Fashion/Photo/Film:

The Intertextual Discourse of *Funny Face* (1956)

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Abstract: In this paper I mobilize *Funny Face* (dir. Stanley Donen, 1956) to examine the intertextual nexus between fashion, fashion photography, and film. Set in New York City and Paris, with costume design by Hubert de Givenchy and Edith Head, the film is a latter day telling of the Pygmalion myth, such that photographer Dick Avery (Fred Astaire) and Maggie Prescott (Kay Thompson), the dictatorial Fashion Editor of *Quality*, take up the challenge of converting Jo Stockton (Audrey Hepburn), whom they regard as an unprepossessing bookstore intellectual, into a top model. Thus I analyze how a film that is more generally regarded as a benchmark in the Hollywood musical for its exuberant use of colour and songs is, more particularly, a cinematic locus for both the mediation and mediatization of fashionable identities. To this end, I assess how the film elaborates the power of the fashion industry as a matter of social practice in regards to Foucauldian discourse and the related concept of the *énoncé*, or event/statement. Thus I evince I two events/statements — "Think Pink!" and "Bonjour Paris" — to discuss in particular the relationship of style to national identities and the need or desire for America to assert cultural leadership in fashion photography, art, and design over France in the context of 1950s Cold War politics. By comparison, I enlist the statements, "Take the Picture!" and "A Bird of Paradise," to examine respectively the dynamic of looking/gazing between the fashion photographer and designer and their (in this case) female models, the nexus between star designing, clothing, and gender identity, and what Foucault calls *assujetissement* — subjection — which connotes the dual process of Jo's subordination as well as the act of her becoming or "being made" a subject according to a system of power.

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Introduction

Shortly before its premiere at New York's Radio City Music Hall in early spring 1957 (*New York Times* 1957: 3), director Stanley Donen's *Funny Face* garnered only tepid reviews — *Variety* on 31 December 1956, for instance, called it "a slightly diverting, modish, Parisian-localed tintuner" — and afterwards it failed to break even at the box office, grossing $2.5 million ticket sales against production costs of $3 million (*Variety* 1958: 30). Since then, it has come to be regarded as a benchmark in the Hollywood musical for its exuberant use of colour and songs, a sensual feast for the eyes and ears. Film critic John Russell Taylor included it in a list of ten great musicals, expatiating, "*Funny Face* carries sophistication, elegance and sheer visual flair just about as far as the cinema ever has: hardly a shot which is not breath-taking, not a number which is less than first-rate" (Russell Taylor 1970: 76-7).[1] Filmed on location in the unseasonably wet and windy Parisian summer of 1956 (Granger Blair 1956: 69), *Funny Face* stars Audrey Hepburn as Jo Stockton, a bluestocking bookstore assistant in Greenwich Village, and Fred Astaire as debonair fashion photographer Dick Avery. Astaire had also headlined the 1927 Broadway musical of the same name alongside his sister Adele. Though the film includes four numbers from George and Ira Gershwin's original score, its narrative drive bears no resemblance to the stage show, whose convoluted plot concerned the theft and recovery of a pearl necklace and had nothing whatsoever to do with fashion.[2] Rather, Leonard Gershe's screenplay is essentially a latter day version of the Pygmalion myth, such that Avery and Maggie Prescott, the dictatorial Fashion Editor of *Quality* played by Kay Thompson, take up the challenge of converting Jo, whom they regard as an unprepossessing intellectual, into a top model. Jo finally agrees to join them on a trip to Paris, after Dick persuades her it will be a golden opportunity to meet her philosophical hero, Emile Flostre. For Dick, however — and Maggie in particular — initially she remains nothing more than a reluctant, if expedient, clotheshorse, someone who will model on location new look outfits by Paul Duval (designed by Hubert de Givenchy for the film) in order to revitalize the fashion photography of fictive *Quality* magazine.

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And yet, this kind of spectacle and play on transformation are not just an escapist audio-visual fantasy. Rather, they are instrumental to the way the drama unfolds. Indeed, the role that clothing plays in the narrative and mise-en-scène of the film — or what Jane Gaines calls the costume plot — is imbricated with the main story rather than being unrelated to it, and contests the archetypal male director's notion of "costume as servant of narrative ideas" (Gaines 1990: 16).[3]

To this end, the intertextual nexus between fashion, photography, and film elaborated in *Funny Face* hinges on how fashionable identities are not only performatively mediatized — in which sense fashion is communicated and experienced first and foremost as a mass-reproduced image[4] — but mediated as well through a post-war discourse in America that enlisted art and design as a means of achieving cultural and political leadership on the global stage.

Accordingly, in this article I want to contest one contemporaneous reviewer's cavil — "It may seem extravagant to discuss a 'musical' in the terms proper to a serious creative work" (Times 1957: 3) — by framing the costume plot or fashion discourse of *Funny Face* as a series of Foucauldian *énoncés*, that is, as events or statements in and through which, Foucault argues, power and knowledge are both produced and enacted by institutions and professions, such as fashion, the law, and education, as a matter of social practice.[5] For readers who wish to interact visually and aurally with the four events/statements I discuss below, I have also included the respective YouTube URLs.

Foucault proposes, "In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures" (Foucault 1981: 52), and in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* he enlists the *énoncé* as the principle element in how discourse functions on a particular level at any given point in time. He maintains that each event/statement has its own material and temporal "conditions of existence" to the extent "We must grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurrence; determine its conditions of existence, fix at least its limits" (Foucault 2002: 30). But he insists also that every statement relates to and coexists alongside others as it circulates and is formally reconstituted or reconfigured across space and time, and the challenge for us, furthermore, is to "establish its correlations with other statements that may be connected with it" (Foucault 2002: 31). It is in this way he ruminates, for example, on the discursive paradigm of the book as an intersectional material event/statement that not only has an external relationship to a network of writings other than itself but that also internally involves sentences in their own intertextual network: "The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full-stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences" (Foucault 2002: 25).

It is this idea of the intersectional *énoncé* and the social and material conditions of existence that give rise to and contour it that I want to elaborate in analyzing the fashion discourse of *Funny Face* in this article.

On this level, then, I have evinced a series of four intertwining events/statements from the script and musical score of the film that, while deceptively hollow or vapid on first encounter, inaugurate a deeper understanding of the costume plot and how it sutures together a multi-layered discourse about fashion and photography, and power and identity.

Accordingly, I mobilize two events/statements — "Think Pink!" and "Bonjour Paris" — to assess in particular the relationship of style to national identities and the need or desire for America to assert cultural leadership in fashion photography, art, and design over France in the context of 1950s Cold War politics. By comparison, I enlist the statements, "Take the Picture!" and "A Bird of Paradise," to discuss respectively the dynamic of looking/gazing between the fashion photographer and designer and their (in this case) female models, and the nexus between star designing, clothing, and gender identity. By extension, both these statements entail the procedural relationship that Foucault argues the *énoncé* has to *assujetissement*. Although he dispensed with any notion of the author/subject as independent originator (Foucault 1970: 305-6; 1977: 21), nonetheless he conceded discursive events/statements are not just produced abstractly, avowing, "I wanted not to exclude the problem of the subject, but to define the positions and functions that the subject could occupy in the diversity of discourse" (Foucault 2002: 221). Thus he propounds that the discursive *énoncé* is a matter of *assujetissement* — subjection — which connotes the dual process of subordination as well as the act of becoming or "being made" a

subject according to a system of power (Foucault 1977: 60).[6] It is to this extent, for instance, that we witness not only the strategic use of two designers for Hepburn's wardrobe — she is styled by Edith Head for her everyday existence as a bookstore assistant and by Hubert de Givenchy for her performance as a catwalk model — but also how in turn she is either held captive or liberated by the clothes she wears.

Event 1: "Think Pink!" The Magazine as a Machine for Making Fashion

The plot of *Funny Face* foregrounds the discourse of fashion publishing rather than of fashion design per se and concentrates on the interactive roles of the magazine editor, fashion photographer, and fashion model. From the outset, it chimes with Roland Barthes' idea that the representation of Fashion is the reality of Fashion and that the magazine is "a machine that makes Fashion" (1990: 51). There are, of course, catwalk displays in the film and, even in the extended photoshoot sequence, the climax of the traditional catwalk is connoted by the fact that in the final tableau, shot at Chantilly, Hepburn models a wedding gown.[7] Yet, from the opening title sequences to the final photoshoot, the film emphasizes the idea of fashion as an idealized media event rather than as a social reality and something that is discursively constructed by a cultural elite.

At the outset, a pivotal event in *Funny Face* that performs this idea occurs when Maggie Prescott arrives at her office and pours scorn on the page designs for the next issue of *Quality*, dismissing them as "just paper … down, dull, dreary, depressing." As she picks up a scroll of pink paper from her desk she pronounces that she wants to colour the whole issue — indeed, the entire country — pink and, unfurling bolts of cloth, launches into the colourful, if camp, song and dance routine "Think Pink!" The character of Prescott is a thinly veiled impersonation of the redoubtable Diana Vreeland, who took over the editorship of *Harper's Bazaar* from Carmel Snow in 1957, the same year that *Funny Face* was put on general release. And though "Think Pink!" references her

predilection for the colour, it predates her chauvinistic utterance, "I ADORE [that] pink! … It's the navy blue of India," which she initially made in an interview with the *New York Times* in 1962 (Donovan 1962: 30).[8]

On a superficial level, then, this intertextual statement strikes us as crass and apparently enunciates nothing more than the idea that such transformations are trivial and real people and life exist beyond the world of fashion. And yet, Barthes maintains, "'*nothing*' can signify '*everything*' … one detail is enough to transform what is outside meaning into meaning, what is unfashionable into Fashion" (Barthes 1990: 243). After all, "Think pink!" is not the same statement as the one he mobilizes in *The Fashion System*, "This year blue is in fashion," and, as Foucault insists, no matter how banal an event/statement seems, discursively it "is really no more than the repressive presence of what it does not say" (Foucault 2002: 28).

Furthermore, a parodic event such as "Think Pink!" signifies the power fashion editors had in dictating entirely what should or should not be any season's fashion and of gaining mastery through exclusivity.

Thus Carmel Snow herself was quoted in *Time*, on the 18th of August, 1947, saying, "The editors must recognize fashions while they are still a thing of the future. The dressmakers create them, but without these magazines, the fashions would never be established or accepted."

Prescott's exhortation "Think Pink!" reminds us also that fashion spreads are intertextual on another level, relying on both words and images to convey meaning. For, just as the film is itself indebted to an earlier event — the stage play of 1928 — ironically, so too is the kind of page layout she disparages, related to the graphic modernism vaunted during the interwar period. Thus the New Vision discourse of European modernism, which entailed the creative integration of text and photographs, was "selected, organised and redistributed" (Foucault 1981: 52) as the basis of another publishing discourse after 1945, and was promoted extensively in the international design monthly *Neue Grafik*, published in German, French, and English between 1958 and 1965.

Harper's Bazaar, the title that the fictional *Quality* co-opts and mimics, was founded in 1867 and acquired in 1912 by the Hearst Corporation, which determined to transform the look of the magazine. In 1933, Carmel Snow was appointed Editor-in-Chief, and in 1936 appointed Diana Vreeland as Fashion Editor. The latter shot to fame with her monthly column "Why don't you?" and eventually became Editor-in-Chief of *Harper's* between 1957 and 1962, and afterward Editor of American *Vogue*.[9] Between 1934 and 1936, the magazine also published pioneering Surrealist-inspired photographs by Man Ray, such as *Fashion by radio* (*Harper's Bazaar*, November 1936). What is significant in this respect was that fashion photography during the early twentieth century seemed to become more important than the fashions themselves by playing on fetishized fantasies of desirability and beauty, achieved through a manipulative use of lighting, tone, and scale. Horst's photograph of a Mainbocher corset for French and American *Vogue*, 13 September 1939, has become one of the most iconic forms of this type of representation. As Elizabeth Wilson (1985: 157) has appositely argued, "It was above all the camera that created a new way of seeing and a new style of beauty for women in the twentieth century. The love affair of black and white photography with fashion *is* the modernist sensibility."

The camera's love affair with fashion that she refers to was both disseminated and transformed after the Second World War by a new style of more wired, spontaneous fashion photography, embracing colour as well as black and white formats, that had begun to crop up in America.

This is signalled in *Funny Face* by the way the fashion shoot predominantly takes place on location. It is also symbolized by Astaire's character, Dick Avery, who is based on Richard Avedon.[10] Alongside Carmel Snow, he acted as visual consultant for the film and was responsible for the photographic stills in the opening credits and photoshoot sequence.

In 1944, aged 21, Avedon had taken up work as a staff photographer at *Harper's Bazaar* under its legendary art director Alexey Brodovitch, who had been appointed by Snow in 1934 and remained at the title until 1958. Brodovitch, a white Russian, had emigrated from Paris to America in 1930, initially to direct the first program in advertising design at Philadelphia College of Art along the lines of European modernist principles. Inspired by seminal works like Moholy-Nagy's *Painting, Photography, Film* (1925) and *The New Vision: from Material to Architecture* (1929), the new graphic style, with its reliance on uncluttered or white space, promoted the page layout as a creative and harmonious artwork — though art in a commercial context. In 1941 Brodovitch relocated

his "Design Laboratory," focused on the application of art to graphic journalism, to the New School for Social Research in New York City, and by 1945 he had sealed his reputation for innovative design with the publication of *Ballet*, a ground-breaking set of photographs of dancers in movement, produced in the 1930s. It was from this point onward that the relationship between Avedon and Brodovitch seriously developed, as evidenced in their layout, "Perugia's bronze kid shoe edged with mink," for *Harper's Bazaar* August 1948, with its close-cropped photograph that bleeds across a double-page opening and represents the leg and foot of a model wearing the shoe as she strides in front of the Eiffel Tower.

Avedon's photographic style was also influenced by two other practitioners: German photojournalist Martin Munkácsi, who emigrated to New York City in 1934 and won favour with Snow at *Harper's* for the way his work embedded fashion in the everyday world, and Helen Levitt, who developed an intense preoccupation with photographing street life in 1940s New York City. Many of Avedon's images for *Harper's* from the late 1940s and 1950s likewise put fashion into unexpected situational contexts and he exploits informality, drama, and playfulness to choreograph a sense of the ambiguity of the real. Striking examples of this duality are his respective photographs of Elisa Daniels modelling a Balenciaga outfit among street performers in the Marais district, Paris (*Harper's* October 1948) and of Dovima in a Dior Dress, flanked by elephants at the Cirque d'Hiver, Paris (*Harper's* August 1955). In both images, then, we witness a form of magic realism that expresses a collision between the ordinary and the extraordinary. Unlike the sporty, healthy models in Munkácsi's fashion photos, however, Daniels and Dovima are emaciated, tense, and somewhat artificially posed. Indeed, Dovima and another model of the period, Suzy Parker, both make cameo appearances in *Funny Face* — the former plays Marion, while the latter appears in the "Think Pink!" routine.

Event 2: "Take the Picture!" In and Out of the Male Photographer's Gaze

To a large extent, fashion photography has traditionally been a male-dominated profession through which the female body is objectified by the photographer, both for his own pleasure and that of the (male) spectator. First published in 1976, Laura Mulvey's seminal essay about the objectification of women in 1950s Hollywood film, "Visual Pleasure and the Narrative Cinema," has shaped much subsequent writing about this dynamic of patriarchal power and control in regards to the male gaze. Mobilising psychoanalytical theory from a feminist perspective, Mulvey argues that, "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is stylized accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed … Woman displayed as sexual object is the leitmotif of erotic spectacle" (Mulvey 1989: 19).

This is not an exaggeration, particularly if we consider how, since the 1920s at least, gala fashion shows were conceived more like spectacular theatrical productions "attended by vast audiences," as Caroline Evans argues (2013: 117-8), and how the discourse of fashion photography has nearly always involved men as producers and women as objects of desire. Jean Patchett — one of Avedon's favourite models in the 1950s — commented, for instance, how Avedon "jumped around too much" and made her "feel inadequate" (Gross 1995: 79). Similarly, the first time we witness Dick Avery in the studio, we see he has complete control over the model Marion, represented as a mindless cipher who can't give him the "long look" he demands as she concentrates instead on reading her novel, *Minute Men from Mars*.[11] For the most part, Jo is also the object of Avery's gaze. Thus in his darkroom she bewails the fact that she is too unconventional and plain to be a fashion model, whereas he freezes her in the glare of the spotlight and echoes her assertion to him in the bookstore that she finds trees more authentically beautiful than fashionable women, quipping, "When I get through with you … you'll look like a tree." As well, when he demands she should pretend to be tragic

"like Anna Karenina" as he photographs her at the Gare du Nord, he fails to notice she already has tears in her eyes. But there are telling moments when Jo resists being pinned down by her role as a fashion model and the power of the male photographer's gaze; in the bookstore Dick defines his job as a case of "beautiful dresses on beautiful women," while Jo parries it is more a matter of "silly dresses on silly women."

In particular, the tension between the passive object and active subject is performatively deconstructed in the film's prolonged photoshoot sequence, which acts as an event to showcase Hubert de Givenchy's eight stunning outfits for Jo and inverts the normative logic of the costume plot whereby, "the actress should be dressed down for the high emotional scenes and dressed up for the less significant moments" (Gaines 1990: 205). At the same time, the dynamics of the gaze complement how *assujetissement*, the process of subjection and becoming a subject in discourse that Foucault elaborates in *Discipline and Punish*, is enacted in *Funny Face*. At this stage in the narrative, having been plucked from obscurity as a gamine bookseller by Dick and Maggie to model outfits in Paris, Jo fledges into a confident young woman, while she also begins to fall in love with Dick, and he with her. In an earlier catwalk scene, wearing a sack-back dress by Givenchy, she remarks, "It doesn't feel like me" after the fashion designer Paul Duval (played by Robert Flemyng) calls her a "bird of paradise," whereas in the fashion shoot she progressively asserts herself and takes control of the situation. At the start of the sequence, photographed in front of the Arc du Carrousel in the Tuileries Gardens, Jo is still the inert ingénue, learning how to strike the right pose in her black New Look day dress as she clutches on to a bunch of balloons. Dick entreats her to run as fast as she can but she exclaims, "I don't know which way to go. I'm sorry, I'm terribly nervous, I've never done anything like this before." In the penultimate shot, however, she resists the normative power dynamic of the male gaze. Spontaneously marching down the steps of the Louvre in a stunning red New Look evening gown, therefore, she raises her arms and pashmina to mimic the pose of the "*Victory of Samothrace*" behind her and enjoins Dick three times to "Take the picture!"

This statement of intent clearly subverts the discourse of patriarchal domination that Mulvey describes and troubles the idea that the female model is merely the male photographer's captive muse.

To a large extent Jo is a fashion model by default and by no means is she just the docile discursive body that typifies the "aesthetic blankness" of the interwar modernist mannequin, as expertly assessed by Brown (2009: 42) and Evans (2013: 245-6). Rather, she is someone whose status hinges on the "double impetus of pleasure and power" that Foucault argues the act of making visible and spectatorship entail (Foucault 1990: 47 and 1977: 187).

Thus Jo's speech act also intersects with another aspect of her personality as an intellectual woman and reminds us that her original motive for visiting Paris is to engage with Professor Emile Flostre (played by Michel Auclair), in the cult philosophy Empathicalism. In fact, Jo's infatuation with Flostre — she declares to Dick she "worships everything he stands for" — alongside the influence of France on American cultural politics in the 1950s, are the key themes underpinning the next statement I want to explore, "Bonjour Paris!"

Event 3: "Bonjour Paris!" American Cultural Hegemony and Fashion in the Context of Cold War Politics

As the film clearly reveals, in the post-war period Paris was still the locus of immense and diverse pleasure, a reputation that had been sedimented internationally through the hedonistic culture of Montmartre since the 1890s (Stern Shapiro 1991). On this level, the "Bonjour Paris!" song and dance sequence, involving Jo, Dick, and Maggie, is a virtual love affair to the city as spectacle that has echoes of *An American in Paris* (1951), director Vincente Minnelli's film musical based on a 1928 score by George and Ira Gershwin.[12] But the routine also takes in several long-standing and archetypal sites of fashionable spectacle and consumption, such as the Rue de la Paix, the Place Vendôme, and the boulevards, and culminates with all three characters converging on the Tour Eiffel, which is not only promoted as the universal symbol of tourist Paris but, as Rocamora attests, since the early twentieth century has also become associated with the female form and fashionability (Rocamora 2009: 167-70). Furthermore, as an event, "Bonjour Paris!" furnishes a political and, therefore, unexpected dimension of the Hollywood musical, revealing how the costume plot can take a surprising turn that "does not correspond with narrative developments" (Gaines 1990: 205).

Accordingly, the event underscores Foucault's insistence that discourse relies as much on what is not stated as what is, for it evinces the equivocal position that America held on French culture just after the Second World War, captive and in thrall to it as a source of inspiration, yet simultaneously aiming to surpass European supremacy in art and design.

As early as November 1940, Harold Rosenberg had written "The Fall of Paris" for *Partisan Review,* claiming that the French avant-garde was being hijacked by the infiltration of Fascism (Rosenberg 1992: 544). But the desire to take pole position in art and design on the global stage intensified during the immediate

period of Cold War ideology, when America sought to challenge Russian propaganda portraying it as a cultural backwater, and aimed to do so by taking the cultural crown from Paris. Accordingly, in an essay titled "The Decline of Cubism" for *Partisan Review* in March 1948, Clement Greenberg reinforced the idea that art in France was being eclipsed, but he took a different tack to Rosenberg, claiming, "… the main premises of Western Art have at last migrated to the United States, along with the centre of gravity of industrial production and political power" (Greenberg 1986: 212). Rather than arguing that it was the impact of Fascism that had led to this situation, he proposed instead that American painters, such as Jackson Pollock, were genuinely more radical in their technique and philosophy of art than those in Europe. Pollock is probably the most well-known proponent of Abstract Expressionism, or action painting, which was vigorously promoted in the 1940s and 1950s as "the coming of age of America," initially by Alfred Barr, director of the Museum of Modern Art, NYC, and subsequently by Porter A. McCray, director of international programmes for the Museum (Cockcroft 1995: 86).

While American cultural producers had begun to challenge and to surpass European dominance at this time, paradoxically they were still indebted to Europe for artistic and intellectual ideas. The new style of fashion photography and page layouts by Brodovitch and Avedon, after all, betray their origins in the New Vision of graphic design of interwar Europe and, although the film's initial location is New York City, America's fashion capital, as the narrative unfolds it swiftly demonstrates that post-war fashion photographers like Avedon were still reliant on Paris as the optimal space to enact their "New American Vision" between 1945 and 1955. Moreover, in the case of painting, many of the Abstract Expressionists were introduced to the Left Bank philosophy of Existentialism through *Partisan Review*, which had published articles by Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre. At the heart of their philosophy was the idea of man as free agent, ethically responsible for his/her own acts, and that there are no predetermined, objective rules, and definitely no God: people, in other words, are all there is. Sartre summed up such inter-subjectivity in *Existentialism and Humanism* (1946), postulating, "I am responsible for myself and for all men, and I am creating a certain image of man as I would have him to be. In fashioning myself I fashion man" (Sartre 2007: 29). As a corollary, Gopnik

has aptly argued that Avedon's animated fashion photographs proffered a "vernacular form of existentialism" and "his work as a popular artist throughout the forties and fifties tracked the dissemination of existentialism as a pop style" (Gopnik 1994: 111).

By the 1950s, however, Sartre was also denounced as a communist in America because his philosophy went against the grain of individual freedom that the American establishment wanted to promote under the neoliberal ideology of "People's Capitalism," a term coined jointly by the Advertising Council and the United States Information Agency in 1956 (Guimond 1991: 166). *Funny Face* follows suit, therefore, in simultaneously embracing and unmasking the intellectual posturing of Existentialism, which it converts into and satirizes as Empathicalism. During "Bonjour Paris!" Jo sings the lyric "I want to see the game of thinking men like Jean-Paul Sartre. I must philosophise with all the guys around Montmartre — and Montparnasse." But after finally meeting Flostre (an assonant alias for Sartre but also a loaded pun on "fluster") she is disillusioned to discover that he has sexual desires just like other men and sees her as fair game, much as Sartre's support for Simone de Beauvoir's feminism and his love for her were underpinned by their mutual belief that seduction and writing emanated from the same intellectual base. In no sense is Jo represented as sexually emancipated a figure as de Beauvoir, willing to enter into the free love and "contingent love affairs" that the latter agreed to in her relationship with Sartre (Friedan 1976: 397).[13] Yet, by the same measure, it is her own intelligence and sense of independence that enables her to see through and resist such sexual liberation as a fiction or sham. During her visit to Flostre's apartment, for example, he attempts to seduce her but she retaliates by smashing a statue over his head and runs off. It is in this instance that we encounter the sense of discontinuity Foucault raises that may beset the wider discourse, though without necessarily capsizing it. As he insists, we should not be put off by or ignore "the phenomena of rupture" (Foucault 2002: 4) that may emerge within the same discourse and instead "characterise and individualise the coexistence of these dispersed and heterogeneous statements" such that "… perhaps one might discover a discursive unity … in the distance that separates them and even in their incompatibility" (2002: 37 and 38).

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This is the challenge that also faces us with another striking example of *assujetissement* in *Funny Face* and the way it addresses and avows the fact that, even if America had surpassed France in painting and photography, it had failed to take the lead in fashion design and couture after 1945 — in fact, its costume plot doesn't try to suggest otherwise.

On this level, it is interesting to note how the success of the *Quality* Paris photoshoot also relies heavily on the outfits produced by the character of French couturier, Paul Duval.

Certainly, in the interwar period Hollywood stars such as Joan Crawford and Greta Garbo had an immense influence on fashion the world over (Gaines 1989; Berry 2000). And, just as in the aftermath of the First World War the French fashion trade was forced economically to adapt to American tastes in fashion (Evans 2013: 101-3), with the occupation of France in 1941 American designers hoped to seize the initiative once more. They did so in the first instance by promoting their own silhouette in accordance with the government's Order L-85, which stipulated that suit jackets should not be over 25 inches long and no more than three yards of material should be used in the making of a

suit (Gustafson 1982: 12). To this end, film costume designer Gilbert Adrian opened his own salon in 1942 in Beverly Hills and, working within the new constraints, promoted a triangular look known as the "coat-hanger" — though his suits were expensive at $135 (Esquevin 2008: 129). In contrast, designers such as Hattie Carnegie saw an opportunity to challenge French dominance of fashion by emphasising informal, youthful styles for the ready-to-wear market (Wilcox 2007: 32).

But, even under the German occupation of 1940–44, Lucien Lelong, president of the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne (the governing body set up in 1868 to control the location, creation, fabrication, and dissemination of, initially, both haute couture design and ready-to-wear[14]), had resisted the relocation of couture to Berlin and Vienna, affirming "It is in Paris or nowhere" (Veillon 2002: 86). Moreover, during the war, couture houses were allowed to use more material for a particular garment, provided they reduced the quantity of designs they produced. This led some critics in America to accuse French couturiers of collaborating with the Germans to ensure that they could compete with American designers.[15]

1946 was the pivotal year that enabled French couture to assert its international hegemony. The Chambre Syndicale organized "Théâtre de la Mode," a touring exhibition of two hundred dolls dressed in fashions by French couturiers that travelled through Europe and on to New York and San Francisco, while Christian Dior opened his new fashion house. Dior became an overnight sensation with his first collection in 1947 that Carmel Snow dubbed the "New Look" in her report for *Harper's Bazaar* (Flory 1986: 27), and in 1948 he also opened a store on New York's Fifth Avenue to sell machine-produced versions of his designs, in keeping with American democratic taste. The exquisite New Look outfits that Jo wears on the catwalk and photoshoot in *Funny*

Face were, however, designed by one of Dior's main competitors, Hubert de Givenchy, personified in the film as Paul Duval. He opened his own Paris fashion house in 1952 and aimed his designs at a more youthful market by forging a link between the quality of couture and the spirit of the boutique. Hepburn herself had modelled clothing for Givenchy since the age of seventeen and, alongside *Funny Face*, he designed her wardrobe for *Sabrina* in 1954 (with costumer Edith Head, who won Oscar for best costume design) and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* in 1961.[16] He was responsible also for the camelhair coat worn by Maggie in the "Bonjour Paris" sequence; otherwise, Head masterminded the everyday wardrobe for Dick and Maggie, and the outfit Jo wears in the bookstore. On top of this, by the time she came to star in Sabrina Hepburn also had more say in what she wore on screen, as Head attested, "She loves to design, and we worked as a team on the Sabrina clothes" (Head and Calistro 2008: 134). It is precisely the role of the costumer/designer and the relationship of his/her designs to Hepburn/Jo that are the focus of the final event I want to discuss

Event 4: "A Bird of Paradise!" Star Designing, Acting, and Identity

In general, the couturier has more freedom of expression since his/her own style usually exists outside cinema and is transported into it in association with a film's chief star(s).[17] By contrast, costumers such as Head were the employees of the major studios and their role was subordinate to both the couturier and the film director.[18] Thus the involvement of two different types of designer on *Funny Face*, as well as Hepburn's own input to her wardrobe, could be regarded as compounding the discursive discontinuity of the costume plot.

But such incompatibility is instructive insofar as their distinctive roles and styles coalesce as an event that symbolizes the transformations in Jo's identity and maintains the discursive unity of the film: Jo is lost and found, captive and liberated, through her burgeoning love for Dick as well as the outfits she wears. Indeed, clothing enables her performatively to be either in or out of control of who she thinks she is.

It is illuminating, for example, that she remarks, "It doesn't feel like me," when Duval calls her a "bird of paradise" in the catwalk scene in his atelier. Two more key moments of this dialectic are the song and dance sequences in the bookstore and the bohemian cabaret, where she extols the peaceful ethos of Empathicalism. In the first, Dick kisses Jo and awakens a sense of desire in her that she rhapsodizes in "How long has this been going on?" singing "My philosophic search has left me in the lurch" while donning the extravagant yellow and orange hat (also designed by Head), left behind by the model Marion. In the second, she appears more at ease and her most natural as a beatnik, garbed in a black turtleneck, pedal pushers (store bought from Jax in Beverly Hills), white socks (Hepburn's own choice), and hair in a ponytail, while performing "Basal Metabolism," a jazz-orchestrated dance routine symbolising female emancipation, though enamoured of Flostre as master, nonetheless.[19]

The sense of liberation connoted in the cabaret scene

is likewise compromised by the film's dénouement, which is sufficiently open-ended for us to speculate that Jo ends up married to Dick, something that had already been adumbrated by "He Loves and She Loves," the romantic song and dance scene at Chantilly, that terminates the location shoot. In this scene Jo models a wedding dress and veil, and she wears it once again while modelling Duval's collection for *Quality* on the catwalk, just after she visits Flostre's apartment and rebuts Dick's avowal that the former is "more man than intellectual." In fact, the closing sequence of the film echoes the one shot at Chantilly. When the fashion show is over, Jo is disappointed to find she has missed the opportunity to tell Dick that he was right about Flostre after all, believing the flight he has suddenly decided to take to New York has already departed, and she flees to Chantilly, still wearing bridal attire. Simultaneously, just as he is about to board the plane, Dick discovers that she has seen through Flostre's act and he rushes back in a taxi to find her there. Thus the two are reunited, declare their true feelings for each other, and perform "S'Wonderful", as they dance and float away on a raft, surrounded by swans.

And yet, because she is not merely a clotheshorse and has the intelligence and foresight that mark her out from the other models in the film, Jo also deconstructs the sexist binary between brains and beauty. If, as she comes to realize, the sexual desires of an intellectual like Flostre are not necessarily any different to those of other men — in this instance a photographer such as Dick — then why shouldn't an independent young woman like herself combine marriage, glamour, and intellect? Hepburn herself was offbeat, exotically European, and youthfully gamine — a persona that was the antithesis of the 1950s buxom Hollywood archetype but, as Sarah Moseley has amplified, also enabled her to find popularity with female film audiences across time and place (Moseley 2002). Hence, the costume designs for *Funny Face* exemplify the dialectic between star designing and star acting and the concomitant tension between impersonation and personification that is identified by Gaines, who argues, "The ideal in this way becomes the transformation of the star that plays on a fascination with masquerade while remaining a transformation that stops short of complete disguise" (Gaines 1990: 200). Hepburn, for instance, wore Givenchy both on- and off-screen from 1953 till her death in 1992 and, on account of this, in the films for which he designed her wardrobe we never entirely lose sight of the actual person,

while also avowing the role she plays. When the film was released, however, only one (anonymous) film critic seemed to appreciate the adventitious nature of this kind of masquerade, commenting, "Miss Hepburn, as it happens, is a bundle of genuine charm, and nothing that … the latest creations of the fashion designers can do will smother this *quality* of hers" (*Manchester Guardian* 1957: 5).

By extension, the play on unconventional and traditional female identities we witness in *Funny Face* strategically reminds us they are never static, but always provisional or *en procès*; that is to say, both under construction and on trial. Consequently, Jo's identity crisis, her very own *assujetissement*, echoes Judith Butler's argument that identity is performative, a matter of repeatedly doing something rather than having it or being it immanently in advance of the act. Furthermore, although gender identity is created and ostensibly consolidated through the reiteration of certain speech and body acts, its final outcome is never settled and, whether Jo appears as bohemian or bird of paradise, such acts only "constitute the illusion of an abiding self" (Butler 1990: 140). It is not for nothing, after all, that Foucault also resisted any straightforward characterisation or subjection, concluding the introduction of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* with the Delphic statement, "Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same" (Foucault 2002: 19).

Conclusion

Although *Funny Face* is a visual feast to watch, analysing it as matter of discourse also reveals that it is a far cry from portraying the fashion system as entirely vacuous, as two other films dealing with fashion photography and publishing imply — William Klein's *Qui Etes-Vous, Polly Maggoo?* (1965) and Antonioni's *Blow-Up* (1966).[20]

Hence, each of the four discursive events/statements I have outlined operating in *Funny Face* can be seen coterminously to negotiate its own intratextual message concerning power and control, and to exist in a discursive network where one event, on some level, is related intertextually to another.

It is in this way that its costume plot overlaps with Foucault's contention that "To reveal in all its purity the space in which discursive events are deployed is not to undertake to re-establish it in an isolation that nothing could overcome; it is not to close it upon itself." Rather, as he posits, "… it is to leave oneself free to describe the interplay of relations within it and outside it" (Foucault 2002: 32). Taking this sense of interplay a step further, and by way of tying threads together, it is also worth reiterating how each of the four events in *Funny Face* intersects in turn with the four enunciative functions of any given discourse that Foucault outlines in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (2002: 129).

First, the event/statement operates as "a referential" that is based on a principle of differentiation. Accordingly, the rhetorical image of fashion often places fashion in a situational context, and yet neither of them denotes or straightforwardly "references" real life itself; the male gaze demands a female model; modernism/modernity are regarded as American as well as French or European; Hepburn is both a star/actor and a real person who wears Givenchy outfits; and Jo is simultaneously intellectual and model. Second, the event embraces different subject positions; not just that of its author/originator but others that respective individuals occupy, as they identify as subjects of the statement. Thus the discourse of *Funny Face* aligns itself extra-diegetically with the magazine

editor, fashion photographer, and fashion models in the film, as well as intra-diegetically with readers and spectators outside;[21] it converts Existentialism (involving Sartre and de Beauvoir) into Empathicalism (involving Flostre and Jo); it represents Jo as passive object of the gaze and as active participant in deconstructing it; it portrays the tension between everyday clothing and couture, and it symbolizes how Jo/Hepburn mediates this on- and off-screen. Third, the event has an associated discursive field, a domain of coexistence with other events/statements. By this measure, fashion/fashion photography are not only embedded in the film discourse but, through the film's costume plot, are discursively related to events in art, identity politics, and philosophy as well. And last, the event has repeatable materiality; instead of a limited materiality fixed by form, date, and location, discursive events/statements are open for reinscription and transcription as they circulate across space, time, and form. Most obviously, this concerns Hepburn's enduring legacy as a style icon (Moseley 2002)[22] and the various 1950s style revivals that have taken place in postmodern culture and fashion since 1980 (Jameson 1991: 279-96; Jobling 2014: 153-64). But more particularly, Avedon/ Avery take their place in a succession of other male fashion photographers, working before and after them. And *Funny Face* has its reinscription and transcription in a succession of other films and television shows about fashion publishing — *Blow-Up, Ugly Betty*, and the *Devil Wears Prada* spring to mind here, while the opening and closing sequences of the photoshoot, namely the balloons scene and dance routine between Jo and Dick at Chantilly, were cribbed by director Damien Chazelle for the musical *La La Land* (2016). Finally, the permutations on Maggie's exhortation for us all to "Think Pink!" reverberate down the years. Alongside Vreeland's notorious statement of 1962, key examples range from "India" in British *Vogue* (Gilliatt 1956), featuring Norman Parkinson's photograph of a model wearing a pink Jaeger mohair coat in the Palace at Jaipur, the "city of pink sandstone,"[23] through to "Candy coloured clowns" in *Arena* (May/June 1988), whose rose-tinted images by Juergen Teller and editorial fetishize the ephebic male models and what they wear, to the recent self-reflexive homage to *Funny Face* qua exuberant musical in Harrods Fashion Special brochure for spring 2017. Shot by Jon Compson and edited by Victoria Gaiger, it underscored the circular idea that "pink is the colour that's opening doors this season," this time in designer collections by the likes of Stella McCartney, Prada, and Christopher Kane.[24]

Endnotes

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[1] This stands in telling contrast to the review that appeared in the *Times* (1957: 3) after *Funny Face*'s British release: "…a displeasing piece of work, pseudo-sophisticated, expensive and brash in approach, vulgar in taste and insensitive in outlook. This, in fact, is the American 'musical' at its worst; not even the presence of Mr. Fred Astaire, who was in the original stage production, nor that of Miss Audrey Hepburn can save the day."

[2] The surviving musical numbers are "*Funny Face*," "He Loves and She Loves," "S'Wonderful," and "Let's Kiss and Make Up."

[3] Gaines (1990: 195) relates, for instance, how Alfred Hitchcock insisted costume should play a subservient role in the narrative structure of his films and how George Cukor commented that if the costume, "knocked your eye out, it was neither good for a particular scene, nor the entire film."

[4] See Thompson (1995), for instance, on the symbiotic relationship between the development of modern society and the mass media, and the ways the latter have led institutions to mediatize communications and products with individuals and audiences.

[5] Rocamora (2009) and Tynan (2016) have also demonstrated the relevance of his ideas to how fashion and clothing function as discourse. Rocamora merges theoretical standpoints by Foucault and Bourdieu to analyze how a "fashion media discourse" has operated to articulate French style as Paris style, while Tynan analyzes his ideas about a disciplinary regime in regard to dress and the body.

[6] He clarifies and reinforces this point in one of his last interviews in 1984, "The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice for Freedom," stating how it also involves human agency and how it is in "institutions or practices of control … [that] the human subject defines itself" (Foucault 1997: 281). Foucault also occasionally uses the related term *sujétion* but more commonly he uses *assujetissement* in order to signal the "constitution of 'subjects' in both senses of the word" (Foucault 1990: 60).

[7] Granger Blair (1956: 69) informs us that the nineteenth century hunting lodge chapel in the scene was augmented by wooden scenery to look like a church and that turf had to be imported specially from California to cover over the rain-sodden lawn upon which Astaire and Hepburn performed their dance.

[8] The statement haunted Vreeland for the rest of her career, also appearing one year later in "The Vreeland *Vogue*," *Time*, May 10, 1963. In her memoirs, first published in 1984, she wrote: "Although, naturally, I *adore* PINK. I love the pale Persian pinks of the little carnations of Provence, and Schiaparelli's pink, the pink of the Incas. And, though it's so *vieux jeu* I can hardly bear to repeat it, pink is the navy blue of India" (Vreeland 1997: 106).

[9] *Vogue* also had an instrumental part to play in the transformation of fashion publishing. The title was founded in 1892 in America, originally as a society magazine that was aimed at the top 400 families whose names were recorded in the Social Register in New York. A British edition followed in 1916, and French and Italian versions in 1920 and 1950 respectively. When Thomas Condé Nast took over running the American edition with its first editor

Edna Woolman in 1909, its circulation was equally modest — approximately 14,000 copies per month. His aim, however, was not to increase *Vogue*'s readership dramatically and he deliberately continued to emphasize the magazine's social exclusivity during the 1920s and 1930s. What was of more importance to him was its aesthetic appearance and the chief concern was to revitalize the form and content of *Vogue* in keeping with the prevailing aesthetic values of modernism. To achieve this, he employed a successive range of inventive layout artists, editors, and photographers. Between 1909–39 the chief artistic contributors to *Vogue* in America and Europe were the photographers Edward Steichen, George Hoyningen-Huene, and Horst and the graphic designer Mehemed Fehmy, all of whom emulated the avant-garde art movements of New Objectivity and Surrealism in their stylistic tendencies. See Jobling 1999: 19-21 and Matthews David 2006: 25-6.

[10] In turn, Astaire was a hero and idol to Avedon (Gopnik 1994: 111).

[11] The look and the gaze are also instrumental to *Blow-Up* (dir. Antonioni 1966), based on a short story by Julio Cortazar. The film, with mod costumes coordinated by Jocelyn Rickards, is emblematic of the sexual — and often sexist — politics of London in the swinging sixties, and there is little or no opportunity for the dolly bird models to escape from the photographer's relentless objectification. The part of Thomas, played by David Hemmings, treats fashion models like mindless zombies and is based on the likes of 1960s fashion photographers Terence Donovan and David Bailey. The latter gives us a clear insight into how there is a discursive lineage between Avedon/Avery and himself in the following comment, "I sometimes hate what I'm doing to girls. It turns them from human beings into objects. They come to believe they actually are like I photograph them and it gives me a terrific feeling of power. Power and destruction" (Walker 1965: 15).

[12] The MGM film starred Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron. Unlike *Funny Face*, it turned a profit at the box office and also garnered Oscars for best picture, best director, and best costume design by Orry-Kelly, Walter Plunkett, and Irene Sharaff. It was later adapted into a successful stage musical by Ken Ludwig in 2008 and Christopher Wheeldon in 2014 (Mackrell 2014).

[13] de Beauvoir once commented, "We were two of a kind and our relationship would endure as long as we did: but it could not make up for the fleeting riches to be had from encounters with different people" (Friedan 1976: 397).

[14] In 1911 the Chambre was reconstituted to represent couture exclusively (Rocamora 2009: 29).

[15] See *Time*, 11 September, 1944. It is also worth noting that, as soon as the war was over, wealthy American clients, including the Duchess of Windsor, returned their custom to Paris (Wilcox 2007: 36).

[16] There is evidence to gainsay Head's instrumentality for some of the designs in *Sabrina*. She claims credit for the black boat-neck cocktail dress worn by Hepburn, for instance, whereas she actually made up the garment from a sketch by Givenchy. See Chierichetti (2004: 135) and Head and Calistro (2008: 134) on this kind of self-mythologizing by Head.

[17] Well-known fashion designers had been headhunted by Hollywood since the 1920s, and the relationship between fashion designers, filmmakers, and stars has been regarded as mutually beneficial in terms of publicity and cachet. Indeed, during the 1920s Parisian and Italian couturiers were often invited to include their fashions in Hollywood movies, and in turn many of the costumes featured in them became popular with the public. In 1925, Erte designed costumes for Lillian Gish and Renée Adorée in *La Bohème* (although Gish had hers modified by

Lucia Coulter, MGM's wardrobe mistress). Coco Chanel costumed Gloria Swanson in *Tonight or Never* (1931) and Elsa Schiaparelli, Mae West in *Every Day's A Holiday* (1938).

[18] See Nielsen (1990), who dispels the myth of the autonomous star designer. Edith Head was one of the most prolific of Hollywood costumers, working for Paramount between 1919 and 1965, and thereafter for Universal until her death in 1981. During her career she won eight Oscars for costume design, though often by taking the lead in a collaborative team effort, as follows: filmed in black and white — *The Heiress,* styled with Gile Steele, 1949; *All About Eve*, with Charles Le Maire, 1950; *A Place in the Sun*, 1951; *Roman Holiday*, 1953; *Sabrina*, 1954; *The Facts of Life*, with Edward Stevenson, 1960; and filmed in colour — *Samson and Delilah*, with Dorothy Jeakins, Elois Jenssen, Gile Steele, and Gwen Wakeling, 1950; and *The Sting*, 1973 (Chierichetti 2004: 235-6).

[19] See Chierichetti (2004: 136) on the wardrobe credits for *Funny Face.* He states, "The black slacks … came from Jax in Beverly Hills, and the matter of the white socks … was one settled by Hepburn and Donen themselves."

[20] *Blow-Up* represents everything — including people — as disposable commodities. *Qui Etes-Vous, Polly Maggoo?*, starring Klein's favourite female model Dorothy McGowan, was a critical and commercial success on account of its message and design, which pandered to a geometric, Op art aesthetic. But Klein ultimately portrays the fashion system as vacuous and artificial. The models that are sent down the catwalk wearing aluminium dress to rapturous applause by the audience suffer cuts and grazes, and portray the stupidity of those involved in promoting fashion. The film also contains cameos of fashion photographers like Avedon and Jeanloup Sieff, and a spoof on *Vogue*'s editor Diana Vreeland.

[21] Genette (1980: 228-31) deploys these terms to analyze how a narrative is told and read from different positions. Thus, in the case of *Funny Face* the extra-diegetic message exists in the film narrative and is relayed primarily to the film audience by its actors, while the intra-diegetic code is a second level of narrative that may involve the audience insofar as they receive or perceive the message. See also Jobling 2013.

[22] An exhibition of Hepburn's possessions at Christie's, London that took place between September 23–28, 2017 to coincide with their auction, prompted her son Sean Hepburn Ferrer to claim that fifty percent of her fan base is now under thirty years old: "She has replaced James Dean on that closet in kids' bedrooms. It's quite extraordinary … in a world of a lot of smoke and mirrors with social media, I think they feel there is something very real about her" (Marriott 2017: 5).

[23] The feature postdates the filming of *Funny Face*, while also adumbrating Vreeland in 1962. It abounds with references to the colour pink. Thus Gilliatt (1956: 82) marvels at a fisherwoman in a fuchsia sari and relates how the South Indian child on the front cover "carried in her pocket … a deep pink flower clearly picked for the pleasure of its colour with her clothes."

[24] Pink-themed clothing was also popular with youth culture brands such as Missguided and Acne in spring and summer 2017. I owe a debt of gratitude to Karen Scanlon, one of the students in the MA History of Design and Material Culture at the University of Brighton, for bringing the Harrods brochure to my attention. And, along with her, I dedicate this article to the following postgraduate students, who listened patiently and responded insightfully to seminar discussions about it between 2015 and 2016: Jenna Allsop, Sequoia Barnes, Julie Bidmead, Georgina Burger, Jane Chetwynd-Appleton, Sylvia Faichney, Sarah-Mary Geissler, Emily Hill, Amy Hodgson, Sandy Jones, Harriet Parry, and Hannah Smith.

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