



The Evolution of Jeans and its Impact on Global Society

Yazan Baara, Rozanne Mungai, Crystal Pham

The History of Jeans and Denim

Jeans in the US

Jeans in the World

History of Jeans and Denim

- Jeans of Genes (Genoa)
- Denim De Nimes (of Nimes)
- Italy's Master of the Blue jeans
- Genoan sailors' couture



Image courtesy of Sailko on
Wikimedia Commons.
License CC BY.



Image is in the public domain.

History of Jeans and Denim

- The Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis duo
- Even cheaper: Local fabrics and synthetic dye
- Better Pocket patent
- Choice of the working class



© Source unknown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>



This image is in the public domain.

The Original Jeans

Originally:

- Work apparel for laborers
- Western attire
- Rugged, independent American



© Dorothea Lange. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>



Image courtesy of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. License CC BY.



© Pageant Magazine, 1952. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>

Jeans and Teens

Jeans in Youth Counterculture (1960s):

- Hollywood's "Bad boy" apparel
- Youths vs. Establishment
- Banning jeans in schools
- Solidarity movement for workers



Image courtesy of Ric Manning. License CC BY.

© John Kobal Foundation. All rights reserved.
This content is excluded from our Creative
Commons license. For more information, see
<http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>

Why Jeans?

- Appeal: versatility, affordability, style
- Put Americans on same level
- Casual and relaxed
- Personal clothing article

“Jeans are everywhere”



Image courtesy of Wagner Macedo on flickr.
License CC BY-NC-SA.



Image courtesy of Anthony Catalano on flickr.
License CC BY-NC-SA.



Image courtesy of ilcountz on flickr.
License CC BY-NC-SA.

The US Navy spread Jeans Worldwide

- WWII: official off-duty uniform of the navy and coast guard
- Spread jeans worldwide
- symbolized American liberty

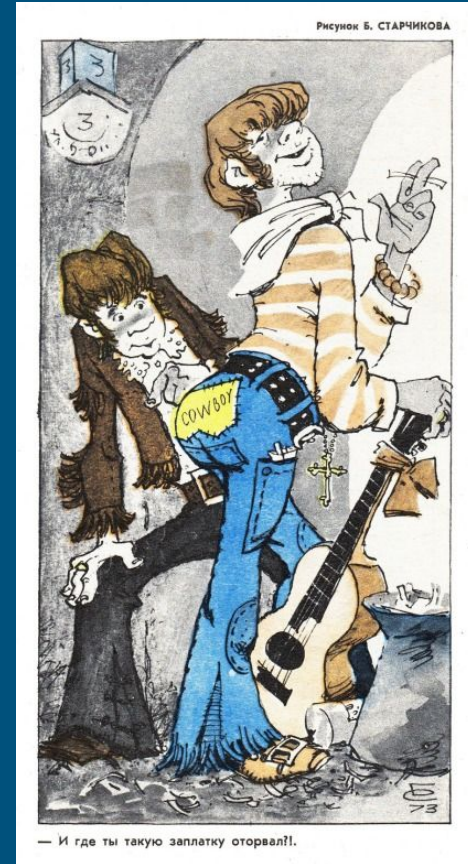


© Source unknown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>

“Jeans Fever”

- USSR: jeans symbolized the West
- Jean trafficking in the communist era
- Were placed in the American exhibit at the 1958 World’s Fair

© Source unknown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>



“Denim: Fashion’s Frontier”

- 1980s: creation of designer jeans boosted jean popularity among upper classes
- Jeans became a mainstream international product

“Denim: Fashion’s Frontier”

Jeans had penetrated the Berlin Wall!



© Leonardo Biondo. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>

The History of Jeans and Denim

Jeans in the US

Jeans in the World

Jeaning the Law

1992 Rome: rape-case overturned by supreme court because the victim was wearing very tight jeans



© BBC News. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>

Jeaning the Law

2014 India: Family court ruled that a wife can file for divorce if her husband does not allow her to wear a kurta and jeans



Image courtesy of Strawberry Singh on flickr. License CC BY-NC-SA.

Jeaning Economics

- Massive global market
- Unshakeable fashion sector
- Designer houses adopt iconic look

“Jeans are expressive and discreet, they have sex appeal and simplicity,- everything I could want for the clothes I design.”

- Yves Saint Laurent

Jeaning Economics

- BRICS rise on production
- Emerging African production



© Reuters. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>

Summary

- Jeans created in France
- Later spread across Europe and to US
- Rose in popularity in the US
 - Affordability, durability, and style
- Became economically, politically, and socially important
 - Huge global market
 - Legal issues
 - Integral part of cultures everywhere



Image via Pixabay.

Sources

1. <http://www.fashionintime.org/history-jeans/>
2. <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17101768>
3. <http://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21695405-denims-history-suggests-american-attitudes-work-are-more-complex-they-seem>
4. http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/fashion_costume_culture/European-Culture-19th-Century/Blue-Jeans.html
5. Book: The World Trade Organization and International Denim Trading By Yan Li, K W Yeung, Y Shen, E Newton, L Yao (<https://goo.gl/f56WA6>)
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeans>
7. <http://www.cottoninc.com/corporate/Market-Data/SupplyChainInsights/Driving-Demand-For-Denim-Jeans/>
8. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/global-denim-market-challenges-opportunities-george-ayompe-1>

MIT OpenCourseWare
<https://ocw.mit.edu>

21L.020J Globalization: the Good, the Bad, and the In-Between
Fall 2016

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <https://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.