

A museum display of mannequins in various outfits. In the foreground on the left, a mannequin wears a leopard print dress. In the center, a mannequin wears a white fur skirt. On the right, a mannequin is unclothed, showing a red nipple. In the background, other mannequins are visible, some wearing gold or metallic outfits. The setting is a museum with dark walls and spotlights.

FASHION AND GENDER

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QUESTION

When you see someone for the first time, what do you pay attention to?

- “Gender is the single most important factor in practices of dress” (Entwistle, 2000, 52)
- Gender division of clothing was the first step towards the modern fashion system (Lipovetsky 1994, 20)
- Even if the aim of fashion is to define the style of a given moment, *it is always mediated by social factors such as gender*
- The role of dress: *representation of gender and gender difference*
- Gender refers to cultural classifications of masculinity and femininity which is, in turn, visible in clothing:
- *‘men’s wear’, ‘women’s wear’*

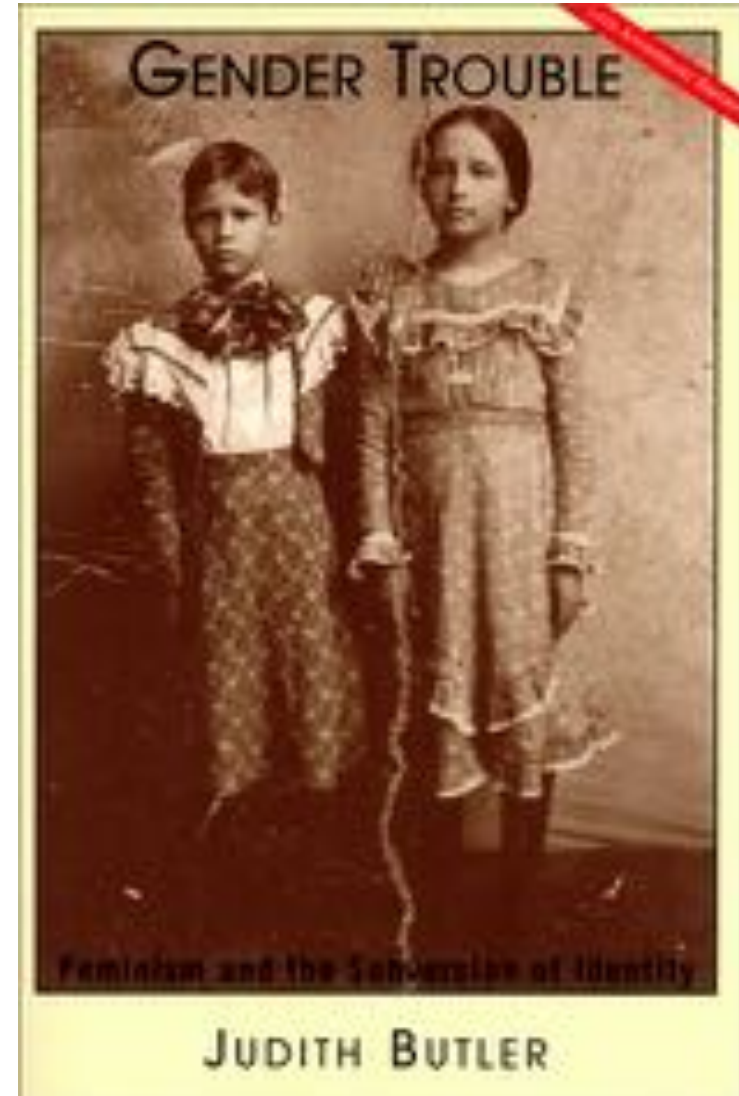


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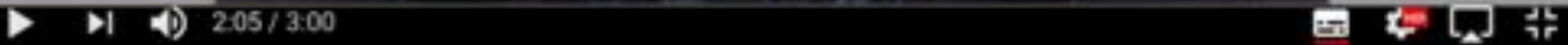
GENDER PERFORMATIVITY

- Judith Butler, American scholar, philosopher and feminist
- Butler's critique: the self-evident idea of *gender as natural* (that there are two genders: male and female)
- Separates gender from anatomy, highlights gender as *concept, conceptual and discursive*
- *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990)
- "Post-wittgensteinian": gender is constructed and produced in different institutions of power (language, school, medicine, fashion, social situations)





So there are institutional powers like psychiatric normalization and there are informal kinds



GENDER IS DOING

- Anatomy is not destiny: one is not born to a certain gender but *becomes gendered*
- Gender is not fixed but *in constant flux*
- **Gender performativity**: gender is *constructed*, based on *social norms*
- Gender performativity means that gender is a **hierarchical system** in which some forms of gender are prioritized while others are marginalized
- Performativity suggests that *gender is subject to change*

An anonymous boy, age four or five, in a dress with pleated skirt, ca. 1870.



DRAG

- “Drag” *dramatizes* gestures that make gender
- Drag is a parody of gender norms
- Gendered bodies are styles of the flesh
- These gestures are innumerable:
 - Clothing
 - Body modifications (from hair and make-up to surgery)
 - Walking style
 - Ways of taking space
 - Ways of expressing emotions
 - Speech, pitch and tone of voice
- Butler’s theory of gender performativity is *critique of essentialism*

Ru Paul, Drag Race





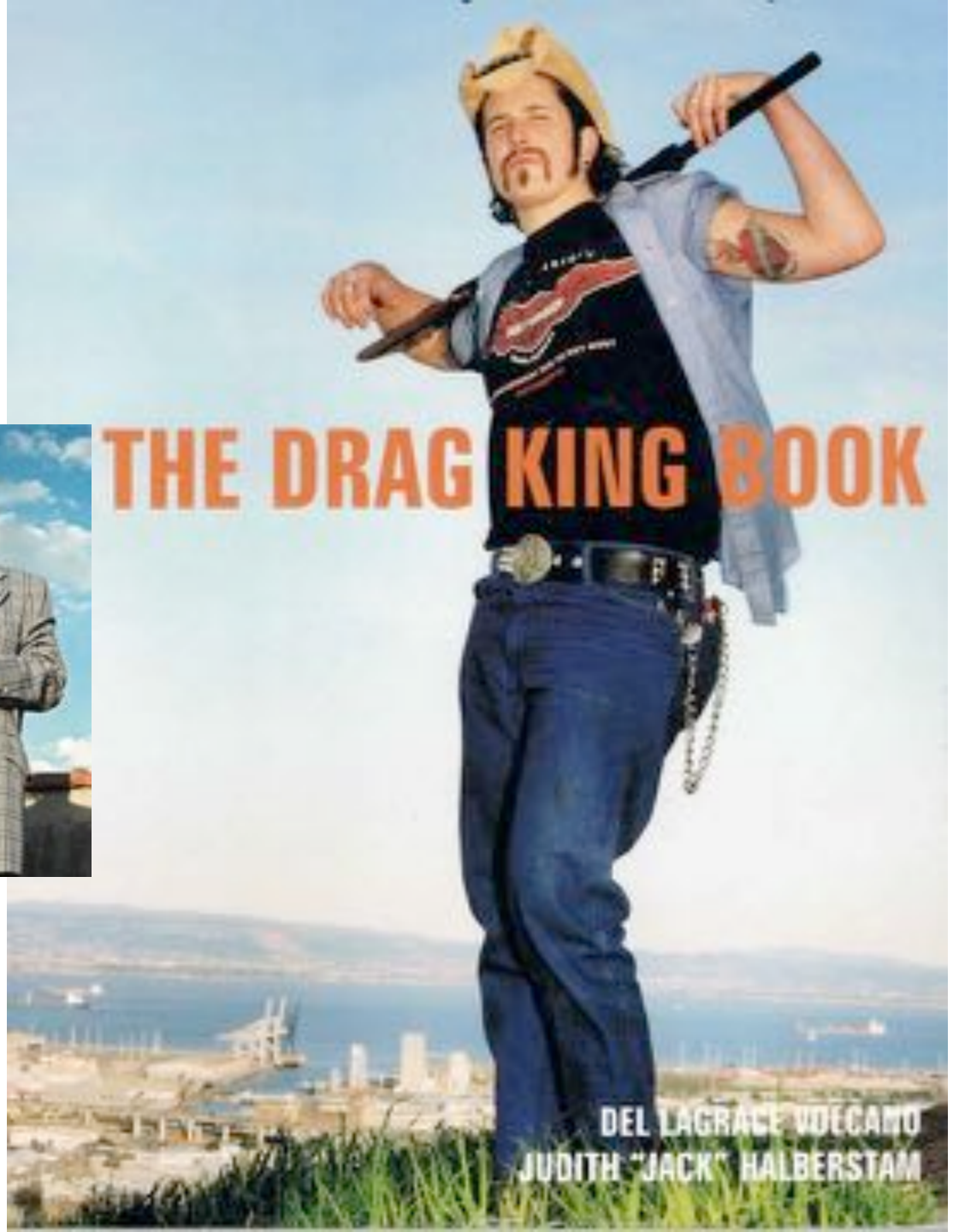
Paris Is Burning. 1991. USA. Directed by Jennie Livingston. 78 min. Sheds light on "the balls", underground dance and drag events that were an important part of New York's gay and drag communities.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2EncFXHS20c>

See Butler (1993) and hooks (1992) on the documentary.



Billy Porter pays homage to ballroom icon, the Legendary Grandfather Hector Xtravaganza of the House of Xtravaganza



THE DRAG KING BOOK

DEL LAGRACE VOLCANO
JUDITH "JACK" HALBERSTAM



Drag King Book (1999) by Judith Jack Halberstam and Del Lagrace Volcano.

Masculinity as culturally constructed, masculinity as drag

VENUS BOYZ



Venus Boyz. Directed by Gabriel Baur. 2001. With Diane Torr, Dréd Gerestant, Del Lagrace Volcano, Queen Bee Luscious. A film journey through the universe of *female masculinity*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8brA0BKZMus>



The Brandon Teena Story. Directed by Susan Muska, Gréta Ólafsdóttir. 1998.
Documentary about a young transgender person who was murdered in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1993.

See Halberstam (2000) on the documentary and transgender history.



Calvin Klein CK One perfume, 1995 (top left); lipstick ad, House of Exposure, 2012 (below); Tom Ford / Gucci, early-2000s (centre); Dolce & Gabbana perfume, mid-90s (bottom left).





Andreja Pejić (right), in Australian *Vogue*, 2018.



Hari Nef (left), in Gucci ad 2017.



Lea T (2nd from right) for Givenchy, 2010.

- Butler's theory is based on her everyday life experiences in California
- Butler writes about those who she encountered in her own life: lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans people
- Writes about those who fall outside the dichotomous gender system and whose gender is not understandable in our culture
- *Argues that the idea of "normalcy" is constructed by placing certain groups of people outside the binary gender system by casting them as "deviant"*



Brassaï, Butch-femme lesbian couple at Le Monocle, 1932, the first and most famous lesbian nightclub in Montmartre, the main gathering place for lesbians in Paris.

FASHION: A TREASURY OF GENDER PERFORMATIVITY

AGAINST NORMS OF FEMININITY

ANTI-FASHION / FEMINIST PROTEST



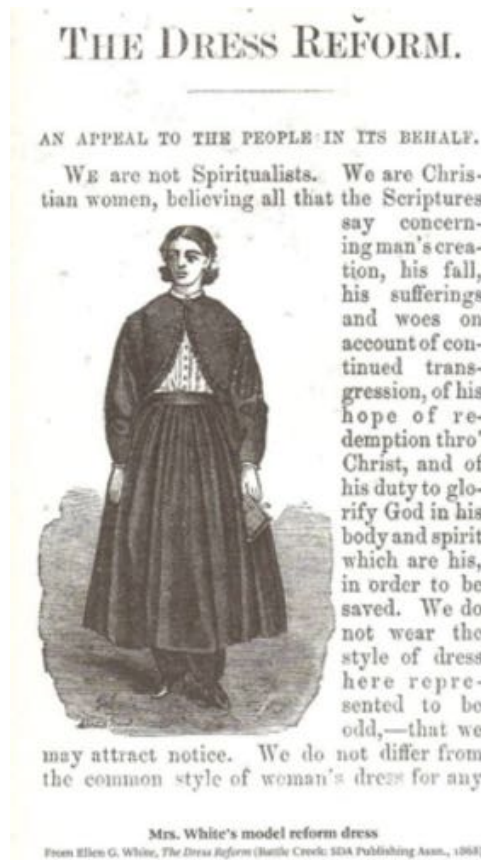
Charles Fredrick Worth, Evening ensemble, 1862–1865



Mrs. Tibitts wearing a "Bloomer-costume", 1860s

ANTI-FASHION / FEMINIST PROTEST

- Women's Dress Reform (1868)
- Fashion = patriarchal conspiracy, signified in "painful fashions", e.g. the corset and the hoop skirt
- Prevents women from participating in real affairs of society
- Advocated loosely fitting clothing and masculine tailoring
- Loose clothing symbol of women's liberation:
- intellectual independence; right to have an education; right to vote; right to have a career
- Trousers as activist tool



Mrs. White's reform dress, 1868 (left).

Amelia Bloomer and the "Bloomer Costume", 1851 (right)

“NEW WOMAN”



Actress Ina Claire wearing a herringbone tweed skirt and jumper by Chanel, *Vogue*, 1924.

- Changes in dress reflect changes in women's *social status*
- Fashion and clothes *political tools* in advocating women's rights
- “The flapper” – modern young woman
- Dressed in short skirts, wore no corset, had a natural waistline, short hair, moved about in the city, worked, did sports, rode a bicycle...
- The flapper's societal freedom *changed her figure* into an *androgynous*, flat and geometrical *boyish* form

AGAINST NORMS OF MASCULINITY

MODERN MASCULINITY



Gustave Caillebotte, *Streets of Paris, Rainy Day*, 1877 (above); Two gentlemen (right).

PERFORMING MASCULINITY

FOP



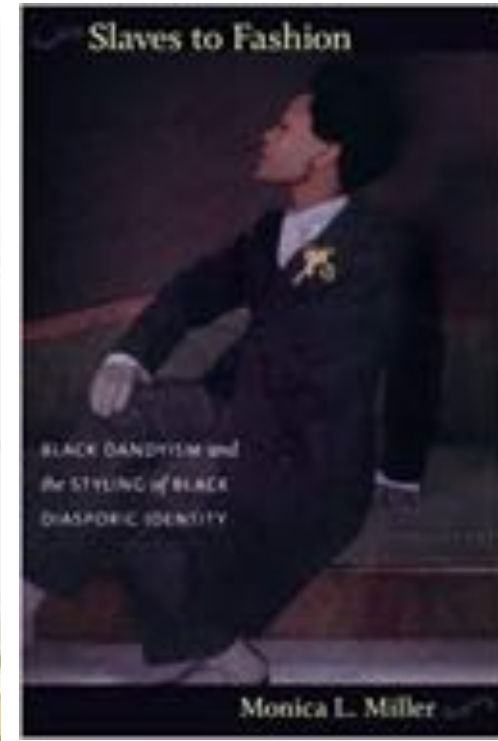
MACARONI



DANDY



BLACK DANDY



John Vanbrugh, Colley Cibber as Lord Foppington, 1696.

How D'ya Like Me, 1772.

Robert Dighton, George "Beau" Brummell (1778-1849).

Black dandyism, slavery, "diasporic identity"

Theatricality, vanity, mannerism, effeminacy

Flamboyancy, effeminacy, subcultural style

Class-mobility

Race

NEW MAN

- Changes after WW I
- “Old wardrobe” with stiff collars and formal attire symbolized “hard warrior masculinity” and old world order
- “New man”: young, cosmopolitan, pleasure-seeking, jazz, arts, sports, leisure
- The new man distanced himself from wartime masculinity and values associated with it
- Exchanged formal suit for an informal one
- New materials: linen, silk and fine wool flannel

Man’s two-piece wool leisure suit with knickerbockers, c. 1920.



MEN'S DRESS REFORM PARTY

- Manifesto (1929):
- “Most members wish for shorts; a few for the kilt; nearly all hate trousers. Some plead for less heavy materials and less padding; others for brighter colours; but the villain of the piece is the collar-stud. A wail has gone up throughout the land; man is clutching at his throat and crying.”
(*Times* 17 June 1929).



Members of the Mens dress reform party, 1929.

HUGH HEFNER

PLAYBOY, ACTIVIST AND REBEL
A FILM BY ACADEMY AWARD WINNER BRIGITTE BERMAN



THE BACHELOR

Hugh Hefner, the modern bachelor after
WW II



Lounge suit, Late 1950s (left). Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Leisure Suit for men, 1973 (right). Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Kanye West in Haider Ackermann Drop Crotch Sweatpants

**CROSSDRESSING, VOL. I:
FROM THE MALE CLOSET**

- *“Never have I had such a string of would-be admirers, and all of my black curly hair, and white collars. They like the dandy in me and are in no way interested in my inner-self or value.”*

– The American painter
Romaine Brooks, 1923



Romaine Brooks: Self-Portrait, 1923.



Romaine Brooks, Lady Una Troubridge, 1924 (left); Tamara de Lempicka, Portrait de la Duchesse de la Salle, 1925 (centre); Marlene Dietrich in the film «Morocco», 1930 (right).



Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel with her dog, Gigot, 1930.



Jean Patou, sports wear for women. Tennis champion Suzanne Lenglen, 1920s.

Young woman on a bicycle, wearing a three-piece Aquascutum trouser suit, October 1939. Photo: *Daily Herald* Archive/SSPL/Getty Images.





Katherine Hepburn, 1930s (left); pant suit patterns for women, 1940s (centre); Yves Saint Laurent, Le Smoking, 1962 (right).

Yohji Yamamoto, a combination of ankle-length men's paletot coat with a tulle form as a kind of bustle.
Photograph by Nick Knight, 1986.

"All I wanted was for women to wear men's clothes". – Yamamoto, V&A Museum, 2011.



**CROSSDRESSING, VOL. II:
FROM THE FEMALE CLOSET**



ABOVE: David Bowie wearing striped bodysuit designed by Kansai Yamamoto, 1973



RIGHT: Christine Walton for *Vogue* Paris, August 1971.



RIGHT: *Harpers & Queen*, London, July 1971. Designs by Kansai Yamamoto. Hair and makeup by Sachiko Shibayama



BOTTOM RIGHT: David Bowie wearing "man-skirt" and posing as "Olympia", 1970.





Jean-Paul Gaultier, the cone bra dress, male corset, the male skirt, mid-1980s.



Gucci menswear SS 2016.



Palomo Spain, Spring / Summer 2018, "gender binarism or any form of self-identification shouldn't matter."



John Galliano / Maison Margiela haute couture / Artisanal mens- and women's wear shows 2018, podcast on new definitions of masculinity and femininity; from the intricate corsetry work to the reimagination of Japanese dress. **"Redefine what is a new masculinity, or even femininity, through cutting."** Podcast *The Memory of ... With John Galliano* at https://i-d.vice.com/en_us/article/9k878z/margielas-first-couture-menswear-blurred-gender-binary.

TOWARDS ANDROGYNY, UNISEX, GENDER NEUTRALITY, GENDERLESSNESS...?



A Man's Suit, 1925 (left); Elsa Schiaparelli, Pantsuit, Winter 1939-40 (right).
Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Rudi Gernreich, 1960s-1970s. Unisex collections.

marimekko®



Annika Rimala, Tasaraita -jersey,
Marimekko, 1968.



Finnish unisex sportswear, 1980s and 1990s.



Eckhaus Latta Spring/Summer 2019 (left), Zara "Ungendered" collection, 2016 (right).
What makes clothes "androgynous", "unisex", "genderless" or "ungendered"?
Plainness of the garments? Similar colors, cuts, patterns? Materials? Androgynous models?



Demna Gvasalia / Balenciaga: Ready-to-wear collection womenswear Fall/Winter 2018/2019.



AGENDER

The Concept Space

As part of Agender, Selfridges is creating a unique genderless shopping experience across fashion, accessories and beauty. The Concept Space, devised by renowned designer Faye Toogood, is an environment in which you are given the freedom to transcend notions of 'his' and 'hers', as you simply find your most desired item by colour, fit and style. Including exclusive designs by both world-renowned and upcoming designers, complemented by exciting beauty launches, these products mark a significant turning point in the way we think about fashion, beauty and style.

Welcome to the future of genderless shopping.

Selridges gender-neutral pop-up store to provide "genderless shopping experience", 2015.



Clothes bagged up in white cases; clothes not shown on mannequin dolls. Agender aimed for something subtler than "women in suits and men in dresses".

WHAT NEXT?



Rei Kawakubo / Comme des Garçons, spring/summer 1997 and fall/winter 2017:
Reconstructing the human form.



- Bas Kosters, *Permanent State of Confusion*, autumn/winter collection 2015
- A collection that questions the ideas of gender and even that of the human
- A collection that is "a statement against the consumer society we live in." (Kosters)
- A collection made of left-over materials from Koster's previous collections
- Sculpted, hand-made, sewn "soft sculptures"
- <http://fuckingyoung.es/bas-kosters-fallwinter-2015/>

TO SUMMARIZE...

- Significance of gender is established through clothing
- Clothes play a central role in constructing ideas about gendered appearance
- Fashion and clothes reflect deeper social and cultural forces that characterize understanding about gender, social status, and sexuality
- Designers affect a great deal to how a person's gendered identity appears
- Designers also construct understanding of the human

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