

Taylor Williamson, Nahid, Chantal, Emma, Jaiden

Book Club #2 4/14

Chapter 11: Grand Social - Taylor

In chapter 11, it was about Dawson and her journey in the fashion industry. She talked about City of Joy, where women who have been sexually assaulted can go on to create and use the money, they make to help give their kids a better life. Cipriani directed the EFI, and he believed “you cannot have sustainable fashion without a sustainable market. Alemu wants Fair Trade to be sustainable.

Chapter 12: The Ethical Runway - Taylor

In chapter 12, they compared selling fashion to yoghurt – even if it is ethical it needs to be tasteful and attractive to consumers. It is important to know who you select as partners. You have to be willing to search for partners. Ethical fashion is not always considered “runway” brands, but with hard work and dedication it is possible. Unustainable fashion should be called out and addressed to make a change in the industry.

Chapter 13: Silent Spring/ Summer

Chapter 13 explores the use of pesticides and chemicals in the cotton industry. Katherine Hamnett was a designer in the late 80's/ early 90's with a campaign dedicated to stopping the environmental cruelty being imposed by the fashion industry. One of her campaigns shot by Vogue featured Peter Lindbergh and a group of scowling teenagers and two young children wearing t-shirts saying, “Stop Acid Rain” and “Education not missiles” she had a focus on how fashion impacted humanity. Hamnett researched the social and environmental impact of clothing and textile production, and she discovered the toxic side of cotton- pesticides. These chemicals hold serious consequences to humans and the environment, and it began a push for organic cotton. Sustainable and ecofriendly materials are expensive and harder to source which is why many companies are hesitant to pick up on these initiatives, but Hamnett argues this shift is necessary to improve our industry for the future.

Chapter 14: Dyeing Shame

Levi Strauss, Wrangler and Lee were some of the first producers of denim jeans. When jeans were first produced, the user would wear them overtime to develop the wholes and worn look. In the 80's pre distressed denim was the look consumers wanted. To do this, factories had to put jeans through intensive stone washing procedures. Francious Girbaund, and his wife Marithe were some oof the first to do this. Using water and rocks they thought it was a good natural process, but the leftover sludge from the wash process contained chemicals from the jeans manufacturing processes that were released. Many factories used stone washing or sandblasting to do the distressing process. Sandblasting workers usually didn't have proper PPE when operating the machinery and many were exposed to inhalents and other dangerous chemicals being sprayed. Along with these leftover waters from laundry was dumped into local water sources. One factory worker recall using gloves and a mask to dispose of contaminated water, then goes home and bathes and drinks from that same water source, which is dangerous, but he must have the job to make a living, and you need water to survive. Recently, some producers have started using lasering as a way to bleach and distress denim as a more sustainable process.

Chapter 15 & 16: Slippery Customers / Weird Science - Nahid

Lucy Tammam is a designer who creates vegan wedding dresses using Eri silk, a non-violent silk that does not involve killing the moths that produce it. She believes it is important to care about the entire ecosystem, including the smallest creatures like moths, slugs, and snails. However, the fashion industry has a sense of specialness that makes it challenging to start impactful conversations about sustainability and ethics within it. A language barrier exists between sustainability and fashion that needs to be bridged. The fashion industry has long relied on viscose, also known as rayon, made from wood pulp, which can cause harm to workers and has environmental implications. While it was discovered accidentally by an assistant of Louis Pasteur in 1856, it has been mass-produced since the early 20th century, fueling the fashion industry.

Chapter 17 & 18: Jaiden – You Should See Polythene Pam and Waste Not, Want Not

Chapter 17 begins by detailing the plastic crisis that has taken over every beach, lake, ocean and stream around the world: plastic soup. Explaining how plastic pollutes the waterways, turning into microplastic by “photo-degradation,” which is where materials do not biodegrade, but instead just break into smaller and smaller pieces. Clare Press was able to land an interview with Pharell Williams, who is trying to “leverage his fame” for a better purpose than personal publicity. Williams backs Bionic Yarn and one of their biggest clients, denim brand G-Star, to take post-consumer plastic and combine it with raw materials to make a unique material. This chapter also discusses the work of Mark Anthony Brown, a British scientist who specializes in microplastic research and textile development.

Chapter 18 talks about the different ways we, as consumers, can reduce our waste and recycle old items. Press details about how the recycling system works, and how most consumers are completely unaware of how recycling actually works. Yvon Chouinard and his company, Patagonia, lead the way for sustainability and apparel development. Press discusses the trend and changes in shopping for second-hand clothing and other green movements in clothing, specifically crocheting!

Chapter 19 & 20: Chantal- Raising the Baa & Can We Really Change Our Ways?

The IWS, International wool secretariat was created to increase purchases with wool during 2014. The IWS created the Woolmark prize in 1953, where there were many notable well-known designers in today's age. Some of them being Yves Saint Laurent who was a first-place winner the second year the prize was established, and Rahul Mishra who was inspired by Ghandi and the ideology of the importance of the value and tradition of craft. There have been controversies of how we maintain the quality of wool, for one there have been many brands who don't work with wool farms due to the mulesing, which is a painful procedure that the animals go through to make the wool process and quality easier. There are still talks about to this day on the pros and the cons about ethics on the farms. While that has been a controversy, there are also problems with how to continue to increase the consumption of unnecessary shopping for clothing. Designers such as Vivienne Westwood had a phrase for “buy less, choose well” and saw her collections are catalysts for social change not trends. There has been much influence in reducing consumption but there have been many ups and downs with this kind of thinking. Many small businesses could be impacted by this but so can our environment. In summary we have to learn how to create simple and doable changes that will benefit us and the planet.

Reflections: Due 4/16

Sustainable fashion is something that customers want to want. The best way to get to that is by companies and the fashion industry offering it directly to consumers. This book and ending showed me just how unaware most people are to the impact the fashion industry has on the environment. As a future employee in the fashion industry, I will try and think about where and how my clothes were made. This book has taught me the importance of informing not only myself but others on what fast fashion can do on the environment and to people and use what I have learned in this book about sustainability in my future career and shopping habits.

Sustainable fashion, apparel, and textiles are not a trend, but the only way to move forward in the fashion industry. As brands like Patagonia pave the way, companies are going to have to reevaluate what endeavors are worth spending money on and which are better to save with. Sometimes it will take more expensive processes and more time to produce products that are going to actually have a positive impact on the environment. Brands like Bionic Yarn also help to break the traditional barriers, by taking post-consumer products and finding ways to use them and give them a second life. I think it is extremely important to ask, What can I make out of things that already exists? As Fashion majors, we all love going to the fabric store to get a brand-new yard, but as our natural resources have started to dwindle and production has had clear side effects on the environment, we need to be more creative with the new products we develop and transform traditional products with repurposed materials.

The world moves at a fast pace and will continue to do so due to the technological advances and selfish habits that humans have started to get accustomed to. As a future professional in the fashion industry, it is intriguing to see what the future will hold in the field, this is due to the many ethical talks there has been for creating clothes. One thing that will be in mind throughout my career is the impact that we are creating not only on our planet but the trauma it has already created to the living creatures. Making sure that where I work will have a stance on the importance of ethics and sustainability and advocate for that throughout my professional career. As a consumer the topic of ethics and sustainability has always been on my mind whenever I shop for anything. While reading this book, it has conversations that should be talked about on a regular basis which is why I only shop at places that have the same values as me, since it helps me be more at ease and comfortable when purchasing new clothes. Overall, the topics in this book are already seen in the media but should be taken with grave importance and advocacy.

Responses: Due 4/17

Response #1:

Response #2: