What do clothing, jewelry, and accessories really tell us about the modern individual, her origins and ambitions, her past struggles and social networks, her place in a world populated by so many other shoppers, critics and style icons? How does our understanding of fashion, taste, beauty and style evolve over time and shape the way we look at gender, sexuality, creativity, commerce and aging? This online course explores the fashion world and its impact on the way we view ourselves and the world around us. Our survey will include fashion writings and aesthetic musings from Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco and Dubravka Ugresic; symbolist poetry by Charles Baudelaire and Barbie poems by Denise Duhamel; body modification tales by Junichiro Tanizaki and Nikolai Gogol; films like Desperately Seeking Susan and Coco Before Chanel; episodes of Project Runway; and iconic fashion collections, editorials, and live media featuring style icons like Madonna, Lady GaGa, and Beyoncé.