Manifesting that dream: A Qualitative study of Vision Boards

Alexandra Lindström
Media and Communication Studies: Culture, Collaborative Media, and Creative Industries
One-year master thesis I 15 credits
Spring semester 2023
Supervisor: Linda Paxling
Examiner: Erin Cory
Abstract

This paper investigates the phenomenon of digital vision boards on the platform Landing, focusing on their alignment with postfeminist media culture and the empowerment narratives of neoliberal principles. Through a discourse analysis of vision boards and user interviews, the study explores the values and behaviours within this digital subculture. Drawing on Foucault’s “technologies of the self” and Lauren Berlant’s “women’s intimate publics” the research reveals how vision boards have evolved into tools for shaping identity and aspirations in a postfeminist media culture.

Keywords: Landing, New Age Spiritualism, Postfeminism, Social Curation, Vision Boards
# INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 BACKGROUND</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. Landing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Digital and social curation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Curating identity and possible futures</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. New age spirituality and self-care culture</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Postfeminist neoliberalism</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 Postfeminist bodies</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2. Postfeminist consumption</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.3. Digital labour in online Girlboss Culture</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2. Women’s intimate publics</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3. Technologies of the self</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3. Research questions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 METHODS AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1. Semi-structured interview</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1. Data collection</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2. Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1. Data collection</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4. Research approach and paradigm</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5. Ethics</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 RESULTS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1. Visualising possible futures and identities on Landing</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2. Girlboss productivity and digital labour</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2. Landing as a women’s intimate public</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 DISCUSSION</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 CONCLUSION</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1. Further research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 INTRODUCTION

Vision boards are collages of images and words representing a person's wishes or goals, intended to serve as inspiration or motivation (What Is a Vision Board or Mood Board?, n.d.). They are part of a historical continuum of self-expression and exploration, ranging from conduct manuals (Almjeld, 2015) to scrapbooking (Jones, 2016) that now has migrated into digital spaces. Platforms like Pinterest have emerged as significant platforms for creating and displaying visual representations of dreams and aspirations. Similar to Pinterest, the newly established platform Landing enables users to collect and showcase images that encapsulate their interests, tastes, future goals and future selves through compiling images in digital collages.

These digital vision boards have been promoted as tools for visualising and manifesting your aspirations and dreams that supposedly aids in asking “the universe” to bring said aspirations to fruition, a practice increasingly popular, that aligns with the entrepreneurial spirit of ‘Girlboss culture’ (Mastrangelo, 2021). The Girlboss is a cultural phenomenon celebrating women's empowerment and their pursuit of successful careers and businesses (Pierce, 2022), that echoes neoliberal postfeminist ideology. Neoliberal postfeminism is a somewhat debated term (Wilkes, 2021) but this paper will view it as a movement that has merged with neoliberal principles, creating a narrative that emphasises individual empowerment and choice, often within the context of a market-driven society. Women are portrayed as free to make choices and pursue their desires, particularly within the realms of career, consumption, and self-improvement (ibid., 2021).

By conducting a discourse analysis of vision boards on Landing and interviews with two Landing users, the study aims to showcase the values and behaviours promoted within this digital subculture and craft. Additionally, it seeks to understand where these practices sit within the broader realm of postfeminist media culture (Gill, 2007).

Inspired by Michel Foucault's concept of "technologies of the self," this study explores how various practices and habits have transformed into tools for shaping contemporary identities through the use of vision boards. By curating dietary preferences and fitness routines, positive affirmations and skincare routines into visually appealing collages, these activities reflect how individuals conform to and amplify societal norms and expectations of what constitutes a happy and successful life.

Drawing parallels with the concept of the "belaboured self" by McGee (2005), vision boards on Landing amplify the constant drive for self-improvement. This emphasis on personal transformation aligns with the idea that change comes from inside a person (Mastrangelo, 2021), fostering a belief in the individual's capacity to shape their own destiny while disregarding structural inequalities.
Landing, like the traditional scrapbooking practises it resembles, is a women-dominated space with a significant majority of users being millennials or gen Z (Varanasi, 2022). Therefore, the study also draws upon Lauren Berlants (2011) concept of “women’s intimate publics”, which illustrates the idea that women often engage in forms of collective and public discourse that are intimately tied to their personal experiences, feelings and aspirations.

In conclusion, this paper investigates the effects of vision boards on Landing unveils the dynamics of digital self-representation and identity exploration, aspiration and empowerment within the framework of contemporary postfeminist media culture.

2 BACKGROUND

The term "Girlboss" gained popularity in the early 2010s, particularly within the context of equating entrepreneurship with female empowerment (Robinson, 2023). The term stems from Sophia Amoruso, the founder of the online fashion retailer Nasty Gal, who wrote a memoir titled "#Girlboss" in 2014. The Girlboss embodies the idea of a woman who is confident, ambitious, and successful in both her personal and professional life, and personifies the idea that women can be strong, independent, and successful leaders in any field as long as she puts her mind to it (Roivainen, 2023). It encourages an entrepreneurial mindset that initially appears empowering, fostering feminist ideals of breaking patriarchal barriers (Robinson, 2023), but quickly reveals a shallow interpretation of what true gender equality means.

Although the term Girlboss is predominantly prevalent among millennial women and therefore is perceived as somewhat outdated by gen Z (Chen & Zeng, 2022), the idea of personal achievement through self-optimisation nonetheless remains prevalent. However, it has taken on a different look, for example in the “that girl” trend popularised on TikTok. The wellness trend seeks to encourage individuals to embrace their best self, or “get their shit together and look good doing it, too.” (Joshi, 2021, para. 2). The destabilising years of the COVID-19 pandemic saw a surge in content around self-care and spiritual discourses (Gill & Ogard, 2022), as these topics moved outside of the confines of media into other areas “in communications from our bank, the supermarket, the charities who want us to donate — all urging us to “feel good,” “take a moment,” “be kind,” or “get some love.”” (ibid., 2022, 48).

Manifestation is “the spiritual practice of turning thoughts and intentions into reality” (Baah, 2022, para. 1). During 2020, Google searches for the term ‘manifesting’ soared with 669% (Insights: Generation Manifestation, n.d.), with the search results including countless guides and advice on how to go about it. The the hashtag #manifestation boasts
almost 5 million posts on Instagram, but even more impressive is the 8.1 billion views of manifestation content on TikTok.

Shawn Owens, a TikTok influencer who makes content on the topic of manifestation for around 73,000 followers said in an interview with NYLON that:

“Visualization is the best manifestation technique (...) I’ve used that technique to manifest my apartment; I started to visualize myself in that space. Be specific about making coffee or decorating things to embody the energy of the thing you’re trying to attract in your life” (June, 22, para. 12).

Despite manifestation’s recent surge on social media, the idea of bringing your idea or vision from your head into the tangible world is not a new one. If we consider "manifesting" as the act of channelling our thoughts and energy toward accomplishing a specific goal, it becomes logical to assume that by fully dedicating ourselves to one goal, we increase the likelihood of achieving it. When seen from this perspective, the concept closely resembles the Girlboss mantra of "work hard and make it happen".

Rhonda Byrne’s widely sold book “The Secret” (2006), popular among self-titled girlbosses, described “The Law of Attraction” in which thoughts and feelings have a frequency that attracts similar frequencies from the universe (Carr & Kelan, 2023). In other words, if you focus on positive thoughts and emotions, you will attract positive experiences and outcomes, and vice versa for negative thoughts and emotions. The book emphasised the power of positive thinking, visualisation, and gratitude as key practices to attract abundance, success, health, and happiness into one’s life (Mastrangelo, 2021). Vision boarding thus becomes an easy method to concretely visualise someone’s dream life.

2.1. Landing

Vision boards have been widely used for a long time (Zhong, 2014), and social networking platforms like Pinterest or Polyvore have drawn upon these traditions (Jones, 2016).

Pinterest is a social media platform and visual discovery engine that allows users to discover, collect, and share ideas and inspiration through mainly images. Users create mood boards by "pinning" various visual content onto their boards, organising them according to themes or interests. Polyvore on the other hand was a popular social commerce website and mobile app that allowed users to create and share fashion collages, also known as "sets". In 2017, Polyvore was acquired by the e-commerce company SSENSE, who then chose to shut it down. Some have emigrated to Landing, a fairly new social media website launched in 2019 (Shuttleworth, 2022). Similar to Pinterest and Polyvore, it’s a platform users can create moodboards in a collage-like manner on different topics and interests. It offers users the
ability to craft vision boards, compile wish lists, provide feedback on others' creations, import images, “remix” existing boards, and more.

Originally conceived as an interior design tool, Landing's co-founder Buckland describes how the platform's concept evolved as they observed people's enthusiasm for designing mood boards on platforms like Google Slides (Shuttleworth, 2022). Recognizing this trend, they transformed the idea into Landing.

The main activity on the platform is creating boards, which are digital collages of images. Landing provides an easy tool to upload and cut out objects from digital images and paste them to a board, which previously would have required someone to own and be proficient in tools like Adobe Photoshop, for example. The platform features a “community library” where users can save their uploaded images to a joint library for other users to also upload to their boards.

Like making lists of goals or journaling, Landing becomes a visual discussion thread of its users' plans, personal taste, interests, and dreams for the future (June, 2022). The user base consists of 80–90% Gen Z women, as “gen Z-ers manifest constantly” (ibid., 2022). One Landing user told Business Insider that she uses Landing to make boards with her resolutions for the new year. She then sets it as her phone wallpaper, so it serves as a constant reminder of who she wants to become (Varanasi, 2022).

According to the founders, the platform is described as “Pinterest but with community” (June, 2022). In 2023, the platform launched its mobile application for iOS, which in contrast to the website does not support vision board making but instead focuses on collecting boards and joining group chats centred around specific topics like “The Book Nook” (to discuss literature) or “Potterheads” (to discuss the Harry Potter universe). As part of a generation that has been forced to build a lot of their communities and relationships online due to the pandemic (Shuttleworth, 2022), feeling connection and finding common interests with others become more important. This is something Landing has directed their attention towards, and actively cultivate an engaged alliance of users through the platform, the newly released app, as well as a community Discord channel. The Discord channel aims to be a space for users to share feedback, as well as connect with each other and share things they are enjoying from the platform (ibid., 2022).

Liz Friedland, co-founder and head of community at Landing, emphasises the importance of community for retaining a user base on a newly established platform. For example they utilise a “Limelight Ambassador Program”, in which users can apply to be volunteer community leaders. They are supposed to help build the platform through their feedback and ideas, create a welcoming and inclusive community on the Internet, serve as role models for other community members to help actively maintain Landing’s community.
culture, as well as reach new audiences to grow the platform (*Landing Limelight Ambassador Program*, n.d.).

## 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1 Digital and social curation

Digital or online curation, the practice of collecting, organising, and sharing content from the web, is a practice that has seen an upswing with the boom of user-generated content (Zhong et al., 2021), and can be viewed as an evolution of the participatory web. It is increasingly supported by popular platforms (Linder et. al, 2014), where arguably the most popular content collection and curation site is Pinterest – but even Instagram recently started supporting a function where users can save and organise posts into collections and share them with their friends (Roth, 2023).

Also known as “data curation” or “social curation” (Almjeld, 2015, 10), it involves users identifying, arranging, and sharing personal collections of online materials that reflect their interests and personalities (ibid., 2015), which create value beyond the sum of each asset (Linder et. al, 2014). The focus therefore lies on finding and arranging content, rather than generating it (Almjeld, 2015).

It is however important to make a distinction between online social curation and traditional curation. Professional curation, for example by someone educated in Fine Arts, selects, organises and displays art as a way to mediate between the artwork and its observers. Historically, curators held the cultural authority to transform previously unknown artworks into recognized and valuable ones, acting as gatekeepers (Villi et al., 2012). This made professional art curation more of a top–down process. Social curation however has a more bottom–up approach, where the curators are ordinary people who nonetheless serve an important role in making content both known and valuable (ibid., 2012). Amateur curators act as information finders and evaluators for others (Rheingold, 2014, cited in Almjeld, 2015), the curated artefact are to be shared with viewers and interacted with through commenting, liking, adding tags or sending direct messages (Almjeld, 2015). The practice also relates to the way mood boards are utilised by designers in the design process, where they “express their imagination and ideas using a medium that can be shared with other people in order to illustrate visually the style which they are pursuing” (Edwards et al., 2009, 2) – it’s a form of communication.

Curation can play a direct role in community-building, as users tailor their posts to fit the content and scope of the communities they engage with (Adriaansen, 2022, p. 107).
Linder et al. (2014) similarly describes the act of choosing and placing images on boards as "found objects," indicating that by selecting and arranging an image clipping, the user modifies its context and purpose, transforming it into a found object. By curating images on boards, users can appropriate them to suit their individual needs and preferences. An image’s purpose and meaning are determined by the user’s personal context, and a board’s title can further transform the image's significance by applying cultural references to add personality and meaning (ibid., 2014). Therefore, social curation may be viewed as social and cultural practice, as the ways in which people participate in social curation are rooted in the society and culture in which the person lives (Villi et al., 2012). With this view, the attention turns away from specific activities and technologies towards the symbolic meaning and roles of social curation within consumers' daily routines (ibid., 2012).

3.2. Curating identity and possible futures

Platforms like Pinterest provide a space for users to curate their ideal wardrobes, workouts, and dream weddings, projecting their desired self-image (Almjeld, 2015), and thorough it becomes a powerful tool with which individuals intricately shape their individual and collective identities. As users curate and share content across online platforms, they embark on journeys of identity work, piecing together things that resonate with their beliefs, aspirations, and interests. The curations can act as avatars, which are digital representations of a person in digital environments (Zimmerman et al., 2022), and is a method for trying on possible versions of oneself (Almjeld, 2015).

The power to change your life and identity through platforms like Landing can be found “in the assumption that people produce themselves in media” (Deuze, 2011, 138). It acts as a window to the future self, providing inspiration and guidance through curated content (Phillips et al., 2014). Furthermore, instead of differentiating ourselves through where we live or what job we have, we do it through the symbolic value that is associated with consumer goods like clothes, music, interior design, technology and so on (Hodkinson, 2017). According to Giolo & Berghman (2023), the gathering and categorization of these materials now happen primarily (and often exclusively) online, making the internet integral to their construction (ibid., 2023).

Online environments aid identity reinvention, as it allows people to explore different identities and emerging styles. Haimson et al. (2015) raises this specifically in regards to gender, which is an aspect often experimented with in online spaces. Collecting images on a board allows people to discover differences between societal expectations and their own desire to create and assemble identities (ibid., 2015). Small acts of curation such as adding, deleting or filtering images on social curation platforms can lead to a significant shift in how
users perceive themselves, and aid identity transformation and reinvention in the real world (Turkle, 1999, cited in Haimson et al., 2015). These seemingly minor actions nonetheless accumulate, shaping our identities both online and offline and affecting how we connect with the world around us (ibid., 2015).

In the public nature of social curation, the boards created become a performance of personality, taste and values. It can be seen as a form of cultural capital, where our cultural preferences become a way to signal our class and influence (Bourdieu, 1986). Essentially, these digital curation platforms serve as spaces where cultural preferences are evaluated and showcased, effectively shaping the curator’s online identity. Almjeld (2015) adds that in performing social curation in public on social networks the individual surveillis themselves while being surveilled, and surveillis others in return. A study performed by Scolere and Humphreys (2016) explored how design professionals utilising Pinterest for business purposes (such as collecting inspiration for current design projects) were deeply aware of other’s observing their pinning, leading to artists utilising secret boards for projects that they didn’t think suited their personal brand. Social curation sites, then, function as hubs for validation and exchange, enabling individuals to converge around their interests, accumulate, and trade cultural capital (Macek, 2013).

As Landing’s user base primarily comprises Generation Z women (Varanasi, 2022), the platform can be contextualised in the longstanding history of female consumers collecting and sharing images (Zhong, 2012). For example scrapbooking, a dominant way for women to collect images in the past (Almjeld, 2014), could feature mementos from trips, photos of loved ones or special moments of a person's life. In other words, scrapbooks centre celebration and nostalgia (Jones, 2016). However, unlike traditional scrapbooking, online social curation platforms propels a vision of perfecting oneself across various aspects of life. It’s a medium that mimics the scrapbook in its visual form but generally looks into the future instead of the past (ibid., 2016). Users engage in a form of prosumption, where they consume and produce content centred around the desire for future improvements; it evokes a feeling of addictive yarning because something is missing or incomplete (ibid., 2016). This leads to a “virtual hoarding” (ibid., 2016, 358) of images portraying products, practices, and lifestyles for imagined future consumption.

Phillips et al. (2014) describe boards on Pinterest as either “aspirational” or “inspirational”. Aspirational boards were centred on immediate futures, displaying clear and achievable visions, while inspirational ones looked more into a distant future, displaying images with less defined themes or even fantastical content (ibid., 2014).

The way women create and consume their possible futures through vision boards can be compared with historic commonplace books or conduct manuals (Almjeld, 2015), which were typically a collection of personal notes, quotes, observations, and thoughts gathered
over time—a repository to record ideas, book excerpts, poems, or anything meaningful to
the individual. In their era these books were read and produced by young ladies, and were
physical collections of advice, images, lessons and stories intended to “train girls as future
wives, mothers, friends and obedient members of society” (ibid., 2015, 8). Similarly, on
social curation platforms like Pinterest, Jones (2016) notes that the ideal woman stretches
across all aspects of life: cooking perfect meals for perfect parties, where her perfect body
created by perfect workouts is presented in a perfect outfit, accompanied by perfect makeup,
as well as her perfectly dressed partner and children, in a perfectly designed home (ibid.,
2016, 359). However, unavoidably, this content fosters a culture of competition or anxiety
due to the high expectations it places. A 2013 study on mothers in the US usage of Pinterest
revealed that a significant portion of them experienced “Pinterest Stress” (Dube, 2013).
While seeking inspiration and connection, mothers using Pinterest often feel overwhelmed
and inadequate when confronted with images depicting domestic perfection (ibid., 2013).

In other words, social curation platforms present a hyper-idealised world that
instructs users how to imagine and govern almost every aspect of their life (ibid., 2016).
Here, Lauren Berlant’s (2011) idea of “cruel optimism” helps us understand how individuals
become attached to certain aspirations or expectations that might initially seem positive but
can lead to disappointment, stress, and harm in the long run. The concept describes a
situation where people invest in and cling to hopes and fantasies that keep them going, even
though those attachments may perpetuate their suffering or prevent them from achieving
genuine well-being. The optimism becomes "cruel" when the very objects of attachment
contribute to their own harm, leading to a sense of stuckness and dissatisfaction. (ibid,
2011). This is particularly pervasive in contemporary capitalist societies, where individuals
are often entangled in attachments to unattainable or damaging ideals such as success, love,
or social status (ibid, 2011).

3.3. New age spirituality and self-care culture

The association between wellness and positivity took off in the 70s (Mastrangelo, 2021), and
started its rebranding towards what now often is referred to as “self-care”. The late 20th
century further witnessed a rise of prosperity gospel within Christianity, a movement
emphasising positive thinking to deepen one’s relationship with Christ (ibid, 2021). This,
according to Mastrangelo (2021) represented a continuation of the New Age spirituality
trend of manifesting success, encouraging believers to control their thoughts and
visualising their prayers being answered.

The self-made man ideal historically benefited men, while women’s roles were
confined to supporting men’s self-invention. As gender roles shifted in the late 20th
century, women were able to seek their own self-fulfilment (McGee, 2005). Precursing Amorosos Girlboss, Sheryl Sandberg’s influential book "Lean In" (2013) promoted the idea of visualising and manifesting success, encouraging a form of “magical thinking” (Mastrangelo, 2021, 86) for women to achieve success by simply willing themselves into powerful positions. She suggests that the only barrier preventing women from corporate success is their own negative mindset and lacking confidence.

Thus, in self-care culture, the burden of being well and happy becomes the work of the individual consumer (ibid., 2021). Similarly, Gill and Ogard (2016) argue that positive psychology aligns with the principles of neoliberalism, because it emphasises personal development and individual responsibility for overcoming challenges (ibid, 2016). Positive psychology operates on the premise that if you consistently practise optimism, such as declaring “I am happy”, you can cultivate happiness. Negative thoughts or feelings are thus made to be self-surveilled and self-governed through practising positivity (Carr & Kelan, 2021). By making positive self-declarations and embracing an optimistic outlook, individuals can talk themselves into a state of happiness and make it a habitual part of their life. The way a person talks about themselves as being happy contributes to actual experiences of happiness (Ahmed, 2010) - their thoughts actively shape their reality.

This internal focus on self-responsibility shifts agency away from external sources, effectively promoting the notion that individuals have control over their experiences and outcomes (ibid., 2023). Consuming specific products, services or brands help to propel the notion that wellness, personal empowerment and fulfilment can be bought, rather than discussing how systems fail to provide things like universal health care.

New age spiritual methods and self-help is disproportionately addressed towards women (Gill & Ogard, 2022), since alternative health practices are often seen as more connected to them (Sointu, 2011). As these health practices don’t have as much official support or a strong foundation in institutions, they’re often connected to the kind of private care women have traditionally done for their families (ibid., 2011). In addition, astrologer Deon Mitchell (cited in Lee, 2022, 166) describes how astrology offers solace to those who have been let down by mainstream systems of health and well-being, and offers an informal source for navigating everyday suffering (ibid., 2022). Thus, women who who pursue and participate in New Age spirituality, what Conor (2021, 1262) dubs “cosmic wellness”, are in a way participating in a space that is already feminised, where as men on the contrary participate in a way that doesn’t align with masculine gender norms (Conor, 2021).

It’s therefore also not unexpected that social curation platforms like Pinterest are seen as feminine and therefore less serious (Almjeld, 2015). Since the way of meaning-making in these spaces are very visual, they are perceived as less intellectual than
more text-dominated platforms such as Twitter (ibid., 2015), which has a male-dominated user base (Dixon, 2022).

In addition, it’s predominantly white women who are appealed by New Age spiritualism. One racial logic behind this appeal is the tendency for white women to analogue their experience of sexism to racism. The “long and complex (...) and failed political alliances with women of colour” (ibid., 2011) are negotiated through spiritual means, which may then legitimise the appropriation of spiritual traditions from marginalised communities.

Shome (2014, cited in Wilkes, 2017) argues that Asian therapies are being reimagined within a framework of spiritual value. They are now talked about as modern wellness ideas among white women in the Western world where the practices become part of a personal and individualised lifestyle, which contradicts the culture of sharing that the practices are based on (Wilkes, 2017). The rise in popularity of these practices has attracted the attention of Western corporations seeking to profit from them. The plants, herbs, and natural elements intrinsic to these traditional therapies have become valuable assets for Western entities aiming to claim ownership of this knowledge for financial gain (ibid., 2017). The practices then become available only to those with resources such as time and money, that they can dedicate to yoga retreats, crystal healing or essential oils. Conor (2021) argues, then, that New Age wellness is a distinctly postfeminist phenomenon, since it frames practices such as detoxing or buying crystals as empowering for “its people who are always/already entrepreneurial, networked, aspirational and digitally literate individuals.” (ibid., 2021, pg).

Digital platforms have provided further visibility and accessibility to this kind of wellness content. For example, Gill & Ogard (2022) highlights how self-care apps, which have become more prominent during the COVID-19 pandemic, are playing a significant role in amplifying the practice of self-care. Providing support to individuals dealing with stress and challenges when proper psychological and public health services are lacking, the apps are particularly targeted at women (ibid., 2022).

4 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. Postfeminist neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is generally understood as a political framework that values free market capitalism, deregulation and decreased government spending (Wilkes, 2021). It has restructured economies through the deregulation of financial markets, privatisation of state
assets, and the provision of favourable conditions for corporations (Wilkes, 2021). As a consequence of these economic transformations, traditional structures of employment, characterised by stable conditions such as employee training, pensions, sick leave, and holiday pay, have been dismantled and through this emphasis is placed on individual entrepreneurship, self-governance, and flexibility as desirable attributes for workers (ibid., 2021). Neoliberal precarity often encourages individuals to act as entrepreneurs of the self (Carr & Kelan, 2023), and failure to thrive in this system is blamed on the individual rather than the structures.

Feminist scholars have identified the ways neoliberalism has latched on to postfeminism as it often values the same things: independence, choice and freedom (Wilkes, 2021). This emphasis on individual success and economic independence reinforces neoliberal ideologies, which prioritise market-driven values and entrepreneurial selfhood (Gill, 2007).

Since women in the past were often not given the same status and opportunities as men to make important decisions for themselves, this inequality was considered the main reason for the unfair treatment of women based on their gender (Budgeon, 2015). The political strategy that grew out of this idea therefore aimed to give women more independence and the right to make their own choices without being controlled by traditional male-dominated structures that used to dictate what they were allowed to do with their lives (ibid., 2015). Postfeminism argues that because feminism has achieved certain goals, such as women having successful careers, it is seen as no longer necessary in today’s society (Butler, 2013).

When representation is viewed as the ultimate goal, Sarah Banet-Weiser (2015) argues that ‘economies of visibility’ become obstacles for feminist progress. Women are included in companies to check a diversity box, and her visibility in the company, no matter her policies or practices, is therefore a win for feminism. This however often downplays structural and systemic barriers that contribute to gender inequalities, thereby shifting responsibility onto individual women to overcome these obstacles. (Gill, 2007).

Postfeminism is a reaction to feminism, but discussions within postfeminism often avoid direct mention of feminism itself (Butler, 2013). Instead, they refer to a range of ideas, histories, and terms that collectively establish a distinct framework of discourse. Rosalind Gill (2007) argues that postfeminism should be perceived as a ‘sensibility’ that highlights the contradictions present in its discourses and the mingling of both feminist and anti-feminist elements within them. Particularly it’s often reflected in media, advertising, and popular culture, where the portrayal of empowered women simultaneously perpetuates stereotypical images or reinforces gender norms. Postfeminist media culture is
characterised by certain themes, including femininity as a bodily property, prevalence of self-surveillance and self-disciplining, a shift from objectification to subjectification, and a neoliberal focus on individualism, choice, and empowerment (ibid, 2007).

These discourses have also given rise to 'choice feminism,' a term coined by Linda Hirshman (2006, cited in Ferguson, 2010) to describe “the widely held belief in the USA that second wave feminism succeeded in liberating women from inequalities associated with gender.” (Budgeon, 2015, 307). It refers to feminist politics driven by the notion of freedom as the ability to make individual choices.

Budgeon (2015, 307) describes four principles that are featured in choice feminism. Firstly, women are best equipped to make choices for themselves based on personal history, ambitions and desires, which makes individual choice the primary criterion for evaluating women's actions. Secondly, it attributes the wide range of choices available to women today to the success of second wave feminism. And so third, women now have the autonomy to choose traditional roles, transcending constraints associated with societal expectations (ibid., 2015). Therefore, feminism should equally recognize and respect the diverse paths women take without subjecting their decisions to critical scrutiny meaning all choices can be considered feminist (ibid., 2015). Decisions like wearing makeup, engaging in activities traditionally associated with a specific gender, opting to be a stay-at-home mother, or consuming pornography are all seen as part of this feminist approach (Ferguson, 2010). The idea of personal choice and self-improvement as the primary means of empowerment for women. Budgeon (2015) further argues that choice feminism consistently aligns with neoliberal feminism and a particular way of governing based on gender, which is in line with how neoliberalism has co-opted feminist ideas, something she calls “freedom without critique” (Budgeon, 2015, 314).

4.1.1 Postfeminist bodies

One of the key features of Gill’s (2007) postfeminist sensibilities is the emphasis on womanhood stemming from the body, a core source of a woman’s value. In postfeminism this body generally centres a white, heterosexual and middle-class one (Butler, 2013). Despite the increasing visibility of women of colour in contemporary popular culture, their incorporation into media representations often perpetuates hierarchies of difference and dominance (ibid., 2013). Women of colour depicted in postfeminist representations are portrayed as assimilated beneficiaries of feminism’s supposed gains, while their specific experiences of gender and race oppression are often ignored (ibid., 2013).

The neoliberal focus on self-improvement through consumption aligns with postfeminist messages that urge women to see their appearance and bodies as ongoing
projects that require investment (Butler., 2013). Particularly for white women, conforming to notions of being “beautiful, gentle, and ultimately preforming” (Wilkes, 2015, 25) are particularly alluring since, due to their ethnicity, white women are invited by patriarchy to share power (Wilkes, 2015).

This dynamic raises the argument that certain white women might contribute to the reproduction of white power and privilege within society (Wilkes, 2015). This collusion could be driven by the perception that they have the most to gain under the guise of sharing power. In this context, upper- and middle-class white women assume the role of guardians of beauty, supported by their consumption of luxury goods (ibid. 2015). Wilkes (2021) observes how diets from the fringes of Western healthy eating have moved to the mainstream through social media, with buzzwords like "clean eating" or "raw food" (ibid., 2021, 6). These practices are heavily promoted with images that align with established norms of white femininity - slim, flawless skin and glossy hair. Shaped by cultural representations, there is a close connection between being a woman and one's racial identity (Wilkes, 2015).

4.1.2. Postfeminist consumption

As women are, at least on the surface, the ones to make the decisions to conform to beauty ideals, they appear empowered and become the perfect audience for selling products that promise the ideal feminine image. This simultaneously upholds the capitalist patriarchal consumption that relies on ideas of femininity and wellness discontent (Agenjo-Calderon, 2021).

Gill (2007) further examines the prevalent emphasis on consumerism and the commodification of femininity in postfeminist media culture. She argues that media representations often present femininity as a product to be consumed, perpetuating a cycle of materialistic self-improvement and the continuous pursuit of an idealised feminine image. This commodification of femininity can result in feelings of inadequacy and anxiety among women who strive to meet the unattainable beauty standards propagated by the media. Women’s lack of confidence is then named as the main obstacle to their success and happiness (ibid, year), leading to many experts, programs and other business to encourage women to work on building self-confidence as the ultimate solution, referenced by Sarah Banet-Weiser (2015, 182) as “girls empowerment organisations”. It’s a market that commodifies girl power and neoliberal entrepreneurialism, and turns empowerment into a marketable concept (Gill & Ogard, 2015). This “culture of confidence” (ibid., 2015, 10) appears not only in written and spoken forms but also in various other practices and products, such as quizzes and psychological tests to gauge confidence, mind-training exercises, self-care apps and daily uplifting messages on phones. In addition, there are
events, conferences and educational programs focusing on areas like body confidence or financial confidence (ibid, 2016). Landing therefore fits into girl empowerment organisations, as a tool for seeking self-improvement and the cultivation of confidence. It can be used to encourage women to work on themselves — both individually and collaboratively — aiming to transform their bodies, thoughts, behaviour, and way of being (Gill & Orgad, 2016). Similarly, McGee (2005) discussed the “belaboured self”, which is a self that constantly strives to improve and transform their personality. Product purchasing is no longer enough; individuals are encouraged to adopt comprehensive lifestyles that include organisation, mindfulness, diet, and more (ibid., 2005). The commodification of affections and experiences, where production and products are immaterial, has become central to the global commodification process. This shift is exemplified by the rise of makeover television programs that sell experiences and transformations rather than tangible objects (Agenjo-Calderon, 2021).

4.1.3. Digital labour in online Girlboss Culture

The emergence of participatory media on the web in combination with the amount and spread of commercialised content has led to the heavy utilisation of user-generated content (Jarrett, 2015), encapsulated in the concept of ‘Web 2.0’.

Shifting from static web pages to dynamic and interactive spaces, Web 2.0 disrupted the traditional information flow controlled by media corporations. The concept of participatory culture, popularised by Henry Jenkins (2006), shows how users actively contribute to shaping media content and generate meanings. This participatory nature is now a fundamental aspect of contemporary digital media consumption. Similar to how domestic work creatively transforms goods, digital media users engage in daily acts of creative labour within the context of participatory culture and "Web 2.0." (Jarrett, 2015).

The Girlboss praises loose concepts of women’s empowerment in conjunction with establishing careers and corporate empires (Pierce, 2022), putting the self as responsible to contribute to and benefit from financial success. On social media this notion has created a breeding ground for “aspirational labour” (Duffy, 2016, 446), which utilises the word ‘passion’ to highlight that those creating content are getting paid for ‘doing what they love’ (Duffy, 2016). As an example, Roivanen (2023) studies how Youtube creators showcase how leisure time and work seamlessly blend together through brand trips to exotic destinations, the ability to work from aesthetic cafes or networking at influencer parties.

Aspirational labour, then, is a form of cultural production that relies on the vague promise of future success – the potential of a career where “labour and leisure harmoniously coexist.” (Duffy, 2016, 453). This notion has become heavily romanticised in contemporary
media culture, and redirects employment concerns and the responsibility of institutions to individual passion and entrepreneurship (Mastrandelo, 2021).

In this context, Jarrett (2015) theories the “digital housewife” to characterise individuals who engage in voluntary consumer activities on commercial digital platforms, contributing economic value while expressing opinions and forming social connections. The term deliberately draws attention to the historical and complex role of "the housewife" and her unpaid domestic labour, linking it to immaterial labour in digital media (ibid., 2015).

Duffy (2016) notes that another facet of unpaid digital labour is the way content creators publicly align themselves with certain brands, in the hopes of being noticed and thus capitalise on their success. This “labour of devotion” is discussed by Campbell (2011, cited in Duffy, 2016, 451) as marketers' assumptions that women will enthusiastically promote their favourite brands to other women. This is a labour often overlooked in economic calculations despite its significance (ibid., 2016).

“Girlboss influencer culture” (Mastrandelo, 2021, 89) has emerged on social media platforms as a significant mediated cultural space that amplified neoliberal feminist ideologies (ibid., 2021), mobilising content to produce a secondary stream of income or seeking to convert the efforts into future employment (Jones, 2016). At its core, girlboss influencer culture promotes a distinctive brand of feminism that revolves around individual achievements, financial gains, and self-realization, mirroring the ideas of Sandberg's “Lean In” (Mastrandelo, 2021). By resonating with millennials and gen Z, it fosters a belief that attaining feminist progress hinges on managing one's thoughts, actions, and work output, often adhering to notions like Byrne’s (2006) Law of Attraction and manifestation through positive or ‘magical’ thinking. These notions serve to educate followers on how to “find change from within” (Mastrandelo, 2021, 89) and through it achieve feminist progress. This content signifies an evolution not just in engaging with neoliberal feminist ideas, but also in the way self-help coaching manifests in contemporary culture (ibid., 2021).

The Girlboss on social media thus “equate feminist empowerment with financial success, (...), individualized work-life balance, and curated digital and physical presences driven by self-monetization.” (Mastrandelo, 2021, 21).

4.2. Women’s intimate publics
Exploring the intersections of emotion, intimacy and politics, Lauren Berlant (2008) introduces the concept of “women’s intimate publics”.

Since women have historically been excluded from traditional public spheres and political realms, they have as a result often formed alternative spaces for discussion. In
these cultural spaces, women circulate texts and objects that express their interests which creates a feeling of shared history and common ground among those involved in that particular space (Berlant, 2008).

Her concept can be applied to women’s usage of Landing by recognizing how the platform acts as a form of intimate public engagement, providing a space for women to express their hopes and dreams, share experiences and connect with others. Vision boards created to imagine an idealised future creates an intimate public, providing material that encourages “enduring, resisting, overcoming, and enjoying being an x” (Berlant 2008, viii), in this case, being a postfeminist subject striving for success and happiness in all areas of life.

4.3. Technologies of the self

As neoliberal post-feminist ideology requires subjects to self-surveil and govern, it’s useful to understand these practices through Foucault’s concept of "technologies of the self" (Foucault, 1988). These technologies are mechanisms through which individuals strive to attain socially constructed moral and aesthetic ideals, and operate at both the individual and societal levels and are deeply ingrained in cultural practices, institutions, and power structures.

This theory suggests that individuals are not merely passive recipients of power but actively engage in processes of self-formation and self-discipline within societal norms and expectations. Foucault argues that these technologies of the self are embedded in various practices, discourses, and techniques that individuals employ to shape and govern themselves. They encompass a wide range of practices, including self-examination, self-surveillance, confession, meditation, and self-care rituals, among others. Dietary movements, exercise routines and productivity methods, as well as mindfulness and meditation, all fit within Foucault’s original concept (Hernandez-Ramirez, 2017). In the context of self-care culture, healing oneself becomes a project of self-policing – for example curating self-care routines by consuming products like skincare. These mechanisms then aid in strengthening the forces that exploit and dominate the person (Mastrangelo, 2021).

McRobbie (2015) recognises the "dispositif" that hides male dominance behind female self-regulation and surveillance. Through their choices and self-monitoring women decide on how to acquire the perfect life, which include working on their appearance and sex appeal, their diet, their relationship, their motherhood and more (McRobbie, 2015).

Gill & Ogaard (2016) sees confidence as a technology of the self, as subjects engage in self-improvement achieved through different methods to boost their self-confidence. In the
context of social curation, Jones (2016) notes that work that was previously done privately, such as creating an idyllic home, has moved into the public through social curation platforms adding an audience, and thus amplified technologies of the self. As users create an idealised version of themselves, their lives and their future, they are governing and monitoring their lives in the pursuit of happiness and satisfaction (Jones, 2016). In addition, it helps bridge the gap between where they are and where they wish to be (Zhong, 2014). By engaging in technologies of the self, individuals participate in a continuous process of self-formation, self-improvement, and self-regulation. These practices involve the internalisation of societal norms and values, as well as the adoption of techniques and strategies to align oneself with those norms.

4.3. Research questions

The aim of this study is to examine in what ways postfeminist and neoliberal ideas can be placed in vision boarding practices on the platform Landing. By placing vision boarding and Landing in larger conversations about postfeminist self-improvement, digital labour, New Age spiritual beliefs and women’s intimate publics, the study strives to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do vision boards created with the purpose of manifesting an ideal future adhere to the characteristics of a postfeminist media culture?

RQ2: How does Landing serve as a new digital mode of creative production that reinforces postfeminist neoliberal ideals, while simultaneously empowering the women that partake?

The first research question is asking how vision boards created on Landing, with the intention of visualising an ideal future, align with or differ from the features commonly associated with postfeminist media culture. The question seeks to understand whether the content and themes of these vision boards reflect or challenge the characteristics of this broader cultural context.

The second research question focuses on the role of Landing as a platform for creative expression and production. The question also addresses the potential dual nature of Landing, examining how users might reinforce neoliberal ideals while simultaneously providing a space for women to engage in creative expression and empowerment.
5 METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

The study analysed “manifesting” vision boards to determine what values promoted and behaviours are encouraged to users partaking in this type of content, and to what end the concept of “an ideal life” is to be modelled. In doing so, it assesses how Landing board search results implement a postfeminist media culture online (Gill, 2007).

The study also utilises a qualitative, semi-structured interview study with two Landing users, as a tool to understand in what ways the women felt empowered by creating and sharing vision boards. By combining a visual thematic analysis with qualitative interviews, the study aims to get a fuller look into how vision boards in the context of a postfeminist media culture function, both from the perspective of consuming content as well as creating content.

5.1. Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured, qualitative interviews were made with two active users of Landing during the month of July 2023. Although a set of prompts and questions were planned beforehand (see Appendix 3), the participants’ responses were allowed to guide the interview. Thus, the interviews were on the more loose and flexible side of semi-structured. I allowed spontaneous follow-up questions to arise during the interview, allowing for more in-depth insights into participants’ perspectives, experiences, and attitudes (Denscombe, 2010). Furthermore it gave the participants the chance to reflect on their own statements, as well as explore related and additional topics. The intention was not to steer the conversation in any specific direction, but focused on capturing not only what the participants had to say, but also on the subjects they themselves wanted to discuss.

5.1.1. Data collection

The participants were found and chosen through random sampling, where the selection of the individuals for a sample happens purely by chance, which can also eliminate bias (Denscombe, 2010). The informants were found through the official Discord channel of Landing, where I wrote a message describing the study and my interest in interviewing someone from the platform. Four people reached out to me, however one was under 18 and was therefore declined from participating. Three interviews were planned, but one participant decided to cancel.

Before the interview the participants were sent a Letter of Information as well as a Form of Consent to read and sign (see Appendix 1 and 2). The interviews were recorded and lasted somewhere around 30 minutes each, and were conducted digitally, one on Zoom and
one on Discord. While online interviews lack visual cues that aid in communication (Denscombe, 2010), Landing has a global user base and I could not anticipate where my informants were going to be located. Online interviews offer a cost-effective way to interview people globally without the travel expenses (ibid., 2010). The interviews were then transcribed (see Appendix 4 and 5).

5.2. Discourse Analysis

The interview study is combined with a discourse analysis of five vision boards created by users in the pursuit of manifesting their ideal future and ideal self.

Discourse analysis analyses data with a focus on understanding the implied meanings, underlying assumptions, and hidden messages present in these forms of communication, rather than merely examining their explicit content (Denscombe, 2010). The core idea of discourse analysis is that language and images are not neutral conveyors of information; they actively shape and construct social reality (ibid., 2010). Discourse analysis is suitable for understanding how users on Landing choose to frame what a happy and successful life entails, and how those framings shape our worldview. Here it’s important to remember “intertextuality”, which suggests that texts are not isolated entities but are woven together through a network of references and influences, shaped by the context of other texts that have come before them (Rose, 2016).

5.2.1. Data collection

The visual material was collected using purposive sampling. As a non-random sampling technique, involves deliberately selecting specific items or individuals who are likely to possess the relevant attributes needed to offer valuable and insightful information about the research subject, and is especially effective for creating an “exploratory sample” (Denscombe, 2010, 35), offers the advantage of in-depth exploration of specific characteristics, contexts, or phenomena of interest (ibid., 2010).

Using the keywords “manifest” and “manifesting”, the boards were collected between 16th of April 2023 and 23rd of June 2023. The boards selected were in the top 9 search results, as those are the only ones available to someone that is not logged in on the platform but using it as a visitor.

What type of search engine the Landing platform uses is not disclosed. According to my own observation, the results tend to be sorted according to what the algorithm defines as most relevant to the keyword (the boards always contained the searched word), as well as the most recently uploaded boards.
5.4. Research approach and paradigm

This study utilises an interpretivist research approach, as it emphasises the importance of subjective experiences and social constructions of reality. The interpretive research paradigm is rooted in the idea that human experiences are complex and multifaceted. Participants play a crucial role in the construction of social reality through their everyday interactions, continuously producing and reproducing meanings. Consequently, the world we inhabit is a direct outcome of the collective meanings that we create and assign to it, significantly shaping our shared experiences (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

Rose (2016) argues that discourse analysis is criticised for potentially influencing the conclusions to align with a certain perspective rather than objectively explaining an ultimate truth. This is due to the unavoidable impact of a researcher’s personal background, opinions, cultural insights, and experiences on the analysis process.

When it comes to marginalised groups, such as women, it’s believed that marginalised groups possess a deeper understanding of the issues to be studied and can contribute more relevant experiences to knowledge-building compared to dominant groups (ibid, 2019). Therefore, according to “standpoint feminism”, it’s important to acknowledge the influence of a researcher’s background on research outcomes (Blaikie & Priest, 2019, p. 130). More significantly, experiences within a marginalised group can vary substantially based on factors such as race, class, and geographical location resulting in multiple distinct standpoints (ibid, 2019). Therefore, women should not be viewed or studied as a single, undifferentiated category (Hodkinson, 2017). This highlights the need to recognize and appreciate the diversity of experiences of women, ensuring a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of their perspectives.

5.5. Ethics

One of the most prevalent aspects to consider is that of confidentiality. As a researcher, there are two actions to take regarding this: first, to store the material securely, and secondly to safeguard the source of the data to ensure anonymity (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014). The interviews have been recorded and stored in private, password protected files. These files will be kept until the completion of the study and will then be permanently deleted. Any personal information (name, age, geographic location, current workplace, ect.) that came forward has been redacted from the transcripts.

Another important aspect to consider is that participation in the study should always be entirely voluntary and based on informed consent (Bank & Scheyvens, 2014). As Denscombe (2010) explains, participation should occur without any pressure from others,
and researchers should always provide potential respondents with sufficient information about what is required to take part in the study. Therefore the participants received a form of consent, as well as a project description (see Appendix 1 and 2), that also stated their rights to withdraw their consent and participation in the study at any point, no questions asked. Furthermore, all individuals involved were informed of and consented to the interview being recorded, and the information shared were to be used solely for addressing the research questions of the study.

As the names of the two listener participants in the interviews are not relevant to the purpose of the study and out of respect for their privacy, their identities have been concealed through the use of pseudonyms (Banks & Schyvens, 2014). An online random name generator was used to pick out the two names Katherine and Deanna.

Regarding the analysis of the boards found on Landing, certain social media scholars point out that images might be uploaded on online platforms with the intent of only being shared with a limited audience of friends and followers, but then end up being disseminated on other platforms without the uploader’s explicit consent. In the case of Landing, as the images to a large extent are not the creators own, determining the original source is very challenging. But since the accounts are linked to public personas and their boards are public, even to people who are not members of the platform, they are already accessible to anyone. Consequently, it could be argued that explicit consent may not be necessary (Rose, 2016). Furthermore, the images do not portray the actual users who pinned them, and no personal information about these individuals or their Landing profiles has been analysed.

Due to the qualitative nature of this research, it relies on the researcher’s interpretations. The primary aim of this study is to maintain objectivity in the analysis. However, it is essential to acknowledge that my own background, experiences, and perception of reality unavoidably influence the interpretations made (Rose, 2016). As discussed in 5.4. Research Approach and Paradigm, being a woman with personal experiences related to the framing of women in media I may have a different understanding of the material than another researcher. In addition, I am a white person from a country in the global North, which further limits my experiences and understanding of the issues that more marginalised women face.
6 RESULTS

The interviewees were both women in their 20s from Europe. Both of them had started their account on Landing about a year prior, and both discovered the app through the video sharing platform TikTok. This showcases Landing’s targeted demographic, as TikTok primarily appeals to a younger audience, with a substantial user base consisting of teenagers and young adults.

Both respondents had previous experience of vision boarding on other platforms prior to Landing, naming websites like Pinterest and Polyvore, and found this interest in their teens. Katherine previously used Instagram as a platform to post collages she made on her phone, but abandoned the account due to feelings of competitiveness from the vision boarding community on Instagram.

Both had only practised the hobby digitally, and preferred it that way, as it is a more accessible and flexible medium than traditional scrapbooking. Katherine is an avid user of Landing and estimated that she makes about 3 boards a week. For Deanna she usually used the platform less frequently but in intense bursts of creativity, describing:

“When I don’t use Landing like it can go like really long times when I don’t like go there at all or, like do mood boards in general. (...) I mean it’s it’s weird because it kind of comes in waves. And when there’s like a small wave it usually turns into a bigger, and then it’s completely stale.”

One reason Deanna now uses Landing more than Pinterest was the fact that the boards offered a way to blend images together to create a more condensed picture of whatever she was trying to visualise, whereas on Pinterest each image is separated into individual rectangles.

“I have these things in my brain that I want to like get out physically and then combining text with image works the best because then I can sort of explain things as well as put like a visual context to it.”

When exploring what inspired their boards, both respondents shared that they usually went into the board making session with a concept or idea already in mind – it could range from being inspired by a song, a quote, a colour and more. Other inspirations for making boards included utilising Landing as an aid in creative concept developments. Deanna described using Landing as a tool in her pursuit of writing a book, where she used vision boards to explore and visualise the characters in her book.

The images they used in the creation of these boards were typically taken from Pinterest, or from the community library on the platform. Katherine said she has a Pinterest
board responding to the board she wants to make on Landing, meaning she sometimes collects the images on Pinterest first before importing them to Landing. Only in the case of documenting her travels did Katherine upload private pictures to her Landing boards, while Deanna never utilised any private pictures.

Katherine used her vision boards to showcase her niche interests like Harry Potter or Taylor Swift, as well as customising covers for her Spotify playlists and participating in events and competitions organised by Landing. In fact, she had three separate accounts to differentiate between these three types of boards, as she didn’t want to mix up the formats.

6.1.1. Visualising possible futures and identities on Landing

Similar to the way designers use mood boards as something symbolic of the final design’s style and concept (Edwards et al., 2009), Deanna uses vision boards as a tool to visualise the concept of herself as a writer:

“I want to write more, OK, and so I would make a board where I imagine a person who (...) writes all the time and reads a lot of books, (...) and what their life could look like (...). Not because I think my life will be exactly like that, but it’s it motivates me (...) to have that visual representation of what it could be like.”

When Deanna imagines herself in the place of a specific character – what would they wear, where would they live, what would their home look like – she is collecting visual reminders of her ideal self, motivating a change and “make unfamiliar activities seem achievable” (Haimson et al., 2015, 3814). It demonstrates how curated boards can act as an identity collection tool – a way to create your own online avatar (Almjeld, 2015). By creating a board for “The Writer”, Deanna tries on a specific lifestyle and identity. However, Deanna stated that she is aware that she will not achieve the full scope of what she has included on her inspiration board, meaning curating items online can also allow the user to just play with styles that may not be feasible offline (Haimson et al., 2015).

Another identity Deanna explores is the identity of the ‘bad bitch’, a woman that is unapologetically herself and unbothered by others’ opinion of her. This could be contextualised in how feminism under neoliberalism is no longer rejected but a “depoliticised and stylish identity for young women” (Pierce, 2022, 207).
Deanna acknowledges the rise of different visual subcultures, internet aesthetics, going hand-in-hand with social curation.

“(…) Aesthetics are a little bit on the rise, like with Gen Z and everything, like there’s more different sorts of aesthetics, and so there needs to be like, somehow to access those aesthetics and Landing or any mood board platform is a good platform for doing that”

The vision boards analysed are definitely presenting a coherent ’aesthetic’ where all aspects, from clothing to hobbies to interior design all match each other visually. More specifically, the ultimate aesthetic according to the analysed vision boards is one that is luxurious, organised, feminine, white and thin.

Beauty, in these vision boards, has a strong relationship with health and wellness. The women pictured in the vision boards are often bare faced or wear minimal makeup, showcasing their glowing skin as they look effortless and “clean”. Arranging these pictures together with images of fresh berries and lemon water, foods associated with low calorie eating then echoes the message of “clean eating” (Wilkes, 2021). Together with images of thin bodies working out, it creates a correlation between being beautiful and thin with being healthy.
Girlboss culture in the context of wellness becomes a discussion of self-optimisation and taking responsibility for your health journey without recognising how systemic powers shape our wellness outcomes (Mastrangelo, 2021). Healthy eating for example is consistently equated to foods like exotic fruits – foods that are primarily accessible to those with large disposable incomes. Furthermore, Wilkes (2021) notes that clean eating can be tied to consumption and accumulation of expensive kitchen gadgets, and similarly the message of exercising in these boards is not just a message about moving your body, it’s a message about the need to invest in matching workout sets, stylish water bottles, wireless headphones and smart watches.

Landing as a platform becomes strongly connected to products and consumption, and the products presented in the boards act as indicators for a specific lifestyle (Almjeld, 2015). The products consumed and gathered on the boards do not however fulfil their intended functions – such as moisturising the skin – instead, they end up being symbols made to represent specific lifestyles or identities (Almjeld, 2015). The key to investing in yourself, and more specifically femininity (Gill, 2007), therefore becomes consumerism – in this case through products like facial creams, fresh produce and technology gadgets.

![Vision board titled “Manifesting my dream life”](image)

Figure 2. Vision board titled “Manifesting my dream life”

Vision boards are created both in regards to immediate futures as well as potential, distant ones. Katherine for example described doing vision boards for specific lunar cycles or
upcoming trips. The boards analysed demonstrate how looking into the future not only means looking into more tangible goals like getting a well-paid job or having a curated skincare routine, but encompasses aspects like having a fulfilling free time through reading books, practising art or hanging out with friends. It therefore illustrates the concept of the “belaboured self” (McGee, 2005), where individuals are encouraged to work on and upgrade every aspect of one’s life – from diet, to what hobbies are practised, to being a good friend or a good student (Gill & Orgard, 2022).

In Western self-care culture the personal realm, traditionally associated with family, relationships, and personal growth, has become a hub of constant production (McGee, 2005). Looking at the vision boards however, they do not actually provide any concrete guidance on how to improve yourself nor your life. Still, they are treated as practical sources for enhancing your life. The access to a luxurious lifestyle involving expensive skincare, trips abroad, fashionable clothing and so on is posed in these vision boards as being dependent on the efforts to practise manifestation and affirmations like “Old energy is clearing. New energy is entering. Great things are coming.” (see Fig. 3).

![Vision board titled “Manifesting”](image)

**Manifesting**

Figure 3. Vision board titled “Manifesting”
5.1.2. Girlboss productivity and digital labour

Rhondas ‘Law of Attraction’ inspired philosophy takes shape in the vision boards through affirmations that read “GIRL, YOU PROMISED YOURSELF A CERTAIN LIFESTYLE. YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF TO MAKE IT HAPPEN.” (Fig. 3) and “I AM CREATING THE LIFE OF MY DREAMS” (See Fig. 2). These demonstrate how thinking positively enough and working hard enough will lead to personal and financial success. This success is represented in the vision board with pictures of perfect grades, stacks of cash, dream jobs and travel.

Consumerism is again present in productivity, exemplified by studying being symbolised with items like iPads, Bluetooth headphones and sleek stationary. This leads to the idea that one must be part of a specific socioeconomic status to be considered a productive person. Furthermore, it connects to the postfeminist idea that “equate feminist empowerment with financial success, (…), individualized work-life balance, and curated digital and physical presences driven by self-monetization.” (Mastrangelo, 2021, 21).

Figure 4. Vision board titled “Manifesting me”

Katherine made vision boards specifically as a tool for manifestations during lunar phases. That could include bucket list-like boards for her travels, or boards to “set the mood” for a specific moon phase or lunar cycle. She believes in the practice of manifesting, but also notes that some things you simply work towards and are not automatically given to you by the universe. She uses an example from her travels:
“The first month I was there I went to that castle, like the one that was on my vision board. I just didn’t know. And I was looking back at my pictures and I was like, hmm, this looks very familiar. And I went back to that picture and it was the one I put on my vision board, so I visited without knowing. (...) But then the cliffs of Moher, that was something I really wanted to see, I put it on my vision board, and while I was in Ireland, I made it happen. (...) I think some things just happen and you don’t even realise until after they happen, and some things you should just work towards to make them happen.”

It seems she attributes some part of some of her goals to her vision boards, believing it’s a powerful tool to give abstract concepts in the mind “a tangible, physical representation”, which echoes New Age spiritual beliefs of visualisation. Furthermore, she attributes part of her creativity to being “a typical pisces”.

Fig 5. Vision board titled “Manifesting that dream”

While the reason to make boards was for Katherine primarily for rewinding and being creative, she said the responses and interactions her boards contributed to as the most rewarding aspect of the whole platform. This was due to Landing being a place for her to explore her “nerdy” side, specifically her interests related to different fandoms. More significantly, the platform was for her a safe space where she didn’t feel judged for her interest and has helped her find peers from the fandom communities. She explains:
“You see a lot of people who have (...) fandom accounts, and they don’t show their faces. And what I like about Landing is that I show my face and I don’t feel judged for anything of it.”

Her time on Landing has led to several friendships and encounters with people from the platform in real life. Furthermore, her openness about her interests also inspired others on the platform to be open about their minority interests too:

“We were in a, in an event and someone else, they told me like you’re the person that made me like, feel comfortable about showing minority interest online and just showing my face on the account, and that made me very happy. That’s so fun being that person that I would have needed.”

Through a heavy emphasis on building community, Landing is able to foster brand devotion and capitalise off aspirational labour (Duffy, 2016). On Landing, Katherine takes part in a type of aspirational labour as a Limelight Ambassador. For example, she describes bringing in new users through word-of-mouth on Twitter:

“(…) on Twitter someone wrote a whole tweet about that they missed Polyvore (...) So I said hey, I’m using Landing because I miss Polyvore too, and this kind of fits the bill of what Polyvore used to be, only it’s more community centred. And she joined, and she also loves it, so.”

Landing suggests through their Ambassadors programme that users get access to special perks such as badges and invites to private channels, as well as an opportunity to present the experience as part of their resume (Landing Limelight Ambassador Program, n.d.). This is a key characteristic of aspirational labour, where the promise of the work being put in now will bear fruit later on. It utilises users’ personal passion for vision boarding to blur the lines between work and pleasure, romanticising the idea of a career where these aspects can coexist (Duffy, 2016).

Aspirational labourers see self-branding as an important part of their content creation – a tool for them to market their persona to current and potential audiences. In the case of Katherine, her boards earlier had a doodle element to them that she later had to abandon due to pain in her hands.

“I couldn’t even hold my pencil anymore, so I couldn’t properly doodle on the post, but I just kept pushing myself to doodle doodles, even though no one asked it of me, it was just myself that forced myself to do it, (...) I started this theme, I have to continue with it.”

Katherine’s big following on the platform manifests in the way she is aware of her personal brand on Landing, and reluctant to change it as it becomes a part of who she is on the platform, as well as sets her apart from other users.
5.2.2. Landing as a women’s intimate public

There is a significant difference in how Deanna and Katherine use Landing. Where Katherine sees it as a very social act, it’s a more private and introspective process for Deanna. She described not really discussing the platform with people on Landing or other people in her real life, the way you might discuss something you’ve seen on Instagram. She describes the platform as her “own little thing”.

As Landing becomes a platform for consuming ideas and specifically for girls, consuming feminine identities (ibid, 2015), it can be seen as a “women’s intimate public” (Berlant, 2008). Similarly to the previously studied parallel between women and vision boarding (Zhong, 2014; Almjeld, 2015), both respondents agree that vision boarding is a predominantly female activity. Deanna notes:

“Like maybe the sort of, sitting inside and daydreaming and you know, maybe that thing just doesn’t really fit into the societal standards for boys and men”

Creating boards demands an awareness of the ways the user's curated display of selfhood will be perceived by those who visit their profile (Almjeld, 2015). It’s clear that Deanna is aware of others’ perception of her through her boards, as she wants to keep some of her boards private, describing:

“I feel like the platform is more about like, I don’t want to say secretive, but more a thing that you keep to yourself because maybe you don’t want everybody to like, know your inner dreams.”.

The way someone represents themselves online is greatly influenced by who they think is watching (Haimson et al., 2015). The makeup of one’s online community (be it friends, acquaintances, strangers or just for oneself) impacts how much a person reveals about themselves, and the risks they are comfortable taking while delving into different aspects of their identities or ideal selves (ibid., 2015).

Although she was aware of her desires potentially being perceived by others on the platform, she stated that she was not prone to compare herself to others on social media. She described feeling like social media was something separate from the real world and from herself that there was therefore no point in comparing oneself.
6 DISCUSSION

The images within the vision boards encompass numerous references to individual agency, entrepreneurial endeavours, and other thematic elements that correspond to the discourse of neoliberal post-feminism. The vision boards present an ideal postfeminist subject (Gill, 2007) that is heavily invested in self-monitoring and improving herself. This is in line with Gill & Ogards (2016) idea that self-surveillance now increasingly has a psychological, self-care component where the inner life is also perceived as needing monitoring, disciplining and reinvention.

Although the images in the boards very clearly amplifies the white, thin, cis gendered, able-bodied body as the ultimate success, it does so in a more concealed way. This was exemplified in the way Deanna makes the distinction between Pinterest and Landing:

“I feel like it (Landing) is more um, artistic rather than just collecting, um, images about workout sets”

What becomes interesting is that even though in the cases where boards were made as visualisations to manifest ideal futures, motivation or self-transformation, respondents still saw it as a primarily artistic expression, not a tool for working on themselves.

Although the interview participants didn’t discuss their vision boards in direct reference to things like goal-setting or self-improvement, the boards still played some part in their personal and professional aspirations. Deanna uses her boards both as a creative aid in her pursuit of writing a book, as well as motivating herself to write said book through imagining herself as a writer, showing how vision boards on Landing becomes a tool for holding individuals accountable for their own success.

They are situated within Foucault’s concept of “technologies of the self”, as the boards become tools for individuals to actively engage in processes of forming themselves within societal norms and expectations. Increasingly, these self-improvements are to be done by practising self-care, symbolised by skin care regimen, lighting candles and relaxing with a book. However, the vision boards do not actually offer any concrete steps to take towards transforming oneself, instead they incorporate vague affirmations like “Be the energy you want to attract”. This often ignores the fact that the activities promoted in the vision board requires a person to already be well-off financially.

The surge of media content around spiritualism, positive psychology or “trusting the universe” through astrology is evident in the material analysed, and aid in propelling neoliberal notions that a successful life is attainable through sheer willpower, regardless of systemic inequalities. The fact that both women interviewed were white europeans makes it
worth asking if their successes manifested through vision boards are actually blessings granted by the universe, or instances aided by privilege.

While the vision boards seems empower the women who participate, as they claim to “do it for themselves”, it also perpetuates neoliberal ideas of beauty, productivity and self-help compatible with the emergence of online girlboss culture, which ultimately becomes and obstacle for women (Mastrangelo, 2021).

Through this lens, vision boards as a phenomenon can be understood with Lauren Berlant’s (2011) concept of ‘Cruel Optimism’, in which a desired object or concept, such as food, love, a fantasy of a better life, or a personal habit, becomes an obstacle to one’s well-being and progress. This phenomenon occurs when the very thing that initially attracts a person ultimately hinders the fulfilment of their original goals or aspirations. (ibid., 2011).

Although Landing asks its users to both consume and collect images that could further amplify problematic narratives of feminist progress, it can simultaneously be a tool for exploring and experimenting with one’s identity in a ‘safe space’. This can be done both in an introspective manner, or aid in connecting individuals with others with shared interests that might not always be present in real life (Haimson et al., 2015). In this light, we can understand Landing as a women’s intimate public, where women share their inner dreams through vision boards.

Overall, when personal growth is attributed to manifestation techniques and an emphasis of positive thinking, it reinforces the idea that systemic issues can be reduced to a person's own willpower (Mastrangelo, 2021). Consequently, individuals may struggle to articulate and address issues related to gender, class, and race (Gill, 2014). The focus on personal transformation obscures the need for collective action and broader societal changes.

7 CONCLUSION

Through a discourse analysis of vision boards and vision board creators on the platform Landing, this study set out to explore how vision boards created with the purpose of imagining possible futures adhere to the characteristics of a postfeminist media culture, and how this digital medium simultaneously empowered the women partaking.

The vision boards shared characteristics of neoliberal postfeminism such as a focus on individualism, empowerment through consumption and improved confidence through monitoring and modifying the body, especially through consumerism (Gill, 2007). The platform functions as a women’s intimate public, a concept proposed by Berlant (2008), where intimate dreams are explored publicly. These intimate publics discuss “how to live as an x” (2008, viii) where in the case of the vision boards analysed is a neoliberal postfeminist
The users, both by creating and consuming these boards, contribute to a discourse of what it means to be successful and ‘well’. As users on Landing urge themselves, and others, to “focus on you” and “radiate positivity” (See Fig. 2) they amplify neoliberal messages of mental and physical wellbeing being the responsibility of the individual. Sitting in a context of “cruel optimism” (Berlant, 2011) vision boards on Landing are clinging to something that seems promising but is, in reality, unsustainable.

At the same time, the platform clearly serves as a platform to explore one’s identity, find peers and be creative. This can be empowering in the sense of not feeling alone in one’s interest, as a relaxing pastime activity, or having a tool for articulating creative concepts.

7.1. Further research

Given the limited scope of both vision boards and interviews, it’s important to note that the findings of my analysis do not fully represent the entirety of vision boards in a postfeminist media culture. Nor is it a fully comprehensive representation of all users on Landing. However, the netnographic exploration of a specific subset of Landing users and their practices offers insights into contemporary media dynamics and the landscape of postfeminism within participatory media culture.

To gain a better understanding of this topic, there is a need to delve deeper into, for example, how consuming these boards actually affect women’s perception of themselves. It would also be useful to study this from a perspective of women of colour.

Furthermore, this study focused only on boards on the topic of manifestation, but it’s important to note that the boards on Landing cover an ever growing number of topics. One aspect that arose from my interview study but that didn’t fit into the scope of this particular paper was the way boards are used in fandom cultures, which is something that could be further investigated in future studies.
References


40


What is a Vision Board or Mood Board? (n.d.). Merriam-Webster. Retrieved August 12, 2023, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/wordplay/words-were-watching-vision-board


Image sources

2023 Manifestations [Board]. Landing. https://app.landing.space/boards/BWJOBAL6mOCy
Manifesting that dream [Board]. Landing. https://app.landing.space/boards/0Je0ehtWoA8U
Manifesting [Board]. Landing. https://app.landing.space/boards/2HVJV1efOl1u
Appendix 1. Letter of Information

Letter of Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Project title:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Date:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploring the creation and utilization of vision boards in a postfeminist context.</td>
<td>30 June 2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Responsible student:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Student at Malmö universitet, Faculty of Art, Culture and Communications.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra Lindström</td>
<td>205 06 Malmö, Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E-post:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tel. 040 665 70 00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:alexandrali@live.com">alexandrali@live.com</a></td>
<td><strong>Programme:</strong> Media and Communications: Culture, Collaborative Media and Creative Industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Level:</strong> Master’s programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRESENTATION**

My name is Alexandra Lindström, and I am a student at the Master programme Media and Communications programme at Malmö University.

**AIM OF STUDY**

This study aims to explore vision boards and vision boarding, focusing on how users create and utilize them, and the broader meanings they generate within the context of postfeminist media culture. The interview study seeks to understand the creative processes behind vision board creation and their impact on things like individuals’ self-empowerment, mindfulness, motivation and inspirations. Overall, this research investigates the significance of vision boards in shaping individual aspirations, motivations, and identities within a digital and media-driven landscape.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

The study will be conducted through semi-structured interviews online with users of the vision board platform and social media landing. The selection has been made through reaching out through the platforms discord channel for volunteers, who then contacted the conductor if interested. The participation in this study will require about 30-40 minutes of your time.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time without further motivation.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

I ensure that no unauthorized person can access the material you provide. The material is stored so that it is only accessible to me who leads the study. In the reporting of the results in
the form of a thesis at Malmö University or in another form of publication, the informants will be de-identified so that it is not possible to link the results to the individual.

RIGHT OF USE
The material from the interview will be published in my Master thesis through the Malmö University DiVA portal. (https://mau.diva-portal.org/smash/search.jsf?dswid=5765)

You are hereby invited to participate in this survey.
Appendix 2. Form of Consent

Consent form

Processing of personal data
This processing of your personal data is based on your consent. You may withdraw the consent at any time, and the data may not be retained or processed without any other legal grounds.

By collecting data on peoples use of vision boards, the study will advance knowledge on vision boards in the context of identity formation, goal setting, and curating of images online.

The data will be processed during 1 July 2023 - 30 August 2023, after which the information will be deleted. You can find out what has been registered about you or have feedback on the processing or information collected by contacting the study conductor Alexandra Lindström at alexandrnl@live.com, or the university's Data Protection Officer at dataskyddsm bullpen@mau.se. Complaints that can not be resolved with Malmö University may be submitted to the responsible regulatory authority.

............................................................................................................................
Signature

.................................................................
Appendix 3. Questions and prompts for a semi-structured interview

BACKGROUND
- How and about when did you find out about Landing?
- Did you use vision boards before discovering Landing? In what ways?

COLLECTING & CREATING VISION BOARDS:
- How do you come up with themes or ideas for the vision boards?
- Is it artistic, like artworks, or more motivational like a visual manifestation of something you want/strive towards?
- What is your process when creating a board?
- How often do you make vision boards?
- Do you utilise the exiting library or other online sources/do you upload your own images?

SHARING BOARDS
- Are all your boards public or do you make private ones too?
- Are the boards more for your personal/creative fulfillment or do you strive to inspire others?
- What type of response do you usually get on your boards?
- Is it important for you that the boards get visibility?
- Is there some aspect you find more rewarding out of everything?
- Is there any draining aspects?
- Landing doesn’t show numbers of likes anymore on boards, does that impact you in any way?
- Do you think there is a reason for Landing being female dominated?
Appendix 4. Transcript - Interview with Deanna

3 July 2023

00:01:06 Interviewer
OK, thank you.

00:01:09 Interviewer
So like I said before.

00:01:13 Interviewer
This is like a study about, well you read the document I sent but yeah. About vision boarding, the vision boarding community, let's say and and. How they use vision boards and what it means to them and, if it's significant for peoples, uh, life ambitions and self... self-improvement. Yeah, just like general.

00:01:34 Interviewer
OK, so like. Well, I had some like background questions about Landing specifically. Like, when did you join and why?

00:01:42 Deanna
So Landing, I think I joined like a year ago. I, I saw it on TikTok and it seemed like something I'd like because... because I have had like Pinterest and... yes, I mean they are similar. It looked fun.

00:01:57 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly. And so you, mention Pinterest so, so I'm like wondering. When did you like start with it, vision boarding, and why? If there was, if you can remember specific, I mean, if you don't, it's fine, but. Like, has it always been like kind of a part of your life or was there a specific moment where you, like, discovered it and was like, OK, cool?

00:02:22 Deanna
Oh I think, I think it's always been like, I can't really remember when... I can't remember when I sort of discovered Pinterest? I remember that there was a thing called WeHeartIt. When we were teenagers, kids. And I feel like, I was never on there, but I feel like Pinterest may have come in that same sort of... of age. Um. So I feel like it was probably just like, one of the... like normal platforms to be on or to use as a young teenager or a young kid. A tween, yeah.
Interviewer
Yeah, exactly. And. So like, when do you when you do, if you do vision boards like, do you always have like a specific theme in mind or idea that you want to do or do you or does the idea come from when, while you're scrolling pictures and you see a picture and you think ohh this could be this kind of vision board and, or, or both, if both happens, but.

00:03:36 Deanna
I think, I think I mostly like the majority of the time I get, I have an idea before I go to Landing. So I had like an idea of of things that I want to like. Of of this sort of inspiration that I like want to get. Or just find visual material for like a specific idea. That's the majority of the time.

00:04:01 Deanna
And then I do think that like maybe like the more I use the platform... So if I'm like, scrolling a lot on Landing the more I, just randomly scroll without having a specific idea in mind, but it's it's maybe rare that I just from nowhere go, go into Landing and be like, oh, I'm going to see what, what's happening there today. So usually I have a specific idea that I want to get inspo or inspiration for or just like visual material for. And then the more I use the platform, the more spontaneously I use it.

00:04:26 Interviewer
Yeah, yeah, that makes sense.

00:04:27 Interviewer
And so like these ideas that you have going into it, like what, what usually sparks them?

00:04:46 Deanna
It’s... I don’t know, I don’t know. Do you mean like? What are the ideas about? Or do you mean like what, like where did the inspiration for the idea come from if not from Landing

00:05:00 Interviewer
Yeah, I would say like, well, well, maybe let’s do both like what kind of because my next question was going to be like, do you, are your like boards, are they usually more sort of like, let’s say, like artistic thing where it's just like kind of abstract and and doesn't like serve a purpose, but it’s more like a creative expression that’s like more artistic? Or is it more to like, be motivational to give you inspiration for something specific in real life that you want to achieve, or that you dream about?
Deanna
OK. Yeah, I think both because lately. Um. You know, I'm always trying to... write a book. And it's never succeeding, but lately I've been sort of like, for characters. By trying to like visualize the characters more. So lately I've been having like a very specific purpose, like going in and being like, OK, I have this. Character in mind and I want to like. I want to sort of put a visual image onto that character. It's just a better... make it more like clear in my mind who that character is.

Interviewer
Yeah, yeah.

Deanna
But I also make boards that are like characters but not always for like my book research or just for... I don't know, creative expression but, but character boards that are characters that I would like to be more like, and. So what I mean is like I will make like I want to write more, OK, and so I would make a board where I imagine a person who is like, writes all the time and reads a lot of books, and is like super intellectual and, and like what their life could look like and, and where do they live and and stuff like that. Not because I want my... not because I think my life will be exactly like that but it's it motivates me anyway to I don't know, yeah like to... to see it that way and to have that visual representation of what it could be like, if that makes sense.

Interviewer
Yeah, no, definitely.

Deanna
So, so lately I've been having very much like a purpose. Like I've been searching for very specific things that I feel like would fit, the, the character. And it's usually like images of people or animals or places or, um, it can also be I don't know, things that things that like fits a certain... I want to say something smarter, smarter than, a vibe.

Interviewer
No but that makes total sense, a vibe, yes.

Interviewer
But oh ok, that's super interesting um, do you have like, what, what other types of characters is it that you find motivating or that you inspire to be that you have made boards about, if any?
Deanna
I don’t know, I think and I’ve made one that was like, to sort of like embody like my bad bitch side, let’s say. That sounds kind of lame when I say it out loud, but you know. Yeah like, like what is a woman that doesn’t care about others people’s opinions and you know, like, that is like super cool, um, and feminist and I’ve definitely I have a board about that, and then I don’t know like but this was of course like when I was more like teenager on Pinterest, I for sure made boards that were like more related to like, I mean like fitness or you know, like yeah like healthy eating and working out and stuff. It was just the way that it was back then. I've like... diet, dieting and everything, everyone in high school did it and so I made I've made that kind of Pinterest board about that as a teenager, but on Landing since... I feel like it's more um, artistic rather than just collecting, um, images about workout sets, or, you know.

Interviewer
Yeah, but no, that's yeah, definitely.

Deanna
But then I do also have boards that are more like... that are more just, more just about the vibe. Can be like a, a color or, or a quote or, I mean, can also be a person. It can be a meme, it can be a plant like really just anything that sort of fits the, the general vibe that I like, yeah.

Interviewer
OK, cool.

Deanna
I don’t know if that answers your question.

Interviewer
Yeah, yeah, no, definitely.

Deanna
Yeah, I would say all of my boards actually, like summed up, I would say all of my my boards usually have to do, like have something to do with creative expression. With the yeah, at least with these like, character things specifically.

Interviewer
Yeah, exactly. No, that makes sense.

Deanna
Because they're also more, I would say like, condensed into one image instead of like when
on Pinterest you kind of... Like it's all scattered. And so it's, I guess it's nice to have them like in one single image that's more easy.

00:11:31 Interviewer
Yeah, yeah. To look at. Yeah, yeah.

00:11:32 Deanna
And then also I like the fact that you can on Landing you can combine it with text. Because the, I guess that's what makes it more of a like a, like a, I don't know what the word is but like, like I, I, I have these things in my brain that I want to like get out physically and then combining text with image works the best because then I can sort of explain things as well as put like a visual context to it.

00:11:48 Interviewer
And so it's when you make these boards, are they like public or private? Like, do you make them, I think from what you're saying, I feel like you make them mostly for yourself, maybe more than to get followers or like, inspire others.

00:12:03 Deanna
Yes, only for myself.

00:12:05 Interviewer
Yeah. OK.

00:12:07 Deanna
But although I never really thought about the public slash private function so most of them are public. It was only now like until recently that I was like, huh, maybe. Maybe I want to keep this private, yeah. So I never really cared about keeping anything private and like except a few ones lately. And but it's not because I want to gain followers or anything. It's just because I didn't, I was, I'm thinking like it's Landing, nobody knows who I am. Nobody cares.

00:12:36 Interviewer
Yeah it's like a very anonymous platform in general. And I don't know if there's, like, such a thing as, like, a Landing Influencer, in general?

00:12:49 Deanna
I mean you can have like followers and stuff there, but I think it's more about the content you make more than the person you are on there.
00:13:09 Interviewer
Yeah, probably.

00:13:10 Interviewer
So I had some questions like do you get like? Any response on your boards or like is it important to get, but if they're mostly for your private use then I...

00:13:19 Deanna
Yeah, sometimes I get, like, somebody glittered my board, but it's like, I don't, so I don't really see it as something important or... yeah.

00:13:33 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly.

00:13:33 Interviewer
Like, do you ever, reflect like on like, where the images are coming from or like, check where they're all from or do you just like...?

00:13:41 Deanna
No, not really. Sometimes I wonder, I just like, the thought crosses my mind. I'm like, Ohh wonder where this comes from. Or like wondering what context this picture has been made sort on, or if it's like from a, very clearly from like a movie or TV show. I can be like, oh, I wonder from from which movie or TV show it is, but other than that I spend very little time thinking about where the images come from.

00:15:34 Interviewer
And, and, um. Yeah, like, how does it leave you feeling like when you're doing your boards? Like, do you feel? That they help you in some ways that they give you like clarity or motivation and and. Stuff like that. After, after you've spent some time doing a board or something.

00:15:56 Deanna
Yeah, I think so. Maybe more specifically, the ones with like a, a specific purpose. I do feel like, I do feel like I often achieve my goal, which could be like OK, getting to know this character more or getting sort of a visual image of this character, or like whoever I'm trying to find inspiration for and...

00:16:12 Deanna
But, but now that I'm like thinking about it it may be like, the like, I, I, very rarely like go back and like check my boards and like look at them that much. Like it's almost more like it's...
the process of finding different things and putting things that are like, that gives more than having the board done itself and I don't know if that's maybe because Landing is like a, like, for that platform specifically, it's like. I feel like maybe Landing is more just about. I feel like it's. More about the process somehow like. I never really. Go back and like, look at the stuff. Unless it's like something very specific, like. Oh, I remember seeing this. This photo that I thought it was cool and now I want to use it for something else but. But yeah, I think I think that's. I'm guessing that's I think that's the case for. Probably a lot of...

00:17:18 Interviewer
Yeah, I would say. OK, that's great.

00:17:20 Interviewer
So just like going back a little bit to like how it feels like, do you ever like on like instead of like feeling like empowered or like inspired or motivated by doing these things, do you ever feel like exhausted or that you like yeah like? I don't know that the images like maybe make you like compare yourselves to you know like you compare yourself easily to people on social media. Do you ever get that feeling creating these boards specifically?

00:17:47 Deanna
I don't think so. I feel like it's fun until I'm like, OK, now I want to do something else.

00:18:05 Deanna
Yeah, like I I don't. I don't think I really ever get any like, negative feelings about it. But then I also I don't know, I feel like I like I don't really get that many negative feelings from social media either, so I don't know if it's just like me specifically that I, I am quite good at not like comparing myself, yeah.

00:18:31 Deanna
Because I feel like, it's so different somehow? Like I am much more prone to compare myself to like people in my like in my real life, in my close proximity, or not even close but like friends of friends, or like people in my real life, because I feel like anything that is on social media or like on mood boards, I feel like, that's like a separate world for me, so it's like there's no use even to compare because it's it's so separate from me somehow, yeah.

00:19:02 Interviewer
Yeah, yeah, yeah, that makes total sense.

00:19:03 Deanna
So only good vibes, yeah.
Interviewer
That's great and. OK. So like statistically, women use mood boards and vision boards way more than men like on Landing, something like 80% of the user base is female and, and. Yeah. Do you like... What do you think when you hear that, do you think, could you like imagine a reason for it or? And you know.

Deanna
I feel like it makes sense. But I don't know if I... can really explain why?

Deanna
I feel like somehow, in a way, it's weird because you always hear that men are like visual creatures. So wouldn't that like, mean that stuff like this would interest them a lot, but maybe it's about the sort of content that is on mood boards like... I don't know, I mean, I was going to say, because it's usually more like... but I'm like, I guess men want to be inspired too. I don't know. Yeah, I don't really know.

Deanna
Maybe it's just because like Landing, Pinterest, specifically in my mind, has always been quite, I don't know it's just like all the people that I know use Pinterest are I think women, and and I feel like it sort of started... I feel like it sort of started like when we were younger like it was like among us girls like, I don't know, it's just always sort of somehow been related to, like women and girls for me.

Deanna
Yeah, well, maybe I don't know. Maybe it's like, maybe it doesn't.... paint like a societal picture of that men should be... active and, and like you know, like being sort of a, a leader and doing... sports outside. Like maybe the sort of, sitting inside and daydreaming and you know, maybe that thing just doesn't really fit into the societal standards for boys and men, I don't know.

Deanna
Yeah, I yeah, I think I agree, definitely.

Interviewer
And and like, I feel like with, like, Pinterest has also kind of had, like, a surge now, I don't know if you've felt that too? That it's like... because you know, well, for me personally, like when I, I, the first time I heard about Pinterest was when I was an exchange student in Ireland and my host mother was using it, and it was kind of like this platform that was very much for moms like to pin DIY crafts and and and like recipes and and stuff like that. And,
and so it was kind of like a platform for middle-aged people, and women specifically. But now it's way more like young people is using it way more, and that's also what's kind of given birth to this Landing platform. Because that's kind of like a continuation of Pinterest. So it's definitely more like among Gen Z. But like, yeah. So, like, have you felt that or like, why do you think that is? Do you think there's like, a bigger need now to sort of create these mood boards and... and I don't know.

00:22:04 Deanna
Yeah, that's very interesting. I can definitely see it like before, like being more of a mom platform. But I don't know, I don't think that I've like felt this sort of like new wave of users just because I feel like... I feel like it's sort of, like if you compare with all the other like social media platforms I feel like it's sort of a platform that's like more in the background.

00:22:49 Deanna
Like I don't, like when I talk to my friends, it's more like “Oh, blah blah blah, Instagram”. Like, did you see what this thing on Instagram where like someone posted this on you to like whatever platform, but I we never like, I never really, talked about Landing with anyone. I never really... Yeah, I don't know. So it's, it's like hard for me to say what, like how other people are using it or like who is using it because it's, it's something that I don't really... It's more just like my own little thing, like I go off,

00:23:29 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly.

00:23:29 Deanna
And you know... I think that's kind of the thing about it. It's like a more, it's more a social media. That you use for yourself. And like I said before, it's like kind of also like a very anonymous social media and you don't see the person behind the picture, who's doing the board. Yeah, yeah. So there's nothing really to talk about with other people, yeah, on it.

00:23:53 Deanna
And then some. Sometimes I even feel like. The boards that you can have there like... if they are about, you know like, being inspirational and like, how can I express this?

00:24:17 Deanna
Like since I feel like the platform is more about like... I feel like it's almost a more like, I don't want to say secretive, but like more a thing that you like keep to yourself, because maybe you don't want everybody to like, know your inner dreams. So like the the things that you aspire to be, your do you like? Like it is more of a like. This is just. From the deepest corners in my
head and like. I just want to somehow. I just somehow want to like visualize it, but I don't necessarily want everybody to know what.

00:24:58 Interviewer
Yeah, for sure, yeah, I feel the same way. Like it's much more intimate somehow... Yeah, yeah, definitely, definitely.

00:25:09 Deanna
I think also that like it's kind of has a rise because, like, aesthetics are so big now. Through TikTok.

00:25:20 Interviewer
That's true. Yeah, that's true.

00:25:21 Deanna
That there's so many, so I think people also want to because of that, they want to go and do like a dark academia board or they want to go do a cottage core board and, and they want to collect all these things into this aesthetic. They like, whatever matches and, and so yeah.

00:25:42 Interviewer
Yeah, that’s very true actually.

00:25:44 Deanna
Because I feel maybe that's why, like aesthetics are a little bit on the rise, like with Gen Z and everything, like there’s more different sorts of aesthetics, and so there needs to be like somehow to access those aesthetics and Landing or any mood board platform is a good platform for doing that, yeah.

00:26:16 Interviewer
Yes totally. Thank you. Well, I think that was all my questions, but if you have any final thoughts? Feel free to... I don't know, save them otherwise.

00:26:38 Deanna
I'm thinking. I don't know if this is like interesting to you at all, but I, I feel like the way I use Landing can be very like... It's a little bit like what I said before, but it's like, the more I use Landing, the more I use Landing.

00:27:04 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly.
Deanna
It's kind of like you when you go on it, you go on it for a long time and you really like go down a rabbit hole. Yeah, and it's like, yeah.

Interviewer
Yeah, I'm the same.

Deanna
I mean it's it's weird because it kind of comes in waves. And when there's like a small wave it usually turns into a bigger, and then it's completely stale. Like it's, it's weird.

Interviewer
Yeah, yeah, no, but I totally, I, I relate to that a lot.

Interviewer
OK. Well, thank you so much.

Deanna
You are welcome.
Appendix 5. Transcript - Interview with Katherine

25 July 2021

00:02:38 Interviewer
So OK, let's move on to the more interesting part.

00:02:44 Interviewer
If you would like to tell me like a little bit like about when you joined landing, how did you find out about it?

00:02:58 Katherine
OK, so I think it's a pretty funny story. I found it on TikTok and it was New Years, so it was like, I think 2:00 or 3:00 AM at night. And I was just scrolling TikTok before I went to bed because I was. I was... my brain was still wired so I can’t sleep. And then Landing popped up and picked up and I was like, OK, I need this. I'm going to sign up.

00:03:29 Katherine
So I went to landing on my phone. I signed up and. With the thought OK, I really hope I remember in the morning, that I signed up for this and I did. And that's kind of it.

00:03:44 Interviewer
Ohh cool. Yeah, I think I also saw it on TikTok the first time, but so, so was it this New Year’s like you've been since the beginning of 2023 or?

00:03:57 Katherine
2022, because this year New Year's,

00:03:59 Interviewer
OK.

00:04:01 Katherine
Was my one year Landing anniversary.

00:04:04 Interviewer
Oh fun. Congrats.
Katherine
Thank you.

Interviewer
So did you, like, do any like vision boards or mood boards or colleges before joining Landing like would you do that on other platforms or, or physically?

Interviewer
Oh yeah.

Interviewer
OK, in what what ways?

Katherine
I think when I was like 15 or 16 I used Polyvore And I made a lot of collages and mood boards on there.

Interviewer
Oh yeah.

Katherine
Then in the beginning of the pandemic, I needed a creative outlet. So I started making colleges and posting them on Instagram. And the mood boarding community on Instagram, to my opinion, it was really competitive and it always had to be a contest and all those kind of stuff and I really didn’t like that. So I kind of stopped posting on Instagram, but I kept making collages just on my phone just for fun, and then I found Landing and I that was exactly what I needed.

Interviewer
I get that.

Interviewer
Oh, my God.

Interviewer
Wait, my alarm.
Interviewer
Um yeah, because I looked at your profile and like, first of all, there's all so nice. Like, really, really nice. So cool. So I can see that you know, you are a pro.

Interviewer
Like what? Like how do you come up with the ideas? Like, do you usually have an idea before you start, or do you kind of just start and then it comes? Or does it depend?

Katherine
It depends on what the what it's kind of about. So, so I'll just look at my account. For example, the last one I posted was based on a song. And usually when I listen to music, I kind of get an idea of what the song looks like in my head. And I kind of try to recreate that, and then the one before that was a character. Usually I also kind of envision a character, and then I try to put that out on the board.

Interviewer
OK.

Interviewer
Yeah, that's so cool. Do you would you describe them as more like artistic and, like, creative? Sort of more abstract or do you also do like more like actual vision boards that are like to motivate yourself to, like, achieve a goal or anything like this. Or are they purely artistic for the most part?

Katherine
Purely artistic for the most part, I think, but... then in the beginning of the, there are sometimes with like, sometimes you see the moon phases and then there's manifesting idea behind it. And I try to make a mood board about that, so that's a vision board that would be a vision board.

Interviewer
Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Do you want to share what you usually manifest, like what is it that you, what do you want to achieve?
I mean it’s different ... like if I’m travelling, I travel a lot um and I will make boards like, bucketlists but sometimes it’s more like, what do I want the, the vibe to be that cycle like cozy or, or, fun, activities I want to focus more on, yeah... I don't know they don't always have a specific... goal, it can also just be, a feeling, yeah.

00:07:50 Interviewer
Yeah, okay... uh, like how often would you say you do boards then? Because it looked like you had quite a lot, yeah.

00:07:58 Katherine
Ah yeah, I have 13 pages and that's my, that's my main account.

00:08:05 Interviewer
Yeah. Oh, wow.

00:08:05 Katherine
Yeah, I have three accounts. I think because it's also kind of, for me, relaxing to make them. Yeah, I do it quite a, I, I make them quite a lot. So I'd say at least three times a week.

00:08:24 Interviewer
Oh wow, yeah.

00:08:25 Katherine
If not more if not more, because it really depends, because sometimes I get days where I'm just not feeling creative at all and I won't create anything. And then it'll spike and I'll make like 5 boards in one day.

00:08:39 Interviewer
Yeah, no, I get that I'm the same.

00:08:39 Katherine
So it depends.

00:08:42 Interviewer
I will also like be super active like a short period. And then I kind of forget about it for it sometimes, you know, months and then I'm like, oh, wow, I should do one. And then when I do one, I want to do more instantly, like, you know.
Um, so like when you do boards, do you use mostly the, the library that exists on landing or do you like usually upload a lot of your own content? Or is it 50/50 or, yeah.

I think 50/50 because what I do is I make boards on Pinterest as well that correlate with the work I’m making on Landing. So if I have an idea. The Pandora Board, for example, I have a whole Pinterest board full of pictures I knew I wanted to use, and then I’ll upload those, put them on the board, and then if it's not full enough for for me personally, I'll use the community library to find pictures that kind of hit the vibe, I guess.

OK.

So they're usually from Pinterest, or do you ever, like, upload your own like pictures you've taken yourself, or drawings you've done or something?

I have a yeah, I have a few boards where I did that, and then it was kind of looking back on my month of travel. So I went from Norway and one from Ireland.

Oh yeah.

But no, mostly I think Pinterest because those fit like the artistic vibe more, I guess.

Yeah, exactly. I get that.

So yeah, like, so you mentioned you have several accounts and like, do you like, do you do also? Like boards, let that are private just for yourself. Or are they all always public?
00:10:57 Katherine
No, I post I think I post them all actually. There's some that are still private, but just, just because I started them and didn't finish.

00:11:06 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly.

00:11:07 Interviewer
But these other accounts you have, would you mind like, are they like because I assume you have like 1 main account and the other ones? Like what purpose do they serve like? Why do you want to have several?

00:11:23 Katherine
OK so I have my main account and that's just for creating all the time and then I have, I'll just then I have my like spam account kind of it's called prompts and that's for event posters if I join contests and,

00:11:47 Interviewer
All right.

00:11:51 Katherine
Let me just... what else do I post on that?

00:12:01 Katherine
Yeah, the song boards that for events and all my glitterbot posts are on there. Those kind of things and my third account is for Spotify specifically, so I do all my playlist covers on there because I get really antsy when the feed changes.

00:12:22 Interviewer
Oh, cool, yeah.

00:12:28 Katherine
Kind of, I can really handle that really well. So for example, for the Spotify covers, I want a square post, but because my main account is all the, what's it called in the horizontal mode?

00:12:38 Interviewer
Mm. Yeah. Like landscape, yeah.
00:12:49 Katherine
So I just mentally I can't do that if it stays on one account.

00:12:54 Interviewer
No, I totally feel that, yeah.

00:12:56 Katherine
So I created a separate account.

00:12:58 Interviewer
Yeah, that's fair. I would probably do the same. I also get like super annoyed if it's if it doesn't match so.

00:13:04 Katherine
Right. That's, no.

00:13:05 Interviewer
I get that.

00:13:13 Interviewer
Yeah, like are the boards usually more for your like own personal fulfilment than like creative outlet or do you also strive to like, inspire others in what you do?

00:13:28 Katherine
Both, I think because I also, I always kind of described Landing as this is the first place on social media where I don't feel judged to be myself, um.

00:13:44 Katherine
I kind of like nerdy things like Harry Potter and like Percy Jackson. I watch a lot of cartoons, but I'm 24 years old and before Landing I always kind of kept it to myself. I didn't talk about it openly, like, oh, I like Harry Potter. This is my favorite character. You know all those. So then on landing I started making boards about those fandom things, and I started seeing other people respond positively to it. And then, OK, so by hearing Potter, I like the Marauders more than I like The Golden Trio era and I'm,

00:14:30 Katherine
I'm just gonna sit up a little more straight. So.

00:14:37 Katherine
I'm sort of making boards about that, and slowly I started seeing more people, like Marauders on landing. So, you know, you start talking to them and I know a lot of, I don't know, if it's the boo or not but, you see a lot of people who have fan accounts, fandom accounts, and they don't show their faces. And what I like about landing is that I show my face and I don't feel judged for anything of it.

00:15:06 Katherine
And then at one point, we were in an event and someone else, they told me like you're the person that made me like, feel comfortable about showing minority interest online and just showing my face on the account and that made me very happy. That's so fun being that person that I would have needed. Yeah, that just makes me really...

00:15:41 Interviewer
Yeah, of course. That's so nice to hear. I'm so happy. That's fantastic. That must feel really great.

00:15:50 Interviewer
So yeah, so like my next question was, but now you already talked about it a little bit. But my next question was like what type of response do you usually get on your boards. Like get do get like, a lot of comments or messages or is it more just the glitter effect or people like putting them on their own collections and stuff?

00:16:15 Katherine
I think there's a lot of glitter effect. It was like first and it's now glitter.

00:16:22 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly. I remember that.

00:16:23 Katherine
So and then there's also comments and... Yeah, it depends on what the board is about. I think because usually I get a lot a lot of comments when I post something fandom related. So I do a lot of Taylor Swift. I do a lot of more other than that gets a lot of comments and then I when I do something that's not as known, so the last board I did was a song that's not
even released yet, I get no comments, but usually I don't mind it at that much because I make the board for me. It's because I like to do it.

00:17:03 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly. And I guess it makes sense that like obviously it's easier for others to relate to Harry Potter or something that's well known rather than. Like specific songs or whatnot, so that totally makes sense.

00:17:21 Interviewer
And yeah, like the the glitter function like as because it before you could see the amount of likes, right. But now they sort of removed it. I mean you could still see it I guess if you counted it yourself. But how do you feel about that like, do you think that's an improvement or would you like to see the number? Or, or do you not care?

00:17:42 Katherine
No, for me, I really like it that I did it because I did this on Instagram before, like when I was younger. I really wanted likes on my Instagram post. Because all my friends were getting like 200 likes and I got maybe 50. So it was something that I was always really focused on, but now even on Instagram, I just usually what I do is I post everything, because I post in bulk.

00:18:14 Katherine
So I post 50 pictures maybe at once, and because I don't want to flood the timeline for other people, I'll, I'll archive them all of them after I post them and I'll I'll archive them maybe a week later so it doesn't flood the timeline for other people and but that will end up with having no likes on the pictures, but it's just more my digital diary, so it's more for me. I post for me, I don't post for other people, yeah. So the like count doesn't really matter to me, and that's the same with Landing I suppose for me. So if other people like it, that's fun and I care more about talking with people about those interests and connecting with them than I care about the like count on the pictures and the post.

00:19:03 Interviewer
Yeah, that's so great.

00:19:07 Interviewer
What would you say like is the aspect of landing that you find like the most rewarding out of everything? Like, is it more like the process like getting the idea and finding the images or
when it's done? Or is it the sharing? Or is it the response like do you have like one part that you feel gives you the most joy?

00:19:35 Katherine
I think the community itself, just making friends online like I've met people I can truly call my friends. I'm going to a concert with one of them in October.

00:19:47
That's nice.

00:19:51 Katherine
Two of them are moving to the Netherlands and we're gonna hang out when they do, you know those kinds of things. The community is very a very strong part of it like I would love to meet a lot of them and a lot of them live overseas, so that's gonna be a lot harder, but I know it's gonna happen one day.

00:20:13 Katherine
Yeah, it's also just the creative outlook part because I. I'm a Pisces, I'm a stereotypical pisces and creative...

00:20:24 Interviewer
I love it.

00:20:25 Katherine
It's really nice because it's just something I like to do in my free time, I always like to do it in my free time and I like the space for it.

00:20:36 Interviewer
Yeah, that's so fantastic. Totally get that.

00:20:41 Interviewer
On the other hand, is it some aspect of it that you sometimes find like draining or you wish were better or like yeah, if there's something. That sort of irks you. In the process.

00:20:54 Katherine
Not landing itself, but me personally, because what I told you I want to stick to.
A theme, yeah.

And sometimes I kind of and I've always done this, this not because of Landing, push myself to keep doing it. So I did the doodles for a very long time and you can see them like a few pages back and at some point.

Yeah, right. Yeah, I've seen them.

I had, like my hands, I don't know what is wrong with them, but it's in the family because my mom has it. My grandma has it, her

OK.

Hands kind of hurt during winter times, so during the winter I couldn't even hold my pencil anymore, so I couldn't properly doodle on the post, but I just kept pushing myself to doodle doodles, even though no one asked it of me, it was just myself that forced myself to do it, cause OK.

I start, I started this theme, I have to continue with it. and then at one point I was talking to (name of her friend) and we were doing the the tote bag for the Landing team and, maybe you've seen it, but we kind of gift, we gifted them, OK, we gifted the team, with a lot of ambassadors.

Oh no, I haven't. But that's so,
We gifted them a ton back with our names written on it. We were working on that and I told her about it, then it kind of came up when we were calling, like my hands are hurting. So I'm kind of struggling with all, it's all the names. So everyone sending their name kind of, and I kind of traced them so it was in everyone's handwriting, and it came up and she said OK, but you're also doing the doodle so what, so why you're doing it and I told her OK, but I'm forcing it because I started, and she said you could just start anew, we don't force you to do it. You kind of can just start something new and post something else and I was like, OK, you're right. So that's kind of then I made the switch to not doing doodles, and maybe I'll do them one day again but now do this summer. But yeah, that's kind of, it's not landing it's just me forcing myself to do something, even though my hands can't physically take it.

00:23:27 Interviewer
Yeah, I see. Yeah. I get it.

00:23:33 Interviewer
UM, OK, let me see. What else did I have? Oh yeah.

00:23:41 Interviewer
So like obviously landing is like I think, a very female dominated space. And just also like Pinterest, which is like a little bit same vibe like. Like, why do you think women are more sort of into this type of... craft, let's say. Do you have any idea about that? Or do you think it would make a difference if landing had more male users like, would you feel differently about it?

00:24:21 Katherine
I wouldn't feel different about it at all. I think, and I think maybe it's not even about men not liking to do it, it's more about society telling us that creative stuff is more for women, even though it's...

00:24:48 Interviewer
No, yeah.

00:24:51 Katherine
Because I think she is a lot also in just general art that it's more women-dominated..., more women-dominated fields.

00:25:01 Interviewer
Yeah, yeah.

00:25:03 Katherine
But I don't... But no, I think if men want to be creative, they should join landing.

00:25:11 Interviewer
Yeah, absolutely. I I totally get that.

00:25:18 Interviewer
I mean now you've obviously done like vision boarding for a long time, but while I been doing this study, I sort of feel like. There's like, it's like a new interest now, almost like it's like, yeah, it's it's having, like, a revival with landing and also with, like, I think Pinterest is doing like, a similar thing.

00:25:41 Interviewer
And like so it's like obviously like, yeah, it's like current interest like do you, can you feel that, can you feel that it's like becoming more popular and do you have like any idea as a user why it's like more prevalent now, because you also said like you started it and some of it during the pandemic. So yeah.

00:26:11 Katherine
I think some of it the... It's like a lot of people are spending time on their phones, I think, and on their laptop and just looking at screens so opportunities to lean toward, toward more digital art is easier. And for me it's also, I don't like paper scraps at all, so having the ability to make mood boards and vision boards online instead of having to stick them on paper, because what I don't like is when I stick something on paper, it's stuck. There is no way I can change it anymore, and I'm a perfectionist. So that just doesn't, yeah, it's a lot of work for me and pressure to get it right from the start.

00:27:05 Interviewer
Right.

00:27:06 Katherine
And then when I do it on digital, on a digital screen I get the opportunity to change something if I really don't like it, so that's something for me that I think also people relate to, it's just, it's easier. You don't have to print anything out and yeah, it's... I think with the
digital scrapbooking kind of go and try roll and TikTok. I think that kind of kickstarted it, but I think with Polyvore, you know, I don't know if you used Polyvore when you were younger?

00:27:47 Interviewer
No, I didn't. But I definitely knew about it.

00:27:49 Interviewee
OK.

00:27:51 Katherine
So I think a lot of the people that used Polyvore before, and I know on Twitter someone wrote a whole tweet about that they missed Polyvore and there was no place like it. So I said hey, I'm using landing because I miss Polyvore too. And this kind of. Fits the bill. Of what police were used to be, only it's more community centred and she joined and she also loves it so.

00:28:23 Interviewer
Yeah, that's fantastic. Yeah.

00:28:23 Katherine
Yeah, I think that's kind of it.

00:28:27 Interviewer
No, it's super cool. Like I used to do a lot in, I used to do like a lot of my own colleges like in photoshop just for myself, but like, obviously Photoshop is super expensive first of all, so it's like not accessible.

00:28:42 Katherine
Yeah, I was too broke for Photoshop.

00:28:44 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly.

00:28:46 Interviewer
So like this is such a great like free tool that's accessible to anyone, so it's... It's super, super great.
Interviewer: OK, let me just check if I have interrogated you enough or not, but I think ohh I did have one question, sorry. Now I’m kind of jumping back to what you said before when you would do like actual vision boards for like the New Year’s. Or for like lunar cycles.

Interviewer: Do you feel that they, like, help actively help you, like reach your goals, or is it just more fun to kind of dream and imagine but then, like, they don’t matter that much in the actual goal achievement process? Or do you? Do you feel that they do actually play a role? In what you want to achieve in your year or in your month or whatever.

Katherine: I've always been kind of open about the idea of manifesting because I know there’s a lot of people who actively do it and it works for. So I want to I want to believe it, and I there's part of me that does. And how do you say this...

Katherine: Ok, I’ve always find it, find it easier to be open minded, about things like manifesting. So yeah, I kind of believe it, but I also think with having a vision board, having a visual representation of what you want to do and what you want to see, you have something to work towards. So it kind of comes from both ways. It can be something of higher up, but it’s also something you can work towards.

Katherine: But a funny story is actually I made a vision board in December for January and February for my time in Ireland, and I put a picture of the, the castle in Cashel on there, but I didn't know where it was. I just put that picture of, oh, this is Ireland, yes.

Katherine: Well, I went to see castles in Ireland and then, the first month I was there I went to that castle, like the one that was on my vision board. I just didn't know. And I was looking back at my pictures and I was like, hmm, this looks very familiar. And I went back to that picture and it was the one I put on my vision board, so I visited without knowing.

Interviewer: No way.
00:31:28 Katherine
But then the cliffs of More, that was something I really wanted to see, I put it on my vision board, and while I was in Ireland, I made it happen. So it kind of comes from both ways. I think it's some things just happen and you don't even realize until after they happen, and some things you should just work towards to make them happen.

00:31:48 Interviewer
Yeah, exactly.

00:31:50 Katherine
But I do think it's like a powerful tool to just... so it's not like an abstract thought in your head it has like a tangible, physical representation and and then you kind of internalize it.

00:32:14 Interviewer
Yeah totally. But that's super interesting. I'm so happy you got to see everything in Ireland from your vision board. That's great. OK.

00:32:27 Interviewer
I think that was the one question that I missed. But other than that I asked everything, but if you still feel like you have some thoughts or something you want to. Add please feel free to do otherwise. I'm happy to end the interview here.

00:32:48 Katherine
Not as of right now. Maybe something will pop up later. I can always drop it in the chat and also.

00:32:53 Interviewer
Oh yeah, that would be great.

00:32:53 Katherine
If you have, if you come up with any more questions, also just drop them in as well and I'll write them down.

00:33:00 Interviewer
That's so great. Thank you so much.

00:33:02 Interviewer
Again like you have no idea how grateful I am like it’s it’s super. It means a lot to to have you in this super great.

00:33:14 Katherine
Well, I thank you for having me.

00:33:17 Interviewer
Yeah, of course. No pleasure is all mine. OK, I won't bother you anymore.

00:33:25 Katherine
I'm gonna eat dinner in a few so.

00:33:30 Interviewer
Enjoy your evening. And yeah, OK.

00:33:32 Katherine
You as well.

00:33:36 Interviewer
Take care.

00:33:39 Katherine
You as well. Bye bye.