

Fromm Institute, Winter 2020 Professor William Eddelman
Thursday Mornings 10:00 -11:40

**Mapping and Wrapping the Body: The Psychology of
Clothes**

**What People Wear or Wore and Why
The Relationships Between Bodies and Clothes; an
investigation.**

Syllabus

**NOTE: The syllabus has a large number of pages, because I
have included brief descriptions of several films that could serve
as “additional materials” for the class. You might try to look at
some of them.**

**The British costume historian, James Laver, has stated,
“Clothes are the furniture of the mind.”**

and

**The drag performer, RuPaul, has stated, “We are all born
naked, everything else is drag.”**

Why Not?

Clothes are the boundary between the individual and society.

**In this course we will explore many of the social, cultural
and psychological reasons why people have always had a very
complex relationship with their body shapes, changes,
adornments and clothes. We will also focus on the ways in
which gender is defined through clothes, the porous and rigid
boundaries that exist today among genders and the ways in**

which society stratifies, categorizes and presents itself. Over thousands of years the clothed and unclothed body has been very problematic, and many times the result has been totally irrational or is irrationality a part of human desires and clothing?

Although everyone has various prejudices and opinions regarding bodies, clothes and the ways in which people wear them, we must assume a “neutrality and objectivity” when we pursue the subject. Think along the lines of a group of doctors analyzing sick patients on Grand Rounds. They don’t say to themselves, “I would not have that disease”! Be neutral!

We are here to think about all the cultural complexities that for thousands of years have framed bodies and clothes and not to make judgments. It is really very complex and at times mystifying, but can that be the ultimate pleasure in looking? Our eyes and minds are to be stimulated with all kinds of thoughts and analyses.

Another thing to consider is the way in which bodies and clothes are presented. When we look at them in pictures; how is the individual or individuals posed and how does this posing affect the body and clothes?

Yes, it will be a challenge, but that is why this class was put together. You might not be completely convinced at times, but then bodies and clothes are there to be looked at, to be a “fragment of a cultural moment” and maybe finally a puzzle?

No subject matter in regard to clothes will be excluded. You may never look at your friends and society with the same eyes again.

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After each session there will be a list VIEWINGS; films or film clips to look at. (Consult: YouTube) I know that you can think of others that we could add.

Most of the viewings are from the late 20th century. In these films we can see the body and “clothes in action”. For after all, bodies and clothes are made to move or are they contained in a single picture, frozen in time.

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Week One (Thursday, January 9): Introduction: Mapping and Wrapping the Body

Why Clothes?

1- The Basic Body: If we start with the basic body unclothed, how does the addition of clothes or pieces of clothing affect the body and its presentation? Changes do occur. Do they also change perceptions of how humans are received?

2- Changing Concepts of the Body and Beauty: Humans are the only “animals” that continually change their looks, why? Is this a basic need?

3- The Decorated Body: In applying color or paint to the body or face does the body become a canvas? What are possible signals....status, class, beauty?

4- Tattooing and Piercing: What are the signals that tattoos and piercing send? Do these marking procedures raise us above the animals?

5- Underwear, Outerwear, Corsets: Why are corsets used in shaping the body?

6- Silhouettes: Clothes create silhouettes and fashion changes. Over the centuries how do we read them and what do

they say? Clothes can be used to change personalities and how one feels about oneself. If depressed go shopping?

VIEWINGS

Corsets and Underwear

- 1- *Gone with the Wind (1939)*: There is a very small section where Vivian Leigh is being laced into her corset. Look at the entire film to follow changing silhouettes in the mid-19th century.
- 2- Can Can clips: *Moulin Rouge (1952)*, *French Can Can (1955)*, *Cole Porter's Can Can (1960)*: All of these three films have Can Can sequences. Since they were made a few years apart, look at the changing visual treatments.
- 3- *The Graduate (1967)*: Look at the bedroom seduction scene between Ann Bancroft and Dustin Hoffman.
- 4- *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (1958)*: Look at the bedroom scene with Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman. Notice that she is wearing a slip and high heels.
- 5- *A Streetcar Named Desire (1951)*: Marlon Brando in "T shirt scenes" are iconic moments in American clothing history-----a break through or a "break out"?

Tattooing and Silhouettes

- 6- *Utu, We Were Warriors Once (1983)*: There is a very brief scene where they are cutting into the skin (blood is shown) in order to create tattoos
- 7- Silhouettes: There are so many films to draw from. You could think of some that you have already seen. I would start in the Ancient World, then the Middle

Ages and Renaissance (Shakespeare?), the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. In looking at the clothes use a “critical eye” to “re-see them”, and their “individual” and “unique” silhouettes.

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Week Two (Thursday, January 16): Modesty and Immodesty. Sexual Stimulation and Fetishes.

1- Modesty and Immodesty: How do cultures view modesty and immodesty? Does this only involve women? How does modesty apply to men or does it?

2- Eroticism: Do women dress for men or do they dress for other women? Think about the complications. What do we mean by the “gaze”? It generally relates to the male “gaze”, but has this changed and why? Is there now a female “gaze”?

3- Psychological connections and Sexual Stimulations: Is the “unwrapping” of the body the gradual stimulation?

4- Shifting Erogenous Zones: How and why do erogenous zones change? Do they always relate to cultural changes and differences?

5- Interrogating Fetishes----Sex, Power, and Fashion: It has been stated that men are more “fetish driven” than women. Why the difference? How do fetishes relate to sex and power? What are female fetishes and how might they differ from male fetishes? Yes, we will discuss shoes later.

VIEWINGS

Sexuality and Striptease

- 1- **Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953)**: A film with “teasing sexuality” that features Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell as two “gold diggers”. Do notice the “Diamonds Are A Girl’s Best Friend” number as an introduction to the color pink.
- 2- **The 7-Year Itch (1955)**: The movie concerns a man undergoing a mid-life crisis while his wife and son are away. He meets Marilyn Monroe and his fantasies come into play. The most notable scene in the movie is when Marilyn, standing on a subway vent has her dress blown upwards.
- 3- **Showgirls (1995)**: This film is so bad it can be considered “good”. Look at the pole “dancing”, but I would suggest drugs before watching it!! Contrast *Showgirls* and *Gypsy*.
- 4- **Gypsy (1962)**: Look at the classic striptease scenes in the film. They show the development of Gypsy Rose Lee (Natalie Wood) and her “lady like” strip.
- 5 - **The Chippendales in London (1990s)**: What is so interesting about this film is the way in which the audience of women reacts. Who knew that women are as “crazy as men” when it comes to male striptease.
- 6 - **Clips featuring Mae West**: Mae West, an American performer, with her numerous sexual innuendoes, plays and movies was a perfect example of someone who was always “kidding sex”. But it was too much for American puritanism! Look at such films as: *She Done Him Wrong*, and *I’m No Angel*.

Censorship

- 7 - **Tarzan and His Mate (1934)**: The images from the

movie and the movie itself fit right into the pre-code Hollywood aesthetic. But Jane's revealing costume had to be changed so that she was partly covered up. This was not the case with Tarzan.

8 - Jean Harlow/Grand Hotel clips and Hayes Office Censorship (This film also relates to Lecture #4).

Fetishes

9- Pandora's Box (1998): This is a private club in New York City that caters to all kinds of fetish activities----- extremely interesting, but should one really be tempted?

Performing Arts

10-Synthetic Pleasures (1996): Orlon, A French "performance artist", uses facial surgery as a means of changing her looks. This is very strange, but thousands of people undergo facial surgery to correct, modify or change their appearances.



Week Three (Thursday, January 23): Status, Power and Class Stratifications. Group Behavior. Uniforms. Jocks and Nerds. Academic and Political Dress. Dandies. Colors: Pink and Black.

1 - Classical, Nouveau, Middle, and Lower: How is power and class expressed through clothes? Can you "mark classes" by viewing people and clothes? What are the signifiers? What

are “conspicuous consumption”, “conspicuous waste” and “conspicuous leisure”? These terms were created by Thorstein Veblen, a sociologist at Stanford University in the early 1900s. You might want to look at his book, “*The Theory of the Leisure Class*”.

2 - Rituals and Group Behavior/Conformity and Societal

Control: Why do social situations require different types of dress? Are rituals and taboos involved? How are clothes used to bring and bind groups together? Does it set a group off from others in society? What about political clothes and dressing for politics-----how do they relate to power?

3 - Uniforms: Consider the ways in which uniforms are used in societies. The kinds of uniforms vary widely and are expressions of what an individual does? Think of all the possibilities and varieties. Can you tell a person’s job by looking at a “uniform”.

4 - Jocks and Nerds: What are the contrasts between jocks and nerds? Different bodies and movements are basic to these two categories. Cheerleaders?

5- Academic and Political dress: This category involves the “F.....” word.

6 - Dandies: What is a Dandy, a Macaroni?

7 - Colors: Pink and Basic Black: Is pink a feminine color of fragility or is it a pretty and powerful color? How has the color black been able to express both the sacred and the profane and how has it changed over the centuries?

VIEWINGS

Class Structures

- 1 - **Age of Innocence (1993)**: This movie portrays upper class New York society in the 1870s. In doing so it shows all of the class conscience problems that existed in human relationships and what has to be given up in order to remain in that stratified class.
- 2- **Bulworth (1999)**: It is an American political satire comedy that brings a disillusioned US senator into contact with various levels of society as he runs for office. The classes, white and black, rich and poor, are clearly drawn and demonstrate how a campaign has to operate at so many different levels. The satire is excellent.
- 3- **Hair (1979)**: An anti-war musical film that brings a Vietnam War draftee into contact with a “tribe” of hippies and also upper-class society. He is introduced to marijuana, LSD and their environment of unorthodox relationships and draft evasion. The conflict reaches a very funny, clashing moment at a wedding dinner party.
- 4- **Best of Show (2000)**: As several different couples with their dog’s in tow head to a national event, “The Mayflower Dog Show”, we are treated to stereotypical class behavior. To add to the humor each dog breed accurately reflects the class of their owners!!

Social Mobility

All three of these films show a woman moving up in terms of class, and in each clothes play a primary part in the transformations.

- 5- **Breakfast at Tiffany’s (1961)**: Based on Truman Capote’s novel of a young woman from a lower class background who is working as an expensive escort (if you are going to

be an expensive escort it is advantageous to be dressed by Givenchy!) and a young man kept by an older, wealthy woman love eventually wins out. Holly Golightly's clothes place her in the chic look of New York society.

- 6- ***My Fair Lady (1961)***: A Cockney working-class girl is transformed by a pompous, phonetics professor who, through work, study, and elegant clothes turns her into a cultured member of high society. In the recent New York production of the musical Eliza leaves him. This is not the case in the 1961 movie.
- 7- ***Funny Face (1957)***: A shy bookstore employee is turned into a high fashion model in Paris after she is discovered by a New York based fashion photographer. Clothes are the foundation of the transformation.

Please look at the "Think Pink" musical number in the movie as it will relate to comments made in class about the color pink.

Groups

- 8- ***Triumph of the Will (1936)***: This movie, ultimately fascinating and shocking, was a propaganda film made by the German film maker, Leni Riefenstahl, which showcased Adolf Hitler and the huge Nazi Party rally held in Nurnberg in 1934. If you have not seen the film, it is a perfect realization of mass group control, complete regimentation, and the horror that would ultimately follow with the Nazi's

Jocks and Nerds

9- History of the Olympics (1990s): There are numerous films made of the Olympic Games over the decades and you might want to select one (winter or summer) to see. The films will give you a very specific view of the kinds of clothes worn by the athletes in the individual sports. You can also see how the various bodies perform in relation to the specific sport.

10 - Pee Wee's Big Adventure (1985): As a cartoonish and childness character, Pee Wee Herman goes on a big adventure after his bicycle is stolen. This leads to all kinds of situations where his childish attempts to be cool and mature manage to get him out of what seem to be impossible situations. His character is a perfect example of a childlike nerd in an adult world.



Week Four (Thursday, January 30): Star Images and Fantasy Constructions. Pre-Code Film Images. Drag and Cross-Dressing. Camp.

1- Stars: What is a “Star” and how are “Stars”

created? Hollywood is called the “Dream Factory”. How are clothes used to create dreams and fantasies? Hair and makeup treatments are important in relating stars to a films contemporary period. Why? We will look at selected female stars and their transformations. Are there “secrets” involved in these changes and “transformations?”

2- “Fantasy Constructions” and the “Past” in Films:

How does Hollywood create the historical past and “fantasy constructions”? How correct are the re-creations? Is Hollywood guided by the perceived artistic standards of

the times?

- 3- **Pre- and Post-Code in Hollywood:** There were clothing styles and presentations in Hollywood (1929-1934) pre-code that we will focus on. We will also look at the reasons for the changes after the Code went into effect in 1935. Does this relate to “American Puritanism”, and are there other factors involved----religion, etc.?
- 4- **Drag and Cross-dressing:** These are terms used by gays and lesbians as a way to change or play with concepts of gender. Is there a “fear or amusement factor” in confronting someone in drag and if this is the case then why? As a very important part of “cross-dressing” we will explore the development of women wearing “pants and suits” over the years and why. Today they are completely accepted.
- 5- **Camp:** This is a very difficult term to define and it can have several meanings. We will use such word as; subversion, artificiality, pastiche, humor, extreme, challenging established norms, and outrage in order to “try to define” it. How would you define “good taste” and who sets the standards? Please look at the more complete definition of Camp below.

Camp

In 2019 the Metropolitan Museum presented a major exhibition devoted to Camp. The catalogue was very extensive, but even reviewers from the NY Times had trouble defining the term “Camp”. Susan Sontag wrote an article in the early 1966 called “Notes On Camp”, but even that article did not completely grasp what Camp might be.

It is very difficult to define and I wanted to present some specific concepts on Camp that would be helpful in possibly defining it.

Camp Is Subversive

Let's start with this and add other words: irony, parody, aestheticism, theatricality, a critique and a breaking down of boundaries. Camp is closely related to a gay sensibility; a sensibility that differs from the mainstream and with a heightened awareness of being the "other". It is a critique of straight society. What is straight and what is normal?

What are its characteristic features?

- 1- **Camp and Irony**: An incongruous contrast, saying one thing and meaning another (masculine/feminine, youth/old age, sacred/profane and high/ low status).
- 2- **Camp and Aestheticism**: The aesthetic element is basic to Camp. It is in opposition to Puritan morality and is subversive of commonly received standards. Sontag wrote, "Camp neutralizes moral indignation." Camp can move into the exotic, fantastic, sensual surfaces, and stylistic devices (a matter of style). It is urban and not natural. Camp aims to transform the ordinary into something spectacular.
- 3- **Camp and Theatricality**: To appreciate Camp is to perceive the notion of "life as theatre"; implying that roles are superficial, to be on stage, to impersonate, to pretend. Gay Camp breaks down the binary opposites of masculine and feminine thus creating a variety of role- playing models (sliding ambiguities).
- 4- **Camp and Humor**: The comic element of Camp is inherent in irony that can serve as a defense.

5- Although Camp might mock structures in society it never totally disregards the serious.

A character in a Christopher Isherwood novel said, "You can't camp about something you don't take seriously, you're not making fun of it, you're making fun out of it. You are expressing what is basically serious to you in terms of fun, artifice and elegance."

Viewings

Greta Garbo

Garbo did not really have strong directors and as a result her films might have been better. But she was recognized as the "great and very special star" of the movies.

1-Mata Hari (1931): During WW I an exotic Dutch dancer secretly moonlights as a German spy. Using her feminine wiles she seduces French and Russian agents to gain information. But when she falls in love with one of her targets she is finally arrested and sentenced to death. It was one of Garbo's most successful movies. Look carefully at the dancing sequence. Is it Garbo?

2-Camille (1936): Lifting herself out of poverty, Marguerite Gauthier becomes the enchanting French courtesan, "Lady of the Camellias". Kept by the rich Baron de Varville she falls in love with a young man and considers leaving the Baron for him. The depth of her love over money surprises her but when the young man's father tells him about her past she spurns him, returns to the Baron and dies of consumption. The story line

was based on a real French courtesan of the 19th century who died of consumption.

Marlene Dietrich

She made six films in the 1930s that were directed by Joseph von Sternberg, who made her a star by creating the “Dietrich look and mystique”.

3– Morocco (1930): A world-weary chanteuse, mistress to a wealthy man, arrives in Morocco where she attracts the attention of a womanizing Legionnaire. Discouraged by her demeanor he departs for another rendezvous. She follows him in the end. In this film Dietrich gets plenty of chances to sing and there is a scandalous moment in a cabaret when Dietrich in a man’s tuxedo kisses a woman.

4-Blond Venus (1932): A nightclub singer becomes a playboy’s mistress to support her son and ailing husband. The movie is a muddle, but you will see Dietrich in the “Hot Voodoo” number where she starts as a gorilla and then changes into a white afro.

5-The Devil Is A Woman (1935): This is the last film Dietrich made with her mentor, Joseph von Sternberg, the filmmaker who made her a star and created the “Dietrich look”. Set in Spain it centers on a Spanish seductress who destroys the lives of those who love her. the film was banned in Spain because of the unflattering description of the Guardia Civil and charges of government brutality.

Fantasy Constructions

6- Bird of paradise (1932): A Polynesian setting for romance between a sailor and a princess. They fall in love and run away together, but a volcano eruption warns the couple and they return to her home. Captured, they are to be sacrificed to the volcano but finally, the princess in order to save her people throws herself into the volcano. Is this always the ending for a “transgressive woman? The environment of the South Seas had a great appeal for audiences in the 1930s.

7-The Barbarian (also known as A Night In Cairo) (1933): A pre-code romance between an American woman and an Arab guide who happens to be a prince find love and at the end it is revealed that she is actually half Egyptian which solves all the problems-----"he would love her no matter what her background". This film fits in with a series of desert romance films starting with *The Son of the Sheik* (1926). The film contains a scene in which the female star is “bathing nude” in a large pool with floating flowers.

The “Past” in Films

8- Samson and Delilah (1949): Samson is a strongman whose secret lies in his uncut hair. He is the hero of the Israelites, seduced by Delilah who discovers his secret and betrays him to the Philistines. Blinded and humiliated with his hair cut off by Delilah, his hair grows back and with renewed strength he then brings down the temple upon the wayward Philistines.

Pre-code Films

Beside those that we have talked about in class, you might look at these films: Red-Headed Woman, Call Her Savage, Madame

Satin, Scarface, and The Sign of the Cross, among others. I have already mentioned *Tarzan and His Mate*.

Drag and Cross-Dressing

10-Victor/Victoria (1982): A young soprano struggles to find work until finally a cabaret performer comes up with the idea that she should pass herself off as a young man who is a male female impersonator-----a mix of genders. Her success leads to a lot of comic situations until at the end she is finally *revealed as a woman. The film was based on a 1933 German film Viktor and Viktoria.*

11-Paris Is Burning (1990): This documentary focuses on drag queens living in New York and their “house” culture which provides a sense of community for African-American flamboyant performers to compete in elaborate balls that relate to the world of fashion.

12- Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994): When a drag queen in Australia agrees to take his act on the road, he invites a cross-dresser and a transsexual to come along. Traveling across the Australian desert performing for enthusiastic crowds and homophobic locals their act and friendship is threatened.

Week Five (Thursday February 6): History and Sexology of Shoes and Feet. Chinese Bound Feet and the “Cinderella Legend”. Hair and Hats Framing the Head. Changing Faces.

1-Feet and Shoes: Sexology of feet and shoes. Feet have been considered an erogenous part of the human body. How might this relate to shoes? Can shoes be considered as fetish items for women? What do shoes do to the human body and how do they dictate movement and body stance?

We will also focus on high heel shoes, their “purpose?”, how they shape the body and “problems”.

2- The Chinese Bound Foot and the “Cinderella

Legend”: What are the customs and reasons that lie behind this particular treatment? Can we relate it to seduction and sensuality? How did it relate to status? The “Cinderella Legend” has a long history. What is it and why? How was it changed? We will explore the legend from the beginning.

3- Hair and Hats: They are a major part of dress and like changes in clothes they also change as they are incorporated into the “total look” of a period.

4- Changing Faces: How does make-up change the facial look and today with the advent of surgical facial “modifications”, what can we see in terms of “youthful results” or other “kinds” of results both good and bad.

VIEWINGS

1– Disney’s Cinderella (1950): This animated version of Cinderella took the somewhat violent tale of a young woman who uses her wits, beauty, goodness and a little magical intervention to rise above adversity to become a princess. But in this version she just looks pretty and the final result is a syrupy, sweet treatment. It is still a Disney favorite.

2 – Roger’s and Hammerstein’s Cinderella (1957): This musical originally written for television, later appeared on the stage. It is

based on the fairy tale Cinderella, particularly the French version, *Cendrillon, ou la Petite Pantoufle de Verre* by Charles Perrault. A young woman, forced into servitude, dreams of a better life and with the help of the fairy godmother is transformed into a princess and finds her prince. There have been several later versions over the years.

3 - *Ever After (1998)*: This might be the best Cinderella movie ever made of a true princess among cinder-girls. The brothers Grimm arrive at the home of a wealthy Grand Dame, who tells the true story of her ancestor. Treated as a servant by a new wife, who arrives with two daughters, she meets a prince fleeing from an arranged marriage and, of course, love and matters of the heart, win out in the end.

4 - *The Red Shoes (1948)*: In this movie, based on a tragic story by Hans Christian Anderson, an aspiring ballerina is torn between her dedication to dance and her desire to love. While she is urged to forget everything but ballet, she falls for a young composer. Under great emotional stress to choose between a career or romance her final decision leads to her death by suicide.

We can think of the “original Cinderella story” and the relationship of tragedy that appears in the Hans Christian Anderson story.

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Week Six (Thursday, February 13): Clothes and the Performing Arts: For Performing Arts we will look at Several Types and the Clothes that are worn. Movement and Performance. The Body in Action.

Comments and questions:

- 1- In regard to performances we must look at the kinds of movements and bodies and how they relate to the clothes.**
- 2- Various kinds of dance require different types of clothes. What are the relationships and why?**
- 3- In creating historical periods for performances how close to historical fidelity should the costumes be and what is the visual relationship between stars on the screen and audience members?**
- 4- Are there performances where costumes styles mix and draw from different periods; forming a new aesthetic.**
- 5- Do clothes in movies also reflect the visual aesthetics of the time in which they were made? Has this changed today? This can relate to #3.**

VIEWINGS

The following list includes all of the brief clips that were shown in class. They were all taken from YouTube. I understand that not everyone has YouTube, but unfortunately that is where the “world” exists today. Yes, it can be a problem.

- 1 – “Oedipus” by Sophocles as presented at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in 1957.**
- 2 – The ending of the Met’s production of “Turandot”, 2019.**
- 3 – A Kabuli “Lion Dance” performance. There are several clips on YouTube.**
- 4 – The “all girl/women” Japanese Takarazuka theatre. There are several clips on YouTube.**
- 5 – The English Royal Ballet’s production of “Swan Lake”, 2018 showing the brief “cygnets” section.**

- 6 – The “Trocs” (Les Ballets Trocadero de Monte Carlo) doing a parody of the “cygnets” section of “Swan Lake”, 2011?
- 7 – Fred Astaire and Ginger Rodgers dancing “Cheek to Cheek” in the movie “Top Hat”, 1935.
- 8 – Fred Astaire and Eleanor Powell dancing “Begin the Beguine” in the movie “Broadway Melody of 1940”.
- 9 – A scene from the recent English production of “Twelfth Night”, 2015-16. The cast was all male as was the case in the Elizabethan theatre.
- 10 – Taylor Mack performing “Amazing Grace” in San Francisco 2018?
- 11– “River Dance” featuring two dancers. There are several clips of “River Dance” productions on YouTube.
- 12- “You Gotta Get a Gimmick” from the musical, “Gypsy”, 1993.
- 13 – A tango clip from the World Tango Championship, 2016.
- 14 - and 15 - Two clips of Josephine Baker performing: 1- Introducing the “Charleston” and 2 – A clip from the movie “Princess Tam Tam”, 1935.
- 16 - The “Supremes” on the Ed Sullivan Show 1966-67?
- 17 - Lady Gaga in her video “Bad Romance” 2017?
- 18– The “Triumphal March” from the Met production of “Aida” 2012-2013.
- 19 - The ending trio from the Met production of “Rosenkavalier”, 2014.

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Week Seven (Thursday February 20): Changing Concepts of Gender.

Comments and questions:

- 1- How have concepts of gender changed over past decades or have they?

- 2- Why has gender blurring in clothes occurred? Can we look at specific reasons? Are there historic prototypes?
- 3- Should we begin with stereotypical clothes styles for men and women and then see how separations are used for sexual identifications.
- 4- Have gays and lesbians led the way in gender blurring? How does this relate to drag?
- 5- Transgender individuals are a more recent public phenomenon in regard to traditional gender perceptions and how can we analyze and critique them today as they relate to clothes. Do they fit within the stereotypical male/female clothing systems or are there modifications?
- 6- Transvestite: This term refers to a straight man who at times likes to dress in woman's clothes.

VIEWINGS

1-The Rocky Horror Picture Show (the original production was 1973 and the movie was 1975): A young couple discovers the eerie mansion of Dr. Frank-N-Furter, a transvestite scientist. As their innocence is lost, they discover a household of characters including a “rocking biker” and a creepy butler.

2-Orlando (1992): In 1600, nobleman Orlando inherits his parent's house, thanks to Queen Elizabeth, who commands the young man never to change, but in 1700 Orlando is shocked to wake up as a woman who struggles to retain her property as the centuries roll by. The movie was loosely based on Virginia Woolf's 1928 novel *Orlando*.

3-Boys don't Cry (1999): A young female to male transgender leaves his hometown under threat. He falls for a young female

singer and they plan a life together, but when his secret is discovered there are problems. The film's themes include romantic and platonic love, violence against LGBT people and the relationship among social class, race and gender.

4-Soldier's Girl (2002): Based on a true story it concerns the relationship between a soldier and a transsexual drag queen who fall in love, but another soldier who is an unstable friend becomes bitter about the relationship and the soldier who loves the transgender is killed. The film received major accolades for the honesty and treatment of the story.

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Week Eight (Thursday, February 27) New Systems and Boundaries? Cultural Appropriation. New Materials.

Where we are now and what might happen in the future with new developments and new frontiers? What are the boundaries today? How porous are these boundaries and what are possible new boundaries; changing influences and where do we go from here? Is fashion modern? We will follow some fashion pieces through the past.

Comments and questions:

- 1- Today there are major discussions concerning "cultural appropriation". What is happening? Has this happened before and what are the difficulties involved? Can "cultural appropriation" be considered something that has a positive effect? We will talk about examples of "cultural appropriation" and how they are created.
- 2- In opposition to "cultural appropriation" how do you define stylistic and artistic influences on clothes that are

absorbed by a culture yet coming from another culture or cultures. Should we think about class structures?

- 3- New uses of fabrics and how they might be applied. This has many exciting possibilities.
- 4- Based on a 2017 exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York we will follow certain aspects of “Items: Is Fashion Modern?” How does the past continue into the present and what are the influences?

Conclusions:

So in the end we finally return to the basics: a picture of a “primitive” family group in Borneo! We had started with the nude body and looked at various ways how the body was decorated, covered or uncovered over the centuries. But by creating a mask from vegetation and covering their bodies with available colored earth, this family has created, a “unified, bonding look”. They are now “dressed”. Is it time to re-think?

We, as humans all over the world, simply cannot escape these basic desires to transform the body’s limitations and with this dialogue between wearer and viewer messages and signals take on meanings: aesthetic, symbolic and communicative. It will never change but then these are several of the “ongoing rewards” that challenge the human eye and keep cultures going.

REMEMBER: WHY NOT?

These are some books that you might want to look into in order to better understand the complex field of the psychology of clothing.

There is not one book that covers all the material, but if you want to look at two books, I would suggest, #1- Anne Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 1993, (this book is very detailed and relates clothes through art history) and #2- Allison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes*, 2000 (a very concise and focused book about what clothes mean).

If you want a book that deals just with costume and fashion, I would suggest #3- James Laver's *Costume and Fashion: A Concise History*, 4th addition 2004.

A Selected Bibliography

The book biographies that deal with this class are so extensive I am giving you a VERY SELECTED list. If you are interested in a particular topic, I can give you the titles of other books.

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