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An Environmental Alternative
for the Fashion Industry

By

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Introduction

I first developed an interest in the relationship between the fashion industry and Environmental concerns in 1989, while writing a term essay on Katherine Hamnett and her outspoken beliefs on political and Environmental issues. It was at that stage in the late Eighties that the Developed World had finally begun to realise the disastrous situation the earth was facing.

However, the fashion industry, carrying under its belt the textile and beauty industries, had managed to escape criticism until very recently. It was through the efforts of UK designers like Katherine Hamnett, in her bid to promote an Environmentally friendly fashion and Anita Roddick's efforts to encourage the use of naturally-based cosmetics, that public awareness has increased in the early Nineties.

"Little coverage is given to the consequences which may result from the many and various processes involved in clothing production." ¹

Three years after this quote was made in 1989, I set about examining how the clothes we wear affect the Environment we live in. I will look at the main culprit, the textile industry, both natural and man-made and hopefully evaluate the processes behind several key fabrics in both groups, from fibre to finished garment to bio-degrading. While I do not plan to come up with any radical solutions to such a complex decision, I do hope to discover what the growth and processing of various fabrics is doing to our natural resources, human and animal inhabitants, waterways and their natural life.

Another Twentieth century development, lying at the root of the Environmental situation is mass consumerism which I will look at from the fashion point of view. Although I realise that this is only a small part of the picture in which a highly materialistic, society

exists throughout the Industrialised World, coveting all that money can buy in the constant belief that in doing so, people will improve their status in society, and be rewarded with greater happiness, I think it is an important consumer area than can no longer escape 'ungreened.' In this chapter I will refer to the impact which social movements, large scale political events and youth movements have had on mass-consumerism.

Consumerism in the Nineties is an area which interests me, so I hope to examine how Environmental issues and World depression have affected current attitudes and public thinking towards changes in buying habits.

This will lead me on to considering solutions to the problems and steps that are being taken by Governments, multinationals, manufacturers and retailers, without forgetting the huge marketing appeal which has encouraged many a false claim.

As Katherine Hamnett was the original inspiration for my thesis, I wanted to research her work in more depth, asking questions such as - Is she genuinely concerned, how does she hope to get her message across and what do her clothes really do for the Environment and public awareness? In researching this, I came across an English and a Belgian designer, Helen Storey and Martin Margiela who struck me as having similar genuine concerns for the Environment displayed in their clothes. I contacted all three designers by post and their replies were so encouraging, I eventually decided to write about each of them, comparing and contrasting their ideals and assessing their level of commitment to change, coupled with the influence their work is having on the fashion industry.

Chapter 1

Natural or man-made fabrics? - The facts

The important question which the Nineties fashion consumer should now be asking is: Should I buy natural or man-made? If only there were a straightforward answer, if only life were so easy.

While both groups of fabrics have their advantages, they certainly have their disadvantages. They have been battling against each other for supremacy since Rayon, the first man-made fabric was developed in 1855 by a Frenchman, Count Hilarie de Chardonnet and dubbed 'artificial silk'. It became widely used with the rise of the working classes as it could be blended cheaply and suited the high street mass-production market, as have other developments in man-made fibres this century such as nylon, acrylic and polyester. While these fabrics can be produced without any harm to the Environment and dyed at a lower temperature, absorbing more of the dye and allowing less waste to be released into the waterways, they are manufactured from oil, a non-renewable source, and the production of nylon and polyamide produces nitrous oxide (N_2O), a greenhouse gas. It is estimated that man-made fabrics such as nylon may take several centuries to decompose while a natural fabric such as cotton will take only 2-3 years.

Man-made fabrics

* Rayon *

While most man-made fibres are produced from a non-renewable source, Rayon is the exception as it is manufactured from the wood pulp of the eucalyptus tree. However this tree, when located anywhere outside its native Australia, starves soil and as some plantations are located in Rain-forests, is involved in de-forestation. Rayon, is cheap and easy to care for, thus experienced immense popularity after

World War I, when it lent itself ideally to the production of cheap mass-produced dresses aimed at the working girl and easily manufactured due to rayon's affordability, compared to silk. Courtaulds is one of the world's largest producers of rayon and viscose but due to the decline in man-made artificial feel fabrics of the last ten years, they are now concentrating on developing Tencel, a man-made fibre produced from the natural cellulose in wood pulp, using a solvent spinning technique without chemicals. This solvent is recyclable, reducing wastage. The finished fibre is biodegradable, shrink resistant and a good dye absorber. The handle is soft and similar to that of silk.

* Other man-made fibres *

Another largely produced man-made fibre is nylon which is made from an oil base. It was first marketed in the Forties when it achieved automatic success as it could be woven to a sheer enough filament, suitable for stockings, was cheap and easy to care for, replacing expensive, delicate silk. Although nylon can be produced with reduced pollution, the main producers of this fibre ICI are now concentrating on Environmentally sound moves such as the recycling of nylon tights in Britain, planning to eliminate their gas emissions entirely by 1996 and the development and promotion of their less harmful fibre 'Tactel'. Nylon is oil-based which means it relies on the earth's finite supply of a natural resource, making it an Environmental hazard.

Polyester is a petrol based man-made fabric developed in the 1940's and used throughout the Developed World for separates, again making a cheap easy-care alternative to silk.

Acrylic is a plastic made from oil which has been knitted into sweaters and body wear fabric and socks, to give added strength and durability. Acrilan, Courtelle, Orlon and Dralon derived from these fibres and have all decreased in popularity since the Seventies due to their undesirable, synthetic qualities.

ICI plans to recycle tights

ICI, the chemicals and fibres giant, has tentative plans to launch limited trials of hosiery banks within the next six months.

According to ICI Fibres managing director and president of the British Textile Confederation, Scott Davidson, thousands of pairs of stockings and tights are placed in the bin each day when they could easily be recycled.

"The rag and bone man is part of British history," he says, "so why aren't we doing anything about recycling nylons or putting old suits into textile banks?"

"Ladies tights could be recycled and go back to where they started from. Reprocessing would obviously knock the edge off our growth but if you combine it with an increase in clothing engineering, such as producing clothes for energy saving or keeping cool, then that

By Karen Falconer



Scott Davidson

could rectify the balance."

The plan is to test hosiery banks within strict geographical confines in the UK as part of the company's determined

as a poor environmentalist. The banks would operate in a similar way to existing bottle banks, when consumers dump bottles in a bank. These are later picked up and taken on for re-processing.

The fibres division has now got an in-house Green team in place to monitor ICI developments in relation to the environment, whilst the chemicals division has recently committed £5m to developing a new waterbed plant to clean up effluent.

However, not all companies are convinced that British consumers are concerned enough with the environment to go out of their way for environmentally sound products, as Martin Taylor, managing director of Courtaulds Textiles explained recently. "I don't believe that the British consumer is interested in environmental clothing nor that they will pay for

All of these fibres have been treated with formaldehyde Resin, to give them their hard-wearing and practical properties. Formaldehyde is a chemical known to irritate the eyes, nose and throat and combined with the resin, remains within the fabric, constantly emitting an irritating gas to the wearer.

While the latest word on polymers is that they can be made to degrade, the truth in this is doubtful at such an early stage. One advantage of synthetic fabrics for the Environment is that their after-purchase care uses less of our natural resources and avoids the dangerous chemical agents used in dry cleaning.

Because of our more natural lifestyles, synthetics have lost their appeal, certainly in Europe, since the Eighties as consumers move towards more natural lifestyles. ICI fibres dominate the synthetic textile industry in Britain, closely followed by Courtaulds. In 1980 ICI introduced 'Mitrelle', a polyester which weaves into fabrics very like silk. In 1981, they came up with 'Terinda' which resembles suede and in 1983, 'Tactel', a range of fibres which possesses the strength and easy care qualities usually offered by polymer, with a silk feel.

This is an indication of the direction of synthetic fibres since the Eighties, striving to imitate the qualities of natural fibres. Mixing man-made with natural is another way forward: Du Pont, who created Lycra, are most successful in this field since their mixing of lycra with cotton jersey for sportswear and more recently with wool, linen and silk for tailored separates, improving the comfort fit and recovery factor of the garments. The downfall of the lycra fibre is that it is not biodegradable, causing a dilemma for designers who would like to be Environmentally friendly but yet wish to keep up with the most innovative fabric developments.

* Promotion *

In a constant effort to surpass each other in terms of sales, the various textile industries offer such services as predictions for the coming season's silhouettes and colours, technical assistance from fibre to finished garment, specialised garment labelling (e.g.: Lycra by Du Pont or Woolmark, pure new wool) and even fashion shows. The International Wool Secretariat, was founded in 1937 in the UK, to encourage not only manufacturers to use wool but also consumers to buy and wear it rather than the new man-made fibres of the time. The Cotton Board was set up in London in the Forties to persuade manufacturers to use cotton and succeeded in creating a revolution in cotton fashions, proving its capability in competing with synthetics, particularly rayon, at the time.

Close on their heels, however, ICI and Du Pont set up similar services in the Fifties, offering an advisory service to promote and market their new synthetics. Courtaulds took this promotion a step further in the late Sixties by acquiring manufacturing companies and chain stores, sponsoring exciting young designers and promoting and marketing all of these interests. They are still involved in many of these ventures.

These promotional campaigns are now having to concentrate on convincing their manufacturing members of Environmental concerns and the consumer of what action they are taking.

Natural Fibres

* Cotton *

Since it is my objective to examine the harmful elements which various fibres bring to the Environment during their production, for natural fibres, I will concentrate on cotton, as its growth and manufacture are an Environmental horror story throughout the Developed and to a greater extent, Developing World.

To realise the scale on which cotton production is endangering our world, we must first realise the massive scale on which cotton is grown. Cotton is one of the world's most important fibre crops, constituting half of the world's textile consumption. To feed the hungry planet's textile needs, cotton uses approximately five per cent of the world's cultivated land, amounting to over thirty million hectares. Since the Cotton Board was set up by the British government in the 1940's to encourage manufacturers and consumers to use cotton, it has become the most popular fabric in the UK and Ireland. It's affordability, comfort and easy care qualities make it a popular choice above other natural fabrics, linen, silk and wool, in mainland Europe and America. Cotton is also a renewable source and biodegradable, making it a highly suitable fabric for the Environmentally aware consumer.

* Growing *

First and foremost the problem lies with the frightening quantities of dangerous pesticides used during the growing of cotton. These pesticides are toxic chemicals which are sprayed over the crop to control pests. Even in moderation many of these pesticides are harmful but the most damage is caused in developing countries, who, through a lack of proper guidance, over-use the chemicals in huge quantities to ensure a safe crop. Cotton in particular is treated with many applications. Cotton 2000 formed by the pesticide trust in association with Katherine Hamnett, estimates that \$2-\$3 billion is spent on pesticides to produce a crop worth \$24 billion. They also calculate that in 1988, 11 per cent of World pesticide sales were used on cotton crops, and half of the 300 million Kg, of pesticides used in the third world are used on cotton.²

The vast amounts of pesticides, carelessly used in the third world means that many people come into contact with them through either their direct work in the cotton fields or in the manufacturing plants. Often in Developing countries, the pesticides are mixed in the home by women or children, who then use the same basic utensils



Figure 2 - Cotton plants - International Textiles 1991



Figure 3 - Coloured cotton - International Textiles 1991

for the preparation of food. The same pesticides have been proven responsible for chronic diseases such as cancer and lung problems. Cotton 2000 estimate that seventy per cent of all pesticide poisoning is caused at work, in the Developed and Developing World.

- In Bhopal, India, the world's most devastating pesticide poisoning disaster happened in 1970, when the Union Carbide Plant, an American owned company producing pesticides for cotton, experienced a leak of deadly Methyl Isocyanate, killing at least 2,500 people and permanently harming far more.

Another way in which pesticide poisoning occurs is through the run-off water from cotton growing, contaminating drinking water; this Environmental problem is not exclusive to the Developing World. The World Health Organisation estimates that every year 3,000,000 people suffer acute pesticide poisoning and possibly 20,000 die, and this is only a conservative estimate as many cases escape, unreported.

The devastating effects of pesticide over-use are not exclusive to the human inhabitants of the planet. Overlooking the other endangering effects would be typical of our selfish attitude which has caused this world to be in the state of Environmental decay which we are now witnessing. Pesticides endanger Wildlife, poisoning birds, bees and fish and generally upsetting the food chains of many animals, but in particular the over killing of crop pests can upset the balance of nature. Many of the insects killed by pesticides are not actually harmful to the crop in any way but actually beneficial as they are predators of the cotton pests. With the wiping out of these insects, the pests often become resistant to the pesticides and with no natural predator, multiply. With the predators destroyed, many other species may multiply.

In Mexico, 300,000 hectares of cotton growing land had to be abandoned when the tobacco budworm enjoyed a sudden population growth after its natural predator, the bollweevil was wiped out by

pesticides. This was another of the alarming reports sent to me by Cotton 2000.

Pesticides aside, cotton is a thirsty crop and its intensive production destroys the soil, particularly when it is grown in Developing Countries where knowledge of crop rotation is limited. Cotton growing can also affect de-forestation, as in Brazil where rain-forests are cleared to make way for cotton growing.

* Processing *

When mechanically harvested, cotton is exposed to crop dusting with toxic chemicals which, like pesticides can adversely affect the health of the farm workers and in Third World Countries, like pesticides, these dusting chemicals are often exported from the Industrialised Nations who have declared them illegal and forbidden their usage on their own shores.

When it reaches the manufacturing point, the raw cotton is subjected to cleaning, carding, blending, spinning, weaving, cleaning again, dyeing and finishing. Many of these treatments involve harmful chemicals, including chlorine-based bleaches and cleaning detergents which run foam into waterways, harming river inhabitants. The spinning and knitting of cotton (and other fibres) causes dust and noise pollution.

The dyeing of cotton requires vast amounts of water and careless manufacturers discharge waste water, polluted with chemical dyes into the seas and rivers, again harming wildlife and perhaps contaminating drinking water.

The finishing treatment for cotton involves the use of a formaldehyde-based finishing agent to give the fabric certain easy-care qualities, but its harmful effects extend to the consumer as well as the cotton producer's employee.



Figure 4 - Selection of Natural Fabrics - I.T. 1991

* Other Natural Fibres *

According to figures from the International Wool Secretariat, Wool is the World's second most important fibre in terms of consumption, presently accounting for eight per cent, but steadily rising in popularity since the Nineties trend towards natural fibres and the drop in fur and suede sales since the Eighties.

In wool producing European countries the main problem is the cruelty to sheep by 'dipping' them in benign chemicals. In Australia the huge numbers of sheep are sheared at such a speed that the result is often cutting and injuring of the animals.

Largely uncontrolled, the cleaning process for wool can release hazardous waste and general mess into the Environment, particularly waste water from dyeing processes.

Both wool and linen give off a hazardous amount of dust pollution during manufacture, and are currently under question. Leather is a natural fabric, which although it comes from an animal's back like fur, we tend to discredit with the notion that the animals have been killed primarily for their meat (sheep, cows, pigs). However recent light shed on the subject suggest that this is untrue; as unmarked skins are desired, animals are often reared specifically for their skins. These animals, I then imagine must live in conditions similar to those of battery hens, to protect their precious hides, posing another moral question and putting leather and fur farming in the same category.

* Fur *

Untold misery is suffered by small animals, whether factory farmed or killed in the wild, whose fur is considered to be a highly desirable and opulent fashion fabric. Not only is this the theft of one animals rightful coat by another animal, a vain woman who purely wishes to display her wealth, but it is the unnecessary death of the

innocent animal for those selfish reasons that are no longer acceptable as we approach the 21st century. One fur coat can mean the agonising deaths of up to sixty-five mink, sixty rabbits, forty foxes, fifteen beavers or fifteen lynx. While steel-jawed leg traps, used to trap wild animals have been banned in Ireland for decades, we still import fur garments obtained in this way. AFAR, 'Alliance for Animal Rights' the anti-fur organisation based in Dublin, whom I contacted during my research, estimate 100,000 red foxes are snarred or trapped illegally in Ireland and Britain each year to serve the fur trade. These figures represent only part of the suffering as up to one in four animals chew off their leg or paw to escape, only to die later from blood loss or infection. The other hidden casualties are the non-target animals such as cats, dogs, birds, swans, lambs and calves who stumble upon the traps, resulting in their injury or death. AFAR believe that for every target animal trapped, approximately three 'non target' or 'trash' animals are killed and discarded. So, one mink coat may represent 260 deaths.

Animals reared in fur farms are forced to spend their lives in small cages, resulting in great emotional distress which shows in their neurotic behaviour such as compulsive pacing movements and self mutilation.

"Many caged mink bite off their own tails. Their undignified existence is cut dramatically short by being gassed, electrocuted or lethally injected. Some may be skinned alive".

Although it is difficult to keep track of the world fur trade, fortunately fur as a fashion fabric has greatly decreased in popularity in Northern Europe and America over the last twenty years, largely due to the campaigning of pressure groups such as LYNX, the anti-fur campaigners in the United Kingdom and AFAR, in Ireland. They brought into the public eye the cruel conditions under which these animals are slaughtered for their fur, often by means of attention-grabbing tactics such as the burning of fur departments and shocking advertising campaigns. Celebrities Linda McCartney and David Bailey have directed and photographed these advertisements for Lynx in 19



Figure 5 - Fur Trapper Killing an Animal - LYNX Brochure



Figure 6 - LYNX Advertisement

It takes up to 40 dumb animals to make a fur coat.



But only one to wear it.

LYNX

If you don't want animals gassed, electrocuted

Fur deal: hard-hitting images made women abandon their coats

Stars' anti-fur charity in fight to save its skin

TWIGGY modelled its T-shirts and Linda McCartney's photographs provided its posters. Lynx, the anti-fur campaign that once caused an outcry with a chilling David Bailey commercial about blood on the catwalk, is now on the brink of bankruptcy.

The pressure group, which helped to force half of Britain's fur farmers out of business and made mink-clad women ashamed to walk the streets, faces closure following a libel case billed as a fight to the death with the fur industry. A High Court jury has decided unanimously that Lynx, in literature circulated to MPs, wrongly accused a Halifax fur farmer of running a "hell-hole" where animals were caged in dilapidated and dirty conditions.

The verdict, hailed by furriers as a rejection of criticisms that they prosper through the suffering of animals, means Lynx must pay £40,000 in damages to the farmer and £250,000 costs.

by Sean Ryan
Environment
Correspondent

Supporters, including Sir John Gielgud, Neil and Glenys Kinnock, and the rock singers Chrissie Hynde and Siouxsie Sioux, will be told by letter tomorrow that the group must be wound up unless the decision can be overturned. It would cost at least £50,000 to mount an appeal and Lynx is more than £100,000 in debt. A £500,000 fighting fund, launched by McCartney before the 24-day libel hearing, attracted only £10,000.

Yesterday Twiggy, the actress and former model who helped to promote Lynx's "cruelty-free" fashion shops, said she was horrified that the campaign could be silenced. "I am totally against the wearing of fur. It would be quite shocking if the collapse of Lynx allowed the fur industry to be revived," she said.



Dress code: Siouxsie Sioux, left, and Twiggy modelled shirts to promote the anti-fur campaign

Lynx, founded in 1985 by a breakaway group of Greenpeace campaigners, enjoyed phenomenal early success in its drive to transform fur from an elegant status symbol into a "politically incorrect" badge of cruelty: within five years Harrods closed its fur department, while leading furriers called in receivers as sales fell by more than 50%. Only 29 of Britain's 75 fur farmers survived the slump in demand.

As the campaign attracted support from designers such as Vivienne Westwood and Sir Hardy Amies and models who included Yasmin Le Bon and Paula Hamilton, several women were attacked in the street for wearing fur. Some even had their coats daubed with red paint.

Recently, however, the industry has vigorously rejected allegations of squalor, poor hygiene and cruelty. The Fur

Education Council, set up in 1990 to counter the claims of animal rights groups, argued that fur farms were good for the environment because their products were "natural", with animals being fed on slaughterhouse offal that would otherwise accumulate as waste.

Last week the increasingly acrimonious dispute came to a climax in court after Leo Sawrij, a mink farmer, brought a libel action over a 1989 Lynx report about the conditions in which 10,000 animals were allegedly kept. An RSPCA inspector gave evidence to support his case.

This weekend the Fur Education Council said the hearing had demonstrated that fur farming was humane. Mike Allan, a spokesman, denied that the council would relish Lynx's demise. "Its existence is a good sounding board for the arguments," he said.

Some supporters are still urging a last-minute attempt to keep the Lynx campaign going. The designer Katharine Hamnett, who once created fur coats and now describes them as disgusting, said Lynx should close and start again under another name. Peter Gabriel, the rock star, said its work must be allowed to continue: "I am very upset that they have lost the libel action. I found it extraordinary that the RSPCA should end up on the side of the mink farm."

In a statement this weekend the RSPCA said that its inspector had been subpoenaed by solicitors acting for the mink farmer and reaffirmed its general opposition to all forms of farming that cause distress or suffering to animals. "The society strongly objects to the wearing of fur and the farming of fur," it said.



▶ TRAPPING SUPPLEMENT

▶ SWALES MOOR HELL HOLE

▶ PHIL COOL THROWS UP

▶ GOVERNMENT ROGUE

▶ HARRODS DRESS CODE

▶ LYNX FASHION SHOW

▶ LYNX UP IN LIGHTS

McCARTNEY POSTER FOR LYNX



Rich bitch.



Poor bitch.

If you don't want millions of animals tortured and killed in leg-hold traps don't buy a fur coat

LYNX

Figure 8 - LYNX Advertisement



Figure 9 -- David Bailey Cinema Commercial for LYNX

fashion intelligence

THE FUR INDUSTRY: back from the dead? By Mimi Spencer

It's slinking its way out of the closet once more? Evidence suggests that it's undergoing a minor renaissance on the catwalks of Milan, Paris and, more surprisingly, London – but is this merely the swan song of a dying industry, or a hat attitudes have changed? After 1985, the fur industry had scant defence against the able tide of late-Eighties thinking when sinning power was so intimately connected with the national consciousness went tabby hand in hand with anti-fur sentiment. The effect was a startling demonstration of consumer power: stores closed their fur departments; many independent furriers shut their doors; the industry, worth £80 million in 1984, fell in a mere £11 million in 1990, which had long had (and still has) a reputation for avoiding garments and accessories deriving from endan-dered species, found itself in tune with the thinking. The grim moral climate, accompanied by a season of mild winter, helped to keep the streets and, as if not enough to nail the industry, there was a change in fashion. In the past, the young were variations on cycling leotards and gym costume. Fur could no longer be considered the ultimate luxury at a time when the fur-wearer was not only on the red list, she was virtually extinct. One observing the international catwalks could not fail to have noticed fur rearing its head for this season. There were no more "solid" sables dragging on the runway-style, but here and there – at Ferré at Prada and Gucci (designers who public pressure and faked it in the – was a flash of mink collar, a chin-strap. To be expected, perhaps, from designers who are pressured by a strong, pro-fur lobby and for whom fur has an inalterable ethical ground; it is fur as trim by British designers that is prising. Tomasz Starzewski's mink cuffs of last winter, pointlessly dyed yellow and powder pink, would, he "add luxe to the clothes"; Joseph's were edged in wild wolf last winter; nines produced velvet trouser suits with mink; London's Valentino now reports demand for the addition of its trouser suits. Evidently, fur is

making a comeback, but only as trim (the Royal Survey of Great Britain in September 1991 found that seventy-eight per cent of participants believed full-fur coats were "out of fashion") or cunningly, even guiltily, dyed to make the real thing look fake – the ultimate irony. The work of Philip Jones, a young graduate of St Martin's, further highlights the changing attitude. In the heart of a recession, he has set up his own-name label with fur as its signature. Madness perhaps, but Jones insists there is a new market for microfibre parkas lined in wild mink, denim-style jackets with real fur collars and even sheared-mink baseball caps. "For

The fur trade – difficult to defend, if not indefensible – is on the attack. In an effort to clean up fur's tarnished image, the Fur Education Council is playing Lynx at its own highly charged game, pointing to the noxious by-products of synthetics manufacture and highlighting the disruption caused to native fur-trading peoples by the anti-fur lobby. Mike Allan of the FEC is determined to desensitise the fur issue, to steer the collective consciousness away from what he calls the protest industry's "blood-and-guts tactics". The pro-fur voice is, much like the opposing team's, a well-oiled, slogan-shouting propaganda campaign designed to arouse public interest. The Wear Your Fur Day of November 1991, for example, saw the PR and pro-fur activist Annette Gardener indulging in language as emotive as that of the antis, defiantly taking to the streets with her band

Are we now
experiencing a yearning
for the trappings
of luxury in a grey,
recession-bitten world?

of merry mink-clad women beneath their "freedom of choice" banner. As one adamant fur wearer says, "We're less 'Walt Disney' about it now; we've learnt the difference between vermin and endangered species, trapped and farmed animals, and we know whether a pelt has been obtained cruelly." Many fur-wearing women do seem to be more aware of the origin of their coats and trims, though there is currently no labelling of fur garments to identify the way in which wild skins are obtained. Ninety per cent of British fur – mostly arctic fox and mink – is farmed, in highly regulated circumstances – which means that the quality of death (by gassing) may be an improvement on wild trapping's infamous steel-jawed, leg-hold trap and cosh. But what of the quality of life for a caged, non-domesticated, semi-aquatic mink? In any event, trims are made mainly from imported wild pelts – raccoon, coyote, wolf, coyote. The claims and counterclaims continue, but the new message is that people are beginning to consider fur in an informed manner, without being bulldozed by in-thinking. And perhaps that is the point: not that we are eager to don the full-length, forty-pelt mink, or even the two-pelt mink baseball cap, but that we can see beyond the knee-jerk reactions and simplifications that have governed the fur question in the past. And if fur is undergoing a revival, the impulse behind it has little in common with that of its heyday; women's aspirations have changed radically, and few would hinge their hopes of happiness on a mink coat. We all have better things to do... Carol McKenna for one may have a busy time ahead. ■

Object by Monet Oppenheim, 1936 (Museum of Modern Art, NYC)

which were shown throughout cinemas and billboard advertisements in England and America, leading to the closing down of fur departments and shops everywhere, the most famous being those of Harrods and Selfridges in London.

At the turn of the Nineties, when it was thought a turning point had been reached and we were witnessing the beginning of the end of the fur trade, Lynx lost a much published libel action against an English fur farmer in late '92 which put the organisation into receivership. Now ironically for Autumn/Winter '93/94, fashion journalists are reporting the return of fur as a luxury fashion fabric and an antidote to recession, this time round appearing mainly on collars and cuffs. With the development of synthetic material, there is no longer any excuse for wearing fur and the need to keep warm is not a justifiable excuse.

"Expeditioners to Antartica and Mount Everest in the 1950's preferred nylon furleen clothing to fur garments because these were considered warmer, lighter and more water-proof." 4

* Developments *

An exciting range of new fabrics are being produced in poor agrarian countries like the Pacific from such unusual natural sources as banana, pineapple and water hyacinth. A bark fibre has also been developed to a high standard and along with the pineapple fibre is available from an English fabric mill. An Australian has developed an odour-free fish leather which is reckoned to be ecologically sound, and has already been used by American designer Bill Blass for swimwear!

Innovative as they maybe, however, it maybe a long time before we see these fabrics being produced on any large scale, in ecologically safe conditions, but they do serve to show there is a way forward for living in harmony with nature.

Chapter 2

Solutions

It seems paradoxical that the fashion industry, one which produces such unnecessary waste twice yearly and on such a large scale, should now be attempting to rectify the current disastrous Environmental situation. Fashion Shows and parties are now being thrown by the World's leading fashion designers, models and rock stars in aid of Amazonian rain forests and African famine victims.

Fashion designers and high street chain stores proudly display their consciousness of Environmental worries through such marketing stunts as 'green slogans' or natural unbleached fabrics which are more than questionable and mass produced bi-annually, adding to their profits and the World's surplus waste. When Environmental issues came to the fore in 1989, Turkish born, English based designer Ryat Ozbek presented his Spring/Summer, New Age Ecology collection, all in pure white and silver - no colour could be more ecologically harmful than pure white and this did not escape the attention of the press.

Is it surprising that leading 'Green' activists are dismissive of the fashion industries genuine concern and capacity to change? What immediately intrigued me when I first researched this topic in 1989 was the whole bandwagon aspect. The stronger the trend towards eco-consciousness gets, the more appealing it is for aspiring trendy marketers to jump on board, with no more genuine concern than a CFC. The more that companies adopt the 'ecological label', while it may at first appear encouraging, the more I find myself questioning their motives.

The situation becomes more paradoxical when the more successful the false marketing claims of these companies become, the more people buy clothes which are not only not Environmentally friendly but also worsen the problem by adding to the World's surplus of textiles.

During the process of my research, I decided to contact various fashion retail companies who have been advertising their Environmental concerns. These included Katherine Hamnett, Helen Storey, Muji, Next, Lynx, Esprit and Knickerbox, either through their Irish franchises or by writing to their London headquarters. Not surprisingly, Katherine Hamnett, whom I will discuss in more detail later, came top of my list of genuinely concerned designers/retailers because of her extensive research into 'safe cotton', which she sent me information on when I contacted her. The most frightening result of unworthy marketing claims came from Knickerbox, the high street underwear retailers, whose Irish franchise, while selling pure unbleached cotton underwear, knew nothing about the concerns behind the fibres used. Surely even if the head designer at Knickerbox had genuine motives in mind, when using the organic cotton, if it reaches the point of sale without even the sales staff knowing how it differs from regular cotton, how will the consumer ever be educated?

What I mean by this is that trendy marketing such as the natural stone-coloured labelling and recycled effect swing-ticketing on the Knickerbox underwear is not educational only unaffactive marketing hype. I believe marketing will have to take a more educational approach to make consumers really aware of the problems, as only then will consumers take their Environment into consideration when making a purchase of any item, from high street fashion to washing-up liquid.

Definite trends are emerging on a worldwide scale in those countries and companies who are genuinely ecologically aware. Governments who were at first slow on the uptake of the issue, have been forced in this decade into actions, such as the passing of the Environmental Protection Bill in the UK in April '91 which makes an inspectorate of pollution responsible for ensuring that all works built from that date have to apply for authorisation to emit pollutants and by '96 existing companies will have to meet the same requirements. This however is in the UK, one of the most industrialised nations of the Developed World which along with Germany, Japan and the U.S.A., has wreaked Environmental havoc

throughout this century, and it is only just that they should now implement change.

Unfortunately the Irish Government has been one of the slowest to take green action. While the Green Party have forced them to acknowledge some of the real problems facing society, "Their policies are little more than a cosmetic preening, not the deep greening we need so urgently."⁵ The Green party policies being those that put the Earth first and seek to "Deintensify the way we produce things, reducing the amount of resources we use and recycling things when we have fully used them."⁶ They also aim to "Detoxify production processes, progressively eliminating the use of substances in any way incompatible with the chemistry of life."⁷

The European Community, however has shown an interest in ecological labelling with two initiatives, the "ecological quality label" and the "eco-audit", the first being a system to recognise companies which adhere to ecological practice by granting them this "label", on satisfactorily meeting the requirements laid out to be 'nature preserving'. Through the second initiative, -:

"A manufacturer can be audited, according to roughly the same criteria as those of the ecological quality label. In the end, an actual balance sheet of Environmental profits and losses is arrived at, determining the company's level of ecological commitment."⁸

Of course the Developing World, while it is suffering most from Environmental dangers (particularly the pollution of their waters), is still relatively ignorant of the source of the problem and cannot be blamed, for it is we in the Developed World who have wreaked not only our own disasters but also theirs. An ideal example of this is the exporting of the banned 'dirty dozen' dangerous pesticides to Third World Countries purely for profit.

While I have mentioned by belief that the Industrialised countries, including Japan are making moves towards Environmental

consciousness or at least harmonious living, I see a move by countries with a thriving sportswear market such as Germany, Sweden, England, Switzerland and Denmark towards making Environmental friendliness a crucial selling point. In Germany in particular, where Environmental issues have become central to their fashion industry, consumers are prepared to pay extra for a genuine eco product. The umbrella organization of the German textile industry, Gesamttextil founded "The Association for Consumer and Environment Friendly Textiles" in '92 and plan an 'Eco Label' for textiles which have been tested for harmful substances. With 39 members at the moment, they welcome membership from other EC textile and clothing manufacturers.

In Italy and Spain where image is so important, the look may sell but only if it is ultra-chic and only because it is ultra-chic, not because its an effort towards saving the planet.

In Ireland, whereas eco-consciousness has not yet hit the fashion industry on any large scale, not even on the moderate scale which it has hit other consumer areas such as in petrol, aerosols and household goods. We have made a clean move away from Eighties extremes, with their fake 'Dynasty' and 'Miami Vice' power dressing, towards a more classic, traditional look with an emphasis on natural fibres in a softer colour palette. At present it is Eastern European countries who are witnessing out-dated textile industries, causing large scale pollution similar to that seen in Britain during the Industrial Revolution. Situations like these are becoming matters of grave concern to Environmentalists and change must be implemented from the top. I think it is the responsibility of Governments to take into harness matters relating to the Environment and lay down specific regulations for any company or individual who may be responsible for Environmental pollution (as in the way Lead-free petrol has been treated). By the turn of the century, Governments will have to form a Green Standards Council to implement specific measures, like those of the food industry, where chemical components and any processes and treatments that have gone into a garment will have to be listed on a label.

* Multinationals *

Multinationals are very important and influential bodies, often more important than Governments and without their backing the ecology movement may have reached a standstill. Fortunately we live in such times where powers like these are driven by consumer demand, in the textile field multinationals, notably ICI and Courtaulds, have responded amicably to necessary consumer demands for a more harmonious way of living with our planet

"It's true in the past that a lot of problems were caused by thoughtless multinationals. They are extremely powerful, some more powerful than governments, and many of our huge technical problems would only be solved through their resources. There is a lot to suggest that they will move in the green direction, from consumer pressure and legislation. The fundamental understanding of why companies exist is to meet peoples' real needs and requirements." ⁹

ICI, the textile giant, has been listening to green pressure groups and in 1991 announced plans to recycle tights after being advised that for such a non-biodegradable fibre as nylon, recycling was by far the best option as it avoids waste and uses less resources since the same fibres are being used over and over." ICI have also reduced their gas emissions and plan to eliminate them entirely by 1996¹⁰. Courtaulds for their part are concentrating on the man-made fibre Tencel which I have mentioned. The International Wool Secretariat is also working on improving conditions under which sheep are sheared (as are the organization, Compassion in World Farming) and their wool is manufactured, with hopes to reduce pollution from treating and dyeing.

* Manufacturers *

Even more encouraging are the steps being taken by smaller textile manufacturers towards greening their industry and these companies who I hope to look at, show the most significant moves when

working together on quite a large scale which will determine the future of the textiles which we come into contact with everyday. The most important developments are in the manufacture of cotton, as until this decade its production has been the most harmful fibre production Environmentally, destroying areas of scenic beauty and animal, plant even human life.

The cotton industry's answer to the problem is 'Green Cotton', which is exclusively manufactured from hand-picked cotton which has not been exposed to crop dusting's toxic chemicals, used during mechanical harvesting. The crop is also organic as it has not been treated with any pesticides or artificial substances but relies on nature's own resources to achieve a balance between insect pests and their natural enemies. Vegetable compost and manure supply the soil with its nitrogen needs as well as with organic materials.

As a result, the crop upon arrival at the manufacturing stage is cleaner and healthier, having avoided being polluted by the soil, or starving the soil itself, as well as pollution to the Environment, workers and harm to the pests' natural predators. During spinning and knitting, the usual problems of dust and noise pollution can be avoided with the use of advanced technology, proper ventilation and soundproofing. The Environmental impacts of cleaning, dyeing and finishing are huge with the use of harmful chloride, benzidine-based dyes and formaldehyde, whereas 'Green Cotton' avoids all these hazards. It is dyed in enclosed, high-pressure jet machines, reducing water consumption and air pollution. Other solutions are to use only approved water-soluble dyes (I think the finished cotton is even more attractive without any dyeing) and avoid chloride in the bleaching stage. The most advanced Green cotton manufacturers (usually in Northern Europe) have a plant located at their dye-works for the mechanical, chemical and biological cleaning of waste water. An American woman, Sally Fox has developed a cotton which grows naturally in colours ranging from caramel brown to greenish brown, under organic conditions in California and Texas. Named 'Foxfibre', Levi Strauss



GREEN COTTON

COMMON SENSE

and Co. have been granted exclusive rights in the U.S. and this is how their Levis Naturals line came about.

The use of formaldehyde during the finishing stages of treating the cotton is replaced by a mechanical process. Green cotton can be bought as a fabric at this stage and is very popular among individuals who suffer allergies from treated cotton.

However, it often goes onto the next stage of production to be made into garments. These garments are manufactured under the strictest and pollutant-free conditions which not only make for a better quality garment but also better working conditions for employees. As the fabrics are cleaner and formaldehyde-free, and dust-suction devices are located in factories, the Environmental risks to employees are greatly reduced.

These are the conditions under which a completely pure, natural and Environmentally pure fibre is produced. One organization which was formed in the UK at the turn of this decade to encourage and promote such a process is Cotton 2000, which set out a six point plan which they aim to achieve by the year 2000. Their aims are to:

"Harness the power of the Green consumer movement and the fashion industry to generate an awareness of the Environmental costs and damage of pesticide use in cotton production
provide the lever to effect change in production and manufacture
research the use of pesticides in cotton and the problems that result from their overuse, misuse and abuse
research and develop alternative methods of growing cotton, without hazardous pesticides, but using lesser amounts of safe pesticides and in some cases no pesticides at all
develop criteria for a cradle to grave Environmental audit of the use of pesticides in cotton production
apply new concepts for alternative means of pest control for cotton production, including the development of organic or pesticide-free cotton."

In my own opinion, their criteria for change seem to concentrate on the problems resulting from the growing of cotton and pesticide misuse with little mention given to the Environmental dangers of cotton manufacture which usually results in pollution on our own doorsteps. As Cotton 2000 is a charitable body, perhaps they reject 'charity begins at home' but surely we must tackle our own Environmental problems before we can begin to help others (I exclude from this the problems which we have forced on the Third World). I have witnessed horrendous conditions in Irish clothing manufacturers, cotton knitting and dyeing plants, including all of those which 'green cotton' is trying to eliminate - noise and dust pollution, and damp, dirty dyeing rooms with extremely unpleasant odours, no ventilation and generally poor working conditions.

Similar processes to these I have outlined should be employed in various stages in the manufacture of other natural fibres such as linen and wool, where the main concerns lie in the cleaning, dyeing and treating of wool, where the cruelty to sheep and the dye pollution which I have already mentioned are matters of concern.

A Welsh knitwear company called Black Sheep produce natural organic knitted garments using only bio-degradable detergents and avoiding chemical processes in carding, gilling, and knitting the yarns.

The manufacture of another popular natural fabric, silk, involves cruelty to silk worms which the anti-fur campaigners Lynx has condemned as unnecessary in recent years.

*** Retailers ***

Governments and manufacturers are not the only bodies who can implement change. A very important link in the chain is the retailer who is in direct contact with the consumer (the most important party in the chain) while the Government can and hopefully will issue directives to manufacturers on Environmental issues, it is unlikely

that they will outline reforms for consumers, so we must take action into our own hands. If we look upon the retailer as the consumer's consumer, it becomes clearer as to the power he may exert in the direction of change. The retailer can and should be purchasing eco-friendly stock, perhaps at a higher price but these clothes are usually of a superior quality and a main reason for consumers not buying these products in the past has either been, they were unaware of their existence or, if they had heard of them, could not get them from their retailers. The retailer should also use recycled carrier bags and cut down on unnecessary wrapping and packaging. A more natural Environment-friendly approach to shop fittings and interiors is another positive way forward which has been adopted by many leading retailers in the last six years. However, often the 'look' is more important than the cause and beautiful wood finish interiors maybe responsible for deforestation.

Why We Are Different:

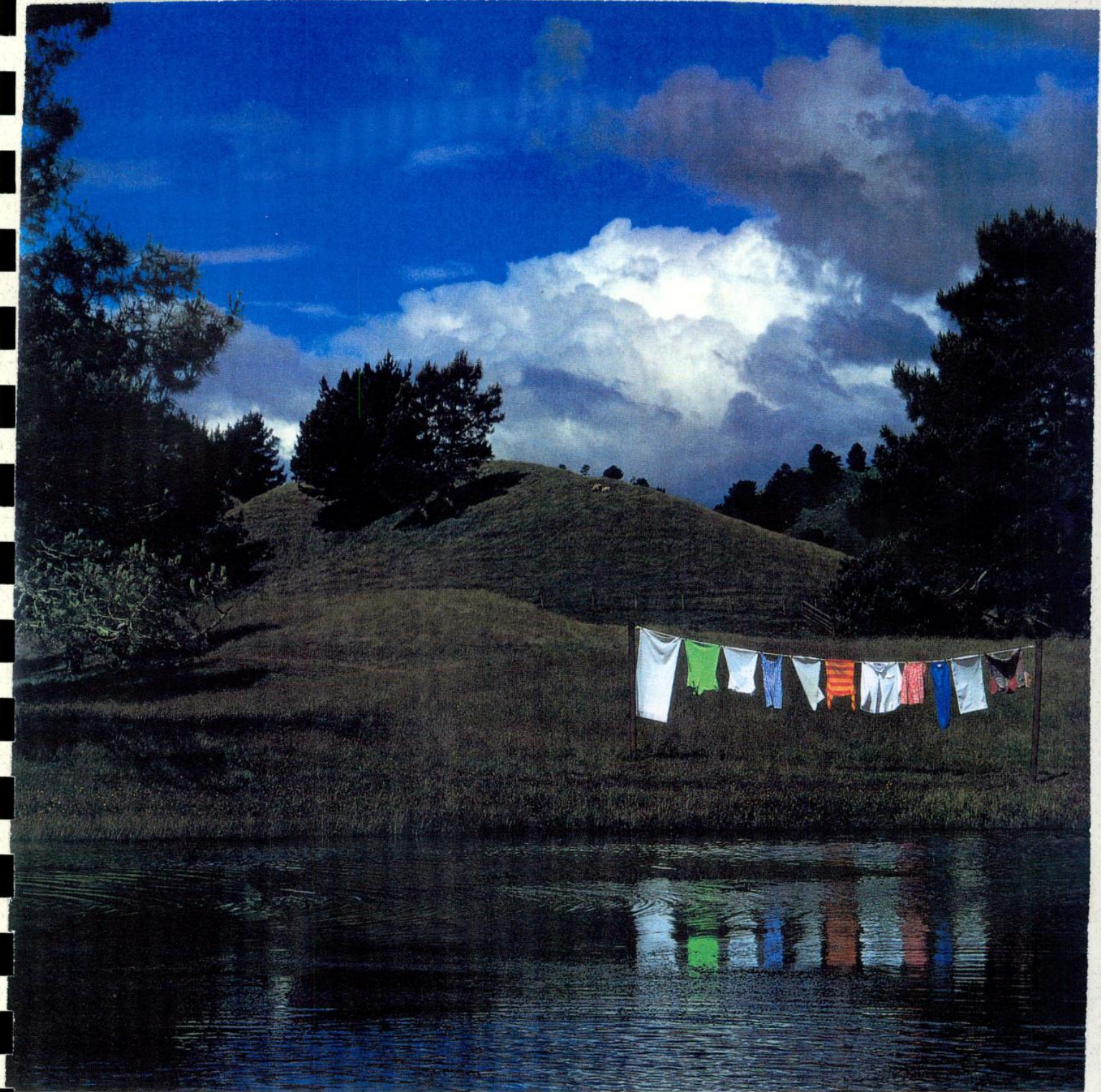


WE RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT *Reuse - Refill - Recycle*
WE ARE AGAINST ANIMAL TESTING FOR COSMETICS
Cruel - Unnecessary - Misleading

WE HAVE A NON-EXPLOITATIVE APPROACH TO TRADE
Equality - Employment - Trade Not Aid
WE MEET THE REAL NEEDS OF REAL PEOPLE
No Idealised Images - No Extravagant Claims
WE CAMPAIGN FOR ISSUES WE BELIEVE IN



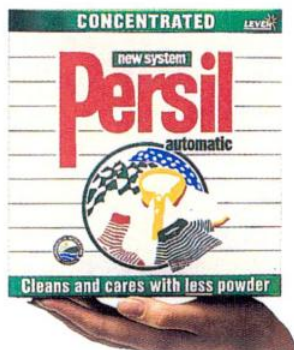
This bag is printed on recycled paper.



Green and pleasant.

New Concentrated Persil Automatic
gives you at least twenty full washloads from
a small box instead of a big one. So you have
less to carry home and less to store.

How is that green? Because Concentrated
Persil's small box uses less packaging



material. That's good news for trees. And, wash for wash, it puts far less powder into
our waste water systems.

The main aim is still to give you perfect
Persil results. But it's pleasant to announce a
new technology with such green consequences

Figure 14 - Advertisement for Environmentally friendly detergents -
Cosmopolitan, July 1992

*Now there's a facial wash so gentle
you can clean around your eyes.*



ANNE FRENCH Facial Wash. It's so mildly formulated that you can clean your face all over. Gentle and pure, it will wake up your skin, leaving it soft and thoroughly refreshed. Keep your eyes open for it. **NEW FACIAL WASH**



No Anne French product is tested on animals.

*Trade mark.

Figure 13 - Advertisement for Anne French Cruelty-Free Cosmetic -
Marie Claire, Jan 1993



Figure 12 - Terra Verde Trading Co (New York's first 'green' department store) - the walls are done in formaldehyde-free paint and the floorboards are stained with vegetable-based colour

Chapter 3

* Consumer Society emerges *

In order to fully understand what we, the inhabitants of the Developed World are doing to our planet through our completely materialistic and selfish lifestyles, I think it is important to look back to where these consumerist habits began.

Of course, since time began, man has coveted personal belongings. In the Bible story of Adam and Eve, did Eve not pick the forbidden fruit, displaying our basic human desire for all that is put before us. Eve would have made the perfect late Twentieth century fashion victim.

The birth of mass consumerism from a fashion context, as we know it today, came with the Industrial Revolution in the late Eighteenth century. There have been several World events in the last two centuries (particularly this one) which have had a significant impact on the mass production which feeds our consumerist society, these range from social movements, large scale political events to youth movements.

* Industrial Revolution *

The Industrial Revolution turned small scale production in the home cottage industries into large scale factory production. These large industrial factories, largely textile and garment producing, centralised labour for the first time on any large scale, creating large towns and cities, the first industrialised urban societies were formed. Belfast and Manchester are examples. Now that so many people of many classes were living in such close proximity to each other, made it important to display their social status with their dress. The aristocracy attempted to stand completely apart from the ordinary person and dress was a means of doing so, despite new production

methods these men and women mostly had their clothes made by the forerunners of the couturiers or private dressmakers. (The first couturier was employed by the Empress Eugénie, during Napoleon III's reign in the mid Nineteenth century). Then in the latter half of the Nineteenth century, there was the wife of the wealthy industrialist who aspired to all the consumer luxuries which the aristocracy had, and although she too used the services of a dressmaker, she began the practice of shopping in Department Stores, while her husband was dressed by a tailor. He wore a greatly less elaborate style of dress than that of his father as his new daily duties in the offices of industry, required the simpler business suit of the Bourgeois business man, which has changed very little since in comparison to womens wear.

At the same time that couture was developing in Paris, particularly through the influence of the Englishman, Charles Worth, who made for the Empress Eugénie, mass production was under way, particularly in England and America, where textiles were produced on mechanised looms.

In 1851, Isaac Merrit Singer introduced the sewing machine, although it took some time to become accepted in the manufacture of ladies wear because of the complications involved in the fitted garments of the time, and also, to an extent, I imagine, snobbery - dressmakers were not machinists and saw the machine as only fit for sewing linings and household textiles. Secondly, this machine must have appeared frightening to many dressmakers, not to mention threatening to their jobs, as is often the case when new mechanization and technology are introduced. Although the Singer Machine was accepted quite early on in America, it was only at the turn of the Twentieth century that Europe finally adapted to using it for womenswear. It was far more suited, up to this time, to the manufacture of menswear because of its more standardised, looser shape which required less personalised fittings. As the Nineteenth century continued, more machinery emerged to aid the mass-production of clothes, such as the Band Knife in 1860 which allowed the cutting of cloth in batches. In 1889 an Englishman, James H Northrop invented



Figure 16 - Cramped, turn-of-the-century working conditions

the first automatic loom. By 1880 other machines had emerged for felling, steam pressing and buttonholing.

At this stage fashions were still dictated by the Court and Aristocracy, particularly in Ireland, England and France (although dress reform in the last years of the Eighteenth century did coincide with the French Revolution) and this trickled down through the wealthy middle classes and proved to be a struggle for lower middle class women whose dress, social etiquette and entertaining skills were essential to the social standing of her family. The emergence of fashion magazines in the second half of the Nineteenth Century, along with a more active life for Victorian women which even sometimes extended to travelling, were important in the spread of fashion.

* Second-hand clothes *

Lower down the social scale, the working classes were less affected by fashions and relied mostly on hand-me-downs, or second hand clothes, in which there was a big trade during the last century. This is a subject I would like to look at in more detail, as I believe it relates to the turnabout we are witnessing in our present day fashion industry, due this time, not only to poverty but also to the Environmental harms of so much wasteful excess in clothing.

The less well-off working classes could not afford to have their clothes made by a dressmaker or indeed even if they themselves were employed as dressmakers' assistants, they had more concerns in their own lives than making up fashionable garments. If they could afford it, they could purchase the ready made cheap clothes which were available in the Eighteenth century and sold in 'show shops' or 'slop shops' as they were known because of their inferior quality. However, by far the most important way of obtaining clothing (I call it clothing not fashion, as its purpose was basically to clothe, not to keep up with trends) was by buying second hand clothes.

"Fashionable clothes had been traditionally passed on by the lady of fashion to her personal ladies maid. Occasionally the maid would wear these hand-me-downs' herself, but more likely she would sell them. The second-hand clothing business had flourished in the Eighteenth century around Covent Garden but it reached new heights in the 1850's."¹²

During these times, clothes were expected to have a far longer life-span than clothes today, as they were mostly worn by more than one person. Passing-down was practised within middle class families and then the garments, if not given to maids, were sent off to old clothes exchanges which were popular in London with Irish and Jewish immigrants and presumably in America also. Most popular was menswear, again because it was not so fitted to the body and many aspiring working class men could buy quality, if worn, gentlemen's overcoats and suits for a better appearance. An industry developed for the re-making of second hand clothes which involved mending, re-dyeing and patching sections from several old garments to form another garment. Another practice was the exporting of large quantities of second hand clothes from England to Ireland - did they think we would go cold over here, and could we not generate our own second hand clothes? Or was there simply so much poverty that everyone wore their own clothes away to nothing? This business could be likened to the 1980's practice of European countries importing used Fifties denims and sweatshirts from America to satisfy the trendy youth market, inspired by Levi's 501 advertisements.

Second-hand clothes were widely worn until the end of the Second World War, and extensively during the war years under government directives, which must have amused the poor, who had been wearing them all their lives.

* Dress Reform *

While I have mentioned Industrialisation as mainly responsible for the beginnings of a consumerist society, second in importance was



BLOOMER COSTUMES OR WOMAN'S EMANCIPATION.

the Emancipation of Women and the Dress Reform which was brought about in the late Nineteenth century. The Feminist movement in the 1840's, then known as the Emancipation of women struggled for the financial and social independence of women, something that Victorian middle class women had not had. Soon women were taking part in golf, tennis, walking and travel, activities that required different but less constricting dress. Although the attempts of Amelia Jenks Bloomer to introduce pants for women, were in vain in 1851, the notion was accepted towards the end of the century as suitable for bicycling, horse-riding and swimming.

Dress did become less cumbersome towards the end of the century for hygiene reasons as much as anything else. The new look which women began to wear was one of tailored elegance based on the health corset which, when pulled too tightly caused the famous S-bend silhouette. Not only was this new attire more suited to mass production but it was greatly influenced by women's changing roles in society and the depression which loomed at the close of the Nineteenth century, because of it's less flamboyant, cleaner lines.

The ready made clothing industry expanded for the first time to serve young female workers who although at the very bottom rung of the career ladder, were beginning to earn a stable income. There were new job openings for lower middle class women as shop assistants, clerks and school teachers and education was available for young girls in schools and universities.

A tailor-made, unfussy suit with cleaner lines was available for their new working lifestyles and could be bought 'off-the-peg' in large quantities. Middle class men and women who would previously have had their clothes made for them, were now buying 'off-the-peg' as it was cheaper and less time consuming, although dress-makers were still widely used by the middle classes, often calling themselves 'Court dressmakers.'

* The Birth of fashion retailing *

The English 'court dressmakers' often operated small shops from their premises selling fabric and haberdashery, the development from this to the boutiques of today may have been a slow process but probably began with the dressmaker selling some partly made garments at the start of this century, amongst her fabrics. As designs simplified in the twenties, she might have begun to sell fully made dresses until eventually in the fifties, concentrating more on this 'ready to wear'.

It was at this time too that the department store grew from the grocers of the early Nineteenth century to the fashion and style emporium of the first half of the Twentieth century, following a similar pattern to that of the Madam or boutique shop. Many existed pre 1850 (John Lewis, Dickens and Jones in London and Macy's in New York) and developed pre 1900, offering the growing middle classes all the luxuries they could afford; most were established firmly as large department stores by 1900 in the UK, France and America.

The draper/haberdasher, who, having expanded, could now call his business a department store would have sold mainly fabrics and ladies accessories and had dressmaking workrooms attached to the premises where they would have made high quality garments to their customers' requirements on quite a large scale.

Eventually as the 1920's emerged, the fashionable stores began to sell garments with partly made bodices so that the customer could finish the garment to her own sizing herself or through a dressmaker. Within a few years they were hanging completely ready-to-wear garments on the shop floor, labelled as genuine copies of Paris originals, the very basic twenties silhouette made this possible. As early as the Nineteen-ten's it became acceptable and in-keeping with womens' busier lifestyles to buy ready-to-wear.

Unfortunately with the mass production well fuelled and underway, the already poor working conditions deteriorated further particularly in fashion centres such as London and New York, where they availed of the influx of immigrants, mainly Jewish and Irish, who were happy to have any job at all and being illegal had no rights. The immigrants and working class women, endured long hours, low wages and poor conditions in tenement workrooms known as sweatshops, scattered throughout the cities slums.

* World War I *

Ironically, fashion continued to develop during World War I, as many working class women found themselves in the position of working outside the home for the first time in munition factories and other war-related industries. Although this was only for the duration of the war and they were paid nearly half the wage a man might have earned at the time, these women had their own stable, financial independence. In a time when very little else was stable, this was important with a huge population of women becoming consumers for the first time. There were relatively few restrictions during this war, and many women bought the materialistic goods they had dreamed of, such as fur coats and silk.

Another significant point is that women were now wearing looser shapes, even trousers and boiler suits, necessary for their duties and these were better suited to mass-production. Also, the skills that war-time machinists were learning in the controlled production of war uniforms were invaluable to the improvement of standards in factory mass-production.

* Between-Wars Consumerism *

Mass-production really took off directly after the war to quench the thirst of the consumer now created. The Emancipation of women with their right to vote now granted, the popularity of cinema and related activities, sports, dancing, smoking and the wearing of make-

up, produced huge consumerist trends, while women gained physical and social freedom they also partook in many outdoor activities and travelling which with the help of Coco Chanel made the sun-tan fashionable. At this time some of today's largest cosmetics companies began: Max Factor, Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden, all riding on the success of the heavily made-up Hollywood movie stars.

This signified the development of research into the cosmetics industry which meant the testing of products on animals, which continued extensively until the 1980's.

New developments in the textile industry also soared to success in the Twenties. Rayon, the 'new silk', lent itself ideally to mass-production and was used mostly for the Twenties drop waisted dresses.

Class differences had been eased as never before and this was evident in the more relaxed clothes of Coco Chanel and her imitators. As women of the higher classes had less time for fitting, 'ready-to-wear' suited the social spectrum. Less and less, women used dressmakers and the department stores began to advertise their ready-to-wear as their main business.

"The growth and development of manufacturers, many to be powers in themselves in future years, but most of them starting as small operators, is one of the biggest between-wars stories in fashion marketing in Britain."¹³

With all this prosperous gaiety, something was bound to happen and it did; the Wall Street Stock Market crashed in 1929. Society, particularly in America was devastated, Paris couture orders dropped and the great Thirties depression followed. Extravagance was out and demand grew for well made, ready-to-wear, providing an important move away from couture and towards mass-markets. Cashing in on this, English manufacturers such as Jaeger, Windsmoor and Deréta offered quality copies of Paris originals.

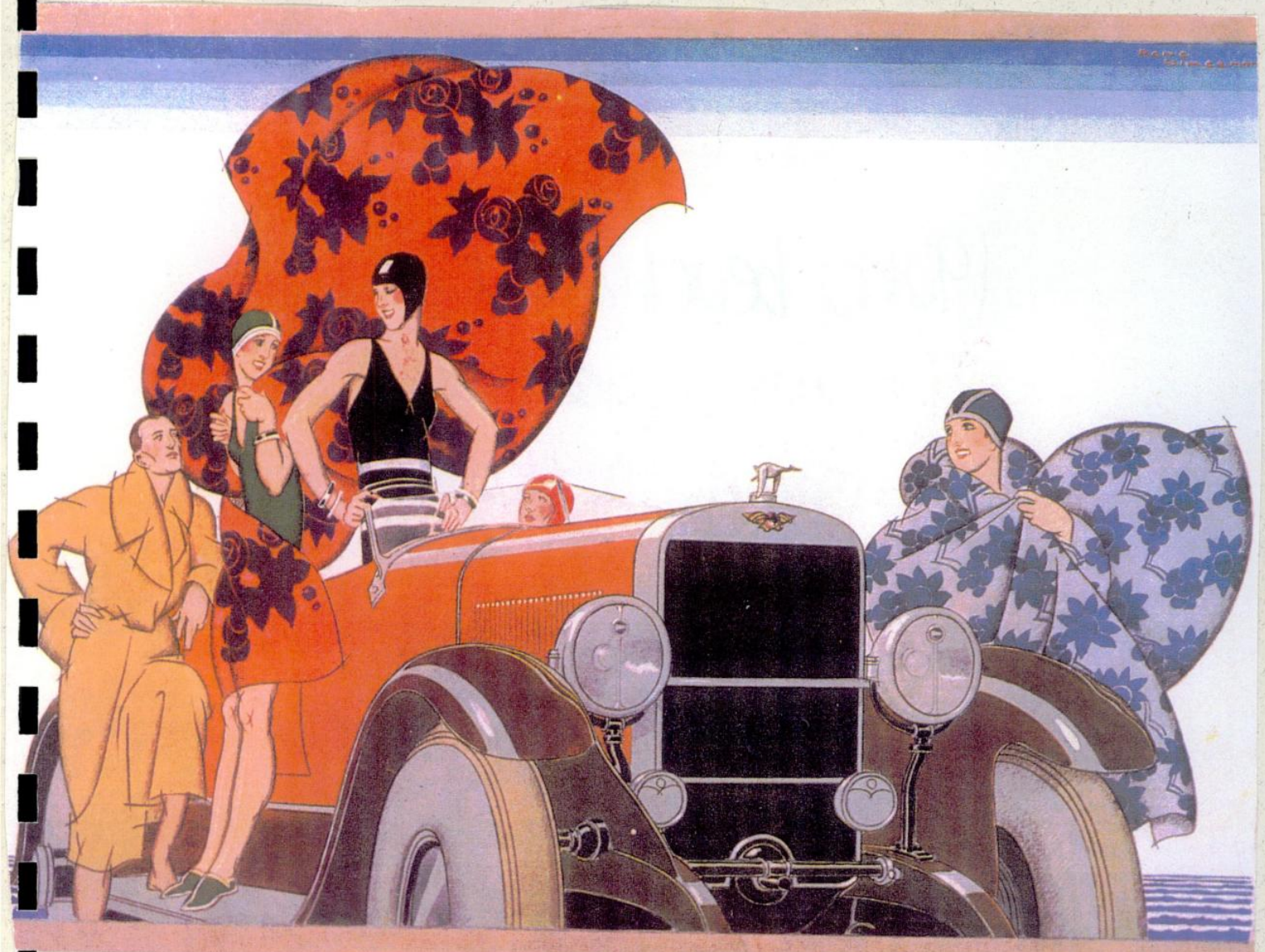


Figure 18 - 1920's Beachwear



Figure 19 - 1920's Beachwear



Figure 20 - World War I women in boiler suits



RATIONING

of Clothing, Cloth, Footwear

from June 1, 1941

Rationing has been introduced, not to deprive you of your real needs, but to make more certain that you get your share of the country's goods—to get fair shares with everybody else.

When the shops re-open you will be able to buy cloth, clothes, footwear and knitting wool *only if you bring your Food Ration Book with you*. The shopkeeper will detach the required number of coupons from the unused margarine page. Each margarine coupon counts as one coupon towards the purchase of clothing or footwear. You will have a total of 66 coupons to last you for a year; so go sparingly. You can buy *where* you like and *when* you like without registering.

NUMBER OF COUPONS NEEDED

Men and Boys		Adult	Child	Women and Girls		Adult	Child
Unlined mackintosh or cape ..	9	7		Lined mackintoshes, or coats (over 28 in. in length) ..	14	11	
Other mackintoshes, or raincoat, or overcoat ..	16	11		Jacket, or short coat (under 28 in. in length) ..	11	8	
Coat, or jacket, or blazer or like garment ..	13	8		Dress, or gown, or frock—woollen ..	11	8	
Waistcoat, or pull-over, or cardigan, or jersey ..	5	3		Dress, or gown, or frock—other material ..	7	5	
Trousers (other than fustian or corduroy) ..	8	6		Gymtunic, or girl's skirt with bodice ..	8	6	
Fustian or corduroy trousers ..	5	5		Blouse, or sports shirt, or cardigan, or jumper ..	7	5	
Shorts ..	5	3		Skirt, or divided skirt ..	5	3	
Overalls, or dungarees or like garment ..	6	4		Overalls, or dungarees or like garment ..	6	4	
Dressing-gown or bathing-gown ..	8	6		Apron, or pinafore ..	3	2	
Night-shirt or pair of pyjamas ..	8	6		Pyjamas ..	8	6	
Shirt, or combinations—woollen ..	8	6		Nightdress ..	6	5	
Shirt, or combinations—other material ..	5	4		Petticoat, or slip, or combination, or cami-knickers ..	4	3	
Pants, or vest, or bathing costume, or child's blouse ..	4	2		Other undergarments, including corsets ..	3	2	
Pair of socks or stockings ..	3	1		Pair of stockings ..	2	1	
Collar, or tie, or pair of cuffs ..	1	1		Pair of socks (ankle length) ..	1	1	
Two handkerchiefs ..	1	1		Collar, or tie, or pair of cuffs ..	1	1	
Scarf, or pair of gloves or mittens ..	2	2		Two handkerchiefs ..	1	1	
Pair of slippers or goloshes ..	4	2		Scarf, or pair of gloves or mittens or muff ..	2	2	
Pair of boots or shoes ..	7	3		Pair of slippers, boots or shoes ..	5	3	
Pair of leggings, gaiters or spats ..	3	2					

CLOTH. Coupons needed per yard depend on the width. For example, a yard of woollen cloth 36 inches wide requires 3 coupons. The same amount of cotton or other cloth needs 2 coupons.
KNITTING WOOL. 1 coupon for two ounces.

THESE GOODS MAY BE BOUGHT WITHOUT COUPONS

* Children's clothing of sizes generally suitable for infants less than 4 years old. * Boiler suits and workmen's bib and brace overalls. * Hats and caps. * Sewing thread. * Mending wool and mending silk. * Boot and shoe laces. * Tapes, braids, ribbons and other fabrics of 3 inches or less in width. * Elastic. * Lace and lace net. * Sanitary towels. * Braces, suspenders and garters. * Hard haberdashery. * Clogs. * Black-out cloth dyed black. * All second-hand articles.

Special Notice to Retailers

Retailers will be allowed to get fresh stocks of cloth up to and including June 28th, of other rationed goods up to and including June 21st, WITHOUT SURRENDERING COUPONS. After those dates they will be able to obtain fresh stocks only by turning in their customers' coupons. Steps have been taken, in the interests of the smaller retailers, to limit during these periods the quantity of goods which can be supplied by a wholesaler or manufacturer to any one retailer however large his orders. Further information can be obtained from your Trade Organisations.

ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF TRADE

The story of the expansion of retail chain stores during the Depression is significant; companies like Marks and Spencer, growing since the start of the century, targeted the young working woman and lower-middle class suburban housewife and provided them with simple, stylish separates in affordable fabrics such as rayon.

Magazines and glamorous Thirties movies also gave this section of the population what they wanted in the form of escapism, encouraging consumerism and improved female standards of living. Developments in fibre research also took place with the improvement and mass-production of Rayon. The American company, Du Pont came up with synthetic polymers and in 1939, Nylon was developed.

"Fashion between the wars is perhaps best understood as the spearhead of consumerism, which was at last reaching some sections of the working class." ¹⁴

* World War II *

"Paradoxically it was during World War II that women were to make economic advances." ¹⁵

The harsh conditions which many European women lived with between 1939 and '45 (except perhaps in neutral countries like Ireland) took most women's minds off fashion, as they had to man the home front and carry out men's jobs as well as living under the Blitz in London and the German Occupation in Paris. When not wearing uniforms, everybody dressed under strict government restrictions, known as the Utility Scheme, which dictated styles, stabilized the price of clothes and dictated that all non-essential elements (e.g. flap pockets, large hems or cuffs) were to be eliminated from fashion.

Clothes were rationed and could only be bought with coupons. Basically women improvised wherever possible and patched clothes together with whatever they could get their hands on; unrationed curtain and upholstery fabrics, blankets and old coats; even parachute

silk became underwear. This is not unlike the movement underway in Paris at the moment, spearheaded by Martin Margiela, which I later hope to prove, is the way forward for fashion.

So while consumerism almost came to a standstill in London and Paris, I believe that style was continually on the move because improvisation is a creative art, is it not? It is well proven that in times of deep depression, people are at their most creative, as if creativity is being used as escapism.

Trends such as stocking-less legs were born with the humorous painting of a line down the back of the leg to mimic stocking seams. Magazines offered suggestions on how to maximise your quoted wartime wardrobe. Women wore their husband's trousers, they had never been so clever. "Thrift is the fashion" was the slogan of the English "Make Do and Mend" campaign which encouraged the care and preservation of clothes and encouraged the buying of coupon-free second hand clothes. Government advice such as this would be very sound advice for the Nineties consumer, not only to save on finances but also our planet.

* New Look *

With the end of World War II in 1945, women were happy to return to their homes in a romantic sense, to become wives, mothers and women again, welcoming their war-torn husbands with loving arms (Unlike post-War I, when women wanted to remain in the workplace, they had been given a taste of). The war had been long and harsh with many casualties. Women had been denied their femininity for over a decade, they desperately wanted so many things:- glamour, excitement, femininity, extravagance, love, beauty and luxury. A new consumerist era was awaiting them with dollar signs in his eyes. After nothing, there should be everything. The 'New Look' was announced in Paris, heralding a return to femininity (not to mention couture, whose lead had been stolen by New York's Seventh Avenue during the war).

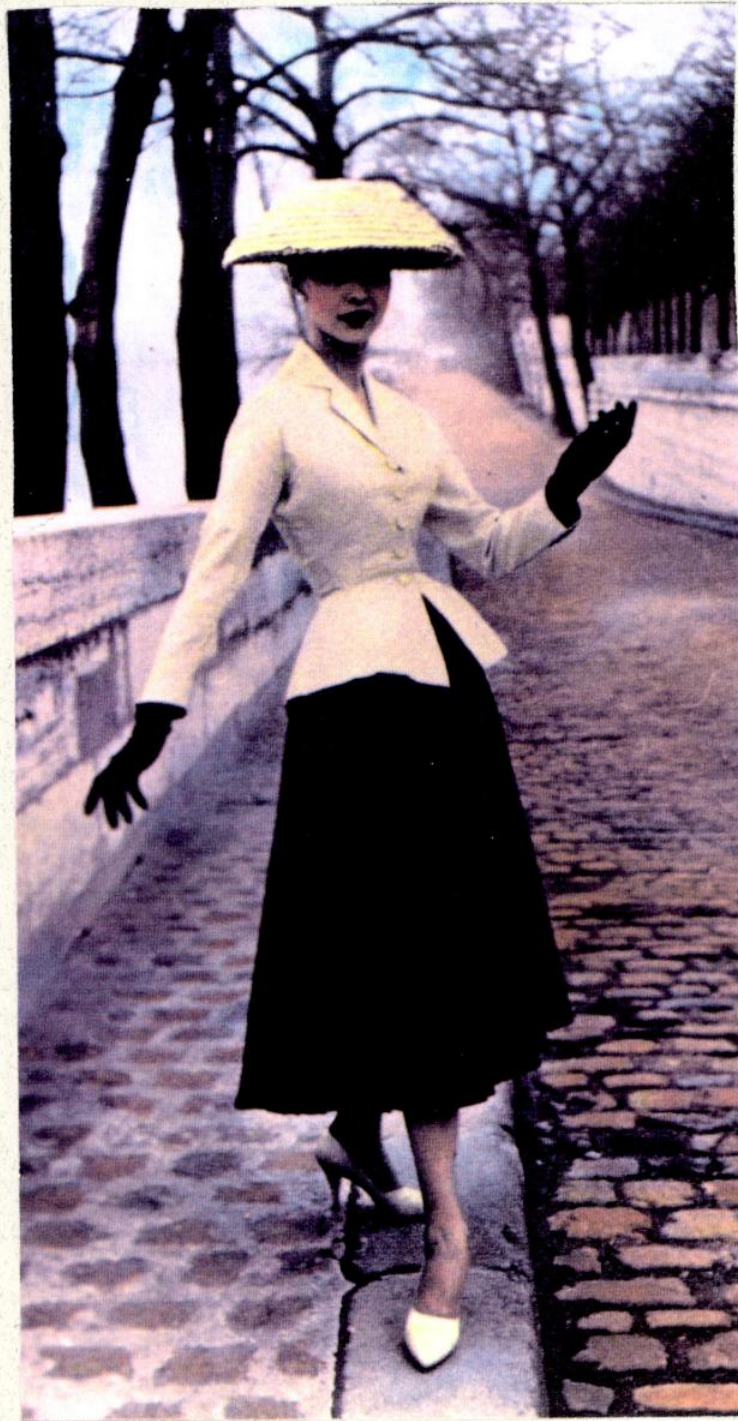


Figure 22 - Yves Saint Laurent's 'New Look',

The New Look was channelled into mass-produced, cheaper fashions instantly and enthusiasm for this look was widespread on both sides of the Atlantic, due to improved communications: Newspapers, magazines, television and wireless all had massive consumer appeal. Escapism was as evident as it is today. The Fifties was a time of many new discoveries, as above and domestic items for the newly fulfilled housewife, Rock and Roll, leisure, movies, hire purchase and mass marketing but most of all the Youth Movement.

These were the days of well groomed, chic young ladies, debutants, proms in the States, Elvis and shopping. Progressive Modernism, it was called in 1951 Britain, and although there were two million unemployed in Britain, the number of UK cars totalled 2,250 and televisions 1,000,000; by 1964 there were 8,000,000 cars and 13,000,000 televisions.

Even the haute couturier, who, up until World War II, had only dealt with private clients on an individual basis such as Yves Saint Laurent and Hardy Aimes, were now moving into the mass-market by designing directly for American department stores and large manufacturers, opening their own retail outlets and gradually throughout the Fifties, delving deeper into the ready-to-wear market where a great many more International clients lay.

* The Sixties *

By 1960, Youth Culture, with its great emphasis on clothes and music was in full swing. The main reason for this was the large youth population in Europe and America as a result of the post war baby boom. This massive surge of teenagers wanted excitement, more than their Fifties predecessors, who had really paved the path for them by discovering rock and roll and a youth inspired fashion. The excitement they sought could be found in the huge scale mass-marketing of anything that was new and fun. In fashion-related terms boutiques and trendy retail outlets became so popular, even in smaller towns,

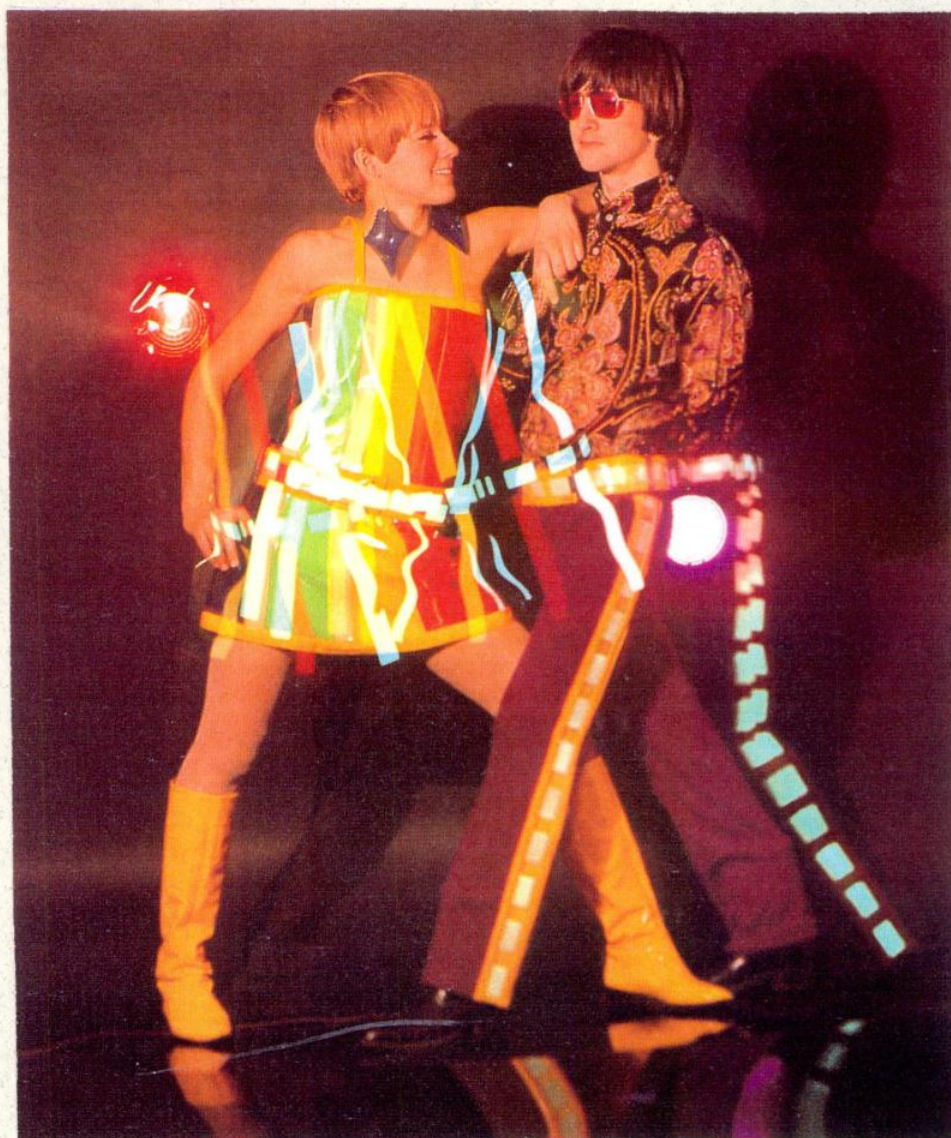


Figure 23 - 1960's Plastic fashions

that the first significant role reversal took place when London's Kings Road boutiques, led by Biba and Mary Quant's Bazaar, no longer looked to Paris haute couture but vice-versa.

Cheap, ready-to-wear sales soared and 'anything goes' was the name of the game. Teenagers had small disposable incomes from part-time jobs and manufacturers targeted this market as never before. Fashion was changing in importance from the establishment to the young, in sales as well as influences.

The Sixties was a throw-away decade - music/fashion, food and entertainment were all designed to be disposable. The 1965 craze for plastic and PVC dresses are a perfect example of throw-away fashion - the relevance is that many bad habits were adopted by the Sixties consumer who yet knew nothing of recycling.

Shopping had by now become an important leisure activity, not only for the young who shopped for fun, novelty and adventure but also for a growing number of middle class families who were escaping to the suburbs and were catered for by the new shopping centres or American malls often connected with other leisure activities such as sports centres or cinemas. The department store had been replaced by a bigger and better leisure emporium rather than a style emporium.

Other Sixties developments were in fabric innovations, which I will discuss in another chapter, also there was the large scale movement of men into the consumer market, partly due to changes in sexual attitudes after the war and its becoming more acceptable for men to dress themselves, wanting to mimic the dress sense of rock and pop stars such as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Young men now wanted a highly individual image which could easily rival what his female counterpart was wearing and their mothers could no longer buy for them.

Improved education made youth more aware of what was going on around them and in the later Sixties non-conformist protest movements



Figure 24 - 1960's King's Road boutique

emerged. In their dress, they adopted the Parisian left-bank style, berets, denims and second hand clothes which still have a cult following today. Politically they established The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Many political events of the late Sixties provided the, by then, educated youth with questions, many of which remain unanswered, leaving despair, unemployment, the Vietnam war, violence particularly in ghettos, racism, assassinations and in Northern Ireland, killing, were all reflected in the confused face of fashion, which became blatantly evident in the styles of the Seventies.

* The Seventies *

From what I can determine from my reading and talking to early Seventies consumers, the face of fashion at this time was split in two distinctive directions

"The anti-fashion youth movement".

"Classic styles for the twenty-five plus consumer".

While there was a degree of overlap in style, I believe the attitudes of these two groups were quite different so I have chosen to deal with them separately.

I have mentioned the growth in education and 1970's teenagers particularly American, because of the political unrest which surrounded them. The Youth culture of the Sixties saw their younger brothers and sisters spearhead a youth revolt, not so much in a violent way but a way of peace, love, flower-power and hippies. This was the first time that material possessions had been rejected since the Second World War. Various groups of young people from all classes joined together to form their own separate World and chose their own style, far removed from mass-consumerism. Whether it was Hippie, or the later Glam Rock or Punk, it was often a style which remained with a person throughout their life.

Even couture which had fallen from its mighty throne was influenced by anti-establishment youth (many Parisian couturiers died

at this time, as did their clients): Yves Saint Laurent was inspired by peasant art in the Seventies.

This was the beginning of a trend which continues today, with top International designers taking their inspiration from London's street fashion scene. Christian Lacroix, Jean Paul Gaultier and Karl Lagerfeld are a few to admit to flying to London in search of inspiration. Ethnic and Eastern trends, gypsies and peasant art, even punk with its slashing, piercing, leather and tartan influenced haute couture of the time.

One important consumerist item of today which was adopted by many of the Seventies anti-fashion groups is the denim jeans which have caused irreparable damage to the Environment in the processing stage (this, I will discuss in another chapter). Denim jeans originated from San Francisco, America where a Jewish immigrant made them for the workers in the gold rush, they were adopted by post World War II youth, who watched James Dean wear them in movies. Jeans then grew in accordance with the growing importance of Youth Culture. They particularly suited Seventies youth because of their working origins, unisex sexy wearability, comfort, inexpensive, hardwearing qualities. However, by the Eighties they were worn by all classes, all ages, for many occasions and as trend-setting youth, who are always looking for something different, were tempted with a great variety of treated denims, ranging from sand-washed, snow-washed, bleached, worn-in, printed and dyed. Denims became a major cause of Environmental pollution.

The hectic pace of Sixties boutique fashions sparked off a reaction for more classic, wearable, quality clothes to flatter the woman over twenty-five. The desirable look was known as 'country' and suggested the country living which was becoming popular amongst the growing middle classes. Many top manufacturers, growing since post-war days, were now answering the call of this consumer with long production runs of a 'classic' rather than a 'fast-changing' style, Jaeger, Acquascutum, Burberry, Wolfangel (German), and Richard



Figure 25 - Peasant-inspired 70's separates by Ingeborg Marcus

Alan/Clarke brothers in Dublin were all leaders in this market and still are today.

Middle aged women of all classes still shopped in Department Stores for a wide range of goods for the whole family; in Dublin, Switzers, Brown Thomas, Arnotts and Clearys were well established with shoppers from all parts of the country, as in the UK were Marks and Spencer and British Home Stores.

The most important Dublin courturiers during the Seventies were Irene Gilbert, Sybil Connolly, Jack Clarke and Ib Jorgensen. Other important trends for this consumer group with a more suburban, active lifestyle were sportswear, and textiles and furnishings, aiding the growth of interior design departments of Laura Ashley and Mary Quant. For the Environment, this meant pollution due to more textile manufacture and its consequences.

* The Consumer Eighties *

The 1980's witnessed a huge gap between the working class or unemployed and the wealthy professionals, dubbed yuppies. I see this as the most important basis for the large scale consumerism which emerged in the late Seventies. While there were three million people unemployed in Britain in 1979, the educated youth were fast climbing the career ladder, but education was not enough to achieve success, image was vitally important. This image could only be bought, boosting consumerism. Marketing created the Eighties man, who coveted and owned all that was put before him - fashion, fast cars, magazines, stereos, an assortment of gadgets even makeup and specialist hair and body care products (Lynx, Armani, Clinique for men). All of these were status symbols; the basis for female status was her new height on the career ladder and in Britain, the influence of Princess Diana. The powerful woman competing with the image-conscious man was the ideal and 'Power-Dressing' was born. (In one way the new man was mimicking his female counterpart as much as she was, him. I imagine that both wanted more of what they had seen the other having since the



Figure 26 - 1980's London fashion working conditions

post-war re-establishment of roles) Power dressing, a consumerist craze, originated from American soap operas, Dallas and Dynasty and the images created filtered down through all levels of fashion in America, Europe and Australia. It was not just the large padded shoulders that titillated consumers but also the emphasis on short skirts, legs, harsh colours, makeup, the combination of masculine, feminine and a wealthy, materialistic lifestyle.

74p
This very important business of dressing and possessing led to a large surplus of waste build up throughout the Developed World; in 1982, £115 billion was spent on clothes in the UK. The average British person spent £165 per annum on clothes. The average British woman spent £250 per annum on clothes which amounted to £5.6 billion in 1982, almost half of the total spent. Proving that women are still the biggest consumer group.

One sector greatly responsible for this surplus is High Street fashion which became cheaper in the Eighties with the use of cheap labour in Developing Countries such as Asia. This exploitation is still in practice with UK companies Next, Top Shop and Hennes and in Ireland retailers A-Wear, Issue and Dunnes Stores and surprisingly Paul Costelloe have availed of cheap foreign labour. Not only did this bring down the cost of clothes and increase spending but it also brought fashion to the less well-off sections of society who were also influenced by American soaps and brain-washed into the belief that materialistic goods would change their lives. There were, and still are the extreme but many cases where this led to theft and violence; In Los Angeles coloured youths can kill for Reebok sports shoes. In less extreme cases, the results are often debt and re-possession, giving shop till you drop a more serious meaning.



Figure 27 - Princess Diana - Style icon for the 80's

Chapter 4

Nineties Fashion

In April 1991, UK Vogue carried an article by Sarah Mower warning that the first serious signs were showing of the 'Couture in Crisis' at the January '91 Paris couture shows:

"Amid the empty seats of absent American customers and journalists, there was anxious talk of war and recession and the indecency for those who could still afford it, to spend £60,000 on a dress when a war was raging." ¹⁶

Many Couture houses who relied particularly heavily on Middle Eastern clients felt the pinch and could now only span Europe and Japan for remaining clients. In times of war, the fashion industry, particularly the extreme of couture, is open to criticism. Judged by the clothes they send down the catwalk, it is difficult for the creators of such needless consumption to appear sincere. The industry is often expected to do penance when war breaks out (as in the Second World War when many Paris designers, fled the occupied city for its duration). However, there is a flip side to the coin; according to Pierre Cardin "fashion should provide an alternative to bad news." ¹⁷ Despite their best intentions, Paris haute couturiers' figures paint a grim picture: customers dropped from 3,000 in the late eighties to 2,500 in the 1990 Autumn/Winter season. Such a decrease may suggest that the couture customer could become completely extinct by the end of the century.

While haute couture may only be a small part of the picture, it does represent the trend for 'designer dressing' and the steady downward slope it is following. After the head-to-toe designer decade of the Eighties when the marketing of an image crazed world labelled everything and anything 'designer' - 'designer food', 'designer water', 'designer beer', 'designer stubble' and, most important in keeping up with designer lifestyles, - 'designer clothes'. However,

fashion designers have had to come to terms with the realities of the Nineties, a decade in which war has already raged in the Middle East and famine has wiped out millions of people in Africa. We are killing our planet - rainforests in Brazil, waterways in Industrial countries like Germany, and allowing many species of endangered plants and animals to become extinct every day, not forgetting our most fantastic blunder, the growing hole which we have burned in the ozone layer, the protective film of gases which surrounds the earth.

"Today, the future of life hangs in the balance. The natural diversity of plants and animals is being destroyed at a rapidly rising rate. Millions of our fellow beings live in conditions of desperate poverty. Even inside the global ghettos of affluence, there is a deep lack of contentment and fulfilment. The web of life on earth is fast coming apart The Green Party's policies face the real issues - global overpopulation, overconsumption particularly inside the rich countries and the production of the things we consume by the wrong technologies." ¹⁸

The fashion industry's backlash is a growing anti-label, eco-aware movement. Fashion has shot off in several diverse directions but what is obvious is that during times of depression, fashion is at its most creative. Consumers no longer want or can afford head-to-toe designer dressing and resort to creating their own look with a mix of designer, thrift-store and old clothes. The result is a market-place in which customers will buy one or maybe two interesting quality designer pieces each season, to wear for several years. One fashion leaning, heralded as the way forward by Vogue UK in January '92 is "Quite Good Taste", seen in the gentle lines, easy silhouettes and unforced style of Armani, Gucci, Calvin Klein and Jasper Conran. This was the beginning of an international new fluidity of style which another group of designers, Lagerfeld, Ozbek, Dolce and Gabbana and Lacroix combined with the need to come up with collections full of garments which were dramatic and enticing and would tempt the Nineties consumer to buy her 'one winning piece' from them. Their answer was a



Figure 28 - The 70's Revival by Gianni Versace

Seventies revival for the Spring/Summer '93 collections. The Sunday Independent reported:

"What it reflected was a new mood at work. Just when it seemed this really was the decade when fashion was well and truly dead, there came signs that it was not only alive and kicking, but preparing for a new burst of creativity. Exactly at the point when the recession seemed to be deepeningall the clothes going down the runway cost a fortune, of course, but the general idea behind many of them - this kind of jumble sale eclecticism - needn't." ¹⁹

While the recent Seventies revival may appear a little extreme at the moment (not to mention regressive), it does signal fluidity and femininity as the new direction, pared down to a more wearable wardrobe, points to the softer more comfortable clothes we should be wearing for the rest of the Nineties.

Then there are the designers who are questioning the purpose of churning out collections every six months. Workers For Freedom, the English design team of Richard Nott and Graham Fraser, have decided no longer to produce the merry-go-round of collections and catwalk shows, swapping the fast fashion scene for a retreat in France where they will concentrate on 'special handworked garments'. They believe:

"Fashion will go back to evolving slowly rather than being a desperate rush for the latest thing. It's difficult for designers to come up with a fresh attitude every season. Designers' clothes have become over the top and they cost too much and there isn't the occasion" ²⁰

I'm sure this endless rush to churn out another collection that Nott talks about, is the reason why fashion had reached a stalemate about four seasons ago. Designers were simply exhausted and drained of ideas from the constant process and then there just wasn't the money to risk spending on young novelty designers. At the turn of the decade, journalists claimed they could no longer tell one season from the last but maybe they just couldn't see it - the quiet murmur of

*F*uture perfect

CHECK POINTS: BEYOND HIPPIE CHIC, FIND SOPHISTICATION IN THE NEW SHAPES. HOUNDSTOOTH WOOL JACKET WITH ECRU CUFFS AND BOW, *OPPOSITE*, AND WOOL CREPE TROUSERS, FROM £2,800, TO ORDER, AT HARDY AMIES. LONG-SLEEVED SILK BLOUSE, £185, AT POLO RALPH LAUREN. STRAW HAT, £130, AT HERALD & HEART HATTERS. EIGHTEEN-CARAT WHITE GOLD RING, £370, AT THIO FENNELL. FAUX-PEARL AND GILT FILIGREE EARRINGS, BY MIRIAM HASKELL, £65, AT SUE MAUTNER.

AN ORIGINAL ANGLE ON SUITING: FLARED-FROM-THE-HIP TROUSERS SKIRT THE FLOOR. TAUPE SILK CREPE LOOSE JACKET, *THIS PAGE*, £485. MATCHING WIDE-LEG TROUSERS, £360. SILK CAMISOLE, £120. BOTH TO ORDER, AT BENNY ONG. WHITE LEATHER PLATFORM SANDALS, £225, TO ORDER, AT JIMMY CHOO

MANUELA PAVESI





Figure 30 - Emblematic of the '93 softness; romantic blouse and wide legged pants from Anne Klein, New York

understated natural elegance that the easy silhouettes and natural colour palettes of Armani, Calvin Klein and Donna Karan were whispering, before a brief appearance of the Forties suit and now the Seventies flop and flare are said to have saved the day. These fads however are regressive and show little imagination, only a desperate attempt to get out of a rut by looking to what has been done before. The really fresh ideas are the ones coming from eco-aware designers such as Martin Margiela, Katherine Hamnett and Helen Storey and the less restrained silhouettes of Armani, Klein and a growing number of London designers, Jasper Conran (it is notable that his father is taking similar moves with Habitat) Amanda Wakely, and Betty Jackson.

Another anti-fashion phenomenon of the Nineties, happening in London at the moment is the ecologically-conscious 'no-brand goods' Japanese store selling basic, natural effect functional kitchen ware and bed linen, recycled stationery and organic cotton underwear, shirts and nightwear. Muji's policy is 'high quality natural basics' designed for our new eco-comfortable, anti-excess lifestyles.

A significant direction which Nineties anti-fashion has also followed is that of the youth movement. Said to originate in Seattle in the US, the Grunge rock music scene has inspired 'Grunge Fashion' which has spread to the wardrobes of teenagers everywhere. This trend did, until recently display the huge divide between youths culture and the establishment, but in the Spring/Summer '93 collections many New York designers took inspirations from grunge, bringing fashion from the streets to the catwalks (e.g: Perry Ellis, Anna Siu, Donna Karan and Calvin Klein). In keeping with current attitudes, these designers are endorsing Margiela's belief that:

"To be chic is negative, chic is a caricature of a certain mindset of twenty years ago. In those days a woman thought she had to spend a lot of money to be fashionable. True style has got nothing to do with money."²¹

The stars and fans of the Seattle grunge rock scene opted for a mix-match of comfortable loose, anti-designer thrift store garments

WORKERS FOR FREEDOM

and painted
I silk taffeta
irt with net
derskirts,
65, and silk
nd painted
istcoat, £180,
th Workers
r Freedom;
ede boots with
tice detail, £525,
anolo Blahnik;
ndant around
m, £35,
nifer Corker;
aque tights,
1.99, Hue.

See page 131 for
cocktail details.

Photographs by
Jay Ward. Styled by
Lizzi Mason. Hair
Thomas McKiver for
Humble + Bumble, NY.
Make-up by Carol Brown.
Model: Aga Marie



Figure 31 - An example of Workers For Freedom, Nineties dressing




JASPER
CONRAN

Figure 32 - The Nineties Silhouette by Jasper Conran

like lumber shirts, button thru floral dresses, thermal underwear on show, oversize sweaters, woolen pull-down hats, cut off jeans, biker boots and long lank hair.

It is only the Irish students who have noticed that this is what we've been wearing for years, maybe a little less Margiela-styled but basically it came from our own rock music scene and the financial restraints that force us to buy second hand clothes. Perhaps one explanation for it is that Seattle bands have been inspired by Irish bands like U2 and many young Irish have emigrated to Seattle because of its similar size and climate, bringing with them their student image.



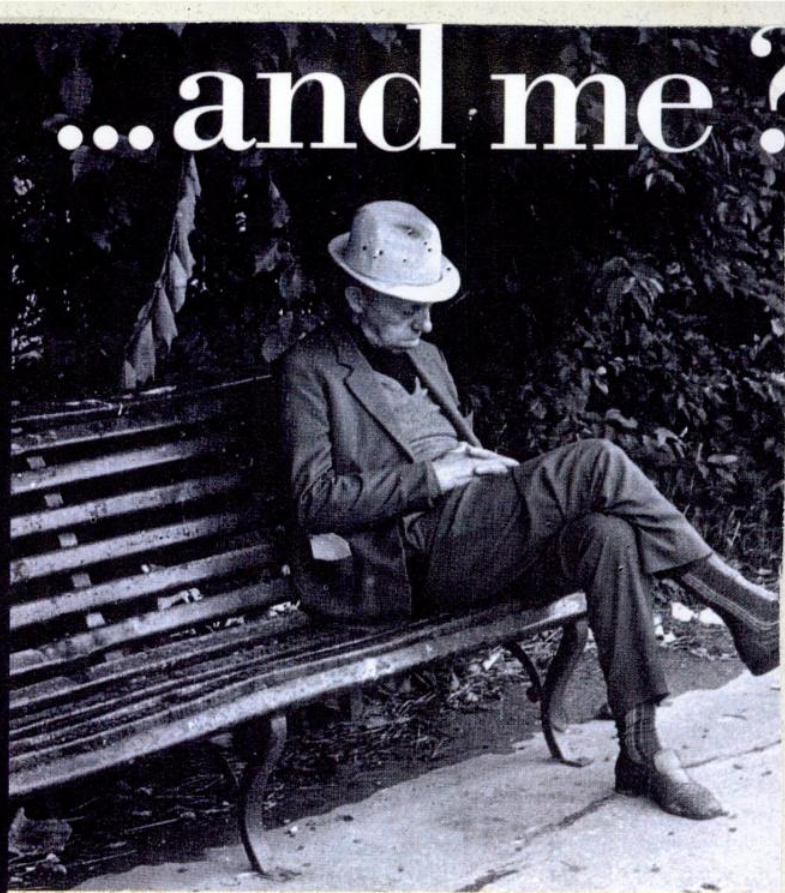
FULL TURTLENECK SWEATER
IN COTTON.
SWEATER IN WOOL/COTTON/

Figure 33 - Natural Cotton Knitwear, Marco Polo magazine

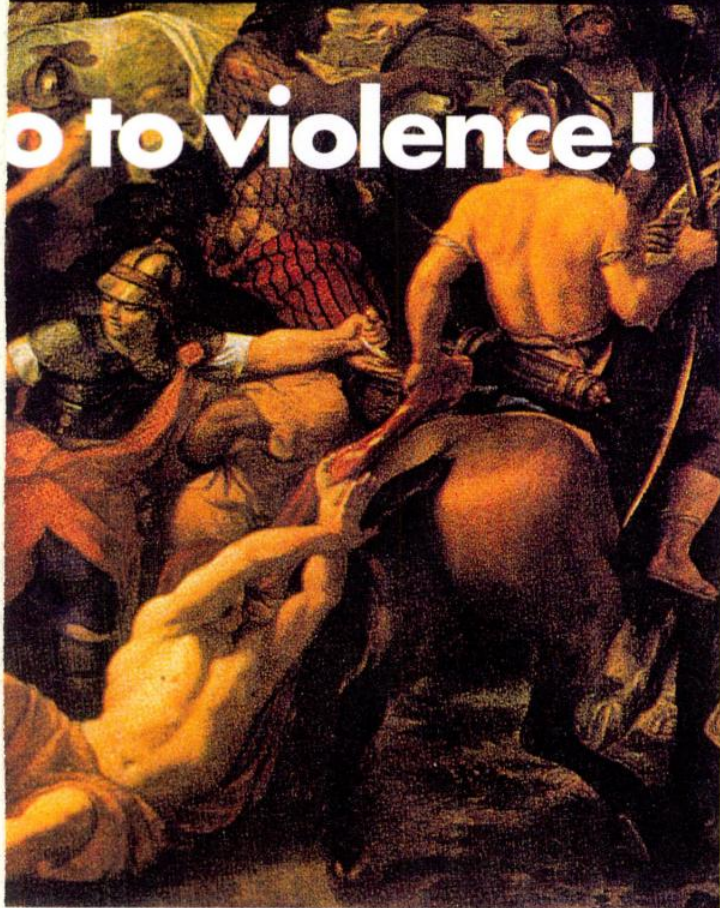
I ♥ DRUGS!



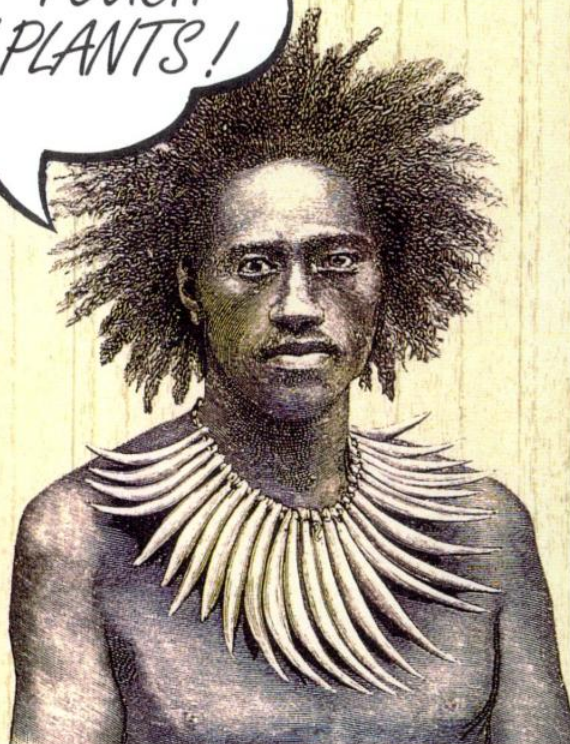
...and me?



Go to violence!



DON'T TOUCH
MY PLANTS!



MOSCHINO

Figure 34 - Moschino's Nineties advertising carried on all leading International Magazines in 1992

Perry Ellis

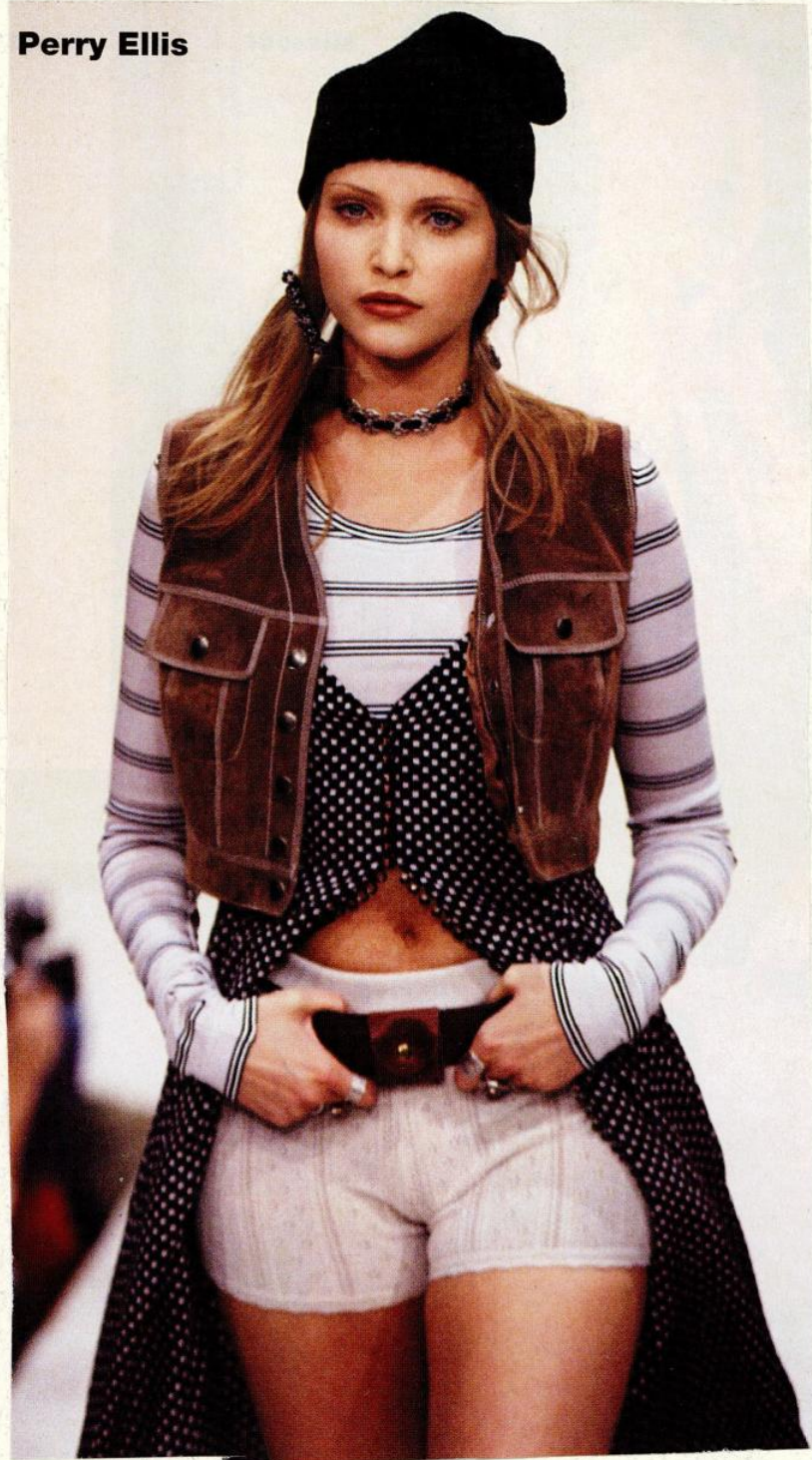
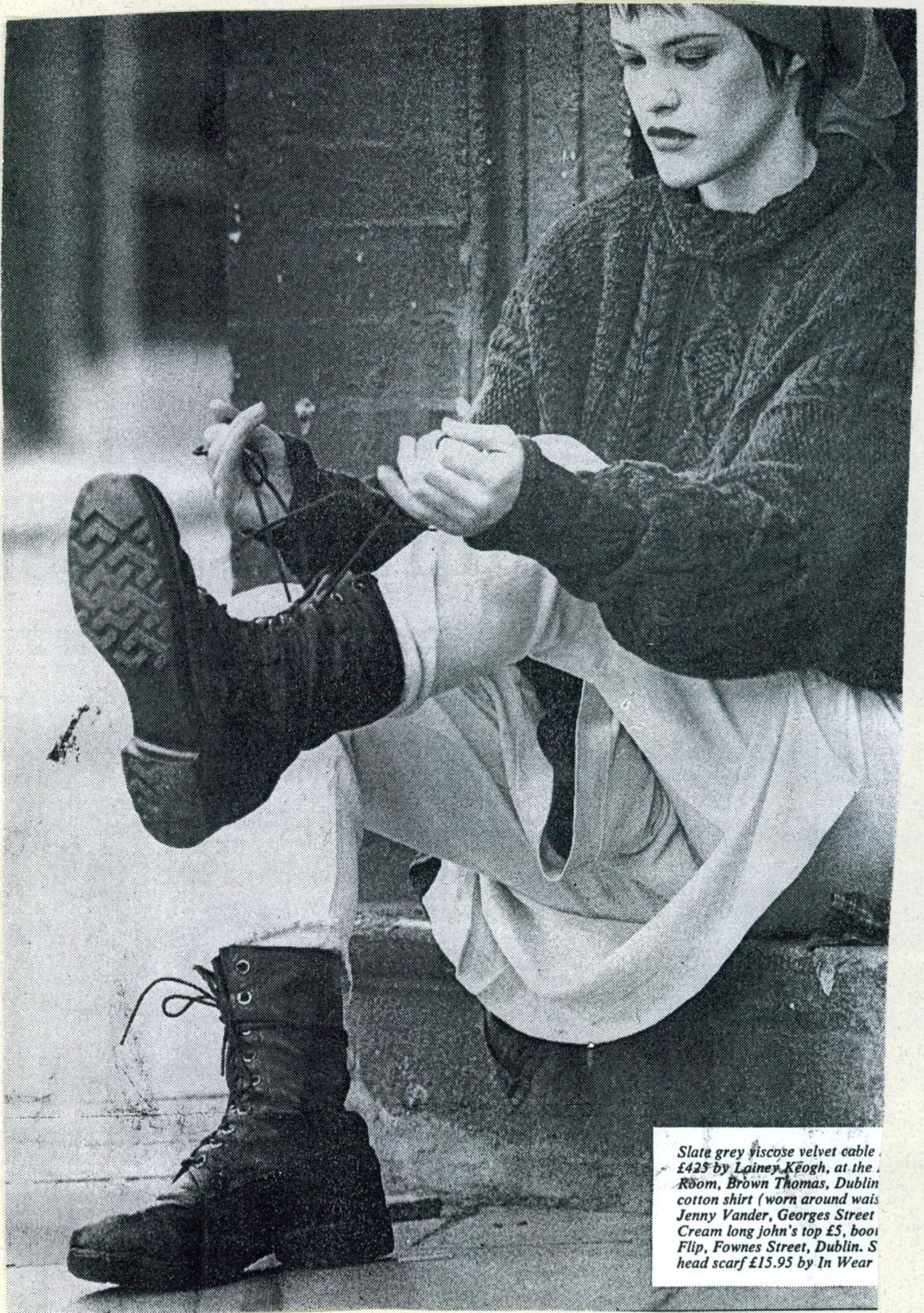


Figure 35 - Designer Grunge from Perry Ellis, New York



Slate grey viscose velvet cable
£425 by Lainey Keogh, at the
Room, Brown Thomas, Dublin
cotton shirt (worn around waist)
Jenny Vander, Georges Street
Cream long john's top £5, boots
Flip, Fownes Street, Dublin. S
head scarf £15.95 by In Wear

Figure 36 - Grunge dressing for the Nineties woman

(more scouting)



Figure 37 - Seth Shapiro, a young New York designer with models wearing his Margiela-inspired clothes

Chapter 5

Designers for the 21st century

In the process of my investigation into an Environmentally safe fashion, I came across many designers, retailers and manufacturers mostly European who have been moving in ecological directions but three designers of high fashion stood apart from the crowd in their genuine, brave will to change the face of fashion. These designers, Katherine Hamnett, Helen Storey and Martin Margiela, I have chosen to write about in a case study format.

All three designers have expressed their concerns for Environmental pollution and Eighties consumerism in very different and contrasting ways. All have come up with intelligent, appealing answers to the problem which should be seen as an example to be followed by any aspiring designer of the late Twentieth century who should not and hopefully will not be able to create garments, or indeed any product without primarily considering their Environment.

Katherine Hamnett

Probably the best known of my chosen designers, Katherine Hamnett, a leading British designer, has been outspoken on many political issues since her early Eighties demonstration T-Shirts shouting 'Choose Life' and '58% don't want perishing' in large black capitals. She earned herself a radical and provocative reputation in 1983 by wearing the latter to meet the then Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher at 10, Downing St. It was well engineered, startling public gestures such as these, as well as a design imagery that shouts of sex, rock and roll and rebellion - overlaid with the casual attraction of thrift shop - inspired garments that has sent her sales soaring amongst the youth of Britain and mainland Europe. In 1987 her



Figure 38 - Katherine Hamnett slogan t-shirt 1985

financial backer Neil Cobb, said of her:

"She's the only British designer who is anywhere near the Italians in terms of garments sold; 60- 70,000 per season. Her business is in great shape." ²²

Her prices range from approximately £35 for a T-shirt in her Katherine Hamnett jeans range to £80 for natural cotton jeans and up to £500 for a tailored jacket.

While Hamnett was very much aware of Environmental issues in the mid Eighties, when Neill Cobb made the above quote, and this did come across in interviews of the time, she concentrated most of her attentions and slogans on nuclear issues. Her 1984 collection had been inspired by the women of Greenham Common. However, by 1986, her fashion politics had become more subtle and while she was still producing versions of the slogan t-shirts, her audience became broader (perhaps older?) and her method more refined.

By 1988, Hamnett's ecological concerns had moved to the fore in the public eye, but this time not so much via slogans but in a way she really could make a difference - by actually producing ecologically friendly garments. She was still using the same tactics - using clothes as a form of expression, to convey a message. In a 1983 'The Face' interview she said she felt she was a designer in a position of power and was using this power to dress intelligent and powerful people in a demonstrative way:

"You can decide what they're going to look like basically and that means a lot. If they're read off totally as the clothes they're wearing, as the person they are, you're creating their persona. So I say let's make peace and ecology very fashionable. Everybody thinks, What can I do? You look at the situation in the world at the moment, the politicians aren't really representing the people. You've got a chance to let people represent themselves to an extent... That's where I think my area of responsibility lies." ²³

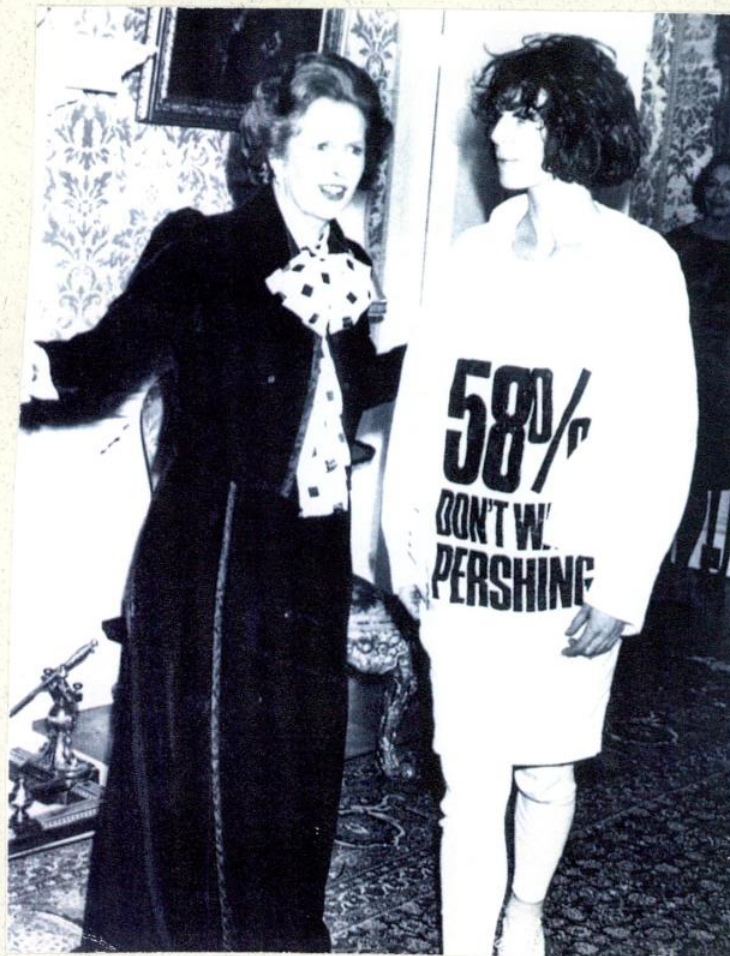


Figure 39 - Katherine Hamnett meeting Margaret Thatcher in March 1984, wearing her slogan t-shirt

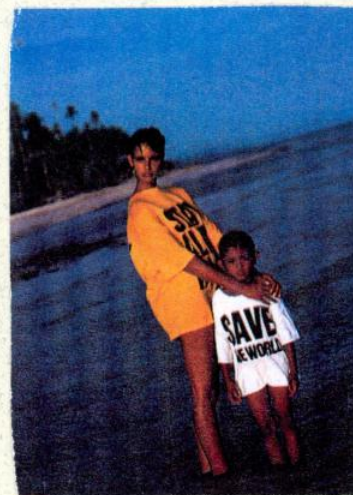
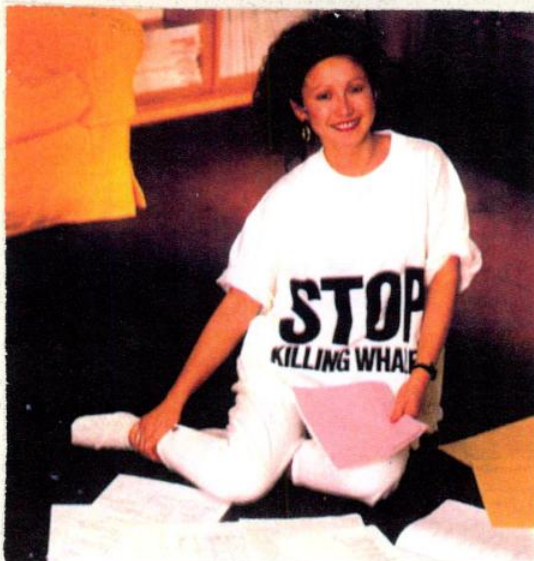


Figure 40

+ 41 - Katherine Hamnett slogan t-shirts 1985

I think this interview embodies a lot of what Katherine Hamnett is. Showing her genuine concern, sense of responsibility and fascination with the relationship between clothes and the attitudes the wearer adopts.

"What you represent in your clothes is your values".²⁴

Hamnett strikes me as a creative, intelligent fashion designer with something to say. Constantly questioning and examining new ways in which we can live and aiming to embody these ideals through her clothes, in the hope that their ideals will become the wearers. On the ecological side, she has joined forces since '91 with Cotton 2000, the research and educational programme set up in association with the Pesticide Trust to examine the effects of Pesticide use in cotton growing. 1% profit from her denim sales, (her biggest sellers) goes towards this programme and she is currently researching the Environmental impact of her denim washes and treatments, striving towards producing an entirely pollutant (pesticide, dye, detergent, formaldehyde)-free denim. She also sells organic cotton t-shirts as part of each collection and her denims are stone-washed with natural pumice stones and naturally dyed.

Coupled with this, she believes wasteful packaging should be minimised and, wherever possible, eliminated or recycled. At her Islington headquarters, all glass, paper, tins, plastic and bottles are recycled. Hamnett told Marie Claire magazine in November '92, that she does not believe Environmental concern is a passing fad.

"The consumer has been educated by the media to the horrors. They are compassionate and will hopefully lead the movement away from Environmentally bad products. Look at CFC's, people care. I believe in consumer power and democratic survival. After the collapse of the Rio summit, it's all we have."

She does believe in consumers and the sheer volume of power which they may possess en masse, a realisation that would never have been possible before consumers began to dictate their needs in the early Seventies. She says customers of our present decade are prepared to



Katharine Hamnett claims, 'The need to ornament ourselves is more ancient than the clothing industry. Designers don't create needs, we respond to them'

Right: cotton jeans, £65, and cotton shirt, £65, both Katharine Hamnett. Leather belt, £35, Mulberry; mock-troc shoes, £79.99, Russell & Bromley

pay more for 'Green' fabrics in their garments, providing quality comfort and style are not sacrificed -

"Designers don't create needs, we respond to them".²⁶

According to Hamnett, it is only those designers who create what satisfies customers' dictates that will survive; this may account for her recent move away from outrageous headline-grabbing collections, towards a more basic and natural, mostly denim and cotton collection, bringing in a Worldwide turnover in '91 of £90 million Stg. Perhaps there are also suggestions there that the more Environmentally aware the Nineties consumer becomes, the greater the need will be for a high quality, eco-safe yet innovative garment.

Upon reading an '86 interview in Art and Design magazine, I was confused to hear Katherine Hamnett say that she adored cotton "because its completely ecologically clean and it doesn't irritate your skin".²⁷ As I know from my own reading, that this is not the case, that cotton growing and treating plays more havoc with the Environment while its formaldehyde treatment also often irritates sensitive skins.

Also Hamnett's early Eighties exhibitionism might have suggested a greater interest in the attentions of the press than any genuine nuclear concerns.

I am, however convinced that she now has genuine interests and has set herself apart from all other designers in her quest for fashion's harmony with nature, not just through her sympathetic interviews and contribution of profits but mainly through her stepping down from the high fashion rat race and nearing a style that is simpler, more natural, classic and timeless, in well-sourced fabrics.



Figure 43 - Dress from the Katherine Hamnett Summer 1993 Collection

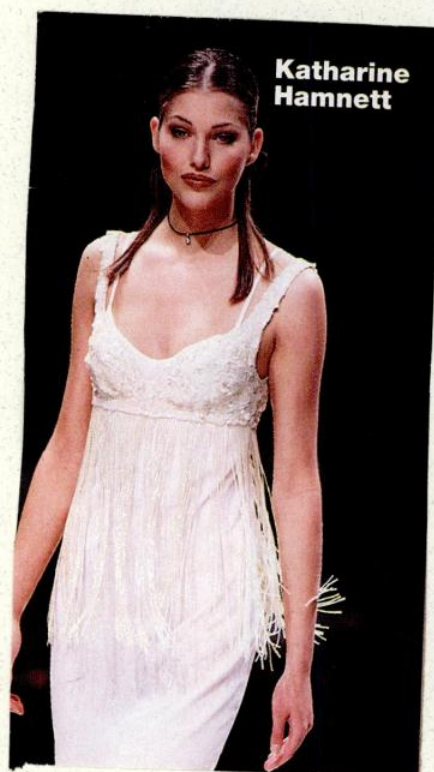
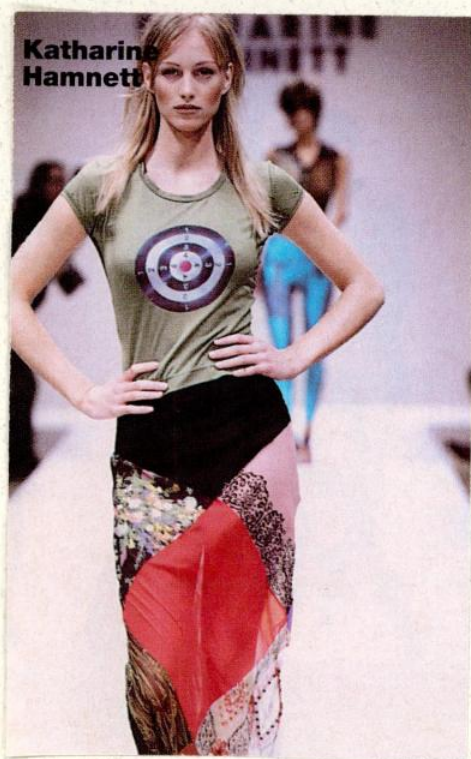


Figure 44 - Katherine Hamnett, Summer 1993 Collection

Helen Storey

My second chosen designer, London based Helen Storey is one of a new breed of designers challenging the very concept of high fashion. Where people in the past spent large amounts of money on extravagant, overpriced garments, maybe only wearing these clothes on one occasion, the Nineties are a time where the more socially aware designers are answering to the dictates of a recession hit and ecologically aware consumer with classic investment dressing.

In a recession one of the first things we cut down on is spending on clothes. The level-headed Storey saw this trend and answered it with a more commercial business approach in '91, launching her Real Classics diffusion line which aims to complement her more adventurous main line with timeless pieces, such as jeans and leather jackets at lower prices

"I have always hated designer prices but they are necessary for small businesses with enormous overheads." ²⁸

Helen Storey.

"I went into business out of a love for design, not a love for business itself. But by supplementing the mainline with a commercial range, I hope one day to be freed of business constraints and have more time to design and travel for inspiration." ²⁹

Helen Storey.

It is from reading many comments like these from Storey that I see her almost as an artist and an intellectual in chains, disillusioned by the constraints of fashion, wishing it were art.

Storey's first solo collection, comprised mainly of, shirts, T-shirts and jeans but there was one beaded dress and it was the only thing that sold. Five years later she says, "The orders are still coming in".

This turned her into a designer of expensive eveningwear which exudes power and sex, demanding attention. Like Hamnett, Storey sees the power and confidence which her clothes give the wearer, creating a persona and she hopes to, in a different way from Hamnett, display her own social beliefs through the image which she creates for her customers. This is a long way from simply creating frocks, but is the way Storey wants it, to be judged as an intellectual and an artist. Her interviews are littered with impassioned references to her social concerns such as war, third world poverty, feminism and the Environment and she seems to need to justify her role as a designer by showing that there are far more serious issues on her mind than hemlines and colour schemes.

Her 'thinking designs' are not always well received by the press who concentrate on chasing stories and pictures of 'Nice Dresses' and have been dismissive of Storey's commercial success since the late Eighties, which I imagine probably has a lot to do with her very private and anti-fashion lifestyle: refusing to wear make-up, dye her greying hair or wear anything but jeans, sweaters and sweatpants, saying that if she wore her beaded dress, she would "feel like a complete fake; it's the equivalent of changing my sex."³⁰ She leads an intensely private existence with her husband Ron Brinkers and son, Luke.

While she wants critics, "not just to like her clothes but to understand them"³¹ a journalist quoted in The Guardian said:

"She sees fashion as art; we see it as yet another load of outfits, to be written about or photographed. She has some great ideas, but they're overdesigned to the point where they're unwearable. And she takes herself far too seriously, with these collections that try to say something. I mean, who in their right mind would wear a dress with a foetus on the front?"³²

What the press call pretentious packaging, Storey calls the message which makes fashion interesting to her. After an overdose of

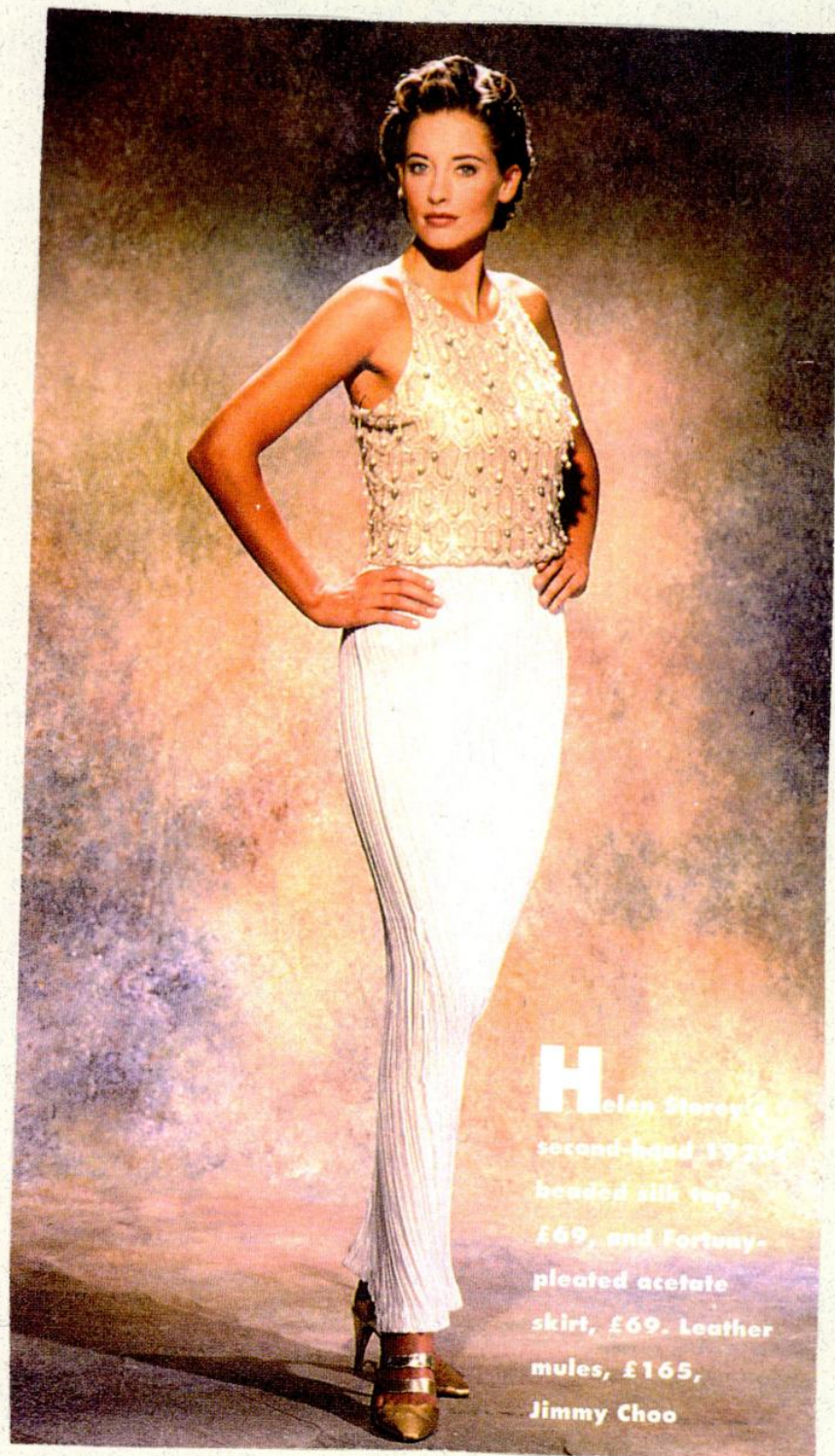


Figure 45 - Helen Storey, "2nd Life"

banal Eighties power dressing, Storey's angle is far more attractive in an interesting way than a 'load of outfits' which are simply photographed and written about.

Winning 'Innovative Designer of the Year' in the UK in 1990, coupled with a wholesale turnover of between £2 and £3 million, proves that the public love Storey and her statements.

Her freshest and for the case of my investigation, more important statement was in June '92 when as part of her bid to promote conservation of resources and social awareness, she introduced a range of 'recycled' clothes, only four months after the launch of her 'Real Classics' line. The Recycled line 'Second life' is the result of a partnership with Abel Damoussi, who owns Flip in Covent Garden and Mash and Avirex US in Oxford St. Under this agreement, Storey has first choice on the second-hand clothes which are imported for Flip from the States; she buys these garments and then either customises them with trimmings or sells them straight through her newly opened Kings Road shop for less than £30. The exciting new partnership is an innovative milestone in retailing history. While people have always worn second hand clothes, it is a first for an established designer to sell them as one third of her range. Storey says "It's about recycling clothes and fabrics. These clothes fit with the times: People cannot afford designer prices but they don't want the chain store look."³³ The new price points are appealing to Storey as it widens her market.

"I wanted to create a shop with many garments selling for under £50. The days of buying a frock for an one-off occasion are over for the time being. Fashion has slowed and designers are having to come round to meeting people's everyday needs. The recession and the growing awareness of the Environment has meant a move against consumerism. Products now have to be commercially and morally right".³⁴

While the recycling of second hand clothes is primarily an Environmental move for Storey, it also helps rid herself of the guilt

**HELEN
STOREY**

Long brocade waistcoat-style dress, £169, worn over organza pleated wraparound shirt, £212, narrow-legged stretch trousers, £120, all Helen Storey; satin strappy mules, £245, Manolo Blahnik; gold rings, all from a selection, Wright & Teague



she feels in being a designer, churning out more and more clothes that people don't really need. When she first went to the Flip warehouse to select garments and saw the vast quantities of garments just being processed, compressed and bundled up, she "went through a bit of a design crisis for the first time ever" ³⁵ she continues in a Time Out interview "It almost seemed like a kind of pollution, there were so many clothes and so much time had gone into making them that it was overwhelming." ³⁶

For a while she found the whole idea of churning out another collection quite revolting, only serving to add more to the worlds textile surplus and seeing fashion as a kind of "creative pollution."

However, Environmentally sound Storey's new recycling programme might be, this is not the whole picture and she admits herself to the issue being rather more complex, first because her designs for Environmentally friendly fabrics don't come cheap, as many are in their early stages and not yet mass produced; these fabric costs then make it impossible for her to keep prices down. One fabric which she uses is Courtaulds new Tencel fibre, made from wood pulp and giving a soft silky handle with a very high strength when mixed or alone. Storey uses it as a tencel denim which has a drape and handle superior to traditional denims. The fabric is costing her £10 per metre, which is very expensive. The second reason which makes Storey, not altogether an Environmentally friendly designer is that from the beginning she has concentrated on using stretch fabrics, heavily dependent on lycra, a fabric which is not biodegradable. This is similar to Katherine Hamnett's situation with leather, as she sees the use of animal skins as disgusting but is a Buddhist and their belief is that any waste is improper, so cows when killed for their meat should also be used for their skins. At least it is encouraging to know both designers are aware of the problems and don't hide what many people may not know anyway. I believe there are still people who do not realise that animals are inhumanely reared and killed for their skins and the growing and processing of cotton is hazardous to our Environment and many man-made fibres take hundreds of years to biodegrade; people who probably don't understand the purpose of

biodegrading or even know there is an enormous textile mountain. I don't mean in Developing countries but here and now, and I know many such people.

At least if what designers like Storey and Hamnett are doing is on a relatively small scale it is in the right direction and the message behind their clothes and their interviews (both collections can only be bought in one shop in Ireland, yet the papers and Magazines which interview them can be bought in any town) will hopefully show people that there is an alternative. The most fashionable way of doing so at the moment is Grunge dressing, which I will discuss.

"If I said I had to be 100% Environmentally friendly now, I might as well shut down the business. There's no way I could do it overnight."³⁷

Storey feels she has stepped out of the exhausted medium of fashion design and now prefers to be known as a 'clothing designer', but despite her best intentions, what she is doing is so new, exciting and available to the young it is inevitably being followed on the streets of London and thus creating 'fashion'.

Martin Margiela

Relatively little is known of the Belgian born, Paris based avant-gard designer as he refuses to be photographed and does not give interviews. He talks only through friends or his press office, explaining that he would rather draw attention to his clothes than to himself. Neither does he put his clothes on a pedestal, avoiding the raz-ma-taz of high-profile fashion shows. He prefers to show in offbeat locations such as parking lots, metro stations and seedy basement clubs, with models and guests and whoever might be there, drinking red wine out of plastic cups, his models wearing black-eye style mascara, long lank hair and a wistful appearance.

His anti-establishment attitude has enticed the press into heralding him as a signal for the end of designer luxury overkill of the Eighties since his first solo collection in 1988, when he left his position as assistant to Jean-Paul Gaultier. They have also much applauded him for the re-invention of Le destroy, deriving from the beautifully destructive slashing treatment he gives old clothes, resurrecting them to a new life. Fashion's answer to Julian Schnabel, Margiela however prefers to use the term récupération, the recovery and re-use of any material that comes to hand, explaining it as fashion's version of the objet trouvé; he says he is doing to nylons and sweaters what Picasso did to bicycle seats and car parts.

He does not see what he is doing as destructive "When I slash old or new clothes, I don't think of it as a destructive act, it's my way of bringing them back to life in a different form. It's more like a form of freedom to me, to design linings on the outside of dresses, or to use industrial materials for clothes, or metro posters or broken china that can make waistcoats."

This curious and inventive designer, not satisfied with the limitations of fabric has reinvented old clothes, turning socks into sweaters and butchers' aprons into slinky dresses, even non-fashion items such as broken dishes, paper and plastic bags become tunics and



Figure 47 - Model in Martin Margiela's Paris Showroom

waistcoats in his hands, but not in an ornate tacky way that students or some designers might do. Tom Gilby, the English waistcoat designer claims to help the planet by sticking bits and pieces onto his waistcoats, the result however, is contrived and vulgar, at least in my eyes. I mean where is the creativity in simply sticking things down? When Margiela made a patchwork of old wool socks into a fitted jumper, last season the heels fitted right over the bust, giving a beautiful fit. When his fall '92 collection arrived from the manufacturers covered in plastic, rather than throw the plastic out, he used sellotape to attach them to the long jumpers.

Upon finding a bunch of fitted Fifties ballgowns, he told American Vogue, he "recut them into waistcoats and jackets."⁴⁰ He has worked papier-mâché into delicate busiters and turned old denims into just about everything: plastic chopping bags become t-shirts and old nylons are cut into sleeves attached a bodice or worn alone. Margiela's belief that the "inside of clothes should be as interesting as the outside"⁴¹ has a constant presence with loose threads left hanging like dangling spiders webs, linings exposed and seams inside out.

It is wrong to think that Margiela's mix and match of garbage and old clothes sounds like an unorganized wasteground. He is, underneath the frayed edges, a real romantic. Last season, his models walked on a sea of rose petals wearing patchouli oil and no lipstick it was like a street wise Botticelli.

When the U.S. Vogue journalist Katherine Betts questioned the sex appeal in Margielas layers of boiled sweaters, she was informed by the hip sales girl that "There's more to fashion than luxr" and dismissed her as 'trop classique'. The trendiest young Parisians have adopted Margiela's 'no hanger appeal yet sexy silhouette', long dark shirts, long lank hair, skinny jackets, dark layers and clogs. These clothes reflect the times we live in, while cozing sex appeal and mystery.



Figure 48 - Margiela's Paris Showroom

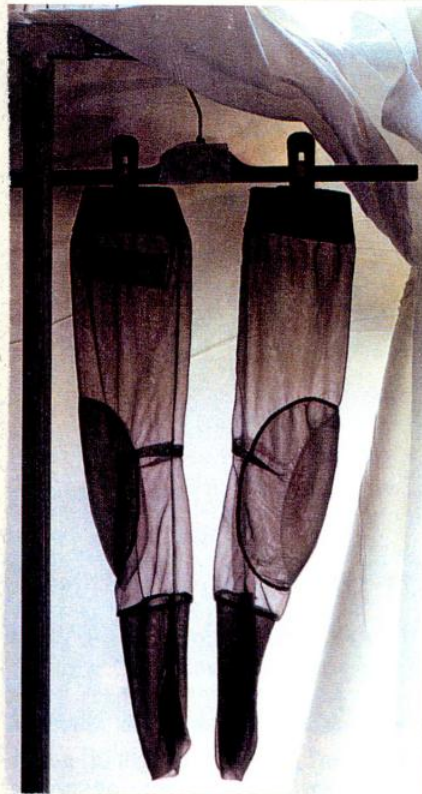


Figure 49 - Nylon sleeves hanging in Margiela's Paris Showroom

Margiela is not the first or the only fashion designer to have used slashing or indeed the long dark silhouette. In the Seventies many designers worked with recycled materials such as Paco Robanne, but it was space age inspired, clean and shiny, not worn in and comfortable. In 1976, Vivienne Westwood and Malcom McLaren, the punk designers of the time invested 'destroy' and their blatant, crude slashing is still worn by punks everywhere.

In 1974, in Paris, Jean-Charles de Castelbajac created clothes using bandages. Anne Demeulemeester, another Belgian designer who is one of the group of 'New Wave' Paris designers along with Margiela, rips fabrics, leaves edges to fray and hand paints onto her fabrics, as well as favouring the slim, long, romantic silhouette which became the hallmark of Autumn/Winter '93 collections in all the leading fashion capitals. These originated from the cutting tables of Paris's 'New Wave' designers (who include Jean Colonna and Corinne Cobson).

What Margiela has done is eco-fashion at its most creative and beautiful, bringing back what may have only ended in bundled cartons like the ones Helen Storey discovered on her visit to the 'Flip' warehouse

The difference between Margiela, Helen Storey and Katherine Hamnett, and the reason I admire him so much, is that what he does is one (or several) steps forward in the thinking process. While Storey maybe the 'Thinking designer', she does a lot of talking when all she's really doing is sticking a picture of a fetus on the front of a dress or adding some lace to an old blouse to resell. She's still producing the lycra pieces because they sell well although that image has had its day.

"Margiela has no time for eighties body dressing, painted on looks for over-aerobicized figures. Gone from his imagination are the canonical body-types and the exotic looks of the last ten years. My public," Margiela states, "if everyone who has a certain mentality rather than a certain age or perfect body. I'm very positive about the future, ⁴² I feel there'll be a place for authenticity again" he tells American

Elle readers, through his 'friend' of course. The point is that he says little, what he does say means a lot and anyway his clothes say it all. Expensive as they maybe (even though they are nearer to works of art - maybe these are the art that Storey really wants to create), it is their ideals and silhouettes that have spawned a host of interpreters, mainly young, and very aware, often fashion students raiding flea markets to style their own 'récupération', and en masse, playing a positive role in utilising our worlds textile surplus 'Le destroy' is a truly inappropriate title.

Conclusion

Throughout the research for this thesis, I became increasingly aware that the main responsibility for our current frightening Environmental situation lies with our narrow minded society.

My attempt to discover if the fashion industry was adjusting to current Environmental concerns, opened my eyes in many directions. Firstly in learning of the un-told horrors which the fashion, textile and beauty industries have inflicted on our Environment, the most shocking being the natural disasters caused by the use of pesticides in the cotton industry, the inhumane acts of vivisection carried out by the cosmetics industry and the unnecessary slaughter of animals for their skins which in our world of highly developed fibres, we no longer need.

As for pollution from textile dyes, cleaning detergents and treatment agents, I am optimistic that at least in the Developed World, steps are being taken by governments to implement change, by insisting upon the cleaning up of textile mills, particularly in Germany where effluent from industry (largely textile producing) has killed their waterways. One dye producer based in Switzerland and Germany, Sandoz, blamed for much harmful pollution into the Danube declined to aid my research when I contacted their Irish agent.

The third form of pollution is waste and once waste does exist, a great many things can be done about it based mainly on either recycling or bio-degrading.

The beauty industry, a close relation of the fashion industry and largely responsible for Environmental waste, pollution and cruelty to animals during testing was too vast an area to cover completely and with so many other areas, I wished to explore in adequate depth, I had to make the difficult decision to eliminate this topic.

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