THE FASHION PRODUCT AS MESSAGING FOR HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

BY

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When I am watching awards ceremonies, I am especially impatient with those winners acknowledging a long list of names. However, at this moment I totally understand how they feel.

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Finally, as a tradition, I’d like to thank my parents even though their knowledge of English is quite limited. Thank you, Mum, for mailing me so many clothes and thank you, Dad, for supporting my ideas and my dream. I love you.
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ABSTRACT

The present study sought to explore the effect of health fashion on individual and tried to describe its implication for public health campaign. Data were collected from one-on-one interviews with twelve undergraduate students. To assess their attitude on two skin-cancer T-shirts—one designed by Marc Jacobs and the other is a plain white T-shirt with ribbon on it and reasons why they have such attitude, the interviews were recorded and analyzed. Results showed that participants could generally understand the message on Marc Jacobs’ cancer T-shirt, but only three of twelve participants had positive rating on it. For the other skin cancer T-shirt, none of the participants correctly understood what the orange ribbon stands for and none of them had positive attitude on it. However, this study ultimately yielded many implications for future research regarding the health fashion campaigns and products.
Chapter I

Introduction and Literature Review

Introduction

There has been a long term debate about the effectiveness of health campaigns. For example, the US government plans to invest a new $340 million bill to the prevention and treatment of drug use (White House, 2010), and part of the money will go to the national anti-drug media campaign. Although health care advertising spending continues unabated it has also been the case that there had been an ongoing debate on the effectiveness of public health campaign (Bruvold, 1993; Ennett, Tobler, Ringwalt & Flewelling, 1994; Snyder, 2004). Some scholars simply suggest that setting a moderate expectation on the effectiveness of media campaigns is appropriate as outcomes are multi-faceted and complicated (Salmon & Johnson, 2001). Other campaign experts suggest that the failure of conventional campaigns indicates the need of employing more advanced campaign strategies, for example, community partnership, Entertainment-Education, and Media Advocacy. Each of these strategies functions in a different way and has different target audience.

Media advocacy is defined as “the strategic use of mass media as a resource for advancing a social or public policy initiative” (Wright & Jernigan, 1996). Media advocacy has been widely used in addressing variety of health issues, including alcohol and tobacco control, lead poisoning, nutrition, the prevention and treatment of HIV (Asbridge, 2004; Smith, Terry-McElrath, Wakefield, & Durrant, 2005; Becker, Smith, & Ciao, 2006). Media advocacy campaign designer considered that public health issue is the problem of certain social system rather than the problem of individual. Thus, the ultimate aim of media advocacy campaign is to perform the “agenda setting” function, influencing
the voters and policy makers and thus ultimately change related social policy (Wright & Jernigan, 1996).

Entertainment-Education is a practice of purposely delivering media message to both educate and entertain to increase audiences’ knowledge, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms and change overt behavior (Bouman, 2002; Singhal & Rogers, 2004). To raise awareness of HIV and advocate healthy behavior, Entertainment-Education soap opera has been widely used in developing countries, such as Bangladesh (Do & Kincaid, 2006), Tanzania (Vaughan, Rogers, Singhal, & Swalehe, 2000), Sudan (Greiner, Singhal & Hurlburt, 2007) and other countries. In developed countries such as the United States (Hether, Huang, Beck, Murphy & Valente, 2008) and the Netherlands (Bouman, 2002), Entertainment-Education drama is also very popular in campaigns advocating safe sexual behavior. Based on Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), Entertainment-Education dramas use narratives to influence audience, especially the lowly-educated. In a typical storyline, positive figures would always benefit from performing the right behavior and the negative characters always got punished by doing the opposite (Singhal, 2005).

Community partnership is another health campaign strategy which stresses the importance of active community involvement and collaboration in the design and implementation of local projects (Brachet, 2001). Community-based health promotion effort not only adds human and material resource for the given campaign but also reinforces the media message and keeps the effect enduring beyond the campaign period (Thompson & Winner, 1999). Community partnership has been used in promoting mental health (Pharez, Walls, Roussel, & Broome, 2008), children and youth health
(Corona, Gonzales, Cohen, Edwards, & Edmonds, 2009), and other health issues across North America.

Each of these strategies functions in a different way and has different target audience. During recent years, there are more and more fashion campaigns and fashion products promoting public health issues, which seems to be different from other campaign strategies listed above. A latest example is the “Fashion against AIDS” campaign sponsored by H&M—the clothing giant from Sweden. Celebrities including Penn Badgley and Nikki Reed teamed up for this health event, and the company promised to donate 25% of the proceeds to the public (Lee, 2011). Collaboration between health organizations and fashion companies has generated a certain number of studies in marketing research. Yet the implication of this trend for public health campaign is largely underexplored. Given the popularity of the health fashion partnership, it is warranted to explore the nature and influence of this hybrid. There are a few features distinguishing this emerged phenomenon from the traditional health campaigns: first, health fashion delivers information via two different channels. Primarily, message is disseminated through mass media, including advertising, news report and fashion shows. Moreover, health information is also passed through the natural diffusion of fashion products; second, health fashion is using “fashion” as the carrier of “health message”, which is similar to using soap opera to deliver subliminal message; third, health fashion is also different from the moving advertisement—like the vans or the T-Shirts with the company’s name. Health fashion product is type of commercial product which people would like to pay for it. In all, health fashion deserves attention.
This thesis reviews the emergence of health fashion and its wide application. Then, to examine the influence of health fashion on individuals, an exploratory study is conducted using one-on-one interviews. Finally, this article discusses the possibility of using health fashion as a new and effective strategy in public health campaigns.

**Literature review**

*Fashion and Society*

Voltaire says:

“There is a fickle, teasing goddess
Fantastic in her taste, playful in adornment,
Who at every season seems to flee, return, and arise again?
Proteus was her father, her name is Fashion”

Fashion has always been an interesting topic. It is unstable, unreliable, and untouchable. Tracing back the history of clothing, one should actually look into the body covering arising in prehistoric human societies. For example, most of the figures in the Neolithic paintings have decorations on their heads or hands (Bigelow, 1979). Some argue that Adam and Eve’s experience in the Eden garden is the start point of human interest in garments.

Though there are different opinions about fashion’s origin, a widely shared perspective is that fashion is not merely the way that humans cover their bodies. As Presley (1998) stated, fashion is entwined with a number of factors, such as political and social forces. Fashion reflects social changes with symbolic meaning. For instance, Gordon (1991) examines the post-war social changes in America during 1920s. A group of artists in the Santa Fe area of New Mexico took blue jeans as a symbol of rebellion and insecurity.
Fashion also influences society in multiple ways. Primarily fashion determines what people wear and what is the symbolic meaning associated with the selected clothing (Schnorman, 2003). In most social contexts, one consciously chooses his/her clothing to present particular image and shape his/her social identity among peer group (Woodward, 2005). In addition, since social norm is collective behavior perceived by individuals, fashion is also used in negotiating social change. For example, in the early 1980s, the clothing style in China was slowly shifting from the pure navy suit (a symbol of Culture Revolution) to multi-colored dresses. The acceptance of diverse clothing styles symbolizes the death of a homogenous society and the ideology it connects to (Zhou, 2001).

With regard to the theme of this article, studies also showed that fashion industry have impacts on adolescents and youth’s perception and behavior. For example, reading fashion magazine has a negative effect on young woman’s appearance esteem (Krcmar, Giles & Helme, 2008). Low level of appearance esteem might motivate individual to conduct certain behavior to make a change. A recent study also shows that exposure to fashion media is one of the factors influencing adolescents’ sun-tanning behavior (Shoveller, Lovato, Young & Moffat, 2003).

**History of Health Fashion**

Talking about health fashion products, one could easily be remind of two items: ribbon and wristband. The symbolic use of ribbons in literature and real life has a long tradition in European and American history. Hundred years ago, the poem "She wore a yellow ribbon" and its variations had appeared in Europe. In United States, columnist Ribbon Pete Hamill published a story on New York Post in 1971, called “Going Home.”
In it, an ex-convict waits to see a yellow handkerchief on a roadside oak, which is an indication that his wife would welcome him home. The next year, ABC-TV produced a drama version of the story, which spurred Irwin Levine and L. Russell Brown to write a song named “Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree.” In the song, symbol yellow handkerchief is substituted by yellow ribbon. In 1981, yellow ribbons are displayed everywhere in America in support of Americans being held hostage in Iran. Ever since then, ribbon becomes a widely shared sign of welcoming the absent family member.

The connection between ribbon and health causes starts from the early 1990s. Visual Aids, a group dedicated in drawing public attention against AIDS, choose a ribbon in bright red as its symbol, mirroring the yellow ribbon’s use for supporting soldier in the Gulf War. Now the Red Ribbon is almost exclusively used in AIDS awareness campaign and is widely recognized.

Another popular symbol is Breast Cancer Campaign’s pink ribbon. The ribbon for breast cancer was first produced by Charlotte Haley, an older woman whose mother, grandmother and sister were battling the disease. She distributed hand-made peach ribbons to raise awareness about breast cancer, which seized the attention of Alexandra Penny of Self Magazine and Evelyn Lauder of Estee Lauder cosmetics. They would like to work with Haley on her peach ribbons but were rejected when Haley considered them “too commercial.” Penny and Lauder moved ahead with adopting the symbol, choosing a pink ribbon as the representation for their campaign; a color slightly different from peach (Walker, Hart, Gregg & Lajoie, 2010). The pink ribbons are ubiquitous today.

Following the breast cancer success, diverse organizations participated in the ribbon race by declaring a specific color to represent their cause; the orchid ribbon is
associated with testicular cancer; blue ribbon serves for raise awareness of colon cancer; brown ribbon connects to anti-tobacco, and purple ribbon signifies Crohn’s disease. It seems there are too many colors associated with cause to be properly remembered.

Along with appropriation of the ribbon as the symbolic stand-in for health campaigns, the wristband has become another health fashion item. In 2004, Nike introduced its “Livestrong” in support of the testicular survivor Lance Armstrong. This yellow rubber wristband has been stamped with the Motto “Livestrong”, raising awareness and generates funds for testicular cancer research. By the year of 2007, Livestrong wristbands yield $63 million in the three years after introduction (Ruibal, 2007). It also spurred other wristbands with health message, for example the ONE campaign raises awareness of AIDS epidemic. This campaign invites celebrities to wear a white wristband imprinted with the word ONE. It sells for $1, the same price of Nike’s Livestrong wristband (One, 2010).

Following the success of ribbons and wristbands, health becomes a hot topic in the fashion industry and has resulted in further variations for fashion items highlighting health issues. In United States, for example, there are innumerable categories of breast cancer awareness products. For example, Ralph Lauren issued its pink pony shirts for the cause of cancer care and prevention (10% of the net proceeds would be donated); Tommy Hilfiger published his charitable handbag for an on-going campaign initiated by Breast Health International (50% of the proceeds would be donated); in 2010, Guess designed a T-shirt embellished with pink crystals, partnered with Susan G. Komen for the Cure (100% of the net proceeds were donated). An incomplete list of the brand names participating in the breast cancer fashion includes: Ann taylor, BCBG, Van Cleef & Arpels, Swarovski,
New Balance, Estee Lauder, Tumi, Wilson, Guess, Rebecca Taylor, Victorinox, etc (Instyle, 2011). Their products include T-shirt, handbag, shoes, sunglasses, necklace pendant, suitcase, wristwatch, lipstick, tennis racket, and more.

In United Kingdom, Fashion Targets Breast Cancer (FTBC), a charity fashion initiative, launched its 15th annual collection in April, 2011. This year’s FTBC collection consists of a 'Love' T-shirt by Topshop, a heart print blouse from River Island and an Aamaya by Priyanka cocktail ring. 30% of the proceeds will go to charity Breakthrough Breast Cancer (Waite, 2011).

In fact, majority of the health fashion products and health fashion campaigns mentioned above are actually part of Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) practice. To fully understand how health is connected with fashion, an introduction of CRM is warranted.

**Cause-Related Marketing**

CRM refers to the cooperation between a "for profit" business and a non-profit organization. The corporation offers to donate a specific amount of money to a designated cause when customer engages in revenue producing transactions (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988). Now, CRM campaigns have become one of the most regularly used marketing tools (Polonsky & Wood, 2001).

The types of health cause involved in CRM application are diverse and can serve to support children protection to helping address poverty issues. Similarly, CRM as a marketing tool is also popular in a variety of industries, including food, manufacturing, and information technology industry. With regard to the focus of this study, health fashion products are commonly introduced with the joint effort of a health organization.
and a fashion company. One example is the partnership between Nike and Lance Armstrong Foundation, as mentioned above.

Another attention-grabbing and profit-making CRM partnership is Marc Jacobs’ alliance with New York University Cancer Institute. In 2008, Victoria Beckham and other pop stars stripped off for the skin cancer awareness T-shirt designed by Marc Jacobs. While celebrities on the T-shirts are naked, important parts are covered by slogans “protect the skin you’re in” and “protect your largest organ.” This shirt was priced at $35 each and became really popular according to its market performance. Through May of 2009, this fashion campaign had raised over 1 million dollars for the New York University school of Medicine (New York University, 2009).

However, CRM is defined as a marketing strategy, the current CRM research primarily focuses on the company’s revenue and social image (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Yeo Jung & Wei-Na, 2009). CRM campaign designer do not typically include the desired behavior change into campaign evaluation analysis. A recent survey suggests that raising public awareness is the NPO’s primary concern in a CRM partnership, surpassing the goal of seeking immediate funding. However, for the NPOs, the outcomes of the CRM alliance usually failed to match the public awareness goal (Runté, Basil & Deshpunde, 2009). With regard to the popularity of health fashion product, as noted by Walker, Hart, Gregg and Lajoie, (2010), additional research is needed to determine its effect on consumer and society other than the sales.

Influence of Health Fashion

There is little empirical research on the influence or the effect of health fashion. Among the available ones, a national study in 2004 examined the influence of a national
campaign targeting heart disease. Initiated by American Heart Association and sponsored by Macy’s and Pfitzer, this campaign is named “Go red For Woman” and it uses a red dress pin as symbol to alert woman about heart disease. According to the survey, “it can be inferred that the heart disease awareness was greater among those woman who reported seeing or having read the red dress symbol, though a causal relationship cannot be determined” (Mosca, Mochari, Christian, Berra, Taubert, Mills, Burdick, & Simpson, 2006). This seems to suggest that health fashion campaign is effective in informing audience of a health topic. However, what is its influence on audience’s perception, attitude and behavior? This remains to be examined.

The present study seeks to identify the college students’ perception and attitude on two health fashion items promoting skin cancer awareness. One is designed by Marc Jacobs which has a naked Victoria Beckham and endorsement of many celebrities. The

![Figure 1 (Skin Cancer T-shirt by Marc Jacobs)](image1.png)
other is a charity shirt with an orange ribbon and the writing “Cancer sucks” on it. The Marc Jacobs one is designed by a commercial company and the ribbon one is produced by a charity organization, they represent two types of health fashion products which would be discussed in Chapter III.

Marc Jacobs’ Skin cancer T-shirt was chosen for the experiment for the following reasons: first, Marc Jacobs is one of the most popular high-end clothing brands who have cooperated with health fashion; second, striking health message—including naked celebrities and writings— is printed on the T-shirt, which could generate a higher level of stimulation; third, there has not been a ubiquitous media campaign for skin cancer when this T-shirt is issued. Compared with the breast-cancer ribbons, there may be less pre-exposure to the campaign or products.

The first research question I try to explore is:

RQ1: Do college students understand the health message on both skin-cancer T-shirts?
A study summarizes the history, theory application and types of health fashion. In the discussion part of their study, the authors pose several questions and areas for continuing study, including the unbalanced attention on different health issues, the ubiquity of certain health fashion products and its problem in raising awareness, and the future of health fashion, He also asks an interesting question—“are fashion items chic because they support a health cause, or are health issues chic because of fashion items?” (Walker, Hart, Gregg & Lajoie, 2010). The health campaign designer and the fashion manager will be interested in the answer as guidance for changing health-related behavior or making profit. Thus the second research question is:

**RQ2:** What kind of attitude do college student have on the skin cancer T-shirts? Why do college students hold their attitudes?

Moreover, as the influence of health fashion on individual perception, attitude and behavior remains to be a new topic. The present research tries to explore the potential variables or factors associated with the health fashion influence.

**RQ3:** What other factors affect attitude towards these two T-shirts?

To explore these research questions, a focus group study and one-on-one interviews were conducted. Participants were first showed with these two T-shirts and then a set of questions were asked to assess their perception and attitude. Results and implications were discussed in the later chapter.
Chapter II

Methods

The present study is composed with two stages. The first stage is a focus group study conducted to identify prominent themes and topics about health fashion. The second stage involves a quasi-experiment followed by one-on-one interview.

Stage I Method

Recruitment questionnaires were sent to students enrolled in two communication courses, with 72 completing responses. The participants were asked to choose their favorite clothing brands among nine different fashion labels. As the present study selected a skin cancer T-shirt by Marc Jacobs as one of the stimulus, only Participants who circled Marc Jacobs were invited to participate in second stage research. Based on the gender (to balance), eight respondents were invited to the focus group study and the others were to join the one-on-one interview based on their preference and availability of time.

After sending out invitations for focus group study, four participants promised to come with two showing up. The focus group study is used to elicit preliminary answers to the research questions as well as to explore potential variables and to assess the way of asking questions. This session was conducted by the researcher. To explore RQ1 and RQ2, questions including “How do you think about these two items” “Do you like them” “Do you get the message that they try to deliver” and “Why do you think they are attractive or not attractive” were posted during the discussion (see Appendix 2).

In order to determine what other variables are associated with the attitude towards health fashion products, more probing questions including “Do you follow the fashion
shows” “Where do you get information about fashion” “Do you talk about fashion with your friends?” “Do you notice what kind of clothes your friends are wearing?” and “Do you think fashion have some influences on your behavior?

Implication of Stage I

Given the fact that only two participants showed up in the focus group session, researcher does not make any conclusion out of the data collected in focus group. Instead, as Stage I mainly served to explore the themes and topics, the data was analyzed to generate themes and topics for the stage II study. The implications are enumerated here concisely without quotes. However, some topics discussed in the later part will refer to the focus group.

At the beginning, the researcher asked several general questions to make the participants fully relaxed, including: “Why do you care about fashion?” “What is the most popular style in this university?” and “Can you list some popular clothing brands at this campus? ” After five minutes of conversation, the researcher found it was the right time to go on with the core questions. Thus, after the focus group session, the researcher determined the optimal time for probing questions, approximately 5-6 minutes after starting the session.

With regard to the RQ1, the researcher asked: “How do you think of these T-shirts in general?” and “What kind of messages do you think these T-shirts want to deliver?” Both of the participants considered MJ’s T-shirt to be inappropriate and the orange ribbon one to be unattractive. They understood the message on MJ’s T-shirt. For the orange ribbon one, they knew it was a T-shirt against cancer but made no mentioned specific to skin cancer. In addition, they thought people in the urban area might like the
Marc Jacobs’ T-shirt better. Though they couldn’t offer specific explanations, two questions were devised for the second stage including: “Where are you from?” and “Whether the styles in your hometown are different from the styles in Wake Forest?”

For the RQ2 the question posed was “why are these T-shirts not attractive to you?” Both participants said they didn’t want to wear a T-shirt with a naked woman and so many writings and thus they prefer the orange ribbon one more than the Marc Jacobs one. Besides, participant I said didn’t like Victoria Beckham and participant II didn’t think it’s necessary to be naked to express a cause. In addition, though they emphasized they would not wear these two T-shirts, they would not judge those wearing them. This reveals a potential situation that one might like the T-shirt when it was worn by others. The above findings together led to three questions: “Does it make a difference if the naked figure on the T-shirt is your favorite celebrity?” “What types of health message on the garments is more acceptable for you?” and, “How do you think about people wearing these T-shirts?”

Finally, participant I, a senior student, demonstrated inconsistent opinions and behaviors. Initially she emphasized that she had her own style and didn’t care about the brand names. However, she got especially excited when she saw the brand name of a dress (it is from a premier designer). To avoid participants’ bias, researcher drafted an explanation prior to the interview in the stage II study, clarifying that “there is no competition and no one will judge the participant’s taste or sense of fashion.” In addition, more fashion items were prepared to confuse the participants about the true intention of the experiment.
Stage II Method

Twelve respondents who selected Marc Jacobs as one of their favorite clothing brands participated in the interviews, eleven female and one male. No participants in the interview were involved in the previous focus group study. They are told that the purpose of the study is to measure “college students’ perception and attitude toward fashion products”, without mention of health message on fashion products. Arrangements were made for each participant to come in at their own convenience, a time that suited to their schedule.

The procedure was maintained identical for each participant. A large meeting room with sofa was set up for the interviews where a participant would feel comfortable. An audio recorder was placed on the desk between the interviewer and interviewee. Conversation was recorded with the permission of IRB panel.

After debriefing the nature of the study and distributing consent forms, the researcher displayed three sets of fashion products, including Set I) two dresses whose brand labels are covered; Set II) two T-shirts including a Marc Jacobs skin cancer T-shirt and a skin cancer T-shirt without brand identification; Set III) two items from Top designers’ 2011 collection. Only the T-shirts in Set II are correlated to the present study. The reason for showing Set I and Set III products is to help participants relax as well as to divert the participants from the study’s purpose to avoid participants bias to fulfill expectations (Hawthorne Effect). After displaying each set of the products, the participants were questioned with same protocol. According to the responses, researcher sometimes asked followed-up questions to probe the in-depth reason.
Questions for Stage II and Method for Data Analysis

As a scale for measuring perception and attitude on clothing or accessories is not available from previous research, the questions used in the study were inspired by a scale measuring attitude toward private label products (Burton, Lichtenstein, Netemeyer & Garretson, 1998). The questions were modified to fit the health fashion products and one-on-one interview. Additional questions were added based on the assessment of themes in stage I study.

In order to help interviewee relaxed, some general questions about fashion (SET A questions) were prepared, including “Why do you care about fashion?” What are the most popular fashion styles and fashion brands at this campus?”

To assess whether participants have positive attitude towards the health fashion products (RQ1), Set C questions are designed, including: “How do you think about these two T-shirts in general?” “Do you think they are attractive to you and why?” “What do you think about the health message on each T-shirt?” and “What would you think if you see your friends wearing these T-shirts?” Based on the focus group data, the researcher created several possible categories of participants’ attitude and the reason why they have such attitude (see Table 1). The data from these targeted questions was analyzed by categorizing the responses into these categories. Since most of the questions are open-ended, relevant responses were also considered if participants mentioned some reasons other than the ones listed below.

To explore RQ2, two questions (Set D), “Do you get the message of these T-shirts?” and “What are they?” were asked. The answers were analyzed by determining if participants mentioned skin-cancer or similar themes such as tanning or sun-screen.
Table 1. Attitude on Skin Cancer T-shirts and Reasons for Having Such Attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Sample Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Brand Name</td>
<td>I just like Marc Jacobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>It is cool to have such a graphic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>The material is soft and feels good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Message or Cause</td>
<td>It supports a cause and that’s good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Preference</td>
<td>I just like T-shirts, all kind of T-shirts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Brand Name</td>
<td>I do not wear things without brand name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>I do like so many writings and graphics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>It is poorly made and looks cheap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Message or Cause</td>
<td>I don’t want to wear a T-shirt for cancer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Preference</td>
<td>I just don’t wear T-shirt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine what other variables are associated with attitude towards T-shirts (RQ3), several questions including: “Where do you usually get information about fashion?” “Do you often talk about fashion with your friends?” and “Whether you and your friends make comments on each other’s clothes?” were designed. As these questions served to explore the correlation between individual difference and attitude towards cancer T-shirt, the data would be analyzed by comparing the participant’s answers to SET C and SET B questions.

In addition, as an explorative study, the researcher is interested in identifying potential factors relevant to the influence of health fashion. Thus the data analysis focused on exploring the relevant themes and ideas. No correlation was appropriate given the nature of the data set.
Chapter III

Results

The present study seeks to identify the impacts of health fashion on college students with three research questions. This chapter presents an analysis of interview data.

Analysis and Results for RQ1

Research question 1 asked: Do college students understand the health message on both skin-cancer T-shirts? To address the question, comparison of each participant’s response to the message of each T-shirt was conducted. Twelve participants were coded, assigning a letter to each - A, B, C... L. Only participant K is male and all other participants are female. They are all undergraduate students registered in either one of two pre-selected communication courses. In addition, given the open-ended nature of the questions, participants differed but often had similar answers. These differences are enumerated here in order to better describe their understanding of the message.

For the Marc Jacobs T-shirt, nine participants correctly got the message. Among them, five participants immediately identified the aim of this T-shirt is to raise awareness of skin cancer. For example, participant A answered, “Maybe skin cancer, or sun-exposure.” Similarly, Participant L answered, “It’s saying be careful of skin cancer.” Other two participants mentioned “skin cancer” in their answers. However they either hesitated or looked at the T-shirt for quite a while. For instance, Participant G initially responded, “I guess I am not quite clear about the ‘protect the skin you are in’...the image kind of detracts the message, kind of confuse me a little bit.” Then after take a closer look at the shirt, she said, “I would say maybe skin cancer.” Another two participants didn’t mention about skin cancer, but they understood the message. For
example, Participant E answered, “it says protect yourself from cancer, probably don’t go
tanning.” Participant K answered, “I think it's actually for sun screening.” There are
three participants who didn’t get the health message on Marc Jacobs’ T-shirt. Participant
J interpreted the naked woman and the writings as a message for encouraging one’s body
esteem, saying “I guess Marc Jacobs is influencing being confident, be confident with the
skin you are in, be confident about your body.” Participant D and Participant I saw the
writing of cancer institute, but they had no idea what type of cancer it was.

For the orange ribbon T-shirt, all of the participants understood that’s used for
raising cancer awareness, but none of them knew what the orange ribbon stands for.
Typically, Participant F answered, “The ribbon isn’t pink and gets a heart on it…I am
anti-cancer, but what kind of cancer it is talking about?”

Eight participants consider the message to be for cancer in general. For example,
Participant C said, “that one is just plain cancer” Two participants considered this shirt
was for breast cancer. For instance, Participant K answered, “Is that a breast cancer? Not
100% sure.” In a similar fashion, Participant L answered, “it has ribbon on it, kinds of
remind me of breast cancer, the Komen foundation and all of that.” Other two
participants thought the ribbon was for heart cancer. For instance, Participant B answered,
“Maybe something about cardiovascular or something.” Participant A said, “I don't know
what type of cancer, maybe like a type of heart cancer?”

As reported above, participants generally have a clear understanding on the Marc
Jacobs’ T-shirt. For the orange ribbon T-shirts, none of the participants could identify
skin cancer or related information.
Analysis and results for RQ2

Research question 2 asks “What kind of attitude does college student have on the skin cancer T-shirts? What makes the college students have such an attitude?” For the Marc Jacobs T-shirt, nine participants offered negative comments. The most controversial point was the naked Victoria Beckham on the front of the T-shirt. They either considered that a naked woman was offensive or simply didn’t want to wear a naked woman on shirt. For example, Participant F said, “She is naked …I guess, some people might find it offensive. I am not sure whether I do. If my guy wears it, I would certainly feel offended.” Similarly, Participant L answered, “I don’t think, me personally will feel super comfortable to wear a naked person on my body.” A second factor that made the shirt not attractive was the writings on it. Four participants mentioned that they would not wear T-shirts with so many words. For instance, Participant A said, “I don’t even want words or stuff on my shirt.” Participant I answered, “I don’t like the writing on it.” Similarly, Participant C disliked it because “it’s written all over.” In addition, four participants said they just didn’t wear T-shirts; having no feeling about T-shirts was the third reason. The answer of Participant F, “They are just T-shirts”, could adequately describe the attitude of other three. At last, health message is the forth reason why participants dislike Marc Jacobs’ shirt. Participant A said, “I just don’t want my cloth to convey such a strong message.” Participant G had a similar opinion. It ought to be clarified that in order to make sure that participants understand the difference between the messages of the T-shirt and the writings on the T-shirt, researcher asked a specific question inquiring participant’s attitude using the phrase “health message.”
Three participants have positive ratings on the naked Victoria Beckham shirt, though Participant E is the only one who directly says “I like it.” Participant H said, “I think it was pretty stylish.” And when researcher asked Participant L that how did she think if her friends worn this shirt, she said, “I would be really impressed if they wear it through the day. I would be really proud and impressed, a little bit jealous that they can pull it off.” The influence of brand name is the most cited reason why participants had positive attitude on Jacob’s shirt. Participant E was using “My brand Marc Jacobs” when explaining why she liked it. Participant L also agreed that “the brand has a great influence.” Some participants had an unfavorable attitude on the shirt, but they still credited the positive influence of the brand name. For instance, Participant B considered the shirt fashionable because “it refers to Marc Jacobs.” Another reason why participants liked the shirt is the quality. Participant L said, “I think the fabric is very thin and comfortable to wear.” In a same manner, Participant E compared two T-shirts and said, “The quality is better.” Interestingly, only Participant E offered the naked Victoria Beckham as the reason she liked it.

For the orange ribbon skin cancer T-shirt, surprisingly, none of the participants considered it to be very attractive. Typical comments are that, “This shirt is just like old person looking (Participant A)” “This one is just plain. It doesn’t seem meaningful. It just doesn't have any appealing and the message seems to be kind of kindling (Participant F)” “It is normal charity shirt” and, “it is plainer, very blunt (Participant B)” However, it should be noticed here that some participants would rather choose the orange ribbon T-shirt over the Jacobs’ one because they had a strong opinion on the naked woman. For example, Participant J said, “I might wear a shirt says cancer on it, but maybe not the
naked girl or whole thing. That is too much for me.” Participant L said, “I probably will be more comfortable to wear this one (ribbon one) because I am not sure whether I can wear a naked Victoria Beckham on my front.”

When asked why this T-shirt was not attractive, ten participants mentioned the fabric and cutting. For example, Participant A described it as “a big boxy T-shirt.” Participant C said: “the cut is so wide… it’s kind of rough feeling.” Participant E said, “The giant screen print, kind of (cheap).” Participant G said “I think this is a charity shirt and the material is the normal charity shirt material.” Similarly Participant F said, “This one (ribbon) is just plain. It doesn’t seem meaningful. It just doesn't have any appealing.” Two participants considered the word “sucks” to be offensive. For example, Participant A thought it’s a little inappropriate to wear “sucks” on her shirt. Participant G thought “that would be especially offensive to the family.”

Though no one liked it in particular, several participants have positive comments on the color and the message design. Participant G considered that “black and orange is just cool.” Participant L said the shirt had an “important message.” Participant K acknowledged its “humor side.”

To sum up, Marc Jacobs skin cancer T-shirt generated completely different attitudes among the participants. Majority of the participants have negative ratings and the top three reasons associated with such attitude are: 1) the provocative image 2) the writings on the shirts 3) personal preference. Only one fourth of the participants have favorable attitude on the cancer T-shirt. And the top reason is the brand name effect. Quality and design are also referred as one of the reasons. Thus, RQ2 is answered.
Analysis and Results for RQ3

Due to the open-ended nature of the conversation, part of the data is relevant to the topic but not discussed above. This section summarizes the additional findings in the interview.

First, several participants mentioned location as a factor when answering why Jacobs’ shirt was not attractive to them. All of the participants identify “preppy” and “conservative” as the predominate style at Wake Forest University where the study was conducted. Several participants consider people in urban area might be more into the Jacobs shirt. For instance, Participant A said, “I think this one would be popular in the city rather than in Wake Forest…I studies with NYU students, and they are much more into things they consider to be clever or funny.” Similarly, Participant E was the only participant who said “I like it.” She was from New Jersey, near New York City. She said, “If I see this in New York, I would just feel like...nice…I think it’s cool. I wouldn't be surprised by that in the city, SOHO or something.”

Another factor is age group. Participant A said, “I guess it would be more attractive to young people who think Marc Jacobs make someone really cool.” Interestingly, Participant H, a freshman, said that a lot of her friends in her high school had this T-shirt. But she didn’t see people wearing this T-shirt after entering college.

However, fashion media consumption doesn’t seem to be correlated to the attitude on the skin cancer T-shirts. Participants all indicate that they receive fashion information through magazine, online shopping and TV program. The only exception is participant E. She is the only one who follows the fashion week shows. It is not clear whether her positive attitude on the Jacob’s skin cancer T-shirt is associated with that.
In addition, though majority of the participants don’t like the naked woman on the shirt, they admit that the design is very attention-grabbing. For instance, Participant K said, “I think the Marc Jacobs one definitely grasps more attention. The immediate impression would not be of that like a cancer. So I think people maybe more drawn to it and better serve the message and be more likely to ask what it is.” Participant L said, “To wear the gray one, you have to have a lot of balls to do that. I would be really impressed if they wear it through the day.”

Finally, ten participants indicate that they talk about fashion with friends, they notice what people are wearing and make comments on each other. For example, Participant F said, “Looking around and walking on the school, if I see something that I think is pretty, then I would pay more attention to find out what it is so I can go and find.” Participant I said, “We do make comments on what others are wearing.”
Chapter IV

Discussion

Implication of Research Findings

As an exploratory study, the results are largely descriptive in nature. They suggest some possible associations, but variable were not designed or controlled and thus this work is only suggestive of potential avenues for future studies. In addition, with the small sample size, the generalizability of the results is speculative. However, there are a few interesting findings that deserve attention.

Be Wearable and Be Attention-Grabbing

As showed in chapter 3, the majority of the participants didn’t want to wear a naked Victoria Beckham on their shirts. However, meanwhile, they admitted that this provocative image could draw them into it. Similarly, some participants dislike the writings on the shirt, but these writings helped them get the health message—they all correctly correlated it to skin cancer. This seems to be contradictory. In order to better serve the cause, deliver clear information and grasp attention, the designer might have to attach letters, logos and graphics on the product. According to the interview, most of the participants considered that the health message was acceptable—depending on the way that the message was delivered. Most of them dislike the provocative image (such as the naked woman) and the offensive words (such as “sucks”). Some of them accept letters on shirt but dislike it being written all over. This actually posted a challenge to health fashion designer. In the future, more research is needed to test the way of delivering health message. If appealing to sex will decrease the likelihood that people wear it, whether appealing to humor would work better? Or are there any other methods? And of
interest, some said they wouldn’t wear the Jacobs T-shirt but kind of like it on others. Does the message still work in that case?

**Brand Name Effect**

A previous study shows that brand name has important effects on apparel consumer. People have higher rating score on the intrinsic attributes (fabric and quality), perceived value and perceived price of a product when it is labeled (MiKyeong, 2003). This suggests that brand has positive influence on the participants’ attitude on cancer T-shirts. In other words, if they like the fashion brand, they are more likely to like the health fashion products designed by this brand. All of the participants in study choose Marc Jacobs as one of their favorite clothing brands. According to the results, three participants like this T-shirt. They refer brand name as an important factor. Other participants don't like the T-shirt, but they think the brand name makes it “less so bad.” This seems to suggest that brand name can bring positive influence on participant’s attitude, but that influence is not power enough to change their opinion on certain product.

However, as I introduced many health campaigns sponsored by fashion companies in chapter I, it should be notified here that some health fashion items are produced without brand identification. For example, in the Go Red for Woman campaign mentioned previously has been using a red dress pin as its centerpiece. Though more than 10,000 companies, including Macy’s, joined the campaign to generate funding for heart cancer research, the red dress pin was produced by American Heart Association itself (American Heart Association, 2006). Similarly, the Pink Ribbon Shop (Pink Ribbon Shop, 2011) sells all kinds of items which are not named branded, including notebook, T-shirts, bracelets and other stuff. Of course, given the wide recognition of pink ribbon, one could
actually argue that this breast cancer logo itself is a brand. However, this raises several questions. Are the health products designed and labeled by a fashion company necessarily more popular or more fashionable? If health fashion product does not necessarily come from a fashion company, what is the difference between the traditional charity shirt and the health fashion product? Whether different fashion brand have different influences on individuals’ attitude on health fashion product? These questions remain to be defined and explored in future study.

**Ribbon and the Cause**

Currently the pink ribbon, or the simply the color pink, has been widely recognized as a symbol for raising breast cancer awareness. During the interview, several participants were confused by the orange ribbon which is used to alert people about skin cancer. It seems that using ribbon to raise people’s awareness on certain issue is not such a good idea. How many people can actually tell what the blue ribbon, red ribbon, yellow ribbon and black ribbon represent? The symbolic meaning of ribbon is actually arbitrarily determined. Since there are too many different ribbons with different health issues, to better serve the cause and impress the audience, maybe organizations should design some meaningful logos to make it work.

In addition, given the ubiquity of breast cancer campaign, an associated question is if the pink ribbon marketing has already reached saturation, either for companies who would like to make profits from CRM or for the organizations who seek to raise people’s awareness? As numerous corporations try to use breast cancer to market their products, people can see the pink ribbon everywhere. Unless there is evidence proving that higher
exposure to the pink ribbon could generate higher level of awareness or behavior change, marketing breast cancer topics with such intensity could be a waste of social resource.

**Health Fashion as Campaign Strategy**

The influence of health fashion on individual behavior is largely undetermined. Yet the popularity of health-fashion collaboration argues for its potentiality to be an effective campaign strategy. In order to better understand the advantage and disadvantage of health fashion as tool for health campaign, here I compared it with another popular health intervention strategy—Entertainment-Education.

**Targeting Audience**

Every campaign strategy has its unique targeting audience. Entertainment-education has been widely used in developing countries (Dutta, 2006; Piotrow & Fossard, 2004). Majority of Entertainment-Education campaigns targeted the lowly-educated, the females or the ethnic minorities. It tries to use narratives to help audience understand an issue and change their behavior (Singhal & Rogers, 2002).

For health fashion campaign, its targeting audience could be youth group who are fashion followers. For example, Participant E said that a lot of her friends in high school had the Marc Jacobs skin cancer T-shirt, but she didn’t see people wearing the T-shirt after going college. As many health campaigns seek to address youth health problem such as illegal drinking and dangerous sex behavior, health fashion product might work well as a supplement tool for current campaigns.

**Effectiveness**

Studies have shown that Entertainment-Education is an effective strategy in changing individual perception, attitude and behavior. However, the effect of E-E soap
opera is mediated by interpersonal communication (Sood & Nambiar, 2010). For instance, a study shows that E-E drama audience is more likely to discuss relevant health issues with their friends and these interpersonal communications in turn leads to behavior change (Mohammed, 2001). Multiple theories account for these results and the most frequently cited are the two-step flow theory and diffusion of innovation theory. Two-step flow theory claims that ideas from mass media will be well received by the opinion leaders first and then from them to a wider population (Lazarsfeld, 1944). Diffusion of innovation theory considers that innovators and early adopters play important roles in the diffusion of idea and technology. As opinion leaders in their social circle, their adoption will influence people in close relations with them (Rogers, 1962). They both emphasize the importance of interpersonal communication.

The effectiveness of health fashion on individual behavior is not determined. However, the diffusion process of fashion campaigns and products retain the potential ability to generate interpersonal communication on health topics. As demonstrated in the results, most of the participants the present study indicate that they usually notice what people are wearing and also make comments on each other’s style. If the health message on the garments is visible and clear, then people might have comments or discussions on related topic.

Cost

Campaign designer and policy maker have an increasing interest in comparing different campaign tools in terms of their cost and effect. A study conducted in Indian shows that, for the E-E soap opera Jasoo Vijay, the cost per behavior change is estimated
as $2.49. However, another study in India shows that the soap opera *Haath se Haath Mila* costs $857.15 to change one person’s condom use behavior (Sood & Nambiar, 2006).

Well-organized Health fashion collaborations are generally profit-making for both the health organization and the fashion company. For example, after issuing the “Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer” lipstick line, Avon company’s sales in 2001 increased by 6%. Meanwhile, breast cancer foundation received 50% -85% of the net purchase of the breast cancer product line (Avon Company, 2006). Comparing with other campaign strategies, this is health fashion’s unique advantage.

**Problem**

As identified by two major E-E research organizations, a major challenge for E-E production is the unequal position of “entertainment” and “education”: there is either “too much education and not enough entertainment” or “too much entertainment and not enough education” (Piotrow & Fossard, 2004). Entertainment-Education—the term itself represents a combination between Entertainment and Education. E-E soap opera should be designed and produced with the joint effort of two academic fields. But evidence shows that the collaboration between scholars and TV professionals usually brings an unhappy experience, often lacking defined mechanics for bringing the media professionals and the campaign experts together. For example, health communicators tend to make the health message directly delivered, but the TV professionals consider that an overt E-E message may be perceived as “hard sell,” resulting in resistance (Bouman, 2002; Bouman, 2009). In real practice, the initiator and funder of the E-E collaboration is often the health communication research center. Media companies generally consider them as customer. Usually, the funding agency tries to get involved in the fields that they
do not have any expertise and professional knowledge (Bouman, 2007). According to a recent meta-analysis of E-E Campaigns shows that many of the E-E soap operas are dominated by education and lack of entertainment (An, 2008).

There are similar threats for health fashion collaboration. For instance, a recent survey suggests that raising public awareness is the NPO’s primary concern in a CRM partnership, surpassing the goal of seeking immediate funding. However, for the commercial companies, CRM campaign is profit-oriented. As a result, the NPOs usually found that the outcomes of the CRM alliance failed to match the public awareness goal (Runté, Basil & Deshpande, 2009). However, in the present study, the majority of the participants understood the health message on the Marc Jacobs’ shirt, but they wouldn't wear it or buy it because of the design. In other words, though the sponsor is the fashion company, they designed a T-shirt containing more “health” than “fashion.” It’s unclear whether this connects to the philanthropy nature of this campaign—Marc Jacobs promised to donate 100% of the proceeds for selling this T-shirt. However, “too much health message” is nothing better than “too little.” These two cancer T-shirts are assumed to be fashionable and attractive. However, people don't want to wear it for different reasons. This is similar to an E-E soap opera which tells important health message but with plain storyline or unattractive actors. If nobody watched it, then no effect would be generated.

**Limitations**

This explorative study has limitations. The most obvious one is the limited sample size and qualitative analysis method, which leads to a low level of generalizability. Besides, the location where the study is conducted is at a small private southern college,
whose dominant culture is described as “preppy” by all of the participants. The norms about fashion could be different from the youth in urban areas. For example, participant A said that people in urban areas such as New York City might be more interested in the graphic T-shirts with Writings.

In addition, the Marc Jacobs skin cancer T-shirt was chosen as a stimulation material in the experiment. However, the provocative image and overt health message on this T-shirt are not common in other health fashion products. Most of the health fashion products have less extreme designs, conveying the message via a ribbon logo or a specific color.

Another limitation is the order of the fashion products shown to the participants. The perception and attitude on skin cancer T-shirt might be influenced by the dresses showed prior to the T-shirts. For example, participant F said “I do not know what to say. They are just T-shirts.” But she showed great interest in the dresses before she saw the T-shirts.

Moreover, though the efforts have been made to avoid participants’ bias, there is clue indicating that some subjects intentionally hide their feelings about fashion brand. For example, in the focus group study, a participant emphasized again and again that she didn’t care about the brand, “she just wear what she likes.” However, she became extremely excited when she is showed with a FENDI dress. In addition, the interviews are conducted by the researcher personally, which can be problematic. The benefit of conducting interview in this way is that the researcher could understand the responses better and pose follow-up questions, which might outweigh the risk of researcher bias.
Finally, it should be noted that the interview for participant C was interrupted because she didn’t feel well. During the interview, her responses are short and concise. That might affect her attitude on the T-shirts. Similarly, Participant J also expressed that she was physically uncomfortable. The length of her interview was significantly shorter than the others’.

**Conclusion**

In the two decades since the introduction of pink ribbon, health fashion has gained rapid development and increasing popularity. Currently majority of the research on health fashion is from business field. Limited research is done within social science. The present study explored some common assumptions underlying health campaigns and sought to explore themes and factors related to the effect of health fashion. Three findings suggest avenues for future research. First, the study demonstrated that people found the Marc Jacobs campaign attention-grabbing and understood the health messages; even as they would not personally wear the t-shirt. In future studies, more work should be done to test message design, exploring ways to make it attractive while still being informative and attention-grabbing. In addition, scales and instruments measuring attitude or buying attention on health fashion product need to be developed. Second, the data seems to suggest that high school student in the urban area might be more likely to be influenced by the health fashion product of this type. Thus, in the future, quantitative study with young participants from urban area is needed to determine the effects of health fashion. Third, the data suggests that participants generally notice what people wear, make comments about each other and tend to dress in similar fashion. In other words, there might be interpersonal communicative behavior related to the health fashion product. The
influence of health fashion products in its natural diffusion deserves more research. In addition, to assess the partnership between health organizations and fashion corporate, researchers must understand to what extent that a company’s willingness to involve in the collaboration is motivated by philanthropy or by revenue. As an explorative study, hopefully this article could lead to future studies that help us understand how health fashion influence human behavior as well as human society.
References


Appendix 1

Questions for Recruitment

What sex are you?
1  □ Male
2  □ Female

2. What is your race/ethnicity?
1  □ Caucasian
2  □ African American
3  □ Hispanic or Latino
4  □ Asian
5  □ American Indian or Alaska Native
6  □ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

3. How would you describe your family’s socioeconomic status?
1  □ Upper class
2  □ Upper middle class
3  □ Middle class
4  □ Lower middle class
5  □ Lower class

4. Do you care about fashion brands?
1  □ Very much
2  □ Moderate
3  □ A little
5. What type of fashion brands you like regardless of the price? (You can circle more than one)

1. Vineyard Vines
2. Nike or Adidas
3. Marc Jacobs
4. Lilly Pulitzer
5. Ralph Lauren
6. J.crew
7. Anthropology
8. Forever 21
9. None of the above
Appendix 2

Questions for Focus Group

1. Why do you care about fashion or why you think fashion is important?

2. Where do you usually get the information about fashion?

3. What is fashion’s influence on your behavior?

4. Do you talk about fashion with your friends?
   
   Probe if yes:
   
   Do you notice what clothes your friends wear?

5. Did you see these T-Shirts before?
   
   Probe if yes:
   
   When and where you see these T-shirts? What did you think of these T-shirts at time?
   
   Demonstrate two T-shirts and then continue with the questions

6. What do you think about these two T-shirts in general?

7. Are they attractive to you?
   
   Probe if yes:
   
   Why you think it is attractive for you?
   
   Probe if no
   
   Why you think it is not attractive?

8. Do you get the message on the Two T-shirts?
   
   Probe if yes:
   
   What is the message do you think that these T-shirts want to deliver?

9. How do you perceive the health message on this T-shirt?
10. Does the health message make the T-Shirt less attractive to you?
Appendix 3

Questions for Interview

A1. Why do you care about fashion?

A2. What is the most popular fashion style and fashion brands at this campus?

A3. Do you change your style after entering this university?

A4. Do you think your fashion style has some influences on your behavior?

B1. Where do you usually get information about fashion?

B2. Do you follow the fashion shows during fashion week?

B3. Do you often talk about fashion with your friends?

   Probe (if yes) Do you notice what kind of clothes your friends are wearing?
   Whether you and your friends make comments on each other’s clothes?

C1. How do you think about these two T-shirts in general?

C2. Do you think they are attractive to you?

   PROBE : Why or why not?

C3. How do you think about the health message on both T-shirts?

C4. What would you think if you see your friends wearing these T-shirts?

D1. Do you get the messages of these T-shirts?

   PROBE (if yes): What are they?
Appendix 4

Transcripts of Interviews

Part of the transcript from Participant A

Researcher: how do you think about these T-shirts in general?

Participant A: I mean I wouldn’t wear either. I think they are both…um…I don’t know what I am looking for, but one has a naked person on it, kind of covered up…and the other one, “cancer sucks”…well I know everyone says “sucks”…but I don’t know if I want a T-shirt that says that on it. I think they are both like a little inappropriate. I mean, it’s just something I wouldn’t want on my shirt. The cancer one (ribbon) is just like a big boxy T-shirt, you know…they give out at the event and the stuff…and this one (MJ) is thinner, you know, softer. The fabric feels different. This one is little more graphic, you know…maybe appealing to young people…um…

Researcher: so what makes these T-shirts not attractive to you?

Participant A: As I said, they are both….I don’t want to have a naked Victoria Beckham on my shirt. I don’t want the word “sucks” on my shirt. And, the gray one (MJ), the design and the graphics are really boxy…this shirt (ribbon) is just like old looking…old person looking…I mean, that’s not very cute.

Researcher: do you get the messages of these T-shirts?

Participant A: The white one (ribbon one) is clearly like a cancer, raise the awareness of cancer T-shirt. Maybe …I don’t know…I don't know what type of cancer, maybe like a type of heart cancer? I’ve got no idea…I don’t like it.

Researcher: what about the other one (MJ)?
Participant A: maybe skin cancer, or sun-exposure. I don't know why you get naked to protect your skin. So…

Researcher: what makes it not attractive to you?

Participant A: I just don’t want my cloth to convey such a strong message. The grey shirt (MJ)…I wouldn’t wear it…I don’t even want words or stuff on my shirt. But I guess it would be more attractive to young people who thinks Marc Jacobs make someone really cool…I think this one would be popular in the city rather than in Wake Forest…people here are subtle about brand names, don't really wear graphic tees and stuff… and this one (Ribbon) is not attractive to me because it’s just like big boxy white T-shirt.

Researcher: you said the Jacobs one would be more popular in cities, so which cities you are talking about?

Participant A: I guess that would be urban cities. I don't think southern cities are that urban, just from a personal experience. They are spread out…The first thing came to my mind is New York. I studies with NYU students, and they are much more into things they consider to be clever or funny. And their cloth, like ironic…I guess they might think this is funny or something…

Researcher: If you see your friends are wearing one these T-shirts, what would you think about it?

Participant A: I think they are really against skin cancer…is this a girl shirt?

Researcher: it’s uni-sex

Participant A: Ok, I think it’s weirder if a guy wears it. In my mind, in the cities guys wear graphic T-shirts but at Wake, it’s really not part of the way people dress here…
Researcher: If the naked person is someone you like, does it make a difference?

Participant A: no.

...

Participant A: I think there’s better way to really support a cause rather than buying an expensive dress. I would buy the cloth I like and if I wanna support a cause, I will support the cause directly…

Part of Transcript from Participant B

Researcher: How do you think about these T-shirts in general?

Participant B: I think they are for benefit…This one is much more fashion because there is a naked Vitoria Beckham and it refers to Marc Jacobs. And this says a lot of celebrities, Katie Klumpp, Even Mendez, Hilary Swank…And this one (ribbon) is a little plainer, but very blunt.

Researcher: How do you like them?

Participant B: I kind of prefer this one (ribbon) because I don’t think I can wear a naked Vitoria Beckham.

Researcher: what makes them not attractive to you?

Participant B: I like the messages and usually like the Marc Jacobs, but just…I don’t wear T-shirts either.

Participant B: I don't think “cancer sucks” is attractive…I think maybe “protect the skin you are in” will be more eloquent.

Researcher: Do you get the message of these T-shirts?
Participant B: This one (MJ)…probably skin cancer, tanning or something like that. And this one (ribbon) is just kind of looking at cancer in general, although there is a heart on it. ..may be something about cardiovascular or something…

Researcher: If your friends wear these T-shirts. How do you think about them?

Participant B: I wouldn’t really think about it…no one at Wake wears T-shirt…so….

Part of Transcript from Participant C

Researcher: How do you think about these T-shirts in general?

Participant C: Aside when I am working out, I rarely wear T-shirt. For this one (MJ), since there is a naked girl on it, I think I would not wear it. But it’s softer. I like the material and cut. And this one is just boxier…But I don't think I will wear a naked person…

Researcher: What makes these T-shirts not attractive to you?

Participant C: For this one (Ribbon), just again the cut is so wide… it’s kind of rough feeling… This one (MJ)… but it’s written all over… And I don't like graphic Tees…

Researcher: Do you get the message of these T-shirts and what are they?

Participant C: yes, this one (MJ) is skin cancer. And that one is just plain cancer or cancer in general

Researcher: Does the health message make it less attractive to you?

Participant C: No, I think just the letters, not the message.

Researcher: If one of your friends is wearing this, what would you think?

Participant C: That doesn’t bother me, but I think it would be a little weird.

Part of Transcript from Participant D

Researcher: How do you think about these T-shirts in general?
Participant D: This one (MJ) is name-branded and this one (ribbon) isn’t. But this one (ribbon) says cancer, so I think it is for cause. And this one (MJ) has a naked girl on it. So I would wear this one (ribbon) over that one (MJ), even though the cloth is nicer.

Researcher: What makes it not attractive to you?

Participant D: The graphics…I don't mind shirts with writings on it, but I don't want a naked one on it.

Researcher: If one of your friends is wearing this, what would you think?

Participant D: Some people would wear this just for the brand, but that’s not how I …

Researcher: Do you get the message of both Shirts?

Participant D: The white one is for cancer…and the gray one says protect the skin you are in…ok, it also says cancer…

….  

Participant D: If you just look at the naked woman, you would think it is a little inappropriate. But if you see this, ok, you know it’s for cancer, for a cause, then it makes it better. But, still a naked woman is weird….I don't want to wear this T-shirt.

Part of Transcript from Participant E

Researcher: how do you think about these T-shirts in general?

Participant E: you see…This is cute…I like this(MJ). Because it says cancer institute and advertise it on a shirt…and my brand Marc Jacobs…it's cool than this (Ribbon), you see the giant screen print, kind of…(cheap)

Researcher: so you like the Jacobs one?

Participant E: The quality is better…I like the brand name and the quality is definitely associated with that….but I guess this is a guy fit…
Researcher: yes, it is for guy...for woman, the shirt has a naked guy

Participant E: cool. I don't know if I will wear it in class, but I could just wear it for chilling. But I think it is cool. How they have all the people to support the skin cancer? As that one (ribbon) just says “cancer sucks”, so all the information there just makes me to think it (MJ) is a more interesting way.

Researcher: Do you get the message of these T-shirts?

Participant E: that one says “cancer sucks” and so I guess it supports cancer. And this one says “protect the skin you are in”, I guess probably you will not see it unless you here (sleeve), probably supports the cancer institute… I guess they should probably put it down somewhere here (chest), I think that will make more sense.

……

Participant E: It says protect yourself from cancer, probably don’t go tanning…. 

Researcher: If some of your friends wear this T-shirts, how do you think about them?

……

Participant E: I would think they are a little unique, but I doubt they will wear it to class…I don’t see people here wear stuff like this to the class

Researcher: what if in other cities

Participant E: If I see this in New York, I would just feel like...nice…I think it’s cool. I wouldn't be surprised by that in the city, SOHO or something

……

Researcher: Whether the health message makes them less attractive to you?
Participant E: There is a naked woman on it, naked Victoria Beckham on it, kind of weird… The message makes sense…but the image is kind of provocative… But it’s very Marc Jacob, they make condoms too. So I am not surprised…

Researcher: So you don’t like the design, but it is from Marc Jacobs (She indicates she likes this brand)

Participant E: It makes it less so bad…

Part of Transcript from Participant F

Researcher: How Do you think about these T-shirts in general?

Participant F: This one (ribbon) I don’t understand why the ribbon is not pink, it’s orange. I don't know what cancer is orange. I can totally picture a Wake guy wearing this one (MJ) though. But they are just T-shirts. Neither is attractive to me, I wouldn’t be surprised to see either one on a guy and I don't find either one especially appealing and I certainly would not purchase either one for my guy.

Researcher: What makes them not attractive?

Participant F: This one (ribbon) is just plain. It doesn’t seem meaningful. It just doesn't have any appealing and the message seems to be kind of kindling. So with this one (MJ), I don't think the girl was pretty and she is naked and that’s all she has going for…I guess, some people might find it offensive. I am not sure whether I do. It if my guy wears it, I would certainly feel offended. But if it’s just a guy on the street wearing it, I just wouldn’t be surprised… there’s just nothing special there…

Researcher: Do you get the message?

Participant F: No I don’t think so for both of them. The ribbon isn’t pink and gets a heart on it…I am anti-cancer, but what kind of cancer it is talking about? …This one(Mj) is not
especially meaningful...like skin cancer awareness...I don't know...it’s just a naked chick T-shirt...

Part of Transcript from Participant G

Researcher: How Do you think about these T-shirts in general?

Participant G: I think the gray one (MJ) in particular is very racy. I think I would be shocked if I saw someone wearing it on the street...and for the white one, I definitely think it is a good idea to raise awareness of cancer...but I am not sure whether using the word “suck” to describe it would be appropriate. That would be especially offensive to the family...sort of..

Researcher: What makes the T-shirts less attractive?

Participant G: I would say message and the design...especially the gray one (MJ)... not really my style. And for the white one, it’s the message. I think it could be described in another way.

Researcher: Do you get the message of these T-shirts?

Participant G: I guess I am not quite clear about the “protect the skin you are in”...the image kind of detracts the message...kind of confuse me a little bit. But I definitely get the message of the white cancer T-shirt.

(Looking at the MJ’s once again)

Participant G: Ok, I would say maybe skin cancer, it says cancer institute on it...

Researcher: How do you think if you see your friends wearing one of these T-shirts?

Participant G: “cancer sucks”, I would think it was a little offensive, but I feel it would not bother me as much as if I saw them wearing the gray one. I would definitely be shocked...
Part of Transcript from Participant H

Researcher: Take a look at these two T-shirts and tell me how you think about them in general.

Participant H: Ok, I think a lot of my friends have this T-shirt, Marc Jacobs one. First time I saw it, I was of shocking because there is a naked woman on it. Then I found out it was this brand’s style. I think maybe the designer want to express himself, want to express some information through the T-shirt. I think the fabric is very thin and comfortable to wear. For me the style is a little inappropriate, but some people don't mind. I think it was pretty stylish, I would say. And for this one… cancer sucks… I think this is a charity shirt and the material is the normal charity shirt material…There is a design and there is a purpose for this shirt. I think the design is cool… the logo and the color…black and orange is just cool…

Researcher: what makes the gray shirt more fashionable?

Participant H: There is more information on it. The designer put more effort and idea on it.

Researcher: So what makes it attractive to you, the brand, the design or the message?

Participant H: I think it is both…The brand has a great influence…like what’s the style of this brand, how does this brand function and what kind of people will wear it..so…

Researcher: You just mentioned it that some of your friends have this shirt, you referred to your friends here or your boarding school?

Participant H: My friends in boarding school. I don’t see people here wear this.

Researcher: Do you get the messages of these T-shirts?
Participant H: Well….maybe I think it is for the skin cancer because the…cause it says “protect the skin you are in” and there’s a naked woman on it. Maybe more people would be careful about skincancer…

Researcher: Do you still remember when you see your friends wearing this T?

Participant H: I feel funny at the moment…and the one with a naked person draw people’s attention on it at first. And you’ll feel like a little inappropriate. But later you see it’s a charity and it’s not just a naked woman… the information says something good, not just something meaningless… It’s kind of cool

Part of Transcript from Participant I

Researcher: How do you think about these two T-shirts in general?

Participant I: I don’t like graphic T-shirts. I don’t like it. If I had to pick, I guess I will pick the gray one (MJ)

Researcher: why?

Participant I: Cause I see that’s Marc Jacobs.

Researcher: But If you have more choices...

Participant I: I would choose neither of them.

Researcher: What make them not attractive?

Participant I: I don't like T-shirts in general. And I don’t like the writing on it. They are both a little offensive.

Researcher: Do you get the messages of the T-shirt?

Participant I: That one says “cancer sucks”…and this one (MJ)…is it also for cancer?...I don't know…Oh yeah…ok, they are both for cancer….
Researcher: I would think it’s a little different if my friends wear it. But I will not think bad about it. I will just notice it…

Part of Transcript from Participant J

Researcher: How do you think about these two T-shirts in general?

Participant J: They are just plain T-shirts

Researcher: What makes them not attractive to you?

Participant J: I don't wear anything with pictures on them. I guess they are both advertising something.

Researcher: So what they are trying to advertise?

Participant J: This one (ribbon) is for cancer. And the gray one, I guess Marc Jacobs is influencing being confident, be confident with the skin you are in, be confident about your body…Interesting, having a naked person.

Participant J: I guess I would wear something that conveys a message that I stand strong for.

Researcher: For example?

Participant J: I might wear a shirt says cancer on it, but maybe not the naked girl or whole thing. That is too much for me.

Part of Transcript from Participant K

Researcher: How do you think about these two T-shirts in general?

Participant K: I think they definitely have a humor side to them. They are attention grabbing shirts, sort of portraying a message.

Researcher: What kind of message?
Participant K: For the cancer shirt (ribbon) is obvious. People could identify with it. The Marc Jacobs’ one, I think, is outlandish. I guess most of the people would not be seen wearing that just because of the naked woman on the front.

Researcher: Do you get the message of both T-shirt?

Participant K: For the cancer shirt (ribbon) it’s drawing attention on cancer, for a cause.

Researcher: What type of cancer?

Participant K: Is that a breast cancer? Not 100% sure.

Researcher: For this one?

Participant K: I am not sure…(hesitate for a while and take a look again) I think it's actually for sun screening or kind of saying you have to protect your body…

Researcher: How do you think if your friends are wearing one of these shirts?

Participant K: I think the Marc Jacobs one definitely grasps more attention. The immediate impression would not be of that like a cancer. So I think people maybe more drawn to it and better serve the message and be more likely to ask what it is….but I don't think I will wear either one of this…

Part of Transcript from Participant L

Researcher: How do you think about these two T-shirts in general?

Participant L: I think they both have important message. I think one (MJ) is very much in your face, the one with Victoria Beckham on the front. That definitely will grasp some eyes because there’s a naked woman on the front. But the other one is just very self-explanatory. “Cancer sucks”, everyone knows that. But this one (MJ) is kind of …It's a cool way to go about. Protect your skin your are in…with sunscreen…skin cancer…that’s what I get from it. So, I think they both have good message…
Researcher: What makes it attractive to you?

Participant L: I probably will be more comfortable to wear this one because I am not sure whether I can wear a naked Victoria Beckham on my front.

Researcher: What if it is a naked guy that you like, let’s say David Beckham..

Participant L: (Laugh)...I don’t know…I don’t think, me personally will feel super comfortable to wear a naked person on my body. It is a good message, it is a good cause.

But I just don't know if I can do it. You are definitely drawn to it…probably more comfortable to wear this(ribbon)..but this one’s (MJ) fabric feels a lot better, I am noticing that too. It’s softer…with the image text and graphic, it definitely gets more support for cause a lot quicker than this one, the white one (ribbon)

Researcher: Do you actually get the message of these shirts?

Participant L: Well, the white one says cancer sucks, because it has ribbon on it, kinds of remind me of breast cancer, the Komen foundation and all of that. This says cancer sucks, but there’s nothing more than that…like what I can do with it…This ribbon is arbitrary.

You see it with all of the cancer stuff. And this one is more of a subliminal message, because it’s saying be careful of skin cancer, but….ok these are the people dying from skin cancer, this is kind of cool…and the cancer institute…and the person in front of it is kind of cool, you have Beckham with cancer institute and NYU, so it gives it some depth….

Researcher: As you just said, this is not your style, but what if you see your friends wearing that, how do you feel?
Participant L: To wear the gray one, you have to have a lot of balls to do that. I would be really impressed if they wear it through the day. I would be really proud and impressed, a little bit jealous that they can pull it off or feeling comfortable doing it…
Curriculum Vitae

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Education Background
2009-2011 Communication, Department of Communication, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, USA
Master of Arts
2002-2006 TV and Photography, Television and Journalism School, Communication University of China, Beijing, China
Bachelor of Arts

Professional Experience
1) Web Campaign Assistant (Intern) May 2010-Aug 2010
United Nations Office on Drug and Crime Vienna, Austria
2) Teacher (Volunteer), Cifeng Middle School Jan 2009-Jun 2009
Sichuan, China
3) Director Jun 2006-Sep 2008
Phoenix Satellite Television Channel Europe (CNE)
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Academic Experience
Presenting “Media's Influence on Diplomatic Relations: Chinese Government’s Diplomacy with India” in NCA’s Annual conference Nov. 2010

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Television Production Expert
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Native Chinese Mandarin, Fluent English and Cantonese, Intermediate French