

Abstract

This thesis explores the phenomenon of New Queer Cinema (NQC), which emerged in the 1990s as a radical movement within independent cinematography. Its goal is to identify the key characteristics of NQC across selected films (*Poison*, *The Living End*, *Paris Is Burning*), analyze their narrative and aesthetic strategies, and examine their cultural and political impact. The study focuses not only on the historical context of NQC's emergence—the AIDS crisis, the conservative societal reaction, and the marginalization of the LGBTQ+ community—but also on its long-term influence on queer cinematography and the formation of queer identity among viewers.

The study employs semiotic analysis of film imagery and a comparative approach, placing its findings within the framework of queer theory. Key concepts include performativity (Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*), power analysis (Foucault, *History of Sexuality*), queer temporality (Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*), and the influence of media representations on the process of queer subject identification. The results confirm that NQC not only redefined the way queer characters are portrayed but also created space for alternative identities and a collective queer experience.

The research demonstrates that NQC represents not only a milestone in queer cinematography but also a crucial tool for reassessing the representation of gender and sexuality. NQC films, as earlier mentioned by B. Ruby Rich (2013), disrupt heteronormative norms, rewrite traditional narrative structures, and open space for alternative identities. However, with the increasing mainstream popularity of queer representation, its subversive potential has weakened. That raises questions about the future of queer filmmaking. Therefore, this thesis examines NQC not only as a historical phenomenon but also as an inspiration for contemporary queer aesthetics, identity formation, and the politics of representation. Additionally, it opens possibilities for further research in the context of digital media, intersectionality, and global queer cinematography.