

# More than Sex Scenes: Recognizing the “Male Gaze” in Blue is the Warmest Color among Contemporary Queer Cinema

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## Abstract

Since its inception, the film industry has been notoriously male-dominated. The term “male gaze”, coined by Mulvey, was developed in the 1970s as a criticism of classical Hollywood cinema. Over time, the term “male gaze” has not been submerged but has grown stronger and more abusive than ever until the present day. In a world where the film industry is still male-dominated, lesbian films such as *Blue is the Warmest Color* are still measured under the notion. This thesis adopts Mulvey’s model of feminist film theory from three perspectives of the male gaze to investigate contemporary queer cinema, in particular lesbian cinema. Although the sex scenes in *Blue is the Warmest Color* are popularly perceived as the representation of the male gaze, this article argues that it is not only the sex scenes that embody the male gaze but also the film technique, narrative, as well as production group that contributes to that notion by comparing to other queer films. This thesis launches the conclusion that the film falls into the male gaze from those four aspects in varying degrees, across all the three perspectives raised by Mulvey’s model.

**Keywords:** Temporary Queer Cinema, Lesbian representations, Mulvey's Male Gaze, Male/Female directors, Sexuality