

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON

LONDON COLLEGE OF FASHION

Fashion Business School

**Once Upon A Garment: The Psychological Impact of Storytelling Narratives on
Consumer Engagement in Fashion Marketing**

by

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Thesis for the degree of Bachelor of Science (Honors) Psychology of Fashion

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13-05-2025

Word Count: 8720

Abstract

Background

Storytelling is a powerful marketing strategy utilised by the Fashion industry, yet its psychological impact on consumers' decision-making remains underexplored. This study investigates how narrative-based descriptions, rooted in different fictional genres, influence consumer involvement and purchase intention with a unique focus on reader status, nostalgia and escapism levels.

Methods

The sample for this research consists of 140 participants, including females, males, and non-binary individuals. Two main groups were created based on reading status. A multi-layered Qualtrics questionnaire was designed for analysis; this included demographic and reading habit-based questions, an experimental task with four randomised genre-based conditions to assess consumer engagement, and two Psychometric scales to assess nostalgia and escapism levels. This questionnaire took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Results

Reader status and condition type significantly influenced emotional involvement, with non-readers showing higher involvement in storytelling conditions. Nostalgia emerged as a significant predictor of involvement, but escapism did not. Purchase intention was also found to be generally higher for utilitarian descriptions, but was also influenced by genre.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings contribute to a growing area of literature on narrative-marketing by offering quantitative evidence and suggest that brands could benefit from tailoring their advertising strategies to include nostalgic and genre-based storytelling.

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List of Abbreviations

ANOVA – Analysis of Variance

BPS – British Psychological Society

DV – Dependent Variable

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation

IV – Independent Variable

PREP – Psychology Research Ethics Panel

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UAL – University of Arts London

Statement of Originality

I, *Tia Joshi*, certify that:

- This is an original and individual piece of work, and no part of this has been written by anyone else.
- I have acknowledged (appropriately referenced using the APA referencing system) all sources and citations.
- No section of this assignment has been plagiarised.
- This work has not been submitted for any other assessment.



T.Joshi

11-05-2025

AI Use Disclosure

Acknowledgement Statement:

“I acknowledge the use of Chatgpt, <https://chatgpt.com/>, 30-11-2024, to aid in formatting garment descriptions for the experimental portion of the questionnaire. This was done to regulate the word count as much as possible.

The prompt used was ‘Create single line advertising descriptions for a trench coat, a chunky knit jumper and leather boots, each in four different styles: a utilitarian-style, a romance-genre style, a fantasy-style and a crime/ murder mystery style. Try and use the same number of words for all 12 descriptions and make sure they are gender-neutral.’ 30-11-2024

The output from these prompts was used within the Qualtrics questionnaire along with garment pictures to use as stimuli to regulate the descriptions across the four genre conditions and remove any bias within their content.

Stimuli can be found in Appendix C, in the Ethics Form’s Appendices



T.Joshi

11-05-2025

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my project supervisor, Dr Mason Silveira, for his patience and care throughout the process. The valuable suggestions, advice and time secured the completion of this dissertation. You have been a great inspiration to me in the pursuit of knowledge and beyond.

I would like to send a special thank you to my parents who continuously send their unwavering support, regardless of the path I decide, and have always created a safe, secure space for me to focus on my studies. Without you, none of this would've been possible; my degree, but also the unforgettable memories I have created. Thank you for being my pillars of strength.

I am also eternally grateful to Shey, my flatmate for my final year. You have taught me unfathomable amounts, and I am so lucky to have found you during this process. From the nights out, to the sip and paints and the endless Netflix- all of which kept me sane. I am also extremely thankful for Hannah, another one of my rocks throughout the process. Our fangirling and bookish escapes helped inspire this topic, and I am glad to have made another friend for life.

I am forever thankful for Beth, Andy and the rest of my close circle outside of university. They were vital in keeping the balance between the academic hardship and real life. Thank you for the spontaneous visits and support to get me through the journey of my final year, you know who you are.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I want to send my gratitude to the rest of UAL and my lecturers over the years, who have equipped me with the skills and knowledge to thrive not only throughout my degree, but to chase my dreams.

(Oh, and shout out to Bollywood films, True Jackson VP and The Cheetah Girls for igniting my passion for fashion.)

1. Introduction

“In difficult times, fashion is always outrageous.” – Elsa Schiaparelli (Lindig, 2017).

1.1 Background and rationale:

In the midst of political instability and economic strain, a quiet but undeniable decline in collective optimism has taken hold. With rising living costs, stagnant wages, and an increasingly unforgiving climate, many have found themselves in a state of survival, rather than fulfilment. Joy, whimsy and leisure- once accessed through hobbies- now feel like luxuries, often sacrificed in the face of work-related stress. In these conditions, the need for escapism has never been greater, but where can people turn for this emotional and psychological reprieve?

During periods of economic uncertainty and increased digital consumption, research shows individuals often turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms (Stubbs et al., 2017). Yet, traditional hobbies also see a resurgence, offering comfort and a sense of continuity (Currell, 2010). Reading, in particular, acts as a refuge; being accessible and emotionally grounding, it serves as the perfect mental getaway (Department for Education, 2012). Stories have long offered comfort, identity, and community, from ancient myth to contemporary fandoms (Corson-Knowles, 2018). However, with the decline of third spaces like libraries and free community hubs, more notably since the COVID-19 pandemic, this connection has largely moved online (Rao, 2024).

One such platform is BookTok (Allen, 2025), which has transformed reading into an aesthetic-driven identity that shapes everything from personal style to consumer behaviour. Fashion, like literature, has long been a medium for self-expression, uniting fans through merchandise and genre-inspired looks, enhancing connection and affiliation (Affuso & Scott, 2023). With the rise of book-inspired collections and thriving literary communities, brands now

have a unique opportunity to use storytelling in fashion marketing to reach new, diverse and emotionally engaged audiences.

Storytelling has always played a central role in advertising, (American Marketing Association, 2022) and fashion designers have historically drawn inspiration from literature: including Alexander McQueen's AW99 show 'The Outlook,' which took reference from 'The Shining' by Stephen King (Smyth et al., 2024) and Valentino's Spring/Summer 2024 Menswear show in Milan which paid homage to Hanya Yanagihara's novel 'A Little Life.' This cultural convergence points to an underexplored but growing area ripe for investigation.

This research aims to explore this intersection by investigating how literary genres, specifically Fantasy, Romance, and Crime, can influence fashion preferences and whether storytelling-driven campaigns are more emotionally engaging than the common, utilitarian descriptions. This study draws on two key psychological mechanisms: Nostalgia and Consumer Escapism. Nostalgia evokes sentimental longing, particularly among older demographics, fostering resonance and familiarity (Thackray, 2025). For example, Bershka's Twilight collection revived a dark romantic aesthetic that emotionally connected fans with a bygone era. Escapism, by contrast, allows consumers to immerse themselves in fictional identities, providing emotional relief from reality as well as the ability to 'step into' a beloved character's world (Muller, 2021).

These mechanisms are especially relevant during economic downturns. Grounded in Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943), this research highlights how fashion can serve as a medium for self-actualisation and community. Consumers often seek to express their identity through clothing that aligns with their fictional affinities; a potential, strategic angle for brands becomes apparent.

Examples of fiction's influence on fashion are in abundance; from superhero-inspired streetwear to the return of the "Bridgerton neckline" (Joseph, 2021), fiction consistently

influences fashion. Moreover, the “Vamp, Camp Goth” aesthetic, rooted in the 19th-century novel ‘Dracula’ written by Bram Stoker, resurfaces cyclically in style trends (Wilson, 2024), demonstrating how even centuries-old literature continues to inspire societal dress. This highlights the enduring power and relevance of storytelling.

Despite the cultural impact of literature on fashion, the psychological mechanisms driving consumer responses towards narrative-driven marketing remain insufficiently understood. Most existing studies explore these areas separately, through a cultural and qualitative lens. The goal of this research is to address this gap by using a quantitative, multi-layered approach. It utilises psychometric testing, demographic information, along with experimental behavioural responses to offer a novel perspective on consumer behaviour, blending storytelling with involvement.

1.2 Aim and objectives:

This dissertation investigates whether storytelling-driven fashion campaigns based on fictional genres evoke consumer engagement: emotional involvement and purchase intention, more than utilitarian descriptions; particularly in relation to reader status, nostalgia and escapism. It also explores the implications for fashion marketing strategies.

1.3 Methodology:

This is examined by conducting quantitative research through a Qualtrics survey, followed by a statistical analysis via SPSS. The sample consisted of 140 participants, including males, females, and non-binary individuals, all 18 years and older.

The questionnaire begins with initial demographic questions, followed by questions to assess participants’ reading habits. An experimental section of a garment-description task follows, showing each participant one of four possible genre conditions, as well as two Psychometric scales to record their nostalgia and consumer escapism levels. The results

were then statistically analysed using a two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) alongside independent t-tests and regressions.

1.4 Overview of the structure:

This dissertation's structure is designed to provide an exploration of the connections between storytelling and consumer behaviour.

Initially, the introduction provides the rationale of the study while briefly describing its objectives. It also refers to several practical implications. I address the merits of recent popular advertising campaigns, created by the top Fashion Brands and masterminds of the industry. These aid in creating a practical and clear image of the potential benefits of fictional involvement in the marketing sector.

A Literature Review follows, curating classical and recent literature within the topics of storytelling, nostalgia and escapism, as well as referring to key psychological theories. It aims to lay the groundwork for the paper. After the examination of previous studies, it concludes by outlining a gap in the literature that this paper provides insight into.

Next is the Methods section, in which the details of the participants' sampling are found. A full description of materials and reasoning behind visual aids is included here. The full methodology is also described, allowing the study to be replicated, before the section ends with navigating the ethical considerations that have been taken into account throughout the completion of this dissertation.

The results of the study are then described. They are displayed through a statistical data analysis, which includes descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to illustrate the findings for each hypothesis. Finally, the Discussion section follows. The results are used in reference to the previously explored literature and structured in a way which aims to fill the aforementioned gap in the subject area. The dissertation concludes

by explaining its strengths and weaknesses, whilst offering insights for improvements, before once again summarising its findings and recommending further areas of study.

2. Literature Review

Storytelling has emerged as a powerful mechanism in modern fashion marketing, offering consumers more than aesthetic appeal by embedding emotionally and psychologically connecting narratives. As identity and self-expression become increasingly vital to consumer behaviour, it is essential to explore how constructs at an individual level, such as nostalgia and escapism, influence engagement with narrative-driven campaigns. To gain a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding storytelling and its influence on consumerism, this chapter explores the existing body of literature. It begins by reviewing the role of storytelling in marketing, followed by the psychological theories that underpin it. This review will then break down the mechanisms of nostalgia, escapism and the Psychometric tools available to measure these levels before concluding by describing the gap in the breadth of literature.

2.1 Fashion and Identity

Fashion operates beyond practical necessity, becoming a rich communicative and psychological tool; a space in which identity, mood and culture intersect (Nair, 2024). Beyond function, clothing offers comfort through emotional escape. In recent years, this expressive potential has become increasingly visible in the rise in trends embracing ‘Whimsy’ and ‘Adult Play.’

Poland’s psychoanalytic article ‘Whimsy’ defines the state as expressive freedom, rooted in emotional contentment and mastery. Drawing on theory and clinical observation, he separates it from humour or compulsion, instead positioning it as a creative impulse that reflects emotional liberation even through adulthood (Poland, 2010). Whimsy becomes recognised for its self-expression; dressing whimsically or expressively allows individuals to engage in a similarly liberating act.

Adult Play continues to be explored through a qualitative study. Using a sample of 837 participants, a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) revealed five key themes: Positive outlook, Activities, Relationships, Humour and Experiencing Life. The findings suggest that adult playfulness fosters positivity, enhances relationships and serves as a coping strategy against stress (Lubbers et al., 2023). Whilst being limited in its objectivity, the study advocates for future research due to its ties in improving Well-being (Lomas & Ivztan, 2015) and Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). This appetite for the playful can be seen as a response to the harsh demands of reality (Proyer & Ruch, 2011), offering self-reclamation, an angle brands can utilise.

As consumers engage with clothing symbolically and emotionally, fashion surpasses a trend-following choice. A study conducted in Korea evaluated the aesthetic expression against the trendiness of clothing (Oh Hyun-Jung & Rhee Eun-Young, 2016) among 221 female students from Seoul University. After reviewing 8 pictures of clothed bodies, participants were presented with a questionnaire revealing that visual appeal and emotional resonance mattered more than their current trend alignment. The connection to the garments related to participants' own identity outweighs the importance of their popularity. This research, despite its large sample size, has limited generalisability due to the geographically and demographically narrow participant pool. However, the two-step process effectively captured immediate and reflective responses. Overall, this study suggests that a collection prioritising a narrative with identity, colour, and mood has the potential to increase brand engagement and purchase intention compared to a trend-following collection.

This evolving relationship between clothing, identity and emotion lays important groundwork for understanding 'Storytelling' in marketing and consumption.

2.2 Storytelling as a Marketing Tool

In the increasingly saturated fashion market, 'storytelling' emerges as a powerful tool for differentiation (Choi, 2014). Rather than solely focusing on the functionality or trendiness of garments, brands are turning to narrative-driven marketing to forge connections with consumers (Mandung, 2024).

A 2023 bibliometric analysis, 'A Story to Sell,' examining 91 peer-reviewed papers published between 2011-2022, investigated this. Upon analysis, four aspects were uncovered: Brand identification, emotional value, consumer engagement and potential negative effects of harmful narratives (Júnior et al., 2022). Despite its widespread application, the study highlighted the current gaps in the available literature regarding storytelling, including the lack of a universally accepted definition, which creates a fragmented understanding of its mechanisms. Nevertheless, the study affirmed that storytelling could enhance engagement behaviours, such as emotional involvement, and stimulate consumer identification with the brand. This consumer involvement can be measured using a 10-item involvement inventory (Zaichkowsky, 1994).

A 2008 journal article builds on this using case studies and blogging data. It supports that brands act as anthropomorphic actors in consumers' personal, archetypal narratives, proposing a 'narrative theory' in which consumers derive pleasure from reliving stories, suggesting brands should not only utilise storytelling but align messaging with familiar experiences to strengthen engagement (Woodside et al., 2008), perhaps focusing on nostalgia. This shows that storytelling allows garments to become vessels of meaning (Kim et al., 2018).

2.3 Psychological theories behind engagement

Human behaviour, including how we dress, is often rooted in observation and imitation. Social Learning Theory (SLT) explains how individuals learn by watching others, internalising their behaviours based on consequences and modelling their actions accordingly (Bandura,

1977). The act of 'Role modelling' is prevalent from early childhood. Children imitate superheroes and princesses, figures rooted in fictional literature, demonstrating how early identification shapes confidence, self-expression and early behavioural development (Duck, 1990). This engagement with fictional narratives allows children to explore a range of traits and moral perspectives, fostering self-awareness (Quinn, 2019). Importantly, these learned mechanisms carry over into adulthood, where consumers may continue to draw emotional insights and behaviour from similar cues (Rain & Mar, 2021).

The research article 'Connecting the Dots between Fantasy and Reality' (Dill-Shackleford et al., 2016) highlights how fictional narratives have positive repercussions as they enhance empathy, reduce prejudice and support psychological well-being through a process system called 'dual-empathy' (Jarvis, 2012). This is where individuals simultaneously relate to characters while reflecting on their own lives (Oatley, 1999), offering cognitive rehearsals for real-world experiences (Hoorn & Konijn, 2003). Embedding these narratives into branding enables deeper, lingering emotional resonance. Solaki et al. (2019) suggests that this resonance is supported by the dual-processing system. Cognitive Psychology (Sternberg, 1981) refers to the involvement of two systems: the first is fast, unconscious processing, and the second is slow, deliberate processing. Emotionally resonant campaigns appeal to the latter, creating lasting impressions that anchor the brand in the consumer's identity and memory.

Biopsychology (Moss, 2013) also supports the power of fictional relevance on consumer engagement. A neuroimaging study by Abraham and Von Cramon (2009) used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to investigate the neural mechanisms underlying the distinction between fiction and reality, focusing on the role of personal relevance. The findings uncovered regions of the brain's default mode network, including the anterior medial prefrontal cortex, activated more intensely when participants evaluated individuals with higher personal relevance, regardless of whether they were real or fictional.

This suggests that relevance, rather than objective reality, drives emotional and cognitive engagement. FMRI, however, have poor temporal resolution, potentially creating difficulty in inferring causation from blood flow changes. This suggests findings should be evaluated with caution. Regardless, this principle can be effectively applied to fashion marketing strategies, as incorporating such storytelling narratives and loved characters may elicit similar neural responses. This perceived alignment over time may foster brand loyalty (Kang et al., 2013).

However, storytelling is not without limitations. In Irina Guseva's thesis 'Storytelling as a Marketing Tool: Case Study Chanel' (Chane, 2021), 8 semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain insights from fashion enthusiasts to investigate how storytelling shapes consumer engagement. Upon evaluation, a contradictory result occurred. Whilst emotional connection and brand value recognition were evident using storytelling, Chanel's high price point and brand exclusivity constrained loyalty and purchasing behaviour. Unlike previous findings, this suggests storytelling alone may not be sufficient in driving brand loyalty without the inclusion of other factors. This small sample size, however, makes it difficult to generalise these findings; bias could be present during the results' interpretation. To measure purchase intention numerically, a single-item, nine-point scale can be used (Dugan et al., 2021).

Beyond personal expression, clothing enables social connection. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a motivational theory that categorises human needs into five levels. Each must be achieved to reach Self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943). The stages comprise: physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, self-esteem and finally, self-actualisation. The third level, 'belongingness,' can be satiated through symbolic group membership, which fashion facilitates. A 2021 study examined the phenomenon of fandom consumption, focusing on the band BTS to illustrate how themed merchandise can help fulfil a sense of community. Using qualitative methods, interviews and netnographic observation, the researchers explored how fans use clothing as more than a product (Farhana Dinningrum & Umi Satiti, 2021). Findings

revealed that merchandise extends beyond its functional use, aiding in the fulfilment of psychosocial needs and guiding consumers towards their ideal self. An insight that brands can leverage through narrative-based marketing.

‘Inconspicuous Fandom’, a study by Diana Smith-Glaviana takes this further, investigating the reasons why women wear such Inconspicuous Fan Dress (IFD). 33 qualitative interviews were conducted to reveal that IFD allows fans to express their fandoms subtly, creating community in secrecy through the ‘Taxonomy of Fan dress’ (Mendlesohn, 2002), without overtly sharing their interests (Smith-Glaviana, 2015). Findings also stated that fan identities were expressed in multiple contexts, including formal settings, semi-formal settings and professional settings. This contrasts the belief that dressing up is limited to one’s free time, suggesting there is a space for storytelling-related apparel in different levels of conspicuousness, widening the potential market for brands greatly. The discrete, female-only demographic, however, causes difficulty in generalising the findings.

Community is also prevalent through reading groups on social media platforms (Maddox & Gill, 2023). A recent 2013 study looked at the prevalence of BookTok, a ‘side’ of the platform TikTok specialising in literary topics, during the COVID-19 pandemic and offers insight into how digital communities can enhance motivation and identity. The study utilised a mixed-methods approach, involving 450 survey responses analysed using ANOVAS, alongside six semi-structured interviews. The results showed that intrinsic motivators, such as emotional resonance, curiosity or a sense of community, significantly influenced reading motivation. Notably, passive participation, merely viewing BookTok content, had the strongest correlation with increased motivation, suggesting that those unfamiliar with the literature are still drawn due to emotional cues and aesthetic appeal. Similarly, consumers may be drawn to story-driven fashion, regardless of the familiarity of the source.

2.4 Nostalgia: Emotional Anchoring and Brand Resonance

In the late 17th Century, Johannes Hoffer, a Swiss physician, referred to the term ‘nostalgia’ as a cerebral disease affecting mercenaries at war (McCann, 1941). Reported symptoms included homesickness, anxiety, irregular heartbeat, as well as disordered eating (Routledge et al., 2013).

However, by the late 19th century, this viewpoint changed with the new Oxford dictionary definition coining the term as ‘a sentimental longing or wistful affection from the past’ (Stevenson, 2010). It begins to signify a powerful psychological mechanism, offering continuity during times of uncertainty by reconnecting individuals with familiar pasts (Wildschut & Constantine Sedikides, 2021). In consumer contexts, nostalgia goes beyond fleeting emotion. It has the power to impact decision making, intensify brand attachment and may adjust self-concept.

A review of ‘Nostalgia Marketing’ by Cui (2015) delves into how this emotion elicits affective, cognitive and behavioural responses. It revealed three core strategies: ‘character nostalgia,’ familiar figures and icons, ‘event nostalgia,’ shared cultural moments and ‘collective nostalgia,’ experiences shared geographically or temporally. The brand Coca-Cola is a leading example, doing this through its focus on tradition and heritage to build brand loyalty (Jabr, 2023). Cui, however, stresses potential drawbacks. Nostalgia marketing’s effectiveness varies by product, and its excessive use may stifle innovation. The study itself, however, focuses solely on secondary material, lacking original empirical data. It lays a conceptual foundation that may benefit from longitudinal or experimental studies to strengthen its findings. Overall, the review highlights the importance for brands to tailor nostalgic cues to the target audience whilst balancing sentimentality with novelty.

To measure nostalgia, a multitude of Psychometric scales have been devised. A recent scientific review compared four of these established scales to investigate their convergent

validity (Wildschut et al., 2023). The Southampton Nostalgia Scale (SNS-7) stands out for its wide application.

2.5 Escapism as a mechanism

Escapism is recognised for its adaptive creativity (Saba, 2025). Within marketing concepts, escapism can be strategised to build emotional resonance, allowing consumers to morph into other identities through fashion.

A paper investigating fictional escapism and identity formation used a qualitative lens to explore how individuals engage with fictional media as a form of escapism (Lawton & Cain, 2022). 8 semi-structured interviews, analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), revealed that fictional escape served as a retreat from reality and a reflective space to process emotions, rehearse ideal selves and connect with others. It highlighted how media consumption, in all forms, contributes to self-construction, relating to this investigation into escapist storytelling and emotional involvement. IPA falls victim to potential bias upon its analysis.

Orazi et al. (2023) created the Consumer Escapism Scale (CES) to quantitatively assess escapism levels. Its study basis relied on samples from the UK, USA and Australia, increasing its generalisability and external validity due to this diverse data.

2.6 Gaps in Literature and Study Justification

In summary, while storytelling has received growing attention as a marketing strategy, particularly in the fashion industry, most existing studies rely on qualitative or content-analytical approaches (Chane, 2021). They fail to experimentally examine psychological moderators, lacking objectivity. Few studies address the role of genre-specific narratives in shaping consumer involvement, failing to also integrate Psychometric tools to assess individual differences, which would increase psychological rigour. This study addresses these gaps by employing an experimental section within the multi-layered questionnaire, including

established Psychometric scales to quantitatively examine nostalgia and escapism levels, providing a more nuanced understanding of the emotional and cognitive drivers behind consumer involvement. Moreover, it introduces the underexplored area of reader identity, investigating whether individuals who regularly engage with fiction respond more strongly to narrative-marketing. This study also focuses on specific genres, romance, fantasy and crime, rather than merely testing heritage or brand narratives (Jabr, 2023). Together, these contributions fill several important gaps in the literature: methodology, theory and context, offering practical implications for marketers.

2.7 Research Aims and Objectives

This research aims to explore the impact of storytelling-driven marketing on consumer involvement and purchase intention, using a quantitative multi-layered questionnaire, with particular focus on the moderating effects of reader status, nostalgia and escapism.

H1: Readers will show a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to non-readers.

H2: Participants with higher nostalgia scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions than those with lower nostalgia scores.

H3: Participants with higher escapism scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to those with lower escapism scores.

H4: Participants scoring high on both nostalgia and escapism will show the strongest involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions

3. Methods

3.1 Participants

In total, 180 participants attempted the questionnaire. However, in the final sample, 140 participants remained. Those removed either left the questionnaire prematurely or failed to begin after giving informed consent.

A priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power version 3.1.9.7 (Faul et al., 2007) to determine the minimum sample size required to test the study hypothesis. Results indicated the required sample size to achieve 80% power for detecting an effect size of 0.25, at a significance criterion of $\alpha = .05$, was $N = 180$ for Fixed Effects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) testing. Thus, the sample collected narrowly missed this recommendation. As a result, the findings from this research must be interpreted with caution due to the increased type II error, despite the robust analytical methods.

The sample consisted of 40 male participants, 97 female participants and 3 non-binary/third-gender participants, all above the age of 18 and spanning up to over 65 years of age. From the valid sample, two groups were created based on the self-reported reading status. Group 1 contained the Readers ($n = 77$), and Group 2 consisted of Non-Readers ($n = 63$). They were created to compare engagement between the groups. Four randomised groups were then created, based on popular fictional genres, to separate the sample for the experimental portion of the questionnaire. Condition 1 was the control, utilitarian garment descriptions ($n = 36$), Condition 2 contained the first experimental condition of the Romance-genre descriptions ($n = 35$), Condition 3 contained the participants exposed to the Fantasy-genre descriptions ($n = 34$), and Condition 4 contained the Crime-genre descriptions ($n = 35$). *See Appendix D for tables*

However, the conditions were also split into Control ($n = 36$) and Story-telling ($n = 104$) to compare classic utilitarian advertising with genre, story-telling advertising.

3.2 Materials

A three-part questionnaire was created using Qualtrics *see Ethics Form in Appendix C* After presenting the consent form and information sheet, the questionnaire began by assessing the participant's demographics and reading habits before going into the experimental section. Here, they were shown 3 garments, each with a unique description in the style of the condition they were randomly allocated to using the Qualtrics Randomiser. They were then asked about their purchase intention and involvement towards each garment and its description.

The garment pictures were sourced from Google and Pinterest and were placed on an ASOS website page to create a mock website. The garments were chosen due to their ability to be manipulated into each fictional genre and visualised in each of the contexts. They were also unisex, so each participant could see themselves potentially purchasing them. The pictures themselves were specifically picked as they weren't being modelled by people and were shown in solitude, this is to prevent any other variables interacting with their opinion of the garments, such as the size or fit of the items. The descriptions were created with the help of the AI tool ChatGPT to regulate the word count of each description across the conditions and for each garment.

To record purchase intention, a one-item scale was employed (Dugan et al., 2021), including a nine-point scale from 'Not at all Willing' to 'Very Willing' in response to 'How likely would you be to purchase the garment described?' This was picked due to its quick yet effective nature; the scale's validity is also supported by its use in other experiments. The scale has effectively captured the differences between utilitarian/ hedonic purchases upon its creation. Further analysis also confirmed its reliability and relevance in measuring consumer response.

To measure consumer involvement, the 'Personal Involvement Inventory,' made in 1994, was used (Zaichkowsky, 1994). It was chosen due to its thorough yet concise items; the

inventory originally had 20 items but was simply reduced to 10 without compromising its reliability. This was checked using Cronbach's Alpha, which changed from 0.91 to 0.95. The revised version captures two involvement types: cognitive, stressing informational processing and affective, emphasising feelings and emotional states, both relevant to the test variables. Each item used a seven-point scale, items included 'boring to interesting,' 'unimportant to important', and 'mundane to fascinating.' Studies using this scale confirmed that individuals can experience varying levels of involvement with the same adverts, emphasising the importance of recording this personal relevance.

Finally, before being presented with the debrief sheet *see Appendix C*, participants were shown two Psychometric scales. To quantitatively assess escapism levels, a nine-item Consumer Escapism scale has been established (CES), measuring three interrelated dimensions: cognitive distraction, reality detachment and anticipated relief (Orazi et al., 2023). Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale, from 'Not at all' to 'Very much so' or 'Very Frequently.' Three examples of included items are 'To what extent do you engage in the activity to...' ('not think about my problems'/ 'escape from reality' and 'get a break.')

The scale has strong convergent, discriminant and predictive validity whilst also having physiological links due to heart rate monitoring. This allows the scale to be effectively used by marketers to identify consumer motivations for escapism and tailor their advertising strategies accordingly.

Nostalgia was then measured using the seven-item Southampton Nostalgia Scale (SNS-7), which was chosen due to its simplicity in totalling the scores. A higher score represents a higher frequency of Nostalgia (Looti, 2025). Initially comprising five items, it was later increased to seven. Four items measure the propensity to nostalgia or their frequency of doing so, whilst the remaining three measure how important and valuable participants perceive nostalgia to be (Looti, 2025). Both versions have been tested and concluded to have good

psychometric properties, making the SNS reliable for research. Examples include ‘How valuable is Nostalgia to you?’ and ‘How significant is it for you to feel Nostalgic?’ These were measured with a seven-point scale from ‘Not at all’ to ‘Very Much.’

Both scales were easy to understand and applicable to the visual stimuli.

3.3 Procedure

Ethical clearance was obtained from the UAL Ethics Committee prior to the distribution of the questionnaire. After approval, participants were recruited using a mix of snowball and convenience sampling. This was done online using links on Instagram adverts and LinkedIn posts shared by the researcher on their personal social media accounts *see Appendix C* as well as through in-person posters and QR codes.

Upon clicking the link, the participants were presented with an information sheet before being shown a consent form that they were required to sign before going further. (see ethics form in the appendix) If they did not consent, they were kicked out of the questionnaire and were unable to proceed. They were then asked their age group, ethnicity and occupation, followed by their reading habits.

After the demographics section, they were randomly allocated to the experimental portion of the questionnaire. They were shown one of four conditions: either the Utilitarian control condition or the experimental conditions, which were one of the following: Romance, Fantasy or Crime. Here, they were shown three garments with a description corresponding to the condition type. They were then asked their thoughts on the description using a purchase intention and involvement scale. Their opinion was asked for on each of the three garments.

Following this, they were then taken to the Psychometric scale portion of the questionnaire, where they were assessed on their escapism and nostalgia levels. They were then presented with a debrief form where they would find details of the study’s aim and the researcher’s email address. Overall, this process took between 10-15 minutes.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data was exported from Qualtrics to be analysed in SPSS. Initially, scores for each of the scales (Purchase Intention, Consumer Involvement, Nostalgia and Escapism) were computed for each of the four separate conditions (Utilitarian/Control, Romance, Fantasy and Crime) and each reading status (Reader, Non-Reader) to allow for easy analysis across the tests. This was done by calculating the means of items within each scale.

Descriptive statistics were first assessed: mean, standard deviation, variance, skewness, and kurtosis were calculated for each test variable. Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were then conducted for all variables against the two Reading status conditions, as well as the four experimental genre conditions, to explore normality distributions. Levene's tests were also conducted before Inferential Statistical testing to ensure homogeneity of variance across conditions.

H1: Readers will show a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to non-readers.

A two-way ANOVA was used to test the first hypothesis, to compare the group differences. The first Independent Variable (IV) was the reader status, Reader and Non-Reader, whilst the second IV was the condition type, Storytelling or Utilitarian. The Dependent Variable (DV) used was the Involvement scores.

To further investigate the findings, a follow-up Independent t-test was run before a Simple Main Effects Analysis was conducted to pinpoint the interaction uncovered.

Another two-way ANOVA was then conducted with the same IVs, but placing Purchase Intention scores as the DV. To further investigate these results, the four conditions were looked at separately. This was done using a 2 (Reader or Non-Reader) x 4 (Control, Romance, Fantasy, Crime) ANOVA, with the same DV, before finally concluding with a Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons post-hoc test.

H2: Participants with higher nostalgia scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions than those with lower nostalgia scores.

Two regressions were used to assess predictive relationships. The first focused on the Storytelling condition data (combining Romance, Fantasy and Crime) with Involvement scores as the DV and Nostalgia, Escapism and Age-group as Predictors. The second regression repeated this, but using only Utilitarian condition data. The coefficients were then compared.

H3: Participants with higher escapism scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to those with lower escapism scores.

The same process for H2 was repeated here, however, using Escapism scores as the DV.

3.5 Research Ethics

This research is conducted within the University of the Arts London's (UAL) code of practice on research ethics and the British Psychological Society's (BPS) code of ethics and conduct. This code consists of four primary principles: respect, competence, responsibility and integrity, whilst UAL's code also employs four considerations: ethics of care, respect for persons, social justice and beneficence.

Within these codes, the Psychology Research Ethics Panel (PREP) of UAL approved this research, which is considered minimal risk as it does not involve particularly sensitive topics or vulnerable populations.

The participants were required to be 18 or over to take part and were sampled using an online questionnaire shared through social media (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn) or book cafes, minimising physical risks. The questionnaire was also done electronically using the participants' own devices. A consent form was presented upon clicking the link or scanning

the QR code, which participants were required to sign before moving to the questionnaire; they were kicked out if informed consent was not given.

Whilst the study explores psychological concepts such as Nostalgia or Escapism, it is unlikely to provoke serious emotional responses or lasting distress. However, in the event of occurrence, the debrief form is equipped with mental health support and advice: Mind, the NHS support, and Samaritans. Participants are also informed in advance of the nature of the questions and are free to withdraw consent by closing their browser.

Participant privacy is ensured through anonymous data collection and is stored in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Despite collecting demographics, no personally identifiable information is collected unless participants voluntarily get in touch. Data access is limited to the researcher and select staff at UAL, with the data scheduled for deletion by July 2026.

Alongside the participant, the researcher's safety is also considered. All online communications are conducted VIA the researcher's official UAL email. Due to the study's non-sensitive nature, risk to the researcher's well-being is low, but support through UAL's Counselling Services is always available. In conclusion, comprehensive safeguards are in place to protect participant and researcher.

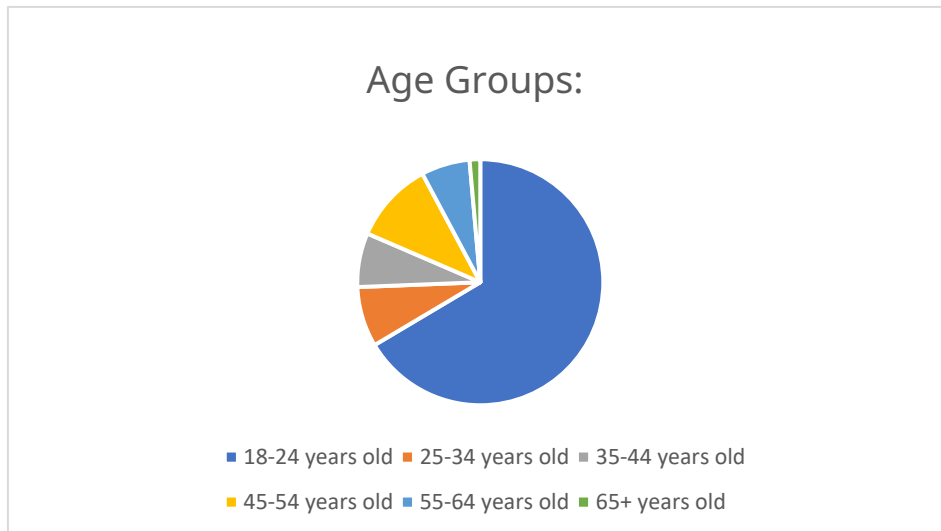
4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics:

There was a total of 140 participants: 40 male participants, 97 female participants and 3 non-binary/ third-gender participants. Participants were from a range of ethnicities, with 40% being White, 17.1% from a Black background, 25% Asian, 14.3% Mixed, and 0.7% preferred not to specify. Most of the participants were between 18-24 years old (66.4%), with a smaller portion in older age brackets (age group distribution found in Figure 1).

Figure 1

Age Group Distribution of Participants



Two groups were then created based on reader status; the first group contained the Readers ($n = 77$), 23.4% of whom stated they were a part of a book community, and the second consisted of Non-Readers ($n = 63$). Using the randomiser, four groups were then created for the experimental portion. They were based on popular fictional genres: the control, utilitarian garment descriptions ($n = 36$), the Romance-genre descriptions ($n = 35$), the Fantasy-genre descriptions ($n = 34$), and the Crime-genre descriptions ($n = 35$). Their mean Consumer Involvement and Purchase Intention scores can be found in Table 1.

Table 1*Consumer Involvement and Purchase Intention Descriptives*

Condition	Reader status	Involvement	Purchase Intention
		<i>M ± SD</i>	<i>M ± SD</i>
Control	Reader	4.15 ± 1.13	5.39 ± 1.70
	Non-Reader	3.74 ± 1.18	5.69 ± 1.01
Romance	Reader	3.90 ± 1.03	4.55 ± 1.86
	Non-Reader	4.73 ± 0.65	6.38 ± 0.96
Fantasy	Reader	3.92 ± 1.17	4.36 ± 2.17
	Non-Reader	4.27 ± 1.64	5.24 ± 2.25
Crime	Reader	3.74 ± 1.18	3.74 ± 1.18
	Non-Reader	4.48 ± 0.93	4.48 ± 0.93
Control	Total*	3.95 ± 1.22	5.53 ± 1.41
Storytelling	Total*	4.12 ± 1.21	4.70 ± 1.71

Note: *denotes sum of Readers plus Non-Reader scores

When combining both Readers and Non-Readers, descriptive statistics show that the highest mean total of involvement scores was within the Storytelling conditions ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.21$), in contrast to the Utilitarian condition ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 1.22$).

However, Readers, overall, were more involved with the Control condition, showing Utilitarian descriptions ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 1.13$). In comparison to Non-readers, who were more involved with the Storytelling conditions ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.17$).

Descriptive statistics also show that readers have the highest purchase intention in the Utilitarian condition ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 1.70$), whilst non-readers had the highest purchase intention in the Romance genre descriptions ($M = 6.38$, $SD = .96$). However, overall, the

utilitarian descriptions elicited the higher purchase intention scores ($M = 5.53$, $SD = 1.41$), compared to the slightly lower storytelling descriptions ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.71$).

4.2 Normality/ Levene's Assumptions:

Prior to conducting the main analyses, assumption tests were carried out to ensure the appropriateness of an ANOVA. Normality was assessed using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk tests for Purchase Intention, Consumer Involvement, Nostalgia and Escapism against Reader status and Condition.

Table 2

Normality Tests for All Variables

Variable	Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		Shapiro-Wilk	
		Statistic (D)	p	Statistic (V)	p
Involvement	Reader	0.095	>.200	0.965	.106
	Non-Reader	0.130	.037	0.944	.020
	Utilitarian	0.108	>.200	0.942	.121
	Romance	0.086	>.200	0.955	.308
	Fantasy	0.199	.012	0.839	.001
	Crime	0.103	>.200	0.971	.644
Purchase Intention	Reader	0.068	>.200	0.975	.308
	Non-Reader	0.128	.043	0.932	.007

	Utilitarian	0.134	>.200	0.954	.249
	Romance	0.169	.054	0.858	.002
	Fantasy	0.128	>.200	0.924	.063
	Crime	0.103	>.200	0.971	.644
Nostalgia	Reader	0.149	.003	0.958	.048
	Non-Reader	0.117	.092	0.953	.049
	Utilitarian	0.099	>.200	0.974	.679
	Romance	0.237	<.001	0.890	.009
	Fantasy	0.196	.014	0.931	.091
	Crime	0.115	>.200	0.979	.856
Escapism	Reader	0.104	>.200	0.967	.129
	Non-Reader	0.151	.007	0.933	.008
	Utilitarian	0.167	.043	0.944	.142
	Romance	0.124	>.200	0.975	.746
	Fantasy	0.159	.104	0.945	.189
	Crime	0.139	>.200	0.940	.136

Note: K-S p -values marked as >.200 represent lower bounds of true significance (Lilliefors Correction)

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests revealed violations of normality ($p < .05$) for some groups, such as the Romance condition, violating normality for Nostalgia ($D = 0.237, p < .001$), however, ANOVA is considered robust to minor deviations from normality (Schmider et al., 2010); hence, this test was chosen for *H1*.

The homogeneity of variance was also checked before running each test using Levene's test.

See Appendix D

4.3 Inferential Statistics:

H1: Readers will show a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to non-readers.

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effect of Reader status (IV) and description type (IV) on the Involvement scores (DV).

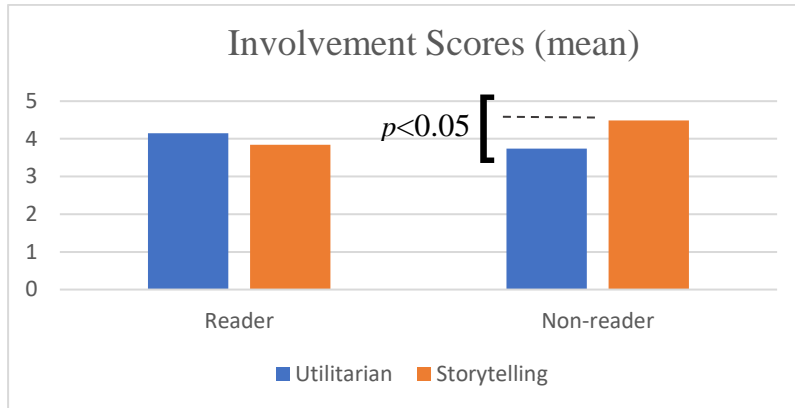
The overall model was marginally non-significant, $F(3, 118) = 2.63, p = .054$ Whilst no main effect was found in regards to reader status, $F(1, 118) = .24, p = .628$ and no main effect was found with description type, $F(1, 118) = .85, p = .360$, There was a significant interaction of these categories; when combining reader status and description type $F(1, 118) = 4.60, p = .034$, suggesting that the effect of condition type on involvement scores differed between readers and non-readers.*See Appendix D for SPSS outputs*

Independent t-tests were then used to investigate this interaction. The first was conducted to compare involvement scores between readers and non-readers in the storytelling conditions alone. Levene's test indicated the assumption of equal variances was met, $F = 0.43, p = .513$, so equal variances were assumed. The results showed a significant difference in involvement scores between readers ($M = 3.84, SD = 1.19$) and non-readers ($M = 4.49, SD = 1.17$), $t(51) = -2.05, p = .046, d = -.57$ The direction is also indicated, showing that non-readers were more involved with Storytelling conditions than readers

The second independent t-test compared Involvement scores between readers and non-readers, but in the Utilitarian, Control condition only. There was no significant difference in involvement scores between readers and non-readers, $t(30) = .94, p = .353$. This suggests the reader status did not impact involvement with utilitarian conditions. Figure 2 shows this significance.

Figure 2

Bar graph indicating Involvement scores across Reader Status and highlighting the Significant Difference



As a result, H1 is supported in a nuanced way, as there is a significant interaction between reader status and condition type (utilitarian or storytelling), but there was no main effect discovered. A second ANOVA investigated Reader status (IV), description type (IV), but with Purchase Intention scores (DV). The corrected model was significant, $F(3, 118) = 5.95, p < .001$, A main effect of Reader status was also found to be significant ($p = .029$), which shows that non-readers are more likely to record higher purchase intentions than readers. The description type (Utilitarian or Storytelling) also found a significant relationship ($p = .034$), suggesting that whether the descriptions were utilitarian or contained storytelling narratives also significantly impacted purchase intentions.

However, their interaction is non-significant, $F(1, 118) = 1.80, p = .183$, suggesting they operate independently on the outcome of purchase intention.

Next, for a more precise investigation, a 2 (Reader or Non-reader) x 4 (condition type: Control, Romance, Fantasy or Crime) ANOVA was conducted to separate the 'storytelling' variable into the separate experimental groups. This corrected model was also found to be significant, $F(7, 114) = 4.28, p < .001, \eta p^2 = .208$, with a significant main effect of reader status $p = .002, \eta p^2 = .081$, showing non-readers consistently show higher purchase intention than readers. The

condition type was also found to be significant $F(3, 114) = 5.01, p = .003, \eta p^2 = .117$, suggesting some genres are more persuasive than others. This interaction effect was also non-significant ($p = .298$), meaning the impact of genre does not depend on a participant's reader status.

A Bonferroni multiple comparisons test was then used to look at which genres had a significant difference. Utilitarian and Crime had a significant difference in influencing Purchase Intentions ($p = .002$), with Crime being significantly lower. Romance genre descriptions also had a significantly greater influence over Crime on purchase intentions ($p = .011$), showing that not all storytelling genres are equally effective.

H2: Participants with higher nostalgia scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions than those with lower nostalgia scores.

Multiple regressions were conducted to examine whether age groups, escapism scores and nostalgia scores (IVs) predicted involvement scores (DV). The first regression isolated the Utilitarian, control condition's responses. This overall model was not statistically significant, $F(3, 24) = 1.48, p = .245$

However, the second multiple regression, which focused solely on the storytelling responses (combining Romance, Fantasy and Crime genre responses), was statistically significant. $F(3, 73) = 12.58, p < .001$ This indicates the predictors collectively accounted for a significant portion of the variance in Involvement scores, accounting for approximately 34.1% of the variance. ($R^2 = .34, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .31$)

Looking at the coefficients, the regression analysis revealed that Nostalgia was a statistically significant positive predictor of involvement scores. $\beta = .48, t(73) = 4.37, p < .001$, indicating that higher nostalgia scores were associated with greater involvement. As a result, the hypothesis is supported as those with higher involvement scores are associated with greater involvement in the storytelling-driven conditions.

H3: Participants with higher escapism scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to those with lower escapism scores.

The multiple regressions also looked at Escapism scores as an IV to investigate Involvement scores (DV). The Utilitarian only regression model was not statistically significant, with the escapism coefficients showing $\beta = .31$, $p = .13$

The Storytelling regression, whilst having a statistically significant model, didn't show Escapism as a statistically significant predictor. $\beta = .17$, $p = .13$ Therefore, the hypothesis stating that participants with higher escapism scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to those with lower escapism scores isn't supported.

However, when combining all of the experimental conditions (Utilitarian with all Storytelling responses) focusing on Involvement scores, Escapism and Nostalgia, the regression was found to be significant ($p < .001$). Coefficients revealed that both Nostalgia and Escapism Scores were significant predictors of Involvement. Nostalgia was found to have a medium to large effect size, $\beta = .40$ ($p < .001$), whilst Escapism had a weaker effect size, $\beta = .21$ ($p = .032$). Whilst H3 is unsupported due to its focus on storytelling conditions, Escapism may still affect Involvement.

H4: Participants scoring high on both nostalgia and escapism will show the strongest involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions

This hypothesis predicted that participants scoring highly on Nostalgia and Escapism levels would exhibit the strongest involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions. However, whilst results supported the second hypothesis by indicating a significant positive relationship between Nostalgia and Involvement, the third hypothesis was not supported, as Escapism did not significantly predict Involvement levels.

As a result, this hypothesis is not supported. The proposed additive or interactive effect of high nostalgia and escapism was not observed. Findings, instead, suggest nostalgia alone plays a more prominent role in influencing consumer behaviour through Involvement with storytelling narratives. In contrast, escapism didn't appear to meaningfully contribute to this context.

5. Discussion

Overall, this study aimed to investigate how storytelling influences consumer behaviour, focusing on emotional involvement and purchase intention, whilst looking at the moderating effects of reading habits, nostalgia and consumer escapism.

5.1 Hypothesis Evaluation:

H1:

The first hypothesis was partially supported. Results indicate a significant interaction between reader status and condition type on involvement scores. Overall, involvement scores were higher in storytelling narratives, consistent with the 2023 bibliometric analysis suggesting storytelling could enhance engagement behaviours, such as emotional involvement (Júnior et al., 2022). Unexpectedly, non-readers were found to have higher involvement with storytelling conditions than readers. This may be due to non-readers' lower exposure to creative narratives, potentially making them more impressionable or responsive to descriptive content due to lower expectations or familiarity with storytelling descriptions.

The corrected model, examining reader status, condition type and purchase intention, also showed significance. Although main effects of reader status and condition type were discovered, an interaction between the variables was not, indicating independent influence rather than additive or synergistic effects. ANOVA results revealed that non-readers had a higher purchase intention than readers, across all conditions. This finding, taken together with their higher involvement with storytelling conditions, suggests that brands may benefit from creating similarly involving narratives through branding and advertisements.

Purchase intention was highest in the utilitarian conditions, this may be due to the straightforward, practical framing of the garments, which could convey a sense of reliability and safety. This may make them appear as lower-risk purchases, encouraging immediate decision-making (Solaki et al., 2019). Future research could explore whether storytelling

marketing has longer term effects on consumption. A two-way ANOVA also revealed significant differences in purchase intention between genres, suggesting some storytelling genres are more persuasive than others; an area for further investigation.

The lack of an interaction effect indicates that genre influence may be consistent across consumer types. Therefore, tailored storytelling, such as Romance, may be effective across markets. This supports the concept of ‘Inconspicuous Fandom,’ by Diana Smith-Glaviana where consumers express identity and affiliation subtly and contextually (Mendlesohn, 2002). In conjunction, these findings imply that fiction-inspired fashion collections can appeal to a both avid readers and broader consumer groups, including professionals seeking subtle or not so subtle self-expression.

H2:

For the second hypothesis, regression analysis within storytelling conditions found nostalgia to be a significant predictor of involvement ($\beta = .48$) with a medium to large effect size. This finding connects to the 2008 academic journal, which concocts the ‘narrative theory,’ that posits consumers derive pleasure from reliving narratives (Woodside et al., 2008), supporting the idea of brands embedding nostalgic resonance within their marketing techniques (Jabr, 2023).

H3:

The third hypothesis was unsupported, as escapism did not significantly predict involvement within storytelling or utilitarian conditions. Nonetheless, previous qualitative findings indicate that fictional media may support self-discovery and identity exploration (Lawton & Cain, 2022). The gap in the literature becomes evident as escapism has not been looked at previously regarding advertising involvement, only its psychological effects. Moreover, this study’s underpowered sample size may have resulted in a Type II error. Future research with a larger sample size should reassess this relationship.

H4:

Given the insignificance of escapism as a predictor, the fourth and final hypothesis was unsupported. Whilst nostalgia emerged as a significant predictor, escapism did not follow its impact on involvement. This suggests that emotional connection to the past may play a more central role in enhancing consumer engagement with storytelling than the desire to mentally escape to unfamiliar surroundings. This finding aligns with neurological research showing that personal relevance, rather than objective reality, determines cognitive and emotional engagement (Abraham & Von Cramon, 2009). Escapism may lack the familiarity that fosters such relevance.

5.2 Implications

In conclusion, the findings of this study offer several implications for both academic research and applied fashion marketing. From a practical standpoint, the results suggest that emotionally resonant narratives can increase consumer involvement even with unexpected audiences. This contradicts assumptions that only frequent readers or media consumers are affected by narrative marketing (Maddox & Gill, 2023), and implies that storytelling is in fact, an effective tool.

Also, the higher purchase intentions associated with utilitarian descriptions suggest that straightforward marketing may be more effective for immediate responses, whereas storytelling might be better suited for building long-term emotional engagement and brand loyalty (Wildschut & Constantine Sedikides, 2021). For psychology as a discipline and for scholars in consumer behaviour, this study highlights the value of incorporating individual difference variables, such as proneness to nostalgia, into marketing research, expanding the understanding of how personality traits impact engagement. It also supports more integrative study models that consider both emotional and behavioural responses in assessing marketing

outcomes.

5.3 Strengths and weaknesses of the study

A notable strength of this research appears in its quantitative methodology, which provides objectivity and robust insights into consumer psychology (Mitra, 2020). The scientific design enhances replicability and supports falsifiability (Popper, 1963). This research also integrates psychological constructs such as nostalgia and escapism, while addressing consumer behaviour through social learning concepts, providing interdisciplinary academic rigour.

The study also accounts for individual differences by including reading habits alongside demographic questions, allowing for more nuanced insights into marketing for fashion brands and more refined segmentation. Randomised condition allocation using the Qualtrics ‘Randomiser’ improved internal validity and mundane realism. The creation of four genre-based narrative conditions offered precise comparisons to the control, utilitarian condition. Using consistent garments and similar word counts across conditions and descriptions ensured that observed effects could be attributed to narrative-framing rather than other confounding variables.

A multi-layered data collection approach, using demographic, psychometric and behavioural information, enabled a novel and nuanced analysis. The findings have real-world applications for brands aiming to craft more effective garment descriptions and marketing strategies based on consumer psychology.

However, there are limitations to the research. Recruitment bias was difficult to avoid. Despite some demographic diversity (eg. ethnicity,) many participants shared similar backgrounds. For example, they came from the same universities or the same families, which limits generalisability. Furthermore, the recommended sample size based on the G power calculation (Kang, 2021) was not met, resulting in the study being underpowered.

Consequently, both significant and non-significant findings must be interpreted with caution. In the future, sampling will be done over a longer period and with a wider pool of people. This can be done using survey group chats online to ensure a more diverse sample.

The questionnaire's layout may have affected engagement. Although reduced from four garments to three garments per condition to minimise fatigue, participants still refused to complete that section in its entirety. The nostalgia scale may be seen as repetitive. To address this, future studies could redesign the layout using varied presentation formats to maintain attention. For each garment, instead of a table, a new layout can be implemented to stimulate the participant.

The terms 'reader' and 'non-reader' classification may also lack precision. Some participants who identified as readers may only read for academic or work purposes, which may not influence escapism the same way as leisurely reading. Future studies could include precise questions, such as 'Do you read fiction for pleasure?'

Additionally, while efforts were made to maintain equal quality across genres, differences in tone, connotations, or realism may have influenced responses. Cultural relevance may also affect how participants interpret genre-specific narratives. Similarly, personal fashion preference may have influenced their evaluations more than the presented narrative content, suggesting that a larger number of garments could provide more balanced insights. The mock website in the experimental portion is also abstract and not representative of all real-life purchasing cues, such as price, size and brand; this limits the ecological validity of the research.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study investigated the psychological impact of storytelling on consumer behaviour, with a special focus on emotional involvement and purchasing intention, and moderated by escapism, nostalgia and reader identity. By addressing gaps in the existing literature and applying a multi-layered design, it contributes empirical insights into how

narrative framing in fashion marketing can influence consumer engagement.

The findings suggest that storytelling, particularly when nostalgic, is a powerful tool in consumer engagement, even among audiences not traditionally engaged in narrative consumption (non-readers). Although escapism did not emerge as a significant predictor, this area remains underexplored and deserves further investigation.

Future research should consider factors such as self-confidence or self-image, which may interact with escapism and influence engagement levels. Additionally, switching the experimental media from static text to dynamic video could offer a more immersive and accurate representation of genre-specific storytelling in advertising contexts.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Reflective Statement

The creation of this dissertation has allowed me to grow in ways that I did not expect. It pushed me, not only on the expected educational level, but on a personal one too. Whilst the process was challenging, I found the output rewarding, and I feel extremely proud of my journey to get to this point.

This dissertation has forced me to enhance my time-management skills from a new angle I hadn't encountered, to this extent, before. My past educational endeavours had mainly been aligned with a set timetable, within typical school hours and in a regular routine. However, for this project, I had to learn how to be realistic with my deadlines whilst navigating my own events and chores. It was a learning curve in itself to discover my pacing and tailor my schedule in line with this, a foreign concept in the beginning. I found this incredibly difficult as I had discovered new health concerns this year, causing me to shift my priorities. It was tricky for me to manage and accept when my body wasn't able to work to the extent that I knew it was previously capable of.

To aid in this pacing, I used a Canvas template to create a vague time plan of my process to ensure the sections would all be completed in adequate time. I also made sure to fit in bits of stretching and physical exercise at points of frequent laptop work, to give my back a reprieve and to maintain my fitness. To encourage a healthy work/ life balance, I planned 'study dates' with my friends to kill two birds with one stone. This involved cute cafes, hotel lobbies and, on the odd occasion, a cocktail or two in the sun. This was done to ensure my mental health didn't take a toll and to stop FOMO (the fear of missing out) from kicking in, particularly in those few sunny days. I also made sure to keep a couple of fun events, such as concerts and cinema trips, dotted throughout the months at planned checkpoints to boost morale. Since it's

my final year in the city (for the foreseeable future), these days out allowed me to make the most of my time here and not feel like I'm wasting it.

Self-motivation was another key theme throughout this process. I was able to do this quite adequately, or much better than I expected. I quickly recognised my habits, such as preferring to work later in the day, and made sure to shift other responsibilities to accommodate these realisations. However, I believe this was largely due to this project being riddled with content regarding my favourite hobby. It's much easier to prioritise something you enjoy.

When deciding the topic for this dissertation, I had to sift through previous assignments to try and find something I hadn't touched on, a difficult task. Whilst I came up with a list of possibilities, I knew that I had to pick something I wouldn't get bored with. This requirement greatly reduced my potential topics and quickly resulted in this storytelling subject. Reading and imagining new worlds has been a constant in my life for years, and I knew it was a theme I would never be tired of due to its endless possibilities.

After speaking with friends who are also in their final year of University, I realised how fortunate I am to be intensively studying a subject I am so passionate about. I am astounded that my lockdown addiction (reading and consuming fiction) has made its way into my final project for my dream course at my dream university. I love this subject, and I am endlessly grateful that I am obtaining a degree based on my exploration of it. Regardless of the reason, I do believe that my motivation techniques and time-management skills have been honed and greatly improved over the process. These skills will undoubtedly be useful for future employment and adventures.

Up until the data analysis, this dissertation didn't feel too much like a burden. The quantitative portion quickly changed this. During my first two years of this degree, my contact with SPSS was brief and torturous. I had managed to get away unscathed, without needing to

sit down and unpack each of its buttons and functions. However, for my dissertation, I felt it was a necessity to conquer this terrifying programme to fully devour this degree.

Honestly, it would've been incredibly simple to develop a research study for this subject using solely qualitative methods, but I was genuinely intrigued by the possibilities that could come from these findings. I am easily persuaded to purchase garments and accessories that are even slightly reminiscent of a beloved book or character. Is it just me? Is it because I read? Or because I'm nostalgic? Wait, do I like to read because I want to escape? So many questions came to me, and in that moment, the decision to quantitatively analyse these questions was made.

After watching as many 'SPSS for beginners' videos as I could, I quickly realised my fear of the programme was completely unjustified. My previous run-ins with SPSS had been purely in group form, which, although it shared the workload, made it difficult to understand the required steps and their order. Creating my own study and knowing exactly what variables I wanted to investigate made the process infinitely easier. It forced me to get in touch with the mathematical part of my brain that had remained dormant since my A-levels. Whilst maths is a strength of mine, computer systems were not. By the end of the process, I think I managed to utilise the analysis programme well and with a good level of confidence. I hope this newly acquired skill comes in useful in the future.

Another obstacle that I found difficult to navigate was sticking to the word count. This topic, being an interest of mine for years, was a strength most of the time, but also a weakness at some points. My vast research and knowledge of the subject matter were impossible to condense; the topics have infinitely more connections and links than what I was able to express within the confines of this paper. I worry that my editing and removal of aspects will reduce the flow of content for someone who hasn't done the same research as me. In an attempt to combat this, I had colleagues proofread a couple of sections to ensure clarity; however, as they

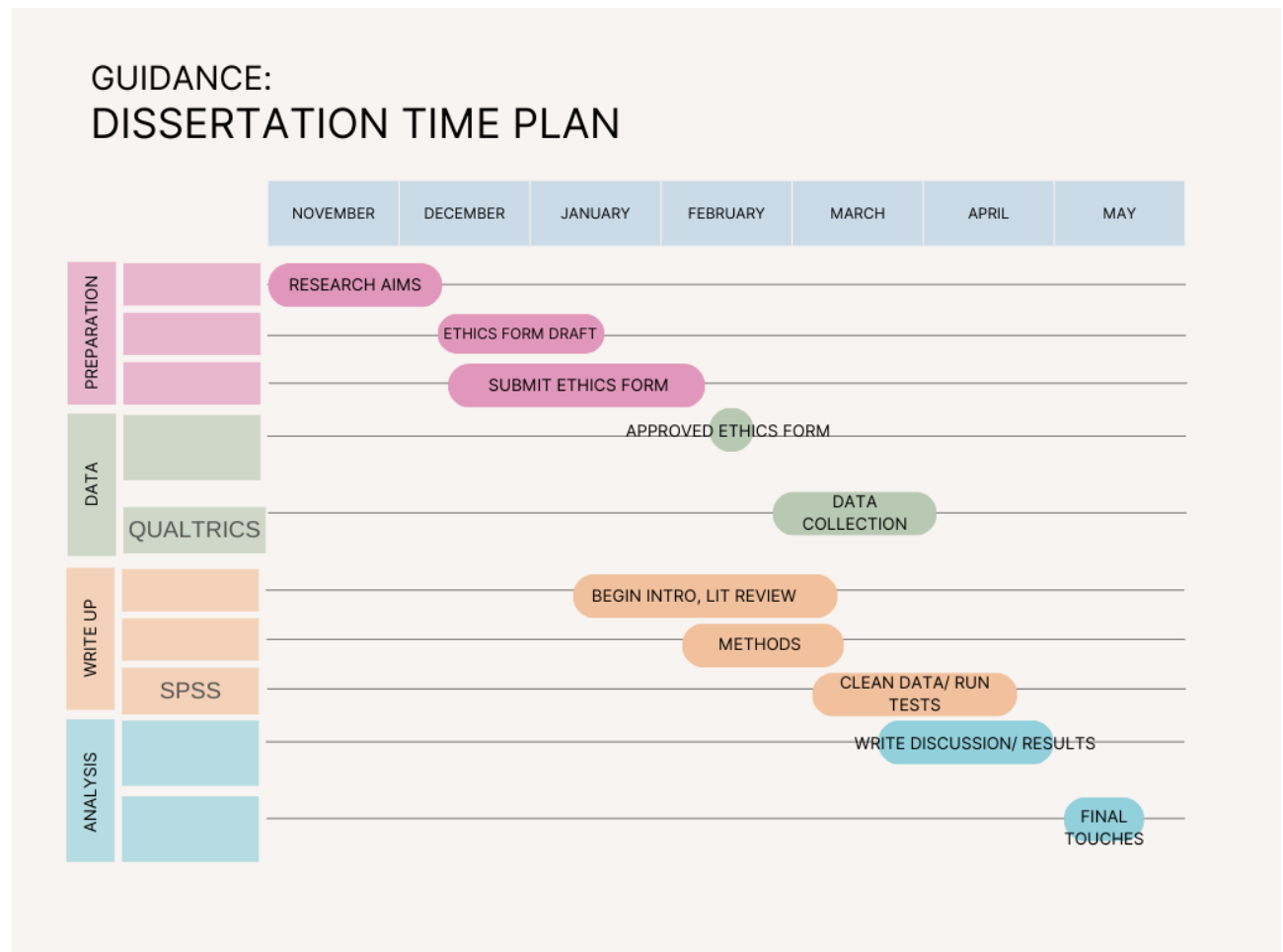
also studied the same psychological theories, I'm sure they grasped the content much easier than those who hadn't.

I also had a few physical setbacks during the completion of this dissertation. Whilst I was creating my ethics form, my laptop's internal hinge decided to make an appearance. My device was in the shop for over a week, somehow, which forced me to utilise every device I could get my hands on. Public libraries, computers at our campus, my friends' iPads- nothing escaped me. OneDrive became my saving grace; however, document layouts differ hugely depending on the device they are displayed on. This made the completion of my ethics form so unnecessarily difficult, as every edit I made changed the entire format on the next device. This improved my patience, hugely.

For my birthday, I finally convinced myself to take a few days' break and go to Milan, whilst the trip was filled with positives, my 21st was unforgettable. After miraculously surviving nearly three years in London without this occurring, my phone was stolen. This took a toll on a lot of my work; essential things such as logging onto Moodle and social media accounts felt impossible due to passwords and two-factor authentication, however, I had the best support system around me and friends who lent me their devices to finish ethic forms, drafts and other pieces of work. I am so lucky to have these wonderful people around me. This event reminded me of the importance of asking for help when you are in need and just having people who care about you close by. I realised that every big win is cultivated by the efforts of a community.

In conclusion, I am so relieved to have finally completed the biggest piece of work in my career so far. The content being that of interest and love, I am infinitely grateful for this to be the culmination of my Bachelor's degree.

Appendix B: Dissertation Time Plan



Appendix C: Approved Ethics Application

Research Ethics Approval Form – Student Research

Psychology Research Ethics Panel (PREP)

Guidance:

- Please ensure that you have read the **UAL Code of Practice on Research Ethics, UAL Code of Practice on Educational Ethics, and the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics** before completing this form.
- Please complete this form electronically. While completing it, delete all the text in green font, which is meant to guide you.
- **Section A** is to be completed by the student and Supervisor / Unit Leader.
- **Section B** is for PREP and UAL Sub-Committee use only.
- Once Section A has been completed, the form should be submitted to the relevant staff member (e.g., Unit Leader, Course Leader) by the student. Instructions on who to submit the form to will be given in each unit.
- **Incomplete applications which are missing question responses, signatures, documents for the participants (Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, Debriefing Sheet), or relevant appendices (e.g., study advert, questionnaires, instructions, interview questions, tasks, stimuli such as images) will be returned to the student for completion. This will delay the review and approval process.**

SECTION A

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT

Name:	Tia Joshi
College:	London College of Fashion
Course and year (if applicable):	Bsc The Psychology of Fashion 2025 (Year 3)
Unit for which this study is being conducted:	Final Major Project
Study title:	Investigating the Influence of Fictional Literature on Fashion Consumer Behaviour

The UAL codes of practice set out four key areas for ethical consideration. Which one or more of the ethical principles does this application for ethical consideration relate to?

a. An ethics of care is supported by the Educational Ethics Sub-Committee as a positive ethic that is the University's responsibility to foster in relation to students, educational content,	Yes
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educational process including material resources, and in students' relations with anyone who participates or interacts with their work.	
b. The principle of social justice obliges the student to identify the risks and benefits of participation in creative or investigative practice. Any risks to persons participating should be weighed against any potential benefits – to the participants or the student, and also the wider benefits to society of the knowledge gained. As with the principle of respect for persons, there is a need to promote equality and racial justice and protect vulnerable groups.	Yes
c. Respect for persons recognises the capacity and rights of all individuals to make their own choices and decisions. It refers to the autonomy and rights to self-determination of all human beings, acknowledges their equality, dignity, freedom, and rights. An important component of this principle is the need to provide special protection to vulnerable persons, both students and in student activity involving others.	Yes
d. Beneficence is the principle of acting for the good and well-being of others. It requires students to serve the interests of others. In so doing, students comply with the principle of neither doing, nor permitting, any foreseeable harm as a consequence of creative or investigative practice. This is the principle of non-maleficence , it is the principle of doing no harm.	Yes
The specific duties of promoting equality and good relations are assumed under these principles, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.	

1. Please provide the rationale behind your study, including a brief literature review, the gap in existing literature that the study will address, study aims / research questions, and hypotheses (if study has a quantitative component). Indicate whether the study is qualitative or quantitative and design it will use. (600 words max, excluding references)

The intersection of fictional literature and fashion offers a unique perspective on consumer behaviour, blending storytelling with personal expression. This study investigates how characters from genres such as fantasy, romance, and mystery influence readers' real-life fashion choices. It focuses on the psychological mechanisms of nostalgia and escapism, examining their potential to emotionally connect consumers to fictional worlds and drive fashion purchases.

With the rise of book-inspired fashion collections and thriving literary communities such as BookTok (Bolan 2023) and book clubs, brands have an opportunity to engage diverse audiences through storytelling-driven marketing. Nostalgic readers may respond differently to such campaigns depending on factors such as age, occupation, or genre preferences. This research evaluates whether this approach can effectively connect fashion brands with new demographics and provide insights into consumer engagement.

The study explores how book characters' fashion choices shape readers' personal style preferences and investigate how nostalgia influences engagement with literary-inspired fashion. It also examines whether storytelling-driven campaigns are more effective than conventional descriptions and evaluates how fashion brands can use literature-inspired collections to foster psychological connections with their consumers.

Nostalgia taps into sentimental memories, particularly for older demographics, by creating emotional resonance (Thackray, 2025). For example, Bershka's *Twilight*-inspired collection rekindled the 2000s dark romantic aesthetic, connecting fans to a simpler and emotionally charged time. Escapism, on the other hand, allows consumers to immerse themselves in fictional worlds, providing emotional relief or the opportunity to "step into" their favourite characters' identities (Muller, 2021). These psychological mechanisms are critical for brands aiming to market products that deeply resonate with consumers.

Psychological theories offer a framework for understanding these behaviours. The Social Identity Theory (McLeod, 2023) suggests that consumers align with fictional characters or worlds that reflect their sense of self, using them as role-models. Similarly, the Self-Congruity Theory claims that individuals seek products that match their personal identity, fostering emotional attachment (Kim, 2015). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs highlights how fictional-inspired fashion can address self-esteem and self-actualisation, enabling individuality and creative expression (Cherry, 2024). Research into the biopsychology of fictional emotions shows that the brain often processes fictional emotions as real, creating strong bonds between readers and characters, which can translate into brand loyalty (Broom et al., 2021).

Existing research explores these themes independently but lacks a holistic connection. Escapism has been validated as a healthy coping mechanism using tools like the Consumer Escapism Scale (CES) (Orazi et al., 2023). Reader-character interaction has been examined through the PEFIC Scale (Hoorn & Konijn, 2003), which measures emotional engagement with fictional personalities. Nostalgia is widely recognised as a driver of consumer preferences but has not been integrated into literary-inspired fashion. Platforms like BookTok illustrate how book communities influence cultural trends and consumer behaviour, yet their potential in fashion marketing remains underexplored.

Examples of literary influence on fashion include: Superheroes, originally created during times of social upheaval, which have inspired fashion trends by symbolising strength and unity, with costumes and merchandise allowing consumers to embody these traits. The *Bridgerton neckline*, inspired by historical fiction and period drama, demonstrates how literature and TV adaptations revive classic styles (Joseph, 2021). The Vamp, Camp Gothic aesthetic has roots in literary works such as *Dracula* and *Nosferatu* (Wilson, 2024). Designers like Nephi Galbraith bring fantasy novels to life through intricately crafted gowns, connecting deeply with fans through nostalgia and escapism (Woolsey, 2016). Valentino's recent collections, inspired by *A Little Life*, Edgar Allan Poe, and Agatha Christie, showcase how high fashion incorporates literature to evoke emotional connections (Smyth et al., 2023).

This study uses quantitative methods to analyse a Qualtrics questionnaire which looks into how storytelling-driven marketing influences consumer engagement. Demographics will first be collected, these include age, occupation, ethnicity and whether the participant is a reader or a non-reader. Following this, they will be randomly assigned to one of four conditions, Utilitarian (the control,) Romance, Fantasy or Crime/ Murder Mystery (the experimental conditions, each relating to a fictional book genre.) During this section, they will be shown the garments on a mock-up website, each with a description correlating to the condition type they are assigned. They will answer questions about how emotional response towards each garment description and their purchase intention using Likert Scales. Finally, two psychometric scales will be used to collect data around their nostalgia and consumer escapism tendencies.

Data will be analysed with SPSS to examine the significance of relationships between nostalgia, escapism, and preferences for storytelling-driven campaigns.

- H1: Readers will show a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to non-readers.

- H2: Participants with higher nostalgia scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions than those with lower nostalgia scores.
- H3: Participants with higher escapism scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to those with lower escapism scores.
- H4: Participants scoring high on both nostalgia and escapism will show the strongest involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions

2. Does your research involve participants?

No*

X

Yes

***If you answer 'No', you do not need to complete Questions 3 to 11. Instead, please go to Question 12 and continue from there.**

3. Who will the participants be? Please tick as appropriate.

Students at University of the Arts London

Staff at University of the Arts London

X

Other*

***If you answered 'Other' please specify below.**

The participants will include individuals from Gen Z and older, representing a diverse range of occupational backgrounds, ethnicities, genders and backgrounds. They will be at least 18 years of age. Both readers and non-readers will be recruited to ensure a balanced perspective on the influence of fictional narratives on fashion consumption behaviour.

The target demographic will primarily focus on adults who can provide insights into their engagement with fictional characters, storytelling, and fashion, who are also the main market of fashion brands. By including individuals across various age groups, the study aims to explore how factors such as age, reading habits, and personal interests may impact preferences for storytelling-driven advertising and fashion choices.

4. How will participants be recruited and how many will be involved?

Participants will be recruited through a combination of social media outreach and in-person distribution at book cafes, ensuring a sample that includes both readers and non-readers. Recruitment will employ a mix of sampling methods: purposive sampling will involve targeting known readers at book cafes and through social media platforms, while convenience sampling will involve recruiting family, friends, and their immediate network. Additionally, snowball sampling will be utilised by encouraging participants to share the questionnaire with their own connections to widen the pool further.

While this recruitment strategy may limit the generalisability and mundane realism of the findings due to its non-random nature, it is suitable given the constraints of time and resources and the study's focus on a niche topic. This approach allows for effective data collection within populations most likely to provide meaningful insights into the research question. Using a G Power calculation, a good sample size was deduced to be 180 participants using an effect size of 0.25, alpha as 0.5 and a power of 0.8. Therefore, the study will aim for 200 responses accounting for unfinished answers.

To see the adverts see Appendix 1.

5. What will participants be asked to do and for how long? Describe the entire study procedure, including the measures (e.g., questionnaires) or the interview questions that you will ask them to complete or answer.

The participants will begin by clicking on the Qualtrics link which will send them to a questionnaire where they will be presented with the Participation Information Sheet. This will give the participants an overview of what the questions will consist of without giving away the entire purpose of the study to prevent demand characteristics. After reading, they will then be shown a Consent Form which they will have to give their formal consent for their data to be used in the study.

The questionnaire will be made using a UAL login.

The questionnaire itself (see Appendix) will take around 10-15 minutes to complete. They will begin by giving their age, occupation, gender and ethnicity. However, their name will not be taken to respect anonymity. They will then be asked whether they are readers or non-readers; readers will then be asked further specifics including their frequency of reading, whether they read fiction or non-fiction, their favourite genres and whether they interact with any book communities such as BookTok.

All participants will then proceed to the experimental part of the questionnaire which was newly created. They will be assigned to one of four conditions: Utilitarian (control), Romance, Fantasy or Crime. For each condition, participants will be presented with three garments, each of which will have a product description in accordance to the assigned condition. The garments will be placed on a mockup clothing website to imitate a real-life scenario and to encourage a more thought-out response. They will then answer questions about their personal involvement towards the descriptions and their purchase intention towards each garment. These questions will be a single 1-9 Likert scale for purchase intention (Dugan et al., 2021) and a ten item Personal Involvement Inventory (Zaichkowsky, 1994). (See Appendix.)

After these four garments, the final part of the questionnaire will be the psychometric scales. The Consumer Escapism Scale (CES,) (Orazi et al., 2023) will be used. This is a 9- item scale which uses a 1-5 Likert scale (from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree,) which assesses both specific aspects of consumer escapism and a general tendency toward escapist consumption behaviours.

Finally, the questionnaire will end with a Nostalgia scale (SNS-5) put forward by Southampton University (Bailey et al., 2010), which is a 7-item scale that uses a 1-7 Likert scale (Not at all to Very Much.) It investigates the frequency and intensity of Nostalgia felt by the individual.

After completing the questions, the participant will then be taken to the Debriefing sheet where they will receive the full hypotheses of the study and how their data will be used to make a difference as well as the implications of the study. They will also be signposted to places that they could reach out to for help if the questionnaire triggers any negative emotions.

6. What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? How will you inform participants of the risks and the steps you are taking to address them? The BPS defines risk as the 'potential physical or psychological harm, discomfort or stress to human participants that a research project may generate.' It includes risks to participants' well-being, self-esteem, social standing, values, privacy and reputation, beliefs, employment / livelihood, personal relationships, freedom of commercial interests (e.g., intellectual property), and so on.

Based on the nature of the study and the procedures in place, this project is considered minimal risk. There is no involvement of sensitive topics or physical activities that could cause harm, and the risks to psychological well-being are low and manageable. According to the BPS and UAL Codes of Ethics, this project falls under minimal risk, as it does not involve vulnerable participants or sensitive subject matter.

Given the nature of this study, which involves an online questionnaire distributed through social media and book cafes, there are no significant physical safety risks for participants. The study does not involve any activities that could physically harm or endanger participants.

The study involves exploring personal preferences and emotional responses, including elements of nostalgia and escapism. While it is unlikely that participants will experience significant distress, some individuals may experience emotional triggers when reflecting on nostalgia or personal connections to fictional worlds. For example, participants with strong emotional attachments to certain books or characters might experience a temporary sense of longing or sadness. These effects, if they occur, are expected to be short-lived and should not persist after completing the survey.

To manage this, participants will be informed in the consent form that the questionnaire might evoke personal reflections or emotions, and they will have the option to skip any questions they find uncomfortable. They will also be able to withdraw their data at any point by closing their browser- incomplete responses will be removed from the final analysis. A debrief will also be provided, ensuring participants are not left feeling distressed. If needed, participants will be given information on support resources such as the Mind charity, Samaritans helpline (0800 111 123), and links to NHS support for mental health.

The study will be conducted anonymously, and no personally identifiable information (PII) will be collected unless the participant voluntarily chooses to share their contact details for follow-up purposes. All responses will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, with any personal data anonymised and removed before analysis. This ensures that participants' privacy and reputations will not be compromised.

This study does not pose any risk to participants' commercial interests or livelihood. Participation is voluntary and will not affect their employment, social status, or financial standing in any way.

To minimise risks, participants will be fully informed about the potential emotional nature of the questions and given the freedom to skip any that they deem sensitive or uncomfortable. The consent form will clearly state that participation is voluntary, and they can withdraw at any time without consequence by closing the browser.

If a participant feels distressed during the study, they will have the option to stop immediately, and they will be given information on support services such as:

- Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support>
- Samaritans: 116 123
- NHS Therapy Services: [Mental health conditions - NHS](#)
- Get Self Help: <http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk>

Additionally, a debrief will be provided at the end of the questionnaire, offering reassurance and offering an option to contact support services if needed. All data will be stored securely on UAL-managed systems, including OneDrive. The data will be anonymous and personal identifiers will be included in the dataset. It may be moved onto personal devices upon analysis but will be secured using passwords.

Only the researcher and relevant staff members at the London College of Fashion will have access to the data. Data will be stored for a year following the publication of exam board results (July 2026) and then deleted.

7. What potential risks do you foresee to yourself as the researcher and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? For example, does your research raise issues of personal safety for you or others involved in the project, especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises?

As the researcher, I do not foresee any significant risks to my physical or psychological safety while conducting this study. The research involves administering an online questionnaire, which will be distributed through social media and book cafes, all of which take place in public spaces or through virtual platforms. These environments are generally safe and accessible, and no physical interaction with participants outside of the potential questionnaire distribution method, is required.

However, as a precaution, I will be mindful of the locations where I distribute the questionnaire in person (e.g. book cafes) to ensure they are public and well-lit spaces. I will also adhere to working during standard business hours to avoid any safety concerns associated with late hours.

For the online distribution, I will strictly communicate with participants using my UAL email address and not share any personal contact details. All communication with participants will be done via official UAL platforms, which ensures both professionalism and security.

Given that the questionnaire is focused on psychological factors like nostalgia and escapism, there is minimal risk to my psychological well-being. This study is not dealing with sensitive or distressing topics that could impact my emotional state.

To further ensure my safety and well-being, I will keep a record of the times and locations where any face-to-face data collection occurs and will inform a close person about these details. In the unlikely event that distress arises from the research process, I will reach out to UAL's Counselling Service for support if necessary.

Overall, the study poses minimal risk to my physical or psychological safety, and I am confident that the measures outlined above will effectively minimise any potential risks.

8. Please attach a copy of the Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, and Debriefing Sheet to your plan to give participants.

Please tick here if the Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, and Debriefing Sheet are attached to the appendix at the end of this form.

9. Does your project involve children / minors (anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults? BPS states that vulnerable populations include 'children, persons lacking capacity, those in a dependent or unequal relationship, people with learning or communication difficulties, people in care, people in custody or probation, people who have suffered physical or psychological trauma and people engaged in illegal activities such as drug abuse.'

No. Go to Question 10

Yes*

***If you answer 'Yes', you may need to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and seek ethical approval from the relevant UAL ethics sub-committee. Discuss this with your Supervisor, UAL Leader, or Course Leader. Please be aware that a DBS check normally takes 4 weeks, but can take longer.**

I confirm that I have obtained a DBS check.

I understand that I need to go through the PREP review and the UAL ethics review process.

Please Note:

It is a presumption of academic research that, wherever possible and feasible, the information on which the research is based should be preserved, so that it can be made available to future researchers. However, the privacy of participants must be respected. Please refer to the UAL and BPS ethics codes before answering Question 10.

10. Will you be obtaining personal information (e.g., name; postal, email, or IP address; recorded images or audio; date of birth) from the participants?

No. Go to Question 11

	Yes*
<p>*If you answer 'Yes', please give details. In your response, please indicate: Why do you need to collect personal information from participants? How will you store and use this information during the course of your research in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)? What parts of this information will need to be confidential? How will you ensure that no one can link participants' identity to the rest of their data? Will you exhibit or publish the information? Who will have access to the data? Will you retain information after the research is concluded? If yes, how? If information is to be destroyed, explain why this is appropriate.</p>	

11. Will payments to participants be made?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No. Go to Question 12
	Yes*
<p>*If you answer 'Yes', please state amount and whether payment is for out-of-pocket expenses or a fee</p>	

<p>12. If the project is to receive financial support from outside the University, please give details. Include any restrictions that have been imposed on the conduct of the research by the funding body or sponsor. If financial propriety and the protection of commercial rights are important for you, the University, and other third parties (e.g., sponsors, participants).</p>	
N/A	

13. Will any restrictions be placed on the publication of results?	
	No. Go to Question 14
	Yes*
<p>*If you answer 'Yes', please state the nature of the restrictions (e.g., details of any confidentiality agreement).</p>	

Student Declaration:


15. I confirm my responsibility to deliver the project in accordance with the Code of Practice on Research Ethics and the Code of Practice on Educational Ethics of the University of the Arts London (University), as well as the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics. In signing this form, I am also confirming that:

- a)** The form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.
- b)** There is no potential material interest that may, or may appear to, impair the independence and objectivity of the researchers conducting this project.
- c)** I understand that I cannot start data collection until I have received ethical approval from the relevant ethics body (e.g., PREP).
- d)** I undertake to conduct the study as set out in this application unless deviation is agreed by the University and to comply with any conditions set out in the letter sent by the relevant ethics body (e.g., PREP).
- e)** I understand that, if I decide to make substantial changes to the study method (e.g., the design, participant recruitment method, procedure), I will need to submit a revised ethics form.
- f)** I will store data on UAL-managed systems and will follow the [data protection principles](#) at all times.
- g)** I understand and accept that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the relevant College Research body and/or Educational Ethics Sub-Committee.

Signature of Student:	T.Joshi
Date (dd/mm/yyyy):	28/01/2025

Unit Leader or Supervisor Declaration:

16. I support this project and have reviewed and approved the current ethics application.

Name:	Mason Silveira
Signature of Unit Leader or Supervisor:	
Date (dd/mm/yyyy):	10/02/2025

SECTION B

FOR UAL COMMITTEE USE ONLY


Approval of Psychology Research Ethics Panel:

- The Psychology reviewers recommend that:

This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as **minimal ethical risk**.

This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as **more than minimal ethical risk** and so will be forwarded to the University's Educational Ethics Sub-Committee for final approval.

This student's Ethics Approval Form must be resubmitted after the student has made the **required** modifications indicated in the PREP's feedback.

Name of Reviewer 1 (Psychology Team Member / Unit Leader / Supervisor)	Ameerah Khadaroo	Date <i>(dd/mm/yyyy)</i>	20/02/2025
Name of Reviewer 2 (PREP Chair / Deputy Chair)		Date <i>(dd/mm/yyyy)</i>	
Signature	Reviewer 1 		Reviewer 2

Approval of University's Educational Ethics Sub-Committee (EESC)

All 'more than minimal risk' documents will be sent to EESC.

- The Educational Ethics Subcommittee (EESC) recommends that:

This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as **minimal ethical risk**

This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as **more than minimal ethical risk**

This student's Ethics Approval Form must be resubmitted, and the following modifications should be made (see below):

Required Modifications List
(if applicable)

1)

Suggested List	Modifications <i>(if applicable)</i>	1)	
Name		Date <i>(dd/mm/yyyy)</i>	
Signature <i>Chair of EESC</i>			

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Version 1, Dated 28/01/2025

Study title: Investigating the Influence of Fictional Literature on Fashion Consumer Behaviour

Introduction

My name is Tia Joshi and I am a student at London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London (UAL). You are being invited to take part in the above research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand what the study involves. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information. If you are happy to take part, you will be asked to provide consent before engaging with the study.

What is the purpose of the study?

The aim of this study is to explore how fictional literature and characters influence fashion preferences and consumer behaviour. By participating, you'll help uncover how storytelling, whether in books or other forms, plays a role in the way people make fashion choices and respond to fashion-related marketing.

Your responses will contribute to research that explores the intersection of psychology, consumer behaviour, and the power of storytelling, providing valuable insights for brands seeking to connect with audiences in a more meaningful way.

Who can take part in this study?

This study is open to people who are 18+ and can be from all backgrounds: any gender, occupation and ethnicity. Readers and non-readers are welcome, the more insights, the better.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to take part if you do not wish to.

What will I be required to do if I take part?

In this study, you'll help explore how fictional stories and characters influence fashion preferences and consumer behaviour. We're interested in understanding how elements like nostalgia, personal connections to stories, and emotional engagement with fictional characters shape the way people think about and choose fashion.

By taking part, first you will be asked to give your consent for the use of your responses and data. Then, you'll be asked to complete a short Qualtrics questionnaire that will take 10-15 minutes. It will be anonymous, however, you will be asked to give your age, occupation, gender and ethnicity. You'll evaluate fashion descriptions inspired by different genres and characters. You will also answer two short psychometric scales, followed by a final debrief form

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

While we do not anticipate significant risks, there are some potential disadvantages or emotional risks involved in taking part in this study. The questions in the survey may trigger some personal reflections or emotions related to nostalgia or escapism. For example, if a participant has strong emotional connections to certain books or characters, they might experience temporary feelings of longing or sadness. These effects are likely to be short-lived and should not persist after completing the survey.

If you feel any discomfort or distress during the study, you are free to stop at any time. You can also choose not to answer any questions that you find upsetting or uncomfortable without any consequences.

If you experience any emotional distress during or after completing the survey, you can access several support resources. These include the Mind charity (<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support>), the Samaritans helpline (116 123), or NHS counselling services (<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/free-therapy-or-counselling.aspx>). In addition, we will include links to relaxation exercises and self-help resources in the Debriefing Sheet, which may help you feel more at ease.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Your answers will help us see how storytelling can shape the way people approach fashion and engage with fashion-related marketing and your insights will contribute to research that examines the connection between psychology, consumer behaviour, and the power of storytelling.

This information will help brands develop better marketing strategies and connect with their audiences in a more meaningful way. By participating in this study, you'll have the opportunity

to reflect on how fictional stories and characters influence your own fashion preferences, which may offer personal insights into your own consumer behaviour and emotional connections to storytelling. This could help you better understand how stories, nostalgia, and escapism shape your decisions in areas like fashion.

From a wider view, your participation will contribute to research that links psychology with consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of fashion. This study aims to enhance the understanding of how psychological factors, such as nostalgia and escapism, influence purchasing decisions. By using quantitative data analysis to explore these links, the research will help solidify the view that psychology is a science grounded in data and measurable outcomes. Your involvement in this study will contribute to a more empirical approach to understanding the link between psychology and consumer behaviour, providing valuable insights for both psychology and the fashion industry. This is a new angle and will fill in a gap in literature that has remained untouched until now.

How will my information be used?

Any data obtained will be used solely for research purposes. This also applies to personal data, which will be used with your consent.

You can stop taking part in the study at any time while completing it, without giving a reason, and without experiencing any detriment. You can withdraw from the study by simply closing your browser window. All incomplete responses will be deleted. It will not be possible for you to withdraw your data after you submit your responses. This is because the study is anonymous and it is therefore impossible to identify your responses among those of other participants.

All data will be accessible to me and the relevant staff at the London College of Fashion. The anonymised file containing no personal data may be analysed using specialised software on a password-protected computer. When this is the case, the data file may be stored temporarily on the password-protected computer and deleted immediately afterwards. The anonymised data will be stored on systems managed by UAL for a period of 1 year after the end of the project.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results will be written up as part of my dissertation for the BSc (Hons) Psychology of Fashion at The London College of Fashion. The results may also be presented as part of the Graduate showcase in a new format however, no identifying information will be included

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions, require more information about this study, or would like to receive a summary of the study results when they are ready, please email me, the researcher, at t.joshi0320221@arts.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

This study has been approved by the Psychology Research Ethics Panel at London College of Fashion, UAL. If you have any concerns about the study, you can contact my supervisor, Dr Mason Silveira at m.silveira@fashion.arts.ac.uk

They will do their best to answer your query.

If you have further concerns or wish to complain about the study, please contact researchethics@arts.ac.uk.

Thank you for reading this Information Sheet and for considering taking part in this research.

CONSENT FORM

Version 1, Dated 28/01/2025

Study title: Investigating the Influence of Fictional Literature on Fashion Consumer Behaviour

Researcher's name: Tia Joshi

Please complete this form after you have read the Participant Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to participate.

If you decide to participate, please tick each of the boxes below to consent to different elements of this study. Please note that you may be deemed ineligible to participate if you do not consent to any of the elements.

Item no.	Item	Tick
1.	I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.	
2.	I confirm that I am at least 18 years of age.	
3.	I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary.	
4.	I understand that this study is anonymous and therefore I will not be able to withdraw my data after submitting them.	
5.	I understand how my data will be stored and consent to the processing of all data for the purposes explained to me.	
6.	I understand the potential disadvantages and risks of participating and the support that will be available to me should I become distressed during the course of the research.	
7.	I understand that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me in any reports or publications.	
8.	I consent to my data being used in written-up or published work resulting from this research.	

9.	I understand that honesty is important to the research and will do my best to answer the questions accurately and honestly.	
10.	I agree to take part in this study.	

DEBRIEFING SHEET

Version 1, Dated 28/01/2025

Study title: Investigating the Influence of Fictional Literature on Fashion Consumer Behaviour

Researcher's name: Tia Joshi

Researcher's email address: t.joshi0320221@arts.ac.uk

Thank you for taking part in this study! Below is some more information about the aims of the study and what happens next.

What are the aims of this study and what are we expecting to find?

The aim of this study is to investigate how factors such as nostalgia, escapism, and emotional engagement with fictional characters/ literature impact fashion preferences and consumer decisions. Through the questionnaire, we examined how different descriptions of fashion items, comparing responses to descriptions inspired by fictional stories to regular utilitarian descriptions, might affect your thoughts on clothing and the types of advertising you find appealing and get more involved with.

The study specifically looked at how individuals' emotional connections to characters and stories could influence fashion choices. By exploring these psychological concepts, we hope to better understand how storytelling-driven marketing could connect with audiences and influence their purchasing behaviour.

This study also sought to evaluate the role of nostalgia in driving consumer preferences and how escapism could influence engagement with fashion. Using quantitative data analysis, we aim to uncover the links between these psychological factors and fashion choices.

- H1: Readers will show a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to non-readers.
- H2: Participants with higher nostalgia scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions than those with lower nostalgia scores.
- H3: Participants with higher escapism scores will exhibit a stronger involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions compared to those with lower escapism scores.
- H4: Participants scoring high on both nostalgia and escapism will show the strongest involvement with storytelling-driven descriptions

What are some of the benefits that may result from this study?

Your answers will help us understand how storytelling influences fashion choices and engagement with marketing. By participating, you'll reflect on how fictional stories and characters shape your fashion preferences, providing personal insights into your consumer behaviour.

On a broader scale, your participation contributes to research linking psychology with consumer behaviour, especially in fashion. This study examines how psychological factors like nostalgia and escapism affect purchasing decisions, using quantitative analysis to solidify the connection between psychology and consumer behaviour. Your involvement will help fill a gap in existing research, offering valuable insights for both psychology and the fashion industry.

Where can you find more information about this research topic?

If you're interested in learning more about the topics covered in this study, there are several resources available to explore further. You can read about the role of fictional characters in psychological exploration and emotional responses in this research article on ResearchGate: [The role of fictional characters in psychological exploration, personal experiences, emotional responses](#).

For more on escapism and its effects, you can check out this article on Verywell Health: [Escapism: What it is, Why People Use it, and How to Cope](#).

Additionally, the Financial Times offers insights into how storytelling and consumer behaviour intersect in the modern world: [FT Article on Storytelling and Consumer Behaviour](#). These resources will provide further context and in-depth exploration of the themes discussed in this study.

What should you do if you need support at the end of the study?

If you experience any emotional distress or need support after completing the study, please don't hesitate to reach out to a GP or family doctor, who can guide you to local psychological services. Additionally, there are several online resources available to help you restore your mood and well-being:

- Mind charity (UK): <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support>
- Samaritans helpline (UK): Call 116 123 for confidential emotional support.
- NHS Therapy Services (UK): [Mental health conditions - NHS](#)
- Get Self Help: <http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk> for self-help tools and exercises.
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation Exercise (YouTube):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=912eRrbes2g>

If you feel the need for more personalised support, please also consider speaking with a mental health professional, who can offer tailored advice and guidance.

Remember, you can always contact these services or your GP for further assistance, and they are here to support you if you need it

Contact details

If you have more questions about the study or would like to request a summary of the findings when they are ready, please contact me using the email address provided above. If this study has harmed you in any way or you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the study, you can contact researchethics@arts.ac.uk.

Thank you once again for your contribution to the study!

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Instagram story advert:

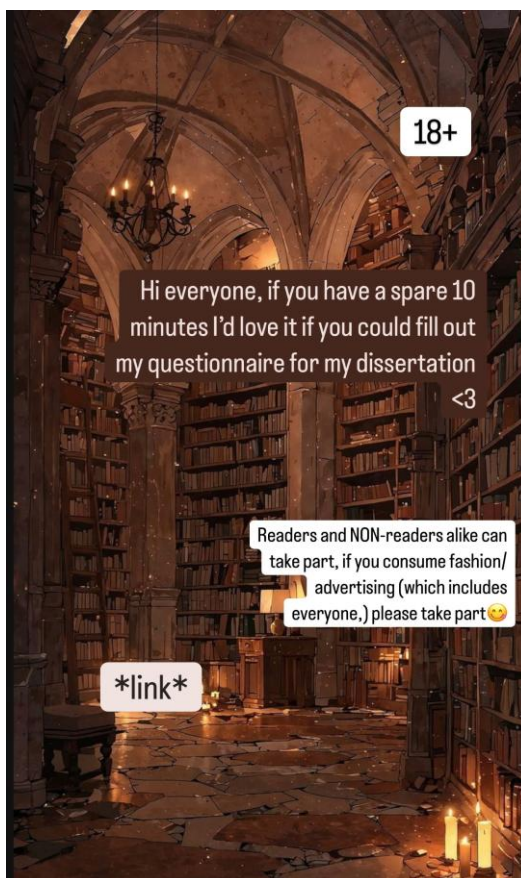
Backgrounds

from

Pinterest:

<https://i.pinimg.com/236x/1c/4d/a6/1c4da651dd52a77cd2c928245b5bc94b.jpg>

<https://i.pinimg.com/236x/f7/16/27/f7162781585bffc54835ea674e473826.jpg>



LinkedIn post:

×  Anyone ▾

🕒 Post

Hi everyone, as part of my dissertation research at UAL i'm exploring the link between fictional literature and consumer behaviour. I'll be investigating concepts such as nostalgia and escapism alongside. 18+

It would be greatly appreciated if you could fill in my questionnaire, it will take around 10 minutes.

Readers and NON-readers alike are welcome to answer, all ages and backgrounds!
Thank you:)

PS. Feel free to share with your network too

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire questions (Qualtrics layout not yet completed):

-Age

-Ethnicity

White, Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups, Asian, Black or/African American, Arab, Other, Prefer not to say

-Gender

Male, Female, Non-binary/ Third Gender , Prefer not to say

-Occupation

(Free text response, space to add their specific occupation)

-Reader or Non-reader

IF READER:

-Frequency of reading: Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Rarely, Never

-Fiction or Non-fiction preference: Fiction, non-fiction

-Favourite genre? Romance, Fantasy, Crime, OTHER

(Space to add other favourite genres)

-Are you a part of a book community? Eg. BookTok, a Book club, Reddit etc.?

YES/NO, WHICH?

(space to add which community)

EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS DIFFER HERE

(SEE APPENDIX 3 FOR DIFFERENT CONDITIONS OF THIS SECTION, the three garments will be shown in each condition but with a different set of descriptions according to either the control condition (Utilitarian) or a different fictional genre condition: ROMANCE, FANTASY OR CRIME/ MURDER MYSTERY.

The questions that follow each garment will remain the same across all conditions)

APPENDIX 3

EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS START HERE

(Descriptions will differ in accordance to the experimental condition, for instance in the Utilitarian condition, all descriptions for the garments will be ones in blue, Romance condition, all descriptions for the three garments will be the pink text. For the fantasy, all descriptions will be the green and so on. ASOS WAS USED AS A MOCK UP WEBSITE)

1) Trench Coat:

(Unisex garments were used)

https://images.ikrix.com/product_images/original/burberry-trench-coats-islington-classic-trench-coat-00000165770f00s001.jpg



INSERT EXPERIMENTAL DESCRIPTION HERE

Or 3 payments of £21.67 with 18% credit option. Check you can afford and repay.

PSST! NEW HERE! Get 10% off selected styles* With code:

COLOUR:

SIZE: [Size Guide](#)

Please select

ADD TO BAG

Free delivery on orders over £40.00. Standard delivery £4.30

Free returns on qualifying orders.

[View Delivery & Returns rates](#)

This product has shipping restrictions.

Product Details

Brand

Size & Fit

CONTROL- UTILITARIAN DESCRIPTION

"A water-resistant beige trench coat designed for practicality. Features deep pockets, a double-breasted front, and a secure belt for optimal fit and function."

2- ROMANCE DESCRIPTION

"This beige trench coat flows effortlessly in the rain, perfect for a misty stroll through cobblestone streets or an unexpected rendezvous under city lights."

3- FANTASY DESCRIPTION

"Crafted from weatherproofed hides, this trench coat is fit for adventurers seeking secrets in enchanted forests, its deep pockets ready for magical trinkets."

4- CRIME/ MURDER MYSTERY DESCRIPTION

"Dark and double-breasted, this trench coat is a detective's trusted companion, with deep pockets concealing tools of the trade or untold secrets."

Questions to follow garment and description:

(Dugan et al., 2021) [\(PDF\) When Cause-Marketing Backfires: Differential Effects of One-for-One Promotions on Hedonic and Utilitarian Products](#)

[-How likely would you be to purchase the product described? \(Purchase intention scale\)](#)

[Scale from 1-9 Not willing at all to Very willing](#)

(Zaichkowsky, 1994) [The personal involvement inventory: Reduction, revision, and application to advertising.](#)

Appendix A
Revised Personal Involvement Inventory

To me (object to be judged) is:

1.	important	.....	unimportant*
2.	boring	.....	interesting
3.	relevant	.....	irrelevant*
4.	exciting	.....	unexciting*
5.	means nothing	.....	means a lot to me
6.	appealing	.....	unappealing*
7.	fascinating	.....	mundane*
8.	worthless	.....	valuable
9.	involving	.....	uninvolving*
10.	not needed	.....	needed

* indicates item is reverse scored.

2) Chunky Knit Sweater

Possible picture examples:

Sourced from –

[Jake cable-knit sweater in](#)



INSERT EXPERIMENTAL DESCRIPTION HERE

Or 3 payments of £21.67 with 18+ credit option. Check you can afford and repay.

PSST! NEW HERE! Get 10% off selected styles* With code:

COLOUR:

SIZE: [Size Guide](#)

Please select

ADD TO BAG

Free delivery on orders over £40.00. Standard delivery £4.50

Free returns on qualifying orders.

[View Delivery & Returns rates](#)

[This product has shipping restrictions.](#)

Product Details

Brand

Size & Fit

"A thick, soft-knit sweater made from high-quality wool. Its relaxed fit and durable stitching provide reliable warmth for colder days."

"This soft-knit sweater wraps you in cosy warmth, perfect for curling up by the fire or walking hand-in-hand through a crisp autumn evening."

"Woven by skilled artisans of the Northern Wilds, this chunky sweater shields travellers from biting winds and whispers of ancient magic."

"This heavy-knit sweater, faintly unravelling at the cuffs, was left behind at a crime scene, a subtle witness to a fateful encounter."

(Dugan et al., 2021) [\(PDF\) When Cause-Marketing Backfires: Differential Effects of One-for-One Promotions on Hedonic and Utilitarian Products](#) To measure purchase intention:

[-How likely would you be to purchase the product described?](#)

[Scale from 1-9 Not willing at all to Very willing](#)

Appendix A
Revised Personal Involvement Inventory

		To me (object to be judged) is:						
1.	important	—	.	.	.	.	.	unimportant*
2.	boring	—	.	.	.	.	.	interesting
3.	relevant	—	.	.	.	.	.	irrelevant*
4.	exciting	—	.	.	.	.	.	unexciting*
5.	means nothing	—	.	.	.	.	.	means a lot to me
6.	appealing	—	.	.	.	.	.	unappealing*
7.	fascinating	—	.	.	.	.	.	mundane*
8.	worthless	—	.	.	.	.	.	valuable
9.	involving	—	.	.	.	.	.	uninvolving*
10.	not needed	—	.	.	.	.	.	needed

* indicates item is reverse scored.

3) Leather Boots

Possible picture examples:

Sourced from –

<https://images.esellerpro.com/2189/1/492/460/5269-Black-Heritage-Ankle-Motorcycle-Boot-0.jpg>



INSERT EXPERIMENTAL DESCRIPTION HERE

Or 3 payments of £21.67 with 18+ credit option. Check you can afford and repay.

PSSTI NEW HERE! Get 10% off selected styles* With code: [redacted]

COLOUR: [redacted]

SIZE: [Size Guide](#)

Please select

ADD TO BAG

Free delivery on orders over £40.00. Standard delivery £4.50

Free returns on qualifying orders.

[View Delivery & Returns rates](#)

This product has shipping restrictions.

Product Details

Brand

Size & Fit

"Sturdy leather boots with a durable sole and reinforced stitching. Designed for long-lasting wear, they offer ankle-high coverage for everyday reliability."

"Elegant yet sturdy, these leather boots are perfect for wandering through dewy meadows or cobblestone streets in search of quiet moments."

"Forged from enchanted leather, these ankle boots are favoured by adventurers crossing rugged terrains, their soles imbued with resilience."

"Polished and precise, these leather boots leave faint imprints on rain-soaked pavement—a silent witness to the unfolding mystery."

(Dugan et al., 2021) [\(PDF\) When Cause-Marketing Backfires: Differential Effects of One-for-One Promotions on Hedonic and Utilitarian Products](#)

[-How likely would you be to purchase the product described?](#)

[Scale from 1-9 Not willing at all to Very willing](#)

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Journal of Advertising

Appendix A
Revised Personal Involvement Inventory

		To me (object to be judged) is:						
1.	important	—	:	:	:	:	:	unimportant*
2.	boring	—	:	:	:	:	:	interesting
3.	relevant	—	:	:	:	:	:	irrelevant*
4.	exciting	—	:	:	:	:	:	unexciting*
5.	means nothing	—	:	:	:	:	:	means a lot to me
6.	appealing	—	:	:	:	:	:	unappealing*
7.	fascinating	—	:	:	:	:	:	mundane*
8.	worthless	—	:	:	:	:	:	valuable
9.	involving	—	:	:	:	:	:	uninvolving*
10.	not needed	—	:	:	:	:	:	needed

* indicates item is reverse scored.

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Appendix D: Evaluative Commentary

Statistics

		CONTCONDU TIL	EXPCONDRO M	EXPCONDFAN T	EXPCONDCRI ME
N	Valid	36	35	34	35
	Missing	104	105	106	105

Would you describe yourself as a...

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Reader	77	55.0	55.0	55.0
	Non-reader	63	45.0	45.0	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

ETHNICITY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	WHITE	56	40.0	40.0	40.0
	BLACK	24	17.1	17.1	57.1
	ASIAN	35	25.0	25.0	82.1
	MIXED	20	14.3	14.3	96.4
	OTHER	4	2.9	2.9	99.3
	PREFERNOTTOSAY	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

How do you describe yourself?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	40	28.6	28.6	28.6
	Female	97	69.3	69.3	97.9
	Non-binary / third gender	3	2.1	2.1	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Employment status over the last three months?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Working full-time	51	36.4	36.4	36.4
	Working part-time	29	20.7	20.7	57.1
	Unemployed and looking for work	6	4.3	4.3	61.4
	Student	50	35.7	35.7	97.1
	Retired	3	2.1	2.1	99.3
	Other	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Are you a part of any book communities? Eg. book clubs, BookTok, Reddit etc.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	12.9	23.4	23.4
	No	59	42.1	76.6	100.0
	Total	77	55.0	100.0	
Missing	System	63	45.0		
Total		140	100.0		

What is your favourite genre?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Romance	24	17.1	31.2	31.2
	Fantasy	18	12.9	23.4	54.5
	Crime/ Murder Mystery	13	9.3	16.9	71.4
	Other	22	15.7	28.6	100.0
	Total	77	55.0	100.0	
Missing	System	63	45.0		
Total		140	100.0		

Tests of Normality

	CONDITION	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
INVOLVEMENTSCORES	UTILITARIAN	.108	28	.200 [*]	.942	28	.121
	ROMANCE	.086	26	.200 [*]	.955	26	.308
	FANTASY	.199	25	.012	.839	25	.001
	CRIME	.103	26	.200 [*]	.971	26	.644
PURCHINTSCORES	UTILITARIAN	.134	28	.200 [*]	.954	28	.249
	ROMANCE	.169	26	.054	.858	26	.002
	FANTASY	.128	25	.200 [*]	.924	25	.063
	CRIME	.103	26	.200 [*]	.971	26	.644
NOSTALGIAMEAN	UTILITARIAN	.099	28	.200 [*]	.974	28	.679
	ROMANCE	.237	26	<.001	.890	26	.009
	FANTASY	.196	25	.014	.931	25	.091
	CRIME	.115	26	.200 [*]	.979	26	.856
CNSESCAPMEAN	UTILITARIAN	.167	28	.043	.944	28	.142
	ROMANCE	.124	26	.200 [*]	.975	26	.746
	FANTASY	.159	25	.104	.945	25	.189
	CRIME	.139	26	.200 [*]	.940	26	.136

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Tests of Normality

	Would you describe yourself as a...	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
INVOLVEMENTSCORES	Reader	.095	56	.200 [*]	.965	56	.106
	Non-reader	.130	49	.037	.944	49	.020
PURCHINTSCORES	Reader	.068	56	.200 [*]	.975	56	.308
	Non-reader	.128	49	.043	.932	49	.007
NOSTALGIAMEAN	Reader	.149	56	.003	.958	56	.048
	Non-reader	.117	49	.092	.953	49	.049
CNSESCAPMEAN	Reader	.104	56	.200 [*]	.967	56	.129
	Non-reader	.151	49	.007	.933	49	.008

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

Would you describe yourself as a...	UTILVSSTORY	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Reader	1.00	4.1451	1.13290	17
	2.00	3.8442	1.18613	52
	Total	3.9184	1.17228	69
Non-reader	1.00	3.7378	1.30881	15
	2.00	4.4904	1.16531	38
	Total	4.2774	1.24280	53
Total	1.00	3.9542	1.21601	32
	2.00	4.1170	1.21398	90
	Total	4.0743	1.21161	122

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^{a,b}

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
INVOLVEMENTSCORES	Based on Mean	.285	3	118	.836
	Based on Median	.313	3	118	.816
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.313	3	116.450	.816
	Based on trimmed mean	.237	3	118	.870

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Dependent variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

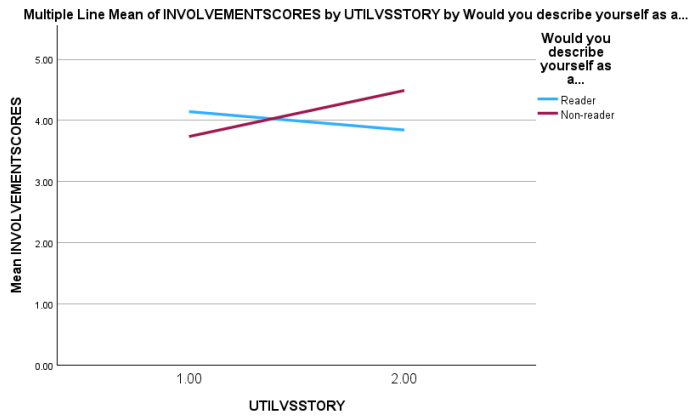
b. Design: Intercept + RDRNONRDR + UTILVSSTORY + RDRNONRDR * UTILVSSTORY

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	12.885 ^a	7	1.841	1.274	.270	.073
Intercept	2008.428	1	2008.428	1389.799	<.001	.924
RDRNONRDR	4.334	1	4.334	2.999	.086	.026
CONDITION	2.175	3	.725	.502	.682	.013
RDRNONRDR * CONDITION	7.426	3	2.475	1.713	.168	.043
Error	164.744	114	1.445			
Total	2202.836	122				
Corrected Total	177.628	121				

a. R Squared = .073 (Adjusted R Squared = .016)



Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
INVOLVEMENTSCORES	Equal variances assumed	.434	.513	-2.046	51	.023	.046	-.75257	.36787	-1.49110	-.01404
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.944	23.271	.032	.064	-.75257	.38721	-1.55307	.04793

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
INVOLVEMENTSCORES	Equal variances assumed	.711	.406	.944	30	.176	.353	.40732	.43153	-.47398	1.28862
	Equal variances not assumed			.935	27.943	.179	.358	.40732	.43554	-.48493	1.29957

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
INVOLVEMENTSCORES	Equal variances assumed	.100	.753	-2.571	88	.006	.012	-.64612	.25128	-1.14549	-.14675
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.578	80.683	.006	.012	-.64612	.25058	-1.14473	-.14751

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^{a,b}

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
PURCHINTSCORES	Based on Mean	1.992	3	118	.119
	Based on Median	1.993	3	118	.119
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.993	3	114.540	.119
	Based on trimmed mean	2.041	3	118	.112

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Dependent variable: PURCHINTSCORES

b. Design: Intercept + RDRNONRDR + UTILVSSTORY + RDRNONRDR * UTILVSSTORY

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: PURCHINTSCORES

Would you describe yourself as a...	UTILVSSTORY	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Reader	1.00	5.3922	1.70063	17
	2.00	4.1955	1.75205	52
	Total	4.4903	1.80348	69
Non-reader	1.00	5.6889	1.01157	15
	2.00	5.4123	1.70724	38
	Total	5.4906	1.53793	53
Total	1.00	5.5313	1.40623	32
	2.00	4.7093	1.82647	90
	Total	4.9249	1.75846	122

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: PURCHINTSCORES

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	49.158 ^a	3	16.386	5.949	<.001	.131
Intercept	2502.550	1	2502.550	908.627	<.001	.885
RDRNONRDR	13.393	1	13.393	4.863	.029	.040
UTILVSSTORY	12.690	1	12.690	4.608	.034	.038
RDRNONRDR * UTILVSSTORY	4.949	1	4.949	1.797	.183	.015
Error	324.997	118	2.754			
Total	3333.177	122				
Corrected Total	374.155	121				

a. R Squared = .131 (Adjusted R Squared = .109)

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: PURCHINTSCORES

Would you describe yourself as a...	CONDITION	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Reader	UTILITARIAN	5.3922	1.70063	17
	ROMANCE	4.5463	1.86453	18
	FANTASY	4.3556	2.16929	15
	CRIME	3.7368	1.17793	19
	Total	4.4903	1.80348	69
Non-reader	UTILITARIAN	5.6889	1.01157	15
	ROMANCE	6.3846	.96077	13
	FANTASY	5.2381	2.25103	14
	CRIME	4.4848	.93361	11
	Total	5.4906	1.53793	53
Total	UTILITARIAN	5.5313	1.40623	32
	ROMANCE	5.3172	1.78593	31
	FANTASY	4.7816	2.21516	29
	CRIME	4.0111	1.13851	30
	Total	4.9249	1.75846	122

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^{a,b}

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
PURCHINTSCORES	Based on Mean	3.029	7	114	.006
	Based on Median	2.284	7	114	.033
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	2.284	7	86.816	.035
	Based on trimmed mean	2.974	7	114	.007

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Dependent variable: PURCHINTSCORES

b. Design: Intercept + RDRNONRDR + CONDITION + RDRNONRDR * CONDITION

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: PURCHINTSCORES

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	77.931 ^a	7	11.133	4.284	<.001	.208
Intercept	2939.585	1	2939.585	1131.282	<.001	.908
RDRNONRDR	26.278	1	26.278	10.113	.002	.081
CONDITION	39.078	3	13.026	5.013	.003	.117
RDRNONRDR * CONDITION	9.669	3	3.223	1.240	.298	.032
Error	296.224	114	2.598			
Total	3333.177	122				
Corrected Total	374.155	121				

a. R Squared = .208 (Adjusted R Squared = .160)

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: PURCHINTSCORES

	(I) CONDITION	(J) CONDITION	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	UTILITARIAN	ROMANCE	.2140	.40623	.952	-.8451	1.2732
		FANTASY	.7496	.41328	.272	-.3279	1.8272
		CRIME	1.5201*	.40965	.002	.4520	2.5882
	ROMANCE	UTILITARIAN	-.2140	.40623	.952	-1.2732	.8451
		FANTASY	-.5356	.41644	.574	-.5502	1.6214
		CRIME	1.3061*	.41284	.011	.2297	2.3825
	FANTASY	UTILITARIAN	-.7496	.41328	.272	-1.8272	.3279
		ROMANCE	-.5356	.41644	.574	-1.6214	.5502
		CRIME	.7705	.41978	.262	-.3240	1.8650
	CRIME	UTILITARIAN	-1.5201*	.40965	.002	-2.5882	-.4520
		ROMANCE	-1.3061*	.41284	.011	-2.3825	-.2297
		FANTASY	-.7705	.41978	.262	-1.8650	.3240
Bonferroni	UTILITARIAN	ROMANCE	.2140	.40623	1.000	-.8767	1.3048
		FANTASY	.7496	.41328	.434	-.3601	1.8593
		CRIME	1.5201*	.40965	.002	.4202	2.6201
	ROMANCE	UTILITARIAN	-.2140	.40623	1.000	-1.3048	.8767
		FANTASY	-.5356	.41644	1.000	-.5826	1.6538
		CRIME	1.3061*	.41284	.012	.1976	2.4146
	FANTASY	UTILITARIAN	-.7496	.41328	.434	-1.8593	.3601
		ROMANCE	-.5356	.41644	1.000	-1.6538	.5826
		CRIME	.7705	.41978	.414	-.3566	1.8976
	CRIME	UTILITARIAN	-1.5201*	.40965	.002	-2.6201	-.4202
		ROMANCE	-1.3061*	.41284	.012	-2.4146	-.1976
		FANTASY	-.7705	.41978	.414	-1.8976	.3566

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square(Error) = 2.598.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.552	3	1.517	1.481	.245 ^b
	Residual	24.585	24	1.024		
	Total	29.137	27			

a. Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

b. Predictors: (Constant), What is your age?, CNSESCAPMEAN, NOSTALGIAMEAN

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.550	1.187		1.306	.204
	NOSTALGIAMEAN	.143	.189	.154	.753	.459
	CNSESCAPMEAN	.444	.285	.307	1.557	.133
	What is your age?	.051	.130	.078	.395	.696

a. Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	38.719	3	12.906	12.581	<.001 ^b
	Residual	74.890	73	1.026		
	Total	113.609	76			

a. Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

b. Predictors: (Constant), What is your age?, NOSTALGIAMEAN, CNSESCAPMEAN

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.858	.610		1.407	.164
	NOSTALGIAMEAN	.458	.105	.481	4.368	<.001
	CNSESCAPMEAN	.249	.161	.173	1.545	.127
	What is your age?	.053	.078	.066	.681	.498

a. Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.239	2	20.119	20.004	<.001 ^b
	Residual	102.587	102	1.006		
	Total	142.826	104			

a. Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES

b. Predictors: (Constant), CNSESCAPMEAN, NOSTALGIAMEAN

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.118	.499		2.241	.027
	NOSTALGIAMEAN	.382	.089	.404	4.279	<.001
	CNSESCAPMEAN	.297	.136	.206	2.180	.032

a. Dependent Variable: INVOLVEMENTSCORES