

Essay on twiggy in 1960s: the supermodel influence

[Business](#), [Industries](#)



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(Submitted to:)

Introduction

The 60s are considered as one of the most renowned times when people gained awareness of fashion trends. As far as dressing fashion is concerned, there were a number of diverse fads and clothing staples that composed the trends in 60s. The women's fashion went through a complete transformation. In contrast to the previous times, the 60s surfaced up as a trendy time that introduced urbane and informal dressing sense. Women started wearing bold prints and bright colors, embracing the change with modish finesse and flamboyance. A lot of the trends were the result of the social structure and happenings of that time (Okonkwo 2010). Women started to like and put on

low heels, extreme hemlines, and psychedelic prints. It is particularly important to mention that styles that emerged in the stated decade still have a remarkable influence on the trends and fashions of the contemporary times.

1960s Culture

It is not incorrect to state that the 1960s were a great era to be young. The world witnessed the blossoming of youth fashions and culture in this time. The industrialized boom after the war started to benefit the Western young people. As a consequence, they started to adopt new trends and refashion themselves. The prevalent fashion business was not able to cope with the shifting demands. For that reason, the youth market gave rise to new fashion designers and innovative fashions. Thus, fashion in 1960s divided the age groups. The pockets of young people had extra cash and this signified extra autonomy to imagine and create positive ideas. Globalization made the world a smaller place. Young people of the era enjoyed this independence offered by the idea of a global village (Connikie 1990).

London as Fashion Centre

In 1950s, Paris was the hub of the fashion industry. However, trends started to shift in the 1960s. During the discussed time, London presented an era whose feel and look was fable-like. It was a city that gave birth to the 60s soundtracks from the Who, the Beatles, Cream, and the Stones, and other innumerable artists and bands. It would not be incorrect to state that London was a city where “ the street scenes, especially along Carnaby Street in Soho, with Mods and hippies parading their utterly distinctive gear, provided

youth culture around the world with exemplars of cool that are still embraced today” (“Twiggy: Rare Photos of a Swinging Sixties Icon”). London became the center of fashions that echoed through pop culture. In a similar fashion, the models of the mentioned era contributed in making those fashions famous, modish and tasteful. Twiggy was one of the models who represented the fabricated expression of Swinging London to a great deal.

Twiggy – the Supermodel

Twiggy (Lesley Hornby) is, without a doubt, the most admired, trendy, and fashionable model of the 1960s. Her ‘pixie look’ gave her a unique position in the fashion industry. Her style included a chic cropped hairstyle, shift dresses, ballet flats, and cigarette slacks. The 1960s Twiggy fashions were short, exposed, and bold for the most part. There is no doubt in the fact that Twiggy turned out to be a magazine maven. She set remarkable trends with her daring dressing style. In fact, her bold style proved that a short-haired, short woman can look incredibly sexy. She became the icon of promoting the 60s fashion for models who had an asexual appearance. She is also famous for her contributions to popularize colorful, bright tights, mini-skirts, and baby-doll dresses.

Baby Doll Dress (1960s)

The baby doll dress of the 1960s was made famous when the doll-like Twiggy modeled it. This dress was designed by taking the inspiration from the feminine and flowing cloth that is frequently used for clothing dolls. The dress was not only short but flirty too. It was particularly a flattering dressing design for women who were thin. Twiggy presented a fuller shape by

modeling the dress. It is also worth-mentioning that baby doll dress was also meant for not-so-thin, larger-bodied females. This style was both playful and comfortable. It gave a more chic look when women paired it with tights with geometrical patterns and long boots (Mansour 2005).

The length of the 1960s baby doll dresses was shorter than the usual dresses in that era. As mini-skirts were debuted in the same decade, hemlines got shorter, and boots got taller. Similarly, baby doll dresses usually cropped past thighs'-mid. As mentioned already, Twiggy was a bold representative of the fashion industry. Therefore, she modeled dresses that demonstrated her rebellion against customary fashion in the 1960s. Baby doll dress was one of them. As one could observe, the Twiggy baby doll dress was designed in such a manner that it could fit around the body loosely. The design of Twiggy's baby doll dress puts emphasis on the young-looking nature of this dress.

Twiggy's Achievements

Twiggy was, without a question, a breath of fresh air for the fashion industry. It was a time when Marilyn Monroe was considered the feminine sex symbol due to her luxuriant curves. For that reason, little Lesley had to hang around for a long time for her share of fame and success. For that, she had to prove her potential to the fashion world as she was not only small in size, but her height did not meet the prevailing fashion standards as well. However, her determination and inflexibility made her the first diminutive supermodel (165 cm tall) that got worldwide recognition and earned big money. It is extremely significant to mention that Twiggy never turned out a catwalk model.

However, she became the perfect and most wanted photographic model. Twiggy's " ultra-slim figure, doe-like eyes, and cropped hair offered an instant image for the era as she became a frequent cover star for fashion magazines across the globe" (Baugess & Debolt 2012). She became a regular for renowned fashion magazines from American Vogue to French Elle. Twiggy was also quick in adjusting to the Mods style. This style was one of 1950s subculture that was particularly popular in Britain. Those who followed this style were finicky about their dressing ways. They were also concerned about up-to-the-minute fashion trends and styled by wearing bright and dresses and accessories. The boyish figure of Twiggy was just right to present A-line dresses, flared mini-skirts, coats without collars, and round collar shirts.

Young women all over the British land soon started to sport dresses and hairstyles inspired by Twiggy. She used to wear false eyelashes, named ' Twiggies', which also turned out extremely popular among women in 1960s. In 1967, Twiggy spent several weeks in America for the promotion of her clothing line. She got a chance of a photo shoot in New York that increased her popularity even more. After this shoot, she doubled her per hour photography rates from \$120 to \$240 (Baugess & Debolt 2012).

Twiggy's Influence – Then and Now

Twiggy transformed the fashion industry forever. According to fashion historians, Twiggy is surely the first contemporary supermodel who was successful in destroying the assumed full, curvy, perfect body without anyone's help (Olson, 1999). Her increasing popularity made a revolutionary

change in the fashion industry as the idolized voluptuous figures started losing their desirability.

The influence of Twiggy is multifold. She was not only able to set innovative fashion trends but also influenced the fashion industry by introducing the Top Model concept. She is also the first lady who contributed in bringing a shift in the idea of beauty prevalent in her time. She was successful in ending the obsession of society with ultra-slim bodies. She was able to take the place of Marilyn Monroe by representing a child-like image.

Conclusion

Even though Twiggy took retirement from her career as a model several years after its beginning, the impressions left by her were everlasting. She became a well-recognized public figure as she advanced herself as a social-cause promoter and businesswoman. In addition, her popularity is not only influential for a lot of people who try to copy her look. Twiggy's influence has brought a drastic change in the attitude of contemporary models. She is considered a role model and innovatory for the top models of the present times (Gilman 2008). Although she belonged to England, she was triumphant in setting significant trends in the United States of America. She was a revolutionary in the 1960s as she took advantage of her achievements in starting a profitable business. One can easily observe her influence on television programs and runways as models still imitate her appearance and style.

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