

The second impact, and probably the largest, is that lack of visibility in our community is allowing a large bastion of homophobia, which happens to be the straight male community, to go unchecked. How many times have you heard a group of guys call one another gay, faggot or queer as a way to insult one another? What about all of the homophobic vitriol found in the online gamer community? What about a subtler form of homophobia, such as someone saying “no homo” when you compliment another male? Or citing such “Man Laws” as ‘two men shall only click bottles at the base, when saying ‘cheers,’ never the tops, for that could exchange saliva, and thus be equitable to making out’ or the countless others ensuring that no “gay” acts transpire between straight males.

We LGBTIQ individuals can only do so much. We can advocate and be visible, but at the end of the day, we need your support. We need you to stand with us when a fellow classmate makes a homophobic comment, when a friend makes a homophobic joke, or when a player on your favorite online game or on your sports team calls another player a fag or queer.

Call that classmate’s comment out and explain how it was homophobic. Tell your friend that the joke they just told was offensive and why. Report that player for using offensive language (and if there is no way to report them, submit a suggestion to the game developers to add away to report offensive language). Also, for our online gaming friends, doing something as simple as putting “NoH8” (in reference to the NoH8 campaign) on your gamer profile, can send a powerful message to the gay gamers that there are allies out there in the digital world.

We as a community have come great distances in a relatively short period of time. However to reach the next level we need your help! And the best way to help is simply being visible. Walking through a dorm and seeing Safe Zone signs all around or walking into a class and seeing rainbow pins on backpacks, purses, workout bags, could help someone who’s struggling with their sexuality realize they’re not alone. It could help that first year, who has left home for the first time, feel more comfortable and free to be open about who they are. It may seem like a small gesture, but it is the small things that can have the greatest impacts.



REVIEW: BLACK SWAN

By Kelli Joyce

Darren Aronofsky’s Oscar-nominated psychological thriller *Black Swan* has received strong interest in the media for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is its much-hyped lesbian sex scene between Nina (Natalie Portman) and Lily (Mila Kunis).

Within LGBTQ circles, there has been quite a bit of debate over the scene. However, there is one important question that is often repeated. Was it a positive portrayal of lesbian women, or was it simply added to titillate straight men in the audience?

Much of the strongest criticism of the film and its lesbian content, however, takes the scene out of the context of the story. Without spoiling the plot, *Black Swan* is a film about Nina going through an identity crisis in every sense of the phrase. It seems unlikely that the sex scene was simply an afterthought to attract straight men, as it is deeply connected to the movie’s plot.

In an interview with Time Magazine, Aronofsky said the scene represents the “idea of Natalie Portman making love to Natalie Portman. Everyone’s always talking about Natalie and Mila Kunis, but for me it was more about Natalie making love to herself.” Nina’s identity crisis is, among other things, a crisis of sexual identity. Nina and Lily’s sex scene, toward the end of the movie, illustrates Nina’s shift toward the passion and sensuality of the Black Swan.

So does *Black Swan* provide a positive portrayal of lesbianism? It’s difficult to say. A dark movie with such a deeply complicated and flawed cast of characters is unlikely to provide examples of healthy relationships, regardless of sexual orientation. But I believe all of the film’s sexual content, including Nina and Lily’s sex scene, is real to the characters and situations involved. In fact, it is in part the raw, dark nature of those scenes that made the film so moving and so disturbing.