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Review Article

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Movie Portrayals of Men in Sensible Shoes

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Abstract

Keywords

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and drag queen

Queer terms associated with *odd*, *strange*, *unusual*, *sick* or *abnormal* open a new world of sexual fundamentalism and fluid gender options (Halperin, 2003). Films best encapsulate the aspects of queer theory, especially among teenage and adult homosexuals. Movies deliberately show sex interlaced with pleasures, longings, and dominant performances. These practices are not restricted to intercourse or acts of penetration, as shown in eight gay films from various cultures. The sexuality of an individual, as seen in the films, may cover sexual practices that have been channeled into 'signifiers of a particular type of social identity' (Garton, 2004). As such, gay movies against all odds need acceptance and approval from society.

Introduction

Moving closer to adolescence, one begins to realize the complexity of the self and explores identity through the interactions between the opposite sex and that of the same gender. The things that make life happy eventually shape the sexual preference of an individual. Movies, in one way or another, may capture the life of a homosexual: the consciousness that he is different, the struggles –whether to reveal his homosexuality or not, the search of finding answers to his sexuality as well as the position he occupies in the gay society once he achieves status.

Rudy (2016) in *The Depiction of Homosexuality in American Movies* shares that opinions and arguments are being discussed in the gay life as most homosexuals still conceal their relationships and in secret exercise homosexuality compared to others who are still trying to confront the truth that they are different by fighting their rights. This explains that "...gay films can attract audiences by describing gays as the objects for laughs; gays revealing their sexual identities; sexual scenes of gays; masculine gay men; and violence in gay life" (p. 59).

As much as movies present a closer truth of gay life, criticisms may still arise depending on how viewers embrace homosexuality. Henceforth, a queer film criticism on eight movies: *Ang Lihim ni Antonio (Antonio's Secret)*, *Edge of Seventeen*, *Ai No Kotodama (Words of Devotion)*, *The*

Fluffer, *O Fantasma (The Phantom)*, and *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar*, *The Happy Prince*, and *A Single Man* are scrutinized to understand a man's affection towards another man.

Synopses

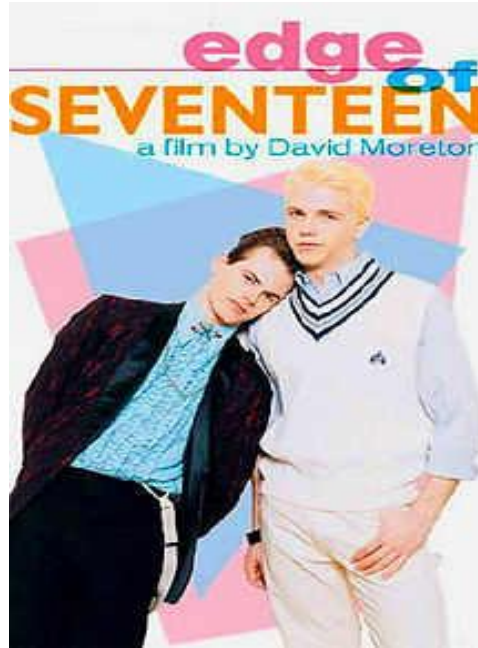
Ang Lihim ni Antonio (Antonio's Secret)
Filipino Independent Film (2008)
Screenplay: Joselito Altarejos & Lex Bonife
Directed by Joselito Altarejos



Fifteen-year Antonio (Kenjie Garcia) from Marikina realizes that he is gay, where his first sexual encounter happens with an older friend Nathan (Ferdinand Zandro Salonga), during a sleepover. After that, Nathan avoids Antonio. Mike (Jiro Manio), another common friend of Antonio and Nathan, is the only person who accepts and supports Antonio's homosexuality. Meanwhile, despite her husband's long absence, who works overseas, Antonio's mother, Tere (Shamaine Buencamino), still hopes that her husband will come home one day. Everything

completely changes when Jonbert (Josh Ivan Morales), the younger brother of Antonio's father, decides to stay with them. Jonbert, a mariner apprentice, is processing his papers co-shares Antonio's room. The teenager curiously touches his sleeping uncle and Jonbert seems to enjoy it. As the story progresses, both frequently exchange sensual intimacy. Then the time comes when Antonio declines to be anally penetrated and Jonbert rapes the teenager. Teri witnesses the situation and kills Jonbert.

Edge of Seventeen
American Independent Film (1998)
Screenplay: Todd Stephens & David Moreton
Directed by David Moreton



Musical inclined Eric Hunter (Chris Stafford) recognizes his sexual identity when he and his best friend Maggie (Tina Holmes) have been employed for a summer job in a local amusement food service in Ohio. They become friends with Angie (Lea Delaria), their lesbian manager and Rod (Andersen Gabrych), a gay college student. Meanwhile, Maggie anticipates and waits for Eric affection towards her.

An attraction exists between Eric and Rod in the workplace, leading to a date. Rod is Eric's first sexual partner: touching and kissing. However, Rod heads back to Ohio State, resulting in Eric's mixed emotions that thereby confirms Eric's sexuality. During his senior year, Eric dyes his blonde hair and effeminate dressing. His parents find this quite a strange transformation. On Eric's side, he feels fortunate that his mother works to send him to New York to pursue a degree in music. When both friends attend a party, the boys call Eric gay, prompting him to run off.

That evening, Eric heads to a local *gay* disco, "The Universal", where he reunites with Angie's

former manager. With Angie's assurance, Eric comfortably mingles with the group and ends up with a stranger who gives Eric a 'rim job'. Eric calls Rob to narrate what happened during his one-night stand, but in their conversation, it seems that Rob has gotten back with his old love affair and finds a lack of interest in Eric. This compels Eric to visit Maggie and reveal that he is *gay*. In the next few days, Eric frequently visits the bar and gets an acceptance by Angie's circle of friends. One night while waiting for Maggie to join him at the bar, Eric flirts with Jonathan, a local college student. Maggie enters the club and is labeled a "fag hag" by Angie's pals, sending her off.

Eric follows Maggie, but she is too upset to talk to him. Eric returns to the club, but Jonathan is nowhere to be found. Eric decides to try his luck by visiting the Ohio State dorms with high hopes of locating Jonathan. He instead meets Rod and ends up having sex with him. After Rod falls asleep, Eric heads home. His mother, Bonnie, confronts issues on his femininity but denies it.

As an experiment, Eric sleeps with Maggie to mend everything, yet Eric realizes that after all, he is *gay*. There is some rift between Maggie and Eric. But towards the end, Eric reconciles with

Maggie and confesses to his mother his homosexuality. The viewers can speculate that he will be “coming- out-of-the-closet” as he visits the gay club.

Ai No Kotodama (Words of Devotion)
DVD Japanese Film (2007)
Screenplay: Keiko Konno and Rie Yokota
Directed by Satoshi Kaneda



Another movie that depicts the fear of revealing oneself of being homosexual is the Japanese film *Ai No Kotodama* or *Words of Devotion*. The story revolves around Shinya Ootani (Hidenori Tokuyama) and Miyako Tachibana (Yasuka Saito), who lived together. Their relationship

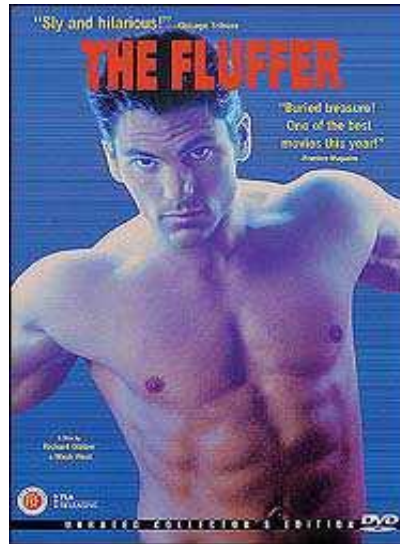
perfectly goes well until Yuki Mizusawa (Rinako Matsuoka) blindly falls for Tachibana. Yuki shows her affection to Tachibana, causing a rift between the boy couple. The story ends with a good relationship between Yuki, Shinya, and Tachibana.

The Fluffer

American Independent Film (2001)

Screenplay: Wash West

Directors: Wash West and Richard Glatzer



In *The Fluffer*, the knowledge of homosexuality has been recognized by the self and the challenge unfolds of finding the perfect mate. Los Angeles newcomer Sean McGinnis (Michael Cunio) tries his luck into the movie business. While passing the time, he accidentally watches a videotape *Citizen Cum* instead of *Citizen Kane*. Sean becomes obsessed with the screen name of Johnny Rebel or known as Michael Rossini (Scott Gurney), the main actor of *Citizen Cum*, who makes Sean turn down a job in the mainstream movie. Instead, Sean accepts to work as a cameraman for Men of Janus, where Johnny is under an exclusive contract. Sean performs oral sex to Johnny prior to the movie production so Johnny will sustain an erection and reach his sexual excitement for the “money shot”. Sean later learns that Johnny does not execute oral sex or kiss other men, but he is a “gay-for-pay”. Sean continues to fluff Johnny during additional movie productions making Sean admire Johnny more. Sean confesses his feelings towards Johnny to his colleague Silver but only learns that it will only be fruitless if a relationship exists since Johnny is a porn star and a straight guy. Meanwhile, Sean starts dating Brian, an acupuncture student, but in their relationship, Brian breaks up with Sean due to Sean’s unending obsession with Johnny.

Back to Johnny, who now becomes an absentee worker as a result of his continuous habit of using crystal meth, Sam Martin, the producer of the film, forces Sean to fluff Jonny’s substitute for the movie. Johnny shows up late and eventually gets fired while his girlfriend Julie Desponsio (Roxanne Day) decides on an abortion. She drives Johnny away from their shared apartment. Then the bad news sets in the expensive camera in the studio goes missing while Chad Cox, the company manager, is discovered to be dead in his unit.

With the police pursuing Johnny, he goes to Sean for help. Both run away to Mexico, where Sean put his car for sale for their getaway funds. Johnny admits that he accidentally killed Chad in a fight over the bribe for slipping the camera for drug money during the trip. That evening, Johnny proposes to let Sean perform sex to him; unfortunately, Sean declines. Both exchange stories of their childhood past: Sean being abused by his male neighbor while Johnny did things he shouldn’t do. They kiss.

The morning after, Johnny leaves and takes Sean's money. Broke and alone, Sean decides to hitchhike and move to Johnny's place he initially suggested. The movie ends with Johnny robbing establishments to be able to survive.

O Fantasma (The Phantom)

Portuguese Independent Film (2000)

Screenplay: Alexandre Melo & Jose Neves

Director: Joao Pedro Rodrigues



The film opens with a dog barking while a man dressed in a full latex suit performing anal sex with a handcuffed man somewhere in the building. The film shifts by introducing Sergio (Ricardo Meneses), a young man who works as an evening garbage collector in Lisbon, Portugal. Fatima, his co-worker, seems to be attracted to him. His dog, Lorde, keeps Sergio company, and their relationship is almost sexual. Like a dog, he prowls the night streets looking for anonymous gay sex that becomes more brutal in each encounter. While rummaging through the trash, he eyes a motorcycle and becomes obsessed with it, eventually leading to his admiration for the

owner-- Joao. The film also shows Sergio's several sexual appetites: when he discovers a cop inside a car who is being handcuffed and gives him a below the belt rub, quick sex with a stranger in the public toilet, a phallic manipulation while strangling himself with the shower hose, an obsession of sniffing and wearing the worn underwear from the garbage and a torrid kiss on the walls where Joao takes his shower after his swimming routine. The story concludes when he breaks into Joao's place and kidnaps him. He leaves his victim and proceeds to the garbage heap where he scavenges.

To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar

American Film (1995)

Screenplay: Douglas Beane

Director: Beeban Kidron



Noxeema Jackson, played by Wesley Snipes and Patrick Swayze, acting as Vida Boheme, won New York's Drag Queen of the Year. Their prize includes a trip to Hollywood to join the Miss Drag Queen of America Pageant. Vida sways Noxeema to bring Chi-Chi Rodrigues (John Leguizamo) along to their trip to Hollywood. They ordain Chi-chi as the *drag princess* who earlier is known as the *boy in a dress*. They purchase an old Cadillac convertible by trading off their airline tickets to John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt (Robin Williams). The trio head to Los Angeles, bringing along an iconic photo of Julie Newmar with an autograph "*To Wong Foo, thanks for everything! Julie Newmar.*" Vida sneaks this photo from a bistro wall.

Driving the long stretch road, Sheriff Dollard (Chris Penn) stops them and discovers that Vida is not a woman but a man. Vida fights back while Dollard falls to the ground, leaving him unconscious. The three speed off thinking that the sheriff is dead. However, somewhere in their travel, the car breaks down and a young lad,

Bobby Ray (Jason London) from an adjacent town, Snyder'sville, gives them a lift. They take shelter for the night in the house of Carol Ann (Stockard Channing), who offers bed and breakfast. Negotiating with the car mechanic, Virgil (Arlliss Howard), Carol Ann's husband, the drag queens have to stay for the weekend while waiting for a replacement for their vehicle to be delivered.

Since the town folks think of them as career women, they carry their feminine roles well. A band of street boys stalks Chi-chi, but Bobby Ray comes to rescue the drag princess. The three homosexuals volunteer for the strawberry social and help the women look better. After the makeover, the women have been confronted by the street boys where Noxeema teaches the roughnecks good manners.

On the other hand, Sheriff Dollard is mocked by friends in the station, laughing at the idea of how a woman can beat up a sheriff. Furious, Dollard goes out in search of the three homosexuals.

During their stay in Snydersville, Vida discovers Virgil's abuse on Carol and comes to rescue her. Vida beats up Virgil, who is thrown out of the house. Virgil the following day meets Dollard in a bar and exchanges notes. Both go to Snydersville, where Dollard commands the townfolks to hand in the drag queens.

Knowing the kindness of the three strangers to their town, one by one, the townfolks walk to the road to declare of being drag queens. Dollard fails and leaves. The event stirs excitement with

everyone dressed in red for the Strawberry Social. After that, Carol Ann fixes the car and the three are set to go. Carol reveals that all along, she recognizes Vida as a drag queen with the presence of his Adam's Apple. Vida gives the photo of Julie Newmar to Carol to signify the importance of their friendship.

The three arrive in Los Angeles, where Chi-Chi receives pageant coaching tips from the other two. The story ends with Chi-Chi winning the Drag Queen of the Year and Julie Newmar crowns him.

The Happy Prince British Film (2018)

Screenplay & Directed by Rupert Everett



Meanwhile, the life of prominent gay personalities may not be expected. They may be doomed towards the end of their careers or face death unexpectedly. So is *The Happy Prince* (2018), a British film written, directed, and played by Rupert Everett, who shows the last three years of famous writer Oscar Wilde. The film demonstrates the pain of Oscar as he faces society's criticism of being gay, mocked by public bullying despite changing his name to

Sebastian Melmoth. The name is Saint Sebastian and Melmoth, the Wanderer, a novel written by Charles Maturin, Wilde's great uncle. His love affair with the young Lord Alfred "Bosie" Douglas (Colin Morgan) brings them to Naples, where his small allowance from his ex-wife Constance played by Emily Watson, has been being cutoff. So is the money Bosie gets from his parents being taken away from him, leaving both penniless and eventually separating.

According to critic writer Peter Bradshaw (2018) in the Guardian, the story becomes a perplexing parable of Wilde's character of being passionate

with a possibility of redemption and that of a lonely and sad person-- a prince in himself who believes in himself that love is worth adoring for.

A Single Man

British Film (2009)

Screenplay by Tom Ford & David Scearce

Directed by Tom Ford

Based on the Novel *A Single Man* by Christopher Isherwood



Another British film, *A Single Man* (2009), depicts a literary twist where college professor George Falconer (portrayed by Colin Firth) mourns the death of Jim (Matthew Goode), his lover. Jim died in a car accident and this devastated the professor so much that he ponders committing suicide. The movie begins with the fatal car crash where George walks and kisses the dead Jim lying on the snow with his dead dog. This horrifying dream wakes the professor and thus, his routine life begins to unfold. One of his students, handsome Kenny Potter, played by Nicholas Hoult, asks for his address from the office and shows a sense of admiration towards the professor. Likely, they develop friendship by drinking in the bar, taking a swim on the beach, and sleeping over in George's house. In their

conversation, George falls asleep and wakes up looking at the sleeping Kenny. He then returns the gun to his safe, burns the suicide letter, and explains in a voice over that it is better "to feel, rather than think". This discovery of finding new love in his life surprises him, and minutes later, he suffers a heart attack, and the movie closes with the ghost of Jim kissing him.

Analysis

The display of homosexuality in movies as proclaimed and celebrated by the gay community depicts that they need to establish their identity in their culture. Despite the marginalization, homosexuals are accepted in western countries by legalising gay marriage. However, there are still

places where homosexuals remain as closets for fear of being stigmatized. Eight movies show the fantasies and struggles of homosexuality as they brace themselves in a community that will either judge or accept them as the third sex.

Awakenings

That line existing between boyhood and young adulthood creates mixed emotions in the lives of Antonio in the movie *Ang Lihim ni Antonio* (Antonio's Secret) and the character of Eric Hunter in *Edge of Seventeen*. Antonio knows that he is different and keeps this awareness to himself at the film's beginning. Antonio's best friend Mike nonetheless accepts him, yet Antonio cannot gain information on his gay sexuality. Surprisingly, Mike validates Antonio's homosexuality by asking him questions. Unlike Eric, Antonio does not explore his sexuality outside his home but takes advantage of the masculinity of his uncle, who is sexually active.

Jenkins (2010) notes that Savin-Williams theorizes that the critical period of developing a homosexual orientation concentrates on adolescence is attributed to the 'changes physiology, psychological functioning, and social conditions'. This is when they become interested in the same sex and act on these attractions. It is further explained that puberty is linked with increased sexual cravings, especially when there are no avenues. As an alternative, these 'early bloomers' are encircled by same-sex stimuli, which they may join in sex play connecting their sexual delight with homosexual experience.

A gay closet like Antonio is someone who has the "phenomenon of the "open secret" does not, as one might think will bring about the collapse of those binarisms and their ideological effects, but rather attests to their fantasmatic recovery (Sedgwick, 1990). The argument here revolves around whether he is willing to go out or should someone open the door for him and tell him that he is gay. The individual waits for the perfect time and may or may not have the courage to reveal his identity. Hence, limiting sexuality to homosexuality or heterosexuality from a binary

leads to the third sex (Sedgwick, 1990). Likely, there is not much discrimination against Antonio as a homosexual because he is still a gay closet, but Nathan's actions towards Antonio indicate some bias. Although both have been on a drinking spree earlier, the wee hours of morning turn into a consensus sexual exchange between Antonio and Nathan. After the incident, no confrontation exists between the two. The absence of a father image may also contribute to the gender inversion of Antonio. In a conversation in the workplace, Teri indicates that if Antonio is gay, she'll be happy to accept the idea as long as he is responsible. William J. Jenkins (2010) explains that Bieber and colleagues (1962) say that male homosexuality produces families with a weak father and a dominant mother.

Faghag

While Eric Hunter is happy to know who he is, he is terrified of what is transforming within him. As shown in the movie, Eric chooses his sexual preference; Scenarios push and pull Eric to be a man or be a woman. And yet, in the end, he feels that he is gay. In his quest for "gay knowledge", he finds the bar as the best source of information. From there, he learns to adopt the lifestyle of gay people: drinking, dancing, flirting, or having a one-night stand with a stranger. Peter Robinson (2008) in *The Changing World of Gay Men* posits that most gay males discover a point in their life when they see a gay scene. They go to bars, clubs, or venues of sex as they socialize with their friends, be with other gay people to have sex or find a sex buddy.

Eric has a closer relationship with his mother and not with his father, contributing to his identity. Eric is quite a loner with only Maggie as his company. On one occasion, Maggie leaves the bar angry when she is called "faghag" by Angie's friends. Dawne Moon (1995) discusses that *faghags* are friends with homosexual men, not lesbians or straight men, since they connect best with this group. Despite knowing that Eric is gay, Maggie is at a crossroad too, it is this divider of maintaining her friendship with him or accepting the idea of Eric's new world---homosexuality.

The crisis confronting the movie is Eric's struggle of revealing his homosexuality to his family, particularly his mother, contrary to Antonio, who maintains his homosexuality from his mother. It is not surprising if Eric denies his sexuality during a confrontation.

Unrevealing Identities

Unlike Eric Hunter, who soul searches for further homosexual knowledge, Shinya and Tachibana have each other to learn. But outside their relationship, both Japanese teens do not know the other homosexuals. They hope to find someone who shares their situation, then comes the revelation of Sho-kun, who has a boyfriend in America. For fear of rejection from society, men loving men in Japan are maintaining their silence.

Japan's anonymity of an open, same-sex relationship in public is documented by Joseph R. Hawkins (2000) in his paper, *Japan's Journey into Homophobia*. Hawkins stresses that when he conducted his field research on homosexual men, the respondents did not confess that they are gay to anyone except their *gei*-friends.

Hawkins (2000) further explains that very few will join a *gei* rally, a march or a meeting. Most of them are not inclined to marry the opposite sex, but the preference to live with the same sex can be seen in what is Japan now --- contemporary Japan. Most Japanese *gei*-identified males are divided into the public and private spheres. As Hawkins (2000) mentions, many Japanese homosexuals have declared knowing little about the history of Japan's homosexuality and have expressed not being interested to know deeper. Hawkins (2000) notes that many men are scared that their family or co-workers may unearth their secrets and be "ostracized". This is not to explain that there are no closet *gei*-men in Japan, there are but can only be seen in a small minority.

The movie does not depict too much physical intimacy or transformation. It would be a very unlikely situation if it was transported centuries ago when male love was declared part of the Japanese sociological framework. During the pre-

Meiji in Japan, homosexual behavior was chronicled by a Jesuit missionary who shared that young men and their lovers did not hide. They honored each other openly, and many men engaged in homosexual relations even if they had been married to women. They considered such acts as procreation (Hawkins, 2000).

Gay-for-Pay

In *The Fluffer* and *O Fantasma* (The Phantom), both Sean and Sergio have already acknowledged their homosexual identities. Sean finds his perfect mate in Johnny while Sergio falls for Joao. Sean, without any inhibition, becomes the *fluffer* described as an individual who works in a pornographic film and ensures that male actors are always aroused. Sean is willing to do anything to win Johnny's love even if he is fully aware that Johnny is *gay-for-pay* who is paid to perform as a homosexual professionally.

Fantasies

O Fantasma portrays too much nudity and rough sex. The film Joao Pedro Rodrigues director shows the core of Sergio's confused thoughts. The film borders the animalistic compulsions of Sergio, such as his obsession with the garbage and the reality that also besets him in the light of day. A catalogue of sensuality and strangeness highlights *O Fantasma*. Film critic Dennis Lim (2010) remarks,

Rodriguez values the night for both its ability to conceal and its capacity to reveal. Sergio's Lisbon is a shadow land of temptation, where he's liable to stumble upon such enticements as a night-shift cop conveniently cuffed and gagged in the backseat of a car or a strapping hunk intently polishing his shiny motorcycle. The biker Adonis wore leather gloves ripped swimming trunks. He dons the stolen Speedo and soaps up his groin while auto erotically choking himself with a shower hose. Moving on to spying, stalking, and outright cruising, he's eventually rebuffed, but the rejection only deepens his obsession (p.304).

It is quite strange to associate names with religion, such as Fatima or the dog as **Lorde**. His relationship with his pet dog is almost sexual: licking, hugging, and kissing. The garbage reflects the kind of life Sergio possesses. His anonymous sex with strangers depicts his thoughts bringing him down to the hell hole. The end of the film finally demonstrates his inability to climb out, and such transformation from a boy to a dog is quite astonishing (Lim, 2010).

Drag Queens

Homosexuals like Vida Boheme and Noxeema Jackson, who achieve recognition in society, do not search for sexual fulfilment but rather maintain their goodness. Vida generally exhibits the traits of an angel. This is evident in the statement by Carol Ann to Vida, “*I don’t think of you as a man and I don’t think of you as a woman. I think of you as an angel.*” From the point of view of Carol, whom Vida has lifted her from her violent husband, Vida is heaven-sent. The angel traits are further demonstrated in the lines, “*there are human rules by which we operate*” “*we help people*”. The helping hands of Noxeema, who disciplines the roughnecks and teaches them manners and Chi-chi, who sacrifices his affection for Bobby Ray, are evidence of goodness. Their accessories and clothes too clearly manifest the angelic appearance. For instance, Vida appears in a large feathered hat and a white suit at the film's beginning.

Joyce Hammond (1996), in her article *Drag queen as an angel; transformation and transcendence in ‘To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar’*, discusses those drag queens, prodigies of sex, and gender differences are used as symbols of femininity. The invasionary element is extended in portraying a drag queen as a gay male, where gender and sexuality through heterosexuality are identified with males and females. Hammond (1996) believes that drag queens are biological men who use make-up, dress up in feminine clothing, wear high heels and wigs. They employ feminine names and imitate women’s speech and behavior.

Noxeema expresses, “*When a gay man has way too much fashion sense for one gender, he is a drag queen.*”

Also, the drag queens represent the victimized *other* among minority groups and the reinstatement of family values. In the *Histories of Sexuality* by Stephen Garton (2004), he explains that the deviancy theory insistence on homosexuality and the social interactionist is some sort of a label that has been given to the marginalized group wherein they design dresses, speech, and actions that will recognize them from the dominant culture.

Conclusion

Homosexuality existed even before gay films were made. Everyone can see glimpses and shadows of homosexual characters in the cinema. So is Eric’s case in *Edge of Seventeen*, the community he is in fosters the identity of homosexuality. Although his coming out from the closet is quite difficult, at a later time, people around him will be able to adjust to his new identity.

The lovers of *AI No Kotodama* (Words of Devotion) are forced to keep their affair a secret for fear of being displaced. Identities of being gay have been identified in the characters in *The Fluffer*, *O Fantasma*, and *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar*, *The Happy Prince*, and *A Single Man*.

Anneke Smelik’s (2000) *Gay & Lesbian Criticism* believes that these movie characters are teased, bullied, muted, pathologized, and much other public shaming. Not only this, but movie producers fear that gay films might not appeal to the general audience or discourage investors. Moviemakers tend to be very cautious and therefore, they create a limited number of gay movies. It is then a risk for movie producers to release films tainted with homosexuality.

Vito Russo (1987), the author of *The Celluloid Closet*, says that homosexuality is rarely depicted in many hundreds of movies. If these movies are shown, the viewers have something to look forward to in these gay movies whether to laugh, pity or even feel the fear. These are examples of pictures that are hard to forget which surely last a legacy. Hollywood, which possesses a higher sense of myths, should ponder gay individuals allowing gay people to be fully accepted worldwide.

This limitation of gay films affects the audience's knowledge of the desires and struggles of homosexuality. Likely, when male viewers or conservatives have the opportunity to watch an erotic gay film, it is not surprising if they will not be pleased and essentially can't even continue watching the entire movie. Besides, religious groups ban churchgoers from watching these types of movies.

The prohibition of homosexual knowledge in society makes gay men keep silent of their identities, or for them to be accepted, they have to leave home and go elsewhere. Who suffers most are teenagers at the crossroads of knowing who they are.

This quest for gay knowledge can be seen in *Lihim ni Antonio (Antonio's Secret)* and *Edge of Seventeen*. Due to the limited information on homosexuality or having a gay mentor, how can a homosexual like Antonio be willing to undergo an incestuous relationship to achieve sexual gratification? In an online question and answer forum on *The Incestuous Family-Roles in Families with Sexual Abuse* moderated by Lisa Levin (2008), it is evident that,

An explanation to why boys are underrepresented as victims can be that the experience of being a victim is so shameful for boys that they deny that the incest ever happened. The sexual abuse against boys can also be a case of homosexual abuse, which is even more taboo than heterosexual abuse.

It is common knowledge that sexual instinct is missing in childhood and set in puberty and the development of coming to adulthood. It is thereby revealed in an alluring attraction by one sex unto the other with the goals of having a sexual union as demonstrated in the movies *Edge of Seventeen* and *O Fantasma*.

Ona Nierenberg (1998), the author of *A Hunger for Science: Psychoanalysis and the Gay Gene*, states that everyone needs to understand human sexuality, not as a biological innate or fixed routine of behaviors with "a pre-established aim and object". It thereby serves a pessimistic milieu that the instinct of nutrition will outline the breadth of hunger and the acquisition of satisfaction. This explains why teenagers who have acknowledged their homosexuality need to satisfy their *sexual hunger*; otherwise, too much repression may lead to an identity crisis, sometimes the death of oneself.

However, those homosexuals who have reached their goals in life and found their destined partners are contented, unless within their relationship something will happen like the film *A Single Man*. The British movie depicts less intimacy but dwells on a deeper understanding of what it takes to have everything and lose the most significant person in life. George does not seek to find new love, but he rather wants to end his suffering by killing himself and yet when Kenny arrives, all his plans eventually change. The plot provides a twist at the end of the story by allowing George to die in a heart attack. This gives a beautiful yet painful resolution that love is always meant to be. Hence, the beginning of the first frame and the film's end are interconnected.

Finally, four or five are independent films out of the eight movies. There will be enlightenment if mainstream cinema produces gay films in the future and not into independent projects that will only yield a few productions. It hopes to truly depict the truths of homosexuals where society will not deny their existence. Like Marcel Proust, author of *The Captive* (1929), shares,

The lie, the perfect lie, about people we know, about the relations we have had with them, about our motive for some action, formulated in totally different terms, the lie as to what we are, whom we love, what we feel with regard to people who love us ... -that lie is one of the few things in the world that can open windows for us on to what is new and unknown, that can awaken in us sleeping senses for the contemplation of universes that otherwise we should never have known (p. 135).

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