

SAE Institute Australasia

Creo

---

Exemplars

Student Works

---

21-7-2024

## CIE111.2 Communication for Creative Media Example 1

SAE University College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://creo.sae.edu.au/exemplars>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#), and the [Communication Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

SAE University College, "CIE111.2 Communication for Creative Media Example 1" (2024). *Exemplars*. 175.  
<https://creo.sae.edu.au/exemplars/175>

This work is made available to you by SAE Institute. Reusing any part of this work remains the right of the copyright owners. All Rights Reserved. This work has been accepted for inclusion in Creo's Exemplars Collection by an authorised administrator of Creo. For more information, please contact [library@sae.edu.au](mailto:library@sae.edu.au).

*The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (Stephan Elliot, 1994) is an Academy Award-winning film that follows three drag performers on a road trip journey through outback Australia to deliver a performance in Alice Springs. In this analysis, I will argue that the director's portrayal of gender and sexuality challenged typical heteronormative stereotypes in Australia, leaving a mark on society and culture. I will support my argument by reflecting on the director's use of satire and parody to comment on social values at the time, the director's choice to include images of violence and discrimination, and the reception Australian audiences had for the film.

During a scene early on in the movie, we see the director's creative use of satire as one drag performer by the name of Felicia Good Fellow, played by actor Guy Pearce, expresses his intention of being the first drag queen to climb Kings Canyon. While expressing his idea to transgender drag performer Bernadette, played by actor Terence Stamp, an iconic line gets delivered to the audience: "Great, that's just what this country needs—a cock in a frock on a rock." (Movieclips, 2019) This quote has a direct correlation to the socio-political state of Australia at the time because the whole country was not yet unified in its stance on LGBT+ rights. The director's choice to satirise socio-political views set the tone for the movie, conveying an underlying message of social exclusion and marginalisation. This example demonstrates how the film involves audiences with broader social issues such as homophobia and discrimination, which will be key supporting points later in my analysis. As argued by Anne Marie Cook in her analysis of the film, the diverse imagery used by the director challenged the traditional views of Australian society and shone a light on the lack of representation in films published at the time. (Cook, p.20) With the director's use of satire, the tone of the film is quickly set, and as the plot progresses, we see examples of discrimination, which will be discussed as I analyse the director's choice to include graphic yet authentic depictions of violence towards the LGBT+ community.

As the plot progresses, the three protagonists make their way to the rural town of Broken Hill, and they quickly realise that their presence is far from welcomed. I have specifically focused on this scene from the film, but it is important to note that examples of further discrimination were present in earlier stops in the protagonist's road trip journey. The scene begins with a group of town men socialising when they meet Felicia in head-to-toe drag. Once Felicia is outed as a male in drag, the group of men chases her while hurling violent remarks, ultimately leading to an altercation. (Movieclips, 2019b) This is a graphic scene, and the director's choice to include it was tantamount to the film's impact on audiences. This was a common occurrence within gay communities from well before and till after the film's release, with New South Wales being a

hotspot for violence against LGBT+ people (Guardian staff reporter, 2022). The director's choice to depict sensitive imagery gave a glimpse into the harsh realities of being a queer-identifying person in Australia. As Scott Mckinnon argues, the censorship of positive, non-sexual homosexual representation aided in the heteronormativity of Australian movies (McKinnon, 2015, p. 286). The director's choice to present the audience with authentic experiences solidified the queer voices and experiences that were silenced not only in the media but within widespread society. Within the film, there are examples of diverse characters stretching across different ends of both the gender and sexuality spectrum, which I will argue had a profound impact on audiences due to its further challenge of heteronormativity in Australia.

To finalise my key points, I will be analysing the effect of diverse characters on audiences. As I do not have time to delve into the plot surrounding each character's individual gender identity and sexuality, it should be noted that themes of diversity occur throughout the whole film. So to briefly summarise, the characters I will focus on are Bernadette (Terence Stamp) and Tick (Hugo Weaving) because they represent two of the most underrepresented minority groups in the LGBT+ community. Bernadette is a transgender woman, and Tick is a bisexual man. I think this is important to draw attention to because bisexuality and transgenderism represent unique issues within LGBT+ and heteronormative society. A less known fact is that 4 percent of the whole LBGT+ community is bisexual, making up the largest percentage overall. (LGBT+ Identification Worldwide 2023 | Statista, 2023) As made clear by Dylan Stanford, bisexual invisibility exists due to the hetero/homosexual binary within modern-day society. In the community, this is often known as "bi-erasure," and the process of erasing the bisexual experience can lead to lesser support systems and a sense of forgottenness within social groups. (Stanford, 2017) While bisexuality refers to the attraction of both genders, transgenderism is a gender identity where individuals who do not identify with their chosen gender will undergo changes to live their lives as the opposite sex. It is to be noted that transgender people experience heightened levels of discrimination in nearly all aspects of their lives due to the increased lack of education and exposure in broader communities. (To, 2014) The director's choice to include characters who differ from the typical homosexual representation seen in films is a choice that I believe to be very important to the storyline of the movie, as we get to see the different ways each character develops beyond their stereotypical role in society. This can be seen in Tick's character, as he later reveals in the movie that he has a son from a lesbian lover. Tick's revelation puts a whole new spin on traditional masculinity and gender roles, and as Sol Lucia Fossati argues, the portrayal of Tick and his son reconstructs the idea of traditional father figures while also demonstrating a non-traditional form of masculinity. (Lucia Fossati, 2023) This choice by the director allows the audience to question their preconceived ideas about gender roles and sexual identity within the film industry.

To conclude my analysis, the director's use of imagery to portray complex social issues is a main reason why the film gained cult-classic status within global communities. The display of

characters existing outside of traditional gender roles allowed marginalised groups to have their experiences validated and represented. The scenes of violence and discrimination used in the movie played an important role in allowing audiences to be immersed in and understand the issues presented with identifying as LGBT+ at the time. The use of satire to comment on socio-political issues helped to engage audiences with the undertones of marginalisation within large-scale society. Through this analysis, my examples represent how the film challenges the heteronormative ideology of society at the time and how the film left a mark on audiences through its exploration of gender and sexuality.

### References

Baume, M. (2020). How Australia Fell In Love with Priscilla, Queen of the Desert [YouTube

Video]. In *YouTube*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xEOMAIu-3mU>

Cook, A.-M. (n.d.). *More Than Just a Laugh: Assessing the Politics of Camp in The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

<https://people.southwestern.edu/~bednarb/road-movies/articles/cook.pdf>

Elliott, S. (Director). (1994, May 15). *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

Roadshow Film Distributors.

*Gender identity worldwide by country 2023 | Statista*. (2023). Statista; Statista.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1269778/gender-identity-worldwide-country/#:~:text=In%20a%20global%20survey%20conducted,fluid%2C%20or%20in%20another%20way.>

Guardian staff reporter. (2022, December 6). *Average of 20 gay men bashed every day for over 40 years, NSW inquiry told*. The Guardian; The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/dec/06/average-of-20-gay-men-bashed-every-day-for-over-40-years-nsw-inquiry-told>

*LGBT+ identification worldwide 2023 | Statista*. (2023). Statista; Statista.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1270166/lgbt-identification-worldwide/>

Lucia Fossati, S. (2023). "I've Said It before, and I'll Say It again: No More Fucking

ABBA "Masculinities & Queerness in the Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert.

*Dspace.uib.es*. <https://dspace.uib.es/xmlui/handle/11201/161355?show=full>

Manfre, I. (2013). Abba - Mamma mia [YouTube Video]. In *YouTube*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWbaah51-Sk>

McKinnon, S. (2015). Watching Men Kissing Men: The Australian Reception of the Gay Male Kiss On-Screen. *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 24(2), 262–287.

<https://doi.org/10.7560/jhs24204>

Movieclips. (2019a). The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994) - Christening Priscilla (1/8) | Movieclips [YouTube Video]. In *YouTube*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2QiCFAQ-qQ>

Movieclips. (2019b). The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994) - Now You're F\*\*\*ed Scene (6/8) | Movieclips [YouTube Video]. In *YouTube*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nc12yOA4jM>

Oscars. (2013). The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert Wins Costume Design: 1995 Oscars [YouTube Video]. In *YouTube*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tex3dw3RjGk&t=212s>

Sontag, S. (1964). *Notes on Camp*.

[https://monoskop.org/images/5/59/Sontag\\_Susan\\_1964\\_Notes\\_on\\_Camp.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/5/59/Sontag_Susan_1964_Notes_on_Camp.pdf)

Stanford, D. (2017). *Bisexual erasure revisited: Exploring how norms of temporality produce bisexual invisibility*. Research Online. <https://ro.uow.edu.au/theses1/1513/>

*Student showcase: LGBTI history interactive timeline 1975–2019 | Australia's Defining Moments Digital Classroom | National Museum of Australia*. (2019). Nma.gov.au.

<https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/extra-resources/student-showcase-lgbti-history-inter>

active-timeline-1975-2019

To, A. (2014, December). *Understanding transgender people, gender identity and gender expression*. <https://www.apa.org>.

<https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/transgender-people-gender-identity-gender-expression>

## **Project Reflections**

Mid-Project Reflection:

In *at least 250* words, answer each of the questions with examples from your project:

During this project, I have noticed my time management skills have improved, however I have seen what skills I have to further develop so I can effectively manage how much time I am allocating to my project. Since my last project I noticed that I wanted to keep a log of how much time I have been spending on my college work so I tried doing it by listening to ambient music and taking notes on how much time I spent on individual activities. During this, I realised that I struggled to stay consistent in entering the data on my log sheet. Overall I feel that this was a successful attempt with learning to log my time and with some adjustments to my consistency, I think I will be able to refine this skill to a true journal and reflective process.

In terms of project management, I feel like I am getting better at staying on track. I would consider my focus to be one of my biggest learning curves and I am learning to tackle higher priority responsibilities instead of jumping to lower priority tasks as I notice I did that in other units I am studying. This also rings true for my personal pursuits as when I have multiple projects running concurrently, I struggle to maintain composure and my focus tends to shift away from the most important task. This project has been an example of that so I have had to apply for a time extension.

For the second half of this project, I can improve on my time management skills to ensure I deliver the highest quality work within the extension of time I have received. By shifting my focus toward completion of this task above all other responsibilities, I will be able to complete this project to a standard I am happy with.

I have employed a new approach to maximising my feedback process by reaching out to the learning support advisors at SAE. Reaching out to the advisor, I was able to get more nuanced feedback regarding my paragraph structure. I applied the feedback I received to my introduction paragraph by re structuring the initial approach I had taken. By doing this re structure, I now have the skills to concisely introduce my argument.

Throughout this project, I have had to develop my analysis skills and a part of this for me was examining works in context to other works. By identifying intertextuality within my scholarly research, I was able to reflect further on works and accurately draw my own conclusions regarding my arguments. I used this skill when analysing (Cook, n.d.) for my project and through reading this article, I made a note to check the references which ultimately led me to a famous journal further explaining terms that were used within the first chosen text I chose to analyse. Using Sontag's journal, I was able to further understand what camp culture is and how it was related to my main argument. By delving further into intertextuality and understanding the references scholars use to support their arguments, I have been able to form my thoughts with certainty and a larger understanding of the topic.

### Reference List

Cook, A.-M. (n.d.). *More Than Just a Laugh: Assessing the Politics of Camp in The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

<https://people.southwestern.edu/~bednarb/road-movies/articles/cook.pdf>

Sontag, S. (1964). *Notes on Camp*.

[https://monoskop.org/images/5/59/Sontag\\_Susan\\_1964\\_Notes\\_on\\_Camp.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/5/59/Sontag_Susan_1964_Notes_on_Camp.pdf)

### Project-Completion Reflection:

Overall my project was successful and I achieved all of the outcomes that I intended for my critical analysis. Researching the scholarly references that I was going to be using for this project worked quite well as I was able to find accurate sources that spoke to my main arguments. I definitely realise that my time management skills need to be improved to ensure that I don't have to apply for an extension on any further projects.

An obstacle, I overcame in this assessment was ensuring that I completed my project within the designated time extension I got granted even though I had extenuating circumstances outside of college so even though my time management skills faulted in the middle of my project, I was still able to successfully overcome the challenge of effectively managing my time. Ultimately I

learnt that it is important to prioritise tasks to effectively complete projects within the time required.

To improve on my skills for the future, I will continue to develop ways to stay consistent with my time management to ensure that my project stays on track. I will continue using identifying skills to notice intertextuality to support my arguments in a well rounded and concise way.

My goals for the next project are to ensure that my brainstorming template is done on time and ready for feedback to ensure that I get the most feedback possible from my classmates, lecturer and any other support members that I might enlist.