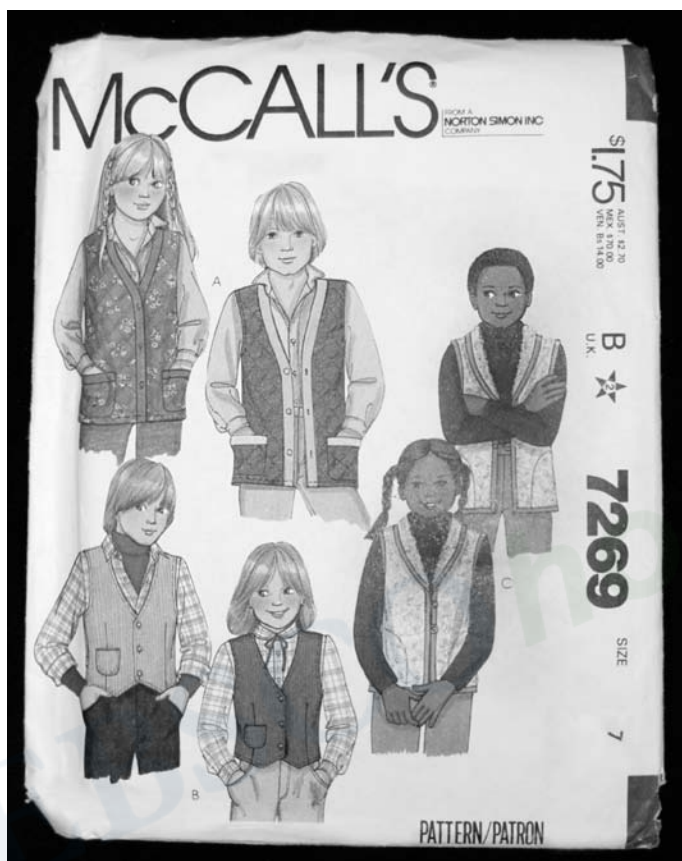




Children's play clothes, Montgomery Ward catalog, Fall/Winter 1960.

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McCall's unisex vest pattern, 1980. McCall's M7269.

*Image courtesy of the McCall Pattern Company, 2014.*

frilly dresses worn over puffy underskirts, not child versions of women's trends. Misses styles could be more revealing and more sophisticated than the Junior fashions designed for high school and college-age consumers. Different flavors of femininity were available depending on age and dating or marital status. Little girl femininity was dainty, pastel, and whimsical. Bigger girl femininity was ladylike and paid attention to current trends and to becomingness (colors that flattered the girl's complexion, for example). Teenage clothing was trendier and figure-flattering, but not revealing. "Sexy" was for adult women.

The innovative styles popular with adults in the late 1960s were available for children, including pantsuits for girls, collarless or Nehru jackets for boys, and turtleneck sweaters and shirts for both. Many of the options for boys and girls were truly neutral, with no strong, preexisting gender significance. Most of the neutral styles were based on adult unisex trends, including hairstyles like the Afro and novelty items such as caf-tans, ponchos, and belted sweater vests. Styles such as turtleneck sweaters, T-shirts, sweatshirts and sweat pants, and jeans, which had been acceptable casual wear for both boys and girls for some time, became more popular and permissible for a wider variety of occasions. Some of these represented new classics, which have continued to be available ever since the 1970s. By the late 1970s feminized versions of once masculine or neutral styles were appearing such as turtleneck shirts with puffed sleeves or denim overalls with ruffled shoulder straps. Vests survived ungendered into the 1980s.

Unisex clothing and fashion for boys meant a kind of flexibility that had not been seen in several decades: more patterns in fabric, including floral prints and bright colors generally, and more embellishment, especially embroidery. These trends echoed similar freedom in men's clothing, described in the previous chapter. Boys' hairstyles became longer and longer and in many cases were quite similar to girls' hairstyles.

One interesting feature of unisex clothing for children was not only the phenomenon of designers of girls' fashions borrowing styles from the boys' department but also girls actually buying boys' clothes. Sears acknowledged this practice by including size conversion charts in the boys' pages of its catalog. *Earnshaw's* reported in 1978 that as much as 25 percent of "boys" jeans and pants was actually sold to girls. The practice also apparently reversed, though not to the same extent; one manufacturer of girls' stretch pants and tops increased his business when he realized that mothers were buying the comfortable, easy-care garments for little boys and started including boys in his ads. To further complicate the story, the manufacturer added a "boys" line, which girls also began to wear.<sup>7</sup> In the same year, some feminine elements started to make a comeback. Red, yellow, or green shortall (short overall) and overall sets in the spring 1978 Sears catalog featured ruffled straps and puffed-sleeve shirts.

The unisex trend reached every member of the family beginning in 1970 when the Sears catalog that spring featured six pages of “his and hers” styles for adults (in the men’s section) and “family styles” modeled by school-age children. Toddler play clothes for boys and girls had always been grouped together, but the unisex influence was visible in fashion-forward styles mimicking adult trends: collarless jackets, longer haircuts, and bright colors for boys and pantsuits for girls. There were fewer dressy, traditional gender-specific styles for children under size 14 as casual styles dominated the scene.

“Family” fashions, in the form of coordinates for adults and children of both sexes, had been popular since the end of World War II, perhaps as a celebration of the nuclear family. These styles in early 1960s Sears catalogs reflected current trends in colorways, whether for heathered neutrals or citrusy brights, but they were limited to a page or two. For boys and men these “his and hers” styles offered a rare respite from the limited range of appropriately masculine hues. Overall one of the most striking characteristics of all clothing between 1968 and 1978 is the explosion of color and pattern that assaults the eye in every magazine and catalog. From apparel for the tiniest babies to men’s suits, each page is a kaleidoscope of stripes, plaids, and prints in brilliant colors. For the first time in generations, older boys and men were enjoying colors and expressive patterns formerly considered effeminate, juvenile, or both. Pastels for babies and toddlers were “creeping into the background,” replaced by red, white, and blue and green, orange, and yellow.<sup>8</sup> Orange, gold, and olive green dominated kitchens and closets alike in the early seventies, and bi-centennial red, white, and blue was everywhere in 1976.

Pastel pink had become a nearly universal symbols of femininity by mid-century, but dressing baby girls in pink was still optional. For most girls pink was one choice among many, and pastels in general were clearly associated with warmer weather and dressier occasions as well as gender. Spring and summer fashions featured pastels and light colors while the fall-winter catalogs were full of darker, more saturated hues. The plaid cotton school dresses familiar to so many baby boom girls were seldom light in color because they had to stand up not only to recess but to penmanship lessons with real ink as well. From season to season the colors

and fabrics in the children's sections of clothing catalogs generally followed adult trends and patterns. If burnt orange was a fashionable color, the entire family wore burnt orange.

The details of clothing trends can be overwhelming; underlying rules and patterns can be frustrating to discern amid the constant flow of colors, shapes, and patterns. They also make for boring reading. Rather than recap the trends already described in the previous chapters for women and men, most of which were transferred directly to children's clothing with little modification, what follows is a brief summary of changes in gendered and ungendered clothing for children from birth to puberty for the years 1962 to 1979.

Two of the "bedrock" rules from the previous decades did not change: the dressier the outfit, the more gendered it was, and it was perfectly acceptable for girls to wear boyish styles for play, or even clothing from the boys department. However, some of the key existing rules disappeared, including

- age separation (babies are not toddlers are not children are not teens are not adults)
- pants for girls are for casual wear only
- neutral styles for babies may include some otherwise feminine elements (floral prints, puffed sleeves, smocking, pink and blue in combination)

A new pattern emerged during this time that not only survived the 1970s but also persists today in an even more decided form. As the age separation rule faded, the distinction between "girly" feminine and "sexy" feminine dissolved and moved lower in the age range for girls. This began with preteen or young Junior styles aimed at girls in the 10–12 age range, but by the late 1970s they were evident in the 7–14 size range as well.

One last shift that occurred during this period was the boys' equivalent of the peacock revolution. Like teens and older men, boys enjoyed a wider spectrum of colors, patterns, and styles and wore their hair longer and longer. Like the more mature styles, this trend showed signs of disintegrating after the mid-1970s.

All of these changes together resulted in more options from which to choose. This was true for gendered clothing, which was reimagined and expanded: more pants for girls, in styles ranging from boyish to fussy, and more expressive, colorful, and even flamboyant styles for boys. But the number and proportion of styles designed for both boys and girls—the neutral or unisex styles—also increased. As a result there was more choice than had been available for children before or since. The question remained, what to choose?

Unisex clothing could be dismissed as just another trivial fashion trend, except that it coincided with heightened scientific, popular, and political attention to the differences between men and women, including the sources and consequences of those differences. Much of the excitement boiled down to a very old question: Are we products of nature or nurture? Unisex clothing posed this question not only visually, to the observer, but also in a very intimate way to the wearer. Who was right? Erasmus, when he penned *vestis virum facit* (often translated as “Clothes make the man”), or Shakespeare, who observed, “Clothing oft proclaims the man”? The women’s movement introduced new urgency to the question of the origins of gender roles, along with a corollary: Is it possible to explore new social roles? Almost immediately there was a conservative reaction: just because new roles were possible didn’t necessarily mean they were desirable.

For many scientists these questions were already being answered by work suggesting that nature and nurture interacted, although in unknown ways. The either/or binary choice persisted in the popular mind, however, especially when it came to children and gender. Many parents (and psychiatrists) clearly held the view that biological sex, as indicated by a baby’s genitalia, was inextricably connected to gendered behaviors. Boys were expected to be loud, tough, and active; girls were dainty, cuddly, and gentle. Children, especially boys, who did not display appropriate characteristics and interests needed correction, whether in the form of parental discipline or professional therapy.

On the other hand, feminist parents, scholars, and educators argued that traditional masculine and feminine roles were the result of social and cultural pressure, not biology. Second-wave feminists were particularly



interested in challenging the sexist beliefs and structures they believed were responsible for women's lack of power and status. Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, in particular, was an indictment of cultural notions of femininity marketed as natural traits. In the public square this translated into protests and political activity. But for many this desire for equality resulted in a more personal, long-term goal: a new generation of men and women raised to be unrestricted by gender stereotypes. The answer, it seemed, lay not only with adults as they struggled to break out of their traditional roles, but also with children, especially the very youngest boys and girls. The solution to sexism seemed to be early intervention, in the form of "unisex child-rearing," a movement affecting even the youngest babies. The transfer of that newly coined term from pantsuits to parenting seems to signal a shift from the "frivolous" realm of trendy young adult fashion to the serious business of cultural transformation.

By the 1970s science and popular culture converged on a paradigm shift in parenting and education. What if femininity and masculinity were almost entirely nurtured? This would place the power for shaping children's gender and sexuality in the hands of parents and educators; medical professionals and mass media would play important supporting roles. This moment was a long time coming, beginning with the first child psychologists who had challenged the nineteenth-century view that masculinity and femininity were innate but undeveloped in babies, and that such traits naturally emerged as the child matured, without the need for coaxing or direction. G. Stanley Hall and others had argued instead that, like intelligence or musical talent, sex roles (as they were then called) were subject to good or bad influences, neglect or cultivation. Scientific evidence that masculinity and femininity were all or mostly learned behaviors would not have made the stakes any lower or the parents' task less important. In fact, as it turned out, believing that gender roles are mostly cultural only intensified those arguments over what masculinity and femininity should be.

The work of John Money in the 1950s and '60s not only introduced the modern concept of gender but also popularized the belief that in the process of identity formation, biological sex was subordinate to gender—that is, the cultural expressions associated with sex. At that time the leading

expert in the treatment of intersex children (those born with ambiguous genitals), Money separated the acquisition of gender identity into biological and social processes. The former, he argued, began at conception and proceeded through five stages before birth. Studies in the late 1950s had established the effects of fetal hormones on brain development, a phenomenon popularly referred to as “brain sex.” At birth the external genitalia identify the baby as a boy or girl, but then gender socialization takes over and becomes the more powerful influence.<sup>9</sup>

Before the reader gets too enthusiastic about his findings, I need to point out that Money has now been so discredited that his name serves as a warning for researcher hubris. Most of his fame rested on *Man and Woman, Boy and Girl*, a widely used college textbook coauthored with Anke Ehrhardt.<sup>10</sup> Besides introducing and elucidating the very useful concepts of gender identity and gender roles to a generation of college students, Money and Ehrhardt’s book is best known for the story of John/Joan, an infant boy whose circumcision went terribly awry, leaving him with an irreparably damaged penis. The solution was surgical reassignment, conducted when the child was about a year and a half old, along with follow-up therapy and hormone treatments that Money claimed produced a well-adjusted girl. The fact that “Joan” had an identical twin brother gave additional weight to Money’s claim to have successfully created female gender identity in someone born male. In addition to this famous case, Money also published widely on his “successes” with hermaphrodite (intersex) babies, who were usually transformed into girls through surgery and hormones, accompanied by behavioral therapy.

In the decades since Money’s peak influence, follow-up studies of his patients have cast a huge shadow over these claims. Not only were they often unhappy with their female bodies, but as adults his patients rejected the feminine cultural patterns foisted on them. The feminized twin on whose story Money had built this reputation eventually chose surgical reversal of the operation and wrote his own story, *As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl*. Sadly, he eventually committed suicide in 2004 at the age of thirty-nine.<sup>11</sup> In the meantime, despite the unhappy outcome of Money’s work, surgeries on intersex infants have continued



to be common practice. Overwhelmingly, these babies are still recreated as females, because male-to-female surgery is generally easier than the reverse. This represents an extreme, rare effect of Money's work, but his work also helped propel acceptance of the belief that gender identity is socially constructed. In fact the roles of nature and nurture in human development are still controversial.

For scholars the distinction between biological sex and the expressions, behaviors, and personality characteristics associated with biological sex served a very useful purpose, seemingly isolating the sociocultural aspects of human behavior from the presumably more universal biological traits. Biological sex was a given, nearly immutable; socially constructed gender was a dependent variable, subject to not only influence by social interactions and media but also, potentially, intervention by parents, teachers, and therapists. Separating the two forces also conformed to the trend for academic specialization. Geneticists, endocrinologists, and other life scientists could focus on the physical (sex), leaving gender to the social scientists. Behavioral scientists began to scrutinize how we acquire gender in early childhood, including patterns of nurturing and education. These investigations were driven not only by scientific curiosity but also by popular demand for definitive answers. The feminist movement and the sexual revolution had opened a Pandora's box of questions and confusion about the most basic elements of human identity.

The same year that Money and Ehrhardt published their textbook, one of the most iconic fictional works of the unisex era appeared: Lois Gould's short story "X: A Fabulous Child's Story," a tale of an "Xperiment" in gender-free child raising. It was published in *Ms.* in 1972 and was expanded into an illustrated children's book in 1978.<sup>12</sup> In the story a baby, named simply X, is born to two parents who have agreed to keep its sex a secret as part of a huge, expensive scientific experiment. They are given a thick handbook to help them navigate future problems from how to play with X to dealing with boys' and girls' bathrooms at school.

The challenges grow larger and thornier when X enters the gendered world of school. Although the boys and girls initially share their parents' discomfort and insist on X's acting like one sex or another, they eventually envy and then imitate its freedom in dress and play. Finally the angry

parents of the other children demand that X be examined physically and mentally by a team of experts.

If X's test showed it was a boy, it would have to start obeying all the boys' rules. If it proved to be a girl, X would have to obey all the girls' rules.

And if X turned out to be some kind of mixed-up misfit, then X must be Xpelled from school. Immediately! And a new rule must be passed, so that no little Xes would ever come to school again.

Of course, X turns out to be the "least mixed-up child" ever examined by the experts. X knows what it is, and "by the time X's sex matters, it won't be a secret anymore." Happy ending!<sup>13</sup>

In an instance of science imitating art, "X: A Fabulous Child's Story" inspired a series of real-life studies that explored the relationship between an infant's sex (real or assumed) and the child's interactions with adults. The earliest published study was 1975's "Baby X: The Effect of Gender Labels on Adult Responses to Infants," by Carol Seavy, Phyllis Katz, and Sue Rosenberg Zalk. In the experiment a baby dressed in a yellow jumpsuit was presented to adult subjects with instructions to play with the baby, choosing a football, a rag doll, or a flexible plastic ring. The technician running the study was under instructions to give no clues as to the sex of the baby. Subsequent studies became progressively complex. Sometimes the baby's assumed sex was the variable, with the same infant given different names (Beth or Adam) and dressed in pink or blue, accordingly.<sup>14</sup> Other studies explored when and how well children learned gender stereotypes or how adults' use of these clues may or may not reveal their own beliefs about sex, gender, and appropriate behavior. Baby X research even trickled down to elementary school science fairs; two sixth-graders from my suburban Maryland neighborhood entered a project based on a trip to the local mall with a baby they dressed first in boys' clothes and then girls' and then recorded shoppers' responses to each variation.

What we've learned from all of these studies is that children understand and can apply gender stereotypes well before they reach their third birthday. These studies also confirmed the belief that adults routinely

look for and use gender clues in their social interactions with babies and toddlers, unconsciously communicating gender stereotypes at the same time. These “Baby X” studies, combined with the emerging narratives in popular works such as the children’s version of “X,”<sup>15</sup> *William’s Doll, Free to Be . . . You and Me*, and *Sesame Street*, helped reinforce the feminist message that gender stereotyping was harmful to children.

One of the more subtle themes in Gould’s story is the unequal value of feminine and masculine traits. Given that her essential message is that children should be free of stereotyped behaviors and treatment, she was surprisingly dismissive of some feminine markers. For example, the *Official Instruction Manual* mentioned in the story offers the following directions for interacting with their new baby: “plenty of bouncing and cuddling, both. X ought to be strong and sweet and active. *Forget about dainty altogether*” (emphasis in the original). This ambivalence, if not hostility, toward femininity is an important part of the cultural climate of the early 1970s.

Gould also draws a picture of clothing and toy stores that is not entirely accurate. In the story the parents are faced with a highly gender-binary landscape that sounds more like 2012 than 1972, with sharply distinctive boy and girl sections in the store. In reality, clothing and playthings for babies and toddlers a generation ago included many more neutral options than are available today. So X is provided not with neutral things that actually existed at the time, but instead a selectively androgynous blend of “blue pajamas in the Boys’ Department and cheerful flowered underwear in the Girls’ Department.” In reality a baby in 1972 could have worn both blue pajamas and underwear in a floral print (Sears’ Winnie-the-Pooh nursery print had Pooh, Eeyore, Piglet, and flowers), and they would have been considered neutral! Gould also invents fantastic, gender-bending toys and books, such as a boy doll that cries “Pa-Pa.” X’s favorite doll is a robot programmed to bake brownies and clean the kitchen. When the other children decide that X is not weird, but cool, the message they get is that by playing with both boys’ and girls’ stuff, X is “having twice as much fun as we are.”

Finally, when the children decide to go to X’s house to play, they are all shown in identical red-checked overalls. “X: A Fabulous Child’s Story”

tells us that some stereotypically feminine traits (daintiness) are undesirable, that children naturally desire both “boys” and “girls” things, and that the ultimate form of gender neutrality is uniformity with a masculine tilt. The X model of a “gender-neutral” world was masculine, like most of the unisex trend, with occasional touches of femininity to help boys be more nurturing and expressive. This aligns with much of the feminist opinion about dress in the late 1960s and ’70s, which cast traditional women’s clothing as limiting, objectifying, and disempowering while portraying men’s clothing, especially pants, as symbolically empowering rather than just more practical.

This fictional child and its scientific counterparts provided support and evidence for the cultural and social origins of gender roles, framing the “nature or nurture” debate in a manner that has provoked discussion in living rooms and conference rooms ever since. Evidence of this discussion can be found in popular magazines, often drawing on emerging (and contradictory) scientific opinion. A lengthy article in *Newsweek* in 1974 asked “Do Children Need Sex ‘Roles’?” and offered pro and con opinions from the psychiatric community.<sup>16</sup> Psychiatrists advocating traditional gender roles argued that children were the victims of “militant women’s liberationists, overachieving fathers and . . . androgynous youth culture,” and warned that unisex child raising would lead to more sexually aggressive girls and more passive boys. Such a reversal would also result in a greater incidence of homosexuality, they hinted, clearly based on antiquated notions of the “causes” of same-sex attraction and the continuing belief that it was a mental illness, despite the recent change in the American Psychological Association’s (APA) official position. On the side of ungendered parenting were professionals who charged that the profession had long been in error when trying to adjust people to “the cultural status quo” rather than question the status quo itself. They also came armed with clinical experience and scientific research: psychologist Jeanne Humphrey Block offered evidence from her prizewinning research that adults who are raised to assume traditional roles are less satisfied with themselves. If the cultural roles were unhealthy or damaging—and subject to change—why not change them? The battling experts did agree on one point: it was fine to give baseball mitts to little girls and

dolls to boys in early childhood, as long as it wasn't part of an agenda to "destroy the child's basic biological identity," but children needed to arrive at a stable gender identity by the time they started school.<sup>17</sup>

The elephant in the room in many of these discussions was homosexuality, specifically the treatment of boys who exhibited signs of femininity. Not surprisingly, the scholarly literature addressed these issues much more directly than the popular books and articles, although *Psychology Today* and similar popular science magazines occasionally helped bring these studies to the larger audience. Reporting on the work of the Gender Identity Project at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1979, *Psychology Today* asked, "Does a boy have the right to be effeminate?" The clinical psychologists at UCLA had published an article on their work in helping "gender-disturbed" children (mostly effeminate boys, since being a tomboy created fewer social problems for girls) learn more androgynous gestures and speech. In this article, as in the *Newsweek* piece, the clinicians were pitted against the more theoretical psychologists, who opposed these interventions, which they felt sent negative messages to the boys about themselves and amounted to efforts to cure or prevent homosexuality. Ever since the 1973 APA reclassification of homosexuality, treating it in children was bound to be controversial. The UCLA team defended their work as not being aimed at preventing homosexuality, but helping children fit into their social environment. Once more the argument boiled down to whether the person or the culture needed to be fixed.<sup>18</sup>

By the late 1970s claims that gender was almost entirely a matter of nurture were being taken seriously by a wider public, but with surprising results. Useful as the concept of gender as separable from sex is, it introduced a messy new variable into popular notions about sex and sexuality. The idea that gendered behaviors are entirely cultural could be used by both feminists and antifeminists. For many conservatives and antifeminists, biological essentialism (biology is destiny) was replaced by cultural chauvinism: yes, gender roles are cultural, but the traditional (Western, Judeo-Christian, middle-class—take your pick) cultural norms are superior and should be preserved. If gender could be taught that still begged the question of which gender rules should be passed along to the young.

The most progressive parenting literature frequently advocated “unisex child raising,” applying the fashion term in a brand-new way. Unisex child raising included encouraging children to play with a variety of toys, modeling gender-free roles as adults by switching chores (Daddy cooks, Mommy mows the lawn), and choosing neutral clothing and hair-styles for the whole family. Public education also took a decidedly liberal position on gender stereotyping, promoting curricula and resources including a widespread adoption of *Free to Be . . . You and Me* for primary grades. A two-year study of gender stereotype “interventions” at a variety of grade levels convinced Marcia Guttentag and Helen Bray that undoing cultural training was possible, and they clearly believed that it was desirable. They were hardly radical in their advocacy; their goal was to “expand job and human opportunities” for boys and girls.<sup>19</sup> Yet it is easy to see how this agenda would have seemed offensive and even threatening to parents and educators who believed in the moral rightness of traditional cultural norms.

For children’s clothing, unisex essentially meant more a wider range of colors, styles, and decoration for boys; fewer very feminine styles for girls; and more neutral choices for all. On the surface this was identical to trends for teenagers and adults, but the difference is in the effect. From tot lot to retirement we are engaged in a continual process of adjusting our appearance according to our inner sense of self and the accepted patterns of identity expression. Children engage in the process at the same time they are first acquiring identity, which, I suspect, makes a huge difference.

Children’s fashions of the early 1970s demand our attention with their bright colors and gender-defying styling. In some of these old pictures it really is impossible to tell the boys from the girls. For young children not yet in school, unisex fashions combined more neutral styles and a trickling down of adult fashions. As with clothing for newborns, pastels were rejected in girls’ clothing in favor of earth tones and bright primary colors. But a broader and deeper view reveals patterns that continued to follow old, established rules. Some of the “paradigm shifts” turned out to be mere fads. In the end unisex children’s fashion enjoyed a very brief popularity and somehow also ushered in an era when juvenile styles from babyhood on were more gendered than they had been in the early 1960s.



Girls' clothing, beginning in the mid-1970s, began to regain feminine details that had been briefly discarded: ruffles, lace, puffed sleeves, and pastels. Yes, girls could wear pants to school, but pants were no longer perceived as exclusively masculine, and girls' styles featured the same dainty and fussy details as girls' dresses did. Consumers, parents and girls alike, who preferred plainer, more tailored styles found fewer and fewer options beginning in the mid-1980s. The plain T-shirts, overalls, and pajamas for children that once occupied several pages in the Sears catalog were reduced first to just a page or two and then to nothing except for a few yellow or green outfits for newborns. Boys' brief flirtation with color and pattern ended along with the peacock revolution, replaced by athletic styles, the preppy look, and camouflage. This time not even the tiniest babies escaped gender labeling; prenatal ultrasounds made it possible for parents to furnish them with a completely gendered environment from the very start. It was as if a switch had been pulled and gender ambiguity in babies disappeared completely.

Of course for most children born after the mid-1980s this hyper-gendered world was traditional—the way things had always been. Although it is clear that our cultural landscape is subject to change, we tend to see the world we knew at four or five as the way it always was, even when we learn it was not. A little girl born in the late '60s probably grew up wearing pants to school. Even if she learns that for generations this had been absolutely forbidden, she will never share the sense of rebellion and defiance her mother experienced when she wore jeans or a pantsuit in 1970. This sense of history colors what adults perceive as traditional, even when that “tradition” dates only to their infancy. They'll look back at the clothing of their childhood and reassess those fashions through the lens of their own personal tastes and experiences. One woman may look at her grade-school class picture and feel nostalgia for plaid dresses; another remembers only cold knees. The boy with the gender-free wardrobe in the early 1970s may later recall the embarrassment of being called a girl; another may miss the bright colors and patterns.

Unisex fashion played out differently for children than for grown-ups. On adult bodies unisex clothing can accentuate physical differences, creating a pleasant sexual tension. Babies and preadolescent children of-

ten don't look masculine or feminine, and dressing them in ambiguous clothing produces social discomfort. In a culture where "boy or girl?" determines our mode of address and interaction, an encounter with the unknown is fraught with anxiety for the onlooker. For children between three and six—old enough to know their own sex but not yet secure in its permanence—being mistaken for the wrong sex can be embarrassing or even frightening.

While the battle over the proper roles for men and women raged in the popular media throughout the 1970s, parents were left to clothe and raise their children with no clear agreement and confusing advice from the "experts." The only common theme in the advice literature was the assertion that the stakes were very high; children's future mental health and happiness were at stake. One thing is clear: people on both sides of the controversy seemed to agree on the tremendous power of the gender-shaping abilities of clothing. Feminist writers argued that traditional gendered clothing would make children repressed, rebellious, and unable to function in the new egalitarian society. More conservative voices warned that blurring the distinction between the sexes would confuse children, possibly even steer them into homosexuality.<sup>20</sup>

Future historians tracing the emergence of the American "culture wars" may not bother to look at children's clothing, but they should. A longitudinal study of two hundred "conventional and unconventional" families beginning in 1974 identified a cluster of attitudes and behaviors in a subset of unconventional households the researchers labeled as "pronaturalism"—a preference for natural/organic food and other materials, emotionally expressive men, low-conflict parent-child relationships—that set them apart from, and often at odds with, more conventional parents.<sup>21</sup> For a brief time in the 1970s, pronaturalist parents found their beliefs positively portrayed in the media and supported by public education and policy, or at least not deprecated. This changed with the emergence of the modern conservative movement and the "moral majority," which dominated both culture and politics in the 1980s.

While the multitudes of clinical studies offered no satisfactory answer to the question of why some people are homosexual while others are not, parents attempting gender-free child rearing found their efforts resisted

by their own children. Even advocates of nonsexist child rearing noted the stubborn persistence of sexist behaviors and beliefs. Consistent with their own conviction that gender was a product of nurture, they tended to place the blame on media and consumer culture, dismissing the possibility that daughters' rejection of trucks and longing for frilly dresses had any basis in biology.<sup>22</sup> But many parents, faced with rebellion, felt like Jesse Ellison's mother, quoted in a 2010 article: "We all thought that the differences had to do with how you were brought up in a sexist culture, and if you gave children the same chances, it would equalize. . . . It took a while to think, 'Maybe men and women really are different from each other, and they're both equally valuable.'"<sup>23</sup>

In a 1981 journal article researcher Penny Burge reported that in her survey most parents supported nontraditional sex-role attitudes and practices.<sup>24</sup> But this does not represent every parent. Just because *Free to Be . . . You and Me* won awards and sold millions of records, books, and videotapes does not mean its message won universal approval. A parent who read *Psychology Today*, *Ms.*, *Parents*, *McCall's*, or *Good Housekeeping*—or who even talked with other parents—would likely be familiar with the arguments for nonsexist child raising and unisex clothing but not necessarily persuaded by them. Feminists used the cultural construction of gender to push back on the claim that women had a natural inclination toward home and family. Conservative parents generally rejected unisex child raising along with other elements of feminist ideology, while less ideologically driven parents simply found gender-free clothing less appealing. Both categories of parents certainly had access to clothing choices other than gender-free throughout the era. Sears might not offer pastel toddler clothing, but specialty stores did, and in the 1970s many women still knew how to sew, which gave them even more options. And popular culture is complex and often contradictory: at the same time that girls were being encouraged to wear simple, modern styles, the television series *Little House on the Prairie* (1974–1982) and the nation's bicentennial celebrations popularized and romanticized versions of historical girls' dresses and women's traditional roles.

Nonsexist child rearing, and with it unisex clothing for children, was supposed to transform our culture by limiting children's exposure to ste-

reotypes and preventing their acquisition of limited gender roles. Firm in their belief that gendered behaviors stemmed from nurture, not nature, progressive parents and educators launched a movement to reprogram boys and girls from birth to be completely free to express their “natural” selves. Much to their surprise, for many children their “natural selves” fell short of the egalitarian ideal. Unfortunately, all we have today with which to judge the success or failure of the unisex movement is anecdotes and subsequent history.

The anecdotes tell of failure after failure. My own son (born in 1986), as a toddler, used to bite his slice of cheese into the shape of a gun. Girls rejected trains and trucks and demanded Barbie dolls and nail polish. The stories go on and on. Are these behaviors really evidence that gender-free child rearing is a wasted effort, or do they suggest that gender is more complicated than originally thought? From the highly gendered vantage point of the early twenty-first-century children’s clothing department, kids’ unisex styles of the 1970s seem just a small blip in the steady transformation of infants and toddler clothing from ungendered to a nearly complete masculine/feminine binary. Yet that brief period has had lasting effects, including some unsettled issues that still vex us.

Not everyone follows fashion trends, but it is safe to say that unisex clothing options represented a controversial issue that thoughtful parents could not help but be aware of, even if they chose to disagree. Most of the unfinished business of unisex childrearing settled on the children of the 1970s, not their parents. Children, too, remember the clothing and their own reactions and preferences, and even if they rejected the gender ambiguity of the fashions, they absorbed the egalitarian messages of the unisex movement. Young women in the late 1980s and 1990s expressed a desire to “have it all,” not just in terms of career and family but also in terms of feeling pride in feeling female. This was not a simple matter to translate into actions. For example, no parents thought about sexual assertiveness when they encouraged their daughters to be less “dainty,” but by the late 1980s the popular media was bemoaning the sexualization of girls in their early teens. Was this the result of feminist influence and a sexually permissive culture, or an expression of young adolescent girls’ real nature, unencumbered by “old-fashioned” notions of feminine delicacy?

**Table 4.1. Birth Cohort of First-time Parents, 1980–1990**

	Birth Cohort	Age in 1975	% 1980 Births	% 1985 Births	% 1990 Births
Mother	1961–1975	0–14	<1	43	71
	1946–1960	15–29	79	56	29
Father	1961–1975	0–14	0	24	53
	1946–1960	15–29	82	71	47

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "1951–1994 Statistical Abstracts," <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/statab1951-1994.htm>.

One possible explanation for this shift is demographics. Between 1980 and 1990 the majority proportion of births to first-time parents shifted from baby boomers (b. 1946–1964) to Generation Xers (b. 1965–1982). This generational perspective matters because of the huge difference between being a twenty-three-year-old choosing gender-bending clothing for herself or himself in 1975 and having unisex clothing selected for you as a three-year-old. This suggests that the children of the '70s became parents who were likely to prefer gendered clothing for their own offspring.

Even more striking, as the children of the 1970s became parents, they demanded even more stereotyped clothing and toys for their offspring than had existed in their childhood. Superficially, the explanatory pendulum seemed to have swung back toward "nature," because this gender revival was justified as satisfying children's innate preferences, with the anecdotal unisex failures providing the necessary proof. Yet the same parents placed no limits on their daughters' ambitions; like their mothers, young girls seemed destined to have it all: girly clothes, spa parties, and soccer—with pink uniforms. Add to this equation the advent of prenatal testing that revealed the baby's sex months before birth. Knowing only that fact about their unborn child, new parents seemed eager to embrace "traditional" gender in their preferences for clothing and nursery décor. Many of my baby boom sisters were horrified.

Something even more troubling has shown up in girls' clothing since the revival of feminine designs: women's clothing of the 1960s that essentially conflates femininity, youth, and sexual attractiveness has trickled down to girls' clothing, first for young teens, then to the 7–14 size range,

and eventually even younger. It is not so jarring to see skimpy clothes and flirty models in the Juniors section; it seems completely consistent with the spirit of fashion trends since the 1960s. But seeing seven-year-olds in bikinis, posing like beach bunnies, while in the same spirit, seems inappropriate to many adults. The modern controversies over sexy dressing in child pageants and the KGOY (kids getting older younger) trend have their roots in the sexual and gender revolutions of the 1960s.

Part of the appeal of adult unisex fashion was the sexy contrast between the wearer and the clothes, which actually called attention to the male or female body. A grown man in a brilliant pink sports coat can still appear very masculine, even with a long haircut, because his voice, body shape, and gestures also convey gender. If he sported sideburns and other facial hair, the contradiction between “feminine” clothing and “masculine” physique actually created the desired tension and novelty. Similarly, women in pants appearing in popular humor were usually depicted as more attractive because of the way that trousers emphasized their curves. Ironically, unisex fashions for adults did not really blur the differences between men and women, but instead highlighted them.

One significant tie to previous patterns was a continued distinction between clothing for very young children and adult clothing. Toddler boys enjoyed a greater range of colors and patterns than older boys and men, and toddler girl fashions were shorter and more whimsically decorated than those for older girls and women. Above the toddler age range, however, age markers were blurred. It was not just existing gender rules that broke down during the 1960s; older conventions about what was age-appropriate also crumbled. What had once been clear distinctions according to age became a much looser and more permeable set of options. One sign was a more juvenile turn to teenagers’ casual clothing, which became more colorful and playful. Minidresses on young women made them look like little girls, and the men’s hairstyles and collarless jackets popularized by the Beatles were strongly reminiscent of toddler boys’ classic Eton suits and long bangs. Through most of the 1960s unisex design was seen more in toddler clothing than in infants’ wear as adult styles mimicked children’s, which in turn reflected prevailing adult trends. This mutual influence resulted in adult clothing that was youth-



ful and androgynous and children's clothing that looked "sophisticated" because of its resemblance to adult fashions.

This trend prompted considerable discussion in the style press. Fashion writers and cultural critics noted the "little girl" trend for women's clothing with some confusion. Was it asexual because it was immature, or was it super-sexy because of a "Lolita" effect, mimicking schoolgirl-themed pornography? There was no attention at the time to the implications for little girls wearing the same styles, but from a twenty-first-century vantage point, one can see the first outlines of early childhood sexualization in the baby doll dresses of young women.

It is worth considering that the relationship between girls' play clothes and fashions for teens and adult women was not simply one of trickling down, but was also a result of "carrying over" childhood clothing as girls grew to women. For example, jeans and overalls had been part of girls' playtime wardrobes for decades, and teenagers had been exchanging their skirts for dungarees after school since the 1940s. As rules of dress etiquette were discarded in the early '60s—no more hats or white gloves—and lifestyles became more laid-back, jeans and other casual trouser styles increased in popularity among young adults. Or to look at it from a different perspective, children who had grown up in jeans and T-shirts in postwar America saw no reason to stop wearing them just because they had outgrown the playground.

In recent years scholars and popular authors have once more challenged the notion that masculinity and femininity are innate; they are also attempting to highlight the roles of media and consumer culture in defining and promulgating gender stereotypes. Despite their efforts, however, the issue seems no closer to being settled than it ever was. Every few months there is a new story about a boy who dresses like a girl, a girl who dresses like a boy, or a boy who likes pink nail polish that sets off a new round of claims, counterclaims, and controversy.<sup>25</sup> Around the globe, parents attempting to raise ungendered children make the headlines, and their stories echo the messages of the unisex era.<sup>26</sup> Nearly always the public reaction is mostly reminiscent of the adults in "X: A Fabulous Child's Story": anger, derision, and warnings of future confusion. But they also have their defenders, many of them parents of the same generation: the

ones who grew up highly gendered in the 1980s and who are rejecting the binary and looking for new alternatives.

So is gender identity an effect of nature or nurture? Science tells us that the foundations for sexual behavior are laid down before we are born and also that human variation is vast and complex. Knowing that most boys behave in a particular way does not tell you how your son will behave, nor will it explain why your daughter might prefer Barbies or Transformers. The dominant professional advice for parents of gender-fluid or gender-creative children is to watch and wait; sometimes it's a phase and sometimes it isn't, and interventions with the goal of "correction" do more harm than good. History tells us that children can wear dresses or pants, and can wear pink or blue or both together, but that strongly gendered or gender-free clothing has an unpredictable effect, most of it not evident until they are grown. The clearest answer, for now, to the age-old question is nature *and* nurture, sympathetically, unpredictably.

EBSCOhost

# *Litigating the Revolution*

# 5

Fashion has had a legal side for centuries. Powerful rulers once set limits on who could or could not wear certain finery and decreed that colors, badges, or hats be used to set certain groups of people apart as “others”—Jews, for example, who were required to wear yellow badges or pointed hats in parts of thirteenth-century Europe.<sup>1</sup> The umbrella term for these edicts is “sumptuary laws”; one of my favorites, from medieval Spain, begins with “the king may wear anything he wishes.” Sumptuary laws reveal a great deal about a society—for example, which goods are highly valued (and therefore reserved for the élites) and also which groups may be considered a threat to the status quo. Amid the social turbulence of the Renaissance, wealthy merchants and their wives were often singled out as needing to be reminded of their inferiority to their high-born betters. Economist Thorstein Veblen observed in 1899 that in modern capitalism, wealth could be freely displayed by nearly everyone who has it, as a sign of socioeconomic superiority. But we still face restrictions in the form of dress codes, usually in schools or in the workplace, that attempt to enforce a uniform appearance or suppress potentially disruptive elements. These modern regulations have elements of social class (public schools with uniform dress codes tend to be in poorer districts), race (local ordinances against “saggy pants”), or gender (laws against cross-dressing and public indecency, dress codes that enforce gender stereotypes). Sumptuary laws don’t come from out of the blue: they are a reaction by the powerful to undesirable behavior from their “inferiors.” The rampant and dramatic changes in gender expression that emerged in the 1960s met with just such resistance, leading in some cases to the courtroom and sometimes even to prison. The litigious heat generated by

long hair, short skirts, and women in pants is strong evidence that these were far from trivial issues for the parties involved. The fact that we are still arguing about the same principles, though in different clothing, is part of the ongoing legacy of the 1960s.

In nearly every case the defendants in these legal cases were what young people at the time would have labeled “the Establishment”: school administrations, employers, or the military. The plaintiffs were arguing from their less powerful positions as students, employees, or simply as individuals (men, women, minors, people of color). Each of these variables carries with it distinct arguments on the part of both the plaintiffs and defendants. Although the prohibition of pants for women and long hair for men is often mentioned in tandem, the two situations could not have been more different. Court cases involving male plaintiffs dominate the legal record. There were seventy-eight court decisions at the state level or higher about long hair in the United States between 1965 and 1978, compared with just six cases about girls or women wearing trousers. Long-haired boys and men experienced harassment and even violence, while women and girls wearing slacks or jeans might just be turned away from a restaurant or sent home from school to change outfits. Between the first court case concerning pants, in 1969, to the last, in 1973, trousers for women went from being a novelty to a wardrobe staple with a minimum of public outrage.

Chronologically, the legal record begins in 1964 with lawsuits involving minors challenging school dress codes: first longhaired boys and later both boys and girls with a more extensive list of complaints. In the 1970s there was an increase in the number of cases brought by adults concerning workplace restrictions. The legal arguments on both sides shifted over time as well.

For men and boys perhaps the most contentious and visible aspect of unisex fashion concerned not clothing, but hair. The British Invasion in popular music deserves much of the credit for the early trend toward longer hair for men. The long hair craze swept the United Kingdom before it arrived on American shores, propelled at first by the Beatles and soon after by scruffier groups like the Rolling Stones. None had originated the style; art school students such as John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and

Mick Jagger had been sporting long hair for some time. The unisex effect was accentuated when British girls began adopting the same styles in the summer of 1964, either in imitation of the rock stars or to present a “his and hers” appearance when they were out with their boyfriends. There were skirmishes over long hair in schools, but overall the public reaction in the U.K. was nonchalant, with most people considering it as just another adolescent fad. Noting that long hair used to be associated with the upper class and close-cropped hair with the middle and lower class, adolescent psychologist Derek Miller pointed out that British teens were just bored and trying to stand out and that long hair was preferable to juvenile delinquency.<sup>2</sup> Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones detected the moral panic behind some of the criticism: “They seem to have a sort of personal anxiety because we are getting away with something they never dared to do. It’s a personal, sexual, vain thing. They’ve been taught that being masculine means looking clean cropped and ugly.”<sup>3</sup>

Beginning in 1963, newspapers in the United States reported numerous instances of boys, some as young as nine, being barred from school for having long hair. Most of these confrontations ended with a quick trim. In a parochial school in New Hampshire, the administrator actually loaded eighteen students on a school bus and delivered them to a local barber. A smaller group of students defied the rules and ended up facing school or district hearings. The well-publicized story of fifteen-year-old Edward T. Kores Jr. of Westbrook, Connecticut, ended with Kores transferring to a private school after he lost his appeal to the state education commission. His father, a carpenter, at first vowed to “fight this in the court,” but the family eventually decided against that course of action.<sup>4</sup>

The trouble escalated in fall 1964 when boys started showing up at school with a summer’s growth of hair. It would seem that most school systems were caught unaware, without a true dress code, just vague guidelines about neatness. Newspaper accounts of similar events started popping up across the country. Most cases were resolved with a quick trip to the barber or brushing the boy’s bangs off his forehead. But eventually a few ended up in local courts. Perhaps the significant detail to note about these cases is that because the boys were minors they had to have the support of their parents in order to take it to the legal level.

The number of hair resisters who took the next step—suing the schools in state-level courts—was smaller still. The earliest such case involving hair was *Leonard v. School Committee of Attleboro* (Massachusetts), which began with the first day of classes on September 9, 1964, and went all the way to the state supreme court, which upheld the school’s right to dictate the appearance of students. George Leonard, already a professional musician performing under the name Georgie Porgie, had argued that the school did not have a written dress code and that his long hair was vital to his career, but the court ruled that the principal had the authority to tell Leonard to get a haircut and to expel him if he refused. When he attended an Attleboro High School all-class reunion in 2013, he was greeted as a celebrity; to his classmates and the younger students at the school, he had been a hero.<sup>5</sup> To some fans of freedom of expression, he still is: his entry at the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame website claims, “Every kid who sports long hair, pink hair or a shaved head, or wears a nose ring, a tattoo or makeup, owes his right to do so to” the Pawtucket-born Leonard.<sup>6</sup> Georgie Porgie and his band appeared at least once with the Cape Cod garage band the Barbarians, who recorded the 1965 hit “Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl,” the unofficial anthem of the long hair cause.

Are you a boy  
 Or are you a girl  
 With your long blonde hair  
 You look like a girl (yeah)

You may be a boy  
 You look like a girl

You’re either a girl  
 Or you come from Liverpool  
 (Yeah, Liverpool)  
 You can dog like a female monkey  
 But you swim like a stone  
 (Yeah, a rolling stone)

You may be a boy (hey)  
 You look like a girl (hey)



You're always wearing skin tight  
 Pants and boys wear pants  
 But in your skin tight pants  
 You look like a girl<sup>7</sup>

Signs that this was a more serious issue appeared almost immediately. The New York Civil Liberties Union went to the defense of high school boys with long hair in 1966, releasing a statement saying that dress codes disapproving of hairstyles were violating constitutional guarantees by punishing “nonconformity and expression of individuality.” That same year the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) wrote letters and memoranda to principals in three Philadelphia-area high schools asking them to rescind bans against hairstyles on the grounds that public schools have no authority to impose such regulations. The boys in two of the schools had directly appealed to the ACLU for help.<sup>8</sup> In 1968 the ACLU issued recommendations regarding the academic freedom of secondary-school students and teachers. The twenty-two-page policy statement was six years in the making and included the following student rights:

To organize political groups, hold assemblies and demonstrations, wear buttons and armbands with slogans as long as these do not disrupt classes or the peace of the school

To receive formal hearings, written charges, and a right to appeal any serious violation conduct or charge

To dress or wear one's hair as one pleases and to attend school while married or pregnant unless these things “in fact” disrupt the educational process

To publish and distribute student materials without prohibitions on content unless they “clearly and imminently” disrupt or are libelous

The authors of the statement argued that school administrators had often erred on the side of the need for order rather than the need for freedom in establishing and enforcing school rules. Titled “Academic Freedom in the Secondary Schools,” the statement was distributed in booklet form to all major education associations and available from all state ACLU affiliates.<sup>9</sup>

Dress code cases were working their way through the courts just as quickly, often with the assistance of ACLU attorneys. The first such case reached the U.S. Supreme Court in 1966, but the court refused to hear it. Three adult male students from the Richmond Professional Institute (RPI; now Virginia Commonwealth University) had brought the case, which involved an administrator requiring them to shave their facial hair and get haircuts before they could register for classes. The plaintiffs—Norman Thomas Marshall, Robert D. Shoffner, and Salvatore Federico—claimed RPI was denying them the rights of self-expression and to be left alone and insisted that the consequence, being barred from registration, was cruel and unusual punishment. The circuit court judge had ruled against them, finding the rule “reasonable and in no sense arbitrary” and necessary for the “preservation of discipline.”<sup>10</sup>

School administrators in many states had followed this case, as evidenced by the official comment about it from the High School Principals Association in New York: “The court statement to the effect that the question is one to be determined by common sense rather than by courts and [that] schools obviously have the authority to make rules on the matter express the views which we hope will now be adopted by our own superintendent of schools.”<sup>11</sup> This last comment was a poke at Dr. Bernard Donovan, superintendent of schools in New York City, who, in the view of the principals association, had not only failed to support principals’ efforts to nip longhaired defiance in the bud but had also interfered with local authorities by stepping in on a case involving two students at Forest Hills High School in Queens.<sup>12</sup> The sixteen-year-olds had been confined to the dean’s office during the school day for two weeks, and the New York branch of the ACLU had lodged a protest with the New York State superintendent of schools, who had not yet responded. Donovan had ordered principal Paul Balsler to let the boys attend classes in the meantime, and the result was an immediate avalanche of protest from teachers and the parents’ association. Students interviewed by the *New York Times* had different views, however, ranging from disinterested (“It’s just a fad”) to defiant (“I don’t think they had the authority to tell you to get a haircut”). In an article in *New York State Education* (the teachers association journal), Donovan had condemned “punitive action” in dress code cases, giv-

ing the example of one principal who was standing at the school's door with scissors, trimming hair. The tempest swiftly escalated, as the High School Principals Association sent a defiant letter to Donovan saying that in the absence of a policy from his office, they would construe his actions as applying only to Forest Hills High School. In the meantime they intended to "continue to maintain the kind of safety, dress and appearance regulations that will make our students presentable, teachable and employable."<sup>13</sup> In this and in similar cases all across the country, the Supreme Court's refusal to render a decision seems to have complicated the question and only keyed up the controversy.

Not everyone over the age of eighteen agreed with dress code defenders. A sharp-eyed reader responded to the principals' statement with a letter to the editor of the *New York Times* that expressed the opposing view, one held by many parents and teachers: "I and some others interested in education and in doing things the American Way have discussed the situation in your city as elsewhere and have felt that Dr. Donovan rather than those principals which, given such exhibitions of their 'up the down staircase' mentalities, has acted to preserve common sense."<sup>14</sup> "Up the down staircase" is a reference to a best-selling memoir of a first-year teacher's experiences in a New York City school overseen by an overzealous administrative assistant the author calls "Admiral Ass." The battle lines in the culture wars were taking shape.

Most school and workplace conflicts over appearance were resolved without going to court, of course. A principal might warn dozens of long-haired boys that they faced suspension, and all or most would head to the barbershop, albeit reluctantly. Only a small minority of students, and their parents, chose to challenge dress codes legally. Still, the result was that nearly eighty such cases moved through the nation's courtrooms between 1965 and 1978, thirty-five resolved at the federal district level and twenty at the appellate level, landing in every federal circuit except the second. Eleven such cases applied to the U.S. Supreme Court, but all were denied certiorari, with the result that the varying judgments in the lower courts established the legal precedent in each state.

There were seventy-three long hair cases from schools or colleges decided by the courts between 1965 and 1978, (there were also workplace

cases, which will be discussed separately); two-thirds of those were decided between 1970 and 1972. Frustratingly for all concerned, however, there was no clear trend in the decisions (see table 1). By the mid-1970s dress code fatigue was setting in. Some schools gave up. Teachers complained that dress code enforcement itself was more disruptive than long hair or girls wearing slacks. In some cases coaches and sponsors of extracurricular activities tried to make short hair a requirement for boys' participation, but those rules, too, often proved controversial and, in the long run, unenforceable. In the end neither side won the legal battle, yet both claimed a sort of victory. Long hair cases fell off because long hairstyles became widely acceptable in mainstream culture, which was a kind of vindication for the advocates of the more liberal position. But the Supreme Court had clearly left the authority for dress codes with the states and the local school systems, so a great variety of rules persisted and dress code controversies have never completely subsided. A map of the states where dress codes were upheld in the majority of cases neatly overlays the maps of opinion on many other cultural issues. At the extremes the states within the jurisdiction of the Fifth Circuit (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) upheld the schools' position in twelve out of fourteen cases. In contrast, the Second Circuit (Vermont, Connecticut, and New York) had only three dress code cases between 1965 and 1978 and ruled in favor of the students every time.

Plaintiffs in the long hair cases of the 1960s claimed that school dress codes violated their constitutional rights, citing the First and Fourteenth Amendments most frequently. Their First Amendment argument was that one's appearance was protected speech. Dress codes that applied differently to students and adults, or to girls and boys, violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Other cases pointed to protections of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Amendments. There appears to be no consistent pattern of the success or failure of these various arguments over the entire period, but students and their families found encouragement in the case of *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969), where the Supreme Court had ruled 7–2 that minor students enjoyed constitutional protec-

**Table 5.1. Court Decisions in School Long Hair Cases, 1965–1978**

Year	Decisions	Dress Code Defeated	Dress Code Upheld
1965	1	0	1
1966	1	0	1
1968	1	0	1
1969	5	4	1
1970	15	7	8
1971	21	7	14
1972	12	7	5
1973	7	5	2
1974	2	2	0
1975	2	1	1
1976	3	2	1
1977	2	1	1
1978	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>

tions, including First Amendment rights.<sup>15</sup> However, the *Tinker* case involved the banning of black armbands, which students wore to protest the Vietnam War, not school dress codes. Justice Abe Fortas, writing the majority opinion, was careful and clear to point out: “The problem posed by the present case does not relate to regulation of the length of skirts or the type of clothing, to hair style, or deportment.” His use of the phrase “the present case” left open the possibility that such regulations might also face a constitutional test. Justice Hugo Black, in his dissent, worried that “if the time has come when pupils of state-supported schools, kindergartens, grammar schools, or high schools, can defy and flout orders of school officials to keep their minds on their own schoolwork, it is the beginning of a new revolutionary era of permissiveness in this country fostered by the judiciary.”

*Tinker v. Des Moines* did not open the door to riots in the schools, but it did open the floodgates on dress code cases. Students, their families, and attorneys saw an opportunity to broaden the narrow ruling, and administrators and school boards saw in the majority opinion some additional

justification for school rules. The justices had agreed that freedom of speech was not unlimited and could be restricted out of concern for public safety or serious disruption. With this clearly in mind, dress code defenders increasingly cited the need to avoid “disruption” in their schools as a reason why outlandish or unusual hairstyles and clothing should be banned. The nature of these alleged disruptions ranged from amusing to disturbing. Teachers testified that the longhaired students distracted their classmates by “priming” or “flipping their hair.” There were also numerous accounts of violent encounters between “shorthairs” and “long-hairs,” which are similar to the forced haircut story that surfaced during the 2012 presidential campaign, in which a teenage Mitt Romney and a few friends had pinned down a longhaired classmate and cut his hair.<sup>16</sup> In nearly all of the examples of violent disruption, the shorthaired students were the aggressors and the schools had failed to discipline students who harassed longhaired classmates. In a few cases they found that teachers had initiated the harassment by singling out longhaired students for criticism. Rather than punishing the harassed students, one judge noted, “We are inclined to think that faculty leadership in promoting and enforcing an attitude of tolerance rather than one of suppression or derision would obviate the relatively minor disruptions which have occurred.”<sup>17</sup>

It was not just the rationales in the court decisions that were confusing the issue: the many defendants, plaintiffs, and witnesses expressed the multitude of reactions people experienced with regard to long hair. The courts also raised the question of whether the rules themselves were a source of disruption:

It is contended that disruption is caused by the very fact of disobedience to a school rule, whatever the content of the rule may be. If so, this consideration lends no support to the necessity for, or the rationality of, the rule itself. If the rule itself is unnecessary, those who promulgate it must accept the consequences of its violation.<sup>18</sup>

There is some uncertainty in our minds as to whether problems of behavior and discipline necessitated the dress code or whether the enforcement of the dress code merely contributed to the problems of behavior and discipline.<sup>19</sup>



This belief was underscored in *Independent School District v. Swanson* (1976) by the testimony an administrator from neighboring district who testified that his own district had abandoned dress codes because enforcement efforts had reduced schools to a “police state,” which was disruptive to education.<sup>20</sup>

Another argument that was popular with the school boards was the connection between long hair and other negative behaviors. The problem was that there was not always a correlation—some of the longhaired students were honor students or star athletes—and even when a longhaired student was chronically absent or tardy or had poor grades, there was no guarantee that a haircut would resolve the issue. Arguments based on hygiene or safety were quickly knocked down, because girls also had long hair and were allowed to participate in labs and sports as long as they took sensible precautions. If girls could tie their hair back around Bunsen burners, so could boys.

By the early 1970s the outcome of any particular case depended on the language of the dress restrictions themselves and the testimony of witnesses, not on case law and precedent. Some of the dress codes were laughably vague; at a time when fashions were changing so rapidly, what exactly differentiated “extreme” from “conventional” hairstyles? When the offending haircut of a high school student was shorter than that worn by teachers from his own school, judges were quick to take note.<sup>21</sup>

The most common counterargument advanced by the schools was also the most difficult to support with actual evidence: that long hair was associated with delinquency or antisocial behavior. The testimony of dozens of administrators in these cases comprises a composite stereotype of “longhairs” that grew weaker as long hair became more common, less unkempt, and more acceptable to the wider public. The judge in Thomas Breen’s case expressed his skepticism of the claims of the principal regarding the meaning of long hair on boys:

In apparent seriousness he testifies: that “extreme hair styling” on boys especially “symbolizes something that I feel is not in the best interests of good citizenship”; that “whenever I see a longhaired youngster he is usually leading a riot, he has gotten through committing a crime, he

is a dope addict or some such thing”; that “anyone who wears abnormally long hair, to the decent citizenry, immediately reflects a symbol that we feel is trying to disrupt everything we are trying to build up and by we I mean God-fearing Americans”; that the students at his high school share his opinion “that long hair symbolizes revolution, crime, and dope addiction”; that in his opinion “wearing long hair is un-American” in this day and age; and that its symbolism renders long hair a distraction.<sup>22</sup>

School superintendent Dr. Raymond O. Shelton of Hillsborough (Florida) County Schools testified that in his experience “there is a direct relationship between appearance, an extreme deviant appearance, and conduct, and behavior.” He also believed studies had shown that such persons tended to underachieve, although he was unable to cite any such studies.<sup>23</sup> In the case of *Howell v. Wolf*, in Marietta, Georgia (1971), administrators reported a lengthy list of undesirable traits associated with long hair:

[Unkempt boys] generally contributed to disruptive activities in the school, were constantly tardy and had a greater percentage of absenteeism than other students. They were generally poorer students and were not well prepared for classroom work. They often combed and shook their hair in class and would play “peek-a-boo” through the long hair hanging over their face, all of which was disruptive to other students and teachers. They would gather as a group in one corner of the class, talk among themselves and often sleep. They had even eaten candy and popcorn and consumed soft drinks during class.<sup>24</sup>

In *Lambert v. Marushi* teacher Charles Cassell offered his opinion that long hair and unusual dress made students appear “arrogant and overbearing.” Like many others with similar opinions, he was unable to cite an instance where long hair had actually been a disruption, other than occasional clashes between students, which were usually initiated by shorthaired boys.<sup>25</sup>

U.S. District Court Judge James B. Parsons, in his opinion siding with David Miller in his refusal to conform to school hair rules, points out,

It must be made clear from the outset that this is not a case involving a revolutionary type young man, who by bizarre attire, filth of body and clothes, obscene language and subversive-like organizational activity, seeks to wage war against the established institutions of the community or nation. It is not a case involving youth commonly referred to as “beatniks” or “hippies” or “yippies.” It is simply a case of a seventeen year old boy wearing hair substantially longer than that permitted by the school’s regulations.<sup>26</sup>

While the first few media reports attempted to cast long hair cases in schools as light, trivial news stories, the number of cases and the rhetoric used on both sides reveals that serious ideological differences were involved. These differences only deepened as the controversy spread and escalated. For the longhaired boys and their allies, the right to have long hair was just one front on the struggle for individual expression. The issue wasn’t a trivial matter of hair and clothes, but the right to self-expression or to live one’s private life as one pleased. It was no small matter to take a school system to court, not to mention moving up the chain of the judicial system. The plaintiffs deeply believed that they were in the right, that their personal choice of grooming and dress were protected by the Constitution, and that the school administration thus had no authority to dictate their appearance or to discriminate against people whose appearance they did not like. The defendants in these cases were equally convinced that longhaired students presented a dangerous defiance, a threat of anarchy.

Just as school regulations initially made no reference to boys’ hair length, trousers had often been absent from lists of prohibitions for girls. Both trends caught the authorities unaware. In the case of girls’ clothing there had been rules about skirt length and dress styles, which were interpreted later to mean proscribing pants when girls began to demand to be allowed to wear them. By the late 1960s pants were added to the list of explicitly forbidden items in most school systems. The language in the dress code for the Laurel Highlands School District in western Pennsylvania was typical in its vagueness:

Neat and conventional skirts and sweaters, skirts and blouses, or school dresses are required. Hemlines should not be too short, nor clothing too tight. Slacks and shorts are not to be worn unless specifically permitted for special occasions. Attractive hair styles, appropriate makeup, and a minimum of jewelry are suggested.<sup>27</sup>

It is no coincidence that the earliest court cases related to female students' wearing pants date to 1969, when miniskirts had reached their shortest length. Several of the dress codes specified skirt lengths that seem rather short if the objective was modesty: four inches above the knee (*Miller v. Gillis*, 1969), mid-thigh (*Carter v. Hodges*, 1970), and six inches above the knee (*Wallace v. Ford*, 1972). As was pointed out in every case, trousers could not possibly be considered more distracting or immodest than a miniskirt; in one instance the dress code had been modified just before the school year began because no skirts or dresses long enough to meet the requirement could be found in the local stores. Faced with a choice between immodesty and informality, informality won.

As the 1970s wore on, dress codes became more detailed and, not surprisingly, more difficult to enforce. Rather than simply allowing girls to wear pants and leaving the specific style up to them, some school systems found that if they allowed culottes (a divided skirt), a girl would show up in a jumpsuit with wide legs, arguing that it was no different from long culottes. The Perryville, Arkansas, school district agreed to permit jeans made for girls on the condition that if they had a front zipper it must be concealed by a tunic or square-tailed blouse. This particular school district admitted to having difficulty interpreting its own dress code, having sent girls home for wearing a midi-skirt (six inches below the knee), a knickers suit (a suit with knee-length gathered trousers), and a jumpsuit while admitting the outfits had caused no classroom disruption and were not immodest in any way.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was written to guarantee access to education, employment, and public accommodation and is associated in most Americans' minds with the end of racial segregation and discrimination. So what does it have to do with white boys wearing long hair? At first not very much. But with the help of the ACLU, attorneys for the plaintiffs in long hair cases made the connection almost immediately, arguing that



Which is more modest, dress or pants? (Circa 1970). Butterick B5817.

Image courtesy of the McCall Pattern Company, 2014.

minors—a group not explicitly included in the law—had the same civil rights as adults. The basic question, appearing over and over in the case law, was whether schools have the authority to limit the rights of minor students (in the 1960s the age of majority was twenty-one, explaining why a few of these cases included college dress codes).

The school systems first justified dress codes by simply asserting their authority to set institutional rules, and for a few years that argument was

successful. But beginning in 1969 attorneys for the students began to cite *Griswold v. Connecticut* (the landmark Supreme Court case that established the “right to privacy”) to counter the schools’ “because I said so” argument. The first case to connect *Griswold* and appearance made its argument in this manner:

The right of privacy is a fundamental personal right, emanating from the totality of the constitutional scheme under which we live. The hairstyle of a person falls within the right of privacy which protects his beliefs, thoughts, emotions and sensations, and the board of education has no legal ground to proscribe the hairstyle of a pupil when the board interferes with his right to self-expression in the styling of his hair. His right to style his hair as he pleases falls within the penumbra of the constitution which protects his right of privacy and his right to be free from intrusion by the government.<sup>28</sup>

Judging from their dogged pursuit of the issue, the ACLU clearly also believed that dress codes violated the First Amendment by limiting a students’ freedom of expression. In several cases local ACLU attorneys contacted students who had been suspended from school for dress code violations, offering their support soon after the stories appeared in the papers. Within a year or two long hair had made the transition from a popular teen fad to an iconic emblem of rebellion, nonconformity, and protest. Journalist Daniel Zwerdling, then a sophomore at the University of Michigan, noted the shift in meaning in a very prescient editorial published in November 1968. Arguing that the attention to hair and appearance was diverting attention from more serious issues, he pointed out that most young men grow long hair and beards, “imagining what the pretty girl in class will say,” not as a political statement. The overreaction of authority figures only served to create the very defiance they imagined when they saw the long hair and beards. At a time when the United States was waging both a Cold War against the spread of communism and a real war purportedly to defend democracy in Southeast Asia, the establishment’s reaction also exposed the hypocrisy of “railing against totalitarianism and insisting on conformity.”<sup>29</sup> From my vantage point in the early twenty-first century, 1968 seems to be an excellent candidate for



the year that long hair went from minor irritant to “freak flag.” The evening news was scary; against the backdrop of an escalating Vietnam War and attempted revolution in Czechoslovakia against the Soviet Union, student protest culture had spread from Europe to major universities in the United States. The emerging Black Power movement, impatient with slow progress and obstructionism in resolving inequality, made whites uneasy and opened a generation gap in African American homes. When Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated within months of each other, it seemed the year could not get worse, but it was only half over. The riots following the King assassination and the violent confrontations between police and demonstrators outside the Democratic National Convention in August helped “law and order” candidate Richard M. Nixon win the presidency. Small wonder that any tendency to nonconformity, including looking like a hippie or a Black Panther (even superficially), was perceived with alarm and greeted with hostility.

Workplace dress code cases were far less numerous than school cases and appeared later. Between 1971 and 1979 there were twenty-nine rulings on dress codes in the workplace, all but three concerning men’s hair or facial hair. Unlike the even split in the school-related decisions, the courts ruled in favor of the employer twice as often as the worker when it came to workplace decisions. One striking aspect of these conflicts is class: most of the employees were lower-level clerical, service, or blue-collar workers.

Many of the long hair cases in workplaces came directly from the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned discrimination in employment. Section 703(a) of the act provides:

It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer—

(1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because of an individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or

(2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.<sup>30</sup>

The plaintiffs in these cases argued that restrictions on men's hair length or women's wearing slacks were a form of sex discrimination. This ended up being a surprisingly thorny issue, since employers had always seen the need to impose grooming standards either for safety or other reasons, but now found themselves having to reconsider those standards in a more inclusive workplace.

It is deliciously ironic that all of this fuss was created over sex discrimination as a result of Title VII. Sex as a prohibited criteria for employment practice was added by Southern Democrats as a "poison pill" designed to block the passage of the act—unsuccessfully, as it turned out. In many of the sex discrimination cases where it was alleged that a person's appearance had led to not being hired, the court relied on the regulations developed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to help them navigate exceptions. The problem lay in the meaning of the words "bona fide occupational qualification," or BFOQ, meaning skills or attributes that are not considered illegal hiring standards if they are a legitimate requirement of the job. (For example, the ability to lift fifty pounds is a BFOQ for a furniture mover but not for a bank teller.) The EEOC recommends that the BFOQ exception be applied narrowly and that it be used to specifically prohibit a refusal to hire based on stereotyped characterizations of the sexes, or because the preferences of co-workers, employers, clients, or customers favor one sex or another. Probably the most prominent case of this was in the 1972 Fifth Circuit Court decision on *Diaz v. Pan American World Airways Inc.* The airline had refused to hire male flight attendants, claiming their customers preferred females. The airline attempted to justify the restriction because the airplane cabin was a "unique environment in which the psychological needs of the passengers are better attended to by females." Pan American lost.<sup>31</sup>

There's an interesting relationship between business dress codes and the public. In *Fagan v. National Cash Register* (1973) the court noted that the company's grooming policy had been initiated because of specific customer complaints about the personal appearance of employees. Just as employers could require that employees wear certain uniforms and had the right to package their products and services in the most attractive way possible, the court reasoned, they should also have the right to "pack-

age” their employees through the use of dress standards.<sup>32</sup> So in *Diaz v. Pan American*, while the airline could not discriminate against male applicants for the job of flight attendant even if females might be more appealing to the traveling public, the court did not say that stewards and stewardesses would have to be “packaged” by dressing alike. Requiring all flight attendants to wear skirts and have shoulder-length hair would not meet the standards of a BFOQ.

As with the school cases, the plaintiffs in workplace dress code cases sincerely believed that barring men from wearing long hair and women from wearing slacks were forms of discrimination based on sex. Where the courts agreed, they relied on the EEOC guidelines and held the employers to a fairly strict standard in determining if the dress code distinctions reflected a “bona fide occupational qualification.” In *Willingham v. Macon Telegraph Publishing Co.* (1975), a male employee was fired for his failure to get a haircut. He was processing food, and workplace policy required male employees to wear hats and females to wear hairnets. When Willingham’s hair grew too long to be covered by the hat, he asked if he could wear a hairnet. His request was denied, and he was subsequently fired because he wasn’t abiding by the dress code. The court found that the regulation was not purely for sanitation purposes, since contamination could be prevented by having men’s hair contained within a hairnet, so the insistence that men wear hats instead of hairnets was based on grounds other than sanitation. Decision for the plaintiff.<sup>33</sup>

In the case of *Donohue v. Shoe Corporation of America* (1972), a shoe store salesman was held to have been discriminated against on the basis of sex because he was fired for having long hair when his employers did not have the same requirements for saleswomen. The court was fairly strong in condemning the discrimination based on hair length, arguing the following:

In our society we too often form opinions of people on the basis of skin color, religion, national origin, style of dress, hair length, and other superficial features. The tendency to stereotype people is at the root of some of the social ills that afflict the country and in adopting the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Congress intended to attack the stereotyped characterizations of the people would be judged by their intrinsic worth.<sup>34</sup>

In *Aros v. McDonnell Douglas Corporation* (1972), the court ruled similarly, saying, “The issue of long hair on men tends to arouse the passions of many in our society today. In that regard the issue is no different from the issues of race, color, religion, national origin, and equal employment rights for women.”<sup>35</sup>

Opposing arguments often engaged in thought experiments that revealed much about the attorneys’ attitudes. For example,

[If] an employer required all employees to wear their hair in ponytail style, or required all employees to wear dresses, it could not be said that different standards were being applied to men and women. It seems obvious, however, that such requirements would discriminate in operation against male applicants and so would be prohibited. This illustration emphasizes the fact that Title VII should not logically be viewed to require males and females to be governed by identical appearance codes.<sup>36</sup>

Other judges ruled that if the plaintiff says his way of dressing is “expressing himself” or “doing his own thing,” then style of dress and grooming is an extension of his personality, which they separated from gender identity. Put this way, the rule would have nothing to do with sexual bias, and “refusing to hire a longhaired male is merely avoiding a personality conflict between employer and applicant.”<sup>37</sup> Employers were well within their rights, most of the courts agreed, in establishing dress codes to enforce a pleasing, uniform appearance as long as the rules did not prevent a class of people (men, women, African Americans) from being able to gain employment.

The evolution of the civil rights movement into the Black Power movement in the late 1960s further complicated questions of gender-appropriate grooming by intersecting them with expressions of racial identity. The popularity of the Afro hairstyle had little impact at the high school level, since the dress codes usually defined the proper hair length in terms of where it reached around the ears and collar. The Afro style made a much bigger stir in the military, though only very briefly. In 1969 airman August Doyle was court-martialed for disobeying an order to cut his Afro and was sentenced to three months of hard labor, fined sixty dollars a

month during that time, and demoted. By the time he was released, however, the regulations had been relaxed.<sup>38</sup> African American women opting for Afros also experienced criticism and discrimination, as in the case of stewardess Deborah Renwick, who thought her three-inch natural style conformed to the United Air Lines requirement for short hair. The airline grounded her, and she agreed to trim her hair to just two inches, but she was still dismissed. Eventually, like Airman Doyle, she won: outraged black leaders and professionals organized a boycott and she sued the airline for a million dollars. United Air Lines backed off, offered to rehire her with back pay and a cash settlement, and agreed to revise its grooming guidelines to be more inclusive.<sup>39</sup>

The cases involving African American plaintiffs offer particularly rich insights into interaction between gender and other factors as cultural constructions and social realities. Since the 1970s the case law involving dress codes has been disproportionately dominated by attempts by school or workplace authorities to control the appearance of people of color or members of minority religions. Few as they are, the very earliest cases reveal the constriction of available options for racial and other minorities and the increasing likelihood that their transgressions will be punished more severely.

The complete text of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 reads,

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.<sup>40</sup>

The passage of Title IX is largely remembered today for improving access to sports for girls and women. But Title IX was also used, along with the Fourteenth Amendment, to support boys' claims that regulations on hair length discriminated against them by treating them differently from girls. Many of these cases were decided by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) and later the Department of Education rather than through the courts. The first court case to be decided on this basis was *Jacobs v. Benedict* (1972) in the Ohio

Appellate Court. The sex discrimination argument essentially eliminated the “safety” defense for banning long hair on male students. It is clear from some of the testimony that the authorities had initially thought that requiring boys to wear hairnets or to tie their hair in ponytails would shame them into getting haircuts, only to find, to their chagrin, the boys had no objection to those accommodations.<sup>41</sup> But the Title IX argument was not always persuasive, especially in more conservative courts; in *Trent v. Perritt* the Fifth District Court reasoned that the law and the proposed HEW guidelines about gender discrimination that were being circulated did “not require that the recipient erase all differences” between boys and girls, and that requiring boys—but not girls—to have short hair was not discriminatory.<sup>42</sup> In the long run the arguments against long hair were defeated indirectly; because Title IX opened home economics and shop classes to all students, the real requirements of safety and sanitation prevailed. In these settings all longhaired students regardless of sex needed to keep their hair under control by any means, including ponytails, hairnets, or bobby pins.

The military academies offered a different challenge under Title IX, because their dress codes—uniform clothing and grooming standards—were originally designed only for men. When the U.S. Military Academy at West Point admitted the first women in 1975, there was a flurry of attention in the press as to what they would wear and how their hair would be cut. The academy’s administration had worried publicly that women would not fit in, being unprepared for the discipline or the tough standards of West Point. But once the female students were accepted, the school held a fashion show to show how the classic uniform would be adapted. Their hair would be a short bob, not completely shorn, and women cadets would be issued purses. (This was necessary because the women’s uniform had six fewer pockets than the male version.) They would also wear bras, the school reported reassuringly. Instead of the tailcoat, the dress uniform jacket was modified to be straight in the back and worn with a knee-length skirt, not trousers.<sup>43</sup>

Title IX did have an impact on athletic clothing; predictably, it was quite different for boys and girls. For male student athletes it could be used to battle team dress codes requiring short hair and conserva-



tive dress. Uniformity and discipline were especially valued by athletic coaches, who were often the last holdouts, requiring athletes in football, tennis, and other sports to adhere to restrictive dress codes even when the rest of the students at the school were exempt. There was a rash of coach resignations in the early 1970s at both the high school and college level, with some coaches taking a dim view of the schools overriding their authority. The athletic director at a San Francisco–area high school predicted darkly, “This is the beginning of the end of all athletics.”<sup>44</sup> Having so many professional and Olympic athletes dress contrary to school standards was also a blow to these restrictions. In every sport, students could point to examples of outstanding athletes with long hair, mustaches, and flashy personal wardrobes.

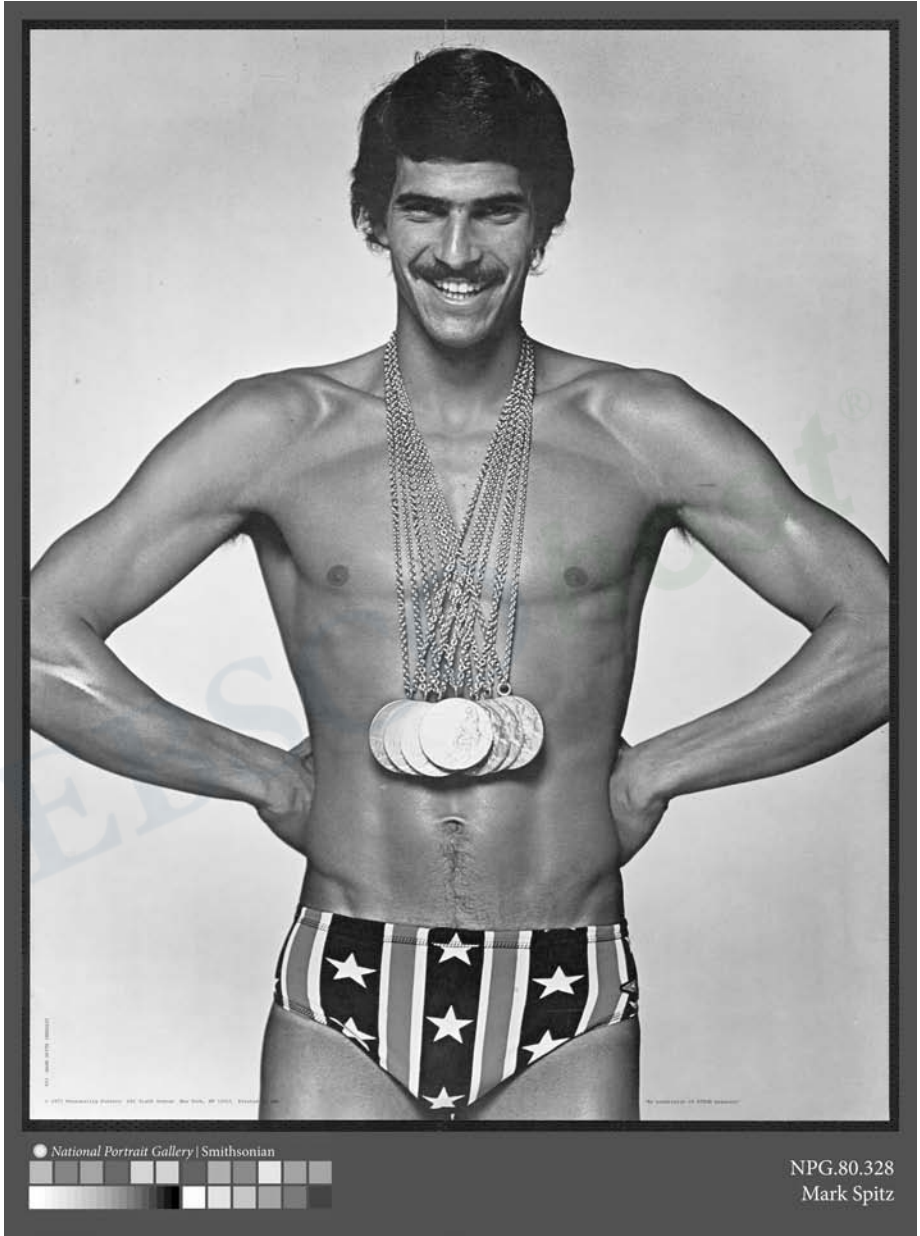
The situation for female athletes had been so appalling before Title IX that the immediate effects were not so much in terms of style as simple access. Even at wealthy schools, girls’ teams made do with old uniforms while the boys’ teams got new ones every year. Many girls’ sports did not have uniforms at all, much less warm-up suits and team footwear. Instead, they wore the same one-piece gym suits used for physical education. By requiring that teams have equal access to funding, Title IX ensured that girls’ and women’s teams were properly equipped for the first time. This had a ripple effect in the active sportswear market in the years and decades to come, as the number of women who had played sports in school jumped into the millions, many of them continuing to participate and complete long after graduation.

The legal battles prove two things: personal decisions about appearance are far from trivial matters, and the establishment dearly wanted to control the emerging culture. The role of gender norms in the long hair controversy was very different for men and women. The court decisions tended to skitter around the direct question of gender roles, preferring instead to emphasize the schools’ demand for order and discipline. Even this emphasis was gendered: the testimony of the authorities expressed a conviction that conformity and submission to rules is especially necessary for boys and young men. The dress codes themselves reinforced this distinction. Girls’ dress codes placed a premium on modesty; boys’ regulations were more likely to mention “conventional” standards. The

Perryville, Arkansas, administrator in *Wallace v. Ford* testified that the objective of the codes was to prevent girls from wearing “revealing or seductive” clothing and boys from wearing “bizarre” clothing.<sup>45</sup> West Point admissions officer Col. Manley Rogers was concerned that newly admitted female cadets were not ready for the rigors of the academy because, “You tell a 12-year-old boy about the need for discipline and tough training and he will understand; the girls have not been conditioned in that way.”<sup>46</sup>

For boys and men the dominant expectation was that males, especially those in subordinate positions, should respect and follow authority. Aspersions on their masculinity, such as the common suggestion that “you can’t tell boys from the girls,” were patently false but nevertheless used as a method of coercion and control, in an attempt to shame a shaggy-haired boy into compliance. My own reaction to hearing the phrase was amusement: it marked the commentator as an uncool, unhip square. My male peers were similarly unimpressed. When science teachers required them to wear hairnets in labs, the boys shrugged and donned the hairnets. At the restaurant where I worked after college, the male servers—all members of the same rock band—complied with regulations by wearing matching shorthair wigs and thought the whole fuss was pretty amusing.

There were clearly times when disapproval escalated to physical violence. Anti-long hair sentiment seems to have run especially high among football players, who appeared regularly as the antagonists in harassment and forced-haircut anecdotes. How much of this was the result of locker room and sideline rhetoric that accused boys of being “sissies” or “faggots” if they did not meet expectations? A North Shore Junior High School football coach, in an article in the *Texas High School Coaches Association* magazine, said that coaches should ban “individuals that look like females,” noting that long hair is “the sign of a sissy.”<sup>47</sup> It took high-profile examples to counter these stereotypes; Olympic swimmer Mark Spitz is credited with breaking the long hair barrier for many athletes, probably in part because of the popularity of his door-size poster among young women. While the shorthair establishment tried to frame the issue as masculinity versus effeminacy, young men reframed it as “new man versus old man.”



Olympic swimmer Mark Spitz, 1972.  
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution/Art Resource, New York.

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Girls who violated dress codes were usually just sent home to change or actually given a change of clothes to wear, but they seldom faced suspension or expulsion, even for repeated violations. Boys were threatened with more serious consequences. It could be argued that clothes were easier to change than hair, but the disparity in the number of legal cases and the severity of the punishments suggest that the real underlying issue was resistance to authority. One measure of the importance of conformity and submission to authority in postwar masculinity is the narrow range of styles available to men and boys. The institutional reaction to nonconformity, as seen in the dozens of hair cases, is even more powerful evidence.

Besides concerns about female modesty and male compliance, the main objection to both male and female fashions of the late 1960s was that they were too casual. That was clearly the problem with girls wearing pants to school or women wearing them in the workplace. It was also the objection raised to jeans in general. The same rising tide that eliminated hats and white gloves had also swept away the barriers between clothing for work and leisure. The sense that the social fabric was loosening elicited different reactions from different people. Some found the new standards not just more comfortable but a sign of greater individual freedom of expression and thought. To others it marked the decline of civility and social standards that had provided a different kind of “comfort”—the assurance that stems from a society regulated by clear rules and standards.

Note that I resisted the temptation to associate these perspectives with particular age groups. If this had been a truly generational battle, there would be no culture wars today. The baby boomers would have won simply by outliving the opposition. But the many examples of conflict, even violent confrontation, between shorthaired and longhaired students suggest otherwise. Adults who defended men’s right to wear long hair found themselves characterized as either heroes or traitors. Consider the case of new headmaster Robert Thomason at Horace Mann, an all-male private school in New York, who announced the suspension of the dress code to a standing ovation from the 545 students at a school assembly, but then faced opposition from parents and alumni.<sup>48</sup>

In the end all of the *Sturm und Drang* over appearance ended in a stalemate, on the national level. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear dress

code challenges again and again, in 1968 (*Ferrell v. Dallas*), 1969 (*Breen v. Kahl*), 1970 (*Jackson v. Dorrier*), 1971 (*Swanquist v. Livingston, King v. Saddleback*), 1972 (*Oloff v. East, Freeman v. Flake*), and 1973 (*Lansdale v. Tyler, Karr v. Schmidt, New Rider v. Board*).<sup>49</sup> The most eloquent defender of the civil libertarian side came from Justice William O. Douglas, who dissented from the denial of certiorari in nearly every case and thought the court should have heard the cases. Writing in his 1968 *Ferrell v. Dallas* opinion that a nation founded on the Declaration of Independence should allow “idiosyncrasies to flourish, especially when they concern the image of one’s personality and his philosophy toward government and his fellow man,” Douglas added,

Municipalities furnish many services to their inhabitants, and I have supposed that it would be an invidious discrimination to withhold fire protection, police protection, garbage collection, health protection and the like merely because a person was an offbeat, nonconformist when it came to hairdo and dress as well as to diet, race, religion, or his views on Vietnam.<sup>50</sup>

In his 1971 *Freeman v. Flake* dissent, Justice Douglas noted, “Eight circuits have passed on the question. On widely disparate rationales, four have upheld school hair regulations . . . and four have struck them down,” which he believed to be a compelling reason why the Supreme Court should take up the case.<sup>51</sup> Instead, the highest court let the widely divergent case law in each circuit set the precedent for their respective regions. Across the nation people on both sides believed they had won when in fact the basic conflict between personal expression and community standards has never been resolved.

# *The Culture Wars, Then and Now*



It has been over fifty years since the confluence of youth culture, sexual revolution, and civil rights activism set the culture wars in motion. Judging by the present state of affairs, it may be another half century before the many questions raised in the 1960s are finally resolved. I wrote the bulk of this book in 2013, a year punctuated with important fiftieth-anniversary observations. The year 1963 was a watershed. It was the year that brought us the Beatles, *The Feminine Mystique*, the Great March on Washington, and the Kennedy assassination. The teenagers of 1963 are in their sixties now but still arguing about many of the same contentious issues that have occupied us since junior high. Commentators originally attributed the rifts in our society to the perennial conflict between youth and age, but the generation gap has faded with the passing of our own grandparents and parents. To paraphrase Pogo, we have met the culture warriors and they are us.

In the preceding chapters I have described the major battlegrounds as revealed through dress. In this chapter I use the same lens to examine what our current gender controversies and quandaries owe to the unfinished business of the sexual revolution. Finally, I ponder what may lie ahead.

The civil rights battles of the 1960s were not new nor were they just about race. They were the result of struggles dating back to the earliest years of European colonization. The ideal of equality, articulated in the Declaration of Independence, has a long, contentious history of claims by different classes, races, and nationalities, believers, and nonbelievers. Our country's history has been one of gradual expansion of civil rights, though not without tensions, resistance, and conflict. It also includes



women, gays, lesbians, and, most recently, transpeople. To claim that the principles of equality and civil rights cannot be linked to sex, gender, or sexuality, particularly since the 1960s, is disingenuous and false.

The rise of second-wave feminism was certainly connected to the larger civil rights movement, sometimes in solidarity but frequently in tension fueled by the perspectives and agendas of women of different races and classes. Mix in the sexual revolution, timed to coincide with the adolescence of a demographic wave of unprecedented size and affluence, and the stage was set for cultural upheaval. Beginning in the mid-1960s all of the questions and tensions surrounding gender and sexuality were played out among factions that may seem to have been well defined. Closer examination reveals that individuals within those factions varied considerably, and movement between positions was more fluid, especially in the beginning. Dress continues to be a valuable lens for making identity-based conflict visible, because it is so intimately tied to our public and private selves. Fashion provides a means of keeping up with kaleidoscopic change. This project has focused on gender identities and expression, but there is also endless opportunity for other researchers to use the same approach to examine race, age, and other dimensions of difference and connection.

In our consumer society the marketplace is where most of us must go to literally materialize our lives. Clothing and accessory manufacturers can't provide every possible variation or every color in the visible spectrum. They restrict themselves to their own best guesses as to what will profit them. Whether we feel comfortable or uncomfortable in current trends depends on how well we fit the composite customer in the manufacturer's imagination. Advertising and branding are designed to help us envision ourselves as that imaginary consumer. If you experience no friction between your desires and the ideal lifestyles depicted in popular media, you are likely to be satisfied with the available options. If you do not see yourself in the glossy ads or share in the fantasies they promote, you are more inclined to notice the places where our culture chafes. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the instability and variety of popular styles meant consumers had an unprecedented opportunity to match their outsides to their insides, or their lifestyles to their lives. This may have been



exhilarating to young consumers, who were eager to try on new looks and identities, but manufacturers and retailers were less happy. From season to season they gambled on trends ranging from Nehru jackets and turtle-necks to polyester double knits and designer jeans. Some of these innovations reflected permanent changes in cultural patterns; others turned out to be short-lived fads. The fads, particularly the most popular ones, should no more be dismissed as trivial than should major shifts such as the acceptance of trousers for women or the mainstreaming of jeans. All of them represented possibilities that seemed plausible to someone, at some point.

The sexual revolution and the women's liberation movement affected people of all ages across the spectrums of gender identity and sexual orientation. After all, so much of the way sex and gender are conceived and expressed in our culture is in terms of relationships between opposites or complements. Without a commonly understood gender binary, there can be no unisex or androgyny. Advocates for cultural change recognize this, and so do those who oppose any alteration in traditional gender roles or sexual mores.

In the battle between second-wave feminists and antifeminists in the 1970s, the conservatives were by far more organized and, ultimately, more successful, slowing down the political and economic progress that were the primary goals of second-wave feminism. If there was a moment when the wind shifted, it was at the November 1977 National Women's Conference in Houston. Gloria Steinem claimed that the gathering would be a constitutional convention for American women, a setting for consolidating their demands for political and economic equality. The conference program lists the group's demands, including steps to move women into positions of power and influence. The conference also planned to recommend that the federal government assume a major role in providing "bias-free nonsexist quality child care."<sup>1</sup> That was what was *supposed* to happen. Instead, antifeminists took over the nominating process for the Houston conference. Conservative leader Phyllis Schlafly organized busloads of women opposed to the ERA who registered on voting day, elected a conservative delegation, and then left. By the time everyone got to Houston, antifeminist women controlled about 20 percent of the seats at the con-

ference. Throughout the three-day conference there were pro-family rallies across the city attracting attention and distracting from the business of the meeting. "Houston will finish off the women's movement," Schlafly said. "It will show them off for the radical anti-family pro-lesbian people they are."<sup>2</sup> While it was not the end of the women's movement, the 1977 conference marked the high mark of progress on many feminist initiatives. They were able to win a three-year extension of the deadline for ratification of the ERA but not much else, and the ERA failed to reach ratification by 1982. As sociologist Philip Cohen has pointed out, the growth in women's employment rates stalled in the 1990s, especially those of married women with young children.<sup>3</sup>

But Schlafly and antifeminist conservatives were not alone in their objections to the direction of cultural change. There were fissures and factions within the women's movement as well. Although right-wing pundits have been depicting feminists as a single bloc for years, feminists from the very beginning varied widely in their interests and arguments and did not agree on objective or tactics. Cultural feminists, for example, sought to elevate what they perceived as women's unique capacities. For cultural feminists the problem with the gender binary was the power structure, not the categories. It was possible to embrace motherhood and equality; women in power would bring a "feminine essence" to balance masculine tendencies. Liberal feminists emphasized political and legal reform such as reproductive and abortion rights, while radical feminists argued that significant change required changes to the root of the problem, identified as oppressive patriarchal social structures. Many black feminists objected to the assumption that race could be disentangled from gender and class and criticized much of the liberal and cultural feminist agendas as narrow and elitist.<sup>4</sup> Between internal and external criticism of the women's movement, it is not surprising that progress has been slow over the past fifty years. Examining the fashions of the 1960s and '70s provides some insight into what the larger public was experiencing beyond the activists on the front lines.

For at least the past two and a half centuries, men's and women's clothing has been growing farther apart visually, even as women gained access to higher education and the franchise. Though baby and toddler clothing

lagged behind this slow wave of gendering, even this last category of dress has divided more and more sharply into masculine and feminine styles. Scholars have been trying to explain this trend for more than a century from dozens of disciplinary perspectives. Until we are locked in one room and forced to arrive at a unified theory of gender expression, there won't be a definitive answer to why clothing styles persist in being gendered as male or female, even in the face of increasing economic, social, and political equality. For now, here is my best attempt: this pattern parallels the rise of individualism and of a culture that ties identity to consumption. Sex is one of our most basic identifiers, and until just recently it has been understood as a very clear binary. This pattern extended to individuals whose appearance or behavior did not fit into either category, who were commonly described in binary terms (effeminate gays, mannish lesbians, "shemales," and so on), and were considered at best abnormal and at worst immoral. Mainstream fashion reflected that underlying model and served as a vehicle for expressing one's individuality within well-established rules for masculinity or femininity, as appropriate—that is, until the 1960s.

Consider again the environmental science concept of punctuated equilibrium, which posits an evolutionary process of periods of dramatic change followed by periods of recovery, allowing for ecological adjustment. I believe the cultural equivalent of punctuated equilibrium is evident in the 1960s and '70s. After a short, anxious period of dizzying change around 1966–1969, the early 1970s ushered in a revival of classic styling, nostalgic escapism, and a superficial truce in the gender wars. For some there was a sense that progress had been made; women were making gains in the workplace, sports, and higher education, and gays and lesbians were living more open lives, especially in politically liberal parts of the country. But in more conservative quarters, those who were uncomfortable or hostile to gender equity and gay rights, sensing that progress had been stretched to the limit, continued their efforts to organize resistance and rebuild barriers. The study of dress since the late 1970s suggests that the tide of liberation was receding, and until just recently there were signs that we have settled back into a more gendered and restrictive status quo. Rather than see this pattern as cyclical, I see it as evidence that we

are still working through the questions raised fifty years ago as individuals and as a society.

Adults now in their forties, who were children during the early years of the gender revolution, have played an important role in the gendering of children's clothing in the 1980s and 1990s. Raised on *Free to Be . . . You and Me* and *William's Doll*, these older Generation Xers traded their own neutral fashions in a nostalgic return to "classic" styles as they entered adolescence and then adulthood in the late 1970s and early '80s. As they became parents they began to influence baby clothing. Between 1980 and 1990 the proportion of births to first-time parents shifted from baby boomers and Generation Xers; the availability of neutral styles for infants plummeted between 1984 and 1986 and has stayed low until very recently.<sup>5</sup> The 1970s girl who had worn plain corduroy overalls over a striped turtleneck grew up dressing her own daughter in pastels and ruffles and adding a stretchy headband to the outfit when they went to the mall, just to make sure everyone knew the baby was female. Hair ribbons and barrettes for infants took the children's accessories industry by storm in 1988, signaling the end of unisex in infants' clothing.<sup>6</sup> Across a cross-section of retailers from mass-market catalogs to designer boutiques, infant clothing departments offered more gender-specific styles and fewer neutral options. Even in newborn sizes boys' clothing was not simply blue, but was blue with masculine motifs such as trucks or footballs, and the last traditional "baby" elements, such as round collars and smocking, were eliminated from infant and toddler boys' fashions.

How did this happen? As I explained in chapter 4, it may have initially been a reaction to the experience of wearing unisex styles as children, especially for children whose gender identity was still taking shape or who felt more keenly the deprivation of gendered clothing and toys. (Whether the loudest cries for weapons or Barbies came from tots with strong or weak gender identities, I will leave to the psychologists.) Certainly the connection between cultural environment and gender identity development is far from being understood. When girls began to wear pants to school in the 1970s, there were studies suggesting that girls who wore pants were more active during recess than girls who wore skirts or dresses. Later research introduced a wrinkle: girls who wore pants were

perceived by their peers as more active, even when they weren't.<sup>7</sup> The relationship between highly feminized play clothes and girls' freedom to romp and get dirty is still unclear, but we do know that gendered clothing is an effective vehicle for encouraging stereotyped expectations. The more children's clothing has branched into distinctly masculine and feminine styles, and the fewer neutral options there are, the easier it is to attach those same labels to children, even when they are just a few weeks old. This may make it even more challenging for today's young parents and teachers to avoid essentializing children, because gender stereotypes might seem more natural to them.

The sharp gendering of children's clothing has created friction for children who do not fit easily into pink and blue boxes. Every few months there is a new story about a boy who dresses like a girl, a girl who dresses like a boy, or a boy who likes pink nail polish, setting off a new round of claims, counterclaims, and controversy. Many of these stories are told by their parents in clear efforts to challenge prevailing gender norms and to reach out to other parents in similar circumstances. Blogger Sarah Hoffman explained, "I started writing about my son because I don't think there is anything wrong with being a pink boy. I think being pink is just a natural variation of being a human being. I wanted to let other parents, doctors, teachers, and families of pink boys know that there are other pink boys out there—boys who struggle with the same sorts of things, with families who strive to support them in all their sparkly glory."<sup>8</sup>

This is in sharp contrast to the generations of "gender-nonconforming" children, mostly boys, who were quietly taken to therapists. Psychologists and social workers themselves have disagreed in their approach to these children, with some taking the relatively new approach of supporting kids wanting to live openly as members of the opposite sex. Others encourage kids to discard their more pronounced behaviors, explore new interests, and embrace the gender associated with their biological sex. Many therapists take the middle ground by accepting a boy's desire to wear dresses and saying it's fine for him to do so at home, but strongly discouraging him from wearing them to school, where he might encounter unpleasant responses or even bullying.

At the center of the issue is the connection, still not yet completely understood, between gender identity and adult sexual orientation. “I think parents are very worried and confused and there isn’t clear-cut advice,” says Ellen Perrin, chief of developmental-behavioral pediatrics at the Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center in Boston. “It’s a complex issue.”<sup>9</sup> Parents wonder if their child will someday want sexual reassignment surgery; the answer is probably not. According to years of study, most gender-variant children (between 85 and 90 percent) grow up quite content with their biological sex. Will gender-variant children grow up gay? For boys that is more likely, though still not a sure thing. In contrast only about one-third of gender-variant girls later identify as lesbian or bisexual.<sup>10</sup>

But it’s not just parents of gender-variant kids who are trying to break out of the binary. Around the globe, parents are once more attempting to raise ungendered children, and their stories echo the messages of the unisex era. Nearly always there is a loud negative reaction from critics who see them as foolish, misguided, or even abusive. But with every one of these stories, the ranks of defenders increase, many of them children of the 1980s looking for alternatives to highly gendered clothing and toys for their own offspring. As I write this in 2013, there is not only more resistance, including more parents choosing not to know their unborn baby’s sex, but there are also more neutral clothing options on the market. Most of the alternatives come from online retailers, many of them small businesses, not the mass merchants of children’s fashion. Consumers are also pushing back against gendered toys and books—and winning. When thirteen-year-old McKenna Pope organized a Change.org petition to ask Hasbro for a ungendered version of the classic Easy-Bake Oven, the manufacturer unveiled plans for a black and silver version.<sup>11</sup>

Mainstream women’s fashions today show little evidence of the unisex era. The clothing changes that accompanied the women’s movement beyond the acceptance of pants were subtle, not revolutionary, and the resilience of beauty culture and “traditional” feminine styling has puzzled many gender scholars. In 1977 John T. Molloy’s *Dress for Success for Women* offered a means by which women could secure their places in business and politics. Some of his advice seems antiquated today—his warnings



that pants-wearing women might be too threatening to male bosses, for example. But overall Molloy was suggesting only that women pay attention to the rules that men had learned to observe in the workplace: focus on the job, not on the clothes. The themes in his advice for women were little different from his recommendations for men: invest in well-made clothing in classic styles that will last for years; save the flash and fun for leisure. Women's business styles followed the Molloy prescription through the early 1980s and then drifted into familiar old territory. The conflict between women's desire to be taken seriously as students, workers, and athletes and the importance of an attractive appearance was never completely resolved. They followed the current trends in silhouette and skirt length. They incorporated softer fabrics and this season's colors. Suits lost their importance when dresses made a comeback, and the simple blazer suit took a backseat to trendy cuts and fabrics.

Of the three primary strands of advice for women in the early 1960s—from Friedan, Brown, and Andelin—Helen Gurley Brown's vision of sexual liberation seemed to have gained the most traction, as women's clothing, even in the workplace, has continued to focus on physical attraction as the most important element in femininity. The other two philosophies—feminism and antifeminism—have been battling each other for dominance for fifty years, leaving the marketplace clear for what I'll call "cosmofeminism," in honor of Helen Gurley Brown's longtime leadership of *Cosmopolitan*. From an entrepreneurial standpoint, cosmofeminism was the likeliest vehicle for business success. Many second-wave feminists were hostile to fashion, when they considered it at all. Although the stereotypes of hairy-legged, frumpy "women's libbers" are both unfair and false, the truth is that the movement didn't lend itself to commodification, nor did it wish to do so. *Ms.* magazine was no handmaiden to commerce, having refused advertising its publishers considered "insulting or harmful to women" for its first fifteen years and being essentially ad-free since 1991. The conservative antifeminist movement also focused more on political action than on fashion and beauty and, consequently, has had little direct influence on fashion. Ironically, both of these forces helped propel the popularity of cosmofeminist dressing for women and girls, though probably inadvertently. New generations of feminists have



reclaimed makeup and high heels along with other feminine elements once rejected by their mothers and grandmothers. In 2013 the *Financial Times* reported that “feminism is back in fashion,” quoting current *Cosmopolitan* editor Joanna Coles as an example of the trend: “Probably the most feminist thing I have in my own closet this season are Tamara Mellon’s genius, sexy, hugely practical legging boots, which pull on in one easy movement. . . . Women want fashion to keep up with the speed of their lives.”<sup>12</sup> Coles, born in that banner year 1963, has not only claimed that *Cosmopolitan* is “deeply feminist” but also that it has done more for women’s rights than feminist academics.<sup>13</sup>

Conservative antifeminists see gendered clothing as a natural expression of innate and essential differences between men and women. Although Helen Andelin died in 2009, *Fascinating Womanhood*’s legacy lives on in local club chapters, online classes, and even a Facebook group. The rise of conservative religion has complicated the advice given as observant Christian, Jewish, and Muslim women struggle to balance the demands of modesty and femininity in a consumer culture where sexiness seems so essential in female fashions. In fact concern about the conflation of “feminine” and “sexy” is one point of agreement across the feminist-antifeminist spectrum, especially as it affects girls.

Compared to the fashions of the 1950s and early 1960s, today’s clothing for women, including girls in their teens and even younger, is more revealing and more focused on sexual attraction (or objectification, if you prefer). Cleavage, once relegated to beach, ballroom, and boudoir, is visible in classroom and office settings. Dresses and skirts are almost always above the kneecap (sometimes way above), and it is difficult to find women’s shorts that are longer than mid-thigh (which probably explains the popularity of cropped pants and capris). To many women the implicit cultural message that they should want to be sexually attractive in every waking moment and every social situation is oppressive. This is felt particularly by women who don’t “measure up,” by virtue of age, body size, or other media-influenced ideals, who may see images of themselves only in “before” pictures in ads or in reality makeover shows.

I believe that the sexualization of femininity is also connected to the phenomenon of early feminization of girls. It probably wasn’t the fathers

who first embraced a return to gendered baby clothes in the mid-1980s; it was the same mothers who were buying “romantic” dresses and ruffly blouses for themselves. The Walt Disney Company may have commercialized the princess dress in the late 1990s, but the homemade versions its former chairman Andy Mooney saw at *Disney on Ice* performances inspired the idea.<sup>14</sup> This hyper-gendering of little girls’ clothing associated “girly” femininity (ruffles, pastels, flowers, and the rest of the lexicon of softness) with being a little girl, with the result that girls grow out of it and into—well, what?

One vital aspect of children’s gender identity in a media-rich consumer culture is that the boys and girls start to influence the market at a very young age. At four and five little girls may clamor for pink and glitter so ardently that parents mistake their demands for innate needs. When their princess enters third or fourth grade and rejects pink, girly styles as “babyish,” the parents find themselves fighting a battle over clothing that is too sexy for an eight-year-old. Blogger Suzette Waters observed that her nine-year-old daughter, Anna, left “pink behind” and traded it for blue, purple, and black.<sup>15</sup> According to child development literature, this is a clear sign that Anna had mastered the concept of “gender permanence” and no longer needed to adhere to stereotyped clothing and toys in order to maintain a stable gender identity. The once beloved symbols of femininity looked childish instead, and Anna wanted a more grown-up look.

This phenomenon has attracted a great deal of attention in the last decade, especially since the American Psychological Association published the report of its task force on sexualization of girls in 2010.<sup>16</sup> The report documents the expansion of sexualized media since the 1980s as it reached younger and younger girls and details the already observed consequences, including “cognitive functioning, physical and mental health, sexuality and attitudes and beliefs.” As I was writing this chapter, the performance of twenty-year-old Miley Cyrus on the 2013 *MTV Video Music Awards* show had Twitter all atwitter and occupied nearly every talk show and blogger for a week, despite looming crises in Syria and the media coverage of the fiftieth anniversary of the March on Washington. By the time you are reading this, I have no doubt that more young stars have committed more outrage, but this episode stands out for the way that all of the

trends converged in a single location. Miley Cyrus had been a child actor in the classic wholesome Disney mode, first packaged for consumption in 2006 at the age of thirteen as “Hannah Montana,” in the TV series of the same name aimed at younger girls who had outgrown princesses. Replacing fairy-tale fantasy with a story line about a teenager who leads a secret life as a pop star, Disney launched a line of items, including clothes, bedding, luggage, makeup, and toys through mass-market retailers across the country.<sup>17</sup> The clothing featured the pop star side of the character’s persona, and because Cyrus’s character was modeled on existing images of (adult) female performers, it soon drew criticism from some parents, who felt that the look was too mature for Hannah Montana’s young fans.

What happened when Miley outgrew teen pop fashion may have been disturbing, but it wasn’t surprising. Compare her experience with other post-1970s celebrities such as Drew Barrymore, Britney Spears, or Lindsay Lohan. Their trajectory from cutie pie to cheesecake parallels the blurring of size-age boundaries in girls’, teens’, and women’s clothing. This relationship between celebrity and consumer culture has been around for some time, although the particulars have changed. For stars of an earlier generation the pattern was prolonged childhood, an abbreviated adolescence, and early domesticity, as seen with Shirley Temple, Judy Garland, and Elizabeth Taylor, all of whom married before they turned twenty.

The youth-driven fashions of the 1960s had long ago erased the boundary between young adults and teens in women’s fashions, and a similar transformation eliminated the distinction between tweens and teens between the late 1970s and the early 1990s. Combine that with the reassignment of more modest expressions of femininity to girls under the age of seven and women over fifty, and what’s left is sexualization for everyone else. The APA identified half of the problem—sex-saturated media that broadcast an image of women as objects of desire and sexual violence (and often cast women of color as actively seeking those attentions)—but missed the more insidious piece of consumer culture that primes toddlers and preschoolers for sexualization by initiating them into a world of femininity that they are destined to outgrow within a few years. When four-year-old girls want everything pink and glittery, it’s nature, but when

they're eight and they want flirty, it's the media's fault? That's having your cake and eating it too.

In addition to the hypersexualization of women's fashion, we also see evidence of visions of equality and femininity dating back to the 1960s, which offered new choices in nearly every facet of women's lives. But these choices were neither equally available nor equally valued, resulting not only in the well-known "mommy wars" between women working outside the home and stay-at-home mothers but also in the marginalization of women who do what they must because they have no choice. Women and girls of all ages are subject to a beauty culture that may be different from that of the 1950s and early 1960s, but it is no less problematic. Despite fifty years of modern feminism, an analysis of Google searches revealed that parents were twice as likely to seek ways to help their daughters to lose weight than to look for similar advice for their sons, despite the fact that the proportion of overweight girls and boys is essentially similar.<sup>18</sup>

John T. Molloy is still dispensing advice, and his opinions on clothing for career women who aspire to leadership positions has changed only slightly. He now endorses pantsuits, and his reasons are revealing: "The suit remains the uniform for women executives but today it is as likely to be a pantsuit as a traditional skirted model. The pantsuit was made a legitimate executive uniform by Hillary Clinton and today pants are being worn by women because the skirts that are being shown are not appropriate for business."<sup>19</sup>

What about masculinity? What do today's fashions reveal about how the gender revolution affected men and boys? Once the peacock fever had passed, they too reverted to older patterns. Still, some deep and permanent changes did emerge from the chaos of the 1970s. Men benefited more than women had in the loosening of occasion-specific rules for dress and today enjoy a greater range of options than they did during the 1950s. Although the unstructured leisure suit in its pastel polyester incarnation went out of style, other, less revolutionary casual styles moved into the workplace. Even in a conservative fashion culture like the federal government, sport coats are more common today than suits. The Washington, D.C., Metro during summertime rush hours is filled with men in shirt sleeves and tie; they wear no jacket at all, or they leave one at the office

“just in case.” “Casual Friday” has evolved into a weeklong affair labeled “business casual.” Men’s leisure clothing is colorful and expressive, even if what they are expressing is no more than love for their local football team. The men’s grooming industry has flourished since the appearance of the first unisex salons in the late 1960s, even reviving the humble barbershop. Of course, the twenty-first-century version is not so humble; it’s an upscale exercise in nostalgia for “a time when barbershops provided real men a place where they shared common values, where they could relax, and where they could enjoy meaningful conversation with old friends and new acquaintances.”<sup>20</sup>

The popular award-winning series *Mad Men* has focused attention on the 1960s and the experiences of men and women as they navigated their ways through a culture in transition. Through this series, post-boomer viewers have learned about the 1960s from a completely different angle from the stereotyped “flower power” and civil rights lenses. This has revived interest in the look of the period, but even the most ardent fan of the show just wants to look like Don Draper, not behave like him:

On the outside, Don is successful, rich and married with children. But in reality he is a deserter, a drunk, an adulterer and, to be frank, pretty fucked up.<sup>21</sup>

Draper then serves as not role model but as a warning.<sup>22</sup>

With the advantage of hindsight and history, viewers know that the masculine culture of *Mad Men* is headed for challenging times. The irony is that we still may not be able to predict where Don Draper will be in the twenty-first century, other than retired or dead. Men’s lives took so many different directions in the late 1960s that a man in his early forties in 1968 could not begin to fathom what the future held. Even with today’s look-alike fashions, a time-traveling Don Draper would find himself in a strange new world fifty years later.

One important distinction, though less visible, between clothing for men and women is the pace and magnitude of fashion changes from season to season and from year to year for business and formal dress. Men’s clothing for the office has been reduced to classic styles and a limited

range of colors and fabrics for generations. They rent most of their formal wear, which is also only lightly touched by fashion. Why so many women have been so reluctant to relinquish fashionable clothing, particularly in the workplace, is a puzzle, and the answer is complicated. Part of the explanation may lie at the intersection of feminism, antifeminism, and cosmo-feminism, in the territory sometimes called “having it all.” Part of it may be a side effect of the gains won by the women’s rights movement. The fortieth anniversary of Title IX was celebrated at the governmental level and by many women in sports. But it is telling that in writing about the occasion *Washington Post* columnist Valerie Strauss felt compelled to dispel several myths about how Title IX had hurt male athletes and men’s sports. This is perhaps the most pernicious accusation of the women’s movement: that the advancement of women has come at the expense of men. This echoes the antifeminist counterarguments of Helen Andelin in *True Womanhood*: “One of the greatest threats to a man’s position . . . is when his wife earnestly pursues a career. The dedication and drive required for success tends to push the man into the background.”<sup>23</sup> Dialing back on the power suits, or even compensating with styles that convey softness and seduction, may have been a way to relieve this tension. British journalist Caitlin Moran, author of *How to Be a Woman*, wrote in 2012: “When we imagine the fully emancipated 21st-century woman, we are apt to think of some toned, immaculately dressed overachiever, leading a Fortune 500 company while bringing up bilingual twins. And that’s what simultaneously stresses women out to the point of living on a Pinot Grigio drip, and terrifies insecure men. This idea of perfect, sexy, super-human lady-titans, winning at everything. That’s what scuppers moves toward gender equality.”<sup>24</sup>

For all the privilege associated with being male in our culture, comments like these bring to mind the Freudian-influenced concept of fragile masculinity, vulnerable to “corruption” in early childhood. Much of stereotypical male behavior may be aggressive, but their clothing is defensive. The traditional suit is going strong, still shielding men’s bodies from view and still deflecting ridicule through conservative cut and color. It is easy to see that it may have been premature in the 1970s for women to dress too much like their male co-workers. It also may have been too soon to ask them to relinquish fashion as a marker of femininity.



The role of queer fashion professionals—designers, models, journalists, and curators—is significant. In the 1960s gay male designers could challenge prevailing gender norms through their designs, but just up to point. Today's more accepting climate has made it possible for them to be much more open personally and creatively, which in turn has brought discussions of gender expression to the forefront once more. Whether it is transgender runway models or lines of ready-to-wear clothing expressly for butch lesbians and androgynous straight women, the market is responding to the demand for options. Less evident but even more important has been the steady erosion of the visual stereotypes of gays and lesbians; the news coverage of same-sex weddings has exposed the general public to the range of body types, hairstyles, and clothing in the LGBTQ population, in all its glorious ordinariness.

I also have a hunch that the popularity of cosplay (dressing up as a character from a book, film, or computer game) is part of an emerging sense that all clothing is costume. (Or, in the words of RuPaul, "We're born naked, and the rest is drag.") This is more true with feminine dress than masculine clothing, as there is still a lingering tendency to think of menswear as "just clothes." The extent to which femininity had become a performance by the early twenty-first century is best illustrated by the popularity of makeover reality shows, from TLC's *What Not to Wear* (2003–2013) to *RuPaul's Drag U* (2010–2013) on Logo. The latter is the most fascinating for any student of gender. A competitive makeover show, it featured three "biological women" who were coached to discover their inner divas by three drag queens. In this, as in all makeover shows, the underlying message was not only that femininity is a learned behavior but also that women who have not acquired it are missing a vital aspect of themselves. On *Drag U* this message extended to lesbians as well as straight women, resulting in a truly mind-bending episode featuring a trio of self-described "butch" students learning how to walk in four-inch heels from their gay male coaches.

One of the reasons I wanted to write about unisex fashions is that they seemed emblematic of a very complicated—and unfinished—conversation about sex, gender, and sexuality. Perhaps the crowning achievement of the conservative movement has been the creation of a stereotype of the 1960s and '70s as self-indulgent and aimless—just a bunch of free-love



hippies waving protest signs and getting high. That is certainly one way to trivialize the yearnings of millions of people for lives of their own choosing. Many of us who grew up in the 1960s have mixed feelings about that era, though mine are more positive than Senator Santorum's. The conversation now comprises so many voices that it may seem there will be no end to the chaos. But I am hopeful that a multitude of voices is exactly what is needed to resolve the conflicts generated by social and cultural categories. As feminist activist and social critic Naomi Wolf wrote, "Underlying all of these movements is the democratic ideal from the 1970s that asserts: No one person has the natural right to suppress, silence or dominate any other person, simply because of where both are situated in society."<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps we are just halfway through a century-long conflict that will be a footnote in our great-great-grandchildren's history books. We still have a long way to go before pink is just a color again, female athletes can wear their hair long or short without arousing speculation about their sexuality, and men can trade their khaki trousers for cotton skirts on humid summer days—without having to shave their legs. In the meantime, we need to listen to one another in order to grasp the consequences of the individual freedom we claim to prize so highly. We already know enough about the origins of beauty culture and fat shaming; we need to understand the outcomes they produce in real people's lives.

Perhaps "clothes make the man" after all. In an exercise in aspirational dressing, consider the possibilities if our wardrobes reflected the full range of choices available to each of us. Imagine that we dressed to express our inner selves and our locations not as fixed but as flexible. Imagine a consumer culture so responsive that no one felt excluded or shamed.

While male-female relationships may be a driver in shaping gender roles, they're unlikely to be the entire story. An important part of the interplay between existing and emerging gender roles for women has taken place among women. For every liberated, pants-wearing, makeup-rejecting woman in the 1960s, there was another woman the same age who still dreamed of *being* Miss America rather than picketing her. Women do not dress just to attract men; lesbians certainly do not. Historically, blue- and pink-collar workers have tried to remind their upper-class sisters in

the women's movement that they want "bread and roses"—the right to beauty in their lives, not just economic security. Women enforce and influence women's appearance perhaps even more strongly than men do, especially when they are young.

We are living at a time when individual expression is far more possible than ever imagined, through social media, blogging, self-publishing, and myriad other platforms. We can choose to listen or ignore the voices of others, but we cannot make them go away. Their very diversity challenges our attempts to sort them into categories, so perhaps we should stop trying. Consider, for example, the use of stereotypes in clothing to mark homosexuality as "the other." Fashion journalist Clara Pierre commented optimistically in 1976 that unisex clothing and the sexual revolution had reduced fears of sexual ambivalence and "clothes no longer have to perform the duty of [sexual] differentiation and can relax into just being clothes."<sup>26</sup> Her celebration was premature, but when a popular reality show can feature straight men being re-fashioned by five "queer" guys, change is in the air.<sup>27</sup>

A more open climate for discussing issues of gender identity and expression has paralleled shifting public opinion on gay rights and marriage equality, issues that are far from being settled. Is gender identity a matter of nature or nurture? Science tells us that the foundations for sexual behavior are laid down before we are born, but also that human variation is vast and complex. Perhaps, in addition to making the mistake of assuming a binary model, we have been asking the wrong questions about gender all along. As long as gender was envisioned as separate paths stemming from biological starting points, it made sense to ask how the paths were laid down or why some individuals strayed from the paths. Now it's time to consider the consequences of cultural norms, not their origins.

Knowing that most boys behave in a particular way does not tell you how your son will behave, nor will it explain why your daughter might prefer Barbies or Transformers. History tells us that children can wear dresses or pants, and that both girls and boys can wear pink or blue, but that strongly gendered or gender-free clothing has an unpredictable effect, most of it not evident until they are grown. The effect of either/or

constructs when status differences are involved can be insidious. If men are expected to be sexually aggressive while women are passive, the results are a double standard for sexually active men and women, overemphasis on women's appearance, homophobia, and a rape culture. When "princess boys" adopt stereotypical signifiers of femininity, such behavior can be defended as an indication that they are performing their authentic selves. When "girly-girls" embrace the same signifiers, does it make sense to criticize them for adopting an artificial construction imposed by consumer culture? These and other contradictions are signs that our basic assumptions need to be revisited.

We are still untangling the complicated relationships between sex, gender, and sexuality. One way to begin is to let go of worldviews that no longer fit scientific facts. The binary model of sex, particularly the notion of male and female as opposites, needs to join the flat earth and the geocentric universe in the discarded theory bin. I feel a twinge of sympathy for demographers who will have to come up with new boxes on forms to accommodate evolving notions of gender, but they already have had some practice adjusting to changes in how we see race, so they will probably be fine.

The fashions of the 1960s and '70s are the manifestation of attempts to solve the problems of gender inequality all at once, driven by the impatience of youth, within the context of emerging—and incomplete—understanding of the biological and cultural complexities responsible for that inequality. It now seems inevitable that efforts to modify or supplement the existing binary model with androgyny, ambiguity, or the ungendered unity of futuristic unisex would falter and fail in the short run. The binary model itself, however, is showing clear signs of fatigue.

My distrust and skepticism for categories has been growing throughout this project. In real life there are many alternatives to a binary construction of gender; the Bem model was just the beginning. Because it still relies on sorting personality traits into "masculine," "feminine," or "neutral," it hangs on a skeleton of binary gender stereotypes. The malleability of these categories reveals their artificiality; it is quite visible in baby clothing, where the definition of "neutral clothing" has shifted from white dresses to green coveralls in less than a century. The categories are

also interdependent; what makes a garment masculine is its lack of femininity.

The possibilities for ridding ourselves of this binary view of gender boil down to two choices: no gender categories, or a finite (but yet undetermined) set of gender categories. Since the late 1970s new scholarship challenged the essentialism that stems from binary models of sex and gender. Third-wave feminism began by shifting the focus from gender to examining how individuals represent intersections of numerous identities, including sexuality, race, class, and ability. Although biology is important, it is not destiny. Forty years of gender research using multi-dimensional instruments such as the BSRI indicate that the correlation between biological sex and masculinity or femininity is weaker now than it once was.<sup>28</sup> Feminist biologist Anne Fausto-Sterling argues that not only is biological sex not binary but also the act of determining a child's sex, based only on visible markers, is culturally constructed.<sup>29</sup> Judith Butler, coming from a completely different direction—feminist rhetoric and literary studies—arrives at a similar conclusion: our definitions of sex are themselves culturally gendered, and basing our search for identity on these shifting “facts” sets us on fruitless, circular paths.<sup>30</sup>

There are suggestions that gender binary thinking has reached its limit, especially in the last market it touched: children's clothing. Even while juvenile clothing has become more gendered than ever before, it has also become a site of growing parental discontent and resistance. The push back against early sexualization of girls is one sign of dissatisfaction with the double standard that stems from the gender binary. Another sign is the revolt against pink, princess culture and the lack of neutral or even nuanced options. As infants grow into toddlers, they become active participants in the gender binary fashion show, much to the amusement, chagrin, or dismay of their parents. For many boys and girls this participation is enthusiastically embraced. These are the girls who insist on wearing nothing but pink and prefer dresses to any form of pants and the boys who clamor for buzz cuts and ubiquitous sports imagery. But what about the others? What about tomboys, the little girls who in earlier decades could have worn plain girls' styles or their brother's hand-me-downs without appearing out of the mainstream? What about boys who

feel out of place in hypermasculine clothing and are drawn to softer colors and fabrics, but for whom the English language has no positive term? What about the one person in one hundred classified as “intersex,” whose body differs from standard male or female, or those whose inner sense of identity may not conform to the gender chosen for them at birth by their parents? Clearly one consequence of a strong gender binary in children’s clothing is the lack of expressive options for children’s fluid identities, especially for children who are chafed by stereotyped, binary images of masculinity and femininity. As the categories have tightened, squeezing out neutral options, a growing number of adults have realized that children who don’t fit the binary suffer real distress. Increasingly their response is not to “fix” their children, through training, punishment, or therapy, but to argue for cultural change.

This is a beginning, but we are still years, if not decades, from resolving all of the issues raised by the sexual revolution. Change will come, because so much of what happened fifty years ago cannot be undone. Civil rights can be undone, but not un-thought. Oral contraceptives will not be un-invented, nor abortions prevented, by making them illegal or difficult to obtain. In the words of Unitarian minister Theodore Parker, made famous by civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., I do believe that “the moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”<sup>31</sup> In this case my vision of justice includes freeing ourselves from the assumptions and stereotypes that are the logical byproducts of outmoded categories. I have no idea what you or I, or our children and grandchildren, will be wearing when that day comes, but I like to imagine that it will be a perfect fit.

It isn’t just our clothing that will fit; we will fit—within our communities and even standing in a crowd of strangers. Culture is the inarticulate shaping of rules and boundaries, signaling belonging and exclusion within a society and determining the rewards for fitting in and the consequences for nonconformity. If we desire a society of individuals, each empowered to achieve their full potential, we need to produce a culture that recognizes human diversity, offers options, and respects choices. We began to move in that direction with the questions of the 1960s; some of the answers were visible in the fashions of the period. Looking closely, we

can also detect the confusion and conflict that began fifty years ago and continue unresolved. We may still have a long way to go, but I share the optimism of Frank Zappa:

There will come a time when everybody who is lonely  
will be free to sing and dance and love.

There will come a time when every evil that we know  
will be an evil that we can rise above.

Who cares if hair is long or short or sprayed or partly grayed?  
We know that hair ain't where it's at.

There will come a time when you won't even be ashamed if you are fat.<sup>32</sup>

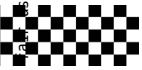
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# Notes

## Introduction

1. Santorum quoted in Charles M. Blow, "Santorum." The original speech is archived on the Oxford Center for Religion and Public Life website at <http://www.ocrpl.org/?p=96>.
2. Dolan, "Fox's Elisabeth Hasselbeck."
3. Paoletti, *Pink and Blue*.
4. Justice Winter, *Massie v. Henry*, February 2, 1972.
5. For intersectionality in women's fashion, Maxine Leeds Craig, *Ain't I a Beauty Queen?* includes a thorough discussion of the relationship between black beauty culture, feminism, and the civil rights movement. Stylist Lloyd Boston (*Men of Color: Fashion, History, Fundamentals*) offers a detailed history of African American men's fashions and their role in men's fashions since World War II. Monica Miller's *Slaves to Fashion* employs an intersectional lens in her historical study of black men's use of elite fashions to perform both race and gender.

## 1. Movers, Shakers, and Boomers

1. Roberts, "Old Grad Returns," 303.
2. Horowitz, "Mitt Romney's Prep School Classmates Recall Pranks."
3. Bentley, "For the Right to Wear Our Hair Long."
4. Goodson, "Next Generation Brand."
5. Coupland, *Generation X*.
6. Kimmel, "Real Man Redux," 48.
7. Kagan and Lunde quoted in Adams, "Male & Female: Differences between Them."
8. Benedek and Adelson quoted in *ibid*.
9. Kagan and Symonds quoted in *ibid*.
10. Wyden, "When Both Wear the Pants."
11. I am indebted to Dr. Susan-Marie Stedman, a scientist at NOAA, for this insight.
12. Miller, *Slaves to Fashion*.
13. "Harry Hay Interview."
14. Lobenthal, *Radical Rags*, 139.

15. Faure, *Rudi Gernreich*, 23.
16. Kazin, "The Young: The Party of Hope," 122.
17. Vanderbilt quoted in Lobenthal, *Radical Rags*, 132.
18. *Ibid.*, 132.
19. Bullough, *Science in the Bedroom*.
20. Constantinople, "Masculinity-Femininity"; Bem, "Measurement of Psychological Androgyny."

## 2. *Feminism and Femininity*

1. Smith and Greig, *Women in Pants*.
2. Fairchild, *Fashionable Savages*, 87.
3. Audsley, *Bowling for Women*, 11; emphasis added.
4. Fairchild, *Fashionable Savages*, 177.
5. Pierre, *Looking Good*, 137.
6. "Hem and the Haw," *Newsweek*, 80.
7. Bradley, *Husband-Coached Childbirth*, 240.
8. Heidrich, Berg, and Bergman, "Clothing Factors and Vaginitis."
9. "Beauty Bulletin," *Vogue*, 127.
10. *Ibid.*, 146.
11. Torres quoted in Fairchild, *Fashionable Savages*, 88.
12. Bender, "New Fashions Are Sad Blow to 'Older' Set," 20.
13. Farrell-Beck, *Uplift: The Bra in America*, 147.
14. Fiegel, *Dream a Little Dream of Me*, 157.
15. *Ibid.*, 217.
16. Ollove, "1960s Siren."
17. Fiegel, *Dream a Little Dream of Me*, 176.
18. *Ibid.* 157; Ollove, "1960s Siren."
19. Klemesrud, "Day for Plump, Motherly Models," 38.
20. Milinaire and Troy, *Cheap Chic*.
21. "Personality Types and the Clothes That Go with Them," *Seventeen*, August 1965.
22. *Seventeen*, June 1965, 22.
23. Pierre, *Looking Good*, 138.
24. Davidson, "Foremothers"; "Women Who Are Cute When They Are Mad," 81.
25. "What If . . . Gloria Steinem Were Miss America?," 132.
26. Gilder, *Sexual Suicide*, 7.
27. Von Furstenberg, *Diane: A Signature Life*, 55.
28. Molloy, *Dress for Success for Women*.
29. Molloy, *Dress for Success*.
30. Molloy, *Dress for Success for Women*, 72.
31. Laver quoted in Taylor, "Women Perplex Fashion Historian."

### 3. *The Peacock Revolution*

1. The term “peacock revolution” appeared in Frazier’s *Esquire* columns in 1968 but was originally coined by consumer psychology icon Ernest Dichter in 1965. Haye et al., *Handbook of Fashion Studies*, 193.
2. Nicholson, “Men’s Clothes,” 38.
3. Dearborn, *Psychology of Clothing*, 59.
4. Nystrom, *Economics of Fashion*, 71–78.
5. Babl, “Compensatory Masculine Responding,” 252–257.
6. Grambs and Waetjen, *Sex, Does It Make a Difference?*, 115; emphasis in original.
7. Lobenthal, *Radical Rags*, 140.
8. Conekin, “Fashioning the Playboy,” 454.
9. Lobenthal, *Radical Rags*, 139.
10. Kendall, “Men’s Fashions,” 174.
11. Bender quoted in Lobenthal, *Radical Rags*, 134.
12. Fish quoted in *ibid.*, 157.
13. Green, “Modified Mod,” 149.
14. Lobenthal, *Radical Rags*, 149.
15. John Rogers, donation cover letter, 1980, Fashion Archives and Museum, Shippenburg University, PA.
16. “Bill Blass,” *Voguepedia*.
17. Ephron, “Man in the Bill Blass Suit,” 330.
18. “Suited for City Squiring,” *Playboy*, 135.
19. Lobenthal, *Radical Rags*, 39.
20. *Ibid.*, 153.
21. Gernreich quoted in *ibid.*, 39.
22. Taylor, “Men’s Fashions in the 1960’s,” 62.
23. Priore, “Joe Pepitone.”
24. Palmer quoted in Bennett-England, *Dress Optional*, 37.
25. Green, “Back to Campus,” September 1965, 140–142.
26. Green, “Back to Campus,” September 1966, 179.
27. Both ads appear in *Playboy*, September 1966.
28. Hentoff, “Youth—the Oppressed Majority,” 136.
29. Green, “Back to Campus,” September 1967, 179.
30. Green, “Back to Campus,” September 1968, 159.
31. Green, “Back to Campus,” September 1969, 276.
32. *Bonnie and Clyde*, directed by Arthur Penn. Warner Bros.–Seven Arts and Tatira-Hiller Productions, 1967.
33. Bennett-England, *Dress Optional*, 151.
34. Faure, *Rudi Gernreich: A Retrospective*.
35. Johnston, “What Will Happen to the Gray Flannel Suit?”
36. Taylor, “Hair Grooming Goes Unisex,” 38.

37. Phalon, "Long-Hair Trend Thinning Barber Ranks," 20.
38. "Setting Your Own Style," 61–88.
39. "Resort Fashion Report," 104.
40. Aletti, "Discotheque Rock '73," 60.
41. Miller, *Slaves to Fashion*.
42. Bennett-England, *Dress Optional*.
43. Lynes, "What Revolution in Men's Clothes?," 26.
44. *A Queer History of Fashion: From the Closet to the Catwalk*.
45. Cole, *Don We Now Our Gay Apparel*.
46. *Hair: The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical* (1967) and *Oh! Calcutta!* (1969) debuted off-Broadway and then moved into major productions in New York and London. A pay television video version of *Oh! Calcutta!* (1971) was released to theaters in 1972, and a film version of *Hair*, directed by Miloš Forman, was released in 1979. *Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice* (1969) began as a feature film written and directed by Paul Mazursky and starring Natalie Wood, Robert Culp, Elliott Gould, and Dyan Cannon.
47. Pierre, *Looking Good*, 160.
48. Blazina, *Cultural Myth of Masculinity*.

#### 4. *Nature and/or Nurture?*

1. Zolotow, *William's Doll*; Thomas, *Free to Be . . . You and Me*.
2. Cook, *Commodification of Childhood*.
3. "New Day Dawning at Sears," 44–45.
4. Paoletti, *Pink and Blue*.
5. Blank, *Straight: The Surprisingly Short History*.
6. Tanous, *Making Clothes for Your Little Girls*, 16.
7. "How to Sell Boys' Wear," 67–68.
8. "Spring 1974 Swatch Book," 16.
9. "Male and Female Differences," 43–44.
10. Money and Ehrhardt, *Man and Woman, Boy and Girl*
11. "Who Was David Reimer (also, Sadly, Known as 'John/Joan')?"; Colapinto, *As Nature Made Him*.
12. Gould, "X: A Fabulous Child's Story," 1972; Gould, *X: A Fabulous Child's Story*, 1978.
13. Gould, "X: A Fabulous Child's Story," 1998.
14. Seavey, Katz, and Zalk, "Baby X." 103–109.
15. Gould, *X: A Fabulous Child's Story*, 1978.
16. Woodward, "Do Children Need Sex Roles?," 79–80.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Horn, "Does a Boy Have the Right to Be Effeminate?," 34, 100–101.
19. Guttentag and Bray, *Undoing Sex Stereotypes*.

20. B. Rice, "The Power of a Frilly Apron: Coming of Age in Sodom and New Milford," *Psychology Today*, September 1975, 64–66.
21. Weisner and Eiduson, "Children of the 60's as Parents," 66.
22. Carmichael, *Non-Sexist Childraising*.
23. Ellison, "My Parents' Failed Experiment."
24. Burge, "Parental Child-Rearing Sex-Role Attitudes," 199.
25. Examples of this sort of news item abound and include Palmer, "Angelina Jolie Says"; "J. Crew Ad Showing Boy"; Fisher, "My Son, the Princess"; and Hoffman, "On Parenting a Boy Who Is Different."
26. "Boy or Girl?"

### ***5. Litigating the Revolution***

1. Ribeiro, *Dress and Morality*, and Robson, *Dressing Constitutionally*, both offer extensive descriptions of early sumptuary laws.
2. Derek Miller cited in Emerson, "British 'His and Her' Hairdos," 29.
3. Mick Jagger quoted in *ibid*.
4. "School Orders Boy," 44.
5. Rhodes, "Attleboro High Alums Come Together," *Sun Chronicle*.
6. Bellaire, "Story of Georgie Porgie."
7. Morris and Morris, "Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl."
8. "Legal Group Snips at School 'Rights.'"
9. "Students' Rights Stressed in Report."
10. "Supreme Court Lets Maryland Ruling Stand."
11. "High Court Bars Review of Ruling on Long Hair."
12. Buder, "Principals Score Long-Hair Ruling," 31.
13. "Now It's a Short Cut to Learning."
14. "Student Fashions."
15. *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969).
16. Horowitz, "Mitt Romney's Prep School Classmates."
17. *Massie v. Henry* (1972).
18. *Cash v. Hoch* (1970).
19. *Blaine v. Board of Education* (1972).
20. *Independent School District v. Swanson* (1976).
21. *Massie v. Henry* (1972).
22. *Breen v. Kahl* (1969).
23. *Dawson v. Hillsborough* (1971).
24. *Howell v. Wolf* (1971).
25. *Lambert v. Marushi* (1971).
26. *Miller v. Gillis* (1969).
27. *Martin v. Davidson* (1971).
28. *Yoo v. Moynihan* (1969).

29. Zwerdling, “Unshaven, Unshorn, and Unacceptable.”
30. “Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.”
31. *Diaz v. Pan American World Airways, Inc.* (1972).
32. *Fagan v. National Cash Register Company* (1973).
33. *Willingham v. Macon Telegraph Publishing Co.* (1975).
34. *Donohue v. Shoe Corporation of America* (1972).
35. *Aros v. McDonnell Douglas Corporation* (1972).
36. Golden, “Sex Discrimination and Hair-Length Requirements,” 349.
37. *Ibid.*, 350.
38. “Jailed Airman Finds Rules Have Changed,” 10.
39. “Airline Stewardess Wins Right,” 1.
40. “Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972.”
41. *Jacobs v. Benedict* (1973).
42. *Trent v. Perritt* (1975).
43. Feron, “Fashion, If Not Tradition,” 45.
44. Lipsyte, “Hair Again,” 58.
45. *Wallace v. Ford* (1972).
46. Feron, “Fashion, If Not Tradition.”
47. “Coaching Staff Resigns,” 42.
48. “Horace Mann Boys,” 1.
49. Johnson, “Constitution, the Courts, and Long Hair,” 32.
50. “Hairy Case,” 13.
51. *Freeman v. Flake* (1971).

## 6. *The Culture Wars, Then and Now*

1. Schulman, *Seventies: The Great Shift*, 186.
2. *Ibid.*, 187.
3. Cohen, “Opting Out and Jumping In.”
4. hooks, *Feminist Theory*.
5. Paoletti, *Pink and Blue*.
6. “Direction ’88,” D9.
7. Kaiser, Rudy, and Byfield, “Role of Clothing in Sex-Role Socialization.”
8. Hoffman, “On Parenting a Boy Who Is Different.”
9. Perrin quoted in Schoenberg, “When Kids Cross the Gender Divide.”
10. Schoenberg, “When Kids Cross the Gender Divide.”
11. Grinberg, “Hasbro to Unveil Black and Silver Easy-Bake Oven.”
12. Coles quoted in Long, “Feminism Is Back in Fashion.”
13. Sterne, “Joanna Coles: ‘Cosmopolitan.’”
14. Orenstein, “What’s Wrong with Cinderella?”
15. Waters, “Leaving the Pink Behind.”
16. American Psychological Association, “Sexualization of Girls.”

17. Tirella, “Hannah Montana Crowned.”
18. Stephens-Davidowitz, “Google, Tell Me. Is My Son a Genius?”
19. Molloy, “Suits and Accessories.”
20. “Kennedy’s Barber Club Experience.”
21. Staplehurst, “Don Draper Effect.”
22. Baldoni, “‘Mad Men’: Learning from the Dark Side.”
23. Andelin, *Fascinating Womanhood*, 118.
24. Moran, “Gender Equality.”
25. Wolf, “Gender Equality.”
26. Pierre, *Looking Good*, 160.
27. Referring to *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* (2003–2007), Bravo.
28. Twenge, “Changes in Masculine and Feminine Traits,” 5–6.
29. Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body*.
30. Butler, *Gender Trouble*.
31. Parker, “Justice,” 18.
32. Zappa, “Take Your Clothes Off When You Dance.”

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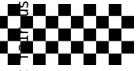
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# Index

*Italicized page numbers refer to illustrations.*

- abortion, 1930s, 23–24
- “Academic Freedom in the Secondary Schools” (ACLU), 127
- active sportswear, 61
- Adelson, Joseph, 25
- advertising, 75, 78, 121
- African American models, 86
- African and Asian styles, 10, 29, 59, 86
- Afro hairstyle, 142–143
- age compression, 45
- age distinctions, 100
- AIDS, 90
- A-line skirt, 41, 45
- allies in older generations, 15, 17, 27, 75
- alternative lives, 88
- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), 127–128, 136, 138
- “American Costume,” 39
- American Dream, 50
- American Psychological Association, 25, 34, 112, 160
- Amies, Hardy, 88
- Andelin, Helen B., 36, 37, 41, 54, 159, 164
- androgynous styles, 30
- androgyny, 6, 33, 44
- antifeminists, 152–153, 158
- antiwar rallies, 17
- appearance, behavior associated with, 133–134
- appropriation of minority or subcultural styles, 29
- “Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl” (Barbarians), 126–127
- Aros v. McDonnell Douglas Corporation*, 142
- art school students, 124–125
- artificial secondary sex characteristics, 64–65
- As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl* (Colapinto), 108
- Asian clothing, 29, 59
- athletes, 74, 86, 144–145, 146, 147, 164
- athletic clothing, 144–145
- attractiveness, 12–13, 36
- Babl, James, 65
- baby boom generation, 9–10, 17–18, 21–23, 27; “leading edge,” 19, 53; memories, 30–31
- baby doll dresses, 121
- baby dresses, 95, 97
- “Baby X: The Effect of Gender Labels on Adult Responses to Infants” (Seavy, Katz, and Zalk), 110
- Balser, Paul, 128
- Barbarians, 126–127
- barbershops, 11, 81–83, 163
- bare legs, 40
- baseball, 74
- Beatles, 9, 20, 27, 52, 70, 124; hairstyle, 82
- Beats, 88
- beauty, “natural” vs. “artificial,” 12, 32
- behavioral psychology, 33, 109
- bell-bottoms, 76
- Bem, Sandra, 33

- Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), 33, 65, 168
- Bender, Marilyn, 44–45, 67
- Benedek, Therese, 25
- Bennett-England, Rodney, 79, 86–87
- Bentley, Eric, 18
- binary model of gender, 7, 94–95, 111, 118, 152–153, 154, 167–168
- biological essentialism, 113
- biological sex, 22–23, 25, 109
- birth control, 1, 6, 17, 22–24
- bisexuality, 22, 25, 90
- Black, Hugo, 131
- black armbands, 131
- black feminists, 153
- Black Power movement, 12, 16, 139, 142
- Blank, Hanne, 95
- Blass, Bill, 69, 72, 79
- Block, Jeanne Humphrey, 112
- Bloomer, Amelia, 39, 52
- Bloomer dress, 39, 57
- Bloomingtondale's, 55
- Blow, Charles, 1
- Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice* (1969), 22
- bodies: ideal, female, 43–44; ideal, male, 70
- Bold Look, 68
- bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ), 140, 141
- Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), 79
- Bourdin, Guy, 55
- boyfriend sweaters, 30
- Bradley, Robert, 41
- brain sex, 108
- bras, 31, 46, 53, 55
- Bray, Helen, 114
- breadwinner role, 87–88
- breaching, 39
- Breen, Thomas (plaintiff), 133–134
- British Invasion, 12, 124–125
- British menswear, 66–67, 72
- Brown, Helen Gurley, 10, 35, 36, 38, 158
- Brylcreem ad, 80
- Bullough, Vern, 33
- Burge, Penny, 117
- Burr, Raymond, 89
- Bush, George H. W., 20
- business casual, 61
- business suits, men's, 13, 15, 59; cultural Darwinist view, 64; lapel width and fit, 62, 70; origins, 62
- business suits, women's, 56, 157–158
- bustline, 42, 43
- Butler, Judith, 169
- caftans, 73, 74, 81
- "California Dreamin'" (Mamas and the Papas), 46–47
- campus styles, 45
- Cardin, Pierre, 6, 67, 69–70, 72, 88
- Carnaby Street, 9, 10, 59
- Cassell, Charles, 134
- casual clothing, men's, 61, 66
- casual Friday, 61, 163
- Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture, 69
- Chanel, Coco, 40
- Cheap Chic* (Milinaire and Troy), 52
- children: "Baby X" studies, 110–111; failures of non-gendered child raising, 118, 119; feminization of girls, 45, 119–120, 159–162; gender roles, learned, 92; gender-nonconforming, 13, 95–96, 156–157, 169–170; homophobia and child raising, 113; non-gendered child raising, 10, 92, 107, 110–118, 157; "tomboyism," 95–96, 113; toys, 111, 157
- children's clothing: accessories industry, 155; age distinctions, 100; for babies, 97–98; carrying over, 121; dressy clothes, 100, 102; girls buying boys' clothes, 103; mail order catalogs, 94; more gendered after early 1970s, 114–115; pink and blue, 96–97; play clothes, 98–100, 99, 101; rules for, 105;

- school clothes, 100; sexualization of, 119–121; for toddlers, 97, 98, 120; unisex, 100–104, 101, 102. *See also* children's clothing, by era
- children's clothing, by era: nineteenth century, 95–97; 1950s and early 1960s, 97; between 1962 and 1979, 100–105, 101, 102; after early 1970s, 114–115; after mid-1970s, 105–106; after mid-1980s, 115
- Civil Rights Act of 1964, 6, 12, 136–137, 139–140
- civil rights movement, 1, 4, 16, 17, 150
- civil rights movements, as efforts to include people, 26–27
- classic clothing, revival of, 27–28, 53, 83–84, 90, 154–155
- Clinton, Bill, 20
- Clinton, Hillary, 162
- Cohen, Philip, 153
- Cold War, 138
- Cole, Shaun, 89
- Coles, Joanna, 158
- college students, 75–76
- colonization, 150
- color palettes/colorways, 10, 104–105, 158
- conflict in fashions, 32
- Congress to Unite Women, 53
- conservative movement, 116, 165–166
- conservative women, 41
- Constantinople, Anne, 33
- consumer culture, 10, 27, 154; connection to others, 18; generational categories used, 20–21; preschoolers and, 93
- Continental Look, 66
- Cook, Daniel T., 93
- Corby, Colleen, 45–46
- corporate culture, 84
- cosmetic surgery, 57
- cosmetics, 52, 57
- cosmetologists, 82
- “*Cosmo Girl*,” 10
- cosmofeminism, 158
- Cosmopolitan*, 37, 44, 158, 159
- cosplay, 165
- Costume Society of America, 93
- Coty Award, 72
- counterculture, 1960s, 74
- countermovements, 53–55
- Coupland, Douglas, 20
- couples motif, 78
- Courrèges, André, 40, 42, 67
- crocheting, 49, 78, 78
- cross-dressing, 30
- cruel and unusual punishment, 128
- culottes, 136
- cultural chauvinism, 113
- cultural feminists, 153
- culture change, 15, 170–171
- culture wars, 1, 9, 13–14, 90, 150–171; acceptance of gender-nonconforming children, 156–157; binary model of gender and, 152–153, 154, 167–168; generation gap as opening, 17; legal cases and, 129
- cutaways, 62
- Cyrus, Miley, 160–161
- dandyism, 86
- Darwin, Charles, 27
- Davidson, Sara, 54
- Declaration of Independence, 26, 149, 150
- democratic ideal, 166
- Democratic National Convention (1968), 139
- demographics, 20, 119, 119
- Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), 143, 144
- Diamond, Milton, 33
- diaper shirts, 97
- Diaz v. Pan American World Airways Inc.*, 140–141
- dieting, 46
- Dior, Christian, 41
- disco, 84, 85



- disillusionment, 50
- Ditto brand jeans, 49–50
- “Do Children Need Sex ‘Roles?’” (*Newsweek*), 112
- “do your own thing,” 18–19, 32, 48, 51, 142
- Donohue v. Shoe Corporation of America*, 141
- Donovan, Bernard, 128–129
- “Don’t Call Me Mama Anymore” (Elliot), 48
- Douglas, William O., 149
- Doyle, August (plaintiff), 142–143
- drape suits, 66, 67
- dress codes, 123–127; elements of social class in, 123; extracurricular activities, 130; school, 6, 28, 30, 123–130; team, 144–145; workplace, 129–130, 139–143
- Dress for Success* (Molloy), 56, 59, 84–85
- Dress for Success for Women* (Molloy), 56, 157–158
- Dress Optional* (Bennett-England), 79
- Duke of Windsor, 81
- Earnshaw’s*, 103
- earth mother, 48
- Eddie Bauer, 83
- Edwardian elegance, 66
- Ehrhardt, Anke, 108
- Elliot, Cass, 10, 46–47
- Ellison, Jesse, 117
- employment, women and, 2, 6, 12
- Enjoli perfume commercial, 52
- Ephron, Nora, 54, 72
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 140
- Equal Protection Clause, Fourteenth Amendment, 130
- equal protection under the law, 26
- Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), 6, 54, 152–153
- equality, 6, 39, 150
- Erasmus, 106
- Esquire*, 54, 60, 68
- Establishment, 124
- event dressing, 52
- evolutionary biology, 27
- evolutionary/cyclical theories of fashion change, 64–65, 67, 154–155
- exercise, 10, 43–44, 46
- existential questions, 13–14
- fads, study of, 152
- Fagan v. National Cash Register*, 140–141
- Fairchild, John, 39–40
- family styles, 78, 104
- Fascinating Womanhood* (Andelin), 36, 37, 38, 44, 159
- fashion: as expression of convictions, 18; as superficial, 13, 17
- fashion advice, in books, 37–38
- Fashion Archives and Museum of Shippensburg University, 70–71
- fashion designers, 6, 41–42, 50, 67–68; queer fashion professionals, 88, 165; Silent Generation, 20; women’s, in menswear, 69
- fashion industry, 8, 30
- fashion studies, 2
- Fashionable Savages, The* (Fairchild), 39–40
- fat bodies, 44; Cass Elliot’s style, 46–48
- Fausto-Sterling, Anne, 169
- Federico, Salvatore (plaintiff), 128
- Feminine Mystique, The* (Friedan), 4, 10, 22, 24, 35; challenges to “nature” debate, 107; launches second-wave feminism, 36–37
- femininity, 29, 35–58; changing notions of, 10; competing visions, 36; fear of, 63 hostility toward, 111–112; “man-

- tailored" clothing permitted, 30; resistance to stereotypes, 57; sexualization of girls, 159–162
- feminism: backlash, 53–55; cosmofeminism, 158; femininity, view of, 111–112; first-wave, 38; second-wave, 16, 106–107, 151; third-wave, 169. *See also* women's liberation movement
- Ferrell v. Dallas*, 149
- fetal hormones, 108
- fibers and fabrics, 10, 32, 46, 59, 78, 103, 158
- fictional characters, 87
- First Amendment, 130, 138
- first-time parents, 119, 119
- first-wave feminism, 38
- Fish, Michael, 67–68, 69
- flamboyance, 86
- football players, 146
- Forest Hills High School (Queens), 128–129
- Fortas, Abe, 131
- foundation garments, 46
- Fourteenth Amendment, 130, 143
- Frazier, George, 10, 59
- Frederick's of Hollywood, 55
- Free to Be . . . You and Me* (Thomas), 7, 92, 111, 114, 117, 155
- Freeman v. Flake*, 149
- French aristocracy, 18
- Freud, Sigmund, 63, 87
- Freudian psychology, 21, 62–63, 87, 95
- Friedan, Betty, 4, 22, 23, 26, 35, 36–37, 50, 57
- fur coats, 74, 86
- futuristic vision, 32
- Gap store, 49
- Gatsby style, 81
- gay liberation movement, 9, 10, 31, 59, 90, 165
- gay men, fashion and, 88–89
- gender: binary view of, 6–7, 94–95, 111, 118, 152–154, 157, 167–168; bipolar model, 33; sex conflated with, 3
- gender identity, 14–15, 22–23, 108–109; children's clothes and, 94; civil rights movements linked with, 26–27
- Gender Identity Project (University of California at Los Angeles), 113
- gender mix-ups, 30, 115–116
- gender permanence, 160
- gender revolution, 22–25
- gender roles, 10, 106, 145, 152, 166; learned, 11, 92; origins, 107, 112; psychological strain, 91; socially constructed, 7, 107–108, 112–113, 118. *See also* nature or nurture debate
- gender rules, 27–30
- gender studies, 2–3
- gender-neutral, as masculine, 111–112
- gender-nonconforming children, 13, 95–96, 122, 156–157, 169–170
- "generally acceptable" forms of dress, 8
- generation gap, 17, 49
- Generation X, 20, 119, 155; memories of unisex era, 30–31
- Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (Coupland), 20
- generational categories, as advertising construct, 20–21
- Gentleman's Quarterly* (GQ) (magazine), 60, 83–84
- Gernreich, Rudi, 4, 9, 31–32, 73–74, 88; predictions, 79, 81
- Gilder, George, 54
- girdles, 40, 46
- girls' dresses, historical, 117
- Godfather, The* (1972), 81
- Gould, Lois, 109–110, 111–112
- Grambs, Jean, 65–66
- granny length skirts, 52

- gray flannel suit, 49, 59, 62, 81, 175n35
- greasers, 66
- Great Depression, 21, 24, 79
- Great Gatsby, The* (1974), 81
- Greatest Generation, 19
- Greece, ancient, 63
- Green, Robert L., 67, 69, 74, 75, 76
- Griswold v. Connecticut*, 138
- grooming industry, men's, 11, 82, 163. *See also* hair styles
- Guttentag, Marcia, 114
- hair styles: Afro, 142–143; Afros and braids, 12; children's, 103; long hair on men, 1, 2, 11–12; male, well-groomed, 80, 81–82; men-only establishments, 83; unisex salons, 11, 81–83
- hair-care products, 11, 81, 82, 163
- Hall, G. Stanley, 96, 107
- Hannah Montana, 161
- Harrad Experiment, The* (Rimmer), 22
- Harvey of Carnaby Street, 75
- “having it all,” 164
- Hay, Harry, 31
- Hefner, Hugh, 17, 21, 67, 89
- Heinlein, Robert, 22
- hemlines, 10, 43, 52, 90, 136; midi-skirts, 41, 52, 136; miniskirts, 30, 40, 45, 136
- Hentoff, Nat, 75
- Hepburn, Katharine, 40
- heteronormative advertising, 78
- High School Principals Association (New York), 128–129
- hippie styles, 69, 74
- h.i.s. (advertiser), 75
- “his 'n' hers” clothing, 30, 76–78, 77; for children, 104
- “his 'n' hers” hairstyling, 82–83
- Hoffman, Sarah, 156
- Hollywood glamour, 47–48
- Hollywood stars, 28
- home-sewn clothing, 51, 78, 94, 117
- homophobia, 10, 59, 61, 63, 87, 113
- homosexuality, 21, 25, 113, 116; declassification of as mental disorder, 34, 113
- How to Be a Woman* (Moran), 164
- Howell v. Wolf*, 134
- Hudson, Rock, 89
- Husband-Coached Childbirth* (Bradley), 41
- identity formation, 107–108, 114
- immaturity, male, 87
- Independent School District v. Swanson*, 133
- individual rights, 17
- individualism, 154
- individuality, 65, 75, 135
- “Inn Shop, The” 76
- interactionism, 33
- intersectionality, 169
- intersex people, 25, 108–109, 170
- investment dressing, 83
- Italian-style trousers, 66
- Ivy League style, 67, 74–75
- J. C. Penney, 70, 76, 94
- Jacobs v. Benedict*, 143–144
- Jaffe, Richard, 50
- Jagger, Mick, 125
- Jayson shirt company, 75
- jeans, 3, 28, 30, 40, 49–50, 86, 100, 136, 148; for children, 97, 97, 100, 103, 121
- jet-set avant-garde, 72
- Journal of Home Economics*, 81
- jumpsuits, 44, 49, 51, 136
- Junior sizes, 42–43, 44, 76, 102
- Kagan, Jerome, 25, 26
- Katz, Phyllis, 110
- Kazin, Alfred, 32
- Kelleher, Tim, 76
- Kendall, Elaine, 67
- Kennedy, Robert F., 139

- Kent State, 17
- kids getting older younger (KGOY), 45, 119–120
- King, Martin Luther, Jr., 139, 170
- King's Road line (Sears), 76
- Kinsey, Alfred, 21
- kipper ties, 68
- knee breeches, 18
- knickers suit, 136
- Kores, Edward T., Jr., 125
- L. L. Bean, 83
- Ladies Circle Knitting and Crochet Guide*, 77
- "ladylike" image, 28–30, 40, 45, 102
- Lambert v. Marushi*, 134
- Lands' End catalog, 90
- Lane Bryant, 48
- lapels, 62, 70
- Lauren, Ralph, 68, 72, 79
- Laver, James, 57, 67
- legal cases, 6, 8, 11–13, 123–149, 131; ACLU and, 127–128, 136, 138; African American plaintiffs, 142–143; constitutional rights, 130, 135; cruel and unusual punishment, 128; Fifth Circuit, 130; Forest Hills High School (Queens), 128–129; long hair on men, 1, 2, 124–135, 131; males, focus on, 30, 124, 148; pants for women, 135–136; parental support for minors, 125, 129; school dress codes, 123–130; Second Circuit, 130; Title VII, 12, 139–142; Title IX, 6, 143–145; U.S. Supreme Court, 128–131, 138, 148–149; workplace dress codes, 129–130, 139–143
- leisure styles, 40, 61, 81
- leisure suit, 70, 79, 81, 162
- "Lemon Frog Shop," 45–46
- Leonard, George (Georgie Porgie), 126
- Leonard v. School Committee of Attleboro*, 126
- lesbians, 38, 53, 165, 166
- Levi's jeans, 49
- LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) rights, 10, 165
- liberal feminists, 153
- licensing, 82
- lifestyle, 18–19
- lingerie, 55–56
- "little girl" trend, 120–121
- long hair on men, 11–12, 28; anti-long hair violence, 124, 146, 148; delinquency, allegations of, 133–134; legal cases, 1, 2, 124–135, 131; stereotypes, 133–134
- lounge suit/sack suit, 62
- Lunde, Donald, 25
- Lynes, Russell, 8, 88
- Mad Men* (2007–), 163
- Mademoiselle*, 52
- madras plaids and paisleys, 78
- magazines: men's, 21, 60, 64, 67, 72, 74–76; women's, 10, 19, 37, 42, 44, 51, 72, 76, 158, 159
- "Male Liberation Festival," 24
- Mamas and the Papas, 10, 46–48
- Man and Woman, Boy and Girl* (Money and Ehrhardt), 108–109
- Mannes, Marya, 75
- mannish clothing, 41
- "man-tailored" clothing, 30
- Marshall, Norman Thomas (plaintiff), 128
- masculine mystique, 60, 64, 87–88
- masculine signifiers, women's appropriation of, 51
- masculinity, 24, 29–30; competing models, 60; as cultural artifact, 61, 63, 67; current fashions, 162; expressive forms, 29, 79; as fragile, 63–66, 164; in relation to femininity, 61; school-age boys, 65–66
- masculinity, rules of, 29
- Masters and Johnson studies, 17

- Mattachine Society, 31  
 Maurice Rentner Ltd., 72  
 McLuhan, Marshall, 73  
 “Me Decade,” 2  
 Mellon, Tamara, 158  
*Men and Masculinity* (Pleck and Sawyer), 24  
 men of color, 84  
 men’s movement, 24  
 menswear: African American clothing, 29, 59; Asian clothing, 29, 59; British, 66–67, 72; casual clothing, 61; Continental styles, 67; decorative details, 59; fur coats, 74; gay men and, 88–89; “his ’n’ hers” clothing, 30, 76–78, 77; leisure suit, 70, 79, 81, 162; Mods and Rockers, 66–67, 69, 74; neckwear, 61, 66, 67–70; peacock revolution, 6, 10, 59–91; Romantic revival, 10, 28–29, 59; Saville Row styles, 66, 67; sexiness, 86–87; women’s fashion designers in, 69  
 micro-mini skirts, 52  
 midi-skirts, 41, 52, 136  
 Milinaire, Caterine, 52  
 Miller, David (plaintiff), 134–135  
 Miller, Derek, 125  
 Miller, Monica, 29, 86  
 miniskirts, 30, 40, 45, 136  
 Miss America pageant, 53, 54, 57, 166  
 Misses sizes, 42–43, 48, 102  
 Mods, 66–67, 69, 74  
 Molloy, John T., 56, 59, 84–85, 157–158; current advice, 162  
 moment dressing, 52  
 mommy wars, 162  
 Money, John, 22, 23, 25, 33, 107–109  
 Montgomery Ward, 84, 94, 99, 101  
 Moran, Caitlin, 164  
 morning coat, 62  
 movies, 79, 81  
 Mr. Fish, 68  
 Ms., 9, 158  
 Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, 88  
 musicians, 9, 12, 46–48, 66, 86; Silent Generation, 20  
 Namath, Joe, 86  
 National Organization for Women, 53  
 National Women’s Conference (1977), 152–153  
 “natural” vs. “artificial” beauty, 12, 32, 44, 46  
 nature or nurture debate, 8, 22, 33, 92–122; failures of non-gendered child raising, 118, 119; introduction of nurture, 95–96; parenting advice, 96; second-wave feminism and, 106–107. *See also* children; children’s clothing; gender roles  
 nature plus nurture hypothesis, 95  
 Nazi edicts, 31  
 neckwear, 61, 66, 67–70  
 Nehru, Jawaharlal, 70  
 Nehru jacket, 70–72, 71, 74  
 neutral clothing, 30, 94–95; for babies and toddlers, 97; cost, 98; feminized versions of masculine styles, 103; nineteenth century, 95–97. *See also* unisex clothing  
 New Look, 41  
 New York Civil Liberties Union, 127  
*New York Times*, 16, 52  
 “Newport Look,” 81  
 Nicholson, Harold, 65  
 Nixon, Richard M., 16, 139  
 “no-bra bra,” 31, 46  
 nostalgia, 2, 6, 55, 68, 79, 81  
 nurses, dress codes for, 40  
 office styles, 56  
 older women, 44–45

- “-ologies,” 33
- O’Neill, George, 22
- O’Neill, Nena, 22
- Open Marriage* (Nena and George), 22
- pageants, 120
- paisley, 78
- Palmer, Jim, 86
- Palmer, Mark, 74
- pants, for children, 97, 97, 99, 100, 103, 121
- pants, for women, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 28, 38–39; cut and style, 40; legal cases, 135–136; peer perceptions, 155–156; rules for, 39–40; as subversive, 39. *See also* jeans
- pantsuits, 28, 40, 45
- panty girdles, 40, 46
- pantyhose, 40–41, 42, 46
- parenting, 107; ambivalence and anxiety, 11, 12; demographic changes, 119, 119. *See also* children
- Parker, Theodore, 170
- Parsons, James B., 134–135
- patterns, 42, 43, 51–52, 73, 78, 102, 137; conservative, 83
- peacock revolution, 6, 10, 59–91; background for, 64–68; on college campuses, 74–76; gay men and, 88–89; rejection of masculine mystique, 60–64; sexual attractiveness, 73–74, 86–87; unisex clothing, 76, 77, 78. *See also* menswear
- Penn, Arthur, 79
- Penthouse*, 60
- Pepitone, Joe, 74
- Pepsi ads, 19
- Perrin, Ellen, 157
- personality dressing, 52, 79
- Peters, Nick, 83
- Phillips, Michelle, 47
- photographs, 4, 5
- Pierre, Clara, 52, 89–90, 167
- Pill, the (oral contraceptives), 22, 23–24, 44, 50
- pink, as symbol of femininity, 104
- Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys from the Girls in America* (Paoletti), 7, 94
- pink boys, 156
- pinkification, 97
- plaids, 78
- plastic surgery, 44
- playboy, 87, 89
- Playboy*, 16, 21, 60, 67, 72; “Back to Campus” issue, 1969, 75–76; college issues, 84; generation gap and, 75–76; sartorial conservatism, 74–75
- Pleck, Joseph, 24, 91
- plus sizes, 48
- Polo brand, 68
- polyamory, 22
- polyester double knits, 78
- ponchos, crocheted, 49, 78, 78
- pop psychology, 63
- Pope, McKenna, 157
- pornography cases, 21
- power suits, 56
- premarital chastity, 50
- prenatal testing, 115, 119
- presidents, 19–20
- preteens/young teens, 45–46
- princess dress, 160
- Profile du Monde, 47
- proliferation of choice, 51–53
- pronaturalism, 116
- Psychology Today*, 9
- punctuated equilibrium, 27, 154
- Quant, Mary, 42
- queer fashion professionals, 165
- Queer History of Fashion*, A, 88
- race-based legal cases, 142–143
- racial identity, 12, 86

- ready-to-wear clothing, 48, 69, 165  
*Reefer Madness* (1936), 16  
 Renwick, Deborah (plaintiff), 143  
 restraint of women, 46  
 Richmond Professional Institute (RPI), 128  
 right to privacy, 138  
 Rimmer, Robert, 22  
 Roaring Twenties, 21  
 Roberts, Steven, 16  
 Rockers, 66  
 Roger, Manley, 146  
*Rolling Stone*, 84  
 Rolling Stones, 124  
 Romantic revival, 10, 28–29, 59  
 Romney, Mitt, 16, 132  
 RuPaul, 165  
*RuPaul's Drag U* (2010–2013), 165
- Saint Laurent, Yves, 88  
 sandals, 58  
 Santorum, Rick, 1, 2, 3, 166  
*Saturday Night Fever* (1977), 84  
 Saville Row styles, 66, 67  
 Sawyer, Jack, 24  
 Schlafly, Phyllis, 54, 152–153  
 school dress codes, 6, 28, 30, 123–130  
 scientific studies, 7, 9, 25–26; child psychology, 107  
 Sears catalog, 42, 42, 43, 44, 84, 94; children's clothing, 97; King's Road line, 76; "Lemon Frog Shop," 45–46; mod look for men, 76; neckwear, 68–69  
 Seavy, Carol, 110  
 second-wave feminism, 10, 16, 35–36, 106–107, 151; fissures in, 53, 153  
 self-expression, 13, 70, 73, 128, 135, 138  
 self-reflexivity, 14  
 separate sphere, 64  
*Sesame Street* (1969–), 92, 111  
*Seventeen*, 52, 76
- sex, conflated with gender, 3  
*Sex and the Single Girl* (Brown), 35, 36, 158; clothing chapter, 37–38  
 sex characteristics, 64–65  
 sex discrimination, 139–141  
 sex roles, 22, 107  
 sexiness, male, 86–87  
 sexology studies, 17  
*Sexual Behavior of the Human Female* (Kinsey), 21  
*Sexual Behavior of the Human Male* (Kinsey), 21  
 sexual orientation, 87, 95  
 sexual revolution, 1, 4, 13, 17–18, 21–22, 152  
*Sexual Suicide* (Gilder), 54  
 sexuality: birth control and, 23–24; double standard, 24, 44, 50, 168; as learned, 95; male, and sexual orientation, 87  
 "sexy," definition, 73–74  
 sexy little dresses, 55  
 Shakespeare, William, 106  
 Shelton, Raymond O., 134  
 shifting erogenous zones, 67  
 shirt suits, 70  
 Shoffner, Robert D. (plaintiff), 128  
 Shrimpton, Jean, 72  
 "Sighs and Whispers" catalog, 55  
 Silent Generation, 19–20  
 "sissyish" boys, 95–96, 113  
 sizing systems, 42–44  
 skinny bodies, 44  
 skirt lengths, 41  
 slacks. *See* pants, for women  
 slavery, 86  
 slopers, 43  
 smooth line under clothes, 40, 46  
 socialites, 72  
 sodomy and public indecency laws, 25  
 sources, 8  
*Space: 1999* (1975–1977), 31, 51  
 specialty stores, 117