

Giovanna Flores  
Final Project  
Ecology

Today's textile industry is accountable for being the third largest consumer of water in the world. [5] The making of clothing consumes an enormous amount of water. Cotton is a key textile that is one of today's "thirstiest crop". [2]. The overproduction of cotton is destructive to fresh water supply due to the overconsumption and pollution of water, which also harms soil and results in disruptions to biological equilibriums because of poor irrigation techniques. Chemicals used in dyeing the cotton along with special finishes, also cause air and water pollution.

I found this ecological concept very moving because clothing is something very present in everyone's life. I do not think that very many people acknowledge the potential change every individual can make with little effort in changing their mentality of the way they purchase the clothing they wear. Most people buy clothing today with a mentality of it being disposable or short lived without taking into account that they are contributing to overconsumption that is detrimental to our ecosystem services. [3] Fashion has become such a fast moving cycle that is far from basic clothing needs [1], people are now expected to keep up with trend and it is important to almost anyone regardless of how fashionable or unfashionable people consider themselves, it is obvious that looking the part is important to the majority. If more people could find ways to repurpose their current wardrobe into one for future seasons and styles it would make a huge impact. Just one tee shirt uses an equivalent amount of water to produce that an average person would drink over the course of three years. [2] If everyone was aware of the damage that textile industry has on our natural resources, I don't think it would be such a desired luxury to have a stocked closet of new clothing.

For my final project I will chose one piece of clothing made of 100 percent cotton and reuse the materials to make a new piece of clothing for summer, solely using the already existing textiles of the before garment. I will leave clues on the garment so that the viewer can infer from looking at the garment that I have recycled clothing to make it. I want to show viewers that with a little effort everyone can have new clothing at little expense to them and our planet. There is a common idea in today's society that the fashion world has made that links the repurposing or wearing of second hand clothing with a 'certain' aesthetic so that people feel insecure or out of place if they don't fit into this genre of people, however repurposing clothing in fact does not put individuals into any subculture, one can still style and recreate clothing to meet their personal taste.

The idea of using and repurposing second hand or individual's own personal clothing not only helps our planets and safes money but also allows the wearer a lot of creative freedom. The new manufactured market currently has the control of saying what's in style and dressing contemporaries. By mix matching and

deconstructing used clothing, the wearer regains control of their personal style and identity. [4]

## Works Cited

1. Black, Sandy. "Ethical Fashion and Ecofashion." : *Berg Fashion Library*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Apr. 2014.

Black talks about the cycle of fashion and how its evolved for the worst in terms of overproduction. She also speaks of the importance in designers hands to change the language that has arisen in fashion, for example 'cheap clothing' in todays society translates into disposable low quality garments.

2. "Cotton and Water." *Protecting People and Planet*. EJ Foundation. 19 Mar. 2014 <<http://ejfoundation.org/cotton/cotton-and-water>>.

In this article I learned about the production of cotton and exactly how much water it takes to produce certain garments, which was really helpful for me to put things in perspective. Its really hard usually to see that even one tee-shirt can do as much harm as it does- and its nice that this talks about not only big scale but something that I can grasp.

2. Norris, Lucy. "Trade and Transformations of Secondhand Clothing: Introduction." *Textile: The Journal of Cloth and Culture* 10.2 (2012): 128-43. Print.

Norris talks about current day second hand clothing and what happens to them if no one buys them in the current market. She gets very into detail about where they go and who usually benefits from them. She truly takes the reader through the birth and death of a garment and is very detailed throughout the stages.

4. Palmer, Alexandra, and Hazel Clark. *Old Clothes, New Looks: Second Hand Fashion*. Oxford: Berg, 2005. Print.  
"Product Ecology." *Product Ecology*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Apr. 2014.

Palmer identifies the issues with the current fashion cycle, similar to sourcer number one. However Palmer takes it beyond the problem and looks at possible solutions along with benefits for the wearer who goes on to find a new life in second hand fashion.

5. "The Water Impact of Fast Fashion." *The Water Impact of Fast Fashion*. 23 Feb. 2011. 21 Mar. 2014 <<http://www.made-by.org/blogpost/water-impact-fast-fashion>>.

This article talks about the enormous and detrimental impacts of water due to the high demand of fast fashion. It does a good job in

laying out graphs and numbers showing the changes the rising demand in fashion has made to the earth's water supply.

Before:



After:





Side



Back

