

Looking Awry: Representing Bisexual* Desires On Screen



Talk length: 60 minutes

Technical requirements: Projector with HDMI connection, sound connection to 3.5mm headphone jack.

In LGBT+ politics and activism bisexual people are often left out of the conversation. To consider bisexual people – our lives, our desires, and the difficulties we face – enriches our understanding of sexuality, foregrounding issues that we otherwise might not consider.

This is eye-opening when considering cinematic representations of bisexuality. When do we read a character as bisexual? How can a character's bisexuality be communicated? What tropes and stereotypes are at play in these representations and what purpose do they serve? What is the impact of the scarcity of bisexual representations on bisexual people's lives?

Taking a ride through cinema's invocations of bisexuality, from well-known Hollywood neo-noir thrillers to underground queer filmmaking to the extremities of European art cinema, let's take a moment to consider representations of bisexual desire on screen.

Jacob Engelberg is a Film Programmer based in Brighton, England where he runs the queer film strand Eyes Wide Open Cinema. Jacob has an academic background in Film Studies and Queer Theory; his masters degree in Sexual Dissidence looked at the representation of bisexuality in the films of Gregg Araki.

** This talk will use the terms "bisexual" and "bi" to refer to sexualities encompassing desire towards people of more than one gender, a model that has been called "the bisexual* umbrella" or "bi+".*