

“Nothing Comes from Violence”: Teen Drama, Hate Speech and Digital Masculinities

Abstract

In the digital age, teen drama series such as *Sex Education*, *Heartstopper*, and *Adolescence* extend beyond the screen to become central texts in wider discursive formations around youth, gender, and violence. This study explores how hate speech, whether direct or systemically embedded, is discursively rearticulated and emotionally reframed by adolescent viewers through social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram.

Grounded in Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS, Khosravini, 2017, 2020), the analysis focuses on how young users engage with scenes of homophobia, gender-based exclusion, and emotional repression by producing platform-native responses: reaction videos, duets, meme edits, and captioned clips. These affective performances serve not only to interpret the original content but to renegotiate its ideological payload, often amplifying or resisting the violence depicted.

Two conceptual tools are employed to examine these processes. The first is semiotic prosody (Balirano, 2017), which captures the emotional and ideological layering across modes, image, sound, gesture, and text, within digital remediations. The second is the community factor (Balirano, 2014), here reconceived to analyse the cultural and generational proximity between content creators and audiences, shaping how hate is either reproduced or dismantled in these digital contexts.

Ultimately, echoing Sting’s words that “nothing comes from violence,” this talk argues that the digital afterlife of teen drama is where masculinities are not only represented but contested, and where the emotional legacies of televised hate become tools for building diversity, rather than breaking-community.