

# FASHION INSPIRATIONS

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*Through this project I seek to capture the essence and vitality of street fashion and to gain and share an understanding of the impacts of street fashion innovators.*

# INTRODUCTION

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

My research explored the mechanisms of inspiration and influence in the fashion industry through the mediums of street fashion and runway trends with the goal of deepening the understanding of their correlation.

# INTELLECTUAL MERIT

In the field of Retail Merchandising, the theoretical grounding of my research is addressed through trends analysis, Diffusion Theory and Trend Contagion.

Theoretical work that addresses the Trickle-up aspect of Diffusion Theory was of particular importance.

# BROADER IMPACTS

The global fashion industry is worth over \$184 billion. Fashion often defines an era of a culture and it is a strong influence of the zeitgeist. Much has been written about the importance and influence of runway fashion. Historically overlooked has been the impact of street fashion innovators. This research seeks to provide better understanding for

those working in the fashion system. Consumers, apparel designers, design students, and retailers – those interested in advancing their knowledge of fashion presentations - will also find great value in understanding the interaction of street fashion innovators and high fashion designers who lead their generations in fashion.

# THE RESEARCH

# METHODOLOGY

1. **Preparation:** Identified three key locations in London to observe street fashion female individuals, ages 18 - 25.
2. **Observation:** Observed and photographed fashion innovators using both logical and intuitive processes when recognizing distinctive looks.
3. **Observation:** Observed and collected photographs from street fashion blogs (The Sartorialist, Facehunter, Style Scout) and Style.com runway photographs from London fashion weeks.
4. **Compilation:** Edited and compiled photographs, observations, and research materials into a consistent and intentional final production.
5. **Analysis:** Paralleled the trend timelines of street and runway and applied the diffusion theories of Trickle-up and Trickle-down to source inspirations.
6. **Synthesis:** Identified synchronous and asynchronous trends between runway and street fashion.

# TERMINOLOGY

- **Trend Contagion**
  - Spread of a fashion trend
- **Diffusion Theory**
  - The path and/or direction in which the spreading of a trend proceeds socially, economically, and geographically
  - Diffusion can be trickle-up (for example, street fashion to runway) or trickle-down (for example, runway to street fashion)
- **Fashion System**
  - The entirety of the fashion industry, including all related professions, industries, and impacts of fashion as dress
- **Fashion Presentation**
  - The ensemble, including garments, shoes, accessories, body modifications, hairstyle, cosmetic use, and emotional exertion, of an individual.
- **Fashion innovators**
  - Earliest fashion communicators highly interested in fashion, sensitive to their impression on others, and recognized as being social and having qualities appropriate for leadership, who tend to influence others in their social worlds and legitimize a style for fashion followers

*“The central feature of this conceptualization is that fashion is a process predominantly motivated by social communications and social influence.”*

- George B. Sproles

## **FASHION DIFFUSION**

# FASHION DIFFUSION

## **Fashion Theory: A Conceptual Framework**

George B. Sproles, Purdue University

- “The motivational force behind fashion may be thought of as social conformity or social "contagion.”
- “Fashion may be conceptualized as a ‘social mechanism’ of collective behavior among a mass of people, in which the collective tastes of people are modified for reasons not generally associated with economic or technical utility.”
- “Fashion diffusion represents a dramatically unique application of general diffusion theory, emphasizing the collective social mechanisms of fashion object acceptance.”

# FASHION DIFFUSION

Fashion Theory: A Conceptual Framework  
George B. Sproles, Purdue University

**Sproles' five stage process propagated largely by social motivations:**

1. Adoption Leadership by "Consumer Fashion Change Agents."
2. The Social Visibility and Communicability Phase.
3. Conformity Within and Across Social Systems.
4. Market and Social Saturation.
5. Decline and Obsolescence Forced by the Emergence of New Fashion Alternatives.

# FASHION DIFFUSION

Fashion Theory: A Conceptual Framework  
George B. Sproles, Purdue University

**1. Adoption Leadership by "Consumer Fashion Change Agents."**

This phase represents the introduction of the fashion innovation, the purchase of the innovation by individuals who function as leaders of collective taste within their social networks.

**2. The Social Visibility and Communicability Phase.**

Fashion change agents operating within their social systems. During this phase, the fashion is characterized as "new" and "novel," and emerges as a highly visible and communicative alternative to the existing fashions.

**3. Conformity Within and Across Social Systems.**

Fashion gains a further base of social legitimization and social acceptance as it is communicated within social system networks and across social systems over time. This diffusion process is propagated by social contagion and social conformity to a new set of fashion "tastes."

# FASHION DIFFUSION

Fashion Theory: A Conceptual Framework  
George B. Sproles, Purdue University

## **4. Market and Social Saturation.**

The fashion reaches and passes the mass marketing phase. The fashion has reached its highest level of acceptance, and the massed conformity to the fashion creates a form of "social saturation" in that the fashion is in constant use by a large and visible number of people.

## **5. Decline and Obsolescence Forced by the Emergence of New Fashion Alternatives.**

The market and social saturation of the fashion, combined with the emergence of new fashion alternatives, forces the ultimate decline in use of a fashion.

# TRICKLE-DOWN



- Trends originating in the elite strata of the fashion industry (runway fashion) affect fashion trends of the lower strata (street fashion) through mass media and impersonal influence.
- Can be synchronous or asynchronous
- Once trends disseminate, they are no longer desirable to the leaders of the highest social class.

# TRICKLE-DOWN EXAMPLE

*Jessica's Jeans: \$198*

*"I love her cool, stylish outfit so I found some inexpensive options that have a similar look."*

*Go shopping! Red Jeans \$18.99  
Forever 21 White Tee \$9.50 Old  
Navy Blazer \$29.99 Target Boots  
\$59 Urban Outfitters*

*(Jessica Alba photo via  
Celebrity Street Style)*

*www.hollywouldblvd.com*



# TRICKLE-DOWN EXAMPLE

The Real



The Steal



*“Valentino Rockstud Leather Flats Look For Less! ...The real comes with a price tag of \$645.00 at Bergdorf Goodman! The look for less may be found in several color options at Go Jane on sale now for only \$10.95!”*

# TRICKLE-DOWN EXAMPLE



*‘Kate Middleton wore an Alexander McQueen wedding dress when she said ‘I do’ to Prince William. You can feel like a princess too in this replica by JS Collections called “The Duchess” which will be available in stores on September 15, 2011, but can be pre-ordered today. Nordstrom.com, \$698.’*

*- Fashion Magazine*

# TRICKLE-UP

Typically defined as trends originating in lower strata of fashion industry (socio-economic class) and influencing upper strata (upper class). This diffusion can be synchronous or asynchronous

However, recently, fashion innovators directing the trends of street fashion are influencing the elite of runway fashion through personal and impersonal influence. In this research, street fashion will be examined as a trickle-up diffusion.

# TRICKLE-UP EXAMPLE



1962 Ad for Men's Hush Puppies shoes

The Hush Puppy, classically uncool after the 1950s, caused a phenomenon in the 1990s when club kids of New York began wearing them.

Inspired by this, a stylist famously used them in the John Bartlett's Spring/Summer 1995 runway show and the trend spread, resulting in the Hush Puppy selling out in all its stores.

# TRICKLE-UP EXAMPLE



Jeans began as a utilitarian item for laborers and miners in the late 1800s. The purpose and associated image of jeans evolved when Hollywood spotlighted jeans with tough cowboys and villains, Vogue featured tight fitting jeans on 1930s women, US designer Claire McCardell took an innovated approach with the jean “popover” dress, and in the 1950s and 1960s jeans were adopted as a rebellious statement by American protest youth. By the 1990s, jeans had become a fashion statement embraced by the fashion elite and jeans were being produced by fashion houses for a premium price.

Tortora, Phyllis. "Snapshot: Jeans." The Berg Fashion Library.

# TRICKLE-UP ARCHETYPAL EXAMPLE

## MARIE ANTOINETTE

- Born an archduchess of Austria
- Dauphine of France 1770 to 1774
- Queen of France and Navarre 1774 to 1792.
- She rebelled against court life and found refuge in *Hameau de la reine*. She and an elite circle of friends would dress in **peasant clothing** and straw hats and retreat to the hameau. It was out of this practice that her style of dress evolved.



# MARIE ANTOINETTE



- The chemise was made from a white muslin, the gaulle consisted of thin layers of this muslin, loosely draped around the body and belted at the waist, and was often worn with an apron and a fichu.
- This trend was quickly adopted by fashionable women in France and England
- Marie Antoinette's gaulle or chemise à la Reine stripped female aristocrats of their traditional identity. Noblewomen could now be confused with peasant girls, confusing long standing sartorial differences in class.

*For more on Marie Antoinette:  
[marie-antoinette.org](http://marie-antoinette.org)*

# EVIDENCE

This fashion research is supported by visual photographic evidence from designer runway shows, various street fashion blogs, and personal observation and research conducted in London, England during summer 2011.

While not every runway trend between 2008 and 2012 is included in this analysis, the selection of runway and street fashion trends is based on their prominence.

# THE ROLE OF MEDIA

Historically, fashion was sourced primarily from high fashion mediators like fashion magazines, designer runway shows, and trade shows.

Today, with trend websites, street fashion blogs, social media, and online access to all levels of fashion, both the source and the direction of trend diffusion have changed and continue to change.

**OBSERVATIONS**

*For a better understanding and context of trends, my personal observations paired with various online runway and street fashion blogs included material from 2008-2012.*

*InStyle.com was used for concise seasonal runway trend reports and selected the street trends that best represented visible trickle-up and trickle down effects.*

# INSTYLE

*www.instyle.com*

- InStyle.com is the leading fashion, beauty and celebrity lifestyle site including seasonal runway trend reports that outline primary fashion trends of fall and spring designer lines during Fashion Weeks.
- I chose to use the seasonal trends outlined by InStyle because:
  - InStyle.com reports aligned with other respected trend documenting sources such as Harper's Bazaar and Vogue.
  - InStyle.com provides high resolution runway photographs.
  - InStyle.com includes a wealth of fashion content, designer information, and trend articles in a centralized and well organized site.

# STREET FASHION BLOGS

- **The Sartorialist**

*www.thesartorialist.com*

- Founder, blogger, & photographer Scott Schuman began The Sartorialist with the idea of creating a two-way dialogue about the world of fashion and its relationship to daily life; his blog focuses on street fashion around the world. In addition to the blog, Schuman's work has been featured in GQ, Vogue Italia, Vogue Paris, and Interview.

- **Style Scout**

*www.stylescout.net*

- A street style blog focusing on London street fashion and style.

- **FaceHunter**

*www.facehunter.blogspot.com*

- A look at the street fashion of London.  
“Eye candy for the style hungry.”

- **Street Peeper**

*www.streetpeeper.com*

- Worldwide street photos including London and New York.

# RUNWAY

*Trend & Images Source: InStyle.com*



# MINIMALIST

*Runway Fall 2008*



## MAXI DRESSES

*Runway Fall 2008*



# FULL FLORAL PRINT

*Runway Fall 2008*



# GEOMETRIC

*Runway Spring 2009*



# HIGH FASHION SWEATPANTS

*Runway Spring 2009*



# BANDEAUS

*Runway Fall 2009*

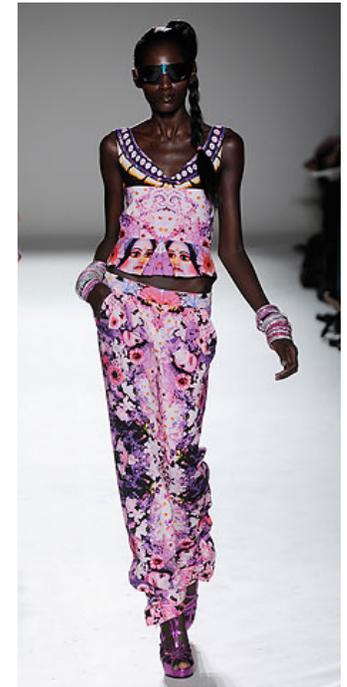
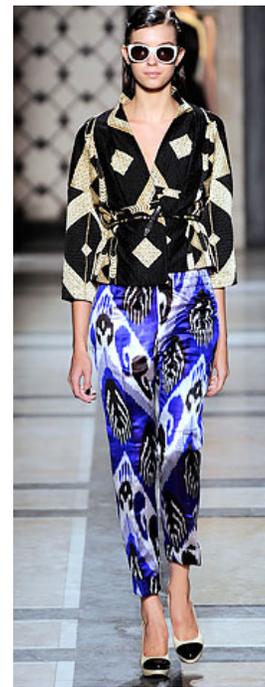


# LEATHER

*Runway Fall 2009*



**MILITARY**  
*Runway Spring 2010*

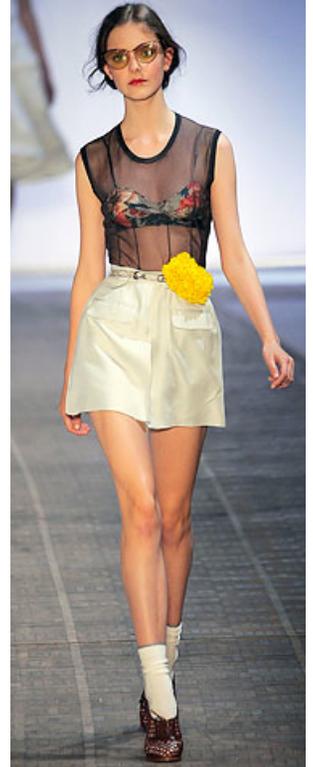


# PSYCHEDELIC

*Runway Spring 2010*



**FULL FLORAL**  
*Runway Spring 2010*



**SHEER**  
*Runway Spring 2010*



# FUR: REAL & FAUX

*Runway Fall 2010*



**GOLD**  
*Runway Fall 2010*



# WRAPPING LAYERS

*Runway Fall 2010*

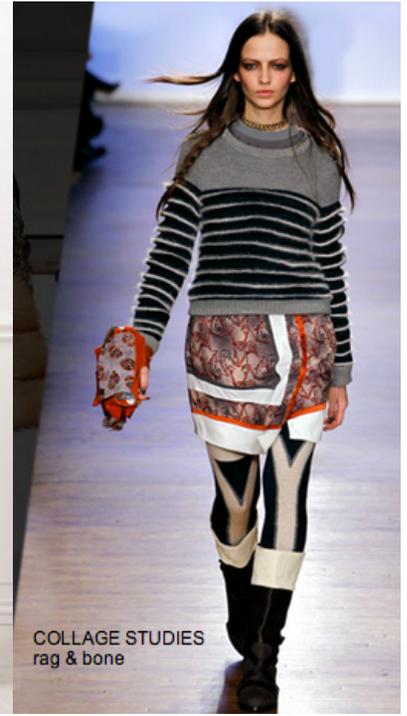


# HYPER COLOR

*Runway Spring 2011*



**LACE**  
*Runway Spring 2011*



## BOLD & CONTRASTING PATTERN ENSEMBLES

*Runway Fall 2011*



SPOTTY SERVICE  
yves saint laurent



SPOTTY SERVICE  
david koma



SPOTTY SERVICE  
jeremy laing



SPOTTY SERVICE  
l.a.m.b.



SPOTTY SERVICE  
stella mccartney



SPOTTY SERVICE  
marc jacobs

## POLKA DOTS

*Runway Fall 2011*



PSYCHEDELIC FURS  
the row



PSYCHEDELIC FURS  
missoni



PSYCHEDELIC FURS  
emporio armani



PSYCHEDELIC FURS  
roksanda ilincic



PSYCHEDELIC FURS  
prabal gurung



PSYCHEDELIC FURS  
emanuel ungaro

# PSYCHEDELIC FURS

*Runway Fall 2011*



AB FAB  
Roland Mouret



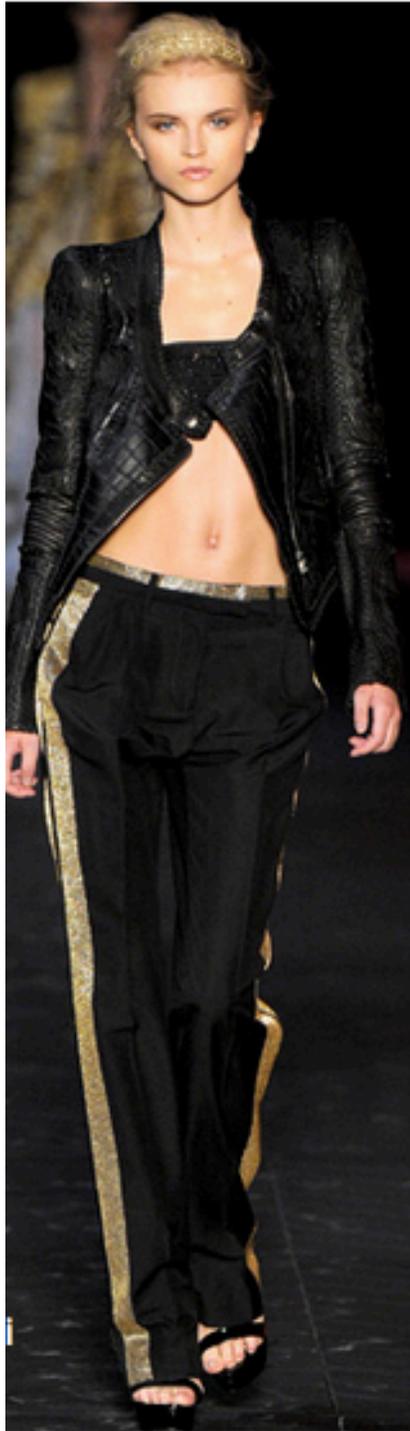
AB FAB  
Bill Blass



AB FAB  
Band of Outsiders

## EXPOSED MIDRIFF

*Runway Spring 2012*



GAME ON  
Ohne Titel



GAME ON  
John Miller



GAME ON  
Isabel Marant



GAME ON  
Kenzo

# HIGH FASHION SWEATPANTS

*Runway Fall 2012*



Erdem



Rag & Bone



Prada



Giambattista Valli



# FULL-BODY PATTERN

*Runway Fall 2012*



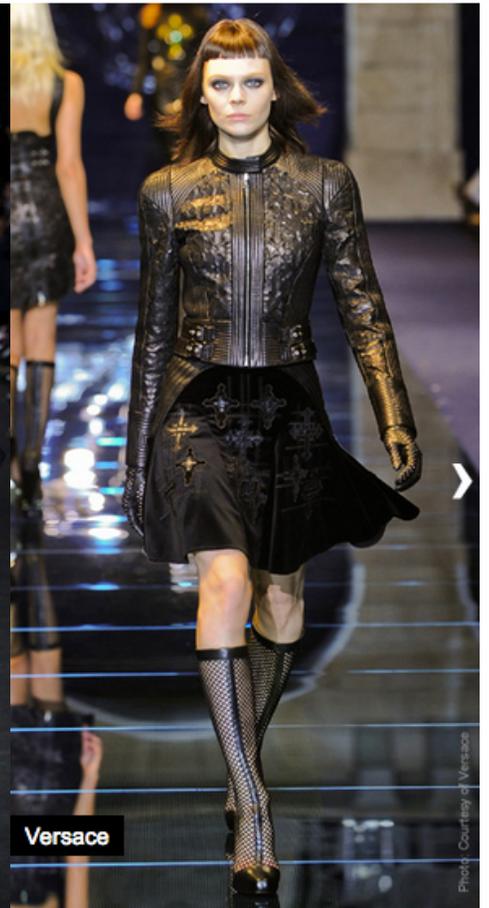
Alexander Wang



Gareth Pugh



Ann Demeulemeester



Versace



Photo: Courtesy of Versace



# LEATHER

*Runway Fall 2012*



## FUR ACCENTS & ACCESSORIES

*Runway Fall 2012*

*“I am a fashion person, and fashion is not only about clothes – it’s about all kinds of change.”*

*– Karl Lagerfeld*

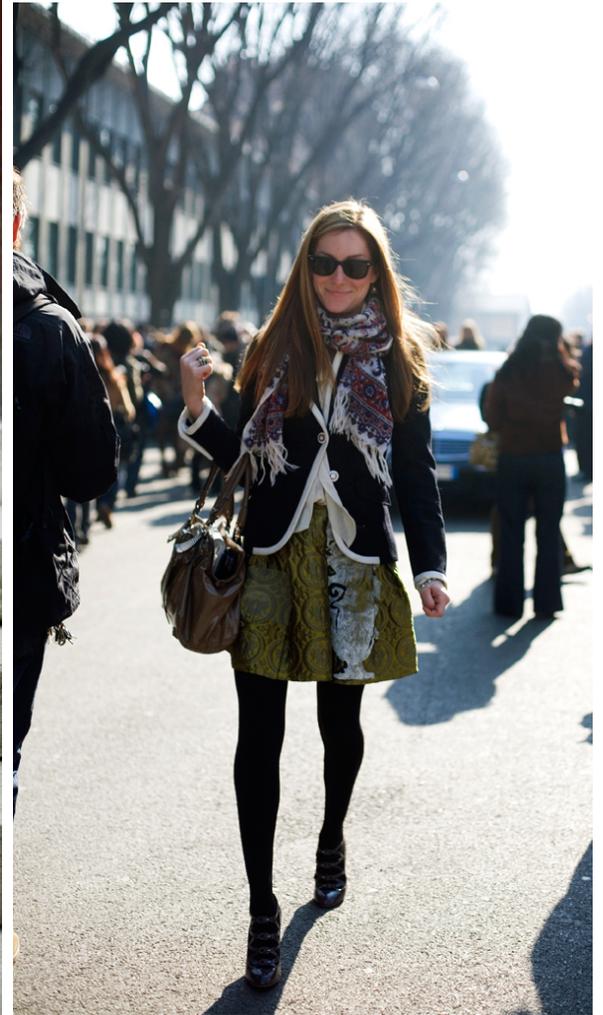
# STREET

*Images Source:* The Sartorialist, Facehunter, Street Peeper, & Style Scout



# HIGH FASHION SWEATPANTS

*Street 2008*



## BOLD & CONTRASTING PATTERN ENSEMBLES

*Street Spring 2008*



**SHEER**  
*Street Fall 2008*



## POP OF RED

*Street Fall 2008*



# LACE

*Street Fall 2008*



**WRAPS**  
*Street Fall 2008*



**WRAPS**  
*Street Fall 2008*



**FUR**  
*Street Fall 2008*



## GRAPHIC TEES

*Street Fall 2008*



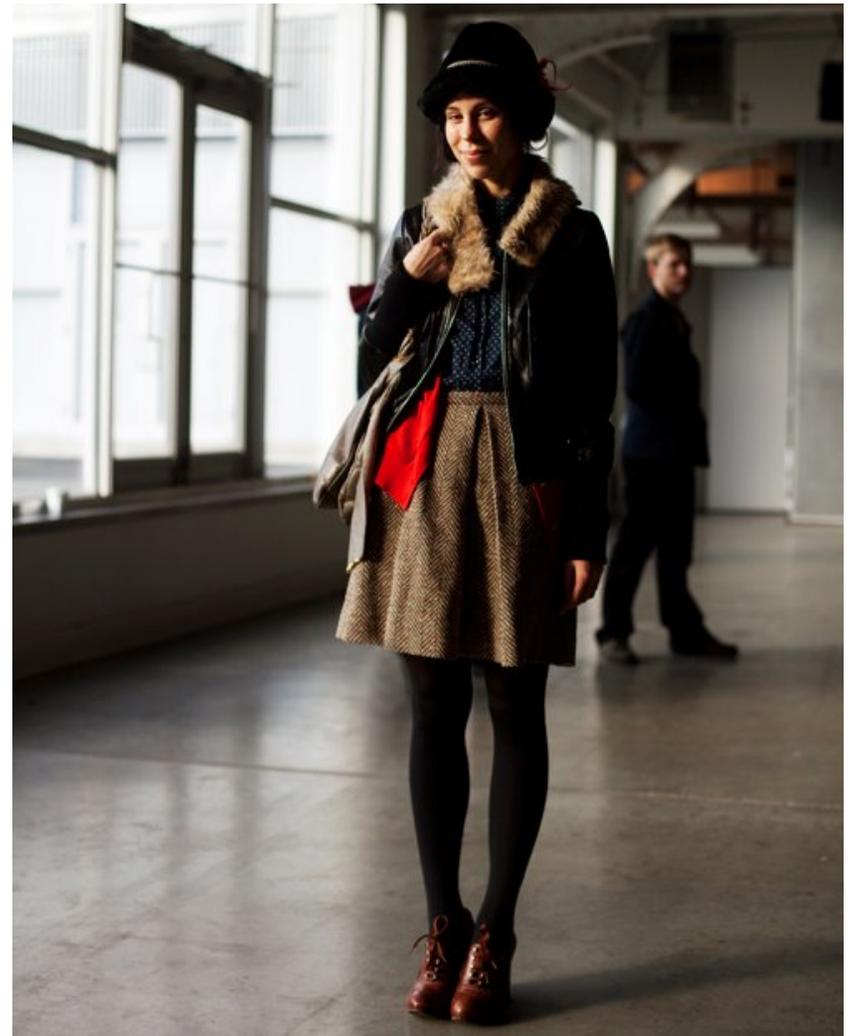
# FULL COLOR

*Street Fall 2008*



# FULL PATTERN ENSEMBLES

*Street 2008*



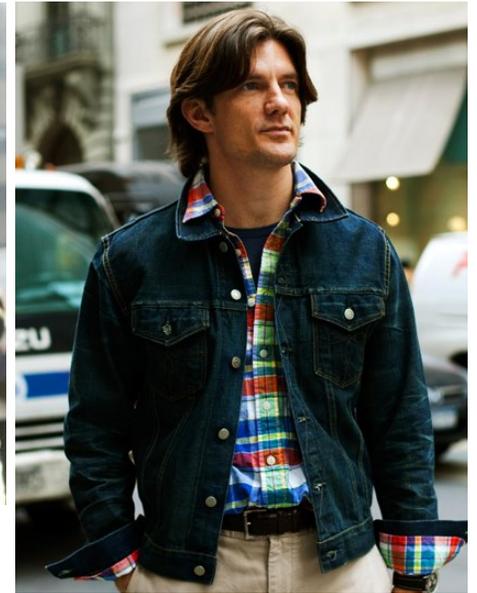
A POP OF RED  
*Street Winter 2008*



**A POP OF RED**  
*Street Winter 2008 & Spring 2009*



A POP OF RED  
*Spring 2009*



## JEAN CLOTHING

*Street 2009*



JEAN  
CLOTHING  
*Street 2009*



**BLACK & WHITE  
STRIPES**  
*Street Summer 2009*



**BLACK & WHITE  
STRIPES**  
*Street Fall 2009*



# PSYCHEDELIC PRINTS

*Street Spring & Summer 2009*



**WRAPS**  
*Street Spring & Fall 2009*



**WRAPS**  
*Street Spring & Fall 2009*



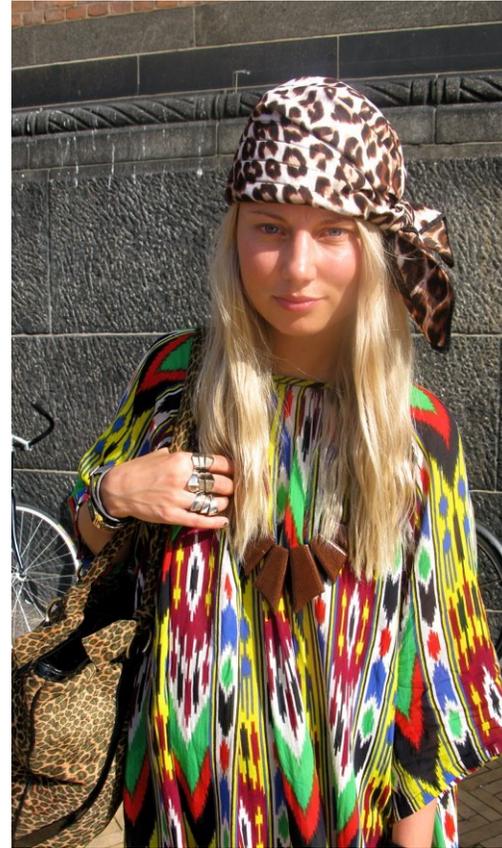
## WRAPS

*Street Spring & Fall 2009*



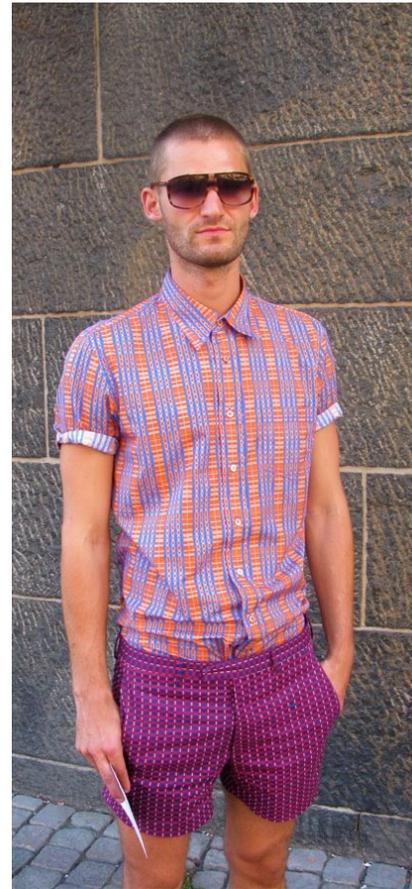
# JUMPERS

*Street Summer 2009*



## BOLD & CONTRASTING PATTERN ENSEMBLES

*Street Summer 2009*



# BOLD & CONTRASTING PATTERN ENSEMBLES

*Street Summer 2009*



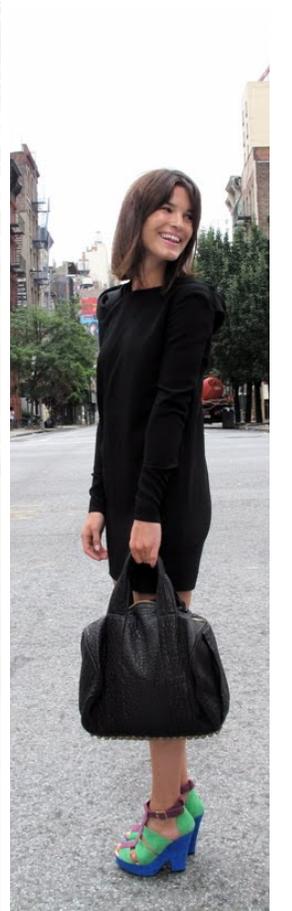
# ANIMAL PRINT

*Street Fall 2009*



# SHOULDERS

*Street Fall 2009*



# SHOULDERS

*Street Fall 2009*



# HIGH FASHION SWEATPANTS

*Street Spring 2010*



**FUR**  
*Street Spring 2010*



**FUR**  
*Street Spring 2010*



## MAXI-SKIRTS

*Street Spring 2010*



**SHEER**  
*Street Spring 2010*



## SHEER

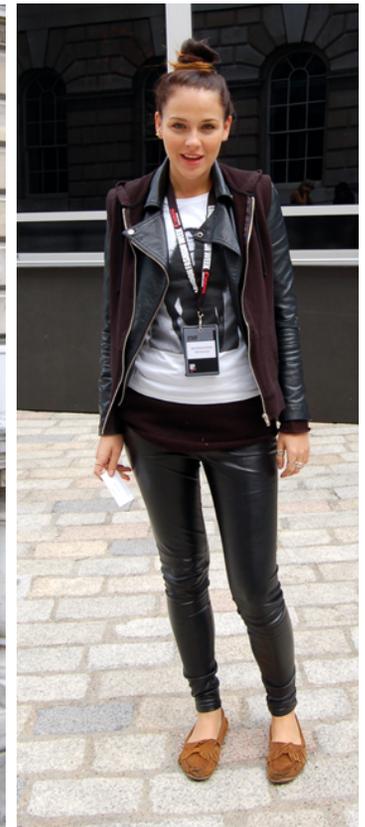
*Street Fall 2010*



**SHEER**  
*Street Fall 2010*



**LEATHER**  
*Street Spring 2010*



# LEATHER

*Street Fall 2010*



**LEATHER**  
*Street Fall 2010*



# BANDEAUS

*Street Fall 2010*



# NEUTRALS

*Street Fall 2010*



# NEUTRALS

*Street Fall 2010*



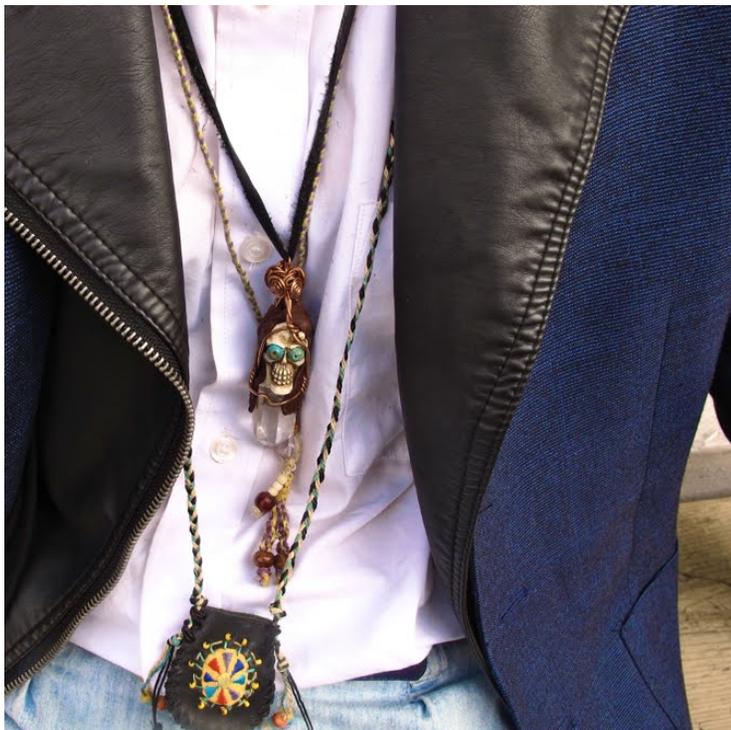
# BOLD & CONTRASTING PATTERN ENSEMBLES

*Street 2011*



## BOLD & CONTRASTING PATTERN ENSEMBLES

*Street Spring 2011*



## LEATHER TOPS & ACCESSORIES

*Street 2011*



**LEATHER TOPS &  
ACCESSORIES**  
*Street Spring 2011*



# JEAN CLOTHING

*Street 2011*



## GRAPHIC TEES

*Street 2011*



## MAXI SKIRTS

*Street 2011*

# FINDINGS

# PRIMARY RUNWAY TRENDS

2008

- Minimalist (Neutrals)
- Maxi Dresses
- Full Floral

2009

- Geometric
- Sporting Wear
- Bandeaux
- Leather

2010

- Military
- Psychedelic
- Full Floral
- Sheer
- Fur
- Gold
- Wraps

2011

- Full Color
- Lace
- Bold & Contrasting Ensembles
- Polka Dots
- Psychedelic Furs

2012

- Bare midriff (Bandeaus)
- High Fashion Sweatpants
- Full pattern
- Leather

# PRIMARY STREET TRENDS

2008

- High Fashion Sweatpants
- Bold & Contrasting Ensembles
- Sheer
- A Pop of Red
- Wraps
- Fur
- Graphic Tees
- Full Pattern

2009

- A Pop of Red
- Jean Clothing
- Black & White Stripes
- Psychedelic
- Wraps
- Jumpers
- Bold & Contrasting Ensembles
- Animal Print
- Shoulders

2010

- High Fashion Sweatpants
- Fur
- Maxi Skirts
- Sheer
- Leather
- Bandeaux
- Neutrals

2011

- Bold & Contrasting Ensembles
- Color Blocking
- Leather
- Jean Clothing
- Graphic Tees
- Maxi Dresses

# TREND CONTAGION & DIFFUSION

## **SYNCHRONOUS**

Synchronous spread of a fashion trend occurs when a runway trend and a street trend occur simultaneously in a specific time and place. This is assumed to be Trickle-down because more long term planning is involved in runway presentations than street presentations.

*4x*

this occurred in my research

## **ASYNCHRONOUS**

Asynchronous spread of a fashion trend occurs when a runway trend and a street trend occur at different periods of time in a specific place. Depending on the order of trend occurrence, this can be Trickle-Up or Trickle-down.

*6-10x*

this occurred in my research

# TRICKLE EFFECTS

## TRICKLE DOWN (SYNCHRONOUS)

Full Pattern Ensembles

2008 > 2008

Sheer

2010 > 2010

Fur

2010 > 2010

## TRICKLE DOWN (ASYNCHRONOUS)

Minimalist (Neutrals)

2008 > 2010

Maxi Skirts

2008 > 2010

Bandeaus

2009 > 2010

## TRICKLE UP (ASYNCHRONOUS)

Bold & Contrasting Ensembles

2008/09 > 2011

Wraps

2008 > 2010

High Fashion Sweatpants

2008 > 2009

2010 > 2012

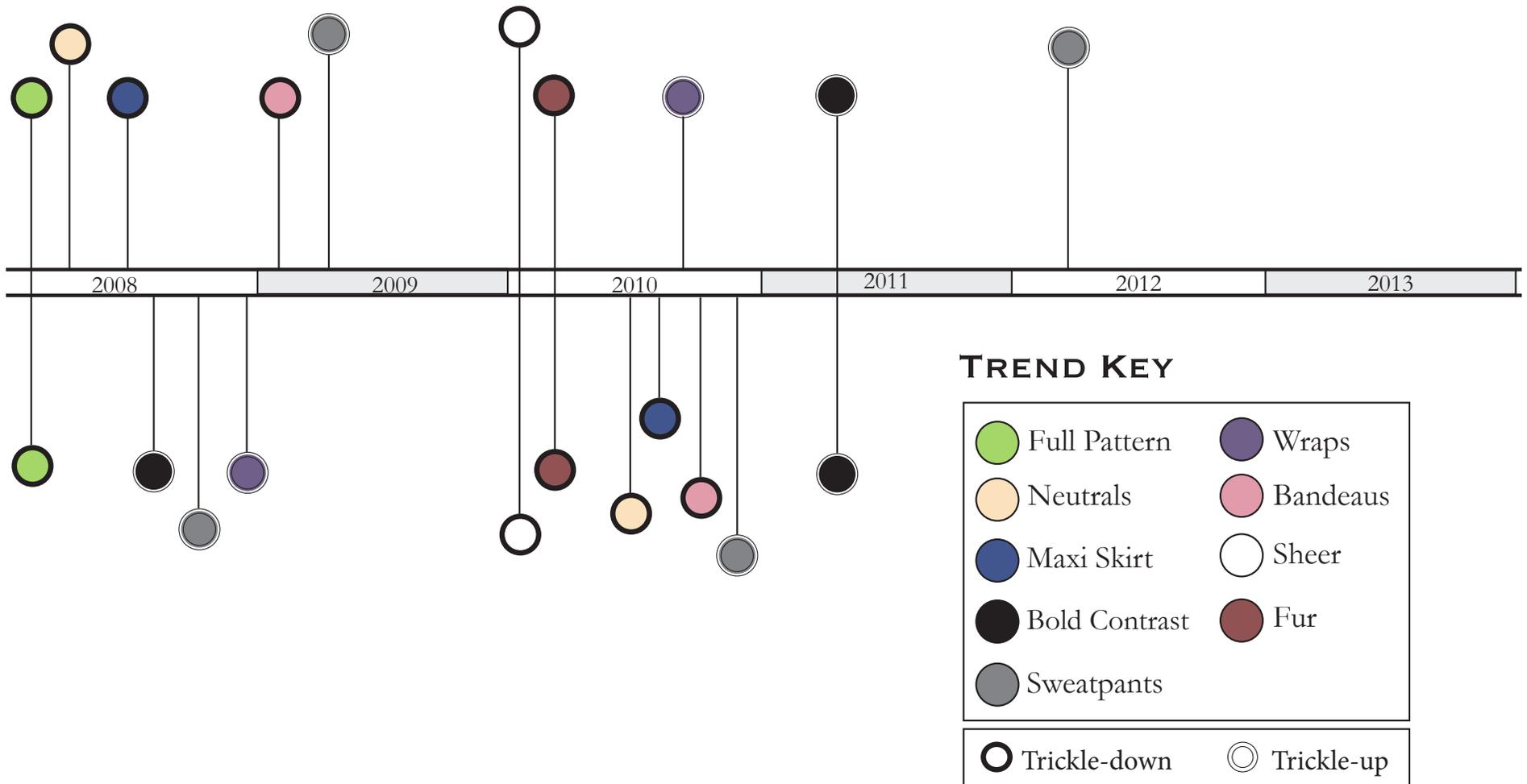
Additionally

Power Shoulders

Black & White Stripes

Pop of Red

# PARALLEL OF RUNWAY & STREET FASHION TREND TIMELINES



**CONCLUSIONS**

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

*— Alexander McQueen*

# CONCLUSIONS

1. Trickle-up diffusion is an increasingly influential force
2. Trickle-down remains a dominant force
3. Diffusion cycle lengths vary
4. Classic styles are incorporated each season

# CONCLUSIONS

- Trickle-up is an increasingly significant and influential force of trend contagion and diffusion
  - Trickle-up is becoming a more prominent direction of diffusion through a new era of highly visible and accessible street fashion
  - The importance and impacts of street are being acknowledged – and even fostered - by the elite of the fashion system
  - A unique differentiation between the formation of trends on runway and the formation of street trends is that runway designers are creating form from one vision while street fashion innovators are assembling a collection of forms from diverse visions into one cohesive look. In both, the innovator controls the vision. While in runway fashion the designer controls the identity of the parts of the presentation, in street fashion the innovator controls the interpretation and collaboration of those parts into the overall vision.
    - Runway: Whole to parts
    - Street: Parts to whole

# CONCLUSIONS

- Trickle-down diffusion remains a dominant force in the fashion system
  - Trickle-down is the historical diffusion process for fashion
  - In this research, six trends were identified as a result of trickle-down diffusion. Three of these six trends were synchronous and three of these trends were asynchronous.
  - According to B2B Marketplace of Fashion & Business Industry<sup>1</sup>, the global fashion industry is worth over \$184 billion<sup>2</sup>. It is the highly influential interaction of designers and consumers, and the resulting impact on aesthetics, that this research explores.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fashionproducts.com/fashion-apparel-overview.html>

<sup>2</sup> Including brick and mortar, catalog, and online sales

# CONCLUSIONS

- The time duration of trend diffusion cycles can be immediate or require weeks, years, and even decades
  - Synchronous trends – often most obvious during fashion weeks – are runway and street fashion trends occurring simultaneously in a specific time and place
  - Some trickle-up and trickle-down diffusion trends take weeks or years to fully cycle
  - Trends may also resurface after decades of absence
  - Based on analysis, trickle-up diffusion is typically a longer diffusion process than trickle-down because it includes trends being formed in street fashion, influencing runway designers, prompting the design and execution of a runway line, premiering on the runway, and then becoming available in retail.
  - Trickle-down diffusion includes lines being showcased on the runway, being promoted or categorized with overall trends of all designers within a season, and becoming available in retail.

# CONCLUSIONS

- *Classic Style:* Items of clothing that are timelessly elegant; they never look old-fashioned and, although subtly reworked from time to time, retain discerning purchases. 20th century onwards. -- *Berg Fashion Library*
- “Classics” include trench coats, tweed jackets, fur, and more recently, leather and jeans. These trends appear nearly every season as both runway fashion and street fashion trends.
- Classics are timeless but trend in different ways with subtle variations from season to season.
  - This research observed fur throughout each season 2008-2012. One season fur trended in hyper color, one season fur trended in accessories like handbags, and one season fur trended in the detailing of garments, such as cuffs or buttons.
  - This research observed leather throughout each season 2008-2012. One season leather trended in jackets, one season leather trended as a compliment to high end garments (high-end low-end), and one season leather trended in accessories and garments historically not made of leather material, such as tees and pleated skirts.
  - Jeans are another example of a classic material prominent every season, particularly in street fashion, but evolve in silhouette, color, texture, and garment use.

# **TRICKLE-UP TRENDS OF 2013**

# POSSIBLE TRICKLE-UP EFFECTS

BEAUTY INSIDER

Seeing Red

February 21, 2013 10:51 am

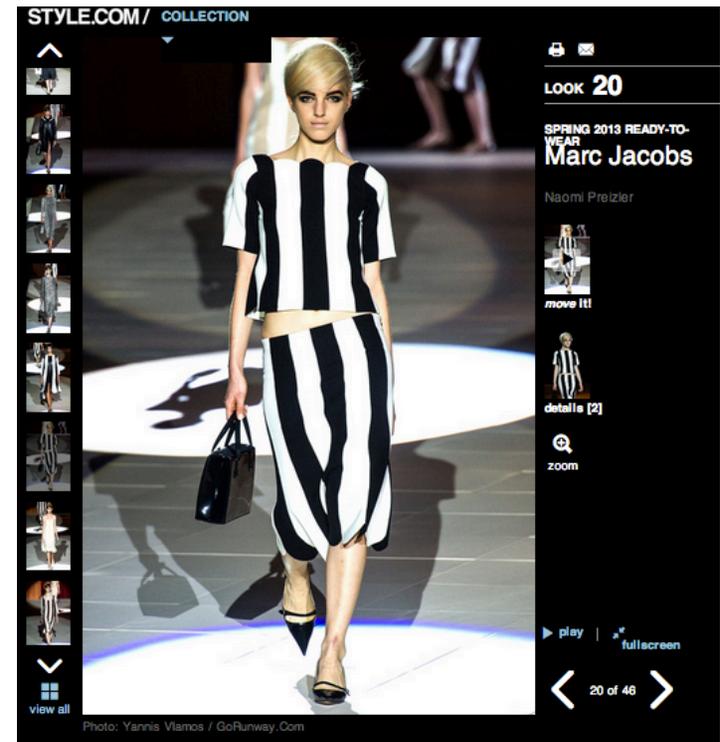
## POP OF RED



Cosmetics  
Spring 2013

## BLACK & WHITE STRIPES

Marc Jacobs  
2013 RTW



# POSSIBLE TRICKLE-UP EFFECTS



## MIDRIFF & THE BANDEAU

Runway Fall 2009 Trend

Street Fall 2010 Trend

Runway Spring 2012 Trend

# POSSIBLE TRICKLE-UP EFFECTS

No. 21

## ECLECTIC OUTFITS

REVIEW

No. 21 Style.com Review By Nicole Phelps  
February 21, 2013



VIEW COLLECTION

English meets Italian, Alessandro Dell'Acqua said backstage today. The designer has built his No. 21 label on the mash-up, and as promised, his new collection mixed tweeds, plaids, and checks with plenty of embroidery. Call it grungy meets girly. The masculine/feminine thing is practically as old as time, but Dell'Acqua is connecting with fashion's young ones.

Something about the offhand way he pairs a sequin-encrusted sweatshirt with a button-up and mannish cropped pants (Swarovski-studded socks peeking from beneath their hems) is jibing with them. Same goes for a pink lace pencil skirt over-embroidered with birds accompanied by a boxy space-dye knit sweater. **It's a bit of a trickle-up phenomenon, really.** Eclectic outfits like these are already being put together on the streets.

# POSSIBLE TRICKLE-UP EFFECTS

## SHOULDERS

*“Power Shoulders escaped the Dynasty vault to become a fashion mainstay.”*



# ADDITIONAL READING

“Theories of Fashion” by Marilyn DeLong

A-Z of Fashion

*Excerpt*

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“Today major fashion changes occur frequently, but the choices and selections have increased so that mainstream fashion is one choice among many, including recycled clothing, vintage clothing, and wearable art. Also the easily recognizable rules of fashion, such as rigid proportions, hem lengths, and silhouettes now relate more to the particular look of one group than to a fashionable look for all. Agins (1999) has declared the end of fashion, but only as it has been known historically.”

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS: ROLE & IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

What is Social Media's role in fashion?

With the exponential increase in fashion blogs – often with a focus on street fashion and/or commentary on trends – there is a new prominent information source and authority in the fashion industry. What impacts does the increase in access have on the industry, the way people dress, and the way people think about fashion? Similarly, with smartphones becoming a camera of choice for many, how does this new access to capturing fashion contribute to the growing democratization of the industry?

FACEHUNTER



STREETPEEPER

The Style Scout

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# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS: ROLE & IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

TALKS

Clay Shirky: How social media can make history

FILMED JUN 2009 • POSTED JUN 2009 • TED@State



The end of top-down control, and a new era of citizen-driven coverage and contribution, is changing the nature of information sharing.

# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS: ROLE & IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

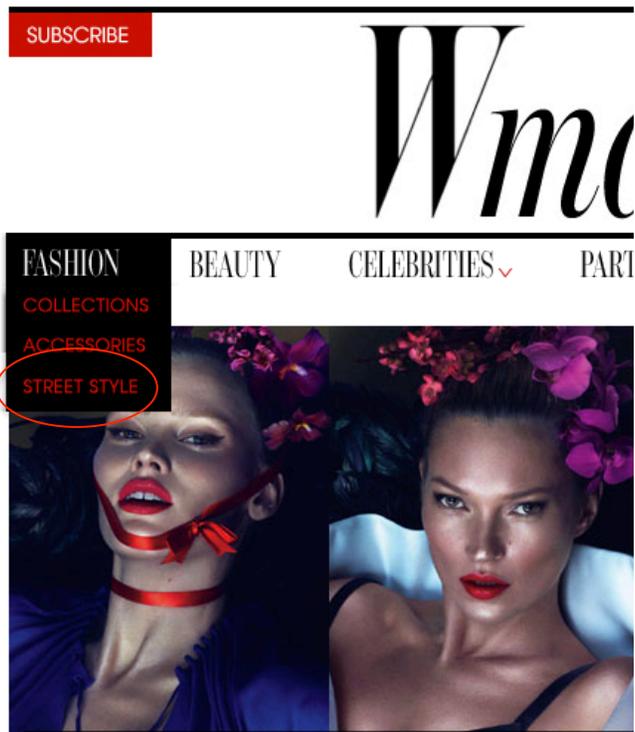
Fashion advice & insight no longer sources only from the elite, such as Vogue or celebrities, but rather **from fashion consumers themselves**, disseminated extremely rapidly through social media and online sharing.

In reexamining **Sproles' Five Stage Process**, notably published in 1974, both Stage 1: Adoption Leadership by "Consumer Fashion Change Agents" and Stage 2: The Social Visibility and Communicability Phase are taking on new forms and methodologies utilizing the reach and accessibility of the internet. New leaders of collective taste are emerging within and outside their social networks through online platforms. Fashion change agents are operating within and outside their social systems in new ways to communicate alternatives to the existing fashions in highly visible ways.

**How does this change things?**

# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS: ROLE & IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Street fashion, previously regarded simply as the result of influential designer runway lines, is now receiving attention and credibility from the industry's elite. If high fashion is photographing and promoting street fashion, how do consumers filter and identify what is a curation by designers and creative directors and what is an authentic product of street fashion innovators?



## FASHION

Spring Trends & Shopping

Street Style

Fall 2013 Fashion Shows

Spring 2013 Fashion Shows

Fashion Week

Shopping Features

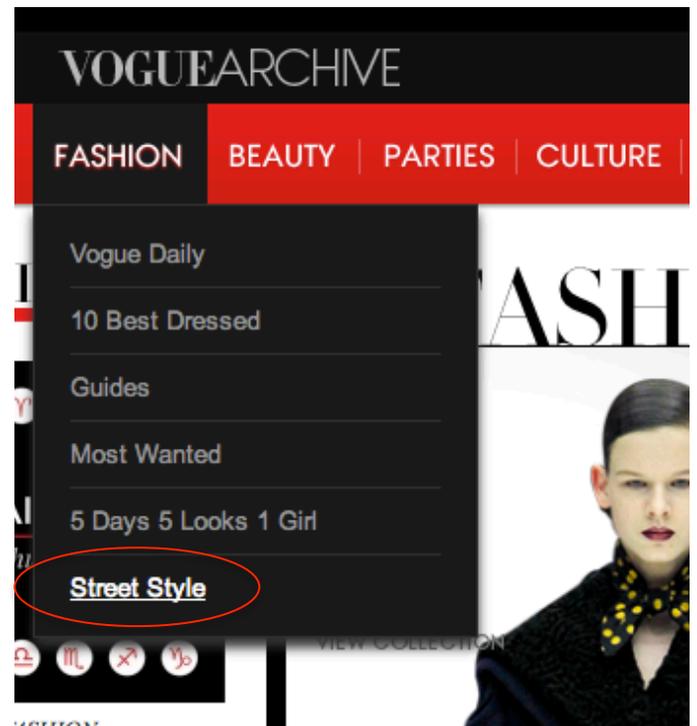
Fashion Designers

Mr. Blasberg's Best-Dressed List

Get the Look

Fabulous at Every Age

on Videos



# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS: **CUSTOMIZATION TREND**

Corporations produced an era in which sameness meant security and success. The reflex reaction has been a phenomenon of customization and individualization of everything from cell phone cases to cars. While high fashion is often a focus on creating form, street fashion is often a focus on assembly. The rising popularity of DIY and the sharing of ideas through sites like Pinterest and constantly updated profiles on social sites like Facebook are evidence of the desire for individualization, creation, and self-identifying statements.

How does the cultural trend of customization and individualization impact the prominence of street fashion?

# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS: INSPIRATION SOURCES

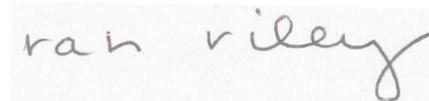
Every season, high fashion runway designers are posed the question, “What was your inspiration?”

What are the sources of inspiration for street fashion innovators?

Inspiration matters in fashion. Fashion innovators all possess the ability to choose apparel, accessory items, and body modifications to coordinate a fashion presentation that appeals to their peer group, while also contributing to the continuous diffusion of trends. Understanding the inspiration sources of fashion innovators - as well as the thought and decision processes – would provide better understanding to not only aspiring fashion innovators, but promoters in fashion marketing and fashion designers themselves. Increased comprehension of true inspiration could dramatically impact the fashion industry.

*I do not believe fashion has a scientific formula to understand and predict trends and correlations – & hopefully it never does.*

*I believe in intuition, the gut of fashion innovators and trend forecasters. I believe in inspiration from travel, structure, human experience, psychology, sociology, the natural world, and the shared zeitgeist of the people. I believe in personal style and its contribution to the revolution of global aesthetics.*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "ran riley". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

University of Minnesota – Twin Cities  
*Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program*

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**THANK YOU**

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