

New York University
Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute
Style in the City: Reporting on Manhattan
Summer 2024 Session 1
Professor: Jessica Minkoff
Wednesdays, 4:30-8:30PM

To contact professor: jlminkoff@gmail.com
In-class lecture and discussion; Reporting on the street

Office Hours: please email me to set up office hours as needed.

Course Description:

In her book *New York in Style: A Guide to the City's Fashion, Design and Style Destinations*, writer Janelle McCulloch said it best: "This is a typical day in New York. You'll never know what you'll see, and you'll never know what you'll discover. It's a city like no other. And its style is one of a kind."

There is no better place to explore, hone in on, and report about fashion and style than New York City—ripe with over 300 neighborhoods, each one with something different to offer. From Soho and Tribeca, where many fashion shows are currently staged, to the Upper East Side, home to iconic industry destinations like Bergdorf Goodman and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, you can uncover fashion history while discovering interesting facets about the trends and people of today.

This class will capitalize on the unique gifts that New York City has to offer, such as the hustle and bustle of chic working women and men on their way to their corporate jobs, to landmarks like Bryant Park and the Pulitzer Fountain (which have made fashion history) to report on and understand the varied elements of style and trends. Each week will focus on a different neighborhood, where students will take class time to explore, digest their surroundings, talk to stylish strangers, and come up with stories that capture all that they see, hear, and learn.

Students will be required to present their findings in varied forms that include three long-form researched and reported assignments along with short form profile pieces, personal essays, trend stories, and blogs posts. They will also hear from a handful of New York City-based guest speakers with ties to the below neighborhoods in observation: Upper East Side, Soho/Tribeca, Harlem, East Village/Lower East Side, Upper West Side, and Williamsburg.

Learning Objectives:

In this course, students will:

- Demonstrate awareness of journalism's core ethical values
- Understand and develop the ability to write a fashion show review
- Explore long-form fashion journalism and how to develop a trend piece
- Interview a profile subject and create a profile piece
- Brainstorm blog ideas and develop an understanding of social media as it applies to the fashion industry
- Demonstrate critical thinking, independence, and creativity appropriate to the role of journalism in a democratic society
- Interview subjects, conduct research, and evaluate information
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diverse perspectives
- Use technological tools and apply quantitative concepts as appropriate

Course Structure

Class lectures and open discussion, in-class workshops, guest speakers, course readings, case studies, weekly reporting on the street.

Weekly assignments will be discussed in class. There will also be weekly assigned readings.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities that necessitate accommodations should contact and register with New York University's Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at [212-998-4980](tel:212-998-4980) or mosescsd@nyu.edu. Information about the Moses Center can be found at www.nyu.edu/csd. The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

Diversity & Inclusion

The Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute is committed to creating an anti-racist learning environment that embraces diversity, complexity, and honesty. We are an intellectual community enriched by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, sex, gender identity, class, ethnicity, sexualities, abilities, religion, and culture. Our student body is excitingly international. We welcome a multiplicity of perspectives. We acknowledge that listening to other perspectives on some of these issues may be personally challenging, and we accept that challenge. We further acknowledge that our profession, journalism, and our home, New York University, have participated in the systemic racism that underpins U.S. history. We are committed to teaching and practicing fair, rigorous, and engaged journalism that helps all our communities move toward justice and equality.

Readings

The required text discussed in whole or in part are:

New York in Style: A Guide to the City's Fashion Design and Style Destinations by Janelle McColloch
New York Through a Fashion Eye by Megan Hess

Optional and recommended texts include: *New York Times* Styles section," T, *The Cut*, *WWD*, Business of Fashion, Wall Street Journal's *Off Duty* section and WSJ magazine, plus online publications such as *Vogue.com*, *Fashionista*, and *DailyFrontRow*, etc. Also keep abreast of major fashion monthlies such as *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Elle*, *Marie Claire*, *GQ* and special fashion issues of *The New Yorker* and *New York Magazine*.

The following books are also helpful and recommended:

The Elements of Style by William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White
The Associated Press Stylebook

Location of books and readings: you can find all the reading on Amazon or on the Internet.

Course Requirements

The goal of this course is to develop an understanding of New York City's complex culture through the lens of fashion while mastering the generation and development of story ideas, pitches, research, reporting, and writing a series of pieces—ranging from a personal essay, to a trend piece and a final project. You will have the opportunity to revise the personal essay once, the trend piece twice and the long-form final project, three times. Class participation (and attendance) factor into the final grade.

Assignments

Students will be required to present their findings in varied forms that include three assignments of increasing lengths with one rewrite for a 500-word personal essay; two rewrites for a 750-word trend piece and three rewrites for a 900-word final feature.

Grading

Final grades will be calculated as follows: papers and projects will be given letter grades (rewrites will count) and final grades will be calculated with those letter grades mixed with class attendance and participation, handing in assignments on time, and demonstrating an overall understanding of the different forms of fashion journalism.

- Personal Essay (500 words): 25%
- Trend piece (750 words) 25%
- Final project (900 words): 40%
- Class participation and readings: 10%

Absence

Due the fact that this course only meets once a week, there will be a no absence policy.

Week 1: Wednesday, May 22nd

Upper East Side

Hop off the subway by the Plaza Hotel, and you will be surrounded by Bergdorf Goodman, Louis Vuitton, Tiffany & Co. and just about every designer boutique you could ask for. Stroll down 57th Street and it feels like you could be on Avenue Montaigne in Paris, France. On your way passed the Plaza, you will encounter the Pulitzer Fountain, where Fendi once staged a historic runway show that will never be forgotten. These same streets and avenues were once home to Bill Cunningham's *swans*, who he documented with his iconic street style photos for the New York Times Style section, and can still be spotted entering and exiting Bergdorf Goodman. How have these iconic moments in history transformed and evolved in the present day? What is the 2024 version of Bill Cunningham's *swan*? If Cunningham was alive today, what would he capture with his camera on his way up Madison Avenue apart from a swarm of people waiting to get coffee at *Ralph's*?

Reading: <https://untappedcities.com/2021/08/19/secrets-bergdorf-goodman/9/>

Reading: <https://www.vogue.co.uk/article/bill-cunningham-history-in-his-lens>

Assignment due May 29th: First draft of the personal essay. Write a 500-word personal essay about an experience where fashion or style in New York City has had an impact on your life. This could be something profound that changed the way you viewed the world, how a change in the way that you dressed reflected upon an evolution of self, how you could accurately or inaccurately surmise someone's character through the way they dressed or an instance of how you were taught to never wear a certain style again, etc. This could also be how you were inspired to try something new based on personal style you noticed in a specific neighborhood of New York. This exercise is meant to illustrate the connections fashion has beyond throwing on something to wear in the morning and how its effects can be resounding. It is also meant to enable you to familiarize yourselves with writing in the first person and finding what makes your voice as a writer unique.

Week 2: Wednesday, May 29th

Soho/Tribeca

South of Houston brings the cool factor. If you don't run into actual models-off-duty in baggy jeans and baby-tees, accented with Adidas Sambas and vintage handbags, you are bound to see countless young people trying to emulate the ones that they see all over their Pinterest boards. It's a place to see and be seen, whether you there to get a matcha, eat at the Mercer Hotel, or shop at Prada, The Real Real or What Goes Around Comes Around. On your way towards Tribeca, it's likely that you will see an influencer or two snapping their daily photos for their feeds with major architectural backdrops that make the neighborhood unique. What is it about Soho that has captured the hearts and minds of the youth? Why is it attractive and how has it changed over time?

Reading: <https://www.thecut.com/2018/01/mercer-and-howard-streets-streetwear-destination.html>

Assignment due June 5th: Final personal essay + first draft of trend story. This will be discussed in class.

Week 3: Wednesday, June 5th

Harlem

You can't talk about the intersection of fashion and Harlem without mention of Daniel Day aka Dapper Dan. Born and raised in the neighborhood in 1944, he brought his personal style and opinion to everything that he did. Whether working at a local newspaper or selling clothing out of his car, he was unapologetically himself and tied to his roots. He opened his own store in 1982, where customers could purchase items on a made-to-order basis, before going on

to infiltrate celebrity and Hip-hop culture with his flashy designs. Most recently, Dapper Dan collaborated with Gucci on a menswear line and dressed Ashley Graham, Karlie Kloss and Regina Hall for the 2019 Met Gala. How can Dapper Dan's lasting legacy be seen in Harlem today? Are there standout characteristics of his reign that you see elsewhere in Manhattan? What is it about Harlem that stands out from a fashion perspective?

Reading: <https://www.lofficielusa.com/men/dapper-dan-harlem-influence-fashion-gucci-logo>

Reading: <https://www.vogue.com/article/brandice-daniel-harlems-fashion-row>

Assignment due June 12th: Second draft of trend story + first draft/outline of final project. This will be discussed in class.

Week 4: Wednesday, June 12th

East Village/Lower East Side

While most fashion shows and events are staged up and down the West Side Highway, the Lower East Side has always been significant to the fashion industry. According to the Tenement Museum, "the manufacturing of fine men's and women's clothes defined the Lower East Side in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and by the century's end, it was the selling of clothing that set the neighborhood apart." Many immigrant families made their living with garment production and a focus on selling high quality handbags and shoes. Now, young creatives have breathed new life into these same streets (Orchard Street, for example) setting up artsy shops that attract both New Yorkers and tourists. The street style is also bound to be noticed, yet it's in a world of its own when compared to that of Cunningham's Upper East Side. What caused the re-emergence of the Lower East Side as a fashion it-spot?

Reading: <https://www.vogue.com/article/orchard-street-lower-east-side-new-york-shopping-scene>

Assignment due June 18th: Final trend story + second draft of final project.

Week 5: Tuesday, June 18th

Upper West Side

New York Fashion Week had its home at Lincoln Center from 2010-2014, following years at Bryant Park and preceding its time at Spring Studios (which, WWD recently announced will no longer be the hub for NYFW go forward). Industry insiders always thought the choice of Lincoln Center for fashion week to be odd, as the neighborhood was not a go-to for designer shopping or fashion people—it was more a focal point for the arts (New York City Ballet has its home at the Koch Theatre, while the Metropolitan Opera performs across the way at the Met). A glance at the streets and you are bound to see laid-back casual style, dancers off-duty and musicians on their way to rehearsals. What does the Upper West Side signify in terms of fashion trends? Is there some undiscovered sense of style that is prevalent among the residents?

Reading: <https://wwd.com/feature/new-york-fashion-week-lincoln-center-10108237/>

Assignment due June 26th: Third draft of final project.

Week 6: Wednesday, June 26th

Williamsburg

It's no longer only hipsters that occupy the fashion space in Williamsburg. Just this past year, Chanel opened a pop-up diner in the neighborhood, attracting the industry's top influencers and celebs, while Hermes hosted a niche fashion show a few blocks away just some months later. Now luxury is shoulder to shoulder with the trendy cafes and vibrant street art that has personified Williamsburg for years, which begs the question: what has changed? Why is the neighborhood more attractive to high-end fashion designers now more so than ever? Is there a new sense of style or appreciation for fashion that is ripe for discovery in Williamsburg?

Reading: <https://wwd.com/fashion-news/fashion-features/gallery/a-look-at-the-luxury-commodification-of-williamsburg-1235296278/>

Reading: <https://www.vogue.com/slideshow/hermes-williamsburg-mens-after-party-2023>

Reading: <https://www.thecut.com/2023/08/chanel-diner-brooklyn.html>

Assignment due June 28th: Completed final turned in by noon.

