

Title: The Evolution of Fashion Magazines: How Harper's Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle have shaped trends from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Century in the Digital Age.

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## **Abstract**

This project explores fashion magazines' profound influence on fashion trends' evolution from the 19th century to the 21st century. Fashion magazines have shaped public perceptions of styles, acting as trendsetters and tastemakers. Beginning in the 19th century, publications like Harper's Bazaar and Vogue provided detailed descriptions and illustrations of contemporary fashion, making high-end styles accessible to a broader audience. As photography became integral to fashion journalism in the 20th century, magazines showcased iconic images that defined eras and popularised trends. In the digital age, fashion magazines have adapted to online platforms, continuing to influence fashion through instant updates and interactive content. This project examines how these publications have not only documented but also driven the popularity of various fashion trends, reflecting and shaping societal changes over time.

## **Declaration**

### Declaration of Originality

In signing this declaration, you are conforming, in writing, that the submitted work is entirely your original work, except where attributed otherwise, and that it has not been submitted partly or wholly for any other educational award.

I hereby declare that:

- this is all my work unless indicated otherwise, with full and proper accreditation.
- concerning my work, none of it has been submitted to any educational institution contributing in any way to an educational award.
- concerning another's work: all text, diagrams, code, or ideas, whether verbatim, paraphrased or otherwise modified or adapted, have been duly attributed to the source in a scholarly manner, whether from books, papers, lecture notes or any other student's work, whether published or unpublished, electronically or in print.

Signed: Maria Luisa Twomey

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025

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I thank my supervisor, Rosane Minghim, for helping me with my project and guiding me in the correct direction.

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# Introduction

This project examines the evolution of fashion magazines from the 19th to the 21st century, specifically focusing on how Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle have played significant roles in setting fashion trends. The project explores how these iconic publications have adapted to societal changes and technological advancements, particularly the rise of digital media. It aims to analyse how these magazines have maintained their influence in a rapidly changing media landscape, moving from traditional print to embracing the digital age.

Through a combination of historical analysis and digital content review, the project seeks to understand how these magazines have shaped fashion and culture while responding to the challenges of the digital revolution. The key focus is on how the advent of digital technologies, such as social media, websites, and interactive content, have affected how these magazines engage with their audiences and continue to set trends.

The project is conducted through extensive research into a star for publications, current digital strategies, industrial trends, and creating a WordPress website as a digital artefact, which can be accessed through this link: <https://twomey12.wordpress.com/>. This website serves as a platform for showcasing the research and demonstrating how these magazines have integrated digital technologies to stay relevant by exploring the balance between traditional editorial content and digital; this project contributes to understanding how fashion magazines are evolving in the 21st century.

## 1.1 Project Objectives and Goals

The primary goal of this project is to analyse how fashion magazines, specifically Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle, have evolved from the 19th century to the 21st century. This analysis will focus on understanding these magazines' role in trendsetting and how they have adapted to the digital age, particularly with the rise of digital technology and social media. By examining their historical context, editorial shifts, and digital strategies, the project aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the magazine's ability to influence fashion, culture, and society over time.

As part of this project, a digital artefact in the form of a Wordpress website has been created. The website will serve as a dynamic platform for presenting key findings from analysing Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle. It will feature interactive content such as multimedia (images), case studies, and visual representations, making the research accessible and engaging for an online audience. The website provides a digital extension of the project, demonstrating the shift of traditional print magazines into this digital age.

### 1.1.1 Key Project Objectives:

1. To explore the historical evolution of Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue and Elle from their inception in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

2. To analyse the role of these magazines in setting trends within the fashion industry, both historically and in the digital age.
3. To evaluate how the digital revolution has impacted the operations and strategies of these publications, focusing on their transition from print to digital platforms.
4. To compare and contrast the response of these magazines to the challenges posed by new technologies and shifts in consumer behaviour.
5. To investigate how these publications have maintained their influence over time and continue to shape the global fashion media landscape.

### **1.1.2 Expected Deliverables**

The deliverables of this project include:

1. This comprehensive literature review covers the historical context of Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle, explicitly focusing on their role in fashion, culture, and trend-setting from the 19th century through the 21st century.
2. An analysis of digital transformation that outlines how these magazines have embraced digital technologies (such as websites, social media, and interactive content) and what impact this has had on their readership and brand image.
3. This is a comparative analysis of how Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle have adapted to changing media landscapes and continued to set fashion trends in a digital world.
4. A section on how magazines, particularly Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle, engage with new forms of media (such as Instagram, YouTube, Podcasts, etc) to connect with their audience and maintain relevance.
5. This final report synthesises the findings, concluding how fashion magazines have navigated the balance between tradition and innovation and offering insights into the future of fashion media.
6. To create a digital artifact, which will serve as an interactive and visual extension of the research. The website will include multimedia content, articles, and visual analysis, helping to engage a wider audience by presenting the project findings digitally.

### **1.1.3 Background Material**

To fully understand the project's scope, it is essential to consider the historical significance of fashion magazines. Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle have played pivotal roles in shaping fashion culture, providing a lens through which societal changes—particularly in gender, class, and identity—have been reflected. By analysing the magazines' evolution, the project will build on existing work that examines the interplay between fashion journalism and cultural shifts.

Additionally, background research will include a review of relevant literature on the impact of digital technology on traditional print media, with a particular focus on fashion publications. Previous studies have explored how magazines like Harpers Bazaar have embraced digital platforms to engage their audiences. However, there



remains a gap in the literature about how these transitions have affected their status as trendsetters.

#### **1.1.4 Considerations and Technical Decisions**

This project will also consider the rapid pace of change in digital technology and its implications for print media. Major decisions include:

- Digital and social media metrics (such as audience engagement data) assess how Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle have adapted to the growing demand for real-time digital content.
- A comparative analysis of the online presence of these magazines, specifically looking at their websites, apps, social media platforms (Instagram and YouTube), and digital subscriptions.
- The inclusion of multimedia content in the analysis illustrates the visual and interactive elements that have become central to the digital strategies of these magazines.

#### **1.1.5 Related Work and Distinction:**

Several studies have examined the history and influence of fashion magazines in the 19th and 20th centuries, but few have provided an in-depth analysis of their digital transformation in the 21st century. Existing work, such as an article in Google Books titled 'Harpers Bazaar: 150 Years', has explored Individual cases of digital adaptation by Harpers Bazaar. However, this study only focuses on one magazine or different aspects of the digital transition, such as digital content innovation.

This project differentiates itself by offering a comparative, in-depth examination of Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle as they navigate the changing landscape of fashion media. Additionally, it will analyse the broader implications of digital technologies on the fashion industry, not just from a marketing perspective but also from the standpoint of editorial strategies, brand identity, and trend-setting influences.

By filling this gap, the project aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how fashion magazines have responded to technological advancements and how they continue to shape fashion culture today.

# Literature Review

This literature review examines the evolution of fashion magazines from the 19th century to the 21st century, focusing on publications such as Vogue, Godey's Lady Book, Harpers Bazaar and Elle. This literature review aims to analyse existing knowledge on how these magazines have historically set fashion trends during periods such as the World Wars and the Great Depression. Another aim of this review is to explore the shift in trend-setting power from print magazines to digital platforms in the modern age. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of current research, this literature review will highlight gaps in the literature and establish the foundation for this project's contribution to understanding the changing role of fashion magazines in the digital age.

## 2.1 19th Century

"Fashion magazines are an important vehicle in fashion communication" [2]. Harpers Bazaar and Godey's Lady's Book were two of the most influential early fashion magazines. These publications provided fashion guidance and a blend of literature, practical advice, and social commentary. This discussion will explore these two iconic magazines' origins and early development, highlighting their contributions to the fashion industry and their impact on society.

### 2.1.1 Harpers Bazaar

"The Harper family was already known as a book publication group" [5]. The title 'Harpers Bazaar' originated from the youngest Harper, Fletcher Harper, noticing a fashion magazine called "Der Bazar, published in Berlin, Germany" [5]. He then considered creating an American edition and collaborating with the German publisher. Harpers Bazaar was published in 1867 by Harper & Brothers, a prominent New York-based publishing house. "A repository of fashion, pleasure, and instruction" is how Harpers Bazaar described itself on the cover of its inaugural issue in 1867 [1]. This magazine was initially aimed at the American middle and upper class, providing them with the latest fashion trends from Europe, particularly Paris. It quickly established itself as a premier fashion publication known for its high-quality illustrations and detailed descriptions of the latest styles.

In the 19th century, Harpers Bazaar was a magazine that played an impactful role in shaping the fashion taste of its readers. It was known that "Bazaar's definition of fashion went far beyond clothes" This magazine embraced a comprehensive view of fashion, incorporating elements of beauty, lifestyle, and culture.

Harpers Bazaar had "sketched out the journal's mission to become a vast repository of all the rare and costly things of earth – silks, velvets, cashmere, spices, perfumes, and glittering gems; in a word, whatever can comfort the heart and delight the eye" [10]. This vision shaped the magazine's content, making it a luxurious and aspirational publication. Harper's Bazaar showcased fashion trends and featured articles on fine arts, travel, and high society events. This approach appealed to its readership, positioning the magazine as a symbol of sophistication and elegance. By curating a

blend of fashion, culture and lifestyle, Harper's Bazaar set itself apart from other publications and established a legacy in fashion journalism.

It featured articles on art, literature, and social issues, reflecting its readers' broader interests and aspirations. "The magazine was among the first mainstream publications to advocate for equal rights and educational and employment opportunities for women" [1]. By addressing topics such as women's rights and the role of women in society, Harpers Bazaar positioned itself as a publication that showcased the latest styles and engaged with the intellectual and cultural currents of the time. Harper's Bazaar also aimed to cater to an audience fascinated by luxury.

The magazine's content often reflected the aspirations of its readers, who were interested in the symbols of wealth and social status. "Social mobility and the trappings of wealth were big subjects for early Bazar. Each week, the magazine served up dispatches from cities such as Paris, London, Florence, Dresden, and Munich, offering glittery glimpses from abroad". [1]. These international reports provided readers with insights into the latest European fashions and allowed them to experience the lavishness and sophistication of foreign cultures. By presenting a blend of fashion, travel, and high society, Harper's Bazaar distinguished itself as a publication that went beyond mere clothing to encompass a broader lifestyle of elegance and refinement.

Harpers Bazaar did not delve deeply into historical events in the 19th century. This focus allowed the magazine to maintain its reputation as a fashion and society magazine. However, its sister publication, Harpers Weekly, founded by the identical Harpers brothers, served a different purpose. Harpers Weekly was "aimed at the middle and upper socio-economic classes and tried not to print anything that it considered unfit for the entire family to read", making it a prominent source of news and commentary, covering significant events such as the American Civil War and political developments with detailed articles and illustrations. This distinction between the two publications highlights the specialised role of Harpers Bazaar in the realm of fashion and lifestyle. At the same time, Harpers Weekly provided comprehensive coverage of the era's critical historical events.

### **2.1.2 Godey's Lady's Book**

Godey's Lady's Book originated from Louis Antoine Godey, who worked as a "'scissors editor' for Charles Alexander on the Daily Chronicle" and then released his first Lady's Book. "This book was an important factor in spreading French ideas and culture throughout American culture". By introducing American readers to French fashion, literature and lifestyle, the book played a crucial role in shaping the preferences of its audience. It helped to popularise French styles and customs, making them a desirable standard in American society. This cultural exchange enriched the American fashion scene and fostered a greater appreciation for French art and sophistication. As a result, the book contributed to a broader cultural dialogue between France and the United States, influencing various aspects of American life, from fashion to social etiquette.

Godey's Lady's Book was "founded in Philadelphia in 1830 by Louis Antoine Godey and edited for four decades by Sarah Josepha Hale" [16]. The content of Godey's Lady's

Book began with using Hale's beliefs of influencing "the nation's tastes and the position of women" and also "women in the workforce argued for women's education and published several special issues comprising only women's writing"[16]. Hale's editorial direction elevated the magazine's status and made it a powerful platform for defending social change. By promoting women's education and showcasing female writers, Godey's Lady's Book helped to empower women and their role in society. This approach resonated with readers and influenced the magazine's popularity and influence. Hale's vision for the magazine was to shape its legacy as a publication that assisted women's rights and cultural development.

The content of Godey's Lady's book was "elaborate, hand-coloured fashion plates"; these plates resulted in some people classifying the magazine as a 'fashion magazine' [15]. "The fashion plate is a hand-coloured engraving that appeared in weekly or monthly journal publications, at least one or two per issue" [17]. These fashion plates inspired women's fashion but also played a crucial role in disseminating the latest styles and trends across the country. They allow readers to stay updated with the latest fashions from Europe. These plates' detailed and artistic nature made them highly influential, often leading to local dressmakers and sewists replicating these styles. Godey's Lady's Book became a key magazine through which fashion trends were communicated to a broader audience. The magazine's attention to fashion also reflected and reinforced the growing consumer culture of the 19th century, where the appearance of fashion trends became increasingly important.

One of the magazine's significant articles varied from "fiction, poetry, and essays almost exclusively from American writers, many of them women" [15]. This emphasis on American writers, especially female authors, helped to promote and celebrate their talent. By providing a platform for women's voices, the magazine played a crucial role in advancing women's literary careers and fostering a sense of a community's amount of readers.

Another significant innovation of the magazine was endorsing "gendered jobs such as teaching but also stretched gendered conceptions about appropriate work for women to endorse caring – or nurturing-based professions such as medicine and occupations in education management including college administration"[6]. This open-minded stance was groundbreaking when women's roles were primarily confined to the domestic sphere. The magazine challenged societal norms and expanded opportunities by advocating for women's participation in professions requiring education and specialised skills. The magazine's support for women in medicine was particularly unique. During the 19th century, the medical field was predominantly male-dominated, and women faced significant barriers. By highlighting female doctors' achievements and promoting the idea that women could excel in medical professions, the magazine helped pave the way for future generations of women in healthcare. In addition to medicine, the magazine's advocacy for women in education management, including college administration, was influential. By showcasing successful women in these roles, the magazine inspired readers to aspire to leadership positions in education and beyond. Significant innovations were the magazine's endorsement of gendered jobs and efforts to stretch gendered conceptions about appropriate work for women. By advocating for women's participation in professions such as medicine and education

management, the magazine challenged traditional gendered roles and empowered women to pursue their ambitions.

During this century, a lot of historical events occurred. During the American Civil War, Godey's Lady's Book took a unique stance by allowing "the publication to become embroiled directly in political matters, refusing even to mention, much less take a position on, sectionalism and the Civil War"[\[16\]](#), continuing to focus on fashion, literature, and domestic advice. This decision could have led to a significant loss of subscribers, as readers most likely looked out for war-related information elsewhere. Despite this, the magazine influenced women's fashion and societal norms. The elaborate fashion plates continued to give readers a sense of normality and a chance to escape the troubling times. Sarah Josepha Hale maintained the magazine's focus on domestic life and fashion, even as the nation was conflicted.

The decade of 1870 marked a significant transition for Godey's lady book. After four decades of influential leadership, Sarah Joseph Hale retired as the editor. Hale had been the force in the magazine industry advocating for "education for women and opportunities for women to teach, although. She always remained apart from formal feminist movements" [\[15\]](#). Under her guidance, the magazine had become a platform for promoting women's rights and education, making it more than just a fashion magazine. In the same year, Louise A. Godey, the founder, sold the magazine to John Hill Seles Haulenbeek.

From 1880 - 1900, Godey's Lady's Book was a significant publication for American women, offering a mix of fashion literature and practical advice. The magazine continued publishing duplicate content under various editors, including J Hannam Jones and Mr S.A. Shields. Despite changes in ownership and editorial direction, Godey's Lady's book maintained its popularity by adapting to its readers' evolving interests and needs. The magazine's content during these two decades reflected the social and cultural shift of the time, providing a window into the lives and aspirations of 19th-century American women.

However, the magazine eventually ceased publication in 1896.

Despite the significant contributions of Harpers Bazaar and Godey's Lady's Book to 19th-century fashion and culture, there are notable gaps in the literature regarding their broader societal impact and the implication of their readership. While much has been written about their editorial content and influence on fashion trends, less attention has been paid to how these publications shaped and reflected the evolving roles of women in society. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive studies comparing the two magazines' approaches to addressing or avoiding political and social issues of the time. Further research is needed to explore the intersection of fashion, culture, and politics in these publications and their influence on women's education and empowerment. This gap in the literature presents an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the cultural significance of Harpers Bazaar and Godey's Lady's Book beyond their fashion content.

## 2.2 20th Century

### 2.2.1 Harpers Bazaar

As Harpers Bazaar transitioned into the 20th century, it continued to build on its reputation as a premier fashion magazine. Founded in 1867, the magazine became a sophisticated publication dedicated to fashion, culture and lifestyle. The early 1900s saw Harpers Bazaar maintaining its commitment to high-quality content and elegant presentation, catering to an affluent readership seeking the latest fashion and social trends.

During this period, Harper's Bazaar featured many contributions from some of the most influential writers. "Bazaar editor Arthur Samuels was a member of the Algonquin Round Table and got the ever-elusive Dorothy Parker to write short fiction for the magazine, which also published pieces by other major female writers of the era, including Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West" [10]. These literary contributions significantly elevated Harper's Bazaar's cultural prestige, positioning it not only as a fashion magazine but also as a platform for intellectual and artistic expression. By featuring works from such esteemed writers, Harper's Bazaar attracted a sophisticated readership that valued high fashion and literary excellence. This blend of fashion and literature helped to distinguish the magazine from its competitors, creating a unique identity that resonated with readers who appreciated the intersection of style and substance. Including these influential female voices further emphasised the magazine's dedication to showcasing diverse perspectives and empowering women through fashion and storytelling.

A pivotal moment in Harper's Bazaar's history was when "Bazaar's covers and illustration in the 1910s and 20s were created by a raft of a new visual talent from the burgeoning European avant-garde art world that included illustrations such as George Barbie's and Leon Bakst, both of whom created costumes and sets for performance troupes like the Follies Berger and the Ballets Russes in Paris." [10]. These collaborations elevated the magazine's aesthetic appeal and positioned Harper's Bazaar at the intersection of fashion and high art. Including such distinguished artists brought a sense of sophistication and innovation to the magazine, attracting a readership that appreciated both innovative fashion and artistic excellence. This period marked a significant evolution in Harpers Bazaar's visual identity, setting it apart from other fashion publications and showing its reputation as a trendsetter.

As the 20th century ended, Harper's Bazaar continued to evolve, embracing diversity and innovation in its editorial content. The magazine recognised the importance of representing various voices and perspectives, featuring celebrities such as Lauren Bacall and contributors from diverse backgrounds. The magazine's fashion spreads, interviews, and features reflected this commitment to inclusivity.

Technological advancements started to play a significant role in shaping Harper's Bazaar during this period. "The emergence of new technologies has caused a major decline in the popularity and consumption of print magazines" [9].

This shift significantly impacted magazines throughout the 20th century as technological advancements increased, such as digital photography and online platforms, such as the personal computer. "The personal computer went from a niche technology to one of the most transformative innovations of the 20th century" [8].

Harpers Bazaar had to adapt to these advancements to keep its relevance and readership. The magazine embraced this shift by incorporating high-quality digital images, enhancing print and online editions' visual appeal and engagement. Additionally, the rise of the internet allowed Harpers Bazaar to reach a global audience, expanding its influence beyond traditional print boundaries. However, these changes also meant that the magazine had to compete with the growing number of digital fashion publications. Despite these challenges, Harpers Bazaar used technology to create and stay the focus of the fashion industry, blending its history with modern advancements to continue captivating its audience.

Harpers Bazaar was a magazine that embraced "both still photography and motion pictures." In December 1933, Martin Munkacsi issued an edition with the magazine's first action shot: "Lucile Brokaw running on the beach at the Piping Rock Club on Long Island" [10].

Harpers Bazaar adapted to the advancements of digital photography by using high-quality digital images, which enhanced the visual appeal and engagement of its print readers. The magazine's ability to display vibrant, detailed photographs allowed it to support its reputation for stunning visuals and new fashion content. Additionally, digital photography enables faster production time and more efficient workflow, allowing Harper's Bazaar to stay current with the latest trends and events. Harpers Bazaar used digital photography to innovate and remain at the front of the fashion industry, blending its history with more advancements to intrigue its audience.

Throughout the 20th century, Harper's Bazaar remained a leading fashion magazine, influencing and reflecting cultural and fashion trends. The magazine's commitment to high-quality content, innovative design, and artistic excellence set it apart. Harper's Bazaar's ability to adapt to changing times while staying true to its core values ensured its continued relevance and success.

The magazine's cultural impact extended beyond the realm of fashion. Harper's Bazaar significantly shaped societal norms and ideals, particularly women's roles and identities. By featuring powerful and influential women on its covers and pages, the magazine contributed to the broader conversation of gender, empowerment and representation.

### **2.2.2 Vogue**

Vogue began its journey in the late 19th century by being "founded in 1892 as a weekly high-societal journal, created by Arthur Baldwin Turnure for New York City's social elite" [14]. Turnure wanted Vogue to cover "the latest trends in fashion, as well as cultural and social events in New York City" [3]. This vision was reflected in the magazine's early issues, which featured a blend of fashion advice, social etiquette, and coverage of high-



society events. By focusing on the lifestyles and interests of New York's elite, Vogue quickly proved itself as a prestigious publication. The magazine's content was designed to appeal to both men and women, offering insights into the latest fashion trends and books, plays, and music reviews. This comprehensive approach helped Vogue attract a sophisticated readership and set the stage for its future growth and influence in the fashion industry.

Vogue, often called "the bible of fashion" [11], was pivotal in shaping the fashion industry throughout the 20th century. In 1909, Vogue's ownership changed due to the death of Arthur Baldwin Turnure. This led to the leadership being "bought by Condé Montrose Nast's mass media company" [4]. Nast's vision for Vogue included expanding its reach and influence domestically and internationally. He raised the magazine's price and increased the number of publications, which led to a dramatic rise in profit and readership.

Vogue was "known for its distinctive photographs and high editorial quality". Nast employed illustrators and photographers to produce "covers for the magazine that was consistently revolutionary". This commitment to visual perfection and modernism set Vogue apart from its competitors and showed it as a trendsetter in the fashion world. The magazine's covers became iconic, often pushing ordinary fashion photography's boundaries and setting new artistic expression standards. This approach helped Vogue keep its status as a leading force in fashion, continually influencing and reflecting its readership's evolving tastes and trends.

In 1988, Anna Wintour replaced Grace Mirabelle and became editor of Vogue and immediately transformed the magazine's covers by emphasising the woman's body rather than just their faces. Wintour's motto was "Mass with class – that is my mantra" [14]. In 1901, Wintour often featured Hollywood actresses and other celebrities, such as "cleft-chinned Shakespearean stage actress Julia Marlowe" [7], rather than the traditional fashion models, sparking an international trend. Vogue's content often reflects the aspirations of its readers, who are interested in the symbols of wealth and social status. The magazine featured articles on fine arts, travel, and high society events, positioning itself as a symbol of sophistication and elegance. By creating a blend of fashion, culture, and lifestyle, Vogue set itself apart from other publications and established its legacy in fashion journalism.

Vogue was a fashion magazine and a publication that engaged deeply with the intellectual and cultural movements of its era. As one of the first mainstream platforms to champion the cause of women's rights, it played a crucial role in advocating for equal opportunities in education and employment for women. At a time when social norms were rapidly shifting, Vogue recognised the importance of addressing issues that extended beyond the realm of fashion. By doing this, Vogue positioned itself as a forward-thinking voice, displaying the latest styles and actively engaging with the significant social issues of its time. Its commitment to reflecting the complexities of women's lives contributed to its standing as a cultural touchstone and a progressive force in the media landscape.



Like many other fashion magazines, Vogue had to adapt to technological advances and changing societal trends to keep its relevance and leadership throughout the 20th century. The magazine embraces these shifts by incorporating high-quality digital images, which enhance the visual pay and engagement to print. The rise of the Internet also allowed votes to reach a global audience, expanding its influence beyond traditional print boundaries. However, these changes also meant that magazines had to compete with the growing number of digital fashion publications. Despite the increased competition from digital fashion publications, Vogue utilises technology to remain at the front of the fashion industry, blending its history with modern innovations to captivate the eyes of its audience.

During the decade of the 20th century, many historical events occurred. However, "despite the Great Depression and World War 2, Vogue subscriptions continued to grow" [13]. This resilience can be attributed to the magazine's ability to adapt to the changing times while remaining a cultural staple. Through its ability to stay relevant and address the social climate of the time, Vogue survived difficult periods and grew in influence and readership.

Although Harpers Bazaar and Vogue have played pivotal roles in shaping 20th-century fashion and culture, there is a noticeable lack of comprehensive research regarding their broader societal impact, particularly women's evolving roles. While extensive analyses exist on their fashion content and editorial influence, less attention has been given to how these magazines mirrored and influenced societal shifts, particularly regarding women's rights and gender norms. Despite occasional engagement with social and political issues, there is little knowledge of how Harpers Bazaar and Vogue tackled key topics such as feminism, political activism and women's empowerment. This gap provides an opportunity to explore the broader cultural significance of Harpers Bazaar and Vogue beyond their focus on style, showing their role in shaping the modern identity of women.

## **2.3 21st Century**

Having already explored the evolution of Harpers Bazaar and Vogue in the 19th and 20th centuries, I will now turn your attention to Harpers Bazaar, Vogue and Elle in the 21st century. The evolution of fashion magazines has been shaped significantly by the technological advancements and cultural shifts of the 21st century. While Harpers Bazaar and Vogue have histories dating back to the 19th and 20th centuries, their progression in the 21st century reveals their ability to adapt to the digital revolution while maintaining their role as trendsetter icons. In contrast, Elle, which emerged later, has navigated the digital age, shaping its influence in the fashion world alongside this established publication. These publications have transformed how they engage with audiences, represent fashion, and demonstrate relevance in an increasingly digital landscape. How Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle navigated their changes speaks to their ability to remain relevant in an age where fashion is no longer dictated solely by print media but has expanded into the many different online platforms, social media, and instant digital access.

### 2.3.1 Harpers Bazaar

Harpers Bazaar continues to be recognised for its blend of high fashion and cultural commentary, establishing itself as one of the leading fashion magazines of the 19th and 20th centuries. However, the early 21st century marked a critical shift in the publication's approach as a source to adapt to the digital era. The transition from print to digital content was not a sudden move but a graduate shift alongside the transformation of the broader media industry. Former editor-in-chief Carine Roitfeld said, "If you are a reader of Harpers Bazaar, to me, you are a woman who loves fashion, but not just fashion; you love fashion, you love travel, you love art, you love music" [\[12\]](#). Carine says this shows that Harpers Bazaar goes beyond fashion, offering a broader experience that includes travel, art, and music. With this ability to reach a broader audience in the digital age, the magazine continues to be relevant and shape fashion and cultural trends globally.

One of the key strategies employed by Harpers Bazaar in the 21st century has been its innovative approach to online content. The magazine created an integration between print and digital platforms, capitalising on the potential of the internet to reach broader audiences. The digital edition of Harpers Bazaar became more interactive, often featuring exclusive digital content such as behind-the-scenes footage from fashion shows, interactive fashion books, and video interviews with designers. Additionally, Harpers Bazaar enhanced its online presence on social media platforms like Instagram, where it curated content to engage readers directly. This allowed the magazine to connect with the younger audience, who was increasingly drawn towards digital content rather than traditional print.

### 2.3.2 Vogue

It is essential to consider how Vogue has navigated as one of the top fashion magazines, having consistently been a leader in shaping trends and influencing the global fashion industry. By the 21st century, Vogue had already solidified its position as the most influential fashion publication in the world. However, the rise of digital media caused a unique challenge to the magazine's dominance in print media. With the rise of online platforms, Vogue faced the challenge of preserving its prestigious reputation and luxurious image while adapting to the increasing demand for real-time digital content.

A key time for Vogue was the positioning of Anna Wintour as editor-chief, but it was not until the 21st century that we truly saw Vogue embrace the digital landscape. The magazine strategically expanded its online presence through its website, launching interactive features and embracing digital content formats such as videos and podcasts. Vogue's online platform became more dynamic, offering readers immediate access to fashion news, trends, celebrity interviews, and exclusive scene coverage from fashion shows worldwide.

Social media platforms, especially Instagram, became a key part of Vogue's strategy. Vogue uses Instagram to promote fashion and shape body images, gender, and social justice. It leverages influencer culture by working with high-profile individuals such as models, designers, and actors whose personal brands align with the magazine's image.

As Vogue embraces technology, it continues to maintain its print edition. The print magazine remains a symbol of fashion leadership. At the same time, its digital presence connects with millions of readers worldwide in real time, keeping Vogue at the top of global fashion media.

### **2.3.3 Elle**

Elle is another magazine that has navigated the challenges of the 21st century, becoming a prominent player in the digital era while maintaining its identity as a fashion and lifestyle magazine. Launched in 1945, Elle has always discussed a mix of fashion, beauty, and women's issues, emphasising empowerment and women's race. In the 21st century, Elle began to rise in popularity as a fashion magazine, embracing digital platforms and social media as essential components of its business model.

The magazine was one of the first major fashion magazines to invest in video content, producing original series and tutorials on fashion and beauty. The digital space provides more immediate, on-demand content for the audience, including fashion news, interviews with designers, and beauty tips.

Like Harpers Bazaar and Vogue, Elle also capitalised on social media to engage with readers. Elle's Instagram account became an essential platform for reaching younger readers, showcasing fashion looks, celebrity collaborations, and social causes. The magazine also embraced digital trends such as live streaming for fashion shows and interactive content that allows readers to participate in the magazine's content.

## **Conclusion**

The 21st century has significantly transformed Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle. These magazines have successfully navigated the challenges posed by digital technology, shifting from print models to digital platforms that engage a new generation of readers. These publications have maintained relevance through their strategic use of social media, online content, and interactive formats while embracing inclusivity, social justice, and digital modifications. While each magazine has taken a unique approach to integrating digital technology, their collective ability to balance print and digital content demonstrates their continued dominance in the fashion media landscape.

There is a notable gap in the literature surrounding Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle in the 21st century compared to the extensive research available on their history in 19th and 20th centuries. Much of their existing literature focuses on the foundational years of these publications, exploring their establishment, editorial evolution, and influential roles in shaping fashion and culture during these early periods. This emphasis on historical analysis is understandable as the 19th and 20th centuries represent crucial moments in the development of fashion journalism and societal shifts. In contrast, the 21st century has seen rapid changes in digital technology, media consumption, and cultural trends, leading to less scholarly attention on how these magazines have adapted to new challenges. This lack of extensive analysis of these magazines in the digital age may reflect the novelty of the current era and the ongoing nature of these transformations, making it hard to assess their long-term impact.

However, a more focused study on their current strategies and digital transmissions could provide valuable insights into how these iconic publications are evolving in response to shifting cultural dynamics.

# Design Overview

The digital artefact for this project is a WordPress website designed to present research findings on how fashion magazines—Harpers Bazaar, Godey Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle—have evolved from the 19th century to the 21st century. The website explores how these iconic publications have set fashion trends over time and adapted to technological advancements, focusing on their response to the digital revolution.

## 3.1 System Components and Structure

The website is structured into several key sections to present the research across different periods and other relevant content:

1. Homepage – The homepage introduces the project, summarising the historical development of Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle across the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. It briefly summarises the 19th and 20th centuries, highlighting key events and trends in fashion magazine history. At the end of the homepage, the overall findings section summarises the research conclusions, tying together the insights from researching each century.
2. About Page - This page introduces the project's objectives and aims and the reasoning behind looking into the evolution of fashion magazines across centuries. It provides context on which magazines will be looked into and the research project's goals. This page also contains a gallery which emphasises visual changes, such as layout and content delivery from the 19th century to the present
3. 19th century – This section dives into the early history of magazines in the 19th century, showcasing how Harpers Bazaar and Godey's Lady's Book laid the foundation for influencing customer styles and showcasing their influence on the societal role of women. This content is a static timeline, showing an image slideshow of some issues from each company during the period.
4. 20th century – This section provides an in-depth comparison of Harpers Bazaar and Vogue throughout the decades, examining how both publications evolved in response to technological and cultural shifts. The page features textual comparisons between the two magazines for each decade, highlighting the changing editorial content, design, and target audience. Each decade is illustrated with images representing the time's visual style. This page includes a link to a coded interactive timeline, allowing users to explore key milestones in the history of these magazines during the 20th century. This timeline adds a user engagement element to this section, providing an interactive way for users to learn about the key events and transformations of the century.
5. Timeline for the 20th century—The website's key interactive feature is the timeline, which was custom-coded to showcase significant events and milestones in the 20th century for Harpers Bazaar and Vogue. This timeline allows users to explore the magazine's most important developments engagingly.

6. 21st century – This section focuses on how Harpers Bazaar, Vogue and Elle have responded to the digital revolution, detailing their embrace of digital media, social media engagements, and the incorporation of interactive content.
7. Overall Finding Page – This page summarises some research findings from the entire project, offering key statistics and insights on the magazine's influence. Specifically, it includes data on the number of print, digital and social media users for each magazine, showcasing how the readership has shifted with the rise of digital media. Additionally, it estimates approximately how many fashion magazines exist globally, reflecting their global presence and the competitive landscape in which they operate.

## 3.2 Technologies and Tools

WordPress—This platform was selected for its ease of use, scalability, and built-in features. The free version was suitable for creating a user-friendly website while offering options to align the site with the project's goals.

- Theme used—The 'Marl' theme was chosen for its clean and modern design. It provides a minimalistic layout that complements the content while ensuring device scalability. This theme is well-suited for easy navigation and an aesthetically pleasing user interface.
- Custom Coded Timeline—A custom-coded interactive timeline was created using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. It is linked in the 20th-century section of the homepage and the 20th-century page. This interactive timeline allows users to explore the historical milestones of Harpers Bazaar and Vogue during the 20th century. It was designed to give users a visual and interactive experience, making it easier to understand key events in developing these iconic magazines.
- Multimedia—The site integrates various images to track the evolution of Harpers Bazaar visually, Godey's Ladys Book, Vogue, and Elle. Specifically, the 20th and 21st sections include images depicting these magazines' design and editorial changes throughout the decades, illustrating their visual evolution.

## 3.3 Explanation of Technical Decisions

WordPress was chosen for its accessibility, ease of use, and customisation options, enabling the creation of a user-friendly website. The 'Marl Theme' was selected for its modern and clean aesthetic, which allowed the content to stand out. The decision to code the timeline manually was to create an interactive feature that allows users to engage with the history of Harpers Bazaar and Vogue effectively. The inclusion of print and digital readership statistics on the Overall Findings Page provides essential context, demonstrating how these magazines adapt to the rise of digital media while maintaining their influence in the print world. By presenting approximate global magazine statistics, the project situates these magazines within the broader fashion industry context and highlights their international significance.

# Methodology

The methodology used in this project combines qualitative and quantitative research approaches to explore the evolution of fashion magazines from the 19th century to the 21st century. The research aims to understand how Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle have shaped fashion trends and adapted to the digital revolution.

## 4.1 Research Approach

Due to the project's focus on historical analysis and the impact of digital technologies, the primary research method is content analysis. This method allows for systematically examining the editorial content, design, and multimedia strategies across different periods: the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. The content analysis provides insights into how these magazines communicated fashion trends, addressed cultural issues, and evolved in response to changing technologies.

## 4.2 Data Sources

The key data sources for this project are:

1. Magazine Archives—The physical and digital archives of Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle were used to analyse editorial content, layout, advertisements, and fashion imagery from the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. These magazines' archives offer data demonstrating how editorial choices, photography, and themes have evolved.
2. Website Analysis – the digital strategies of Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle in the 21st century are examined through official websites. This includes analysing how each publication has structured and presented its content online, integrating multimedia elements, and using interactive features such as digital archives and behind-the-scenes content. The websites are also reviewed for user experience and how effectively they show the brand's identity from print to digital. This analysis helps illustrate how each magazine has adapted to changing reader expectations in the digital landscape.
3. Literature – Academic papers, articles, and books that discuss the evolution of fashion media, print media's transition to digital, and the role of magazines in trendsetting were used to support the analysis.

## 4.3 Comparative Methodology

The research uses a comparative methodology to analyse how Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle have evolved from the 19th century to the 21st century. This approach allows for direct comparisons of the magazines across different periods, focusing on trends, content, and adaptation to digital technology.

1. Historical content comparison:

- Compare the editorial content of Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue, and Elle from the 19th to the 21st century.
  - Focus on how each magazine featured fashion trends, responded to cultural movements, and influenced public perceptions of fashion.
  - Analyse the evolution of magazine layout, photography style, and content themes.
1. Digital Transformation Analysis:
    - Examine how Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle adapted to digital platforms in the 21st century.
    - Analyse the shift towards digital content, including interactive online features.
    - Compare each magazine's approach to social media engagement and how these platforms are used to maintain relevance in the digital age.
  1. Digital Compared to Print Readership:
    - Compare the shift in readership from print to digital for Harpers Bazaar, Vogue, and Elle.
    - Assess how each magazine's business model has adapted to the growth of digital readership while maintaining its print audience.

#### **4.4 Reasoning for Methodology**

- The comparative methodology was a good choice for examining the evolution of Harpers Bazaar, Godey's Lady's Book, Vogue and Elle because it directly compares how these publications responded to historical and digital changes.
- By focusing on content, digital transformation, audience engagement, and readership changes, this approach offers a comprehensive view of how each magazine has shaped and been shaped by societal and technological shifts.
- The comparative approach allows insights into how the magazines have maintained their position as trendsetters across different media and eras.

#### **4.5 Possible Alternatives**

While content and comparative analysis were the primary methods, other approaches were considered. For example, surveys could have been used to gather data directly from readers of these magazines to understand their preferences about print and digital content. However, given the project's scope, the focus was kept on available published data, which was a more comprehensive and historical perspective.



# Implementation

The website's implementation involved creating an interactive timeline and a world map to illustrate fashion magazines' history and approximate global presence. The website was built on WordPress using the 'Marl' theme, but custom features were added using coding languages like HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and external libraries like CodePen and D3.js. Below is a breakdown of the key elements created for the project.

## 5.1 Interactive Timeline (Mimo, HTML, CSS, and JavaScript)

- **Tool Used:** CodePen was used to gather the general functionality of the interactive timeline from an existing project. Mimo was then used to host the interactive timeline code. The timeline was designed to showcase key events in the history of Harpers Bazaar and Vogue throughout the 20th century. Once completed, the timeline was embedded into the WordPress website by embedding the link into a button so that users could be directed to a separate page to view the timeline.
- **Implementation Process:**
  - **CodePen:** The timelines code was gathered from an existing project that is hosted on CodePen. CodePen is an open-source platform that allows users to access publicly available code. The code that was selected was transferred to Mimo where it was developed to create an interactive timeline specifically for this project.
  - **Mimo:** The timeline was created using Mimo's intuitive tools for building interactive content. It showcases significant events, such as important milestones in the history of magazines, fashion trends, and societal shifts. Each event is clickable, directing users to a more in-depth page on WordPress.
  - **HTML:** The timeline's structure was created using HTML. Each significant event in the history of the fashion magazines was added as a separate section, which includes the magazine's name, year, and description.
  - **CSS:** The timeline was styled using CSS to make it visually appealing and easy to navigate. It has a clean, modern design that fits with the website's overall theme.
  - **JavaScript:** JavaScript was used to add interactivity to the timeline. This includes smooth scrolling, a text box appearing when the user scrolls, and the ability to click on the button to see the in-depth page. JavaScript was also used to ensure the timeline was responsive and worked across various devices.
  - **Link integration:** Once the timeline was created, it was linked to the website's homepage and the 20th-century page as a button. When users click the link on the homepage, they are taken to the timeline, where they can explore the history of these fashion magazines in more detail.

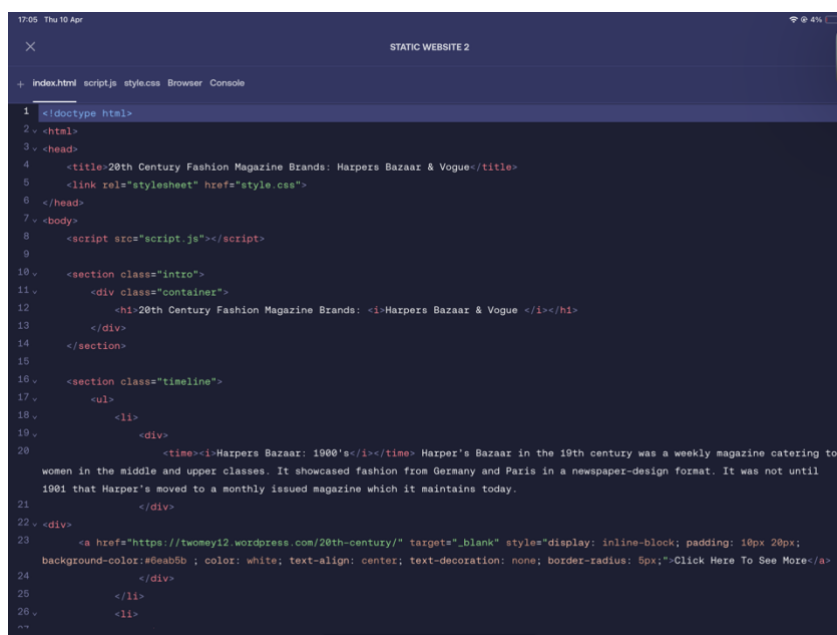
### 5.1.1 Challenge

- One of the challenges faced during the timeline's creation was making the text box appear as the user scrolls through the events. This was resolved by using JavaScript and CSS. By sharing the text box that would fade in and appear only when the user reached a specific timeline point, the timeline became more interactive and visually engaging.

### 5.1.2 Screenshots

- Below are screenshots showing the HTML, CSS, and JavaScript code used to style the page and the timeline's final result from the browser's point of view.

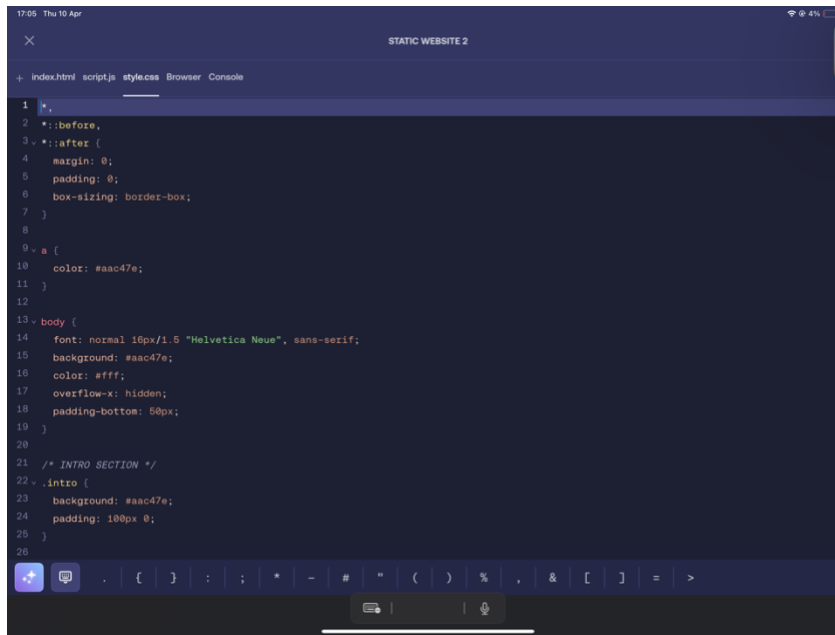
**Figure 1**



```
17:05 Thu 10 Apr
X
STATIC WEBSITE 2
+ index.html script.js style.css Browser Console
1 <!doctype html>
2 <html>
3 <head>
4 <title>20th Century Fashion Magazine Brands: Harpers Bazaar & Vogue</title>
5 <link rel="stylesheet" href="style.css">
6 </head>
7 <body>
8 <script src="script.js"></script>
9
10 <section class="intro">
11 <div class="container">
12 <h1>20th Century Fashion Magazine Brands: <i>Harpers Bazaar & Vogue </i></h1>
13 </div>
14 </section>
15
16 <section class="timeline">
17 <ul>
18 <li>
19 <div>
20 <time><i>Harpers Bazaar: 1900's</i></time> Harper's Bazaar in the 19th century was a weekly magazine catering to
women in the middle and upper classes. It showcased fashion from Germany and Paris in a newspaper-design format. It was not until
1901 that Harper's moved to a monthly issued magazine which it maintains today.
21 </div>
22 <div>
23 <a href="https://twomey12.wordpress.com/20th-century/" target="_blank" style="display: inline-block; padding: 10px 20px;
background-color:#66ab5b ; color: white; text-align: center; text-decoration: none; border-radius: 5px;">Click Here To See More</a>
24 </div>
25 </li>
26 </ul>
27 </section>
```

This section of code defines the structure and content of the websites fashion history timeline. It includes the main title, a timeline entry for Harper’s Bazaar in the 1900s, and a styled button linking users to a dedicated page with more detailed information.

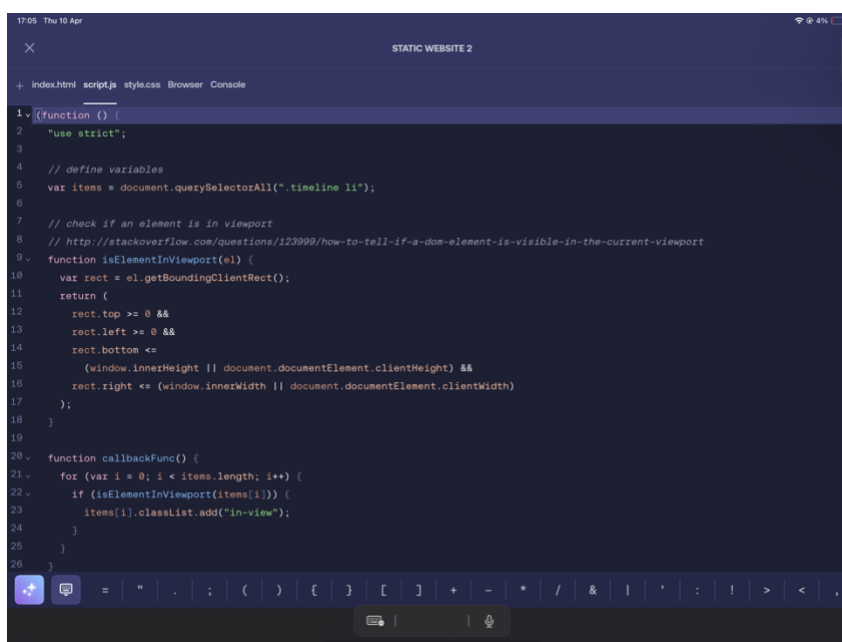
**Figure 2**



```
1 *,
2 *::before,
3 *::after {
4   margin: 0;
5   padding: 0;
6   box-sizing: border-box;
7 }
8
9 a {
10  color: #aac47e;
11 }
12
13 body {
14  font: normal 16px/1.5 "Helvetica Neue", sans-serif;
15  background: #aac47e;
16  color: #fff;
17  overflow-x: hidden;
18  padding-bottom: 50px;
19 }
20
21 /* INTRO SECTION */
22 .intro {
23  background: #aac47e;
24  padding: 100px 0;
25 }
26
```

This section of the CSS file defines the timeline's global styles and layout rules. It includes base element resets, link colour customisation, and styles for the body and introduction section, such as font settings, background colour, and layout control, to ensure a clean and cohesive design across the timeline.

**Figure 3**



```
1 (function () {
2   "use strict";
3
4   // Define variables
5   var items = document.querySelectorAll(".timeline li");
6
7   // check if an element is in viewport
8   // http://stackoverflow.com/questions/123999/how-to-tell-if-a-dom-element-is-visible-in-the-current-viewport
9   function isElementInViewport(el) {
10     var rect = el.getBoundingClientRect();
11     return (
12       rect.top >= 0 &&
13       rect.left >= 0 &&
14       rect.bottom <=
15         (window.innerHeight || document.documentElement.clientHeight) &&
16       rect.right <= (window.innerWidth || document.documentElement.clientWidth)
17     );
18   }
19
20   function callbackFunc() {
21     for (var i = 0; i < items.length; i++) {
22       if (isElementInViewport(items[i])) {
23         items[i].classList.add("in-view");
24       }
25     }
26   }
27 })
```

The code in this JavaScript screenshot detects when timeline elements scroll into view. It uses a method to check if an element is visible in the user's viewport and then adds an in-view class. This triggers animations such as fade-ins, making the timeline more dynamic and interactive as user scroll through the content.

**Figure 4**



Figure 4 shows a piece of the final interactive timeline from the perspective of the browser.

## 5.2 World Map (D3.js and JavaScript):

- Tools Used: D3.js was chosen to create an interactive map representing the approximate number of fashion magazines in different countries. D3.js is a JavaScript library that allows the creation of dynamic and interactive data visualisations in web browsers.

### 5.2.1 Implementation Process

- D3.js Setup: D3.js was used to generate a choropleth map where countries were coloured according to the estimated number of fashion magazines in each region. The map was created using a combination of a map already created on D3.js and the data I collected about the estimated numbers of fashion magazines.
- JavaScript: JavaScript was used to link the data to each country's geographical coordinates.

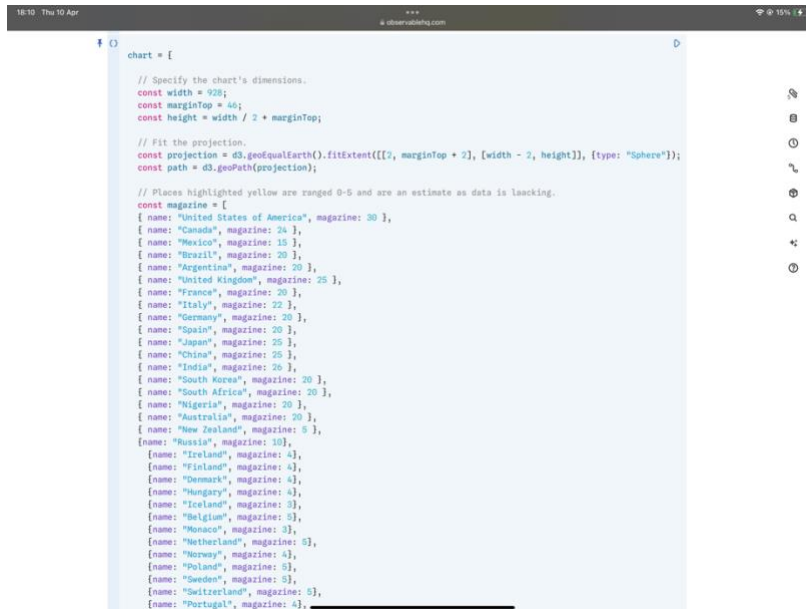
### 5.2.2 Challenges

- One challenge in implementing the map was finding reliable data for the estimated number of fashion magazines in each country. Once this data was gathered, it was necessary to format it so that D3.js could read and visualise it. Additionally, testing the map's responsiveness addressed another challenge of ensuring the map was displayed clearly on all screen sizes.

## 5.2.3 Screenshots

- Below is a screenshot showing the code used to create the map and the final map results

**Figure 4**

A screenshot of a code editor window. The editor has a dark theme and shows a JavaScript file named 'chart.js'. The code defines a chart object with dimensions, projection, and a list of countries with their magazine counts. The countries are listed in descending order of magazine count. The code is as follows:

```
chart = {  
  // Specify the chart's dimensions.  
  const width = 928;  
  const marginTop = 40;  
  const height = width / 2 + marginTop;  
  
  // Fit the projection.  
  const projection = d3.geoEqualEarth().fitExtent([[2, marginTop + 2], [width - 2, height]], {type: "Sphere"});  
  const path = d3.geoPath(projection);  
  
  // Places highlighted yellow are ranged 0-5 and are an estimate as data is lacking.  
  const magazine = [  
    { name: "United States of America", magazine: 30 },  
    { name: "Canada", magazine: 24 },  
    { name: "Mexico", magazine: 15 },  
    { name: "Brazil", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "Argentina", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "United Kingdom", magazine: 25 },  
    { name: "France", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "Italy", magazine: 22 },  
    { name: "Germany", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "Spain", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "Japan", magazine: 25 },  
    { name: "China", magazine: 25 },  
    { name: "India", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "South Korea", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "South Africa", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "Nigeria", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "Australia", magazine: 20 },  
    { name: "New Zealand", magazine: 5 },  
    { name: "Russia", magazine: 10 },  
    { name: "Ireland", magazine: 4 },  
    { name: "Finland", magazine: 4 },  
    { name: "Denmark", magazine: 4 },  
    { name: "Hungary", magazine: 4 },  
    { name: "Iceland", magazine: 5 },  
    { name: "Belgium", magazine: 5 },  
    { name: "Monaco", magazine: 3 },  
    { name: "Netherlands", magazine: 5 },  
    { name: "Norway", magazine: 4 },  
    { name: "Poland", magazine: 5 },  
    { name: "Sweden", magazine: 5 },  
    { name: "Switzerland", magazine: 5 },  
    { name: "Portugal", magazine: 4 },  
  ]  
};
```

Figure 4 shows a piece of the JavaScript that was used to create the map that showcases the approximate number of countries that have fashion magazines.

**Figure 5**

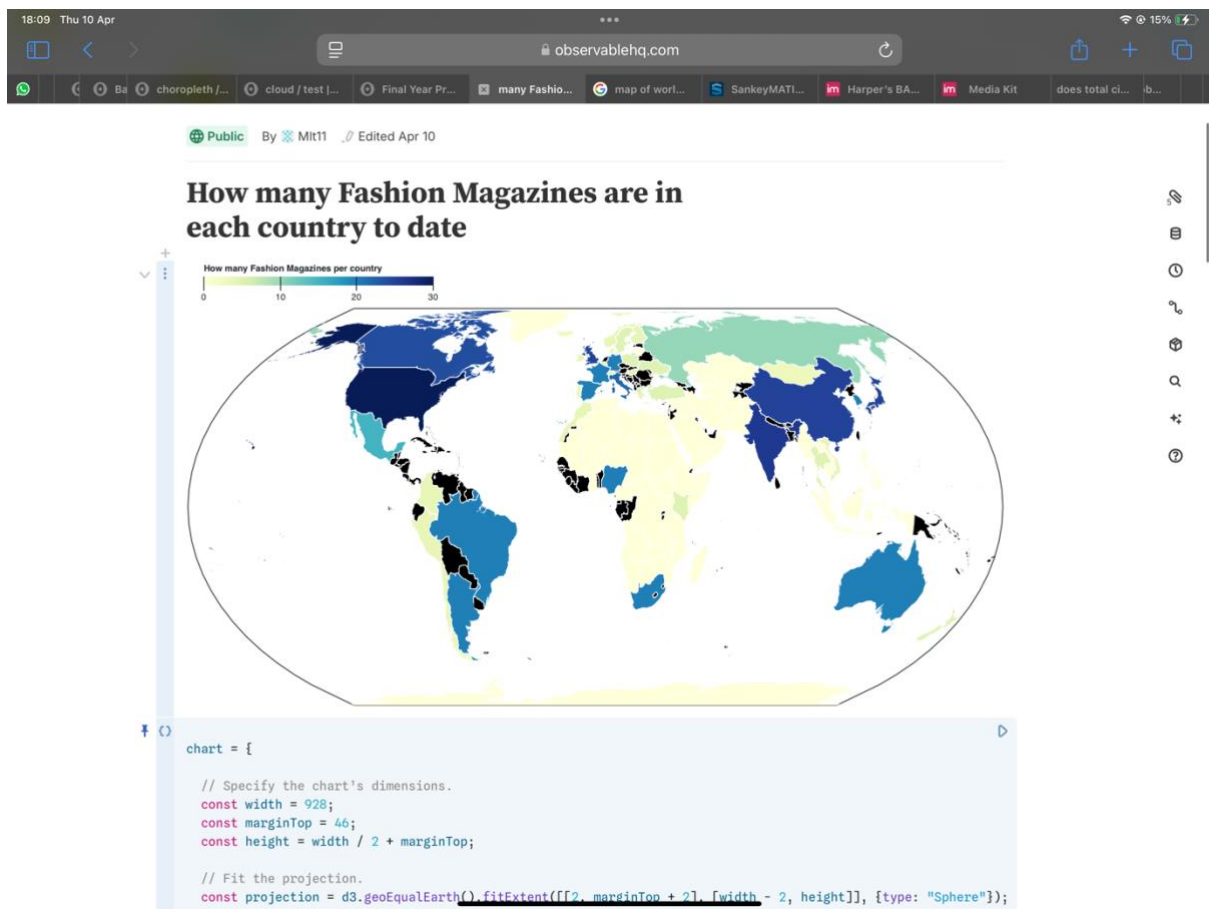


Figure 5 shows the final map showing the approximate amount of fashion magazines that are in each country to date. The countries with the less amount of fashion magazines are in a yellow colour, such as Angola, and the countries with the darker colours, such as the United States of America, have approximately 30 fashion magazines.

## Evaluation

### 5.3 Technical Testing

- To ensure the website and its features were functioning correctly, a variety of testing methods were employed throughout development:

- Unit Testing: Individual components were tested to ensure they performed as expected in isolation. For example, the tests confirmed that:
  - Each event in the timeline correctly displayed the correct year, title, and description.
  - Buttons are linked to the correct detailed pages.
- System Testing: the complete website was tested on different browsers and devices to ensure:
  - Responsive design and layout were consistent.
  - Embedded elements, such as the timeline and map, loaded correctly and were fully functional
  - Navigation between pages was smooth, with no broken links.
- Known issues:
  - On smaller mobile devices, the length of text appears too much.

## 5.4 User Evaluation

- To assess the usability and user experience of the website, a small evaluation was conducted:
  - Participants: 5 individuals, including relatives and individuals interested in the fashion industry.
  - Method: Participants were asked to navigate the site, use the timeline, and view the world map, then provide general feedback based on the following:
    - Ease of navigation
    - Visual aesthetic
    - Overall engagement and educational value.
- Feedback Summary:
  - Positives: all users found the timeline easy to follow and visually interesting. They appreciated how key events were broken down clearly and found the image comparison interesting.
  - Constructive Comments: One user suggested making the homepage summaries for each century shorter.

With this not being a formal survey, the informal feedback helped confirm that the site was user-friendly and informative to a general audience.

## 5.5 Achievement of Project Objectives

- The project aimed to create a digital artefact that:
  - Presents the history of key fashion magazines in a structured, visual format.

- It was interactive and user-friendly.
  - Showcase overall findings.
1. Evaluation of Objectives:
    - The interactive timeline successfully visualises key historical events using coded and web applications.
    - The visual design maintains a modern and accessible aesthetic across platforms.
    - The overall findings page successfully presented the key points that were discovered.
  2. Limitations:
    - The timeline focuses on two detailed magazines from the 20th century. Expanding the timeline to include more than two publications for the century would enhance the project's depth.
    - Although WordPress is user-friendly, it has limitations when fully customising interactive elements with the free version. One specific restriction was the inability to embed the complete interactive timeline directly onto a WordPress page. To achieve this, the timeline was linked via a button that opened in a separate tab. While functional, this slightly disturbed the website's layout by requiring the users to navigate away from the leading site. Embedding the timeline would have created a more seamless and immersive experience.

## 5.6 Summary

All of the initial project objectives were successfully achieved. The timeline interaction and the showcasing of overall findings were implemented as planned, and the final website presents the history of fashion magazines in an engaging and accessible way. Although there were minor challenges, such as embedding interactive content directly into WordPress, effective solutions were found, and these obstacles did not impact the overall quality or completeness of the project. The result is an aesthetically pleasing and functional digital artefact that meets the initial creative and technical aims.

## Conclusion

This project aimed to examine the evolution of fashion magazines from the 19th to the 21st century, with a particular focus on. Through extensive historical research and digital content analysis, the project explored how these iconic publications have influenced fashion and culture while adapting to the digital age. A significant



achievement of this project was the successful development of an additional artefact: an interactive website that visually and contextually presented the findings, including a coded timeline and a word map showcasing the global presence of fashion magazines.

The research revealed how fashion magazines have transitioned from print-based publications to dynamic digital trendsetters. It demonstrated that despite the decline of print leadership, these magazines have retained their cultural influence by embracing online platforms, interactive media, and social engagement strategies. The website supports this analysis by offering a user-friendly and visually engaging way to explore this evolution.

All initial objectives were met, and any obstacles, such as technical restrictions in WordPress, were effectively worked around without compromising the quality or goals of the project.

## **6.1 Contributions to Knowledge**

This project contributes a comparative, multimedia-based perspective to the existing chair on fashion media. It joins the gap between traditional historical fashion journalism and the less explored digital transformation of significant publications in the 21st century. By comparing the development of four influential magazines across three centuries, it offers a unique timeline of editorial and technological evolution. Additionally, digital artefacts showcase how research can be translated into interactive and educational online experiences.

## **6.2 Future Developments**

There are several promising directions for possible future work:

- Expanding content depth: additional fashion publications from other countries would provide a more global perspective.
- Enhanced interactivity: future site versions could include advanced filters, search functionality, and hover-based interactions on the timeline and the world map.
- Formal user research: A structured user experience survey could offer more detailed insight into how users engage with the site.

## **References**

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