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FROM VICTIM TO VIXEN: THE TRANSFORMATION OF DOLORES HAZE THROUGH THE ADAPTATIONS OF VLADIMIR NABOKOV'S LOLITA

Kulcsszavak: *Lolita; férfitekintet (male gaze); szexizmus; tárgyasítás; nemi erőszak*

The portrayal of women in media and art has increasingly become a point of discussion in recent years. However, this issue is deeply rooted in societal structures that predate the contemporary debates on the subject. The gendered lens through which narratives are shaped is influenced by patriarchal systems, impacting both the creation and interpretation of artistic works. My central argument is that Lolita's subject matter has been distorted by the societal dominance of the male perspective, complicating readers' ability to fully engage with the novel's themes. Through the lens of the male gaze, Lolita's character is often sexualized, overshadowing her victimization and instead emphasizing her supposed role as a seductress.

I apply the theoretical frameworks of John Berger and Laura Mulvey's concept of the "male gaze" to analyse how the changes in the character of Lolita and her narrative have been reshaped in various cultural contexts.

A central focus of this analysis is the comparison between Nabokov's original novel and its Hollywood adaptations by Stanley Kubrick and Adrian Lyne. Moreover, my thesis delves into the transformation of Lolita's image in popular culture, particularly in the context of modern-day references of Lana Del Rey. I examine how Del Rey's music and overall aesthetic, influenced by the vintage Americana elements of Lolita's image and themes, play a role in transforming Nabokov's heroine.

One of the main aspects of my thesis involves exploring how Lolita's image itself has been appropriated by online fans of the aesthetic, particularly on platforms such as TikTok, Tumblr, and Pinterest. These communities often blur the line between the adaptations, with young girls and women adopting the "nymphette" or "coquette aesthetic".

In the final section of my thesis, I emphasise the significance of addressing these issues and reclaiming the narrative of Lolita. I examine whether educators, critics, and media creators can help shift the conversation surrounding the novel and similar works, advocating for a more responsible and nuanced approach to these complex topics.

Ultimately, my thesis seeks to shed light on the ways the male gaze influences not only the interpretations of Lolita but also broader societal issues, such as victim-blaming and sexual exploitation.