



Movies as Learning: Watch, Discuss, and Learn

Investigate a LGBT and/or women's topic through film. Choose a film from the list, fill out a "workshop/training request form," and a facilitator will come with the film and discussion topics and questions. The request form can be found at www.utgsc.com. If you have questions please email: swhalley@austin.utexas.edu or call 512-232-1873.

Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual

Better than Chocolate (101 minutes) -- Two attractive young lesbians, Maggie and Kim, meet in Vancouver, develop a passionate romance, and move in together. Meanwhile, Maggie's well-meaning but naive mother Lila gets divorced and decides to move to Vancouver and join the household. Soon after, Judy, a transsexual about to undergo a sex-change operation, befriends Lila. Complications ensue as the conservative Lila learns the truth about Maggie, Judy, and their diverse group of friends.

But I'm a Cheerleader (85 minutes) -- Megan is an all-American girl. She's a cheerleader, she has a boyfriend, etc. But she doesn't like kissing her boyfriend very much. And she's pretty touchy with her cheerleader friends. And she only has pictures of girls up in her locker. Her parents and friends conclude that she *must* be gay and send her off to "sexual redirection" school, full of admittedly homosexual misfits, where she can learn to how to be straight.

Chutney Popcorn (92 minutes) -- Reena is a young Indian American lesbian who lives and works in New York. Her sister Sarita, who is happily married, discovers that she is infertile. Reena offers to be a surrogate mother for her sister's baby, hoping to improve her relationship with their mother, who disapproves of Reena's sexual orientation. Reena has second thoughts when her girlfriend Lisa feels left out.

If these Wall Could Talk 2 (96 minutes – can be shorter if not all the vignettes are shown) -- 1961: When Abby dies of a stroke, her surviving partner of 50 years, Edith, must silently face heartbreak and the denial of her status as "family" by the hospital and Abby's heirs. 1972: Linda, a feminist, out, college student is ousted, along with her lesbian cohorts, from the on-campus womens' group: the cause of feminism comes first, apparently. In an attempt to forget their troubles, the friends go to the only lesbian bar in town, where Linda meets Amy, who is too butch to pass muster with Linda's friends. Intrigued, despite her friends' disapproval, Linda comes to understand and fall in love with Amy while learning about her own prejudices. 2000: Fran and Kal want to have a baby. But they want the baby to be theirs and theirs alone, so to the sperm bank they go. But the decisions to be made! Ordering over the internet? Which donor? What race? What gender? And above all, is it right to bring a baby into a world that will undoubtedly be prejudiced? Or will love and laughter see them through?

Milk (128 minutes) -- Using flashbacks from a statement recorded late in life and archival footage for atmosphere, this film traces Harvey Milk's career from his 40th birthday to his death. He leaves the closet and New York, opens a camera shop that becomes the salon for San Francisco's growing gay community, and organizes gays' purchasing power to build political alliances. He runs for office and victory finally comes on the same day Dan White wins in the city's conservative district. The rest of the film sketches Milk's relationship with White and the 1978 fight against a statewide initiative to bar gays and their supporters from public school jobs.

Philadelphia (125 minutes) -- No one would take his case, until one man was willing to take on the system. Two competing lawyers join forces to sue a prestigious law firm for AIDS discrimination. As their unlikely friendship develops, their courage overcomes the prejudice and corruption of their powerful adversaries.

Saving Face (91 minutes) -- When 48-year-old widow Hwei-Lan Gao informs her less-than understanding father she's pregnant, he banishes her from Flushing until she remarries or proves Immaculate Conception. With nowhere else to go, Hwei-Lan moves in with her grown daughter, Wil, a Manhattan doctor who doesn't want a roommate, especially since she's met Viv, her sexy young lover. So Wil does what any dutiful child with an expectant, unmarried mother on her hands would do: she proceeds to set Hwei-Lan up with every eligible bachelor in town.

The Twilight of the Golds (92 minutes) -- The jumping-off point here is the scientific discovery that homosexuality is genetic--and that the gene can be detected in prenatal testing. This disrupts the Gold family, where Dad barely tolerates the homosexuality of his son. When pregnant daughter, who is married to a geneticist, has the test and discovers that her fetus will be gay, she triggers a family debate that pits parents against son, raising the question of whether they would have aborted Fraser if they'd known he would be gay.

Transgender

Boys Don't Cry (118 minute) -- Based on actual events. Brandon Teena is the popular new guy in a tiny Nebraska town. He hangs out with the guys, drinking, cussing, and bumper surfing, and he charms the young women, who've never met a more sensitive and considerate young man. Life is good for Brandon, now that he's one of the guys and dating hometown beauty Lana. However, he's forgotten to mention one important detail, that he was actually born a woman named Teena Brandon. When his best friends make this discovery, Brandon's life is ripped apart.

Ma Vie En Rose (88 minutes) -- Ludovic is a young boy who can't wait to grow up to be a woman. When his family discovers the little girl blossoming in him they are forced to contend with their own discomfort and the lack of understanding from their new neighbors. Their anger and impatience cave and Ludovic is sent to see a psychiatrist in the hopes of fixing whatever is wrong with him. A movie that addresses transgender and gender issues in general through the eyes of a child.

Normal (108 minutes) -- After being married to Irma for 25 years, Roy decides the stress of being a woman in a man's body has grown intolerable. He unburdens himself to Irma and their pastor, shocking them both. Roy's decision to pursue a sex-change operation is greeted with intolerance and disgust by some of his co-

workers and members of his church. Irma eventually comes to some understanding, and supports Roy through his journey to becoming "Ruth."

Transamerica (103 minutes) -- One week before her sex-change operation, Bree receives a call from a 17-year-old identifying himself as her son from a college liaison. Bree's psychiatrist won't approve the surgery until Bree deals with this relationship, so Bree flies to New York City, bails the youth out of juvenile detention, and offers him a ride back to Los Angeles without disclosing that she is his father. The lad's step-father, a sex-change support group, a peyote eater, a Navajo wrangler, and Bree's family all play their parts in this exploration of family, gender, and expectations.

Women

Erin Brockovich (130 minutes) – Based on actual events. Erin Brockovich is a feisty young mother who fought for justice any way she knew how. Desperate for a job to support herself and her three children, she convinces attorney Ed Masry (Albert Finney) to hire her, and promptly stumbles upon a monumental law case against a giant corporation. Now, Erin's determined to take on this powerful adversary even though no law firm has dared to do it before. And while Ed doesn't want anything to do with the case, Erin won't take "no" for an answer. So the two begin an incredible and sometimes hilarious fight that will bring a small town to its feet and a huge company to its knees.

Iron Jawed Angels (123 minutes) -- Defiant young activists, lead by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, take the women's suffrage movement by storm, putting their lives at risk to help American women win the right to vote.

North Country (126 minutes) -- A semi-fictionalized account of a long legal battle of group of women miners who endured a hostile work environment and numerous and continuous insults and unwanted touching when they became the first women to go work at the Eveleth Mines in Minnesota.

Real Women Have Curves (90 minutes) -- This is the story of Ana, a first generation Mexican-American teenager on the verge of becoming a woman. She lives in the predominately Latino community of East Los Angeles. Freshly graduated from high school, Ana receives a full scholarship to Columbia University while her very traditional, parents feel that now is the time for Ana to help provide for the family. Torn between her mainstream ambitions and her cultural heritage, she agrees to work with her mother at her sister's sewing factory. Over the summer, she learns to admire the hardworking team of women who teach her solidarity and teamwork. Still at odds with her mother's expectations, Ana realizes that leaving home to continue her education is essential to finding her place in the world as an American and a Chicana.

Documentaries

After Stonewall: The Making of the Gay and Lesbian Community (88 minutes) -- From the emergence of the 70's Gay Liberation Movement and Womyn's music festivals to the onslaught of AIDS, the vibrant Gay Games movement and Ellen DeGeneres' highly publicized coming out performance, AFTER STONEWALL presents a story as compelling, rewarding and provocative as the individual lesbians and gays who defined the era.

The Aggressives (75 minutes) -- "The Aggressives" is a dynamic film shot in vibrant NYC on digital video, featuring intimate interviews with six lesbians who define themselves as "Aggressives." We show their daily lives and also highlight their participation in the underground lesbian "ball" scene (the female counterpart to "Paris is Burning"). The Aggressives range in masculinity but do not aspire to be men. Nor are they "drag kings." They have found an unexplored loophole in society's gender tapestry and this film seeks to expose their world.

Before Stonewall (87 minutes) -- Using filmed recollections and a wealth of archival material (including excerpts from silent-films newsreels and Hollywood musicals), "Before Stonewall" traces the social, political and cultural development of the gay and lesbian community. As such, the film is not a narrow history of gay civil rights, but the hidden story of a vital American subculture.

The Education of Shelby Knox (76 minutes) -- A 15-year-old girl's transformation from conservative Southern Baptist to liberal Christian and ardent feminist parallels her fight for sex education and gay rights in Lubbock, Texas.

For the Bible Tells Me So (99 minutes) -- Through the experiences of five very normal, very Christian, very American families -- including those of former House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt and Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson -- we discover how insightful people of faith handle the realization of having a gay child. Informed by such respected voices as Bishop Desmond Tutu, Harvard's Peter Gomes, Orthodox Rabbi Steve Greenberg and Reverend Jimmy Creech, "For The Bible Tells Me So" offers healing, clarity and understanding to anyone caught in the crosshairs of scripture and sexual identity.

One in 2000 (26 minutes) -- This provocative documentary demystifies the issue of sexual difference. At a time when five babies a day in the United States are having "gender reassignment" surgery, it argues that there is little evidence that such surgery is beneficial to the child. The program profiles several people born intersex, with ambiguous sexual anatomy, who have managed to deal with some very difficult family and social issues, but today are living "ordinary" and productive lives. It also includes a young mother who is matter-of-factly creating the conditions for her intersex baby to do the same.

Southern Comfort (90 minutes) -- As Robert Eads puts it in one of the first scenes of this remarkable documentary, he lives in "Bubba-land"--which wouldn't be unusual if Robert weren't a female-to-male transsexual. Southern Comfort chronicles the last year of Robert's life, as he succumbed to, ironically, cervical cancer. Over that year, documentarian Kate Davis developed an amazing intimacy with Robert and his adopted family of other transsexuals living in the depths of Georgia, including his vivacious male-to-female transsexual girlfriend Lola.

Transgeneration (272 minutes – 30 to 60 minute episodes) -- Across America, transgender college students are visible, political and bravely challenging the status quo. In this eight-part original documentary series, filmmaker Jeremy Simmons follows a year in the lives of four transgender students as they define who they are and take control of their gender identity. Gabbie and Raci (born male, but now living as women) and Lucas and T.J. (born female, but now living as men) attend different campuses and come from varied social backgrounds, yet are all about to experience a pivotal moment in their lives.