A handbag with exchangeable components is described. Also described are fastening mechanisms for use with a removable liner and for fastening the interior liner to the exterior of the handbag. Furthermore, exchangeable exterior pieces and mechanisms for fastening such exterior pieces to the exterior portion of the handbag are described.
Figure 180
HANDBAG WITH EXCHANGEABLE COMPONENTS

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FIELD OF INVENTION

[0003] The present invention relates to a handbag with exchangeable components.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] Handbags and purses tend to be a portable repository of important or convenient items for their owners. It is often desirable, for purposes of fashion, or for the sake of practicability, for handbag owners to use different handbags on different occasions. With known handbags, if users wish to change handbags for an occasion, they will usually wish to transfer some items (such as, for example, a driver’s license, credit cards, money) from a first handbag which had previously been in use to another handbag which they intend to use.

[0005] This transfer of items from the first handbag to the other handbag tends to be inconvenient, and can lead to lost time for the user, as well as possibly to the loss of items during the transfer.

[0006] Therefore, a need exists for a handbag with exchangeable components that tends to be easy to use and secure and that does not cause undue stress on interior or exterior portions of a handbag.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] In an aspect of the present invention, there is a handbag comprising an exterior shell and a removable accessory detachably attached to the exterior shell by an attachment mechanism. The attachment mechanism has movable parts and is operable to secure the removable accessory to the exterior shell while the mechanism is in a first position, and operable to release the removable accessory while the mechanism is in a second position. While the mechanism is in the second position and the removable accessory is removed from the mechanism, another removable accessory is receivable by the mechanism for detachable attachment to the exterior shell after receipt of the other accessory by the mechanism and the mechanism is moved to the first position.

[0008] The removable accessory may comprise jewelry. It may further comprise a semi-precious stone. It may still further comprise a precious stone.

[0009] In another aspect of the present invention, there is a handbag comprising an exterior shell having a shell opening to an interior compartment defined by the exterior shell. The shell has a shell connection aperture therethrough. The handbag further comprises a removable liner for insertion into the interior compartment. The liner is complimentary to the exterior shell and has a liner opening complimentary to the shell opening. The removable liner further comprises a liner connection aperture complimentary to the shell connection aperture in the exterior shell and aligning therewith when the liner is inserted into the interior compartment of the exterior shell for forming an aligned aperture with the shell connection and interior connection apertures. The removable liner is insertable within the interior compartment and is detachably attachable within the interior compartment by a fastener passing through the aligned aperture.

[0010] The fastener may be movable from an unsecured position for inserting the fastener through the aligned aperture to a secured position for preventing withdrawal of the fastener through the aligned aperture.

[0011] The fastener may comprise first and second parts connected by a hinge to permit relative movement of the parts between the unsecured and secured positions.

[0012] The fastener may include an arm for passing through the aligned aperture. The end of the arm may be rotatable between the unsecured and secured positions.

[0013] A rim may surround the liner connection aperture in an interior of the liner. The end of the arm of the fastener may be passable through the aligned aperture into the interior of the liner. The rim may have a notch to help retain the end of the arm in the secured position after the end is passed into the interior of the liner and rotated to the secured position.

[0014] The end of the arm may be ring-shaped. The ring-shaped end may comprise a retractable bar movable to reveal an opening to the ring-shaped end for inserting an accessory into the ring-shaped end. The retractable bar may be further movable to close the opening the secure the accessory to the ring-shaped end. The accessory may be a handbag strap.

[0015] The shell may have a shell edge at the opening to the interior compartment. The exterior shell may have a wrapping section wrapable into the liner opening over a liner edge complementary to the shell edge when the liner is inserted into the exterior shell. The shell connection aperture may be located in the wrapping section.

[0016] The exterior shell may have a second shell connection aperture positioned such that when the liner is inserted into the interior compartment and the wrapping section is wrapped over the liner edge, the second shell connection aperture is aligned with the aligned aperture for the fastener to pass through.

[0017] The fastener may include an arm for passing through the aligned aperture and second shell connection aperture. The end of the arm may be rotatable between the unsecured and secured positions.

[0018] The fastener may comprise first and second parts connected by a hinge to permit relative movement of the parts between the unsecured and secured positions.

[0019] Each of the shell connection aperture, the second shell connection aperture and liner connection aperture may be rectangular in shape.

[0020] In another aspect of the present invention, there is a handbag comprising an exterior shell having an opening to an interior compartment defined by the exterior shell, a fastener, and a removable cover detachably attached to the exterior shell by the fastener for covering the opening to the interior compartment. The fastener permits complete detachment of
the cover from the exterior shell. When the removable cover is detachably attached to the exterior shell, the cover is operable between a first position and a second position, such that in the first position the removable cover substantially covers the opening and thereby restricting access to the interior compartment of the handbag, and such that in the second position access to the interior compartment is provided through the opening.

[0021] The fastener may include parts moveable between at least an unsecured position and a secured position. The fastener may be passable through a shell connection aperture in the exterior shell while in the unsecured position, and thereafter moveable to the secured position and operates with the shell connection aperture to detachably attach the removable cover to the exterior shell.

[0022] The parts may include first and second portions connected by a hinge to permit relative movement of the portions between the unsecured and secured positions.

[0023] The parts may include an arm for passing through the shell connection aperture. The arm may have an end rotatable between the unsecured and secured positions.

[0024] A rim may surround the shell connection aperture in the interior compartment. The end of the arm of the fastener may be passable through the shell connection aperture into the interior compartment while the fastener is in the unsecured position. The rim may have a notch to help retain the end of the arm in the secured position after the end is passed into the interior compartment and rotated to the secured position.

[0025] The end of the arm may be ring-shaped. The ring-shaped end may comprise a retractable bar movable to reveal an opening to the ring-shaped end for inserting an accessory into the ring-shaped end. The retractable bar may be further movable to close the opening to secure the accessory to the ring-shaped end.

[0026] The accessory may be a handbag strap. The removable cover may be made of a different material than the handbag. The different material may be selected from a group of materials consisting of alligator skin, leather, crocodile skin, suede, patent leather, and Kevlar. The removable cover may a precious stone detachably attached thereto. The removable cover may comprise a semi-precious stone detachably attached thereto. The removable cover may comprise jewelery detachably attached thereto.

[0027] The removable cover may comprises a cover connection aperture permitting the fastener to pass therethrough when the fastener is in the unsecured position and operating with the fastener to detachably attach the cover to the exterior shell when the fastener is in the secured position.

[0028] In another embodiment of the present invention, there is a handbag comprising an exterior shell having a shell opening to an interior compartment defined by the exterior shell. The shell has a shell connection aperture therethrough. The handbag further comprises a removable liner for insertion into the interior compartment. The liner is complementary to the exterior shell and detachably attached to the exterior shell by a fastener attached thereto. The fastener has at least one part being moveable from an unsecured position to pass through the shell connection aperture to a secured position after passing through the aperture to detachably attach the liner to the exterior shell.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0029] The foregoing and other aspects of the invention will become more apparent from the following description of specific embodiments thereof and the accompanying drawings which illustrate, by way of example only, the principles of the invention. In the drawings, where like elements feature like reference numerals (and wherein individual elements bear unique alphabetical suffixes):

[0030] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a fastener;
[0031] FIG. 2 is a rear perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 1 in a first position;
[0032] FIG. 3 is a rear perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 1 in a second position;
[0033] FIG. 4 is front view of the fastener in the first position of FIG. 2;
[0034] FIG. 5 is a rear view of the fastener in the position of FIG. 2;
[0035] FIG. 6 is a top view of the fastener in the position of FIG. 2;
[0036] FIG. 7 is a bottom view of the fastener in the position of FIG. 2;
[0037] FIGS. 8 and 9 are side views of the fastener in the position of FIG. 2;
[0038] FIG. 10 is an exploded view of the fastener of FIG. 1 showing components thereof;
[0039] FIG. 11 is a perspective view of an interior compartment for a handbag;
[0040] FIG. 12 is a perspective view of an exterior shell of a handbag;
[0041] FIG. 13 is a perspective view of the interior compartment of FIG. 11 inserted into the handbag of FIG. 12, and of fasteners for securing the compartment to the handbag;
[0042] FIG. 14 is a perspective view of the interior compartment of FIG. 11 inserted into the handbag of FIG. 12, and of the fasteners as shown in FIG. 13 in a securing position;
[0043] FIG. 15 is a view of a handbag with removable components in another embodiment;
[0044] FIG. 16 is a back view of a mount;
[0045] FIG. 17 is a front view of the mount of FIG. 16;
[0046] FIGS. 18 and 19 are side views of the mount of FIG. 16;
[0047] FIGS. 20a and 20b are top and bottom views of the mount of FIG. 16;
[0048] FIG. 21 is a back perspective view of the mount of FIG. 16;
[0049] FIG. 22 is a back view of an accessory showing a pin mounted thereto;
[0050] FIG. 23 is a front view of the accessory of FIG. 22;
[0051] FIG. 24 is a top view of the accessory of FIG. 22;
[0052] FIG. 25 is a bottom view of the accessory of FIG. 22;
[0053] FIG. 26 is a side view of the accessory of FIG. 22 from a release end thereof;
[0054] FIG. 27 is a side view of the accessory of FIG. 22 from a hinge end thereof;
[0055] FIG. 28 is a back perspective view of the accessory of FIG. 22;
[0056] FIG. 29 is a view of a handbag showing the accessory of FIG. 22 prior to inserting a pin thereof into the mount of FIG. 16 attached to the handbag;
[0057] FIG. 30 is a back view of an alternate embodiment of a mount to the mount shown in FIGS. 16-21;
[0058] FIG. 31 is a side view of the mount of FIG. 30;
[0059] FIG. 32 is a side view of the mount of FIG. 30;
[0060] FIG. 33 is a front view of the mount of FIG. 30;
[0061] FIG. 34 is a top view of the mount of FIG. 30;
[0062] FIG. 35 is a bottom view of the mount of FIG. 30;
FIG. 36 is a back perspective view of the mount of FIG. 30;
FIG. 37 is a back perspective view of an alternate embodiment of a fastener to the fastener of FIG. 1;
FIG. 38 is a front perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 39 is a bottom view of the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 40 is a top view of the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 41 is a back view of the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 42 is a side view of the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 43 is a front view of the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 44 is a perspective view of an interior compartment of a handbag for use with the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 45 is a perspective view of the exterior of a handbag for use with the interior compartment of FIG. 44 and of fasteners similar to the fastener of FIG. 37;
FIG. 46 is a perspective view of the interior compartment of FIG. 44 inserted into the handbag of FIG. 45, and of fasteners similar to the fastener of FIG. 37 for securing the compartment to the handbag;
FIG. 47 is a perspective view of the interior compartment of FIG. 44 inserted into the handbag of FIG. 45, and of the fasteners shown in FIG. 46 in a securing position;
FIG. 48 is a perspective view of a handbag with removable components in an other embodiment;
FIG. 49 is a front perspective view of an alternate embodiment of a fastener;
FIG. 50 is a side view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;
FIG. 51 is a front view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;
FIG. 52 is a side view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in an unfolded position;
FIG. 53 is a front view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in an unfolded position;
FIG. 54 is a perspective view of a handbag having an interior compartment for use with the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 55 is an enlarged view showing the fastener of FIG. 49 inserted into an aperture in the handbag of FIG. 54;
FIG. 56 is a side perspective view showing the fastener of FIG. 49 inserted into apertures in the handbag of FIG. 54;
FIG. 57 is an enlarged view showing the fastener of FIG. 49 inserted into an aperture in the handbag of FIG. 54;
FIG. 58 is a front perspective view showing the fastener of FIG. 49 prior to insertion of the fastener into apertures on the handbag of FIG. 54;
FIG. 59 is a front perspective view showing the handbag of FIG. 54 with the inner liner partially removed;
FIG. 60 is a front perspective view showing the handbag of FIG. 54 with the inner liner completely removed;
FIG. 61 is a front perspective view of an alternate embodiment of the handbag;
FIG. 62 is a front perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 61 showing a flap in an open position;
FIG. 63 is a front perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 61 showing a still further embodiment of a fastener, and showing a flap detached from the handbag;
FIG. 64 is an enlarged view of the fastener of FIG. 63;
FIG. 65 is a back perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 61 with the flap detached from the handbag;
FIG. 66 is a front perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 61 showing the fastener of FIG. 63 inserted into the handbag;
FIG. 67 is an enlarged view of the fastener of FIG. 63 showing the fastener rotated into a second position;
FIG. 68 is a front perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 61 and fastener of FIG. 63 showing the fastener rotated into a second position;
FIG. 69 is a front perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 61 showing a strap attached to the fasteners of FIG. 63;
FIG. 70 is a front perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 61, with an alternative flap attached thereto;
FIG. 71 is a front perspective view of the handbag and flap of FIG. 70 showing the flap in an open position;
FIG. 72 is a front perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a closed position;
FIG. 73 is a front perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 between a closed position and an open position;
FIG. 74 is a front perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in an open position;
FIG. 75 is a back perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a closed position;
FIG. 76 is a back perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 between a closed position and an open position;
FIG. 77 is a back perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in an open position;
FIG. 78 is a top view of the front piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 79 is a back view of the front piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 80 is a back perspective view of the front piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 81 is a front perspective view of the front piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 82 is a side view of the front piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 83 is a front view of the front piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 84 is a front view of the back piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 85 is a front perspective view of the back piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 86 is a back perspective view of the back piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 87 is a side view of the back piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 88 is a back view of the back piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 89 is a side view of the back piece of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 90 is an exploded view of the fastener of FIG. 49;
FIG. 91 is a back perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 with prongs unfolded;
FIG. 92 is an exploded view showing the interaction of the fastener of FIG. 49 with the material of the interior compartment of the handbag of FIG. 54;
FIG. 93 is a back perspective view showing the fastener of FIG. 49 attached to the material of the interior compartment of the handbag and a mounting plate;
FIG. 94 is a front view of the mounting plate of FIG. 93;
FIG. 95 is a back perspective view of a female grommet component.
FIG. 96 is a top view of the female grommet component of FIG. 95 showing a cross section across line A-A marked on FIG. 97;

FIG. 97 is a front view of the female grommet component of FIG. 95;

FIG. 98 is a side view of the female grommet component of FIG. 95 showing a cross section across line B-B marked on FIG. 97;

FIG. 99 is a back perspective view of a male grommet component;

FIG. 100 is a top view of the male grommet component of FIG. 99 showing a cross section across line C-C marked on FIG. 101;

FIG. 101 is a front view of the male grommet component of FIG. 99;

FIG. 102 is a side view of the male grommet component of FIG. 99 showing a cross section across line D-D marked on FIG. 101;

FIG. 103 is an exploded view showing the female grommet component of FIG. 95, the male grommet component of FIG. 99, and a section of material;

FIG. 104 is a perspective view showing the female grommet component of FIG. 95 and the male grommet component of FIG. 99 assembled about a section of material;

FIG. 105 is an exploded view showing the interaction of the fastener of FIG. 63 with a section of material, and with a backplate;

FIG. 106 is a front perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 63 attached to a section of material;

FIG. 107 is a back perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 63 attached to a section of material and the backplate with prongs in a bent position;

FIG. 108 is a side perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 63 in a horizontal position;

FIG. 109 is a side perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 63 in a vertical position;

FIG. 110 is a side view of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 111 is a front view of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 112 is a top view of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 113 is a side perspective view of the base and arm portion of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 114 is a top view of the base and arm portion of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 115 is an enlarged view of a ridge on the arm portion of the fastener of FIG. 63 marked as detail A in FIG. 117;

FIG. 116 is a front view of the base and arm portion of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 117 is a side view of the base and arm portion of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 118 is a cross section view of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 119 is a back perspective view of the securing portion of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 120 is a front perspective view of the securing portion of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 121 is a side view of the securing portion of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 122 is a back view of the fastener of FIG. 63 showing a cross section across line B-B marked on FIG. 124;

FIG. 123 is a back view of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 124 is a top view of the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 125 is a front view of an inner component of a grommet for use with the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 126 is a top view of an inner component of a grommet for use with the fastener of FIG. 63 showing a cross section across line C-C marked on FIG. 125;

FIG. 127 is a back view of an inner component of a grommet for use with the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 128 is a back view of an outer component of a grommet for use with the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 129 is a top view of an outer component of a grommet for use with the fastener of FIG. 63 showing a cross section across line D-D marked on FIG. 130;

FIG. 130 is a front view of an outer component of a grommet for use with the fastener of FIG. 63;

FIG. 131 is an exploded view showing the interaction of the inner component of FIG. 125 and the outer component of FIG. 128;

FIG. 132 is a front perspective view showing the inner component of FIG. 125 and the outer component of FIG. 128 fit together;

FIG. 133 is a front view of the handbag of FIG. 61;

FIG. 134 is a top view of an accessory;

FIG. 135 is a front view of the accessory of FIG. 134;

FIG. 136 is a back perspective view of the accessory of FIG. 134;

FIG. 137 is a back view of the accessory of FIG. 134;

FIG. 138 is a front perspective view of the accessory of FIG. 134;

FIG. 139 is a front view of the accessory of FIG. 134;

FIG. 140 is a side view of a chain link;

FIGS. 141 and 142 are front views of the chain link of FIG. 140;

FIG. 143 is a side view of the chain link of FIG. 140;

FIG. 144 is a front perspective view of two chain links of FIG. 140 linked together;

FIG. 145 is a front view of the accessory of FIG. 134 attached to a chain formed of the chain links of FIG. 140;

FIG. 146 is a front perspective view of the chain link of FIG. 140;

FIG. 147 is a front view of a D-ring and base;

FIG. 148 is a front view of the base of FIG. 147;

FIG. 149 is a front view of the D-ring of FIG. 147;

FIG. 150 is a side view of the base of FIG. 147;

FIG. 151 is a side perspective view of the D-ring and base of FIG. 147;

FIG. 152 is a back view of the base of FIG. 147;

FIG. 153 is a front perspective view of the D-ring and base of FIG. 147 attached to material with the D-ring in an up position;

FIG. 154 is a front perspective view of the D-ring and base of FIG. 147 attached to material with the D-ring in a down position;

FIG. 155 is an exploded view of the base and D-ring of FIG. 147, a segment of material, and a baseplate;

FIG. 156 is a back perspective view showing the prongs of the base of FIG. 147 protruding through the baseplate of FIG. 155, with the prongs in the bent position;

FIG. 157 is a front perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;

FIG. 158 is a front perspective view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in an unfolded position;

FIG. 159 is a front view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;
FIG. 160 is a back view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;

FIG. 161 is a top view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;

FIG. 162 is a bottom view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;

FIG. 163 is a side view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;

FIG. 164 is side view of the fastener of FIG. 49 in a folded position;

FIG. 165 is a side view of the interior compartment of the handbag of FIG. 54 showing a cross section of material, showing a layer of stiff material within the material comprising the interior compartment;

FIG. 166 is a front perspective view of an alternate embodiment of the handbag;

FIG. 167a is an enlarged view of a fastener in a first position inserted through an aperture of the handbag of FIG. 166;

FIG. 167b is an enlarged view of the fastener of FIG. 167a in a second position inserted through an aperture of the handbag of FIG. 166;

FIG. 167c is an enlarged view of the fastener of FIG. 167a in a first position;

FIG. 167d is an enlarged view of the fastener of FIG. 167a in a second position;

FIG. 168 is a front view of a male grommet component;

FIG. 169 is a back view of the male grommet component of FIG. 168;

FIG. 170 is a side view of the male grommet component of FIG. 168;

FIG. 171 is a top view of the male grommet component of FIG. 168;

FIG. 172 is a side view of the male grommet component of FIG. 168;

FIG. 173 is a front view of a female grommet component;

FIG. 174 is a back view of the female grommet component of FIG. 173;

FIG. 175 is a top view of the female grommet component of FIG. 173;

FIG. 176 is a side view of the female grommet component of FIG. 173;

FIG. 177 is an exploded view showing the operation of the male grommet component and female grommet component of FIGS. 168 and 173, respectively, with an aperture in the handbag of FIG. 166;

FIG. 178 is perspective view of the male grommet component and female grommet component of FIGS. 168 and 173, respectively, assembled together within an aperture in the handbag of FIG. 166;

FIG. 179 is a perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 166 showing different flaps that may be attached to said handbag; and

FIG. 180 is a perspective view of the handbag of FIG. 166 showing a flap attached to the handbag and a chain attached to the male grommet of FIG. 168.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF AN EMBODIMENT

The description which follows, and the embodiments described therein, are provided by way of illustration of an example, or examples, of particular embodiments of the principles of the present invention. These examples are provided for the purposes of explanation, and not limitation, of those principles and of the invention. In the description, which follows, like parts are marked throughout the specification and the drawings with the same respective reference numerals.

In an embodiment of the present invention, there is a handbag having different exchangeable components, including decorative exterior components, and mechanisms for detachably attaching such components to the handbag. Exchangeable components tend to be desirable to, among other things, vary the look of the handbag. By changing exterior components on the handbag, different appearances of the handbag can be achieved. Such different appearances may be desirable as fashion or practical considerations dictate.

Referring to FIGS. 1-10, there is shown a fastener 101 for the embodiment that can be used to detachably attach an exchangeable component of a handbag. Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, fastener 101 is shown in perspective view. Therein, a bar 120 is shown movably connected to a central post 104 of fastener 101, and the bar is movable from a first position to a second position. In FIGS. 1 and 2, bar 120 is shown in an unsecured position, and in FIG. 3, bar 120 is shown in a secured position. In the embodiment, bar 120 can move by rotation between the unsecured and secured positions, and bar 120 can also move along the axis of rotation so that bar 120 can be secured in the first and second positions by one or more indentations 116 that are complementary in dimension to bar 120. FIGS. 4-9 provide additional views of fastener 101 with bar 120 in the open position.

Referring now to FIG. 10, further detail on the components of fastener 101 is shown in an exploded view thereof. Fastener 101 comprises a faceplate 100 attachable to backpiece 102. Faceplate 100 has grooves 130 that may be attached to legs 132 of backpiece 102. Such attachment may be by way of frictional engagement, welding, or other attaching methods known in the art.

Backpiece 102 comprises a cylindrical central post 104 with a passageway therethrough having an opening 118 at one end that is narrower than an opposing opening 136. Backpiece 102 further comprises two opposing side pieces 106 which extend from central post 104 opposite to one another. It will be appreciated that side pieces 106 and central post 104 may be integrally formed as one piece, or be multiple pieces connected together. The passageway of central post 104 may be a cylindrical hollow tube that runs the length of post 104 as shown in FIG. 10. The side pieces 106 provide U-shaped channels 134, and when backpiece 102 is attached to faceplate 100, the open end of each channel 134 is covered by the faceplate 100 so that ring 108 may rotate freely around central post 104. For the embodiment and the description that follows, the end of backpiece 102 that is attached to faceplate 100 will be referred to as the proximal end of backpiece 102, and the opposing end of the backpiece 102 will be referred to as the distal end of the backpiece 102.

Ring 108 is provided so as to provide reduced friction against a surface that fastener 101 is attached to. For example, if fastener 101 is connected to a handbag, as described in detail below, ring 108 provides reduced friction through its rotational movement as one planar side of the ring engages a surface of the handbag, which tends to reduce the stress or wear on the surface. Ring 108 further enables attachment of another component, such as a chain of a handbag, to fastener 101.
For the embodiment, bar 120 is connected to backpiece 102 by way of central pin 110. Pin 110, when assembled with fastener 101, has a flange 112 at the proximal end thereof. Pin 110 further has an insertion section 128 at the distal end thereof. Insertion section 128 and the main body of pin 110 are insertable into the passageway of central post 114 from opening 136, and flange 112 extends from pin 110 in physical relation to the diameter of opening 118 to prevent pin 110 from being pulled through opening 136. Insertion section 128 is of a dimension that permits it to be fed through opening 118, while the diameter of the main body of pin 110 is such that only insertion section 128 may pass through opening 118. Insertion section 128 is also of a dimension that can be fed through passage 122 of bar 120, and a securing pin 124 is provided to engage slot 125 in bar 120 and slot 126 in insertion section 128 to secure bar 120 to pin 110, and by other connections of fastener 101, to backpiece 102, faceplate 100 and fastener 101. It will be appreciated that when fastener 101 is assembled and spring 114 is wrapped around pin 110, one end of spring 114 acts against opening 118 of central post 104 while the other end of spring 114 acts against flange 112 of pin 110. This tends to push pin 110 towards the proximal end of fastener 101, so that bar 120 tends to be pulled into indentations 116 so as to secure bar 120 in one or more positions defined by indentations 116. The lengths of pin 110 and insertion section 128 are selected to allow them to fit through the passageway and opening 118 of central post 104. For the embodiment, opposing side pieces 106 further includes partial grooves 138 to help secure bar 120 in the open position. While a cylindrical pin 110 is described herein, it will be appreciated that other pins or pin assemblies of differing geometry or configurations may be used in other embodiments of fasteners, as described below.

For the embodiment, the distal end of the central post 104 comprises four curved indentations 116a, 116b, 116c, and 116d disposed peripherally around the distal opening of opening 118 to define two positions for bar 120 to be secured against. Cylindrical bar 120 is biconvex as shown, but it will be appreciated that in other embodiments, other complementary shapes may be used for the bar and indentations. As described above, bar 120 can be rotatably moved from an unsecured position (as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2), in which the bar 120 rests along the lateral length of backpiece 102 defined by opposing side pieces 106, to a secured position (as shown in FIG. 3), in which the length of bar 120 is perpendicular to the lateral length of backpiece 102.

In the unsecured position, the bar 120 rests in indentations 116a and 116c. In the secured position, the bar rests in indentations 116b and 116d. As described above, spring 114 urges pin 110 toward faceplate 100, which in turn urges bar 120 to remain within whichever indentations in which it is positioned by the user. Thus, the bar 120 tends to remain in one position until manipulated by the user to another position.

Fastener 101 may be used, in an embodiment, to secure exchangeable components of a handbag to one another.

Referring now to FIGS. 11-14, a removable interior compartment 200 that may be inserted and detachably attached with an exchangeable exterior handbag shell 202 is shown. For the embodiment shown, interior compartment 200 has a number of apertures 204a, 204b, 204c and 204d. In the present embodiment there are four such apertures, but it will be appreciated that a different quantity of apertures may be used in other embodiments. The apertures 204a, 204b, 204c and 204d are generally cylindrical in shape with a circle shape superimposed over an oblong, oval, or rectangular shape. For the embodiment, the shape and dimensions of the apertures 204a, 204b, 204c and 204d are such that they permit passage through liner 202 and compartment 200 by the distal end of the backpiece 102 of fastener 101 when bar 120 thereof is in the unsecured position.

The exterior liner, or shell, 202 may have flaps 206a and 206b. Once compartment 200 is inserted into liner 202, flaps 206a and 206b can fold inwardly and can rest flush against the inside wall of compartment 200. Exterior liner 202 has a number of apertures 208a, 208b, 208c and 208d that are similar in shape and size with the apertures 204a, 204b, 204c and 204d in the interior compartment 200. The flaps 206a and 206b also have a number of apertures 210a, 210b, 210c and 210d that are similar in shape and size with the apertures 204a, 204b, 204c and 204d in the interior compartment 200 and with the apertures 208a, 208b and 208c and 208d in the exterior liner 202. Interior compartment 200 can be inserted into exterior liner 202 in such a way that apertures 204a align with apertures 208a and 210a. In a preferred embodiment, the exterior dimensions of compartment 200 and the interior dimensions of liner 202 are matched to provide an easily movable frictional fit of compartment 200 inside liner 202, and which provides alignment of apertures 204 and 208 when compartment 200 rests inside liner 202 by force of gravity, as shown in FIGS. 13 and 14.

With the interior compartment 200 and exterior liner 202 aligned as aforesaid, when flaps 206a and 206b are folded inwardly they will lie flush against the inside wall of interior liner 200, and apertures 210a, 210b, 210c and 210d will be aligned with apertures 208a, 208b, 208c and 208d, which in turn will be aligned with apertures 204a, 204b, 204c and 204d, as shown in FIG. 14.

Referring to FIG. 14, four overlapping apertures 212a, 212b, 212c and 212d are created by the overlapping of respective apertures 204a, 204b, 204c and 204d with apertures 208a, 208b, 208c and 208d and with apertures 210a, 210b, 210c and 210d. When the various apertures are aligned as aforesaid and as shown in FIG. 14, fasteners 101 in the unsecured position may be passed through the overlapping apertures 212a, 212b, 212c and 212d. Once a fastener 101 has been inserted, a user may turn bar 120 of the fastener 101 perpendicularly to the lateral length of the distal end of fastener 101 and thus manipulate fastener 101 to the secured position. By inserting fasteners 101 in their unsecured position into each of the overlapping apertures 212a, 212b, 212c and 212d, and by then manipulating the bars 120 of each fastener 101 to the secured position, the exterior liner 202 and interior compartment 200 may be secured together.

It will be appreciated that the shapes of apertures 204, 208 and 210, and flaps 206, may be selected to provide additional surfaces and support structures for fastener 101 to engage against, and this tends to permit greater weight to be carried in compartment 200 without damage to compartment 200 or liner 202 where fastener 101 is engaged against. As described above, rings 108 of fasteners 101 may also tend to reduce frictional stress of faceplate 100 of fastener 101 against the exterior, and usually decorative, surface of liner 202.

Chains 214a and 214b may be fastened to the rings 108 of fasteners 101. Chains 214a and 214b may be used as handles or carrying straps for the handbag comprising compartment 200 and liner 202. It will be appreciated that by
connecting chains to ring 108, an aesthetically pleasing faceplate 100 of fastener 101 may be left undisturbed by a connecting mechanism to a chain 214. Chains 214a and 214b may be fitted with a clasp or other connection mechanism such that they can be removed from ring 108, allowing users to exchange chains as they wish. Furthermore, chains 214a and 214b may be fitted with additional clasps or other connecting mechanisms to allow other chains to be attached to chains 214a and 214b themselves, thereby lengthening or shortening chains to be attached to the rings 108 as a user finds suitable or fashionable. Furthermore chains 214a and 214b may also be attached at shorter lengths, or doubled back on themselves as a user finds suitable or desirable.

[0226] It will be appreciated that chains, or straps, 214a and 214b may be made of metal, leather or other materials, and that they may be solid structures, such as loops and straps, as well as linked structures such as chains. The chains 214a and 214b may themselves be aesthetically pleasing, and may be worn as jewelry by some users. It will be appreciated that in other embodiments, other structures, materials, or combinations thereof may be used.

[0227] In another embodiment of the invention, a purse or handbag may be fitted with other exchangeable components, such as a cover flap, using fasteners 310 similar to fasteners 101 described above. For example, FIG. 15 shows a purse 300 having a top opening 302 that can be closed with a removable flap 304. Purse 300 of FIG. 15 has apertures 306a and 306b, although it will be appreciated that a different number of apertures may also be used for other embodiments of the invention. The apertures 306a and 306b are cylindrical shaped with a circle shape superimposed over an oblong or rectangular shape, and are similar to apertures 204, 208 and 210 described above.

[0228] Flap 304 has apertures 308a and 308b that are matched to apertures 306a and 306b respectively. These apertures 308a and 308b are similar in shape and size to apertures 306a and 306b. The flap 304 may be positioned in such a way that the apertures 308a and 308b are aligned with apertures 306a and 306b creating overlapping apertures. In this position, flap 304 covers top opening 302 of purse 300.

[0229] When the apertures are aligned as aforesaid, the fastener in the unsecured position may be passed through the overlapping apertures. Once the fastener has been inserted, by turning the bar 320 perpendicular to the lateral length of the distal end of fastener 310, fastener 310 can be manipulated to the secured position to secure flap 304 to purse 300. By inserting one or more fasteners 310 in their unsecured position into each of the overlapping apertures, and by then manipulating bars 320 thereof to the secured position, the purse 300 and flap 304 may be attached to one another.

[0230] In the embodiment, apertures 306a and 306b are situated along one longitudinal side of purse 300 to allow for flap 304 to be attached to only one side of purse 300. This allows for flap 304 to be opened at one side of purse 300 to reveal its contents to the user. It will be appreciated that in other embodiments, other configurations of flaps or other components of handbags can be achieved.

[0231] An exchangeable flap 314 is also shown, with dimensions and apertures 318 substantially identical to apertures 308. Flap 314 as shown is dimensionally similar to flap 304, but it will be appreciated that so long as the placement and dimensions of aperture 318 is complementary to aperture 306 for securing to purse 300 by fasteners 310, an exchangeable flap may be otherwise different from flap 304 or 314. For the embodiment, flap 314 provides different decorative features than flap 304, so as to provide a user with a different appearance to purse 300 when a different flap is attached.

[0232] In another embodiment, exchangeable accessories may be added to a handbag or purse by way of an attachment mechanism permitting detachable attachment of an accessory to the handbag. Referring to FIGS. 16-21, there is shown an exemplary mount 400. The mount 400 comprises a backpiece 402 and as shown, backpiece 402 is attached to two tubes 404a and 404b. Mount 400 in this embodiment is oval-shaped, but it will be appreciated that many other shapes, and even irregular shapes, may be used in other embodiments. In this embodiment, the backpiece 402 has two tubes 404a and 404b, but it will be appreciated that one or more Men two tubes may also be used in other embodiments. For example, FIGS. 30-36 illustrate an embodiment in which only one tube is used. In this alternate embodiment, a backpiece 420 is attached to a single tube 422.

[0233] The mount 400 may be attached to a handbag or other item such that only the tubes 404a and 404b are visible. This attachment is illustrated in FIG. 29.

[0234] An exchangeable accessory 406 having a complementary attachment mechanism to mount 400, as shown in FIGS. 22-28, may be detachably attached to tubes 402a and 402b of mount 400. Accessory 406 has a frontside 405 that typically is decorative, and may be adorned by jewelry such as precious stones and metals in an aesthetically pleasing arrangement. Accessory 406 has a hinge 408 on its backside 407, such hinge 408 being attached to pins 410a and 410b. In the embodiment, two pins are described, but it will be appreciated that one or more than two pins may be used in other embodiments. The hinge 408 may be spring-loaded such that pins 410a and 410b are biased away from the accessory 406.

[0235] In an embodiment, a release mechanism is provided that tends to be easily accessible by a user to detachably attach and detach accessory 406 from mount 400. A pin holder 412 is slidable attached to the backside of the accessory 406. The pin holder 412 has two pin retainers 414a and 414b. Once again, while two pin retainers are described, it will be appreciated the one or more than two pin retainers may be used. The pin retainers 414a and 414b are hollow cylinders into which the ends of pins 410a and 410b fit and are secured in place when the pins 410a and 410b are held flat against the backside of the accessory 406. Pin retainers 414a and 414b are attached to a release 416 for removing pin retainers 414 from pins 410 to release pins 410 from their secured position. For the embodiment, release 416 extends beyond an edge of accessory 406 such that it tends to be more easily accessed by a user looking from the frontside 405 of accessory 406. Release 416 may be bent towards frontside 405 as shown in FIGS. 24 and 25 to improve the ability of a user to manipulate it. It will be appreciated that a release may be bound away from frontside 405 or be arranged differently in other embodiments. The release 416 may be operated by the user to slide the pin retainers 414a and 414b parallel to a plane of the pins in a secure portion to the accessory 406 and thus retracting pin retainers 414a and 414b. When the pin retainers 414a and 414b are retracted, the pins 410a and 410b may swing freely on the hinge 408.

[0236] For the embodiment, the attachment of the accessory 406 to the tubes 402a and 402b is effected by insertion of pins 410a and 410b into tubes 402a and 402b, respectively. After pins 410a and 410b are inserted into tubes 402a and 402b, pin retainers 412a and 412b may be positioned over the
ends of the pins 410a and 410b to hold the accessory 406 in close proximity to the handbag or purse attached to mount 400.

[0237] Referring to FIGS. 37-43, there is shown a further embodiment of a fastener 501 to be similarly used as fastener 101 described above. The alternate fastener comprises a faceplate 500, an arm 502 and a bar 504. The bar 504 is rotatable between different positions, including an unsecured and a secured position.

[0238] In a still further embodiment of the fastener 501, at least one plate 516 is attached to the faceplate 500. One or more plate 516 may contain an aperture 518 to which removable straps, such as for a handbag, may be attached.

[0239] For the embodiment, at least an additional plate 516 is connected to faceplate 500 or to each other by way of one or more links 519. It will be appreciated that in either embodiments, a connection mechanism for straps may be directly on a faceplate, and other connecting mechanisms for a faceplate may be used.

[0240] FIGS. 44-47 show the interrelationship between an interior compartment 516 and a handbag 508. This interrelationship is similar to that described above, and shown in FIGS. 11-14, with respect to compartment 200 and liner 202. In FIGS. 44-47, fastener 501 is used instead of fastener 101. When the bar 504 on the fastener 501 is rotated to the unsecured position, as shown in FIG. 45, the bar 504 is passable through apertures 506a, 506b, 506c, and 506d in a handbag 508; apertures 510a, 510b, 510e and 510f in sections 512a and 512b attached to a handbag 508; and apertures 514a, 514b, 514c and 514d in an interior compartment 516.

When the liner 516 is inserted into the handbag 508, and sections 512a and 512b are folded over the edge of the liner 516, as shown in FIG. 41, the bar 504 on fastener 501 may be inserted through each of the apertures, and the bar 504 may be rotated to the secured position, as shown in FIG. 47, thus retaining the arm 502 within each of the apertures to secure the interior compartment 516 to the external liner 508 of the handbag.

[0241] In a further embodiment illustrated at FIG. 48, a purse or handbag 522 may be fitted with a removable cover flap 520 attached to the handbag or purse with a fastener 502 in a manner similar to the handbag or purse described above and shown in FIG. 15. Flap 520 may be replaced with another attachable, detachable flap 530 having different features, such as decorative features, as explained above with respect to flaps 304 and 314 shown in FIG. 15. For the embodiment shown in FIG. 48, fastener 502 is similar to fastener 501, except fastener 502 does not have multiple plates or a connection mechanism for a strap. Fastener 502 has an arms and rotatable bar similar to fastener 501. Fastener 502 may operate with apparatus in flaps 520 or 530, in an attachable, detachable manner or as shown in FIG. 48, fastener 502 may be bonded or otherwise integrally connected to flaps 520 or 530. The operation of fastener 502 with purse 522 is similar to that described above with respect to fastener 501 with handbag 508; and this is not repeated.

[0242] Referring to FIGS. 49-60, a still further embodiment of the fastener is illustrated. Fastener 600 comprises two or more parts in a moveable relationship from at least an unsecured to a secured position, and vice versa. As shown, part 610 is in a folding relationship with part 612 by way of a hinge mechanism 614.

[0243] As shown in FIG. 54, part 612 may be secured to a handbag 604. Part 610 of fastener 600, when unfolded in an unsecured position, may be inserted through apertures 602a and 602b in a compartment 606 inserted into handbag 604 and functions to fasten a liner 606 to a handbag 604, as shown in FIG. 54, or for attaching a covering flap onto a purse as described above. Once part 610 of fastener 600 has been inserted through an aperture 602a and 602b, the part 610 of the fastener 600 can be folded relative to part 612 into a secured position such that the fastener 600 is maintained within the said aperture to secure compartments of a handbag together.

[0244] In one embodiment of the handbag as shown in FIG. 58, part 612 may be attached to the liner 606. For the shown embodiment, the handbag 604 comprises internal flaps 618a and 618b. Internal flaps 618a and 618b further comprise apertures 620a, 620b, 620c and 620d. Part 610 of fastener 600, when unfolded in an unsecured position, may be inserted through apertures 620a, 620b, 620c and 620d when internal flaps 618a and 618b are folded over the top edge of liner 606 and overlaps liner 606. After insertion through the apertures, part 610 can be folded to fasten liner 606 to handbag 604.

[0245] For the embodiment, apertures 620 and 620 may each be rimmed by grommets as shown in FIGS. 95-102. Male grommet component 623 and female grommet component 621 are complimentary in shape to one another such that raised central edge 627 of male grommet component 623 fits tightly with the raised central edge 625 of female grommet component 621. Central edges 625 and 627 can be complimentary in shape to an aperture in material, for example, the material of internal flaps 618a and 618b, sandwiched between the male grommet component 623 and female grommet component 621. The inner surfaces of male grommet component 623 and female grommet component 621 may be textured to promote adhesion to material, such as that material comprising the internal flaps 618a and 618b, for example.

[0246] In one embodiment shown in FIGS. 72-93, part 612 is attached to a set of prongs 624. The prongs 624 may themselves be attached to a prong plate 626. The prongs 624 or the prong plate 626 may be welded or friction-fitted to part 612, or attached in another manner. The prongs 624 are bendable between a straight position shown in FIG. 91 and a bent position shown in FIG. 93. In the straight position, prongs 624 may be inserted through apertures 628 in material forming part of the liner 606, for example, and through apertures 630 in a mounting plate 632. Once the prongs 624 have been passed through the apertures 628 and 630, the prongs 624 may be folded into the bent position thus holding part 612 tightly to the material of the liner and to the mounting plate 632.

[0247] The mounting plate 632 is held within the liner 606 such that the mounting plate 632 is not visible when the liner 606 is fully assembled. It is thus appreciated that the liner 606, or portions thereof, may consist of two or more layers of similar or differing materials.

[0248] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 72-93, there are three prongs 624, but it will be appreciated that a different number of prongs may also be used in other embodiments.

[0249] In another embodiment, the liner 606 may also comprise a layer of stiff material 638 as shown in FIG. 165. The stiff material 638 may run along the length of the liner 606, and may also be the same height as the liner. This stiff material tends to provide stiffness to the liner 606, protect prongs 624, and improve mounting of the fastener 600 to liner 606. This stiff material may be held in place by friction, stitching, glue, rivets, or some other form of attachment. The stiff mate-
rial may be semi-rigid and flexible. The stiff material may be a composite sheet made of leather, cork or other particulate material that is mixed and pressed into sheets. For the embodiment, the stiff material is salpa of approximately 1 mm in thickness for use with liner 606 to add structure and semi-rigidity to a finished product.

[0250] In another embodiment of the handbag 604, part 612 may be inserted through an aperture in the liner 606 rather than permanently attached thereto. The fastener 602 would then function to retain the liner 606 within the handbag 604 as described in the preceding paragraph, although the fastener 602 would not, itself, be attached to the handbag 604 or the liner 606.

[0251] For the embodiment of the handbag 604, as shown in FIGS. 58-60, the liner 606 may have a void 622 which can function as a handle for grasping the liner 606.

[0252] Part 610 may include a decorative design, such as shown in FIGS. 49 and 58.

[0253] For the embodiment shown, an angled post 636 may protrude from part 610 as shown in FIG. 79. Furthermore, a spring steel 634 may be attached to part 612. Spring steel 634 is displaced when part 610 is folded from the unfolded, unsecured position to the folded, secured position, as shown in FIGS. 75 to 77. In this way, spring steel 634 functions to urge part 610 to remain in the unsecured position when part 610 is in the unsecured position, and to urge part 610 to remain in the secured position when part 610 is in the secured position.

[0254] In other embodiments, various different fasteners and components may be used in different combinations. For example, for the handbag 604 shown in FIG. 54, fasteners 602 are used to secure liner 606 to handbag 604. However, fasteners 501 or 101 can be detachable, attached to aperture 616 to, for example, connect a strap on a flap cover to handbag 604.

[0255] Referring to FIGS. 61-71, a still further embodiment is shown. Referring first to FIG. 64, fastener 700 is shown having securing portion 702 movably connected to a base portion 717 having arm 718. For the embodiment, securing portion 702 is mounted to arm 718 by way of rod 720 so as to permit rotational motion. This connection permits securing portion 702 to rotate relative to base portion 717, including from an unsecured position to a secured position, and vice versa.

[0256] For the embodiment, fastener 700 is attached to flap 724, with rod 720 extending to connect with back piece 722 to secure flap 724 between back piece 722 and base portion 717. Back piece 722 and base portion 717 may also be connected to mounting plates inside flap 724 as described below.

[0257] Securing portion 702 may be inserted through apertures 704a and 704b in handbag 706 when securing portion 702 is in the unsecured position shown in FIG. 63. Securing portion 702 may be considered the end of an arm portion of fastener 700. After insertion, fastener 700 may then be retained within the aperture 704a and 704b by rotating the fastener securing portion 702 away from the unsecured position into a secured position, such as having the securing portion 702 rotated to 90 degrees from the position shown in FIG. 63. In a second position as shown in FIGS. 67 and 68, the securing portion 702 may rest within indentations 708a and 708b provided on a retainer border 710a and 710b of the aperture 704a and 704b provided on the handbag 706. In this secured position, flap 724 is secured to handbag 706.

[0258] Arm 718 may be spring loaded and may contain notches 742 as shown in FIGS. 113-118. As shown in FIGS. 119-124, securing portion 702 may contain one or more ridges 744. A spring 746 rests within the arm 718 and around rod 720. The spring urges the securing portion 702 toward base portion 717. When user rotates securing portion 702, ridge 744 is forced out of notches 742. When user refrains from exerting force on securing portion 702, spring 746 urges ridge 744 to rest within notches 742, thus tending to hold securing portion 702 in place. In the embodiment shown, notches 742 are displaced about the edge of the arm at 90 degrees from each other, such that ridge 744 and, in turn, securing portion 702 will have four resting positions each 90 degrees from the other. It will be appreciated that a different number of notches may also be used in other embodiments.

[0259] In the embodiment, the aperture 704a and 704b may be rimmed with a grommet having an inner component 748 and an outer component 750 as shown in FIGS. 125-132. Inner compartment 748 has raised central edge 756 and outer component 750 has raised central edge 758. Raised central edge 756 is complimentary to raised central edge 756 and can frictionally fit within central edge 756. Inner component 748 may have indentations 754 which are complimentary in shape to the side of securing portion 702. Outer component 750 may have inner-channels which are complimentary in shape to the side of arm 718. Inner component 748 and outer component 750 may sandwich material between them, such as the shell of a handbag, and may be complimentary in shape to aperture 704a and 704b. The inner surfaces of inner component 748 and outer component 750 may be textured to promote adhesion with material.

[0260] For the embodiment, fastener 700 also comprises a retractable bar 712 that is fitted within securing portion 702. This bar is attached to a handle 714 that extends through portion 702 in aperture 715. A user can grasp handle 714 to slide the bar in the ring-shaped securing portion 702 to an open position to reveal an opening in the ring-shaped portion 702, as shown in gap 713. The bar 712 is preferably spring-loaded such that it is urged into a closed position so that securing portion 702 tends to form a closed loop. When the user slides the bar 712 into the open position, a gap 713 is revealed in securing portion 702. Referring to FIG. 62, straps 716 or other accessories may be passed through the gap into the hollow area of the ring-shaped securing portion 702. When the bar 712 is slid back to the closed position, the gap 713 is closed, and the straps 716 or other accessories are retained within the ring-shaped tube 702.

[0261] In an embodiment shown in FIGS. 105-112, fastener 700 may be attached to the material of the handbag 706 or flap 724 using prongs 734 attached to base portion 717 similar to the attachment mechanism described for fastener 600 described above. Prongs 734 in the straight position may be inserted through apertures 740 in material of a portion of the handbag 706 or flap 724 and through apertures 738 in a backplate 736. When prongs 734 are folded to a bent position, the fastener 700 is held in close proximity to the material of a portion of the handbag 706 or flap 724 and to the backplate 736.

[0262] In one embodiment, backplate 736 may be hidden inside the material of handbag 706 or flap 724.

[0263] In another embodiment, backplate 736 may be attached to backpiece 722.

[0264] In a still further embodiment, backplate 736 may be attached to backpiece 722, and fastener 700 may not be attached to the material of the handbag.
Flap 724 may be operable between an open and a closed position to limit access to the interior compartment of the handbag 706 by a connecting mechanism 726 on the flap 724, and a complimentary connecting mechanism 728 on the handbag 706. The connecting mechanisms may be magnetic latches, hook and loop closures, frictional engagement mechanisms, or other connecting mechanisms that permit the flap to be moved to an open position to permit access to the bag 706.

In a further embodiment of the handbag 706 shown in FIGS. 70 and 71, a different, replaceable flap 725 is detachably attached to handbag 706. As shown, flap 725 is asymmetrical in shape as compared to flap 724. Flap 725 has connecting mechanism 727 similar to mechanism 726, and has decorative feature 731 that may be integral or otherwise attached to flap 725.

In a still further embodiment of the handbag 706, an accessory 730 may be removably attached to the handbag 706. The attachment mechanism may include an attachment mechanism such as described above for use with exchangeable accessory 406, but it will be appreciated that other attachment mechanisms may also be employed in other embodiments.

For example, in a still further embodiment the accessory 730 may be attached to the handbag 706 by way of a connector chain 732 which may be attached to ring 734 on the accessory 730, such as shown in FIGS. 134-146. The connector chain 732 is comprised of individual links 738 linked to one another. The links may comprise S-shaped complimentary portions, 740a and 740b which overlap with one another to connect links 738. The connector chain 732 has a clasp 736 at the end opposite the end that is attached to the accessory 730. This clasp 736 may be removable attached to D-ring 742 attached to handbag 706. For the embodiment, a lobster-claw clasp is used for clasp 736, but it will be appreciated that other connecting mechanisms may be used in other embodiments.

As shown in FIGS. 147 to 156, D-ring connector 742 may be attached to the material of the handbag 706 using prongs 746 attached to base 744 similar to the attachment mechanism described for fastener 600 described above. Prongs 746 in the straight position may be inserted through apertures 752 in material of a portion of the handbag 706 and through apertures 750 in a backplate 748. When prongs 746 are folded to a bent position, the D-Ring 742 is held in close proximity to the material of a portion of the handbag 706 and to the backplate 748. Again, backplate 744 may be hidden between layers of material of bag 706. D-ring 742 is moveable between an up facing and down facing position.

It will be appreciated that the connector chain 732 and accessory 730 and variations thereof may also worn as jewelry by the user. It will also be appreciated that the accessory 730 may comprise crystals, gemstones, precious metals, or other decorative materials.

In a further embodiment of a handbag 800, shown in FIGS. 166 to 180, a removable flap 802 may be detachably attached to the handbag 800. The removable flap 802 may have one or more fasteners 804 attached thereto. Each fastener 804 is comprised of a base 806 and an end 808, with the end 808 being rotatable in relation to the base 806 between an unsecured position and a secured position such that, in said unsecured position, end 808 and base 806 may be passed through an aperture 812 in handbag 800, and, in said secured position, if base 806 is located within the aperture 812, end 808 cannot be passed through aperture 812, and base 806 is therefore retained within aperture 812. In the fastener 804 of the embodiment shown, the cross sectional profiles of each piece are in registry with one another. Fastener 804 may have a baseplate 810, which can be attached to flap 802. It will be appreciated, however, that base 806 may be fastened directly to flap 802 without baseplate 810.

Handbag 800 comprises one or more apertures 812, through which end 808 may be passed in the unsecured position. Once end 808 has been passed through aperture 812, it may be rotated to the secured position, thus retaining the base 806 within aperture 812, thereby attaching flap 802 to handbag 800. While, in the current embodiment, fastener 804 is attached to flap 802 and aperture 812 is located on handbag 800, it will be appreciated that fastener 804 could be attached to handbag 800, and aperture 812 could be located on flap 802.

The fastener may comprise a restraint therein, to restrain the movement of end 808 relative to base 806 when the end 808 is in certain positions relative to the base 806. For example, in the embodiment shown, end 808 may comprise depressions 810a and 810b on the face of end 808 that is in contact with base 806. The face of base 806 that is in contact with end 808 may comprise a protuberance 803 that is complimentary in shape to depressions 810a and 810b, such that, in the unsecured position, the protuberance 803 rests within depression 810a, thus facilitating the maintenance of end 808 in the unsecured position, as shown in FIG. 167a. In the secured position, shown in FIG. 167b, the protuberance 803 rests within depression 810b thus facilitating the maintenance of end 808 in the secured position. Base 806 may be biased toward end 808 by a biasing means, such as a spring, for example. Although base 806 and end 808 are rectangular in shape in this embodiment, it will be appreciated that other shapes may also be used, so long as base 806 and end 808 are capable of being manipulated into both a secured position and unsecured position. It will also be appreciated that the depressions may be present on the base and that the protuberances may be present on the end, and that the shapes of the protuberances and depressions may vary, so long as they are complimentary to one another.

Apertures 812 may be rimmed by grommets 814. Grommets 814 are comprised of a male grommet component 816 and a female grommet component 818. Male grommet component 816 comprises a post 820 and an aperture 815. Female grommet component 818 comprises an aperture 817. Said post 820 may be inserted within aperture 812 of handbag 800. Said post 820 may rest flush against female grommet component 818 when said post 820 is inserted within aperture 812 of handbag 800 and when said female grommet component 818 is placed opposite said male grommet component 816 with a layer of material of handbag 800 sandwiched between male grommet component 816 and female grommet component 818. Male grommet component 816 may be fastened to said female grommet component 818 by screws 822, for example, as shown in FIGS. 177 and 178, although it will be appreciated that other fastening means may be employed. Apertures 815 and 817 may be complimentary in size and shape, such that when male grommet component 816 and female grommet component 818 rest flush against each other as shown in FIG. 178, aperture 812 is rimmed by fully assembled grommet 814.

The grommet 814 may also comprise a chain attachment 824 to which a chain 826 may be removably attached,
allowing the wearer the option of carrying the handbag 800 by said chain 826. Chain attachment 824 may be attached to female grommet component 818 by means of a hinge 825 as shown in FIG. 167a, for example. Although not shown in the present embodiment, it will be appreciated that chain attachment 824 may also be attached to male grommet component 816. It will also be appreciated that the chain attachment 824 may be attached to either the male grommet component 816 or female grommet component 818 by means other than a hinge, and that the attachment of said chain attachment 824 may not necessarily be at the same position on the grommet as shown in the Figures. The chain attachment 824 may comprise a loop as shown in the present embodiment, but it will be appreciated that the chain attachment 824 may comprise other shapes, and need not be circular, as shown in the Figures.

[0276] The flap 802 of handbag 800 may be fitted such that it is capable of covering the opening 832 to handbag 800. Flap 802 may be fixed in a position closing the opening 832 by various means. In the embodiment of handbag 800 shown in the Figures, flap 802 may be fixed in a closed position by way of magnets 826 in flap 802 which attract with magnets 830 in handbag 800. Although magnets 826 are shown in this embodiment, it will be appreciated that other closure mechanisms, including, without limitation, buttons, clips, frictional engagement mechanisms, and hook and loop closures, for example, may also be employed.

[0277] It will be appreciated that the embodiments described above tend to permit easy exchange of flaps, straps, or other accessories to a handbag to change the functionality or fashion appearance of the handbag, without a user having to empty the contents of the bag and transfer it to another bag to achieve a different appearance or function in a handbag for use.

[0278] It will also be appreciated that the embodiments described above also tend to permit exchange of the position or orientation of fasteners and apertures, so long as the positions and orientations of the respective fasteners and apertures remain complimentary to one another.

[0279] It will also be appreciated that the handbags, flaps and purses described above may be made of different materials including, but not limited to, polymers, crocodile skin, alligator skin, leather and Kevlar.

[0280] Although the invention has been described with reference to certain specific embodiments, various modifications thereof will be apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as outlined in the claims appended hereto.

We claim:

1. A handbag comprising:
   an exterior shell; and
   a removable accessory detachably attached to the exterior shell by an attachment mechanism, the attachment mechanism having movable parts and is operable to secure the removable accessory to the exterior shell while the mechanism is in a first position, and operable to release the removable accessory while the mechanism is in a second position,
   wherein while the mechanism is in the second position and the removable accessory is removed from the mechanism, another removable accessory is receivable by the mechanism for detachable attachment to the exterior shell after receipt of the another accessory by the mechanism and the mechanism is moved to the first position.

2. The handbag of claim 1, wherein said removable accessory comprises jewelry.

3. The handbag of claim 1, wherein said removable accessory comprises a semi-precious stone.

4. The handbag of claim 1, wherein said removable accessory comprises a precious stone.

5. A handbag comprising:
   an exterior shell having a shell opening to an interior compartment defined by the exterior shell, the shell having a shell connection aperture therethrough; and
   a removable liner for insertion into the interior compartment, the liner being complimentary to the exterior shell and having a liner opening complimentary to the shell opening, said removable liner further comprising a liner connection aperture complimentary to the shell connection aperture in the exterior shell and aligning therewith when the liner is inserted into the interior compartment of the exterior shell for forming an aligned aperture with the shell connection and interior connection apertures, wherein said removable liner is insertable within the interior compartment and is detachably attachable within the interior compartment by a fastener passing through the aligned aperture.

6. The handbag of claim 5, wherein the fastener is movable from a first unsecured position for inserting the fastener through the aligned aperture to a second secured position for preventing withdrawal of the fastener through the aligned aperture.

7. The handbag of claim 6, wherein the fastener comprises first and second parts connected by a hinge to permit relative movement of the parts between the unsecured and secured positions.

8. The handbag of claim 6, wherein the fastener includes an arm for passing through the aligned aperture, the end of the arm being rotatable between the unsecured and secured positions.

9. The handbag of claim 8, wherein:
   a rim surrounds the liner connection aperture in an interior of the liner;
   the end of the arm of the fastener is passable through the aligned aperture into the interior or the liner; and
   the rim has a notch to help retain the end of the arm in the secured position after the end is passed into the interior of the liner and rotated to the secured position.

10. The handbag of claim 9, wherein the end of the arm is ring-shaped.

11. The handbag of claim 10, wherein the ring-shaped end comprises a retractable bar movable to reveal an opening to the ring-shaped end for inserting an accessory into the ring-shaped end, the retractable bar being further movable to close the opening the secure the accessory to the ring-shaped end.

12. The handbag of claim 11, wherein the accessory is a handbag strap.

13. The handbag of claim 5, wherein:
   the shell having a shell edge at the opening to the interior compartment;
   the exterior shell having a wrapping section wrapppable into the liner opening over a liner edge complementary to the shell edge when the liner is inserted into the exterior shell; and
   the shell connection aperture is located in the wrapping section.

14. The handbag of claim 13, wherein the exterior shell has a second shell connection aperture positioned such that when
the liner is inserted into the interior compartment and the wrapping section is wrapped over the liner edge, the second shell connection aperture is aligned with the aligned aperture for the fastener to pass through.

15. The handbag of claim 14, wherein the fastener includes an arm for passing through the aligned aperture and second shell connection aperture, the end of the arm being rotatable between the unsecured and secured positions.

16. The handbag of claim 13, wherein the fastener comprises first and second parts connected by a hinge to permit relative movement of the parts between the unsecured and secured positions.

17. The handbag of claim 16, wherein the each of the shell connection aperture, the second shell connection aperture and liner connection aperture is rectangular in shape.

18. A handbag comprising:
   an exterior shell having an opening to an interior compartment defined by the exterior shell;
   a fastener; and
   a removable cover detachably attachable to the exterior shell by the fastener for covering the opening to the interior compartment, said fastener permitting complete detachment of the cover from the exterior shell, wherein, when the removable cover is detachably attached to the exterior shell, the cover is operable between a first position and a second position, such that in the first position the removable cover substantially covers the opening, thereby restricting access to the interior compartment of the handbag, and such that, in the second position, access to the interior compartment is provided through the opening.

19. The handbag of claim 18, wherein:
   the fastener includes parts moveable between at least an unsecured position and a secured position;
   the fastener is attached to the removable cover; and
   the fastener is passable through a shell connection aperture in the exterior shell while in the unsecured position, and thereafter is moveable to the secured position, thus retaining the fastener within the shell connection aperture, thereby detachably attaching the removable cover to the exterior shell.

20. The handbag of claim 19, wherein the parts of the fastener include first and second portions connected by a hinge to permit relative movement of the portions between the unsecured and secured positions.

21. The handbag of claim 19, wherein the parts of the fastener include an arm for passing through the shell connection aperture, the arm having an end rotatable between the unsecured and secured positions.

22. The handbag of claim 21, wherein the fastener comprises a base and an end, wherein the end is rotatable between the unsecured position and the secured position, and wherein the cross sectional profiles of the base and end are in registry with one another in the unsecured position.

23. The handbag of claim 22, wherein the shell connection aperture is rimmed by a grommet.

24. The handbag of claim 23, wherein an accessory attachment is attached to the grommet.

25. The handbag of claim 24, wherein the accessory attachment is attached to the grommet by a hinge.

26. The handbag of claim 24, wherein an accessory is detachably attached to the accessory attachment.

27. The handbag of claim 26, wherein the accessory is a chain.

28. The handbag of claim 21, wherein:
   a rim surrounds the shell connection aperture in the interior compartment;
   the end of the arm of the fastener is passable through the shell connection aperture into the interior compartment while the fastener is in the unsecured position; and
   the rim comprises a notch to help retain the end of the arm in the secured position after the end is passed into the interior compartment and rotated to the secured position.

29. The handbag of claim 28, wherein the end of the arm is ring-shaped.

30. The handbag of claim 29, wherein the ring-shaped end comprises a retractable bar movable to reveal an opening to the ring-shaped end for inserting an accessory into the ring-shaped end, the retractable bar being further movable to close the opening to secure the accessory to the ring-shaped end.

31. The handbag of claim 30, wherein the accessory is a handbag strap.

32. The handbag of claim 18, wherein the removable cover is made of a different material than the handbag.

33. The handbag of claim 32, wherein the different material is selected from the group of materials consisting of alligator skin, leather, crocodile skin, suede, patent leather, and Kevlar.

34. The handbag of claim 18, wherein the removable cover comprises a precious stone detachably attached thereto.

35. The handbag of claim 18, wherein the removable cover comprises a semi-precious stone detachably attached thereto.

36. The handbag of claim 18, wherein the removable cover comprises jewelry detachably attached thereto.

37. The handbag of claim 18, wherein:
   the fastener includes parts moveable between at least an unsecured position and a secured position;
   the removable cover comprises a cover connection aperture;
   the fastener is passable through the cover connection aperture, and a shell connection aperture in the exterior shell in the unsecured position, and, thereafter, is moveable to the secured position, thus retaining the fastener within the cover connection aperture and shell connection aperture, thereby detachably attaching the removable cover to the exterior shell.

38. A handbag comprising:
   an exterior shell having a shell opening to an interior compartment defined by the exterior shell, the shell having a shell connection aperture therethrough; and
   a removable liner for insertion into the interior compartment, the liner being complimentary to the exterior shell and detachably attachable to the exterior shell by a fastener attached thereto, the fastener having at least one part being movable from a first position to pass through the shell connection aperture to a second position after passing through the aperture to detachably attach the liner to the exterior shell.