"PUTTING ON MY FEMINIST PANTS": HOW ACADEMIC FEMINISTS USE CLOTHING TO CONSTRUCT PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

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Feminism has traditionally been concerned with issues of women's bodies; however, an examination of women's bodies in clothing has been largely overlooked, especially in relation to feminists themselves. Constructing identity for professional feminists in the context of clothing calls into question the traditional feminist binary of privileging the mind over the body. While many feminist writers discuss a rift between second and third wave feminists concerning views on clothing, no one has produced data to show that these views are still held. This paper investigates how second and third wave professional feminists view clothing in relation to the mind/body binary using the classical rhetorical notions of *ethos* and *terpsis*. The data revealed that even among professional feminists, the mind/body binary still privileges those qualities associated with the mind—and that dressing as a professional feminist means dressing for authority and the political expression of feminist values, specifically economy and comfort.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"So, in the words of Immanuel Kant, an enlightened philosopher, a woman who thinks might as well wear a beard." (Ruddick, 1996 quoted in *Through the Wardrobe*)

"In the world of academe, where the life of the mind prevails, does it really matter if a scholar wears Gucci, gabardine, or grunge?" (Schneider, 1998 quoted in *Through the Wardrobe*)

"Fashion is nothing but what one says it is" (Barthes, 1972 quoted in *The Language of Fashion*)

Feminism has long been concerned with issues of women's bodies. As Margrit Shildrick and Janet Price explain in the introduction to *Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader*, "...feminism has long seen its own project as intimately connected to the body, and has responded to the masculinist convention by producing a variety of oftimes incompatible theories which attempt to take the body into account" (1). While these many theories of the body cover a wide range of subtopics, an examination of contemporary women's bodies in clothing has been largely overlooked by feminist theorists. In the introduction to *On Fashion*, Shari Benstock and Suzanne Ferriss quote Kim Sawchuck and state that, "When we are interested in fashion, we are concerned with relations of power and their articulation at the level of the body" (8). Because of its concern with power and the body, Benstock and Ferriss's definition of fashion offers a rationale for an investigation of women's bodies, and the extension of feminist scholarship by turning inward and investigating how academic feminists themselves view clothing.

Feminist scholars, or what I call "professional feminists" in relation to their "feminist professional" business world counterparts, are women who represent feminism on a college or university campus through their research and teaching and are a sub

category of female academics. According to sociologist Eileen Green, female academics comprise a group that is often overlooked for clothing research. Green states that, "little attention has been paid to the ways in which women academics...use clothing strategies to 'place' themselves within academic cultures which marginalize and exclude them" (98). With such dynamic jobs it is surprising that there has been relatively little discussion about (professional) feminism and fashion.

Green explains that academics have many roles in the academy, which are often quite different than the work done by women in the business world. Because the work of academic women, and in particular professional feminists, is unique, these women "are relatively privileged in the latitude with which they can integrate various personal and standpoint issues" in both their clothing choices and their political views (Kaiser, Chandler, Hammidi 134). To emphasize this distinction between the business world and the world of the academy, Kaiser et al explain that the female "power suit" of the business world "represents a kind of uniform professionalism that is viewed as too slick and hierarchical for the world of intellectual ideas...The implication is that a severe suit, for many women, is too pre-coordinated, too static, or too fixed for a world of moving ideas" (120-121). Green goes on to articulate the uniqueness of the job of the female academic. She explains that, "'the academy'...[is] a prime site for what might be termed the 'theatrical performance' involved in everyday practices such as lecturing and interactive committee meetings. Such public performances include meetings in rooms where contests around power relations take place, often involving combative discussions about issues which range from financial resources to intellectual ideas" (99). Kaiser et al state that when female academics participate in this variety of tasks they must, "somehow negotiate diverse

discourses—feminine, fashion, intellectual, professional, feminist" (119). The distinction between these terms is important: it illustrates the nuanced multifaceted roles of the academic job for women. For feminist academics in particular, reconciling (or keeping separate) these discourses is critical. Benstock and Ferriss's definition of fashion as something that brings together power and the body, helps explain that clothing can be one way that professional feminists negotiate complex roles.

The task of "navigating diverse discourses" is made more difficult at times by the virtual lack of clothing guidelines for female academics. The lack of an academic uniform for women is discussed often in relation to the more established (but not formalized) male academic uniform. Kaiser et al go so far as to state that, "There is no direct female counterpart to the male professorial image in an academic culture that is still predominately organized and interpreted as masculine" (118). Green examines the differences between male and female academic appearance, stating that part of the academic uniform for women involves being "efficiently packaged" which she explains includes both the physical body and personality (99). Men, on the other hand, are less restricted by "packaging" and are able to "fill out their academic roles with generous corporeality, including booming voices and spreading torsos" (99). Kaiser et al also comment on the male academic uniform which they attribute to pieces such as such "a beard, a tweed coat with suede elbow patches, khaki slacks, loafers, and the like" (117). While they go on to explain that not all men adhere to this stereotypical style of dress, their clothing choices do help them to "negotiate intellectual and professional discourses" more easily than women since they "need not contend with discourses of fashion, femininity and even feminism in the same way that women do" (118). Based on these differences, Kaiser et al ask if this

freedom for women "is a source of anxiety or pleasure for academic women as they seek to construct and reconstruct their intellectual identities in the context of dominant gendered power relations in the academy" (118). In order to investigate this, it is necessary to examine the relationship between feminism and fashion. In apparel scholarship, there are specific terms that address the nuanced differences in the ways that garments are chosen as body coverings. In this paper, the term "clothing" will be used interchangeably with "fashion" to represent the conscious use of garments as body coverings that communicate meaning to others.

A discussion of feminists and clothing begins with the broader topic of beauty. Naomi Wolf, in her 1991 book *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women*, offers insight into how beauty and feminism have come to be at odds. She explains that because of what she terms the "beauty myth" (the cultural idea that women must look a certain way and are therefore oppressed by unrealistic ideals) reinforces the traditional mind/body binary (59). Since the beauty myth reinforces the idea that "...women are allowed a mind or a body but not both" it makes sense that those interested in the advancement of women would choose the mind over the body (59). Also writing about feminists and society is bell hooks. In her book *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, hooks examines the current state of feminism and beauty and acknowledges the trend in the media, specifically fashion magazines, encouraging women to have an unrealistic idea of what beauty means for women in our society. She warns that, "young girls and adolescents will not know that feminist thinkers acknowledge both the value of beauty and adornment if we continue to allow patriarchal sensibilities to inform the beauty industry in all spheres...until feminists go back to the beauty industry, go back to fashion,

and create an ongoing, sustained revolution, we will not be free" (36). This call for feminists to work with the fashion industry is echoed in the work of Linda M. Scott and third wave feminist writers.

In her 2005 book *Fresh Lipstick: Redressing Fashion and Feminism*, Scott specifically addresses contemporary feminism and clothing. Scott calls for a healthy relationship between fashion and feminism and states that,

> Across the spectrum of academic and popular literature, feminist writers have consistently argued that a woman's attempt to cultivate her appearance makes her a dupe of fashion, the plaything of men, and thus a collaborator in her own oppression...My objective in this book is to demonstrate that established feminist theorists and leaders...need to experience a change in consciousness with regard to the politics of personal appearance (1-2).

Scott reinforces the idea that academic feminists in particular have traditionally privileged the mind over the body. The impact of a mind/body dichotomy on professional feminists is in line with what Shildrick and Price describe in the introduction to *Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader* when they explain that,

> In terms of intellectual activities, the body seems to have been regarded always with suspicion as the site of unruly passions and appetites that might disrupt the pursuit of truth and knowledge... the denial of corporeality and the corresponding elevation of mind or spirit marks a transhistorical desire to access the pure Intelligible as the highest form of Being (2).

With this binary in mind, Scott calls for feminists, specifically those of the second wave, to be more open to embracing fashion and states that "first articulated in the 1910s, [the] privileging of the mind over the body continues to this day in feminist works" (5).

The love/hate relationship of feminism and fashion can be isolating, however, as Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards explain in their 2000 book *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future*, where they offer a brief history of feminism in the United States and call for feminism to move beyond the second wave and reach out to young women today, especially since there is a rift between second and third wave feminism. According to Baumgardner and Richards, the older second wave feminists "subconsciously or not...often deny that they could benefit from younger feminists' knowledge and experiences" and go on to call younger feminists a "tokenized group" in relation to these older second wavers (222-3). They explain that many second wave feminists "don't see feminism unless it looks like their brand" (223); views like this limit the conversations about topics that feminists of all ages are concerned about—and at the forefront is fashion.

This rift opens the door for research into current feminist views on fashion. In her essay "A Woman's Two Bodies: Fashion Magazines, Consumerism, and Feminism," Leslie W. Rabine calls scholars to investigate "...the relation between...two kinds of feminism, popular and academic, both working within structures of domination, and both still seeking a way out" (74). While the study of clothing as communication is interdisciplinary, much of the writing surrounding feminism and clothing seems to come out of the field of apparel and textiles by researchers who study dress and appearance, and is often anecdotal (Chowdhary, Laughlin, Michelman). In 1988 Kathryn E. Koch and Lois E. Dickey

surveyed self-identified feminists in order to see how a feminist attitude toward clothing was manifested in career attire. Using a survey instrument and regression analysis to analyze their results, they found that the more "feminist" a woman was the more she was likely to adhere to the latest fashion trends—even if they were uncomfortable. Koch and Dickey hypothesized that a link existed between women who self identify as feminists and a desire to use clothing for success on the job.

Based on this previous scholarship, I adapted Koch and Dickey's survey instrument for professional (academic) feminists in order to investigate how the mind/body binary is currently played out for second and third wave feminists.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature surrounding the professional dress of professional feminists comes from multiple disciplines including the broad field of apparel and textiles, women's studies, and rhetoric. In her article "Toward a Contextual Social Psychology of Clothing: A Synthesis of Symbolic Interactionist and Cognitive Theoretical Perspectives," Susan Kaiser states that finding common ground among theory (in her case, in the social/psychological area within the apparel and textiles field) would help to create a more "integrative conceptual framework for examining dress" which would "enable researchers to consider how their findings contribute to the interdisciplinary knowledge base in the field" (1). Adding a rhetorical lens to apparel and textiles research would help to show ways in which different disciplines can be of use to each other to further investigate issues of dress and communication.

Contemporary literature in apparel and textiles

The study of the visual impact of material elements (specifically clothing) to understand the way in which they influence the self and others has been a long- standing site of inquiry in the discipline of apparel and textiles, which is deeply interdisciplinary. Drawing intellectually from sociology, anthropology, psychology, and sociolinguistics, the discipline uses a broadly social science literature to refine its theories and methods. In the introduction to her seminal work, *The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context*, Susan Kaiser offers an overview of the scholars who have contributed to the discipline's development, which includes the work of sociologists

George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer, Gregory Stone, and Ervine Goffman (23). Kaiser also gives an overview of the theory used in apparel and textiles scholarship, including self-completion theory and a contextual approach to clothing analysis.

Self-completion theory holds that people see clothing on a daily basis and, whether consciously or not, they constantly assign and interpret its meaning within a larger culture. Drawing from the work of psychologist Kurt Lewin, self- completion theory specifically deals with the idea of multiple self-definitions, or "particular statements of self that may vary greatly by the context and the person, for example, football player, intellectual, creative, and able to speak French" (Kaiser 176). R.A. Wicklund and P.M. Gollwitzer, in their 1982 book *Symbolic Self-Completion*, state that, "the building blocks of these self-definitions are symbols used to strive for a sense of completion. A person engages in self-symbolizing, or the use of symbols to build and retain a complete self-definition when he or she senses a lack of completion" (9). Self-completion theory provides a way of examining the extent to which individuals use clothing to obtain these self-definitions, which is similar to what Green proposed when she called for an examination of how female professors "use clothing strategies to 'place' themselves within academic cultures which marginalize and exclude them" (98).

The other theory that allows for an examination of attitudes toward clothing is the contextual approach to clothing analysis. A contextual approach to clothing analysis "...considers the linkages between one's own self-definition and the situational contexts that require certain types of symbolic behaviors" (Koch and Dickey 47). This extends self-completion theory and looks at how the meaning of clothing can change based on the context that they are found it. A contextual approach also takes in to account that society is

not static: according to Kaiser, "discovery about the meanings of clothes and appearance is an exploratory process of change and continuity" (61). Theories that examine the messages of clothing are important for a discussion of the ongoing debate between feminists concerning fashion.

Contemporary literature in feminism and dress

American feminism can be divided into three distinct movements or waves. The first wave of feminism began when the movement first emerged in America in the late 19th century. In the 1960s, it reemerged in a "second wave" which lasted until the late 1990s when the third wave emerged (Daum 19). Each wave can be characterized by what it was fighting for. Courtenay W. Daum explains in her 2010 article "Point Break: Abandoning the Wave Metaphor and the Politics of Division," that the second and third waves are divided by what she terms a "sameness/difference debate" where second wave feminists are concerned about women's rights broadly while third wavers are concerned with distancing themselves from the second wavers. Daum quotes Astrid Henry and explains that "...the term 'third wave' [has] become synonymous with younger feminists and with stressing generational differences from the second-wave feminists of the 1970s" (24). Third wave feminism, according to Daum, "highlights intersections and women's multiple identities" (24). One common thread among all three waves of feminism has been women's dress, but perhaps most popularly for the second and third waves.

Second wave feminist Naomi Wolf, in her 1991 book *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women*, investigates how beauty and feminism have come to be at odds. Wolf describes the "beauty myth" as a cultural mindset that works to

control women's behavior by making them feel unhappy with their appearance and constantly strive for an appearance that is unrealistic. Since the integration of these standards is oppressive for women, as a result many feminists have responded by simply denying the standards.

Wolf briefly examines the relationship between feminists and the beauty myth when she traces the history of feminism in relation to beauty. She explains that since the first meeting at Seneca Falls in 1848, feminists were harshly judged on their appearance, both by other feminists and by the outside culture. In the 1960s, when feminism gained a great amount of momentum, the beauty myth was there to keep the feminist message from being accepted by the masses of women who adhered to society's ideal. Wolf explains that "since 'beauty' follows fashion, and the myth determines that when something female matures it is unfashionable, the maturing of feminism was crudely but effectively distorted by the lens of the myth" (69). Also, since the beauty myth reinforced idea that "...women are allowed a mind or a body but not both" it makes sense that those interested in the advancement of women would choose the mind over the body (59). With this premise established, third wave feminist scholars have worked to break down this binary.

In her book *Fresh Lipstick: Redressing Fashion and Feminism*, Linda M. Scott specifically addresses the history of feminism and fashion and proposes that the two do not need to be at odds. She explains that it is natural for human beings to decorate and adorn their bodies and that the traditional feminist view that women should look "natural" is no different than the beauty industry telling women how to look. Scott states that she wants to "...encourage [those] who are dedicated to the equality of women, but do not wish to give up the pleasures of self-decoration, to renew their commitment to feminism" (331). Scott

specifically takes second wave feminists to task, who she claims have made it so that being a feminist means being anti-market and anti-capitalist—and often anti-beauty. She takes issue with this for many reasons; among them is the reason that this causes many young feminists feel left out of the movement. Scott calls for second wave feminists to embrace the young women of the third wave and their interests, as capitalist and pro-market as they may be, even if they include things such as beauty, modeling, and Barbie (277).

In their 2000 book *Manifesta*: *Young Women, Feminism, and the Future*, third wave feminists Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards call for many of the same things as Scott. They explain that for third wave feminists, "if we're strong enough to handle sexy clothes and Barbie dolls, then we should be strong enough to read Andrea Dworkin and other analyses of power, and still feel in touch with why we love skinny rocker boys or false eyelashes. The feminist transformation comes from the political theory *and* the cultural confidence" (165). Third wave literature is reaching out to the second wave feminists, telling them that even though they are younger, third wave feminists have something to say.

Rhetorical lens

Much of the literature mentions a mind/body binary introduced by western philosophers and internalized by contemporary women and is being challenged by third wave feminists. While I believe that there are more than two reasons for dressing, I also think that this binary gets at the heart of the love/hate relationship between feminists and fashion in addition to the rift between the second and third wave feminists. Many feminist writers talk about a rift between second and third wave feminists concerning their views on

clothing, but no one has produced data to show that these views are (still) held. In order to address this, my research will investigated how second and third wave professional feminists view clothing in relation to the mind/body binary.

Building off of the mind/body binary and the way it has been interpreted by the waves of feminism, my research questions address how professional feminists use career clothing in relation to establishing authority and aesthetic pleasure. The use of clothing for authority addresses the mind portion of the mind/body binary while aesthetic pleasure represents the body. My lens will add classical rhetorical notions of *ethos* and *terpsis* to this analysis in order to investigate the mind/body binary which will extend feminist scholarship on embodied rhetoric and show the current differences in attitude toward dress that may or may not exist between second and third wave professional feminists.

Ethos and *terpsis* are classical rhetorical terms that are commonly used by rhetorical scholars (Erickson and Thomson, Poulakos) to examine credibility/authority (*ethos*) and aesthetic beauty (*terpsis*). While rhetorical studies has traditionally been linked to the written word, a relatively new sub field of rhetoric, visual rhetoric, seeks to apply classical rhetorical notions to media beyond the written word. It is in this vein that I propose using these classical rhetorical terms to analyze quantitative data.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Third wave feminist writers have identified a rift between the second wave feminists and the newest generation to take up the cause—which currently is focused around issues of fashion and beauty. Therefore, my research questions about how professional feminists use career clothing in relation to establishing authority and aesthetic pleasure are important to ask as we enter the second decade of the 21st century. An investigation of how the women who dedicate their lives to feminism in the academy through their research and teaching view their career clothing today offers insight into the real attitude practicing second and third wave feminists have toward fashion. While many people have written about the rift, as of yet no one has produced quantitative data showing that these attitudes are still held; this study will attempt to do just that.

Population and sample

In order to address questions of how professional feminists view clothing and fashion it was necessary to contact them. In order to do this, I utilized the listserv for the 2009 *Feminism(s) and Rhetoric(s)* conference. Members of this email list are other feminists in a variety of disciplines (largely rhetoric and composition and women's studies) from academic institutions across the United States. The participants of this conference were self-identified feminists representative of both the second and third wave. Participants were asked to forward the survey link to others that they thought would be willing to take the survey. By doing this, I was able to get responses from a wide selection of professional feminists concerning their attitude toward clothing and fashion. There were a total of 252

responses, 233 of which were used for data analysis after the initial filters (gender and screening for more than one attempt) had been applied.

Instrumentation

Previous research on feminist attitudes toward dress has been either personal anecdotes or informal interviews (Kaiser, Green). One exception is Koch and Dickey's 1988 study, where the authors used a three-part survey to measure feminist professionals' attitudes toward dress. Their survey instrument contained three parts: a demographic section, a section about feminist orientation and work status, and a 53- question section on attitudes toward dress (see Appendix A) that asked participants to agree or disagree on a 7-point Likert scale with statements that they later categorized into areas of conformity, fashion, social/concern for appearance, political, economy, freedom/comfort, equality, and success/achievement (see Appendix A for definitions). Koch and Dickey used multiple regression analysis to determine the relationship between feminist orientation and work status in relation to attitude toward dress. They also used chi square analysis to categorize demographic information in relation to their feminist orientation (which they classified as "feminists," "moderates," or "non-feminists"). The quantitative data Koch and Dickey produced enabled them to be able to make claims about the then-current status of the relationship between (what is now second wave) feminism and fashion.

Since my research aims to quantitatively measure contemporary professional feminist attitudes toward clothing, I used many of their methods, including their survey, which was modified from their original instrument. Specifically, the survey used was administered as one unit and for the purpose of convenience, was administered

electronically via email instead of through the mail. Some of the wording of the questions was also updated (see Appendix A for the instrument). My survey, like Koch and Dickey's was divided into three clearly marked parts: Demographic Information (five questions), Feminist Orientation (two questions), and Attitude Toward Dress (53 questions). A 7 -point Likert scale was used for the Feminist Orientation and Attitude Toward Dress sections (1 being "disagree strongly" and 7 being "agree strongly"). The demographic information questions had multiple-choice answers and respondents were asked to choose the most applicable category. This allowed me to get responses from a wide range of academic feminists in order to answer my research questions about how this group views their career clothing. All responses were anonymous. A reliability test and factor analysis test were run to confirm that this instrument was in fact appropriate for a new population and context.

Variables

Responses were filtered initially for gender; only the responses from those who identified as female were used in the data analysis.

Feminist orientation. Since it was imperative that the responses used in the data analysis came from professional feminists, there were two questions regarding feminist orientation in the survey, which worked as filter questions for the data. The first question offered a definition of liberal feminism (see Appendix A for survey questions) and asked participants to respond on a 7 point Likert scale (1 being "I strongly do not associate myself with this definition of feminism"; 2 "I do not align myself with this definition of feminism"; 3 "I somewhat do not align myself with this definition of feminism"; 4 "I neither agree nor disagree with this definition of feminism"; 5 "I somewhat align myself

with this definition of feminism"; 6 "I align myself with this definition of feminism"; 7 "I strongly align myself with this definition of feminism).

Participants were then asked to respond about how their personal definition of feminism differed from this given definition by choosing from a 7-point Likert scale (1 being "much more liberal"; 2 "more liberal"; 3 "somewhat more liberal"; 4 "I agree with this definition"; 5 "somewhat more conservative"; 6 "more conservative"; 7 "much more conservative").

By asking participants to agree or disagree with these statements, I filtered the results from respondents who replied with a score of 3 or less on the first feminist orientation question. The responses of these individuals for the second feminist orientation question were tracked to see how their personal definition of feminism was different than the one offered in the survey. This allowed the differences between the groups to be isolated and have data that was the most representative of the target demographic. For the analysis, the responses of 4 or higher were used as one population.

Age and position within the academy. Within this group of professional feminists, I tracked responses based on the demographic categories of "age" and "position within the academy" in relation to *terpsis* and *ethos*. As mentioned in the literature, the waves of feminism are commonly described in relation to periods of time. Therefore, it would be appropriate to call feminists who were active during the corresponding period of time as feminists of that wave. For the purposes of this paper, women currently ages 18-35 are classified as third wave feminists, while women ages 36 and older belong to the second wave. In order to best investigate trends between second and third wave feminists, I divided the age group of the second wavers into two smaller categories: 36-45 and 46-70.

This allowed me to see nuanced differences between the oldest second wavers, and those feminists who make up an intermediary or transitional wave. Position within the academy was broken down into four categories for analysis: tenure or tenure track; student; non-tenure track; and administration. These represented the major groups of responses from participants.

Attitude toward dress. The dependent variables for this survey were contained in the attitude toward dress section. Since the responses measured were from women who identified as feminists, the responses to the attitude toward dress section were used for data analysis to see how professional feminists view clothing and fashion. All responses are measured on a 7- point Likert scale. The questions made up the original eight categories of analysis that Koch and Dickey established: conformity, fashion, social concern for appearance, political, economy, freedom/comfort, equality, and success/achievement. After these responses had been recorded, 28 questions were pulled to create the categories of *ethos* and *terpsis* to better understand the mind/body differences between second and third wave feminists. The reliability and factor tests confirmed that these categories were appropriate for my new sample population.

Sartorial *terpsis*. Since I am investigating how the mind/body binary impacts attitudes toward career dress for professional feminists, I have chosen *terpsis* for my rhetorical lens because it has a nuanced meaning which includes an appreciation of art, beauty, and self- expression. While the literature (Green) provides a rationale for studying the relationship between fashion and feminism, an investigation of the relationship between feminism and *terpsis* would allow us to see things from a perspective that attempts to remove the outside authority by focusing on individual reasons for dress.

In my analysis, sartorial *terpsis* is the use of clothing for the aesthetic pleasure or self- expression of the wearer. In order to measure this, questions about dress were pulled from Koch and Dickey's original categories of fashion and social concern for appearance. Initially, the questions were coded for words that correspond with the classical definition of *terpsis* with words such as "fashion," "style," and "appearance".

There were a total of 14 questions that constituted *terpsis*. After this, an Eigenvalue test and a factor test were run to determine cohesion of the category. The reliability was over 80% so the category was considered valid and used for data analysis.

By asking this questions about *terpsis* of both second and third wave professional feminists, I will be able to address the question of "do professional feminists see clothing as a way to express themselves: a source of artistic pleasure?" and quantitatively measure the difference in attitudes toward dress for my sample population.

Sartorial *ethos*. In order to address the "mind" portion of the mind/body binary, I created the category of *ethos*. The classical rhetorical notion of *ethos* deals with how credibility is established and works well in relation to Benstock and Ferriss' definition of fashion as something that is "... concerned with relations of power and their articulation at the level of the body" (8).

In my analysis, sartorial *ethos* is the use of fashion in order to establish authority. In order to measure this, questions about dress were pulled from Koch and Dickey's original categories of conformity, political and success/achievement. Initially, the questions were coded for words that corresponded with the classical definition of *ethos*. There were a total of 14 questions that measured *ethos*. After this, an Eigenvalue test and a factor test

were run to determine cohesion of the category. The reliability was over 80% so the category was considered valid and used for data analysis.

By asking questions about ethos of both second and third wave professional feminists, I will be able to address the question "do professional feminists see clothing as a tool to help them establish authority?" and quantitatively measure the difference in attitudes toward dress for my sample population.

Statistical methods

The quantitative data was analyzed using Ttest analysis to determine the results of the independent variables (age, position within the academy, feminist orientation). To measure the relationship between age and the dependent variables of attitudes toward dress as well as the new categories of *ethos* and *terpsis*, a one way ANOVA test, which measures independent variables against multiple dependent variables, was used and was followed up with a Duncan test, which measured the reliability of the questions for this new population.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The data gathered from the methods outlined above produced a plethora of information. Since this paper is focused around answering the questions concerning how professional feminists use career clothing in relation to the mind/body binary (establishing authority versus aesthetic pleasure), I will concentrate my results and discussion around the most pertinent information. Since I am examining a specific group of people, I will first discuss the demographic results, focusing on the independent variables of age, feminist orientation, and position within the academy. In order to examine how this group values clothing and fashion, I will next look at the results from the attitude toward dress portion of my survey. Finally, I will examine the results from my two new categories: *terpsis* and *ethos* in relation to the independent variable of age. I will examine the results in relation to my research questions and the literature in the next chapter.

Demographic results

Age. Nearly half of all participants (43.88%) were between the ages of 18 and 35, which is representative of the third wave of feminism. The remainder (56%) of the participants were between the ages of 36-70 which composes the second wave of feminism (see Table 1).

Table 1. Percentage of Participants Based on Age

Age	Percent	Number
18-35	43.75%	98
36-45	30.36%	68
45-60	25.89%	58

In order to examine nuanced differences between second wave feminists, I have broken the age group into two groups: 36-45 (the young second wave feminists, or the feminists in the

"transition period") and 46-70. This allows me to see discrepancies in attitudes toward clothing based on age. Nearly as important as age in understanding the data, is the position within the academy that the participants held.

Position within the academy. The demographic information revealed that the majority of participants were either tenured/ tenure track (52.89%) or students (30.67%). The majority (61%) of third wave respondents were students or tenured/ tenure track (30%). This age range had the lowest percentage of people in non-tenure track positions, which is to be expected—typically, students make up the youngest people in academia. This trend carried through in the two categories of second wave feminists: the majority of second wavers (about 72%) were tenured or tenure track and the percentage of these participants who were students decreased as age increased (see Table 2).

Table 2. Relationship Between Age and Position Within the Academy

	Third Wave		Second Wave			
Position in the academy	Percentage of participants ages 18-35		Percentage of participants ages 36-45		Percentage of participants ages 46-70	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Tenured or tenure-track	29.59%	29	72.06%	49	71.93%	41
Student	61.22%	60	8.82%	6	3.51%	2
Non-tenure track/other	7.14%	7	17.64%	12	22.81%	13
Administration	2.04%	2	1.75%	1	1.75%	1

The relationship between age and position in the academy for this population was what would be generally expected in academia: over half of the women ages 18-35 were students, while the overwhelming majority of participants ages 36-70 were either tenured or tenure track. While originally I hypothesized that this would be one independent variable that would yield valuable results in relation to the attitude toward dress questions, in all the

tests that were run the data concerning position within the academy was never a statistically significant variable. This lack of difference in opinion based on position makes the study more focused around differences in waves of feminism (defined by age group). While age and position within the academy are two separate independent variables, they are connected and produce similar looking results. The majority of third wave feminists (those ages 18-35) are students, a traditionally disadvantaged position in terms of income and authority in relation to tenure or tenure track positions, which the majority of the second wave feminists (about 72%) held. Since there was no statistical difference in responses based on position but there were based on age, I will discuss the data through the correlation of age with the connection between age and position kept in mind. The other independent variable that all participants were screened for was degree of feminist orientation.

Feminist orientation. Combining all of the participants, the majority (73.01%) identified themselves as agreeing strongly with Rosemarie Tong's definition of liberal feminism: "both genders should be treated equally inside and outside of the workplace, and that there is a continuing need for political, social, economic, and legal reform as well as the removal of institutional bias in order to achieve this equity". The rest of the participants (26.99%) responded with a positive but less strong response (numbers 3, 4, and 5 on the Likert scale). While none of the age groups identified themselves as disagreeing with liberal feminism, the strongest support for this definition came from the oldest of the second wave participants (ages 46-70). Over 80% of these women saw their personal definition of what it means to be a feminist as being in line with liberal feminism. The younger group of second wavers (what I call the "transition age") responded more similarly to the third wave participants than the oldest second wavers (see Table 3).

Table 3. Response to How Personal Definition Differed from Definition of Liberal Feminism

Personal Feminist Orientation in relation to liberal feminism	Participants ages 18-35		Participants ages 36-45		Participants ages 46-70	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Agree Strongly w/ liberal feminism	69.39%	68	72.06%	49	81.03%	47
Agree w/liberal feminism	30.61%	30	27.94%	19	18.97%	11
Neutral/Disagree w/ liberal feminism	Less than 1%		Less than 1%		Less than 1%	

While in each age group the majority of participants identified themselves as agreeing strongly with liberal feminism, it is worth noting that the percentage of women identifying with this definition increased as age increased. The largest gap was between the third wave respondents and the oldest second wave participants. Feminist orientation responses of 3 and higher were taken as one category for analysis to be measured against the attitude toward dress results.

Attitude toward dress results

The independent variable of age was measured in relation to the attitude toward dress questions. This allowed me to compare the results of each wave of professional feminists to see how they are different. The responses to the attitude toward dress questions can be divided into three sections for analysis: responses to the original eight categories, responses to *terpsis*, and responses to *ethos*. For all sections of analysis, an ANOVA test

was run to determine if there were any significant differences between the three age groups (representing the two waves of feminism: third wave, second wave transition and second wave oldest). This trend of statistically significant differences occurring between the oldest of the second wave participants and the other two age groups occurred with other categories as well—and in all of these cases there was never any significant difference between the third wave and young second wave feminists. For this paper, I will refer to responses over a 4.0 as being "positive" and anything below "negative". It is also interesting to note that in 4 out of the 8 categories, the oldest second wave feminists responded more positively than the third wavers—although only one of these was stastically significant.

Original eight categories. The attitude toward dress portion of the survey was made up of 53 questions from which Koch and Dickey created eight categories (conformity, fashion, social concern for appearance, political, economy, equality, freedom/comfort and success/achievement). Regardless of age, the majority of the responses to the categories were below a 5 on the Likert scale (see Table 4).

Table 4. Koch and Dickey's Original 8 Categories Measured Against Age

Variable	P value	Mean for ages 18-35	Mean for ages 36-45	Mean for ages 45-70
Economy	.07	4.36	4.51	4.63
Freedom	.50	4.31	4.35	4.48
Political	.0002	3.90*	3.60#	3.09*#
Conformity	.13	3.66	3.53	3.43
Fashion	.08	3.65	3.48	3.38
Ethos	.0007	3.59*	3.37#	3.06*#
Terpsis	.12	3.46	3.19	3.17
Success	.02	3.38*	3.15	2.94*
Social Concern	.79	3.15	3.07	3.20
Equality	.06	2.62*	2.96#	3.06*#

* and # show statistical difference and relationships

The most positive mean response to any category was 4.63 on the 7- point scale (economy), which indicates neutrality (the definition of 4 is "I neither agree nor disagree). Overall, there were some consistent patterns of response for all participants. In no category was there more than a one point mean difference. Taking all respondents as one group, generally they seemed to value the use of clothing for economy, and the most were concerned with the equality of clothing the least (see Appendix A for definitions and questions for each category). For the responses to economy and freedom, statistical tests showed that there was no significant difference in responses based on age. However, there were significant differences in the responses to three categories (political, success/achievement, and equality), including the one with the lowest average mean (equality). While the data from all eight of the original categories is very telling—separate papers could be written about the responses to each. In order to answer my research questions about the differences in professional feminist attitude toward dress based on age, I will be concentrating on the three categories that had statistical differences first (political, success, and equality), and then my new categories of *terpsis* and *ethos.*

Equality. At the bottom of the list of attitudes toward dress is the use of clothing for equality, which was defined by Koch and Dickey as "the belief that men and women behave or are treated in a similar manner with respect to clothing use in social and occupational situations" (48). This category was comprised of five questions. Unlike the two most popular categories, the responses to equality were different enough to be stastically significant in relation to age. The most positive response came from the oldest second wave feminists, who had an average score of 3.06. This was significantly different

from both the younger second wave feminists and the third wavers, both of which had a mean response under a 3.0, at 2.96 and 2.62 respectively.

Political. The category "political" ended up being the third most positive in responses overall. The category "political" was originally defined by Koch and Dickey to mean "the desire to use clothing to make an impression or to achieve influence, prestige, distinction, or recognition" (48) and was made up of four questions. In their responses to the questions that make up this category, third wave participants answered more positively (3.90) than the late second wave feminists (3.09). The younger second wave feminist responses were more similar to those of the third wavers than the oldest of the second wavers (3.60).

Success. The category "success" was originally defined by Koch and Dickey as representing "the belief that clothing is influential in career success and advancement and that adherence to socially prescribed rules for career dressing is important" (48) and was made up of eight questions. The responses from the two groups of second wave feminists were similar enough that there was no statistical difference. However, significant difference did occur between the responses of the third wave feminists and the oldest feminists of the second wave, with the third wavers responding more positively (3.38) than the oldest second wave feminists (2.94).

***Terpsis* and *ethos*.** When my new categories of *terpsis* and *ethos* are added to the original eight created by Koch and Dickey, the mean responses fall in the bottom half of the list. While there was no statistical difference in the responses to *terpsis* based on age, overall the mean responses of the oldest second wavers were the lowest of the three age groups, but in relation to their mean responses to *ethos*, the oldest second wave feminists

were more keen on *terpsis* than *ethos*, while the other two age groups seemed to value *ethos* over *terpsis*.

Terpsis. The questions for the category of *terpsis* were made up of fashion and social concern for appearance. A reliability test was run to ensure that this collection of questions was cohesive enough to be a category in relation to the original eight categories and new population.

In the responses to *terpsis*, the ANOVA test did not reveal any significant differences in the responses of the three age groups and the response to *terpsis* was 3.30, which ranked in the bottom half of the list of categories.

Ethos. The category of *ethos* was made up of questions from the original categories of conformity, political and success/achievement. I ran a reliability test to ensure that this collection of questions was cohesive enough to be a category in relation to the original eight categories and new population and the questions were reliable for use in this fashion.

When responses to *ethos* were examined based on age, the test showed that there was statistically significant difference. Third wave feminists had the highest mean response (3.59), which was significantly different from the response of the oldest second wave feminists (3.06). This was not the only stastically significant difference; the responses of the oldest and the younger second wave feminists were different. The only two groups that were similar enough to not be stastically different were the third wave and the young second wave.

Conclusion

The data collected from the survey produced many points that will be further investigated in relation to the literature in the discussion chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The results of the survey offer insight into the ways in which the "situational contexts that require certain types of symbolic behaviors" (Koch and Dickey 47) of professional feminists and how they use clothing to "'place' themselves within academic cultures which marginalize and exclude them" (Green 98) in order to define themselves as professional feminists. Specifically, focusing the analysis around the two new categories of *terpsis*, which addresses the use of clothing for the aesthetic pleasure of the wearer and *ethos*, which examines how clothing can be used to construct authority, offer a way to examine contemporary professional attitudes toward the mind/body binary of career clothing. The results of the dependent variables show how professional feminists view career clothing in relation to establishing authority and aesthetic pleasure.

Independent variables and the mind/body binary

There are multiple independent variables for analysis; however, the variables of age, position within the academy, and feminist orientation are the most appropriate to examine in relation to the mind/body binary for professional feminists. By looking at age in relation to wave of feminism, I will demonstrate how the mind/body binary is viewed by the two different waves of feminists. While age and position within the academy are two separate independent variables, they are connected and produced similar results. As the literature (Daum) would suggest, the majority of third wave feminists were, by definition, young (ages 18-35) and were students—a traditionally disadvantaged position for income and authority in relation to tenure or tenure track positions, which the majority (about 72%) of the second wave feminists held.

Before examining the way that the mind/body binary is expressed for the two waves of feminism, it is important to look at trends in responses based on age, which in this paper represents waves of feminism (Daum) and focuses the analysis of the results. The results show some difference in attitudes toward dress between the two groups of second wave feminists. In the data there were never any significant differences between the means of the third wave and younger second wave feminists. The fact that the younger second wavers were in closer agreement with the third wave feminists in their mean response to every category (so much so that there was never any statistical difference in the mean responses) seems to show that the line between third wave and young second wave is not necessarily as clear cut as age. One explanation for this finding is the imprecise age relation to "wave"— the dates given for the waves of feminism are estimates and being a certain number of years old does not guarantee that one will think a certain way. Overall, though, the data show that there are differences between second and third wave professional feminist attitudes toward clothing and that there is a transitional age group for second wave feminism. If plotted graphically, the responses would progress in straight lines where the transitional feminist means were right in the middle of the third and late second waver means. There was only one category, "social concern for appearance", where the transitional age group was the most different—and these results were not statistically significant. Overall, this shows that the middle group of professional feminists are a transitional group between second and third wave attitudes.

Position within the academy. While there were multiple times when the independent variable of age showed statistical difference in attitudes, surprisingly the results showed that there was no statistical difference in responses to attitude toward dress questions based

on position within the academy. According to Scott, third wave feminists are ready to see fashion as an available form of self-definition that is not at odds with their self-definition as feminists, the data show that for contemporary professional feminists, age dictates opinion of dress more than job status or income. This means that my decision to examine responses based on wave is an accurate and more meaningful category of analysis than the seemingly more economically accurate position in the academy.

Feminist orientation. The way that clothing is used to enhance the mind or the body is related to degree of feminist orientation. The results measuring feminist orientation indicate that the older women (81% of the oldest second wavers) identified more strongly with liberal feminism than the younger second wave and third wave feminists (only 68% of the third wave feminists). This suggests that within this sample population, older feminists feel more closely aligned with liberal feminism; the women who came into the movement with liberal feminist ideas (which were economic, primarily) have retained these ideas. The results show that the younger women were less likely to identify themselves as liberal. This paints a picture of feminism and age where the younger women are not seeing the tenets of liberal feminism meeting their needs—something Baumgardner and Richards explain in their call for second wave feminists to recognize the value of a third wave of feminism when they quote Diane Elam, "[third wave feminists] are not allowed to invent new ways of thinking and doing feminism for themselves; feminists' politics should take the same shape that it has always assumed. New agendas are regarded at best with suspicion on the part of seniors, at worst with outright hostility" (224). In a climate like this, it is not surprising that third wavers do not identify with their second wave counterparts. Whatever the reasons, the data suggest that Rosemarie Tong's definition of liberal feminism, while

one that still resonates with women, is more meaningful to the group of women who are part of the second wave of feminism.

Dependent variables and the mind/body binary

The results from the dependent variables that measure attitudes toward clothing paint a picture of contemporary academic feminist attitudes toward dress that can be examined in relation to the mind/body binary. Out of the eight original categories from Koch and Dickey's research, the most highly ranked mean responses came from the categories of economy and freedom, which respond to an interest in dressing for both affordability and comfort. While there was no stastically significant difference in responses to these two categories based on age, the oldest second wavers had the highest mean response in both categories (4.63 for economy and 4.48 for freedom) while the third wavers had the lowest (4.36 and 4.31 respectively). This shows that the professional feminists who participated in the survey viewed career clothing as something that should be comfortable and affordable (in both time and money) and seemed less concerned with fashion for its own sake in their career wardrobes. They also were less interested in using their career clothing to enhance their physical attractiveness (the mean response to the category of *terpsis* and social concern were much lower than economy and freedom, with the highest means being 3.46 and 3.20 respectively). While it is not possible to make claims about professional feminists not caring about fashion, the results do show that there are other things that this group of women are concerned about: economy and freedom.

While Koch and Dickey's method of data analysis did not produce means for their data (which prevents me from making direct comparisons), their final discussion offers

conclusions about trends for feminist professionals that are relevant to my study. Based on their data, Koch and Dickey found that feminist professionals were not only more aware of the power of clothing to be influential on the job, but were more willing to dress to achieve "a certain professional self-definition" than for the purposes of freedom and comfort (51). In fact, their group of feminists "were least likely to be concerned with comfort and mobility in their clothing" and "were more aware of the influence that clothing has on a person's perception and the means by which appearance can be manipulated to control impression formation" (51). There are two possible reasons for the differences between results, both of which help to illustrate the current relationship between feminism and fashion. The first reason has to do with the social context of Koch and Dickey's study, which was conducted in 1988 during the second wave of feminism. There have also been many societal changes concerning career apparel for both men and women including the popularity of "casual Fridays"; general trends in workplace attire are much more casual than they were in the 1980s. The "power suit" for women is all but gone in some careers. Attitudes have changed in big ways and women perhaps feel better equipped to establish careers without a uniform. The second potential reason for the difference in results is that for Koch and Dickey, the participants were not professional feminists, but feminist professionals (women in the business world). The two decades of time that have elapsed during the two studies, offers something to compare my results to: the women who make up my oldest age category (46-70) were contemporaries of the women who Koch and Dickey studied in 1988. While there is no way to know if any of my participants were business professionals in the late 1980s, Koch and Dickey's results show that at that point in time, second wave feminist professionals were willing to embrace "fashionable" career

clothing; something that third wave professional feminists are less likely to do, despite what third wave feminist literature would suggest (Scott, Baumgardner and Richards). This difference can be better understood by comparing it to the differences in responses between the three age groups to specific categories of the attitude toward dress section of my survey—and especially the responses to my two new categories *terpsis* and *ethos* which are designed to examine mind (*ethos*)/body (*terpsis*) split that is central to the feminist contentions.

Responses to *terpsis* and *ethos*. I developed the new categories of *terpsis* and *ethos* to better understand the way that professional feminists privilege the mind or the body when choosing their work attire. In relation to the other eight categories, the mean responses for both *terpsis* and *ethos* were in the bottom half of the list. Specifically, the mean response for *terpsis* was below *ethos*, which shows that dressing for the aesthetic pleasure of the wearer was valued less than dressing for authority, but it is still closely related—not nearly as stratified as those qualities of economy and equality. Returning to Scott's call for professional feminists to "not... give up the pleasures of self-decoration" (331), the data suggests that these pleasures are not the most important thing in determining dress for this group of women.

Also of note, while there was no statistical difference in the responses based on age for the category of *terpsis*, overall the mean responses of the oldest second wavers were the lowest of the three groups (3.17). However, in relation to their mean responses to *ethos* (3.06), the oldest second wave feminists were more interested in clothing for *terpsis* than *ethos*, while the other two age groups seemed to value *ethos* over *terpsis*. The data indicates that while the third feminists feel as if they want to be able to use fashion in their

career clothing, they are not comfortable enough to do so. Since the oldest second wave feminists have also been in the academic workplace longer than the third wave feminists, they would naturally feel more comfortable in their position and, while not necessarily as interested as their third wave counterparts, are actually more willing to indulge in fashion, Scott's idea of "self-decoration" (331), when establishing their career clothing. A closer examination of the two waves' responses to the two new categories will show specific differences in attitude toward dress.

Terpsis. The mean result for *terpsis*, or the use of clothing for the aesthetic pleasure of the wearer, was in the middle of the 7- point Likert scale (3.30). With no difference between the age categories, this seems to mean that professional feminists do not value using career clothing for aesthetic reasons (*terpsis*) as much as they value economy and freedom of dress. As Wolf explains, since the beauty myth reinforced idea that "...women are allowed a mind or a body but not both," those interested in the advancement of women, and specifically those in the academy where the life of the mind is one's career, would choose the mind over the body (59). Koch and Dickey found in their study that the higher feminist orientation a woman had, the more likely she was to "use clothing consciously to achieve a desired self-definition" (51). The fact that my results show that *terpsis* is not ranked as highly as *ethos* (as well as other categories such as freedom and economy) suggests that professional feminists of both waves have a self-definition with clothing that does not privilege the "body" (*terpsis*), which means that the traditional binary of the mind being more important than the body continues for professional feminists as it no doubt continues generally in the academy. This is especially important when

examining the third wave professional feminists since, as Scott explains, this wave is already at the forefront of fashion and feminism.

While the category of *terpsis* was made up of a few questions from two other categories, it is useful to look at the two contributing categories as a whole. None of the categories that made up *terpsis* (fashion, social concern) had results that were statistically significant. For both the oldest second wavers and third wave feminists, the mean responses to fashion were in the top half of all categories. This would be indicative of Scott's call for contemporary feminists to embrace fashion and not see it as antithetical to their feminist beliefs. However, the response to the other category that made up *terpsis* (social concern) was much more stratified for these two groups: the third wave feminists ranked it almost last, while the oldest second wavers ranked it fourth (see Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5. Third Wave Means

Variable	Mean for ages 18-35
Economy	4.36
Freedom	4.31
Political	3.90*
Conformity	3.66
Fashion	3.65
Ethos	3.59*
Terpsis	3.46
Success	3.38*
Social Concern	3.15
Equality	2.62*

Table 6. Oldest Second Wave Means

Variable	Mean for ages 45-70
Economy	4.63
Freedom	4.48
Conformity	3.43
Fashion	3.38
Social Concern	3.20
Terpsis	3.17
Political	3.09*#
Ethos	3.06*#
Equality	3.06*#
Success	2.94*

* and # show statistical difference

This shows that while the mean responses to the category of *terpsis* may not have been statistically significant, overall the oldest second wave feminists were more interested in different aspects of clothing for their own aesthetic pleasure than their third wave

counterparts. In order to see the full picture of feminist attitudes toward clothing it is necessary to look at the mind portion of the mind/body binary: *ethos.*

Ethos. The category of *ethos* was created from individual questions from three preexisting categories: political, success/achievement, and conformity. The results indicate that a concern for clothing as a means of creating authority (*ethos*) decreases with age for professional feminists. Specifically, there was a stastically significant difference in attitudes between the two age groups of second wave feminists (3.37 and 3.06 respectively), which shows that a concern for clothing as a means of creating authority seemed to decrease with age. Naturally, women who are more firmly situated in their jobs may feel less pressure to assert their authority via the garments they wear—but it is important to note that these were potentially the same women who, twenty years ago, indicated that clothing was a vital part of one's work identity; Koch and Dickey described them as being the "most likely to see clothing as having a legitimate impact on one's career advancement" (51). Based on these results, we would expect to see the younger feminists more willing to use clothing to help them "negotiate diverse discourses—feminine, fashion, intellectual, professional, feminist" (Kaiser et al 119) since it can help them with their self-definition as a feminist. This paints a picture of a definition of feminism these women have a view of feminism more strongly related to *ethos* than *terpsis*. According to Shildrick and Price, it seems that the traditional binary of the mind over the body continues to prevail for professional feminists of both waves in academia. To see how this was manifested in the data, it is useful to take a closer look at the statistically significant categories that made up the new category of *ethos*: political and success/achievement.

Political. The responses of third wave feminists concerning clothing usage for political purposes ("the desire to use clothing to make an impression or to achieve influence, prestige, distinction, or recognition" (Koch and Dickey 48)) were higher than the responses of the second wave feminists. If we are looking at clothing, and fashion in particular, as something that can be used to observe the "relations of power and their articulation at the level of the body" (Benstock and Ferriss 8), those just entering the profession (the majority currently students who are still academic apprentices) would be highly aware of the possibilities of clothing as a political choice and eager to find ways to do this themselves. After all, they do have the furthest to climb to achieve success.

Success. The responses of third wave feminists concerning using clothing for success ("the belief that clothing is influential in career success and advancement and that adherence to socially prescribed rules for career dressing is important" (48)) were higher than the responses of the second wave feminists. The notion of a contextual approach to clothing—the idea that self-definition "requires certain types of symbolic behaviors" (Koch and Dickey 47), which in this case would be clothing, would help to show why the youngest professional feminists see the "socially prescribed rules for career dressing" as worth following. This is consistent with third wave literature (Scott, Baumgardner and Richards) that explains that this new wave of feminism is more ready to embrace clothing and fashion in their personal and professional lives.

Conclusion

While the majority of the respondents seemed to care less for fashion and the qualities that made up the category of *terpsis* (based on the mean responses to the

categories), the difference between the two new categories shows that even among professional feminists, the mind/body binary still privileges those qualities associated with the mind—and that dressing as a professional feminist means dressing for authority and the political expression of feminist values, which the women in this sample saw as economy and comfort.

While things have been changing for feminism since the beginning of the 21st century, my results indicate that we are not quite where Scott wants us to be when she said that "established feminist theorists and leaders ...need to experience a change in consciousness with regard to the politics of personal appearance" (1-2) and asked for those feminists "who are dedicated to the equality of women, but do not wish to give up the pleasures of self-decoration, to renew their commitment to feminism" (331). While my results are not necessarily indicative of professional feminist attitudes toward other women's clothing, they do offer insight into the individual's "politics of personal appearance" on the job (2).

Kaiser et al's question of anxiety over the degree of freedom for academic women's clothing as "a source of anxiety or pleasure for academic women as they seek to construct and reconstruct their intellectual identities in the context of dominant gendered power relations in the academy" (118) perhaps offers a space for further inquiry: since the older feminists seemed less concerned with establishing authority, one could hypothesize that clothing was less of a source of anxiety for them and more of a source of pleasure (based on their responses to *terpsis* in relation to *ethos*). This would be different than what the third wave literature would suggest—and shows that while third wave professional

feminists may desire fashion and all its fun, they are more concerned with establishing *ethos* first.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In the process of discovering how professional feminists use career clothing in relation to establishing authority and aesthetic pleasure, an image of professional feminists putting on their "feminist pants" comes into focus. The pants are representative of individual attitudes toward career clothing, and taken together make up the trends observed in the data. So what do these "feminist pants" look like?

Based on my data, I would speculate that each individual professional feminist's pants look different (and in many cases might not be pants at all), but overall, for contemporary professional feminists, these pants are comfortable and economical, but not necessarily unfashionable. The pants are a necessary part of their job, as Kaiser explains in reference to the social psychology of clothing—most of the people around them are wearing garments that look similar and it is expected (both internally and externally) that they follow suit. However, this does not mean that professional feminists are not thoughtful about the pants that they choose.

Because the responses of the third wave feminists showed that they favored *ethos* over *terpsis*, the third wave feminist pants have clear- cut lines and strong seams; pants that remind them of what they see people in positions of power wear. They sometimes look to the older feminists (who feel more comfortable using clothing as *terpsis*, even if it is not the most important factor) to see what they are wearing, although there are times where they see what the second wavers have chosen and decide that that look is not really for them. At the same time, the younger feminists eye the pants of the older feminists with a hint of jealousy because they realize that they older second wavers see themselves in the cut and color of the garment and are more artistic with their clothing, but feel that they

could not pull off that look just yet. While this interpretation may be representative of the population of the survey, there are still many things that could be done to further investigate the current relationship between feminism and fashion.

Limitations

There were limitations to this study, such as only having access to survey data; it would be useful to conduct interviews or have participants respond to open ended questions in writing. It would be possible to do a more traditional rhetorical analysis of the responses to attitudes toward clothing this way. Other limitations of this study include not having a control group (such as academics who are not feminists or men). The method of data analysis also provided some limitations: since the responses were anonymous it was not possible to find out what part of the country the participants were from. Since dress is often regional and institutional, this additional information would have offered a more detailed view of what participants were wearing. Another issue that arose during the research was the problem of making statements about all feminists of a certain wave: while wave is commonly defined by a set of years (Daum) not every participant who fell into a certain wave necessarily agreed with the results that this paper discusses. Finally, the parameters of the survey are limiting for analysis since they do not allow conclusions to be drawn about how fashionable the participants actually are: the only thing that can be said with certainty is that other issues (comfort and affordability) are more important to this group of professional feminists.

Future research

Future research should examine the ways in which clothing attitudes are practiced with this group by asking participants to photograph themselves and describe (orally or textually) what their clothing represents. Dividing participants based on age into waves of feminism is not the only way to measure feminist attitudes toward clothing. While the age ranges work as being representative of waves of feminism, not all individuals in each age group necessarily adhere to the agenda of the group and it would be useful to look at responses based on other factors such as position in the academy.

Rhetorical notions such as *ethos* and *terpsis* add a unique way of analyzing quantitative data by adding a layer of interpretation to the results. This study has barely scratched the surface of the ways that rhetoric can be used in conjunction with appearance research conducted by those in the field of apparel and textiles. Currently, there is a dearth of literature concerning the connection between rhetoric and dress; however, there is a relatively new subfield of rhetoric that explores images and materials. In the introduction to *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, Charles A. Hill and Marguerite Helmers explain that the uses of visual rhetoric have ranged from looking at how data is represented graphically to "...include the study of the visual aspect of pretty much anything created by human hands—a building, a toaster, a written document, an article of clothing" (ix-x). Clearly, visual rhetoric could add to interpretation of dress and appearance for future research. Further research should also investigate feminist professionals' (and/or the attitudes of women in academia who are not feminists) attitudes toward clothing so that the data can be directly compared with the professional feminist attitudes toward clothing. The data

presented in this paper is the first step of many to situate current feminist attitudes toward clothing in a way that allows for further exploration in relation to other feminist issues.

The future of feminism and fashion

While it is clear that there are differences in attitudes about dressing for the mind and the body as a professional feminist, perhaps looking at this topic as a binary is no longer necessary. If clothing exists as a communicative act (Kaiser) then ultimately it is not possible to completely parse the reasons why a person (or group of people) chooses to wear what they wear for certain occasions. If meaning is complex, perhaps it would be the most useful to do away with the division of the mind and the body altogether. By breaking down the feminist mind/body clothing binary feminists could focus on other issues such as those raised by both second and third wave feminist writers. Scott criticizes academic feminists for not only perpetuating the discussion, but for ignoring other (perhaps larger) issues that feminism should be tackling, stating that "...the obsession with personal appearance has focused the energies of feminism on a relatively trivial issue at a time when the challenges of globalization seem poised to demand more of the next generation than the politics of body fat: It has created a vocal cohort of young feminists who actually center their vision of feminism on their own appearance" (322). Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards offer a similar call in their 2000 book, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future*. Baumgardner and Richards state that, concerning this third wave of feminism, "the feminist transformation comes from the political theory *and* the cultural confidence. We can't afford to overlook the real barriers to women's liberation" (165). In her book *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, second wave feminist bell hooks examines

the current state of feminism and beauty and acknowledges the trend in the media, specifically fashion magazines to encourage women to have an unrealistic idea of what beauty means for women in our society. She warns that, "young girls and adolescents will not know that feminist thinkers acknowledge both the value of beauty and adornment if we continue to allow patriarchal sensibilities to inform the beauty industry in all spheres...until feminists go back to the beauty industry, go back to fashion, and create an ongoing, sustained revolution, we will not be free" (36). In order to fix this problem, contemporary feminist writers seem to be calling for not only a reconciliation of fashion and feminism, but awareness of the other issues that feminism needs to deal with. The data presented in this paper offer a space for reconciling the mind/body binary and perhaps moving forward to tackle other feminist issues. While these other issues are important, clothing will always be tied to feminism in some way. By understanding the current relationship between feminism and fashion—what feminist pants look like right now— we can situate third wave feminist writers and better understand how feminists see themselves in relation to society and each other.

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APPENDIX A. SURVEY INSTRUMENT

1. Demographic Information: There will be a range of answers for the participant to choose from.
    a. Position within academia
        i. Student
        ii. Tenure track
        iii. Tenured
        iv. Non-Tenure track
        v. Administration
        vi. Other
    b. Age
        i. 18-25
        ii. 26-30
        iii. 31-35
        iv. 36-40
        v. 41-45
        vi. 46-50
        vii. 51-55
        viii. 56-60
        ix. 61-65
        x. 66-70
    c. Income
        i. < $10,000
        ii. $10,000-$25,000
        iii. $25,000-$50,000
        iv. $50,000-$75,000
        v. $75,000-$100,000
        vi. $100,000-$150,000
        vii. >$150,000
    d. Relationship status
        i. Single
        ii. In a committed relationship
    e. Number and ages of children
        i. <5 y.o.
        ii. 5-10
        iii. 10-18
        iv. >18
2. Feminist Orientation: Although the population that the survey will be sent to is likely to be self-identified feminists, there will be questions regarding feminist orientation. This will be measured by a 7- point Likert scale response (1 being "I strongly do not associate myself with this definition of feminism"; 2 "I do not align myself with this definition of feminism"; 3 "I somewhat do not align myself with this definition of feminism"; 4 "I neither agree nor disagree with this definition of

feminism"; 5 "I somewhat align myself with this definition of feminism"; 6 "I align myself with this definition of feminism"; 7 "I strongly align myself with this definition of feminism") to the statement:

a. According to Rosemarie Tong's *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction*, a commonly accepted definition of liberal feminism suggests that both genders should be treated equally inside and outside of the workplace, and that there is a continuing need for political, social, economic, and legal reform as well as the removal of institutional bias in order to achieve this equity. Based on this definition, to what extent do you align yourself with a feminist outlook?

Participants will be asked to respond to a second question about feminist orientation by choosing from a 7-point Likert scale (1 being "much more liberal"; 2 "more liberal"; 3 "somewhat more liberal"; 4 "I agree with this definition"; 5 "somewhat more conservative"; 6 "more conservative"; 7 "much more conservative") to the statement:

b. My personal definition of feminism would be different from this in what way?

3. Attitude Toward Dress Survey
Each of the eight dimensions are measured by a 7 point scale (1 being "strongly disagree" and 7 being "strongly agree"). I will ask my participants to respond to the following statements:
    a. Conformity: "the desire to be like others in styles, colors, and design of clothing specifically in the work situation" (48)
        i. Before I purchase a new item of clothing, I consider what my friends would think of it.
        ii. I adjust my clothing to match the clothing habits of my group of friends.
        iii. I am uncomfortable when my clothing is different from my friends or co-workers.
        iv. Dressing similarly to my friends is important to me
        v. I am aware if my clothes are different from my friends or co-workers.
        vi. For work, one should dress in similar styles as worn by others in the same position.
        vii. Clothing is an individual matter and everyone should dress as they wish.
        viii. I am more concerned with individuality of dress than following current fashions.
    b. Fashion: "the attitude of wanting to keep up with the latest trends in dress and appearance as well as the desire to experiment with new styles of clothing" (48)
        i. I try to be alert to all new clothing ideas and possibilities because I like the challenge of trying the unexplored.

ii. I try to stay aware of the latest fashions and accessories.
iii. I shop for different or unusual accessories (belts, ties, scarves, etc.) to wear with my clothes.
iv. I enjoy attempting something different in clothing.
v. I think the stimulation of wearing something new makes it worthwhile to take a chance on something unusual and untried.
vi. I frequently look at fashion magazines or pattern books to find out what is new in fashion.
vii. Wearing the latest styles is important to me.
viii. I buy at shops that offer the most fashionable garments.
ix. Shopping for clothes is not one of my favorite activities.
x. Planning and wearing clothes are routine to me, not exciting and not boring.
xi. It is not worth the risk to experiment with untried clothing ideas.

c. Social Concern for Appearance: "a concern for physical appearance consistent with current social constructs of appropriate gender behavior and physical attractiveness" (48)
   i. Women should look their best no matter what the situation or activity of how they feel.
   ii. Because physical appearance is so important, a woman should do all she can to improve her looks.
   iii. It is important to me that I use my clothing to appear in a manner which other people will like.
   iv. I feel uncomfortable when I am dressed sloppily so I am particular about how my clothes look even when I am alone.
   v. When selecting my garment, my primary consideration is to make my figure look like the ideal.
   vi. Carelessness in dress indicates a lack of concern for others.
d. Political: "the desire to use clothing to make an impression or to achieve influence, prestige, distinction, or recognition" (48)
   i. I am more concerned with the impression my clothes make than with the amount of care they require.
   ii. I dress to impress certain people.
   iii. I like to dress so others will notice me.
   iv. I use clothing to try to influence others to have a different opinion of me.
e. Economy: "an interest in the efficient use of time, money, and energy as these relate to dress and appearance" (48)
   i. I always consider the time and money needed for upkeep when I shop for clothing.
   ii. Shopping for clothing is more of a burden than a pleasure.
   iii. For me, shopping for clothes is fun and I enjoy it as a leisure time activity.
   iv. I prefer a no-fuss hair style
   v. My clothing choices are always dictated by practicality.

vi. I like to figure out how I can save as much time, energy, and money as possible with my clothes.

f. Equality: "the belief that men and women behave or are treated in a similar manner with respect to clothing use in social and occupational situations" (48)
   i. Career apparel for men and women in professional positions requires about the same amount of upkeep and maintenance.
   ii. The clothing I wear to work is very similar to what the men wear.
   iii. Men and women probably invest about the same amount of money in their career wardrobes.
   iv. Generally, I feel the clothing I wear to work allows me about the same amount of mobility and comfort as that of my male co-workers.
   v. Men and women administrators spend about the same amount of time in personal grooming.

g. Freedom/Comfort: "the attitude involving a physiological preference for clothing that does not restrict, confine, or control a person's body" (48)
   i. I always consider comfort and mobility more important than what is the current fashion.
   ii. I believe comfort in clothing is more important than fashion.
   iii. I choose clothing that is as unconfining as possible.
   iv. I choose clothing more for personal comfort and satisfaction than to fit in with a particular social or occupational situation.
   v. I like belts and waistbands to fit snugly.

h. Success/Achievement: "the belief that clothing is influential in career success and advancement and that adherence to socially prescribed rules for career dressing is important" (48)
   i. A woman can achieve a greater degree of power and authority in her position if she dresses in a manner similar to that of the men in comparable situations.
   ii. I find I dress in a more traditional or conservative manner when my job requires working primarily with men.
   iii. I take the message conveyed by the dress-for-success proponents very seriously.
   iv. I am very conscious of what is being promoted by retailers and the media for professional career wardrobes.
   v. I do not put too much faith into dress-for-success literature and articles.
   vi. The greatest influence on what I wear to work is what others in similar positions are wearing.
   vii. Men and women in high- level positions are most effective in traditional conservative suits.
   viii. My decision about what styles to buy for work is frequently influenced by magazine ads and articles or by store displays.

i. *Terpsis*:

i. I try to be alert to all new clothing ideas and possibilities because I like the challenge of trying the unexplored. (fashion)
ii. I try to stay aware of the latest fashions and accessories. (fashion)
iii. I shop for different or unusual accessories (belts, ties, scarves, etc.) to wear with my clothes. (fashion)
iv. I enjoy attempting something different in clothing. (fashion)
v. I think the stimulation of wearing something new makes it worthwhile to take a chance on something unusual and untried. (fashion)
vi. I frequently look at fashion magazines or pattern books to find out what is new in fashion. (fashion)
vii. Wearing the latest styles is important to me. (fashion)
viii. I buy at shops that offer the most fashionable garments. (fashion)
ix. Women should look their best no matter what the situation or activity of how they feel. (social concern)
x. Because physical appearance is so important, a woman should do all she can to improve her looks. (social concern)
xi. It is important to me that I use my clothing to appear in a manner which other people will like. (social concern)
xii. I feel uncomfortable when I am dressed sloppily so I am particular about how my clothes look even when I am alone. (social concern)
xiii. When selecting my garment, my primary consideration is to make my figure look like the ideal. (social concern)
xiv. Carelessness in dress indicates a lack of concern for others. (social concern)

j. *Ethos*:

i. I am more concerned with the impression my clothes make than with the amount of care they require. (political)
ii. I dress to impress certain people. (political)
iii. I use clothing to try to influence others to have a different opinion of me. (political)
iv. My decision about what styles to buy for work is frequently influenced by magazine ads and articles or by store displays. (success/achievement)
v. I find I dress in a more traditional or conservative manner when my job requires working primarily with men. (success/achievement)
vi. Men and women in high- level positions are most effective in traditional conservative suits. (success/achievement)
vii. I am very conscious of what is being promoted by retailers and the media for professional career wardrobes. (success/achievement)
viii. I do not put too much faith into dress-for-success literature and articles. (success/achievement)
ix. A woman can achieve a greater degree of power and authority in her position if she dresses in a manner similar to that of the men in comparable situations. (success/achievement)

x. The greatest influence on what I wear to work is what others in similar positions are wearing. (success/achievement)
xi. I take the message conveyed by the dress-for-success proponents very seriously. (success/achievement)
xii. I am uncomfortable when my clothing is different from my friends or co-workers. (conformity)
xiii. I am aware if my clothes are different from my friends or co-workers. (conformity)
xiv. For work, one should dress in similar styles as worn by others in the same position. (conformity)