

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



Fashion is a multibillion-dollar international business; it permeates our lives and our economies. Yet there has never been a book of solid, hard-hitting, uncompromising business/cultural/social journalism on this subject--because the fashion press is subsidized by the very industry it covers. Teri Agins, however, covers the fashion beat for a publication that does not rely upon fashion advertising--and she is thereby uniquely unfettered and able to finally tell the whole truth about this gigantic, flamboyant, and endlessly fascinating business. Her book traces an arc from the origins of couture and its apotheosis in the early part of this century to the advent of prêt-à-porter post World War II and the sweeping changes that have taken place as the century ends. It is an arc from when fashion was defined by elite French designers whose clothes could be afforded only by the global socialites--but whose designs were copied and followed by everyone else--to the point where the rules are set by the consumers, and the designers must follow them. It is an arc from class to mass; from art to commodity. Above all, it is the story of the triumph of marketing. The narrative includes profiles of designers Emmanuel Ungaro, Giorgio Armani, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfinger, Donna Karan, and Zoran, as well as retailers Marshall Field and the Gap. The End of Fashion is classy and stylish, filled with insider details; it is dishy and lively and fun--as well as astute and full of insights about how the changes in the fashion business have reflected changes in the culture over the last fifty years. Fashion is a multibillion-dollar international business; it permeates our lives and our economies. Yet there has never been a book of solid, hard-hitting, uncompromising business/cultural/social journalism on this subject--because the fashion press is subsidized by the very

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