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## Abstract

As the romantic comedy has evolved through indie cinema in the 2000s, a new character trope has seen a huge surge of use, popularity, and backlash: the Manic Pixie Dream Girl, or MPDG. Through three key films in the MPDG canon, *Garden State* (2004), *(500) Days of Summer* (2009), and *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World* (2010), this thesis explores the meaning of the trope as well as its implications on modern pop culture and gender relations. Integral to this is an analysis of the MPDG and her relationship to her protagonist informed by queer theory and feminist theory.

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