THE SOCIAL COST TO WOMEN IN THE FAST FASHION INDUSTRY

ANASTASIA BELLISARI
DECEMBER 2018
The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to practice leadership through action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women’s Leadership’s website at http://iwl.rutgers.edu.
EVERYTHING I AM WEARING HAS COME FROM AN ETHICAL SOURCE*
SHOES

ITALY
Brescia

EMPLOYEES
60

ESTABLISHED
1974

MATERIALS $32.59
LABOR $33.60
DUTIES $6.72
TRANSPORT $2.00
SWEATER

TRADITIONAL RETAIL
~$150-$200

MATERIALS $26.65
HARDWARE $1.60
LABOR $12.00
DUTIES $1.61
TRANSPORT $.60

Image: Everlane
FAST FASHION
THE HISTORY OF FAST FASHION
WHY ETHICAL FASHION MATTERS
WORKER RIGHT VIOLATIONS

• WOMEN WORKERS IN BANGLADESH ONLY MAKE $0.22 AN HOUR

• IN BANGLADESH AND CAMBODIA OVER 2/3 OF THE WORKFORCE ARE WOMEN

• GENDER WAGE GAP – MEN CAN MAKE 2,500 MORE RIELS THAN WOMEN

(SOURCE: BERIK & RODGERS, 2008).
WORKER RIGHT VIOLATIONS

- “LONG WORKING HOURS, FORCED AND EXCESSIVE OVERTIME, ILLEGAL PAY DEDUCTIONS, LACK OF SAFE AND SANITARY WORKING CONDITIONS, AND DENIAL OF THE FREEDOM TO ASSOCIATE AND BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY” (BERIK & RODGERS, 2008).
SHIMA AKHTER

- GARMENT WORKER IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH
- WANTED TO FORM A UNION AT HER FACTORY
- MANAGERS BEAT HER AND OTHER WOMEN WORKERS DUE TO THEIR LIST OF DEMANDS

(Source: The True Cost, 2015)
OTHER ISSUES
The fashion industry is the second largest polluter, after the oil industry.

Water consumption, water pollution, the use of toxic chemicals, and increasing levels of textile waste

(Gibbens, 2018)
IMPACT ON OUR HEALTH

• USE OF PESTICIDES HAS CAUSED CANCER IN FARMERS AND MENTAL DISABILITIES AND DEFORMITIES IN CHILDREN (PERRY, 2018).

• CHEMICALS FROM DYSES OR PESTICIDES CAN RUN OFF INTO WATER SOURCES

• MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES DUE TO FASHION (BAIN, 2015)
THE SURVEY
Where do you purchase/receive your clothing from? (Select all that apply)

26 responses

- Physically going to stores: 25 (96.2%)
- Online shopping: 18 (69.2%)
- Thrifting (this includes online thrift...): 18 (69.2%)
- Second-hand from a family member or fri...: 16 (61.5%)
- Small Boutiques or Independent Clothing...: 1 (3.8%)
- Make your own clothing: 0 (0%)
How much are you willing to spend on an item of clothing? (Select all that apply)

26 responses

- $25 and below: 17 (65.4%)
- $25-50: 17 (65.4%)
- $50-75: 8 (30.8%)
- $75-100: 3 (11.5%)
- $100 and above: 4 (15.4%)
Do you check to see where your clothing was made?

26 responses

- Yes: 76.9%
- Some of the time: 11.5%
- No: 11.5%
Do you care about where/who is making your clothing?

26 responses

- Yes: 46.2%
- Some of the time: 30.8%
- No: 23.1%
Do you seek out ethically made clothing?

26 responses

- Yes: 46.2%
- Some of the time: 34.6%
- No: 19.2%
Can you name any ethical clothing brands?

26 responses
WHO MADE YOUR CLOTHES?

Documentary Viewing + Clothing Swap

11.08.18 | 7-10 PM | COOK STUDENT CENTER ROOM 202 ABC
WHO PAYS THE PRICE FOR OUR CLOTHING?
THE TRUE COST
TRAILER
Resources & Brands to Check Out!

Wear No Evil: How to Change the World with Your Wardrobe by Gretha Eagan - an all-in-one style guide with ethics built in.

Fashion Revolution (https://www.fashionrevolution.org/) a non-profit organization that puts out a yearly fashion transparency index so you can see how ethical your favorite brands really are. They will also give you a pre-written blurb to send to brands and policymakers that you know can be doing more!

Everlane - an ethical clothing brand that has prices that range from $15-$200 for various items of clothing. They are great about showing you photos of factories and also telling you how much it cost to make your clothes.

PACT - the shop for all your basics that are super soft and long-lasting! All clothing is very affordable and is organic and fair trade certified.

Ways To Help

A closet full of clothes but nothing to wear - to be successful, you need to know yourself and your style, this way you can stop buying clothing you know you will never wear.

You gotta be thrifty! Before spending money at ethical clothing brands, check out your local thrift stores, they even have online ones! (treedup.com) Also, you can host clothing swaps with friends or family an easy and free way to get some new style!

Research. Research. Research! Look for brands that are ethical/transparrent and spend your money at these places, rather than big name brands!

Call, E-mail, Write, or Smoke Signal brands that you know could be doing more! As a consumer your voice matters, so make sure it is heard!

Recycle! Use that old t-shirt as a cloth for cleaning! Have an old sweater? Make it into a scarf! There are a lot of other DIY type recycling projects that you can do with old clothing. Youtube is a great/free service to get some ideas!
Hi Anastasia!!! Thank you so much for your documentary showing the other night. It was really great and I really liked how the doc was laid out. Did you have to get copyrights to show it or stuff bc I've been telling people about it and they all wanna watch it but couldn't come to your specific event the other day.

Hope you're doing well and thanks again for showing it! How did you hear of it??

Thank you for hosting such a great event!!!

I answered the survey, and will attend. I have everything I want clothing wise but will try and find something to offer for the clothing swap. Thank you and I'm looking forward to becoming aware of this issue.
SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT IMPACT

• AN EYE OPENING EXPERIENCE FOR PEOPLE
  • THE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT
  • THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH IMPACT
• SHOWED PEOPLE WHAT THEY CAN BE DOING TO HELP
LESSONS LEARNED

• HOW TO PLAN AN EVENT
  • BUDGETING
  • NETWORKING
• HOW TO BECOME AN ACTIVIST
  • CONFIDENCE
WHAT CAN WE DO?

- RESALE CLOTHING STORES
  - The fashion resale market is currently worth $18 billion and is expected to grow to $33 billion by 2021 (Friedman, 2017).

- PURCHASE FROM ETHICAL CLOTHING BRANDS (EVERLANE, PACT, PATAGONIA)

- CLOTHING SWAPS

- CURB YOUR SPENDING

- RECYCLE

IMAGE: SHEFF, 2016


• Life is My Movie Entertainment (2015, April 25). The True Cost – Official Trailer. From, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPMU1VHgmEo


