

DIOR AND DIGITAL STORYTELLING: ON THE MARKETING OF LUXURY BRAND
NARRATIVES

by

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Abstract

A postmodern theory and contemporary marketing strategy, digital storytelling is the virtual means by which a story can be organized. Less traditional to the beginning, middle and end of conventional narratives, this framework suggests that individuals connect the dots of a story by comparing their reading with others. To conceptualize this model within fashion, this paper follows Christian Dior's Secret Garden campaign as it is broadcasted and diffused through Instagram and YouTube. Carried out by consumers' interpretations as the story unfolds, this study aims to measure the interaction of media and audience within the parameters of social network analysis following Rihanna's casting as Dior's newest protagonist. Characterized by its hyperrealistic nature and speeded-up cultural tropes, this case underlines the epistemic shift for luxury brand communities today. As a result, this paper indicates the success of e-word-of-mouth marketing, and denotes the strength of fashion film as an illustrative medium of communication.

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1. Introduction

As the evolution of advertising has led to a heightened sophistication of marketing strategies, organizations must adapt in such a way to compete in the online marketplace. While the aesthetics of ads have improved as a result of digital technologies, this compels brands to dynamically engage with consumers through new channels. With social media at the fore of this trend, brands hail consumers through an interplay of values and visual narratives, specific to their brand identity. As capitalism drives this ethos, brands have the capacity to create an aura of both lust and lack that can only be sated by the consumption of their label. In fashion, and in relation to trickle-down theory, luxury brands create an air for aspiration and desire through a discourse of quality, expansive networks and refined marketing initiatives. Thus, to reflect the shift in which fashion has taken to participate on these digital foregrounds, this study encompasses selected elements of French luxury goods company Christian Dior's Secret Garden campaign.

Beginning in 2012, Dior began the Secret Garden campaign using new media fashion film. With subsequent installments in 2013 and 2014, the campaign, for a time, appeared to be a concluded trilogy; a seemingly modest triad of films led by a traditional 'Miss Dior' protagonist. As his initial muse, Christian Dior's 'Miss Dior', continues to epitomize the typecast silhouette and demeanour of the modern fashioned body today. Surprisingly then, and in momentum with creative director Raf Simons' recent success at Dior, the brand announced a new ambassador for their 2015 womenswear collection. Moving away from these standards, Rihanna would be the new face for a fourth Secret Garden film. Thus, to comment on the complicated nature of fashion culture, this study will juxtapose the three initial Secret Garden episodes to Rihanna's newest campaign installment.

Luxury womenswear is an interesting sector of study from two perspectives. First, at the top of the fashion system, the notion of luxury implies a longstanding class of leisure, status and hegemony. From Veblen, Simmel and Bourdieu's accounts, it is driven by socio-economic liberties and the oldest of fashion houses. In more recent research, it shows that consumers of luxury are not all but customers of these brands; stakeholders account for any individual with interest or concern in Dior. Under this principle, participants in luxury labels' social media streams are also impacted by this sector. This logic also explains the now seemingly attainable relationship to the luxury market, as it is no longer bound by brick-and-mortar retail boutiques. Brought closer by Rihanna's collaboration with Dior, consumers from otherwise disconnected demographics share in the shaping of a 'luxury' brand community. Second, womenswear alone connotes themes of gender representation, the male gaze, and a history of social etiquette. Together, these tropes set luxury womenswear apart from any other fashion segment. As vast as it is narrow and limitless as it is shortsighted, this corner of the industry sparks the most hyperbolic of successes and stark of controversies. As such, Rihanna's portrayal as Miss Dior presents an interesting debate for future scholarly research on these fronts.

For fashion brands, scholarly research on social networks is exiguous. What is more, there is no study on social media and luxury fashion goods. Though many authors declare its popularity, the categorical relationship between network properties and the fashion content that drives them is seldom addressed. Furthermore, researchers are less inclined to conduct social network analysis through Instagram or YouTube, as it is difficult to mine data from dominantly visual platforms. While Twitter is then a popular means for tracking social media text and reach, its infamous 140 character length tweets limit the poster's capacity to share content. In their 2012 research, though Song et al. discuss Internet fashion communities and the variables of

information which are most accepted by e-word-of-mouth (eWOM), their study did not focus on the advantages of specific social network hosts. Affirming the aim of their study to “propose structural features for the information dispersion networking that occurs between consumers in the Internet fashion community” (456), their research is primarily quantitative, and largely ignores the denotative meaning behind fashion’s complex visual narrative. Contributing to the scant findings bridging fashion and network theory, Park and Kim investigate the benefits of brand community within social networking sites (SNS). In an effort to identify “the specific benefits perceived by consumers of fashion brand communities embedded in an SNS”, the authors test their hypothesis alongside “the impact of these benefits on consumers’ brand relationships and brand loyalty” via Facebook (75). Finding that brands generally underperform on social media, the authors suggest that “fashion brands should cultivate their BSNS in such a way that it creates social experiences and facilitates a meaningful social relationship [...] such as posting pictures of the brand which tell a story as well as personable messages (83). Consistent with Park and Kim’s findings, “consumers engage in a brand community because of the social value of the community, including interacting with a brand and communicating with other like-minded people” (83), the Dior case will build on this knowledge claim by employing a narrative and storytelling lens.

Confronting the barrier in this line of research, this paper mines user-generated content (UGC) from Instagram and YouTube to analyze the consumer engagement corresponding directly to an image or film. Playing on the conventional wisdom that ‘a picture says a thousand words’, this research shares insight into the cognitive response from digital media marketing. New from both theoretical and methodological perspectives, it opens up avenues for study on consumer engagement based on the interplay of social media marketing and fashion film. By

identifying the gap in research surrounding the marketing of fashion brands through Instagram and YouTube, this study fills an important void in the literature on how fashion theory manifests over these channels.

1.1. Campaign Overview

As a collection of short films shown on YouTube and other media, the Secret Garden series implies that there is a story to be told. Through a thematic narrative exploring the brand's past and present, Dior's portrayal of 21st century Versailles reflects the undertones of its monarchical heritage and position in high fashion. Contrasting Rihanna's subculture persona and celebrity status to this backdrop, the misalignment between luxury ideals and diversity in fashion is amplified further. Illustrating the concepts behind each episode, Table 1 provides an overview of details relevant to the campaign's trajectory. Moreover, Figures 1.1.-4.4. offer clearer understanding of its visual focus.

Installment	Year	Starring	Director	Music	Backdrop
Secret Garden I	May 2012	Daria Strokous, Model Other apperances: Melissa Stasiu, Model Xiao Wen Ju, Model	Inez van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin	'Enjoy the Silence' by Depeche Mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filmed in both black and white and in colour • Features the Chateau de Versailles and its grounds by day
Secret Garden II	May 2013	Daria Strokous, Model	Inez van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin	'Behind the Wheel' by Depeche Mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cinematic focus on the Grand Trianon and forest beyond • Captures dusk and cast of mysterious flower women
Secret Garden III	May 2014	Daria Strokous, Model Other apperances: Fei Fei Sun, Model Katlin Aas, Model	Inez van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin	'Strangelove' by Depeche Mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shot along the Grand Canal and surrounding gardens • Camera revealing what resides beyond the dividing shruberry
Secret Garden IV	May 2015	Rihanna, Singer/Songwriter	Steven Klein	'If Only for a Night' by Florence and the Machines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nightfall over Versailles • Scenes in Hall of Mirrors as lights go out over the estate

Table 1: Chronology of Dior Secret Garden Films with Themes

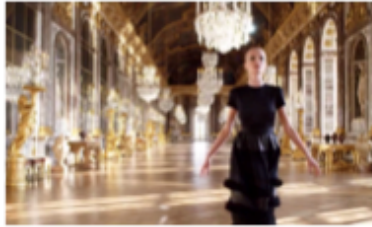


Fig. 1.1.: Secret Garden I



Fig. 1.2.: Secret Garden I



Fig. 1.3.: Secret Garden I

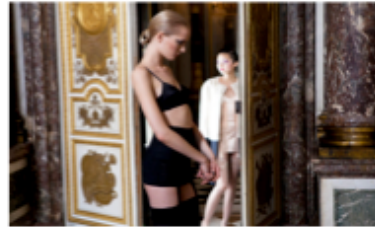


Fig. 1.4.: Secret Garden I



Fig. 2.1.: Secret Garden II



Fig. 2.2.: Secret Garden II



Fig. 2.3.: Secret Garden II



Fig. 2.4.: Secret Garden II



Fig. 3.1.: Secret Garden III



Fig. 3.2.: Secret Garden III



Fig. 3.3.: Secret Garden III

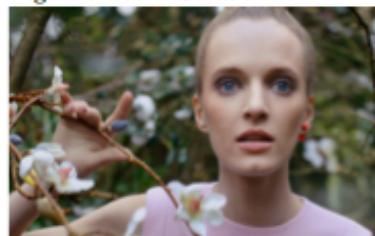


Fig. 3.4.: Secret Garden III



Fig. 4.1.: Secret Garden IV



Fig. 4.2.: Secret Garden IV



Fig. 4.3.: Secret Garden IV



Fig. 4.4.: Secret Garden IV

2. Literature Review

By isolating the UGC belonging to its Instagram and YouTube channels, this MRP examines the dialogue which transpired in the anticipation and release of Rihanna's Secret Garden film. First, by discussing digital storytelling as a means to situate the intent of this MRP within a theoretical framework (see Appendix A), the literature will outline the use of this lens and reiterate its temporal significance. In this section, the review will draw on how the image of fashion, both in still life and in motion, contributes to the fulfillment of this theory. Next, to contextualize this study within the arena of fashion culture, this section will justify the focus on the luxury sector and outline the social implications of positioning Rihanna in this light. Lastly, to conceptualize the diffusion of this information across Dior's brand community, literature on the topic of social network analysis will substantiate the network structures which make possible the realization of these digital marketing initiatives.

2.1. Digital Storytelling: What Brand Narratives Tell Us

A product of digital narratives and extension of storytelling theory, digital storytelling is a practice of information sharing and meaning creation (Irwin 42). By connecting the dots of a

‘story’, individuals can formulate meanings of their own and build larger interpretations by comparing their ‘reading’ with others (see Appendix A). From a theoretical perspective, both producers and consumers use digital storytelling to order otherwise disconnected experiences into interrelated, meaningful episodes (Vannini). For Dior, the story of the Secret Garden is fulfilled through its ability to convey congruency across multimedia channels. By creating a larger than life brand mythology, consumers can immerse themselves into this myth (Schau and Muñiz Jr 145). Equally, as readers of the story, individuals engage with the tale by means of UGC (Nam and Kannan 21) in social media. In acts of social tagging (21) or posting comments on platforms through which the story is broadcasted, individuals can participate in the process of shaping Dior’s sartorial influence. As these consumers engage in the shared interest of the brand’s representation (Muñiz and O’Guinn 413), digital storytelling also serves as a gateway for two-step flows of communication (Choi 2) within the parameters of a brand community. Building then on Marshall McLuhan’s model of the global village, the digital interface allows storytellers, or rather brands, to present this phenomenon on an interconnected, international front (Irwin 41). Through this union, natural leaders and followers emerge. However, counter to McLuhan’s contribution to theories of mass media communication, the logic of digital storytelling assumes that the ‘story’ is ultimately carried out when the user shares and discusses their findings with others. More conducive to Gruzdz and Wellman’s findings on the shift from socially-influenced to network-influenced societies (1256), users are swayed less by ‘mass’ media and contingent rather on the opinions of leaders within their network.

With video content to convey its brand development and plot line, Dior uses digital storytelling to situate the crescendo of events leading to the fourth installment of the Secret Garden campaign. Projecting a landscape of themes and patterns in line with its mythological

archetypes, this framework allows recipients of the brand's narrative to insert themselves into the story where they see fit. As it relates to Dior's online strategy and visual aspects of the Secret Garden, Irwin speaks to the use and effectiveness of digital storytelling, "more than recasting personal material through digital means" (41). In addition, Löwgren and Stolterman assert, "the digital material, void of image or pattern, becomes 'something' when the bits and bytes are transformed to an image that was once 'material without qualities' in the process of creating the story" (qtd. in Irwin 41). By leading to other theorists' work, such as McLuhan, Irwin relates our engagement with the media to an extension of the self (42). Finally, to build on the notion of self-actualization, Megehee and Spake's 'Consumer Enactments of Archetypes Using Luxury Brands' examines visual narrative art (VNA) as a means to better connect to the human experience. In the context of storytelling theory, Megehee and Spake argue that people naturally think in narratives and stories rather than arguments and paradigms (1435). Moreover, speaking specifically to luxury, they contend, "luxury brands provide satisfaction through image enhancement – emphasizing what is strong, beautiful, and otherwise positive – and the emotions associated with owning, displaying, and using them" (1436).

2.1.1. The Image of Fashion

While a leader in social media interaction in the luxury goods sector, Dior still lags behind fashion houses such as Chanel, Louis Vuitton, and Michael Kors in an omnichannel evaluation (Zaryouni) (see Figures 16-18). To understand whether Dior's visual narrative has consequence on this status, semiotics can be tried against the campaign's "aesthetic sensibility" (Berra 233) to further decode the signifiers it expresses. Peirce's semiotic philosophy, brought forth in the 19th century, supposes "meaning resides not in the initial perception of a sign or representation of an object but in the interpretation of the perception and subsequent action based

on that perception” (Sturken and Cartwright 28). While language and thought are largely contributive to semiology, this lens encapsulates what Dior aims to convey in its vignettes. Playing into its brand heritage, Dior’s tactfully themed storyline and nuanced product placement sets a rich stage for its campaign. By isolating signs, objects, and interpretants, the Secret Garden discerns the iconic and symbolic elements of the fashion image (Khan 235) in this context.

As supported by visual culture theorist Alison Bancroft, “the relationship between language and desire, the conscious and the unconscious, and the Symbolic and the Real, is understood in literary terms by Artaud in ways that reflect the psychoanalytic concerns of Lacan” (Bancroft 71). Relating to the campaign, these binaries are represented in the dreaming, longing, and pleasures derived from looking that distract the audience’s attention to the Secret Garden ‘story’. The link, between reality and the dream-like state that is Versailles, lies in the products themselves; the tactile luxury goods to which Dior owes its success in the first place. Here, the “interactive influence of films on dreaming and dreaming on films” (Bulkeley 50) can also be understood as a strategic move on the part of Dior. This ‘code’ of luxury, which functions as a language (Larraufie and Kourdoughli) over the course of the Secret Garden ‘story’, is then diffused in the virtual sphere. Of course, the literal and figurative beauty of the fashion film also allows users to insert their own subjectivity. While film hails viewers to satisfy an inherent wish for pleasurable looking, “it also goes further, developing scopophilia in its narcissistic aspect of desire” (Mulvey 8). In the case of the Secret Garden, the convergence of Dior consumers and Rihanna fans, and the new discourse it generates, is the epitome of pastiche in contemporary fashion media. It reiterates the paradox of couture, which, by Bancroft’s standard, is “the capacity to embody two opposing suppositions at once without either of them cancelling the other out” (76).

2.1.2. The Fashion Film

Beyond what it implies aesthetically, Dior's use of the fashion film holds an unequivocal epistemic bearing on the definition of the fashion image today. More than its editorial content, the Secret Garden series suggests a shift from fashion's fixation on the photograph to the moving image. This profound change, as explained by Natalie Khan, inducts fashion film as "a genre that is not simply a tool to stimulate consumption, but is something that is set to change our notion of fashion as a moment in time" (Kahn 236). In her analysis, Khan advocates for the position held by new media theorist Lev Manovich, in the way that fashion film offers viewers a "permanent present" (qtd. in Khan 238). Through a flow of images unrestricted by time or space, fashion film has "the additional impact on how we perceive the ephemeral nature of fashion" (237). Akin to the manner in which cinematic film creates "a sense of linear time" (249), the story of the Secret Garden is temporally rooted by the "conventions of mainstream Hollywood film" (237).

With respect to its impact on the fashion industry as a whole, Khan considers these films as a "part of fashion's renewed presence on the Internet" (236). In this spirit, the once "passive consumer" is now an "active spectator", as new media seeks the engagement of its network members to further its process of diffusion. Equally, in her review '100 Years of the Fashion Film', Marketa Uhlirova argues that this "phenomena we are currently experiencing is inextricably linked with the new possibilities of moving image production and, crucially, dissemination that were opened up by the digital technologies in the 2000s" (138). Borrowing from fashion historian Caroline Evans' link from the early fashion show to contemporary technologies aimed at visualizing motion (qtd. in Uhlirova 139), Uhlirova draws on parallels between film's "potential to promote fashion" to the medium's ability to recast consumption as "seductive visual entertainment" (140). Not new to the field of fashion film, Dior is versed in

experimenting with motion picture, Hollywood and cinematic themes. Budding from a portfolio including collaborations with Marion Cotillard and David Lynch, Dior's use of film goes further than a simple "vehicle of consumption relying on the discourse of commodity fetishism" (Khan 237), using cinematic language on a semiotic level, unveiling themes Barthes once used to describe the fashion photograph. Taking account of three interrelated styles of objectivity, romance and mockery (Barthes 518), it is arguable that fashion film works on the same level, breaking down boundaries between consumption and representation (Khan 237), to form a cohesive story. In this way, Dior's products are intertwined with meaning as much as its models and plot lines. As Berra suggested in Lynch's Dior short, "the branded product becomes a central character that undergoes a transformation from a source of anxiety to a fetish object that replaces Cotillard's love interest' (Berry qtd. in Berra 247).

Throughout these films, themes are built on entertaining the male gaze even without the presence of men. Rihanna included, the models' most "supreme moments of erotic meaning take place in the absence of the man she loves in the fiction" (Mulvey 12) Whether Rihanna's unconventional exotica fosters this notion or not, Laura Mulvey brings to light "the beauty of the woman as object and the screen space coalesce; she is no longer the bearer of guilt but a perfect product, whose body, stylized and fragmented by close-ups, is the content of the film and the direct recipient of the spectator's look" (12). An important facet and recurring theme in fashion imagery and contemporary womenswear, the voyeuristic nature of the industry is reinforced by scholars such as Bancroft, who contests these "sexuated subjectivities", in claims that challenge the gendering of cultural forms, "where all cultural productions are inevitably gendered, fashion, uniquely, defaults to the feminine, and it is perhaps fashion's inherent femininity, independent of its creators, that allows the entry of the feminine into avant-garde practice" (Bancroft 70). While

ultimately, this perspective informs our reading of fashion ad campaigns, like the Secret Garden, it goes further in questioning how the content of this imagery might provoke readership. Thus, Dior depends on the visual literacy of their brand community and principle network actors in order for the success of the campaign to realize its potential and convey the moral of the ‘story’ through its brand narrative.

2.2. Consuming Luxury: Couture and Capitalism

In its neo-liberal, Western climate, fashion is at the same time the brainchild and driver of capitalism. The fashion system, as described by Barthes, is comprised of a language of codes and meaning, only supporting this further. Moreover, in the relationship between consumption, aspiration and luxury, Lacan’s psychoanalytic theory and general principle applies to that of consumerism. Under the assumption that desire and lack are central motivating forces in the human condition, our lives are structured by a sense of lack (Sturken and Cartwright 279). Thus, we are in constant search for wholeness, striving to fill this void with relationships, activities, such as the consumption of goods. Speaking to the kind of lack that capitalism must produce in order to advance its logic (Metts 46), we can deduce that most affective advertisements work on this level (46). By exploring how consumerism appears to be a primordial remedy to this lack, we can also infer that fashion is significant because it transcends this state (46), and, as explained by visual anthropologist Rod Metts, is reconciled “through the alleviation of material deprivation” (46).

While Dior typically plays on themes of chauvinism and seduction to attract its consumer psyche, the naming of Rihanna as the new face for the Secret Garden complicates this brand narrative. To explain the complexity of Dior’s evolving message and further conceptualize its recent promotional changes on a broader scale, Larrauffie and Kourdoughli’s ‘e-Semiotics of

Luxury' provides a basis to translate 'codes' of luxury in online environments. Using Peirce's system of the sign (199), their work outlines characteristics of luxury womenswear in digital settings, and turns to Veblen's theory of conspicuous consumption to describe luxury as a mode of status-seeking (Veblen 103). As a high-fashion luxury brand, Dior exemplifies trickle-down theory. Borrowing also from Simmel's account of fashion as "a form of imitation and so of social equalization" (Simmel 541), this turn of the century model aligns with Veblen's theory of conspicuous dress as an extension of Veblen goods. Understood as those desired for being overpriced (Larraufie and Kourdoughli 200), the Veblen effect, as a characteristic of luxury, transpires in what Larraufie and Kourdoughli refer to in commodity culture and commodity fetishism. Under Simmel's assumption that Veblen's theory of diffusion mainly concerns women, Larraufie and Kourdoughli's work concentrates on the defining principles of luxury within the women's apparel sector. By stressing its subjective nature, they conject "what can be called luxury is also more pragmatically related to the economic resources of an individual" (200). Sensitive to the ideological tropes on which Dior plays, scholar Kim Sawchuk argues "fashion is never simply a question of creativity or self-expression; it is also a mark of colonization, the "anchoring" of our bodies, particularly the bodies of woman, into specific positions" (Sawchuk 476). By this understanding, Sawchuk critiques French fashion conglomerate Dior for the ironic exploitation of its French heritage by means of cultural tradition and historical events, such as French colonialism (476). Making the connection between the colonization of women under patriarchal capitalism, French custom, "white mythology" and phallocentrism, Sawchuk recalls Mulvey's three manifestations of the male gaze in objectification, narcissism and fetishism (477) to argue how a brand narrative could so coolly act in such a contentious style.

2.2.1. Repositioning Rihanna

While scholars have studied Rihanna's ubiquitous presence in the media as it concerns her personal affairs, this paper builds on the existing academic material positioning Rihanna as an incomparable token of contemporary society. Transcending the front of erotic desire, violence (Fleetwood 419), the "strongblackwoman", and "island woman" (Rodier and Meagher 176), the discussion on where to place Rihanna within popular culture is an interesting one. As this paper examines her new role as a celebrity ambassador for Dior, this section points to the gap in literature pertaining to her more recent professional undertakings. Confronting the subcultural persona to which she is often depicted, this study questions whether her position within luxury branding is tenable as her authentic self. What is more, this paper suspends the Secret Garden tale in questioning the monism that one's persona can be transformed through fashion alone.

Disrupting the "keeping-it-real" posture upon which hip-hop discourse depends for its 'cult of authenticity'" (Jones 71), Rihanna's involvement with the Secret Garden complicates the readers' view of Dior's heritage. In her 2013 work, African American literary scholar Esther Jones follows Rihanna's media history through hip-hop, examining the stigma surrounding its "elision with rap" and lyricism reduced to those especially sexist and misogynist (Jones 71). Concerned with the "hypermasculinist industry" in which Rihanna is most represented, Jones negotiates why Rihanna's "black female expression of sexual agency" is held up by the "Caribbean woman's sensibility in attitudes toward sexuality, labor, and the marketplace" (82).

Framing Rihanna through Jones' cultural interpretations and the "global hip-hop/pop music scene in which Rihanna operates" (82), the basis to understand Rihanna's transcendence into other forms of mainstream culture takes shape. Equally, researcher Nicole Fleetwood explores Rihanna's November 2011 *Esquire* issue for 'Sexiest Woman Alive', and the cover

feature which denotes an uncanny comingling of “sexual pain and pleasure” akin to the infamous 2009 image of Rihanna following her highly publicized assault by boyfriend Chris Brown (Fleetwood 419). Driving the exchange between these two images, Fleetwood suggests that “here and elsewhere [...] the biographical details of Rihanna as one who has suffered at the hands of her lover offer a referent for the suggestive violence of the magazine cover image, one that resonates from the realm of fantasy” (420).

Under the framework of digital storytelling, this preamble, ignorant to the temporality of these events, affords Dior consumers the means to interject this knowledge into the overriding brand narrative. Preceding her Secret Garden role, this rhetoric ultimately affects viewers’ interpretations of the film, and perception of Dior as a luxury player bound by conservative conventions.

2.3. Social Network Analysis: Studying the Storyline

Over the past decade, our understanding of social networks has progressed with the development of new software and social theories. A group of individuals, tied together by a common interest, has long since been able to create a network of shareable information and resources to further its agenda. However, with the emergence of social media within this sphere, a group’s ability to connect, communicate, and produce, has transcended the basic principles of social networks and allowed users to assert their involvement in new ways. The purpose of social network analysis (SNA) is to provide researchers with data on the interaction of network members in an online community. By studying the nature of these relationships and behaviours, SNA allows scholars to “see how online interactions and connections influence personal choices and actions” (Gruzd and Wellman 1252). Moreover, the study of SNA offers a breadth of additional vocabulary of its own in order to identify and classify users, trends, and ties of these

networks. As explained by Gruzd and Haythornthwaite in their 2013 work, SNA identifies network ‘actors’ as ‘nodes’ (e248). These nodes are the people or organizations that populate a network and fuel its activity. In addition, the authors define the ‘ties’ between these nodes as ‘relations’ to describe the kind of relationship they have with one another, and in effect, how they interrelate (e248).

Together, Gruzd and Haythornthwaite stress the significance of the configuration in social networks, “these structures show how actors are connected over the whole network, and thus what paths and obstacles there are for contact, information, and resource flow” (e248). The position of an individual within the network is then telling of his or her influence, based on the amount of direct ties they have to other actors (e248). In the geography of social networking, the centrality that an actor exhibits in relation to the network demonstrates their ability to share information, exert influence, and assert power (van de Hulst 108). What is central in Gruzd and Wellman’s work is the nature of relations between actors. Their argument centers on the influence which actors have on one another, and how the impact of these ties have led to a shift in social influence to networked influence (1256). The authors defend the position that people are no longer influenced on the individual level by mass communication, but by the strong impact of a network’s size, ties, mutual awareness, geographic proximity, clusters of ties, bridges across clusters, and socially similar network members (1255). In social media, the transition from social influence to networked influence holds true, as technologically developed media platforms have given way to a wider range of ways for users to interconnect. On a virtual, mobile, and wireless front, users are able to share ideas and information without the constraint of time and space, and moreover, do so “anonymously and asynchronously” (1252). In addition, the digitization of visual culture has also provided users with more content to mobilize. As such, this

study will proceed to investigate social media platforms that cater specifically to visual imagery and video content. Due to the inherently visual nature of fashion (Insight Report) this focus narrows the terms of the study's inquiry, concentrating on industry-specific dialogues of this nature.

Elaborating on the concept of similarity and homogeneity between actors, Gruzdt and Wellman offer insight into homophily as a social occurrence within networks (1255). The study of this principle, a bond linking social network members, also serves as a gateway to theories of social exchange and diffusion of innovation. This tendency, for individuals to associate with like-others, explains that contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate than among dissimilar people (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 416). In social networking, the proverbial expression of homophily, "birds of a feather flock together," (417) works to describe this pattern. By centering their study on this idiom, McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook's work aligns with other social network analyses, like that of Mah, Lee, and Goh, who reaffirm the significance of homophily in the diffusion of information in social networks, "in social media users tend to connect with others who have similar characteristics in terms of demographics, attitudes, and informational interests" (206). As McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook point out, "the pervasive fact of homophily means that cultural, behavioral, genetic, or material information that flows through networks will tend to be localized" (416). By then grouping the actors of a given network, their findings also point to other evidence of ecological social phenomena at the individual and community level of social networks (416).

Much important to the principle of homophily and influential networks is the concept of social capital. In his 1984 seminal work, Bourdieu introduces the distinction between economic, cultural and social capitals to describe a "three-dimensional space" (114). Explaining that

together, these symbolize “possession of the material and cultural means of maintaining a bourgeois life-style” (122), he illustrates hierarchies through forms of wealth and appoints taste as a marker of class, formal education, background, and who-you-know (114). Focusing on the latter, themes of social capital are recurrent though the study of SNA, as it figures “people who have better access to valuable social resources are more successful in their performance” (van de Hulst 105). Because of its application to individuals, groups, organizations and communities, themes of social capital recur in social networks. As explain by cultural theorist Renée van de Hulst, the social capital of network actors is displayed in how their relationships are structured, and the degree to which their embedded positions affect their behaviour(s) (106). In an explanation of how this results in strategic advantages, van de Hulst outlines two definitive factors through which social capital manifests in social networks. First, in how connections to other people provide access to their assets (106). Whether this be instrumental resources, emotional support, expertise, or knowledge, van de Hulst makes clear that, before all, the access to another actor’s resources alone serves as a vessel to further one’s own social capital and network reach (106). Next, in how the overall network structure provides strategic benefits in and of itself (106). In summary, van de Hulst synthesizes how relationships between individuals within a network inform the macro-level formation of social network activity (107). In this, broader themes such as Blau’s theory of social exchange (qtd. in van de Hulst 106) and Simmel’s social geometry (qtd. in van de Hulst 109) are woven into SNA to further describe the interplay between material and immaterial goods and services exchanged in networks, instrumental to achieving goals. For by van de Hulst’s characterization of social networks as opportunity structures, their capability to “get things done” through the interconnectivity of people, information and technology (106) is advantageous when exercised optimally.

In his 2006 work, economist and network scholar Stephen Borgatti pokes holes in the existing methods that identify key players in social networks. By outlining the relevant streams of research available to quantify these actors, he proceeds to explain his rationale for stating that the existing measures and algorithms available in this domain do not solve the key player ‘problem’, and that new approaches are needed (21). As he defines it, this problem is twofold, and reflects “different kinds of purposes to which key player measurements and identifications are put” (22). In his analysis, the first aspect of the problem is explained as “the extent to which the network depends on its key players to maintain its cohesiveness” (22). In, short, this is the lack of cohesiveness that would occur in the network if these nodes were not present. Consequently, the second element to the key player problem is defined in terms of “the extent to which key players are connected to and embedded in the network around them” (22). In this regard, Borgatti does not believe that concepts of node centrality, cores and peripheries, or structural measures of social capital alone are sufficient enough to ‘solve’ this problem. Perhaps his most relevant point made in this respect is his clarification of social capital. By reiterating that its function has the ability to identify key players, he explains that here, “the perspective is reversed in that with social capital research one asks what features of the network contribute to the individual, whereas with key player research we ask which individuals are important for the network” (21). Because this paper is more concerned with the latter, the identification of key actors within the Secret Garden network will carry out the purpose of this study. From deducing who is “in the thick of things” (Freeman 219), this project will turn to the discourse generated by these actors to reinforce how the brand’s narrative weaves into perpetual topics of conversation circulated within the network.

2.3.1. Behind a Brand Community

Moving into the topic of eWOM and the language derived from key players, it is relevant to note the temporal significance of the aforementioned research. Though Borgatti identifies gaps in the quantitative analysis of key players in social networks, what is left out are the breadth of tools and programs used to analyze networks today. Through software like Netlytic, this paper defends that there is, in fact, a sufficient amount of evidence to make valid assumptions on the identification of key players and opinion leaders. Engineered to compute node behaviour, Netlytic's capacity to manipulate and present data in new ways offers with it the language and information shared between these actors. As it relates to the discourse of a brand community and relationships among actors, Nam and Kannan's research in the value of social tagging finds that social tags act as a proxy measure for brand performance and strong indicator of the financial valuation of a firm (21). In terms of brand reach, the authors conclude that social tags act as a primary source to capture a brand's customer-based brand equity (CBBE) (26). They note that a key element of CBBE is brand awareness, which can be qualified as "the likelihood that a brand name will come to mind and the ease with which it does so" (Keller 3). Alternatively, Nam and Kannan also note that a brand's association with social trends and issues may result in the transference in the popularity of the tags, and thus the brand, through these associations (28). As it relates to brand familiarity and frequency in word-of-mouth, this element translates easily to eWOM, and the actors that initiate it. When speaking then to social networks as a mechanism for communication, social media propels this phenomenon, encouraging a hyper level of engagement among network actors. In reference the UGC made available by social network sites (SNS), Chu, Kamal and Kim examine the 'netnographic' disparity exhibited by network actors (160). They affirm, "although not all of these social 'netizens' can potentially afford luxury

brands, they may be potential brand advocates” (160). Meanwhile, Goldenberg et al. discuss the organizational behaviour of these actors. Through an examination of the social adoption processes, the authors focus on innovative and follower hubs in relation to informational superiority and opinion leadership (3). The authors dispute Richmond’s 1977 belief that opinion leaders acquire more information than nonopinion leaders, from the same sources of public and personal communication (3). Moreover, they challenge Katz and Lazarsfeld’s findings that cast opinion leaders as those to have more exposure to the mass media than their followers. By focusing on connectivity as a principal trait embodied in opinion leadership, the authors consider individuals with “an exceptionally large number of social ties” (3) to hold more network agency, and ultimately, less dependency.

3. Research Questions

Based on the reviewed literature surrounding the marking of luxury and the implications of the fashion image as broadcasted today, this MRP focuses on the followership and engagement of audiences who consume the Dior brand through the Secret Garden campaign. As such, the research questions are as follows:

RQ1: What network patterns emerge from users’ interaction with the campaign imagery on Instagram and YouTube?

RQ2: Is Rihanna’s involvement with Dior received positively among consumers over these channels?

Research Question 1 studies the interaction between Secret Garden network actors and the bonds that tie them. In examining this relationship, broader concepts of eWOM emerge, explaining the process through which information is diffused. By identifying the influencers who mobilize this flow of resources, this query seeks to address the network trends in Instagram and

YouTube that garner followership. By identifying these patterns, the purpose of this inquisition aims to compliment the findings of RQ2, in bridging the gap once again between network properties and the nature of the content that shapes them.

Research Question 2 reflects the changing nature of the fashion image today. Through the Secret Garden campaign, consumers are met with an intersection of traditional brand archetypes and contemporary marketing strategies, such as celebrity endorsement. What transpires in this convergence is a meeting of new Dior stakeholders and a maturing brand narrative. Hardly an unprovoking example of 21st century fashion advertising, the casting of Rihanna as brand ambassador and protagonist, juxtaposed to her Aryan predecessors, also stirs debate around diversity in fashion, high-low culture and luxury ideals. Seeking to address these tropes, this question raises the matter of how intently users are interacting with the campaign imagery. An inquiry into the visual literacy of its audience, this question asks whether Dior's change of thematic direction positively affects the brand's image.

4. Methods

Grounded by digital storytelling theory, this MRP turns to UGC to follow the dialogue behind Dior's branded imagery. Through an analysis of this text, this project compares its findings to back to the visual content of the campaign. Justified by the lack of research surrounding the intersection of luxury fashion and social network analysis (SNA), this paper works to build a framework for future study.

As pointed out by Zafarani et al., the field of social media mining (SMM) encompasses a range of disciplines (16), and as such, by transitive logic, would best fit with a mixed method approach to analyzing data. Under this, the project takes account of the quantitative data

provided by the mining of Instagram and YouTube, and pairs it with the content analysis ultimately afforded by its corpus.

4.1. Data Collection

The data for this project came directly from Instagram and YouTube, specially mining the feeds relating to the launch and release of the fourth Secret Garden installment. Through Netlytic, a cloud-based text analyzer and social network visualizer (System Overview), 8 discrete datasets were set up to collect data from these channels. Working to summarize large volumes of data derived from SNS conversations, Netlytic seeks to find and explore emerging themes of discussion among actors, based on the type of data captured or imported (System Overview). Using the visualizer to quantify other measures of the Secret Garden network, this function serves dual purpose, illustrating the dynamics of both ‘Chain Networks’, based on “who-replies-to-whom” and ‘Personal Name Networks’, cultivating “who-mentioned-whom” (System Overview). By identifying key network players in this way, Netlytic offers the capacity to work at the mixed methods level. Though it cannot perform these tasks for historical data, such as the initial reception to previous Secret Garden installments, Netlytic functions are multi-dimensional, providing opportunities for both content and statistical analysis.

The Secret Garden feature film became available to the public May 18th, 2015. With the purpose of capturing data before and after its release, the collection period ran from May 1st, 2015, to June 30th, 2015. As Zafarani et al. explain, SNA can be performed through either the collection of raw data or by data collected via “available repositories that host collected data from social media sites” (136). Using application programming interfaces (APIs) mediated by Netlytic to gather data from Instagram and YouTube, the 8 datasets we set to represent an adequate scope. Made up of the full-length fashion film, its 60-second version, and the 4

previews that leaked prior to May 18th, 6 different Dior YouTube posts account for the majority of the datasets. As illustrated in the methodology set forth in this section, the 2 Instagram datasets that remain do not use the same metrics as YouTube APIs. Automated by #hashtags and @usernames, the Instagram files were generated the #SecretGarden4 and @Dior tags.

Both Netlytic and Microsoft Excel were used to further understand the dynamics between network constituents, processes of diffusion and the resulting dialogue. As documented in the table below, the mixed method approach utilizes both programs to capitalize on data processing capabilities.

Research Questions	Program	Quantitative Analysis	Qualitative Analysis
RQ1: What network patterns emerge from users' interaction with the campaign imagery on Instagram and YouTube?	Netlytic	Chain Network Analysis Manual Categories	
RQ2: Is Rihanna's involvement with Dior received positively among consumers over these channels?	Netlytic	Manual Categories	Content Analysis, Sentiment Analysis
	Excel	Manual Coding	Content Analysis

Table 2: Tools to Carry Out RQs

4.1.1. Instagram

In establishing the characteristic of a network-influenced brand community (Gruzd and Wellman), this project frames its inquiry through micro-blogs most geared toward the visual and interactive aspects of social media. Developed as a mobile app in 2010 as a means to “allow you to experience moments in your friends' lives through pictures as they happen” (FAQ), Instagram is a social networking service enabling both online photo and video sharing. At the height of its emergence, fashion brands quickly took to Instagram, “leveraging its visual nature to build brand equity” (Zaryouni). Moreover, in their 2015 ratings, business intelligence firm L2 estimated that 98 percent of brands included in their annual review were present on the platform (Digital IQ Index). With a specific focus on luxury brands, this ranking is congruent with fashion's

“migration to Instagram” after Facebook changed its algorithm to a pay-to-play platform (Zaryouni). Seeking opportunities for more organic reach through their social network, Dior is among the cluster of brands taking advantage of this paradigm. Employing a user-friendly photo pool, akin to the interface used between peers, Dior’s use of Instagram makes it easy to cultivate, curate and disseminate content to its brand community. Featuring both 15 second-long teaser clips (Jenkins) and film stills during the launch of its fourth Secret Garden installment, Instagram worked simultaneously with Dior’s other social media outlets to foster a cohesive message across platforms.

4.1.2. *YouTube*

YouTube allows users to broadcast videos of up to 11 hours in length (Jenkins) and shares content by means of friending, commenting, and social tagging (Paolillo 9). Presenting similar functions to other SNS, in terms of both degree distribution and internal structure, informatics scholar John Paolillo asserts that YouTube exhibits a social core among authors (9), “but with greater semantic coherence around content” (1). Paolillo claims that YouTube producers are linked to others producing similar content, based on ‘friend relations’ and their correlation with tags applied to uploaded videos (1). Finding that authors of different user accounts engage with one another through these virtual processes, Paolillo hypothesizes that even denser core structures exist (9).

As one of the most resonant forms of digital marketing today (Insight Report), online video has quickly emerged as a top strategy for fashion brands developing their global presence. With video traffic estimated to account for half of global Internet traffic by 2019 (Insight Report), brands, such as Dior, who invest in this approach, are doing so to increase their digital presence, social network and brand mythology. L2 finds that of fashion brands’ YouTube

channels, “videos with the highest view counts are most often ‘brand building’ in the form of heritage vignettes” (Insight Report).

While Dior’s use of both Instagram and YouTube indicates a shift from traditional media outlets (Insight Report), video ad production affords Dior to broadcast content across multiple channels and reach a wider audience. Returning to Paolillo’s social core among authors, the Secret Garden stretches across multiple user accounts, as the film series is hosted on channels held by both Dior and former Secret Garden campaign directors Inez and Vinoodh. Sharing in the breadth of Dior’s four-part series, these YouTube producers act simultaneously to boast Dior’s owned media attention. While the production of the Secret Garden films are a result of Dior’s direct resources, the open-ended nature of social media allows actors to insert their own subjectivity, and, through UGC, become influencers in their network. In this matrix, although Dior rendered the campaign possible, the success it continues to earn is contingent on the participation of its network actors and brand community.

4.2. Quantitative Methods

Used to statistically measure, compile and account for data derived from YouTube and Instagram, the Netlytic platform was used to analyze the data gathered from these channels, ultimately forming the corpus for the study.

The initial point of intersection between the RQ’s and the UGC selected for analysis began at the macro-level; identifying which posts were searchable, most relevant and best depicted the unfolding story of the Secret Garden filmography. Given YouTube’s capacity to feature full-length short films, the number of datasets from this medium exceeds those warranted by Instagram. Being of related social media categories, in photo sharing and video sharing (Zafarani et al. 21), both hosts offer different media sharing advantages. However, the way in

which actors can comment, reply and tag in response to this material is what points to the commonalities between them. With this, the discourse generated from both accounts form a cohesive language.

For the datasets pertaining to YouTube, Netlytic requires the ID of the YouTube video, as well as a name identifier for the dataset. In the first phase of the data collection process, this action forms a customized dataset. Located under ‘Edit’ in Netlytic’s interface, the import process is initiated once these fields are filled. Using the API information set out by these metrics, Netlytic can obtain a limited amount of data daily (17).

Dataset	Platform	Name	Search Terms	Number of Records Found
1	IG	May Feed	#SecretGarden4	1,550 ¹
2	IG	June Feed	#SecretGarden4	9,339 ²
3	YT	Secret Garden IV Ft. Rihanna via Dior	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGw9q8xppfg ³	223
4	YT	Secret Garden IV Long Version	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GalVglH2wSA ⁴	173
5	YT	Teaser 1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEi-1rhXpJ0 ⁵	3
6	YT	Teaser 2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BILr-0wQ_Jc ⁶	1
7	YT	Teaser 3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7DVhsNxGCg ⁷	10
8	YT	Teaser 4	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jfqZAFgPAc ⁸	16

Table 3: Netlytic Datasets Used to Mine Content

As a commonly used method to collect data (17) in SNA, APIs work by specifying how the software components should interact (Beal). In an effort to address the limitations present in data mining via API, Zafarani et al. contest the reliability of the samples represented by this function (17). Within the paradox of “big data”, the authors question how these complexities serve as “any indication of true patterns that can benefit our research” (17). In order to make inferences from these large volumes of data, they assert the effectiveness of aggregating and exploiting data (17) through means of methodical sorting and formatting. By exporting the Netlytic data to Excel, the Netlytic’s ‘Preview’ pane is much more visible. Once transferred, the

¹ & ² After compiling IG datasets and removing duplicate cells from overlap, the subcorpus found 8,983 original entries
³, ⁴, ⁵, ⁶, ⁷ & ⁸ URL no longer active, as Dior removed videos from YouTube

records also are numerically ordered, and the following columns are annotated by category; ‘guid’, ‘link’, ‘pubdate’, ‘author’, ‘title’, ‘description’, ‘likecount’, ‘replycount’ and ‘isreplyto’.

1. Edit / 2. Preview / 3. Text Analysis / 4. Network Analysis / 5. Report

This previews up to the latest 1000 records in this dataset, so that you can easily check for import accuracy.
Total records in dataset:

[View API logs for this dataset](#)

	PUBDATE	AUTHOR	TITLE
/OPrpvJ-/	2015-06-15	gfar33	#secretgarden #secretgarden4 #secretgardeninspiration #florestaencan: #colorindoavida #florestamagica #nossaforestaencantada #papel #fabe
h.com/p/3-VOPrpvJ-/	2015-06-15	gfar33	#secretgarden #secretgarden4 #secretgardeninspiration #florestaencan: #colorindoavida #florestamagica #nossaforestaencantada #papel #fabe

Fig. 5: Netlytic 'Preview'

Through the filtering options made available by Excel, less relevant categorizations were excluded to better reflect the determinants of the RQ's. Reducing the workbook to tags limited to the link, date of post publication, post author, description (i.e. post content), and replies-to, the pith of the spreadsheet is more concerned with the content of the comment, and less with 'liking'.

Though in their handbook, Zafarani et al. caution researchers in their query to edit out seemingly irrelevant elements from their data, this project overtly concerns itself with the 'who', 'what', and 'why' of the UGC. In their cautioning of the noise removal fallacy (17), the authors observe, "blindly removing noise can worsen the problem stated in the big data paradox because the removal can also eliminate valuable information" (17). Still this "garbage in and garbage out" (17) exercise is important to the processing stage of data mining. For this corpus, duplicate records were deleted. In narrowing the results and reformatting them in a consistent format (136), this phase abides by recommendations set forth by Zafarani et al., to represent data in a unified format (136). They find this approach most conclusive to identifying common patterns

between nodes and neighbours (136), offering further opportunity to draw sequences from the raw data provided through APIs.

The third stage in Netlytic's portal provides a Key Word Extractor and Manual Categories tool, both with a Visualizer function. For the quantitative analysis, this was used to count term frequency. Finally, taking account of the actors driving the Secret Garden dialogue, Netlytic's Network Analysis presents the authors, or nodes, in relation to their conversation. By mining personal names found tagged in this array, the Chain Network Visualizer offers insight into the intersection between individuals. Summarizing the Network Properties on a decimal scale, this Visualizer also synthesizes participants' posting behavior.

Outlined by its system glossary, these properties are measured against the network's diameter, and compare its findings from the Secret Garden datasets to that of other networks run through Netlytic. The relative diameter, density, reciprocity, centralization and modularity can be compared in larger societal context and standard deviation here.

4.3. Qualitative Methods

For the qualitative analysis, the purpose of this phase is to unpack the terminology used in both Instagram and YouTube, and implement the tools provided by Netlytic to contextualize key terms and themes.

Under the Netlytic framework, the Text Analysis is twofold, offering first the extractor to deem most relevant the key words found in the corpora. Next, the 'Words Over Time' Visualizer depicts these words across the span of the collection period for the data stream. The practicality of this tool is in its ability to convey the dissemination of the Secret Garden dialogue over the campaign release. For instance, consumer eagerness toward using Dior's campaign hashtag diminishing over time, as the conversation moves past the anticipation of its release. With this,

the following action in examining the Secret Garden corpus is editing the Manual Categories dictionary, and from thereon, interpreting the results in its Visualizer (Figure 9). This customizable ‘dictionary’ is comprised of categories segmented by appearance, feelings, place, quantity, shape, size, sound, time and touch. With a detailed viewing option to further interpret the context in which these words are used, the purpose of this function offers strategic advantages. Acting as sentiment and content analyses for the corpus, the dialogue matures into a cluster of meaningful conversations, leading to the next phase of Netlytic’s web process.

Lai and To’s methodological work on the content analysis of social media further demonstrates this project’s intent to uncover the possible thematic distances within a corpus, based on “the co-occurrence of keywords or key attributes” (Lai and To 147). Using a concepts map to illustrate their findings, the researchers investigate the most attractive tourism concepts to consumers of a city polarized between cultural heritage and new age amenities. To illustrate these polarities, they use a heat map (147) to code the key words and conceptualize this dichotomy. Using warm and cool colours to shade in the variance, the authors illustrate the poles by identifying clusters. Also a determinant of word frequency among social network users, the visualizer takes the form of a web, with nodes representing the different terms, appearing larger or smaller based on their relative usage. Much like Netlytic’s Visualizer, the web affirms the relationship between the two trends.

Before visualizing the text on this level, however, the Secret Garden corpus requires a common code to further sort through the nature of each comment. In his investigation of emerging corpus linguistic techniques, applied linguistics scholar Lawrence Anthony claims, “it is important to recognize that corpora are simply linguistic data and that specialized software tools are required to view and analyze them” (141). Serving as the ‘tools’ of corpus linguistics

(141), the Secret Garden corpora can be further reviewed by means of manual coding to sort through the subtle nuances and tones that Excel, Netlytic or other processes may overlook. Drawn from his work on content classification for other social networking channels (Dann) theorist Stephen Dann presents proof of six categories to classify online content (see Table 5). Adapted from past studies, Dann's framework is motivated by the existing scope of too-broad categories of content set forth by other researchers in this domain. Often generalized to umbrella categories such as 'information', 'broadcast' or 'other', Dann's 6-category matrix builds from the multi-dimensional models of classification, and offers further characteristics for each grouping. Comprising of categories 'conversational', 'status', 'pass along', 'news', 'phatic' and 'spam', Dann attests that this process is engineered to consider UGC more than either "serious business" or "conversations about nothing" (Dann).

Helpful in coding content to improve accuracy, without the statistical barrier of confidence intervals better suited for larger corpora, this classification uses a manual coding system. Comparing the Instagram (IG) and YouTube (YT) coded content, the results pertaining to each category can then be contrasted or evaluated as a whole. Consistent with the rationale behind cohesive formatting, both the IG and YT subcorpus would be analyzed separately before merging.

Coding comments by the designated categorical marker, the annotated entries were to be tabulated and sorted again to reflect the number of records still pertinent to the project. By removing noise (Zafarani et al. 17) such as 'spam' (Dann), the data presents new meaning again. Though this part of the methodology ultimately leaves it up to the researcher to categorize the content themselves, the bias reserved by the individual is largely overcome by Dann's detailed account of what qualifies each of the 6 categories and their 23 subsets.

5. Findings

In sum, the objective of this MRP was to unpack the UGC garnered from the Secret Garden campaign in order to make further inferences on the social, cultural and commercial impact of fashion advertising. Answering to the ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘why’ with which the campaign engages, the results from the analysis are presented below, respectively following the sequence of the research questions.

5.1. RQ1: Network Trends, Trends in Networks

This section refers back to Gruzdt and Wellman’s theory on the shift from networks once dictated by social hegemony, to one that offers more autonomy to its users, taking cues from its multiple network influencers and sources. By comparing the results of the content gathered from Netlytic’s Chain Network and Network Properties summary, this section explains the current state of Dior’s online community structure. With findings from both its Instagram and YouTube channels, these results illustrate its modular structure. Seemingly independent of the way it takes shape, the content driving the network’s configuration also implicates the ways its nodes interact.



Fig. 6: Netlytic 'Chain Network' Visualizer (Dataset 2)

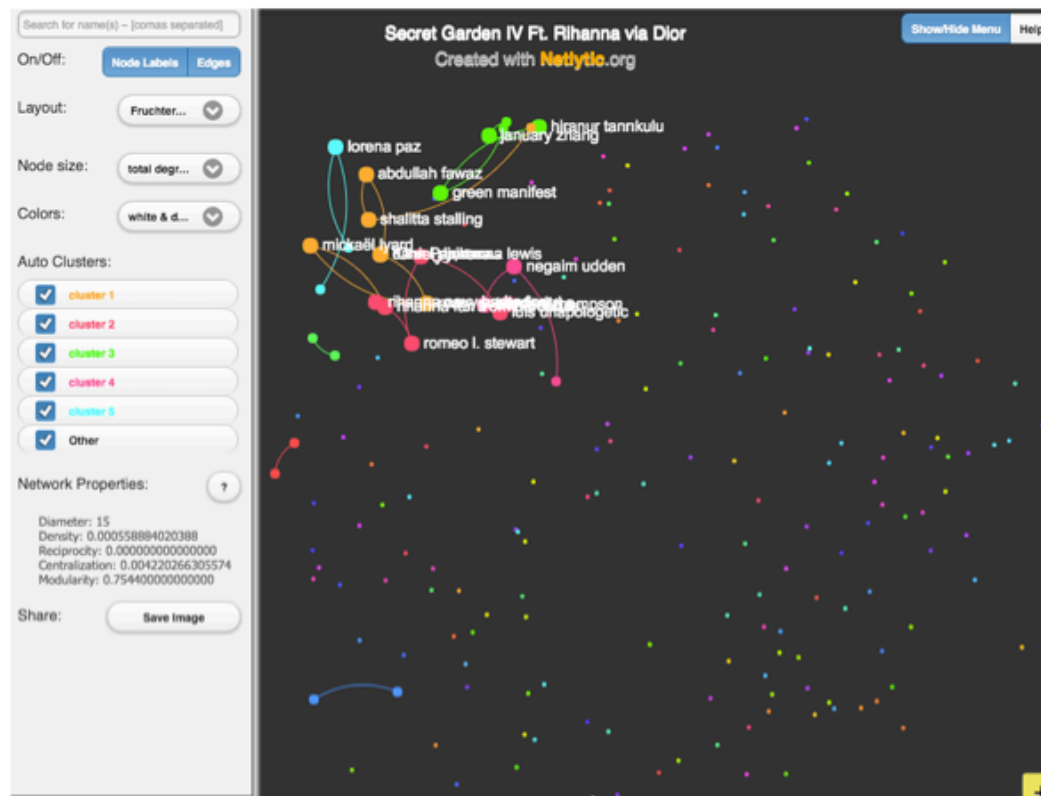


Fig. 7: Netlytic 'Chain Network' Visualizer (Dataset 3)

Figures 6 and 7 show the network configuration of Dataset 2 and 3, pertaining to Instagram and YouTube feeds, respectively (see Table 3). Though two different network channels, one offering video and the other supporting graphics, both Visualizers outline similar structures. In an observation of their Network Properties, both network communities exhibit low values of reciprocity and centralization, but a higher rate of modularity.

A proportion of ties which indicate “two-way communication in relation to the total number of existing ties”, reciprocity is the measure of reciprocal ties in relation to the total number of ties in the network (Network Visualization). Here, lower reciprocity values suggest that many conversations are one-sided, so there is little back and forth conversation. Another unit of measurement listed in the Network Property summary, the degree of centralization points toward the propensity for central nodes to dominate the flow of information in the network. The closer this value is to 1, the higher the centralization. Characterized by values closer to 0, these structures can be considered decentralized, suggesting that information flows more freely between many participants (Network Visualization). Finally, high values of modularity are found over both Instagram and YouTube. To understand this unit of measurement, Netlytic explains the concept of clusters in the network, “a cluster is a group of densely connected nodes that are more likely to communicate with each other than to nodes outside of the cluster” (Network Visualization). Similar to the concept of homophily, modularity helps to “determine whether the clusters found represent distinct communities in the network” (Network Visualization). Indicative of a clear division between communities, the higher values of modularity here suggests that there are many, different, core groups with less overlap.

Also suggestive of network-influenced societies, these nodes are less reliant on a single, central cluster and driven more by vehicles of communication such as eWOM, to carry out the

flow of information and resources. Met with the related concept behind digital storytelling and user exchange to forward this discourse, these markers reflect the way in which users communicate with one another to extrapolate greater meaning, connecting the dots of the Secret Garden story as a collective.

https://instagram.com/ 05/16/15 11:49	nathenxoxo	@grainneemcb we were there 🍷🍷
https://instagram.com/ 05/19/15 5:44	ibenjaminvu	Versailles is her runway : Rihanna injects her swag to Marie Antoinette and other @Dior cliché's #SecretGarden4 @thefelipebravo
https://www.youtube.c 05/25/15 12:30	Misiiee Missiee	Daria Strokous was better. 🍷🍷
https://www.youtube.c 05/25/15 14:59	utop ia	Much better story telling in this version compared to the short one. And I like how they shot Versailles at night, because in a fashion context the palace has become boring and overused, but in the dark there's a whole new kind of beauty to explore. 🍷

Fig. 8: User Engagement in Digital Storytelling

Supplementary to the structure of these networks are the textual interactions that flow among it. For the Dior case study, this concerns user interpretations of Rihanna's Secret Garden. Through this lens, the corpus can be further dissected to identify themes beyond its obvious elements. Given the informality of online communities and instantaneity of the content it generates, the phonetic and linguistic nature of these comments should also be considered when mining this data. Adedamola et al. find that in social media, users are also met with limited character length, causing people to “communicate unconventionally with a mixture of formal and slang words” (Adedamola 418). With this “unconventionality and irregularity”, the authors find that these texts can vary from traditional forms of communication in lexical variants such as spelling errors, abbreviations, and millennial or African-American jargon (418).

As Dior consumers meet with Rihanna fans in Secret Garden IV, the unfolding of these ‘slang’ and Out-Of-Vocabulary (OOV) words (419) is indicative of trends among this cohort of consumers as a whole. As found in Netlytic's Manual Categories function, ‘trendy words’ (Kultgen), or ‘slang’, account for much of this word space. As illustrated in Figure 9, the reoccurrence of these terms account for a significant part of the corpus.

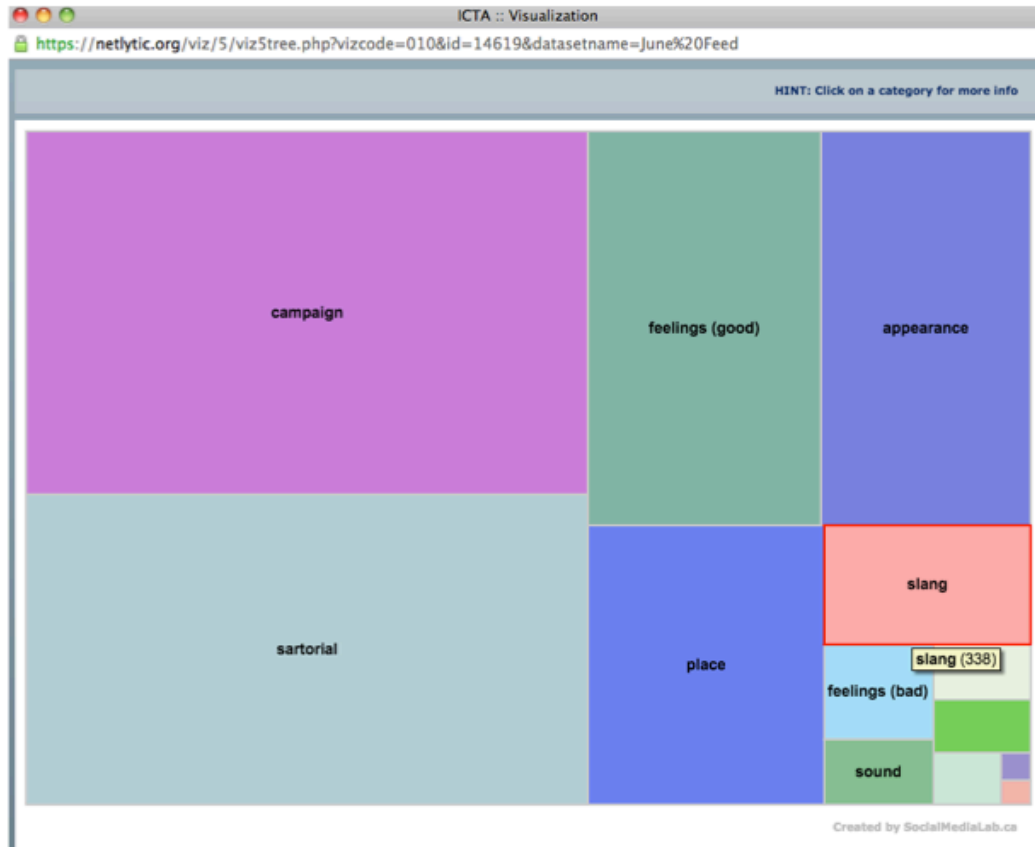


Fig. 9: Netlytic 'Manual Categories' Visualizer (Dataset 2)

In summary, Figure 9 shows common categories of dialogue among users. Outlining the variation in this exchange, the Visualizer depicts which other topics lead the conversation. Reflecting the changing nature of fashion communication today, OOV words speak to the informal nature of how digital story 'readers' interact with media.

5.2. RQ2: A Converging Audience

Through Netlytic, 8 datasets were saved to generate the main corpus for the project. From the 2 Instagram portfolios, 8,989 comments were collected from May 1st, 2015 to June 30th, 2015. Under the same timeframe, 6 datasets were registered for YouTube. Comprising of the Secret Garden full-length film, its shortened version, and the 4 unique 'teasers' that preceded the release of the campaign, together these 6 feeds resulted in 426 unique records. While other studies in network sociality often take account of larger volumes of records for analysis, the

dynamics of both the Instagram and YouTube hosts offer a primarily visual base, resulting in less text-rich content than their SNS counterparts. Additional strain on the density of this scope is Netlytic's YouTube API. Confirmed to experience issues in its importer configuration, the technicality warns, "as a result, you may not receive as many results as normal until this is resolved" (System Overview). While the variation in this type data is often inevitable, this study closely examined the Instagram (IG) and YouTube (YT) corpora to find significant patterns in its body.

The objective of RQ2 was to further unpack the language in the corpus and identify the primary themes with which consumers identify most. Continuing in the use of Netlytic's text analyzer and Manual Categories dictionary, 'Campaign' and 'Sartorial' were created to reflect the presence of characteristics either akin to the House of Dior and its elements that relate specifically to fashion, or, conversely, key words that relate directly to the Rihanna's Secret Garden installment. Listed below, these categories are informed by the garments and accessories most depicted in the campaign, as well as by Rihanna's fan following, album names, and title tracks. A visual representation of their prominence within the dataset can be found again in Figure 9.

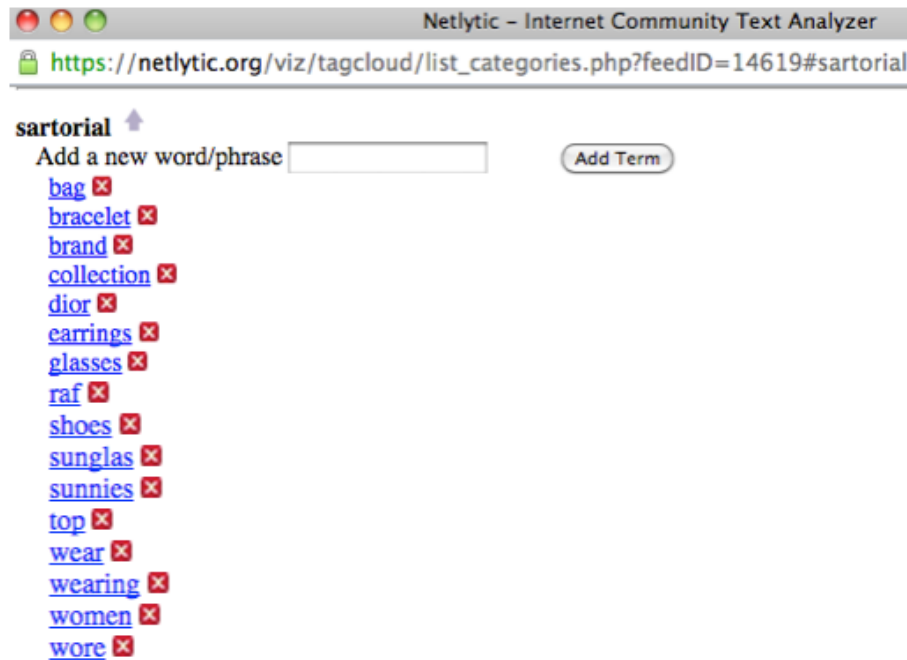


Fig. 10: Netlytic 'Manual Categories, Sartorial'

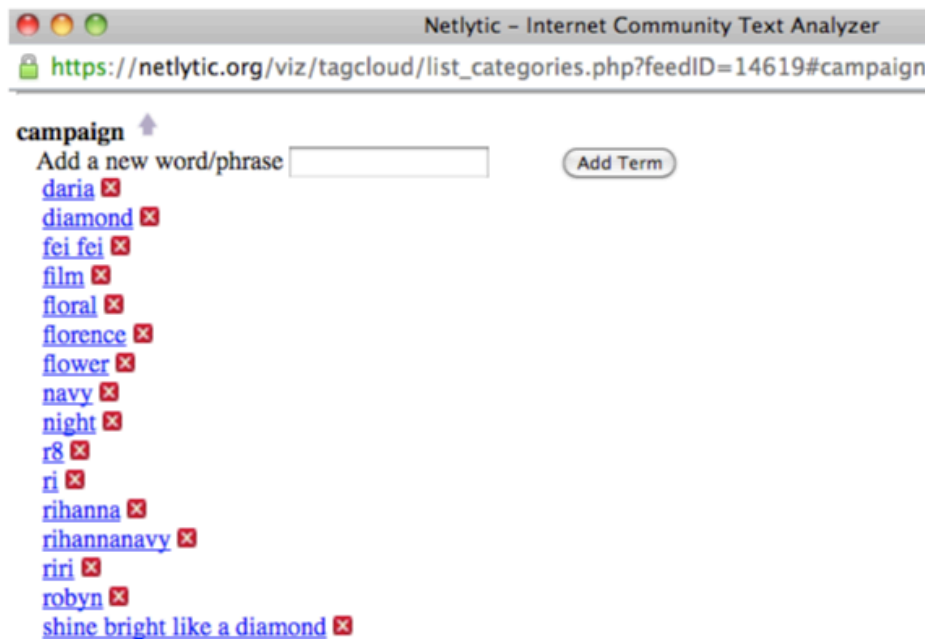


Fig. 11: Netlytic 'Manual Categories, Campaign'

Similar to the dualism found in Lai and To's case study, these results point toward the probability that audiences speak more about the latest goings-on of the brand, rather than the sartorial traits on which it is built. To investigate this in detail, each dataset was exported by Comma-Separated Values (CSV) into an Excel file. Subsequently, two workbooks were formed

to compile either the IG or YT records. In the process of deleting duplicate entries and revising format, each entry was then coded by Dann's system of Content Classification (see Table 9). Using a numerated hand-coding system, values 1-6 were attributed to each row of commentary. Depicted by their respective categories in the table below, the spreadsheet was then sorted by these values for tallying. While the results show the data as organized by Dann's model, they highlight the discrepancy in the volume of data collected by either channel. Finding fewer records overall, the YouTube subcorpus provides comparable ratios per category.

<u>Code</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>IG Subcorpus</u>		<u>YT Subcorpus</u>	
		<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
1	Conversational	3,343	37.2%	37	8.7%
2	Status	326	3.6%	187	43.9%
3	Pass along	334	3.7%	27	6.3%
4	News	25	0.3%	3	0.7%
5	Phatic	3,927	43.7%	155	36.4%
6	Spam	1,028	11.4%	17	4.0%
Total		8,983	100%	426	100%

Table 4: Results of Manual Hand-Coding for Content Structures

In his debate around convergence culture, scholar Vincent Miller speaks to the notion of phatic communication as a product of digital media and online networking practices (387). Challenging the “social context of individualization and [...] the technological developments associated with pervasive communication and ‘connected presence’” (387), Miller speaks to the rise of ‘phatic media’, “in which communication without consequence has taken precedence” (398). Concerning Dann's multi-dimensional model of categorization, both authors find that content of this nature is undirected, unclassifiable and vague. Important to these results is the question of what this says about Secret Garden viewers, and much more, how it impacts the transcendent storyline. The findings of Table 4 point toward the frequency of phatic communication, and the associated assumption that this voice is shadowed in relation to those generally picked up in Natural Language Processing tasks such as Information Retrieval and

Opinion Mining (Adedamola 418). By this, the data suggests a disruption to digital storytelling at the level of the user. Albeit undirected, phatic communication is still indicative of engagement, as it contributes to the larger body of publically available commentary. Though it is not reciprocated (see Figures 6 and 7), it fosters the evolving discourse surrounding Dior. Met with evidence of conversational narratives, such as reposts and activity including other users, these categories of communication make possible the realization of digital storytelling and provide a qualitative description to the quantitative application of Netlytic's Network Properties.

In a final implementation of the Netlytic Manual Categories dictionary, this project adopts a very basic sentiment analysis to glean the most frequently used words in positive and negative interpretations among consumers. Alternative to a scaling system whereby terms associated with having a positive, negative or neutral connotation are attributed a number and ranked accordingly, this study seeks to outline the polarity of the corpus and classify the expressed opinions found in the UGC as positive or negative. Because Netlytic does not have a metric of neutrality under this function, the analysis was twofold, addressing users' optimism or disapproval of the film. In Pandarachalil et al.'s approach to analyzing sentiment for large-scale data, the authors address 'sentiment aware tokenizing' to rationalize the fact that "emoticons, slangs and acronyms present [...] are strong indicators of emotion or sentiments" (256). Through this understanding, Manual Category, 'Slang', is also suggestive of unclassifiable enthusiasm among users. Reflecting the anecdotal narrative exchanged in discussing socio-economics and modern icons, this section gives voice to those who celebrate, or take issue, with the evolving face of Miss Dior.

https://instagram.com/	05/20/15 15:29	creepmag	Whether you love or hate the fashion industry, you can't ignore the fact that @badgalriri being the first black woman to star in a @dior campaign in the brand's entire history is pretty fucking cool.
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 17:53	Natassja Gresh	This is just breathtaking!Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 19:30	jarrett lozieres	Amazing!Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 19:42	selick	So beautiful and love that song Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 19:47	Daiana Florenc	Is perfect My queen 3 BEAUTIFUL!!!!Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 20:01	ComplejoDeDi	This is a fucking masterpiece!!Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 20:26	FahoOowd	Commercial of the yearÔ
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 20:32	javier nova are	Riri is amazing!!!Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 20:59	SOULxFINDE	Amazing!Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 21:59	Najee Wilbur	Breathtaking!Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 22:03	Rajae Belalami	QUEEN OF DIOR RIRI :* She's such a Perfect Woman love love love you Robyn so much 3Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 22:07	kailarer123	yas rihanna will always slay and she will always be the princessÔ
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 22:09	Latrell2Hot	Stunning visuals!!! She looked breathtaking! And i loving the sound of this new song! Ô
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 22:39	Rufus Outland	Very Hot Indeed, Dramatic, Strong, and Sensual.....Love ITÔ
https://www.youtube.c	05/25/15 23:44	Minnie Truly	love!Ô

Fig. 12: Positive Response

https://instagram.com/	05/18/15 14:27	gspitz9	Unfortunately Dior chose the wrong person for this ad! She's not classy enough for this. Should of been Sandra Bullock or someone with class! ð
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Fig. 13: Negative Response

https://www.youtube.com/	05/25/15 14:56	Oisl	I love the lighting, camera work and the amazing soundtrack, really great Florence and the Machine is part of it. I do think Rihanna overdoes it too much, which makes it tacky. The viewer has the constant association of 'Rihanna does this', a model would have suited it better, in a more gracious way, also if a model did this we wouldn't make associations because a model is much more anonymous for the bigger public. But it's a great clip. love it.Ô
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Fig. 14: Mixed Reviews

Trying again two categories from the dictionary against one another to compare rate of recurrence, Netlytic draws the comparison between users' general feeling toward Secret Garden IV. While it is difficult to judge how this contrasts the consensus in previous installments without resorting to retroactive data, it is clear that users belonging to the Dior community share their knowledge and repertoire of former episodes (see Figures 8, 12-14).

Ultimately proving their positive impressions of the film and Rihanna through these figures of speech, the medium through which these expressions are shared also speaks to the validity of the findings. Recalling the organic reach potential afforded by Instagram (Zaryouni) and social core among authors over YouTube (Paolillo 9), these results are congruent with users' intent to engage through the Secret Garden tale, and at last, willingness to participate in the reading of this digital story.

6. Discussion

6.1. Reciprocal Roles: Followership and Engagement

In the Secret Garden fan community, themes of diversity in fashion and couture are met with personal anecdotes and informal ‘talk’. Through the cultural appropriation in ‘slang’ and other monuments such as Versailles, users connect in the shaping of their shared perceptions of Rihanna for Dior through social media. While this data presents evidence of active participation among views, it finds a large proportion of this engagement to be phatic. Disrupting the flow of digital storytelling theory, the dialogue is pushed forward through tags, questions, and replies in conversational communication. Though unrequited, phatic communication works alongside conversational narratives as users build on the existing comments posted to Instagram and YouTube. The data finds that while these statements are largely undirected, they serve as part of the Secret Garden virtual lexicon, furthering the discourse of the campaign in a broader capacity. Furthermore, due to the high value of modularity between Netlytic’s clusters, it is critical to understand what importance these forms of communication have on the network’s structural properties.

From a commercial standpoint, network structure shows that effecting marketing management is necessary “in order to establish verbal communication and maximize marketing by the acceptance of Internet fashion information” (Song et al. 469). As it relates to active participation and digital storytelling, the parallels between phatic dialogues and the evident lack of reciprocal ties suggest that if actors were to exert more dynamic posts, UGC would yield a different network visualization. A desirable outcome for Dior, this effect is contingent on the visual literacy of the Secret Garden consuming audience and the potential growth they may experience in the continuation of the campaign.

Still, what these results show at present is a candid snapshot of fashion communication. As Scholar Kate Crawford explains, “if networked technologies in general, and social media in particular, generate ideal listening subjects of the twenty-first century [...] they also reveal the human limits of attention” (Crawford 532). By this understanding, it is important to take into consideration the medium used to host these users, and that as a media structure, it is not a neutral technology where meanings, messages and information are channeled unmodified (Sturken and Cartwright 229). Mindful of the impact to the story it conveys, Dior’s Instagram and YouTube initiatives complicate the transmission of this message to its viewers. Responding to the convergence of Rihanna fans and luxury customers, Dior hails viewers in a unique way. Under McLuhan’s philosophy, ‘the medium is the message’ (244), fashion film relies on the visual literacy of this converging audience to understand the attraction of these narratives through new media channels. While conversational communication works back and forth to inform users’ understanding of the film, phatic dialogues encourage actors to engage with their cluster by adding to the momentum of existing UGC.

6.2. Longevity in Digital Storytelling

Though defining the relationship between network dynamics and fashion theory poses challenges, it is crucial in describing the evolving nature of the fashion industry today. While the findings of this study are suggestive of users’ interaction with Instagram and YouTube, they go further, by supplementing the results with existing concepts on the fashion film, principles of luxury and the scopophilic nature of fashion culture. Two platforms in a global, omnichannel campaign, Instagram and YouTube serve as unique channels for the dissemination of Secret Garden IV, being mobile-accessible, conversationally informal, and primarily visual.

In its application, Dior capitalizes on these trends by forming a cohesive story for the Secret Garden through congruent episodes across channels (Vannini). Consistent with the logic of digital storytelling, the trajectory of the Secret Garden highlights the necessity for brand narratives to be consistent across channels when catering to an omnichannel strategy. As the same visual cues from Instagram and YouTube are carried out in Dior's retail displays, editorial content, and Fashion Week photo ops, users view, interpret, and emit a response to their mental impressions of these experiences (see Figure 15). Characterized by the UGC, the results found users' preoccupation with themes, emotion and language to be congruent with the cinematic nature of Rihanna's film.

As a campaign with four years of history, Rihanna's Secret Garden could not be narrated in the same light if not for the installments that preceded it. The stark contrast of Rihanna's femme fatale portrayal in Secret Garden IV (Figure 1) could not exist without the seemingly lost, doll-like, and absent Daria in films I-III (Figures 2-4). Equally, the ready-to-wear garments in Daria's trilogy would not connote timelessness if Rihanna's much more blatant display of material patronage was not as evident. Both status seeking and boastful in their own way, each Secret Garden episode presents the same egotistical stroking, staring, and longing to which the viewer has grown accustomed. Though they differ in light, sound and artistic direction, the films rely on each other, as the impact of one could not exist without the next. Under the framework of digital storytelling, annual campaigns are an investment for the producer as much as they are an enduring process for the consumer. Participating in the longevity of the Secret Garden mythology by inserting themselves into the story in ways that make sense to them (see Figure 8), users exhibit behavioural patterns indicative of the brand's positioning moving forward.

6.3. Qualifications and Limitations

For future study examining the relationship between SNA, fashion, and media, researchers may reference this study as a starting point for methodological purposes and themes, and how they interrelate. For the process of SMM, Netlytic proved to be a viable and effective tool to deliver ratios, themes, and ease of use. Though seldom, the drawbacks presented in the system could be improved for future study. In its Text Analysis, the software is unable to pick up ‘emoji’ characters, resulting in unclassifiable information during the content classification procedure. Other contributions for Netlytic include the suggestion of a heat map to show overlap between Manual Categories in its Text Analysis. This type of algorithmic concepts map could bridge the divide between sentiment and slang, much like Lai and To or Pandarachalil et al.. To this end, Netlytic users could visualize how terms such as ‘queen’, for instance, fit in multiple categories.

In addition, crowdfunding resources could be used in future consideration of ‘big data’ seeking analysis. Following the methodology of Adedamola et al., which resorted to crowdfunding to code their findings, this process saves time and serves as a more objective source to manually categorize, mediating the risk of bias.

In a comment toward the mining of specific sources and volatility of digital data, future scholars may be wary of content being taken offline, just as Dior made private their original Secret Garden films by removing them from YouTube. Should further inquiries wish to be made with the 8 datasets, perhaps to review ‘likes’ or ‘views’. the primary source is no longer eligible for study.

7. Conclusion

This paper moves for three key points which draw on the aforementioned concepts surrounding followership, engagement and their implications to carry out the theoretical evidence of digital storytelling. Conclusions on the latter state that micro-blogging (Hao et al. 470) communities exhibit patterns of digital storytelling by means of eWOM and through a sharing of common cultural views. As the visual nature of Instagram and YouTube platforms suggest, the discourse which emerges from the visual interpretation of fashion content elicits a cognitive and lexical response. The Secret Garden imagery is layered with themes of brand heritage, French custom, modern design and popular culture, and under the assumption of digital storytelling theory, the presence of this dialogue is proof that these tropes resonate with consumers. For Rihanna's case, this is positive.

In practice, the Secret Garden contributes to Dior's competitiveness in a market where few brands use the technique of an annual campaign. Creating an air of anticipation through its longevity, campaign followers revisit the Secret Garden year after year in succinct reinstallments of their projected understanding of Dior's brand image. With an increased likelihood for brand community members to remember the campaign and await its "future iterations", Dior is "developing equity in this content franchise" (Rue qtd. in King) so long as users are following the story and engaged in its plot. Under the framework of digital storytelling, these 'chapters' of the Secret Garden are consistent, but not boring; familiar, but fresh at the same time (Rue qtd. in King).

For the theory of fashion, this case study explains the implications of converging narratives in an arena that denotes both luxury ideals and subcultural tropes. On a digital front,

the theoretical and methodological perspectives offered by this campaign fill the gap in research surrounding the interplay of social media marketing and the complexities of fashion film.

8. Appendices

Appendix A Theoretical Framework

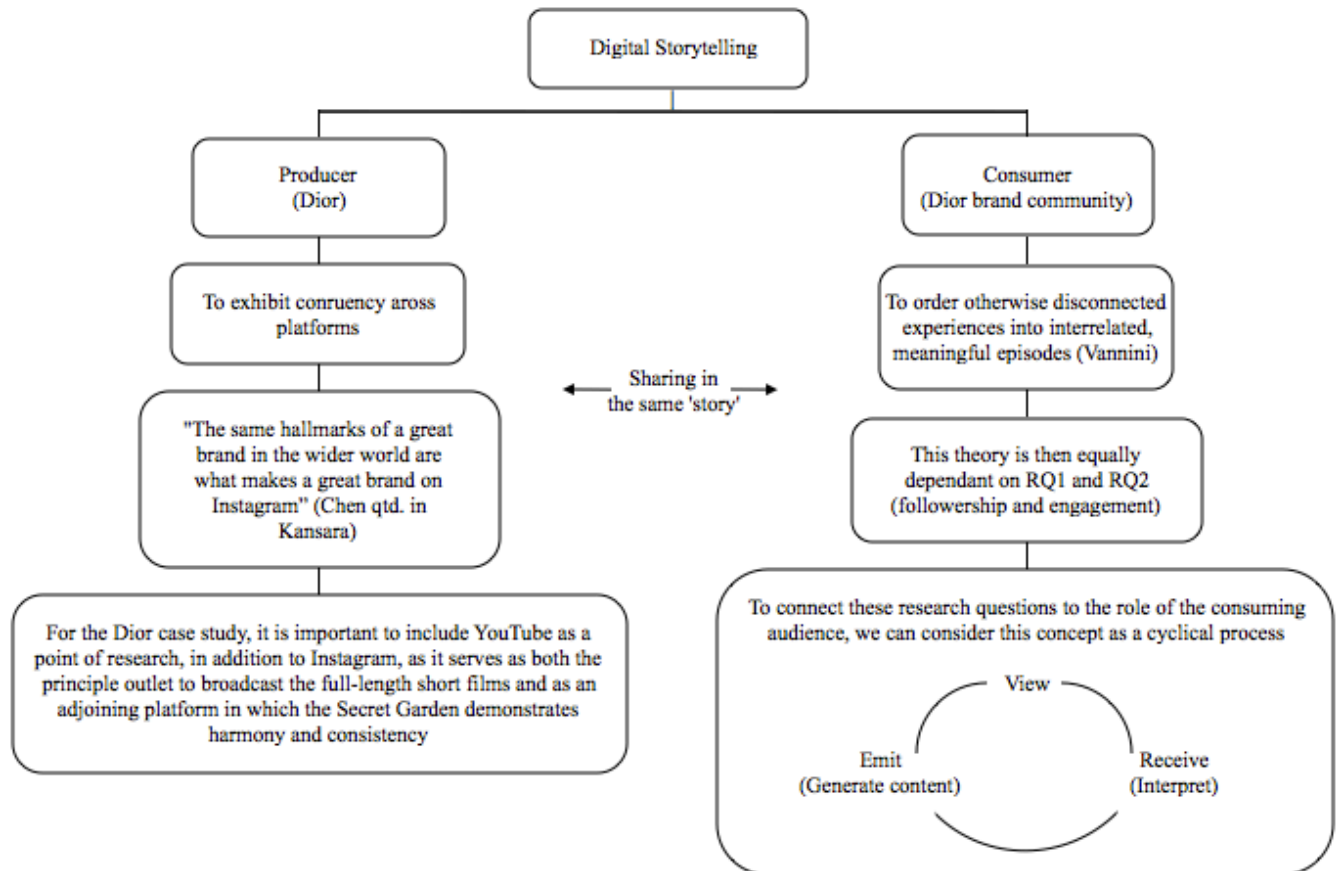


Fig. 15: Digital Storytelling Flowchart

Appendix B Brand Valuation through YouTube

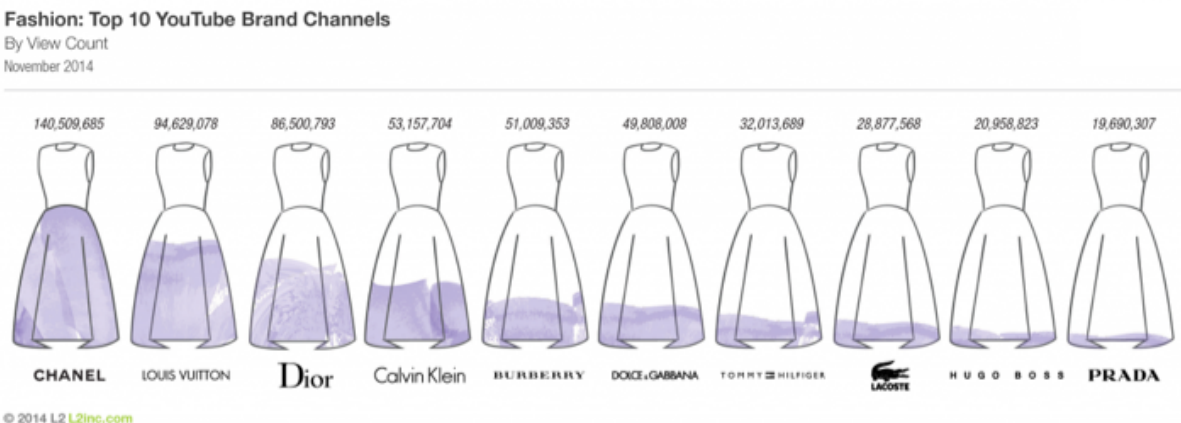


Fig. 16: Top YouTube Channels, View Count (Zaryouni)

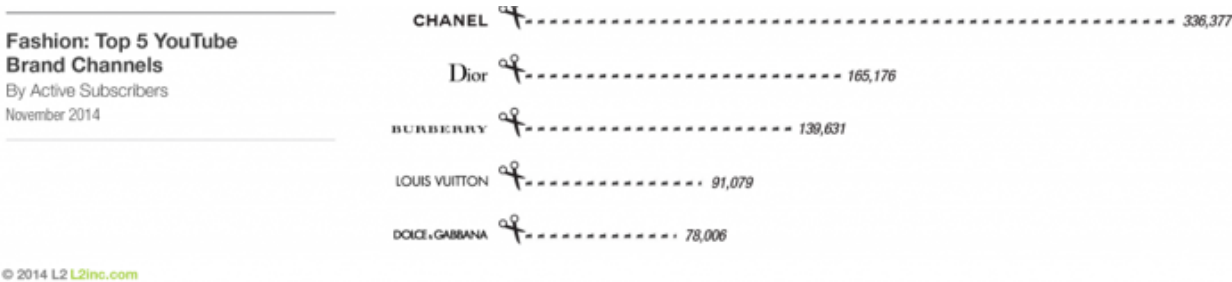
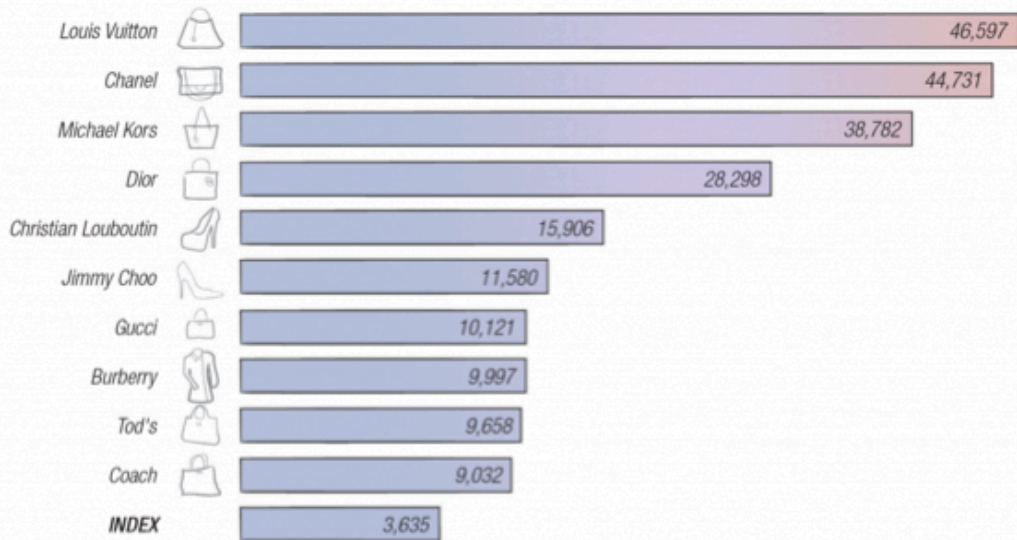


Fig. 17: Top YouTube Channels, Subscribers (Zaryouni)

Appendix C Rating Brand Presence in Social Media

Fashion: Top 10 Brands by Average Interactions Per Facebook Post

September–October 2014, n=88



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Fig. 18: Facebook Communities and Interaction (Zaryouni)

Appendix D Previous Studies Using Content Classification

	<i>Java et al (2007)</i>	<i>Jansen et al (2009)</i>	<i>Pear Analytics (2009)</i>	<i>Honeycutt and Herring (2009)</i>	<i>Naaman et al (2010)</i>
<i>Conversational</i>	“conversations”	information seeking	conversational	Addressivity About addressee Exhort Solicit information	Question to followers
<i>Pass along</i>	“information or URL sharing”	information providing	pass-along value self-promotion	Information for others Announce/ advertise Other’s experience	Information Sharing Self Promotion
<i>News</i>	“news reporting”	information providing	News	Information for others	
<i>Status</i>	“daily chatter”	Comment / Sentiment	pointless babble	Self experience Announce/ advertise Opinion	Opinions/Complaints Me now Anecdote (me) Self Promotion
<i>Phatic</i>	“daily chatter”	Comment / Sentiment	pointless babble	Self experience Exhort Information for self Metacommentary Media use Other	Presence Maintenance Anecdote (others) Statements & Random Thoughts
<i>Spam</i>			Spam		

Table 5: Content Classification (Dann)

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