

= Anna Wintour =

Anna Wintour , OBE (/ ˈwɪntʊr / ; born 3 November 1949) is a British @-@ American journalist and editor . She has been editor @-@ in @-@ chief of Vogue since 1988 . In 2013 , she became artistic director for Condé Nast , Vogue 's publisher . With her trademark pageboy bob haircut and dark sunglasses , Wintour has become an important figure in much of the fashion world , widely praised for her eye for fashion trends and her support for younger designers . Her reportedly aloof and demanding personality has earned her the nickname " Nuclear Wintour " .

She is the eldest daughter of Charles Wintour , who was editor of the London Evening Standard from 1959 to 1976 . Her father consulted her on how to make the newspaper relevant to the youth of the era . Anna became interested in fashion as a teenager . Her career in fashion journalism began at two British magazines . Later , she moved to the United States , with stints at New York and House & Garden . She returned home for a year to turn around British Vogue , and later assumed control of the franchise 's magazine in New York , reviving what many saw as a stagnating publication . Her use of the magazine to shape the fashion industry has been the subject of debate within it . Animal rights activists have attacked her for promoting fur , while other critics have charged her with using the magazine to promote elitist views of femininity and beauty .

A former personal assistant , Lauren Weisberger , wrote the 2003 best selling roman à clef *The Devil Wears Prada* , later made into a successful film starring Meryl Streep as Miranda Priestly , a fashion editor , believed to be based on Wintour . In 2009 , she was the focus of another film , R.J. Cutler 's documentary *The September Issue* .

= = Family = =

Wintour was born in London , in 1949 , to Charles Wintour (1917 ? 1999) , editor of the Evening Standard , and Eleanor " Nonie " Trego Baker (1917 @-@ 1995) , daughter of a Harvard law professor . Her parents married in 1940 and divorced in 1979 . Wintour was named after her maternal grandmother , Anna Baker (born Gilkynson) , a merchant 's daughter from Pennsylvania . Audrey Slaughter , a magazine editor who founded publications such as *Honey* and *Petticoat* , is her stepmother . The late @-@ 18th @-@ century novelist Lady Elizabeth Foster , Duchess of Devonshire , was Wintour 's great @-@ great @-@ great @-@ grandmother , and Sir Augustus Vere Foster , the last Baronet of that name , was a granduncle .

She had four siblings . Her older brother , Gerald , died in a traffic accident as a child . One of her younger brothers , Patrick , is also a journalist , currently political editor of *The Guardian* . James and Nora Wintour have worked in London local government and for international non @-@ governmental organisations respectively .

= = Early life = =

In her youth , Wintour was educated at the independent North London Collegiate School , where she frequently rebelled against the dress code by taking up the hemlines of her skirts . At the age of 14 , she began wearing her hair in a bob . She developed an interest in fashion as a regular viewer of Cathy McGowan on *Ready Steady Go !* , and from the issues of *Seventeen* her grandmother sent from America . " Growing up in London in the ' 60s , you 'd have to have had Irving Penn 's sack over your head not to know something extraordinary was happening in fashion , " she recalled . Her father regularly consulted her when he was considering ideas for increasing readership in the youth market .

At the age of 15 , she began dating well @-@ connected older men . She was involved briefly with Piers Paul Read , then 24 . In her later teens , she and gossip columnist Nigel Dempster became a fixture on the London club circuit .

= = Career = =

= = = From fashion to journalism = = =

" I think my father really decided for me that I should work in fashion , " she recalled in The September Issue . He arranged for his daughter 's first job , at the influential Biba boutique , when she was 15 . The next year , she left North London Collegiate and began a training program at Harrods . At her parents ' behest , she also took fashion classes at a nearby school . Soon she gave them up , saying , " You either know fashion or you don 't . " Another older boyfriend , Richard Neville , gave her her first experience of magazine production at his popular and controversial Oz .

In 1970 , when Harper 's Bazaar UK merged with Queen to become Harper 's & Queen , Wintour was hired as one of its first editorial assistants , beginning her career in fashion journalism . She told her co -@-@ workers that she wanted to edit Vogue . While there , she discovered model Annabel Hodin , a former North London classmate . Her connections helped her secure locations for innovative shoots by Helmut Newton , Jim Lee and other trend @-@ setting photographers . One recreated the works of Renoir and Manet using models in go @-@ go boots . After chronic disagreements with her rival , Min Hogg , she quit and moved to New York with her boyfriend , freelance journalist Jon Bradshaw .

= = = New York City = = =

In her new home , she became a junior fashion editor at Harper 's Bazaar in New York City in 1975 . Wintour 's innovative shoots led editor Tony Mazzola to fire her after nine months . She was introduced to Bob Marley by one of Bradshaw 's friends , and disappeared with him for a week . A few months later , Bradshaw helped her get her first position as a fashion editor , at Viva , a women 's adult magazine started by Kathy Keeton , then wife of Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione . She has rarely discussed working there , due to that connection . This was the first job at which she was able to hire a personal assistant , which began her reputation as a demanding and difficult boss .

In late 1978 , Guccione shut down the unprofitable magazine . Wintour decided to take some time off from work . She broke up with Bradshaw and began a relationship with French record producer Michel Esteban , for two years dividing her time with him between Paris and New York . She returned to work in 1980 , succeeding Elsa Klensch as fashion editor for a new women 's magazine named Savvy . It sought to appeal to career @-@ conscious professional women , who spent their own money , the readers Wintour would later target at Vogue .

The following year , she became fashion editor of New York . There , the fashion spreads and photo shoots she had been putting together for years finally began attracting attention . Editor Edward Kosner sometimes bent very strict rules for her and let her work on other sections of the magazine . She learned through her work on a cover involving Rachel Ward how effectively celebrity covers sold copies . " Anna saw the celebrity thing coming before everyone else did , " Grace Coddington said three decades later . A former colleague arranged for an interview with Vogue editor Grace Mirabella that ended when Wintour told Mirabella she wanted her job .

= = = Condé Nast = = =

She went to work at Vogue later when Alex Liberman , editorial director for Condé Nast , publisher of Vogue , talked to Wintour about a position there in 1983 . She eventually accepted after a bidding war that doubled her salary , becoming the magazine 's first creative director , a position with vaguely defined responsibilities . Her changes to the magazine were often made without Mirabella 's knowledge , causing friction among the staff . She began dating child psychiatrist David Shaffer , an older acquaintance from London . They married in 1984 .

In 1985 , Wintour attained her first editorship , taking over British Vogue after Beatrix Miller retired . Once in charge , she replaced many staffers and exerted far more control over the magazine than any previous editor had , earning the nickname " Nuclear Wintour " in the process . Those editors who were retained began to refer to the period as " The Wintour of Our Discontent . " Her changes

moved the magazine from its traditional eccentricity to a direction more in line with the American magazine . Wintour 's ideal reader was the same woman Savvy had tried to reach . " There 's a new kind of woman out there , " she told the Evening Standard . " She 's interested in business and money . She doesn 't have time to shop anymore . She wants to know what and why and where and how . "

In 1987 , Wintour returned to New York to take over House & Garden . Its circulation had long lagged behind rival Architectural Digest , and Condé Nast hoped she could improve it . Again , she made radical changes to staff and look , canceling \$ 2 million worth of photo spreads and articles in her first week . She put so much fashion in photo spreads that it became known as House & Garment , and enough celebrities that it was referred to as Vanity Chair , within the industry .

Those changes worsened the magazine 's problems . When the title was shortened to just HG , many longtime subscribers thought they were getting a new magazine and put it aside for the real thing to arrive . Most of those subscriptions were eventually canceled , and while some fashion advertisers came over , most of the magazine 's traditional advertisers pulled out .

Ten months later , she finally became editor of Vogue . Under Mirabella , it had become more focused on lifestyles as a whole and less on fashion . Industry insiders worried that it was losing ground to the recently introduced American edition of Elle .

After making sweeping changes in staff , Wintour also changed the style of the cover pictures . Mirabella had preferred tight head shots of well @-@ known models in studios ; Wintour 's covers showed more of the body and were taken outside , like those Diana Vreeland had done years earlier . She used less well @-@ known models , and mixed inexpensive clothes with the high fashion : the first issue she was in charge of , November 1988 , featured a Peter Lindbergh photograph of 19 @-@ year @-@ old Michaela Bercu in a \$ 50 pair of faded jeans and a bejeweled jacket by Christian Lacroix worth \$ 10 @,@ 000 . It was the first time a Vogue cover model had worn jeans (Bercu was originally supposed to have worn the skirt that coordinated with the jacket , but she had gained some weight and it didn 't fit) . In 2012 , Wintour reflected on the cover :

It was so unlike the studied and elegant close @-@ ups that were typical of Vogue ? s covers back then , with tons of makeup and major jewelry . This one broke all the rules . Michaela wasn 't looking at you , and worse , she had her eyes almost closed . Her hair was blowing across her face . It looked easy , casual , a moment that had been snapped on the street , which it had been , and which was the whole point . Afterwards , in the way that these things can happen , people applied all sorts of interpretations : It was about mixing high and low , Michaela was pregnant , it was a religious statement . But none of these things was true . I had just looked at that picture and sensed the winds of change . And you can ? t ask for more from a cover image than that .

Years later , Wintour admitted the photo had never been planned as the cover shot . In 2011 , when Vogue put its entire archive online , Wintour was quoted as saying , " I just said , ' Well , let 's just try this . ' And off we went . It was just very natural . To me it just said , ' This is something new . This is something different . ' The printers called to make sure that was supposed to be the cover , as they thought a mistake might have been made . " In 2015 she said if she had to pick a favorite of her covers , it would be that one . " [I] t was a leap of faith and it was certainly a big change for Vogue . "

" Wintour 's approach hit a nerve ? this was the way real women put clothes together (with the likely exception of wearing multi @-@ thousand @-@ dollar T @-@ shirts) , " one reviewer says . On the June 1989 cover , another model was shown in wet hair , with just a bathrobe and no apparent makeup . Photographers , makeup artists , and hairstylists got credited along with the models .

In August 2014 , Gigi Hadid paid tribute to Wintour 's first cover .

= = = 1990s = = =

Under her editorship , the magazine renewed its focus on fashion and returned to the prominence it had held under Vreeland . Vogue held its position as market leader against three contenders : Elle ; Harper 's Bazaar , which had lured away Liz Tilberis , Wintour 's most prominent deputy , and

Mirabella , a magazine Rupert Murdoch created for Wintour 's fired predecessor . Her most serious competitor was within the company : Tina Brown , editor of Vanity Fair and later The New Yorker .

At the end of the decade , another of Wintour 's inner circle left to run Harper 's Bazaar . Kate Betts , seen as Wintour 's likely successor , had broadened the magazine 's reach by commissioning stories with a more hard @-@ news edge , about women in politics , street culture , and the financial difficulties of some major designers . She had also added the " Index " section , a few pages of tips meant to be torn out of the magazine . At staff meetings , she earned Wintour 's respect as the only person who publicly challenged her .

The two began to disagree about the magazine 's direction . Betts felt Vogue 's fashion coverage was getting too limited . Wintour in turn thought that the stories with popular culture angles Betts was assigning were beneath readers , and began pairing Betts with Plum Sykes , whom Betts reportedly detested as a " pretentious airhead . " Eventually , she left , complaining to the New York Times that Wintour had not even sent her a baby gift . Wintour wrote an editor 's letter that complimented Betts and wished her well .

= = = 2000s = = =

Betts was one of several longtime editors to leave Vogue around the new millennium . A year later , Sykes , another putative successor , left to concentrate on her best @-@ selling novels set in the city 's upper classes and a screenplay . A number of other editors also left to assume the top jobs at other publications . While some of their replacements didn 't last , a new group of core editors formed .

The September 2004 issue was 832 pages , the largest issue of a monthly magazine ever published at that time , since exceeded by the September 2007 issue Cutler 's documentary covered . Wintour also oversaw the introduction of three spinoffs : Teen Vogue , Vogue Living and Men 's Vogue . Teen Vogue has published more ad pages and earned more advertiser revenue than either Elle Girl and Cosmo Girl , and the 164 ad pages in the début issue of Men 's Vogue were the most for a first issue in Condé Nast history . AdAge named her " Editor of the Year " for this brand expansion . Queen Elizabeth II appointed her Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2008 Birthday Honours .

That year was generally difficult , as the economy worsened . After ruffling feathers at the Milan shows in February , the April issue 's cover image of LeBron James and Gisele Bündchen brought criticism for its evocation of racial stereotypes . The next month a lavish Karl Lagerfeld gown she wore to the Met 's Costume Institute Gala was called " the worst fashion faux pas of 2008 . " In the fall , Vogue Living was suspended indefinitely , and Men 's Vogue cut back to two issues a year as an outsert or supplement to the women 's magazine . At the end of the year , December 's cover highlighted a disparaging comment Jennifer Aniston made about Angelina Jolie , to the former 's displeasure . It seemed Wintour had lost her touch .

In 2008 , rumours arose that she would retire , and be replaced by French Vogue editor Carine Roitfeld . An editor at Russian GQ reportedly introduced Russian Vogue editor Aliona Doletskaya as the next editor of American Vogue . Condé Nast responded by taking out a full @-@ page ad in The New York Times defending her record . In that same publication , Cathy Horyn later wrote that while Wintour hadn 't lost her touch , the magazine had become " stale and predictable , " as a reader had recently complained . " To read Vogue in recent years is to wonder about the peculiar fascination for the ' villa in Tuscany ' story , " Horyn added . The magazine also dealt awkwardly with the recession , she commented .

In 2009 , Wintour began making more media appearances . On a 60 Minutes profile , she said she would not retire . " To me this is a really interesting time to be in this position and I think it would be in a way irresponsible not to put my best foot forward and lead us into a different time . " In September , The September Issue , a documentary film by The War Room producer R.J. Cutler about the production of the September 2007 issue , was released . It focused on the sometimes @-@ difficult relationship between Wintour and creative director Grace Coddington . She appeared on the Late Show with David Letterman to promote it , defending the relevance of fashion in a tough

economy . The American Society of Magazine Editors elected her to its Hall of Fame in 2010 .

== 2010s ==

In 2013 , Condé Nast announced she would be taking on the position of artistic director for the company 's magazines while remaining at Vogue . She assumed some of the responsibilities of Si Newhouse , the company 's longtime editorial director , who , in his mid @-@ 80s at the time , had begun moving from his role at Condé Nast to join the rest of his family in managing Advance Publications , its parent company . A company spokesman told The New York Times the position was created to keep Wintour . She described it as " an extension of what I am doing , but on a broader scale . "

In January 2014 , the Metropolitan Museum of Art named its Costume Institute complex after Wintour ; First Lady Michelle Obama opened it in May of that year . Wintour starred in The Fashion Fund , which aired on Ovation TV that year as well ; she was also named the 39th most powerful woman in the world by Forbes .

== Fashion industry power broker ==

Through the years , she has come to be regarded as one of the most powerful people in fashion , setting trends , and anointing new designers . Industry publicists often hear " Do you want me to go to Anna with this ? " when they have differences with her subordinates . The Guardian has called her the " unofficial mayoress " of New York City . She has encouraged fashion houses such as Christian Dior to hire younger , fresher designers such as John Galliano .

Her influence extends outside fashion . She persuaded Donald Trump to let Marc Jacobs use a ballroom at the Plaza Hotel for a show when Jacobs and his partner were short of cash . More recently , she persuaded Brooks Brothers to hire the relatively unknown Thom Browne . A protégée at Vogue , Plum Sykes , became a successful novelist , drawing her settings from New York 's fashionable élite .

Her salary was reported to be \$ 2 million a year in 2005 . In addition , she receives several perks , such as a chauffeured Mercedes S @-@ Class (both in New York and abroad) , a \$ 200 @,@ 000 shopping allowance , and the Coco Chanel Suite at the Hotel Ritz Paris while attending European fashion shows . Condé Nast president S. I. Newhouse also had the company make her an interest @-@ free \$ 1 @.@ 6 million loan to purchase her townhouse in Greenwich Village .

== Personal life ==

She had two children by David Shaffer following their 1984 marriage : Charles (Charlie) born 1985 , and Katherine (known as Bee) born 1987 . The latter wrote occasional columns for The Daily Telegraph in 2006 , but says she won 't follow her mother into fashion . The couple divorced in 1999 . Newspapers and gossip columnists claimed her affair with investor Shelby Bryan ended the marriage . She declined to comment . Her friends say Bryan has mellowed her . " She smiles now and has been seen to laugh , " the Observer quoted one as saying .

Wintour is also a philanthropist . She serves as a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York , where she has organised benefits that have raised \$ 50 million for the museum 's Costume Institute . She began the CFDA / Vogue Fund in order to encourage , support and mentor unknown fashion designers . She has also raised over \$ 10 million for AIDS charities since 1990 , by organising various high profile benefits .

She claims to rise before 6 am , plays tennis and has her hair and makeup done , then gets to Vogue 's offices two hours later . She always arrives at fashion shows well before their scheduled start . " I use the waiting time to make phone calls and notes ; I get some of my best ideas at the shows , " she says . According to the BBC documentary series Boss Woman , she rarely stays at parties for more than 20 minutes at a time and gets to bed by 10 : 15 every night . She exerts a great deal of control over the magazine 's visual content . Since her first days as editor , she has

required that photographers not begin until she has approved Polaroids of the setup and clothing . Afterwards , they must submit all their work to the magazine , not just their personal choices .

Her control over the text is less certain . Her staffers claim she reads everything written for publication , but former editor Richard Story has claimed she rarely , if ever , read any of Vogue 's arts coverage or book reviews . Earlier in her career , she often left the task of writing the text accompanying her layouts to others ; former coworkers claim she has minimal skills in that area . Today , she writes little for the magazine save the monthly editor 's letter . She reportedly has three full @-@ time assistants but sometimes surprises callers by answering the phone herself . She often turns her cell phone off in order to eat her lunch , usually a steak (or bunless hamburger) , undisturbed . High @-@ protein meals have been a habit of hers for a long time . " It was smoked salmon and scrambled eggs every single day " for lunch , says a coworker at Harpers & Queen . " She would eat nothing else . "

= = = Personal fashion preferences = = =

Because of her position , Wintour 's wardrobe is often closely scrutinised and imitated . Earlier in her career , she mixed fashionable T @-@ shirts and vests with designer jeans . When she started at Vogue as creative director she switched to Chanel suits with miniskirts . She continued to wear them during both pregnancies , opening the skirts slightly in back and keeping her jacket on to cover up . Wintour was listed as " one of the fifty best @-@ dressed over 50s " by the Guardian in March 2013 .

According to biographer Jerry Oppenheimer , her ubiquitous sunglasses are actually corrective lenses , since she suffers from deteriorating vision as her father did . A former colleague he interviewed recalls trying on her Wayfarers in her absence and getting dizzy . " I think at this point they 've become , you know , really armour , " Wintour herself told 60 Minutes correspondent Morley Safer , explaining that they allow her to keep her reactions to a show private . As she rebounded from the end of her marriage and the turnover in the magazine 's editorial staff , a fellow editor and friend noted that " she 's not hiding behind her glasses anymore . Now she 's having fun again . "

= = = Politics = = =

Wintour has been a supporter of the Democratic Party since Hillary Clinton 's 2000 Senate run and John Kerry 's 2004 presidential run and serving Barack Obama 's 2008 and 2012 presidential runs as a " bundler " of contributions . In 2008 and 2012 , she co @-@ hosted fundraisers with Sarah Jessica Parker , the latter being a 50 @-@ person , \$ 40 @,@ 000 @-@ a @-@ plate dinner at Parker 's West Village town house with Meryl Streep , Michael Kors , and Trey Laird , an advertising executive , among the attendees . She has also teamed with Calvin Klein and Harvey Weinstein on fundraisers during Obama 's first term and Donna Karan has been amongst the attendees . In 2013 when Vogue 's former director of communications stepped down , Wintour was rumoured to be looking to hire someone with a political background . Soon after , Wintour hired Hildy Kuryk , a former fundraiser for the Democratic National Committee and Obama 's first campaign. She also supported Hillary Clinton 's 2016 Presidential Campaign , forming part of Clinton 's long list of wealthy donators or " Hillblazers " .

= = The Devil Wears Prada = =

Lauren Weisberger , a former Wintour assistant who left Vogue for Departures along with Richard Story , wrote The Devil Wears Prada after a writing workshop he suggested she take . It was eagerly anticipated for its supposed insider portrait of Wintour prior to its publication . Wintour told The New York Times , " I always enjoy a great piece of fiction . I haven 't decided whether I am going to read it or not . " While it has been suggested that the setting and Miranda Priestly were based on Vogue and Wintour , Weisberger claims she drew not only from her own experiences but those of her friends as well . Wintour herself makes a cameo appearance near the end of the book , where it is

said she and Miranda dislike each other .

In the novel , Miranda has many similarities to Wintour ? among them , she is British , has two children , and is described as a major contributor to the Met . Priestly is a tyrant ; who makes impossible demands of her subordinates , gives them almost none of the information or time necessary to comply and then berates them for their failures to do so .

Betts , who had been fired by Harper 's after two years during which staffers said she tried too hard to emulate Wintour , reviewed it harshly in the New York Times Book Review :

Having worked at Vogue myself for eight years and having been mentored by Anna Wintour , I have to say Weisberger could have learned a few things in the year she sold her soul to the devil of fashion for \$ 32 @, @ 500 . She had a ringside seat at one of the great editorial franchises in a business that exerts an enormous influence over women , but she seems to have understood almost nothing about the isolation and pressure of the job her boss was doing , or what it might cost a person like Miranda Priestly to become a character like Miranda Priestly .

Priestly has some positive qualities . Andrea notes that she makes all the magazine 's key editorial decisions by herself and that she has genuine class and style . " I never for one second didn 't know it was an amazing opportunity to assist Anna , " Weisberger said in 2008 .

= = = Film adaptation = = =

The film version of the novel has not been the only movie to have a character borrowing some aspects of Wintour . Edna Mode 's similar hairstyle in The Incredibles has been noted , Johnny Depp said he partially based the demeanour of Willy Wonka in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory on Wintour . Fey Sommers in the Ugly Betty television series was also likened to Wintour , from the trademark bob and sunglasses , to Wintour 's last name homophonous with ' Winter ' , while Sommers ' is homophonous with ' Summer ' .

During the film 's production in 2005 , Wintour was reportedly threatening prominent fashion personalities , particularly designers , that Vogue would not cover them if they made cameo appearances in the movie as themselves . She denied it through a spokesperson who said she was interested in anything that " supports fashion . " Many designers are mentioned in the film . Only one , Valentino Garavani , appeared as himself .

The film was released , in mid @-@ 2006 , to great commercial success . Wintour attended the première wearing Prada . In the film , actress Meryl Streep plays a Priestly different enough from the book 's to receive critical praise as an entirely original (and more sympathetic) character . (Streep 's office in the film was similar enough to Wintour 's that Wintour reportedly had hers redecorated .)

Wintour reportedly said the film would probably go straight to DVD . It made over \$ 300 million in worldwide box office receipts . Later in 2006 , in an interview with Barbara Walters that aired the day of the DVD 's release , Wintour said she found the film " really entertaining " and praised it for making fashion " entertaining and glamorous and interesting ... I was 100 percent behind it . "

That opinion of the movie has not yet led her to forgive Weisberger . When it was reported that the novelist 's editor told her to start her third novel over , Wintour 's spokesman suggested she " should get a job as someone else 's assistant . "

Oppenheimer suggests The Devil Wears Prada may have done Wintour a favour by increasing her name recognition . " Besides giving Weisberger her fifteen minutes , " he says , " [it] ... place [d] Anna squarely in the mainstream celebrity pantheon . [She] was now known and talked about over Big Macs and french fries under the Golden Arches by young fashionistas in Wal @-@ Mart denim in Davenport and Dubuque . "

When The September Issue was released three years later , critics compared it with the earlier , fictional film . " For the past year or so , she 's been on the media warpath to win back her image , " said Paul Schrodtt in Slant Magazine . Many considered the question of how similar she was to Streep 's Priestly , and praised the film for showing the real person . Manohla Dargis at The New York Times said that Priestly had helped humanise Wintour , and " the documentary continues this . " " The movie offers insights that lift it beyond a realist version of The Devil Wears Prada , " agreed Mary Pols in Time .

= = Criticism = =

In 2005 , two years after *The Devil Wears Prada* , Oppenheimer 's *Front Row : The Cool Life and Hot Times of Vogue 's Editor in Chief* was published . It painted a similar portrait of the real woman . According to Oppenheimer , Wintour not only declined his requests for an interview but discouraged others from talking to him .

= = = Personality = = =

Wintour is often described as emotionally distant by those who have come to know her well , even her close friends . " At some stage in her career , Anna Wintour stopped being Anna Wintour and became ' Anna Wintour , ' at which point , like wings of a stately home , she closed off large sections of her personality to the public , " wrote *The Guardian* . " I think she enjoys not being completely approachable . Just her office is very intimidating . You have to walk about a mile into the office before you get to her desk and I 'm sure it 's intentional , " Coddington says . " I don 't find her to be accessible to people she doesn 't need to be accessible to , " agrees Vogue publisher Tom Florio .

She has said she admired her father Charles , known as " Chilly Charlie " for being " inscrutable . " Former coworkers told Oppenheimer of a similar aloofness on her part . But she is also known for volatile outbursts of displeasure , and the widely used " Nuclear Wintour " sobriquet is a result of both . She dislikes it enough to have asked *The New York Times* not to use it . " There are times I get quite angry , " she admitted in *The September Issue* .

" I think she has been very rude to a lot of people in the past , on her way up ? very terse , " a friend told the *Observer* . " She doesn 't do small talk . She is never going to be friends with her assistant . " A former assistant said , " You definitely did not ride the elevator with her . " Unwritten rules imposed by Wintour at the Vogue offices forbid junior staffers from initiating conversation with her ; an editor who greeted her on the elevator was reprimanded by one of Wintour 's assistants . (She calls that an exaggeration .) A visiting reporter saw a junior staffer appear visibly panicked when she realised she would have to ride the elevator with Wintour . Once a junior editor saw her trip in the hallway , walked past without offering assistance , and was later told she " did absolutely the right thing . "

Even friends admit to some trepidation in her presence . " Anna happens to be a friend of mine , " says Barbara Amiel , " a fact which is of absolutely no help in coping with the cold panic that grips me whenever we meet . " " I know when to stop pushing her , " says Coddington . " She doesn 't know when to stop pushing me . "

She has often been described as a perfectionist who routinely makes impossible , arbitrary demands of subordinates : " kitchen scissors at work , " in the words of one commentator . She once made a junior staffer look through a photographer 's trash to find a picture he had refused to give her . In a deleted scene from *The September Issue* , she complains about the " horrible white plastic buckets " of ice behind the bars at the CFDA 's 7th on Sale AIDS benefit and moves them out of sight . " The notion that Anna would want something done ' now ' and not ' shortly ' is accurate , " Amiel says of *The Devil Wears Prada* . " Anna wants what she wants right away . " A longtime assistant says , " She throws you in the water and you 'll either sink or swim . "

Peter Braunstein , the former *Women 's Wear Daily* (*WWD*) media reporter , later convicted of sexually assaulting a coworker , allegedly planned to kill Wintour because of perceived slights . After receiving only one ticket to the 2002 Vogue Fashion Awards , which he perceived as a snub , he became so angry that *WWD* fired him . At his 2007 trial , prosecutors introduced as evidence a journal he kept on his computer in which he stated his intention to kill her . In it he wrote , " She just never talked to peons like us " to justify his intended actions .

On one occasion , she has had to pay for her treatment of employees . In 2004 , a court ruled that she and Shaffer were to pay \$ 104 @ , @ 403 , and Wintour herself an additional \$ 32 @ , @ 639 , to settle a lawsuit brought against them by the New York State Workers ' Compensation Board . They had failed to pay the \$ 140 @ , @ 000 judgement it incurred on behalf of a former employee injured

on the job , who did not have the necessary insurance coverage .

In the 2000s , her relationship with Bryan was credited with softening her personality at work . " Even when she 's in a bad mood , she has a different posture , " someone described as a " Wintour watcher " told the New York Observer . " The consensus is that she 's so much more mellow and easier to work for because she 's probably getting laid . "

= = = Pro @-@ fur stance = = =

She has often been the target of animal rights organisations like PETA , who are angered by her use of fur in Vogue , her pro @-@ fur editorials and her refusal to run paid advertisements from animal rights organisations . Undeterred , she continues to use fur in photo spreads , saying there 's always a way to wear it . " Nobody was wearing fur until she put it on the cover in the early 1990s , " says Vogue co @-@ worker Tom Florio . " She ignited the entire industry . "

She has " lost count " of the times she has been physically attacked by activists . In Paris in October 2005 , she was hit with a tofu pie while waiting to get into the Chloé show . On another occasion , an activist dumped a dead raccoon on her plate at a restaurant ; she told the waiter to remove it . She and Vogue publisher Ron Galotti once retaliated for a protest outside the Condé Nast offices during the company 's annual Christmas party by sending down a plate of roast beef .

Others outside of the animal @-@ rights community have raised the fur issue . Fashion journalist Peter Braunstein wrote in his manifesto that she would go to a hell guarded by large rats , where it would be so warm she wouldn 't need to wear fur . Pamela Anderson , in an early 2008 interview , said Wintour was the living person she most despised " because she bullies young designers and models to use and wear fur . "

= = = Elitism = = =

Another common criticism of Wintour 's editorship focuses on Vogue 's increasing use of celebrities on the cover , and her insistence on making them meet her standards . She reportedly told Oprah Winfrey to lose weight before her cover photograph . Likewise , Hillary Clinton was told not to wear a blue suit . At the 2005 Anglomania celebration , a Vogue @-@ sponsored salute to British fashion at the Met , Wintour is said to have personally chosen the clothes for prominent attendees such as Jennifer Lopez , Kate Moss , Donald Trump , and Diane von Fürstenberg . " I don 't think Vreeland had that kind of concentration , " says WWD publisher Patrick McCarthy . " She wouldn 't have dressed Babe Paley . Nor would Babe Paley have let her . " By persuading designers to loan clothes to prominent socialites and celebrities , who are then photographed wearing the clothes not only in Vogue but more general @-@ interest magazines like People and Us , which in turn influence what buyers want , some in the industry believe Wintour is exerting too much control over it , especially since she is not involved in making or producing clothes herself . " The end result is that Anna can control it all the way to the selling floor , " says Candy Pratts Price , executive fashion director at style.com. She has been credited with killing grunge fashion in the early 1990s , when it wasn 't selling well , by telling designers if they continued to avoid glamour their looks would not be photographed for Vogue . All complied .

Another Vogue writer has complained Wintour excluded ordinary working women , many of whom are regular subscribers , from the pages . " She 's obsessed only about reflecting the aspirations of a certain class of reader , " she says . " We once had a piece about breast cancer which started with an airline stewardess , but she wouldn 't have a stewardess in the magazine so we had to go and look for a high @-@ flying businesswoman who 'd had cancer . "

Wintour has been accused of setting herself apart even from peers . " I do not think fiction could surpass the reality , " a British fashion magazine editor says of The Devil Wears Prada . " [A] rt in this instance is only a poor imitation of life . " Wintour , the editor says , routinely requests to be seated out of sight of competing editors at shows . " We spend our working lives telling people which it @-@ bag to carry but Anna is so above the rest of us she does not even have a handbag . "

At the 2008 Milan Fashion Week she requested that some key shows be rescheduled for earlier in

the week so she and other U.S.-based editors could have time to return home before the Paris shows . This led to complaints . Other editors said they had to rush through the earlier shows , and lesser @-@ known designers who had to show later were denied an important audience . Dolce & Gabbana said Italian fashion was getting short shrift and Milan was becoming a " circus without sense . "

Giorgio Armani , who at the time was co @-@ chairing a Met exhibition on superheroes ' costumes with Wintour , drew some attention for his personal remarks . " Maybe what she thinks is a beautiful dress , I wouldn 't think was a beautiful dress , " he said . While he claimed he couldn 't understand why people disliked her , saying he himself was indifferent , he expressed hope she hadn 't made a comment once attributed to her " the Armani era is over . " He accused her of preferring French and American fashion over Italian . Geoffrey Beene , who stopped inviting Wintour to shows after she stopped writing about him , called her " a boss lady in four @-@ wheel drive who ignores or abandons those who do not fuel her tank . As an editor , she has turned class into mass , taste into waste . "

Her remarks about obesity have caused controversy on more than one occasion . In 2005 , Wintour was heavily criticised by the New York chapter of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance after Vogue editor @-@ at @-@ large André Leon Talley said on The Oprah Winfrey Show , at one point , Wintour demanded he lose weight . " Most of the Vogue girls are so thin , tremendously thin " he said , " because Miss Anna doesn 't like fat people . " In 2009 , residents of Minneapolis took umbrage after she told 60 Minutes she could " only kindly describe most of the people I saw as little houses . " They noted their city had been named the third fittest in the nation that year by Men 's Fitness while New York had been named the fifth fattest .

Wintour surprised observers when developing an association with the Kardashian family and Kanye West , which culminated in having the Kardashian @-@ Wests on a Vogue cover ; Wintour reportedly commented that having only " deeply tasteful " people in the magazine was boring , and her decision to resort to such personalities has led some to accuse the magazine of being " desperate for buzz . " Wintour has nevertheless continued the association with the less @-@ than- " deeply tasteful " pair .

= = = Responses = = =

Defences of Wintour have often come from others . Amanda Fortini at Slate said she was comfortable with Wintour 's elitism since that was intrinsic to fashion :

Most of us read Vogue not with the intention of buying the wildly expensive clothes , but because doing so educates our eye and hones our taste , similar to the way eating gourmet food refines the palate . This is a pleasure enabled by Wintour 's ruthless aesthetic , her refusal to participate in the democratizing tendency of most of her competitors . To deny her that privilege is to deny her readers the privilege of fantasy in the form of beautifully photographed Paris couture .

Emma Brockes sees this in Wintour herself : " [Her] unwavering ability to look as if she lives within the pages of her magazine has a sort of honesty to it , proof that , whatever one thinks about it , the lifestyle peddled by Vogue is at least physically possible . " " Print publications have to be as luxurious an experience as possible , " Wintour explained in 2015 . " You have to feel it coming off the page . You have to see photographs and pieces that you couldn 't possibly see anywhere else . "

Some friends see her purported coldness as just traditional British reserve , or shyness . Brockes says it may be mutual , " partly a reflection of how awkward people are with her , particularly women , who get preemptively chippy when faced with the prospect of meeting Fashion Incarnate . " Wintour describes herself as shy , and Harry Connick Jr . , who escorted her and Bee to shows in 2007 , agrees . When Morley Safer asked her about complaints about her personality , she said

I have so many people here , Morley , that have worked with me for 15 , 20 years , and , you know , if I 'm such a bitch , they must really be a glutton for punishment because they 're still here ... If one comes across sometimes as being cold or brusque , it 's simply because I 'm striving for the best .

She has made similar statements in defence of her reported refusal to hire fat people . " It 's

important to me that the people that are working here , particularly in the fashion department , " she says , " will present themselves in a way that makes sense to the outside world that they work at Vogue . "

Her defenders have called criticism sexist . " Powerful women in the media always get inspected more thoroughly than their male counterparts , " said The New York Times in a piece about Wintour shortly after *The Devil Wears Prada* 's release . When she took over at Vogue , gossip columnist Liz Smith reported rumours she had gotten the job through an affair with Si Newhouse . A reportedly furious Wintour made her anger the subject of one of her first staff meetings . She still complained about it when accepting a media award in 2002 .

She has been called a feminist whose changes to Vogue have reflected , acknowledged , and reinforced advances in the status of women . Reviewing Oppenheimer 's book in The Washington Monthly , managing editor Christina Larson notes Vogue , unlike many other women 's magazines , ... doesn 't play to its readership 's sense of inadequacy ... Instead , it reminds women to take satisfaction , parading all manner of fineries (clothes , furniture , travel destinations) that a successful woman might buy , or at least admire . While it surely exists to sell ads ... it does so primarily by exploiting ambition , not insecurity .

Wintour , unlike Vreeland , " ... shifted Vogue 's focus from the cult of beauty to the cult of the creation of beauty . " To her , the focus on celebrities is a welcome development as it means women are making the cover of Vogue at least in part for what they have accomplished , not just how they look .

Complaints about her role as fashion eminence grise are dismissed by those familiar with how she actually exercises it . " She 's honest . She tells you what she thinks . Yes is yes and no is no , " according to Karl Lagerfeld . " She 's not too pushy " agrees François @-@ Henri Pinault , chief executive officer of PPR , Gucci 's parent company . " She lets you know it 's not a problem if you can 't do something she wants . " Defenders also point out she continued supporting Gucci despite her strong belief PPR should not have let Tom Ford go . Designers such as Alice Roi and Isabel Toledo have flourished without indulging Wintour or Vogue . Her willingness to throw her weight around has helped keep Vogue independent despite its heavy reliance on advertising dollars . Wintour was the only fashion editor who refused to follow an Armani ultimatum to feature more of its clothes in the magazine 's editorial pages , although she has also admitted if she has to choose between two dresses , one by an advertiser and the other not , she will choose the former every time . " Commercial is not a dirty word to me . "

Wintour herself , when asked about it , dismisses the notion that she has all the power attributed to her . " I don 't think of myself as a powerful person , " she told Forbes in 2011 , when it named her 69th on its list of the world 's hundred most powerful women . " You know , what does it mean ? It means you get a better seat in a restaurant or tickets to a screening or whatever it may be . But it is a wonderful opportunity to be able to help others , and for that I 'm extremely grateful . "

In response to criticisms like Beene 's , she has defended the democratisation of what were once exclusive luxury brands . " It means more people are going to get better fashion , " she told Dana Thomas . " And the more people who can have fashion , the better . "