UNIT 2 REPRESENTATIONS

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you have got some idea about representations as a cinematic mode and how representation can be used as a way of understanding or interpreting cinema. In this unit we will take that discussion further and talk about it in further detail. Here, we will look more closely at the relationship between representation and gender. We will learn how men, women and the same-sex, have been represented in Indian cinema especially, the commercial Hindi cinema of Bollywood, to see what representations reveal about the way gender is understood and mediated through cinema.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you would be able to:

• Define and describe representations in the context of cinema;

• Analyse the debates on representations from ancient to modern times;

• Discuss gender representations in contemporary Indian cinema; and

• Explain and distinguish different categories of gendered representations in cinema.


2.3 DEFINING REPRESENTATIONS

At the outset, we could begin by saying that a representation is a depiction or a sign that stands for, or takes the place of, something else. This could be the world around us or an abstract idea or for that matter even a political articulation. A representation could be conveyed through a variety of forms such as theatrical performances, cinematic narratives, literature, art, photography, digital encoding and so forth. These choices, however, are not random or politically innocent. Moreover, as there is no unmediated access to reality, representations are an essential component of our lives for they help us understand our world better and even from a different perspective. Nonetheless to treat a representation as politically neutral is a fallacy. This unit underscores the need to read representations in terms of their ideological effects, for even the earliest modes of representations which comprised theatrical performance and poetry dealing with the valour of kings, tales of war or the separation of lovers, were not devoid of the ideological mores of their age. Thus, the ancient Greek poet Homer sang ballads about the Trojan War and of the marvellous exploits of the Greek hero Odysseus mainly because he catered to an audience of courtly lineage.

What really is a representation? Why do we use the term ‘representation’, when categories like art, literature, film or aesthetics would suffice? One would like to know why a bust of the Greek philosopher Aristotle falls well within the realm of representational art, while a rare satellite photograph of the moon does not? This is not to imply that photography is not a representational art form, but to draw attention to the difference between representation as a creative activity, distinct from the mechanical process of imitation. As re-creation, a representation must be filtered through the subjectivity of the artist, who in turn belongs to a certain historical context and cultural milieu. So, while Keats “Ode to Autumn” is brilliant poetry, it is nonetheless a depiction of an English autumn from the point-of-view of a subject called John Keats, who was located at a moment in time when industrialisation was first making its appearance in the English countryside. The “Ode” captures a fast disappearing pastoral activity - that of the hand operated cider press. Similarly, while the impressionist artist Claude Monet’s masterpiece entitled The Water Lilies (http://www.moma.org/images/dynamic_content/exhibition_page/31634.jpg) is a re-presentation of actual water-lilies, it has in turn inspired many more representations which, while simulating the original, are by no means servile copies of it.

When seen as a representation, art cannot be abstracted from the conflicts of its age. It is no longer viewed as transcendental or as occupying a realm of pure beauty untouched by time or place; rather, it is very much a part of its times, of the mundane and politically inundated reality from which it grows. Therefore, as representation, art stands demystified and embedded
Representations in the discourse of its time. Thus we can say that culture and ideology are the salient factors that determine the study of representation. Let us look at some examples. While the sign of the Red Cross, for instance, represents medical and humanitarian aid, Edvard Munch’s iconic painting *The Scream* attempts to re-present the angst of the post World War II generation; likewise, the Russian director Sergei Eisenstein’s film *Battleship Potemkin* attempts to re-create the essence of a complex historical period - the Tsarist regime in Russia; and last, but not the least, is the diasporic Indian filmmaker Deepa Mehta’s film *Fire* which attempts to re-presents gender taboos in the Indian society. The term ‘attempt’ used here, illustrates the difference between reality and its portrayal; for while reality is far too complex, rough, unclear and often diffuse, when it gets transformed into a piece of art it appears as an artistic product that has finesse, shape and form. In other words, reality has been re-constructed.

The reality that art attempts to portray is therefore a construction and like all constructions it is not free of its politics or ideology. However, as no system of representation can ever encompass the entire gamut of reality, new modes and media of representation are constantly being invented/constructed to signify reality in better ways. Newer media are forever being invented, as is evident in the trajectory of art forms beginning with cave paintings to movements such as Surrealism, Dadaism, Cubist art, and post-modernism, and various other art forms such as literature, cinematography, digital and electronic media and so forth.

As a representational art form, literature, it has been stated perhaps naively, is a ‘representation of life’. ‘Naively’, because while a novel like Charles Dickens’ *Hard Times* for instance does represent life in the Victorian age or the gory aspects of industrialisation in Victorian England, it is instrumental in influencing opinion regarding capitalism in general and the Victorian age in particular. Likewise, the play *Dance Like a Man* by the contemporary Indian playwright Mahesh Dattani represents the effect of a normative, machismo culture on a protagonist who challenges the stereotypical definitions of ‘masculinity’. Commenting on the play after watching the performance, the audience commended Dattani for presenting a departure from the regular stereotypes of dissidence. They admitted that the play had influenced and even changed their perceptions regarding gender. It is important to remember that mainstream Indian cinema exerts a strong influence on various aspects of Indian life including fashion, ethics, politics and especially gender and the social expectations of gender roles.

The curious question is, if representations stem from life, what effect, if any, can representations have on life? In this regard the Victorian writer Oscar Wilde was not far from the truth when he made the controversial statement that life imitates art and not vice-versa. From the above discussion one can infer that representation and reality are in dialogue with one
another and while it is an established fact that the former is not a mirror reflection of the latter, yet representations cannot be divorced from the culture and society that have produced it. Art as representation can mould society’s attitudes, perceptions, behaviour and values. In the Indian subcontinent, media and cinema have proved to be the most influential modes of representation. However, before we embark on a full-fledged analysis of gender representation in film, certain theoretical aspects must be clarified.

The two factors that stand established are: one, art is influenced by life and in turn exerts its influence over life; and two, all art is representation, which means that it is hardly ever neutral, unbiased or politically innocent. This is not to say that all art whether popular or elitist is no different from propaganda. But by describing art as representation, we foreground its ideological and political constructedness. In the next section, let us look at various attempts to theorise and debate representation through the ages.

2.4 DEBATING REPRESENTATION: PLATO TO EDWARD SAID

The earliest attempts to theorise representation are found in the work of the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle. In their treatises, the word *mimesis* is used to define representation as a literal translation amounting to imitation. ‘Imitation’ is not viewed in a pejorative manner but treated more in terms of the layered ambiguity of representational art. As Aristotle saw it, ‘imitation’ is a natural aspect of the human condition and humans, far more imitative than other animals, learn their first lessons through imitation. It is thus the first step towards a performance. For instance in the *Poetics*, Aristotle uses the term *mimesis* to describe tragedy - the most performative and representative art form in ancient Greece:

“An imitation of an action that is serious and complete, and which has some greatness about it. It imitates in words with pleasant accompaniments.... It imitates people performing actions and does not rely on narration. It achieves, through pity and fear, the catharsis of these sorts of feelings.” (Butcher, 1974, p. 31-55).

The aim of tragedy as an art form is to bring about *catharsis* or purgation. Aristotle insisted that tragedy, by arousing pity and fear, had a purging effect on individuals. Aristotle’s statement was made in response to Plato’s call for censorship in the arts. In Book X of *The Republic*, Plato had proposed banning imitative poetry in the ideal city-state as he claimed that it aroused emotions of baser and irrational nature and perversely affected the human mind. The performance of tragedy and comedy would therefore promote undesirable modes of behaviour among the citizens. Bolstering his argument
further, Plato insisted that imitative art being thrice removed from reality was a falsehood and deserved to be banished. The argument goes as follows: while the original form, let’s say of a chair, for instance, rests with the creator, it was in turn copied by the carpenter and the likeness of this was further reproduced by the poet or the painter. Art was thus thrice removed from the original idea (Allen, 2006). This argument can be better understood in the context of the present-day media which bear the charge of mediating reality and creating for the viewer a version of reality that may be far removed from the events that actually transpired. So, for Plato, art created illusions, in much the same manner as the present day media is accused of falsification of reality. Plato makes a strong argument regarding the potentiality of representational art to rouse emotion and influence opinion. It therefore had no place in his ideal republic. The only poetry that was allowed in the city state or in the nurseries of the young and impressionable was the kind which dwelt on heroic valour or the coronation of kings or didactic tribute to the state.

While Plato was well aware and wary of the idea of art on the mind, Aristotle made a case for the same by drawing upon the *catharsis* or purgation. He argued that by re-presenting the more disturbing, volatile and irrational side of human nature, the viewer’s experience was at best vicarious and this induced a purgation of those undesirable elements thereby cleansing viewer of negative emotions. Aristotle insisted that art and its performance led the citizen to leave the theatre completely purged of all that was base (Butcher, 1974, 1961).

Moving from ancient Greece to the Romantic Period may appear to be a quantum leap but it was with the Romantics (Coleridge, Kant, Hegel among others), that the concept of aesthetics as the philosophy of art was first articulated. Speaking about this period, Terry Eagleton states “… the assumption that there was an unchanging object called ‘art’ or an isolable experience called ‘beauty’ or the ‘aesthetic’, was largely a product of the very alienation of art from social life...” (Eagleton, 1983, p. 21).

This was the time when industrialization was beginning to make its presence felt in the English countryside. Thus, for the Romantics, artistic creation transcended the vagaries of historical, material, social or political change. In other words, art was removed from the materiality of commercial activity and appeared absolved of the conflicts of its age rather than embodying them. The Victorian age with its emphasis on utilitarianism and progress welcomed this line of thought by insisting that imaginative endeavour was as an activity gloriously useless, and at best an end in itself. Attempting to make a case for the arts, Oscar Wilde insisted on the adage ‘art for art’s sake’, implying that it was reductive to look for a message or purpose in a work of art. Paradoxically, Victorian art is extremely representative of the discourses of its times. Moreover, with the emergence of print culture in...
As the post-modernist philosopher Michel Foucault later pointed out, the Victorian age straitjacketed sexuality into discourses of the normative as opposed to that of the deviant or the dissident. Representation played no small role in this facilitation; rather, as Foucault writes in *The History of Sexuality Volume II*, it added to the proliferating discourses on sexuality. Typical representations of sexuality such as the normative family, the hysterical woman, the dissident, the deviant, the lady, the prostitute and so forth abound in the Victorian Age. The thrust of Foucault’s investigation is why all this transpired in the Victorian age and not before or after it? He tries to show how discourse and the knowledge it produces and disseminates are connected to the power structures which in turn stand validated by that knowledge. Foucault relates this to the demands of the welfare state that was beginning to consolidate its position and shows how representations of normative sexuality were complicit with it.

Using the Foucauldian framework, the post-colonial scholar Edward Said in his path-breaking study titled *Orientalism* (1978), analyses the way geographical territory of the Orient (Middle East) was depicted by the European imagination through the entire period of colonial expansion from eighteenth century onwards. He notes how these representations of the Orient focus on images of primitivism, despotism, cruelty, sensuality, superstition, exotic splendour and so forth to create certain stereotypical notions about the Orient and its inhabitants. For the European imaginary, the Orient, through its representations, stood for everything that they prided themselves on not being. In other words, the Orient was the uncivilized, barbaric ‘Other’ to the civilized West. Thus, Orientalism helped the West to define its self-image more than it did for the East. You have already come across Said’s work in unit 3, Block 5 of MWG 001. It may be helpful for you to review the relevant section.

The overarching question is why such representations of the Orient would be helpful to the Western power structures of the time in time and why would the West wish to propagate such representations? The answer lies in the economics of colonial polity which needed an ideology such as Orientalism to facilitate the project of colonial conquest. As Said says, Orientalism became: “…a western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.” (Said, 1978, p. 3). The ideology of Orientalism projected colonial expansion not as the exploitative mechanism it really was but as a civilizing mission of carrying the white man’s [and woman’s] burden - that is, of carrying the light of civilization and modernity to the darker and savage regions of the earth. In this regard, representations of the Orient by the Occident, worked to validate the altruistic aspect of colonial conquest. While agreeing that representations can never be exactly
realistic, for there is no Orient (except as a geographical location) out there waiting to be realistically depicted, Said states: “there is no such thing as a delivered presence but a re-presence, or a representation” (Said, 1978, p. 21). Representations however cannot be dismissed as untrue, for as the text goes on to demonstrate, Orientalism, i.e., knowledge about the Orient produced by the Occident, deeply influenced colonial polity and therefore had vast implications for real people in real contexts.

Our next point regarding the theory of representation deals with the politics of the viewer because besides the creating subject, the interpreting subject too imparts meaning to the piece of art in terms of her politics and ideologies. As the cultural critic Ella Shohat says:

“Each filmic or academic utterance must be analysed not only in terms of who represents but also in terms of who is being represented for what purpose, at which historical moment, for which location, using which strategies, and in what tone of address.” (Shohat, 1995, p.166-178).

In other words, while studying representations we must be alert to the ideological work the representation accomplishes. So while liking or not liking a text/art may appear to be no more than a value judgment, it speaks volumes about how power operates in a society at any given point of time. Our critical responses, variable as they may be, are demonstrative not just of the vagaries of human nature but reflect deeper prejudices and beliefs, which as mentioned earlier on in this essay, shows how power operates in society. For instance, while the neo-classicists decried Shakespeare's plays as the products of a mind untrained in Latin, Greek and mathematics; the Romantics deified him but doubted the literary capabilities of the poet John Donne.

As you have seen from the above discussion, representations are therefore deeply political and laden with ideological mores. This is particularly true of cinema and mainstream Indian cinema which is labelled as an escapist mode of mass entertainment. When studied in terms of representation, this cinema reveals the politics of its making. In the next section we will take a closer look at gender representation in contemporary Indian cinema.

**Check Your Progress 1:**

*What is representation in films? Is it different from other forms of art?*
2.5 GENDER REPRESENTATION IN INDIAN CINEMA

Gender representations in the mainstream contemporary Indian cinema (Bollywood) generally follow a set pattern or formula; for instance femininity is represented in terms of passivity, chastity and as the repository of traditional, ritualistic values, while controlled anger and violence are the characteristics of the virile male hero in his role as protector of the defenceless women. Their maschismo character makes them the hero, while gay men are often shown as effeminate, and lesbians are portrayed as exhibiting masculine traits. Films did evolve beyond such stereotypical depictions, about the gay men and lesbian portrayals we will talk in details in the last unit of this block. The nuances of such attempts will be explored in this section. We will look at representations of dissidence vis-à-vis their equation with heterosexuality, the manner in which they challenge the traditionally established and inviolable gender demarcations and how this relates to the homophobia of a heteronormative society.

2.5.1 Masculine Representations

In this section, we will begin by examining two important aspects of masculine representations in Indian cinema: homosociality and homoeroticism. The difference between the two terms lies in the social behaviour between two male protagonists in a film. Homosociality refers to a bonding between the two characters without any sexual connotations. For instance, either they are two heroes, or two brothers, or hero and a villain. Between the male hero and the male villain, certainly action and showing physical power of the two are evident, overlaying the fact that good (hero) always wins over evil (villain) whatsoever may be the incidental development in the movie. So this category might be seen through ethical and moral point of view; but the first two categories of two heroes/brothers are more prominent examples of homosociality. For instance, the bondage of friendship between two male protagonists is sometimes portrayed sharing their feelings and love for each other at plutonic level. Films like Dosti (1964), Sholay (1975), Yaraana (1981) and many more films where two protagonists turn out to be heroes of the films each having two different heroines. Not only such portrayals, but pairing up two male heroes with bondage of same profession or motive behind their acts, like Do aur Do Paanch (1980), Shaan (1980), and many others, is also quite common examples of homosociality. Still today such representations of masculine homosociality are acceptable by spectators widely.

The other representation of two male actors is homoeroticism. Their amiability and bondages with other male protagonists in any given film sometimes depicts an erotic bondage beyond the parameters of sexual overtones. Take examples of films where, two heroes fall in love with the same girl and one sacrifices for the other, like Arzoo (1965), or Muqaddar
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ka Sikandar (1978), or Qurbani (1980). Another example of homoeroticisms in Bollywood Hindi cinema are camp readings. Camp readings see male spectacle as masculine. Camp readings combine the antithetical qualities of authenticity and theatricality. This can be seen as an oppositional reading of popular culture offering the identification and pleasure that dominant cultures deny to homosexuals. Camp emphasises the performativity of gender and shows that gender enacts a set of discontinuous, if not parodic, performances (Butler, 1990, pp. 163-80).

Representations of gender matter because gender is a fiction disseminated by the prevailing power structures, which is in this case the welfare state. In being seen as natural, gender representation assumes dimensions akin to natural truth and can exercise the power to determine the destiny of the persons concerned. Particular acts and choices function as the markers of pathology typifying the deviant character type which expresses, as Foucault says, a degenerate constitution whose sexuality is governed by concepts of risk, danger and violence (Foucault, 1976, pp. 38-79). These groups are taken to be marginal but in their marginality function to determine the dominant, that is, they consolidate reproductive sexual relations as normative and healthy.

2.5.2 Feminine Representations

As you have read, femininity is often represented in mainstream commercial cinema in terms of passivity, chastity where woman becomes the repository of traditional, ritualistic values making her the carrier of maan-maryada of the family, community and nation, such as the figure of the pativrata (devoted wife and mother), the Sati-Savitri, and the portrayal of villainy through characterisations of vamps. The depiction of deviance on the Indian screen has followed a staple pattern too, with very few exceptions. The Pati- Parameshwar phenomenon has become a ritualistic tradition for representing women in cinema. Until the 80s of Bollywood there was an increase in the number of female-orientated movies. Masculine characteristics of action were depicted. Even, the roles of vamps or female villainy saw changes during this period. Vamps were no longer shown as docile feminine characters attached to the male villains, they rather were portrayed as over-powering and significant roles in most of the family dramas, for example like a torturous saas or nanad, like Sau Din Saas Ke (1979), Ghar Ek Mandir (1984), Biwi Ho To Aisi (1988), etc. Another significant factor can be seen in films, is the feminine homosociality. The plutonic bonding between two female protagonists is also represented in many films, like the male bonding. Two female protagonists may be involved in the same act, like stealing Parvarish (1977), or supporting the heroes to take revenge, like in Mawaali (1983).
2.5.3 Same Sex Representations: Lesbians

In Indian cinema, same sex love has often been used as stock situation for comedy. This is especially true in the depictions of male homosexuality which is often represented in terms of effeminacy or an inadequacy in terms of meeting the norm of masculinity typified by the figure of the hero. For instance, the blockbuster Kal ho Na Ho (2003) directed by Karan Johar was among the first films to portray camp reading gestures on screen. Yet when this was shown through sexual postures of the two male leads Shahrukh Khan and Saif Ali Khan, the camera focussed instead on the nervous agitation of the bai bringing the morning tea. Her reaction prompted hilarious comedy, thereby negating the possibility of making manifest the subversive sexuality observed by the viewer, who through the reaction of the bai is now encouraged to view the enactment as a comic misunderstanding rather than a conscious choice made by the protagonists. The subversive edge of the preceding shot — enacting Camp (through gestures) — was thus translated as a comic occasion. The film Dostana (2008) followed a similar theme but established heterosexuality of all the couples involved in the final sequence. The possibility of a committed and fulfilling homosexual relationship, in this case between the two male leads Abhishek Bachhan and John Abraham, was reduced to the level of farce. You will read more about such examples in Hindi and vernacular films in the last unit of this block.

In this unit, you will learn about lesbian representations in Bollywood cinema, citing two examples only. Deepa Mehta’s radical movie Fire (1996), despite the representation of a bond between the two main characters played by strong female lead of Shabana Azmi and Nandita Das, ultimately took recourse to explaining the desire between the two women as the outcome of a cloistered and lonely marriage. Female homosexuality was seen as demonic and threatening and needed to be erased to re-set familial and social balance. Depictions of homosexuality as in the films mentioned above strengthen the binary between the hetero and the homo, with normativity and health associated with the former.

In this regard, Karan Razdan’s film Girlfriend (2004) marks a departure from the set norm. At the outset, the ‘Tanya’ character in the film is depicted as a masculine woman or the mannish-lesbian; but she is so by choice. As the masculinised lesbian, the character of Tanya follows the stereotypical image of female homosexuality but it is through the inherent doubleness of her character, existing and partaking of both the realms of masculinity and femininity that she challenges established and exclusivist gender boundaries. Through her, the auteur is able to subvert the staid dichotomy of active male as opposed to the passive female - a binary that is foundational for defining gender in a patriarchal culture.
Narratives are often structured through opposition, thereby enabling the spectator to identify with the point-of-view desired by the auteur. In this text the stereotype of the homicidal, psychotic butch Tanya, is foiled by the ultra feminine, victimised, ‘normal’ woman Sapna, who besides being a professional model is utterly incapable of taking care of either herself or her finances. Needless to say, she has to be rescued time and again by Tanya. While Sapna fits the stereotypical mould of the damsel in distress, Tanya on the other hand straddles a bike, makes money as a street fighter and becomes the menacing serial killer. Danger stalks her character. Following lesbian stereotypes, she too is cast in terms of the castrated female lesbian. She is in this regard the wild uncontrollable entity- the female homosexual, who by subverting societal mores now exists in a space that is taboo.

Representations of female homosexuality, as is evident from the above example, do not serve the function of celebrating female desire but place it on display for the masculine spectator. Women’s desire is a matter of curiosity, and it demands investigation simply because it is the ‘other’. The spectator engages with the scene by seeing the lesbian as the ‘other’, a fit object of ‘investigation-by-scrutiny’ (Kuhn, 1985). This objectification of the images on screen imply a masculine subject position, which can be occupied by spectators, be they men or women.

According to Sigmund Freud (Frud, 1905, pp. 387-90), homosexual women suffer from penis envy, therefore the homosexual female, as visualized in the dominant discourse, tries to overcome her castration by assuming a masculine role in life, cross-dresses and behaves through gestures and desire like a man. A significant part of the lesbian fantasy/myth is the origin of the lesbian. For Freud, a lesbian is a woman who has never recovered from her sense of phallic inequality.

Ultimately, the cinematic text attempts to contain the unruly and deviant female body which threatens to confuse gender boundaries and disrupt the social order. Such an argument establishes heteronormative sexuality as the accepted sexual behaviour and dismisses homosexuality as a pathological deviation. However, the final method of containment is always lethal. The psychotic lesbian must die, which may not be the case with the male homosexual who by being effeminate and funny is rendered innocuous. As Michel Foucault iterates, the culturally sanctioned signifiers of the homosexual experience cannot go beyond casual encounters, the anonymous sexual act and the immediate albeit illicit pleasure (Blackman & Walkerdine, 2001, p. 168).

Foucault argues that homosexual connections assume disturbing and disruptive positions when they translate into gentler modes of camaraderie, affection, friendship, passion, solidarity, companionship and tenderness (Blackman & Walkerdine, 2001, 168). The dominant stereotypes of gay men range from
the sissy to the sad young man to the ageing queen and as mentioned earlier they are characteristically the source of comedy because they fail the norm of masculinity. These stereotypes are often introduced through visual, aural and descriptive iconography to typify male homosexuality, such as codes in dressing, certain gestures, stylistic décor or extended looks, all of which can invoke the homosexuality of the character. Typically in the Girlfriend, the male homosexual is a limp-wristed effeminate man.

The representation of the male homosexual objectifies the male body and delivers to the gaze. But the image of the male body as an object of the gaze is fraught with ambivalences, repressions and denials. Like the masquerade, the notion of spectacle has such strong female connotations: for a male performer to be an object of display and desire, even if it means donning a mask, it threatens his very masculinity. But because the phallus is a symbol and signifier no male body can ever symbolise it completely and although the patriarchal male subject has a privileged relation to the phallus, he will always fall short of the phallic ideal. Jacque Lacan (Lacan, 1977, p. 291) notices this effect in his essay on the meaning of the phallus: “the curious consequence of making virile display in the human being itself seems feminine.” Hence the male spectacle acquires a feminine position. While the theatricality of the performing male is aimed at arousing desire, sensuality is more a feminine trait. It is the female body that can legitimately be objectified as sensual and desirable thereby commanding the gaze, while the sensual masculine posturing, even in theatricality, easily becomes an object of laughter.

Check Your Progress 2:
What are the differences between homosociality and homoeroticism?

2.6 LET US SUM UP

Our analysis of gender representation in mainstream Indian cinema shows how representations are far from innocuous and stereotypes far from sterile. Their presence ensures that the hegemonic social gendering maintains and validates its position as the dominant, true and natural. However, it is the inherent ambivalence in the nature of representation that reveals the antithetical directions at one and the same time. The cinematic text discussed above, at one level solidifies the position of the heteronormative by playing on the homophobic notions of society but at the same time destabilises notions of gender by pointing to the ‘performance’ of gender. What this makes apparent is that ‘gendering’ is an ambivalent process and that identity, specially gendered identity, is relational.
2.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Use examples to illustrate how gender and representation are inter-linked.

2. Critically analyse the concept of *mimesis* in the context of gender taking examples from any film you have watched recently.

3. Discuss same-sex representations in Indian Cinema with the help of examples. What do these representations reveal?

4. What is Camp reading? How is gender represented in this form of readings?

2.8 REFERENCES


Edvard Munch’s iconic painting *The Scream* ([link](http://www.nydailynews.com/polopoly_fs/1.1026216!/img/httpImage/image.jpg_gen/derivatives/landscape_370/image.jpg))

**FILMS**


### 2.9 SUGGESTED READINGS


