

# DIGITAL AGNES

Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen's University  
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## Agnes Gets Hysterical, featuring Courtney Gilmour

### SPEAKER

Courtney Gilmour

### KEYWORDS

Comedy, Hysterics Collective, Museum Collection, Collection of Canadian Historic Dress

### TRANSCRIPT

**Courtney Gilmour:** Hi. My name is Courtney Gilmour. I'm a standup comedian and I've been invited by the Hysterics Collective to review these undies by Agnes.

This is a petticoat. This to me is alarmingly vibrant for its time, which I love. It's bright red. It's loud. I like to think that girls wore it under their beige cream dresses and they were like, "You'll never know what I've got under here." You know? It's like just for them.

This to me is also what I believe women wore when they were on their periods. Honestly, I would wear this on my period. Given how primitive menstrual products still are, the technology is not there yet. Just give me a whole red petticoat. Okay? It's the Victorian maxipad.

This is a nightgown. I love this. It's long. It's ruffled. It's giving straitjacket vibes. Okay. We're going for a cozy psychosis. Psychozy is the brand here. For me, I really like the zip up at the back. It's very hard to get. Very inaccessible. Back then, if you didn't know hard to get was more than a state of mind. It was actually physically impossible to get into people's undergarments. But if you managed to get in there, then it was all a nice long ruffle-y pay-off.

This is a negligee. This was every dress in the window of Le Château in 2006. I'm pretty sure I have this. It's not a negligee. It's a full dress that teenagers were wearing. If this is the Victorian era, I imagine it is, I wonder if Vicki herself was wearing this. Go off Queen! I support this. This is why fainting couches were invented. People think that it was because of female hysteria. No, it wasn't. It was the men. How could we expect people to handle this level of sexiness back then? You've seen your spouse wearing frocks her whole life, and then she busts out this number. You're going to be on the floor for sure.

This is simple, modest weekday wear-type of undergarments, you know, very casual. This is like the Monday to Friday with a little bit of lace trim for a sultry Wednesday vibe. There are a distracting amount of stains on this piece. A little bit concerning, but... I know the laundry situation back there was very minimalist. I think the undergarments were more complicated than the washing methods. In 1877, you only washed your clothes when you were about to

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walk into the lake. And that's what I think women did back then, was dramatically walk into the lake, wearing their full gowns and frocks. This is just the thing that they did to feel romantic. You're not a true romantic era Victorian woman unless you have absolutely walked yourself directly into the lake wearing your underwear.

These are the Friday panties. It's been a long week of lounging on the velvet sofa, feverishly fanning your brow. It's time to unwind and relax with some lace trim and an extra pop of colour. They said, "we're keeping the stains, but we're adding blue ribbons." To me, when I see these, it's like, I can't imagine getting into an argument with your spouse while wearing these, like, in the bedroom, having a heated intense fight. It's too embarrassing to be wearing ruffled mini pantaloons like this. I think whoever's underwear is the most dramatic wins the fight. That's the most fair solution to me. You're already humiliated enough wearing these. Now you have to admit to hiding opioids in your waistcoat? No. You win the fight with these. They were just painkillers, Ophelia. Okay? Relax.

Well, that's the undergarments collection. I'm Courtney Gilmour. Thank you so much to Agnes and the Hysterics Collective for having me.