

TEXTILE ESSAYS					
8. Lifestyles/dressing trends	Version 1.0 By DRA				
<i>* Words in blue indicate possible hyperlinks to other topics in this essay, other essays and the internet</i>					
ISSUES	COMMENTS				
<b>Definition of area/subject</b>	<p><b>A lifestyle is a way of life, defining the environment, actions and tastes of an individual. This can affect their clothing tastes and needs.</b></p> <p><b>Manufacturers and marketers need to envisage the future needs of people in particular market segments and the ways in which performance, or at least specially designed textiles, might meet those needs.</b></p>				
<b>Segmentation</b>	<p>Successful market development needs a clear market target and segmenting consumers needs by specific lifestyles is one such method of segmentation. Lifestyles are not necessarily age specific, as many believe.</p> <p>While many of these segments overlap they are worth individual consideration.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Baby-boomers, "at home",</td> <td>Working Life Technology age</td> <td>Convenience Low-Cost</td> <td>Healthy Consumers Branded clothing</td> </tr> </table>	Baby-boomers, "at home",	Working Life Technology age	Convenience Low-Cost	Healthy Consumers Branded clothing
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<b>Baby-boomers</b>	<p>Born in the years after 1945, baby boomers are now 50+. Their children have typically left home and they have become financially independent Baby-boomers are a different breed of consumer and now form a mainstream market not a niche.</p> <p>They control an increasing share of both spending and saving, are more demanding and discerning than their predecessors. Baby-boomers want to maintain their youthfulness. They are healthier and more active than their predecessors were with more time to pursue recreational activities. They will pay more to have their problems solved or their desires fulfilled.</p> <p>Various fibre/fabric technologies can potentially be applied to meeting the needs of the ageing baby boomer. <a href="#">Exhibit 8.1</a> shows an analysis based on discussions with people in the age group 55-75 about their lifestyles, activities and problems.</p> <p>In general it is estimated that by the year 2020, 50% of the population will be over 50 years old. There is a real urgency for retailers and manufacturers to increase their efforts towards meeting the requirements of the greying population, which is becoming increasingly ageless.</p>				
<b>The Work Environment</b>	<p>Smart/casual work clothing, until recently confined to "Friday-wear", is becoming more and more prominent. One of the big 5 Accountants, Arthur Andersen, recently announced that it was introducing a new dress code to allow staff to wear smart-casual, to fit in with clients in e-commerce, design and media. It is claimed that this approach is more appropriate to the "new economy" of e-commerce and internet start-ups. The idea is to increase lifestyle flexibility and mirrors the more relaxed American way of doing things.</p> <p>With more and more people working from home, the formal suit has even less significance. The trend away from formal dressing favours softer, more fluid clothes such as knitwear pieces. For some there is still a need to have discernible boundaries between different areas in life and clothing is one way of making them. However, for the main, there is increased demand for clothing which is compatible across a number of different occasions in the day; clothing which can be dressed up or down accordingly. Layering and accessories therefore play an important role.</p>				
<b>The Healthy Consumer</b>	<p>Health is increasingly important in most people lives. Exercise is one example of this and while sports team participation is decreasing, there is an explosive trend towards gym membership. Being a member of a gym is more convenient and allows flexibility. It is expected that, by the end of 2010, 100 million people will be a member of a gym or fitness studio.</p> <p>Health concerns have also fuelled the growth for <a href="#">anti-bacterial</a>, anti-allergenic products and <a href="#">UV resistant clothing</a>. Anti-bacterial products can be found in bedding products, towelling, wipes, footwear and sportswear, to name a few.</p>				

<p><b>“At home”</b></p>	<p>People increasingly spending their leisure time at home, having spent more money doing them up. When they are not working they want to relax and feel comfortable and not necessarily by slinging on an old pair of tracksuit bottoms or a faded sweatshirt. BHS’s “home wear”, <a href="#">M&amp;S’s</a> “Relax at home” and Selfridges “Loungewear” ranges have all identified this leisure time void left by the demise of branded sportswear.</p> <p>People want simplicity and comfort and that means <a href="#">seamless</a>, soft, stretch, cosy, deconstructed clothing such as knits, soft jerseys, wide trousers, fleece garments.</p> <p><a href="#">Stretch</a> clothing plays a major role in comfort/casual clothing providing a number of consumer benefits. Increasingly stretch is being added to woven fabric to impart comfort and crease resistance benefits.</p>
<p><b>The technology age</b></p>	<p>Technology continues to invade our lives. Most people have computers in their homes with internet access. Consumers are shopping on-line, banking on-line and even investing on-line. People are constantly searching for new technical solutions to solve their problems and automate their lives. Perhaps it is inevitably therefore that technology is becoming a fashion trend in clothing.</p>
<p><b>Convenience</b></p>	<p>Convenience and easy living are key requirements for consumers today. Everything needs to be done with minimum effort and take a minimum amount of time, as leisure time becomes more precious.</p> <p>The contour top is a good example of this trend. Women have little time to iron and are opting to wear the <a href="#">contour top</a> as an alternative to shirting. These figure-hugging tops can be worn under suits. They are extremely convenient for travelling requiring little packing space and no ironing.</p> <p>Dry cleaning is considered an expensive burden. The consumer expects to be able to throw her clothes in the washing machine with little effort. Traditionally delicate fabrics, such as <a href="#">wool</a>, are now expected to be machine washable in everyday wear and everything needs to be compatible in the washing machine.</p>
<p><b>Low cost retailing</b></p>	<p>There has been considerable growth in <a href="#">“low cost” fashion retailers</a> in recent years (Mark One, H&amp;M, New Look etc). This has been driven by consumers’ need for greater value for money and the increase in disposable fashion. Consumers are willing to buy lower quality goods at a lower cost in the knowledge that the garments will only last one season. However, they still expect their garments to survive the washing process.</p>
<p><b>Branding</b></p>	<p>As people search for individuality another trend has emerged. “Cherry picking”, as it is known, is when the consumer mixes value and non-value, i.e. designer and low cost clothing.</p> <p>The clothing market has polarised between value clothing and branded clothing, squeezing middle market retailers such as <a href="#">M&amp;S</a>. Over the past few years branded clothing has become more popular and prominent. This is largely due to the increase in sportswear, and diffusion-line designer labels such as DKNY (Donna Karen) and YSL (Yves Saint-Laurent). As a result of this trend a number of high street retailers, such as French Connection and Ted Baker, have developed “quasi-brands” in order to develop consumer pull for their products.</p>
<p><b>Market drivers</b></p>	<p>Lifestyles are becoming more fragmented and complex. People are searching for individuality, have more choice, more leisure time, have different working environments, have access to new technology, travel more and are exposed to more advertising.</p>
<p><b>Other sources of information/ contacts</b> <b>Trade Press</b></p>	<p><a href="#">See contacts list</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Menswear</li> <li>• Drapers record</li> <li>• Fashion weekly</li> <li>• Textile View &amp; View Point</li> </ul>