GSWS 319-4: Fashioning Gender

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Lecture: Mondays 13:30 – 17:20
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Course Description:
How do clothes, fabrics, accessories, and adornments signify gender? How do specific items of clothing—suits, dresses, pants, etc., or fabrics—silk, woolen, cotton, etc., or accessories—high or low heeled shoes, hats—or adornments—lace, braid, etc.—indicate that the wearers are men or women—and usually simultaneously, their social status and sometimes their ethnicity? How does the line or silhouette of an outfit communicate gender, class and ethnic origin? And how stable are the relationship between this aspect of material culture and gender, class, and ethnicity over cultures or time periods? For instance, why is it acceptably masculine for western churchmen to wear robes? Or, were garments that emphasized curves always and everywhere feminine? Or, why and when did lace become a feminine trimming? Or how did colourful Indian cottons become indicators of respectable middle class European masculinity? Does fashion challenge and reformulate gender? This course focuses on these types of questions in western (European and North American) fashion and gender systems, with due attention to the globalization of fashion and some comparisons to Eastern attire and its gender messages.

Course Texts and Courseware:

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Attendance and participation in tutorials: 20%
Short Biography, due week five (Oct 11): 20%
Oral and visual presentation, weeks six through nine: 20%
Paper proposal and bibliography, due week ten (Nov. 14): 15%
Term paper, due week thirteen (Dec. 5): 25%

Prerequisite: six units in women's studies including WS 101 and/or 102.

THE DEPARTMENT OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN’S STUDIES ENCOURAGES CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION AND GOOD WRITING. STUDENTS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THESE SKILLS IN ALL COURSES GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT. IN ADDITION, THE DEPARTMENT WILL FOLLOW POLICY T10.02 WITH RESPECT TO "INTELLECTUAL HONESTY," AND "ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE" (WWW.SFU.CA/POLICIES/TEACHING)