



Abstract

Gender neutrality: The idea that policies, language, and other social institutions should avoid distinguishing roles according to people's sex or gender, in order to avoid discrimination arising from the impression that there are social roles for which one gender is more suited than another.

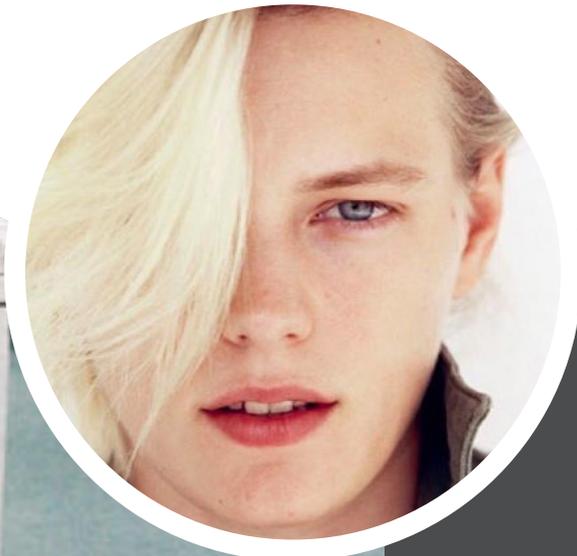
I started with the inspiration of fairytales and the gender stereotypes that they encourage. I also wanted to look at the current "trend" of gender fluidity in fashion: is it just a trend or a social movement that can continue for the sake of the non-binary community? After researching various online pleas and talking to members of the LGBTQIA community I've noticed several concerns related to design. I also looked at gender-neutral fashion companies and noticed a disheartening trend: most of these "progressive" lines were manufacturing shapeless, muted garments that closely resembled oversized menswear. Women have been dressing like men for years, but what about the men that want to dress feminine?

Inspired by the gender roles instilled on us as children and the growing trend of gender-neutral fashion, I want to create a collection that celebrates the amount of choice we have in expressing ourselves as individuals. Using feminine details and a soft color palette, I want to create clothing designed for feminine and masculine

bodies that still exudes femininity.

I pulled silhouette inspiration from the prominent movements in fashion. The romantic volume of the 1850s combined with the sleek forms of the 1960s as well as hyper-feminine style lines resulted in garments that are both structured and feminine at the same time. I chose fabrics such as double-faced satin and neoprene to create volume as well as chiffon and organza to add delicacy. I played with controlled fullness: several of the garments feature straps that can be wrapped to give the wearer their desired shape, and many of voluminous shapes taper into delicate hand smocking. I also experimented with texture, quilting fabric with thumbprints, the ultimate identifier. Combining all of these elements, I have created a collection that can project femininity, regardless of the wearer's gender identity.

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LITERATURE REVIEW



Ever since I was little, I've been fascinated with fairy tales. As I grew older, I began to question the lessons and themes that were present in most of these stories. As I researched further, I realized that fairy tales have been influencing humans and their expectations on gender since the Grimm Brothers published their compilation of fables in 1697. There have been numerous studies since that have criticized the negative affects of these stories, creating roles that are consistently assigned to one gender or



another. The prince is brave, and saves the weak, delicate princess. The pattern is unnervingly consistent.

Over the past hundred years, society has struggled to challenge those gender roles. When the first feminist movement began in the 1850's, women strove for legal equality. During the third wave in the 1960's, women



I began experimenting with external binding on several garments, which provides the wearer with the ability to convert the garment to the shape of their liking. Another aspect of identity that I focused on was fingerprints in the form of embroidery. Several major fashion companies are beginning to adopt aspects of gender-neutral clothing into their collections. Gucci, under Alessandro Michele, has been producing mixed-gender collections featuring bold 70's

, women strove for economic and gender equality. Shortly after that wave, the fight for gay rights began, and was won in 2015. Today, the struggle is with those who stand in-between, such as transgender and non-binary people. Generation Z is full of young individuals who have chosen to identify as neither male nor female, and they want their clothing to help convey whichever gender they identify most with in the moment. An article entitled "9 Things I Want to See in Androgynous Fashion so All Gender Identities are Visible" communicates the major concerns of the LGBTQIA community in terms of agender fashion. I used this article, as well as an interview with a genderqueer friend of mine, as a springboard into the world of non-binary fashion.

Two main concerns of this unique community are that there aren't enough stylish chest binders and that most gender-neutral clothing is shapeless/there isn't a consistent sizing between menswear and womenswear.



prints, frills, and bell-bottoms recently, referencing a time when men dressed with as equal flamboyancy as women. Meanwhile, smaller brands and fast-fashion companies have caught on to the "trend" such as Zara and & Other Stories. What I have noticed, however, is the distinct lack of femininity in these collections. For clothing that is supposed to represent both genders, most current gender-fluid fashion features shapeless athleisure that looks like loose menswear. Taking inspiration from great brands such as Vaquera and Not Equal, I've incorporated feminine details to structured silhouettes to create clothing that is representative of both masculinity and femininity.