

Veranstalter	PD Dr. Monika Pietrzak-Franger
Thema	From Corsets to Craftivism: Fashion in Literature, Theory and Politics [AA-MA6]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar IV
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-553
Zeit	Mo 12-14
Raum	Ü35-01016
Beginn	16.10.17

Course Description:

When Queen Elisabeth II gave her parliamentary speech on 21 June this year, she sported a blue ensemble complemented with a blue hat with yellow-eyed blue flowers. Media interpreted her outfit as a political statement of solidarity with the European Union: a subversive message that undermined the ‘hard Brexit’ policy of Theresa May. This instance of sartorial politics is one among many. It clearly demonstrates that fashion is an intrinsic element of culture and politics along with being of supreme importance in the construction of personal and collective identities. In this seminar, students will become acquainted with many facets of British fashion. Next to a historical overview of British design, students will become familiar with theoretical perspectives from which to inspect fashion, fashion industry, and fashion rituals (e.g. Simmel, Veblen, Barthes). They will not only address the ways in which fashion industry has been developing and changing (slow/fast fashion) but will also discuss how globalization and new markets influence the way we wear and perceive clothing. Finally, they will inquire how fashion is used in protest cultures by taking a closer look at craftivism – a (new?) way of taking a political stance by using long existing crafts. Next to discussing written texts, advertisements, magazines, and fashion shows, students will be asked to analyze and interpret blogs, documentaries, installations, and clothing.

The list of reading will be provided during the first session.

Requirements, Expectations, Procedures:

1. Thoughtful, well-prepared participation in class discussions and consistent attendance will be a crucial part of my evaluation of your work in the course. Excessive absence (more than two classes) will be grounds for failure.
2. Three analytic essays (the first two about 5 pages long, the last one about 10 pages long), due at scheduled intervals throughout the semester (see syllabus). I will suggest topics, but you’re free to develop topics of your own.
3. Each student has to function as an “expert” for one of the class sessions. Being an expert means a particularly thorough preparation of the assigned reading and the formulation of three theses on the assigned reading and three questions for the seminar discussion. The theses and questions must be posted on Agora one week before the day of the session.
4. There will be an end-semester evaluation of the course. I encourage you, however, to give me feedback, make suggestions or express criticism at any time.
5. I will use this scheme in determining your final grade: 5-page essays 20 % each, 10-page essay 30 %, expert work 15 %, class participation 15 %.