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| BA Sociology  BA Sociology (Major) |
| SY2083 – Sociology of Fashion |

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# **Introduction**

The module offers students the opportunity to study the growing body of literature on fashion within and outside of sociology. It also covers a range of topics of interest to students and related to other areas of their study including the politics that swirl around fashion, including fast fashion and sustainable fashion. Youth subcultures, fashion, and activism, saving and breaking the world through what we wear. We will look at and critique film analysis, social media, music, the print and advertising media and personal and public politics. Students will be encouraged to investigate areas of their own interest through portfolio work on fashion including engagement with magazines, retail and the role of fashion and dress in their own lives.

## **Module Aims and Objectives**

At the end of this module, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of classical and contemporary theories and studies of fashion.
2. Have a broad understanding of a variety of dimensions of fashion including gender, sexuality, children’s fashion, fashion production and celebrity, linking to media sources, subcultures, ethnicity and race.
3. Be able to apply theory and concepts from fashion literatures to current and contemporary examples.

## **Learning Outcomes**

Students will have the opportunity to develop:

1. Present sociological knowledge and ideas in a clear and concise way both orally and in writing.
2. Show ability to critique and analyse theory and concepts both verbally and in writing.
3. Form teams and work collaboratively to discuss sociological problems.
4. Read, analyse, and critically reflect upon sociological texts and other studies in relation to fashion.
5. Assess evidence and the appropriateness of sociological methodology and empirical investigation.
6. Make connections between theory and practice or concepts and examples.
7. Demonstrate points 1 to 6 through formally assessed work on set tasks.

***Employability Profile***

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| **Employability skill** | **Where demonstrated** | **Method of assessment** |
| Problem solving | Summative assignments | Formally assessed |
| Leadership | seminars | Formally assessed |
| Written communication | Summative assignments | Formally assessed |
| Information technologies | Summative assignments | Formally assessed |
| Group work skills | seminars | Informally assessed |
| Oral communication | Seminars | Formally assessed |
| Analysis of evidence, information & competing explanations | Summative assignments | Formally assessed |
| Time planning, organisation | Summative assignments | Formally assessed |
| Self-directed learning and initiative | Preparation for seminars & for assignments | Informally assessed |
| Relevance of sociological knowledge to social, public and civil policy | Summative assignments | Formally assessed |
| Understand the value of comparative analysis | Summative assignments | Formally assessed |

## **Teaching and Learning on the Module**

The most important part of your study consists of your own reading, thinking about and writing about the theorists and ideas covered by this module. The 2 hour workshop a week aims to guide you and to enable you to discuss your ideas and raise questions. They are in no way a substitute for your own independent study. Given the topical nature of this module, students are actively encouraged to engage with the topic outside of lecture and seminar time and to make connections between issues raised during teaching and everyday life.

In the 2 hour workshop we will provide you with an overview of the main theoretical concepts and the principal criticisms that have been levelled at them. In the workshops you will have the opportunity to discuss your thinking and writing with a small group of fellow-students. We highly encouraged that you engage in debates and bring ideas to these sessions. You are required to attend every workshop. We are happy to meet with students individually to discuss their work during appointments made via email.

Attendance is an essential requirement. Attendance registers are kept for all sociology workshops and persistent non-attendance will be reported to the College Student Progress Committee.

Unexplained absence causes inconvenience to lectures/tutors and fellow students and is taken very seriously. Please let the lecturer/tutor or the Departmental Office know *in advance* if you are unable to attend. This is particularly important if an essay, paper or presentation that you have been asked to prepare is intended to form the basis of a seminar class.

## **You Said, We Did**

The module has received good evaluation but has included more focus on race and fashion.

# **Assessment**

Portfolio (100% of module marks)

The portfolio consists of 2 Tasks

Task One: Design & Production of Advertisement

Task Two: Essay/rationale that goes along with your advertisement piece to justify and link to academic texts that we have discussed throughout the module.

## **Deadline**

**9th of May 2022 – 12 noon**

Coursework handed after the above deadlines will incur a late penalty, as specified in the Undergraduate Student Handbook. Deadlines may vary between modules.

**It is your responsibility to meet the correct deadline.**

## **Assignment Questions / Details**

**Tasks must be submitted together as single document (PDF) – unless task 2 is an audio or video file**

**TASK 1**: **Design & Production of Advertisement (50%)**

Students will choose a specific item of clothing or a fashion accessory that currently exists, and *design and produce an advertisement for this product*. This can either be an audio, video or a still image advertisement. Be creative and think of the topics that we have covered over the weeks.

Audio advertisements are generally produced for radio and are generally no more than 30 seconds in length – this should be a guide for students choosing audio.

Video advertisements are made for a variety of media, but are usually no more than 1 minute in length - this should be a guide for students choosing video

Still image advertisements feature in newspapers, magazines, on billboards, on the sides of public transport to name a few. They are generally a single paged image - this should be a guide for students choosing still images.

Advertisements must be submitted as audio, video or image files titled Task 2, as part of the portfolio, **BUT** audio and video files should also be sent to the module convenor.

**TASK 2: rationale that goes with advertisement piece (50%)**

*Write up a* ***rationale*** *(2000 words max)* that explains why you chose the given product, as well as the intended effects or messages embedded in the advertisement. In addition, you can remark on the connections between your advertisement and the key issues and concepts we explore throughout the module. Explore what weeks link back to your advertisement piece and reference literature that we have looked at. This is your opportunity to show us what you have learnt during the module and what you have taken from it. Make sure you reference back to the weeks that we have covered.

# **Assignment Project Details**

**HOW TO SUBMIT ALL FORMS OF COURSEWORK – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

* Download the correct coversheet and save with a file name such as SY2083 Portfolio followed by your candidate number. The coversheets can be found on Blackboard.
* Complete the boxes on the coversheet. In the box which is orange and requests your name as you type you will not see your name, just a yellow box. This is to keep your work anonymous. It is important that you complete the **word count** where required.
* Now simply cut and paste your essay/portfolio on to the end of the form. Your name should not be included anywhere on your essay**. Instead you should put your candidate number in the header of your essay.**
* You can then submit your work to Blackboard. The submission is via the relevant module. Access the module and use the **“Submit your work here”** tab on the left-hand side. Then submit to Blackboard following the on-line instructions.
* In the **submission title box** use the save file name as above, e.g. SY2083 Portfolio, and then your candidate number. Remember that you must submit your work using Word. Only one Word file can be submitted – so please merge any work into one file. No hard copies are required.
* ALL coursework is submitted to Blackboard, where it will be checked for Plagiarism**.**
* If you have any queries or problems, please email [mcs@le.ac.uk](mailto:mcs@le.ac.uk)).

*Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is using the work of others as if it were your own. All written work must be your own work. You must not copy from other students, or from the published (or unpublished) work of others. Whenever you make use of books, articles, Internet or other source material, you must make this clear by the appropriate use of references and, where a passage is cited word for word, by the use of quotation marks. **Plagiarism is a serious offence and is regarded in the same light as cheating in examinations. It is likely to result in failure and a mark of 0 for the whole module**, and can lead to disciplinary action. See the section on plagiarism in the Sociology *Undergraduate Student Handbook*. If you are, in any doubt you are advised to talk to your personal tutor, module leader, or seminar tutors.

Your summative essay and portfolio which must be submitted on Blackboard, will be checked using the JISC Plagiarism detection software (this compares your work to that of other students past and present, at Leicester and other Universities, as well as websites, journals and other materials).

**Contacting Staff**

You are encouraged to use the lecturer’s and or seminar tutor’s Drop-in Office hours. However, if you are unable to attend and wish to make an appointment or to get advice on an urgent matter, you are welcome to email them. Staff will answer emails as soon as possible. However, please note that they have other responsibilities alongside their teaching such as research and administrative meetings which mean that they are often away from their email and cannot be expected to provide an immediate response.

# **Lecture Schedule**

The following provides a week by week guide to the main content of lectures and seminars. Content may vary or get moved due to unforeseen circumstances or pedagogic decisions taken by the module lecturer.

Topic for each lecture and seminar is below. For reading lists please see the library reading list on blackboard.

**Week One: Introduction and 24 hours with Molly Mae – 21th Jan**

This week will introduce students to the module, its aims content and teaching methods. Assessment procedures will also be outlined. It will also cover how this module will be structured and taught and what is expected of you during the session. This week we will explore the role of the influence with our example of Molly Mae. We will begin to touch upon the notion of fast fashion and its links to sweat shops in Leicester as well as sustainable fashion and how this can be done/maintained in a busy lifestyle.

**Week Two: The rise of Fred Perry – 28th Jan**

This week we explore fashion through its links to class and identity. We use the example of Fred Perry to demonstrate how big fashion companies evolve and change over time. By doing this we analyse its links with far right hate groups, working class youth subcultures, modern day skin heads and repurposed, recycled vintage clothes. This week you will be introduced to some theory, including Hebdige and Cohen who talk about subcultures and their roles in society. How they are formed, how they link to music, youth, and wider societal issues. Appropriation is introduced which we will explore further in Babylon Britain.

**Week Three: Babylon Britain – 4th Feb**

Week 3 consists of influence and ethnic identity. We encourage you to watch the film Babylon before this session as we will refer to it throughout this workshop. It is available on Netflix and some clips are available on YouTube. We are looking at an extremely important aspect to fashion which is often overlooked: ethnicity. Here we will deconstruct fashions links with ethnicity and cover ideas of heritage and cultural appropriation. Who is aloud to wear what and who owns the right? We will use film analysis to test your critical thinking and analysis skills. We will look at the Windrush and how this had an impact on Britain, what did Britain look like in the past, how does it differ to now and what should we expect to see in the future.

**Week Four: Punk, identity, and fashion – 11th Feb**

Mia will be leading this session focusing on all things to do with punk, music, fashion, and identity. We will cover the definitions of punk, how and what classes you as a punk, what do punks do and the history of why it all started. We will be talking about aging punks and what punks looks like today with reference to Mia’s own research on aging members of the subculture. In this session we will get you to do some photo elicitation of punks to see what you can draw out from these images and help your analytical skills. Specific readings will be put up on blackboard before the session which will be discussed during the workshop. DIY culture and how punks put together outfits will be explored and how this has changed and shaped society today. Zines and cut and stick posters will be looked at and we may ask you to make some of your own!

**Week Five: I fought the law and the law won part 1 – 18th Feb**

This week is the first of a 2 part workshop looking at activism and fashion. Here Lisa will be talking about her project that she is part of with Vivienne Westwood. We are going to explore what it means to be an activist, how this links to fashion and who can get involved. We are going to look at what fashion activism campaigns look like, what their aims are and how they relate to wider societal issues. What do they achieve, how did they come about and what is there history?

**WEEK SIX: READING WEEK – 25th Feb**

We will give you relevant literature to read for this week.

**Week Seven: I fought the law and the law won part 2 – 4th March**

This week, which is the second part of activism and fashion, we are asking you to get creative. This task will help you with part of the assessment being asked to make an advert. This week we will split you into groups and ask you to design your own activism campaign for a cause of your choice. As a collective group we will analyse and critique each group looking at the pros and cons of fashion and activism and how this can either help or disadvantage the cause. This will help develop your debating skills and encourage you to look at both sides of the argument being made.

**Week Eight: Sustainable fashion – 11th March**

This week’s workshop links back to the first session that we did on 24 hours with Molly Mae. We refer back to sweat shops and remove the veil covering the hidden secrets of fast fashion. We will explore definitions of sustainability and what this looks like. How much can we do to avoid fast fashion and who can participate in being sustainable? Charity shops and vintage clothing will be a big part of this session, discussing the rise and lack of stigma now attached to charity shops. What is second hand clothing, why is it popular and what has changed in fashion for this to be a thing?

**Week Nine: Critique of British fashion through media film analysis – 18th March**

This week we are using film to critically analyse fashion. Clueless and mean girls will be used as examples to observe consumer behaviours, social identity, and personal style. We want to encourage your sociological lens and show you how wider contemporary sources link to sociology and fashion. Tween culture and sexualisation of women will be discussed including a feminist perspective on why this is an issue in society. Again, we will link back to the very first week, looking at Instagram and ticktock to demonstrate the power of the media and social media trends. This will take a modern look at fashion using media sources.

**Week Ten: Critique of British fashion through media film analysis – 25th March**

Like last week we are using media film analysis to structure this workshop. This week we will be taking a look back to critique the social history of fashion and move away from modern ideas. Here we will use photographs and videos to show how fashion has changed. We will explore gender boundaries with what and who can wear what, when did things change and was there a reason for this.

**Week Eleven: The good, the bad and the ugly, summery and assessment workshop – 1st April**

This week’s session will bring together the key themes of the module and discuss the ‘future’ of fashion. We will discuss what conclusions can be made and we want to give students the opportunity to share their opinions and views on fashion as a whole concept and idea. Students will also be given a chance to discuss assessments. We will host a Q and A about the assessment so please bring any questions or queries that you have to this session.

Any further questions about the module, please email either Lisa or Mia.