

Queer Aesthetics

Name

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Fight for Acceptance

Introduction

Aesthetics: Experience of Sense and Sensation

Same sex marriages or same sex relationships have been around for as long as someone can remember. Queer/ same sex has always been viewed as unorthodox or unacceptable to the society and that is why the people in this community have always been shut down or even killed because they are associated with the wrong side of things such as bad omen. The Queer community these are people just like us and it is not their choice to be something that people disgrace. It comes from within or rather it is biological as it will be discussed later. For years the gay community have been fighting for acceptance and their rights and they have won the fight yet up to this moment. There are individuals at this moment still think that all the sexes present have been made up and individual wakes up one and decides to be bisexual or transgender or any other sex in the gender spectrum. People have always wanted to define everything and also want this to happen to this community most conventional leaders still believe that there are two genders or gender should be binary; you are either male or female. But that is not the case as people in some areas in the world cannot express themselves because they might be stigmatized or treated unequal, even not accepted by their family members. Well looking at this is a struggle that is the same just as any other struggle like racism, religious acceptance or even asking your government to work harder. The most important thing is that these people want to feel and

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treated as the human beings they because whichever gender they might identify with, because they did not ask for it, it is a gift and they accept it fully.

Whereby in past few years the Queer community has such a sensation that can be identified as Queer Aesthetics. They have received support, they have run campaigns, they have a movement and a month dedicated to the such as pride month; whereby almost all major companies supported this movement. Through the years of suffering and hiding; not coming out of the closet until your death. Know even teenagers can identify themselves as early as possible to take their gender path. This is a step for this community that powerful people in this community have used their platforms to make their voice heard so that the world can accept them as they are. Technology has their major platforms know through social media a lot of things can change. Another channel is art a lot of artist have used their artistic expertise to push the queer agenda to the rest of the world like Kehinde Wiley, Langstone Hughes who will the point of focus and Andy Warhol among others. These are artist that have made an impact in the LGBTQ+ community with their contribution. Like for instance Andy Warhol was a gay icon that had various gay movements, to the extent that his factory was termed as degenerate. Langstone Hughes on the other hand apart from focusing on race equality, using the poem Café 3 a.m. he was able to express his concerns about the state of homosexuality during hat time. whereby it brought about a lot of controversy especially to the people who studied this artist. Additionally, Kehinde Wiley, a renowned artist through his floral themed art he has also been able to support the LGBTQ+ movement which he is part of with works such as the “Third Gender.” All these people have successfully built the queer aesthetics through their works among others.

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Key Scholars

The struggle of the LGBTQ+ community has been documented by a lot of scholars whom of which will be discussed in the following sections. Queer Aesthetics has made such an impact not because of social media or art it is because the influential members were brave enough to pave the way for the future generation of the LGBTQ+ community. One of the issues faced and that have caused so much uproar is the fact that people don't understand their situation and what they go through in their daily lives. Rather people be first to judge not understanding this actually is a biological occurrence just as a person might be born blind or dyslexic among other biological occurrences human beings have. According to Fausto 2018, sex is not binary because of biological reasons. Meaning for one to have a gender different from the norm is mostly influenced by the biological aspect of rather than the cultural aspect which seems to be what most people think. One might wonder why now is the queer aesthetic aspect so important, well since time in memorial there are only two sexes that describe the human variety that is the male and the female. This based from the societal rule and norms set to dictate and eliminate everything does not conform to what is considered as normal by the society. Whereby stringent measure was placed to see that this societal norm is seen through, for instance the roman empire killed people with mixed sex as they were seen as bad omen because they did not conform to the normal binary sexual classification.

This did not end currently there are forces that also work hard to bring down the Queer community, like some governments use model similar to the roman model to suppress these groups. Obviously not killing these people because it is not legal, "but at least deny their

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existence.” Which according to Dr. Fausto is wrong morally and scientifically and it can be proven. The Trump administration; “Now the Department of Health and Human Services wants to follow suit by legally defining sex as “a person’s status as male or female based on immutable biological traits identifiable by or before birth.” This is because as mentioned before an individual does not suddenly decide to become a particular gender; it is a process that starts when they are still an embryo and the XY chromosomes might not form normally and that is what destroys the expected binary sexual expectation. According to DR. Fausto “By birth, then, a baby has five layers of sex. But as with chromosomal sex, each subsequent layer does not always become strictly binary. Furthermore, the layers can conflict with one another, with one being binary and another not: An XX baby can be born with a penis, an XY person may have a vagina, and so on.” which is why these Queer aesthetic movement is basically there for the members to be accepted into the society.

Jude Bennet on the other hand looks at the life of Langstone Hughes and his life in the article: Multiple Passings and The Double Death of Langstone Hughes. Whereby the main work of focus in this period will be Café 3 a.m. that Hughes actually uses it to push the acknowledgement of the Queer Aesthetics, joining the other artist who experience sense and sensation despite the fact that there are some people who are ready to tear them down. Café 3 a.m. was part of the collection of the poems from the large book Montage of Dream Deferred. This poem was explicitly written to deal with the queer aspect whereby this was in the 1950’s joining the early pioneer who started the fight for this group to be recognized. This poem was mainly inspired by the change of location for Hughes, whereby he moved to Harlem and made many gay men and some of them were married. Homosexuality during this period had not

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garnered the much attention it required, mainly because of issues like the Aids scare whereby it was called “their disease.” Therefore, the queer movement was not as popular as today, the poem *café 3 a.m.* was a directly addressing the fact that gay people need acceptance and understand which makes it to perfectly fit into this essay. The poem explicitly looks at the sexual spectrum and how ambiguous it is, making this the more reason that there should be acceptance.

According to Bennet the name of the poem, *café* had a hidden meaning to the fact that it is open up to the late night obviously has some hidden meaning. In addition to the fact that there is a voice that is incapable of making complete sentences using vocabulary like “spotting fairies.”

Detectives from the vice squad

With weary sadistic eyes

Spotting fairies

Degenerates,

Some Folks Say.

But God, Nature,

Or somebody

Made them that way.

Police lady or lesbian

Over there?

Where?

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The café is turned into a bar, the act is carried by vice squad with weary sadistic eyes, day becomes nights, created multiple points of view. Showing how people lack consideration and treat the community as not human beings. They cannot even address them properly “Degenerates some folk says” which brings out the common people in the part they play in making things hard for the Queer community. This paints a whole image of extreme homophobia only make a consideration of where the queer community can get hope “But God, Nature or Somebody made them that way.” Here Hughes echoes Dr. Fausto trying to show the audience that no one really knows why an individual would want to go against the society sexual binary norm, knowing that it will be hard for them. really nobody knows why individuals would wasn’t to belong to whatever gender in the spectrum by at least Dr Fausto has tried to explain the occurrence biologically which has clearly fallen on deaf ears. Hughes through this short poem has been able to express all the aspects of the queer community including the stereotypes, at the end there is the line “Police lady or lesbian,” typically up to this point a police lady is considered a lesbian or any other who takes a job that society has only designated for men. Also, this line explains the gender confusion in place, people are not sure if he is man or she is a woman, the different forms in which gender can take. In this case the sexist stereotype clearly shows how indistinguishable the policewoman and lesbian are, because they have taken the role of men that society has set aside.

The queer community always leaves the common people with a lot of questions and that is why maybe this poem was filled with questions, to further the confusion people already have intended in an artistic manner. Like for example the last question “where?” it symbolizes the need most of the common people who want homosexuality to be defined, that is if not male or female then what it is then? Additionally, the question acts as a representation of a common

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reaction to a lot of people; asking the “where the police lady or lesbian?” is clearly a matter of spotting more fairies or degenerates which is actually what most people do for the purpose of continuing to stigmatize or gossip about the degenerates. Additionally to draw the “homosexual panic,” just as his other narrative Hughes does promise or assure anything in the sense that the confusion is already created but there is certainty that identities will be fixed or order be established, what he does is to further blur the boundaries which technically represents fully homosexuality; it is a blur line there is no definition. In this poem homophobia and homosexuality are both blurred just as in his other works like *Blessed Assurance* (1963). Hughes can be considered a master in poetry but also in queer aesthetics because he uses his platform to experience and make others experience sense and sensation of the queer culture with just a short poem, he has been able to address all the homosexuality topics. Which plays an important role in the fight for acceptance in gay community in addition to the other artists or influential people in history who have used their platforms to bring inform the common people about what they don't understand.

Technology (The Use of Social Media in the LGBTQ+ community)

The fight for acceptance is not left to the influential people; as know a lot of people come out of the closet and with large numbers anything can be achieved. Therefore, queer individuals don't need to have big audiences or platform like Langstone Hughes or Andy Warhol, they just technology. Something simple like a tweet or an Instagram post can go long a way in their fight for acceptance. At this point is clear that being a queer individual is not an easy task in our society that is heteronormative, that is based on the groups around the world that are far-right

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queer individuals feel it more difficult to be themselves which is the essence of queer aesthetics. But now with technology everything has become easier, through the use of technology the LGBTQ+ community has been able to use it as a platform to voice their experience and help spread their cause. Just as any other cause like #metoo or #blacklivesmatter the queer community has been able to use the social media platform to further their cause just like #pride. This is in the event of intolerance, discrimination they receive from the common people in their society, whereby through social media the queer community can empower each other using groups, hashtags, campaigns and maybe pages.

Social Media Platforms

According to Walthman 2018, twitter is considered as one of the most active social media platforms for the queer community. Twitter is used as a “brave Space” that allows queer individuals to be really themselves, whereby twitter also puts in efforts such as the Pride Month movement. Twitter users develop weekly hashtags that trend globally, here members of the queer community, members engage in different activities such as posting selfies which helps them to express themselves in their own comfortable skin. Through such platforms also helps the queer community spread positivity, make friends, partners and come together for the same cause. Twitter also helps them to grow and develop like figuring out sexuality or any other related issue. Which actually proves that social media plays a vital role in assisting and empowering the members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Facebook on the other hand is not that popular to the LGBTQ+ community, but there are pages and groups which use themes based on the queer community; whereby members can share

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posts, memes and stories that can empower and inspire at the same time. for instance, a Facebook page superficial that is a meme page that have countless interactions because actually it is a safe place for the young queer individuals.

Instagram on the other hand has been under criticism for mistakenly removing content that was LGBTQ+ related. Which basically has not discouraged the queer individuals to use the social media space to push their agenda and inspiring more people. The #pride has also been used on Instagram together with photos of the rainbow themed content, whereby celebrities have shown support in pushing for this culture. Like for instance, Taylor Swift's Music Video "You Need to Calm Down" that was specifically developed to support the LGBTQ+ community. It was directed, casted among other various posts was filled by a queer individual.

Which brings us to YouTube that has also been criticized for having policies that are considered to be homophobic, like for instance "anti-LGBTQ+" ads during the influential Pride month. This platform has been used to push the agenda of the queer community, just like Taylor Swift Music Video; You need to calm down that was used to garner support for the Equality Act which would provide the LGBTQ+ community equal opportunities as anyone else. Just as Langstone Hughes Taylor Swift has been able to use her huge fanbase and platform to send a message to common people who still don't understand that the queer individuals need to accepted. With over 150 million views on YouTube this music video has clearly brought and enlightenment with lyrics like "Shade never made anybody less gay." Additionally, YouTube has been used by a lot of Queer individuals who actually are most influential individuals in this platform coming up with creative and inspiring content like their Coming out stories. "Yes, there

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are controversies involved in many of the platforms, but the number of queer individuals using them to empower themselves outweighs the defects.”

In conclusion this might be seen as a battle that might not be won, the most important thing is the progress that is made. Everyday the queer community get a win, and they never shy to express themselves for who they really are. With the aspects like gay marriage and maybe the passing of the Equality Act this will mean that the queer community is almost there in winning the fight for acceptance. This is throughout the world, whereby people united by the same cause will have to leave like the rest of the common people without fear of being judged or being left because of their sexual orientation. Technology definitely and in specific social media has changed everything in the way they approach Queer Aesthetics. Before it was influential people like Hughes or Warhol who would make impact but today anyone can make the change they desire, making it easier for the queer community to express themselves adequately. Being an aspect that has been considered as degenerate for the longest time, it is only right that the queer community is embraced by society to change the narrative for once. So that the coming generation would not have the ideas of discrimination and isolation of queer individuals but enable the queer individuals to identify their sexuality early enough which would be better for everyone.

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