

Brandy Melville and the Young Generation: visual representation of women in social media-How women are constructed in the advertisements, and what messages about women are given to audience via advertisements?

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Keywords: Female representation, Social media, Gender advertisement, Brandy Melville.

Abstract: This paper aims to study how women is portrayed in Brandy Melville's advertisements, and what messages about women are given to the audience through advertisements. Brandy Melville is a Italy clothing brand featured to create "sweet and cool American girl" by Silvio Marsan and his son Stephan Marsan in 1970. The marketing strategies of "one size fits all" and "no advertisements" has raised controversy in the society. In 2019, Brandy Melville officially entered Chinese market and have quickly become popular on Chinese social media through the recommendation of many actresses and internet celebrities. Its "short, tight and revealing" style has also become a highly discussed dressing style, namely, the "BM style". While BM becomes a trend in China, the concept of "one size fits most" and its too-small sizing has also sparked discussions about body standards among women. This paper specifically focuses on, in a time where post-feminist sentiment and consumerism both raised, how BM avoids its criticism of male gaze and body anxiety. The study selected 200 images posted on the Little Redbook by the BM account. Through a quantitative analysis of advertising images from May 2020 to July 2021, the study explores the brand's representation of women. This study found that, compared to the straightforward display of feminine body lines in the early 20th century, the style of advertisements now tends to be more like street photography - emphasizing on everyday movements. The models highlight their body curves and reflect their personality through autonomous daily movements, instead of showing their female curves through revealing clothes and impersonal sexy movements. Thus avoiding the suspicion of female objectification. At the same time, in order to avoid the suspicion of excessive sexual innuendo, the brand's advertisements diminished the audience gaze, and use the camera language such as group power to enhance the status of the characters.

1. Introduction

In the past two years, the Brandy Melville brand has been rapidly gaining popularity in the Chinese market. Brandy Melville was founded in Italy in 1970 and entered the United States market in 2009, and was named as the most popular girls' clothing brand within five years. Similarly, after Brandy Melville entered Chinese market in 2019, it soon became one of the trendy clothing brands in China. On Little Redbook, there are 70,000+ posts about BM, and BM official account has 363,000 fans. In addition, besides the online sales channel, Brandy Melville has opened stores in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing one after another, becoming a popular "spotting place" where young generation in China gather. Domestic celebrities such as Yang Mi, Ouyang Nana, Song Yanfei and Yu Shuxin, as well as the Korean girl group Blackpink have expressed their love for BM clothing in street photos, selfies and stage performances. In addition to the brand itself, Brandy Melville has driven a dressing style in China, that is, the "short, tight, exposed" design with simple checkered and floral elements, and the clothing style with such characteristics is referred as "BM" style. Taobao data show that in March 2020, BM sales increased 71 times and the sales volume has reached of nearly 40 million. In March 2021, BM sales reached 28.4 billion yuan.

Brandy Melville's unique marketing approach and brand features has been a huge success and has also rised questioned by consumers. The "body anxiety" caused by extra small sizes and the "white, young and thin" aesthetic reflecting the male gaze are the problems that Brandy Melville has been often criticized. The growing feminist thinking in China nowadays also poses a serious challenge to the aesthetics promoted by BM brand. We hope to discuss the Brandy Melville representation of women's image through assesses its social media marketing campaign, and explore the great changes in Chinese women's thinking and aesthetic representation behind it.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Other and Gender Stereotype

The concept of "otherness" was first introduced into philosophy by Plato. The Das-man is a state in which the existence of the other is completely dissolved. Edward Said (1987) interprets the other as a static notion of the public that has the effect of preserving and displaying the individual's non-genuine existence and dissolving it. Merleau-Ponty argues that the other both "reveals to me what I am" and "constitutes me in a new type of being that can support some new characterization" (2003, p.153). Levinas, the postmodernist representative of existentialism, discovers the Other that cannot be reduced to the same or to the self, and that the Other is in the "otherness of the self" (1985, p.85), and states that "the infinite Other, which cannot be integrated into a totality, is most typically embodied in eros The infinite other, which cannot be integrated into a totality, is most typically embodied in eros, and the absolute other we see in eros is the feminine" (1987, p.101).

Simone Beauvoir introduces existentialism to the study of women's problems, and in her book *The Second Sex*, she raises the topic of "women as other" and states that "to ask the question of women is to ask the question of the other" (1998, p.292). Since then, the philosophical term "other" has become an important research theme in the field of feminology, providing a solid theoretical foundation for the feminist movement. According to Beauvoir, women have become the Other because men have long identified themselves as subjects, defined women according to the viewpoint of the male subject, and exercised male domination in all aspects of society. Women have long been forced to accept the identity of the Other, losing their sense of self and becoming subordinate to men rather than independent beings. According to Qin Dahong (2006), the problem of otherness discussed by Beauvoir emphasizes the absolute, pure otherness, negativity and negative meaning of the "other", which is an "absolute other" and further clarifies the real situation of women.

Male authority and the formation of women's otherness have a mutually reinforcing and interpenetrating effect. Women's pursuit of beauty and fashion follows a large part of the standards set by male authority and eventually internalizes into women's self-seeking and self-regulation. In her book, Beauvoir writes that "custom and fashion often work to serve the female body from any possible transcendence" (1998, 185). Some scholars analyze the influence of media on women's otherness, pointing out that mass media completes the combination and unification of women with the false object itself, i.e., the public's frozen impression of fashionable beauty, making women the carrier of men's complex of fashionable beauty (Qin Dahong, 2006). From the perspective of advertising media, Du Jia (2021) suggests that widespread feminine modeling advertising constructs an "other" environment for women, objectifying, sexually objectifying, and being viewed as women.

Female otherness also makes women carry more intrinsic qualities pursued outside of their external role in favor of men. Since men are better able to earn economic income outside the home, women are more often in the function of caring for the family and raising offspring, so women are required to have the qualities of hard working, attentiveness, virtuousness, gentleness, and understanding (Qin Dahong, 2006). Beauvoir called these feminine characteristics "femininity". The scholar Zhao Yosheng (2019) points out that these femininities defined by the male perspective actually make women more dependent on men.

Many scholars have also studied and elaborated on gender differences from the perspective of gender role stereotype. Walter Lippmann, an American journalist, was the first to use the concept of

stereotype to describe fixed stereotypes, and in his book *Public Opinion* (1997), he emphasized the decisive role of stereotypes about gender, race and age in the formation of public opinion. The MBA think-tank defines gender stereotypes as inherent impressions of masculine or feminine role characteristics that indicate people's expectations and perceptions of gender roles. Bem (1974) further concludes that gender stereotypes are used to describe not only others, but also oneself. This can be considered in a sense as a result of the internalization of gender differences. Li Yinhe, a famous Chinese sociologist and liberal feminist, argues (2020) that gender stereotypes are a double oppression to both men and women, which are culturally and socially constructed and will change with the changing social consciousness. Scholar Wang Pei (2008), on the other hand, defines gender stereotypes in advertisements. He believes that gender stereotypes in advertisements refer to the transmission of advertising messages through characters and the establishment of a certain association between the gender of the characters and the products, which in turn has an impact on the processing of advertising messages. Researchers from home and abroad, generally agree that gender stereotypes in advertising make the representation of women in advertising more focused on appearance, body and quality, often matched with lifestyle, consumer or service-oriented products.

2.2 Social Representation Theory and Advertising Semiotics

Social representation is a new social psychological concept proposed by Serge Moscovici, which refers to "a cognitive system containing its own logic and language" that allows people to "discover and organize the 'branches of knowledge' or 'theories' of reality" (2000, p.12). 'Branches of knowledge' or 'theories'" (2000, p.12), which "reveals the social cognitive processes of people in the context of the larger society from a theoretical perspective that is more relevant to the ontology of human existence" (Zhang, 2008). Some scholars have likened social representations to myths and belief systems in traditional societies, or modern versions of social consensus (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). In addition, Duveen, G (2001) suggests that social representations are the core of a "thinking society". Jean Claude, Bric (2001) explores the inner structure of social representations from a structural perspective, dividing them into a central core that determines the nature of social representations and a limbic system that is flexible and variable, allowing representations to withstand the impact of dissent.

Social representation theory is also of great value to the study of gender identity. Caroline Howarth (2002) suggests that however one makes sense one's sexed body, our identities have to incorporate, negotiate and/or contest representations of gender. This sense of a gendered body is a social representation of a gendered group. "We are not left to define ourselves as we see fit" Ryan recognizes (1999, p. 146).

Gender, on the other hand, is a complete system of relationships that includes gender, but is not directly subject to it, nor does it directly determine sexual relations. It emphasizes that gender is socially or culturally, not just biologically distinct. With the feminist movement, feminists began to conduct in-depth research on the gender perspective in multiple perspectives and strive to interpret a new gender equality perspective through gender (Su Hong, 2014). Scholar Liu Ni (2001), on the other hand, argues that there is a deconstruction of the dichotomy in the gender system, to the traditional thoughts that men have held more power and resources than women, both from a historical perspective and from a cross-cultural perspective. Scholar Tong Xin, on the other hand, further summarizes the gender equality claims based on the concept of gender: gender equality of opportunity in terms of legal, political, economic, work remuneration, access to human capital and other productive resources versus gender equality of outcomes based on the recognition of fundamental differences between men and women's gender.

As the influence of mass media continues to expand, advertising semiotics- which uses semiotics to analyze advertising texts, has become an important research method to explore the field of gender. MBA Think Tank defines advertising semiotics as the analysis of the interaction between the message conveyed by an advertisement and its effect on the audience by taking semiotics as the basic theory and combining it with other marginal theories such as structuralism, narratology, pragmatics, sociology, etc. Scholar Zhong Chenli (2021), on the other hand, based on the commercial elements

of advertising, believes that the use of semiotics in advertising can bring into play the symbolic value of advertising and serve as an important means to attract market influence. Zhu (2015) focuses on video website advertisements and points out that the symbolic portrayal of characters in such advertisements often makes use of the traditionally solidified, standardized and beautiful images of women to inspire viewers to aspire to such a state of life or human attitude and graft them onto products.

2.3 Goffman's Frame Theory of Gender Advertising

Research is a dual field of sociology and cognitive psychology research theory. The academic concept of "frame" was first introduced by G. Bateson in 1955, who believed that people transmit symbols that stimulate the senses in communication activities, and that frames are the rules of interpretation that people understand each other's symbols and send and understand the mutual agreement between the two parties. The concept of "framing" in the field of cultural sociology was first introduced by Goffman in 1974. Goffman proposed that "we tend to perceive events in terms of primary frameworks" (Goffman and Erving, 1981), and argued that primary frameworks can be understood through the social roles and situations in which characters are placed. The primary frameworks can help people better understand how they should interact and behave in specific action scenarios by interpreting the social roles and situations they are in, thus influencing their daily performance. From the perspective of body view, some scholars suggest that Goffman's "framing analysis" emphasizes the contingency and multiplicity of meaning and reality through bodily performance, embodiment techniques, and intersubjectivity (Wang Ching-feng, 2019). On the basis of frame analysis, Goffman investigates gender relations in commercials. Through the analysis of a large number of commercials, Goffman proposes six dimensions that can be used to specifically observe and analyze the presentation of gender relations, such as "the physical relative size of male and female characters, gentle touch, functional hierarchy, family field, ritualization of subordinate status, and permitted situational withdrawal" (Wang, 2018).

2.4 Gender in Contemporary China

Since the Qin and Han dynasties, the traditional gender concept in China has gradually formed, women are inferior in status and are always required to be in a "subordinate" rather than a "dominant" position, without independent personality and social status (Lv Hongping, 2010). The traditional Chinese theoretical system of Confucianism is an important part of the Chinese system. In Confucianism, an important part of the traditional Chinese theoretical system, Mencius proposed that women should be submissive as the highest principle (Yang Bojun, 2005). Dong Zhongshu derived a systematic view of women based on the theory of the unity of heaven and man, and made it the basis of the orthodox Confucian view of women in Han dynasty society (Liu and Shuli, 2003). The ancient Chinese canonical texts set strict requirements for the status and behavior of women. The Book of Rites, written in the Han Dynasty, directly states that "women are subordinate to others" and for the first time introduces the concept of "obeying one's father and brother when one is young, obeying one's husband when one marries, and obeying one's son when one dies". The poem "Shi Jing - Xiao Ya - Sigan" depicts the different ways in which boys and girls are treated by their families after birth. In order to maintain this unequal male domination, the ancient Chinese fused social order with the laws of nature to support the legitimacy of the system. Scholar Leng Dong (1999) points out that the ancients established a connection between heaven and earth, yin and yang, and the two sexes, laying a firm foundation for gender differences in ancient times. The gradual prevalence of foot-binding in the Song Dynasty marked a double confinement of traditional Chinese gender concepts on women's physical and spirituality. Margery Wolf (1972) argues that Chinese women used their emotional control over their sons to form a mother-centered, non-obvious, and smaller "womb family" within the male perspective of the extended family, thereby constantly fighting for their place in the patriarchal society. their own status and power within the family.

With the dramatic changes in the social landscape in recent times, gender concepts in Chinese society have also changed accordingly, and many Chinese feminists have sought the emancipation of

individuals and all women, and even people in society as a whole, in many forms. Scholar Wang Zheng (2017) introduced the concept of socialist state feminists, who subscribe to the socialist theory of women's liberation—that women's complete emancipation can only be achieved in a socialist system after the elimination of private ownership—and to this end, they have devoted themselves to the modern Chinese socialist revolution, making remarkable contributions to the establishment of the People's Republic of China together with male revolutionaries. In addition, Deng Yingchao (1979, p.225), a representative of feminists in socialist countries, once proposed that "we should apply Marxist-Leninist theory and Mao Zedong Thought to the struggle against feudalism. We should resolutely break the idea that 'everything is not okay for women' and replace it with the idea that 'everything is okay for women'. But the views of feminists in socialist countries have also often been criticized. First, scholars have argued that the struggle for women's emancipation subordinates gender politics to class politics and promotes the shift of female labor from the family to socialist movements rather than the true emancipation of women; second, under the call of Mao Zedong's era that "women can hold up half of the sky," women take up jobs that are usually considered to be the responsibility of men, or Secondly, under the call of "women can hold up half the sky" in Mao's era, women were engaged in work that was usually considered to be the responsibility of men. Regardless of its original purpose, the feminist trend has developed in China.

From the founding of the Women's Journal in Shanghai in 1898 to the founding of the country, more than 600 women's periodicals appeared, including more than 50 from the Hundred Days Reform to the May Fourth Movement (Zhou Zhaoyi, 1997), reflecting the progress of society and the awakening of women's subject consciousness (Li Xiaojiang, 2000). "In 1995, China committed to gender mainstreaming at the Fourth World Conference on Women and included gender equality as a basic state policy. With the protection of the state, legal level, and the influence of progressive thinking, the modern gender concept of gender equality in China has gradually taken shape, and women's political participation, women's education, women's employment, and women's health level have all been greatly improved (Li Yin, 2008). Scholars Liu Aiyu and Tong Xin concluded that China's gender perceptions are in a state of transition between traditional and modern based on the Third National Survey on the Status of Women in 2010 (2014).

On the basis of the prevalence of postmodernism worldwide, postmodern feminist sentiment has emerged in China. Post-feminist sentiment focuses on individualism and emphasizes the autonomy of individual women's expression of their bodies. However, autonomous expression implies self-monitoring and self-regulation, and is easily bought by consumerism (Meng Bingchun, 2019). At the same time, thanks to the development of new media technologies, feminist issues have become increasingly influential in the public arena in recent years, and the series of controversies that have arisen also reflect a new stage in the interpretation of feminism in China (Yao, Xi, and Xiang, Tianyuan, 2021).

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Sampling

Among the many sharing and shopping platforms in China, Little Redbook is of great value to the study of BM. First, Little Redbook is involved in the whole process of BM's popularity in China. Little Redbook is one of the two platforms on which the brand's official account resides (the other platform is Weibo), and it is an important channel for the brand to connect with consumers, as well as the main channel for consumers to learn about BM's style. On Little Redbook, not only does the official account regularly release promotional pictures, but users also actively leave comments under the official notes and share their own outfit reviews, micro-fat girl challenges, physical store try-on and buying tips, making BM complete the spread from KOL to KOC. Secondly, Little Redbook itself has a strong fashion appeal. Compared with Jieyin Express, which focuses on the spread of interesting clips, B Station, which focuses on secondary yuan culture, and Taobao, which mainly provides shopping services, Little Redbook focuses more on shaping Chinese consumers' fashion aesthetics

through users' sharing of the good life. Currently, Little Redbook has over 100 million monthly active users and is ranked by KANTAR (2020) as the digital media platform with the highest advertising value in the Chinese market. At the same time, the percentage of consumers showing "negative attitude" towards Little Redbook ads are the lowest (24%) among all digital channels. Therefore, the photos chosen for this project are mainly promotional images posted by the official account of the BM brand on Little Redbook, which can show the BM brand's communication of women's image in a more comprehensive way.

In the selection of specific pictures, all pictures are selected based on the photos posed by the official account. For photo selection, we excluded product pictures that only show clothes, so as not to interfere with the conclusions presented. In the end, a total of 200 pictures from July 2021 to May 2020 were selected in strict chronological order. The time period covered more than one year, which can cover most of the official BM brand marketing pictures categories and draw creditable conclusions. This time period is also the second year of the BM brand's entry into China, and the brand has gradually found and formed a stable form and overall style of publicity, which is of higher research value.

3.2 Coding

There are four sections in the codebook: descriptive questions, exploration of sexual innuendo, exploration of gender role, and exploration of women's tendency to rely on men. The descriptive questions are the first to the sixth questions in the codebook, which include questions that can visually describe the characteristics of the pictures. Such as whether the characters are looking directly at the camera, whether there are props, the style of clothing, the physical distance from the camera, and the shooting angle of the picture. Sexual innuendo exploration is question seven to question nine in the codebook, which address the possible existence of sexual innuendo in the female self-objectification in the picture samples. Starting from the intuitive perception, specific factors such as the display of body lines and pleasing behaviors that cause sexual perception are gradually analyzed. The exploration of gender role assignment is mainly considered through the tenth question to determine whether there is a traditionally conceived role assignment of female characters in the pictures, such as non-instrumental and non-dominant as opposed to male roles, by looking at the scenes and activities to which the characters belong. The exploration of women's tendency to depend on men was focused on question 11. The judgment was developed through the data on the relationship between the number of men and women and the relationship between characters in the picture sample. Through the above four major parts of the question set, the data obtained by codebook can show the shaping of BM brand female characters in many aspects.

Table 1. Definition of categories and coding rules

Category (Goffman)	Definition	Coding Rules
Descriptive— License Withdraw by extension	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Looking away from the camera, indicating shyness and willingness to be gazed by male. 2. Face doesn't show up in the photo, indicating female objectification. 3. Camera position (up to down) indicates male gazing. Physical distance with the camera.	Single choice question, not multiple answer question. If no answer is applicable, please choose N/A
Sexual innuendo- Feminise touch + Ritualization of subordination is the same	Whether there is sexually available by touching their own bodies; whether the character's actions reflect their subordination through Ritualization of subordination, to show themselves sexually available	<p>The question is a Single choice question and is asked in a hierarchical progression. To answer the question, you need to choose between two or more answers by using the appropriate criteria.</p> <p>The question is a multiple answer question and is asked in a hierarchical progression. To answer the question, you need to select the appropriate option from two or more answers by using the appropriate criteria.</p>
Gender Role Domination - an extension from Function Ranking	The environment and the activities of the person in the picture can reflect their social division of labor and position of power	Of the three questions in the single choice question, not multiple answer question category, the first two are descriptive questions and the third is an inferential question that requires inference from personal experience.
The tendency of women to rely on groups	The different proportions of responses to the above questions when the figures are single, double or group can reflect the degree of women's dependence on the group. The gender ratio of the accompanying persons also reflects women's dependence on men	

The codebook was finalized after several adjustments to ensure the data validity . In the initial pilot, it was found that the elaboration of some questions in the codebook was not clear, which led to difficulties and bias in the selection of the answers; the summary of the answers to the questions was not comprehensive and could not include all options, which also led to insufficient data obtained from the codebook, such as "which prop is the model holding in the picture? The initial setting of the option of "which prop is the model holding in the picture" could not meet the sample reality; some questions also had unclear answer criteria, which caused confusion to the responders, such as the definition of intimacy and alienation in the judgment of physical distance. In response to the above problems, the author firstly elaborated the questions so that the respondents could fully understand the meaning and connotation of the questions, and perfected the options to cover different elements of the pictures.

The confidence interval of this study was greater than 0.8, reaching 0.86. Krippendorff (2004) argues that when the ICR is 0.8, it indicates sufficient reliability, which means that the current coding results can lead to a valid conclusion.

The quantitative research method also has some limitations. For example, we can generalize the pattern from as many pictures as possible, but we cannot fully explore the reasons for the formation of the pattern. However, for this research question, quantitative method is sufficient to support our conclusion. We also hope that the conclusion of this study can become one of the reference materials for researchers in gender studies and representation of women in advertisements.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Measurements of BM's Female Sexual Implications

Female Line means breast, leg, skin, face, buttock and whatever else could represent feminine body in pieces. These pieces may be detached—as an inverted puzzle with dislocated bits hiding the picture that is never formed (Rocha, 2013).

Among the 200 sample images, 62% of the images had characters who showed this feminine line to the viewer through body movements or clothing wear. At the same time, 12% of these images showed subordinate actions such as crouching, lying on the bed, curling up, and beaming, which made them show a "hypersexualised" representation of women- both of these issues are the problem of objectively describing the status of the picture characters. Finally, there was a subjective judgment question about the status of the pictures, i.e., whether the pictures were explicitly or implicitly suggestive. In this sample, 7.5% of the images were considered to be sexually suggestive.

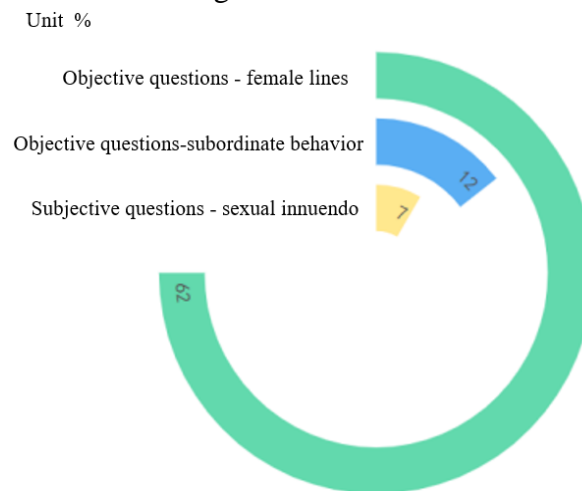


Fig 1. Proportion of pictures showing female lines, submissive behavior and sexual innuendo

Table 2 Summary of findings for Brandy Melville

Category	Sexual innuendo (contains implicit + direct sexual innuendo)	Number of trees belonging to environmental categories	Female dependent group behavior	Number of female objectifications in descriptive variables (no face showing, no direct view shots)
Number of Photos	14	Work: 5 Family: 18 Leisure: 173 School: 0	1 person: 1662 people: 303 and above: 4	No face exposure: 55 no direct view camera in face exposure: 118

The prominent display of female lines and the display of subordinate female actions became the main source of the sexually suggestive feeling of the images. Of the 14 images that were considered sexually suggestive, 8 images had both subordinate actions and the display of female lines, 6 images had subordinate actions, and 1 image had the display of lines.

However, only 14 of the 200 selected samples were sexually suggestive, while more samples with female lines and submissive behavior were not suspected of being sexually suggestive, which is summarized by the following three reasons: First, avoid sexual innuendo by weakening the presence of the "audience". Make the model's sexiness as her own free choice, independent of men's desire, thereby highlighting the agency of the model (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004). The sample, on the other hand, enhances the sense of side-viewing and reduces the sense of "having an audience" under the gaze through everyday scenes, ignoring the camera's expressions and unintentional movements, thus weakening the sexual innuendo.



Fig 2. A sample of avoiding sexual innuendo by increasing emotional distance

Secondly, when there is strong interaction between the character and the camera, the photographer elevates the power status of the picture character by using the elevated perspective in the language of the camera, which to a certain extent reduces the possibility of sexual innuendo brought about by the subordinate behavior (the beak in Figure 2 below) and the female line display (the waist and hip line display in Figure 2 below). The difference in status brought about by the elevation len demonstrates the terms of “sexual agency” and “sexual empowerment” which were highlighted to characterize this shift in sexualized advertisements from objectified to subjectified women (Gill, 2008), and seems to reflect the Zeitgeist of women becoming independent- this includes agency in their sexuality. According to this view, being sexy and agentic at the same time can be seen as liberating for women, not the follower of men’s desire (Dahl et al., 2009).



Fig 3. Sample of avoiding sexual innuendo through shooting angles

The third finding is the use of group power to reduce the suspicion of sexual innuendo. The woman in a social role is depicted in contact with other people, generally in a relaxed or enjoyable environment (Koernig & Granitz, 2006). The woman in a group is more confident and abandons the subordinate mental state that emits subordinate behaviors and the mental state of self-objectification in the face of the presence of friends Figure 3 The woman in a social role is depicted in contact with other people, generally in a relaxed or enjoyable environment (Koernig & Granitz, 2006).



Fig 4. Sample of avoiding sexual innuendo through group power

Compared to the early 20th century's straightforward display of female lines, the display of female lines now tends to be achieved through street-style photography. In the above picture, for example, the model highlights her body curves and reflects her personality through her autonomous daily movements, instead of showing her female curves through revealing clothes and impersonal sexy movements, thus avoiding the suspicion of objectifying women by BM brand.



Fig 5. Obscure female line display

4.2 Environment of the photo scene

As a social being, the woman is shown in a wide variety of social contexts, such as sport events or parties (Plakoyiannaki et al., 2009). The types of scenes involved in this sampling including: work scenes, home scenes, and leisure scenes. In terms of the proportion of scenes, work scenes and family scenes accounted for less, 2.5% and 9.5% respectively, while leisure scenes accounted for more, 88% specifically. From the analysis of specific subordinate activities, the proportion of street photography, enjoying the city or nature, and entertainment in bed/sofa/in front of mirror occupy the top three, with the proportion of 43.5%, 36.5%, and 9% respectively. We can find that the sample belongs to a more concentrated scene activities, only street photography and enjoying the city or nature accounted for 80% of the overall proportion. This also leads to a more concentrated and thin presentation of female image.

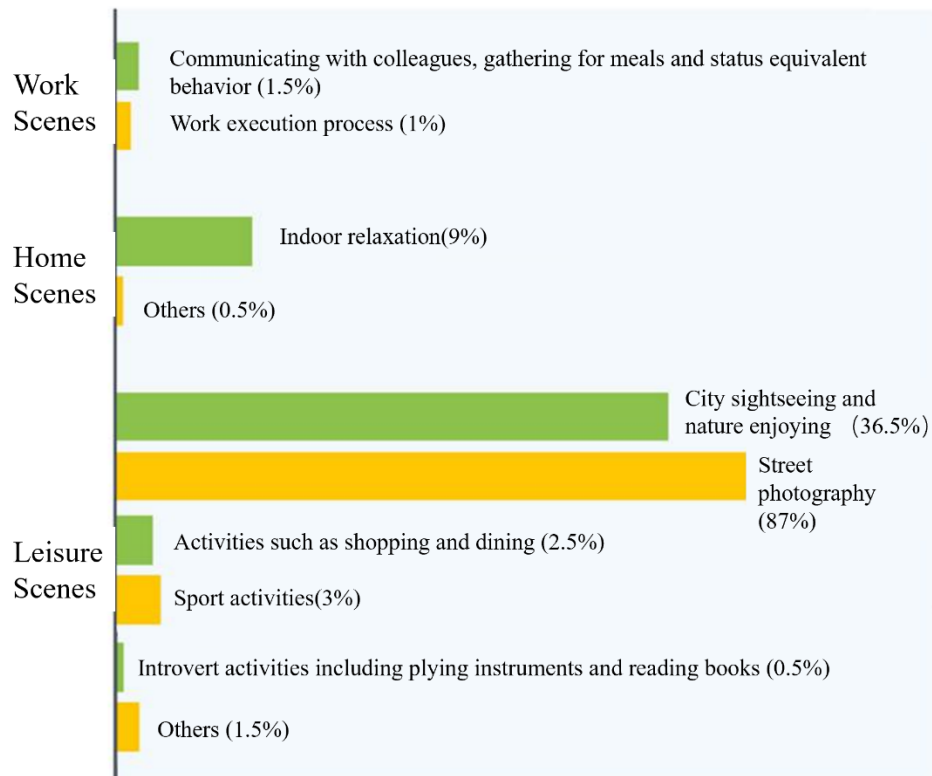


Fig 6. The proportion of different scenes and activities to which the picture characters belong

The women in the picture are mainly in a self-centered state where they do not take any responsibility. In the leisure scenes, the characters are mainly in activities such as enjoying the scenery, enjoying food, playing sports, reading books, etc. In these activities, the characters are not responsible for others, simply seek own comfort. In the family scenes, the characters are mostly relaxing in bed/sofa. cleaning up the house or getting along with family members; in the work scenes, the characters mainly communicate with colleagues for dinner and clean up laundry, which are equal and easy tasks, hiding the practical difficulties that women are prone to unequal treatment or prejudice at work, and highlighting women's entertainment, freedom and equality at home and at work. In fact, the increase in female work roles is one of the manifestations of the trend of gender role equality portrayal (Mandy et al., 2018) .The BM brand is little represented here, showing a high degree of stereotyping.

5. Conclusion

Brandy Melville has grown in a very short period of time to become a brand that has a profound influence on Chinese female consumers, and its leading style reflects the feminist ideology of Chinese women's independence and pursuit of freedom. In the interpretation of its mission statement on the BM website, fun, cool, free-spirited, glamorous and feminine are the brand values it wants to convey. In modern society, with the return of female body dominance, women today are using their appearance to reflect more of their mental outlook and aesthetic pursuits. More women are beginning to fight gender discrimination by confronting traditional wraparound dressing prejudices and seeking more tolerance from society for the diversity of women's development. Through their consumption of BM brands, women consumers are able to convey to the social audience that they are "independent, open, confident and attractive" and that they have the freedom to dress in a non-traditional way.

Through the analysis and summary of 200 Brandy Melville brand official social media account publicity pictures, we found that the brand's marketing pictures show more female body lines, some of the pictures have subordinate female characters' movements, and a few of the pictures have sexual innuendo. In order to avoid the suspicion of excessive sexual innuendo, the brand's publicity pictures mainly use ways to weaken the "audience gaze", use camera language to enhance the status of the

characters, and use group power. In addition, compared to the early 20th century, which showed cleavage, buttocks and other female lines, the BM brand's promotional images showed more female lines by using slim clothing and daily movements, focusing on capturing the lines of women in their daily lives. As for the display of women's scenes, BM's promotional images mainly focus on leisure scenes, but less on family and work scenes. And the display of women's social image is more inclined to show women's entertainment, freedom and equality, while ignoring the relative responsibilities and obligations.

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