

Abstract

The diploma theses “Representation of Homosexuality in American Sitcom, as exemplified by Will & Grace and Modern Family” examines the portrayal of minority groups on television. Initially vilified as perverts and abominations, homosexual individuals are now seen as complex characters that buck older stigmatization and stereotypes. These changes can be exemplified and documented across different popular genres currently on television. However, a sitcom is a genre defined by specific rules. Thanks to its simple, recognizable formula, a sitcom is easily adaptable abroad. It has the ability to quickly respond to current social issues. It is also defined by a specific relationship with humor which largely consists of generalizations and simplifications. In sitcoms, stereotyping is readily applied to all minority groups, homosexuals being no exception. Considering the recent development in the representation of homosexuality on television, the question is: how does the conversation about homosexuality transfer to the sitcom? Does the change in conversation go hand-in-hand with changing the existing stereotypes that are specific to the genre? How does contemporary context affect the representation of homosexuality in sitcoms? This thesis aims to answer these questions by analyzing two sitcoms: Will & Grace and Modern Family. For researching these sitcoms, a discourse analysis was chosen.