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“Love is ours only in death”

- An analysis of how lesbian and bisexual relationships are stereotyped on Western television shows through the use of tropes

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**Bachelor's Thesis, 15 HE credits
Thesis work in Political Science
Spring term 2016**

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Abstract

Television is a mirror of society and in which we hope to see our lives and existence reflected. When the images shown marginalises your reflection through the use of stereotypes and common tropes it is hard to believe this does not affect the world around you and your perception about yourself. Television is vastly researched and this case study will add to it by analysing how lesbian and bisexual relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes on Western television shows. Semiotics is used to decipher the underlying meanings of stereotypes and tropes; as stereotypes and tropes marginalise groups of people. By using visual analysis to watch episodes, the scenes analysed through qualitative content analysis proved that same-sex relationships are stereotyped through tropes and rarely challenge previous research. Social interaction based on representation theory solidify the perceptions through television images causing further harm to lesbians and bisexuals.

Keywords: Lesbian and Bisexual, LGBT, Television, Stereotypes, Tropes, Representation, Same-Sex Relationship

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to thank my family and friends for still loving me. I have barely seen or spoken to you for weeks because of this thesis but you are still there and it warms my heart. I would like to thank Therese, Frida, Eske, Heidur, Rebecca, and Saida for reading through my paper and giving me constructive comments [and checking my spelling]. Thank you to my supervisor Fredrik Sjögren for being there for me, and thank you to my examiner Fredrik Sunnemark. Kind words and actions go a long way!

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1. Introduction

Twenty years ago, the 'Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation' (GLAAD) began tracking the number of 'lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender' (LGBT) characters on television, and publishing annual reports which overviews representation of LGBT characters. For the 2015/2016 television season,¹ 35 (4%) out of 881 regular characters were identified as LGBT and scheduled to appear on prime-time television. The findings were then divided between broadcast and cable television shows:² *Broadcast* – lesbian 33% (23 characters) to gay male 47% (33 characters) and bisexual female 17% (12 characters); *Cable* – lesbian 22% (31 characters) to gay male 41% (58 characters) and bisexual female 23% (32 characters) (GLAAD 2015).

Representation of sexual minorities³ have historically been limited. Harris affirms that when LGBT characters have occurred on television “they have tended towards stereotypes of (usually) gay male characters and male to female transvestites as hopeless figures of fun, or both gay men and lesbians as, at worst, corrupt and evil and at best, doomed and self-loathing” (Harris 2006:148). Even when positive or complex representations befall, LGBT characters are most often “narratively positioned as secondary to, or on the margins of, some more centrally important heterosexual plot” (Doty & Gove 1997:88). Due to time restraints, this thesis will focus on how lesbian and bisexual women⁴ are represented on television, as they can be identified as minorities within a minority group.

Television provides a rich environment to consider gaps and differences between academic theories and public practices (Harris 2006:2); as it reflects our society and in which we hope to see elements of our lives represented or responded to (Beirne 2008b; Jackson & Gilbertson 2009; Raley & Lucas 2006; Gerbner et al 1987). Due to its dominant form, television has become the primary source for construction and production of identities (Harris 2006; Gauntlett 2008; Gerbner et al 1987; Gerbner et al 2002; Raley & Lucas 2006). Continued use of

¹ GLAAD defines the 2015/2016 television season as June 1, 2015 to May 31, 2016 (GLAAD 2015).

² This thesis will utilise the American terminology of television show instead of television programme. It will be used to refer to dramatic prime-time television shows.

³ A sexual minority is defined as a group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices diverge from society at large. The term is commonly used to refer to the LGBT community (Sullivan 2003).

⁴ The term bisexual will in this thesis be defined as bisexual women, and will refer to female bisexuals.

stereotypical and negative portrayals of lesbians and bisexuals separates them from the mainstream, and Doty (1993:xi) sees this as straight culture using “queerness for pleasure and profit without admitting to it”.

This ‘pleasure’, or in other words trope,⁵ saw the lesbian character Lexa killed by a stray bullet meant for her lover Clarke in an early March episode of the television show *The 100*.⁶ Audiences were outraged as the show had actively promoted the relationship of Clarke and Lexa.⁷ Lexa’s death ignited the movement, “LGBT Viewers Deserve Better”, demanding better representation of the LGBT community (Cava 2016; Lawler 2016; Murray 2016; Rice 2016; Robinson 2016; Ryan 2016; Snarker 2016; Wendling 2016). The signification of the trope that saw Lexa killed, becomes, to cite Peyton Thomas:

“The girls are never supposed to end up together. [...] if you should fall in love with a girl—and loving and falling in love are two very distinct things—the first kiss is the end. [...] You were never meant to fall in love. Your story ends in tears or it ends in death” (Thomas 2014).

This is the message audiences perceive from television about lesbian and bisexual representation, and especially same-sex relationships. There will be no happy endings. It is evident that stereotypes and tropes exist, and that their existence and continued use affect society. But how are lesbian and bisexual relationships stereotyped through the use of different tropes? How lesbians and bisexuals, and in turn same-sex relationships, are represented is important as it is highly improbable to think that television does not affect people, their subjectivity, and their perception about the world and themselves (Gauntlett 2008:1-3).

The aim of this thesis is thus to conduct a case study of Western television shows through a qualitative content analysis to see how lesbian and bisexual relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes. The aim is to apply existing theory to new context, in the form of previously established stereotypes and tropes. The theoretical framework is therefore used as

⁵ A commonly used storytelling device. It will be further explained in the theory chapter.

⁶ Thirteen (*The 100*), Season 3 Episode 7, Originally aired on March 3, 2016.

⁷ These relationships have been promoted through social media, promotional images, merchandise, by the cast and crew, and the television show in general. Creating an invested audience of the relationship.

an outline and will be the basis for comparison between different tropes following the analysis. The question is thus how lesbian and bisexual women are represented in relation to each other.

Therefore, the general aim of this thesis is to add to the literature of LGBT representation on television. The scholarship is extensive in regards to gay and lesbian representation, with less written about bisexual. However, the majority of the literature found, in regards to representation, concerns individual character representation or group representation, and not how stereotypes are used to represent lesbian and bisexual characters in a same-sex relationship. The literature review will demonstrate that there is little to no research on how lesbians and bisexuals are stereotyped through the use of tropes. Most scholarship focus on how they are stereotyped in relation to heterosexual characters. This results in a gap, which this thesis aims to fill by analysing how same-sex relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes on television shows. By using tropes as the unit of analysis it is possible to examine how relationships are presented to audiences, and thus how stereotypes are used within tropes.

First, following this introduction, the literature review presents what has previously been done in regards to the line of scholarship which is of relevance for this thesis. Second, the theoretical approach discusses how representation theory is used to understand the meaning of language through social construction; by using semiotics, hidden meanings of signs and concepts such as stereotypes and tropes are revealed, and how it is used to represent lesbians and bisexuals on television. Definitions of stereotypes and tropes that form the analytical framework are provided. Followed by the research question used to formulate the specific aim of this thesis. Research design and methods are then argued for along with an explanation of how data will be gathered through visual analysis and analysed on the basis of qualitative content analysis. The analysis is then presented through a qualitative content approach in order to answer the research question, and is lastly followed by a conclusion of the findings.

2. Literature review

This thesis aims to contribute to the scholarship of LGBT representation on television. Previous research on lesbian representation is extensive but less has been written about bisexual. Most previously written literature is about Western representation, predominantly American, as homosexuality is still illegal or frowned upon in non-Western countries. In prior scholarship, stereotypes and tropes are sometimes used interchangeably, however, the aim of this thesis is to recognise their separate functions to examine how stereotypes are used within tropes. Little to no research has been done, overall, on how stereotypes are used within tropes. As most research focus on the individual there is a gap concerning how lesbian and bisexual relationships are represented in relation to each other through the use of stereotypes and tropes. Therefore, the aim is to examine how same-sex relationships are stereotyped on television shows through the use of tropes.

2.1. LGBT representation on television

Beirne (2008a), Ringer (1994), Raley and Lucas (2006) show how the term homosexual⁸ is often used instead of LGBT to refer to the LGBT community, thereby excluding bisexuals and transgender people. Research shows that LGBT are highly misrepresented on television and usually categorised into simply lesbians and gay males (Beirne 2008a; Burston & Richardson 1995; Ringer 1994). Beirne (2008a) states that although the term homosexual is inclusive of lesbians the perception of homosexuality is white, male, and affluent.

Wyatt (2008) establishes that homosexual representation on early American television was largely ignored. As Beirne (2008a; 2008b) and Hart (1994) affirm homosexuality was not a topic discussed on television until the mid-1950s, and when it was, it was almost always related to gay men. In 1961 lesbians were excluded from the first American documentary broadcast on homosexuality and again in 1967 when the first network documentary on homosexuality was shown. Capsuto (2000:43) shows that it was not until 1962 that lesbianism was covered on American television during an episode of *Confidential File*. However, far less research has been written about bisexuality as it is not mentioned in the field of television until after 2004 (Beirne

⁸ Homosexual in this chapter will refer to gay male and lesbian.

2008b:163). Beirne (2008b:9) affirms that bisexuality is often outranked by heterosexuality and homosexuality, and is therefore usually characterised as either lesbian or straight.

Scholars show how homosexual characters have, historically, been infrequently shown on American and British television, and when portrayed representation was either negative, stereotypical or both. Most often depicted as villainous, neurotic, humorous or morally unstable; and frequently killed at the end of the episode (Blaine 2007; Burston & Richardson 1995; Capsuto 2000; Dow 2001; Harris 2006; Hart 1994; Russo 1987; Steiner, Fejes & Petrich 1993; Tropiano 2002). Research shows homosexuality associated with either sickness, perversion, or crime (Steiner, Fejes & Petrich 1993). Capsuto (2000:110-13) shows that the Lesbian Feminist Liberation staged a zap on NBC following an episode of *Police Woman*⁹ in 1974 – in which a trio of lesbians were robbing and murdering the elderly residents of the nursing home they ran. It was an action to end homophobic representation on television (Steiner, Fejes & Petrich 1993). Beirne (2008b:109-10) explains how American network television increased cooperation with gay consultants following the zap, and portrayal of homosexuals became slightly more sympathetic, as an impulse to “educate viewers about homosexuality”.

However, Beirne (2008b) states that although homosexual representation has progressed since the 1970s and 1980s, it has not been a steady narrative of progress. Ringer (1994) affirms how the arrival of the AIDS epidemic saw television blame homosexuals as the cause of it, thereof fostering an anti-gay attitude. Again, homosexuals were reinforced as white, male, promiscuous and evil (Steiner, Fejes & Petrich 1993). Netzley (2010) shows how lesbian representation increased during this period but stereotypical portrayals did not diminish. Research verify that homosexuals were mostly cast in guest starring roles opposed to leading characters, which suggests that gay consultants took a less radical approach to improve acceptance of homosexuals on television by casting them in tandem with the leads but never as regulars (Beirne 2008a; Brunson, D’Acci & Spigel 1997; Capsuto 2000; Raley & Lucas 2006).

Gauntlett (2008), Hart (1994) and Hart (2004) affirm how homosexuals became more visible during the 1990s and 2000s; with not only an increase in roles but an increase in variety of roles and personality types. Studies have listed the American sitcom *Ellen* as a ground-breaking for

⁹ Flowers of Evil (Police Woman), Season 1 Episode 8, Originally aired on November 8, 1974.

prime-time television during the 1990s, as star Ellen DeGeneres publicly came out in 1997 in tandem with her character. This made DeGeneres' character the first homosexual title character on television (Capsuto 2000; Croteau & Hoynes 2014).

Beirne (2008a), Stein (1993) and Walker (2001) affirm that lesbianism before the 1990s was synonymous with 'butch'; defined as a masculine female (Beirne 2008a; Stein 1993; Walker 2001). As Stein (1993) points out "it's the butch lesbian who's been synonymous with lesbianism in the public imagination", but cultural imagination is different from cultural representation. Walker (2001) shows how societal perception of sexual stereotypes created gender dysphoria. For example, scholars show how gay men were portrayed as promiscuous, flamboyant, and/or feminine; whilst lesbians were depicted in the reverse (Beirne 2008a; Steiner, Fejes & Petrich 1993; Stein 1993; Walker 2001). This created an idea about how they should look and act like, and they felt societal pressure to identify as such. Bisexuals and transgender people, on the other hand, were often absent from television representations according to (Beirne (2008b) and Gauntlett (2008), and when depicted it was commonly as morally corrupt or mentally unstable. Stereotypical representations vilified already marginalised minorities (Raley & Lucas 2006; Ringer 1994).

Beirne (2008a; 2008b) and McFadden (2014) have indicated the importance of the American television show *The L Word* (2004) as it highlighted a significant difference in how LGBT were presented towards audiences, especially how lesbians were shown as a product to be sold instead of as the masculine butch. Research shows how *The L Word* ignited renewed interest in the 'chic-ness' of lesbianism, which was brought forward in the 1990s; and how 'lipstick lesbian' is used as a 'tasteful' representation for heterosexual consumption (Beirne 2008b; Brunsdon, D'Acci & Spigel 1997; Ciasullo 2001; Diamond 2005; Jackson & Gilbertson 2009; Walker 2001; Wilton 1995). Engel (2003:219) emphasis that "under Lesbian Chic, lesbians become at once commodities and consumers, packaged as an erotic other from the heterosexual mainstream". Hence, heterosexualisation aligns the femininity of 'lipstick lesbian' with specific racial and socioeconomic qualities; femme Caucasian body and upper-middle class. Ciasullo (2001) argues that lesbians who are not femme become less visible and when they are represented they are often pathologised.

Ciasullo (2001) claims the 'lipstick lesbian' as a novelty, a trend, to consume and toy with. Although the 'novelty' status brings attention the long and difficult struggle of positive lesbian

representation on American and British television, it comes with difficulties as research finds that this cultural trend of 'lesbian chic' is attached to a more complex issue. Therefore, it must be considered "how the emergence of 'the lesbian' is constructed, characterised, and framed by the media that are presenting it to middle America" (Ciasullo 2001:578).

There is a gap of how lesbians and bisexuals are represented in relation to another lesbian/bisexual character by utilising stereotypes through the use of tropes. Previous scholars show sexual minorities representation as an individual, group or in relation to the heterosexual norm. The aim is to add to the field of LGBT representation on television by analysing how same-sex relationships are represented, and how the characters are related to each other within the context of the story.

3. Theoretical approach

In this chapter, representation theory will be described and explained. This thesis will utilise representation theory with the semiotic approaches by Saussure and Barthes to understand the meaning of language through the 'signified', the 'signifier', and the 'signification'. Semiotics can be used to explain the use of stereotypes and tropes, and how they set sexual minorities apart from the mainstream. Previous scholarship on stereotypes and tropes will be used to develop an analytical framework that will be used to identify how same-sex relationships are stereotyped on television through the use of tropes.

3.1. Representation theory

The idea of representation is based on social constructivism; the world around us is socially constructed. Bryman (2012) presents constructivism as an ontological position in relation to social objects and categories. Categories are used to understand how the world is constructed. However, categories themselves have no inner essences. Their meaning is constructed through interaction (Bryman 2012). As social constructivism defines no fixed meaning in language, meaning is constructed through representational systems such as concepts and signs. Hall (1997) describes representation as "social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistics and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to communicate about that world meaningfully to others" (Hall 1997:25).

Representation analysis is used to understand the meaning of language, as the basic understanding of it is as the main medium of human interaction. Therefore, language can be described as "the property of neither the sender nor the receiver of meanings. It is the shared cultural 'space' in which the production of meaning through language – this is, representation – takes place" (Hall 1997:10). In other words, the meaning of language is culturally produced. Hence, the concepts of lesbian and bisexual must be constructed. Semiotic approach is used to understand the meaning of language. Concerned with representation analysis, semiotics can be used to understand how sexual minorities are represented on television through the use of signs and concepts, such as stereotypes and tropes.

3.1.1. Semiotic approach

Semiotics is defined as a science of signs, and argues that “material reality can never be taken for granted, imposing its meaning upon human beings” (Strinati 1995:109). However, this meaning is never ‘innocent’, as it is always tied to a particular purpose or underlying interest which semiotics can uncover. Hence, our experience of the world cannot be pure or ‘innocent’ because concepts and signs make sure we comprehend the meaning of the language used (Strinati 1995:109-110). Semiotics can be used to understand how lesbian and bisexual concepts are used on television. Television is important, as in order for signs to be culturally available and implicated in social relationships, concepts have to be produced and distributed (Strinati 1995:125).

Roland Barthes built upon Ferdinand de Saussure’s idea about the dualistic notion of signs; the ‘signifier’ and the ‘signified’ (Hall 1997:30-31). For Barthes the signifier became the form, the signified the concept, and then he added the sign as a signification (Strinati 1995:114). For example, a bunch of roses can be used to signify passion. The roses are the signifier and passion the signified. These two terms unite and form the third object, the sign. Barthes explained the sign as ‘the roses as a sign of passion’, thus making passion the process of signification (Strinati 1995:112-13). Therefore, the sign cannot be understood as concepts and signs, but has to be located in the context of social relationships (Strinati 1995:113).

Signification is used to find underlying meanings of tropes and stereotypes to which an audience is privy. This is because codes and signs are not universally given. Strinati (1995:110) explains them as “historically and socially specific to the particular interests and purposes which lie behind them”. Also, as semiotics is concerned with the construction of meaning, it is also important to mention how Saussure categorised things to explain how something can be manufactured by signifying what it is not. For example, a table; what ‘is not’ a table able us to signify what ‘is’ a table. The simplest way to show these differences is by using a binary scale: black/white, day/night, masculine/feminine and so forth (Hall 1997:31-32). For example, what a butch ‘is not’ can be used to signify what a butch ‘is’, and thereby categorising it.

3.2. Stereotypes

A stereotype is a social representation based on “a fixed, over generalized belief about a particular group or class of people” (Caldwell 1996). For this thesis, stereotypes are

generalisations based on sexual orientation. According to Lippmann (1965) stereotypes are simplified 'images' in our heads, because the mind cannot comprehend direct knowledge about the 'real' world because it is too big, too complex, and too volatile for us to have direct knowledge about. The world is understood by categorising people based on qualities or characteristics based on simplified 'images' instead of direct and secure information about them. These 'images' are constructed by a group, the majority, based on cultural norms (Hinton 2003). Stereotypes are thus defined for us by society, and thereof we see those stereotypes as society has already defined them without questioning it (Nachbar & Lause 1992:236-37). Therefore, it is of importance how society defines stereotypes (Lippmann 1965), as they are created and distributed within a culture when people communicate with each other, for example through conversations or television (Fourie 2001; Hinton 2003:30; Nachbar & Lause 1992).

Stereotypes mean that people are judged based on what category they fit into, and not as individual people. This leads to marginalisation and prejudice of groups of people (Fourie 2001; Hinton 2003). Lippmann (1965) claimed that most stereotypes are false, both in how they are created by society and the context of the stereotype. Hence, society should not make assumptions and draw conclusions about different categories of people. Therefore, a stereotype is a valuable tool in the analysis of television because once a stereotype has been identified and defined, it provides important and revealing expressions about hidden beliefs and values.

For example, lesbians stereotyped as 'butch' – short hair, baggy clothes, and playing sports – are perceived as masculine (Greiger, Harwood & Hummert 2006); strong and outspoken advocates for lesbian issues, and as such threaten masculinity (Krantz 1995). This social representation has been reinforced and distributed by television, which has highlighted 'butch' instead of giving equal portrayals to other lesbian identities, such as 'femme'. 'Femme' is portrayed as the opposite of 'butch'; pretty, stylish, with make-up and high heels. She tends to be 'hyper-feminine', attractive, and almost indistinguishable from a straight woman (Beirne 2008b; McFadden 2014). Both lesbians and bisexuals can be seen in the binary oppositions of butch/femme (Hollibaugh 2000). The stereotype is thus the 'image' given to people to make assumptions about in reality (Stossel & Binkley 2006).

'Butch' and 'femme' are most often categorised by masculine and feminine traits, and can therefore be understood in terms of heteronormative stereotypes (Hemmings 1998:93; O'Brien 2009:99). This thesis will use the presumed masculine and feminine traits identified by

England, Descartes and Collier-Meek (2011) to simplify the 'butch' and 'femme' stereotypes. 'Butch' is thus characterised by masculine traits: assertive, unemotional, independent, selfish/self-serving, hero, problem solver, leader, higher economic/career status, gives advice, and proud. 'Femme' is characterised by the contrary feminine traits: submissive, emotional, dependent, nurturing/helpful, afraid/fearful, troublesome, follower, physically attractive, asks for/accepts advice, and ashamed (England, Descartes & Collier-Meek 2011:561).

The constructed world might not be ideal, but it is how we expect it to be (Lippmann 1965). Thereof, lesbians and bisexuals are encouraged to "live up to their stereotypes"; what Nachbar and Lause (1992:241) described as "to act like the images a culture already has of them and to thereby fulfil their proper social roles". Therefore, minority groups are often complicit in their own subordination (Jost & Kay 2005). The role of television in developing and maintaining stereotypes should not be underestimated as it quickly distributes ideas and conceptions to people (Fourie 2001:303; Hinton 2003:152).

Such was the case when *The L Word* came on the air in 2004 as it utilised the 'male gaze' stereotype in depicting female homosexuality by sexualising and fetishizing lesbians as slim, feminine and middle-class Caucasian (Beirne 2008b; Ciasullo 2001). Creating a male fantasy of what lesbianism was to make it less threatening compared to 'butch'. Although *The L Word* did challenge 'butch' by portraying 'femme', and refuted the 'U-Haul' stereotype – lesbians moving in on the second date, suggesting an extreme preference toward a monogamous or committed relationship – by portraying a lesbian couple with 'family values' and long-term relationships. It also challenged the perceived idea that lesbians are easily attached and instead saw a character shuffle through a variety of girls (McFadden 2014).

Promiscuity is a common bisexual stereotype, which focuses on the inability to maintain a steady relationship, making them non-committal and sexually deviant, to reinforce the perception that bisexuals are promiscuous because of their attraction to both genders (Scherrer, Kazyak & Schmitz 2015). *The L Word*, did however not challenge the bisexual 'phase' stereotype, which sees bisexuality as a transitional sexual orientation or temporary identity 'on the way' to a lesbian identity or 'back to' a heterosexual one (Bradford 2004; Diamond 2008; Israel & Mohr 2004; Scherrer, Kazyak & Schmitz 2015). Lippmann (1965) has claimed that stereotypes are both inflexible definition-wise and difficult to change. As is the case with both

bisexuality and lesbianism as society still perceive them as temporary phases (Beirne 2008b:179).

Although stereotypes are a natural function of society (Lippmann 1965; Nachbar & Lause 1992:237) it endorses prejudice based on beliefs and assumptions. The purpose of stereotypes is to socially marginalise a group of people (Nachbar & Lause 1992). Distributing and maintaining stereotypes through television can therefore be harmful for real people; not merely because their descriptive nature but of their prescriptive qualities as well. *What* and *how* are stereotypes used to represent lesbians and bisexuals on television, and how are they used to stereotype a same-sex couple?

3.2.1. Definitions of lesbian and bisexual stereotypes

Butch – Dressed more masculine; for example, plaid flannel shirts, short haircuts, work boots, tattoos, and body piercings. Perceived as strong and outspoken, often angry and aggressive.

Femme – Tends to be “hyper-feminine”, attractive, and almost indistinguishable from a straight woman. Pretty and stylish, wearing make-up and heels.

Gay Character – Defined by their sexual orientation.

It's-Just-A-Phase – A temporary identity. Can refer to both lesbians and bisexuals. Bisexuality is often depicted as a “phase”, “on the way” to homosexuality or “back to” heterosexuality.

Male Gaze – Used to attract heterosexual males by sexualising and fetishizing a specific sexuality. Often depicted as a slim, feminine, and Caucasian.

Promiscuity – Bisexuals are sexually deviant because of their attraction to both sexes. This includes the inability to maintain a steady relationship, making them non-committal.

Psycho Lesbian – Mentally unstable and/or morally corrupt. Can be seen as psychotic, angry and violent sociopath who will stalk and ruin your life. Can refer to both lesbians and bisexuals.

U-Haul Syndrome – Lesbians and bisexuals tend to commit and move in with each other very quickly (on the second date).

3.3. Tropes

A trope can be defined as the use of figurative language for artistic effect (Miller 1990). An image, word or a phrase can be used as a figure of speech. As such, the word trope has come to describe commonly recurring literary and rhetorical devices, clichés or motifs in works of art (Cuddon & Preston 1998:948; Merriam-Webster, n.d). It refers to a meaning other than its literal sense. For example, 'stop and smell the roses' refers to the underlying meaning of taking a pause, and is therefore a trope as the literal meaning differs from what it is understood to mean (Adkins & Hinlicky 2013).

For example, when a lesbian character is killed because she can be seen as either mentally unstable or morally corrupt, it falls under the "Dead Lesbian" trope as it has appeared often (Blaine 2007; Capsuto 2000; Dow 2001; Harris 2006; Hart 1994; Russo 1987; Tropiano 2002). Another frequently used trope for lesbian and bisexual characters is that they are not allowed happy endings. Commonly referred to as "Bury Your Gays". Even if they are afforded a relationship, at least half of the couple often die. Most often it is the lesbian/bisexual shown as more aggressive in pursuing the relationship, as she is thus seen as 'perverting' the other and has to die to redeem herself (TVTropes, n.d.a).

A trope can be explained as "devices and conventions that a writer can reasonably rely on as being present in the audience members' minds and expectations" (TVTropes, n.d.c). It can be thought of as a narrative choice by the storyteller (Foss 1992:12). For television, the storyteller is the showrunner in charge of the television show, and the story he/she tells is expressed through content and form (Foss 1992). Foss (1992:9) explains that "in narrative audiovisual media such as film and television, content and form can be approached in terms of a Plane of Events and a Plane of Discourse". The *Plane of Events* is the content of a television show. It is the world in which characters exist, and everything in it can and could be perceived by them. In other words, it can be referred to as the story or action of the show. The *Plane of Discourse*, on the other hand, is the form of the television show. It means that all the elements of form or narrative devices which the storyteller uses to communicate a story to the audiences. The characters within the story or action cannot be aware of the form as it is a message from the storyteller to the audience. The camera's behaviour, for example, exists as a message from the storyteller (Foss 1992:9-10).

Therefore, television plays an important role in fostering tropes (Gerbner et al 2002). As storytellers are most often part of the majority, they help repeat both tropes and stereotypes as cultural norms, as people who lack of first-hand experience of lesbians and bisexuals rely on television's depictions of them (Stangor 2000; McCrady & McCrady 1976). In the case of this thesis storytellers should be understood in terms of the television shows. The means of expression of television is thus elements of the narrative. It can be defined as *what* we see and hear, and *how* we see and hear it; with the former being the plane of events and the latter the plane of discourse (Foss 1992:23).

As such, "Lesbian Subtext", as a trope, can be portrayed similar to a romantic relationship, even though the characters may not be sexually attracted to each other. The subtext is used by the storyteller to create an illusion of a romantic relationship, most often to bait female viewers (TVTropes, n.d.b). Another way for storytellers to increase ratings is by using "Sweeps Week Lesbian Kiss", which sees a lesbian/bisexual character kiss the heterosexual female character. However, the straight character refutes the action and the lesbian/bisexual character is not seen again (Capsuto 2000). The signification becomes that 'it was just a walk on the wild side'.

Other tropes used by storytellers include "Behind Closed Doors" and "Deviant Bisexual"; the former, sees lesbian intimacy and love scenes behind closed doors or only implied to as to not arouse male viewers (Brunsdon, D'Acci & Spigel 1997); and the latter depicts bisexual characters as untrustworthy, prone to infidelity, and/or lacking a sense of morality (GLAAD 2015). Television most often depicts bisexuals in stable relationships with a male partner. Although bisexuals are frequently portrayed in relationships with other women, these relationships never last, and she ends up with a man to reinforce the heterosexual relationship (Beirne 2008b; Brunsdon, D'Acci & Spigel 1997).

These are thus clichés to convey to an audience how a bisexual is. She is not someone to be trusted, or women are just a phase. They are as such a figurative language for artistic effect, just as storytellers enforce the heterosexual norm by portraying homosexual relationships as butch/femme to signify that there has to be a man and a woman in the relationship (Beirne 2008a:90; Tatum 2014). *What and how* are tropes used on television to represent lesbians and bisexuals? Are they used to reinforce general ideas about same-sex relationships?

3.3.1. *Definitions of lesbian and bisexual tropes*

Behind Closed Doors – Lesbian sex must stay behind closed doors. Most often only hinted to.

Bury Your Gays – Same-sex relationships always end tragically. If they are afforded a relationship, at least half of the couple often die. The more aggressive woman must die in order to be punished for ‘perverting’ her partner. Often used in conjunction with a romantic scene.

Dead Lesbian Syndrome – Sees single lesbians killed off, particularly if they are shown as mentally unstable or morally corrupt.

Deviant Bisexual – Bisexual characters who are depicted as untrustworthy, prone to infidelity, and/or lacking a sense of morality.

Female-to-Male Partner – Bisexual women are portrayed in homosexual relationships, but these never hold, and the bisexual ends up with a man to reinforce the heterosexual norm.

Gender Roles – There has to be a man and a woman in the relationship because of heterosexual norms.¹⁰

Lesbian Subtext – Same-sex friendship is portrayed similar to a romantic relationship to create an illusion of a romantic connection, even though the characters may not be sexually attracted to one another.

Sweeps Week Lesbian Kiss – A seemingly heterosexual female character engages in a kiss with a possibly lesbian or bisexual character. Most often the potential relationship does not last the episode and the lesbian or suspected lesbian is written off.

3.4. **How theories will be used**

Representation theory is used to understand the meaning of language, and how meaning is constructed through concepts and signs. Semiotics is then used to uncover how concepts such as lesbian and bisexual are used on television. Their meaning is understood through categories;

¹⁰ The gender roles of man/woman in this trope will be based on stereotypes of butch/femme, as they are perceived as the equivalent to the heterosexual norm.

stereotypes thus become the 'image' by which people simplify the category. A trope is then used by the storyteller to represent lesbians and bisexuals by artistic effect. The trope is thus the 'signification' of the 'signifier' and the 'signified'. The question "how are lesbians and bisexuals represented on television" can therefore be answered by understanding how the meaning of language is used through stereotypes and tropes. Tropes become the form by which a story is told, and stereotypes become the concept which fills the story. Do the stereotypes vary dependent on what trope is used to tell the story? Do certain tropes utilise certain types of stereotypes? How are they used to represent same-sex relationships?

3.4.1. Analytical framework

The analytical framework is used to identify *what and how* a trope is used as a form of storytelling, and to identify the stereotype(s) used to portray the characters within the context of the storyline. Definitions of the tropes and stereotypes have been described above. However, they are only outlines of how they may look or be used. Most likely, both tropes and stereotypes will be used in modified form on the television shows, or not be used at all. The analytical framework is not filled in as it is not yet known how the different tropes utilise the different stereotypes. Thus, the analytical framework will be used as a guideline to identify tropes and stereotypes to be able to compare stereotypes between the different tropes. After identifying tropes and stereotypes the analytical framework will be filled in. The question then becomes *what and how* tropes are used by the television show, and *what and how* stereotypes are used within the trope.

Table 3.1 Analytical framework

	Behind Closed Doors	Bury Your Gays	Dead Lesbian Syndrome	Deviant Bisexual	Gender Roles	Female- to-Male Partner	Lesbian Subtext	Sweeps Week Lesbian Kiss
Butch								
Femme								
Gay Characters								
It's-Just-A- Phase								
Male Gaze								
Promiscuity								
Psycho Lesbian								
U-Haul								

4. Specified aim and research question

This thesis aims to further the understanding of how lesbian and bisexual women are represented on television, and in turn how stereotypes and tropes are used to marginalise same-sex relationships. The main question this thesis aims to answer is: How are lesbian and bisexual relationships stereotypes through the use of tropes?

In doing so, this thesis strives to answer the following questions:

- a. *What and how* are tropes used to portray the characters' storylines?
- b. *What and how* are stereotypes used within the trope to portray the characters in relation to each other?
- c. Do the tropes and/or stereotypes used challenge previous scholarship? If so, how? If not, in what ways are they reaffirming tropes and/or stereotypes?

5. Research design and methods

A single case study is used with the aim to identify how lesbian and bisexual relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes on television. *What and how* are tropes used as storytelling devices? *What and how* are stereotypes used in the context of the trope? To carry this out, a qualitative content analysis will be used for the analytical part. Three television shows will be analysed based on viewer ratings and popularity as they are most likely to be viewed by society and most relevant to character identification. The following television shows will be analysed: *Grey's Anatomy*, *Orphan Black* and *The 100*. They will in turn be treated as one case of Western television. Scenes from episodes of these television shows will be collected through visual analysis, to be able to transcribe the scenes for textual analysis. The analytical method together with the framework proposed in the theoretical chapter will be used to analyse the gathered material. Existing theory is thus applied to new context to examine how same-sex relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes.

5.1. Research design

This thesis will utilise a single-N research design to identify how Western television stereotype lesbians and bisexuals in relation to each other through the use of tropes. A single case study is optimal because even though the television shows analysed have different countries of origin, they are built upon Western stereotypes, and can therefore be used as a case study of Western television. A single-N allows for a more in-depth and intensive knowledge of the case (Geddes 2003; George & Bennett 2005). It is as a way “to uncover causal paths and mechanisms and assess specific mechanisms identified in theories” (Halperin & Heath 2012:172). Due to time restraints it is more feasible to look at the television shows as one case, as they are based on Western stereotypes. If time was not an issue a small-N could be used to see how different countries represent lesbian and bisexual women on television, or how different forms of media portray lesbians and bisexuals; or a large-N could be conducted to systematically examine the relationship between representation of lesbians/bisexuals and race on television for example (Halperin & Heath 2012).

The aim is to identify *what* and *how* tropes are used, and *what* and *how* stereotypes are used within the trope. Do stereotypes differ dependent on the trope? To compare analytical units, for this thesis the tropes, a comparative design is used to either compare differences or similarities

between them (Halperin & Heath 2012). Research designs, such as experimental design, and cross-sectional and longitudinal designs are not appropriate as they are not interested in identifying and explaining differences or similarities between units as comparative design is (Halperin & Heath 2012). As previously mentioned, studies have shown that sexual minorities are often marginalised in society. Television is crucial in the formation of identities, and therefore, it is important to see how television represents lesbians and bisexuals in same sex-relationships. How are they stereotyped through tropes? Do stereotypes differ dependent on the trope used? How they are portrayed can be drawn to social perception.

For the analysis three television shows have been selected from a population of all television shows with both lesbian and bisexual characters currently on air. The samples have not been randomly selected. *Grey's Anatomy*, *Orphan Black* and *The 100* have been chosen based on viewer ratings and popularity inter alia (see Appendix B); viewer ratings¹¹ and popularity indicate that people are watching the show and thus forming ideas about identities in society. Television shows have been selected based on similarities such as drama series with at least one main or recurring lesbian and bisexual character. Initially, 40 television shows were selected (see Appendix A). However, two of the shows have no current lesbian or bisexual character; eleven were cancelled during the 2014/2015 television season; two air on streaming services; and two of the shows are produced in French and Spanish respectively, and cannot be properly analysed due to language barriers. From the remaining 18, three samples were selected: *Grey's Anatomy* because it is the highest rated show indicating that it has the highest number of viewers and it is most probable to be viewed by society; *The 100* because it initiated the "LGBT Viewers Deserve Better" movement, and it is the highest rated show with both a lesbian and bisexual character on The CW network (TV Series Finale 2016); and the Canadian show, *Orphan Black* was selected as it is the only non-American show rated. Although a non-probability sample is not reliable in a statistical sense, they most often produce realistic results (Halperin & Heath 2012). Based on the utilised research design it is not possible to make broad generalisations about how same-sex relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes on Western television shows. However, this study adds to the overall literature on LGBT representation on television and if patterns found in this thesis hold then it is possible to make broader generalisations.

¹¹ Viewer ratings are based on Nielsen ratings. Nielsen rates American households.

Another important factor for this thesis is the relationship between theory and observation. The theoretical chapter presented relevant stereotypes and tropes derived from theory. Hence, tropes and stereotypes in the analytical framework guide observation and finding of data. This can be seen as deductive (Bryman 2008; Halperin & Heath 2012). However, this thesis is also inductive as it aims to examine the relationship between the two and thereof 'theory'¹² is the outcome of research (Bryman 2008; Halperin & Heath 2012); as the framework is filled in based on findings from the analysis. Therefore, the thesis is both deductive and inductive. Halperin and Heath (2012:31) asserts that, in practice, researchers most commonly use both.

5.2. Method of gathering data

This case study applies existing theory to new contexts. As stereotypes and tropes are already well established, the aim is to apply existing knowledge to new contexts in the form of the television shows. *What and how* are tropes used? *What and how* are stereotypes used in relation to the trope? To answer these questions data must be collected by mapping the different stereotypes and tropes in television shows with lesbian and bisexual representation.

The data is gathered by visual analysis. A visual protocol is used to capture the characters in a scene; what the characters are wearing; how the characters are acting; what the setting is; how the camera behaves; and to cite dialogue. By utilising a semiotic approach to analyse television shows, it will be possible to observe signs in addition to the language of the dialogue; as visual analysis pays attention to behaviour and appearance of the characters, appearance of the sets, the use of lighting and framing, and the situations in which the characters are placed, in addition to language (Riessman 2008; Schneider 2012; Spencer 2011; van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2001). The visual protocol makes the end result more reliable and valid, as without the protocol the data's trustworthiness may be limited. First, the protocol makes the analysis simpler and more organised to carry through. Second, the protocol allows for more consistent results; making it easier to draw conclusions and make generalisations (Halperin & Heath 2012).

As television shows are made up of a number of episodes per televised season, the source of the data must come from them. Due to a large quantity of episodes it is not feasible to analyse them all due to time restraints, and because not all content within the episodes are relevant to

¹² The aim of this thesis is not to develop 'theory'. It is merely used to explain how induction works. This study will answer the research question by observing and developing an analytical framework based on the findings.

the study. Since the aim is to analyse lesbian and bisexual representation only material in reference to those characters are pertinent. Only episodes aired during the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 seasons will be analysed to give a picture of current representation. The time frame is August 2014 through April 2016. I do acknowledge that the current season is not finished but the majority of all episodes for the television shows have aired.¹³ See Appendix C for descriptions about the television shows.

Figure 5.1 Protocol for visual analysis

Name of Television Show

Season X Episode X

Time frame in episode	Character(s) and representation	Costume	Body language and behaviour	Setting	Framing	Dialogue
xx:xx – xx:xx	Name of character(s) in scene. Description of the character(s). What is the age and social class of the character.	What is the character wearing.	How is the character acting? How is the character acting in relation to another lesbian/bisexual character.	Description of scene.	How the camera is used.	What is spoken in the scene.

5.3. Method of analysing data

It is unlikely that the tropes and stereotypes this thesis seeks to identify will be clearly defined in the data, hence, the task is to identify and categorise them according to the analytical framework developed in the theory chapter. When identified, tropes and stereotypes are classified based on the proposed analytical framework. As previously mentioned, a trope is a form of storytelling whilst a stereotype is a type of content to fill the story with. First, tropes are identified using the analytical framework. Second, stereotypes are identified within the trope according to the framework. It is likely that stereotypes are mixed when analysing the data. This is acknowledged and briefly discussed in the analysis. However, by using semiotics they are categorised based on predominant traits.¹⁴ Of course there are repercussions to this as it may imply further marginalisation but for simplicity and consistency predominant traits are used.

¹³ *Grey's Anatomy* and *The 100* will air their final episodes of the season on May 19, whilst *Orphan Black* will air its remaining seven episodes throughout May and finish on June 16. June/July will then start off the 2016 Summer TV season until the 2016/2017 season starts in August.

¹⁴ Television shows utilise overall arcs and episode arcs which means that a trope can be reoccurring to portray a relationship or it can be used as a one-off in a separate episode. Therefore, previous scenes will be referred back to when it is related.

A qualitative content analysis is used to analyse the transcribed protocols. It is used to find the signification, as qualitative analysis is concerned with latent content, and assumes that it is possible to expose the meanings, motive, and purposes embedded within the text and to infer valid hidden or underlying meanings of interest to the researcher (Halperin & Heath 2012; Weber 1990). Quantitative content analysis is not relevant as it is concerned with the manifest content of communication and used systematically, for example to count the number of times a particular word, phrase, or image occurs in a communication (Halperin & Heath 2012).

This analysis could be done using either qualitative content analysis or discourse analysis as it falls between both fields. Content analysis is concerned with identifying representations in the content of mass media, literature and film (Halperin & Heath 2012:310); and discourse analysis investigates a recurring set of 'underlying mental models and social representations' in 'influential public discourses', and attempts to understand the conditions, consequences, and functions of these discursive elements by exploring the context in which they are produced (van Dijk 2004:353-57). Therefore, qualitative content analysis has much in common with discourse analysis. This thesis utilises a qualitative content analysis to identify how lesbian and bisexual relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes. I understand that parts of my analysis can be understood in forms of discourse analysis but I treat it as qualitative content analysis for consistency and simplicity.

The following chapter analyses the gathered data. By applying theory to context the transcribed data is examined for patterns of tropes and stereotypes. First, *what* trope and *how* the trope is used is identified. Second, *what* stereotype(s) and *how* stereotype(s) are used within the trope is identified, and how the characters are related to each other using a stereotype/stereotypes. The analysis is presented using quotations and narratives as it is the primary mode of presentation for qualitative content analysis. Last, the analytical framework is filled in according to the findings.

6. Analysis

Television is a mirror of society and in which we hope to see our lives and existence reflected. How lesbian and bisexual characters are represented is important as it affects how people see themselves and how society perceive them. Stereotypical or negative representation marginalise lesbians and bisexuals, and as mentioned, the LGBT community has grown tired of continued misuse of stereotypes and tropes, especially the signification that there will be no happy endings for same-sex relationships. The aim is to analyse how relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes. However, television shows are fictional and are not a complete and true image of lesbian and bisexual representation and life. Though, popular images do affect the way we think and act because television shows are based on the constructed views of society.

This analysis uses qualitative content analysis to interpret the text within the content. This is done by watching the television shows and transcribing relevant scenes that adds to the use of tropes and stereotypes on television. The analytical framework is then used as a tool to identify *what and how* tropes and stereotypes are used. First, the analysis describes the represented lesbian and bisexual characters and how they can be stereotypical in their own right. Second, the different tropes are presented; *how* are they used, and *what and how* stereotypes are used in conjunction with the tropes. Followed by the findings from the analysis presented in the analytical framework proposed in the theoretical chapter.

6.1. Lesbian and bisexual characters

It is important to point out that the majority of these characters are supporting roles to the main protagonist. Although the actresses playing these roles are main or recurring cast with their characters getting their own storylines, they are supporting characters in the overall story arc. The result of this is that they are more likely to be killed off or used in other ways to increase ratings. Only *The 100* has the bisexual Clarke Griffin as the main protagonist.

The overall impression of the characters is that individually they are stereotyped with both masculine and feminine traits which do not set them apart from straight characters. However, in relation to another lesbian/bisexual character, traits are emphasised as either 'butch' or 'femme', as one become more prominent in relation to the other character. Masculine traits identified are: brave, problem solver, leader, perpetrator, higher economic/career status, and

gives advice; and feminine traits identified are: emotional, dependent, nurturing, afraid/fearful, troublesome, asks for or accepts advice, and ashamed. These are stressed as 'butch' and 'femme' respectively within the tropes. Another protruding stereotype among the individual characters is the 'male gaze'. Six out of eight characters are portrayed as slim, feminine and Caucasian. Only two of eight characters are portrayed as people of colour, and only one of the actresses is actually Latina.

Most often the characters' storylines are tied to a romantic relationship in one way or another. In both *Grey's Anatomy* and *Orphan Black*, the relationships have blossomed in seasons previous to the time frame studied. Though the relationships are still relevant as the characters are portrayed in relation to that partner. Tropes and stereotypes are thus prominent when analysing the relationship they have to one another. Only *The 100* includes the meeting of the couple in question during the time frame studied. It is also important to note that the three core relationships studied have been heavily promoted by the television shows and the showrunners for seasons, and therefore have gained a large audience-following invested in the relationships and the characters.¹⁵ These relationships are: Callie Torres and Arizona Robbins (*Grey's Anatomy*); Cosima Niehaus and Delphine Cormier (*Orphan Black*); and Clarke Griffin and Lexa Kom Trikru (*The 100*). In addition to the core relationships, two of the characters are portrayed with new girlfriends during the time frame studied; Callie Torres and Penny Blake (*Grey's Anatomy*), and Cosima Niehaus and Shay Davydov (*Orphan Black*). See Appendix D for character descriptions.

6.2. Tropes

6.2.1. Gender Roles

"Gender Roles" are defined with the perception that there has to be a man and a woman in a relationship. The trope assumes that even in a same-sex relationship there has to be one partner that act likes the man and the other as the woman. Therefore, one partner must act more butch and the other more femme; as these are the equivalents to heterosexual norms. Found in this

¹⁵ These relationships have been promoted through social media, promotional images, merchandise, by the cast and crew, and the television show in general. Creating an invested audience of the relationship.

trope are the stereotypes butch and femme, as well as promiscuity. They are presented as followed: butch, promiscuity and femme.

In *Grey's Anatomy* and *The 100* Callie and Clarke are the two characters represented as butch through actions such as the primal need to defend their 'girlfriends', even against their knowledge or wishes. In several scenes of Season 12 Episode 7 of *Grey's Anatomy* Callie tries to get Penny reassigned from Meredith's service and defends Penny to Meredith. Following a scene where Penny gets called into work in the middle of the night, Callie seeks out Richard to get Penny reassigned from Meredith's service. Her demeanour is at first manipulative but as she is confronted by other characters, that she is speaking about Penny, she gets defensive and quickly changes her tactic to compassion in Penny's favour: "I worry she's not getting a full education. And Grey is [pause] she's running her ragged"; telling Richard Meredith's behaviour towards Penny is personal. Richard tells Callie that if Penny has a problem she can come to him, and that the hospital has no policy moving around residents to accommodate Callie's personal life. Callie is frustrated as she storms out the room. Callie portrays both manipulative and defensive behaviour in the scene as she tries to manipulate Richard, and gets defensive and aggressive towards another female character. The behaviour could also be interpreted as psycho lesbian but is affirmed as butch as Callie predominantly feels the need to defend Penny against her perceived injustices.

As is such when Callie angrily confronts Meredith about Penny only to be told "if she was any other resident you wouldn't be talking to me right now Callie". Meredith tells Callie that the problem lies with her and not herself or Penny. Callie is mad and will not accept Meredith's argument. The underlying message points towards the dominating male who feels the need to protect what is his no matter the cause. Callie's personality is tainted by her predatory and driving need to defend and protect Penny, even though Penny never asked her to and even go so far as to tell Callie to stay out of it. This in turn leaves Callie with hurt pride, something commonly associated with men.

Callie is further affirmed as butch by association with another male term, 'chasing tail'. In a scene from Season 12 Episode 20 Callie gives her notice to Miranda as she is moving to New York with Penny. Miranda's response is to hint at Callie's infatuation with Penny: "You're a chief and she's a resident. So you're moving to chase tail across the country". Callie as such is thus giving up her position to 'chase tail' across the country. A term usually associated with

men, as men become infatuated by women they are willing to chase them around. Callie is defensive in her response as she seethes at Miranda that she does not need her judgement. Callie is capable to make her own decisions. In turn reinforcing Callie as butch in her relationship with Penny.

In similar fashion on *The 100*, Clarke is represented as butch in her primal need to protect Lexa, even though Lexa explicitly tells her not to. In Season 3 Episode 3 Clarke declares to Abby and Marcus that Skikru¹⁶ should join the coalition¹⁷ as this will help save their people from further war. However, the underlying message by Clarke is that joining the coalition will help her save Lexa. Previous scenes have seen Clarke angry at Lexa, but as Clarke learns about the potential danger to Lexa by not joining the coalition Clarke convinces both Abby and Marcus that Skikru should join.

In Season 3 Episode 4 the Ice Queen challenges Lexa in a duel to the death, in an effort to remove Lexa as Commander. Clarke angrily refuses to acknowledge Lexa's decision to accept the challenge and actively seeks out to bargain for her life, in the process even trying to murder the Ice Queen herself. Even though Lexa has come to terms with her fate shall she die, Clarke is not willing to let her, even yelling at Lexa that "I won't just sit there and watch you die". Clarke, as butch, must defend and protect Lexa, and the meaning thus become clear that Clarke has the masculine qualities through her actions based on primal emotions of anger and possession.

Both Callie and Clarke are depicted as promiscuous in the sense that they are non-committal. This action could also be used to reinforce their butch personalities as it is a behaviour that could be associated with masculinity. In Season 12 Episode 16 of *Grey's Anatomy*, Penny lovingly tells Callie "I love you" as they are going to bed. Shocked and seemingly panicked Callie stumbles out a "Thank you" in response. In a reflecting scene of *The 100*, Finn [Clarke's boyfriend] tells Clarke he loves her to which Clarke desperately just tells him to "Don't leave. Please". Callie and Clarke are both in relationships but cannot verbally commit to the other person. However, this stereotype is refuted as Callie later, after a medical scare with her

¹⁶ Skikru. The people that fell from Space. Clarke's people.

¹⁷ The coalition is an alliance of peace negotiated by Lexa to join together 12 different clans. Lexa is intent on Skikru becoming the 13th clan.

daughter, compassionately declares to Penny that “We are in the same place. We have been there a while”. The meaning clear that Callie loves Penny as well. In the same fashion Clarke is tenderly declaring her love for Finn as she is killing him out of compassion.¹⁸ A such the promiscuous stereotype is refuted but only in the response to eminent danger or perceived dangerous situation. Clarke is seen refuting this stereotype in her commitment to Lexa as she is rarely seen leaving her side throughout Season 2 and even choosing to go with Lexa instead of staying with her people.

Lastly, as the perceived gender roles assign two roles, the role of femme shall be discussed. On *Grey’s Anatomy*, in contrast to Callie’s butch personality, Penny is represented as femme. In Season 12 Episode 17 Penny has received a grant to study medicine in New York. Callie assumes that Penny has already accepted and is depicted as annoyed by the fact. However, Penny emotionally responds that she would not make a choice without Callie: “Not without talking to you first”. Although Penny has the right to make her own decisions she feels submissive to Callie’s opinion. Hence, reinforcing Penny as femme, as dependent on Callie.

In a similar depiction on *The 100*, Lexa is prescribed as dependent on Clarke. Throughout, other characters comment on the fact that Lexa listens to Clarke. It is evident that Lexa becomes wary about making decisions without Clarke’s input, as seen in Season 3 Episode 7 when Titus asks Lexa’s orders, and Lexa in response turns to Clarke and calmly says her name: “Clarke”. Her eyes are firmly placed upon Clarke with the camera showing a close-up of her face before moving to Clarke. Lexa is no longer making her own choices, but choices based on Clarke’s needs. In Season 3 Episode 5 Clarke makes a case for Lexa not declaring war against Skikru after they have massacred 300 of Lexa’s people. Clarke is desperately pleading for Lexa to make the right choice. A wounded Indra despairingly asks Lexa “Commander you can’t really be considering this”, as she wants revenge for her people. Lexa calmly but coldly declares that “I’m not considering it. I’m doing it”. The message clear that Clarke must have what she wants. Lexa is submissive to her. In an earlier scene, Season 3 Episode 3 [Azgeda](#) questions why Clarke

Commented [CL1]: Should I use Azgeda or Ice Nation? Same goes for Skikru and Trikru. I could use the terms Sky People and Tree People.

¹⁸ Instead of letting Finn be killed by Lexa’s army for his war crimes in Season 2 Episode 8, Clarke kills him out of compassion.

is still alive and asks “If this is your weakness again”,¹⁹ reinforcing Lexa’s feelings for Clarke and her compulsion to do everything in her power for Clarke.

The “Gender Role” trope is used to portray the bisexual characters as more masculine in relation to the lesbian characters. They are represented as protective and aggressive towards others in their primal need against the other female. The lesbian characters are in turn represented as submissive and dependent on the other. Neither trope nor the butch and femme stereotypes are challenged but in turn reaffirmed. However, previous scholarship has not represented bisexuals as butch in same-sex relationships. Though promiscuity is refuted for the bisexual characters as they are both committed to their partners. Although the trope still associates them as butch.

6.2.2. Behind Closed Doors

“Behind Closed Doors” is based on the trope that lesbian sex is steamy, and men love to watch it. Therefore, it must stay behind closed doors. Sex between same-sex characters and is most often only hinted to on television in comparison to heterosexual sex which may be shown more explicitly. Stereotypes found represented in this trope are butch, femme and male gaze.

Again, Clarke and Callie are reinforced as butch. In Season 3 Episode 1 of *The 100*, Niylah is washing Clarke. Clarke is in the dominant position. Niylah is impressed as she speaks of Clarke’s previous actions whilst Clarke is dismissive. Defensively Clarke demands: “Niylah, would you mind not talking”. Hurt by her words, Niylah starts to pull away but Clarke stops her. Clarke is craving her touch and places Niylah’s hand upon her body before kissing her. They fight for control as they undress and kiss before the camera locks on Clarke underneath Niylah grasping the bed sheets and tilting her head back. It is not implied that they are about to have sex. They are having sex as the scene change. However, even though the scene in itself defines the trope, Clarke can still be seen as butch as she comforts herself and Niylah through sex, instead of talking through her feelings. As Clarke leaves in the following scene, the interpretation of her actions reduces Clarke to masculine, or promiscuous, as she is using Niylah for sex.

¹⁹ Lexa’s weakness is in reference to Azgeda previously having killed Lexa’s lover Costia. In Season 2 Episode 9 Lexa tells Clarke she lost someone special to her too: “Her name was Costia. She was captured by the Ice Nation, who’s queen believed she knew my secrets, because she was mine. They tortured her. Killed her. Cut off her head”.

Parallel is Clarke's love scene with Lexa in Season 3 Episode 7. Lexa and Clarke are saying their goodbyes before Clarke has to leave. They are both emotional as they speak of potential life after the war. The camera focus on their faces, with the light casting shadows as if to hide them, as Lexa compliments Clarke, her voice nearly breaking "That's why I [pause] That's why you're you". The camera focus on Clarke before she kisses her. The subtle dialogue implies that Lexa loves Clarke, and Clarke kisses her in response. Clarke can be seen as more aggressive as she starts to undress Lexa, and the scene ends with Clarke pushing them down on the bed. Clarke as such, is again more assertive and takes charge. In contrast both Niylah and Lexa can be seen as femme, as submissive to Clarke. Clarke's love scene with Lexa follows the "Behind Closed Doors" trope as it only hints to sex, in contrast the previous love scene with Niylah. The following scene shows Clarke and Lexa naked underneath sheets and the gist is that we know that they have had sex. Clarke is tracing her fingers over Lexa's arm and back. Clarke is quietly asking questions about Lexa's tattoos. Lexa is relishing in Clarke's touch and contently asks if they can speak about something else to which Clarke saucily replies "We don't have to talk at all". They both smile as Lexa leans in for a kiss. As the camera pans out we see them making-out and Lexa clasping Clarke's hand over Clarke's stomach. Even though this scene shows more than the previous and thus defines the trope in a sense, the strategic exist of the camera as it pans out hides what is about to happen. Once more, Clarke can be seen as butch as she is more inclined to have sex than having a conversation. Though she shows more affection towards Lexa than she does towards Niylah.

Callie is also depicted as butch in relation to Arizona on *Grey's Anatomy*. In Season 11 Episode 7 Callie is seen pursuing Arizona, with them thereafter having sex. As Arizona is practicing medical procedures Callie is watching her while drinking wine. Callie has a determined look in her eyes as she disposes of her wine glass and starts massaging Arizona's shoulders. Arizona meekly stutters "I need to practice" but Callie hoarsely tells her "No talking". The scene quickly changes to them dropping down on the bed. The setting is dark, and Arizona hesitates before being assured by Callie that they should continue, and the camera then blurs out with Callie and Arizona making out. Just as the scenes with Clarke and Lexa, the scene is changed before anything too intimate happens to only give the illusion of a sexual encounter. The actual sex is either confirmed by later dialogue or intimate scene. As with Clarke, Callie can be seen as butch with a more dominant and assertive behaviour and sex drive. Callie is the one who pushes Arizona for sex and asserts that it is the right course of action. Arizona in turn is submissive and lets Callie talk her into having sex.

In a dissimilar scene between Callie and Penny in Season 12 Episode 19 of *Grey's Anatomy*; both Callie and Penny are exhibiting feminine traits. They are seen naked on the floor panting. The camera is only showing them neck up to give the illusion of them as naked. Penny is out of breath as she declares to Callie "That was, seriously you have skills", to which Callie responds with a smirk "I don't work alone". Callie knows she is good. However, the tone quickly changes as Callie sadly states that she will be miserable without Penny [when Penny leaves for New York]. Penny in turn tells Callie that she never asked her to stay. They both display emotional and dependent behaviour which is attributed to the femme stereotype. Callie declares that she loves Penny too much to ask her to stay. They are both emotional because they love each other, and Penny wells up at Callie's declaration. Callie is dependent on Penny as she will be miserable without her which implies Penny is tied to Callie's emotional happiness whilst Penny sadly says it sucks that she has to leave Callie, and thus inferring that her emotional happiness is tied to Callie.

Orphan Black utilises the male gaze stereotype to imply sex between Cosima and Shay. In a scene from Season 3 Episode 6 Cosima is seen waking up at Shay's apartment. The sheets wrapped around her body implies she is naked underneath. Shay is seen in the background in a bra and panties with an open cardigan showing off her body. They are both sexualised using the typecast of them as slim, feminine and Caucasian. As Shay returns to bed and starts kissing Cosima on the shoulder it implies previous intimacy between the pair. The same can be argued when Cosima trace kisses on Shay's leg. It is further implied that they have had sex when Shay tells Cosima that "It doesn't get much wilder than you", thus hinting that Cosima is wild in bed.

"Behind Closed Doors" is used to imply that there will be or have been sex. Unlike implied heterosexual sex, or foreplay, which is more often shown in explicit manner. In other words, it can also be described as intimacy between two women being shown less on screen as it is outside the bounds of heterosexual norms. *Grey's Anatomy* has a majority of heterosexual couples who are more often shown in intimate or heated situations than their homosexual counterparts. Arizona's sex life, after her divorce, is only ever hinted at, and with Richard not wanting to hear any details about the women. Callie/Arizona and Callie/Penny is only ever shown kissing and then the scene change or there is an implied scene with confirmation by succeeding dialogue. *Orphan Black* utilises the trope in the same manner. However, *The 100* defies it by showing Clarke in the majority of intimate scenes on the show.

Stereotypes, on the other hand, are used differently within the trope dependent on the characters and contexts, though none are challenged. Again, the bisexual characters are represented as butch in relation to their lesbian lovers, with the exception of Callie in relation to Penny. Although the lesbian characters, and Callie in relation to Penny, are seen as either dependent or submissive. Neither Niyah, Lexa nor Arizona question either Clarke or Callie's suggestions.

Orphan Black clearly uses male gaze in portraying their characters. Especially Shay is sexualised in her coloured underwear that highlights her bosom and features. The setting of the scene between Shay and Cosima is warm which is in contrast with the consecutive scene featuring a heterosexual couple which is more cold in colour. Even though the straight female is also portrayed in underwear, her features are not highlighted and the white/neutral underwear is covering. The contrast between the scenes speaks to how 'sexy' and 'saucy' Shay is together with a naked Cosima. Both *The 100* and *Grey's Anatomy* depict their couples naked or give the illusion of them being naked, however, I would not call this male gaze as even though they are depicted undressed, so are heterosexual couples on the show. *Orphan Black* on the other hand sexualises Shay in contrast to the heterosexual female.

6.2.3. Lesbian Subtext

"Lesbian Subtext" is most often used to portray a same-sex friendship similar to a romantic in order to create an illusion of a romantic connection, even though the characters may not be sexually attracted to one another. It has been used as a storytelling device to increase ratings and to bait the LGBT community. Femme, butch, psycho lesbian and male gaze stereotypes have been found in this trope.

Grey's Anatomy utilises "Lesbian Subtext" to portray the relationship between Arizona and Nicole [Arizona's supervisor]. Following Arizona's divorce, she is most often portrayed together with Nicole. This is used to build tension between Arizona and Callie, as is shown in Season 11 Episode 13 when Callie jealously states to her friends "Just look at them. Arizona and Herman. They're practically joined at the hip". Callie seems to take offense by the fact that Arizona is happy with Nicole. Alex points out that Arizona is not sleeping at home "Robbins have been crashing with Herman. She hasn't slept at the house all week". Hence, it is hinted to that they have a relationship even though everyone knows they are not actually together.

In her relationship with Nicole Arizona exhibits feminine traits such as emotional, dependent, nurturing and troublesome. When Nicole tells Arizona she is terminally ill, Arizona refuses to accept the fact at first and asks Amelia for help to remove the tumour. In Season 11 Episode 8 Arizona realises her mistake and yells at Amelia to give all of Nicole's medical files back "It turns out that she is just dying. And she is alone, and she's smart and she's funny, and horny and lonely. She deserves to die however she wants to". Arizona is dependent on Nicole and she has feelings for her. When Amelia tells Arizona she can remove Nicole's tumour, Arizona begs and pleads with Nicole to go through with the operation.

During Nicole's operation in Season 11 Episode 14 Arizona is crying as she tells Callie that "She's [Nicole] is my head. I'm not ready for my head to be the only place where she exists". Thus implying that she is not ready to lose Nicole, she is emotionally dependent on her. She means something more to Arizona. At the end of the episode when Nicole wakes up blind from the surgery, Arizona is crying. She is worried about Nicole and desperately tells her "I will be there if you want me to". However, Nicole is only mentioned once again, as Arizona happily states that she has gotten a text message from her.

Similar to Arizona, Lexa is depicted as femme in relation to Clarke on *The 100*. Even though Lexa is represented as a leader to her people, and a strong and assertive character, she is portrayed as submissive and dependent on Clarke. Most of Season 2 and Season 3 utilise subtext to portray their relationship. In Season 2 Episode 9 Lexa is affirmed as lesbian, and following this declaration it is clear that Lexa has feelings for Clarke such as a scene in Season 2 Episode 10 when Lexa watches Clarke sleep in the woods. As Clarke awakes Lexa calmly tells her "It's okay. You're safe". Lexa looks vulnerable as she says "I was wrong about you Clarke. Your heart shows no sign of weakness". Again, in Season 2 Episode 14 Clarke is seething as she confronts Lexa about a previous war attack, "You let them burn" she angrily declares. Lexa stares at Clarke and quietly tells her "Not everyone, not you". In Season 3 Episode 3 Titus questions Lexa's repeated attempts to initiate Skikru in the coalition. The meaning of the action is placed upon the fact that Lexa is doing it for Clarke. Lexa does not look at Titus as she calmly tells him "She's [Clarke] special". Placing meaning upon the fact that Lexa cares deeply for Clarke. The underlying message represents Lexa as enamoured by Clarke. She is precious to her. Lexa must keep her safe. This is more femme behaviour as she actively tries to create a safe environment for Clarke.

In a scene from Season 2 Episode 14 Lexa kisses Clarke after calmly affirming that “I do trust you Clarke”. However, Clarke pulls away from Lexa as they kiss. Lexa looks unsure as Clarke fumbles to tell her that she is not ready to be with anyone, not yet. As such, it is not clear if Clarke feels the same about Lexa. Though, in Season 2 Episode 15 Clarke is hinting that she has feelings for Lexa too. The scene depicts the two of them on the battlefield calmly speaking about the future. Lexa tells Clarke “You should come with me to the capitol. Polis will change the way you think about us”. As they just stare at each other Clarke quietly tells her “You already have”. These subtle meanings show that Clarke cares about Lexa as well. For Lexa having Clarke close becomes a need.

In Season 3 Episode 7 when Lexa has declared a blockade around the Skikru camp, she affectionately tells Clarke she does not have to leave: “We may be drawing a line but who’s to say you can’t choose to stay on this line of it”. Clarke looks at Lexa with love in her eyes. The way in which Lexa build-up Clarke as butch in Season 3 Episode 5 also portrays her as femme in relation to Clarke. To Lexa Clarke is a hero “You left a hero to your people. And you return one”. Again, for her, Clarke is her epitome. As is clearly shown in Season 3 Episode 3 in which Lexa swears loyalty to Clarke. In an earlier scene of the same episode Titus mentions that the commander bows to no one. However, as previously presented, Clarke is someone Lexa cares about deeply and is dependent upon. Clarke and Lexa are alone when Lexa thanks her for staying with her. Clarke has an edge to her voice as she tells Lexa not to betray her again. Lexa’s demeanour is submissive and vulnerable as the camera shows a close-up of her kneeling before Clarke, before panning out to show Lexa on her knees in front of Clarke. Lexa’s eyes are locked on a surprised Clarke as she vows “I swear fealty to you, Clarke Kom Skikru. I vow to treat your needs as my own, and your people as my people”. Clarke extends her hand to Lexa as she rises and the scene ends with them staring at each other. Lexa is Clarke’s.

Lexa is also represented as a psycho lesbian in relation to Clarke. This is prominent in the perception from other characters. In Season 2 Episode 15 Lexa chooses to protect her people and in doing so betraying Clarke and Skikru. Clarke is visibly upset as she asks if Lexa really cares if Skikru is killed or not. Lexa answers with a hard voice: “I do care Clarke. But I made this choice with my head not my heart”. Lexa then leaves with her army. Hence, Lexa is out to get Clarke killed even though she cares about her. She is morally corrupt as she leads with her head and not her heart. That is the underlying meaning. In Season 3 Episode 7 Lexa is branded as morally corrupt by both Octavia and Titus in two separate scenes. In the first Octavia tells

Clarke that this is the second time Lexa has left them to die. Thus, implying that Lexa does not care about Skikru. However, Clarke responds that she will talk to Lexa, and in so referring that she has influence over Lexa's actions. Titus also sees Lexa as responsible for Clarke's fate. He is demanding she send Clarke away: "If you care about Clarke you must send her home. It is the only way that you will be safe. Don't make her pay the price for your mistakes as Costia [Lexa's deceased girlfriend] did". Not only is Lexa corrupting Clarke, she also corrupted Costia. Lexa is responsible for their lives, and in such took Costia's.

Male gaze is a stereotype utilised by *The 100* to portray intimate scenes between Clarke and Lexa. In Season 3 Episode 3 Clarke bows before Lexa to signify Skikru joining her coalition. The scene is built up with music and dimmed lighting. A singer is shown sporadically and Lexa is seen in a dress standing above the crowd on the raised part of the floor at the right end of the screen. An aisle has been left for Clarke to enter between the crowd of people to bow down before Lexa. Clarke, as Lexa, is shown in a dress with her hair in braids and distinct make-up. Although this scene could be seen as femme, the fact is that neither Clarke nor Lexa have previously been seen in other than practical clothing. They are in this instance sexualised for the audience, and the scene itself is built up as a marriage ceremony. The message is thus clear, Clarke is Lexa's.

In another scene from Season 3 Episode 4 Clarke and Lexa are again shown in dresses. This time in night dresses and barefoot. Lexa enters Clarke's room which is dimly lit by candles. The camera pans between close-ups of Clarke touching Lexa's hand, and of their faces. They sit next to each other as Clarke re-dresses a wound on Lexa's hand. Lexa is shown as vulnerable and gives Clarke shy smiles. Their voices are soft and they glance at each other often. Clarke lets out a deep breath before she stands. As if Lexa's close proximity is affecting her. Clarke affectionately tells Lexa goodnight before Lexa stands and does the same. As Lexa opens the door to leave she glances back at Clarke lovingly. Again, creating an intimate and sexualised scene between the two. It is almost as if the audience should not be privy to it. It is clear they are more than friends. The first scene is followed by the previously mentioned scene where Lexa vows her loyalty to Clarke. Together both scenes read like a marriage ceremony with them promising each other their hearts. The scene in Clarke's bedchamber implies they are more intimate than friends. They are familiar.

Grey's Anatomy uses the trope in a more traditional sense to portray a straight character in a perceived relationship with a lesbian character. Nicole is not interested in Arizona as more than a friend but Arizona's behaviour reads as a deeper connection. She is dependent on Nicole. In parallel, *The 100* depicts Lexa as more dependent on Clarke. Most of the show is built upon the subtext between Clarke and Lexa. It is also evident that Lexa has deeper feelings for Clarke, and initially it is unclear whether Clarke has the same feelings or if she is bisexual, as Clarke was previously portrayed as heterosexual. However, as the character of Lexa is introduced the story puts more weight on the subtext between Clarke and Lexa, predominantly representing them as a couple as they are portrayed side-by-side in battle, war rooms, and together in each other's personal chambers. The stereotypes vary dependent on the context within the trope. What is concerning is that Lexa is always portrayed as submissive to Clarke, and perceived by other characters she is seen as a psycho lesbian in relation to Clarke. It is also concerning that more intimate scenes sexualises them.

6.2.4. Deviant Bisexual

This trope sees bisexual characters depicted as untrustworthy, prone to infidelity, and/or lacking a sense of morality. In the analysis of this trope only one stereotype was prominent: psycho lesbian. The perception is therefore that "Deviant Bisexual" must be psycho lesbians.

Grey's Anatomy, *Orphan Black* and *The 100* all depicts their bisexual characters as psycho lesbians. Most often they are seen as lacking a sense of morality and thus are morally corrupting the other partner. In Season 11 Episode 5 of *Grey's Anatomy*, Callie is on multiple occasions seen drinking and pursuing Arizona sexually. In one scene Callie is clearly intoxicated and stands by Arizona's bedroom door watching her sleep. Callie's face is almost contorted as she sways over to sit on the bed. Her face becomes almost desperate as she kisses Arizona. Arizona breaks it off. In another scene, previously mentioned under "Behind Closed Doors", Callie has a determined look in her eyes as she puts her wine glass down to pursue Arizona sexually. Callie is lacking a sense of morality as she has to have Arizona sexually. Her sexual behaviour is perverting her.

In a similar fashion on *The 100*, Clarke is depicted as psychotic in a scene from Season 3 Episode 2 when she kicks and screams at Lexa while being dragged out of the room by two guards: "You bitch! You wanted the Commander of Death. You got her. I'll kill you". Clarke

is referred to as the 'Commander of Death' after she killed the Mountain Men in Season 2 Episode 16.²⁰ In a sense, Lexa is portrayed as being responsible for their death even though it was Clarke that killed them. Clarke has also previously killed an army of Lexa's. However, in this instance Clarke can be seen as psychotic by her behaviour such as kicking and screaming. She literally has to be removed from the room to not physically hurt Lexa. Since we know Clarke and Lexa care for each other, Clarke must be ruining Lexa. In Season 3 Episode 4 Titus refers to Clarke as corrupting Lexa. After the Ice Queen has challenged Lexa to a duel Clarke asks Titus why Lexa is fighting, and he answers that "The Queen's strength is not in doubt. Thanks to you Heda's²¹ is". Again, she is seen as corrupting Lexa. Clarke is the cause of Lexa's problems. In the same way Clarke can be seen as morally corrupt in Season 3 Episode 6 when she only sees the need for Lexa to change not her, 'blood must not have blood' only applies to Lexa's people not Clarke's. As such the message becomes clear that peace is only something Clarke favours when she needs it. However, Clarke defines this stereotype as in the end she changes for Lexa. If Lexa can bring peace so can Clarke. Clarke has therefore atoned.

Most prominent is the representation of Delphine in *Orphan Black* as a psycho lesbian. In Season 3 Episode 6 Delphine is seen sitting at her desk drinking alcohol and looking at surveillance photos and videos of Cosima with Shay. Her demeanour is almost psychotic, her face distorted. She is obsessed with Cosima. Delphine is stalking her. In a succeeding scene, Season 3 Episode 7, Delphine shows up at Shay's apartment to speak with Cosima. Delphine is on edge, depicted as both worried about Cosima and jealous of her relationship with Shay. Cosima is annoyed and accuses Delphine "You stalking me?". As the previous scene showed, Delphine is stalking Cosima. She is therefore mentally unstable.

Psycho lesbian is frequently used to portray Delphine in various ways such as untrustworthy. In Season 3 Episode 7 Cosima tells Felix that she does not trust Delphine, which is further enforced by Sarah to Scott in the same episode. Delphine is also shown as having no qualms about threatening or torturing people. In Season 3 Episode 1 Delphine's face is demented as she tortures an immobile Rachel with her bare hands, and during a later scene in Season 3

²⁰ Enemy of both Lexa's people and Clarke's people. Initially Lexa helped Clarke fight the Mountain Men but retreated after she struck a deal to save her people and left Clarke behind. Clarke then killed them all herself.

²¹ Heda is another term for Commander in *The 100*. Lexa is thus referred to as both Commander and Heda.

Episode 8 she threatens Rachel's life, and adding that she should have let her die when she had the chance.

Following a scene in Season 3 Episode 9 where Cosima asks for Delphine's help to find out if Shay is a spy for Castor²², Delphine forces her way into Shay's apartment. Coldly Delphine commands Shay to sit down and do what she says. As Delphine closes the window blinds, the camera pans out and the interpretation of the scene is that Delphine will do whatever it takes. She is demented enough to do anything for Cosima. The scene continues with Delphine ignoring Shay, and calmly she turns on the water taps for the bath, the camera focuses on the razor blade she takes out from her boot, before it flips from Shay to Delphine to the water. Again, the message is clear, Delphine is not opposed to harming the other woman [for Cosima]. When the scene continues the camera again focuses on Delphine's hand picking up the razor blade, then Delphine turning off the water. It stops to focus on her calmly telling Shay "You know when I was at boarding school. There was a girl I knew very well and she attempted suicide. She slit her wrists in the bathtub, but it wasn't enough. She should have cut the metatarsal arteries on top of her feet too". Shay is visibly shaken as she looks away. Delphine plans on murdering her [for Cosima]. In the continuing shot Shay lashes out "Jealous bitch you're crazy". She vocally puts words to the underlying meaning of Delphine's actions. Delphine only stops when Cosima calls her to tell her Shay is not a spy for Castor. Delphine still looks demented as she turns around to again face a scared Shay. The scene ends with a close-up of the razor blade in Delphine's hand. The message still clear, that she might kill Shay because Delphine is unstable and corrupt.

The trope is used in conjunction with psycho lesbian to portray the bisexual characters as untrustworthy for the overall storyline and/or as lacking a sense of morality in relation to the other partner. Again, it is clear that psycho lesbian is used within the trope to reinforce the perception that bisexuals lack a sense of morality and are therefore untrustworthy. They are out to ruin the life of their partner. However, with Delphine it is two-fold as her actions toward Shay are for Cosima. Delphine is demented in her love for her.

²² Castor is another organisation.

6.2.5. *Bury Your Gays*

The trope sees relationships end tragically. In the traditional sense, if lesbian/bisexuals are afforded a relationship, at least half of the couple often die. Most often it is the more aggressive woman in the relationship as she is seen ‘perverting’ the other woman and thus must die in order to be punished for her actions. Another common way in which this trope is used is in conjunction with a romantic scene. First there is a romantic scene featuring the couple, then the next scene features one part of the couple dying. This trope is most often used to further a storyline with an established and/or highly promoted television show couple such as Arizona/Callie, Cosima/Delphine, and Clarke/Lexa. They cannot have a happy ending. Stereotypes found are psycho lesbian and femme.

Both *Grey’s Anatomy* and *Orphan Black* utilises the trope to vilify their lesbian characters as the reason for the break-up. In Season 11 Episode 3 of *Grey’s Anatomy*, Arizona decides to further her career instead on expanding her family with Callie. Arizona’s decision to place work above else causes a crack in their marriage thus instilling Arizona as the villain. Arizona even demands a break from Callie in Season 11 Episode 5. Callie begs Arizona to keep trying but Arizona denies her. Although Callie can be seen as the offender just as much as Arizona it is more prominent that Arizona is the culprit for their deteriorating marriage; as the pervading theme of the episode is that Arizona wants to have a break from their marriage, from Callie. Arizona is the one who is ‘perverting’ Callie, driving her to drink and becoming psychotic. At the end of the episode Arizona happily declares that she has realised she cannot live without Callie “[...] Life without you terrifies me. [...] the thing I need is my anchor. It’s you. I need you”. Callie is all Arizona will ever need. As Arizona finish her speech Callie is crying. She has come to the conclusion that their marriage is slowly killing her, and Arizona is suffocating her: “[...] I finally feel free. And by being free I can see now that constantly trying to fix us is the thing that has been killing me slowly. And I don’t want to do it anymore [...]”. Without Arizona Callie feels free. Again, Arizona is the psycho lesbian, who has morally corrupted Callie and ruined her life. Arizona is punished by realising that she wants Callie but she cannot have her.

Much like *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Orphan Black* utilises “Bury Your Gays” to break-up a well-established couple. As Delphine visits Cosima in Season 3 Episode 1 she keeps her distance. Although Delphine is clearly worried about Cosima’s well-being she cannot continue their

relationship: “I’m keeping my promise to you to love all your sisters equally. I can’t do this”. Delphine’s voice almost breaks as she tells Cosima she cannot do them anymore. Cosima is visibly upset and her voice quivers when she declares “I love you” to Delphine. In the initial scene Cosima is subtly stereotyped as the villain as Delphine is only keeping her promise to Cosima. Even though the scene is built up to resonate with Cosima and her love for Delphine, and not with Delphine as the psychotic, angry and violent sociopath she becomes; Cosima is the culprit as she will not allow Delphine to love her above her sisters. When Delphine resonates with that argument and breaks up with Cosima, Cosima uses this against Delphine, and she is seen as ‘perverting’ Cosima. It does not matter what choice Delphine makes, it will not be good enough for Cosima. As Cosima leaves Delphine, they separately break down crying. It is clear that they both care for each other deeply but Delphine chooses work above Cosima [to protect all the clones], and Cosima lets Delphine walk away from her. Though, the message intends to vilify Delphine the underlying stereotype also vilifies Cosima. Hence, they are both ruining their relationship and in doing so they are not afforded happiness together.

In Season 3 Episode 6 Delphine pursues Cosima even after Cosima has begun a relationship with Shay. Enforcing her as morally corrupt. Left alone with Cosima for a moment she tells her “I miss you”. Cosima walks away from Delphine. As she is morally corrupt she cannot have Cosima again. This message is further reinforced in Season 3 Episode 8 when Cosima hands Delphine her resignation. Again, Delphine tries to get her to stay, to persuade Cosima that she needs Delphine. Though, Cosima cannot be with Delphine because she cannot be trusted. Cosima gives Delphine an ultimatum “If you’re not going to be with me. If you’re not going to switch sides. Let me go”. They both stare at each other. Again, it is inferred that Delphine is stalking and ruining Cosima’s life by not letting her go. Delphine is trying to ‘pervert’ Cosima. However, neither is Cosima allowed a relationship with Shay. After Delphine’s episode with Shay [trying to kill her], Cosima confronts Shay about perceived lies she has told. Yet, Cosima is the one who has been hiding information. Shay angrily confronts Cosima about this fact “I think from day one that you have been the liar. I have [pause] I have like no clue who you really are do I?”. Cosima is the one responsible for Shay’s pain and therefore stereotyped as the villain, the psycho lesbian. Shay is deflated as she asks Cosima to leave. Neither they are afforded a relationship as Cosima needs to be punished for her actions.

Orphan Black and *The 100* also use “Bury Your Gays” in the traditional sense and not just metaphorically. This is done by two consecutive scenes; the first one with the pair in a romantic

or otherwise intimate scene, and followed by a scene with one dying. It solidifies the fact that same-sex couples cannot find happiness together.

In Season 3 Episode 10 of *Orphan Black*, Delphine phones Cosima tell her to come outside so they can speak. Outside on the pavement they make small talk before Cosima apologies to Delphine for her behaviour: "I know why you did everything you did. I'm sorry I made you make all the hard choices and then blamed you for them". This is the second scene were Cosima is referred as guilty to their unhappiness and break-up. Delphine is obviously emotional by the declaration. It is clear that she cares deeply for Cosima. The scene is a reflection of Delphine having atoned for her sins and is therefore allowed forgiveness from Cosima. Delphine kisses Cosima but goes no further. Before Delphine walks away she tells Cosima to give her sisters all her love. Again, Delphine's promise to Cosima is placed above all else. Whomever should be stereotyped as the true psycho lesbian is debatable as they are both used as the reason for them not being afforded happiness.

In the following scene Delphine is seen parking her car in the DYAD parking garage. As she walks towards the building the camera is angled to give the illusion of someone following her. Delphine stops and puts her purse down before turning around to face her pursuer. Again, Delphine is depicted as nothing but caring, as such as feminine. Before Delphine is shot and left to bleed out she ask the person holding the gun what will happen to Cosima, she is fearful for her: "What will happen to her?". The trope is here very clear; for Delphine to truly atone for 'perverting' Cosima she needs to be punished. She is punished by being shot, and even as she knows her fate she only cares about Cosima's continued well-being. Cosima is left with the fact that Delphine loved her but they cannot be together.

Clarke and Lexa are depicted in a similar way in Season 3 Episode 7 of *The 100*. The initial love scene is described under "Behind Closed Doors". Clarke and Lexa are shown finally admitting their feelings for each other, and become intimate. The succeeding scene show Titus trying to kill Clarke because Lexa cannot command as long as Clarke is alive. In Titus eyes Clarke is corrupting Lexa. As Clarke seeks cover from the bullets shot at her Lexa opens the door and is hit by a stray bullet. Clarke cries out her name, "Lexa". Lexa is stumbling as the camera pans down to reveal her wound. As Lexa falls Clarke becomes frantic. Lexa is placed on a bed and Clarke desperately tries to save her life "You'll be okay just lie still okay". Lexa's body is shaking and her voice trembles as she tells Clarke "Don't be afraid". Lexa is the one

dying and her thoughts are about Clarke's well-being. Lexa is barely holding on but Clarke still tries to save her "I will fix you. Just stay with me". Clarke is emotional and becomes afraid as Titus approaches Lexa. Clarke feels the need to protect Lexa. Her behaviour is more femme, desperate need. Lexa asks Titus to swear to never attempt to hurt Clarke again. With her last breaths Lexa can think of nothing but Clarke. Clarke frantically tells Lexa "I'm not letting you die".

Parallel to Delphine, Lexa is caring even in the face of death. Lexa tries to sooth Clarke, but Clarke is on the brink of tears as she whispers "I want you" to Lexa. As Lexa is bleeding out she asks for Clarke. Clarke tells her she is here and lovingly strokes Lexa's hair. In Lexa's final moments Clarke is there for Lexa. They love each other deeply. They look at each other, and Clarke places a kiss upon Lexa's lips as she slips away. Clarke breaks down after Lexa's death. They were both clearly dependent on each other. They loved each other. Therefore, they cannot be together. In this instance it was their love that got Lexa killed, and because of their love they must be punished.

It is evident that stereotypes within the trope differs dependent on the characters and context. Although all characters are depicted as psycho lesbians to varying degrees. Though, one is stereotyped as more psycho lesbian for ruining the other. "Bury Your Gays" is then used to punish these characters for 'perverting' the other, and thus they are not afforded happiness together. For Callie and Arizona, the trope is used to break up their marriage, whilst *Orphan Black* and *The 100* use it in the traditional sense with both Delphine and Lexa getting shot. Both partners are to blame for their unhappiness. Love only causes pain. As Thomas (2014) said, "you were never meant to fall in love. Your story ends in tears or it ends in death".

6.3. Findings

Although "Dead Lesbian" is active as two lesbian/bisexual characters have been killed, they were so in conjunction with a relationship, hence the "Bury Your Gays" trope is utilised. From the initial framework five out of seven tropes could be identified as used, and five out of eight stereotypes. The 'U-Haul' stereotype was found in *Orphan Black* but it could not be identified as used within a trope.

Overall, neither tropes nor stereotypes were challenged. The stereotypes butch and femme are used similarly between tropes, but they differ depending on the context of the characters and

how they are stereotyped in relation to their partner. Male gaze is used in a similar way, and is not reliant on the form. Opposite to the aforementioned stereotypes, psycho lesbian is characterised differently dependent on the trope. However, in general, stereotypes were not challenged.

Only the stereotype of promiscuous bisexuals was refuted with the characters committed to their partners, and only the trope “Behind Closed Doors” challenged its form but solidified its use in a succeeding scene. From the observations made, Western television shows stereotype same-sex relationships through the use of tropes. Prominent features include how bisexuals are more masculine in a relationship, how same-sex relationships are sexualised, and the use of unhappy endings.

Table 6.1 Findings and the analytical framework

	Behind Closed Doors	Bury Your Gays	Deviant Bisexual	Gender Roles	Lesbian subtext
Butch	Assertive Domineering	X	X	Protective Aggressive Defensive	Hero
Femme	Dependent	Fearful Nurturing Emotional Dependent	X	Submissive Dependent	Dependent Nurturing Submissive Emotional
Male Gaze	Sexualised Slim, and feminine	X	X	X	Sexualised Slim, and feminine
Promiscuity	X	X	X	Non-committal (refuted)	X
Psycho Lesbian	X	Villainous Corrupt Ruins your life	Psychotic Morally corrupt Mentally unstable	X	Morally corrupt Ruining the lives of others

X – has not been found.

7. Conclusion

How television represents lesbian and bisexual women influence how society perceives them. The problem of how sexual minorities are portrayed using stereotypes are no longer as prominent as they previously have been. In themselves, the individual characters are more often characterised by male/female traits as heterosexual characters. Stereotypes become more prominent in a relationship. Their storylines are then depicted using different tropes and the problem become more focused on the way these are utilised. From the observations made Western television challenges neither previously established tropes nor stereotypes.

Gender is a recurring feature throughout, not only “Gender Roles”, but the others tropes as well. The butch/femme binary is most often used to affirm bisexuals as more butch to lesbian femme, with two of three bisexual characters exhibiting more masculine traits in relation to their partner such as dominant and protective. Previous studies have shown how butch and femme are defined by their characterisations, for examples how to dress and behave, whilst this study has observed how television is challenging this disposition and are instead utilising these stereotypes in a behavioural way. Hence, butch/femme cannot be characterised only by appearance but should be understood in terms of gender traits. Television is no longer interested in the butch appearance over the sexualised femme, and instead prefer to divide femme into masculine/feminine. Thus they are still utilising the initial stereotypes but in a new manner. Previous scholars point to the lack of bisexual representation, however, it appears as if bisexuals are the new butch in the form of more masculine traits in relation to their partner. In relation, the lesbian partner is depicted in feminine manners, such as submissive and dependent. Lexa (*The 100*) as an individual character is complex and strong, but in relation to Clarke she is subordinate, and most of her actions are used to affirm her subservience to Clarke. Research has previously shown lesbians as either butch or femme but not in the sense of mentality in a same-sex relationship. Even though stereotypes, traits, differ dependent on the trope the lesbian character is most often subordinate the bisexual.

Bisexuals are not only frequently represented as butch but also stereotyped as psycho lesbians through “Deviant Bisexual”. Most prominent is the character of Delphine (*Orphan Black*), but all three bisexuals are depicted as psychotic and morally corrupt, commonly in the form of drinking, stalking and sexually inclined. Scholars have previously shown how this has been the most common use and it is evident that this has not changed. However, the trope is two-fold as

mixed with other tropes the behaviour of the bisexual is related to the partner in the relationship becoming the psycho lesbian. As is such when Arizona and Cosima can be tied to Callie and Delphine's stereotypical behaviour through "Deviant Bisexual" in "Bury Your Gays". Psycho lesbian is thus used in similar ways but differently depending on form, and relation to the other character and context. Delphine is psychotic in the "Deviant Bisexual" trope, but even though Cosima is also stereotyped as a villain in "Bury Your Gays" Delphine is still the main offender. Whereas Arizona takes over as the main culprit in the same trope, even though Callie can still be seen as corrupt through "Deviant Bisexual". As stated in method, the predominant tropes and stereotypes has driven the analysis of the scene and as such how the characters are interpreted in relation to each other.

More controversial is the use of male gaze in both "Behind Closed Doors" and "Lesbian Subtext" as it is used to portray a specific type of character: slim, feminine and Caucasian. Scholars have shown how lesbians have previously been presented as commodities, and it is apparent that this is still used to sexualise a couple or a specific character. In a succeeding sequence of first Shay and then a straight female character in parallel appearance, emphasis is placed on bright colour underwear for Shay that highlights her bosom and features whilst the other female is in white/neutral underwear which do not highlight any features. The straight woman almost become de-sexualised to highlight how 'sexy' Shay was in the previous scene. This reaffirms previous studies of male gaze as needing to sexualise lesbians/bisexuals. Sex between lesbians cannot be shown but they need to be fantasised about. Similar is the use of male gaze in "Lesbian Subtext" where there is a need to strip Clarke and Lexa of previously defined characteristics to sexualise them in intimate positions. To be vulnerable and appealing to the heterosexual audience, they have to be sexualised.

Although the bisexual characters are used to defy some stereotypes, overall both the lesbian and bisexual stereotypes are mostly affirmed in accordance with previous research. However, as there are little to no research on how stereotypes are used within tropes this study observes that butch and femme are used similarly between tropes but differ depending on the context of the characters and how they are stereotyped in relation to their partner. Male gaze is utilised in the same way and is not reliant on the form whilst psycho lesbian is characterised differently dependent on the trope used. Therefore, tropes can be used to affirm how lesbians and bisexuals are stereotyped in same-sex relationships on Western television.

Audiences have questioned the use of “Bury your gays”, and this study upholds that it is used as the predominant form to end promoted television couples. The trope is used to vilify the characters, and portray the dying woman with feminine caring traits. To atone for her previous sins (as a psycho lesbian) she most often has to die. It is also used in a similar way in the metaphorical sense. To cite Peyton Thomas, the signification becomes “your story ends in tears or it ends in death” (Thomas 2014). Lesbians and bisexuals cannot be afforded happy and stable relationships as heterosexuals are. The implication for society at large is that LGBT are still marginalised, and they should accept emotional suffering as the norm.

This study does of course not imply that real life is as black and white, and I acknowledge that people interpret and perceive things differently. However, this study gives an important idea of how things can be interpreted, and that television influence how we perceive lesbians and bisexuals, and in so how they are expected to behave and in turn how they may perceive they have to act. As mentioned in the introduction, this thesis wished to add to the literature on LGBT representation on television by looking at how stereotypes are used to represent lesbians and bisexuals in relation to each other within tropes on television. This thesis has covered the most important aspects regarding the use of tropes and stereotypes on *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Orphan Black* and *The 100*, by doing so the gap mentioned in the literature review has been filled, and thereby fulfilling the aim of this thesis.

Furthermore, research could be conducted on a larger scale by including more television shows from the same period to see how lesbians and bisexuals are represented on a wider scale. It could also be done by comparing countries to each other, or different forms of broadcasts such as soap operas, comedies and streaming services. Of course it would also be interesting to conduct research on what effects these representations have on people in society. Research could also be done to compare representation between Caucasian characters and those of different descent. Another question for further research could be why bisexuals are implied as butch in same-sex relationships. There are many aspects of sexual minorities that can be studied.

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Appendix A: Television drama with LGBT characters

Below is a table of television shows with lesbian and bisexual characters on dramatic television shows during the 2014/2015 television season to the 2015/2016 television season (June 2014 to August 2016). Although the time frame studied is August 2014 to April 2016.

Table A.1 Television shows with lesbian and bisexual characters

Show	Year	Country	Network	Characters	Notes
<i>Grey's Anatomy</i>	2005 -	USA	ABC	Callie Arizona Lauren Leah Penny	
<i>Bones</i>	2005 -	USA	FOX	Angela Roxie	No current lesbian character.
<i>Doctor Who</i>	2005 -	UK	BBC	River Song Madame Vastra Jenny	Characters not currently on show.
<i>Glee</i>	2009 - 2015	USA	FOX	Brittany Santana Quinn...	Cancelled.
<i>Pretty Little Liars</i>	2010 -	USA	Freeform	Emily Alison	

				Maya	
<i>The Walking Dead</i>	2010 -	USA	AMC	Tara Alisha Denise	Unclear if bisexual character.
<i>Lost Girl</i>	2010 - 2015	Canada	Showcase	Bo Lauren Nadia Tamsin Marquise	Cancelled.
<i>Parenthood</i>	2010 - 2015	USA	NBC	Haddie Lauren	Cancelled.
<i>Rookie Blue</i>	2010 -	Canada	Global	Gail Holly Frankie	
<i>Teen Wolf</i>	2011 -	USA	MTV	Caitlin Emily	
<i>Shameless</i>	2011 -	USA	Showtime	Svetlana Karen	

				Angela Jasmine	
<i>American Horror Story</i>	2011 -	USA	FX	Countess (S5) Ramona (S5)	Different characters each season.
<i>Person of Interest</i>	2011 -	USA	CBS	Sameen Samantha	
<i>Saving Hope</i>	2012 -	Canada	CTV / NBC	Maggie Sydney	Unclear if bisexual character.
<i>Les Revenants</i>	2012 -	France	Canal+		Unclear if bisexual character.
<i>Chicago Fire</i>	2012 -	USA	NBC	Leslie Clarice Devon	
<i>Arrow</i>	2012 -	USA	The CW	Sara Nyssa	Unclear if bisexual character.
<i>The Following</i>	2013 - 2015	USA	FOX	Gina Jana	Cancelled.

				Dawn	
<i>Orphan Black</i>	2013 -	Canada	Space / BBC America	Cosima Delphine Shay	
<i>The Fosters</i>	2013 -	USA	Freeform	Stef Lena Monte	
<i>Under the Dome</i>	2013 - 2015	USA	CBS	Carolyn Alice	Unclear if bisexual character. Cancelled.
<i>Orange Is the New Black</i>	2013 -	USA	Netflix	Piper Alex Sophia Nicky Lorna "Big Boo" Tricia "Crazy Eyes" Poussey Brook	
<i>Hannibal</i>	2013 - 2015	USA	NBC	Margot Alana	Cancelled.
<i>Defiance</i>	2013 - 2015	USA	SyFy	Stahma Kenya	Cancelled.

				Doc Lev	
<i>Wentworth</i>	2013 -	Australia	SoHo	Franky Erica Kim Joan Maxine Bridget Lucy	
<i>The Fall</i>	2013 -	Ireland & UK	BBC Two	Dani Stella	
<i>Black Sails</i>	2014 -	USA	Starz	Eleanor Anne	
<i>Dominion</i>	2014 - 2015	USA	SyFy	Uriel Akira	Unclear if bisexual character. Cancelled.
<i>Chasing Life</i>	2014 - 2015	USA	ABC Family	Brenna Greer	Cancelled.

				Margo	
<i>How to Get Away with Murder</i>	2014 -	USA	ABC	Annalise Eve	Season 1 did not mention Annalise's bisexuality.
<i>Gotham</i>	2014 -	USA	FOX	Renee Barbara Tabitha	
<i>Red Band Society</i>	2014 - 2015	USA	FOX	Sarah Kara	Cancelled.
<i>Faking It</i>	2014 -	USA	MTV	Amy Karma Lauren Reagan	
<i>Jane the Virgin</i>	2014 -	USA	The CW	Luisa Rose	
<i>The 100</i>	2014 -	USA	The CW	Lexa Clarke	
<i>Carmilla</i>	2014 -	Canada	Vervegirl	Carmilla	

				Laura Danny Susan	
<i>The Returned</i>	2015	USA	A&E	Julie Nikki	Unclear if bisexual character. Cancelled.
<i>Younger</i>	2015 -	USA	TV Land	Maggie Lauren	Unclear if bisexual character.
<i>Rosewood</i>	2015 -	USA	FOX	Pippy Tara	Unclear if bisexual character.
<i>Buscando el norte</i>	2016 -	Spain	Antena3	Belén Silvia	

Source: IMDB.com and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_dramatic_television_series_with_LGBT_characters

From the initial 40 television shows identified these are 18 television shows currently airing on prime-time television during the 2015/2016 television season.

Table A.2 Current shows with lesbian and bisexual characters

Show	IMDB Rating ²³	2014/2015 Season Rankings ²⁴	2014/2015 Season Average Rating ²⁵	2015/2016 Season Highest Rating ²⁶	Season(s) of Shows Aired During 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 Season
<i>Grey's Anatomy</i>	7,7/10	3,7 +(11,081)	2,38	2,29	11, 12
<i>Pretty Little Liars</i>	7,8/10	n/a	0,9	0,8	5, 6
<i>Rookie Blue</i>	7,7/10	n/a	0,65	n/a	6
<i>Teen Wolf</i>	7,8/10	n/a	0,7	0,45	4, 5
<i>Shameless</i>	8,7/10	n/a	0,7	0,64	5, 6
<i>American Horror Story</i>	8,3/10	n/a	n/a	1,36	5

²³ IMDB.com. [IMDB: Popularity Up](#) [IMDB: Popularity Down](#)

²⁴ <http://deadline.com/2015/05/2014-15-full-tv-season-ratings-shows-rankings-1201431167>

²⁵ Nielsen ratings via <http://tvseriesfinale.com> (18-49 demographic)

²⁶ Nielsen ratings via <http://tvseriesfinale.com> (18-49 demographic) up until March 2016

<i>Person of Interest</i>	8,4/10	2,2 +(12,217)	1,53	n/a	4
<i>Chicago Fire</i>	7,9/10	2,6 +(9,658)	1,82	1,81	3, 4
<i>Orphan Black</i>	8,4/10		0,15		3
<i>The Fosters</i>	8,1/10	n/a	0,6	0,4	2, 3
<i>Wentworth</i>	8,7/10	n/a	n/a	n/a	3
<i>The Fall</i>	8,3/10	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
<i>Black Sails</i>	8,1/10	n/a	n/a	n/a	1, 2, 3
<i>How to Get Away with Murder</i>	8,3/10	n/a	n/a	1,87	2
<i>Gotham</i>	8,0/10	2,8 +(7,566)	2,19	1,48	1, 2
<i>Faking It</i>	7,7/10		0,31		1, 2
<i>Jane the Virgin</i>	7,8/10	0,6 +(1,553)	0,48		1, 2
<i>The 100</i>	7,9/10	0,9 +(2,460)	0,52	0,53	2, 3

Appendix B: Television show samples

From a population of 40 television shows with at least one lesbian and bisexual character, three were chosen as samples. *Grey's Anatomy*, *Orphan Black* and *The 100* are used as samples for the analysis to see how same-sex relationships are stereotyped through the use of tropes.

Table B.1 Television shows for analysis

	<i>Grey's Anatomy</i>	<i>Orphan Black</i>	<i>The 100</i>
Country	USA	Canada	USA
Network	ABC	Space / BBC America	The CW
Year	2005	2013	2014
Number of Seasons	12	4	3
Number of Episodes	266	33	42
Number of Seasons analysed	2 (season 11 + 12)	1 (season 3 + season 4)	2 (season 2 + 3)
Number of episodes analysed	24 + 21	10 + 3	13 + 13
Genre	Drama / Romance	Action / Drama / Sci-Fi	Drama / Mystery / Sci-Fi
Showrunner	Shonda Rhimes	Graeme Manson & John Fawcett	Jason Rothenberg

IMDB rating	7,7/10	8,4/10	7,9/10
Viewer rating²⁷	2,38	0,15	0,52
Lesbian characters	Arizona (<i>main cast</i>), Penny (<i>recurring</i>)	Cosima (<i>main cast</i>), Shay (<i>recurring</i>)	Lexa (<i>recurring</i>)
Bisexual characters	Callie (<i>main cast</i>)	Delphine (<i>recurring/main cast</i>)	Clarke (<i>main cast</i>)

Source: IMDB.com

²⁷ 2014/2015 television season average. Nielsen ratings via <http://tvseriesfinale.com> (18-49 demographic)

Appendix C: Descriptions of television shows

These are short summaries about the three television shows analysed:

Grey's Anatomy – A medical drama about the personal and professional lives of a group of doctors and their surgical residents.

Orphan Black – A science fiction drama about a group of women who realise they are clones. The clones are owned by the company DYAD and a lot of conspiracy plots happens.

The 100 – A post-apocalypse drama set 97 years after a nuclear war has destroyed civilisation. Survivors are living in space. One hundred teenagers are sent back to Earth so see if it is inhabitable. The people from space (Skikru) realise that there are survivors on Earth known as the Grounders (made up of 12 different clans) and the Mountain Men.

Appendix D: Description of characters

Lesbian characters

Arizona Robbins (*Grey's Anatomy*) – Paediatric and fetal surgeon. During Season 11 she accepts a fellowship with Dr Nicole Herman. Divorces Callie Torres in Season 11 Episode 5. Arizona is slim, feminine and Caucasian.

Cosima Niehaus (*Orphan Black*) – A Scientist and a clone. She is terminally ill from the 'clone disease'. Ex-girlfriend of Delphine Cormier. Cosima is slim and Caucasian. She is characterised by her dreadlocks and by being cheeky, witty and fun [as to appeal to all women regardless of sexuality (Brunsdon, D'Acci & Spigel 1997:321)].

Lexa Kom Trikru (*The 100*) – Commander of the Grounders [of the 12 clans, and her own clan Trikru]. She is the first LGBT character introduced on *The 100*. The Grounders are depicted as people of colour, although the actress playing Lexa is slim and Caucasian.

Penny Blake (*Grey's Anatomy*) – Surgical resident. Introduced as Callie Torres' new girlfriend in Season 12. Penny is slim, feminine and Caucasian.

Shay Davydov (*Orphan Black*) – New love interest of Cosima Niehaus in Season 3. She is believed to be a spy for the Castor project. Shay is slim, feminine and Caucasian.

Bisexual characters

Callie Torres (*Grey's Anatomy*) – Chief orthopedic surgeon. Divorces Arizona Robbins in Season 11 Episode 5. She has a daughter Sofia, with Arizona. Callie is Latina.

Clarke Griffin (*The 100*) – Main protagonist. Perceived leader of Skikru. Former girlfriend of Finn Collins. Established as bisexual in Season 3 Episode 1. Clarke is slim and Caucasian.

Delphine Cormier (*Orphan Black*) – Ex-girlfriend of Cosima Niehaus. Delphine has assumed the head of DYAD position (preceded by Rachel Duncan). She is not trusted by any of the other characters. Dedicated to her work. Delphine is slim, feminine and Caucasian.

Other Characters

Grey's Anatomy

Dr Alex Karev – Friends with both Callie and Arizona. Arizona moves in with Alex after her divorce with Callie.

Dr Amelia Shepherd – Neuro surgeon. She becomes Nicole Herman's doctor after Arizona asks her for help regarding Nicole's tumour.

Dr Meredith Grey – Main protagonist. Meredith is a close friend of Callie's. In Season 12 Penny is assigned to her service. Meredith is a general surgeon.

Dr Miranda Bailey – Chief of Surgery. Everyone's boss.

Dr Nicole Herman – Fetal surgeon and Arizona's supervisor. Nicole has terminal brain cancer.

Dr Richard Webber – Responsible for the surgical residents. Becomes a close friend of Arizona in the latter part of Season 11.

Orphan Black

Felix Dawkins – Sarah's foster brother. Knows everything about the clone project. Sarah's sidekick.

Rachel Duncan – A clone. Rachel is the former director of DYAD, succeeded by Delphine. Rachel is a former antagonist but in Season 3 she is continually tortured by Delphine.

Sarah Manning – Main protagonist. Sarah is a clone.

Scott Smith – Cosima's colleague and confidant.

The 100

Abby Griffin – Chancellor of Skikru and Clarke's mother.

Costia – Lexa’s deceased loved. Member of Trikru. Costia was killed by the Ice Queen who believed Costia knew Lexa’s secrets.

Finn Collins – Clarke’s deceased boyfriend. Clarke kills him in Season 2 Episode 8 to protect him from being tortured to death by Trikru for murdering members of their clan.

Indra – Lexa’s ‘Second in Command’. Indra is a member of Trikru. After Skikru has murdered an army of 300 Trikru soldiers she is the lone survivor of the massacre.

Marcus Kane – Previous Chancellor of Skikru but leads together with Abby.

Nia Kom Azgeda – Queen of the Ice Nation (Azgeda). Also known as the Ice Queen. She killed Lexa’s lover Costia. Nia wants to remove Lexa as Commander.

Niylah – Member of Trikru. Clarke has sex with Niylah in Season 3 Episode 1. She is used to enforced Clarke’s bisexuality.

Octavia Blake – Member of Skikru. A close friend of Clarke’s.

Titus – Member of Trikru. Titus is Lexa’s teacher and her adviser. He is not fond of Clarke as he perceives her as a threat to Lexa’s leadership.



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