



**Stockholms  
universitet**

Master's Program HMFAO, spring 2015

2015-03-23

**Fashion and Materiality, 7,5 ECTS**

Course responsible: Dr Paula von Wachenfeldt

## **Course Guidelines**

History of civilisation and culture shows that objects have always had a pivotal role in society. Our everyday life is organized around different objects with miscellaneous significance: they could bear a symbolic and/or affective value and they could have a purely functional role.

Object-based studies aim at exploring the ways in which commodities can be interpreted and conceived and how they can reflect the socio-cultural context in which they were created and used. Objects bring to life the social practices connected to them and tell about different narratives both historically and contemporary ones. This course offers methods that can be used when examining through which material culture can be examined.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

On completion of the course, you are expected to be able to:

- Explore the different methods that can be approached in fashion studies when analyzing an object
- Analyze fashion objects in their socio-cultural context
- Critically reflect on the meaning behind the materiality of an object

## **COURSE CONTENT**

The course will cover the following topics:

- The objects in Fashion studies
- Meanings of the objects

## **Centrum för modevetenskap**

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- Material culture of everyday

## TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The course consists of lectures, seminars and workshops. The lectures provide an overview of the different topics and issues in fashion and materiality while the seminars provide an opportunity to discuss and apply theoretical concepts and different approaches to the object-based studies.

Students are expected to attend at least 80 % of the total number of classes/lectures. Attendance at the Hallwylska Museum, student symposium and submission of papers are mandatory.

*All coursework will be conducted in English.*

## ASSESSMENT

The course is assessed through student presentations at the symposium and the completion of a written take-home exam à no more than 10 pages. The presentations are graded *pass* or *fail*, while the take-home exam is graded on a criterion-referenced seven-grade scale.

In order to obtain the final grade for the course, both assignments have to be completed with a *pass*, a minimum grade of *E*, as well as the criteria of 80 % mandatory attendance.

### *Final Exam*

The symposium consists of a presentation of a chosen object by a pair of students. The presentation is 20 minutes long followed by 5 minutes feedback from a feedback group. The last 5 minutes are dedicated to the comments and questions of the audience. Theoretical aspects, as much as the methodology used to investigate the object, have to be taken into consideration. The study has to show the social, cultural and historical context in which the object in question has been produced and used.

The symposium will take place on **27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May in Wilson**. Participation is mandatory. At the symposium review on the 11<sup>th</sup> May, you are to discuss the final details of your presentation with your peer.

The paper that the student writes for the presentation at the symposium will serve as the final exam, and it should be turned in on **the 25<sup>th</sup> May in the box outside Paula's office.**

### *Grading*

The assessment is based on a criterion-referenced scale from A to F.

A, B, C, D and E are approved grades. Fx and F are failed grades. Students who have received a passing grade (A-E) are not allowed to retake the examination in order to receive a higher grade.

Students who, for any reason, do not meet the deadline for the final exam cannot expect to receive any higher grade than a **D**.

## **PLAGIARISM**

As a student you will be writing and handing in different types of written tasks. It is therefore fundamental that you know that all kind of plagiarism is strictly forbidden! Plagiarism consists of:

- Students copying from each other;
- Students copying from internet, books, articles or other sources without a clear reference;
- Students passing a work or a citation as their own when it is not;
- All kind of cut-and-paste writing strategies.

Any incident of this kind will be reported to the Disciplinary committee of Stockholm University. In case you are found guilty you might be suspended from the University for a period of time.

In order to avoid plagiarism you need to:

- Precise your sources by referring to the author, the book and the page in question;
- Mark that you are using someone else's words by marking it with a quotation mark;
- Precise whose thoughts you are presenting if they are not your own;
- Not pass your work to others.

## GRADING CRITERIA

The following summary presents the criterion applied to the different grades. The grading criteria is designed so that requirements included to achieve the lowest approved grade, the grade of E, also applies to higher grades (D-A).

A → The student shows an excellent ability to understand and reflect on the different meanings of materiality. An innovative ability to independently examine and apply different theoretical approaches to an object. Impeccable language.

B → Very good ability to understand the meanings of materiality. The student can perfectly integrate different theoretical approaches to the analyses. Well reflective standpoints and very good language.

C → Good knowledge of concepts and theories related to materiality. Ability to use these concepts and theories to explain and analyze the nature of an object and its role in society. Good language use.

D → Good knowledge of an object. Rudimentary ability to use the concepts and theories in describing and analyzing the object. Acceptable language use.

E → Knowledge of some factors and concepts in the field of material culture. Basic attempt to use these concepts when describing an object. Acceptable language yet with some faults.

The following applies to fail grades:

Fx → Insufficient: Mandatory course requirements are not met. The student needs to hand in a supplementary course work within one week after the result of the final exam has been reported.

F → Insufficient: No relevant knowledge. Handed in a defective examination or one that cannot be assessed. Supplementary work is not accepted.

## READING LIST

### ***Books:***

Harvey, Karen. 2009. *History and Material Culture*. London & New York: Routledge.

Daniel Miller & Susanne Kuchler 2005. *Clothing as material culture*. Oxford: Berg.

### ***Articles uploaded on Mondo:***

Giorgio Riello, 2011. "The Object of Fashion: methodological approaches to the history of fashion", *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, Vol. 3, <http://www.aestheticsandculture.net/index.php/jac/article/view/8865/12789>

Daniel Miller, 2005. "Introduction", Daniel Miller, *Materiality*, Duke University Press Books. [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/people/academic\\_staff/d\\_miller/mil-8](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/people/academic_staff/d_miller/mil-8)

Peter Stallybrass, 1993. 'Worn Worlds: Clothes, Mourning, and the Life of Things', *Yale Review* 81(2), pp. 35–50.

### ***Articles Available Online (students must download them):***

Valerie Steele, "A Museum of Fashion is More than a Clothes Bag", *Fashion Theory*, 'Methodology' a special issue, vol.2 Issue 4, 1998, pp. 327-35.

Sophie Woodward, Tom Fisher. 2014. "Fashioning through materials: Material Culture, materiality and process of materialization", *Critical Studies of Fashion and Beauty*, Vol. 5, Issue 1, 3-24

### ***Compendium bought at the Centre:***

Marie Riegels Melchior, 2014. "Dress Museology vs Fashion Museology", in *Fashion and Museum: Theory and Practice*, London: Bloomsbury, pp. 6-14

Lou Taylor. 2002. "Artefact-based approaches: collection, identification, conservation" in *The Study of Dress History*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press. pp. 4-23.

Ludmilla Jordanova, "Description and Evidence" in *The Look of the Past, Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Georges Perec, 1996 [1989] "Approaches to What?" in *The Infra-ordinary*. Reprinted in *Species of Space and Other Pieces*. London: Penguin Books.

Georges Perec, 1996, [1985]. "Notes Concerning the Objects that are on my Worktable", *Thinking and Classifying*. Reprinted in *Species of Space and Other Pieces*. London: Penguin Books.

Georges Perec, 1996, [1985]. "Twelve Sidelong Glances", *Thinking and Classifying*, History of sensibility. Reprinted in *Species of Space and Other Pieces*. London: Penguin Books.

Daniel Wickberg, "What is the History of Sensibilities? On Cultural Histories, Old and New" in *The American Historical Review*, vol. 112, no. 3, June 2007.

Sherry Turkle, "What makes an object evocative?", in *Evocative Objects. Things We Think With*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 307-326