



IN OUR NEW COLUMN, DEPUTY EDITOR LOTTE JEFFS TAKES **A SIDEWAYS LOOK** AT A WORD **THE FASHION WORLD** CAN'T STOP SAYING AND ASKS: 'WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?'

LEXICON

'OVER'

Preposition: At the other side of, beyond

Batten down the hatches and stock up on tinned goods because the apocalypse is coming and it ain't going to be pretty. But before you call Will Smith (and tell him to bring Willow this time), we're not talking asteroids, super volcanoes or alien invasions. The end that's so 'nigh' right now is heading straight for the fashion world via anyone under the age of 40 who is interested in popular culture. And #SorryNotSorry, but it's entirely self-inflicted.

See, there's only so long you can go on declaring things are 'over' before there's nothing left. And that's exactly where we currently find ourselves. One ELLE staffer perfectly summed up the point we're at after an editorial meeting during which we'd slapped DNRs (Do Not Resuscitate orders) on celebrities, items of clothing and contemporary food stuffs: 'Over,' he said with a sigh, 'is over.'

It shouldn't come as a surprise. We've been 'slaying', 'killing it' and 'literally dying' on the battlefield of fashion for so long now that it's no wonder all that's left of 2016 is a barren wasteland in which only Mariah Carey and avocados – the cockroaches of millennial trends – have survived.

Journalists are forever calling 'the end' of things. In 2010, *The Atlantic Magazine* announced

The End Of Men. We've been guilty of it at ELLE too, proclaiming the past year 'the end of gender', 'the end of heels', 'the end of irony' and 'the end of trying to decided if we *actually* fancy Tom Hiddleston or whether he just looks good in a polo neck'. OK, that last one was a conversation I had with the features team the other day, but you get the point.

If we've pressed 'Apple-Z' on all that was once cool, does that



'WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE STOPPED FOLLOWING TRENDS ENTIRELY – GASP! – OR IF WE STOPPED CARING WHETHER UNICORNS WERE STILL A THING'

mean we get to start again but with a blank canvas? Maybe that's quite a tantalising proposition. What would happen if we stopped following trends entirely – gasp! – or if we stopped caring whether 'unicorns' were still a thing and we just did stuff without thinking twice about it being part of a wider cultural or fashion moment. Oh god, it's happening again look... It's the end of trends! Over is over, I'm trapped in a meta spin-cycle: I need a cronut (or a unicorn), if that's even a 'thing' any more. Am

I even a 'thing' any more? [Locks self in room with a mindfulness app for 15 minutes to divert existential crisis.]

Another way of looking at it is that calling an end to something, when it's on your terms, is fun. Picture that one-night stand you left in bed the morning after and never called back. As far as you're concerned, that person is over with a capital OVER, but that doesn't mean it wasn't a fabulous, sweaty tangle of Calvins while it lasted.

So too went the fate of pop-ups, normcore, the sharing economy, ripped jeans, dirty burgers, calling people 'bae', green juices... Trends have a lifespan and, just like that hot date you never saw again, it's the temporality of it – the sense of let's do this/wear this/say this/eat this NOW before it's gone – that gives it such life, bae (sorry).

The worlds of fashion and pop culture are wild and unstable; pull one block and the fourth wall tumbles like a Jenga stack and we're left wondering what it all means (and wishing we'd bought that Balenciaga puffer jacket).

Let's embrace this *tabula rasa* moment and use it to rethink the things that matter because frankly, it's all ridiculous. And if we can't admit that then the only thing we really need to get over is ourselves.

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