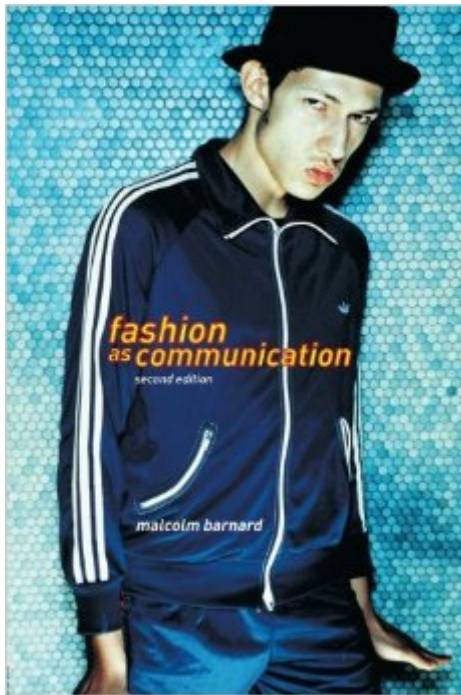


The book was found

# Fashion As Communication



## Synopsis

What kinds of things do fashion and clothing say about us? What does it mean to wear Gap or Gaultier, Milletts or Moschino? Are there any real differences between Hip-Hop style and Punk anti-styles? In this fully revised and updated edition, Malcolm Barnard introduces fashion and clothing as ways of communicating and challenging class, gender, sexual and social identities. Drawing on a range of theoretical approaches from Barthes and Baudrillard to Marxist, psychoanalytic and feminist theory, Barnard addresses the ambivalent status of fashion in contemporary culture.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Though informative in exactly the way the title describes, it lacks any personality. It is like reading a dry, boring, antiquated textbook. Though the information is solid and probably applicable for the fashion student...or the student of anthropology or psychology, it is like eating spoonful of plain flour instead of eating a slice of warm bread. I can enjoy reading textbooks...certain ones are actually a good read. Especially when the author has some wit. It discusses the theory of clothing and how different society and tribes adorn themselves. And how the society perceives such adornments. It compares what outsider perceptions might be and how we not only communicate messages with our adornment but how those perceptions can differ from culture to culture. It does not give many colorful descriptions and examples. It stays more on theory of fashion as communication.

Malcolm Barnard is one of the leading fashion theorists alive today. His expertise in the literature (see his reader *Fashion Theory: A Reader* (Routledge Student Readers) and his forthcoming *Four* volume *Fashion* (Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies) by the same publisher) is matched with this very concise and important survey of fashion theory utilizing the lens of communication. Malcolm is one of the few fashion theorists publishing these days who has the philosophical tools to think through semiotic theory. His chapter on fashion clothing and postmodernity is worth the price of the book. I've read tens of books on fashion theory, but keep returning to this clear and concise summary of so many essential themes. No wonder it is in the second edition! If you are looking for costume history with lots of examples of clothing styles and anecdotes, this book is not for you. But if you are interested in one of the best primers on fashion theory in print today, this is your book.

This book, with such an important and wonderful premise, says very little. I had purchased this book thinking it would be a marvelous introduction book for costume design students to help them understand the communication power of clothing and fashion. But the author ultimately makes no real independent observations or helps to make sense of the numerous references provided by past historians. He introduces every topic (nearly every two pages) by stating "We just discussed x and we will now discuss y" and yet one marvels at what little was in fact actually said. He also spends an inordinate amount of time defending fashion as "important" by ridiculously comparing it to things like medicine yet he utilizes no clear examples or "proof" of the actual import of fashion to support his claims at any level - not even pertaining to the title of communication. This was quite frustrating and disappointed and an extremely boring read.

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