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The Identity Transformation of David through Consumption in *Une nouvelle amie*

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Abstract

In modern society, consumption functions not only to fulfill material needs but also as a means of expression and identity formation, particularly in relation to gender. This study explores how gender identity transformation can occur through symbolic consumption. The film *Une nouvelle amie* (2014) by François Ozon serves as the corpus and is analyzed qualitatively through the narrative and cinematographic frameworks of Petrie & Boggs (2022) and Gustav Freytag's Freytag Triangle (1863). Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumerism (1970) is employed to examine how the consumption of symbolic objects by the protagonist contributes to identity construction. Additionally, Kathryn Woodward's theory of identity (1997) is used to analyze how identity is formed through representation and social interaction. Findings reveal that symbolic consumption enables the character David to express femininity and construct a non-normative gender identity. Through engagement in inclusive social spaces and the consumption of gendered symbols, David constructs an identity outside traditional gender norms. This study highlights consumption not only as a visual signifier but also as an agentive medium in the construction of identity.

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Introduction

Film functions as a visual medium that communicates social meanings, evokes emotional responses, and shapes cultural perceptions. Corrigan and White (2004) argue that cinema serves as a powerful communicative form because it reflects social values, constructs ideas, engages spectators, and exerts influence. French cinema, known for its long historical trajectory, continues in the twenty-first century to explore diverse genres and experiment with visual and narrative forms. French filmmakers frequently address social, political, and cultural issues, including



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LGBTQ+ representation, gender identity, and same-sex marriage, reflecting cinema's role as a mirror of social realities (Cindrati, 2017).

François Ozon's *Une nouvelle amie* (2014), released shortly after the legalization of marriage pour tous in 2013, engages with themes of gender identity, desire, and social norms. Although the law granted same-sex couples equal rights in adoption and reproductive procedures, discrimination persisted due to continued resistance from homophobic groups (Casondra & Miranda, 2020). The film centers on David, who explores femininity through cross-dressing as a means of articulating a repressed gender identity. Ozon, known for his transgressive treatment of sexuality and relational complexity (Schilt, 2011), approaches the subject with emotional nuance.

Identity, as Woodward (1997) argues, is fluid and constructed through representation and social interaction. Consumption likewise plays a key role in identity formation, especially within contemporary consumer culture. Baudrillard (1970) posits that objects are consumed not for utility but for their symbolic value, which communicates social distinctions. In queer contexts, consumption of clothing, cosmetics, and lifestyle goods becomes a medium for identity expression (Rocha et al., 2021). Thus, David's practices of consumption—purchasing women's clothing, adopting beauty routines, and entering queer social spaces—illustrate how symbolic consumption mediates gender transformation.

Existing studies have analyzed *Une nouvelle amie* from perspectives of identity conflict (Cindrati, 2017), transgender representation (Reis, 2018), and sexual performativity in cross-dressing (Litasari, 2023). However, the role of symbolic consumption in constructing gender identity, especially through Baudrillard's framework, remains underexplored. This study fills that gap by examining how the film constructs David's gender transformation through consumption practices, asking: How does *Une nouvelle amie* (2014) depict gender identity transformation through symbolic consumption?

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach to examine the transformation of David's identity in the film *Une nouvelle amie* (2014). The material object of analysis consists of scenes and sequences depicting the character's acts of consumption. Data were collected through visual observation of cinematic elements such as costume, dialogue, setting, and other components using the film analysis framework developed by Petrie & Boggs (2022).

In their book *The Art of Watching Films*, Petrie & Boggs (2022) outline the essential components of film, namely narrative elements which include theme, character, characterization, plot, situation, setting of time and place and cinematographic elements encompassing visual and auditory aspects.

The framework by Petrie & Boggs (2022) is complemented by Gustav Freytag's (1863) structural model from Freytag's *Technique of the Drama*, used to examine the film's narrative structure, consisting of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement.

Exposition refers to the initial stage introducing essential components such as characters and conflicts. Rising action consists of actions and events that drive the story forward. The climax is the turning point in which major conflicts become fully articulated through actions and dialogues. Following the climax, the falling action marks a decrease in emotional intensity as the narrative moves toward resolution. The final stage, the denouement, indicates that the central conflict has been resolved. Both the Petrie & Boggs framework and Freytag's pyramid are applied to identify the character's identity transformation within the narrative structure and the film's cinematic elements.

The protagonist's identity transformation is further analyzed through the character's consumption practices depicted in the film. Jean Baudrillard's theory of consumerism, as outlined in *La Société de Consommation* (1970), is employed to analyze how David's gender identity is

constructed through symbolic consumption. Baudrillard (1970) explains the emergence of consumer culture in contemporary society and details how consumption influences identity. He asserts that consumption serves as a means of constructing identity, where the goods consumed by individuals possess not only economic value but also symbolic value.

This research also draws on Kathryn Woodward's identity theory in *Identity and Difference* (1997), which posits that identity is constructionist in nature identity is not innate but instead socially produced through relations with the "other." By synthesizing these two theoretical perspectives, this study aims to demonstrate that the character's consumption choices such as clothing, lifestyle, and makeup function as symbolic tools representing and reaffirming identity within the social sphere. Through the theories of Baudrillard (1970) and Woodward (1997), the transformation of the character's gender identity can thus be understood as a symbolic construction formed through dynamic social interactions.

Results and Discussions

Results

Through a combined narrative and cinematic analysis, this study finds that patterns of consumption play a significant role in shaping David's transformation of identity, particularly in relation to the gradual adoption of femininity. The film is composed of 31 sequences, several of which foreground David's evolving engagement with femininity through acts of consumption. Extended sequences such as those depicting the emotional aftermath of Laura's death, the purchase of feminine products, and the accident that precipitates David's comprehensive shift in identity function as key narrative milestones that structure and illuminate this trajectory. Below is the table of sequences.

Table 1. Sequence Duration

N.S.	Duration	N.S.	Duration	N.S.	Duration	N.S.	Duration
1	1"26'	9	2"51'	17	4"19'	25	5"
2	6"30'	10	3"39'	18	5"1'	26	7"24'
3	1"30'	11	6"48'	19	2"1'	27	42'
4	3"33'	12	2"30'	20	1"28'	28	1"38'
5	2"59'	13	1"32'	21	3"5'	29	5"1'
6	4"20'	14	2"4'	22	4"4'	30	1"12'
7	1"37'	15	1"12'	23	1"22'	31	1"20'
8	5"19'	16	7"	24	2"22'		

- N.S : Number of Sequence

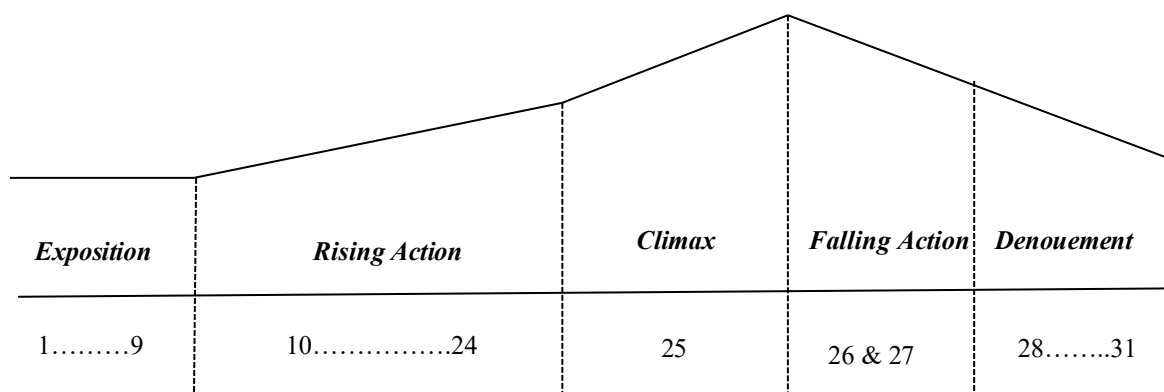
Based on the table, the longest sequences in the film are sequences 2, 11, and 26. Sequence 2 depicts the emotional situation resulting from Laura's death and includes flashbacks of Claire and Laura's childhood friendship. Narratively, this sequence provides the emotional foundation for understanding the relationship between Claire and Laura and introduces David's entry into the story. Sequence 11 presents David and Claire's shopping activity at a mall, functioning as a significant turning point in which consumption becomes a medium for expressing David's emerging identity.

The longest of the three is sequence 26, depicting the accident experienced by David. The

accident occurs unintentionally after Claire rejects David’s true identity, revealing a moment of emotional collapse and profound identity crisis. Meanwhile, sequence 27 the shortest sequence shows Laura’s parents’ reaction to David’s transformation into Virginia. Collectively, these four sequences form a narrative progression that spans emotional trauma, symbolic expression, rejection, identity collapse, and social judgment. The longest and shortest sequences not only highlight key stages in the protagonist’s identity transformation but also illustrate how consumption operates as a means of gender expression

According to Freytag, plot structure consists of five stages: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement. In this film, exposition occurs from sequence 1 to sequence 9; rising action from sequences 10 to 24; the climax in sequence 25; falling action in sequences 26 and 27; and the denouement in sequences 28 to 31.

Image 1. Plot Diagram of *Une nouvelle amie* (2014)



The exposition stage begins in sequences 1 through 9, serving a crucial narrative function by not only introducing the characters but also establishing the emotional tone of the film. Sequences 1–3 introduce the main characters. Sequence 1 presents Laura, who has recently died, showing her lifeless body a symbolic representation of death that initiates the film’s central conflict. Sequence 2 begins inside a church, introducing Claire as she delivers a eulogy. The solemn atmosphere underscores the depth of Laura’s loss and the emotional impact on those around her. Claire’s use of the phrase “*un coup de foudre*” meaning “love at first sight” evokes romantic connotations, highlighting the complexity of Claire’s attachment to Laura

David is introduced as a man grieving deeply over his wife’s death, underscoring Laura’s significance in his life. His interactions with Claire reveal a shared emotional bond, as both struggle with the loss of someone dear to them. Amid this grief, Claire fulfills her promise to Laura by helping David care for his daughter, Lucie. Claire’s concern for David is depicted in sequence 5, when she decides to visit his home. Upon arrival, she encounters a woman caring for Lucie. When Claire greets her with “*Bonjour Madame*”, she soon realizes that the woman is actually David.

Image 2. David’s Change in Appearance



This revelation marks a critical turning point. The use of an over-the-shoulder shot aligns the viewer with Claire’s perspective, reinforcing the shock of discovering David presenting as a woman. David pleads that Claire keep his secret and it highlights his uncertainty about this emerging identity a recognition that his expression diverges from societal gender norms. This ambiguity reflects the early instability in his identity transformation

David later attempts to reassure Claire by showing her the clothing he has altered and expressing his desire to visit a women’s clothing store. This scene signifies David’s growing openness regarding his identity. His hesitation reveals the pressure imposed by societal gender norms. It also deepens the dynamic between Claire and David, as Claire begins to witness aspects of David previously unknown to her. David’s explanation suggests that his actions feel new, unfamiliar, and potentially deviant within the social norms surrounding him.

In the exposition stage, David’s femininity is presented through emotional expression and acts of consumption. He starts by wearing Laura’s clothing as an initial form of gender expression. Yet he remains in a state of ambiguity, reflecting internal conflict during the early phases of identity transformation. Cinematic techniques, including close-ups and over-the-shoulder shots, highlight emotional intensity and shock. David’s ambiguity and hesitance foreshadow identity conflict.

In the Rising Action stage (Sequences 10–24) David’s increasingly bold performances of femininity, are supported by Claire. Shopping becomes a symbolic act of self-affirmation; club scenes present queer social spaces where femininity is validated; grooming practices such as waxing demonstrate bodily commitment to a feminine identity. Musical cues such as “Hot n Cold” reinforce emotional instability and transformation.

Image 3. David and Claire at the Shopping Mall. David dressed as a woman.



David then admits to Claire that, after their shopping trip, he feels something different. David realizes that these feelings are still new and not yet fully understood. Consequently, he experiences a desire to repeat the experience as a means of seeking certainty regarding his identity. This reflects a pattern of consumption within David that becomes a medium through which he searches for self-understanding. Consumption, then, functions as an emotional need for David throughout his transformation a space that allows him to express his identity. Moreover, David’s dialogue, in which he says “*heureux*” and Claire corrects it to “*heureuse*,” suggests that he has begun to explore and internalize his emerging feminine identity. David’s consumptive behavior reappears in sequence 17, when he fully adopts a female identity by performing body-care practices such as waxing to remove hair.

Image 4. David waxing



David and Claire then visit the private club, shown in image 5, illustrates how the consumption of entertainment spaces becomes part of the identity-seeking process. The club is not merely depicted as a place for leisure but as a medium in which David can explore and affirm his identity beyond traditional norms. In this context, David's consumptive behavior demonstrates how engaging with lifestyle and certain social spaces can play an essential role in one's attempt to understand and construct their identity. For David, the club becomes not only a venue for entertainment but a symbol of freedom to articulate his identity.

Image 5. David and Claire in a private club



Eva Carlton's performance in the club plays a crucial role in this sequence. According to Petrie and Boggs (2022), music in film serves multiple important functions, including reinforcing characterization and strengthening visual elements. Music also allows characters' emotions to be expressed more clearly. Thus, the song performed by Eva Carlton "*Une femme avec toi*" by Nicole Croisille reflects David's emotional state

The Climax stages occurs when David temporarily reverts to masculine presentation, prompting Claire's ambivalence and David's emotional crisis. His attempt to kiss Claire and her rejection triggers renewed assertion of femininity. Although Claire seems drawn to David's feminine side, she ultimately remains confined within a binary understanding of gender. Following this rejection, David rushes out of the hotel and is hit by a car shortly after replying to Claire's message with "*Non, je suis femme,*" a final affirmation of his identity.

The falling action stages, centers on David's accident caused by emotional turmoil. During David's critical condition after the accident, Claire tries various ways to wake him, but he remains unconscious. Ultimately, Claire calls him "*Virginie,*" awakening him for a few seconds. Claire calling him "*Virginie*" becomes a symbolic act that restores consciousness, signifying the stabilization of feminine identity.

Image 6. David regains consciousness after being called Virginie



The denouement stage concludes with Claire publicly acknowledging Virginie as a woman, completing the narrative arc of identity transformation. Narrative analysis reveals that David's consumptive practices not only play a central role in his search for identity but also serve as a means of obtaining social validation for his transformation. When David presents himself as a woman and engages in acts of consumption, he attempts to reshape how society perceives him. Conversely, when he performs masculinity and stops presenting as a woman, his consumptive

behavior also ceases. This demonstrates that David's consumption is not merely economic—it is a performative tool within the transformation process.

It is also important to note that David's consumption extends beyond clothing to social spaces, such as the private club, which provide him with freedom for self-expression. Through these spaces, David finds avenues to strengthen his identity, understand himself more fully, and gain social recognition.

On character analysis, David and Claire function as dynamic characters. David's progression from concealed cross-dresser to an openly feminine identity illustrates a profound psychological and social transformation. Claire evolves from suspicion to emotional entanglement and eventual acceptance. Supporting characters Lucie, Laura's parents, Gilles, and Eva Carlton—function as static characters who reinforce or resist the central transformation. Eva's presence provides a model of transgender self-expression, validating David's journey.

According to Petrie and Boggs (2022) in *The Art of Watching Films*, characters are classified into two categories: dynamic characters and static characters. Dynamic characters evolve throughout the narrative and undergo significant changes in their personality. In contrast, static characters remain largely unchanged, with no meaningful development, and generally serve a supporting function to reinforce the main storyline.

This distinction provides a framework for understanding the contribution of each character within the narrative structure, as shown in the following table:

Table 2. Dynamic Character

No.	Name	Sequences	Total Appearances	Description
1	David	3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31	24 sequences	Character undergoing identity transformation
2	Claire	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29 sequences, 28, 29, 30, 31	29 sequences	Character who witnesses David's transformation

The characters listed in Table 1 are categorized as dynamic characters in *Une nouvelle amie* (2014). David, as the central figure in the film, experiences a profound identity transformation through his consumption of clothing and public spaces. His development is evident throughout the narrative, beginning as a man who conceals his preference for presenting as a woman, and gradually evolving into someone who embraces his feminine identity.

Claire, who initially appears passive, becomes crucial in both facilitating and inhibiting David's emotional journey. As the witness to David's transformation, Claire undergoes significant changes in her own perspectives, particularly through experiences such as shopping together and visiting new social spaces. These experiences shape Claire's understanding and force her to adapt to the increasingly complex reality of David's identity.

Thus, the dynamic nature of David and Claire reinforces the film's central message: identity is not static but continually evolving. David demonstrates that gender identity can transform, while Claire illustrates emotional and psychological growth that influences David's process.

Several other characters belong to the static category, as shown below:

Table 3. Static Character

No.	Name	Sequences	Total Appearances	Description
1	Gilles	3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 15, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30	13 sequences	Character unaware of the unfolding situation
2	Lucie	6, 22, 24, 28, 30, 31	6 sequences	Supports David emotionally
3	Laura	1, 2, 19, 20	4 sequences	Idealized woman in David's life

No.	Name	Sequences	Total Appearances	Description
4	Liz (Laura's mother)	9, 27	2 sequences	Represents conventional gender norms
5	Eva Carlton	18	1 sequence	Influential in David's transformation
6	Laura's father	27	1 sequence	—

The static characters above do not experience significant change and serve primarily as supporting figures. Gilles appears most frequently among them but remains consistently unaware of the circumstances around him. Lucie indirectly motivates David to adopt maternal behaviors, which become an early step in David's cross-dressing and identity exploration. Laura, meanwhile, becomes an important symbolic trigger due to David's memories of her idealized femininity clothing, self-care, and domestic roles which unconsciously shape David's consumption practices.

Eva Carlton, despite appearing only once, significantly influences David by representing a confident transgender figure within a safe social space. Her presence validates the possibility of gender performativity. Laura's parents, though minor characters, embody societal resistance rooted in traditional gender norms.

The setting in the film also plays a significant role in shaping the narrative. Petrie and Boggs (2022) describe setting as a contextual framework that strengthens themes, constructs atmosphere, and conveys symbolic meaning. The settings associated with consumption in *Une nouvelle amie* (2014) appear in the following locations:

Table 4. Settings

No.	Setting	Sequences	Total Appearances	Description
1	Claire's House	4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 15, 21, 22, 24, 27, 29, 30	12 sequences	The place where Claire experiences emotional encounters
2	David's House	5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 24, 29	8 sequences	The initial site of David's cross-dressing behavior
3	Morgue	1, 19	2 sequences	The place where David's desire first resurfaces
4	Shopping Mall	11	1 sequence	The site of consumption-related behavior
5	Hospital	27, 28, 29	4 sequences	The place where Laura's parents learn about David's cross-dressing
6	Laura's Family Home	16, 17, 20, 21	4 sequences	The place where David fully assumes the role of a woman
7	Tennis Court	25	2 sequences	The place where David and Claire reunite
8	Cinema	12	1 sequence	The place where David is touched by a man
9	Restaurant	10	1 sequence	The place where David begins to invite Claire to shop

The morgue marks the beginning of David's cross-dressing desires. This location functions not only as a site of grief but also as a symbolic liminal space between life and death. The stillness of the scene evokes David's memories of Laura's femininity, symbolizing the reawakening of his long-suppressed feminine side, almost as though he seeks to revive Laura's presence through himself.

Claire's house, featured in twelve sequences, becomes a space where Claire experiences emotional tension linked to David's transformation. It evolves into a private environment reflecting her confusion and growing fascination.

David's home, initially a private sanctuary for exploring femininity particularly in the bedroom once shared with Laura eventually transforms into a semi-public space once Claire discovers David's identity. This shift illustrates the fluid boundary between private and public spaces within gender identity transformation.

Other locations such as shopping malls, cinemas, and the private club further illustrate David's efforts to adopt and express his new identity. These public spaces symbolize his resistance to restrictive gender norms. The private club, in particular, serves as an affirming environment for transgender individuals, allowing David to feel secure and unjudged.

The hospital setting near the film's conclusion symbolizes the rebirth of David's identity. His awakening after Claire dresses him and sings for him marks not just physical recovery but the confirmation of his gender identity. As a public space, the hospital highlights that David's transformation has moved beyond the private sphere and is now subject to broader social acknowledgment.

Settings reinforce thematic meanings such as: the mortuary symbolizes trauma and the revival of repressed desire, David's home shifts from private to semi-public space as his femininity becomes visible, the shopping mall and club represent queer-affirming spaces, the hospital symbolizes rebirth and social acknowledgment of Virginia. These spatial transitions symbolize David's movement from internal struggle to social validation.

Discussions

From Baudrillard's (1970) perspective, consumption is understood as a system of signs grounded in the interpretation of social symbols related to class, gender, and race. Baudrillard argues that what is consumed in a consumerist society is not the functional utility of an object, but rather the image or message it conveys. Advertising functions as a mediator between evolving trends and consumers, shaping perceptions of objects. Through advertising, products are no longer consumed merely for their use value, but for the symbolic and cultural meanings attached to them.

Image 7. Poster on Breast Cancer Awareness



The poster in the film suggests that the director intends not only to convey the importance of women's bodily health but also to depict advertising as a form of symbolic consumption that displays femininity and female relationships in public spaces, as demonstrated by David and Claire. Moreover, the intimate positioning of the two women in the poster implicitly represents same-sex relations, thereby opening space for the recognition of lesbian identity as part of the broader spectrum of gender and sexual diversity represented in the media.

Clothing and accessories function as consumed objects that act as markers of identity, serving not only as reflections of psychological or emotional character, nor as indicators of physical traits, but as deliberate constructions of self. Through their clothing choices, individuals express and shape aspects of their identity. The identities communicated through clothing hold symbolic meaning that can be interpreted by others within social contexts (Amalia, 2018).

In *Une nouvelle amie* (2014), David's consumptive behavior demonstrates his efforts to

express his new identity. His consumption includes visiting shopping centers to purchase women's clothing in his size, buying makeup that matches his skin tone, and adopting feminine self-care practices such as waxing. As Woodward (1997) explains, identity is not fixed but is constructed within specific social and cultural contexts through systems of representation. This is shown in the following dialogue:

Furthermore, David's consumption is also reflected in his visits to a private club that hosts transgender individuals. This activity represents David's search for social spaces where his identity can be accepted without judgment.

Image 8. David's Visit to the Private Club



In broader social spaces, however, David's emerging identity is not always accepted. Many individuals continue to adhere to traditional gender norms, leading them to perceive gender expressions outside those norms as deviant. David receives hostile stares and cold reactions in public places such as cafés and shopping centers.

Image 9. Public Reaction Toward David



These experiences illustrate the intensity of social rejection, making it difficult for David to express himself freely in public. Additional disapproval is shown through the reaction of Laura's parents when they discover David dressed as a woman after the accident. Consequently, David seeks more inclusive social spaces in which he can solidify his sense of identity.

David's acts of consumption are not merely functional; they are symbolic. According to Woodward (1997), *identity work* refers to the active effort of individuals to negotiate and maintain a sense of self through cultural and symbolic practices. In this context, each consumptive choice David makes serves as identity work communicating to society his identity as a woman.

Baudrillard (1970) asserts that in a consumerist society, individuals are defined by their roles as consumers, and identities are shaped by what they consume. David becomes a consumer of various symbols of femininity, such as women's lingerie, dresses, wigs, high heels, perfume, and cosmetics, to reinforce the feminine identity he desires. Through these symbols, David constructs an identity code shaped by societal expectations. These codes function as social constructions attached to specific products, such as dresses associated with femininity. Although femininity in

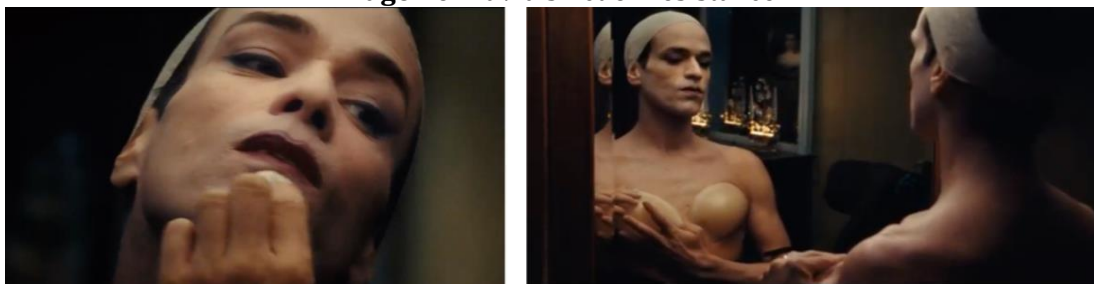
reality does not depend on particular attributes, popular culture has encoded such items as gender markers. This explains David’s decision to adopt these feminine symbols as performative tools in his transformation.

Image 10. David’s Symbolic Consumptions During Self-Creation



David’s biological reality as a man becomes a barrier to his transformation. Biological bodies often reinforce social norms that make identities like David’s difficult to accept. Woodward (1997) argues that gender identity is not determined solely by physical characteristics but is socially constructed through symbolic practices. Nevertheless, gender identity continues to be associated with visible physical traits such as body shape or genitalia. This compels David to use symbolic consumption as a form of resistance against biological essentialism and restrictive gender norms. Scenes depicting David trying on women’s clothing, wearing makeup, and using wigs illustrate how symbolic consumption becomes a means of challenging these norms.

Image 10. David’s Act of Resistance



Despite the freedom symbolic consumption affords David in constructing his gender identity, he continues to face social resistance from those who uphold biologically defined gender norms.

Table 5. Transformation of David’s Symbolic Consumption

Aspect	Before Symbolic Consumption	After Symbolic Consumption
Displayed Identity	Masculine (aligned with gender norms)	Feminine
Visual Appearance	Masculine clothing	Feminine clothing (dresses, heels, wigs, makeup)
Social Response	Neutral or none	Hostility and judgmental stares
Psychological State	Suppressed and incomplete	More confident and accepting of self

The table above illustrates the irony of David’s symbolic consumption: consumption becomes a tool through which David expresses his identity as a woman. Baudrillard (1970) states that in modern society, objects are consumed not for their utility but for their sign value. This contradiction aligns with David’s use of consumption not merely to construct a new identity but

also as a form of resistance against social realities that reject non-normative gender expression. Consumption thus functions as an expressive tool within a system of signs.

More importantly, David's consumption is not merely a symbolic illusion; it actively shapes a lived gender identity. Woodward (1997) maintains that identity is not fixed but socially constructed through interaction, representation, and meaning-making. David's symbolic consumption serves as a means of affirming his gender identity amid societal norms. Through consumption, David does not merely imitate feminine representation but actively challenges and reconstructs gender meaning through the cultural symbols he adopts.

Conclusion

Une nouvelle amie (2014) portrays David's gender transformation from a socially constructed masculine identity toward a feminine gender expression facilitated through symbolic consumption. The forms of consumption represented in the film extend beyond economic transactions; they operate as symbolic mechanisms through which David articulates his desired identity. By engaging with feminine symbols such as lingerie, makeup, hair accessories, and self-care practices like waxing David asserts his identity as a woman. He also seeks inclusive social environments, including private transgender clubs, where his identity is acknowledged without judgment. These practices function as symbolic markers that communicate the gender identity he intends to make visible in public.

David's transformation advances in tandem with his increasing involvement in feminine symbolic consumption. This is illustrated in sequences featuring shopping trips with Claire, body-care routines, and visits to private clubs, all of which underscore the centrality of consumption as a medium through which David constructs his chosen gender identity. He consumes culturally produced signs of gender as a means of signaling his identity to society, despite the limitations imposed by biological expectations.

Overall, this study reinforces Baudrillard's conception of consumption as a system of signs and further demonstrates how consumption operates as an agentive device within cinematic narratives. In *Une nouvelle amie* (2014), David's symbolic consumption functions not merely as a representation of femininity but as an active process in the construction of a non-normative gender identity. By foregrounding this dynamic, the research contributes to film and gender studies by illustrating how cinema provides a critical space for negotiating and challenging conventional gender norms. Thus, the film underscores that consumption can serve as a decisive factor in gender transformation, enabling individuals to express and construct identities that align with their self-defined sense of gender.

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