Bollywood Fashion

Hollywood’s counterpart is Bollywood, the entertainment industry in India. If one goes to Mumbai or Delhi, he or she will find himself or herself immersed in a world of vivid colors, catchy show tunes, and dancing. The musical feel of Bollywood movies is reflected and conveyed in India’s most common garment: the sari. Saris have exotic and bold prints on them; the fabric is wrapped around the woman’s body in an intricate manner. After the sari is the salwar kameez, a combination of a tunic and loose fitting pants. Little by little, similar elements of style began to appear in the Western world. Even Lady Gaga herself said she is “fascinated by the dance and the clothing,” and wants to participate in a Bollywood film. (Camilli, 2012, para.1). The way the Eastern hemisphere is fascinated by the Western half, the Western half has mutual feelings for the Eastern half. We see Western influence all over the world, and in that same way, we see Bollywood fashion and style influencing America. Karl Lagerfeld recently showcased his Paris-Bombay line, “The collection the designer showed... was an ode to India...” (Menkes, 2011, para.1).

Design Elements

The set I created depicts how Bollywood has influence Western fashion. The idea was born with a picture of the Taj Mahal, one of the world’s most famous and historical buildings. When people think of India, they automatically think of the Taj Mahal. This set’s background of the set, and around it is an antique gold picture frame. My family is from Bangladesh, which is right next to India. Our cultures are very alike. Indians value gold jewelry as do Bengalis; it is a sign of wealth and my parents have always told me that a girl must go to her in-laws home adorned in the finest gold. This hype for antiqued jewels has hit the Western world as well. "Despite gold’s steadily rising prices, a growing number of consumers are gravitating toward modern interpretations of the ancient gold jewelry that originated in the land of maharajas and moguls jewens.” (Depasque, 2009, para. 2). I did not want to just put gold jewelry into the collage, instead I subtly hinted at consumers’ desire for Indian style gold.

The next element was the woman in the vivid sari. I placed her on the left, and one of Lagerfeld’s Paris-Bombay models on the right to show how one style transitioned into and influenced another. The color scheme of the set is peacock inspired; in her article Lorraine Depasque notes that, “Primary color gems, with ruby, sapphire and blue sapphire [are the] most important,” (Depasque, 2009, para. 31). Peacocks are rare creatures, and their colors are reflected in Bollywood dresses. With these things in mind, I kept the color scheme very close to purples, greens, and blues.

I included a peacock feather as a detail and to show how the peacock has influenced clothing and shoes. The purple flat has gems shaped into a peacock feather along the side. Other than direct interpretations, colors and prints of India are also reflected in Western wear. Westerners may not wear saris or salwars, but the idea has been translated into similar fabrics and clothes. Turco with beaded collars or threaded designs are very popular these days. Since westerners will not wear the loose pants style of the Indians, they stick to tights or leggings. The dress on the right from Chanel’s Paris-Bombay collection is a soft, lustrous, almost sheer fabric that is very similar to the fabric of the sari on the left.

Other style elements that were influenced by Bollywood fashion are bangles and chandelier earrings. We now see chandelier earrings in bright hues from greens to blues to yellows. Another trendy accessory are bangles in vibrant shades and stacked together. Bangles can be fabric, glass, plastic, or pure gold. All of these styles have somehow influenced Western accessories. The jade and gold bangles in the collage are strikingly similar to bangles one would find at a bazaar in India. They have etched in designs as well as rhinestones on them.

Women have taken up the Bollywood inspired fashion more quickly than men. We do see harem pants and such on the streets but it is the Western women who have grasped onto the concept of Bollywood meets Hollywood with turcics, bright colors, and jeweled accessories.

References:
Technology and Fashion

More than ever, designers are using technology as a form of innovation. In order to succeed in a competitive and cut-throat industry, designers need to be able to come up with novel ideas, having fashion and technology is helping them do that. In October 2006, Hussein Chalayan showcased dresses that would transform to a completely new look by the end of the runway; the secret behind his technological high fashion pieces was a small microprocessor that controlled levers that did the tugging and pulley of the garment to be shaped into something else (Anonymous, 2007). Chalayan is no newcomer to technology; his show in 2000, “Living Room”, consisted of the models walking in and putting on pieces of furniture that could double as apparel and home decor (Anonymous, 2007). Combining fashion and technology is not a new concept; the idea can be conveyed through the use of “conceptually practiced designers such as Hussein Chalayan or as seen in the prevalence of garments with embedded circuitry or high-performance fabrics.” (Scaturro, 2008). The zeitgeist of the 21st century includes technology with a constantly growing stream of innovative and fashion forward products. Take the MacBook for example: the laptop computer can do just about anything a regular HP laptop can do, yet everyone chooses to buy an Apple branded product. Why? It’s a fashionable product and it’s the latest, hottest thing to own. Apple has influenced fashion accessories as well; the earnings in the set are studs that resemble the power button on a MacBook.

Design Elements

Since many designers are coming up with tech savvy fashions, I could have easily selected one of Hussein Chalayan’s pieces to place on my set. However, technology’s influence on fashion can be clearly visible and large, while other times the influence is evident but small. With this in mind, I found the gadgety necklace, which is made out of computer parts. One of the latest accessory trends is computer parts jewelry. Other wearable technology has little “real-world application but... it’s the possibilities that continue to excite and inspire us.” (Chua, 2009).

The next two pieces were obvious to point out: watches and 3D inspired glasses. Watches started out as a way for men to be aware of time in their busy lives; later women were allowed to wear delicate watches for their feminine wrists. Over time the watch has gone from a technological invention to a fashion forward accessory. One can wear a watch that tells the time, date, and exact location they are at, but it needs to be in a good color and made of nice material like rose gold or silver. Movies like the Lion King are being reshown in 3D and the craze for 3D films has increased greatly. XPand, the global leader in the 3D market, is “bringing the 3D to every aspect of digital life.” (“About XPAND”, n.d.). The glasses may not be suitable to wear for everyday use but I placed them in the set to emphasize how fast our world is moving. There are new changes almost every day; the 3D glasses symbolize the effect technology has on fashion and how much further we have to go.

The black and white dress is known as the Printing Dress was actually created by two women who are not involved in the fashion industry at all, Microsoft Research’s Asta Roseway and Xbox’s Sheri Daniel. The thought provoking garment is made out of black and white rice paper and has buttons reminiscent of old typewriter keys; the wearer can virtually type messages into the bodice of the gown, which will then be displayed into the body for everyone to see. There’s more to this high tech, high fashion dress though, “it comes equipped with a laptop, a projector, and four circuit boards. Everything is functional, from button to hem.” (“Dressing for the Future”, 2011). I was very intrigued by this gown because it’s the brainchild of two women who may not have a background in fashion but are able to deliver a fashion forward piece that’s also technologically equipped.

The last apparel piece is the Chanel heel that has a light bulb built into it and can be turned on. A couple of years ago children’s shoes had built in LED light; this is slightly similar with a much higher price. It’s fashion like this that shows society how far we have truly come. The heels may have a platform look to them but the concept is strictly in the future. To pull the whole set together, I added one of Hussein Chalayan’s pieces to place on my set. However, technology’s influence on fashion in a competitive and cut throat industry, designers need to be able to come up with novel ideas; having fashion and technology is helping them do that. More than ever, designers are using technology as a form of innovation. In order to succeed in a competitive and cut-throat industry, designers need to be able to come up with novel ideas, having fashion and technology is helping them do that. In October 2006, Hussein Chalayan showcased dresses that would transform to a completely new look by the end of the runway; the secret behind his technological high fashion pieces was a small microprocessor that controlled levers that did the tugging and pulley of the garment to be shaped into something else (Anonymous, 2007). Chalayan is no newcomer to technology; his show in 2000, “Living Room”, consisted of the models walking in and putting on pieces of furniture that could double as apparel and home decor (Anonymous, 2007). Combining fashion and technology is not a new concept; the idea can be conveyed through the use of “conceptually practiced designers such as Hussein Chalayan or as seen in the prevalence of garments with embedded circuitry or high-performance fabrics.” (Scaturro, 2008). The zeitgeist of the 21st century includes technology with a constantly growing stream of innovative and fashion forward products. Take the MacBook for example: the laptop computer can do just about anything a regular HP laptop can do, yet everyone chooses to buy an Apple branded product. Why? It’s a fashionable product and it’s the latest, hottest thing to own. Apple has influenced fashion accessories as well; the earnings in the set are studs that resemble the power button on a MacBook.

References:

XPAND_mce.asp
Culturally speaking, in relation to the Western world, women have consistently been seen as oppressed and recessive in comparison to the dominant male gender. Traditionally men have been viewed as the provider, and the dominant one in society. Women have been oppressed for centuries; traditionally, their roles have been limited to that of a housewife, a mother, a nurser, a secretary, or a teacher. When women started to place themselves in the work force, there was uproar. Coco Chanel legitimized menswear for women with her creation of the women’s blazer. “Chanel’s interpretation of masculine styles and sportswear—her blazers, waistcoats, and shirts with cufflinks, as well as her choice of fabrics…” (de la Haye, A., 2005) all helped women make more of impression in society.

In China, foot binding was a common practice since the 10th century until it was made illegal. A female’s feet are bound to restrict and alter the growth; in that society, smaller feet are more desirable. However, foot binding was also done as a way to convey the message that men can control women. It was, therefore, a symbol of oppression and the men’s power, whether it’s her brother, father, or husband; over the woman (Mao, J., 2007).

Even though women have gained more respect through out time: we now have women CEO’s and it’s common for a female to wear pants, there are still people in the world who abuse females whether its sexually, verbally, mentally, or emotionally. There are various types of violence against women: dating violence, domestic and intimate partner abuse, emotional abuse, human trafficking, same sex relationship violence, sexual assault and abuse, stalking, violence against immigrant and refugee women, violence against women at work, and violence against women with disabilities.” (“Violence Against Women”, 2011).

Design Elements

The set I created depicts the power and confidence of women that society sometimes refuses to see. The idea was born with the photograph on the right of the woman holding the balloons. She’s walking down the street, in what seems to be New York City, and she has a very powerful, determined walk. She is staring straight at the camera, like there is something in her eyes she wants us to see. With this image, I want people to see and understand that women are not to be objectified or oppressed; we are to be respected. Next I found the magazine article with the prominent title, “I Am Woman”. This text seemed to say it all. Helen Reddy and Jordan Sparks have both created song with the title, “I Am Woman”. A part of Reddy’s lyrics says, “I am woman, hear me roar… And I’ve been down there on the floor, No one’s ever gonna keep me down again…” (“Helen Reddy Lyrics”, n.d.).

I already knew I wanted to stick to pink and red as the primary colors for the clothing line. The color red is “associated with energy… strength, power, determination as well as…love.” (“Color Meaning”, n.d.). Women and red have gone hand in hand before as a symbol of sexual pleasure and passion; however, I wanted to show how red could mean confidence and determination as well. Pink is also a feminine color but is already a symbol of the fights women have to face because the “the pink ribbon is an internationally recognized symbol of hope and awareness in the fight against breast cancer.” (Smith, K., 2012).

I made sure to include feminine and masculine clothing in the set to show that women can be delicate and strong at the same time. There is the hot pink, or magenta, dress on the left paired with fierce, fiery red heels. Traditionally we view extremely high heels as sexy and as a way for a woman to get a man’s attention. I included them in the set to in order to convey that a woman is confident, she wants people to notice her as a woman, not as an object of pleasure but as a person who should be respected and who is strong. Although I included feminine dresses, I also included pants which were traditionally (long ago) only for men. The pants symbolize how some things have changed, like how women are in the business world as bosses and CEO’s, but they are still abused and oppressed in other ways. Then I included more accessories to go with the garments.

I also included tops with hearts. Today, and for a long time, society has viewed the heart as the universal symbol of love. However, “the ancient Egyptians held that the heart was the seat of both life and morally [emphasis added].” (“The Changing Symbolism of the Heart Shape Through the Ages”, n.d.). So if a heart can mean morally, then according to which morals to people abuse and act violently against women? This is the thought process that pushed me to include hearts in the set. I wanted to show that it is morally wrong on so many levels to be violent against the sex that everyone came from; a woman gave birth to every one ever born yet people abuse them.

References:


we have come to treat as commodities but are really just things that make our lives easier while simultaneously harming the environment (Beavan, C., 2009).

Beavan, and many other people have stood up to speak out about eco-friendliness and the problems our environment is facing right now. Companies have tried to become eco-friendly by offering water bottles that use less plastic, or selling organic foods and more. However, the fashion industry has also taken up the “be green”. Designers now offer organic cotton products or use completely environmentally friendly methods to make their products. Eco fashion includes products that “may be designed, manufactured, transported, consumed, or recycled with methods and materials that reflect an enlightened consciousness about environmental issues and human and animal rights” (Winge, Theresa M., 2008). Ultimately, the process of making the products and the products themselves have “little to no negative impact on the natural environment” (Winge, Theresa M., 2008).

Design Elements

This set was born after I found Stella McCartney’s logo. If people do not care about the environment they are living in, then nothing will change. McCartney’s logo is bold and stands out; my intention was to make sure that the whole set was centered around this one word: CARE. Stella McCartney has been known to be a “rare breed” in the fashion industry (Lee, M., 2009). She had a completely eco-friendly collection once and has now ventured into sunglasses. The sunglasses in the set are from McCartney’s line and were made out of castor oil.

The next element I put in the set were the color swatches. Green has generally been associated with Earth and is the “pervasive color in the natural world…” (Smith, K., n.d.). Various countries around the world have different views of the color green, but the underlying message is the same. For example, in Japan “green is regarded as the color of eternal life” (Smith K., n.d.). Being eco-friendly is not only about helping and saving the environment, but it is also about improving the quality of our lives. In Portugal, green is viewed as a symbol of hope. Earth is suitable to live on because it can sustain life; there are plants which give us oxygen and there is water which makes up 75% of our bodies. Earth itself is a symbol of hope for mankind. It was with these things in mind that I found 3 different shades of green to include as a background for the set.

The watch that is in the set is made out of bamboo and organic cotton. The dress is from H&M’s eco-friendly line. Lastly, the heels are made out of all natural leather and natural wood. I wanted to show that eco-friendly does not necessarily mean ugly. In the past, hemp was a common tool to use to make “green” garments. Back in the day environmentally friendly clothing products included “rope sandals, tie-dye T-shirt, and hemp cargo pants established in the 1960s” (Wings, T. M., 2008). These days, manufacturers have found a variety of reusable and natural sources to make fashions out of.

The last element in the set was the photograph of the girl clad in flowers and green eye shadow. The model’s look of determination in her eyes is what stood out to me the most. She is conveying a message through her facial features and makeup. It’s as if she is completely devoted to the environment. I wanted this same message to be conveyed throughout the set. In April 2006, editor Graydon Carter declared that “Green is the New Black” in the “Green” issue of Vanity Fair (Winge, T. M., 2008). Going green is still a relatively new trend and through this set I wanted to show that being green isn’t as “ugly” or as unimportant as some people like to think.

References:

Advertisements:
Tim Coppens is an emerging designer in the menswear side of the fashion industry. The Belgium native graduated from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in 1998 and worked for Ralph Lauren's RLX label from 2008 to 2011 as design director (“About”, n.d.). He then went on to create his own label of menswear apparel that was exclusively taken up by Barney’s New York. Other companies have taken up his label as well for their stores.

Coppens’ line was shown at 2012’s New York Fashion Week and he was applauded for “push[ing] aesthetic boundaries while staying within the relatively limited sartorial confines of what the vast majority of men are willing to wear” (Cordero, R., 2012). Tim Coppens has only been working on his own label for two seasons but he’s already doing great.

His aesthetic combines a tailored look with details inspired from active wear (Cordero, R., 2012) and his “reserved approach to design is perhaps precisely why his brand resonates with so many men” (Cordero, R., 2012). His looks are simple and have clean lines. His entire label is fashionable but doesn’t scream fashion. The looks are easy for any man to adopt and wear.

On this year’s runways, Coppens’ looks were inspired by athleticism, the Ryan Gosling film Drive, and hockey and racing attire (Singer, M., 2012). Coppens’ has combined active wear and street wear to create a line that conveys how “athletic apparel lives a double life, as both a wardrobe of functional garments and as street wear with its own tough attitude” (Singer, M., 2012). His experience working for Ralph Lauren’s RLX line truly helped him create his own aesthetic and mindset for what types of clothing he wanted to create.

References:

MAR 14 2012
1 COMMENT
MDSE 2350
DENIM: THE FABRIC WE LOVE

On the topic of innovative fabrics, I have to bring up denim. Denim jeans are a staple clothing item everyone has in their closet; I have 5 or 7 pairs of jeans ranging from dark blue to black to teal. The fabric has been around for years and is so common we tend to not give it the attention it deserves. There is academic literature on all the “avant-garde or outlandish couture” that a small amount of consumers actually wear but very little attention is given to the most common garment worn by almost everyone (Miller, D., & Woodward, S., n.d.).

Denim is an innovative fabric because it’s very durable and has high abrasion resistance. It was initially made for workers who needed durable garments but now jeans can be durable, comfortable, cute, and trendy all in one. Jacob Davis, a tailor, and a customer of Levi Strauss’, had come up with an “ingenious way to make pants stronger by adding metal rivets to the weak points at the pocket corners and the base of the fly” (Whitley, L., 2005). The metal pieces on jeans make them stronger and perfect for workers. The idea shot off and became an instant hit in 1853.

People in other countries have taken up the American phenomenon and now “[jeans] clearly are not only present but are, moreover, the dominant form of casual attire in many countries” (Miller, D., & Woodward, S., n.d.). Jeans are everywhere. Now the denim fabric is not even restricted to just jeans; there are also denim jackets, dresses, overalls, shorts, skirts and handbags. Vivienne Westwood even created a two-piece denim outfit with lace effects.

In her article June Hill names denim as “the fabric of our lives” (Hill, J., 2009). Levi Strauss was the revolutionary with denim; his company, Levi’s, is the biggest and the best denim producing company. In 1853, Levi Strauss and his company created the very first pair of jeans (“About Levi Strauss & Co.”, n.d.). At the time they were called waist overalls and targeted towards workers and miners. The durable fabric was ideal for construction workers and such. However, “the meanings associated with jeans changed from work wear to an icon of the next generation born of that working population.” (“About Levi Strauss & Co.”, n.d.).
Youth cultures began to adopt the fashion statement of jeans as a way to be autonomous from the adult society that liked order and normality. Then James Dean put jeans on in Rebel Without a Cause, thus adding fire to the flame. Jeans were everywhere; various subcultures adopted them to their own styles; denim became common. With that said, “jeans are often read as either the spread of Americanization or a sign of freedom, rebellion, and youth.” (Miller, D., & Woodward, S., n.d.). However, once something is mass-produced and made easily affordable and accessible to all consumer groups, everyone is going to buy the product.

Resources:

FROM I ROBOT TO HIGH FASHION
Blogging Day 5: Wearable Technology
Fusing technology and fashion is not novel; the two have gone hand in hand since fashion first began. The body itself can be seen as a machine. Historically speaking, people used their own two hands to make clothing. Then there were inventions like the loom, which allowed women to spin and weave fabrics since the Neolithic Times (Leopoldina, F., 2010). Because of steam and waterpower, the process of making textiles changed drastically. After the Industrial Revolution and then mass manufacturing of Ready-to-Wear garments in the 80’s technology and fashion were forever bonded in society’s eyes. We can never separate the two now.

Innovation and fashion also go hand in hand. In a world where technology is everything to consumers, from our smart phones that tell us everything to our iPads and MacBooks, wearable technology is just the next step towards a more technologically savvy society. Manufacturers, researchers, and others alike have taken textiles and made them “smart”. Personally I find that we have not reached the limit yet. There are so many other things inventors have to come up with in terms of a mash up of fashion and technology. A lot of the products are not actually wearable or are for special purposes. Average consumers would not purchase some of the tech savvy fashion that has been created. This just makes me wonder why it was made in the first place but as humans we have a natural inclination towards exploration.

Electronic textiles, “…exploit[] techniques that redefine construction methods and streamline production processes.” (Borzewska, J., 2005). The consumers who have the purchasing power and influence on the fashion industry by accepting or rejecting something heavily impact the fashion industry. However, when it comes to wearable technology, the drive for better textiles sometimes comes from researchers who are trying to make a positive impact in the medical world or the military. Electronic textiles consist of the ability to “sense[] communication, power transmission, and interconnection technology allow sensors or things such as information processing devices to be networked together within a fabric.” (Borzewska, J., 2005). There are always products that were created to cross boundaries and delete the limit between technology and fashion. The company Philips Smart Connections collaborated a variety of lifestyle jackets with Levi Strauss that are already for sale. The jackets are technologically forward with electrical parts to them like an MP3 player, unified controller, microphone and headphones, which can be taken out before washing the garment (Borzewska, J., 2005).

Fashion techies want “to take the concept of clothing as we know it to its very limits – integrating software, communication devices, sensors and speech-recognition systems into garments to make them think for the wearer.” (Quinn, B., 2002). Researchers want to go above and beyond and explore all potential future opportunities with technological fashion. Thanks to “smaller, cheaper, and more powerful electronic components,” the possibilities for technological clothing are endless (Quinn, B., 2002).

Resources:
Blogging Day 4: Trickle Up Fashion in the 21st Century

By the 1960's, the Post War era and time of Industrialization made it possible for everyone to have the same products due to mass production of fashion goods. Social classes began to disappear and you could no longer tell how much money someone had by what they were wearing. Subcultures were created by the youth as a way for them to be distinctive and unique. These subcultures had an influence on fashion, "[t]hrough global media and popular culture, members of the lower classes, and subcultural and marginal groups, have been able to influence fashion as much as those in the upper classes." (Medvedev, K., 2005, para. 12).

Vivienne Westwood's Fall 2010 Collection Pieces

For years now, designers have been inspired by street style and what the average person is wearing. As human beings, we like new things. Fashion is driven by the consumers' acceptance or rejection of a product. Times have changed, its not only the upper class who have a say in what is "in". The hottest trends have been found on the streets and are worn by the middle class, people who have created these unique looks for themselves because they couldn't afford the upper class' idea of fashion. Vivienne Westwood took the punk look off the streets and made it trendy for high fashion. The military inspired clothing started in the 16th century with slashed and cut clothes but the style has not gone away. Military inspired prints and outfits can still be found in famous retailers, like Forever 21 and Express, today.

One specific trend that has always been trickle up fashion is ethnic inspired wear. Truly ethnic and traditional clothing is known as anti-fashion because it's a method of adornment that doesn't fit within the traditional idea of fashion as change (Kaiser, S. & Looysen, R., n.d.). Ethnic wear stays the same over years; fashion however, is constantly changing. Yet, designers found ethnic wear inspiring. The tribal look is all the rage these days, "[t]hey [designers] are all weaving their ideas into a cross-cultural patchwork that embraces the magic-carpet motifs of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, the ikat patterns of Indonesia, and the embroideries inspired by ancient Chinese dynasties." (Alexander, H., 2010, para. 2).

Another trend that started with average people is the nautical look. The trend has been around for a while and is probably in culmination right now; even I have a striped tee and anchor necklace. The trend was a hit with designers and consumers alike because, "[t]here is a romantic image of life on the sea reflected in a navy jacket with brass buttons, a crisp white sailor’s uniform…." (Bye, E., 2005). The look is once again on the runway as designers like Chanel, Alexander McQueen, and Sarah Burton showcased their ocean inspired looks on the Spring 2012 runway ("Style.com", n.d.).

Designers can get inspiration from anywhere and everywhere. Looking at what a regular person is wearing out and about helps a designer create products that consumers will enjoy and accept. Denim jeans are a classic piece that everyone owns now, they may even have five or 6 pairs of jeans; however, jeans were a common work uniform for workers. The item then trickled up and has turned into one of the most common and staple commodities everyone has in their wardrobe.

Resources:
INNOVATIVE FASHION

Blogging Day 3: Fashion Innovators

The Historical Resurrection theory of fashion states that fashion is cyclical and recycled; nothing is really revolutionary, fashion is just evolutionary. "[F]ashion design is defined less by the world of progress and far more by the cyclic world of revival." (Loschek, 2009). However, there have been moments in history when a designer released a completely new idea. Donna Karan became a hit for her functional yet fashionable wrap dress, which sprouted at a time when women were beginning to get jobs and gender roles were shifting. Donna Karan was able to look at the zeitgeist, or spirit of the current times, and interpret what was going on socio-culturally into something innovative and fresh.

Japan is known for its innovative and visionary designers. Japanese fashion is fresh, new and mind-boggling. The designs are structured and unique; the "clothes [are] made to be worn by the mind as well as the body," (Quinn, 2002). Don't get me wrong, I love Japanese fashion. However, I was always left feeling like what I sketched wasn't anything fantastic; the designs were simply based off of something I had already seen before. I could not look at fashion in a fresh-minded way; designers can not afford to think the way I was thinking.

In order to be a success, designers need to be able to either change fashion to make it something the collective society will accept or think of something completely different and innovative. The world is constantly changing and designers need to explore in order to come up with great, new ideas. In her essay, "Technology, Tradition and Creativity in Apparel Designers in Three US Companies," Elizabeth Bye states, "Maintaining a work- and lifestyle that supports an environment of exploration may be related to higher creativity levels." (Bye, 2012).
Blogging Day 2: Social Networking and its Impact on the Retail Industry

The fashion industry is constantly changing and growing. More and more people are getting interested in having a job in the apparel industry. "However, the apparel industry will annually lose more jobs in the United States than any other industry because of growing imports, new technologies, and cost cutting measures." (Gerber, T. & Saiki, D. 2010). Retailers need to find a way to stand out and be above the rest of the competition in order to continue business.

Social Networking is the latest and greatest trend in the nation right now. First it was just a way to communicate with your friends and family; it was a method of making sure an individual was in the loop with all the current information in his or her group of friends. Now, it's a marketing strategy. Retailers are catching on to the social networking trend and advertising their products and companies through Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and more. Retailers and companies have not missed the fact that millions of people get on the Internet; thus the retailers have used the new trend of social networking to their advantage.

"Internet Retailer's 2009 Top 500 Guide devoted an introduction to this year's report on the prevalence of online retailers' participation and use of social media networks." (Hackworth B. & Kunz, M.). Almost seventy-five percent of the top 500 retailers have shown up in social networking, Facebook being the most popular method of social networking marketing (Hackworth B. & Kunz, M.). The Internet has become an open book for consumers; they can find anything they need within seconds of a Google search. Millions of people have a Facebook, and even if they did not, the Internet, "is fast becoming a standard part of the global shopping experience. As shoppers go online, they are using the Net as an important source of information about products and retailers for a growing breadth of buying decisions...." (Chu, J. & Gagnon, J. 2005).

The world is moving quickly; people can find everything they need with the click of a button on their smartphones or simply by typing something in to Google. "As widespread adoption of advanced wireless technologies gives shoppers constant access to ubiquitous information," customers may seek even more information from retailers and the retailers who do provide information to help consumers make better purchasing decisions will stand out in the crowd (Chu, J. & Gagnon, J. 2005).

A retailer can create a poll on their Facebook page to get input from consumers, so not only are businesses giving consumers access to information, but also consumers are giving feedback.

With the use of social networking analysis, "retailers have recognized the need to focus on what customers are looking for on a site, what the company wants to communicate, and the role the fan page can play in communicating their message." (Hackworth B. & Kunz, M.). Hackworth and Kunz also state that, "The actual number of retailers on Facebook doubled in only five months." Retailers can use social networking methods to see what consumers are saying about them and their products.

With everything at their fingertips, consumers can shop from anywhere. Giving consumers the ability to shop online makes retailers more conscious of consumers' schedules and availability. Busy mothers don't have the time to go to the store and take a slow look around at everything; by enabling customers to browse retailers online sites, consumers have the chance to shop more according to their own time frames. "Shopping has always been a social experience and social networking allows consumers to interact with individuals," allowing consumers to discuss product choices and the pros and cons of each product (Koester, K. & Pookkulangara, S. 2011). All an individual has to do is post a question as a status on Facebook and their friends will reply within minutes. Instead of having to look up reviews of products, consumers can just ask their friends through Facebook or Twitter.

Consumers are "using several online formats (e.g., blogs, podcasts, social networks, bulletin boards, and wikis) to share ideas about a given product, service, or brand and contact other consumers...." (Koester, K. & Pookkulangara, S. 2011).
GREEN IS THE NEW BLACK

Blogging Day 1: Sustainability and Retail

For the last decade or so, eco-friendly fashion has been changing the way society looks at the fashion industry as a whole. Richie Rich, co-designer at Heatherette, said, “People often perceive the fashion world as superficial, so it’s great to work with materials that are actually good for the environment…” (Gershon, 2005). I myself have thought that the fashion industry is take and cares only about beauty and presenting that which is ideal. It’s refreshing to see that even the fashion industry can help the environment. However, was it always like this? Of course not, it was a long time before the fashion industry jumped on the bandwagon and decided to create sustainable fashion. But why make sustainable fashion in the first place? How can clothing and accessories help the environment and our quality of life?

Sustainability is essential for human life; according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, “Everything that we need for survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony…” (Sustainability, n.d.). Sustainability is not just about recycling; it also includes wearing fabrics that have not been made by child laborers, or saturated by pesticides. The idea of sustainability begins from the moment the cotton seed is planted, to the moment when the buyer purchases the 100% cotton, pesticide-free t-shirt in the store. These little changes to the way apparel is made catalyzes big changes for the world. Why would a consumer want to buy a product that was made by a child laborer who picks the cotton day and night and only gets paid .38 cents? All of this has to deal with sustainability and the fashion world is trying to make a change.

Companies and individuals are now finding a way to bring sustainability into the fashion and retail industries. This is a relatively new idea in the fashion industry: “In the 1990s there were few environmentally preferable clothing choices…” (Meisner, 2011), Eventually, change caught on, and “hemp wear” and “fleece jackets made out of recycled PET bottles” (Meisner, 2011), were coming along. Remember those baby and oddly-designed t-shirts made out of hemp? That’s where “green” fashion was back then. It was something new and designers didn’t know how to interpret eco-friendly fashion yet. The products were awkward and had very little style to them. These may have been eco-friendly approaches to the idea of sustainability but they were nowhere near fashionable.

However, in today’s time, “eco-chic” is also stylish, and higher end designers are taking the hint. “Gucci, Yves Saint Laurent, and Stella McCartney [are all] developing sustainability projects and dabbling [splashing in] organic cotton and other desirable fabrics.” (Meisner, 2011). Designers started creating 100% cotton clothes and “[accessory designer, Anya Hindmarch launched a beige cotton bag emblazoned with the slogan: ‘I’m not a plastic bag.’]” (Beard, 2008). Grocery stores use so many plastic bags, sometimes consumers even double or triple bag their purchases; carelessness like this leads to thousands of plastic bags in trash cans or flying away in the wind. Numerous designers have created re-usable tote bags and so have grocery stores and book stores; I shop at B&N a Million occasionally; when I signed up to be a BAM member I received a free B&N a Million tote bag as a thank you. I use that bag when I get groceries just so I don’t get a handful of plastic bags and later forget to recycle them. In February 2004, high fashion designers at New York Fashion Week set the stage by participating in “…FutureFashion, a show featuring outfits made from eco-friendly fabrics and materials. It was an unusual marriage of upscale elegance with sustainability.” (Gershon, 2005).

Green fashion is changing the industry by giving consumers the opportunity to purchase accessories and apparel that have made almost no impact on the environment, but there’s more to it. Sustainability is now “seen as a source of innovation and a key way to differentiate in a competitive market.” (Boynton, 2012). Companies are saving millions of dollars by becoming eco-friendly and more efficient in their services. Sustainable clothing has given everyone a chance to do something for the environment; from children to the retired. Stores are offering re-usable shopping bags in place of plastic ones, products are made from recycled materials, and everyone is learning to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

As more and more companies catch on to the eco-fashion trend, more consumers adopt it as well. Environmentally friendly fashion can be found in stores and online; companies like Cotton Inc. educate consumers on sustainability in order to push them towards a healthier lifestyle in the form of dress. From high end designers, to stars like Emma Watson, who “designs and models for People Tree” (Meisner, 2011), to stores like Wal-Mart and Target, sustainable fashion is signaling that “…a cultural shift is happening, and its not just a select few who care.” (Meisner, 2011).

Take a look at Anya Hindmarch’s cotton bag as well as some other “green” products:
This clutch is something crafty fashionistas can make themselves. I love do-it-yourself projects and this looks like something I want to make. Crafty mom’s can teach their kids how to make a variety of products from recycled materials. It’s a great way to save money and to teach children the value of life and helping the environment for not only their generation, but for generations to come.

References:

References:

Advertisements.
These designers starting dating and began making things and that’s when they came up with their clothing line “Creatures of the Wind”. Comments Leave a Comment.

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Start studying MDSE 2350 Final. Learn vocabulary, terms and more with flashcards, games and other study tools. MDSE 2350. Start studying MDSE 2350 Final. Learn vocabulary, terms and more with flashcards, games and other study tools. Which price point category includes a small group of high fashion designers in Paris, France, who meet the formal criteria set by the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute-Couture? Haute Couture. Tracking and interpreting trends for the company’s target market and developing styles to be produced refers to which of the following processes? Creative planning. Which of the following is true of the price point category of “designer RTW”? All of the above. The result of a licensing arrangement between a brand owner and a retailer distribution partner, giving the retailer all rights to sell Posts about MDSE 2350 written by beardunt. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jun/04/business/la-fi-walmart-green-20110604. 7 years ago Short URL Comments. MDSE 2350.