Clothes (Un)Make the (Wo)Man – Ungendering Fashion (2015)?

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Acknowledged by many as the year that the term 'transgender' fully entered American mainstream consciousness, 2015 marked a distinct cultural watershed. Models, media stars and activists were coming out with their transgender identities (Griggs 2015). At the same time, and without coincidence, the world of fashion took up the issue. Transgender models such as Lea T walked the runways, and Andreja Pejic was featured in the May issue of *Vogue.* Designers and brands also openly revealed a new gender consciousness, or even strove beyond gender dichotomy. Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell (2015) crystallized the moment by writing for *The Atlantic*: 'Indeed, unisex everything appears to be back with a vengeance'.

Yet this was not merely the 1960s unisex revisited. The phenomenon encompassed, but also moved beyond, avant-gardist designers and high-fashion brands, and in the United States extended further than the 'fashion center' of New York City (Chrisman-Campbell 2015; Leach 2015). It came to the British high street when in March 2015, Selfridges in London opened its Agender department consisting of three floors (Selfridges 2015; Tsjeng 2015). Zara followed suit exactly one year later (Sharkey 2016). *The New York Times Style Magazine* published fashion spreads on gender-blending menswear, representing androgynous black models (New York Times, 2015). According to *Harper's Bazaar,* among eighteen 'fashion moments' of 2015 were: Caitlyn Jenner appearing on the cover of the July issue of *Vanity Fair,* photographed by Annie Leibovitz; Kanye West's two-gender ambiguous *Yeezy* collections; Rick Owens Spring 2016 collection, featuring models strapped together walking the runway, redolent of performances by Leigh Bowery; but also some distinctly binary-gendered examples. Therefore, we can ask whether in the third millennium, fashion can serve to make and unmake genders, and in what way this making and possible unmaking of genders affects the way sexuality is performed (Bain

2017).

Gender and Sexuality, from Being to Doing

For the less fashion informed or interested, the transformation of former Olympic athlete, and Kardashian father and step-father, Bruce Jenner to Caitlyn Jenner highlighted gender transitioning more widely. Laverne Cox, the trans actress who became a celebrity for her role in the Netflix series *Orange Is the New Black* (2013–) (Carveth 2015) and had been nominated in 2014 for a Primetime Emmy Award as the first openly transgender person, was in 2015 named as one of the 'Pioneers' on *TIME* magazine's list of the '100 most influential people' (http://time.com/collection/2015-time-100/). These examples, among others, identify the mid-2010s as marking a 'paradigm shift' connected to changes in conceptualizing gender, and corporeally living and *doing* gender (Butler 1990; Lloyd 2007; Zimmerman and West 1987) within, but also beyond, American society. This, in turn, was reflected in contemporary fashion. In order to contemplate on and investigate this phenomenon, it is necessary to consider how fashion does, or does not, contribute to the representation, and moreover the *making* of genders, and participate in the production of gender systems. To do so, we ask in this chapter whether what was being highlighted in 2015, in the United States in particular, produced a wider 'ungendering' of fashion, or how much it actually reflected and supported the proliferation and fluidity of gender identification. Was this a sign of a more significant fashion shift, or simply another passing 'fashion moment'?

Gender, both as a concept and as lived reality, has indeed been changing rapidly in the West since the mid-twentieth century. While 'second-wave' feminism struggled for women's rights and against patriarchy in the1960s and 1970s, it did so within a binary gender system, or rather still conceptualized gender through biological sexes. The 'third wave' of feminism was more geared toward a recognition of differences among and within women (Bowden and Mummery 2009), and in pointing out that gender is largely a cultural and social construction, constricted and regulated, but also enabled and produced by discursive practices and corporeal reiterations (Butler 1990). One of the canonical figures of contemporary feminist theory, Judith Butler crystallized this account of gender as performative, thus emphasizing the role of repeated

gendered practices. Intersectional feminism, having its roots in the 1960s and 1970s galvanization of women of color and lesbians (Collins and Bilge 2016), further emphasized the hierarchies between women, constructed by such axes of difference as sexuality, race, class, age, bodily abilities and religious backgrounds, to name a few. Also, the critical studies of sexuality went through a sea change, as queer studies was launched as an academic field in the early 1990s (de Lauretis 1991; White 2007: 1; Hall 2003). Queer studies further complicated the previously assumed simple account of the connection between gender and sexuality, which had normatively naturalized heterosexuality (Sedgwick 2008; Hall 2003). In the 2000s, even the mainstream discourses began to encompass the plurality of genders and sexualities, and brought familiarity to such terms as 'non-binary' or 'nonconforming' gender, as well as cis-gender, and to antinormative sexualities (see, e.g. Kern and Malone 2015; Bennett 2016).

But even though gender pluralism and sexual anti-normativity have gained a momentum, there is strong evidence that indicates that we are *not* living through a process of 'undoing' gender (Butler 2004) and sexuality. On the contrary, gender and sexuality seem to form just as much a battlefield as ever, which makes them highly political issues. The Obama administration in the United States took a stand on discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and in 2015 entered into the 'bathroom wars', by offering gender-neutral bathrooms in the White House (Marcus 2015). In popular culture, series such as *Orange Is the New Black* and *Transparent* (Amazon 2014–17)*,* brought visibility to transgender characters and actors, and transgender subjectivity at large. All of this, however, has failed to prevent the continuing transgender vulnerability and hate crimes against transgendered people in the United States and elsewhere, especially against trans people of color (Griggs 2015; Transrespect.org 2016; Allen 2017).

These realities lead us to suggest in this chapter that gender is not being undone, but rather that it is changing rapidly, and that fashion has a key role in this change. In this process of re-imagining gender, fashion discourse and fashion design are extending their binary-based vocabulary of gender, to include not only 'unisex', but also neologisms such as 'agender', non-binary and 'ungendered'[1] fashion. We insist, however, that we have to take a closer look at the ways in which fashion (including designers, media, models, consumers, images and actual material

garments) participates in doing gender and making changes to it, may be making it more flexible and plural rather than erasing or undoing it. We also suggest that by looking at different areas of (meaning) production in fashion we may need and find methodologically new ways of addressing and conceptualizing how fashion indeed participates in making gender.

While it is possible to conceptually and theoretically distinguish between gender and sexuality, in practices of everyday life – fashion included – they entangle and influence each other in multiple ways. Heteronormatively thinking, it is supposed that women are 'naturally' feminine and desire (cis) men, who are 'naturally' masculine and desire (cis) women (Butler 1990). This has also for long been a prerequisite for fashion designers, and photographers, who have focused on women's fashion, and on producing garments that have been culturally associated with feminine sexuality and sensuality. Some theorists have even gone as far as stating that theorizing fashion equals theorizing femininity (Tseelon 2001), while others have emphasized that women's ways of wearing clothing can also be interpreted as nonverbal resistance (Crane 2000: 99–132; Holland 2004). Either way, critical and theoretical thinking about fashion's ability to enhance heterosexual appeal has been entwined with feminist theorizing of the 'male gaze' (Mulvey 1989) based on a strictly binary notion of gender. Already changing the 'lens' into a lesbian one affected the conceptual knot between femaleness, femininity and always being the object of the gaze (Lewis and Rolley 1997; Lewis 1997); queering the gaze and the notion of gender performance has further complicated theorizing the routes of desire in corporeal doing, being looked at and looking. It is one of our questions in this chapter, how both the erasure and proliferation of the markings of gender in fashion-affects the politics of sexuality and desire.

Fashion and [Non-]binary Genders

Taking a broad historical and cross-cultural perspective on the subject of gender and dressing, individual and collective clothing choices have not revealed consistent manifestations or expectations of what could or should be worn by women or men. In the West, historically, fashion has tended to reflect and perpetuate a largely dichotomous gender system. Even with women wearing trousers and the introduction of so-called 'unisex' garments, fashion has remained substantially divided down the two gender lines. It is notable also that while more unisex dressing in the 1970s may have made women's clothes slightly more masculine, it never

made them totally unfeminine. Hollander notes how 'assortments of blouses and sweaters' were worn with trouser and skirt suits 'to suggest Dressing for Success, rather than… bodily self-possession' (1994: 170). At the same time in popular culture, parallel attempts to feminize men's appearance, or to de-emphasize male masculinity, highlighted by glam rock and its icons, such as Marc Bolan, David Bowie or Roxy Music in the United Kingdom, proved to be particularized and short-lived in mass fashion (Chrisman-Campbell 2015; Paoletti 2015). US musicians including Iggy Pop and The New York Dolls had an even more select following.

Yet by the 1980s fashion was registering significant change and offering greater flexibility for dressing beyond the strictly demarcated gender binaries. While 'power dressing' continued to impact corporate culture in the United States and beyond, the growing presence of women in previously male-dominated professions had meant that 'work dress began to evolve away from the very tailored and conservative look' (Steele, in Kidwell and Steele 1989: 88). However, innovation toward less gender-defined fashion did not originate in the United States in the 1980s. Among the most significant fashion innovators in the latter part of the twentieth century were designers of Japanese origin, who introduced a much less gender-defined way of dressing in the 1980s, which caused a 'revolution' in Paris (Kawamura 2004) and proved a distinct fashion counterpoint to power dressing. Kenzo, Kansai Yamamoto and more particularly the designs of Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons introduced garments that took their origins from the looser, less body-defining clothing particular to eastern sartorial traditions, rather than more fitted and tailored western dress. Also, in the mid-1990s, in the popular domain and originating in Europe, the British football star David Beckham was the most iconic example of the newly-defined 'metrosexual'. Referenced as a product of urban heterosexual masculinity, akin to the eighteenth-century dandy, the metrosexual was more concerned with fashion and appearance than in any time since the 'great masculine renunciation' of the nineteenth century (Geczy and Karaminas 2013: 49–98; Flügel 1930).

Aforementioned developments are not without significance for this chapter, which continues to argue that avant-garde fashion's relationship with gender took some basic points of departure after the 1980s. One, premised by the work of the Japanese designers and their successors the 'Antwerp 6' and designer Martin Margiela, was more conceptual and even 'intellectual',

predicated on looser, softer garments, often featuring black, navy blue and more neutral colors. The other, kept true to more gender-defined styles, but featured greater opportunities for both women and men to wear styles, fabrics and colors typically associated with the so-called 'opposite' gender. It is these distinctions that we discuss in the next section.

Alternative Femininities and Masculinities

As mentioned already, femaleness and fashion have been historically closely connected especially since the development of the somber men's suit. Also, in terms of cultural hierarchies, because of its labeling as feminine (Bancroft 2016: 22), fashion has widely been valued as trivial, and inferior to spheres considered masculine and traditionally performed by men, such as politics, business and high culture. However, it is arguable that in modern times in the west, women, even though corporeally may be more defined and controlled by fashion, also have had more leeway than men in terms of moving between femininity and masculinity in their way of dressing. In this sense, alternative femininities (Holland 2004) have existed as a possibility for women alongside more controlled feminine styles. But how about alternative femininities in men's fashion? And what are we exactly talking about when using the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' when discussing men and women, and garments?

It is notable that if gender is largely considered to be constructed through culture and society, it can also be said that it is garments – as cultural artifacts and changing historically – that reinforce the gender/ing of people. And it is designers of fashion that influence the gendering (or ungendering) of garments at given times. Certain clothing items have sustained, post the 'great masculine renunciation' (Flügel 2004), specifically gendered meaning or signification, which seems to be challenging to unravel. In the feminine category of garments, we find skirts, high-heeled shoes, such underwear as bras and 'girdles', and sheer stockings (see, e.g. Gandolfi 1989; Parkins 2002; Small 2014; Steele 2001). Also such decorative elements as jewelry, and such corporeal features as bodily 'curves' and long hair have been connected with the female body and often considered as factors of female beauty – which, of course, is literally made up with makeup. In terms of materiality of the garments, softer fabrics and softer colors have been signified as feminine, as have large or excessive folds of garment (cf. the avant-garde, less

obviously gendered use of folds, see Smelik 2015). Pink and blue are prime examples of the gendering of colors, and the changing historical associations connected to them (Garber 1992). The enduring label of masculinity has been attached to trousers (Kidwell and Steele 1989; Smith and Greig 2003), jackets, suits (Kuchta 2008), more subdued colors, coarser fabrics, neckties, short hair and wearing no makeup or jewelry (except for the wristwatch, and perhaps also the wedding ring as a signifier of normative heterosexuality).

The western fashion system, taking a lead from wider dress practices, has provided some possibilities for challenging the culturally set pairing of femaleness and femininity, and maleness and masculinity. The most obvious example, of course, is the history of women and trousers, both work life and sports having provided these otherwise male-gendered garments for women in order to enhance their corporeal mobility (Smith and Greig 2003; Luck 1992). Even though wearing trousers mostly has not really 'masculinized' women as already noted (Hollander 1994), some of the alternative ways of dressing up without wearing a dress within the female sphere may be positioned within 'female masculinities' (Halberstam 1998) – and therefore form a case of alternative masculinities performed by female bodies. The drag king phenomenon of lesbian women aiming toward emphatically masculine style and corporeal performance (Grace and Halberstam 1999) is one example. This can be distinguished from, but also draws historically upon, the likes of the practical outfits of rural women working within agriculture (Halberstam 1998), in coal mines or during war time. In the contemporary world of fashion, models such as Casey Legler have reiterated the drag king style and butch, not androgynous but clearly masculine appearance. What is interesting about Legler, in terms of the fashion system, is that this former competitive swimmer, now based in New York City, was the first woman with a contract as a male Ford Model, in 2012. As for 'newly visible alternative femininities', one has to take into account the performances of fashion models who seriously challenge the gendered expectations of normalized cis femininity. Andreja Pejic, originally a young male model from Bosnia, is now one of the best-known female transgender models, who was posing both in androgynous and feminine ways before her transitioning in 2013. Lea T and Hari Nef are also models who slid across the binary gender divide through the fashion system, at a moment when transgender identification was gaining popular attention.

Designers were also challenging gender stereotypes in what was being presented in menswear collections. The appointment of Alessandro Michele as the new creative director of Gucci at the beginning of 2015 proved to be another fashion marker in this transitional year. His second menswear collection for Gucci in June 2015, which was described in the press as 'defining', comprising garments that incorporated 'ruffles, bows, embroidery, appliqué, lace and jacquards', was described as seeming 'to span from the Renaissance to the punk era' (Madsen 2015). As the article goes on to note, this was not 'androgyny', but rather a presentation of alternative masculinity that reflected the designer's own ambiguous ideas around sexual orientation. Michele was not alone in throwing out fashion challenges to gendered norms of masculinity and femininity through use of colors, fabrics, shapes and with the choice of models. A number of other designers were also moving across and between gender binaries in their designs and practices. London-based Grace Wales Bonner won Emerging Menswear Designer at the British Fashion Awards in 2015, for designs that are more intersectional in their approach to gender, race and identity, having drawn on black style as embodied by James Baldwin, and colonialism, referencing the life of Malik Ambar, a sixteenth/seventeenth-century Ethiopian former slave who gained political power in India (Wales Bonner 2016).

We can trace the fashion origins of these more 'feminine male masculinities' back to the 1980s in particular. Shaun Cole (2000, 2009) has eloquently documented the masculine appropriations that occurred in that decade and earlier, while acknowledging the parallel prevalence of more effeminate styles. Designer Jean Paul Gaultier introduced the 'man-skirt' in 1985. He, and other designers including Dries Van Noten and Vivienne Westwood, continued to challenge gender norms in their utilization of this stereotypically feminine garment for men. Cole has drawn our attention to the fact that the male skirt, in the form of the kilt, was not a new form of drag or cross-dressing, but rather the reflection of the masculine ideal, quoting Steele's reminder (Cole 2013: 190; Steele 1989: 9) that the kilt is a form of (Scottish) male national dress. In dress and in fashion, context and timing, and the body inside the garment, should not be overlooked when investigating a 'new look'. So when, for example, Kanye West sported a 'skirt' in 2011 and subsequently, the garment in question was a black leather kilt worn over tight black leather leggings, designed by Ricardo Tisci of Givenchy. While West drew surprised comments, his appearance was far from 'feminine' and very much within a masculine dress tradition. The same

could be said of David Beckham, who sported a Gaultier designed sarong in the 1990s. The referencing was to male dress practices, within and beyond western traditions. What we can conclude from these examples, and there are many more (see, e.g. Carreño 2014), is that by 2015 fashion's points of reference, culturally and historically, were more expansive than ever before. Fashion also references changes in society at large, notably for our argument the greater acknowledgment and visibility of LGBTQ people (Hyland 2015). As well as the existence of examples of 'alternative femininities and masculinities' in fashion garments, design, style and icons, by 2015 a greater range of clothing options were available across the fashion spectrum, which were less gender defined than any time in the previous century.

Intellectuals of Design and Indeterminate Gender

Writing, again in 2015, journalist Alexander Fury identified 'The Alternatives', in the form of designers, located in various parts of the world, who were 'subverting fashion's status quo' by pursuing a more conceptual approach to fashion. He described their work as perpetuating 'a visual language of distress and decay' very much 'at odds with contemporary tropes of luxury'. The aesthetic was contrary to what might be considered pleasing or 'attractive', often due to the scale of garments not being made to fit, but rather being significantly over or under the body size. Also, the demarcation between genders was eroded so wearers could be either male or female, 'stranding onlookers in a hinterland of indeterminate gender identity' (Fury 2015). The aforementioned Japanese and Antwerp designers provided a stylistic and creative backbone to these changes, which in the twenty-first century represented a particular fashion approach. Fury acknowledged the work of the brands Alyx and Vejas, whose designers would both be finalists in the 2016 LVMH young designer competition (Figure 1). A point of consistency is the appreciation by these designers of the construction of garments and their relationship to the human body, an understanding that is evident in, but not limited to, the work of Rei Kawakubo, Martin Margiela, Rick Owens and Demna Gvasalia, of the brand Vetements. Beginning as a fashion collective in Paris in 2014, one characteristic of Vetements has been to show identical garments on men and women in their catwalk shows and their fashion imagery (Fury 2016). Their more gender fluid shapes, often oversized, hark back to the work of Martin Margiela, with

whom Vetements chief designer Demna Gvasalia worked briefly. In the United States, the designer who best represents this approach is Rick Owens.

Characterized by the color black, soft, draped fabrics, the likes of dropped-crotch pants and distressed leathers, Owens' designs have projected a Gothic aesthetic, and change little across fashion seasons. Skillfully cut, and ignoring fashion's obsession with 'newness', they typically defy distinct gender identification. They are products of Owens' training in pattern cutting, skill in draping, interest in sportswear and undoubtedly influenced by his own self-declared bi-sexuality (Frankel 2011). Showing both women's and menswear collections, he has also challenged the norms of the fashion runway show with his focus on consistency, rather than rapid seasonal change, providing his designs with 'an aura of timelessness' (Yoon 2015) (Figure 2). The concept of confounding fashion time also resonates with less binary prescribed design relationships to gender. That said, 2015 also witnessed interesting changes in the gendering of fashion retail, which internationally reinforces 'men's' and 'women's' wear by the separation of garments and accessories in shops, and on websites.

In the Spring of 2015 Selfridges flagship department store on London's Oxford Street opened a pop-up department called 'Agender' that stated its aim as creating a 'genderless shopping experience' (Tsjeng 2015). The work of British designer Faye Toogood, the concept was simple, yet for a department store, revolutionary: to create a space where men and women could shop for clothes irrespective of gender distinction. Toogood had a strong affinity for the project, not only having created store interiors for brands such as Comme des Garçons and Alexander McQueen, but also for her eponymous undergendered clothing brand (http://t-o-o-g-o-o-d.com). The department was described as follows:

> All the clothes are bagged up in white cases made from stiff artists canvas, with a slit running down the middle to offer a glimpse at the garment inside: black tulle-overlaid hoodies from Nicopanda, gold embroidered Ann Demeulemeester jackets, graphic-print Yang Li sweatshirts. All accessories come in unmarked white boxes. (Tsjeng 2015)

While the project was in effect a short-lived experiment, for those paying attention it was more

than another take on cross-dressing based on binary thinking. At best, it was a 'bold declaration of self-identity' (Tsjeng 2015). This aspect of the project continues with the campaign film, featuring Hari Nef and a cast of performers who cross racialized, color, age, corporeal and gender distinctions. The film provides a lasting record of the close association of fashion with identity and 'becoming'. Interestingly, on the project's website, the term 'agender' has been defined *not only* 'without gender', but also, and more importantly, as 'moving between genders or with a fluctuating gender identity (genderfluid); third gender or other-gendered; includes those who do not place a name to their gender' (Selfridges: Agender 2015). This further supports our account of the recent changes in the fashion system's gendering tendencies being rather about proliferation and fluidity than erasure of gender.

In contrast to the Selfridges initiative, the introduction the following year by global fashion brand Zara of its 'ungendered' line proved much more controversial (see, e.g. Sciacca 2016). The Zara collection comprised sixteen items including jeans, T-shirts and sweatshirts in neutral colors, shown on male and female models. The collection harked back to 1960s 'unisex' while also referencing the fact that the featured garments are standard everyday wear for many women and men, typically distinguished only according to size and fit. Perhaps this was influenced as much by retail competition as by gender politics. The rapid global growth and competitive aspirations of the Japanese clothing brand Uniqlo, owned by Fast Retailing Co. was proving a major market challenge to Zara's parent company Inditex SA (Huang and Takada 2017). Uniqlo's styles were more casual and everyday-focused than those of Zara. They also espoused and promoted collaborations with designers. At the time of writing this chapter, the company was promoting its Fall 2017 collaboration with British designer Jonathan Anderson. The designer's label, JW Anderson, was named men's and women's wear brand of the year in 2015, and his ethos has been the concept of a shared rather than a gendered wardrobe.

Other changes have also been evident since 2015 in the fashion system at large. In April 2016 fashion authority Vanessa Friedman reported in *The New York Times,* how Gucci had announced that from 2017 they would no longer hold different shows for men's and women's wear, but would combine the two into a single, seasonal show, as a way of simplifying their business (Friedman 2016). This move followed similar announcements by Burberry, Tom Ford and Vetements, some of whom were also changing their production calendar, to enable customers to

'see now and buy now'. While this change on the one hand seems to reinforce our observations of more fluid gender distinctions being acknowledged by the fashion system, it could equally be more a sign of fashion wanting to bring products to consumers as fast as possible. Perhaps both impetuses are evident, for fashion is not only a complex business, but also a reflector of social and cultural change.

In response to the Zara initiative, one commentator expressed the view that mainstream retailers' gender fluid clothing has both positive and negative effects on the LBGTQ community:

> On one hand, genderless lines in the mainstream encourages everyone to accept more diverse forms of gender expression, which creates positive change for the queer community', she said. 'On the other, the industry seems focused on masculine style for all genders, erasing femme identities and perpetuating a standard that femininity is still very narrowly defined and only acceptable for a limited scope of identities'. (Sciacca 2016)

This leads us to wonder how thoroughgoing the cultural change in terms of gender and sexuality has yet been, no matter the ubiquity of the discourse and representations, and the malleability of garments.

Conclusion

To return to our thesis stated in the beginning of the chapter, 2015 proved a pivotal year for more fluid gender and identity recognition in fashion/by the fashion industry, in the United States and other western cultures. In comparison to earlier times, this twenty-first-century phenomenon meant referencing more diverse 'forms' of earlier fashion trends, and also bringing forth new aesthetics, which worked against the notion of normatively 'attractive', neither according to 'feminine' nor 'masculine' standards. Also, on the runways the demarcation between genders was eroded so wearers could be either male or female, or 'other-gendered'.

Beginning our discussion on changing representations of gender in and through fashion, we also took into account the broader changes in theorization of gender and sexuality, noting that along with other ways of *doing* or constructing gender, fashion is a relevant one. And since gender and

sexuality entangle and influence each other in multiple ways – also through fashion – the ways in which garments are designed may also challenge the former heteronormative notions of gendered desire.

We recognized three 'streams' of both fading and proliferating gender in contemporary fashion:

1. unisex clothes have returned but sized and cut differently;
2. feminine styles have become more accessible for men, but also more masculine styles for women, with openly gay women modeling (e.g. Casey Legler). New visibility of trans and non-binary people, also in fashion, has further complicated the former cis and binary thinking of corporeal styles;
3. the 'alternatives' – more conceptual design – continue to produce less gender-defined fashion. This is coming more into the mainstream with projects such as Selfridges Agender, and Uniqlo's 'democratic design'. We also pointed out that avant-garde fashion's relationship with gender took some new, gender-bending points of departure after the 1980s, rather than simply returning to former sartorial notions of unisex.

It was our aim to show that even though in 2015 and after there has been a lot of discussion about 'ungendering' of fashion, it is arguable that fashion has actually reflected and supported the proliferation and fluidity of gender and sexual identification. It is our conclusion that gender is not being undone, but rather changing rapidly, and that the way fashion is *used,* not only by the industry and the media, but also by people wearing it, has a key role in this change. Therefore, there is reason to think that the phenomenon we have been analyzing is not simply a 'fashion moment', but part of a broader societal and cultural process. Nevertheless, we are talking about a really short and recent period of time, and the profoundness of this change remains to be seen, beyond the catwalks.

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[1] We co-taught a graduate course titled 'Ungendering Fashion' at Parsons School of Design in the Spring 2016 (29 February–11 March), which we began planning well ahead in 2015. That course also generated the ideas that underpin this chapter. Note also 'Ungendered' fashion, the name chosen by Zara for a new collection launched in Spring 2016. The name stuck, and was used, for example, for a panel entitled 'Ungendering Fashion' held at The Museum of the City of New York, 12 October 2016, including Peche Di, Founder of Trans Models New York, the world's first transgender modeling agency; Sara Geffrard, Editor-in-Chief, *A Dapper Chick*; Luna Luis Ortiz, photographer and HIV/AIDS activist; Ryley

Pogensky, model and contributor; and Anita Dolce Vita (moderator), fashion and culture blogger, *dapper Q*.