Walking Wounded:
Cinematic Representations of Masculine, Post-Modern Anxiety in the
Urban Space

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the representation of post-modern, masculine anxiety in seven motion picture films. Drawing on the concept of pomophobia by Thomas B. Byers (1995), it examines the ways in which racially dominant, heterosexual masculinity is depicted in film as an embattled and besieged subjectivity, struggling to recover cultural dominance and authority which has been lost as a result of, amongst other socio-political forces, the limited yet significant gains made by feminism, the pervasive presence of non-white “others” and the processes of post-Fordist de-industrialisation. This thesis draws on both historical and contemporary readings of the flâneur, the solitary, urban stroller, to consider the ways in which modern cinema allegorises this supposed male cultural displacement. By identifying the flâneur as a significant vehicle through which feelings of male anxiety are represented cinematically, this thesis argues that the urban space is frequently made the geographic site through which post-modern, masculine anxieties are rehearsed while providing the domain for patriarchal authority to be recovered. This thesis aims to contribute to the existing body of academic literature which views racially dominant, heterosexual masculinity as being in a perpetual state of crisis, requiring persistent reaffirmation in order to maintain its cultural privilege. Through a detailed analysis of seven motion picture films, this thesis will explore the varying strategies utilised to represent the recovery of masculine power, in the process revealing the hegemonic ideologies which are promulgated and sustained through these cinematic texts.
Declaration of Originality

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