

**Selling Sustainable Fashion:
How Small Apparel Companies Communicate Social and
Environmental Responsibility**

by Aubrey West

A THESIS

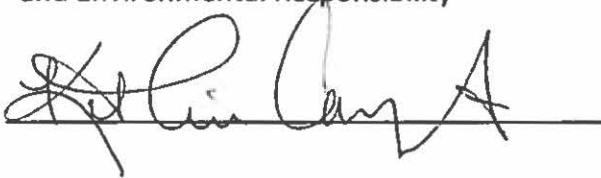
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An Abstract of the Thesis of
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The apparel industry is responsible for much of today's global pollution and human rights violations, but quite a few small apparel companies are refashioning the industry's dirty façade and becoming successfully sustainable by focusing on quality and consumer awareness. This research compiles the opinions of small apparel companies and consumers in order to recommend viable solutions for creating a more sustainable fashion industry. Interviews were conducted with sustainability managers at two small apparel companies chosen based on each company's efforts in sustainability, commitment to luxury style, and willingness to participate. Both managers agreed that their customers feel well informed about their products and will actively communicate with them if they want more sustainable options. In contrast, I conducted a consumer survey in which the participants called for an increase in knowledge about and accessibility to sustainable fashion. Thus I discovered a major disconnect between company and consumer perspectives about information exchange. I then make recommendations about how companies can adjust their organizational structure and marketing techniques to communicate their social and environment responsibility.

Acknowledgement

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I hope I have made all of the above proud with my extensive research and dedication to this project and recognize that the final result is made better by their involvement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Sustainability in the Fashion industry

“Sustainable fashion must encourage our sense of ourselves as human beings and revitalize our relationships with others, including those who make our clothes, and so will work to counter our lack of awareness of poor working conditions, poverty wages and poor environmental standards. It will emancipate us from submissive dependence on fashion by instead giving us the skills to creatively participate with and rework our clothes”

— Kate Fletcher’s *“Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys”* 125.

Global industrialization since the 20th century has provided clothing in mass quantities at record-level low costs, with 1.72 million ton of brand new clothing coming out every year in the United Kingdom alone (Siegle 20). Though almost all apparel production takes place in developing countries, the majority of consumption takes place in the United States and Western Europe. The consequences of this globally influential system that employs over a billion people, “accounting for one person in six in employment worldwide, from field to factories,” have been beneficial to some and deadly to others (Black 18). The clothing industry in particular highlights the paradox between Western consumption and Eastern production because fashion has traditionally been a status symbol of luxury and wealth, yet comes from the hands of the poorest citizens of the poorest nations in the world. Sustainable apparel companies were born out of observing this paradox and in hope of changing the status quo.

The 1970’s saw the first wave of conscious consumers, informed companies, and “sustainable fashion” that was moving away from the mainstream mass production model with the vision of creating less waste, using natural materials, and

overall having a lower impact on the environment. Lucy Siegle, author of To Die for, asks, "what is sustainable fashion?...no one knows. And the more you try to figure it out, the more confusing it becomes" (Siegle 276). This confusion is attributed to the stark contrast of the complex sustainable clothing to the simple mass produced clothing that operates on one trend, such as 'wear pink' or 'get a hat' (276). It requires more effort, knowledge, and care to inquire about and contemplate the origins and make of any given garment and the complicated trade offs of one fabric or style over another. Sustainable fashion can encapsulate organic and fair-trade clothing with appropriate third party certifications. To be able to use the term "organic" in present times means that the fibers are grown from non-genetically modified seeds without the use of pesticides, herbicides, or other toxins. Fair trade means the laborers are of legal working age, they must be paid a "fair" wage, and the working conditions must be safe. These terms were not fully developed in the 1970's, GMO seeds had not been introduced yet, and the iconic "hippie" styles of sustainable clothing became another trend to go out of fashion. In the 1990's companies such as Patagonia and ESPRIT attempted to bring social and environmental issues to the apparel conversation once again and have recently been successful even in the face of tough competition from cheap brands like Old Navy and Forever 21.

Sustainable fashion has become a hot topic recently due to widespread media attention surrounding the negative impacts of the apparel industry, which has sparked investigations into working conditions in apparel factories. In particular, the Rana Plaza factory collapse in May 2013 that resulted in over 1,000 deaths has spread

awareness and concern for social consequences of a global capitalist system (Image 1). An interview with a Bangladeshi worker by French magazine, *Le Monde*, reveals “La jeune femme ne désespère pas pourtant : ‘les entreprises comme Auchan, Carrefour ou Benetton sous-estiment l’atteinte durable à leur image dans l’esprit de leurs clients et prospects en n’assumant pas leurs responsabilités’ [Translation: The young woman does not despair: Companies such as Auchan, Carrefour or Benetton underestimate the lasting damage to their brand image in their customers’ minds by not fulfilling their responsibilities] (Novel 2014, Image 2). There is hope for the works in Bangladesh because of the strong media coverage of the disaster that has created awareness and ruined some companies’ reputations. The laborers in apparel factories across the globe are 80% women, most of them young girls. They work around 12 hours a day or more to meet high pressure deadlines set by companies that change their clothing lines every few weeks rather than the traditional, and long forgotten, seasonal change (Cline). They are exposed to potentially dangerous chemicals, fibers, and machinery with little opportunity to participate in unions or advance their economic status. Under criticism by customers and organizations, H&M and other international apparel companies took it upon themselves, in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation, to write an Accord on Fire and Building Safety after the Rana Plaza disaster. Their efforts show to their customers and laborers that corporations can be ethical and do care about the consequences of their profits. However, the debate continues on how to determine and provide laborers a “living wage,” which the Clean Clothes Campaign defines as enough to cover 3,000 calories a day per adult, housing,

healthcare, education, clothing, transportation, and enough left over for savings (Images 2). Thus far, there is no incentives for apparel companies to pay a living wage over a government supplied minimum wage, which is significantly less and is usually not enough to support one person let alone the multiple people in one family that one wage often has to support (Image 3).

Image 1. Rana Plaza Factory Collapse on April 24, 2013 resulting in 1,400 deaths and many more injured. This event inspired the Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety



Munir Uz Zaman/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

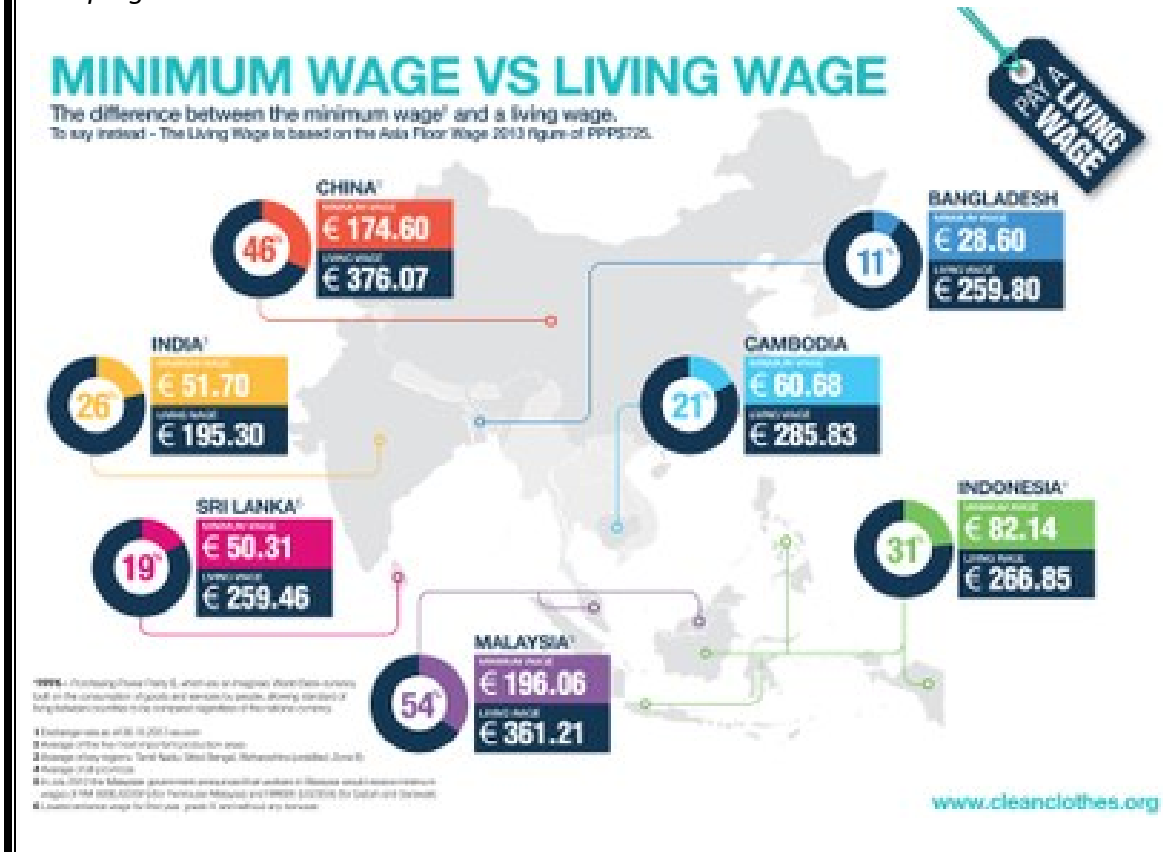
Image 2. A Bangladeshi garment sewer shows her work during her interview with Anne-Sophie Novel for Le Monde to raise awareness about the global apparel supply chain



Image 3. Definition of a living wage by the Clean Clothes Campaign

An infographic on a dark purple background titled 'PAY GARMENT WORKERS A LIVING WAGE'. It features a woman icon and a speech bubble stating 'A worker should be able to afford:'. Below this are seven numbered circular icons representing essential needs: 1. food (fork and knife), 2. rent (house with dollar sign), 3. healthcare (first aid kit), 4. education (books), 5. clothing (t-shirt), 6. transportation (bus), and 7. savings (piggy bank). A larger speech bubble at the bottom right states 'A living wage is a human right, for all people, all over the world' with a row of human icons below it. The website 'www.cleanclothes.org' is at the bottom.

Image 4. Minimum wage versus Living wage in various countries by Clean Clothes Campaign



The clothing industry’s involvement in the most recent wave of the “green movement” is perhaps even more extensive than social responsibility. The global fashion industry causes extensive environmental harm throughout the lifecycle of a garment. The manufacturing processes releases chemicals and dyes into natural waterways. Large amounts of oil are used for transportation as well as in the creation of Polyester, a plastic-like fabric that is found in over 60% of clothing. Massive amounts of water are used in the creation process and with each laundering. Finally, clothes complete their life cycle by piling up in landfills. These environmental

problems, and the social issues above, are just a slight insight to the consequences of a multi-billion dollar industry that affects each and every cloth-wearing person on the globe (Cline).

Large apparel corporations such as H&M have been quick to implement the trend of sustainable fashion through their “Conscious Collections” and adoption of sustainability commitments on their websites, but often have little action to back up their promises (Image 5). It is often impossible for customers to verify with confidence where their clothing is coming from because large companies tend to have their orders sub-contracted by their main manufacturer to other, smaller factories without their knowledge or concern in order to finish their large orders on time (Cline). Under this nontransparent system, social and environmental negligence is common. While there have been astronomical profits for some, the negative social and environmental costs are enough to beg the question, *what can practically be changed throughout the fashion industry cycle to make sustainable fashion a viable and attractive option?*

Image 5. An advertisement from H&M's "Conscious Collection" that features affordable clothing from organic cotton, jersey, and Lycoell (a fabric made from plant cellulose)



To answer this question, it is necessary to define the current problems and understand the benefits throughout the fashion industry chain. Each stakeholder in the industry has the opportunity to make changes to create a more sustainable system, including the consumers, retailers and manufacturers who make and sell the product, fashion designers, and farmers or producers who grow and manage the fibers for textiles.

At first glance it may seem that *consumers* have benefited most from this "fast fashion" model of mass production and consumption that has created record-level low prices on apparel. Elizabeth Cline, author of *Overdressed* and journalist, observes that a dress from Forever 21 is now \$10 whereas in the 1960's a dress was around \$250, after adjusted for inflation (Cline). This lowered price allows for multiple garments of every style to be owned, making fashion more accessible for all classes and allowing people to express themselves through clothing even more. It is common now for

young women to brag about their clothing not based on the quality, endurance, or style, but on how cheap the product was (Cline). However, there is some opposition to the “fast fashion” movement because of the sharp decline in quality of fabric and sewing of garments that means they wear out faster, often unraveling after only a few washes. Cline complains about the lack of emotional connection to her clothing due to its perceived disposability and unoriginality.

Second to consumers, *retailers and manufacturers* have certainly benefited enormously from the “economy of scales” approach to production, which means that the higher the quantity of products manufactured, the cost is spread out further and becomes less for the company, so it is actually more profitable for them to make a 3,000 shirts rather than 100. Another issue is the complex supply chain and global scale of the fashion industry. It causes a lack of transparency that corporations thrive on by “offshoring” their manufacturing from the United States and Western Europe to China, Bangladesh, India, and nations with developing economies that have low minimum wages (Black). It is difficult to obtain specific factory information because managers are often given notice for inspection dates and thus are prepared to hide their illegal workers. Managers have also been known to threaten their workers with dismissal for telling too much about their lack of safety standards and regulations (Black). The problem for retailers arises when practices become known through the press or academic research and their reputation is sullied, such as Wal-Mart and others that are undergoing scrutiny for their hand in the Rana Plaza factory collapse (Dufault). In the future, major retailers and manufacturers that do not change may

suffer under stronger competition from socially and environmentally responsible companies.

A major actor in the fashion industry cycle who is often overlooked is the *fashion designer* because they are at the mercy of the manufacturer for their options on fabrics or styles since the price and quantity must always be negotiated. At present, it is difficult for designers, and small companies like boutiques, to have much affect on the capabilities of factories overseas because their sustainable designs may call for different fabrics, sewing skills, or machinery (Fischer-Groban). This means that designers often feel unfulfilled artistically working for corporations like Gap that want the same t-shirt for every new line, but just in a different color (Black). They have the most knowledge to design sustainable apparel because they know which patterns create the most waste and which fabrics can last the longest. Design programs such as the University of Arts in London are starting to offer design degrees with a focus on sustainability, which will help designers better understand the long-term impact of their creations.

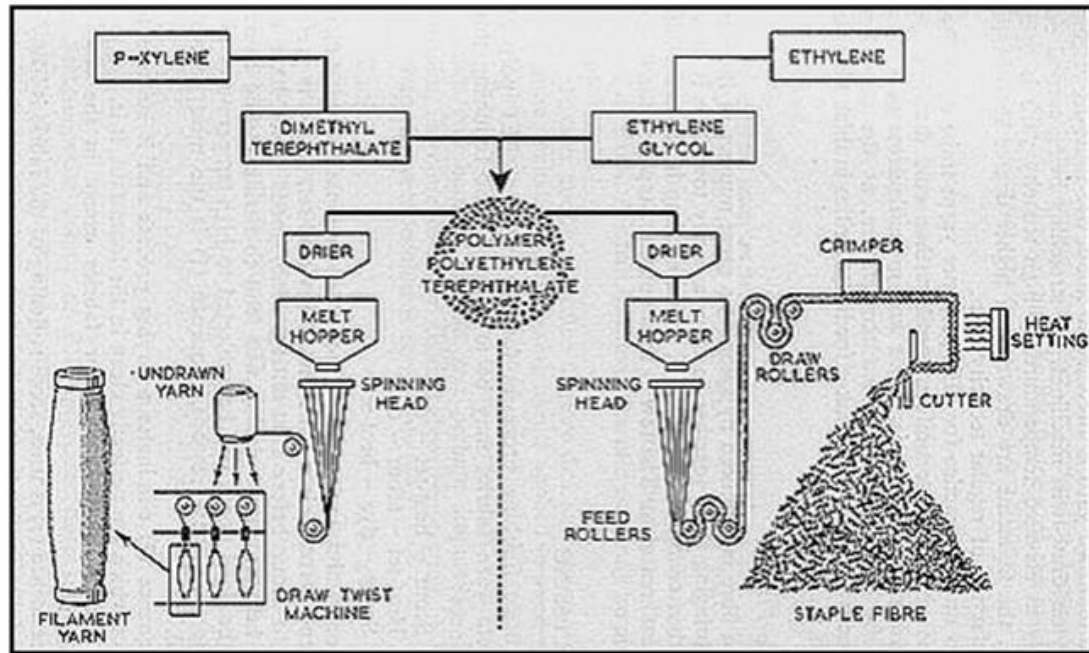
Lastly, perhaps the least acknowledged yet arguably most essential actor in the fashion industry is the *farmer or producer* who is under the influence of government and company pressure to harvest or create the highest amount of fiber for the lowest cost. Natural fabrics come from plants that undergo processing with water and chemical binders to form fibers that can be woven (Image 6). The most common naturally made fabric comes from cotton that is grown in large quantities in the United States, Europe, as well as Africa (Black). At the moment, synthetic man-made materials

such as polyester are the most commonly found in “fast fashion” clothing, often mixed with naturals like cotton or other synthetic fabrics such as nylon or spandex (Lenzing). This is problematic because polyester and similar fabrics are oil-based and go through much chemical processing to reach their pliable, washable, sew-able state as their chemical foundations are very close to plastic (Image 7). Even naturally grown fibers are subject to heavy pesticide and insecticide treatments, unless they are certified to be organically grown. These chemicals are costly for a farmer or small producer and can be dangerous when washed into waterways or when coming in to contact with human skin. Greenpeace’s report *Toxic Threads* highlights the surprising amount of chemical residue left on clothing even once it reaches retailers, especially chemicals that are known to cause cancer with lengthy exposure (*Toxic Threads*).

Image 6. An example from Lyocell that shows the process for how the plant based fabric is made using pulp from trees, which is considered a sustainable process since it takes less water than cotton and less chemicals than synthetic fabrics.



Image 7. The process for creating Polyester uses oil and chemicals to synthetically make polymer polyethylene terephthalate, which can then be processed into hard plastics or flexible fibers. This process is often considered unsustainable because it uses a scarce resource, but it also uses less water than traditional cotton fabric production.



Chapter 2: Research Methodology

My research compiled perspectives of two important actors in the fashion industry supply chain, sustainability managers and consumers, in order to understand the obstacles for sustainable fashion's growth and then recommend organizational and marketing strategies that can assist companies in communicating their social and environmental responsibility to their customers to make sustainable fashion a more widely available and attractive option.

I conducted interviews with Hilary Fischer-Groban, the Vice President of Operations and Sustainability at The Reformation, a sustainable fashion company in

Los Angeles, California and Tina Cheung, Senior Manager of Social and Environmental Responsibility at Aritzia in Vancouver, British Columbia. The goal of the interviews was to identify the problems and solutions the two companies have found in attempting to become more sustainable. I inquired about the challenges the company faces in maintaining a sustainable outlook, the specifics of what sustainability means to them, how they communicate social and environmental responsibility to their customers, and how they are able to compete with “fast fashion” companies.

I also conducted a consumer survey, which was made using Qualtrics software and distributed via Facebook to my direct social network. The goal was to better understand shopping behavior, test the level of knowledge about sustainable fashion, and discover consumer’s direct opinions about why they do or do not participate in purchasing sustainable fashion as well as what would make it a more viable option.

I kept track of my research on my fashion blog, *Le Petit Ouest*, in order to organize my sources and ideas while aligning them with current trends in the fashion world. This made it easy to compare the different marketing techniques of apparel companies because specific advertisements could be observed side by side, creating stark contrasts between strategies that seemed effective and those that were less so.

I chose to focus on small apparel companies rather than large because in general they are under less pressure from consumers, thus motivation to be sustainable often has to come from an internal source or company culture. I also observed that some of the most successful sustainable apparel companies are Patagonia and Nike, which are both sportswear companies. With the growth of these

companies, sportswear may become less of a niche market and seep into clothes that one would wear everyday. However, I thought it important to delve further into the world of fashion where style really rules because boutiques that want an image of luxury do not often simultaneously pursue an image of sustainability.

I originally attempted to contact H&M as well in order to understand the large apparel company perspective, but received a very nice rejection letter because their standard is to only speak with press on cleared topics. Though this would have been an interesting perspective, the lack of companies defining themselves as green-luxury greatly intrigued me. Another source of inspiration was the observation that small companies often escape the criticism that large companies face because they are seen as powerless or insignificant. My research of two small apparel companies that have implemented sustainable efforts showed that it is possible for them to hold enough power to create positive change for people and the planet while also making a profit. The next chapter of company profiles will explain in more depth each company's backgrounds, approaches to sustainability, greatest challenges, relationships with local governments, and marketing strategies.



**Interview with Hilary Fischer-Groban, Vice President of Operations and Sustainability
at *Reformation* in Los Angeles, CA**

Background

Reformation is a small sustainable clothing company based out of Los Angeles, California with 75 employees in office and factory and 3 retail stores. The president, Yael Aflalo, created the company after observing the wasteful effects of producing her first and successful clothing line, Ya-Ya. My interview was conducted over e-mail with Hilary Fischer-Groban the Vice President of Operations and Sustainability, who comes from a background working in Corporate Social Responsibility and “saw first hand the horrible impact that U.S. manufacturing abroad can have.” (Fischer-Groban) She started working for Reformation in the summer of 2013 and has enjoyed fusing sustainability and fashion in such an innovative environment.

Reformation’s approach to sustainability is repurposing or “reforming” vintage clothes into modern styles and creating new clothes in a transparent, local, and supportive environment. There is only one store at the moment, so they are able to analyze and control their impact quite easily. They are opening their own sewing

factory in downtown LA so that they can be responsible and make positive changes in the work environment. There will be solar panels on the roof to save on energy costs and all excess fabric will be recycled. For each part of the building process they ask, “Is this the most sustainable option? What are the alternatives? How does this impact our footprint?” (Fischer-Groban).

There is quite a lot of competition for The Reformation in L.A. because the main store is located on Melrose Avenue, which is one of the main shopping streets and tourist destinations in the city. In order to compete with non-sustainable companies, Reformation focuses their efforts on the design aspect when attracting customers. Hilary states, “At the end of the day, we make clothes that look great, and we always want gorgeous design to be our guiding principle”(Fischer-Groban). However, she does believe that consumers are becoming more informed and interested in the sustainable aspects of clothing as well.

The biggest challenge for Reformation is sourcing of materials. Large apparel companies have the most influence on mills and fabric manufacturers and so it can be difficult to find organic, fair trade fabrics that are not in high demand. As a small company, they do not feel that they have enough influence over the mills because they only account for a small percentage of their profits. Fischer-Groban was not too optimistic that the large companies will change any time soon because the industry as a whole will take a long time to change, even with events like the Rana Plaza factory collapse reaching the media.

Government support for sustainable practices in L.A. has been helpful for The Reformation. They operate within an Enterprise Zone and thus get a tax advantage and also are reimbursed for energy efficient renovations to their factory. They are in the process of becoming a certified B-Corporation, which is a company that “Provides a framework and certification for companies wishing to benefit society as well as their shareholders” (B-Corp).

Marketing Strategy

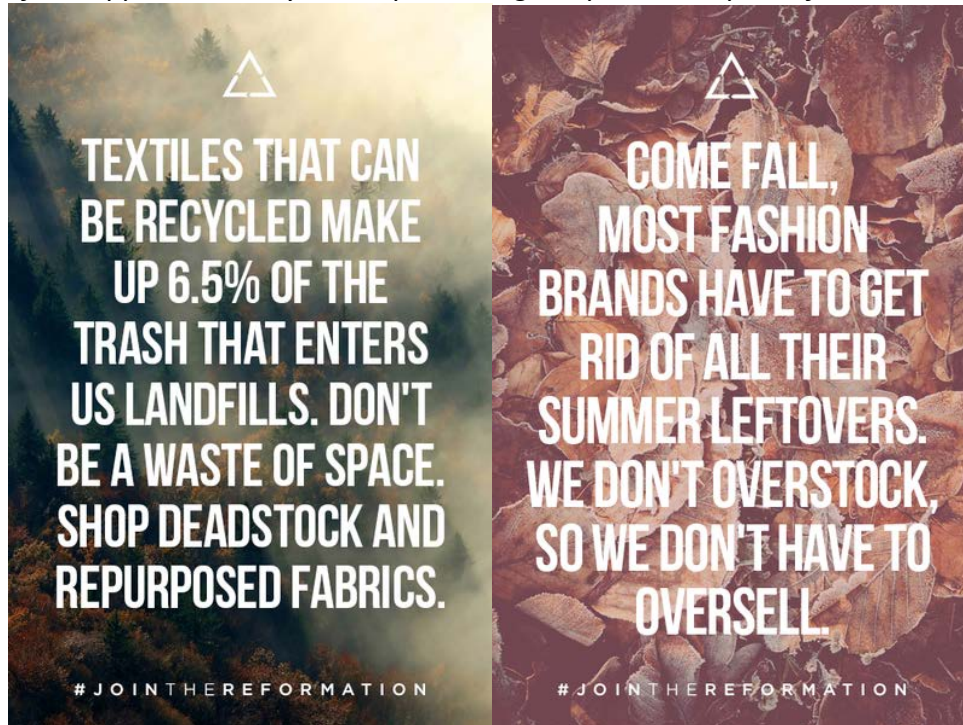
Reformation’s marketing strategy is technology-based in order to reach their customers frequently and directly. Anyone who visits their website is prompted to sign up for e-mail notifications that offers 10% off the first purchase from their website. These e-mails come two to three times a week and contain updates about new products and product lines, information about sales in the rare occasion there is one, and updates on their sustainability efforts. The most sustainable aspect is the facts at the bottom of each e-mail about the negative environmental impacts of the apparel industry and how either The Reformation or the customer can have a positive impact (Figure 7).

E-mail is an ideal form for their marketing strategy because they are able to communicate a lot of information to their direct audience. Sustainable practices are often difficult to express to customers because it takes time and words to explain the processes and their impacts, but a complicated and lengthy document is not very aesthetically pleasing or readable for the average person. It is also sometimes

necessary to bring up negative impacts of the industry in general in order to show the positive actions of the company, which can turn customers off because it is too much to think about when they are already trying to make a difficult purchasing decision (Image 8). Reformation thrives in summarizing the negative and promoting the positive in a few words while still sounding casual. This makes the customer feel comfortable and safe in their decision rather than that they are inducing an apocalypse if they buy the wrong shirt. The harsh words of truth are contrasted with beautiful images of nature that at once make it more aesthetically pleasing and readable while also distracting from the negative emotions. Reformation is also careful not to preach too much to their customers, they remind them what they can be doing to help the environment, “always recycle,” but they also say “it’s only natural to want things.” This shows the difficult balance of sustainable companies that want to be a force for positive environmental change, but also still need to make a profit and thus encourage consumerism to a certain extent. Reformation has been able to grow, opening two more stores in New York in the last year and begun construction on “America’s First Sustainable Sewing Factory”, despite a strong commitment to sustainability (Image 9).

My interview with Hilary Fischer-Groban revealed that the Reformation is quite revolutionary in their sustainable pursuits and are effective at communicating these efforts with their customers. In the next section, I will show how another small apparel company that is also committed to sustainability has developed a completely different approach.

Image 8. A collection of advertisements from the Reformation that exemplify their marketing strategy of spreading awareness to their consumers about negative impacts of the apparel industry, while promoting the positive impact of the brand.





THE UNITED STATES PRODUCES 70% OF THE WORLD'S GARBAGE,
BUT IS ONLY 5% OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION. ALWAYS RECYCLE.

#JOINTHEREFORMATION



THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUMPING OUT
2.5 BILLION TONS OF WASTEWATER PER YEAR. BY USING DEADSTOCK
FABRICS WE DON'T NEED TO ADD ANOTHER DROP.

#JOINTHEREFORMATION



80% OF THE BAD STUFF ABOUT CLOTHES - LIKE GREENHOUSE
GASES AND WASTED WATER - HAPPENS AFTER YOU TAKE THE
GARMENT HOME. WASH COLD AND LINE DRY WHEN POSSIBLE.

#JOINTHEREFORMATION

I'LL TAKE A CUTE DRESS - HOLD THE POLLUTION



**IT'S ONLY
NATURAL
TO WANT
THINGS**
#TGIBF



BLACK FRIDAY CAN BE A DARK DAY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.
WE USE RECYCLED OR ECO FABRICS, RENEWABLE ENERGY AND
GREEN SOLUTIONS JUST ABOUT EVERYWHERE WE CAN.
SHOP WITH A CLEAN CONSCIENCE. WE GOT YOU.

#JOINTHEREFORMATION

Image 9. The newsletter sent by e-mail that Reformation sent out to their subscribers that explains their building of “America’s First Sustainable Sewing Factory”

△
AMERICA’S FIRST
SUSTAINABLE SEWING FACTORY



DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - OCT 27, 2013

We’re making moves. Big moves. Thanks to all you loyal Ref Babes, we outgrew our old spaces and bicoastal lifestyle. To bring you the best possible clothes, we decided to get everything together under one roof - our web team, design, shipping, studio and most importantly our very own factory. Here, in sunny Los Angeles, we found a home for all of it to exist together.

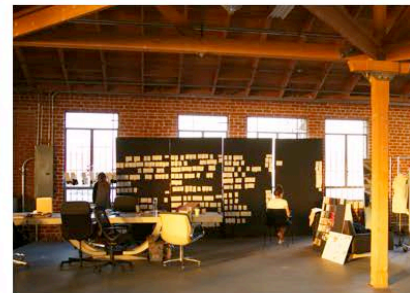
I’ve had a sustainable sewing factory on my mood board for years, and finally I got to realize my dream. The Reformation Factory is happening, and it’s going to be one of a kind.

The Factory will be America’s first sustainable sewing factory, and we are so proud that we can make our clothes in a place

that’s as perfect as they are. Obviously, The Factory is going to be powered exclusively by renewable energy, and we are gearing up for a solar installation too. We are using as many reclaimed and repurposed materials in our build-out as possible, and making sure everything from our cleaning supplies to the way we arrange our desks minimizes our footprint here on earth.

We’re building a revolution over here, and it’s all thanks to you. I’ll keep you updated along the way!

xx
Yael Aflalo, Founder & CEO





Interview with Tina Cheung, Senior Manager of Social and Environmental Responsibility at Aritzia in Vancouver, British Columbia

Background

Aritzia was founded in 1984 and has since expanded to over 50 retail stores throughout North America, opening a new flagship store on New York City's fashion famous Fifth Avenue. CEO Brian Hill states that their objective is simple, "We offer beautifully designed clothes that are on-trend, high quality, and of good value." (Aritzia/about-us). While Aritzia does not necessarily define itself as a sustainable fashion company, they have made changes in recent years in that direction and some aspects of the company were inherently sustainable to begin with. For example, recycling has always been encouraged across all departments. This small, but international company brought on Tina Cheung in 2011 as their Senior Manager of Social and Environmental Responsibility to further commit themselves to operating sustainably. Cheung obtained her International MBA at University of British Columbia and went on to work in Corporate Social Responsibility, auditing factories for major brands like Target and Aritzia. Like Hilary Fischer-Groban, she became disillusioned with the corporate approach that was more about "greenwashing" than creating real change, and she was happy to start with Aritzia to implement an in-house, formal Social and Environmental Responsibility program.

Aritzia's approach to sustainability is manufacturing focused. Tina has a strong background and understanding of factory auditing and speaks fluent Mandarin, and so has strong relationships with the 15 factories in Asia that Aritzia partners with. She also ensures that every three years a third- party auditor assesses the factories as well, so there is more transparency and accuracy. She has noticed that there has been some improvement in safety standards and treatment of factory workers over the last five years, and vast improvements over the last ten. They do not source from Bangladesh and 75-80% of labor is concentrated in China, Cambodia, and Vietnam, while the fabrics come from Turkey, Italy, and Japan. SER has been implemented at their headquarters in Vancouver as well in the form of recycling and energy efficiency. However, sustainable practices have yet to be expanded and enforced throughout the retail stores.

The main competition of Aritzia is large corporations and other boutiques. In order to compete successfully, they focus on the financial aspects of the company by actively cutting costs where feasible and having a limit on their upfront capital, so that they are not wasting money unnecessarily. They also focus on the quality of garments, through selection of successful factories and fabrics. For example, they do not use factories in India because it is hard to get quality pieces completed there as of yet.

The biggest challenge for Aritzia is the same as for The Reformation, not having enough control over their sources for fabrics and the supply chain under the influence of large corporations. However, Cheung argues that even so design thrives rather than suffers because they have their own in-house design team that is prepared to meet

any fabric challenges. Another challenge is the cost and impact of transportation in order to audit factories and meet with clients. She states that she tries to use phone calls and Skype video chats often, and hopes in the future that bio-fuel becomes more popular.

The Canadian government is somewhat supportive of Aritzia's and other sustainable companies efforts and offers tax incentives for additions such as solar panels, DC hydro, and LED bulbs. However, Cheung suggested that the Canadian government is not as encouraging as the Californian government, which she had experienced in her time working in corporate social responsibility before Aritzia.

Marketing Strategy

Aritzia's marketing strategy is design focused, preferring to leave sustainability out of their campaigns. Cheung states that Aritzia aligns their brand on the luxury side of the spectrum and that customers who shop luxury brands are not attracted to them because of their sustainable practices. This belief runs throughout the company and means that it is the new designs that are highlighted in Aritzia's marketing instead of their sustainable efforts, including their monthly magazine that is published online, email updates, website homepage, and in store.

Despite the fact that their overall marketing strategy is not focused on sustainability, Aritzia has had a few campaigns that overlap their sustainable company culture and their high-end clothing. For example, the "Staying Power" ad showed on their website homepage as well as in their monthly magazine (Image 10). It enforces

the customer's belief that Aritzia's clothes are long lasting, a staple of the slow fashion movement, because they are perfectly designed, timeless pieces. This is more sustainable for Aritzia because they are able to sell more of their product, creating less waste and making more profit than they would have throwing it out. The Clean Slate Campaign was based in social media and encouraged customers to use the website Pinterest to collect images of what a 'clean slate' means to them in order to win \$1000 towards an Aritzia wardrobe (Image 11). These images could be anything, but Aritzia made a few of their own examples that featured nature backgrounds with eye-catching font that suggested sustainable practices like growing one's own herb garden and cleaning one's closet out to only have what they need. However, the focus of the campaign was strongly on promoting their spring collections and if they wanted to send a message about sustainability they could have done it in a much clearer and more effective manner. For example, the image that says "toss everything that doesn't make you feel amazing," suggests slow fashion ideals of only having the amount of clothes that one needs and not being wasteful or excessive, but it does not describe how to sustainably do so because throwing clothing out to landfills is one of the most environmentally harmful consequences of the fashion industry.

Aritzia has a Social and Environmental Responsibility page on their website that is dedicated to informing their network about the work they are committed to currently, past projects, and organizations they partner with. Tina Cheung wrote it in very readable language with an overall aesthetically pleasing format. However, there are not many pictures or details. Many companies who are committed to social

responsibility and transparency will have information about their factories on their website for the public to see. For example, Nordstrom has images and profiles of specific factory laborers they work with and a story about their auditor who travels to the factories. Tina Cheung has strong relationships with the factory workers and owners, visiting them almost every six weeks. However, she states that Aritzia would not publish images or stories about these workers because that is not the brand image they want to promote. This lack of transparency and detail shows that Aritzia has other priorities in their business and flaws in their progress toward sustainability.

Image 10. A collection of images from Aritzia's website that exemplify their focus on social responsibility as well as quality and longevity in their clothing.





Image 11. Two advertisements from Aritzia's Clean Slate Campaign, which were posted on the popular website, Pinterest. These ads exemplify Aritzia's company culture of sustainability



Company Profile Discussion

Both Hilary Fischer-Groban and Tina Cheung offered great insight into the world of sustainability management in the fashion industry. Each company had a distinct focus from the other, but there were some aspects where they overlapped. It is a step towards sustainability that these women are holding titles and responsibilities that show the companies' commitments to making a positive impact on their employees, consumers, and environment.

The major distinctions between the two companies are their scope and focus. Aritzia is an international company with over 50 stores that has been in business for 30 years while The Reformation is brand new with only 3 stores in the U.S. so far. It is hard to say which company has the most advantage to becoming the most sustainable since Aritzia's age could mean they have more scope to work with or that because of their size it is harder for them to implement change. For The Reformation, they have the advantage of starting the company with sustainability in mind in a time period where the materials are more accessible, but they are also still very small and facing a lot of competition. Another difference was the focus of each company in the area of sustainability. The Reformation focuses on the actual clothing and reducing environmental impacts, such as using recycled materials, repurposing old styles, and creating less waste. Aritzia on the other hand is focused on the behind the scenes efforts towards social responsibility in their supply chain by creating strong relationships with the factory workers.

The greatest challenge for both Aritzia and The Reformation is supply chain control. Small apparel companies do not often have much influence over textile suppliers and manufacturers who focus their energy on big orders that offer wider profit margins. Small companies face tough competition from larger for this very reason, and small companies who focus on sustainability take an even bigger risk by creating a specialized and sometimes more expensive product. Small orders may not be creating enough demand for organic and fair trade fabrics to warrant a large variety of weaves, patterns, and colors. This means they are missing out on potentially more attention-grabbing pieces that could attract a wider range of consumers who are concerned about design and style more than the environmental or social issues when shopping for clothing. Another aspect of the supply chain that small apparel companies struggle to influence is manufacturing firms. They often lack the funds and personnel to strictly audit the factory conditions for every order done. However, Tina Cheung shows real commitment by travelling every six weeks to China to speak directly with the workers in their native language to address any of their concerns. Small orders also mean that one factory can take on most of the work and it does not have to be subcontracted out to other factories where the conditions are often not regulated (Black). The Reformation has solved the problem of manufacturing control by creating their very own sewing factory. While the textiles and resources come from all over the world, the formation of the garments is done in central L.A. near their store. This means that designs can be altered or added with very short notice, so they

are able to respond to new trends quickly and directly control the wages and working conditions of their factory workers.

It is also notable that both companies find that reaching consumers in order to give them knowledge and promote sustainability is not difficult or even overly necessary. Hilary Fischer-Groban finds that customers are often interested in the concepts of sustainability and ask questions on their own. If they do not fully understand, they still feel good about purchasing for the company because they trust their advertising. I found their advertisements online and through e-mail to be very informative and aesthetically pleasing, so as a consumer I felt more knowledgeable and attracted to the product. Aritzia on the other hand is not marketed as a sustainable company and many consumers do not ask about their fabrics being organic or fair trade, rather they shop for quality and find that quality to Aritzia means quality fabrics and timeless styles. The consumer survey I conducted seeks to understand whether consumers really do feel informed enough about companies' sustainability efforts like Tina Cheung and Hilary Fischer-Groban suggest they do.

Comparisons	Aritzia	Reformation
Scope	>50 stores, >30 years old	3 stores, <5 years old
Focus	Social Issues	Environmental Issues
Marketing	Luxury	Sustainability
Customer Relations	Well Informed	Well Informed
Greatest Challenges	Supply Chain Control	Supply Chain Control

Chart 1. Comparisons between Aritzia and Reformation

Chapter 4: Consumer Survey

Introduction

In order to determine whether company perspectives align with the consumer perspective, and whether companies have an accurate understanding of their consumers' perceptions and desires, I conducted a consumer survey. The purpose of the consumer survey was to better understand shopping behavior, test the level of knowledge about sustainable fashion, and discover consumers' direct opinions on the topic. The survey took place anonymously on Qualtrics software and was made available to my direct social network through two separate Facebook postings two weeks apart. The survey was open for four weeks with 80 participants total, with 56 participants completing it through completion. Since surveys can be time consuming and many participants fail to complete them, I inserted fashion related cartoons that made the survey a little less mundane and encouraged 70% of the total participants to complete the survey through the short answer questions (Image 12). It was intended to reach all genders across a wide age range with a variety of different personalities

and backgrounds in order to get diversified answers that would shed light on the best strategies for sustainable fashion to be further promoted and popularized.



Image 12. Two examples of fashion related cartoons that were inserted periodically in the consumer survey to encourage participation

Demographic Questions

Questions one through seven sought demographic information in order to connect personality types and backgrounds with fashion attitudes and buying behavior, such as age, gender, occupation, education level, and place of origin. Since many people in my network that had access to the survey were around college age, I also asked what their major was in order to better understand their interests and expertise. The last demographic question was a ranking of six activities from most to least preferred. There were two activities related to environment: gardening and

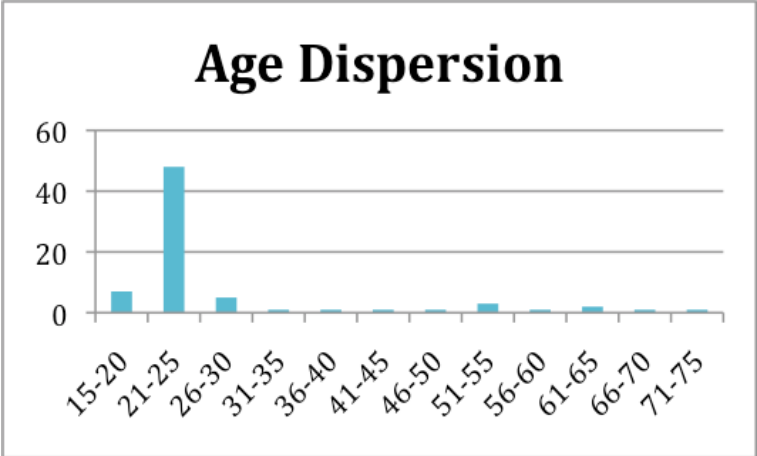
hiking, two related to humanitarianism: volunteering and spending time with family and friends. The final two activities were reading and shopping because reading could be associated with the quest for knowledge and shopping relates to an interest in fashion. My hypothesis is that those with interests related to environmentalism or humanitarianism will be more sensitive to environmental and social issues in the fashion industry respectively.

Demographic Results

Age

66.67% of the sample was in the age range 21-25. This was due to the accessibility of the survey to those within my direct social network. Sustainable fashion can be targeted to all age ranges, but a majority of clothing companies market towards 18-35 year old women, including Aritzia and The Reformation. This sample is relevant as it examines the opinions of primarily those in the target market for sustainable fashion companies.

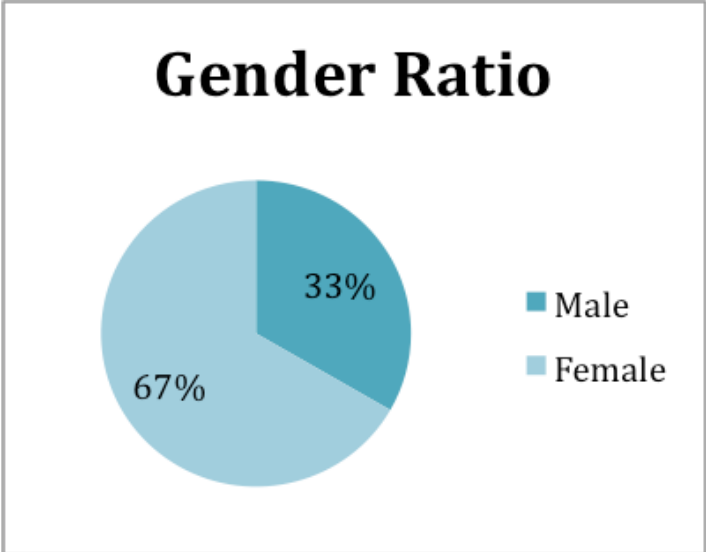
Chart 2. Age dispersion of the consumer survey sample



Gender

The gender ratio was 67% female to 33% male. This is expected as out of those I spoke to directly about taking the questionnaire, females were the most interested in participating and the most active in my outcomes. As mentioned before, the majority of clothing companies market to females who tend to do the most shopping, so this sample remains indicative of the opinions of many clothing companies' target audience.

Chart 3. Gender division of the consumer survey sample given the option of male or female

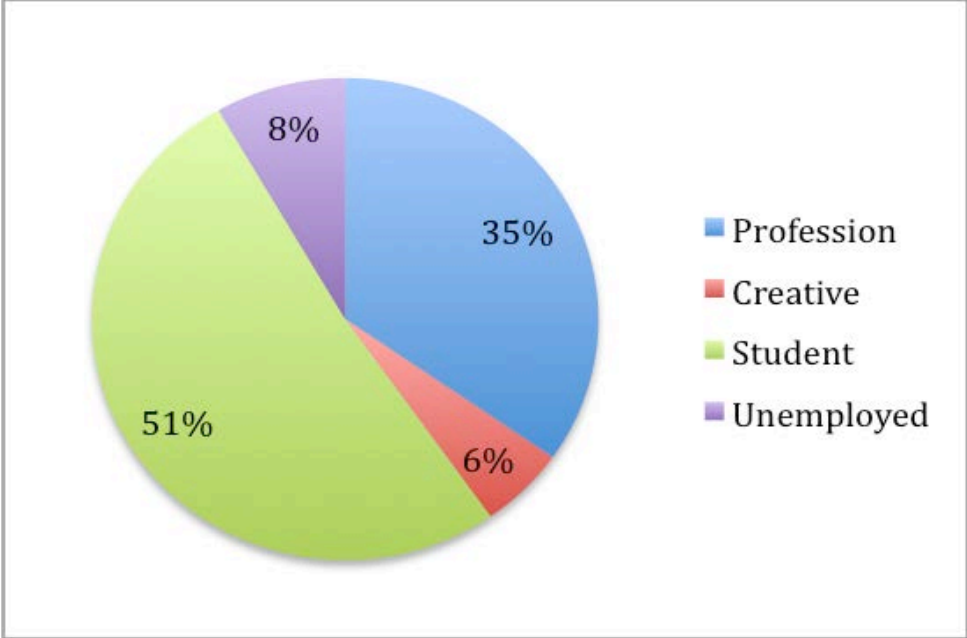


Occupation

51% of the sample is students, which follows the high volume of 21-25 year olds that participated in the survey, and 85% of the sample has a Bachelor degree or is in progress of attaining a Bachelor's degree. This indicates that the sample is well educated, meaning they may have some previous knowledge of the environmental and social issues that affect the world in general, if not specifically the fashion

industry. 35% of the sample is professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, or other occupations that require an advanced degree. This supports the assumption that the sample is largely well educated. 6% work in creative roles, such as photographers and directors. This shows that the sample may be more analytically minded. The remaining 8% of the sample are unemployed, most of them specifying that they are retired. This shows that a majority of the sample participates or will participate in the professional world where they may need to better understand environmental and social issues that affect their respective industries.

Chart 4. Percentages of the consumer survey sample whose occupations were divided into profession, creative position, students, or unemployed including retired.



Place of Origin

53.5% of the sample is from Oregon, primarily in the Portland metro area. This means there is a greater probability of the participants having similar core values and beliefs that are reflected in their answers to the survey. 31% of the sample is from

states other than Oregon in the United States and 15.5% of the sample is International including countries such as France, the Netherlands, Morocco, Puerto Rico, Germany, Malaysia, Korea, and Romania. From this one can see that the sample is quite diverse, representing Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central America.

Activities

The sample was asked to rank five activities from most preferred to least in order to make assumptions about their core values based on their interests. Spending Time with Family and Friends ranked number one by 84.2% of the sample, showing that the welfare of family and friends are of utmost importance to this group.

The second highest ranking was Reading, which shows that majority of the sample enjoys obtaining new knowledge and stories. This is helpful for marketing sustainable fashion because it often depends on stories from abroad to connect customers to their practices. This may infer that customers may want to read more about the companies they shop from, but don't because of other factors like accessibility.

The third ranked activity was Shopping. This is not surprising and will be more interesting when compared with shopping behavior. Hiking was very close to shopping, but was ranked as fourth, showing minimal preference for outdoor activities and proclivity towards nature.

Volunteering was a strongly ranked fifth, second to last of the activities. This shows that while people have a very strong preference for time with family and

friends, putting in time for philanthropy for people they perhaps do not know is less preferred.

Gardening was ranked last by 60% of the sample, showing that while hiking is popular, direct contact with and control of the environment is not as preferred as observing nature like hiking perhaps allows. This has implications for sustainable fashion in that while people may care about the environment they may not want to do anything directly, or they feel their time is more valuable elsewhere.

Shopping Behavior Questions

These questions are a pre-made block of Qualtrics survey software questions that relate to shopping behavior for clothing. The subject answers strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree to 24 statements, such as “I buy clothes I like, regardless of current fashion.” It is useful to use a pre-made set of questions that are proven to be effective in their order and wording. It also aids in understanding how fashion attitudes to clothing in general affects an attitude towards sustainable fashion in particular. My hypothesis for this set of questions is that those who strongly feel that clothing reflects their personality are more likely to purchase more items at a cheaper price because style is their main goal. Those who are less certain of their sense of style may be more likely to shop less, but have other factors that are more important than style affect their purchasing decisions.

Shopping Behavior Results

A majority (over 50%) of the sample agreed that they were “not afraid to wear something different,” “what you think of yourself is reflected in clothes”, “spending excessive amounts of money on clothing is ridiculous,” they “buy what they like over what is currently in fashion, they “feel good buying something new,” and “like to buy new clothes.” These answers suggest that consumers feel they have control over their purchasing behavior because they think they are purchasing what they want despite what clothing company ads tell them to.

A Majority of the sample (over 50%) disagreed with the following statements from the shopping behavior section of questions. “you’re better than someone else if you dress better,” “I am a fashion pacesetter,” “I prefer designer labels,” “a man wouldn’t look twice at a women who doesn’t dress well,” “I plan my shopping trips carefully,” and “wearing good clothes means having a good life.” These answers suggest that consumers do not place fashion at the highest of their priorities because it does not affect ones ability to find a partner and is not the only means to show affluence. It is also important to note that shopping trips are not planned carefully and that people do not believe they are trend- setters because this contradicts the confidence of those who felt like they had full control over their shopping behavior.

Manufacturing

This section consists of six statements about the manufacturing of clothing in which the subject answers on a range of strongly disagree to strongly agree. These

questions test consumer opinion about manufacturing in accordance with laws and standards and working conditions of laborers. Following the statements is a multiple choice question that tests whether consumers know where their clothes are made, and if they do know, what the main source of their clothing is. My hypothesis is that those who know where their clothes are made may be more sensitive to environmental and social issues because they can imagine that their clothing choices have long distance effects.

Manufacturing Results

Statement 1. It matter where my clothes are made had very differentiated answers with 33% answering somewhat agree, 33% answering somewhat disagree, and 33% answering neither. This suggests that people do not know the difference between clothing manufactured from one place to the next because they do not have sufficient knowledge to have a strong opinion.

Statement 2. A company's use of child labor would affect my purchasing decision was more decisive with 72% of the sample agreeing that it would affect their decision, meaning they would not purchase an item knowing it was associated with child labor.

Statement 3. Manufacturing in accordance with the law would affect my purchasing decision was differentiated with 33% answering somewhat agree and the rest of the answers very low percentages. This may again be attributed to lack of

knowledge about manufacturing laws and whether or not they are fair to begin with since this would affect whether one thinks they should be followed or not.

Statement 4. I know where my clothes are made was again quite split with 30% somewhat agreeing, 30% somewhat disagreeing and 26% strongly disagreeing. This shows a divide between the sample of consumers who have perhaps taken the time to become informed or at least read the labels on their garments whereas a large amount of the sample recognizes they do not know where their clothes are made, but have not taken or do not know how to take steps to find out this information.

Statement 5. Manufacturing workers in the apparel industry are treated and paid fairly was very decisive with 75.4% somewhat disagreeing and strongly disagreeing. This suggests that consumers have paid attention to news articles and information about clothing production scandals. In particular, many of the sample may have been informed about Nike's past issues with child labor and paying fair wages as the company is based out of Beaverton, Oregon and many of those in my network are familiar with the company.

Statement 6. Manufacturing workers in the apparel industry work in safe conditions had a strong response similar to Statement 5, 71.9% somewhat and strongly disagreed

The multiple-choice answers for *where are the majority of your clothes made?* Were China and Southeast Asia, India and Bangladesh, Central and South America, The United States and Europe, or unknown. The purpose of this question was to understand the consumer's perception of where their clothing is made. The response

was nearly tied between China and Southeast Asia and unknown. This shows that perhaps people are well informed about where their clothes are from, or at least were able to make an educated guess, because between 60-80% of apparel is made in China and Southeast Asia (Black). There was also a large amount of participants who did not know where their clothes come from and could not even make a guess.

Chart 5. Answers shown in numbers and percentages of the sample when asked “Where are the majority of your clothes made?”

#	Answer	Response	%
1	China and Southeast Asia	23	40%
2	India and Bangladesh	5	9%
3	Central and South America	2	4%
4	USA and Europe	5	9%
5	Unknown	22	39%
	Total	57	100%

Clothing Fabrics

This section has seven statements about shopping behavior and clothing fabrics in which the subject answers on a range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These questions test whether fabric type affects purchasing decisions, knowledge of different fabrics, and understanding of sustainable fashion terms such as “fair trade” and “organic” and ability to distinguish between the two. This section is followed by a multiple-choice question that tests consumer knowledge about the fabrics of their clothes and what fabrics are the most popular. My hypothesis was that those who knew about fabric choices are more likely to choose organic or fair trade fabrics rather than synthetics, thus choosing a more sustainable option in most cases.

Statement 1: It matters what fabric my clothes are made out of had a response of 51.9% agreeing and 21% strongly agreeing showing that consumers do appreciate knowledge about fabrics and thus probably expect that information to be available to them.

Statement 2: I know what fabrics my clothes are made out of had a response of 57.6% agreeing with 17.3% strongly agreeing, which shows that consumers have read the knowledge available to them about clothing fabrics including the information on clothing labels or tags. This also shows a trust in the accuracy of that information.

Statement 3: Some fabrics are better than others had a response of 53.8% agree and 17.3% strongly agree showing that a majority of the sample does believe that some fabrics are “better” than others, thus they must have certain qualities or preferences for fabrics when making a purchasing decision.

Statement 4: I would rather purchase organic fabrics or clothing than non-organic had the strongest response at neither with 36.5% of the sample choosing that option. The second most popular selection was 30.7% somewhat disagreeing. This was a bit surprising because people tend to think that organic is better than non-organic when used in other sectors, such as agriculture.

Statement 5: I know the difference between organic and non-organic fabrics had a response of 34.6% choosing neither and 30.7% agreeing. The lack of knowledge about the qualities that make a fabric or piece of clothing organic versus not organic explains the negative response for purchasing organic fabrics. Consumers suggest they

are not likely to make a purchasing decision without feeling knowledgeable about the qualities of the garment, even if it sounds appealing.

Statement 6: I would rather purchase fair trade fabrics and clothing over non-fair trade had a response of 36.5% choosing neither and 25% agreeing.

Statement 7: I know the difference between fair trade fabrics and clothing over non-fair trade had a response of 34.6% agreeing and 21.1% disagreeing. This suggests that the majority of the sample has a general idea about what fair trade fabrics and clothing are, but do not have a preference for fair trade fabric over non fair trade.

Multiple-Choice: The Majority of my clothes are made out of... had a majority of the sample choosing blends followed by cotton. The most widely used fabric in the apparel industry is polyester followed closely by cotton. The sample underestimated the prevalence of polyester in their wardrobes or perhaps lumped it in with blends since synthetic fabrics are often mixed together. However, polyester is a unique synthetic in that it can be used alone because it can provide durability, flexibility, and comfort without being mixed with other fabrics.

Chart 6. Answers shown in numbers and percentages of the sample when completing the statement, “the majority of my clothes are made out of...”

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Cotton		19	37%
2	Polyester		3	6%
3	Spandex		0	0%
4	Blends		28	54%
5	Unknown		2	4%

Factors of Purchasing Decisions

The explored factors of purchasing decisions were price, style and current trends, fabric quality and longevity, environmental and social concerns, location and accessibility, and fit. My hypothesis was that for most consumers, price and style are the most influential factors, followed not far behind by style and current trends and fit. Location and accessibility is not as much of a factor because online shopping has made all clothing more accessible, and most towns tend to have a variety of different clothing shops to choose from as well as the large staples such as Forever 21, Nordstrom, or Macy's. I think that fabric quality and longevity will rank low because consumers anticipate that trends will change and do not often buy for the long term. Environmental and social concerns will rank low because even if they seem important to the consumer, price and style are still the most important when purchasing clothing.

Factors of Purchasing Decisions Results

The most common response for this set of questions was agree, which shows that there is a wide variety of factors a consumer considers when making a clothing purchasing decision. The most strongly agreed with factor was fit with 100% of the sample agreeing or strongly agreeing that it affects their decision, the second was price with 98%, quality and longevity at 88%, location and accessibility at 86%, style and trends at 80%, and lowest was environmental and social concerns at 38%. The highest single response for environmental and social concerns was neither at 36%, which shows that most of the participants do not consciously choose to ignore

environmental and social concerns when they are making a purchasing decision, but they do not consider them intentionally either. This could be attributed to lack of knowledge about the environmental and social impacts that any given piece of clothing may have.

The ranking of factors based when the factor was evaluated individually differed from the ranking when the participants were asked to list them from most important to least one factor against another. The majority of responses placed the ranking as price, fit, style, quality, location of final sale, and location of manufacture. Price and fit are clearly the most important factors of a clothing purchasing decision, but it is unclear which truly trumps the other. Style remained in the third place, while quality became more important than location when compared directly to the other factors. These rankings can show companies what factors influence their customers purchasing decisions the most and are utilized to help the company market their products. These results that put all of the major factors above environmental and social concerns are not necessarily unexpected and have been seen before. This is the reason many apparel companies, such as Aritzia, have not made as many efforts towards environmental and social responsibility as they could. However, despite this response from my survey participants and those of other apparel industry marketing research that suggest environmental and social responsibility is not important to consumers, when asked the right questions it seems that it is not compassion that consumers lack, but the knowledge base about environmental and social issues.

Purchasing Decisions and Social and Environmental Responsibility

These questions directly address social and environmental responsibility of companies, governments, and consumers. There are five statements that ask whether companies can or are responsible with or without government support or consumer activism answered by ranking strongly disagree to strongly agree. There is also an option that states companies are not responsible. This tests consumers' opinions about the role of governments, companies, and consumers in order to find out what they think the system is like right now, and how or if it needs to change. This will show how consumers define their role within the fashion industry and whether they see themselves as just a customer, an informed customer, or an activist.

Apparel companies can be environmentally and socially responsible without government or consumers influence had the strongest response of 38% for agree followed by the second strongest of 22% for disagree. This shows a strong divide of opinion about the government's and the consumer's potential role in supporting SER in the apparel industry.

Apparel companies are environmentally and socially responsible without government or consumer influence had a strongest response in disagree at 36% followed by neither agree nor disagree at 30%. This shows that the participants were divided about the potential role of governments and consumers, but also saw that sometimes companies do not invest in SER without the influence of outside forces like government and their customers.

Companies need consumer feedback and activism to be ethical had a strongest response of 50% for agree, or 70% including strongly agree. This shows more clearly that the participants do think they have a solid and important influencing position on company behavior. However, it is still unclear how many of these participants would be willing to or know how to give feedback to a company about their practices or actively ask a company to change their practices.

Companies need government incentives to be ethical had a strongest response of 44% for agree, but 22% chose neither agree nor disagree, and 22% disagreed. It seems that the participants were more confident in their role as an influencer of companies than the government's role.

Companies do not need to think about social or environmental issues had the strongest response of this set of questions with 58% of the participants disagreeing, 88% including strongly disagree, that companies do not need to think about sustainability. The general opinions of the participants are that companies can and should implement sustainability without external motivation, but they do not tend to do this.

Short Answer Questions

These questions are open-ended questions that the participants respond to with their direct opinions on sustainable fashion. The purpose is to show what the most and least attractive aspects of sustainable fashion are to a customer, what would make them more likely to make a sustainable purchasing decision, and who is

responsible for the environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry. I prompted them with the major actors being consumers, companies, designers, governments, or others. My hypothesis is that the subjects will think the most attractive aspect is a clean conscience and making a positive impact on society, the least attractive will be the price or accessibility. The major influencer that could make them buy more sustainably will be a drop in price or more knowledge about where and how to shop sustainably. I think that the subjects will choose companies and consumers as the most responsible for the environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry because designers are not seen as having much power. Some may say governments because they understand a lacking of laws and standards to protect laborers and the environment. Many of my subjects will be from the United States where free trade is very important, and so some subjects may not think government intervention would be a positive impact on clothing business.

What does sustainable fashion mean to you? had two responses tied for the strongest at 30%, environmental issues and environmental and social issues together. While environmental issues alone were mentioned often, “Made with out hurting environment,” only three participants stated social issues as the sole aspect of sustainable fashion, “To me it means to donate clothes when I don't wear them anymore and they are in good shape, so someone else can wear them”. Longevity was the second highest aspect at 22%, such as “Fashion that can withstand the time and fleeting trends”. Other notable response were that sustainable fashion means using natural materials, offers a fair price, and only one participant answered

unknown. These questions were asked at the end of the quiz, so it is possible that some participants learned about sustainable fashion through the process of taking the survey. However, 99% of the participants had some answer about what sustainable fashion means to them, which suggests that they do have a general understanding about it.

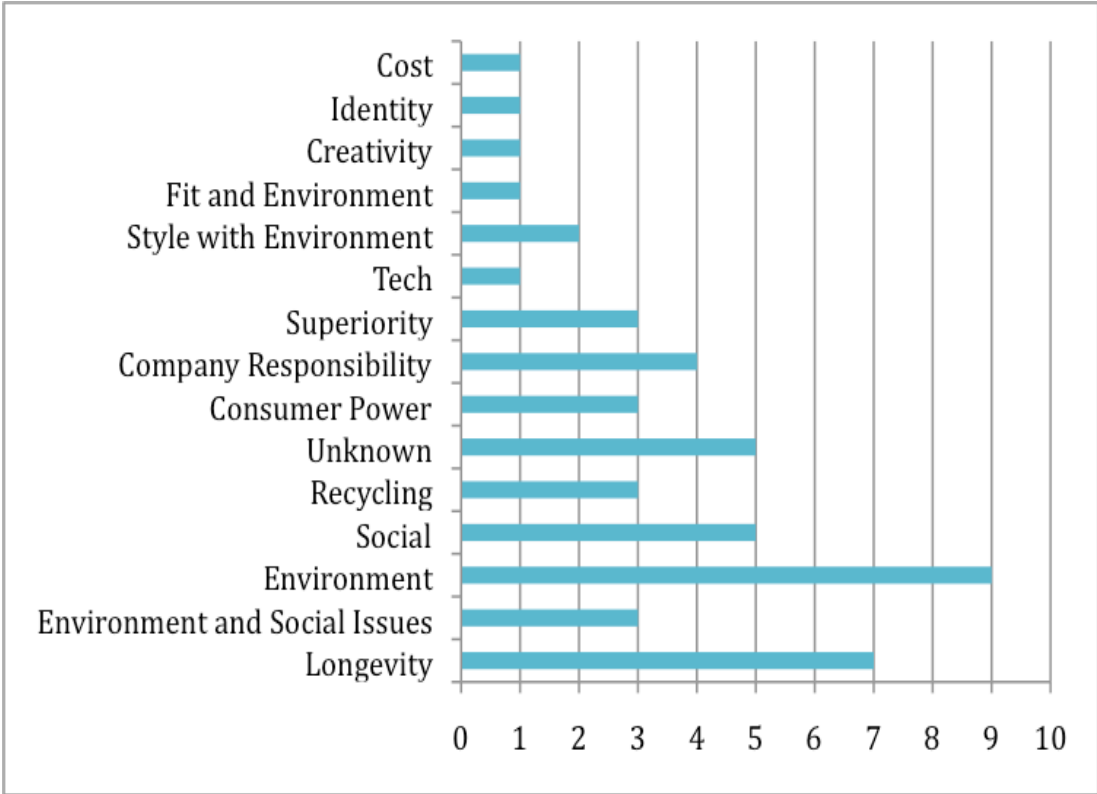
Chart 7. A pie chart that shows the frequency in percentage of the samples' answers to "what does sustainable fashion mean to you"



The most attractive aspect of sustainable fashion is... had a highest response in regard to its protection against environmental degradation with nine (or 18.3%) of the participants mentioning positive environmental effects in their responses. The second highest was longevity, which follows the responses for what sustainable means so this shows an overall positive connotation to the definition of sustainable fashion. The third most prevalent comment was "I don't know", which also tied with a comment

about solely social issues. 99% of the sample had an answer for what they believe sustainable fashion means, but when asked what the most attractive aspect is to them the response “unknown” jumped to 10%. Other interesting comments were “it can be creative and fun fashion” and “be able to remain fashionable yet remain kind to the environment” which show an opinion that sustainable fashion is not devoid of style and actually makes new opportunities for creativity.

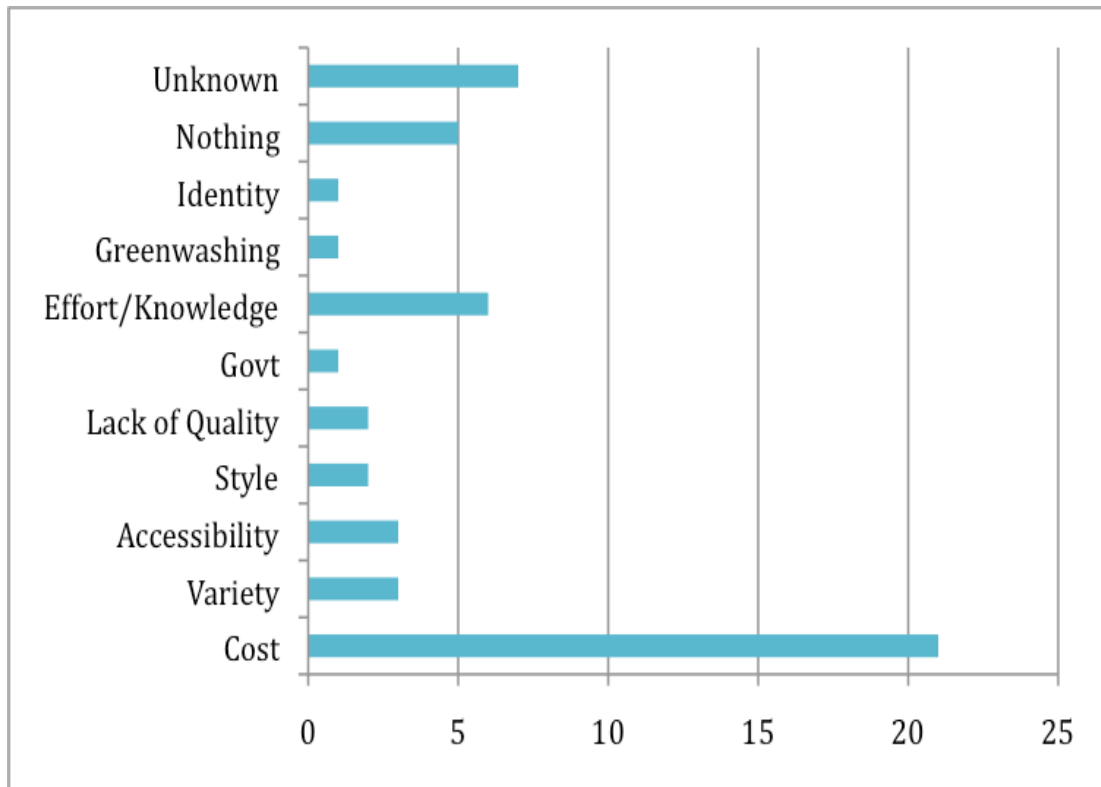
Chart 8. A graph of the sample’s answers when asked to complete the statement: “The most attractive aspect of sustainable fashion is...”



The least attractive aspect of sustainable fashion is... had a response of about 45% of the sample communicating concerns about the high cost of sustainable fashion. The second most common response was “unknown” at 14.2%, showing again the gap

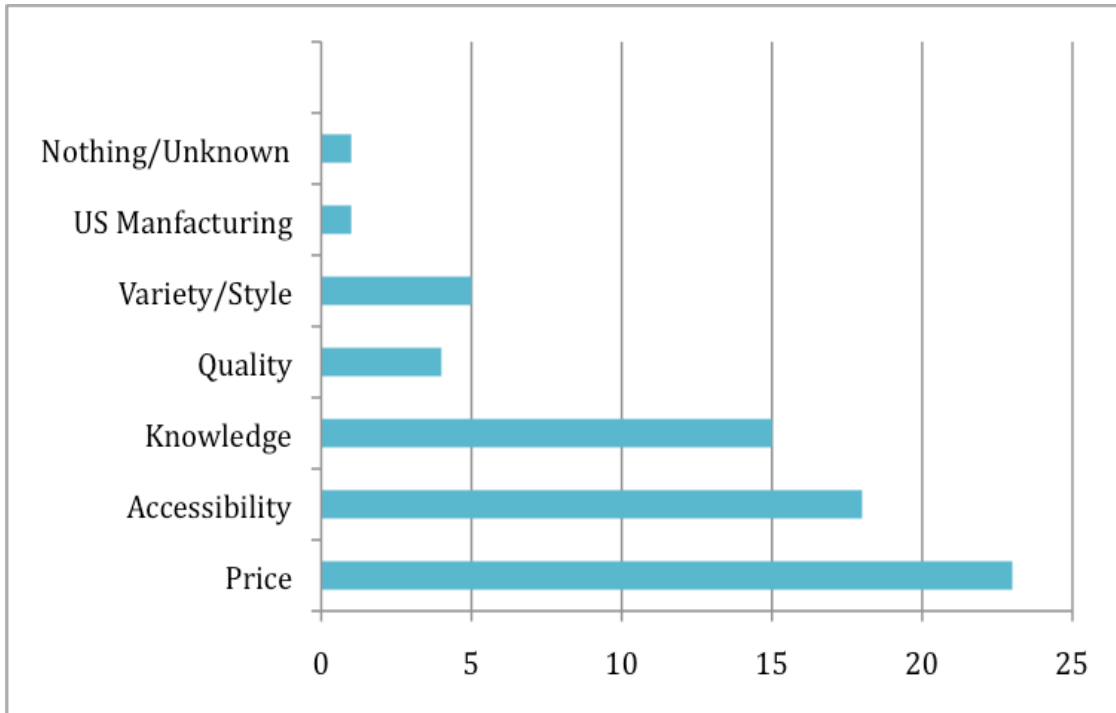
of knowledge about sustainable fashion, or a general positive attitude towards the idea, one response suggested, “I don't know if there is a ‘least attractive’ aspect, but I'll admit that I could do more research about the clothes I buy before I buy them. If stores/manufacturers were required to provide information about their fair/non fair trade status, use of organic materials, etc. on the actual product, I think it would help consumers decide where to spend their money.” In this case the participant as a clothing consumer has directly asked for more information from companies and wishes they would give that information freely. The third most common response at 12.2% was a concern about more effort in the shopping experience attributed to the amount of time one must spend researching the product, “it can often be more expensive and is not as accessible”. The concerns about cost are valid as it is often true that sustainable fashion is sold a premium price due to higher costs in production such as paying workers fair wages. However, the popularization of sustainable fashion will reduce the cost over time and even now there are some sustainable options that are affordable. The hierarchy that exists for traditional clothing with fast fashion at the bottom and haute couture at the top still exists for sustainable fashion, where there are organic cotton t-shirts sold for \$68 at Zady or \$10 from H&M's Conscious Collection.

Chart 9. A graph of the sample's answers when asked to complete the statement: "The least attractive aspect of sustainable fashion is..."



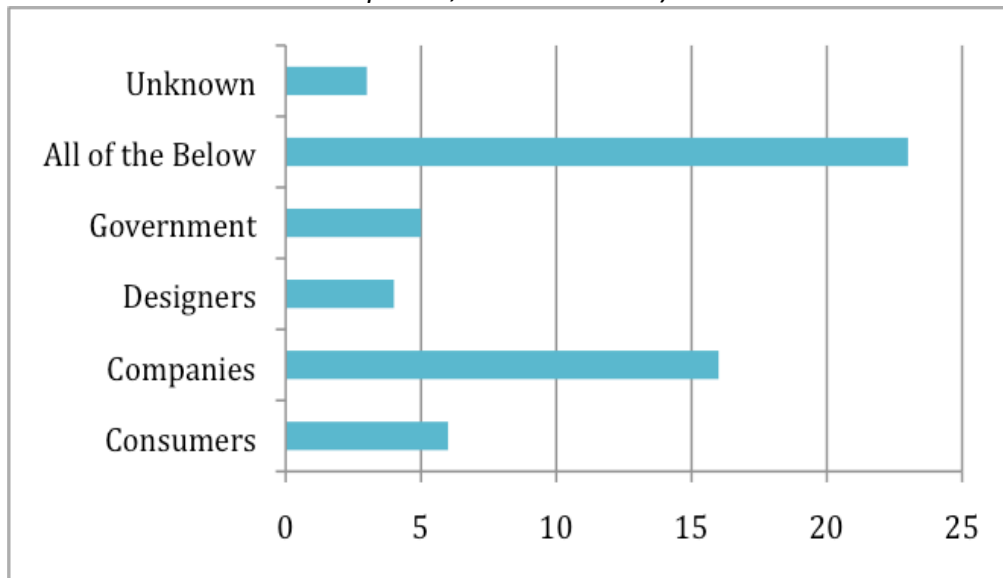
What would make purchasing sustainable fashion a more viable option? had the most common response as being price at 47%, which reflects the opinion that the least attractive aspect of sustainable fashion is the price premium. In an apparel industry where fast and cheap fashion rules, this is not a surprising request. The second and third most mentioned aspects were accessibility at 36.7% and knowledge at 30.6%, which shows the participants feel that they do not know where to find sustainable clothing. This follows the responses that showed concern about the extra effort it takes to buy sustainable clothing because it requires more time to find, especially in the sea of advertising that is dominated by big fashion brands with the focus of selling this season's or this week's latest styles.

Chart 10. A graph of the sample's answers when asked: "What would make purchasing sustainable fashion a more viable option?"



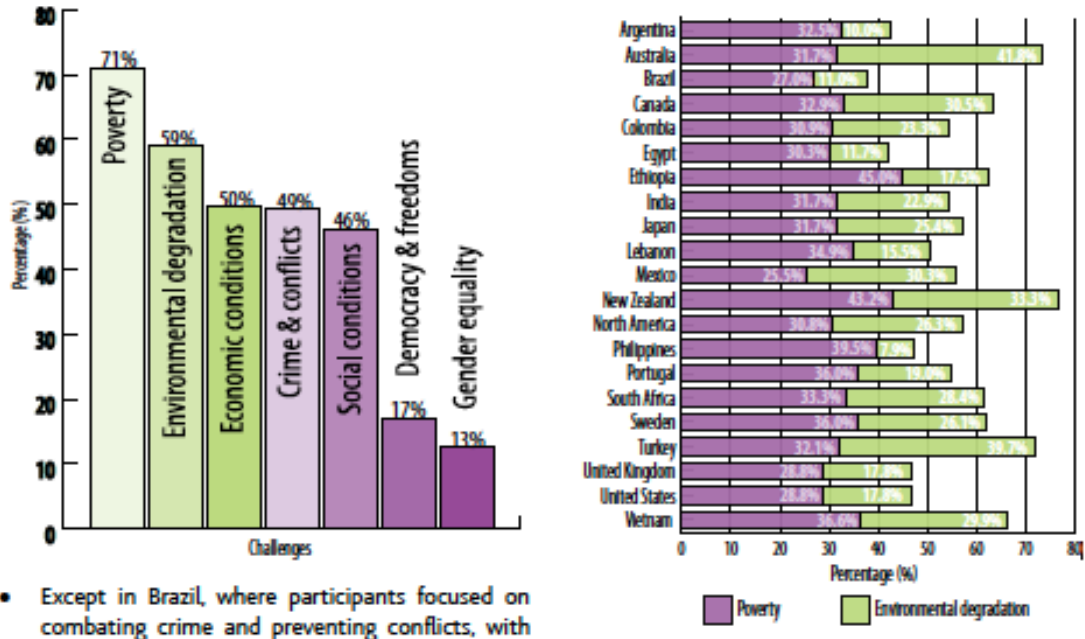
Who is responsible for the social and environmental impacts of the apparel industry? (governments, companies, consumers etc.) had a strong response of 47% agreeing that all of these actors have equal roles in lessening the negative impacts of the apparel industry, "All of the above play different roles". The second strongest response was 32.6% for companies as the sole bearer of responsibility for the impacts of the apparel industry, one participant responded, "I think it's the companies responsibility. You shouldn't need a government or anyone else looking over your shoulder to do the right thing." From the consumer perspective, companies seem to have the most power and knowledge to be able to take sustainability actions and they may not be aware of complex supply chain issues that prevent companies from having as much control as they might like.

Chart 11. A graph of the sample's answers when asked: "Who is responsible for the social and environmental impacts of the apparel industry? (governments, companies, consumers etc.)?"



Visions for Change, a UNEP division, conducted the Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles (GSSL) that observed a similar demographic to my consumer survey of 61% students with 58.3% aged 18 to 23 and a slightly higher female representation at 53.3%. The GSSL showed "a majority of young people recognize poverty and environmental degradation as the most important global challenge today" (28). In the United States in particular environmental degradation was ranked the most important global issue with poverty ranked second, but 17.8% lower. These results mimic the responses from my consumer where environmental issues were seen as more important to sustainable fashion than social issues.

Chart 11. A graph of the results of UNEP’s Vision for Change Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles



Consumer Survey Discussion

Consumers’ main concerns when it comes to sustainable fashion based on the results of the survey were the perceived high cost and lack of accessibility to and knowledge about this type of clothing.

Price was the most influential factor in most purchasing decisions, which is not surprising. However, a majority of consumers commented that the least attractive aspect of sustainable fashion is the price because there is an assumption that sustainable clothing has to be more expensive. The scarcity of choices for sustainable clothing makes the price higher because it is more expensive for companies to produce when it is outside of their traditional production processes. More demand for sustainable clothing from consumers will eventually decrease the price because

companies will have to respond and make the materials more accessible. However, it is difficult for demand to rise when there is so much anxiety about the price being quite a lot higher than traditional clothing. This belief is somewhat unwarranted because H&M's Conscious Collection boasts the same low prices as their traditional lines with a jersey t-shirt being \$9.95. If given a choice between this organic jersey t-shirt and its polyurethane identical twin at the same price, a majority of people would choose the sustainable option. Consumer's holding on to this belief about the exclusiveness of sustainable fashion means there is a disconnection in communication between companies and their customers about the details of their products.

After concerns about price, consumers gave the most feedback about needing more accessibility to sustainable clothing and more knowledge about it in general. Many of those who took the survey contacted me personally to ask more about sustainable clothing with basic questions such as, what is it? Who sells it? Is it about the environment or social issues, or both? When asked how they personally define sustainable fashion, a majority of the sample answered with comments that focus on just the environmental side. Only one person mentioned where it could be found or a company they shopped with because of their sustainability, and this was a customer of Patagonia. This is a major failure on the part of sustainable apparel companies because the survey showed that customers do have a large interest in sustainable clothing, but they see themselves as passive buyers rather than activists that will tell companies what clothes they should carry. Many would not even know how to approach the company to inform them of their interest in sustainable clothing and most would not

want to make the extra effort. Therefore, apparel companies need to be more proactive in communicating their sustainability to their customers by reinventing their marketing and organizational strategies when it comes to social and environmental sustainability.

Chapter 5: Marketing and Organizational Recommendations

Marketing Recommendations

My research shows that there is a major disconnect between apparel companies and their customers when it comes to communicating sustainability. It is in the best interest of apparel companies to use their sustainable efforts to promote sales and create brand loyalty. Some companies, like Aritzia, prefer not to communicate their sustainability because there is still a lot of progress for them to make and they do not want to be guilty of “green washing.” It is often left up to the consumer to do background research about a garment in order to find out details, which is very hard to do even for professionals. Reformation is the most successful small apparel company at communicating their sustainability because they are able to integrate their messages of care for the environment with a positive brand image dedicated to high-end style through their online ads that are aesthetically pleasing, easily accessible, and interesting. However, there are many other ways of utilizing technologies to dissolve communication rifts between companies and their customers which would be much more effective than traditional means.

The traditional means of communication about product origins and make between companies and their customers are sales people and the tags on clothing. Sales people may be experts in customer service and product knowledge, but they are the farthest removed company employees from the manufacturers and are usually not informed about the company's supply chain. It is not even very common for a salesperson to be informed about fabric quality and care enough to know if one garment is a more sustainable option than another, so even if a customer took the time to think about sustainability when they are shopping they would not receive any help from the company on the ground floor where it is most important. As the direct communicator between the company and customers, sales associates could be used much more efficiently to market sustainable clothing, which will be discussed further in organizational recommendations.

Traditional clothing tags seek to fill the information gap that the sales representatives leave by stating origin, fabric type, and care instructions for the garment. When a garment is fair trade or otherwise certified, there is often a sticker attached on the tag that is encouraging to a customer, but not often informative. It is no secret that traditional tags are not well loved. We have become so used to tags and the riddles of information they carry that they have become disposable, much like the cheap garments they so lacklusterly describe. Black states, "labels are currently inadequate, until very recently there has been little or no information of the sources of fibres and textiles in clothing at the point of purchase by the consumer" (Black 106). Labels can become useful through technological advances in data storage and

communication. In this highly digitalized age, there are many benefits in using technology to store information rather than the traditional means.

Digital tags for clothing in the form of Quick Response (QR) codes pose many advantages to their fabric counterparts. QR codes can be scanned using any mobile device with the downloaded app and take the user to a site that can hold up to a page and half of information, or 3 Kilobytes. Laura Siegel first presented this idea as a design project called Clothing Traceability, but it has never been implemented into an actual clothing line (Image 13).

Image 13. Laura Siegel's concept of using a fabric tag with a QR code as a part of her Clothing Traceability project



QR codes can tell a detailed story about a garment's entire lifecycle, giving the item more meaning and value along with transparency. The four basic aspects of information that should be included are:

1. Where the garment was made, which country and specific factory, and perhaps even the exact people who worked so hard to make it.
2. The factory's most recent audit, the results of the audit, and current wage rates
3. Fabric type and its ranked environmental impact based on data from the Higgs index or Nike's Materials Sustainability Index
4. Care instructions for the garment that minimize environmental impact such as how to recycle or donate the item and how to wash it using less water and energy.

Providing this information to consumers makes companies directly responsible and accountable for their practices while providing their customers with desired knowledge for making smart purchasing decisions. The technology is quick, informative, and attractive in its modernism.

Similar and currently available technology that helps communicate and facilitate sustainable practices are the Nike *Making* app and *Wear this, Not that* by Fashioning Change. The Nike *Making* app is used foremost by designers because it measures 22 different types of fabric against one another and gives each a score depending on usage of water, energy, toxics, and waste (Image 14). The data is based on their Materials Sustainability Index, which was used as a model in the formation of the Higgs Index, a global standard for measuring sustainability in apparel that emerged in 2014. The *Wear This, Not That* website from Fashioning Change is a tool for

customers to find sustainable substitutes for big brand name products (Image 15). For example, the Urban Outfitters jeans pictured are said to be made using child labor, unoriginal designs, and were not manufactured in an environmentally responsible way. The website then offers a similar looking alternative that is made using 80% recycled denim, has a known origin, saves water, uses low impact dyes, and is even \$4.99 cheaper! It is common on this site that the alternative options to the big brand names are actually cheaper than their counterparts, which goes against the common thinking from my consumer survey that showed a fear of price premiums for sustainable clothing. The drawbacks to this website are a lack of options and variety; the clothes tend to be quite basic looking in color and style. There were 357 garments for women, 136 for men, and only 8 for children. This website has earned international interest, making headlines in France on the popular *Ecole Info* website. One review states, “Certes, cela reste encore un peu vague comme concept... mais à terme, avec la force des réseaux sociaux et des communautés, l’outil se révélera très performant !” [Translation: admittedly, this is still a vague concept, but eventually, with the influence of social networks and communities, the tool will prove to be very powerful!] (Novel, 2011). This site is useful when looking for a specific garment, but is not beneficial when shopping offline or when one is looking for an alternative to a piece that is not yet represented on the site as it is still a growing site.

Image 14. Nike's Making application for mobile devices showing comparisons between fabrics of environmental impact



Image 15. Fashioning Change's Wear This, Not That online comparisons find sustainable replacements for popular, but unsustainable items

WEAR THIS, NOT THAT

Reuse Jeans



Total Cost:
\$95.00

80% Recycled Denim



Made in China



Saves Water



Low-Impact Eco-Friendly Dyes



Buy Now

Total Cost:
\$99.99

Forced child labor



Steals designs from emerging designers



No commitment to ethical manufacturing



No commitment to eco-friendly manufacturing



Urban Outfitters



To implement QR codes on garment tags or onto garments themselves, it would be necessary to change other aspects of the company to support the technology. Smartphones, while growing in popularity, are not universally owned, so my recommendation for companies is to provide mobile devices available for use in dressing rooms, on the retail floor, and most importantly, with their sales associates. This places the sales associate in direct communication with customers about the company's sustainability and thus would require an entire reworking of the organizational structure of SER departments.

Organizational Recommendations

My survey revealed that consumers believe companies have the most responsibility in encouraging sustainability because they are perceived to have the most influence. However, this does not mean that companies should attempt to implement sustainable practices completely on their own. In fact, as mentioned in the discussion of the company interviews, both companies rely on targeted government policies and programs. In order to overcome the major challenges in becoming sustainable, it is necessary for companies to create strong communication channels with the local governments, non-governmental organizations, each department within the organization, and perhaps most importantly, their consumers.

The results of the consumer survey show that many of the participants did not feel that governments should play a significant role in environmental and social

responsibility in the apparel industry. However, a majority of the sample did agree that while companies should not need to have government involved in order to act responsibility often times it is necessary. There are a number of things governments on a national and international level can do to enforce sustainability in the apparel industry without overstepping the freedoms of the organization. These include safety and labor regulations that ensure laws that are enforced in the United States are also enforced abroad, which would ban the use of child labor, paying under minimum wage, constricted amounts of over time allowed, as well as allowing workers to be a part of unions. A good example of this type of regulation is the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh that was written after the Rana Plaza factory collapse in May of 2013. This Accord was successful partly because it was backed by big fashion brands such as H&M and Zara and was publicized on an international level. Small apparel companies can also make an impact on their national government if not international by lobbying for tax breaks for environmentally friendly business practices. California is one such state that uses tax incentives for businesses to use solar power and reduce carbon emissions. To have a stronger impact on the government body, it would be useful for small apparel companies to team up with other organizations who are more familiar with lobbying and working with, and sometimes against, government bodies.

Non-Governmental Organizations can make advantageous partners because their professionals have a different set of skills and expertise than those trained in the realm of private business. As mentioned above, they tend to know how to work with

governments to lobby for a certain cause and have their voice heard. They also have an expanse of knowledge about environmental or social issues throughout a given supply chain because in general they are founded on the premise of aiding a certain cause. One such example is the Clean Clothes Campaign, a nonprofit based out of England, that has an large, international network of partners such as the Swedish Fair Trade Centre, Labour Behind the Label, War on Want, Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee, and more. These partnerships combine the knowledge of hundreds of different experts to facilitate communication about pressing environmental and social issues present in the apparel industry. Transparency in the supply chain is a major issue for the apparel industry, but when NGOs can do the dirty work of breaking down that transparency it makes it much easier for apparel companies to focus on what they are best at, profits and promotions.

Though it is useful to have external partners that can help carry some of the responsibility of sustainable practices, it is also beneficial to have sustainability as a strong core value system within and throughout an organization. While many companies such as H&M, Nordstrom, Arizia, and The Reformation have sustainability officers or departments these are fairly new positions that are still taking form in definition and responsibility. Arizia for example has just one person in their SER department that takes on all the responsibility of auditing their factories, ensuring they are following the law, and implementing sustainable practices in the corporate offices. This is much different from The Reformation where there is not a sustainability department, but each employee and the owner consider sustainable practices when

they make decisions. It would be useful to have ambassadors of sustainability that travel to the different departments such as marketing, finance, accounting, etc. to educate them in how their specific department can be more sustainable. This would help foster a strong company culture around sustainability while making it relevant to each person's specific position. An internal culture that is supportive and encouraging of sustainability will be beneficial in the long term when the company can communicate their sustainability more transparently with less risk of 'greenwashing' because they can have irrefutable facts and evidence of their sustainable practices. It is also essential for the company culture of sustainability to flow down to even the furthest removed employees, the sales associates. As mentioned previously, they are the employees with direct, daily contact with customers and so are the ones who should be trained extensively on their company's sustainability practices. Consumers want the information in quick, easy, and interesting way and sales associates are already trained to market their products in this manner, but need the training in social and environmental responsibility to really be effective in promoting sustainable fashion.

Conclusion

Sustainable lifestyles are becoming more attractive and even necessary in the face of global climate change that may drastically alter the equilibrium of our ecosystems and wreck havoc on the current economic system. The fashion industry has been particularly exploitative of global industrialization, creating apparel giants such as H&M that can offer thousands of styles at competitively low prices. While this

has made clothing more widely available, its reputation as a short-term commodity product has destroyed an essential emotional connection that restrains overuse of resources, both environmental and social. Sustainable fashion offers a solution that at once allows indulgence in materialism while reducing the impact of consumption so that styles can continue to evolve and perfectly represent the personalities and perspectives of the modern women or man. This ideal can only be met through changes in the current system provoked by demand from consumers, governments, and employees of apparel companies throughout the supply chain. My research revealed one important hindrance to reaching this ideal: consumers do not feel well informed about their clothing and believe companies hold the responsibility to inform them, while companies think their customers feel well-informed and will ask for changes if they want them. Marketing is the communication tool that companies wield to bridge the gap between the organization and the customers. A modern take on sustainable fashion would do well to partner with technological resources such as Quick Response codes that enhance the role of traditional, non-effective clothing tags, so customers have immediately available, relevant, and interesting information about garments, which encourages a purchase and may help alleviate buyer's remorse. As the one-year anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory collapse passed this May, apparel companies and nonprofits joined to create a "fashion revolution" in remembrance of those who have been cruelly sacrificed to the global apparel production machine and in pledge to stop passive consumerism in favor of sustainable solutions. This is a movement that is rapidly growing and every day new ways to integrate sustainability

and fashion are discovered. Though the fashion industry's past may be a dirty façade, there is enough knowledge and motivation now to clean it up so that the future may have in store a sustainable system that is as beautiful as the treasures it creates.

Image 16. Zady's impactful, one page ad in the Wall Street Journal that calls for a fashion revolution on the one year anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory collapse

**Fast Fashion
is Fast Food.**

EMPTY CALORIES THAT MAKE US FEEL FULL

FACTORIES FULL
OF MISTREATED WORKERS
RIVERS FULL
OF TOXIC CHEMICALS
CLOSETS FULL
OF DISPOSABLE WEARS
LANDFILLS FULL
OF YESTERDAY'S GARMENTS

**Process matters.
Quality matters.
Honesty matters.**

YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT IT'S
A CALL TO ACTION.

ZADY.COM

WE SEARCH THE GLOBE FOR EXPERTLY CRAFTED PIECES WITH TRANSPARENT
ORIGINS, WHICH ARE TIMELESS IN STYLE AND MADE FROM THE BEST MATERIALS

Reformation Interview with Hilary Fischer-Groban

1. Tell me a little more about your personal background, how did you get into sustainable business, and particularly in the fashion industry? Was there a certain event or moment that was impactful for you?

I used to work in corporate social responsibility, and for me sustainable businesses are a natural next step after that model. I grew really disenchanted with “CSR” and feel strongly that businesses should be responsible citizens in their own right. I always personally loved fashion, and would spend hours each day learning about the industry and staying on top of trends. I realized I should try to fuse these passions professionally, and when I was in business school that all started to come together.

For the quick bio on me: I used to work in CSR in India for several years. I saw first hand the horrible impact that US manufacturing abroad can have. Then I went to get my MBA at MIT Sloan School of Management, where I was pursuing a Sustainability Certificate. I did projects for Reformation over the summer, and they offered to take me on full time and head the sustainability efforts here. I’m technically on a leave of absence from Sloan, but I just couldn’t pass up the opportunity to work for such an amazing company.

2. What is your, and Reformation’s, inspiration, why is sustainability so important and integral to the company? Is there a business model from other sustainable companies you are inspired by or aspire to?

Our founder, Yael Aflalo, is the real motivation for our sustainability efforts. She had a very successful fashion brand called Ya-Ya before Ref. You can find more about that, and her personal journey here (<http://fashionista.com/2012/08/how-im-making-it-reformations-creative-director-yael-aflalo/>). I can personally vouch that there are very few companies who really live sustainability as much as we do, but we also look to companies like Tesla, Apple, and Google for inspiration on innovative and disruptive thinking.

3. How do you deal with competition from companies who choose less environmentally and socially responsible modes of manufacturing?

We have always been confident that our designs will win over people who are less informed about their impact. At the end of the day, we make clothes that look great, and we always want gorgeous design to be our guiding principle. However, I think our customer base is slowly learning more and more about fashion's destructive habits.

4. How does Reformation balance maximizing profits with sustainable practices? What are the greatest challenges this presents?

At this stage in our growth, it's actually surprising that our biggest challenge is that there aren't that many sources for us to get raw materials. Most mills and fabric companies aren't interested in producing eco-fabric. Most of the sustainable fabrics out there are for upholstery in cars or for furniture. To get that looks we want it's incredibly difficult. We love our deadstock, but as we scale that will become less feasible. Only huge brands get complete control over their suppliers, and we hope to one day have that power.

Our recent growth has allowed us to make sustainable choices like renewable power, green packaging, and efficient appliances, that do sometimes cost more than a traditional alternative. Still, are becoming more standard and less exorbitant these days.

5. Can sustainable fashion become more affordable and widespread in the future, or is it naturally a slow, local process?

This is a really tough industry to change, and I think a complete revolution, like what we've seen in the tech industry with the internet boom, will be a long time coming. The recent media attention to tragic events like the building collapse in Bangladesh definitely help draw focus to these issues, but the industry has still not been able to come up with viable solutions.

6. Is it difficult to reach consumers and make them care about these issues? How do you reach out to and inform the consumer?

We are fortunate that our customers seem to love both sides of our company: both the style and sustainability sides. We try to only present messages lightly and in a palatable format through our eco-tips and social media posts. We are working on building out more cohesive stories around issues that are important to us, but for now we are taking it slow.

7. How can sustainable fashion keep up with the quickly changing trends 'fast fashion' provides that can manifest in new collections 6-8 times a year rather than the usual 2-4? Does design innovation suffer or thrive?

Reformation has tried to find a balance of both. We have the huge advantage of manufacturing in-house, so we can have much greater control over our collections. We have between six weeks to three months from the design stage to the time a garment hits the web or stores. When you are waiting on samples from China, and garments have huge lag times, this is not possible. We try to make innovation thrive in this schedule, since we can see immediately what's doing well, and what we need to quickly rework.

8. Do Reformation and other sustainable companies in California receive tax breaks or any form of local or national government support in their ventures?

We manufacture our clothes in an Enterprise Zone, which gives us a tax advantage. We also have submitted for reimbursements on some of the renovations to our factory, and the City of Los Angeles has many incentive programs for energy efficient build-outs. We are in the process of becoming a certified B Corporation, and while there are no immediate financial benefits right now, we are confident that there will be some in the near future.

9. I saw in a recent Reformation newsletter that the you are building America's first sustainable sewing factory (Exciting!) Tell me more about what it takes to be called a sustainable factory and what processes will be in place? How many workers will be employed and what is the capacity for production?

You'll have to keep reading our newsletter for the full story! I can tell you that everything we do, we ask, "Is this the most sustainable option? What are the alternatives? How does this impact our footprint?" I mean everything from the type of

toilet paper we buy to what materials we used in our walls. It is a lot of extra work but we have loved being a pioneer in this area for the fashion industry.

Some of the processes we have include: maximizing recycled or repurposed content in our materials and supplies, only using renewable energy (while working on a solar panel installation), only using native landscaping and a small amount of recycled grey water for watering, encouraging a minimalist approach to office design (without unnecessary furniture, materials, or infrastructure), and recycling or repurposing everything we can (from our excess fabric scraps to our file folders). We have policies in place to encourage employees to carpool or use public transit, and use reusable containers for their lunches and snacks. A little thing like providing silverware and plates can cut down on so much unnecessary waste.

We currently have over 75 full-time employees in both the office and the factory and are only growing J

I'm so happy to help! Please let me know if there's anything else. It's a small industry so I feel obligated to encourage people who are interested in the space!

Best,

Hilary

Aritzia Interview with Tina Cheung

1. Tell me a little more about your personal background, how did you get into sustainable business, and particularly in the fashion industry?

International MBA at UBC, worked for Telecom, Sprint in SF, in LA worked in CSR to audit factories for Target, Aritzia (helped them work on Olympics uniforms 2010), Kathy Lee Gifford, became disillusioned after Enron and working there for awhile. Went full time at Aritzia in 2011 to start a formal SER program.

2. SER team, how many people, responsibilities of the job?

1 person, visit factories to audit, check compliance with standards and regulations, proper fire extinguishers etc.

3. What can you tell me about the relationships with your garment factories? How do you maintain and control quality of the product when it comes from overseas? (notice made in china labels)

15 factories in Asia, speak to workers, observe, and interview (speaks mandarin) 3rd party audit every other year, pretty steady over the last five years, vast improvement over last ten years.

4. What is your, and Aritzia's, inspiration, why is sustainability so important to the company?

based in Vancouver, active lifestyle and culture

5. How do you deal with competition from companies who choose less environmentally and socially responsible modes of manufacturing?

cost cutting, upfront capital cap prioritized

6. How does Artizia balance maximizing profits with sustainable practices? What are the greatest challenges this presents?

beginning to end authentic, delaying sales (holiday) air over sea

7. Can sustainable fashion become more affordable and widespread in the future, or is it naturally a slow, (local) process?

transportation is the biggest challenge there, biodiesel and others becoming more widespread, still a lot of greenwashing for large scale companies

8. Is it difficult to reach consumers and make them care about these issues? How do you reach out to and inform the consumer?

no, becoming more and more informed, put money where their heart is, reach them by putting design first, recycle or donate all returns, upcycle fabrics, recycle as usual

9. Don't use a lot of marketing about SER issues, why?

Owner is quite modest, just trying to do business in the best way, it is also a new program

10. In trying to produce sustainable fashion, does design innovation suffer or thrive? (in general)

Own design team, design thrives, large companies can influence supply chain a lot more which is the biggest challenge (not enough control over fabrics and design and workers) Production QA changing behavior.

11. Does Aritzia or other sustainable companies in Canada receive tax breaks or any form of local or national government support in their ventures?

there is some government support in tax breaks for using solar panels, DC hydro LED bulbs, not as great as CA or other US states perhaps.

12. Using technology to lessen the environmental impacts, new not listed on website that you do within in stores not just corporate office?

SER hasn't spread to stores yet, want to do clothing take back program (like patagonia) no recycling in all stores, focus on corporate for now, some decisions need to be made still about what departments will own what responsibility-operations decision. need to

get internal on board-purpose to sell and make clothes (not save the environment or end unfair labor)

There are 54 stores and expanding in NJ, Michigan, 3 in Montreal

Don't source from Bangladesh, 75-80% labor from China, Cambodia, Vietnam, get fabric from Turkey, Italy, and Japan, thinking about India, but hard to get quality there.

Tina was so inspiring to speak with! I hope to stay in contact with her and perhaps visit the headquarters one day soon.

Consumer Survey

Q1 My age is...

Q2 My gender is...

Q3 My occupation is...

Q4 My level of education is...

- High School Diploma (or in progress) (1)
- Bachelor's Degree (or in progress) (2)
- Master's Degree (or in progress) (3)
- Doctorate (or in progress) (4)

Q5 If you have attended or are attending college, what was your major?

Q6 My city, state, and country of origin are...

Q7 Please rank the following activities from your most to least preferred

- _____ Hiking (1)
- _____ Reading (2)
- _____ Shopping (3)
- _____ Spending time with family and friends (4)
- _____ Volunteering (5)
- _____ Gardening (6)

Q8 Listed below are statements about shopping behavior for clothes and about clothing fashions. Please check one box for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I buy clothes I like, regardless of current fashion. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I buy new fashion looks only when they are well accepted. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am not as concerned about fashion as I am about modest prices and wearability. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer to buy well-known designer labels rather than take a chance on something new. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My friends regard me as a good source of advice on fashion selection. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident of my own good taste in clothing. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm not afraid to be the first to wear something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

different in fashion looks. (7)					
I like to buy clothes. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel good when I buy something new. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like clothes that make the most of my figure. (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am the first to try new fashions, therefore many people regard me as being a fashion pacesetter. (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In this period of rising prices, spending excessive amounts of money on clothes is ridiculous. (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What you think of yourself is reflected by what you wear. (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I plan my shopping trips carefully. (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You can tell you are just a bit better than	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

someone else if you dress better than they do. (15)					
A man wouldn't look twice at a woman who wasn't well dressed. (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wearing good clothes is part of leading the good life. (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I plan my wardrobe carefully. (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I resent being told what to wear by so-called fashion experts. (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like clothes that emphasize my femininity. (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fashion in clothing is just a way to get more money from the consumer. (21)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often find I don't have all the accessories to go with my outfits. (22)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I shop for coordinated outfits. (23)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

wrong with a woman who doesn't care about dressing nicely. (24)					
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Q9 Listed below are statements about shopping behavior and manufacturing for clothes and about clothing fashions. Please check one box for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Click to write Scale point 6 (6)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
It matters to me where my clothes are made. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The use of child labor in manufacturing would affect my purchasing decision. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manufacturing in accordance with laws and safety standards affects my purchasing decision. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know where (in what country) my clothes are made. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, clothing manufacturers and laborers are treated and paid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

fairly. (5) In general, clothing manufacturers and laborers work under safe conditions. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q10 Most of my clothes are manufactured in:

- China and Southeast Asia (1)
- India and Bangladesh (2)
- Central and South America (3)
- USA and Europe (4)
- Unknown (5)

Q11 Listed below are statements about shopping behavior and fabrics for clothes and about clothing fashions. Please check one box for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
It matters what fabrics my clothes are made out of. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know what fabrics my clothes are made out of. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some fabrics are better than others. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer one fabric over another. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would rather purchase organic fabric/clothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

than non-organic. (5)					
I would rather purchase fair trade fabric/clothing rather than non-fair trade. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the difference between organic and non. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the difference between fair trade and non. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12 The majority of my clothes are made out of...

- Cotton (1)
- Polyester (2)
- Spandex (3)
- Blends (4)
- Unknown (5)

Q13 Listed below are statements about the factors of purchasing decisions for clothes and about clothing fashions. Please check one box for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (6)
Price affects my purchasing decision. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Style and current trends affect my purchasing decision. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fabric quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

and longevity affect my purchasing decision. (3)					
Environmental and social concerns affect my purchasing decision. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Location and Accessibility affect my purchasing decision. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fit affects my purchasing decision. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14 Rank what affects your clothing purchasing decision from most influential to least.

- _____ Price (1)
- _____ Style (2)
- _____ Fabric Quality (3)
- _____ Location of Manufacture (4)
- _____ Location of Final Sale (5)
- _____ Fit (6)

Q15 Listed below are statements about company social and environmental responsibility for clothes and about clothing fashions. Please check one box for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Apparel companies can be environmentally and socially responsible without government or consumer influence. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Apparel companies are environmentally and socially responsible without government or consumer influence. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Companies need consumers feedback and activism to be ethical. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Companies need government incentives to be ethical. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Companies do not need to think about social or environmental issues. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q16 What does the term "sustainable fashion" mean to you?

Q17 What is the most attractive aspect of sustainable fashion to you?

Q18 What is the least attractive aspect of sustainable fashion to you?

Q19 What would make purchasing organic, fair trade, or sustainable clothing a more viable option for you?

Q20 Are consumers, companies, designers, governments, or others responsible for the environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry?



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