

THE THEATRICALITY OF THE EVERYDAY THROUGH COSTUME EXPRESSIONS OF FANDOM AND DRAG

Jorge Sandoval



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Abstract

This article-based dissertation, comprising six published research texts, investigates the ways the male costumed body performs theatricality in non-theatre settings. It does so by looking at costume as a means of expressing non-normative gender, researched through two distinct perspectives: the costume expressions of fandom and drag. More specifically, the dissertation uses as cases studies: (i) the regalia of fans of the Canadian football team the Saskatchewan Roughriders, and (ii) drag display in both professional and amateur situations in Canada and Finland.

My research draws from theories such as Peter Boenisch's (2012) concept of relational dramaturgy, Alan Read's (1993) concept of theatricality and the ambit of the everyday, John R. Suler's (2016) idea of performance and identity in social media, Eric Anderson's (2005) and Amir-Ben Porat's (2010) research on masculinities and fandom in sports, and Rachel Hann's (2017) concept of normative dress and conscious othering. These voices inform my understanding of the theatrical and emblematic potentialities of the costumed material body in real life and the immaterial body in virtual spaces, through acts of 'costuming' the self.

The study explores two research questions: 1) how does the performance of the male body create a space for theatricality through costume expressions off the stage? 2) how does the consideration of the queered male body in social media platforms advance new paradigms for theorizing the notion of costume in the context of the everyday? These questions form the basis of the thesis by researching three lines of enquiry: a) costuming expressions outside conventional theatre spaces; b) the queered male body, specifically, the male body in drag in real life contexts; and c) the theatricality of the everyday, understood here as an action emanating from an 'everyday event'. The thesis examines dressing up in everyday situations as an act of 'othering' by means of adornment through individuated sartorial expressions, generated by creative whim, fashion, and similar systems of commodification (Hann 2017), that [re]gender the male body, transforming it into a theatrical instance.

Using a qualitative ethnographic research methodology grounded in two perspectives—the sartorial expressions of football fans and drag display in professional and amateur everyday situations—and based on case studies, I examine representations of gender performed through acts of 'costuming' in a variety of spaces, such as football stadiums, the street, social media platforms and reality TV. This dissertation's findings present the body and costumed expressions of gender, within the ambit of the everyday, as the signifiers and producers of a process, rather than a specific event; this stimulates new knowledge regarding the way we spectate and employ theatricality in regards to non-normative gender expressions and societal assumptions of gender off the stage.

Keywords costume, theatricality, social media, gender, queer, body, fashion

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I wish to dedicate this work to two very special people in my life, my mother and my husband.

I owe this work to my mother, Elvia. Her life and work ethic have always inspired me. My admiration goes out to her, a woman who grew up in a time and place that made it difficult for women to feel they could be successful on their own. She, however, never gave up and did it her way. Her perseverance and her love for knowledge taught me how to break the chain of what sometimes felt like assumed life paths and to embrace whoever and whatever I wanted to be in life.

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List of Original Publications

This dissertation is based on the following peer-reviewed publications which are referred to in the text by their corresponding short name and Roman numerals.

Publication I (peer-reviewed eBook chapter)

Sandoval, Jorge (2016), 'Is that a watermelon on your head or a basket of fruits? Orthodox masculinity in sports and the paradoxical erotic experience of the Roughriders male fans' drag expressions', in H. G. Markstein and A. M. Steijn (eds), *Inhabiting the Meta Visual: Contemporary Performance Themes*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 55–63. https://doi.org/10.1163/9781848885325_008

Publication II (peer-reviewed journal article)

Sandoval, Jorge (2016), 'The rough riders: An exploration of theatricality, masculinity, identity and voyeurism in Canadian football', *Critical Studies in Men's Fashion*, 3:2, pp. 95–106.
https://doi.org/10.1386/csmf.3.2.95_1

Publication III (peer reviewed book chapter)

Sandoval, Jorge (2018), 'The RuPaul effect: The exploration of the costuming rituals of drag culture in social media and the theatrical performativity of the male body in the ambit of the everyday', in S. McCarroll (ed.), *Other Habits, Theatrical Costume*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, pp. 100–117.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/tsy.2018.0007>

Publication IV (peer-reviewed journal article)

Hodes, Caroline, Sandoval, Jorge (2018). 'RuPaul's Drag Race: A study in the commodification of white ruling class femininity and the etiolation of drag', *Studies in Costume and Performance*, 3:2, pp. 149–166.
https://doi.org/10.1386/scp.3.2.149_1

Publication V (peer-reviewed journal article)

Sandoval, Jorge (2019), 'The body as costume: The theatricality of the male body and the modern peep show', *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture*, 6:2, pp. 175–95.
https://doi.org/10.1386/fspc.6.2.175_1

Publication VI (peer-reviewed journal article)

Sandoval, Jorge (2021), 'All dressed up with somewhere to go: Drag expressions on social media and the theatricality of the everyday', *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture*, 8:2&3 pp. 259-277, https://doi.org/10.1386/fspc_00026_1

Author's Contribution

The author is the sole author of the present Thesis and Publications I–III and V–VI. The author's role in Publication IV is described below.

Publication IV: “RuPaul’s Drag Race: A study in the commodification of white ruling class femininity and the etiolation of drag”

The author provided a first draft to the co-author as the foundation for article IV. This article was planned as the continuation of the research on drag developed through article III “The RuPaul effect: The exploration of the costuming rituals of drag culture in social media and the theatrical performativity of the male body in the ambit of the everyday.” The author developed the topic further through the lens of theatrical representation by analysing the commodified body being transformed into a theatrical device.

The co-author added to this article the discussion on the commodification of the body through what Catherine Rottenberg and Mark Sparks have identified as the market values of neoliberalism (2014). The co-author therefore, participated in the writing of this article by developing the analysis of the topic through neoliberalist theory.

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1.Introduction

In this investigation, I research the use of costume outside the bounds of the theatre, looking at clothing and especially at non-normative dress as a means of expressing non-hegemonic gender when performing in the everyday. Taking the queered male body itself as a form of theatrical expression, I adopt the viewpoint of costume studies in order to explore the concepts of ‘costume’ and ‘body’ as simultaneously signifying and deconstructing binaric gender assumptions.

I position individual expressions of dress at the centre of this exploration to show how the consideration of costume and gender is fundamental to theatrical expressions in the twenty-first century, as part of post-dramatic theatre practices (Lehmann 2005).¹ The idea of ‘post-dramatic theatre’ as non-mimetic helps here to contextualise the exploration of gender and everyday dress as a non-conventional theatrical expression in my study, through the examination of mundane occurrences that are conceived as imagined authenticities, or representations of a reality that already exists as a representation of that same reality. Representations of a binary constrained femininity that drag expressions reproduce in social media offer an example of imagined authenticity. Examining this fetishisation of the real, along with the idea of everyday dress as a non-conventional theatrical form, helps to situate non-normative dress within the frame of post-dramatic theatre. Drawing from Ryan Anthony Hatch’s revision of the post-dramatic—where the fetishisation of the real, or what I previously called imagined authenticity, places the real as a value for contemporary artistic practice—fits the exploration of non-normative dress as a theatrical device within the frame of the post-dramatic. Hatch writes,

Whether the performance artist lays claim to a zone of the real beyond what is possible on stage, or allows the highly scripted, ‘inauthentic’ realm

¹ A theory introduced in 1999 by Hans-Thies Lehmann, and since revised by theorists like Marvin Carlson (2009) and Ryan Anthony Hatch (2019), among others, ‘post-dramatic’ is used here to mean theatre beyond text, the non-mimetic body and the stage itself (Carlson 2015).

of theatricality itself to come apart at the seams, so that the real, as it were, shines through the cracks, we are confronted with an ideological formation that links a certain way of thinking the place of the real in aesthetic experience. (Hatch 2019:132)

Hatch's proposition opens the door for unconventional expressions such as the queered male body and post-dramatic theatre to work together as an exploration of the non-mimetic.

The burgeoning of new technologies and social media platforms requires the redefinition of the key terms of this thesis' topic, i.e. 'costume' and 'theatre', to fit the ways we understand and experience them in the ambit of the quotidian. I use the word 'quotidian' to refer to everyday mundane activities such as going out for social leisure or pleasure, special events in one's life, etc. Prior to the internet, theatre presented a fictional world in an actual space—the stage—conceived solely for the display of drama and entertainment. New ways of spectating, new platforms and forms of interaction, much of it the result of interactive technologies, characterise what has come to be known as post-dramatic theatre. Early examples are The Performance Group (TPG), an experimental theatre company started by Richard Schechner in 1967 in New York City (later known as The Wooster Group), and The People Show, started in London in 1966 (Carlson 2015). The work of these two companies focused on the audience experience and the space of performance rather than mimetic representation as a fictional construct and narrative foundation. Through experiments like *Dionysus 69* directed by Richard Schechner for The Performance Group in New York (1968), and *the telephone booth* performance by the People's Show in London (1966) where notions of traditional spaces and practices of theatre were challenged, the idea of the non-mimetic body and its potential for meaning-making became a fundamental idea for post-dramatic theatre (Carlson 2015). Lehmann places the body as the centre of attention for sign production in post-dramatic theatre; he writes,

Despite all efforts to capture the expressive potential of the body in a logic, grammar or rhetoric, the aura of physical presence remains the point of theatre where the disappearance, the fading of all signification occurs—in favour of a fascination beyond meaning, of an actor's 'presence', of charisma or 'vibrancy'. (Lehmann 2006: 95)

With this shift, costume begins to be read as a critical extension of the body. Its implicit symbiosis with the performing body exposes the study of costume, according to Donatella Barbieri and Sofia Pantouvaki, 'to multiple and

interdisciplinary starting points; ones that are not only performance-centred, historical, dramaturgical and socio-cultural, but that can be addressed through theoretical frames provided by specific readings of anthropology, phenomenology, cognition and psychology' (2016: 4). My contribution to costume studies is to look at costume through a gender queer lens as a form of theatricality removed from the frame of the stage and situated in everyday spaces that are performatively queered by means of 'othering' (Hann 2017).

Situating the costumed body at the centre of my investigation and within the frame of fundamental shifts in post-dramatic theatre forms and practices, the need to investigate the body as an immaterial costume vis-à-vis the ubiquitous presence of new technologies and media platforms as spaces for performance is essential. Lehmann states that theatre

requires a lot: the continuous activity of living people; the maintenance of theatre spaces; organizations, administrations and crafts; in addition to the material demands of all the arts themselves that are united in the theatre. Nevertheless, this seemingly antiquated institution still finds a surprisingly stable cultural place in society next to technically advanced media (which are increasingly often incorporated into theatrical performance). (Lehmann 2006: 17)

Within this frame, I consider the changing role of costume, the places where costumes are manifest, and the nature of spectating. Current forms such as devised and immersive theatre modify the audience experience by emphasising the use of unconventional spaces, thus challenging the passive role of the spectator. Groups like Punchdrunk in the UK and Third Rail Projects in the United States are examples of this trend. Sofia Pantouvaki, in her article 'Tribes: Costume performance and social interaction in the heart of Prague' (2016), examines Sodja Lotker's project *Shared Space* and especially the curated 'walking exhibition' *Tribes*. In this project Lotker places costumed bodies in the urban environment, thus introducing the overtly theatrical into public space as part of everyday life (Pantouvaki 2016). This exploration shows how the costumed body has the potential to represent and to perform differently in a variety of spaces and circumstances. Away from the stage, costume becomes ever more culturally and politically intertwined with our bodies and everyday lives (Barbieri 2017).

As a first order of business, it is important to provide a brief personal context for this research. From early childhood and throughout my career, creating with my body has been a constant. Studying and working as a professional dancer and

choreographer for over twenty years, I have always been aware of the materiality of the body. Pushing physicality to the limit, the body became the language I spoke, part of my everyday reality on and off the stage. After retiring from performing, I retrained as a theatre designer, where I found my niche in design for dance. The transition was a natural one: my earlier training helped me to understand the performer's body and its needs. I have performed in other ways, as well: living as a gay man, controlling the body's suspensions and movements becomes the mechanism used to pass in a gender binary-oriented society. Marcel Mauss defines these social idiosyncrasies as 'the ways in which, from society to society, men [people] know how to use their bodies' (1973: 70). As I became aware of my sexual difference, I also became conscious of my physicality as a gay individual. Instincts and emotions were controlled and choreographed as I performed daily, either revealing or masking my gender orientation. Alongside physicality, dress became an important device, a mask I learned to use to navigate or defy the everyday, but most importantly to stage it. Thus, my personal background, career choices, and gender preference guide this research.

Typically, apparel associated with cosplay, fandom, and drag has been dismissed by costume historians whose attention is primarily drawn to the skill, attention to historical detail and technique exhibited in professional stage costumes. In regards to non-professional costumes, Rachel Hann writes, 'these popular practices contravene the high level of craft expertise required to sustain a career as a costume professional' (Hann 2017: 4). However, the disregard of this apparel by many academics excludes much that is worthy of critical consideration; the research taken up here attempts to expand the limited focus of many scholars. Looking beyond the stage, I reconsider what costume does and where it does it, indeed what we even consider to be theatre in a time when social media leads the way for communication, leisure, and social behaviour.

1.1 Aims and Theoretical Framing of the Research.

The aim of this study is to examine ways in which dress is employed in daily life as 'costume', in both the material world and social media, and how it can be read as a theatrical device that produces additional significations. Costume borrows a context usually associated with the stage. In the everyday world, exaggerated sartorial gestures challenge established gender notions and representations in playful and meaningful ways, becoming not just an accessory to the body, but performances in themselves. These significations, perceived as 'the extra daily domain' as Alan Read (1993) calls it, connect everyday dress to the theatrical in

interesting ways. However, does eccentricity in dress in the ambit of the quotidian become automatically theatrical due to its uniqueness? Josette Féral ponders this point, asking, ‘how then are we to define theatricality today? Should we speak of it in the singular or in the plural? Is theatricality a property that belongs uniquely to the theatre, or can it also be found in the quotidian?’ (Féral 2002: 94). I would suggest that theatricality is everywhere present in the everyday – resounding but in ways that are always complicated to read.

Considering Féral’s question across related disciplines, from fashion to scenographic design, this work examines ways that theatricality is shifting to reflect the gender related contingencies of the twenty-first century. Scholars like Jessica Bugg, Rachel Hann, Peter Boenisch and Sofia Pantouvaki, among others, have pushed the theoretical boundaries that formerly defined the term ‘theatricality’ beyond its relation with the stage, thereby informing my understanding of the emblematic potentialities of the costumed material body in real life and in virtual spaces. Bugg, in her work on the body as performance, explores the role of clothing and costume design arguing that ‘the role of costume itself is being reassessed in the hierarchy of design and performance production, [and] researchers and practitioners are beginning to discuss the developed role of costume as performative conduit or maker of meaning’ (Bugg 2014: 6). Hann, co-founder of *Critical Costume*, writes about the recent discourse regarding popular costume cultures within the frame of professional costume design. She discusses the disciplinary and ideological distance that theatre costume keeps in relation to popular expressions like costume parties and fancy dress (Hann 2017). Hann also examines everyday dress as normative dress, a cultural practice within the ambit of the everyday, as opposed to costume created for the stage as a high-level craft. She considers costuming an act of constructing conscious othering. Pantouvaki posits that costume extends beyond visual storytelling and dramaturgy through accidental encounters that promote unplanned interactions and communication with the spectators/viewers and shows the potential (and challenges) of the costumed body operating in the public sphere (Pantouvaki 2016).

Furthermore, my research draws from Peter Boenisch’s concept of relational dramaturgy (Boenisch 2012). His concept examines the new physically engaged ways that spectating alters the fundamental experience of a performance. I also draw from Alan Read’s concept of theatricality and the ambit of the everyday, which suggests that theatricality, within the space of the everyday, is a generative way of thinking about making theatre (Read 1993). Correspondingly, I draw from John R. Suler’s idea of performance and identity in social media (Suler 2016). He explores the notion that social media provides users with ways to establish idealised representations of the self that are presented as real. This is especially relevant to

my work given the possibilities for personal display afforded by social media, which has, as Hal Niedzviecki explains, turned everyone into both performer and peeper, and every virtual encounter into a moment of virtual theatre. Niedzviecki (2009: 4) writes, ‘when we peep on each other, we experience the thrill of performance’.

It is among these theorists that I situate my research and articulate my aim to show the male costumed body as a producer of meaning within the public sphere, replete in its potential to perform, protest, demonstrate agency, and communicate alternative ways of being in the world. Reinforcing or subverting stereotypical ideas of heteronormative gender, I contend that hyperbolic and gendered displays of dress in the public sphere are worthy of serious consideration and such an in-depth investigation can be achieved through the lens of costume research. I argue that the use of such display enacts a desire for self-truth, self-reflection, self-realisation or self-exploration, as well as self-representation, enabled through the process of costuming the self—an area that is under-researched and ripe for investigation. My research aims to address this gap in the six publications that make up this dissertation together with the present summary.

A consistent element that connects these publications is the notion of corporeality, a key consideration for the study of costume expressions within the sphere of the quotidian. Susan Leigh Foster connects the everyday with the body, defining corporeality as ‘the study of bodies through a consideration of bodily reality, not as a natural or absolute given but as a tangible and substantial category of cultural experience’ (Foster 1996: x). Foster’s premise establishes the material body as a non-mimetic agent that brings to life all the political, gendered, racial and aesthetic resonances of which bodily motion is capable. Foster focuses on choreographed dance; however, I use her theory to understand the complexity of bodily expressions away from the stage.

An equally important theme is the notion of how space is queered by the male costumed body—how such bodies speak, playfully but powerfully, against normative social systems, resisting the implicit structures of power and discipline. Michel Foucault in his work *Discipline and Punish* analyses the body vis-à-vis systems of punishment in society. He remarks on the different ways that the body can be manipulated and punished:

But we can surely accept the general proposition that, in our societies, the systems of punishment are to be situated in a certain ‘political economy’ of the body: even if they do not make use of violent or bloody punishment [...] it is always the body that is at issue—the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission. (Foucault 1975: 25)

Whether in cyberspace, the street, or the stadium, areas which I investigate in this study, costumed bodies resist the normative gaze - instead embodying gender alternatives.

My desire to unpack the abstract quality of the body (particularly the genderqueer body)² through the lens of costume studies is also inspired by Ali Maclaurin and Aoife Monks (2015), who explore the role of costume as a theatrical conceit; Joanne Entwistle (2001), who investigates the ideological role of everyday dress; and Donatella Barbieri (2017), whose research examines costume in twentieth century and contemporary performance. Similarly, theories of the queered body, specifically Judith Butler's examination of the gendered body as a cultural construct (1998), and Adam Geczy and Vicki Karaminas' (2013) analysis of male fashion through the lens of queer studies, have also laid the foundations for my study. Drawing, as well, from established scholars Erving Goffman and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, I draw attention to the theatricality of the body using the idea of embodiment, a term understood in this research as knowledge derived from lived experience (Merleau-Ponty 2002). The concept of embodiment within my research is a key to how bodies are read in everyday life, how individuals use costumes to present and represent desires and aspirations, and how usage can be read theatrically and dramaturgically. Aoife Monks sees costume as a device 'forming how spectators may imagine their own bodies, by constructing legitimate and illegitimate identifications with particular modes of embodiment onstage' (Maclaurin and Monks 2015:108). I use embodiment, as well, to mean the agency that bodies in costume assume or exhibit in public space—how the male body performs the costume and the costume performs the body, and how these actions are simultaneously a form of theatrical performance and a performative act achieving meaning and affecting change in both the person doing the action and the person watching. Dressing up in everyday situations implies the act of 'othering' by means of hyperbolisation – through sartorial expressions generated by creative whim that temporarily underscore the male body, transforming it into a heightened moment of pure theatre, and commodifying it as object of value and desire.

In reviewing the ample literature devoted to sports rituals (Anderson 2005; Ben Porat 2010; Guilianotti 2002; Borer 2013), it became apparent that very little had been done regarding sartorial expressions connected to fandom and gender representation. Ben Porat's ideas on identity and ritual (2010), and Anderson's

² According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, this term (an adjective) relates to a gender identity that is other than conventionally male or female.

notions of gender and sports (2005), provided a rich theoretical context; however, I was disappointed by how fancy dress in the world of sport fans has been largely overlooked by either gender or costume scholars. As a result, I have written and published six research texts addressing various aspects of what I have outlined here. A brief synopsis of each of these publications is presented later in this overview. It is my hope that this inquiry will enrich the field of costume studies. To this end, I have collected, analysed and explored costumed bodies taken from quotidian circumstances – namely, football fandom and drag outside the stage – that challenge what Rachel Hann (2017) calls ‘dress normativity’, i.e. bodies that reach a level of hyperbolic personal representation. The body itself, I reiterate, creates its own platform, its own space of performance that offers new opportunities to discuss the performance of costume and the performance of gender in the everyday.

1.2 Research questions.

In this section, I present the lenses that frame this investigation and summarise my research within three interrelated lines of enquiry: 1) costuming expressions outside conventional theatrical spaces and practices; 2) the queered male body, specifically, the male body in drag in real life contexts; 3) and the theatricality of the everyday. Such enquiries are explored specifically through several case studies in the context of fandom in sports in Canada and drag expressions in Canada and Finland.

Two research questions ensue from this:

- 1) How does the performance of the male body create a space for theatricality through costume expressions off the stage?
- 2) How does the consideration of the queered male body in social media platforms advance new paradigms for theorising the notion of costume in the context of the everyday?

The two research questions complement each other when investigating the queered body as a space for theatricality. They also enable the examination of the body within the parameters of the immaterial space of social media as a new expression of the everyday. Therefore, these two questions have been formulated in such a way that they connect with each other and correspond to the three interrelated themes of research established earlier. The idea of interrelation becomes a key element for both the two research questions and the three themes of research and it

is reflected in the construction and writing of the six published research texts that constitute the main corpus of my research.

1.3 Research process

This examination is supported by the following research leads: the analysis of rituals and dressing up in the world of football fandom to support and subvert normative gender representations (Publications I and II); the examination of the body itself as scenographic space to interrogate normative gender representations (Publications IV and V); and the investigation of the performative nature of drag on social media platforms and in the public sphere (Publications III, IV and VI). In order to systematise the methodology for the aforementioned lines of inquiry, I present the following diagrams to illustrate the connections between the three lines of research, the corresponding publications, and their focus.

The first describes the interconnection between the topics explored in the six research publications, the specific focus of each one, and how the research relates to the two research questions.

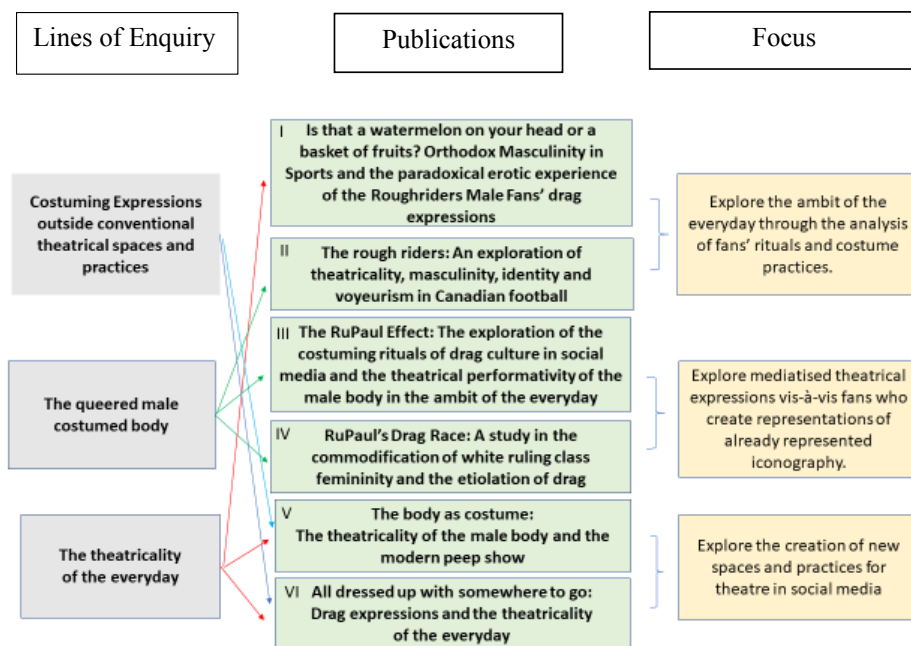


Figure 1: Interrelated lines of enquiry in relation to the six research publications of this thesis.

In the research process, I have gathered several key elements or terms to guide the research and writing using an intertextual approach to connect images and texts. From the beginning, the guidelines established by the three lines of enquiry and the focus of each publication (Figure 1) were crucial to forming a comprehensive argument. Key terms expressed in the following table (Figure 2) helped to define the methods and materials to be utilised, and to work towards the expected outcomes. The three main lines of enquiry are:

- 1) Costuming expressions outside conventional theatrical spaces and practices
- 2) The queered male costumed body
- 3) The theatricality of the everyday

PUBLICATION	KEY TERMS	METHODOLOGY	MATERIALS	OUTCOMES
I Is that a watermelon on your head? Intertextuality: Line of enquiry #1 and #3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The everyday • Dressing up • Costume • The body • Fandom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intertextuality • Literature review • Discursive formation • Intercorporeal exchange approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images • Questionnaire • Fans' website • Journals • Articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight into dressing up expressions of sports fans • Insight into sports and masculine capital • Insight into the performance of the body in the ambit of the everyday
II The rough riders Intertextuality: Line of enquiry #1 and #2 and #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressing up • Costume • The everyday • The body • Fandom • Queer • Drag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intertextuality • Literature review • Discursive formation • Visual analysis • Theoretical analysis • Textual analysis • Intercorporeal exchange approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images • Questionnaire • Fans' website • Journals • Articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight into the sartorial expressions of fans of the game • Overview on ritualistic behaviour • Insight into the gendered body • Insight into the performance of the body in the ambit of the everyday
III The RuPaul effect Intertextuality: Line of enquiry #1 and #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costume expressions • The queered body • The everyday • Social media • Fandom • Drag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review • Intertextuality • Observation • Textual analysis • Visual analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media • Reality TV show • Images • Fan's website • Journals • Articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight into the body as a theatrical device • Insight into traditional theatrical expressions versus costume expressions in social media as representative of non-conventional theatrical expressions
IV RuPaul's Drag Race Intertextuality: Line of enquiry #1, #2, and #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costume expressions • The everyday • The body • Fandom • Drag • Social media • Unconventional theatrical expressions • Queer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical analysis • Intertextuality • Observation • Visual analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Online postings • Images • Fans' website • Journals • Articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight into the commodification of the body in traditional theatrical expressions vis-à-vis drag expressions made by fans in non-conventional theatrical spaces • Insight into the performance of the body in social media platforms.
V The body as costume Intertextuality Line of enquiry #1, #2, #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unconventional costume expressions • The everyday • The body • Social media • Queer • Drag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Theorising the body • Intertextuality. • Textual analysis • Visual analysis • Intercorporeal exchange approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Images • Online postings • Journals • Articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal experiences of the interviewee regarding gendered costume expressions. • Personal insight into the performance of the body in social media as part of the ambit of the everyday
VI All dressed up with somewhere to go Intertextuality: Line of enquiry #1, #2, #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unconventional costume expressions • The everyday • The body • Queer • Drag • Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Intercorporeal exchange approach • Theorising the body • Observation. • Textual analysis • Visual analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social • Media • Images • Online postings • Journals • Articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal experiences of the gendered body in everyday situations. • Insight into the performance of the body in social media as part of the ambit of the everyday

Figure 2: Key terms and themes.

Based on Parker-Starbuck and Mock's model for researching the performing body, this table also serves as a methodological tool. Their model establishes four

methodological approaches ‘for negotiating tensions between bodies in theory/practice, observing/spectating bodies and performing/participating’ (2011: 214). Parker-Starbuck and Mock emphasise how researchers studying the body often become part of the study as participants and/or spectators. Their model supports the researcher in drawing from personal corporeal experience as they engage in theoretical, archival and practical research (Parker-Starbuck and Mock 2011: 214). Their four approaches are: 1) theorising the body, 2) archival analysis of bodies, 3) first-person methodologies, and 4) intercorporeal exchanges. I used two of these methods, theorising the body and intercorporeal exchanges, as I explain in the next section. The key terms (Figure 2) and the methods and materials established in advance, mapped the content, anticipated the outcomes of each article and they kept the writing focused on the research questions.

1.3.1 Research design.

An initial literature review helped to develop the theoretical framework and defined the core concepts for this research. The following diagram (Figure 3) shows the research structure; it presents the main topics leading the literature review (left side), which were essential for the preparation and eventual writing of the six publications. The two research questions are placed in the middle of this diagram as the focal point for the research. The right side of the diagram indicates the research materials used and the research methods employed for the analysis.

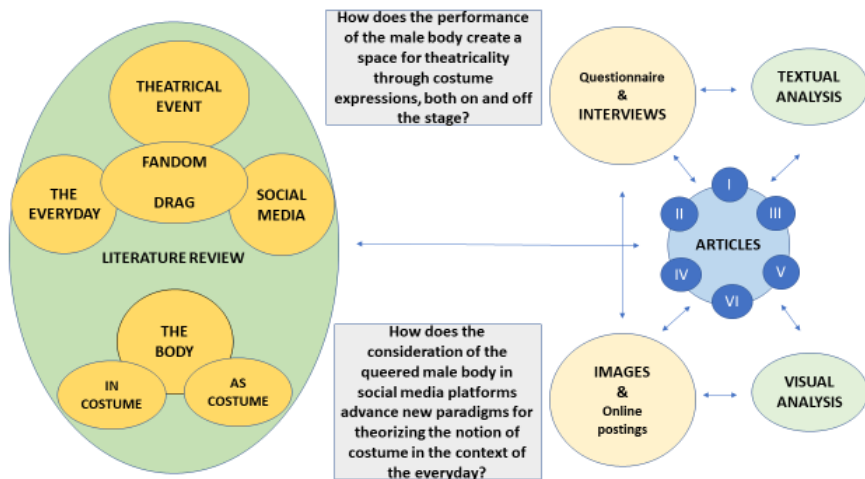


Figure 3: Research structure.

The following diagram (Figure 4) presents an overview of the methodological approaches that were used to analyse the research materials and which overall supported the research, and how these connect.

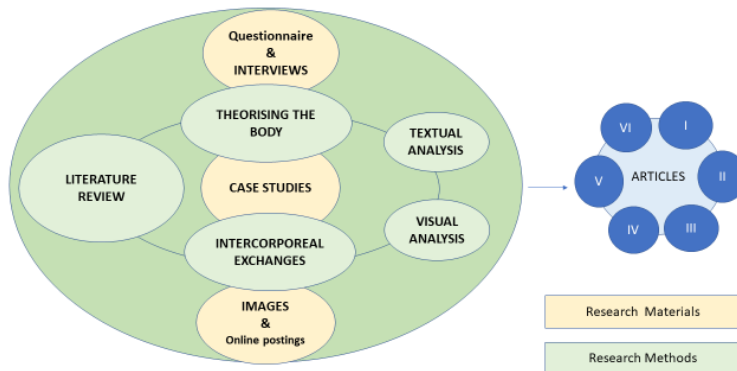


Figure 4: Research materials and research methods

1.3.2 Methods.

For the development of my research work I have used: 1) a broad literature review narrowing the choice of possible theoretical approaches; 2) data collection to determine case studies using surveys and interviews; and 3) analysis of social media representations to illustrate the research premise and draw conclusions. These three steps enabled a discursive approach, using theoretical text and images, to explore the construction of genderqueer meaning through costumes manifest in real and virtual environments apart from the stage, and how costume disrupts normative gender representation. I have gathered data using surveys and interviews, analysed images taken from social media platforms, and, using an auto-ethnographic approach, have drawn from my own lived experience. Parker-Starbuck and Mock (2011: 218) call this body-based research and write, ‘body-based researchers often “report” on these topics by investing their own lived experience, their memories and their muscular energies’.

A broad literature review covering the three main topics of research was crucial in framing this work. Following that, I narrowed and refined theoretical and methodological approaches through each of the six publications. The review covered key concepts including: representation, technology, social media, and the everyday. I also made good use of images to exemplify key points in each of the six

publications. While all of my published research texts bring in images to illustrate dress used as costume, Publications III to VI address specifically the image in social media.

The use of a combination of methodological approaches allowed me to study the queered male costumed body using inductive reasoning, making broad generalisations from specific observations. Drawing from Parker-Starbuck and Mock's model for researching bodily expression in the world of dance (2011), I have primarily used a combination of two of their methods:

- 1) Theorising the body: Cultural positioning of the body; interpretation of corporeal ideas and experiences; investigating researcher's own lived experience; negotiating between bodies absent and present; modelling non-fixed subjectivities.
- 2) Intercorporeal exchanges: Auto-ethnographic storytelling addressing absent bodies; collaboration that facilitates physical sensorial communication.

These two approaches allowed me to connect my own corporeal experiences to my research on performing/dressing up in the everyday world. Using my own experience as a reference, I constructed questionnaires and interviews to establish a strong relationship between my research questions, subjects of study and theoretical frame. This approach was also supported by the analysis of bodily experience through the work of theorists, Erving Goffman (1959), Marcel Mauss (1973) and Alan Read (1993).

The survey/questionnaire that I used (see Appendix 1 for the full questionnaire) served to collect background information about cross-dressing in Canadian football fandom (Publications I and II). The questions orbited around the fans' sartorial choices, asking if the activity was merely dressing up rather than an act of costuming. For the fans, it is evident, dressing up connotes an act of support rather than a theatrical gesture. The nuance led to further analysis in order to probe the representations and assumptions behind each. Dressing up or costuming male bodies is a recurrent theme in all six publications, however, each explores unique facets of the subject, as shown in Figure 1. Questions 1 to 12 of the questionnaire relate to the four images that were attached to it. Questions 13 to 18 ask how the theatricalised male body is read in the public realm in regards to normative gender practices.

Knowing how important the photographic image would be in Publications I and II, I sought access and was given permission to mine the official Saskatchewan

Roughriders Facebook page for images that best represented fan dressing. Also, with his permission, I used images from my case study of ‘Mike’ (the subject of Publication VI), an avid fan of dressing up and social media, whose online presence provided me with vivid material. ‘Mike’s images offered rich material for analysis of dressing up in the ambit of the everyday.

The Roughriders’ fans are best known in Canada for their solid devotion to the team and their extreme sartorial expressions when it comes to showing their loyalty: die-hard football fans, they love to dress up and sport the team colours wherever and whenever.³ I know this from personal experience: living a short distance from the stadium in Regina, Canada, I frequently saw fans before the game attired in team colours and performing mawkish female cross-dressing. Their display certainly expressed the fans’ love for the game and their team but I discerned that it might require a deeper reading to draw out other meanings that seemed to be under the surface. I decided that I wanted to look at such extravagant clothing through the lens of theatrical costume. Thus, the Roughriders’ fan base and their dressing practices became a meaningful case study through which to examine theatricalised apparel outside conventional theatre spaces and the costumed body’s role in subverting conventional gender representations.

From the sports field, I went on to explore examples of outlandish costumes posted online, where genderqueer individuals act out visions of themselves in carefully crafted performances for an audience of enthusiastic followers. Using Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest as display platforms, individuals manipulate and augment imagery into theatricalised expressions of gender, in which the body itself is the space of performance. Not surprisingly, online platforms provide a wealth of opportunities to conduct research on cross-dressing and how it signals important messages about politics, gender, sexuality, and equality.

For media performances of genderqueer identity, I turned to *RuPaul’s Drag Race*, the highly successful reality TV show organised around a competitive drag spectacle. My method was to analyse the shows with a critical eye to their complexity, skill and messaging, noting how the drag queens, both fans and contestants, through the manipulation of costumes and their own bodies,

³ A travel website presents the Roughriders’ fan base and their passion for the game expressed by dressing up to support their team: “It didn’t take long to find out that prairie football fans are entirely wacky, impossibly silly, ridiculously dressed folks who decorate their entire bodies – and often their homes – in Rider green and that they are incredibly and indisputably dedicated to their team. It’s fantastic.” <http://iimbverstravel.com/2017/12/02/footballs-wildest-proudest-and-most-passionate-fans-saskatchewans-rider-nation-loves-their-cfl-team/> Accessed 4 July, 2019

simultaneously contest and reinforce the gender conventions that are socially engrained.

Across all of the platforms considered, the following parameters were used to choose apt case studies:

- (1) costumes were created for non-conventional spaces (i.e. not theatres).
- (2) costumes were created by individuals who, while they publicly identify as male, are engaged in cross-dressing or wearing drag.
- (3) costumes were shared in internet postings (i.e. the person posting has a presence online).

These criteria led me to the co-founder of *The House of Disappointments*, whom I refer to as ‘John’. *The House of Disappointments* is a Helsinki-based creative amateur club-kid collective that was founded in 2017. It was formed from a desire to bring colour to everyday life in Helsinki⁴. Participants are young male cross-dressers who create bizarre and extravagant costumes for street display and competition. These events, once unique to Helsinki, are becoming increasingly international as the initiative takes hold elsewhere.

‘John’, a Facebook and Instagram user with a solid presence online, was originally part of a sample group of Facebook users who answered the questionnaire that I posted to collect data and examples appropriate to my research themes. He agreed to talk about his practice (hobby) and the images he posts of himself cross-dressing on these platforms. My interview with John fine-tuned the direction of my research questions and my methods of data collection and analysis. It also reinforced the need to widen the sample group. As a result, I approached a Canadian Facebook user, whom I had already been following for several years. I refer to him as ‘Mike’. An amateur cross-dresser who regularly posts images online, ‘Mike’ gave me permission to access his images for my research and agreed to complete the questionnaire and participate in an interview. The interviews with ‘John’ and ‘Mike’ were crucial in establishing social media as an integral part of the methodological toolbox for this research; all interviews and information exchanges were conducted through online platforms (Facebook and email).

As it turned out, following individuals who enjoy cross-dressing and disseminating their work on social media was an effective strategy for increasing

⁴ Interestingly, it was, and continues to be sponsored by an asset management company, Helsinki Capital Partners (HCP).

the breadth of the research. It allowed me to collect samples from users who share similar interests and to capture and interpret a sample community's views and actions as a knowledge system. To be precise, my method was to create a representative group drawing on my own Facebook friends (512). I invited all to answer the questionnaire. If every friend has, on average, an equal number of friends, a random and unbiased sample becomes possible since anyone from the 'friends of friends' category could answer the call. After a trial period of 11 months, I had received 35 responses, from which I randomly selected 20 per cent of the total of answered questionnaires. This 20 per cent became my research sample. Based on their answers to the questionnaire, two distinct categories emerged:

- 1) A first group, labelled 'observers' to distinguish them from those who post images, responded to a set of photographs and questions I provided. These individuals did not self-define as cross-dressers, drag artists, or extreme sports fans. They responded by Facebook or email correspondence. Their feedback helped to further shape the theoretical frame of the research.
- 2) A second group was labelled 'performers'. It included people who had experienced cross-dressing as performers or spectators (or both).

The data gathered served two purposes:

- 1) To guide the theoretical frame for the articles. Data collected defined the main focus of Publications I and II and pointed me in the direction of Eric Anderson's research on sports and masculinities (2005) and Amir Ben-Porat's research on fandom and football (2010) as major support literature.
- 2) To guide the elaboration of the interviews for Publications V and VI.

The next step was the interview process. I started with 'John' and 'Mike', initiating the process through arranging an informal conversational interview in the form of a Skype chat with each of them to introduce my research project and organise schedules. This was also my opportunity to meet them in a virtual face-to-face meeting. The exchange was important to establish the tone for what was to follow, namely informal interviews to collect, in their own words, personal experience of drag in environments outside the theatre. Based on Matt Alvesson's idea of a localist approach to interviewing, in which interviewees produce situated accounts that must be understood in their own social context (Alvesson 2003), I created unstructured interviews that allowed me to present open-ended questions focused on identified themes led by my three main topics of research (Dumay 2011).

This interview style provided the necessary relaxed but focused setting – a result of the Skype, FaceTime and email conversations that formed part of the interview process. The reason for conducting the interviews in this way was due to time differences between locations (Helsinki and Montreal, home bases of the interviewees; and Lethbridge, my own base at the time of interviewing). Interviews were carried out in a pressure-free environment, giving the interviewees flexibility to expand their answers as they wished. Each seemed to enjoy taking the time to answer at his own pace. The focus of each interview was aligned with the individual's style of crossdressing. For example, in John's case, questions constellated around his youth club, *The House of Disappointments*, and the members' imaginative approach to drag performance on the streets of Helsinki. In Mike's case, questions focused on his unique way of presenting himself in so-called domestic drag online from his home base in Montreal. Each talked freely about many aspects of their activities, describing everything from emotional investment, to philosophical stance, social interaction and personal opinion. In addition, each talked about how the overall aesthetic of presentation was developed. They both seemed to enjoy describing the process of choosing fabrics and accessories that create the desired appearance.

As images are a key element of my research (something I will address in more depth in the next section) and an important element in the theorisation of the body method of Parker-Starbuck and Mock (2011), I initiated each conversation by asking participants to describe in their own words the images they provided of themselves in drag. Both introduced their drag personas by describing their look in some detail. John's and Mike's initial descriptions of their dress fit what is generally understood in mainstream western society as feminine clothing or an exaggerated version of same.⁵ This includes the use of wigs, undergarments, make-up, shoes, accessories and millinery. Both their styles cover the gamut from glamourised femininity to period dress, frequently mimicking iconic popular culture references frequently inspired by *RuPaul's Drag Race*.

The next step was to analyse the interviews alongside the images and to set the key points in dialogue with the work of Marcel Mauss, Erving Goffman and Peter Boenisch, among others, key theorists related to my research. Observing and analysing John and Mike's dress choices and bodily gestures helped me develop a

⁵ I use this term mainly to refer to Euro-American sociopolitical conceptions of normative dress. Joanne Entwistle refers to such conceptions as 'something recognizable and meaningful to a culture' (Entwistle 2001: 33). It is also important to consider the fact that independent of culture, this concept tends to be fluid due to specific situational contexts.

sense-making structure from which to read each discrete situation. This was central to developing the writing for Publications V and VI.

1.3.3 The images.

How images work to affect moments of performance is key to my investigation. Posting pics of our own bodies online is highly symptomatic of our times and pertinent to this research. Thus, I have made considerable use of images found on social media, in which the representation of the body is controlled by the social media user and manifests as personal showcase or performance. The proliferation of what I call unrehearsed casual performances (recorded as selfies) provides a rich and open source archive of personal narratives. Each image is a form of theatre, a small performance that—through the feedback and comments posted in response—illustrates a palpable, if virtual, audience. On Facebook, for example, a like (or a negative emoji) is an effective feedback loop that sustains an ongoing interaction between the performer and spectator.

Erving Goffman writes that everyday performance can be thought of as ‘all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion, which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants’ (Goffman 1973: 15). This captures the exchange that operates in Facebook postings in which the image maker influences the viewer and vice versa—a fascinating reciprocity evident in every social media exchange.

Using Parker-Starbuck and Mock’s methods to study images as the material/virtual body in/as performance enables both the consideration of the cultural positioning of the body and its corporeal meanings and experiences, negotiating ‘between bodies absent and present’ through an ethnographic and corporeal approach to storytelling (Parker-Starbuck and Mock 2011: 214).

Section 1.3, The Research process, has mapped the research design, the methods and materials that explored the three interconnected lines of enquiry explored in the six research publications. Overall, the research design focuses on the interconnection of the components of the research work towards the answering of the two research questions: 1) how does the performance of the male body create a space for theatricality through costume expressions off the stage? And 2) how does

the consideration of the queered male body in social media platforms advance new paradigms for theorising the notion of costume in the context of the everyday

1.4 Definitions

I have set the following definitions in place in order to establish a ground for the exploration of theatrical expressions emanating from the domain of the quotidian, as well as to clarify my approach to certain themes of this thesis.

The body:

In my work, the body is more than the merely biological; it is a container of culture rather than of mere organs. Fully representational, the body is that which embodies the world. I understand embodiment through the writing of Tomas J. Csordas (1993: 135) ‘as a methodological field defined by perceptual experience and the mode of presence and engagement in the world’. The body is an emblematic entity and a semiological condition. For the body to be presented as a scenographic or theatricalised space, it is necessary to see it as the embodiment of representation channelled here through the notion of gender as a ‘gendered body’. It is a body that navigates between reality and representation in what Judith Butler (1988: 521), describes ‘as an active process of embodying certain cultural and historical possibilities, a complicated process of appropriation’ The body here is the bearer of meaning for gender construction and results, through costuming and gesture, in hyperbolic versions of man and woman. Similarly, when considering the queered male costumed body as an act of performance, queering renders the body as an abstraction and a deconstruction of style; a dramaturgical device that conveys many meanings simultaneously and ambiguously. The body itself becomes inextricable from the emblematic costume, effects theatricality, and presents an infinite array of possibilities.

Dress and costume:

The terms dress and costume, are frequently interchangeable in fashion, theatre and cultural studies. We understand dress as layers that cover and protect our bodies. That said, dress and the body are completely entangled with the production of meaning. Dress and costume are separate entities but they are read simultaneously: the first supports representation and the second is the representation.

Joanne Entwistle defines the dressed body as ‘not a passive object, acted upon by social forces, but actively produced through particular, routine and mundane practices’ (Entwistle 2001: 45). This underscores the difference between the material and metaphoric qualities of dress.⁶ She argues that dress is such a strong symbol of humanity that its removal has been used as a strategy for torture. At the moment that the body loses this cultural signifier, it loses its humanity and affiliation to community (Entwistle 2001). Indeed, individuals learn to belong to a community through dress. Highlighting the centrality of dress to our identities, gender, and sexuality, she suggests that costume can also act to homogenise difference (2001: xi). Put another way, dress transforms the body, but it frequently does so within the context of external social forces that discipline. She writes that ‘conventions of dress transform flesh into something recognizable and meaningful to a culture and are also the means by which bodies are made “decent”, appropriate and acceptable within specific contexts’ (Entwistle 2001: 33). In contemporary society, individuals may express themselves either individually or collectively through gender-bending representations that communicate dissent or subvert the status quo: drag is an example of such performative action. The body is the main actant, but together with dress, it forms a performance that is political and agential; it does something in the world.

Citing Elizabeth Goepp’s prescient desire for a distinct ‘philosophy of costume’ in 1928, critical costume scholars, Donatella Barbieri and Sofia Pantouvaki, note the lack of clarity between the terms but differentiate the use of dress in performance as ‘costume’. They write,

even the title of the field has suffered from a lack of clarity, something that Goepp draws attention to. She distinguishes between ‘theatre’ and ‘social’, exposing the word ‘costume’ as a generic term that could be applied either to clothing for the distinct moment of performance, or to that worn offstage in the everyday of social life. (Barbieri and Pantouvaki 2016: 3)

By separating it from the practice of dressing for the everyday, Barbieri and Pantouvaki reclaim ‘costuming as a preparation of the performer specifically for performance’ (2016: 4). Further, in the introduction to her book *Costume in Performance*, Barbieri views the material costume “as a crucial aspect of the preparation, presentation and reception of live performance, revealing the

⁶ An example is the expression ‘dressing for success’, which implies the existence of abstract guidelines that regulate power relations in society.

relationship between dress, body and human existence in a way that causes us to question the extent to which it co-authors the performance itself” (Barbieri 2017: xxii). She theorises the agency of costume, classifying it both as a material aspect of performance and as a live performance in its own right. Acknowledging the uncharted fields that a critical approach to costume is exploring, she suggests that new platforms for performance, such as social media and virtual environments, place costume front and centre as performance. She writes,

the process of the staged body becoming a site for artistic experimentation from the start of the early twentieth century has not precluded costume’s defining social interaction, individuality, and inner conflict. It has continued as it has done from millennia, to articulate an infinitely complex human nature through material and form. (Barbieri 2017: xii)

Aligned with Barbieri’s premise, the term costume is understood by Davis and Postlewait as the vehicle by which imagined authenticity—which refers to the quality of artifice that costume and theatricality share—is conveyed in the ambit of the everyday and explored by looking beyond mimetic realism.⁷ For performance designer Dorita Hannah, costume connotes both artefact (noun) and action (verb), highlighting costume design as an active practice and an ability to activate objects capable of dynamically intervening between the body and space (Hannah 2014: 15).

Rachel Hann (2017) states that costume is not the sole preserve of theatre or fashion, differentiating between costume as a function of personal style or playful creativity (costume parties, fancy dress, Halloween), and its function as a theatrical element. She distinguishes as well between professional costuming and what she calls fancy dress. Exemplifying the latter, she uses cosplay (in which participants wear costumes and fashion accessories to represent a pop cult character in minute detail), to argue that much interesting work has been dismissed by scholars who see it as a trivialisation of the traditional skills of costume design and construction for film, television and live theatre. However, Hann leverages cosplay to introduce the notion of ‘theatrical charge’ and to argue for costume’s ‘potential for subverting ongoing repetitions of body politics’ (Hann 2017: 5).

⁷ Davis and Postlewait use the term ‘mimesis’ to define theatricality as a word that contains multiple meanings; in one instance it is suggested that the term describes ‘the gap between reality and its representation’ (Davis and Postlewait 2003: 6).

Clothing is constitutive in creating identity but the body remains fundamentally central. Aoife Monks approaches the body as a theatrical device and connects it to the ability to create identity. In her book *The Actor in Costume*, Monks refers to costume as the means by which the spectator accesses the actor's body (Monks 2010). She places this body as a multifaceted one, which she defines more as a 'process' than as a material object. She writes,

we can't leave our context behind when we look at bodies, and actors can't leave their context behind when playing them. If we work with this notion of a body as a process, we can imagine actors emerging in various forms on the stage, depending on their historical context and aesthetic function within the theatrical event. (Monks 2010: 20)

Monks understands costume as a site where 'legitimate and illegitimate bodies are invented, formed and produced' (Maclaurin and Monks 2015: 108). Her definition resonates with my work through the understanding of the body as multi-dimensional, capable of gestures that transform it into scenographic ground. A body so understood is a mechanism for dramaturgical expression explicitly for an audience, not merely functioning in response to the vicissitudes of real life but active in creating a form of theatrical event. Monks implies that costume is a 'mechanism of the real' within a system that comprehends bodies as representational entities. In the experience of the everyday, costumed bodies amalgamate the ordinary with the extraordinary, operating simultaneously as metaphor and accessory—a theatricalisation of the person and the personal. She approaches the body as a theatrical device and connects it to the ability to create identity. Whether for the stage, the runway, the street, or the space of the internet, bodies and garments on bodies have profound narrative and scenographic qualities in regards to expressing, at the most basic level, character, location and time.

Gendered:

In this writing, the adjective 'gendered' describes how experiences, prejudices, or alignments to a sexual orientation are manifest in individuals, specifically referencing assumptions and normative representations of masculinity. The gendered body, here, refers to the male body characterised by dress or gesture derived from conventional representations of masculinity (or femininity) received through popular Western culture. This use of the term aligns with Judith Butler's conceptualisation of gender and desire in heteronormative-driven societies. She writes,

the cultural matrix through which gender identity has become intelligible requires that certain kinds of 'identities' cannot 'exist'—that is, those in which gender does not follow from sex and those in which the practices of desire do not 'follow' from either sex or gender. (Butler 1990: 24)

Following this line of thought, 'gendered' in my work particularly references the heterodox male body, the body that does not conform to orthodox standards or beliefs, but uses mainstream gender representations to a particular performative end.

Queer/Queered:

Two key terms, queer and queered, are used throughout this thesis. According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2016), queer refers to something that: (1) deviates from what is expected or normal; and (2) is odd, strange or unconventional, as in behaviour, eccentric. The term has an interesting provenance. Scholars Adam Geczy and Vicki Karaminas editors of *Queer Style* (2013) make mention of conventional definitions like the one cited above and add:

Queer as we define it, however, is that state of being and its visible incarnation that have embrace affectation and false creation as ends in themselves, in effect adjuring the distinction between thing and appearance, and embracing artifice, pretence and exaggeration over 'conformity' to an imaginary truth' (Geczy, Karaminas 2013; 1-2).

In the eighteenth century, eccentricity (*excentricité*) of apparel as a symbol of gender heterodoxy was connected to affectation and effeminacy, and exemplified by the *macaroni*, English men who, after exploring the continent, went to great lengths to show off their taste for outlandish foreign clothing. Geczy and Karaminas situate the origins of the word's current usage in the flourishing of the dandy as a sartorial icon in the late eighteenth century, and with homosexuality in the Victorian era when Oscar Wilde's eccentricity and notoriety of dress epitomised oddness and artifice, aligning him irrevocably with the queer aesthetic. They write,

the post-Revolution progeny of the macaroni is the dandy and, like the macaroni, is not expressly homosexual but blurs the lines of sexual orientation. It was only toward the end of nineteenth century that the aesthetic movement and the decadents, climaxing in the figure of Oscar Wilde, tightened the association. (Geczy and Karaminas 2013: 56)

Richard Dyer writes that between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries in Western society, the term ‘queer’ began to carry overtly unconventional sexual connotations,

there was a notion of sexual attraction between men characterized by three features: that such attraction indicated a sexual category to which a man either did or did not belong, that it went along with other non-sexual qualities and that it was humanly (morally, medically, socially) problematic. Men of this kind were queers (or fags, froci, poofs, Schwule, tapettes, etcetera). (Dyer 2002: 1)

Through the Stonewall riots (violent demonstrations by the gay community against a police raid on June 28, 1969, in Greenwich Village, Manhattan) and up to the current moment, gestures of dissent in regards to gender normativity have been frequently associated with flamboyant dress and linked to queer advocacy. In the 1980s, in relation to the AIDS crisis, queerness, defined by certain dress codes, marked the ownership of otherness, and was a way of expressing solidarity with the gay community. At the same time, the LGBT+ community reclaimed the term from its frequent use by the straight community as a pejorative gay slur, making it celebratory—a word that denoted a particular non-mainstream sexual orientation, as well as pride in a like-minded community. Judith Butler in *Bodies that Matter* (1993) expounds on the historical re-appropriation of the term. She writes,

the increasing theatricalization of political rage in response to the killing inattention of public policy-makers on the issue of AIDS is allegorized in the recontextualization of ‘queer’ from its place within a homophobic strategy of objection and annihilation to an insistent and public severing of that interpellation from the effect of shame. (Butler 1993: 178)

Geczy and Karaminas write that the meaning of queer had, by then, ‘permanently shifted into the realm of social and bodily types that do not conform to a model that is “straight”, namely heterosexual, conventional and middle class’ (Geczy and Karaminas 2013: 2).

Since that time, the term has been taken up critically by Judith Butler, among other theorists, who connect it to habitual social gestures and rituals of dress that irrevocably portray gender as normative or non-normative. She writes that gender ‘must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and

enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self' (Butler 1998: 519). Butler's work functions in this research as an ontological foundation for the study of gendered expressions in dress that germinate as mundane activity and then present as queerness.

The verb form, to queer, a form that is repeated throughout this thesis, connotes an action that gives agency, as in 'to queer something or someone.' To queer something is to take a look at its foundations and question them, to look at it through a lens that troubles it in some way.

Camp:

The notion of camp is notoriously unstable: it has a relationship to queerness, but does not always connote queerness. As an aesthetic, it suggests sophisticated, knowing amusement, as by virtue of its being artlessly mannered or stylised, self-consciously artificial and extravagant, or teasingly ingenuous, impertinent and sentimental. It has been, historically, another strategy to resist the normative in society through conspicuous dress spectacle. In *Out in culture*, (Ceekmur and Doty 2012), Ceekmur explains how camp works,

camp may have been the first intellectual (although highly aestheticized) approach to indicate the potential for gays, lesbians or bisexuals to reverse, or at least question, the terms of dominant cultural production and reading. (Ceekmur 2012: 2)

Although camp is not always connected to the questioning of gender stereotypes, the act of queering often uses camp as a medium for communicating its intent. Ceekmur explains that, 'camp has the ability to "queer" straight culture by asserting that there is queerness at the core of mainstream culture even though that culture tirelessly insists that its images, ideologies, and readings were always only about heterosexuality' (Ceekmur 2012: 3).

Homohysteria:

Important to my writing is the term 'homohysteria'—the fear of being homosexualised. The term recognises that social power is located within heterosexuality, and changing levels of homophobia can be understood as shifting formations of power pertaining primarily to inclusion of homosexuality (Anderson 2011, McCormack and Anderson 2014). Eric Anderson uses this term to explore

attitudes towards gender in the world of sports, where homosexuality is a liability that impedes the male athlete's potential for acquiring masculine capital. Although sports culture, and society in general, is changing and progressing towards an openness in claiming queerness—sports celebrities like American wrestler Anthony Bowens and Indian sprinter Dutee Chand came out and stated their identity as gay in 2017 and 2019 respectively—the label of homosexual for many athletes is still anathema. In the mid-1980s in North America, femininity in men was particularly problematic because it was seen to be evidence of homosexuality (Bird 1996). A wealth of research from this period shows that males thus had to distance themselves from homosexuality, socially and attitudinally (e.g. Derlega et al. 1989). Hence, males aligned their gendered behaviours with idealised and narrow definitions of masculinity (Connell 1995), which links to the idea of homophobia.

Performance:

In conventional western theatre, a performance implies a spectacle created on stage by a group of artists for the entertainment of an audience. This definition underscores the centrality, interconnectedness, and duality of performer and spectator.

In sociological terms, Erving Goffman uses the term performance to explain how individuals carry out everyday tasks. Regarding the presentation of the self in everyday life, Goffman defines performance as 'all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion, which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants' (Goffman 1959: 15). Implicit in Goffman's definition is the audience. For an action to be a performance, the gaze of another must be present. His work functions in this study to connect theatre and everyday performance with the notion of performing individuality, specifically queer and camp expressions of gender identity. I suggest that, in the age of social media, a private gesture, enacted merely with an implied audience in mind, is also a performance.

Marvin Carlson differentiates between doing and performing, bringing into play the notion of consciousness. He writes, 'the difference [...] would seem to lie not in the frame of theatre versus real life but in an attitude – we may do actions unthinkingly, but when we think about them, this brings in a consciousness that gives them the quality of performance' (Carlson 1996: 4). Critical here is the idea that enacting conscious action creates the expectation of a performance, and implies the expectation of audience. Carlson also draws on ethnolinguist Richard Bauman's concept of doubleness to elaborate his notion of performance. Bauman refers to the consciousness of doubleness, which reflects the individual's awareness of dramatising an action based on an ideal (Carlson 1996: 5). Borrowing Carlson and

Bauman's conceptual frame, I propose my own definition of performance as a gesture enacted by an individual who is aware of the doing of the action, and looking to achieve the idealised version of a remembered action for an audience that is either physically present or not.

Theatrical(ity):

As one of the main objectives of this research is to explore unconventional sartorial expressions of gender beyond theatre, it is important to define the word 'theatrical', a term repeated throughout this thesis. The term generally relates to activity onstage, as in 'making theatre'. Actions outside the stage are sometimes called theatrical due to their quality of exaggeration or artifice. The term is also used to define the gap between reality and its representation. As Davis and Postlewait state, it is also used to describe everyday reality that is exceeded by its representation (2003: 6). Consequently, an appropriate definition of theatrical[ity] comprises both on- and off-stage manifestations. They write that theatricality

is a mode of representation or a style of behaviour characterized by histrionic actions, manners and devices, and hence a practice...it is also an interpretative model for describing psychological identity, social ceremonies, communal festivities, and public spectacles.... Thus, to some people, it is that which is quintessentially the theatre, while to others it is the theatre subsumed into the whole world. (Davis and Postlewait 2003: 1).

For the purpose of this work, I concentrate on the intersection between Davis and Postlewait's take on theatricality and Goffman's view on the performance of the self in everyday life being a controlled behaviour (Goffman 1973)⁸. I propose to use theatricality as an action that takes consciousness and direction; in other words, it becomes dramaturgical – understood as taking on a sociological perspective on identity that employs a theatrical metaphor to explore issues of identity formation and reformation. As such, it also assumes a place, a moment, and an audience to whom the identity is being presented.

⁸ Erving Goffman's work focuses on the performance of the self in everyday life situations where a person involved in a social situation inevitably controls the impression others form of herself/himself.

The Mundane:

This research uses the ‘mundane’ to express the realm or ambit of the quotidian or the everyday. Although the word may allude to the ordinary or unremarkable, in fact what my several case studies show is a rather remarkable level of extraordinary individuality found in the mundane world.

Individuals, to a greater or lesser degree, follow established mores and rules that guide the collective enterprise. The extent to which these are followed wholesale or subverted and inverted make up the ambit of the everyday. Michel de Certeau describes the action of the everyday as a *bricolage* that individuals create by either conforming to or evading mechanisms of discipline. Everyday life is a system of interrelations that humans create with each other, defining a way of being in the world, endlessly renewing and negotiating between reality and desires, the mundane and the fantastical. These ways of operating constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users re-appropriate the space organised by techniques of sociocultural production (de Certeau 1988: xiv).

On the other hand, Henry Lefebvre explains the everyday as a contradiction between illusion and truth, power and helplessness: ‘the intersection of the sector man controls and the sector he does not control’ (2014: 43).

Alan Read explains the everyday as ‘the meeting ground for all activities associated with being human—work, play, friendship and the need to communicate, which includes the expression of theatre. Everyday life is full of potential’ (1993: 1). Read’s perspective informs mine in suggesting that theatricality, within the space of the everyday, is a generative way of thinking about new ways of making theatre and imagining gender.

2. Literature Review

This section provides an overview of sources I have made use of in developing my approach. They are grouped according to the three lines of enquiry of my research: (1) costuming expressions outside conventional theatrical spaces and practices; (2) the queered male costumed body; and (3) the theatricality of the everyday. Revealing this grouping shows how this interdisciplinary investigation is a subset within a larger field of study identified as critical costume studies.

As an introduction to non-normative representations of gender, and specifically masculinity through dress, I present a fragment of Walt Whitman's poem, 'I Sing the Body Electric', to illustrate how I think about costume in the ambit of the everyday. This poem (which is presented in Publication I) was instrumental in initiating this research.

But the expression of a well-made man appears not only in his face;

It is in his limbs and joints also, it is curiously in the joints of his hips and wrists;

It is in his walk, the carriage of his neck, the flex of his waist and knees—
dress does

not hide him;

The strong, sweet, supple quality he has, strikes through the cotton and flannel.

(Whitman [1855] 1900: 19)

Whitman wrote this poem in the 1850s as part of his book *Leaves of Grass*. His work was roundly criticised at the time, and this poem, in particular, was described as fleshy, sensual and obscene. What interests me in the lines quoted above is how Whitman perceives the male body as part of the world, a body that is explicitly gendered and commodified. In these few lines, his relationship with the sensual world is embodied through dress. Indeed, one senses how the sartorial gesture allows individuals to participate in society and to create emotional connections. Whitman considers the currency of dress from the viewpoint of one who takes

pleasure in the gaze, reflecting on the play of masculine muscle through clothing. The poem celebrates the act of the homoerotic gaze.

As a professional performer and as a gay individual, I often pondered spectatorship on and off the stage; how spectating affected me as a performer and how I, as a spectator, viewed the world around me. This led me to consider the performance of my own body, and the many readings and dramaturgical possibilities of which it was capable. Being a gay man in a culture dominated by the heteronormative matrix made me 'perform', consciously and unconsciously, blurring the line between my professional and personal life. As such, this experience was the impetus of my research and helped me define its main topics. I have built this literature overview section around these themes.

2.1 Performing bodies in the ambit of the everyday

Alan Read (1993) and Michel de Certeau (1984) have both written about the intersection of performance in the ambit of the everyday, and I draw heavily on their work. Their perspectives provide a theoretical frame through which I examine the male body as a material entity and as cultural marker or emblem of representation. At the same time, the body is able to be manipulated and commodified. De Certeau summarises this notion as follows:

The presence and circulation of a representation (taught by preachers, educators, and popularizers as the key to socioeconomic advancement) tells us nothing about what it is for its users. We must first analyze its manipulation by users who are not its makers. Only then can we gauge the difference or similarity between the production of the image and the secondary production hidden in the process of utilization (de Certeau 1988: xiii).

De Certeau's study of everyday practices describes the body as the embodiment of complex cultural indicators filtered through social norms and manipulated in a variety of ways. The manipulation is what he identifies as the act of representation.

Read also informs my research through the connection he makes with the everyday (in its digital and actual forms), stating that quotidian acts and gestures are theatrical, representational and generative of multiple meanings. He explains theatre, in relation to the everyday, as a perpetual feedback loop,

an almost infinitely redefinable arrangement of human expressions which are conscious, physical, verbal and witnessed. Each of these operations [...] are contingent upon what is culturally perceived as 'everyday life.' Theatre by definition is not this daily domain but an extra daily dimension, beyond the everyday but ironically dependent on the everyday real. It is the continual negotiation between theatre and its ground, performance and the quotidian (Read 1993: ix).

Of primary interest is the notion of 'the extra daily dimension'—a form of representational superfluity. It is in this area of excess, looped between quotidian and theatrical gesture, that I position my argument. In this space, drag produced in the sphere of the everyday (football stadium, Helsinki street and *RuPaul's Drag Race*) are held in the same moment. They do not form a binary opposition: rather they assert 'the need to think not of an inside or outside of theatre but the way theatre is in a dialectical relation to the quotidian' (Read 1993: 2). Read helps to consider the representational and performative qualities of everyday/unconventional and conventional theatrical expressions in relation to non-normative masculinity and gender identity, as I have exemplified in my writing.

I have also drawn extensively on the work of Peter Boenisch, whose research on spectating addresses the ways that performers and spectators relate to each other in theatrical forms such as immersive theatre, where the audience's interaction is key to the performance and has altered the way we experience theatre itself. Such forms of theatre, frequently situated in found locations (the material everyday), change the way traditional forms are evolving as much as the use of digital media has changed modes of spectating. This is due, in part, to 'the ever growing technical, and in particular the emerging digital reproducibility of images facilitated by mass media.' The more recent advent of new types of digital media which stylize themselves as 'social' media has today further pressed issues of spectating, media consumption and agency into the foreground' (Boenisch 2012: n p). Following Erica Fischer-Lichte, Boenisch attests that the gaze is no longer uni-directional, nor does it merely oscillate between poles (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 17). It is, rather, a dynamic loop that connects the stage and auditorium, the performers and spectators, the gazers and the gazed upon.

With help from these foundational writers, I attempt to explain how online interactions between individuals and the feedback (likes, thumbs up, emojis etc.) that follows each social media exchange can also be understood as theatre. Boenisch names the new modes and relationships of spectating 'relational dramaturgy.' His work is relevant to mine as he sees, in social media, new theatrical possibilities, ways to perform and to actively engage in spectating with no gap, only overlap. He

explains that ‘dramaturgic relations prompt us, in fact throw us back onto our own actions: they force us, the audience, to take ultimate responsibility as “acting agents,” for our own agency, for our actions *as spectators* in this world’ (2012).

This premise establishes a circular interaction between the role of the performer and the spectator: one affects the other. The outcome of such interactions depends on active participation reflecting people’s desire to be wholly present in digital media as part of everyday life interactions. As expressed by Niedzwiecki (2009), people simply want to see and to be seen - wherever.

2.1.1 Fandom and the theatrical event.

The boundaries of my research are defined by an examination of costume expressions in non-conventional spaces, and I place this in conversation with Eric Anderson, Amir Ben-Porat and Dennis Rook’s work on sports and hetero-normative sexual cultures. For example, I consider football fans’ sartorial manifestations in sports stadiums, and frame this within Anderson’s study of male athletes in relation to masculine capital and homophobia, exploring representations of male gender vis-à-vis social perceptions of masculinity (2005, 2011). Ben-Porat’s research explores the representation of hetero-normative gender in sports through the lens of fandom and fan behaviour (2010). Using Ben-Porat, I examine how arcane costume rituals turn a sport event (in this case, Canadian professional football) into a theatricalised spectacle, where the extravagant modes of display simultaneously interrogate, satirise or idealise gender normative clothing.⁹ Such rituals, the wearing of particular colours, symbols and, frequently, cross-gender dressing, generate a bond between male football fans and players through a common and largely unquestioned behavioural code that unifies those who populate the field and those in the bleachers. Drawing from Ben-Porat, I argue that the sartorial expressions are stylised performances that frequently invert masculine dress while underscoring important allegiances that come to make up a stable and effective fan identity. Instead of conventional male dress, and in contrast to the hyper-masculine football uniforms of the players, tinsel grass skirts, coconut brassieres, and watermelon helmets are worn by dedicated fans. In this manner, through extravagant dress and gesture, male sport fans queer their own bodies, simultaneously expressing a powerful

⁹ As I discuss representation and theatricality, I take Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait’s idea of presenting such gestures as a “failure” of mimesis to produce a true likeness. They write: ‘Just as theatricality has been used to describe the gap between reality and its representation—a concept for which there is a perfectly good and very specific term, mimesis—it has also been used to describe the “heightened” states when everyday reality is exceeded by its representation’ (2003: 6).

identification with their team, their pals and the larger community. Such rituals connect fans to teams within a socio-cultural surrounding, on emotional, cognitive, and symbolic levels, and frequently these affiliations last a lifetime (Ben-Porat, 2010). Within the performative space of the sports arena, the fans' material body is read in relation to their representational or costumed body, signalling an identity and gender that are never quite stable, instead are always under construction. So too, where the event is located is concurrently read as both a sports venue and a gender-transgressive space. Such complexity, according to Ali Maclaurin and Aoife Monks, asserts the intricate and contradictory relationship that allows body and costume to mask and/or unmask 'the very conditions by which identity is formed, performed and imagined on the stage and in the street' (2015: 107), or, for that matter, in the sports venue.

Furthermore, Dennis Rook suggests that, in associating with hyper-masculine sports teams, male fans gain surplus masculine capital. What is putatively acquired through the exaggerated, often feminised costuming and ritualised gestures is done in service of the team, transforming the whole into a performance of masculinity and subservient admiration. Dennis Rook qualifies this as a dramaturgical enactment that shapes mundane interactions (Rook 1985). Basing his premise on Erving Goffman's use of a dramaturgical model as a metaphor for the study of human interaction in the ambit of the everyday, he explains such gestures through the four elements that comprise the experience: ritual artefacts, ritual script, ritual performance roles and an audience (Rook 1985). In the case of the football fans, the sartorial elements may be interpreted as ritual artefacts, performing both allegiance and gender otherness.

Following this trope, Anderson's research on sports, masculine capital and the concept of homophobia has helped me to explain how gender can be read, at this moment in time, in the transgressive nature of the football stadium. He writes that shifts in heterosexual men's gendered regimes reflect the denial or acceptance of homosexual otherness in any given social order or designated space. According to Anderson, homophobia is the fear of being thought of as homosexual because of behaviour that is typically considered gender atypical. He writes: 'men will typically position themselves away from femininity to show that they are not feminine and therefore not gay' (Anderson 2011: 87). This also explains how professional sports grant immediate masculine capital to male athletes and, by association, to fans—simultaneously allowing individuals to transgress gender rules without any threat to their masculine status (Anderson 2005). In order to bond to the dominant figures on the playing field, the fans acknowledge, through feminised costume, the hyper-heteronormativity of the team players (Anderson 2011). Such gender inversions function like a scenographic device, dramatising the self-emasculation of fans'

bodies without diminishing their masculine capital. Masculine capital is reified in the costume, a language that is powerfully understood within the bounds of the football arena. Anderson stresses that while the notion of homophobia shifts from generation to generation and culture to culture, it is an important tool in understanding gender representation and is useful in working through the nuances of costume, dress and drag in relation to sport.

2.2 The costumed gendered body.

Drawing from Judith Butler's readings on gender and subversive identities (1990) and her considerations of the subversiveness of dissident sexualities (1993), I understand the body as emblematic and representational, not merely flesh and blood. For the body to be considered as a scenographic or representational space in its own right, it is necessary to see it as the embodiment of history, social conventions and cultural determinations. Bodies are also marked and policed by gender expectations and modes of discipline. As such, they serve as a catalyst for navigating between reality and representation. Butler describes the gendered body as 'understood to be an active process of embodying certain cultural and historical possibilities, a complicated process of appropriation' (1998: 521). The body works as a bearer of meaning for gender constructions articulated through mundane expressions resulting from social relations and cultural conventions. These conventions have ascribed labels to bodies, such as 'man' or 'woman'. The ratification through history of a gender binary made by normative social forces and institutions has also brought with it the idea of gender stereotypes or persistently received ideas. Butler writes:

insofar as heterosexual gender norms produce inapproximable ideals, heterosexuality can be set to operate through the regulated production of hyperbolic versions of man and woman. These are, for the most part, compulsory performances, ones which none of us choose, but each of us is forced to negotiate. (Butler 1993: 181)

Bodies conform to or, as Butler states, negotiate compulsory performances of gender. However, bodies that perform outside the norm mediate gender differently, struggling to find a place within socially acceptable discourse. Out of necessity, humans being humans, and gender being unstable, this situation has resulted in alternative perspectives in which queerness is designated as a space for nonconforming identities. While the binary persists, the notions of queer, queerness and queering have been a catalyst for the revisioning of normative heterosexuality.

However, the term queer has also perpetuated the binary by acknowledging its legitimacy. Within the scope of the theatrical event, the queer or queered body has become a complex abstraction, a mis/representation of the male gendered body.

While Butler's writing on gender and identity is fundamental here, I look to scholarship that connects more directly with the idea of the costumed male body, that is, the dressed body on display in diverse performance contexts. Fashion scholarship has proved insightful. Specifically, Adam Geczy and Vicki Karaminas explore the concept of the queered body in relation to clothing, offering queer fashionability as a tool for dismantling binaries in historical and contemporary lifestyles. They write that,

queer is the notion that sets out to dodge, undermine, parody and ultimately eradicate the hetero-homo binary, which is an imposed binary. We argue that through style and dress, one can begin to uncover queer less as a category or system and more as a dynamic of slippage, a site of renegotiation, undermining, overstatement and reinstatement. (Geczy and Karaminas 2013: 3)

Writing twenty years before Geczy and Karaminas, Butler also argued for the subversive nature of drag, positing that it functions 'to the extent that it reflects the mundane impersonations by which heterosexually ideal genders are performed and naturalized and undermines their power by virtue of effecting that exposure' (Butler 1993: 176). Butler has similarly suggested the productive slippages and intersections to be read through the performance of gender in drag expression. She writes:

It may seem, however, that there is a difference between the embodying or performing of gender norms and the performative use of discourse. Are these two different senses of 'performativity,' or do they converge as modes of citationality in which the compulsory character of certain social imperatives becomes subject to a more promising deregulation? (1993: 176)

Drawing from a growing critical engagement with costume studies, Maclaurin and Monks also embrace Butler's premise that costume (drag or otherwise) simultaneously produces, reinforces, or deconstructs identity, writing that 'costume does complex and ambivalent work in performance, and may fix and unsettle categories of identity all at once' (2015: 109). Monks addresses identity and the body as a system of absences and presences where each case reflects the anxieties, fantasies and desires of the social moment. She addresses cross-dressing as a

specific case—a point that resonates with my research. She asserts, ‘the bodies that don’t appear can point to a culture’s fears about certain kind of identities’ (Monks 2010: 80).

Rachel Hann also discusses costume vis-à-vis normative dress within systems of fashion, identifying costume as being agentic or able to do something more. Building on Butler’s reflections on drag and the imitative structure of gender, she asserts costume’s difference lies in its resistance to the discipline of normative dressing as codified by a fashion system (Hann 2017).

All the authors mentioned here take up the body as a site of cultural renegotiation, and provide a better understanding of the way costumes ‘hug’ the body, both on and away from the stage (Hann 2017).

2.3 The representation of the represented

Since prehistoric times, apparel has primarily protected us. Over time, clothing, has also been understood as an intrinsic element that has shaped our interaction with others by reflecting the status and gender of the bearer (Miller-Spillman 2012). With advances in manufacturing technology around the late middle ages in Europe, society recognised, in the trade of textiles, a commercial worth—and the fashion industry was born. These advances accelerated the growth of textile manufacturing and its highly profitable trade across Europe. From the 1300s to the 1500s, merchants became ‘middle men’ by selling fibre and buying it back as cloth. Thus, a new economic class began to not only earn a living but thrive. People could buy material and clothing that would reflect the status they wanted to portray and merchants could cater to these desires (Tortora and Marcketti 2015).

In present times, the value of the international fashion industry is measured in the trillions of dollars. Through the exponential growth of this industry, the portrayal of gender has been visualised and aestheticised, becoming reified as a main marketing tool for fashion, and showing us what gender could and should look like. As stated by Elizabeth Wilson and Joanne Entwistle (2001), marketing has made fashion the main lens from which we perceive gender and the male dominated fashion industry the major manipulator of the gaze. Wilson posits, ‘fashion, particularly as it is laid out in the fashion magazine, is obsessed with gender’ (Wilson and Entwistle 2001: 39). This obsession fixes the gaze as an ideological tool to discipline the body and to impose the heterosexual matrix upon it. Susan Bordo explains how women’s bodies have been objectified through advertising,

thereby becoming the object of what has come to be known as the male gaze, driving consumerism and advancing the unattainable aims of fashion. She writes,

the perfect images of beautiful women are setting men up for obsession and failure too. For just as the beautiful bodies subject us women to (generally) unrealizable models of the kind of female we must become in order to be worthy of attention and love, they also subject men and boys to unrealizable models of the kind of female they must win. (Bordo 1999: 285)

The commercial film industry has been entirely complicit in the reification of gender. Film theorist Laura Mulvey, in her article ‘Visual pleasure in narrative cinema’ (1975), argues that most popular movies are filmed in ways that satisfy masculine scopophilia. Although sometimes described as the ‘male gaze’, Mulvey’s concept is more accurately described as a heterosexual, masculine gaze. Following Mulvey and Bordo’s thinking, the male gaze in Western society has defined hetero-normal gender roles within the aesthetic realm. Mulvey characterises this phenomenon, noting the persistent flow of sexual power, or subjective power difference, within which the gaze has been defined by the active/heterosexual male and passive/female dichotomy. In reference to narrative film of the twentieth century, she writes: ‘women displayed as sexual object is the leit-motif of erotic spectacle; from pin-ups to strip-tease, from Ziegfeld to Busby Berkeley, she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire’ (Mulvey 1999: 837).

In the case of the fashion industry, the dynamic of the heterosexual male gaze drives the consumer dynamic, promoting the male/female binary central to its operational core. However, in the 1970s, the media introduced a representational shift that objectified the male body through an overtly female gaze. A critical moment was when American actor Burt Reynolds appeared naked in the centerfold of *Cosmopolitan* magazine in April 1972. Perhaps for the first time, Western heterosexual society experienced the objectified and commodified male body in the service of the fashion consumer industry (Bordo 1999). This performative gesture¹⁰ perhaps did little to change the ubiquitous objectification of women’s bodies in mediated culture; yet it drew attention to the pleasure of gazing at not only the female but also the male body, and pointed to the current moment in which looking as a pastime seems to consume every waking moment.¹¹

¹⁰ Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson present the act of looking from the other side, and being placed as the object of the gaze, as ‘fundamentally performative’ (Jones and Stephenson 2005: 273).

¹¹ It is noteworthy that before this instance, in the 1940s, Bob Mizer established the Athletic Model Guild (AMG) along with the magazine *Physique Pictorial*, which published nude images of athletes with a heavily homoerotic

From the end of the twentieth century, the internet and its attendant social media platforms have largely overtaken print media, expanding the ways we perform and perceive gender in the ambit of the everyday. Through Instagram, Facebook, Tinder, etc., we present and represent ourselves to the world in whatever way we choose, making the line between reality and representation indiscernible. Media platforms provide users with the ability to establish idealised representations that stand in for the authentic image and to present it as the real one. John R. Suler, a psychologist who researches online behaviours, describes it in this way:

People can materialize within cyberspace the intrinsic human desire for their own perfect individuality, which can become a goal to motivate true personal growth or simply turn it into a pretense of unrealistic phoniness. People cannot easily tell the difference between the two. (Suler 2016: 29)

Furthermore, images mediated through apps that boost the aesthetic of the image give the viewer a manipulated representation of reality—in other words, a dramaturgically enhanced performance of the everyday self. Thus, the real and the mediated (or theatricalised) exist in parallel universes within the ambit of the everyday. Living in a social media-driven society, we are everywhere immersed in representations of bodies. The conundrum lies in that, while we all want to see and to be seen in the world of internet interaction, we are equally concerned with the idea of anonymity. Suler identifies this as the disinhibition effect. When people interact online, they frequently express concern about online privacy. At the same time, they are uninhibited when sharing intimate personal details. He writes that individuals say and do things in cyberspace that they would not ordinarily say or do in the face-to-face world (Suler 2015: 96). Obviously, the material everyday is not the only space in which we negotiate our own identities. What is so appealing about cyberspace? The draw, Suler opines, lies in how it allows the individual

to express who he or she truly is, something less than who that person is, something more, or something entirely different. How much can you hide about yourself in a particular environment? How much can you transform yourself, in either a positive or negative way? (Suler 2016: 27)

tone (Waugh 1996). Although this early example was probably the first attempt to objectify the male physique, it did not have the impact on consumerist society at large that *Cosmopolitan* magazine had in terms of dissemination and social impact.

When we create images online, we are those images. The images are no longer the representation of the real, rather they are the representation of our idealized self - like a costume that performs, 'that gives expression to some underlying anxiety, wish or ideal' (Suler 2016: 199).

Of course, images, whether painted, photographed or filmed are artificial, and manipulated; they have never been representations of reality. However, Ana Peraica observes how the image may yet reveal an excess of meaning. Examining the selfie in relation to formal portraiture within the field of representation, self-reflection, self-presentation and self-promotion, she suggests that 'photography, as a medium, had managed to show the hidden, oppressed, and the traumatic in reality itself, becoming a proper technology of embodiment' (Peraica 2017: 27). In this scopic moment, reflecting the ubiquitous mode of self-imaging, the image is a parallel reality, something aimed at or desired; something which one wishes to effect or attain.

2.3.1 The body and social media

In the 21st century, digital social networks' semi-anonymous platforms offer spaces in which identities are presented to playful and subversive ends, and tensions of authenticity and artificiality exemplify the intersection of theatre and gender identity. Performing in cyberspace is both an everyday event and a performative gesture, involving an identity proposition and effecting an outcome. In the latter instance, the action is a step towards the dismantling of the gender binary perpetuated by the orthodox male gaze.

In cyberspace, we are surrounded by what Niedzviecki calls 'peeping', which has changed our interactions with others, making the private public. Closely monitoring people's social media postings, we participate in highly charged voyeuristic activities. Sharing photos, videos, messages or comments in cyberspace, we anticipate online responses that may lead to actual encounters. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and Tinder allow us to take part in or peep into, other people's lives. Niedzviecki summarises thus:

Peep coalesces the sensibility of twenty-first-century techno society into a never-ending spectacle of bodies and sounds bared in the name of entertainment, self-betterment, and instantaneous recognition. Peep is a

portal into a collective consciousness no longer content to sit on the sidelines and watch. We want to do. (Niedzviecki 2009: 18).

A prime indicator of this behaviour is the ubiquitous posting of selfies.¹² These have become a focal performative act in our lives: we reconstruct our past, present and future through Instagram, Pinterest and Facebook, where the activity of ‘cyber-voyeurism’ predominates. We don’t just post a picture, we stage it by adding backgrounds, captions, and movements. While preparing such pictures, we costume our bodies to enhance our appearance or otherwise mediate the specific moment through filters and backgrounds, turning it into a larger-than-life performance; the digital trappings are emblematic, much like a costume that performs a function on stage. Hence, we dramaturgically arrange our bodies to perform for an expected audience. Through selfies, social media users create a parallel reality, in which the body functions as a performance to be gazed upon and desired. At the same time, those who are posting also desire to gaze (Niedzviecki 2009). Thus, a dialectic is formed in which the gaze goes back and forth: this exchange permeates cyber society. Niedzviecki explains,

today we’re all happily peeping away, seemingly free of social approbation. Governments, corporations, friends, and family all tell us (for different reasons) that it’s okay to peep over the fence and see what’s going on with the neighbors, particularly if what the neighbors are up to could in any way be constructed as scandalous, scurrilous, seditious, or sexual—something entertaining enough to attract the millions of viewers up for grabs. Meanwhile, the neighbors are doing what they’re doing precisely because they know that they are being watched. Just as we are willing voyeurs—no one forces us to look—they are willing performers ... neither stopping to think about what’s happening and why (Niedzviecki 2009: 19).

Niedzviecki conceptualises digital or online peeping as a portal into collective consciousness, the set of shared beliefs, ideas and moral attitudes that operate as a unifying force within society. While they may serve as collective commons, online platforms also provide an opportunity for theatricality embodied in sartorial representations of gender identity, queered identity and drag. They are

¹² In her book *Culture of the Selfie: Self-representation in Contemporary Visual Culture*, Ana Peraica explains the phenomenon of self-representation better known as ‘the selfie’. She writes: ‘By correlating technology of recording a personal self-portrait to the relationship to oneself, as direct self-knowing, indirect self-mirroring, or avoidable and superficial self-inventing, it is possible to grasp more meanings of contemporary culture hidden behind any distributed image of the self, in terms of the technology of self-representation. And that is from where the need to self-record arrives, in the need to stabilize the meaning of the self.’ (Peraica 2017: 51).

liminal/transgressive spaces akin to the football stadium or urban sidewalk, functioning as a performance environment. They are both a scenographic site apart from the traditional stage and a critical platform for examining the theatre of the everyday. Peep culture has facilitated modes of queer and hetero-normative representation, making them more complex and nuanced and the line between doing and watching evermore blurred.

3. Research Publications

In order to address the concept of the body in costume and the body as costume in the context of the everyday, I have written six publications exploring the costumed male body as an emblematic device that works to subvert normative gender representation. Using diverse methods and materials as well as a variety of theoretical perspectives, as described in the previous sections, all the articles converge around the notion of the body as a scenographic space that is theatrical but not of the conventional theatre. Instead, I look to spaces that might be considered everyday, or within the ambit of the real; I also consider digital platforms that extend the everyday into cyberspace.

Looking to diversely costumed male bodies has provided me with valuable insights and contributed much to my understanding of theatricality and how bodies in costume make meaning in relation to gender in everyday spaces and social circumstances. The argument that follows from these examples suggests that the body is objectivised and spatialised through costume, and is itself made a performance platform. José Gil defines the space of the body as ‘the result of the objectivization of the body in space, an objectivization that itself results from the action of the body—of the singular body, organized in particular fashion—on space and that finishes up by spatializing space’ (Gil 1998: 123).

Gil’s definition functions as a summary of my view on the body in costume and as costume and it also serves as the perfect introduction to the six publications that explore the body not as material but as a space for theatricality that is constructed critically through the lens of costume.

3.1 Publication I

‘Is that a watermelon on your head or a basket of fruits? Orthodox masculinity in sports and the paradoxical erotic experience of the Roughriders male fans’ drag expressions’

In Publication I, I look to the football field (i.e. the Canadian Football League) and the extraordinarily expressive costumes worn by the fans who regularly

inhabit the space of the game. Here, the spectator bleachers are a place of theatricalised display for the performance of unorthodox masculinity—men dressed up as women. The term ‘homohysteria’ is introduced, functioning as a key theoretical point in the examination of the normative male body operating abnormally in orthodox society, where negative attitudes around overt expressions of homosexuality frequently persist. This book chapter proposes that by theatricalising gestures of public cross-dressing, society normalises what it considers unconventional or deviant. The costumed male body and its inherent theatricality in relation to the world of football fandom offers a prime opportunity to examine how costume in everyday circumstances speaks to gender difference. Exploring the football fans’ costumes within the context of the football field, and the performative space created by their cross-dressed bodies, I analyse the interaction that takes place in these spaces through the lens of the theatrical event.

The football field is a space generally identified with normative dress and heteronormative male social behaviour. However, the fans of the Canadian Football League’s Saskatchewan Roughriders frequently present in oddball amateur drag; their rituals and gestures read as codified expressions of gender, borrowed from exaggerated female stereotypes. At the same time, these outlandish outfits are worn to celebrate the hyper-masculinised players on the field.

As theoretical frame, I draw from several scholars who focus on fandom. For example, Eric Anderson’s research (2005) on gender identity, social agency and sports is formative. Anderson explores the acquisition or loss of masculine capital through the performance of gender in regards to male athletes and their fans. The Roughriders’ fans show a deep connection with the athletes both on and off the field, and this is generally associated with, according to Anderson, the markers of orthodox masculinity that the players—through their well-honed musculature, Lycra and protective padding—exhibit. What is notable here is that the fans choose feminine dress to express their devotion.

According to Amir Ben-Porat, when the fan in the bleachers performs masculinity through costuming, a strong symbolic relationship occurs with the player on the field. The fan’s body reifies a theatrical moment or surface on which to perform masculinity. Drawing from Ben-Porat’s theory of fandom and identification (2010), I contend that dressing up is a signifier of identity, through which the body itself is a space to present or perform who we are (or desire to be) via the ritual of dressing and the cathartic experience of the game. The symbolic relationship formed with the players offers the possibility of acquiring or sharing masculine capital or, at least, assuming another identity through player affiliation. In the football stands, the ritualised representation of gender, either hyper-masculine

or stereotypically feminine, enacts a performance that begs to be read critically alongside more overt forms of drag.

I also draw on the thinking of Martyn Percy and Rogan Taylor, who explore football as a metaphor for religion and address its relationship with ritual, performance and crowd expectation. They analyse the dynamics of tribalisation embedded in the game, notions of hyper-masculinity, celebrations of heroes, and rituals of clothing and body painting that help fans create an affective connection with the team (Percy and Taylor 1997). Colours, costumes, chants, etc., are a sign of intense emotional involvement and team identification. Although originating in the world of sport, these acts have undertones of theatrical performance. In them, one recognises the aesthetic choices inherent in the ornamentation of bodies to create scenographic space.

I also find inspiration in the work of Denis W. Rook (1985), who contends that ritual functions are a mechanism to include or exclude individuals from membership in a community of interest. Ritualistic behaviour is here exemplified by the use of the body in repeated performative dramatisations in honour of a sports team. Ritual, he explains, is a language of the body that functions symbolically, thereby facilitating interpersonal interaction that carefully distinguishes between those who belong and those who do not. Rook cites four categories of the ritualistic event: ritual artefacts, ritual script, ritual performance, and ritual audience (2016: 58–59). Looking at Roughriders fans, one is struck by the rehearsed, theatrical gestures and the call-and-response vocalisations within the collective, which closely follow Rook's model. The tribal performances of the fans exhibited through dress, makeup, repeated gestures and anthems are highly performative, creating a vibrant interactive performance space in the stands of the football stadium. Of course, as humans, we have an innate need to belong: bonding through clothing is one way to achieve a sense of collective identity. We follow fashion trends to show allegiances with style setters or ideological leanings, wear national dress to proclaim citizenship, or dress in team colours to show loyalty. These signifiers are intensely emblematic and symbolic to the group and equally meaningful to those outside the group.

The chapter concludes that the football event is a ritualised enactment of gender(s) achieved through the act of dressing up. The normative gender binary represented by the hyper-masculinity of the players in the field and the fans' identification with femininity through costume expressions creates dramatic tension. The fans achieve a sense of belonging through the theatricalisation of their

own bodies, promoting both collective values and a strong sense of individualism. Through theatricalisation, the space of the game is made both concrete and abstract.

3.2 Publication II

‘The rough riders: An exploration of theatricality, masculinity, identities and voyeurism in Canadian football’

Growing out of and continuing the focus on the Saskatchewan Roughriders’ fan base, Publication II explores masculinity and non-normative gender identity in the football fans’ dress rituals. This article proposes that the act of dressing up in drag regalia turns the fan’s body into a scripted event, in which outrageous drag and voyeurism form a theatricalised space, where representations of hyper-masculinity on the field are staged alongside stereotypical feminine dress in the stands. The article further explores Eric Anderson’s ideas, specifically homohysteria and the acquisition of masculine capital gained by the fans through their unorthodox costuming and their relative proximity to the football players.

The article poses two questions:

1. If orthodox masculinity is reified through the hypersexualised figure of the football player, what do the ambiguous displays of gender manifested by the male fan represent?
2. If the space of the football stadium represents a multitude of perceived, conceived and lived meanings in the Lefebvrian sense, how does it operate to liberate self-expression through vying displays of masculinity?¹³

The methodology here is grounded in the close analysis of photographs posted online by fans and taken from online sources (Facebook and Instagram). Through surveys and an online questionnaire this method provides information and opinions regarding concepts like costuming and dressing up, sartorial rituals and the materiality of such rituals, choice of colour, form and ornamentation, as well as face and body makeup. This analysis attempts to read levels of theatricality in everyday

¹³ Lefebvre’s argument in *The Production of Space* (1992) is that space is a social product or a complex social construction based on values and the social production of meanings, which affects spatial practices and perceptions.

dress, more specifically, in hyperbolic costuming expressions. It also addresses issues of spectatorship.

The images exemplify dress that ranges from everyday clothing manifesting the official colours of the team to flamboyant gender-bending expressions typically considered feminine, which are worn by male fans as a ritualistic badge of honour. These artefacts, according to Percy and Taylor's research on rituals and sports (1997), serve to distinguish the real fan from a mere spectator and create an affective connection with the players and the field. I also lean on Pedro Dionisio's (2008) work on fandom and tribal behaviour to examine fan rituals as acts of affiliation and I reiterate Dennis Rook's description of the fans' ritualistic and symbolic expressions as dramatically scripted. Both approaches—Percy and Taylor's along with Pedro Dionisio's—bring front and centre the analysis of the body 'in costume' and the body 'as costume'. Also, Publication II brings forward from Publication I the four elements of ritualistic behaviour, which help to further explore the theatrical event in the context of the everyday (ritual artefacts, ritual script, ritual performance, and ritual audience).

The article concludes that this event with all of its nuances—audience and players in the field—generates a ritualised enactment of otherness in a hyperbolic display of eroticism, expressed via acts of costuming, in a space charged with theatricalised representations of gender.

3.3 Publication III

'The RuPaul effect: The exploration of the costuming rituals of drag culture in social media and the theatrical performativity of the male body in the ambit of the everyday'

This book chapter examines drag as it occurs in informal displays and in comparison to professional drag in the world of professional entertainment. The context for this comparative analysis is the TV reality show *RuPaul's Drag Race*, and its highly theatrical and compelling contestants. Of particular note is the fans' overwhelming response to the show's extravagance. Many of the show's avid followers create flamboyant costume responses and present them on Instagram and Facebook. Looking at the contestants who aggressively fight for recognition (and to compete another day) wearing spectacular drag, I consider the representation of their bodies in drag through processes of dissemination and commodification, focusing on the shift from drag as a transgressive act used to undermine orthodox gender

binaries, to something less potent and agential. A statement in the article's introduction illustrates the main argument: the commodified queered costumed male body presented in shows like *RuPaul's Drag Race* and all the social media coverage promoted by RuPaul's alumni and fan base on several online platforms raises the concern of drag transforming from a historically dissent-driven strategy into a trivialized and depoliticized representation of gender. (Sandoval 2018: 100)

Based on this premise, the chapter examines drag as a theatrical performance vis-à-vis its role on and off the stage as a strategy for resistance. The argument is guided by Marjorie Garber's examination of cross-dressing as a theatrical form that operates representationally (1997). Additionally, key to this chapter is Esther Newton's argument (1979) on the professionalisation of drag as subculture and its ambivalent position in society. She suggests that 'insofar as female impersonators are professional drag queens, they are evaluated positively by gay people to the extent that gay people are willing to oppose the heterosexual culture [...] On the other hand, they are despised because they symbolize and embody the stigma' (Newton 1979: 101).

The chapter examines the structure of the reality show, its contestants and its message. The first section, 'The Queer Costumed Male Body', looks at the connection between appearance and the theatricality of the male body by exploring the term 'Muscle Mary', a term used by gay men to describe a man who dresses or looks 'masculine' due to his physicality but behaves ambiguously. This term serves to explore representations of gender and gender roles in relation to the heterosexual matrix.

The next two sections of this publication, 'Cyber Drag' and 'The Male Costumed Body and its Inherent Theatricality,' explore the show's presence on social media and its effects on its fan base. Such dissemination raises two questions:

- 1) Is the show creating an illusion of ordinariness and acceptance in society?
- 2) Are drag representations of femininity a representation of an ideal and the perpetuation of dress normativity?

These questions also set the tone for Publication V and its themes of commodification and etiolation.

As a conclusion, Publication III recognises that drag on and off the stage has long been part of a marginalised queer demographic and as such is an important gear within the machinery of that society. The current and ubiquitous spread of images from RuPaul's show into the straight world reduces the stigma associated with what was seen, among the majority, as deviant but simultaneously decreases its power as an agent of change due to its promotion of heteronormative ideals regarding gender. This creates the illusion of ordinariness through the repeated display of extravagant gender performances across the internet, identified here as 'the RuPaul effect.'

3.4 Publication IV

‘RuPaul’s Drag Race: A study in the commodification of white ruling-class femininity and the etiolation of drag’

Publication IV continues the examination of *RuPaul’s Drag Race* through social media expressions focusing on the body in drag and the mechanisms of commodification in this highly successful show. Caroline Hodes and I, as co-authors, examine the manipulation and commodification of the body in drag, looking at how the trickledown effect crystalises into amateur renditions depicted on social media platforms. This underscores how drag, which is a traditional marker of dissent against normative views of gender, becomes disciplined and depoliticised. Following the two questions posed by Publication III, this article explores the dramaturgical role of the body in drag in social media in particular, focusing on how through online postings, this body becomes merely a theatricalised and etiolated representation of defiance. The devaluation of drag and the dissemination of normative/binaric views of gender evident in the show’s content are mirrored and magnified by the fans’ postings on social media. Such postings, we propose, reinforce the commodification of the queer male body as something that can be mimicked and mocked. The example offered in Publication IV is the fan known as ‘Empress the Temptress’, who posts looks inspired by season seven contestant Violet Chachki, whose claim to fame is the hyperbolic embodiment of the burlesque body. ‘Empress the Temptress’ copies Chachki, posting her own images online to inspire others. Using waist suppression corsets to manipulate the body, both Chachki and her fan, ‘Empress the Temptress’, present an exaggerated figure that recalls the hyper-feminine silhouette of the pinup girl of the 1940s. Our contention is that drag, so represented, is etiolated, as are the techniques that render drag subversive and powerful. So represented, bodies are commodified and objectified through the reality show’s marketing directives, as we claim in the article. As the main point of the article, we argue that, through the manipulation of the body, *Drag Race* reduces the subversive potency of the male body in drag by perpetuating status quo hierarchies connected to race, class and gender.

Furthermore, we argue that the [re]representation of drag on Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram of an already existing representation of femininity blurs the boundaries between the real and the represented. By posting images online, both contestants and fans reinforce the show’s normative principles in regard to gender

binaries. The article's contention is that 'through the manipulation of physiology, the contestants and fans of *RuPaul's Drag Race* render corporeality a form of costuming that simultaneously etiolates drag and commodifies the body' (2018: 149).

The article also examines the male body from two different lenses that converge around the concept of representation: the lens of theatrical representation supported by the work of Ali Maclaurin and Aoife Monks (2015) as well as Alan Read (1993); and the lens of the represented body as connected to what Catherine Rottenberg and Mark Sparks have identified as the market values of neoliberalism (2014). By these means, we propose that the reality show, despite its claims of being naughty, innovative and subversive, reinforces normative and oppressive gender representations.

Drawing from Maclaurin and Monks' writing on costume (2015), the article proposes that through the show, costuming becomes what Monks calls a mechanism of the real which renders bodies readable through the lens of the theatrical event, and simultaneously, as an ordinary event in the life of the fans. Maclaurin and Monks' concept of theatricality addresses how imagined historical authenticity shapes bodies onstage and off stage by looking at the relationship between the body, the fictional depiction, and the idea of the authentic. This effect is perceived by the spectator as real, when, in fact, it is inflected by what the spectator sees and perceives of the world (Maclaurin and Monks 2015). Maclaurin and Monks' idea of theatre as a mechanism of the real guides my understanding of theatricality as a process that occurs both within and outside of what we call conventional theatre and frames this discussion of drag costume.

In addition to Rottenberg and Spark, Marcel Mauss' idea of the techniques of the body (1973), shows how the body in drag can be understood as a stereotypical representation of white-ruling femininity, the embodiment of the commodified female body in its hyperbolic form. Following Mauss, our contention is that the body becomes a force of production whose labour power is only possible and intelligible because it is caught up in a system of subjection in which two operations occur. Firstly, contestants embody radical performances of drag. Secondly, the contestants become both producer and product of a regressive model that reinforces normative standards.

My main contribution to the article is the consideration of the body in costume and the body as costume. Based on Publication III's findings, I presented

a draft of my main exploration to my co-author, in order to examine together how the bodies of the fans and contestants become a theatrical device, a costume that performs idealistic representations of gender while alienating spectatorship. This draft brings two specific case studies (Empress the Temptress and Violet Chachki), and a topic and focus for the article that follows the plan I created (Figure 2) for the construction of six articles that explore my three lines of enquiry; using social platforms for wide dissemination, images of mimicked drag become widely available, accessible and mainstream, thereby allowing the representations to travel in a circular manner: from the quotidian to the theatrical and back to the quotidian. Following this trajectory, drag remains performative but denaturalised and decontextualised.

In Publication IV, we conclude that while theatre understands the actual body of the performer (whether the body of the contestant or the fan), and the represented body of the character as co-producers of meaning, it is the costume that is the marker of gender identity. In *Drag Race*, it is, rather, the contestants' bodies that do the double work of exemplifying intriguing possibilities while promoting to fans a strict representation of the gender binary endorsed by the show's rigid policing of gender. In this context, costume becomes an over-the-top accessory to the body that, in turn, is the vehicle for expressing the show's strangely orthodox understanding of gender.

3.5 Publication V

'The body as costume: The theatricality of the male body and the modern peep show'

This article explores the body in relation to theatricality, identity, and appearance, particularly in non-traditional spaces such as the streets of Helsinki and social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest. As a methodological tool, the article uses close analysis of photographic material and an interview made for this purpose with a young male participant from the Helsinki-based group *The House of Disappointments*, a group performing drag on the streets of Helsinki in what was originally fashioned as an art project in 2016. This project later developed as an online presence on Instagram and Facebook.

The article proposes that the male body in drag, made visible through images posted online, is read as an emblematic or scenographic device. Specifically, the body is read as a costume within processes of performance/dissemination and spectatorship/interaction, which reinforces the expectation of theatre. It also illustrates how cyber-voyeurism is integral to the way that theatre is introduced into the ambit of the everyday in the twenty-first century.

The article uses Erving Goffman's concept of the performance of the self in everyday life, specifically 'the way that the individual guides and controls the impression others form of her/him, and the kinds of things she may and may not do while sustaining her performance before them' (Goffman 1959: xi). Also important is Ana Peraica's theorising of the myth of Narcissus, the idea of the selfie and the dual nature of the performance of the self, online. She writes that 'the technology of the contemporary age allows us to do what Narcissus did not need at all, simultaneous recording and viewing, capturing a full narcissistic ecstasy' (Peraica 2017: 47). According to Peraica, voyeurism in social media exposes the representational body at the core of the performance of the self; at the same time, it shows the potential for mediatised spaces to be understood as theatrical spaces.

Supporting Peraica's model is Niedzviecki's conceptualisation of peeping in our society as 'a portal into a collective consciousness.' Niedzviecki's term refers here to society's awareness of the double function of peeping: watching and being watched. Niedzviecki's argument brings me again to the centrality of the performing body and how even casual postings on social media turn the body into an abstraction—an emblematic act created by embodying an identity other than one's own. The costumed body presented on social media platforms reveals its fundamental theatricality (Niedzviecki 2009: 18). Like posting selfies, such moments function as performance, making us understand how even incidental gestures can create theatre.

The interviewee from *The House of Disappointments* uses the strategy of drag dressing and making selfies to theatricalise the everyday. He is a social media user, an amateur but very proficient cross-dresser, who performs extraordinary representations of gender on the streets of Helsinki. He then posts these images on social media platforms. Through interviews and analysis of the images, I examine his unique creativity, probing his thoughts, habits, rituals and the language he uses to describe what he does. Notably, he uses 'dressing up' and 'costuming' interchangeably, thus conflating what he performs in the ambit of the everyday with theatre. This point becomes the focus of the article.

The House of Disappointments' goal was not to create a theatrical performance. Rather, the participants' aim was to use hyperbolic forms of dress to

perform gender and talk to people—in other words, to engage in the ambit of the everyday. This approach enabled them to introduce the idea of walking the streets of Helsinki as a strategy of dissent and to oppose normative views of gender in society. They embraced theatricality as a tool: frequently manipulated or distorted by the sartorial elements, whether on the streets of Helsinki or on Instagram, their bodies became an emblematic device for the performance of gender otherness.

The article concludes with the consideration that the young man's queered body (the interviewee), presented on the streets of Helsinki and subsequently on social media sites, behaves transgressively to 'exoticize the domestic' (Read 1993: 7). Through postings online, his body becomes a theatricalised space, a performing costume, a moment of theatre conceived and dramatised for an anticipated online audience.

3.6 Publication VI

'All dressed up with somewhere to go: Drag expressions on social media and the theatricality of the everyday.'

This article explores the case study of 'Mike' through two methodological tools: visual analysis of images posted online, and textual analysis of interview materials. The exploration is guided by Goffman's theory of frame analysis (1974), a method created to analyse people's perceptions of their own actions (occurrences) in everyday life. An interview conducted with 'Mike' forms the basis for the analysis of his actions, which may be considered both domestic and theatrical. The article focuses on the costuming habits of Mike and the way he perceives, presents and represents his gendered body via social media. Here, Goffman's analysis is a tool to comprehend everyday life through what he calls a social frame, which provides a context for understanding actions that 'incorporate the will, aim and controlling effort of an intelligence, a live agency' (Goffman 1974: 22). Live agency is, in Goffman's terms, a guided doing, a combination of the perception of the natural world and a social doing. Applied to social media exchanges, I propose that when Mike posts an image online, he creates a reality fragment or, in Goffman's terms, 'an occurrence' (Goffman 1974). Within the online environment, an occurrence becomes a complex social interaction wherein the spectator receives the image or text and responds in the form of a thought bubble, corresponding image, or emoji.

Marcel Mauss' theory of 'techniques of the body' (1973); Alan Read's notion of the 'theatricality of the everyday' (1993); and Peter Boenisch's concept of 'relational dramaturgy' (2012) help to frame this investigation. Boenisch's concept of relational dramaturgy elaborates the interplay between performers and spectators in contemporary theatre. His work supports my contention that the costumed body in social media is fully performative and emblematic, and that the interactive platforms Mike uses, for example, meet the conditions of performance: both contingencies anticipate a collaborative occurrence for an engaged and responsive spectatorship (Boenisch 2012). Mike's presentations online, and the relationship formed between him and his community of fans and followers, show how online exchanges may be considered a form of theatre. Mike's postings on Facebook, he says, are always directed to a recipient (his friends and family) with a specific purpose, which is to create a reaction and response.

Publication VI concludes that Mike's exotic representations of gender online illuminate how his body engages and interacts with other bodies, are witnessed by an audience and are confirmed by enthusiastic audience response. This points to new ways and spaces where gender can be rehearsed, performed, consumed, and analysed. Mike's corporeal manipulations give us a glimpse of new ways to read gender, shaped by audience response. Mike's performance and interaction with his audience may be construed as another form of theatre making.

4. Results

4.1 Summary of findings

Megan Alrutz and Julia Listengarten state that ‘theory helps to see the world and the artists’ work anew’ (2012: 7). This simple statement underscores how theory conjoined with practice enables an interrogation of the very ways we, as theatre artists, understand representation on and off the stage. My exploration of the queered male body in costume and as costume in the ambit of the everyday situates my research aims within the double frames of theory and practice, of the abstract and the real. Examining the costumed body in the everyday world as emblematic and agential rather than as a merely material display has led me to think about theatricality through costume, in a broader sense, based on how we interact in the world today. This is particularly true when we consider how popular costuming expressions (street fashion, sports fan regalia, party dress/masquerade, etc.) have provided, at times, a source of inspiration for theatre designers but have rarely been seen as theatrical events in their own right. Dressing up for public display, is a process of costuming that carries complex meanings. In this work, I argue that these sartorial manifestations are more than theatrical – they are theatre.

In an effort to be concise, I provide a brief synopsis of my findings here. As I explored the male body through fandom and drag, I focused on ways in which, through quotidian actions, the male body in costume queers normative gender representations through overt theatrical acts. Using inductive methodology to understand the male body as emblem—manifest through fan regalia in the sports field and drag apparel on the street, in televised media and on social media platforms—I propose the costumed body as a device that can be simultaneously performative, scenographic, and dramaturgical, resonating theatrically outside the bounds of the theatre.

From the onset, two questions ignited this study: 1) how does the performance of the male body create a space for theatricality through costume expressions off the stage? And 2) how does the consideration of the queered male body in social media platforms advance new paradigms for theorising the notion of costume in the context of the everyday?

My first two publications focused on football fans’ dress rituals, specifically their use of flamboyant display to connect the players and the fans and to generate

an ‘occurrence’ that hyperbolises gender. The first article theorises the male body within the mundane world of sport fandom identifying it, in itself, as a space of theatricality. The second article reinforces this premise, establishing that ritualised enactments of otherness transform the materiality of the fan’s body into a dramaturgically scripted instance of meaning-making that subverts normative representations of maleness. Publications III to VI examine the costumed body within the parameters of social media and identify it as a performative expression of gender, in which the spectacularised body is an action that generates a result; it has agency.

Seen across a wide spectrum, men in drag are the focus of all six research publications, ranging from football fans’ dress rituals, to drag expressions in social media and on the streets of Helsinki and Montreal. The research, as a whole, contributes to a better understanding of how the costumed male body is read in the mundane world using theatre and gender as discursive frames. Focusing on the sports fan in extravagant regalia and the male body in full female drag, I propose that the costumed body makes meaning as it interrogates normative gender representations in both real and digital environments. In a sense, queered bodily display functions as theatre and furthers an understanding of what costume is and what it does to subvert normative masculinity. In total, these findings respond to my two research questions and especially to my second question: How does the consideration of the queered male body in social media platforms advance the theorising of costume in the context of the everyday? My argument establishes the realm of the everyday in the twenty-first century to be equal parts material and virtual worlds where gender performances play out, from moment to moment, in real life and in social media. Indeed, users of social media seem not to differentiate between the two (Suler 2016; 29). Both forms of display have elements that are reminiscent of theatre performance: they are a conscious and creative doing for the appreciation of an audience. Pre-internet, non-normative (or queer) representations of the male body were limited to the cabaret stage or private club. Arguably, outside these locations, the queer body was largely rendered invisible (Entwistle 2001). However, due to the incessant draw of the internet and the media streaming of mainstream shows such as *RuPaul’s Drag Race*, invisibility is no longer an issue. The result is a broad presence of non-normative signifiers of gender.

Creatively speaking, cyberspace offers a nonthreatening and anonymous platform on which to posit an alternative persona. The focus is not on accurate representations of oneself, rather on their overt theatricalisation. This comes at a time (or has ushered in a time) when gender identity is increasingly fluid and

provisional, underscoring how the body is the platform for questioning binaries of all kinds. As bodies become more undisciplined, and representation embraces gender variation, physical shapes, sizes, abilities and backgrounds, the performance is never one-dimensional or clear. As such, the body in costume and as costume epitomises the way in which performer and spectator are simultaneously breaking down normative designations at the same time the division of performer and spectator are rendered obsolete.

5. Discussion

5.1 Practical and theoretical implications.

At the present moment, the theatrical event is evolving through innovative, total immersion experiences, in which theatre making and spectating are blurred. Characteristically post-dramatic in its form, dramatic text is no longer central; the narrative, if there is one, is frequently non-linear and fragmented, and spectacle is foremost. Concurrently, the everyday world and social media platforms have increasingly become the spaces where the costumed body performs narrative fragments, suggests possible identities and, at least on some platforms, is archived. Theatre, as we came to know it in the last century, is being challenged by virtual spaces and stages where lived reality, fantasy and desire comeingle. This is especially true during pandemic times when traditional forms of staged presentation are temporarily non-existent.

There are myriad other instances of costuming in relation to gender representation in real world circumstances that might be investigated. For example, this study barely touches such costume events as cosplay. Although it is doubtless an important new direction in critical costume studies, to allow for an in-depth analysis within the given frame, I have chosen other topics and spaces (sports and virtual environments) as the context of this study. Through these, I attempt to articulate the relationship between everyday acts of representation, and theatre practices, specifically in regards to understanding costume as a concrete device that simultaneously reveals and masks gender identity on stage, in the media, in cyberspace and at street (or field) level. This work, I hope, enables us to envision the costumed body affecting these spaces while negotiating its own terms of engagement in and with the twenty-first century.

5.2 Recommendations for further research.

The study of the costumed body at the intersection of scenography and gender in the context of the real world 'everyday' is, relatively speaking, wide open territory. Expanding research on the way that costume signifies vis-à-vis the gendered body within the ambit of the quotidian will challenge the way we think of and make theatre at the same time as it challenges notions of hetero-normativity, homo-normativity and the many other issues related to the performance of gender

in society, off the stage and on the internet. Much remains to be discussed in regards to dress and gender: the two are linked in ways we little understand. Expressions like cosplay, fancy dress and national dress in social media are aspects of the everyday still waiting to be explored. Sartorial expressions are intrinsic to the way we move through and understand the world, and looking closely at these gestures as a way of expanding the gender envelop, indeed all human possibilities, is the essence and importance of critical costume studies.

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7. Appendix I

Questionnaire.

DATE:

SALUTATION:

NAME:

PROVINCE

OCCUPATION (optional)

I _____ give permission to Mr. Jorge Sandoval to utilize the answers to this questionnaire for the purpose of his academic research (Doctoral Dissertation).

The following questionnaire is part of my Doctoral research exploring the costuming instances of men dressing up in a setting outside traditional spaces of staged performances.

Working title of research:

The queered male body as costume: Expressions of the everyday in Canadian Culture

Please answer each question as thoroughly as you can. Please include as many comments, examples and information as you feel fit.



Image 1

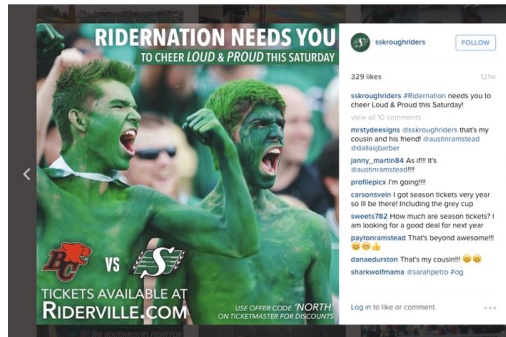


Image 2

1. Photograph by John Klein. Roughriders fans blog by John Klein, accessed 9 May 2015.
2. Saskatchewan Roughriders official page, <http://www.riderville.com/>, accessed 9 May 2015.



Image 3



Image 4

3. Photograph by M. L.
4. Photograph by M. L.

1. What do you see in these two sets of pictures? (images of Roughriders' fans in different costumes and men in Drag in everyday settings).
2. What do you think of the idea of dressing up?
3. What do you think of fan clubs?
4. What do you think about sports' fan clubs?
5. What do you think about football fan clubs?
6. What do you think about the Saskatchewan Roughriders' fans?
7. What do you think about dressing up to cheer your favourite team or artist?
8. What do you think of people dressing up in costumes outside the stage
9. What do you think about costumed fans?
10. What is the idea behind the costumes, props and makeup in these events?
11. What do you notice the most on these images?
12. How does dressing up in an everyday setting would make you feel?
13. What do you see in this second set of pictures (men in drag)
14. What is the idea behind the costumes, props and makeup in these groups?
15. How different or similar is the idea of dressing up when looking at these two groups?
16. What elements do you notice the most in these sets of images?
17. What do you think of dressing up as an everyday event?
18. What do you think of the male body costumed in female elements in a non-theatrical event (not onstage)?
19. What do you think of male bodies cross dressing?
20. What do you think of sport fans cross dressing?
21. What do you think of men cross dressing for everyday situations?

The theatricality of the everyday through costume expressions of fandom and drag comprises six published research texts that investigate the ways that the male costumed body performs theatricality in non-theatre settings.

Jorge Sandoval looks at costume as a means to expressing non-normative gender, researched through two distinct perspectives; the costume expressions of fandom and drag.

The performance of the costumed body in non-theatre Settings expands the notion of representation to include human interaction in the physical, material world, and on the internet, both considered integral parts of the ambit of the contemporary everyday, the public sphere, where individuals come together to identify, discuss, perform and protest personal and societal issues.



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