Student Presentations
Natalie Coughlin, Tori Puebla, Lucchina Breneville, Mary Gee, and Gianna Ferrara
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Summary by Gabrielle Baker

Natalie Coughlin presented on the topic of artificial intelligence in fashion designers. Invented in 1955 by Herbert Simon and Allen Newell, artificial intelligence is a "computational program that can perform tasks that are normally characteristics of human intelligence." This includes but is not limited to pattern recognition, planning, understanding language, and problem solving. This is utilized in several different industries such as transportation, but has recently entered the fashion industry. It contributes to the success of the supply chain by improving productivity, identifying upcoming trends, and aids designers in their creative process. Amazon was the first to create an AI fashion designer, which is programmed to analyze images. With the fashion industry being one of the world's largest contributors to pollution, sustainability is on the forefront and AI can potentially help this issue. AI will help fashion brands cut back on waste and costs. There are several advantages to AI such as reducing human error by up to 50 percent. These technologies will only advance moving forward.

The next student presenting was Tori Puebla, discussing the future of fashion shows. Dating back to the 1860s was the first ever fashion show by designer Charles Frederick Worth. From then on, private showings and fashion parades evolved into much larger productions. Virtual fashion shows are becoming the current state of fashion shows, being streamed on Instagram, Tik Tok, and YouTube. Digital fashion is also on the rise, allowing trades and authentications upon the blockchains. Digital fashion shows are proving to be more inclusive, and they reach a larger audience. The future of fashion shows is predicted to be a hybrid of in-person and digital, allowing for more consumer engagement, little to no restrictions, and a sustainable future.

Lucchina Breneville presented diversity in the fashion industry, focusing on race and the body. The ideal body image for women is the "hourglass shape," which is a tiny waist, flat stomach, and larger bust and hips. The ideal body image for heterosexual men is muscular and lean. Social media plays a huge role in the way we perceive our bodies and how we are "supposed" to appear. Some statistics on the topic of race in relation to body image are that Indigenous people are understudied regarding body image, and Black women who experience racial microaggressions tend to have poor body images. Latinx people are also more likely to experience bulimia than their non-Latinx peers. It is important today to distinguish between appropriation and appreciation in fashion. There is a fine line between the two. Body normativity, and education and appreciation in the fashion industry needs to constantly improve for a better, more inclusive future.

Mary Gee presented innovation in the repurposed vintage luxury market. Repurposed vintage luxury is the process in which vintage luxury goods have been reinterpreted/repurposed into a new garment. Something that was once valued is taken and completely transformed into a new object with alternative value. The first form of repurposed clothing in any form was founded with the Salvation Army in 1865. Following the trend of repurposed clothing was the hippies in the 60s/70s, Kurt Cobain and the grunge movement, and vintage shopping in the 1980s. Repurposed goods have several advantages for a sustainable future due to turning waste materials into a new design, which can help contribute to less waste. Moving forward, upcycling needs to be normalized and designers need to continue pulling fabrics and textiles from deadstock instead of investing in new materials. Repurposed vintage luxury has transformed the market and could potentially inspire a different, improved fashion industry.

Lastly, Gianna Ferrara talked about the climate crisis and fashion. By 2030, the damage we have caused to our planet from carbon emissions will be irreversible. One of the leading causes of climate change is due to fast fashion. Clothing brands such as Shein, Zara, and Romwe contribute to the ongoing issue of fast fashion. Not only does this hurt our environment, but the safety of others. Workers undergo inhumane working conditions with absolutely no regulations and are underpaid. Companies like Patagonia, however, are headed in the right direction, "saving the Earth one garment at a time". They focus on recycling their products and attaining zero waste at their own pace. They make gear to last and not fads. Fashion brands hopefully will follow in Patagonia's footsteps for a sustainable future by utilizing sustainable fibers, innovative dyeing, and stopping fast fashion.