

FP Topic Proposal: Harajuku fashion

For my topic proposal, I want to focus on creating a website on Harajuku fashion. Harajuku is a city in Japan known to be a tourist trap but also rich with new trends and interests within the fashion industry. Japan has a big influence on other cultures around it, especially with the newer upcoming generations such as Generation Z and Generation Alpha. With myself included, Japanese media and culture surrounding entertainment, style trends, art, music, and so on really influence this generation's interest. It shows in references within American media and fashion trends as well. A big thing about Harajuku fashion is that it challenges boundaries put in the fashion industry such as restrictions on body type, gender, and so on. A lot of Harajuku fashion is androgynous and is open to any gender, really pushing fashion in artistic directions that force stylists to be creative with no boundaries. Some of these styles and small archetypes are Lolita, Maude, and so on.

There are a lot of trends that influence American culture that comes from places such as Britain, France, Italy, India, Korea, China, and so on. However, a lot of influence I see with the recent generations comes from Japan. A lot of the recent generations consume media made in Japan, usually anime, music, and so on. The animations are very artistic in design, and Japan, being as versatile as it is, shows different media such as anime styles merging with fashion and becoming a part of fashion designs. There are also full lines based on popular Japanese media, without the clothing not screaming branding, and is subtle for those that want to wear something in memorabilia to their favorite shows while still wearing "normal" clothing. Harajuku seems like a hub for this, as it flourishes in these industries in anime, music, manga, and other aspects of pop culture in Japan. These shows and book series being popular is what makes Harajuku a tourist trap, being sought out for the supply and demand of what is trending to tourists and giving a very commercialized and westernized ideal look of Japan. Even though Harajuku has its downfalls in those aspects, Harajuku is a mixing pot for ideas and looks outside of Japan, as the country can be in its own bubble. Ironical as this is, this causes fashion to have some key boundaries taken out due to where these choices are made yet still be influenced by other fashion industries due to having that reach. Japan is strict with customs and rules due to its older generational power and ideals, which makes it interesting when the normal is challenged by choices made in fashion.

Of those I would interview, I would see those that are within the fashion department that have an interest in Japanese fashion, especially Harajuku street fashion. I do not think I could get anyone that previously lived in Harajuku or is aware of the impacts of the ways in Japan, but those who are studying it could give more insight into the making of these designs and the influence pop culture and fashion industry shapes Harajuku and those within it. I would also interview those that consume Japanese media and how that affects how they consume other media and how it influences their sense of style or their outlook on fashion and art. It is important to get information from those that are studying the effects of media through fashion and see the effects on the actual consumer from those outside of Japan, as Harajuku fashion is meant to bring attention from other countries and demographics. It also looks to see the extent of the influence on the current generation in America.

I hope to learn more about the cultural ties that sit in the chosen types of fashion that is popular in Harajuku. I always wanted to move to Japan for a short time and have always been interested in the culture and ways of life in Japan. I want to be able to learn through ways I find interesting, such as fashion and entertainment media. Japan has its problems, but I have always wanted to learn more about the country as it influences a lot in my life and others that I know. Also to answer the question of why is it so popular among other countries and generations, as it holds a lot of influence to me into getting into the industry I want to be in, which is social media video producing. Japan holds a lot of influence and would love to break down why and also look more into the fashion industry.