BA (Hons)
History of Art and Design
History of Decorative Arts and Crafts
History of Design
Fashion and Dress History
Museum and Heritage Studies
Visual Culture

MA History of Design and Material Culture

Graduate Show
3-11 June 2017
Grand Parade
BA (Hons) History of Art and Design

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University of Brighton
‘It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it’.
(Aristotle)
Welcome…

…to the 2017 dissertation degree show, designed and delivered by students in the History of Art and Design programme in the School of Humanities. This showcase of original research encompasses six undergraduate courses: BA (Hons) History of Art and Design; BA (Hons) History of Decorative Arts and Crafts; BA (Hons) Fashion and Dress History; BA (Hons) Museum and Heritage Studies; BA (Hons) History of Design; BA (Hons) Visual Culture, as well as the full-time finalists in MA History of Design and Material Culture. For all these students, the dissertation is the fulfilment of twelve months of intensive empirical and/or theoretical research. Topics emerge from a combination of students’ own enthusiasms and the specialist knowledge acquired on their degrees, and their independent study develops through a range of supported milestones, culminating in this final presentation for members of the public.

As you will see, students’ projects cut across time and place, from the eighteenth century to the present day, and include local concerns as well as international case studies. The themes they explore cover gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, class and taste, politics and protest, consumption and collecting, magic and myth, craft and technology, music and dance, the display of death and the practice of ‘living history’. The images, objects, media and sites are an equally broad field, taking in painting, photography and performance art; film, music video and digital media; advertising, periodicals and packaging; architecture, furniture and interiors; historic houses, galleries and exhibitions; fashion, dress and textiles. In preparing their dissertations, students conduct original research in national and local libraries, archives, museums and collections, and through interviews and fieldwork. As their final flourish, they distil their results into various forms for the purpose of this degree exhibition. We very much hope that you will enjoy what you see here in posters and showreel images they have produced, and appreciate the intellectual endeavour of the dissertation outlines provided in this catalogue. Please take your time to enjoy the fruits of their labour; we are truly proud of what they have achieved.

If this whets your appetite for pursuing a similar course of study yourself we will be very happy to hear from you; initial contact details for all our undergraduate and postgraduate courses can be found towards the back of the catalogue.

Dr Annebella Pollen (Academic Programme Leader, History of Art and Design), June 2017
BA (Hons) History of Art and Design
My dissertation explores the role of the postmodern gallery and how it has generated alternative platforms for activist art. By focusing on Tate Modern I have explored whether they have worked cohesively with the demands of the community they cater for, with particular attention to the site specific areas within the museum from the gallery space to the performative space.

Furthermore, an exploration into the feminist roots of activist art through influential activist artist Suzanne Lacy. Her performative works during the 1970s, represent how artists like Lacy became the catalyst for the documentation of activist art. This documentation established the role of the cameraman within the art world, and commissioned works in Tate Modern such as those by Tania Bruguera and her behaviour art held in the Tanks, to be recorded and archived. As well as commissioned works, Tate has to consider external activism which impacts on it and its reputation. Liberate Tate, an activist artist collective, drew attention to Tate and its relationship with corporate sponsors BP by using guerilla tactics. Although this external art does not always work in harmony with Tate it does become associated with the museum.

But questions on how this work is to be curated in the gallery space and documented arise, and whether politically driven art should be curated at all. As society evolves and traditions are challenged the museum develops to take on a more liberal approach to art and the world it contextually lies within, with an ethical responsibility to archive, document or curate influential and significant art which confronts current global and social issues.
From Underground to Mainstream: Contemporary Artists and the Commercialisation of Tattooing

Melissa Capon

There has been an increase in the number of individuals who decorate their bodies with tattoos; the amount of tattoo parlours in the UK grew 173% between 2003 and 2013 demonstrating the demand for this art form in recent years. Tattooing and tattoo designs has become adopted into mass society, with help from the fashion industry, and is not constricted to age, ethnicity or class boundaries.

This dissertation aims to explore the relationship between fine art and the folk art of tattooing and the way contemporary artists are using tattoos within their works and exhibitions. Controversial contemporary artists and Young British Artists, represented in this discussion by Wim Delvoye, Damien Hirst and Jake and Dinos Chapman, have incorporated tattoos into their recent works. As they are known characters within the art world, predominantly due to the shocking nature of their works making headlines within media outlets, there is a financial value attached to their creations. This dissertation delves into the way a tattoo can be commoditised and given a financial value within the art market, which thrives from buying and selling rare and unique items, objects that are not mass produced.

The practice of tattooing is becoming distant from its negative subcultural past though its inclusion in respected institutional spaces in the forms of museums, auction houses and galleries. As a result of this, the hierarchies and boundaries between folk art and fine art are blurring and tattooing is becoming closer to “legitimate” art. However, from conversing with a local tattooist, Michelle Taylor-Knight, this dissertation continues to explore the limitations of the practice of tattooing and how the very nature of the craft can hinder it from becoming a high art.

Videogames as a Multi-Dimensional Space: The Gamer’s Subject Position in relation to Counter-Strike: Global Offensive

Kyriacos Charalambous

Videogames are an innovative addition to popular culture and can be characterised as a genre that uses interaction as an instrument for communication. To identify that computer games are a unique genre, is to differentiate them from traditional artistic notions that emphasise on aesthetic theories and their application on social, political and cultural phenomena. This dissertation aims to investigate certain variables that exist beyond the physical and/or virtual boundaries of any videogame, which in turn labels games as an interactive and innovative genre. Using Counter-Strike: Global Offensive as the main example of a videogame paradigm, various levels of human/machine interaction will be analysed. By examining the very nature of play in relation to any videogame, bodily interactions and eye coordination, as well as perception can be seen as essential factors that allow the player to immerse in a virtual world generated by a game.

It is visible that certain spatial temporalities coexist in order to provide a balanced and enjoyable gameplay experience. Such temporalities are identified as the timeframes, and their capability of being altered and manipulated, that surround both the player and the videogame. Particularly, a player can adjust certain in-game events and control their duration, repetition and outcome in order to shape a preferable gameplay experience. Therefore, this project is going to investigate how these temporalities can provide unique virtual experiences to numerous players. Videogames are a creative genre that consumes individuals in every household. From Candy Crush and Tetris to big titles such as Counter-Strike: Global Offensive, it is visible that electronic games follow specific rules that eventually provide a state of immersion that, to a certain extent, the player can shape and manipulate.
Acting up: Activist art and the AIDS crisis in 1980s New York

Emilie Clarke

The political climate of the 1980s unearthed conservative ideals reminiscent of a time before the 1960s and 1970s countercultures, which had a profound effect on society and culture. Meanwhile, a disease was rapidly killing young, relatively healthy members of gay, black and Hispanic communities and spreading across America. Branded as a ‘gay disease’, AIDS and its surrounding discourses give an insight into the attitudes towards already alienated members of American society and the power representation, language and the media have in the spread of propaganda and fear. Communities of people formed alliances and coalitions in order to combat this. In representing themselves, to each other, AIDS activists fought against harmful representations forced upon them by the media and the government.

My dissertation explores the relationship between art and AIDS activism. Focusing primarily on 1980s New York, I showcase the activist work done by both ACT UP New York (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) and Gran Fury. My research also gives an insight into the political climate and explores the discourses surrounding the disease and the power relations within this. Also highlighted are methods by which discourses relating to AIDS relate to power structures and disenfranchisement of affected communities. The aim of this dissertation is to highlight the anger and alienation felt by AIDS victims and queer people while presenting three examples of AIDS activist art which epitomize the activist artwork that emerged. The three examples I have used are a poster, an advertisement and a gallery installation, intending to give a well-rounded view of the different approaches to activist art. Alongside this, a brief introduction to activist art and its various methods is included to give context to the case studies used, while also discussing the problematic nature of activist art’s acceptance into art institutions.
Unmasking ‘Rape Culture’ with Contemporary Art

Grace Collins

This dissertation draws upon contemporary artworks to explore the social phenomenon of rape culture as a contemporary issue. The term ‘rape culture’ defines a society whereby rape, violence, sexual assault and other tropes have become saturated within our culture. Rape culture was first coined during the 1960s and 1970s in response to the socio-political climate. During this period, theorists such as Betty Friedan voiced against the domestic containment, domestic assault and rape against women. Echoing their writings, artists such as Ana Mendieta and Carolee Schneemann reflected this struggle for equality and body autonomy within their artworks. As this social phenomenon has continued, so has its presence within the art microcosm.

This research uses a multi-disciplinarian critical framework to presents a feminist perspective on a culturally embedded social phenomenon. As exemplified by the themes embedded within the included artworks, the multi-faceted nature of rape culture raises many challenges and sub-topics which affect a cross-section of society and have influenced the focus on the subsequent chapters.

To cement rape culture as a contemporary phenomenon, I explore the discourse between rape culture and the digital world, focusing on the problematic medium of photography. Leading on from the microcosm of the digital world, I explore how pornographic materials are embedded within contemporary art and visual culture, reflecting the imbalance of gender equality. Following on from the accessibility of pornography, my focus shifts onto notions of sexual access to reveal how presumed sexual access devalues the woman form. Lastly, in consideration of the encompassing nature of rape culture and the ways it manifests itself, I explore its consequences by discussing internalised sexism and its effects on women’s psychological and physical health, introducing the issue of plastic surgery and body modification.
Contemporary Japanese Art and the Effect of Globalisation

Inez Gill

For young Japanese people in the 1990s, the experience of society and culture was significantly different from the generation before them. This was due to several unique factors that affected those growing up in the period specifically. One of these was the emergence of the otaku sub-culture, a derogatory term for the collective of youths obsessed with anime, manga and video games. There was also the rise of the lolicon phenomenon in which young girls are heavily sexualised by the male population who no longer know how to interact with their mature female counterparts. Another development was kawaii culture, roughly translating as cute, whose participants were typically girls and heavily based on a lifestyle of perceived innocence and adorableness. Inextricable from one another and with growing globalisation, these entities have become part of a world view that accepts them as typical of Japanese culture. This also applies when looking at these characteristics within art. It is often anime, manga and kawaii inspired pieces of work that are associated with being typical of Japanese contemporary art. However, the significance of this kind of art is based on a perception of Japanese culture that is accepted by the Western world, and may not be a true representation of contemporary societal values and customs in Japan.

This dissertation looks at the representation of Japanese culture in art through the work of three Japanese contemporary artists; Murakami Takashi, Aida Makoto and Sugiyama Kenji. It will consider how globalisation, which describes the growing international relationship between worldwide societies, has effected culturally recognisable art in becoming an expected standard and what bearing this has on the perceived success or acceptance of the three Japanese artists work in the global art world.
The Contemporary Collecting of Dogon Material Culture in the West

Sophie Martineau

This dissertation explores the contemporary ways in which Dogon material culture is collected and traded within Western institutions, and the discourse surrounding these practices. The Dogon people of Mali are today one of the most studied ethnic groups in Africa. Since Marcel Griaule’s 1930s expeditions to Dogon country and his subsequent publications on Dogon custom their religion, cosmology and traditions have captured the imagination of the Western public resulting in a thriving market for their material culture through art dealers, ethnographic museums and tourism. This relationship between the Dogon and the West and the general Western fascination with African material culture has lead to extensive academic discourse surrounding the representation and taxonomical approaches within these areas of practice. This dissertation focuses on two main theories; James Clifford presents a system of classification for non-European objects when they enter the Western market, which he titles The Art-Culture System; and Stanley Abe suggests a new contemporary method for the categorisation of global objects under the title World Art. The paper uses these theories amongst others to explore the practices of contemporary collecting through two case studies to act as examples. The first and main case study concentrates on the 2017 BRUNEAF World Art Fair in Brussels. The second case study, used to juxtapose the first, consists of examples from the Dogon archives at the Horniman Museum in London. Using Clifford’s and Abe’s methods and the two case studies this dissertation aims to question whether academic discourse surrounding the collection of African material culture is mirrored within contemporary Western practices.
Jean-Michel Basquiat: No Precedent and Following Tradition

Leonardo Pineiro

Jean-Michel Basquiat’s untimely death at 27 has meant that scholarly inquiry into his oeuvre and biographical research has been essential in constructing a more coherent portrayal of such an influential artist. Despite the fact the artist produced nearly 2000 works in his short career, much of it is inaccessible to the public due to collectors and private estates thus making such research into the artist more tedious. Basquiat was not the type to elaborate in detail about his paintings, however defended himself in interviews against being categorised as a primitive or ‘street’ artist despite coming to public attention as a graffiti artist in the late seventies. Basquiat’s artistic output has been associated with several themes and styles, my dissertation aims to analyse such assertions in accordance with his work and to try and reveal how he interacts with aspects of modernism (such as primitivism), and various themes rather than the conceived notion that Basquiat was untrained therefore having a tendency to lack sufficient art historical knowledge.

The fame that he received during his lifetime and his success on the art market, alongside being one of the most prestigious black painters of the twentieth century, has meant his true artistic worth has often become shrouded and conflated with the latter and his lifestyle. Such lifestyle being synonymous to a decade of conspicuous consumption and the art boom which characterised New York City in the eighties. Whilst such an artist may be difficult to imagine out of his era, his place in art history is undeniable and his ability to use text deserves further scrutiny. My dissertation explores how this highly subjective artist was able to stand out before his contemporaries with a style which presented great originality.

‘Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds’: A study of how album cover art responded to the psychedelic influences of British counterculture in the 1960s

Lili Reavie-Corker

This dissertation deals with the key historical, social and economic factors that influenced British history and preceded a wave of a colourful psychedelic cultural transformation in the 1960s. It defines the countercultural movement, mirrored by changes sweeping across the United States, which influenced the affect popular culture had on British society. It outlines the socio-cultural shifts that gave British youth a voice as to how they wanted to live and how they wanted to be perceived. These changes had their roots in consumerism of product, popular music and fashion, and became reinforced by increasingly affluent and developing technological world and more opportunities for leisure. A catalyst to change was a widening interest in anti-establishmentarianism, exploration and experimentation, particularly through the use of hallucinogenic drugs, for example Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD). The visual and perceptual effects of LSD were recorded by authors, poets, musicians and artists of the time and were regarded as a psychedelic phenomenon that strongly inspired the counterculture in late sixties Britain. The research documents psychedelic visual image through examining album cover art created by artists, designers and photographers, for the most influential bands of the era, namely, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Cream. It concludes with an analysis of findings of how the visual concept of psychedelia influenced a countercultural movement which changed the way album covers are designed and perceived. Psychedelia transpired into a cultural style that was at the forefront of countercultural fashions of the late 1960s and, in turn, contributed to the way we use psychedelic aesthetics in a world that is underpinned by consumerism, counterculture and change.
Gender Representation in Surrealism

Jessica Stanhope

“Surrealism is destructive, but it destroys only what it considers to be shackles limiting our vision.”

Salvador Dali

Surrealism was an art movement originating in Paris in 1924; it was founded on the concept of “psychic automatism in its purest state” and complete freedom of imagination. This dissertation explores gender representation in Surrealism through the work of three artists; Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp and Claude Cahun. These artists all depicted gender utilising three different media; photography, painting and exploration of their own gender. I focused on these artists as they bring various differing aspects on gender and when analysed together this results in an overall balance.

Surrealists produced ground-breaking artwork many of which were heavily criticised by the mainstream, making them even more desirable. As a result of this influential nature, Surrealism effectively paved the way for gender representation, “Surrealists sought to destabilize the gender roles that had cemented traditional ideas about the family.”

Surrealism was a time in post-war France in which the Government wanted to rebuild the nuclear family with traditional values. Surrealists moved and fought strongly against this using their artwork, many of whom photographed female nudes as a stance against the saturation of images of the ‘mother’ figure.

This research hopes to highlight the misogynistic nature of the Surrealist movement despite drawing attention to the work of Claude Cahun, who was an androgynous artist and did not identify as one gender. Through the use of these three artists’ work I analyse the gender portrayed, the sexist nature of the image and the varying techniques used (either photography or painting).
BA (Hons) History of Decorative Arts and Crafts
Crafting Identity, Queering Space: An Examination of How Craft Can Enable the Expression of Queer Identities and Experiences

Jasmine Dunning

Queer: “ […] the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone’s gender, of anyone’s sexuality aren’t made (or can’t be made) to signify monolithically.” (Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick)

Craft: “Rather than presenting craft as a fixed set of things […] Craft only exists in motion. It is a way of doing things, not a classification of objects, institutions, or people.” (Glenn Adamson)

Craft and Queer are terms that are often seen as being somehow subsidiary. The definitions above cast a broad net, however this allows for a different, non-binary way of thinking, within which the two find kinship. Gender and sexuality have long been associated with craft due to its association with femininity, branding it menial due to women’s lesser status in society. Crafts’ identity as simply an expression of femininity led to art forms such as needlework and ceramics being labelled craft, separating such media from art.

From figureheads in the Bauhaus Weaving Workshops in the 1930s to prominent contemporary artists such as Grayson Perry, craft has a history of being used by artists to express and reclaim the marginalisation of identities. This dissertation examines the different ways in which craft is used to aid the expression of queer identities. It explores two key areas, crafts use within a community or non-professional setting, and crafts use in a gallery setting or by professional working artists. It will compare pieces made by LGBTQ+ community groups to pieces shown in major galleries and institutions to examine crafts contemporary role within queer art. The pieces discussed detail a close-knit community that celebrates its history in spite of adversity, adopting craft as its companion to assist with the expression of queer identities and experiences.

A Case for Smoking: Women and the Material Culture of Smoking during the Inter-War Period (1918-1938)

Lindsey Marr

Smoking accessories are not only beautifully decorated objects, but also rich pieces of material culture which can help contextualize the complex cultural attitudes surrounding women and smoking during the inter-war period. Smoking was a form of expression and projection of the liberated women that emerged after World War I. Concurrently the accessories used in the consumption of cigarettes accented the femininity and class of their user. The ways in which these objects were marketed and represented to women can help further reveal contemporary attitudes of the women who used them.

This dissertation will examine themes of female modernity, class, consumption and gender performance through a study of women’s smoking accessories. Women’s progress in the inter-war period was reflected through their increased visibility and agency in the consumption of cigarettes. This research aims to understand the influences which led to the rise in cigarette consumption among women and their use of smoking accessories. This interdisciplinary dissertation is founded on primary research of surviving objects, trade catalogues and periodicals with reference to theoreticians Judith Butler, Pierre Bourdieu and others, in order to understand the type of woman who would use smoking accessories and her motivations for consuming such objects. This study will investigate how smoking and smoking accessories were utilized to express the ideals of the modern woman before exploring the types of smoking accessories that were being produced during the period and how these objects embodied the aesthetic of modernity. The study will then look at the relationship between women’s smoking, class and the consumption of luxury goods before finally examining the transition of smoking to a feminized practice which was seen to reinforce hetero-normative interactions as well as accentuate the femininity of female smokers.
BA (Hons) History of Design
The Arts & Crafts Movement: William Morris and the Expression of Personal Identity through the Transformation of British Interior Design (1860-1910)

Charlotte Brown

Establishing itself in Britain in the 1880s, the Arts and Crafts Movement has become one of the most celebrated design movements of the past, cherished for its values of tradition and handcraftsmanship. This movement transformed the previously ornate and lavish aesthetic of the Victorian middle-class domestic interior to one of simplicity and practicality. My dissertation aims to explore the theme of personal identity within the Arts and Crafts British interior. Key questions such as how these hand-made objects and furnishings reflected characteristics of people’s identities will be explored, particularly ideologies, class and taste. My research begins by exploring the historical context of Britain in the nineteenth century - a period of rapid industrialisation and the creation of mass-produced consumer goods. As a result of this, many desired a return to traditional times and with this came the establishment of schools focusing on the revival of craftsmanship, and the introduction of interior design as an important and respected discipline. I then discuss the success of the Arts and Crafts Movement as well as the influence of perhaps one of the most well-known figures of the movement, William Morris. I later move onto an in-depth semiotic analysis of two renowned Arts and Crafts houses; Red House built in 1860 and Standen House built in 1890. From visiting both houses, as well as the William Morris Gallery and the Standen Archives, I interpret and analyse a range of original domestic objects held at the houses, as well as photographs and various pieces of archival material related to the interiors. Key theories regarding class, taste and gender in the domestic sphere are also incorporated into the analysis of these pieces, to help me answer the question of how, and whose, particular identities could be reflected within Arts and Crafts houses of the nineteenth century.
BA (Hons) Fashion and Dress History
Revolution and Russian Identity: The Changing Representations of Russia in the Ballets Russes

Isabella Anscombe

The 20th century dance company the Ballets Russes is viewed as one of the most influential and groundbreaking companies in the history of art. Being a company made up almost entirely from Russian artists, dancers and collaborators, their export campaign in the West saw them portray Russia in theatrically magnificent ways. The 1917 Russian revolution saw many of these artists disconnected with their homeland and the inspiration that its vast national identity provided.

This dissertation will focus on how the revolution altered the company’s portrayal of Russia through comparisons between productions before and after the revolution. My research opens with an outline of national identity and the history of a national consciousness in Russia. I discuss what imagery and elements make up the Russian national identity and argue how these can be seen in the costumes and music of Ballets Russes productions. Through analyzing garments from the V&A archive, I examine how images of Russia are communicated through dress. Furthermore, I use theory on music’s symbolic power to argue how images of Russia are created through the music of Igor Stravinsky.

The majority of ballets produced before the war used Russia as their central theme and portrayed it in a heightened and glamorised way. After the revolution significantly fewer ballets used Russia as inspiration and the ones that did portrayed it in a more traditional way. My final line of argument looks at how productions centered on Russia after the revolution represented a vastly different image to the glamorised and fantastic imagery in productions before. I argue that the imagery representing Russia in ballets after the revolution, compared to pre-revolution, reflect the feelings of disconnection from their homeland of the Russians living in the West and their feelings of loss of their Russian national identity and nostalgia for Russia’s past.
Corpse Couture: An Exploration into the Representation of Women as Corpses in Fashion Photography and Film from 1964 to 1980

Jade Bailey-Dowling

Fashion and Death are, arguably, intrinsically linked and constantly turn to one another as a mutual source of inspiration. While many scholars have noted this relationship, very little has been written on the subject by contemporaries.

The collaborative aspects of the death’s dialogue with fashion can be seen in the representation of women as corpses. While the Couture Corpse has been a common trope in art, literature, film and photography throughout history, this dissertation will focus on fashion photography and films with narratives of the fashion industry, which centre around models being staged as corpses.

The fashion photography of Helmut Newton and Guy Bourdin and the films Blood and Black Lace directed by Mario Bava (1964) and Eyes of Laura Mars directed by Irvin Kershner (1978) will be analysed as examples of women presented as corpses, during a time of female emancipation, to examine why this subject was used, as it appears to be an interesting and commonly contested approach in which to advertise clothes to women.

This exploration into the representation of women as corpses in fashion photography and film focuses on a specific time frame, from 1964 to 1980. This presented a very volatile period for the representation of women in popular culture, due to an increase in female liberation. Specifically, the issue of body ownership and notions of femininity led to increased scrutiny regarding how women were represented in visual culture.

In this exploration, Freudian and feminist theory will be applied to explain how the representation of women as corpses in fashion photography and film was perhaps a reaction, response or reply to, changing ideas of femininity and the female body during this period.
Correct Turnout? Proper Hunt Attire and Etiquette for the Horse and Rider

Lisa Bartup

Foxhunting was banned in 2004 but still over two hundred hunts continue to meet weekly between the open season of November and May following an artificial scent trail. The sight of red coats, hounds and horses gathering at a meet will perhaps evoke, in many, a quintessential image of rural England and a traditional symbol of national identity. For others it evokes feelings of class privilege and animal cruelty.

My dissertation focuses on the, often unwritten, rules and codes of dress and behaviour that are expected from participants in the hunting field. Not only the riders but also their horses are expected to be “correctly turned out”. Any rider not following these rules would be considered by the rest of the group to be “improper”.

Referring to contemporary and historical sources, my research uses hunt dress to investigate how these codes are communicated and what it means to be an insider in the complex world of hunting. Each item of clothing worn by the hunters is embodied with meaning, where even the style of buttons represents their status and position within the group.

Finally, I discuss relaxing the rules of “Correct Turnout”. Die-hard traditionalists are determined to uphold the old ways and not alter the dress and turnout code in any way. I argue that sacrificing tradition would allow post-ban hunting to attract new participants to the sport and secure its future.
Eclecticism on the Pages of 1980s i-D: The ‘Straight Up’ and what i-D Stands For

Charlotte Brown

Terry Jones, the founder of i-D Magazine, published its first issue in August 1980. As a step away from the glossy magazines of the time like Vogue, i-D took the cut and paste aesthetic of popular fanzines, and focused on subcultural style, with a specific focus on street style. This dissertation explores the ‘Straight up’ section of each issue. ‘Straight Up’ being a form of street fashion photography, the pages include photographs and captions, which several photographers took in and around the streets of London, at the time the magazine was in publication. The subjects in the photographs are ‘real’ people from the streets, going about their everyday life. The majority are young people but there is a vast mix in age, gender and style. i-D’s conceptual basis, formed by Terry Jones who sought to break away from the fashion media norms, taking a DIY approach and ignoring the structures previously in place in society. i-D therefore tried to remove these rules and barriers and allow for free expression and individual identity; it is through this acceptance of the new and the different that eclectic identities form.

The analysis of these complex identities makes up the vast majority of this dissertation and formulates my argument, that there are no definitive patterns with identity within the ‘Straight Up’ images. It is also discussed how important clothing is as a communicator and signifier of ones outward and inward identity, whilst also evaluating the captions alongside the images which contribute additional knowledge to the reader on the subjects identity which may not have been obvious from the photograph alone.
‘Sweet Dreams are Made of This’: Annie Lennox and her Representation of Self, 1983 -1987

Issy Dann

My dissertation focuses on pop star Annie Lennox and her band Eurythmics during the time period 1983-1987. The Eurythmics’ videos and performance were exciting and created spectacle. At the time new technologies were emerging such as the creation of a new 24-hour music channel, MTV that meant bands now had a new layer of visual representation to add to their music. Lennox created many characters for her videos that explored and commented on society at the time, also questioning gender binaries by creating both males and female characters.

The dissertation first gives an overview of the 1980s and the sexual politics of the time. Also looking at other pop stars and fashions of the time, such as Boy George and the New Romantics, and the female business woman style of power dressing to see whether what Lennox was doing in her videos was a complete divergence from the norm or in keeping with the times. It then looks at three specific examples of Annie Lennox during the 1980s; the Eurythmics Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This) music video; an article from the October 1983 issue of The Face magazine; the Eurythmics Beethoven (I Love to Listen to) music video. It explores these examples as they show a range of Lennox’s different characters, from masculine and feminine characters and in The Face article, her “unmasking.” It will then apply Queer and gender theories when thinking about Annie Lennox and the examples given. These theories emerged after the 1980s, and by applying them back to this time it can help gain a wider understanding of the how and why Lennox was creating these characters.
Fashion Icon or Fashion Rebel? An Investigation into the Dress and Representation of Nancy Cunard, 1918 -1939

Eve Flitman

Nancy Cunard, the wealthy shipping heiress, attained a fashionable profile due to her socialite status. Depictions of Cunard by high profile photographers such as Cecil Beaton and Man Ray, and their distribution in magazines like British Vogue, cemented her identification as an arbiter of taste in the inter-war years. A reputation she is still predominantly associated with. In particular she became synonymous with the fashioning of African Ivory bracelets that was interpreted as part of the Parisian phenomenon of ‘Negrophilia’. The term ‘Negrophilia’ was intended as an admirable expression to describe a love of black culture that manifested during this period through the collection of African artifacts, jazz music, Afro-American performers such as Josephine Baker, and its representation in numerous art forms.

Cunard’s relocation to Paris and participation in ‘Negrophilia’ triggered her lifelong political ambition to fight for racial equality and justice. However, admiration was often confused with objectification. This is exemplified by the complication of Cunard’s ownership of African Ivory jewellery. They can be interpreted as an outcome of European colonialism that contrasts with her beliefs and knowledge of traditional African cultures, whilst simultaneously establishing her as a fashion icon, and visually binding her to the political cause. However through autobiographical writing and depictions by artists such as Barbara Ker-Seymer and Constantin Brancusi, it is suggestive Cunard’s desire was further, to be black herself.

It becomes evident that Cunard’s racial romanticism of African culture informs her construction of dress and presentation to the public. However, its meaning and interpretation strongly differ alongside the different personas of her life, concurrently depicting Cunard as a fashion icon, an appropriator, or a radical reformer. This dissertation provides an investigation into the contrasting identities of Cunard and how it suffices to present the complexities of ‘Negrophilia’.
Junglists: Graphic T-Shirts and Fashion within the Jungle and Drum and Bass Subculture, 2010-2017

Ruby Helms

During the early 1990s, a new genre of music was first heard by ravers and clubbers within cities such as London and Bristol. Electronically produced, consisting of fast-paced rhythms, and influenced by reggae, jungle music transformed Britain’s musical, cultural and subcultural histories. Within a decade, jungle developed into drum and bass. Those who listened to jungle began to call themselves ‘junglists,’ a direct indication of subcultural membership.

With over twenty-five years of history, this paper investigates the symbolism, meaning, and cultural importance of graphic designs printed onto t-shirts worn by jungle and drum and bass listeners from 2010-2017. An amalgamation of participant observation conducted within nightclubs, interviews with subculturalists and t-shirt designers, and finally analyses of physical garments belonging to interviewees, aids to explain how jungle and drum and bass listeners communicate and negotiate subcultural identities and knowledge through t-shirt design.

This research project begins by providing a brief timeline documenting the history of jungle and drum and bass music in relation to the development of British club, rave and subcultures. It later critically interprets the graphic designs of t-shirts, corresponding to themes such as record label affiliation, reverence of musical equipment such as club speakers or vinyl turntables, and finally the communication of political dissatisfaction through processes of logo subversion, or culture jamming. Throughout this investigation, the wider cultural significance of the jungle and drum and bass subculture is emphasised. It stresses the importance for academics and theorists to recognise jungle and drum and bass within British subcultural history, highlighting the need for future research.
While the “swinging sixties” and psychedelic seventies have typically been regarded as a time of significant social and cultural progress, at the same time, popular culture was increasingly looking to the past with the revival of historical themes. The romanticism of nineteenth-century Pre-Raphaelite art found particular resonance with the Hippie counter culture, both in terms of aesthetics and interest in the medievalist themes of myth, magic and mysticism.

As counter-cultural influence became increasingly prominent in wider culture, this influenced how women were represented in popular media. From the pages of Vogue to song lyrics in rock music and, moreover, the fashioned bodies of certain female musicians, inscriptions of women as ethereal, submissive and highly idealised fantasy figures appeared to reproduce feminine stereotypes derived from the canons of mid-Victorian art. Against a historical context which has been linked to a marked relaxation of traditional gender roles, this makes for an interesting point in time in regards to popular notions of femininity, seeing as Pre-Raphaelite images of women have subsequently been deemed problematic by feminist art historians for reinforcing patriarchal cultural structures, which leave no space for female perspective and position women as passive objects of the male gaze.

Since joining the British-American band Fleetwood Mac in 1974, Stevie Nicks has established a career as one of the most influential women in the male-dominated field of rock music. Central to her career is her distinctive public image as an enigmatic “pagan high priestess,” evoked through references to Celtic sorceresses and other such Pre-Raphaelite inscriptions of women both in her dress practices and songwriting style. This dissertation uses Nicks as a case study to explore how, through the clothed female body, myth and mythical Pre-Raphaelite themes can be used to negotiate a feminine identity which simultaneously reiterates and subverts patriarchal discourses of gender.
Translating a Transatlantic Journey: The Role of Costume in John Crowley’s 2015 Film adaptation of Brooklyn

Emma Kelly

Within film, costume’s role (or “the role of costume”) goes beyond merely acting as a cover for the bodies we encounter on screen. It plays an integral role within the storytelling process that is film. Whether worn on the body, carried as a prop or triggering a conversation among the characters, costume provides the means for a deeper understanding of the film. Taking John Crowley’s film Brooklyn as my case study, this dissertation examines the role of costume, with its central belief being that it plays an intrinsic role in film, from the societies we encounter throughout the narrative to the main protagonist Eilis and her development.

Through scene analysis, I assess the role costume plays in Brooklyn in relation to narrative and character, basing my examination on a framework of theoretical and historical references. I argue that costume provides an invaluable insight into Irish and American society of the early 1950s, reflecting and reiterating the differences between the two nations. In Brooklyn, we are presented with Ireland as a society blighted by emigration and lack of opportunities as reflected and reiterated by the humble leather suitcase and its meagre contents which Eilis carries to start her new life in Brooklyn. In contrast, America is depicted as a place of advancement and opportunity, themes that arise in conversations and reactions triggered by Eilis’s dress upon her brief return home to Enniscorthy. In relation to the character of Eilis, I argue that the costume provides a visual timeline of her arc. As she progresses as a person, Eilis relinquishes her muted Irish wardrobe and embraces an American style, one of colour and flattering silhouettes, reflecting and reiterating that she has progressed as a person, now with the confidence to wear such garments with ease.
Toyen and the Artistic Rejection of Gender through Dress: The Prague years (1921-1947)

Sarah Mason

Toyen was born Maria Cerminova, Prague (1902-1980). She was an artist and one of the leading members of the Czech Surrealist group in Prague. Sexuality and eroticism was a major interest and feature in her work. She was an ambiguous character who was secretive about her sexuality. She refused to be pinned down by her sex and took on the pseudonym Toyen, a name without gender. Toyen is often portrayed as being masculine in appearance, favouring male clothes and speaking in the masculine form. Photographs of Toyen throughout her life however, show her not only in masculine clothes but also dressed in feminine fashionable styles of the time.

My dissertation explores Toyen’s relationship with dress. I focus not on Toyen’s artwork and career, but instead I examine how she chose to be seen by the outside world through her dress and her rejection of normative gendering.

In my research I analyse photographs taken of Toyen and cross reference them with descriptive accounts written about her by her contemporaries in their memoirs. Studying gender theory, lesbian dress and cross dressing, and looking closely at Prague, Toyen’s home, I set out to consider whether Toyen’s choice to adopt a masculine tone and genderless persona was to do with fitting into a male dominated art world, in order to be respected for her art work on the same level as her male contemporaries. The 1920s saw the creation of the modern woman and the masculine style was the height of fashion. Was Toyen simply following trends and was Toyen’s sexual preference represented in her dress? Toyen’s home, Czechoslovakia, under the First Republic, and its influence in promoting a functionalist ideal of simplicity and a practical way of living, is explored in my dissertation.
BA (Hons) Museum and Heritage Studies
When we think of the witch there are obvious characteristics that come to mind. We generally imagine an old, haggard woman, wearing long black clothes, crotched over a bubbling cauldron with a broom to hand. This dissertation will look at the stereotypical ideas of the witch and investigate at how museums and exhibitions in Britain have represented the witch through historical to modern examples. This work particularly looked at two museums and exhibitions. Firstly, the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic in Bosccastle, Cornwall opened in 1951, by Gerald Gardner, who was to be known as the ‘Father of Wicca’ in Britain. This museum intends to reveal to the public that the idea of the witch and witchcraft is not as straightforward as one might have thought, as you go through the museum displays a much broader sense of the witch starts to uncover itself. The second is an exhibition named Witches and Wicked Bodies in the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh in 2013. This exhibition was curated by Deanna Petherbridge, and displayed ninety examples of prints, photographs and wood carvings which was divided into six categories of the stereotype of the witch.

My dissertation explores examples of the stereotype of the witch within our common consciousness; for one example, looking at how domestic objects such as the cauldron and the broom has led to a widespread view of witchcraft itself as it has become a prop of witchcraft, connecting to both witches and women. We will see that all of the stereotypes discussed within this work connect to women in one way or another. So, we will see how these two different institutions represent these stereotypes of the witch and looking how we still view the witch within twenty-first century society.
Country houses have had many changing roles throughout history, from powerhouse to tourist attraction to domestic dwelling and back to tourist attraction. Country houses have always been an exhibition of the owner’s status and wealth and something that most people aspire to own. The twentieth century was a turning point for these houses, after a period of negativity towards them and an uncertain future many underwent complete changes of use that could not have been foreseen. This dissertation explores the different roles country houses in Sussex performed during Wartime, with particular focus on World War Two.

Country houses across Britain took on the role of hospitals, army billeting, evacuee homes and schools amongst other uses. The county of Sussex was important as it was in the front line of defence of the nation, many country houses in Sussex were requisitioned for army billeting to ensure plenty of troops were available to defend the coast and the vast expanse of the South Downs. Throughout this dissertation I focus on Parham Park in Pulborough West Sussex and Michelham Priory in Hailsham East Sussex and their changing roles particularly during World War Two. Both houses have extensive archives providing a wealth of information on this period when they underwent a complete change of use. I explore the inhabitants’ relationships with these houses through letters and interviews during a traumatic time of upheaval and I investigate how these Sussex country houses fared after the war compared to many others across the country. I argue that country houses in Sussex fared better due to their location and family interaction with the troops and that ensured their survival and yet another change in role during the post war years for these beautiful buildings.
Bringing History to Life: Challenging the Authenticity and Importance of Living History in the Retelling of Combat

Eleanor Newton

Displays of living history have become a popular and widely used method of retelling history within museums and sites of historical interest. It has the capability of relaying the past in a clear and enticing manner which sees the audience engaging with the history set out before them. Living history is a practice which uses re-enactors and immersive scenery or props to bring the past into the present. My dissertation focuses upon the use of living history as a method of retelling military history and conflicts, through living history displays in museums and battlefield re-enactment.

While I draw upon a range of sources within my dissertation, for example the rise of living history and public history, the key source in which I apply my research to is the Battle of Hastings Re-enactment held by English Heritage; which was hailed as one of the largest and most commercialised military re-enactments which happened that year.

The main aim of my dissertation is to question the authenticity and importance of living history as a curatorial technique, assessing whether it should be respected as an important method of display or whether it falls into the realm of popular entertainment, made for the audience’s enjoyment rather than education.

Throughout my dissertation, I raise and debate such issues surrounding the inaccurate portrayal of history, and the rise of the Post-Modern theory of simulation and simulacra by Jean Baudrillard in regards to the warping of historical fact into fiction in military re-enactments. Furthermore, by looking at the altering of historical fact into entertaining fiction I debate the educational value of living history and re-enactment, assessing whether it should remain a method used by many museums and organisation and to what extent the audience can learn from partaking in or watching historical re-enactments of conflict.
Regarding the Living Observing the Dead: A Study into how Human Remains are Viewed within the Exhibitionary Complex and how Meanings are Created through this Process of Looking

Kitty Pert

The debate surrounding human remains displayed within museum and exhibitions (the exhibitionary complex) is a hugely emotive and polarising one. Issues concerning the treatment of human remains have been brought into public consciousness by tragedies such as the Alder Hey Hospital organ retention scandal, and have carried through into the museum sector by contentious exhibitions such as Gunther von Hagens’ Body Worlds.

However the popularity of exhibitions which do contain human remains proves that there is a desire to view and further understand life’s only inevitability – death. My dissertation therefore focuses on how we ‘view’ human remains within the exhibitionary complex and throughout the research asks the question: what influences this field of vision?

In the first chapter, I argue that what you ‘see’ when viewing human remains varies considerably based on your position of sight. Here I examine the role that personal spiritual belief, age and occupation, amongst other factors, play when visitors look at human remains. I then argue how these personal frameworks influence the way meanings are made by the visitor in the moment of viewing.

The second chapter then analyses how the museum creates meanings for the visitor using curatorial technologies. Using the Hunterian Museum, a medical museum which displays human remains in the form of ‘specimens’, as an example, I argue that the exhibitionary complex informs the way in which the museum visitor will view. By undertaking an exploration of both the self and the museum, I demonstrate that how human remains are viewed and understood is a two-way process informed simultaneously by the individual and the institution.
Sponsorships and Partnerships: The Survival of the Museum in 21st Century Britain

Kane Preston

Survival of the Museum draws focus on the funding of public museums and the social and ethical challenges both museums and art galleries face in funding these cultural institutions. The dissertation explores different aspects of sponsorship, starting with the history of the 70-year relationship between the Arts Council and the British Government. Starting with the initial creation of the Arts Council after World War 2, comparisons are made between different prime ministers and their policies in funding the Arts Council. Starting as a fully funded body of government, discussion is drawn to the changes of the role of the Arts Council under leadership such as Maragret Thatcher’s attempts to privatise the cultural sector and Tony Blair’s efforts to treat the arts as an industry to create profit.

Following this, insight to governing bodies of Museums reaction to the sponsorship body of income will be explored, focusing on these bodies’ changing Code of Ethics. Alongside this, case studies of sponsorship within both the British Museum and the Science Museum will be explored and compared with one another and these Codes of Ethics put in place, ultimately to understand the sacrifices of these museums to gain income from private sources, such as BP oil.

Lastly, a discussion of reactions and commentary from both protest groups and artist curators will be used to understand the response to private sponsors in the cultural sector. Attention will be drawn to the protest group Liberate Tate and their efforts to address the unhealthy relationship between BP oil and the Tate through pieces of protest art and collaborations with the museums going public.

Survival of the Museum aims to not fix the current model of funding, but rather to address the issues within sponsorship funding, looking at how these sponsors work with cultural institutions.
BA (Hons) Visual Culture
‘No Lifeguard on Duty’: The Cultural and Physical Space and Place of the Motel and Pool

Stephanie Barnes

The American roadside trifecta of gas, food and lodging has, since the devolution of Route 66 and construction of state highways been relegated to a locale devoid of meaning and purpose. The motel and its swimming pool is ingrained in the western subconscious and the cultural significance of the urban American roadside has been visually examined, recontextualised and rehashed extensively in postmodern art, cinema and television. In 2006, ‘no lifeguard on duty’ was the first major solo exhibition by young American photographer J Bennett Fitts. The series was the result of a 20,000-mile-long road trip across America, and the collection comprises over twenty large scale chromatic film prints of the motel swimming pool in various states of occupation, preservation, use and decline. The motel swimming pool forms a vehicle for the discussion of space, place and cultural meaning in my dissertation. The series is primarily concerned with multifaceted liminality and the binaries of space and place. My dissertation examines the complicated relationship that exists between space/place, public/private, absence/presence, living/dying and past/present. My dissertation examines the swimming pool as a liminal, libidinal and transgressional site. I have applied the lens of omnitopia and the understanding of junkspace in my examination of the motel space, as a location imbued with abstract dichotomies of meaning and value. The dissertation is underpinned by the work of phenomenologist Yi-Fu Tuan, cultural geographer Tim Creswell and the seminal work of Kant. In an increasingly digital age, the film format favoured by Fitts forms an essential component of the investment of meaning. The romantic landscape tradition of the nineteenth century converges with the popular picture-postcard of the not-so-distant past in ‘no lifeguard on duty’ to present the motel pool spaces within distinct binaries.

I ask: how does J Bennett Fitts present the cultural and physical space and place of the motel pool?
Robert Mapplethorpe: Subjectivity & Sexual Liberation

Raphaëlle K. Cummins

Robert Mapplethorpe was a significant cultural figure in the 1970s and ‘80s New York arts scene. Having experimented with various mediums including paint, collage and installation, he settled on monochrome photography as the instrument with which to articulate his artistic vision. Notorious not only for the explicit content of much of his photographs (which even sparked juridical controversy), Mapplethorpe depicted himself and gay American subcultures in an aestheticised yet raw, unapologetic fashion previously unseen.

This dissertation looks at Mapplethorpe’s work in conjunction with discourses surrounding subjectivity. I engage with debates about gender, sex, race, pornography and fetishism, religion as well as psychoanalysis; considering ways in which individual images together with his oeuvre as a whole can be read as a form of discourse concerning multifaceted and often conflicting contemporary ideas about the self. I suggest that his work not only alludes to but in fact epitomises much of these theoretical concepts. Drawing on the literature of art historians, critics and academics, I place Mapplethorpe within the context of the history of art, photography and contemporary American culture. With regards to social theory, I employ the work of Judith Butler, Michel Foucault and Herbert Marcuse in particular, in order to formulate arguments about the pictorial, sociological and psychological components of Mapplethorpe’s work; contemplating their subjective, social, personal and artistic implications.

The main purpose of this article is to deconstruct intersectional binaries concerning Mapplethorpe and society in general in terms of the stated discursive areas. I offer sexuality as the principal aspect of subjectivity expressed in his art and, deploying Freudian and Marcusean philosophies, I examine his work in relation to the idea of sexual liberation and poststructuralist conceptualisations of identity.
Horror and Insanity: What Does the Portrayal of the ‘Insane Asylum’ in Film and Television Tell us about Society’s Repressed Fears and Desires?

Kerryn Lewis

The gothic and horror genre has always been a reflection of the fears, anxieties and desires that live inside the minds of all of us. Many of what we see in gothic novels and later, in horror movies are the manifestations of the repressed thoughts of everyday people. My dissertation focuses around the recurring and popular horror film motif, the ‘Insane Asylum’, to explore what the characters incarcerated within the walls of the asylum say about us as a society and our relationship with mental illness both past and present. The use of the ‘Insane Asylum’ in horror has often not swayed far from the truth surrounding past asylums, as reliable accounts show us that these places were horrific within themselves and therefore the truth about conditions within the asylum and the treatments of the patients does not have to stretch too far.

I have selected both a television show, American Horror Story: Asylum (2012-2013) and a film, Asylum (House of Crazies, 1972) as my focus and source material. With American Horror Story: Asylum being a very recent and popular television show and Asylum (House of Crazies) having been created before my time I felt that the two offered a great contrast to one another yet surprisingly have many similarities. My dissertation will explore the storylines of my selected characters within the television show and film and look at what their confinement says about us as a society. Many of the reoccurring themes in both my sources such as female hysteria, sexuality, sadism, religion and maternity are subjects that have all been heavily psychoanalysed throughout history and I shall be using this form of analysis along with what we already know about horror and asylums to further explore these themes.
From Junk to Treasure: Investigating the Changes in Meaning of Objects Using The Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising

Emily Lunt

As Alan Radley writes: “The world of objects, as material culture, is therefore the tangible record of human endeavour, both social and individual.” It is the purpose of my dissertation to investigate how everyday objects in our society can constantly change their meaning depending on how they are displayed, who owns them, their current function and the personal relationship that the viewer has with that object. To do this I use The Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising as a case study. The Museum of Brands houses the founder, Robert Opie’s collection. The museum holds a collection of over 12,000 objects that begins in the Edwardian era through to this century. It shows how brands and packaging have changed over time demonstrating our consumer history. I examine the objects in the collection in depth and compare them to objects that exist out of the museum environment such as the supermarket. Some of the objects I investigate include OXO tins from the 1940s period and from today. I also look at different uses of Heinz baked beans tin-cans from being displayed in the museum and from being transformed into candles. My research is split into three chapters each one progressing on how objects’ meanings change and why they change. Within in my research I use a variety of theoretical texts to support the arguments being made but also reviews of the museum are used to help gain a wider opinion of how the objects are viewed. With this combination of theory and primary research, including words from Robert Opie himself, this dissertation explores how even identical items can have a plethora of different meanings.
This dissertation will be an exploration of the representation of masculinity in photographic fashion spreads, specifically The Face, using issues from 1999. The research is based on a case study of the magazine throughout the year, using the archive journals in St Peter’s House Library, Brighton. The subject of the first chapter will be looking at the historical context in which masculinity began to change. Following this in chapter two, will be a theoretical discussion of consumer culture and identity in association to masculinity and magazine culture. The final chapter is an image analysis of the selected photo spreads from The Face using the application of theories on nostalgia in relation to advertising and gender theory, with a particular focus on masculinity.

The textual analysis applied to develop my ideas are based on gender theory discussed by Judith Butler, Tim Edwards, John Beynon and John MacInnes. Each writer theorises cultures of masculinity and how they are represented in society. To understand the formation of identity through consumption I have drawn on texts from Mike Featherstone, Don Slater and Jacques Lacan, alongside texts from Paul Jobling and Frank Mort who specifically look at the consumption of magazines by men. Combining ideas from this selection of writers allowed for a stronger approach to the image analysis of The Face fashion spreads. Focusing on how the men in the imagery are represented to the viewer through cultural references and ideologies of masculinity allows for both a theoretical and personal approach to the readings of the images.
MA History of Design and Material Culture

Hannah Smith

The Mass Observation Project defines itself as a ‘national life writing project’. Mass Observers are sent up to three sets of ‘directives’ a year with the invitation to write about a wide range of themes, specific subjects and events. Former director of the project, Dorothy Sheridan has described it as, ‘ordinary people observing and reflecting on everyday life’. Examples have included ‘Dancing’ and ‘The Refugee Crisis’.

In the Spring of 1992 and the Spring of 2006, Mass Observers were twice asked to record a ‘One Day Diary’. As well as their feelings and thoughts on the extraordinary happenings of the day, respondents dutifully recorded the ordinary thus relaying their daily routines and rituals. This study tracks the particular ritual of ‘dressing’ within these daily diaries.

In the study of fashion history, the ordinary is often overlooked by the unusual, the ultimate or the extraordinary. This study takes issue with this, concerning itself with the ordinary existence of clothing in everyday life through the application of Michel de Certeau’s work in The Practice of Everyday Life. For de Certeau, the focus of the everyday is placed upon ‘ways of operating’ or ‘doing things’. Daily actions and movements constitute the everyday and thus become a location for the exploration of everyday life. Applied here, this study explores the act of applying and arranging clothing, or as the Mass Observers commonly articulate it - ‘getting dressed’.

Through analysis of the acts of dressing and adorning the body rather than the objects themselves, this study aims to explore how the Mass Observers use clothing to negotiate public and private spaces, as well as attempting to define what it really means to be ‘dressed’. This is undertaken by analysing the fragments of time presented within the diary format of the selected Mass Observation responses.
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MA (Hons) History of Design and Material Culture
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The University of Brighton College of Arts and Humanities, situated on Grand Parade in the city centre, evolved from the Brighton School of Art founded in 1859. Committed to learning as a collaborative process, the College nurtures excellence in the visual and performing arts, architecture, design, art and design history, media studies, moving image and film studies, literature, languages and humanities, and provides a world-leading research environment for the arts.

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- BA (Hons) Visual Culture
- BA (Hons) Philosophy, Politics, Art
- MA History of Design and Material Culture

At the same time we welcome applications for MPhil and PhD research in the history of art and design, material culture and related topics (with some places eligible for funding).

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