

WHY I HATE FASHION

Sabina Welstead

THANK YOU

I want to start by thanking everyone who helped and contributed to this book. This project wouldn't exist without the people who shared their stories and supported my ideas from the beginning.

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To my parents, thank you for sponsoring my education and for always supporting my post-secondary endeavors; I am so grateful for all you guys do for me.

To my classmates who helped me survive classes like Design 1, I literally could not have done it without you guys. And to all of my friends who inspire me to push my limits and step out of my comfort zone, thank you for keeping me creative.



PREFACE

Okay – obviously, I don't hate fashion. I love this program. I love my clothes, and I love the people who have inspired me to pursue fashion as an interest and career. Listen: our contemporary world needs clothing. We clothe ourselves as much as we eat, drink, and socialize; the undressing goes in tandem with the dressing. But...I have a problem. Through my four years in the Fashion program, I've learned a lot. Not all of it was good.

The fashion industrial complex has become a gross amalgamation of irreversible damage to global ecosystems, warped standards of beauty stemming from colonial conquest, and an insatiable need to consume, to buy, and to possess. And yet, I can't stop.

This has become my moral dilemma: I love clothing. I think about clothing daily. Yet, my knowledge of these damaging systems does not negate my complicity. The need to buy clothing is ingrained in me like the need to check TikTok in the morning, the need to stay up to date on the newest trends, or the need to take air into my lungs.

I feel like I have no control.

I can recall a pivotal moment in my youth when I was maybe eight or nine, and I was learning about the importance of brand names and what it meant to be “fashionable,” which for an eight-year-old in 2013, was probably chunky Fila sneakers, striped Adidas tights and one of those Justice hoodies with a cartoon animal on the front.

That summer, I noticed one of my newer friends had Adidas sneakers with four stripes instead of three. With my newfound knowledge of popular brands, I knew this was incorrect! I quietly pointed out to someone beside me who loudly laughed, “Oh my God, he has fake Adidas, those aren’t even expensive shoes to begin with!”

I could feel his embarrassment. Immediately, my perception of brands changed irreparably. It was terrible to think that someone could be made fun of for something as stupid and insignificant as an additional stripe on a shoe. I guess my taste for off-brand clothes was hidden behind the guise of my adolescent charm.

Sometimes, I wonder if life would be easier if we didn’t have to wear clothes at all. I think it would be different. I hope it would be good. I am exhausted by the constant scrutiny and attention paid towards what is trendy, what is worth virality, and what is even “good.”



**I WISH
WE WERE
ALL NAKED**



FINGERPRINTS OF FASHION

"You can tell a lot about a person just by looking at their shoes."

I remember a friend once telling me that, one afternoon. Although I didn't think much about his statement at the time, and the group moved on to other topics of conversation, that quote has remained ingrained in my mind for over five years. I don't remember the context or what prompted such an insightful comment from my usually uninformed friend, but the more I dwell on that point, the more it reveals a sincere truth. Our footwear functions as a fingerprint for our sense of fashion.

Shoes are unique in our wardrobe; much like a winter coat or a daily bag, they are high-utility items that are rarely replaced more than once a season. They are chosen with a level of meticulous intent that other garments lack. Because a shoe is worn almost daily, it becomes a physical manifestation of the wearer's priorities: a prioritization of comfort, aesthetic alignment, and necessity. The next time you are commuting on the TTC or sitting in a waiting room, look at the shoes around you and see what you can decipher about the wearer.

However, this "fingerprint" is a double-edged sword, representing both the communal and the exclusionary nature of the industry. On one hand, shoes act as a bridge – a signal of shared interests, subcultural belonging, and personal compatibility. On the other hand, they serve as an immediate signifier of status, wealth, and literacy of fashion trends. While I have always loved shoes, especially sneakers, I am increasingly unsettled by how easily a shoe can be used to categorize and exclude. Shoes don't just identify us but rather places us within a hierarchy of fashion.





HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT FASHION?

My sartorial sensibilities were shaped by the communities that raised me, yet I've found outside that, the fashion journals and critiques I have studied, I rarely discuss how fashion is viewed with my friends and family outside of superficial conversations. I wanted to transcend my own insular perspective to conduct a qualitative study on how my peers actually feel about their clothes.

Through these interviews, I've explored the friction between the most cherished and the most reviled items in a wardrobe. By analyzing what we preserve and what we resent, I aim to explore the emotional landscape of the modern consumer. Why do we maintain a domestic archive of garments we claim to hate? From Baby Boomers to Gen Alpha, these interviews serve as a cross-generational record of how we navigate a world that is increasingly defined by how we choose to clothe our bodies.

STEPHEN, 56

FAVOURITE ITEM: Adidas sneakers

HATED ITEM: Adidas sneakers



My dad is really cool. Over the years, I've seen photos and heard stories about his punk teenage years, and I have gladly inherited his spiked bracelets and chains once that phase passed from him to me. One thing I admire about my dad is his appreciation for quality; he values craftsmanship, which is why I've been able to inherit so much of his awesome stuff. Shout out, Dad.

Why are these your favourite and least favourite items?

"I could not believe the difference in quality between the Adidas bought directly from the brand and the pairs I've ordered off Amazon. It's night and day. The pair from the Adidas store is superior in comfort, style, and material quality-by far my favourite. It's not that the Amazon ones are terrible, but they have a cheaper feel and just don't hold up the same way."

Why are you drawn to the Adidas brand specifically?

"Growing up in the '70s and '80s, Adidas was a symbol-it was more than just a running shoe. I idolized that feeling, but I never had the money for them as a teenager. To me, they are representative of my youth. Back then, there wasn't a huge variety of brand-name shoes; Adidas was the brand. I remember seeing them in RUN DMC music videos and on the kids at school. My parents could afford the Adidas backpack that everyone had, but that was as far as it went."

How was your experience with fashion growing up?

"Coming from England and with an accent, I felt like an outcast, but punk genres and style made me identifiable to my friend group. It also felt like a rebellion against the fashion norms of the time. My style was really a 'group style' shared with my friends, which is somewhat embarrassing to look back on how we dressed now. Now, I dress more utilitarian. I still have a sense of fashion, but I choose things for comfort and function over everything else."

SUSAN, 47

FAVOURITE ITEM: Brown hiking boots

HATED ITEM: Bathing suits

My step-mum is one of the most impressive people I know. She's built her career from the ground up to become an AVP of Cybersecurity for an investment firm, all while refusing to spend more than \$50 on a single piece of clothing. I say that with admiration, especially since I'm usually spending money I don't have on clothes I don't need. I admire how little power brands have over her; she's immune to the influence that usually consumes me. Even though we don't always see eye-to-eye on the "need" for brand-name, she's never once looked out of place, and she's always supported my fashion choices.

Why are these your favourite and least favourite items?

"My favourite element of my wardrobe are these little brown boots. Various iterations of this boot have been a staple of my style since I was in high school. They're a bit rugged, vintage, and easy to pair with almost anything. I feel like I can go anywhere and still sport my cherished footwear. There's a comfort in knowing that no matter how much my life or job changes, these boots stay the same."

And the least favourite?

"Bathing suits. Bikinis. Underwear you're supposed to wear in front of everyone! Even saying the word makes my nose crinkle. I can't say I have ever felt powerful or terribly comfortable in a bathing suit, despite being an active person. I love how everyone else looks in them, but for me, they represent a level of exposure I just don't want. They are the only items in my closet that I'm not excited to put on; they're my least favourite by a mile."



WOLFGANG, 21

FAVOURITE ITEM: Vintage keys from Portugal
HATED ITEM: Mesh cardigan & tarnished jewellery



Why is this your favourite item?

"I brought back these keys from a trip to Portugal – it was my first time travelling outside of Canada, and I was captivated by the history and culture there. To me, keys represent accessibility; they start conversations about what is public and what is kept hidden. Over the last year, I've been trying to curate a more visually interesting closet, moving away from whatever is 'trendy' and focusing on silhouettes that actually suit me. I find myself drawn to new pieces that have a history, like these keys, because they feel like they have a story to tell."

And why are these your least favourite?

"I don't mind a rustic, weathered look for accessories. I love that about the keys, but my enjoyment stops at tarnished jewelry. Fake jewelry feels like it's trying to be something it's not. As for the mesh cardigan, I bought that at Value Village when I was eighteen. At the time, I was trying to do a total 180 from the 'traditional' masculine way I used to dress—the big shirts and baggy pants. I wanted to experiment and push boundaries, but I've since found ways to express myself that feel much more 'me.' Looking at that cardigan now just reminds me of a phase I've outgrown."

How easy or difficult was it to pick these items?

"It was actually really hard to pick a favourite. I've acquired a lot of pieces that I think are interesting, so there's a constant rotation of what I'm loving at any given time. I definitely hold onto things I don't like out of a desperate hope that I might like them again at some point. It's hard to let go of the potential of a garment."



What is your current perspective on fashion?

"The global distribution of clothing is innately unethical. It's something you can either choose to think about or ignore whenever you buy something, which is why I try to avoid shopping firsthand. To me, clothing speaks to geopolitics and culture in a way that transcends language. You can identify people and their whole way of being just by how they dress. It's a visual map of what people actually assign importance to."

EL, 20

FAVOURITE ITEM: Necklaces

HATED ITEM: Capris

Why are these your favourite items?

"Most of my necklaces were gifts, though some are from local spots in Kensington like One Heart. I've always found ways to repurpose them – sometimes I'll turn a necklace into a wallet chain when it breaks or to restyle it. The Nigeria pendant is the piece I've had the longest; it's been through a lot with me and has lived on three different chains over the years. I wear it every single day. For me, these aren't just accessories – they're a collection of memories I carry around."

And why are these your least favorite?

"My dislike for capris started when I was young. They're actually quite popular in Nigeria, but I just remember feeling physically uncomfortable whenever I had them on. The length is awkward and completely impractical. To me, they represent a kind of 'trend-hopping' – this once-popular style has only seen a resurgence because of things like the Y2K trend. I just can't get behind them."

What is your current perspective on fashion?

"The concept of fashion is amazing, but the problem is the culture. There is often this underlying sense of competition rather than community. Especially in Toronto, the fashion scene can feel somewhat introverted and closed off at times. I feel like it's more about the 'look' than the connection."





BK,19

FAVOURITE ITEM: FUBU jeans

HATED ITEM: Pleather Jacket

Why are these your favourite item?

"I never really cared for clothes. Especially my younger years. I was more concerned with jewelry or necklaces, that used to be my biggest hyper fixation in fashion. Nothing prompted it – but I've had a shift recently. I realized the key to expressing myself better, or having a good 'fit, is in the jeans. At least to me, though.

So I decided to put more money and effort into finding jeans. I remember seeing these FUBU Platinum jeans on an ad last year and thinking, 'Okay yeah, I can't get this.' At the time I was unemployed...but I saw them again recently on Facebook Marketplace and I knew I had to cop them."

And why is this your least favourite?

"The jacket was actually my favourite until it started tearing apart. I usually go thrifting, so I got this jacket for maybe two or three dollars. It's still a cool jacket, but I hate when fake leather starts to tear apart because it becomes so obvious that it isn't real leather – Why would they do me like that? I would have paid at least thirty dollars if it was genuine leather. I know I'll have to let it go eventually, but it still does its job sometimes."



ROHAN, 20

FAVOURITE ITEM: Solomon hiking shoes

HATED ITEM: Crutches

My conversation with Rohan changed the direction of this interview, and we realized that our least favourite fashion items aren't always a choice; sometimes, they are a requirement.

Originally, we talked about a pair of fake Balenciaga sneakers he wore in high school. The kind of chunky, nostalgic shoe that feels outdated once the trend dies out. We were going to focus on how his style had evolved into something more practical. But as we were setting up the photos, we started talking about his crutches. We realized they weren't just medical equipment; they were a part of his daily dressing process. It's a different kind of resentment, not for a bad trend, but rather for a physical burden.

Why are these your favourite items?

"I've had these Salomons since I was sixteen. They were the first pair of shoes I actually wanted for a long time – my first real, durable hiking shoes. Honestly, I haven't taken them off since. They've stood the test of every weather condition, from summer to winter, and even though I've bought newer versions since then, I always find myself reaching for the originals. Over the years, they've moulded perfectly to my feet. I've worn them almost everywhere; they're just part of me now."

And why are these your least favourite?

"As a basketball player, I've had to deal with my fair share of injuries, so crutches have become my least favourite thing in the world. They've ended up becoming a part of my daily 'outfit,' but always not without reluctance. They're heavy, and after a while, they get incredibly uncomfortable. I've become more agile with them over time because I've had to, but they're still bulky and make what should be easy into a major struggle. They represent a version of myself I'd rather not be."



BRENNA, 26

FAVOURITE ITEM: Rings

HATED ITEM: Ugly Sweatpants

Why are these your favourites?

"My rings are deeply sentimental to me; they each carry a piece of family history. I have my dad's alumni ring from university, and another that my grandma gave me back when I was in the sixth grade. Then there's this replica that was originally sent to my great-grandmother by a close friend. I wear them almost every day, and they constantly remind me of happy memories.

And why are these your least favourite?

"These pants are just honestly not that comfortable, and they just fit me in all the wrong places. They are so unflattering, and I have never felt good in them. They're basically the opposite of what I want to be wearing. I usually like a cute sweatsuit, but something about these pants is just off...I keep them as a backup for laundry day or something, but I hate them."



ROLAND, 6

FAVOURITE ITEM: MINECRAFT SWEATER
HATED ITEM: GRINCH PYJAMAS
FAVOURITE COLOUR: ALL OF THEM



In this study, I wanted to gather different perspectives on fashion across different stages of life. Roland is my younger cousin, and we share interests in cars, video games like Minecraft and Sonic, and cats. Though Roland was the only participant I had to convince with ice cream and Hot Wheels, we had a good conversation. It was refreshing to hear from someone who has a rather uncomplicated view of fashion.

Roland noted he doesn't mind when his favourite sweater gets dirty, as long as the Minecraft print remains intact. He has lots of Minecraft clothing, but he said that this sweater was his absolute favourite. When I was taking photos of his clothing items, he told me that he liked the pair of jeans and his favourite top together. He wasn't exactly sure why he liked these garments together, but I was delighted to hear he didn't just have a favourite garment but a favourite outfit combo as well.

Aside from a few items with cartoon characters he doesn't like, he said he was happy with his clothing. Roland stated that if there are clothes he doesn't like, it's because they are scary or become too small for him. It makes him sad when he grows out of his favourite clothes. Me too, bro.



What's your favourite piece of clothing?

"My gray Minecraft sweater. It has a small picture on the front and a big picture on the back. Most of my shirts don't have that, so it's a special shirt. I wear it to school and outside."

Why don't you like the Grinch Pyjams? Do you have any clothing that's itchy or uncomfortable?

"I don't like the Grinch...he's scary. I have other Christmas pyjamas, but I don't like these ones."

No. I like most of my clothes. Some clothes make me too hot or too cold, but nothing itchy."

What about your socks? How do you feel about them?

"I love them. I think I love all of them. There might be one or two better pairs, but I love my socks, they have colours and patterns I like."

Before we finish eating our ice cream, I see you have your nails painted. Can you tell me about that?

"I just like it. My daddy helps me. This time I'm just doing half of them [only painting his right hand]. I don't want to paint them myself, though."

Why don't you like doing them yourself?

"It gets messy when I do it."

FREDA, 80 & CHARLIE, 84

FAVOURITE ITEMS: KEEPSAKE JEWELLERY

HATED ITEM: MODERN FASHION

To understand the current state of the fashion industry, it's important to look at generations that have come before us and their relationships with fashion. My grandparents, Freda and Charlie, carry with them the traditional, religious values of mid-century Malta, where they were born and raised. Malta is home to the Collegiate Parish Church of St. Paul's Shipwreck, and they have celebrations and feasts to commemorate St. Paul. Their views serve as a living archive of past ideologies, where dressing was an act of formality and respect, and garments were valued as keepsakes that almost always hold a sentimental value. Comparing their experiences to our modern habits highlights the drastic shift in how we consume fashion and demonstrates how much the industry has changed in fifty years.



How have you seen fashion change since you were young in Malta?

Charlie: "Everything used to be much more formal. Growing up, on Saturdays and Sundays in the summer, you wore a white shirt and a tie. That was the rule. When it got cold, you always wore a blazer or a suit. Men used to look a certain way. Now, everything is more casual."

I remember the 'Teddy Boys' with their tight pants – we used to have to struggle just to get the fabric over our feet! Then it moved to bell-bottoms, and then there was a fashion where everyone wore socks up to the knees. It's all very different now; everything is looser."

Freda: "The skirts used to be longer, and the sleeves were more modest. Now, everything is low-cut and getting smaller. I miss some of the old styles, but some things today – like the jeans that are torn or too short. I don't understand those as much!"

What do you think about the luxury "designer" brands we see today?

Freda: "We knew about names like Louis Vuitton and Gucci back then, but we never had them. Now, it seems like everyone is chasing fashion. I find it crazy to buy a handbag for hundreds or thousands of dollars. Whether it costs fifty dollars or a thousand, it's still just a handbag."



Freda

What is your favourite garment or accessory?

"My jewelry. You know, the expensive stuff—the keepsakes. If the house were burning, I'd grab my jewelry and my photo albums. If I could only wear one piece, it would be my gold earrings. I got those in Malta when I was young; it was one of the first pieces of jewellery I received from my parents. Gold jewellery was something that everyone had there, for every occasion—Christmas or a feast—you would get a piece of jewellery in a box. It was always gold and silver."

What was the fashion like back home in Malta?

"We dressed up for any social occasion. We would have a special dress for the fireworks the night before, and then another dress for the day of the procession. Everyone would buy jewelry for those occasions; it's just what you did. We didn't go to university back then—we just went to work. I remember taking my very first paycheck in Malta and using it to buy jewelry. I got those blue earrings and the matching ring, then necklaces with the Maltese crosses. It was the first thing I wanted to own for myself."

You have a beautiful silver hairbrush and mirror set. What is the story behind those?

"I got those as engagement presents. At the time, they cost about four pounds, which was a lot of money back then! They are real silver. Today, I think a set like that would cost a fortune. It's a keepsake from when we were first starting our lives together."



Charlie

Do you have a favourite piece of jewelry or clothing?

"I'm not really into jewelry. When I worked in factories, we weren't allowed to wear anything fancy, so I got used to not thinking about fashion. But I do remember buying Nanna's rings. I was working and making a good wage for those days."

"Before we even got engaged, I bought her [Freda] a ring with a big pink stone—I just bought it for her because I wanted her to have it. Now, I mostly care about being comfortable. In the winter, I like my dress pants and a button-up, but in the summer, you'll find me in shorts and sandals."

What is the history behind your rings?

"My oldest ring is from around 1935. It belonged to my father. When he and my mother passed away, my sister Doris saved it specifically for me because the tradition is that it is given to the oldest son in the family. It was his wedding ring. It's more than just a piece of jewelry to me; it carries the history of my parents' marriage and our family's beginnings in Malta. Another ring I have is engraved with the birthstones of all my children. It's the one thing I wanted to make sure stayed with me."



DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

JUSTIN - NORTHERN VINTAGE VIBEZ

I have been visiting the town of Cobourg since I was little, and I've observed that although it's a relatively small town, it has a creative and fashionable sense of style. The town has some awesome vintage and second-hand stores that I encourage you to visit if you are ever in the area. The best vintage store that has opened in Cobourg, in my opinion, is Northern Vintage Vibez. They have some of the best finds I've seen, and at incredibly reasonable prices. If this store were in Toronto, it would be cleared out in seconds—I'm sure of it. I had the pleasure of speaking to the store's owner and curator, Justin, who gave me some insight into why he loves fashion and what motivated him to start this store, stemming from his love of the Raptors and vintage basketball merchandise.

"I have always had a passion for vintage and collecting. It started as a hobby and overtime, turned into a business. I started out collecting Toronto Raptors '90s merchandise and expanded to other avenues of vintage and streetwear. The items began stacking up, and we went to a more online approach, selling through multiple platforms and online auctions. From there, we opened our first storefront roughly two years ago and have never looked back. We continue to buy, sell and trade higher-end premium, curated vintage, and hopefully can continue for many years to come."





LINLEY - GIBSONS DRY CLEANERS

I visited the Gibson's dry cleaners main facility in Etobicoke, and had the pleasure of interviewing Linley McConnell, the fourth generation of Gibson dry cleaners since the 1950's. I was interested in learning how the dry cleaning business has changed with the rise of fast fashion, and how she feels about fashion with a unique view of clothes that most others do not experience. Dry cleaning represents the love and care people have for their clothing, which is becoming exceedingly uncommon in today's fashion consumption habits.

How did you get into the dry cleaning business?

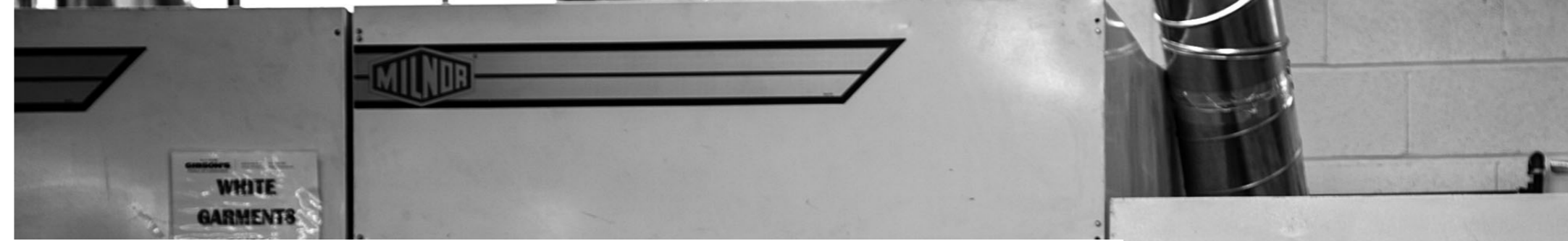
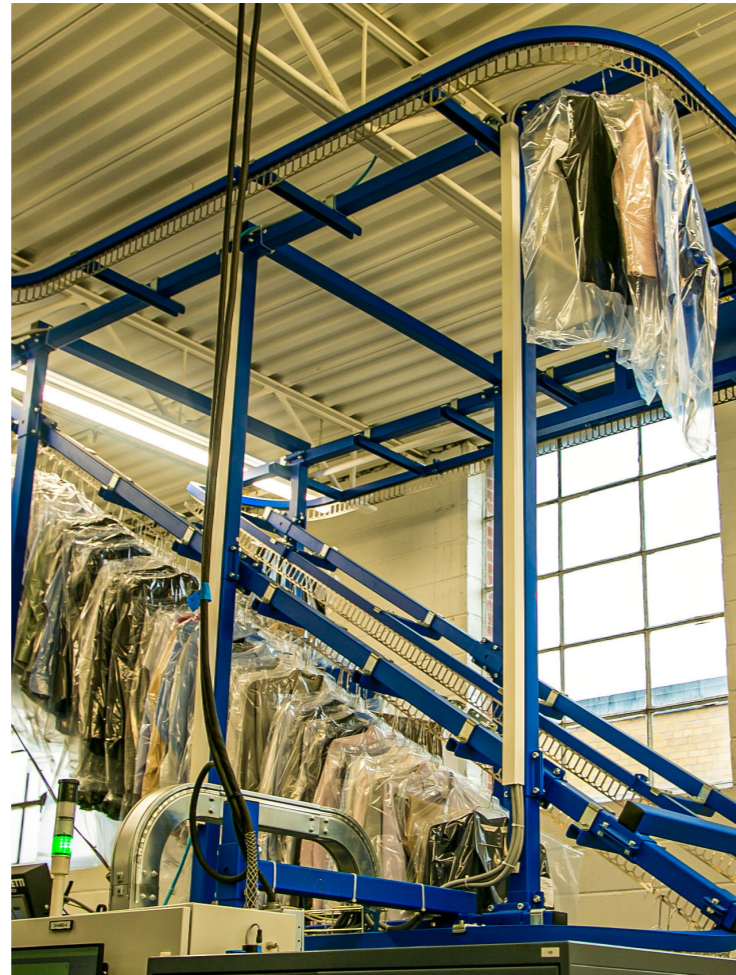
"It's in my blood. My grandfather bought the business from Mr. Gibson back in the '50s, and my dad joined after marrying my mom. I officially joined about six years ago. It's a niche world; when I was a kid, we didn't go on typical vacations—we went to dry cleaning conventions. Growing up around it, you realize how many of these businesses are still rooted in family legacy."

How has the industry changed since this business started?

"The biggest shift is volume. People aren't dry cleaning as much because of 'athleisure' and the move toward casual wear. Our parents' generation cleaned everything, but we've had to evolve with our customers. Today, we're a preferred cleaner for high-end brands like Canada Goose, and we handle a lot of couture."

Fast fashion has created a strange gap, too. We'll see a Zara dress come in where the cleaning bill is almost half the price of the dress itself. It makes me hope the next generation starts to invest more in quality pieces they actually want to maintain. We see a lot of vintage and resale now, which is encouraging, but we never see 'disposable' brands like Shein or Temu. Those aren't meant to be kept."





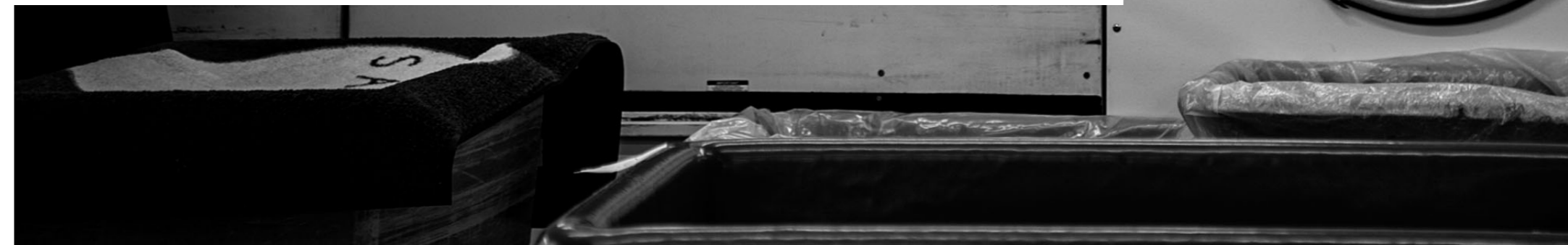
Does seeing the physical quality of these garments change how you shop for yourself?

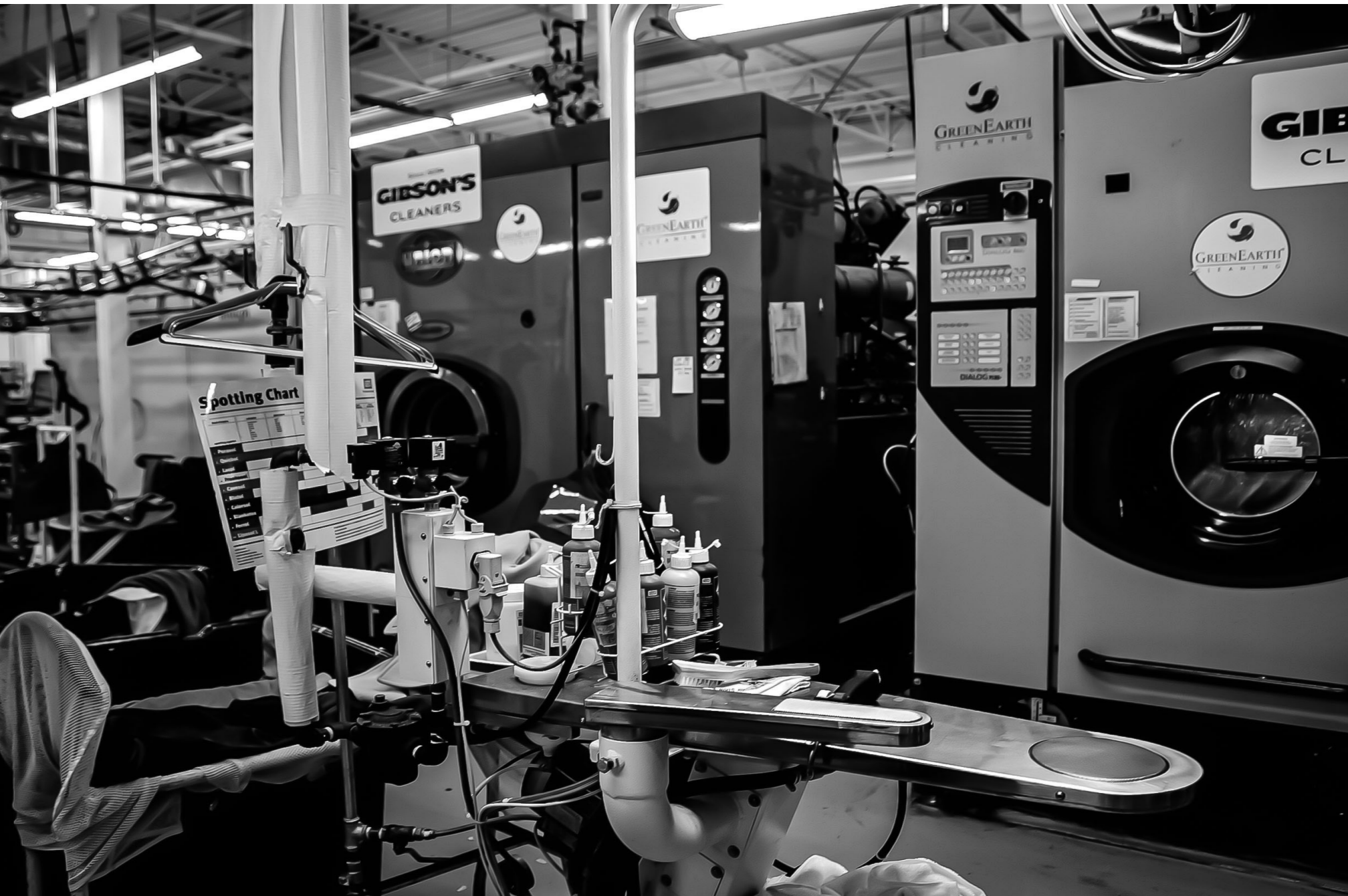
"I'm definitely disillusioned by luxury now. We see \$800 t-shirts, and I can see the quality—or lack of—right in front of me. For a lot of these brands, the garment is just a statement, not a quality piece. It's made me much more conscious of whether something is actually worth the money. I'm a lot more aware of the 'illusion' of the price tag."


Do you still enjoy fashion, or has seeing the 'afterlife' of clothes changed that?

"I still love it, but my perspective has shifted. I used to want to be a stylist, but now I mostly just appreciate people with a truly unique, original style. The industry moves so fast now—it's gone from two seasons a year to eight. Trends used to move from the top down, like Chanel dictating the color of the year. Now, it's 'trend-up,' where influencers dictate the look and the brands have to chase them."

There are so many new luxury designers now that we sometimes have to research the brand just to know how to insure the garment. You'll see a \$4,000 jacket from a name you've never heard of. It's a completely different world than the one my grandfather started in."







IT'S REALLY NOT THAT SERIOUS

A significant factor in my growing resentment toward this industry is the suffocating pressure to take it so seriously. During my early years of sartorial experimentation, I genuinely believed I looked like the fifth member of My Chemical Romance. Looking back at those “emo” ensembles – the skinny jeans, the band tees, and the not-so-subtle cheap, smudged eyeliner – makes me laugh. Obviously, the aesthetic execution didn’t quite match the vision, but I deeply miss my fearlessness in that era.

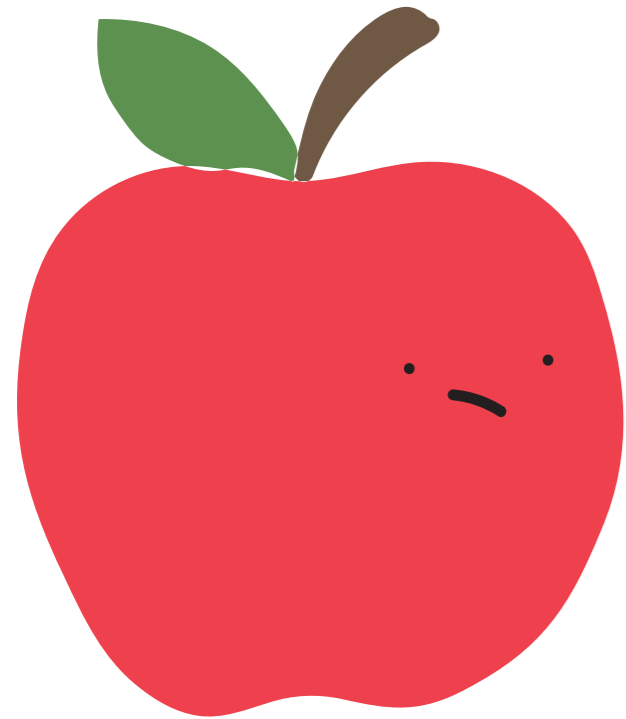
At that point in my fashion trajectory, I wasn’t governed by the exhaustion of trends or the anxiety of the “correct” look. I didn’t feel self-conscious when I wore something experimental; I was an accurate representation of myself. I fear I have strayed from that level of aesthetic authenticity, replacing it with a curated performance that reflects popular trends rather than my own interests. I find myself wishing I didn’t treat fashion with such gravity – that I could reclaim that unpolished but unwaiveringly creative version of myself.

This final section is a way to confront the dualities of love and hate I experience with fashion, expressed through entirely “unserious” forms of media. I love fashion and I love having fun, this is my book, and I can do what I want! I think we all need to start having fun with fashion again.

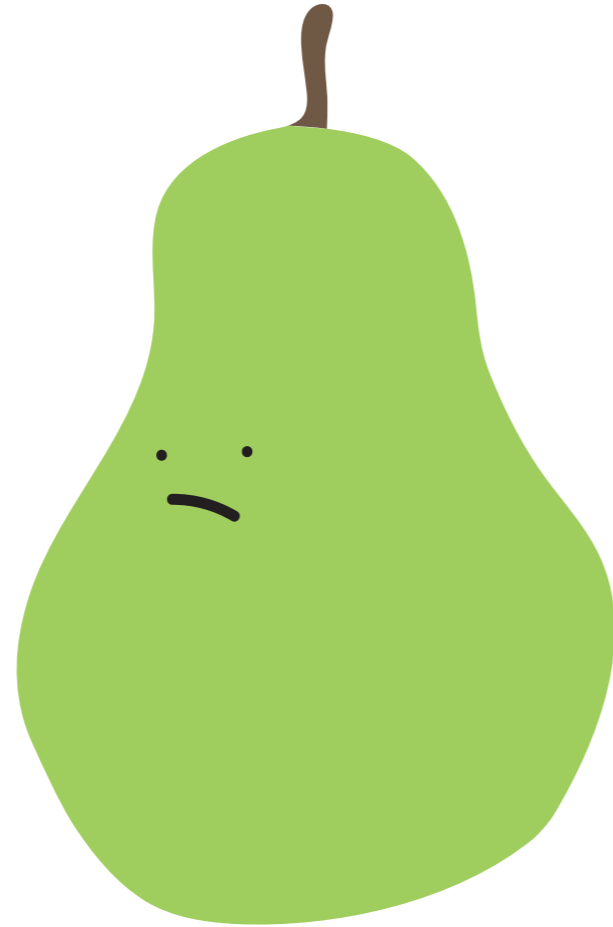
POV: YOU ARE LOOKING FOR THAT ONE BLACK TOP



PAIR THE SOCKS

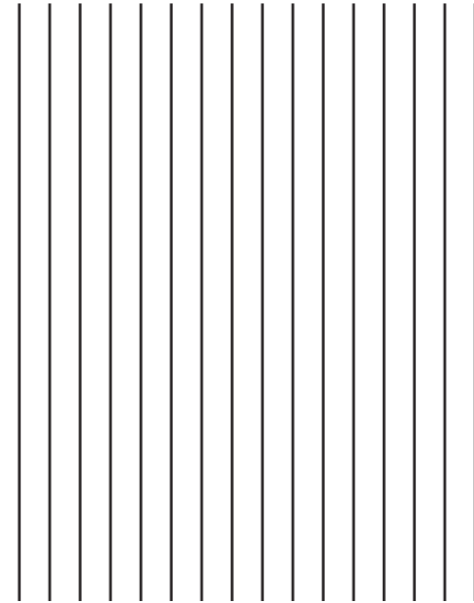


"I WISH I LOOKED LIKE HER..."

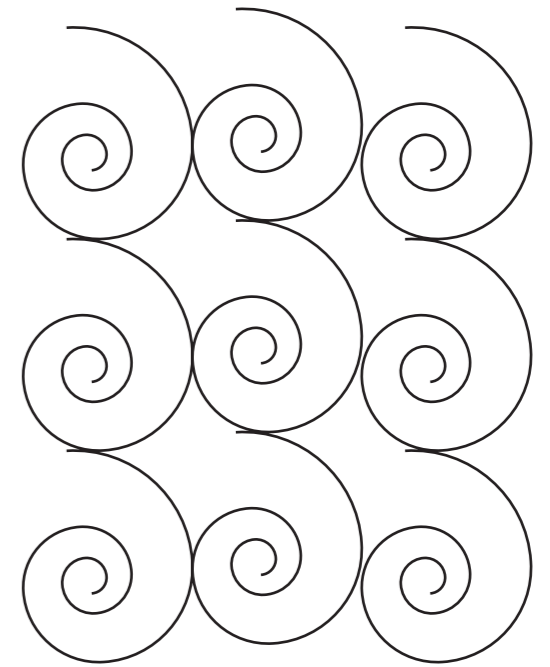


"I WISH I LOOKED LIKE HER..."

"I WISH MY HAIR WAS CURLY"



"I WISH MY HAIR WAS STRAIGHT"



**THERE ARE THREE WINNERS DEPARTMENTS STORES
FROM YONGE AND BLOOR TO YOUNGE AND DUNDAS.**

**EACH WINNERS MUST HAVE AT LEAST 100 RACKS OF
CLOTHES, WITH AT LEAST 50 GARMETS PER RACK.**

THAT IS AT LEAST FIVE THOUSAND GARMENTS PER STORE.

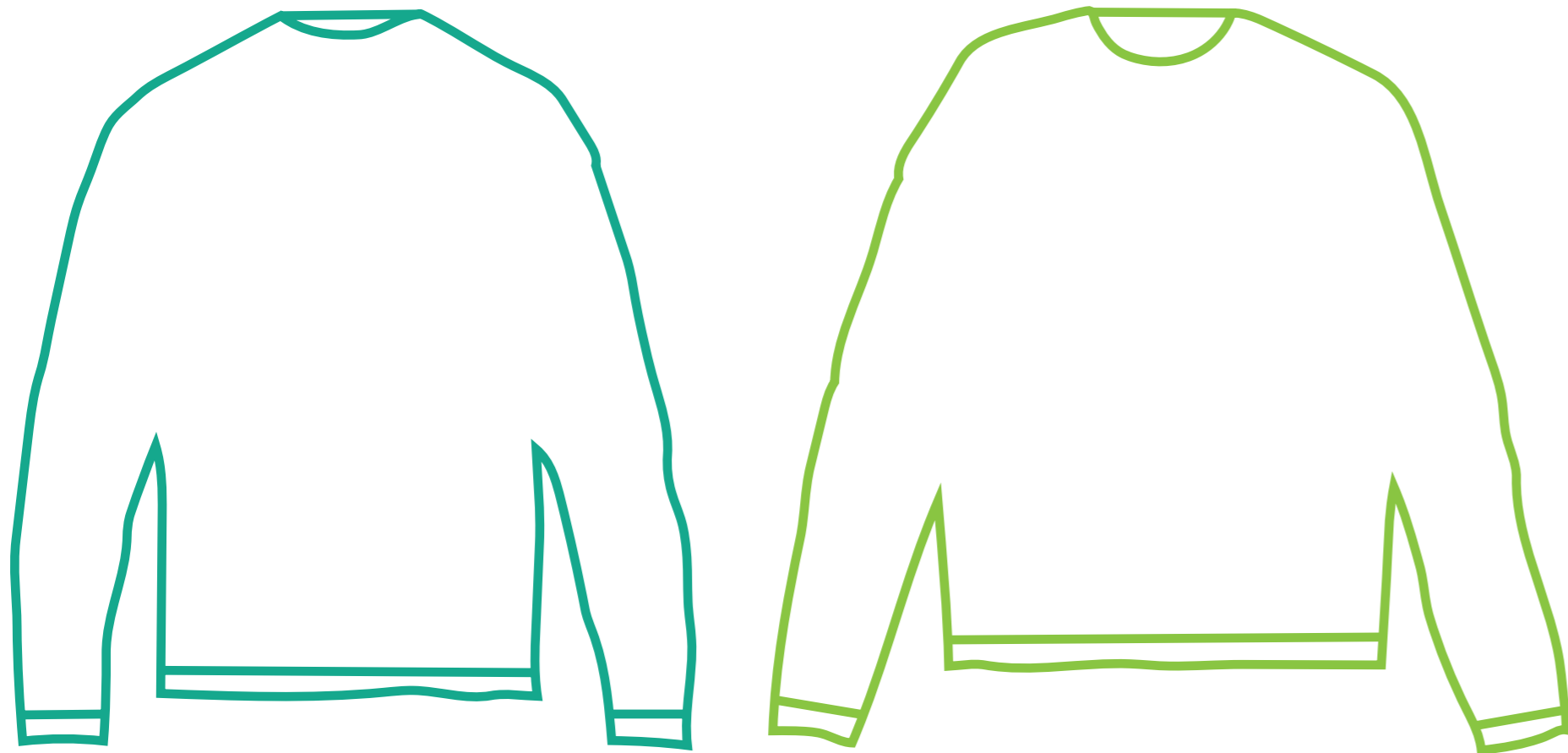
**MEANING-DURING MY WALK TO SCHOOL, I PASS AT LEAST
FIFTEEN THOUSAND GARMENTS IN WINNERS STORES ALONE.**

AND HALF OF IT IS UGLY ASF...

I used to love going downtown in High School. The Eaton Centre and all of its stores used to call my friends and me, inviting us to spend hours walking around and spending our hard-earned money from whatever side job we had going on.

I miss when the Eaton Centre felt like that. Now, knowing what I have learned about fashion systems, I cannot walk through a mall without at some point wondering, *what's going to happen to all this shit?* All of it will get thrown out at some point. But there is pressure and a yearning for something no one else has ever had, that everyone is already wearing.

I get a headache anytime I'm in Eatons for longer than twenty minutes. I hate it there.



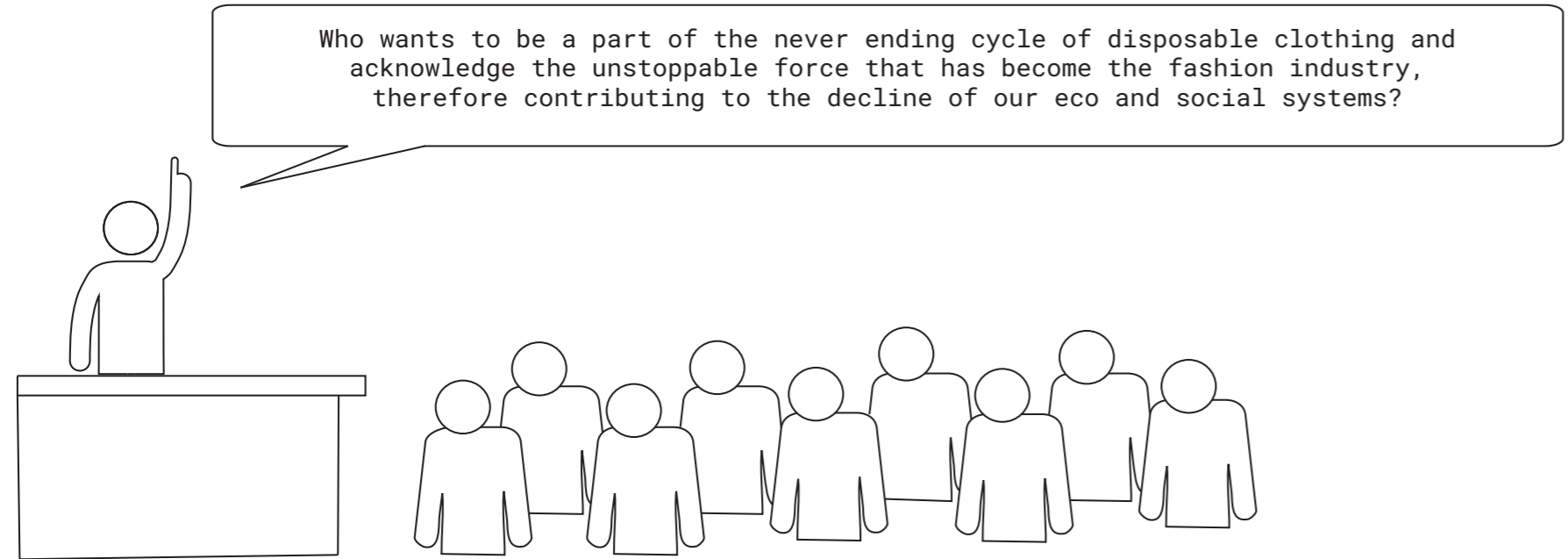
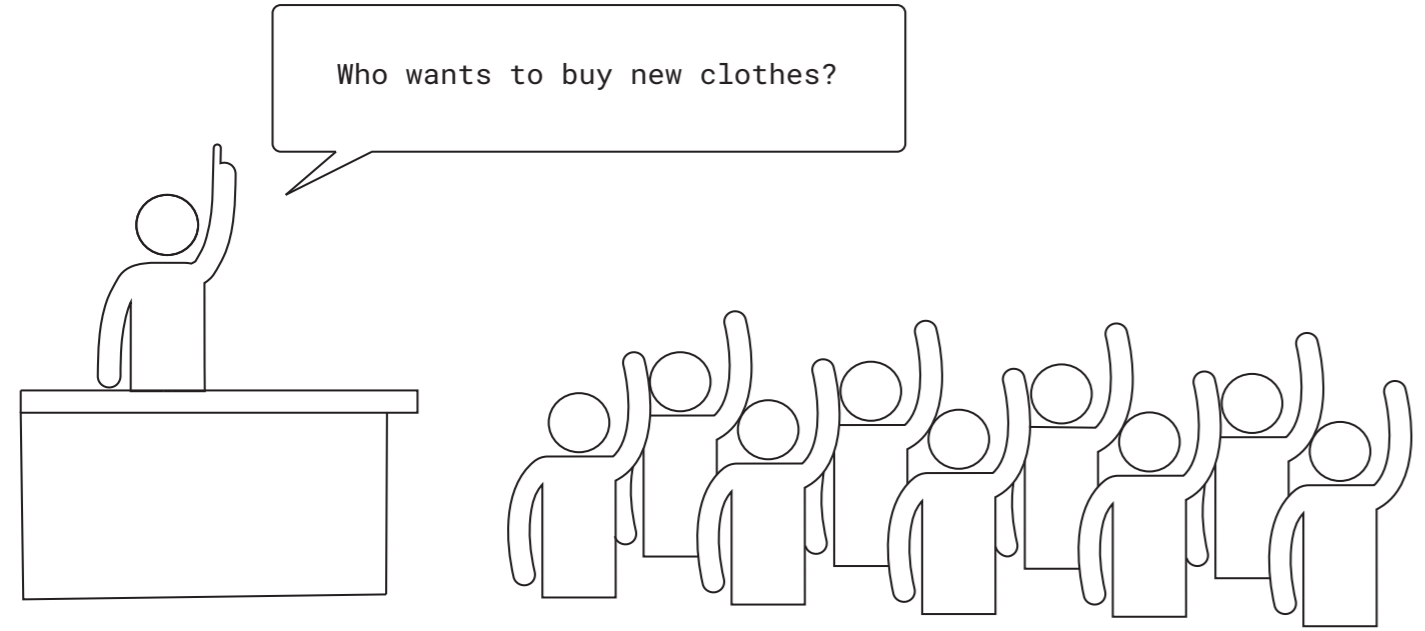
**ONE OF THESE IS A SIX-HUNDRED DOLLAR GUCCI
SWEATER AND THE OTHER IS A TWENTY-TWO DOLLAR
SWEATER FROM WALMART.**

CAN YOU TELL WHICH IS WHICH?

Probably not...and they both do the same thing, keep you warm.

We are loosing our grasp on what is important in regards to fashion and clothing the body.

And they are, in fact, both from Walmart.



FENDI - MORE LIKE



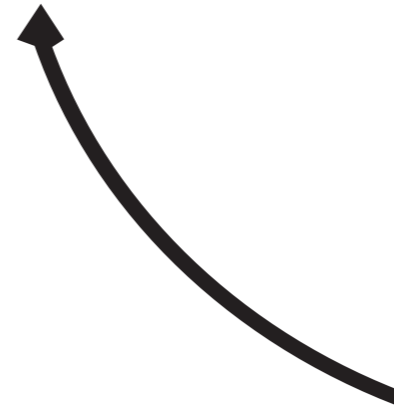
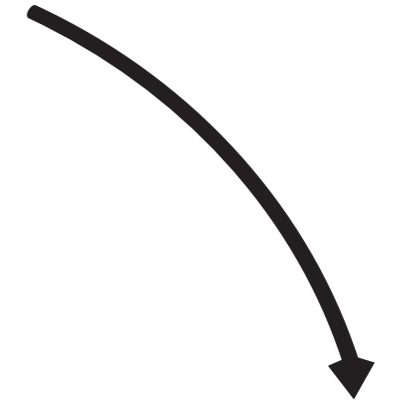
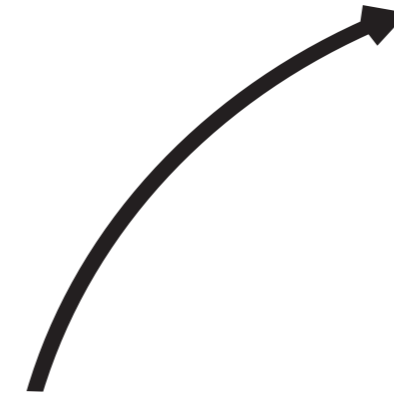
FUCK, FASHION. SERIOUSLY, WHY IS THIS SHIT SO EXPENSIVE?

I'M SAD AND BROKE AGAIN :(

I WANT NEW CLOTHES

I BUY NEW CLOTHES :D

HEYYY FRESH FIT I LOVE MY LIFE!



AFTERWORD

My relationship with fashion remains a fraught duality between a deep-seated adoration for self-expression and a resentment toward the systems that govern it. These systems have been grotesquely distended, mutating a once-valued industry of craftsmanship into a relentless engine for the production of ecological garbage. The goal of this collection was never to instill a sense of shame or nihilism in the reader. I remain, after all, a participant and an admirer of these systems everyday, I love to buy new clothes. However, our collective perception of what this industry should be, has been thoroughly eroded by hyper-consumerism and the frantic, microscopic lifecycle of digital trends.

Through these interviews that span from small-town vintage stores to the vast cultural landscape of Toronto, I sought to document the everyday tension within these structures. This research brought greater insight than I anticipated, challenging my own biases and revealing the vast, conceptions of style. Whether through the lens of generational keepsakes or the functional necessity of medical equipment, it is clear that everyone, regardless of class or culture, navigates a personal sartorial logic. These studies revealed a heartbreaking shift: we have moved away from the "personal treasure" and toward a culture of overconsumption, where garments are kept not for their quality or memories they hold, but for their potential resale value or the desperate hope of a trend's resurrection.

As we transition into adulthood, the joyful experimentation of our youth is often replaced by a rigid, self-conscious performance of "taste." In major fashion districts like Toronto, we navigate a precarious boundary between assimilation and distinction, where looking "weird" is a cardinal sin and "fitting in" is a survival tactic. We have allowed the industry to strip away the fun, replacing it with the anxiety of "fashion crimes." Sometimes, the most radical act of rebellion against a trillion-dollar industry is simply choosing comfort over the gaze of others. Sometimes, a girl just wants to wear her socks and sandals.

That is why I hate fashion.



