

The popularity of vintage shopping

An echoing warehouse illuminated by fluorescent lights and crowded with bins. The atmosphere is electric, as people are filled with a rush of serotonin after scrounging for hours.

“It’s like a treasure hunt.”

Thrifting, and in particular vintage shopping, has become increasingly appealing to college students. The high demand for unique IU clothing has led to the opening of vintage stores all over Bloomington, online and in storefronts.

Thrifting for clothes isn’t as straight-forward as it may seem, but can end with an incredibly satisfying outcome when a quality piece is finally found, as described by Jack Koceja.



Koceja, a Fashion Design major at IU, has been thrifting for six years. It has come to the point where he hopes to begin selling some of his clothes because of his enormous collection.

Thrifting is enticing to college students. It’s common to get 40-50 t-shirts for \$10, Koceja said.

A t-shirt with a single stitch on the sleeve equates to a high quality, vintage find. The hunt for desirable clothing is what attracts Koceja to thrifting. He describes the resemblance to gambling, finding one good piece makes you want to come back for more.

“Graphic vintage tees propelled this demographic into thrifting,” Koceja said.

Around 2014, vintage style shirts were being sold at big retail stores, encouraging the popularity of this type of clothing.

In Bloomington, there are a multitude of vintage stores. Some, targeting IU students with hand stitched, one of a kind college wear, and others, selling any type of clothing you could imagine.

Koceja believes that there won't be any new vintage stores in Bloomington in the near-future. He described how for every store, there are around 10 online vintage stores. Online retail makes shopping easier and more accessible to everyone.

The definition of vintage clothing is heavily debated among retail lovers, but Trey Humphrey, creator of the HoosierA1 Vintage store, states that vintage clothes refers to clothes made in the 90's or earlier in the US. These clothes are of higher quality because they are not cheaply made as a by-product of a massive industry.



Piles of hand selected vintage clothing fill Humphrey's showroom. His successful business began in his dorm room and has grown due to his tenacious character and embodiment of the charismatic HoosierA1 Vintage persona.

"Thrifting and vintage have become synonymous in a way," Humphrey said.

Vintage shopping hasn't become popular to the extent that thrifting has. People who enjoy thrift shopping and who want to shop for vintage retail aren't as knowledgeable on the subject and often expect lower prices for high quality clothing, Humphrey said.



"When IU doesn't do well, I don't do well," Humphrey said.

His main market is IU students. The consistent want for unique and sustainable IU clothing is what attracts buyers to the store, but it is heavily reliant on the school's success.

When looking for vintage clothes to sell, "It's all about who you know," Humphrey said.

It's important to consider the quality, rarity, color, stains and intricacies when valuing a piece of clothing. Humphrey looks at the online market and prices his finds \$10-15 lower.

With outward enthusiasm, Humphrey described how much hard-work is required in this industry because it's dependent on a great number of factors compared to other industries.

During his Freshman year, Humphrey focused most of his time on building his business. He talked to everyone, in order to gain a bigger audience. Laughing, while reminiscing on that year, Humphrey explains how his friends would become annoyed at his perpetual need to approach everyone on the street.

The popularity of vintage shopping is being maintained because it "speaks to young people fed up with the system," Humphrey said.

According to the National Association of Resale Professionals, within the past two years, there has been a 7% increase in resale stores. This specific area of retail is currently the fastest growing among other retail industries and is thriving because of consumers' awareness of its ability to cut back waste.

Brian Sullivan, co-owner of the vintage store SLCT, explains how this same idea is the reason for his store's success. SLCT is able to appeal to younger consumers because of their efforts made towards eliminating fast fashion.

When opening a store-front dedicated to vintage clothing, it's important to maintain a constant circulation of clothing, so that buyers will want to keep coming back.

"The process of opening any store is tedious, but obviously incredibly fun and rewarding," Sullivan said.

The passionate drive that is consistent among vintage shoppers and store owners highlights what this industry is built off of. A community is formed from these shared values and beliefs, making vintage shopping more than just a hobby.

Sources

Jack Koceja: jhkoceja@iu.edu

Trey Humphrey: [@hoosier1vintage](#) (Instagram)

SLCT: [@slctstock](#) (Instagram)

NARTS: <https://www.narts.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1>

Council Meeting

A proposed ordinance that aimed to decriminalize the act of sleeping in parks was shut down on March 3 during the nine hour Bloomington city council meeting.

Ordinance 21-06 was created to help the homeless population in Bloomington. It allows people who have no other place to sleep to stay in parks or other designated areas. These locations would be near restrooms and restaurants. A notice would be required before dislodging anyone and storage space would be offered for personal items.

After a passionate deliberation, a 4-4 vote stopped the ordinance from being referred to a committee. Despite Council Member Jim Sims' absence due to a death in the family, the rest of the council voted against further deliberation on the ordinance.

“We are dismayed that we who don’t support this ordinance are being vilified,” Council Member Ron Smith said.

Opponents of the ordinance believe that the costly enactment would not be enough to solve the problem of homelessness. There was also the concern of having a rise in homeless people staying in parks. Council Member Dave Rollo believes that the ordinance is not salvageable.

Before taking the final vote, many public comments urged council members to consider the ordinance.

“More people are upset at the fact that there are people at the park, more than they are upset about the fact that they are homeless,” Kai Freeman, Indiana University student, said.

Council members who voted against the ordinance were Sue Sgambelluri, representative of district two, Ron Smith, representative of district three, Dave Rollo, representative of district four and Susan Sandberg, representative at-large. Those who voted for the ordinance were Stephen Volan, representative of district six, Isabel Piedmont-Smith, representative of district five, Kate Rosenbarger, representative of district one and Matt Flaherty representative at-large.

This ordinance and any others of similar nature will not be able to be reintroduced because of this vote leaving this problem unaddressed.

Kaitlyn Mayse describes acting career

IU alumna, Kaitlyn Mayse, expressed her gratitude for the University yesterday during IU Auditorium's live stream event.

After graduating, Mayse moved to New York in the hopes of launching her acting career. With help from IU alumni, as Mayse described, she not only learned how to take the subway, but was also given a place to stay.

Mayse auditioned for many roles, but her audition for "Cinderella" stood out and led to the enthusiastic retelling of the story.

As a result of being in the very last audition group, Mayse had to completely change her song last minute. She was asked back 14 more times for multiple different roles, but didn't hear anything further and assumed she didn't get a part. Months later, in August, she was asked back and eventually scored the role of Ella that would lead to her three year tour.

While Mayse's role in "Cinderella" was important to her as it brought a lot of joy to children, being in the national tour of "Bandstand" had a large impact on others, as it tells the story of WWII veterans returning home, Mayse said.

"I grew more as a person and learned more perspectives of human life as a member of Bandstand," Mayse said.

During her time at IU, Mayse worked as an assistant choreographer and was on the board for the theater organization, University Players. As a student, she took many master classes with professional actors and was eventually on the other side, by teaching one herself. While cast in "Cinderella", Mayse taught a workshop for students at IU.

"I owe a lot, a lot to IU," Mayse said.

Mayse is a dancer and singer, as well as an actor. But to her, her job is to be a storyteller. Although it will be hard for the theater industry to reopen because of COVID-19, the world may need it as a form of relief and connection to others, Mayse said.

Mayse is optimistic about the future, “I hope that we will find ways to continue to spread art and creativity and healing through music and storytelling, no matter what the circumstance is”.

Written stories from Books and Beyond

Books and Beyond is an organization at Indiana University that collaborates with local elementary school students in Bloomington and in Rwanda. Anyone can get involved, as this group offers a multitude of opportunities for IU students, including graphic design and publishing practice, Audrey Hood, president of Books and Beyond said.

The organization, Books and Beyond, would normally take students on a trip to Rwanda in the spring, as a part of their hands-on educational work. With this trip being cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the group turned their focus to other areas. After going remote in the fall, the organization has been focusing on publishing their yearly anthology and applying for grants for future projects, Hood said.

“The nice thing is, we've been working remotely in some sense since the beginning of the organization because we've always been communicating with the teachers and students and students that we serve,” Hood said.

The elementary school kids from both Bloomington and Rwanda work alongside the organization in order to write stories and learn about different cultures. These stories make up the entirety of the anthology.

The published anthologies can be found on IUScholarWorks. To find out more information about the organization, visit beinvolved.indiana.edu/organization/booksandbeyond.