

Topic 6: Politics & fashion and why companies fail

Politics used in the fashion industry create an awareness on important situations to the world. It can be seen as a bad thing or a good thing. It can be very beneficial in the fashion companies because it can communicate a serious message through a creative way. But it can also be seen in a negative way because it is a very sensitive subject which can drive your consumer base in another direction. Companies and designers like Prabal Gurung, Jonathan Simkhai, Jeremy Scott and Nike has all demonstrate the use of politics in their fashion show. They embrace the political statement and show support in their clothing. But mass markets like JCPenny, Sears and Forever 21 use of politics can eventually lead to a downfall financially.

Fashion designer Prabal Gurung is a perfect example of politics use in his fashion show. He uses it very effectively. He is known for relating messages as a fashion statement. Through his clothing he has empower people. He addresses problems like black lives matter, immigration and his response to the Trump administration. “Many of his designs wore feminist statements on their sleeves, including a silk dress elegantly scripted with famous speeches by Susan B. Anthony and other revolutionary women” (Hua, K. 2017) This use of the politics help him connect with his consumer and create an image for his brand. The use of politics is great content use to help his consumers to stay engaged in the company. So this is very beneficial in his company.

Another designer that use politics very effectively is known as Jonathan Simkahi. Just like Gurung, after Trump administration situation he decided to embrace feminism. He created his whole line in 2017 to show support to women. All of his clothing was very graphic to show

his message clearly. This article “In this new era, politics is on trend on the runways at New York Fashion Week” it stated that “With women across the globe asserting their right to equality,” read the show notes, “Simkhai felt the need to create a look that would mirror the fortitude of their voices.” In case the sentiment was lost on anyone, the designer took his runway bow wearing a T-shirt bearing the slogan, “Feminist AF.” It worked perfectly in his company because it grabs consumer attention and help them to engage into more to what they can offer.

After researching these two brands I can see designers like Gurung and Simkhai beneficial use of politics help their company. It creates a message and show where they stand in the political world. It helps their consumer to embrace in their belief and freedom. The politics creates a connection between the buyer and seller where it can become personal relations. A brand that can understand your perspective encourage your support on its business. I believe it is the perfect platform to make a stance.

Mass markets like Forever 21 can fall in hoop when including politics because unlike the designers they do not have a platform to create a fashion show but to just use their advertisement. It can interpret their message differently. As for designers they can imitate a message through their clothing and put on a show whereas Forever 21 can promote their clothing in their advertisement. Forever 21 has also lacked because of its target market which is generational z. They have lost interest in it. According to Biron B. he stated in this article “A 2017 Cone Communications study found that 94% of Gen Z respondents believe companies should help address social and environmental issues, compared to 87% of millennials.” Most of the time Forever 21 does not create a connecting message with their consumers. The negatively impact

hits the company with a loss of interest and has no content. If there is no message in the clothing then what is the point.

Politics in the fashion industry is very important because it is a popular platform that can help people to be more aware and supportive on the real world problems. According these articles I read it is more beneficial to the fashion companies than its destruction. Fashion as itself is a statement already so adding some politics in it creates a spark in the clothing. Politics in fashion has a lot of history and always have been very effective. In this article it stated “Hence the social power of dress and the political impact of seeing many people dressed in an agreed-upon mode. Simultaneously, “black bloc” dress indicated a willingness to resort to violence if necessary, much like the Black Panthers did in the 1960s and 70s (Delgado, H. N. 2019).” This is a perfect example of how designers have had history on politics. They have resorted to fashion to make their political views clear in the environment.

As you can see, in the fashion industry it has illustrate police into their clothing and was impacted. Delgado, H stated “We could blame the political dressing vs. fashion confusion on the ubiquitous and pervasive public presence of the contemporary fashion industry. From the 18th century onwards, a large sector of industry has been occupied with manufacturing what dresses us: This includes garments, accessories, beauty services and products. This industry, along with advertisers, coalesced into an all-encompassing fashion industry”. Based on this statement it summarize the effect of politics. It can sometimes be seen as a misconception but once it is elaborate you can entail the concept of the idea. Overall I believe politics use in the fashion industry can be used effectively and create a bigger consumer base.

Reference

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