

Fashion Curators and Historians: Instagram's Untapped Sustainability Champions?

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Abstract

This paper investigates the potential of content published online by fashion curators and historians to promote clothing longevity perceptions and stimulate intentions of garment preservation practices through their communication of longterm clothing value on Instagram. How can these highly specialized professionals, who dedicate their careers to the preservation of garments, best engage audiences with their cause on social media? Which of their visual and textual communication strategies of historical clothing value and care could be most successful in impacting attitudes towards garment longevity? Could these help to change clothing care intentions? The data was collected during workshops which took place in July 2022. It reviews the impact of 48 Instagram posts by six accounts of Fashion curators and historians on a group of 12 participants. The study uses qualitative research methods, including netnography, talking aloud workshops, semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, as well as card sorting, and Stephenson's Q-sorting methodology. The findings of this explorative qualitative study indicate that the argumentation of material value and the sharing of care practices by fashion curators may provide vital alternatives in repositioning clothing value, a shift which can counteract the low-value propositions of fast fashion communication.

Keywords: pro-sustainability communication, Instagram, fashion curators.

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