

The End of Fashion: The Mass Marketing of the Clothing Business Forever

Teri Agins

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Teri Agins : The End of Fashion: The Mass Marketing of the Clothing Business Forever before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The End of Fashion: The Mass Marketing of the Clothing Business Forever:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great overview of the (business) history of fashionBy Ilya GrigorikFantastic book about the commercial history and the business of fashion as a whole. The author provides a collection of brief historical accounts of all the major brands and labels: how they came to be, a brief introduction to

each designer, and how and why they succeeded, or failed, in the market. Following that, the book also covers the retail side: shift from boutiques to large retailers, to discounters (Target, Walmart), and how each designer dealt with the continuously changing landscape of how clothes are sold and marketed (e.g. role of Hollywood, TV, celebrity endorsements, and so on). Finally, the book covers the 90's craze of fashion IPOs and their outcomes - mixed results, to say the least! As a bonus, the book sprinkles financial and performance figures throughout all of the different chapters. In short, this is a great one-stop-shop overview of the business of fashion - worth checking out even if you're not in the field. My only remaining wish is that I would love to see an update to the book! A decade has passed, and I'd be curious to see how the landscape has changed since, as it surely has...0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a fast and fun read. The one critique is that it seemed ...By katarinaismA crash course in the history of 20th century fashion, Agins takes us on a well researched and drama- filled ride from runway to factory to department store. The book is really about the dramatic changes in fashion production and marketing that took place in the 1960s-1990s. She takes us from the youthquake and rise of street style over exclusive atelier, to the proliferation of mass marketed diffusion lines over haute couture. This is a fast and fun read. The one critique is that it seemed a bit rushed at the end, leaving the reader a bit bedazzled and wanting more.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Informative, but dated.By Jo G.Entertaining read. I bought this without seeing its publication date, which is obviously my fault. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the subject matter, the book is somewhat dated. There have obviously been major fashion industry developments since its publication, especially due to Internet proliferation, but it's excellent for the time in which it came out.

The time when "fashion" was defined by French designers whose clothes could be afforded only by elite has ended. Now designers take their cues from mainstream consumers and creativity is channeled more into mass-marketing clothes than into designing them. Indeed, one need look no further than the Gap to see proof of this. In *The End of Fashion*, Wall Street Journal, reporter Teri Agins astutely explores this seminal change, laying bare all aspects of the fashion industry from manufacturing, retailing, and licensing to image making and financing. Here as well are fascinating insider vignettes that show Donna Karan fighting with financiers, the rivalry between Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger, and the commitment to haute couture that sent Isaac Mizrahi's business spiraling.

From Publishers WeeklyDispensing with the idea that fashion designers are unpredictable geniuses sequestered in creative isolation from vulgar commerce, Agins, who covers the fashion industry for the Wall Street Journal, has taken a long, hard look at style in the '90s and come back with a compelling report on why big business has forever altered what we wear. In seven superbly researched essays, she explains that the designers are currently being challenged to sell essentially the same clothes to a public with increasingly homogenized tastes. "Today's 'branding' of fashion," she writes, "has taken on a critical role [when] just about every store in the mall is peddling the same style of clothes." Brands, in this context, are the designers themselvesAa woman doesn't go shopping for a particular style of dress, but for a "Calvin" or a "Ralph"Aa lifestyle distillation that denotes professional and severe urban minimalism (Calvin Klein) or athletic, American conservatism (Ralph Lauren). The casualties of this trend are the craftsmanlike members of the Old School, as Agins ably demonstrates in essays on fading Parisian haute couture. Liveliest by far is Agins's chronicle of the rivalry between Lauren and the upstart Tommy Hilfiger, who sells clothes nearly identical to Lauren's, but with a hipper edge, captivating black city kids. The influence of Armani on Tinseltown and Donna Karan on Wall Street are also analyzed with verve and clear-sightedness. As glossy fashion magazines increasingly offer fantasies illustrated by advertisements far more often than they deliver journalism, Agins's penetrating dispatch from the rag trade is especially welcome. Photos. (Oct.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalAgins, a veteran fashion reporter for the Wall Street Journal, has written the first factual book on the fashion industry from a business/cultural/social journalist's view. She traces the beginning of couture from the early 20th century in France through all the stages to the present, when consumers set the fashion rules and designers must follow them. Major components of her story include retailers like Marshall Field, Federated Department Stores, Dillards, Nordstrom, and the Gap as well as designers Giorgio Armani, Bill Blass, Ralph Lauren, and Donna Karan. In the end, this story is about the triumph of marketing; Agins demonstrates how changes in our culture, e.g., more casual dress, have changed the fashion business. Filled with insider details and descriptions of the fickle nature of consumers, this book belongs in academic business and fashion collections.ASusan C. Awe, Univ. of New Mexico Lib., Albuquerque Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistIn one of the oddest industries ever to be chronicled, CEOs of IPOs clash with the wishes of their majority shareholders, and luxury conglomerates exist solely by the avarice and greed of fans of their labels. What else but the incestuous fashion world--and who better to chronicle its rise and fall and rise and fall than an independent, objective Wall Street Journal reporter? Agins tells the tales well and thus captures readers' attention, narrating the stories of the Ralph Lauren-Tommy Hilfiger rivalry, the power of celebrity dressing, and the four reasons for the decline of "true" fashion. (One reason is that "people stopped dressing up." Duh!) All of the gossipy details are here, like Donna Karan's legendary hissy fits. So, too, is the business side, such as the wheeling and dealing pre^--Wall Street. Many of the stories, though, remain semidetached, without much of

a connection except the names and the rags industry itself. Barbara Jacobs