Exploring Female Character Costumes and Representation in Cartoon Network's *Adventure Time*

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ABSTRACT

Costumes in animated TV series play a crucial role in visual storytelling, reflecting the characters' personalities and the narrative's setting. scholar emphasizes that costume design is a delicate balance between narrative and visual elements, using color, texture, and silhouette to enhance authenticity. In *Adventure Time*, the varied costumes of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline showcase their evolving personalities while challenging traditional female character stereotypes. This research explores how these designs communicate distinct identities and narratives, with the goal of advancing costume design practices and character recognition in animation. *Adventure Time* stands out because its secondary female leads possess an extensive wardrobe of costume designs, a rarity in animated television. This study employs a qualitative approach to investigate the diverse costume designs in *Adventure Time* as visual communicators. By focusing on Princess Bubblegum and Marceline, it analyzes their different outfits to uncover the connection between costume design and narrative. The research includes episode analysis, such as *Go with Me* and *What Was Missing*, and the review of online stills and information from books, internet sources, and videos. A comparative analysis of these characters' costumes against stereotypical designs and gender representations will illuminate the influence of gender roles on costume design. This method will reveal how colors, shapes, and details contribute to storytelling. In animation, costume design conveys character personality, credibility, and the story's context. While traditional, consistent costumes help with character recognition, *Adventure Time* demonstrates that varied costumes can make characters memorable. This research examines the impact of these diverse costumes on storytelling, focusing on design elements and gender representation for characters like Princess Bubblegum and Marceline.

Keywords: *Adventure Time, Costume design, Character personality, Gender representation, Stereotype*

INTRODUCTION

In an animated television series, a character's costume is often presented as one of the visual components. Costumes can communicate the details of a character's personality and the visual information of time and place according to their narrative, which continues to develop throughout the visual storytelling process (Kalmakurki, 2021). As Landis (2013) mentioned in Hollywood Costume, movie costume design has a storytelling and visual purpose beyond simple attire. Designers enhance the storyline and the director's artistic vision by creating authentic characters and using color, texture, and silhouette to produce visual coherence within the frame's composition. Before embarking on this endeavor, the costume designer must comprehend the character's identity.

This statement demonstrates that the costumes worn by a character influences a significant part of storytelling in an animation. Not only that, but a character designer is also responsible for coming out with a befitting costume that can successfully set forth a story. The creation of costumes takes part in the character design process where it serves a significant task of settling down with an understanding of the character's backstory along with his or her internal and external traits through various design elements like shapes, colors, and silhouette (Nieminen, 2017). Lioi (2009) also stated that these details are an essential set of parameters as they grant consistency and believability to the character design. Chujitarom and Panichruttiwong (2020) then argue in their publication of Animation - AR Silhouette Model to Create Character Identity Innovation for Computer Art Pre-Production that the silhouette of a character, especially, is the main factor that makes them appear attractive and memorable.

Generally, the primary characters in animated shows often maintain the same wardrobe throughout most episodes, regardless of the series' place, season, or duration on television. The primary rationale for adopting a restricted clothing strategy is to facilitate the recognition of characters by their costumes, hence simplifying the portrayal of their personalities. This approach becomes advantageous for individuals who seldom alter their attire (Snow, 2021). Finn the Human is a renowned character from Adventure Time, noted for his exceptional design and distinctive outfit silhouette. The figure's outline consists of a headpiece adorned with two extensions resembling bear ears positioned symmetrically on the uppermost part of each side and a backpack affixed to his posterior, supported by a pair of slender legs. The outfit design remains the same throughout the whole series unless a specific event or occasion calls for a change. For instance, during Christmas in winter, the character in *Adventure Time* (2016) adorns extra items like fluffy sweaters or scarves to depict the festive and cozy atmosphere.

Adventure Time is a well-acclaimed animated TV series that has gained popularity among a global audience, particularly young children. In their book titled "Female Character Design in Today's Cartoon: The Typical and the Alternative Girl Squad," Sà and Tavares (2017) argue that popular animation may function as a sociopolitical instrument by playing a role in shaping social identities. Hence, the portrayal of characters in the animated series significantly impacts a child's development due to prolonged exposure to cartoon episodes, which might influence young viewers' actions and behaviors. Furthermore, portraying gender roles in media, including animation, film, and comic books, assists young children in recognizing and understanding societal perspectives on gender representation. Additionally, it exposes students to the societal preconceptions around female characters' physical appearance and feminine traits (Sà & Tavares, 2017).

Different costume designs for main characters are uncommon in animated television series, particularly for secondary female characters. However, *Adventure Time* has challenged these norms. Female characters like Princess Bubblegum and Marceline are renowned for their vast array of uniquely designed costumes, which have captivated many devoted viewers. Moreover, according to Logan (2022), Princess Bubblegum and Marceline ranked among the top 15 most popular characters in *Adventure Time,* Marceline took the top spot, and Princess Bubblegum ranked eleventh. Audiences are drawn to these two

characters for their intricate backstories and the depth of their relationship with each other. Princess Bubblegum, who started as sweet and innocent, revealed more complex and unpredictable traits as the series progressed, a transformation reflected in her ever-changing costumes that mirror her evolving personality. Similarly, Marceline's costumes vary widely, illustrating her character development from being introduced as a villain to becoming one of the series's most genuine and beloved characters.

Throughout animation history, female character designs have always been associated with stereotypical characteristics like standard femininity, pink dresses, and pink bows to match their typical girly girl concerns about boys, popularity, and fashion. Sometimes, they are also designed to be the object of desire or distraction to the male characters (Radulovic, 2020). One example of a stereotypical female character design is Isabella from Phineas and Ferb. Isabella is the typical 'only girl' in a group of boys, with a pink bow on her head. As Pollitt (1991) mentioned, "Boys are the norm, girls are the variation; boys are the central, girl's peripheral; boys are individuals, girl types. Boys define the group, its story and its code of values. Girls exist only in relation to boys". This is known as the Smurfette Principle, an idea created by Katha Pollitt in 1991 where there is only one female character amongst a group of male characters in works of fiction. The female character is usually identified as merely a woman and then, only then, seen for her unique traits.

On the contrary, men are immediately identified by their strengths and personalities. In social role theory, women have been standardized to lay hold of caretaking jobs and become fragile individuals constantly. This trope causes some human perceptions of female cartoon characters as weak, boring, and easily beaten, which could be the factor of less diverse and repetitive costume designs due to the existing discrimination. Moreover, Kalmakurki (2021) stated that the animation process requires collaborative efforts from several artists and animators to succeed, even if the animated project is short. For example, a professional costume designer's input may help character designers improve their costume designs for characters as both design processes go hand in hand. However, this practice is often disregarded when making *Adventure Time*. Nevertheless, character designers in today's era like Pendleton Ward, Vincent Chalvon-Demersay, and many more are becoming more innovative and knowledgeable in the sense of female fashion where they gravitate towards raising awareness about female masculinity, female leadership, and female independence through unique and diverse costume designs.

This research aims to study *Adventure Time's* diverse costume designs for Princess Bubblegum and Marceline. We are eager to deeply understand how Pendleton Ward and his team create various costume designs for one character but still manage to keep the character's distinct identity memorable to millions of people in just one look. Our research will explore the constant design elements in Princess Bubblegum and Marceline's costume designs. Then, we will further this research by analyzing the effects of colors and shapes in their costume designs that can deliver the narrative and personalities of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline. Finally, yet importantly, this paper also intends to value gender roles and female representatives that influences Princess Bubblegum and Marceline in their diverse costume designs. The outcomes of this research will benefit character designers, especially beginners, to improve their costume designs to help convey their story's messages to the audience. This research will also aid animation students trying to create appealing and recognizable characters. By understanding more about the diversity of costume designs in *Adventure Time*, they can also become more professional in designing their costumes for cartoon characters by strengthening and exaggerating the design to get a recognizable silhouette. This would positively impact the future animation industry due to high-quality character designs. Not to mention, this research will be beneficial to avid viewers of not only *Adventure Time* but also other cartoon shows, who are intrigued by understanding how costumes are decided for cartoon characters. It may help enhance their knowledge of good versus lousy character design so they can leave appropriate and reasonable feedback to cartoon creators. This way, the cartoon creators will be able to improve their past weak points. In addition, this research would be helpful to future researchers studying

Adventure Time costumes since they will be able to get access to some information that might return possible answers to their questions.

This study primarily examines how the diverse costume designs of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline effectively convey their distinctive personalities and storylines while also challenging stereotypical character traits. The design elements of their selected costumes will be analyzed in detail. The study will reference published articles and previous research on related topics to gather information. Additionally, it will focus on specific episodes of *Adventure Time,* including *Go with Me, What Was Missing*, *Sky Witch*, and *Broke His Crown*, where both Princess Bubblegum and Marceline appear, allowing for an in-depth observation of their varied costumes. The scope of this study is limited to these two female characters from the animated series. Generally, costume design in animation is often overlooked as a separate process. In many cases, the costume design process is integrated with character design and development, which leads to scholarly publications offering only tangential insights on costume-related topics due to this need for more independence (Kalmakurki, 2021). Therefore, this study aims to address gaps in previous research and critically review selected literature related to the costumes of female characters in *Adventure Time*.

Clothing and costumes significantly impact a person's image and first impression. If you see a person wearing overalls over a plaid shirt with a wide-brimmed hat on top, it is immediate to assume that the person is a farmer. Landis (2013, as cited in Kalmakurki, 2021) quoted in her book: "Before an actor speaks, his wardrobe has already spoken for him." It is clear from this statement that costumes worn by characters may determine the character's identity and story situation in just one look. Costumes are sources of information and an illusion for creating a believable new world that relates to the audience (Crist, 2014). In 2014, methodical research was conducted to understand costume design mastery deeply. The research was done by Brianne Crist and titled "The Art of Costuming: Interpreting the Character through the Costume Designer's Eyes." It mainly focuses on the fundamental components one should adhere to in costume design. This research will be reviewed along with another literature titled "Psychology in Character Design: Creation of a Character Design Tool" by Marika Nieminen. The author discussed the connections between psychological theories and character design, closely linked to character costumes.

To further explore the sub-topic of female representation in animation, we have selected the article by Gabriela Sà and Paula Tavares titled "Female Character Design in Today's Cartoon: The Typical and the Alternative Girl Squad." This article discusses female characters' stereotypical and repetitive designs in mainstream animation, a theme closely related to our investigation of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline's costume designs. It also delves into the diversity of female character designs, particularly in silhouettes, shapes, sizes, and colors. By emphasizing female representation and feminism, this study may reveal how gender roles influence costume design for animated characters. Additionally, in the article "What time is it? – It is gender time!"Gender Representation in the Animated Cartoon Adventure Time" by Sanna Partanen, Princess Bubblegum, and Marceline are analyzed based on their varied feminine appearances and behaviors, providing further insights into their representation in the series.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Psychology behind Costume Design

Crist (2014) argues in her publication "The Art of Costuming: Interpreting the Character through the Costume Designer's Eyes" that costume design is more than a creative process. She states that the grasp and comprehension of a script help a costume designer execute a character's costume flawlessly.

Familiarity with a script gives a character or costume designer a complete understanding of the character's backstory, identity, and personality. It helps them put themselves in the character's shoes and think of the clothing they would wear if they were the characters themselves. In animation production, character designers usually take the responsibility of creating the costumes for characters. Therefore, they must excel at developing costume concepts and having the same mindset as the characters. Crist (2014) mentioned that creativity and expertise are mandatory for someone designing costumes. She also mentioned that a costume design reflects the character where the costume matches the wearer's personality. To do that, costume designers should approach the characters in a way that gives them the same perspective regarding their mental world and psychology. According to Nieminen (2017), the author of "Psychology in Character Design: Creation of a Character Design Tool," a character's internal design is equally as important as the visual aspect of the design. However, the author did not focus on costumes for her research; instead, she focused on character design. Costumes worn by characters must be pleasing to the eyes, but the connection with the audience is just as important.

The purpose of a costume is to convey the story through the character and to instantly communicate to the audience what is happening in a particular scene (Hishon, 2017). Whether the costume is flashy, subdued, or somewhere in between, it shapes the audience's emotional and intellectual perceptions, much like how our everyday clothing choices communicate aspects of ourselves to the world (Horton, 2017). Nieminen (2017) notes that to evoke emotions and draw the audience into the story, a designer must have the skill to create believable and visually appealing characters. This means costume designs must also be convincing and authentic to their intended purpose. The character's traits, identity, and personality should be reflected in the costume design for the narrative to be effectively communicated. Obeng et al. (2018) highlight that emotions and psychological responses are influenced by color, either positively or negatively, with each color carrying its specific meaning. For instance, costumes for introverted characters often incorporate "calm" colors like blue and gray, which reduce excitement, while warm and vibrant colors like red and orange are more commonly used for extroverted characters.

In animation, contrasting colors and silhouettes are also used to differentiate characters with contrasting personalities. Crist (2014) pointed out an example from *The Wizard of Oz* where the villain, Witch of the West, is seen in an age-old black dress with a pointed hat while Glinda, who is the friendly witch, wears a soft pink gown sprinkled with 'northern stars' and 'frosty snow crystals. The colors and shapes between two contrasting characters instantly show the difference in both their appearance and personality. In our research, this subject will be important as the chosen characters to be studied are in similar circumstances where their personality and costume designs contrast with each other's female representation in animation. From the article, it is proven that stereotypes exist within the designs of female characters. Stereotypical female characters in some cartoons have the same silhouettes as their body figures created after an idealized pattern, such as hourglass figures with tiny waists and disproportionate heads. This pattern of idealization has come down to a trend called the "typical girl squad," where a single design of a general form and silhouette is used for every female character in an animated series (Sà & Tavares, 2017). This caused female characters in animation to be interpreted as less diverse and repetitive. Another evolving trend is the "alternative girl squad," where female characters break stereotypes and promote leadership and masculinity. Research shows that women are always expected to be communal and avoid any form of dominance, whether it is leadership, independence, or assertiveness (Koenig, 2018). However, Princess Bubblegum represents the female gender as an ambitious woman who is both feminine and intelligent, which opposes the stereotypical female characteristics (Partanen, 2016).

Female characters in today's cartoons are designed in diverse shapes and sizes, making their silhouettes vary significantly from each other in order to expand female representations and raise awareness in cartoons (Sà & Tavares, 2017). However, the authors barely discussed subjects regarding character costumes, which is lacking in most studies involving character designs. Costumes have one of

the most significant impacts on character building and design, enhancing the visual storytelling of the show (Leersen, 2021). Therefore, it is essential to include costume knowledge in a character design study as costumes impact the spectators' minds and affect their ways of understanding the feelings and emotions of an actor (Kalmakurki, 2021). Gender representation and cultural identity also contribute to the final look of a costume design (Kalmakurki, 2021). With this, costumes created for female characters should always include appropriate details to portray the female gender carefully, as it may influence a child viewer's perceptions.

Costume Diversity in Animation

According to Clausen (2015), a character's individuality can be explored through a "playful" method using fashion and dress. With this in mind, the characters' costumes can change from time to time in different episodes to reveal new and surprising characteristics according to the story's plot or twist plots. Observing a character's costume can convey helpful information such as personality, challenges, and overall emotional arc (Bainbridge, 2020). Partanen (2016) argues in her publication, "What time is it? – It is gender time!": Gender Representation in the Animated Cartoon Adventure Time" that women, especially princesses in fairy tales, are frequently introduced without any occupations other than their noble-born title. Consequently, diversity in a princess's costume design may be unusual because it hardly expresses a variety of roles and representations. Even so, Princess Bubblegum from Adventure Time bears many responsibilities, unlike usual princesses. She is often seen in her long pink gown but regularly wears various other clothes that speak volumes. Partanen (2016) explains that to emphasize the contrast between her sides as a kingdom ruler and as a scientist, she changes into clothes more suitable for each situation.

Ojeda (2022) theorized that a character becomes memorable if his silhouette alone can easily be recognized, bringing to the reason that oftentimes, characters do not change their outfits in cartoons. However, many cartoons, including Adventure Time, which will be studied, break the rule of promoting their characters on one silhouette. For example, Princess Bubblegum's wardrobe can be used for up to a hundred different outfits. Characters can often change their outfits throughout a series, primarily if it focuses on fashion or the creator loves expanding creativity through costume designs (Ojeda, 2022). Aside from Princess Bubblegum, Marceline the Vampire Queen is also known for her fashion style or costume designs in an animation context. Her default outfit consists of jeans, a grey tank top, and a pair of red boots, but in different episodes, she would switch to other outfit looks, some to protect her from sunlight as she is susceptible to it (Partanen, 2016). Clausen (2015) referred to Elizabeth Williams that fashion should be regarded as an art form. She opined that fashion is a creative medium to express a character's identity. Therefore, costume designs in animation should never be limited to diversity but instead, express the creativity and uniqueness of characters by expanding their wardrobes. To do this, a designer should consider the importance of design elements when creating multiple outfits for one specific character.

Consistency in a Character's Costume Designs

The costumes created for Princess Bubblegum and Marceline from Adventure Time are noticeably unique and diverse. Despite that, there are some resemblances and constant usage of elements in each of their costumes. According to Crist (2014), color can establish the story's mood and character. To create multiple costume designs for a single character like Princess Bubblegum and Marceline, a specific color should represent the character's mood. This is because color carries significant meanings that can impact people's affect, cognition, and behavior (Elliot & Maier, 2014). For example, Marceline's costume designs are often created using the range of her color palette, which consists of grey, blue, and red. According to

Partanen (2016), Marceline tends to show aggressiveness in her personality, followed by a lack of patience and masculine behavior. From this, it is evident that Marceline is a short-tempered girl. Obeng et al. (2018) suggested that color must be used to match the occasion. In the psychology of colors, someone associated with red tends to be impulsive, impatient, aggressive, and easy to anger, often exhibiting a violent temper (Obeng et al., 2018). Despite Marceline's destructiveness and tough side, she can also be loving and playful (Partanen, 2016). To represent her alternating emotions and personality, blue and grey in her costume designs help neutralize both sides that define her identity and character.

Another essential element that should be utilized in costume design is shape. Shape naturally makes up the silhouette of a character. According to Ekstr- öm (2013), a character's personality can be interpreted through the overall shape of the character design. She opined that it is easier to determine a character's readability if the character designer explores the character's silhouette at the beginning of the design process. On that account, the shape chosen for the character's costume design must reflect his or her personality to communicate the visual message effectively. In her publication, Ekström (2013) also describes the symbolism of each primary shape, starting with a circle, which translates into the state of friendliness or good nature, squares communicating strength and stability, and triangles oftentimes relating to the bad guys. Almost all of Princess Bubblegum's costumes use curved edges to convey her kind and compassionate self. However, in specific episodes like *Reign of the Gunthers* and *Rattleballs*, pointy shapes are used for her costumes to inform hazards.

A character's body shape also affects the costume design (Kalmakurki, 2021), as seen through Princess Bubblegum's slight hourglass body, making her costumes narrow around the waist. Kamalkurki (2021) discussed the proportions of a character's body, referring to Fiona from Shrek, where it should be refined into a more natural shape in an early design process to align better with the character's personality, the story, and also the 'humanized body form'. As Princess Bubblegum and Marceline also appear in a humanized body form, it is essential to look at their proportionate body shapes that, in a way, decide the shapes of their costumes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The process of data collection and Analysis is divided into several phases to ensure a comprehensive examination of the costume designs. To understand the mastery of Adventure Time's diverse costume designs and its function as a visual communicator, this study approaches a qualitative method.

Literature Review: Data is gathered from books, internet resources, and YouTube videos to support the Analysis. This phase involves reviewing existing literature on costume design in animation and gender representation to provide a theoretical foundation for the study. Previous studies on costume design and gender representation in animation are reviewed. These studies offer valuable insights and contextual information that help frame the Analysis and interpret the findings.

Episode Analysis: The selected episodes are watched and analyzed to observe how the costume designs relate to the narrative and character development. This phase involves taking detailed notes on each costume change's visual and narrative context, noting how the costumes support the storyline and character arcs. The role of costumes in advancing the storyline and character arcs is examined. For example, in *What Was Missing*, the characters' costumes reflect their emotional states and personal growth as they face challenges together.

Visual Analysis: Photos from the series are still analyzed to study the costumes' use of colors and shapes. This phase involves a detailed examination of the visual elements of the costumes, such as color schemes, patterns, and textures, and how these elements contribute to the overall design. Costumes from different episodes are compared to identify patterns and changes. This comparison helps to highlight how costume designs evolve and how they respond to different narrative demands.

The study includes a comparative analysis of the selected characters and their costumes to explore how costume design contributes to character development and narrative function. The Analysis explores how the contrasting personalities of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline are reflected in their costumes. For example, Princess Bubblegum's outfits often feature pink hues and elegant designs that signify her royal status and scientific mind. At the same time, Marceline's attire is more casual and often includes darker colors and edgier styles that reflect her rebellious nature. Their costumes' use of colors, shapes, silhouettes, and details is examined. This involves analyzing specific design elements, such as the choice of fabrics, accessories, and the overall silhouette of the costumes, and how these elements enhance the characters' personalities and roles. The study assesses how costumes reflect traditional or non-traditional gender roles and stereotypes. This Analysis includes examining how the characters' costumes either conform to or challenge traditional gender norms and how these representations impact the audience's perception of the characters.

The expected outcomes of this study include a deeper understanding of how costume designs in Adventure Time serve as visual communicators. The study aims to provide insights into the role of costumes in reflecting and shaping gender roles within the series. Additionally, identifying design elements that contribute to characterization and narrative will be explored. This study will contribute to the broader field of animation studies, particularly in understanding visual storytelling and gender representation through costume design. By analyzing the costume designs of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline, the study will offer new perspectives on how visual elements in animation can enhance character development and narrative complexity.

In conclusion, the theoretical framework outlined in this study provides a comprehensive approach to analyzing the costume designs in Adventure Time. By focusing on visual communication, characterization through costume, and gender representation, the study aims to uncover the intricate ways in which costume designs contribute to the overall storytelling and character development in the series. Through a detailed case study approach and a multi-phase analysis, this research will offer valuable insights into the role of costume design in animation and its impact on audience perception.

FINDINGS

Gender stereotypes are customary in female character designs, whose costumes are bound to stereotypical characteristics like bright colors, skirts, dresses, and floral patterns. Not only that, but the social role theory introduced by Alice H. Eagly in 1987 also illustrated one typical pattern found in most female character designs in terms of costume designs and how gender roles are portrayed in animation. This theory ruled out female characters to be in a dominant position or no more superior than any male characters. However, in Adventure Time, the secondary female characters are seen to break through the cliché standard that has been normalized among animated television shows and films.

On that account, we will analyze Princess Bubblegum and Marceline's costume designs to see how the character's personalities, narratives, and gender roles are presented through their diverse designs. I have carefully selected several costumes of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline from specific episodes of Adventure Time, such as *Go with Me, What Was Missing*, *Sky Witch*, and *Broke His Crown*. With this, the

differences in the designs and any possible stereotypes or similarities will be classified into the table below and discussed afterward.
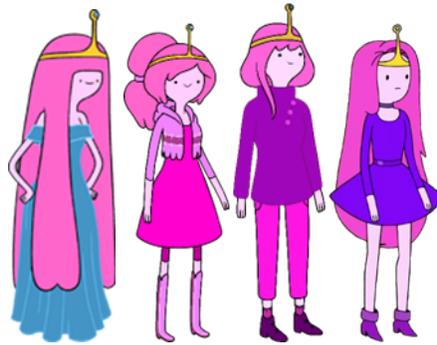

Figure 1. Princess Bubblegum selected costumes from "Go with Me," "What Was Missing," "Sky Witch," and "Broke His Crown."
(Source: Adventure Time Wiki)

Figure 2 Marceline selected costumes; "Go With Me," "What Was Missing," "Sky Witch," and "Broke His Crown."
(Source: Adventure Time Wiki)

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline's Overall Look

Character	Princess Bubblegum	Marceline the Vampire Queen
Character Background	Scientist and the ruler of the CandyKingdom	Half-demon and half-human vampire
Personality and traits	Kind and compassionate, well-mannered, temperamental	Mischievous, playful, independent, emotional
Style	Neat and feminine	Grunge and boyish
Color	Bright colors, primarily pink	Dull color, mostly gray
Shape and Silhouette	Curved and round edges	Sharp and pointed edges

Table 1 above describes Princess Bubblegum and Marceline as characters in a comparative manner and how they dress in most episodes to illustrate the existing contrast between the two characters. Princess Bubblegum is one of the princesses in Adventure Time that is often seen throughout the series. In

most episodes, she usually wears a pink gown, top to bottom, which is a color linked to femininity. In a way, her pink gown represents several common stereotypical characteristics of a female character, such as nurturing, kindness, and gentleness (Cherry, 2022). As a princess, Princess Bubblegum frequently reveals her caring and mother-like side towards her Candy People. Simultaneously, she holds a great responsibility as a firm leader of the Candy Kingdom. Not only that, but she also shows great range in her personality as a princess where she fights evil in an unusual manner, different from typical princesses introduced to children through most cartoon shows. According to the social role theory, women and leadership roles are two things that do not blend well together due to the discriminative Stereotype rooted in society's beliefs.

In contrast to Princess Bubblegum, Marceline the Vampire Queen mostly wears colored outfits consisting of gray, dark blue, and red. At one glance, it is easy to assume that Marceline the Vampire Queen is a vicious, blood-sucking creature. However, as the series progresses, she is revealed as a playful and sweet female character. The color gray used most in Marceline's costume color palette is known to represent neutrality and balance, which matches Marceline's personality as she shows both her predator side and her friendly side towards her loved ones. Moreover, the color gray also represents old age. Marceline is known to feel emotionally attached to her childhood memories despite aging a thousand years old. Various costume designs are created for Princess Bubblegum and Marceline to portray the alternative female representations in Adventure Time. However, design elements like color, silhouette, and shapes are used appropriately for each character without losing the character's identity. For example, bright colors and rounded edges are used in almost all of Princess Bubblegum's costume designs, while dull colors and sharp edges are used for Marceline.

Table 2. Comparative Analysis of Princess Bubblegum and Marceline's costumes on different episodes

	"Go With Me"	**"What was Missing"**	**"Sky Witch"**	**"Broke His Crown"**
Princess Bubblegum	Her body is draped in a long, elegant, neat blue gown with a gold crown. The dress gives her a slim, figure silhouette that makes her look graceful and sophisticated.	She wears pink from top to bottom, including a cropped jacket, knee-length dress, leggings, knee-high boots, and a gold crown. Silhouette and shape are mostly made up of rounded edges to show that she brings no harm.	She wears a purple long-sleeved shirt with a high collar, a pink backpack, and a gold crown. Her silhouette can be seen to be bulkier with soft edges.	She wears a purple above-knee-length dress, purple choker, and gold crown. Silhouette and shape are a mix of rounded and sharp edges. The sharp edges portray Princess Bubblegum's momentary fury and uneasiness.
Marceline the vampire Queen	She wears a gray dress with ripped edges, dark blue skinny pants, and red knee-high boots. Her hair is shaved on one side. Silhouette	She wears a red sleeveless top, blue skinny pants, knee-high boots, and a sun hat. Her hair and costume make her	She wears a bright yellow body suit, dark blue tights, and red high-cut boots. Her hair makes up most of her silhouette as the costume	She wears a knee-length pink dress, pantyhose leggings, heeled high-cut boots, a necklace, and her

	consists of pointed edges.	silhouette look more significant than usual—it has a mix of pointed and round edges.	outlines her body figure.	hair tied up in a bun. Her silhouette looks neat and simple.

One of Adventure Time's most noticeable uniquenesses is the diversity in the costume designs, especially between Princess Bubblegum and Marceline. This is because, in every episode, the characters are set in a different plot with different situations. Hence, the alternating costume designs communicate with the audience instantly to show time, place, setting, and character identity in every specific situation.

Breaking Female Character Stereotypes through Costume Designs

In *Go with Me* and *What Was Missing*, Princess Bubblegum and Marceline are in a detestable relationship where they go against each other, revealing some opposition regarding personality, color, silhouette, and shape. However, as the series progresses into newer seasons, the two characters are closely related, as seen in episodes like *Sky Witch* and *Broke His Crown.* In *Go with Me,* Marceline displays nonsensical and mischievous acts when Princess Bubblegum practices for her whistling choir championship. To match the circumstances, Princess Bubblegum has long pink hair and wears a long blue gown that drapes down to her feet, which makes her look elegant and suitable for a graceful princess doing a sophisticated activity. According to Elliot and Maier (2014), blue is linked to openness and peace as they are often associated with the natural realm, such as the blue sky and water. In contrast, pink is known as the color of feminine traits such as loving, kind, sensitive, and nurturing (Cherry, 2022).

In most recent animated series like Adventure Time, many princesses are breaking out of the stereotypical female character trope as they show femininity and dominant behaviors, a role believed to be taken up only by the male gender (Eagly & Wood, 2016). The distinctive traits owned by Princess Bubblegum can be seen through the colors of her overall look, which is a combination of pink and blue or any other colors of her costume designs in different episodes. Efremov et al. (2021) proved that color can be shown through clothes to express the social status of a person or a character. Henceforth, Princess Bubblegum, as a character, promotes both femininity and masculinity in a female character through her costume designs. This is because her costume designs change in most of the episodes, especially in those where she carries out fanatical activities that oppose the usual princess trope.

In the same scenario from *Go with Me*, Marceline appears wearing a grey dress with ripped edges, dark blue skinny pants, and red boots, creating a disturbance to Princess Bubblegum's tranquil moment. Red is commonly an associative color with situations of incoming danger (Elliot & Maier, 2014). For example, Marceline's red boots and top in both episodes of "Go with Me" and "What Was Missing" make her look antagonistic in the scenarios to complement her purpose as an aggressive female character, different from Princess Bubblegum. She often displays offense towards Princess Bubblegum but warmth towards Finn and Jake in *What Was Missing.* Marceline's costume designs balance red with cool colors like blue and gray to visualize this. Gray is a mixture of black and white, with each color representing a negative and positive association, respectively, making Marceline appear visually threatening and comforting simultaneously (Elliot & Maier, 2014). Not only that, her costume's shape and silhouette also consist of round and sharp edges. The sharp edges on her boots portray action, aggression, and energy, while the round edges portray friendliness and non-threatening (Nieminen, 2017).

Towards the end of the episode of "What Was Missing," Marceline and Princess Bubblegum come across as good friends and continue to deepen their relationship in episodes like *Sky Witch* and *Broke His Crown*. In these two episodes, the two female characters can be seen wearing uncommon colors from their costume color palettes. Marceline's costume in *Sky Witch* catches the eye with bright yellow, representing hope, spontaneity, and caution in the scenario (Kramer, 2023). In the episode, her costume also barely displays any sharp edges, implying that she brings no harm to Princess Bubblegum as they are now close. The representation of the female gender can be seen to portray a healthy friendship between the two characters and leadership, which raises awareness of feminism as the costume design of Princess Bubblegum shows a solid purple color representing power (Cherry, 2022).

In *Sky Witch* and *Broke His Crown*, Princess Bubblegum wears purple in both episodes, one time with rounded edges and another with sharp edges. The Pu, displayed on her costume represents magic, imagination, and mystery (Cherry, 2022). In *Broke His Crown* she often shows displeasure and temporary outbursts of irritation, aligning with the purpose of sharp edges in costume design. In these episodes, Princess Bubblegum breaks the stereotypical traits of a female character in animation by showing a drastic change in her personality from being a kind and gentle princess to an antagonistic- material character, which can be seen through the choice of colors and shapes used for her costume.

CONCLUSION

A character's costume design plays an essential role in animation. It communicates the details of a character's personality, provides believability to the character, and establishes the situation in a story. Permanent costume designsAfter stereotypes, costumes are initially believed to be effective in creating much more recognizable characters as their silhouettes remain the same, but not until animated television series like Adventure Time go their own way, creating an impressive amount of different costume designs for its characters. The different costume designs presented in each selected episode of Adventure Time proved that diversity can also leave a memorable impression on the audience. This research explores how female characters with ever-changing costume designs can still be recognizable to millions despite their different silhouettes. The studies are made to profoundly understand the mastery of costume designs in Adventure Time and to analyze how unique costume designs can affect the deliverance of the whole story.

Although some literature sources lack thorough studies on costumes in animation, the findings were expansible to support our research exploring the main topic. It is clear from the research reviewed that costume is an essential visual component for displaying a character's individuality and the narrative. The diversity shown in costume designs for female characters in Adventure Time stands as the core of the main topic in this study. The astounding total of costume designs in the animated series provides an avenue to investigate the design elements and psychological traits that can influence the final look of a particular character's costume designs. Not only that, gender roles and representations of female characters can be investigated and analyzed in the bargain. From the literature, it can be seen that costume designs are highly bound with character design and development, which is why most animation productions merge the two processes. It has been discussed that before a costume design is made, the internal traits of a character are initially established in the character development and design process to reflect personality well in the costumes. Nevertheless, there is no denying that costume design has separate purposes and values. Evident from the literature is that costume design may change multiple times in an animated series according to its suitability for the situation or personality side, while the original face and body of the character design stay the same.

We delve into the techniques that the character designer uses to create costumes that are easily readable but also visually pleasing at the same time. It is also apparent from the referenced literature that

costume designs of variety depend on the consistent application of design elements to keep the character identity recognizable despite the switching costumes, significantly when the silhouettes change from time to time. Therefore, we have examined the primary use of design elements like colors and shapes, which are kept in a specific range for a single character to make the costume designs distinguishable. My study offers a platform to create an analysis of costume designs and how personality, design elements, and gender representation affect them.

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