

Sophia University Institute of Comparative Culture Lecture Series 2023

Fashioning Lesbianism

Seitō (1911-1916) and the global New Woman

Eleanor Medhurst

(A historian of lesbian fashion and author of the website [Dressing Dykes](https://dressingdykes.com))

July 21, 2023 07:30 PM Osaka, Sapporo, Tokyo

Format: Online only

Registration necessary:

<https://forms.office.com/r/eJCLTNSGEn>



吉原登楼 (『東京パック』1912.8.1)

Seitō (1911–1916) was a 'proto-feminist' magazine, published in Tokyo by a group of five women and contributed to by over one hundred. Included among them were Hiratsuka Raichō and Otake Kōkichi – both no stranger to making their own way in life, despite what was expected of them. Aside from their work and writings, this is evident through the clothes that they wore. The women of *Seitō*'s refusal to conform, as well as their desire for female community, same-sex love and traditional male garments, places them in a global narrative of early-twentieth century 'New Women'. There are particular similarities between the expressions of lesbianism or same-sex desire in the lives and clothing choices of many of these women, from Tokyo to Paris to New York. Amidst increasing global interconnectivity, emerging theories of sexology and women's rights movements, lesbian fashion can be seen as an expression of freedom, difference, and defiance.

Eleanor Medhurst is a historian of lesbian fashion and author of the website [Dressing Dykes](https://dressingdykes.com) (dressingdykes.com). She has written about lesbian fashion history for the edited collections *Crafted with Pride: Queer Craft and Activism in Contemporary Britain* (Intellect, 2023) and *Queering Desire: Lesbians, Gender and Subjectivity* (Routledge, 2023), as well as for the journals *TEXTILE: Cloth and Culture* and *Journal of Lesbian Studies*. She has also worked on sharing queer history and fashion for *Queer Looks and Queer the Pier*, exhibitions at Brighton Museum (UK). Her book, *A History of Lesbian Fashion* (Title TBC), will be published next year.

This talk is organized by David Slater (Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Sophia University)

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