

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



Par Teri Agins

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[Mobile book] The End of Fashion: The Mass Marketing of the Clothing Business Forever

**Par Teri Agins : The End of Fashion: The Mass Marketing of the Clothing Business Forever** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The End of Fashion: The Mass Marketing of the Clothing Business Forever:

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**Description :** Description du produit Fashion is a multibillion-dollar international business; it permeates our lives and our economies. Yet there has never been a book of solid, hard-hitting, uncompromising business/cultural/social journalism on this subject--because the fashion press is subsidized by the very industry it covers. Teri Agins, however, covers the fashion beat for a publication that does not rely upon fashion advertising--and she is thereby uniquely unfettered and able to finally tell the whole truth about this gigantic, flamboyant, and endlessly fascinating business. Her book traces an arc from the origins of couture and its apotheosis in the early part of this century to the advent of prjt-a-porter postWorld War II and the sweeping changes that have taken place as the century ends. It is an arc from when "fashion" was defined by

elite French designers whose clothes could be afforded only by the global socialites--but whose designs were copied and followed by everyone else--to the point where the rules are set by the consumers, and the designers must follow them. It is an arc from class to mass; from art to commodity. Above all, it is the story of the triumph of marketing. The narrative includes profiles of designers Emmanuel Ungaro, Giorgio Armani, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, Donna Karan, and Zoran, as well as retailers Marshall Field and the Gap. *The End of Fashion* is classy and stylish, filled with insider details; it is dishy and lively and fun--as well as astute and full of insights about how the changes in the fashion business have reflected changes in the culture over the last fifty years. Fashion is a multibillion-dollar international business; it permeates our lives and our economies. Yet there has never been a book of solid, hard-hitting, uncompromising business/cultural/social journalism on this subject--because the fashion press is subsidized by the very industry it covers.

*Présentation de l'auteur* The time when "fashion" was defined by French designers whose clothes could be afforded only by elite has ended. Now designers take their cues from mainstream consumers and creativity is channeled more into mass-marketing clothes than into designing them. Indeed, one need look no further than the Gap to see proof of this. In *The End of Fashion*, Wall Street Journal, reporter Teri Agins astutely explores this seminal change, laying bare all aspects of the fashion industry from manufacturing, retailing, and licensing to image making and financing. Here as well are fascinating insider vignettes that show Donna Karan fighting with financiers, the rivalry between Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger, and the commitment to haute couture that sent Isaac Mizrahi's business spiraling. From Publishers Weekly Dispensing with the idea that fashion designers are unpredictable geniuses sequestered in creative isolation from vulgar commerce, Agins, who covers the fashion industry for the Wall Street Journal, has taken a long, hard look at style in the '90s and come back with a compelling report on why big business has forever altered what we wear. In seven superbly researched essays, she explains that the designers are currently being challenged to sell essentially the same clothes to a public with increasingly homogenized tastes. "Today's 'branding' of fashion," she writes, "has taken on a critical role [when] just about every store in the mall is peddling the same style of clothes." Brands, in this context, are the designers themselves. A woman doesn't go shopping for a particular style of dress, but for a "Calvin" or a "Ralph." A lifestyle distillation that denotes professional and severe urban minimalism (Calvin Klein) or athletic, American conservatism (Ralph Lauren). The casualties of this trend are the craftsmanlike members of the Old School, as Agins ably demonstrates in essays on fading Parisian haute couture. Liveliest by far is Agins's chronicle of the rivalry between Lauren and the upstart Tommy Hilfiger, who sells clothes nearly identical to Lauren's, but with a hipper edge, captivating black city kids. The influence of Armani on Tinseltown and Donna Karan on Wall Street are also analyzed with verve and clear-sightedness. As glossy fashion magazines increasingly offer fantasies illustrated by advertisements far more often than they deliver journalism, Agins's penetrating dispatch from the rag trade is especially welcome. Photos. (Oct.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Agins, a veteran fashion reporter for the Wall Street Journal, has written the first factual book on the fashion industry from a business/cultural/social journalist's view. She traces the beginning of couture from the early 20th century in France through all the stages to the present, when consumers set the fashion rules and designers must follow them. Major components of her story include retailers like Marshall Field, Federated Department Stores, Dillard's, Nordstrom, and the Gap as well as designers Giorgio Armani, Bill Blass, Ralph Lauren, and Donna Karan. In the end, this story is about the triumph of marketing; Agins demonstrates how changes in our culture, e.g., more casual dress, have changed the fashion business. Filled with insider details and descriptions of the fickle nature of consumers, this book belongs in academic business and fashion collections. ASusan C. Awe, Univ. of New Mexico Lib., Albuquerque Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.