

The background is a light blue gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across the surface. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The text 'QUEER THEORY' is centered in the middle of the image.

# QUEER THEORY

# WHAT IS QUEER THEORY?

- QUEER THEORY IS A FIELD OF **CRITICAL THINKING** THAT EMERGED IN THE EARLY 1990'S OUT OF THE FIELDS OF QUEER STUDIES AND WOMAN'S STUDIES. QUEER THEORY INCLUDES BOTH QUEER READINGS OF TEXTS AND THE THEORIZATION OF 'QUEERNESS'.
- **CRITICAL THEORY** IS THE REFLECTIVE ASSESSMENT AND CRITIQUE OF SOCIETY AND CULTURE BY APPLYING KNOWLEDGE FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES.

- IN THIS THEORY THE WORD QUEER IS NOT NECESSARILY A SYNONYM FOR GAY BUT RATHER A POSITION THAT REJECTS MAINSTREAM EXPRESSIONS OF ALL TYPES OF BEHAVIOUR INCLUDING SEXUALITY OR GENDER.
- QUEER THEORY LOOKS AT ANY KIND OF IDENTITY OR BEHAVIOUR THAT WOULD FALL OUTSIDE OF THE 'TYPICAL MAINSTREAM' IN CINEMA OR MIGHT BE CONSIDERED 'OTHER' IN THE EYES OF VIEWERS.
- THE THEORY IS INTERESTED IN STUDYING AND EXAMINING NON-NORMATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF GENDER, SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY.
- THEORISTS BELIEVE THAT IDENTITIES ARE NOT FIXED, THEY ARE FLUID AND CHANGING, NOT ONLY FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE BUT WITHIN THE SAME PERSON DIFFERENT TIMES.
- MUCH OF QUEER THEORY DEVELOPED OUT OF A RESPONSE TO THE AIDS CRISIS, WHICH PROMOTED A RENEWAL OF RADICAL ACTIVISM, AND THE GROWING HOMOPHOBIA BROUGHT ABOUT BY PUBLIC RESPONSES TO AIDS. QUEER THEORY BECAME OCCUPIED IN PART WITH WHAT EFFECTS OF NEW FORMS OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, EDUCATION AND THEORIZING IN "QUEER".

- QUEER AND FEMINIST THEORIES, LIKE OTHER PERSPECTIVES BASED ON SOCIALLY-BASED IDENTITIES AND GENDER, TEND TO OVERLAP. BOTH OF THESE THEORIES ARE DESCRIBED AS RESPONSES TO THE "ESSENTIALIZING" OF GENDER AND SEXUAL IDENTITIES, WHICH LEAD TO THE OPPRESSION OF THOSE WHO DO NOT CONFORM TO SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED GENDER NORMS.
- THIS HIGHLIGHTS THEIR SIMILARITY IN THE VIEW THAT GENDER-RELATED IDENTITY IS SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED. THERE IS THUS AN AGREEMENT THAT THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN AND SEXUAL MINORITY GROUPS CAN BE CHALLENGED BY WAY OF A SELF-CONSTRUCTIVE PROCESS THAT REJECTS THE PERCEIVED INFERIORITY OF THIS GROUP WITHIN THE SOCIAL ORDER.
- WHILE QUEER AND FEMINIST THEORIES SHARE SEVERAL COMMONALITIES, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY ARE EASILY MEASURABLE BY THE SAME STANDARD, WITH SOME PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT THEY COULD EVEN BE AN AWKWARD PAIR TOGETHER.