CLOTHES TO DIE FOR
SCREENING & DISCUSSION GUIDE

CONTENTS

• About the Film
• About the Screening and Discussion Guide
• Sample Event Agenda
• Introducing the Apparel Industry and the Rana Plaza Tragedy
• Pre-Screening Discussion Guide
• Screening Guide
• Post-Screening Discussion Guide
• Take Action
ABOUT the FILM

Clothes to Die For is a documentary film about the worst industrial disaster of the 21st century – the collapse of the Rana Plaza building in Bangladesh, in which more than 1100 people died and 2400 were injured. The nine-story building housed factories that were making clothes for many western companies.

Through a series of compelling interviews and unseen archive footage, the film gives a voice to those directly affected, and highlights the greed and high-level corruption that led to the tragedy. It also provides an insight into how the incredible growth in the garment industry has transformed Bangladesh, in particular the lives of women. Described by the Telegraph as “blunt and brilliant”, the film raises fundamental questions about the global fashion industry and the responsibilities of all those involved.

Clothes to Die For was commissioned by BBC Two as part of the international current affairs strand This World and co-produced by SVT. The film was made by British production company Quicksilver Media and has a running time of 60 minutes. The film’s website and outreach activities have been made possible by a grant from The Fledgling Fund.

Zara Hayes, Director
Zara is a British director whose extensive experience focuses on capturing characters within extraordinary contexts and portraying human rights issues in a sensitive and thought-provoking manner. Previous credits include the cinema-released Battle of the Sexes (New Black Films) and television feature documentary 12 Year Old Lifer (Channel 4/ A&E).

Sarah Hamilton, Producer
Sarah is a BAFTA award-winning producer who has made films for all the main UK channels including the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 as well for networks in the US such as the Discovery and Smithsonian Channels. She has produced, directed and filmed documentaries in countries such as Vietnam, Syria, Uganda, China, the USA, Mozambique and Peru. Credits include the One World Media award winning series, African School (BBC) and BAFTA, RTS, Grierson and Broadcast award winning feature length documentary, 7/7: One Day in London (BBC).

Eamonn Matthew, Executive Producer
Eamonn is Managing Director of independent production company, Quicksilver Media. Recent credits as Executive Producer include the Emmy, BAFTA, RTS, Grierson and Broadcast winning Syria: Across the Lines (Channel 4), Emmy and RTS winning Inside Japan’s Nuclear Meltdown (PBS/Frontline/BBC), and Emmy winning Undercover Syria (PBS/Frontline/C4). As Series Producer, and then as Executive Producer, he has helped grow the British foreign affairs series Unreported World into one of Channel 4’s most acclaimed strands.

Thank you to Joshua Williams, Chair of the Fashion Merchandising and Management program at Berkeley College in New York City for developing this Screening Event & Discussion Guide. Joshua has over 12+ years experience in the fashion industry, primarily in brand marketing, content development, and e-commerce. He has been teaching at the university level for five years and has a Master’s Degree in Global Fashion Management from the Fashion Institute of Technology, where he leads the Faces & Places in Fashion lecture series, bringing together speakers on diverse topics ranging from design, marketing and sustainability.

www.clothestodieforfilm.com
**ABOUT the SCREENING & DISCUSSION GUIDE**

*Clothes to Die For* is an unflinching film about the Rana Plaza factory disaster in Bangladesh that unfolded on April 24th, 2013. The film is told primarily from the perspective of the survivors as well as those directly and indirectly involved. It includes raw footage of the aftermath of the tragedy, including scenes that were not often shown in the media due to their upsetting and unsettling nature.

The film is not intended to place blame on any one person or organization, but rather presents, without bias, the tangled web of responsibility that exists in the global fashion supply chain that represents well over 1.5 trillion dollars in business per year. Most importantly, it is a deeply human story of hopes and dreams, greed and corruption that puts a face to the mostly anonymous business of making clothes.

*Clothes to Die For* has the potential to raise awareness of how apparel and other products are being made and consumed. It can also facilitate meaningful discussions about the Rana Plaza tragedy and provide a human rights and fair trade context to discussions about the global supply chain system. This discussion guide can help provide a structure to your screening event, including pre- and post-discussion guides.

**Key learning outcomes from this screening event may include participants being able to:**

- **Communicate key facts** regarding the Rana Plaza disaster
- **Define basic elements** of global supply chain system as it relates to apparel industry
- **Determine key human rights issues**, including fair trade, labor rights and wages, related to apparel production
- **Recognize roles and responsibilities** of corporations, governments, press and consumers in global sourcing and production
- **Distinguish possible action steps** for personal responsibility as it relates to an “ethical consumer”

It is recommended that audiences with younger viewers be advised beforehand of the potentially upsetting scenes that are part of the film. While these scenes may be difficult to watch, they are meant to show the breadth and horrific nature of the tragedy. Ultimately, these scenes are balanced by a sense of optimism and hope from some of the survivors who contributed to the film.

www.clothestodieforfilm.com
SAMPLE EVENT AGENDA

1. Pre-Screening Discussion (10-20 minutes)
2. Introduce the film *Clothes to Die For* (5 minutes)
3. *Clothes to Die For* screening (60 minutes)
4. Post-Screening Discussion (15-40 minutes)

Total time: 90-120 minutes

RESOURCES

Film Website
www.clothestodieforfilm.com

Interview with the film’s director, Zara Hayes
www.sustainable-fashion.com/blog/clothes-to-die-for/

Fashion Revolution
www.fashionrevolution.org

Handbook for Educators
www.labourbehindthelabel.org/education-sustainable-fashion-a-handbook-for-educators/

Global Garment Industry Fact Sheet

Fair Wear Foundation
www.fairwear.org

Well Made Initiative
www.wellmade.org
PRE-SCREENING DISCUSSION GUIDE

PERSONAL CONTEXT

• **How many of you** have shopped for clothes or accessories at least once in the past week? Or in the past few weeks?
• **What was the primary reason** for buying the items you did? Was it price? Quality? Style?
• How many of you have thought about or asked where your clothes were made, or who made them? Does it affect what you purchase?
• Do you consider how your clothes were made and what materials they are made of? **Why** or **why not**?

GENERAL CONCEPTS

• What is a global supply chain? What is global sourcing?
• How is the supply chain connected in the apparel industry?
• How many countries do you think are involved in making one garment? What are some examples?
• What are some of the reasons that a brand or company might produce apparel overseas?
• What are some of the reasons that a country might want to produce and export apparel?
• What are some of the issues that may arise in producing apparel?
• How do you think human rights issues like “fair trade,” “fair wages” and “labor rights” relate to supply chain?
• How is “fast fashion” different from previous fashion production and distribution models?
• Who do you think is responsible for ensuring proper human rights related to manufacturing and sourcing?
• How do you think human rights issues related to apparel production are currently being combatted?
INTRODUCING THE APPAREL INDUSTRY AND THE RANA PLAZA TRAGEDY

• The Rana Plaza factory was located on the outskirts of Dhaka in Bangladesh

• The Rana Plaza factory manufactured clothes for many well-known western companies including: Walmart, Loblaw (Joe Fresh), Primark, JC Penney, Benetton and The Children’s Place (CleanClothes.org)

• The Rana Plaza tragedy took place April 24th, 2013

• Largest industrial disaster in the 21st Century

• More than 2400 injured, over 1100 people died

• Nine-story building collapsed (includes ground floor)

• The Rana Plaza tragedy was preceded by the 2012 Tasreen fire in Dhaka that killed 117 people.

• Over 100 years ago the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory disaster in 1911 killed 146 workers in the USA.
• The **global garment industry** is valued at **1.78 trillion USD** (2010)

• The world’s **women’s wear industry** is worth **621 billion USD**. The men’s wear industry is worth 402 billion USD. And the children’s wear industry is estimated to be worth 186 billion USD. (2014)

• In 2010, **American households** spent an **average of 1,700 USD** on apparel, footwear and related textile products and services

• About **60 – 75 million people** are employed in the garment, textile, and footwear industry (2014), up from 20 million people in 2000.

• Approximately **75% of garment workers worldwide are women.**

• The top three **garment producing** countries are: 1) China, 2) Bangladesh and 3) **India** (2011)

• The top three **garment importing** countries are: 1) EU (38%), 2) US (20%) and 3) **Japan** (2011)

• **Major issues** facing garment workers include: forced labor, women’s rights, child labor, reasonable working hours, safe working conditions, discrimination, freedom of association, and living wages.

*Statistics taken from the “Global Garment Industry Fact Sheet 2015” compiled by Lina Stotz and Gillian Kane and distributed by the Clean Clothes Campaign.*
SCREENING GUIDE

_Clothes to Die For_ breaks down into the following _segments_:

I. Introduction of garment industry in Bangladesh
II. Introduction of Rana Plaza factory and the workers
III. Concern about the factory building structure
IV. The day of the tragedy
V. The aftermath
POST-SCREENING DISCUSSION GUIDE

It is recommended that discussion topics be tailored to the participants using the questions provided below.

Questions are organized into two categories, **Personal Responses**, which focus on how the viewer felt and learned viewing the film, and **Supply Chain**, questions meant to help viewers think critically and synthesize ideas about the global nature of apparel.

While both categories can be used simultaneously, the former is recommended for younger audiences and the latter is recommended for college-level courses, or fashion industry specific audiences.

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**Personal Responses**

- **How do you feel** after seeing the film?
- What were the **major themes** in the film?
- What do you think the **filmmaker’s objective** was in making the film?
- Which **character** in the film did **you relate** to most? Why?
- How does this film **affect your views** on the “fashion” industry?
- Does this film affect **how you** might **purchase clothing** in the future?
POST-SCREENING DISCUSSION GUIDE

Supply Chain

Global Sourcing

- The film gives an insight into the history of how apparel manufacturing began in Bangladesh. What were some of the goals according to the interviewee?

- How do “supply and demand” and the quest for better margins and profits help and/or hurt a country like Bangladesh? What are the pros and cons?

- Is global sourcing changing our relationship to “fashion” and clothing in general?

- What are the specific benefits to fashion when a company can manufacture more cheaply overseas? Besides cheap prices, some businesses do source overseas to take advantage of certain areas of expertise or craftsmanship – can you think of any examples of this? How does this focus differ from a price-focused sourcing and manufacturing model?

Fashion Consumption

- The film begins with young women in Western countries in YouTube videos talking about shopping. How has the way in which we consume fashion changed in the last 10 – 15 years? What has been the impact of this change on the fashion industry?

- How is fast fashion different from more traditional or historical fashion seasons?

- What is the impact of fast fashion, particularly in a country like Bangladesh?

Rana Plaza

- While it’s easy to place blame on the owner of the Rana Plaza building, who are the stakeholders in this story, and what led them to make the decisions they did? (Examples: Factory Owners, Managers, Foreign Companies, Workers, Governments, Journalists)
Worker’s Rights & Wages

• This film focused strongly on the workers at Rana Plaza, mostly young girls and women. In what ways were they the same as American or European girls? In what ways are they different? Do their stories affect how you view the clothes you have or might buy?

• In what ways can companies better ensure safe working conditions and fair wages for factory workers? Can companies be trusted to monitor conditions, or is it necessary for other organizations to be involved?

• What is meant by “subcontracting” and “first, second and third tier” suppliers / factories? How might the practice of subcontracting impact on working conditions and wages in a global supply chain?

• Why are younger people and children working in factories? Who is responsible for child labor? How does this affect a younger person’s family and social lives? How does it affect their educational opportunities?

• What did you feel about the wages that the workers were paid in the Rana Plaza? Now that you’ve seen the film, what is a fair wage? How is it determined? How does sourcing overseas effect job availability and wages in the US or Europe?

• Can garment workers themselves play a part in ensuring safe working conditions and fair wages? What might be the barriers to this? What role do/can/should trade unions play in giving workers a voice and improving working conditions and wages?

Consumers & Change

• In what ways can consumers be actively involved in how products, including clothes, are manufactured? What kinds of expectations should customers have of clothing brands and the retailers they buy from? What are the tensions that exist between cheap prices and fair wages?

• At the end of the film, the filmmakers focus on a newly formed cooperative business. How is this business model different than what is the current norm? What may or may not lead to the success of this business model?
TAKE ACTION

While this film focused on events in Bangladesh, the consequences of what happened at Rana Plaza are of concern to all global citizens. As consumers, our buying habits in the United States or in Europe, particularly in our “fast fashion” culture, have a direct impact on the lives of others and our environment. Understanding these consequences can be overwhelming and lead to inaction instead of action. Individuals might think that they cannot make a difference on their own. However, the effect is in the sum of individuals choosing first to be aware of the issues, and then holding companies responsible for their supply chain and manufacturing practices. After all, the fashion industry relies on their customers for their survival. **Change will happen if we want it to.**

**Fashion Revolution**

Following the Rana Plaza tragedy, an international campaign was launched to try to bring about positive change in the global fashion industry. Each year on the anniversary of the Rana Plaza disaster, **Fashion Revolution Week** takes place around the world.

**Fashion Revolution** believes **transparency** is the first step to transforming the industry – [*fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency*](http://fashionrevolution.org/about/transparency). They suggest 3 things consumers can do to help push the industry to become more transparent:

- **Be Curious**
  Be more curious about how your clothes are made and who made them. Read clothing labels and research where you are buying your clothes from.

- **Find Out**
  Get in contact with brands and ask them [#whomademyclothes](http://twitter.com/whomademyclothes) to discover the real people throughout the supply chain.

- **Do Something**
  Get involved in Fashion Revolution Week and find out about ways to take action as a consumer by visiting the Fashion Revolution website – [*www.fashionrevolution.org*](http://www.fashionrevolution.org)  
  And download the Fashion Revolution, **How To Be A Fashion Revolutionary** guide at [*www.clothestodieforfilm.com/resources*](http://www.clothestodieforfilm.com/resources)