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# The BoF Podcast: Women Are at the Forefront of the Sustainable Fashion Revolution

At VOICES 2019, renowned fashion journalist and author Dana Thomas lifted the lid on how fast fashion is damaging the environment while championing the female pioneers blazing the trail and affecting real change.



Dana Thomas speaks during #BoFVOICES | Source: Getty Images for The Business of Fashion



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**OXFORDSHIRE, United Kingdom** — “Pollution is the cheapest way to do business,” acclaimed fashion journalist Dana Thomas declared at BoF VOICES 2019. The author of *Fashionopolis: The Price of Fast Fashion* and *The Future of Clothes* spotlighted the pioneers who are addressing the climate crisis head on.

It was only when Thomas started writing her book in 2016 — a seething account of the burgeoning consumer demand that fuels fast fashion’s unsustainable growth — that she realised “the majority of change makers were and are women.” During her research, Thomas met a number of women who guided her to the conclusion that the fashion industry must embrace four key principles: wisdom, courage, moderation and justice.

To illustrate her message, Thomas shared her encounter with Sarah Bellos, founder of Stony Creek Colors — a Goodlettsville, Tennessee-based natural indigo company that works with the likes of Cone Denim and Patagonia. Bellos told Thomas she hoped more brands would phase out synthetic indigo usage in denim dyeing, which she says includes harmful chemicals such as cyanide and formaldehyde.



Thomas also spotlighted the inventive work of Evrnu Founder Stacy Flynn, who has created a fibre made from old cotton garments that uses 98 percent less water than virgin cotton in its development process, and also boasts an 80 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared to commonly used synthetic fibres such as elastane and polyester.

“Every single woman in this book who had a great idea was told, ‘You’re crazy, it’ll never work,’” Thomas said. “And yet, they didn’t stop.”

That courageousness is also embodied by labour rights activist **Kalpona Akter** — a former VOICES speaker who also featured on the cover of BoF 500 2018 print edition. Akter, founder of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity, often puts herself in harm’s way to advocate for better working conditions and fair pay, a cause she has been championing for a quarter of a century.

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