

As Seen in Vogue: A Century of American Fashion in Advertising

Daniel Delis Hill

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Fascinating Fashions: In the 1920s, American women morphed from alabaster Victorian homemakers to painted jazz babies. The conformist '50s mom vacuuming in heels made way for braless, mini-skirted, go-go-booted iconoclasts. Thirty years later, the opulence of the styles in TV's prime-time soaps became outré in the wake of grunge and the heroin chic look.

The depictions of dramatic, daring, and dazzling revolutions in women's clothing from one era to the next document much more than fashion. Daniel Delis Hill, author of *As Seen in Vogue: A Century of American Fashion in Advertising* (Texas Tech University Press, 32 color and 600 b/w illustrations, 226 pages, hardcover, \$45.00, 0-89672-534-0) has an extensive background in the fashion business, including serving as assistant professor in the Department of Fashion at Virginia Commonwealth University. He provides a lavish chronicle of the transformations in women's roles and self-image that were sparked by the relationships among the ready-to-wear clothing industry, fashion journalism, and mass-media advertising.

Hill delivers evidence of these transformations in more than 600 fashion ads that appeared in *Vogue* from the magazine's debut in 1893 through the next ten decades; the ads are often as provocative as the styles they feature. A triptych of couture ads from the 1980s, for example, reflects the extravagance and exhibitionism of the high-end glamour that was influenced by the presence of a Hollywood couple in the White House, TV shows like *Dynasty* and *Dallas*, and the media's and public's obsession with fantasies of wealth, status, and American royalty.

A trunk full of design and delight.

NANCY SUNDSTROM (August 18, 2009)

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