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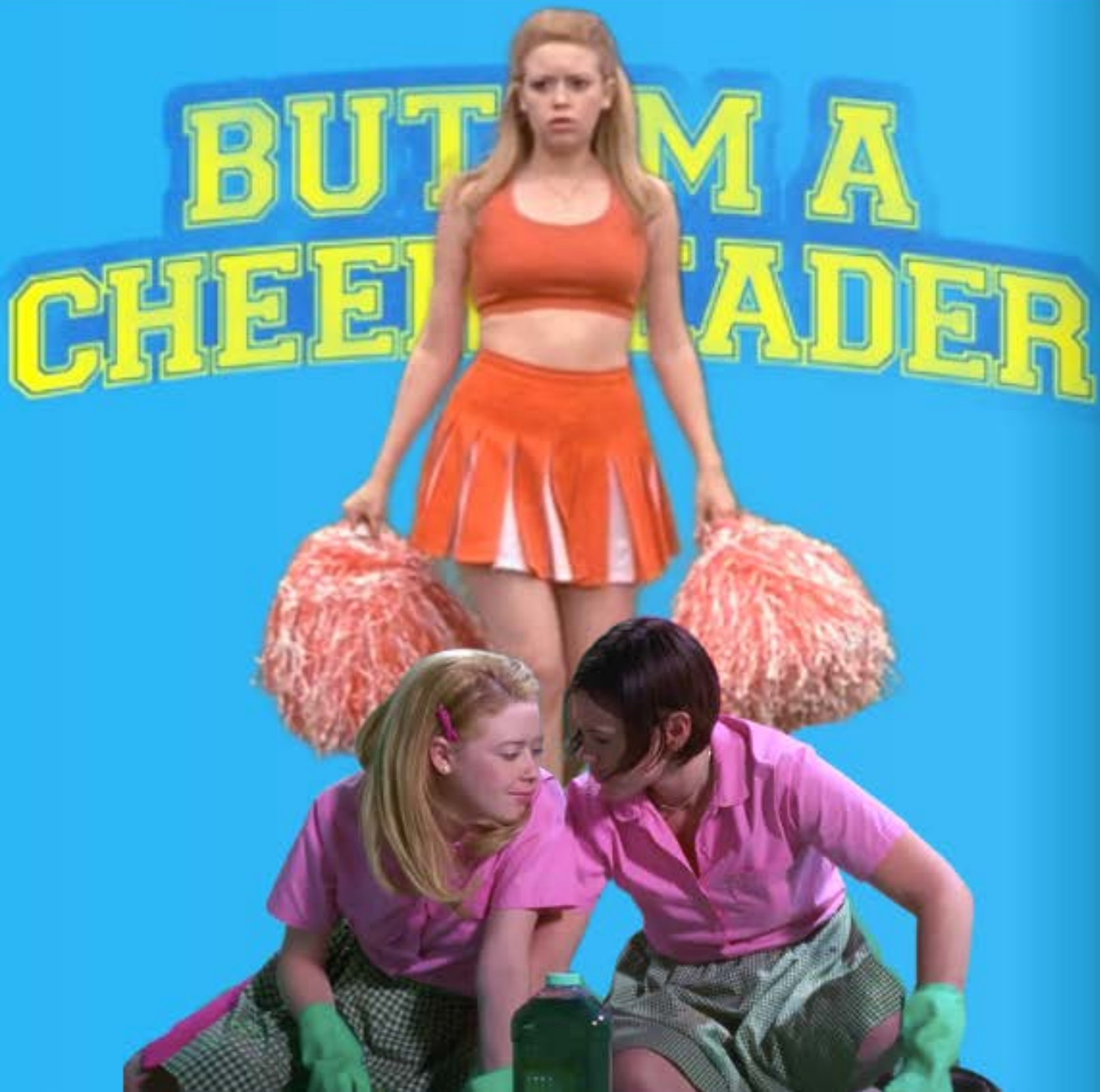
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daniel reilly



The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love, Dir. Maria Meggenti, 1995

Such a fun story about the friendship to lovers pipeline with my only quom being that there wasn't more. I couldn't get enough of these beautiful in depth characters from the classic edgy punk rocker, to the wealthy academically gifted student. It covers topics such as class, race, and, of course, sexuality. A story set in a no name town. A story for anyone partial to the experience of living in a westernized small town. This film has no shortage of sapphic characters. It is lighthearted and romantic with a great 90s aesthetic.



*But I'm A Cheerleader, Dir.
Jamie Babbit, 1999*

CAMP. All camp. If you're looking for something hilarious, highly entertaining, and aesthetically satisfying, this is a great watch! A satire on conversion therapy, this film takes the dark experience and turns it into a camp lighthearted comedy while still holding the heartfelt value that it's okay to be who you are. It takes stereotypes to the extreme to reinforce the ridiculousness of them.

THE WATERMELON WOMAN



C.L.I.T.

The Watermelon Woman

A fictional documentary film on the journey of Cheryl Dunye trying to discover the woman behind her title 'The Watermelon Woman'. Coupled with a romance subplot, this film is incredibly engaging. And, another film where there is no lack of sapphic characters. It feels like queer people are the normative society in this film. The story portrays life as a queer Black woman in a westernized society, coinciding with how they are portrayed in film history. A great film that is hilarious and authentic and that also engages critical thinking when it comes to representation in cinema.

Dir. Cheryl Dunye, 1995




BOUND



"Bound", Dir. The Wachowski Sisters, 1996

A film made by queer people for queer people. Following along with the classic tropes and stereotypes, this film is still able to create a fun, steamy, and genuinely entertaining experience without having to focus too heavily on the meaning of what it is to be queer. This film is a great guilty pleasure romance for queers! Hot badass lesbians kicking the mafia's ass, I'm fully in. Clearly, this film isn't another cis man trying to oversexualize lesbians, but of queer filmmakers making attractive characters for lesbians. The butch character might not be seen as 'hot' to a cis straight man, but could be attractive for a lesbian.

A still from the film 'Portrait of a Lady on Fire' showing two women in period dress looking at a fire in a lantern. The scene is dimly lit, with the fire providing the primary light source. The woman on the left is wearing a white blouse with a brown bodice, and the woman on the right is wearing a dark blue dress. The fire is contained in a lantern hanging from the ceiling.

Portrait of a Lady on Fire, Dir. Celine Sciemma, 2019

Portrait of a Lady on Fire

A beautiful depiction of love. Although it ends with them not being together, it is still a wonderful example, especially given the context of the time period. There's not much to say other than it felt real. When it came to intimate scenes it never showed the actual act of sex, but just before and after. This was a conscious decision for the director to make, as many, many films with depiction of lesbian love tend to oversexualize their love. This film was heavily focused on emotions and romance which made it heartfelt and beautiful.



TOMBOY

Tomboy, Dir. Celine Sciemma, 2011

Tranquility is what Tomboy is. The scenes of silence are what speak the most. The audience follows along Mikeal's journey of discovery, gender euphoria, and the painful reality of being transgender in normative society. A coming of age story learning about identity. This film creates a realistic experience of being trans in a white westernized system and the associated struggles with presenting as "cis-passing".

Note: This film does include triggering content including transphobia and bullying.

Mädchen in Uniform



The root of radical lesbian cinema is Leontine Sagan's *Madchen In Uniform*. Iconic for its anti-authoritarian and anti-fascist themes, it is also iconic as one of the first ever representations of lesbians in film history. This German classic is a shockingly fantastic watch due to its release in 1931. The lesbian characters are so normalized and accepted that it makes this film have better representation than many films in modern day! A film that reinforces the motto 'love is love', and destroys the patriarchy at the same time.

Madchen In Uniform, Dir.
Leontine Sagan, 1931