Hacking the loop
How to encourage consumers to upcycle their clothes in order to reduce consumer fashion waste and lessen the environmental impact of fast fashion?
Abstract

The core of the project lies in upcycling. From the start of the research, I wanted to find new creative ways of upcycling garments and textiles. However, upcycling is a part of a greater whole which deals with addressing the problem of fashion waste. It gives new value to the clothes and prolongs the life span of the clothes. It is a craftivism act since it plugs into an existing system and shapes it towards a more sustainable direction.

Thus this project wanted to take a larger approach and include consumers into the process. The purpose of the project was to explore one of the ways to encourage consumers to upcycle their clothes. This was done through an upcycling workshop. In the upcycling workshop, the consumer visualized the way they want their clothes to be upcycled. Their garments were then upcycled using DIY methods such as stitching, patching, and painting. The process was recorded in detail. The whole process was then translated into a craftivist zine. The zine demonstrates how to do your own upcycling workshop and how to upcycle three garments. The upcycling workshop and the zine want to encourage the consumer to upcycle by giving them the necessary skills to do so.

How to encourage consumers to upcycle their clothes in order to reduce consumer fashion waste and lessen the environmental impact of fast fashion?
Introduction

The modern consumers need to take one step back and rethink its choices. Everything has already been made. New ideas are usually a copy of already existing ideas. Fashion is superficial and boring when you look at it deeply and critically. It does not care about the environment, people who make its clothes and consumers that wear them. Fashion Industry is the world’s second most polluting industry. Tones and tones of garments are thrown away by the consumers of fashion. Fast fashion companies do not think how their clothes are produced and they certainly do not care how it is disposed of by the consumer. It often happens that garments have a short life cycle and end up being disposed of when a new trend comes. Sadly the consumer is not clearly aware of the impact they have on the environment. If the customer was aware of how much resources are needed to produce their garment, they would not dispose of it so easily. However, when a consumer is confronted with such information, they still do not completely understand the power they have when disposing of the garment. The project will be talking about the ways consumer and designer can possibly work together to reduce the environmental impact of fast fashion. One of the ways is to include a consumer into the process of upcycling and teach them the necessary skills they need to upcycle their garments. Upcycling is one of the ways consumers could make an impact and prolong the life span of their product. It is one approach to being more sustainable, but it is still not a solution. However, the project wants to explore and find ways to persuade the consumer to upcycle themselves. How can a designer encourage people to take a step back and rethink their choices with a cold head?

Fig1. Amount of clothes thrown each year by fast fashion company
Background

From the start of the research, the project wanted to find new creative ways of upcycling garments and textiles. However, upcycling is a part of a greater whole which deals with addressing the problem of fashion waste. Previous research on fashion waste and waste survey show that consumer fashion waste is one of the major issues. (Centre for Sustainable Fashion, 2019) (Climate Change: Implications and Strategies for the Luxury Fashion Sector, 2015) Each year we throw numerous amounts and do not think about the consequences they leave on the planet. Fast fashion became a big part of our wardrobe and we do not usually have a big connection to the clothes. Upcycling, on the other hand, addresses the issue of fast disposable fashion. It is a counteract which tries to slow down and close the loop of disposable fashion. Upcycling gives new value to garments and encourages their longevity. (Busch 2009) The consumers dictate how the garments are going to be used and disposed of. Therefore the project wanted to address how to communicate upcycling better to the consumer. DIY and skill sharing plays a major role in the project since both are directly used in the process of upcycling. However, the problem lies in how to communicate them to the fashion consumer. How to encourage upcycling among consumers in a way that could be easily done and interesting to do? How to make the upcycling interesting and valuable thing to do for a consumer?

Defining fashion

Before continuing with my process, I wanted to find the correlation between fashion and upcycling. For me, fashion is a handicraft. It is made with care and patience. Fashion needs to be made in ethical conditions and consumers need to be aware of its impacts on the environment and people. Just like upcycling, fashion requires craft and hands-on approach. Upcycling is fashion. Because when we upcycle, we are creating and we are caring about the environment.

Design proposal

The core idea of the project is to encourage young adults, in this case, a student at Linnaeus University to upcycle their clothes. In order to encourage them to upcycle, the participants were involved in the upcycling process themselves. They attended the workshop where they visualised the upcycling of their garments. The workshop was a simulation of practice which demonstrates how the consumer can alter the loop of fast fashion by prolonging the lifespan of the garments. The workshop was a teaching method where participants learned one way of bringing new life to their old garments. The workshop wanted to implement the practice of upcycling into the participants. The garments that were upcycled after the workshop was proof that the practice of upcycling actually “works”. They proved that upcycling not only gives new life to the garment but it also creates a new aesthetic that goes hand in hand with fashion.

Aims and goals

Upcycling gives new value to garments and encourages their longevity. It is a hacktivist and co-designing project whose aim is to plug in the existing system and try to make changes around the fashion waste. Its purpose is to encourage the consumer to upcycle their clothes and reduce their fashion waste. To do so the project involved consumers into the process of creating upcycled garments. Upcycling process would encourage them to upcycle their other clothes in the future using manageable DIY techniques. My project wanted to create “action spaces” or a workshop where people would bring their own clothes and help me design the upcycled garments. At the same time, the workshops aim was to implement the practice of upcycling into consumer behavior. By including the consumer in the process of making upcycled garments, they obtain upcycling skills and are encouraged to upcycle garments in the future.
Theoretical Framework

Craftivism

As one of the main inspirations for the contextualization of the project was Otto von Busch’s thesis on hacktivism and engaged fashion design. Busch’s concept of craftivism was particularly connected to my project. Craftivism is activism by doing craft or DIY. It reinvents the craft by updating hacking tradition (eg. stitching) and makes it a tool for raising political questions. (Busch 2009) It is often used as a way of acting against consumerism (eg. fast fashion). By being engaged in such an act, people gain a sense of empowerment and “usefulness”. It makes them an active agent of change even though they do not see it directly. “Engaging in the practice of empowerment through skills can make us more “useful”.” (Busch 2009) Craft and craftivism open up action spaces for people to act in and create.

In my project, Busch’s concept of craftivism is used in the practice of upcycling and in the upcycling workshop. In my project upcycling is a way of craftivism since it plugs into existing fashion structures and uses it to create change. The garments new value is an activist message because the user acted against fast consumerism and prolonged its life cycle. The upcycling workshop is an action space, the participants could reflect upon the garments and think about their fashion waste by being included in the process of making. In the action space, the participants meet to exchange skills and create new practices. (Busch 2009) The project takes a craftivist standpoint and it tries to promote thinking and acting against waste by promoting upcycling as a craft. By being more aware and engaged the consumer will upcycle the clothes themselves in the future and act against fast fashion.

Fashion Marketing

The Why of the Buy (Rath et al., n.d) is a book that gives good insights into how consumers and marketing work when it comes to fashion. This interesting book describes nicely how a designer or marketing person needs to adapt to consumer needs and understand how people think when it comes to pushing ideas to the public. It explains how a fashion idea should be marketed in order to attract the consumer. “In working to meet consumer needs, marketers look for those product qualities that will make people feel good about their purchases- consumer benefits” (Rath et al., n.d, page xviii) The book clearly describes marketing techniques such as pop-up events that aim to persuade consumers to consume certain idea or product. Everyone wants to participate in spreading the news about something exciting and avant-gardes; people are flattered when they’re part of the process.” (Rath et al., n.d, page 12) The book demonstrates how to change consumer behavior and persuade them to participate in a certain idea.

My project takes marketing methods from the book in order to encourage upcycling which is a form of consumer behavior. It is a way of hacking the methods of marketing and using them to promote sustainability. My project uses a pop-up event, which in this case is my workshop and the exhibition to persuade consumers to upcycle. When participants were participating in the workshop, they gained certain consumer benefits. They felt worthy and good about themselves since they were participating in a workshop that resulted in something bigger. By being more aware and engaged the consumer will upcycle the clothes themselves in the future and act against fast fashion.
Co-design is one of the concepts that was used in the design process of my project. Co-design is a collaborative process where the customer, the retailer, and the manufacturer work together in customization of the product to satisfy customer’s requirements. (J. Peterson, 2016) Co-design main aim is to engage with the public (eg. consumers) and increase democratic participation in the design process. It encourages consumer participation in design activities related to designing public spaces, activities, services or systems. (Huybrechts, Benesch and Geib, 2017)

One of the brands that help visualize such process is Companion. It brand which uses co-design to include immigrants into the production of their garments. Their concept was interesting because they managed to implement co-design into their process and make garments that are customized by the artisans. Co-design is relevant to my project because it was used in the upcycling workshop.

The participants of the workshop customized their garments by visualizing the upcycling of their garments. They were actually the designers of their garments, while I was the one transforming their customized designs into reality. The workshop provided participants with the necessary skills that enabled them to visualize their customization/upcycling of the garments.

As a practice example, the project was inspired by works of Amy Twigger Holroyd that are using craft as activism against fast fashion. Her works are relevant to my project since she is using making to make an activist statement. Her re-making project encourages people to do knitting themselves the same as the project wants to encourage people to do upcycling. However, her project was not particularly engaging when it comes to sharing skills and including people in her process. The interesting things about her project are the way she shares her project.

For example, she uses booklets and hashtag movement to promote her craftivism. She as well has an interesting narration of the project and tells a nice conceptual story behind the knitting. This was particularly present in the way she exhibited her project. She based the narration of the project behind the knitworks she did. In her exhibition that was visualized by pinpointing and zooming in on each knitwork exhibited.
Upcycling brands
As a concept and visual inspiration, I have been inspired by brands that upcycle clothes for their collections: Femail, Remake Stockholm, Rave Review Stockholm and Lou Dallas. I found it quite interesting because when it comes to upcycling garments, the designer does not have much choice when it comes to visual manipulation of garments. You are offered with garments with set designs and it is your role to reshape them and turn imperfections into aesthetics. On the other hand, their process and outcomes are not so accessible and transparent to the user. The users do not see where their upcycled clothes come from and they do not know so much about the process of upcycling. They follow a typical design process pattern where we only see the outcome and not the process of making it. When it comes to skills, upcycling could not be done by everyone and these examples demonstrate that you necessarily need to have knowledge in sewing in order to produce a good upcycled garment.

Context
Linnaeus University Students
The participants of the project were the university students on campus. During the research phase of my project, a survey on fashion waste was conducted on them. The survey wanted to find out whether students are aware of how much waste their produce. The survey showed that students at Linnaeus University could be a good context for the project. It was because they showed a big interest in the topic and they were the audience who consume a lot of fashion. Students are young adults and play an important role in consuming fashion and it would be beneficial for them to rethink their waste and start upcycling their clothes.

Collaborators
During my the research phase, my project got a future collaborator that needed designers for a fashion show in May. She provided me and other designers with freedom of experimentation. She provided me a space to exhibit the outcomes of the design process to a wider audience. The exhibition show would promote upcycling among a wider audience of people. It would provide inspiration and freedom to explore fashion sustainability. The other collaborators were the participants of the event/workshop who brought their garments for upcycling.
Design process and methodology

An outline

The design process of the project started with positioning and material research. The core concept of the project is upcycling, but at the beginning, the project was more revolving around the ways a garment could be upcycled. As the research evolved, the project wanted to find ways to include people in the ways of upcycling. It wanted to find ways that will encourage people to upcycle their garments and reduce their fashion waste. The research then focused on finding the way or narrative the project could revolve around. It wanted to find a focus which would inspire people to upcycle. To find a final focus, the project had two workshops.

The first workshop of the design process was conducted on university students, but it was just a test out of upcycling possibilities when it comes to time management. The second workshop was the main workshop of the project. It as well determined the final narrative of the project which is about sharing skills to do upcycling which it is in the spirit of craftivism. The participants’ garments were upcycled and skills used were recorded using photography. The participants as well tried out their upcycled garments and provided feedback. The skills used and the workshop itself will be shared in a form of zine DIY manual for participants and the wider public to use for new upcycling of garments in the future.

Planning the process

The design process had three stages. The beginning was of the design process was used for material research and finding easy and accessible ways of upcycling the garments. Then came the phase which researched ways of including people into the upcycling process. In this phase, the process was testing out workshops and design of workshops that encouraged people to upcycle their clothes. The first test workshop gave an insight into how the final workshop should be designed. The final workshop then provided participants with the necessary skills and encouraged people to upcycle their old garments. The third phase of the design process was saved for upcycling the garments according to the visualizations of the participants. The upcycling was recorded and the skills used in the workshop and in upcycling are going to be published in the form of the DIY zine which is a manual into fashion craftivism.

Material research

The design process of the project started with researching into ways of upcycling the garments. In this phase, the process wanted to find easy and accessible ways of upcycling for people. Techniques as stitching and painting were used to upcycle test garments. These techniques were as well used in upcycling the garments participants brought to the workshop. These techniques were mostly chosen because they are easy and do not require so much time. They are DIY and could be done by people who are not professionals.
I need to throw away this old T-shirt. Hej! Give it to me. I need it to make an upcycled collection. You can even help me with it.

Okej!

Can you visualize how you want me to upcycle the garment?

Being involved in the process was interesting! Next time I am going to do myself.

Thank you! After the show and the exhibition you are going to get your shirt back as a reminder that you can even do it yourself.

The focus of the project:

Exchange of skills

The focus of the project narrative was to base the project around the workshop, creating active spaces and implementing the practice of upcycling among university students. The design narrative is based on the exchange of skills (techniques of upcycling) and sharing the knowledge needed to upcycle a garment.

The first test out workshop: T-shirt hacking workshop

During the second phase of research, there was test out the workshop on design students. In the workshop, the students explored DIY techniques that were used during initial material research. The students were asked to upcycle and explore t-shirts. The workshop showed that it was hard for design students to upcycle the garment without thinking about its usefulness. It gave an idea about how the final workshop should be designed and how it should be more simplified for people who are not designers. The design students did not have enough time to properly upcycle t-shirts and were struggling to visualize how they wanted to upcycle the t-shirts. The workshop showed that the final workshop should be simplified and share techniques that are manageable in the time period provided.

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Designing the final workshop

After the test out workshop with design students, the research was based around designing the actual workshop where people would be involved in the process of upcycling. The test out workshop showed that the tasks given to people need to be simplified since they are not going to be able to do the same DIY tasks in a short period of time. In tutoring with artist Marie O’Connor, an idea was developed where participants of the workshop would outline their garments on white paper. Afterward, they would cut out the tracing and do iterations to visualize upcycling of the garment. After the workshop, the garments would be upcycled using their visualization. During the workshop, the participants were provided with visual triggers and materials to help them visualize the upcycling of the garment. Visual triggers were clothes made by upcycling brands that were used as inspiration of the project. The participants were provided with materials such as yarn, paint, markers, pencils, needles, scissors and etc.

Final workshop: Upcycling workshop

In the final workshop, the participants were invited to visualize the upcycling of the garments. There were 7 participants in total. The first task of the workshop was to trace the origin of the garment the participant brought. Ethics form and introduction were given beforehand to the participant. After the first task, the participants proceeded with the second task of the workshop. In the second task, participants visualized the upcycling of their garments. The participant first needed to trace out their garment on a piece of white paper. After they traced their garment, the participant cut out the tracing and did visual iterations on it. The workshop lasted for one hour and thirty minutes in total. The main task of the workshop lasted for about one hour. After the participants did visual iterations they discussed their ideas.
Upcycling the garments
During this phase of the design process, the garments were upcycled according to visualizations of participants of the workshop. The garments were upcycled according to techniques the participants wanted. The visualizations techniques such as painting, stitching, and patching were used to create the new aesthetic of the garments. In total there were seven garments upcycled. The upcycling process was slow and every garment needed special handling. It slowed down the design process and demonstrated the amount of care each garment needs. It also proved the value that customization and upcycling bring to the garment. Each upcycled garment had a “personality” of their owner and it was clearly visualized in the outcome. The upcycling process was being recorded using photos and the photos will be used in the zine manual to share them to participants and the wider public.

Sharing skills
Workshop
The main focus of the project is to encourage upcycling among university students by sharing skills that enable them to do so. The workshop was a space where participants tried out the skill of prototyping the upcycling. They visualized the way they want their garment to be upcycled. This was one skill that sparks participants imagination and encouraged them to think about upcycling. During the visualization, they needed to be the designers of their own garment and think about the outcomes of upcycling.

Zine: a fashion craftivist manual
The zine is a manual that demonstrates the skills used in the workshop and during the upcycling of the garments. It is another form of skill sharing that demonstrates the skills used to the participants and to the wider public. The zine shows which skills were used during the whole process and show how to execute them again. It is a DIY manual into fashion craftivism. The reader can learn how to execute their own upcycling workshop and how to upcycle three garments. (The full zine can be found in the appendix).
Participant feedback

After the garments were upcycled, they were given to participants for test-out. Most of the participants liked the way their garments were upcycled. They mentioned minor things they would change but mostly they were satisfied with the aesthetics of them. They were proven that upcycling can create an interesting aesthetic that could be worn as everyday fashion. They all said that in the future they would do more upcycling. They were inspired by the workshop and gained skills that would help them to upcycle more clothes in the future. The participants designed their garments in a simple and practical manner. They designed their garments so they could feel comfortable in them and wear them regularly.

Exhibition

Afro Fusion Event

Before making the final exhibition, I had a chance to exhibit my project at my collaborator’s event. The event was an exhibition where I and other designers needed to exhibit their garment designs. In exchange for helping my collaborator to design garments using African textiles, my project was provided a showcase in the event. The Afro Fusion event/exhibition was aimed to promote African culture in Växjö. It wanted to start up discussions and embrace the fusion of cultures (Swedish and cultures of the African continent). My project needed in some way fit the context of the event. However, that was a bit hard since it did not directly have a connection to the context of the event. My upcycling project was aiming to promote upcycling among people and it was somewhat difficult to communicate this message directly to visitors of Afro Fusion.

The visitors were impressed by upcycled clothes worn by the model, but they did not clearly understand the message of this piece. They were a bit confused because my garments were standing out from the rest of the garments presented in the event. My upcycled garments did try to promote upcycling craft but were not clearly fitting in the cultural concept of Afro Fusion. However, they were still interesting to visitors. The visitors often engaged in the conversation with me and the model about the project and the aim of the upcycled garments. They were inspired by the garments and mostly did not mind that they were not strictly fitting in the Afro Fusion concept. Working with Afro Fusion event helped me to rethink the final exhibition and see that visitors need to have more interaction with the upcycled garments. Although my model was good in presenting the garments, the visitors still lacked more interaction that could enable them to experience garments more.
Introduction to curating

After completing my project, my role was to interpret it in the form of an exhibition. My project was supposed to be part of the graduating exhibition that would include other works. Next, to designing my own exhibit, I needed to be part of designing the final exhibition with my classmates. At the beginning of the course, we were introduced to a brief history of curating and ideas of curating through workshops and course literature. In one of the workshops, we needed to curate the “exhibition” using the food we cook. When food was cooked we “curated” the food and made it into art pieces with which the visitor interacted. The food art pieces were interactive in a sense that the visitor needed to perform certain action in order to eat the food. In this workshop, it was demonstrated how we can curate exhibition even using unusual tools such as food. In reference to Hans Ulrich Obrist’s, you could see from this workshop that you could create a good exhibition no matter the tools you are provided with. It showed that curating is about taking advantage of what you have and turning it into an experience/exhibition. (Obrist, Jeffries, and Groves, 2019) The workshop as well provided a good inspiration into developing my own exhibit design. It showed me that the exhibit needs to be interactive and sort of “democratic” by including the public into the exhibit.

Process of making

After the introductory week to curating, the class and I start to work on the design of the exhibition. The process of making my exhibit was long with a lot of iterations and adjustments to the collective exhibition. At the start, I wanted to create a changing room where visitors could try out the upcycled garments and interact with them in a more meaningful manner. The changing room was supposed to be a free-standing element made out of materials available at the exhibition space. The changing room was supposed to have clothing hanger on one of the long sides and a podium for the zines on one of the shorter sides. However, as the process of designing the exhibition continued, it turned out that my exhibit design needed to change. While designing the exhibit, I as well needed to balance the collective work on the exhibition. Since I was part of the communications group, we needed to create the concept of our collective exhibition. 

My final exhibit design depended on the design of the final exhibition. That mostly included the spaces we were provided by the exhibition hall. It was first time I was fitting my exhibit into an experience/exhibition hall. However, I was placed in the corner of the exhibition hall. I needed to adapt the shape to the room corner. Next, to adjusting my exhibit design, I as well needed to work with the communications group on spatial concept of the exhibition. In the end, we decided to present everyone’s work under the umbrella term RE. The term RE was associated with re-designing, re-evaluating and re-thinking aspects of all projects. It was a short metaphorical and in-depth representation of each project’s criticality around sustainability and design. Through this process of making, I learned to work together as a collective and properly exchange knowledge with classmates. Proper communication and work as a collective enabled us to develop conversations that created the exhibition.

Fig 34. Collective workshop

When reflecting on the course literature, I could really see that the whole class was slowly turning into a collective. At first, it was hard to plan the tasks for each individual, but as we were more progressive with the design of the exhibition, everyone found their roles. With time some of the tasks came naturally and with time they were easy to do. At some times it was hard to stay focused with specific tasks, but that was managed by keeping day to day plan of tasks. (Raqs Media Collective, 2009) One of the challenging aspects was to fit my exhibit into the final exhibition setting. Before installing the exhibit into the exhibition space, I needed to modify my exhibit design again. In the end, I decided to create divider panels that would enable the visitor to try out my upcycled garments. In times of stress and lack of time, it was a bit demanding to create these dividing panels. However, with the help of installation group, I managed that in time.
Installation of my exhibit came with a lot of changes. First, the position of the exhibit changed to a place where you could easily build a changing room. The changing room was created in the corridor between our exhibition room and the room which was used as exhibition storage. The changing room was created by dividing the passage with the panels offered at the exhibition hall and by making the curtain where people would enter the room. The exhibit contains a mirror, hanger and two podiums on which zines were exhibited. The visitors were provided with instructions on how they could use the exhibit and find out more about fashion craftivism. The installation of the exhibit was not as demanding as expected. The communication between teams was good and that enabled everything to be done in time. The visitors understood the role of the exhibit. They did read instructions of use, but they sometimes did not have the "courage" to try out the exhibit. They did use the changing room when they were encouraged by me. When using the changing room the users were more interested in the garments and they were gladly taking photos of themselves wearing them.

When the upcycled garments were on hangers they would go through them with interest and were engaging with the exhibit. They seemed to understand the upcycling concept behind my exhibit as they were going through the zines and trying out clothes. At the opening of the exhibition, I engaged in conversation with visitors to check if they understood the aim of my exhibit. The conversations were interesting and they proved that the visitors understand the sustainability message behind my project. They managed to understand that the exhibit wanted to encourage them to upcycle their clothes. However, the visitors were more inspired with clothes themselves than the zines which were a guide to craftivism. The attention was mostly directed towards the use of clothes than thinking about upcycling skills. In the future, it could be nice to do an upcycling workshop that would go together with the exhibit and communicate the upcycling message more clearly.

When reflecting on the whole exhibition, the message was quite clear. It was clear that the exhibition wanted to promote an activist message of sustainability. It was curatorial activism because we provided our projects as voices of change. We re-defined what design and sustainability can be in today’s society (Reilly, 2019). We demonstrated that design can be a useful design of change by exposing, rethinking or even solving various societal problems.
Analysis and discussion

Evaluating process

Beginning

The design process of the project started with positioning the project inside a design practice working with upcycling. Upcycling was the main core from the beginning of the research. It was an understandable concept and it provided a space for experimentation. Upcycling seemed engaging since it could be approached hands on. From my perspective, it was a quite understandable and “humble” concept known well to people outside academia. However, upcycling is still seen as a somewhat unusual practice among everyday consumer. People might do it for fun, but in general, it is not considered as something that can go hand in hand with fashion. Meaning that upcycling was not usually associated with clean and nice aesthetic consumer wants. Upcycling is currently seen as messy and aesthetically unpleasing. Therefore, the next stage of my design process wanted to find a way to make upcycling more appealing to the consumers (university students).

For me, upcycling is about using DIY skills to give new meaning to old garments. Therefore, if I found it appealing and easy to do, the consumer might as well. In the next step of my design process, I wanted to explore upcycling techniques. It started with upcycling a T-shirt using paint. It was a bit difficult to paint the whole t-shirt and it left traces on the other side of it. It took a long time to dry and the paint went off when the t-shirt was washed. However, if you would iron the paint it would stay after the washing. The techniques were manageable if a smaller surface on the t-shirt was painted. The other technique that I tried out was stitching, which was quite easy and imaginable. Stitching did not require much caution and it could be used as well to patch something onto the fabric.

Finding focus

During material research, the focus of the project was still unclear. The core concept was upcycling, but it was not clear how it would be communicated to the consumers. The project needed a clear narrative which would communicate the idea to the consumers. At first, there were three possible focuses: skill sharing, storytelling about the garment and upcycling itself. Skill sharing narrative based project around exchanging skills with participants in the form of a workshop and other media (e.g. zine). Storytelling narrative would focus the project more on the garment. Meaning that focus would be set on past, present, and future of upcycled garment. The third narrative would focus only on ways of upcycling. The workshops showed that the project is about skill sharing and DIY. The main focus of both workshops was to teach people upcycling skills and encouraging them to do upcycling in the future. Skill sharing was in the focus because it enabled them to acquire the skills needed to upcycle their garments.

These two techniques were chosen as they did not require handling of a sewing machine which people might not know how to use. Both of the techniques were manageable, but they did need some test out on real participants.
The final workshop: Upcycling workshop

The final workshop showed the time limitations of the upcycling. In the final workshop, the participants will not be able to actually upcycle their garments. Instead, they only visualized the way their garments would be upcycled. Artist Marie O’Connor suggested that participants should visualize the upcycling by tracing out their garments on white paper and then doing iterations on the paper. It was an easy method because it did require design skills from people who are not designers. The participants were not free to explore the actual upcycling however they wanted and they were provided with a range of materials (paint, threads, yarn, collage paper). This enabled participants to use skills they are comfortable with (e.g., painting or stitching).

The workshop was marketed by publishing an event on social media. This was somewhat a good tactic since it attracted many participants. The workshop was held at university and gathered participants. This would bring a more demanding from me as a facilitator to pay attention to all participants outline of what participants are expecting from upcycling. It was a bit than having one person in the workshop to deal with the rest of time to properly test out painting and the participants.  All the participants were debriefed about what is going packaging and stitching methods. The process was messy and confusing. Patterned problems but some participants were confused about the task they should do first. In the first task of the workshop, the participants needed to discuss their ideas with me. The discussions were short and they provided the outline of what participants are expecting from upcycling. It was a bit
demanding from me as a facilitator to pay attention to all participants of the workshop. When discussing with one participant, the other participant was needed something else. It could have been helpful to have another person in the workshop to deal with the rest of the participants. All the participants were debriefed about what is going to happen with their garments. Most of them enjoyed the workshop and were engaged in tasks.

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The workshop itself could be improved by adding a description where the participant should put their name and garment they brought to the workshop. This could be useful to have an audio recording since there were a lot of interesting conversations in the workshop. Most of the conversation was about participants and its sustainability approach. At the end of the visualizations, the participants needed to discuss their ideas with me. The discussions were short and they provided the outline of what participants are expecting from upcycling. It was a bit
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The main task of the workshop was clear but the participants did not have enough space to work on their tracings of the garments. They needed to wait for some time until the person before them makes the tracing of the garment. The waiting created a bit of confusion. If making a new workshop, space, where the workshop is set, should be bigger with more surfaces to place the visualizations.

The workshop was recorded using photos and all participants signed the consent forms in which they agreed to be photographed. It could be useful to have an audio recording since there were a lot of interesting conversations in the workshop. Most of the conversation was about participants and its sustainability approach. At the end of the visualizations, the participants needed to discuss their ideas with me. The discussions were short and they provided the outline of what participants are expecting from upcycling. It was a bit
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Skill sharing

The first skill sharing was in the upcycling workshop. There the participants were learning how to visualize the upcycling of their garments. They tried out methods such as stitching and painting. After interviewing a couple of participants, I realized that they did not really think that much about visualization as a skill. They were more thinking about the upcycling design and the outcomes of the design process. They may use the visualization skill in the future, but it was not really needed for the upcycling. They saw the workshop as more of an inspiration of upcycling. The skill acquired from the workshop was interesting for them but it was not the main thing they learned.

What I learned is that the workshop did not really exchange skill with the participants. It exchanged the practice of upcycling. The other skill sharing is in the form of a zine. The zine is a guide to craftivism. It is made for the participants and the wider public. The zine demonstrates how to do the workshop and upcycle three garments. These three garments were chosen because their upcycling was the most detailed one. The upcycling of these three garments needed a lot of skills, but at the same time, they were really easy to upcycle. The upcycling of these three garments was recorded in detail and they were aesthetically pleasing. They were a good example of how upcycling is efficient and easy. When making the zine, I think that much about visualization as a skill. They were more thinking about the upcycling design and the outcomes of the design process. In the process of upcycling garments, they are more eager to change their habits and put upcycling of garments into their everyday practice. Upcycling of garments requires manageable DIY techniques that can be possibly done by everyone if it is communicated well.

Design as agent of change

The design project mostly based on making changes in the local university context. It many wanted to encourage students to upcycle their clothes and reduce their fashion waste. The workshop did leave an impact on the participants and enable them to see that upcycling can be made fun and easy. The outcomes of the upcycling made them see that upcycling can be efficient and aesthetically pleasing. This project strived to find ways to communicate upcycling to the consumer in a way that is understandable and inclusive. This was made by involving the participants in the process of making. Including participants in the process of upcycling was one of the main transformation moments. By experiencing the upcycling hands on, the participants gained insights into their own garments. They saw what could be improved. They could not work when it comes to upcycling.

In a global context, I see this project being implemented in fast fashion companies. One of the most important parts of upcycling is the customization of the garment. With customization, the garment is adapted to customer needs. This was made by involving the participants in the process of making. Including participants in the process of making, they are more eager to change their habits and put upcycling of garments into their everyday practice. Upcycling of garments requires manageable DIY techniques that can be possibly done by everyone if it is communicated well.

In order for people to change their unsustainable habits, sustainability needs to be made more appealing. This project tough me that upcycling can be made appealing to the consumer. One of the ways to do it is to include consumer into the process of upcycling. In the process of upcycling garments, the consumer has a chance to customize their garment and adapt it to their needs.
Bibliography

Books

• Safa Minney. (2011). Naked Fashion. NEW INTERNATIONALIST.


Journals/papers


Appendix

Zine

- a guide to fashion craftivism
Sadly the consumer is not clearly aware of the impact they have on environment. If the customer was aware about how much resources are needed to produce their garment, they would not dispose it so easily. However, when consumer is confronted with such informations, they still do not completely understand the power they have when disposing the garment. The zine will be giving new ways for you (a consumer) to reduce environmental impact of fast fashion.

Why?

Fashion is superficial and boring when you look at it deeply and critically. It does not care about environment, people who make clothes and consumers that wear it. Fashion Industry is the world’s second most polluting industry. Tones and tones of garments are thrown away by the consumers of fashion. Fast fashion companies do not think about how are their clothes produced and do not care about how they are disposed by consumers. It often happens that garments have short life cycle and end up being disposed when new trends come.
Upcycling gives new value to garments and encourages their longevity. It is fashion craftivism because it aims to plug into the existing system and try to make changes around the fashion waste. When you upcycle your clothes, you are reducing fashion waste by giving new purpose to your old garments. Craftivism takes form in upcycling and it uses upcycling as tool to raise a political question. In the case of this zine, upcycling is way of fighting against overconsumption of fast fashion. (Busch, 2009)

What is fashion craftivism?

- “practice in which craft meets political activism.” (Busch, 2009)

How?
The zine will provide you with manageable DIY upcycling techniques. Using them you can prolong the lifespan of your garments. By using DIY upcycling techniques you are taking a craftivist standpoint and acting against fast fashion. The zine will also provide you with instructions that will show you how to conduct your own upcycling workshop and open up action spaces for craftivism. By creating your own workshop you can encourage other people to join you in craftivism against fast fashion.
The aim of the workshop is to explore the ways we can encourage people to upcycle. It wants to explore how to encourage young people to reduce their fashion waste by being involved in the upcycling process.

In this workshop the participants is going to visualize the way they want their clothes to be upcycled. They are going to bring a piece of garment they want to upcycle.

The workshop consists out of two tasks:
In first task of the workshop the participant will trace the origins of the garment. They will need to answer three questions regarding the origin of the garment.
In the second task of workshop the participants are going to trace the garment on a piece of white paper. Then they are going to cut out the trace and do iterations on it. In the main part of the workshop the participant will do iterations on the tracing. This task would last for about 1 hour. In this 1 hour the participant is going to visualise the way they want their clothes to be upcycled. You (a facilitator) are going to provide them with various materials that would help them to visualize their ideas.

At the end of the workshop you are going to discuss ideas together with the participants of the workshop.
1. write down the summary of the workshop so you are clear about what you are doing.
2. make a list of materials that you need for the workshop (e.g. paint, snacks, consent forms, paper etc.)
3. find a location of the workshop and book it
4. create an event on social media
5. make sure that event describes the aim of the workshop and what you are demanding from participants + write down location, time and date of your workshop
6. invite participants to your workshop (at least one week before the workshop)
7. prepare materials for the workshop at least one day before (e.g. print out consent forms, prepare paint, paper etc.)
8. at the day of the workshop set up everything 30 minutes before
9. when participants come to the workshop, give them consent forms (a paper where they agree to participate) and give them a brief introduction to the workshop and tasks
10. during workshop make sure to pay attention to participants needs
11. at the end of the workshop discuss the workshop with participants and tell them what is going to happen after it
12. at the end of discussion offer them with snacks and beverage (you could do that as well during the workshop)

Request for participation in "Upcycling workshop"

Background and Purpose
The aim of the workshop is to explore the ways we can encourage people to do upcycling. It wants to explore how we can encourage young people to reduce their fashion waste by being involved in the upcycling process. It is one of the research methods for bachelor degree project that wants to explore the before-stated question. The outcomes of the design research will be presented in the fashion show in collaboration with Afro Fusion an organization that promotes multiculturalism in fashion.

The have been asked to participate in the workshop since you are the target audience of the design research. Your group plays big role in impacting upcoming trends and norms in fashion industry in general.

What does participation in the project imply?
In this workshop, you are going to visualize the way you want your clothes to be upcycled. You are going to bring a piece of garment you want to be upcycled in first task of the workshop. You will create the outline of your garment. Then you will need to answer three questions about your garment. The second task of workshop you are going to trace the outline on a piece of white paper. You are going to cut out the trace and do iterations on it. This would be the main part of the workshop. When you have finished, you are going to watch the workshop and discuss it with other participants. You are going to discuss your ideas together with other people in workshop.

What will happen to the information about you?
All personal data will be treated confidentially. Only the facilitator of the workshop will have access to your personal data via consent form. Consent forms will be stored safely and separate from other data. After the design research ends they are going to be destroyed. However, the photos of the workshop will be used for public in form of presenting the design research. Therefore, it may happen that your participation in the workshop could be recognizable in public. Therefore it is advised to sign if you agree on being photographed and publishing your pictures. The whole project is going to be published in June 2019. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be made anonymous.

Voluntary participation
It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw your personal data will be made anonymous.

If you would like to participate or if you have any questions concerning the project, please contact:

Toinka Crkjen at tc222cx@student.lnu.se

I have received information about the project and am willing to participate

_______________________________________________________________________________
(Signed by participant, date)

□ I agree that my photos may be published/saved

Template for the consent form
What materials do you need for your upcycling workshop...

- big white tracing paper
- consent forms
- tracing the origin of the garment task
- paint
- yarn
- needles
- scissors
- tape
- glue sticks
- paper
- color paper
- markers
- color pencils
- pencils
- pens
- cardboard
- cups for water
- erasers
- some inspirational pictures for participants
- snacks
- juice

How to upcycle pants using DIY...
1. prepare the materials 
   - for this upcycling you are going to need:
     • light textile (make sure the textile is long enough to cover the length of the pants)
     • scissors
     • paper
     • needles
     • stitching thread (white)
     • button
     • ruler

2. iron the textile and pants

3. put textile on back of the pants and mark out the area for the patch
4. cut out textile in two pieces so they follow the inner lining of the pants

5. after you cut the textile, start stitching it onto the pants using simple stitching technique (shown on the next page)
6. when you are stitching the back of the pants try to follow the inner lining of the pants, when you reach the upper area you can follow the middle lining of the pants

Making the pocket for the pants...

7. first you cut out the pocket size out of paper and place it onto place where you want it
8. use the paper to cut out the pocket out of textile, mark the size using marker and cut out the pocket with scissors
9. stitch the pocket using same technique you used for the patch
10. mark the place where you want to stitch your button
11. when stitching the button start first by taking needle through textile and then through the button hole
12. pass the needle several times through the button holes
1. voila! you successfully upcycled your pants

How to upcycle sweater using DIY...

1. prepare the materials
   - light textile
   - scissors
   - paper
   - needles
   - stitching thread
   - ruler

2. iron the textile and sweater
   - marker
   - scissors
   - paper
   - needles
   - stitching thread
   - ruler

13. voila! you successfully upcycled your pants
Making the pocket for the sweater...

1. First you cut out the pocket in size you want out of paper, and then place it onto place where you want it.

4. Use the paper to cut out the pocket out of textile, mark the size using marker and cut out the pocket with scissors.

Stitching letter on the pocket...

5. First you mark out the letter using marker.

6. To stitch the letter you are going to need a needle and a thread.
7. to stitch the letter you first need to pass the thread through the needle and tie the end.
8. then pull the needle through the fabric.
9. put the needle again into the fabric but this time at distance that creates the thickness of the letter (follow stitch on previous page).
10. do the same stitch with other parts of the letter by following marked out area

11. place the pockets on the sweater where you want them
12. pull the thread through the needle and tie the end of the thread
13. pass the needle through the sweater and then through the pocket fabric (follow stitching technique on next page)
14. pull the needle back into the pocket fabric and through the sweater
15. follow the instruction for the stitch on the previous page
16. stitch three ends of the pocket fabric to the sweater
17. do the same thing for all three pockets
18. voila! you upcycled your sweater

How to make a statement using DIY...

I. prepare the materials
- for this you are going to need:
  - scissors
  - needles
  - stitching thread

II. materials
Making outline of the statement..

2. To stitch out the statement, first you need to make an outline stitch.
3. You start a stitch by pulling the needle through the fabric and then pulling it back upwards through the fabric again (follow stitch technique on next page).

4. Then you pull the thread again through the fabric, but this time at some distance from the initial position.
5. Pull the thread again through the fabric but at the end of the previous stitch.
6. Outline all the letters of your statement.

7. After you outlined all the letters, to make your statement more visible by bolding out the letters.
Bolding stitch

7. **BOLDING**

8. To bold out the letters, follow the illustration on the previous page.

9. Voila! Now you have your craftivist statement.