

In contrast to the stereotypical depictions frequently seen in episodic television programming over the past five decades, historically, many made-for-TV movies have reflected a more realistic approach to representations of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities and issues. As early as 1972, ABC's *That Certain Summer*, explored the relationship between a divorced gay man and his son to warm critical reception and a subsequent Golden Globe award for "Best Movie Made for TV." Similarly, ABC's *A Question of Love* (1978) marked an early portrayal of a lesbian mother, her loving relationship with her domestic partner and their joint effort to retain custody of their children in a climate of homophobia. *An Early Frost*, broadcast on NBC in 1985, garnered wide acclaim and numerous awards as one of the first network programs to dramatically and sensitively examine the devastating impact of the AIDS crisis on a gay individual and his family.

Unencumbered by pressures to accommodate advertisers, productions originating from the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and cable networks have consistently presented a wider range of earnest depictions of LGBT lifestyles than have been previously shown on television. HBO's *More Than Friends: The Coming Out of Heidi Leiter* (1994) featured an early small screen same-sex kiss in its examination of a teenager's realization of her lesbian sexual orientation. Showtime's drama, *Soldier's Girl* (2003) offered the true story of hate crime victim Barry Winchell, a 21-year-old private first class who falls in love with a transgendered nightclub performer.

The UCLA Film & Television Archive has a number of titles related to Made-For-TV movies featuring LGBT issues and subject matter. For more information, or to arrange research viewing, please contact the Archive Research and Study Center (ARSC) at 310-206-5388, or by e-mail: arsc@ucla.edu

– Please note some titles may require additional lead-time to make available for viewing –

1970s

That Certain Summer (1972-11-01). ABC. Producers, Richard Levinson, William Link. Director, Lamont Johnson. Writers, Richard Levinson, William Link. Cast, Hal Holbrook, Hope Lange, Martin Sheen. Conflict arises between a divorced homosexual father and his teenage son. Study Copy: VA12043 T

Visions: The War Widow (1977-02-10). PBS. Producer, Barbara Schultz. Director, Paul Bogart. Writer, Harvey Perr. Cast, Pamela Bellwood, Nan Martin, Tim Matheson. A realistic, non-prurient portrayal of lesbian love, set in New York City during World War I. Study Copy: VA5943 T

Sergeant Matlovich vs. the U.S. Air Force (1978-08-21). NBC. Director, Paul Leaf. Writer, John McGreevey. Cast, Brad Dourif, Ellen Holly, Harrison Page. True story of Leonard Matlovich, a U.S. Air Force sergeant who was dismissed from service when it was discovered that he was gay. Study Copy: VA22508 T

A Question of Love (1978-11-26). ABC. Director, Jerry Thorpe. Writer, William Blinn. Cast, Gena Rowlands, Jane Alexander, Ned Beatty. The plot for this drama based on a true story, involving a lesbian who attempts to attain custody of her children after a divorce, evolved in part from a meeting between National Gay Task Force leaders and ABC's VP for Standards and Practices, Richard Gitter, in an effort to present a positive representation of lesbians on network TV. Study Copy: VA20483 T



Archive Study Guide:

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER TELEVISION: MADE-FOR-TV MOVIES

UCLA Film and Television Archive

Archive Research and Study Center (ARSC)

46 Powell Library, Box 951517 • Los Angeles, CA 90095-1517
www.cinema.ucla.edu • arsc@ucla.edu • t: 310.206.5388 f: 310.206.5392

The Naked Civil Servant (1979-06-15). ITV (UK). Producer, Barry Hansen. Director, Jack Gold. Writer, Philip Mackie. Cast, John Hurt, Liz Gebhardt, Patricia Hodge. Drama based on the life of gay icon, Quentin Crisp. Study Copy: VA15377 T

1980s

Sidney Shorr: A Girl's Best Friend (1981-10-05). NBC. Director, Russ Mayberry. Writers, Marilyn Baker, Oliver Hailey. Cast, Tony Randall, David Huffman, Kaleena Kiff. The homosexual main character in this movie, presented as anti-abortion, prudish and celibate was tolerated by conservative organizations like the Coalition for Better Television and the Moral Majority. Study Copy: VA2273 T

An Early Frost (1985-11-11). NBC. Director, John Erman. Writers, Ron Cowen, Daniel Lipman. Cast, Gena Rowlands, Ben Gazzara, Sylvia Sidney. First made-for-television broadcast to acknowledge the 1980s era AIDS epidemic. Study Copy: VA787 T

Welcome Home, Bobby (1986-02-22). CBS. Producers, Thomas De Wolfe, Cyma Rubin. Director, Herbert Wise. Writer, Conrad Bromberg. Cast, John Karlen, John Pleshette, Tony Lo Bianco. A teenager faces ostracism by his classmates and family after his arrest reveals a sexual relationship with a man. Study Copy: VA22499 T

As Is (1986-06-27). Showtime. Director, Michael Lindsay-Hogg. Writer, William Hoffman. Cast, Colleen Dewhurst, Robert Carradine, Jonathan Hadary. Adaptation of the award-winning Broadway play about a poet who contracts AIDS and the devotion of his former lover caring for him. Study Copy: VA21331 T

CBS Schoolbreak Special. What If I'm Gay? (1987-03-31). CBS. Producer, Susan L. Aronson. Director, Jeffrey D. Brown. Writer, Paul Cooper. Cast, Richard Joseph Paul, Evan Handler, Manfred Melcher. A star high school athlete is able to come out with the help of friends and a school guidance counselor. Study Copy: VA18066 T

The Ryan White Story (1989-01-16). ABC. Director, John Herzfeld. Writer, Phil Penningroth. Cast, Judith Light, Lukas Haas, Michael Bowen. After contracting AIDS through a blood transfusion, Ryan White is barred from attending his school in Kokomo, Indiana. Based on a true story. Study Copy: VA11285 T

1990s

American Playhouse. Andre's Mother (1990-03-07). PBS. Producers, Deborah Reinisch, Sarah Green. Director, Deborah Reinisch. Writer, Terence McNally. Cast, Mark Zeisler, Cyndia Sieden, Sada Thompson. A journey through grief and acceptance following the death of a young man from AIDS. Named "Outstanding Television Movie" by the National Board of Review. Study Copy: VA11153 T

Doing Time on Maple Drive (1992-03-16). FOX. Director, Ken Olin. Writer, James Duff. Cast, James Sikking, Bibi Besch, William McNamara. A college student returns home to introduce his family to his fiancée, only to reveal he is gay following a suicide attempt. Study Copy: VA22498 T

Citizen Cohn (1992-08-22). HBO. Producer, Doro Bachrach. Director, Frank Pierson. Writer, David Franzoni. Cast, James Woods, Joe Don Baker, Joseph Bologna. "This adaptation of Nicholas von

UCLA Film & Television Archive

Archive Research and Study Center (ARSC)

46 Powell Library, Box 951517 | Los Angeles, CA 90095-1517
www.cinema.ucla.edu | arsc@ucla.edu | t: 310.206.5388 f: 310.206.5392



Archive Study Guide:

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER TELEVISION: MADE-FOR-TV MOVIES

Hoffman's biography traces Cohn's life [as prosecutor and confidant to Senator Joseph McCarthy] via flashbacks as he lies dying from AIDS." Study Copy: VA11086 T

Overkill: The Aileen Wuornos Story (1992-11-17). CBS. Producer, William Beaudine, Jr. Director, Peter Levin. Writer, Fred Mills. Cast, Jean Smart, Park Overall, Tim Grimm. Biography of convicted murderer Aileen Wuornos. *Overkill* is notable for not linking Wuornos' crimes to her sexuality, instead subtly acknowledging her lesbianism. Study Copy: VA11752 T

American Playhouse. Tru (1992-11-23). PBS. Producer, Michael Bronson. Director, Kirk Browning. Writer, Jay Presson Allen. Cast, Robert Morse. Morse reprises his 1990 Tony Award winning performance as gay author Truman Capote. Study Copy: VA15267 T

And the Band Played On (1993-09-11). HBO. Executive Producers, Aaron Spelling, E. Duke Vincent. Producers, Midge Sanford, Sarah Pillsbury. Director, Roger Spottiswoode. Writer, Arnold Schulman. Cast, Matthew Modine, Alan Alda, Patrick Bauchau. Based on journalist Randy Shilts' bestseller about the beginnings of the AIDS crisis. Study Copy: VA12338 T

CBS Schoolbreak Special. Other Mothers (1993-10-12). CBS. Producer, Joseph Stern. Director, Lee Shallat. Writer, Amy Dunkleberger. Cast, Joanna Cassidy, Meredith Baxter, William Russ. Examines the difficulties encountered by a high school student with lesbian parents. Study Copy: VA12088 T

More Than Friends: The Coming Out of Heidi Leiter (1994-01-24). HBO. Producers, Frank Doelger, Howard Meltzer. Director, Juan Jose Campanella. Writer, Bruce Harmon. Cast, Sabrina Lloyd, Kate Anthony, Wend May. "The story of a teenager's realization of her sexual orientation." The lesbian kiss in this HBO drama caused virtually no public outcry in sharp contrast to the lesbian kiss on the ABC sitcom *Roseanne* featured in an episode that was broadcast in March 1994. Study Copy: VA13362 T

Roommates (1994-05-30). NBC. Producer, Tom Rowe. Director, Alan Metzger. Writer, Robert W. Lenski. Cast, Randy Quaid, Eric Stoltz, Elizabeth Peña. In a Seattle AIDS hospice a straight, homophobic ex-convict shares an apartment with a Harvard educated gay man. Study Copy: VA21332 T

Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story (1995-02-06). NBC. Executive Producers, Barbara Streisand, Glenn Close, Craig Zadan, Neil Meron. Director, Jeff Bleckner. Writer, Alison Cross. Cast, Glenn Close, Judy Davis, Jan Rubes. At the time of broadcast Colonel Cammermeyer was the highest-ranking person ever expelled from the U.S. military on grounds of homosexuality. Study Copy: VA13047 T

Any Mother's Son (1997). Lifetime. Director, David Burton Morris. Writer, Bruce Harmon. Cast, Bonnie Bedelia, Hedy Burress, Paul Popowich. Based on a true story about a U.S. Navy seaman who is killed by his shipmates when they discover he is gay. Study Copy: VA18379 T

Twilight of the Gods (1997). Showtime. Executive Producer, Garry Marshall. Producer, Paul Colichman, John Davimos, Mark R. Harris. Director, Ross Marks. Writers, Jonathan Tolins, Seth Bass. Cast, Jennifer Beals, Faye Dunaway, Brendan Fraser. This adaptation of the successful stage play considers whether parents would choose abortion over the birth of a gay child. Study Copy: VA17363 T

Mobil Masterpiece Theatre. Breaking the Code (1997-02-02). PBS. Producer, Jack Emery. Director, Herbert Wise. Writer, Hugh Whitmore. Biography of gay mathematician and computer pioneer Alan

Turing. Turing was convicted of "acts of gross indecency" by the British courts and committed suicide in 1954. Study Copy: VA20156 T

Breaking the Surface: The Greg Louganis Story (1997-03-19). USA. Director, Steven Hillard Stern. Writer, Alan Hines. Cast, Mario López, Michael Murphy, Rosemary Dunsmore. Biography of the gay, Olympic gold medal winning diver. Study Copy: VA20152 T

Blind Faith (1998). Showtime. Producer, Nick Grillo. Director, Ernest Dickerson. Writer, Frank Military. Cast, Charles Dutton, Courtney Vance, Kadeem Hardison. "Set in the Bronx in 1957, a young black man is accused of killing a local white boy amid mysterious circumstances. The resulting case brings to surface social tensions, including racism, homophobia, and assimilation politics." Study Copy: VA15216 T

More Tales of the City (1998). Showtime. Producer, Kevin Tierney. Director, Pierre Gang. Writer, Nicholas Wright. Cast, Olympia Dukakis, Laura Linney, Colin Ferguson. Author Armistead Maupin's chronicles of gay culture and transsexuality was rejected by PBS for both financial and political reasons and eventually broadcast by Showtime. Study Copy: VA15307 T, VA15308 T

Gia (1998-01-31). HBO. Producer, James D. Brubaker. Director, Michael Cristofer. Writers, Jay McInerney, Michael Cristofer. Cast, Angelina Jolie, Elizabeth Mitchell, Eric Michael Cole. The life of international 1970s supermodel and lesbian Gia Carangi from her rise and fall as a sought-after model to her death from AIDS at age 26. Study Copy: DVD804 T

Labor of Love (1998-05-04). Lifetime. Director, Karen Arthur. Writer, Nina Shengold. Cast, Marcia Gay Harden, David Marshall Grant, Daniel Hugh Kelly. A gay man's best friend agrees to bear his child. Inventory Number: T73049

Execution of Justice (1999-11-28). Showtime. Director, Leon Ichaso. Writer, Michael Butler. Cast, Tim Daly, Khalil Kain, Tyne Daly. Based on the play by Emily Mann, this courtroom drama examines the aftermath of the 1978 assassination of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and City Supervisor Harvey Milk. Study Copy: VA22510 T

2000s

If These Walls Could Talk 2 (2000-03-05). HBO. Directors, Jane Anderson, Martha Coolidge, Anne Heche. Writers, Jane Anderson, Sylvia Sichel, Alex Sichel, Anne Heche. Cast, Vanessa Redgrave, Marian Seldes, Paul Giamatti. Three stories about lesbian couples who occupy the same house in different decades. Study Copy: VA18492 T

Dirty Pictures (2000-05-27). Showtime. Director, Frank Pierson. Writer, Ilene Chaiken. Cast, James Woods, Craig T. Nelson, Diana Scarwid. A dramatization of the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center's trial for exhibiting homoerotic photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe. Study Copy: VA22509 T

The Truth About Jane (2000-08-07). Lifetime. Director, Writer, Lee Rose. Cast, Stockard Channing, Ellen Muth, Kelly Rowan. A high school teenager attempts to deal with the discovery that she is a lesbian. Study Copy: VA18653 T

Holiday Heart (2000-12-10). Showtime. Director, Robert Townsend. Writer, Cheryl L. West. Cast, Ving Rhames, Alfre Woodard, Jesika Reynolds. A grief-stricken drag queen finds new meaning in life when he takes in a battered drug addict and her child. Inventory Number: T87734



Archive Study Guide:

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER TELEVISION: MADE-FOR-TV MOVIES

What Makes a Family (2001-01-22). Lifetime. Director, Maggie Greenwald. Writer, Robert L. Friedman. Cast, Brooke Shields, Cherry Jones, Anne Meara. A drama about a custody battle between a lesbian mother and her deceased partner's parents. Inventory Number: T91629

Stranger Inside (2001-06-23). HBO. Director, Cheryl Dunye. Writer, Catherine Crouch, Cheryl Dunye. Cast, Yolonda Ross, Davenia McFadden, Rain Phoenix. Set in a maximum-security prison, this telefilm reveals the intricacies of female bonding beyond the usual stereotypes. Study Copy: DVD5988 T

Badge (2002-09-07). Starz! Director, Writer, Robby Henson. Cast, Billy Bob Thornton, Patricia Arquette, Sela Ward. Bigotry as well as political and police corruption come into play in the investigation of the death of a transsexual. Study Copy: DVD67 T

Soldier's Girl (2003-05-31). Showtime. Producers, Linda Gottlieb, Doro Bachrach. Director, Frank Pierson. Writer, Ron Nyswaner. Cast, Troy Garity, Lee Pace, Andre Braugher. The true story of Barry Winchell, a 21-year-old private first class who fell in love with a transgendered nightclub performer. Anti-gay sentiments in the barracks ultimately lead to Winchell's murder by a fellow soldier. Study Copy: DVD293 T

The list of titles above was compiled with the assistance of the following reference works: THE PRIME TIME CLOSET: A HISTORY OF GAYS AND LESBIANS ON TV (2002) by Stephen Tropiano and Steven Capsuto's ALTERNATE CHANNELS: THE UNCENSORED STORY OF GAY AND LESBIAN IMAGES ON RADIO AND TELEVISION (2000).

PRINT RESOURCES

(for more information consult the UCLA Libraries Collection)

Becker, Ron. *Gay TV and Straight America*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006.

Capsuto, Steven. *Alternate Channels: The Uncensored Story of Gay and Lesbian Images on Radio and Television*. New York: Ballantine Publishing Group, 2000.

Johnson, Phylis. *Queer Airwaves: The Story of Gay and Lesbian Broadcasting*. New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2001.

Keller, James R., Stratyner, Leslie. *The New Queer Aesthetic on Television: Essays on Recent Programming*. North Carolina: McFarland, 2006.

Montgomery, Kathryn Christine. *Gay Activists and the Networks: A Case Study of Special Interest Pressure in Television*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1979.

Tropiano, Stephen. *The Prime Time Closet: A History of Gays and Lesbians On TV*. New York: Applause Theater and Cinema Books, 2002.

OUTFEST LEGACY COLLECTION AT UCLA

In addition to the titles listed in this collection profile, the Archive holds the Outfest Legacy Collection of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) which includes over 5,000 Outfest Film Festival entries, released studio films, works-in-progress, television programs, public service announcements, commercials, music videos and electronic press kits available for research access.

For additional information related to material in this collection or to arrange onsite viewing at UCLA, please contact the Archive Research and Study Center (ARSC) at 310-206-5388, or via email: arsc@ucla.edu