

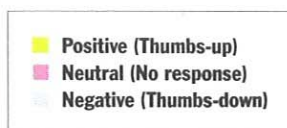
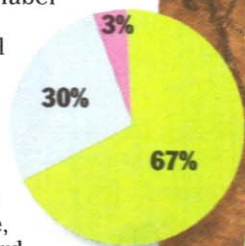
The Kate Debate: Weeding Down Wedding Gowns

KATE MIDDLETON might be keeping mum on whether she's picked Sarah Burton of Alexander McQueen to design her wedding dress, but the royal fiancée did endorse one British label Tuesday — Burberry.

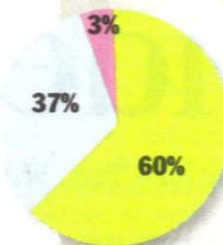
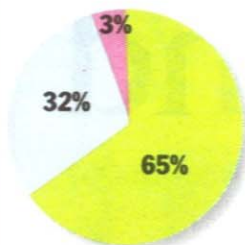
Middleton wore a beige wool cashmere Burberry trench-coat with a frilled hem to a public engagement with Prince William in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on Tuesday. During the trip, the couple visited Belfast's city hall where, after meeting with the city's lord mayor, Middleton spoke to members of the crowd who turned out to see the royal



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SWEET AND GRACEFUL



VISUALS/DATA SOURCE: FIRST INSIGHT

First Insight determined what people expect from Kate Middleton's wedding gown. It should be strapless for sure, and from left, in satin with beaded embroidery and bodice, or chiffon A-line with chapel train and beaded back, or layered in tulle with beading and feathers.

couple. She even gamely tossed a pancake, as part of a Shrove Tuesday event organized by the Northern Ireland Cancer Fund.

The Burberry coat, which Middleton paired with black opaque tights and black court shoes, is part of the label's current spring line, and costs 650 pounds, or about \$1,057 at current exchange.

As for that wedding dress, the questions are flying as to whether the princess bride will go modern and simple or medieval and regal.

WWD thought it would be fun to determine "the people's choice" for Middleton's gown, and — who knows? — she might even be interested in what the common folk think would serve her well. WWD culled

information from First Insight, which used its online interactive gaming software to engage hundreds of consumers in some fantasy royal styling. Typically, First Insight uses its gaming technology to have consumers create virtual stores that they merchandise and set prices for, helping retailers and manufacturers make product decisions and obtain customer knowledge.

Of the 2,700 consumers that First Insight sent its Kate Middleton gaming platform to, 338 participated, and 319 played it all the way through. It took each consumer about five minutes on average to complete. They were asked to vote thumbs-up or thumbs-down on a variety of silhouettes and attributes and from that,

a composite picture of the gown people believe Middleton should wear emerged. The people perceive her as a "timeless beauty" wearing a princess-cut sleeveless gown with either a V-neck or strapless neckline, made of white satin (lace was a close second) with beading, and a long train. Gathering and draping were of less interest. They would also like to see Middleton wear a tiara (fewer were interested in a veil) and to carry roses. Lilies of the valley were a close second.

Overwhelmingly, the findings underscored Middleton's potential to become a major trendsetter regardless of what she wears on her wedding day.

— DAVID MOIN AND NINA JONES, LONDON