

Where Am I Wearing?

Part II – My Underwear: Made in Bangladesh

Chapter 4-6

1. Several times throughout his Bangladesh trip, Kelsey ends up lying to various people to get his story even though he claims he is uncomfortable doing so. Is it ethical for him to misrepresent himself in order to write a *truthful* story about the creation of his clothing?
2. During his visit to Dalton's village, the elders complain that the economic situation of their village is President Bush's fault. Why do you suppose these villagers in this small area of Bangladesh blame the US for their plight? Can you shift your perspective to theirs and understand their thinking?
3. Kelsey takes a group of children to Fantasy Kingdom for the day all the while acknowledging that the trip "didn't have much to do with [his] quest to find the people who made my *Jingle These* boxers" (40). So why does he do it? Couldn't the \$67 he spends have been put to better use for these children, some of whom do not even own a shirt or shoes?

Chapters 7-9

4. In Chapter 7, Timmerman gives a brief history of child workers in Bangladesh. The result of these several actions resulted in children under the age of 15 being removed from the garment industry. He ends the section by saying, "While there are a small number of kids making our clothes in Bangladesh, there are 4.9 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 holding down other jobs" (48). Since interference in the garment industry only removed the children to other jobs, was it worth it for the US to become involved in the internal commerce of Bangladesh?
5. Timmerman outlines his job as a youngster working in his family's lumber operation. He writes that like many kids his age, he had great aspirations, "raised on a steady diet of 'you can do anything you put your mind to'" (54). Do you believe this is true? For whom and under what conditions would this aphorism not be true?
6. After touring several garment factories, some of which employed young children, Timmerman asks, "Does a mother who sends her eight-year-old daughter off for a day of picking up plastic bottles, or begging, or working in a factory love her daughter any less than a mother in the United States who sends her daughter to school? Is she being immoral?" Knowing what you have read about child workers in Bangladesh, how would you answer his question?
7. In Chapter 9, Timmerman describes a day spent with Arifa, a garment worker who is off work due to an injury. He writes that he has been honored in small ways the entire day: "a pillow under the head, a fan directed on me, the honor of short-grained rice, or saving me a few cents to get back to my hotel" (68)—yet when he leaves, he fingers the \$20 he has in his pocket (a month's wages to Arifa), and does not leave it for Arifa. Why? Can you understand his reluctance? his motivation?