

27) Behind the Business of Resale with Cynthia Power of Recurate [TRANSCRIPT]

ELIZABETH

You're listening to the Conscious Style Podcast, where we explore what it will take to build a better, more sustainable and equitable future for fashion. I'm your host, Elizabeth Joy. Now let's dive into today's episode

So when we talk about circular fashion — which is the theme of this season of the podcast in case you missed it — probably the first thing that comes to mind is secondhand.

And it's no surprise why: secondhand fashion has been growing rapidly with an increasing interest in sustainability and the growing desire for cheap clothes.

The value of the secondhand market is projected to double in the next 5 years according to ThredUP's 2021 Resale Report.

So, a decade ago, shopping secondhand fashion pretty much exclusively meant charity shops and thrift stores. But that has changed dramatically in the past years. Now there's a new big player in the secondhand market: resale.

So as you know, now we can buy secondhand fashion from online marketplaces like Poshmark and Depop, somewhat curated thrift stores like ThredUP, or luxury consignment sites like The RealReal. And these all make up the resale subcategory of secondhand. And this resale category has been a major driver for the growth in the secondhand market. In fact resale is expected to grow 11x faster than the broader retail clothing sector according to that same ThredUP report.

While all types of secondhand have been growing, the resale sector alone quintupled from 2017 to 2021, while charity & thrift grew 25% in that same time period.

To be clear, ALL of these forms of secondhand fashion are incredibly valuable and important to a circular and sustainable fashion future. But online resale does have more of an ability to "keep up" so to speak with traditional retail because of the convenience, searchability, and variety of selection.

Personally, love thrift shopping, but this is just something to note on a more macro scale.

So, of course with this rapid growth in resale, brands are taking notes and want a piece of this \$36 billion secondhand market pie. A pie that is projected to grow to \$77 billion by 2025.

And you may have noticed a surge in brands launching their own resale programs, especially in the past couple of years. Also with growing consumer concerns about the ecological impact of fashion, resale can also appeal to sustainability-minded consumers.

Now, I don't think that this means that sites like Poshmark or Depop will go away. The growing secondhand market should mean that there will be room for a lot of different players and different forms of access. Like the birth of online resale has not meant that charity shops went away — in fact this sector has still been growing, 2020 lockdowns excluded — so I don't see brand resale programs causing online marketplaces to go away.

As previous guests Aja Barber and Emily Stochl have pointed out: the world has way more than enough clothes.

I think that we need a variety of secondhand fashion options, as different options will appeal to different types of people. Some may love the hunt at thrift stores, some may love the selection on marketplaces, some may love the curated almost retail-like experience through brand resale programs. And some may rotate between all three!

So, all of that said, today we are going to explore this brand resale programs in a bit more detail.

For this episode, I had the pleasure of speaking with Cynthia Power, an expert in brand resale programs. Cynthia currently helps brands build and optimize their resale programs at Recurate, a full-service recommerce partner for brands, whose clients include Mara Hoffman and RE/DONE. Before that, Cynthia worked as the Director of Eileen Fisher's take-back and resale program. And as you may know, Eileen Fisher has been a major trailblazer in the brand resale space.

Cynthia is also an avid thrifter and self-proclaimed vintage fanatic herself, so she has a lot of great insight into the secondhand fashion space.

In this episode Cynthia is addressing topics like:

What are the differences between brand-led resale programs vs. third-party platforms like a ThredUP or Depop?

What are the challenges to getting a resale program off the ground and what can brands do to support them in the process?

And how can brands design for resale from the very beginning?

Cynthia is also addressing some of those big difficult-to-answer and hotly debated topics, like:

- + How can we start to get fashion to *finally* talk about reducing new production?

- + And does resale give brands an "excuse" to continue to overproduce?

Lots to cover in this episode, so we'll dive in very shortly, but first I wanted to remind you that the transcript is over in the show notes on consciouslifeandstyle.com. And if you enjoy this episode, make sure to hit subscribe if you're not already a subscriber to this podcast, so that you don't miss future conversations like this one.

Finally, for more sustainable fashion content, subscribe to my weekly newsletter at consciouslifeandstyle.com/edit. And it is a completely free resource for you.

Okay, now onto the conversation with Cynthia. Cynthia is going to start us off with a bit of her background in secondhand fashion and what led her to where she is today with her role at Recurate.

CYNTHIA

Well, thank you for having me and you pinned me correctly. I am a lifelong vintage and thrifting fanatic and it's still like my happy place. When I take the day off, I will always manage to find a thrift store wherever I go. And I just — I don't know — it just makes me happy.

When I started working at Eileen Fisher and for the 14 years I was there I think I just really learned the value of really well made quality clothes and how long they can last. I mean with the program that I was directing there, we would get back clothes that were like 20-25 years old, that were still in perfect condition.

And so I think that that can just be very meaningful for where we are in the world and overconsumption, and, you know, and reuse and the importance of reuse. And so I think, you know, my role now Recurate, I'm very excited to really help scale more branded peer-to-peer resale, and just working with Reurate, and giving all the brands that we work with a lot of time, energy, dedication to help them grow their their internal resale programs as well.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, so you're very clearly very experienced with managing take back and resale programs for brands with your experience at Eileen Fisher, and now with Recurate. So I'd love to know, from your perspective, what does an effective and sustainably minded take-back and resale program look like?

CYNTHIA

So my first thought on effectiveness is making it easy for the customer. The easier you can make it for the customer, I think the better your program will be. I love that peer to peer happens at home, takes you five minutes, right? You log in, you take a picture of your item, you could do

in your living room. And I think also just from a sustainability perspective, like the most sustainable thing...

Well, for you know, for a piece of clothing and for consumers, right, it's like the most sustainable thing we can do is continue to use things that already exist and not buy new. And then in terms of like a program and thinking about it from, from a brand's perspective, the most sustainable kind of way to initiate all of that and have it work is to have customers just send product to each other instead of having them all come to a warehouse and then go back out. So I'm definitely interested in peer-to-peer for that reason as well. You know, I think that we see so much product being sold on peer-to-peer third party platforms right now.

So I think that that's just, you know, thinking about, like, how can we make it easier for the customer? And really also speaking, when we think about effectiveness, like thinking about customer loyalty. And we've seen, brands that have super high customer loyalty or really, really strong customer loyalty, that they have the most robust and kind of effective programs. And so I think that's something also for brands to keep in mind.

And that also last thing about you know, effectiveness is that you should try to integrate it into your brand and not have it be this very separate program. But I think that kind of brings up like, well, what does effective mean? But if you want it to be like a great customer experience, a great branded experience, you want it to be simple and easy to do, then I think the more integrated it can be the better.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. And that's really — there are a lot of interesting things there. But something that really struck me was your point about peer-to-peer not having the warehouse in between because I just did a podcast episode on rental and the difference between inventory-based rental versus peer-to-peer rental, which is more like sharing, lending. So lots of interesting things to think about.

CYNTHIA

Definitely.

ELIZABETH

So we are seeing more and more brands, big and small, enter the resale space. I feel like I see a new brand entering like every day. So what does that look like on the back end? You know, what sort of time or resource commitment does that look like for a brand? And are there barriers to entry with it?

CYNTHIA

I've had a lot of different experiences with this. I think trying to build it in house, you know, it's a lot of work. It's a lot of labor, it's a lot of space, it's a lot of people. I think that maybe you know,

Eileen Fisher started their program 12 years ago, and that was just what they needed to do then and you know, fantastic that they did it.

But I think if you were starting a resale program now, there are so many vendors, and there are very low barrier ways to enter into this space. And so I think, of course, I would say like, outsource it and to outsource it to, for example to Recurate, you really get our technology, our expertise, our support. It's very cost effective. Like, I don't think there's a great reason to build it in house right now. But I know you want to talk about that a little bit more.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. Yeah, that leads into my next question really well. But does it ever make sense for a brand to create their own [resale program]? Or, you know, why might it be... why might it make sense to use something like Recurate? What's that difference like? You know, anything you want to weigh in on there.

CYNTHIA

Well, I'm biased, but I think, you know, I would just say, with the experience that I have, I think I would be really curious to talk with a brand and be convinced that they should really build it in house themselves, you know, given all the resources that now exist. And so I think, because it is a huge, it will be a huge lift financially, and operationally. I just think, you know, I think about it kind of like most brands, work with a website provider, or web platform provider, right? That's just a very normal thing to do. You just shop around and you find the right provider. And they do that, right? You're the brand. You don't expect, like the brand itself to be, you know, necessarily managing, like all of all the aspects of his web platform.

I kind of think about resale similarly, now where I'm like, yeah, I guess you could do it. It's going to be outside of your expertise, and it's going to be expensive and it's going to take a lot of work. So if there are companies and services, like Recurate, that can really help — we're experts at this, we can help make it easy — I think that that makes a lot of sense.

I will also say that we have had conversations with brands where they initially wanted to build it themselves. And they have come back to us and just said like, this is too expensive, too difficult. We would rather do it with you all. So that's how I feel about that.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, I think that having a resale program is something that sounds very straightforward, very simple. And then once you get into the nitty gritty, the logistics of it, it becomes quite complicated. But we'll get more into that later.

First, I want to ask you from a reseller's vantage point, what do you see as the biggest difference between selling through maybe a brand-led peer to peer program, or even if the brand is kind of being the middleman versus a third party secondhand app, like Poshmark or Depop?

CYNTHIA

I think the most important part here is that the vast majority of brands that we work with, which is about... we've launched about 18 brands or you know brands' sale platforms, and we have about 15 more coming through in the next few months. And the vast majority of them give their sellers 100% site credit. You know, if they're listing an item for \$100, when it sells they get \$100 site credit.

So it's definitely more generous than I think any of the marketplaces that you'll see where I think could vary from like, 30 to maybe even 80% that you might get back. But you know, I think nothing really compares to that 100% that we really recommend brands give. And I think that you know, for Poshmark and Depop and those kinds of places, they've been super successful. Because branded retail is relatively new, and just customers haven't had another option.

So I think as customers start to learn that like, oh, my favorite like brand is doing this, that we think that we'll see, you know, more of an uptick in then using those branded platforms. A) because they love their favorite brands, and they want to like have that experience on that branded site. And because they'll get more value when they sell them.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. And I almost wonder if it'll get more people who maybe wouldn't have otherwise trusted like Poshmark or Depop. Or they're just very unfamiliar with it. But yeah, as you said, they have that trust with a brand.

CYNTHIA

Right. Totally. It's actually funny, I was just talking about this with one of my team members, Karin Dillie, who has a long experience working at The RealReal before this. And she was saying something that we're seeing is that like, we tell brands, you have all these customers that are already shopping on secondhand markets like Poshmark and Depop. And, you want to bring those customers right onto your site.

But then kind of surprisingly, we're also seeing loyal customers that just hadn't been doing secondhand at all. Hadn't been selling it. Now that there are brands that they are loyal to and trust basically, now that they're offering resale, now those customers are now like, oh, cool, I'll participate in this.

So it just points to like there's so much we don't know about this yet. There's so much opportunity. It's really exciting. And I just like I really want to help brands like capture all of that for themselves and their brand experience. I mean, they made the product in the first place. They're proud of it, they want to resell it, and have that customer enjoy all of the stages of what they made.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. And it also works from the customer standpoint. I'm thinking you know, as someone who's trying to make conscious purchasing decisions, I'm already thinking about the end of life. Or you know, maybe doesn't fit me anymore, maybe it doesn't work for me anymore. You know, what can I do with it at that point? And to know that that brand has a resale program gives me more confidence in making that purchase.

CYNTHIA

I totally agree, yeah.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. So then kind of shifting to the view of the secondhand shopper, which we started to talk a little bit about. What are the differences between purchasing from a [brand] resale program built by Recurate, for instance, versus one of these marketplaces, as we were talking about, like Poshmark or Depop?

CYNTHIA

Yeah, so I think you know, what you just mentioned about having customers kind of like that there's an additional element of like, at least for me, excitement for any brand that I like, that is selling secondhand. And I will always check out that collection, if I'm on that brand's website. So just something I think about, you know, millennials and Gen Z, and you know, almost everyone is shopping resale now. So I think that, like, that's something to keep in mind.

I think that in terms of the different shopping experiences, I would say, you know, it's a much more sophisticated experience, having a branded resale collection, as opposed to, you know, on Poshmark. And I shop Poshmark. But I think that, like, what I'm slowly learning is that it's hard, you know, when I go on Poshmark, I do shop for brands, specifically, right? And the brands that I know how they fit me.

And if those brands had resale programs, I would 100% just go straight to that brand. Because the visual experience, everything about it is like it's not only more sophisticated, but is more just like level and more similar across items. Whereas, on the marketplaces, it's like, you run such a gamut of like, what it looks like, and who's selling it. And I don't know, it's just you have to be willing to spend a lot more time I think, and search a lot more on the marketplaces. Which I know most people don't have time like that, or like, love the thrill of the hunt. You know, I find myself like scrolling for a really long time, and it's just kind of a waste of time.

So anyways, I think that that's one of the main reasons is just like it's more sophisticated, it's easier if you know the brands that you love, like you know how they fit you. It's just a much clearer experience. I think, if you don't know, if you're looking for a plain t shirt and you don't care what brand it is, you could go on a marketplace.

But what I've also found recently, personally is like, when I do that, and I buy from a brand that I'm not familiar with, or that I don't wear Normally, most of the time, it doesn't fit me the way that I wish it did. And then it's kind of like, I find myself in this other weird position where I'm like, I

was trying to be responsible by buying secondhand, but if you buy something secondhand that doesn't fit, or that you're just going to be done with, then it's like, yeah, I'm gonna go back and resell it. But that's a lot of work. I'd rather buy from a brand that I know how it's gonna fit me and I can just be confident in that purchase from the start.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. I definitely resonate with that, especially with activewear, I find it very difficult to find that for some reason on Poshmark. And I'm excited to see that some of the eco-minded activewear brands that I love have launched resale programs, and it's really, really exciting.

So on the back end of things, there are, of course, a lot of logistics involved with making these take-back and/or resale programs work. I'm not sure if the peer to peer model would be considered take back or more just resale.... But in any case, can you give us a little bit more of a behind the scenes look at what this secondhand supply chain or this reverse supply chain looks like?

CYNTHIA

Mhm. So you know, you're correct, I wouldn't consider peer-to-peer take back, I would just consider it resale. So in terms of take-back, what you're usually looking at, you know, is customers, they have to get their product back to you. So whether they drop it off in a store or at a location or they ship it back to wherever you're processing it or warehousing it. You know, they have to sort everything that comes back through, like if you think about ThredUP, right? I don't know how... I can't even imagine how many millions of garments they have.

But you have to sort everything and you have to determine what is sellable and what is not. Some things need to be cleaned. Or if it can be saved, right? Like if it's a high value item that just has like a makeup stain on it, you'd do a lot better to just clean it, then you can resell it.

But anyways, it has to be photographed. It has to be packaged, warehoused, wait for it to sell, go back, pick it, sell it, send it out to the buyer. And that's just for the resellable piece. And then there's the whole pieces that can't be resold, and all of the sorting and hopefully responsible recycling, upcycling, downcycling all of that.

It is a whole lot of logistics and warehousing and a headache. It's a beautiful headache, one that I have had many years. But again, I think it just for me, it's such a new and exciting world to think about peer-t- peer. And like, you just skip all of that. And it's this very simple and sustainable solution. So that's what I get excited about.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, totally. And knowing what the resale process is like, and now brands are having more and more of these resale programs.

What qualities of a garment do you think are important for resell-ability? Like how can brands design for resale from the beginning? What makes for a piece that can be resold or repaired or restored?

CYNTHIA

So this may be obvious, but really choosing quality every step of the way. In material, and construction, in style — like timeless style, right? If you're making extremely trendy pieces, they're gonna be really hot this season, and then, you know, lose their kind of excitement next season.

I think that you know, super quality items are going to be things that people want to have repaired. Obviously, they also spent more money on them, so you have like more of a literal vested interest in having them repaired. And then I think also... and there's a lot happening here for you know, on the design side of things, which is really exciting. Down to like... you know I get excited when I think about when you design a cotton t-shirt, for example, it's more recyclable if you choose 100% cotton thread for the sewing of that t-shirt instead of using like a polyester thread, because then the entire item is 100% cotton.

So like, you can get very granular with this question. I won't. But I think it's really exciting. And there's a lot, you know, it would be a fun topic for you to like, talk with a circular designer. I could actually introduce you to a great one.

ELIZABETH

Yeah!

CYNTHIA

Anyways, so I think that the other point I would make about this is that as brands start to see the value of resale, and then if they're making something once that is potentially being sold 2,3,4 times that they can, I hope feel more incentivized to produce higher quality items that can be sold multiple times instead of lower quality items that you know, can potentially only be sold once.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, that's really interesting. They have more of a motivation, because then they can sell it 3,4,5 times instead of making five garments.

CYNTHIA

Yeah, exactly.

ELIZABETH

I always find it fascinating to look at the motivations behind certain things. And I feel like the resale programs, I think put the motivations in the right places. Yeah, more of a motivation for quality,

So, of course, one of the biggest potential benefits of resale is that it will allow brands to ideally produce less and for consumers to ideally purchase less new. And I feel like this is like one of the biggest questions that's being debated in the sustainable fashion space.

A lot of brands are talking about resale now. A lot of big brands that we didn't expect to get into secondhand! But not many, yet, are talking about making less new stuff. In fact, some recent data from the retail intelligence platform Edited found you know, fashion might be actually getting even faster. Although 2020 slowed down, 2021 is looking to be at a faster pace, even than 2019. So can you speak to why that is and how we can maybe get brands to start thinking about slowing down and reducing new production?

CYNTHIA

Yeah, I think that one of the key things here is for brands to start to understand the value even just in revenue of resale. And I think that this hasn't been something that has been really an option or available to brands until very recently.

So, I'm hopeful that if we can start proving that actually, you know, resale models are increasing customer acquisition... Well we have started proving it but if it becomes more widely kind of understood that resale programs bring in new customers, that they provide a second, third and fourth sale of an existing item. You know that they reactivate lapsed customers that there are all of these, like significant benefits of having a resale program then I think that that could start to change part of the the mindset around making new things is the *only* way to make money. I think we can start to show that well also you can make money and get your return on investment in multiple ways, through doing resale. That's a little bit like a sliver of hope that I have there.

My other hope, I think is, that I don't know, it's kind of a mixed one. But it's like, I kind of hope that virgin materials like cotton will become more expensive. I know, they have been getting more expensive over time. And so I'm assuming they will continue to be more expensive. And I hope that labor continues to become more expensive, just in terms of, you know, really paying fair wages. So that will also kind of I think de-incentivize super fast fashion.

And then kind of coming back to where I started, like, in the ThredUP report, right, it says that I think retail is growing like X number of times faster than fast fashion, something like that. So I think that again, you know, it's like, how do we get the the people responsible for these fast fashion companies to kind of have a little bit of a chat, look around and say like, okay, maybe we could be, maybe we could be slowing down production and focusing on resale. If revenue is what matters, instead of making \$10 billion, this way only, What if we made \$8 billion this old way, and \$2 billion this new way, and like that kind of impact. So we'll see. It's a great question. And there's no perfect answer,

ELIZABETH

Right. But yeah, it would be really incredible to see some of these fast fashion brands who are talking about their recycled materials to take it a step further and invest that much into resale.

And secondly, I really love that you brought up the connection with higher wages and reduced production. A few guests have talked about that, and I feel like it's so important to discuss that. Like, if we're paying people along the supply chain fair wages, it will be more expensive to

produce new. And hopefully, that incentive will be there to get more into secondhand both from a brand standpoint and from a consumer standpoint.

CYNTHIA

Right. Make more quality and figure out how to continue the lifecycle and like the selling cycle of things that already exist.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, totally. So another related concern that has come up is that having a resale program might give brands an excuse to overproduce since they know that there's somewhere for that excess to go. But as our previous guest, Natasha Halesworth of the rework brand, The Consistency Project pointed out, there is a certain level of so-called overproduction inherent in production with things like factory minimums, errors, maybe wholesale order requirements, and so on.

So, in your view, is this a legitimate concern about resale being a way for brands to continue to overproduce? And if it is legit, you know, how can the industry sort of mitigate that?

CYNTHIA

I think that I know from working, I don't know, from working inside a brand for a long time and just being in the industry for a long time, that this is part of the reality of fashion. And I do know in some cases, I just learned about a brand that's like, doing pre orders only. Which I'm kind of like, that's awesome, good for you! I would love to see more of that, but I understand it's not a reality for a lot of brands now.

I think I would just kind of say go back to what I said before that, like overproduction is linked to brands believing that the only way to make money is by making new things. And so really, if we can, again, try to think about that there is revenue and other gains to be had from resale, that could kind of help with this overproduction mindset that you know, let's make and sell some new things and let's not make and so some existing things.

So I think resale really helps brands be smarter about their production and tap into the inventory that exists in customers' closets, which is you know, kind of like the big resale unlock that is super fascinating.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, definitely. And I feel like a lot of it just comes back to a brand's intention. And with how the fashion system works, there likely is always going to be a bit of extra, but is that brand at least trying to minimize that extra?

So there's clearly a lot to that conversation about slowing down production and reducing consumption and the production of new stuff. But nonetheless, I'm also excited and hopeful about resale. And as we talked about, it can encourage more people into the secondhand space, if they have if they see a brand that they love having a resale program.

And some of the conscious brands that I have loved are launching resale programs, which I love to see. But there are some brands that I would love to see, in the future launch a resale program. You know maybe their prices are out of reach, or I just like to buy as much secondhand as possible. So what tips do you have for other consumers like me who, you know, want to ask their favorite brands to launch a resale program? What do you suggest for that?

CYNTHIA

I think in terms of what customers can do, what I thought of was that, you could DM them on Instagram, you could get in touch with their customer support team. Some brands have, you know, like customer message boards or things like that. Actually one of the brands that we work with, their resale program came to life because their customers on their message board like started requesting it. And so I do think as customers, you know, we have a lot of power in that sense.

I think also just like, you know, in terms of good news, there are so many brands considering resale. And even like, a few months ago, I think there was more like, you know, on Recurate's part of having to go like, hey, have you heard about resale? And now the conversation is brands are coming to us and they're like, we want to do resale, tell us about how you do it. So I'm just very heartened by that because I think resale is the future and is going to be like just so much bigger than it is now and so diverse and so interesting. And like, so that's just exciting, I think for me.

And then I wanted to just mention an example of specifically one brand that we work with, Brass Clothing, they had a really active Facebook, like Buy Sell Trade group for their clothes, specifically. And they were seeing the behavior there. And so for Brass, I think the opportunity was like we want that to keep happening, just could it just come on to our site.

And we just did a case study on them that we could link to and then on your post. It's really like just looking at that customer behavior and looking out into the world. That's part of what we do when we're talking with brands. You know, we say, hey, like, we managed to get a little bit of data, like \$2 million worth of your stuff sold last year between Poshmark and eBay, like, just bring that onto your site, you know, so those are my thoughts.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. Recently, this isn't fashion, but for home stuff, I was trying to find West Elm furniture secondhand, because I love the aesthetic, I think it's pretty good quality. But the prices are really high and just for environmental reasons, also trying to source as much secondhand as possible. And that stuff goes so fast. And so I actually reached out to them and I sent them a message and I was like, you know, you should consider having a resale program on your site.

Because I just know how much furniture gets wasted. You know, same with clothes, and there's a market there are people who like your stuff and either, you know, prioritize secondhand or maybe can't afford your stuff. And so it really gives like a great opportunity for accessing that.

CYNTHIA

Absolutely. And I would just say you know, we're talking to furniture companies, we're talking to outdoor's companies, we're talking to children's toy companies. I think that the opportunity is pretty limitless. Like if you make a good quality product, I think it can be resale.

ELIZABETH

Yeah, I love that you're looking into furniture at Recurate because trying to furnish like our first apartment. It's kind of tough. Yeah. So yeah. That would be really useful.

CYNTHIA

Okay, noted.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. So what insights do you have for the future of resale? You kind of hinted at it a little bit. But where do you hope in a dream world for this space to go next?

CYNTHIA

Right, so I talked a little bit about, you know, I think everything that's quality can be resold. Really everything. And I'm excited about all of the innovation that will come with that, like when you think about reselling furniture or other like big, bulky objects, you know. I think we'll see a lot more different types of shipping services and things like that, that will go with especially the peer to peer resale economy, that should be interesting to see how that shapes up.

I think, you know, every brand is likely to have their own retail program in the next number of years, or to have it be like, you know, most brands do and if you don't, it's kind of like, why not? That would be a great future. I would love to live in that future. And hopefully, you know, hopefully, I will.

I think, you know, I love really beautiful, well made things just in my life. And that's probably why I love vintage and thrifting as well. And so, you know, for me, like, I don't care if it's from the first owner, or the fourth owner, sometimes I prefer to be the fourth owner, because I just love that history. And so I would love to see also we talked a little bit about brands committing to growing, resale and shrinking new production. I think that's the future.

I think that brands that do that will be true pioneers. And I think that customers will reward them. That's my belief, or at least customers like me will reward them right. I am very careful about where I spend my money. Yeah, that's what I would say.

ELIZABETH

I love that. And then more generally speaking, the final question I ask to all guests that come onto the podcast is: what does a better future for fashion look like to you?

CYNTHIA

Well you know, I mentioned paying fair wages across the supply chain and transparent supply chains. I think investing in quality materials, and hopefully a lot of quality recycled materials. I think, you know, a really huge growth around the resale industry, and brands really listening to their customers, hopefully, to make resale a part of their brand experience.

I think, you know, we've seen, like the uptick on buying used. Like a huge change over the last five years. I think five years ago, it felt kind of like, maybe less than half of people bought used and now it's like almost everyone will buy used in some way or another. So I'm really looking forward to or hope that that behavior will... also like we'll see that same pattern with people selling their own stuff. I understand there's it takes a little bit more effort. It's not quite as easy as just buying something.

But I think that the way that people are looking at their closets now, like I mentioned before, and seeing like, oh, that's still has value, like I could get a \$70 gift card, if I sold that on this brand's website. And then I could buy like the thing I'm actually going to wear because I haven't worn this in a year or whatever. Or you know, expanding into those other categories.

I think that just having people look around them and be like, this doesn't feel valuable for my life anymore, but it still has value and thinking about okay, so where am I going to resell it? I just like I kind of think ahead, almost like the Jetsons but a very, very different kind of — oh god, I'm probably dating myself, but anyways — just like a futuristic cartoon of like, what will it look like when everyone just like, buys and sells their stuff used or secondhand, pre-loved.

And of course, new things will still exist and be important. But I would love to be part of that future where it's just where secondhand is prioritized and that quality is prioritized. Yeah, that's what I'm working towards, at Recurate.

ELIZABETH

And that's a wrap for this episode, be sure to take a look at the episode description in your podcast app for the links referenced in this episode, as well as the various links to learn more about today's guest. For the full transcript of this episode, you can head on over to consciouslifeandstyle.com and navigate to the podcast section of the site. The link to the full show notes should also be linked in whatever podcast app that you are listening on.

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