

FASHION / STYLE / BODIES

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Course Description:

Clothing, style, and fashion have long been important aspects of American culture. Using interdisciplinary methods, we will examine the meanings behind various eras and types of American fashion, especially as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicities, and high vs. popular culture. “fashion / style / bodies” is divided into three overlapping parts. First we will consider a general history of fashion from the end of the 19th century to the present, looking at what particular class, social and cultural issues are raised by fashion as well as questions about modernity and consumerism. We will also look at Roland Barthes’s theorization of fashion and semiology. Second we will explore the relationship between fashion and the gendered body—and how this relationship relates to questions of sexuality and identity. Third, we will go beyond the axiom that “all fashion is about sex” to consider other identity formations, namely race. We will look at specific cases that deal with fashion—whiteness and celebrity culture, “Orientalism,” Black culture, as well as Latino styles.

<p>Learning Goals:</p>	
<p>Department Learning Goals Met by this Course</p>	<p>Students will be able to synthesize an interdisciplinary dialogue among the different disciplinary methodologies that compose American Studies: investigation of culture across time and space in the history, politics, literature, and arts of the peoples of the United States, as well as the Americas. Students will be able to write well; speak articulately; and think critically, analytically, and creatively.</p>
<p>Any Additional Learning Goals Met by this Course</p>	<p>Students will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to understand and apply a critical vocabulary in fashion, modernity, and cultural theory • to analyze fashion and its relationship with history, culture, gender and race • to critique the role of fashion in gendered and raced self-figuration • to demonstrate an understanding of the economic, social, and cultural aspects of fashion • to demonstrate a critical analysis of celebrity culture and how it functions.

<p>Current Academic Integrity Policy: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.</p>	<p><i>Take interactive-tutorial on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity, http://sccweb.scc-net.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/Intro.html</i></p> <p>Consult <i>Don't Plagiarize: Document Your Research!</i> for tips about how to take notes so that you don't plagiarize by accident. http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml</p>
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<p>Current Academic Integrity Policy (continued):</p> <p>Sample Honor Pledge: I pledge on my honor that I will adhere to all aspects of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy.</p> <hr/>	<p>Online Learning Tools from Rutgers University Libraries including Rutgers RIOT, Searchpath and RefWorks: http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/lib_instruct.shtml</p> <p>Academic Support Programs: http://lrc.rutgers.edu/</p>
<p>List of Required Books and Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilson, Elizabeth. <i>Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity</i>. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003. [ISBN: 9780813533339] • Hwang, David Henry. <i>M, Butterfly</i>. New York: Plume Book (Penguin), 1986. [ISBN: 9780452272590] • Valdez, Luis. <i>Zoot Suit</i>. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1992. [ISBN: 9781558850484] • Selected readings from the following (all available through SAKAI): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barthes, Roland. <i>The Language of Fashion and The Fashion System</i>. ○ Hollander, Anne. <i>Sex and Suits</i>. ○ Peiss, Kathy. <i>Zoot Suit: The Enigmatic Career of an Extreme Style</i>. • Additional readings available on SAKAI (<i>Students are responsible for downloading these readings, AND bringing them to class for discussion.</i>) • There will be two film screenings throughout the semester—students are responsible for viewing the film prior to the class discussion.
<p>Course Structure and Requirements</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p> <p>Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/sra to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to professor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 scheduled hour examinations (40% of total grade) • 2 response papers (3-4 pages each; topics for each response paper will be given out 1 or 2 class session prior to the due date of the assignment) (40%) • one 10-minute presentation (10%) • class attendance and participation (10%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students are asked to engage in all class discussions, if not with commentary on the readings, certainly by asking questions. Although this is a lecture course, it is designed for intellectual exchange: every student is responsible for reading and preparing the assigned texts <i>before</i> class meetings. ○ All exams and assignments must be turned in on time; no material will be accepted late unless appropriately justified. In cases in which late material cannot be justified with an appropriate explanation, excuse or other documentation, students will be docked a whole grade per day that the assignment is late. ○ <i>The professor reserves the right to give impromptu quizzes during the semester.</i> • Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html • <i>University religious holiday policy is at</i> http://scheduling.rutgers.edu/religious.shtml • <i>An interfaith calendar can be found at</i> http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/index.htm
<p>Grading Scale:</p>	<p>92→100=A; 87→91=B+; 81→86=B; 77→80=C+; 70→76=C; 60→69=D; 0→59=F</p>