

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

SPECTACLES AND ARTIST-CREATORS
Representation of women through fashion on CD-ROM
Ambitious Bitch by Marita Liulia
A Pro Gradu Thesis

by

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English
2002

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA
KIELTEN LAITOS / ENGLANTI

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Pro gradu –työ

Englannin kieli

Joulukuu 2002

97 sivua ja 1 liite

Tutkielman tarkoituksena oli tutkia naisen representaatiota muodin kautta suomalaisen multimediataiteilija Marita Liulian Cd-rom multimediataideteoksessa *Ambitious Bitch* (AB). Materiaali koostuu Cd-romin osasta ”Fashion, designers”, joka vuorostaan on jaettu osiin ”Fashion”, ”Designers” ja ”Garment”. ”Fashion, designers” osa on litteroituna liitteenä Appendix 1 tutkielman lopussa. Materiaali on liitetty tutkielmaan mukaan, koska digitaaliset taideteokset ovat muuttuvaisia ja muuttuvat katsoja-kokijan valintojen mukaan, vaikka niissä aina ovatkin samat peruselementit. Nyt AB:n katsoja-kokija voi palata materiaaliin ja tutustua siihen paremmin, koska materiaalin lukemiseen sen alkuperäisessä muodossa tarvitaan erikoisvälineistöä, (tietokone, Cd-rom asema ja *Ambitious Bitch* Cd-rom), joita ei välttämättä ole kaikkien saatavilla.

Lähtökohtana tutkimukselle oli muotimaailma ja naisen representaatio muotimaailmassa, joita molempia on Suomessa tutkittu hyvin vähän. Tutkielma on pääosin kuvaileva. Käytin materiaalinani sekä Cd-romissa esiintyviä tekstejä, että teksteihin liitettyjä kuvia. Koska kuvia oli mahdoton kopioida ja liittää tutkimukseen mukaan, kuvailin omin sanoin mitä elementtejä kuvista löytyy, joten tutkimuksen lukija saa edes jonkinlaisen käsityksen ”Fashion, designers” –osassa esiintyvistä kuvista. Tutkimukseni tavoitteena oli selvittää: 1) millaisia tekstejä ja kuvia ”Fashion, designers” osassa on käytetty naisista, 2) mitä merkityksiä feministinen teoria antaa AB:n kuville ja teksteille ja mitä merkityksiä kuvilla ja teksteillä on yksittäisinä saattanut olla muotimaailmassa ja 3) miten Marita Liulia on tulkinnut ja yhdistellyt kuvia ja tekstejä ja miten niiden merkitys on yhdistelmien seurauksena muuttunut.

Liulia käsittelee ironisesti miehisenä medianäyttelijänä pidetyn Cd-romin kautta naisten asemaa yhteiskunnassa ja naisten representaatiota muodissa, vaikka käyttääkin työssään melko perinteisiä kuvia ja tekstejä. AB:n osassa ”Fashion, designers” nainen on kuvissa kuvattu pääasiassa nuorena, valkoihoisena ja hiljaisena spektaakkelinä. Kuten muotikuvissa yleensä, naista esittävät kuvat ovat myös AB:ssä usein muutettu ja vääristelty kuvankäsittelyn keinoin. Monissa kuvissa esiintyy elävien naisten sijasta mallinukkeja, nukkeja ja naista esittäviä patsaita, jotka ovat myös valkoihoisia ja nuoria. Muotimaailmassa naista esittävät nuket toimivat yleensä ihanteina ja malleina naisille, mutta niillä saattaa olla katsojaansa myös vieraannuttava ja etäännyttävä vaikutus. Nuket saattavat viitata myös muotiin esityksenä tai naamioitumisena. Teksteissä puolestaan naispuoliset muotisuunnittelijat yrittävät esittää itsensä miessuunnittelijoiden kaltaisina taiteilijoina ja uuden luojina, mutta ovat itse asiassa sisäistäneet monia maskuliinisia näkökulmia, joita myös Liulia koittaa tuoda esiin ja siten kritisoida. Yleensä Liulian kritiikki on melko epäsuoraa. Liulia ei osoittele, vaan pyrkii käyttämään ironiaa ja saada katsoja-kokijan tekemään omat tulkintansa kuvien ja tekstien yhdistelmistä. Toisaalta AB:n teksteissä esiintyy muotisuunnittelijoiden lisäksi naisia, jotka toimivat muun muassa tutkijoina ja kirjailijoina, joka osoittaa, että kuvien ulkopuolella naiset voivat toimia myös aktiivisina tekijöinä. Katsoja-kokijan on mahdollista lukea useita tekstin ja kuvien yhdistelmiä pieninä tarinoina, jotka viittaavat muihin ”Fashion, designers” –osassa esiintyviin teksteihin ja kuviin ja muuttavat niistä saatuja merkityksiä. Teksti-kuva yhdistelmät tuovat ”Fashion, designers” –osaan lineaarisuutta, vaikka Liulia omien sanojensa mukaan haluaa nimenomaan välttää sitä.

Asiasanat: CD-ROM, desire, fashion, femininity, feminism, Otherness, power, representation, spectator-user, threat

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
2. RESEARCH DESIGN.....	8
2.1 Data.....	8
2.2 Aims.....	10
2.3 Methods of Analysis.....	13
3. THE TEXTS OF “FASHION, DESIGNERS”.....	15
4. THE IMAGES OF “FASHION, DESIGNERS”.....	50
5. LIULIA’S TEXT AND IMAGE COMBINATIONS.....	65
5.1 Women’s Roles.....	65
5.2 Duality.....	73
5.3 Resistance.....	78
6. CONCLUSION.....	85
THE BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	91
Appendix I.....	98

1. INTRODUCTION

Clothes are an important part of everyday life. People wear clothes to keep themselves warm or for reasons of modesty, to cover themselves up. Depending on their culture, people wear clothes also to decorate themselves or to convey messages about themselves. Clothes can communicate to other people what kind of groups a person belongs to, or wants to belong. Clothes can signal that a person works in a certain kind of profession, for example as a police officer, or belongs to a certain group, such as punk sub-culture. Clothes can also tell about their wearer's values or personality. For example, if you wear bright colours it can tell that you are not afraid to stand out from the crowd.

Clothes can also communicate something about their wearer's wealth or status. People can often show off their wealth by wearing fashionable clothes, clothes that are designed by famous fashion designers and clothes that other people know are expensive. Still, in many cultures, clothes are often considered trivial. For example, in our Western culture, people do not like to acknowledge that buying clothes and deciding what to wear requires time and energy. Interest in clothes is often considered as something people do when they do not have anything more important to do. In the Western culture, interest in clothes and fashion is often considered to be a feminine occupation. People often assume that all women are interested in fashion, whereas men who are concerned about their outside appearance can easily be labelled somehow 'feminine', or even homosexuals.

Art is usually divided to 'high' art and 'low' popular culture. Clothing can also be divided into 'high' designer fashion or haute couture, and to 'low', mainstream street fashion or prêt-a-porter fashion, which refers to mass-produced, ready-to-wear clothes. Popular culture and street clothes are usually consumer products, cheap and easily replaceable. Out of designer and mass-produced fashion, designer fashion is usually considered to be a form of art. It is displayed in fashion shows, it is expensive and it has a high status. However, for example Evans and Thornton (1989:xv) have defined fashion as a discourse that

has been culturally marginalized by art and history. From the point of view of artists and historians, 'high arts' usually still consist of creative and performing forms of art such as painting, sculpture, music and dance. Making and designing garments is often thought to belong to the area of handicrafts. As a result, fashion has been studied less than the other so called high arts.

The material of this study is Marita Liulia's CD-ROM artwork *Ambitious Bitch* (1996, AB from now on). The CD-ROM deals with the topic of being a woman in modern and post-modern Western culture. Its target audience is women (see *Ambitious Bitch manual* 1996). It consists of eleven parts that focus on different aspects of being a woman. The parts are: "Ambitious blonde", "Ambitious Witch", "Body -art of existence", "Bubbles", "Erotic tales", "Fashion, designers", "Female perversions", "Female qualities?", "Sex or gender", "trad.wit" and "Waves of feminism". Because studying all the parts would make my thesis too wide in scope, I have decided to concentrate on only one of the parts, "Fashion, designers". The "Fashion, designers" part consists of three separate sections; "Fashion", "Designers" and "Garment". I am going to study each of these sections.

The "Fashion, designers" part of AB shows women as designers as well as consumers of fashion. However, it is noted that the majority of famous fashion designers are men. My objectives are to show how women are represented through fashion on Marita Liulia's CD-ROM *Ambitious bitch* (1996) part "Fashion, designers" in texts and images. My goals are also to study whether Liulia has tried to comment, criticise or even to change the way women are represented in fashion.

The "Fashion, designers" part was selected, because, as Leena-Maija Rossi (2001:261, translation M.K.) so aptly put it: "The world of clothes is the world of ideologies, power, many kinds of exchange and the politics of the body." In other words, we do not just wear clothes to keep ourselves warm, but there is a lot more involved. Fashion is a huge industry. Some people, usually the fashion designers and the market forces, have the power to decide and define what is considered fashionable, and therefore desirable, at a time, while others

try their best to follow these definitions, to buy clothes and accessories and to consume time and money to be 'fashionable'.

I chose AB also because both AB and Liulia are interesting from several points of view. For example, Liulia was one of the first Scandinavian multimedia artists (*HS Kuukausiliite* January 1996:52). She works in the field of computers, computer graphics and software that are, even still, connected more to men than women (see for example Järvinen and Mäyrä 1999). Further, Liulia has tried to 'feminize' the masculine field of computers by using aesthetics and easy user interfaces, to make computers and CD-ROMs more appealing to women. (*Aamulehti*, 27.01.1996: 22.)

Today, there is an increasing number of multimedia CD-ROMs available in shops and libraries. Most CD-ROMs that are currently available are either games or teaching aids and materials. The multimedia games available are commercial and generally targeted to boys and young men. As for example Huhtamo (1995) has pointed out, in games women are often depicted as sexy objects, such as Lara Croft in the game *Tomb Rider*. The teaching aids available are also often in the game format. However, Liulia's work is different from them, because it is a work of art. Furthermore, Liulia has targeted her work specifically to women. When Liulia talks about the users of AB in her interviews, she uses the term 'spectator-users' ("katsoja/käyttäjä"; *HS Kuukausiliite*, January 1996:52). In my study, I also mostly use the term 'spectator-user' to refer to the user of AB, since the term can cover both the male and female users of the CD-ROM.

As Liulia herself has said (*HS Kuukausiliite*, January 1996:52), AB looks like a game, for example, both the CD-ROM and its cover are very colourful and its colours remind its user of popular culture. However, in an interview, Liulia has also argued that her work is not a game. Her work is directed to women and it shows for example in the way AB is not constructed linearly. Most of multimedia games have a linear structure, they start from point A and you have to follow points B, C, and D to finish the game. According to Liulia, the linear game-format is masculine (Liulia in Koskinen 1996). Therefore, AB is non-

linear: as a spectator-user of AB, you can start anywhere, although there are only five out of eleven possible options available at a time, and go through the CD-ROM in any order you like. You may get a little different impression of AB every time depending on the order you go through the CD-ROM.

In Finland there are several studies about the representation of women. However, clothing and fashion in Finland have not been studied much (see for example Laiho and Leino 1988:6). One reason might be, as Evans and Thornton (1989:81) have put it, because fashion is an essentially transitory system of representation, it is always in a process of change and, therefore, it is difficult to discuss. The combination of fashion and representation of women has, to my knowledge, not been studied at all. Therefore, my research is one of the first ones in the area. For example Modinos (1994) has done research on representation of women in pop star Madonna's music videos, and Nikunen (1996) about the politics of look in Finnish and English television series. Uotila (1995) has studied wearing clothes as a creative act, Noro (1991) has studied fashion as a social form from the point of view of sociology, and Laiho and Leino (1988) have studied fashion from the point of view of identity formation and consuming. In addition, in Finland there are few books written on the history of clothing (see for example Franck 1997). Mari Mäkiranta has also studied a part of AB previously in her thesis "Ambitious Bitch/Indolent nymph" (2000). Mäkiranta has studied "Body/art of existence"-part of AB. Mäkiranta has studied both verbal and visual representation of women (body, cyborgs, sex/gender politics, technology, politics of gaze) and she has used French feminist theories and deconstruction in her study, so her point of view is a bit different from mine. However, she has not touched the subject of fashion in her research.

AB is based on Liulia's idea to produce a CD-ROM about being a woman to a female audience. As a woman I myself belong to AB's target audience and the topics and issues dealt on the CD-ROM are close to me. That can also affect my perception of the CD-ROM. On one hand, it may be easy for me to read and understand the topics and issues that Liulia has chosen, because as a woman they are so familiar to me. On the other hand, I may be so close to

the topic that my personal opinions affect my perceptions of the CD-ROM, so it is good to acknowledge these possibilities before I start my work.

From my own point of view, I have often taken for granted the representation of women in fashion images and women's magazines. Learning about the background of representation of women has made me take a more critical attitude towards pictures, although I still admire them and desire to be like them, and spend time looking at them. However, studying about the representation of women has made me realize that women have been represented differently at different times, depending on the values of the society at that time. The representations have tried to affect women and the representations have also changed throughout times. I think the fact that we are influenced by images would be an important issue for other women to realize, too. Nevertheless, it does not mean that they should think that all images of women are trying somehow covertly influence us, whenever they see fashion images, because in my mind it takes out the pleasure in looking at the pictures.

In addition, as a result of the terrorism that took place in the United States in September 2001 and the resulting war in Afghanistan, the position of women, and the way women are represented and seen in different cultures and societies is at the moment a very current issue, visible in the media and therefore worthy of attention.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Data

AB is a multimedia work. Multimedia can be defined as “the seamless integration of data, text, sound and images of all kinds within a single, digital information environment”, in which all information is in digital form (Feldman

1997:24). Therefore, it consists of several elements, moving and still images, sound and text.

AB is also interactive. Interactivity means that the work gives its user access to information. In interactivity the user can select available options and influence on his or her own experience of the multimedia product, but usually within the limits of computer software. (Feldman 1997:14). As Sederholm (2000:177) has noted, many of the interactive art works are dependent on the recipient and in which order s/he looks at the work of art. As a result, the work is never similar.

CD-ROM is also a spatial medium (Huhtamo 1995). In contrast, for example video, which is a linear medium and which the user can only watch, in CD-ROM s/he can take an active role in the events on the screen. Therefore, it is possible to produce a CD-ROM that is non-linear. When using a CD-ROM the user can, for example, point or click marked or hidden hotspots on the screen, type in messages or look through keyholes. Because CD-ROM is spatial, the user can pause, take time and reflect the possibilities it offers him or her, and choose different options. Because the user can choose his or her own paths, the using experience can be different every time. If s/he were for example watching a video, the user could not influence the using experience, but had to watch the video from start to finish. However, AB's interactivity is largely confined to the fact that the user can choose his or her own paths inside the CD-ROM, although not all options are available at a time. Most of the images in AB are quite static. They are still pictures, not moving, although they may be distorted in several different ways. There are some hidden spots, and some visible ones that the user can click with the mouse and get new screens to read.

I have transcribed the "Fashion, designers" part of AB and my material can be found in Appendix I. I have included Appendix I to my study, because reading CD-ROMs requires special equipment, a computer with a CD-ROM drive and a CD-ROM disc, and this way it is easier for the reader to get to know my material. AB consists of texts and pictures. Because it was impossible to copy and attach all the pictures in picture form to my research, I have verbally

described the pictures, so that the reader of my study can get an idea what the pictures are like. In addition to texts and images I also occasionally mention some audiovisual features, if I consider them relevant.

The languages available in AB are French and English. According to Koskinen (1996), the versions are slightly different from each other, and it would be interesting to compare them. However, I do not know enough French and that would also take too much space in my research, so I will have to leave that to the future researchers.

2.2 Aims

In my analysis I will investigate how women are represented through fashion in the texts and images of a CD-ROM. First, I am going to study how women have been represented in the texts of “Fashion, designers”. The texts have been chosen by Liulia, taken from their original contexts and pasted into AB. In their original contexts they have had certain meanings. I am going to examine, what the meanings might have been, or what kind of interpretations feminist research would give to them.

Next, I am going to concentrate on the images of AB. Just like the texts, the images have been taken out of their original contexts. According to Koskinen (1996), some of the photographs on AB have even been taken by Liulia herself. I am going to study what the images may have meant in their original environment, the fashion world and in the context of feminist research.

Then I am going to focus on the images and text and how they are combined in AB’s part “Fashion, designers”. Liulia has chosen the texts and images herself, analysed them and given them certain meanings. As a ‘post-feminist’ she has most likely been aware of the meanings the texts and images can have inside the feminist discourse. Then she has taken the texts and images and combined them in new ways. I am interested in what Liulia aims at with the new text/image combinations. Is she trying to give the texts and images new meanings or does she support the ideals of the fashion world and fashion

designers? It is also possible that she is trying to use for example irony: “saying the opposite of what you mean, or inviting an interpretation different from the surface meaning of your words” (Lodge 1992:179), or humour, to reveal some stereotyped ideas about women in the world of fashion. Furthermore, I am going to study how effective Liulia’s text/image combinations are. Do her combinations reinforce the messages of previous texts and images or has she changed them somehow?

My aim in this research is to analyse how women are represented through fashion in CD-ROM AB’s part “Fashion, designers”. In Western culture women are often pictured, but the images of women are often representations. Representation can for example be defined: “ a representation of a person, thing or event is something that shows or describes them in an artistic form, for example in a painting or a play” (Collins Cobuild 1987:1228). According to Walters (1995:47, emphasis in the original): “Representation is *not* reflection, but rather an active process of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping, or making things *mean*.” The definitions above imply that representations are made from a subjective point of view of someone, such as an artist who has made the painting or play. Someone has chosen what to include in a representation and what to leave out, and therefore a representation is not completely truthful. By making representations of people and objects, words and images are given meanings.

The notion of representation above also tells that a representation can be either visual (painting) or verbal (play), or both. In addition, although art, as well as fashion, are often mainly understood as visual, Parker and Pollock (1981:114-115) have claimed that art, and art history, are not only about images, but how images are explained verbally, in either written or spoken form. Furthermore, as Laiho and Leino (1988: 39-40, translation M.K.) have said: “fashion is a mechanism that lives only through fashion shows, catalogues, brochures, advertisements and mass media.” So, in order to exist and influence people, fashion has to appear both in images as well as texts.

Furthermore, Parker and Pollock (1981:116) have suggested that the use of language and non-linguistic features can reveal the power of one group over another. This can also show in AB, because as argued above (p. 5), one element of fashion is power. Therefore, in my opinion, when analysing art and fashion, it is important to analyse both images as well as texts connected to them.

The mainstream representations of women are often one-sided. For example, according to Gaines (1990:4), the mainstream representation of women is falsified, because it depicts only certain types of women and leaves out many other types of women. Women have been pictured in art as well as in photographs, advertisements and films so much that the images of women can be thought of as being part of the Western pictorial tradition. Often the women featured in images are young and attractive-looking, wearing seductive, revealing clothes and a lot of make-up. However, if we look around us, for example on the morning train, we see various people, men and women, of different ages, slim and fat, young and old. Representations are images created according to certain pictorial conventions to serve certain purposes. For example, fashion pictures are trying to sell the clothes as well as a certain image that the clothes represent and also to 'sell' the designers of the clothes, to make the designers better known. According to for example Parker and Pollock (1981:116), in the Western society men usually have the power of defining how women are and should be represented, and therefore the representations of women show actually the masculine ideal of women.

Liulia looks at her topic from a post-feminist point of view and she uses images familiar from the worlds of fashion and advertising in AB (see for example *Ambitious Bitch manual* 1996). Post-feminism was a form of feminism that developed in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of the criticism directed towards the earlier forms of feminism. It was claimed that the feminism of 1960s and 70s had not resulted in the liberation of women, but, instead, in a "backlash". As a result of the "backlash" women were becoming like men in a sense that they had more liberties and could for example work outside home. However, they were also doing "double-duty", which meant that in addition to going to

work, they were expected to take care of the home and the children just as before (see for example Walters 1995:117-138). What is also typical of post-feminism is the study of relationship of women to images and the process of representation (Walters 1995:26).

Liulia's CD-ROM is a form of (post-) feminist art. According to Sederholm (2000:125, translation M.K.), "in feminist art the purpose is often to change the ways in which women see themselves and change the ways in which the other people see women." Further, it is asserted by Rossi (2001:161) that it is also typical of post-feminism to recycle and copy pictures and to use irony. Rossi's definition of post-feminism suits the medium of multimedia especially well, since, as Sederholm (2000) has noted, multimedia uses the techniques of montage and collage. Collage aims at re-using already existing art-works and things, for example well-known cultural symbols, such as images of women as symbols of beauty. Montage means arranging successive or parallel pictures so that the different elements are made to collide. The first collages were made to change the thinking that "a painting is a window to reality" (Sederholm 2000:73). Therefore collages were made to show that paintings, just as many contemporary photographs or other images of women, were only representations of reality, but not real. (Sederholm 2000).

2.3 Methods of analysis

I have chosen the tools of my analysis from the Anglo-Saxon feminist theory of representation of women and looking at the images. I am going to see how they relate to the texts and images Liulia has chosen for AB's part "Fashion, designers". In addition to Anglo-Saxon feminist theories, there is another main feminist branch, the branch of French feminist theory. Inside Anglo-Saxon and French feminist theories there are several different fields of study, such as film study and literary study, and different points of view, such as Marxist feminism and psycho-analytic feminism. Since the object of my research is multimedia, I shall use feminist theories from both film and literary study. As noticed above

(p.12), the use of language and non-linguistic features can reveal the power of one group over another. Bergvall, Bing and Freed (1996:1-30), have claimed that in modern society, language has power and it is used in constructing and maintaining male dominance. It is possible that this can also show in AB. In my analysis I am first going to introduce the caption of text from AB and then what kind of meanings can be connected to it in the context of fashion world, or in the context of feminist research. If the reader wants to see the text and image combinations, they can be found transcribed in Appendix I at the end of the thesis.

According to Brook (1999:4,35,105), many feminist theories have been criticized of being heterosexually centred and, as a result, one-sided. They try to group all women under same theories, although as Brook (1999) argues, all women are individuals and therefore different. Similarly to Brook, Gaines (1990:4) has suggested that the mainstream representation is also giving a one-sided image of women. In my study I will touch the issue of gender, since in the world of fashion, as well as in the representations of the different genders, men and women have often been connected to different characteristics and behaviour. I shall also briefly touch the issue of sexual orientation, since many male fashion designers are known or suspected to be homosexuals. About the representation of race or ethnicity it can be noted briefly that, as far as I know, Liulia's CD-ROM multimedia artwork includes only images of white Western women and no images of the representatives of any other race or ethnicity, not in pictures of women, fashion models or fashion designers or in the comments of the researchers and theorists quoted on the CD-ROM. The CD-ROM centres around the Western cultures of France, United Kingdom and United States, where the majority of the people and the comments used in part "Fashion, designers" come from, and it is influenced by Liulia's own, Finnish, culture. Therefore, the CD-ROM represents a Western cultural point of view towards women.

Feminist research claims that in spite of the many images of women that can be seen in our Western culture, women have seldom been the real stars of the pictures (see for example Parker and Pollock 1981:80, Pollock 1988:21, Sederholm 2000:120, *Kiasma* 7. 2000, vol 3.: 18-19, Rossi

www.medeia.com/ab/e_ab/e_main_article.html, printed 22.02.2001). For example in artworks, it was usually the skill of the artist that was admired. The famous artists were up to the 20th century more often male than female, as they also nowadays still often are. Similarly in fashion creations that can be seen on the catwalks, the skill of the designer and the beauty of the creation have played the main role, in spite of the fact that in the 1990s some supermodels managed to make it to the fame and appeared on catwalks because they themselves were famous as a person. In advertisements, images of women have usually stood for something else, such as the product on sale or the desirability of the product.

In my study I deal with the Western fashion culture and Western beauty ideals. When I speak about “Western culture”, I mean the shared representational features of Europe and the United States that nowadays have also spread to the other continents of the world as well. These features are based on European and American history and traditions. When I talk about fashion, I mean both fashion in the sense of clothes, as well as fashion as one’s whole outside appearance. As Wolf (1991:84) has said: “images of the Face and the Body” and also garments used in covering the body.

3. THE TEXTS OF “FASHION, DESIGNERS”

In this section of my research I am going to study the representation of women through fashion in the texts of AB. I am going to go through the texts and see what they originally might have meant in the world of fashion, or what meanings does feminist research give them and how the texts link historically to fashion world. Before I analyse the texts of the different screens, I shall quote the texts, like for example below: “O) ‘Fashion, Designers, Garment’ “, and then analyse them. I have given the different screens of “Fashion, designers” different numbers, so that it will be easier to refer to the screen. If a certain screen does not have any text but only an image, I have left it out of this part of analysis and gone

it through in the part four of my research: *The Images of "Fashion, designers"*. Therefore, the numbering of the screen may not be continuous.

O) "FASHION, DESIGNERS, GARMENT"

The first screen, "Fashion, designers, garment", shows the three sub-sections the part "Fashion, designers" has been divided to. The name 'fashion' can be used of garments as well as accessories that can be worn with the clothes. It can also be used of peoples' general outside appearance, such as their hair and make-up. Hollander (1978:350) has described fashion as: "the whole spectrum of desirable ways of looking at any given time", so according Hollander an important property of fashion is that it arouses desire in the persons looking at fashion creations or people wearing them. According to Kokkonen (1996:41-55), fashion is "seeing and being seen". It is also the leading taste, habit, style, pattern or design. Fashion has always been connected to seeing, although as I have mentioned before (p. 11-12), it also needs text to survive. Still, Kokkonen has claimed that in the Western culture seeing is considered superior in comparison to all other senses. Throughout history, people have used fashion to differentiate different groups from each other. For example, before the fashion system, upper classes differentiated themselves from the lower classes with the aid of patina. Patina was a symbolic quality that showed itself in the signs of time on objects. Those signs proved that the upper classes had owned their property for a long time and, at the same time, justified and reinforced their leading position. (Kokkonen 1996:45.) However, clothes formed a starting point for a cultural change. With the rise of fashion, different classes started differentiating themselves from each other more and more with the aid of the clothes they were wearing.

Pictures and images played an important role from the beginning of the development of fashion. In Franck's (1997:147) words, in the images of the Western world, a "fashionable dress" started to replace folk costumes in etchings from the 18th century onwards. The first fashion magazine appeared in France in 1785. At first fashion was elitist and reserved for the use of the members of

aristocracy and men took also an active part in fashion, but gradually fashion became connected more to women than men. Attractive women were thought to be fragile, both physically and morally, hence the expression 'weaker sex'. Therefore women had to be guarded from male desire and their own weakness. (Franck 1997, see also Laiho and Leino 1988:26-28.)

'Designers' are the people who have, or who have been given, the authority and vision to create fashion. In AB's part "Fashion, designers" the name 'designers' refers to the men and women who work in the field of high fashion and in the big European and North American fashion houses. Fashion designers try often to be individual and unique and to make something that people have never worn before. Often, though, there are certain common features that appear in fashion and that all designers have in their creations. As for example Hollander (1978) has pointed out, fashion also affects the way we perceive the human body. Even the naked body is seen through whatever is in fashion at that time. Therefore the designers have even more power. Nowadays they can concentrate people's attention to certain parts of the body and make them rush to the gym or even to the plastic surgeon, if the followers of fashion do not feel that they fit into the requirements of fashion.

'Garment' is the general name for the pieces of cloth that people wear for purposes of modesty, protection, to decorate themselves, to seduce, to show order of rank and power and for the reasons of practicality (Uotila 1994: 15-16). Hollander (1978:xiv) defines garments as complex cultural organisms that express the prevailing taste and attitudes of a society. Because garments are 'cultural organisms' they reveal a lot about culture's values. Garments can either be in fashion or not. They can communicate different messages in a society.

A1.2) " 'Fashion is a guided tour of feminine difference.' Caroline Evans & Minna Thornton"

This Evans and Thornton's saying includes two elements that are visible and important in fashion, namely otherness and femininity. Kuhn (1985:19) has

suggested that in a patriarchal culture, such as the culture currently dominating in the Western countries, women dominate images. However, men are still the “norm” and most of the representations of women connote “Otherness” or difference from the norm of patriarchy (see also for example Kuhn 1985:19, Evans and Thornton 1989:12, Modinos 1993:30) and Evans and Thornton’s quote in screen A1.2 seems to agree with this. According to, for example Walters (1995:54-56), men can also see the otherness of women as a threat to themselves.

In representations, women are often pictured as ‘feminine’. Femininity is a general label, under which the features that are considered typical of women are often grouped. Femininity is also a characteristic of women that shows women’s otherness from men. For example dictionary definitions describe feminine as: “Has qualities that are considered characteristic of women, especially in the terms of being delicate, pretty or gentle.” or: “Qualities that are considered to be feminine, especially those qualities, which are considered to be attractive to men. (Collins Cobuild 1987:526), or “Femininity. 1) The quality of being feminine, womanliness. 2) Women collectively. 3) Effeminacy” (Random House 1991:490). As these definitions show, ‘femininity’ is something that is ‘not like men’, but that at the same time is ‘pleasing, desirable or attractive to men’.

Ideals of femininity have been used to control women (Wolf 1991:3). Evans and Thornton (1989:3) have defined femininity as: “A manipulative discourse about what women are, should be or might become.” For example Schulze (1990:73) has claimed that women, who do not fit in the traditional definitions of ‘feminine’, such as lesbians or female bodybuilders, are often accused of “not being real women and wanting to be like men.” Because these women do not correspond to the traditional definitions of feminine women, men, and even other women, may find them hard to define and therefore threatening. In addition, although women’s roles in for example occupations and images may change, they still have to appear attractive and desirable (Betterton 1987 1b:20), in other words ‘feminine’. This, in my opinion, shows especially in the context of the fashion world.

Walters (1995:148) has claimed that in the representation of females, “while ‘women’ are avoided, femininity and the feminine are constantly evoked. Yet femininity is not interchangeable with women, although it is clearly a part of the construction of female identity.” Still ‘femininity’ is often used as a general term describing women. Depending on the situation in which the word femininity is used, it is understood to consist of various, sometimes even contradictory properties (see for example Williamson 1986:101, Betterton 1987 1a: 10, Rossi 1996: <http://www.medeia.com/ab/index.htm>). For example according to Brook (1999:111), femininity is often identified with the private and domestic body, although the modern theory of woman’s body as a public spectacle, available everywhere as an object of masculine look, is its antithesis. Williamson (1986:101) considers important not only the things that the images of femininity reveal, but also what they conceal.

Laiho and Leino (1988:62) have argued that femininity is constructed piece by piece out of clothes, cosmetics and hair do’s. These elements are central in the context of fashion world. They are also thought to be important elements in the world of women, although actually not all women are interested in them. Laiho and Leino have suggested that femininity is a construction. They have claimed that someone has built femininity, and that someone has the power to choose the elements that people then connect to femininity.

It is good to notice that clothes, cosmetics and hair do’s are all elements of outside appearance. In the context of fashion, appearance and also insecurity about it are usually considered to be essential parts in being a feminine woman (see for example Bordo 1993:254). Wolf (1991:176) has defined femininity as a “...code for femaleness, plus whatever a society happens to be selling”, so also to her femininity is something defined from the outside of the women themselves by, for example the culture in which they live or by the market forces. Furthermore, Wolf has implied that the consumer society attempts to keep up women’s insecurity about their outside appearance, so that they could sell women more beauty products. Therefore, as Betterton (1987 1a: 7) has also noted, the visual is important in defining femininity.

Betterton (1987 1a: 7) has defined femininity as a social process in which female sex is attributed with specific qualities and characteristics, which are seen as desirable. As a result, desire is a major part in representing women and femininity as well as a large part of fashion. The feminine qualities can be desirable to men, but also women can desire that they could possess the qualities and be more like the 'ideal' women in the images. Furthermore, Pollock (1988: 71) and Gaines (1990:1, see also Kuhn 1985:4, Laiho and Leino 1988:62) have suggested that femininity is a historically variable and ideological construction, so although the term itself always stays the same, the features connected to it may vary. However, Pollock (1988:84) has also proposed that women have power to negotiate and refashion femininity and that changes its meanings. Gaines (1990:2) has seen women's clothing as part of their self-representation. Gaines believes that there is a possibility for women to define themselves through, for example, the clothes they wear, and not just be defined from outside.

A1.3) For women fashion is both prescribed and reviled. Caroline Evans & Minna Thornton

According to Evans and Thornton's saying above, fashion is 'prescribed' and 'reviled' [sic] to women. Both words suggest that women are not active subjects in fashion, but objects and, just like in the field of art, someone else than 'the women', for example the fashion designers, has the authority and power in fashion. Betterton (1987 1a:7-10) has argued that the feminine ideal in our Western society is white, heterosexual, young, able-bodied and middle-class. According to Betterton, women are easily defined according to their appearance and relationship to men, while men are defined according to their social status, intellect and material success. (Betterton 1987)

A1.4) It is prescribed as an aesthetic packaging of the female body; it is reviled as deliberate disguise and deception. Caroline Evans & Minna Thornton

The images that appear in the Western films, advertisements and magazines can be manipulated to suit the 'ideals' even better, or to make them more 'aesthetic', which makes it even harder for women to become like the images. Fashion and glamour pictures can be improved and changed, for example with computer graphics (Wolf 1991:4,82-83,109), sometimes photographs of the model's bodies are even trimmed with scissors before they are published! (Wolf 1991:83). Still, according to Wolf, women are "trained to see themselves as cheap imitations of fashion photographs" (Wolf 1991:105), instead the other way around. Furthermore, when women resort to tricks and aids, such as make-up, push-up brassieres or even cosmetic surgery to achieve the looks required by fashion, they can easily become targets of criticism and be accused of 'deceiving'.

A1.5) Women must **'perform'** femininity, and fashion is part of that **performance**. Caroline Evans & Minna Thornton

I noticed above (p. 17-18) that femininity is an important part of fashion. I described femininity as something that is 'not like men', but that at the same time is 'pleasing, desirable or attractive to men'. This quotation (A1.5) implies that femininity is also a performance. According to Brook (1999:113), performance is "generally something constructed." Therefore performance can be compared to representations, because the representations of women that appear in the Western pictures are also subjective constructions (see p.11-12). However, the difference between representations and performance is that representations come usually from outside of the women, whereas performances are made by the women themselves. Fashion helps women in their performance. As a result, women who take part in the world of fashion are not necessarily products defined solely from outside, but they themselves can also influence in the way in which they appear and are seen. Therefore representations in the fashion world are doubly constructed. The definitions of femininity may have come from outside women, but then women have constructed themselves in their performance of femininity. Still, women can usually only construct themselves within the frame given them by the society and the fashion world.

Riviere (as quoted in Brook 1999:115-116) has also theorised that femininity is “a mask developed by women who desire to be masculine (to *have* rather than to *be* the phallus) but who want to deflect the opposition and resentment this will generate from men.” In the world of theatre, masks and disguises are something that people use in performances on stage. Riviere believes that femininity can be used as a series of acts and performances. Evans and Thornton (1989:99) have also defined femininity as surface and depth, a form of masquerade and self-display of women. Women can use masquerade to deceive, as said in the quotation A1.4 (“deliberate disguise and deception”), but at the same time women can use masquerade to protect themselves. They can use their own power and have their own say in formulating femininity.

Doane (Brook 1999:116) has also used the term masquerade defining it as a possibility for women’s agency in a world where men usually are the doers. Whereas the feminist film theory has seen women as having problems in distancing themselves from images of other women, Doane has seen masquerade as a distance of the performer from the image she is representing, using the word performer in the sense that everyday life is a performance.

A1.7) ...for **men** act and **women** appear. John Berger

According to several feminist theorists (see for example Parker and Pollock 1981:132, Brook 1999:15), women and men are often represented as hierarchical oppositions. Women are connected to such words and concepts as femininity, nature (Parker and Pollock 1981:130), consumption (Gaines 1990:15), mass culture (see for example Williamson 1986, Walters 1995:191), reading, the private and passivity (Evans and Thornton 1989:11), and are represented accordingly. Men, on the other hand, are connected to masculinity, culture (see for example Parker and Pollock 1981:130), production, especially the productive gaze (Walters 1995:57), creativity (Pollock 1988:17) writing, and activity (see for example Evans and Thornton 1989:11, Moi 1990:51, Walters 1995:23). As a result: “men act and women appear.”

Furthermore, Rossi (2001: 69) has suggested that in the Western culture there is a division between mind, which according to the definitions above equals men, and the body, equalling women. Similarly, Wilson (1990:38) has proposed that in Western Christian cultural tradition, there has been a division between the denigrated outside appearance and inner, real 'spiritual' truth. While men are connected to the use of their 'inner' mind, women are connected to the use of their 'outside' body, for example giving birth and so on. Therefore, men 'act'. Acting is doing that requires the use of your mind. It needs the subject, 'actor' who must choose and decide, for example, how and when to act. As a contrast women 'appear'. Appearing does not require conscious acting, all you have to do is to show up, so that other people can see you, or, actively look at you, to engage in the act of looking.

A1.8) **Men** look at **women**. John Berger

According to Walters (1995:51-52), John Berger was one of the first scholars interested in looking and its relation to gender in the 1970s. In his studies Berger stated that looking is connected to relations of power, access and control. Berger also claimed that the 'ideal' spectator of, for example films, was in the Western culture always male, whereas women were merely passive objects of male look and had internalised the look, so that they thought that it was the natural way of seeing.

A1.9) Women **watch** themselves being **looked at**. John Berger

Berger believed that because women have internalised the idea of looking being active and 'male', and women being the passive objects of male desire, women were objectified and males have the control of the images (Walters 1995:51-52). According to for example De Laurentis (1984:15) and Walters (1995:23), when a woman looks at the representations of other women, she becomes a spectator-subject, both an everyday object of cultural consumption as well as a maintainer

of patriarchal social relations. In the area of feminist film theory, Mulvey (1989:20) has claimed that the spectator of a film identifies with the main male protagonist and is a subject/spectator, in a sense that the spectator is both a man and he identifies with the main male protagonist in the film. Therefore, when women look at images of other women, they either have to adopt a masculine point of view to the images, or masochistically enjoy the ogling and humiliating of women (see for example Pollock 1988:85).

However, according to later research by Betterton (1987 1a:12), on one hand there are dominant modes of looking and people who do not have so much power and who are perceived as inferior, such as children, servants, and women, are subjected to surveillance and control through the way they are represented and looked at. On the other hand, however, Betterton (1987 1a:13, see also Evans and Thornton 1989:8-9) has suggested that there exist categories of image, such as advertising, fashion and women's magazines that are especially addressed to women and women are also often depicted in their imagery. Betterton has claimed that women can use these categories in creating new identities for themselves, and use the images as models in transforming themselves. Still, even if there are images addressed to women, women may easily end up in 'watching themselves being looked at', only this time by other women, so the categories addressed to women can also be used in delimiting women's potential identities.

Further, according to De Laurentis (1984), persons can occupy either feminine or masculine positions in relation to desire and looking at images. De Laurentis (1984:142) has disagreed with the assumption that masculinity can be identified with 'the look' and femininity with 'the image' or 'to-be-looked-at-ness', because she claims that they both combine in case the person looking at for example a film is woman.

A1.11) "Fashion is more than a language. **TRUE** – it communicates" Elizabeth Wilson

Some researchers, such as Roland Barthes, have defined fashion as a language, since people learn to 'read' other people's outside appearance and make judgements on other people on the basis of how they look and dress.

Also, from the start, typical to fashion was that it changed often by its nature and it required certain literacy. You need to know what is fashionable and what is not in order to be able to take part in (the discussion of) fashion (Laiho and Leino 1988:18). However, the quotation by Wilson claims that fashion is more than a language, a written or spoken text.

A1.12) It is **also** tactile, visual it is **about** touching surfaces, **colours**, shapes.
Elizabeth Wilson

As I have explained in my analysis of the text A1.7 (p. 22-23), fashion is often connected with women and outside appearance; therefore, as it is argued here, it is about 'surfaces, colours and shapes'. In this quotation A1.12 Wilson defines that fashion is also about 'tactile', 'visual' and 'touching surfaces'. If women are connected with fashion, they are the wearers of fashion and also the objects of touching and looking.

A1.13) It **embodies** the culture. Elizabeth Wilson

Fashion 'embodies the culture', because it is such a major part of culture. As for example Hollander (1978) has noticed, fashion defines the ideal body shape in a culture and as a result affects also other images and how people are represented in them.

A1.15) Fashion – **as performance art** -acts **as a vehicle** for this ambivalence;
Elizabeth Wilson

As I have said above in the analysis of text A1.5 (p. 22), fashion can be a masquerade or a performance. It can be both verbal and visual communication to other people. Fashion is ambivalent, because it is so many-sided and always in the process of change.

A1.16) the **daring** of fashion speaks **dread** as well as **desire**; Elizabeth Wilson

Again, this quotation by Wilson may refer to the otherness of women from a masculine viewpoint, therefore 'dread' and, at the same time, if men are seen as spectators of images, male 'desire' towards women and female desire to become and be like the 'model' women in images.

Gaines (1990:21) has claimed that because male artists have perceived the female body as a threat in the Western imagery, it has in the images been transmuted to something else. Gaines (1990:13) has also claimed that our consumer culture's body ideal that is so 'desired' by both men and women, can be almost impossible to achieve. Therefore some women may also see it as a threat to themselves.

A1.17) the **shell** of chic, the **aura** of glamour, always **hides** a wound. Elizabeth Wilson

If this sentence is read after A1.16, the spectator-subject can connect the words 'chic' and 'glamour' to desire and the word 'wound' to dread. This sentence can also be read in connection with A1.4, in which fashion was seen as 'disguise' and 'deception', which are both used to hide or to cover something else.

Borzello et al. (1985:12) have discussed the term glamour, which according to them is in our culture applied almost exclusively to women. They define it as: "a sense of deceptive fascination, of groomed beauty, of charm enhanced by means of illusion" (Borzello et al. 1985:12.). Glamour pictures are usually not pornographic. Whereas masquerade of fashion can come from the women themselves, glamour is designed and defined from outside women. Glamour pictures can present for example movie stars or they can appear in fashion magazines. However according to Borzello et al. (1985:14), glamour pictures often dehumanise women, represent them as "automations" or "living dolls", and as a result 'hide a wound'. The fascination of glamour images hides the fact that they do not always picture women in a respectful way.

Borzello et al. (1985) suggest that glamour pictures are powerful, because they arouse desire in their spectator. The spectator wants to become as perfect as the images, or because in the images beauty is depicted as idealised and unattainable. (Borzello et al. 1985.)

Salo (*Helsingin Sanomat* 14.3.2001: B7) has claimed that in the 1990s there has been a change in the style of the fashion pictures. They have changed from glamour to disgustingly realistic, risky and voyeuristic, often featuring adolescent girls in sexy postures and outfits. There has also been a change in the image of women.¹ In the 1980s women were pictured strong, with huge pads on their shoulders, whereas the 1990s featured child-like women, frail waif-models like Kate Moss. (*Helsingin Sanomat* 14.3.2001: B7.) As a contrast, Evans and Thornton (1989:98) have noted that the fashion models of the 1960s and the 1980s have also been very young, which in their opinion was an indicator of the rejection of mature female body and an evidence of infantilised and infantilising (sic) nature of fashion.

A1.19) it's true: Men *do* dominate women's fashion. Valerie Steele

Parker and Pollock (1981) have argued that there exist powerful myths about the artist in the Western society. One of the myths is that an artist is a creator of unique and valuable objects (Nochlin 1988:17, 153-154). Another myth is that art is created by men (Parker and Pollock 1981:6, Nochlin 1988:142). This assumption can still be seen in, for example art history, a field of study that has developed from the 18th century onwards. Women are identified with procreation, whereas men are identified with cultural creativity and seen as makers and

¹ According to Stenius (2001) most of the current advertising and images are aimed at women, and they use irony to reveal the traditional expectations directed to women. Contemporary advertisements can also feature older women or mix traditional gender roles. The Finnish female image of advertisements, and most likely also fashion images, differs from, for example, the image of women appearing in the media of the other European countries. According to Kuusamo (as quoted by Stenius 2001:32), advertisements follow the trends of art and photography and the image of women in the advertisements of today is multiple. Women of contemporary advertisements have taken over masculine roles, whereas men have become softer. (*Kotiliesi* 7. April 6th 2001: 31-33) However, the images and ideals used in AB have probably been taken from the fashions of the 1980s and 90s, since AB was completed in 1996.

subjects (see also De Laurentis 1984:35). It is also thought that art is a representation of an [male] artist's desire (De Laurentis 1984:74). According to Parker and Pollock (1981), in the art world there exists a "feminine stereotype" of "weak femininity", which is defined as the "product of patriarchal culture which constructs male dominance through the significance it attaches to sexual difference." (Parker and Pollock 1981:7). The feminine stereotype of weak femininity implies that all men are inherently strong because of their gender and all women inherently weak. In this kind of society, all activities by women are seen as an antithesis of cultural creativity.

Up to the Renaissance, women were able to have an equal training in handicraft professions. However, Renaissance brought with it a new notion of art, dividing art into arts and lesser crafts and a new concept: an artist. This concept of the artist was a male genius (Parker and Pollock 1981:106, see also Pollock 1988:11, 159). In the art world and in the society there evolved a distinction between the professional and the amateur, as well as the public and the private. According to Pollock (1988:6), beautiful objects expressed the genius of their author. The status of an artwork was also tied to the status of its maker (Parker and Pollock 1981:68). Contemporary Western conventions of art and picture making and perceiving rely heavily on the heritage of the Renaissance.

According to Nochlin (1988:156), there is an absence of women in the history of art. The absence is thought to be a result of women's lack of artistic creative ability, "the golden nugget of artistic genius". Parker and Pollock (1981:45) have suggested that there is not only an absence of women artists in the history of art, but that women were and still are seen as lesser talents and not as historically significant as men. The ideology of male dominance naturalised itself, according to Parker and Pollock (1981:80) in the 20th century.

Women's role was to become the muse, a source of artistic inspiration. Women became the objects of art instead of creators of art (see for example Nochlin 1988:2,17). Women were, for example, excluded from painting a life model, which was considered at the time crucial practice for an artist. Therefore

women were confined to 'lesser' forms of art, such as to crafts that in the art world were considered decorative and requiring only manual skills.

A1.20) *Of famous 20th century fashion designers 65% are male 35% are female.*

In the 18th and 19th century there evolved an ideology of femininity in the Western world (Parker and Pollock 1981:58). It was considered acceptable for leisured middle-class women to do needlework, which shows still in a feminine stereotype of sewing women. However, the needlework of middle-class women was not considered creative or powerful, but mainly just an appropriate way to pass time and a handy skill to know when you became a mother and a homemaker.

Industrialization and the mass production of clothes in the 19th century needed a lot of cheap labour and many lower class women started working in textile factories and as dressmakers, whereas men continued their work as independent artisans and later became fashion designers (Laiho and Leino 1988:20). The growth of mass production deepened the division of cheap, easily reproduced clothes and expensive hand made unique pieces of clothing, which later became known as 'haute couture' garments. (Laiho and Leino 1988: 31.)

A1.22) Do men design clothes that are more "flattering" to women?

As I mentioned in my analysis of A1.7-A1.9 (p. 22-24), according to some researchers in the Western culture men are often seen as the spectators to whom images are directed. Also, as pointed out above (p. 27-28) men are in the Western culture seen as artists and creators and there are more male than female fashion designers. Therefore it can be possible that men can "design clothes that are more 'flattering' to women", since the image of women in our culture aims at pleasing men and men know what kind of clothes can please them, what kind of clothes make women 'flattering' in their eyes. According to the conventions of our culture, men are also seen to have more talent than women to design 'flattering' clothes.

A1.23) Do women dress to please men?

If the clothes designed by the fashion designers are aimed at pleasing men and men are the primary spectators of images, then women who want to wear fashion creations and follow fashion also want to please men.

A1.24) Women designers tend to be less “objective” because they design for themselves. Oscar de la Renta

This comment generalises all women into the same group. It also refers to the closeness of women to their own images. It implies that if women design to other women, they tend to start following their own desires, not to think what might be best for their clients. However, art is thought of being a representation of male artist’s desire. In A1.23 Liulia wonders: “Do women dress to please men?” AB’s part “Designers” introduces four female fashion designers: Gabrielle ‘Coco’ Chanel, Donna Karan, Sonia Rykiel and Vivienne Westwood. According to the female fashion designers, at least two out of four introduced, Rykiel and Karan, started designing or designed clothes for themselves. Rykiel (Boyd Davis: “*Sonia Rykiel*” www.fashionwindows.com/fashion_review/sonia_rykiel, printed on 01.03.2002) did not have any formal training as a fashion designer. She started designing clothes first to herself in the 1960s, because she was pregnant and could not find any clothes she liked. Karan’s (www.donnakaran.com, printed 01.03.2002) leading idea was to design only clothes and accessories she would wear herself. So Rykiel and Karan’s main aim was not to ‘please men’, but to find clothes that suited their bodies and their individual personalities. Men may know how to design clothes that please men, but when it comes to comfortable maternity clothes, they maybe have less interest and experience than some of the female designers.

Chanel and Westwood attempted to give women power and independence through their designs. For example, in her designs for women Chanel aimed at conveying power and independence (Evans and Thornton 1989: 123). Vivienne

Westwood became famous in the 1970s as a punk-designer. Her ready to wear, high fashion designs included ‘the seminal bondage –collection’, inspired by pornography, especially sado-masochist sexual paraphernalia. She also reworked clothes to design ‘anti-fashion’. However, Chanel and Westwood’s designs might also please men in the process.

A1.25) *Men* get easier entrée to the field because of prejudice toward women.
Dianne T. Meranus

According to Hollander (1978:351), the concept of the dress designer as an original genius, much like the painter-creator before, was invented by the French in the 19th century. Before, fine clothes were connected to the taste of their wearer, who was usually a high rank aristocrat. Now it was thought that the designer was totally responsible for his creations, and he was seen as a prophet, a hero, subject to his own private and aesthetic laws.² Also, the rise of the bourgeois class speeded the use of fashion in the 19th century. Idle bourgeois women spent their time in department stores, and fashion and women became to be understood to belong together (Laiho and Leino 1988:21-23). Laiho and Leino (1988:32) give the title of the first fashion designer to Frenchman Charles Worth (1826-1895). He for example organized the first fashion show and defined himself as an artist.

Parker and Pollock (1981:116) have claimed that in the images of women made by male artists, the man can be absent, but what is present, is “his speech, his view, his position of dominance, which the images signify.” Artist is the user of the language of his culture and he cannot exist outside of it.

B) DESIGNERS

GAULTIER RYKIEL YVESSAINTLAURENT c {inside a circle=Chanel}
VERSACE KARL LAGERFELD DONNA KARAN VIVIENNE WESTWOOD
CALVIN KLEIN

² Hollander (1978) talks about masculine “he” when she talks about artists in her research; compare Parker and Pollock’s (1992) theory that art is seen as created by men.

This screen begins the part “Designers” of “Fashion, designers”. It consists of the names of nine world famous fashion designers from France, United Kingdom and the United States. Five of the designers are men and four women, which may refer to the fact that men dominate women’s fashion, as already pointed out above (A1.19, on p. 27-29).

Many designers use their names as brand names in the clothes they have designed. The designer names that are sown in the labels of garments carry a certain authority and prestige.

B1.1) [the ideal woman] “the daughter of the one who made women’s lib “
{Jean-Paul Gaultier}

This comment by Gaultier is ambiguous, because it can be interpreted in multiple ways. On one hand Gaultier can be understood saying that the ideal woman is a daughter of a feminist. She has learned her mother’s principles from when she was a baby and realizes them in her life. On the other hand, the comment can imply that children tend to question their parents ideals. Therefore, the ideal woman can also be one that questions the ideology of women’s liberation movement and maybe makes her own interpretation of them, or, renounces them altogether.

B1.2) [ideal of the liberated woman] “**She knows her power**, but she uses it **in a determined way**, with a jerk and a twist” I HATE THE IMAGE OF SERVILITY {Jean-Paul Gaultier}

This Gaultier’s comment makes its reader wonder, whether it should be read in connection with the quotation in B1.1. The comment “I hate the image of servility” seems to imply that Gaultier thinks that women should stand up for themselves and not just adopt the role of a caring daughter, wife and mother that is often offered to them. However, if the reader of this comment reads it after B1.1, the comment seems to refer to B1.1. As a result, the reader can think that the women, who made the women’s liberation movement, were either somehow ‘servile’ or did not use the power they succeeded to gain in a determined way.

Either one of these comments can be read as criticism towards the women who made the women's liberation movement.

B1.3) **A lot of** young girls dress up like prostitutes but **inside** they may be pure, puritan, strict and reserved. CODES ARE CHANGING {Jean-Paul Gaultier}

Because this comment is taken out of its original context, it is hard to tell whether Gaultier is trying to promote traditional Christian religious and middle-class Western values that young girls should be pure, puritan, strict and reserved, or if he is trying to encourage young girls to dress more like 'prostitutes', like spectacles that men can look and desire.

Gaultier can also try to make the audience of fashion aware that maybe it is not possible to interpret fashion through the old theories of the look. Maybe fashion has really changed and the subjects and spectators are not men anymore. As a result it can be possible for women, or young girls even, to look at images as well as to experiment, to masquerade and play with clothes and the images they create and no one actually knows what the women are like underneath of their outside appearance. So, people should not take for granted that certain looks can be connected with certain people or behavior.

B2.1) Sonia Rykiel. I hate the word feminine!

I have already explained the different meanings that can be connected to the word 'feminine' above (pages 18-20). My summary of the definitions of 'feminine' was that it was 'not like men', but 'pleasing, desirable and attractive to men'. However Rykiel states that she hates the word, which can make the comment's spectator wonder could Rykiel be supporting feminist ideals? Or maybe Rykiel is implying with this comment that she resists the traditional definition of femininity.

B2.2) "I mean, there is **a woman** and **a man** and when I say 'woman', it suggests all that is **radiant**, tender, **fascinating**, gentle, **demoniac**, exaggerated!"

Above (p. 19) I also mentioned that the properties connected with femininity can often be controversial. In “Fashion, designers”, femininity is referred to in the texts of A1.2, A1.5 and B2.1-2. In these texts femininity is described of being ‘different’, something that women must perform and, in the words of fashion designer Rykiel: something connected to the word ‘women’ that ”suggests all that is **radiant**, tender, **fascinating**, gentle, **demoniac**, exaggerated!” (emphasis in original). First of all, the words used in the list sound a bit contradictory. For example, the words ‘gentle’ and ‘demoniac’ are not usually used in connection with each other. Because most women do probably not possess all the qualities in the list, the list is something women in Rykiel’s opinion should be or might become. In the light of Rykiel’s comment B2.1 “I hate the word feminine”, she might think that the list of qualities is too much to expect from ordinary, or any, women. She might also think that the word ‘feminine’ and the list connected to it aim at controlling women, especially when the word ‘man’ does not carry any such additional connotations. In contrast, Rykiel’s comment could imply that to her, the word ‘woman’ means something plural and complex and even conflicting. Rykiel might also think that there is no such thing as one form of femininity, just like there is not only one form of feminism, but many different forms.

B3.1) When a dress of *Yves Saint Laurent’s* appears in a salon, or on television we cry of joy. For the dress we had *never* dreamed of is there, and it’s *just* the one we were waiting for, and *just* that year. MargueriteDuras

B3.2) When a dress of *Yves Saint Laurent’s* appears in a salon, or on television we cry of joy. For the dress we had *never* dreamed of is there, and it’s *just* the one we were waiting for, and *just* that year. We are the *desert* that was waiting for the dress, and thus each day we wait for the moment of *truth*. MargueriteDuras

In B3.1 and B3.2 Saint Laurent is seen as an artist creator: “For the dress we had *never* dreamed of is there, and it’s *just* the one we were waiting for, and *just* that year. “ He is described as designing unique objects. When Duras talks about ‘we’ she can refer to the audience of fashion, both to men and women. However, since

she herself is a woman, and women are usually seen as the main target group of fashion, the reader of this sentence can understand that she talks about women in general, herself included. Furthermore, there are words such as ‘cry’, which is very emotional and ‘dress’, which can be connected to women. Therefore, women are represented through this comment as passive receivers of active artist-creators designing skills. However, Duras’ comment is so packed with words praising Saint Laurent that the comment’s reader may think that there are some humorous, or even ironic, meanings in the words. The exaggerated words seem to ridicule the fashion designer, but also at the same time his female audience.

Although the quotation does not acknowledge it, B3.1 and B3.2 could also be parts of Duras’ novels. Marguerite Duras (www.kirjasto.sci.fi/duras.htm) was a French author whose favourite themes included sexual desire, love, death and memory. She also wrote about the aimlessness of people’s lives. Duras has also been credited by feminists of using language in a way that embodies feminine writing. Knowing about Duras’ background can also make the reader think that maybe there is irony in her words. Duras seems to refer to all women by using the word “we” and use herself as the representative of all women.

B3.3) I design classic shapes for women so that they feel *the same confidence* in their clothes as men do in their suits. YvesSaintLaurent

Clothes are connected with power, and so are the suits that men wear (see for example Franck 1997:40,89). As I have mentioned above, (p. 22-23), often women who have wanted to gain power and credibility, have tried to ‘masquerade’ themselves in a ‘masculine disguise’. As Parker and Pollock (1981:7) have claimed: “The woman of genius does not exist, and when she does, she is a man.” Silverman (1986:139) has stated that the history of Western fashion is about spectacular display. Complicated and ornate dresses are now connected to women, but they were previously a class rather than a gender issue. During for example Baroque or Rococo times men as well as women could wear a wig, colourful clothes, lace, and a lot of make-up. Wealth was associated with leisure time and lavish dress. However, the “respectable suit” became the

conventional male outfit, “a harmonizing and homogenizing uniform”, in the 18th century, when, with the growth of the industrialism, it was considered acceptable for even men of the higher classes to work in management positions (Silverman 1986:141). As a result, it became a woman’s role to show her father or husband’s wealth. (Silverman 1986). Wilson (1990:29) connects the association of fashion to women in the 19th century. According to Wilson, men’s clothes have since been seen, inaccurately, as unchanging.

In B3.3, Saint Laurent tells that he designs “... classic shapes for women so that they feel the same confidence in their clothes as men do in their suits.” His comment suggests that men do not need new fashion, since they can always wear a suit, whereas women need fashion. Furthermore, women do not only need fashion, because in our culture they are connected to fashion, but also because wearing fashion enables women to feel confident, and confidence is something, Saint Laurent implies, that women do not normally possess.

B4.1) Men make dresses [**Coco Chanel**] in which one can’t move.

Gabrielle ‘Coco’ Chanel, became a fashion designer, ‘haute couturier’ in the Paris of the 1920s. According to Evans and Thornton (1989:110), couture offered possibilities to women in the times, when women were exempt from the practice of the high arts and in the 1920s and 1930s there were slightly more female than male couturiers. Chanel took inspiration from men’s clothes, because she thought that the way femininity was expressed equalled triviality (Evans and Thornton 1989: 123) and she did not like the ways in which women’s clothes were often designed as jokes or entertainment.

B4.2) C {inside a circle} My genius [**Coco Chanel**] was to liberate women.

B4.3) C {turns into Chanel- logo, with two c’s that are each other’s mirror images} My genius [**Coco Chanel**] was to liberate women.

As noticed above (p. 27-29), there is a myth of masculine artist-creator in the Western culture. However, in the quotes B4.2 and B4.3 Chanel is actively resisting that definition and calling herself a genius. She not only sees herself as an active creator, she also has the skill and power to ‘liberate women’. Her own trademark, the ‘C’ standing for Chanel is a sign of her independence.

B4.4) L’Elegance [**Coco Chanel**] c’est moi.

B4.5) Chanel always dressed [**like the strong independent male**] she has dreamed of being. Salvador Dali

Franck (1997:38) tells that men often dress in a homogenic way, according to a group they belong to and according to the democratic ideals of equality that formed during the 19th century. Women in high positions have assumed the masculine model in both their behaviour and in the way they dress, their dress communicating “strict control” (Franck 1997:40). Also, women wanting to ‘liberate’ themselves from the prevailing conventions of the ways in which a woman should dress have often resorted to masculine type of dressing (Franck 1997:89). Dali’s comment appears to be light and humorous, but beneath he is implying that the positive meaning that the words ‘strong’ and ‘independent’ carry with them in our culture are male qualities and no matter how Chanel tries to dress like men, in reality she can only ‘dream’ of possessing the rights and properties of men. So, not only men have power in the Western society, even the clothes they wear have adopted some connotations that are often connected with men. Also, Dali was a great artist and Chanel’s contemporary. Dali became an artist during a time when it was easy for a man to study arts, but not for a woman. Therefore women became clothes designers, because the field of clothes offered them easier access to become artists and creators than the field of ‘high arts’, such as painting. As a result, Dali’s words may have a hint of truth in them, since if Chanel had been born a man, she might have been able to pursue a career in any field of arts.

Furthermore, for example Brook (1999:98) has suggested that: “For women to succeed in any discipline or organisation, we must to some extent engage in a drag act that mimics both that imaginary male and his beliefs about femininity.” Also Pollock (1988:35) has proposed that women’s ‘Otherness’ from men leads to that women’s “freedom lies in becoming like a man.” Women who want to succeed have to disguise or ‘masquerade’ themselves. They either dress like they think men would like ‘feminine women’ to dress, so as not to appear so threatening to men, or dress in a masculine way to blend in with the male leaders. According to Evans and Thornton (1989: 123), also Chanel used elements from men’s clothes in her designs to give women more power and credibility.

B5.1) GIANNI VERSACE. I think all the parts of a woman can be sexy if they are well highlighted.

In B5.1-5.2 Versace’s comments show that the designer has the power to make women appear sexy. Versace implies that women themselves, or their ‘parts’ are not inherently sexy, or capable of being the subjects of sexiness. It takes the skills of an artist-designer to highlight right parts in a woman, to make them appear sexy. With the skills of designer, even the ‘not so attractive’ women can be made to look sexy, therefore Versace’s comment reveals his power as a designer and the power of clothes to transform women.

B5.2) GIANNI VERSACE. I often fall in love with hips, breasts, or legs.

Kuhn (1985:4) has defined femininity as a social construction (see also Laiho and Leino 1988:62, Rossi 1996 <http://www.medeia.com/ab/index.htm>, printed 22.02.2001). According to Kuhn (1985:38-39), because femininity is constructed, some body parts, such as breasts and buttocks, are marked in our culture as feminine. The highlighting same parts of women in magazines and pictures mark women as ‘different’ and ‘non-male’, and as said above (p. 17-18) ‘the Other’ (see for example Evans and Thornton 1989:12). Kuhn suggests that representing women as bodily parts gives a message that sexuality equals femininity, and

femininity can be understood by studying its outer marks. Pictures of women's bodies are often motivated or justified by the notions of 'glamour' or 'art'. When pictures of women's body parts appear everywhere, they become naturalised, and people start to think that that is the way they are supposed to be seen.

When B5.1 and B5.2 are read in a sequence, Versace seems to be saying that with his artistic skill, all parts of a woman can be sexy, but that he prefers to highlight only certain parts of women, such as hips, breasts and legs, which are also traditionally connected to women. Therefore, he does not seem to want to change the way women are seen in our society.

Furthermore, when Versace's comments (B5.1, B5.2) are read separately, taken out of their original contexts, they sound humorous, even fetishist. The spectator-user of AB may start to wonder what is he talking about? Versace seems to be thinking of women as parts. Why should women be divided in parts in that way and why should the parts then be thought of as sexy? Does Versace not fall in love with women, but only parts of women? Versace's comments seem to imply that he sees women as material that he as an artist-creator can mould to suit his purposes when he makes his works of art.

B6.1) It's ridiculous. It's thanks to MONSTROSITIES that we can *invent* something. Karl Lagerfeld

B6.2) *Vulgarity* is not disturbing when people are young. But as the years pass, people start to do things they shouldn't. Karl Lagerfeld

In B6.2 Lagerfeld comments on what is appropriate in fashion. His comment implies that it is suitable for young people to do or wear almost anything, whereas age brings limitations. As a fashion designer, he has the power and authority to express his opinion and he expects that people listen to him. For example Brook (1999:82) has claimed that, for women, the "choices offered by appearance are heavily policed and deviance is punished." Nowadays, it seems that the choices offered by appearance require women to look young and Lagerfeld's comment seems to be idolizing youth as well (see for example p.20). When B6.1 and B6.2 are read in a sequence, the 'vulgarity' in B6.2 seems to be referring to

‘monstrosities’ in B6.1. Both old and young consumers of fashion can be guilty of monstrosities in fashion, but when young people do it Lagerfeld sees it as inspiring and when old people do it, he sees it as vulgar.

B7.1) DONNAKARAN recognized that working women want clothes that fit.
the Face

B7.2) Hang on, how come no one else noticed? the Face

B7.1 and B7.2 state the fact that the target audience of fashion are the young, thin, women with busy social lives, although in reality, the people who more likely can afford to buy haute couture fashion are somewhat older career women. Furthermore, many fashion designers aim their creations to be sexy, stunning, different or creative, but usually not so practical.

B7.3) DONNA KARAN’S professional rise has a lot to do with the current rise of “forty-something” female executives, like herself, who want to look pulled-together but not prim. Jenny Capitan

This B7.3 can be compared to A1.24 (p. 30-31) that women designers tend to design first of all for themselves, and only then to other women. The words ‘pulled-together’ and especially ‘prim’ seem not to refer to glamour and creativity, but to ordinariness and every day life, the word ‘prim’ even to somewhat lack of taste. At the same time they seem to decrease and belittle the value of Karan as a ‘forty-something’ designer and her ‘ordinary’ clients. In the age of idolising youth, being a ‘forty-something’ is not very appealing.

B8.1) IN ORDER TO MAKE PEOPLE TO THINK YOU DO HAVE TO
EMOTIONALLY HURT THEM IN SOME WAY. Vivienne Westwood

With this comment Westwood may refer to that she uses pornographic elements in her designs that are traditionally considered to be elements that objectify women and make them spectacles and that may hurt some women’s feelings. However, Westwood attempts to use them in an eccentric way that gives women

power to choose themselves what they wear and how they want to be seen and understood. Still, saying that you have to hurt people sounds a little extreme.

With this comment Westwood is also displaying her power as a designer and creator, since she has the power ‘to make people think’ as well as ‘to hurt people’.

B8.2) YOU HAVE TO DESTROY TO CREATE. Vivienne Westwood

Destroying is an active and powerful word. Also the word ‘create’ refers that Westwood knows her skills and thinks of herself as an artist-creator. Maybe Westwood is trying to say that by using controversial elements in her designs and ‘emotionally hurting’ people, she can be able to destroy the old female image and to create a new one.

B8.3) CLOTHES ARE THE ONLY WAY MOST PEOPLE CAN EXPRESS THEMSELVES. Vivienne Westwood

Although Westwood herself is an artist-creator, her comment keeps up the distinction between ordinary people and the artists, who are fortunate exceptions from the ordinary people. Furthermore, if haute couture clothes are usually designed for women, and women are usually thought to be interested in clothes, then this comment implies that ‘most people’ is the same as ‘women’ and clothes are the only way women can express themselves. As a result, the quotation reinforces the idea of women as passive and as persons who cannot express themselves with the use of art. Taken out of its original context, which might for example, have been an interview, Westwood’s comment sounds humorous and even a little absurd. The spectator-user who reads this comment can start to wonder whether clothes and the outside appearance really are the only way for people to express themselves? Can people not express themselves with the use of written or spoken language?

B8.4) WOMEN ARE THE MOST CONSERVATIVE SECTION OF SOCIETY, THEY WILL NOT RISK ANYTHING. Vivienne Westwood

On one hand Westwood refers to women as if she was not one of them. The spectator-user gets an impression that Westwood wants to exclude herself from the 'conservative' and 'non-risking' women and, instead, include herself to some other group, such as the group of male designers. However, on the other hand, Westwood can be saying that now, women, herself included, might be 'conservative' and 'non-risking' or that our society wants to see them and keep them that way, but that with her designs she wants to change the situation.

B8.5) SEX IS THE THING THAT BUGS ENGLISH PEOPLE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, SO THAT'S WHERE I ATTACK... Vivienne Westwood

B8.6) I'D MUCH RATHER PROMOTE OR DEFEND HOMOSEXUALS THAN WOMEN, BECAUSE THEY'VE CONTRIBUTED ... MUCH MORE TO OUR SOCIETY. Vivienne Westwood

Nochlin (1988:153) has pointed out that in the history of Western art, great artists are thought to possess "Genius". According to Nochlin (1988:150-152) it is due to Western institutions and education that women do not even see themselves as equal creator subjects to men. Parker and Pollock (1981) have seen language as a system of signs and meanings produced by the positions of a speaker and receiver. In the world of fashion, especially when we are talking about fashion designers and their clients, the positions of a speaker and receiver are that fashion designers are the speakers. They have an authority to define what is fashionable at a time or to change the prevalent fashion. Their clients, individual people and the fashion markets are the receivers. However, as the artists are still more often men than women, the speakers in the fashion world are also more likely men than women, and the receivers are women. For example in B8.6 Vivienne Westwood is quoted of saying "I'd much rather promote or defend homosexuals than women because they've contributed ... much more to our society." Westwood speaks here like she wants to think of herself as something exceptional, something more than just an ordinary woman, and to include herself in the group of artist-creator designers, outside ordinary women. However, at the same time she reveals that she has

internalised the way our society sees women, and does not see the other women as equal creators or ‘contributors’ to men.

Westwood talks about homosexuals and in the context of fashion she can be interpreted of talking about many male fashion designers, because several of them actually are homosexuals. Out of the five male fashion designers featured in AB at least Gianni Versace (Richmond, www.365gay.com/lifestylechannel/intime/months/01-january/versace.htm printed 04.03.2002), Yves Saint Laurent (www.hellomagazine.com/profiles/yves_home.eol.ca/~lefirme3/designers_history/yves_stlaurent.htm printed 04.03.2002) and Karl Lagerfeld (www.hellomagazine.com/profiles/karllagerfeld printed 04.03.2002) are known homosexuals. Westwood seems to want to relate herself to the group of ‘fashion designers’ rather than the group of ‘women’. However, this comment is controversial in comparison to the comment A 1.22 (p.29) in which it was asked: “Do men design clothes that are more ‘flattering’ to women?” Above (p. 31) I referred to the theory that in our culture men are seen as spectators of images and the purpose of images is that men desire them. This desire refers to heterosexual desire. However, although the majority of fashion designers are men, many of the male fashion designers are actually homosexuals. This questions the idea that male designers design clothes only with the goal of masculine pleasure and desire in mind. This comment shows also how people in our culture have internalised the idea of men as artists and creators, since, no matter what their sexual orientation, men are still more appreciated as creators than women.

In addition, for example Nochlin (1988:152) has claimed that the few female designers who have managed to succeed and achieve the position of creators alongside the male designers: “those who have privileges inevitable hold on to them, and hold tight”. In her comment B 8.6 Westwood is saying that more men, than women possess the creative genius, the power to contribute to our society. However, at the same time she wants to include herself in the group of creators. Her comment gives the impression that she herself is more special because she has managed to succeed in something that other women have failed. Because she thinks not many women have the power to create, she seems to say

that she does not appreciate other women. As a result, she, just like Chanel in B4.5, she seems to want to associate herself with the male designers and to 'hold on to her privileges'.

C) Part GARMENT

C1.2) ...the surface of sexual display functioned as a kind of "TOUCH ME NOT" armour, with voyeurism replacing actual sexual contact, Elizabeth Wilson

Male and female fashion was differentiated in the 19th century. After that, fashion was connected with feminine fickleness and sexual power (Hollander 1978:360) as well as with vanity, frivolity and triviality (Evans and Thornton 1989:xii). The middle class ideal fashion stressed propriety, decency and 'good taste' (Laiho and Leino 1988:26), although middle-class women also represented their husband's or father's wealth and good-taste. Because people appreciated decency but at the same time wanted to show off women as signs of wealth, the current way of looking started to developed. As pointed out above (see for example p.24-26), looking was seen as an expression of male desire. However, looking was also voyeuristic, since the idea of an accepted way of looking was to 'look, not touch'.

C1.3) Clothes act as an extension of self and body; in a very immediate way they represent culture... Elizabeth Wilson

C1.4) Clothing and other kind of ornamentation make human body culturally visible. Kaja Silverman

C1.5) Clothes don't maketh the man, but they certainly maketh the woman.
Laura Craik

As noted in connection with, for example B3.3 (p. 35), the style of male 'uniform', the suit, changes very slowly, whereas the female fashion changes almost every new season. Also, men are usually judged according to what they do, women what they consume, wear and how they look (see for example p.22-23). Silverman (1986:147) has also theorised that clothes are markers of sexual differences, and that sexual difference has become the primary marker of power,

privilege and authority. Therefore, in modern Western culture class distinctions have become less obvious than gender distinctions. For example, men of different social class, do not necessary differ much from each other, but men and women, even if they belong to a same class, do. Silverman has called the distinction “The Great Visual Divide” (Silverman as cited in Modleski 1986:147).

Silverman (1986:145) has also argued that dressing is seen as a necessary condition for subjectivity, of individuality and agency. Then, although in our culture women are not traditionally seen as subjects, it is maybe possible for women to become subjects through the clothes they wear. Also, when Hollander (1978:xv) and Uotila (1994:29) have seen dressing as a form of picture making, women can also become artists, creators and picture makers through the clothes they wear. Dressing as picture making might not be what we understand to be art in its traditional sense, but according to art history, women have not traditionally been seen as artists, either.

C1.6) All fashion is tyranny, but babe fashion - the act of squeezing into a teensy pink T-shirt and micro mini - is especially cruel. Laura Craik

In this quotation, Craik calls fashion ‘tyranny’. Fashion can be thought of ‘tyranny’, because it sets ideals that people then try to achieve. It also gives measurements of clothes, such as long or short sleeves or long or short length of skirt, which do not necessarily suit all body shapes. Trying to be like the ideal set by fashion can be difficult. Craik also suggests that fashion is ‘cruel’. When fashion idealises certain kind of features of the body, the representatives of fashion often try to ridicule the people who cannot achieve the requirements, such as Lagerfeld in B6.2.

To Bordo (1993:255), fashion aims at racial and gender normalisation. Fashion sets the ideal and then tries to make everyone to look like the ideal. At the moment, the ideal appearances are the Caucasian standards of beauty that men and women from several different cultures and backgrounds aspire to (see also Betterton 1987 a1:7-10). Women’s fashion is often trivialised and women’s values are called superficial (Bordo 1993:253). When women are not happy with

themselves they are denigrated, and women's unhappiness is thought to be a result of female nature. Bordo (1993:254) has written about the "general tyranny of fashion". As argued above, (see for example p. 17-18), in magazines and advertisements fashion is often presented as sexy and attractive 'Otherness' that can be achieved through make-up and clothes. In reality, though, the aim of fashion is not to transform, but to normalize, to make all women want to appear in a way that is desirable to men, or as Laiho and Leino (1988:69) put it, standardize, subjects. 'Normalizing', trying to make all women to fit in the same mould, makes women seem more controlled and therefore less threatening. Fashion ideals vary historically, racially and along class and other lines, and fashion itself is often seen as arbitrary and without meaning. (Bordo 1993: 250-254.) Furthermore as Hollander (1978) has noticed, what is currently fashionable is in our culture also seen as normal. For example Franck (1997:21) has claimed that when a person strives for the outside appearance that is seen as ideal in his or her culture, it increases his or her social esteem and makes people feel good about themselves.

Fashion establishes models (Noro 1991:94). During each period there are divergent ideals, for example the concept of the ideal body changes. Hollander (1978:345) has used the term "tyranny of fashion" in a sense that in spite of our age of visual pluralism, it is still not possible to wear anything we like. If fashion is normalisation and the ideal of fashion are the Caucasian standards of beauty, which, at the moment are young, fit and white, then fashion indeed is restrictive 'tyranny'. This comment makes the spectator-user wonder what makes women follow fashion, although it at times can be cruel and humiliating, sometimes even dangerous. For example if sun tan is in fashion, many 'fashionable' women want to get it, although it means an increasing risk of skin cancer. If micro-mini is in fashion, you have to buy it and squeeze into it, although it does not make you look any younger, thinner or fitter, but merely ridiculous. Are women so desperately after the "social and communal acceptance" (Laiho and Leino 1988:7) that fashion can offer?

C1.7) Dressing like a dozy 12-year-old means you're likely to be treated as one. Laura Craik

As suggested above (see for example p.21-22) women can use fashion as masquerade, to take on different roles with the aid of fashion. However, in our culture, a person's outside appearance is still often thought to represent what he or she is like from the inside. Again, in our culture women are judged more on the basis of their outside appearance than men. In our society fashion is a form of culture addressed mainly to women³, and women can read the fashion pictures for the clothes in the pictures, and also for the images themselves (Evans and Thornton 1989:82). Women can use images as ideals, but also as images that are understood of being 'not true'. (Evans and Thornton 1989:72.) However, if women dress in a way that is not appropriate to the situation or makes them look that they do not take themselves seriously, it can affect in the way other people see them and what kind of judgements other people make of them. Therefore, even though our culture may idolise youth, if you are an adult, but you dress like a teenager, you will be treated like you are not an adult and capable of taking responsibility of yourself.

C1.8) VALUE SYSTEMS ARE INEVITABLY EMBODIED IN OUR DRESS. Elizabeth Wilson

This comment sums up the comments C1.6 and C1.7 about peoples' outside appearance and what kind of values are connected to it in our culture.

C1.9) A garment can function either as a fetish or as a transitional object.
Juha Siltala

Walters (1995:54, see also Winship 1987:25) has defined fetishism as: "sexualisation of women's bodies or parts of their bodies" that has happened as a result of the threat of otherness or castration. Also garments can represent parts of

³ Traditional perceptions and ideas of being male and female live in cultural products (Laiho and Leino 1988:61). However, nowadays fashion is not just for women. Due to the need of more markets for fashion products, men have been taken in the marketing of fashion. Men's bodies are expected to fill certain standards and measures, although not in the same extend as women (Laiho and Leino 1988:59).

a body and therefore work as fetishes. When fragments of women stand metonymically for the whole, women are encouraged to think of their bodies in parts or things that can be moulded according to the demands of fashion or society. As for example Versace has quoted saying in B5.1: “I think all the parts of a woman can be sexy if they are well highlighted.”

C1.10) A fetish serves to mend one’s weak body image, when there always seems to be something wrong with it. Juha Siltala

The fragmentation of women is related to the marketplace and consumerism, because women are constantly encouraged to buy new products and services to improve themselves. A new season’s clothes often concentrate attention in different body parts, so women have to concentrate in improving different body parts every season. (Walters 1995.)

C1.11) In every human being a vacillation from one [SEX] to another takes place. Virginia Woolf

C1.12) and often it is only [the CLOTHES] that keep the male or female likeness. Virginia Woolf

C1.13) while underneath [the SEX] is the very opposite of what is above. Virginia Woolf

As pointed out above, in addition to differing classes, fashion has been a form of differing the genders, working as a sign of gender difference (Kokkonen 1996:50, see also Noro 1991:91, Franck 1997:70). For example, before the 18th century, fashion had been a matter of the upper classes. Clothes conveyed a person’s sex, age and rank. In the 18th and 19th centuries a change took place, women became connected with fashion. In the 19th century, women functioned as an indicator of men’s, their husband’s or father’s, wealth. Gradually, “The person looking started to gain power over the person looked at.” (Kokkonen 1996:50, translation M.K.). Pollock (1988:66) has called it a change from the culture of production to a culture of consumption and display. In this culture, what is consumed and

displayed are the images of women. However, Woolf seems to be thinking that we should not think gender in such an oversimplified way. In the quotations C1.11-13, Woolf suggests that both men and women can possess features that in our culture are seen only as male or female and that we should not judge people only on the basis of their clothes or other outside appearance.

Some researchers, (see for example De Laurentis 1984:149-151, Sederholm 2000) have suggested that when fashion works as a sign of gender difference, it reinforces the idea of men as a norm or the measure of being human and women as 'the Other', the deviation from the norm man. Hardness, strength and self-assurance, features that are associated with men, are things to pursue, softness, adaptation and flexibility are not.

Brook (1995:13) has also theorised about "the performativity (sic) of gender". Just like in A1.5 it was said: "women must **'perform'** femininity", Brook has suggested that gender, being a man or a woman, would be a performance.

The texts of "Fashion, designers" discuss several different aspects of fashion and its relation to women. The main points that rise up are that in our culture, fashion is seen as a marker of difference between men and women. Fashion is connected with outside appearance and outside appearance is connected with women. Fashion can be connected to ideals, power and desire. The definitions of correct fashion are given to women by male designers or by female designers, who want to associate themselves with male designers and see themselves as equal artist creators to the male designers and, therefore, exceptions from the majority of women. However, women can also use fashion as a disguise or masquerade and it is not so straightforward what they actually think or how they feel inside. Also, the way of thinking may be gradually changing in our society.

There are 66 different quotations in AB's part "Fashion, designers". Out of these quotations, 37 have originally been said by women, 23 by men and in 6 quotations it is not clear, what gender the speaker is. The texts of AB show women not only as fashion designers, like Chanel, Westwood or Rykiel, but also

as actors, authors and creators, who have something to say, such as feminists and authors Marguerite Duras (see B3.1-3), Virginia Woolf (see C1.11-13), fashion editor Laura Craik (Evening Standard, U.K., see C1.5-7) and scholars Dianne T. Meranus (professor of fashion design, Marymont College, Tarrytown, U.S.A., see A 1.25), Valerie Steele (author, history of fashion, see A1.19), Kaja Silverman (professor, University of California, Berkeley, see C1.4), Elisabeth Wilson (fashion historian, see A1.11-13, A1.15-17, C1.2-3, C1.8) and Caroline Evans and Minna Thornton (see A1.2- 5). Therefore, the female perspective on fashion is well represented on AB.

4. THE IMAGES OF “FASHION, DESIGNERS”

In this chapter I will analyse the images that appear in the part “Fashion, designers” of AB. I am going to analyse what the images may have meant in the fashion world and what kind of interpretations feminist research gives them. It is impossible to show all the images in my research in their original picture form, because they cannot be copied from the CD-ROM. Including all the pictures in my research would also take too much space, so I have described the images in my own words. Because the descriptions are my own subjective perceptions, the descriptions are written inside curly parenthesis.

As Walters (1995:2) has noted: “... different audiences may interpret the same images in various ways. One group’s ‘negative’ image may be another’s source of empowerment.” Women are often thought of having difficulties in looking at the pictures of other women because of the factors of proximity and distance (see for example Pollock 1988:86). Pollock has suggested that because looking is sexually positioned, it is divided into binary positions such as men/women, distance/proximity, activity/passivity, looking/being seen, voyeur/exhibitionist, subject/object. As a result, according to Pollock, I might have problems in analysing AB. The problems could arise, because I am a

woman, and therefore too close to the images of women, since women in most of the Western images are depicted as objects and their role is to be seen.

O) Main menu of the FASHION DESIGNERS –section:

{On the screen there is a picture with three green texts and symbols; flowers, squares, triangles and snow flakes. The background of the image has a leopard spotted pattern. The texts seem to flash: they change colour from dark to light green.}

FASHION
DESIGNERS
GARMENT

A) PART “FASHION”:

A1.1) {A screen with a vertical rectangle on the right hand side. The main colour of the screen is green and yellow. There is a picture of distorted models on a catwalk inside the rectangle. Click the right hand side. Moving from one screen to another is done by clicking the right hand side, when a white triangle appears.}

Screens A1.1-32 have almost the same image. In the images A1.1-5, A1.7-9, A1.11- 13, A1.15-17, A1.19-20, A1.22-25, A1.27-28, A1.30-32 there is the same image of five female models on a catwalk. In images A1.6, A1.10, A1.14, A1.18, A1.21, A1.26, A1.29, only two of the five models are visible. The two models are pictured inside two vertical rectangles on the left and right side of the screen. At times the models may appear in different colours or they may be differently distorted, but the basic picture is the same.

According to Modinos (1994:16), the most frequent image of woman in popular culture has been that of a pretty, kind and passive housewife. However, there are no housewives in the images of AB. Friedan (as quoted in Wolf 1991:10,15) has claimed that from the 19th century onward in the Western world there existed a “feminine mystique of domesticity.” During that time successful womanhood was in the images, represented by a happy housewife. However, Wolf (1991:11) has claimed that in the mid 20th century there emerged the ‘beauty myth’ of women and the concept of happy housewife was replaced by an image of a youthful model. That image indeed appears in several images of AB (for example A1.1-32). Furthermore, Wolf (1991:11) remarks that idolising youth led

to diet and skin care industries, which are a part of the whole Western beauty industry. The companies in the beauty industry consider women as attractive customers and they try to sell their beauty products to women by making them feel guilty; so that they would do everything they can to preserve their youth and beauty.

Being a fashion model can be called a ‘spectacle profession’, since the work mainly consists of walking in front of a camera or audience and displaying your body or the clothes that you are wearing. In many contemporary images women’s bodies are represented as a spectacle, maybe as a result of idolising the profession of modelling. Wolf (1991:15, see also Kokkonen 1996:42) argues that the modern assumptions about beauty date back to the 1830s when the photographic camera was invented. The 1840s brought the first nude photographs, and in the 1850s photographs of ‘beautiful’ women started appearing in magazines and newspapers, advertising various products. According to Hollander (1978:154-155), the invention of film camera changed the idea of perfect feminine beauty from a still image to an image of a moving woman, usually also with her legs showing. Film camera also helped in making women spectacles (Kokkonen 1996). Furthermore, because the camera eye seemed to fatten women, the objects of pictures had to be thinner to start with.

Now, women’s bodies are used in selling things, like, in the context of fashion, clothes and shoes, or images and fantasies. As a result of the connection of the modern concept of beauty with the development of the film industry, in our Western culture, film stars and fashion models have been the ‘spectacle professions’ of the 20th century. Models and film stars appear in the pages of magazines as well as in advertisements and posters, and the general public is often very interested in their private life as well.

As I noted above in my analysis of the texts of “Fashion, designers” (p. 20), Betterton (1987:7-10) has described the feminine ideal in our Western society as white, heterosexual, young, able-bodied and middle-class. There are only white women in the images of AB, for example in images A1.1-32. The sexuality of people is hard to tell on the basis of images, so is the age of the people featured in

the images, since many of them are so blurred. However the images A1.1-32 picture young fashion models.

As said above in my analysis of the texts of “Fashion, designers”, the definitions connected to femininity can be contradictory (p. 19). Femininity is often connected either to the private and domestic body or to the women as public spectacles. In “Fashion, designers”, most of the images portray women as public spectacles, which, in the context of the fashion world, is quite ordinary.

Several researchers (see for example Wolf 1991, Rossi 1996 <http://www.medeia.com/ab/index.htm>., *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 14. 2001: B7) have claimed that women use the images appearing in our culture as models of how their bodies are supposed to look, what they are supposed to wear and so on. For example Wolf (1991:136, see also Herzog 1990:158) has claimed that while people believe that our culture promotes the display of female sexuality, the representations of women’s bodies are actually heavily censored and restricted to only few types of (sexual) female bodies. She has also noted that: “Men are exposed to male *fashion* models but do not see them as *role* models” (Wolf 1991:58-59, italics in original), because men have lots of various role models to choose from. In “Fashion, designers” there are nude or erotic female bodies at least in the images B8.1, B8.4-6, C1.6-7. In B5.1-2 and C1.4-5 the sexual female bodies appear as statues or dolls. In many other images female sexuality is represented through attractive clothes or make-up, such as red lips, which are seen sexual or erotic in our culture. As a contrast, there are also garments and blurred bodies that cannot be seen sexual at all, for example the white t-shirt in B7.1-3. In A1.1-32 the images are so blurred that their sexuality is somewhat lost.

A1.7) {The same picture of distorted models as above, except instead of two vertical rectangles, the whole image of five distorted models fills the screen. There is a small vertical rectangle in the middle of a screen with a small picture of a sixth woman, who seems to be looking at the spectator through the letters ‘n’ and ‘d’ in the word ‘and’. In the background there is music without words. There is a line of little stars in the upper part of the screen and two arrows that face each other in the middle of the screen.}

A1.8) {The same picture of distorted models as above, except there is a picture of a small woman in the small rectangle in the middle, looking at the spectator through the wedge of 'k' in 'looked'.}

A1.9) {The same picture of distorted models as above, the picture in the middle rectangle seems to be looking at the spectator through the 'c' of 'watch'.}

Berger's theory of look as masculine and women in Western images as objects of masculine look and desire was discussed above (p. 23-24). In images A1.7-9 there are five female fashion models on a catwalk, as objects of look. Furthermore, sixth woman is captured inside a short vertical rectangle in the middle of the picture. She seems to be looking at the spectator modestly and covertly from behind the letters. The lines of stars and two arrows that meet at the upper side of the picture direct spectator-user's gaze to her image. Her mouth is closed, so she is an image of a silent woman. She seems to be smiling with her lips closed and the spectator's attention is directed to her purple pouting lips.

A1.15), A1.16) and A1.17) {A picture of five blue models distorted differently than before. The shape of the woman in the middle is curved, so that her outline looks like an empty shell.}

A1.22) {Picture of five models on a catwalk, background colour brown. The face of the second woman on the right has been framed with two parallel horizontal lines of yellow dots. Her lips are purple. The other women are distorted so that the spectator cannot see their faces.}

A1.23) {The same picture as in previous screen, except on the right hand side of the screen two vertical lines of yellow dots separate the body of the second woman from the right. The other women are distorted so that the spectator cannot see their faces.}

A1.24) {Picture of distorted models on a catwalk. On the right hand side there is a small yellow question mark above the head of the image of the woman furthest on the right.}

A1.25) {Picture of distorted models on a catwalk.}

In the images of AB there are different elements used to draw attention to certain parts of the pictures. These elements are, for example stars (A1.7), dots (A1.22, A1.23) and question marks (A1.24). They have probably not been in the original

images, but either Liulia or her team have added them in the images later by to serve some purposes. Usually their function seems to bring out certain features of the images and to direct the spectator-user's attention to something in the images. In A1.22 the lines of horizontal dots direct spectator-user's attention to a woman's head, in A1.23, two vertical lines of dots direct the spectator-user's attention to the woman's body. In A1.24 the small question mark above a woman's head directs the attention to the woman's head in the background.

B) {PART "DESIGNERS". On the screen there are the names of famous fashion designers surrounded by a leopard spotted frame. The names from left to right: }
GAULTIER RYKIEL YVESSAINTLAURENT c {inside a circle=Chanel}
VERSACE KARL LAGERFELD DONNA KARAN VIVIENNE WESTWOOD
CALVIN KLEIN

{A picture of shiny red lips on the upper left corner. When you click the red lips on the upper left corner of the screen, there appear several pictures of various women's shoes inside a leopard pattern frame. A rhythmic sound of footsteps can be heard in the background. }

According to Pollock (1988:122), women in images, such as advertisements, are often not faces or portraits, but fantasy figures of visual perception. In advertisements, women are often represented as a mysterious enigma or a fascinating other (Pollock 1988:175, see also Laiho and Leino 1988:62). For example, in screen 'B) Designers' there is a picture of shiny red lips in the upper left hand side corner. The lips are placed on a leopard spotted surface. Animal prints are often used in fashion, and they are fashionable even at the moment. Usually they denote exotic otherness. However, when they are brought to a familiar context of fashion, they are 'normalized', and therefore made to seem more familiar. Other examples of exotic otherness that is brought to familiar surroundings might be the T-shirt in C1.3 featuring a palm tree and a camel.

B1.1), B1.2) and B1.3) {A picture of a distorted woman, her face invisible. She is looking up and left from the spectator. She looks like she is striking a fashion pose, her hand on her hip. She is wearing a black small top, white skirt and black-and-white striped stockings. The name 'Jean Paul Gaultier' is written vertically on the background.}

The image of the woman in B1.1-3 looks like the ideal Western woman. She is white, thin and does not look at the spectator-subject. She is striking a fashion pose, so she might be an example of a 'youthful model'.

B2.1) and B2.2) {A sound of whispers on the background. Pictures of two rows of women's high-heeled shoes with open toes and straps. Picture is coloured as a photograph film negative. The shoes are placed above and below the text.}

Above (p. 48-49), fetishism was defined as the sexualisation of women's bodies, parts of their bodies or garments connected to parts of women's bodies. Fetishised clothes are seen especially desirable and sexually attractive. Also clothes that make a woman's life difficult, or clothes which disable her, such as high-heeled shoes or a corset, have throughout the times been considered especially sexually attractive (Franck 1997:117). Clothes that can be used as fetishes appear in images B4.1-5 B8.1-6, C1.2, C1.4-5 C1.9-10 and C1.11-13. These garments are mostly shoes and women's underwear, but there is also a picture of blue jeans. Many of these clothes can also restrict women and therefore they can be seen as desirable in our culture.

Women's garments and accessories have worked as signs of gender difference (Kokkonen 1996:50, see also Noro 1991:91, Franck 1997:70). Especially women's underwear and shoes differ from men's and therefore can be used to signify the difference of the genders and, as in some images, the male desire towards women. For example Hollander (1978:85) has proposed that one purpose of clothing, in addition to modesty and protection, is to make body seem more desirable and to emphasise body's importance.

B3.1), B3.2) and B3.3) {Picture of a smiling mannequin doll dressed in a wedding dress. There are many white veils in the background. The doll is smiling and looking downwards, not at the spectator. The picture shines as if it were in a shop window. There is a sound of whispered words in the background. The colour of the screen is mainly light blue.}

In screens B3.1-3 there appears another image of Caucasian standards of beauty; there is a picture of a white, Caucasian-featured mannequin doll. The doll is dressed in a white wedding dress. She is wearing a veil and smiling at the

spectator from behind a glass, as if she were in a shop window. The doll-bride can represent what is supposedly the happiest day of a woman's life in the Western world: her wedding day. Girls and women are often taught to see finding the right man and getting married to him as a fulfilment of a woman's life, and therefore every bride is a symbol of beauty.

B4.1), B4.2), B4.3), B4.4) and B4.5) {There is a picture of several pairs of gloves, a handbag, shoulder bag and a brassiere. The colouring of the image is as if in a photonegative. In B4.4 there is a green cross on the lower right corner of the screen. When it is pressed, screen B4.5 appears.}

As in B2.1-2, in B4.1-5 there are pictures of garments that are usually connected to women. They are also clothes and accessories that a feminine woman would wear: gloves and handbags. The brassiere and the gloves can be used in shaping female body according to the requirements of fashion.

B5.1) and B5.2) {Picture of two statues of women of white marble. The statue on the left is standing; the statue on the right is in a kneeling position. Both statues are pictured sideways, from behind, so spectator can see the statues backs, legs and parts of their breasts, but not their faces. The statues are placed in a large hall. The hall is elaborately decorated, with carvings and mirrors. The hall is well lit with chandeliers that seem to multiply because of the mirrors. On the lower left corner there is a small face of a woman. She seems to be looking at the statues.}

Above (see for example p. 19), it was argued that women are often made spectacles in images and representations, especially in the fashion world. Women as spectacles appear also in parts B5.1-2, both in the images and the texts connected to them. Images B5.1-2 picture two white statues of women. The statues are placed in a hall. The hall is decorated with mirrors and it is brightly light with large chandeliers. There is a small face of a real woman on the bottom left corner that works as a contrast to the large statues. It is hard to notice her in the middle of all the grandeur. She has long brown hair, a double chin and a doubtful expression on her face. The way she looks at the statues and the contrast between her and the statues give the picture a humorous air. The statues are placed on a pedestal. The statues are placed looking away from the spectator-user.

They have their arms modestly and protectively around their chests in the middle of all lights. The spectator-user can start to wonder if there is ‘a real woman’ and ‘ideal women’ depicted in the picture? The ideals are young, smooth, naked, white, cold women (see for example Betterton 1987). They are immobile symbols of beauty. The statues of women are placed in a public space, to be admired by people. In the lights we can see women as spectacles. The small face of a woman in the bottom left hand side corner that is very hard to notice represents the reality. Furthermore, the comments of Versace increase the idea of woman as a spectacle. There are altogether 77 images in “Fashion, designers”. Out of the 77 images, nine feature mannequin dolls or dolls. In the ‘Designers-part’ there are seven images of dolls (B3.1-3, B5.1-2, B6.1-2) and in the ‘Garment-part’ there are two (C1.4-5). The dolls, like the statues, can also represent female body as a spectacle.

The two statues of women in B5.1-2 are also non-threatening images of women. The statues are large, white and naked and in a public place, but they are placed so that the spectator-user cannot see their faces. Therefore, the spectator-user can actively look at them, but the statues are passive and cannot ‘look back’. Furthermore, they are modestly trying to cover their bodies with their hands.

According to Parker and Pollock (1981:116), the women depicted in the pictures and statues in the 19th century salons were classical goddesses, characters from the Bible, courtesans or prostitutes and artist’s models, and the pictures had classical historical and literary titles. The common denominator, however, was that most of the women depicted were young, beautiful and often naked. The pictures and statues formed a basis of the representation of women in many later images. The same features can also often be seen in contemporary fashion and glamour images. Parker and Pollock (1981:139) have suggested that women have traditionally been depicted as silent or silenced, mysterious, chthonic [sic] and enigmatic. Parker and Pollock (1981:118-119) have formulated that those pictures were organisations of signs and that art mediates and represents social relations of a culture, and therefore reproduces patriarchal ideology. Furthermore, Parker and Pollock (1981:126) have proposed that female nude worked, and still works, as a

signal of male fear of sexual difference. Cultural productions and representations in art as well as in the media, film and television are ideological and political (Parker and Pollock 1981:157). Therefore art is not pure or neutral, although it might seem so.

B6.1) and B6.2) {There is a picture of a mannequin doll's head. The female doll is wearing a red swimming cap and swimming goggles. She has white skin, bright red lips and brown eyes that look down and not towards the spectator. She has an enormously long neck.}

Some researchers, such as Laiho and Leino (1988) claim that the fashion's ideal body crystallizes in the body of a mannequin doll. The figure of the mannequin doll can be moulded and changed easily and the doll's stylised body and its clean features are an ideal that fashion often repeats and refers to (Laiho & Leino 1988:74-75.) Mannequin dolls represent perfect, public bodies. Clothes look great on them, because the dolls can be tailor made to meet the requirements of prevalent fashion. Throughout the 20th century mannequin dolls followed the contemporary fashion and the way a fashionable body was supposed to look like. It was common that there were both male and female mannequin dolls, although the female one's were in a majority. However, in the late 1980s and 1990s dolls were often genderless, only references to body. The current, post-modern fashion imposes certain measurements and standards on the female as well as the male body, but, like in the case of the genderless mannequin dolls, it can also play with gender. Laiho and Leino (1988:60) have discussed the "third gender". "Third gender" enables people to change gender. Therefore clothes can now be displayed on genderless dolls. But, instead of new freedom that getting rid of the visible gender might offer, Laiho and Leino suggest that our 'new gender' is now youth. Youth has become idolised and the most wanted object of people's desire. For example in the images A1.1-32, the shapes of the models may be distorted, but the parts of their faces that are visible, show that they are fairly young women, as most of the fashion models are.

Also, for example the images B6.1-2 feature the head of a mannequin doll that has an unnaturally long neck. The neck makes the doll look delicate, but also

almost comical. It would probably look awful if attached on a real woman. The doll has also very white skin and shiny, desirable, red lips. The doll's eyes are cast modestly downwards, not directly at the spectator-user. The doll's sideways look makes it appear non-threatening.

B8.1) {Picture of a woman's hips and thighs. The woman's legs are very white. She is wearing what appear to be latex fabric shorts, a gun holster, a belt with metal dots and a garter. In the background there is veil-like white material.}

The image in B8.1 works as an interesting contrast to B3.1-3, the image of a happy mannequin doll wearing a wedding dress. In B8.1 there is what Wolf (1991) would call a beauty-pornographic picture of a woman's hips and thighs. According to Wolf (1991:79) nowadays in order to arouse attention, images of women and 'beauty' are constantly becoming more and more extreme. Wolf has introduced two concepts that she calls "beauty pornography" and "beauty sadomasochism". "Beauty pornography" uses images that previously only appeared in 'men's' or pornographic magazines. Also for example Salo (*Helsingin Sanomat* 14.03.2001:B7) has noticed that many fashion pictures nowadays stage fantasies, such as women as victims of violence or crimes. Wolf (1991:133) has claimed that with "beauty pornography", the ideal female body was revealed, shifting the attention of fashion from clothes to the whole female body. Wolf (1991:133) has used "beauty sadomasochism" as a name for advertisements mistreating women, for example picturing artistic shots of raped or beaten women.

The woman in image B8.1 represents another white Caucasian ideal body. However, the white material behind her looks just like the veils behind the mannequin doll dressed in a wedding dress in the images B3.1-3. As Modinos (1994:15-17) has suggested in her research, in the Western discourses, the picture of woman has been "the Other", but also dual mother/virgin or she –devil/whore, good or evil. In the image B8.1 there seem to be both the good, represented by the wedding veil, and the evil, represented by the sexy outfit. The image therefore combines two Western female stereotypes and male fantasies. The image may also refer to the masquerade and performativity of fashion. Today it is possible to

mix roles, to dress up as both a virgin and a whore and confuse the spectator, so that he or she has actually no idea which one you really are.

B8.2) and B8.3) {Picture of a pair of sexy, shiny black shoes. The shoes have thick soles, very high heels and several straps. The shoes are placed childishly inwards, toes facing each other.}

Mulvey (1989) has theorised that Hollywood cinema has two ways of seeing, either a voyeuristic or a fetishistic way. In the both ways of seeing, the spectator stays in control of the images. As I have theorised above (pages 38-39) in context to the texts B5.1-2 (see for example Walters 1995:54-55), fetishising women results in that women appear in a fragmented way in both texts and images around us, and that encourages women to think of their bodies as collections of mouldable things instead of living bodies.

B8.4), B8.5) and B8.6){Picture of a woman's bottom in black small panties, gun holster hanging by her side. She is wearing what appear to be tiny underpants and a garter-like top. The viewer can see her buttocks and thighs from behind. Her hand is placed pose-like on her hips.}

In this image there is similar kind of fragmentation as in images B8.1-3. The image is beauty-pornographic and voyeuristic, and makes the woman in the image as an object of the spectator-user's look. If the image has been made to advertise or promote some fashion creation, it does not concentrate spectator-user's attention to the piece of garment at all, but rather to the body parts of the fashion model.

B9.1), B9.2) and B9.3) {Picture of a mature woman in front of a wall. She is laughing so hard that her mouth is wide open. She is wearing a sweater, a big necklace and small black shorts. She is holding the legs of her shorts with her hands.}

Borzello et al. (1985:14) have claimed that fashion and glamour pictures often attempt to neutralise the potentially threatening aspects of mature female sexuality by erotising immature pubescent girls. For example Calvin Klein, (CK form now on), advertisements are world famous of this kind of use of teenagers. In

comparison to the usual CK adverts where there are very young, very thin and very serious people this image gives a different message, this image is maybe trying to use irony and show the values the usual CK advertisements are trying to convey in a different light. This image is humorous. The laughing mature woman looks like she is the exact opposite of the usual CK model, she looks as if she really enjoys life and being in the picture.

C) Part “GARMENT”

C1.2) {An unfocused picture of a black and white lace brassiere and shiny pink panties placed on the ground.}

In addition of being a condition for subjectivity, dress, according to Silverman (in Modleski 1986:146) articulates and territorializes human corporeality. Silverman suggests that dress maps human’s erotogenic zones and affixes sexual identity. In addition to clothes, or underwear as in this image, human body is erotised through wearing make-up and adornments. Different parts of the body are at the centre of erotic attention at different times. By using clothes as a message, it is possible to manipulate and provoke the receiver of the message (Franck 1997:74).

C1.4) {Picture of a Barbie doll leaning on a long leg of a shoe. The doll is wearing a small bathing suit, its blond hair is tied up on a ponytail and sunglasses are placed in its hair. The doll has very long legs and arms and a low cleavage. There are several shoes pictured on the background. There is a red cross on the lower right side.}

The Caucasian standards of beauty probably again crystallise in the images C1.4-5. These images feature the figure of a Barbie doll. Barbie’s ultra white skin, blue eyes, long, blond hair, long arms and legs, tiny waist, wide chest and always smiling red lips that also always either show a row of pearly white teeth, or stay permanently shut, are something that most Western women can be envious. For years Barbie set an example that not only Caucasian women, but women all over the world admired and even tried to copy. Not even the appearance of Barbie’s African and Asian featured friends has changed the situation much, women with

non-Caucasian features still often try to straighten their hair and whiten their skin or to have surgery on their eye lids to better meet the Western standards of beauty.

{Press the red cross.}

C1.5) {A close-up of the Barbie doll leaning on a boot. Music.}

The Barbie-doll that appears in the images C1.4-5 represents one of the ideal bodies of the Western culture. As for example some artists have pointed out, Barbie's measurements would look ridiculous if they were realized on a real life size doll. Still, little girls see the doll and take its forms for granted and later may start wondering why they themselves do not meet the Barbie measurements. Barbie is also an object in a way that it is both a doll and it represents the idolised shape of woman. It is leaning against the leg of a boot. Shoes are one group of garments that are often used as fetishes in our culture. Barbie can also become a fetish in our culture.

C1.6) and C1.7 {A blurry picture of a woman in a pink sleeveless top and a black mini skirt. The dress looks as if it has been drawn on the picture. She is wearing a black bra under the dress. Her face is blurry and half in a shade, but she is smiling. She looks forward and down. Her legs are crossed and she is leaning against a wall. In C1.7 the picture is the same, but the outline of the dress changes. It looks slimmer, smaller and thinner.}

According to the theories of "Otherness", men often see women, especially mature women, as threats. In C1.6 there is an image of a non-threatening childish-looking woman. Her eyes are cast downwards and not directly towards the spectator-user. She looks uncomfortable in her pink dress and black-and-white striped stockings and her smile seems unsure, almost desperate. She has squeezed herself into a 'pink T-shirt and a micro mini', because they are fashionable. Therefore, she follows the standards and stereotypes of Western fashion that claim that women are interested in fashion.

C1.8) {A white short sleeved dress on brown fabric, out of focus. The dress looks like a nurse's uniform. It has five golden buttons that shine. Behind the dress there is a golden coloured fabric.}

There are several meanings connected to a nurse's uniform in our culture. Nursing is seen as a female occupation. Nursing, taking care of others, is also seen maternal (see p. 60, virgin/mother). The white colour of a nurse's uniform, like the wedding dress, is connected with purity. Also sometimes there are fetish connotations connected with the nurse's outfit (she-devil/whore). The white dress may also refer to the possibility of role-play and performativity.

C1.11), C1.12) and C1.13){A picture of seven checked green and black swimsuits, or underskirts, on a purple surface. The suit in the middle is bigger than the other ones. The clothes seem to be making in a twirling, turning motion.}

The garments that appear to be women's swimsuits or underskirts are the kind of clothes that men would hardly ever wear. Therefore they are the kind of garments that work as indicators of gender difference and men can see them either feminine or desirable. They can also be used in shaping or moulding the body towards a more desirable shape.

Whereas the texts of "Fashion, designers" consist of more comments by women than men, in the images of "Fashion, designers" there are only images of women, dolls or statues that represent women, or pieces of garment that in our Western culture are associated with women. The images of "Fashion, designers" seem to concentrate on the concept of the look, who the spectator-user of the images could be and do the women or the representatives of women in the images act as passive objects of the look, or do they somehow try to return the gaze, as for example in the images A1.7-9. Many of the images that appear in "Fashion, designers", such as the images of fashion models, Barbie and mannequin dolls and statues, can in the context of the fashion world work as ideals or models for women. Also, many of the garments pictured in "Fashion, designers" can have erotic or sexual or even fetishistic meanings in the Western culture (see for example B2.1-2, B4.1-4, B8.1-6, C1.2, C1.11-13). The images of "Fashion, designers" seem to have similarities with the theory of men and women as hierarchical oppositions (men as the norm - women as "Others", looking - being the object of look and so on. See p. 22), but also with the duality of the roles that

are given to the women in the Western society (good-bad, virgin/bride-whore, real-ideal women, young –old women. See p. 60)

5. LIULIA'S TEXT AND IMAGE COMBINATIONS

In this section of my study I am going to discuss the text and image combinations of “Fashion, designers” part of AB. Liulia has chosen the texts and images and combined them with certain intentions in her mind. I am interested in whether the texts and images have something in common in their representation of women through fashion in “Fashion, designers” and how Liulia has interpreted their messages and combined them.

In the texts of AB's part “Fashion, designers”, the topics that stood out the most were femininity, fashion as a mask or performance, Otherness, power, control, look, feminine ideal, desire, men and women as artists and creators and the duality of women's roles in the Western society (private/domestic, public/spectacle, mind/body). In the images the most frequent topics were ideals, restricted images of women, erotic, sexual or fetishistic images, Otherness (wedding dresses, dolls, underwear), look, young and older women and women as a threat. The texts and images have many things in common, but there are also differences in the female image they construct. Because of the similarities and differences, I have divided this part into three subheadings: women's roles, duality and resistance.

5.1 Women's roles

AB's part “Fashion, designers” seems to represent women in two ways. The images of “Fashion, designers” show women mainly as public bodies, catwalk models and dolls, objects that the spectator-user can desire or use as ideals and models. The texts of “Fashion, designers” depict women as fashion designers,

authors and scholars. There are no comments by fashion models, so, as in the reality of fashion world, they stay silent.

I have mentioned above (p. 51-52) that Wolf (1991:11) defined that the new Western beauty ideal was an image of a youthful model that worked in a spectacle profession. Also Liulia has commented on youth and being a spectacle in AB. In “Fashion, designers” there are both images of younger and older women, but there are more images of younger women than older ones. For example, the images A1.1-32 picture young fashion models, and B9.1-3 a woman that might be in her forties. However, there are no images of children or very young or very old women and in that sense the image of women given by “Fashion, designers” could be more versatile. The images of real, live women are often blurred, whereas there are some clearer images and even close-ups of dolls and statues. The dolls are beautiful, attractive and flawless, and may stand for the beauty ideals of the Western world or the idea in the Western culture that beauty is considered very important and it is connected to outer features. However, inside the dolls are empty and the statues are stone.

In “Fashion, designers” the earlier female ideal and role model of the ‘happy housewife’ has certainly been replaced by the picture of the ‘youthful model’, both in texts and images. There are in total 32 pictures that are clearly featuring fashion models on a catwalk. However, most of the images are so blurred that it is hard to tell the age of the women featured in the images. In some images it is even hard to tell whether all the people in the images are women or not. For example in A1.7-9, the third person from the right might be a man and in some pictures the ‘women’ may actually be dolls. Several texts in “Fashion, designers” refer to youth. For example in B1.1, Gaultier defines ‘the ideal woman’ as “the daughter of the one who made women’s lib”. With ‘women’s lib’ Gaultier is referring to women’s liberation movement. Although women’s liberation movement has been active in the Western culture since the 19th century onwards, and therefore the word ‘daughter’ could refer to a considerably old person, the word ‘daughter’ is usually used to refer to young people.

Also, in B1.3 Gaultier says: “**A lot of** young girls dress up like prostitutes but **inside** they may be pure, puritan, strict and reserved CODES ARE CHANGING”. From his comment the spectator-user of AB can conclude that Gaultier too thinks that the image of a ‘happy housewife’ is changing to something else. Wolf (1991:163) tells that before 1960, the image of a ‘good’ woman was non-sexual, whereas ‘bad’ was sexual. In the 1960s it changed to ‘good’, ‘beautiful-(thin)-hence-sexual’ and ‘bad’, ‘ugly-(fat)-hence-non-sexual’. According to Gaultier’s comment in B1.3 the word ‘young’ could be added to the image of a ‘good’ woman (see also B6.2). The comment implies that young girls can dress up like prostitutes, as long as they are young and beautiful. However, when Gaultier describes the girls as ‘pure, puritan, strict and reserved’, he is listing qualities that were connected already to bourgeois housewives. For example Wolf (1991:11) has said that the feminine mystique of domesticity was connected with myths about motherhood, domesticity, chastity and passivity.

In B6.2 Lagerfeld is quoted stating with the authority of a fashion designer: “*Vulgarity* is not disturbing when people are young. But as the years pass, people start to do things they shouldn’t.” When the comment is said in the context of fashion world and connected with an image of a female mannequin doll’s head, it is easy to understand the word ‘people’ referring first of all to the biggest target group of fashion industry, women. So, when women mature, they have to be extra careful not to appear vulgar, or they should try to appear young, because young people can get away with more. However, there is also humour in the picture, since no matter how young and flawless the doll looks like, it is wearing a swimming cap and goggles that look the same, not very attractive, on women of all ages. Also, in the context of the fashion industry Lagerfeld’s comment sounds a bit strange, since not very many young people can afford haute couture creations, and, in fact, probably most of Lagerfeld’s customers consist of not so young women. However, it is probably not that ‘people start doing things they shouldn’t’ when they get older, but the society has different expectations of older people.

For example Betterton (1987:7-10), Wolf (1991:11) and Kivimäki (1993:75-78) have suggested that women and girls have a restricted range of role models in the current Western world. Wolf (1991:211) has also claimed that: “Young women today are expected to act like ‘real men’ and to look like ‘real women’.” There are only images of women in the whole “Fashion, designers” part of AB. The images are like photographs, although many of them have been visibly altered by computer graphics. According to Mulvey (1989:20) the photographic camera and the film camera usually imitate the natural conditions of human perception. That is why it is so easy for us to look at pictures and images and try to make sense of them. In the Western culture, photographs are traditionally connected with ‘showing the truth’, to a truthful, documentary image (Kuhn 1985:43), so the fashion pictures that appear for example in magazines and on TV give their viewers an image of picturing real, almost flawlessly beautiful people as they actually appear. That is why we often take the fashion images for granted and do not even think about the influence of camera angles, lightning or make-up, safety pins and even scotch tape that have been used in order to create that flawless looking image.

Although many of the images in “Fashion, designers” are of young fashion models, there are no quotations on AB that would have been said by the fashion models, so they do not have a voice of their own on AB. That seems to reinforce the role model of beautiful women whose outside appearance matters more than their inner opinions. However, many of the images are blurred or twisted and therefore it can be difficult to identify with them. As Koskinen (1996) has noted that fashion models are stretched on the screens of AB as if they were dough, “which of course they are in the hands of their shapers. Most of the digitally manipulated images are derived from photographs...” AB works like the fashion images often do; it uses digitally manipulated images, but does not overtly acknowledge it. However, whereas fashion pictures often try to hide the fact that they have been manipulated to achieve the best possible result, in AB the manipulation is often so apparent, that the spectator-user stops thinking about it, tries to make sense of the images and finds it hard to identify with the women in

the images. However, since it is not clear where or from what contexts the pictures of “Fashion, designers” have been taken, it is also possible that the women in the images are not ‘youthful models’ at all, but merely women masquerading as models for the picture. They can just perform the role of mannequin for the picture, and therefore Liulia has managed to deceive the spectator-user.

In addition to giving women possible role models and ideals through the use of pictures in “Fashion, designers”, there are also definitions and expectations directed to women that are related to women’s roles. One of them seems to be the expectation that women should be feminine. In “Fashion, designers” femininity is referred to in screens A1.2, A1.5 and B2.1-2. In these screens femininity is described of being ‘different’, something that women must perform and, in the words of fashion designer Sonia Rykiel: something connected to the word ‘women’ that “suggests all that is **radiant**, tender, **fascinating**, gentle, **demoniac**, exaggerated!” Rykiel’s comments are accompanied with an image of two rows of women’s high-heeled shoes. The shoes can also be thought of to represent one form of controlling women. As anyone who has tried to wear high-heeled shoes knows, in our Western culture they are connected to sexuality, they make you seem taller and require you to have a good posture. But they can also give you sore feet or sprained ankles and prevent you from moving fast. According to some feminists, some items of clothing that in the Western culture are considered ‘feminine’, such as brassiere and high-heeled shoes, are a form of controlling and restricting women, but also seen as attractive and desirable.

Women are often expected to be feminine, but as noticed above (p. 22) according to some researchers, also ‘passivity’ is often connected with women. Women’s passivity is mentioned in texts A1.7: “for men act and women appear”, A1.8: “Men look at women”, and A1.9: “Women watch themselves being looked at”. The texts are connected with images of women who stand and stare quietly at the spectator-user. According to Rossi (2001:127, see also p. 12 above), Western culture connects looking and power. Who has the power to look has also the power to control his or her surroundings. There are several images of dolls in

“Fashion, designers”, and the dolls increase the image of women as passive dummies that stand on display, since the dummies do not have a power to look back at their spectator. In addition, fashion is ‘described’ and instead of revealing, ‘reviled’ to women (A1.3, A1.4), who seem to accept the descriptions that come from outside of them. The text of C1.5: “Clothes don’t maketh the man, but they certainly maketh the woman”, reinforces the idea of passive women, especially when it is connected to an image of a Barbie doll leaning on a boot, an object of looking and desire. The text implies that men do not need clothes to make themselves important and noticed, but women do. Furthermore, there is humour in the image/text combination because a major part of playing with Barbie is that you are able to change Barbie’s clothes and there are a lot of clothes for Barbie available in shops. As said above, interest in clothes is seen as a feminine feature, so Barbie teaches girls the values of our society.

However, when you change Barbie’s clothes, you also change the roles Barbie takes. You can make Barbie become a ballet dancer or a hip-hop star, in fact there are many roles a Barbie can take and several disguises she can wear. So maybe she is also teaching little girls masquerade and performativity of clothes. For example Uotila (1994) compares wearing clothes to picture making. To Uotila fashion is art and the use of power. If fashion is seen as an area of life for women, then is it not an area where women, instead of being passive, can be active ‘doers’ and ‘picture makers’? For example Betterton (1989:13, see also Evans and Thornton 1989:8-9) has claimed that fashion is addressed to women and therefore it can be liberating. As a result, the spectator-user of “Fashion, designers” may start to wonder does fashion delimit women’s potential identities or through masquerade and performance increase them?

As a contrast to passive women, men are in the texts of “Fashion, designers” described to be the doers, who ‘act’ (A1.7), ‘look’ (A1.8) and in A1.19 and A1.20 ‘dominate women’s fashion’. For example there are no pictures of men in “Fashion, designers”, but there are plenty of written comments and opinions by men. Men who are dressed in their suits are described as ‘confident’ (B3.3) and women can achieve the same kind of confidence through their clothes. The text in

B3.3 implies that men are able to achieve things through what they themselves are, but women often need some help, such as clothes. In the words of Vivienne Westwood, even homosexuals have “ contributed ... much more to our society” than women (B8.6). The comment is connected with an image of a woman’s bottom. The woman is wearing underwear-like garments. The text/image combination reinforces the image of passive women, connected to outside appearance, desire, nature and the use of their bodies: it seems that what the woman in B8.6 is ‘contributing’ to the society is her desirable outside appearance.

It can be asked do the images and texts chosen by Liulia, in addition to defining women feminine and passive, define women as suggested above (see p. 22-23) connected with nature and consumption, body, mass culture, reading and private? In “Fashion, designers”, screens A1.2, A1.5 and B2.1-2 refer to women as ‘feminine’. Women are compared to ‘nature’ in screen B3.2: “... We are the *desert* that was waiting for the dress, ...” ‘Consumption’ is not referred to directly. For example in B3.1-2: “... For the dress we had never dreamed of is there, and it’s just the one we were waiting for ...”. In B7.1: “...working women want clothes that fit.” Either of the quotations does not refer straight to buying clothes, but women are ‘waiting for’ clothes or they ‘want’ clothes, although both may result in buying clothes.

Women’s bodies are pictured in some form in most of the images of “Fashion, designers”. The images may present distortions of women’s bodies or women’s bodies represented by mannequin dummies or dolls. Furthermore, the images of models (A1.1-32) have been stretched more often vertically than horizontally, resulting in long, thin body shapes that are seen attractive in our Western culture, instead of short, wide forms. However, there are some exceptions, such as A1.7-9 and A1.30-32, where the manipulating of the picture has made the bottom of one model look very big and fat, although in A1.30-32 also the breasts of the model look bigger and therefore they match the Western beauty concept. Also, for example the images B6.1-2 feature the head of a mannequin doll that has an unnaturally long neck.

There are no images of men or even men's clothing in "Fashion, designers", although one of the images of fashion models in screens A1.7-9 (the third from the right) is blurred in a way that makes it hard to tell whether it is a man or a woman. Women's bodies appear also in the texts of "Fashion, designers". For example in A1.4, fashion is described as 'an aesthetic packaging of female body'. In B1.3 young girls are described as dressing up 'like prostitutes'. The word prostitution connects both consumption and using women's bodies. In addition, there are several images and texts in "Fashion, designers" that refer to parts of women's bodies (texts: B5.1-2, pictures: B8.1, B8.4-6). The quotations mention especially women's hips, breasts and legs, around which fashion creation's attention also often centres.

Above (p. 26) I discussed Borzello et al.'s (1985) theories of glamour pictures. Borzello et al. (1985:14) have proposed that glamour pictures often dehumanise women, represent them as 'automations' or 'living dolls'. Out of the 47 images of real women appearing in "Fashion, designers", 38 are distorted in some way and 4 show parts of women, so it is hard to tell whether they are parts of dolls or real women. "Fashion, designers" 'glamour' pictures of deformed different colour models (A1.1-32) have certainly dehumanised women. Their twisted forms barely resemble human anymore, although their faces and hands that are showing are still visibly human. Furthermore, there are many images of doll-women in "Fashion, designers".

Out of 77 individual screens that appear in "Fashion, designers", 9 feature mannequin dolls or dolls. In the 'Designers-part' there are seven (B3.1-3, B5.1-2, B6.1-2) and in the 'Garment-part' two (C1.4-5). Total 47 screens feature images of real life women. In the 'Fashion-part' there are 33 images of women, but they are distorted. In the 'Designers-part' there are 3 distorted and 9 not distorted images (B5.1, B5.2, B8.1, B8.4-6, B9.1-3) of women. Out of these images B8.1 and B 8.4-6 show women in a fragmented way as parts of body. In B8.1 there is a picture of woman's hips, in images B8.4-6 there is a picture of a woman's bottom. In 'Garment'-part there are two distorted images. Rest of the images picture items of clothing or high-heeled shoes associated with women. Two screens feature just

text. It is also difficult to make out of the distorted pictures, what kind of clothes the women are wearing and do they look attractive or not.

However, Borzello et al. (1985) have also proposed that glamour pictures arouse desire in their spectators. Although the kinds of pictures that are in “Fashion, designers” have appeared frequently in fashion magazines throughout the 1990s, they usually only manage to give their spectator-user an artistic impression. The distorted images of women and close-ups of plastic-looking dolls are not very desirable and therefore they are far from the glamorous fashion pictures. They hardly arise desire to be like the women pictured, or to own the clothes featured in the images. So instead of bringing female spectator-users too close to the images, so they can identify with the women in the images, the distorted images and the use of dolls in the images have, as Pollock (1988:163) and Rossi (2001:52) have said, a distancing and defamiliarising effect on their spectator-users.

Furthermore, in the fashion world the designers are important figures, who have the power and authority to define what is seen as desirable at a certain time. The designers give women the definitions of how women should appear, but the female fashion designers themselves can also work as ideals and role models to women, as can the other successful women mentioned in “Fashion, designers” (see p. 49-59), although as noticed above (p. 37-38), being a successful woman in the Western society often requires that women adopt masculine points of views and opinions.

5.2 Duality

The topic of duality seems to appear in both the images and the texts of “Fashion, designers”. On one hand women are represented as opposites, or ‘Others’ of men (see or example p. 17-18 and 22), but on the other hand the whole concept of ‘women’ seems to be built of dual properties.

As I have gone through the text and image sections of “Fashion, designers”, in the light of feminist theory and research on fashion, certain features

have stood out from both the texts and the images. One of them is that fashion reinforces the division of men and women in the Western culture. It has been claimed above that fashion is about desire (see for example p. 23) and fear (see for example p. 17). Fashion images and the definitions of fashion can arouse desire in both male and female spectators and users of fashion. However, femininity and otherness have in some theories also been linked to fear, the fear of feminine difference from the masculine norm. Women have used the methods of masquerade and performance to resist the desire and the requirements and expectations directed to them.

In “Fashion, designers”, women are often represented as ‘attractive others’ to the point where they have been replaced by dolls. Still, the Caucasian standards of beauty (see p. 45, see also Bordo 1993:255) are visible in “Fashion, designers”: all images of women, even the dolls and statues, are white. They often have red lips and eye make-up that are considered attractive in Western culture. Even in the images of catwalk models, although the bodies of the models are twisted and deformed, their faces are visible, with attractive red lips. Red plump, shiny lips can also be seen in the upper left corner of the first screen of the “Designers” part of AB. Red lips are a part of women that are connected to both glamour and pornographic images in Western culture.

Furthermore, Yves Saint Laurent comments in B3.3: “ I design classic shapes for women so that they feel *the same confidence* in their clothes as men do in their suits.” When the comment is connected to a picture of a smiling mannequin doll in a wedding dress, it makes the spectator-user wonder, if Saint Laurent sees wedding dresses as ‘classic shapes for women’ and therefore supports the traditional division of men working outside the home ‘in their suits’ and women at home, in need of some more confidence that new clothes can offer them. The purity that is often connected to white and especially the white wedding dress in the Western culture is also traditionally connected with middle-class values of women who work at home. In this comment Liulia may be subtly trying to use irony with the text and image combinations.

In my analysis of fashion texts and images I introduced the concepts of voyeurism, fetishism and beauty pornography. Laiho and Leino (1988) have claimed that men have taken most of the fashion pictures. Therefore the pictures include masculine fantasies. Fetishlike clothes, such as socks, high-heeled shoes, leather clothes and underwear, are often displayed in fashion images in a way that is close to pornography (Laiho and Leino 1988:61-62).

In “Fashion, designers” there are several images that feature high-heeled shoes and underwear. Some of the images simply display the garments. The images B2.1-2 show women’s high- heeled shoes in two rows. The images B4.1-5 picture gloves, a handbag, shoulder bag and a brassiere, C1.2 picture a brassiere and panties and C1.11 picture several women’s swimsuits. However, in some images clothes have been placed in positions or pictured from angles that make the spectator-user think of erotic, or even pornographic pictures. For example in B8.1 there is a picture of a woman’s hips, in B8.2-3, a picture of black leather high-heeled shoes, their toes pointing childishly towards each other, although there is nothing childish in the shoes themselves with their many straps and buckles and shiny black surface. Also in images B8.4-6 there is a picture a woman’s bottom in small black panties. However, if the spectator-user of the images knows about the background of the designers, she can notice that the items of clothing pictured in images B8.1-6 have been designed by Vivienne Westwood. Westwood became famous for her punk designs. Furthermore, according to Westwood, fashion and sex are very intermingled (Evans and Thornton 1989:23). She attempts to give women power of self-presentation and erotic power, with the use or pornographic elements in her designs (Evans and Thornton 1989:29) and works through the use of excess, eccentricity and paradox (Evans and Thornton 1989:150). So, instead of making women spectacles, Westwood has claimed that she attempts to give women power to express themselves. However, the results look like they come from a very familiar collection of pictures, although similar kinds of garments can get different meaning in the hands of different designers, as well as designers of different gender.

As noted above, in the Western culture women are often represented in a dual way that gives the impression that women are different in private and in public (see for example p.19, 53). As the most popular representations of women seem to indicate, women are either seen as ‘domestic’ housewives or as ‘spectacle’ fashion models (p.19). However, in “Fashion, designers”, women are mainly represented as public spectacles and fashion models. Furthermore the images in “Fashion, designers” represent women in a dual way; some of them are clear and focused, but some are manipulated and distorted.

AB’s part “Fashion, designers” features altogether 77 images. Out of the 77, there are 32 images of fashion models walking on a catwalk. The models are spectacles, but their bodies have mostly been distorted into wavy lines that melt in with the background. As a result of the distorting of the outlines, the models lose their spectacle status and, instead of looking at the women as spectacles on a catwalk, the spectator-user can concentrate on looking at the parts of the women that have not been blurred, namely their heads and hands, thus the distorting effect makes the models look more like individuals. Furthermore, when people look at a fashion model, they usually concentrate on the clothes, not the women who are wearing them. When the images of the women are distorted, the spectators see above all the women, not their clothes. Liulia has used the same image of five distorted fashion models on a catwalk in many places of “Fashion, designers”, but in different parts of AB the image of models has been distorted differently. For example in A1.15-17 the image of a woman in the middle of the picture is curved, so that she looks empty inside. When the image is combined with the text (A1.17): “the **shell** of chic, the **aura** of glamour, always **hides** a wound”, the spectator-subject can understand that the image/text combination refers to the performativity of fashion (see for example p. 21).

The different distortions of images A1.1-32 make the spectator-user concentrate on different parts of the images and, therefore, s/he can each time interpret the text/image combinations slightly differently each time. In addition to the fashion models of A1.1-32, there are images of individual women or parts of

women that could have been taken out of fashion pictures, for example in screens B1.1-3, B8.1, B8.4- 6, C1.6-7.

One of the dualist definitions often connected to women is the division of good -bad. According to Modinos (1994:15-17) women in Western culture are often pictured as 'Other' or either good or evil, mother/virgin or she-devil/whore. In Gaultier's comment (B1.3) young girls are described as both: 'prostitutes' and 'pure', as well as 'puritan'. Other comments that describe women as good or bad are B2.2 that describes women as both 'gentle' and 'demoniac' and B8.4 'conservative' connected with an image of a woman's bottom dressed in small panties.

There are also several images that refer to either 'good' or 'bad' women. There are several images of women, or female mannequin dolls, dressed in a wedding dress (B3.1-3). In our Western culture, the white wedding dress symbolises 'good', namely the purity and virginity of the bride. But there are also several images that have been taken in a style that resembles the style of men's magazines (B8.1-6). In image B8.1 there is white, wedding veil-like material in the background of an image of woman's hips. The woman is wearing latex fabric shorts and a garter. A gun holster hangs by the side of her hip. This image seems to combine items associated with the 'good' and 'bad' woman. The text and image combinations that present women both good and bad can be confusing to the spectator-user. They can either imply that all women have a bit of both in them or that nowadays the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' is not as clear as it used to be. Yet, however much the codes may be changing, the expectations directed to women still seem to stay the same. Liulia can also try to use the text and image combinations to point out the roles women are given in our society and by so doing to ironise them.

According to Hollander (1978:345), people have always used clothes in sending messages. However, today the amount of dress messages, as the amount of all communication, has increased enormously: the clothing business has expanded and the quantity of visual information has exploded. There is no more just one fashion, but fashions, in plural and everything we wear refers to an

image. Salo (*Helsingin Sanomat* 14.03.2001: B7, translation M.K) quotes Charlotte Cotton, curator of Victoria and Albert Museum: “Fashion pictures are like a mirror that reflects both good and evil sides of our culture.” According to Salo, the fashion pictures are not just innocent pieces of commercial that promotes the circulation of fashion and consuming of clothes, but, instead, they are illustrated communication that affects more profoundly to people’s values and ways of living. The pictorial advertising of clothes has lost its influence on us, because it is consciously offered and resisted and, therefore, people can learn how to resist it. As a result, pictorial advertising has had to find new ways of presenting clothes. Salo (*Helsingin Sanomat* 14.03.2001: B7) has told that there has been a change into glamour pictures to young, even adolescent and weak women, who pose in sexy postures. However, if we think of fashion as the desirable ways of looking at a given time, then we should maybe become worried, when fashion images resort to repeating ‘beauty pornographic’ or ‘beauty sadomasochistic’ images, because that means that our cultures sees them as desirable ways of looking and might, also in reality, start treating women in that way.

5.3 Resistance

Has Liulia somehow tried to resist or change the traditional way of representing women in the context of fashion? In many images and some of the texts she has used the look: in the images women are the objects of the look and spectator-users have a free access to looking at the images. However, at times Liulia has tried to reverse the look. Also, by repeating certain images, and sometimes texts, Liulia has tried to give them new meanings.

Do the images of women in “Fashion, designers” try to resist the traditional definitions and divisions of man and woman? Superficially it seems that in “Fashion, designers” men are depicted active, creative, productive and using their mind and women passive, consuming, concerned about their outside appearance and connected to nature and the use of their body. However, if the

spectator-user looks carefully, for example in A1.8: “Men look at women”, she or he can interpret that one of the images of catwalk models in the picture looks actively and slyly at the spectator-user through the wedge of a ‘k’ in the word ‘look’. The rest of her face is hidden behind the letters, so that it is difficult for the spectator-user to look at her. On the other hand, she may also be interpreted as looking at the spectator in a ‘feminine’ way, in a way that aims at pleasing male spectators. In A1.7 the same model looks at the spectator-user through the letters ‘n’ and ‘d’ of “Men act and women appear”. When the spectator-user reads the text and looks at the image A1.7 in the same context, he or she can understand the image to present a woman who is appearing on a catwalk, as an object of look, whereas the spectator-user is possibly an actively looking man. Similarly in A1.9, the same model ‘watches herself to be looked at’ through the letters ‘c’ and ‘h’ in the word ‘watch’. With small alterations the same images can get different meanings when they are connected to different texts.

Also, in B5.1-2 there are female bodies on display in the shape of two statues. However, next to the statues spectator-user can see a small face of a woman. On one hand she may be ‘watching herself to be looked at’, as said in A1.9, in the form of a statue. On the other hand, she has a doubting expression on her face. She does not seem to be just passively looking at the images, but actively doubting or even criticising the polished image of women that the statues are conveying.

Liulia may also try to ‘reverse the look’ (Rossi 2001:52-67). If, as according to for example Berger’s (Walters 1995) or Mulvey’s (1989) theories, the spectators of images in the Western culture are usually men, and women in the images are seen through the eyes of men, it is possible that Liulia is trying to remind the spectator-user of AB of the artificialness of the Western idea of the ‘masculine look’ by offering the spectator-subject artificial dummies and mannequin dolls to view instead of real life women. As said above (p. 12, 69), looking in Western world is connected to power. Whereas spectator-users may have some power over real, living objects and all the power in the world over lifeless dolls, the power over dolls does not matter much, since they are lifeless

anyway. However, the mannequin dolls may refer to fashion models. In a way fashion models are like dolls, since it is not important who they are, but rather how they look and what they wear. Therefore the images of the dolls reinforce the representation of fashion models in the context of the fashion world.

One way Liulia is maybe trying to change the traditional representation of women in “Fashion, designers” is to alter the way the image of five fashion models on a catwalk are represented. When their images are twisted and blurred, it is difficult for women to try to identify with them. As mentioned above (p. 49-50), there are also several female authors’, scholars’ and strong women designers’ comments featured on AB. What positions do female fashion designers take on AB? Do female fashion designers use their positions and their authority in fashion in creating new identities for themselves or other women? As a contrast to the fashion models, the female fashion designers do not appear in the images, but only in the texts. So against the traditional belief that in women, outside appearance matters and in men their inner life, their thoughts and opinions (see p. 22-23), in AB women’s voices can be heard. Could these designers then work as role models for female spectator-users of AB?

For example in screens B4.2 and B4.3 Chanel describes herself as a ‘genius’ of a designer, a property that I have above, in the context of artists (p. 27-28), described in our Western society to be more a property connected with men than women. In other words, Chanel thinks of herself as an active subject. She also tells how she has liberated women from the dresses that men have designed. However, her comments are presented with images of ‘feminine’ garments, handbags, gloves and a brassiere, that Chanel used in her fashion creations and that are still used by women. So Chanel’s designs did not change the garments women wear, but they are exactly the same ones that male designers have used. In addition, Dali’s comment in B4.5 tells that Chanel maybe acted like a man, but that she also looked more like a ‘strong independent man’ than a real woman. Therefore her genius resulted not from her own talent, but from her masculine properties. Dali is suggesting that in order to be artists that other people can take seriously, female artists either already have masculine properties and those

properties help them to become famous and good, or that good female artists adopt masculine features. As a result Chanel is not seen as an equal creator in comparison to male designers, but more like ‘one of the men’

Also Westwood, in her comments B1.8-6 about creating, sex and women sounds more like a man. For example in B8.2 Westwood is quoted saying how you have to actively “destroy to create”. However, her comments are combined with pictures of sexy, feminine shoes and women’s hips dressed in lingerie-kind of clothing that refer to the image of ‘sexual’ or ‘feminine’ women. Furthermore Westwood’s comment in B8.6: “I’d much rather promote of defend homosexuals than women, because they’ve contributed ... much more to our society”, seems to both humiliate women and to look at them from a masculine point of view, which corresponds to the theory that most artist-creators have been and are male and, as a result, have contributed more to the Western society than women.

In B8.4 Westwood is quoted saying: “Women are the most conservative section of society, they will not risk anything.” Again Westwood refers to women as if she was not one of them. The quotation is connected to an image of a woman’s bottom in black small panties, with a gun holster hanging by her side. Although the values and codes of Western society may be changing, not many people would probably think that exposing your bottom in public is considered conservative. Women sometimes wear the most horrible and unsuitable colours and pieces of clothing in the name of fashion. As a result of the combination of image and text, Westwood’s comment gets ironic tones. In addition, the spectator-user may get the impression that Westwood is trying to increase her own value as a non-conservative, creative artist who differs from the ordinary women.

Rykiel seems to oppose the traditional definitions of ‘feminine’ in her comments, although the images accompanying her words feature ‘feminine’ and unpractical high-heeled shoes, which, according to Koskinen (1996) have been photographed by Liulia in Rykiel’s fashion studio. It seems that no matter how the female fashion designers define themselves or their creations, in the end their designs are quite similar to those of the male designers and follow closely the Western conventions of dressing and representing women.

The fourth female designer, Karan's voice cannot be heard in AB. She is not quoted saying anything, only what *the Face* magazine has said about her. The magazine's comments about Karan are not very flattering. The text is accompanied by an image of ordinary and everyday, non-glamorous or creative white plain t-shirt. When spectator-user reads the comments connected with Karan, s/he can conclude that Karan has not adopted as masculine viewpoints as Chanel and Westwood. As a result, she is accused of designing for herself and other 'forty-something females' like herself. 'Forty-something' and 'executives' refer to an age and occupation groups that do not fit neither to the old female ideal of 'housewives', or the new one of 'youthful models'. However, Karan has seemed to choose her own way of designing, namely not designing for the 'fashionable' and idolised audience of fashion, the young people, but for older women. Therefore she is using her power as a designer to change, or at least to resist, the ruling ideal of women.

The whole "Fashion, designers" part of AB consists of texts 'made', or at least chosen and put together, by women. AB is also intended and designed for a female audience. As a result, at least according to Pollock (1988), there is a possibility that the texts in AB can differ from the usual positions of looking, when the person looking is expected to be a man. Especially, considering that AB is been created from a feminist point of view, it is also highly likely that Liulia intends to change the way we see and look at the images. However, many of the images used in AB such as B8.1-6 that picture images of women's bottom and thighs, are probably pleasing to men and they are also taken from an angle that is more often used in erotic magazines than fashion images. In contrast, there are many images in "Fashion, designers" that do not feature specific parts of women at all, many images do not even feature women, just empty garments. However, the images that show only garments look less appealing than the one's that picture women inside them, maybe because we as spectators of fashion images are so used to in seeing someone, whether a real life model or a mannequin doll, wearing and displaying fashion clothes. Still, in addition to the fact that many images are blurred and altered, so that it is hard to see clearly the

people or objects in the images, the way women are represented in AB is not strikingly different from what Pollock (1988) calls the 'masculine sexual politics of looking'. One reason might be that the masculine way of looking is such a big part of our culture that it is difficult to differentiate from it.

Rossi (2001:67-87) claims that the images of gender are formed in our society by repeating certain existing models, pictures, postures and gestures that we then learn to connect to the different genders. Rossi suggests that repetition is important, because if someone wants to change the way a gender is imaged, s/he can try to repeat images differently. Images of women in Western culture are often passive, but for example post-feminism tries to recycle and copy pictures in a way that questions common images and the uniqueness of art.

"Fashion, designers" certainly repeats images of women and items connected to women and femininity. For example, in the images A1.1-32 Liulia has used the same image of five models on a catwalk, but in connection with different texts. The images have also different colouring and they are distorted differently. Different distortions make the spectator-user notice different parts of the pictures. The pictures have usually not been distorted in a way that would make women's body parts, such as breasts or legs that fashion often concentrates on, stand out. However, in the images A1.7-9 the figure of the second model from the left has been distorted in a way that makes her bottom look enormous in comparison to her body. The use of yellow colour in the image even increases the impression. In addition to different distortions and colours, Liulia has sometimes used lines of dots or stars or, in the case of A1.24, a little question mark on top of a model's head, to bring out the images of individual women in the images. In A1.23, two lines of vertical yellow dots bring out the body of the second woman on the right, although her body is otherwise distorted. The image is connected to a text "Do women dress to please men?" It is hard to tell whether this woman has dressed to please men, since her body is all distorted, but the dots make the spectator-user look at the women's body that would otherwise blend in with the background. However, Liulia seems to use question marks to give more power to texts and images and also to question, or even make their messages ironic (see for

example A1.22, A1.23). When the spectator-user sees the question mark in an image or at the end of the sentence, s/he can start to think about the information offered to him or her more.

Furthermore, in A1.24: “Women designers tend to be less ‘objective’, because they design for themselves”, the little yellow question mark on top of the face of a woman in the image shows that either Liulia or the little image of a woman is questioning the quotation and, possibly, makes the spectator-user of the CD-ROM question, or at least think about, the quotation. Most images in “Fashion, designers” are repeated at least twice. In connection with the texts, the interpretations the spectator-user gives to the images can change.

On the other hand, at times Liulia tries to use irony to reveal stereotyped ideas about women in fashion world. For example there exists an idea that women are supposed to be more interested in fashion than men. If the spectator-user of “Fashion, designers” reads the texts A1.24 and A1.25 in a sequence, the text A1.25 seems to be referring to A1.24 and reinforcing A1.24’s message. As a result, when in A1.24 de la Renta is quoted saying “Women designers tend to be less ‘objective’ ...”, and in A1.25 Meranus: ”Men get easier entrée to the field because of prejudice toward women”, de la Renta’s comment seems to reinforce what Meranus is saying. If de la Renta, as a male fashion designer thinks that women are less objective than men that is a generalised, or even prejudiced comment about female designers. If there are more assumptions like de la Renta’s about the female fashion designers, they can probably make it more difficult for female designers to enter the field of fashion. In addition to irony, Liulia sometimes uses humor in her text and image combinations. However, sometimes after a female spectator-user reads some quotations or texts in “Fashion, designers”, she may start to think who exactly the texts and images are laughing at and why.

As argued above (p.6-7) Liulia has not wanted AB to be linear. However, some of the texts inside “Fashion, designers” can be read in sequences. If the texts are read in sequences they seem to form little stories, in which parts of the texts refer to other parts of the text (see for example A1.24-25). When the texts refer to

each other, they can question what was said previously. In this way Liulia can make her spectator-users question and think about the messages of the texts.

On screens A1.6, A1.10, A1.14, A1.18, A1.21, A1.26 and A1.29 there appear two vertical rectangles that mark transitions from one section of “Fashion” part to another. There are parts of letters ‘f’ and ‘n’ in the blocks on this screen. Because the topic of this section is fashion, the spectator-users can think that these letters stand for the first and last letters of the word ‘fashion’. However, there is also a convention in the printed matter of the Western world in which the middle letters of the so-called ‘f-words’ are left out when they are written. F-words are swearwords and it is often thought that they can offend some readers of the text. When the middle letters are left out, readers can mentally fill in the missing words, if they like. Maybe in this part Liulia is trying to make AB’s spectator-users aware that fashion can also be offending to some people or groups of people. Maybe with the use of the f-word style letters, Liulia is covertly trying to decrease the power and authority of fashion world and its designers, or maybe she just thinks that we should not take fashion too seriously.

Although the audiovisual elements of AB’s part “Fashion, designers” were not part of my analysis, I think that Liulia could have used sound more as an element of AB, to make the silenced ‘objects of desire’ of the fashion world to speak, to give them a voice and thus in that way also change the way women are seen and perceived in our culture.

6. CONCLUSION

I set out to study how women were represented through fashion on CD-ROM *Ambitious bitch* in texts and images and then the text and image combinations put together by Liulia. In my opinion, in the images of “Fashion, designers” women are represented mainly according to the conventional ways of representing women in the Western world. Women, dolls and statues representing women or feminine

pieces of clothing appear in all the images of “Fashion, designers”. There are also more texts and quotations written or said by women in “Fashion, designers”. The images appearing in “Fashion, designers” are still images. Women are represented as spectacles, white, frozen, silent, and at times blurred and distorted. All the images feature Western women. The women appearing in the images are often young. In many images the women are dressed in small clothes. Some images feature clothes that have become familiar to us from pornographic or ‘men’s’ magazines. In many parts of “Fashion, designers”, the spectator-user of the CD-ROM can read the texts and images to convey a message of ‘Otherness’ from men or the requirements of femininity nowadays directed to women. For example, in some images there are items of clothing that are connected to women, such as high-heeled shoes or underwear. In some images there are dolls or mannequin dummies, in some even statues, instead of women.

As Bergvall, Bing and Freed (1996:1-30), have claimed, in modern society, language has power and it is used in constructing and maintaining male dominance. There are 67 written comments, out of 7 do not reveal the gender of the speaker, 23 are by men and 37 are by women. Most of the texts and quotations are concerned about women’s position in the world of fashion. Although some of the written comments are ironical, because they represent women in such an aggravated way that they make the spectator-user question the messages and meanings given by the texts, most of the time it is also easy as a woman who is used to in reading fashion magazines, listening to ‘fashion talk’ and looking at fashion images, to pass the comments as language typical to the fashion world, and therefore it shows the way the Western culture has internalised and naturalised the way women are seen. At times Liulia tries also use humour in “Fashion, designers”, but it is usually quite subtle.

In “Designer” and “Garment” parts women are represented more verbally than visually. Out of 42 images in the “Designer” and “Garment” parts 20 picture garments, 9 dolls, 4 parts of women and 8 women. In the images of the “Designer” and “Garment” parts women are often replaced by mannequin or Barbie dolls, ‘empty’ clothes or feminine accessories that can increase the

'Otherness' of women. At times the images are blurred or distorted artistically, which corresponds to the style fashion images often have on television or magazines. In the artistic style the spectator cannot actually see the clothes displayed or the women wearing them.

The comments of male fashion designers are often undervaluing or belittling women. In addition, the comments of female fashion designers are often also hostile towards women in a way that the female fashion designers try to differ themselves from their female clientele. That may be a result of the 'artist-creator' myth that has developed in the 19th century in the Western world and which states that the independent, creative artists have their power given by God and are first and foremost male. Therefore female designers try to adopt masculine viewpoints and comments and Liulia tries to reveal that. However, at the same time Liulia seems to criticise some female fashion designers for adopting such masculine points of view, although they would have the power to be more supportive towards women and even change the way women are seen and represented through fashion. In parts of "Fashion, designers" Liulia tries to use irony to reveal stereotyped ideas about women in fashion world. She is trying to laugh at the expertise and power of fashion designers by using their words as weapons against them, but at times her combinations seem to repeat the usual messages of fashion world accompanied by only mild irony or doubt.

However, AB's part " Fashion, designers" can also be read that it is possible for women designers to use their masculinity as a masque behind which they can hide their real self, as well as for women to use fashion as a masque. Also, as Hollander (1978) and Uotila (1994) have suggested in their theories of dressing as picture making, women can possibly become artists and subjects through dress designing as well as dressing, and to use designing and dressing to achieve their own means.

Like Betterton (1989:13) and Evans and Thornton (1989:8-9) have said, fashion and women's magazines are categories of image that are especially addressed to women and women are also often depicted in their imagery. Women can use these categories in creating new identities to themselves, like for example

Chanel or Westwood may have done and use the images as models in transforming themselves. Fashion can also be used in limiting women's potential identities, as can be seen from images A1.1-32, in which the same image of young, white, slim female models has been repeated over and over again, although the image has been differently coloured and, at times, slightly differently distorted.

Femininity is also one concept that is often connected to fashion and that can be used in limiting women's identities. As Pollock (1988:84) has said, women have some power to negotiate and refashion femininity, too, and that changes its meanings. Therefore femininity can have different meanings to different women and also to men looking at women.

Throughout "Fashion, designers" fashion is a feature connected more to women than men. However, the interpretations of the spectator-user depend also on his or her position as a viewer. The spectator-user can either look at the pictures as they are or try to find additional meanings in the text/image combinations. The images can get new meanings when they are read in connection with texts, and the texts when they are read in connection with the images. Liulia does not underline the messages she is trying to convey, but she lets the spectator-user make his or her own interpretations of "Fashion, designers", just as the spectator-user can find his or her own way through the CD-ROM. For example the masquerade and performativity of fashion is referred to in some texts and very subtly in some images, but could have been brought in a more straightforward way in images. In an interview (*HS Kuukausiliite* January 1996) Liulia has stated that behind her artworks there is always years of background study. The user of *Ambitious Bitch* can get a lot out of the CD-ROM without a prior knowledge of feminist theory, but knowing about it helps the spectator-user to notice even more.

One element of fashion images is that they are supposed to arouse desire in their spectators. The spectators see the images and start desiring to either be like the fashion models that look like example figures of Western standards of beauty, or to desire to own the pieces of clothing that the models wear. Often the

aim of fashion is to make the spectators buy the clothes in hope that wearing the clothes would make them look like the models. However, several images in “Fashion, designers” have been changed and visibly manipulated. In many cases, the women depicted in the pictures do not resemble women so much at all. The faces of the women in images have been placed in a shadow and blurred, making it hard for female spectator-users to identify with the images. Furthermore, at some points, Liulia has used dolls and mannequin dummies instead of real women. The manipulating of the pictures and using dolls can have a distancing effect from the pictures and make it hard for women to identify with the pictures.

However, the mannequin dolls can have several meanings: they can also represent ideal bodies that set an example that is almost impossible for ordinary women to achieve, which is very stressful and restricting for women. They can also represent women’s masquerade, hiding behind fashion, which can be very liberating. It seems that Liulia gives freedom for the spectator-user to decide what point of view s/he adopts in relation to the images.

Liulia uses very traditional elements of fashion in her artwork. Sometimes at least I myself as the spectator-user hoped that she would have used something more radical and absurd to bring out more the elements that we often have learned to take for granted and that can be found in everyday life and in the walks of life such as fashion. The elements of fashion and wearing clothes may have been naturalised, but as a result of them different genders in Western society are treated differently. Liulia could have done even more to contrast and question the roles given to men and women in fashion. Sometimes when we focus on the different expectations and assumptions about different genders, some of them may start to look ridiculous and like they are in a need of change and, in my opinion we as readers of our cultural texts should be more aware of these expectations and assumptions.

The importance of this research is to make people realize how images try to affect us and how we have learned to take for granted certain forms of representation. We think that they are natural, ‘the way things are supposed to be’,

although they actually are based on the conventions of our society, and therefore they can be changed.

Liulia relies on AB much in the Western style reading from left to right. It is possible to move from one screen to another inside AB by moving a computer mouse, so a white arrow appears on the edge of the screen and then clicking the mouse. If spectator-user goes through AB reading screens and moving from one screen to another by clicking the right hand side of a screen, the texts chosen by Liulia sometimes form little stories, such as, for example in screens A1.7, A1.8 and A1.9. As a result, although Liulia has noted that she did not want AB to be linear, since she thinks linearity is masculine, there are linear elements inside non-linear AB. Therefore there are elements of masculinity inside Liulia's 'feminine user-interface'.

Women are represented in various fields and various ways in our culture. The Western culture has certain conventions, according to which women are usually represented. Therefore it would be interesting to study further what the conventions of the representation of women in our Western culture have been and whether they are changing. Also, it would be interesting to know if they are changing at the moment, how are they changing, and what are the factors that influence the change. For example, is Western culture starting to use more images of men and are the images of men, for example in fashion, used in a similar way as the images of women were used before. *Ambitious Bitch's* part "Fashion, designers" was mainly concerned with the representation of women in the comments and images taken from the French and Anglo-Saxon countries. Since fashion has not been studied much in Finland, it would be interesting to learn how women are represented in the world of Finnish fashion, especially when we Finnish women often think ourselves as more equal and independent as, for example, our Southern European counterparts.

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APPENDIX 1

MARITA LIULIA: AMBITIOUS BITCH MULTIMEDIA CD-ROM 1996.

Sub menu: "FASHION, DESIGNERS"

My descriptions of the music and pictures of the Fashion Designer's part are written in brackets: {...}.

{Fashion Designers –section begins with a sound of a whispering voice: "It's official, extremely fashion, garments, high fashion, it's fabulous", and a sound of applause.}

O) Main menu of the "FASHION, DESIGNERS":

{On the screen there is a picture with three green texts and symbols; flowers, squares, triangles and snow flakes. The background of the image has a leopard spotted pattern. The texts seem to "flash": they change colour from dark to light green.}

FASHION
DESIGNERS
GARMENT

A) PART "FASHION":

{Click "FASHION". A whispering voice is saying: "Miraculous, fashionable, fabulous, extreme".}

A1.1) {A screen with a vertical rectangle on the right hand side. The main colour of the screen is green and yellow. There is a picture of distorted models on a catwalk inside the rectangle. Click the right hand side. Moving from one screen to another is every time done by clicking the right hand side, when a white triangle appears.}

A1.2) {A picture of five distorted catwalk models (main colour turquoise), same sound as in A1.1.}

"Fashion is a guided tour of
feminine difference".
CarolineEvans & MinnaThornton

A1.3) {The same picture as above, same sound as in A1.1. and A1.2}

For women fashion is both prescribed
and reviled.

CarolineEvans & MinnaThornton

A1.4) {The same picture as above, same sound as in A1.1, A1.2 and A1.3. Words written in bold are written in different colour in the CD-ROM.}

It is prescribed as an aesthetic packaging of the female body;

it is reviled

as deliberate disguise and deception

CarolineEvans & MinnaThornton

A1.5) {The same picture and sounds as in A1.1-4.}

Women must

“perform”

femininity,

and fashion

is part of that

performance.

CarolineEvans & MinnaThornton

A1.6) {Empty screen, two vertical rectangles on each side. Pictures of distorted models in the both rectangles. Part of letter ‘f’ on the left side rectangle, part of letter ‘n’ on the right side. Colour of the screen greenish yellow. Pulsating heart on the left hand side, crystal on the bottom right hand side of the screen. Click right hand side (white triangle appears).}

A1.7) {The same picture of distorted models as above, except instead of images inside two rectangles the whole image of five distorted models fills the screen. There is a small vertical rectangle in the middle of a screen with a small picture of a woman, who seems to be looking at the spectator through the letters ‘n’ and ‘d’ in the word ‘and’. In the background there is music without words. There is a line of little stars in the upper part of the screen and two arrows that face each other in the middle of the screen.}

...for **men** act and **women** appear

John Berger

A1.8) {The same picture of distorted models as above, except there is a picture of a small woman in the small rectangle in the middle, looking at the spectator through the wedge of ‘k’ in ‘looked’. Music without words.}

Men look at **women**

John Berger

A1.9) {The same picture of distorted models as above, the picture in the rectangle in the middle seems to be looking at the spectator through the 'c' of 'watch'. Music without words.}

Women **watch** themselves
being **looked at**
John Berger

A1.10) {Sound: "Miraculous, fashionable, fabulous, extreme."
Empty screen, two vertical rectangles on each side, colour purple. There is a small, black and white pulsating heart on the left hand side, crystal on the bottom right hand side.
Click right hand side. White triangle appears.}

A1.11) {The same picture of distorted models as before, colour purple, same sound as in A1.10 above.}

"Fashion is more than a language
TRUE – it communicates"
Elizabeth Wilson

A1.12) {The same picture of distorted models as before, colour purple, same sound as in A1.10-11 above.}

It is **also** tactile, visual
it is **about** touching
surfaces, **colours**, shapes
Elizabeth Wilson

A1.13) {The same picture of distorted models as before, colour purple, same sound as in A1.10-12 above.}

It **embodies** the culture
Elizabeth Wilson

A1.14) {Two blue vertical rectangles on the left and right hand side of the screen, part of "f" on the left, part of "n" on the right, in both rectangles there is a picture of a distorted model. Just music in the background.}

A1.15) {Just music in the background, a picture of blue models distorted differently than before. Words written in **BOLD**, are written in different colour.}

Fashion – **as performance art**
 - acts **as a vehicle**
 for this ambivalence;
 Elizabeth Wilson

A1.16) {Just music in the background, a picture of blue models as in A1.15.}

the **daring** of fashion
 speaks **dread** as well as **desire**;
 Elizabeth Wilson

A1.17) {Just music in the background, a picture of blue models as in A1.15-16.}

the **shell** of chic,
 the **aura** of glamour,
 always **hides** a wound.

Elizabeth Wilson

A1.18) {Two dark blue vertical rectangles, part of “f” on the left, part of “n” on the right, as in the word ‘fashion’. In both rectangles there is a picture of a distorted model. Words “chanted” in the background: “Miraculous, fashionable, fabulous, extreme.” Words that are underlined are underlined with dots in the text.}

A1.19) {Images of five fashion models on a catwalk, main colour blue. Their figures have been deformed in a wavy style and their faces have been blurred so you cannot see any of their faces.}

it’s true: Men *do* dominate
 women’s fashion.
 Valerie Steele

A1.20) {The same image as in A1.19.}

*Of famous 20th century
fashion designers*

*65% are male
 35% are female.*

A1.21) {Just music in the background. On the screen there are two vertical rectangles. Inside of each rectangle there is a picture of orange/brown models

distorted differently than before. Words that are underlined are underlined with dots in the text. }

A1.22) {The same picture of models as in the previous screen, distorted differently again. The face of the second woman on the right side of the screen has been framed with two parallel horizontal lines of yellow dots. The other women are distorted so that the spectator cannot see their faces. }

Do men design
clothes that are
more “flattering”
to women?

A1.23) {The same picture as in previous screen, except on the right hand side of the screen two vertical lines of yellow dots separate the body of the second woman from the right. The other women are distorted so that the spectator cannot see their faces. }

Do women dress to please men?

A1.24) {Picture of distorted models on a catwalk. On the right hand side there is a small yellow question mark above the head of the image of the woman furthest on the right. }

Women designers tend to be less
“objective”
because they design for themselves.
Oscar de la Renta

A1.25) {Picture of distorted models on a catwalk. }

Men get easier entrée
to the field
because of
prejudice
toward women.
Dianne T. Meranus

A1.26) {Two light purple vertical rectangles on both sides of the screen. There is part of “f” on the left, part of “n” on the right, in both rectangles there is a picture of a distorted model. Words “chanted” in the background: “Miraculous, fashionable, fabulous, extreme”. There is also a ringing sound. Words that are written in italics are written in italics in the text. }

A1.27) {The same image as in A.26, except now the spectator can see small faces of the audience of the fashion show at the bottom of the screen. The audience is looking up at the fashion models.}

Fashion *never is*
- it's just a trend.
GeorgSimmel

A1.28) {The same picture of distorted models on a catwalk as in A1.27.}

It's always on the make, but
as a result it no longer exists.
GeorgSimmel

A1.29) {Two light blue vertical rectangles, part of "f" on the left, part of "n" on the right, in both bars a picture of a wavyly distorted model. Just music, no words.}

A1.30) {Picture of five distorted blue models on a catwalk.}

Trends pass but *fashion* remains.
It's mortal in it's immortality.

Arto Noro

A1.31) {The same picture as in A1.30.}

Fashion can *quote*
anything it wants.

WalterBenjamin

A1.32) {The same picture as in A1.30-31.}

Fashion is always postmodern.
If it's fashion, it's already POST!

ArtoNoro

B) {PART "DESIGNERS"

Click "DESIGNERS".

On the screen there are the names of famous fashion designers surrounded by a leopard spotted frame. The names from left to right: }

GAULTIER RYKIEL YVESSAINTLAURENT c {inside a
circle=Chanel} VERSACE KARL LAGERFELD DONNA KARAN
VIVIENNE WESTWOOD CALVIN KLEIN

{Picture of shiny red lips on the upper left corner.

Click GAULTIER }

B1.1) {A picture of a distorted woman, her face invisible. She is looking up and left from the spectator. She looks like she is striking a fashion pose, her hand on her hip. She is wearing a black small top, white skirt, black-and-white striped stockings. The name 'Jean Paul Gaultier' is written vertically on the background. On the background voices saying something like "They destroy that crisp, expressive, light-hearted fashion show, let me go, let me go." }

[the ideal woman]

"the daughter of the one
who made women's lib"

B1.2) {The same picture as in B1.1, words written in **BOLD** are written in different colour}

[ideal of the liberated woman]

"**She knows her power,**
but she uses it
in a determined way,
with a jerk and a twist"

I HATE THE IMAGE OF SERVILITY

B1.3) {The same picture as in B1.1-2.}

A lot of young girls dress up like prostitutes
but **inside** they may be
pure, puritan, strict and reserved.

CODES ARE CHANGING

{End of part GAULTIER,
Click RYKIEL.}

B2.1) {A sound of whispers on the background. Pictures of two rows of women's high heel shoes with open toes and straps. Picture is coloured as a photograph film negative. The shoes are placed above and below the text.}

Sonia Rykiel
I hate the word feminine!

B2.2) {The same picture and music as in B2.1.}

“I mean, there is **a woman** and **a man** and when I say ‘woman’,
it suggests all that is **radiant**, tender, **fascinating**, gentle,
demoniac, exaggerated!

{End of part RYKIEL,
Click Yves Saint Laurent.}

B3.1) {Picture of a smiling mannequin doll dressed in a wedding dress. There are many white veils in the background. The doll is smiling and looking downwards, not at the spectator. The picture shines as if it were in a shop window. There is a sound of whispered words. The colour of the screen is mainly light blue.}

When a dress of *Yves Saint Laurent's* appears in a salon,
or on television we cry of joy.
For the dress we had *never* dreamed of is there,
and it's *just* the one we were waiting for,
and *just* that year.

MargueriteDuras

B3.2) {The same picture and whispers as in B3.1.}

When a dress of *Yves Saint Laurent's* appears in a salon,
or on television we cry of joy.
For the dress we had *never* dreamed of is there,
and it's *just* the one we were waiting for,
and *just* that year,
We are the *desert* that was waiting for the dress,
and thus each day we wait for the moment of *truth*.

MargueriteDuras

B3.3) {The same picture and whispers as in B3.1-2.}

I design classic shapes for women
so that they feel
the same confidence
in their clothes
as men do in their suits.

YvesSaintLaurent

{End of part Yves Saint Laurent,
Click Chanel.}

B4.1) {Sound of whispering voices saying something like “They destroy that crisp, expressive, light-hearted fashion show, let me go, let me go.” There is a picture of several pairs of gloves, a handbag, shoulder bag and a bra. Colouring of the image is as if in a photo negative.}

Men make dresses
[Coco Chanel]
in which
one can't move.

B4.2) {The same picture and whispers as in B4.1.}

C {inside a circle}
My genius
[Coco Chanel]
was to
liberate women.

B4.3) {The same picture and whispers as in B4.2, except ‘C’ changes to a “Chanel” logo, with two intertwined mirror image C’s inside a circle}

C
My genius
[Coco Chanel]
was to
liberate women.

B4.4) {The same picture and whispers as in B4.1-2.}

L'Elegance
[Coco Chanel]
c'est moi.

{In the picture there is a green cross on the lower right corner. When it is pressed, a new screen appears.}

B4.5)

Chanel always dressed
[like the strong independent male]
she has dreamed of being.

Salvador Dali

{End of part Chanel.
Click Versace.}

B5.1) {Picture of two statues of women of white marble. The statue on the left is standing; the statue on the right is in a kneeling position. Both statues are pictured sideways, from behind, so spectator can see the statues backs, legs and parts of breasts but not faces. Both of the statues have their arms protectively around their breasts. The statues are placed in a large hall. The hall is elaborately decorated, with carvings and mirrors. The hall is well lit with chandeliers that multiply because of the mirrors. On the left corner there is a small face of a woman. It is hard to notice in the middle of all grandeur. She has long brown hair and a double chin and seems to be looking doubtfully at the statues. Sound: “Extreme, crisp, expressive”, spoken by whispering voices.}

GIANNI VERSACE

I think all the parts of a woman can be sexy
if they are well highlighted.

B5.2) {The same music and pictures as in B5.1.}

GIANNI VERSACE

I often fall in love with hips,
breasts, or legs.

{End of part Versace,
Click Karl Lagerfeld.}

B6.1) {Whispered words voices saying something like “They destroy that crisp, expressive, light-hearted fashion show, let me go, let me go.” There is a picture of a mannequin doll’s head. The Female doll is wearing a red swimming cap and swimming goggles. She has white skin, bright red lips and brown eyes that look down and not towards the spectator. She has an enormously long neck.}

It’s ridiculous

It’s thanks to MONSTROSITIES that we can *invent* something.

Karl Lagerfeld

B6.2) {The same picture and sound as in B6.1.}

Vulgarity is not disturbing when people are young.

But as the years pass, people start to do things they shouldn’t.

Karl Lagerfeld

{End of part Karl Lagerfeld,

click Donna Karan.}

B7.1) {Picture of a white t-shirt spread on a cloth. There is a text written at the top of the screen. Whispering voices saying something like “They destroy that crisp, expressive, light-hearted fashion show, let me go, let me go.”
No music on the background.}

DONNAKARAN
recognized that working women
want clothes
that fit.

the FACE

B7.2) {The same picture as in B7.1. No sound.}

Hang on, how come
no one else noticed?

the Face

B7.3) {The same picture as in B7.1-2. No sound.}

DONNAKARAN’S
professional rise
has a lot to do
with the current
rise of “forty-something”
female executives,
like herself,
who want to look
pulled-together
but not prim.

JennyCapitan

{End of part Donna Karan.
Click Vivienne Westwood.}

B8.1) {Picture of a woman’s hips and thighs. The woman’s legs are very white. She is wearing what appear to be latex fabric shorts, a gun holster, a belt with metal dots and a garter. In the background there is veil-like white material. Sound of whispering voices saying something like “They destroy that crisp, expressive, light-hearted fashion show, let me go, let me go.”}

IN ORDER TO MAKE PEOPLE TO THINK YOU DO HAVE TO
EMOTIONALLY HURT THEM IN SOME WAY.

Vivienne Westwood

B8.2) {Picture of a pair of sexy, shiny black shoes. The shoes have thick soles, very high heels and several straps. The shoes are placed childishly inwards, toes facing each other. Sound of whispers.}

YOU HAVE TO DESTROY
TO CREATE.
Vivienne Westwood

B8.3) {The same picture and sound as in B8.2.}

CLOTHES ARE THE ONLY WAY
MOST PEOPLE CAN EXPRESS THEMSELVES
Vivienne Westwood

B8.4) {A picture of a woman's bottom in black small panties, gun holster hanging by her side. She is wearing what appear to be tiny underpants and a garter-like top. The viewer can see her buttocks and thighs from behind. Her hand is placed pose-like on her hips.}

WOMEN ARE THE MOST CONSERVATIVE SECTION OF SOCIETY,
THEY WILL NOT RISK ANYTHING.

Vivienne Westwood

B8.5) {The same picture and sounds as in B8.4.}

SEX IS THE THING THAT BUGS ENGLISH PEOPLE MORE THAN
ANYTHING ELSE, SO THAT'S WHERE I ATTACK...

Vivienne Westwood

B8.6) {The same picture and sounds as in B 8.4-5.}

I'D MUCH RATHER PROMOTE OR DEFEND HOMOSEXUALS THAN
WOMEN,
BECAUSE THEY'VE CONTRIBUTED ... MUCH MORE TO OUR SOCIETY.
Vivienne Westwood

{End of part Vivienne Westwood.

Click Calvin Klein.}

B9.1) {A picture of a mature woman in front of a wall. She is laughing so hard that her mouth is wide open. She is wearing a sweater, a big necklace and small black shorts. She is holding the legs of her shorts with her hands. Sound of whispers.}

Fashion is a reflection of what happens.

Calvin Klein

B9.2) {The same picture and text as in B9.1.}

It can't be too far in advance and if it's behind the times it's no good.

Calvin Klein

B9.3) {The same picture and text as in B9.1-2.}

It has to be in time.

Calvin Klein

{End of part Calvin Klein.

Back to B) "DESIGNERS" menu. When you click the red lips on the upper left corner of the screen, there appear several pictures of various women's shoes inside a leopard pattern frame. Rhythmic sound of footsteps. }

C) Part "GARMENT"

C1.1) {A screen with a vertical rectangle, colour brown, on the right hand side. Click the right hand side. Moving from one screen to another is every time done by clicking the right hand side, when a white triangle appears. Music, no words.}

C1.2) {An unfocused picture of a black and white lace brassiere and shiny pink panties placed on ground. Music.}

...the surface of sexual display functioned as a kind of
 "TOUCH ME NOT" armour,
 with voyeurism replacing actual
 sexual contact,

Elizabeth Wilson

C1.3) {An unfocused picture of a t-shirt with a picture of camel and palm trees.}

Clothes act as an extension of self and body;
in a very immediate way they represent culture...

Elizabeth Wilson

C1.4) {A picture of a Barbie doll leaning on a long leg of a shoe. The doll is wearing a small bathing suit, its blond hair is tied up on a ponytail and sunglasses are placed in its hair. The doll has very long legs and arms and a low cleavage. There are several shoes pictured on the background. There is a red cross on the lower right side. Music.}

Clothing and
other kind of ornamentation make human body
culturally visible.

Kaja Silverman

{Press the red cross.}

C1.5) {A close-up of the Barbie doll leaning on a boot. Music.}

Clothes don't maketh the man, but
they certainly maketh the woman.

Laura Craik

C1.6) {A blurry picture of a woman in a pink sleeveless top and a black mini skirt. The dress looks as if it has been drawn on the picture. She is wearing a black bra under the dress. Her face is blurry and half in a shade, but she is smiling in an unsure, desperate way. She looks forward and down. Her legs are crossed and she is leaning against a wall.}

All fashion is tyranny, but babe fashion
- the act of squeezing into a teensy
pink T-shirt and micro mini
- is especially cruel.

Laura Craik

C1.7) {The same picture as in C1.6.}

Dressing like a dozy 12-year-old means
you're likely to be treated as one.

Laura Craik

{The next click right brings you back to C1.4 again.}

C1.8) {A white short sleeved dress on brown fabric, out of focus. The dress looks like a nurse's uniform. It has five golden buttons that shine. Behind the dress there is a golden coloured fabric. Music.}

VALUE SYSTEMS ARE INEVITABLY EMBODIED IN OUR DRESS.

Elizabeth Wilson

C1.9) {Blue jeans on an orange surface. The picture is unfocused. The legs of the trousers are folded; they look like they were moving. Music.}

A garment can function either as
a fetish or as a transitional object.

Juha Siltala

C1.10) {The same picture and music as in C1.9.}

A fetish serves to mend one's weak body image,
when there always seems to be
something wrong with it.

Juha Siltala

C1.11) {A picture of seven checked green and black swimsuits on a purple surface. The suit in the middle is bigger than the other ones. The swimsuits seem to be arranged in a turning motion.}

In every human being a vacillation
from one [SEX] to another takes place

Virginia Woolf

C1.12) {The same picture as in C1.11.}

and often it is only [the CLOTHES]
that keep the male or female likeness

Virginia Woolf

C1.13) {The same picture as in C1.11-12.}

while underneath [the SEX] is
the very opposite of what is above.

Virginia Woolf

{End of AB's "FASHION, DESIGNERS" –part.}