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**THE "MANIC PIXIE DREAM GIRL" FILM TROPE IN "500 DAYS OF  
SUMMER" VIA CRITICS' AND VIEWERS' PERCEPTION**

Bachelor thesis

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## **Kinnitus**

Olen koostanud töö iseseisvalt. Kõik töö koostamisel kasutatud teiste autorite tööd, põhimõttelised seisukohad, kirjandusallikatest ja mujalt pärinevad andmed on viidatud

## **PREFACE**

The problem of gender inequality remains relevant in the 21st century and this affects the representation of women in cinema. Most images of women, especially in romantic films, reflect ingrained stereotypes and discrimination against women, thus hindering the overcoming of gender imbalance in real life. Stereotypical images of women on movie screens influence the formation of the idea of love, as well as containing a negative idea that women are objects or toys for love and play. One such negative image of women in films is “Manic Pixie Dream Girl” (further referred to as MPDG) discovered in films by film critic Nathan Rabin (2017). The image of the ideal girl, focusing all her attention on the life of a man.

The present research paper attempts to show the importance of the image of women in cinema. The aim of the research work is to demonstrate the ways in which the Manic Pixie Dream Girl cinematic trope expresses the idea that women are objects for love and play and to compare the viewers’ and critics’ perceptions of the main female character in the film “500 Days of Summer” directed by Mark Webb in 2009.

The paper consists of the Introduction, Chapter I *Socio-Historical Aspect and Characteristics of the MPDG Cinematic Trope* and Chapter II *The Opinion of Critics and Viewers about the Film “500 Days of Summer”*. The introductory part provides an overview of functions of cinema, the perception of cinema, the importance of the viewer's connection to the film and overview of gender inequality in romantic films. The introduction identifies the hypothesis and sets the questions for the research. Chapter I includes an overview of trope definition, an overview of the MPDG trope and addresses the female tropes in cinema from the socio-historical perspective. Chapter II includes an analysis of the film and a search for a reflected problem in modern society, a comparative analysis of a female character with MPDG and the opinion of critics and viewers through a review of the data obtained and the results of an online survey. Conclusion summarises the analysis and comments on the hypothesis.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Functions of Cinema**

Cinema is the art of storytelling. Literary scholar Kenneth Burke argues (McKee, 2010) that stories are a means of existence. Stories are a significant and integral part of life. People navigate inside stories through films, theatrical plays, and books, as well as through dreams and daydreams (McKee, 2010). Stories are an opportunity to comprehend life experiences and personal feelings.

American film editor Walter Murch argues (1995, p. 124) that cinema is the latest iteration of the art of storytelling in the dark. People gathered around the fire and told each other stories. In addition, Walter Murch mentions (1995, p. 82) that the reason for the adaptation of people to moving images (montage) was the similarity of the perception of films with the perception of dreams. Dreams are fragments and images in sequence that tell us a story. Editing is sequential cutting and reorganization of images that tell us a story (Murch, 1995, p. 15).

Compared to literature, cinema is a finished product of perception and interacts with the viewer through sound and image without forcing the reader to plunge into their imagination (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 24). Filmmakers provide the audience with finished images of the characters and set the rhythm for the events (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 25). Cinema involves cognitive psychological processes without making the viewer an active participant in the process (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 25).

Russian film expert and media educator Stal Penzin (1987, p. 8) claimed that cinema is multifunctional and defined the main responsibilities of cinema:

- The cognitive function (complex of knowledge and dissemination of information)
- The educational function (formation of moral conviction and public opinion)
- The aesthetic function (formation of artistic values)
- The communicative function (transformation of the image into the universal language of people)
- The hedonic function (recreation and entertainment)

People come to the cinema to satisfy the need for entertainment. Entertainment means immersing yourself in story for inspiration and knowledge of the essence of life through an intellectual and emotional response (McKee, 2010). Therefore, watching films is not an escape from reality, but a cognition of reality. Cinema reflects the picture of the real

world and contributes to the dialectical process of resolving contradictions between the objective and the subjective, the absolute and the relative (Penzin, 1987, p. 11). Cinema is a means of influencing the audience and a source of information for understanding the world (Penzin, 1987, p. 13). Accordingly, the goal of cinema is the formation of the consciousness of the audience (Eisenstein, 1964, p. 568).

### **The Relation between Viewer and Film**

American screenwriter and screenwriting theorist Robert McKee (2010, p. 139) mentions, “The audience wants to be taken to the limit, to where all questions are answered, all emotion satisfied – the end of the line”. The viewer is initially set to fulfill his need for deep emotional experiences (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 21).

The purpose of cinema is to satisfy the need for emotional experiences through the image of the protagonist. The empathetic image of the protagonist creates an unconscious process of identification (Indick, 2004, p. 113). Robert McKee explains (2010, p. 140), “Empathetic means *like me*”. The identification of the viewer with the main character evokes an emotional response. The viewer shares the emotions and experiences of the character. The success and fulfillment of the protagonist's desires reflect the inner desires and needs of the viewer (Indick, 2004, p. 106). Film psychologist and Gestalt therapist Tatyana Salakhieva-Talal (2019, p. 53) claims that the success of the protagonist is analogous to the psychological victory of the viewer.

Associate professor of psychology William Indick (2004, p. 113) and American film editor Walter Murch (1995, p. 124) argues that films have a similarity to dreams. Watching films leads to an understanding of inner desires and an understanding of the unconscious, based on Sigmund Freud's theory that dreams are a reflection of the unconscious. Consequently, the emotions received from watching a film give an idea about oneself, about the perception of the world and about one's belonging to the world (Penzin 1987, lk 8). The viewer explores himself and finds a solution to his problems, extracting his own meaning while watching the film (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 128). Watching a film becomes not only a leisure activity, but also a spiritual and valuable experience. Ingmar Bergman (1983, p. 234) argued that cinema has a therapeutic effect.

Accordingly, the success of the film directly depends on the topic of the problem and the conflict that will affect most people. It is possible to conclude that characters in popular films characterize society. The main conflicts in the film coincide with the conflicts of society. The protagonist is a reflection of the actual psychological and social

problems that worry most people (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 72). Filmmakers use a psychological approach to character and script design to create strong and memorable films (Indick, 2004, p. 10). In the United States, the film industry works in collaboration with institutions that research psychological issues, viewership needs and sociocultural phenomena (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 72). American producers use the social and psychological problems of society to make the film successful.

Accordingly, cinema is a tool of psychological influence (Indick, 2004, p. 10). The screenwriter and director take on the educational function of cinema. The idea embedded in the film helps the viewer find a solution to problems and a model of behavior. Vsevolod Pudovkin (1975, p. 395) argued that modern cinema has a strong influence on the spiritual education of a person. The benefit or harm of the film depends on the creator of the cinema and his intellect. Plato insisted that storytellers and poets pose a threat to society, as they possess the power of persuasion (McKee, 2010).

Cinema differs from other forms of narrative art in that it puts the viewer in a passive position. The director and screenwriter shows the viewer his worldview and view of history (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 25) without using the human imagination. The filmmakers immerse the viewer in a childish state, where a person is most receptive to what is happening on the screen. Mental processes and psychological defenses of the viewer in a passive position weaken. The weakening and reduction of control leads to increased sensitivity and sentimentality. The film influences the viewer by addressing their childhood fears, unconscious problems and repressed desires (Indick, 2004, p. 10). After watching a film that caused an emotional response, a person saves the information received (Penzin, 1987, p. 12). Conclusions and reassessment of individual experience after watching a film affects the inner world (Penzin, 1987, p. 12). New experience will awaken in life situations that require the implementation of the behavior model given by the author of the film (Penzin, 1987, p. 12). A person finds in the film a solution to the problem to their circumstances. This is the educational function of cinema (Penzin, 1987, p. 8). Cinema is the educator of the viewer in a childish state.

### **Gender Inequality in Romantic Films**

In the 20th century, the idea of romantic love became the dominant theme in the art of Western culture (McKee, 2010). Since people have become free from parental control and approval in choosing a partner, the authors of the art-works have more ideas on the topic “what prevents lovers from being together?” (McKee, 2010). Romance books and

films began to touch on the themes of religion, racism, death, and the different beliefs of the main characters. The theme of love has become more complex and deep.

In the 21st century, the theme of romantic love has not lost its relevance in cinema, literature and music. Statistically, romantic films are in demand and popular across all genres (The Numbers, 2021). In addition, romantic relationships in cinema serve as a supporting function in all genres: horror, fantasy, drama, action, etc (Music Gateway, 2021). The theme of love is relevant for every person, thus the protagonist who loves or loved is alive for the viewer and evokes empathy. The love line is part of the protagonist's successful climax, as love and family are an important value for the viewer (Indick, 2004, p. 173).

However, despite the development of freedom in relationships, outdated stereotypes about the role of women in relationships remain. According to a study by the United Nations Development Program, 90 % of people around the world have gender bias in 2020 (Globalcentre, 2020). The traditional gender role of wife and mother remains central to women. The valuable qualities of a woman are the ability to cook, take care of children and her husband, as well as beauty (Tochno, 2021). Experts in the study of gender issues in the media at the American Geena Davis Institute argue (UN News, 2017) in films, the amount of discrimination and sexism prevails than in real life. Most female characters have only feminine qualities and act as a sexual object. The female character complements the male character and does not reveal her potential in other areas of life. According to a University of Washington study, based on 1,276 films from 1909 to 2013, female characters in films are unsure of their words and actions and let men decide for her what is best for her (University of Washington, 2017). Claire Mortimer (2010, p. 31) mentions, “The heroine is central to the appeal of the genre to its audience and, as with many film heroines, a female spectator may seek someone to identify with, but also someone who embodies dreams and desires. Yet the romantic comedy heroine is almost always the construct resulting from the work of men, due to the patriarchal nature of the film industry, creating a tension in the representations”.

Cinema is a gender technology that influences the formation of gender stereotypes and gender images through display and repetition (Yakovleva, 2015). According to the World Economic Forum, it will take about 100 years for the imbalance in society to disappear, but the increase in the number of women and the developed images of female characters can accelerate the process (Broom, 2020). Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, (UN News, 2014) argues that images of women in



the media shape audience perceptions. Consequently, stereotypical images interfere in the struggle for equality in society.

Former Ithaca College student Alyssa Rodriguez has conducted research on the MPDG trope, arguing that the image of the MPDG influences gender bias. In an interview (Nalepinski, 2016), Rodriguez mentions, “Because men are the primary source of these stories, they can't conceptualize the misogynistic impact it may have on young readers: girls and boys as a whole”. Laurie Penny in *The Statesman* mentions, “Stories matter. Stories are how we make sense of the world, which doesn't mean that those stories can't be stupid and simplistic and full of lies”. In her article, Laurie Penny writes about the impact of the MPDG trope on her life and the bad consequences. She draws attention to the fact that films can reflect desires for the possession of an ideal person who is easy to subjugate and exploit.

Viewers do not realize that the film not only reflects social reality, but can also be a product of patriarchy and create role models that can subsequently reinforce stereotypes.

The importance of the study lies in the awareness of the negative representation of women in cinema, as cinema influences the perception of people in real life. The creators of films take responsibility and contribute to behavior of men and women, since the cinema performs an educational function.

The object of the study is the cinematographic trope of the MPDG, which reflects the problem of gender inequality, as well as the problems of modern society.

The research hypothesis is that the MPDG cinematic trope expresses the negative idea that women are objects for play and love. The viewers do not realize that the MPDG reinforces stereotypes about women and perceive the MPDG positively.

Research questions:

- How do the audience perceive the main female character?
- How does the opinion of the audience about the film differ from the opinion of the critics?
- Is the character in "500 Days of Summer" an example of an MPDG?

# **CHAPTER I SOCIO-HISTORICAL ASPECT AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MPDG CINEMATIC TROPE**

## **1.1 Trope Definition**

In the context of literature, the term trope often refers to figurative language, such as metaphors, hyperboles, synecdoches and metonyms. In the context of cinematography, the term trope is recognizable plot formula or narrative technique that is used many times (Anderson, 2020). Film tropes are the constant use of certain techniques, rhetorical devices, motifs, and conventions that the screenwriter can rely on. The tropes are present in the minds and expectations of the audience (Writeworld, 2013). The function of the trope is to simplify the intuitive understanding of the material for immersion in the plot audience (Writeworld, 2013). Film tropes include storylines and twists, character types and settings. The reason for the appearance of tropes are cultural stereotypes. A stereotype is a simplified and fixed image or representation of an object or subject (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

Tropes interact with archetypes. Archetypes are images of people and associations in the collective unconscious (Bordoni, 2016, p. 159), which reflect universal psychological needs. For example, the need for love, spiritual healing and rebirth (Bordoni, 2016, p. 179). Tropes divide the archetype into separate cultural images. One archetype has several tropes (Writeworld, 2013).

Transforming a trope into predictable and superficial behavior is a cliché. The official website of the Nashville Film Institute (2021) mentions that there is a difference between clichés and tropes, “Tropes are just the thematic storytelling devices that allude to something beyond the literal meaning that an object, a person, or an action has. The way you use a trope in your film is what determines whether or not the trope turns into a cliché”. The trope becomes a cliché if the motive and technique are overly frequent and performed incorrectly. A good trope is what viewers recognize from execution and concept, while a cliché trope is exhausted idea and an accurate understanding of what will happen next (Writeworld, 2013). Tropes change and evolve. Lack of innovation and laziness leads to clichés. Tropes without innovation reinforce unhealthy stereotypes in society. For example, “the smart girl” trope reveals smart women as ugly girls with strange and comical behavior.

## **1.2 Female Tropes from the Socio-Historical Perspective**

Psychology and cinema are closely related. Actual socio-psychological problems and conflicts in the film can evoke an emotional response from the audience (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 72). Accordingly, screenwriters and directors who want to find an approach to the viewer should pay attention to what psychological problems and social phenomena are relevant in society. Salakhieva-Talal (2019, p. 71) mentions, “Social problems are embodied in the symptoms of specific mental illnesses of specific people. According to what diagnoses are most often addressed to psychotherapists, one can judge the problems that concern society as a whole. The diagnosis of an individual is a symptom of the disease of the society to which he belongs”. For this reason, in cinematography, the main character of the film is the embodiment of the actual problems of his time and cinema expresses the psychological tendencies of the time. Films from different times allow to trace the changes that took place in society, as well as to consider how society treated women through the images of female characters. Since the 1940s, women mostly played secondary roles and were the object of love for a man and complementing the image of a main character (ADME, 2020).

The review of the social and psychological problems of modern society through cinema should start from the 1940s. The most significant event for people is the Second World War. The main value of society lies in belonging to a group for protection from danger. The main male characters of this period are courageous and purposeful leaders who are ready to sacrifice their personal values to save the world or a group of people. Self-identification and uniqueness cause mistrust and a sense of danger (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 75).

The cinema of 1940 reflected the gender tension caused by the redefinition of gender roles (Mortimer 2010, p. 37). Women contributed to the war effort and performed masculine jobs. In romantic plots, men are victims of insidious seductresses and teach a lesson to an overly independent woman. The ‘happy ending’ is the return of women to the roles of mother and wife (Mortimer, 2010, p. 37).

One of the popular female tropes of 1940 is the *Femme Fatale*. As historian Richard Lingeman (R. Briley, 2013) writes in *The Noir Forties*, “The rise of the *femme fatale* in films noir reflected male ambivalence and anxiety about... those Amazons unleashed by the war who worked at men's jobs, had sex with whomever they wanted, and rejected home and motherhood”. The main features of the *Femme Fatale* are conscious sexuality and deceit. Their values do not include marriage and family. For this reason, *Femme*

Fatale is most often villainous, as it does not follow the norms of female behavior (The Take 2020). The main function of such a female character is to distract the male character from his main goal. She uses her sexuality as a weapon against men.

The complete opposite of the Femme Fatale is the Girl Next Door. The Girl Next Door trope often interacts with the Femme Fatale trope in a love triangle. In this case, she emphasizes the sinfulness of the image of the Femme Fatale (The Take, 2020). Purity, simplicity, and charm are the main features of the Girl Next Door (Dictionary, n.d.). The Girl Next Door waits for a long time for mutual sympathy, even if she may be mistreated (The Take, 2020). She personifies humble femininity and holiness. This image is an example of a good woman who is not aware of her sexuality and does not use it for her own purposes.

As a rule, at the end of the film, the fate of the Femme Fatale is unhappy. A man chooses a good woman and has contempt for a bad woman because she has led him astray with her sexuality. The man understands how the fatal woman is vicious and forces the society to punish her for all her sins. An alternative ending can be the transformation of the Femme Fatale into a good woman. Dominant woman threat eliminated (The Take, 2020).

The period from 1950 to 1970 is a narcissistic society (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 77). Self-realization and individual needs come to the fore. People strive for greater freedom and independence through rebellions against authority. The fight against the system leads to violence, disintegration and rethinking of old values and traditions. The main male character becomes a loner, defying social rules. In films, the position "one against all" is increasingly common (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 80).

Despite the raised and revised issues of freedom, independence and self-realization, the role of the wife and mother has returned. In the ideal family, the woman sacrificed her education and career prospects in order to fulfill the role of wife and mother (Mortimer, 2010, p. 37). However, in 1953, Kinsey's report on women's sexual behavior created an uncertainty in terms of gender roles (Mortimer, 2010, p. 37). The report's results, which showed that women were sexually active and had sexual contact before marriage, challenged widely held beliefs about human sexuality and inspired public discourse on American sexuality (Encyclopedia, n.d.). The film industry has reflected this discrepancy between reality and the fantasy of femininity. Female characters began to

have their own desires and careers, but did not find satisfaction in this. The 'happy ending' was finding a man.

The first popular image of a female character from the 50s is a Housewife who finds happiness in marriage. She raises children, cooks and cleans without stress and discontent. Despite the amount of housework, the Housewife always finds time for perfect hairstyling, selection of a beautiful dress, pearls and high heels (Tvtropes, n.d). The second popular image of a female character is the Dumb Blonde. The Dumb Blonde denied the benefits of education and dreaming of a career, preferring to seek a man. The hypersexualization of femininity and infantilism caused a comic effect and reinforced the opinion that sexuality and sexual activity are bad for women.

The period from 1970 to 1990 is a technological society. The main events are the scientific and technological revolution and the economic boom (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 80). People prioritize high productivity and sacrifice familial attachments in favor of efficiency. Children born in an narcissistic society feel lost because of the distance from parents who instilled in them the need to be successful, but did not provide enough support (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 81). Negative emotions, loneliness, inaccessibility of intimacy and inability to accept intimacy lead to psychological problems that reflect the technological society. The main male character is lost and has a destructive and self-destructive nature (drug or alcohol addiction) (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 84). Blockbusters are becoming a popular genre as brilliance, loudness and battles become the cure for the viewer with unresolved internal contradictions and aggressive impulses. Blockbusters provide clear guidelines and a division between good and evil that helps the viewer deal with ambiguity and confusion (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 86).

Romantic films were not in demand as they used to be. Hollywood did not know how to tackle the subject of love and relationships during the second wave of feminism (Mortimer, 2010, p. 39). The sexual revolution has led to changes in the female image. The female characters were virtually independent of the males and developed self-confidence through self-actualization. In the plot of the romantic film, there was a choice between family and work.

However, in the horror films of the 70s, gender stereotypes were common. Carol J. Clover in 1987 (Hageman, 2021) coined a name for the phenomenon of only a girl surviving in a horror film - the Final Girl. The Final Girl trope was an innovation, as for a long time in horror films women were victims who needed a man to save them. In the

70s, women began to survive on their own with the help of their cunning and intelligence. Professor Carol J. Clover was also convinced (The Take, 2020) that the association with the female protagonist made male viewers understand the psyche of the female victim. However, the Finale Girl had sexist aspects. She often differed from other characters in her virginity and lack of interest in alcohol and drugs. This carries the negative idea that girls survive if they adhere to conservatism and some rules.

The beginning of a modern society or, as Zygmunt Bauman (Bordoni, 2016, p. 2) called it, a liquid society - 1990. The psychological problems of modern society are anxiety disorders, loneliness and depression (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 106). The development of migration processes leads to the loss of roots and traditions. Globalization and technology do not allow a modern person to give himself time to search for new roots, since the coincidence of rhythms and schedules is an important part of maintaining relationships (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 102). The growth of the means of communication is the cause of the depreciation of communication itself. People do not know how to build close relationships because of emotionally and physically absent parents (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 102). Loneliness and lack of love from family ties leads to high demands from a partner (Johnson, 2017, p. 3). People compensate with romantic relationship for the lack of love and attention from emotionally and physically absent parents (Johnson, 2017, p. 3). The main male character in the films is a lonely and depressed person who is in search of himself and the ability for intimacy and relationships (Salakhieva-Talal, 2019, p. 108).

The female characters of modern society experience panic when trying to combine work and relationships. Mortimer (2010, p. 41) mentions, "Today's romcom heroines are tantalizing figures. They live on the cusp between strong, empowered choices and more traditional, reactionary fates. They start the film as powerful, successful and free from the confines of the traditional family. They work and play hard, seemingly living the post-feminist dream. Yet at a decisive point in the narrative, their values are overturned and they can no longer find happiness in their former lifestyle". As a result, female characters always find fulfillment and self-satisfaction in relationships in romantic films.

In the plots of other modern romantic films, women repeat the fate of old images of women. They do not at all strive to be successful, which indicates the persistence of stereotypes and sexism throughout history and the reflection of psychological problems, such as codependency.

The modern trope Cool Girl is a reflection of sexism under the guise of equality. The Cool Girl represents the male fantasy of the ideal woman. She prefers stereotypical male activities: cars, sports, comics, beer. She likes what the male character likes. Her role is to show how different she is from other girls and to become an exception. The Cool Girl is special and better than other girls who prefer makeup and clothes (R. Murtuza, 2021). The Cool Girl combines unrealistic standards. She loves to eat junk food, but has a perfect figure. She is smart, but never has an opinion of her own. She does not know how to be angry with a man and does not try to change something. She is cool as long as she does not violate the comfort of a man (R. Murtuza, 2021).

The trope of the Manic Pixie Dream Girl reflects the psychological problems of modern society among all the female tropes of the romantic genre. The MPDG contains a solution to all the problems of modern society: lack of intimacy, depression and self-discovery. A Manic Pixie Dream girl enters the life of a depressed and confused man to change his life without caring about her own (Tvtropes, n.d).

### **1.3 The MPDG Trope**

The term “Manic Pixie Dream Girl” appeared in 2005, when film critic Nathan Rabin watched the film "Elizabethtown" and described the main female character with this term (Hellerman, 2020). In “My Year Of Flops” entry, Rabin mentions (2010, p. 8), “The Manic Pixie Dream Girl exists solely in the fevered imaginations of sensitive writer-directors, who use them to teach broodingly soulful young men to embrace life. The Manic Pixie Dream Girl serves as a means to an end, not a flesh-and-blood human being. Once life lessons have been imparted, the Manic Pixie Dream Girl might as well disappear in a poof for her life's work is done”. The Oxford Dictionary and Merriam-Webster provides a detailed description of term:

- Manic – full of activity, excitement and stress, behaving in a busy, excited, anxious way
- Pixie – a cheerful mischievous sprite; a usually petite vivacious woman or girl
- Dream – a beautiful person or thing; something notable for its beauty, excellence, or enjoyable quality
- Girl – a young woman

Alan C Swann of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences states (2009) that impulsivity is an important feature of mania, which increases in severe cases. Therefore, the Manic Pixie Dream Girl is an idealized cheerful girl with beauty and an

obsessive desire to change another person's life. In addition to excitement and full of activity, MDPG has impulsive behavior that leads her to seize the moment and use all opportunities. For example, running away from an important event, jumping into someone else's pool, etc.

Supposedly, the trope Manic Pixie Dream Girl is an adaptation of the muses that helped men find inspiration for their exploits or creativity (Rodriguez, 2017). Men called muses women who influenced them and were a source of inspiration for their work (Crystal, 2022). The Manic Pixie Dream Girl is the source of the lost man, who finds in her the path to happiness and the revelation of masculinity. Furthermore, the trope of the Manic Pixie Dream Girl is similar to the 1940 trope of *The Girl Next Door*, as both female characters are complementary to the male character. They are objects for the disclosure of male potential, but do not have their own story. Unconscious sexuality and unconditional love for a male character leads to one archetype - anima. William Indick (2014, p. 173) writes in a book on screenwriting that the anima archetype embodies the traditional female features of caring, emotionality, and sensitivity. Integration with the anima for the male character means gaining integrity, since a balanced ego has a male and female beginning. The union of the male character with the anima means the discovery of the feminine in oneself and the acquisition of integrity. The popularity of the MPDG in 2000 explained by social and psychological problems of modern society. The lack of intimacy and the inability to express it leads to destructive relationships, namely co-dependent. Co-dependent relationships are a complete absorption of the life of a partner and an inadequate need for another person (Mahova, 2021). The image of a woman who fully devotes herself to the life of man and helps him recover from depression is a reflection of a destructive relationship. In a 2017 study, Lucia Gloria Vázquez Rodríguez concluded that the Manic Pixie Dream Girl gained popularity due to the popularization of hipsterism in the 1990s. In modern films, Manic Pixie Dream Girl has an unusual taste in clothes and hobbies. Her outfits have vintage or homemade elements. She has exceptional musical taste in music, literature and films. This description is characteristic of hipsters. Hipsterism supports individualism and hedonism. Hipsters are addicted to intellectual literature, auteur cinema, independent art and original but unpopular music. A particularly important trait for hipsters is the look, which helps them highlight their uniqueness with vintage elements and handcrafted details. The external component for hipsters is a manifestation of independence from the system. (Soc-Mol, n.d.). However, her individuality and uniqueness is only a reflection



of the desires of a man. The Manic Pixie Dream Girl, similar to the Cool Girl, has interesting and attractive qualities for a male character, thereby making her image idolized. Nathan Rabin (2010: 8) explained this concept by the fact that love is not enough for the Manic Pixie Dream Girl; the male character must romanticize, idealize and worship her.

It is worth noting that of all the characteristics listed above, the key is the desire to change a man's life for the better. The audience began to distort the meaning of the Manic Pixie Dream Girl, which led to the condemnation of Rabin. Monika Bartyzel explains, "MPDG is now a catch-all term for unusual interests and style". Viewers focused on one characteristic and mistakenly listed all characters with unusual styles or hobbies as Manic Pixie Dream Girl. Sarah Grace Stevenson (2014) considered criticism towards Rabin for creating term and concluded, "We should not be asking, "Why would a woman want to get a cupcake tattoo and play the ukulele?" We should be asking, "Why would a woman want to be one-dimensional?" By virtue of being human, no real person is naturally one-dimensional, but a certain kind of person would strive to achieve that status". The Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope romanticizes loss of identity and self-destructive behavior.

In a 2014 interview, Rabin (Salon, 2014) mentions, "The trope of the Manic Pixie Dream Girl is a fundamentally sexist one, since it makes women seem less like autonomous, independent entities than appealing props to help mopey, sad white men self-actualize". In a 2017 blog post, Rabin explained, "I strongly dislike romantic comedies. I find them gimmicky, fake, sexist, problematic and fundamentally dishonest. I coined the phrase "Manic Pixie Dream Girl" to call out a particularly toxic, dishonest and ubiquitous fiction promoted by romantic comedies, namely that woman exist exclusively to cheer up mopey male sad sacks, and have no real agency or drive or will of their own". Female images are distorted in accordance with the fantasies and fears characteristic of male screenwriters. As a result, films influence the perception of female audiences and limit the social aspirations of women. British journalist and writer Laurie Penny (The New Statesman 2014) mentions, "Men grow up expecting to be the hero of their own story. Women grow up expecting to be the supporting actress in somebody else's". All characteristics of the MPDG trope lead to a gender stereotype that, unlike men, women have no problems and ambitions. The goal of women is to help men cope with their problems. Beneath the romantic story lies the idea that women are objects for self-fulfillment. In reality, this may lead to disappointment in a man when a

woman, in addition to loving him, has her own desires and work, which takes a lot of time and self-investment. Women try to become someone's dream girl (Middleton, 2019) and romanticize self-destructive behavior (Stevenson, 2014). Sarah Grace Stevenson (2014) argues that women who don't know how to find value in themselves can take the example of the MPDG. As a result, women avoid the real problem with self-esteem.

Modern female directors and screenwriters are trying to fix the situation and bring realistic representation of women to cinema. Films teach the female viewer to love herself and not try to meet other people's expectations (ADME, 2020). However, the male screenwriters continue to create clichéd images of women with lack of depth (Davletshina, 2020). Nanette Brown of UN Women claims (UN News, 2017) that cinema does not reflect everyday reality and the changing position of women in society. In cinema, a female continues to be valuable only in relation to men, as if she lacks subjectivity and her own agenda. In real life, however, women are not mythical creatures whose sole life goal is to make a man's life brighter.

In addition to objectifying the woman and romanticizing the destructive form of relationships and behavior, the Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope undermines the basic principles of compelling screenwriting. William Indick (2004, p. 139) argues that the main character must come to enlightenment on his own. The protagonist may have mentors and assistants who can provide support, but the main character must discover himself through the crisis. The MPDG takes away the opportunity to get through the crisis.

The main features of Manic Pixie Dream Girl (Rabin, 2017):

- Has no goals and desires
- Meets unhappy man
- Often has an interesting appearance or unusual hobbies or taste
- Has energy, cheerfulness
- Unexpected behavior
- Does not have her own story
- Idealized and adored by a man
- Changes the life and outlook of the protagonist
- Often disappears after hero's enlightenment

The analysis of the main female character of the film “500 Days of Summer” (2009) is carried out on the basis of the main characteristics of the Manic Pixie Dream Girl. The image of the main female character, played by Zooey Deschanel, has a controversial reputation on the Internet. One part of Internet users add the name of the main female character to the list (Loftus, 2015) of the Manic Pixie Dream Girls, another part of the Internet users denies that the main female character belongs to the MPDG trope (Qureshi, 2019).

## **CHAPTER II "500 DAYS OF SUMMER" BY CRITICS' AND VIEWERS' PERCEPTION**

### **2.1 The Plot of the Film**

The male protagonist of the romantic film “500 Days of Summer” is Tom Hanson. Tom works at a greeting card agency despite his passion for architecture. The main female character is Summer Finn. After moving to Michigan, Summer gets a job in the company's office, where she meets Tom. Non-linear storytelling is the main feature of the film: it is divided into time-shifted scenes, randomly showing the audience Tom after meeting Summer or Tom after breaking up with Summer. The day counter between scenes helps the viewer navigate the story. The first conversation between Tom and Summer takes place in an elevator, where Tom finds out that Summer likes the same kind of music as him. After that, he falls in love with Summer and considers their meeting in the office to be fate. At the corporate party, Tom appears to get to know Summer better. He learns that Summer is not interested in love and relationships. This is the second feature of the film: it focuses on gender role reversal. Tom represents a feminized man who believes in fate and love, while Summer represents a masculine woman who does not believe in love but is open to no-strings relationships. Despite their differing views on relationships, Tom continues to be interested in Summer and agrees to a no-strings relationship. A discrepancy of views leads to the separation of the two characters on the 290th day of their acquaintance. Tom is depressed and complains about Summer to his friends. After a while, Tom goes to a colleague's wedding where he meets Summer again. Tom forgets all his grievances and anger after dancing and having a good time together. Summer invites him to a party at her house, and the invitation gives Tom hope for a reunion. Hope for a relationship with Summer fades after Tom finds out at a party that she is engaged to another man. This leads to changes in Tom's life: he quits his job and resumes learning architecture. Tom and Summer meet for the last time a few months later at Tom's favorite place where he spent time with Summer before breaking up. Tom reveals to Summer that he no longer believes in fate and love. Summer admits to Tom that she believed in fate and love after meeting her husband. After the conversation, Tom goes to an interview to get a new job and meets a girl named Autumn. Tom, having doubts about fate and love, decides to approach Autumn and invite her to continue their acquaintance after the interview. The open ending lets the viewer decide what lesson Tom has learned.

## 2.2 Research Methodology

Comparative analysis of the main female character with MPDG includes dialogues from the film, Rabin's characteristics of the Manic Pixie Dream Girl, comments from Internet users, reviews of critics and the results of a survey of 21 viewers. The 21 people interviewed were summed up with the comments and reviews found on Letterboxd, Rotten Tomatoes and IMDb.

For comparative analysis, scenes were chosen where the main characters showed their personal qualities through relationships with each other and other characters. The behavior of the female protagonist was analyzed based on Rabin's data (2017) on the characteristics of the MPDG:

- Has no goals and desires
- Meets unhappy man
- Often has an interesting appearance or unusual hobbies or taste
- Has energy, cheerfulness
- Unexpected behavior
- Does not have her own story
- Idealized and adored by a man
- Changes the life and outlook of the protagonist
- Often disappears after hero's enlightenment

Comparative analysis helped to answer the research question - Is the character in “500 Days of Summer” an example of an MPDG?

The survey was conducted in Russian for Russian viewers since organizing college screenings and acquaintance with the film takes more time than collecting data online from users who were already familiar with the film. The Cinemaholics VK group, which has 434,394 VK followers who are interested in cinema, made it possible to find viewers who had already formed their own opinion about the film. The participants were selected through comments and likes on a post with screenshots from the movie “500 Days of Summer”. Subscribers of the Cinemaholics group responded to a survey in Google Forms. The selection of participants was random and did not focus on age or gender. The main objective of the survey was to find people who would like to answer

the questions. Since the author was not a well-known media personality, not all Internet users were ready to help in the study. 21 people out of 45 responded to the survey.

The survey made it possible to find answers to the following research questions: how does the audience perceive the main female character and how does the opinion of the audience about the film differ from the opinion of the critics? The first, the seventh and the eighth survey questions answer the first research question, and the questions from second to sixth answer the second research question.

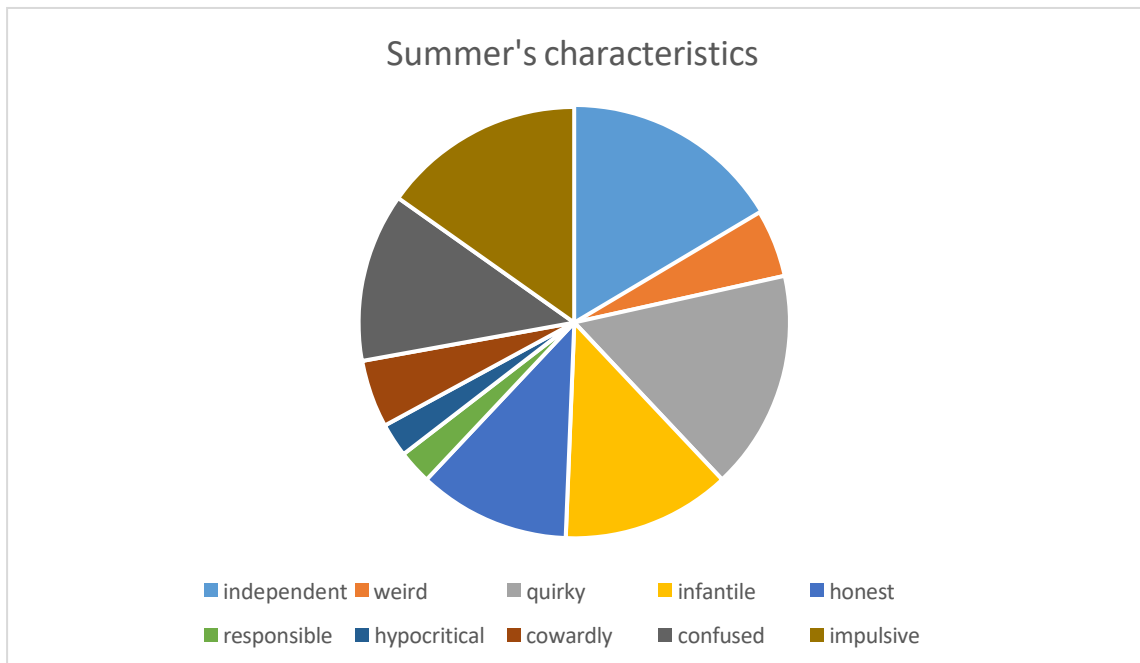
Questions:

1. Which character evokes your sympathy? (multiple choice)
2. Is this film about love? (single select)
3. Could Tom and Summer become an official couple? (single select)
4. Do you think Tom loved Summer? (single select)
5. Do you think Summer loved Tom? (single select)
6. What is the main idea of the film? (multiple choice)
7. How would you describe Tom? (multiple choice)
8. How would you describe Summer? (multiple choice)

Selected websites made it possible to find the opinion of critics about the film, as well as to support the conclusion of the survey through user comments. The Rotten Tomatoes website focuses on the opinions of leading critics who write for major newspapers such as New York Daily News and Los Angeles Times. Letterboxd is a social network for movie lovers. On the site, users exchange opinions, lists of films and likes. The IMDb site focuses on the opinion of a wide audience and allows viewers to rate the film on a scale of 10. IMDb sorts reviews by year.

### **2.3 How Do the Audience Perceive the Main Female Character?**

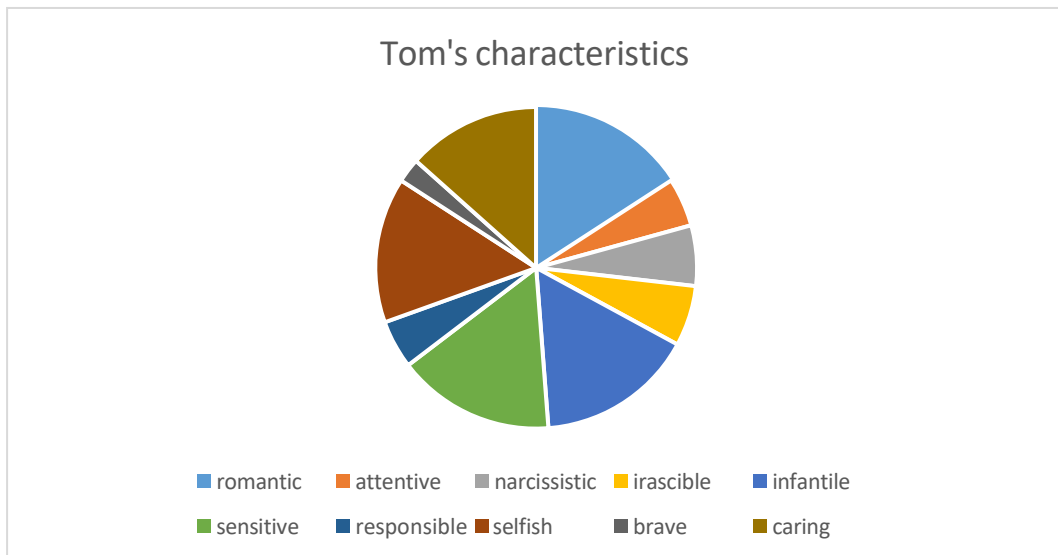
Firstly, it is worth paying attention to the results of the survey. Answers to the question “How would you describe Summer?” had answer options. The list of characteristics has both positive and negative features that allow to know the attitude of the viewer to Summer.



*Graph 1. Summer's characteristics*

Most of the members voted that Summer is quirky, independent, infantile, confused and impulsive. If the difference is considered between “weird” and “quirky”, then the word “quirky” has a positive meaning, which indicates the sympathy of the audience. The words “impulsive” and “infantile” have a negative connotation, as viewers do not perceive Summer as a mature person and do not understand her abrupt decisions. The word “independent” has a positive connotation, but a low responsibility score and a high confusion score indicate that Summer is not responsible for her actions. Accordingly, the word “independent” has a more negative meaning and is associated with selfishness or silliness. To sum up, the audience does not feel sympathy for Summer Finn, as negative traits dominate in the character.

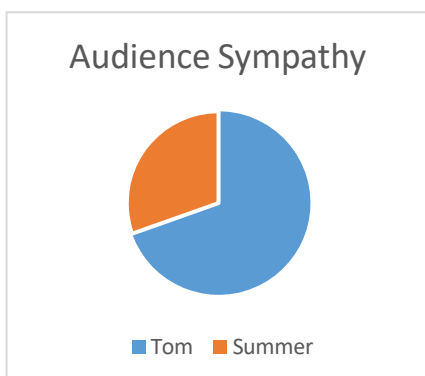
Answers to the question “How would you describe Tom?” had options. The survey participant could choose more than one from the list:



*Graph 2. Tom's characteristics*

Most of the participants considered that Tom Hanson is a romantic, caring and sensitive man. This indicates that the film reveals Tom's feelings and experiences. The viewers of the film watch the events unfold from the perspective of a man. However, in addition to pleasant qualities, survey participants noted that Tom is infantile and selfish. This indicates that Tom is an emotional man who tends to get depressed or angry, which leads to the high level of irritability (irascible). Infantilism and selfishness indicate that the male character does not want to solve his problems or is looking for a solution through another person. The low responsibility and bravery indicator confirms this. To sum up, the audience is more sympathetic towards Tom than Summer, as the viewers see the story from Tom's point of view, despite the awareness of the character's negative traits.

The answers to the question "which character evokes your sympathy?" confirm that the viewers do not favor Summer.



*Graph 3. Audience Sympathy*



## **2.4 How Does the Opinion of the Audience about the Film Differ from the Opinion of the Critics?**

The question “Is this a movie about love?” turned out to be difficult, despite the fact that at the beginning of the film the narrator warns, “This is not a love story”. 9 people decided that this film is about love. 8 people decided that this film is not about love. The rest offered their options:

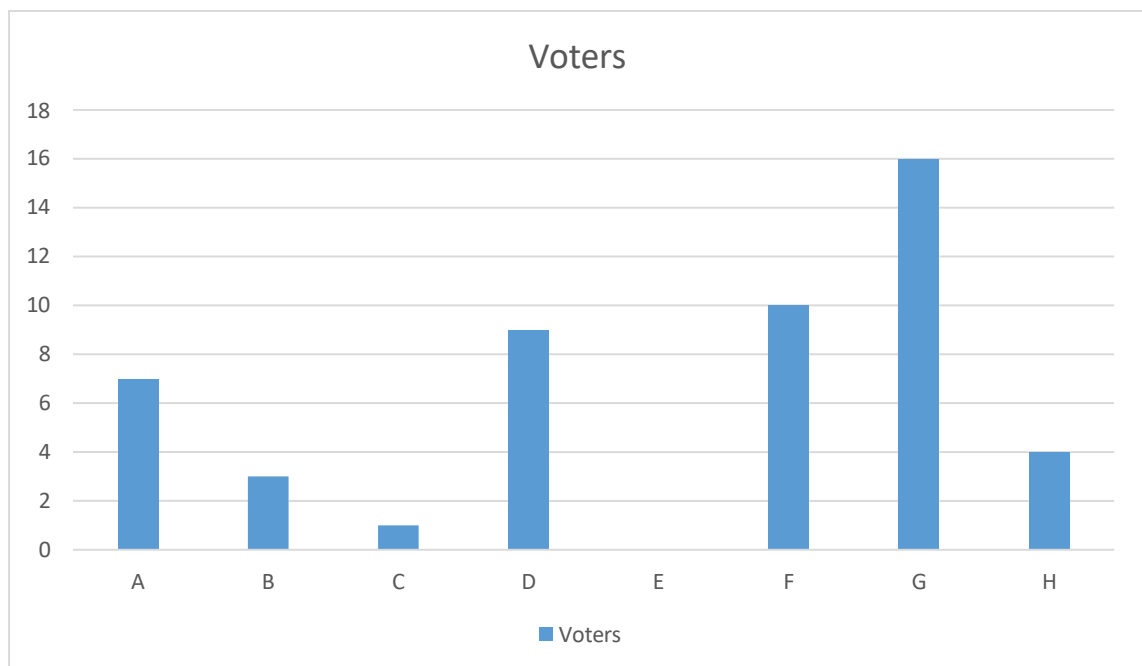
1. about the excessive idealization of a loved one
2. about the lack of proper communication
3. about love in general, but not about a specific romantic line

The question “Can Tom and Summer officially be a couple?” led to a division of opinion: 14 people answered negatively and 7 people answered positively.

The questions “Do you think Tom loved Summer?” and “Do you think Summer loved Tom?” confirm a noticeable division of opinion: 13 people decided that Tom loved Summer. 8 people decided that Tom did not love Summer. 12 people decided that Summer loved Tom. 9 people decided that Summer did not love Tom. This leads to the fact that the love line is atypical and complex, unlike most romantic films with a ‘happy ending’ and reciprocity of feelings.

To the most important question on the plot “What is the main idea of the film?” 8 options were offered:

- A. let go of the one you love
- B. walk towards your goal
- C. girls do not choose nice guys
- D. do not give love to someone who does not appreciate it
- E. women make things difficult
- F. see things realistically
- G. having the same interests does not mean you are the perfect couple
- H. love changes people



*Graph 4. Voters*

Participants offered their own options:

1. do not believe in something that does not exist
2. one person is not the whole life
3. love is not enough
4. do not turn a real person into your fantasy

This indicates that the audience recognized that Tom idolized Summer. However, 9 people chose "do not give love to someone who does not appreciate it" and 1 person "love is not enough". This means that there are viewers who do not accuse Tom of idealizing Summer and considered that Summer did not appreciate Tom's attention and love. The antipathy towards Summer is caused by the reluctance of the main female character to become the dream girl of the main male character and the unwillingness to change Tom's life for the better. Therefore, viewers perceive Summer as an MPDG.

Letterboxd users have a different opinion. Popular comments with 200 to 2000 likes mostly demonstrates sympathy for Summer. The comment with 1804 likes demonstrates that people perceive Tom as a selfish man. User argues, "This is a story about love as seen from the eyes of an immature guy who fails to grasp the fact that it is he who is the real architect of all his miseries and not the girl who left him". The comment user who got 1420 likes mentions the trope MPDG. The user claims that Tom considered

Summer as a Manic Pixie Dream Girl and argues, “loving someone just because they fill the image of the “ideal” girl you have in your head is not love at all, it is just a very selfish infatuation where you are loving the idea of a perfect girl, not the imperfect, real girl”. The comment with 546 likes demonstrates that viewers have rewatched the film over time and changed their opinions about Summer. A user shares their experience and mentions, “I would like to think this is an overly self-aware film, that Marc Webb knows exactly how idealistic Tom is, how much he idealizes Summer, and how unhealthy and unrealistic all of his expectations are”. The comment with 231 likes demonstrates the perspective of a woman who met a man with features of Tom Hanson in real life. The woman claims that after the new experience, she feels sympathy for Summer. It should be noted that in most cases, comments from 2015 to 2021 have a positive opinion about Summer. On the contrary, users who left comments in 2012 consider Summer to be a cruel and cold woman. The user with 213 likes in 2012 claims, “She is an unbelievable bitch”.

The IMDb website confirms that the low rating is typical of users from 2009 to 2013. 17 users from 2009 to 2013 rated the movie 1 out of 10, and 7 users from 2019 to 2021 rated the movie 1 out of 10. In most cases, the rating depended on the female character:

2020 - “She is not dishonest. She is more like a narcissistic lunatic and her words are not worth a dime. She says one thing and do the complete opposite instantly. Total waste of time”

2020 – “I hate Summer with a passion. What a hideous human. I despise her so much that actress, who is never seen in anything before, I cannot and will not watch in anything ever again. I hate her stupid name, her face, even her fringe, all as a reaction to her being this vile character in this Godawful film”

Audience opinion is divided. There are people who perceive Summer as a negative character and are not pleased with the love line. There are people who perceive Tom as a negative character, since Summer does not have to be reduced to a mere love interest. This indicates that the film is innovative and offers the modern audience a new look at the romantic film genre.

Critics on the website Rotten Tomatoes do not rate the characters, however, most of them rate the romantic film highly, which confirms the film's innovativeness. 57 out of 67 critics note the originality and unusualness of this romantic film:

<b>Ben Lyons</b> At the Movies	Inventive romantic comedy
<b>Sara Maria Vizcarrondo</b> Slant Magazine	Just sincere enough not to seem target-marketed
<b>Tim Grierson</b> Screen International	Rethinking rom-com conventions
<b>Kirk Honeycutt</b> Hollywood Reporter	The writing is often clever and the overall production playful and intelligent
<b>Michael Ordoña</b> Los Angeles Times	(500) Days of Summer is something seldom seen: an original romantic comedy.
<b>Joe Neumaier</b> New York Daily News	A romantic comedy that feels like real life
<b>Lorien Haynes</b> Little White Lies	(500) Days of Summer is a great film - a step in genre and gender development that will be referenced for years to come.
<b>Robbie Collin</b> News of the World	More of an anti-romcom: something many women - and perhaps even more men - will be grateful for.

*Table 1. Critics' opinion*

## 2.5 Is the Character in "500 Days of Summer" an Example of an MPDG?

Characterization based on dialogues/scenes and Rabin's characteristics of an MPDG:

<b>Idealized and adored by a men</b> "For all intents and purposes, Summer Finn, just another girl. Except she wasn't"  "It was a rare quality, this "Summer effect". Rare and yet something every postadoles cent male has encountered at least once in their lives"  "Tom meets Summer on January 8. He	Tom: I am in love with Summer. I love her smile. I love her hair. I love her knees. I love heart-shaped birthmark she has on her neck. I love the way she sometimes licks her lips before she talks. I love the way she looks when she is sleeping. I love how I hear this song everytime I think of her. I love how she makes me feel. Like anything is possible
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<p>knows almost immediately she is who he is been searching for”</p> <p>Tom: This is different</p> <p>Sister: Why?</p> <p>Tom: Cause it’s Summer</p> <p>Friend: There is plenty of other fish in the sea</p> <p>Tom: No. I don’t want to get over her. I want to get her back</p>	<p>or like life is worth it</p> <p>Tom: On the one hand, I want to forget her. On the other hand. I know that she is the only person in the entire universe that will make me happy</p>
<p><b>Unusual hobbies or taste</b></p> <p>“To wit, in 1998, Summer quoted a song, by the Scottish band Belle and Sebastian... in her high school yearbook. This spike in Michigan sales of their album continues to puzzle industry analysts”</p> <p>Summer: I love The Smiths. You have good taste in music</p>	<p>Summer: I wanted to sing “Born To Run” but they didn’t have it</p> <p>Tom: I love “Born To Run”</p> <p>Tom: She likes Magritte and Happer. And we talked about Bananafish for like 20 minutes. We are so compatible, it is insane</p> <p>Summer: Come on! I love Ringo Starr!</p> <p>Tom: Nobody loves Ringo Starr</p> <p>Summer: That is what I love about him</p>
<p><b>Has energy and cheerfulness</b></p> <p>Summer: (hums a tune)</p> <p>Friend to Tom: your girl is losing it</p> <p>Tom: You just moved here, right? What brought you?</p> <p>Summer: Boredom mostly. Wanted to try something new and exciting</p> <p>The scene where Summer invites Tom to</p>	<p>The scene at a colleague's wedding where Summer dances with Tom reminisces about their past and jokes</p> <p>Summer: I think you are interesting, and I would like for us to be friends</p> <p>(The next day, Summer initiates a kiss with Tom)</p>

play a game in the park during the daytime, who will shout the word "penis" louder	Tom: You never wanted to be anybody's girlfriend and now you are somebody's wife Summer: Surprises me too
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*Table 2. Dialogue/scenes analysis*

Summer has the traits of an MPDG. She meets a unhappy man and encourages him. She has a lot of energy and a cheerful look. Summer charms men. She has a unique musical taste and is interested in things that interest Tom. At the end of the film, she disappears after the development of the main male character. However, her disappearance is evidence that Summer has her own history and her own desires:

<b>Has desires and has her own story</b>	
Summer: You do not believe that a woman could enjoy being free and independent? I just do not feel comfortable being anyone's girlfriend. I do not actually feel comfortable being anyone's anything.	Tom: I need to know that you are not gonna wake up in the morning and feel differently Summer: And I cannot give you that. Nobody can
Summer: I like being on my own. Relationship are messy and people's feelings get hurt. Who needs it?	Tom: Those girls knew how to dress. Nowadays, it is all these giant sunglasses and tattoos. It is handbags with little dogs in them. Who okayed this? Summer: Some people like it
Summer: I just wanna tell you that I am not really looking for anything serious. Is that okay?	Tom: I like how you dress Summer: I was thinking about getting a butterfly tattoo about yea big on my ankle
Tom: Why'd you dance with me? Summer: Cause I wanted to Tom: You just do what you want, right?	Summer: I just wake up one day, and I knew what I was never sure of with you

*Table 3. Dialogue/scenes analysis 2.*

Analysis of the male character confirms that Tom must meet the MPDG:

Characterization based on dialogues/scenes:

<p><b>Believes that a girl will change his life:</b></p> <p>“He grew up believing that he would never truly be happy until the day he met “the one”. This belief stemmed from early exposure to sad British pop music and total misreading of the movie The Graduate”</p> <p>Tom: But what happens if you fall in love?</p> <p>Summer: Well, you do not believe that, do you?</p> <p>Tom: It is love. It is not Santa Claus</p> <p>Summer: Well, what does that word even mean? I have been in relationships and I do not think I have ever seen it. And most marriages end in divorce these days. Like my parents. There is no such thing as love. It is a fantasy</p> <p>Tom: Well, I think you are wrong</p>	<p>Periodic references to popular films when Tom feels in love. This demonstrates how much Tom associates himself with the character of a romantic film.</p> <p>Tom: It is these cards, and the movies, and the pop songs – they are to blame for all the lies and the headache, everything!</p>
<p><b>Needs development:</b></p> <p>Summer: So have you worked here long?</p> <p>Tom: About three or four years</p> <p>Summer: Wow, you have always wanted to write greeting cards?</p> <p>Tom: No. I don’t even want to do it now</p> <p>Summer: Well, you should do something else then</p> <p>Tom: Yeah, I studied to be an architect, actually</p> <p>Summer: You did? That is cool. What happened there?</p>	<p>Quest: So, Tom, what is it that you do?</p> <p>Tom: I write greeting cards</p> <p>Summer: Tom could be a really great architect if he wanted to be</p> <p>Quest: I mean, what made you go from one to the other?</p> <p>Tom: I guess I just figured, why make something disposable, like a building when you can make something that last forever, like a greeting card? (nervous laugh)</p>

Tom: It didn't work out	
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*Table 4. Dialogue/scenes analysis 3.*

An analysis of the scenes and dialogues shows that Summer is an MPDG through Tom's perspective.



## CONCLUSION

The results of the research demonstrate that Summer Finn is not a Manic Pixie Dream Girl; she is a Manic Pixie Dream Girl in Tom Hanson's mind. Despite her character possessing such traits as having the unusual hobbies and cheerfulness, meeting an unfortunate man who idealises her, and her story of the past not being revealed, Summer Finn has her own desires and does not change Tom's life for the better. Tom changes his life himself, coming out of the crisis on his own. He quits his job and becomes an architect, rethinking his values and ideas of love.

Viewers are ambivalent towards Summer Finn. The main female character breaks the typical development of a romantic film by not reciprocating Tom's feelings. Summer evokes antipathy as she refuses to become a dream girl. Consequently, viewers prefer the stereotypical image of women, as they are used to typical romantic storylines.

The film is realistic, so is the representation of women in it. According to critics and modern viewers, the film performs an educational function and considers the problems of idealization of a person. Negative reaction to Summer's character reflects ingrained stereotypes in society and gender inequality. Despite the fact that modern viewers are aware of the MPDG concept and recognize its presence more often, the survey demonstrates that they are still not accustomed to realistic representation of women.

The hypothesis of this study was that viewers do not realize how the MPDG concept reinforces stereotypes about women and perceive the MPDG positively. The results of the research confirmed the hypothesis. This indicates that the film industry needs innovative films that reflect the more objective picture of the world, where women have their own lives and desires.

## SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Töö nimetus on "Manic Pixie Dream Girl" filmitroop filmis "500 suvepäeva" kriitikute ja vaatajate märkudel. Käesolev uurimus näitab, et Summer Finn ei ole Manic Pixie Dream Girl, vaid sellisena teda näeb Tom Hanson. Vaatamata sellele, et tal on sellised iseloomujooned nagu huvi ebatavaliste hobide vastu ja rõõmumeelsus, et tema mineviku lugu jääb jutustamata ning et ta kohtub õnnetu mehega kes idealiseerib teda, Summer Finnil on oma soovid ning ta ei tegele Tomi elu parandamisega. Tom muudab oma elu ise kui ta iseseisvalt väljub kriisist. Ta lahkub oma töölt ja saab arhitektiks, mõeldes ümber oma väärtusi ja ideesid armastusest.

Vaatajatel on vastakad tunded Summer Finni vastu. Peategelanna murrab tüüpilist romantilise filmi arengut sellega, et ta ei vasta Tomi tunnetele. Summer kutsub esile antipaatiat, kuna ta keeldub unistuste tüdrukuks saamist. Järelikult, vaatajad eelistavad stereotüüpilist naisekaju, kuna nad on harjunud tüüpiliste romantiliste süžeedega.

Film on realistlik ning see, kuidas see näitab naisi, on samuti realistlik. Vastavalt kriitikutele ja tänapäevastele vaatajatele, film toimib õpetlikult ja käsitleb inimese idealiseerimise probleemi. Negatiivne reaktsioon Summer Finni tegelase vastu peegeldab ühiskonnas juurdunud stereotüüpe ja sugude ebavõrdsust. Vaatamata sellele, et tänapäevased vaatajad on teadlikud MPDG troopist ning tunnevad selle ära tihedamini, kui varem, läbiviidud küsitlus näitab, et nad siiski ei ole harjunud realistliku naisekujuga.

Käesoleva uurimuse hüpotees seisnes selles, et vaatajad ei mõista, kuidas MPDG kontseptsioon tugevdab stereotüüpe naistest ning kiidavad seda heaks. Läbiviidud uurimise tulemused kinnitavad hüpoteesi õigsust. See annab märku, et filmitööstus vajab rohkem uuendusmeelseid filme, mis kajastaksid realistlikumat maailmapildi, kus naistel on nende omad isiklikud elud ja soovid.

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