

"Living Quietly": the Generation Mechanism of "Stealing Feeling" Behavior of Digital Youth: From the perspective of Goffman's Parody theory

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Abstract: "stealthy feeling" is a life mentality and behavior model that has sprung up in the digital youth group in recent years. The core performance is to actively reduce their visibility in the social field, hide their personal life and growth process, avoid public attention and other people's evaluation, and complete daily practice in the state of "not being noticed". Based on Goffman's Parody theory, this paper regards "steal feeling" as a new impression management strategy for youth groups in the digital age, and believes that its essence is the adaptive choice of young people to actively shrink the scope of performance and retreat to the backstage space in the media environment where the frontage boundary continues to expand and the performance pressure continues to increase. The study found that the panoramic exposure of digital media, the evaluation anxiety of competitive society and the awakening of individual self-consciousness jointly promoted the popularity of "stealing sense" culture. This behavior pattern not only constitutes a protection mechanism for young people to resist social burnout and maintain their own boundaries, but also implies the potential risks of weakening public participation and thinning social connections, which provides a new observation incision for understanding the survival mentality and social interaction characteristics of young people at present.

Keywords: Digital Youth; Stealthy Feeling; Parody Theory; Impression Management; Digital Media

1. Introduction

In recent years, the word "steal feeling" has gradually evolved from a popular Internet phrase to the core keyword of contemporary youth's living conditions. From "secretly learning and amazing everyone" to "stealing a lot" as young

people's self ridicule, to the three-day visibility in the circle of friends," diving" on social platforms and "invisibility" on offline occasions have become common daily. A low-key, hidden and unremarkable behavior orientation is spreading among young people. Unlike the fierce confrontation of "Involution" and the passive retreat of "lying flat", the "sense of stealing" presents a moderate and firm intermediate state, and has become a lifestyle actively chosen by contemporary youth groups. Although "steal feeling" has not attracted enough attention in the academic circle, it has been discussed more on newspapers, television, the Internet, wechat public accounts and other platforms, and has been listed on the list of "top ten hot words for youth" in 2024 jointly released by Shanghai Youth Research Center and surging Research Institute^[1]. It can be seen that "stealing feeling" has certain universality and influence. The white paper "Chinese youth in the new era" issued by the State Council pointed out that "Chinese youth in the new era are self-confident, philosophical and positive. They must adapt to the society, integrate into the society, participate in the process of social development with a more confident attitude and more active spirit, show a positive sense and ability of social participation, and become advocates and practitioners of positive energy."^[2]

The existing youth studies mostly focus on cultural phenomena with clear emotional catharsis color, such as "Involution", "lying flat", "rotten" and "Buddhism", focusing on the analysis of youth's explicit resistance or compromise to structural pressure, and paying insufficient attention to the implicit and strategic daily practice of "stealing feeling". In fact, "steal feeling" is not an isolated network subculture. It is deeply embedded in the social environment dominated by digital media, reflecting the youth's re control of their own space and pace of life under the background of overload of social performance and generalization of evaluation

pressure. With the help of Goffman's Parody theory, this paper puts "stealing feeling" in the analytical framework of social interaction, and explains its connotation, generation mechanism and social implication, in order to enrich the understanding of the living state of contemporary digital youth.

Based on the above research background, this paper puts forward the following three core questions: (1) why does the boundary between the front and back office continue to be blurred today when digital technology has penetrated into daily life? (2) Why do young people turn from active performance to active concealment? (3) Is "stealing sense" the awakening of youth's subjectivity or another form of self-restraint?

2. Theoretical basis and literature review

2.1 Theoretical Basis

In his "self presentation in daily life", Goffman put forward the theory of parody, comparing social interaction to dramatic performance, and believed that individuals would carry out impression management in different fields according to a specific script in social life, in order to create a self-image that met the expectations of others. The core concepts of the theory include the front and back stage. The front stage is a formal occasion for individual performance. Individuals need to abide by specific social norms and role expectations, presenting an idealized image that meets the requirements of the scene, and their behavior is open, performative and normative; The backstage is a relaxation area outside the front stage performance. Individuals can take off the performance mask to show a real and relaxed state without maintaining a specific role image [3].

In the traditional society, the boundary between the front desk and the back desk is relatively clear, and the family, private gathering and other spaces constitute a stable back desk area. After entering the digital age, social media has broken the boundaries of physical space, and private life has been largely moved to the online public field. The daily debris, emotional expression and growth process that originally belonged to the backstage have been included in the category of front stage performance. Individuals need to maintain personal facilities in multiple online spaces, such as the circle of friends and short

video platforms. The duration and scope of performance are infinitely extended, resulting in serious "performance burnout".

"Stealthy feeling" is the impression management strategy generated under this background. Young people no longer pursue the perfect performance of the front desk, but actively reduce the exposure, withdraw more behaviors from the public front desk to the private back desk, and avoid the pressure of evaluation by reducing the performance. It is not to give up impression management, but to complete self-protection by "no performance", which is a reverse adjustment to the overload of the front desk.

2.2 Literature Review

In the face of structural pressure, "stealing feeling" has increasingly become a unique practice form of youth, which vividly reflects the characteristics of youth's social psychology, and psychological symptoms have become the logical starting point for understanding the phenomenon of "stealing feeling". Young people have a social mentality that is intertwined with contradictions and full of tension, and establish excessive defense mechanisms in cognition, emotion, attitude and behavior to maintain individual psychological safety [4], showing the characteristics of anxiety, vulgarization and pragmatism, low desire and loneliness [5]. Other studies based on the theory of differential order pattern put forward the "differential order mentality", which shows the atomization tendency centered on "oneself", the trust level of "internal and external differences", and the cultural dependence of the circle [6], and embodies more concrete and symbolic value expression and behavior strategies such as "lying flat" and "Buddhism". "Lying flat" is mainly manifested in the minimization of social, marriage, development and other needs [7], while "Buddhism" is regarded as an alternative cultural way and emotional response for young people to deal with social reality [8]. The complexity of young people's social mentality actually reflects the psychological adaptation dilemma under the changes of the times. In terms of structural pressure, uncertainty and liquidity have gradually become a source of pressure for young people [9]. As far as individual adaptation is concerned, young people realize self adjustment through defensive withdrawal, demand diversion and family emotional buffering. They pay more

and more attention to the developmental needs of spiritual abundance, time freedom, experience diversity and so on, and redefine the concept of struggle based on this, so as to realize the deep adjustment from passive defense to positive value reconstruction^[10]. In addition, in the face of the spread of "Pan depression" mentality, young people realize self adjustment by reshaping new intimate relationships and reconstructing family ethics, preventing the deterioration of mentality and showing subjective adaptability^[11].

It is worth noting that in the pedigree of young people's social mentality, the phenomenon of "stealing feelings" is attracting the attention of the academic community, but there are only a few studies on it at present. Previous studies have regarded "stealing feeling" as a symptom of the times that needs to be solved urgently, which is a manifestation of social withdrawal, and analyzed around the practice picture, motivation perspective and risk response. For example, some studies believe that "stealing sense" is a psychological defense and self-protection mechanism formed by young people in the face of social acceleration, structural pressure and algorithm technology risks^[12]. Some scholars believe that "stealing feeling" is a kind of contradictory psychology that expresses and evades in the establishment of relationship, yearns and hesitates in the realization of goals, and is false and true after others, which is easy to lead to alienation of interpersonal relationship, reduction of self-efficacy, confusion of life value and other consequences^[13]. Other studies have expanded the understanding that "stealing feeling" is social withdrawal under the background of liquid modernity and digital technology, and regarded it as a strategic tool for young people to cope with structural pressure and technical discipline, with multiple characteristics such as information masking, spatial retreat, identity disengagement, and group collusion^[14]. Existing studies have paid more attention to the "active performance" aspect, and have fully discussed the phenomena such as selfie, exposure to life, and human design, but paid less attention to the reverse "contraction performance" and "active stealth". A few studies have mentioned the "diving" behavior of social media and the permission management of the circle of friends, but have not yet upgraded it to an overall survival strategy for systematic analysis.

3. Multi Dimensional Characterization of "Stealing Feeling" Behavior of Digital Youth

"Stealing feeling" is not a single behavior, but permeates all fields of youth's daily life, forming a complete set of concealed practice system, which is embodied in three dimensions: social interaction, growth and public participation.

3.1 Contraction of Social Performance: from "Basking in Life" to "Hiding Life"

Online social networking is the most concentrated field of "steal feeling". After experiencing the upsurge of "basking in life" in the early stage of social media, digital youth generally began to fine regulate their online visibility, forming a practical mode of "gradient stealth".

The first is the contraction of content release. According to China Youth Daily's survey of youth's social status in 2024, more than 68% of them set their circle of friends to be visible for three days or half a year after 00, and nearly 50% of them said they "rarely send original news, only browse without speaking". Young people no longer regard social platforms as life diaries, but rather as semi public workplaces. The content released is mostly related to work and public welfare, and the sharing of private life is greatly reduced. The second is the hierarchical management of social accounts. The "big and small" system has become the standard configuration for digital youth: the big one is for colleagues, elders and ordinary friends, maintaining a professional and decent public image, with low publishing frequency and formal content; The trumpet is only open to a very small number of close friends. It is used to vent emotions, talk about daily life and share minority hobbies. It is a real backstage space. Through the split personality of the account, young people have reserved a private plot for themselves that will not be examined. Finally, the low sensitivity of interactive posture. In the face of the dynamics of others, young people are more likely to choose the "diving" mode, silently praising instead of commenting, browsing instead of participating, so as to avoid appearing in the comment area and becoming the focus of attention of others. In the public community, the vast majority of members are in the state of "only seeing but not speaking". Even if they have opinions, they also choose to express themselves in private chat to avoid public standing in line

and causing controversy.

This model is not social disconnection, but the active regulation of social visibility. Young people no longer regard the online platform as a window for self display, but as a public field that needs to maintain a distance. The essence of "Tibetan life" is to avoid over examination of private life and reduce the performing burden in order to maintain image.

3.2 The Concealment of the Growth Process: From "setting Goals" to "Working Quietly"

In the field of personal growth, such as academic and professional development, "stealthy feeling" is embodied in the deliberate concealment of goals and processes, forming a "silent force" behavior mode. One is the privatization of goal setting. Unlike the previous "flag" type of public commitment, young people rarely publicly announce their plans for preparing for the exam, job hopping, textual research, weight loss, etc. Important life choices such as taking the postgraduate entrance examination, taking the public entrance examination, and applying for school are often kept secret until the dust settles, and only disclosed to the closest family members. In their view, the public goal is equivalent to putting a shackle of public opinion on themselves. Success is taken for granted, and failure will become a laughing stock.

Second, the concealment of the effort process. "Working secretly" has become a general consensus, learning in the library without sending out a circle of friends, improving skills after work without telling colleagues, and preparing to change careers without disclosing to people around. On the one hand, this choice is to avoid the negative evaluation of "Involution" and "utilitarianism" and to avoid being isolated by peer groups. On the other hand, it is also to eliminate external interference and promote the goal at its own pace without responding to the expectations and inquiries of others.

Third, the result disclosure is delayed. Even if achievements have been made, young people tend to refer to them lightly rather than trumpet them. Getting an offer, being admitted to the establishment, being promoted and getting a raise are often mentioned by chance long after the event has passed, or even by others. The essence of this preference of "doing great things quietly" is to withdraw the right to evaluate growth from others, and the process and result

are defined by themselves." Covert efforts" will transfer the growth process from the public front desk to the private back desk, so that individuals can be separated from the supervision of others' eyes, which not only avoids the risk of social death from failure, but also eliminates the interference of public opinion in the process.

3.3 Low Profile of Public Space: from "Seeking Attention" to "Transparency"

In the offline public space, the "sense of stealing" shows that it actively reduces its own sense of existence, pursues the "transparent person" state, and reduces unnecessary social interaction as much as possible. In daily commuting and public scenes, young people generally practice the principle of minimizing interaction: wear earphones and look down at mobile phones when taking public transport to avoid looking at others. If you meet someone who is not familiar with you, you would rather take a detour than say hello. In restaurants, convenience stores and other service scenarios, try to use self-service orders and scan codes to pay, and reduce the language communication with service personnel. This behavior is not impolite, but to avoid the emotional consumption caused by improvisation.

In the collective scene, "edge station" becomes the default choice. For collective activities such as meetings, classes and League building, young people should give priority to places that are not attractive, such as corners and back rows. They should try not to raise their hands actively during the speech session, and try to be brief when called. They should actively stand on the edge when taking group photos to avoid becoming the center of the picture. For them, not being concerned means not being evaluated, which means safety and relaxation.

In the discussion of public issues, the feature of "silent majority" is more obvious. In the face of Internet hot spots and public events, most young people only browse information and do not express their views. Even if they have a clear position, they rarely speak out in public. They are not only worried about the internet violence caused by improper speech, but also unwilling to be involved in the war of defiance against each other." Not talking" has become the lowest cost self-protection way.

The essence of this "transparent person" appeal is the exhaustion of public interaction. When public space is full of judgment, opposition and

excessive interpretation," not being seen" has become a safe option. Youth can maintain the stability of daily order by reducing their public identification and unnecessary social friction and emotional consumption.

4. The Generation Mechanism of "Stealing Feeling" Behavior of Digital Youth

4.1 The Visibility Oppression of Digital Media: the Infinite Expansion of the Front Boundary

First, the dilemma of no background under digital surveillance. Foucault's panoramic view theory has obtained a new interpretation in the digital age ^[15]. The popularity of smart phones makes everyone a potential recorder. The communication mechanism of social platforms allows information to spread to the whole network instantly. Individual behavior, life trajectory, and private conversations may be photographed, screenshot, and forwarded into public view at any time. This kind of digital surveillance completely breaks the boundary between the front and back.

The traditional sense of private space is no longer absolutely safe, and the relaxed state of the backstage may be exposed to the front desk at any time, causing the crisis of "human design collapse". Under the omnipresent panoramic surveillance, the individual loses the stable backstage shelter and is always in a tense state of performance. The "sense of stealing" is a negative resistance to such surveillance, which can reduce the number of traces left and the probability of being concerned as much as possible, so as to combat the dilemma of no background in the digital age.

Second, the emotional labor and time consumption of human design maintenance. Self presentation in the digital age is no longer an impromptu daily interaction, but has evolved into an emotional labor that needs continuous investment. In order to maintain the ideal online presence, individuals need to carefully select pictures, Polish copywriting, maintain comment interaction, and invest a lot of time and emotional costs. This kind of unpaid performance labor has brought serious social burnout. When social interaction changes from pleasant interaction to heavy operation, and sharing changes from true feelings to human performance, individuals will naturally have the impulse to escape. "Stealthy feeling" is exactly the resistance to the alienation of performance labor: reducing release,

shrinking social contact and reducing exposure is essentially reducing the investment of emotional labor, and returning from "performing for the audience" to "living for yourself".

Third, the overlap between acquaintance society and stranger society. The uniqueness of the digital social platform is that it brings together family, colleagues, friends and strangers in the same space, forming an overlapping audience. A dynamic may be seen by parents, leaders, classmates and netizens at the same time. Different audiences have different expectations and evaluation criteria. It is difficult for individuals to satisfy everyone with a set of performances. The fluidization and complexity of the audience has greatly increased the difficulty and pressure of the performance. In order to avoid conflict between people and offend different groups, young people can only choose to reduce performance. Setting group visibility, three-day visibility, and size separation are essentially the management and separation of audiences. By cutting the audience group and narrowing the audience range, individuals reduce the complexity of performance and the probability of error.

4.2 Evaluating Social Risk Anxiety: Self Protection in the Context of Competition

First, the comprehensive comparison and evaluation anxiety under the merit doctrine. Michael Sandel pointed out that performanceism has created a kind of "tyranny", which not only exacerbated social injustice and excessive competition, but also artificially created interpersonal tension and social tear ^[16]. In the social context dominated by meritism, individual value is highly quantified, and life is simplified into a continuous ranking competition. From academic achievement, college background to salary level, marriage and love status, every life index has become the basis for others to judge, and also the yardstick for individuals to make social comparison. In this environment, self disclosure means exposure to the evaluation system. Public efforts may be ridiculed as "the king of the roll", public failures may be labeled as "losers", and public choices may be instructed to "take a detour". The generalization of evaluation makes every self display full of risks, and "no display" has become the choice with the lowest risk. "Stealing feeling" is essentially a defensive strategy, which minimizes the impact of external

evaluation by reducing information exposure, and avoids itself becoming the object of comparison and judgment of others.

Secondly, the solidification of social expectations and role overload pressure. Contemporary youth are expected to play multiple social roles. They should be professional and enterprising in the workplace, sensible and filial in the family, and open and decent in social life. Each role corresponds to a set of standardized norms of behavior. Individuals need to switch between different roles to maintain an image that meets expectations. Continuous role playing has brought serious role overload. When an individual always needs to live according to the expectations of others, the real self is squeezed into a very small space. And "stealthy feeling" provides a way to escape the shackles of roles. In the corner that is not noticed, individuals can temporarily remove all role masks, instead of playing excellent employees, sensible children, cheerful friends, and just be themselves. This brief escape is a psychological buffer for young people to cope with the role pressure.

Finally, the uncertainty and defensive psychology in the risk society. The risk society described by Baker has become increasingly prominent in the digital age, and individuals are facing multiple uncertainties such as employment, health, and social networking [17]. A casual speech may trigger cyber violence, a common sharing may be maliciously interpreted, and a life detail may become the handle of others' attack. The intensification of uncertainty gave birth to a general defensive mentality. "Misfortune comes from the mouth" and "more words, less words" have become the social norms of young people. In order to avoid unpredictable risks, the safest way is to reduce self exposure. "Sense of stealing" is the externalization of this defensive psychology: by reducing their visibility and the probability of being involved in the risk, they can obtain a controllable sense of security in a society full of uncertainty.

4.3 The Awakening Of Individual Consciousness: The Backwash Of Performing Life

First, the weariness of the performing self and the appeal of the real self. The digital youth who grew up in the Internet age have been immersed in the performance culture since childhood, and have also experienced the fatigue of

performance earlier. When "human design", "script" and "acting" become the key words of daily social interaction, young people are generally tired of acting self. With the maturity of self-consciousness, more and more young people begin to ask the essence of life: is life to be seen by others or to be experienced by themselves? The popularity of "steal feeling" is the result of this reflection. Young people no longer regard the recognition of others as the source of self-worth, and no longer pursue the appearance of brilliance, but instead pay attention to the inner real feelings. "Living quietly" is not to close yourself, but to turn the focus of life from the eyes of others to their own experience, and pursue a more authentic and relaxed self in hiding.

Second, the awakening of Boundary Consciousness and the withdrawal of self-determination. The self boundary consciousness of contemporary youth has been significantly improved, and there is a strong resistance to "being interfered", "being judged" and "being defined". They are disgusted with the life choices of their elders, the excessive curiosity of their colleagues about their private lives, and the random judgment of strangers on themselves. "Stealing feeling" is the behavior embodiment of boundary consciousness. By hiding their personal lives and shielding irrelevant audiences, young people have drawn a clear psychological boundary for themselves: my life does not need to be explained to irrelevant people, my choices do not need to be recognized by others, and my rhythm does not need to be disturbed by the outside world. This kind of active boundary construction is essentially the withdrawal of self-determination and the manifestation of individual subjectivity.

Third, the group identity of subculture. The evolution of "stealing sense" from individual behavior to group phenomenon is also inseparable from the subculture identity mechanism. When "strong sense of stealing" becomes a joke and resonance among young people, it becomes a code of group identity - people who identify with "sense of stealing" tacitly understand each other's low-key and alienation, forming an invisible sense of group belonging. In this subculture atmosphere, "stealing feeling" is no longer a synonym for solitude, but a sign of cool, sober and mature. By practicing "stealing sense", the youth have completed the confirmation of group identity

and obtained the value support of cultural level.

5. The Duality of "Stealing Sense": The Dialectic Between Self Protection and Social Alienation

As an adaptive survival strategy, "steal feeling" is not absolutely positive or negative, but both protective function and social cost, showing a distinct duality.

5.1 Positive Orientation: Concealment Strategy as a Protective Buffer

The first is psychological defense. From the individual level, "stealing feeling" is an effective psychological protection mechanism. By reducing social performance and evaluation exposure, young people have effectively alleviated the social burnout, appearance anxiety and ability anxiety prevalent in the digital age. In a hidden state, individuals do not have to maintain a perfect image at all times, and do not have to deal with other people's comments. The psychological burden is greatly reduced, and the emotional energy is preserved. For young people in a high-pressure environment, "steal feeling" provides a low-cost emotional outlet. There is no need to escape from society and give up competition. You can get breathing space by lowering your visibility. This mild adjustment helps young people maintain their psychological balance under high-intensity social pressure.

The second is border reconstruction. In the digital age, where the backstage is constantly colonized, "stealing sense" is an attempt by young people to rebuild their own boundaries. Through permission setting, content contraction and low-key behavior, young people have delineated a relatively private territory for themselves in the pervasive digital surveillance. Although the territory is small, it is crucial. It means that individuals still have a space that is not examined, recorded or defined by algorithms, and that the integrity of self has not been completely dismantled by digital technology. In this sense, "stealing sense" is the micro practice of individuals against digital alienation, guarding the privacy and dignity of human beings.

Finally, efficiency improvement. The mode of "working quietly" has also objectively improved the efficiency of growth. When the growth process is separated from the eyes and comments of others, individuals get rid of external interference and emotional internal friction, and

can devote themselves to the goal itself. Don't worry about whether others feel "rolled", don't worry about the embarrassment after failure, don't cater to others' expectations, just focus on your own rhythm. This disruptive growth model enables young people to focus more on real self-improvement rather than falling into the trap of performing efforts. Many young people said that "when you work hard secretly, you will make faster progress". It is precisely because you eliminate the external noise and return to the thing itself.

5.2 Potential Worries: the Social Cost of Hidden Existence

The first is the elimination of publicity. When "no speaking, no attitude, no participation" has become a common choice, the youth's enthusiasm for public participation faces the risk of continuous digestion. The operation of public life needs individual expression and participation, and the promotion of public issues needs the collision of different voices. If the youth generally choose to remain invisible in the public sphere and remain indifferent to public affairs, it will not only lead to the absence of youth in public discourse, but also weaken the vitality of social development. What is more alarming is that the long-term habit of "transparent people" may dissolve the youth's awareness of public responsibility, evolve from "not wanting to be concerned" to "not wanting to care about public affairs", and eventually fall into the atomization state of "everyone sweeps the snow in front of their own door".

The second is the weakening of social connection. While protecting individual boundaries, "steal sense" may also intensify the thinning of social connections. Deep social relationships need to be based on self exposure. Friendship, trust and intimacy are all based on mutual understanding. If individuals are always in a defensive state, unwilling to open themselves to others, and always keep a low profile and distance, it is difficult to establish a profound emotional connection. When everyone chooses to "live quietly", the gap between people will continue to deepen. The society will become a collection of isolated individuals, lacking sincere interaction and deep connection with each other, and the sense of belonging and cohesion of the whole society will also decline.

The third is the risk of self sealing. The original intention of "stealing feeling" is to actively

choose self-protection, but the long-term hidden state may evolve into passive self sealing. When individuals get used to the state of not being noticed and not interacting with others, their social skills may gradually deteriorate, and they will feel more uncomfortable when they enter the public field again. Especially for some young people who are introverted themselves, "steal feeling" may become an excuse to avoid social contact, slip from "don't want to socialize" to "can't socialize", and finally fall into the dilemma of self isolation. At this time, concealment is no longer the choice of subjectivity, but a new constraint.

The last is the cover of class differences. Existing discussions tend to regard "steal feeling" as a common choice of youth groups, but in fact, "steal feeling" has distinct class differences. For the well-off and resourceful young people, "stealing sense" is an active low-key: they have the capital to show, but they just choose not to show, hiding is to avoid trouble and pursue relaxation. However, for the young people from ordinary backgrounds who are in a weak position in competition, "stealing sense" may be more of a passive cover up: they lack cultural capital and economic capital to perform, and opening themselves to the public may expose class disadvantages and lead to negative evaluations. Hiding is not for relaxation, but for shame, which is a helpless self-protection. If we ignore this class difference and beautify the "sense of stealing" as the mainstream lifestyle, it will cover the survival dilemma of the youth at the bottom and make the structural inequality covered by individual choice.

6. Conclusion

The rise of "stealing sense" culture is essentially the reconstruction of self boundary and life subjectivity of digital youth in the era of visibility overload. It is not lonely, nor retreat, but the survival wisdom of young people in the complex social environment. From the perspective of Goffman's Parody theory, this behavior mode with concealment and low profile as the core is an adaptive practice for young people to adjust the impression management strategy and rebuild the backstage space in the media environment of front desk expansion and performance overload. It originates from the visibility oppression of digital media, the evaluation anxiety of competitive society and the awakening of youth's individual consciousness.

It is not only a psychological mechanism of self-protection, but also implies the reflection and rebellion against the performance culture. To understand the "stealing sense", we should not simply classify it as the introverted or withdrawn youth, but should see the social structure motivation behind it. For the youth group, "stealing feeling" provides a mild way to coexist with pressure, but the real self acceptance still needs to find a balance between hiding and opening, private and public. As for the society, only by paying attention to the youth's demands behind the "sense of stealing" and creating a more inclusive and less critical social environment can we truly understand the tenderness and stubbornness of contemporary youth, so that youth can grow and express calmly without having to "live secretly".

This paper focuses on the theoretical interpretation and the induction of empirical phenomena, and has not yet carried out empirical research. Future research can use in-depth interviews, questionnaires and other methods to compare and analyze the differences of "stealing sense" among young people of different classes, regions and ages, and further reveal their stratum logic and intergenerational characteristics. At the same time, combined with specific social platform scenarios, we can explore how the algorithm mechanism affects youth's visibility choice, and promote the research to a more micro and empirical direction.

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