**Knowing Bodies: A Visual and Poetic Inquiry into the Professoriate**

Fiona Blaikie of Lakehead University conducted a study in which she asked the question, “How are your clothing choices determined by your work as a scholar?” She essentially looked to find the correlation between clothing and scholarship. She gathered her results through poems and artwork that artist had done. Blaikie did not take the traditional route of research. Instead, she did an art-informed research project. In it, she asked her participants to answer the question that pertains to them. Such as what does it means to be a bisexual scholar, female scholar, male scholar, English scholar, an anthropologist, and so on. The poems and drawing give her the answers. By doing so, it gave her a way to reflect on the works, the “aesthetics of the clothed body”, look at the semiotics of the clothing, and create theories. At the end of her research, she draws an interesting conclusion. She found that the body can be explained as the “mediator” while clothing is the “negotiator” between visual identity and who you really are.

In her documentation of the study, she expressed how “fascinated by the ways in which scholars re/present themselves and their scholarship through their clothed and accessorized bodies.” (Blaikie) She notices that even the objects, may they be on the body or not, in the pictures have their own representation. The artist used the clothing as a way to communicate what is accepted by the particular group that they are trying to appeal to. It also showed their emotional value and their longing to be accepted by not only a group, but by oneself.

On a deeper analysis, the visual identities along with aesthetic choices gave worldly meanings. The clothing presented the individuals socio-economic values as well as the political and aesthetic values with the world and with human kind. Blaikie writes this art-informed research can moreover connect with morals. The artworks she studied illustrated moral and ethical standing with the individuals who created them.

“Living these identities as ways of being are value laden: The type of shoes one wears, the particular jacket selected and/or coordinating jewelry say and tell who I am, what I value, they even point to how I vote and who I might sleep with. They speak to and about dis/functionality and dis/ordered subjectivities. They shriek of social class, gender, oppression, culture, religion, and nationality.” (Blaikie)

Blaikie feels that the use of the clothing was used in order to reveal culture, values, ideologies, and emotionality. She states that should we agree with it or not, clothing is a way or presenting who we are to the world. Intentional, or not. She quotes another researcher, Lurie who states, “you announce your sex, age and (social) class to me through what you are wearing – and very possibly give me important information *(*or misinformation*)* as to your occupation, origin, personality, opinions, tastes, sexual desires and current mood” According to Blaikie, clothing can almost be explained as a the first universal language.

Blaikie, Fiona. "Knowing Bodies: A Visual and Poetic Inquiry into the Professionate." *Eric* . International Journal of Education and the Arts, 03 Mar 2009. Web. 26 Oct 2011. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?\_nfpb=true&\_&ERICExtSearch\_SearchValue\_0=EJ859039&ERICExtSearch\_SearchType\_0=no&accno=EJ859039>.

**Toward a Pedagogy of Intercultural Understanding in Teaching English for Academic Purposes**

Anne Jund, a teacher at the University of Hawai’i at Manoa, analysis how the talk of traditional clothing’s intertwines with interactional work for ESL students. ESL students are students who do not know English very well, if at all. Through these classes they have to opportunities to develop their skills in English. Jund points out the fact that it is more than just learning a language though. When learning a language, you also have to learn about the culture. By using traditional clothing as the topic, she was able to analysis how their recognized and perceived each other’s cultures. Those cultural affiliations thus gave them way to identify themselves and a chance to understand each other.

The finding was that the students assembled cultural objects, activities, and actions when discussing traditional clothing. Thus, they created various meanings each other’s culture as well as their cultural identities and differences. In one communicative task, they were asked about their thoughts on kimonos. A kimono is a traditional clothing piece from Japan worn by men, women, and children, but here is what they thought: (statements are left as they were written by the students)

1. Some women wear kimono in Japan?

2. =[(xxx)

3. =[in their job

4. Kind of costume?

5. Yea as a kind of costume.

6. [Mmm:::

8. See that’s a progression right Western clothing replacing traditional clothing now.

9. Because women don’t wear kimonos anymore in maybe situations right so most likely

10. ninety five ninety six percent

11. of the people wear Western style clothing

Some of the things they were trying to say is that Western clothing represent progression in Japan, women do not wear kimonos anymore, Japanese clothing are becoming Westernized, and that women wear kimonos to work. With the language barrier, interpreting kimono, and essentially almost every word, is hard to do. Through the findings, Jund was able to realize what moral standings and perceptions these people had of each other’s cultures. Soley based on clothing; there were many misinterpretations and precise observations that were made. Therefore, Jund exemplified the importance of not just knowing a language, but understanding the culture.

Jund, Anne. "Toward a Pedagogy of Intercultural Understanding In Teaching English for Academic Purposes." *Eric* . TESL-EJ , 01 Jun 2010. Web. 26 Oct 2011. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/recordDetails.jsp?searchtype=basic&pageSize=10&ERICExtSearch\_SearchValue\_0=Toward a Pedagogy of Intercultural Understanding in Teaching English for Academic Purposes&eric\_displayStartCount=1&ERICExtSearch\_SearchType\_0=kw&\_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900019b8042ef2c&accno=EJ898207&\_nfls=false>.

**The Globalization of Asian Dress Re-Orientating Fashion**

The book *The Globalization of Asian Dress Re-Orientating Fashion* written by Sandra Niessen, Ann Marie Leshkowich, and Carla Jones, the changes in Asian fashion and how it has changed society are analyzed. In the 1990s, Asian fashion became a global trend. This came along with the help of famous high-grossing Asian themed films such as *M. Butterfly, Indochine,* and *Heaven and Earth.* Also celebrities like Janet Jackson and Madonna helped bring the Asian culture to a global influence by using Asian inspired music videos. The new wave of style changed the how the rest of the world viewed Asia while eventually being influenced by them. The Asian culture became so mainstream that because of the increased practice of Asian traditions such as yoga, the fashion of it took over.

For the Asian communities, it became a time in which they had to make the decision to coincide with Asian fashion or Western fashion. It was thus a struggle to keep traditional wear or move with the trend. It was about more than just looking good though. Although the trend seemed to do no harm, in some way it was harming a culture. The “cross-fertilization” of Asian and Western styles in some way caused Asian dress to become more “homogenized heterogeneity”. Meaning that things that were *liked* about the Asian style were focused on, leaving out many other important things. Through this time of Asian style globalization, the social and cultural changes are also developed. “The contours of Orientalism are particularly complex when one considers fashion, for colonial dress became enmeshed in struggles over race, gender, tradition, and imitation.”

Fashion is a way to have your own identity as well as show the movements and/or changes that are happening in that society. According to the authors, the cross-fertilization of the Asian and Western styles have become so wide spread that to make distinctions between the two is not possible. By doing so, it also leaves the question of how tainted a culture’s morals can become with so much cultural exchanges. “As a result, the daily sartorial decisions that Asians made became politically charged tools in contests over identity, status, and power.” (Niessen)

Niessen, Sandra, Ann Leshkowich, and Carla Jones . *The Globalization of Asian Dress Re-Orientating Fashion* . New York, NY : Berg Publishers , 2003. <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=KJJpqA\_4\_sgC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=The Globalization of Asian Dress Re-Orienting Fashion&ots=JS6Rfoskmo&sig=MW2dlLnUEekFQ2\_zyLEidWDZ2jI

**Fashioning Women in Colonial India**

In *Fashioning Women in Colonial India* by Nandi Bhatia, the evolution of style in India is examined. The writer states the during the colonial, nationalist, and Orientalist discourses, the image of women in India remained a primary subject. Fashion is not the only thing that the author takes into consideration. Bhatia looks at the Indian cultural system and their practices to get a deeper understanding of the symbolism that is behind an Indian woman’s dress.

The article also analyzes literary-cultural texts. With the use of those literary texts, the author is to have those “critical frames for locating the multiple social meanings which came to be enclosed in women’s apparel and defined their role and position in the colonized nation.” (Bhatia) Bhatia believes that India has been framed by nationalist and colonialist thought. Modernity and tradition, social reform, progression, and socialital pressures to essentialize and maintain “Indianness” are the causes. The writer feels that these issues have come about because of Westernization.

Attire is one of primary things that categorized a properly dressed Indian woman in colonial India. It is so, and is still, so important that is played a role in social interplay of imperialist and nationalist relations. Bhatia feels that with the interpretation of the cultural text, we can understand the social movements made during the history in India, along with the impact it had on fashion.

Bhatia, Nandi. *Fashioning Women in Colonial India* . 7. New York, NY : Berg Publishers, 2003. 327-344. <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/berg/jdbc/2003/00000007/F0020003/art00008>.

**Ethics and Fashion Industry in West Europe**

In this writing, the notion that fashion pertains to more than moral issues but political, social, legal, economical, and environmental ones as well are explained. The focus is on the fashion industry in Western Europe and how it has contributed to changes in morals. The writer states that “while many consumers have a positive involvement with clothing in terms of emotional attachment and identification, they also have a distinctively negative image of the industry behind.” This could suggest why companies began to take a more predominate role in corporate social responsibility policies.

In Europe, corporate social responsibility (CSR) typically means the company does more than what is required by the law. They involve themselves in the social, environmental, and initiatives to help solve these issues. They do all of this out of “pure altruism”. In the beginning of the 21st century, Western European fashion companies had the goal of making social responsibility “sexy”. Such as targeting sweatshops in developing countries and increasing awareness about recycling by doing a review on cotton where the article states, “‘Nothing disappears’ on textile waste and recycling.”

With such an enormous awareness growth on the issues in the fashion industry, surprisingly it has reflected in the economy. For example, there has been a long-term drop in clothing prices which has displayed by the family household budget drop from 10 per cent in 1970 to around 5 per cent in 2000 in France. The author feels that if working conditions and wages are improved and consumption volume was decreased, the dependence on individual-operating would increase. Thus this will reduce companies from out sourcing and become a way to control prices. Instead, clothing prices continue to decrease during the first decade of the 21st century because of the rapid expansion of low value retailers. These low value retailers include super markets and chain stores that offer much lower prices. “In all price segments, material and labor costs make up 5-7 per cent of the retail price.”

The author also believe that fashion is closely linked to social changes with the growth of the media. “…fashion and beauty industries both reflect and shape broader cultural ideals.” The article makes the statement that “extreme idols”, celebrities, are made and become the focal figures over the ethics of the fashion images. The writer relates this to the French makeup company *Lancôme* and its once spokes model Isabella Rossellini. Rossellini at the time was seen as someone who brought about a new type of beauty because she continued to be the spokes model even after the age of 40 and because of her role as an abused woman in the film *Blue Velvet.*

The article also explains how the fashion show is trying to reshape the ideas of beauty. Madrid Fashion Week and the Milan Fashion Week require health certificates and do not allow models to walk that have a body mass index under 18. They also do not allow smoking, alcohol, and drugs and supply nutritious snacks backstage to help promote a clean and healthy environment. Modeling agencies have also begun to educate young models on healthy lifestyles to help prevent eating disorders and low self-esteem, which these problems often lead to drug abuse. “It is not reasonable for a modern and advanced society to establish stereotypes of beauty that are far removed from social reality.” The fashion industry continues to make movements to help improve “the world of the runway”.

Skov, Lise. "Ethics and the Fashion Industry in West Europe ." N.p., Nov 2008. Web. 28 Oct 2011. <http://www.researchnest.com/all\_reports/13100175651ethics and the fashion industry in west europe.pdf>.

**The Scented Winds of Change: Conflicting Notions of Modesty and Vanity among Young Qatari and Emirati Women**

The authors give an in depth analysis on how women’s fashion in the Qatari and Emirati culture reflects social, gender, and religious identities. They primary research the Islamic religion and how it configures fashion. They found that in the Islamic religion that women should be covered in a way that does not reveal their sexuality. Therefore, women are expected to wear loose, thick clothing that covers their body, excluding their face and hands.

The writers also examined the diverse meaning of the Muslim veil and the practice of hijab. Hijab gives women the option to decide if they would like to observe modest dress. This applies to countries such as Egypt, Turkey, Mali, Indonesia, Cote D’Ivorie, London, and South India. It was discovered that the black abaya, which is an outer gown, has a different context in oil rich Gulf countries and is associated not with religion but status and wealth.

Although some women were found to have the pleasure of making a decision in what they wanted to wear, in some cases it was expected to conform. Conforming to dress conduct was a way of remaining loyal and local traditions and culture, which also demonstrated national pride and dignity. They found there are different connotations for wearing the chador in Iran, the abaya in Yemen, and the purdah in South India. It was discovered that for Arab and Muslim women, wearing traditional clothing is a way to uphold cultural integrity and assert citizenship. Studying women’s fashion in the Qatari and Emirati cultures was “particularly interesting because of the social and economic upheaval that these countries have been undergoing and the concomitant shifts in discourses of beauty, religion, and modernity in the media, advertising and other forms of the local commercial imagery.” (Belk)

According to the writers, the struggle came when Western fashions started to influence these countries fashions. In “petrodollar-fueled economic wealth and integration into the global economy have increasingly attracted foreign investments and Westerners to the region, leading major social changes.” (Belk) With this in mind, tensions between Western fashion, and local values and national identities have come about. The authors believe that Western values look to highlight women’s sexuality and beauty to the public, whereas tradition has that modesty should be displayed to the public. Thus, this has caused some European designers create garments that are modest but still makes a statement about a women’s modernity and attraction toward fashion.

It was revealed to the writers through twenty four in depth interviews with Emirati and Qatari women that the solution to the tension was instead to combine Western fashion and traditional wear. As a result, a woman may wear a traditional black abaya but cover it with Swarkovski crystals. These women have chosen to make fashion fit their customs and values, not to conform to it.

Sobh, Rana, Russell Belk , and Justin Gressel. "The Scented Winds of Change: Conflicting Notions of Modesty and Vanity among Young." N.p., 2008. Web. Oct 2011.

**Research Approaches to the Study of Dress and Fashion**

As a supplement to the writing, the writers, Skov and Melchior, examine how fashion and culture correlate to each other. They feel that in order to have a well understanding of fashion in a particular area you have to have scholarly knowledge about the culture. According to the authors, the objective of the study is not on the fashion or jewelry itself. Instead it is focused on idea, object, and/or image.

The article states that “the terms fashion and dress mean something like a cultural constitution of the embodied identity.” (Skov) Even though Skov and Melchior does feel that the study and the view of studying fashion has changed, they do feel the some negatives about it continue to thrive. This is supported by that statement that “This is a highly inclusive approach that brings together processes of creative authorship, technological production, and cultural dissemination in an overall focus on cultural representation. On the negative side, the identity of such a loosely defined field of study is premised on culturally and geographically specific developments so that it can be said that this approach has tended to privilege a Western culture and history.” (Skov)

Skov and Melchior feel that those who study fashion are more interested in its cultural and historical developments in Europe rather than its universal developments. They go on to state scholars more specifically they seem to be interested more so with French fashion with it being the mother of the term la mode and haute couture. Scholars also look at historical icons such as Louis XIV and others who were apart of the historically known fashionable French courts. The writer does support that fact though that fashion is an outlet for people. The way a person dresses can display there social class and they way a society dresses can show the gender distinctions. Both Skov and Melchior believe that studying fashion should not be limited to one particular geographical area but be a universal study to get a better understanding of socialistic changes.

Skov, Lise , and Marie Melchior. "Research Approaches to." Creative Encounters, Nov 2008. Web. Oct 2011. http://openarchive.cbs.dk/bitstream/handle/10398/7766/Creative%20Encounters%20Working%20Papers%2019.pdf?sequence=1

**Imperial Designs: Fashion, Cosmetics, and Cultural Identity**

Written by Rebecca Ann Nickerson, the article gives insight of how fashion has influenced politics and other laws. During the time frame of 1934-1937, Japanese designers wanted to create a new wave of fashion that rather than suited a Chinese woman’s frame was created for the Japanese woman’s frame. Designers were coming up with ideas that would be specifically Japanese yet modern and practical. They looked for a modern alternative to *yofuku* and China dress seemed to be the answer. The idea for a uniform that was inspired by Chinese dress was given by Yoshioka Yayoi who was chairman of the Greater Japanese Women’s Clothing Association. But that never happened because I a national uniform was favored more.

Officials were particular about their decision knowing that they already had tension with China. They felt that through fashion it could unite them, with both China and Japan being Asian countries, but Japan did not want to lose it own national identity. I solution was not clearly identified in the article but it does show how fashion does influence how countries correspond with each other and may affect how united they were.

Nickerson also discusses how Japan influenced other countries through fashion. During the time, Koreans preferred white clothes “primitive” over colorful fabrics used in “civilized” countries. Japan worked as the compassionate ruler helping to relieve Korean women from the hardships of household work and civilize the population. Until, Japan became more forceful and did not allow Korean women to wear colorful clothing at all. Korean women thus continued to dress in traditional clothing to try to protect their culture and their daily historical norms.

Japan played to compassionate role again with the indigenous people of the South Seas. The ethnic customs Japan brought romanticize the South Seas but looked to keep the own traditional dress in tactic. Therefore, similarities between the two cultures were viewed even more by Japan not acting in the same manner as the dominating Europeans. With the correlations between the two, Japan was able to make new policies and “discourses on the clothing of the South Seas reveal the difficult balance of negotiating sameness and difference for the sake of empire.” (Nickerson)

Nickerson concludes that Japan used clothes as a way to “articulate sameness and differences in relation to its colonial others.” (Nickerson) According to the writer, Japan also used clothing as a way to make a distinction between the colonizer and the colonized that helped them to gain cultural authority against it Asian neighbors. “Japan’s colonial regime also used clothing reforms to try to exercise authority over colonial people. The resistance to such acts of control by colonial women points to the power of clothing as a technology of empire but also to the “precarious vulnerabilities” of Japan’s imperial regime.” (Nickerson)

Nickerson, Rebecca. "Imperial Designs: Fashion, Cosmetics, and Cultural Identity." N.p., 2011. Web. Oct 2011.

**The Japanese Revolution in Paris France**

Writer Kawamura explains why culture is important to fashion. “The image and the background of the designers are important in creating high fashion which projects the image of high culture.” (Kawamura) Japanese designer Mori took a different route with fashion. She did not take away from Western clothing or the idea of aesthetics or even use fabrics that were worn by Japanese fishermen and farmers. In order to keep the Japanese culture alive, she used the ultimate beauty and luxury from Japan, brought it to the West, and applied to Western aesthetics.

Mori made the effort to change the negative image that people had about the Orient and Japanese women. She was inspired to do so when she had seen a fashion show of a collection from Madame Butterfly in New York in 1961. She felt that Americans did not know enough about Japanese women and that was why they were so poorly portrayed. Therefore, she used the French fashion system as a way to introduce her clothing to the Western fashion system. Then she would be able to express Japan’s highest aesthetic standards. “Like Kenzo, Mori’s position in the world of fashion in Japan and in France is unique and, therefore, is not easy to reproduce.” (Kawamura)

The author makes a point to express Japanese designers like Kenzo and Mori used fashion as a way to expand into the global spectrum and used the French fashion system as the “door of opportunity”. Mori wanted to express her heritage to the world through the French fashion system and therefore became a role model for other countries who followed in her footsteps, such as some Belgian. Kawamura continues to say that Paris cannot do it alone but needs other designers to help keep up that aesthetic standard of beauty and appearance that Paris has created. “Because of this belief, fashion professionals and designers continue to mobilize in Paris. Fashion is a social construction.” (Kawamura)

Kawamura, Yuniya. *The Japanese Revolution in Paris France*. New York, NY : Berg Publishers, 2004. 158-164. <http://books.google.com/books?id=xjhM0NFCmTsC&pg=PA200&lpg=PA200&dq=the japanese revolution in paris fashion&source=bl&ots=kgNlDE5yjZ&sig=E\_3kHjQ\_ydon5wJ8QHmYmhg8fk4&hl=en&ei=ZtetTt7mL8KusQLO4fzvDg&sa=X&oi=book\_result&ct=result&resnum=8&sqi=2&ved=0CF0Q6AEwBw

**America Women’s Adoption of Pants and the Changing Definition of Femininity during World War II**

Writers Yhe-Young Lee and Jane Farrell-Beck talk about the social changes that happened to women with the start f women wearing pants in World War II. American women started wearing pants because of the type of work they had to do while the men were gone. Dresses and skirts would not work because they started working in defense industries and farms. Women also wore pants in the winter to stay warm which helped to conserve oil, rubber, and other raw materials. Wearing men’s pants began to become a trend to young women in college, but soon thereafter regulations were put in place on women wearing pants.

According to the authors, the definition of femininity began to change with the adoption of men’s wear on women. The gender role was affected because women were now not only working in the home but outside of the home. Women now had a since of empowerment and “bringing home the bacon” mentally that they did not have before. Therefore, when the war was over there was still a demand for practicality in women’s wear because it was more comfortable and easier for daily life.

During the mid-19th century, bloomers were introduced to American women. Bloomers did not become a success during the time period though because they reminded people of Turkish pants seen in Muslim culture, which some deemed “heathenish” because they showed ankles and legs. Some even said that it was against the will of God for women to wear men’s clothing. Yet, women who were involved in women’s rights wore them to symbolize a social movement.

The articles state that during the 1920s American womanhood changed as women wore knickerbockers without overskirts. They also began to wear pajama bottoms, shorts, trousers, and slacks for causal events. Women began to become more liberated with these new fashion changes and Hollywood stars such as Katherine Hepburn and Marlene Dietrich helped to support these new trends. Together with the new fashion trends of women wearing menswear clothing and the women’s rights movement, which helped to shape a new image for how women wanted to be viewed and respected.

Yhe-Young, Lee, and Jane Farrell-Beck. "American Women’s Adoption of Pants and the Changing." N.p., June 2010. Web. Oct 2011. <http://210.101.116.28/W\_kiss9/13104560\_pv.pdf>.

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