

S: Queerness Everywhere. Queer, Post-Queer and Post-Feminist Sensibility in Contemporary Pop-Culture

Seminar Description:

In the winter semester 24/25, but also in the winter semester 25/26, my seminars touched on topics that could be considered part of the post-feminist sensibility. This is a crude mixture of feminist rhetoric and patriarchal stereotypes of female gender imagery. In a way, post-feminist sensibility (Gill, 2007) has already become standard in media theory. Building upon the foundational work of Gill regarding post-feminist sensibility—characterized by a complex amalgamation of feminist discourse and entrenched patriarchal stereotypes—we aim to explore whether similar dynamics apply to the evolving landscape of queer identities. As myriad self-identifying categories emerge within digital spheres, queer representation has increasingly become a prominent facet of modern culture. Nevertheless, it is crucial to interrogate whether these representations escape traditional frameworks that reinforce rather than subvert binary gender norms. Indeed, certain expressions of queerness now serve as cultural capital, potentially diluting the radical potential inherent in queer activism. This seminar posits that while societal recognition of diverse sexual identities is imperative, it simultaneously invites scrutiny into the commercialization of queerness. We will critically examine how queerness, when commodified, can inadvertently align with and uphold heteropatriarchal and capitalist structures rather than challenge them. Through an academic lens, participants will engage with contemporary texts, media, and theories to unpack these complex intersections and their implications for cultural production and identity. The seminar does not question that heteronormativity is a code that is both outdated and mostly useless. Here, however, we are concerned with a different phenomenon, namely how queerness can be sold in a market-compatible way and thus does not attack heteropatriarchal and capitalist structures but rather embraces them.