Original Paper

"Cold Thinking" of the "Hot Communication" of Genderless Clothing in New Media—Based on the Perspectives of Gender, Media and Culture

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Abstract

The popularity of genderless clothing was regarded as a microcosm of various social and cultural phenomena in the new media era, and it was also regarded as a new phenomenon arising from the close integration of new media and life. Its formation mechanism and characteristics of new media, gender culture and clothing culture were closely linked. Based on the perspectives of gender, media and culture, this paper started from the phenomenon of the popularity of genderless clothing, and analyzed the characteristics and logic of the communication of genderless clothing in new media. Further research found that genderless clothing had lost its own meaning of "gender equality" after the "hot communication". It was specifically explained from three aspects: gender cognition, media platform, and consumer culture, in order to promote the harmonious development of gender and clothing.

Keywords

New media, Genderless clothing, Gender culture

1. Introduction

Gender culture occupied an important position in the current social culture. With the gradual deepening of people's awareness of gender, gender was no longer a simple binary opposition between men and women. Transgender, homosexual and other genders were also included in social discussions. As an important part of the material carrier of social culture, clothing was the representation of social culture and also reflected gender culture. Genderless clothing carried a new gender culture and became a new

trend.

The current new cultural phenomenon was inseparable from the influence of the media. The popularity of genderless clothing in the new media had become a cultural phenomenon with its own communication logic behind it. Based on the perspectives of gender, media and culture, this paper sorted out the concept of gender and the development of genderless clothing, summarized the characteristics of the communication of genderless clothing, discussed the logic of its wide communication on the Little Red Book platform and thought deeply about the meaning behind it.

2. The Concept of Gender and the Development of Genderless Clothing

2.1 The Concept of Gender

From the perspective of gender constructivism, factors such as history, tradition, culture, power and economy had shaped the different gender temperament and division of labor between men and women, and formed a gender standard of binary opposition between men and women. The temperament boundaries between men and women were clear, and the judgment standards and behavioral norms of men and women were also completely different. If a man was feminine and dresses like a woman, he was seen as an alien. There were many groups of people in society whose behaviors were different from traditional gender expressions. They were covered up by the mainstream binary system of men and women, ignored and excluded.

In the process of gender research, gender cognition gradually deepened and became clear. In fact, human gender had biological attributes and social attributes, namely biological sex and social gender. Gender only referred to biological gender in Chinese, and could correspond to two meanings in English, namely biological gender (Sex) and social gender (Gender). Biological sex was the difference between male and female that was directly determined based on reproductive organs. Gender was the perception and identification of one's own gender from the heart from the perspective of psychology and society. From a biological perspective, gender identity was the degree to which one perceived oneself as masculine or feminine. Men considered themselves as masculine and women considered themselves as feminine. From a sociological perspective, gender identity was the application of all gender meanings that a person identified to oneself. This level means that people would be influenced by society and their gender perceptions would change. Those who identified with their biological gender were cisgender, and those who did not identify with their biological gender were transgender (Zhao, 2020), which was divided into MtF (male of biological gender, female of gender identity), FtM (female of biological gender, male of gender identity), and non-binary (gender identity is neither male nor female). In addition to transgender people, there were many sexual minorities who did not agree with its concept (Gao, 2017), believing that men and women could no longer fully define themselves, but called them "queer" to identify themselves and expressed their gender cognition (Zhao, 2020). The determining and influencing factors of gender were extremely complex. From the perspective of social identity, gender was no longer a simple binary opposition between men and women. It was not only determined by

innate physiology, but required independent rational leadership. Gender roles were a cultural phenomenon that was more diverse. The idea of gender diversity had led us to start paying attention to gender issues. Gender selection from the perspective of social identity provided a new way of thinking for human beings to understand the world and themselves, and had a profound impact on the theoretical exploration and social practice of gender roles.

2.2 Development of Genderless Clothing

The origin and development of "genderless" clothing should start with the development of western clothing. At first, Western clothing was not clearly differentiated by gender. It wasn't until the 19th century that gender differences in clothing began to emerge. Bourgeois men no longer used any form of decoration. Men wore simple, flat trousers to express the seriousness and rationality of male, and women wore delicately decorated skirts to highlight the tenderness and sensuality of female. Male and female identity differences were effectively established through trousers and skirts (Gao, 2017). With the development of society, the clothing of men and women had also been changed due to economic differences. People's economic status could be directly seen through clothing. Men's clothing thus had a system of symbols that distinguished from women's.

Gender roles and clothing influenced each other. Dressing the body showed gender roles through clothing, and gender roles also regulated and influenced the change of costume. In the 1950s, challenges to gender roles emerged. Elvis Presley was daring in clothing and makeup. The Beatles wore long hair and dressed up as an "androgynous" figure. Madonna was dressed in a suit and combed her hair to establish the image of a queen with a powerful aura. Guitarist Jimi Hendrix put on high heels to break the dullness of the male, and the layered men's and women's shirts made him eye-catching. This phenomenon first led the trend in the entertainment circle and then turned to the fashion circle. Jo Paoletti, a professor in Maryland University, believed that this trend stemming from World War II. World War II strengthened the stereotype of gender roles of men and women. After the 1950s, Men and women changed the old concept of gender in clothing, and they were brave to change and try. The emergence of the concept of genderlessness also had a certain theoretical connection with the concept of "hermaphroditism". Hermaphroditism referred to a state in which a person's gender characteristics could not be clearly assigned to the typical male and female physical characteristics in society, and it was in the middle of masculinity and femininity (Gao, 2017). Hermaphrodites expressed strong dissatisfaction with gender and sought for a balance above gender. In 1980, the term "hermaphrodite" began to appear in the fashion media (Gao, 2017). In 1968, The New York Times first used the term "Unisex" to refer to no specific object. Genderless clothing was also inspired by the word, which was translated to "neutral" clothing, regardless of gender. With the continuous development of the times and the continuous progress of language, people translated it into "genderless", and in clothing, it was translated into "genderless clothing" (Ji & Zhou, 2019).

Genderlessness was a vocabulary developed by the times, and it was also the pursuit of hermaphrodite and the transcendence of gender. Genderless clothing referred to clothing that could be worn by men,

women, same-sex or transgender people, and other genders. This included expressions of all genders, both biological and sociocultural. Genderless clothing aimed to break the stereotypes under gender through the expression of clothing and pursue new aesthetic standards of clothing. The biological nature of gender affected people's masculine and feminine traits. With the strong influence of society, gender roles were more diversified, and new expressions were also sought in clothing representation. Clothing could construct and display the gender and gender roles advocated by the society.

3. Characteristics of the Hot Communication of Genderless Clothing in the Little Red Book

Different from WeChat, Weibo, Tik Tok, Kuaishou and other media with social attributes, the new media, the Little Red Book, was mainly characterized by sharing and "planting grass" (recommend), and had become an important platform for young people to obtain fashion information nowadays.

According to the Active Users' Portrait and Trend Report in the Little Red Book in 2021 exclusively launched by Qiangua Data, the Little Red Book had more than 100 million monthly active users, and in 2020, the number of notes released exceeded 300 million, and more than 100 notes were exposed and shared every day (Qian, 2021). According to the 2021 Lifestyle Trend Keywords report released by the Little Red Book, the keyword "genderless clothing" had become one of the lifestyle trends in 2021. The data in the report showed that in 2020, the number of views of the Little Red Book's genderless clothing notes increased by 182% year-on-year, and the number of posts increased by 83% year-on-year (The Little Red Book, 2021). It could be seen that genderless clothing was showing a trend of hot communication in the Little Red Book.

This paper selected the Little Red Book platform as a representative to analyze the communication characteristics and communication logic of genderless clothing in the Little Red Book. Searching for the keywords of "genderless" and "genderless clothing" on the Little Red Book platform, there were 140,000 shared notes, showing four characteristics: young communication subjects, custom labeling, fuzzy and fusion of clothing symbols, and in-depth sharing. The younger generation wore genderless clothing to perform and interact in the Little Red Book. Through in-depth sharing and self-labeling, they spread genderless clothing and ideas, and showed the fashion and trend of genderless clothing.

3.1 Being Young: Urban Fashion Men and Women

72% of the users of the Little Red Book platform were born in the 1990s, and over 50% were from the first- and second-tier cities (The Little Red Book, 2022). Through in-depth observation, it was found that mainly urban trendy men and women shared their experience and feelings about wearing genderless clothing. These urban men and women had the following typical characteristics. Firstly, they lived in big cities and had a fashionable and leisurely living environment. Secondly, they spent a certain amount of money on clothing. Regardless of the influence of economic strength and consumption concepts, they paid great attention to clothing. Thirdly, they not only pad attention to the consumption of clothing, but also paid attention to facial makeup. Men and women would pay attention to the overall fashion sense. Fourthly, their concepts and ideas were more avant-garde, and they fully

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accepted genderless concepts and clothing, and recognized and recommended genderless clothing in sharing.

This kind of urban men and women wearing genderless clothing presented new characteristics in temperament. Firstly, men abandoned their inherent sense of power and appeared in a new aesthetic state. Coupled with the influence of genderless clothing, men's gender and sexuality were obviously blurred. These men were increasingly absorbing elements of femininity, and showing tenderness and consideration. This meant that the concept of gender roles had changed, a new temperament of men had emerged, and society's acceptance for men has increased. For men, it was also a breakthrough. Secondly, women hided their original sexiness. The strength of the male was attached to the female, so that the female exhibited new characteristics. Under the original male's gaze, a new style of women emerged, breaking the original pattern. For women, it was such a kind of liberation that women could no longer be bound by sexiness.

3.2 Custom Labeling: No Gender Labelled Expression

In the traditional concept, labeling was synonymous with limiting individuality. Labeling meant being defined and forming a stereotype, but the Little Red Book bloggers were different. Communicators in the Little Red Book would customize labels to highlight their identity and share content.

Firstly, defined himself as a fashion blogger under the avatar image and used it as his own label. On the one hand, it could obtain the traffic of the platform, and more users' browsing and attention. On the other hand, showing positioning could attract fans and enhance the stickiness of fans. Secondly, the bloggers would customize the tags in the content they shared, and focused on their own content and characteristics by setting the hashtags "#Genderless wearing" and "#Daily wearing". At the same time, bloggers would also define their outfits as labels such as "functional boy" and "cool boyfriend style", and describe their fashionable and trendy outfits, which conformed to the concept of genderlessness and satisfied the audience's needs for outfits and perceptions of genderlessness.

Sunshine boy Eyex, a fashion blogger with 88,000 followers, posted notes in the Little Red Book and received 250,000 likes. The note he shared was titled "Have an attitude, no gender. I'm a boy who likes to wear pink", which defined him as a gender-neutral blogger with attitude. The hashtag "#Daily wearing, #Genderless wearing" expressed his specific content. The tags in the Little Red Book were a clear definition of the content, which was convenient for the audience to search and read. Through labels, they broke people's perception of the original traditional clothing for men and women. No matter it was a video or a picture, the label of "genderless clothing" emphasized that all genders' clothes could be worn, and popularized the concept of genderless clothing, and promoted diverse social genders to enter into the field of vision of the mass.

3.3 Symbol Ambiguity and Fusion: Clothing Symbols Blurring Traditional Gender

Genderless clothing weakened the original masculinity and femininity by blurring or merging gender symbols to achieve the effect of no gender difference.

The fuzzification of gender clothing symbols was the fuzzification of the typical symbols of men and women. In traditional clothing, due to the innate physiological characteristics of men and women, men and women had obvious differences in body figure, and resulted in obvious differences in clothing outlines. The outline of men's clothing was mainly T-shaped, which highlighted the lines of men's back and chest; and the outline of women's clothing was mainly X-shaped, which highlighted the sexy waist of women. Genderless clothing fuzzified it, and there were more H-shaped and O-shaped ready-to-wear. "Oversize" was a typical silhouette feature of genderless clothing, which could enhance the comfort of wearing while conforming to people's body curves.

Gender clothing symbol fusion processing referred to merging the element differences of each other in the design of men's and women's clothing, and looking for neutral element symbols to present. For example, in the color of traditional men's and women's clothing, black, white and gray were the main colors of men's clothing, which showed the calmness and seriousness of men; while women's clothing had no restrictions, and could be brightly colored to show women's sexy, lively, cute and other temperament. Genderless clothing blended bright warm tones with monotonous cool tones, and weakened them in terms of color purity. There was no obvious difference between men and women, and so as to achieve a sense of visual comfort. For example, the short and medium sleeved (Ishizukawa Bosie2021SS) series had a loose style and a triangular neckline design to meet the wearing needs of multiple genders. The horizontal stripes of different thicknesses and the combination of three colors were visually harmonious. Through the fuzzification or fusion of symbols, genderless clothing broke through the traditional stereotype of masculinity, broke the prejudice of "strong men and weak women", and became an effective way to construct a new concept of gender temperament and the equality development of multi-gender.

(Ishizukawa Bosie 2021SS series pictures from Bosie official WeChat)

*3.4 In-depth Sharing: Combination of Pictures and Texts, Soft Text and Recommend*

Sharing had become a common feature of new media nowadays, but the Little Red Book platform was different from the other life sharing platforms. The Little Red Book focused on the sharing of fashion information and good things around the posters. The sharing of the Little Red Book was more in-depth, including the sharing of the characteristics of the item itself and the sharing of its ideas. The Little Red Book was mainly used in mobile terminals, mostly mobile phones, and the sharing posts met the sensory needs of users with combination of pictures and texts. Different from the sharing forms of Weibo and WeChat, the Little Red Book had pictures on the top, text on the bottom, and pictures were preconceived, which was more likely to arouse the users' interests. The combination of pictures and texts under the small screen could attract users' attention and let them watch the content of the shared posts immersively.

The communication of genderless clothing on the Little Red Book platform was divided into three categories. One was to directly share the outfits of genderless clothing, explain one's own understanding of genderless clothing, and deepen users' understanding of genderless clothing. Such fashion bloggers would share genderless outfits in different seasons and scenarios, such as genderless outfits in spring, commuting outfits, etc. The other type was to visit and share the store. Bloggers would go to the store of genderless clothing in person, share the design and clothing in the physical store, and bring a more realistic experience to users. The third category was users sharing genderless clothing designers and brands. Searching in the Little Red Book with "genderless clothing" as the key word, "what's the experience of visiting a genderless clothing store for the first time?" "Fashion is regardless of gender, and boys' clothes are no longer monotonous" such obvious titles reflected the blogger's attempts and perceptions of genderless clothing. The blogger shared his feelings with his own personal experience, provided suggestions to the audience, and achieved the purpose of "planting grass" (recommend) while sharing ideas. New media and genderless clothing had spawned niche brands and fashion bloggers. The brands of fashion bloggers and niche designers would become the shared content, enter into the audience's field of vision, and deepen the communication of genderless clothing. Texts based on genderless clothing gradually deepened the concept of gender equality in the minds of users through in-depth sharing, and promoted the rise of gender awareness.

4. The Logic of the Popularity of Genderless Clothing in the Little Red Book

The deep logic of the popularity of genderless clothing in new media was the result of the interaction between media and gender culture. Media and gender did not exist in isolation, but interacted through the material carrier of the clothing. Feminists viewed gender as a cultural construct. It was through the functioning of social practices that developed the difference in the roles, behaviors, thoughts, and emotional characteristics of women and men (Liu, 2001). The emergence of gender depended on social practice and was gradually formed in the process of social development. In the era of mass media, the shaping of social gender by the media could not be ignored (Zhang, 2014). In the era of new media,

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multiple genders were also expected to be displayed through the media, and clothing provided the material carrier and content of expression. Genderless clothing had an important impact on social gender cognition in the sharing and communication of new media platforms. This article explored the generative logic of genderless clothing from "generation-popularity" from the three main levels of genderless clothing brand, the Little Red Book platform, and individual.
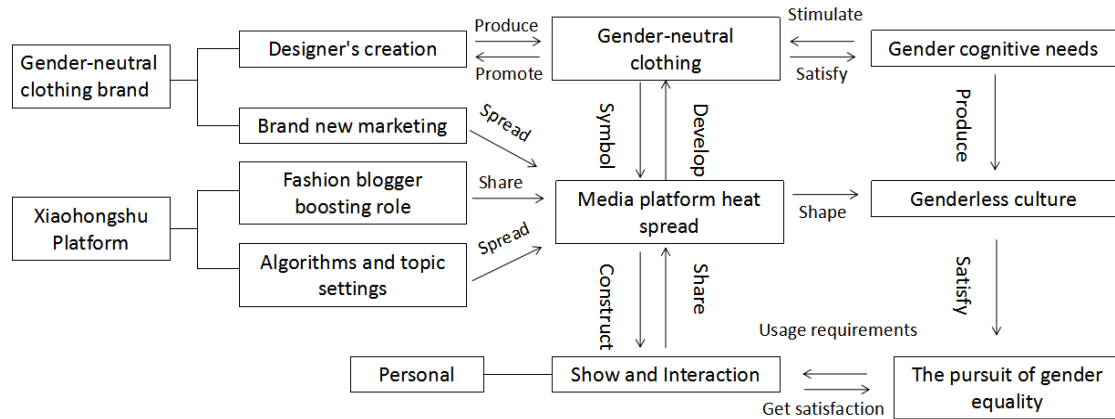
Logic diagram of genderless clothing popularity

4.1 Guidance of the Designer

Clothing was an expression of gender culture. Clothing was an important medium for conveying gender information. Gender diversity stimulated designers to design clothing catering to all genders—genderless clothing. Designers were central figures in the fashion circle. Designers expressed their ideas through clothing, broke through the constraints of gender and leaded the trend. Designers could firmly grasp the pulse of fashion, sniff the trend, grasp the current public's psychology, and express it through the design of different clothing symbols. In order to break through the gender restrictions and meet the public's demand for gender equality, the designer integrated and blurred the symbols of men and women in clothing design, and launched genderless clothing. The brand concept of China's local genderless clothing brand Bosie was "NO GENDER. NO BORDER.". During the development of gender culture, clothing played an important role, and genderless clothing had become a new trend hotspot to meet the needs of people's diverse gender expression.

4.2 Brand New Marketing

Donald Horton and R.Richard Whol put forward the "vice social interaction", which believed that new media leaded to new types of relationships (Joshua, 2002). As a new media platform, the Little Red Book had naturally triggered a new type of social relationship. The Little Red Book took fashion as its platform positioning and supplied a platform for fashion bloggers to interact with each other. Bloggers who were keen on gender-neutral outfits would share their lives. They focused on the injection of fashion sense and fashion taste to align the content with their own labels. The brand companies would invite fashion bloggers to share the outfits of their own brands, and through the sharing of fashion

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bloggers, fashion brands could be spread to the audience. This marketing method was different from the marketing methods of other platforms, and it was also different from the traditional marketing method. The traditional marketing method focused on products and prices, while the promotion and sharing of the Little Red Book was in the form of soft articles, focusing on the understanding of the brand, which helped to increase public acceptance of genderless clothing and enhanced the public's understanding and favorability towards the brand. The brand's new marketing method in the Little Red Book not only selected bloggers for social sharing and promotion, but also combined different content with its own brand content to participate in discussions with diverse topics. For example, genderless clothing brand Bosie combined content with travel, environmental protection, beauty, etc., and different communication content could be combined with "genderless", so as to participate in topic discussions and increase brand awareness. Such marketing method also led the "hot communication" of genderless clothing.

4.3 The Boosting Role of Fashion Bloggers

On the Little Red Book platform, the sharing of fashion bloggers had the boosting effect of the opinion leaders. Fashion bloggers in the Little Red Book mainly shared the content of different styles of outfits, which attracted different fans, and affected fans' outfit behaviors. Fashion bloggers had obvious labels. For example, some fashion bloggers would define fashion bloggers under their signatures, which could directly attract the attention of fans with the same attraction. The sharing of fashion bloggers was not a simple brand and advertisement promotion, but a share of organically combing daily life with their life experience. The audience would reduce their rejection of the content, and result in a certain sense of trust. With the support of trust, the audience would pursue the content shared by bloggers. Blogger Jiang Caozi had 29,000 followers in the Little Red Book, and she defined herself as a genderless mix-and-match enthusiast. She took photos in different scenes such as subways, streets, bedrooms, parks, etc., and shared them to provide reference for those who liked genderless clothing.

Fashion bloggers shared trendy genderless clothing, and the fans would follow them in action. Genderless clothing bloggers wore genderless clothing to express their ideas, "using clothing language instead of me to express", which was easy to resonate with fans emotionally, and reshape the audience's aesthetics on social media.

4.4 The Little Red Book's Algorithm and Topic Guidance

One of the advantages of the Little Red Book different from WeChat, Tik Tok, Taobao and other platforms was the "community + e-commerce" operation model. The form of social networking enabled users to connect together, and the sharing and evaluation of products with each other allowed the audience to gain a better understanding of the product's characteristics. The algorithm distributed and recommended information in a targeted manner according to the user's interests and geographic location. The Little Red Book used algorithmic big data to recommend similar note content based on users' preferences. Under the connection of the community, the audience paid attention to genderless clothing and learnt about it by sharing notes. Under the deep influence, consumption behavior would

occur.

With the recommendation of the algorithm, various "circles" formed. Users who had always liked to wear clothes, users who had always liked fashion, would follow their favorite bloggers, and would naturally recommend content related to them. In order to facilitate algorithm recommendation and users' self-search, the Little Red Book set topics when publishing content, closely combined content and topics, and effectively spread information to match users, thus the senders and receivers were directly linked with together. The topic was set after tagging the content and joining the discussion in the community. Bloggers who posted content could set topics such as "#Genderless" "#Genderless wear" and "#Genderless clothing". Users could also search for such keywords. The combination of topic setting and algorithm recommendation enabled users who liked fashion and were keen on genderless clothing to naturally gather together, and thus the communication of genderless clothing became popular.

4.5 Individual Performances and Interactions

Goffman's drama theory believed that people would have a choice of self-presentation in their daily interactions, and this process was the performance. Self-presentation had undergone new changes under the influence of new media technology (Dong, 2018). Individual performances in new media differed from Goffman's face-to-face performances. The performer and the audience in new media were separated from each other. Individuals completed their own performances and impression management through sharing in the media platform. People's gender perception of themselves was male or female, or transgender, etc., which would be expressed in clothing. Bloggers thought that they were pursuing genderless roles. They would wear genderless clothing and directly identify with the genderless concept in their behavior. On the Little Red Book platform, they would outline their own cognition through photos and texts to achieve self-identity. The famous American psychologist Rogers proposed that everyone had two selves: the ideal self and the actual self. The ideal self was related to self-identity, which was one of the ways to realize identity (Wu, Zeng, & Wu, 2019). The Little Red Book had set up following and comments, users would follow and comment on bloggers related to non-gender content, and the bloggers who are followed and commented would feel a kind of satisfaction of being recognized, which achieved a kind of identity. This identity further allowed users to have a deeper understanding of their new "gender" and meet their ideal self. The source of self-identity was based on the performance and interaction on the Little Red Book platform, and the media played an important role. Young groups gained recognition in the Little Red Book through genderless clothing, and formed an identity with this gendered culture in a specific circle of the Little Red Book.

5. Cold Thinking on the Popularity of Genderless Clothing in New Media

James Carey's "Ritual View" of communication opened up the cultural research orientation of communication studies. In the "Ritual View", communication was mainly related to "sharing" "participation" "jointness" "group" and "having a common belief" related words. Communication was

a symbolic process in which reality was produced, maintained, modified and transformed (James, 2005). Communication and culture were closely linked, and the central issue was meaning, which was transmitted through symbols. Genderless clothing was popular in new media, the public had a common belief - gender equality, and the important symbols of genderless clothing had become a new cultural phenomenon in sharing. The meaning of genderless clothing itself was that all genders could wear it, but in the process of sharing, the meaning of itself had not been achieved or even deflected due to the hot communication.

5.1 Genderless Slogan Calls, Confusion of Gender Cognition

In the context of multi-gender society, it was emphasized that all genders can wear genderless clothing. Gender equality here referred to the equality of clothing expression, and did not rise to equality in all senses. Broadly speaking, genderless clothing had contributed to the rise of gender awareness and the expression of all genders in clothing. However, in terms of individuality, genderless clothing could not express groups such as same-sex and transgender, and could not generate identity for some groups.

Traditional feminism attributed the inequality of men and women to the difference between men and women, and sought the liberation of women through "seeking common ground". The fact that both men and women could wear genderless clothing was a manifestation of seeking common ground, which belonged to the path of traditional feminism seeking liberation. Neo-feminism launched a critical reflection on traditional feminism: why should equality be opposed to difference? Why could not equality be sought in a way that recognizes gender differences? They believed that in a world full of differences, equal respect should be obtained, and no assimilation should be at the expense of being male (Meng, 2010). Neo-feminism was not just about male and female, it was about equality of all genders and human emancipation. Genderless apparel brands only showed men and women wearing the same clothes in their promotions to express "all genders can wear them". It was difficult to show the social gender of male and female models. In this way, genderless clothing could be worn by both men and women, and they became "clothes that cover the body", and the meaning of gender equality in clothing was weakened.

Genderless clothing used the standard requirements of men's and women's clothing to display other genders, which was not conducive to gender equality. Gender diversity should also be the embodiment of diversity in clothing, not from "diversity" to "sameness". Emphasizing differences would lead to inequality, but same did not mean equality. In the context of multiculturalism, it was necessary to allow differences to exist, and "differences" contained positive meanings, which not only meant equality between men and women, but also equality for all genders and could achieve harmonious development of genders. Such groups wearing genderless clothing showed their own personality but could not conform to their own gender cognition. Their gender was not expressed through clothing, and the others did not understand their gender, thus made it difficult to achieve self-identity.

5.2 The Guidance of Sharing Platforms, the Fanaticism of Irrational Pursuit

Michelle Barrett, a famous British materialist female scholar, explained the logic of the formation of

the dualism of femininity from the perspective of cultural communication, focusing on the "stereotypes" of hidden masculine and feminine temperament shaped by literary works, advertisements, and other media texts. Emphasizing the connection between media texts and social reality had created a value of gender binary opposition (Michele, 2014). The popularity of genderless clothing was displayed on the new media platform, the Little Red Book, and the role of the media could not be underestimated. The influence of the text of the medium on the dressing of genderless clothing was particularly important. The image sharing and text introduction of genderless clothing on the new media platform had affected the audience's original gender cognition, brought diverse social genders into the public's field of vision, and the freedom and equality of clothing expression had been well promoted.

In the sharing of new media, the importance of gender equality in clothing was deflected. First of all, genderless clothing was interpreted by some bloggers as being worn by both men and women, only from the perspective of biological gender, which made a difference in whether genderless clothing was understood in terms of social gender or biological gender, thus resulted in a difference in meaning. Secondly, new media was different from traditional media. The new media represented by the Little Red Book was to achieve the purpose of product marketing and profit realization through new forms of social interaction and sharing. "Gender equality" in "genderless clothing" made the concept publicity become a marketing gimmick, and the fashion bloggers and users embraced genderless clothing in their understanding of fashion trends. On the new media platform, the Little Red Book, the audience was keen and addicted to the outfits shared by bloggers, followed the outfits of bloggers, lost their autonomy in clothing matching and lacked their own thinking. The fashion of the audience was the product of following the matching in the new media. The expression of clothing in reality had all become the "genderless" style in the "the Little Red Book", and the personality expressed by the clothing was invisibly destroyed.

The production of genderless clothing culture in new media was based on an uncertain value judgment and selection, which was randomly determined and expressed according to the needs of the public and the orientation of the market. In the process of social practice, value selection and judgment were purely controlled according to human desires, and the ultimate meaning was missing, and created the illusion of gender equality.

5.3 The Carnival in the Consumption Era, the Erasure of Individual Characteristics

The popularity of genderless clothing was also a consumption frenzy. In 2021, the report JD 618 | 9 Consumption Trends in Generation Z Fashion Trends by the Jingdong Big Data Research Institute showed that "genderless dressing" had become one of the trends. Since 2021, the transaction volume of online shopping for men and women of the Z generation had increased by 4.3 times year-on-year, and the transaction volume of oversized clothing had increased by 1.5 times year-on-year (Zi, 2021).

With the advent of the new consumption era, the consumption behavior of genderless clothing was actually the consumption of "genderless" symbols on clothing. Roland Barthes introduced semiotics into the consumer society, and Baudrillard pushed the theory of semiotic consumption to its peak.

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Baudrillard believed that in a consumer society, consumption was not a material practice. When we consumed a commodity, it was not the function of the commodity itself, but the essence of the function of expressing meaning behind the commodity (Jean, 2019). Genderless clothing symbols had brought a new consumer culture, which led people to rediscover themselves, search for themselves, and redefine gender. Baudrillard emphasized that consumption was full of motives to show off wealth, and advertise oneself as a wealthy or special class. In contemporary consumption, it was no longer purely to meet the needs of life, but to show one's identity and status through consumer commodity symbols (Liu, 2019). Genderless clothing was a symbol of the expression of "genderless" and "gender equality". Consumers intended to show their gender and pursue the concept of gender equality. In the sense of consumption, genderless clothing was a commodity. The focus of the commodity was to meet the consumer needs of consumers. The genderless clothing with the concept of genderless dressing and fashion made the clothing loose and monotonous, and replaced individuality with commonality, which was difficult to meet individual needs. Behind the consumption frenzy, genderless clothing had become a mass commodity, thus became unfashionable and sacrificed the individuality of those who pursued sexism. Under the influence of consumer culture, people put their pursuit of gender equality in the consumption of genderless clothing products, lost their critical dimension, resulted in alienated consumption, indulged in it, and lost themselves.

6. Conclusion

Genderless clothing subverted the traditional clothing differences between men and women, and integrated multiple genders into clothing to express the meaning of gender equality, which reflected the social consciousness behind the mainstream. When we looked at all the differences in clothing between men and women, we lacked the discussion about society itself, in fact, diverse social genders also needed equality. The meaning of genderless clothing had been deflected in the process of hot communication. Genderless clothing expressed all genders in the form of "same clothing", which did not achieve gender equality in essence, but caused gender loss to minority groups. Different understandings in new media led to the weakening of the meaning of gender equality. From the perspective of consumer culture, genderless clothing could not meet the needs of all genders, which greatly reduced the original gender charm and lost individuality, thus also made oneself lost. Differences in gender roles were gradually weakened under the representation of fashion clothing. In the context of increasingly reliance on media communication, how one equally displayed multiple genders with clothing symbols needed to be further explored.

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