WORK IT!

-Exploring gender-issues through extreme contrasts

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1. ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore gender-issues by the means of extreme contrasts in functionality. The motivation behind the work comes from the structural objectification of women that is maintained through fashion and social media, and how this is an issue that mainly regards women. By morphing extreme contrasts in dress, by the means of male coded work wear, and female coded shape wear, this work explores gender related norms, ideals and statuses. Through this work, shape was decided through try-outs with garments and/or their components, with a research that was based on today’s ideals, and social media trends. Lines in garments became increasingly more important during the process, and the components of garments in the different categories too. In the result the importance of colour, material and shape regarding gender-issues in dress is highlighted, since they often convey a gender coded expression. To disrupt this inherit gender, the result demonstrates how these components can be mixed. Breaking down status in gender attributes could be used to create a more equal sphere in fashion.

Keywords: Shape wear, Objectification, Gender, Functionality, Lines
1

CORSET WORK WEAR JACKET

STOCKING WORK WEAR BOOTS
AFTER GLOW BUTT LIFTING

PANTIES-PANT
5

FLORESCENT SEQUENCE

MINI DRESS
SEQUIN GALA
JUMPSUIT
7

REFLECTIVE RED-CARPET

PUFFER JACKET
Practicality can be defined as "The quality of being appropriate or suited for actual use" (Learnersdictionary.com, n.d.)

In other words a practical object is something that is usable & functions well in use; something functional.

3.1. What could be considered practical regarding clothing?

When regarding practical wear, one of the most practical categories of garments are work-wear. Their main function is to be practical, protect the wearer and make working as easy as possible (Larsson, 2013).

Work-wear have a big amount of pockets in easy-to-reach places, with many different sizes and shapes for a good functionality. Examples can be viewed in figure 1 and 2. The garments are today even adapted for modern phenomena like mobile phone pockets and rubber holes for headphones; everything to make working as easy as possible.

3.2. Gender perspective

When viewing how work-wear is usually marketed, it is clear that the wearer that is the primary focus are men by who are portrayed, and still today they are norm (see figure 3). Some may argue that it is not strange since these industries are male-dominated. The strange part though, is that the features of functionality in these garments, like pockets adapted for objects like phones, and features that simplifies life in general are lacking so much in clothes for women. (Basu, 2014)

A general problem in female clothes is that there is a big lack of pockets. Either the garments don’t have any, which is very usual, or even worse there are a lot of fake pockets. Also, often when female garments have pockets they are very small, since the placement of pockets often are in unflattering places on the body where the female body (normatively) shouldn’t look bigger than needed. (Basu, 2014)
As Yamamoto puts it "When did women begin to put their hands in their pockets?..."/"We can be sure, at least, that it started after women began wearing men’s clothes../" (Yamamoto and Mitsuda, 2010)

3.3. The female ideal

As Thesander (1997) states it, the female ability to carry children has set them apart from men, which has been used in a various of ways to limit their social and cultural sex roles. The myths about the female sex such as "the weaker sex" and "eternal feminine" is used to describe women still in modern contexts, which strengthens their undermined position in society. (Thesander 1997)

It is the myth of the woman as a part of nature and the strong force of the "Eternal Feminine" that is contradictory, as Simone de Beauvoir states in her work The Second Sex (1949). The Eternal Feminine is a state that is unique and changeless which in itself means that a flesh-and-blood woman that doesn’t fit the mold of the feminine ideal isn’t considered feminine despite the fact that she is in fact a woman.

To fit the mold of femininity one must understand that the feminine ideal is not only dependent on biology, but it is a social constructed gender (Beauvoir, 1949) which means that a female body is not enough, but the social demands of being female has to be met. This means that to be accepted as a woman you need to meet both the physically and mentally ideals of your time, which has historically casted women into a role of aesthetic objects - a state of passivity.

Thesander (1997) means that the body is the ultimate place where status, social and cultural values are most clearly expressed and that the formed and moulded body clearly signals our social position.

3.4. The function of shaping garments

Shaping garments main (and only) function is pure aesthetically. They manifests the woman’s position as an object in society, and not as an active individual (Allen, 1999), which makes these garments non-functional. They are supposed to change the aesthetic of the body without being noticeable or shown to create an illusion of a "perfect" body.
3.5. Female shaping today

Today shaping garments are seen in new trends. When viewing current bodily trends and ideals it is clear that the "perfect body" is influenced by women like Rihanna, Beyoncé, and the Kardashians with their timeless figures; big bums and very narrow waists. This ideal is spread through social media such as Instagram (figure 5) and is consumed by their fans, creating a craving to look just as “good” as they do.

In 2016 the corset made a break from the current in this time’s very rational and functional fashion. Extremely well photographed and published celebrities like Kim Kardashian, Gigi Hadid and Rihanna wore corsets as outerwear, creating an exaggerated hourglass-figure. Also at the same time the Kardashian’s, seen in figure 4, who are some of the most followed people on social media all around the world, started the waist trainer trend (Ehrman, 2016) which made people believe they could achieve the same body type.

The "waist-trainer" is in its very core a corset with the same steel wires and extreme pressure on the waist as a historical one, which is used today to shape the waist while training, or put like this "Waist training is the process of wearing a modern take on a Victorian era corset in order to (1) provide an instant slimming, hourglass figure effect, (2) motivate one to improve posture and eat healthier, and (3) eventually, over continued use, physically change the shape of the rib cage (smaller).” (Faries, 2018)

Another example of modern body-shaping is "the butt-lifter" that lifts your bum to make it look bigger, or the body-shaper that is made out of Spandex to shape and press the tummy and thighs into a tighter and smoother shape.

To shape and control the body is still today a very big phenomenon, and tools like the butt lifter, push-up bra, body shaper, corset and waist trainer are used to distort, push, change or enhance the body into today’s ideals.

Still today these ideals are prioritized before practicality in women’s wear.
5. MOTIVE & AIM

5.1. Motive

When viewing female dress it is very clear that female dress is still today very defined by the female body as a sexual object. It is an object to shape, push, force and view first and foremost, and women who do not have normative bodies are encouraged and socially pressured to use disciplinary processes to push and force their bodies into "the ideal female form" (Kinney, 2016).

This work is motivated by the ideals and the pressure that is put on women to fit the mold of femininity. It aims to criticise the ways of forcing the body and objectifying women as a group since this is still very fundamental in our society. By showcasing these shaping garments and putting them in a context where they are contrasted with an extreme opposite: the stereotypical male work-wear wardrobe (made for being active and functional) this work is motivated to showcase the absurdness of the differences in gender when it comes to functionality in dress.

5.2. Aim:

The aim of this work is to investigate feminine ideals in relation to masculine workwear to discuss gender-issues.
5.3. State of the Art

5.3.1. Dolce & Gabbana, autumn/winter 2018

This collection contains a lot of traditional female attributes such as corset lacing’s, very skin-tight fits, and feminine materials such as lace, satin and chiffon. It is a collection that clearly references a traditional view of femininity, but at the same time tries to incorporate modern-time trends, and today’s youth with the usage of graphics, symbols and writings that has a youthful essence. This could be considered a way of merging two phenomenons, relatively opposite from each other.

5.3.2. Ida Klamborn, autumn/winter 2018

In this collection Klamborn tries to portray different ways of how female sexuality is, and can be, portrayed (Borrelli-Persson, 2018).

By the usage of transparent materials, and no underwear one could argue that Klamborn investigates what it means to be dressed/undressed, and that she explores which parts of the female body that is sexualized. One could argue that her work explores the objectification of the female body, and what it means to be a person of high status or power. As Borrelli-Persson says, Klamborn’s starting point was power dressing, and her work is exploring what it means to power dress. As Klamborn is cited “Does it have to be a suit, or can it be a really transparent dress?” (Borrelli-Persson, 2018). According to Borrelli-Persson, Klamborn considers clothes to be items of power and the freedom of wearing whatever one wants is thereby a kind of power in itself.
5.3.3. Calvin Klein, autumn/winter 2018

In this collection Raf Simons, who is the head of design, explores a male safety/work-wear-context in a women’s wear context. Reflective straps are sewn into fur coats, garments are slit up underneath the boobs, and safety blankets are made into feminine dresses. In this collection it is clear that a masculine opposite has been dissected and made into something more feminine, but still balancing between femininity and masculinity.

When comparing Calvin Klein’s collection to Ida Klamborn’s, one could argue that the femininity is clearly taking over in Ida Klamborn’s collection. The colours, materials and cuts are all feminine-coded. It is not about morphing femininity with an opposite, but to highlight the femininity on its own. Calvin Kleins collection could, on the other hand, be considered rougher and stronger when the feminine parts are actually shown. This is maybe the most clear in the examples where the head, neck, shoulders and whole legs are being covered, but the part underneath the breasts are cut open, showing everything except for the nipples. Maybe if the nipples also would have been shown, the collection could have been more progressive and “now”, considering the very contemporary free-the-nipple-campaign that is about equal rights (Beggan and Allison, 2018).
6. METHOD:

6.1. Visualization/Quantity:

This work will use a method from the field of social science, called the quantitative method. It is based on an ideal of objective research, and a personal distance to the research objects (Magne Holme and Krohn Solvang, 1991). This means that the researcher is supposed to watch, observe and view his or her research from a distance, and not to be personally involved in it, which Magne Holme and Krohn Solvang (1991) also means is impossible since the scientist is only human and therefore always somehow affected by pre-knowledge from previous education, surrounding or personal belief (Magne Holme and Krohn Solvang, 1991).

In this work it will be important to make things quite fast and take fast decisions to get an early visualization of the experiment at hand since it is very based on construction and hybrids of different kinds. To know how the hybrid will work and if it will be successful the physical outcome must be produced in an early stage. This will help the work to evolve faster, be more objective since it won’t only exist in the creator’s head, and make the final outcomes more thoroughly worked through. It is important how different outcomes are valued, and how selection is made to get a fair result (Magne Holme and Krohn Solvang, 1991). This selection will be based on the actual outcomes and final results, their fit, their relevance to the collection and their balance in femininity and masculinity.

In a quantitative method one is only left with a view of an experimentation that shows one side of a problem, and not the entire truth (Magne Holme and Krohn Solvang, 1991). When using this method in this work it is very successful since the work wishes to convey a view of the matter, and not everything there is to know, since the experimentation wouldn’t tell a clear story if it did.

When adapting this theory in this work, the workspace is very important to make sure distractions are reduced and that the workspace is organised in a way which contributes to a clear head and focused mind.

6.2. Workspace:

In this project a personal space for development is going to be used to avoid distractions. A theory by Binder et al. has been used, where they state that the workspace must be adapted to the task at hand in order for the designer to become productive. (Binder et al., 2014) Binder means that this is an ongoing process that is never fully finished, since it is tightly connected to the project at hand. Therefore in this project the workspace will be created in a big space to begin with, but it will be flexible and might move around or change according to the project.

6.3. Material:

Material-wise the collection should balance both non-functional and fragile materials often related to a female shaping/underwear wardrobe which could include lace, Spandex, fine mesh etc. It should also include the functional opposite that is usually connected to a work wear wardrobe such as beaver nylon, thick polyester etc.

Together these materials should balance an expression of function and non-function.
6.4. Shape:

The shapes should be based on experiments made through styling with existing garments and accessories or try-outs (toiling, draping, sketching) with their components. Examples of this can be seen in figure 9. It should be based on these garments/accessories relation to each other and of how they affect each other and the wearer. Styling is in this work an important aspect to find the most successful shape. This styling-method is in this project called “Styling as a tool”, as seen in figure 10-14 under segment “6.6. Styling as a tool”.

The garments selected for these experiments should contain both a strong non-functional female attribute made for objectifying the female body such as corsets, heels, shapers, and other fragile/non-functional garments/accessories that shapes and changes the body. They should at the same time include work-wear garments and accessories to get the extreme contrast of functionality.

Together with a female body the opposite categories should affect each other and the wearer in different ways that explores and criticises the gender differences in functionality in a shape-related perspective.

6.5. Colour:

In each example of the work, colour should be considered both from the aesthetic of hi-vis work-wear, but also from the aesthetic of hi-vis female wear, which could be a red-carpet event, sexy underwear, a popular stage-performer or a social media trend.

Elements such as neon-colours or elementary colours (pure colours) that are often found in work-wear should be the base of the function colour-spectra.

Reflective materials and details should also be considered as an important aspect in the work-wear colour/surface references since these are mainly viewed in this category of clothing.

Colours stereotypically related to a female colour spectra should also be considered. As Jacobson (2009) states in her book; colours that are considered innocent, sensual, sexy or naked have a clear reference to womanhood (such as different shades of red and pink), and are hence important for the female contrast.

Like a bridge between these two different fields of colour, black is used, since it has a clear place in both categories.
6.6. Styling as a tool:

Styling will be used as a tool to find successful shapes. It will be important mainly in the beginning of the work to find successful hybrids between the two categories of clothing, and later on to find the most successful way of wearing the hybrid as seen in figure 10-14.
7. Development:

7.1.1. Pre-study:

Outfit 1

The Butt-Lifter:
The skirt is a mixture between a pencil skirt with a slit in the side, combined with a butt-lifting pair of panties, bringing out the secret shape-wear into the light.

Successful:
- The shape
- The details, such as the corset-closure and the straps

Problematic:
- Clear work-wear aspects are missing
- Material is non-coded and could be stronger

Outfit 2

The Corset Work-wear Jacket
The shape of the jacket is a 3XL jacket scaled up 150% with a sewn-in corset and elastics in the back, creating a female flow in the back.

Successful:
- The shape
- The details (corset-closure, work-wear details)
- The drape
- The meeting between the two contrasting attributes.

Problematic:
- Sewing the corset into the jacket
- Making the fit tight despite the thick fabrics

The Stocking Shoes
A pair of work-wear shoes sewn on to a pair of stockings.

Successful:
- The meeting between the two contrasting attributes.

Problematic:
- The holes from the rips cannot get too big, then the stitches falls off
Outfit 3

The Shoe-Bags:
The merge of a pair of wedge high heels, and a pair of handbag handles, merged with a nylon ripstop.

Successful:
- The shape
- The restriction it means for the wearer
- How it moves

Problematic:
- It lacks in work-wear-qualities

The Corset-Backpack
A backpack in jersey merged with a corset.

Successful:
- The idea

Problematic:
- Unclear in its expression
- Lacking in colour
- It could be argued it is not explored enough
7.1.2. Pre-study, final lineup:

Figure 19
7.2. The Corset Jacket

Figure 20
7.2.1. Reference pictures

By very clearly merging contrasting garments, the example aims to straight on showcase the contrast within the garments.

Figure 21, waist trainer  Figure 22, work-wear jacket  Figure 23, work-wear shoes  Figure 24, shaping nylon stockings
7.2.2. Jacket experiments

Drapes were made in styling-sessions with an already existing work-wear jacket as seen in figure 26. The jacket was sewn in toile fabric, and a corset as well, then the corset was put on top to create shape as seen in figure 26. In figure 27, the corset has been integrated into the jacket on one side to explore its possibilities shape-wise.
7.2.3. Shoe experiments

Different kinds of soles were tried in combination with the nylon stocking, but to create a clear contrast between the two, the shoe had to be rough. Only then the contrast was successful. Also, the seam sewn between the shoe and stocking was made in reflective thread to clearer highlight the meeting between the two.

Figure 28, process pictures of experiments with shoes and stockings
7.3. The Butt Lifting Pantie-Pants
7.3.1. Reference pictures

Figure 30, butt-lifting panties

Figure 31, painters work-wear trousers

This example explores the combination between the butt-lifter and a pair of painters work-wear-pants. It has it’s main focus on the functionality, questioning what makes a garment functional and why certain functions with inherit gender have a higher value (status) than others.
7.3.2. Buttlifter experiments

The experimentation was initiated by the merging of a butt-lifting pair of panties with a body suit as seen in figure 32-33. When the fit was hard to adapt to different kinds of bodies, this developed into a two-piece garment consisting of a pair of panties (seen in figure 34) and a top, referencing back to a bikini or a lingerie-set with a top and a bottom, but still staying in the “dressed-section” of garments, not becoming lingerie.

The panties becomes the waistband to the pants, creating a function out of the non-functional shaping garment, and is thereby the core of the garment.
7.4. The Mermaid Pants

Figure 36
The shaping panties with built-in-corset part in the waist is combined with a gala-dress and the work-wear-pants to explore an gala-expression where the main attraction is the shaping-wear that should normally not be seen. The taboo of the shape-wear is explored.
7.4.2. Shape development

Development of pants with drop in the back, train and shaping panties as the core of the garment. Creating a train in the back adds to the drama, though making it impossible to walk and also competing with the silver sequin dress-pants, the train was taken away to make the look more polished.

Figure 39, development of different toile, cuts and drapes
7.4.3. Reference pictures

In this example the T-shirt is explored. The t-shirt is a very basic garment found in most categories of garments. The contrasts were further pushed in this example to challenge contrasts in the materials and surface of the garment.
7.4.3. Material development, tufting:

Tufting was used to try other dimensions of the reflective effects. The reflective yarn was tufted in loops, without being cut with intention of getting the maximum reflection out of the yarn.
7.5. The Hi-Vis Butt-Lifting Outfit
7.5.1. Reference pictures

By combining the kind of tight-fitting skirt, that one usually would use a shaping garment underneath, with the shaping garment itself, this example tries to explore the best possible shape, colour and material to put focus on the shaping garment which usually should not be seen at all.
7.5.2. Experiments

In figure 47, the buttlifter is tried in draped shape, without a specific reference skirt. The clear references in this example is thereby lost. In figure 48 again a variation of figure 47 is tried, but with a short skirt-reference in the back, the look of a pair of pants from the side, and open in the front. Again, though, the clear references gets lost, and it fails to ducesfully reference a skirt or the panties. On the other hand, in figure 49 the skirt is clearly referenced, but the effect of the buttlifter is missing, while looking at the experiment in figure 50, the skirt and the butt-lifting panties are present. This makes figure 50, the most succesful experiment.
7.5.3. Successful examples

In figure 51, the experiment from figure 50 was tried in a flexible scuba fabric. The lifting effect from the butt-lifter is very successful in this example, but the coded expression of workwear, and the highlighting the effect of the butt is the most successful as seen in figure 52 and 53, where it is made out of a reflective material.
7.5.4. Reference pictures

This example is made by the use of the silhouette of a workwear vest but making it in a reflective laser cut lace-pattern, combining a male-coded garment with a female-coded expression.
A reflective spray paint was used on a white lace-fabric as seen in figure 57. This led to a further investigation in laser cutting a lace pattern. Try-outs were made in paper as seen in figure 58. When the pattern worked in paper it was tried in a reflective fabric as seen in figure 59. The result can be viewed in figure 60.
7.5.6. Shape development

In the first example as seen in figure 61, the impact of the lace is big since it covers the arms with sleeves, but shapewise it lacks in workwear references, so in figure 62, the development was focused on a workwear related garment instead.
7.6. Neon sequin

Figure 63
This experiment is using work-wear related accessories to shape the garment, and florescent yellow related to work-wear in combination with a sequin fabric, both expressing light to enhance the florescent effect, and as a female attribute of non-function.
The idea started with a fast casual drape of a sequence fabric over a cap, initiating the idea of draping a dress in sequence by the use of work-wear accessories as shaping.
7.6.3. Shape, process

In this stage the gloves had been sewn into the piece, and the cap as well, but the work-wear belt is still missing, which is the attribute in this piece which most clearly expresses femininity since it enhances the waist.

Figure 71, full silhouette from different angles
7.6.4. Waist, shape and drape

In this stage the waistline is accentuated, and the ends of the fabric is gathered in the front, creating a drop-cut in both the front and the back to relate back to the other pieces.
7.7. The gala jumpsuit
7.7.1. Reference pictures

This example is morphing a wedding dress with a painters dungarees. It is two very different garments, but both have a very clear colour code - white. The painters clothes are traditionally always white, so is the wedding dress.
7.7.2. Shape development

The starting-point in this outfit is a scaled up work-wear uniform to have a lot of fabric to work with.

Further development of the skirt.

The pants are split up and draped into a skirt - part with a train.

Tryouts are made with an up-scaled workwear vest as a base for the upper body.
7.7.2. Shape development

The white colour makes the wedding-expression take over. The light-aspect of the work is incorporated in the outfit and a silver-grey sequin-fabric replaces the white.

The work-wear pants grows into a bra, and falls underneath the butt to enhance it, while it also grows down-wards into a skirt/train

The crotch-seam is changed to make the drape in the back tighter around the butt, the pant-dress is lined and the bra-strap is closed with a buckle-closure
7.8. The red carpet jacket
7.8.1. Reference pictures

This example is a merge between a jacket scaled up 130% and thin, bra straps as the contrasting element.
7.8.2 Shape development

First tryouts: Scaling up pattern 150%, and padding the jacket. The padding takes over, the colour is non-coded and hence plain, shape is not yet explored.

Changing the colour, referring to the way companies often makes female function: red for women.

Adding shape-wear attributes - bra straps

To make reference clearer the straps are kept thin; in their original size.
The jacket is re-made to further elaborate the scale, making it more into a female-coded evening-wear garment. The black ripstop is exchanged into a black reflective material. The colour red is kept. A hoodie and zip are added to keep the jacket-refernce.

Figure 90, jacket photoed in day-light with a flash making the reflective material look green. Jacket missing hoodie and finishing.

Figure 91, jacket photoed in darkness, making the reflective material turn white in the flash-light.
7.9. Line-up development

Line-up sketching in illustrator has been an important tool throughout the process to make decisions regarding colour, shape, and a balance throughout the collection, and also to visualize the complete lineup in early stages.
In the last stages of sketching the photos of the final garments are being used as a base to get the clearest visual expression possible.

Figure 96, step five; the sewn examples are being photographed and sketch on in a new layer in Illustrator to find a balance in accessories and complementary garments.

Figure 97, final touches, idea-sketches and accessories are being sketched and tried.
8. Results:

8.1. Final Lineup

Figure 98, final lineup photographed without reflective qualities showing, except for in outfit 6.
8.2.1. Garment sketches

Figure 99, photos front and half back

Figure 100, technical drawings front and back
8.2.2. Garment sketches

Figure 101, photos front and back

Figure 102, technical drawings front, back and side
8.2.3. Garment sketches

Figure 103, photos front and half back

Figure 104, technical drawings front, back and side
8.2.4. Garment sketches
8.3. Visuality

An important finding in this work is the connections between the two different fields - the points where female objectification connects with male functionality; the visibility. This became the bridge that enabled the two to clearly connect, and also contribute to each other. Being visible is what social media is all about, social media is spreading ideals today, people claim their space trough internet, and this is also what the red carpet is about; being in the spotlight. Red carpet, work-wear, ideals - everything is there for the possibility to be in the spotlight, be seen. It is what in the end connects all aspects of the work, and also gives the work an extra strength.

8.3.1. Light

The light has been important to enhance visibility in different ways and create different expressions. A very revealing outfit in daylight becomes totally dressed under the spotlight, since the light dresses the body and makes it almost impossible to identify the body underneath. An outfit with glow in the dark in some parts of the print is pale green or white in daylight but shines acid green when turning of the lights.

8.4. Lines

The lines of the work-wear and shape-wear also became increasingly more and more important through out the work, since the reflective straps, and the shape-wear straps have an important roll to play in the very graphic expression they make.
8.5. Order of examples

Figure 108, final order of examples, most straight-on example in the beginning and most dramatic piece in the end

Figure 109, try-out; changed order of piece 6, putting it after piece 3

Figure 110, try-out; piece 6 in place after piece 2, and piece 3 & 2 have swapped place

Figure 111, try-out; piece 3 is put in second place, and piece 6 is placed after. Piece 5 is put in fourth place, and piece 2 is moved to place 6, after piece 2, comes piece 4.

Piece 1 is very straight on, it is one of the pieces that is clearest, that is why it is the first piece - so the viewer gets an introduction to the collection. Piece 2 is also clear but a bit less, still keeping the trouser-legs, the clear graphics and clearly showing the butt. Piece 3 is more abstracted but still keeping the lines in the top and the pant-reference and then it goes on til’ the most dramatic pieces
9. Discussion:

When viewing this work as a whole, it shows cohesiveness in shape, material, and colour. The language balances strong work-wear references with equally strong shape-wear, and bodily references. Viewing the collection as a whole, the collection does not speak a traditional female language, but neither a convincingly male. In the end the work mainly speaks about shape-wear and work-wear as categories of garments and as morphed examples, and less about the actual wearer, which is an interesting finding in this work. The work aimed from the beginning to discuss and criticise gender-issues, but gender is very much dependent on the wearer, which in this case has a secondary role, and the final result may hence mainly be a morph of two categories of garments, which becomes more interesting because of their politically inherit differences.

Throughout the design process it has been important to both construct through flat pattern-construction, but also through draping. To take a constructed garment and together with a body, drape it into the final examples has been the main method. A method of styling with what you created to make the most out of something, not being statically bound to the original idea or sketch. To dare to do this has made the work stronger and helped develop the ideas into more successful versions.
The body has had an important role in this project. This has also been an obstacle since the garment has been adjusted according to only one body-type only, which was only noticed as an issue late in the process, and by then it had to be considered and changed accordingly. Having three models with different kinds of bodies would have helped the work and method to evolve even more, since all the garments are very adjustable which enables a more inclusive range of models.

9.1. Changes of focus

From the beginning the purpose was only to criticise gender related issues with a focus on functionality, but throughout the work the materiality, the light aspects, and being visual has taken over as the focus and interest. How the female-coded garments that was explored are made for being viewed and visual, which is also the case regarding the work-wear - being visual is the main expression of the garments. It was interesting how one can explore these aspects to dress the body through light or to highlight parts of the body through darkness as seen in the fully reflective outfit seen in figure B.

9.2. Developing examples further

The final collection does show a good range of examples that has a good balance and speaks a clear language, but the next step could be focusing more on just one example and develop that one example further. Just one example in the collection could create a whole new collection with interesting examples. For example the reflective lace that was laser-cut, could have been cut in a range of patterns, sizes and materials and in its own been the focus of a entire collection.

9.3. Commercialization

The final collection does show some examples that could be considered commercial such as the reflective lace vest and the silver sequin dress, but to make it even more commercial could be to make simpler pieces with a stronger degree of recognition such as t-shirt and jackets that sits traditionally on the body, but with details from the collection such as corset-closures and reflective details.

Figure 113; Highlighting the buttox through darkness, and dressing the upper body through light.


11. Appendix:
11.1. Pre-study

10.1.1. Styling session, part 1, finding shape:

This work started with styling sessions as seen in figure 1 and 2. Practical garments and accessories (related to an active lifestyle in a male context) were draped and tried in relation to a female body and accessories, stereotypically mainly used by women, such as heels and handbags. The styling session lasted for a few hours and everything was filmed to not miss any details or successful try-outs. The movie was then viewed and parts of it was screenshot to preserve good try-outs. These screen-shots was later viewed to make a selection of a smaller range of successful experiments, these are seen above.
11.1.2. Styling session, part 2, shoes:
11.1.3 Styling session, part 3, bags:
11.2. Process, first physical experiment:

Try-outs with fabric, and components of a bag and shoe and their relation was explored. In figure 4 a sports-fabric was sewn on to a pair of wedge heel soles, and tried in relation to carrying. In figure 5 this was taken further into a more applied shape where a handle of a handbag and a sole of a heel became starting-points for working with a garment in-between.
11.3.1. Development of shape from two contrasting garments

The development with shape started with two different attributes - one female coded, in this case a corset (see figure Q), and one in the work-wear category, in this case a work-wear jacket (see figure U).
10.3.2 Development of shape from two contrasting garments, continuation

In figure J the corset is put on top of the work-wear jacket.

In figure E the corset pattern is incorporated in the work-wear jacket, and sewn into one garment.

In figure R the corset is sewn in place.

In figure Y the corset is put in place with elastics from the inside in the back.

Try-outs of putting the different attributes together are seen in the figures above.
10.3.3. Try-outs with already existing jacket and corset

Incorporating the shape of a corset on one side of a ready-made jacket.
10.3.4 Try-outs with scale, colour, material & shape

To enhance the contrasts between the garments, scale and shape were tried out with materials, colours and padding.
The work-wear jacket was made in 150% scale with exception for the sleeves which were kept in the original size. It was also shaped to create a smoother shape in front to meet the corset which was sewn through the pocket in front.
Focused documentation, clear collection. Going through the documentation I found very well made 2D- and 3D-collages, it seems like a strong and clear personal expression has been found in the work. Also the interpretation from collaged line-up to the finished collection is extremely clear and copy-pasted in it’s look. Very clearly described method.

The documentation is very much about cut and paste, was there any tryouts done with paper and glue, actually cutting and pasting shapes and collages on a body? Would other ways of putting things together and making collages (apart from sewing) also be successful to enhance the expression?

Also in the documentation and in the line-up accessories are mentioned as something important, but missing in the photos, why? Could you have collaged with the bags as well, making them a part of the expression in the same matter?

In the documentation fashion is described as something ever changing, it is written ”However, this project adds another aspect, the continuation. To hybridize ready-made garment-parts to create a new whole.” Ready-made garments - could they have been a bigger part of the collection? Second hand garments where tried and ”cut and pasted” with, could that be something to go further with?

Though I agree that the expression that is the final outcome (like the puffer jacket) would not have been achieved through second hand garments, as it is put in the documentation: ”It’s about the meeting between scale, materials, movement, colours, garments and the playfulness that is created through the combinations” It is an aesthetic that is very Linn, and I really the designers fingerprint in this collection, maybe it could be interesting to try the Linn-aesthetic also with this sustainable aspect in mind and second hand garments?

In the documentation it is said that big pieces of paper where layered and collages where projected on a body, but that this expression was to abstract. Why was it too abstract? Could it be something to develop for the future?