

Mommy's Baby

How can fans use film to create cross-temporal queer connections?

Introduction to research

- 'Carol' (dir. Todd Haynes, 2015) tells the story of Carol and Therese as they fall in love in 1950s North America, and is an adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's 1952 novel *The Price of Salt*.
- A striking feature of Carol and Therese's relationship was the age difference between the two women.
- Mandy Merck has commented how this 'negative Oedipus complex' and 'maternal melodrama' (Merck, 2017) are key to Highsmith's original text, but is only alluded to in Haynes' film.
- This research explores how fans of the film use this 'negative Oedipus complex' to create an Erotohistoriography which allows for cross temporal connections.

Theoretical framing

'Erotohistoriography does not write the lost object into the present so much as encounter it already in the present, by treating the present itself as a hybrid. And it uses the body as a tool to effect, figure, or perform that encounter'

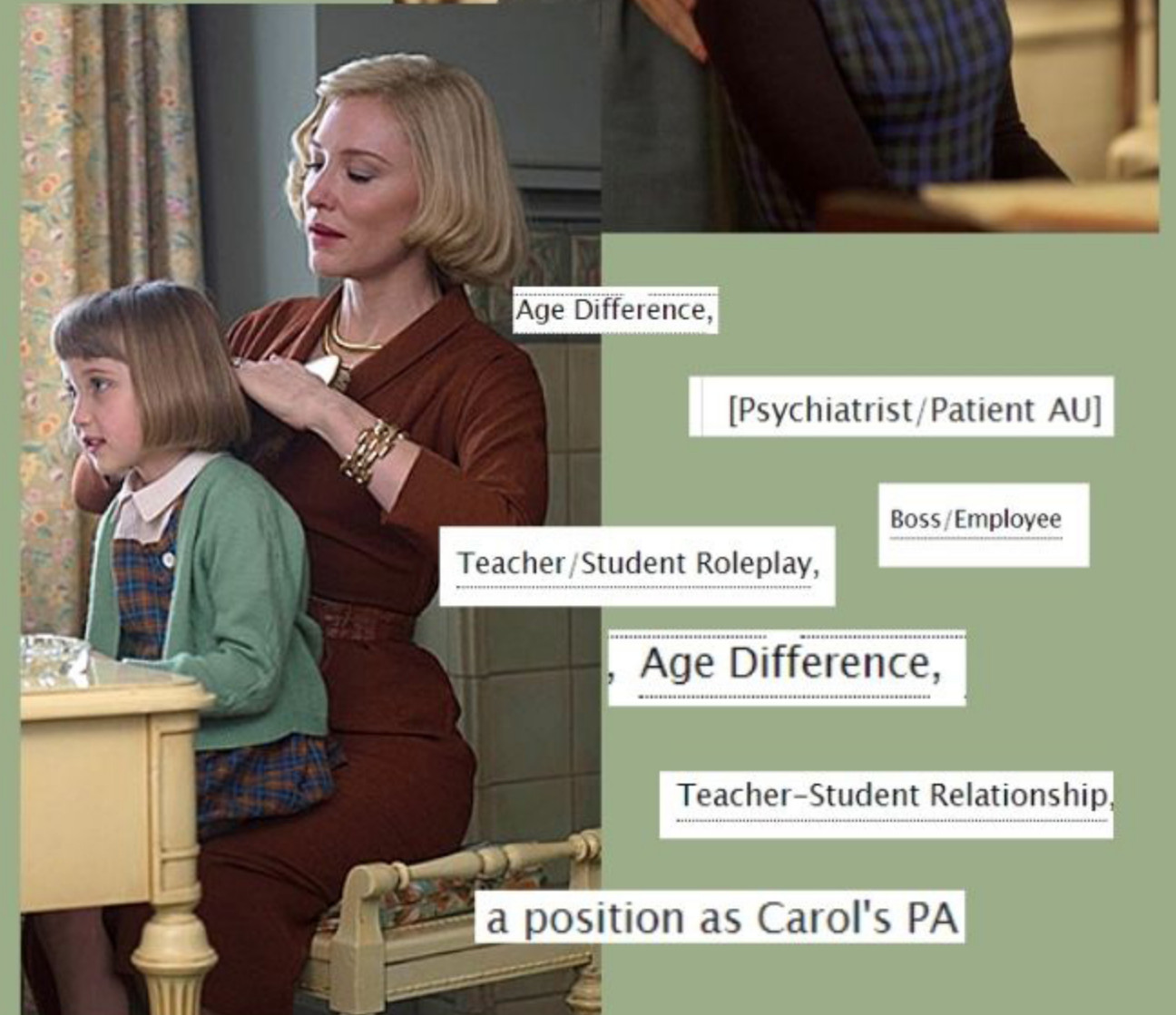
Elizabeth Freeman, 'Time Binds : Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories', Duke University Press, 2010.

CHOOSE

Sugar mommy Sugar daddy



Q cate blanchett #cate blanchett #carol
#lou miller #carol aird #oceans 8



Findings

- Fans use memes, fan fiction and fan art to explore Carol and Therese's relationship, drawing these aspects out of the film. They explore both age difference but also power dynamics in the relationship.
- By exploring the 'Mommy's Baby' theme through Haynes' film fans create a temporal clash. They bring together the original 1950s psychoanalytic origination and its 2015 eradication.
- By doing this, fans form an 'erotohistoriography', using this eroticism, shared across the 1950s and the present.
- Fans encounter this pastness in the present and utilise eroticism as a means to connect with both the characters of the film, but also to reimagine a 1950s approach and understanding to queer identity, through a shared understanding of the erotic potential of this relationship.