

(Mobile book) Fashion Is Spinach: How to Beat the Fashion Racket

Fashion Is Spinach: How to Beat the Fashion Racket

Elizabeth Hawes

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Elizabeth Hawes : Fashion Is Spinach: How to Beat the Fashion Racket before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fashion Is Spinach: How to Beat the Fashion Racket:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. 'All American women can have beautiful clothes'By EleanorWritten in 1938, "Fashion is Spinach" is Elizabeth Hawes's examination of the business of designing, making, and selling clothes in Paris and America. Contrasting made-to-order couture with ready-made and mass-produced clothes. Hawes's aim throughout is to debunk the claim that "All beautiful clothes are made in the houses of the French Couturieregrave;res and all women want them." and she brings her own experience in both Paris and America to bear,

describing the economics of the fashion industry in great detail, exposing its often shady practices in the process. Hawes is also an exponent of 'style' rather than 'fashion' which she views as a construct designed to make women buy clothes they don't need every six months, in order to keep up with the 'deformed thief'. Hawes does a wonderful job of evoking Paris in the twenties where she worked as variously a sketcher, copier, stylist, journalist, and fitter. Fashionable Parisian society is contrasted with that of the States, where Hawes opened her own made-to-order boutique and also designed ready-made clothes for wholesalers and department stores. Hawes is writing for a reader who is familiar with how the fashion industry worked in the twenties and thirties and for a reader used to the high-street clothes shopping, "Fashion is Spinach" is sometimes very confusing. Some explanatory notes or an introduction which provided more context would have been very welcome. I also would have loved some pictures of the clothes Hawes describes, although I appreciate that pictures of this sort are beyond the remit of this reprint. Despite sometimes being confused, I did enjoy this book. Hawes is an opinionated, irreverent, and witty author (I imagined someone a bit like Katherine Hepburn) and it is great fun being part of her world. One of the most enjoyable chapters is her discussion of men's fashion and her attempts to release men from the straitjacket of stiff sombre-colored clothes. She imagines a world in which her experiment was successful, one in which: "When some masculine creature took it upon himself to throttle me for some real or imaginary sin, instead of looking up and having my last living impression a dull mud-like uniformed being, I'd see wonderful rich colors and hear the heavy swish of rich damask." [I was given a free download of this book by the publishers for review.] 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Paris and American Insider Fashion By bookwomen37 This is the the first book I have read by Hawes but it will not be the last. This one is part autobiography and part fashion business treatise. Hawes began her fashion career in Paris and the first half of the book takes place there. After learning the business in Paris she decides to try her hand at designing back in America. This book is full of Hawes' views on the business of fashion and the French vs American. Parts of the book can get dry as she explains the economics of Fashion. Surprisingly the book does not feel dated. The fashions may have changed but the business has not. If you have an interest in fashion you will enjoy this book. I received a copy of this book from Netgalley in exchange for my honest review 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Some Things Never Change By MJ Brodeck Elizabeth Hawes gives the reader an insider's look at the fashion industry from the 1920's through 1970's. After graduating from Vassar College and Parsons School of Design, she worked in a Paris fashion copy house, and wrote about fashion for The New Yorker. In 1928, the public's interest in French fashion began to fade, so she opened her design house, Hawes Inc., which originally made expensive custom designs for affluent women. The outspoken and independent Hawes criticized the New York Fashion industry for creating poorly made, expensive clothing and marketing them as trendy. Designers couldn't complain about the Fashion industry, for fear of losing business. Yet, Hawes had the luxury to be outspoken, as she came from a wealthy family. She worked with retailers to produce and sell well made, affordable clothes. Hawes believed in wearing classic, well made clothes for years, instead of caving into designing the latest fashion design trends. Although the book was written seventy years ago, the fashion industry operates the same way today, by continuing to lure the public with the latest fashions every season. A copy of the book was provided to me by Netgalley in exchange for an unbiased review.

After working as a stylist in Paris, Elizabeth Hawes (1903–71) launched one of the first American design houses in Depression-era New York. Hawes was an outspoken critic of the fashion industry and a champion of ready-to-wear styles. *Fashion Is Spinach*, her witty and astute memoir, offers an insider's critique of the fashion scene during the 1920s and '30s. "I don't know when the word fashion came into being, but it was an evil day," Hawes declares. Style, she maintains, reflects an era's mood, altering only with changes in attitude and taste. Fashion, conversely, exists only to perpetuate sales. Hawes denounces the industry's predatory practices, advising readers to reject ever-changing fads in favor of comfortable, durable, flattering attire. Decades ahead of her time, she offers a fascinating and tartly observed behind-the-scenes look at the fashion industry's economics, culture, and ethics.

From the Back Cover