

Writer's Memo: "Desire of the Absence of the Other"

Adriana Beltrano

I wrote this paper for my final in a course taught at the University of Florida by Professor Bianchi titled ENG4015 Psychoanalytic Approaches: What is Desire? I loved the course, and I was intrigued by the concept of a desire only being a desire when it remains unrealized. A main aspect of the course was applying Freudian and Lacanian concepts of desire to media, whether it be film or another medium. Here, I wanted to explore the theory that when we desire, especially when it comes to romantic desires, we are actually desiring the absence of the other. It is the age-old adage of, "I want what I can't have." I chose to analyze *Fleabag*, a TV show which exemplifies the fact that an unfulfilled desire is more satisfying than a fulfilled desire, as ironic as that may seem. The second season in particular has a Catholic priest as a love interest, which, as love interests go, is quite literally as unavailable as possible. I contrasted *Fleabag* with *The Graduate*, an example of a realized desire that is unfulfilling, and *Titantic*, another example of more fulfillment as a result of unrealized in a romantic desire. My goal is to have readers (perhaps mostly young adults who are relatively new to love/desire) question their desires and whether they actually hope for fulfillment. When we grow tired of our partners, is it because they are not for us, or is it because media has made us used to unfulfilled or impossible to fulfill relationships as the end goal? On a similar note, are we purposefully desiring things that will never lead to our desires being fulfilled?