ATS2094
Transgressive Desires: The Representation of Sexuality and Desire in German Film

Library Research & Essay Writing Workshop
Contact us

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Overview

• What are you having trouble with?
• Getting started
• Refine your essay question and searching
• Refining your argumentation via debate
• Introductions and conclusions
## The process of writing an essay

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<td>Brainstorm ideas</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Research and read sources</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Construct an outline/plan</td>
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<td>Draft versions, revisiting steps 1 and 4</td>
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<td>Edit and proofread before submitting</td>
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Your poll will show here

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2. Make sure you are in Slide Show mode

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or
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Getting Started
Your assignment

Details of task: Students will have to write an essay on a set topic relating to one of the films covered during the semester. They will have to gather (using library sources) and incorporate at least five titles of research literature on their respective topic.

Learning objectives assessed: Students will train their ability to present content in an intellectually reflected, well-structured and academically written way.
Your assignment

Presentation requirements: The essay is to be written in English.

Criteria for marking:
In general:
- content (60%),
- use of research literature (20%),
- style (20%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addresses all the assessment criteria</th>
<th>Fails to address one or more of the assessment criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>An excellent understanding of the text(s) and the critical and interpretive issues and debates raised by the question.</td>
<td>Fails to address the main issues of the unit and question and omits essential material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear evidence of critical analysis and reflection on the chosen texts and a demonstrated capacity for independent thought.</td>
<td>Essay focuses on description, with scant evidence and no reflection on the chosen texts. Student relies on references with no judgement as to how this works into their argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some grasp of methodology in literature analysis should be shown.</td>
<td>Uses no methodology and instead describes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A well organised argument supported by the judicious choice of articles and chapters that reveal divergent views of Romantic literature.</td>
<td>Fails to use the compulsory reading and do any further research. Critical sources are cited with very little judgement used about their quality and usefulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear expression and precise use of language with no grammatical or spelling mistakes.</td>
<td>Ill expressed, not proof read, incoherent and grammatically unsound.</td>
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Drafting your question
Drafting your essay question

• **First** and foremost, seek an essay topic that is interesting to you. A topic that genuinely engages your interest should be fun to read and write about, and will likely result in a better essay.

• **Second**, make sure your topic is manageable in size. Subjects such as ‘Queer film’ and ‘Fassbinder’s representation of women’ are the matter of careers by professional academics. You should aim at a limited and sharply focused essay topic.

• **Third**, your essay topic should preferably be phrased in the form of a clearly defined question, rather than a statement. This minimises the tendency towards describing rather than arguing. It also allows subjective judgement by a competent specialist (=Franz-Josef).
Finding your topic

- Anders als die Andern (1919)
- Mädchen in Uniform (1931)
- Der junge Törless (1966)
- Reifezeugnis (1977)
- Die Konsequenz (1977)
- Die bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant (1972)

→ Remember your presentations
Finding your topic

• Sexual identity – a ‘German’ concept
• German silent film
• The era of sound (1928-1933)
• Post-war German film (50s and early 60s)
• German Autorenfilm
• The German film industry today
• The history of the §175
• Censorship and German film
What sort of question do you want to be answering?

• Are you interested in context, art, society, culture, religion, the author?
• Do you want to do a comparison?
• Do you prefer a close reading of the text?
• Are you interested in the genre of writing?
• Or a contentious statement so that you can explore it?
• Do you like responding to a quote?

Problems:

• Is it too broad?
• Too narrow?
• Have you got sufficient case studies?
• Sufficient variety of points of view?
Brainstorm your own essay question to double check!

• Identify key terms.
• Identify any problems with the key terms (there will be at least one difficult term!).
• What is going to be the hard part to answer?
• What sort of analysis are you going to need to do? (What types of analysis are there?)
• What do you need to know to answer this question?
• What don’t you know?
• Are there two or more sides to the debate in the literature? What are they?
Where to start?

To establish one of the ‘debates’ that are to be found in the writing on the topic. Finding this debate is what your research is to help with. Read the topic thinking about:

- What you do know
- What you don’t know
- What you need to know
Research
Research

German Studies: ATS2094 - Transgressive Desires

Transgressive Desires
The Representation of Sexuality and Desire in German Film

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/german-studies/ATS2094

https://magic.piktochart.com/output/16037897-ats3098-research-tips-air
Construct and outline plan
Question

What role did medical science play in shaping sexuality and desire in the early German film?
Use the case study of Anders als die Andern.
# Argumentation

**Draft 1**

**Introduction:** The role of medical science in shaping sexuality and desire is exemplified by the place of sexology in the early twentieth century, in particular its influence on the representation of transgressive sexuality and public opinion.

**Point 1:** *Anders als die Andern* (description of the story)

**Point 2:** Hirschfeld and Brand (physical representations of homosexuality)

**Point 3:** Sexuality and transgression: Thomas Laqueur.

**Conclusion:** During the nineteenth century, the development of medicine as a science created a physical, corporeal reality for ideas about gender and sexuality. The medicalisation of what constituted ‘sex’ solidified existing boundaries around desire and sexuality. Even early twentieth century sexology – ostensibly tasked with exploring the varieties of human sexuality – struggled to move navigate the parameters of objective science, and lived human variability. These tensions are especially clear in *Anders als die Andern* where the argument to consider abnormal sexualities as normal is premised on ideas about the universality of love. However, the lust for the same sex – not framed as male friendship - is still considered transgressive and punishable. This in turn is reflected in the dismissiveness of film critics to write the film off as ‘just another suicide of a homosexual.’
Debate

Why?

• A debate is a the raw argument that considers all different arguments and provides evidence
• The winner is the one you write into your essay.
• Having done a debate, you have all the material you need for a good outline.
Debate

Instructions:

• Choose a contention from your group’s assessment (the more drafted it is, the easier!).

• Assign those arguing for it and those arguing against.

• Take 10 minutes to quickly give the reasons why, and what evidence. Then 10 minutes to debate it.
Debate

Debrief:

• What side was more convincing?
• Write down the answer and why.
Essay Structure in a linear format

**Intro:** The role of medical science in shaping sexuality and desire is exemplified by the place of sexology in the early twentieth century, in particular its influence on the representation of transgressive sexuality and public opinion.

**Conclusion:** During the nineteenth century, the development of medicine as a science created a physical, corporeal reality for ideas about gender and sexuality. The medicalisation of what constituted ‘sex’ solidified existing boundaries around desire and sexuality. Even early twentieth century sexology – ostensibly tasked with exploring varieties of human sexuality – struggled to move navigate the parameters of objective science, and lived human variability. These tensions are especially clear in *Anders als die Andern* where the argument to consider abnormal sexualities as normal is premised on ideas about the universality of love. However, the lust for the same sex – not framed as male friendship - is still considered transgressive and punishable. This in turn is reflected in the dismissiveness of film critics to write the film off as ‘just another suicide of a homosexual.’
Further research

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/german-studies/ATS2094

https://magic.piktochart.com/output/16037897-ats3098-research-tips-air
Redrafting the debate

Draft 2

**Introduction:** Problem: *Anders als die Andern* is held up as both an example of the positive experience of medicine and sexuality in film, while also being dismissed by scholars as in the end ‘just another suicide of a homosexual.’ This attitude represents the misunderstanding of the way medical science and gender work together.

Answer: *Anders*, which was co-written by the foremost sexologist of the day, is shaped by pre-existing tensions in discourse around the medicalised body that come from the eighteenth century. However, I argue, the film although unable to resolve these questions, on some level is able to transcend the influence of medical science and represent queer as human and not simply exotic.

**Point 1:** Sex, gender and medicine (Laqueur and the body)

**Point 2:** Challenging discourse on sexuality (Sexology and Anders)

**Point 3:** Audience and the transgressive (Paul and his flashbacks)

**Conclusion:** During the nineteenth century, the development of medicine as a science created a physical, corporeal reality for ideas about gender and sexuality. The medicalisation of what constituted ‘sex’ solidified existing boundaries around desire and sexuality. Even early twentieth century sexology – ostensibly tasked with exploring the varieties of human sexuality – struggled to navigate the parameters of objective science, and lived human variability. The impact of such debate and uncertainty on German cinema, combined with the activism to repeal the #175 meant that the there was room to stop asking question about why and individual was queer, but instead to represent them just as being queer and to ask for this acceptance. This then, is the most positive influence of medical science on early German cinema, not simply the fact that it was mentioned at all.
What goes in your conclusion?

Hint for concluding:
• What is transgressive?
• How does this help us understand the development of sexuality?
• How does this help us understand German cinema?
• German literature – what do you know about it and what does your argument contribute?
Citing and referencing
Referencing Film


Title in italics followed by full stop

Director(s) followed by full stop

Original year of release followed by full stop

Medium followed by full stop

You can include other data that seem pertinent, such as the names of the screenwriter, performers, and producer followed by full stop

Year of release Use n.d. if no date given or [xxxx?] for approximate dates followed by full stop

Distributor followed by comma
Referencing Film

Title in italics followed by full stop

Director(s) followed by full stop

You can include other data that seem pertinent, such as the names of the screenwriter, performers, and producer followed by a full stop

Film studio followed by a comma

Year of release on platform followed by a full stop

Online platform in italics and Medium of publication, each followed by a full stop

Access date followed by a full stop

Tatort Folge 73: Reifezeugnis. Dir. Wolfgang Petersen.


Original year of release followed by a full stop