

Fashion & Design in Europe:

Between the West and the World

01:510:232

Professor Jennifer M. Jones

Teaching assistant, McKenzi Christensen

Rutgers University, Fall 2023

Van Dyck 211

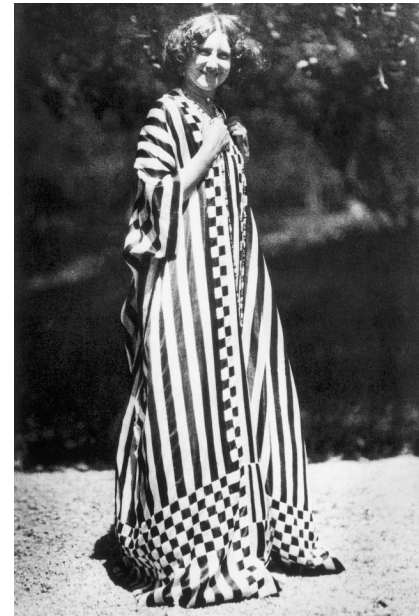
Class meetings: Monday, Thursday 10:20-11:40 am

Office hours: Tuesday, 11:45 am- 1:00 pm,

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Emilie Flöge Austrian fashion designer, 1909

Fashion is one of the most striking features of the modern world. The tempo of modern life is marked by our clothing fashions. What screams 1990s like “mom jeans”? Each year sports its fashionable colors, with 2016 the year of “Millennial Pink”. We live in a world dominated by “fast fashion” in which companies like Zara stock their stores with new styles every 14 days and create up to 10,000 new clothing designs each year. Supply chains for a single item of clothing stretch around the world. Labor exploitation is endemic in the clothing industry. And the production of clothing and textiles are significant causes of environmental destruction and play a key role in climate change. Yet, our clothing and fashion provide inestimable aesthetic pleasure, provide tools for social cohesion and economic advancement, and are primary ways of exploring and shaping our identities. For many, fashion is a form of recreation and shopping, whether in brick-and-mortar stores and scrolling through Instagram influencers’ pages online, is fun. How did we get here?

Exploring the history and culture of clothing and fashion systems requires a full range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. How Europeans dressed and designed the material objects that shaped their

The history of costume touches on every issue – raw materials, production processes, manufacturing costs, cultural stability, fashion and social hierarchy.

- Fernand Braudel (1981)

Fashion is a rich and multi-disciplinary subject, and a point at which history, economics, anthropology, sociology and psychology could be said to meet.

- Lisa Tickner (1977)

Fashion is more art than art is.

- Andy Warhol

world is deeply revealing of cultural norms, social hierarchies, and individual aspirations. Studying clothing fashions provides a distinctive perspective on the connections between social and gender relations, sexuality and aesthetics, domestic and global systems, tradition and novelty, "the normal" and "the deviant," and between politics and culture. Fashion and design are also deeply embedded in technology and economic practices and were driving forces of imperial expansion. Since at least the Middle Ages, fashion culture has always been "globalizing" and Europeans have been engaged in an ongoing process of dialog and appropriation of the textiles and design cultures of Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

As historians, the study of clothing and fashion is particularly interesting. All clothing has a distinctive "temporal signature" – traditional, classic, retro, modern, youthful, avant-garde, revolutionary, futuristic.... Clothing styles are shaped by a complicated dialog between the past, present, and future.

This course focuses on a series of "moments" in European history when aesthetic styles in clothing became a flashpoint for cultural change. In order to understand the values at stake in the aesthetic choices European men and women made in different eras, students in this class will focus on the tensions between older styles and the adoption of newer styles.



SAS Core Goal: HST

Learning goals:

- Chart how clothing styles changed and how the fashion system developed between the Renaissance and the late 20th century.
- Connect the emergence of new styles of clothing to specific aesthetic shifts that marked European culture from the early Renaissance to the late 20th century.
- Connect changes in European fashion and design to new patterns of global trade, colonization, and empire.
- Understand the complicated ways in which changes in fashion and design are connected to transformations in society, politics, technology, and culture.
- Learn to incorporate the study of material objects into historical inquiry and explore some of the key challenges faced by historians of material culture.
- Develop a more sophisticated understanding of the dialog that takes place between different cultural forms, especially between peoples' clothing, domestic architecture, and artistic, philosophical, scientific, and cultural movements at key moments in European history.
- Develop familiarity with key concepts in fashion theory.
- Draw connections between the history of fashion and our contemporary culture of fashion and the fashion industry.
- Reflect on the environmental impact of clothing, textiles, and the drive for novelty throughout European history.

We will explore four broad periods:

- **1350-1700:** From the birth of fashion and a new kind of court culture in the Renaissance to new practices of domesticity and the emergence of middle-class culture in the 17th and 18th centuries.
 - Early Modern globalization and colonization; the printing press; decline of sumptuary laws; virtuosi and collectors; the beginnings of a consumer revolution; the spread of cotton and colorful Indian cotton print textiles.
- **1700-1815:** From the Rococo in 18th-century France to the new aesthetic of neoclassicism and Empire style in the late eighteenth and early 19th century.
 - Urbanization early industrialization; cotton and the expansion of the trade of enslaved people; Enlightenment and new ideologies of gender and race; neoclassicism and discoveries of Herculaneum (1709) and Pompeii (1748, rediscovery); Republicanism, Revolution and political upheaval.
- **1815-1920:** From the Biedermeier style and Victorianism in the mid-19th century to the Arts and Crafts movement, Art Nouveau and Modernism in the late 19th and early 20th century.
 - Department stores, fashion magazines, celebrities, *haute couture*, ready-to-wear clothing, innovations in chemical dyes, sewing machines, bicycles, working-class culture, mass culture, nationalism, imperialism, and WWI.
- **1920-2000:** From high modernism in fashion and design to the celebration of mass culture and the impact of Pop art, Punk rock, and "Fast Fashion" on clothing and design.
 - Bauhaus and modernism; film industry and film stars, pop music; communism, fascism, WWII; postmodernism, street style, subcultures; Milan, London, Antwerp, Tokyo, and NYC compete with Paris; globalization.

Readings:

All readings will be available as PDFs or as links on the History 510:232 Canvas site.

Note: In lieu of a textbook, I have assigned chapters from *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition for background and context for lectures topics and our other more topical readings.

Note: We will read several chapters from the following book: Robin Givhan, *Battle of Versailles: The Night American Fashion Stumbled into the Spotlight and Made History* (2015). All will be available on Canvas as pdfs. But some students may want to buy the book to have a copy of their own. Robin Givhan is a journalist and writes in a lively manner for the general public.

For reference and further exploration:

- [FIT Fashion History Timeline](#)
- Phyllis Tortora and Sara Marcketti, *Survey of Historic Costume*, 7th edition (2021)
- Valerie Steele, ed. *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion* (2005), 3 volumes. Available through RU Libraries, Gale [ebook](#)
- [Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History](#), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET)
- ["Fashion"](#) on the Victoria and Albert Museum website.
- [The Business of Fashion](#) (for fashion business and industry news)
- [Women's Wear Daily \(WWD\)](#) (for fashion business and industry news)
- [The Guardian's fashion section](#)
- [Google Arts & Culture](#) (search "fashion" and other topics)
- *Dressed: The History of Fashion* podcast, <https://dressedhistory.com>

Requirements and assignments

Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

- **Active participation: 8%**
 - Each member of the class is expected to attend class and participate actively in discussions and group work. **This is not an online class.** More than 2 absences will have an impact on your final grade.

- **In-class assignments: 12%**
 - Six in-class assignments/engagements as noted on the syllabus. Students receive up to 2 points of credit for each. Students who miss class may not make up the work, with exceptions for students who notify the professor in advance that they will miss class for a religious observation or illness. Other, non-graded assignments will take place throughout the semester and count towards students' participation grade

- **Reflection posts: 12%**
 - Over the course of the semester students post 4 (out of a possible 8) Canvas Reflection Posts on readings. The specific prompts are posted on Canvas. You must submit at least 2 reflections before week 6 (reflection post #6). Note: the last opportunity for a reflection is Nov. 7. Each reflection should be at least 300 words. Longer is fine! Read the rubric on our Canvas site for detailed expectations (3 points each)
 - Due by 11:59 pm the evening before class associated with the reading

- **Fashion Designer Biographies: 10%**
 - Students will produce a Fashion Designer Biography with a partner (10 points); each student will submit a self-assessment. Students will also participate in small-group presentations of their designer in class on October 9.
 - Due Oct 8

- **Exams: 28%**
 - Two midterm exams, Oct 11 and Nov 16, (14 points each)

- **Final project: 30%**
 - Research proposal (5 points), due Nov 3
 - Poster presentation (5 points), Dec 11
 - Final paper on "The Rise and Fall of a Fashion" (20 points), due Dec 15

Note:

- Students are expected to read all assigned books, articles, and websites and view assigned films and film clips. They are expected to take notes on the readings and refer to their notes throughout the semester as we make connections between the readings.
- Failure to complete any assignment may result in failure for the course

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Thursday, September 7 Introductions. What is fashion?

Reading (read after first class; use as a reference for subsequent weeks of the semester):

- Megan Doyle, "Why Fashion Can't Forget Its References".
- Phyllis Tortora, "Europe and America: History of Dress (400-1900 C.E.) in Valerie Steele, ed. *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion* (2005), 3 volumes.
- Fashion History Research handout on Canvas

Week 2

Monday, September 11 Theorizing Fashion

Readings:

- Thorstein Veblen, "Dress as an expression of the pecuniary culture".
- Georg Simmel, "Fashion"
- Fred Davis, "Do Clothes Speak?" and "Identity Ambivalence, Fashion's Fuel" in *Fashion, Culture, and Identity* (1992). Read for ARGUMENT

Reflection post, option #1 due Sept 10

Thursday, September 14 Was Fashion a European Invention?

Time period: Courtly Culture, 1350-1600

Readings:

- Carlo Marco Belfanti, "Was Fashion a European Invention?" *Journal of Global History* 3, no.3 (2008): 419-443. Read for ARGUMENT
- Background: Linda Welters, "Europe to 1700," chapter 2 in *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition

Reflection post, option #2 due Sept 13

Week 3

Monday, September 18 Material histories: Cotton & Silk

Time period: 1500-1800

Readings:

- Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*, chapter 1, "The Rise of a Global Commodity," and chapter 2, "Building War Capitalism" (2014), pp. 4-55. Read for ARGUMENT

Reflection post, option #3 due Sept 17

Thursday, September 21 The Northern Renaissance and Holland's Golden Age

Time period: 1550-1700

Readings:

- Kassia St. Clair, "Diamonds and the Ruff: Lace and Luxury," in *The Golden Thread: How Fabric Changed History* (2018).

Week 4

Monday, September 25 The Eighteenth Century: From Classicism to Rococo

Time period: 1650-1750

Readings:

- Beverly Lemire, "Domesticating the Exotic: Floral Culture and the East India Calico Trade with England, 1600-1800," *Textile*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (2003). Read for ARGUMENT.
- Background: Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, "From Baroque Elegance to the French Revolution, 1700-1790," chapter 3 in *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition.

Reflection post, option #4 due Sept 24

Thursday, September 28 Case Study: Marie Antoinette

Time period: 1770-1790

Readings:

- Caroline Weber, *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution* (2006), chapters Intro, 1, 2, and 5.
- Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, "Rose Bertin," in Valerie Steele, ed. *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion* (2005).

Discussion/ In-class assignment #1: Marie-Antoinette

Week 5

Monday, October 2 Women's Fashion in the Time of Jane Austen: Empire, Biedermeier, and Regency Styles

Time period: 1790-1820

Readings:

- Vanessa Thorpe, "Rewriting history: how imperfect costume dramas make the past relevant," *The Guardian*, 27 June 2021.
- [Interview with Hannah Greig](#), historical advisor for films
- Danielle Dove, "Bridgerton: in defense of 'inaccurate' costumes in period dramas".
- Background: Susan North, "From Neoclassicism to the Industrial Revolution: 1790-1860," chapter 4 in *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition.

Reflection post, option #5 due Oct 1

Thursday, October 5 Men's Fashion in the Romantic Era: Saville Row and the Three-Piece Suit

Time period: 1790-1830

Readings:

- Anne Hollander, "The Genesis of the Suit," *Sex and Suits: The Evolution of Modern Dress* (1994), chapter 3. Read for ARGUMENT

Reflection post, option #6 due Oct 4

Week 6

Monday, October 9 Fashion Biographies Group presentations (in class)

Submit Fashion Designer Bio project, Sunday, October 8

Discussion/In-class assignment #2: The Business of Designing Fashions

Thursday, October 12 **Midterm #1** (in class)

Week 7

Monday, October 16 Victorianism and the Creation of *haute couture*

Time period: 1830-1880

Readings:

- Elizabeth Ann Coleman, "Charles Frederick Worth," in *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion*. Read for INFORMATION.
- Background: Cynthia Cooper, "The Victorian and Edwardian Eras: 1860-1910," chapter 5 in *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition.

Reflection post, option #7 due Oct 22

Thursday, October 19 **The Corset Debate: Gender and Eroticism in the Victorian Era**

Time period: 1840-1890

Readings:

- Helen E. Roberts, "The Exquisite Slave: The Role of Clothing in Making the Victorian Woman". Read for ARGUMENT
- David Kunzle, "Dress Reform as Anti-Feminism: a Response to Helen E. Roberts". Read for ARGUMENT

Discussion/ In-class assignment #3: Debating the Corset

Week 8

Monday, October 23 William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement

Time period: 1870-1890s

Readings:

- "How Arts and Crafts influenced fashion," Victoria and Albert Museum website. Read for INFORMATION
- Diana Crane, "Clothing behavior as non-verbal resistance: Marginal women and alternative dress in the 19th century," in *The Fashion History Reader: Global Perspectives* (2010). Read for ARGUMENT

Reflection post, option #7 due Oct 22

Thursday, October 26 Art Nouveau, Wiener Werkstatte

Time period: 1890-1910

Readings:

- Kimberly A. Smith, "The tactics of fashion: Jewish women in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna," *Aurora, The Journal of the History of Art* (2003). Read for ARGUMENT.
- Background: Tiffany Webber, "The Modern Era: 1910-1960," chapter 6 in *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition.

Reflection post, option #8 due October 25

Week 9

Monday, October 30 The Flapper, Coco Chanel, and the "Little Black Dress" (LBD)

Time period: 1910-1965; 1920s

Readings:

- Film: *Coco Before Chanel* (2009) – watch outside of class; complete before class. <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/watch/coco-before-chanel?source=suggestion>
- Amy de la Haye, "Coco Chanel," in *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion* (2005). Read for INFORMATION

Discussion/In-class assignment #4: Coco Chanel

Thursday, November 2 Bauhaus, Soviet Utopian Modernism

Time period: 1919-1933

Readings:

- Djurdja Bartlett, "Art Versus Technology: Early Soviet Dilemmas on Dress," in *FashionEast: The Spectre That Haunted Socialism* (2010), chapter 1.

Final Project research proposal due Friday, November 3

Week 10

Monday, November 6 Fascist Fashion

Time period: 1930s

Readings:

- Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich* (2004), chapter 4.

Reflection post, option #9 due Nov 5

Thursday, November 9 Post- WW II: The Baby Boom and Dior's New Look

Time period: 1945-1960

Readings:

- "Dior," in *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion*; "[Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams](#)"; "[Fashion unpicked: The 'Bar' suit by Christian Dior](#)"
- "Claire McCardell," in *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion*.
- Robin Givhan, "French Rules" and "Copycats and Salami" in *Battle of Versailles: The Night American Fashion Stumbled into the Spotlight and Made History* (2015).

Week 11

Monday, November 13 The Golden Age of Fashion Journalism

Time period: 1945-1970

Readings:

- Kate Nelson Best, "The Golden Age: Fashion Journalism and Haute Couture in the 1950s," in *The History of Fashion Journalism*, 2018.
- Robin Givhan, "Four Gentlemen and a Powerhouse," in *Battle of Versailles: The Night American Fashion Stumbled into the Spotlight and Made History* (2015).

Discussion/in-class assignment #5: Fashion Magazines

Thursday, November 16 **Midterm #2**, includes the visual analysis of an image/ad/page from a fashion magazine published between 1875-1975

Week 12

Monday, November 20 Scandinavian Modern: Armi Ratia and Marimekko

Time period: 1950-1975

Readings:

- Marilee DesLauriers, "Marimekko," in *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion*.
- Background: José Blanco, "The Postmodern Age: 1960-2020," chapter 7 in *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition.

Tuesday, November 21 **NO CLASS** (This is the change in designation day for Thursday classes)

*** work on final projects***

Week 13

Monday, November 27 The 1960s: Mary Quant and the Swinging Sixties

Time period: 1955-1970

Readings:

- "Mary Quant," and "Biba" in *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion*.

Thursday, November 30 London Calling: Vivienne Westwood, subcultures, and style

Time period: 1968-1980

Readings:

- Valerie Steele, "Anti-Fashion: The 1970s," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture* (1997)

- Phyllis Tortora, "Style Tribes and their Impact on Mainstream Fashion," in *Survey of Historic Costume*, table 22.1

Week 14

Monday, December 4 The 1970s -1980s: The Battle of Versailles, American designers, and the rise of Milan as a center of fashion

Time period: 1970-1980s

Readings:

- Robin Givan, "Cities in Flames" and "Apostasy" in *Battle of Versailles: The Night American Fashion Stumbled into the Spotlight and Made History* (2015).

Thursday, December 7, Fast Forward into the 21st century

Time period: 2023 and beyond

Readings:

- Teresa M. McCarthy Byrne, "Zara: The business model for fast fashion" in *The Fashion Reader*, 3rd edition.
- Christian Allaire, "How TikTok Changed Fashion This Year," *Vogue*, December 28, 2020, <https://www.vogue.com/article/how-tiktok-changed-fashion-this-year>

Discussion/In-class assignment #6

Week 15

Monday, December 11 Final Project Presentations, Poster Session

**Reading Day, Thursday, December 15 NO CLASSES
Final papers due, Friday, December 16**

Notes and University Policy

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all sessions and to be active and thoughtful participants in class discussion. Unexcused absences (i.e., other than a documented illness, documented emergency, religious observance, or university-approved absence) will have an adverse effect on your grade. All absences, whether excused or unexcused, should be entered into the Rutgers University [absence reporting website](#).

Citizenship

Please review the Department of History's ["Policy on Mutual Responsibilities and Classroom Etiquette"](#).

Your grades

The Canvas grade book will be updated regularly throughout the semester, so please make sure to check your grades so that you know where you stand. If you would like to discuss your grades at any point, I am always happy to meet with you during office hours or via Zoom.

Academic Integrity

The foundation of this course and any scholarly endeavor is academic integrity. I fully expect that all students will adhere to principles of academic integrity in their work. You are responsible for understanding the [Rutgers University policies regarding academic integrity](#). Ignorance of these policies or the consequences for violations is not an acceptable excuse.

All written work must be a student's own original work. Collaboration on written work is not permitted with the exception of the joint Fashion Designer project. Students may not use AI programs, including ChatGPT for any of their course work.

Any and all references to other sources within your own paper must be properly cited according to the bibliographic conventions of the MLA, APA, or [Chicago Manual of Style](#), which is available at the Alexander Library and online at the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#).

Students with Disabilities

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, Sections 504 and 508, which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me during the first week of the semester so that we can arrange accommodations. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, Lucy Stone Hall, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Ave., Suite A145. Phone: 848.445.6800 Online: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

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