics. They were attaching very specific meanings to the representation of the model in the ads. These responses were generally made in regard to photographs and the differences between references to the models in photographs and illustrations will be discussed later (see pp.92-96).

The participants’ comments about the models were occasionally related to the effect
of the model on their evaluation of the garment or the ad. The participants’ feelings about the model had positive or negative influences on their opinions about the clothing in some cases and did not effect their evaluation of the garments in others.

"She is striking a rather sexy pose. I couldn’t see somebody just standing around and having a plain conversation wearing a dress like this, I mean, it is just like she is standing there with her arms to her side and her leg up and all that. I couldn’t see somebody carrying on a regular conversation and not striking a sexy pose wearing that."

"It doesn’t really do anything for me, but the model’s got a nice face."

"I don’t particularly care for it and to wear it, you would have to know, so it would have to be somebody with a very good figure."

"Well, the person who is wearing it. It looks as if it would be...that the garment she is wearing would be something that she would probably enjoy. Wear it perhaps to a meeting. She looks like she is rather happy about the whole thing."

Responses to the model were also related to the presentation of information about the clothing through the pose.

"I like to see how it fits and then I know the models have perfect figures and so I often wonder."

"I think I would rather it would be in a stand-up position that way I would get a better overall line."

"...but she doesn’t even have any legs, so I don’t know how long it is."

These responses can be viewed according to DeLong’s (1987) concept of the interaction between the body and the clothing in the perception and evaluation of clothing. DeLong’s Apparel-Body Construct (ABC) is the holistic perception of the garment on a figure within
an environment. In the ABC, an interaction occurs between the clothing, the body and the environment which leads to the gestalt perception of the total ABC.

**Evaluative component of the viewing experience**

The second category theme which emerged through the content analysis was the evaluative component of the experience. This component is the aesthetic evaluation or preference for the garments in the advertisements and the ads themselves. Participants were asked to state whether they liked or disliked the garments and the ads during Part 2 of the interview schedule. In addition, some participants volunteered evaluative comments during other parts of the interview. The evaluative criteria were not defined by the researcher; the participants were asked to explain why they liked or disliked the garments and the ads in order to identify what criteria they used for their evaluations. Evaluations of the garments were made on the basis of personal preference for the style or features of the garment, the perceived fashionability of the garment, and the assessment of the intended or appropriate market for the garment. Eight criteria for the evaluations of the ads were identified in the participants' responses.

**Evaluation of garment** Evaluations of the garments were made on the basis of personal taste, practicality or appropriateness of the garment for the participants' own lifestyle, the perceived quality of the garment, and the perceived cost of the garment. Table 5 lists the responses evaluating the garments and the frequency of those responses. All participants used personal taste as a criterion for evaluating the garments. Lifestyle
Table 5. Evaluative criteria applied to the garments in fashion advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative response</th>
<th>No. of participants giving response</th>
<th>Percent of total participants</th>
<th>Total no. of times response was given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garment preference based on personal taste</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment preference based on lifestyle attributes</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment evaluation based on perceived cost</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment evaluation based on perceived quality</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

appropriateness was also a used criterion. The perceived cost and quality of garments were used as evaluative criteria by only a few participants.

Positive or negative evaluations of the garment were usually phrased simply, stating a preference for the garment. Participants often described why they did or did not like the garment, citing color, fabric, style, or style details. Evaluations were also rationalized according to the participant's lifestyle.

"I like the outfit in this. I like sort of tailored clothing."

"This of course, is nothing that I would ever be interested in, but it is an eye catcher."

"I love polka dots, so of course, I would have to look this over and the jacket I like. The skirt is too short for me."

"I am not real fond of this outfit. The colors don't... I don't like those colors."

Whether the garment was suitable for herself was the most frequent or important aspect of
preferences. Occasionally however, participants expressed appreciation for garments which were 'not their style'.

"I like the outfit. I would not choose it for myself."

"This doesn’t appeal to me because it is not something that I would wear. It is an attractive outfit if it were on someone else."

Four participants’ evaluative responses to the garments were based on the apparent quality and five participants’ responses were based on the apparent cost of the garments. The cues which the participants used in making this evaluation were store name, designer name, fabric, and perceived level of fashion for the garments.

"This first one I see comes from Nordstroms, which tells me it is expensive."

"Liz Claiborne. That is a good line of clothing."

"The slacks look like they are of good quality, practical."

"This, that is for somebody who can afford a lot of clothes because it is something you wouldn’t wear very often."

"I would imagine that might be a little more expensive. I am saying this because most of these stores, I think, are stores who carry expensive clothing."

"[I see] the T-shirt is for 126 bucks. Then I would turn the page."

"It is a dream picture. It is not anything we would normally be able to afford or wear."

The perception of cost or quality influenced both negative and positive evaluations.

Assessment of the garment’s fashionability

Thirteen participants (30% of the sample) assessed the fashionability of the garments. Comments included judgements of stylishness, faddish-ness, or outdated-ness.
"It is very classic."

"This one looks a little more 'far out' or a fad-type of dress."

"I'm not sure why I don't [like the outfit]. Maybe it is because yellow and orange has been kind of a thing of the past and I have seen so much of it and it is not really so popular now."

These comments occasionally referenced the appropriateness of the garment for the participants' geographic location.

"More casual dress here and this is something that we would probably see around here and something I would enjoy wearing and I think it looks stylish."

"I like the garment because I think it looks kind of New York style, more stylish than what you see in fashions around Iowa and Ames."

Assessment of the garment's intended market Twenty-two participants (51%) gave responses which were coded as an assessment that the garments in the ads were not targeted at themselves, that the garments were appropriate for young women and/or that the garments were targeted for a trendy market. Many responses included a combination of the comments that the garment was not intended for the market the participants placed themselves in, and assessment of the target market as younger women or trendier consumers than themselves.

Examples of these responses include:

"This one definitely is not for me; perhaps a younger person, but definitely bad for my age group."

"I know they are usually tailored to younger people and that is kind of a cutesy outfit. I could see my daughter-in-law enjoying something like that."

"This is a more 'far-out' or a fad type of dress. Definitely for the younger generation."
"This doesn't appeal to me at all because of my age. I guess it would be because it appears to be more or less faddy and I have to think of style and things that I can wear or change with accessories for several years."

In assessing the trendiness of the intended consumer, participants seemed to make inferences about the attitudes or intentions of individuals who would purchase the garment based on some cues in the ads:

"I like these nice lines but I don’t know that it really...it would be a certain type of person would really be attracted to this."

"It would be very appealing to the stylish minded."

"It looks like the type of thing somebody would have to be kind of exhibitionist to wear.

Participants used their assessments of the suitable market for the garments in the ads to make both positive and negative evaluations.

"This sort of says style and it is colorful and it would be very appealing to the younger crowd."

"I don’t happen to like the latest fashions because it is just too much."

"Again, I guess it is in too much of a new direction. I would not look at that too much more."

"This one again, I am not...it is kind of eye catching but there again it would go for a young bouncy person and I don’t care for that."

"It would be a real vogue type thing and especially with the faceless person with the dark pouty lips like that. It is just not the typical thing you would see here in the Midwest so it is something that does not appeal to me."

The ages of the participants giving responses coded as assessments of the intended market for the garments in the ads were primarily over 50. Fourteen of the participants
(33%) made comments which were coded as assessments of the trendiness of the market for the garments; only two of these responses were from participants who were younger than age 50. Seventeen participants (40%) gave responses about the garment's appropriateness for a young market. These participants were all over age 35, and 14 were over age 50. Comments that the garment was not intended for themselves were given by ten participants (23%), nine of whom were over age 50. These findings suggest that many of the respondents over age 50 do not view themselves as the target market for the fashions advertised in fashion magazines, even though the majority of the ads used as stimuli were selected on the basis of their appropriateness for a mature, professional woman.

**Evaluation of the advertisements** Along with their evaluations of the garments, the participants were asked to evaluate the advertisements themselves and assess how effective the ads were in attracting and/or maintaining their attention during Part 2 of the interview. Eight sub-categories were identified as criteria contributing to positive or negative evaluations of the advertisements. These included: evaluation of the garment, the layout or design features of the ad, the ad's clarity in presenting information about the style of the garment, the congruity of the ad's implicit or explicit message, the mood or feeling expressed in the ad, the artistic quality of the ad, the uniqueness of the ad, and the potential of the ad to persuade or induce purchase of the garment. Table 6 lists the criteria used to evaluate the advertisements and the frequency of those responses.

**Evaluations of the design of the ad** This category includes all responses in which the participants expressed positive or negative preferences for either the overall character or
Table 6. Fashion advertisement evaluative criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative response</th>
<th>No. of participants giving response</th>
<th>Percent of total participants</th>
<th>Total no. of times response was given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preference for ad based on layout/design features of the ad</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference for ad based on preference for the garment</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of garment information in the ad</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of the ad as a sales tool</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of mood or feeling expressed in the ad</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congruity of message cues in the ad</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of visual quality in the ad</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniqueness of the ad</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

qualities of the ad, and for specific design features of the ad. This category was used by 43 participants and these preferences were expressed 285 times throughout all the interviews.

"I don't really like this that well. It is okay, but I guess I wouldn't probably stop and look at if I were looking through a magazine."

"This one I would probably look at. It's kind of intriguing...just trying to figure out what this is. I would look at this ad."

"I like the lines in this. It is attractive to me. I would stop and take another look at it and I like the way it is presented because none of the background takes away from the garment and I am interested in this format. I like very much the way it is presented. I like the blend of the colors."

"This appeals to me, too. I like the color. I would not be personally interested in it because it is not my style but I do like the way it is presented. Again, the simplicity is there. The color is there and yes, you do stop and look at it. Again,
I like it because it has a background in it, it makes you think right away, casual, relaxed."

Evaluations based on the garment  This category of response included statements which linked the participants' evaluation of the ad to their like or dislike for the garment featured in the ad. Thirty-four participants used their preference for the garment as a criteria for evaluating the ad and this response was given 95 times across all ads. The following are some examples of responses which were coded as ad evaluations based on the garment:

"This one just doesn't do anything for me. I think its because I just don’t really care for the dress. I think the black and white and the lines of the picture itself are good. But it doesn’t do anything for me because I don’t like the style of the clothing. So I’d pass this one right by."

"In this one, I guess I’m not into real modern stuff which I would think this is. I would go past that one pretty quick."

"I like this one. Evening. I guess I see that it is a black silk and it just looks dressy and elegant and the ad looks classy."

"I like this one. I like the jacket and it is more colorful I guess. I just like the appearance better. Maybe it is the color. I guess I would look at this."

Evaluations based on the information clarity  Thirty participants used the clarity of the garment style information in the ad as a criterion for evaluating the ads. This criterion was used in 95 responses which were both positive and negative evaluations. The following are examples of comments which praised ads for the amount of information they conveyed both visually or verbally:

"The costume presentation also tells you immediately this is a sports outfit, semi-dress. It says right away to me it is comfortable and yes, I would like to check into it farther. Nothing takes away from the costume. The advertising is there. You know what brand it is, you know where to buy it. It tells you what kind of material
it is in, but the first thing it does is sell you immediately on the picture itself, the way it is presented."

"The design itself has to be pretty much [visually] imaged in whatever the photo is. I don't look for those in the details."

"It looks very classy and interesting and I would probably be more inclined to seek out this outfit...because it gives me more information about what the outfit is about than some of the other ads do so there is more particulars like what type of fabric, the sizes, and that kind of thing so I would be more inclined if I were looking through this and in the market for some kind of outfit or just even if it caught my eye, to go to a store and say 'here is the ad, I would like to see this outfit' versus some of the other ones that didn’t give that kind of description."

"It doesn’t give me information about it particularly, but I can still look at it and get a good feel for what exactly the type of clothing this is."

Negative evaluations were made when participants found the amount of information in an ad to be lacking:

"I don’t like that at all. I can’t really tell what she has on. You don’t know what colors. I don’t like that type of artwork."

"I don’t like this because the posture is horrible. You really can’t tell what the outfit is like because you want her to 'straighten up’. I don’t care for that."

"I cannot see enough detail in the costume. To me, it looks like a piece of art rather than a sales pitch for me to want to explore it further or perhaps be interested in buying it. Not enough detail shows of the garment. I know they are trying to present it in a very sophisticated way, but because of the lack of clear detail, it does not interest me."

These type of comments are very information oriented. Participants giving these responses were very conscious of the communicative purpose of the ads. These comments were concerned with the effectiveness of the ad as a communication and sales tool. By praising or criticizing ads for their presentation of detailed visual or verbal information, the
participants expressed their need or want for as many of the specific details about the style of the garments as possible. This finding is in accord with the attitudes of advertising professionals (L. Algueseva, Art Director, Younkers, Inc., March, 1990) contacted by the present author and as was suggested by the literature.

Evaluations of the ad as a sales tool Along with their acknowledgment of the ad as a tool for information, participants acknowledged the purpose of the ad as a sales tool which is intended to stimulate the viewer’s interest in seeking and buying new fashions. Twenty-nine participants gave 82 responses that made reference to the effectiveness of the ad in creating an interest in the particular garment advertised. The following are examples of this type of comment:

"It just seems to jump out of the page and do what it is supposed to do."

"I wouldn’t rush out and buy this because I can’t really tell what it looks like from this ad."

"I think they are not really advertising the product, they are advertising an idea, their name. If you are selling an idea, perhaps that ad is good. It’s not an ad that means a lot to me."

"It catches my attention, but I wouldn’t look into more detail to buy it. I don’t recognize the ad name. The overall effectiveness of this add wouldn’t affect me much. I think it would probably be too expensive anyway."

In giving these responses, the participants were aware of and concerned with the ad as a persuasive source of information. These participants were utilizing the ads as an information source for a potential purchase decision.
Evaluations based on perceived congruity or ambiguity of the ad’s message

Seventeen participants expressed some difficulty interpreting the implicit or explicit messages in at least one of the ads. In these responses, participants expressed confusion or uncertainty about various cues in the ads. According to DeLong, (1987) all elements in an apparel-body construct (ABC) affect the meanings interpreted by the viewer. This type of evaluative response concerned the participant’s ability to interpret meaning in the ads based on the interaction of all the cues in the ads. These responses were given 28 times and the following are some examples:

"What are they advertising? That is my first thought."

"To me it is too trendy. To me it is out of place on a couch. It is kind of a velour type couch. To me it would be softer. She doesn’t fit with gloves on a couch."

"The first thing I notice is the glove on the woman’s hand which sort of detracts from the clothes and I am not sure what kind of statement they are wanting to make by putting in the white glove other than maybe a different era maybe. I’m not real sure what their intent was. It is obviously there for a reason because that is not very normal. That sort of confuses me and it catches my eye a little bit."

"…’For those who shun the overtaiored, the uptight, the fashion serious’…Boy, that doesn’t come across as being that way does it?"

"I’m not sure what the lady standing in front of modern furniture has to do with Elizabeth Arden, but that is nice."

In most instances, the participants’ confusion concerned the congruence of message cues between the garment and the surrounding space or the textual elements. In others, participants found all cues too ambiguous to interpret meaning in the ads. Participants found these instances of confusion to be generally negative.
Perception of mood in the ads

Thirty-three participants made comments recognizing a specific mood or feeling which they felt was expressed by the ads. This code was used for 88 responses such as:

"This is a very nice ad. It shows class and the style of the clothes very nicely."

"It is kind of a soft ad, kind of business-like, even though she is wearing the gloves."

"I sort of like Impressionist art. Sophistication. I like that kind."

"Glamour in this one. I assume that is what they’re going after."

The types of mood or feeling identified by the participants included glamour and sophistication, youthfulness, casual and dressy moods, 'fun,' and spiritedness.

Association of visual quality in the ads

Sixteen participants gave a total of 28 responses which assessed the ads on the basis of the artistic qualities or level of professional polish in their visual characteristics. The following are examples of such responses:

"I believe the artistic part of the ad would make me stop and look. I think anything that was colorful, out of the ordinary color that would be striking, I might stop and look at that, too."

"The format and the quality of the way it is laid out, especially if it is artistic or something, I would probably look at it more than others."

"It looks real neat, like it is professionally done. I guess, I don’t know...maybe just real clean cut."

"This one is "art-sy" and I like it. I think it looks pretty glamorous. It is a dream picture."

"Very artistic looking, more like a painting."
Uniqueness of the ad  Sixteen participants commented about the uniqueness of specific ads. These responses were generally stimulated by interest in the visual form of the model and the garment or some element of the layout or design of the ad. A total of 19 responses characterized a particular ad as unique, such as the following:

"I do like it because it is trimmed looking and even though it is in black and white, it still is something that strikes me as different, so I guess, yes, I would stop and look at it."

"It is not something that I would like. I would stop and look at it just for the fact that it is different."

"This one is unusual, the way it is posed with the very dark outline."

"I guess [I look for] the unique things,...things that represent creativity."

The uniqueness of the ad generally contributed to visual interest and positive evaluations of the ad. But the uniqueness of the ad was not necessarily associated with positive interest in the garment as a potential purchase.

Underlying concerns of evaluative criteria

Preferences were either simply stated likes or dislikes or evaluations accompanied by specific rationale for their evaluations. In general, these more specific criteria which participants used for evaluating ads fall loosely into two categories. The first group of criteria seem to admit consciousness of the persuasive sales goal of the advertising media and evaluate the ad’s performance in meeting that goal. These criteria were based on the preference for the products in the ads, the ads’ persuasive communication, both of physical product information and the underlying messages, and the ads’ effectiveness at stimulating
an interest in pursuing or purchasing the garment. These evaluative criteria place emphasis on the functional/practical features of the garment and purchase-decision related experiences of ads.

The second group of criteria deal with evaluating the ad as a visual form. This group includes evaluations of the ad based on layout and design features, the artistic or professional quality of the ad's design, the mood or feeling expressed by the ad, and the uniqueness of the ad. These criteria may be related to Holbrook's (1987) concept of consumer aesthetics. When the ads are evaluated as a visual form, preferences are based on the experience of the intrinsic visual qualities of the ad, not the extrinsic goal of persuasion in a purchase decision.

The specific criteria within these two different concerns, functional/practical experiences of the product or the aesthetic appreciation of the ad, tended to occur together. Some participants may have been more inclined toward using one type of evaluative concern more frequently than the other. For instance, responses which contained a reference to the ad as a sales tool frequently were also concerned with the amount of or clarity of the information contained in the ad. In this respect, the evaluation of an ad was justified or clarified by the use of several criteria which had the same basic underlying emphasis, that of the practical information gathering experience. These criteria within each emphasis then, may be related constructs in the participants' view. Although participants giving these responses did not depend exclusively on one group of criteria or the other, in general, the responses which were concerned with the advertising purposes of the ad and those discussing the ad as a visual form tended not to overlap within the units of response to each ad.
The fact that the two separate groupings of responses emerged from the data suggests a possible hypothesis that there were differences among the participants in their approach to the evaluation of these advertisements. Some participants may have been more concerned with the information gathering function of the viewing experience whereas others may have been more interested in the aesthetic experience of the visual form of the ad. The free-response data and the computer analysis program did not permit an in-depth analysis of paired or grouped responses in order to further substantiate this hypothesis. However, visual examination of the data and the patterns of the coded responses suggested that some of the participants did rely more heavily on one of the two approaches throughout the interview.

**Informational needs and fashion advertisements**

The previous section detailed participants’ attitudes toward the ads as elements of an information gathering experience or as an aesthetic experience. A significant need for participants who viewed the ad as a sales tool was product information. The types of information participants perceived or found lacking was occasionally identified in the responses to the stimuli ads. In addition, during Part 3 of the interview, the participants were asked what they generally liked about ads, what information they wanted to gain from ads and what, in general, gained their interest in ads.

The participants identified 12 types of garment information that they felt they would like to gain from viewing fashion advertisements. The number of participants who responded that they would like the ads to contain these cues is listed in Table 7. The informational cue
most frequently desired by these participants was the price of the garment in the ad. Also highly desired were information about the garment style, type of garment fabric, style details, such as type of construction, trims, etc., and available colors. It is evident that some participants wanted all the information which could be communicated through both visual and verbal means. When participants listed this type of information, especially the desire for price information, I reminded them that this was a magazine ad and not a catalog from which they could order and asked them if they still wanted to know these things. The responses were still positive. Less than five participants stated that detailed information was not important to them; these five wanted only style information which they could ascertain from the visual image.

Participants who stated that they would like descriptive text in the ads generally were envisioning a description which included many or all of the other cues, such as price and

Table 7. Informational cues desired from fashion advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informational cues desired</th>
<th>No. responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric type</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style detail information</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment style information</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colors available</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive text</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care information</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store where available</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber content</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sizes available</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic location of store</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
fabric information. The participants who wanted detail information were referring to items such as elastic or tailored waistbands, presence of shoulder pads, and the type of trim. Participants who stated that they wanted fiber and fabric information often were motivated by interest in the care requirements. They felt that if they knew the fiber and fabric information, they would know how to care for the garments. Therefore, some participants listed both fiber and care information as needs while others listed only one or the other.

As a follow-up to this line of exploration, I asked the participants if they really did or would read the information in the ads. Some participants stated that they did not generally take time to read any information in the ads; they would only take time to read about something very special which strongly drew their interest. Some of these participants even said that they did not like a lot of verbal information, they thought the ads should concentrate on the visual image.

Other participants' comments clearly demonstrated fashion involvement behavior exhibited through magazine use. These participants stated that when they were looking through advertising, they did like to read all the information presented because they had a real interest in the prices, styles, fabrics, colors, details, and stores which were featured in the magazines and they used that information in their shopping activities. These participants seemed to be interested in using this type of information to abstract information about what was happening in fashion in general; they frequently stated that their motives for using the magazine advertising were to find out about trends in styles, colors, and fabrics, etc. (See p. 87 for discussion of motives and the experience of advertising.) Few participants seemed
to be interested in this information because they would be deciding to purchase that particular garment, although some noted the presence of toll-free telephone numbers in the ads and stated that if they were really interested, they might call the store featured in the ad.

The remaining participants stated that whether they read the information varied depending on their current need or desire for new clothing, the amount of time they had to look through magazines, and their interest in the individual garments and ads themselves.

Although Chowdhary (1989) found that the use of magazines for fashion information varied with sex and age, in the present analysis, no clear relationships could be identified in the analysis between frequency of participants’ responses desiring detailed information or attending to verbal text in ads and their age or fashion involvement. This indicates that the level of information, verbal or visual, desired by individuals may not be related to age or familiarity with fashion.

Price information

Due to the apparent significance of price information to participants during the first few interviews, I began detailed questioning of the participants about their price concerns during the follow-up portion of the interviews. I asked how important it was to find out the price from ads and why it was important. The participants were also asked what elements of the ad were cues they used to estimate the price when the actual information was not given to them in the ads.

Importance of price

Five participants stated that they would not care about the price, whereas twenty-one participants thought it was important to find out the price. Others did not have a strong preference; they thought it would be nice to know, but it wasn’t
vital. Reasons that participants wanted to know the price were simple curiosity (4 participants), importance in a purchase-decision process (8 participants), and importance as a reference guide to estimate what prices for similar styles would be in local stores which the participants frequented (9 participants). As one woman stated:

"Yes, I am still interested in how much does that cost and I think it is important for wives to say to their husbands, 'Take a look at what the clothes cost these days. I am going shopping tomorrow', and then when you come home with something about a third of that, they’ll say, 'Wow, she knows how to handle money.'"

These types of comments demonstrated the participants' understanding of the high-fashion orientation of the fashion magazines and the fact that similar styles filter down to lower price points and would be available at various price levels. In addition, participants were abstracting explicit and perceived price information from these ads and using it to evaluate other garments not found in these ads.

**Cues for perceived price**

Participants were asked what aspects of the ads gave them clues or helped them estimate the price of the garments in the ads when the price was not explicitly stated. The seven elements of the ads which were identified as cues for perceived price are listed in Table 8 along with the number of participants who listed each cue. The most frequently listed cue for estimating price was the garment fabric. Also very important cues for the participants were the style of the ad, the designer's name, the style of the garment, and the store name.

The style of the advertisement was the second most frequently cited cue in the perception of price. The participants commented that there were certain ads which "you can
Table 8. Informational cues used by participants in estimating the price of garments in advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cues for perceived price</th>
<th>No. responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fabric type</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of the ad</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer name</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store name</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of the garment</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine the ad is in</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;High fashion&quot; style</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

just tell they are expensive." Generally, ads perceived as glamorous or sophisticated were perceived to promote higher priced garments. Both the garments and the ad layouts were cited as contributing to the sophisticated look. Several felt that the more abstract the presentation, especially in illustrated ads, the higher the price of the garment. Participants also believed that when the price was not listed in the magazines, that alone meant that the garments were very expensive. They seemed to feel that if the advertiser did not state the price, it was going to be out of their own price range. One woman even said that "The prices must be too high. They are ashamed to put them in the ad."

The importance of price to these participants may be a factor of their socio-economic status. While income data was not collected, participants were asked to report approximately how much they spent on clothing for themselves per year. The average amount spent by the participants was $907. This amount of spending generally does not support a "high-fashion" level of spending. The attitudes of the participants, being from a midwestern community, were generally conservative in regard to both clothing styles and clothing expenditures. In
addition, over 50% of the sample were either retired or held clerical positions. These women were generally not concerned with maintaining a more formal business or professional wardrobe.

**Dimensions of response based on formal characteristics of the advertisements**

The participants were questioned during the follow-up portion of the interview about how they felt about specific formal elements of advertisements. Questions pertained to feelings about illustrations and photographs, the use of color in ads, and the setting or backgrounds in ads. Participants’ responses covered a range of preferences and attitudes toward each of these elements. Because multiple responses were given, the frequencies reported do not equal 100%.

**Photographs vs. illustrations**  Preferences for photographs and illustrations were stated both as comparative statements relating one media to the other or as general attitudes or opinions. Table 9 demonstrates the categories of responses related to photographic and illustrated ads and the number of participants who gave these responses.

Four categories of preference for photos emerged from the data: a preference for photographs was expressed with no additional rationale, preferences were due to the participants’ perception that the photo more accurately represents the material and style of the garment than an illustration, participants liked the representation of a real person, and they were bothered by the distorted human figure proportions often evident in illustrations.

Illustrations were evaluated favorably for three reasons: illustrations were felt to be
Table 9. Rationale for preferences for photographs or illustrations in advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferences</th>
<th>No. responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real people in photos</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate material and style in photos</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate figure proportions in photos</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos preferred, no reason given</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations are viewed as cartoonish, not fashionable</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Realistic&quot; illustrations preferred over abstract</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations are more visually interesting</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations convey mood and feeling better than photos</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations viewed as &quot;high fashion&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations are associated with sewing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

more visually interesting or appealing, they were viewed as more expressive of mood and feeling than photos, they were viewed as trendier, in vogue and more high fashion than photographic presentations. Illustrations which were viewed as more realistic or naturalistic in presenting the figure and the garment were viewed more positively than abstract presentations. Certain styles of illustration were viewed negatively because they were felt to be too cartoonish instead of sophisticated or classic. Illustrations were also associated with sewing patterns. This association led to negative or positive feelings, depending on how the participant felt about sewing activities.

The categories of responses to photos and illustrations support the conclusions made earlier that because photography and illustration are different media, the meanings associated with their images are different (McLuhan, 1964). Illustrations are perceived to be unique and high fashion, but they are also disliked in comparison to photographs because they are
perceived to be more abstract or farther from the "real" thing. The photograph is considered to be just as compelling as and realistic as the subject itself (Ewen, 1988).

These findings again point up two approaches to the evaluation of fashion advertising. In one approach, participants were evaluating ads on the basis of the product information they conveyed. The responses which favored photos because of their accuracy in representing the material and style of the product and the proportion of the figure were concerned about getting clear information. The other approach included responses which favored more visually interesting ads, more expressive ads, or "high style" ads. This approach was more concerned with the aesthetic experience. Again, these two views can be associated with an emphasis on information gathering and consciousness of the persuasive goals of the advertisements and the aesthetic, emotional, and hedonic experiences. Both approaches stimulate positive and negative evaluations of both illustrations and photographs.

Interest in color in ads    Participants expressed six various opinions about the use of color in fashion advertisements. Table 10 lists these responses and the number of participants who gave them in response to specific ads or in response to direct questioning about their feelings on the subject of color.

In general, participants thought the use of color was the most effective way of attracting attention to the ads and the garments in them. They wanted the ads to use color both to be visually attractive and to inform them about the color(s) in which the garments were offered. Most participants, though, were not strongly opposed to black and white ads.
Table 10. Responses to color in fashion advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response to color</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color is more effective in attracting interest or attention</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments about the level of attention stimulated by the intensity of color in the ads</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and white is effective, creates more striking graphic design compositions</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color is preferred because it informs viewer of at least one color in which the garment is available</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference for color or black and white in ads</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and white is okay if the ad contains a description of the colors in which the garment is available</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One participant stated "Black and white really says a lot." Twenty-two participants thought that black and white was just fine in ads; four participants qualified that feeling by saying that black and white ads would be fine with them if they included verbal text which described the colors in which the garment was available. Six participants expressed no preference for color or black and white ads.

In addition to participants expressing interest in color, they also made comments which were evaluations of the intensity level of the color in the ads. Such responses include:

"Is the dress really as muted [in color] as they make it look?"

"I would probably stop and look at this ad even though it isn't quite as bright of colors as in most ads."

"The colors are bright and so it would attract attention."

"This one catches your eye because it is against the light background and it just comes at you when you look at it. You almost have to look whether you want to or not."
Interest in the setting of ads  The participants were asked about their opinions of the setting in advertisements; they were asked if they liked to see the model in an indoor or outdoor environment, if they liked the use of graphics or if they felt the background should be empty space. Four response categories emerged from the interviews. Table 11 shows the number of participants who gave each response. Participants responses included: feelings that having some type of environment or design features around the model added interest to the ad, any activity or features in the setting could detract from the garment in the ad by creating a focus other than the garment or by discouraging purchases by defining limited situations where it would be appropriate to wear the garment, elements in the setting had the potential to supply cues about the situations or activities for which it would be appropriate to wear the garment, and no feelings about the setting of the ads.

Once again, the differences among participants' responses in this dimension of experience can be viewed as two differing approaches to the ad. The concern that the setting could potentially distract the viewer's attention from the garment in the ad, and the use of the setting for garment use cues are concerns which exhibit conscious of the ad as a persuasive tool. Responses which favor the use of environment or graphic design features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response to setting</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elements of a setting can add visual interest to the ad</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral feelings about the setting of ads</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements of a setting can provide cues about the use of the garment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements of a setting can detract from the garment in the ad</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
may be interested in the ad for its product promotion or as visual media which can be appreciated as an artistic layout and design.

**Aesthetic and non-aesthetic viewing experiences**

Two final categories of the viewing experience developed from the content analysis of the data. The first category of responses was based upon the researchers’ insight and interpretations of the participants’ experiences and includes the participants’ stated motives for using fashion advertising, and their resultant fantasies and hedonic consumption, experiences of alienation, and aesthetic experiences. The second category of experiences are based on individual or personal associations of meaning which participants described during the interviews. These include references to personal experiences, personal taste and wardrobe selections, including sewing habits, and general associations between the advertisements and some external referent.

**Motives for using fashion advertising** Participants frequently commented on their particular motives for use of fashion magazines. Six participants stated that they only look at the magazines for fun; they would not be really looking for any specific information in ads. Twenty-eight participants cited an interest in fashion trends as their motive for using fashion magazines. They were interested in learning about trends in colors, fabrics, textures, and styles. Nine participants commented about the frequency of their use of fashion magazines or direct mail catalogs in order to justify their familiarity or lack of familiarity with the subject during the interviews.
Experiences resulting from viewing fashion advertising

Three types of general experiences resulting from advertising use were identified. The first type of experience was the participants' ability or desire to personally identify with the model in advertisements. Eight participants gave responses in which they identified themselves with some aspect of the ad. These responses were characterized by statements in which the participant referred to herself wearing the garment instead of the model, performing the same activity or in the same situation as that of the model, or identified in some way with the experiences she felt the model was experiencing. Some examples of this response are:

"But it just makes it look so neat that you could see yourself wearing it."

"I know that it is really modern and so forth, but I wouldn’t...the first one I could picture myself in I guess, this one I couldn’t. There is no way and the ad doesn’t interest me at all."

"I like the way she looks put together. I wouldn’t mind looking that way either."

"I would probably look at that one for a while.... I wish I were sitting next to the water."

"I wish I had somewhere to go in the evening to get dressed up like that."

Consumers fantasizing or imagining themselves with a product in this manner are experiences which Hirschman (1982) termed hedonic consumption. Hirschman asserted that hedonic consumption was an important facet of the consumer's experience and it can lead the consumer to purchase the products in order to "live out the fantasy". By stimulating the viewer to identify with or fantasize about the position of the model in the ad, the ad can persuade the viewer to seek out the product.
The second general type of experience identified was one in which instead of identifying with the model and having a positive experience, viewers had experiences which were potentially alienating. In reviewing the literature, I found that viewers could be alienated by fashion ads which Hart (1985) felt were racist and sexist overtones in ads. Although none of the participants seemed to respond to concerns similar to those raised by Hart, several other types of responses indicated potentially alienating experiences. Sixteen participants gave responses to ads which I felt indicated some degree of alienation. For instance, participants were alienated because they felt that the clothing was not targeted to their age group or the clothing was not appropriate for, or offered in, their physical size:

"...But if you start looking at it with an eye of being sexist at all, then it also reveals some new information about the ad, where they use all the young slender models, and even though the garment might be appealing, you have to look at it as being entertaining because you know it is something that an older woman maybe that doesn't have a perfect figure would wear."

"It is for the younger generation. It is not anything that anyone my age would be interested in I don't think in wearing."

"...Again, it is sophistication which the types of clothes are what I like to wear, but I would never look like that."

"I get a little discouraged when I look at a magazine like Vogue because they don't have any large sizes that I could be interested in."

In addition, one participant may have been alienated by an ad which she felt required some familiarity with the company or store featured in an ad:

"I think you would have to be a real familiar customer to gain anything from this ad so it is really maybe only geared to those people who either shop this line or these stores so I would say it is probably a real specific ad and I would go right past this one."
As the first quotation indicates, these responses often referred to the viewing experience as simply appreciating the ads or looking for fun. This response indicates that for participants who were alienated as potential consumers not targeted by the garments, attention to the aesthetic features of the ads was substituted for interest in the garment as a potential purchase.

The third general experience was the aesthetic experience of the ads. Responses of participants which expressed appreciation for the visual qualities of the ad on the basis of their own intrinsic merit were classified as aesthetic experiences. These responses were comments which expressed positive preferences for ads and were not justified by any relation to the garment or the ad’s fulfillment of its advertising goals. Twenty-three participants expressed this aesthetic appreciation either of ads in general or in response to one or more of the stimuli ads. The following are some examples of the aesthetic response:

"I think it is more of an overall quality of the image. That would not influence me to run out and buy anything but I might appreciate the ad. A lot of ads are very artistic and from that standpoint, the background, set-up, and the composition and those sort of things are really important, but it wouldn’t induce me to buy it."

"[Ads are]...sometimes fun to look at even though you know that it is something that you wouldn’t buy, it is just fun to look at the models and all that just for entertainment purposes."

"I like to look at it. It gives the impression that it is all one color, that they are really not depicting anything, it’s just an expression, that’s all."

"This is beautiful. I love this picture. Everything is glamorous about it and it isn’t something that you would do the laundry in in Iowa. Pretty girl, pretty hair. Art-sy. I love it."

In these aesthetic experiences, appreciation is based on the visual qualities of the ad. The
ad, rather than the product, becomes the focus. In a sense, for individuals who look at ads with little or no concern for the advertisement as a sales pitch, the ad becomes the product or commodity experienced. The garment ceases to be the product; it becomes an element in an artistic or visual composition.

In the final category of experience, the ad experiences became fused with or blended with some other aspect of the participants' life experiences. Thirty-three participants made reference to their own personal shopping habits or their wardrobe selections during the course of the interview. These comments were generally explaining that a garment in an ad would or would not fit with their own personal style. These responses also explained the participants shopping habits and their favorite stores or catalogs to shop from; two participants mentioned that they sewed and that they looked at ads in magazines for sewing information. Twenty of the participants gave responses related to past personal experience while viewing the ads. For instance, one woman told me about a grade-school teacher of whom she was reminded when she looked at one of the ads. Finally, viewing the ads incited 13 participants to make some association between an ad and another era, another style, or some other referent. The gloves worn by the model in Ad #1 frequently led participants to associate the ad with an earlier era when women frequently wore gloves. Another participant's first response when viewing one of the ads was "Paige Mathison. The woman looks like Paige. I watch Knots Landing." A similar association was this response: "This looks like one of my daughter's teen magazines."

Fashion ads have the potential to stimulate a variety of experiences, some having to
do with the purpose for which the ad was created and others not. The motives participants expressed for viewing fashion ads were either for product information or just for entertainment and aesthetic experience. It is not a new phenomenon for ads and editorial material from fashion magazines to be appreciated for their aesthetic value. Many coffee-table volumes such as Packer’s (1983) Fashion drawing in Vogue have been published which feature the work of fashion illustrators and fashion photographers.

These experiences, while extraneous to the ads’ purpose, should be acknowledged and understood. While they are unique and individual experiences, they are still intimately entwined within the viewer’s consciousness of the form as an ad. It is important to note that everyone of the participants, no matter what experiences were most salient for her, admitted a consciousness of the ad as a promotional medium at some point during the interview.

Comparison of Responses to Illustrations and Photographs

To compare participants’ responses to illustrated and photographic ads, all coded responses to each media were compared. Only the response units given during the viewing of the stimuli were used. The Ethnograph computer program was used to sort and compile all response units given for photographs and illustrations. The program identified all codes applied to the text in each unit and the frequencies of individual response codes were calculated. Fisher’s Z for comparison of proportions and frequencies was computed for each category in which the number of responses to either photographs or illustrations was greater than 10. Because these data are free-responses, the expected frequency for each category was
.5. The responses compared are divided into two categories: sources of visual interest and evaluative criteria. Each category will be discussed separately.

Sources of visual interest in photographs and illustrations

The nine elements of visual focus or attention and references to the model identified in the responses to photographs and illustrations were identified and compared. Table 12 lists the frequencies for each response by the media used in the ad.

Significant differences are evident between the responses to photographs and illustrations in the interest in layout and design of the ads, the details of the garment styles, the color in the ads, and the model in the ads. Table 13 lists the visual interest response frequencies by ad.

Table 12. Frequencies of visual interest responses to illustrations and photographs in fashion advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of visual interest</th>
<th>Photographs</th>
<th>Illustrations</th>
<th>Fisher’s Z**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garment style</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout/design of ad</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-3.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment style detail</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2.97*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.98*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer name</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal text</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting of ad</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store name</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.59*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.01
**expected proportion = .5
Table 13. Frequency of visual interest responses by ad for significant responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Photographic ads</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Illustrated ads</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#1</td>
<td>#3</td>
<td>#6</td>
<td>#7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on ad design</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on style detail</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on color</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in the model</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants mentioned aspects of the layout or design of illustrated ads more than twice as frequently as photographic ads. This may be in part explained by the fact that this category included references to graphic design elements which may have seemed more dominant than design concerns in the photographs. Table 13 indicates that the number of responses focused on the graphic features of the illustrations are generally distributed across all four ads, indicating that no one particular ad can account for this difference.

The difference between participants’ focus on the garment style details in the illustrations and photographs can be explained, in part, the nature of the ads themselves. Ad #7 accounts for over one-half of the responses to the style details. This ad is a black and white photo of a jacket and skirt ensemble. The fabric of this ensemble has a large-scale polka-dot print; the pattern is ordered on the jacket and random on the skirt. Responses to the polka-dot pattern, a surface design, were coded as interest in the style details of the garment. If this ad were not considered in the analysis, and it were assumed that another photograph would have the same number of responses as the mean of the other three ads, then there would probably not be a significant difference between the illustrations and the
photographs and their resultant interest in the garment's style details. The significant difference in the attention to color, however, is not explained by any one specific ad. The color in Ads #3 and #6 were the focus of attention more frequently than any other ad. These two ads contain bright colored jackets and the models are posed in front of bright, nearly white backgrounds that suggest the outdoor sky. This contrast made the color salient for the viewers. Ad #8 also contained a brightly colored jacket in high contrast to the background, but the frequency of color focused responses is lower than for the bright photographs. This finding suggests that color in photographs may be more visually attractive to viewers.

Participants' responses included the model in the advertisements nearly three times as often when they were responding to photographs as when they were responding to illustrations. This finding indicates that the model has more salience for the viewer in the experience of ads when the ad is a photograph. These participants not only were focusing on the model, but their responses were attributing specific characteristics to the models, such as "mischievousness", happiness, and sexiness. The participants responded favorably to and seemed more interested in the model in the ads when the model was a real person. Not only were these participants interested in the "concreteness" of the photographic image as opposed to the illustration, they were interested in the humanness of the model.

**Evaluative criteria applied to photographs and illustrations**

Among the evaluative responses to the garments and the ads, there were also significant differences in the participants' frequency of preference statements for the garments
Table 14. Frequencies of evaluative responses to illustrations and photographs in fashion advertisements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative response</th>
<th>Photographs</th>
<th>Illustrations</th>
<th>Fisher's Z**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garment is liked</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2.36*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment is disliked</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment fits lifestyle</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment does not fit lifestyle</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of garment's fashionability</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment is intended for younger market</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment is intended for trendier market</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is liked</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is disliked</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>-2.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is liked due to garment</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is disliked due to garment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad expresses mood or feeling</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is judged unique</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is uncertain</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is clear</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message is uncertain</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad has an artistic quality</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of ad as a sales tool</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic experience of the ad</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-0.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.01.

**expected frequency = .5.

by type of ad and differences in preferences for the ads (see Table 14).

The garments represented in the photographs were more frequently liked than garments represented in the illustrations. This may be due to the concreteness of the garment or the perceived clarity of information in the photographs. Participants may be more likely
to prefer the photograph which they feel provides more accuracy in representing the garment.

Although it was not statistically significant, a trend exists in the data in which the responses expressing certainty of the information were more frequent in regard to the photographs and expressions of uncertainty about the information were more frequent in regard to illustrations.

Further analysis demonstrates the accountability of specific ads for these differences. Table 15 lists the frequency of responses by ad for the significantly different responses and the responses which indicate trends toward differences (.01 to .20) taken from Table 14.

In stating their preferences for the ads, participants expressed dislike for the illustrations significantly more often than for the photographs. The differences between participants’ like for photographs and illustrations is also a strong trend, although not statistically significant at the level of p < .01 (see Table 14). Table 15 demonstrates that there is a strong similarity between the frequency of responses expressing positive preference for the garments and the ads. It should be noted however, that this is not completely the case among responses expressing dislike for both the illustrated and photographic ads. The garments in Ads #6 and #7 (photographs) and Ad #4 (illustration) were most frequently disliked, but these ads were not similarly disliked. In fact, the photos were generally still liked, while the frequency of dislike responses for illustrations was similar between the ad and the garment. It is interesting to add to this comparison that responses which expressed like or dislike for the ad because of preference for the garment were coded as preferences for ads based on garments and not also coded as simple preference for the ad. This indicates that
although participants did not consciously justify or state their preferences for ads according to their preference for the garments, it was probably the strongest contributing factor. This may indicate that an elaborate ad design or expensive, exotic-looking settings may be wasted effort and production expense if the preferences for the garment in the ad is not positive.

Table 15. Frequency of evaluative responses to illustrations and photographs by advertisement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Photographic ads</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Illustrated ads</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#1</td>
<td>#3</td>
<td>#6</td>
<td>#7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment is liked*</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment is disliked***</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is liked**</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is disliked***</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad is liked due to garment**</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment is intended for younger market**</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment is intended for trendier market**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is uncertain**</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is clear***</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of ad as persuasive tool**</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic experience of ad**</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates significant difference, p < .01.
** indicates trend.
*** no trend indicated, included for comparison.
In assessing the intended or appropriate market for the garments in the ads, two non-significant (p > .05) trends were identified. First, the photographs were more frequently judged to portray garments for a young market. Ad #6 was the ad most frequently assessed as targeting young women. The garment ensemble consists of pants and a bright orange casual jacket and t-shirt. This trend may also be explained by the apparent ages of the models in the photographs. The models may have been perceived to be of a specific age, whereas the illustrations may not have been perceived to convey age information.

Second, the illustrations were assessed as appropriate for a trendier market more frequently than the photographs. In particular, illustrated Ads #2 and #4 were assumed to be trendy garments, perhaps due to their more abstract qualities. Ad #2 was also considered to be "high fashion" and sophisticated. The fact that these ads were also disliked most frequently may be a function of the level of fashion interest and the socio-economic status of the participants. These participants generally gave positive evaluations to garments which they felt were appropriate for themselves and they did not apparently view themselves as in a "high fashion" market.

Participants evaluated the effectiveness of the ads as a persuasive sales tool more frequently in response to the illustrations than photographs. These responses were generally phrased negatively, such as "This wouldn’t induce me to buy anything." Although not statistically significant, this trend may indicate that the illustrations were not as effective from an advertising perspective as the photographs. Although not conclusive, this trend supports the feeling of many of the advertising professionals I contacted through an informal survey.
who believe that photography is more effective than illustration in advertising.

In response to the specific ads, participants gave statements which were interpreted as aesthetic appreciation more frequently for illustrated ads than photographs. The participants seem to have expressed enjoyment of the illustrations for their visual characteristics more frequently. This trend may be due to illustrations perceived association with art and graphic design. Participants, because they were aware that the work was drawn, tended to perceive and evaluate the illustrations as they would the work of artists.

The results of the comparisons between the frequency of each response category used in reference to the two types of ads indicate that there are both significant and slight differences between the way the participants responded to illustrations and photographs. Illustrations and the garments in them were most frequently disliked by the viewers in this sample. The illustrations were viewed as trendier, more high-fashion oriented than the photographs. In general, the photographs were viewed as more effective in communicating information about the product, although the more naturalistic or realistic ads illustrations were viewed more positively than abstract or exaggerated illustrations. These results indicate a perceived dichotomy between the level of garment information conveyed in an ad and the level of fashion of the garment. Ads with less garment information were perceived promote more high fashion garments.

The participants exhibited more interest in the visual qualities of the illustrated ads, although they responded more frequently to the color in the photographs. They also seemed to show more interest in the models in the photographs.
Viewers’ Satisfaction with Fashion Advertisement Information

The participants completed a 9-item rating for each ad in which they responded on a 7-point Likert-type scale and assessed their personal satisfaction with the information gained from viewing each ad. The items rated were: information about the garment’s price, design details, lines, shape, color, texture, fabric type, fiber content, and the situations appropriate for wearing the garment. Participants were reminded that by assessing their satisfaction with each ad, they should consider whether they cared about knowing that information and whether they learned the information from the ad. In other words, if the participants did not care about learning the price in an ad, they were asked to rate the ad highly whether it conveyed price information or not.

The mean scores for each item and across items were calculated on the satisfaction ratings to produce a rank order of the ads as they were perceived to be informative by the participants. The data were also analyzed using a repeated measures analysis of variance with Bonferroni t-tests of differences between means of each item. Pearson Correlation Coefficients were computed to compare the effect of participants’ age, education, scores on the two involvement indexes, and reported amounts spent on apparel per year.

Mean scores and ranking of ads

The analysis of the participants’ responses to the satisfaction questionnaire did not indicate a high degree of differentiation among ads on their information content perceived by the viewers. Simple calculation of mean scores resulted in a rank ordering of the stimuli
ads on the basis of all responses across the nine item scale. Table 16 demonstrates the rank order of the ads rated most to least satisfactory on their information content.

The ad ranked most satisfactory in its information content, Ad #5, was an illustrated ad which contained a block of descriptive text discussing the designer, the intended level of formality or occasion for the garment, the fabric, surface treatment, and size information in addition to the store name. The background around the model is rendered in a loose manner, faded-out at the edges of the composition and consists of a table holding a large floral arrangement. The illustration, by Kenneth Paul Block, would be classified as an edited sketch according to Bride (1990). This ad did not include price information.

Table 16. Overall rank and mean satisfaction with information scores by item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ad #</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Design detail</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Texture</th>
<th>Fabric</th>
<th>Fiber</th>
<th>Use cues</th>
<th>Ave.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>5.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>5.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>5.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>5.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second most highly ranked ad, Ad #1, was a photograph of a woman seated on a couch in an indoor setting. It also included descriptive text referring to the designer, the intended use in an appeal, "For those summer days when the mood is delightfully Dior," the
fiber content, the price, the location within the department store where the suit could be found, the store locations and a toll-free telephone number for at home ordering.

The two least satisfactory ads, Ads #4 and #2, were also the ads which stimulated negative preference responses during the oral portion of the interview. The garment in Ad #4 also stimulated the most negative preferences of all the garments. These ads had little or no descriptive text accompanying the visual image. Ad #2 contained only the designer name and a listing of 9 stores and their locations. Ad #4 contained an apparent designer or manufacturer's name and an affective appeal, "Dress in a New Direction." The mean score for all items, with the exception of color, for these ads was 3.5 and below.

These findings indicate that participants are more satisfied with ads which include most or all of these types of information. They do not apparently feel that the visual image alone accurately describes elements such as the fiber or fabric and texture of the garments.

**Analysis of variance of satisfaction with information ratings**

The nine items: price, design details, line, shape, color, texture, fabric type, fiber content, and situational cues, were the dependent variables in the analysis of the effect of the ad on ratings of satisfaction. Results of the analysis of variance (Table 17) indicate that among each item, significant differences exist between ads.
Table 17. Analysis of variance results for satisfaction with information in ads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction variable</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>184.55</td>
<td>61.40</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design detail</td>
<td>86.16</td>
<td>30.07</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines</td>
<td>65.99</td>
<td>23.31</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>59.24</td>
<td>19.67</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>133.98</td>
<td>45.45</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>140.49</td>
<td>43.44</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric type</td>
<td>178.17</td>
<td>64.66</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber content</td>
<td>143.51</td>
<td>46.46</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational cues</td>
<td>70.68</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 7, 344

To further compare means of satisfaction items between ads, post-hoc Bonferroni t-tests were computed to identify important differences. Table 18 lists the results of the t-tests. The items and differences between ratings of the ads on each item are discussed separately.

**Price** Two groupings of ads emerged from the analysis of price satisfaction ratings. Ads #1 (mean = 6.02) and #6 (6.36) were rated the highest as could be expected because these two ads were the only two which contained stated price information.

**Design details** Ads #2 (2.75) and #4 (2.91) were similarly rated and significantly different from the rest of the ads on the variable of garment design detail information. These ads were abstract or exaggerated illustrations. The ads were very impressionistic and the viewers rated them low on their ability to communicate detail information.
Table 18. Bonferroni groupings of ads according to mean scores on satisfaction with information questionnaire items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>*M.S.D.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>1.1637</td>
<td>6.02_a</td>
<td>1.43_b</td>
<td>2.23_b</td>
<td>1.41_b</td>
<td>2.27_b</td>
<td>6.36_a</td>
<td>1.66_b</td>
<td>1.98_b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design details</td>
<td>1.1362</td>
<td>5.32_a</td>
<td>2.75_b</td>
<td>6.11_a</td>
<td>2.91_b</td>
<td>6.05_a</td>
<td>5.82_a</td>
<td>5.18_a</td>
<td>6.07_a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines</td>
<td>1.1294</td>
<td>5.18_b</td>
<td>3.45_c</td>
<td>6.34_a</td>
<td>3.09_c</td>
<td>5.80_ab</td>
<td>5.43_ab</td>
<td>5.70_ab</td>
<td>6.23_ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>1.1649</td>
<td>5.30_a</td>
<td>3.48_b</td>
<td>6.11_a</td>
<td>3.30_b</td>
<td>5.89_a</td>
<td>5.52_a</td>
<td>5.50_a</td>
<td>6.23_a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>1.1524</td>
<td>5.64_ab</td>
<td>1.73_d</td>
<td>6.45_a</td>
<td>5.05_b</td>
<td>5.84_ab</td>
<td>6.34_a</td>
<td>2.95_c</td>
<td>6.18_ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>1.2072</td>
<td>5.55_ab</td>
<td>1.89_d</td>
<td>4.70_bc</td>
<td>1.81_d</td>
<td>6.16_a</td>
<td>4.02_c</td>
<td>2.00_d</td>
<td>5.27_ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric</td>
<td>1.1142</td>
<td>5.68_ab</td>
<td>1.57_d</td>
<td>4.25_c</td>
<td>1.64_d</td>
<td>6.73_a</td>
<td>3.32_c</td>
<td>1.95_d</td>
<td>5.45_b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber</td>
<td>1.1797</td>
<td>5.36_ab</td>
<td>1.39_e</td>
<td>3.36_c</td>
<td>1.34_e</td>
<td>5.81_a</td>
<td>2.61_cd</td>
<td>1.73_de</td>
<td>4.64_b_c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use cues</td>
<td>1.2313</td>
<td>5.91_a</td>
<td>3.55_cd</td>
<td>6.20_a</td>
<td>3.07_d</td>
<td>6.36_a</td>
<td>5.84_a</td>
<td>4.57_bc</td>
<td>5.75_ab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means having the same subscript are not significantly different.
* Minimum significant difference; df = 7,344; Critical value of T = 3.15.

Lines Three groupings of ads emerged from the analysis of the variable: garment line information. Ads #1, #3, #5, #6, #7, and #8 were all rated satisfactorily on their line information. Ads #1 (5.18) and #3 (6.34) are apparently different due to the amount of separation of the and contrast between the model and the background surrounding her and the pose of the model. In Ad #1, the model is seated on a couch of a similar value to her garment and she is in a slightly hunched position and leaning forward.

Ad #2 (3.45) has a very sketchy line quality and Ad #4 (3.09) has a heavy exaggerated line quality and exaggerated figure proportions. These under- and over-exaggerated qualities of line were judged by the participants to be inadequate or inaccurate.
information and therefore not satisfactory.

Shape  Once again, Ads #2 (3.48) and #4 (3.30) are significantly different than the other ads, probably due to their exaggerated visual qualities. Ad #2 is a vertically elongated figure whereas ad #4 is horizontally elongated with highly exaggerated details such as shoulder pads. The two ads are also very two-dimensional in their figure representation. Participants might also have been rating these ads low because they convey little information about the garments' shape in a three-dimensional sense. Again, these qualities were not rated as satisfactorily conveying information. These two ads were rated similarly on three items: lines, shape and detail information. This finding indicates that these concepts may be interrelated.

Color  The two black and white ads, Ads #2 (1.73) and #7 (2.95), are significantly different both from the other ads and from each other. The photo (Ad #7) may have been assumed to be a black and white garment, although participants rated it low because that information was not certain, whereas the illustration (Ad #2) was rated the lowest and participants were even more dissatisfied by its color information.

The remaining six ads, all rated relatively satisfactorily, have little differentiation between them. Ads #3 (6.45) and #6 (6.34) were apparently rated similarly to each other due to the intensity of the colors portrayed in the ads and significantly different than #4 (5.05) due to the realistic nature of the color. Ads #3, and #6 also the highest frequency of response to color as a focus of attention. These differences apparently fall in a rank order of participants faith in the accuracy of the garment's color in the ads with the exaggerated
illustration being perceived the least accurate.

Texture   The flat visual qualities of the garments’ surfaces in Ads #2 (1.89), #4 (1.81) and #7 (2.00) apparently contributed to the similar ratings of these ads on the variable texture. The garment in Ad #7 appears as a flat block of color and pattern with no highlights or sheen indicating texture. Ad #2 is very sketchy with little surface texture intimated for the suit and an over-exaggerated fur texture, whereas Ad #4 has a very chalky appearance to the garment’s surface. These ads did not provide satisfactory information to the viewers about the garments’ textures.

Two photos, Ads #3 (4.70) and #6 (4.02), were rated similarly and their garments seem to exhibit a soft, smooth textured look. Ads #1 (5.55), #3 (4.70), and #8 (5.27) formed one cluster in the analysis, as well as Ads #1 (5.55), #5 (6.16), and #8 (5.27). These ads were perhaps rated similarly because the garment surfaces in the ads carry a similar amount of light and shadow. Ads #3 and #5 were rated significantly different from each other, perhaps due to the participants’ certainty of the information. Ad #5, an illustration with a very soft and fluid visual surface character, was rendered through color wash techniques and has an additional description of the fabric in the text.

Fabric type   Ads #1 (5.68) and #5 (6.73) were rated satisfactorily as were ads #1 (5.68) and #8 (5.45). These three ads contained some type of terms or references to the fabric; Ad #5 was the only ad to actually state a fabric name. Ads #3 and #6 were rated similarly, possibly based on visual qualities used by participants to make assumptions about the fabric type. Ads #2 (1.89), #4 (1.81), and #7 (2.00), which were rated low, provided
the viewers unsatisfactory information about fabric type. This was similar to their ratings of satisfaction on texture. Because Ads #3 and #6, were rated similarly on texture and fabric as were ads #2, #4, and #7, this indicates that visual texture is an important factor for viewers in interpreting fabric type or vice versa.

**Fiber content** On the variable fiber content, there are 5 significantly differing groupings. The first group, Ad #1 (5.36) and #5 (5.81) list wool as the fiber content. Ad #1 and #8 (4.64) created the next grouping. Ad #8, listing linen fabric, is apparently different from Ad #5 based on the ads’ visual cues. Ads #3 (3.36) and #6 (2.61) again group together as do ads #2 (1.39), #4 (1.34) and #7 (1.73), none of these listing fiber content, but viewers apparently were also using visual textural cues to guess about fiber content. It is not understood why ads #6 and #7 were not rated significantly differently.

**Situational appropriateness cues** Affective text may have provided viewers with cues about the appropriateness of the garment for specific situations. Ads #1 (5.91), #3 (6.20), #5 (6.36), #6 (5.84), and #8 (5.75) formed one similarly rated group and all have textual appeals, some including direct references to appropriate or intended situations for the garment. Participants were apparently not depending heavily on setting cues on this item because this first grouping contains ads with realistic indoor settings, outdoor settings and no setting. Ads #2 (3.55) and #7 (4.57) were rated similarly, perhaps on the basis of the lack of text and their ambiguous settings. Ads #2 and #4 (3.07) were similarly rated also. Many participants, while completing the questionnaire, in addition to commenting about their preferences (usually negative) for the garments in these two ads, also commented that they
had no idea who would wear the garments and where they would be worn. Because the garments were perceived as trendy or high-fashion, these participants did not feel they knew where they would be appropriate.

On the items referring to information about garment line, shape and detail, two ads were rated similarly to each other and significantly different from the rest. On the items texture, fabric, and fiber, two other ads were also rated similarly throughout. In both groups, the ads do not contain descriptive text referring to these items. These findings indicate that these concepts are highly interrelated and that the visual information about line is used to interpret information about shape and detail. Qualities of visual texture seem to be the primary cues used in interpreting information or making inferences about fabric type and fiber content. These items will be compared and the degree of correlation between items will be discussed in the following section.

Comparison of Ratings by Individuals with Different Levels of Involvement

The final objective of this study was to compare the responses to fashion advertisements of individuals with different levels of fashion involvement. This analysis was restricted to the participants' responses on the questionnaire ratings of their satisfaction with the information in the ads. Analysis of participants' fashion involvement and their free-responses collected during the interview may be analyzed and reported elsewhere.

Satisfaction ratings were analyzed through calculation of Pearson Correlation Coefficients between the scale items from the satisfaction measure and the participants'
demographic and involvement information. Table 19 shows the correlation matrix for the
nine information items and the participants' age, education, involvement scores, and their
amounts reportedly spent on clothing.

**Fashion involvement indexes**

The Pearson Correlation Coefficients indicated only limited relationships between
participants' scores on the Tigert, Ring and King (1976) Fashion Involvement Index, (FII),
which measured behavioral involvement with fashion and the Personal Involvement Index,
(PII), (Fairhurst, Good & Gentry, 1989) which measures attitudinal involvement and their
ratings of satisfaction with the information found in the ads. The FII scores were negatively
correlated with participants' satisfaction ratings for price ($r = -0.14$, $p = .008$) and situational
appropriateness information ratings ($r = -0.18$, $p = .0006$) indicating that participants low
in behavioral involvement were less concerned about price information in ads and less
concerned about gaining cues about where to wear certain garments. This may be due to the
fact that the questions on the FII relate to an individual's adoption rate and frequency of
time spent concerned with fashion related activities. Participants who are later adopters and
do not spend time frequently seeking fashion information may have less knowledge and
experience to draw upon in making judgements about the price or the appropriateness of
garments from limited information, but according to these results, they do not seem
concerned about this information.

Participants FII scores were also somewhat negatively correlated, although not at the
level of $p < .05$, with their ratings of the ads on their communication of information about line, texture, and fiber content (see Table 19 for coefficients). Lower involved participants rated these items as more satisfactory than participants with higher involvement. This finding indicates that participants low in involvement may not be as concerned about getting detailed or specific information to interpret advertisements. They may be comfortable making inferences about these items from visual information; being less involved, there may be less risk involved in making assumptions.

And finally, FII and PII scores were negatively correlated with participants' ratings of the situational cues in the advertisements indicating that participants who were less involved in fashion were more satisfied with the information provided about appropriate situations in which the garments would be appropriate. Participants higher in involvement may have been more concerned about the garment information and situational appropriateness cues, in order to use this information to keep themselves knowledgeable about fashion.

As should be expected, there was a correlation of .61 between the two involvement measures, indicating that there is a moderate degree of construct validity between the two measures. The measures do differ in their measurements of attitudes and behaviors, but underlying these two constructs is the subjects’ perceived importance of fashion.

**Age**

Participants' ages were negatively correlated with satisfaction ratings of detail, line, shape, texture, fabric, and fiber information ($p < .05$, see Table 19 for coefficients). Older
Table 19. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between satisfaction with information items and subject variables of age, education, fashion involvement scores and annual clothing expenditures

| Price   | Detail Lines Shape Color Textur Fabric Fiber Sit. Age Educat. FII PII Spent per yr. |
|---------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Price   | 1                               | 0.2672                          | 0.1627                          | 0.1544                          | 0.2852                          | 0.3419                          | 0.2864                          | 0.2746                          | 0.2787                          | 0.0364                          | 0.0325                          | -0.14                           | -0.02                           | 0.056                           |
|         | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.002                          | *0.003                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.0001                         |                           |
| Design  | 1                               | 0.7863                          | 0.751                           | 0.4462                          | 0.5051                          | 0.4812                          | 0.4207                          | 0.5626                          | 0.1463                          | 0.0141                          | -0.077                          | 0.0203                          | 0.0791                          |
| details | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          |                           |
| Lines   | 1                               | 0.8509                          | 0.3798                          | 0.4329                          | 0.4008                          | 0.3766                          | 0.2178                          | 0.1568                          | 0.0199                          | -0.09                           | 0.0081                          | 0.1267                          |
|         | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          |                           |
| Shape   | 1                               | 0.3526                          | 0.409                           | 0.3881                          | 0.3477                          | 0.2576                          | 0.1639                          | 0.2163                          | 0.0563                          | -0.046                          | 0.0006                         | 0.1133                          |
|         | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          |                           |
| Color   | 1                               | 0.4813                          | 0.3881                          | 0.3558                          | 0.3802                          | 0.0686                          | -0.559                          | -0.019                          | -0.044                          | -0.008                          |
|         | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.0001                         |                           |
| Texture | 1                               | 0.8552                          | 0.7731                          | 0.5352                          | 0.1749                          | -0.037                          | -0.095                          | -0.016                          | -0.061                          |
|         | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          |                           |
| Fabric  | 1                               | 0.8344                          | 0.4929                          | 0.1494                          | 0.1463                          | 0.1876                          | -0.053                          | -0.049                          | -0.043                          | -0.07                           |
| type    | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.001                          | *0.0001                         |                           |
| Fiber   | 1                               | 0.4613                          | 0.1876                          | -0.053                          | -0.049                          | -0.043                          | -0.07                           |
| content | 0                               | *0.0001                         | *0.004                          | *0.005                          | 0.709                          | 0.187                          | 0.077                          | 0.419                           | 0.199                           |
| Situation cues | 1 | 0.1122  | 0.1173  | -0.181  | -0.131  | 0.1188  | **0.036  | **0.027  | **0.006  | **0.014  | **0.029  | **0.036  | **0.027  | **0.006  | **0.014  | **0.029  | **0.036  | **0.027  | **0.006  | **0.014  | **0.029  | **0.036  | **0.027  | **0.006  | **0.014  | **0.029  | **0.036  | **0.027  |
| Age     | 1                               | -0.094                          | -0.383                          | 0.0413                          | -0.086                          |
|         | 0                               | 0.079                           | 0.439                           | 0.115                           |
| Education | 1                                | 0.1106                          | 0.1693                          | 0.289                           |
|         | 0                                | **0.038                          | *0.001                          | *0.0001                         |
| Fashion involvement | 1                                | 0.6053                          | -0.376                          |
|         | 0                                | *0.0001                          | *0.0001                         |
| Personal involvement | 1                                | -0.213                          |
|         | 0                                | *0.0001                          |
| Amount spent/year | 1                                | 0                                |

* p < .01.

** p < .05.

Participants may have been either less interested in this information or more able to interpret this information in the ads. Age was negatively correlated with the behavioral involvement,
reported spending on apparel per year

The amount participants reported spending on apparel for themselves per year was correlated with ratings of satisfaction with line (r = 0.13, p = 0.02) and shape information (r = 0.11, p = 0.04) as well as satisfaction with situational appropriateness cues (r = 0.12, p = .03). Participants who reported spending more on apparel rated the ads more positively, indicating that they were satisfied with these types of information in the ads. The amounts participants spent on clothing was also positively related to their educational level and both involvement ratings.

Education

Participants’ reported educational level was correlated only with participants ratings of their satisfaction with the appropriateness cues in the ads. The educational level of the participants was strongly correlated with participants’ involvement scores for both measures (p < .05).

These correlations between education, spending, and fashion involvement may have to do with socio-economic factors. Participants at higher levels of education have a greater
earning potential and therefore have potentially higher amounts of discretionary income. They also may have higher status positions in which appearance or a professional wardrobe is important or required for job success. Participants with higher discretionary income or professional wardrobe needs may be more personally involved in fashion.

Comparison of scale items in satisfaction measure

Satisfaction ratings for all nine items are significantly correlated with each other ($r = .15$ to $.85$, $p < .01$), indicating that participants' satisfaction with each of the types of information in the ads are all related. Participants used all information cues available to them through visual and verbal information to evaluate the information content on each specific element.

Correlations of $.75$ or greater were found between two groups of items, line, shape and detail; and fiber, fabric and texture. The high correlations between these two groups of items indicate that visual or verbal cues about any of the items in the group are used as cues to interpret information for the two other items. This finding substantiates the hypothesis generated by the analysis of variance results in which specific ads which were rated similarly on one of these cues were also rated similarly on the other two items (see p. 109). These items are measuring highly inter-related constructs.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present research was conducted to explore the experiences women have when they view fashion advertising. Participants in this study were asked to view and evaluate a set of fashion advertisements, relating their perceptual, evaluative, aesthetic and non-aesthetic experiences. A literature review assessed changes in fashion advertising through the Twentieth Century and provided a general characterization of the formal features and informational aspects of ads currently employed in fashion magazines. This review helped to identify form and content to which viewers might respond and also identified potential experiences available to viewers of fashion magazines. This study explored the nature of the practical/functional product oriented experiences and aesthetic experiences of fashion advertising. Experiences which are based on a consumer’s role in seeking and processing information leading to a purchase decision were considered to be functional/practical experiences of the ads or products in the ads. Experiences in which the intrinsic visual qualities of the ads perceived by the viewer are valued as an experience in themselves were considered aesthetic experiences (Holbrook, 1987).

The four objectives of this study were 1) to explore the experience stimulated by the viewing fashion advertisements including identification of the dimensions of that experience; 2) to compare the responses to illustrations and photographs used in fashion ads; 3) to explore viewers’ satisfaction with the amount of and types of information available in fashion advertisements; and 4) to compare the responses to fashion advertising of individuals with different levels of fashion involvement.
Free-response interviews were conducted with 44 women in Ames, IA, in which the participants were asked to view and respond to 8 fashion ad stimuli selected from recent issues of *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Participants were asked to identify what features of the ads stimulated their visual interest, to evaluate the garments in the ads, and to evaluate the ads. This information was collected to identify the criteria viewers used to evaluate fashion ads. The participants were also asked about their information needs/wants from fashion advertisements and their opinions about the various formal aspects of fashion ads, including the use of illustration and photography, color, setting and verbal text. A measurement of the viewers' satisfaction with the information available in the ads was developed for the study to explore viewers' informational needs.

**Limitations**

The exploratory nature of this study should be considered when reviewing its results. As is the case in all naturalistic studies, the findings here are limited to the experiences of the participants in the sample and are not generalizable to any other population.

The convenience sample for this study was limited to career women in a relatively conservative-minded midwestern community and the sample included a large number of older and retired women. Although many of the participants were personally interested in or involved with fashion, they were generally not fashion leaders or innovators who purchase the "high-fashion" garments featured in *Vogue*. This study may have produced different results if conducted among residents of a major metropolitan area.
When responding to the ads or to the specific questions about elements of ads, participants often gave multiple responses, supplying a range of experiences and preference criteria and responses were given according to the salience of that theme for each participant. Each response category was not used by each participant in response to each ad or question. This limited the analysis of the data to description of the responses, rather than comparison of frequency or priority of responses. Further research should build on these findings in order to make comparisons between types of evaluative criteria applied to fashion ads, preferences for garments and ads, the product information-seeking or aesthetic experience orientation of the viewer, and responses about specific formal elements in fashion ads.

Patterns of Perception and Response

Three patterns of perception and response were identified by analysis of the participants’ responses to the ads during their first viewing when they were told to identify what they saw in the ads. One group of participants focused on specific features of the ads as I expected them to do, whereas another group’s responses were more global, immediately making evaluations of or associations with aspects of the ads. The third group’s responses included both patterns of response. This finding suggests that participants differed in style of mental processing of information in the ads. This finding also indicates that perception, recognition, association and evaluation of clothing images are automatic processes which may be very difficult for individuals to separate and verbalize.
Dimensions of Experience

The dimensions of the viewing experience were identified through the content analysis of the transcripts of the interviews. Themes emerging from the data were analyzed and grouped into categories of a coding guide. Through constant comparison of responses and negotiation of coding of responses, the coding guide was revised and refined. The categories of the final coding guide represent all the dimensions of the experiences identified through this study.

Five broad categories of themes were identified: attention to specific visual elements of the garments or the ads, the evaluative criteria applied to both the garments and the ads, the informational needs of the participants, dimensions of response based on formal characteristics of the advertisements, and the overall aesthetic and non-aesthetic experiences.

The elements which were identified by participants as items which attracted their attention in the ads included the style of the garment, color, details of the garment, accessories, designer name, store name, elements in the setting of the ad, layout and design features of the ad, verbal text, and the model. The color, garment style, and overall design of the ads were most frequently the elements which provided a visual focus of attention for participants. The models in photographs were also frequently the focus of participants’ responses. Participants responded to several aspects of the model, such as pose and appearance as well as age and perceived psychological traits. The participants’ responses were interested in the "human-ness" of models in photographs as compared with drawings.

The evaluative criteria identified for the garments included the personal like or dislike
for the garment reflecting its perceived appropriateness for the participant, the perceived appropriateness of the garment for the participants' individual lifestyles, the apparent quality, cost of, and intended market for the garment, and assessments of the garments' fashionability. Participants generally responded negatively to garments which they felt were not "for them", indicating that the perceived appropriateness for oneself is a strong factor in preferences.

The advertisements were evaluated on the bases of the participants' preferences for the garments in the ads, their visual qualities of the ads, including layout/design features, the mood or feeling expressed in the ads, the professional or artistic qualities of the ads, and the uniqueness of the visual character of the ads. These visual qualities were usually perceived as positive features of the ads. The advertisements were also evaluated on the basis of their accurate communication of garment information, the explicit and implicit message cues in the ads, and the persuasiveness of the ad as a sales tool. Ads which conveyed limited information were generally liked less frequently than ads which included more information. In addition, ads with a more abstract presentation, particularly abstract illustrations, were viewed as trendy and high fashion. This characteristic was generally not liked by women who felt that they were not "trendy" consumers.

Features of the surrounding space in the ad were often cues for the participants in evaluating the garment or the message in the ad. This finding demonstrates DeLong's (1987) concept of the interaction between the clothed body and the surrounding space in the creation or interpretation of meaning. When features of the environment were perceived in conflict
with the garment or the model, participants expressed uncertainty or confusion about the meaning or message in the ad.

Informational cues important to participants in the evaluation of fashion advertisements were general information about the style of the garment, the price, the designer, the color, fabric, fiber content, and specific details about the garment. Nearly all participants favored the inclusion of garment information in text copy in the ads. They felt that even though they might not read all ads, they would like this information to be included so that they could read the ads for which they liked the garments. Many participants demonstrated fashion involvement through an interest in learning detailed information about garment styles from magazines in order to follow fashion trends. These participants generally wanted explicit information and most wanted the ads to state the garment price.

The importance of price to these participants was explored as well as the cues they used to estimate price when that information was unavailable. Participants wanted price information to satisfy their curiosity, in order to make purchase decisions about the garments in the ads, and to abstract information from the ads to evaluate other garments with which they might come in contact in other shopping experiences. The fabric, the style of the ad, and the designer’s name were the most frequently cited cues used.

Participants were questioned about their feelings about specific formal features of fashion ads, including the use of photography and illustration, color, verbal text, and setting in the ads. Responses to this line of questioning included general characterizations of ads based on their formal features, evaluative criteria based on formal features, and participants’
preferences for specific types of ads.

Types of overall experiences identified, both aesthetic and non-aesthetic, were associated with participants' motives for and experiences resulting from use of fashion advertising. Motives were either seeking product information in the fashion ads or aesthetic experiences in which fashion ads functioned as a source of pleasure or entertainment. Aesthetic experiences in which participants appreciated the intrinsic qualities of the ad for their own value were evident in responses to both illustrations and photographs, supporting Wollen's (1989) assertion that any visual form, including photography, can be both informative and induce aesthetic experience.

General experiences which resulted from viewing fashion ads include identifying the self with the ad in hedonic consumption experiences, being alienated by ads which are for markets other than the market in which participants' believed they belong, and fusing the experience of the ad with other personal experiences.

Functional/Practical Product Experience and Aesthetic Experience

The two general types of experience identified in the literature, the practical, information gathering, consumer-role oriented experiences and aesthetic experiences, were found to be underlying concerns in the participants' evaluation of the garments and the ads and their responses to questions about specific formal aspects of the ads. Decision-making experience themes included focus on the garment as a product offered in the ad, the persuasiveness of the ad, and the amount of or clarity of the information communicated by
the ad. Aesthetic experience-oriented themes were characterized by attention to the visual qualities of the ad, the general layout or design of the ad, the mood or image conveyed in the ad, and associations with art or an artistic character. The two types of experiences were found to be generally distinct concerns underlying individuals’ responses to all ads or to specific ads, but all participants made both types of responses to some degree throughout the interviews. Future research may explore the underlying functional or aesthetic experiential orientation of individuals as they perceive and evaluate clothing and advertising. The functional and aesthetic themes were distinct but overlapped to some degree in all interviews, perhaps due to the participants’ fundamental consciousness that fashion advertising’s general purpose is persuading viewers to seek and purchase garments.

Aesthetic concerns were occasionally the basis of responses after the intellectual, consumption-oriented experience was found lacking or eliminated for some reason. For instance, when a garment was perceived as inappropriate for the respondent, aesthetic concerns, such as an interest in the visual qualities of the ad, were sometimes substituted. In addition, if the garment information was inadequate, then the ad may have been appreciated for its aesthetic nature. Further research should continue to investigate the product-information oriented and aesthetic experiences to explore the nature of, and interactions between these two orientations.
Comparison of Illustration and Photography

Viewers’ responses to fashion illustrations and photographs were found to be significantly different on a number of dimensions, including the elements in the ads which became the focus of attention, the evaluative criteria applied to the garments and the ads, and the attention given to the models in advertisements. Viewers concentrated their attention more frequently on the graphic design features such as the artists’ technical style in illustrations and the color in photos. They also focused attention on and discussed the model in the photographs almost three times as often as the models in the illustrations, indicating that real people in photographs are more salient than drawn figures. The responses to the models in the photographs were concerned with both the reality of the model’s size and shape and with the model’s psychological traits.

Garments shown in photos were liked more frequently than those in illustrations. In addition photos were liked whereas illustrations were disliked more frequently by the participants. Another trend identified in the analysis was the participants’ tendency to be more satisfied or confident with the accuracy of information conveyed in photographs. These findings support some the perception of consumers’ attitudes toward photography held by many individuals in the advertising departments of major retail stores as identified in my informal survey of advertising art directors. However, the participants’ favor for photos was due not only to the "reality" of the garments in the photographs, but also to the participants’ ability to relate to the model in the ad on a psychological level. The underlying product-
oriented or aesthetic nature of the experiences was not found to differ significantly between illustrations and photographs as separate categories, but by individual ads.

**Participants’ Satisfaction with the Information in Fashion Advertisements**

Differences in the participants’ satisfaction with information in the ads was examined using analysis of variance and t-tests for the variables price, garment line, garment design detail, shape, color, texture, fabric type, fiber content, and the situational appropriateness of the garment. Analysis of variance found a main effect for ads on each variable item. Bonferroni T-tests determined similarity of ads on each variable. Both the t-tests and Pearson Correlation Coefficients indicate strong relationships among all variable items indicating that information about one visual element is used to make inference about other information. T-tests identified ads which were rated similarly on line, shape and detail variables and texture, fabric type and fiber content. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between these two groups of variables indicated very high correlations ($r > .75$) among the items. The similar findings in the two analyses support the post-hoc hypothesis that information in one visual element is used to interpret information about another element of the garment.

**Comparison of Responses by Levels of Fashion Involvement, Age, Education, & Annual Clothing Expenditures**

Pearson Correlation Coefficients between participants’ satisfaction ratings and age, educational level, reported annual clothing expenditure, and scores on two measures of fashion involvement indicate positive relationships between participants’ ages and their
satisfaction with all items except price and color, indicating older women were more satisfied than younger women with less explicit information about the product. The older participants may have been more comfortable or adept at interpreting or making inferences about fashion information from the ads.

The participants’ fashion involvement scores were negatively correlated with their satisfaction with price information and situational appropriateness cues in the ads. Those who are less concerned with fashion in their personal lives were more satisfied with this information in advertisements. The less involved participants may have been unconcerned about learning this information from fashion magazines because they did not consider themselves interested in the high-fashion products advertised in fashion magazines.
REFERENCES CITED


DeNeve, R. (1976b). The fashion photo: From cool to kinky and how it got there. Print, 30(4), 24-33.


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincerest thanks go to Dr. Ann Marie Fiore who has guided me in shaping this study and whose advice and experience in the area of aesthetics has been invaluable. She has always been supportive and enthusiastic about this project. I have been grateful for her assistance and for the opportunity to work with her.

I would also like to thank the members of my committee for their support and assistance, Dr. Mary Lynn Damhorst, Dr. Joseph Kupfer, and Donna Danielson. Dr. Damhorst provided valuable guidance in developing the research approach. And without the interest in fashion illustration shared between Donna Danielson and myself, this study would never have been conceived.

Special thanks to Marsha Casselman for her help on the statistical analysis and for her ever-ready smile and supportive friendship. Thanks also go to Deb Pierce for her help in transcribing.

I would like to thank the College of Family and Consumer Sciences Graduate Fellowship/Scholarship committee for my graduate fellowships. The CFCS Research Institute and the Younkers Foundation provided research support for this study for which I am very grateful.

Thanks to the members of the American Business Women’s Association, Cyclone Charter and Silver Satellite Chapters, and the Ames Women’s Club, and their presidents, Sandra Englehart, Norma Duke, and Wilma Brugger. Their willingness to participate made this study possible.
My deepest appreciation go to my friends and family who supported me in this endeavor and continue to support me always. And to my husband, Kevin, whose love and enduring patience has been my mainstay throughout my graduate program of study.

The Iowa State University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research reviewed this project and concluded that the rights and welfare of the human subjects were adequately protected, that risks were outweighed by the potential benefits and expected value of the knowledge sought, that confidentiality of data was assured and that informed consent was obtained by appropriate procedures.
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
PERCEPTION OF ADVERTISING INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Questions to be asked in response to each stimulus ad
**Participants will be presented with a selection of 8-10 ads and asked questions in connection with the ads. The set of ads will be discussed three times with different questions each time.

First time through the ads:
1. Tell me what you see in this ad; what catches your eye first, second, third, etc.

Second time through the ads:
2. Do you like this ad? What do you like and dislike about it?
3. Do you like this garment? What do you like and dislike about it?
4. Do you think this ad would make people want to buy this garment? Why?

Third time through the ads:
Participants will have a set of scales to respond to on paper in reference to each ad. The third time through the ads, there will be no interview questions.

General follow-up questions not in reference to specific ads:

What do you generally like about fashion ads?

What do you find most interesting in ads?

Do you prefer ads with a verbal description? or none?

Do you like to read the information which accompanies the ads?

What information are you looking for or do you want from the ad?

How important is price information in ads?

When the ad does not state the price, what things in the ads give you an idea about the price of the garment?

Do you prefer to see a photo or an illustration?

Do you prefer to see a background setting in an ad or a studio pose?
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUMENT
For each of the ads we have discussed, please answer the following questions:

Ad #1:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No
Ad #2:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.
Ad #3:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No
Ad #4:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?
  Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No
Ad #5:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?
Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No
Ad #6:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?
    Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No
Ad #7:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?
Yes...1  2  3  4  5  6  7...No.
Ad #8:
Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Price?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about Design Details?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Lines?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Shape?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the garment’s Color?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the fabric Texture?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fabric type?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Are you satisfied with the information in this ad about the Fiber Content?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.

Do you get an idea about the types of situations where it would be appropriate to wear this garment?

Yes...1 2 3 4 5 6 7...No.
Please answer the following questions to help me interpret your answers in the interview.

* What magazines do you look at for information about styles and fashions? Please list:

* What is your marital status? ____married ____single

* How many people are there in your household? ______________

* Age? ____

* What is your occupation? __________________________

* What is your spouse’s occupation? __________________________

* What is your educational background?
  ____Highschool
  ____College
  ____Graduate School

* Approximately how much would you say you spend on apparel for yourself per year?
For the following questions, please check the one response which you feel best describes yourself:

1. In general, when do you generally buy new clothing fashions?
   _____ When a style is very new.
   _____ After I see a few people wearing a new style.
   _____ When I see a lot of people wearing the style.

2. How much would you say you talk to your friends about clothing fashions?
   _____ I talk with friends often about clothing styles.
   _____ I talk with friends occasionally about clothing styles.
   _____ I never talk with my friends about clothing styles.

3. In general, how interested do you think you are in clothing fashions?
   _____ I am more interested in clothing than most women.
   _____ I am as interested in clothing as most women.
   _____ I am less interested in clothing as most women.

4. How much time do you spend following fashion changes in newspapers and magazines?
   _____ I take the time to read fashion news regularly.
   _____ I occasionally take time to read fashion news.
   _____ I do not take time to read fashion news.

5. Do you try to keep your wardrobe up to date with changes in fashion?
   _____ I try to keep my wardrobe up to date with the fashion changes.
   _____ I try to choose fashionable styles when I really need to buy something new.
   _____ I am not interested in the fashion trends.
Respond to the following question by circling a number between each pair of adjectives which you feel most adequately describes fashion apparel.

Fashion apparel is...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Of Concern</th>
<th>Irrelevant</th>
<th>Means a Lot To Me</th>
<th>Useless</th>
<th>Valuable</th>
<th>Trivial</th>
<th>Beneficial</th>
<th>Matters to Me</th>
<th>Uninteresting</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Vital</th>
<th>Boring</th>
<th>Exciting</th>
<th>Appealing</th>
<th>Mundane</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Undesirable</th>
<th>Wanted</th>
<th>Not needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C: ADVERTISEMENTS USED AS STIMULI
For those summer days when the mood is delightfully Dior.

Exclusively ours, Christian Dior suit of domestic wool; $480.00. In Gallery.

Washington Oregon California Utah Alaska Virginia 1-800-465-4000 Opening August 17 in Santa Barbara
JACQUES MOLKO
PARIS
Liz Claiborne Collection

From the Neutral Zone Collection, a soft new menswear look for fall.
Featuring classic shapes in rich fabrics.
It's another success story by Liz Claiborne.
At Belk SouthPark and Eastland.
DRESS IN A NEW DIRECTION

EPISODE
All About Evening

Oscar de la Renta didn’t invent the tuxedo, he merely made it ravishing.

Wool jersey, exquisitely quilted, over a V-neck white silk charmeuse blouse and cummerbund wrapped wool crêpe trousers.

Black, 0 to 14

Lord & Taylor, Fifth Avenue.
FOR THOSE WHO SHUN

THE OVERTAILORED,

THE UPTIGHT,

THE FASHION SERIOUS.

SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

To order, call 1 (800) 345-3454

Gene Ewing BIS

Jacket $175 (95-8521), Short Sleeve Sequin T-Shirt $126 (95-850), Drawstring Pant $94 (95-751).

All available in sizes S, M, L. To order, call toll free 1 (800) 345-3454.
VICKY TIEL

AT

ELIZABETH ARDEN

THE SALON
MATTERS OF STYLE

Notice how style sings
when all the lines are exceptional.

Our southbound Bill Blass linen
—navy jacket zipped over a
white short-sleeved dress, 4 to 10
Coding guide for interview responses to fashion advertising

Sources of visual interest/focus of attention in ads
* Style of garment (overall)
* Color of garment or in ad
* Style details of garment (such as trims, buttons, surface design)
* Accessories
* Designer name
* Store name
* Setting for ad
* Graphic design/layout features of ad
* Verbal copy
* References to the model

Evaluative components

Evaluation of garment—positive and negative
* garment is/is not in accord with personal taste
* garment is/is not appropriate or practical for lifestyle, activities, or place of residence
* perceived quality of garment
* perceived cost of garment

Assessment of garment’s stylishness, fashionability, trendiness, classic look
* Stylish
* Outdated

Assessment that garment is intended for a specific market:
* not felt that garment is for self
* younger market
* trendier market

Evaluation of ad—positive and negative
* ad is liked/disliked overall; design/layout features of ad are liked/disliked
* ad is liked/disliked because garment is liked/disliked
* ad’s informativeness; shows the information about the garment clearly or information is uncertain
* ad is expressive of mood or feeling: sophistication, casualness, fun
* uncertainty about (symbolic) message conveyed by ad
* ad has overall artistic quality or professional, polished quality
* ad is perceived as different from most other ads
* comments exhibiting consciousness of the ad’s intention to create interest in buying the garment; assessments of the ad’s effectiveness
Informational cues perceived or desired:
* Basic information about overall style of the garment
* Price
* Designer
* Store where available or ordering information
* Location of stores listed in ads
* Description of garment style
* Size
* Care information
* Fabric type
* Fiber content
* Colors available
* Detail information
* Use of ad information:
  - Does like to or take time to read ads generally
  - Only read ads for which more info is desired, genuine interest in a specific garment, want to know more about style, price, store, fabric, color, details, etc.

Cues for perceived price:
* Designer label
* Store name where garment is available
* Materials/fabric
* Overall style; or basic garment type, i.e., jeans vs. dress
* Trendiness vs. high fashion
* Characteristics of the ad, layout, graphic design, etc.
* Different magazines would have clothes in different price ranges advertised

Importance of price information:
* Real desire for information for decision process
* Price in magazine gives reference point for what to expect in stores nearby
* Curiosity only
* Not interested in price at all
Formal visual aspects of ads

Illustrations vs. Photos

* Photos are preferred
  - no reason given
  - because material and style is accurate, sketches may not be
  - because "real" people,
  - proportions of the body are accurate

* Illustrations are preferred
  - have more interest, appeal
  - can convey mood or feeling better
  - appear to be more vogue, high fashion or trendy
  - cartoon quality of sketches is not viewed as
    sophisticated or classic
  - illustrations which are higher in realistic representation vs. abstraction

* Illustrations are associated with sewing patterns

Interest in the setting of ads:

* setting ads visual interest
* setting is distracting or takes away from garment
* setting gives cues as to where garment could be worn
* no concern with or opinion as to importance of setting

Color in ads:

* like color better than black and white because want to know that information
* feel color is more effective at creating interest than black & white
* black & white is an effective way of creating interest through graphic design/layout
* black & white is okay, no preference
* black & white is okay if accompanied by information about colors available
* color comments; bright, subtle, high or low contrast

Ad viewing experience

* MOTIVES:
  -- Look at magazines for entertainment
  -- To get information on current trends in style, fabric and colors

* RESULT:
  -- Aesthetic appreciation of ad's visual qualities, not concerned with sales info.
  -- Alienation by feeling that magazines target younger women, high fashion, "perfect" figure size.
  -- Identify with model's experience or activity
* PAST PERSONAL EXPERIENCES:
  --Does home sewing, uses fashion magazines for information about styles and fabrics and ideas
  --Comments about frequency of magazine and mail order catalog use
  --Ad is associated with another era/style
  --References and associations with personal experiences
  --Relate to personal clothing selections/shopping habits