

Celebrating the anonymous trendsetters

Some of the most important people in any change in style and taste are never identified yet as trendsetters they have very real influence on what millions of people wear, eat, and listen to

Trends are a unique and intriguing process of change that affects most of us. Now for the first time a book describes in detail a phenomenon that many people talk about and are intrigued by but few have investigated. *Anatomy of a Trend* documents that trends are much more than unpredictable phenomena that only a few intuitive people can understand. Using sociology author Henrik Vejlgaard explains in details exactly what trends are, who creates them, how they happen, and how they affect consumers, lifestyles, businesses, and industries.

Most people can describe what the word is about – something new or “hot.” Often people will also point out that a trend is something “airy” or “mysterious” or something that is “completely unpredictable.” But these perceptions are not true. It is important to be aware because trends are a social process trends can be understood. Vejlgaard points out that trends only happen because there are people involved. Changes in style and taste do not just happen “out of the blue”. Only human beings can create changes in style and taste. And to the extent that we can understand human being’s behaviour we can understand how changes in style and taste come about.

In his search for answers to who creates trends the author introduces us to people – many unknown and anonymous – who have had worldwide influence in style and taste. Most trendsetters are found in groups like artists, designers, gay men, the young, celebrities, and wealthy people. It is when members of each of these groups mingle, observe and copy each other that a new trend takes off.

By studying and analyzing past trends, Henrik Vejlgaard reveals that there are predictable patterns in every trend. After having analyzed past trends related to many different kinds of style and taste (from clothing to food) the conclusion is that a trend is most likely go mainstream if the following conditions are met:

- The new trend has started as a reaction to what is mainstream
- Different kinds of trendsetters adopt the trend
- A high number of trendsetters adopt the trend
- The trend first emerges in a major city that is know to have many trendsetters
- The trend quickly spread to other cities that are known to have many trendsetters
- There is ongoing product and/or design development early in the trend process
- The products or style can be imitated or copied
- Many of the trendsetters’ media feature the trend in articles
- There is a connection between Hollywood movies and the trend.

Henrik Vejgaard, M.A., M.Sc., is a pioneer in trend sociology, the study of the trend process. *Anatomy of a Trend* will be published in October 2007 by McGraw-Hill.

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