

This file contains all publicly available online supplements to the doctoral thesis titled

**“Queer strange, or queer gay?” – A diachronic mixed-method perspective on linguistic representations of queerness in scripted North American television shows**

submitted by **Charlotte Maria Rosenow** at RWTH Aachen University.

The **full thesis** is available via **DOI** 10.18154/RWTH-2025-08959

As this thesis project utilizes datasets compiled by a third party, only a small excerpt of the annotated data can be made publicly available as a supplement. These exemplary materials from each step of the analysis are intended to illustrate the annotation procedures performed and to allow for more transparency in the analysis. A list of materials included as part of these **online supplements** can be found below, and can always be accessed via this

**DOI** 10.18154/RWTH-2025-08954

In the interest of academic accountability and comparability, a **Coscine repository** with additional materials relating to each of the analyses exemplified here was created. Limited access to these materials can be granted upon request via

**PID** 21.11102/591a86a1-4283-4192-9fe7-7c4e401502c6

## **Contents – ONLINE SUPPLEMENTS**

### **A) Thesis Abstract**

### **B) Stage 1**

- 1) List of queries run to obtain the stage 1 data and results
- 2) Exemplary hits and concordance lines for each of the phenomena investigated in the stage 1 analysis, annotated for relevance (See thesis section 3.3 for full explanation)

### **C) Stage 2**

- 1) Annotation schemes and examples of speaker annotation using the *UAM Corpus Tool*
- 2) Detailed notes on the qualitative annotation for mentions of queerness in the 60 episodes in narrative form, sorted by show, episode
- 3) Call sent out to recruit student annotators

## Contents – COSCINE REPOSITORY

### Archived Data for Stage 1

- A) Full datasets exported from the *TV Corpus*
- B) Complete annotated datasets per term
- C) List of relevant hits per term, including lists of variants, related terms, and additional visualizations

### Archived Data for Stage 2

- D) *UAM Corpus Tool* project containing completed speaker annotations (ZIP file, requires *UAM Corpus Tool* to open)
  - E) Complete set of frequency measures exported from *UAM Corpus Tool*
- 

### A) Thesis Abstract

Due to the carefully planned, practiced, and edited nature of scripted television shows, their use of language can be assumed to be purposeful and self-aware to a very high degree (Marshall and Werndly 2002, 78). As such, “TV dialogue” (in the sense of Bednarek 2018, 7) can be assumed to allow us to understand “how language used in television texts connects to a world outside the text” (Marshall and Werndly 2002, 94). With this presumed “culture–media dialectic, where TV dialogue both constructs and reflects cultures and their ideologies” (Bednarek 2018, 3), the question arises of if and how real-life sociopolitical changes may be mirrored in TV dialogue. Meanwhile, the influence that behaviours witnessed on TV may have on the behaviours and opinions of a viewer has long been documented (e.g., Bandura 1977). Moreover, recent studies have found indications that this may be especially true with regards to the representation of marginalized groups on television, both in terms of self-image, as well as in terms of their perception by the general public (e.g., Pugh 2018, Battles and Hilton-Morrow 2002).

Accordingly, this thesis project investigates linguistic representations of the queer community in scripted North American television shows in the *TV Corpus* (Davies 2021) from a diachronic perspective and using a mixed-method approach in two stages. Both stages feature elements of qualitative and quantitative analysis, so as to “provide a systematic analytical framework and empirical data for talking about the expression of ideology through dialogue in episodic

television” (Bednarek 2015, 227). This project thus aims to account for some of the great complexity inherent to the phenomenon of queer “representation” (in the sense of Hall 1997, 1) in TV language.

Stage 1 is comprised of a large-scale diachronic analysis of selected current terms for queer identities in the *TV Corpus* via quantitative frequency measures, collocates, and extensive manual annotation for semantic meaning that “applies a rather deductive methodology in selecting specific words which are relevant for analysis, but also offers concordance lines as a basis for further (qualitative) interpretation” (Wodak and Meyer 2009, 30). Taking into account the interplay between alternative meanings of the selected terms and whether they are, for instance, “regularly used in contexts of good news or bad news or judgement” (Tognini-Bonelli 2001, 111), this stage offers a bird’s eye view on how certain terms for queer identities are used in scripted TV dialogue across time.

Stage 2, on the other hand, is focused on a more fine-grained comparison of the linguistic behaviours and the construction (e.g., Bednarek 2010) of prominent queer and non-queer characters. For this stage, a total of 60 episode transcripts from six shows contained in the *TV Corpus* were extracted and annotated with speaker information using the *UAM CorpusTool* (O’Donnell 2008). Said episodes were then examined further using both quantitative measures and a qualitative analysis aiming to understand “the conditions of the speakers’ [or characters’] experience as located within structures of power” (Leap 2015, 661). As such, these analyses take complementary perspectives in an in-depth comparison of the language use and power conditions of queer and non-queer characters both within the same show, as well as across shows, TV genres, and different times of production.

Taken together, the two stages thus aim to provide insight into the complex interplay between scripted TV dialogue, its ways of representing selected queer identities in general (Stage 1), individual queer characters and their power conditions in particular (Stage 2), and real-world sociopolitical change. As such, this thesis also argues for an understanding of queer representation that is more nuanced than a binary distinction of “represented” vs. “not represented”, as such a more simplistic view cannot account for the whole range of ways in which the queer community may be represented on TV, as has also been noted by Baker (2005, 225).

## Relevant Sources

- Baker, Paul, ed. 2005. *Public Discourses of Gay Men*. Routledge Advances in Corpus Linguistics 8. London New York: Routledge.
- Bandura, Albert. 1977. *Social Learning Theory*. Prentice-Hall Series in Social Learning Theory. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Battles, Kathleen, and Wendy Hilton-Morrow. 2002. 'Gay Characters in Conventional Spaces: Will and Grace and the Situation Comedy Genre'. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19 (1): 87–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07393180216553>.
- Bednarek, Monika. 2010. *The Language of Fictional Television: Drama and Identity*. London: Continuum.
- Bednarek, Monika. 2015. 'An Overview of the Linguistics of Screenwriting and Its Interdisciplinary Connections, with Special Focus on Dialogue in Episodic Television'. *Journal of Screenwriting* 6 (2): 221–38. [https://doi.org/10.1386/josc.6.2.221\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/josc.6.2.221_1).
- Bednarek, Monika. 2018. *Language and Television Series: A Linguistic Approach to TV Dialogue*. The Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series. Cambridge New York: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108559553>.
- Davies, Mark. 2021. 'The TV and Movies Corpora: Design, Construction, and Use'. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 26 (1): 10–37. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.00035.dav>.
- Leap, William L. 2015. 'Queer Linguistics as Critical Discourse Analysis'. In *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, 1st edn, edited by Deborah Tannen, Heidi E. Hamilton, and Deborah Schiffrin. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118584194.ch31>.
- Marshall, Jill, and Angela Werndly. 2002. *The Language of Television*. Intertext. London ; New York: Routledge.
- O'Donnell, Michael. 2008. 'The UAM CorpusTool: Software for Corpus Annotation and Exploration'. In *Proceedings of the XXVI Congreso de AESLA*, 3:5. Citeseer.
- Pugh, Tison. 2018. *The Queer Fantasies of the American Family Sitcom*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Tognini-Bonelli, Elena. 2001. *Corpus Linguistics at Work*. Studies in Corpus Linguistics 6. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins.
- Wodak, Ruth, and Michael Meyer. 2009. 'Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory and Methodology'. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* 2 (1): 1–33.

## B) Stage 1

As described in the abstract above, Stage 1 focused on a large-scale diachronic analysis of selected current terms for queer identities in the *TV Corpus* via quantitative frequency measures, collocates, and extensive manual annotation for semantic meaning. The data used for this stage was obtained from the *TV Corpus* (Davies 2021) and further analysed via a series of commands which can be found in **supplement a)** below.

The thus extracted data was filtered based on their metadata (e.g. column “Country” or column “Genre” in the table below), as well as annotated for likely semantic meaning (column “Rel.” (Relevance) below). The exemplary concordance lines in **supplement b)** below were selected to illustrate and exemplify different aspects of the Stage 1 annotation and its findings, and should accordingly not be understood as a comprehensive or representative sample. The full set of annotated concordances with relevance judgements, basic frequency counts, and additional illustrative visualizations was preserved in this thesis’ **Coscine repository** (PID 21.11102/591a86a1-4283-4192-9fe7-7c4e401502c6).

### 1) List of queries run to obtain stage 1 data and results

All queries were run in a *CQPweb* interface and make use of CQP Syntax. The data extracted was subsequently annotated and further analysed.

#### Exploratory Queries

[word="lesbian.\*"%c]

[word="trans.\*"%c]

[word="gay.\*"%c]

[word="LGBT.\*"%c]

[word="bi.\*"%c]

[word="queer.\*"%c]

## Queries collocation analysis

```
[word="bisexual?"%c)::match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

```
[word="gay?"%c)::match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

```
[word="lesbian?"%c)::match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

```
[word="LGBT?"%c)::match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

```
[word="queer?"%c)::match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

```
[word="transgender?"%c)::match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

## Queries Usage Fluctuation Analysis

Due to the requirements of the Usage Fluctuation Analysis, queries were performed for sliding sets of 10 years. The example below illustrates the first query run to obtain data from 1990-1999. The latest period of time queried for was the period from 2017-2020.

```
[word="lesbian"%c)::match.text_year="(1990|1991|1992|1993|1994|1995|1996|1997|1998|1999)" &  
match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

```
[word="gay"%c)::match.text_year="(1990|1991|1992|1993|1994|1995|1996|1997|1998|1999)" &  
match.text_country="(.*Canada.*|. *USA.*)" &  
!match.text_genre="(.*Reality.*|. *Talk.*|. *Game.*|. *Documentary.*|. *News.*)"
```

2) Exemplary hits and concordance lines for each of the phenomena investigated in the Stage 1 analysis, annotated for relevance  
(See thesis section 3.3 for full explanation)

Lesbian\*

| No. of hit | Context before  | Hit        | Context after  | Rel. | Country    | Episode                              | Genre                | Language | Series                        | Word Count | Year |
|------------|---|------------|--|------|------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------|------------|------|
| 7          | Robert left a substantial donation to establish a gay and | lesbian    | centre ? Gay , Lesbian , Bisexual and Transgendered .        | Y    | USA        | Get Carter                           | Drama_Romance        | English  | ER                            | 6831       | 2004 |
| 110        | 're in love . We 're lovers . We 're                      | lesbian    | , gay-type lovers . I meantyour relationship with the Slayer | Y    | USA        | Checkpoint                           | Action_Drama_Fantasy | English  | Buffy the Vampire Slayer      | 5119       | 2001 |
| 309        | so much the better . She is definitely not a              | lesbian    | . We have covered that . Shh . Shh .                         | Y    | USA        | Rule #47: Always Take Advantage of \ | Comedy_Drama         | English  | Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce | 5586       | 2014 |
| 359        | Kathy , image consultants . How come they 're not         | lesbians   | ? We do n't believe in labels . Oh ,                         | Y    | USA        | Goodbye, Mr. Gordon                  | Comedy_Drama         | English  | The Golden Girls              | 3028       | 1992 |
| 724        | encountered . You know , I mean , you do                  | lesbian    | better than any lesbian I know ! Okay . And                  | Y    | USA_Canada | Luck, Next Time                      | Drama_Romance        | English  | The L Word                    | 4860       | 2004 |
| 1137       | than my friend . Shut up ! Are you two                    | lesbians   | ? Which one 's the dude ? ( laughs )                         | Y    | USA        | What Are You Doin' in My Life?       | Comedy_Romance       | English  | Cougar Town                   | 3358       | 2010 |
| 2761       | No , no . I mean , driven Susan to                        | lesbianism | . Oh , no . That 's ridiculous . What                        | Y    | USA        | The Smelly Car                       | Comedy               | English  | Seinfeld                      | 2927       | 1993 |
| 3229       | That 's not fighting . I think Kim is having              | lesbianic  | impulses . Lesbi , what ? She 's always had                  | Y    | USA        | Gay                                  | Comedy               | English  | Kath & Kim                    | 3081       | 2008 |

Gay\*

| No. of hit | Context before   | Hit         | Context after   | Rel. | Country        | Episode                           | Genre                           | Language             | Series                  | Word Count | Year |
|------------|--|-------------|---|------|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------|------|
| 10         | You are so gay now ! Stupid dwarf !<br>Totally                       | gay         | , 100% . Home Stenographer and<br>Travel Stenographer , available | Y    | USA            | Episode #1.1                      | Comedy_<br>Music                | English              | Chappelle's Show        | 2963       | 2003 |
| 35         | desk . We 'll do the cover page last .                               | Gayle       | 's making changes . Did you know<br>she 's colour-blind           | N/X  | USA_<br>Canada | Reaping Havoc                     | Comedy_<br>Drama_<br>Fantasy    | English              | Dead Like Me            | 4506       | 2003 |
| 39         | matter what Steven 's lifestyle is .<br>You mean his                 | gayness     | ? That is the polite word they 're<br>using for                   | Y    | USA            | The Vote                          | Drama_<br>Romance               | English              | Dynasty                 | 5324       | 1983 |
| 79         | diagnose . A neurologist , maybe . I<br>'m not                       | gay         | . I was n't gay either until the day I                            | Y    | USA            | Blowback                          | Crime_<br>Drama_<br>Thriller    | English              | The Shield              | 4881       | 2002 |
| 87         | musician . A teen experimenting<br>with her sexuality . A            | gay/lesbian | . So . What am I ? Going by your                                  |      | USA            | Friends with<br>Benefits          | Drama                           | English              | South of Nowhere        | 2754       | 2005 |
| 186        | gay . I know , but that 's what you                                  | gays        | do . You indoctrinate . If I do n't stay                          | Y    | USA            | Highway to the<br>Discomfort Zone | Comedy_<br>Drama                | English              | Greek                   | 5255       | 2008 |
| 218        | the diver . And second of all , they<br>'re                          | gay-married | . And do n't you dare judge ... You<br>do                         | Y    | USA            | Bioshuffle                        | Comedy_<br>Sci-Fi               | English              | Better Off Ted          | 3113       | 2009 |
| 275        | that new Jersey police questioned<br>you about your participation in | gay-bashing | incidents that evening ? I did n't do<br>anything .               | Y    | USA            | Thicker Than<br>Water             | Crime_<br>Drama                 | English              | The Whole Truth         | 6875       | 2010 |
| 337        | no one wanted to date me and why I<br>spent                          | Gay         | Pride alone . Fortunately , I wound<br>up working here            | Y    | USA            | And the Pop-Up<br>Sale            | Comedy                          | English_<br>Arabic   | 2 Broke Girls           | 3308       | 2011 |
| 598        | I love that song . MAN 2 : Is he                                     | gay         | &lsqb; ? MAN 3 : I do n't know what                               | Y    | USA            | The Real                          | Animation_<br>Action_<br>Comedy | English              | The Boondocks           | 3218       | 2006 |
| 637        | down there ? Now then , here we<br>have a                            | gay         | young fellow . Heh-heh . John , how<br>are you                    | U    | USA            | Pilot: Part 2                     | Comedy                          | English              | Filthy Rich             | 4595       | 1982 |
| 702        | Franco , help us out , man . Who<br>looks                            | gayer       | , me or the probie ? You 've got to                               | Y    | USA            | Believe                           | Drama_<br>Comedy                | English              | Rescue Me               | 6026       | 2005 |
| 810        | r " s . " Thank you for supporting the                               | gay         | marriage . You rock ! The boys at<br>the Bulge                    | Y    | USA            | Pawnee Zoo                        | Comedy                          | English              | Parks and<br>Recreation | 2936       | 2009 |
| 846        | i 'm short . he 's black . You 're                                   | gay-ish     | . That 's it . treat for crps . Prep                              | Y    | USA            | Epic Fail                         | Drama_<br>Mystery               | English_<br>Mandarin | House M.D.              | 5412       | 2009 |
| 1266       | have been there . I 'm not Rage .<br>Saving                          | Gayopolis   | is n't my thing . You doing ok ? Yeah                             | Y    | USA            | Episode #5.7                      | Drama_<br>Romance               | English              | Queer as Folk           | 11235      | 2005 |
| 1285       | . Hello , scouts ! Hey , it 's big                                   | gay         | al ! Hello , stanley , i was happy to                             | Y    | USA            | Super Best<br>Friends             | Animation_<br>Comedy            | English              | South Park              | 3278       | 2001 |

| No. of hit | Context before   | Hit       | Context after  | Rel. | Country    | Episode                                    | Genre                  | Language | Series                             | Word Count | Year |
|------------|--|-----------|--|------|------------|--|------------------------|----------|------------------------------------|------------|------|
| 1688       | bucks , dawg . A'ight ! Get drinking ' ,                   | Gaybraham | Lincoln ! The fuck did you do ? Here you                 | Y    | Canada     | The Motel Can't Live at the Motel          | Comedy_Crime           | English  | Trailer Park Boys                  | 3602       | 2015 |
| 1805       | leather shorts . Yeah , well , we 're not                  | gay       | , all right ? Freddie Mercury was cool . Look            | Y    | Canada     | Europe - Berlin                            | Adventure_Comedy_Crime | English  | Trailer Park Boys: Out of the Park | 4843       | 2016 |
| 2190       | of the Blue and Gray here , and I am                       | Gaybraham | Lincoln , baby . Oh , that 's okay .                     | Y    | USA        | The Blue and the Gray                      | Animation_Comedy       | English  | The Simpsons                       | 2462       | 2011 |
| 2680       | &lsqb; LAUGHS &rsqb; You are a genius . He likes           | gay       | jokes . What ? I said we write great jokes               | Y    | USA        | Romantic Expressionism                     | Comedy                 | English  | Community                          | 3345       | 2010 |
| 2790       | She 's super famous for having the world 's worst          | gay-dar   | . How could I be so cavalier with her emotions           | Y    | USA        | Treehouse                                  | Comedy_Romance         | English  | Modern Family                      | 3565       | 2011 |
| 3750       | Loafers and a musical &lsqb; ? &rsqb; You are really       | gaying    | me up . Nice to be heading home . Mm                     | Y    | USA        | Wild Cards                                 | Comedy                 | English  | The King of Queens                 | 2830       | 2000 |
| 4158       | you know Rupert 's a dude , right , you                    | gaylord   | ? Okay , you guys , where should we start                | Y    | USA        | Quagmire's Quagmire                        | Animation_Comedy       | English  | Family Guy                         | 3700       | 2013 |
| 6678       | ? Now sit back , relax and enjoy " Big                     | Gay       | Al 's Big Gay Boat Ride . " Big Gay                      | Y    | USA        | Big Gay Al's Big Gay Boat Ride             | Animation_Comedy       | English  | South Park                         | 3047       | 1997 |
| 7585       | prison for seven years , and those are still the           | gayest    | thing I 've ever seen . Well , I find                    | Y    | USA        | Custody Law and Eastern European Diplomacy | Comedy                 | English  | Community                          | 3457       | 2011 |
| 7918       | wo n't even be an issue . Warchowski 's the                | gay       | one , is n't he ? Not an issue .                         | Y    | Canada_USA | Helios 685                                 | Drama_Mystery_Sci-Fi   | English  | Travelers                          | 4722       | 2016 |
| 7959       | , I lived on Christopher Street . I have good              | gaydar    | . You told her , did n't you ? Tell                      | Y    | USA        | Hurricane                                  | Drama_Romance          | English  | Dawson's Creek                     | 5007       | 1998 |
| 8146       | Gentlemen , meet the Enola Gay . When the Enola            | Gay       | dropped her payload on Hiroshima , only 1 07 men         | N    | USA        | Beyond the Sky                             | Drama_Sci-Fi           | English  | Taken                              | 6792       | 2002 |
| 8845       | Have yourself a merry little Christmas ? Make the Yuletide | gay       | ? From now on ? Our troubles will be miles               | N    | USA        | Ludachristmas                              | Comedy                 | English  | 30 Rock                            | 3252       | 2007 |
| 8946       | sense now . You , my friend , are a                        | gay-cist  | . What ? You think all gays are the same                 | Y    | USA        | Of Mice & Jazz-Kwon-Do                     | Comedy_Romance         | English  | Happy Endings                      | 3741       | 2011 |
| 11700      | carts and stray dogs following you around . Ah ,           | Gay       | Paree . Beautiful " City of Lights . " I                 | U    | USA        | Vince Takes a Bath                         | Comedy                 | English  | Mike & Molly                       | 2695       | 2012 |
| 13504      | . Merry Christmas , Gee . ? With the yuletide              | gay       | ... ? Merry Christmas ! Happy Hannukah ! Merry Christmas | N    | USA        | All Through the House                      | Crime_Drama_Mystery    | English  | Homicide: Life on the Street       | 5593       | 1994 |

| No. of hit | Context before  | Hit          | Context after  | Rel. | Country | Episode                                       | Genre                         | Language            | Series                           | Word Count | Year |
|------------|---|--------------|--|------|---------|---|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|------------|------|
| 13927      | you ready ? Uh-huh .<br>Congratulations . You just got      | gayed        | . ( Laughs ) Thanks , but I 'm ...                                     | Y    | USA     | The Gift                                      | Comedy                        | English             | Ground Floor                     | 3199       | 2013 |
| 14108      | . " Correct to ... to who ? The<br>Lesbian                  | Gay          | Bisexual Trans Questioning Allied<br>community . The " Q "             | Y    | USA     | Rule #25:<br>Beware the<br>Second Chance      | Comedy_<br>Drama              | English             | Girlfriends' Guide<br>to Divorce | 6361       | 2016 |
| 14709      | with your boyfriend , you 'd go to a<br>more                | gay-friendly | state . Well , I think it 's okay in                                   | Y    | USA     | Electile<br>Dysfunction                       | Comedy                        | English             | Web Therapy                      | 5785       | 2012 |
| 15349      | the first place ? I knew you were a<br>fucking              | gay-ass      | liberal . You tried to pretend by<br>invading iraq with                | Y    | USA     | Stay Frosty                                   | Drama_<br>War                 | English             | Generation Kill                  | 7500       | 2008 |
| 16295      | dema ! I shall summon the power of<br>all the               | gaylords     | ! &lsqb; CHEERSANDAPPLAUSE<br>&rsqb; &lsqb; GRUNTS &rsqb; whoo<br>! Do | Y    | USA     | The Lord's Force                              | Comedy                        | English             | Workaholics                      | 3649       | 2012 |
| 16419      | been pushed to 11:00 . And<br>Bamberger called about the    | gay-marriage | amendment . Tell him I 'm<br>sympathetic but it will                   | N/X  | USA     | The Advocate                                  | Drama_<br>Romance             | English             | ER                               | 5908       | 2003 |
| 19984      | 'm going for it . ? Don we now our                          | gay          | apparel ... ? Would you give me a<br>second chance                     | N    | USA     | Santa   | Comedy                        | English             | New Girl                         | 3537       | 2012 |
| 20431      | in my mouth . You 're ... You 're a                         | gay          | fish , man ! Thank you very much !<br>About                            | Y    | USA     | Fishsticks                                    | Animation_<br>Comedy          | English_<br>Spanish | South Park                       | 3406       | 2009 |
| 21024      | fair . Josh gets a lot of fan mail for                      | Gaybraham    | Lincoln . Did you guys know that<br>Holland is the                     | Y    | USA     | Jack-Tor                                      | Comedy                        | English             | 30 Rock                          | 3962       | 2006 |
| 21025      | , starting tonight because this show<br>is important . When | Gaybraham    | Lincoln gets hit in the crotch , can I<br>go                           | Y    | USA     | Jack-Tor                                      | Comedy                        | English             | 30 Rock                          | 3962       | 2006 |
| 21184      | . Where 've you been ? They 're<br>reviving the             | Gay-Straight | Alliance at school . The Gay-Straight<br>what ? It 's                  | Y    | USA     | The Gay-<br>Straight Alliance                 | Drama_<br>Family_<br>Romance  | English             | Once and Again                   | 5295       | 2002 |
| 21946      | the gay-maker ! The last stop on the<br>train to            | Gayville     | ! Just sprinkle on a little Hillary and<br>hello !                     | Y    | USA     | No Weddings<br>and a Funeral                  | Comedy_<br>Romance            | English             | The War at Home                  | 3133       | 2007 |
| 22207      | TV before bed , but ... get this ... "                      | Gaybraham    | Lincoln " here does n't have a<br>television . And                     | Y    | USA     | Charlie & the<br>Secret Gigolo                | Comedy_<br>Romance            | English             | Anger<br>Management              | 3527       | 2013 |
| 22230      | News says kills old people and lets<br>illegal Mexicans get | gay-married  | . No , he 's not from around here .                                    | Y    | USA     | The One with<br>Interspecies<br>F-R-I-E-N-D-S | Comedy_<br>Family_<br>Romance | English             | The Neighbors                    | 3459       | 2013 |

## Bi\*

| No. of hit | Context before  | Hit         | Context after   | Rel. | Country | Episode                   | Genre                   | Language              | Series                                   | Word Count | Year |
|------------|---|-------------|---|------|---------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------|------|
| 22         | . It 's cold , it 's windy . A                          | big         | storm coming . Lightning ! ( SHIVERING ) Good thing     | N/X  | USA     | Murder, Smoke and Shadows | Crime_Drama_Mystery     | English               | Columbo                                  | 10360      | 1989 |
| 2159       | 'm not gay gay . I 'm what you call                     | bi-curious  | . Whatever . Look , I got ta go ,                       | Y    | USA     | Work Related              | Comedy                  | English               | The King of Queens                       | 3388       | 2000 |
| 21944      | loose interest in girls ? I 'm just curious .           | Bi-curious  | ? I did n't mean to be too personal .                   | Y    | USA     | Allegra Caldarello        | Drama                   | English               | Nip/Tuck                                 | 4478       | 2009 |
| 32148      | do n't know if I told you I 'm a                        | biathlete   | . Hey , whatever you do behind closed doors is          | Y    | USA     | High School Confidential  | Comedy_Family           | English               | Home Improvement                         | 2935       | 1996 |
| 103306     | Intruder alert . Switching to pursuit and arrest mode . | Bingo       | ! ( Alarmhonking ) ( Phoneautodialing , ringing ) Hello | N/X  | USA     | Operation: Breakout       | Comedy_Drama_Family     | English               | The Secret World of Alex Mack            | 2529       | 1996 |
| 130050     | anything , I have nothing against lesbians or gays or   | bis         | or trans or anyone questioning what they are . I        | Y    | USA     | 4SnP                      | Comedy_Drama_Family     | English               | The Secret Life of the American Teenager | 7239       | 2012 |
| 177003     | 'm going to fight for equality for everyone , Including | bisexuals   | , like myself , And gay men and transgender people      | Y    | USA     | P.C.                      | Crime_Drama_Mystery     | English               | Law & Order: Special Victims Unit        | 6278       | 2010 |
| 180571     | way ? Oh , like I 've never thought about               | bisexuality | . But , you know , social biases , they                 | Y    | Canada  | Entangled Bank            | Action_Drama_Sci-Fi     | English               | Orphan Black                             | 4362       | 2013 |
| 252022     | Hmm . As the old saying goes , " zhi                    | bi          | zhi ji bai zhan bu Dai . " Yeah ,                       | X    | USA     | Alpha Dogs                | Action_Drama_Sci-Fi     | English               | Alphas                                   | 4842       | 2012 |
| 288922     | ? That 's right . A bi-polar , bipolar ,                | bi          | polar bear . That is very stupid . My name              | Y    | USA     | Snarfer Image             | Animation_Comedy        | English               | Robot Chicken                            | 1515       | 2014 |
| 321630     | the attic . All right . Bisspater , alligator .         | Bis         | spater . We arrested a guy tonight , and during         | X    | USA     | Three Coins in a Fuchsbau | Drama_Fantasy_Horror    | English_French_German | Grimm                                    | 3983       | 2012 |
| 371333     | ... and from my observations , it seems they 're        | bisexual    | , reproducing at will . And , brother , have            | N    | USA     | The Trouble with Tribbles | Action_Adventure_Sci-Fi | English               | Star Trek                                | 5239       | 1967 |
| 573654     | you to tell Mo that his mama is lesbianic ?             | Bionic      | ? What ? I ca n't understand you . How                  | Y    | USA     | Mo's Ma                   | Comedy                  | English               | Clipped                                  | 3314       | 2015 |

Trans\*

| No. of hit | Context before  | Hit            | Context after   | Rel. | Country | Episode                            | Genre                      | Language | Series                            | Word Count | Year |
|------------|---|----------------|---|------|---------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|------------|------|
| 121        | Robert Romano Center for Gay , Lesbian , Bisexual and   | Transgendered  | Healthcare . This new facility will provide the latest in | Y    | USA     | Get Carter                         | Drama_Romance              | English  | ER                                | 6831       | 2004 |
| 868        | helping out . We did it , partner . The                 | trans          | am is safe . Yeah , me too . I                            | N    | USA     | Bait & Switch                      | Action_Comedy              | English  | The Good Guys                     | 6524       | 2010 |
| 5432       | for our case . People are generally hostile towards the | trans-gendered | . So a jury will be , too . Berger                        | Y    | USA     | Fallacy                            | Crime_Drama_Mystery        | English  | Law & Order: Special Victims Unit | 6465       | 2003 |
| 6557       | . So that 's the whole story ? He 's                    | transgender    | ? Did ... Did something else happen ? No ,                | Y    | USA     | What Happens in Vegas              | Drama_Romance_Thriller     | English  | Mistresses                        | 6591       | 2016 |
| 7407       | Modesty . I 'm not gay . L ... Most                     | transvestites  | are n't . Hm . I see that you 're                         | Y    | USA     | Brigitte Reinhold                  | Drama                      | English  | Nip/Tuck                          | 4955       | 2009 |
| 8854       | Charge Three states you have a noncom who is a          | transvestite   | . I do n't pry into a man 's religion                     | Y    | USA     | The Trial of Henry Blake           | Comedy_Drama_War           | English  | M*A*S*H                           | 2961       | 1973 |
| 15864      | Do what ? You know , Denise Logan , the                 | transsexual    | lady . How do you know about that ? I                     | Y    | USA     | Believers                          | Crime_Drama_Mystery        | English  | Crossing Jordan                   | 5547       | 2001 |
| 17215      | Sir ? Listen to me . You 're a baby                     | trans          | . You 'll get used to it . Aww ,                          | Y    | USA     | Episode #3.9                       | Comedy_Drama               | English  | Transparent                       | 3485       | 2016 |
| 18437      | to see my daughter 's body ! I think that               | transgender    | kid was brave as hell . It took a lot                     | Y    | USA     | Boys Will Be Boys                  | Crime_Drama_Mystery        | English  | Major Crimes                      | 5986       | 2013 |
| 19304      | , " Do n't be a Fra ? d oF                              | trans          | ? t ? ons . " " They make you                             | X    | USA     | Transitions                        | Action_Adventure_Crime     | English  | Magnum, P.I.                      | 5397       | 1988 |
| 21692      | n't you be gayanatin ' him . You trying to              | transmogrify   | me into one of y'all's ? I do not want                    | Y    | USA     | Asses to Ashes, Sluts to Dust      | Animation_Action_Adventure | English  | Squidbillies                      | 1638       | 2006 |
| 34785      | : Why ? Were the Beatles dyslexic and cat-fished by     | transsexuals   | ? Jake : John Lennon 's dad was n't even                  | Y    | USA     | Love, Love, Love                   | Comedy_Drama_Music         | English  | Glee                              | 5704       | 2013 |
| 36856      | Correct to ... to who ? The Lesbian Gay Bisexual        | Trans          | Questioning Allied community . The " Q " is for           | Y    | USA     | Rule #25: Beware the Second Chance | Comedy_Drama               | English  | Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce     | 6361       | 2016 |

**Queer\***

| No. of hit | Context before                                    | Hit      | Context after                                      | Rel. | Country | Episode                                  | Genre                 | Language        | Series                       | Word Count | Year |
|------------|---|----------|--|------|---------|--|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------|------|
| 622        | n't have a mosque in a church full of drag        | queers   | . It 's queens . It 's drag queens .               | Y    | Canada  | Mother-in-Law                            | Comedy                | English_Arabic  | Little Mosque on the Prairie | 3213       | 2007 |
| 703        | the debt , he 'll be as old and as                | queer    | as I am . Queer strange , or queer gay             | Y    | USA     | The Wife Aquatic                         | Animation_Comedy      | English         | The Simpsons                 | 1841       | 2007 |
| 704        | be as old and as queer as I am .                  | Queer    | strange , or queer gay ? Oh , a touch              | N    | USA     | The Wife Aquatic                         | Animation_Comedy      | English         | The Simpsons                 | 1841       | 2007 |
| 705        | as queer as I am . Queer strange , or             | queer    | gay ? Oh , a touch of both . Homer                 | Y    | USA     | The Wife Aquatic                         | Animation_Comedy      | English         | The Simpsons                 | 1841       | 2007 |
| 917        | well , you saw me . Was I not the                 | queerest | thing on God 's earth ? Actually , you seemed      | Y    | USA     | Episode #5.3                             | Drama_Romance         | English         | Queer as Folk                | 6214       | 2005 |
| 1047       | Oh , I 'm afraid I 'm feeling a bit               | queer    | . Do n't ask . Do n't tell . But                   | Y    | USA     | Here Comes the Brood                     | Comedy_Family_Romance | English_Yiddish | The Nanny                    | 3119       | 1993 |
| 1235       | without a question ?? Who gives your heart a      | queer    | congestion ??? You 'd better write her number      | N    | USA     | Cuban Pals                               | Comedy_Family         | English_Spanish | I Love Lucy                  | 2674       | 1952 |
| 1238       | great surprise to me , and made me reconsider the | queers   | that I had previously kicked around . uncle , what | Y    | USA     | Brains, Know-How and Native Intelligence | Comedy_Drama_Fantasy  | English         | Northern Exposure            | 5407       | 1990 |

**LGBT\***

| No. of hit | Context before                                 | Hit   | Context after                                   | Rel. | Country | Episode               | Genre               | Language | Series                            | Word Count | Year |
|------------|--|-------|---|------|---------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|------------|------|
| 77         | and I have been very , very supportive of the  | LGBTQ | community . Oh , John ... John . For ...        | Y    | Canada  | Ronnie's Party        | Comedy              | English  | Schitt's Creek                    | 3006       | 2016 |
| 124        | Perhaps because he 's gay and you ordered an " | LGBT  | " sandwich ? Yeah " lettuce , guacamole , bacon | Y    | USA     | Have Love Will Travel | Comedy_Romance      | English  | Cougar Town                       | 3057       | 2013 |
| 164        | two years . Has he ever had a problem with     | LGBTQ | students ? No . Darius has a little sister ,    | Y    | USA     | Transgender Bridge    | Crime_Drama_Mystery | English  | Law & Order: Special Victims Unit | 4809       | 2015 |
| 175        | All right . The people in my group at the      | LGBT  | center , they say that you have to have a       | Y    | USA     | Episode #2.4          | Comedy_Drama        | English  | Transparent                       | 3289       | 2015 |

## C) Stage 2

As mentioned in the abstract, for Stage 2 a total of 60 episode transcripts from 6 shows contained in the *TV Corpus* were extracted and annotated with speaker information using the *UAM Corpus Tool* (see O'Donnell 2008 for more information). The full annotation schemes developed for this purpose can be found in **supplement c)** below, along with exemplary screenshots of the completed speaker annotation. As this annotation process was assisted by master's level students at the department for English Linguistics at RWTH Aachen University, the call for help sent out to recruit student annotators can be found in **supplement e)** below. The full set of annotated episode transcripts was preserved as a UAM Corpus Tool project in this thesis' **Coscine repository** (PID 21.11102/591a86a1-4283-4192-9fe7-7c4e401502c6).

The thus annotated episode transcripts were complemented with a qualitative annotation for mentions and indications of queerness in the 60 episodes' playback. The detailed notes on this stage of the analysis were prepared in narrative form and can be found in **supplement d)** below.

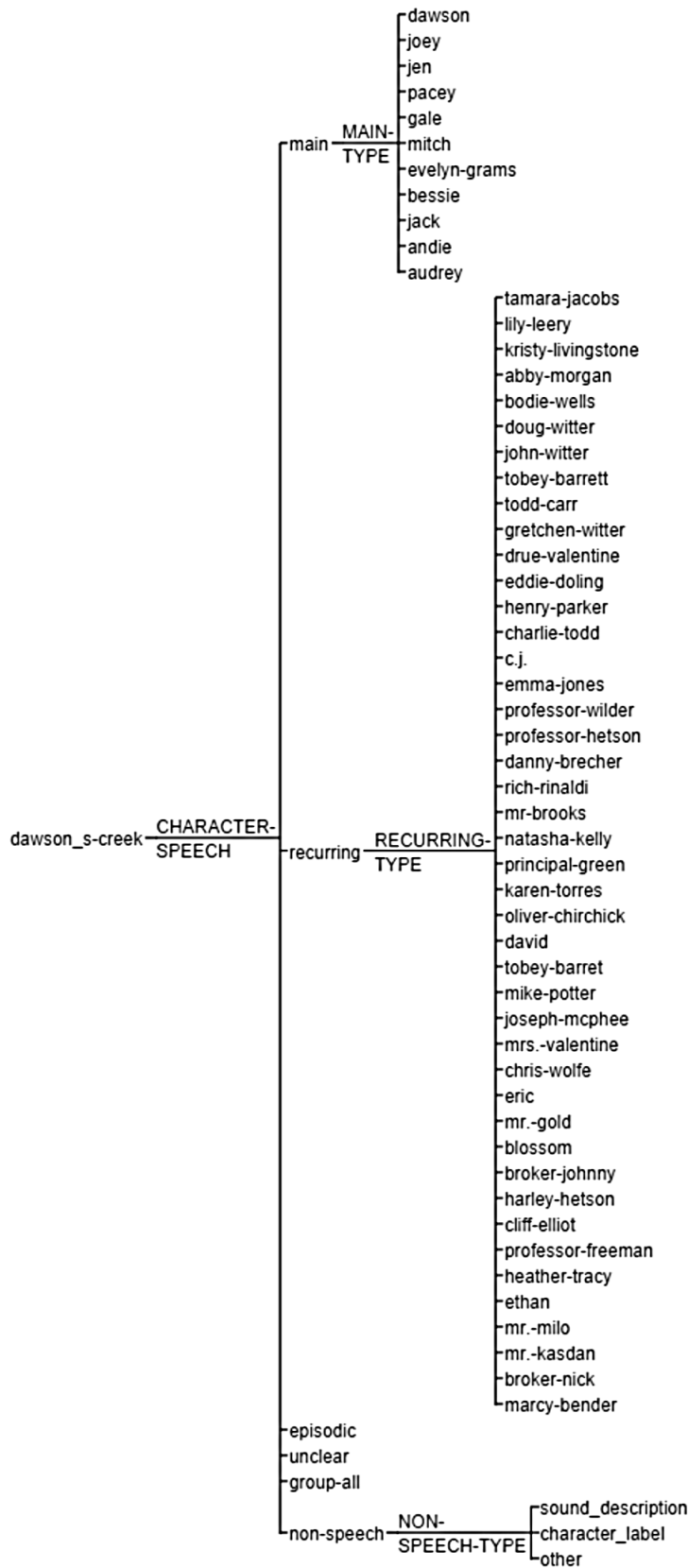
### 1) Annotation schemes and examples of speaker annotation using the UAM Corpus Tool

The screenshots included in this section were taken using version 6.2j (February, 2023) of the *UAM Corpus Tool*. Please note that, due to practical constraints, the speaker annotation was performed using version 3.3x (August, 2021) of the tool. However, projects created using either version of the tool are fully compatible with the other version (see <http://www.corpustool.com/documentation.html> for more information).

#### Annotation schemes

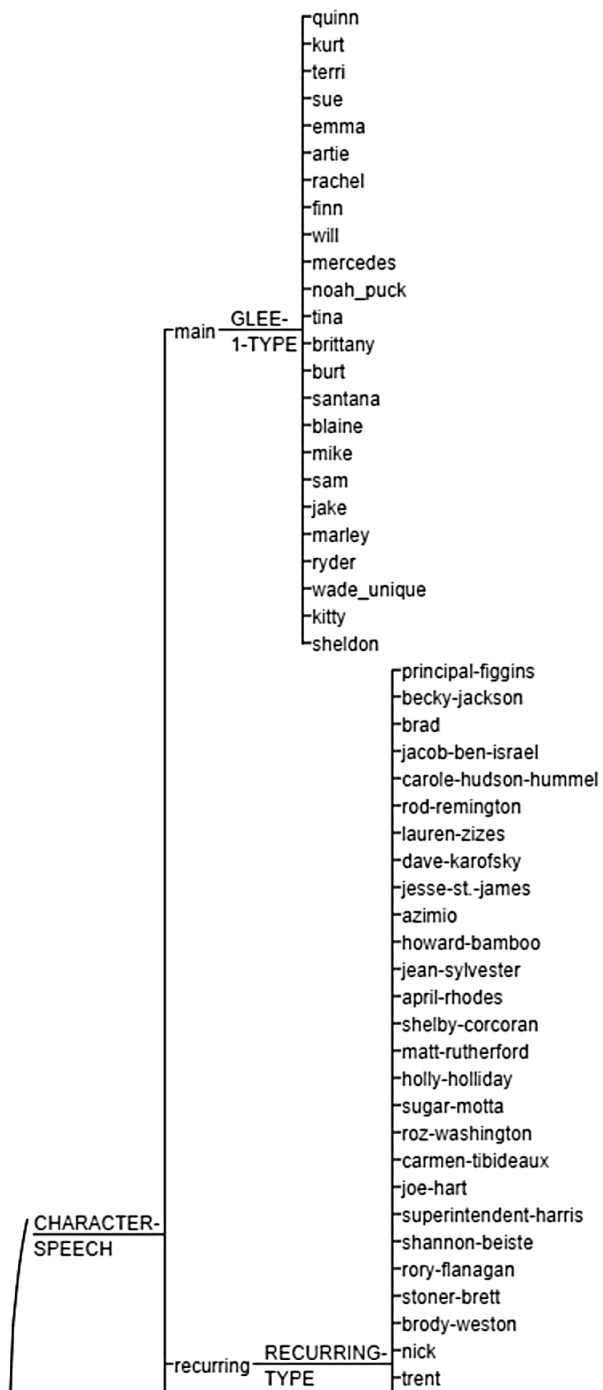
In this section, screenshots of the annotation schemes used in the speaker annotation for each of the 6 shows/60 episodes can be found. All annotated episodes from each show were annotated only with the annotation scheme created specifically to recognize that show's own recurring/main cast characters.

# Annotation scheme for *Dawson's Creek*

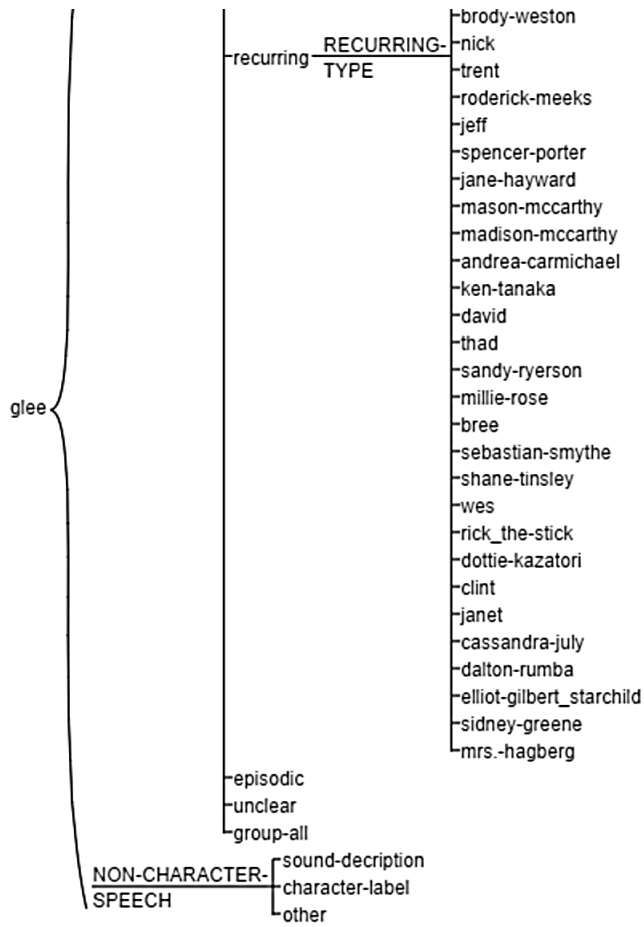


# Annotation scheme for *Glee*

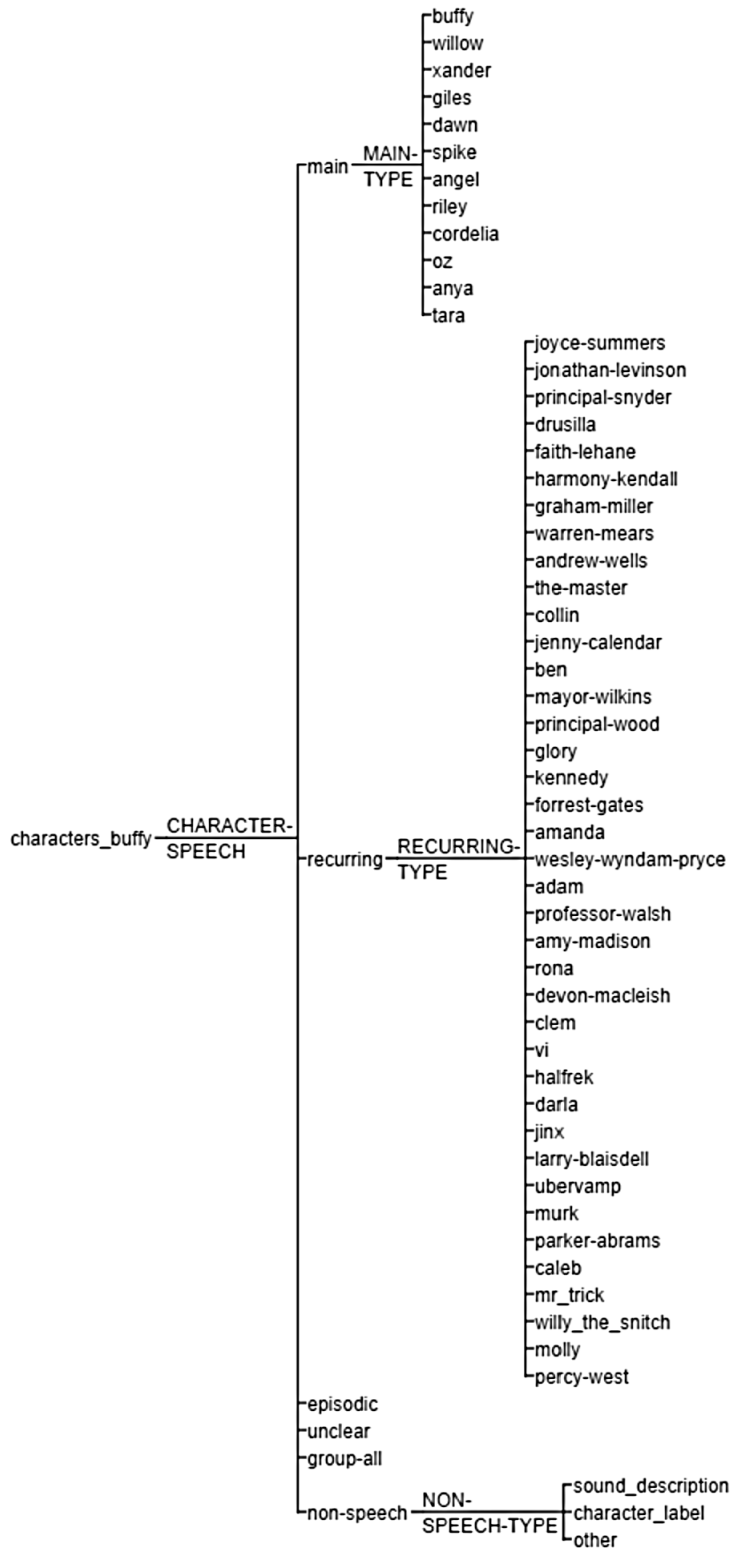
## Part 1



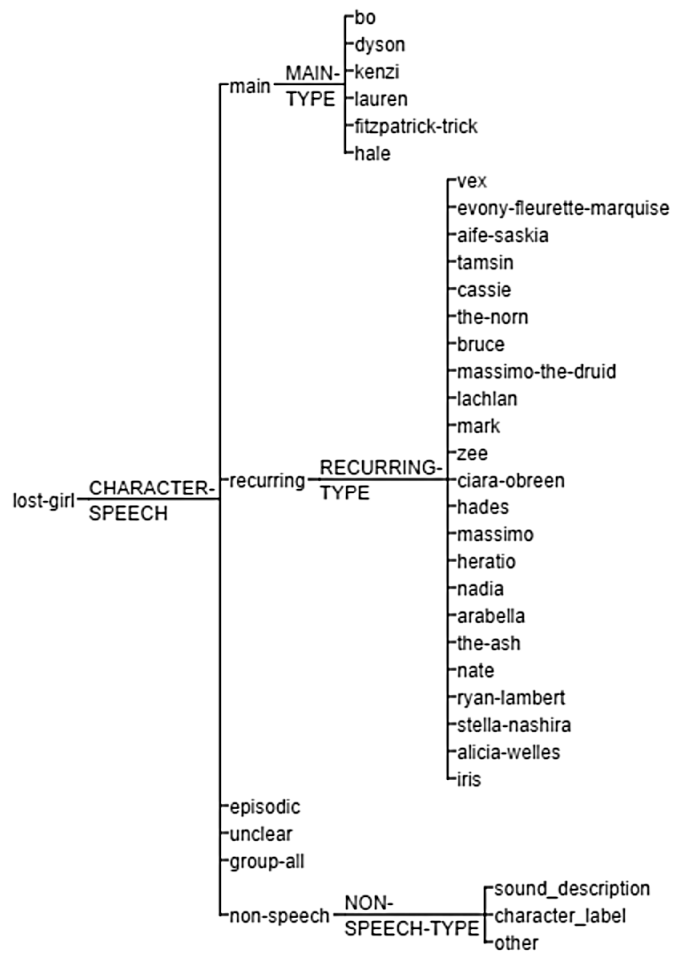
Part 2



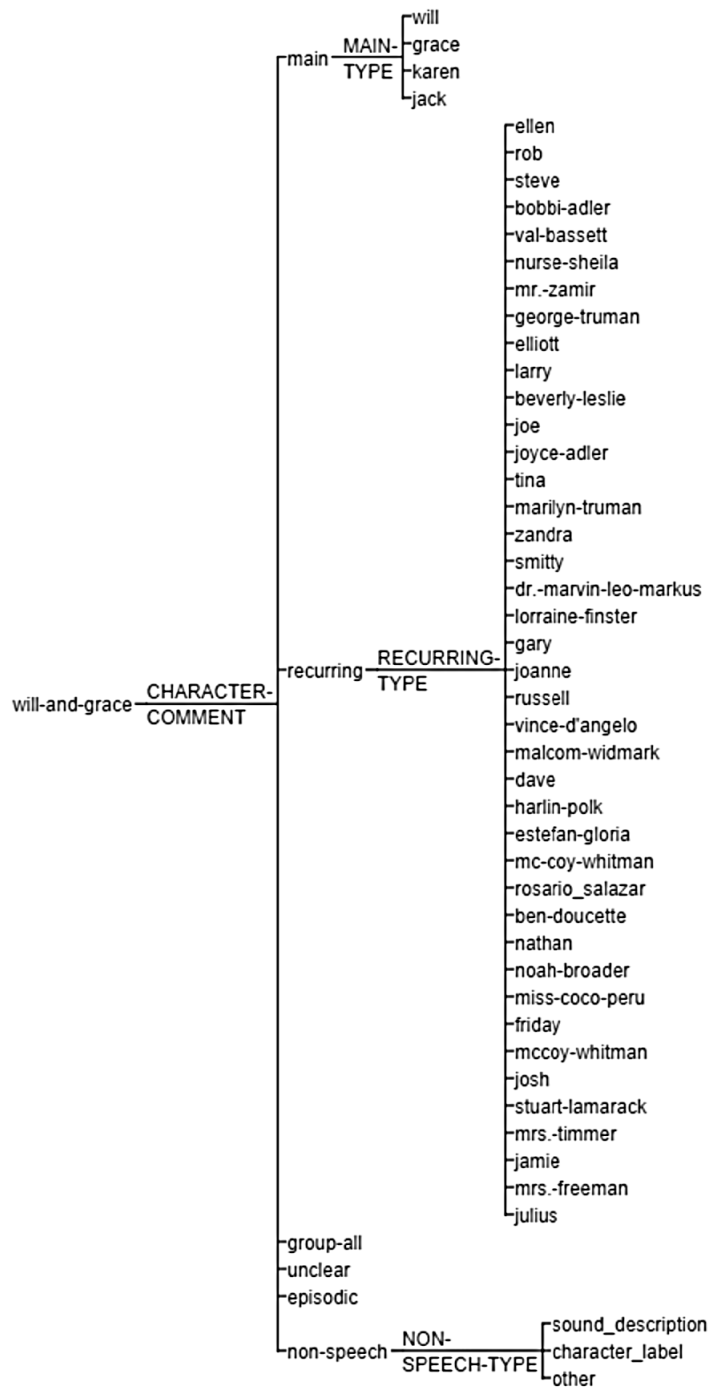
# Annotation scheme for *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*



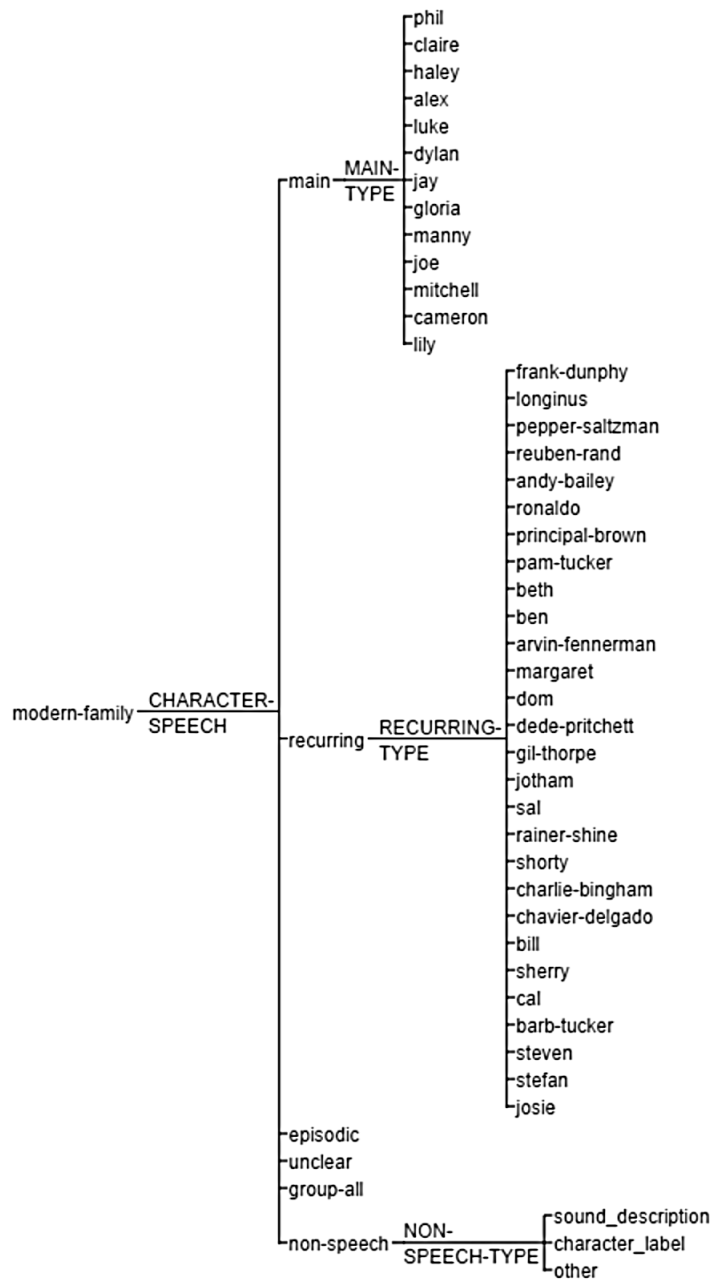
## Annotation scheme for *Lost Girl*



## Annotation scheme for *Will & Grace*



## Annotation scheme for *Modern Family*



## Examples of completed speaker annotation

This section contains several examples of what the finished speaker annotation using the *UAM Corpus Tool's* features looks like. These examples were chosen to illustrate a rather uncommon way of using the tool's annotation layer function, and should thus be seen as supporting the actual frequency measures reported on in the main body of the thesis, rather than as analysis results in their own right. As mentioned previously, the full *UAM Corpus Tool* project is stored in this project's Coscine repository, where limited access may be granted upon request (PID 21.11102/591a86a1-4283-4192-9fe7-7c4e401502c6). This first example was drawn from an annotated episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Season 2 Episode 3, "School Hard"). The segment highlighted in red was attributed to Principal Snyder, who, as can be seen from the selected labels visible in the bottom left corner, can be classified as a recurring character.

UAM CT Files Layers Annotation Search Statistics Lexis Help Projects

Annotation Edit View Help

Subcorp: Buffy S2 Filename: Buffy\_SchoolHard.txt Layer: Characters\_Buffy Change

You would n't be helping Buffy in Sheila 's place , would you ? I feel an expulsion coming on . No , actually , Sheila 's been helping us for hours . She just went out to get some more ... paint . Oh ! Oh , is there no more teal in  
Principal-snyder Principal-snyder Buffy

La v ? che doit me touche ... de la ... jeudi , Was it wrong ? Should I use the plural ? No , but ... You said " The cow should touch me from Thursday . "  
Buffy Willow

Maybe that 's what I was feeling . Then you said it wrong . Oh , je stink . You 're just not focused . It was a " Maybe see you there " kind of deal . Guys , I 'm all alone out there . Dance with me . Well , we are studying . On  
Buffy Willow Buffy Willow Buffy Xander Willow

Go get something to eat . Where 's the phone ? I need to call the police . There 's some big guy tryin ' to bite someone . Slayer . Slayee . Get her out of here ! And a stake would be nice ! I do n't need to wait for St Vigeous .  
Spike Episodic Buffy Buffy E

Those two losers ... who thought they were good enough for Spike for you ? What happened to ' em ?  
Spike Episodic

They got sleepy . Huh ? And you ... got something a whole lot better . Hey ! Wait up . What 's your name ? Spike ... That 's what the other vampire called him ? That 's a little unorthodox , is n't it ? Maybe he 's Reform .  
Spike Episodic Spike Episodic Giles Buffy

That would be wrong . Could we hide ? I mean , if that Spike guy is leading the attack ...  
Willow

He ca n't be any worse than any other creature . He 's worse . Once he starts something , he does n't stop until everything in his path is dead . Hm . So he 's thorough , goal-oriented . We were at the Bronze before . Thought  
Giles Angel Xander Buffy

OK , that 's it . I 'm puttin ' a collar with a little bell on that guy . St Vigeous , you who murdered so many , ... we beseech you , cleanse us of our weaknesses . Mercy , compassion , pity ...  
Xander Episodic

Miss Edith speaks out of turn . She 's a bad example , and will have no cakes today . Darling , are you going to eat something ? I 'm not hungry . I miss Prague . You nearly died in Prague . Idiot mob . This is the place for us  
Drusilla Spike Drusilla

The stars will align and smile down on us . And then ... God , this town will burn . Should be a party . You should go up with them and cleanse . Dru ... The boy does n't trust you . They follow him . I think sometimes that all  
Drusilla Spike Spike Drusilla Spike Drusilla

You sure do n't . Parents start arriving in an hour . OK . So , banners are in place , the lounge is comfy . What am I forgetting ? Punch ? Punch ! I need punch !  
Cordelia Buffy Willow Buffy

| Selected         | To Choose | Fields | Comment |
|------------------|-----------|--------|---------|
| characters_buffy |           |        |         |
| recurring        |           |        |         |
| principal-snyder |           |        |         |

The second example below was taken from an episode of *Will & Grace* (Season 1 Episode 16, “Yours, Mine, Ours”). Once again, the first visible element has been selected here, and the selected labels indicate that has been attributed to the main cast character Grace in the manual speaker annotation. Notably, this screenshot also illustrates the phenomenon of a character’s segment being interrupted by a non-character speech element (see line 6-7), such as, in this case, Karen’s speech repeatedly being interrupted by a phone ringing, as was also discussed in Section 3.4.2.1 of the thesis (DOI 10.18154/RWTH-2025-08959).

UAM CT Files Layers Annotation Search Statistics Lexis Help Projects

Annotation Edit View Help

Subcorp: WillAndGrace S1 Filename: WG\_Yours, Mine, or Ours.txt Layer: Will-and-Grace Change

Oh . that 's okay . I 'll just wait for the next one . Oh -- Or not . I was going down . but I do n't have to go straight down . We 're all so goal-oriented . It 's really all about the journey . is n't it ? And the company . I 'm Peter . So I

Grace Episodic

Uh . no . Just a one bedroom . Just me . Just good . Oh . uh . actually . I 'm goin ' up . Oh . well . that 's okay . I 'm a Scorpio . We love to travel . Is everyone in this building good-looking ?

Episodic Grace Episodic Will Episodic

Oh . no . We make the ugly ones take the stairs . but . uh . I got some ideas . I 'm Will . Uh . Peter . 12-D . 12-D ? That 's a ... studio . is n't it ?

Will Episodic Will Episodic Will

Oh . sorry I 'm late . My driver hit a pedestrian on 57th Street . and we had to stop and blah-blah . ugh . Oh my God . Is he okay ? Mmm . a little rattled . but he always gets like that when he hits someone . Karen ... you have

Karen Grace Karen

You understand that would be wrong . do n't you ? Yeah . I guess . Fire him . Grace . he is old and sweet and helpless . I ca n't just fire him because he 's a raging incompetent . I mean . maybe you could . but not me . Kare

Grace Karen Grace Karen

I think he said that . ( ringing )

Karen Sound\_description

Or maybe it was . " Wow . this sand is hot ! " ( ringing ) Oh ... Honey . are you gon na get that ? It 's kind of distracting . Grace Adler Designs . Hold on . One . two . three . This is Grace . Oh . Peter . Hi . Who 's Peter

Karen Sound\_description Karen Grace Karen

Oh . tonight ? Oh . um . uh . let me check my book . One . two . three . Yeah . it seems like I 'm free . Yeah . like you need a book to tell you that . Great . sounds like a plan . I 'll see you at 8:00 . Cue the laugh . And the hair

Grace Karen Grace Karen

Tell me he 's lazy . tell me he 's slow Tell me I 'm crazy . maybe I know Ca n't help lovin ' that man of mine ! Take it . Jackie !

Group-all Will

And pas de bourr ? e . and pas de bourr ? e and soufflé . I 'm gay ! So what 's goin ' on with you ? What ?

Jack Will

We have n't sung a show tune since Jimmy Swaggart got caught with a hooker . I have sinned ! So what 's cookin ' . average lookin ' ? Okay . this guy moved into our building . and um . and I like him . Oh my God . She 's al

Jack Group-all Jack Will

We have a date ! Woo ! Woo ! Wait a minute . Do n't losers get that excited about dates ? Losers do n't have dates . We have a date !

| Selected       | To Choose | Fields | Comment |
|----------------|-----------|--------|---------|
| will-and-grace |           |        |         |
| main           |           |        |         |
| grace          |           |        |         |

#### **D) Detailed notes on the qualitative annotation for mentions of queerness in the 60 episodes in narrative form, sorted by show, episode**

To better understand how these characters develop across episodes and seasons, a brief summary of the theme analysis for mentions and elements of queerness in the analysed episodes will be provided in the following order:

*Dawson's Creek, Glee, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Lost Girl, Will and Grace, Modern Family.*

##### ***Dawson's Creek***

Jack is introduced in season two, as the brother of the girlfriend (Andie) of one of the characters of the main group of friends. He briefly dates another girl from the group, Joey, though they break up in S02E15, after he comes out to first his family and then to her. Him and Joey remain on good terms. In the narrative, Jack's queerness is a topic very soon after his appearance in the story, with a double episode focusing on his coming to terms with his identity (S02E14-S02E15).

In this double episode, Jack comes into conflict with a teacher who forces him to publicly read out loud a creative writing assignment that is a poem about being scared of his sexuality ("I grow more afraid [...] I see him" S02E14) and wishing to be different, leading his classmates to conclude that he "is a total homo" (episodic). His girlfriend Joey at first does not attribute any significance to the rumours about Jack's sexuality, thinking it to be "all a big joke", and taking their mutual friend's Dawson's questions to be an attempt to get (back) together with her. His sister, on the other hand, thinks that Jack drew unnecessary attention to himself with the poem, and is of the opinion that "[h]e hates Madonna, he's not gay.", though she does also admit to her boyfriend that she'd feel "disappointed" if he were gay. The student body reacts badly to the rumours about Jack's sexuality, and he ends up with the word "fag" written on his locker. This leads to a heart to heart between Jack and his sister in which she apologizes for her initial reaction and offers her support. At the end of S02E14, Jack explicitly states that he is "not gay".

By the opening scene of S02E15, Jack has to a degree gotten used to the reaction of others and jokes about coming out as straight publicly: "we can in me". His father comes to visit after being told about the situation by the school, and they are revealed to have a rather rocky relationship. His father also describes Jack's alleged sexuality as a "problem". Another person

from their friend group, Jen, considers ending her relationship because of her date's views about gay people ("it's wrong, it's in the Bible."; "his kind is damaging to the world at large"), though they agree to "see what happens next" by the end of the episode. Jack confronts his father, which leads to Jack's assertion that "[y]es, I am [gay]". At the end of the episode, he also comes out to his girlfriend, telling her that "whatever it is that I'm going through, it's not gonna go away, maybe ever", again framing his sexuality as a force that he struggles with as it places him in conflict with his environment. As the main group of friends appears to be largely sympathetic to Jack's struggle, episodic characters are drawn on as a source of conflict for Jack's arc.

S03E12 focuses on Joey and her sister struggling to get their BnB started, so one of their friends invites a hotel critic to get publicity, while the friend group and their families stay/pose as additional guests. At this point in the story, Jack has moved out from home due to conflicts with his father, and instead lives with Jen and her grandmother (Grams), with whom he appears to get along well. At the beginning of the episode, his sister asks him to move back in, but Jack claims to be "happy where [he is]", which he claims that he couldn't be while living with his father. At the end of the episode, Jack agrees to move back in, though he asserts that it "has nothing to do with [his] dad", it's about [his sister] Andie", who needs his support. He thanks the family he stayed with for the previous year, and declares himself ready to return to his birth family after having experienced such great support from Jen and her grandmother.

S03E22 focuses on the group going to junior prom, and their conflicts about who is going to bring whom as a date, resulting in their organizing an "Anti-Prom" when Jack is forbidden from bringing another boy as his date. At the beginning of the episode, Jack is considering "bringing a guy to the prom", but is intimidated by the idea. When trying to buy the tickets, the student selling the tickets claims that the "definition of a prom date is a boy and a girl", and that he's looking to "cause a spectacle and ruin the prom". The gang protests, but Jack no longer wants to go, because he doesn't want his "entire life [...] to be a fight. Why does something that is normal for someone else have to be so political for [him]?". The gang decides to hold an "anti-prom" that is "not about who you bring, but about who you are" instead. At the anti-prom, Jack's date, Ethan, who has been out for longer, confesses to never having been to such an event, after which Jack feels tricked into going, as he himself felt uncomfortable with the situation, but didn't want to disappoint his date. Jack confronts Ethan about not being

uncomfortable because of the publicness of the event, but rather because he feels that he is more invested in the relationship than his date. Ethan dares him to kiss him as he says that there is “no network television to cut to commercial”. Jack does not, and his date leaves the event. Jack’s continuing discrimination at school was the inciting incident that caused the titular “anti-prom” to take place, and he spends much of the episode in conflict with first his homophobic schoolmates and then his date (a recurring character) about his continuing discomfort with being publicly queer.

In S04E07, the gang is fighting after several conflicts escalated: Jack has stopped speaking to his best friend Jen, as he blames her for his sister going through a drug overdose. Throughout the episode, his sexuality is not referenced, except implicitly when Jen accuses him that he “of all people” should understand about being judged unfairly. His sister is offered the opportunity to travel to Europe for the rest of the schoolyear, and after deciding that she wants to take the opportunity, she confronts the group about their avoidant behaviour. At the end of the episode, Jack and Jen talk, and agree to make up because Jen is “such an important part of [his] life”.

S04E14 is about the gang going on a class trip, which their classmates treat as being mostly about hooking up without adult supervision. Jack, meanwhile, is less interested in the trip, as he perceives his queerness to be an obstacle to his romantic and/or sexual prospects: “If sexual misadventure were an option for me I’d be all over it... so to speak”. Jen suggests he should speak to another gay student, a proposition which he rejects because “he’s very gay. It’s just when it’s that obvious, it’s a bit of a turnoff”. Jen hurts her ankle, but Jack is uncomfortable helping her because of his idea of appropriate “boundaries” between genders. Jen is annoyed by his behaviour, and demands that he “stop clinging to these ridiculous macho conventions about what is [...] appropriate”. Later, the two talk again and Jack confesses that he “always play[s] everything so safe and harmless”, and is tired of such behaviour. They get drunk, and Jack shares that he’s “scared that [he’s] gonna end up alone [...] always gonna be someone’s friend, or brother, or confidante, but never quite somebody’s everything.”, leading the two of them to kiss, though they end up deciding it was a mistake only caused by Jack’s feelings of loneliness.

S05E04 focuses on the death of Dawson’s father, and the reactions of their community. Jack only appears in some of the group scenes, as the episode’s focus is rather on dealing with grief.

S05E10 has the group meeting up for dinner to catch up and to introduce a new friend. The evening gets sidetracked when Dawson and Jen reveal that they are together again. Jack describes Jen as “a woman even my tribe can’t resist”, and jokes about their kiss in S04E14. However, he also notes that their relationship has since changed, saying that “[i]t’s not the Will & Grace land it once was.” In doing so, he references one of the other shows under investigation in this study, putting his own struggling friendship in contrast with a show characterized by the strong (if platonic) relationship between the two titular characters. Later in the episode, he and Jen have a confrontation about their difficulties, during which Jen characterizes him as a “guy who chose a beer bong over his boyfriend”, though they ultimately agree that the difficulties in their relationship come from an ongoing estrangement, which is put into contrast with their earlier closeness: “You and I used to operate like this perfect clockwork”. Strikingly, a very similar discussion is also had between Dawson and Joey, who have had a complicated and sometimes romantic relationship in the past: “Our lives used to happen together, Dawson”, highlighting a similar sense of estrangement brought about by the onset of adulthood and the interpersonal conflicts within their group. At the end of the episode, the characters have mostly made up, and several agree to go to a “gay bar” together, which can be read as an indication of Jack’s increased comfort with and assurance in his own sexuality.

S06E21 focuses on the group’s changing plans for the summer, and different issues that necessitate changing those plans: Jen asks Jack to be present for dinner with her estranged mother and her grandmother who has recently been diagnosed with cancer, as she feels that she needs “the whole gamut of boy power”. Jack is reluctant, since it is also the last night in which Jen’s boyfriend will be in town, and he suspects his presence will cause awkwardness. At dinner, Jen’s mother questions Jack about how he met Jen, assuming that he is Jen’s boyfriend. He has to specify that “[n]o, [he is] the gay one.” Jen’s mother tries to explain her confusion: “Well, [the boyfriend] and Jack are both so attractive... and I don’t know what the gays look like these days.” The boyfriend confusedly thanks her to Jack’s amusement. Jen’s mother tells her that she “only just figured out which one is [Jen’s] boyfriend.” Leading the boyfriend in question to joke: “That’s because Jack acts like a boyfriend.” Jack agrees with this, saying that he “technically” is Jen’s boyfriend. Jen protests this, as Jack does not sleep with her. Her boyfriend is offended by this, questioning her about whether that is “the only difference” between them. Later, Jack is offended that Jen did not tell him about Grams’ illness,

as “[she] and Grams are pretty much all the family that [he’s] got”, again referencing his strained relationship with his birth family, especially his father. Jack promises to visit Grams and Jen in their new home, but Grams then explains to him that they will not leave him to his “questionable devices”, as Gram thinks that they “need a man around the house”. Jack is hesitant at first, leading Jen to prompt him that “[t]his place doesn’t appreciate your absolutely fabulous gayness.” Jack ultimately agrees to the move.

S06E22 has the gang scrambling to put together Dawson’s vaguely autobiographical film at the lowest budget possible, while several of them prepare to move out of town: Jen and Jack go to a store in town to ask to borrow some equipment for the movie, which the clerk declines. Jen offers to go out with him in exchange, which he declines, saying that he’s “not really interested”. She claims that she’s “a film geek’s dream”, to which he replies “not this film geek”, turning to Jack with a “how you doing?”, clearly implying that he’d prefer to go out with Jack. The gang surprises Dawson with their help with the shooting logistics, asking him whether he is “ready to take off the dress and step up to the plate”. Jack also informs him that he’s got “no idea” what Jack “went through” to get the equipment, implying that he did indeed end up going out with the store clerk, and that it apparently was not a good experience. This episode, several other characters discuss queerness, too: Pacey tells his brother that he should develop “rudimentary cooking skills”, as “[c]hicks dig that kind of thing. And, you know, those other guys too. They like it.” Thus, he speculates about his brother’s likely bisexuality. The actress playing the character based on Joey questions her about her choices: “You’re sure I’m not a lesbian?”, which Joey denies. The actress also describes the character based on Dawson as an “asexual film dork”, though this appears to be less of a comment about Dawson’s/the character’s actual sexuality. Notably, she does not engage with Joey’s explanations, rather focusing on whether “[h]e must have been a really good kisser, the gay guy”.

## ***Glee***

S01E04 focuses on Kurt, who is gay and closeted at the beginning of the episode, trying to connect to his father by joining the football team, and more broadly on the preconceived notions the football team and choir have about one another. It opens with Kurt and two friends performing a dance number in his basement wearing a unitard, which is interrupted by his father. Tina attempts to explain Kurt's choice of outfit by claiming that it is a football outfit. Kurt claims that now that he is playing football he and his father "will have something to talk about", indicating that their relationship currently is somewhat strained. His father asks whether Brittany or Tina are his girlfriend, which Kurt answers vaguely. When Kurt speaks to Finn at school, Finn thinks that he is being asked to prom, but declines as he already has a date, asserting that he is "flattered, [he] know[s] how important dances are to teen gays", to which Kurt responds "I'm not gay". Kurt accompanies Finn to football practice, where he uses stage terms ("auditioning for the role of kicker") and insists on playing music and dancing while trying out, which the team responds to poorly. Puck consistently jokes about how Finn and Kurt are dating in a way that appears intended to be insulting. The football team is asked to practice dancing to improve their performance skills, which one of them terms "a big gay team of dancing gays" to show his disapproval. When the game goes badly, the team does try the dancing strategy and they win. After the game, Kurt comes out to his father as gay, as he claims that he has learned that he "can be anything". His father responds acceptingly, stating that he's "not totally in love with the idea", but that he knows and loves Kurt regardless.

In S01E18, Kurt is hurt that his father develops a closer relationship with Finn, whose mother he is dating, and tries to amend his own image to become closer with him. Sue, another of the school's staff, questions Kurt about his sexuality, claiming that he is "obsessed with labels, so you like show tunes, doesn't mean you're gay". Kurt chooses a song for his next assignment that his father likes, and is questioned on this choice by the choir teacher. Brittany asks him to make out since his recent behaviour made her believe that he is not "capital G-gay", as she had previously assumed. Kurt accepts, and they are caught kissing on his couch by his father, who voices his confusion about Kurt's changed behaviour. When his father continues to spend time with Finn, Kurt breaks into song about the unfairness of the situation. They confront Kurt's feelings of alienation, and he acknowledges that his father is "working hard on [himself] to make all of this okay", but that he's still jealous of his father's easier relationship with Finn. In

these earlier episodes, Santana and Brittany, both of whom still appear to be straight, serve mainly as comedic relief characters with Santana herself saying that “everyone knows that [her] job here is to look hot”, and Brittany mostly characterized as naïve and somewhat cartoonishly unintelligent.

S02E08 starts with Finn and Kurt’s parents dating, while Kurt has an unreciprocated crush on Finn that is making them both behave impolitely. Their parents announce that they intend to get married, which Kurt is very excited about and he wants to plan the event as his “power rangers got married and divorced in so many combinations they were like Fleetwood Mac.” Kurt is scared of another student, “feel[ing] like [he’s] in a horror movie”, but the principal insists that it will “make [him] stronger”, but promises to expel the other student if he should get violent. She also calls Kurt “Lady”, which Kurt points out also is a form of harassment. She apologizes, but then offers him the choice of several other “nicknames”, all of which play on Kurt’s (compared to the other male characters) more feminine presentation. The other students confront the bully, who claims that Kurt is rubbing his sexuality in his face. During a dance lesson for Burt’s wedding, Burt sees the bully making fun of Kurt from the hallway, there is a confrontation, and Kurt reluctantly reveals that the bully has threatened to kill him “if I tell anyone”. The bully is expelled for this threat. At the wedding, Finn makes a speech declaring himself and Kurt “brothers from another mother” and giving them the portmanteau name of “Furt” (also the episode’s title). He further elaborates that Kurt in particular has shown him “what it means to be a man”, and waltzes with him in public, which he’d been embarrassed about doing earlier. Notably, he does sing a song about a girl while he’s doing it, and they have prefaced it by specifying that they are “brothers” now, and Kurt does have a crush on Finn. As such, the situation is quite messy, but it still appears to be a well-intentioned gesture. At the end of the episode, it is revealed that the bully’s expulsion was overruled by the school board. Kurt decides to switch to another school at which there is a “zero tolerance policy for bullying”, so he will feel safer.

S02E20 focuses on the prom held at their school, with the central conflict revolving around the question who will be prom queen/king. Two of the candidates are being beards for one another (Santana and Dave, who bullied Kurt in S02E08). Kurt asks his boyfriend Blaine to prom, to which he responds not very favourably. He asserts that he does want to go with Kurt, but has had a bad experience previously where “three guys beat the living crap out of [him

and his date]”. Kurt suggests that “you couldn’t face up to the boys at your old school, so you can do it at mine”. Santana, who herself is queer (if closeted), offers/insists on providing “security” for Kurt at school. Her and her (also queer but closeted) boyfriend use walkie talkies to escort Kurt around school: “Teen gay, you may proceed to the next checkpoint.” Finn at this point is much more relaxed around Kurt, and compliments his chosen prom outfit as “that rocks, it’s like gay Braveheart.” Kurt’s father, on the other hand, thinks the outfit too unusual, and accuses Kurt of “trying to stir the pot a little”, which Kurt acknowledges, but also correctly points out that most people will dress in a way that is intended to grab attention for their prom. Burt explains that “I want you to be yourself, but also I want you to be practical.” Kurt confronts the closeted Dave about how he thinks that the school “maybe [...] evolved enough to be indifferent”, and how he feels bad for Dave’s clear unhappiness, leading Dave to apologize for his previous bullying of Kurt. At the prom, Dave is then named prom king, while Kurt is named prom queen (even though he did not ask for nomination). Kurt leaves, feeling humiliated and disappointed that the school’s attitude towards his sexuality hasn’t actually changed: “all that hate, and they were just afraid to say it out loud [...] I’m one big anonymous practical joke.” Meanwhile, Santana is hurt that her “running mate” won when she didn’t, claiming that “they must have sensed that [she’s] a lesbian”. Kurt decides to get coronated out of spite, and encourages Dave to come out, who claims that he cannot and leaves. Blaine then asks for the dance in Dave’s stead.

S03E11 focuses on a competition with another school over who gets to perform a specific artist’s song at an upcoming event. Blaine, who has joined their school, is attacked with a tampered slushie by the other choir, about which the team is outraged, as they don’t want to wait for “things to get better, [they] want them to be better now” (Artie), which draws on the recurring theme of the glee club being marginalized for their interests and/or socioeconomic circumstances (the other school being much more prestigious and well-funded than their own). Kurt receives a letter from a school he applied to that he is in the final round of selection and has a heart to heart with his dad, who affirms that he’s proud of him and his journey. The group confronts the other choir about their behaviour, but also decides to change their program to stop the “backstabbing”, because they are “show choirs, we’re supposed to be supportive of each other” (Kurt).

In S03E18, Kurt and Rachel audition for college admission, while the football coach comes to school with a bruised eye, leading to some students speculating/joking inappropriately about the coach's sexual relationship, causing the new cheerleading coach to intervene. Towards the end of the episode, one character who was struggling with an exam that his friends helped him study for, thanks them, saying, "instead of one dad, I got a whole gang of them", and that they "showed [him] what it means to be a man [...] even you, Blaine" (Puck), setting Blaine apart from the rest of the group ambiguously either because he joined their team later, or because of his sexuality.

S04E04 focuses on the ongoing long-distance relationships of the main cast. It opens at high school with Blaine and Brittany commiserating about their long distance relationships: "remember when you first started dating Santana and I started dating Kurt back before everyone was so busy and so... far away?", and they sing a song montage about it. All four end up in New York together, where Blaine sings karaoke for Kurt whom he describes as "the love of [his] life". Blaine confesses to having cheated on Kurt, Finn interrogates whether Rachel and one of her classmates are "really just friends", and she admits to kissing him. In this way, both relationships undergo a very similar development in this episode, including a song montage with a four way face wipe. Brittany, too, voices that she feels "left behind" by Santana. At the end of the episode, all main cast relationships are more or less broken up.

S04E06 focuses on the club putting on a production of Grease while several of their former members are in town. Before this episode, Unique, who has recently joined the choir with a female stage persona, has started to present feminine also in non-stage contexts. Because of this, Unique is referred to as "Ladyboy", and one of the newer club members makes highly transphobic comments about her. Unique's parents, who are concerned over their child being harassed at school, ask Unique to give up a (typically female) role in the school musical, and to "not dress like a girl during school hours". Later that episode, Brittany informs Santana that she isn't "dating anyone new, boy or girl".

S05E01 has some of the old cast visiting their high school, causing them to reexamine their relationships: Kurt and Blaine have a discussion about how their relationship ended and Blaine's cheating, they agree to "be boyfriends again". After, Blaine informs the club that he'll ask Kurt to get married, which is received generally well, but with surprise and some degree of overcompensation: "that's my best friend, gay marriage good, it's good, it's good things". At

the end of the episode, as Kurt is preparing to leave again, he is redirected to a “surprise” proposal that he already knew about by his father. Blaine gives a speech about his feelings and proposes to Kurt, who agrees to marry him.

S05E11 has the choir at a national competition, in which they make second place. Queerness is not in focus this episode, though their second place is described somewhat sarcastically in one conversation as similar to a silver medal at the Olympics “if there was an Olympic event in being totally gay” (Jean).

## ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer***

S01E10 has the fears/nightmares of people at Buffy's school becoming reality. Towards the beginning of the episode, Xander voices his confidence in Buffy's fighting skills: "You da man, Buff." Intended as a compliment and endorsement of her skills, it nevertheless shows a close association of the categories of "maleness" and "fighting ability" in Xander's mind, even though only one of these traits is accurate in Buffy's case. He also jokes about a classmate's affinity for spiders by asking him "[i]t is platonic, right?". In similar terms, the end of the episode has him and Willow in a discussion about whether he was attracted to a nightmare-vision of Buffy in which she herself was a vampire: "Willow, how can you... I mean, that's really bent! She was... grotesque!" The term "bent" appears to be an interesting choice here, as it may be used as a term synonymous to "queer", thus linking the magical/supernatural with the notion of queerness, an analogy that is prominent in many of the show's arcs. Xander does also acknowledge that he was attracted to a more "grotesque" Buffy, though he disapproves of this attraction: "I'm sick, I need help."

S01E12, the season finale, focuses both on the group's approaching school dance and the climax of the season's overarching supernatural threat. It opens with Xander practice-confessing his feelings for Buffy to Willow, who is currently infatuated with him. Buffy is taken aback by Xander asking her out: "Xander, you're one of my best friends. You and Willow.", to which he replies "Willow's not looking to date you. Or if she is, she's playing it pretty close to the chest." When Buffy declines, Xander implies that she only dates "undead" people, as her romantic interest this season is a vampire (Angel), though he then apologizes for the comment. Xander asks Willow to come to the dance with him, but she declines, as she doesn't want to be a stand-in. At the end of the episode, when Xander and Angel are rushing to go support Buffy in her fight against the season antagonist, they have a fight about whether Angel was "looking at [Xander's] neck" that in its structure and phrasing draws a parallel to the (homophobic) fear some straight men voice of queer men's attention. This episode shows a similar distribution of dialogue contributions by the characters as the previous one, though recurring characters appear to be more prominent than episodic ones here – besides Buffy's mother and several teachers, this episode, as the season finale, also includes a number of contributions from the season's main antagonist, a vampire named "the Master".

In S02E03, Spike, another vampire who is familiar with Angel, comes to town and wants to establish his power, while the gang have to organize a parent-teacher-night. When Spike attacks the school, Angel tries to trick him into trusting him, claiming that his relationship with Buffy and “tortured act” were only part of a deception. At this, Spike asks him whether “[p]eople still fall for that Anne Rice routine?”, likening Angel’s behaviour and character to an at the time of production very popular series of novels about queer vampires. When Angel is revealed to have lied to Spike, Spike is very distressed: “You were my sire, man, you were my... Yoda.”

S02E13 focuses on Buffy’s birthday party that is crashed by a scheme of Spike’s. Early on in the episode, Buffy questions Willow about her interest in Oz a schoolmate of theirs, which Willow describes as “[h]e’s nice. I like his hands.” However, she does not want to approach him for fear of being awkward. When they do talk, Willow and Oz discuss going out first in the hypothetical: “I am gonna ask you to go out with me tomorrow night. And I’m kinda nervous actually. It’s interesting.” – “Oh, well, if it helps at all I’m gonna say yes.” As such, they approach their potential relationship at something of a safe remove. During their first date at Buffy’s birthday party, Oz learns that “vampires are real, a lot of them live in Sunnydale”, which Willow tries to ease him into by saying “I know it’s hard to accept at first”, once again using phrases frequently utilized in (fictional) coming-out contexts to refer to magical elements. Oz, however, asserts that “actually, it explains a lot.”, and integrates into the group very easily.

S03E06 has the town experiencing a phenomenon where adults appear to revert to the behaviour of their teenaged selves, leading to chaos. When a teacher at school voices her disinterest in going forward with class, Xander asks whether “anyone else wanna marry Ms Barton?”, to which their classmate Cordelia jokingly replies: “Get in line”, again drawing on queerness as a source of comedic quips. Angel, who no longer is dating Buffy, asks her whether she is “being careful”, which Buffy takes to refer to her new relationship, though Angel then specifies that he was talking about her work as a slayer. Willow is still dating Oz, but she is also flirting with Xander, whom she used to have a crush on.

S03E19 focuses on the gang’s trouble in deciding their next steps after school, as well as the attempt to steal a magical artefact from the season antagonist. This episode, Buffy argues that she should be able to go to college in spite of her status as a vampire slayer, asserting that she is not just a slayer but “also a person. You can’t just define me by my slayerness. That’s...

something-ism.” Willow, who has recently started to learn magic (in contrast to her earlier role primarily as tech-support to the group) proposes to use “down and dirty black magic.”, which, as a phrase, is more commonly associated with discussions on sexual behaviours. Oz is supportive of her new abilities, asserting that there is “[n]obody like my Will”.

S04E04 has the gang attending a Halloween party at which a fraternity accidentally summons a demon that makes people’s fears come true. Willow, having continued to learn magic says that she has “plateaued, Wicca-wise.” However, Willow is intimidated by more advanced types of magic, thinking them “scary”, though she does then decide that “what is college for if not experimenting? [...] I’ll know when I’ve reached my limit”, which other characters take to refer to “experiments” unrelated to magic, such as drinking alcohol. Notably, this phrase also might be used in reference to the stereotype of people (often young women) who are said to “experiment with their sexuality at college”. Oz is sceptical of the idea of Willow learning more magic, though he does explain that he is worried because of his own experiences with being a werewolf, where his own sudden transformation into a supernatural creature has caused him many difficulties. Once again, the gang makes some jokes that draw on the notion of queerness in contexts that are not actually associated with queerness, such as: “He wanted the [Halloween] candy. I was just the beard.” (Buffy)

By S04E19, Oz and Willow “had a rough breakup [...] and Oz pretty much bailed overnight” because he felt not in control of his werewolf transformations. Since then, Willow has secretly started a relationship with Tara, a fellow college student and witch. Together, as the “previously on” mentions, they have studied magic and attempted several more complex spells to assist the gang with their various magical issues. Riley, Buffy’s boyfriend, learns that Oz is a werewolf and says that he is “surprised”, as he “didn’t think Willow was that kind of girl.”, which Buffy takes badly, and accuses him of being a bigot, a characterization which he rejects. Buffy tries explaining her perspective on the situation that “there are creatures [...] that aren’t evil at all”, referring, among other things, to her own former partner who was a vampire (Angel). Oz visits Willow, and reveals that he has found a way to be unaffected by the full moon and not transform into a werewolf. Willow is happy about this, but reacts awkwardly when Oz mentions asking Xander whether she has “a new guy”, and suggests that they could try dating again. Later, Willow tells Buffy about how her situation is “complicated... because of Tara”. She explains that “[i]t wasn’t something [she] was looking for. It’s just powerful. And it’s totally

different from what Oz and [her] have.” Buffy reacts awkwardly, telling Willow that “Tara’s a really great girl”, but also overcompensating and appearing “freaked” to Willow, who reveals that she hasn’t told Oz yet, to which Buffy advises her to “be honest, or it’s gonna get a lot worse.” Willow goes to see Tara, who assumes that Willow intends to get back together with Oz and is understanding of the situation, promising to “still be [her] friend.” However, Willow explains that she is unsure about what she wants to do next. Oz realizes that Tara and Willow are likely “involved”, and begins to transform into a werewolf due to his agitation. He is then taken away by an on-campus demon fighting unit, who suspect him of attacking other students the night before, a notion which Tara protests. Riley tries to free Oz, but is discovered, and criticised for his “involvement with the slayer and her band of freaks”. After the gang breaks Oz and Riley out, Riley admits to Buffy that he was being unfair to Oz. Buffy, however, now sympathizes more, saying he was “thrown”: “You found out that Willow was in... kind of an unconventional relationship, and it gave you momentary wiggins.” He still acknowledges that he was in a “black-and-white space-people versus monsters. And it ain’t like that. Especially when it comes to love”, which prompts Buffy to tell him about her own past relationship with a vampire. At the end of the episode, Oz and Willow talk again, and Oz comes to the conclusion that his control of “the wolf” is worse around Willow, as his emotions about her are particularly strong. She says that “a part of [her] will always be waiting”, and she will always consider him a part of her life, but they agree that “now is not that time” (Oz), and Oz leaves. Willow goes to see Tara, who tells her that she has “to go be with the person [she] love[s]”, to which Willow asserts: “I am”.

S05E05 focuses on Tara’s birthday and her relationships. While helping Buffy with moving back home to her sick mother, Giles jokes that he “saw [himself] more in a patriarchal sort of role [...] lots of pointing and scowling.”, which is rather comically in contrast to his usual more supportive role in the show. The gang is struggling to decide on a birthday present for Tara, and speculate whether many “Wiccans” will be at her birthday party, as “[t]hat’s sort of her deal. Her and Willow are all Wiccie. Swinging with the Wiccan lifestyle.” (Xander), and Buffy hopes that they will “fit in”: Throughout the episode, the concepts of wiccan witchcraft and queerness are conflated, and arguably used interchangeably by the characters themselves to discuss Willow’s sexuality, which they still appear to feel awkward about addressing: Xander explains that “it’s like she’s got this whole new thing in her life. But she’s still Willow.” Tara’s family suddenly shows up, which appears to be a surprise to her. She repeatedly introduces

the group as her “friends”, which at least her brother appears to be jokingly sceptical about. When Tara meets her father later, he confronts her about how she “wanted [him] to see all these... toys [Wiccan magic items]”, and that she doesn’t “even try to hide it anymore” even though he had been hoping she’d “get it out of [her] system”. He further demands that Tara come home to her family, as he is convinced that Tara has “evil inside of [her] and it will come out”. After an argument, Tara secretly follows Willow to meet the gang, and places a spell on the group so they will not see any demons, to conceal the “evil” that her father was talking about. After, Tara is confronted by her cousin Beth, who thinks it Tara’s responsibility to take care of her father and brother’s household rather than being at university and “living God knows what kind of lifestyle.” Tara releases the spell to enable the gang to fight off demons, after which point her family shows up, claiming Tara’s spell as evidence that “[t]he girl belongs with her family.” The gang objects, saying that they will prevent Tara from being taken against her will. In response, Tara’s father justifies his claim by defining himself as Tara’s “blood-kin”, in direct contrast to which Buffy then defines the group as “family”. Tara’s brother attempts to intimidate her, while her cousin describes her as a “disgusting demon”, but fails to provide any specifics when asked. Spike then determines that Tara actually is fully human: “It’s just a family legend, am I right? Just a biz of spin to keep the ladies in line?” After which point Tara asks her family to leave. At the end of the episode, the gang attends Tara’s birthday party, where she and Willow share a dance while levitating. Tara apologizes to Willow for not telling her about her family, explaining that she was scared how Willow’s perception of her might change. Willow, however, emphasizes that she is proud of Tara for overcoming her family’s opposition, while also jokingly describing her influence on Tara as “magic”.

S05E19 has Buffy trying to adjust to life after her mother has passed away: Buffy drops out of college, and her sister is in trouble at school, while the rest of the group struggles with how to help. Willow and Tara have a disagreement about the recent quick changes in Willow’s life, with Tara being worried where she is “gonna fit in”. Willow is offended by this and reacts sarcastically: “Yeah this is just a college thing, just a little experimentation before I get over the thrill and head back to Boys Town. [...] I’m really sorry that I didn’t establish my lesbo street cred before I got into this relationship. You’re the only woman I’ve ever fallen in love with, so how on earth could you ever take me seriously?” When Tara goes to an university event later, the season antagonist shows up to kidnap her, preventing her from leaving by taking her hand, also commenting “you like this sort of thing, don’t you?”. Willow tries to save her, but by this

time the antagonist has already hurt Tara, which Willow blames herself for. As Tara is being treated at the hospital, a doctor asks Willow whether Tara is her sister, to which Willow replies “[s]he’s my everything”. Anya offers that Willow can sleep with her if she wants company, then comments: “Well, now, that came out a lot more lesbian than it sounded in my head.” Willow decides to try and get revenge, even though Buffy thinks that there is no chance she’ll win. The antagonist taunts Willow with references to her relationship: “[i]t’s the lover! That’s so cute.”, and Willow barely manages to escape. At the end of the episode Tara is still unwell, but Willow is determined to take care of her, as “she’s [her] girl”.

## ***Lost Girl***

S01E08 has Bo trying to learn more about her mother and her own origins, as well as the vaguely defined relationships Bo has with both Dyson and Lauren. At the start of the episode, Bo is sleeping with the werewolf Dyson to activate her magical healing powers, though they then are in disagreement about her relationship with the human doctor Lauren, who is helping her with researching her magical powers: Dyson is of the opinion that Lauren is leading on, and that she's "never gonna love [her]", and decides to no longer sleep with Bo. Bo thinks that Dyson is "being such a girl" about the situation. Bo's best friend, Kenzi, thinks his attitude is reasonable, telling her to "pick a team, dude". Bo thinks that "teams are stupid". When Bo goes to see Lauren, she tries to flirt, joking that "once you go fae you never go back", a phrase that usually is used to describe preferences in sexual partners rather than professional research subjects, which Lauren replies to vaguely and awkwardly. Lauren questions Bo about whether she has successfully slept with a human without draining their life force. Bo asserts that she thinks "that taking things slow on that front would be good", apparently intending a double meaning also about her and Lauren's vaguely defined relationship. Lauren points out that "a succubus needs a healthy [here likely meaning active] sex life to be stable", to which Bo describes her previous arrangement with Dyson, whom she describes as trustworthy and "fae, so I can't hurt him". Lauren does not consider him to be a good choice, describing him as "well-travelled", though she does reiterate that the choice is Bo's. Bo identifies Lauren's behaviour as jealousy, which Kenzi finds exhausting, saying "the three of you [Bo, Lauren, Dyson] should get a room already." Bo states that she doesn't like using her powers, as she doesn't "like losing control", and that she used to have "hope that [she] could live a normal human life if [she] wanted to." Towards the end of the episode, Lauren's boss/owner asks her to use her relationship with Bo to "distract her" from her investigation, which leads to Lauren visiting Bo and sleeping with her. Later, Lauren accidentally reveals that she was sent to Bo by her boss, which Bo reacts to with horror.

S01E13 follows Bo's conflict with her birth mother. The episode opens with the revelation that Bo, whom Dyson is currently dating, had revived him with her "super cool new succubus trick", where she can now also give life-force to others, rather than just absorbing it from them. He reveals that he kept information from her, after which she is concerned about whom to trust. The only person who she still trusts implicitly is her human best friend: "Kenzi, we are always

good. I can always trust you to have my back.” When Bo goes to Lauren to figure out a way to fight her mother, Kenzi suggests “slow motion pillow fights” and “crotch lasers” as weapons for a fight between succubi. Lauren agrees to help on the condition that she get the chance to “have that talk” and explain her own choices afterwards. As such, Bo’s relationships with both her main love interests are at a similar point of crisis this episode. As the situation escalates, Bo promises both Dyson and Lauren to talk to them once things settle down. Towards the end of the episode, Bo kisses Kenzi to test a magical tool intended to block her life-draining powers, which Kenzi is jokingly incredulous about: “did you make this whole thing up just to make out with me?” Kenzi is one of the few characters who actually specify that they are not queer in the show.

S02E09 has the main characters trapped in a bar which is put under magical quarantine because a body-swapping fae may be pretending to be one of them. Upon getting to the bar, Bo and Kenzi immediately meet both Dyson and Lauren, which Bo is equally unhappy about: Dyson magically lost his emotions for Bo and started a new relationship with someone else. Similarly, a previous episode revealed that Lauren is now trying to cure her former girlfriend of a curse which had placed her in a coma, though she still (casually) flirts with Bo. During the episode, Bo is temporarily inhabited by a body-stealing fae, who professes to feel “pity, attraction, and loathing” for Dyson’s new girlfriend, which likely to some degree corresponds to Bo’s emotions as well. Most people then swap bodies accidentally, which leads to some of them commenting appreciatively on the “attractiveness” of their new bodies, or the unexpected level of power (high or low) for the human-fae swaps. The new inhabitants are clearly influenced by the body’s emotions, as, for instance, Hale (usually Dyson’s platonic best friend) who is now inhabiting the body of Dyson’s girlfriend, announces that he suddenly wants to kiss Dyson. This emotional transference becomes a problem when they realize that the escaped fae is inhabiting Lauren, who, wanting to resolve her girlfriend’s curse, will likely try to accomplish this with violence. Throughout the episode, magical elements are discussed using language common to discussions about romance and/or sex, such as “nobody uses my bestie’s body without buying her a drink first” (Kenzi).

S02E21 begins at the wake of Dyson’s new girlfriend, causing Lauren to commiserate with him over also losing her former girlfriend. Their romantic storylines are thus once again in a very similar position. Later, Bo and Lauren discuss a previous experience where a creature tried to

force Bo to magically drain Lauren's life force, leading Lauren to suggest that Bo was able to resist the creature's power because of their feelings for one another, which still appear to be strong if complicated. To get an object back from the Morrigan, Bo goes over to her house and pretends to seduce her, an approach which the Morrigan characterizes as "crass" and "aggressive", though she does ultimately agree to sleep with Bo. In turn, Bo handcuffs her to the bed frame and leaves with the object she came for after having taken a photo for "insurance". At the end of the episode, the group is preparing to go against the season antagonist. Kenzi suggests that Bo should go "be with [her] girl", which Bo declines, choosing to stay with Kenzi instead.

S03E03 focuses on a magical animal causing people to become uninhibited. Bo and Lauren are in a relationship at this point, which places Kenzi and Lauren in conflict, as they think each other "bossy, territorial, and controlling" (Kenzi about Lauren), or "immature, irresponsible, and clingy" (Lauren about Kenzi). Bo is caught in the middle of this "battle of BFF against main squeeze", as she asserts both are "a huge part of [her] life". Bo also explicitly states that she loves Lauren. In an argument, a fae (Vex) refers to Bo as Lauren's "new presumably temporary girlfriend". The fae doesn't think their relationship will last because he claims that Bo is an "energizer succu-bunny", referring to her powers as a sex demon. This appears to cause Lauren some insecurity. In a conversation with Kenzi, Vex also describes da Vinci as a "queen" and says that "[h]e was all over David's ass like curry on chips."

When Bo is affected by the magical creature, she begins to act as if intoxicated, informing Lauren that she wants to kiss Dyson, but also telling her that she's "really hot, have you ever kissed a girl?", and kissing Tamsyn during a party game. When confronted with multiple people exhibiting similar symptoms, Vex asks whether "Bo shagged them [...] daft", arguably trivializing the very real danger Bo's magical powers could pose to her potential partners. As the situation escalates, Lauren and Kenzi have a fight and realize that their respective relationships with Bo make it seem like the other is not "good enough for her". They agree to work together while Bo is incapacitated, however, and manage to come up with an antidote. At the end of the episode, Kenzi, who, by her own assertion, is straight, nevertheless comments that she doesn't "think [she'd] mind getting [her] ass kicked by someone that hot" in reference to Bo, likely indicating a high level of comfort with both Bo and her own identity.

S03E06 has a possible imposter in place of either Bo or Kenzi, with the group concerned that Bo might be using her magical powers to kill: “another rough sex game gone wrong for Bo-Bo. It happens if you’re a succubus” (Kenzi). They call in Lauren to confirm Bo’s identity, while Bo claims that Kenzi is missing and the person who they think is Kenzi is someone else. Bo and Lauren then have an argument, Bo claiming that she’ll “never forgive” Lauren for not believing her, as it puts Kenzi at risk. Both of them make use of various pet names, Lauren in what appears to be an expression of concern for her partner, Bo rather sarcastically in response to Lauren’s perceived betrayal. Throughout the episode, Bo reiterates multiple times that “when it comes to Kenzi, no [she doesn’t give up]”, and emphasizes that “she is [her] heart” while looking for Kenzi. Bo kisses Tamsyn, another fae who has recently joined the group, to absorb her life force, even though both of them express their distaste for the situation. After Kenzi is rescued, Bo and Lauren do reconcile, though Bo does not want to actually discuss the situation that put them at odds.

S04E08 focuses on a Christmas-like fae holiday to be celebrated during the summer, and the time loop some of them find themselves trapped in during the party. The episode opens with Bo washing a car while Lauren and then also Dyson watch, both appearing to think Bo very attractive: The two of them seem to have reached a truce, and even share information and concerns about Bo with one another. While in the time loop, Vex, who is repeatedly shown to behave in slightly gender non-conforming ways, is wearing Bo’s corset, and is offering to mediate between the two to decide who is most worthy of “Bo’s box”. The box in question is an actual physical object, but also a common slang term for *vulva*, lending this discussion between Bo’s two main romantic interests in the show another possible interpretation, that the characters themselves appear aware of, correcting themselves from “her box” to “[t]he box” (Dyson). Meanwhile, Tamsyn kisses Bo, saying she won’t remember it anyways. After the time-loop resets and Bo does actually remember what happened, she and Tamsyn decide to try kissing again, in case it changes the situation. When it does not, they spend an indefinite number of loops drinking, wrestling, and possibly also having public sex. Before the time loop is resolved, Lauren says about herself that she “knows Bo beyond her rack size and underwear line”, implying that Dyson’s relationship with Bo is more superficial than hers, which they proceed to cheerfully argue about. Vex refers to them as “the enigma of the most boring threesome ever”, and points out: “What you two don’t get is that you don’t hate each other anymore.” After thinking about this briefly, both of them agree, “I haven’t hated you for a long

time.” (Dyson) and “You’re the only one who gets my predicament, Wolfie. And you make me laugh.” (Lauren).

S04E13 focuses on the group’s struggle against the season antagonist after Bo and Lauren have fallen out over Lauren’s attempts to turn herself into a fae. Also, it is explained that Lauren, once again human, has turned a former fae (the Morrigan) into a human too by sleeping with her, thus once again utilizing (queer) sexual intercourse as a magical plot driving source. When trying to encourage Bo, Dyson reminds her that “[Lauren] needs you”, which leads her to question his changed priorities: “You’re not gonna tell me to save the world instead of the girl?”. He explains this as being Bo’s influence, and Lauren also being his friend. The season antagonist, who also has succubus powers, is tricked into drawing energy from the Morrigan himself, whom he reveres. Bo explains that “it is not just sucking chi that makes [her] special. It’s that [she] learned how to stop.” When the antagonist tries to threaten them, Bo replies that “[a]t least we’ll die a family.”, referring to their group of friends as a family unit, and ultimately resulting in Lauren and Bo’s reconciliation. Meanwhile, Kenzi sacrifices herself in a magical ritual in Bo’s place, which she believes will work due to Bo’s earlier assertion that she is “Bo’s heart” and the fae’s tendency towards “metaphor” (Kenzi). It does work, but leaves Bo devastated and vowing to bring her back from the dead.

S05E13 focuses on the escalating conflict between Bo’s group of friends and her recently revealed biological father: Lauren and Bo are not on good terms, and argue about whether her family is “the ones who’ve been there for [Bo] all along” , or her biological parents, with whom she has little connection. Similarly, Bo is upset that her friends have hidden her mother’s survival from her, which Dyson also tries to explain as being motivated by love: “we made the wrong choice. But we made it because we love you. That’s what family does.” As such, the notion of friends-as-family is brought up repeatedly, also placing both of her main romantic interests at odds with her. At a dinner with Bo’s biological parents, her father offers her two people (one who presents more masculine and one who presents more feminine) to draw energy from as a “main course”, which Bo is dismayed by. Meanwhile, Tamsyn is showing signs of approaching death for her type of fae. She is unhappy to discuss this with Lauren, especially when Lauren asks about her recent sexual history, likely because she does not want to admit to having slept with Bo to Bo’s former girlfriend. Lauren later explains that she wanted to become a fae so she and Bo “could be together forever” (a plan that ultimately led to their

breaking up in a previous episode). Tamsyn confesses that she did sleep with Bo after she and Lauren broke up, to which Lauren responds that she does not care: “I have neither the right or the desire to control her actions.” At the end of the episode, Tamsyn finds out that the person she slept with was actually not Bo, but rather Bo’s father in disguise, which she takes badly, promising to kill him.

S05E16 is the show’s final episode, focusing on the showdown between Bo and her friends on the one, and Bo’s biological father on the other side: When Bo rejects the idea that she has to serve her father’s ambition, he argues that “it is time for [Bo] to embrace [her] true self”, and describing death as her “birthright”. Bo reiterates that she “has found [her] family”, upon which her father starts finding fault with her relationships, ridiculing her for being “a succubus running a Friday-night-date-at-the movies kind of relationship”, and claiming that she (like him) is incapable of love. Meanwhile, Lauren and Dyson voice their appreciation for one another’s support and shared aims. Dyson further tells Lauren that he worried less about Bo while she and Lauren were dating, and that he thinks she should reconsider not being in a relationship with Bo. Lauren returns the sentiment, saying that she is less concerned over what might happen to the longer-lived Bo after her own death, as she would still have Dyson. They shake on their new mutual understanding. When Bo temporarily joins forces with her father and drains everyone’s lifeforce, her memories of and affection for her friends snap her out of her trance-like state: “Your love brought me back. You guys are my family. And I love you all very much.” After the confrontation is ended, Mark (Dyson’s adult son (a recurring character)) and Vex begin holding hands, apparently planning to embark on a romantic relationship together. Tamsyn dies after giving birth, leaving her child in the care of Bo and the group. The baby and Kenzi leave for security reasons, Bo once again repeating that Kenzi “is [her] heart”, and promising that the baby “will not grow up a Lost Girl”. Afterward, Lauren tells Bo that she wants to spend the rest of her life together. Bo replies that “I always thought that because of who I am I couldn’t have a relationship”, and they agree to begin a romantic relationship again. At the end of the episode, in a flash forward, the now grown child of Tamsyn appears to be part of a queer relationship, and is escorted to the fae “colony” the gang have set up that is trying to dismantle the system that makes fae choose between sides.

## ***Will and Grace***

S01E16 focuses on Will and Grace competing over the romantic interest of their new neighbour: The episode opens with both meeting him separately on the elevator, where they both go out of their way to talk to him, making very similar jokes and ask questions about the size of his new flat to gauge his living situation. Both appear to read the new neighbour's responses as flirtatious, and tell Karen and Jack about the interaction, which, in Will's case, Jack receives with mocking surprise: "oh my god, she's alive, alive". When both Will and Grace get home, they tell each other that they both have dates, which they celebrate with a secret handshake and repeatedly describe as "we have a date", not expecting it to actually be with the same person. At dinner with the neighbour, they once again behave in very similar ways, and both have the impression that Peter is flirting with them and accuse one another of lying and making up stories to impress Peter. Jack offers to provide another perspective on whether Peter is most likely queer or straight, which Will approves of as "Jack has the most finely tuned gay-dar in the tri-state area". They each list traits of Peter's that they consider to be stereotypically straight or gay, to which Jack suggests that they simply should ask Peter whether he is gay. Peter comes by, as Jack leaves he announces that he "know[s]", but does not share his impression with Will and Grace. Will actually asks Peter "whether [he] like[s] boys or girls" against Grace's protests. Peter thinks that his sexual orientation should be "obvious", and that he "thought [they] were friends" rather than dating, and leaves. Afterwards, both Will and Grace now claim that it was the other who got dumped, and argue for the opposite assumption about his sexuality than they held previously.

S01E18 opens with Grace working a lot, and Will trying to spend time with her. He jokingly accuses her that "the children don't even know what you look like anymore". Jack, who will have to appear in court that day, is advised by Will to not "sing any showtunes", or "do the whole Perry Gayson thing", causing Jack to immediately break into song. The next day, Jack suggests going out for dinner, which Will declines as he has plans with Grace. Jack comments this being a case of "the missus before the mistress", thereby casting Grace in the role of Will's spouse. Will calls Grace's office, Karen informs her of this by saying: "the reason you're not in a relationship is on [the] line". During the phone call, Jack tries to annoy Will, asking him to "tell Karen [he] wants to French kiss her when [he] see[s] her". After Will brings his new friend Val to meet Grace and Karen, Karen refers to Will as Grace's "husband", which Grace rejects as

a term. Karen then corrects herself to “non-romantic life partner”, and “sexless lover”, neither term Grace approves of. When Grace sees Val and Will spending time together, she does appear to be jealous of her role in Will’s life. Will catches a cold, leading Grace and Val to compete over who takes better care of him, even getting into a physical fight. Will comments on this as “girl on girl action, and it’s totally lost on [him]”, also referring to them as “Gabrielle” and “Xena”. Will asks whether Grace is jealous, which she first denies, but then acknowledges. Will asserts that the “role of Will’s best friend has always been and will always be filled by [...] Grace”, but that she’s got to “let [him] date other women”. Which Grace calls “fair. I date other men.”

S02E04 focuses on a visit from Grace’s mother, and her matchmaking efforts. Karen and her nanny/housekeeper Rosario come to collect Jack for an interview at immigration services, as he has married Rosario in a previous episode to prevent her from having to leave the US. At the interview, Karen describes Rosario as her “everything”, and Jack promises that the interview will go well. However, the person set to interview them turns out to be someone he met and flirted with on several occasions before, among other things at a queer event. Karen asks him how he could not have known that “he worked for the IRNS[sic.] Don’t they teach you anything in homo-school?”. The interviewer tells Rosario that he “has gotten further with [her] husband” than she has. Jack protests this: “What, a guy sleeps with guys and immediately he’s pegged as gay?” Jack and Rosario stage a love confession and kiss, which Karen describes as morbidly fascinating. Meanwhile, Grace has been dreading to be set up on a date with a friend of her mom’s, Andy. She is startled to find out that her mother had actually brought Andy to meet Will. Grace convinces Will to actually go out with Andy, to prove to her mother “what a bad matchmaker she is”. Grace then invites her mother over when Will and Andy are out on their date, but feels betrayed when Will reveals that the date went well, which Will finds unfair. Grace realizes that what she is really worried about is that her mother has “stopped fixing [her] up”, as she interprets this as a reflection of her mother’s opinion of her romantic prospects. Her mother is exasperated at this, saying that “the gays are so much easier”. At the end of the episode, Will and Grace make up and hug, upon which Grace’s mother inquires whether they might not be interested in one another romantically after all, as it “would make [her] life so much easier”.

S02E07 has the gang hosting a Thanksgiving dinner. At the beginning of the episode, Will reveals to Jack that he invited Jack's mother as a "surprise guest", causing Jack to get upset and leave. After Jack is gone, his mother shows up and mentions that she thinks Jack and Grace were "an adorable couple", making them realize that "she has no idea" her son is gay. The next day, Jack comes by the flat and Will confronts him about how he lied to Will about coming out to his mother, and "pressured [Will] to come out to [his] own mother". Jack ashamedly admits to his lie and tries to leave again, but is stopped by Grace. Will tells him that he's going the "wrong way, closet's in there". Ultimately, Jack agrees to come out to his mother at dinner. At dinner, Will suggests that they start the dinner by each sharing a secret that they were "too cowardly to reveal". Jack then tries to come out, but leaves the room before he can actually say anything. Will follows Jack and tells him that he admires him "because you are more yourself than anyone else I've ever known". After Will's encouragement, Jack finally comes out to his mother. His mother is shocked, but tells Jack that he could never disappoint her, and she wants him to be happy. She also claims that "there have been clues", such as his "flamboyantly gay friends", of whom she names Will as an example. This is quite in contrast to the show's usual framing of Will as the more settled, and Jack himself the more quirky and stereotypically queer one. At the end of the episode, Grace jokes to Jack about their supposed past relationship, which he rebuffs with "you already have one gay husband, leave me be".

S03E06 has an ex-boyfriend of Grace's asking her to join him and his new girlfriend for a threesome. Jack, who is working for Banana Republic (a clothing chain) tells Will that: "The Bana changed my life. It's all about the banana.", to which Will replies with "[h]asn't it always been?" When Grace meets up with her former boyfriend, she is surprised that he is in a new relationship, and does not at first realize that she is being asked to join them for a "threeway". Jack shows Will a customer whom he is infatuated with. When questioned how Jack knows the customer is gay, Jack replies "he beeped", once again referring to his supposedly highly accurate gaydar. Will encourages Jack to speak to the customer, but Jack is tongue tied in front of him. Both Will and Karen think the idea of Grace "in a threeway" ridiculous, which Grace perceives as a challenge, as she does not see herself as "a prude". Will comes to visit Jack at work, and his coworker tells Jack that "[Will's] cute, if I didn't have a girlfriend I'd be so into him", which Will is amused by. Jack informs Will that he's intimidated by the customer because "he's a smartie", and requests Will's help to "make [him] smart". They decide to use headsets to have Will "talk for" Jack, which leads to him having a conversation about literature with the

customer. Strikingly, Jack tells the customer: "I love TV, Buffy is my life! I'm so into Willow being a lez." Jack complains that he wants to talk about "something [he's] interested in", and the customer ultimately leaves, after going to the stall where Will is hiding to pass him his phone number. Grace goes to see her ex-partner at a hotel, but is very nervous, telling his girlfriend that she will "have to work [her] way up" to her, and ultimately decides not to sleep with them. When she discusses this with Will later, he tries to reassure her that he also has "never been in a threeway", to which Grace replies "but you're gay, you have the kinky built in".

S03E23 has both Will and Grace going out with people they are unsure/embarrassed about: the episode opens with Will returning from a date with a younger man, which he is conflicted about: "Give me a little time to adjust, okay?", while Grace is coming back from dinner with a man she describes as "a pig" for behaving rudely. When both of them meet, they each make up elaborate lies to cover for their dates. Without knowing about the other person's dates, both Will and Grace complain to the other about their dates, leading them to continue to hide their relationships. Karen runs into both of their dates, and appears to think them both very funny choices. Meanwhile, their neighbour Val has gotten romantically obsessed with Jack, whom she describes as "[her] world now", which Jack reacts to with increasing discomfort. Grace tells Will about her dates, he, however, chooses to not tell her about his, instead claiming to be "hurt" at her choice to hide things from him. Karen mentions during an argument whom Will is dating, shocking Grace. At the end of the episode, both of them decide that they should end their respective relationships, though only Will actually follows through on this resolution.

S04E01 has Will and Grace's current boyfriend Nathan competing over Grace's attention. The episode opens with Will returning from a trip and cuddling Grace in her bed while telling her about his time away. Nathan then appears from where he was asleep under the blanket, and Will leaves. The next morning, Jack tells Nathan that Grace is at "breakfast, with her boyfriend Will", but Nathan refuses to "be threatened by her friendship with Will", and rather thinks that "it's great". Later, Will and Grace have made many plans for things to do together, which Nathan gets more annoyed by as time goes by. Later, Jack confesses to Karen that he's concerned over whether his recently discovered son Elliot likes him and whether he's a good dad. When Nathan comes into the workspace, Karen tells him that his "girlfriend's gone, she went to lunch with her husband". Nathan confronts Grace about "feeling like the third wheel,

and suggests joining Will and Grace for their upcoming shopping trip. At Karen's recommendation, Jack also takes Elliot shopping for school supplies, suggesting "moisturizers, hair gels, body glitter", as well as a very striking outfit for his son, that "the kids at your school would kill for", to which Elliot replies "that's what I'm afraid of, I will be killed". Jack realizes that Elliot would rather get something else, and Elliot confesses that he too was worried about Jack liking him. At the sale, several women try to buy Will's new, supposedly "feminine" jeans, which leads to him telling them that "they were made for men. You need a y chromosome and an appetite for war to even put them on". Rosario tells Karen that she wants to spend more time with her, which Karen at first jokes that only "a lesbian" would say. When she does realize that Rosario is making an honest gesture of friendship, she rushes off as she "can't talk, feeling something". Nathan is stressed by the shopping spree and Grace's demanding opinions from him, leading him to complain that he "miss[es] Will", and leaves to "find a sports bar". At the end of the episode, Will and Grace are trying on their new clothes while Nathan watches TV, Nathan tells the TV that he "love[s] that Mo", which Will takes to be in reference to him, replying "love you too", but is actually directed at a character on screen. Nathan then jokes about taking turns spending time with Grace, apparently at peace with their respective roles in Grace's life.

S04E24 focuses on Jack trying to perform a magic show, while Will and Grace attend a photoshoot. When Will complains about Jack not joining him for an event run by the HRC, "a gay and lesbian advocacy group" (Grace), Jack says he couldn't join because he didn't have "a cute little tank top and shorts to wear", which, judging by the outfit Will is wearing coming from this event, would have been highly inappropriate attire. Will says the dinner was "amazing", as it had "2500 gay men who care. Everything my life is lacking." Will also reveals that he won a photo session with a (fictional) artist named Fanny Lieber, which is likely intended as a pun about lesbianism. The photo will appear in a book of family portraits, and Will invites Grace to take the photo with him: "well, you're my family!" At the shoot, the photographer comments that she "love[s] fags, married three of them". The photographer acts inappropriately towards both of them, partially undressing Grace and telling her that she's "so hot", but also kissing Will. Jack's magic show includes a number of jokes about queerness, and, when he and Karen are fighting about her role in his magic show, she explicitly describes one of them as a "cheap lesbian joke" to make fun of his script. When Will and Grace go back to the photographer to ask for the photo to be re-shot, the photographer kisses Grace and

50

responds to Will's request with "why am I such a sucker for a gay guy who begs?", a comment that Grace voices her agreement with ("Story of my life, sister"). While Karen is hiding, Jack apologises to her, saying that "fame is a rude ugly gay guy". Grace does not like the new photo that was taken of her, describing herself as looking "puffed up and mannish [...] puff the magic drag queen". The photographer is annoyed by them, and suggests they should have a baby so they would have something else to focus on. Will and Grace first laugh at the idea, but then appear to begin thinking about it seriously at the end of the episode.

S05E02 opens with Grace taking a pregnancy test, after she and Will have decided to have a baby. Jack is stalking Kevin Bacon, and gets a job as his personal assistant by knowing more about the number of films in which Bacon has appeared nude than the other applicants. Bacon then reveals that he wants Jack to find his stalker, which Jack reacts to awkwardly. Will and Grace find out that Grace is not pregnant, and decide to try again. Grace has a discussion with a man who tried to ask her out, but now apologises for having done so when she is potentially pregnant with "her gay roommate's baby". Jack asks Will to hold his hand while they walk on the street, Will assents and voices his disappointment that "we didn't get pregnant". Jack tries to encourage him by singing "All Star" to Will's crotch. Jack makes Will crouch down to hide him, which Will misunderstands, saying that he will "hold [Jack's] hand, but [he] draw[s] the line". Karen sends Rosario to break up with her affair for her, but Rosario claims to be unable to do it since she is "only a woman". This Karen snippily comments with "Well, half of you is". Ultimately, Karen decides to break up with her affair herself, as "we make commitments to our husbands", referring to both Karen's legal spouse and Will in case of Grace. Will is spotted by Bacon, who now thinks that he is his stalker. Will denies this, and tries to leave. Bacon asks him to stay, and Will ends up reassuring him about his career. Jack interrupts, telling Bacon that Will is not his stalker. Bacon objects that Jack "fingered this guy", which Jack refutes as "we were just holding hands".

S05E22 has Karen upset that Will is going to represent her husband in the divorce. As such, she decides to get "another lawyer. A better lawyer. A gayer lawyer.", though Will suggests sarcastically that she will need "luck finding that". Meanwhile, Jack got Grace a business meeting with an "associate", which he then specifies to also be his wealthy "lover". When the new client arrives, Jack tells him that "[t]hey don't know I'm gay here", which his friend is sceptical about: "I guess that means you haven't spoken or moved." Later, Jack comes to see

Grace at work, tells her that he was dumped, and expects her to end her business relationship with his now-ex as well: "What kind of friend would you be if you kept working for the man who broke my heart?". After some protest, Grace does go to see Cam to tell him that she cannot work for him, to which he responds with phrases commonly associated with romantic relationships: "I thought it was going so well. We clicked. We were having fun." They discuss the (now abandoned) plans for designing Cam's house, using various phrases that commonly have a sexual connotation, e.g. "you say it's giant. But a lot of clients exaggerate.", or "I don't care what anyone says. Size does matter.", and they agree she will design his house after all, but won't tell Jack. As such, their business relationship is continually framed in terms more commonly associated with romantic and/or sexual relationships. Grace and Jack later realize that they both have claimed to have "ended" their relationships with Cam, but neither one of them actually did. They agree to accept the situation, and hug.

## ***Modern Family***

S01E09 focuses on a birthday party the family is throwing for Luke, the youngest child of Phil and Claire. The episode opens with Jay finding Mitch in an emergency room, asking about “what happened” to someone who is offscreen. Phil goes to Mitch and Cam’s place to borrow a karaoke machine, promising to bring it back after the party. Cam approves of this, but Mitch quietly tells him to “please don’t, don’t bring it back”, the show’s running joke being that he is easily embarrassed by his partner’s more flamboyant personality. Cam suggests they should get a clown for Luke’s party, which Mitch objects to, saying that it is “not [their] party”, and suggesting a gift card as a present instead. Cam inquires “who hurt you”, after which point the scene cuts to Mitch’s father trying to gift-wrap a crossbow. Jay gives Manny the advice that “Girls don’t go for all that romantic stuff, they go for power and success. And since you don’t have either one of those things, you’re gonna be the funny guy”. Mitch buys a computer game “about math” as a present, tells Cam that he guesses that this means they “are those kind of uncles”. Cam has dressed up as a clown, explains in an interview segment that he has “known [he] wanted to be a clown since [he] found out that clowns are just people with makeup” and describes his own past experience as “if I wasn’t in school or fishing, I was clowning”. His partner reacts to this description with sarcasm “[b]etween the clowning and the fishing, I’m surprised you had time for the schooling.” Mitch objects to Cam’s plan to attend the party as a clown, describing him as “[Luke’s] weird gay clown uncle”, to which Cam objects, saying that his clown-persona “Fizbo is not gay, he’s asexual.”, and further characterizes Fizbo as “an innocent, whose only drive is to bring people joy and laughter and balloon animals, he’s- he’s the least sexual being on earth”. This Mitch sarcastically agrees with. On the drive over, they discuss their chores, at the gas station, Cam accuses Mitch of being “worried about people seeing [him]”, which Mitch admits to. Another person at the gas stop bumps into Mitch with their car and is rude about it, refusing to apologize, causing Cam (dressed as Fizbo) to get out of the car, yell at the other person, and demand that they “apologize to [his] boyfriend right now”. The other person is clearly confused, but does ultimately apologize. Mitch, clearly pleased with this interaction, is grinning as they drive on. Arriving at the party, they encounter Phil, who states in an interview segment that he’s afraid of clowns, and tries to calm himself down by repeating “[i]t’s just Cam. Just Cam” to himself. He tells Mitch that he’s “got a complicated relationship with clowns”, to which Mitch replies with “join the club”, likely in reference to the previous scene where his partner got defensive on his behalf. Mitch and Claire

are the only people at the party who are excited about the arts and crafts project Claire has set up, as both of them associate it with a party they themselves went to as kids. Claire questions Mitch whether he “think[s] it’s weird that [they] both chose people who are so-”, when she pauses, Mitch suggests “[u]nhibited”, while Claire describes them as “embarrassing”. She does acknowledge, though, that “they are the life of the party”. Mitch concurs that “for all his craziness, [he] love[s] [his] clown”, and they agree that “they [meaning Phil and Cam] are good for us [Claire and Mitch]”. Mitch also describes Cam-as Fizbo as “a real badass”. After Luke breaks his arm, the family goes to the emergency room, which Phil reflects in an interview segment is “just the way it should be”

In S01E13 Cameron runs into Jay and some of his friends in the street; Jay awkwardly introduces him as “a friend of [his] son’s”. Cam tries to joke with them, but they do not understand his references. Getting in the car with Mitch and their baby daughter Lily, Cam greets them with “sorry, sweetie. Sorry, daddy”, emphasizing Mitch’s fairly new role in Lily’s life. Cam jokes that Mitch is “worse than [his] sister” with technology, once again pointing out the similarities between the two. When Cam tells Mitch about meeting Jay and how he had been introduced, Mitch thinks that “[t]hat’s a little disrespectful to [Cam]”. Cam says he “wasn’t offended”, but Mitch is: “would he refer to Phil as “a friend of Claire’s”? No.” He decides to confront his father about it. In an interview segment, Mitch explains that “[he] came out of the closet in [his mid-twenties]. [He] had to actually come out to [Jay] three times before he finally acknowledged it.” Cam, on the other hand, claims that his parents “always just knew”. Mitch tells Jay that his way of introducing Cam was “more than a little insulting. Cam and [him] have been together for five years, [they] have a daughter.” Jay tries to explain that he thought his friends to be too old-fashioned, but Mitch rejects this explanation as he thinks that “they’re not the ones that are uncomfortable with this”, and that Jay has “never been completely accepting” of his son’s sexuality. Jay tries to explain his perspective, saying that “these guys [meaning his friends] don’t understand the gay thing. Why create an awkward situation?” Mitch tells him that his “gaydar is never wrong”, and that he thinks one of Jay’s friends, Shorty, is “as gay as they come”. In a conversation with Mitch later, Cam still thinks that Jay “didn’t mean any harm. He’s just being who he is”. In an interview segment Mitch reminisces about how his coming out changed his relationship with his father, offering an explanation as to why his reaction to Jay’s behaviour is stronger. Jay tells Gloria about how Mitch told him his friend was gay, which she believes: “He’s a great dresser, a great dancer”,

and suggests that Jay should talk to him about it, since he is “the only one with a gay son”. Jay rejects this idea at first: “We are guys, we don’t open up. We talk about sports and cars, getting up in the middle of the night to pee.” Later, Jay does decide to call Shorty to invite him to play golf. When Cam accidentally sets a bouquet of flowers on fire, Mitch jokes that there are “two things flaming at once”. While out playing golf, Shorty gives Jay tips on his stance, many of which could be interpreted as either sports talk or sexual comments, something Jay clearly picks up on at this point, and which causes him discomfort. Jay nevertheless attempts to start a conversation about Shorty’s (supposed) “secret that’s maybe causing [him] a lot of anguish”, reflecting that he “had the same situation with [his] son” and that he “didn’t handle it too well”. Shorty reveals that he is in debt, and thinks that Jay is offering to pay it off for him. When Jay asks him whether he is gay, citing his style of dress as his reasoning, Shorty gets offended and defensive, going so far as to say that he’d “knock [Jay] out” if he weren’t lending him money. Jay shows up at Mitch’s place, “to let [him] know that [his] gaydar is broken.” Mitch reveals that he “knew that”, but rather “made that up to mess with [Jay] for dissing Cam”. Jay tells him that he wanted to be supportive of Shorty, “to let him know it’s okay to be gay”, surprising Mitch who says that he’s “proud” of Jay for “growing”. Jay reflects that he “used to be just like one of those guys”, but is changing due to their unusual family circumstances, while still sounding vaguely bigoted about said circumstances. Cam meets Gloria’s “new friend Whitney”, who thinks he is the “sweetest guy” and voices her romantic interest in him. In an interview segment at the end of the episode, Mitch opines that people can change who they are “15% [...] Sometimes that’s just enough”. During the episode it is also mentioned that Phil was a cheerleader in college, which he is very proud of, while Claire finds it more embarrassing.

S02E02 focuses on Mitch’s discomfort with public displays of affection. The episode opens with Cam and Mitch out shopping. Cam is trying on shirts, while Mitch is waiting on a couch nearby. Mitch compliments Cam, saying that he “love[s] [him] in both of them [the shirts]”. Cam is flattered, and tries to kiss Mitch in thanks, which Mitch dodges. In an interview segment, Cam reflects that “Mitchell has a problem with public displays of affection. I remember once at a New Year’s Eve Party, stroke of midnight, he high-fived me. Two problems with that. One, gays don’t high-five. Two, gays don’t high-five.” Jay is as always very derisive about Phil, saying that “Phil’s not better than me at anything”. Later at home, Mitch tries to kiss Cam, who comments sarcastically that they should “lock the door and draw the curtains”, and confronts Mitch: “You won’t kiss me in front of other people because you’re ashamed of who you are. And yes, I went

there.” Here, he also draws on a phrase very frequently drawn on in portrayals of queer people in the media (which was also utilized in *Will and Grace*), and acknowledges this adherence to a certain stereotype himself. Mitch objects to this interpretation, as he considers himself to be very assertive in his relationship, which Cam points out is “different. That’s confrontation.” Mitch gets offended, describes Cam as “needy” and claims that he has “impossible standards”. Jay asks Phil for help setting up a printer, which Phil is excited about, since “Jay is always around here fixing things, cracking jokes about [Phil’s] delicate hands”. Haley questions her younger sister Alex about a boy she likes, suggesting that he’s “gonna think [Alex is] a lesbian” if she doesn’t kiss him. Alex rebuffs this, causing Haley to assert that she also thought Alex a lesbian, as she “totally [has] the sandals for it”. Alex then goes over to see the boy she likes: “I am not a lesbian. I would like for you to kiss me.”, but runs off when she notices his friends are there. Cam and Mitch talk, agree that they both were “not entirely off base” (Mitch), and Mitch promises that he’s “working on it” and asks Cam not to “give up on [him]”. When Cam tries to kiss Mitch in front of their family, Mitch moves away too quickly, making Cam unbalance and fall over the couch. They revisit their argument, this time with input from their family, with Claire suggesting that Cam should not “take it personally”, as Mitch hadn’t wanted to kiss his high-school girlfriend either, which Mitch then explains was rather “because [he] was gay”, making Cameron question what his “excuse” is this time. Gloria blames Jay, who she says is not very affectionate either, which Jay takes offense at. She calls Cam Mitch’s “lover”, a term which both of them voice their dislike of. They argue about how a lack of physical affection in their family led to Mitch being “uptight” (Gloria), a characterization that Mitch objects to, and they decide that Jay should try to be more affectionate. At the end of the episode, Cam asks Mitch “who is the better kisser, me or your dad?”, Mitch reacting with “ew”.

S02E18 focuses on the family facing incorrect preconceived notions about others. It opens with Phil, Claire, and their kids having a competition to determine chores for the week. The competition is divided “Boys versus girls. Testosterone versus estrogen.”, drawing a clear binary. Cam and Mitch set up a night out with “[their] gay friends”, as Mitchell mentions in an interview segment that he’s “been spending a lot of time with a lot of straight people lately”, and are looking for a babysitter. Haley offers, but Cam is unconvinced of her suitability, describing her as “a very sweet and fashionable girl, but [...] hardly a responsible caregiver”. They instruct Haley to “not let a serial killer in the front door” (Cam), and when (jokingly) questioned about exceptions “if he is cute” tell Haley to “save him for [them]” (Mitch). Haley

tells them to “go, get your gay on”. Mitch appears more excited about their night out at this point than Cam. Out at dinner with their friends, they talk about who their first crushes were. Mitchell says that he “missed this” type of banter. Jay comes into the restaurant and sits at the bar, one of their friends, Pepper, mentions that “he’s cute”, which Mitch is horrified by. They suggest inviting him over, which Mitch thinks is a bad idea; While Jay knows that he’s gay, “he doesn’t know [Mitch is] this gay”. They call him over, and, after Jay joins them, prompt Mitch to tell them “who his first boy crush was”. Phil and Claire go to introduce themselves to their ill-tempered neighbour, who is deeply asleep, and only wakes up when Phil feels for his pulse. The neighbour accuses them of breaking into his house and fondling him. At dinner with Mitch and Cam’s friends, Jay appears to be having a good time, drinking cocktails, sharing stories, and participating in the banter. In an interview segment, Mitch reflects on his relationship with Jay: “there’s always been a part of me that I’ve kept from him. And yet here he was, laughing with my friends. And, I don’t know, maybe the problem was me.” Accordingly, Mitch decides to share who his first crush was with the group after all, which Jay receives cheerfully: “I get that, he’s a good-looking kid!” Haley’s boyfriend, who visited her on babysitting duty, calls her to let her know that he left his shoes “at [her] uncles’ house last night”, but suggests that “[m]aybe they’ll think they’re theirs”, which Haley denies, as “they’re gay. They know what shoes they own”. In the morning, Mitch calls Jay to let him know that he “had such a good time last night”, but is interrupted by another call from Pepper, who is driving over to pick Jay up. When questioned, Mitch claims that Jay “made a date with him last night”, which Jay denies: “I think I would remember if I made a date with a guy!” He further states that he was “drunk” and is “not going shopping with Priscilla, Queen of the Desert”. After hearing this, Mitch tells Jay that he will hang up, because he wants to “hold on” to his current positive feelings about their relationship. Jay wants Gloria to fake an emergency to get out of the trip, which Gloria first agrees to, but then does not follow through on, telling Pepper that she thinks it will be good for Jay to do something “different”, and teases that she “think[s] he likes [Pepper] more than [her]”. In an interview segment at the end of the episode, Mitch reflects that “[p]eople can surprise you [...]. You get used to thinking of them one way, stuck in their roles. They are what they are. And then they do something that shows you there’s all this depth and dimension that you never knew existed.” Finally, Haley comes by to see Cal, and picks up Dylan’s shoes, which he agrees to not tell her mother about. She also states that she thinks of him and

Mitch as “friends” rather than uncles, though this is likely also done in an attempt to get them to agree to keep the secret.

S03E07: While they are out getting drinks, Cam chats with the waitress, and thinks she is flirting with him. Mitch thinks that this is not the case, as that kind of banter is part of her job and “[s]he totally knows [Cam’s] gay”. Cam disputes this, wondering “how would she know”. In an interview segment, Mitch shares a, in his terms, “crazy theory” of Cam’s, according to which “if he were straight, and Julia Roberts were single, they’d be dating”. Cam thinks the theory is “not crazy” as he once met Julia Roberts and he says that their “chemistry was palpable”. Cam asserts that he “could totally pick up any woman in here” and “could be a womanizer”. Cam and Mitch make a bet whether Cam can get the number of a random person Mitch picks, and Cam goes to try as his friends heckle him. Cam starts talking to the woman Mitch picked, reflecting in an interview segment that “[i]f she were a hot guy, [he] would never have been that smooth. It’s ironic. Like the gift of the Vagi”. Cam wins the bet, telling Mitch that he wants his shirts ironed (part of their bet), and that “their seams should appear straight, just like their owner”. The next day, Cam feels guilty for having been “cavalier with her [the bar patron’s] emotions”. Mitch is unconvinced, asking Cam where he got “all this self-confidence”. Cam calls her to come clean, but appears to be having difficulty mentioning his sexuality or relationship status to her, while Mitch makes sarcastic quips about it. Cam tells Mitch that he accidentally invited Katie over, as he “couldn’t do it on the phone”. Mitch is uncomfortable with this, especially when Cam tries to enlist his help to “un-gay the place”, and leaves instead. Mitch goes over to Jay’s house and finds Manny teaching Jay salsa dancing. He is incredulous and says he’s “looking for Jay Pritchett? He’s about 6’2”, tough guy, wrestles with homophobia.” Mitch half explains the situation, mentioning Cam and his “new girlfriend”, telling Jay “[d]on’t ask”, to which Jay replies “[d]on’t tell”, thus utilizing the phrase typically associated with the long-time US army policy on queer people joining up. Mitch acknowledges that he and his dad “are a lot alike”, and offers him a pill that he says “some people take at clubs to [...] loosen up” (but which he later reveals to have been baby aspirin), and explains why he has it as “[a] gay man who hates dancing lives in a sad and lonely little world.” When Katie is at Cam’s, he finally tells her that he’s gay, to which she responds that “it’s obvious”, based on the way he “talk[s] and walk[s], and dress[es] and [his] theatrical hand gestures”. Cam objects to this description, and asks her why she gave him her number. Katie explains that she wanted “a gay friend”, leading Cam to explain that “[t]hose are totally offensive stereotypes.”, though he has been

shown in previous episodes to enjoy all the activities she proposes. Cam then confesses that he hit on her for a bet, and that he had taken the bet in part out of insecurity, as he wishes “everyone could find [him] attractive”. Mitch comes home, and Katie pretends to be upset about Cam being uninterested in her, though she does overcompensate, calling him “the least gay person [she has] ever met”, kissing him before she leaves. She then asks him whether he is “sure” that he’s gay, which Cam briefly answers in the negative, but then changes his answer when Mitch interjects, offended. Shorty, who is dating a woman at this point, comments to Gloria that he “would’ve danced with [a man at a club]. He’s got nice shoulders.”

S03E24 opens with Cam and Lily practicing a dance routine until the adoption agency calls to tell them that they “are getting a baby today”. They agree not to tell people immediately, though the scene then cuts to Gloria rushing to tell Manny and Jay. Mitch is called by Claire, who is offended that he hadn’t told her personally about the planned adoption, to which he replies that he “was outside for two minutes”, but Cam insists that he “kept it in as long as he could”. They leave to adopt a new baby, taking Gloria along to translate for them, as the family they are adopting from speaks Spanish. Lily stays behind with Jay and Manny. Alex goes to prom, and her “bad-boy prom date is gay. He just doesn’t know it yet, so [she’s] basically his beard”. Cameron makes use of “measurements [they] used on the farm”. At Lily’s dance recital, Jay has a talk with her about how she misses her dads and is not excited for her new brother, but Jay tries to encourage her, ultimately even agreeing to perform the dance with her. At the hospital, Cam, Mitch, and Gloria watch a soap-opera style drama unfold, resulting in the birth family’s decision to raise the child themselves after all. Cameron and Mitch hug, visibly sad and disappointed. Later, when they stop for gas, Mitch walks away, crying, telling Cam that he’s “sick of it”, referring to the challenges of the adoption process. Cam suggests they “take a break”, as “it must be exhausting, always keeping it together for the both of [them]”. They lie down in an empty field holding hands.

S04E11 has the adults of the family going to Palm Springs for a New Year’s party. Mitch and Cam react with amusement to an unintentional double entendre of Phil’s. When a very eccentric looking receptionist comes in, Cam exclaims that “[t]hat’s [him] in 20 years”, which Mitch objects to: “Okay, you be her and I’ll be whoever left her.” Mitch and Cam consider going to a club close by that a friend of theirs likes, “while [they’re] still young-ish”. Jay, who joins a poker game after the others bail on dinner, compliments an actor (Billy Dee Williams) who is

also part of the table, and explains the plot of one of his movies. When the others appear confused about why he is so familiar with the plot, Jay tells them that his “son made [him] watch it with him. He’s gay.” Mitch and Cam are not enjoying the club, as they are dressed differently and also older than most of the patrons. Mitch tries to hype Cam up, asking him “where’s fun Cam who likes to dance?”, but they are accidentally hit with a wet towel once on the dancefloor, so they leave. Mitch confesses to Cam that he’s “sick of feeling old”, so Cam promises to do something. They follow a stranger into another house, but immediately leave again, saying “no judgement. Perfectly acceptable lifestyle” (Cam) – “[j]ust not for us” (Mitch) Mitch likens their luck to “Goldilocks”. After that they immediately spot “three bears” (Cam), as in the queer stereotype, coming out of a bar, which they deem an appropriate choice. The patrons at this bar are mostly older/elderly men. They are getting compliments and free drinks. When Jay gets back, Phil gets very excited and “starstruck” about Williams, he is mistaken for Mitch.

S04E17 opens with Cam and Mitch putting new “shelf paper” into their cabinets late in the evening, Cam trying to motivate Mitch, who agrees with him: “I wish I didn’t get what you were talking about, but I do.” The episode has Mitch and Cam acting as best men for the wedding of their “best girlfriend from back in [their] party days” who has “kinda gone in different directions” than Mitch and Cam. Sal first worries that they will be against her getting married because she can get married while Cam and Mitch cannot, but they try to reassure her: “what kind of people would we be if we denied you or anyone else the right to marry?” and agree to act as best men, even though the wedding is happening very soon. On the day of the wedding, they go out with Sal for drinks before the wedding, and share that they are “excited that [they’re] gonna get to see so much more of [Sal]” (Cam), as they’ll “be couple friends” (Mitch). They try to invite Sal to their “game nights”, which she rejects as an idea, thinking it too settled. They have very different readings of the situation: Mitch thinks that they “have freaked her out”, while Cam describes her as “a woman in love”. They then see Sal kissing the bartender across the bar. Manny, who has gotten into trouble at school for drawing nude women, is confronted by Jay and Gloria. Jay says that “[n]obody [...] is as happy as [he is] about [Manny] loving the ladies”, as he still is not entirely comfortable with Mitch’s sexuality. Cameron is offended by Sal’s behaviour, calling it “a mockery of marriage” and planning to stop it. Mitch objects, and accuses Cam of “infusing the situation with just a touch of [his] own frustration”, though he does also admit that he “get[s] it”. They wrestle for Sal’s wedding ring,

60

and Sal comments that “well, there’s a mystery solved”, turning it into a joke about sex positions. Sal gives a speech during the ceremony that uses Cam and Mitch’s relationship as an example: “I used to think their life looked so boring. [...] But they’re not bored. It turns out when you’re with the right person, you can change shelf paper at 10:00 at night in your pyjamas and not wanna be anywhere else. That’s how much they love each other.” At the end of the episode, Sal and Lily are pettily arguing on a couch, as they appear to strongly dislike one another.

S05E01 Opens with a flashback to 2013 (about a year earlier), where Cam arrives at Jay and Gloria’s on the phone with Mitch, who is telling them that they “won”, as “[g]ay marriage is legal”. Cam then also excitedly announces to Jay that “as of today in California, it’s legal for a man to marry another man”. The baby present in the scene spits up, which Jay jokes is because the baby “just needs some time to get used to the idea”, but also offhandedly tells Cam that he’s “happy for you guys”. Manny, too congratulates Cam: “Go, gay marriage!” Gloria asks Cam “[h]ow does it work when it is between two men?”, which Cam first takes to be a question about sex and refuses to answer in front of his daughter, but Gloria then specifies she was actually asking about “who proposes to who”. Cam says that he is uncertain, that they “talked about it, if it ever became legal” but is unsure what exactly will happen now that this condition is met. Cam conspires with Gloria to plan a “romantic” proposal at dinner that night, then is called by Mitch to come find him at a coffee shop because he forgot his wallet. In an interview segment, Cam reveals that he assumed it to be “a ploy so he could propose”, but was willing to give up his own plans, until the atmosphere at the café got ruined and he left. When Jay and Manny go to the courthouse to pick up a document for Manny, a long line of people waiting to get married wait outside. Jay refers to it as a “gay marriage license”, which Manny then corrects him is “just called a marriage license”. Manny, who is supposed to visit his mother’s family by himself that summer, tells Jay that he’s “scared” and “not sure [he] want[s] to go through with it”. They argue about Manny’s summer plans in a way that has the other people waiting in line looking at them with increasing alarm, as their argument makes it sound like they are not only planning to get married, but also as if Jay “paid for [Manny], and [his] mother signed off”. When Claire comes to pay Mitch’s bill, she also congratulates him “on the whole marriage thing” and asks him whether they’ll be hearing “gay wedding bells” soon. This, too, Mitch corrects to “just wedding bells”. Mitch acknowledges that they have “always talked about it”, but also mentions that he’s “being practical”, which Claire makes fun of, even though

Mitch points out that they have this in common. Claire points out that “Cam’s biggest complaint” about Mitch is that he’s “not romantic”, and he should take this “opportunity”. Mitch agrees, though they then also come to the conclusion that he’s “hopeless”. All Claire’s suggestions are at least mildly morbid, and appear to freak Mitch out. In interview sections with Mitch and Cam, both of them explain their respective proposal plans. These segments are also intercut to make their utterances transition seamlessly. At the restaurant, Mitch realizes that Cam is trying to propose and fakes illness so as not to lose the chance to propose himself as his “romantic redemption”. Both Mitch and Cam have their respective helpers set up a proposal in their home, Phil, Claire, and Gloria consider staying to watch, but Jay objects, thinking that the ongoing chaos is “what happens when they let men marry men”. Phil announces that “there is no way [he’s] not crying at this wedding”. On the way back to their apartment, Cam and Mitch’s car blows a tyre, so they have to stop and change it. They agree that “this is not at all how [they] saw the evening going”, and, while both kneeling next to the car to change the tyre, they simultaneously say “[y]es”, with no question even being asked explicitly.

S05E22: The episode has Mitch and Cam planning their wedding. They are debating the guest list, as they are worried that they will not be able to afford the wedding. Mitch suggests saving money on the centrepieces, which Cam is offended by: “Why even have a wedding?” This, Mitch receives sarcastically: “I don’t know, Cam. Because we love and respect each other and we’re raising a child together?” Cam wonders whether they might be able to uninvite people, but Mitch is sceptical, since he thinks that they “already made a lot of people angry by just being able to get married. Let’s not alienate the ones on our side.” They both consider selling treasured possessions to fund the wedding, both of which have stories attached to them. Claire and her kids find an old voicemail that Mitch sent Phil while at college, in which he thanks Phil for introducing him to his cousin, the “only problem” being that she lives far away. Alex comments sarcastically whether “[t]hat’s the only problem?” Cam tries to sell an heirloom given to him by his grandfather “to prove [his] love for [his] fiancé”, but the antique store clerk informs Mitch that it is a “cheap replica”, but that he “didn’t want to say anything in front of [his] fiancé.” Because of this, Mitch decides to sell his comic book instead. Gloria suggests that Mitch should ask Jay for money for the wedding, which Mitch says he feels “weird about”. Cam and Mitch talk about the comic book Mitch is trying to sell, and Mitch explains why he enjoyed it: “[spiderman] spoke to me. I... I think it’s because it’s about this nerdy kid who has this special

62

secret side of himself that he can't share with anybody, and... and that's how I always felt." They accidentally drop the comic book in a puddle and rush back in to ask for a hairdryer, which makes Jay ask whether it's "some sort of gay emergency". Jay also thinks that they are going overboard on their wedding, and wonders why they "need to make it into a spectacle", a phrase that Mitch takes offense at. They have an argument, in which Jay reveals that he does not want to invite his friends, that he's "not thrilled", and that "[t]his whole wedding thing is weird to [him]". Jay claims that he "didn't choose to be uncomfortable. [He] was born this way.", to which Mitch reacts incredulously: "Are you really throwing a gay anthem in our face right now?" Jay asks for "some credit" as he has changed his views a lot, but Mitch uninvites him from the wedding "if it really makes [Jay] that uncomfortable". No one appears happy with this solution, and at the end of the episode Jay appears to be introspective, overlaid with a voice over: This is another message from the old voicemail that Mitch left shortly after Claire got pregnant, in which he advises Phil that Jay would "come around", and that it would be "his loss" if he didn't.

## E) Call sent out to recruit student annotators

Charlie Rosenow

[charlotte.rosenow@ifaar.rwth-aachen.de](mailto:charlotte.rosenow@ifaar.rwth-aachen.de)

### Speaker Annotation of TV Show Episodes using the UAM Corpus Tool

As part of my PhD thesis research, I am conducting a comparative analysis of queer and non-queer characters' language behavior on scripted North American TV shows. The episode transcripts to be annotated are extracted from the *TV Corpus*, and as they are not currently tagged for speaker, this annotation needs to be added manually using the *UAM Corpus Tool*.

For each of the 6 shows currently under investigation, I will prepare an annotation scheme that identifies all major and recurring characters by name but includes only generic tags for episodic characters and non-character speech elements. The episode transcripts will then need to be segmented into speaker turns and annotated with information on which character, exactly, is speaking which part(s) of the episode's dialogue.

If you are interested in helping with this research project, you will be assigned a previously agreed upon number of TV show episodes to annotate using said pre-defined annotation scheme. If you do not have access to the assigned episode(s), I will, of course, make those accessible to you for the purpose of this research project. As the TV shows are from different genres, you would be able to choose between annotating episodes from a Teen Drama, a Sci-Fi/Fantasy show, or a Sitcom.

#### You will be asked to:

- Do annotation using the ***UAM Corpus Tool*** - some familiarity with the tool would therefore be of great benefit.
- Work carefully and precisely to identify the **boundaries of character speech contributions**.
- Complete a total of **three annotation sweeps** per episode (one to segment, one to identify speaker(s), and finally one to check for errors). In the previously conducted pilot study for this stage of analysis, an episode of a sitcom (~25 minutes) took about 2/2.5 hours to annotate on average.
- **Watch TV for academic credit! :)**