Research on the Image Construction of LGBT Groups from Different Media Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

This paper is a study of sexual minorities, including lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender, which are called LGBT. As a marginalized group, their image is largely influenced by the mimetic environment created by the media. So This paper focuses on the construction of the image of the LGBT community from news media, social media, and film these three perspectives. It is hoped that can enhance public understanding of the LGBT community and provide a theoretical reference for research in the LGBT field. Based on extensive references to previous literature, this paper mainly summarizes the perspectives of the literature and analyze the current situation of the LGBT community. We will discuss the presentation and influence of different media on LGBT groups from news media, social media and films. As an official media, news media has stereotypes about LGBT groups. Social media shows the public's perception of LGBT and identity of the LGBT community themselves. As a kind of art media, film shows the psychological characteristics and social difficulties of LGBT groups, and always end with tragedies. Through these different media and voices, we will understand the LGBT groups more roundly and empathize with them, which will help us put aside prejudice and treat everyone equally.

Keywords：Media, LGBT, ,Image Construction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Lesbians Gays Bisexuals Transgender (LGBT)generally refers to sexual minorities, which are different from the majority groups in terms of sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, or sexual behavior. Although the affirmative action movement of sexual minorities is gradually rising all over the world, LGBT groups still have unreasonable labels such as "AIDS", "abnormal" and "psychosis" in the eyes of many people, and there is still a difficult situation of being stigmatized. In the image construction of the LGBT group, the influence of media should not be underestimated [1].

Previous studies mainly focused on the image building of homosexual groups in the media environment. As a branch with a large number and proportion of sexual minorities, homosexual groups provide a large part of the research data for this study. In the relevant research of official media, sexual minorities lack diversified image construction, and their subject tends to be neutral, but stereotype still exists [1]. Social media shows a complex image construction, showing a sharing attitude of combining self-expression and self-concealment [2]. In film and television works, the image of sexual minorities is mostly shaped with an understanding attitude to guide readers to understand the beauty and emotion of sexual minorities, but the ending is mostly set with a pessimistic attitude [3].

LGBT groups are still stigmatized and labeled, and the construction of LGBT related public opinion atmosphere with the attitude of science popularization and understanding can reduce people's awareness of discrimination and greatly help the equal rights struggle of sexual minorities. This study is committed to investigating the current situation of the media's image of this group, to find a feasible direction to break through the public's cognitive barrier to sexual minorities.

This study takes the information dissemination

publisher and receiver of the media as the classification standard makes a detailed analysis of typical cases in the three directions of news media, social media, and film and television works, and focuses on the current situation of the information publisher's construction of LGBT image in different media environments. Jumping out of the limitations of single social media research, this paper makes an in-depth analysis of representative cases through a horizontal comparison of different types of media, to explore the current situation and reasons for LGBT being stigmatized. Find a large number of samples, summarize and sort out the relevant research from various research angles, and analyze the main narrative direction and expression content from various angles. In the direction of news media, take more than 400 relevant reports dominated by Sina News as the analysis object, and cross analyze the number of reports, reporting objects, reporting topics, and so on. In the direction of social media, comprehensive social media and dedicated social media are discussed separately to study the influence of social media on the image construction of LGBT. In the direction of film and television works, select representative films, and explore the tendency of film and television works to the construction of LGBT group image by analyzing the specific shaping tendency and plot arrangement of film and television works for LGBT group image.

In this article, the analysis direction is from the perspectives of news media, social media, film, and television works. The first part of the following focuses on the external image construction characteristics of the LGBT group from the perspective of news media. The second part of the article studies the self-image construction of the LGBT group in the social media environment, and the third part focuses on the artistic processing of images in the film and television works of the LGBT group.

2. IMAGE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE NEWS MEDIA

The news media, as the official media that the majority of people pay attention to, plays an almost decisive role in guiding the path of the construction of the image of the LGBT community. the LGBT community is often marginalized in the discourse of the mass media, and although there has been a large number of affirmative action campaigns about the LGBT community in recent years, the visibility of the LGBT community in the media remains low, while the image of the LGBT community presented by the media is far from comprehensive and objective. The image of the LGBT community presented in the media is far from comprehensive and objective [2]. In the process of constructing an image of the LGBT community, the majority of people's perceptions of the LGBT community come from media reports, as the

audience is always in a mimetic environment created by the news media.

In this time, we will take 195 relevant reports from 2014 to 2018 by The Paper and 244 relevant reports from 2006 to 2019 by Sina News as our analysis samples, and through a comprehensive cross-analysis of coverage targets, several reports, coverage topics, and coverage tendencies, we believe that news media coverage of the LGBT community mainly has the following characteristics.

2.1. Ignoring the Inherent Diversity of the LGBT Community

The majority of the subjects covered by The Paper are homosexuals, accounting for 63.1%, followed by transgender people at 21.5%, The lowest proportion of reports on bisexuals was 0.5%, and there were no reports on cool kids [1]. The same problem exists with Sina News, which reported 79.1% of homosexuals, 31.4% of transgender people, and a very low 1% of bisexuals [3].

The news media's avoidance of bisexuality and cool kids shows that the news coverage of the LGBT community is mainly focused on the gay and transgender groups within the LGBT community, which to some extent ignores the inherent diversity of the LGBT community, and also reflects the fact that there is a limit to the openness of the news coverage of gender issues, and that the vast majority of the current discussion about sexual minorities is based on addressing [3]. For example, same-sex marriage is the main demand of the gay community, anti-discrimination is the main demand of transgender people, while bisexuals lack a precise group identity and are less discussed and given less attention [4].

2.2. Stereotypes of the LGBT Community Persist

The overall coverage of LGBT in The Paper is mainly neutral, accounting for 42.56%, mostly described objectively, with few judgments of reporting tendencies. Secondly, the number of positive reports was more than twice as high as the number of negative reports, with 33.33% of positive reports and 24.1% of negative reports [1]. In contrast, 32% of Sina News reports presented a positive image of LGBT subject figures, 34% presented a neutral image, and a smaller number presented a negative report [3].

It is clear from the themes and tendencies of the media coverage that the coverage of the LGBT community is mostly neutral and positive, but the three categories of medical treatment and illness, stigma and discrimination, and crime and detention are still dominated by negative tendencies [1]. In many reports, the media will still habitually low have a causal relationship between homosexuality and negative content such as AIDS and correctional treatment, and use transgender people

experiencing workplace discrimination and LGBT offenders or victims as the focus of their reports to attract readers' attention, subconsciously labeling the LGBT community in a negative way [3]. On the one hand, it aspires to deepen the audience's perception of the LGBT community with positive and neutral reporting tendencies, but on the other hand, it finds it difficult to escape the inertia of labeling the LGBT community, reflecting the contradiction which largely confuses the audience's perception. In turn, they simply interpret the news according to their established views, ultimately deepening stereotypes about the LGBT community.

3. IMAGE CONSTRUCTION OF LGBT GROUPS IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The mainstream news media With the development of the Internet, more and more social media appear in the market, which provides an environment for people to gain information and show themselves. Social media are open, connected, and inclusive. Due to the characteristics of social media, the image construction of LGBT groups in comprehensive social media and dedicated social media is different [4]. Besides, according to the conclusion of the theses about LGBT groups and social media, we found that most research focused on homosexuality rather than LGBT group. Based on existing research, we concluded the image construction of LGBT groups from the perspective of social media and divided it into two aspects.

3.1. The Comprehensive Social Media Make LGBT Groups Construct Two Different Identities

Depending on the theory of self-presentation, the LGBT groups have " I and Me " when they use comprehensive social media such as Facebook and Weibo. The comprehensive social media is complex and diverse, having a great influence on the image construction of LGBT groups. Under the influence of heterosexual society, some people are biased against LGBT groups. To prevent themselves from verbal attacks, the LGBT groups choose to show their images. For example, on social media Weibo, some LGBT people hide their true identity and cater to the mainstream culture [4]. On the one hand, they pay attention to the information about LGBT groups to gain comfort and social identity. On the other hand, they are influenced by public opinions, denying their identity and even getting married to women. Because comprehensive social media mainly spread the mainstream culture and core values, the LGBT groups are likely to construct two different identities when they use comprehensive social media.

3.2. The Dedicated Social Media Strengthen LGBT Groups' Self-identification

In the early days of the Internet, some gay websites appeared. With the development of 4G network technology, some dedicated social media are popular in LGBT groups. We choose the dedicated social media Blued as our research object. As of February 2017, the number of global registered users of Blued has reached 40 million [5]. Blued does not require users to register with their real names and further divides users into different identities. In special circumstances, users can find friends easily and share their problems or opinions without worrying, which makes them more confident and achieve self-desensitization [6]. When the gays use Blued, not only can they reduce fear and uncomfortableness, but also strengthen self-identification. However, dedicated social media still have some problems. Under the influence of the patriarchal society, the LGBT groups have an inner contradiction. Gays discriminate against other groups, which makes other groups deny themselves and gradually stop showing their images on social media. In addition, due to the lack of regulation, some dedicated social media involves illegal content, having an awful influence on the teenagers in LGBT groups. In conclusion, dedicated social media strengthen LGBT groups' self-identification and let them construct true images. To provide a clean community for LGBT groups, the government and producers still need to put an effect on regulation.

4. IMAGE CONSTRUCTION OF LGBT GROUPS IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF FILM

The above articles have shown that social media has both the communication and influence of LGBT groups and films, like other media, also play an important role in the images displayed of LGBT groups. Film and television works create many LGBT images that we are familiar with, and they are shown more dramatically, giving us a more intuitive understanding of their images and situations. Through these works, it is not difficult to find that these LGBT images also have rich emotions, views, and the ability to love and be loved. Expect gender identity and orientation, it is hard to say that there is any difference between them and us. Unfortunately, however, these LGBT images mostly end with tragedies in films and television productions [7-10]. The expressions of art are always the reflections of realities. Even the LGBT groups in films and television works are like that, what about in real life?

4.1. The Self-identification Of Transgenders

The film, The Danish Girl, tells the story of the world's first transgender man, Lily. As a member of the LGBT groups, transgender people have been unable to truly identify with their physical genders since they were

born, but under the control of the mainstream social thoughts, they have to force themselves to accept and identify their genders. In the film, Lily bravely breaks down the social prejudice and follows her heart to become a true woman from inner to outer by undergoing transgender surgery. In the film, Lily breaks through the shackles of right discourse to gain the identity of her gender, however, the price of this great step in her life [7].

4.2. The Influence and Display Of The Social Environment On The Protagonist In The Film

Brokeback Mountain and Please Call Me by Your Name are both gay films. Although the tones of the two films are very different, they both end in tragedies. Both the protagonists of the two films choose to bury their heads in the sand when they realize their real sexual orientation, which is also proof of the pressure and inability of the social environment for the LGBT groups [8-9]. Brokeback Mountain shows the influence of social values and morality on LGBT groups in a cruel way [8]. While Alio in Call Me by Your Name has a harmonious and inclusive family, it is still an unsatisfactory ending due to the taboo love of the same sex [9].

4.3 The Character Tragedy Of The Queer —— Dieyi ChengIn Farewell My Concubine

The hero of the film "FarewellMy Concubine", Dieyi, has a feminine looking dressed in girlish clothes, who is taken to the opera house by his mother. From then on, he was forced to understand female roles, such as nuns and concubines. At first, he refused to play such roles and constantly misread the monologue "Dreaming Of The World Outside The Monastery" until he yields to his fate, finally he said, "I am by nature a girl, not a boy". But after accepting female roles, he began to understand that his nature was indeed a girl, that he did not perform but lived his own life on stages. Because of the subtle changes in Dieyi's psychology, he falls in love with his partner, Xiaolou. But because Deiyi was born as a man, however strong their relationship was, the post-imperial Chinese society could agree for him to marry another man. His feminine characteristic of him made him become a weirdo and was not allowed at that time. When he experienced various hopelessness from the society and people around him, he decided to suicide, which led to a thorough tragedy [10].

5. CONCLUSION

As the official media in the eyes of most people, news coverage of the LGBT community is mostly neutral and positive, and positive portrayals of LGBT people are gradually increasing, but some of the topics are still in the habit of labeling the LGBT community, which is a subtle way gives the LGBT community a negative label, and the overall stereotype of the LGBT community still exists.

Secondly, in the selection of topics on the LGBT community, the media has mainly focused on the homosexual and transgender groups within the LGBT community, ignoring to a certain extent the inherent diversity of the LGBT community, reflecting the fact that there is a limit to the openness of news coverage on gender issues.

As an important way to have communications and show images, social media play a role in the image construction of LGBT groups. Some LGBT people choose to show their images on comprehensive social media, while they are likely to construct true images on dedicated social media. Most dedicated social media are provided for homosexuality rather than the LGBT groups, which may cause an inner contradiction. Although there are still some problems and shortages in social media, it is freer and more convenient for LGBT groups to show their characters.

As a kind of art medium, there must be a lot of dramatic techniques of expression and some exaggerations of the shaping of LGBT groups in the films. But art always comes from reality, these artistic expressions can show the social attitudes towards LGBT groups, their complex images, and rich emotions, which arouse public empathy and reflection, causing positive changes. From the perspective of communication, the film spreads these by the way of images, reaching a broader audience and is more acceptable to its audiences.

According to the conclusion of theses about LGBT groups and different media, people pay more attention to homosexuality. The image construction of LGBT groups is still incomplete. In the future, artists can show the emotion and behaviors of LGBT groups through films or artworks to let people have a better understanding of LGBT groups. The government must strengthen regulation of the online environment, providing a free and clean platform for LGBT groups to show their true identities. The official media can report more positive news about LGBT groups. With increasing attention to LGBT groups, people's stereotypes will be broken.

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