# What is the cost of not fitting in Video Transcript

(Dr. Sara Marcketti) Hello, and welcome to the Costume Society of America's Conversations on Dress series. My name is Sara Marcketti and it is my great pleasure as past president of Costume Society of America.

I am joined here tonight by colleagues, my friends, my co-author, as well as a new CSA member, Dr.  Elena Karpova who serves as the Putnam and Hayes distinguished professor in the department of Apparel, Consumer, and Retail Studies at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Thank you for joining us tonight in the third of four panel series focused on our book The Dangers of Fashion towards Ethical and Sustainable Solutions. I hoped and did gather 22 leading scholars in the apparel field with the hope that this book and this panel series could serve as a resource for educators, for students, for those in industry, as well as for those with an interest in fashion and sustainability. The chapters in the book look at all aspects of fashion from the design to the production to the consumption and then of course the disposal.

Tonight we focus on the cost of not fitting in and having seen the slides beforehand, I will tell you we are in for a real treat tonight. We encourage you to stick around as the publisher Bloomsbury has offered one free copy of the book that will be drawn at random at the end of the session. I turn it over now to my colleague, Elena Karpova, to introduce the first panelist.

Thank you.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Thank you very much Sara for the great introduction.

Good evening everyone. So in this episode of the series we will look at the dangers that each of us can encounter in our everyday lives. Each of the panelists will give a short talk and then we'll take several questions. So please enter your questions in the chat during the presentation so Sara and I have them ready to go as soon as the presentation is over.

I'm thrilled to introduce our first panelist, Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best. She is an associate professor in Apparel, Merchandising, and Design program at Iowa State University and director and curator of the Textiles and Clothing Museum. In her research she examines interrelationships of dress and identity. Much of her work is rooted in social justice, which aims to promote social change related to how our bodies are regulated by cultural norms and politics.

I encourage you to visit Kelly's wonderful website where you can learn about her fashion justice research lab and see her award-winning designs such as craft and racism and white privilege.

So I am turning it to Kelly.

(Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best) Thank you for the introduction, Elena. Those within a culture negotiate defining, adhering to, and socializing others on the beauty and appearance ideals of their communities. The ideals are continually shifting as cultures and societies change over time and are impacted by different social, cultural, political, and historical influences. In my chapter of the text "Striving to Fit In" I examine two of these appearance and beauty ideals: body size and shape, and skin color but for the sake of time we'll highlight parts from the body size and shape portion of my contribution.

So historically and today individuals have expectations communicated to them in an ongoing basis from media, peers, family members, and numerous other socialization agents related to how their bodies should be shaped in order to reach an ideal.

For women in the United States and Europe, one of the prominent current beauty body ideals is a thin fit physique. However, this was not always the case. For example, during the 1880s having a fuller, rounder figure was highly desirable for women yet that soon changed by the early 20th century. In the 1920s images of tubular, boyish silhouettes permeated the media as the ideal body type for women. Fleshier bodies during the 1920s were often negatively reviewed in editorials and advertisements of fashion magazines such as Vogue and Good Housekeeping. Other popular fashion magazines in the latter part of the 20th century provided evidence that the thin body ideal has continued to permeate the media. The proliferation of these cultural messages and repeated exposure can result in viewers internalizing the messages, which can lead to moderate or more severe long-lasting negative effects such as individuals engaging in various types of risky behaviors. For example, when women are repeatedly exposed to and compare each other's bodies with a thin ideal, this exposure in comparison can lead to things like eating disorders, depression, low self-esteem, or negative body image. But, not all women from different racial or ethnic backgrounds have negative results from viewing the thin body ideal. For example, in one study Black or African American women were more accepting of fuller or more curvaceous bodies as compared to white women and black women were therefore more shielded from the possible negative effects of unrealistic body size ideals communicated via media.

Overall, body size ideals are very complex and continually changing and research on the topic can sometimes lead to these contradictory evidence due to like differences in race, ethnicity, and numerous other cultural characteristics.

The different preferences for body size and shape ideals including larger, smaller body sizes and shapes has influenced the emergence of entire industries and product lines in order to assist people to achieve these different body ideals. For example, Spanx, which is pictured on the slide, focuses on products meant to slim the body while Bubbles Body wear has both slimming and enhancing products such as buttocks padded underwear.

The previously mentioned work highlights women's interest in trying to achieve a more stereotypically feminine aesthetic, however that's not always the goal for individuals who are part of the queer and trans communities. One example of a contradictory discourse is the use of chess binders by women, transgender,  or gender non-conforming folks. The imageon the slide depicts different coloredchest binders designed by Flvnt Streetwear, a company based in Austin,Texas. Chest binding is the practice of using atight undergarment to flatten your chest, which is different from the previously described ideal for women who often want to emphasize their curves. And then here are two more chest binder examples from the Textiles and Clothing

Museum at Iowa State.

In 2017, a group of scholars did a comprehensive analysis on the practice of chest binding and reported that while binding results in numerous negative physical outcomes such as back pain, overheating, or shoulder pain, wearing binders can also have positive psychological effects including increased self-esteem, confidence, decrease in anxiety, and reduced thoughts of suicide. So while chest binding can have numerous negative physical effects, the positive psychological effects can outweigh the negatives and result in gender affirming body silhouettes and overall positive experiences.

Changing the shape of the body through different products offered via the fashion industry is just one way individuals strive to fit in with the prevailing beauty norms or to affirm their gender identity and there are numerous appearance management practices that folks engage in. Overall, these practices are complex, they're ever changing as different cultural, historic, and political issues impact society and the overall socio-cultural aspects of dress. And so while some of these practices may lead to negative outcomes, in some instances the positives outweigh the negative. And thank you everyone.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Thank you very much Kelly for a great presentation. Given the complexity of the issues that you discussed for the ideal differences and or preferences, etc., as a society how can we begin to disentangle them? Where should we start?

(Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best)  I think that educating, I think it's a really good question. I think there's, you know, two answers that I would provide. First I think it's like, educating folks about some of these dangers or some of like the benefits and then, you know, you don't want to just stop there. You don't want to just like keep doing like education you need to like make structural change for there to be a significant impact on larger society. So, arguably I would say like it would be like you know influencing and educating folks in the industry but then, you know, I'm an educator, you know, as our my colleagues who are on the panel, so I think it would really be about, you know, thinking about the curriculum that we're teaching and informing and educating the next wave of fashion industry professionals and, and so, we can, as we teach them about all different facets of the fashion industry, we also talk about ways that they can be, hopefully, change agents to then go on and have like a positive influence.

So I would say education first and then, you know, implementing structural changes.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Thank you.

One question from one of our participants is, "To what extent are non-binary approaches been incorporated into the design side of the fashion industry?"

(Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best) That is a really good question.

And I think that, you know I actually just did this oral history project on, it's called like

"Queer Fashion Brands Oral History Project" and me and my colleagues, we had interviewed all various like queer fashion brands and a lot of them catered to sort of like non-conforming folks or folks in the lgbtq plus community. And so when we had originally done that we scoured the internet for, because a lot of them are online or e-commerce businesses but some of them had storefronts, for example the Fluid Project in New York City, but we found about 77 brands in our initial account and so that was like, you know, maybe 12 months ago that we had done that so there might be more but some of them have also already closed. So but I think in like larger mainstream fashion brands and maybe someone else can, I don't, I think it's mostly split down the middle, its split in a binary perspective but there are definitely, there's like a growing industry catering to like gender non-conforming and like the queer community. And you can look at it on this oral history project, it's open source, it's just called "Queer Fashion Brands: An Oral History Project".

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Thank you Kelly. I think we have time for just one more question. Can we talk about how folks dress, navigate in-group ideals and the overarching social ideals that govern institutional spaces and structures, structures of powers through dress, if you can see from Angela the question.

(Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best) Yeah, I see that there. So I think that, yeah, it's interesting, I mean I think I'll speak to the, you know, in regards to some of the literature I've read about in the queer community. So I think that, you know I think every community is going to have different ideals and when folks move in and out of different spaces, you know for example one person might appear queer enough in one space and not queer enough in another space, so I think there, like the cultural context for which we are constantly moving in and out of will define the power dynamics for how we may present ourselves. And so, I think it's like this ever-evolving, shifting experience and it's certainly true for groups across time and across culture. But I, being very familiar with the queer literature and queer fashion and queer dress, I would say that you know you will certainly see folks doing those kinds of changes to their appearance when they move to different spaces in order to sort of fit in or not or maybe they don't because depending upon the situation there are in their life, so.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Wonderful. Thank you so much Kelly and we will move to our next panelist.

It is my pleasure to introduce Dr. Eulanda Sanders. Who is the Donna Danielson Professor of Textiles and Clothing at Iowa State University. She is the chair of the Apparel, Events, and Hospitality Management department and her scholarly activities are in the areas of apparel and textile design processes, fashion cultural studies, and wearable technology. An interesting fact about Eulanda is that among her many diverse experiences, career experiences Eulanda used to work as a pattern maker and a system designer for a large western wear brand.

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders) Elena thank you very much for the introduction. So the chapter that my co-author Dr. Ellen McKinney, from Iowa State University who is an associate professor in Apparel, Merchandising, and Design, worked on and wrote together was about pain. In and from fashion.

So, fashion has not always been good for one's physical or psychological health, as many of us know and have experienced. Our chapter explored pain endured from fashion, both physical and psychological. Pain being the way the body signals to us that something is wrong. Humans often endure pain to fit into body norms of the society or culture in which they live and this choice can be made freely or through pressures.

In the arena of physical pain, we explored corsets, waist training devices, and other ways to modify the body to fit into idealized standards of beauty which have been communicated to us historically through societal norms and then presently through social media. Other garments that we discussed in our chapter and accessories include shoes with heels, skinny jeans, and bras, all items that over the past few years have continued to be popular in modifying the body form.

In many cases, garments do create physical pain but they also provide psychological support for the wearer and the pain can be on a continuum from discomfort to severe pain. In this photo from the chapter we have Emily, whose story is shared in the chapter. She adopted wearing a corset from her interest in historic clothing. She shares pros and cons of wearing a corset, however I will let you read her story to form your own opinion about her choices and reasons for for wearing corsets.

Now, our chapter was written prior to Covid-19 and Covid has caused this global pandemic that has evolved many people's views on the tolerance of pain and fashion. So, this time period will probably be a changing point for how people will endure or tolerate pain and the fashion choices that they make.

Now the second area of pain in fashion that we did not discuss in our chapter is psychological pain. In preparation for the session the panel members met and had some discussions about the intersections of gender and race for women of color regards to navigating fashion expectations.

This is a photo of my mother, Martha Johnson Sanders. It was taken in the late

1960s. She's wearing a coat that she constructed. Like many people, my mother followed

Fashion and the norms of the time period. However, like many women of color, she had to make conscious decisions about her dress within the societies that she lived.

So this picture was taken when we lived as a family in a small farming community in southeastern Colorado. What I wish I had a photo to share with you this evening of is when she wore a large afro, bell bottom jeans, and very stylish smocks at that time. Also still living in southeastern Colorado in the 1970s. Now we see on the national and international arenas that fashion and appearances of women are scrutinized daily. Yesterday, much of the talk from the inauguration was of the appearance of the women that were on this international stage.

However women of color are often times scrutinized in a different way and analyzed publicly a bit more. This also happens in everyday life with choices that women of color have to make within business settings, work settings, moving throughout society and sometimes these choices, decisions can be causes for psychological pain as they're trying to navigate whether to fit in or to not fit in.

So, as I conclude, individuals as they just make choices about their appearance and their dress, they do have to think about what they're going to tolerate both physically and psychologically pain wise.

Thank you.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Thank you very much Eulanda. Wonderful photos, I love the photo of your mom, she looks so stylish.

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders)Thank you, that's one of my favorites.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Wonderful construction of the coat as well, looks very, very good. So with the pain like mostly psychological pain from fashion dictated by the society and expectations and norms as you described particularly in relation to color, do you think the historic vice presidency of Kamela Harris might have some effect on that and then if yes or no, why?

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders) That's a hard one to determine because if we look back to when Michelle Obama was first lady there was much scrutiny over her appearance, her physical form, her clothing choices, sometimes the choice to wear non-name brand designers, ready to wear clothing, so it'll be interesting to see how Kamala navigates this- Vice President Kamala navigates this and she has made some bold choices with you know the color that she decided to wear yesterday to represent unity and um but then also we've already seen her on Vogue magazine uh with the colors of her sorority behind her and in a pant suit with sneakers and there were some discussions about was that what was her choice to be represented as? Or other photos that were taken? And so I think she'll be at the forefront and will probably have a lot of conversations about how she's navigating the political scene as a woman VP but also a biracial woman of color too.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) It's just heartbreaking to even think about that. All of this, you know, all women have to go through, right? And definitely women in general when they enter the boardrooms and see suit and you know all of those things but more so even women of color. So what do you think, where can we start to make sure that the girls of color now, young girls, will not have those experiences?

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders) Oh, you know, as Kelly mentioned and you know probably since we're all educators on the panel, the belief that we can educate, expose our students, the industries that we partner, with our alumni, to be more accepting but also to you know help young girls to be brave in making those decisions about their appearance and not feel like they have to assimilate into the dominant societies that they're living in, too.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Why do you think it was normalized for females to endure pain both physiologically- physically and psychologically?

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders) Ah that's a very good question. You know I think historically- well one like honestly I feel like women in many ways have probably in some ways a higher tolerance of pain and you know society had expectations that you look this way for your role within society, and so there was such pressure- peer pressure from women, other women, from men of what is preferred and so I think historically we have but then, you know, over the years luckily there's been strides made in saying well, you know, "This is, you know, what I'm going to wear, what I'm not going to wear, and how I'm going to appear."

But sometimes there's backlash and that backlash can be financial, too, which can really hurt progress for women. 

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Right and I would just add to this question that I think historically this has been because, the societies have been and specifically the western societies have been run by males and white males who wanted to see beautifully dressed or underdressed women. And they...  they built those norms yeah that we basically had to follow, right, so...

And so now we're starting questioning those norms, why do we need to have physical and psychological pain from what we want to wear? Or we cannot wear what we want to wear, we have to wear what the society expects us to wear.

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders) I agree.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Thank you so much Eulanda and with that I'm going to turn it to

Sara to introduce our next panelist.

(Dr. Sara Marcketti) Thank you so much Elena and Eulanda and Kelly. The next panelist is Dr. Denise Nicole Green who is a faculty member in the American Indian and Indigenous Studies program and the department of Fiber Science and Apparel Design at Cornell University where she also directs the Cornell Costume and Textile collection. Her research investigates the cultural significance of clothing, textiles, and the fashion body through triangulation of anthropology, curation, and creative design scholarship.

We asked Denise for a fun fact, and if you know Denise she's always fabulously dressed in vintage apparel, and she said her first piece of vintage fashion was acquired when she was just six years old- she spotted a pill box hat in an antique store and it took a couple months it sounds like of some pretty good chores for her mother to capitulate and buy her that pillbox.

We're thrilled to have Denise here to talk about the cost of not fitting in. I'll turn it over to you Denise.

(Dr. Denise Green)  Thank you so much Sara. So I wanna start by saying that I'm really pleased to be part of this webinar and book project and thank you to the Costume Society of America for hosting and to Elena and Sara for editing the book of course, which is so much work, my fellow panelists Kelly and Eulanda, it's so nice to be here with you. And I also want to give a big thank you to my co-author, Susan Kaiser. She and I worked on the chapter together and Susan was part of the first webinar in the series. The chapter was titled "Taking events: A Discussion of Fashion, appropriation, and Cultural Sensitivity." And Susan spoke on the design focus panel and so her talk was about the ethical issues surrounding the appropriation of design elements, which is really where much of the discussion of cultural region in our field has rightfully focused.

Today I'm going to discuss another aspect of our chapter, which is about the appropriation of the production process. Within the theme of this panel, I'm more specifically questioning what are the costs of not fitting in when it comes to fitting into production and later into profit?

So I'm going to use the case study that we discussed in our chapter which is that of the Cowichan sweater and it's continued appropriation by Ralph Lauren. So this is the story of three sweaters, all of which you see here, they're all part of the Cornell fashion and textile collection.

And they've all been described as Cowichan sweaters.

So this is also the story of an indigenous coast Salish community from the northwest, coast known collectively as the Cowichan tribes and it's also the story of Ralph Lauren the man but also Ralph Lauren the corporation, which is of course an American Fashion company and both have a long-standing practice of appropriating from and defending native north American indigenous communities. Whether that's the teepees that Ralph Lauren erected on his massive ranch outside of Telluride, Colorado- some of you might remember the Oprah episode where she visits him on the ranch and they hang out in one of the teepees, or the ongoing omanticizing of the wild west and appropriation of Amer- native American design elements in his fashion collections, or the offensive use of Native American historical photographs for his 2015 lookbooks, just to name a few.

This is also the story of outsourced and exploited labor, hand knitters in China. This story is one that is long-standing but my participation in the story kind of began in 2015, early 2015. I was actually contacted by someone, an employee at Ralph Lauren because my research on the northwest coast is with a neighboring community, a neighboring first nation the Nuuchahnulths, and so I had some familiarity with the arts and design of this region and its peoples, so the Ralph Lauren employment employee asked me if I could share with them any, quote unquote, distinguishing features of a Cowichan sweater and of course I smelled a rat but responded truthfully, I said, "The distinguishing feature is that it has been knit by a Cowichan person." And that was not the answer that they wanted to hear.

So this sweater that we're looking at here in the slide was clearly not knit by someone from Cowichin. The label tells us it was hand knit in China and was made of linen and hemp rather than wool. The thunderbird is featured as with a Greek key design above the thunderbird and then the second sweater is made mostly of wool but it has buttons down the front rather than the zipper, it also features the thunderbird design but with different geometric borders and the backside actually features an American flag. And as of last Saturday which is when I sent my slides to Sara, I went around searching and I found that it's actually you can find a, you know, a second hand of this very sweater for 498 on poshmark. In the thumbnail images on the left side you can actually see the back side which has the American flag.

So in February 2015, the Cowichan spoke up using social media platforms and press releases that they sent out to various Canadian media corporations to call out Ralph Lauren for selling, at that time he was literally selling something called a Cowichan sweater, the Cowichan tribes are from Canada which means that they are not protected by the United States Indian arts and crafts act of 1990.

This is truth in advertising legislation that prevents companies or individuals from selling products that they call Native American. So for example like you can't sell a Navajo blanket if it's not from Navajo made by a Navajo person, but uh it only protects federally recognized tribes in the United States. Canadians are obviously outside of that or tribes that are in what is now called Canada. So Ralph Lauren responded by renaming the sweaters "Cowichan inspired" and they have continued to sell them.

I took this screenshot on my phone just last July 2020, five years after this whole conversation began and I found it incredibly ironic and deceptive how the masthead of the same page as you can see here featured a link to their Black Lives Matter statement while the company continues to profit from their theft of indigenous design ideas.

So here's an example of an authentic Cowichan knit sweater circa 1950, unfortunately this is a sweater in our collection and unfortunately the provenance does not include the name of the specific knitter which is really a traves- you know, a travesty but it was produced by a member of the Cowichan tribes. And to give you a little background on the Cowichan, I've included here a map of their traditional territory and some historical images that are part of creative commons that were featured in Margaret Miekle's 1987 book Cowichan Indian Knitting which you can actually find through the University of British Columbia's library and you can, it's open access it was published by the UBC Museum of Anthropology. The Cowichan have a long-standing and ancient tradition of spinning and weaving fiber. The Salish wool dog which is also known as the Comox dog, now sadly extinct, but was historically an important source of fiber and it had very long white fur.

A second but more challenging fiber to acquire in the region was the Vancouver Island mountain goat. Both fiber sources along with plant fibers, like the inner bark of the cedar tree which could be beaten and softened and spun with protein fibers, were important parts of Coast Salish weaving. It wasn't until the 1850s that sheep were introduced to Vancouver Island by encroaching settlers and immigrants. Soon after in in 1864 the sisters of Saint Anne established a school where they began to teach knitting to Cowichan girls today's couch and sweaters are two colored pattern knits that are made using the fair island technique, a technique that was named for one of the Shetland islands in Scotland and scots were of course one of the largest immigrant settler groups to contribute to the dispossession of Cowichan territory in the late 19th and early 20th century. So as we can see with this very brief history, I don't have much time, this is very complex and as with any discussion of fashion change in materials, techniques, and aesthetics occur through social and cultural interaction and this of course was true for Cowichan weaving and spinning long before colonial expansion. There was change in their design and fashion long before they met Europeans.

Weaving like knitting is and was a dynamic form of fashion that changes with the availability of new materials, ideas, and interactions with others. You can see a couple of pre-contact examples on the left and a contemporary woven tunic on the right that was gifted to us by the Haa'yuups who at the time was using the name Chuuchkamalthnii from the Hupacasath First Nation. This was made for him by one of his nieces.

So in our chapter, Susan and I define cultural appropriation but we also define some other terms, including cultural exchange, which has been thought of as a kind of respectful and mutual interchange between groups, materials, but we also questioned if this can ever really be possible when we consider the power dynamics at play. So perhaps a better way to think about it and one way that we suggest in our chapter is through the cultural studies concept of cultural hybridity, which involves a cross between at least two different things that does not result in an erasure or the kind of melting pot myth that we often hear. As a concept, cultural hybridity acknowledges cultural differences and distinctiveness alongside the inevitable influences and cross-fertilization of ideas, aesthetics, and intersectional identities in a global world. We can see this concept at work in these Cowichan sweater designs. Marilyn George who knit the sweater at top says that the design- she inherited the design intergenerationally from her grandmother, but her grandmother she believed got the pattern off a Chinese tea box so we see this global, trans national interchange happening from a box of tea as it arrives to Cowichan and then is an inspiration for a couch and knitter and I think maybe even more interesting for some of the fashion history folks here tonight is the sweater on the bottom which was purchased in 1932, and this of course is just five years after Elsa Schiaparelli's now iconic 1927 trump, louis bow sweater. So Cowichan sweaters have circulated globally over the last 120 years or more and this photo montage from Margaret Miekle's book affirms this and she writes, quote, "genuine Cowichan sweaters are more than warm woolen outer garments, they are visual statements. Symbols of the west coast, readily identifiable as Canadian dress, they are ollectors items for hundreds of thousands of people worldwide and have been presented as official gifts to heads of state and even royalty," end quote, as you see here with the queen, Queen Elizabeth.

So as scholars and as media watchdogs, we often focus on the appropriation of design elements... but what about the appropriation of production in addition to the appropriation of aesthetics? So what is the cost of not being included in the production process and the profit? So here we have the production of fiber, production begins with materials, sheep farmers are involved, then there's the shearing, the washing, then we have the carting, and the spinning, you can see some really interesting innovations, here my favorite being the treadle machine turn to spinning wheel, the treadle sewing machine, then comes the hand knitting. And this is, you know, all of these parts are people's livelihoods. People's livelihoods depend on all stages of this production process.

So it's not only the design that's being appropriated, but the labor and the livelihoods. From the farmers, to the spinners and to the knitters.

So this is also, interestingly I, you know, I was doing a little searching around. We wrote this chapter a few years ago, and, come to find out as we might expect this is not just a problem for Cowichan, but this is a problem for knitters around the world. Here we have a recent story about hand-knit lopi sweaters that are made traditionally in Iceland, they're also recently, they've recently been outsourced to China.

So I'm gonna end here because you know we also have to think empathetically about the hand knitters in China. What kind of exploitation are they enduring? The lack of transparency in the production side of the fashion industry makes it very hard to know about what their lives and working conditions are like.

So I don't want to end this talk by villainizing the handovers in China, no of course not, they are also making a livelihood and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect in their work.

The villain here is unchecked capitalism and the financial greed of large corporations like Ralph Lauren who profit from the appropriation of labor in addition to their appropriation of indigenous design work and livelihoods.

Thank you.

(Dr. Sara Marcketti) Thank you so much Denise, there's so many different ways that we could alk about this and so many questions that arise.

(Dr. Denise Green) Well, I always think the question about what could Ralph Lauren have done that might have made this okay? He could have worked with the Cowichan first, you know the Cowichan tribes. I think that would be one way that Ralph Lauren, and compensated them if they reached an agreement that was mutually beneficial to both par- or more beneficial to them because honestly this is their, this is their work and their livelihood and their design, and so respect for that and I think there's another recent, you know, interesting example recently with Jeremy Scott and Adidas doing the track suits also using northwest coast designs again it would have been a perfect opportunity for them to reach out to one of the many, many northwest coast artist designers and invited them into a collaboration and sat down and and thought about what would be equitable and fair. And so it's it doesn't have to be as complicated, it's the taking with entitlement that's the problem I think.

(Dr. Sara Marcketti) I think it leads perfectly into the question about trans culturation, which uh the participant defines as "the creation of new cultural phenomenon from distinct groups", and I wonder if you could talk a little bit about that?

(Dr. Denise Green) Yeah and that might actually be honestly, that might be a better term to think with than cultural hybridity. I think that, that's really what we're we're talking about here and the Cowichan sweater is a great example of that. Is we were trying to use this body of theory to think through how can we acknowledge the fact that there are- there are lots of different groups coming together interacting and influencing one another and producing new kinds of design out of that?

There's still certain kinds of ownership at play but there's also exchange, there's power dynamics at play, and so I think that might be a really great conceptual tool to think with because like Minha Fam wrote in her article in the Atlantic, we don't want to get into this sort of

binauristic way of thinking about like the west and the rest and like domination and, you know it, it's like, that's not productive either.

These kinds of relations are entangled and there's power at play but it's not a sort of top down or, you know, so it's complex is kind of the root of it.

(Dr. Sara Marcketti) Yes very complex issues. I'll open this up to Eulanda and Kelly as well as you Denise.

A couple of the questions in the chat and it seemed almost like a theme in some of the presentations are: social media, how social media has allowed for different voices to be heard versus you know maybe in the past when there was one or two high fashion magazines that tried to dictate what the prevailing styles would be. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about that related to each of your topics? How has that helped or hurt?

(Dr. Denise Green) I'll just say, with the issue of cultural appropriation we've seen a lot of social media accounts function as watchdogs, right? Diet prada and others become platforms for calling out these kinds of inequities or injustices or thefts um and so it it is productive in that way, to raise attention and bring attention to inequalities that are long-standing in the fashion and cultural appropriation isn't new because we have a name for it now, it's long-standing so we have new platforms though to call it out and to bring attention to it and hopefully find ways of remedying it. There have been also stories where this kind of um attention has resulted in reconciliation, to a certain degree, you know, so I think it's productive in that way.

(Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best) I'll go next. I think that social media specifically has been extremely, has revolutionized a lot of the ways that, like, folks can see and like, see different representations. I mean, specifically for the queer community you'll have accounts such as auto straddle, Q-Wear, all these various, like, media, queer media accounts, or even like, you know, fat fashion accounts and so forth where folks can like see themselves represented. And so, any, you know, in all types of spaces, and museums when folks see themselves, when they see the narratives represented. right? Or in, you know, for example Kamala Harris, right? Like seeing folks in these different spaces allows for, you know, connection and identity development and negotiation so

I think that it has really opened up and a lot of like the, specifically like the queer fashion brands have used that space to do like a co-production with a lot of the different community members. So like, for example they'll use it as a way to like help build different products and to like gain feedback and like a really cyclical process between them and the consumer as opposed to them just being like, "Here's what you need," they're like, "What do you need?" and they can use those spaces that are super interactive to ask for feedback and advice. 

So for example, St. Harridan was, really, they have since closed but they were a queer brand that was founded in Oakland, California and they really used that to create some of their products. So, overall I would say that social media has been extremely, like had a positive influence in that, while it has these other negative aspects to it we're being on social media too much, but um you know it, it certainly allows for representation for some of these smaller more niche brands.

I'll pass it to Eulanda next.

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders) Thank you. Social media, you know, in regards to pain in or from fashion, you know is, it's still divisive I feel because there's still the use of social media to support, popularize painful you know, articles of clothing and sometimes you'll see brand influencers that are helping to perpetuate, you know, these historically painful ways of dressing and then of course on the other hand we do have you know access to additional images and empowerment and movements and then sometimes even closed groups that individuals are empowering each

other in via social media. So um we've made some gains but there's still a ways to go I feel in some aspects of what we're seeing perpetuated on social media.

(Dr. Elena Karpova) Thank you so much for the wonderful presentation everyone.

So, as we learned today and we all knew that before but maybe a little, see it a little clearer, there are many hidden dangers in everyday practicesthat are considered normal and widely accepted assumptions, beliefs, and behaviors. What can we do as a society and maybe educators or consumers to see and realize this danger so we can start slowly maybe transforming them?

(Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best) I can go first. I think that in many ways, I think, I mean especially when we- when I think about like appearance norms in regards to, you know, all the different intersections of identity I think that there is a lot of different literature and so I think that in in some ways it's like you know as educators, as like an academic, you know, taking some of that and you know presenting it in a way to the public that folks can understand and to show some of the contradictory discourses that are happening so, but, but also like there's, you know, you have to take into consideration many different cultural factors.

So, for example you might just look at, you know, a few different studies and they might say yeah like viewing these you know images in Vogue over time have been really detrimental to women but more specifically white women, right, so really thinking like knowing and understanding like there's so many different factors that can go into it but I think like the first step is really like education. And so, again, kind of as I was saying before like I think that talking to our students, perhaps like building like partnerships with industry and like showing them like, here is the literature that's being done and here are some of like the negative outcomes, right?

And so you know and talking about those negative outcomes, because as Denise was, you know, mentioning to, you know, like the, the problem is, you know, capitalist greed, right? So like they know that using thin models is going to sell more products. They know that you know using thin, they, if they put, you know, fat women, but there is also research you know, for example Ben Berry a bit Ryerson, he's doing some really great research on perceptions of men and different body sizes of men in magazines and so forth and found that like, they're actually, yeah, like they are, they're wanting these different diverse, you know, they're like being attracted to that more, right?

So you know just sharing this information that, it can result in positive you know capitalist sales I suppose. So yeah, I think just like education is key.

I'll pass it to my colleagues.

(Dr. Denise Green) I was just going to say, Kelly, I definitely think education is critical for our students who are obviously going to work in the industry and have the potential to be change agents. Having them think critically and be aware is crucial and that's wonderful. I also think, you know, at Cornell we have a fashion and textile collection and we use our exhibitions, our public exhibitions which are our form of outreach and engagement, to raise awareness about production because the fashion industry has done a fabulous job of rendering production invisible so that consumption can be easy and enjoyable when we don't think about all of the labor and exploitation and destruction that occurs in the production process from fiber all the way to finished garment and so, you know, in our fashion exhibitions at Cornell we really try to bring awareness to production whether, you know, we've done exhibits on, on you know, the ILGWU and different unions, we've done it, we just did an exhibit on fashion and feathers where we put like bird specimens, like dead birds, next to the garments featuring the feathers from the same bird so the scientific specimens helped you to see like, "Oh you only use the feathers from that tiny part of the bird." You know what I mean?

And so, making clear to people that what we're wearing every day, you know, we have a choice and we have that power as consumers. I don't want to put all of the, you know, onus on consumption because obviously again it's the large corporations that we really need to hold accountable for their practices.

(Dr. Eulanda Sanders) And um, of course I agree with the education aspect of it, too, because as we were talking about brand ambassadors earlier and then also social media, our students really are the best brand ambassadors and to help change happen and I've been at this I think longer than anyone else on the panel and so what's the joy for me to see now are, you know, students I've had over the last 30, 31 years that are making changes within the industry and they're communicating that via social media too and so their impact is spreading faster. And now, today, than it probably has in the past so I think continuing to educate our students, get them out there and, you know, the generation today, they want change and they are moving forward with it. So, it's exciting.

(Dr. Denise Green) I agree with that definitely.

(Dr. Kelly Reddy-Best) Yeah, I think too the, one more thing it's like this, certainly educating our students you know of course I'm saying you know we're academics here, but you know the power of the dollar. Like the consumer is really powerful too, right? And so like researching ourselves and understanding, you know, the various practices of different fashion brands can be really powerful, like collective action as well.

(Dr. Sara Marcketti) Well thank you all so much. I know this has been just so thought provoking for me and I know for the rest of the participants here.

Thank you again and good night.