Reducing Clothing Waste in the Fashion Industry

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INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry's contribution to carbon emissions has global implications, including rising temperatures, flooding, droughts, and loss of food supplies.

"The most vulnerable groups, including children, the elderly, people with preexisting health conditions, outdoor workers, people of color, and people with low income, are at an even higher risk because of the compounding factors from climate change" (NOAA, 2021).

80 lbs of clothing waste per year

80 Lbs

85%

Approximately 85% of the clothing Americans cor nearly 3.8 billion pounds annually, is sent to landfills as

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Background — **Gap** — **Data Collection** — **Data Analysis**

Research clothing waste, effect on environment, and ways to reduce waste.
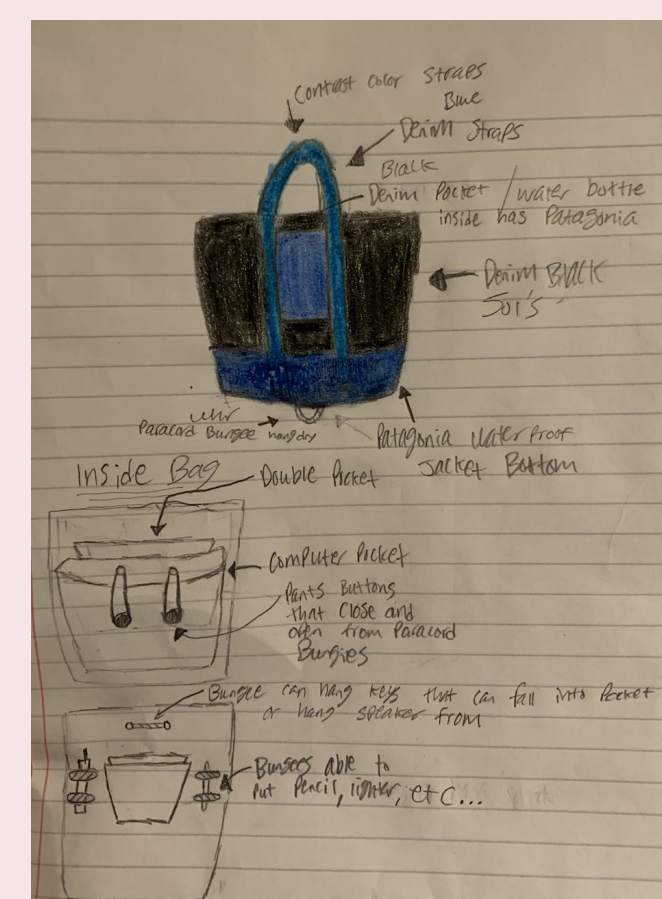
How does the average consumer recycle and reduce waste.

Measuring how much clothing I kept out of landfills.

Explaining how difficult it was to create bag and explain how well I actually reduced waste.

BAG PROCESS

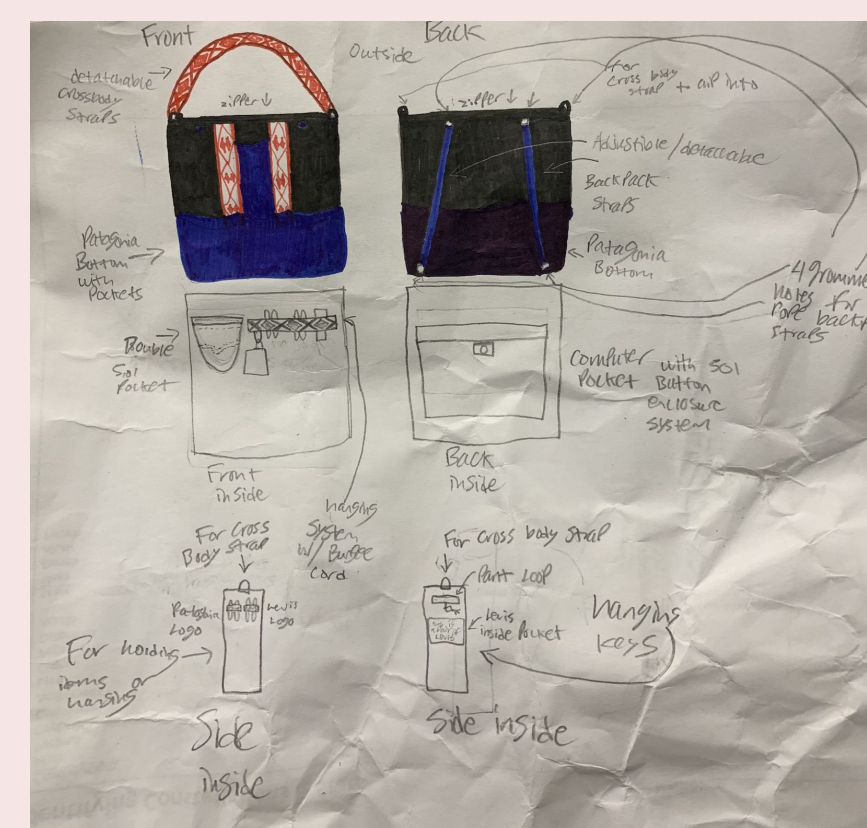| March 3	March 20	April 1	April 15	April 25
Original Mock-Up	Finished Interior Of Bag	Redesign Bag	Prototype Straps	Put Final Bag Together

DATA AND FINDINGS

What I learned:

- When you are working with clothing, it makes it difficult to make things because it is hard to plan for it. You have to make your bag whatever size based on how much clothing you have. This could be limiting, or you could end up with too much material left over.

- I did keep clothing out of landfills, but impossible to measure total impact on the environment.

- I thought I knew what I wanted my final bag to look like, but once I started making the bag I kept changing my mind. This made it difficult to make concrete plans too many steps ahead. If I were to make another bag, it is crucial to make a pattern with explicit instructions on how to go forward.

- Upcycling takes much more thought and time than I expected.

Trade Off:

- Could have made quick tote bag and been done, but chose to make a bag that will last long. This took a lot longer and was much more difficult.

CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

Upcycling bags is very difficult. Especially when you don't have sewing experience, and have never made a bag before.

Upcycling at a small scale is not going to make a difference in the amount of clothing waste in the fashion industry. A company at bigger scale that can upcycle lots of clothing would be more effective and could actually make a difference.

Would be very difficult for the average consumer to do this on a consistent basis. Most would not want to put in the time or effort.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

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