

A Study on Trends of Women's Jean Pants -Focus on Jean Pants in the American Online Shops-

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I. Introduction

The design and manufacture of blue jeans originated in the 1800's for miners during the California gold rush in the United States.¹⁾ The change in jeans has been dramatic. In the 1950's, purism image for jeans reigned. The newer and bluer jeans looked, the better. Rolled cuffs revealing the reverse weave of the fabrics provided contrast. Old denim became popular in the 1960's. The frayed look was in. Colorful patchwork made jeans a living quilt, and triangular inserts were sewn into straight-legged jeans to transform them into groovy bellbottoms. Some folks even split their jeans at the leg seam, added grommets, and laced them back together. In the 1970's, flares were worn with flair. It was a sign of coolness to have the bottoms of unhemmed jeans torn from walking on them. Gay men sandpapered the crotches of their jeans to make them more eye-catching. By the end of the decade, punk rockers safety-pinned the legs of their jeans for the tightest fit ever. Designer jeans ruled the 1980's - the tighter, the better. People would wear their jeans in the tub and sit out in the sun to dry in order to achieve the perfect fit. Jeans were sold stone-washed, acid-washed, and overdyed in acid colors, but that still didn't stop people from bleaching, ripping, and shredding their jeans or from adding beads, jewels, and sequins. In the 1990's, purity was the trend. People like their jeans honest, whether they are faded relics or starched and dry-cleaned to preserve their color and shape.²⁾

Today, jeans are considered a form of world dress, because many people today in both Eastern and Western hemispheres wear them. The possibility of world dress increases the more the media furthers its reach and as clothing like jeans becomes part of a global market place.³⁾ In particular, with fast spread of Internet in the 1990's, chain retailers had the revolutionary idea of apparel retailing on the web. Actually, the many chain retailers, including Levi's, Gap and Guess, started selling merchandise online in late 1997. Therefore, instead of selecting an item for shopping basket, we place it on our wish list by clicking on the appropriate icon.⁴⁾ For

example, in the case of Gap, their online sales have tripled over the past year. The Gap's online business still brings in just a tiny fraction of Gap's \$9 billion in annual sales. But the growth prospects are huge.⁵⁾ In that respect, analyzing the contents of the products in the online shops of the clothing chain's stores is helpful to understand the trends of fashion, because they contain pictures of the main products of their brand.

There were studies on content analysis in the design elements of clothes. Among them, Carmen⁶⁾ accomplished content analysis of the design elements in evening gown as classic study respectively. Carmen used evening gown in 'Vogue' and 'Harpers Bazaar' magazines and measured the skirt width, waist width, and waist length of the dress. The time period studied in 1786 through 1965. The conclusions were that the regularities to some characteristics of fashion in women's dresses over the past 176 years and to relate derivation from the regular cyclical pattern with changes in our social institution. The study of Kwon & Byun⁷⁾ were to identify the design elements and the changing flow of advertisement from 1970's to 1990's by using content analysis of men's magazine. Finding were that the closer to 1990's the more various men's wear styles and backgrounds were advertized and two piece suit was dominated in men's wear during 1970's and 1980's. The brighter and the more various colors appeared in 1990's than 1970's. Lee & Lee⁸⁾ identified fashion trend in the late 1990's by using content analysis of the design elements of wedding dresses in wedding magazine photographs. The conclusions were that dome silhouette, square neckline, and long-tight sleeves of wedding dresses were dominated in the late 1990's. The wedding dress in the late 1990's has become more various in design due to the reflection of changes in society and fashion of everyday garment while the traditional design of the wedding dress has been preserved.

There has been many researches about jeans. Most of the researches concentrated on the history,^{2),9)} the changing meaning of jeans¹⁰⁾ and purchasing behavior toward Jean brands,^{11)~14)} but there were few content analysis. Therefore, this research seeks to analyze the characteristics of a variety of Jean pants featured in online shops' photographs in 2002 spring season. The objectives of this study were to classify the design elements of women's Jean pants in online shops' photographs of Jean companies in America, and identify fashion trends of Jean pants in the 2002 spring season by analyzing the type of design elements.

II. Research Method

Stimuli consisted of 119 photos of Jean pants in the online shops, including the clothing chains' brands such as Levi's, Guess, Gap, Earl Jean, Bisou Bisou and

Rampage. The stimuli were presented in online shops from Feb 1st to Feb 7th, 2002 in America. Sale items were not including in research.

The content analysis method was used to analyze the design elements of Jean pants. The classification of categories was determined by open coding method. The categories were made whenever similar characteristics could be grouped.

The analyzing criteria were 8 major categories in this study: waist rise, legs silhouette, length, color, fabric finishing, fabric content, fly, and detail, which were based on design elements of the Jean pants. Major categories were divided into sub-categories, that were made whenever similar characteristics could be grouped in each major categories. In this way, 8 major categories were composed of 91 sub-categories altogether. For example, the waist rise of Jean pants, which was one of the 8 major categories, could be 3 sub-categorized as standard-rise, low-rise, and super low-rise. The classification of sub-categories in the waist rise, was based on the length from the top of the waistband to the joint seam. In the case of the legs silhouette, it could be 8 sub-categorized as classic fit, skinny straight leg, straight leg, loose fit, boot cut, long & lean, elephant bell, and flare silhouette. The classification of sub-categories in the legs silhouette was based on the fit with legs, shape and width of leg opening in Jean pants.

To increase the validity of the content analysis, 2 graduate students from the Fashion Design Department participated in the analysis which made it a total of 3 participants including the researcher.

III. Results and Discussion

1. Waist rise of Jean pants

The distribution of the waist rise of Jean pants is shown in <Table 1>.

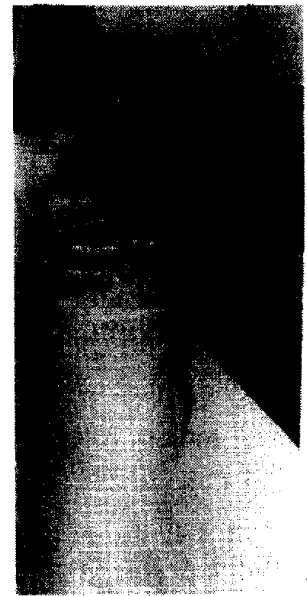
<Table 1> The frequency of waist rise type of Jean pants

	N(%)
standard-rise waist	7 (6.0)
low-rise waist	98 (82.0)
super low-rise waist	14 (12.0)
Total	119 (100.0)

The waist rise of Jean pants can be categorized into standard-rise, low-rise and super low-rise. The classification was based on the length from the top of the waistband to the joint seam. Standard-rise jeans usually run 12 inches. Low-rise jeans have an 8 1/2-inch rise. Super-low jeans run 5 inches. Therefore, low-rise (Fig. 1)

and super-rise jeans show off navel.

Among these waist rises, the most common one was the low-rise, which was found in 82% of Jean pants. For super low-rise, the distribution was 12%; for standard-rise, it was 6%. Therefore, it can be said that the low-rise is the most widely used waist rise for Jean pants in the 2002 spring season. It is the pants formerly known as hip-huggers that have been reincarnated as low-rise jeans.¹⁵⁾ The reason the low-waist jeans are popular is that they are youthful looking and comfortable, and because low-cut jeans are better fit than ordinary natural waist jeans. Also, low-rise jeans allow people to expose all kinds of wonderfully shocking things, in addition to rear-end cleavage, that used to be taboo, and to show pierced navels with sparkly rings.¹⁶⁾ Moreover, some people who love to wear low-waist jeans said it was very sexy, because if they wear low-waist jeans, their hips look bigger and their waists look smaller. Therefore, they look more feminine, though they have to suck in their tummies.¹⁾ The popularity of low-waist jeans was proven one year ago when Levi's introduced its first low-waist jeans with a $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch zipper and an $8\frac{1}{2}$ -inch rise, and then low-waist jeans went from zero to 40% of the business for Levi Strauss & Co. in a year. Designers said that the low cuts are the equivalent of the bikini, that replaced the one-piece suit, and they are the latest key to fashion credibility.¹⁶⁾



<Fig. 1> Low-rise waist jeans (Earl Jean-74, Feb.02)

2. Legs silhouette and length of Jean pants

The distribution of legs silhouette of Jean pants are shown in <Table 2>.

<Table 2> The frequency of legs silhouette of Jean pants

	N(%)
classic fit silhouette	5(4.2)
skinny straight leg silhouette	16(13.4)
straight leg silhouette	11(9.3)
loose fit silhouette	5(4.2)
boot cut silhouette	35(29.4)
long & lean silhouette	25(21.0)
elephant bell silhouette	13(10.9)
flare silhouette	9(7.6)
Total	119(100.0)

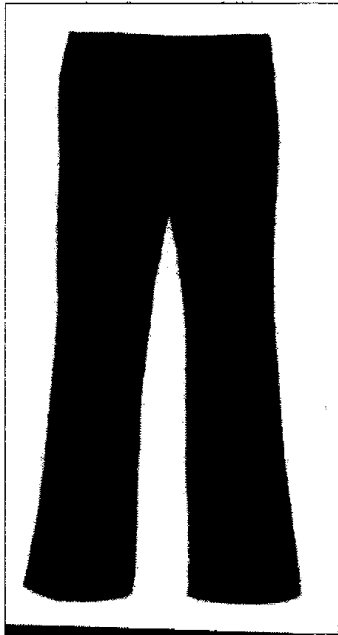
The classification was based on the standard of fit with legs, shape and width of leg opening. The classic fit silhouette had a slight curve through the hips and thighs for relaxed and slightly tapered legs. The skinny straight leg silhouette was slim-fitting and had slightly tapered legs, that was, with a 13-inch leg opening. The straight leg silhouette was slim-fitting with a straight leg, which had a $14\frac{1}{2}$ -inch leg

opening. The loose fit silhouette had loose-fitting straight legs; the leg opening was $17\frac{1}{2}$ -inch. The boot cut silhouette(Fig. 2) was slim-fitting with slightly flared legs,

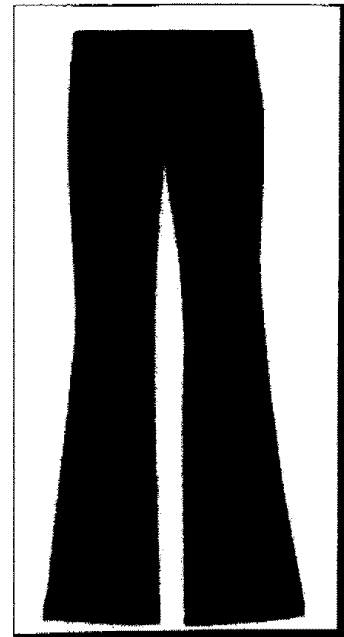
that is, with an $18\frac{1}{2}$ -inch leg opening. The long & lean silhouette(Fig. 3) was

straight through the hips and thighs, with a slight taper at the knee; the leg was flared with a 21-inch leg opening. The elephant bell silhouette(Fig. 4) was straight through the hips and thighs, with a taper at the knee; the leg was flared with a 23 to 25-inch leg opening. It was an exaggerated deformation of the long & lean silhouette. The flare silhouette(Fig. 5) was flared to the hem; the leg opening was 23 inches.

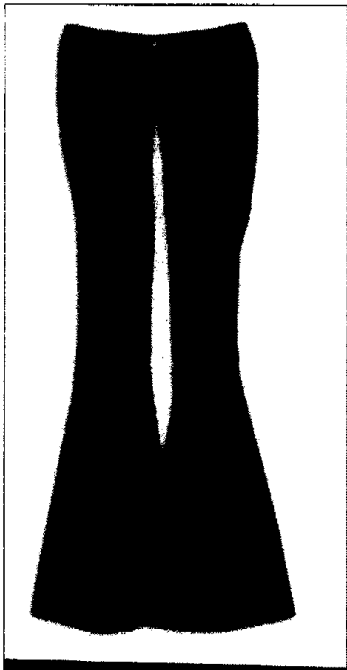
Among these silhouettes, the most common one was the boot cut, accounting for 29.4% of Jean pants having this silhouette. The long & lean silhouette was the next most commonly applied silhouette at 21%. For the skinny straight leg shape, the distribution was 13.4%. For the elephant bell shape, the distribution was 10.9%. Therefore,



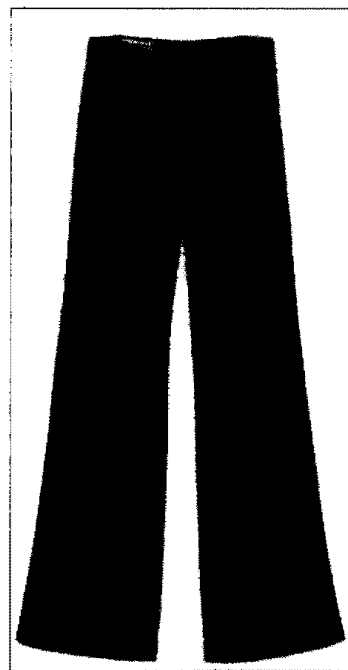
<Fig. 2> Boot cut
silhouette
(Levi's-518R, Feb.02)



<Fig. 3> Long & lean
silhouette in faded washed
with opulence crease wash
(Guess-Y1489129, Feb.02)



<Fig. 4> Elephant bell silhouette with super low-waist (Bisou Bisou-PM540, Feb.02)



<Fig. 5> Flare jeans with shattered Italy washed finishing (Guess-Y2166096, Feb.02)

it can be said that bellbottoms jeans, such as the boot cut and the long & lean silhouette were widely used in the 2002 spring season. The boot cut jeans, the legs are flared to fit over cowboy boot, but look great with city shoes, too. They sit low on the waist and tend to be slim through the hips, so people are in top condition before they pull these on.¹⁷⁾

In terms of the distribution in pants length, the full length was the most common, accounting for 93.3%, as can be seen in <Table 3>. 5% had the mid-calf length, and 1.7% had the ankle length. Based on this survey, the lack of short pants in the results is probably due to the survey being carried out in February.

<Table 3> The frequency of length type of Jean pants

	N(%)
full length	111(93.3)
ankle length	2(1.7)
mid calf length	6(5.0)
Total	119(100.0)

3. Color and fabric finishing of Jean pants

The distribution of color in Jean pants is shown in <Table 4>. The color that was widely used for the Jean pants was indigo (23.6%), faded blue (18.5%) and blue (17.7%). For faded indigo the distribution was 9.3%, and for faded light blue, it was 8.4%. Although their proportion was small, colors such as dark gray, black, and optic white were also used. In particular, the high usage of indigo was supported by the popularity of dark denim, which is on the rise.¹⁸⁾

<Table 4> The frequency of color of Jean pants

	N(%)
optic white	2(1.7)
light blue	9(7.6)
faded light blue	10(8.4)
blue	21(17.7)
faded blue	22(18.5)
indigo	28(23.6)
faded indigo	11(9.3)
dark gray	2(1.7)
faded gray	1(0.8)
faded dark gray	2(1.7)
black	5(4.2)
ochre & black	1(0.8)
faded bluegrass	1(0.8)
faded purple brown	1(0.8)
optic white & blue	1(0.8)
dark blue with white stripes	1(0.8)
light blue with white stripes	1(0.8)
Total	119(100.0)

The distribution of the different kinds of fabric finishing used for the Jean pants is as shown in <Table 5>.

The fabric finishing most widely used for Jean pants was faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat (41.1%), combined with other finishings, such as stone wash, sandblasted wash, hand sanded, opulence crease wash (Fig. 6), bleached stars & stripes (Fig. 7) and rip. The faded washed Jean pants tend to look sexier and more chic. On the other hand, the bleached stars & stripes finishing in Jean pants was worthy of notice because it reflected the patriotism of Americans. In the weeks following since Sept. 11, 2001 (terrorist attacks in America), Americans have been displaying their flags on their apparel, as well as on their front porches, and with red, white, and blue ribbons on their jackets and dresses.¹⁹⁾ The traditional stone wash was the next most-commonly applied fabric finishing, accounting for 28.6%. For rinse for dye, the distribution was 17% and, although their proportion was small, shattered Italy

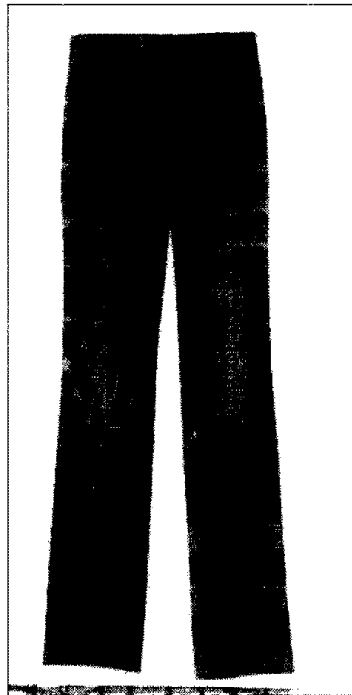
wash (Fig. 5) and tie dyed (Fig. 8) finishings were very interesting methods.

<Table 5> The frequency of fabric finishing of Jean pants

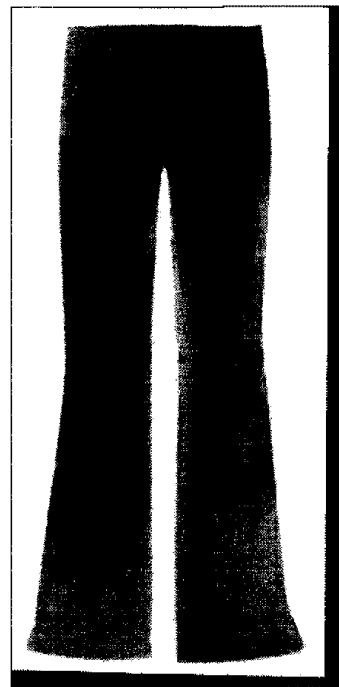
	N(%)	
wash for softness	6(5.0)	
rinse for dye	20(17.0)	
bleached out	2(1.7)	
stone wash	34(28.6)	
sandblasted wash	6(5.0)	
faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat with stone wash	21(17.7)	49(41.1)
faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat with sandblasted wash	8(6.7)	
faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat with hand sanded	1(0.8)	
faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat with opulence crease wash	17(14.3)	
faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat with bleached stars & stripes	1(0.8)	
faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat with rip	1(0.8)	
shattered Italy wash	1(0.8)	
tie dyed	1(0.8)	
Total	119(100.0)	



<Fig. 6> Faded washed jeans at the thighs, knees & seat with opulence crease wash(Earl Jean-74, Feb. 02)



<Fig. 7> Faded washed jeans with bleached stars and stripe (Guess-Y2117192, Feb.02)



<Fig. 8> Tie dyeing finishing Jeans with leather tie fly (Guess-Y2128129, Feb.02)

4. Fabric content, fly and detail of Jean pants

The distribution of fabric content in Jean pants is shown in <Table 6>.

<Table 6> The frequency of fabric content of Jean pants

	N(%)
cotton	77(64.7)
cotton/ lycra	10(8.4)
cotton/ spandex	29(24.5)
polyester/ polyurethane	1(0.8)
cotton/ polyester/ lycra	1(0.8)
cotton/ polyester/ spandex	1(0.8)
Total	119(100.0)

According to the research, Jean pants mainly consisted of 100% cotton (64.7%). The cotton with spandex was the next most-commonly applied fabric content, accounting for 24.5%. For cotton with lycra, the distribution was 8.4%. Cotton with lycra use is increasing in Jean pants these days. The properties of lycra and spandex are very similar. They give the wearer freedom of movement, stretch and comfort. The lycra is more expensive, but can be stretched more creatively than spandex. In

addition, DuPont said that the sexiest jeans in the world, which are made of 96% cotton and 4% Lycra, look like traditional denim, but they are more comfortable, and have a more figure-flattering fit.²⁰⁾

The distribution of the fly of Jean pants is shown in <Table 7>. According to the research, 93.3% of Jean pants had a zip fly in the front. Although their proportion was small, flies such as the button fly(3.3%), the leather tie fly (1.7%) (Fig. 8) and the braided leather lace up fly (1.7%) were also used.

<Table 7> The frequency of fly type of Jean pants

	N(%)
zip fly	111(93.3)
button fly	4(3.3)
leather tie fly	2(1.7)
braided leather lace up fly	2(1.7)
Total	119(100.0)

The distribution of the different kinds of detail are as shown in <Table 8>. Most of the Jean pants had basic five-pockets with no details (50%), but various details, such as wide waistband (7.7%), no waistband with frayed at the waist edge (4.3%), slit in the side hem (2.6%), western style stitched design at the knees (2.6%), contrast stitching (1.7%), silver studs (1.7%) or rhinestones (1.7%) and embroidery were also used.

<Table 8> The frequency of detail of Jean pants

	N(%)
none	59(50.0)
water pick	1(0.8)
embroidery of flower/strawberry	1(0.8)
embroidery of fruit	1(0.8)
embroidery of diamond	1(0.8)
fabric block with side panel & yoke	2(1.7)
heart styled back pocket	2(1.7)
basket weave front pocket	1(0.8)
front arcuate pocket	1(0.8)
front patch pocket	1(0.8)
front welt pocket	1(0.8)
belt wrap around the waist	1(0.8)
no waistband with darted front	2(1.7)
no waistband with frayed at the waist edge	5(4.3)
wide waistband	9(7.7)
braided denim waistband	1(0.8)
extended waistband with rhinestone buckle	2(1.7)

extended yoked tab waist	1(0.8)
slit in the side hem	3(2.6)
tied leather string with long slit hem	1(0.8)
silver studs on the flare hems	1(0.8)
reversed hem	1(0.8)
unfinished hem	1(0.8)
frayed at the waist and hem	2(1.7)
extra long belt loops	1(0.8)
saddleseam detailing	1(0.8)
seamed at the knee	1(0.8)
seamed down the front	1(0.8)
seamed sequins side	1(0.8)
contrast stitching	2(1.7)
western style stitched design at the knees	3(2.6)
stitched stripes at the bottom of the leg	1(0.8)
pin tuck	1(0.8)
grommet	1(0.8)
gingham piping	1(0.8)
rhinestones around the waist and pocket	2(1.7)
star shaped silver studs with front pocket and upper side seam	2(1.7)
Total	119(100.0)

IV. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the heart of the trend is the Jean pants formerly known as hip-huggers reincarnated as low-rise jeans by the results from the content analysis of each design factor of the Jean pants made in the 2002 spring season. Concerning the silhouette, bellbottoms jeans such as boot cut (29.4%) and long & lean (21%) silhouettes were being widely used in the 2002 spring season. These results can be compared with the straight-legged jeans of the 1950's, the tight bellbottoms of the 1960's and 1970's, the tighter jeans of the 1980's, and the minimal styles of the 1990's. Various blue tone colors, such as indigo(23.6%), faded blue(18.5%) and blue (17.7%), are in wide use. The high usage of indigo was supported by the popularity of dark denim, which was on the rise. The fabric finishing that most widely used for Jean pants was faded washed at the thigh, knee & seat (41.1%) combined with other finishings, such as stone wash, sandblasted wash, hand sanded, opulence crease wash, bleached stars & stripe and rip. The faded washed Jean pants look sexier and more chic. The fabric used was mainly 100% cotton, but the cotton with lycra was increasingly being used in Jean pants these days, because the fabric looked like traditional denim, but they were more comfortable, and had a more figure-flattering fit. Most of the Jean pants had five basic pockets with no details(50%), but various details such as wide waistband, no waistband with frayed at the waist edge, slit in the side hem, western style stitched design at the knees, contrast stitching, silver studs or

rhinestones and embroidery were also used.

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