

ABSTRACT

This thesis uses a sociological approach to film and existential theory to analyze the representation of youth rebellion and the rejection of the American Dream in Richard Linklater's *Dazed and Confused* (1993). In this research, an attempt will be made to explore how the 1970s socio-cultural setting in the chosen film leads to the rejection of predetermined life trajectories and to the creation of a counterculture prioritizing personal freedom over traditional success. Based on the concept of cinema as a reflection of collective psychological states proposed by Siegfried Kracauer, the theory of existentialism developed by Martin Heidegger, and the framework of youth alienation by Kenneth Keniston and Theodore Roszak, this research seeks to explore the patterns of anti-authoritarianism, nonconformity, and present-oriented autonomy within the chosen cinematic work.

Keywords: American Dream, Existentialism, Youth Counterculture, Radical Freedom, Sociological Film Analysis.