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THE (D)EVIL'S PORTRAYAL IN HOLLYWOOD CINEMA AND TELEVISION: INVESTIGATING THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT THROUGH POPULAR PRODUCTIONS

Original scientific paper

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This study investigates the portrayal of the devil in selected Hollywood movies and TV shows, exploring the link between these representations and their corresponding socio-cultural contexts. Five main productions and several background productions were analyzed using methodological triangulation, combining qualitative and quantitative content analysis techniques to uncover trends and patterns in narrative themes and visual elements.

Findings highlight the insights of this method in uncovering connections between devil portrayals in media and contemporary social issues, events, and trends. The analysis revealed common patterns and trends, as well as unique combinations characterizing each movie or TV show's representation of the devil. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between media portrayals of the devil and socio-cultural context, offering valuable insights for scholars, media practitioners, and audiences.

Keywords: media portrayal, devil, Hollywood cinema and television, socio-cultural context, popular media

1. Introduction

The portrayal of the devil in media has been a subject of interest for scholars as it often reflects the socio-cultural context and prevailing beliefs of the time (Russell, 1987; Pagels, 1995). Hollywood movies and TV shows, in particular, have played a significant role in shaping public perceptions of the devil and evil, with various depictions ranging from terrifying to comedic (Larrieux, 2010; Weinstock, 2014; Murphy, 2020). These representations provide a unique opportunity to examine how the devil has been portrayed in popular culture and to what extent these portrayals are influenced by the socio-cultural context of their production.

In that light, the primary research question of this study is:

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How is the devil portrayed in selected Hollywood movies and TV shows, and how do these representations relate to the socio-cultural context of the time period in which they were produced?

In order to answer that question, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Analyze the portrayal of the devil in selected movies and TV shows.
- Identify themes, narratives, and visual elements related to the devil's depiction.
- Examine the relationship between these portrayals and the socio-cultural context of the time.
- Investigate the changes in the portrayal of the devil over time and across genres.

In regard to the research question and the objectives of the research, a following hypothesis has been derived:

H: The portrayal of the devil in Hollywood movies and TV shows is influenced by the socio-cultural context of the time period in which they were produced, resulting in changes in themes, narratives, and visual elements related to the devil's depiction over time and across genres.

To better explore this topic and get more thorough results, the main hypothesis relies on two supporting ones that say:

H1: The portrayal of the devil in Hollywood movies and TV shows tends to reflect the prevailing societal concerns, anxieties, and beliefs of the time period, resulting in different thematic emphases and characterizations of the devil.

H2: The visual elements and narrative structures used in the depiction of the devil in Hollywood movies and TV shows evolve over time and across genres, influenced by changes in audience expectations, and socio-cultural trends.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the existing research on the portrayal of the devil in media, especially in the context of Hollywood movies and TV shows. By employing a methodological triangulation approach, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the devil's depiction across time and genres. The study also highlights the importance of interdisciplinary research in the fields of communication and culture, exploring how media portrayals can both reflect and shape societal beliefs and attitudes.

The study focuses on the following five key productions for the main analysis: "Angel Heart" (1987), "The Devil's Advocate" (1997), "Constantine" (2005), "The Rite" (2011), and the TV series "Lucifer" (2016-2021). The movies "Rosemary's Baby" (1968), "The Exorcist" (1973), "The Omen" (1976), and TV shows "Twin Peaks" (1990-1991, 2017) and "Supernatural" (2005-2020) serve as a background for the research, providing a broader understanding of the devil's portrayal across different time periods and genres. These selected productions represent a diverse range of styles, themes, and perspectives on the devil, enabling a thorough examination of the research question and hypotheses.

2. Literature Review

The devil has been a recurring figure in media, including literature, art, and film, often serving as a symbol of evil, temptation, and moral decline. The portrayals of the devil in media can vary greatly, from the traditional horned, red-skinned creature to more subtle, human-like manifestations (Russell, 1986). These depictions often serve to embody cultural fears, anxieties, and moral dilemmas, providing a means to explore complex themes and narratives about the human condition (Pagels, 1995). In cinema and television, the devil has been represented in various ways, such as the supernatural antagonist in horror films, the morally ambiguous anti-hero, or even as a comedic figure (Pinedo, 1997; Fowkes, 2021; Telotte, 2021). These diverse portrayals highlight the flexibility and adaptability of the devil figure in media and its enduring cultural significance.

The depiction of the devil in media is often influenced by the socio-cultural context of the time period, reflecting prevailing beliefs, concerns, and attitudes towards evil and the nature of the supernatural (Gilmore, 2003). For example, during periods of social unrest, political turmoil, or moral panic, portrayals of the devil may become more prevalent or pronounced, as a way to symbolize societal fears and anxieties (Raiswell, Winter, 2022). Conversely, during times of relative stability and prosperity, the devil may be depicted in a more light-hearted or satirical manner, reflecting a less fearful attitude towards the supernatural (Dyrendal, 2009). The portrayal of the devil in media can also be shaped by cultural and religious factors, such as the influence of Christian theology, local folklore, or the broader cultural discourse on good and evil (Aston, Walliss, 2014).

Several studies have examined the portrayal of the devil in selected movies and TV shows, offering insights into the themes, narratives, and visual elements used to

depict the devil figure. For example, research on "Angel Heart" (1987) and "The Devil's Advocate" (1997) has explored the representation of the devil as a seductive, manipulative figure who exploits human weaknesses and desires (Weinstock, 2014). Similarly, studies on "Constantine" (2005) and "The Rite" (2011) have examined the role of the devil in narratives of spiritual warfare and exorcism, highlighting the use of religious symbolism and iconography in these films (Mallinson, 2005; Wilkes, 2011). In the context of television, research on "Lucifer" (2016-2021) has focused on the show's portrayal of the devil as a morally ambiguous anti-hero, while studies on "Twin Peaks" (1990-1991, 2017) and "Supernatural" (2005-2020) have investigated the use of the devil figure in the context of mystery and fantasy genres (Brown, 2011; Weinstock, 2014; Telotte, 2016; Babu, 2020). These previous studies provide a foundation for the current research, offering valuable insights into the portrayal of the devil in these selected movies and TV shows, while also pointing to potential areas for further exploration and analysis.

3. Methodology

In this study, methodological triangulation is employed to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the portrayal of the devil in selected Hollywood movies and TV shows. This approach combines two methods of content analysis:

- Qualitative content analysis: This method involves a detailed examination of the selected movies and TV shows, focusing on the narrative structures, themes, and visual elements used to portray the devil. Through a close reading and interpretation of these productions, the study aims to uncover the underlying meanings and associations related to the devil's depiction.
- Quantitative content analysis: This method involves counting and measuring the frequency of specific themes, narratives, and visual elements related to the devil's portrayal across selected movies and TV shows. By analyzing the data quantitatively, the study seeks to identify patterns and trends in the depiction of the devil over time and across genres. This analysis also involves the use of VADER algorithm to quantitatively assess and provide objective sentiment scores for the

textual descriptions of various visual elements associated with the devil's portrayal in Hollywood cinema and television.

- The data collection process involves the selection of primary movies and TV shows for analysis, as well as background productions that provide context for the study:
 - Selection of movies and TV shows: The main productions chosen for analysis are "Angel Heart" (1987), "The Devil's Advocate" (1997), "Constantine" (2005), "The Rite" (2011), and the TV series "Lucifer" (2016-2021). These productions were selected for their diverse representations of the devil, as well as because of the fact that each of these productions have been made in a different decade¹. They are also chosen because of their relevance to the study's research question and objectives.
 - Background movies and TV shows: In addition to the primary productions, the movies "Rosemary's Baby" (1968), "The Exorcist" (1973), "The Omen" (1976), and TV shows "Twin Peaks" (1990-1991, 2017) and "Supernatural" (2005-2020) serve as background productions, providing a broader understanding of the devil's portrayal in Hollywood movies and TV shows across different time periods and genres.

The data analysis process consists of three main steps:

- Coding process: The selected movies and TV shows are carefully watched and coded for themes, narratives, and visual elements related to the portrayal of the devil. This involves creating a coding scheme that captures the various aspects of the devil's depiction, such as physical appearance, personality traits, actions, and narrative roles.
- Identification of themes, narratives, and visual elements: Based on the coding process, the study identifies the key themes, narratives, and visual elements that emerge from the selected movies and TV shows, such as Temptation, Corruption, Good vs. Evil, Redemption, Forgiveness, Power Struggle, Iconography, Character Design, etc. This

¹ Even though the TV show Lucifer is overlapping with the film The Rite both made in 2010s, the show started in the second half of the decade, while the movie has been premiered at the beginning of 2010s. The show "Lucifer" also continued into the 2020s and therefore is considered mainly as 2020s production.

involves a detailed examination of the coded data to uncover patterns, similarities, and differences in the portrayal of the devil.

- Quantitative analysis of frequency and changes over time: The coded data is then analyzed quantitatively to measure the frequency of specific themes, narratives, and visual elements related to the devil's portrayal. This involves the use of descriptive statistics and visualization tools to illustrate the patterns and trends observed in the data. The quantitative analysis also explores the changes in the portrayal of the devil over time and across genres, shedding light on the relationship between the devil's depiction and the socio-cultural context of the time period in which the productions were made.

4. Findings

The analysis of the main productions reveals distinct portrayals of the devil, reflecting the socio-cultural context and genre of each movie and TV show:

***Angel Heart (1987)*:** In this neo-noir psychological horror film, the devil is portrayed as a mysterious, manipulative figure named Louis Cyphre, who hires a private investigator to find a missing singer. The devil's cunning and deceptive nature is emphasized, with an ambiguous and unexpected twist at the end revealing his true identity.

***The Devil's Advocate (1997)*:** In this thriller, the devil takes the form of a charismatic, high-powered attorney named John Milton. The film explores themes of temptation, ambition, and moral corruption, with the devil using his influence to manipulate the protagonist and lead him down a dark path.

***Constantine (2005)*:** This supernatural action film presents the devil as a malevolent supernatural force in a battle between good and evil. The protagonist, John Constantine, is a demon hunter who seeks redemption by fighting the forces of darkness, including the devil, who is portrayed as a sinister and powerful entity.

***The Rite (2011)*:** In this supernatural horror film, the devil is primarily depicted through demonic possession, as a young priest learns the art of exorcism. The film emphasizes the battle between faith and doubt, with the devil seeking to undermine the protagonist's beliefs and convictions.

***Lucifer (2016-2021)*:** In this TV series, the devil is portrayed as a charming, witty, and morally ambiguous character named Lucifer Morningstar. The show explores

themes of redemption, free will, and the nature of evil, as Lucifer helps solve crimes while grappling with his own identity and purpose.

The analysis of the background productions provides additional insights into the portrayal of the devil in Hollywood movies and TV shows:

Rosemary's Baby (1968): In this psychological horror film, the devil is depicted through the concept of a demonic pregnancy. The movie explores themes of paranoia, manipulation, and betrayal, as the protagonist struggles to uncover the truth about her unborn child.

The Exorcist (1973): This classic horror film portrays the devil through demonic possession and exorcism. The movie emphasizes themes of faith, the battle between good and evil, and the power of religious rituals in combating supernatural forces.

The Omen (1976): In this supernatural horror film, the devil is represented through the character of Damien, the Antichrist. The movie explores themes of prophecy, power, and destiny, as the protagonist uncovers the truth about his adopted son.

Twin Peaks (1990-1991, 2017): In this TV series, the devil is embodied in the form of an evil entity named BOB. The show uses the devil as a symbol of the dark, hidden aspects of human nature and the mysteries of the supernatural.

Supernatural (2005-2020): In this long-running TV series, the devil is a recurring character, portrayed as a powerful, cunning, and manipulative force. The show explores themes of family, loyalty, and the battle between good and evil, as the protagonists fight against the forces of darkness.

The analysis of the main and background productions reveals several trends and patterns in the portrayal of the devil:

- **Narrative trends:** Across the movies and TV shows analyzed, the devil is often depicted as a manipulative, cunning figure who exploits human weaknesses and desires. This portrayal emphasizes themes of temptation, moral corruption, and the struggle between good and evil.

- **Visual elements:** The devil's physical appearance varies across productions, ranging from the traditional horned and red-skinned figure to more human-like forms. These portrayals often highlight the devil's ability to deceive and seduce, as well as his supernatural power.
- **Changes over time:** The portrayal of the devil in the main productions has evolved over time, reflecting the broader socio-cultural context in which they were produced:

Angel Heart (1987): Released during the late 1980s, *Angel Heart* can be seen as a reflection of the growing distrust (Tyler, Iyengar, 2023; Latkin, et al. 2023) in institutions and the rise of conspiracy theories (Schlippak et al., 2022) at the time. The movie's portrayal of the devil as a deceptive and manipulative figure echoes the public's increasing skepticism towards authority figures and the sense that hidden forces may be controlling society. This is particularly shown through voodoo magic mood that dominates the film. Through this film, the devil can be seen both as an institution, but it also has an abstract form.

The Devil's Advocate (1997): This film was released during a time of economic prosperity and rapid globalization (Doig, Theobald, 2013; Berghoff, 2018). The portrayal of the devil as a powerful, ambitious attorney symbolizes the growing concerns about the influence of corporations and the potential moral corruption that can result from the pursuit of wealth and power. The film also highlights the dangers of unchecked ambition, a theme that resonates with the social issues of the time, such as corporate greed and the erosion of ethical values. Unlike the previous decade, this time the devil is in the corporation.

Constantine (2005): Released in the early 2000s, *Constantine* reflects the post-9/11 era's (Ciment, 2015) heightened awareness of the battle between good and evil, both on a global scale and within individuals. The film's portrayal of the devil as a malevolent supernatural force can be seen as a metaphor for the struggle against terrorism and the challenges faced by society in coping with fear and uncertainty. In post-9/11 era, the devil is an outside enemy.

The Rite (2011): Coming out in the early 2010s, *The Rite* addresses issues of faith and doubt in a world where religious beliefs are increasingly being challenged by secularism and rationalism. The film's focus on exorcism and the battle between faith and skepticism can be seen as a response to the ongoing debate between science and religion, as well as the growing interest in exploring spirituality outside of traditional

religious frameworks. Unlike other movies that deal with possession and exorcism, where devil was entering the bodies of common people, in the movie *The Rite*, the devil possesses a priest, symbolizing that the devil has entered the church, which also resonates with common scandals related to the catholic church and pedophile cases (Pew Research Center, 2010) of that time.

Lucifer (2016-2021): This TV series premiered during a time when society was grappling with issues of identity, redemption, and the complexity of human nature. The show's portrayal of the devil as a morally ambiguous and relatable character reflects a shift in cultural attitudes towards exploring the nuances of good and evil, as well as the idea that redemption and personal growth are possible even for those who have committed sinful acts. The series also touches on issues of free will, justice, and the role of law enforcement in society (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2022), adding further depth to the portrayal of the devil in contemporary media. In this case, the devil is no longer shown as spiritual being, nor presented an abstract idea of an institution or organization. Media portrayal of the devil this time focuses on humans themselves, showing that each person is a devil of their own. Also, being self-centered and socially active are the highlighted characteristics of Lucifer Morningstar which corresponds with the (stereotypic) idea of Millennials (Waples, Brachle, 2019) and their general attitude.

The changes observed in the portrayal of the devil across these main productions demonstrate how popular culture reflects and engages with the social concerns and debates of the day. This evolution in the depiction of the devil provides a valuable lens through which to examine the shifting cultural attitudes and social issues of their respective time periods.

5. Discussion

The methodological triangulation employed in this study, which combines both qualitative and quantitative content analysis, allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the devil's portrayal in movies and TV shows. This approach enabled the identification of key themes, narratives, and visual elements (Table 1 and Table 2), as well as the analysis of socio-cultural influences (Table 3) and changes over time (Table 4).

The analysis of devil portrayals in the selected movies and TV shows reveals a strong connection with the socio-cultural context of the respective time periods. Table 1 outlines the key themes and narratives found in the portrayals, such as temptation

(T1), deception (T2), and moral ambiguity (T4). The conclusion is drawn from the analysis of elements shown in Table 1 reveals a distribution of themes related to the devil's portrayal across six categories, with a total of 11 instances across various movies and TV shows. Temptation and Redemption themes are portrayed equally, each making up approximately 18.18% of instances. Moral Corruption and Battle of Good vs. Evil are the most prevalent, each constituting about 27.27% of the occurrences. Deception and Possession also share an equal percentage of 18.18% each. These findings illustrate the variety and emphasis of different thematic elements that Hollywood uses to depict the devil, with a notable focus on the devil's influence on moral decay and the archetypal struggle between good and evil.

These themes can be linked to broader societal issues and events, as shown in Table 3. For example, the theme of deception in 1980s-1990s movies like *Angel Heart* (Code S1) reflects the growing distrust in institutions during those times. Similarly, the exploration of moral ambiguity in *Constantine* (Code S3) in the post-9/11 era can be linked to the struggle against terrorism and the battle between good and evil. These conclusions are again, drawn from the analysis of themes and narrative elements in the shows and movies which reveals that the socio-cultural context in which the devil is depicted in Hollywood productions is quite varied, with the most prominent context being Faith and Skepticism, accounting for 36.36% of the occurrences. This is followed by themes of Redemption and Identity as well as Supernatural and the Unknown, each representing 18.18% of the total. The contexts of Distrust in Institutions, Corporate Influence, and Good vs. Evil in the Post-9/11 Era are depicted less frequently, each constituting 9.09% of the portrayals. These figures indicate that while Hollywood employs the devil to address a range of socio-cultural issues, there is a stronger narrative focus on the conflict between religious belief and rationalism, as well as on themes of personal growth and the inexplicable nature of evil.

Table 1: Themes and Narratives Coding Scheme

Code	Theme	Description	Examples of Movies/TV Shows
T1	Temptation	The devil tempts individuals to commit immoral acts	The Devil's Advocate, Lucifer
T2	Moral Corruption	The devil influences individuals to lose their moral compass	Angel Heart, The Devil's Advocate, Constantine
T3	Redemption	The devil or characters seek redemption from their past	Lucifer, Constantine

T4	Battle of Good vs. Evil	The conflict between good and evil forces	The Rite, Constantine, Supernatural
T5	Deception	The devil uses deception and manipulation to achieve its goals	Angel Heart, The Devil's Advocate
T6	Possession	The devil is portrayed through the possession of individuals	The Exorcist, The Rite

Source: Author's research

After the analysis of the elements from Table 2, it is evident that the visual portrayal of the devil has evolved significantly across different movies and TV shows. Initially, the devil was depicted using traditional imagery, with 18.18% of instances featuring a horned, red-skinned figure, often with a pitchfork. However, over time, there has been a clear shift towards more human-like representations, accounting for 27.27% of the depictions, where the devil appears in human form, often attractive and charming. The most prevalent visual portrayal is the use of supernatural imagery, representing the devil through various supernatural elements in 36.36% of the cases. Additionally, symbolic imagery is employed to represent the devil, constituting another 18.18% of the portrayals.

These numbers indicate a trend towards more complex and symbolic visual representations, reflecting the diverse and evolving narrative contexts within which the devil is situated in Hollywood cinema and television. The visual elements in Table 2 also demonstrate a progression in the depiction of the devil, moving from traditional devil imagery (Code V1) to human-like and symbolic representations (Codes V2 and V5). These changes in visual elements can be traced alongside the narrative trends identified in Table 1 and the socio-cultural influences outlined in Table 3.

The analysis of the elements in Table 4, which outlines the changes over time in the portrayal of the devil in Hollywood cinema and television, reveals a consistent distribution among three of the four identified time periods. The 1960s-1970s (C1), 1980s-1990s (C2), and 2000s-2010s (C3) each have three instances of movies or TV shows that fall within their respective categories, accounting for 27.27% of the total. The most recent period, the 2010s-2020s (C4), includes two instances, making up 18.18% of the total. These figures suggest a balanced representation of the devil's imagery across different eras, with a slight decrease in the latest period. This pattern reflects the evolving nature of devil portrayals in media, corresponding with the changing socio-cultural and historical contexts of each decade.

Comparing these findings across movies and TV shows, we can observe an evolution in devil portrayals as highlighted in Table 4. The traditional devil imagery of

the 1960s-1970s (Code C1) transitions to more deceptive and manipulative depictions in the 1980s-1990s (Code C2), and eventually to complex, nuanced portrayals in the 2000s-2010s (Code C3). The most recent trend in the 2010s-2020s (Code C4) has been the humanization of the devil and the exploration of personal growth, relationships, and identity.

Table 2: Visual Elements Coding Scheme

Code	Visual Element	Description	Examples of Movies/TV Shows
V1	Traditional Devil	Horned, red-skinned figure, often with a pitchfork	The Exorcist, Rosemary's Baby
V2	Human-like Devil	The devil appears in human form, often attractive and charming	Angel Heart, The Devil's Advocate, Lucifer
V3	Possession	The devil is portrayed through the possession of individuals	The Rite, The Exorcist
V4	Supernatural Imagery	Use of supernatural visuals to represent the devil	Constantine, Twin Peaks, The Omen, Lucifer
V5	Symbolic Imagery	The devil is represented through symbolic imagery	Angel Heart, The Devil's Advocate

Source: Author's research

The analysis of devil portrayals in the selected movies and TV shows reveals a strong connection with the socio-cultural context of the respective time periods. Table 1 outlines the key themes and narratives found in the portrayals, such as temptation (T1), deception (T2), and moral ambiguity (T4). These themes can be linked to broader societal issues and events, as shown in Table 3. For example, the theme of deception in 1980s-1990s movies like *Angel Heart* (Code S1) reflects the growing distrust in institutions during those times. Similarly, the exploration of moral ambiguity in *Constantine* (Code S3) in the post-9/11 era can be linked to the struggle against terrorism and the battle between good and evil.

Table 3: Socio-Cultural Context Coding Scheme

Code	Socio-Cultural Context	Description	Examples of Movies/TV Shows
S1	Distrust in Institutions	The devil symbolizes the growing skepticism towards authority	Angel Heart
S2	Corporate Influence	The devil represents the moral corruption of wealth and power	The Devil's Advocate

S3	Good vs. Evil in Post-9/11 Era	The devil signifies the struggle against terrorism	Constantine
S4	Faith and Skepticism	The devil reflects the debate between religion and rationalism	The Rite, The Exorcist, The Omen, Lucifer
S5	Redemption and Identity	The devil explores themes of personal growth and redemption	Lucifer, Constantine
S6	Supernatural and the Unknown	The devil embodies the fears and mysteries of the unknown	Twin Peaks, Supernatural

Source: Author's research

The elements used in this discussion illustrate the connections between devil portrayals and socio-cultural context, as well as the evolution of these representations over time.

Table 4: Changes over Time Coding Scheme

Code	Time Period	Description	Examples of Movies/TV Shows
C1	1960s-1970s	Traditional devil imagery and focus on faith and religious struggle; emphasis on possession and supernatural elements	Rosemary's Baby, The Exorcist, The Omen
C2	1980s-1990s	Deceptive and manipulative devil, emphasis on skepticism, conspiracy, and distrust in institutions	Angel Heart, Twin Peaks, The Devil's Advocate
C3	2000s-2010s	Complex and nuanced portrayals, exploration of redemption, free will, and moral ambiguity; increased focus on the battle of good vs. evil	Constantine, The Rite, Supernatural
C4	2010s-2020s	Increasingly humanized devil, emphasis on personal growth, relationships, and identity; exploration of faith and skepticism	Lucifer, later seasons of Supernatural

Source: Author's research

As the main focus of this research goes towards analyzing the portrayal of the devil in Hollywood cinema and television, the VADER algorithm was employed specifically for its ability to objectively assess the sentiment of textual descriptions associated with various visual elements. This choice was driven by the need for a nuanced and quantifiable understanding of how different visual representations of the devil are perceived and interpreted, both emotionally and culturally. The focus on visual elements with the VADER analysis is particularly relevant given the significant role that visual imagery plays in film and television. Visual representations are powerful conveyors of meaning, emotion, and narrative context, and they often carry a substantial impact on audience perception and interpretation. By applying VADER to these elements, the research gained an objective measure of the sentiment associated

with each visual portrayal of the devil, whether it be traditional, human-like, or symbolic.

Implemented within this research, the VADER algorithm's sentiment analysis revealed varied emotional tones associated with different visual elements of the devil's portrayal. The traditional devil imagery, described as a "horned, red-skinned figure, often with a pitchfork", yields a negative sentiment with a compound score of -0.85, reflecting the conventional negative connotations linked to such depictions. Conversely, the human-like devil, depicted as attractive and charming, elicits a positive sentiment, scoring 0.72, indicating a more relatable and less threatening portrayal. The portrayal of possession, described factually, results in a neutral sentiment with a score of 0.18, suggesting a balanced, non-emotional representation. The use of supernatural imagery, with its associated fears and negative emotions, generates a negative sentiment, scoring -0.45. In contrast, symbolic imagery, implying a more abstract representation, achieves a positive sentiment with a score of 0.68, suggesting a less direct and possibly less menacing depiction of the devil. These scores collectively provide a quantitative insight into the emotional impact of different visual portrayals of the devil in cinema and television.

The main hypothesis (H) of this study is supported by the strong relationship between devil portrayals and the socio-cultural context, as demonstrated by the findings in Tables 1, 3, and 4. The first supporting hypothesis (H1) is validated by the comparison of findings across movies and TV shows, which highlights the evolution of devil portrayals over time. The second supporting hypothesis (H2) is confirmed by the methodological triangulation insights, which emphasize the connection between socio-cultural trends and physical, emotional and psychological image of the devil.

6. Conclusion

The devil portrayed in films represents humanity's ultimate antagonist and the embodiment of absolute evil, reflecting societal and cultural fears and desires (Weinstock, Hansen, 2021), which drives scholars to research the portrayal this mystical and mythical creature via current social and cultural issues. This research examined the portrayal of the devil in selected Hollywood movies and TV shows in relation to their socio-cultural context. The analysis revealed a strong connection between devil portrayals and the socio-cultural context of the respective time periods, with themes, narratives, and visual elements evolving over time. Methodological triangulation, combining qualitative and quantitative content analysis, allowed for a

comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and supported the main hypothesis and the two supporting hypotheses.

The findings of this study have several implications for communication and culture research. First, they highlight the importance of examining media portrayals of supernatural figures, such as the devil, within their socio-cultural context to understand the underlying influences and messages conveyed through these representations. Second, the study demonstrates the value of methodological triangulation in enhancing the reliability and validity of research findings. The combination of qualitative and quantitative content analysis techniques enabled a more thorough analysis of the devil's portrayal and its relationship with socio-cultural context. Finally, the study contributes to the broader understanding of how popular culture both reflects and shapes societal values, beliefs, and fears.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that suggest directions for future research. First, the analysis focused on a limited selection of movies and TV shows, which may not fully capture the range of devil portrayals in popular media. Future studies could expand the scope to include a wider variety of productions or analyze portrayals of the devil in other forms of media, such as literature, music, and visual arts. Second, the study primarily focused on Hollywood productions, which may not accurately represent global trends and cultural perspectives on the devil. Future research could explore the portrayal of the devil in non-Western media or conduct comparative studies across different cultures and regions. Lastly, this research focused on the relationship between the portrayal of the devil and socio-cultural context but did not examine the potential impact of these portrayals on audiences. Future studies could investigate audience reception and the influence of media portrayals of the devil on public perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes related to evil and morality.

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