Over the Rainbow – the comparison of two lesbian-themed movies *Imagine Me & You* and *Butterfly*

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I. Introduction

Recently, there are some gay-themed movies turning up in Taiwan, such as *Eternal Summer*, *Blue Gate Crossing*, *Spider Lilies*, and *Brokeback Mountain*. While watching these movies, we wonder what the LGBTs (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) will think of them. Based on this consideration, we decide to look into what gay-themed movie the LGBTs like, and analyze the movie to see why it’s appealing to these people.

Also, we are curious about whether the reason of choosing movies would vary in cultures. So we’re going to compare the movies selected by people from different places to seek out if the factors behind the people’s choices are the same, and if these movies have something in common. Rainbow flag is the best known symbol of LGBT. As a result, our topic “Over the rainbow” means we are going to look at gay-themed movies from our point of view.

II. Thesis

1. Approach

First, we designed an online survey which has English and Chinese versions due to our language limitation. Then, to look for participants, we advertised the survey on some homosexual forums and discussion boards on line. We received about 100 responses in both languages respectively in the end.

According to the result, in the English version, *Imagine Me & You* got the most votes in the question asking the participants’ favorite film. On the other hand, in the Chinese version the film *Butterfly* got the most votes.

We choose these two films as our subjects. We watch the movies first, and then try to find the difference between them.

2. Content

2.1. The result of the surveys (detailed statistics at the end of the paper)

Most participants of the English version are from English-speaking countries, especially the U.S. On the other hand, participants of the Chinese version mainly come from China, Taiwan and HK, and all above are Chinese-speaking region.

About the question of their favorite movie, which is a fill-in-blank question, there are multiple kinds of answers. In the English survey’s results, there are two movies which got more than 20 votes:
Imagine Me & You (28 votes) and D.E.B.S. (22 votes). In the Chinese version’s result, Butterfly got 15 votes while none of the other movies’ votes are above 10. The apparent difference in the votes of the two versions results from lower answering rate in the Chinese version.

More than two thirds of the participants are females in both surveys. This may be the reason why the favorite movies they choose are both lesbian-themed films.

The following research is going to focus on these two movies, Imagine Me & You and Butterfly, which are representative of two different language-spoken cultures.

2.2. The summaries and backgrounds of the two movies

2.2.1. Plots summary

Imagine Me & You

Rachel was going to get married with Heck, who had been with her for years. However, on her wedding day she met Luce, a lesbian and a flower shop owner. At the same time, Rachel found herself in a mixed emotion because she seemed to fall for Luce little by little. She began to consider about her affection toward her husband and Luce, wondering whether she herself was a lesbian or not. When Rachel became more and more sure the one she loved was a woman, she had to learn to face Luce, Heck, her family and most important of all, herself.

Butterfly

Flavia thought everything would always be like the present situation. Despite the sad memory about her lover in high school, a girl named Jin, she had recovered and enjoyed her life as a teacher and as Ming’s wife. However, things changed when she met a young girl Yip. Flavia couldn’t help falling in love with her. At the same time, she gradually realized that she had only been repressing her inner feelings instead of making herself a “normal” person. Facing the choice between her family and her lover, Flavia finally determined to live with Yip and left her family.

2.2.2. Backgrounds

Imagine Me & You

The director, Ol Parker, is also the writer of this film. Initially, he planned to make a film about a woman meeting and falling for a man on her wedding day. The original title of this film is Click, which is a French term for love at first sight, but a change is required later because another film had
used this title. However, this idea is kind of common, so he changed the man’s character into a woman while working on the script. He thought that a lesbian angle would put a dramatic new effect on this age-old love triangle. So the director focused on the “love at first sight” more rather than the lesbian love; it’s not made mainly for lesbian movie-goers.

**Butterfly**

The director of *Butterfly*, Yan Yan Mak, is an indie(independent cinema maker). She created the skeleton of the story as her thirtieth birthday’s gift. At first, she only planned to film a movie about women. Later, she found a short about lesbians written by a Taiwanese novelist. Out of interest, she talked to the writer and combined this with her original story. Why the plot appeals to Yan is the moderation, which is completely different from other lesbian stories.

Instead of focusing merely on the lesbian issue, the director wanted to present the women’s attitudes toward the difficult situations. She also modified the short story: in the story, the characters have strong emotions because of the public injustice toward gay, while in the movie this kind of sentiment is much milder. Since the director is Cantonese, she changed the setting from Taipei to Hong Kong. This movie is about two hours long, which is longer than *Imagine Me & You*.

### 2.3. Comparison

In the following section, we try to point out the resemblances and differences between these two movies. We divided our comparison into seven parts: Marriage, Accident, Feelings & Struggles, Parents, Husbands, People around, and Ending. After that, we chose several meaningful scenes of both movies, and analyze them in hope to seek out something special.

#### 2.3.1. Marriage

*Imagine Me & You* starts on Rachel’s wedding day. Rachel’s groom, Heck, has been with her for years. They’re friends then lovers, and their love has been smooth all the way. In *Butterfly*, Flavia has a gentle husband, a one-year-old daughter, and a blest family.

So, in the beginning the main characters in both films have a satisfactory marriage. In both films, the married woman encounters an attractive girl, causing the struggles between her husband and the girl she loves.

#### 2.3.2. Accident

In *Imagine Me & You*, at Rachel’s wedding day she sees Luce. Rachel has a different feeling at the first sight. At first she visits Luce often because she hopes to bring Luce and one of Heck’s friends,
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Cooper, together. But actually Rachel and Luce became more and more intimate. In *Butterfly*, Flavia meets Yip in a supermarket. Yip is appealing to Flavia, and makes Flavia recalls her memories about Jin.

2.3.3. Feelings & Struggles

*Imagine Me & You*

Rachel has a special impression on Luce when they first met. She seems to be appealed by Luce. The following is a conversation Rachel had with her colleagues at work about “love at first sight”.

(R: Rachel; C₁ & C₂: Rachel’s two colleagues)

R: Do you believe in love at first sight?

C₁: Well, it saves time.

R: Really, that you could meet someone, or just across a room. And with that one glance you could look in their eyes and see their soul. Do you believe that could happen?

C₂: No.

C₁: Absolutely not.

R: (hesitates for a moment) …No, me, neither.

Rachel struggles with herself. She doesn’t want to let her husband know she may be a lesbian. Despite that she doesn’t admit her sexual preference to girls, she presents it through her acts when she rents a lesbian pornographic film home. Later, when she realizes that does fall for Luce, she knows this will no doubt hurt Heck. Not wanting to do so, Rachel decides to conceal her strong emotion toward Luce.

The following is a conversation in Luce’s room. First, Rachel rejects Luce and is ready to leave. However, driven by her heart’s desire, she returns and kisses Luce passionately.

(L: Luce)

R: You make me feel something, something I absolutely cannot feel. I’m married, for God’s sake, I have a husband… He’s done nothing wrong…

R: ……so do you see? You have to see. I can’t do this. I can’t actually do this. So whatever it is or was, it’s got to stop, and it’s got to stop now. Do you understand? It’s over.

(Rachel leaves impetuously. But she returns right after, and kisses Luce.)

Luce has a conflicting emotion on Rachel, too. However, when one day Rachel tries to tell Luce about her feelings, Luce avoids the subject and leaves on the excuse of works. They’re both at a loss. Rachel doesn’t want to mess up her marriage; however, her heart has been given to Luce already. Luce hopes to be with Rachel, but Rachel takes her marriage seriously. This makes Luce think of
herself as the other woman between Rachel and Heck.

After Rachel and Luce kiss, Heck suddenly comes to Luce’s shop and asks Luce whether he has done something wrong that makes Rachel unhappy. Hearing this in Luce’s room, Rachel is at a loss and leaves. Luce finds this later and run out to talk to Rachel. We can see their feelings clearly in the following conversation.

L: Rachel! Rachel wait!
R: Luce, please!
L: Just talk to me.
R: What do you want me to say? I heard him, Jesus, I’m lying there, and he’s blaming himself!
L: You can put an end to this.
R: How?
L: Tell me to go. Tell me that’s what you want and I will walk away and you will never see me again.
R: Is that what you want?
L: I want you.
R: Luce…
L: I know.
R: I can’t…
L: I know. (Silence for a while) we’ll be okay. (They hug each other) Don’t forget me.
R: I won’t remember anything else.
(They walk away separately)

Butterfly

Yip’s eyes are so attractive that make Flavia recall her past. Her enthusiasm is woken again. She finds out she’s still a lesbian even though her love with Jin had died out for so many years. However, Flavia hopes to deny the fact. She has made an effort to enjoy her family life instead of missing Yip. The following is an example of Flavia trying to be more intimate with her husband.

(M: Flavia’s husband Ming; F: Flavia)
(M is working in front of the computer. F comes and hugs him on his back.)
M: What?
(F just keeps smiling.)
M: You’ve been acting strange lately. Is it because I was always working and neglected you?
(Without saying another word, they kiss.)

But she can’t inhibit her love to Yip totally. When she is invited to Yip’s house for dinner, she can’t help but kiss Yip.

Yet, there’s something bothering Flavia. She considers her feeling to Yip guilty because she has a
husband and daughter already. The thought comes out so often that causes Flavia attempt to break up with Yip. She doesn’t contact Yip for a period of time. Yip is unhappy and feels unfair. Flavia even attempted to ignore Yip while seeing her at her sister’s wedding banquet. The next is what Yip talks to Flavia when she’s about to leave Yip’s home.

(Y: Yip)
(In Yip’s home, F’s daughter cries loudly. Y comes and wants to help F.)
F: (stops Yip.) She’s fine.
(On the glasses F looks at the reflection of her, her daughter and Y. She pauses for a little while.)
F: (turns away from Y) Find a job and forget about me. I don’t know what I was doing just now. Just pretend that we never met. (Pushes Y, takes her belongings and runs to the door.)
Y: We’ve met and that’s a fact. I won’t pretend. (Tells loudly to F)

Still, she failed. She misses Yip day and night. And she starts to dodge her husband.

Flavia has two students who are lesbian and love each other. One day when they come to Flavia and beg for help, Flavia doesn’t support them. She wants to help them indeed. Still, she doesn’t know what she should do to help them or even face her situation. She says, “I don’t know why I always fell for girls. I can’t help my students. I always give up when I’m half way through doing something.”
Flavia is afraid that if she keeps being indecisive like this, she might hurt lots of people, such as Yip and her husband or even her parents. She is completely helpless.

Yip is sure about her love to Flavia. She always waits for her until she makes up her decision. She tells Flavia to just do what she wants when Flavia’s with her. Here’s what she says to Flavia.
Y: You just do what you want when you are with me. No one will laugh at you.

One of the reasons that makes Flavia so confused is her ex-girlfriend Jin. After Flavia broke up with Jin, Jin became a nun. Flavia thinks it was all her fault. She is afraid that her indecision will harm more people, just like what she did to Jin. Jin knows her helplessness. She tells Flavia that the problem can only be solved by Flavia herself. Exactly, what Flavia has to do is to follow her true heart, not others’ values.

From above, we can see that in the two movies, the married women, Rachel and Flavia, seem to have more things to be taken into account and be more ambivalent when they find themselves attracted to girls. Both of them try to forget this thought by being more intimate to their husbands. However, it’s in vain, eventually causing many struggles.

On the other hand, the girls who are single, Luce and Yip, acts differently when facing their feelings. Luce hesitates for a period of time before making up her mind that she loves Rachel, but even after this she’s still struggling to herself because she does not want to ruin Rachel and Heck’s marriage.
While also considerate to Flavia, Yip is relatively active. From the beginning she knows clearly she loves Flavia. She hopes and is confident that Flavia will leave her husband, so she waits for Flavia, not wanting to push her too much.

At first, we thought Rachel and Luce tend to show their feelings and pursue what they want more than Flavia and Yip. But in these two movies, Yip is much more positive than Luce.

Rachel and Flavia both struggle for a while before they decide to follow their hearts. That may result from their hope of being like others instead of being a lesbian. We can infer that in their hearts there are still concepts such as being homosexual is abnormal.

### 2.3.4. Parents

**Imagine Me & You**

Luce’s mother knows Luce is a lesbian and accepts this completely. Her mother hopes Luce can find her true love and be happy. The following is a conversation between them.

(M: Luce’s mom)

M: Oh, what’s wrong with you? Blow your nose, then explain.

L: I met this girl. But she’s with someone else.

M: And does she love you?

L: I don’t know. No…yes. But that doesn’t matter.

M: Oh, it’s all that matters.

When Rachel’s parents know she falls for a girl, her mother seems a bit shocked. But Rachel’s father shows great support to her, and tells Rachel,

“Whatever you choose to do from here, we’ll support you. We always will. But please, my darling, follow your heart.”

At last, when Rachel decides to go and find Luce, both of her parents accompany her.

**Butterfly**

Flavia and Jin’s affair was found by Flavia’s mother in their teens. Flavia’s mother threatened not to see her anymore if Flavia hadn’t come home with her and left Jin. Flavia’s father gave a Flavia slap on the face after he knew she was attracted to a girl.

The following is the conversation when Flavia’s mother found Flavia and Jin together.

(FM: Flavia’s mom)

FM: Flavia, go home with me.

J: Flavia can’t live with out me. Flavia…tell her we are serious.

FM: I can’t live without her either. (To F)Come with me.
J: If you want to leave, leave alone. This is my home. (To F) Flavia, stay.
FM: Flavia…you’ll never see me again.
F: (run to her mother) Mom! Jin doesn’t mean it.
J: This is just between us. Can’t you stop pushing her?
(FM glanced at them, and then walked out the house.)
F: Jin, I’ll be back. Wait for me. (Ran after her mother)
(J grabbed F’s wrist, but F got rid of her.)

We can see that the parents in the two movies hold totally different attitudes about their daughters being lesbians. In *Imagine Me & You*, Rachel and Luce’s parents encourage their daughter to choose what they really want. In *Butterfly*, Flavia’s parents are another story. They force Flavia to be their “idealistic daughter”. They don’t allow her to pursue what she yearns for. Not to disappoint her parents, Flavia just follows her parents’ expectation.

In short, Rachel and Luce’s parents respect their children’s choice very much. On the contrary, Flavia’s parents seem to be more conservative and disapprove their children when they become “different”.

2.3.5. Husband

*Imagine Me & You*

Heck felt something weird between Rachel and him soon after they are married. However, he did not tell Rachel his suspicion, somehow because he was afraid that there may really be something wrong. When Rachel tells Heck she had fallen for someone else, though busted, he doesn’t express his anger or sorrow to Rachel at all. Heck hopes Rachel to be happy more than anything else. Although Rachel tells Heck she isn’t leaving, he still decides to let her go.

Here’s their conversation at the moment.

(H: Heck)
R: I’m not gonna leave you.
H: If you respect me at all, that’s exactly what you will do.
H: It’s not you leaving that’s gonna kill me. It’s you loving someone more.
R: No, you’re not walking away. Don’t walk away from me.
H: Yeah, keep saying that. Let me pretend this is my choice.
R: What do you mean?
H: Oh, come on, Rach, we both know you’d have left me in the end anyway.
R: That’s not true.
H: Yes it is!
H: You know, I want you to be happy more than anything else. I wanted to be the cause of happiness in you. But if not, then…I can’t stand in the way.
H: Cause what you’re feeling now, Rachel, is an unstoppable force… which means that I’ve got to move.
(He kisses Rachel on the forehead and walks away.)

Butterfly

When Ming finds Flavia acting strange, he looks into Flavia’s past and found she has been lesbian in high school. Ming considers homosexual a kind of disease. He tries to convince Flavia that she is “alright” now and there isn’t any problem left. After Flavia thinks everything through and tells Ming it would be better for both if they divorce, Ming becomes furious. He refuses to divorce so much that he promises to let Flavia do anything she wants as long as she doesn’t mention it.

The following is what they say when it comes to divorce.

(When Flavia comes home, Ming doesn’t want to hear what Flavia is trying to say.)

F: You are a good man. I don’t want to lie to you. You shouldn’t lie to yourself either. Let’s…Let’s get a div…
(M closed the fridge violently.)
M: I won’t let you mention that word! Never!
M: It won’t do either of us any good.
F: Who am I? What do you take me for? I can’t compare to a woman?
(M sat down and took several breaths to calm him down.)
M: As long as you didn’t mention divorce…you can do whatever you want. I won’t interfere.

When he realizes Flavia has made up her mind, Ming says she must choose between divorcing and keeping her daughter. Flavia says she wants both.

Here’s what Flavia responds to Ming’s request.

M: I’m giving you one last chance. Do you want to divorce? Or do you want Ting Ting (their daughter)?
F: I want both.
M: Okay. Divorce! But I’ll never give up Ting Ting.
F: Me, neither.
M: You’ve got that woman. Isn’t that enough?

Both Heck and Ming are not very direct people. When they first feel something wrong, they try to fix the problem unnoticeably instead of talking straight to their wife. However, after their wife tells them the truth, their reaction is quite different.

Heck, though not feeling good, doesn’t vent any of his anger to Rachel. He knows well that Rachel’s feeling is almost irresistible. Even though Rachel loves a woman more than him, he lets her pursuit her happiness and blesses her.
On the other hand, Ming feels mad because he thinks “he can’t compare to a woman.” Ming has a very strong bias against gays. In his marriage, he wants to be a controller. He cares much about the word “marriage” more than its real meaning. He just wants to maintain their marriage; despite that he knows clearly Flavia doesn’t love him. He is more self-centered comparing to Heck.

From above we can also see that, although both Rachel and Flavia care about their husbands, they act differently. Rachel thinks she can’t leave Heck for some kind of duty, and she decides to stay with Heck. To Flavia, staying with Ming will only cause more pain, so letting her leave should be the best solution. Maybe we can say that to Rachel, responsibilities are more important while to Flavia, freedom comes first.

2.3.6. People Around

*Imagine Me & You*

Rachel once asked her colleagues if they had thought of loving a woman. Her colleagues thought it was quite impossible to happen to them, but they do not have biases or negative attitudes toward being lesbian. The following is Rachel and her colleagues’ chat.

R: I’m trying to find someone for Beth, and I thought I’d double my chances.
C2: Already tried it. It didn’t happen for me. I like men. I mean, I hate men, but, you know.
C1: I always hoped to do a woman before I died. But it’s kind of like… I want to go to Norway sometime; do you know what I mean? Probably never gonna happen.

*Butterfly*

In *Butterfly*, Flavia’s two students are lesbian and run away together. They beg Flavia for help. Flavia tells them to go back home, but their parents are strongly against them.

One of the students says, “They scolded us, but a lot of people are like us actually.”

Not before long, one of the two girls is sent abroad by her family, causing great pain to the other girl, which attempts to suicide.

At the same time, Ming blames Flavia for letting her students stay at their place. To Ming, it is an immature behavior and shouldn’t be allowed. Ming thinks homosexual is just a kind of mental disease. He thinks Flavia is once “had a problem” and should be alright now.

In *Imagine Me & You*, the issue of gay doesn’t seem to be abnormal in most people’s opinion. It’s okay to talk about it freely. On the contrary, in *Butterfly*, except the lesbians themselves almost everybody thinks being lesbian is a severe problem that should be treated and lesbian couples
Over the Rainbow– the comparison of two lesbian-themed movies Imagine Me & You and Butterfly should be separated immediately.

2.3.7. Ending

Rachel and Luce accompany each other in the end. Heck flies abroad, recovering from the sadness of losing Rachel. Flavia decides to leave her husband and daughter to live with Yip. Ming, though being steeped in soreness, lets Flavia go finally.

In the end of the two movies, Rachel and Flavia accept themselves as lesbians and are with the ones they love. However, there isn’t more description about what happens after that: whether they get married, the reaction of their parents and people around them, etc. The directors just toned down and gave a vague ending, giving us much space of imagination. As a consequence, we aren’t able to see the further problems the lesbians may face in reality. In our opinion, maybe it’s because the issue “homosexual” is still, to some extent, sensitive, so the directors didn’t express too much on this topic.

2.4. Scenes Analysis

We selected three scenes in each movie: one in the beginning, one in the end, and another one during the movie. We try to find something special in them.

2.4.1. The Beginning

Imagine Me & You

In Rachel’s wedding, she gives a speech. In the minute of her speech, there are two scenes taking turn every 1~2 sentences Rachel says. Rachel’s sound continues while the image switches frequently. One scene is in the wedding banquet, and the other is Luce going home alone (The sentences of this scene are underlined)

R: Okay, so this is me now. I’ve been looking forward to this day all my life.

When Rachel says this, the scene changes and we see Luce walk out of the banquet. At the same time, the background music begins, so the following sounds more like Rachel’s monologue.

The scene in the wedding is bright, just like Rachel’s delight to marry to Heck at that moment. On the other hand, Luce is alone at the time, so the scene of her is darker, especially after she walks away from the wedding hall.
R: And I’m glad to share it with so many people I love,

And a few people I’ve never met before. But I’m sure you’re all great, too.

The scene is pictured from a distance. The sight of Luce’s back becomes smaller and smaller.

R: I feel like I’ve known Heck all my life, and I know I’ll know him for the rest of it. He’s my best friend. They say fairytales have happy endings, even though the process can be rough. But Heck and I were mates and then lovers, and it’s been smooth all the way.

At first, we see her walking farther and farther away. It’s possible that Luce and Rachel will never meet again. Just like that Luce is becoming smaller on the screen; she may be just a guest Rachel meets by coincidence on her wedding. However, after Rachel saying a few words, we see Luce on the screen again. This time, the lens zooms in. We can see her from a nearer distance. Apparently, Luce is not going to simply fade out from Rachel’s life.
R: Maybe that’s the best kind of fairytale.

The lens taking Rachel also keeps zooming in. When she first starts her speech, we see half of her body just like seeing her from the audience. Now it’s taking only Rachel’s face.

We can see the close-up shot of both Rachel and Luce in this minute; maybe it’s a hint of that the following story is going to be closely related to the two people.
R: Sort of, toast-schmoast won’t do all that, but if you could all just wish us luck, Heck and I would appreciate very much. All ready? One, two, three.

Everyone: Good luck!

When we hear everyone saying “Good luck” to Rachel and Heck, we can’t see the scene because on the screen is Luce switching off the bed lamp. Rachel and Heck is receiving everyone’s blessing while Luce is at home alone. At that moment, the three people are all on their original life track; they have no idea about what is going to happen. Still, with the scene changing repeatedly, there’s a feeling that some story is going to happen between the three people.

Butterfly

In the beginning of Butterfly, first, there’s the scene of Yip singing a melody. After a short while, the melody stops while the scene changes to Flavia and Jin running up a staircase and stop on the edge of a balcony excitedly. This part is without sound.

Then, the screen turns black and the caption of the movie’s beginning pops up. The scene then changes to Flavia teaching Chinese in class. In class, she and her students read an article “Weight of Thirty Years” (三十年的重量) by Yu Qiuyu (余秋雨).

Flavia reads, “Among the unending phone calls, I suddenly heard a voice of an old man. It’s 30 years ago when I was in high school, my Chinese teacher, Mr. Mu Ni.” After she reads to “Chinese teacher”, the screen suddenly turns to all yellow and then appears the face of Flavia in high school. Only a few seconds later, the screen turns yellow again, and then switches back to the classroom. Her students continue the reading; one after another, each student read a few sentences. In this continuous background voice, the scene shifts frequently between Flavia and Jin’s frame in high school and the present scene of Flavia teaching in class, sometimes the all-yellow picture between two scenes.
The followings are some sentences of the article that may make Flavia think about the past:

“Memories of the tough but happy high school life in early sixties appear.”
“We have already forgotten the way we used to draw and write, so we can only use the hands of two middle-aged men to roll up the sweetness and bitterness of thirty years.”
“We feel some kind of great affections beyond time and space.”

In this few minutes, scenes changes frequently, maybe similar to Flavia’s disorder of thoughts.

2.4.2. The Struggle

*Imagine Me & You*

Rachel rejects Luce at the back room of the flower shop. At this scene, she leaves and closes the door. The lens keeps focus on the door because Rachel soon comes back to the room and kisses Luce. It’s just a matter of seconds.
After that, the romantic music begins. They lie down and hug each other, keeping rolling on the floor paved with flowers, which are almost roses. The sunlight and the roses give an atmosphere of bright happiness and the joy of love. Some scenes zoom in and the light illuminates behind them, creating a dreamy aura.

Then Luce’s backside is stabbed by the thorns of the roses. They look at each other and both laugh mischievously. At the same time, the background music fades away. They keep giggling until Heck’s voice appears at the entrance.
The lens zooms in to capture Rachel and Luce’s fine expression when noticing that Heck is coming.

L: Ow!
R: What? What?
L: Thorns in my bum. (Rachel grunting)
R: I’m sorry. (Laughing.)
(The door of the entrance opens.)
L: (Stops for a while.) It’s another customer.
(They are both giggling.)
H: (In the front of the flower shop, searching for Luce.) Hello?

The roses here are symbolic of love. When Luce is stabbed by the thorns, it may also means their love is merely a fantasy. It is vulnerable and easy to be disturbed. The music totally stops when Heck’s sound comes out. Rachel and Luce’s delightful happiness just lasts a minute or so. What they have to face is the reality.
To greet Heck, Luce goes to the front of the shop and leaves Rachel in the room in case Rachel is seen by Heck. Heck doesn’t know Rachel is in the shop, either. So he asks Luce something about Rachel.

The frames are divided in two parts. One is about Heck and Luce, who is talking in the shop. The other is Rachel in the room. While Heck is talking something sentimental, the scene switches to Rachel’s gloomy face.

(Heck is going to buy some flowers.)
H: Not for me, for my wife, Rachel. Recently, she’s just been a bit……I don’t know. But you know what say……there’s nothing quite so cheering as a well-timed bloom. So, I thought one of your finest arrangements.

The flowers in the background show the different situations. In the room, the roses are still vivid. They are fancy but not that real. In the flower shop, the flowers are as usual as they are often seen. The different kinds of flowers here present the different situation. One is romantic but dreamy, while another is real-life and troubled.

Heck: And if she said what it is……that I ’m doing, or not doing, then I can stop it.
After hearing what Heck say, Rachel jumps out of the window and escapes. We don’t really see Rachel jumps out of the window, but we can infer it by Luce’s view.

Rachel chases to the park and Luce runs after her. In the park, they both don’t know what to do next. Finally, they embrace each other and go home. The gentle melody is playing. The frame zooms out, which makes the people becomes small, and give us a sense of uncertainty.

*Butterfly*

When Flavia comes to Yip’s house for dinner, she thinks of Jin. And the scene switches to Flavia’s memory. She recalls the happy and trouble-free life when she was young. The color tone of the scene is pink, which is almost related to sweet love, fantasy and youth. The back ground is a girl’s voice humming vague tunes.
The frame still stays in Flavia’s past. Flavia remembers the lyric of a song which Jin and she once read out happily together. The lyric is written by a singer who wrote songs to fight against the government. Jin was a human right activist. She is full of ambition at that time. By reading out the lyric loudly and confidently, we can see their fearlessness and hope for life:

Were not we having loved ones? Though only once in a while.
Were not we having food for our mouths? Though it’s not enough.
Were not we having a place to live in? Thought it smells.
Were not we always better than somebody else?

Then Flavia has to go back to reality. Her daughter cries in the living room because she falls down from the sofa. Flavia runs out of the room and holds her daughter in her arms. The scene is taken from the outside of Yip’s apartment to the inside. Holding her daughter, Flavia walks to the French window, which is just in the middle of the scene. It seems like that we’re watching her from another place, which doesn’t belong to her situation.
Yip goes out of the room after Flavia and looks worried. The scene transforms to the inner of the building. The lens focuses on their reflections on the window.

F: She’s fine. Shh.

They both look at the reflections of themselves for a while. Flavia’s daughter keeps crying. It reminds Flavia her responsibility. The lens changes to look from the outside for seconds and then switches to the former one. In Yip’s room, Flavia may not have to care much about others, but the world outside, however, it’s not that simple as she wishes.
Flavia watch her reflection still, and seems to think of something. She turns to face Yip and suddenly speaks.

F: Find a job and forget about me. I don’t know what I was doing just now… Just pretend that we never met. (pushes Yip.)

After saying that, Flavia, holding her daughter, takes her belongings and goes to the doorway urgently. The lens captures in a farther and a higher position. When Flavia take her bags, it changes to an equal rank as the characters and locates on the outside of the door. Through the lens, we can see the characters by a spectator’s view.

Y: We met and that’s a fact. I won’t pretend.
Yip calls behind Flavia while Flavia walking out Yip’s apartment. Flavia stops for seconds and leaves finally. When Falvia steps out Yip’s house, the scene switches to the young Falvia, who walked fast and looked unhappy just as the same.

Falvia remembers that she went to find Jin once for Jin’s poor grade and their relationship.

F: You can always re-take the exam if you work hard. I can’t do this any longer.
(Jin stared at Flavia.)
F: …I don’t want to give up either.
(They remained silent.)
Then the scene changes back. The recall is over. Flavia walks out and closes Yip’s door, which means that she wants to say goodbye to her past.

After going out, Flavia watches the door she’d just left. At the same time, her daughter starts crying again. She comforts her, looking a little depressed and reluctant to give up.
2.4.3. The Ending

*Imagine Me & You*

Heck boards on a plane. Besides him is a seat not taken, and next to it sits a girl. Cooper is singing (the same as the background music) “so happy together…”

(G: the girl sitting beside Heck)
H: Can I just…um… (Hoping to put something on the unoccupied seat)
G: Okay.
H: Thanks.
They look at each other at the same time, and both quickly look away.
H: Just making some notes for this book that I’m writing.
G: Oh, you’re writing a book? Great, because I can read.

Rachel sits alone on a bench in the park. Luce walks up to her from the back of the bench, with two drinks in her hand. The lens pictures from far away and back of Rachel. Maybe it’s similar to what Luce sees while walking toward Rachel. Then, Luce hands Rachel a cup and sits down besides her. The picturing angle changes at this moment. Now we see the front of them and it’s also picturing a lot closer. In this scene, there are no other people but Rachel and Luce, which looks like that they now can be together without being interrupted.

R: It’s cold.
Over the Rainbow– the comparison of two lesbian-themed movies *Imagine Me & You* and *Butterfly*

L: It’s good. It’s nice. (After a short while) It’s cold. They both chuckle.

Heck is on the flight.

H: How long is the flight anyway, do you know?


Different from the montage in the beginning, instead of having interlude during one scene, in the ending every part is separated. For example, there is only the frame of Rachel and Luce when we hear their voice. We see them in this half minute, and we see Heck in another half minute. This may mean an ending of the complex affections and struggles between the three people. Plus, the background music is the song “Happy Together”, which may indicates that every character have found the most suitable life for himself.

*Butterfly*

In the end of Butterfly, Flavia leaves Ming. The song, “The Best is yet to Come”, begins when Flavia draws a butterfly on Yip’s chest.
As the song continues, just like reviewing through the whole movie, the scene of the sink, Jin’s bedroom, an inn Flavia and Jin have been to, Flavia’s high school, and so on appears one after another. There aren’t any people in these scenes. Maybe it’s like Flavia is looking back at all the way she had went through.
Later, as the song goes to the chorus “To hug someone/ to kiss someone/ the best is yet to come”, we see Ming sleeping alone at home.

Then, the music fades out for a while. The scene changes to Yip craning her head out of a car window. Yip’s voice says, “Your name is Butterfly, you know? You aren’t a butterfly if you can’t fly” as she spreads her arms like the wings of a butterfly. It’s just like Yip’s wish to let Flavia go through the cocoon of all the struggles and flies freely just like a Butterfly.

When the music continues to play again, Flavia is watching something played through a projector. She laughs frequently while watching.
There is a similar scene in earlier the movie, and after that follows the scene of Flavia and Jin. From this, we infer that she may be watching the film Jin once made when Flavia is with Jin. However, at that time Flavia is sobbing consecutively. When we see she watch it the first time, she still haven’t overcome her sense of guilty. But in the end of the movie she is able to face her past with a smile.

The next image that appears is the wall Jin once wrote some words on it. This time, we can see what she has written down, “Weren’t we having tears in our eyes through the passing of time?” This sentence pattern is similar to the lyric written by a protester against the government; Flavia and Jin once read his lyrics together.
At the beginning, the scene also appears: Jin is writing on the wall. At that time, pictures are popping up one after another; in the ending the frame just comes out to the screen and stays for a few seconds. Maybe it indicates Flavia’s inner feelings from uneasiness to tranquility.

The last scene is at Flavia and Yip’s house. Flavia sits on the balcony, and she accidentally drops down one of her slippers. Then, she deliberately drops the other one. After that, Yip walks out and asks Flavia why she drops the slippers. Yip isn’t really angry at Flavia; she talks in a rather intimate way.
In the end, the lens takes from a lower place, looking up at Flavia’s feet. The lens became lower and lower, and the screen fades out to all white.
From Yip and Flavia’s talking and expressions, we can feel the sense of happiness between the two people. The movie ends with Flavia’s legs swinging freely. With the changing of capturing angle, her legs look higher and higher, giving the audience the feeling of flying.

III. Conclusion

In this research, we look carefully into the two movies, Imagine Me & You and Butterfly, which are chosen by two different groups of language-speaking people, and try to understand the reason they choose these movies. However, due to our time and language limitation, we were only able to conduct the survey to Chinese and English speaking people and get about 100 shares in both languages. Though it makes the two movies not significant enough, through them, we can still see some subtle and interesting aspects about the lives of gay people in two different circumstances.

In the movie Imagine Me & You, few people are strongly against homosexual, but there are relatively more people who disapprove of homosexual in Butterfly, such as the parents. Lesbians in Butterfly may be confronted with more stress, such as their parents and the society. But in Imagine Me & You and Butterfly, both of the lesbians have to deal with pressures from their inner selves. It seems that being a gay is still unacceptable to the gay people until they finally overcome the mental struggles, even if they have already been accepted. So there may be some established biases against gay people in both movies.

In the end of these two movies, the main characters learn to confront themselves even though there are still problems for them to deal with in reality. They present their fearlessness and optimism to the unknown future. Maybe that’s why the LGBTs choose the two movies as their favorites: the gay fantasy. They may long for having enough courage to accept themselves and being accepted. These things are usually opposed in the real world, and we can infer that these are what they hope to see while watching a gay-themed movie.

The culture things are much more complicated than we thought. It’s hard to give a thorough conclusion just by analyzing two movies because these films can’t completely stand for the two varied cultural backgrounds. Plus, while watching and analyzing the movies, we inevitably have our
own viewpoints, which may not be objective enough sometimes. As a result, we hope we can pay more effort in this subject for making this research better in the future.

IV. References

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2. Forums we advertised the survey
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   Htalk, http://htalk.proboards100.com/
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   Chadzboy, http://chadzboyz2.com/chadzforum
   Aladao, http://bbs.aladao.net/

V. Statistics of the survey

The following four pie charts are drawn based on the results we got in the online survey. The first and the second charts are participants’ answers to where they currently live; the third and fourth charts are the answers to the fill-in-blank question “What’s your favorite gay-themed movie?”

![Chart 1: The participants’ living place in the survey’s Chinese version](image-url)
Over the Rainbow—the comparison of two lesbian-themed movies *Imagine Me & You* and *Butterfly*

**Chart 2: The participants’ living place in the survey’s English version**

**Chart 3: The participants’ favorite movie in the survey’s Chinese version**
(For convenience, we didn’t change the Chinese names into English.)
“Over the Rainbow” – the comparison of two lesbian-themed movies *Imagine Me & You* and *Butterfly*

Chart 4: The participants’ favorite movie in the survey’s English version

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imagine Me &amp; You</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E.B.S.</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loving Annabelle</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broke Back Mountain</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But I'm a Cheerleader</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bound</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better Than Chocolate</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving Face</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gia</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desert Heart</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The L Word</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>High Art</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Boys Don't Cry</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aimee &amp; Jaguar</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>My Summer of Love</td>
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* 2 or 1 Vote(s): 68 Films