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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The fast fashion culture in the developed and newly developing world, has drastically altered social trends, the economy, and the environment surrounding this industry. This process has changed history and culture of regions. Fashion is a cultural identifier across the globe; it creates a unique awareness among varying individuals when interacting, engaging, and witnessing people from different regions and ethnicities. It is a means of communication, symbolism, religion, and an aspect of social identity. In simpler terms, clothes are a basic need for humans, but over the years have morphed into one of the largest industries in the world valued at $1.2 trillion with $250 billion coming from the United States (JEC, 2015). This has led to the textile and apparel industry being saturated today with very expensive clothing on one hand, and with cheap, trendy, mass produced items on the other.

As the fashion industry demand increased, American based corporations responded by outsourcing labor to developing nations (Breward, 2003). These locations abroad had the infrastructure to support this level of manufacturing due to cheap labor costs and the manpower to support it. American corporations recognized that outsourcing increased their profit margins, which led them to continually cut costs in a multitude of ways. These profits, though beneficial to shareholders, came at an excessive cost to garment workers and the environment.

Based on this rational and the fact that America is a nation of fast trend setters, the purpose of this thesis is to understand how American fashion has impacted the traditional apparel industry of certain regions of the world. The primary research question
being analyzed is how has apparel and culture, which is found through traditional apparel in certain regions of the world, undergone drastic change due to American fast fashion.

This topic is very pertinent because of the threat fast fashion poses, as it destroys the global economy and environment; and thereby, impacts millions over the world. This is mainly due to the highly destructive fashion industry using forced labor, unfair working conditions, and environmental destruction locally and abroad. The formed hypothesis is that through collaboration between countries, the fashion industry can become sustainable on a global scale.

The researcher conducted primary research from studying the fashion industry around the world: Germany, India, and the United States. First hand interviews with garment industry workers, fashion professors, and students, point to the recognition that the definition of “sustainable fashion” is vastly different from one country to another. These countries were selected based on convenience as the researcher traveled to these countries.

As there are many definitions associated with specific terms used in this thesis, the definitions in Table 1 provide the cohesiveness required to understand, analyze and argue the researcher’s point of view.
<table>
<thead>
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<th><strong>Table 1: Definitions of terms associated with my research</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Sustainable Fashion</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
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In the following paragraphs, specific information related to the scope of this project is outlined including the delimitations and limitations due to the nature of the questions, the type of investigation performed, and limited time.

**Delimitation:**

To analyze contrasting cultures, delimitations (boundaries purposely created to narrow the scope of the study) were placed on this study. Given the researcher’s interest in global fast fashion and culture, this study focuses on the research collected from Asia, Germany and the United States. These countries were selected because the researcher specifically studied sustainable fashion by conducting personal interviews with the local population, observations and surveys; this created a convenience sample. The sampling is based on three continents with America representing the West, Europe being the intermediary, and India representing the East.

Beyond restricting the survey framework to using three countries, this study is also restricted in the time span of the past 25 years in which fast fashion initiated, developed and expanded. This time restriction corresponds to when the fast fashion industry grew due to technology advancements and changing consumer behavior. This in-turn allowed the researcher to explore authors in the literary analysis who have explored fast fashion and other issues related to my study in the past two decades.

When using literature associated with fast fashion, articles were focused on clothing as a cultural identifier. Authors were chosen based on their knowledge of the topics involving fashion, sustainability, culture, and societal aspects that connects all industry facets.
The third aspect of the primary research was a survey. A survey was constructed and sent to a population sample consisting of Kent State Fashion students, faculty, and staff distributed through Qualtrics. This limitation once again provided me the framework to contain the research with individuals who were directly involved with the fashion industry.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The research focused directly on fashion, culture, and the idea of craft. Various authors have researched the impacts of craft on culture as fashion is equal parts craft, function, and art. Craft specifically focuses on the way a product is made and the manual labor put into it (Adamson, 2007). Craft is about being a part of a community, a connection and it is also about individuality (Faud, 2009). The following authors present research based on craft, consumerism, and fashion.

Louise Crewe (2013) argument is pertinent to the research as she focuses on the connection between slow fashion, quality, and the idea of craft. Crewe starts by exploring the evolution of fast fashion as it is inherently unsustainable. She states that, “the faster fashion moves, the more toxic its effects,” leaving individuals feeling unsatisfied and desiring the next purchase. In this model of fashion, there is a longer supply chain which focuses on consumerism. In a more sustainable fashion model, a shorter supply chain places emphasis on quality and craft (p. 203). Crewe develops her argument that rather than changing consumer behavior to “stop shopping,” the behavior should be to invest in long-term pieces that create a relationship for durability, attachment, quality, and craft (p. 201). This theory, she states, allows garments to accrue value in the consumer’s life by understanding the connection creating between the “personal investments in them, our connections to them, their histories, geographies, and our memories of their wearing” (p. 202). Furthermore, this model of sustainable fashion recognizes a shorter supply chain and places emphasis on rebuilding an industry focused more on quality and craft, rather than consumerism (p. 203).
At a TEDx talk in Sydney, Australia, Clara Vuletich PhD - an expert in sustainable textiles and fashion - states plainly that sustainable fashion is essentially about values. Consumers must decide what they value as they shop because values of one individual can affect the values of another. Clare Wilkinson-Weber (2013) depicts how fast fashion has affected Indian culture through changes in production, marketing, and retailing. Historically, Indian fashion has withstood the test of time in comparison to western fashion. The saree has stood as the testament of Indian fashion for over 5,000 years, witnessing changes in rulers, invasions, and cultural shifts - but the saree has never been eradicated from the subcontinent. For instance, sarees are worn by women across India, but not all sarees are the same; a woman wearing a saree can be distinguished by her geographic region, religion, and caste. Wilkinson-Weber argues that in production, makers of “traditional” fabrics and dress, struggle to keep up with the production of western attire despite support from influencers (p.44). In response to this, lawmakers and Indian influencers have created programs and incentives to promote authentic Indian craft.

Anguelov (2016) argues that the fashion industry dictates the change of trends and that it is fashion sales (i.e. net profits, fashion advertisements, fashion shows, etc.) that drive retail, not consumers. Fashion advertisements play the role of attempting to define to consumers that the more goods purchased or consumed, the better their lives are (p. 6). Ads depict the erroneous mirage that people are more successful, more worthwhile, and are physically beautiful based on their consumption habits of specific brand identity. To fit the desired sense of belonging perceived by advertisements, consumers create an identity
based on the brands they purchase. Anguelov further argues that customers receive a greater sense of self when fashionable clothes are changed constantly (p. 130). Also, as there is an increased amount of fashion options when prices are low, it allows for consumers to purchase more garments. In the United States, overstimulation of advertising has increased in all retail platforms allowing marketing models to create a variety of tactics to push impulse buying. When there is a perceived benefit in purchasing items promoted at a drastically low price, consumers are stimulated to buy even more; thereby, further expanding the consumerist model (p.137). Consumption in the United States is further explained by author Chapman (2003) stating that, “By halting or reducing consumption we call into question our deeply held beliefs of ‘western progress’ and our sense of social and cultural relevance.”

Furthermore, Nathaniel Beard (2008) focuses on how branding and marketing affects fast fashion. Branding has become so ingrained and important to consumers that the product itself lacks in substance. In fast fashion, there is a decreased amount of turnover time and an increase in markdowns meaning designers no longer take risks. This cycle has led to consumers anticipating these sales and the lack of originality meaning they are more willing to wait for it to hit the sales rack. This behavior has led to a disconnect between the value created when purchasing garments and the impact they have on the environment, especially during the disposal stage (p. 450).

Anguelov is supported by Eva Kruse in her TEDx Copenhagen speech (2013). Kruse states that the fashion industry is one of the most powerful in the world. This industry is powerful enough to influence consumers to purchase products they don’t
necessarily need. For example, a designer makes a purple pair of pants. You don't necessarily like purple but through advertisements of attractive people wearing the purple pants, a cheap price, and their convenience, you now feel more compelled to buy those pants. She concludes by stating that that is the power of the fashion industry - to change the consumers’ minds and drive sales.

Kunz and Garner’s (2011) illustrates the shift in power between manufacturers and retailers which demonstrates the role profits have played on a global scale. A few key statistics outlined in their publication include the increase in wholesale gross margins from 15-20% in 1970 to 35-40% in 2008. This has also led to an increase in retail gross margins from 35-40% in 1970 to 55-60% in 2008. Kunz and Garner’s statistics are a result of the decrease in labor cost on the manufacturing side and the total material and fiber cost. They further explain that the money is used in the retail environment to pay for marketing, branding, and design costs rather than for the materials and labor production which demonstrates how a shift in power leads to a shift in profits.

Briggs (2013) explains the danger of consumerism on the production side of fast fashion. Briggs argues that many scholars either focus on the production side of fashion or the consumption side, never taking the time to explain that both are connected. When researching the connection between production and consumption in fashion, Briggs shows how culture and economy are “mutually connected” (p. 187). Briggs follows retailers and suppliers who would purposefully focus on rapid and low replenishment rates rather than on sustainable initiatives; initiatives include small batch production which focuses on only creating the items needed instead of wasting resources. This
strategy left a message to consumers saying, “buy it now or it will be gone” (p.189). This rapid turnaround places stress on the environment and the economy. Brigg’s ends by stating that “production requires the consumption of raw materials and labor” where both consumption and production beg the question of how an individual can “produce” oneself through fashion rather than “being” oneself (p. 186).

Teri Agins (1999) states that even though fashion penetrates every level of society, trends have pointed that consumers are looking for dress that is comfortable and fits into their daily needs rather than valuing the phrase of “dressing to impress” (p.425). Agins suggests that there is an end to the fashion era where creativity and quality were expected, but now it is all about selling the image through branding. Along the same lines, Jerry Adler (1995) defines American fashion, as a nation of slobs stating that, “slobs generally do not care about fashion, but rather they wear sweatpants. Comfortable clothing has its place based on professional and personal requirements.” But Alder argues that when comfort takes priority there comes a sense of complacency. He continues be quoting etiquette professional and author Judith “Miss Manners” Martin when she says that, “People are pretending that dress has no symbolic significance, but it does.”

In Cradle to Cradle, the authors challenge readers to reimagine the meaning behind diversity and how nature plays a deep role in our lives. Nature has the ability to create, grow, and adapt in the snap of a finger. Humans have disembodied this by “de-evolution.” The authors state, “For centuries, our species has built up a variety of cultures across the globe, ways of eating, speaking, dressing, worshiping, expressing, creating. A tide of sameness is spreading from sea to sea, sweeping away these cultural details too”
Furthermore, they explain how each organism is responsible and impactful on a local, individual level, and global scale. By functioning in a cycle where each organism works to benefit themselves and others, the more diversity there is, which means there are more productive functions performed (p. 122). “Industries that respect diversity engage with local material and energy flows, and with local social, cultural, and economic forces, instead of viewing themselves as autonomous entities, unconnected to the culture or landscape around them.” As diversity is eroded, a monoculture is created leaving species and culture degradation (p. 18).

Though these authors have followed various research topics, they collectively provide a greater understanding on how culture and fashion intersect and yet, at times, play parallel roles to one another. These scholars have studied the link between fashion, identity, and culture in different environments and situations.
CHAPTER III: DATA COLLECTION

Based on the research question and incite, the research method used was a qualitative case study. This method was selected based on literature from Yin and Merriam. According to Yin (2003), case studies focus on answering “how” and “why” based questions and provide answers to studies that have no set boundaries. He further states that a case study is the investigation that occurs to solve a hypothesis between a phenomenon and the context while it is happening and as an investigator has less control over the set of events. Case study can be further defined in terms of focusing on the unit of study - the case - or the product (Merriam, 1998). The most defining portion of the case study is understanding what is being studied and the boundaries that is set on the study.

The researcher observed individuals in the field and conducted interviews with professionals, students, and individuals working in the fashion industry in each country and conducted an anonymous survey by sending out the questionnaire to the Kent State fashion community. This sample was based on convenience as the researcher traveled to these specific countries.

Limitations of this research that were beyond the researcher’s control were time, population, and geographical area. The results represent the populations given the time and location; however, by choosing only these three countries and interviewing only people from certain demographic and/or geographic locations, that ultimately limits the scope of my project. In terms of how the data was collected, specifically between using interviews in India and group discussions in Germany, the researcher found these
methods to be appropriate given the situations. Individual interviews would not have been an appropriate method in Germany as they were in India and vice versa with group discussions would not have added value to this study as they did in India; this is due to the language barrier in India and limited participants, which would have hindered group discussions in this location. Given this scenario, the researcher made a mental note that in the near future when she continues to pursue this topic in other countries it would be critical to have primary observations on all three levels in all the locations she visits. This thesis is in the pilot stage due to the short duration to conduct the investigation in each country.

Based on the hypothesis and opportunities presented to the researcher, the beginnings of primary research were collected in Germany in 2016. Observations were used in stores by watching consumers make purchases, student discussions, street wear, and recognizing cultural tension in various social settings. Interviews in Germany, India, and the United States were purposively selected based on the researcher’s evaluation of how involved individuals were in the fashion industry. Surveys were used as a means of getting concrete data and to have a variety of voices accounted for in the United States. The researcher would like to extend a thank you to all individuals who were important in creating this data through their knowledge and comments during observations, group discussions, and interviews.

I. Observations

Observations were an important part of data collection for this thesis. In each country, observations focused on comparing various retail environments and factories.
Specific observations were made in Germany during shopping trips, factory tour at Stoll Knit, and a visit to AMD University. Further observations in India were performed at a block printing and rug making factory to provide a contrasting view from Germany.

Other observations were made while interacting with the culture daily. These moments were documented through pictures, field notes, and journal entries. Table 2 outlines the observations performed and discussed in my research.

Table 2: Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Observed</th>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<td>Stoll Knit Factory</td>
<td>Factory Tour</td>
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<td>June 10, 2016</td>
<td>AMD</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 30th, 2016</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany; Ka de We</td>
<td>Store Observation and tour</td>
<td>Ka de We employees; Kent State University students/faculty</td>
<td>Appendix C; Section 1</td>
</tr>
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<td>June 8, 2016</td>
<td>Lodenfrey</td>
<td>Store Observation</td>
<td>Munich, Germany</td>
<td>Appendix C; Section 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 19, 2017</td>
<td>Carpet Factory</td>
<td>Factory observation and interaction</td>
<td>Jaipur, India</td>
<td>NA</td>
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Observation: Stoll Knit Factory – 8 June 2016

The Stoll Knit Factory produces Stoll Knit machines on a global scale while also producing innovative knit products. The tour began at their Corporate building where the group viewed the various machines they produce and the advancements they are making
in design with the machines. Items included the new knit shoe by Nike, home decor products, and high quality, seamless knit garments. The Stoll knit machines can produce knit pieces in a matter of minutes on a more economically and environmentally friendly level. Stoll creates various machines which meets the needs for diverse types of knits including chunky knits, light knits, and a variety of others (Figure 1-3). The group was transported to the Production Plant where the machines are produced. The environment was loud as the guide was inaudible through most of the tour. During the tour, several group members were mostly aware of how much water waste and metal shavings that were produced during the production process. Members contemplated how the factory could recycle these materials in their manufacturing supply chain.

Figure 1: Inside Stoll knit factory
Figure 2: Stoll’s knit factory entrance

Figure 3: Sample garments created

**Observation: AMD – 10 June 2016**

Upon entering AMD Design studio in Munich, Germany, the group was greeted with polished wooden walls. The faculty explained that the building used to be the home
for horses as they were stalls during WWII. It was restored and repurposed to fit the AMD’s purposes. During the observation, the group was presented with two student group projects that focused on sustainability.

Student Group 1: The first group used seaweed farms to help replace meat and cut down on the meat processing plants.

Student Group 2: The second group created an app where you scan the food barcode then an alarm reminds you when it is about to expire and gives recipes on how to cook it.

These students were fashion students with a focus on finding sustainable alternatives in and out of the fashion realm. This observation showed that sustainability is important not just in the fashion industry, but across disciplinaries.

**Observation: Ka de We – 30 May 2016**

Ka de We is an expensive department store that is home to several major brands and is the largest department store in Germany. Our group received a private tour of the entire department store including Men’s, Women’s, Home, Children, Pet, Shoe Heaven - home to thousands of different pairs of shoes, Accessories, Makeup, Travel, and others as it expanded over six floors. There was an entire section dedicated to shoes and received the label as “Shoe Heaven.” She explained that the rich and famous ask for personal shoppers when they come to Ka de We, but most of their business comes from tourists. The items on sale were of the highest quality receiving luxury status (Figure 4). There was an abundance of items, but it never felt overwhelming as each section was distinctively labeled and separated from the other areas. The brands emulated quality and
stature. The importance of this observation came through in witnessing the pride emulating from the store. Workers, brands, and products were of the highest stature and selected as the best of the best. While they are considered a major department store, their policies still set the bar in terms of quality which many department stores lack in.

Figure 4: Ka de We shoe floor

Observation: Lodenfrey – 8 June 2016

Lodenfrey is a high-end department store located in Munich, Germany. It is of the highest of stature for shopping but despite the price tags, it is still widely popular in Germany. The store was polished, clean, and completely organized. Nothing was out of place, yet it felt comfortable and welcoming. The racks had limited sizes meaning patrons were required to reach out to a sales associate for a specific size and style of a garment to try on. Once the size and style were selected, an associate would take a ticket with those details to the back where the garment would be pulled. At a front desk, the garment would be already wrapped and freshly prepared. The experience was clean, professional
and stylish. Through this observation, it became clear of the importance quality and customer service in German society.

**Observation: Carpet Factory**

In Jaipur, India, the group toured and observed a carpet manufacturer. Inside the building, we walked through the entire rug making process, starting with a demonstration on print dying. The dying process involves using a variety of hand carved blocks dipped in water then pressed on canvas. The process creates beautiful art all the while it is tedious, time consuming, and detail oriented. Inside the studio, we met rug weavers who spend hours sitting on wooden benches tying knots in the rugs. Each rug is made by hand and depicts a variety of motifs and designs. We were given the opportunity to learn to make a knot in the rug and cut it; the process was creative yet tedious and required a great amount of skill and coordination (Figure 5-6). The rug is put under a torch to burn off lint and creates a finished shine. Once a rug is finished, it is taken to the wash basin where a worker dumps buckets of water onto it, scrubs it down, then repeats the same process until it is completely clean. The factory exports an extensive number of products including block printed textiles and handmade rugs (Figure 7). This observation provided a clear insight into the production methods, India is the home of handmade silk rugs.
Figure 5: Rug maker

Figure 6: The researcher testing rug making
II. Interviews

Interviews were conducted at specific locations based on availability of the professors and randomly people at the local printing factories, retail markets, and garment outlook. This was the best method possible as the individuals selected for interviews were directly involved and knowledgeable about the fashion industry. Table number three outlines the interviews conducted in India for my research.

Table 3: Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>People interviewed</th>
<th>Length of time</th>
<th>Interview Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 17, 2017</td>
<td>Delhi, India: Pearl Academy</td>
<td>Prasanna Barusah, Associate Professor, and fashion students</td>
<td>Two hours</td>
<td>Appendix A; Section 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 18, 2017</td>
<td>Jaipur, India: Streets of Pink Palace</td>
<td>Textile store owners and tailors</td>
<td>Two hours</td>
<td>Appendix A; Section 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21, 2017</td>
<td>Delhi, India: Streets of Delhi</td>
<td>Street vendor</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Appendix A; Section 3</td>
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</table>
First Interview: Pearl Academy, New Delhi

The interactions began at Pearl Academy, New Delhi with Professor and Course Leader, Prasanna Barusah. He introduced us to Professor Dhaka who guided the students through various student projects which focused on sustainability as he understood that was the platform of my investigation. The first student collection was designed by a student who is a member of the Rajput royal family. Her collection research was built upon her family life growing up with rules for royal woman attire. She believed in preserving the structure and integrity of this culture while fusing it with women power dress. Sustainability was more than just saving water or using organic material rather it is the process of preserving culture. She used the process of hand painting traditional Indian motifs on top of nontraditional, western-women trousers and ancient forms of resist dyeing with traditional royal family garments (Figure 8). She had an extensive progress portfolio in which she had hand written each aspect of her report to continue with the ancient aesthetic in her work (Figure 9-10). This amalgam of time-honored fashion with modern style is how India regards sustainability.
Figure 8: Hand painted motifs

Figure 9: Student’s design portfolio
Figure 10: Designer combined portfolio with garments

The second student’s work focused on the symbolism of “transferring into something.” Her process followed the transformation of life and connected that into garments. In the collection, the designer used square cut pattern pieces creating zero waste garments (Figure 11). With the same pattern pieces, the designer stitched several different mock ups of tunics transforming one look to a completely exclusive aesthetic design piece with a few simple changes. Sizing was adjusted with gussets for movement practicality in addition to creating a more fitted garment. Darts, pleats, and various seams were added for form, function, and aesthetic beauty. The student designer was able to prove that sustainable fashion does not need to be complex for it to be beautiful; fashion can be created out of nothing and transformed into something functional and aesthetically
pleasing. These zero waste designs, provide a sustainable multifunctional alternative to fast fashion.

Figure 11: Example of designer’s transferable design

Dhaka described the four areas in which to build a sustainable economy (2017):

1. Raw materials: Creating the materials to produce garments and textiles is highly taxing on the environment. The environment is under harsh jurisdiction in terms of the use of pesticides, water waste, and chemicals for synthetic materials. Organic production of kala cotton produced only in India and authentically growing and producing materials is the foundation of a sustainable product.

2. Production: The means in which the materials are produced changes whether an organic material is still considered organic or if it changes the entire face of the product. Using vast amounts of fresh water to dye yarn. This dye is later deposited as harsh chemicals into local waterways which harms the surrounding environment including people, animals, and the planet. People also play a vital
role in production. Workers are subject to harsh work environments to make enough money to feed their families which it is rarely enough. Deconstruction the production processed by focusing on energy, water, and keeping organically made materials as sustainable as possible.

3. Supply chain: Supply chain management focuses on the people, transportation, and total interaction the product undergoes from the beginning till the end when it reaches consumer’s hands. Transportation is a process. Carbon emissions while exporting or importing materials whether by train, plane, or bus to get to the destination can emit tons of carbon into the air in a brief time span. Companies are able to demise this vicious cycle by producing locally or using the most environmentally friendly transportation route. In the realm of people, labor laws are not strictly enforced meaning the garments you make and pay for may be the product of a worker who is sexually harassed or may even die from working in a faulty manufacturing plant.

4. Multifunctionality: Products that have multiple uses get more wear than those products deemed for one specific purpose. In the garment realm, classic pieces such as a little black dress or camping pants that can turn into shorts have more function than a trendy floral romper. Focusing on creating garments which have a greater purpose besides being a piece of clothing is the face of sustainable fashion.

The interview was concluded by asking students in the Pearl Academy how they viewed incidents such as the Rana Plaza disaster. Students stated, “The United States and
obviously have been outraged. And while it is sad when it happens, it happens often. So
just as people in the West are not surprised when another shooting happens, the same
happens here with factories collapsing: it’s just another one to add to the list.”

Second Interview: Pink Palace, Jaipur, India - 18 May 2017

Interviews continued outside the Pink Palace in Jaipur, India where we visited the
central mall of Jaipur, which appeared to be more like a strip mall with several rows
devoted to textiles. The researcher was fascinated with one shop in particular as two old
men were sitting at industrial sewing machines in the intense dry heat piecing together
garments. The shop behind them held three walls stacked high with varying silks, sarees
and mock garments which could be tailored. The interview began with questions directed
towards the older man sewing a saree (Figure 12). When asked if he enjoyed his job, he
said, “I have been doing this since I was eight years old. If I didn’t enjoy it, I wouldn’t be
here.” When asked about the logistics of their business, they explained that they take
measurements of each patron and, quote them for either a complete item or tailoring a
garment preconstructed in the shop. They have it done within a day in which the patron
either waits at the shop or it is delivered to them (Figure 13). Around their machines,
several small scraps of fabric littered the floor including a bag they occasionally put
pieces into. They said they take the scraps of fabric and either make pillows, shawls or
something out of it, otherwise they have no choice but to throw them away since the
pieces can be so miniscule.

It was then asked how they keep competition at bay since every corner seems to
have the same amount of goods to sell. He described their loyal customer base which
keeps them open for life, but the biggest problem is with the new generation. The upcoming generation of business owners are focused these days on making the most amount of money rather than keeping their customers happy; for example, he said younger business owners will give their customers a higher quote saying they need to pay for more fabric. They will then take that extra fabric and sell it on the market getting double the amount of money. To reduce waste and keep their customers trust, this family only cuts the amount they need and keeps their word. The seventh generation even saw their first college graduate who is married and has a young son who will someday be part of the eight generation. Their prosperity acts as evidence to how trust and socially responsible business keeps these historic cultures alive and well (Figure 14).

Figure 12: Older tailor at shop
Third Interview: Streets of Delhi - 27 May 2017

On the streets of Delhi, individuals sell souvenirs, textiles, and other materials to individuals walking on the streets. Tourists are easily pulled over to the shops as sellers
provide deals on cheap goods to these individuals. A random interview was conducted on a side street where a vendor was selling printed textiles. She had been selling textiles for many years to provide for herself and her family. She receives most of her business through tourists and she picks out which textiles to sell based on demand and picks the cheapest items. If certain textiles never sell, she will put them up for liquidation. When asked, she described the hardest part being the environment in terms of logistics. In 2010, they would sell out of a box, but the government made it illegal. Later, they provided the vendors with lockers, so they could have storage, but people do not shop in the heat and by the time the sun goes down there is no light for them to sell. When observing the surrounding area of the shop, one would see a large, wooden shed stuffed with textiles and goods. Each shop had a lock and a large tree covered the area to provide shade.

These interviews provided in some ways an in-depth perspective to the Indian culture. These were starkly different than the evidence provided through group discussions.

III. Group Discussions

Group discussions were conducted in Germany in 2016. While visiting Universities, we were placed with other students and faculty creating a dynamic best fit for group discussions. Table 4 outlines the group discussions performed in Germany that furthered my research.
Table 4: Group discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Group Discussion Personnel</th>
<th>Time length</th>
<th>Discussion Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 31, 2016</td>
<td>UdK; Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>UdK students/faculty; Kent State students/faculty</td>
<td>Three hours</td>
<td>Appendix B; Section 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2, 2016</td>
<td>AMD; Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>UMD students/faculty; Kent State students/faculty</td>
<td>Three hours</td>
<td>Appendix B; Section 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9, 2016</td>
<td>Reutlingen, Germany: Reutlingen University</td>
<td>Kent State University students/faculty, Reutlingen students/faculty</td>
<td>Two hours</td>
<td>Appendix B; Section 3</td>
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</table>

**Group Discussion I: UdK**

UdK is a Fashion, Design, and Art University located in Berlin, Germany. The group discussion began with UdK’s Director describing the admission process for us to understand how selective and talented students were assigned for us to interact with for our sessions. Secondary education is free for German citizens, but out of the 1,000 applications only 10 to 15 are accepted per academic year. 3 UdK students gave presentations on projects they designed based off their research conducted in Bangladesh (Figure 15).

Student 1: Made garments with tags depicting the name and faces of each person that interacted with the garment. This produces a transparency in the fashion supply chain (Figure 16-17).

Student 2: After examining the waste produced in the garment industry, the student took donated and discarded shirts to create 3 different garments by making strips of fabric (Figure 18).
Student 3: The student made athletic wear out of sustainable materials creating a longer shelf and consumption life.

Their projects focused on sustainability in fashion with an emphasis on using materials and production methods that are feasible in the industry. In the studio areas, each student had their own space to spread out and work (Figure 19). It was beautiful seeing projects frozen in time. The Director emphasized that the students put a heavy focus on sustainability while they design any of their garments (Figure 20).

Figure 15: Entire collections at UdK

Figure 16: Garment tag depicting all individuals working on garment
Figure 17: Garment created with fabric strips

Figure 18: Design space for student
Group Discussion II: AMD; Berlin, Germany

AMD is a design University in Berlin, Germany. Upon entering the building, the faculty explained that it used to be an old factory which survived the war (Figure 21). The Director, Dr. Ingo, led the group discussion. He described the coming trends of the fashion industry including technological advancements, bio fabrics, and consumer behavior analytics. He shared research on German fashion where there is the statement of
“efficiency of design” in which these designers focus on using materials available at the given time and using it to its max potential. In January 2016, Berlin’s Fashion Week had 168 sustainable fashion labels which set the record at that time and the standard for all global Fashion Weeks. Following this presentation, the floor was open for discussion on sustainable fashion and retail in the United States compared to Germany. The following are the researcher’s notes based on the discussion:

**United States:**
- In retail, consumers are pushed by buy goods and to buy them often.
- Clothing options are based on trends and fads, not classics.
- Sales associates are there to keep the store straightened and provide minimal help in the store environment.
- Sustainability is a slow-moving concept. Consumers ask for it, but fast fashion is more prevalent due to the cheap cost of clothing meaning it is bought into more.

**Germany:**
- Fashion is based off classics with a few minor fast fashion retailers.
- The largest fast fashion retailers started in Germany, but they are not necessarily the primary source of retail income. Fast fashion is not as prevalent.
- In retail, the shopping experience is considered “experiential” where the customer is top priority.
- Garments focus on quality and longevity rather than just being “in style.”
Research conducted in Germany included the cities of Reutlingen, Berlin, and Munich in varying fashion institutions. Reutlingen University - a liberal arts and business university located in Reutlingen, Germany - invited us for a group discussion on sustainability in fashion and to tour the facility. The discussion was led by Professor William Perrine and the Director of the Textile and Fashion division of the University. In Germany, sustainability is in the core of their products. As a developed nation, Germany focuses on being simple and timeless. They take pride in their garments and fast fashion is not as big of a deal as it is in the United States. Students native to Germany explained that while fast fashion is accepted, many of the retailers thrive from tourism with a small profit from trendsetting millennials. Others focus on apparel shopping as a mindful activity with purchases made with long term in mind; it is an art form. European fashion
is identified through couture designers and innovative ideas with German fashion was specifically described by students as clean, and classy with an emphasis on outdoor apparel and luxury goods. With luxury comes a price, but students vocalized they would rather pay for one well made, high quality piece than several trendy items. And this is highly evident in German design; Professors stated that Germany is at the forefront of sustainable fashion. In retail, it is all about providing an experience.

The group toured their design studios including five Stoll knit machines, their entire cotton processing area that included other machines which are used to study the supply chain process on a more in-depth level (Figure 22-24). This discussion provided an in depth look on how German’s view sustainable.

Figure 22: Jacquard knit machine at University
Figure 23: Cotton weaving machine

Figure 24: Student design studio space
IV. Survey

To expand data collection and provide objective information, balancing the researcher’s observations, a survey was used to effectively reach individuals studying and interacting with the fashion industry in the United States. The results furthered the case by providing more grounded qualitative research as the observations were largely anecdotal. Table 5 outlines the scope of the survey.

Table 5: Details pertaining to the scope of the survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Dates</th>
<th>Survey Title (Method)</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 19 - Feb. 23, 2018</td>
<td>Perception on Culture and Fashion (Qualtrics)</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>Appendix D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey focused on studying how people in the Kent State Fashion School viewed fashion from varying cultures and nationalities and defined it. The survey was developed and guided by information collected in primary and secondary sources. Through Qualtrics, four block topics were created to segment assorted topics of fashion: demographics, shopping behavior and fashion taste, sustainable fashion, and their perceived problems within the American fashion industry.

Demographic questions were created to primarily gather data on the age, gender, and ethnicity of the participant. Shopping behavior and fashion taste were based on understanding what is important for shoppers and how they are influenced by various elements such as comfort, aesthetic, and price. It also provides evidence on the likelihood the participant is susceptible to impulse purchases including the reasoning why certain clothes are purchased including weather and heritage. Sustainable fashion questions were
created to illustrate the American fashion viewpoint in contrast to India and Germany. Group discussions and interviews provided evidence that the term “sustainability” has varying definitions which made it important to recognize how American’s define it. This led into questions on the participant’s perception on the fashion industry; questions included how fashion effects culture, identity, ethnic groups, and the fast fashion’s overall influence in a participant’s life. The final block asked participants to use their own words to answer various questions. Through the researcher’s literature review, it became evident that there was a lacking definition of American fashion which led me to inquiring what fashion students believed the definition was, the problems found in the industry, and practical solutions. These elements gave data pertaining to American fashion allowing it to be compared with India and Germany.

There was a total response of 138 individuals with 98.55% between the ages 18 and 24, and 1.45% between the ages of 35 to 44. The greatest nationality represented was American followed by with India, Russia, Italy, and China. 48% of respondents suggested that they shopped primarily at fast fashion retailers with garment type and garment aesthetic ranking as most important while shopping. Quality was ranked as 3 out of 5 in importance with brand name as the least important when purchasing clothing. When deciding what to wear, 39% of participants based it on weather followed closely by 34% focusing on comfortability. These answers were followed by participants defining American fashion and sustainability in the states. The top word choices when asked to describe American fashion were comfortable, trendy, fast, and casual.
Participants provided unique insight to the topic including the following responses selected as examples by the researcher:

“Americans try and be ‘unique’ but usually all end up dressing very similar.”

“American fashion does not take that many risks. I run into more people who are ‘unfashionable’ than ‘fashionable’. However, I think we are making things that most people wear (like athleisure) fashionable by accessorizing with hoops earrings and necklaces. I think the average American knows what they like to wear and is not experimental. I also believe that most Americans are not in touch with, are cynical towards, or do not understand ‘high fashion.’”

“American fashion is always out for the next best thing we are product driven society who doesn't always care about the impact it has on the environment as long as it is the next best thing.”

“American fashion has become focused almost solely on comfort. Sweatpants, hoodies, and sneakers are the new American staples. Sweatpants in particular are increasingly acceptable in more social situations.”

These definitions have provided a different perspective into how individuals view the fashion industry.

Survey results have provided a variety of information regarding the definition of American fashion and the problems found in America’s fashion industry. The data collected from various sources and the final survey results helped further to define American fashion, and in answering the research question.
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCOVERIES

Data was gathered from scholars, articles, surveys, observations, interviews, and group discussions to find answers to the research question. In the following paragraphs, I answer the research question based on data from various sources. The thesis revolved around answering how American fashion has impacted the traditional apparel industry in certain regions of the world.

Fast fashion has affected culture in certain areas of the world as it has impacted the value of craft and art in fashion. Craft is about being a part of a community, a connection and it is also about individuality (Faud, 2009). But this sense of community has been affected by increased consumption patterns and a power shift from manufacturers to the retailers. Consumption in the United States is explained by author Chapman (2003) stating that, “By halting or reducing consumption we call into question our deeply held beliefs of ‘western progress’ and our sense of social and cultural relevance.” Consumers are told to “buy fast, buy now” or it will be gone, creating the sense of urgency which is furthered through branding and marketing. Nathaniel Beard (2008) states how branding has become so ingrained and important to consumers that the product itself lacks in substance. This cycle has led to consumers anticipating these sales and the lack of originality meaning they are more willing to wait for it to hit the sales rack. This behavior has led to a disconnect between the value created when purchasing garments and the impact they have on the environment (p. 450).

The effects of fast fashion in various regions of the world are also evident through observations and discussions with individuals in these countries. In India, the shop
keepers in the streets of the Pink Palace communicated how the new generation of textile and garment shop owners lie to their customers. Furthermore, street vendors in Delhi received most of their business from tourists, requiring them to purchase the cheapest textiles possible to keep the demand. At AMD, it was vocalized that the differences in retail between Germany and the United States is that fast fashion is highly prevalent in the US. In contrast, Germany has fast fashion techniques, but it is not the main source of income.

This has led to the importance to understand sustainability, fashion, and craft in various fashion cultures. To begin, the researcher focused on how societies defined their country’s style of fashion and their definition of sustainability. American fashion can be defined as comfortable, informal wear with a focus on trends prevalent at the time, mostly known through cheap garments and fast fashion. The comfortable and informal garments are ones that move with the wearer, stretch, breathe, and are occasionally shapeless. The materials are heavily focused on polyester, spandex, and synthetic fabrics that are unsustainable in nature. This definition is further based off 30.4% of the survey respondents selecting the word “trendy” and 28% selecting “comfortable” to describe American fashion. In addition, respondents of the survey repeatedly stated that they would define American fashion as fast, “last call” fashion, and generally unsustainable. One participant stated, “American fashion is always out for the next best thing. We are product driven society who do not always care about the impact it has on the environment as long as it is the next best thing.” As fashion defines culture, time, and identity,
understanding the definition of American fashion ultimately provides solutions to the problems facing this industry.

This further led to the definition of American’s idea of sustainability. 33% of survey respondents agreed that they feel knowledgeable about sustainable fashion and believe that the American fashion industry has problems that are currently unsustainable. When asked to define these problems, it was made clear that a clear majority link America’s unsustainable fashion industry to money and profit hungry corporations. Authors Kunz and Garner (2011) illustrate how money has also been a driving force behind the fashion industry as retail and wholesale gross margins have continually increased from 1970 to 2008. As a developed country, the United States is evidently strong in the economic center as businesses continue to grow and expand, especially with the rise of fast fashion.

India’s fashion is traditional as it has withstood thousands of years as evident by the saree worn by women (Wilkinson-Weber, 2013). The garments reflect religion, social class, and are symbolic to various geographic regions providing a wealth of knowledge from the wearer. This has led to India’s definition of sustainability as a means of preserving culture. This is evident by interviews held at the Pearl Academy as one student fused western women’s power dress and her royal family’s motif into her garments. As western culture has continued to penetrate this area of the world through manufacturing and outsourcing, being able to keep traditional garments and practices has been crucial to India. Society and culture is at the center of this geographic location.
Germany is deeply rooted in innovation and designing with practically and the environment in mind. Garments are cutting edge, classy, and stylish. Pieces are strong in quality, setting themselves apart from other global retailers. Store observations have revealed that individuals, primarily in Berlin and Munich, are mindful of their purchases as they invest thought into the function, fit, and practicality of a garment. They would rather take the time and money to invest in a few great pieces that are timeless than on fast fashion apparel. In group discussions, students articulated how German design is constantly focuses on minimalism and innovation to make the planet better. Sustainability in these parts of Germany focuses heavily on the environment.

These findings have led to the discovery that these three countries are starkly different in their perspectives regarding sustainability. This observation has led the researcher to recognize that there is a connected relationship between the country’s age and their perspectives towards culture and heritage. For example, India represents ancient civilization and therefore represents culture and artifacts that are traditional in nature. On the next level, Germany which is representative of the Middle Ages and therefore is more sustainable in their creation of design. America being a new country, in comparison to other, is modern which is representative through fast fashion. figure below illustrates this relationship in comparison to each other.

Figure 25: Relationships amongst Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Modern (American)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancient (India)</td>
<td>Germany (Sustainable, Middle Ages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast Fashion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The research found it interesting to note the relationship between the value each country has in the fashion industry and how it aligns with the Triple Bottom Line of sustainability. In sustainability, the Triple Bottom Line is a framework to measure performances in three areas: society (people), economy (profits), and environment (Elkington, 1994). Through these three countries, each definition found in the triple bottom line is highlighted. The figure below demonstrates this:

**Figure 26: Triple Bottom Line and Countries**

In this model, it illustrates how the triple bottom line is transferred between the three countries and their definition of sustainability. Each country has their own strengths and inherent weaknesses which has led to an unbalanced fashion industry. Historically, the United States is great at business. This begs the question of what if the US were to combine varying perspectives of sustainability from other countries and their traditional values? For example, the US could take India’s long lasting cultural stances and Germany’s perspective of design with America’s business practices into the fashion industry.
In present day American society, quality has decreased through an increase in quantity with a heavy focus towards profits. If one component is not in balance with the others, then it leads to over domination of another component; thereby, creating an unstable equilibrium. This in turn, can lead to disintegration of societal values and in some cases, total obliteration of inherent culture. This obliteration of culture is found through the concept of craft in fashion. In India, production of traditional items, such as sarees, struggle to compete against western fashion trends (Wilkinson-Weber, 2013).

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS
Humans never have been confined to their perspective geographical borders. They have moved, traded, and collaborated to reach a level in society that is present today. Just as clothes are a human need, the same goes for collaboration and communication amongst individuals. People have found that through these environments, it has allowed people to find that each geographical region has its own special identity. It is based on culture, history, beliefs, attitudes, and more importantly it is represented in the clothes individuals wear. For example, people in India wear saree because it is the traditional dress and it is used differently in various parts based on that population’s culture. By recognizing this connection and creating an environment where individuals can collaborate on innovative designs, manufacturing practices, and consumption behaviors, there can be a shift towards a sustainable fashion industry. This industry would focus back on creating local apparel with an emphasis on craft and art.

American fashion is defined as casual, informal, and ultimately unsustainable as constructed through answering the research question. The western world has created blue jeans, athletic apparel and the dominant athleisure trend. While these trends have grown into becoming the definition of western fashion, it has taken a toll on various cultural identities and the sustainable aspect of fashion. America’s fashion industry promotes and pushes cheap and convenient “casual” clothing onto consumers to buy as fast as possible. This form of consumerism is highly destructive on a global scale.

The solution to this is a closed loop, collaborative sustainable fashion system. In this system, sustainable fashion includes preserving the innate culture of a society and its people today and for future generations to come. It has the ability to create a middle
ground where people can purchase the casual and informal wear they desire, the planet can be protected, and cultural attire can be worn proudly. This is evident in some countries like India and Germany. India’s sustainable fashion involves preserving a culture while in Germany, it is a means of designing clothes that are timeless, responsibly made through the entire supply chain, and aesthetically pleasing. If this model is adopted, sustainable fashion will enter a new dimension and United States will be able to pioneer and preserve cultural identities. This model is demonstrated in the figure below:

In this model, it illustrates the collaborative, sustainable model based on the Triple Bottom Line. In this environment, it takes three distinct countries strengths and uses other countries strengths to balance each other’s weaknesses.

The solution stems out to consumers, designers, manufacturers and brands alike. The authors of *Cradle to Cradle* describes this process as designing with nature in mind where each organism is responsible and impactful on a local, individual, and global level. Brands need to start taking risks again. They need to ask questions, breathe creativity, and be authentic. Fast fashion clothing brands use persuasion and advertising to promote their clothing items as a way for consumers to be “sexy, attractive, and beautiful” rather
than authentic and creative. Brands that are passionate about their beliefs and model their business on them are ones that are sustainable in growth. They are inspiring and are not afraid to offend some people to be a voice for change. For an example, brands could follow the thought process of the student designer at UdK of using a transparent garment label. Brands would follow the garment in the entire creation process and connect names and faces behind each step the garment has.

Creativity and authenticity begins with designers as the entire supply chain stems off the garment’s design. Inspiration can come from a variety of sources as evident by India and Germany where tradition and sustainability collide. As Agins (1999) suggested, when a designer puts emotion and creativity behind their clothing, it creates an emotional connection to the consumer. Culture becomes restored through this emotional attachment. Slowing down the process of creating and designing clothes puts quality and pride behind the garments made which is found through other cultural attire; there is a story placed behind each piece that is made. Through investments in new sustainable technology and designing with culture in mind, the negative connotation of American fashion can change to one that is positive; culture in the United States would stem from garments designed with craft and sustainability at the forefront. Creating items that follow a closed loop cycle where they do not go straight to landfill but are continually reused is ultimately sustainable.

While cutting costs, manufacturers and brands are losing money rather than making it. Creating low quality goods that are quickly throw away means more garments need to be created quickly. Garment workers are having to cut corners in their own lives
in order to survive on low living wages and the planet suffers drastically. Investing in new manufacturing practices such as dry dying and valuing traditional manufacturing techniques, like the block dying in India, add more creativity and value in a garment. Manufacturers that think with the short term in mind will lose in the end as resources become depleted and consumers shift their demand towards sustainable garments. Having empathy and understanding between retailers and manufacturers on an international platform breeds acceptance and responsibility for the products and people involved.

Consumers are just as much responsible for the choices made in the fashion industry as manufacturers, politicians, and brands. Consumers need to demand sustainable clothing outlets, fair trade practices, and support creativity. By spending garments less often and being individualist in one’s approach in purchasing garments will show the fashion industry that there is a demand for more sustainable solutions. In Germany, fast fashion is prevalent, but couture items are even more valuable as consumers and brands understand the implications of focusing on the long term.

Trend research found through forecasting companies like WGSN recognizes that there is a great expanse of knowledge and awareness towards sustainable fashion. It is a step in the right direction, but it is important for companies to acknowledge that this needs to be more than just a trend, rather it needs to be holistically integrated into the company. At a TEDx talk in Sydney, Australia, Clara Vuletich states it plainly that sustainable fashion is essentially about values. Consumers must decide what they value as they shop. Based off my survey results, it is evident that consumers value garment aesthetic, but it is important to think deeper than that when one is shopping. Do you value
the environment, the economy, and society? At what cost would you go against these values; would you break them for a $5 t-shirt? The same goes for designers as they create the garments sold in stores. As a garment is created and sewn, it falls into the hands of a garment worker somewhere in the world. Then, the question that needs to be added is: are that garment worker’s needs met and her values recognized as they are creating the garment being designed? By looking deeper into ourselves as we shop, create, and look at the fashion industry, placing values on sustainability will continue to drive the sustainable initiative needed to repair this industry.

There are abundant solutions and recommendations that can be made for designers, manufacturers, consumers, and brands that are found in a variety of scholarly articles. The importance behind all of this is that the fashion industry will continue to grow and will be a global industry; in this model, empathy, collaboration, and understanding of others will be the future of creating a sustainable business model in the fashion industry. The consumerist society will decline with more time and money spent towards other critical issues, related to creating a sustainable planet. Society will soon become proud to be a part of the American fashion industry as the US starts to create the building blocks of a sustainable platform for fashion. We all wear clothes. We may not love or appreciate the fashion industry, but no matter where we come from, what culture we associate with, or what the color of our skin is, clothing is a human need. When society begins to appreciate clothes for its beauty and the relationships it creates through verbal and nonverbal communication, fast fashion will transition to the sustainable fashion industry it is meant to be.
Future research could involve selecting three other countries. When selecting countries, it would focus on selecting three different and geographically various locations. It would also be possible for a set of questions to be created to be asked for each interview and group discussion. This would provide more structured data.
References


Appendix - A/B/C/D

The following Appendix items are detailed information and transcriptions from interviews, group discussions, surveys, and observations

Appendix A:

Section 1: Delhi, India: Pearl Academy

Q: Can you show us work that focuses on sustainable fashion?
A: Yes! We have a variety of work. This designer is part of a royal family in India. In her portfolio she goes into depth showing how she combined western power dress with the traditional methods of motif work. She hand painted and wrote everything found in her portfolio. She wanted to emphasize the mesh between tradition and modernity while preserving culture. If you look at her design work, it is the family motif and is painted on all of her pieces to form a connection.

Q: What is considered sustainable fashion in India?
A: Sustainability is primarily preserving culture. As you see how she is preserving her family traditions by keeping the motifs and dress code, the same goes for most Indian fashion. It is changing with the western world, but we still keep the same values as we design.

Q: How has design changed with the western world coming to India for manufacturing?
A: A lot has changed. We have markets with second hand clothing coming in from the United States and that has shakin things up a little bit in regards to what clothes we wear which is why sustainability focuses on preserving culture. In sustainability, there are four
main pillars: raw materials, production, supply chain, and multifunctional. Without these four items then a sustainable environment in the fashion industry cannot be met.

Q: With the Rana Plaza disaster and other factories collapsing, how has the industry responded here or felt about it?

A: The United States and main headquarters have obviously been outraged. And while it is sad when it happens, it happens often. So just as people in the west are not surprised when another shooting happens, the same happens here with factories collapsing: it’s just another one to add to the list.

- Moving on to another student project.

A: This student’s project is called Vrtta which is Hindi for “transferring into something.” She took the same sheet of fabric and made a zero waste design. She found over a dozen different ways to add gussets, move darts, and shape the fabric so it created zero waste but still made a beautiful garment. This is a prime example of sustainable fashion. It is sustainable in the sense of having zero waste, but is also traditional in the final product.
Appendix B: Interview Jaipur, India: Textile store owners and tailors

Interview 1: Tailors

Q: Do you like your job?
A: I have been doing this since I was 5 years old. If I didn’t enjoy it, I wouldn’t be here.

Q: What is the process of people coming to you for tailoring?
A: We take measurements of each patron, quote them for either a complete item or tailoring a garment preconstructed in the shop. We have it done within a day in which they either wait for it or we deliver it to them.

Q: What do you do with the scraps of fabric?
A: We do our best to make items out of the scraps, but when a scrap is really small, we have no choice but to throw it away.

Interview 2: Store owners

Q: How long have you been in business?
A: We have been in business for 7 generations. We are family owned and operated and always have been.

Q: There is an intense amount of competition on each street corner. How do you keep your business going with this amount of competition?
A: We have a strong level of brand loyalty with families that have been coming to us for years. We have grown with them just like they have grown with us. They spread word which continues to help us as we grow.

Q: What do you find to be problematic in this industry?
A: The younger generation. The new wave of business owners are focused heavily on making the most amount of money rather than keeping their customers happy. Younger business owners will give their customers a higher quote saying they need to pay for more fabric. They will then take that extra fabric and sell it on the market getting double the amount of money.

Q: How have you responded to this?
A: To reduce waste and keep their customers trust, we only cuts the amount needed and we keep our word.

Section 3: Delhi, India: Street Vendor

Q: How long have you been selling textiles for?
A: For many years.

Q: How did you get started with this?
A: I needed to sell these in order to make a living.

Q: Where do you get the textiles from?
A: I purchase them from a wholesaler and whatever doesn’t sell, I sell at a liquidation price.

Q: How do you decide what to purchase?
A: I pick based off demand and what’s the cheapest.

Q: Do you enjoy what you do?
A: Yes

Q: What is the hardest part?
A: The environment. In 2010, we would sell out of a box, but the government made it illegal. Later, they provided us with lockers so we can have storage, but people don’t shop in the heat and by the time the sun goes down there is no light for us to sell.

Q: Who are your biggest customers:

A: Tourists. I sell to some locals, but most of my merchandise is sold to tourists.
Appendix C:

Section 1: UdK; Berlin, Germany

The group discussion began with UdK’s Director describing the admission process. Secondary education is free for Germany citizens, but out of the 1,000 applications only 10 to 15 are accepted. 3 UdK students gave presentations on projects they designed based off their research conducted in Bangladesh.

Student 1: Made garments with tags depicting the name and faces of each person that interacted with the garment. This produces a transparency in the fashion supply chain.

Student 2: After examining the waste produced in the garment industry, the student took shirts and created 3 different garments by making strips of fabric from the shirts.

Student 3: The student made athletic wear out of sustainable materials creating a longer shelf and consumption life.

Their projects focused on sustainability in fashion with an emphasis on using materials and production methods that are feasible in the industry. In the studio areas, each student had their own space to spread out and work. It was beautiful seeing projects frozen in time. The Director emphasized that the students put a heavy focus on sustainability while they design any of their garments.

Section 2: UMD; Berlin, Germany

UMD is a design University in Berlin, Germany. Their building used to be an old factory which survived the war. The Director, Dr. Ingo, led the discussion. He described
the coming trends of the fashion industry including technological advancements, bio fabrics, and consumer behavior analytics. The floor was open for discussion on sustainable fashion and retail in the United States compared to Germany. The following are overview notes based off of the discussion:

**United States:**
- In retail, consumers are pushed by buy a lot and to buy often.
- Clothing options are based off of trends and fads, not classics.
- Sales associates are there to keep the store straightened and provide minimal help in the store environment.
- Sustainability is a slow moving concept. Consumers ask for it, but fast fashion is more prevalent due to the cheap cost of clothing meaning it is bought into more.

**Germany:**
- Fashion is based off of classics with a few minor fast fashion retailers.
- The largest fast fashion retailers started in Germany, but they are not necessarily the primary source of retail income. Fast fashion is not as prevalent.
- In retail, the shopping experience is considered “experiential” where the customer is top priority.
- Garments focus on quality and longevity rather than just being “in style.”

**Section 3: Reutlingen, Germany: Reutlingen University**

Reutlingen University invited us for a group discussion on sustainability in fashion and to tour the facility. The discussion was led by William Perrine and the Director of the Textile and Fashion division of the University. In Germany, sustainability
is in the core of their products. As a developed nation, Germany focuses on being simple and timeless. They take pride in their garments and fast fashion is not as big of a deal as it is in the United States. In retail, it is all about providing an experience. We toured their design studios including 5 Stoll knit machines, an entire cotton processing area, and other machines which are used to study the supply chain process on a more in depth level.
Appendix D:

Section 1: Ka de We Store Observation

This expensive department store is home to several major brands and is the largest department store in Germany. Our group received a private tour of the entire department store including Men’s, Women’s, Home, Children, Pet, Shoe Heaven - home to thousands of different pairs of shoes, Accessories, Makeup, Travel, and others as it expanded over 6 floors. She explained that the rich and famous ask for personal shoppers when they come to Ka de We while most of their business comes from tourists. The items on sale were of the highest quality receiving luxury status. There was an abundance of goods and items, but it never felt overwhelming as each section was distinctively labeled and separated from the other areas. The brands emulated quality and stature.

Section 2: Stoll Knit Factory

Stoll Knit Factory produces Stoll Knit machines on a global scale while also producing innovative knit products. The tour began at their Corporate building where we viewed the various machines they produce and the advancements they are making in design with the machines. Items included the new knit shoe by Nike, home decor products, and high quality, seamless garments. The Stoll knit machines are able to produce knit pieces in a matter of minutes on a more economically and environmentally friendly level. We were transported to the Production Plant where the machines are produced. The environment was loud as our guide was inaudible through most of the tour. As we wandered the plant, we were mostly aware of how much water waste and
metal shavings that were wasted during the production process. We contemplated how the factory could recycle these materials in their manufacturing supply chain.

**Section 3: Munich, Germany: AMD**

We toured AMD Design studio in Munich, Germany. The building used to be the horses stables during WWII, but was flipped to fit the AMD’s purposes. We were presented with two student group projects that focused on sustainability.

Student Group 1: The first group used seaweed farms to help replace meat and cut down on the meat processing plants.

Student Group 2: The second group was an app where you scan the food barcode then an alarm reminds you when it is about to expire and gives recipes on how to cook it.

These students were fashion students with a focus on finding sustainable alternatives in and out of the fashion realm.

**Section 4: Lodenfrey Store Observation**

Lodenfrey is a high end department store located in Munich, Germany. The racks had limited sizes meaning patrons were required to reach out to a sales associate for a specific size and style of a garment to try on. Once the size and style was selected, an associate would take a ticket with those details to the back where the garment would be pulled. At a front desk, the garment would be already wrapped and freshly prepared. The experience was clean, professional and stylish.