Special Issue: fascion – the far-right's weaponization of style

Fashion Theory – The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture
Deadline: Apr 15, 2025

elke gaugele, Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien

In recent years, globally we have witnessed the unprecedented weaponization of fashion and styles by extreme far-right, neo-nazi, racist, hate and white supremacist groups. Fashion, dress, and the body have become powerful vehicles for spreading far-right ideologies, and recruiting new members on a global scale. Driven by a diverse range of political actors and entrepreneurs, this trend has given rise to an increasing number of far-right fashion labels, street styles, merchandise, (online) stores, and influencers. Concurrently, the phenomenon of "hatejacking"—the cultural jamming and hijacking of mainstream sportswear and fashion brands and logos by extreme far-right and hate groups—has also grown significantly (Benton & Peterka-Benton, 2020). In 2017, amidst the clashes between extreme right-wing 'Make America Great Again' nationalists and U.S. fashion media, the term fascion (a portmanteau of "fashion" and "fascism") emerged to characterize the intersection of far-right ideologies and their aesthetics of fashion, styles and beauty. This phenomenon exemplifies what Mason (2022) described as the emergence of a "new kind of fascism"—a violent mobilization of individuals toward far-right ideologies. Embedded within the design of fashion and other material & visual culture artifacts, it propagates symbolic violence through material culture and media, reshaping the 'myths of everyday life' (Barthes 1972).

Although scholars have begun to explore this area (Kidd 2011; Blee 2017; Miller-Idriss 2017; Lennard, 2017; Belew 2018, Gaugele 2019; Graham, 2021; Strübel and Sklar 2022; Koehler, 2022; Weis 2023), the contemporary intersection of far-right movements and dress has yet to be studied extensively through the lens of fashion studies and fashion theory, and most existing literature is in the sociology and political science realms. This gap highlights the urgent need for deeper research, and, based on this, information for fashion education, consumers and brands.

The editors of the special issue invite researchers worldwide to contribute analyses of contemporary manifestations, fashion, styles, discourses, movements, and political actions associated with the far-right. Suggested topics for the papers include, but are not limited to:

- Explorations of far right styles and gender appearances in the range of: fashion, dress, merch, hairstyles, accessories, badges/patches, jewelry and body modification
- Case studies on Far-Right/neo-Nazi/White Power/Supremacist fashion brands, influencers and social media
- Case studies on cultural hijacking and hatejacking of fashion, fashion brands, and logos
- Militaristic/militia attire
- Aloha shirts use in this context

- Nordic runes and methodology used in this context
- Patriotic dress, flags, historic Americana, U.S. confederate flag
- Dress with weaponry/gun-culture symbols
- Vintage and historic styles that have a connection to the contemporary far right (e.g. Tradwives appearance and fashion businesses)
- Semiological/visual analysis on far-right symbols, typography, codes and designs
- Relationships between subcultural/alternative styles and far right approaches
- The influence of far-right politics on the fashion industry, fashion media, and fashion shows
- Fashion industry celebrities who align with the extreme right/nazism
- The normalization of (neo) fascist, far-right, white supremacist/racist aesthetics and discourses through fashion and styles (designers, enterprises, logos, fashion pieces from mainstream to luxury avantgarde)
- Counter strategies by designers, activists, brands, fashion collections and consumers opposing far-right styles, politics, and hatejacking

Political campaign dress merchandise of the far-right
- KKK robes
- Active cubs and MMA, bodies, sport, and appearance

Please note that each article must include at least one image, and the author is responsible for securing and covering the cost of both a high-resolution image and the necessary reproduction permissions. Whenever possible, we recommend that authors either take the photograph themselves or use an image from the public domain.

The call is open to abstracts from all research methods and disciplines. We encourage innovative and new fashion research. Please submit a paper abstract of 250 words and a 100 word biography to neofash@akbild.ac.at by April 15, 2025.

Acceptance will be sent by May 31, and you will be invited to submit a paper (no more than 8000 words) by October 31 2025.

The special issue of Fashion Theory is edited as a cooperation between the FWF Research Project “Fashion and the Far Right: The new complexity in style” at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Elke Gaugele and Sarah Held) and Monica Sklar, University of Georgia.

Reference:

CFP: Special Issue: fascion – the far-right’s weaponization of style. In: ArtHist.net, Jan 14, 2025 (accessed Nov 6, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/43682>.