

AS/HUMA 4180 3.0A (SS 2017)

**Europe à la mode:
Fashion and the Critical Methodologies of European Studies**
MW 11:30-2:30 (Room RS 101)

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Susan Ingram

singram@yorku.ca

Office: Vanier College 242

Office hours M 3:00-4:00pm or by appointment

"Why brilliant fashion-designers, a notoriously non-analytic breed, sometimes succeed in anticipating the shape of things to come better than professional predictors, is one of the most obscure questions in history; and, for the historian of culture, one of the most central." (178).
Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What makes "fashion" a European idea? What makes "Europe" a fashionable idea? This course is situated at the intersection of these two questions and will probe their interrelations. Taking the field of fashion as our subject matter, we will explore the many methodologies which are part of European Studies and read texts closely that allow for a multi-faceted understanding of fashion and its relationship to Europe. The course provides a comprehensive overview of the institutional approaches that make up European Studies and a strong basis from which to proceed to theoretically oriented graduate studies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students demonstrate that they can:

- correctly order the major periods in modern European cultural history
- recognize the main cultural developments of modernity and the mechanisms by which fashion has come to colonize our lifeworld
- think critically about the taken-for-granted and cultural processes of meaning-making
- analyze visual, material and written texts relating to fashion
- express themselves using theoretical terminology

The course is an upper-level Humanities seminar. It is imperative that students come to each class prepared.

EVALUATION

- well-researched presentations on European urban institutions that introduce the institution and explain how it compares and relates to Berlin (4 x ~10 min. depending on class size; graded on the basis of continuous evaluation, 40%)
- 1000-1500 word descriptive conference report comparing the style components of a keynote, roundtable or panel at **two of four** conferences on during the course:
 - 1) Nouveau Reach: Past, Present and Future of Luxury, 11-14 May at Ryerson: <http://nouveaureach.ca>
 - 2) IABA Chapter of the Americas: Lives Outside the Lines: Gender and Genre in the Americas, A Symposium in Honour of Marlene Kadar, 15-17 May at York: <https://iaba-americas.org/future-conferences/>
 - 3) Marx's *Capital* after 150 Years: Critique and Alternative to Capitalism, 24-26 May at York: <http://www.marxcollegium.org>
 - 4) an academic association such as the CCLA during Congress at Ryerson (20%, due Wed. May 31, to be submitted via email to singram@yorku.ca. If you would like detailed comments and corrections, please bring a paper copy to class.)
- 2000-2500 word analytical final essay, which reflects on the presentations and connects them to the readings (40%, due Mon. 12 June)

REQUIRED READING

- Susan Ingram and Katrina Sark, *Berliner Chic: A Locational History of Berlin Fashion*. Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2011 (in the bookstore in York Lanes and on reserve in Scott library)
- Other texts will be made available on our Moodle site: moodle.yorku.ca

RECOMMENDED READING

- <http://www.europeanafashion.eu/portal/home.html>

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the York website:

- York's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Student Conduct Standards

SCHEDULE

1 May: Introductions

- Kwame Anthony Appiah, "There Is No Such Thing as Western Civilization." *The Guardian* 9 Nov. 2016 (BBC Reith lecture on Culture).
- Ingram and Sark, "Introduction: Locating Berliner Chic," 15-26.

3 May: Europe and the Origins of Fashion

- Carlo Marco Belfanti, "The Civilization of Fashion: At the Origins of a Western Social Institution." *Journal of Social History* 43.2 (Winter 2009): 261-283.
- Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, "Introduction: Fashion, Fetishism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Europe." *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000. 1-14.

8 May: Modernity, Museums, Historiography

- Gilles Lipovetsky, "Chapter 2: A Century of Fashion." *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy*, 1994. 55-87.
- *Berliner Chic* chapters 1 & 2, 27-84

10 May: presentations on museums

- 11-13 May: Nouveau Reach @ Ryerson

15 May: Photography and Film

- *Berliner Chic* chapters 3 & 4, 85-148
- IABA @ York, Day One

17 May: presentations on photography and film

- IABA @ York, Day Three

22 May – Victoria Day no class

24 May: Music

- *Berliner Chic* chapter 5, 149-179
- Marx's *Capital* after 150 Years: Critique and Alternative to Capitalism, 24-26 May @ York

29 May: CCLA @ Ryerson

31 May: presentations on music

- conference report due

5 June: Retail

- *Berliner Chic* chapter 6, 179-208

7 June: presentations on retail

12 June: conclusions and final thoughts

- Parag Khanna, "Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization," *Cities of Migration*, 30 Nov. 2016
- Minh-ha T. Pham, "Fashion's Cultural-Appropriation Debate: Pointless." *The Atlantic*, 15 May 2014
- final essay due