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Episode Information

Topic: Textile Recycling

Hosts: Ian M. Cook, Kate McGinn

Guest: Hilde Van Dujin from EigenDraads

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Transcript

Episode Introduction (0:08 – 2:10)

Ian: Kate, where are we?

Kate: We are in an English clothes second hand shop.

Ian: And why?

Kate: Because you asked me to meet you here.

Ian: It's true. I did ask and I- the reason why I asked you is because I think these are one of the most interesting places in Budapest, not only for buying clothes, but because on the outside you see English Clothes written there in Hungarian "*Angol ruhák*". And it's a way of advertising the fact that we sell Second-Hand clothes to people. And these clothes aren't made in England, they're probably made in China, and they're from brands that you can usually get also in Hungary anyway. But they've been shipped to England, used and then brought to Hungary, or at least that's what I imagine happens and what the clothes shops want you to believe anyway. What's interesting, I think, is that the clothes, by passing through England, a nation that I don't think is particularly well known for being fashionable, is given some magical extra trendiness or worth once it lands in Budapest just because it has the *Angol ruhák* English clothes tag in the shop.

Kate: Interesting.

Ian: Yeah. And I think it reveals something really fascinating about global clothing and well, the economy of global clothing, rather, and how it's not only clothes that circulate, but also the meanings people associate with clothes. So it's an interplay of meaning and materials that are changed both by physical and I guess imaginary geographies.

Kate: Hmm Okay. And are other people thinking about this? And more importantly, how does this relate to sustainability?

Ian: actually, yeah. And the reason why I'm thinking about it as well. Remember last month when I was in Rotterdam, I met a lady named Hilde Van Duijn and she's the creator of *EigenDraads* and they're doing something really innovative, not with the types of clothes that end up in second-hand shops like this, but rather we've used non re-wearable textiles.

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Kate: I want to find out more, but before we do, I want to remind everyone that they're listening to Urban Arena, a podcast about sustainable and just cities, and that I'm Kate McGinn and you're Ian Cook, and that listener can hear us again at the other side of this interview for a little debrief.

[Music]

Introducing Circularity (2:11 – 3:53)

Ian: So I'm really happy to have Hilde here from – I'm going to try to pronounce it – EigenDraads?

Hilde: EigenDraads [Correcting pronunciation].

Ian: Almost, and we're going to talk about that in a little bit, but it's based- or your initiative is based on the idea of the of the circular economy, so maybe let's start conceptual and then move into your actual approach, like what's the circular economy and why did it inspire you to do something in your life?

Hilde: Yeah, so to directly make it very tangible. I used to be in the fashion sector in organic cotton, and I was very troubled with the livelihoods of farmers producing organic cotton, and whether or not when you buy a T-shirt in the shop whether it was organic cotton or not. So I was not in circularity at all, it was very much in a production side. And I mean, success, sustainable success in my previous job was still producing more stuff. It had a better label. It had a better claimed impact, but it was still more stuff.

And I started wondering why- why don't we actually use what is already there and turn it into new things? Because I very much focus on – I call it the trashy side of fashion so very much when it's already waste, when it's already end of use – but of course, I mean, the different approach to that is that you could actually look into different business model, so renting leasing concepts. Because also when we talk about EigenDraads I just want to make sure that we have to understand that actually recycling is a last resort, rather, just where things- don't buy more, reuse to second-hand market, repair. So those are all more favourable things to do than recycling. But if really there's nothing else you can do with it, that at least let's make sure that resources turn back into the chain. And that's the whole concept of circularity. And I specifically apply it in textiles.

EigenDraads: Motive, Vision, and Process (3:53 – 15:17)

Ian: Great. So, let's use our imagination. Imagine we left this part of Rotterdam and moved into where you- where you work, like, I guess you have a warehouse or an office or something? Yeah?

Hilde: Anywhere.

Ian: Anywhere, okay. So like what do you mean, I mean I'm assuming like your day to day what is it you, what is it you do? Like you get to get some clothes in arriving and you rip them up and start again? Like I want to, I want to understand the process.

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Hilde: Well, not yet. So let's first describe where I want to be. So the process I have in mind and then I'll tell you a little bit more about my day to day reality now, because I'm not yet where I actually want to be. And also maybe first to start with why I started doing something with all this used textiles;

Ian: Yeah.

Hilde: Because it's quite an interesting business in the sense that I was an organic cotton before, and everyone is more aware of what's happening production. So we all buy- try to buy more sustainable products, but there are not that many people that actually are bothered about what happens after you've discarded them. So, I decided to look into what happens to the clothes that you put in the collection bins from- very often they're charities. And I started wondering, okay, so where do they go?

And most of these garments are being exported, so they're being sorted, part – only five percent – is being re-worn, in this case in the Netherlands, and the biggest part is actually then being exported. So if we export 70% of all our textiles and of course, we have a growing mountain and it's getting tougher and tougher, we don't really know what happens to the textiles so part of these textiles will actually maybe be reused or re-worn in different countries, but a big part of those, Texas will never be re-worn. So while we are not allowed to do landfill here in Netherlands, we actually export it and we don't know whether it's going to end up in landfill. And that's when I realised that actually the Netherlands, are number six exports and imports of used textiles.

So we are you know, we are trading people, and we also found the trade in used textiles. And Rotterdam, it's a city where I live in, and we have a very big port. So you can imagine used textiles have a very low value, we will not ship them using an aeroplane. They're all being shipped using ships. So they actually leave the country and leave Europe from the place I live in.

And that's when I started wondering, okay, but then can we just stop the non-re-wearable stuff, the stuff that is not so nice that we kind of know that no one will wear again, can't we just take them away here and especially the synthetic things? Because if we export those, they might still be lying around in the landfill 200 years from now. So that's really why I started this initiative. And the aim is to take the non-re-wearable textiles, and here I always have to explain a bit because people think that non re-wearable means it's broken or it's dirty. And actually it's not really the case. Non-re-wearable entails that they don't have value, so they don't have a commercial value anymore. This can be perfectly new garments with a price tag still attached, but they just don't have value on the second-hand market.

So, what I do, what I intend to do is to take these garments and then take the polyester out. So, I'm working with an organisation that has developed the technology to do so. And then from this polyester, you can make new yarns. So that's really what we are also now doing in our organisation. And my philosophy is that by doing so, you could actually create jobs here locally for people, for instance, to remove buttons or zippers or to create more sorting jobs.

Ian: So, I'm- this is interesting about- about jobs. And I suppose I'm thinking about energy and labour intens- labour intensive processes and so on. So we have something which is

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made, in -whatever in a factory, most probably nowadays in in Asia or East Asia, comes here, and the usual model is it gets exported to a landfill let's say, whatever. But you're saying, okay, let's- let's take it out and rework it.

I'm just wondering, like from a pure sort of energy consumption sense, I'm wondering how then- I'd say how sustainable then your practises are. Are they- are they really- are they really offering us something, a new way out? Or are they just basically allowing – if we can now make, if we could make new clothes in a less intensive way, would that not be better than reusing in a way that's not just like taking these unwearable clothes and cutting them up and putting them together again, but you're actually doing some quite- quite a bit of processing with them?

Hilde: Yeah. So that's why I said it's a last resort.

Ian: Okay;

Hilde: I mean, the ideal model is still- and also not all the textiles that are being exported end up in a landfill. So part of those textiles, they have a perfectly good destination and they will be reused by people abroad, but a part of them will not. And so that's why I say it's really a last resort for textiles. And I would never advocate for more recycling because in an ideal world, we would not need recycling. But it is in the current setting. It is the case that we need it.

Ian: That's great. And I'm wondering then, so the type of clothes that then would be produced like out of this, because you're talking about quite a small amount of clothes, I guess you probably want to aim at something like more high end, expensive or whatever?

Hilde: No, because I don't believe that actually – maybe I've been working in the fashion industry too long to- to think that that would be a feasible idea – so for me, one of the principles is there has to be price parity between your recycled- your recycled materials resources and virgin alternatives.

Ian: Mm hmm.

Hilde: Otherwise, there's no use. It will never work at scale.

Ian: Yeah, yeah. And would you I mean, and when and when you're talking about the sort of design of these clothes, is there anything about the materials that you're- I mean, are you totally free to create whatever you want out of the recycled materials? I mean, is it like getting a blank slate again or is there something because it's recycled the add certain constraints or opportunities?

Hilde: So we would create the resources that can be used to make polyester yarn, and there it's quite comparable to virgin alternatives. So, in that sense, they are no really restrictions because if you have a yarn, you can basically make anything out of it.

Ian: Okay, wow! And then so- I'm just I'm just thinking about cycles.

And so one cycle is the circular economy and the other cycle is something that like the fashion cycle, right?

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Hilde: Yeah.

Ian: And then the fashion cycle – even for somebody who I have to admit, luckily everyone's listening at home, so they don't know what I'm wearing, [laughs] but is- is outside-

Hilde: It looks nice! Don't worry!

Ian: So sometimes if I- after a few beers I just go online and buy T-shirts [laughs].

Hilde: This [outfit] was after a happy beer I think [laughs].

Ian: So it's fine! But you know, but the cycles of fashion, even for some, you know, observer from the outside, I can see they're also getting tighter and tighter as well, right? And so I'm just thinking, okay, yes, you're right. and I know you understand it's a last resort. But what this process could be accused of doing is just, you know, adding a little other quirk to the cycle of fashion, if in the end, you know, people using this process and deciding to make stuff are just doing it to give some sort of extra social value to a garment which is produced, then I wonder how much you're disrupting existing, you know, wastages within the fashion industry.

Hilde: Yeah, yeah. In a perfect world, we could completely eliminate the dependence on fossil fuels for the creation of polyester if we would close our loops with technologies like the ones I'm trying to apply.

Ian: Mm hmm.

Hilde: So it wouldn't be greenwashing in the sense that you just do part of it. But it's actually you- you bring back materials – that otherwise end up in a landfill – you bring them back in a virgin-comparable forms.

Ian: Interesting. And so when you're talking about scalability, so now you're saying it's an idea in some way, you want to get to, so I'm wondering if I can ask you to imagine your process like down the line, how can you imagine sort of scaling up your idea into something which is a viable operation? What's your next steps?

Hilde: Yeah so what we're doing now, because I hate being a person with an idea so [both laugh] so I agree there, so I'm not anymore just the person with an idea. But we actually started a pilot with the textiles from the Rotterdam Marathon. At the marathon many people leave lots of clothes at the start, it's because they want to be warm when they are waiting for the start of the marathon, and then once they start running, they basically throw out all their jackets and sweaters and no one is picking them up again.

And as you might know, the city of Rotterdam has quite some circularity ambitions. And they decided that they wanted to look into the potential use of these textiles. So a part of these textiles from the start of the marathon were sold again in second hand shops, which again is the preferable option. And unfortunately, a part of the textiles could not be sold. I think it was around 40% of them, and I got those. So I got those as a feedstock. And then I asked the sheltered workshop that we have in Rotterdam, so people with some kind of disability to remove buttons and zippers to see whether the work was suitable for their skill set and their interests, which fortunately it was- some not everyone, but most people

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enjoyed doing this, and now these materials are being processed with my partner in the U.S., and at the next Rotterdam marathon we aim to present a product that has been made from the garments that have been left at the start of the marathon last year.

So why do I do this? I think I could say there are three different goals with this pilot. So, one, of course, I need to have a proof of concept, because I don't want to stay a person with an idea, I want to be a person that actually makes sure that the insulation gets here so that we get funders interested to invest in this. So that's one there has to be a proof of concept.

Two, I want to make the city aware of the value of textiles; because cities actually play a crucial role when it comes to use textiles. And that for me is fascinating because I also always saw textiles as a private thing, right? You have brands and retailers. They make products and then they sell it to people, so it's a private sector. Actually, it's not, because at the moment you dispose of your textiles, it becomes a public headache, because they need to somehow make sure that these textiles are being collected and processed. And in the current situation, most municipalities, cities have already been looking into what happened to these textiles, resulting in this very big shift towards just exporting textiles, maybe even without sorting it really locally. It's quite similar to- to plastics, where now more and more countries abroad actually start having bans on the imports of plastics, because they are starting to say, well, you're actually exporting waste towards us. And I believe that the same thing is going to happen, and we see some signs already, with textiles as well. So my aim was not only to have a proof of concept, but actually also to show the city of Rotterdam the value of textiles and that they should start looking into that.

And of course, the third one is to make people aware. So, what always fascinates me as well is that actually no one really asks when they put their- their clothes in a container from a charity, what happens to them? Because you give them away. And if you ask people, so what is a way? Where does it go? No one really thinks about it. So that's also what I try to achieve with this pilot to actually for instance at the start of next marathon, if there's a product that has been made with the things that have been left behind, then maybe suddenly people will start thinking about, hey, I left a jacket behind last year, hmm, I never for one second thought again about what happened to the jacket, but maybe that is interesting to start asking questions or start investigating what happens with our used textiles as well.

The Dilemma of Textile Donations (15:18 – 17:11)

Ian: Yeah, I think that's really important because I think that often donations of clothes work for people as a sort of out of sight, out of mind process. Oh, I'm doing something good. I'm not throwing it away, it's getting reused.

Hilde: Yup, it's not even like you have to go through a walk of shame to get rid of your clothes. But you even feel good about it. Which is funny because no- no one feels good about the fact when they throw away the plastics. But for clothes you feel good because you think you gave it away to charity. And of course part of the story is that that is good in some of these clothes will be reused and have a value. But in the Netherlands we are now facing that 50% of everything that is being collected has no value, is not non-rewearable. So- so that's really I think, we should be more aware of that.

Ian: It's interesting the sort of the, the moral attachments people make to the act of giving and where they imagine it might go. I was reminded as you were talking then of – how many years ago in Budapest three, four years ago in Budapest? When we had the politically created so-called migrant crisis, when the government closed the border between Austria and Hungary, and wouldn't allow refugees mostly coming from Syria and Afghanistan to cross the border and basically created a crisis. And at that moment, people were thinking, okay, what can they do? And lots of people started donating clothes, there were so many clothes donated more than anyone could ever possibly wear, let alone carry with them, and it was summer. And so it was like, okay, but people still kept wanting to do it and places kept saying, please stop donating, and people getting upset saying, why are you telling me to stop donating? I'm trying to do something good.

And then at the end of all this, then there was just like piles of clothes, and then so these charities or organisations started them giving them to the homeless population at Budapest which is pretty sizeable, and people were upset that, no, they're not meant for them, you know, like and it's like they imagined them for being for somebody else. And so it's super interesting, I think that what your project can do, or idea can do is really to make people think, okay, what exactly- exactly what happens at that moment things get, things get closed for them in their mind to reopen it up again.

Hilde: Yeah, yeah.

Inspiration for EigenDraads (17:13 – 20:11)

Ian: Yeah. Super interesting. I want to think a little bit about where such a such an initiative fits into other ideas of circularity other parts of the circular economy. So do you think that there's something in what you're doing which is transferable to different realms outside fashion, or how does it speak to or draw inspiration from other people who are involved in circular initiatives?

Hilde: So I must confess, I very much started this initiative, It was a crazy idea and I thought, oh, I'll just ask for some subsidy from the innovation fund of the municipality and who knows? And then that, to my own surprise, actually, I got it. So I got started, and never really did a full assessment of what others were doing. But what I- what I do see around me and the examples that are out there are actually quite similar in the sense that these are just individuals or groups, but mostly people that start to get a very intrinsic motivation or an interest and start asking questions about what happens to specific material groups.

So I think another very- example, that very much inspired me is the bread here in Rotterdam. So there's an initiative that's figured that actually lots of people, they don't want to throw away food, they don't want to throw away bread. So they would feed it to the ducks. The thing is we live in Rotterdam, quite densely populated, and we have lots of people that don't want to throw away food, maybe because of their religion. And that means that actually we have a growing rat population, because you throw away the bread, I mean, the ducks definitely cannot eat all of that, so there's another group of animals that just thinks, hey, that's actually quite nice. So at some point, some individuals figured, hey, that's- that's very interesting, we should start collecting the bread because we know something that we could actually do with it. So now in the city, if you look around, you can find specific containers just to collect bread in them.

So I think, um, for me that's very much comparable, that some individuals just started asking questions and saw materials popping up somewhere, and thought, hmm, maybe we can do something with that. And for me, it has been the same with this image of a growing mountain of used textiles. So imagine that other countries are going to restrict imports and used textiles. What is going to happen in Rotterdam? So we are, as I said, Netherlands, number six exporter importer of used textiles. We export all of that. At the moment the other side of- of the ocean, they don't want to have it anymore, then basically we are going to drown not in water but in this mountain of used textiles that we created ourselves. That's why I think that that you should actually start looking into a material type and just asking questions about where it goes and see what a potential solution it is. And as I said, I'm just organising a last resort for textiles because, I know that there are different uses that actually are more favourable than the one that I'm arguing. But then at least we have something, if nothing else can be done with it, then at least let's make sure it doesn't end up in a landfill abroad.

Fashion and (Over)Consumption (20:12 – 25:20)

Ian: And, then you mentioned last resort, and it brings me to my last question, which is thinking back to the wider fashion industry, because I'm- I imagine you'll agree with me when you say, like you're saying, is this question of overconsumption in a sense, and then what to do with all this over consumption? We basically buy too many clothes. We throw away too many clothes, partly because things come in and out of fashion, our body shape change and so on, but we do- this seems to be ever tightening in ever tightening circles. So I'm wondering, thinking back to your time working in the fashion industry and how you observe it now as a semi outsider, like, do you think there's any changes in the- underway inside the fashion industry to- to think about sustainability in a broader sense?

Hilde: Yes, circularity mainly. So you see more and more of the brands actually looking into renting and leasing concepts or take back schemes. So I very much see a transition with all these brands. All of them have circular ambitions. And of course, we can discuss whether it's realistic or whether they're really going to achieve that. And of course, still they also produce too much. So, I mean, but we are in a transition, and I think it's a very good sign that there are more and more getting interested in and different ownership models, for instance, for the products that they make.

But for me, and I'm- I'm definitely not someone that is going to campaign to- to watch consumers, but I do hope to at least inspire some people to think differently about their own consumption patterns when it comes to textiles and fashion, because if we all just keep having the assumption that whatever we buy remains of value because someone else would like to wear it after us, that's just not the case anymore. Maybe for some of the high high-end garments that you might be buying, but for the big mass of what we buy, we then give it to a charity feeling good about ourselves. But actually, it's not so nice. It's not always such a nice story.

By working at the end, so creating a last resort for textiles and telling about it, I very much hope that people start thinking differently about their own consumption patterns and actually throwing away things. There should be some kind of walk of shame; because, I mean, if we all intend to work to- to have a circular world, then you should also consider the fact of disposing of things is very, it's really the end of the line. It's not something to be- to feel very proud about, but it's rather something that was inevitable. And then, of

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course, you should still do it. So- so that's what I really hope to achieve, that people by thinking about what happens to the clothes that you've disposed of. Start also thinking a little bit more about their consumption patterns.

Ian: Mm hmm. I said it's the last question, but [laughs] I'm not going to let you escape because I mean, even though I just- I feel maybe a little bit of unease about this walk of shame that you mentioned. I think it's like this sort of individualisation or the scaling down of responsibility to individuals, when I think the issue of fashion production and consumption isn't about whether me or you go out tomorrow and buy a new T-shirt or a new jacket, but it's about the overproduction and the economies that are driving trends and fashion and so on. So I think individually, okay, people can feel better or not if they threw something in the dustbin or they put it in recycling, whatever, that whatever, that's paper or clothes or whatever. But surely, the question is actually the production scale.

Hilde: So there I agree very much. But while we are still living in a capitalist world where that is what brands do, they will only do it if there's a demand. So I very much want to focus on the individual, but I know it's the uncomfortable part of it because it's always easier to blame it on whoever fast fashion companies. It's not their fault. The only reason that there's overproduction is because there's a demand for it. So, I mean, I know it's it's- it's not comfortable, and I very often, I've been telling some people here as well that at birthday parties, yeah, I'm not always very happy to tell about my job because I make people feel a little bit uncomfortable because everyone will have gone to buy new clothes for the kids yesterday or would have thrown away garments in the last week. I mean, that's just what we do. And of course, and still, if you want to dispose of garments, then please put them in the collection bin, because that's still the only good thing that you can do. But I think, I really want to address individuals on their own consumption patterns, because if- if there- if there would not be such a demand, this whole engine of overproduction and overconsumption would not be working at all. So I know it's not easy, but I really think that also as individuals, we should think about our own consumption patterns.

Ian: Well, Hilde, I can promise you I'm not inviting you to any of my parties, not only because I don't want to feel uncomfortable, but also because you'd be the best dressed person there [Laughs].

Hilde: Woo! First time I hear that!

Ian: Magic of radio, everyone now is imagining you probably dressed in some extremely elaborate costume. Thank you so much for your time. It's been really great speaking to you!

Hilde: It has been nice. Thank you.

[Music]

Post-Interview Discussion (25:22 – 32:35)

Ian: All right, Kate, did you like listening to me and Hilde?

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Kate: I did. And I have lots of thoughts about this topic. Hilde mentioned this and- and I really want listeners to understand the magnitude of this problem within fashion. I think sometimes we do not understand the amount of waste we produce. But I was doing some research. And just within the past decade, the amount of clothes that the EU has bought has increased by 40% per person. And an organisation I was reading upon while doing some research, the Global Fashion Agenda found that in 2015, 92 million tonnes of waste within the textile and clothing industry was created worldwide, less than half of that is actually being reused and collected. And again, a lot of that is just being collected and, in the end, is not even used by real humans. And only 1% of the actual clothes that we use is being recycled into new clothes. And that is what Hilde is focussing on, that one percent, which I think is a really exciting field to be in.

Ian: Yeah, it really is. And, you know, I was thinking of when- when you just told me that I was thinking – okay I was younger then, but like, I'm just thinking that I'm teaching now in a in a university for undergraduates a little bit, and the and the students there every single day that all of them are wearing different clothes. And I'm trying to remember when I was an undergraduate, if I was doing that, I'm not sure I was I mean, like completely new outfits every day. I think I was probably more – maybe I'm not the best example of someone from who who's caring so much – but like, you know, I think- but I think for most of my maybe at least male friends, it was like one pair of trousers, and then you change a T-shirt or your shirt every day, but not worrying so much about like the whole outfit, shall we say, at least, at least not just for going into, you know, to sit in a- to sit in a college room. And so I was doing a little bit research, and someone was saying – this was like on some Internet forum – that on average now, in Europe, people own 100 items of clothing! So, I was wondering, how many items of clothing do you own?

Kate: Two suitcases full? Probably not that much.

Ian: Yeah, that's- that's true. That's your- exactly. So but, yeah, but- but it's interesting, like how many- I think probably yeah, I definitely own probably more clothes than my parents.

Kate: Or we own stuff and we don't even use it. So this is what I was reading. We really don't use close to 30 percent of our wardrobe. So there's 70 percent that we use day to day and then there's so much that just lies around and then in the end ends up in landfills.

Ian: Yeah, which is insane. Completely, completely insane.

Kate: I have ten scarves I used to, tops.

Ian: And why did you buy them?

Kate: That's the question- I think going out, going shopping, that's a hobby, that's what you do socially. Other people expect you to do that. It looks nice in the shops. You know, fashion advertises it a certain way. And- and I appreciate that Hilde really is trying to look at this issue and try to find an interesting piece of technology that works to solve problems. And, you know, there are so many start-ups working in this space, developing new clothes through food waste, through algae, they're creating microbes that eat polyester and then be able to use that to create other- other clothes. There's so much innovation happening. And, and this is something you mentioned, you mentioned while

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talking to her. I feel like sometimes we're making the problem seem to have a more complex solution than it needs to be. And so my question, and I would love to hear your thoughts on this is why don't we just consume less? We don't have to create all this technology. Why don't we just start the trend of slow fashion?

Ian: Because, I mean, yeah, okay, that would be great. I think, I think because people won't do it. First, one thing is why do people wear clothes? We can, okay, we just put aside the question of the sort of the economic side of the global fashion industry, forcing us to constantly, you know, change, change, change. People like to wear clothes to express themselves. That's why people dress in different ways. What people choose is a form of expressivity which- which we would do no matter what our cultural situation is, we just happen to be living in this particular cultural situation, which demands sort of changing fashion. So you'd still have to allow ways for people to express themselves.

And, and I suppose the other reason why we don't is because – and this is a trouble that environmental politics has had for a long time – is you're going to have trying to persuade people, oh, you're going to have to have less of something is really, is a really difficult sell. So I think this is where you find a lot of resistance to environmental movements is when you tell people that, oh, you know what, you can't go on holiday. You can't fly to meet your friends in another continent. You know, you shouldn't do this. You shouldn't do that. And it can seem all the time as if we're telling people, oh, you need to be more, I don't know, yeah, you need to have less fun in your life. It's a really hard sell politically to do that to people.

Kate: And economically, I mean, this doesn't fit into our capitalist model.

Ian: Exactly. Exactly.

Kate: That doesn't have funding. That doesn't have start-ups vying over the opportunity to do something about it.

Ian: Yeah. So I'm saying that maybe there are definitely people who are into slow fashion. It's a good thing. Definitely I think so. And- but I just wonder, like, how to persuade that to be a really big thing. That's a massive cultural shift which goes beyond fashion. It just goes beyond basically people wanting- a humanity as a whole, deciding I want to or we want to have less. And unfortunately, that means probably changing the economic system. So, but we'll say like putting that to a side within the world of fashion, I guess that's what Hilde does is interesting because she's not actually she's working within, I guess, the current paradigms. I don't know how transformative that necessarily it is, but maybe it's a way of allowing people to continue to consume fashion without, I don't know, without- without changing the system. I don't know that's necessarily a good thing? Or just like...

Kate: It's a step, it's a step forward, I think. I mean, it's definitely better than doing nothing. I mean, there's a larger thought about why are humans vying for social acceptance through clothes, through spending money? There's all these other things that maybe are the root cause, but that's something that is a lot harder to solve.

Ian: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And you, since listening to our discussion, have you bought any clothes?

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Kate: Yeah. No I've actually- I actually haven't.

Ian: Yeah okay. Well let's- anyway we should hear from people at home if they've been, if they've been motivated to stop buying clothes after, after listening to the conversation with Hilde. And if people do want to tell us about their clothing shopping habits, how can they do so?

Kate: Yes, you can email us through the contact form found at our website UrbanArena.EU or at Urbana@ceu.edu. And you can also find us on Twitter or Instagram at the handle @arena_urban.

Ian: Yeah. And we really do want to hear from you not only about what clothes you are not buying, but if you have any thoughts about this topic or any of the others that we have been discussing so far this series.

Kate: See you next month!

Ian: Bye!

[Music]

Disclaimer (32:36 – 32:55)

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