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The Impact Of High Fashion PR In The Creation Of A Fashion Editorial Image.

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Abstract

Brand owners protect their brands by setting policies through their public relations departments. The PR policies control how magazines communicate their brands to the public. This study examines the aesthetical values and impact of a brand owner's public relations policies on fashion editorial images. In particular, fashion editorial images are analyzed to detect and assess the influence of high fashion public relations on the creation of the image.

Three images of the French high fashion brand Givenchy are subjected to a social semiotic visual analysis, "Zoe Kravitz, Unretouched", by Harper's Bazaar US October 2018, which showcases the policies in regards to haute couture. "Full-Look Policy" by CR Fashion Book Issue 14 2019, openly communicates a PR policy, which made this image important to the study. "An American in Paris" by British Vogue May 2012, is used to demonstrate how the PR policies are implemented in the context of an older fashion editorial image, when Givenchy's previous creative director Riccardo Tisci was at the helm. The analysis is further deepened with an interpretation with the help of a theoretical framework spanned by Roland Barthes, Dana Thomas and Yuniya Kawamura's perspectives.

One of the findings of this study is that a brand's public relations and fashion magazines act as gatekeepers of fashion, and participate in the value creation of brands. With its PR policies, a brand like Givenchy regulates the viewer's taste of luxury, and communicates how the concept of luxury relates to the brand. In addition, core policies contribute towards timelessness of high fashion brands. However, a number of issues arise that appear to counteract the intentions of some PR policies. Knowledge of the gatekeeping qualities that high fashion PR possess, may advance the understanding of the evolution of the fashion editorial image, and pave new ways of using public relations techniques.

Keywords: public relations, luxury, gatekeepers, fashion magazines, PR policies.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.2 Aim Of The Study And Research Questions	5
1.3 Research Materials And Delimitations	6
1.4 Theoretical Framework	7
1.5 Methodology	8
1.5.1 Critique Of Methodology	10
1.6 Previous Research	10
1.6.1 Luxury And High Fashion PR	10
1.6.2 Journalism And PR - The Changes In The Digital Age	11
2. Social Semiotic Visual Analysis	13
3. The Power of A Fashion Image And PR Policies	23
3.1 The Power Of A Fashion Image	23
3.2 PR Policies	24
4. Laws and Regulations & Power Play	26
4.1 Laws And Regulations	26
4.2 Power Play Between Fashion Magazines And Fashion PR	28
5. Conclusions And Discussions	31
6. Bibliography	34

List of figures

Figure 1 - "Zoe Kravitz, Unretouched"	13
Figure 2 - "Full-look policy"	17
Figure 3 - "An American in Paris"	20

1. Introduction

High fashion brands remain comfortably seated at high price levels that other brands are unable to reach, despite top quality production and large marketing budgets. What do high fashion brands have that other brands are unable to attain? A question like this leads us inevitably to the marketing and public relation's departments of brands where the broadcasting of images of fashion brand is created and controlled.

A fashion image is full of social symbolism, and hidden meanings. Anna Wintour, editor-in-chief of American Vogue, once said that: "If you look at any great fashion photograph out of context, it will tell you just as much about what is going on in the world as a headline in The New York Times" (Brockes, 2006). Brand owners set PR policies with public relations departments to define and protect their brands by controlling the communication of their brands in the fashion industry. PR's main responsibilities are to build and maintain brand reputation, and to increase the brand's revenue generation by influencing people. The Cambridge dictionary defines PR, Public Relations, as: "the activity of keeping good relationships between an organization and the people outside it" (Cambridge, 2019). High fashion PR policies dictate what is of value and not, in terms of high fashion. Knowledge of how public relations influence the fashion editorial image, is therefore useful in gaining an understanding of how the regulated fashion image impacts on the viewer, and will be the focus of my study.

The subject of high fashion public relations caught my attention during my internship at KCD Worldwide in New York, where I worked with Givenchy public relations¹. High fashion PR and fashion magazines, key instruments in the fashion hierarchy, regard themselves as authorities as well as gatekeepers of fashion. Yuniya Kawamura writes about the *trickle-down effect*, a term coined by German sociologist Georg Simmel, where people need an authority and an expert to look up to and follow their advice. Kawamura explains that this theory creates a clear vision of how fashion moves in a social system (Kawamura, 2004, p. 153). In the book "*The Public Relation's Writer's Handbook: The Digital Age*", the authors underscore that in recent years, digital media has become integrated in our daily lives and fashion images

¹ Givenchy public relations is managed by KCD Worldwide in New York

have become more important than ever. A primary concern of digital media is the impact of wrongful communications these days. The digital media phenomenon can therefore be linked to the rising impact of public relations on the fashion image, and a more carefully controlled communication (Aronson, et al, 1993, p. 3). The visibility of PR in fashion editorial images is more obvious than ever before, and it has become an increasing area of interest within the field of fashion photography and magazine publishing. The discourse about PR policies for fashion images is expanding rapidly, and louder opinions are being voiced. High fashion public relations field is a dense area with strict PR policies powered by large financial budgets. Fashion PR firms outside the luxury realm, tend to have less strict PR policies, according to Osman Ahmed of The Business of Fashion. (Ahmed, 2017). Givenchy, the high fashion brand and the main focus of my study, is a reputable old haute couture house, and part of the Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton group (LVMH), a luxury goods conglomerate with Bernard Arnault at the helm². LVMH boasts a portfolio of fashion brands such as Givenchy, Dior, Louis Vuitton, Fendi, and Celine, to name a few (lvmh.com, 2019). Givenchy had a recent creative director change, from Riccardo Tisci to Clare Waight Keller in 2017.

Givenchy is a brand that is present in magazines such as Vanity Fair, Vogue, International Vogue, GQ, ELLE, CR Fashion Book, and the more well-known fashion magazines. Each fashion brand has its own set of PR policies, that dictate how magazines may showcase the brand's clothing. Some PR policies control a fashion image with stringent rules all the way from how it should be produced, down to what words may be associated with the clothing in the image. A rule might even restrict other brands' presence in an image used in the editorial. Furthermore, laws and regulations play an important role in the creation of fashion editorial images, and are of relevance to public relations. Relevant laws for public relations practitioners include defamation, libel and copyright. Public relations thus encompass rules and regulations and therefore inevitably shapes the perception of a brand.

1.2 Aim Of The Study And Research Questions

To control brand reputation in fashion magazines, the owners of brands have PR departments that set PR policies on how their garments should be presented in a magazine. Fashion public

²A conglomerate is a combination of multiple businesses under one corporate group.

relations is one of the defining factors of a fashion image, and we might not be aware of the long intricate process that underlies in the creation of a fashion image. Editorial fashion photography creates artistic fashion visuals on par with fashion advertisements. However, the difference between a fashion editorial and an advertisement, is the former's elaboration of the art form in a literary context, deepening the mindset and relationship with the reader. This study critically examines high fashion public relations, and in particular how PR policies influence the process of creating a fashion image. I will focus exclusively on three fashion images showcasing Givenchy garments.

This study aims to address the following research question:

”What aesthetical values and impact do fashion PR policies have in the production of fashion editorial images?”

1.3 Research Materials And Delimitations

The research data in this thesis are three fashion images, originating from three different fashion editorials. The first image is from Harper's Bazaar US, October 2018. The second image is from CR Fashion Book Issue 14, 2019. The third image is from British Vogue April 2012. I have defined certain eligibility criteria for choosing the three images. Since Givenchy's PR policies are the same as the PR policies of all high fashion brands at the group LVMH, a study of the Givenchy brand serves the purpose of demonstrating a larger PR phenomenon. One criteria in this study is therefore that an image should only display Givenchy products.

The images are chosen from dominating media outlets in the fashion industry, two of them being British and American Vogue, and the third, CR Fashion Book, based in the United States. The three magazines were selected because of their wide, and their frequent featuring of Givenchy in editorials. Two of the images chosen for this analysis are very recent, from 2018 and 2019, while the third image is purposely chosen from 2012, to demonstrate how PR policies today become evident in the context of an older fashion editorial image. The image from Harper's Bazaar 2018, shows Clare Waight Keller's haute couture collection for Givenchy. The image shows celebrity Zoe Kravitz running in a desert landscape with two

wolves, dressed in haute couture. The celebrity in the image will be taken up for discussion in this study, since celebrities are carefully chosen to represent a brand by PR. This image contrasts the image from British Vogue 2012, that shows Riccardo Tisci's couture collection for Givenchy. Model Karlie Kloss wears haute couture against a blank canvas, with written text on the upper-left corner presenting the process of wearing haute couture. The image from CR Fashion Book is used, since it openly discusses one PR policy, named "full-look policy", in the headline as well as the written text accompanied by the headline. Public relations are not usually brought up by magazines, and therefore makes this image vital for this analysis. The model in the image wears a full-look from Givenchy's ready-to-wear collection which is cropped in the image.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

In this study I have selected three theorists in the construction of a framework to help in understanding the research and interpret the findings.

"Mythologies" by Roland Barthes (1957)

The French literary theorist Roland Barthes (1915-1980), speaks of myths as a phenomenon embedded in our culture. Historical values, attitudes and beliefs are myths in our society. Therefore myths are the building blocks of a culture, they are also used to "naturalize" a culture, such as traditions and beliefs, whether it be high culture, low culture, or somewhere in between (Barthes, 1957, p. 113). Fashion is made up of symbolic values in our society, and this analysis intends to explore the myths presented by high fashion PR, as being of social significance. A myth is a semiotic second-order system according to Barthes, and it is a meta-language (Barthes, 1957, p. 114). A myth takes an already constituted sign and turns it into a specific form of signifier (Barthes, 1957, p. 113). This specific form of signifier highlights qualities rather than attributes, such as fame, fortune, success, beauty and so forth. The aim of fashion photography is to create myths, and frame products in a mythical framework.

"Distinctions - A Social Critique of The Judgement of Taste" by Bourdieu (1984).

Bourdieu in his book, describes social negotiations and the regulation of taste perception. Bourdieu writes that high culture is a mirage, that dominated classes chase. The upper class maintain a position of domination, since by the time a dominated class has acquired taste that

is considered high culture, it has become passé. This theory can be cross-referenced to the gatekeeping qualities that high fashion PR and high fashion magazines have in society, which is why I bring it up in my analysis.

"Fashionology: an introduction to fashion studies" by Yuniya Kawamura (2004)

Yuniya Kawamura (1963-) is an author from the Czech Republic. In this book, Kawamura writes about gatekeepers, and the role of gatekeepers is to act as guardians of fashion, who set rules and regulations for what is regarded as fashion (Kawamura, 2004, p. 127). Kawamura makes a distinction between fashion and clothing. People create fashion, clothing in itself is not fashion. The distinction between clothing and fashion is therefore inherently a symbolic distinction (Kawamura, 2004, p. 117). Against this backdrop, Givenchy can be seen emerging as a gatekeeper of their own brand. Givenchy controls the way their brand is represented in magazine editorials, sets PR policies to clearly communicate the style of the brand, and impose restrictions upon magazine publishers to prevent other players in the industry to take a free ride on the Givenchy brand. I will use Kawamura's theory about fashion guardians, in order to understand the need of high fashion PR policies, and the construction of a luxury brand.

1.5 Methodology

This dissertation follows a social semiotic visual analysis, by authors Theo Van Leeuwen & Carey Jewitt, from the book *"Handbook of Visual Analysis"* (2000). This visual analysis is applied to three different fashion images. The authors describe that a key emphasis of this social semiotic approach is: "semiotic resources are at once the products of cultural histories and the cognitive resource we use to create meaning in the production and interpretation of visual and other messages". (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 136). Fashion editorial images are deliberately constructed images, that are used to convey specific social messages, which makes this method relevant. This analysis examines different styles of framing devices such as salience, different angles, typeface, distance, gaze and other semiotic resources as defined by Van Leeuwen & Jewitt. These visual compositions convey specific messages to a viewer. As public relations controls messages to the viewer of the image, it is anticipated that the

social semiotic analysis will result in indications of the aesthetical values and impact that public relations policies have in the fashion editorial images.

The authors use the terminology "representational", and focus on representations in an image. They explain further that a textual metafunction is when you bring together bits of representation and interaction together into one image, to create a specific kind of text and message to the world. The authors further describe that since every image communicates something about the world, it is described as a text itself (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 138). A text, therefore, is not limited to the written words, a text can be found in paintings, advertisements, or any semiotic resource that communicates something. There are different levels of analyzing a garment, such as a descriptive analysis, or through wearing the garment, or finding out what a garment represents.

This research seeks to discuss the level of representation, and explore the different representations in a fashion editorial image, rather than analyzing the garments themselves. In this way, we will attempt to decode the aesthetical values Givenchy public relations that underlie their policies. In a social semiotic visual analysis, the focus on text differs from classic semiotics. According to the semiotician Saussure, signs occur from the signifier/form and signified/meaning (Saussure, 1983, p.67). Van Leeuwen & Jewitt do not completely agree, since they view signs as more than the conjunction of signifier/signified. Signs also carry socially motivated meanings. As a method, visual social semiotics by itself is not enough, though. Van Leeuwen describes that to explain the results of the analysis, a study needs to draw on other sources such as social theories. Van Leeuwen writes that: "Visual social semiotics is only one element in the interdisciplinary equation" (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 138). Theories are needed to further analyze the relationship between PR firm and fashion magazine, to further understand why the brand Givenchy communicates in a certain way, and why PR policies are necessary. The traces of the policies are researched not only in the image, but also in the written text accompanying the fashion images, and titles of the fashion editorials. The PR policies that will be analyzed are the full-look policy, not mixing seasons, press embargos, the importance of timing, and celebrities.

1.5.1 Critique Of Methodology

The social semiotic visual analysis, is only applicable to the contemporary Western visual culture (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 153). Laws and regulations, as well as PR policies differ from country to country as well. Van Leeuwen & Jewitt further discuss that visual contexts differ in different continents, for example in Japan the written text is read from right to left, and the written text is usually placed on the right hand side. The scope of this research is limited to the United States. However, this limitation can be put into perspective by the fact that New York is one of the biggest fashion cities in the world. I am a researcher with a background in fashion studies, and work experience in the fashion industry as a public relations intern at KCD Worldwide, with the Givenchy account. This research question would not have risen, had I not worked within public relations. This study aims to analyze public relations materials with the support of my work experience to get a deeper understanding of the public relations field. Author Ane Lynge-Jorlén mentions that there is also a disadvantage to being so close to the data, which is the risk of not questioning as much as an outsider would (Lynge-Jorlen, 2017, p. 14). Therefore, I aim to be critical of my perspective, and be as open-minded to new knowledge as possible.

1.6 Previous Research

I have found that earlier research regarding my specific research question remains underexplored in the languages that are available to me. A number of studies have examined luxury brands and PR, as well as the relationship between PR and magazine. The research brought up in this chapter will mainly be: Luxury and high fashion PR, and how online digitalization has changed the relationship between PR and magazines.

1.6.1 Luxury And High Fashion PR

Luxury is a rapidly changing field. It is imperative to understand the changes, considering how high fashion brands communicate their connection to luxury. In 2003, university professor Bernard Catry published an article named *"The great pretenders: the magic of luxury goods"*, where he wrote about how the luxury appeal is diluted by increased market share, and how luxury goods conglomerates such as LVMH is responding to this challenge. He also traced the development of globalization and how this has fueled the challenge, and

the luxury industry's eagerness in meeting the new demand. The increased globalization has made the target audience for luxury brands much larger, altering high fashion PR's communication to the public. Okonkwo discusses a similar phenomenon.

In Okonkwo's book *"Luxury Fashion branding: Trends, Tactics, Techniques"* (2007), he mentions that almost all luxury brands have products that start at low price points. (Okonkwo, 2007, p. 15). This means that luxury brands have wider varieties of customers. Okonkwo writes that the complete process of conveying the brand's essence involves the brand encoding a message through a package of themes. The author identifies the themes as: images, colours, moods, feelings, sound and other elements that reflect the underlying message. (Okonkwo, 2007, p. 144). These themes are all taken into consideration before a message is sent out, which is important for a PR professional. An important aspect of brand messaging is celebrity influencing. Givenchy recently appointed singer and pop icon Ariana Grande as a brand ambassador, in May 2019 (Givenchy, 2019). A celebrity as a brand ambassador is carefully selected through certain criteria. Okonkwo writes that criteria used is: the credibility of a celebrity, global appeal, the celebrity's personality must match the brand's personality, have a lasting appeal, and so forth. (Okonkwo, 2007, p. 160-161). These rules show that the criteria differs greatly when a celebrity wears a fashion brand in a fashion editorial, in comparison to a model. Dana Thomas (1964-) is an American journalist and author. In her book *"How Luxury Lost Its Lustre"*, she demonstrates the changing views of luxury these days. Theories of luxury consumption are discussed in a historical context, such as what makes people want to buy luxury nowadays, compared to in the past. Thomas writes about how the focus in a luxury product has shifted from what the product is to what it represents (Thomas, 2008, p. 41). The book gives an idea of how the changing attitudes towards luxury consumption are reflected in high fashion PR policies. Bernard Arnault, and the LVMH group's marketing plans are also featured in the book, making it especially relevant for this study since Givenchy is part of the LVMH group.

1.6.2 Journalism And PR - The Changes In The Digital Age

In the book *"The public relations writer's handbook: the digital age"* (1993), the authors Merry Aronson, Don Spetner and Carol Ames, are PR professionals who have worked

extensively in the PR field. They illustrate the impact the digital age has had on the relationship between journalism and public relations. Working in a fast-paced environment where news stories can break minutes after the event, it is imperative to know how to keep up with the pace. Furthermore, anything on the Internet stays there forever. The authors prompt public relations to interact with journalists as sources. An important aspect is that public relations restrain journalists' impulse to go to press too soon with too few facts (Aronson, et al. 1993, p. 4).

In addition to the change to the digital environment of instant news, another imperative change driven by the digital age, is the structuring of a story, "now headlines must meet the demands for literal meaning of digital search engines, which are computer programs that crawl the web aggregating keywords" (Aronson, et al. 1993, p. 5). There is thus an increasing pressure on writers to adjust the structure of their stories to conditions imposed by search engines, which in turn are defining the new digital reality. In my analysis, this is taken into consideration as the fashion images in my analysis are selected from different time periods, and the headlines of the fashion editorials are analyzed as well.

Another digitally driven change is "media fragmentation", the increasing number of outlets and sources of knowledge made available to consumers in the digital world. The media fragmentation phenomenon has in turn: "decreased companies reliance on advertising, and increased the importance of public relations" (Aronson, et al. 1993, p. 6). A quick fix with an ad will not do. It seems as if only messages with deeper and more relevant meanings can grab the attention of the busy digital consumer nowadays. With the rise of significance to public relations, the dictating power of a magazine has decreased, including fashion magazines. Yuniya Kawamura, author of "*Fashionology*" (2004) and sociologist, writes about how magazines rely heavily on advertisers for a magazine to stay alive (Kawamura, 2004, p. 129). Kawamura's research is important for my analysis, considering high fashion public relations are a part of the creation of fashion editorials, that fashion magazines publish.

The book "*Public relations: Competencies and Practice*" is edited by public relations and social media expert Carolyn Mae Kim. In chapter 8, author Karla Gower discusses public

relations practitioners and the expected competency of knowing laws and regulations. Due to rising litigations among all marketers, knowledge of defamation laws are increasingly important for public relations practitioners. The straightjacket of laws and regulations is important to understand their influence on the creation of a fashion editorial image. The phenomenon of the digitalization of PR is not a new phenomenon, but is in a new phase due to the rise of social media.

1.7 Disposition of Analysis

This analysis begins with a social semiotic visual analysis of the three chosen images. After the visual analysis, I describe the PR policies, and the images through a legal point of view with laws and regulations. I end my analysis with measuring and analyzing the relationship between fashion PR and fashion magazines, and the power of a fashion image, to determine how the relationship plays out in the creation of a fashion editorial image.

2. Social Semiotic Visual Analysis



Figure 1

© Harper's Bazaar US October 2018.

Fashion Editorial: "Zoe Kravitz, Unretouched"

Photography: Camilla Akrans. Styling: Patrick Mackie.

Hair: Nikki Nelms. Makeup: Nina Park. Actress: Zoe Kravitz.

Pictured, is celebrity Zoe Kravitz running in a desert, with two wolves, wearing Givenchy f/w 2018 Haute Couture Look 32. In this image, there are three participants, two wolves and one person being Zoe Kravitz. The point of view in the image is that the participants in the image are at a vertical angle, which establishes the participants as powerful, and people we look up to. (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 136). Kravitz is displayed from a distance, and her face is unrecognizable. Van Leeuwen and Jewitt describe that someone being pictured at a distance, is to see them how we would see strangers, people whose lives do not touch ours. This photography mechanism means that participants in the image are represented as though they belong, or should belong to 'our group' (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 146).

The image has a diagonal line expressing action in the image. This diagonal line, is called a 'vector' according to Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, as it expresses the participants doing something. (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 141). The action presented, is a person running with the wolves. The patterns shown in this image follow both a narrative structure, and a conceptual structure. A conceptual structure is where an image identifies concepts, and symbolic structures. Different people, places, and things are brought together in one picture, to show that they have the same class or something in common (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 145).

In relation to this image, Zoe is actively running in the desert wearing full Haute Couture with two wolves, representing a new and dynamic way of wearing Haute Couture, and this is the type of person that should belong to 'our group'. Kravitz represents the person we should strive towards becoming. Kravitz being active in the image can signify freedom and being close to nature. Zoe is wearing the full Givenchy couture look, in regards to the full-look policy that is one of the brand's PR policies. The image contains the full look, with the plissé

dress, the neck plate and white leather boots. This image shows the new Givenchy brand code being fully represented. Showcasing the entire look means that Clare Waight Keller's version of Givenchy is clearly communicated to the public. This communication tactic is recognized as an effort to distance from the old Givenchy brand aesthetic, under Riccardo Tisci's reign.

Reflecting back to the idea that distance in a picture creates the idea that the participant in the image is someone we should strive to be, the full-look policy amplifies the idea that people don't buy luxury brands for what they are, but what they represent. The idea of people wanting to buy luxury brands for what they represent, is perfectly aligned with Bernard Arnault's marketing plan (Thomas, 2008, p. 280). The full-look policy, and not mixing seasons in a fashion editorial image can be seen as a PR tactic that actively reinforces Bernard Arnault's marketing plan. Not mixing seasons sends a clear message to the reader, and communicates that consumers should focus on one season at a time. Kawamura writes that fashion is about change, and creating the illusion of newness. The policy of not mixing seasons in images, can be paralleled to creating the illusion of newness. If different seasons of a brand's collections are mixed, it may leave the viewer wondering if the image was not made recently.

Modality is a term stating what 'reality value' an image is, how close the image is to what you would view with the naked eye. Even though wolves can live in a wide range of habitats, they are not made to live in a desert. Even though wolves do not live in the desert, Kravitz is depicted as one with the wolves, which is an inherently symbolic value. Kravitz also wears tall leather boots to run with, which is not practical for a desert climate. With these factors, the modality of the image is not very high. Roland Barthes mentions in "*Mythologies*", how some text can seem to have an underlying meaning. (Barthes, 1957, p. 113) There is a book named "*Women Who Run With the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype*" by Clarissa Pinkola Estés. I see a close correlation between this book title, and the visual patterns in this fashion editorial image. Zoe Kravitz, could therefore signal a 'wild woman archetype', and the luxury brand Givenchy is a part of this demonstration.

Kravitz is a celebrity that has been approved for displaying Givenchy clothing in the fashion editorial. U. Okonkwo wrote that: "Celebrities convince customers of the credibility of the brand's offerings" (Okonkwo, 2007, p. 158). Kravitz was chosen since her personality and public image reflects the personality and essence of the brand, and she does not outshine the brand. Applying the criteria by Okonkwo, she may also have been chosen due to global appeal, and belief that she has a lasting appeal (Okonkwo, 2007, p. 160-161).

The image does not contain any written words, but the fashion editorial is called "Zoe Kravitz, unretouched". Van Leeuwen & Jewitt write that the image is abstract, whilst the written element signifies concrete action and usually reflects personal experience (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 150). Aronson et al. also highlight the significance of written elements in a fashion editorial. They mentioned that headlines must meet the demands of digital search engines, and web crawlers (Aronson, et al. 1993, p. 5). On the internet, the headline "Zoe Kravitz, Unretouched" is unique, and search results only show the specific fashion editorial. The word unretouched is used as a word of social significance in the title, and reflects the idea of going against the social norm of retouching fashion images.

Roland Barthes believes that it is possible to argue that all media representations create broader cultural myths and belief systems. To analyze this image according to Barthes concept of the myth, he writes of a second-order mythological level (Barthes, 1957, p. 113). In this image, the myth spread by Givenchy public relations through their policies, is that there is a 'Givenchy person', which makes the viewer relate to this type of person. A Givenchy person is strong and can run in the desert with wolves, and they can wear couture while doing this. This image also spreads the myth of freedom through luxury, and that it is something to strive for. The full-look policy in combination with the image, tells the message that the viewer should strive to be someone who buys high fashion for what it represents, which reflects society these days. Due to the changing views of luxury in society, the PR policies in the image actively encourage symbolic consumption, to make a person feel as if they belong to the 'Givenchy group', and tends to the needs of wanting to belong to a specific group. In this way, high fashion encourages a norm of how to consume high fashion 'the right way', by buying designer products due to symbolic reasons, and belonging to a certain group.

Any other way to consume high fashion is not optimal. Bourdieu reflects on this, by writing that: "The dominant classes preferences are naturalized as real differences from the middle - and especially the working-class" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.68). The dominant class in this case, is the PR policies and fashion magazines, who as gatekeepers and authorities, tell the viewer what is right and what is wrong within fashion. Bourdieu continues to discuss that a motivation for a person to acquire certain taste, is: "it is also a sense of belonging to a more polished, more polite, better policed world, a world which is justified in existing by its perfection" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 77). The sense of belonging to a world of higher and better taste, can be referenced to wanting to belong to the Givenchy group, a higher fashion group.



Figure 2

© CR Fashion Book Issue 14 2019

Fashion Editorial: "Full Look Policy"

High-fashion has long implemented a full-look policy in which designers insist that what is shown on the runway must be photographed off of it. Turning this on its head, CR shows a cheeky take on the concept with models Natalia Montero, Nana Reznichenko, and Kaila Wyatt in our favorite Spring/Summer 2019 collections.

Photography: Marc Askehame. Fashion: Kyle Luu. Makeup: Yvane Rocher. Manicure: Delphine Aissi. Production: Kitten Production. Casting: Evelien Joos.

The model in this image wears Givenchy s/s 2019 Look 41 top and shower earrings. The visual resources in the picture, shows the model in a frontal angle, and the participant is close-up, which shows her in a way we usually see people with whom we are intimately acquainted with (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 145). The frontal image angle is also a way to increase audience engagement, and the participant is interpreted as someone who is part of 'our group'. The viewer can create a symbolic relationship with the participant in the image. The gesture the model makes is cross-armed, and in regards to gaze she looks away and pouts. As the model is in a passive position against a blank wall, the visual patterns display a conceptual structure.

The photographer chose to photograph only half of the entire outfit. The lighting in the image mimics afternoon sunlight. The earrings shine, and are an eye-catching element, as well as the model's gaze. Eye-catching elements are termed 'saliency' (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 150). The top appears to have a red tint in the image but is in fact jet black. When combining the visual resources in the image, the participant is made out to look rebellious. Her gaze and body posture signify a stubborn attitude, aligned with the editorial story. The fashion editorial is named "Full-look policy", and accompanies a paragraph about the fashion editorial before the images are presented. The models gaze and action highlights the rebellion towards the full-look policy rule. Ahmed writes that the full-look policy can create restrictions for a photographer, since they either have to photograph the full look, or if only part of the look fits

the theme, then find creative ways to conceal the other part of the look. The policy states to use the full look, not that every part of it must be fully shown in the image (Ahmed, 2017).

Roland Barthes states that language implies a one-sided way of seeing, which selects certain characteristics as important, and of social significance (Barthes, 1957, p. 113). The magazine points out the full-look policy as an issue of social significance these days, although the full-look policy has existed for a very long time. It is important to critically reflect why the magazine would highlight the PR policy at this time. A connection can be made to the decrease in sales for fashion magazines, and their influence decreasing (Lee & Maheshwari, 2018). As highlighted in the previous research chapter, advertisers are needed for magazines to stay alive (Kawamura, 2004, p. 129), and due to magazines overall decreasing sales, the need for advertisers is greater than ever before. This in turn creates frustration among editors, as witnessed by the written text in the fashion editorial, as well as the article "*The Problem With 'Full Look' Styling in Fashion Magazines*" (Ahmed, 2017). The headline of the editorial is unique, and when searching the headline on different search engines, this fashion editorial displays on first page results. The headline is therefore optimized to catch the attention of web crawlers and digital search engines, and hence the attention of the target audience. The modality of this image is high, since the photograph resembles how you would see something with the naked eye.

The fashion magazine deliberately wants to point out the full-look policy in an act of rebellion against it, and call it "cheeky". Cambridge dictionary defines the word cheeky as: "slightly rude or showing no respect, but often in a funny way" (Cambridge, 2019). The concept resembles satire, geared towards the fashion business, specifically towards PR. The relationship that the image creates between the viewer and the participant in the image, is the connection between cheeky rebellion, and luxury brands. With use of luxury brands, the magazine seems to create a concept of rebellion against a higher authority.

According to Roland Barthes' second-order mythological-level, the image signifies changing attitudes towards luxury these days. You change the attitude towards luxury by wearing luxury brands in a cheeky way, as described by CR Fashion Book. After further investigation

into the myth that the image is creating, what appears to be criticism geared towards the full-look policy, is not just criticism. The image encourages the viewer to find creativity within luxury fashion. I believe if the fashion editorial was made with true negative criticism of the full-look policy, the editorial would have shown other brands that do not have the full-look policy, to prove "how much better" the fashion editorial is. This fashion image in combination with the written text, highlights the power play between high fashion PR and fashion magazines, and reveals the relationship dynamics to the viewer. The image actively invites the viewer to take a socio-political stance regarding the subject, attracting anyone who likes the idea of 'swimming against the stream'. The fashion editorial makes us relate to CR Fashion Book as an equal, with a need to rebel against something, but this is in fact a symbolic relation. The fashion magazine is an authority and a fashion gatekeeper, with the intention to sell fashion to the viewer.



Figure 3

© British Vogue May 2012

Fashion editorial: "An American In Paris"

Model: Karlie Kloss

Photographer: Angelo Pennetta

Stylist: Francesca Burns

This image depicts Givenchy Haute Couture spring 2012 Look 13. Even though the year is 2012, you can notice the full look policy is employed, as well as the policy of not mixing seasons. In this photograph, you notice almost instantly the stylistic details that are typical of the creative director Riccardo Tisci. The nose ring, the large cluster earrings, and the chain holding up the skirt, add a gothic feel to this image, very characteristic of the old Givenchy style. These details are the salience in the image. With the PR policy of not mixing different season's clothing, the viewer gets a clearer idea of the fashion style of that specific year.

When it comes to archived and older editorials, such as this, this PR policy shows that it is a good tool for organizing. Being a seasoned fashion follower, one would be able to tell that this design is specifically Riccardo Tisci's style. Riccardo Tisci was known for making figure-hugging, silk-chiffon dresses in his Haute Couture, often meticulously ornamented with scales of sequins and crystals.

The visual resources in the image, show that the image is at a vertical angle, signaling the viewer looking up at someone who is more powerful. In Van Leeuwen & Jewitts theory about distance in an image, the closeness of the model in the photography is a sign of intimacy between the viewer and the participant in the image. One feels a relation to the model in the image. The gaze the model displays, closing her eyes in a relaxed position, connects the viewer to believe that one should act and feel this way when wearing couture. The image shows a conceptual structure, as the clothes in combination with the gaze and attitude suggest they all have something in common.

The modality of the image is high. The image shows that wearing couture takes a lot of work. Pain is a theme in the image, considering the two heavy earrings and nose piercing. The

thinness of the model is closely associated with the controlled restriction of a model's diet. Pain and glamour are therefore themes that are part of the same image.

The text presented with the image, describes the Givenchy look as: *"At Hotel d'Evreux, it takes two skilled seamstresses to help Karlie into her dazzling embellished skirt and punkish jewels (but one turn of her chin to make it look effortless)"*. The text is on the upper left side of the image, which signifies that the written text was the prior process, and the page was the outcome. The text presents an idea of exclusivity and unattainability when it comes to couture. Bernard Catry writes about luxury and rarity, and that there are different levels of rarity. The written text here presents an idea of rarity, called information based rarity. Information based rarity is the "starification" of designers, products, managers and customers (Catry, 2003, p. 16). The starification in the text is when describing the product as dazzling, but also the starification of the customer. Two skilled seamstresses helping you into an outfit is not an everyday occasion, the text also states that one turn of her chin makes it look effortless. This sentence provides a suggestion to the viewer that Givenchy's clothing makes one look effortless. The concept of starification is a purposely created myth. This tool is used by brands and media outlets to contribute to the creation of the myth of rarity in luxury brands.

Pierre Bourdieu, writes about the regulation of taste reception in his book. Bourdieu explains that "There is such thing as bad taste (...) and persons of refinement know this instinctively. For those who do not, rules are needed" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 68). The rules for what good taste is stems from myths and storytelling, such as different levels of rarity in a product. The product itself may not be rare, the model is wearing a simple white tank top, white gloves, and materials that might not be rare in nature.

The gatekeeping qualities of the fashion magazine and Givenchy PR, is amplified due to the storytelling of rarity and exclusivity through the written text. The text makes the viewer romanticize the brand and actively enforces a luxury ideal, and tells the viewer what high culture taste is. In comparison to the CR Fashion Book image, the PR policies are actively employed as a tactic to sell, rather than being seen as an obstacle for the photographer. The Vogue UK image spreads social value, where the viewer is invited to purchase a product, which promises a certain type of achievement. This achievement is the achievement of status.

When searching the editorial headline "An American in Paris", in search engines, the fashion editorial is not found in the first few result pages. There is a successful film from 1957 by the same name, and the search results mainly point to the film. The editorial headline was not made with web crawlers and digital search engines in mind, in 2012. The timing being the year 2012, may suggest that digital media did not have the power over fashion magazines and public relations in a way it does these days.

At the second-order mythological level, the image signifies the myth of happiness and achievement through the luxury brand Givenchy. The order of the visual resources, in combination with the written text signifies the myth that Givenchy haute couture displays a certain rarity, and exclusiveness. The closeness of the model in the image, makes the viewer believe the participant is a part of 'our group', and therefore the myths in the image are displayed as relevant for the viewers to strive towards. Even when pain is a theme of the image, pain needs to be achieved to identify with the myths of happiness through luxury.

3. The Power of A Fashion Image And PR Policies

3.1 The Power Of A Fashion Image

Images can trigger a variety of emotional responses. Images are: "not only representational, but also interactional (images do things to or for the viewer), concerned with modality or perceived truth value of images, and compositional". (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p. 3). Fashion images can trigger your way of feeling about certain fashions, or attitudes in society, due to the interactional meanings of an image. Fashion images are often created to send messages across to the viewer. In the public eye, a fashion image can be a source of fashion creation. Fashion images experiment with fashion as an art form, and fashion photography is seen as a creative play field. Brookes writes that Wintour is fond of saying the quote: "If you look at any great fashion photograph out of context, it will tell you just as much about what's going on in the world as a headline in The New York Times" (Brookes, 2006), which I mentioned in the introduction. Wintour's quote supports the popular notion that fashion reflects society, and fashion images spread messages. Kawamura writes that people communicate a certain image of themselves, that they want to project on others (Kawamura, 2004, p. 148). Fashion images show what kinds of messages were communicated to society in

previous decades. Researching fashion images is also key to finding out why certain messages are sent out to society, and why some are not. Van Leeuwen & Jewitt write that: "Any image, they say, not only represents the world, but also plays a part in some interaction and, with or without accompanying text, constitutes a recognizable kind of text" (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2000, p.140). Fashion images not only send out messages regarding fashion, they also send out messages about different myths in society, such as gender, luxury, and more. Finding out how PR influences the outcome of fashion editorial images, and why, can tell you something about the nature of luxury today, the status of fashion magazines, the power of digital media, and more. Public relations policies send out quiet messages, in that way. Public relations differ from advertising, since PR is the art of influencing, and spreading messages about brands or people, without using selling words such as "buy this" (Field, 2006, p. 8).

3.2 PR Policies

A recognizable and prominent policy, is the full-look policy. This policy applies to all fashion magazines, regardless of outreach and magazine status. One anonymous senior fashion publicist mentioned that the purpose of a full-look policy is to give a strong message, and you can define the aesthetic of the brand in a more clear and concise way (Ahmed, 2017). Many opinions have formed surrounding this policy, as evidenced from the full-look policy fashion editorial by CR Fashion Book, and the Business of Fashion article "*The Problem With 'Full Look' Styling in Fashion Magazines*". The full-look policy is only applied by high fashion brands, due to their large budgets (Ahmed, 2017). This policy stands out as the largest difference between high fashion brand PR, in comparison to other brands. *Forbes magazine* has existed since 1917, and has a wide magazine audience readership of 6.4 million people (Forbes, 2019). Forbes mentions a public relations policy in an article, called a press embargo. A press embargo is an agreement between public relations and magazine, that certain information about products or other information surrounding a brand won't be publicized until a certain time (Colao, 2015). For a magazine, this policy can keep competition at bay, and for public relations it gives them more control over their media outlets. (Colao, 2015).

A press embargo on products is a very efficient method, since it eliminates the risk of two magazines accidentally having similar magazine covers during the same month. A PR pro can selectively choose which magazine may have exclusive rights to publish information about a

brand. This PR tactic is a good technique to carefully choose which magazines will show your collections, and not make you material too available for anyone. Content competition is very high today, and getting a fresh fashion picture, and a side of fashion photography no one has seen before is an advantage to stay ahead of competition. Sophie Roche, a PR professional who has worked at Yves Saint Laurent- and Dior public relations, mentions that a brand creates a family of editors and influencers, that stay close to the brand. She mentions that: "you kind of hand-pick the people who make the most sense for the brand", when it comes to influencers, other celebrities, and magazine editors. (Roche, 2018).

Roche underscores that it is important who wears the brand, in a fashion magazine editorial and elsewhere. Another important aspect is who the editors are, and photographers, and who is close to the brand in general. These aspects influence the outcome of a fashion image. (Roche, 2018). One policy that is also used by Givenchy PR, is that magazines are not allowed to mix seasons for the same shoot. This means, that a magazine may not use both Givenchy spring/summer 2019, and resort 2019, in the same photo shoot. Taking a closer look at the fashion editorial images displayed in the analysis of the Givenchy fashion images, this policy stands out and is visible. Not mixing seasons almost goes hand in hand with the full-look policy, since it accentuates that the brand wants to control the message they are sending out. Mixing seasons for the same magazine photo shoot may cause confusion for the viewer reading the magazine, and has the reader question the newness of the image. This policy can be correlated to the importance of timing, and showing new seasons and new collections to the public via magazines, corresponds to a customer's demands for newness. PR, with help of magazines, have created larger demands for newness by displaying seasonal fashion trends, and categorizing products as either in fashion or out of fashion.

Timing is an important aspect of public relations. New seasons are showcased in fashion editorial images quickly. These days, with the rising pace that catwalk collections are produced, and the sheer amount of collections per year, timing plays a large role in fashion public relations. For Givenchy PR, a new collection is sent to fashion magazines worldwide, that are keen to photograph or videotape the collection as soon as possible. A new collection reaches stores only after a few months. One example of this is when Vogue made a video called "Watch Haim take on the best looks from the Paris spring 2019 collections". (Vogue, 2018). This video features a model wearing the full look of Givenchy s/s 2019 LK 53, which

is a silver dress, shown at 0:05. The video was released on the Vogue US website at October 16th 2018, just days after the show, which was September 30th 2018. The clothing in the video was not available for purchase at that time. In the book *Mastering Fashion Marketing* by Jackson & Shaw, the quote: "Having samples readily and quickly available is mission-critical for all successful PR departments" reveals that timing and co-operation between PR and magazine, is carefully planned (Jackson & Shaw, 2008, p. 193).

Customers demand newness, and the PR policies of not mixing seasons and full-look policy makes clear which season is trending and current for a certain luxury brand. The policy of press embargo, filters which magazines are allowed to show a collection first. The viewers can rely on certain media outlets to be the first with fashion news. Certain celebrities are chosen to further endorse customers to buy new products, and show a new side to a brand by affiliating a celebrity's image with the brand image. PR enforces the ideas of newness, whilst attempting to quench it as well.

4. Laws and Regulations & Power Play

4.1 Laws And Regulations

Laws and regulations govern the outcome of a fashion editorial image as well. Laws and regulations are juggled between public relations and fashion magazines. Laws and regulations are defined in a separate chapter from the social semiotic visual analysis, to clearly distinguish what is law and what is a PR policy. Breaking PR policies themselves is not punishable by law, but the consequences affect the relationship between the PR firm and fashion magazine. Laws such as defamation, libel and copyright are important factors in the creation of a fashion image. These laws differ greatly from country to country. Kelly/Warner, which is an American law firm, writes that within the US these laws differ from state to state. (kellywarnerlaw.com, 2019). In the book *Public relations: Competencies and Practice*, Men, et al. writes that laws such as defamation, libel and copyright are important for PR, since litigation is increasing for all marketers (Gower, 2019, p. 114). Law books have to catch up with advancing technology by creating new laws about the Internet. Even though print media is traditionally seen as separate from digital media, print media needs to relate to digital media.

Laws do not apply to the internet in the same way, for instance an individual posting an image on a social media platform with a luxury brand product does not consider laws regarding defamation, libel, and copyright. These days, magazines demand editorial headlines that are unique to web-crawlers, and display first-page results in search engines. Print magazines often have digital platforms as well, and public relations has to relate to the increasing pace of news and editorial creation, as PR regulates news outlets. Digital media has made the access to new, and more information that is growing exponentially. Information is the currency of public relations, and PR pros having extensive knowledge of laws are necessary. Gower argues that the potential impact of communications activities these days are higher than before (Gower, 2019, p. 114). An example of the impact of wrongful communications, is the mindset of boycotting, and ignoring a brand, due to certain communication being deemed as 'wrong'. Aronson et. al. wrote that when communication is put on the internet, it is there to stay forever (Aronson, et al. 1993, p. 4). A journalist does not have freedom of speech when it comes to writing about fashion brands in a fashion image. One of the reasons for this is the risk of laws such as misappropriation, libel, and invasion of privacy, being held against the journalist by the PR firm for a brand. Libel is writing a false statement, and deeming it as true. In the Time Inc editorial guidelines, the document states that invasion of privacy is when "someone gives publicity to another person/brand that places the person/brand in a highly offensive 'false light' before the public". (TimeInc, 2012, p. 16).

Public relations controls the creation of goodwill, and the reputation of each product. A PR firm hand-picks which magazines, celebrities, and influencers may use a new collection or new products first, usually based on the player's outreach to the public. A PR firm expects a certain level of coverage in return. An example of a recent lawsuit surrounding the topic of unjust coverage of a product by a celebrity, involves the New York based public relations firm PR Consulting suing the model Luka Sabbat, for breach of contract, and unjust enrichment October 30th 2018, in the Supreme Court Of The State Of New York. The Cambridge Business Dictionary explains that an influencer is: "someone who affects or changes the way that other people behave, for example through their use of social media" (Cambridge, 2019).

Influencers are increasingly used as a marketing tool by companies, and PR firms create contracts with influencers for them to present goodwill to a product. The court case states that: "PRC engaged Sabbat to create and post certain content on social media in connection with a "Spectacles Marketing Campaign", undertaken for PRC's client, Snap, Inc" (PR Consulting v Luka Sabbat, 2018, p. 1, Supreme Court of The State Of New York). Sabbat was not able to fulfill the demands of the contract, and was taken to court for not influencing enough. This case type is a commercial e-filing, which is found via the index number. Commercial e-filing means that electronic filing is required for cases surrounding commercial matters (nycourts.gov, 2019). This lawsuit demonstrates how PR firms selectively choose their outlets. The court case further states that: "The agreement further provided that each post was to be submitted to PRC for review and that Sabbat would provide PRC with analytics (reach, comments, likes and views for Instagram Stories) within 24 hours of the posting" (PR Consulting v Luka Sabbat, 2018, p. 2, Supreme Court Of The State Of New York). This paragraph gives a perspective of the level of control a fashion PR firm has over their media venues. The public relations firm PR Consulting has clients ranging from streetwear brands to luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton, which is part of the LVMH Group (prconsulting.net, 2019).

Laws and regulations have a certain impact on the creation of fashion editorial images, and are a tool for public relations to control brand outreach as well as the way a product is represented. What is rare sight in the civil court, is a PR firm placing a judgement on a fashion magazine. I did not find a case surrounding a PR firm suing a fashion magazine in the United States case files, but that is not to say it has not happened in another country. PR firms and magazines collaborate daily, and they need each other to achieve business goals on both ends. Laws and regulations always lie beneath the surface, and can therefore be seen as a way for public relations and magazines to control one another.

4.2 Power Play Between Fashion Magazines And Fashion PR

The PR policies and laws examined above, highlight a strong relationship between high fashion PR and fashion magazines. According to Yuniya Kawamura's concept of gatekeepers, fashion magazines are gatekeepers of fashion trends. (Kawamura, 2004, p. 127). High fashion

public relations can in turn, be seen as gatekeepers of a fashion brand and tastemakers, which contributes to the trickle-down effect. What high fashion PR and fashion magazines have in common, is that they are both authorities and control the way fashion is presented to the public. Bernard Arnault, who is the owner of LVMH, says the main goals he has for the brands under LVMH, including Givenchy, is: "enhancing timelessness, maybe hire a hip new designer, and advertise the entire package relentlessly". (Thomas, 2008, p. 41). Arnault's business plans are reflected in the PR policies made by the brand Givenchy, as the PR policies of full-looks, not mixing seasons, cover exclusivity and the importance of timing, align with Arnault's business plans.

An important aspect of the relationship and power play between PR and fashion magazines, is timing. When a new collection is released by a brand, it is available straight away for select magazines. Magazines create content for the new season as soon as possible, due to press rules such as press embargo, that govern which magazine is allowed to present what. The demands of the digital age makes timing a more important factor than ever. J.J Colao writes that press embargoes do not always work in practice, as they do in theory. He mentions that the consequences of a media venue breaking a press embargo depends on the power dynamics at play (Colao, 2015). Colao continues to write that: "top-tier publications, like *The New York Times* for example, often have less to lose by breaking an embargo. Since their coverage is so valuable, and their access to information is so broad, they may feel like they have the upper-hand in any embargo-breaking squabble". (Colao, 2015). Keeping in mind the power dynamics at play is important, since even though PR policies and rules work in theory, in reality it is different. Colao suggests being aware of an individual journalist's embargo track records, in order to prevent information about a brand releasing to the public in an untimely manner. This suggestion may reflect the level of control both players in the industry have over each other.

There is a higher pace in the creation of fashion, especially when a brand has more than two seasons, such as pre-fall, pre-spring, haute couture, and bridal collections. In order to make sure that collections have even media exposure, the communication between fashion PR and magazines is increasingly important. PR lets magazines know when a new collection is in

stock, and when it will no longer be available. Timing has become an increasingly important factor, as the concept of seasonal fashion is changing. Some brands prefer fewer collections per year, and approach different strategies towards media exposure of products. Antiform.com writes that many argue over a time lag, when fashion shows are exposed in the media, months before the collection arrives to stores it can create product fatigue for the customer (Lizzie, 2016). Product fatigue is an important factor to consider these days, considering customers demand newness at a faster rate. Dana Thomas argues about these increasing demands, by stating that: "With the support of fashion magazines, luxury companies in the last ten years have created the phenomenon of the handbag of the season" (Thomas, 2007, p. 4). This was written 12 years ago, but highlights an important phenomenon, that fashion magazines and PR together have increased customer demands for new products, in order to be up-to-date with current fashions. This thirst and drive for new products, makes overexposure of a product in media venues something to be watchful for. In order to clearly communicate a new collection, a PR firm hosts an open house. PR firm KCD Worldwide in New York, which represents a large collection of brands including Givenchy hosts regular open houses. Stylists and magazine editors are welcome to view the new season collections. Ed Filipowski, president of KCD says that: "it is more important than ever to give editors the opportunity to see collections firsthand" (Iredale, 2013).

PR professional Sophie Roche mentioned that: "I realized that to be a good PR, you have to know the editorial side, or have familiarity with it; to be a bit creative. You kind of have to be an editor" (Roche, 2018). This quote displays the close relationship a publicist has to a fashion magazine. Last minute changes are made when a magazine requests certain pieces from a collection to fit a fashion editorial, and the magazine decides to not use certain products from the brand last minute. PR needs to be able to find replacement pieces and offer new choices from their brand, that fit into the fashion editorial theme, and cooperate with the magazine's requests. This sets an example of how PR as well as fashion editors, become tastemakers and define what is good taste. Taste, according to Bourdieu, is something fostered internally in a person through socialization. Bourdieu writes that "Gastronomy is the set of rules which govern the cultivation and education of taste". (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 68). Taste is not something that naturally occurs, but is rather something symbolic, and creates social

status. Bourdieu continues to write that: "The dominant classes preferences are naturalized as real differences from the middle- and especially the working-class (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 68). The concept of good taste is seen as a myth associated to a class system, according to Bourdieu. Roland Barthes, mentions that a myth gives something a "natural and eternal justification" (Barthes, 1957, p. 143). Naturalizing a myth makes it harder to distinguish what is myth and what is not. Fashion magazines promote products and lifestyles that are high budget, and link it to the concept of good taste. Fashion magazines will promote high fashion ready-to-wear pieces at 1600 USD for a pair of pants, for instance. Apart from high-end products, magazines promote expensive travel destinations, and products for increasing your wellbeing. The target customers in this case are people of high income. High fashion public relations, contributes to the formation of the myth of a natural "upper class taste", when being featured in a magazine. The PR policies also contribute to the meaning of what upper class taste is. Luxury is the definition of the myth of an upper class taste.

5. Conclusions And Discussions

This study aimed to answer the following question: "What aesthetical values and impact do fashion PR policies have in the production of fashion editorial images?". This study examined high fashion public relations brand Givenchy, and in particular how their PR policies influenced the process of creating a fashion image. The concrete outcome of my thesis is that the brand Givenchy's PR act as tastemakers of their brand, and in that way are gatekeepers. Through their policies, they regulate taste perception of the viewer regarding high fashion and luxury. The policies also strengthen myths about the Givenchy brand, and different types of representations. The myths are shown as socially significant to the viewer. The common denominator of the PR policies, is that they provide only positive aesthetic values such as beauty, grace. The sensory perception of the viewer is controlled, to only view the Givenchy brand as such.

Barthes concept of myths in society, was a strong driver in the analysis of the images to understand that symbolic relations are created from the brand to the customer through the policies. The full-look policy accentuated the representation of a "Givenchy person" in the fashion image, that a customer can identify with. The concept of a Givenchy person, encourages customers to purchase Givenchy clothing in order to identify with a certain group,

as if being a part of a family. This is inherently a symbolic value, and tends to the needs of being a part of something, and being a part of high fashion culture. Celebrities in the images, set an example for the viewer that they are a part of the Givenchy family. The policies of not mixing seasons, and press embargos both accentuate the illusion of 'newness'. Press embargos are a way to control, and hand-pick the magazines that can use Givenchy products from a new collection for a certain amount of time. The use of press embargos accentuate the importance of which media outlet is allowed to use a new Givenchy collection first in a fashion editorial. The control over media outlets highlight the power of a fashion image in society. Not mixing seasons creates the illusion for the viewer of how new the fashion image is, and drives demands for newness. The illusion, and myth of newness in fashion, is driven by both PR and magazines together. Through magazines, PR has been able to create seasonal trends in magazines, and drive customer demands for the new 'it-bag', or silhouette of the season.

Bourdieu's theory of the mirage of high culture, and dominating class tastes that dominated classes chase after was also a big driver in the analysis. Bourdieu described high culture as creating aesthetical values that show distinction from others. High fashion is closely correlated to high culture taste. The representations in the images, correlate to the aesthetical values of beauty, grace, power, authority, and more. In the Vogue UK image, the clothing is described as "dazzling", in the written text, and it took two seamstresses to put the garments on the model, which sends the message of unattainability and exclusivity. The rebelling against a higher authority, that CR fashion book suggests, asserts power. Then there is the concept of freedom through luxury, that the Harper's Bazaar image connotes. All these concepts were displayed in correlation to Givenchy clothing. Those individuals who then can 'partake' in high fashion, and the concepts displayed through the images, are only high income individuals.

High fashion PR policies radically stand out from brands that do not employ these policies, since they are used as a tool to regulate the taste perception of the viewer. The viewer acquires a different taste for brands that are high fashion through the policies, since Givenchy PR and fashion magazines use the same formula for every fashion editorial image. The viewer therefore is told what is an aesthetically pleasing image of high fashion, so the viewer can not have unbiased ideas about luxury brands. Through the analysis, I found that high fashion

brands, and good design such as couture, lead to more profit-driven PR policies, since the aims for profit are much larger.

Kawamura's gatekeeping theory helped understand the concept of gatekeepers and how gatekeeping can work in different ways. A fashion magazine is a gatekeeper of fashion trends, whilst public relations is a gatekeeper of their own brand. Kawamura did not write about public relations, nevertheless, the concept of gatekeeping helped show that the power dynamic between fashion magazines and PR is an important factor for the outcome of a fashion image. As highlighted by J. Colao, even though PR policies work good in theory, in practice it is very different. The application of PR policies by fashion magazines, is determined by the power play between PR and fashion magazines. Laws and regulations such as defamation, libel and copyright lie beneath the surface, and are an aid to public relations professionals in order to make sure that a brand's demands of certain publicity is fulfilled in the best way possible.

The authors used in the previous research chapter, were of aid to fully understand what public relations aims and intentions are. The definitions of luxury, and different methods of accentuating luxury in a brand, helped contribute to the understanding of the mirage of high culture. The method of using a social semiotic visual analysis on the fashion editorial images, helped to find out the visual cues in an image, and the importance of different photography techniques. Essentially the method helped prove the power of an image, and how an image can manipulate the symbolic relation between the viewer and the participant in an image.

An interpretation I made through my analysis, is that the changing attitudes towards PR policies are changing, because the attitudes reflect the changing fashion business. The digitalization of the fashion business, has also created a change in the relation dynamic between PR and fashion magazine. Fashion magazines could benefit from an understanding of the core values that shape fashion brands public relations policies. Media venues are under larger surveillance of a brand's public relations, since everything that is uploaded to the Internet stays there forever.

High fashion brands could benefit from increasing the awareness of static PR policies that aim to sustain core values, and dynamic PR policies that change at a similar pace as the changing digital environment. The full-look policy and its theoretical foundation is a typical core value

PR policy that captures the timelessness of Givenchy. A dynamic PR policy applied in the rapidly changing digital environment, is the public relations restrain journalists' impulse to go to press too soon with too few facts, due to the colossal impact of wrongful communications (Aronson, et al. 1993, p. 4).

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