

**IDSEM-UG9254L01,  
Fashion, Culture and the Body**

NYU London: Spring 2020

**Instructor Information**

- Office Hours: Thursday 4-5 pm

**Course Information**

- Thursday 1-4 pm
- TBC
- There are no prerequisites for this class.

**Course Overview and Goals**

This is a course that explores the relationship between ideas, the body and the way that fashion can be understood to mediate between the two. Through a range of disciplines and media this course considers the body as an aspect of not only medical and scientific exploration, but crucially as a vital element of culture and society. Bodies affect the ways in which the social world and power relations are organized, and they even arguably condition the way that we understand reality itself. Our physical form is constantly shaped according to both philosophies and fashions. Body ideals and broader ideals often interrelate strongly through bodily practices and with what we wear. There are meanings and fashions in all bodily forms (skinny, buxom, muscular, ideas of 'whiteness') and body practices (dieting, hair management, cleansing rituals, plastic surgery and genital cutting).

Over the sessions, we will take a conceptual approach to fashion, as a strident condition of modern life, that incorporates politics, science and aesthetics and we will closely read a number of cultural texts against a number of theoretical models. Attitudes towards the body can vary widely according to historical period, and this course will explore how, in different moments, and via different media, we have been preoccupied with the aesthetics of different body zones, with displaying identity (gender, class and ethnicity), and also with power. Different cultural forms (literary, visual, material etc) will provide the focus of our discussions as they all engage with the different ways that we make meaning out of our bodies. Students will be invited to investigate in their written work set texts from class in addition to primary material of their own choice, using methodologies taught in the class.

The majority of classes will take place in Bedford Square and be formed of illustrated lectures, class activities, discussion of set readings, and student presentations. There will also be a class visit to The Wellcome Museum as well as

a meeting with a fashion historian who works on issues connected to fashion and the body.

**This course will include controversial images and texts, and the theorized and explicit discussion of bodies and bodily practices.**

The format of the course will be lecture and seminar format with visits and outside speakers where relevant.

**Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:**

- Be able to identify important and relevant aspects of fashion and bodily practices and relate them to a wider historical, theoretical or cultural context via a 'representation based' Cultural Studies approach and other related methodologies.
- Be familiar and able to evaluate a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of fashion and the body via the discussion of the relevant academic literature.
- Have developed their ability to present independent and reasoned analysis of primary and secondary sources relevant to the study of fashion and the body, both verbally and in writing, adopting appropriate academic conventions

## Course Requirements

### Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to these assessment components:

| <b>Assignments/Activities</b> | <b>Description of Assignment</b>   | <b>% of Final Grade</b> | <b>Due</b>                                 |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Paper One (2500 words)        | One x 2500 word essay due on Session 7   | 25%                     | Session 7:<br>19 Mar 2020                  |
| Paper Two                     | One x 2500 word essay due on Session 12  | 25%                     | Session 12:<br>30 Apr 2020                 |
| Individual Presentation       | - One x 5-10-minute oral class presentations, of c.1000 words, on a date to be arranged in class.  | 10%                     | See list on Classes                        |
| Final Exam 2hrs               | - 1 x end of semester unseen written exam of two hours duration.   | 20%                     | Session 15:<br>15 May 2020<br>1.15-3.30 pm |
| Class Engagement              | Attentiveness to, and engagement with, class content and the presentations of fellow students will represent 20% of each student's total assessment. | 20%                     |  |

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class

### Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

| <b>Letter Grade</b> | <b>Percent</b>            | <b>Description</b>  |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>A</b>            | Example: 93.5% and higher | Excellent, sophisticated work that demonstrates lucid, original thinking, superior writing skills, and sustained critical engagement with the course concepts and requirements. Reflects a unique 'voice,' while balancing personality with appropriate tone, style, structure, and awareness of audience. Incorporates evidence with aplomb. Virtually free of grammatical and spelling errors, and presented professionally in terms of layout and referencing. |

| Letter Grade | Percent                   | Description  |
|--------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>B</b>     | Example: 82.5% - 87.49%   | Solid work demonstrating some original thinking, clear writing skills, and sustained engagement with the course concepts and requirements. A B assignment will show a good deal of potential and clarity, but overall it may be less consistent or fully achieved. Writing and ideas may be clear but lack the flair of an A paper. Good editing and structure will be in evidence and the assignment will be well presented, but there may be some grammatical errors or other inconsistencies. |
| <b>C</b>     | Example: 72.5% - 77.49%   | Satisfactory work demonstrating fair writing skills and some engagement with the course requirements. An effort to sustain thinking and develop ideas will be evident, but will not be thoroughly executed. A grasp of some relevant concepts will be present, but there may be omissions, mistakes, or inaccuracies. Writing may be stale and unfocused, or simply lack clarity.  |
| <b>D</b>     | Example: 62.5% - 67.49    | Weak work with clear flaws and a lack of engagement with the course concepts and requirements. May lack structure and will be muddled, with confusions of language and ideas. Likely to be underdeveloped, with variable presentation. Grammar and punctuation is lacking.   |
| <b>F</b>     | Example: 59.99% and lower | Inadequate work with a lack of engagement with the course requirements. Fails to address the prompt, offers of little to no structure, and exhibits high levels of confusion or misunderstanding.  |

## Course Materials

### Required Textbooks & Materials

- All required reading is provided on Classes.

### Optional Textbooks & Materials

- NA

### Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **NYUL Library Collection:** [Senate House Library](http://catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk) (catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

### Course Schedule

| Session/Date              | Topic  | Reading   | Assignment Due |
|---------------------------|--|---|----------------|
| Session 1:<br>06 Feb 2020 | <b>Introduction:<br/>Fashion, Culture<br/>and The Body</b> | Required Reading<br><br>Anderson, F. (2005) 'Fashion, Style, Identity and Meaning', in Rampley ed., <i>Exploring Visual Culture</i> , pp. 67-85<br><br>Blackman, L. (2008) 'Introduction', <i>The Body: Key Concepts</i> . Oxford: Berg<br><br>Recommended Reading<br><br>Howson, A. (2004) 'Introduction', in <i>The Body in Society: An Introduction</i> . Cambridge: Polity<br><br>Svendsen, L. (2006) 'Fashion and the Body' in <i>Fashion: A Philosophy</i> . London: Reaktion |                |

| Session/Date              | Topic   | Reading  | Assignment Due |
|---------------------------|---|--|----------------|
|                           |   | Warwick, A. and D. Cavallero. (1998) 'Introduction' <i>Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and the Body</i> . Oxford: Berg.  |                |
| Session 2:<br>13 Feb 2020 | <b>The Body as a Metaphor</b><br><br>plus<br><b>Essay Writing for Fashion, Culture and the Body</b> | Required Reading<br><br>Entwistle, J. (2000) 'Addressing the Body' in <i>The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory</i> , Cambridge: Polity Press<br><br>Douglas, M. (2002) 'Introduction' and 'External Boundaries' in <i>Purity and Danger: an analysis of concept of pollution and taboo</i> . London: Routledge<br><br>Levine. P. (2008). 'States of Undress: Nakedness and the Colonial Imagination' in <i>Victorian Studies</i> , Vol. 50, No. 2, Papers and Responses from the Fifth Annual Conference of the North American Victorian Studies Association, Held Jointly with the Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada (Winter), pp. 189-219. |                |
| Session 3:<br>20 Feb 2020 | <b>The Body as Process. Foucault, Fashion and the Body</b>  | Required Reading<br><br>Foucault, M. (1995) 'Panopticism' in <i>Discipline &amp; Punish: The Birth of the Prison</i> . NY: Vintage Books 1995, pp. 195-228<br><br>Tynan, J. (2015) 'Fashioning the Body Politic' in <i>Thinking through Fashion</i> . I B Taurus   |                |

| Session/Date              | Topic   | Reading  | Assignment Due |
|---------------------------|---|--|----------------|
| Session 4:<br>27 Feb 2020 | <b>Gender and the Body</b><br><br><b>plus</b><br><br><b>Essay Writing for Fashion, Culture and the Body 2</b>   | Required Reading<br><br>Butler, J. (1993). 'Chapter 4', <i>Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex"</i> . New York: Routledge.<br><br>Entwistle, J. (2000) 'Fashion and Gender' in <i>The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory</i> , Cambridge: Polity Press.  |                |
| Session 5:<br>5 Mar 2020  | <b>Femininity and the Body</b><br><br><b>plus</b><br><br><b>Methodologies for Fashion, Culture and the Body</b> | Required Reading<br><br>Bordo, S. (1993). 'Feminism, Foucault and the politics of the body'. <i>Up against Foucault: Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and feminism</i> , 179.<br><br>Domínguez, Daniel; Beaulieu, Anne; Estalella, Adolfo; Gómez, Edgar; Schnettler, Bernt & Read, Rosie (2007). Virtual Ethnography. <i>Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research</i> , 8(3), <a href="http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0703E19">http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0703E19</a> .<br><br>Hua, W. (2013) 'Chapter 5: The Commodification of the Body' in <i>Buying Beauty: Cosmetic Surgery in Chinana</i> (Hong Kong University Press)<br><br>Recommended Reading<br><br>Steele, V. (1999) 'The Corset: Fashion and Eroticism.' <i>Fashion Theory</i> 3.4: 449-473 |                |

| Session/Date                      | Topic                                  | Reading  | Assignment Due |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|----------------|
|                                   |  | <p>Thesander, M. (1997) 'Introduction', <i>The Feminine Ideal</i>. London: Reaktion</p> <p>Turner, B. S. (1991) 'The Discourse of Diet' in Featherstone et al (eds) <i>The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory</i>. London: Sage</p>  |                |
| <p>Session 6:<br/>12 Mar 2020</p> | <p><b>Masculinity and the Body</b></p> | <p>Required Reading</p> <p>[Please reread: Foucault, M. (1995) 'Panopticism' in <i>Discipline &amp; Punish: The Birth of the Prison</i>. NY: Vintage Books 1995, pp. 195-228]</p> <p>Darby, R. (2005) <i>A Surgical Temptation: the demonization of the foreskin and the rise of circumcision in Britain</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p> <p>Edwards, T. (2006) <i>Cultures of Masculinity</i>. London: Routledge, pp. 87-102.</p> <p>Nagoshi, J., and Stephanie Brzuzu (2010) 'Transgender Theory: Embodying Research and Practice' <i>Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work</i> 25(4) 431-443.</p> <p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Howson, A. (2004) 'The Body, Gender and Sex' in <i>The Body in Society: An Introduction</i>. Cambridge: Polity</p> <p>Nixon, S. (1997) 'Exhibiting Masculinity.' In <i>Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices</i>. London:</p> |                |



| Session/Date              | Topic                               | Reading  | Assignment Due       |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------|
|                           |                                     | Sage; Milton Keynes: Open University Press. pp. 291-336.   |                      |
| Session 7:<br>19 Mar 2020 | <b>Fashioning Bodies:<br/>Dolls</b> | <p>Required Reading</p> <p>Barthes, R. (1991) 'Toys', <i>Mythologies</i>. New York: Hill and Wang</p> <p>Calefato, P. (2004) 'Degree Zero of Fashion and the Body: The Model, the Nude and the Doll.' In <i>The Clothed Body</i>. Oxford: Berg</p> <p>Vanessa R. Schick, Brandi N. Rima and Sarah K. Calabrese (2011) 'Evulvalution: The Portrayal of Women's External Genitalia and Physique across Time and the Current Barbie Doll Ideals' <i>Journal of Sex Research</i>, 48(1), 74-81.</p> <p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Attfield, J. (1996) 'Barbie and Action Man: Adult Toys for Girls and Boys.' <i>The Gendered Object</i>. Ed. P. Kirkham. Manchester: Manchester University Press.</p> <p>Smith, M. (2014) <i>The Erotic Doll</i>. New Haven: Yale, pp. 7-31</p> <p>Wood, G. (2002) <i>Living Dolls, A Magical History of the Quest for Mechanical Life</i>. London: Faber</p> | <b>Paper One due</b> |
| Session 8:<br>26 Mar 2020 | <b>Fashion and the Gothic Body</b>  | <p>Required Reading</p> <p>Collins, W. (2008) <i>The Woman in White</i>, first published 1860. Oxford: Oxford University Press, - see excerpt.</p>   |                      |

| Session/Date                | Topic  | Reading   | Assignment Due |
|-----------------------------|--|---|----------------|
|                             |  | <p>Spooner, C. (2004) 'Curtain'd in mysteries: an introduction to Gothic fashion', in <i>Fashioning Gothic Bodies</i>. Manchester: Manchester University Press.</p> <p>Sedgwick, E. (1981) 'The Character in the Veil: Imagery of the Surface in the Gothic Novel' <i>PMLA</i>, Vol. 96, No. 2, pp. 255-270.</p>  |                |
| Session 9:<br>2 April 2020  | <b>Subcultures and the Meaning of the Body</b> | <p>Required Reading</p> <p>Gagné, I. (2008), 'Urban Princesses: Performance and "Women's Language" in Japan's Gothic/Lolita Subculture' <i>Journal of Linguistic Anthropology</i>, Vol. 18, Issue 1, pp. 130–150.</p> <p>Silver, Eric, Stacy Rogers Silver, Sonja Siennick and George Farkas (2011) <i>Bodily Signs of Academic Success: An Empirical Examination of Tattoos and Grooming</i>. <i>Social Problems</i>, Vol. 58, No. 4 (November), pp. 538-564</p> |                |
| Session 10: 9<br>April 2020 | <b>Fashion, Whiteness and the Raced Body</b>   | <p>Required Reading</p> <p>Dyer, R. (1997) <i>White</i>. London: Routledge, pp. xiii-82</p> <p>Gilman, S. (2001) <i>Making the Body Beautiful: A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 85-119</p> <p>Recommended Reading</p> <p>Gillman, S. (2003), in Jones, A., <i>The Feminism and Visual</i></p>  |                |

| Session/Date                 | Topic  | Reading   | Assignment Due       |
|------------------------------|--|---|----------------------|
|                              |  | <p>Culture Reader (London and New York: Routledge), pp. 166-180.</p> <p>Back, L., Solomos, J. eds (2000) Theories of Race and Racism. London and NY: Routledge.</p> <p>Banton, M. (1987) Racial Theories (Cambridge: CUP), pp.34-38</p>   |                      |
| Session 11:<br>23 April 2020 | <b>Culture and Hair</b>  | <p><b>Required Reading</b></p> <p>Banks, I. (2000) Hair Matters: Beauty, Power and Black Women's Consciousness. New York: New York U</p> <p>Cheang, S. and Biddle-Perry, G. (2008) 'Conclusion: Hair and Human Identity' in G. Biddle-Perry and S. Cheang (eds) Hair: Styling, Culture and Fashion, Oxford: Berg.</p> <p>Fitzgerald, F. Scott, (1920) 'Bernice bobs her Hair', Saturday Evening Post.</p> |                      |
| Session 12:<br>30 Apr 2020   | <b>Session Visit:</b><br>The V&A Museum:<br>Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk | <p>Exhibition visit</p> <p>Meet at main entrance 1.15 pm for 1.30 pm entry</p> <p>Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London, SW7 2RL</p> <p>Required Reading:<br/>Cheang, Sarah (2013). 'To the Ends of the Earth: Fashion and Ethnicity in the Vogue Fashion Shoot' in Fashion Media Past and Present, Bloomsbury 2013.</p>  | <b>Paper Two due</b> |

| Session/Date                     | Topic                                | Reading  | Assignment Due |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Session 13:<br>07 May 2020       | <b>Desire and the Body in Motion</b> | Required Reading<br><br>Barthes, R. 1993. 'Striptease.' <i>Mythologies</i> . London: Vintage.<br><br>Burt, R. 1995. <i>The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle, Sexualities</i> . London: Routledge. Pp. 1-69.<br><br>Willson, J. (2007) <i>The Happy Stripper: Pleasure and Politics of the new Burlesque</i> . London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 1-49.<br>Recommended Reading |                |
| Session 14:<br>14 May 2020       | <b>Visiting Speaker</b>              | Academic and fashion historian Dr Elizabeth Kutesco will speak about her work.<br><br>See NYU Classes for reading and exercise materials.  |                |
| Final Assessment:<br>15 May 2020 | <b>Final exam</b>                    | Unseen format of two and a quarter hours duration.<br><br>You will be required to answer two questions.  |                |

### Curricular Activities

- [Required trips: details, dates, special instructions]
- [Suggested trips]
- [Estimated travel costs]

### Classroom Etiquette

Classroom etiquette aims to promote the best possible learning environment and good communication between all participants.

To this end, mobile phones and **laptops will be switched off**, unless you are asked to use them. All readings must be brought to class in hard copy (there is a printing allowance for this). Food will not be consumed during class.

### NYUL Academic Policies

#### Attendance and Tardiness

- Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

### **Assignments, Plagiarism, and Late Work**

- You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL [website](https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html) (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on [the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website](https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html) for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html>).

### **Classroom Conduct**

Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services. Please refer to the [NYU Student Conduct Policy](#) for examples of disruptive behavior and guidelines for response and enforcement.

### **Disability Disclosure Statement**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

### **Instructor Bio**

Royce Mahawatte (DPhil. University of Oxford) is Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies at Central Saint Martins. He is the author of *George Eliot and the Gothic Novel* (University of Wales Press, 2013). He has chapters in *Horror: A Literary History* (British Library, 2016) and *Fashion and Fiction* (Intellect Books, 2016). His research interests are Victorian fiction and cultures of fashion and the body. Forthcoming are 'Horror in the Nineteenth Century 1820-1900' in *A Literary History of Horror* (British Library 2016), 'Fashion and Adornment' in *A Cultural History of Hair* (Bloomsbury 2017) and 'The Sad Fortunes of 'Stylish Things': George Eliot

and the Languages of Fashion' in *Communicating Transcultural Fashion Narratives* (Intellect 2016). His research interests are Victorian fiction, the Gothic and cultures of the body. In 2018-19 he was a Fellow at the Morphomata Centre at the University of Cologne.