

# Essay on We Are Slaves to Fashion, Even Though We Try to Be Individual

Each one of us is born unique. There are no two persons who are exactly alike. Yet despite our individuality, we constantly become slaves to whatever that is currently in fashion. As a result, even though we are different, we strive to dress alike, use the same slangs, eat the same food and share the same hobbies. I sometimes suspect that our thoughts may be alike too. Then in the midst of such mental slavery, a bright individual may strike out on his own in another direction. Others see him, admire him and then join him. It becomes fashionable to be like him. His individuality has given birth to another fashion.

Before the emergence of "rock-and-roll" in the fifties, it was fashionable to listen to melodious music and to dance the rhumba and the fox-trot. It was the 'in' thing then. However, such a fashion could not last forever. Elvis Presley and the other rockers burst into the scene and caused an uproar. Youngsters started wearing drainpipe trousers and slicked-back hair. Leather jackets and steel-studded shoes became the vogue. Every young boy wanted to be an Elvis. The sale of guitars shot up. The slavery of the rhumba bred young rebels. In turn these young rebels, who, in the process of trying to be individuals, became slaves to rock-and-roll.

These rock-and-roll slaves are still around, even though now they are balding and starting to have grandchildren rebelling against their drain-pipe trousers. That rebellion occurred in the sixties when the hippies and the flower people made the taking of marijuana (ganja) and LSD the fashionable thing to do. Gurus, real and false, appeared all over the place, The "in" thing was to go against the establishment and social order. It was fashionable to dress in rags and have babies out of wedlock. Nobody over thirty was to be trusted. It

was the age of long hair and getting “stoned”.

The hippies have more or less faded from the scene. They are no longer fashionable. However, they have left us a drug culture that has carried on into the eighties. In fact, drug-taking is one of the greatest scourges of the present world. It is still fashionable to take the drug with devastating effects. Anybody who has become addicted to drugs is doomed to a life of hell. Unless he can get rid of his addiction there is not much hope for him. For society as a whole, unless drug-taking goes out of fashion, addicts will abound and the associated problems will persist.

Thus far we can see the powerful drive of fashion. One fashion paves the way for its successor and the chain goes on. Though the actual ingredients change from one fashion to another, the practitioners are the same. They are human beings who in trying to be individuals let themselves be caught by the claws of the current trend. In the process of trying to be different from others, they become exactly alike others. Only a rare few succeed in becoming true individuals. Unfortunately, there are others who would ape them and make it fashionable to do so.

Next time you take a trip to town, reflect on the clothes you are wearing, the food you are going to eat, the things you are going to buy and the thoughts you are thinking about. See how much of these things are subject to fashion.

See if you can find anything genuinely your own.