

# ***VIOLENCE!*** ***in Fashion***

Sermone Amet De Vestmentis

**Still Only  
50c**

The most trusted voice  
in fashion commentary  
since this week

# A new threat: violence is a contagious disease!



Emil  
Polyak  
Senior  
Reporter

According to epidemiologist, Dr. Gary Slutkin violence is an epidemic. It always has a

source and transmits in communities in the same way as an infectious disease. While the progress can be explained by neuroscience, the treatment requires the exact same interventions as malaria or HIV, only with different set of skills,

**Violence creates fear, and fear is integrated in a number of industries that focus on separation of “good and bad people”.**

as violence is responding like a disease and it behaves like one. Moving away from emotions towards science is the most important part of the solution. Real violence can be cured without amputations.

Violence creates fear, and fear is integrated in a num-



Movie scene: Eyes of Laura Mars (1978), by Irvin Kershner



Autumn/winter collection runway show of German designer Phillip Plein in Milan (2013)

ber of industries that focus on separation of “good and bad people”. This creates the “normal” and the morally unacceptable world. Crossing the line without punishment and consequences for an individual, presents an illusion of physical and emotional power over other humans. Fashion is no exception when it comes to employ this illusion as a thrill and source of excitement.

## Breaking News



Shainin Hudda  
Our Ear to the Ground

# The Walking Dead, Mechanical Dolls, Aliens and Cyborgs Invade Fashion Week!



THE WALKING DEAD: Iris Van Herpen, Skeleton Dress, Fall/Winter 2011/12

What has become of the supermodel? The turn of the century has found her dead, almost dead or relocated to planet Earth from another realm – skeletons, wind up dolls, alien beings and cyborgs have strutted down international fashion runway with faces muted, eyes devoid and bodies emaciated. Does this signify a designer's visual scream for attention in a



MECHANICAL DOLLS: Gareth Pugh, Wind Up Dolls, Autumn/Winter 2014

**The shrink wrapped models look like specimens in an inexplicable alien experiment.”**

fashion world where spectacle has become normalized or is there more to this story?

Fashion theorist Caroline Evans posits, “On the edge of discourse, of ‘civilization,’ of speech itself, experimental fashion can act out what is hidden culturally” (2003). Implicit in deathliness is the notion of no longer being human or taking on other worldliness. Evans explains, “If the fashion model at the end of the twentieth century was deathly this was not based on superficial resemblance of lifestyle or body shape but, rather, on an underlying structural connection to her industrial origins...” (2003). Cultural commentator Steve Beard expounds, “The human corpse is aestheticized and galvanized then comes very near to conjuring the aura of the catwalk model” (1999). Alluding to eating disorders and unattainable beauty ideals (think Photoshop), Beard asserts that supermodels of the 1980s “...were always closer to walking corpses than anyone dared to imagine” (1999).

As a cultural signifier, the run-



ALIENS: Iris Van Herpen, Shrink Wrapped Models, Fall/Winter 2014

way shows of designers at the edge of the mainstream visually extend a designer’s social discourse rather than merely focusing on commercial aspects (Hoffman, 2009). Moreover, “the fashion show,” Evans theorizes, “is a singular nodal point where the disparate histories of commerce, modernism, gender, and the body converge” (2013).

Perhaps deathly creatures are

invading the world’s catwalks or perhaps we are Human After All as Daft Punk sings in their robotic Hedi Slimane outfits. Dr. Rebecca Arnold explains, modern fashion displays “the promise and the threat of the future...revealing both our desires and anxieties...constructing identities that use stylish dress as a route to self-creation and yet ultimately to self-destruction” (2001).



CYBORG: Hussein Chalayan, Transformer Dresses, Spring/Summer 2007

# Politics

## Power Dress & Abuse of Public Trust



David Cameron and Ed Miliband - power dressed.



Margaret Thatcher, inimitable style power dressing, suits, pussybow blouses, and pearls.



Emil Polyak  
Keeping the Bastards Honest

**The fundamental purpose of the “power dress” is to look authoritative and competent.**



“A Fashion Revolution” - Styled by Fashion Editor, Ling Wu and photographed by Quentin Shih. Featured items from Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and Hermes.

Political unrest, demonstrations, resistance and revolution seem to stage the urban civilian in his/her non-working dress, by the institutions of violence in uniforms, and the controlling dictator in a “power dress”. The elements of force carry the ability to “de-

stroy” while being protected by the dress. The fundamental purpose of the “power dress” is to look authoritative and competent. Regardless of the functional reasons of the given political system, the abuse of public trust and injustice creates an anti-political sub-

culture. According to Gene Sharp in his famous guide to non-violent revolution this subculture is that holds the ability to achieve change by organized movements. Wearing symbols and signs is one of the key points in the action. Despite the collective

efforts of the occupy movement, to prove mass abuse by the force, the appearance of an individual victim who is dressed differently and looks unrelated in a clash carries a very different seemingly more powerful meaning.

POLICE BRUTALITY IS STILL FASHIONABLE.  
SIGN ON [WWW.AMNESTY.FR](http://WWW.AMNESTY.FR)

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



Carol Howard, police officer in her uniform.

Police brutality is still fashionable.  
Amnesty International.

# Entertainment

## Movies -TV- Music



Michael Weldon  
Entertainment Correspondent

### The Killer Wore Gucci.

Murderess Barbara Stanwyck in a slinky dress and provocative ankle bracket in Double Indemnity (1944). Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway inspiring a revival of dashing 1930s fashion in Bonnie and Clyde (1967). Sharon Stone's roll neck shift dress in Basic Instinct (1992). Christian Bale as the immaculately dressed serial killer in American Psycho (2000). Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone looking sartorially super human in Gangster Squad (2013). What is it that makes violence and fashion



(1) Violence and fashion make a great team in BONNIE and CLYDE (1967)

such great partners in crime when it comes to the movies.? Is it the beautiful people in exquisite clothes that make violence seem glamorous or do people find it glamorous anyway? Perhaps violence is more palatable when someone who is immaculately dressed carries it out. Do we feel that people can be forgiven their misdemeanors if they know how to put an outfit together? At the movies, violence is never out of style!

**At the movies,  
violence is never  
out of style!**



(3) CHRISTIAN BAILE: Immaculate in American Psycho (2000)



(4) SHARON STONE: Dressed to Kill in Basic Instinct (1992)

### Get The Look!

Turn to page 16 where our style guru Fiona Smith-Smyth tells you how you can look like the girlfriend of a psychopathic murderer!



(2) Look like a gangsters moll courtesy of Real Style Network.

### Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick.

Violence or its implied threat is a big part of fashion in music as it is in movies. Rock and roll, heavy metal, punk and hip hop music have all teamed real or implied violence with music to create a look or a mood which tells the person listening to the music that this is *real*. Whether it has any more claim to represent any sort of reality than Barry Manilow in a ruffled shirt is unlikely.



(5) Even mainstream pop stars like MADONNA co-opt the lustre of violence as a tool to appeal to fans.

# Weather and Environment



Emil Polyak  
Senior Forecaster



*Fashion for Climate by cartoonist Helena Lindholm.*

## Hemlines, Tides & Temperatures Set to Rise!

According to Australian Conservation Foundation, \$1.7 billion is spent each year for clothing and fashion items used only a couple of times, while the textile industry is partially responsible for the highest level of pesticide and insecticide emission in the world. Due to climate change the meaning of winter and summer in fashion

The number of contaminated areas caused by industry waste is growing, while our clothing is also many times made of poisonous and carcinogenic materials. Our relationship to weather and environment is slowly changing from mental awareness to mutations in physical appearance in terms of fashion.



Models wear masks for outdoor catwalk at Nanjing jewelry fashion show due to heavy smog (2013).

**Due to climate change the meaning of winter and summer in fashion is changing towards more neutral clothing.**

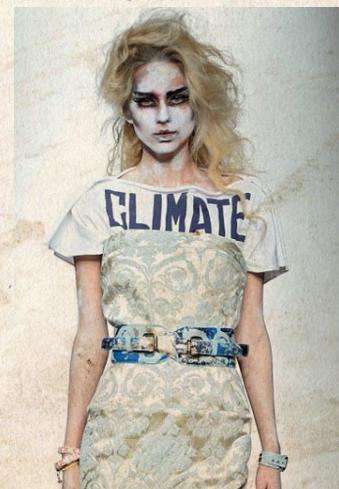
is changing towards more neutral clothing. Violent attacks on nature such as the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico affect all our lives. In some parts of the world due to pollution, items such as N-95 masks have become necessary fashion accessories.



A model wearing a dress made from wine March 15, 2007 in Perth, Australia (Micro'be' Project).



Vogue Italia, 'Water & Oil', Photo: Steven Meisel, model: Kristen McMenamy.

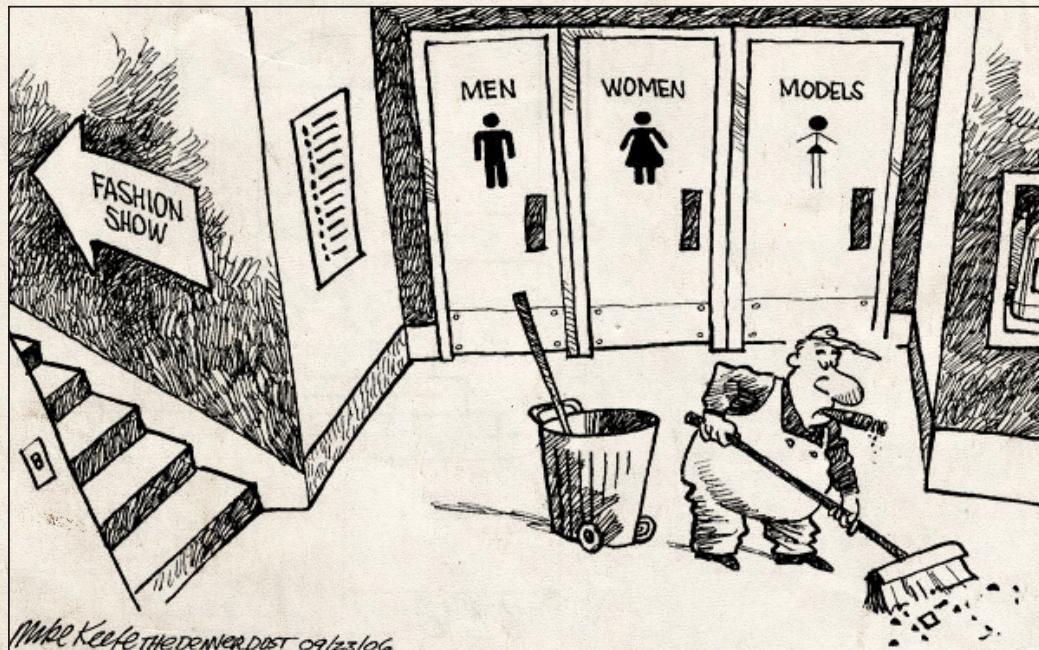


Vivienne Westwood Red Label Spring/Summer 2014 RTW - London Fashion Week.

# Opinions, Letters & Rants



Shainin Hudda  
Editor in Chief



Mike Keefer THE DALLAS DUST 09/23/06

Thank you for your recent coverage on fashion and death. It's absolutely morbidly fascinating to read about just how surrounded we are with images of death, decay and violence. What's with that?

## When I die, I hope that I am wearing a Chanel suit and Gucci slingbacks.

Is it that the imagery of death used so extensively in fashion advertising, editorials, runways – and even extending into areas such as sports, politics and

entertainment – speaks of an underlying current and fear of change? Is it that we are living in a time of rapid technological change and our unease with this comes out in the form of this visual culture? (Evans, 2003). Or perhaps it is the uncertainty that we even have a future.

I just visited the Bass Museum in Miami, Florida. Their current exhibit, Vanitas, offers an alternative explanation. "Traditionally used to refer to a type of still life painting popular in the Netherlands during the seventeenth century, the term 'vanitas' has become more generally associated

with art that meditates on the ephemeral character of earthly pleasures and worldly accomplishments, and highlights the fragility of our desires in the face of the inevitability of death" (Vanitas, 2014). Curator, Harold Kota explains, "... with its accelerated cycle of obsolescence, explicit manifestation of status and material success, and potential for narcissistic self-regard, fashion is a particularly apt medium through which to explore the exhibition's central theme" (Vanitas, 2014). Perhaps these deadly images serve as a catharsis and compel us to live life more fully because of and

inspite of this fear: the fear of change, the fear of terrorists, the fear of global warming, the fear of the end of the world, and of course, we cannot forget the ultimate fear of not being in fashion! Many have even said this out loud in audacious tones. "I wouldn't be caught dead in *that* outfit or *those* shoes....".

Well no, neither would I. When I die, I hope that I am wearing a Chanel suit and Gucci slingbacks. If not, I've left a will with instructions on being buried in the same.

Best,  
*Narcissa*

### Violence in Fashion

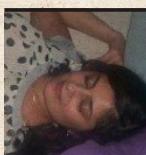
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# Obituaries

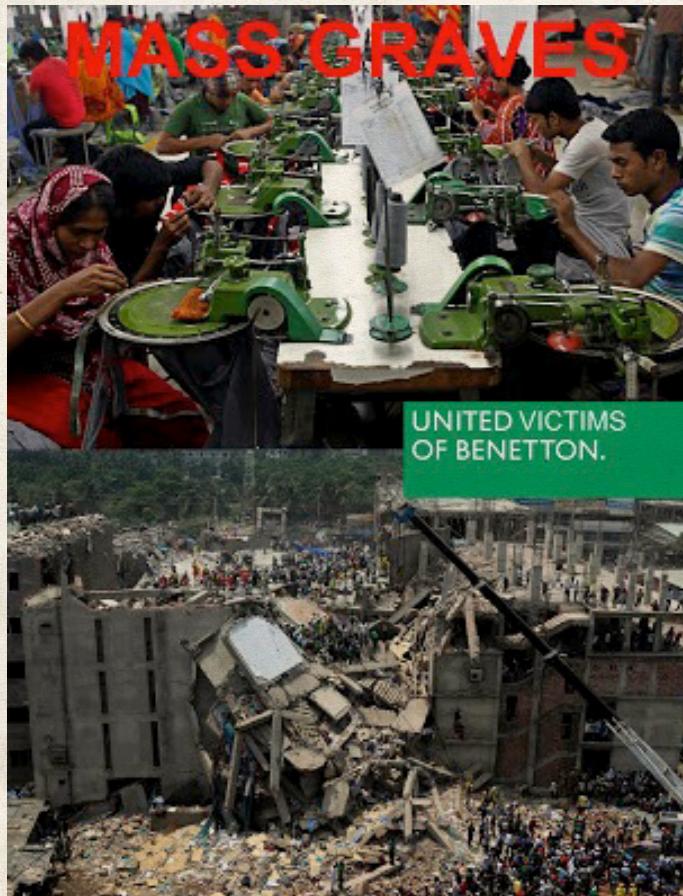


Shainin Hudda  
Alive and Kicking

## Death to Fast Fashion

L'Wren Scott, Peaches Geldof, Alexander McQueen, Isabella Blow, Rusiana Korchunova, these are but a few of the recent fashion industry celebrity names that have received media notoriety in their lives as well as their deaths – interestingly all by suicide (but let's leave commentary on that topic for another time). But what of the 1,134 people killed in the Rana Plaza garment factory building collapse in Bangladesh or countless other deaths due to health and safety violations in garment factories? These are the names that we don't know, the faces that grace the covers of newspapers only in death – and that only sometimes.

Companies producing their goods at the Rana Plaza garment factory included well-known fashion labels such as H & M, Benetton, Gap, Primark, Lacoste, American Eagle and Target (Australia). Many of these are so called fast fashion brands – low cost clothing collections built on designs that mimic high-cost luxury fashions (Fletcher, 2008). Inherent to the business model is a quick production cycle with an aim to go from concept to consumer in a span of mere weeks (compared to the former standard turnaround of six months) thereby promoting a system where the pressure to produce large numbers



*United Victims of Benetton*

with tight deadlines overrides everything else (Tokatli, 2008). The dark side of fashion as a key ingredient in material culture is a place where all the players in the fashion game – designers, manufacturers and consumers – may say that they are against sweatshops but the sad reality is that they don't care about the deadly consequences in a system of production where workers face daily health and safety issues, not to mention a low salary. What they care about is the bottom line: the

bargain price faux designer look is much more important than the unseen, nameless people that produce the looks. Professor of Marketing at Harvard Business School and author of a study entitled, "Sweatshop Labor is Wrong Unless the Jeans are Cute", Rohit Deshpande corroborates, "Our research finds that consumers say they are against

of self to do so", researchers Joy, Sherry, Venkates, Wang and Chan, "hypothesize that *actual* rather than faux luxury brands can, ironically, unite the ideals of fashion with those of environmental sustainability" as well as worker safety (2008). The philosophy behind this is one of slow fashion. "Slow' in this context refers not to time (as opposed to the "fast" in fast fashion, which most assuredly does refer to time), but rather to a philosophy of attentiveness...mindful of its various stakeholders' respective needs (with 'stakeholders' referring to designers, buyers, retailers, and consumers), and of the impact producing fashion has on workers, consumers, and eco-systems" (Fletcher, 2008).

Getting back to those names of Rana Plaza factory workers that we still don't know, and the faces we will never see, may each of you rest in peace.



*War on Want: No More Fashion Victims*

**To learn more about the human cost of the Bangladeshi garment industry, see this insightful video entitled "The Shirt on Your Back"**

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2014/apr/bangladesh->



# Violence Wins Again!



Michael Weldon  
Chief Sports Reporter

When sportsmen aren't blackening each other's eyes or rearranging each other's bones, we often see them pictured in the latest fashions. There are several very good reasons for this. Athletes have very high profiles. They are always in the public eye. If a designer wants the public to see their latest designs, it's a good idea to get athletes to wear them.

Athletes have great physiques. Good clothes look better on people who are in great shape. Athletes are aspirational targets. People want to be like athletes. They want the money, the fame and the glamorous compa-

nions that seem to go with being a successful sportsperson. If you can't be as tough or as strong as your hero, at least you can dress a little like them. (1) Sports like rugby, ice hockey, boxing, Australian Rules and gridiron can sometimes be seen to portray violence as acceptable. When violent sportspeople are seen wearing expensive, fashionable clothing this may blur the line between what takes place on and off the sports field. This may lead some people to seek to emulate their sporting heroes by behaving in a violent manner outside the sporting arena. (2)



(3) The champ ain't no chump when it comes to style. Muhammad Ali, Savile Row, 1966



(4) Jean Paul Gaultier, Autumn/Winter 2010. Hard to do up zips and buttons in this outfit.



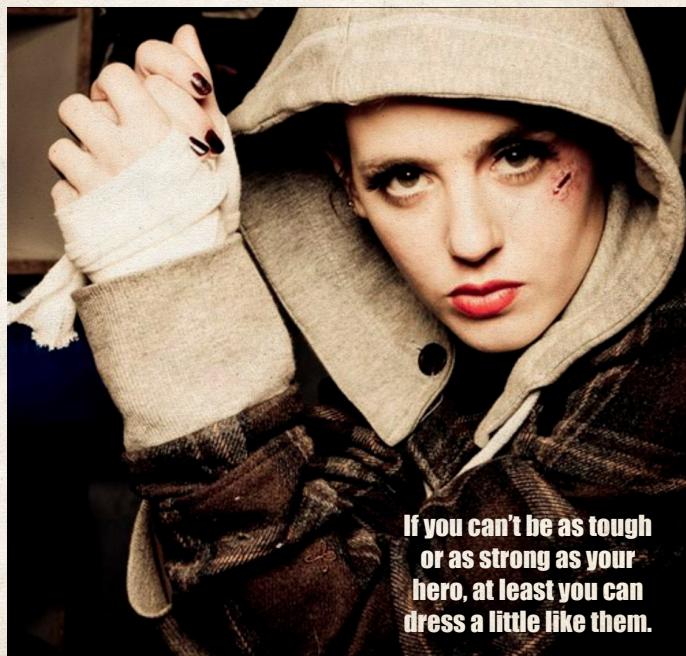
(1)

Inside:  
Kickboxing  
results and  
free  
pattern!



(2) In the blue corner, wearing a single breasted woollen blazer....

Blazer gris en jersey de algodón (1.400 dólares) y camisa marinera de algodón y seda (495 dólares), ambos de Corneliani. Pantalón azul entallado (255 dólares) de Dunhill. Mocasines café en piel (1.310 dólares) de Salvatore Ferragamo.



If you can't be as tough or as strong as your hero, at least you can dress a little like them.

(5) Impeccably stitched. The garment, not the cut.