

The Designer, The Mass Market and The Consumer: Who Carries the Influence

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Summary of Topic

This investigation looks into three key areas: The Consumer, The Mass Market and The Designer. By unpicking these three areas, I explore how they interlink with each other and conclude with possible trends or solutions for the future.

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Introduction

For this investigation I am going to look into key areas of how the designer influences consumer choices within the mass market. By unpicking these 3 areas consumer, mass market and designer. I would like to discover how they interlink with each other and unfold current trends or solutions for the future.

Chapter one will look into The Consumer and how they are influenced when purchasing an item. What does this item say about them? Is it a status symbol or part of a continuing story within their lives? The main thinkers include Johnathan Chapman (2005) and Colin Campbell (1987).

Chapter two, will look into the function of the Mass Market and how it has developed into what it is today. What are the main advantages and disadvantages to having something produced within this system. Key thinkers include Tony Fry (2009), Michael Braungart and William McDonough (2009) and Richard Sennett (2008).

Chapter three, will look into the role of the designer. Today designers are encouraged to look for more sustainable solutions when designing, within the circular economy. I will also uncover key ideas which could have positive effects on designing for our future. Using the work of Tony Fry (2009) and Michael Braungart and William McDonough (2009).

I will then conclude my findings and report if there is one main focus standing out as a driving force or do they all interweave and influence each other.

Consumer

According to Chapman, since the “first person dissected one smooth stone into two sharp-edged cutting tools, we have been mesmerized by objects that signify characteristics of human brilliance, affording elevated social status to individuals in possession of such artefacts” (2005, p.11). The term *object* here describes something with a purpose or function, but also something which signifies characteristics of human accomplishment. This continual development of human tool use leads to the introduction of the machine and technology. The ability to access tools is keeping the consumer intrigued and desiring more. We all shop on a daily basis, for something to eat and drink or to have the next latest desirable item. We are no longer just consuming for our basic needs, food, water and shelter, consumption has almost become a leisure activity in itself driven by the constant advertising, technology advances and peer pressure. Commodities are “more than just objects they are shifting assemblages of social relations, which take place and assume form and meaning in time and space” (Welters and Lillethun, 20011, p.234). We have become transfixed with objects which have surpassed the basic principle of a need and are now representing a part of our life. Many individuals will always try to imitate the hierarchy of society or people they look up to. This desire to fit in, is resulting in continuous consumption of commodities which has been the fundamental role to building consumer demand (Campbell, 1987, p.19).

You are able to see the commoditization happening within the Rhyd-y-car Terrace situated at St Fagan’s, The National Museum of Wales (see figure 1). There are six houses which depict different times within history, starting from 1805 leading to 1985. The first house is very basic stone floors, limited furniture, with the focal point

being the fire and grate. During this period people only came in for a warm at night, as they were out in the fields all day. Whereas gradually shown throughout the houses, more and more commodities start appearing. When you get to the 60s many people were wanting their homes to have gadgets in them. Home became about having the latest commodity. Still today we are Individually striving to surround ourselves with material things so we can enhance our daily lives, (Chapman, 2005, p.19), on an emotional level as well as a status symbol.



Fig.1: St Fagan`s 1805



Fig. 2: St Fagan`s 1855



Fig.3: St Fagan`s 1895



Fig. 4: St Fagan`s 1925



Fig. 5: St Fagan`s 1955



Fig. 6: St Fagan`s 1985

There is no wonder that people's lives and homes are becoming overloaded with excess items. With the global economy constantly growing, "it strives to increase the volume of goods and services purchased by people with disposable income" (Fry, 2009, p.111). The majority of our purchases when shopping, are made on a quick impulse with no regard to where they have come from and how they have been made. Chapman comments that "most consumer products are like stories with an incredible opening line" (Chapman, 2005, p.120), but they will posse a limited vision of the future. This will result with the item soon being discarded as we begin to lose interest with the item on discovering that it has done nothing to enhance our quality of living. This has led to terms such as "throwaway Society" being more commonly used as many people are throwing away items just so they can keep up with the everchanging demands of society (Baudrillard, 2017). Figure 2 shows the projected amount of waste generated around the world: a figure growing exponentially.

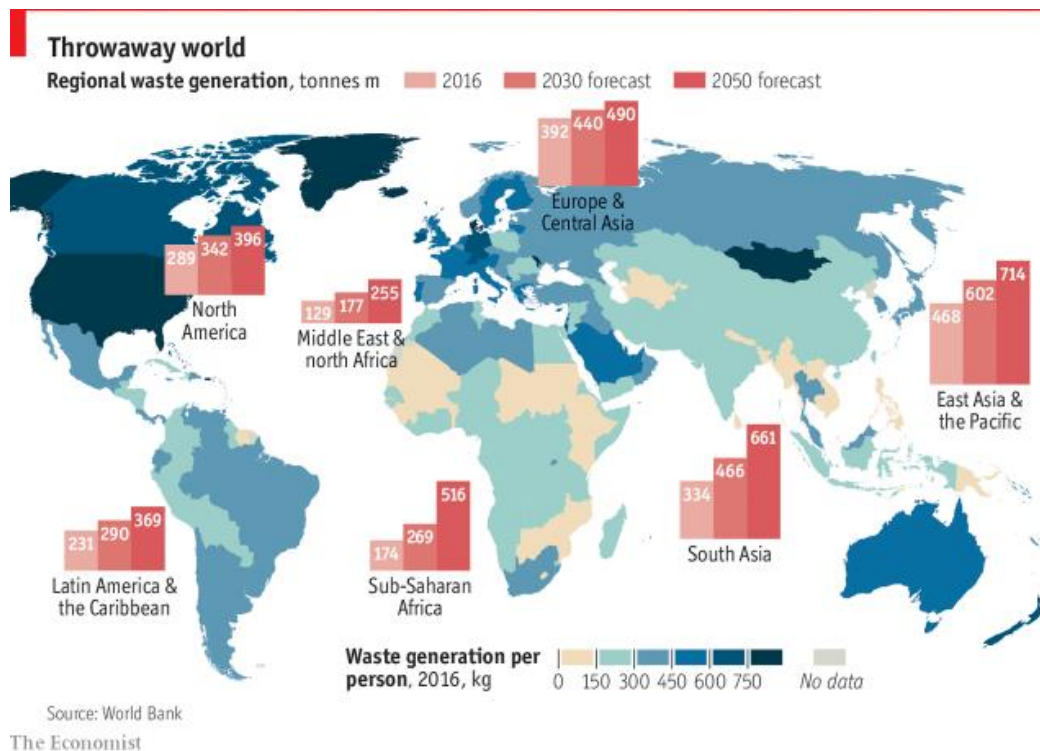


Fig. 7: Throwaway world

Today's contemporary consumers are easily led by very clever marketing and advertising campaigns, indeed we are bombarded by a litany of multimodal forms of advertising,

the purpose of advertising is to make the viewer marginally dissatisfied with his present way of life. Not with the way of life of society, but with his own within it. It suggests that if he buys what it is offering, his life will become better. It offers him an improved alternative to what he is (Berger, 1972, p.142)

Thus, the majority desire or purchase an item that we do not really need and will do nothing to improve our quality of living. Campbell also comments on advertising suggesting they are "remote from everyday experience... and that they are "imaginative or suggestive of grandeur or passion" (Campbell, 1987, p.1). Advertising sells us a dream of what life with that object could be like and also it persuades us to spend money, "the power to spend money is the power to live. According to the legends of publicity, those who lack the power to spend money

become literally faceless” (Berger, 1972, p.143). This is evident when going into any comprehensive school, where teenagers often have the latest iPhone and are wearing top brands such as Adidas and Holster (see figure 3).



Fig. 8: Consumerism

This puts a lot of financial pressure on families from lower income backgrounds to keep up with the demands of society, either the parents go without in order to afford these products, or they go into debt.

As a society we have become prolific consumers but really there is very little we actually need beyond the basics of food water and shelter, “everything else is designed for you to throw away when you are finished with it, cradle to grave designs dominate modern manufacturing” (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.27).

However, “never have more of us had more possessions than we do now, even as we make less and less use of them” (Sudjic, 2008, p.5), with everything we surround ourselves with we will probably only use a few of our commodities day to day, everything else is just for show. In fact, most of our possessions are easily and readily disposed of, even after a single use. Everything has that easy come - easy go

emphasis. It is true we do not really need much, but instead of just throwing the item away we should consider what could it be turned into to, alternatively how it could have a new lease of life. There are only a few items that we become really attached too and they will stay with us and possible be passed on from generation to generation.

The majority of individuals are still wanting and desiring newer items as we are faced with constant advertising on a daily basis showing us the next new thing. We have been living in a time with few concerns as to where our items /commodities have come from or how they have been made. It is shocking to see figures like “90 per cent of the resource taken out of the ground today become waste within 3 months” (Chapman, 2005, p.8). This level of extracting natural resources cannot be sustained as once we have run out of these resources they are gone for good. It is easy to see how these figures can be predicted when you see that McDonalds is the top producer for toys worldwide (Chapman, 2005, p.8). When you think of McDonalds you do not automatically think of toys, but they advertise a free toy with every happy meal, which is always linked to the most recent film in the cinema, (see figure 4).



Fig. 10: Save the Environment

We consume objects that we know will be discarded almost straight away. McDonalds is just one example, this happens constantly with a large variety of other products too on a daily basis, such as toiletries and food packaging.

Commodities now enable people to enhance their social status which inevitably fuels the ongoing need of wanting more and more. This drive to keep up with everyone else spurred people to work harder so they can consume more desirable goods. The middle classes try to imitate the extravagance of the rich, also the lower class trying to imitate the middle class (Campbell, 1987, p.20). They are consuming goods even though they haven't got the money in order to keep up the pretence,

money relation of debtor and creditor that existed at these two periods reflected only the deeper-lying antagonism between the general economic conditions of the general economic conditions of existence of the classes in question (Marx, 1971, p.63).

This would have created a bigger gap between the classes, the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. During this time products could be made fashionably

desirable through skilful sales promotion, advertising and salespeople, who could persuade you to buy the products you desire (Campbell, 1987, p.20). The salespeople were very direct and because they were working within your area they could pressure you by saying your neighbours had purchased it. All these factors lead to a new commercial approach and were “deliberately and consciously aimed at controlling the market, sustaining consumer interest and creating new demand” (Campbell, 1987, p.23). Thus, the current system tends to be three areas: Control the System, sustainability of interest and creating novel new updated products to keep interest as well as changing fashion trends.

The modern-day person has a thirst for more and more consumer goods, they are never really satisfied “when one want is fulfilled, several more usually pop up to take its place” (Campbell, 1987, p.37). Just see figure 6, Apple are constantly bringing out new phones, each one out doing the next. The mass market is cleverly turning a ‘want’ into a ‘need’ (Fry, 2009, p.110), this is what drives us into purchasing a new phone even though there is nothing wrong with our existing one, it has become a need.



Fig. 11: Apple iPhone History

This constant wanting is fed through advertising, as well as following the behaviour of other people (classes) (Campbell, 1987, p.50). We live our lives always striving to achieve better, surrounding ourselves with the very best we can afford, it is consumer heaven, “anything can be bought for a price” (Baudrillard, 2017, p.15) if it is desired by someone. Certain objects can have inflated value which will convey a message about the consumer “see how rich I am, I can afford the very expensive item” (Campbell, 1987, p.50). Some very wealthy individuals will purchase items of art, from very well-known artist just to say they have it. It symbolizes importance, “at the point when clients appreciate an item, it implies that they welcome the item thus they are roused about how they feel about themselves” (Jamil et al. 2019, pp200-226). The art will only be seen by few people as it is often placed within its own room under surveillance and has only been purchased as a statement to show how rich they are. Everything we purchase can tell a story about us, and it is the individual

consumers choice what story they choose to tell indeed it feeds into are narcissistic society values.

As we are rarely really fulfilled by an object/item, maybe we have to question our consumer choices. Maybe we should try and step away from competing with others around us “Keeping up with the Joneses”, and really think how we can purchase item that are more suited to us, “if we can configure solutions to better our needs, then we are much less likely to simply drop them for something that is not as personalised (Chapman, 2005, p.169). Having something custom designed to your own specification is without a doubt going to increase its longevity, thus capturing a greater narrative which enables “their stories to patiently unravel over a rewarding period of years rather than just a handful of fleeting days” (Chapman, 2005, p.120). The greater attachment we feel to something the more likely it will remain with us for our future.

Consumers can also become loyal to a particular brand and be reluctant to change to another, “True brand loyalty exists when clients have a high near methodology towards a particular brand which can be displayed through repurchase conduct” (Jamil et al. 2019, pp200-226). We all have a favourite brand of jeans that we return to and if they bring out different styles or accessories then we will buy them over any other brand first. Figure 7 shows a Levi store that not only sells jeans but also has a clothing range. “Companies that successfully develop loyal customers also develop brand ambassadors” (Jamil et al. 2019, pp200-226), there is nothing better than having someone wearing or using an item and them telling everyone how good it is and where to get it from, a rich story about the product. So, when Chapman talks about the story of a product being front loaded, the longevity could be linked to extending the story.



Fig. 12: Levi's

Campbell suggest the “quickenning pace of technological change began to provide glimpses of abundance which made dreams of affluence possible” (Campbell, 1987, p.28). Our digital devices which are a huge part of our daily lives, allow us to view unlimited brands selling all types of things. We do not just have to rely on salespeople anymore, as we can research items online and are able to access other consumers comments and rating who have purchased the item previously. Online ratings are found alongside all consumer goods, be it a hotel or toaster, these “rating help customers to capture an overall evaluation of products or service providers based on different features” (Alalwan, 2020, pp28-44). For example, performance, quality, price and delivery time (Alalwan, 2020, pp28-44). (see figure 8).

Leave feedback for the seller

Please provide feedback for the seller. Your feedback is important and helps sellers understand what works and what needs improvement.



Morgan Dollar 1880-S Proof Like Obverse Old US Silver Coin PDEB-104

Lot number: PDEB-104

Sale price: \$115.00
Total price: \$115.00

Seller: Decatur Coin and Jewelry



Event: Coin Sale

Sale date: 9/24/2013

Did you receive your item in a timely manner?	★★★★★	☐ Not applicable
How reasonable were the Seller's shipping charges?	★★★★★	☐ Not applicable
Did the Seller's online listing accurately describe the item?	★★★★★	☐ Not applicable
How reasonable were the Seller's fees? (fees other than shipping)	★★★★★	☐ Not applicable
Please rate the Seller's customer service.	★★★★★	☐ Not applicable

Please leave additional comments about your transaction:

500 characters remaining

Quick, professional transaction. Good photos, descriptions, and customer service. Highly recommended.

Fig. 13: Rating System

Product placement within films and Netflix series is another tool used to sell products, which cleverly targets age appropriate consumers. For example, Breaking Bad producers did deals with the car manufacture Dodge and with the restaurant Denny's to show within their series (Baskin, 2013).

With the abundance of information and unlimited access to shopping sites and resources online 24 hours a day, it is no wonder that people are using the internet to shop, it is much faster and you don't even have to leave your house, it is delivered straight to your door. However, by doing everything online you are allowing the market control what you are seeing, they are tailoring advertising specifically to you.

Cookies are a prime example. This allows companies to track your browsing preferences. Unfortunately, this means you are targeted by companies advertising similar or connected products (WSJ, 2010), and so the cycle of consumer targeting leads to further consumption.

Having looked at consumer consumption, and how they are endlessly targeted by companies. This leads me onto my next chapter The Mass Market, and how it manages to create goods for the consumer.

Mass Market

Tony Fry described the function in the mass market as “meeting the needs of human beings quickly” (2009, p.110). The Mass Market provides objects for everybody on a massive scale, through reproduction and continuity. The only problem is it treats everyone the same, filing us into average categories. Rose comments that “no one is average. Not you. Not your kids” (2016, p.11), but yet when shopping for clothes many of us face a constant battle to find clothes that fit our individual body shape. Standardized sizes come in, Small, Medium, Large or 8-10, 12-14 etc, this does not suit everyone and many of us have the problem of garments being too small or too big. If the consumer cannot go out and buy an item in a shop, they are able to purchase online often with an option of with same day delivery. Consumers are able to purchase goods from all over the world at the press of a button, which means there is little we cannot get.

Thomas Thwaites has addressed the mass market within his work; The Toaster Project (see figure 9). He questioned how a toaster could be sold for £3.94, when taking it apart it contained 400 different components made from 100 different materials.



Figure 14: The Toaster Project

When we consider the materials used, wages and transportation of goods, not forgetting the environmental impact of producing these goods both locally and globally, how could we compete. To carry out his work he travelled across the U.K in order to source materials, ironically because he was producing just one toaster he had to go back 8000 years in order to find out how they done certain methods on such a small scale, so he could then try and replicate it within his studio. This was a project, it just would not be practical for everyone to do this and who would want to, nor would it be cost effective. The overall cost of his toaster was £1187.54, which is a massive difference from just £3.94, this showing the monopoly the mass market has on producing cheap and affordable goods (Thwaites, 2011). Thwaites work

demonstrates how much the mass market has finally tuned its processes, as it can effectively produce a toaster for as little as £3.94 and make a profit.

Creating a greater selection of consumer goods but also allowing items that were once made by hand now be made by machine in immense quantities, for a fraction of the price (Sennett, 2005, p.142). The 1800s brought the introduction of the machine, the industrial revolution (Sennett, 2008, p.82), this has been noted as “the most significant upheaval in the system of producing manufactured goods that the world has ever witnessed (Campbell, 1994, p.6). The machines were producing everything in mass from domestic utensils to clothes and books (Sennett, 2005, p.109), this gave the consumers a huge amount of choice. Pre-industrialization people were used to repairing items, things were not as easily disposed of like they are today, who would bother to fix a cheap toaster when you can buy a replacement for under a fiver (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.97). People today haven’t got the time to fix things, it is just easier to go out and replace something, as mass-produced items can be picked up for very little. Thwaites toaster cost just £3.94.

In 1913, Henry Ford along with his engineers developed the first assemble line for the production of cars. It enabled the materials to be carried to the workers and developed down the production line to completion, you can see this demonstrated figure 10.

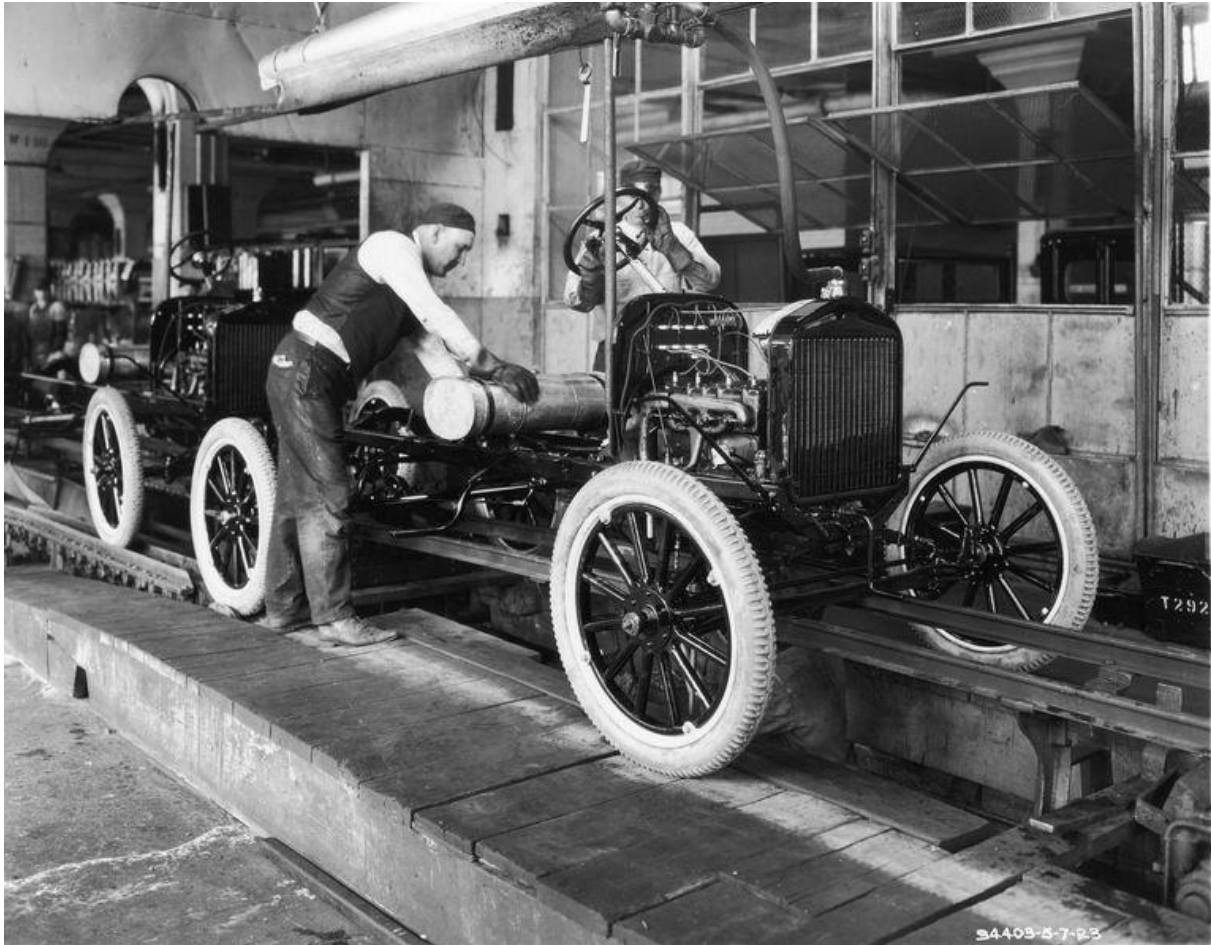


Fig.15: Henry Ford's Auto Assemble Line

This technology was then taken and developed across the manufacturing world to produce other items in mass for example washing machines and hoovers (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.23). This type of manufacturing model would not only have cut the production time but also have cut costs considerably. Within today's manufacturing processes workers are permitted to work on the product while it is moving, as the assembly line never stops, which allows for faster production in order to keep up with the demand. Manufacturers source parts for jobs from all over the world and use a manufacturing process called 'Just in Time'. This allows parts to be delivered to the workers as and when they are needed for jobs, so companies do not have to pay for storage units or have excess stock on shelves, therefore increasing their cashflow. The Toyota car manufacture only has enough parts to keep the

production going for four hours, many other manufactures run the same way. With concerns of Brexit companies are facing worry times, with already tight costing, delays on the borders could prove detrimental to the production of goods, which will inevitably affect the consumer as prices will rise for goods (What Britain Buys and Sells in a Day, 2019).

The industrial revolution and growing demands of mass production has meant, we have been continually stripping all the renewable natural resources from the planet. To the point these natural resources are running out and once there are gone, due to their finite properties, they can never be replaced (Chapman, 2005, p.1). Many companies now, instead of manufacturing in their own country of origin have gone further afield to third world countries in order to mass produce items. They take advantage of these third world countries because the only thing they have to sell is the renewable natural resource which lay within their land, for example “the destruction of the forest of Borneo’s Kalimantan region ... to clear land for palm oil plantations” (Fry, 2009, p.111). This process has placed Indonesia the 3rd highest “emitter of greenhouse gases” (Fry, 2009, p.112) worldwide, and it is also having a detrimental effect on the locals, as it is causing major health problems within its region because of the smoke (Fry, 2009, p.112). Consumers don’t often think about the consequences of purchasing an item and the effect it has on the environment or to the people making it, “they just rely on assumptions that companies they trust ... wouldn’t sell such goods” (Shedroff, 2009, p.14). Due to the digital age we are living in, when companies slip up everyone can see it straight away. One clothing brand in particular, Zara has been in the headlines on a few occasions for exploiting its workforce within the manufacturing of goods. In 2013 it was accused of slave/child labour, children as young as 14 were found within the factories and workers were

The majority of people are disgusted when they find that products they have purchased have been made through circumstances like these (Shedroff, 2009, p.14).

We have rules and regulations within our country which state a minimum wage allowance as well as safe working conditions for all with regular breaks permitted, this is not always the case within other countries, so this is how companies can cut cost within their production of mass goods.

We do have to question ourselves, that when we buy a cheap mass-produced item, where has it actually come from? Where do companies look to source their materials? As mentioned previously big companies can look further afield for raw materials and this alongside with overall production costs can determine where something is produced. Today's manufacturers don't actually make anything, they just assemble parts which have been sourced globally (What Britain Buys and Sells in a Day, 2019), for example, a mass-produced exercise machine which was built in the U.S "May contain rubber belts from Malaysia, chemicals from Korea, motors from China, adhesives from Taiwan, and wood from Brazil" (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.39). This wide range of countries used to source the parts, are stripped of their natural resources and available cheap production/labour. It is hard to see how the cost of production would have inevitable still been cheaper to produce the exercise machine this way rather than in the U.S alone (also nobody takes into consideration of the added environmental impact on the packaging and transportation of these goods).

This also brings up the argument, do we really know what the items we use on a daily basis are made from? There are certain criteria's and legal requirements that items within our market have to adhere (e.g. CE approved), they keep us safe and

limit our contact with hazardous levels of toxins. But using parts from all over the world “substances banned for use in the U.S and Europe can reach this country via products and parts made elsewhere” (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.39), and the manufactures are not obliged to or need to keep track of them, which is astonishing considering today market expectations. An even bigger problem is the number of cheap replicas of desirable goods which hit our market on a daily basis. These items wouldn't have gone through the rigorous testing that our country keeps in place in order to keep us safe. These items are mass produced using substandard materials and once purchased usually break or put us at harm straight away, there are many examples of this, too name a few, cheap USB charges have caused many house fires (BBC News, 2014), (see figure 13).



Fig. 18: Ditch your cheap chargers

Whereas children`s slime and squishes are containing hazardous ingredients within them and are causing burns on children`s hands (Independent, 2018), figure 14 shows the extent with one case.



Fig. 19: School girl suffers horror burns

There is always going to be a demand for cheap, copied goods as people can attain a desirable item for a fraction of the cost. This reflects our need to fit in with society. But we do have to question ourselves when making these purchases. Is it really worth the risk, as some products can have such serious consequences?

Paradoxically we do have to appreciate the complexity and design which has gone into producing a mass market item. Each item has been made with precision and are all identical in both function and aesthetic look (Adamson, 2010, p.49). Great examples of mass production can be seen on the TV program “Inside the Factory”, where millions of the same item are made on a weekly basis, see figure 15 for an example.



Fig. 20: Milk processing plant

The machines never tire, they are constantly working 24 hours a day 7 days a week (Inside the Factory, 2019), no worker could ever compete with this, also “accuracy with which machinery executes its work is, perhaps, one of its most important advantages” (Adamson, 2010, p.51). These machines can accurately replicate a process over and over again without fault, this results in a much faster line of production and less waste as mistakes are less likely to happen. A good example of this, is as follows:

It would be possible for a very skilful workman, with files and polishing substances, to form a cylinder out of a piece of steel; but the time which this would require would be so considerable, and the number of failures would probably be so great, that for all practical purposes such a mode of producing a steel cylinder might be said to be impossible (Adamson, 2010, p.51).

Also, the cost implications of using the skilled worker would make the object unattainable to the masses, it would become too expensive to produce. John Ruskin and William Morris have both suggested that “it was wicked to make man do tedious, repetitive work” (Frayling, 2011, p.102), so why not use the machine and the skilled

worker together in order to achieve a better outcome. What is the role of the designer in this process.

The Designer

We are living in a world that is creating items just to keep up with the latest trends or fashion there is no longevity with them. Design is everywhere, everything we touch has been carefully designed for a function. Our planet gives us the resources in which we can produce items. Fry writes,

Designers design in a designed world, which arrives by design, that designs their actions and objects, or more simply: we design our world, which our world designs us (1999, p.276).

Inevitably designers have to design items that the consumers want and desire, but the designer really has to identify the values of which they want to reinforce within they work (Shedroff, 2009, p.284). Either they chose to work in the industry of mass production where it is more about profits (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.160), or they chose to stand for what they believe in, to make a difference and be a part of designing items in a more sustainable way with positive effects to the environment and the workforce.

According to the Oxford Dictionary the term designer is referred to as “a person who plans the look or workings of something prior to it being made, by preparing drawings or plans” (O.E.D, 2018). You can have someone design for the automotive industry or for interiors, for example the list is endless. But what is the difference in designing for the industry or craft? The craftsmen can design and make some exquisite pieces of handmade furniture, which are all unique and hold an aura about them telling story to where and how they were made (Benjamin, 2008, p.3). A designer for interiors will carefully plan out their design meticulously, starting from a drawing. This process constantly allows for change and development before actually

having the item made. The craftsman would not be able to alter much in the way of design as they have already begun working on the piece (Jones, 1992, p.15).

We are now living in a world that is in constant threat of global warming and drastic measure need to be taken. Teenager Greta Thunberg and other young people from around the world are protesting in order, to get adults to listen about global warming and not destroy their future (The Guardian, 2019). Designers need to play a role as well, they need to look at what they are designing, the materials used and the cost to the environment in the process. As designers we should start looking at different ways of designing, start at the beginning “don’t just reinvent the recipe, rethink the menu” (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.179). A good example of this is “instead of aiming to create cars with minimal or zero negative emissions, imagine cars designed to release positive emissions and generate other nutritious effects on the environment” (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.179). Just imagine the change that could happen if all industries could move to this way of thinking and invest time and money in researching options, instead of pumping out harmful toxins into the environment with such damaging effects globally.

Biomimicry is such an exciting prospect for design for the future. It is about looking for sustainable innovations which occur within nature and using them to help recreate and bring new designs to the for front. This could create endless possibilities within our industries (Shedroff, 2009, p.59). Janine Benyus is an advocate for Biomimicry and believes that everyone should look to nature first when designing, she has spoken about many ways this idea is happening today on Tedtalk. One example is how they were looking at the Galapagos Shark because its skin is known for repelling bacteria and barnacles, nothing can adhere to it and there are obviously no man-made chemicals involved. They found out that it is all to do

with denticles on the skin (pattern), this prevents anything from landing on it. A company called *Sharklite Technology* has taken the pattern and is putting it on surfaces within hospitals to stop bacteria growing, with no use of chemicals (tedtalk). Abeer Seikaly is a designer who has similarly used the same principles as Biomimicry, as she has been developing a tent for Syrian refugees (see figure 16). Her inspiration started from looking at snakeskin (nature) to traditional weaving, as well as the area she was designing the tent for. The tent offers a ventilation system, also cleverly collecting rainwater while storing it in pockets around the outside. This then allows a thermosiphoning system to be added which uses heat to draw the stored water up which could be used for a shower (Wendel, 2015). There are many examples of what can be done if designers use nature for problem solving, it is such an exciting development for the future.



Fig. 21: Innovative tent for refugees

Ideally, new designers need to move away from designing for linear economy flows (see Figure 17), and design with circular economy in mind.

LINEAR ECONOMY

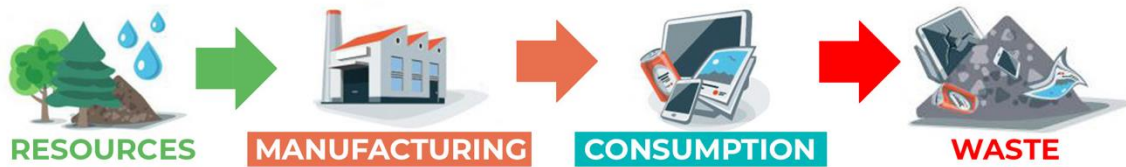


Fig. 22: Linear Economy

The Circular economy is described as turning “goods that are at the end of their service life into resources for other, closing loops in industrial ecosystems and minimizing waste” (Stahel, 2016, p435) (see figure 18). There are many companies that produce huge amounts of waste within their production of goods, an example of this Orangebox (2019) they create office furniture, and, in a week, they can have one ton of fabric waste alone. Even though it is made up of offcuts and end of rolls, it mostly consists of high value fabric, and ends up being incinerated.

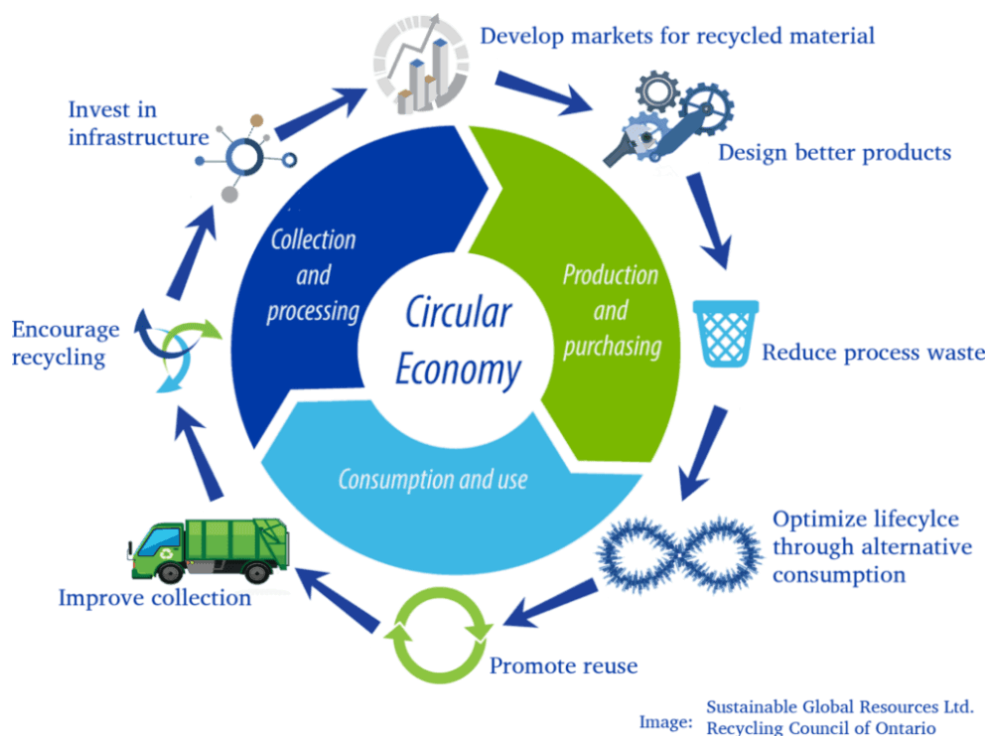


Fig. 23: Circular Economy

Most items in today market are “not designed with recycling in mind” (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.58). Something which is only made with the intention for one use, cannot always be possible for it to be recycled and reused. Certain products have certain toxins and chemicals in their infrastructure, so when consumers are purchasing an item they believe are helping the environment they can become exposed to the toxins/chemicals which could be harmful to them. An example of this is, clothes made from plastic bottle fibres, these bottles were never intended to be used to lie on human skin, so could have a damaging effect (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.58). Another problem when trying to recycle items is that it can prove costly for a business to do as it is trying “to force materials into more lifetimes than they were originally designed for” (Braungart and McDonough, 2009, p.59). This process alone will use up valuable resources and energy which might not be worth it in the long run, because you are just delaying the inevitable, the landfill.

Having programs like product take-back really does get the designers and manufactures “to rethink their end of life strategies and the outcomes of their products” (Shedroff, 2009, p.194), morally, there is no point in just designing an item for single use in a market that is already flooded with stuff. You need to stand out and show consumers that your product has a future which will inevitable create a better future for the consumer. Designing for circular business models is another step. Can you imagine not having to pay large amounts for items which you do not really need for a long time, for example a baby stroller, you just leased them for a set time. This would create new problems for the designer as they would have to “design for durability and design for reparability” (Sumter, 2018, p3) as they are in constant use and demand, but also ensuring the product “stayed relevant, desired, and cost effective over multiple use cycles” (Sumter, 2018, pp1-11). Circular design really

pushes the designer to expand, research and come up with new possibilities for a product that is sustainable to both the environment and workforce, and does not allow products to end up in landfills which many do.

Another way to approach design, is to design something with a purpose and that has unlimited uses. If something breaks it is usually thrown away, but what one designer did is create a product that could fix, hack and redesign stuff. Sugru (2019), it is a mouldable glue. It is multifunctional, soft so it can fit into any shape, and it is durable to fix almost anything. It is an adhesive that fits anything to anything. This is such a unique product as the designer of Sugru, has created a glue, with many possibilities. It cleverly gets the consumer to engage and personalise its use, therefore, building an emotional relationship with the product (Fuad-Luke, 2009, p.95). Allowing the consumer to play and be creative with the product, not only strengthens the personal narrative, but also creates a bond that makes it stand out from similar products on the market (Fuad-Luke, 2009, p.98). This product has people all around the world posting pictures and commenting what they can do with it, examples range from fixing a cup, to giving a chicken a new leg (Sugru, 2019). This product is enabling us to use products that would have ended up in landfills (broken) thus giving them a new lease of life.



Fig. 24: Diversity of Sugru

Designing for the Tailored Market, where experienced craftspeople work on the build of specific goods while meeting the needs of the consumers, will inevitably add to the longevity of a product. Two examples where this is being done to a very high standard is within the automotive industry, Norton Bikes (British brand) and Ferrari (Italian brand). They both offer a unique build to the customer, allowing them to carefully design their own unique vehicle, as a spokesperson from Ferrari said, “we don’t just sell them a car, we sell them their car” (What Britain Buys and Sells in a day, 2019). Allowing customer involvement within the building of their vehicle, is providing a greater attachment which as mentioned previously, will undoubtedly capture a greater narrative therefore increasing the longevity. As a nation many of us are tired

of the throwaway society we live in, so let's hope this trend of extending the story within a product continues.

This inquiry has looked at the roles of the Consumer, the Mass Market and the Designer in improving our overall sustainability on an endangered planet. Some solutions that will benefit our future are designing for a circular economy, circular business models, Biomimicry and also the tailored market playing a key role.

Adopting these new ways of design are only way forward. By changing the consumer to the mindful user, and the consumed into the regenerated, should increase desired longevity.

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