

Stereotyping And Objectifying Women: A Semiotics Analysis In The Lyrics Of Melanie Martinez's 'Strawberry Shortcake'

Gracia Petra Theresa⁽¹⁾

Universitas Bangka

Belitung

graciatheresa98@gmail.com

M. Afifuloh⁽²⁾

Universitas Bangka

Belitung

afifulloh@ubb.ac.id

M. Aries Taufiq⁽³⁾

Universitas Bangka

Belitung

aries@ubb.ac.id

Abstract

Stereotyping and objectifying women has been threatening women's existence and worth for ages. As a result, women have been trying to call out an action to confront and challenge these destructive threats through so many ways. Melanie Martinez is a female singer that often using her platform to raise awareness on woman's struggles in society such as stereotyping and objectifying women itself. This research aims to uncover hidden meanings, stereotypes, and objectifications of women in song lyrics "Strawberry Shortcake" by Melanie Martinez. The purpose of this research is to raise understanding and awareness of women's harmful stereotypes of the "ideal" body image and body objectifications through the song lyrics. This research used descriptive qualitative method to collect and analyze data to reveal the stereotypes and objectifications based on the meaning of the song lyrics. The theoretical framework that were used to analyze the song lyrics was semiotics theory of denotation, connotation, and myth by Roland Bartes. The result shows that the song lyrics are more than just depicts the struggles of women to confront unrealistic stereotypes of beauty standards and the objectification towards their body, but it's also a call out action for society to begin confronting and challenging it.

Keywords: Bartes; lyrics; objectification; semiotics; stereotypes

INTRODUCTION

Since from the very first start of their life, women often had to put up with societies' high standards towards them about the "ideal" body image. The unimaginable standards for women where they should be skinny but curvy at the same time, be beautiful but forbidden to be concerned with beauty, and so much more (Thapa, 2018). These pressures leading up to body shaming culture in society that eventually controlling women and strongly influence them to buy more make up products or doing a diet for losing weight (Batoool, Iqbal, et al., 2022).

Based upon how societies controls women, stereotypes and objectifications towards women are exist. Women stereotypes is a prescriptive influence, determining the parameters of appropriate behaviour for women that portrays them as lack of independence or other characteristics that are depicting low self-perception (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005; Maulana & Syarifuddin, 2022). In the old days, women stereotypically were need to be compliant to men because men were looked upon more superior than women. This also created another stereotype where women are below men that lead them being controlled by men, which is also why women were being a victim of abuse control.

Stereotype of how men are far superior than women create a picture that women are helpless and can't do nothing to men. In the past, women have been viewed as "the Other" in relation to men. This means that men are viewed as the norm or standard, while women are frequently defined in opposition to them. This "othering" is a factor in the marginalization and oppression of women in society (Beauvoir, 2015). Stereotypes can affect any aspects of women's life, for instance there is a pay gap for women in NHS (National Health Services) simply because women are the one who has maternity leave. Consequently, women are appearing to be 'work less' than men who work full time (Appleby, 2018; Stout, 2018). This result in men capable to do anything to women, one of the things they do is objectifying women. The objectification of women refers to the act of treating women as though they were inanimate objects, thereby rejecting their inherent humanity and subjectivity. It frequently occurs as a consequence of cultural stereotypes and ignorance, which are often unintentional (Papadaki, 2010). Once a woman being objectified, her physical appearance or sexual attributes seems only exist to be use by others, or on worst case men (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The experiences of objectifications towards women is not limited in real life interactions, it could also happen through media outlets such as advertisements, movies, printed media, music video, song lyrics, etc.

As a result of the stereotypes and objectifications, many women have been raising awareness to the society to educating them on how women are supposed to be treated. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter or X, and Instagram are becoming essential media for information sharing to spread the awareness. Throughout history, traditional broadcast media, including radio

and television, have also contributed to the coverage of feminist movements and causes (Johnson, 2017). Nowadays, the most common media that are used for spreading awareness is through songs. A song can be defined as a form of creative writing that represents a personal expression of ideas and emotions through lyrical composition. The vocabulary and stylistic techniques used to enhance the song and convey a specific message, which are collectively known as diction and figures of speech, contribute to its aesthetic appeal (Syamsurrijal et al., 2023). Therefore, many singers, especially female, has use their songs to express women's issues.

As stated by Freudiger (1974), female singers may be in a superior position to challenge stereotypes, given their greater capacity for variability in their performances of songs. There are several female singers that stood up for women throughout their music career, which are Taylor Swift, Lizzo, Lady Gaga, etc (Raven, 2022). Melanie Martinez is also one of the female singers that often speak up about women's issues in life. Melanie Martinez, a 29-year-old multifaceted artist, symbolizes the feminist movement with empathy and strength. Her rise to the prominence commenced with her participation in NBC's "The Voice" in 2012. Despite not winning, she garners substantial acclaim, surpassing the success of several previous victors.

Melanie Martinez's debut album, *Cry Baby*, features 13 tracks that embody the perspective of the "cry baby," a derogatory term often used to undermine feminists' narratives. Her utilization of patriarchal media to forge a successful career underscores the potency of her message. She pre-emptively adopts the "cry baby" label, effectively undermining potential criticism. Her intensified representation of femininity, in parallel with her biting lyricism, creates a persona that is distinct among current female figures in the

mainstream (Snider, 2015). Ultimately, her stance, lyrical content, and visual expression collectively embody a formidable feminist aesthetic (Henson, 2017).

It is not uncommon for a song's lyrics to possess a degree of ambiguity, wherein they may be open to interpretation in more than one way. The lyrics of songs frequently convey ideas and thoughts. On occasion, the difficulty arises in comprehending the intended meaning of a text due to the surrounding context, which can result in disparate interpretations. There are multiple methods of conveying concepts to others. The utilisation of musical elements represents a further technique. Songs are typically composed of meanings that are interpreted as a form of language through which the speaker conveys meanings that are not entirely literal. In general, an object that represents another may convey a wholly distinct, profound, and more significant message (Jafar et al., 2021).

The lyrics of 'Strawberry Shortcake' song were used as an object of this research because it contains implicit meanings related to stereotyping and the objectification of women. Despite its cheerful melody and seemingly innocuous subject matter, the lyrics of the song, upon closer examination, are deeply complex and require further investigation to fully comprehend their underlying meanings. Additionally, the urgent issue of stereotyping and the objectification of women demands immediate attention in our current situation in society.

Various previous studies on women's stereotypes and objectification was conducted that have supported the analysis of authors' study on analyzing "Strawberry Shortcake" song lyrics. Those studies were written by Aprilia & Neisya (2022), Bahr & Pujiyanti (2019), and Rasmussen & Densley (2017). Those authors analyzed how song lyrics were

utilized as a media to representing women's stereotypes such as domestic responsibilities, 'feminine' behaviors, career aspirations, beauty standards, and dependency on men. Furthermore, their research show how songs can serve as a rebuttal to societal expectations, objectification against women, promoting a broader recognition of women's identities and advocating for gender equality.

On the other hand, there are also several previous studies that also have been conducted research using framework of semiotics by Roland Barthes, specifically in analyzing song lyrics. Those studies were organized by Jafar et al. (2021) and Sulistyowati et al. (2024). Both studies reveal how employing semiotics framework by Roland Barthes permits a comprehensive examination of the song's lyrics, uncovering both the explicit meanings and the underlying implications. Additionally, the theoretical framework contributes to a deeper understanding of expression that are contain in song lyrics in order to expressing concerns and raising awareness of social issues to the society in a contemporary way. In other words, semiotics is an analytical tool for exploring meaning in different contexts (Mikhaeil & Baskerville, 2019).

As shown in the previous literature review, there is an absence of research on the "Strawberry Shortcake" song lyrics from a semiotics perspective, suggesting an opportunity for further investigation. Moreover, the stereotyping and objectification of women have been a significant and persistent issue for an extended period. However, despite the urgency of this matter, there has been a notable absence of tangible progress. Therefore, "Strawberry Shortcake" serves as a complementing case study, demonstrating the potential for raising awareness on this topic through an engaging and entertaining

platform, particularly when the content is presented in the form of melodious songs with exceptional lyrical composition.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, the authors use descriptive qualitative method to collect, analyse, and characterize the data that were collected. Semiotics theoretical framework by Roland Barthes will be the theory that guide this research in analysing the song lyrics. According to Sugiyono (2013), descriptive qualitative research is a research method that focuses on descriptions that offer insights into human behaviour or social phenomena that aiming to provide a rich and detailed understanding of the subject matter. Descriptive qualitative method allowed the authors to scan and filter which lyrics will be the findings to this research and will later on be analyse and interpret through Roland Barthes' semiotics theory of denotation, connotation, and myth.

Roland Barthes' (1977) semiotics theory outlines three levels of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth. In denotation, the signifier directly represents the signified, and this is the literal or explicit interpretation of a sign. Conversely, connotation refers to a sign's additional, frequently sentimental or value-based meanings (Klugman & Lamb, 2019). Barthes defined myth as a second-order meaning derived from connotation that embodies nuanced cultural values. Myths are expressed in communication and are deeply embedded in our systems of signification, influencing our collective consciousness (Hammouri, 2020). In order to get the data, first thing to do, the authors will analyse which line in the lyrics that have underlying meaning. Secondly, the authors will examine the data and organize it into three significations, which are denotation, connotation, and myth. Lastly, after organizing the data, the authors will

present the data and the discussion in result and discussion section.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After analysed the lyrics, the authors have chosen thirteen lines from the lyrics of 'Strawberry Shortcake' that contain implicit meaning of stereotypes and objectifications toward women. As explained before, denotation is the first level of semiotics, it represents the literal meaning of a sign. Connotation is the second level that contains additional meaning and cultural or emotional implications of a sign. Meanwhile, myth is the third and the last level of semiotics, it's a constructed cultural meaning that transform into a universal narrative. The results of the analysis are presented and discussed in the following sections.

1. Wondering why I don't look like Barbie

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby is wondering why she doesn't have body figure like a Barbie doll.
- b. Connotation: Cry Baby wishing that her natural body figure is like a Barbie doll which are skinny, tall, smooth skin, etc.
- c. Myth: Tall, white, soft skin, and skinny is the absurdity and unrealistic image of beauty standards in society.

The first line of the song on denotation level tells Cry Baby's confusion with her natural body figure because she doesn't look like a Barbie doll. Meanwhile, on the connotation level, it is revealed that Cry Baby wishing she have a body figure like a Barbie doll. The word 'wondering' is an implicit wish for Cry Baby to have a Barbie's body figure. The myth that was discovered in this line is that Barbie is a representation of unrealistic image of beauty standards in society where women will look more appealing if they are white, skinny, tall, etc. The Barbie doll has long been regarded as a cultural icon, and frequently

perceived as a benchmark for physical attractiveness among young girls and women. As previously discussed by Rice et al. (2016), there is a tendency for women to be perceived as more attractive if they conform to specific racial, body type, and height standards.

2. Now, my mama's preaching to make sure I'm pure

- a. Denotation: Her mother lecturing her about purity.
- b. Connotation: The lecture talks about how Cry Baby need to remain innocent and a virgin.
- c. Myth: The constant pressure around women where women need to stay virgin before married.

This line talks about Cry Baby's mother who give her a preach about stay being pure. On denotation level, the line tells about how Cry Baby's mother lecturing her about purity. On connotation level, it shows that the word 'purity' means being innocent and a virgin, which means Cry Baby's mother wants her to protect her virginity. The myth on this line uncover the cultural ideology that women are held to a different standard than men, where women need to stay virgin before married. The constant pressure around women where they have to protect their innocent, while men can do whatever they want with their body. The concept of female virginity prior to marriage is deeply entrenched in a multitude of cultural, religious, and societal norms across a vast array of regions. For instance, a study conducted in a research by Mulumeoderhwa (2018) revealed that men tend to experience disappointment when they marry non-virgin women. Indeed, the majority of male and female participants perceived virgins as individuals of high moral character, holding the view that the loss of a girl's virginity brings disgrace to her family.

3. Got boys acting like they ain't seen skin before

- a. Denotation: Boys behaving as if they never see girls' bare skin.
- b. Connotation: The boys acting like girls' bare skin as a new discovery.
- c. Myth: Men often see women's bare skin as a new discovery that makes them 'curious' and want to 'explore.'

In terms of denotation, the line indicates that boys view girls' skin as something they have never seen. From the standpoint of connotation, the line alludes to the immaturity and objectification of males in relation to how women's bodies are viewed as a new discovery that they recently found. Conversely, the myth exposed in this line reflects the societal expectation that women should conceal their bodies or avoid displaying excessive amounts of skin to avert being perceived as "provocative" in terms of men's sexual desire (Wolfendale, 2016). This notion is seldom challenged, perpetuating problematic attitudes about women's accountability for men's sexual conduct. Additionally, men frequently regard women's exposed skin as a source of curiosity, prompting them to "explore" further.

4. Got sent home to change 'cause my skirt is too short

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby was sent to home because her skirt is too short.
- b. Connotation: Common rules in education area about girl's clothing code on how they should dress.
- c. Myth: Society controls women on how they should dress themselves to not attract men's desire or being distracting for men.

On the denotative level, the lyrics describe how Cry Baby was sent home from school because her skirt is too short. On the connotative level, the song critiques the

educational system's emphasis on dress codes, which frequently disadvantage girls and dictate their attire to a greater extent than boys. The myth embedded in the lyrics pertains to the social norms that control women's attire, regulating how they should dress to avoid attracting male attention or being perceived as a distraction. A study conducted by Neville-Shepard (2019) posits that those who advocate for school dress codes utilize pragmatic arguments to justify regulating female attire. This, in turn, serves to perpetuate a misogynistic culture by attributing harmful consequences to female immodesty and absolving other actors of accountability. Girls are often subjected to stricter dress code enforcement, which can result in feelings of body shame, self-objectification, and a sense of powerlessness.

5. It's my fault, it's my fault 'cause I put icing on top

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby blames herself for put icing on top.
- b. Connotation: Cry Baby is blaming herself for the unwanted attention from boys.
- c. Myth: Society solely victim-blaming, where women have to be hold accountable for the 'unwanted' reactions they receive from men.

The line, at the denotation level, indicates that Cry Baby holds herself responsible for putting icing toppings. However, at the connotation level, the phrase implies that Cry Baby accountable for the unwanted attention from boys to herself. The underlying myth that is conveyed in the line is that women in society are held accountable for men's undesirable actions and attention. For example, women who have been the victims of sexual abuse are frequently held responsible for the actions of their attackers on the basis of their attire. A study by Fasoli et al. (2018) revealed that women's clothing is frequently characterized

as sexually provocative, which serves to normalize the objectification of women's bodies. This objectification is linked to the privileged status of men's sexual arousal and has implications for how society and the legal system address sexual assault and harassment. Meanwhile, the victims are regarded as being "helpless" to their own desires.

6. Now, the boys want a taste of the strawberry shortcake

- a. Denotation: The boys want to taste strawberry shortcake.
- b. Connotation: Cry Baby illustrate her body as something consumable for the boys to taste.
- c. Myth: A phenomenon in the society, especially among men, where women are not a human being but just an object for men to consume.

On the level of denotation, this line conveys the boys' desire to consume strawberry shortcake. However, on the level of connotation, Cry Baby represents herself as a mere object for boys to consume, symbolically aligning her with the "strawberry shortcake" treat. Conversely, the myth that is revealed in this line is an idea and the encouragement that is perpetuated by the sexualization and objectification of women in contemporary culture, where women are not regarded as human beings, but rather as objects for men to consume. According to a hypothesis by Boccato et al. (2015), female objectification constitutes a distinct form of dehumanization, whereby women are regarded as mere instruments for personal use. The objectification towards women postulates that the act of objectification occurs when women are perceived as objects for individual gain.

7. That's my bad, that's my bad, no one told them not to grab

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby is blaming herself for didn't told them not to grab.
- b. Connotation: Cry Baby is blaming herself again for the inappropriate actions from the boys and how no one told the boys about consent.
- c. Myth: Boys' or men's inappropriate actions towards females are often excused or even normalized by the society.

On the denotative level, this line indicates that Cry Baby holds herself responsible for not preventing the boys from grabbing her. On the connotative level, she blames herself again for the boys' inappropriate behaviour and the fact that they were never informed about the importance of respecting girls' consent. Furthermore, this line reveals the myth that the inappropriate actions of boys are often either excused or even accepted by society. In contrast, women are often held to account for such actions, and the phrase "boys will be boys" is frequently used to justify or excuse their actions. When boys made light of sexualized behaviour that girls found intimidating, the behaviour was perceived as "normal. Among the boys, sexual name-calling was only meant as a joke to put the girls in their place, while the girls were silenced. In this way, gendered patterns of interaction contribute to the perpetuation of sexual harassment (Slaatten & Malterud, 2024).

8. Gotta make sure that my legs are shiny

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby is making sure that her legs are shiny.
- b. Connotation: Another pressure for Cry Baby where she has to make sure that she has a smooth and shiny skin or in other word is hairless.
- c. Myth: The pressure that women have to go through every day to make sure their appearances are reaching the societal standards.

The denotation of this line indicates that Cry Baby must ensure her legs are shiny. The connotation, however, reveals the pressure she faces to have smooth, hairless skin and legs. This is a reflection of the myth that women must adhere to certain standards of beauty. This line underscores the prevailing beauty standard that exerts pressure on women to groom their bodies in a manner that aligns with societal expectations. The myth in this line is the idea that embedded in societal discourse, where women with body hair are perceived as less feminine, leading women to be constantly advised to shave their bodies in order to appear more feminine and to avoid being perceived as masculine. The equation of "femininity" with "hairlessness", or vice versa, of "hairiness" with "masculinity", points to an idealization of the female body as 'naturally' smooth, whereas body hair is in fact a biological sign of adult maturity. While the hairless body is a sign of perfected femininity, at the same time it betrays a fear of adult female sexuality. The taboo nature of female hairiness can be further explained by the concept of the abject; that which is psychologically seen as dirty, filthy, and disgusting (Smelik, 2015).

9. Hot wax melting, burn my skin

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby explain that the melting hot wax on her skin is burning.
- b. Connotation: This represent the pain or discomfort of Cry Baby that she has to go through to groom her hair.
- c. Myth: Women are expected to live through physical discomfort or pain to reach unattainable beauty standard.

Based on the denotation level perspective, this line describes the pain experienced by Cry Baby when the hot wax touches her skin. Connotationally, the line evokes the pain or discomfort endured by Cry Baby to achieve the desired "shiny" appearance of her legs (as

referenced in the previous line). Additionally, the myth elucidated in this line pertains to the notion that women are expected to endure physical discomfort to attain an unattainable beauty standard. Consequently, the phrase "beauty is pain" is a pervasive concept in society, particularly directed at women, as a form of encouragement to persevere through the challenging processes associated with achieving a perceived standard of beauty. In her research, Danylova (2020) argues that in their quest for beauty and youth, women are willing to undergo the most painful and risky procedures and buy thousands of pots that promise to restore or maintain this beauty and youth.

10. 'Cause it's how I look and not what I think

- a. Denotation: It's all about Cry Baby's look and not what she thinks.
- b. Connotation: Cry Baby's appearances is more valued rather than her thoughts.
- c. Myth: Physical appearances are often the most primary value for women, rather than their intelligence, skills, or personalities.

In terms of denotation, this line describes that the rationale behind her decision to wax her body is predicated upon a singular focus on enhancing her outward appearance, rather than her thoughts or opinions. On the other hand, the connotation suggests that physical appearance of Cry Baby is a greater value than her intelligence. Additionally, the myth in this line illustrates how physical appearance is often the primary value for women, rather than their intelligence, skills, or personalities. It undermines women's self-confidence and diminishes their self-esteem when they are constantly judged on the basis of their appearance. It can also perpetuate gender inequality in various aspects of life by overlooking women for opportunities,

promotions and leadership positions (Pulido, 2023). This is also the reason why there were periods when women were unable to engage in paid employment, due to the perception that they were intellectually inferior to men and therefore unsuitable for work. Furthermore, the stereotype that women are inferior to men also continues to exert a significant influence.

11. So, I'm stuffing my bra so that mine look the best

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby stuffing her bra to look the best.
- b. Connotation: Cry Baby force herself to reach a certain beauty standard around femininity area to be the most attractive girl.
- c. Myth: Women are more attractive and pleasing to the eye if they have bigger or more "ideal" feminine feature such as breast.

The denotation of this line indicates that Cry Baby is stuffing her bra to enhance her appearance. The connotation, however, indicates that Cry Baby is striving to achieve a specific beauty standard in the feminine area to be perceived as the most attractive girl. The underlying myth in this line is that women are more attractive and appealing to the eye if they possess larger or more "ideal" feminine features, such as breasts. This ideal is heavily influenced by the Western media, promoting curvilinear shapes, including big breasts. This cultural narrative is shaping standards of attractiveness around the world, leading many women to seek surgery such as breast augmentation to meet these seemingly unending and often unattainable standards set by society (Raaziya, 2023).

12. Instead of making me feel bad for the body I got

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby feel bad for the body she got.

- b. Connotation: Cry Baby is experiencing a feeling of insecurity and lack of confidence regarding her natural body figure, which associates from the influence of external factors.
- c. Myth: The insecurities and lack of self-love on women are caused by the society and its beauty standard.

From the perspective of denotation, this line can be interpreted as an expression of regret by Cry Baby regarding the physical form she has been given. However, from the perspective of connotation, Cry Baby appears to be grappling with feelings of insecurity and lack of confidence regarding her natural body figure, which can be attributed to the influence of external factors. Conversely, the underlying myth in this line is the notion that societal beauty standards and the constant body shaming that accompanies them contribute to women experiencing insecurities and a lack of self-love. These external pressures have led women to continuously struggle with embracing and loving their natural bodies. The pervasive presence of negative images of women's bodies has contributed to the formation of self-hatred among many women. The phenomenon of beauty myths has a long history of exerting a detrimental influence on women's mental health. Consequently, some women resort to drastic measures to conform to social expectations, resulting in significant physical and psychological distress. In some cases, this can even lead to suicide (Muayyanah et al., 2022).

13. Just teach him to keep it in his pants and tell him to stop

- a. Denotation: Cry Baby wants people to teach the boys to keep it in his pants and tell them to stop.
- b. Connotation: Cry Baby is confronting the people who making her feel insecure to just stop blaming her and

start educating the boys about self-control.

- c. Myth: Women are solely responsible for men's vile behaviors, especially when it comes to objectifications or sexual harassments.

From the perspective of denotation, this line can be interpreted as a plea from Cry Baby for others to educate the boys to keep it in his pants and tell them to stop. However, from the perspective of connotation, Cry Baby is challenging those who have caused her distress to cease blaming and judging her and instead focus on educating the boys about self-control. Conversely, the underlying myth in this line is that women are solely responsible for men's vile behaviours, especially when it comes to objectification or sexual harassment. This line challenges society to begin holding men accountable for their actions. The objectification of women can result from societal attitudes and cultural norms that promote the dehumanisation of women. Men may be socialised to view women primarily as objects for sexual gratification, rather than as full human beings with their own agency and uniqueness. In addition, a general lack of empathy towards women can also contribute to dehumanisation. When men or society as a whole fail to recognise the emotional and psychological experiences of women, they may be more likely to objectify and dehumanise them (Bevens & Loughnan, 2019). Furthermore, it serves as a reminder of the frequency with which men ignore women's consent and dismiss their self-control, thereby enabling them to harass women.

Based on the results and discussions, we are able to find out that the lyrics of 'Strawberry Shortcake' are critically connected with the stereotypes and objectifications that are experienced by women in our society. Additionally, through the lyrics, we also

discover that we can use any media to outspread awareness about the struggles that women have to go through, and how society place a huge pressures and burdens upon women through stereotypes and objectifications.

Derived from the result, the authors discover three stereotypes contain in the lyrics; the value of women are in their appearances, women are responsible for how men view and treat them, and the existence of women are meant to be consumed by male. The objectification based on the lyrics is how women's body are something to be consume by male, it is clearly visible on the line "the boys want a taste of the strawberry shortcake." On that line, women are represented as 'strawberry shortcake', something 'sweet', or something to 'consume.' Women are no longer treated or viewed as human being but rather an object or in this research is a dessert.

The portrayals of women in "Strawberry Shortcake" song lyrics highlight the damaging effects of objectification and the significant pressure women face to conform to unattainable beauty standards. The objectification and stereotyping evident in the songs can be considered social reflections. The perpetuation of stereotypes and objectification can contribute to adverse outcomes such as negative body image and low self-esteem. Furthermore, it can reinforce a culture in which women are expected to regulate their own conduct in order to avoid being objectified. Nevertheless, songs that challenge these preconceptions, such as "Strawberry Shortcake," may facilitate the deconstruction of deeply established societal conventions and the initiation of discourse on gender equality.

"Strawberry Shortcake" by Melanie Martinez represents a cultural phenomenon that challenges conventional theoretical

frameworks concerning the objectification of the female body. The song provides a platform for examining the ways in which young women challenge the damaging stereotypes associated with their bodies, highlighting how societal conditioning has shaped their perception of their own bodies as objects of male desire. This is in accordance with the increasing quantity of feminist media that is designed to challenge and challenge the systems of accountability and objectification that affect women.

CONCLUSION

The application of Roland Barthes' semiotics theory to the song "Strawberry Shortcake", based on the levels of denotation, connotation and myth, revealed the objectification and the existence of stereotypes of women. A thorough analysis of the lyrics was conducted, and thirteen lines were selected for deeper examination. These lines reveal implicit meanings related to stereotypes and objectification of women.

The findings corroborate those of earlier studies on female stereotypes and body objectification in song lyrics. Through the song lyrics, it creates a space to provide validations and inspirations for women who went under pressures from stereotypes and objectifications that has been decreasing their worth. Ultimately, musical work like "Strawberry Shortcake" advocate a shift towards empowerment and the rejection of restrictive myths surrounding women's bodies and life. The song lyrics challenge established societal norms, facilitating dialogue on gender equality and women empowerment by giving voices to women's experiences of stereotypes and body objectifications that has been long suppressed by the society.

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