

SA2045 Original Monologue

The Problems of Fast Fashion

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Introduction

Did you know that clothing stores like Urban Planet, Bluenotes, and Forever 21 are all part of the same company? These stores are all fast fashion brands. Fast fashion is like fast food. After the sugar rush, it just leaves a bad taste in your mouth because you know it causes environmental damage. These brands contribute to this massive environmental damage and in this speech, I will be telling you all about fast fashion starting from what it means to how you guys as consumers of the industry, can solve these problems.

First, load up your cart with some information about fast fashion. Next, before you press check out, let's go over the problems. Finally, don't get your wallet out until you finish listening to the solutions on how we can fix the problems of fast fashion.

Fast fashion is inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends.

This type of fashion is characterised by mass manufacturing with lower quality materials as a cheap alternative for these trends.

Fast fashion first started in the late 1990s and 2000's which was when online shopping first took off and fashion retailers like Zara, H&M, Topshop, etc. took over the fashion industry.

This occurs because it allows retailers to manufacture and sell clothes at a quick speed so that people can get clothes on time for social status reasons. The production system drives forward to new trends in clothing. The system was built for the sole aim of getting clothes to customers as quickly as possible. This means that customers would be forced to shop more because of the products that come and go so fast.

2nd Body Paragraph

Problem: Pollute the environment

Although there are benefits of fast fashion, there are many more problems. The problem I will be talking about is pollution. Fast fashion became common because of cheaper, speedier manufacturing, and the increase in consumer purchasing power among young people. To fulfil the customer's desires, fashion retailers introduce new products often to stay on "trend".

Man-made synthetic materials like polyester, acrylic, and nylon are highly popular. The fashion industry is interested in these types of materials because of its availability, durability, resistance, and affordability. The bad thing about polyester

is that the fabric releases chemicals like phthalates, which is an industrial chemical used to soften polyvinyl chloride- into the air when touched with the skin. Moreover, acrylic materials are bad because the process of manufacturing them causes very bad environmental pollution. Importantly, even though fast fashion is good for availability, durability, and resistance, the fact that this is changing and killing the environment does not change. Not only does the “fast” in fast fashion speed up the process of production, but it also speeds up the pollution in the world we are living in today.

How large of an effect is this going to have?

Avagyan, Rozanna, et al. “Benzothiazole, Benzotriazole, and Their Derivatives in Clothing Textiles-a Potential Source of Environmental Pollutants and Human Exposure - Environmental Science and Pollution Research.” *SpringerLink*, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 25 Oct. 2014, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11356-014-3691-0>

One of the greatest concerns that come from fast fashion is that when manufactured, washed, and worn, ... tiny plastic fibres end up in the environment and those [do] not biodegrade. Instead, it fragmentizes into smaller pieces. Primary microplastics are directly released into the environment. This is so important because the little microfibers increase the pollution levels everywhere, like the air we breathe, and the land and water where living things live.

3rd Body Paragraph

Solution: Make Good Choices When Buying Clothes

What can be done about this on a large scale?

Sustain your clothing says in 2020:

Williams, Lisa. “How Can We Reduce Our Fashion Environmental Impact.” *SustainYourStyle*, SustainYourStyle, <https://www.sustainyourstyle.org/en/reducing-our-impact> .

Because clothes have become so cheap, we no longer care as much about quality. “Humans just buy new garments when the ones we have lose their shape or appeal.”

Additionally, we have all had the experience of buying clothing or a pair of shoes and facing disappointment when two months later, they already look old or have holes in them.

If we stop buying poor quality clothing, it will push brands to improve the quality of their garments. It will also allow us to keep our clothes longer, which is good for our wallets and the environment.

By partaking in this change, more and more fashion brands will take into account the environmental and social impact of their production. Pricewise, you will pay more for sustainable clothing than in a fast fashion shop, but now we know what lies behind those very low prices. Besides, sustainable brands will not necessarily cost more than brand-name clothing, for which we sometimes pay high prices for the image, but rarely for the quality or the sustainability.

Most of the clothes people use these days consist of synthetic, non-biodegradable fibre and will just pile up in the landfill. Instead of throwing them out, repair them, donate your clothes to your friends, family, neighbours, or charity. Some clothes shops take used clothes from specific brands. These days, the thrifting trend has also started to address this concern, so this can be a great way to both reuse clothes and enjoy the clothes you have. Remember, waste isn't waste until we waste it.

In this speech, I have talked about the problems and solutions of fast fashion. We have to try these solutions **fast** because if we don't try now, later, there might not even be an environment to save. Fast fashion is not free. Someone, somewhere is paying the price. Our world needs our help to develop and sustain throughout all the next generations. However, buying or selling fast fashion will definitely not help this process.