

# ***Fashion Trendsetters***

***Thomas Liquori***  
***FAS238 Professor Cockle***  
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Since the dawn of men's fashion there have been many designers that have made an impact in the fashion world. Many of whom have been popularized for making a certain type of dress wear popular during their time. There are so many great names to chose from, one might ask where do we start. I will briefly talk about some great trendsetters of the past in detail.

Fashion, during the periods from the 1930's until the 1940's were overshadowed by two great catastrophic events that were going on during that time. One, was the great depression, and the other, was World War II. The most characteristic trend of the period was the exaggerated shoulder pads with the butterfly and banjo sleeves. During this era, the period also saw the first use of synthetic fibers, used for linings, lingerie, and stockings. The abdicated King Henry VII, later characterized as the Duke of Windsor who popularized this trend during this period ( as well as others ) was more responsible for the drape cut than any other trendsetter during that time.

The Duke, who was already a fashion icon of his time, from being noted by people to being groomed by choice not by position, had a strong preference in dress, and was an immaculate fashionable dresser, as well as trendsetter of that time. The Duke, changed the ways of certain rules of clothing presentation during that period, because individuals who followed his fashions that the Duke set were mostly intrigued that his attire was for his own practical purposes. The "drape cut" or "London Drape", is the full easy cut with no additional ease or fullness in the chest and shoulder blade area in the back. The appearance of a softness to the coat, as well as having slight extended shoulders with less

padding, gave this look both of more of a professional and personality look to the man that wore it.

Another great icon during the stylish thirties would not come from royalty, but from a Hollywood star. Fred Astaire, was an American film and Broadway stage dancer/actor. His film career spanned over 76 years, and he is particularly associated with his partner Ginger Rogers. Astaire, well known for his dance move choreography and elegant dress wear, was credited with two important innovations for film musicals. One was the single shot in full view at all times, and secondly, he used his choreography to move his plot along, rather than just using song and dances in plot lines. Astaire, also popularized the trend of the “drape cut” during the stylish thirties by performing on stage and in his films with the full and easy attire.

Carrie Grant ( born Carrie Gray ) was a British celebrity vocal coach and session singer, and great fashion trendsetter icon is known for popularizing floppy hats and fedoras which was a trend that came back during 2005 and 2006 in women’s fashion. The fedora, was first initiated in men’s fashion popularized by Humphrey Bogart and Carrie Grant. In 2005 the fedora came back onto the women’s fashion scene. This wasn’t the first time the fedora was on the women’s trend though. In 1964 Sophia Loren wore a fedora, and in 1966 Liza Manneli touted a fedora. The fedora is versatile and can evoke glamour and sophistication, as well as giving women more of a mysterious look.

Two other great Hollywood icons considered being fashion trendsetters of their times would have to be Marlon Brando, and James Dean. The 1950's belonged to Marlon Brando with his hit movie "A Streetcar Named Desire" who is unarguably one of the most celebrated influential stage actor of the post-war era, and for popularizing the desire of jean wear. During the same period there was another young star on the horizon, James Dean, who popularized the leather jacket and the wearing of jeans, by being a very individualistic person, he also emulated the wishes and desires of differentiation that lurked in many teens of his era. Up until this point the use of jeans in the 1940's were considered to be work clothes, it was only up until the 1950's, from movies stars like Elvis Presley, James Dean, and Marlon Brando who started wearing them in movies, did jeans then become desirable to wear. By the 1960's jeans wear had become a universally worn item in the western world.

There is no doubt that there have been many great inspirational trendsetters throughout history. The names mentioned above do not even bite a piece of the iceberg of important names in the fashion trendsetting industry, but it does give some insight into how far we have come and in somewhat gives us a direction to where we are going.

**Cited Resources:**

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