

Carleton University
Department of English
Fall 2009

ENGL5903F: English and Cultural Studies
Sartorial Spectacles: Clothing, Consumerism, and Cable Televisual Narratives

Schedule: Mondays 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Location: 1816 DT

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Office: DT 1807
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OUTLINE:

Topic: Sartorial Spectacles: Clothing, Consumerism, and Cable Televisual Narratives

This course will examine the ways in which televisual configurations and discursive constructions influence both consumers and the cultural imaginary. For example, HBO's *The Sopranos* deliberately played upon the dress code of Coppola's *The Godfather* to update perceptions of "the mafia." Or, in *Sex and the City*, Carrie Bradshaw's use of the Fendi baguette made the purse the "it" bag (or "must-have bag") of the year. More broadly, the course will concentrate on how television influences and draws audiences into sartorial concerns through programming (as opposed to commercials). Focusing on cable television, classes will consider performance and spectacle in various programs like *Deadwood*, *Entourage*, *Mad Men*, among others, in order to query how such performances affect or even change cultural assumptions and expectations.

Texts will include:

Spigel, Lynn and Denise Mann, eds. *Private Screenings*
Modleski, Tania. *Studies in Entertainment*
Benstock, Shari and Suzanne Ferris, eds. *On Fashion*
Emberley, Julia. *The Cultural Politics of Fur*

Note: These texts will be available at After Stonewall Books, 370 Bank St. (Bank & Gilmour)

REQUIREMENTS:

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| One Essay (4000-4500 words) - | | 50% |
| Participation (including message board participation) | - | <u>50%</u> |
| | | 100% |

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PROPOSED SYLLABUS

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|--------------|---|
| September 14 | Introduction |
| September 21 | Modleski, <i>Studies in Entertainment</i> |
| September 28 | Spigel & Mann, <i>Private Screenings</i> |
| October 5 | Benstock & Ferris, <i>On Fashion</i> |
| October 12 | Thanksgiving |
| October 19 | Emberley, <i>The Cultural Politics of Fur</i> |
| October 26 | <i>The Devil Wears Prada</i> |
| November 2 | <i>The Godfather</i> |
| November 9 | <i>The Sopranos</i> |
| November 16 | <i>Sex and the City</i> |
| November 23 | <i>Sex and the City—The Movie</i> ESSAYS DUE IN CLASS |
| November 30 | <i>Deadwood</i> |
| December 7 | Review |

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ESSAY TOPIC

November 23, 2009

Length: 3000-3500 words (12-15 pp.)

Students will submit a critical assessment of one of the questions that has arisen from the course material. Essays will comprise well-researched and scholarly analyses of the issue under study.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated for this course. For an explanation, see the statement on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar.

For Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations are required to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary *letters of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss their needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first class or CUTV test. This is to ensure sufficient time is available to make the necessary accommodation arrangements. Please note the following deadlines for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: November 5, 2004 for fall and fall/winter term courses and March 11, 2005 for winter term courses.

For Religious Observance:

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy:

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.