

Death by fast fashion

Business



Literally, thousands of people are dying from the fast fashion industry.

This is all being brought to people's attention by an organization called, Fashion Revolution. The week of April 26, 2017 was Fashion Revolution Week. This revolution started right after the incident at Rana Plaza; just 4 years ago. On April 26th, 2013, Rana Plaza, a factory in Bangladesh, collapsed. 1, 138 workers were killed and 2, 500 were injured.

There were cracks in the foundation and many workers knew that the building was going to soon collapse. The workers tried to bring it to the factory managers' attention, but they did nothing. This is not an unusual thing to happen though in foreign sweatshops. Working conditions are extremely poor. There have been many workers killed in factory fires as well.

People are dying in these poor countries, just so that we Americans and some Europeans can have cheap clothing every week. You may be asking yourself, what is fast fashion? Fast fashion companies will include, Forever 21, H&M, Macy's, etc. Fast fashion are clothing companies who are coming out with new items every single week. These clothes tend to be cheap as well because they are made by poverty stricken countries. The factory workers are only making 32 cents a day; if that.

To see what is going on from the inside, I would highly recommend watching the documentary, The True Cost. You can find it onNetflix. In this documentary you will follow a young woman who is a factory worker in Bangladesh. It is very clear how awful it is to live in a country that is so poor. What is even more awful, is seeing the working conditions.

The documentary goes into a lot of detail over how the fast fashion industry is hurting people, as well as the world. The United States this past year has made and sold 400x what they did a few years ago. This is incredibly astonishing. The fashion industry is creating way more clothes than what is actually needed. So how is this hurting the world? Well, with the production of so many clothes that are relatively cheap, people will donate items to places like Goodwill. Only 10 percent of the clothing that is donated each year is actually bought and sold.

The other 90 percent is sent to other countries; Haiti would be an example. Haiti does not need that many clothes. The people there will pick and choose what they will keep, and then the rest is sent to a landfill. You may think since it's out of sight, out of mind, that the clothes in the landfill are harmless. You, my friend, are wrong. The clothes there release toxins and pollution in the air which can harm our O-zone layer; thus adding to the global warming issue.

This is extremely dangerous, but there is nowhere else to put the clothes that no one buys. Due to the very high production rate of clothing, companies have turned to using genetically modified cotton, instead of organic cotton. The chemicals and pesticides that are being used to create the GMO cotton are very harmful to the Earth's soil, as well as the human population. Well why don't we just stop using those chemicals and go back to the organic methods? Since the chemicals have damaged the soil so much, the soil is ruined completely. There would be no way of changing the growing methods.

The chemicals make it nearly impossible to grow anything organically. Also, the chemicals release toxins into the air; adding to the pollution issue. May I also add that the clothes made from GMO cotton, can be very bad for a person's skin. Alright, so what can we do to change this? I would start off by joining the Fashion Revolution movement. You can do so by going to their website and sign up. Again, I would also watch *The True Cost* to get a better idea of what it truly going on.

One thing that is highly suggested is to stop buying fast fashion items and switch to companies that receive clothing from factories with better working conditions and benefits. Stop donating so many clothes to places like Goodwill; there are many other organizations that would love clothes donations. Instead of donating, you can give your clothes a new life. You can also trade clothing with another person to reduce the amount of clothing that's being donated. This will help with the pollution issue.

Once you stop giving in to fast fashion companies, those companies will soon realize that there needs to be a change. Help bring the issues to those companies' attention. Fast fashion is truly killing people and hurting the Earth. Please help make a change.