

Student Name: Lucy Ralph

P Number: 1901273

Programme of Study: Surface Pattern Design

Module: ADAD4018

Ways of Thinking Lecturer's Name: Julia Lockheart

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task 1: Manifesto Writing = 568 words

Page 2

Task 2: Observational Writing = 435 words

Page 5

Task 3: Practise Based Writing = 582 words

Page 7

Task 1 – Manifesto Writing

- 1) Textile recycling should be law
- 2) *Fashion* is an art form whereas *clothes* are a basic necessity.
- 3) Fashion and textile production should operate in the most sustainable way possible
- 4) As artists and designers we have a responsibility to protect the planet we take inspiration from.
- 5) Fashion should be a promotion of diversity
- 6) Sustainability is not a restriction, it's an opportunity
- 7) Your art is valid
- 8) We would be nothing without art and design

Three areas of exploration

Fashion is an art form whereas clothes are a basic necessity.

Definition of 'Clothes' : "Items worn to cover the body"

Definition of 'Fashion' : "A popular, or the latest style of clothing, hair, decoration, or behaviour"

(Oxford Dictionaries)

The definitions above suggest that 'clothes' are articles worn to protect and provide warmth to the body, whereas 'fashion' is something more expressive. The process of designing and constructing a garment is a craft. Hand-made processes of stitching, manipulating and embellishing require a high level of skill, whilst also thinking about the atmosphere it will create around the wearer. (Edelkoort, L. 2015) The combination of concept and skill behind the creation of a garment can be likened to the creation of great architecture and paintings, highlighting it as an art.

However, the hand-crafted art of fashion is slowly being lost as cost becomes more of a focus than quality. Brands will create low-cost versions of designer garments to sell on a high street level, however, the way in which these clothes are produced makes them disposable (Black, S. 2012). Consumers aren't necessarily buying clothes because they need them, but rather because they want them to keep up with the latest trends, made easy by their low price and speed at which new items are brought out. (Biehl-Missal, B. 2013)

Fashion should be a promotion of diversity.

Social media has become a major advertising tool for brands. It has exacerbated the way we compare ourselves to others as we want to have every aspect of peoples 'iconic' photos. (Loureiro, C. et al. 2017) As much as we desire the clothes worn by others, the body wearing the clothes is often what we really want. Obviously, the appreciation of fashion as an art is lost here as the garments are only promoted on thin, white, able-bodied, cis-gendered beings, which isn't a very broad concept. Art is meant to be rich, diverse, and colourful, but fashion brands often fail to achieve this, leaving a large majority of people feeling like they cannot be a part of the vision. (Omar, S. 2020)

A study by the International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management 'The Impact of social influence, vanity and exhibition on consumer behaviour' (Loureiro, C. et al. 2017) found that social influence is often more of a selling point than people individual desire, further demonstrating that consumers care more about how they look to others, meaning they dress and change their body to fit social beauty standards rather than embrace their individuality. Fashion brands should make an effort to work with models of all different ethnicities, body types, and backgrounds to celebrate diversity and demonstrate the art of fashion. (Omar, S. 2020)

Sustainability is not a restriction, it's an opportunity.

It is widely known that the fashion industry needs a reform. Garment factory workers operate in unfair conditions for a low pay, and cheap choices of materials (Fletcher, K. 2014) and dying processes are having a harmful impact on the environment as well as promoting a 'throw away fashion' culture that is increasing landfill. (Black, S. 2012) Despite fashion being an art that is expressive and unique, the ease at which designs and concepts can be made into a garment currently, is not sustainable. Designers need to take on more responsibility by opting for more environmentally friendly fabrics, and therefore sacrifice the quick turnout of their garments. (Fletcher, K. 2014) The art of fashion will not be lost under the switch to sustainability; highly successful designers such as Stella McCartney have made changes, such as using organic cotton, she admits that it can sometimes pose as a challenge, but ultimately forces her to be more creative, which is what fashion is all about. (Black, S. 2012)

Bibliography

Biehl-Missal, B. (2013) Art, Fashion and Anti-consumption *Journal of Macromarketing*, 33(3), pp. 245–257.

Black, S. (2012). *The Sustainable Fashion Handbook*. UK: Thames & Hudson

CORREIA LOUREIRO, S.M., COSTA, I. and PANCHAPAKESAN, P., 2017. A passion for fashion. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, **45**(5), pp. 468-484.

DE FREITAS, C., MPH, JORDAN, H., PHD. and HUGHES, E.K., PHD., 2018. Body image diversity in the media: A content analysis of women's fashion magazines. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, **29**(3), pp. 251.

Edelkoort, L. (2015) Anti_Fashion - a manifesto for the next decade *10 reasons why the fashion system is obsolete* Available at: designmanifestos.org

Fashion Revolution *Why do we need a fashion revolution* Available at: [WHY DO WE NEED A FASHION REVOLUTION? - Fashion Revolution : Fashion Revolution](#)

Fletcher, K. (2014) *Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys* 2nd edn. Abingdon: Routledge

Norell, Norman, et al. (1967) "Is Fashion an Art?" *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 129–140. *JSTOR*

Kagan, S. (2013) *Art and Sustainability: Connecting Patterns for a Culture of Complexity* 2nd edn. Transcript Verlag

Omar, S. (2020) *Is Fashion finally addressing its diversity problem?* Available at [Diversity in fashion: it's time for the industry to change \(raconteur.net\)](#)

Werner, T. (2020) *Preconceptions of the Ideal: Ethnic and Physical Diversity Fashion* EBSCO publishing Vol. 20 Issue 78, p183-193, 11p

Task 2: Observational Writing



The key aspect of Semiotic analysis is identifying the 'sign' and highlighting what it signifies (Lomas, T. 2019). This idea is explained by many theorists including Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) and Roland Barthes (1982).

In terms of this Bic Razor advertisement I consider one sign to be the flowers. They are being held by the clean-shaven side of the man, creating this idea of 'take home to mum' as he appears more presentable; hair styled, shirt ironed, all of which can be considered 'signs'. This is used as a selling point as it signifies that being cleanly shaven is more impressive, playing on the desire of men to attract and impress. The pattern in the background is also quite grand and sophisticated, again linking to this idea of being presentable.

Roland Barthes' approach to semiotic analysis looks at the denotation and connotations of the signifier and signified, such as how your culture impacts how it is perceived. In Western popular culture, blue is the stereotypical 'male' colour, so is used here to help target their audience [men] and increase this idea of being masculine and needing to impress. Actually calling on the word "Men," makes it sound like a formal addressment to all men, similar to propaganda used during the war to recruit men, making it seem like it's their mission, again playing on the idea of masculinity.

Barthes' idea of 'Myths' also comes into play here as the advertisement is prying on the fact that men want to be as masculine as they could possibly be, when masculinity is a construct created by the media in the first place.

Pierce (1982) split the idea of a 'sign' into three different classifications; icons, indices, and symbols. The right-hand side of the man's smile would come under indices, as it has an *obvious correlation* to the fact that the advert is implying Bic Razors are a positive addition to your life. Icons on the other hand are less obvious aspects in the background that add to the signified, similarly symbols can include text and language (Lomas, T. 2019).

A semiotic analysis of surveillance advertisements by Hille Koskela (2014) discusses the idea of “the semiotics of danger” which links to the idea of brands using fear in their advertisements. The contrast between the left hand side of the image being messy and unkept, and the right side being smart and presentable creates a fear in men that they may not of before had; to keep shaven and trimmed in order to be more desirable. ‘Positive semiotics’ (Lomas, T. 2019) regards desirability, and is linked to positive psychology.

Bibliography

Chandler, D., 1994. Semiotics for beginners.

Eco, U., 1979. *A theory of semiotics* (Vol. 217). Indiana University Press.

Koskela, H., 2014. “Capture every moment” – the profane semiotics of surveillance advertisements. *Social semiotics*, 24(3), pp.324–344.

Lomas, T. (2019) ‘Positive Semiotics’, *Review of General Psychology*, 23(3), pp. 359–370. doi: 10.1177/1089268019832849.

Tohar, V. et al. (2007) ‘An Alternative Approach for Personal Narrative Interpretation: The Semiotics of Roland Barthes’, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, pp. 57–70.

List of Figures

Figure 1. *MEN ITS TIME TO SMOOTH UP* Bic Razors ‘Smooth Up’ campaign (2016) [BIC® Razors \(@bicrazors\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

Task 3 – Practice based writing

A 'Circular Economy' is essentially a system of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' with an aim of minimising waste and greenhouse gas emissions from unnecessary production (STAHEL, W.R., 2016.)

The need for a switch to more sustainable methods of manufacturing has become imperative as the destruction and pollution of natural habitats and therefore loss of biodiversity, is too big a cost being paid by the environment.

A basic cotton t-shirt starts out as cotton growing in a field. To keep up with demand, pesticides and fertilizers are used on the crop (Zhang, Y. et al 2015). This highlights that even in the very first stages of production, there is an impact on the environment, as the chemicals used on the cotton will degrade the land overtime, as well as leach into waterways and become a pollutant. It also doesn't stop there, vast amounts of water and electricity are used in the manufacturing of cotton, as well as toxic dyes acting as another water pollutant in both the production of the t-shirt and then every time it is washed on a domestic level (Zhang, Y. et al 2015).

The environmental implications posed through the production of a basic white t-shirt is the same across the whole textile industry (Fletcher, K. 2014). This indicates that the relationship between a circular economy and a t-shirt is that the production of textiles needs to be slowed down, with more of a focus being on textile recycling (Subramanian, K. et al. 2020), in order to be more sustainable.

My practise being in the realm of fashion and textiles means that there is a strong relationship with the idea of a circular economy, as I will suggestibly be a part of the life-cycle of a t-shirt. As a designer, I should have a particular sensitivity to the environment and world around us, as it is something I take inspiration from (QAA 2019). Hence it is my responsibility to ensure my practise operates in a way that does not harm it, a circular-economy approach could be a way of achieving this.

I personally am very passionate about sustainable fashion, from both a consumer and designer perspective. The strong relationship between a t-shirt and a circular economy highlights that as a designer I need to operate in a 'circular' approach, and make my consumer aware of the importance of this, to have a positive impact in the bigger picture of protecting the environment. Above personal interest, making textile and clothing production more sustainable is an action plan of governments globally. One of the UK Governments approaches to achieving this is "Maximising Reuse, Recycling and end of life management" (DEFRA 2011) indicating that sustainable textile production is an official responsibility in my practise, as well as a personal one.

Consumerism is a large drive in our lives, and brands recognise this, especially fast fashion brands. (Arnold, C. 2010) The average consumer of fashion has become accustomed to buying a new wardrobe every couple of weeks, which the brands make possible by producing garments at such low costs. There is however a growing awareness among consumers that these 'fast fashion' brands are having a detrimental effect on the environment (Arnold, C. 2010). With consumers becoming more sensitive to the environment impact of the clothes they buy, their needs are switching to sustainability. This reinforces the relationship between my design practise and circular-economy, as developing a brand that adopts textile recycling and an ethos of 'reduce, reuse, recycle' will be more appealing to my cliental.

Bibliography

Arnold, C. (2012) *Ethical marketing and the new consumer* Wiley – Blackwell

DEFRA (2011) *Sustainable clothing action plan* Available at: [Sustainable clothing action plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Fletcher, K. (2014) *Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys* 2nd edn. Abingdon: Routledge

Martin Geissdoerfer, Paulo Savaget, Nancy M.P. Bocken, Erik Jan Hultink, (2017) *The Circular Economy – A new sustainability paradigm?*, Journal of Cleaner Production, **143**, pp. 757-768,

STAHEL, W.R., 2016. Circular economy. *Nature*, **531**(7595), pp. 435-438.

Subramanian, K. et al. (2020) *Environmental life cycle assessment of textile bio-recycling – valorizing cotton-polyester textile waste to pet fiber and glucose syrup* Resources, Conservation and Recycling, **161**

Zhang, Y., Liu, X., Xiao, R. et al. (2015) *Life cycle assessment of cotton T-shirts in China*. Int J Life Cycle Assess **20**, 994–1004