ARTHIST 218/418, Unit 3-5
Thursday 10:30 am - 1:20 pm
Prof. Emanuele Lugli

FASHION and OTHER DISASTERS
This course takes clothing seriously. It examines fashion both as a concept and as a global industry that grew massively during the early modern period (15th-17th centuries), contributing to making the world what it is. Taught by an ex-Vogue journalist, this seminar explores how clothes communicate and subvert ideas of distinction while also examining why many people have overlooked this power over time. In particular, the course focuses on the understudied relationship between fashion, wars, and other geopolitical catastrophes since only disasters provide the necessary ground zero for narratives of change that are fundamental for fashion’s constant regeneration.

**Course goals**

In this seminar, we have three primary objectives: 1) to establish a foundational grasp of the methodologies, inquiries, and issues that have shaped the study of fashion; 2) to learn how to critically analyze texts, images, materials, and the conceptual frameworks that define history; and 3) to practice interdisciplinary research.

**Seminar structure, assigned reading, and participation**

As each seminar is lengthy (3 hours), we will divide it into two parts with a ten-minute break in between. Each course member is expected to attend every class, come prepared, and actively engage in discussions. Class preparation entails completing all assigned readings. During discussions, ask questions, formulate arguments, and respond to your peers’ perspectives. However, engagement will not be evaluated.

Come to class having taken notes on what interests or surprises you. Read actively; that is, ask yourself questions. Check the pronunciation of names and the biographies of people whom you do not know. Look at high-resolution images of artworks online, identify their locations, and ponder why they have ended up there. Studying the early modern world requires you to familiarize yourself with multiple foreign cultures, so invest some time and energy into learning the specificities of each culture.

**Research projects and final presentations**

Over the semester, in addition to engaging with the readings, you will be tasked with completing two research projects.

1) The first project entails a 1,000-word analysis focusing on a specific aspect of Christian Dior’s practice and business. This assignment serves as a historical research exercise, adopting the structure of a magazine article. Access to newspapers from the
relevant period will be provided, enabling you to extract data and craft a concise yet robust think piece. The objective is to begin refining your research skills.

During the Week 3 seminar, you will be introduced to Christian Dior. We will also discuss how to extract data from historical documents and construct a compelling argument. A selection of potential research topics will also be offered. The paper is expected to be submitted by Week 5, after a week of intense research.

2) For the second assessment project, you will need to write a 3,000-word essay on any aspect of early modern fashion. The project will progress through three stages. Firstly, you'll submit an outline of your argument along with a brief bibliography by Week 7. Following our second meeting, you'll present your findings in a presentation during Week 10, receiving additional feedback. Finally, you'll submit your final paper during Exam Week. The formatting should be consistent with that of a published journal.

Remember that Stanford has an Honor Code, which you can access here: https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/policies-guidance/honor-code

Course texts

All readings are accessible for download from the course's Canvas site or online through Stanford Libraries, eliminating the need for any purchases. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that PDFs and scans might not faithfully reproduce illustrations and could lack comprehensive endnotes and informative introductions. Consequently, it is advisable not to depend solely on digital copies. Instead, consider visiting the Bowes Library in the Art+Art History Department to examine the original copies, available on the course reserve.

Office Hours

I am well aware that each of you comes from a different background and has different commitments. So, if you experience any problem, anxiety, or difficulty (emotional, economic, logistical), come to see me during office hours. If you play any sport that affects your schedule or have some OAE exemptions, let me know. You can come to see me anytime and for whatever reason. You don't need to come to ask questions about the course material, to prove to me that you’re smart, or that you’ve done the readings. You can just come to ask me about things that you do not understand, seek recommendations, or speak about anything you’re interested in. If you’re in doubt, come to see me. Seeing me is easy. You can book an appointment online, 24 hours in advance, via calendly.com/elugli (you can also access it through my webpage). If you
find a slot, that means I am available. My office hours tend to be on Wednesday afternoons. You can choose to see me online or in person. My office (#325) is on the third floor of the McMurtry building, which has a beautiful terrace.

My email is elugli@stanford.edu (Pronouns: he/him)

**Reading Schedule**

**Week 1. April 4**

A couple of days before coming to class, spend some time thinking about what is fashionable for you now and write down your thoughts on a piece of paper. It doesn’t matter if you think in terms of brands or the styling of celebrities; just jot it down! Writing impulsively is part of the process. Then, look at what you wrote and start thinking about whether there is a connecting element between what you wrote and what you think the word “fashion” means to you. Provide a definition of the term “fashion”. Only after completing this step, proceed to the readings for Part I.

**Part I: Introduction: Definitions**

Readings:
Peter Aspden, “Miuccia Prada: Interview,” Financial Times, April 27, 2008

Further Reading:

**Part II: Fashion and Death**

In class, we will read together and analyze:

Week 2. April 11

Part I: Lecture by Prof. BuYun Chen (Swarthmore College)

Reading:

Part II: Origins of Fashion

Readings:

Week 3. April 18

Part I: The Couturier/The Designer

Readings:
Nancy J. Troy, Couture Culture, A Study in Modern Art and Fashion (2003), chs 1 and 4.

Further Reading:
Thierry Defert, From the Ballets Russes to Vogue: the art of Georges Lepape. (1984)

Part II: Christian Dior and WWII

Readings:
Further Reading:
Melissa A. McEuen, Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Home Front, University of Georgia Press 2010, esp. 133-177
F. Muller, Dior: The New Look Revolution, 2015
Alexandra Palmer, Couture & Commerce: The Transatlantic Fashion Trade in the 1950s, 2001
Marie-France Pochna, Christian Dior Destiny, 2021
Adelheir Rasche, Christian Dior and Germany, Berlin 2007

You can also watch: “Dior and I” (dir. Frédéric Tcheng, 2014)

**Week 4. April 25 (NO CLASS)**

I’m at a conference.
During this week, work on your Dior piece.
Week 5. May 2
Submit your paper on Dior

Part I: Fashion and Plagues

Readings:

Further Reading:
E. Lugli, Fashion’s Measure: Preaching, Chronicle-Writing, and the New Look of the 1340s, Fashion theory (2021), 157-193 [if you want to know what I think of the issue]
Stella Newton, Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340-1365 (Boydell Press, 1980), chs 1-2

Part II - Uniforms and Standardization

Readings:
Michel Pastoureau, The Devil’s Cloth: A History of Stripes (2003), 7-32

Further Reading:
A. Engberg-Pedersen, Martial Aesthetics: How War Became an Art Form, Stanford University Press, 2023
V. Groebner, Who Are You? Identification, Deception, and Surveillance in Early Modern Europe, New York, Zone Books, 2007 [this is a very good book]
T. McCall, Brilliant Bodies: Fashioning Courty Men in Early Renaissance Italy (Penn State, 2022)
Week 6. May 9

Part I: Lecture by Prof. Giorgio Riello (European University Institute)

(Provisional) Reading:

Part II: Fashion, a Global Market

Readings:

Further Reading:
E. Welch, Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600 (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005)
Werner Sombart, “The Emergence of Fashion,” in Economic Life in the Modern Age (Transaction Publishers, 2001), pp. 205-228
Week 7. May 16

If you have not done so already, remember to book a meeting to discuss your final project.

Part I: Embodied Clothing

Readings:
Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory, Cambridge University Press, 2000, ch. 1

Further Reading:
Guojun Wang, Staging Personhood: Costuming in Early Qing Drama, Columbia University Press, 2020, esp. pp. 1-24 (Introduction) and 61-91 (Chapter 2)

Part II: Pockets and Invisibility

Readings:
Barbara Burman and Ariane Fennetaux, The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women’s Lives, 1660-1900 (Yale University Press, 2019), ch. 4 “Pockets, Possession and Promise”
H. Carlson, Pockets: An Intimate History of How We Keep Things Close (2023), ch. 1

Further Reading:
Chiara Frugoni, Books, Banks, Buttons and Other Inventions from the Middle Ages (Columbia University Press, 2003)
Week 8. May 23

Only one “part” today, as we meet at the David Rumsey Center, where we’ll be looking at a few maps.

Part I: Early Modern Fashion and Geopolitics

Readings:

Further Reading:
Eugenia Paulicelli, Writing Fashion in Early Modern Italy. From Sprezzatura to Satire (Farnham: 2014), esp. ch. 3
Ulinka Rublack, Maria Hayward and Jenny Tiramani (eds), The first book of fashion: the book of clothes of Matthaeus and Veit Konrad Schwarz of Augsburg, 2015
Week 9. May 30

I’ve lightened the workload to allow you to focus on your research papers

Part I: Aesthetics

Readings:

Further Reading:

Part II: Taste

Readings:

Further Reading:

Week 10. June 6

Presentations of final projects and final discussion.
No assigned readings

Submit your final paper by the end of Exam Week