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Introduction

The Met Gala, an annual extravaganza where influential people present innovative fashion, is regarded as the ultimate event in the elite realm of design and status. The turbulent history and reputation of the designer were the main reasons for the harsh criticism directed towards the 2023 Met Gala Karl Lagerfeld a tribute theme. The prevailing views regarding the #MeToo movement, which demands accountability and knowledge of issues relating to gender-based assault, are in opposition to Lagerfeld's prior use of abusive words and prejudices. Social media users expressed displeasure over the industry's decision to honor Lagerfeld, and discussions regarding whether it is fair for it to acknowledge people with questionable histories grew more intense because of the participatory culture. The public uproar emphasized the fashion industry's increasing demand for transparency and showed how online activism significantly affects the conversation surrounding cultural gatherings.

This analysis examines the Instagram debate in the weeks preceding and succeeding the Met Gala, focusing on a particular time frame and media. Investigating the impact of feminist activists on debates about whether to honor Lagerfeld at the Met Gala and the ensuing consequences for the public, the fashion industry, and broader perspectives on who bears responsibility for cultural events is the objective of the thesis. It analyses the participatory culture of feminist activists on Instagram in response to the Met Gala's 2023 Karl Lagerfeld theme, with a focus on how it contrasts with the #MeToo movement. We aim to shed light on how their discourse influences people's perceptions of cultural events, impacts the fashion industry's decisions, and advances a broader discourse in society about responsibility and ethical representation by examining their online behavior over a specific time. Recognition of the significance of this audience's engagement is necessary to comprehend the changing

relationships between online activism, cultural celebrations, and the expectations society places on influential platforms and organizational structures.

Background Research

Numerous factors contributed to this audience-provoking event. (Bowen,2022) highlights a few of Karl's remarks that caused agitation among the viewers. The spectators were infuriated by remarks like "a little too fat," "no one wants to see a round woman," and "Coco Chanel wasn't a feminist because she was never ugly enough for that." As much as he contributed to the fashion business, we shouldn't be honoring someone who made racist, sexist, and fatphobic remarks throughout their career, the piece concludes. Actress and body positivity advocate Jameela Jamil expressed her disapproval of Karl Lagerfeld's "clearly hateful use of his platform, particularly toward women," as even (Caplan, 2022). Furthermore, when PEOPLE magazine asked the Met Gala organizers for their thoughts on the event and theme, they never even responded. This is a fantastic illustration of how the Met Gala organization's and Karl Lagerfeld's overall efforts sparked crowd participation.

The article (Norris,2023) provides excellent background information by identifying Karl Lagerfeld's exact identity, explaining the controversy around the theme, and listing the supporters of the motif. It offers understanding of both the most fundamental and remarkable details. Conversely, (Ritschel, 2023) presents the viewpoint of the viewers. It includes examples of protests, a tally of Instagram postings, and the rise in popularity of #FashionWorkersAct. Many in his business, including Vogue's chief editor Anna Wintour, were offended by his behavior and the Met Gala's theme of paying tribute to him. (Lang, 2023) is adamant about celebrating and honoring "part of his legacy." He referred to the fact that "you've got fat mothers sitting in front of the television with their bags of chips and

saying that thin models are ugly." The fantasy world of exquisite apparel is defined by "illusions and fantasies." Everyone had their own thoughts and tales to share with the world, and the propaganda and the issue at hand itself caused this to go global.

Extensive background research on the theme of the Met Gala 2023 displays Karl Lagerfeld's creative process's significant textual and enunciative productivity. The numerous instances of public opposition demonstrate the inherent power of enunciation and literary interpretation among larger audiences, while Lagerfeld's peculiar voice forms the central idea story. The subtle conversation between designer intention and the diverse expressions emerging from the enunciative and textual creativity of the fashion elite and the public domain is highlighted by this ever-changing a balance.

Enunciative and Textual productivity examples

Jameela Jamil shared a picture of Karl Lagerfeld on Instagram along with the remark "nope." He is gifted and has a large following, but she said that he "used his platform in such a distinctly hateful way." She had texts with specifics about his actions and perspectives, as well as numeric images. More precisely, a lot of individuals found information from her post and details. Many remarks were made along the lines of "I returned today to discover this post because this needs more visibility." Secondly, even those who weren't big fans of the Met Gala, or the fashion business expressed concern and judgment about the same things. Also included in the same post was the statement, "Although I don't really follow the fashion industry, I appreciate you posting a response and bringing hypocrisy to my attention."

Fantagement or fantagonism, is the expression of concern and disapproval about the fashion industry and the yearly Met Gala from people who aren't even great lovers. People are engaging with the content, offering their opinions, and adding to the discourse even when they are not passionate those who follow. Fantagement is description of when the fans have

active engagement even though not optimal side of it. However, fantagonism is that form of engagement which includes both fandom and antagonism. It is when people have both positive and negative ideologies when it comes to the any event. Talking about the Met Gala, Fanagement or fantagonism is the act of voicing concerns and criticisms about the Met Gala and the fashion sector in general, even from individuals who aren't considered to be big fans. People are participating in the discussion, offering their opinions, and demonstrating interest in the subject even when they are not enthusiastic fans. It indicates a critical stance to acknowledge the double standards of the fashion business, and a level of commitment beyond simply observation is demonstrated by the willingness to embrace the posted response. This aligns with the notion of fanagement, wherein individuals actively engage in discussions and contribute insightful opinions regarding the subject matter—despite not being ardent supporters. Additionally, this was an effective approach to draw viewers in. In response to a different post on the same, someone said, "Thank you. I haven't heard anyone else discuss it."



It clarifies for people how unimportant this issue is and connects it all to the #MeToo movement and Kar Lagerfeld. The way the crowds responded to this cultural event and made it the center of attention is staggering. It is a great example of counter publics. It includes group of people who are collectively against the dominant publics due to having different

perspectives on the same. The concept of counter publics comes into the existence when some of the people are ostracized from the dominant publics just because they have different ideologies and views.

An open forum was created by another account for the public to comment on. "Do you think Met should honor him?" was the caption. Many also responded by saying that different designers ought to be hired. It was a really good way to involve the community and the public in the same. Subcultural capital is when numerable symbols, signs, practices, and cultural knowledge are given importance in a specific social group. It mainly focuses on how the cultural elements engage with the subgroup. Members of the forum may demonstrate subcultural capital by exhibiting an awareness of the individual's significance in society, the Met's long tradition of honoring individuals, or the broader context of the creative world. This could entail being aware of the person's accomplishments in the arts, being knowledgeable about developments in art, or being aware of any applicable cultural icons. Answer variations inside the forum may be a sign of subcultural customs and norms. Opinions of the person's recognition by the Met, for example, can align with specific subcultural standards of morality, creativity, or cultural portrayal. Subcultural capital may be used by participants to convey their viewpoints in a way that resonates with those who share similar subcultural ideas. Subcultural capital and creation of identities are supported by participating actively in the forum and the remarks posted therein. Debate participants may gain subcultural capital by demonstrating their knowledge of involvement in, and support for the current discourse within the art society. Through discussions about artistic endeavors and the Met, the forum facilitates the creation of a subcultural network. Participants develop an awareness of community and comparable subcultural capital through shared interests in artistic expression, historical culture, and the role of organizations such as the Met.

Numerous female accounts were dressing up, with captions expressing how Karl Lagerfeld would have disapproved of their outfits. Social capital plays a substantial role here. Social capital are the social resources that one possesses solely or through a group. Some of those can be social networks or relationships which leads to acquiring of resources and social unity. Networks and relationships are often how social capital is produced. In this case, Instagram users establish a social network centered on fashion and the influence of Karl Lagerfeld. The shared experience of putting on clothes up and sharing with personalized captions strengthens participants' social ties. Through parallels to Karl Lagerfeld, members take part in a sort of cultural debate drawing judgments about his potential disapproval. Their common understanding raises their social capital within the fashion community on Instagram. In this community, getting attention from others can help one's social standing. Instagram users that dress alike and express their thoughts about Lagerfeld's supposed disapproval contribute to the formation of an integrated identity within the clothing community. People begin to identify with others who share their opinions, and this sense of group identity serves as a form of social capital. Symbolic and cultural assets are closely related to social capital. Participants are using the symbolic value of renowned fashion sector figure Karl Lagerfeld to exhibit their unique aesthetic choices. People who participate in conversations and events related to Lagerfeld gain cultural capital in the larger fashion sector. Two elements of social capital are reciprocity and trust. Through engagement in the Instagram shared activity, participants can demonstrate mutual trust in each other's understanding of Lagerfeld's influence on fashion. This reciprocity and mutually beneficial trust add to the integration of the online community. Finally, a fantastic illustration of enunciative productivity is the #fashionworkersact. They participated in numerous live news stations and linked the hashtag to Met Gala and Lagerfeld. Both the #FashionWorkersAct and #MeToo movement acted as hashtag publics in this course of event. The term basically represents a group of people who are engaged on social media

platforms and use the similar hashtag. Hashtag publics describes the group participation and discourse when it comes to the public sharing their ideologies and perspectives through sharing content based on specific topic.

Academic Literature

The relationship between Karl Lagerfeld's creative practice, personal style, and broader cultural influences is examined in the 2019 article "Baroque and Bildung in the creative practice and personal style of Karl Lagerfeld – towards a biographical reinstatement of the individual designer" by M. A. Langkjaer. Lagerfeld's part draw's the attention. Even though the article does not directly address the concept of "death of the author," we can draw connections between Lagerfeld's work and the concepts, particularly when taking audience research is there. According to the "death of the author" viewpoint, the audience is extremely important in determining how a creative work is understood and interpreted. In Lagerfeld's instance, the viewer is free to interpret his creative process, sense of style, and cultural inspirations. By contributing their own points of view to the interpretation, the audience actively participates in Lagerfeld's designs and persona. It is evident how his designs and persona were not focused when it came to the Met Gala theme and the backlashes faced by the controversies around the #MeToo movement and judgements on his actions. Even that would a great side of “death of the author”. How Met Gala aimed at honoring his work and accomplishments, however, people instead focused on his personal behavior and not his professional work for which he was to be celebrated.

As this article discusses, different audiences may have different perspectives on Lagerfeld's work. The concept of the "death of the author" implies that there isn't a single, acceptable view of a work; rather, the intricacy of the work's meaning is enhanced by the varied perspectives of the audience. As the paper explains, audiences with varied cultural

backgrounds and experiences could understand Lagerfeld's allusions to Bildung and Baroque differently. The notion of the "death of the author" encourages interpretation to focus more on its cultural and contextual elements. The interpretation of Lagerfeld's usage of Bildung and Baroque inspirations may vary depending on the cultural background of the audience. This article's analysis of Lagerfeld's life narrative and creative influences is in line with the idea that these contextual factors should be taken into consideration when evaluating his work. The idea of the "death of the author" implies that readers' perceptions of a work of literature could change with time. Even when cultural settings and points of view shift, viewers may still be able to comprehend and understand Lagerfeld's creative process as described in the article. The piece's emphasis on a personal reinstatement is consistent with the notion that knowledge of Lagerfeld's creative and personal development enriches understandings in the present day. To conclude it mentions, "The individual creative mind-set is far more complex than one would assume, particularly when it is that of a designer as versatile, intellectually, as Lagerfeld." It means that any creative personality should be judged for their work when it comes to accomplishments. There may be some flaws, however, those are surely important but shouldn't and wasn't the part of the reason for honoring him.

The (Airey, 2018) discusses the #MeToo movement which started gaining fame from 2018 on the media platforms for sexual assaults and harassment. The hashtag flooding can be related to his research paper. The hashtag flooding is involved when there is a massive use of a specific hashtag when it comes to drawing attention to any event and issue. Here, it is when the hashtag was excessively famous and used by so many people during the announcement and after that when Met Gala was taken place. "The #MeToo movement emerged as a grassroots campaign on social media in the wake of revelations about the widespread sexual harassment and assault of women in the entertainment industry." There is a solid relationship between hashtag flooding and the #MeToo campaign. The practice of regularly using a

particular hashtag to draw attention to an issue or event is known as "hashtag flooding." In the #MeToo case, witnesses flooded the internet with their personal stories, creating a collective narrative that highlighted the seriousness of the issue. An incredibly powerful sign of strength and community was created by the sheer number of messages and experiences shared.

Hashtag flooding is the term used to describe the blending of many viewpoints and experiences under one hashtag. The #MeToo campaign is discussed in the article as a situation of how individuals who survived used a particular hashtag to share their stories and call for change and attention as a group. The volume of reports made clear how widespread harassment and sexual assault are. Use of hashtag flooding is one method of raising awareness of a specific topic. The extensive use of the hashtag #MeToo in this situation gave survivors a platform to come up and increased awareness of how common sexual assault is throughout the world. The article can concentrate in how the cause has transformed social media into arenas for activism and raising awareness.

“The hashtag #MeToo became a powerful tool for survivors to public disclose their experiences and unite against sexual misconduct.” Digital activism can be seen in the hashtagging of movements such as #MeToo. By highlighting topics that could have gone overlooked, hashtag flooding encourages social change and facilitates the creation of online communities. Perhaps a thorough analysis of how the #MeToo movement's hashtag deluge helped to change public perceptions of sexual harassment will also be included in the study.

Keist (2018) talks about how the stout were left out of the luxury or the high fashion. The paper itself starts from how, “excluding plus-sized women from high fashion is not a new phenomenon” and how Karl Lagerfeld made headlines by saying, “no one wants to see curvy women on the runway.” In this paper, traditionally marginalized in the field of couture fashion, stout women may establish counter publics, alternative spaces where they define and

challenge conventional wisdom. Because they give people a voice in the fashion business who were previously marginalized, online platforms can be crucial in the establishment of counter publics. One could conjecture about how the absence of stout women from high fashion affected their access to subcultural wealth in the world of fashion. Meanwhile, the emergence of movements that support a range of body forms may contribute to the development of social capital because of changing social norms and perspectives.

The article's analysis regarding past discrimination and following social movements, which employs the "death of the author" concept, argues that rather than a single authoritative fashion narrative, the audience—the stout women in this case—shapes their views and responses to fashion standards. Keist (2018) provides an overview of history that can be connected to contemporary issues such as hashtag publics, counter publics, subculture vs. social capital, fanagement, the "death of the author," and hashtag hijacking/flooding, given the expected protests the Met Gala theme in 2023. These concepts highlight how abuzz and engaged the discussions surrounding equality, style, and culture are today.

Talking about (Vats & Nishime, 2013), the people who are against the neocolonial aesthetic of the fashion industry can gather in counter publics. It might begin with Karl Lagerfeld's "Idea of China". These counter publics could use social media platforms to disseminate their message and offer alternative perspectives on how the society is portrayed. The issue of artistic subcultural capital in this paper is clearly centered around Lagerfeld's representation of China in the fashion business. Nevertheless, people and organizations that disagree with this representation might gain social capital by engaging in discussions that challenge neocolonial visual discourse and advance more culturally conscious style practices. those who actively support and engage in Lagerfeld's "Idea of China" may be considered fanagement. However, detractors can show their fantagonism by opposing Lagerfeld's techniques and advocating for

more varied and culturally conscious representations in the fashion industry. Examining the work from the "death of the author" aspect makes clear that Lagerfeld's seeks, and background are not the only factors that influence how his rhetorical images should be interpreted. Instead, the various interpretations and reactions that the public has to Lagerfeld's depiction of China are valid and contribute to the greater discourse. If the 2023 Met Gala subject reflects Lagerfeld's visual rhetoric or associated issues, resistance could manifest as a hashtag flooding. With the help of hashtags, critics may reject the intended interpretation of the Met Gala's topic, offer an alternative perspective, or bring focus on inappropriate depictions.

People express through hashtags a lot. It is crystal clear how people express their emotions and perspectives through the hashtag in the online world. In today's world, it plays a significant role. (Ratnayake & Suthers, 2023) talks about the same. It talks about expressing emotions through the hashtag publics. The 2023 Met Gala honoring Karl Lagerfeld was met with criticism; those wishing to express their opinions, sentiments, and critiques established hashtag publics. These online spaces are those where people discuss and share their thoughts regarding Lagerfeld and the situation using certain hashtags. Ratnayake and Suthers' approach for arranging the display of one's feelings becomes crucial because it provides an orderly way to understand how emotions are expressed throughout hashtag publics. One could sense criticism and worry in addition to support and appreciation, particularly in view of Lagerfeld's association with the #MeToo movement. It mentions how it "helps with the mapping of emotional dynamics" means, when it comes to the hashtag, it would map the relevance of Karl Lagerfeld with the #MeToo or #FashionWorkersAct which were prominent during the period. Moreover, the hashtag could provide with the overview of the theme and the "emotional tone" as well. It could be helpful in analyzing the feelings that the hashtag publics express. For example, it could facilitate the differentiation of positive and negative emotions,

enabling a deeper comprehension of the emotional scenery around Karl Lagerfeld and the Met Gala overall. Lastly and most importantly, it dwells into the public perspective and opinion. It provides thoughts on Lagerfeld that reflect most of the public's feelings and opinions about the hashtag #MeToo and the #FashionWorkersAct. Acceptance the affective expressions inside a hashtag's publics increases the scope of the event related discourse research. "Emotionality within hashtag publics emerges via interaction among users." This was one of the most significant conclusions. It mentions how the collective response as a group to an issue makes one experience the emotions when it comes to the hashtag.

Conclusion

It is clear how audience's opinions and perspective is all that what matters. Recognizing the changing linkages between cultural gatherings, activism on the internet, and cultural norms on influential platforms and organizations requires a consciousness of the significance of this audience's engagement. As these interactions continue to evolve, our research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the intricate links between cultural manifestations, societal expectations, and digital activism. By merely looking up this audience's conduct on the internet, we hope to add insightful findings to the continuing conversation about ethical conduct as well as accountable presentation in the fashion industry and other fields. Through doing this, the study hopes to make a contemporary and timely contribution to the larger conversation about how technology can affect cultural norms and narratives.

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