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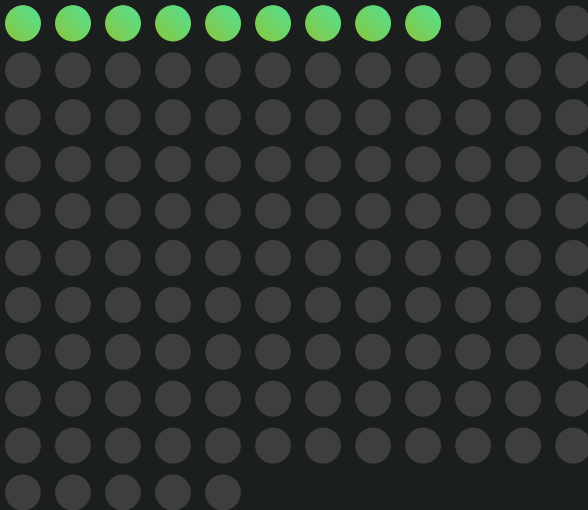
**R E S P O N S -
I B I L I T Y**

I N D E X



Of the 125 films released by major motion picture studios, **only 23** (18.4%) contained LGBTQ characters.

Nearly half (10 films, or 43%) of those 23 films included **less than one minute of screen time** for their LGBTQ characters.



Of the 125 films released by major motion picture studios, **only 9** passed the **Vito Russo Test**, which analyzes how LGBTQ characters are situated in a narrative.



20% of LGBTQ characters were people of color, a **decrease** of

5%

1

film released by a major motion picture studio in 2016 contained **transgender characters**.

The GLAAD Studio Responsibility Index (SRI) maps the quantity, quality and diversity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people in films released by seven major motion picture studios during the 2016 calendar year. GLAAD researched films released by 20th Century Fox, Lionsgate Entertainment, Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures, Universal Pictures, Walt Disney Studios and Warner Brothers, as well as films released by four subsidiaries of these major studios. The report is intended to serve as a road map toward increasing fair, accurate and inclusive LGBTQ film representations.

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Sarah Kate Ellis

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Moonlight, from the independent studio A24, made history this year as the first film led by a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) character to win the Oscar for Best Picture. Meanwhile, nearly half of the inclusive films released by the seven major studios included less than one minute of screen time for their LGBTQ characters. GLAAD started the *Studio Responsibility Index* five years ago to map the quantity, quality, and diversity of LGBTQ characters in films released by the seven major studios. We still struggle to see meaningful improvement in Hollywood's depiction of LGBTQ characters and stories.

Major releases continue to lag behind the groundbreaking stories we see in independent films (like *Moonlight*) and even further behind the LGBTQ stories on TV and streaming series like *Sense8* and *Steven Universe*. Millennials aged 18 to 34 are more than twice as likely to identify as LGBTQ as older generations.* If film wants to remain relevant and retain an audience that has more options for entertainment than ever before, the industry must catch up in reflecting the full diversity of this country.

This year, GLAAD introduced a new five-point scale for grading the studios. Our previous reporting made it clear that what was once termed "Adequate" is not at all. This expanded gauge will allow GLAAD to more accurately report on the state of LGBTQ representation in mainstream film. The new grading system will also hold Hollywood studios to a higher standard reflective of the LGBTQ inclusion that is thriving in other forms of media.

Looking back at five years of the *Studio Responsibility Index (SRI)*, there remains very little consistency in representation of LGBTQ characters. This inconsistency is seen in the year-to-year data as studios drop several grades, as well as within the studios' yearly lineup in which a single studio will release both standout inclusive



films alongside more problematic portrayals. We continue to see many of the same problems repeatedly. This includes LGBTQ characters who lack substance and are often treated only as a punchline, a dangerous message which keeps old prejudices alive both here in the U.S. and around the world where these films are distributed. Hollywood must do better to question what they are really communicating to audiences.

In 2017, we have seen signs of progress in LGBTQ representation in mainstream films. Disney's live action *Beauty and the Beast* established LeFou as a canonically gay character. His happy ending may have been a small moment, but it was a huge step forward for the industry. Disney's decision to update the character for a more contemporary audience — who see LGBTQ people and families every day — paid off at the box office with the film breaking records as the biggest March opening of all time. Lionsgate's *Power Rangers* introduced a storyline that saw the Yellow Ranger, Trini, questioning her orientation; a story reflective of many other teenagers. While

these are positive steps, as the report has shown, there is still an inconsistency as other recent releases have made headlines for including humor rooted in gay panic like *CHiPS*.

Therefore beginning this summer, GLAAD will be upping the stakes by holding Hollywood accountable for the stories they are putting on the silver screen in real time as box office dollars are on the line. We will be reporting on films as they release, and ultimately, compiling that information for a revamped *SRI* to be issued in 2018. There are plenty of unique and new LGBTQ stories to tell, and Hollywood must embrace that to remain competitive with other media industries. With this new method of reporting and future iterations of the *SRI*, GLAAD will continue to hold Hollywood accountable for who they are — or are not — representing.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Kate Ellis".

Sarah Kate Ellis
President & CEO, GLAAD

* *Accelerating Acceptance 2017*, HarrisPoll/GLAAD

Methodology

For this report, GLAAD focused its analysis on the seven film studios that had the highest theatrical grosses from films released in 2016, as reported by the box office database Box Office Mojo. Those seven are:

- 20th Century Fox
- Lionsgate Entertainment
- Paramount Pictures
- Sony Pictures
- Universal Pictures
- The Walt Disney Studios
- Warner Brothers

This report examines films that were released theatrically during the 2016 calendar year (January 1 to December 31) under the official studio banners and imprints. Films released by these studio's "art house" divisions (such as Fox Searchlight) were analyzed separately and not part of the parent studio's final tally or grade. The total number of films released by major studios that fell within the research parameters is 125.

GLAAD separately analyzed the films released under four smaller studio imprints that are sometimes referred to as "art house" divisions. This was done to compare the quantity and quality of LGBTQ representations in these studios' releases directly to parent companies. These specialty films are typically distributed and marketed to a much smaller audience than their major studio counterparts. These distinctions were informed in part by the box office reporting of Box Office Mojo and other entertainment industry databases. The total number of films that fell within the research parameters is 41. These divisions include:

- Focus Features (Universal Pictures)
- Fox Searchlight (20th Century Fox)
- Roadside Attractions (Lionsgate Entertainment)
- Sony Pictures Classics (Sony Pictures)

Each film was researched and reviewed for inclusion of LGBTQ characters. The total number of LGBTQ characters was recorded for each film, as well as each character's race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

The films were also reviewed for the presence of general LGBTQ content and anti-LGBTQ language or "humor," though because such content must be considered in context, the language was not quantified for this report.

Additionally, each film was assigned to one of five genre categories: comedy, drama, family, fantasy/science fiction, and documentary. The family category included animated and children's films rated PG and under. The category of fantasy/science fiction also included horror films and action films not rooted in reality rated PG-13 and above. In the case of films that clearly straddled genre lines, categories were assigned based on the predominant genre suggested by both the film and its marketing campaigns.

Based on the overall quantity, quality, and diversity of LGBTQ representation, a grade was then assigned to each studio: Excellent, Good, Insufficient, Poor, or Failing.

We must also recognize that some of the films counted here as LGBTQ-inclusive will not necessarily be seen as such by everyone. Every year GLAAD finds characters that must be subjectively interpreted to be seen as LGBTQ, require external confirmation of the filmmakers' intentions, or rely on pre-existing knowledge of source material or a public figure on whom a character is based.

Note: Prior to the 2017 report, GLAAD assigned studios scores on a four point scale of Excellent, Good, Adequate, or Failing.

The Vito Russo Test

Taking inspiration from the “Bechdel Test,” which examines the way female characters are portrayed and situated within a narrative, GLAAD developed its own set of criteria to analyze how LGBTQ characters are included within a film. The Vito Russo Test takes its name from celebrated film historian and GLAAD co-founder Vito Russo, whose book *The Celluloid Closet* remains a foundational analysis of LGBTQ portrayals in Hollywood film. These criteria can help guide filmmakers to create more multidimensional characters while also providing a barometer for representation on a wide scale. This test represents a minimum standard GLAAD expects a greater number of mainstream Hollywood films to reach in the future.

To pass the Vito Russo Test, the following must be true:

01.

The film contains a character that is identifiably lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender.

02.

That character must not be solely or predominantly defined by their sexual orientation or gender identity (i.e. they are comprised of the same sort of unique character traits commonly used to differentiate straight/non-transgender characters from one another).

03.

The LGBTQ character must be tied into the plot in such a way that their removal would have a significant effect, meaning they are not there to simply provide colorful commentary, paint urban authenticity, or (perhaps most commonly) set up a punchline. The character must matter.

Only nine of the 23 (39%) LGBTQ-inclusive major studio films passed the Vito Russo Test this year. This is a slight increase from the previous report in which eight of 22 (36%) inclusive films released in 2015 passed; the lowest percentage in the study’s history. This is compared to 11 of 20 (55%) inclusive films released in 2014, seven of 17 (41%) in 2013, and six out of 14 (43%) inclusive films released in 2012. There is clearly much room for industry improvement. More films need to include substantial LGBTQ characters that pass this simple test. However, as several of the films tracked prove, passing this test in no way guarantees that a film is not problematic or offensive in its portrayal of LGBTQ people.

Overview of Findings

General Findings

Of the 125 film releases GLAAD counted from the major studios in 2016, 23 (18.4%) contained characters identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. This is an increase of nearly one percentage point from the 17.5% of films (22 of 126) found to be inclusive in 2015.

Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity of LGBTQ Characters

Gay men continue to be the most represented by a significant margin with 83% of the inclusive films featuring gay male characters. This is an increase of six percentage points from the previous report (77%). Representation of lesbian characters is up with 35% of inclusive films including lesbians, a significant increase of 12 percentage points from the year before. There was also an increase in bisexual representation: 13% of major studios' inclusive films counted bi characters compared to 9% in last year's report. GLAAD counted one transgender-inclusive film (Paramount's *Zoolander 2*), similar to the previous report.

GLAAD tallied 70 LGBTQ characters among all mainstream releases in 2016, up from 47 in 2015. It is important to note that 14 of these characters were part of a single musical number in Universal Pictures' *PopStar: Never Stop Never Stopping*, which misleadingly inflated the numbers. Male characters again vastly outnumbered females by two to one (47 to 22), compared to 36 men and 11 women in 2015's major studio releases. One character (All, Paramount's *Zoolander 2*) was counted as non-binary.

Race & Ethnicity of LGBTQ Characters

The racial diversity of LGBTQ characters again decreased in films tracked in 2016 after another dramatic drop the year before. In 2016, only 20% were people of color, compared to 25.5% the year before and 32.1% in films released in 2014. Of the 70 LGBTQ characters counted, 48 were white (69%), nine were Black/African American (13%), one was Latinx (1%), and four were Asian/Pacific Islander (6%). Eight characters (11%) were non-human (Disney's *Zootopia*, Sony's *The Angry Birds Movie* and *Sausage Party*).

Representation by Genre & Studio

As has been the case each year since GLAAD began this report, comedies remain the most likely major studio films to be LGBTQ-inclusive. Of the 125 films tracked, GLAAD identified 39 films as comedies, of which 12 (31%) were inclusive. By comparison, GLAAD counted 44 films as genre films (action, sci-fi, fantasy/horror), of which six (14%) films were inclusive. Additionally, two of 27 dramas (7%), and three of 15 animated/family films (20%) included LGBTQ characters. GLAAD did not count any documentaries from the major studios in 2016.

Paramount and Universal Pictures tied as the most inclusive major studios tracked in this year's report. Five of Paramount's 15 films (33%) were LGBTQ-inclusive, and Universal's five of 17 total films equates to 29%. Warner Brothers is next with four of 19 films (21%), followed by 20th Century Fox at three of 16 films (19%), and Lionsgate with three of 24 films (13%). Two of Sony's 21 films were inclusive (10%), and Disney rounds out the group with one of 13 (8%). In last year's reporting, both Paramount and Disney were found to completely exclude LGBTQ characters from their slates.

GLAAD also examined the film releases of four smaller, affiliated studios (Focus Features, Fox Searchlight, Roadside Attractions, and Sony Pictures Classics) to draw a comparison between content released by the mainstream studios and perceived "art house" divisions. Of the 41 films released under those studio imprints in 2016, we found seven to be LGBTQ-inclusive (17%). This is down from the 22% (10 of 46) of films from the same divisions that we found to be inclusive in 2015, but still up from the first year of counting these studios when we counted only 10.6% (five of 47).

Observations & Recommendations

Mainstream film continues to lag far behind TV and other forms of media when it comes to LGBTQ representation.

This year, GLAAD has introduced a new grading system that holds the studios to a higher standard to reflect the quality and quantity of LGBTQ representation we are seeing in other forms of entertainment media. On the new five-grade scale, three studios received “Poor” ratings for their 2016 slates [20th Century Fox, Paramount, Warner Brothers] and three others received “Failing” ratings [Lionsgate, Sony Pictures, Walt Disney Studios]. Universal Pictures is the only studio to be rated “Insufficient.” No studios were rated “Good” this year, and none have ever received an “Excellent” rating.

Studios must do better to not only include more LGBTQ characters, but to construct LGBTQ roles that are directly tied to the plot.

The overwhelming majority of LGBTQ characters in mainstream films are still minor, in both screen time and substance. This has been a consistent problem over the five years that GLAAD has tracked LGBTQ characters in Hollywood releases. Of the 23 mainstream films that GLAAD found to be LGBTQ-inclusive, 10 (43%) included less than one minute of screen time for their LGBTQ characters. While some of these were positive moments of inclusion like Sony Pictures’ *Storks* and Disney’s *Zootopia*, many of these characters only existed to be punchlines or establish urban authenticity. Many audiences likely missed several of these characters altogether. This brevity remains standard for LGBTQ inclusion.

Creators need to learn that appealing to one audience does not have to mean insulting other audiences.

Comedy films (the genre most likely to include LGBTQ characters) continued to include out-and-out defamatory portrayals of LGBTQ people. The jokes around these characters relied on gay panic and defamatory stereotypes for cheap laughs. *Dirty Grandpa* and *Central Intelligence* were two of the most egregious offenders, and the non-inclusive films *The Brothers Grimsby* and *Ride Along 2* also included offensive humor based in idea that two men touching each other is inherently strange. Comedy can be a powerful tool in challenging existing norms, but when crafted without thought, these jokes have the opposite effect by signaling that anti-LGBTQ attitudes are acceptable.

Creators need to reflect the full diversity of our community, and tell those stories through the eyes of more than one character that allows for new and unique stories that audiences have not yet seen.

The racial diversity of LGBTQ characters remains a problem in all forms of media, but mainstream film is particularly dismal after a five-percentage point drop in LGBTQ characters of color. This is the second straight year with a significant decrease of LGBTQ characters of color; our previous report found a near seven-percentage point drop in 2015 films from the year before. Many of these characters were isolated tokens burdened with representing multiple communities through the views of one person – often limited to less than five minutes of screen time. Successful and critically acclaimed films that include central LGBTQ characters of color like *Moonlight*, *Star Trek Beyond*, *Pariah*, and *Lilting* should send a message that there is an audience and a hunger for these stories.

Filmmakers should question what they are really communicating to audiences when they use thoughtless “humor” targeting an already marginalized community.

Hollywood film most notably falls behind other forms of media in its portrayal – or lack thereof – of transgender characters. For the second year, GLAAD found one trans-inclusive mainstream film and, again, the character existed solely as a punchline. Paramount’s *Zoolander 2* included Benedict Cumberbatch as All, a cartoonish portrayal of someone who is non-binary, who only exists to mock people who don’t perform traditional gender roles as strange and “other.” Several other mainstream films, which did not have transgender characters, nevertheless included so-called humor rooted in trans panic. There was one film from the smaller subsidiary studios, Fox Searchlight’s *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie*, which included transgender characters. Again, the character’s identities were treated as punchlines and one was a last minute reveal.



20th Century Fox

RYAN REYNOLDS AS WADE WILSON/DEADPOOL, DEADPOOL

Recognized among Hollywood's powerhouse studios, the Fox Film Corporation was founded by producer William Fox in 1915, subsequently merging with Twentieth Century Pictures (founded in 1933) in 1935 to form 20th Century Fox. Media magnate Rupert Murdoch bought the studio in the mid-1980s, making it a subsidiary of News Corporation. 20th Century Fox is now part of parent company 21st Century Fox. Among Fox's most famous films are early blockbuster franchises like *Star Wars*, *Alien*, and *Die Hard*.

Aside from Walt Disney Studios, 20th Century Fox has one of the slightest track records when it comes

to LGBTQ-inclusive films, but it includes a few standouts in its repertoire. *Myra Breckinridge* (1970) and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) contain some of the earliest significant transgender characters, though both depictions are arguably more sensationalized than true-to-life. In 1982, the studio released the drama *Making Love*, which was one of the first realistically depicted gay love stories ever made by a major film studio. Other inclusive films released over the years include *Silkwood* (1983), *The Object of My Affection* (1998), *The Family Stone* (2005), and *How to Train Your Dragon 2* (2014).

In 2016, 20th Century Fox released **16** films, **three** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 19%. **Two of these films passed the Vito Russo Test.**

RATING OVER TIME



Deadpool

Widest theatrical release: 3,856 theaters

This antihero movie follows the origin story of the darkly twisted and sarcastic mercenary, Deadpool/Wade Wilson. While director Tim Miller told press ahead of the film's release that Deadpool was pansexual, the only references that made it to screen were played for comedic effect in throwaway jokes intended to emphasize just how outrageous the character is rather than any real sense of desire. Much was made of a scene where Wade and his girlfriend engage in pegging (a man being anally penetrated by a partner wearing a strap on), but again, the scene was played as a joke and as a painful moment that Wade himself was not actually wanting to engage in other than as a favor to his lover. The portrayal of a pansexual identity as a brazen or scandalous trait, rather than a lived identity, has real consequences for bisexual+ people. Because their identities are often misunderstood, bisexual+ people are less likely to be out to family and friends than gay and lesbian people. The film's star Ryan Reynolds has expressed interest in his character getting a boyfriend in the upcoming sequel; we hope this relationship makes it to screen.

Independence Day: Resurgence

Widest theatrical release: 4,130 theaters

In this sequel to the 1996 original, the audience learns that Dr. Brakish Okun has been in a 20-year coma after being used by the alien invaders in the first film. His partner, fellow Area 51 scientist Dr. Isaacs, has been caring for him ever since. The film fumbled its chance for a meaningful story between the two men, as when they reunite there are some jokes made, but no affectionate gestures or "I love you's" shared. Near the film's end, Isaacs dies and the couple still does not share anything very significant. Compared to the numerous embraces the straight characters share, the lack of intimacy between the only queer characters is a glaring missed opportunity.



Keeping Up with the Joneses

Widest theatrical release: 3,022 theaters

This action comedy included an extended kiss between the two female leads, but the exchange was only a distraction technique in order for one of the women to pass a weapon to the other while all the men in the room were preoccupied with staring at them. The framing of physical affection between two women as a distraction for straight men is a long running plot device that we would be happy to see never used again. The women are both straight, so GLAAD did not include either of them in its final tally.

Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates

Widest theatrical release: 3,008 theaters

After brothers Mike and Dave Stangle's Craigslist ad searching for dates to their sister's wedding goes viral, they get replies from a variety of people hoping for a free Hawaiian vacation including a lesbian woman and a man who shows up dressed as a woman. The man, Bob, replies it's "not a problem" when his colleagues tell him the ad applies only to women. He then meets the brothers as "Lauralie," and eventually takes off the wig,



telling them he recently went through a divorce and needs a vacation. He offers the men sexual favors after they turn him down as their date to Hawaii. While it seems Bob is not actually a transgender woman, the joke here is rooted in trans panic. When Mike and Dave meet "Lauralie," they are clearly supposed to be uncomfortable because "Lauralie" looks like a man in a dress, while the audience is supposed to laugh at the idea that Bob is actually a man "tricking" the brothers. This very clearly furthers the dangerous cultural narrative that someone who does not look conventionally female is a joke to be laughed at, and that straight men might be "tricked" by a woman who's "really a man."

Mike and Dave's bisexual cousin Terry plays a larger role in the film as she competes with Mike for Tatiana's attention, and the family pressures him to live up to Terry's business successes. However, her story fell into some of the negative tropes we still see so often when it comes to bisexual characters. Terry bribes Tatiana with backstage tickets to perform sex acts on her. In another scene, she propositions two men for a threesome. The repeated portrayal of bisexual characters in media as hypersexualized undermines the truth that bisexuality is a real and valid sexual orientation.

Fox Searchlight

In 2016, Fox Searchlight released **5** films, **two** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 40%.

Fox Searchlight Pictures, created in 1994, is a subsidiary of 20th Century Fox and specializes in the release and distribution of independent and foreign films in the United States, as well as horror films and dramedies. Fox Searchlight Pictures is responsible for the release of several LGBTQ-inclusive and Academy Award-winning and nominated films, including *Boys Don't Cry* (1999), about the murder of transgender man Brandon Teena, and *Kinsey* (2004), a biopic of the famed sex researcher.

A Bigger Splash

Widest theatrical release: 378 theaters

This psychological drama follows couple Marianne and Paul who are unexpectedly reunited with Marianne's former manager and lover, Harry, and his newly found daughter Penelope whom he is hinted to be sleeping with. Some outlets have read the Harry character as bisexual after a scene where he tells Paul that he is "metro sexy," and Paul later says Harry would sleep with anyone. These lines could be seen as hinting on the part of the screenplay, but is ultimately more of a comment on others' perceptions of Harry than indicative of his own desires. GLAAD did not count the character in its final tally.

Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie

Widest theatrical release: 355 theaters

This film wraps up the *Absolutely Fabulous* franchise that began in 1992, and that dated mentality was obvious in the script, which made several transphobic

missteps. One such 'joke' involves the reveal that Edina's ex-husband Marshall "is a transgender," and continues downhill from there. Marshall's wife, Bo, attempts to unbutton Marshall's shirt while saying, "Show them your breasts." Edina's mother asks Marshall "when it comes off," and the scene continues in that vein with several other tasteless jokes. In the same scene, Bo is wearing a large wig styled as an afro, and says that she is now a "black person," making a ridiculous parallel between her spouse's transition and her own assertion that she's changed her racial identity. Later, Patsy and Edina flee to Cannes where Patsy goes undercover as a man and marries Baroness Lubliana, the richest woman in the world, to gain access to her fortune. In the final act of the film, Patsy removes her mustache and admits that she is not a man, but Lubliana replies, "I know. And I'm not a woman." Patsy and Edina confer on the disclosure, referring to Lubliana as "him/her" and debating whether this means Patsy will not "need the strap on."

This type of so-called humor exploits an already marginalized community and reduces a person

to what body parts they may or may not have, causing real harm. When less than 16% of Americans say they personally know a trans person, the images they see in the media form the basis of what they know about transgender people. Lazy "jokes" like these are disappointing in a franchise that has always been more thoughtful about portraying gay and lesbian characters.

In a mid-film scene, a flight attendant says, "I hate how you have to be nice to transgendered [sic] people now," in reference to Patsy. While the filmmakers have referred to her as a transgender character in past, this seems to be solely in reference to a one-off joke from the series' original run about Patsy briefly living as a man until "her penis fell off." For that reason, GLAAD did not count Patsy as a transgender character in our final numbers. In addition to Marshall and Lubliana, *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie* included cameos by several out celebrities who appeared as themselves, and Chris Colfer playing a gay hairdresser.

Demolition

Widest theatrical release: 862 theaters

Demolition follows the story of Davis, a man who has lost his wife and turns to physical destruction to cope. He becomes obsessed with taking objects apart to learn how they work, and forms a friendship with customer service representative Karen, who is moved by his letters to her company. Davis and Karen's teenage son, Chris, form a rocky friendship that leads to Chris eventually asking Davis if he thinks Chris might be gay. After Chris says that there is a boy he finds interesting, Davis advises him to stay in the closet until he can move to a bigger city. In the next scene, Chris goes clubbing with a male friend and ends up in the hospital after being jumped by six men. Chris says that "being myself felt good" despite the violence. As Chris never seemed to be actually uncomfortable with himself to begin with, it is disheartening that the film decided to use this kind of violence as a plot device.



Lionsgate Entertainment

ZACH GERARD AS HANNES PIKE, NOW YOU SEE ME 2

The youngest of the film studios that GLAAD tracks, Lionsgate was originally formed in Vancouver in 1997 but has produced some of Hollywood's biggest blockbusters in recent years. Since its inception, the company has grown significantly through acquisitions of other companies, including Summit Entertainment in 2012, which produced the highly profitable *Twilight* film franchise.

The very first film Lionsgate released was *The Pillow Book* (1997), in which Ewan McGregor costarred as a bisexual man, and the company has had quite a few other notable LGBTQ-inclusive films since. These include *Gods and Monsters* (1998),

But I'm a Cheerleader (2000), *Urbania* (2000), *Lost and Delirious* (2001), *All Over the Guy* (2001), *Happy Endings* (2005), *Precious* (2009), *Albert Nobbs* (2012), *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (2012), *American Ultra* (2015), and *Freeheld* (2015).

In 2016, Lionsgate Entertainment released **24** films, **three** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 12.5%. **One of these films passed the Vito Russo Test.**

RATING OVER TIME





Criminal

Widest theatrical release: 2,683 theaters

This crime-thriller follows Jerico Stewart, a former death row inmate who is the test subject for a dangerous surgery meant to give him the memories of a dead man. When Jerico arrives in London and steals a car, the audience sees a montage of notable landmarks and people walking the streets, including two men kissing on a bridge, which prompts Jerico to smile and cheer. While it is noteworthy that the film decided to include gay couples as part of the fabric of what makes London great, the brevity of the scene (less than five seconds) remains entirely too common for LGBTQ inclusion.

Dirty Grandpa

Widest theatrical release: 2,912 theaters

Dirty Grandpa is one of the more offensive films released recently by a major studio, with a never-ending arsenal of homophobic jokes about feminine mannerisms or effeminate clothing, butch lesbians, and prison rape. Bradley, a gay black man, is a friend and vacation partner to the young women who ultimately end up dating the titular grandpa and his grandson, Jason. From his first moment on screen, Bradley has no agency or story, and is only present as a punchline for Dick's racist and anti-gay jokes. While the film attempts to turn Dick's



character around when he later beats up and coerces an apology from a man who was harassing Bradley for his sexuality, it is clear that the writers still find a gay character to be a prop to benefit someone else's story. Dick makes the man say he was raised in a different time and tell Bradley that if he "had to be gay to prevent a terrorist attack" he would choose to be with Bradley. In a later scene, after spending the entire film being bullied by Dick, Bradley says he now wants to sleep with him. There is an additional running gag throughout the film that Jason is actually a butch lesbian. This is one more joke that makes LGBTQ people into the punchline.

While juvenile comedies are known for playing to the lowest common denominator of "humor" to appeal to a studio's idea of what its audience will find amusing, filmmakers must learn that appealing to one audience does not mean the project must insult a different audience. This film's outdated humor would have been better left on the cutting room floor.

Now You See Me 2

Widest theatrical release: 3,232 theaters

The second installment in this magical crime fighting franchise sees the Four Horsemen tasked with a new job in London to save



their reputation, and expose the wrongdoings of a criminal and his son. Hannes Pike, the son of a South African gangster, is a pawn in the Horsemen's overall scheme. They hypnotize him and go undercover as his team to get access to a computer chip that is integral to their plot, but are surprised to learn that they misread the group when security questions them. It turns out the female member of Hannes' team is actually a renowned doctor rather than his love interest as the group assumed. The reveal is played as a joke on the team for their assumption, but is unfortunately then used to further fuel the anti-gay jokes that Merrit makes towards Atlas (the group member who poses as Hanne's "boy toy," Buffy) throughout the film.

Roadside Attractions

In 2016, Roadside Attractions released **10** films, **one** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 10%.

Roadside Attractions, founded in 2003 by Howard Cohen and Eric d'Arbeloff, specializes largely in independent films. In 2007, Lionsgate bought a portion of the company. Notable LGBTQ-inclusive films previously released by the studio include *I Love You Phillip Morris* (2010), *Albert Nobbs* (2012), *Dear White People*, and *The Skeleton Twins* (2014).



Hello, My Name is Doris

Widest theatrical release: 979 theaters

This comedy follows Doris, an office worker in her mid-60s whose mother just passed away, as she drastically changes her life and romantically pursues a much younger coworker. Another coworker at Doris' office is Nasir, an openly gay man. Though Nasir is not a very significant character in the film, he often serves as the voice of the collective of coworkers in their office. Most of the time, he acts as the face of normalcy compared to Doris' wild fantasy life and eccentricities. Later in the film, the audience meets Nasir's date, Keith, at a holiday dinner. The film also makes several one-off jokes about the community in service of portraying how many queer people a hipster in Brooklyn might know, including a coworker who is a member of an LGBTQ knitting group and someone who says she is a teacher at a "gay preschool in Park Slope." This kind of casual inclusion – LGBTQ characters clearly established as such in the material, but whose story does not revolve solely around their identity – is something we would like to see more of going forward.



Paramount Pictures

JOHN CHO AS LIEUTENANT HIKARU SULU, STAR TREK BEYOND

Established in the earliest days of the American film industry, Paramount Pictures traces its lineage all the way back to 1912 and the founding of the Famous Players Film Company, which was one of three companies that would merge in 1916 and eventually become Paramount. Big-budget, mass appeal franchises is how one would describe many of the studio's most recognizable releases, including *Star Trek*, *Transformers*, and *Mission Impossible*. But if one were to look at Paramount Pictures' most recent crop of films, it may appear that the studio is not particularly fond of taking risks. GLAAD's 2016 *SRI* found that Paramount did not have a single LGBTQ-inclusive film in the studio's 2015 slate. This lack has not always been the case.

Starting in the mid-nineties, Paramount released a string of films that were either LGBTQ-themed or LGBTQ-inclusive, including *Home for the Holidays* (1995), *Clueless* (1995), *The Brady Bunch Movie* (1995), *Brain Candy* (1996), *Kiss Me Guido* (1997), *Election* (1999), *The Talented Mister Ripley* (1999), and *The Next Best Thing* (2000).

In 1997, the studio partnered with Scott Rudin Productions to release the mass-appeal, gay-themed comedy *In and Out*, which garnered a great deal of publicity for a kiss between lead Kevin Kline and love interest Tom Selleck and became a box office hit. In fact, *In and Out*, along with fellow Paramount releases *Mister Ripley* and *The Hours* (2002), are three of the top 10 highest grossing gay or lesbian-themed films in the United States.

In 2016, Paramount Pictures released **15** films, **five** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 33%. **Three of these films passed the Vito Russo Test.**

RATING OVER TIME





Allied

Widest theatrical release: 3,160 theaters

This World War II drama included an out lesbian couple. Bridget (Lizzy Caplan) is a Pilot Officer in the Royal Armed Forces and is the trusted sister of the lead character, Max. Bridget and her partner, Louise, have a handful of short scenes together, including one in which they share a kiss, spurring Bridget to say she will actually miss wartime because “no one cares who does what to who.” The story focuses so much on the romantic leads that there is no real screen time devoted to Bridget and Louise, but they are clearly out and in love in a difficult time. It is then even more frustrating that in a later scene the film trivializes their relationship when Bridget and Louise oblige a bunch of male soldiers who ask the women to kiss in front of them.

Everybody Wants Some!!

Widest theatrical release: 454 theaters

While many headlines came out of this film’s release about the homoerotic subtext and male gaze being turned on male bodies, there was not actually any sincere queer content in this 1980-set college baseball comedy. The film includes a party



scene in which star player Roper kisses a girl, and then encourages her to kiss the girl next to her. While the two go along with it, the scene was played to be purely at his suggestion rather than out of any desire on either of the women’s parts. At the same party, a group of performing arts students put on an *Alice in Wonderland*-themed sketch of *The Dating Game*. A male student portrayed the Queen of Hearts and, as part of the sketch, hit on another male bachelor. GLAAD did not count any of these characters in its final tally.

Florence Foster Jenkins

Widest theatrical release: 1,528 theaters

Simon Helberg plays pianist Cosmé McMoon in this 1940s-musical comedy, based on a true story. For this report, GLAAD counts McMoon as a gay character, which the film repeatedly implies through innuendo though never confirms explicitly. In one scene, a man shares a glance with a blushing, flustered McMoon at a party and later pours McMoon a drink with his arm around his shoulders. The film’s end cards give an update on the real characters. McMoon’s musical career never took off past his gigs with Florence, but he instead developed an interest



in bodybuilding and became a judge for several competitions before his death in 1980. He also reportedly worked at a bathhouse in New York City for a time. Though McMoon never came out, the scant amount of history available on his life does suggest he was queer at a time when many never felt safe to come out. *Florence Foster Jenkins* also included a seconds-long appearance by a character identified as real life actor Cole Porter, a fan of Florence, who attended her Carnegie Hall concert.

Star Trek Beyond

Widest theatrical release: 3,928 theaters

The third in the *Star Trek* reboot series; *Star Trek Beyond* introduced the husband and daughter of Lieutenant Hikaru Sulu. When the USS Enterprise makes a stop at the Yorktown space station for shore leave, Sulu reunites with his husband, Ben, and their daughter. The two are seen a few other times in the film; running to shelter when the film’s villain is launching an attack on the city, and Sulu and Ben are spotted together again at Captain Kirk’s birthday party. The inclusion of a gay character as part of the core ensemble of a summer tentpole film is a huge step forward. Genre films like *Star Trek*, which exist in



the worlds of their maker’s own creation, have the opportunity to create unique societies beyond the biases that exist in our own world. By simply including diverse characters who are treated with the same nuance as any other character; these films are able to hold up a mirror to our own society and challenge preconceived notions. We hope to see Sulu’s story explored further in the upcoming sequel. *Beyond* is the only film distributed by a mainstream studio to be nominated at the 28th Annual GLAAD Media Awards.

Whiskey Tango Foxtrot

Widest theatrical release: 2,413 theaters

This dramedy based on the memoir of an embedded correspondent in Afghanistan included an incredibly brief scene at a wedding in which an older woman hits on Tina Fey’s character, Kim Baker. This moment is yet another example of the most common way that queer characters and content still appear in mainstream films: in service of a joke rather than story.

Zoolander 2

Widest theatrical release: 3,418 theaters

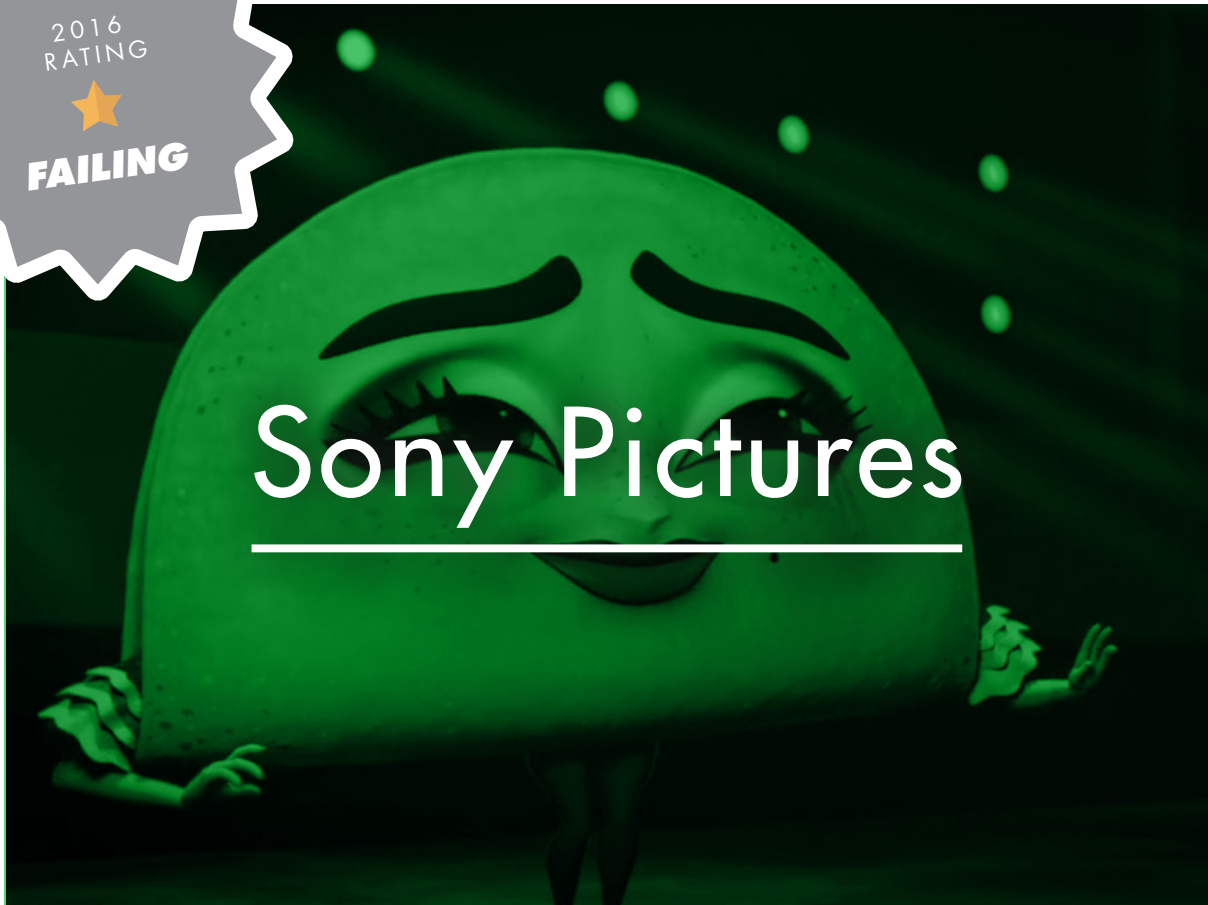
The second film in the *Zoolander* franchise, released 15 years after the first, was incredibly dated

in both story and its attempted humor. While comedy can be a powerful tool to hold a mirror up to society and challenge expectations, cheap jokes constructed without thought that use an already marginalized community as a punchline only reinforce ignorance and prejudice. Further, positioning an LGBTQ identity as something which is inherently absurd and worthy of mocking does real harm to actual people who experience harassment and violence on a regular basis.

Dimwitted former model Hansel McDonald is now bisexual and involved in a long-term polyamorous relationship with 11 people, a mix of men and women led by Kiefer Sutherland as a fictionalized version of himself. After each person reveals that they are pregnant, Hansel runs away, attempts to break back into the fashion world, and tries to hook up with another orgy group (again a mix of men and women). In the end, Hansel returns to living with his original “orgy” as he refers to the relationship, and asserts that he is now ready to be a dad. The entire storyline ends up being a joke based in some of the negative tropes we still see so much with bisexual characters. These include the portrayal of bisexual characters as being more prone to infidelity than either straight or gay characters, depicting bi people

as hypersexualized characters who will sleep with anyone, and positing bi characters as unable to form genuine relationships.

Prior to the release of *Zoolander 2*, a petition was launched calling for a boycott of the film after the first trailer included Benedict Cumberbatch as a non-binary model named All. The character is a completely cartoonish portrayal of a non-binary person. Hansel and Zoolander obsess over the idea of what kind of genitals All has, asking if they “have a hot dog or a bun.” All only refers to themselves in the third person, and it is mentioned that “All just married hermsself” after “monomarrriage” has been legalized. Later, All descends from the ceiling and whips Hansel and Zoolander while alternating between high and low pitch screams. One of the men yells, “It’s definitely a hotdog” referring to their earlier speculation on what is in All’s pants. All existed purely to give the audience something to laugh at, and the story added nothing to the film’s plot as a whole. It is incredibly disheartening that this was the only trans or non-binary character included in a mainstream studio film this year. This is one case in which we wish the character had been cut altogether.



SALMA HAYEK AS TERESA DEL TACO, SAUSAGE PARTY

Starting out as Cohn-Brandt-Cohn Film Sales in 1918, the studio adopted the name Columbia Pictures in 1924. Thanks to its association with Frank Capra in the 1920s, the studio gradually rose in prominence and over the subsequent decades became home to iconic stars such as Cary Grant, Rosalind Russell, and Rita Hayworth. Following a brief period of ownership by The Coca-Cola Company and the spinning off of Tri-Star Pictures (which it subsequently merged with), Columbia Pictures was acquired by Sony in 1989 and is now a subsidiary of Sony Pictures Entertainment.

Overall, Sony Pictures has never had the most impressive track record when it comes

to LGBTQ-inclusive films. The 1962 political thriller *Advise and Consent* did contain a subplot about a Senate chairman who is blackmailed over a past affair with a man (and subsequently commits suicide), but it's hardly held up as a high point in the LGBTQ cinematic canon. The same can be said for 1992's *Basic Instinct* from Tri-Star Pictures, which was decried by LGBTQ groups including GLAAD for its defamatory portrayal of lesbian and bisexual women. On a more positive note, Tri-Star Pictures also released popular inclusive films like *Philadelphia* (1993), *Threesome* (1994), and *As Good as it Gets* (1997). In more recent years, parent company Sony Pictures has released *Rent* (2005), *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* (2011), and *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones* (2013).

In 2016, Sony Pictures released **21** films, **two** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 9.5%. **One of these films passed the Vito Russo Test.**

RATING OVER TIME



The Angry Birds Movie

Widest theatrical release: 3,932 theaters

This animated film, inspired by the hit mobile game app Angry Birds, included a lesbian bird couple. During an early montage of the protagonist Red's daily frustrations living on Bird Island, the audience sees Red seated under a tree and exchanging glances with a group of women birds that he thinks are trying to get his attention. It turns out that they were gesturing at the person behind Red, but when the group walks away, the audience sees that the group is in fact two couples, one just happens to be two women who are holding wings. The moment was small, but still a step forward for a genre that is not often inclusive of queer characters and LGBTQ families.

In a later scene, some audiences have read a couple as two female birds retrieving their egg from the rescued clutch. However, because the film did not denote each character with the cartoonish eyelashes used to mark all other female birds, GLAAD did not count these two characters in its final tally.

The Brothers Grimsby

Widest theatrical release: 2,235 theaters

While there are no LGBTQ characters in this film, the entire movie is threaded with unfunny jokes based in gay panic. In an early scene, lead character Nobby mentions that if he ever finds his missing brother, he will have to "break it to him that some of his childhood heroes didn't love women as much as we thought they did" while the audience sees posters of Freddie Mercury, Elton John, and George Michael. He goes on to say "and some loved them too much" while looking at a photo of Bill Cosby, implying that learning an idol was queer is the same as learning that an idol is a rapist. Later, Nobby is forced to suck poison out of his brother, Sebastian's, testicle after he is hit with a dart during a spy shootout. This all

happens while the townspeople are filming the incident with disgusted looks, as Sebastian tells him to "suck and spit," and eventually ejaculates on Nobby's face. In the film's finale, Sebastian and Nobby reunite at a soccer game and, in order to save the world, they strip down, hold hands, and put the heads of fireworks equipped with a deadly virus in their rectums to contain the distribution of the blast. They turn out to survive the incident because of an ingredient found in elephant sperm, which they anally ingested during an earlier scene when they hid from spies inside an elephant's vagina as it was mated. The entire film is so poorly written that it is difficult to be offended, but it is just one more example in a long line of a lowbrow "comedy" defaulting to cheap homophobic jokes.

Ghostbusters

Widest theatrical release: 3,963 theaters

Out actor and comedian Kate McKinnon stars as eccentric engineer Holtzmann, one of the new team of Ghostbusters, in this reboot of the franchise. During the film's press tour, director/writer Paul Feig was asked if Holtzmann was a lesbian after the film included several interactions that were read as flirtatious between her character and the other female Ghostbusters. He dodged the question, gave a "silent nod," saying, "I hate to be coy about it, but when you're dealing with the studios and that kind of thing..." and instead talking about McKinnon's "pansexual" energy (that causes everyone around her to fall in love with her), which he "wanted to let that come out in this character." Given Sony's refusal to confirm Holtzmann as a canonically lesbian or bisexual character, – even in outside press,

something that still happens too often in place of clearly defined onscreen representation - GLAAD did not count the character in its tally.

Sausage Party

Widest theatrical release: 3,135 theaters

Much of the deserved public criticism of *Sausage Party* centered on the racist clichés of each character in this grocery store-set film, and this carried through with the handful of queer characters as well. Teresa del Taco is an oversexualized Latina lesbian taco who struggles with her feelings for women out of fear of religious discrimination. Sammy Bagel Jr. and Kareem Abdul Lavash are a heavy-handed metaphor for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict before they settle their differences and get together. Other characters are a shallow pun based on their name, including Twink the Twinkie and the overly effeminate produce who are not actual characters so much a series of jokes based on the derogatory term "fruit." The film's finale includes an extended orgy scene between all the foods in the market in various configurations of straight and gay, including a scene where Brenda believes she is having sex with her boyfriend only to look down and realize it is actually Teresa. After a shocked moment, Brenda is fine with it despite the lack of initial consent. The screenwriters clearly believed themselves to be progressive for including several LGBTQ characters, but it largely read more like trolling for buzz (particularly with how much of the advanced press was hyping the "lesbian taco") than a clever joke which lets LGBTQ people in on the humor.

Sony Pictures Classics

In 2016, Sony Pictures Classics released **16** films, **three** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 19%.

Founded in 1992, Sony Pictures Classics (SPC) is the independent arm of Sony Pictures Entertainment, which acquires, produces, and distributes independent films and documentaries. Among the many inclusive films SPC has released since its inception are *My Life in Pink* (1997) about a gender non-conforming child; *The Celluloid Closet* (1995), a documentary about LGBTQ representations in film based on the book with the same title written by Vito Russo (co-founder of GLAAD); the Alan Ginsberg-centered story *Kill Your Darlings* (2013); Pedro Almodovar's *I'm So Excited!* (2013); *Love Is Strange* (2014); and *Grandma* (2015).

Equity

Widest theatrical release: 255 theaters

This Wall Street drama flips the script by turning the focus to women trying to climb the ladder as investment bankers in the stock world. Samantha Ryan is a lawyer with the Department of Justice who reconnects with a college friend, in hopes of getting information on the woman's boyfriend whom Sam is investigating. While Sam's story is largely confined to her work life and connections to this case, the audience does get to briefly meet Sam's wife, Melanie, and their children. Sam has recently moved to the white-collar division from narcotics in order to spend more time at home with her family. While she does have some dubious moments, Sam is also the closest the film has to a moral center. It is refreshing to see Sam being just as humanized in sometimes doing bad things for the right reason as any straight, cisgender male character is. It is the type of story in which women (and queer women especially) are rarely included.

The Meddler

Widest theatrical release: 464 theaters

The Meddler is the story of Marnie, a lonely mother who gets overly involved in the lives of nearly everyone she meets. Despite the fact that they have just met, Marnie is moved to pay for the wedding of Jillian, a friend of her daughter's. She makes the offer to plan and finance the wedding after Jillian tells Marnie about how she and her wife, Dani, had a courthouse wedding as they adopted their daughter. Jillian had hoped that one day they could have a bigger ceremony, but now feels too guilty to spend that much money when they have a daughter to raise. Though she is not a major part of the overall story, Jillian and her family are included as a regular part of the world. The inclusion of a lesbian couple in a comedy, without having them be the butt of a joke, is a step that more films should be taking. The film was SPC's highest grossing 2016 release at the box office.

The Comedian

Widest theatrical release: 848 theaters

This widely panned film follows Jackie, an aging shock comic, who is trying to reinvent his career and get past his audience's perception of him as the beloved television character he once played. Throughout the film, Jackie and his comedian friends make distasteful jokes about prison rape, anti-gay slurs, and pedophilia. After he is released from prison, Jackie connects with his brother who agrees to loan him the money he needs for legal fees if Jackie will agree to attend the wedding of his niece Brittany to her girlfriend Frankie. The wedding itself is handled decently (though Jackie's speech is largely offensive); Brittany and Frankie are largely positioned as the only sane ones in the family. Out comedian Jessica Kirson also briefly appears as herself at a comedy gig that Jackie and his date attend.



Universal Pictures

DAVE FRANCO AS PETE, *NEIGHBORS 2: SORORITY RISING*

Of all the major film studios, Universal Pictures, founded in 1912, is the oldest. In 2004, Universal Studios merged with NBC becoming NBCUniversal, which was acquired by Comcast in 2009. In August 2016, Universal completed purchasing Dreamworks Animation, which was previously a holding of 20th Century Fox. Universal will begin distributing Dreamworks films in 2019. Having long focused on mass appeal films, many of Universal's most classic films came from collaborations with director Steven Spielberg and included *Jaws*, *E.T.*, *Jurassic Park*, and *Schindler's List*.

Due to that focus on mass appeal, perhaps

it is not surprising that it was not until the 1990s that any LGBTQ content began to appear in Universal films. The 1991 adaptation of *Fried Green Tomatoes* removed much of the source novel's lesbian content, though the 1994 comedic drama *Reality Bites* did feature a prominent gay character.

Universal's other inclusive films have also been a mixture of highs and lows, and include *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar* (1995), *Mulholland Drive* (2001), *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry* (2007), *Bruno* (2009), *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* (2010), *Kick-Ass 2* (2013), *Riddick* (2013), and *Legend* (2015).

In 2016, Universal Pictures released **17** films, **five** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 29%. **Two of these films passed the Vito Russo Test.**

RATING OVER TIME



Bridget Jones's Baby

Widest theatrical release: 2,930 theaters

The third film in the *Bridget Jones* franchise includes a handful of gay and lesbian characters, but their stories largely come across as incredibly dated narratives we have seen before. Bridget's cheeky best friend, Tom, returns as a spin class instructor. In the film's opening, he surprises Bridget with the news that he is beginning adoption proceedings with his partner, Eduardo. Bridget's mother is now running for local government on a "family values" platform. After Bridget challenges her to update her worldview, she changes her slogan to include "supports the majority of homosexuals." An older gay couple is part of Pamela's campaign team, though she is shocked to discover the two are together. The men mostly exist to make a point about Pamela's constituents being a more diverse group than she thought. Later, Bridget and her two male love interests attend pregnancy classes together, and their cohort includes a lesbian couple. These characters only appear for a few seconds, and are primarily used to prop up a joke about the possible fathers being mistaken for a gay couple. One of the men is visibly uncomfortable by this assumption and the other plays along with the mix up solely to peeve the other. While the film clearly is set in a world where LGBTQ people are accepted, the inclusion of these outdated jokes and prop characters was jarring.

Hail, Caesar!

Widest theatrical release: 2,248 theaters

This drama revisits early-1950s Hollywood, as the old system of studios having near total control of a star's image was collapsing. The film revolves around the abduction of Capitol Pictures star Baird Whitlock by a group of Communist film writers who intended to ransom him back to the studio. When Whitlock disappears, two rival gossip columnists surface and threaten to run a story about Whitlock agreeing to sleep with closeted

male director Laurence Laurentz to secure his breakout role. The story is widely known in Hollywood, and is again used as a threat against Whitlock when he asks what is keeping him from revealing the names of his abductors. The trope of predatory gay characters bribing or pressuring a straight man into sex is both offensive and incredibly overdone through the years. Concurrently, closeted actor Burt Gurney – the star of the musical number "No Dames" who is referred to as "Laurentz' new protégé" – is revealed as the head of the Communist cell before he boards a Soviet submarine. In the film's finale, the columnist announces her plans to run the story on Whitlock's past with Laurentz, naming Gurney named as her source, but the studio "fixer" makes it clear that she cannot publish the column without ruining her own reputation by tying herself to a defected Communist.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2

Widest theatrical release: 3,179 theaters

Cousin Angelo returns in this sequel to the early 2000s original *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. Over the course of the film, Angelo eventually comes out to his family who immediately accept him and his boyfriend and business partner, Patrick. While both characters are largely relegated to the sidelines and primarily engage in ensemble scenes, their story is sweet and still notable for a mainstream release.

Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising

Widest theatrical release: 3,416 theaters

Neighbors 2 includes an unexpectedly well-handled sub plot about former fraternity brother Pete getting engaged and how his moving forward in life strains his friendship with the central character, Teddy, who is struggling to find his niche post-college. Darren proposes to Pete with the help of Teddy and some of the other frat brothers at their weekly poker night. After Pete says yes, the camera pushes in on the two kissing as the rest of the guys cheer and hug them. Pete and

Teddy have a falling out when he realizes Pete expects Teddy to move out of their shared home to give the couple their own space. Later, Teddy returns and the two reconcile after he realizes he is not losing his best friend, but "gaining a best friend's husband." The film ends on Pete and Darren's wedding day. As Teddy prepares Pete to walk down the aisle, we learn that Teddy has finally found a steady job as a wedding planner for gay couples. Pete and Darren's story was told very naturally, something that is rare in this type brand of comedy where affection between two men is overwhelmingly played for laughs or as a "gross-out" moment. There were some stumbles around jokes of men wanting to see two women kiss, but overall, the film's inclusion was a pleasant surprise.

Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping

Widest theatrical release: 2,313 theaters

This mockumentary of the music industry and celebrity culture from the members of The Lonely Island includes a video for the track "Equal Rights." In the video, the film's star Connor4Real raps, "I'm not gay, but if I were, I would marry who I like," and as the song progresses he references more and more absurd assertions of his own sexuality while waving a rainbow flag and attending weddings of multiple same-sex couples. The couples and his co-star, singer Pink appearing as herself, give Connor increasingly uncomfortable looks as he raps "not gay" after every other word. Ringo Starr notes at the end of the song that marriage equality was already signed into law in the U.S., invalidating Connor's entire song. The single fails and later in the film, Connor himself says the song was offensive. While the song itself made a smart point about the absurdity of gay panic, the film did blunder in a scene where the concertgoers giggle when a stage malfunction disrobes Connor and his penis is not visible. The scene was not overtly transphobic, but the joke presumes the film's audience will laugh at a person not having the expected genitals.

Focus Features

In 2016, Focus Features released **10** films, **one** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 10%.

Focus Features was established in 2002 when USA Films, Universal Focus, and Good Machine combined into a single company. Focus Features produces and distributes its own features, in addition to distributing foreign films, establishing an impressive record of accomplishment of critically acclaimed and popular LGBTQ-inclusive films that include *The Kids Are All Right* (2010), *Pariah* (2011), and *Milk* (2008). Its most commercially successful LGBTQ-inclusive release to date is the 2006 Academy Award-winning drama *Brokeback Mountain*, adapted from the Annie Proulx novel about the romantic relationship between two men in 1960s Wyoming. In 2013, it released another prominent Oscar-nominated LGBTQ-inclusive film, *Dallas Buyers Clubs*, and followed it up with 2015's *The Danish Girl* which was also Oscar-nominated.



Nocturnal Animals

Widest theatrical release: 1,262 theaters

This drama centers on Susan, an upper class art gallery owner, who receives a novel manuscript from her estranged ex-husband Edward that leads her to question the choices that led to her current loveless marriage. Early on, Susan attends a dinner party where she chats with Carlos and his wife Alessia, who are happily married even though Carlos is gay. Their “arrangement” works for them, and Alessia expounds on friendship lasting longer than lust. Later in the film, Susan talks about her brother, Cooper, who has been disowned by her family after coming out as gay. She mentions to Edward that Cooper used to have a crush on him. After Edward reacts only with concern that he inadvertently hurt Cooper because he was not aware of his feelings, Susan commends him for being accepting of a man having feelings for him. Cooper himself never appears. Though it is clear that this film takes place in a world inclusive of gay characters accepted by the protagonists, it is disappointing that their stories are centered on the straight women in their lives.



Of the major U.S. film studios, Walt Disney Studios may be the most recognizable, with a well-defined brand identity that has spread across the globe. Since the first Disney feature film in 1937 (*Snow White*), family entertainment has been a primary focus for the company that continues to this day. The company's distribution imprints include Walt Disney Animation Studios, Pixar Animation Studios, Studio Ghibli (for which Disney holds U.S. and international distribution rights), Walt Disney Pictures, DisneyNature, Lucasfilm, Marvel Studios, and Touchstone Pictures.

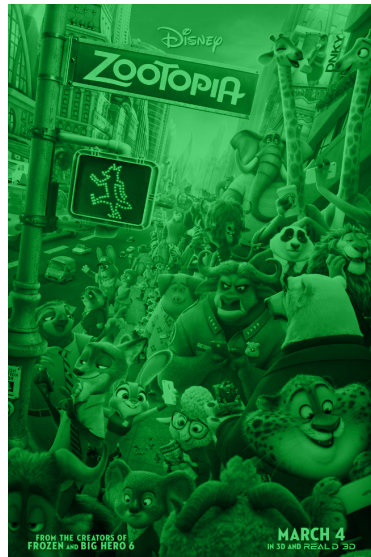
Walt Disney Studios has the weakest historical record when it comes to LGBTQ-inclusive films

of all the major studios tracked in this report. Touchstone Pictures, however, has released a small handful of LGBTQ-inclusive films, including *Kinky Boots* (2006), *Ed Wood* (1994), *Sweet Home Alabama* (2002) and *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003). In 1985, Lucasfilm produced the film *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters*, which wove together passages from gay Japanese writer Yukio Mishima's autobiography with parts of his fictional novels, including his secret love for a peer at school. The film was never officially released in Japan following conservative protests over its portrayal of Mishima as a gay man. It was distributed in the U.S. by Warner Brothers.

In 2016, Walt Disney Studios released **13** films, **one** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 8%. **None of these films passed the Vito Russo Test.**

RATING OVER TIME





Finding Dory

Widest theatrical release: 4,305 theaters

This follow up to the 2003 hit *Finding Nemo* made headlines after the film's first trailer dropped, and viewers read into the edited clip that there was a lesbian couple in the film. Given that there were no real hints onscreen that the two were a couple and the director's refusal to confirm or deny, GLAAD did not count these characters in its final tally.

Zootopia

Widest theatrical release: 3,959 theaters

The Oscar-winning animated film *Zootopia* actually featured a married gay couple, but the two were so minor that nearly every viewer missed the relationship completely. The couple, Bucky and Pronk Oryx-Antlerson, are the loudly argumentative neighbors of main character, Judy Hopps. The only hint on-screen to the couple's relationship is their hyphenated name listed in the film's credits, but co-director/writer Jared Bush confirmed the relationship on his official Twitter account. While confirmed inclusion is a step forward for children's films, we would like to see these characters be more forthrightly defined within the film itself going forward.



Started in the early 1900s by four Polish immigrant brothers as a simple movie theater business, following several decades of growth Warner Brothers Pictures was formally incorporated in 1923 as a full-fledged film studio. Since then, Warner Brothers has remained at the forefront of the film business and a pioneer in technologies like synced sound and color film. Over the years, Warner Brothers produced such classics as *Casablanca*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Goodfellas*, and *Blade Runner*.

One of Warner Brothers' most iconic films also contains one of the earliest and most celebrated gay-coded characters in mainstream American cinema: Sal Mineo's

tragic Plato in 1955's *Rebel Without a Cause*. Over the subsequent years, there were other notable inclusive films released by Warner Brothers, including *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), *The Color Purple* (1985), *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (1997). Notably, nearly every one of those films was based on source material that included LGBTQ characters. More recently, Warner Brothers has also released inclusive films like *Alexander* (2004), *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (2005), *V For Vendetta* (2005), *J. Edgar* (2011), and *Tammy* (2014).

In 2016, Warner Brothers released **19** films, **four** of which included appearances by LGBTQ people, amounting to 21%. **None of these films passed the Vito Russo Test.**

RATING OVER TIME





Batman V Superman: Dawn of Justice

Widest theatrical release: 4,256 theaters

Similarly to *The Avengers* and *Iron Man 3* before, *Dawn of Justice* included cameos by out news commentators who appear as themselves. This time, it was Anderson Cooper and Andrew Sullivan who each appear in very brief scenes to deliver some super-hero related news. Though their cameo appearances do technically meet GLAAD's criteria for an onscreen LGBTQ impression, we continually hope that future superhero films will include substantial queer characters. While more out comic book characters are making the leap from the page to television, mainstream hero films are still cutting them from the big screen.

There is an additional brief scene where Clark Kent boards a ferry and walks in front of a couple sharing a kiss. Some have speculated that the characters are a gay couple, but given the out of focus haze and brevity of the moment, GLAAD did not count these characters.

Central Intelligence

Widest theatrical release: 3,508 theaters

This buddy comedy/spy mystery starring Dwayne Johnson and Kevin Hart is essentially a near two-hour gay panic joke that relies on the long-running homophobic "sissy" stereotype for most of the film's intended punchlines. Johnson stars as Robbie Wierdicht/Bob Stone, a former high school nerd who was relentlessly bullied for his weight and has gone on to become a CIA agent who is believed to have gone rogue. He reconnects with Calvin, the captain of the football team voted most likely to succeed who once helped Bob against his bullies. When they meet up, Calvin is surprised to see Bob's new body and visibly uncomfortable with Bob's more effeminate mannerisms, seeming obsession with Calvin, and

physicality as he hugs Calvin. At their school reunion, Bob gets together with Darla, another classmate who had been bullied for her looks. He strips down on stage to make a point about letting people see all of who you are, and after throwing his pants into the crowd, a male classmate catches them, yells out "yes!," and fights with a woman who tries to take the pants from him.

The film attempts to make it seem as though they are in on the joke when Bob calls out the homophobia of someone attempting to start a fight with he and Calvin by implying the men are a couple, but ultimately *Intelligence* does nothing to address Calvin's disgust at being complimented or touched by another man. The movie instead revels in this "humor," that is both worn-out and simply unamusing.

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them

Widest theatrical release: 4,144 theaters

This spinoff prequel to the *Harry Potter* universe is set in 1920s New York as "magizoologist" Newt Scamander arrives in town, and stumbles into a conflict between the magical government and the non-magic people of the city. The Director of Magical Security, Percival Graves, is eventually revealed to actually be the legendary dark wizard Grindelwald. *Potter* author JK Rowling announced in 2007 that Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore, who was friends with Grindelwald when the two were teens, is gay and had been in love with Grindelwald at one point. As there has not been any confirmation on whether Grindelwald himself returned Dumbledore's feelings, GLAAD did not count this character. The franchise has announced plans for four additional films, set up to follow the rise of Grindelwald and his eventual defeat by Dumbledore. We hope to see more of their early relationship and Dumbledore's feelings explored in those films.



The Legend of Tarzan

Widest theatrical release: 3,591 theaters

While no LGBTQ content made it into the film, the director announced during the film's press tour that there had initially been a kiss between the ruthless soldier, Rom, and an unconscious Tarzan. The kiss was cut after initial test audiences were "perplexed" by the moment. In this case, the decision to cut the kiss helped the film as a forced kiss would have made the Rom character just one more in a long of gay characters who are portrayed as predatory and uncaring of consent. Further, the scene which seems the most likely to have contained the kiss comes as Rom is attempting to murder Tarzan. Including a kiss here would have also made Rom another in a line of villainous queer characters whose villainy was tied directly to their LGBTQ identity. GLAAD did not count this character.

Live By Night

Widest theatrical release: 2,822 theaters

This 1920s-set mob drama included one single scene with a gay character. The former Boston police captain, whose son is facing a possible murder charge, blackmails Chief Inspector Calvin Bondurant (Clark Gregg) with a threat to leak the proof of his affair with a man unless Bondurant allows the man's son to take a deal on a lesser charge. This scene harkens back to old Hollywood production codes, which required that gay characters be somehow punished for being who they are, and would have been best left on the cutting room floor.

Storks

Widest theatrical release: 3,922 theaters

This animated comedy about the delivery of babies to new families via stork includes gay and lesbian couples. The film's finale features a montage of couples and single parents who are receiving the children they have been longing for, and same-sex couples just

happen to be part of that group of new parents. It is refreshing to see a "family" oriented film be so casually inclusive. LGBTQ people are already part of American families and communities across the country, and our films need to reflect that.

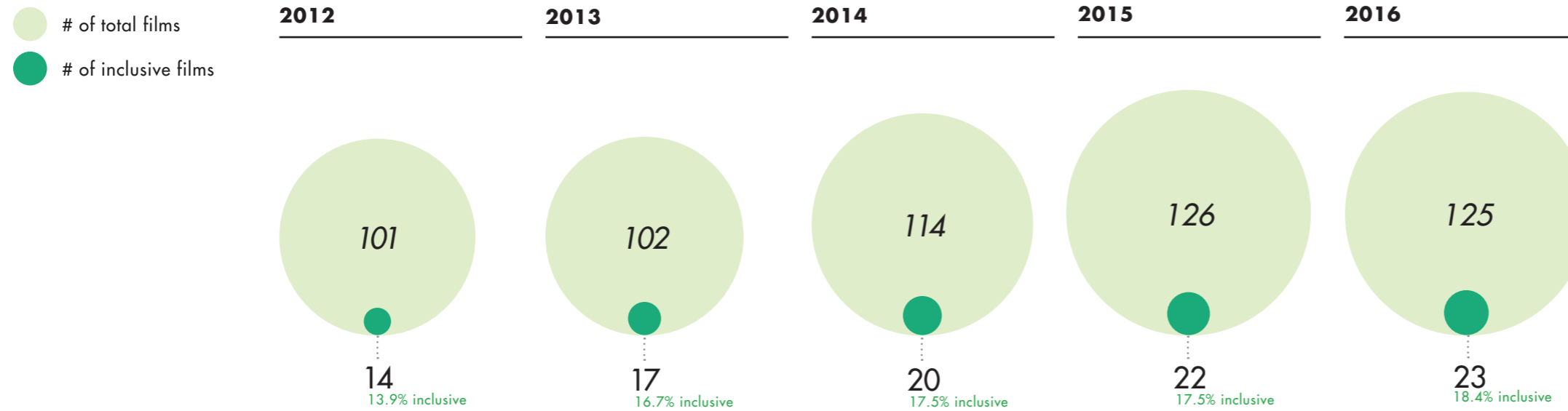
Suicide Squad

Widest theatrical release: 4,255 theaters

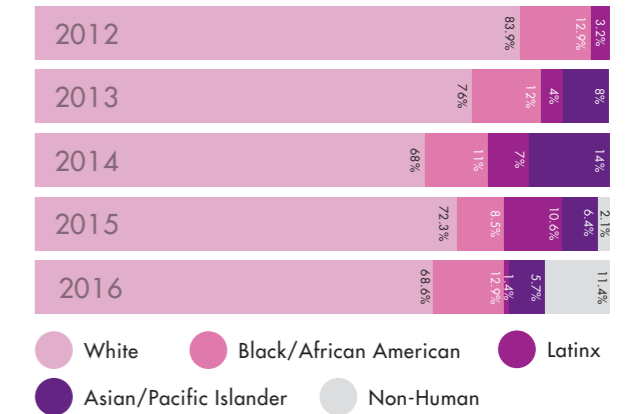
While Harley Quinn is bisexual in the pages of many DC Comics and continually veers between her love for fellow anti-hero Poison Ivy and returning to her abusive relationship with The Joker, none of that backstory came across in this widely panned film. Many audiences likely had no clue unless they had extensively read the source comics or researched the character beforehand. *Suicide Squad* instead chose to focus solely on her relationship with The Joker with very little backstory, and largely sanitized the deeply abusive nature of their relationship. GLAAD did not count this character in its final tally based on the story presented. Warner Brothers has announced they are developing a film adaptation of the comic series *Gotham City Sirens* about Quinn, Catwoman, and Poison Ivy. If they follow the source comics, audiences can look forward to seeing some of the romantic relationship between Quinn and Ivy. This would be a huge moment for superhero films, which continue to leave out meaningful LGBTQ characters.



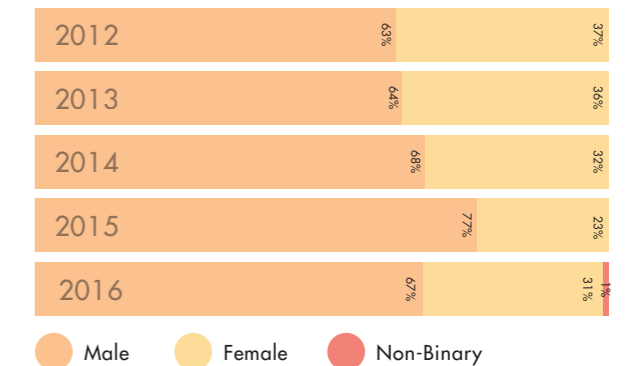
Total Number of Inclusive Films, Overall



Racial Diversity of LGBTQ Characters in Film



Gender of LGBTQ Characters in Film*



Total Number of Inclusive Films, By Studio

Studio	2012			2013			2014			2015			2016		
20th Century Fox	0 (0%)	15	0	1 (7%)	14	1	3 (18%)	17	3	2 (12%)	17	1	3 (19%)	16	2
Lionsgate	not tracked			3 (14%)	21	2	2 (12%)	17	2	8 (33%)	24	3	3 (13%)	24	1
Paramount Pictures	3 (21%)	14	1	2 (22%)	9	0	3 (23%)	13	1	0 (0%)	12	0	5 (33%)	15	3
Sony Columbia	4 (21%)	19	1	3 (20%)	15	2	1 (6%)	18	0	3 (19%)	16	1	2 (10%)	21	1
Universal	4 (25%)	16	2	3 (20%)	15	1	3 (21%)	14	0	4 (19%)	21	2	5 (29%)	17	2
Walt Disney	1 (8%)	13	0	2 (20%)	10	0	1 (8%)	13	0	0 (0%)	11	0	1 (8%)	13	0
Warner Brothers	2 (8%)	24	2	3 (17%)	18	1	7 (32%)	22	5	5 (20%)	25	1	4 (21%)	19	0

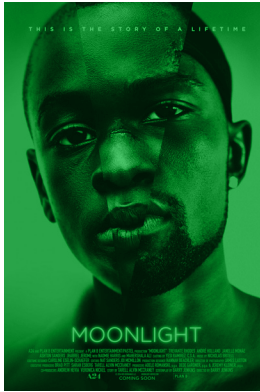
Orientation & Identity of LGBTQ-inclusive films

	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16
Gay men	55.6%	64.7%	65%	77%	82.6%
Lesbians	33%	23.5%	10%	23%	34.8%
Bisexuals	11%	17.7%	30%	9%	13%
Transgender people	0%	11.8%	0%	5%	4.4%

● # of inclusive films
 ● # of total films
 ● # of films that passed the Vito Russo Test

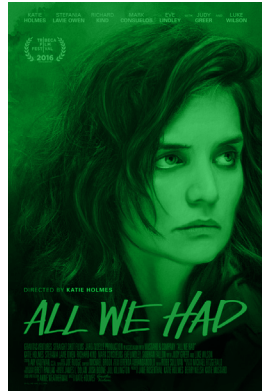
* Non-binary characters were not counted until the most recent report as there were no characters who identified as such prior. Transgender men are counted in male LGBTQ characters, and transgender women are counted in female LGBTQ characters.

Additional Film Distributors



A24

Founded in 2012, A24 has become known for releasing some of the most well respected independent films of the last four years, including *The Spectacular Now*, *Obvious Child*, and *Room*. In 2016, A24 released *Moonlight*, a tender coming of age story about Chiron, a young, black, queer man. The film follows Chiron through three acts of his life, from childhood to teen years to adulthood. Over this time, he struggles with his own sexual identity, the concept of masculinity, and his feelings for his friend Kevin, all set against a challenging home life and bullying at school. *Moonlight* deftly balances telling a very intimate story about love, identity, family, and friendship with painting a picture of the larger experience of what it means to be a young, black, queer male. *Moonlight* made history as the first film with an LGBTQ lead and the first film with an all-black cast to win the Oscar for Best Picture.



Gravitas Ventures

Founded in 2006 by Nolan Gallagher, Gravitas Ventures was initially created to distribute content through video on demand and online systems. In 2011, the company began releasing a limited number of films into theaters. Past LGBTQ-inclusive releases include *Appropriate Behavior* (2015), the story of a Persian-American bisexual woman reconciling different parts of her identity. In 2016, Gravitas Ventures released *All We Had*, the story of a struggling mother and daughter who settle in a small town. The film co-starred trans actor Eve Lindley as Pam, a transgender waitress with big dreams who becomes the best friend of the young girl while dealing with transphobia in rural America. Gravitas also distributed *4th Man Out*, a comedy about a young man coming out to his straight friends.



IFC Films & Sundance Selects

A distributor of independent films and documentaries, IFC Films falls under the AMC Networks umbrella. Also under this umbrella are IFC Midnights, which focuses on horror and thriller films, and Sundance Selects, that distributes independent films, documentaries and foreign films. The company's most successful and critically acclaimed LGBTQ-inclusive films include the drama *Weekend* (2011), about two men starting a relationship right before one of them must leave the country, and the acclaimed but controversial French lesbian drama *Blue is the Warmest Color* (2013). In 2015, among their inclusive releases were the documentary *Do I Sound Gay?*, *Match*, *The Duke of Burgundy*, and *Jenny's Wedding*. Last year, IFC released *King Cobra*, a murder mystery drama set in the world of gay porn.



Magnolia Pictures

Formed in 2001, Magnolia Pictures specializes in releasing both foreign and independent film. The company is owned by Todd Wagner and Mark Cuban, and is a subsidiary of 2929 Entertainment. Some of Magnolia's past LGBTQ-inclusive releases include *Life Partners* (2014) and *Tangerine* (2015). In 2016, Magnolia released the Korean import *The Handmaiden*, a psychological thriller that is ultimately a love story between a Korean handmaiden and a Japanese noblewoman. *The Handmaiden* was nominated for a GLAAD Media Award, and was the highest grossing film released by Magnolia that year. The studio also distributed the film *Viva* last year, a coming of age story about a young drag performer in Cuba and his relationship with his estranged father. Other queer inclusive content include the documentary *Tickled*.

Additional Film Distributors



Open Road Films

A joint venture between two theater giants, AMC Theaters and Regal Entertainment Group, Open Road Films has released a good number of films since its founding in 2011. Among the studio's previous LGBTQ-inclusive releases are 2015's *Dope*, a GLAAD Media Award-nominated comedy about three friends (one a lesbian) who have to dispose of someone else's drugs. In 2016, the studio's inclusive releases include *Mother's Day*, which features a subplot about a mother coming to accept her daughter's sexuality and her partner. Open Road also released *Snowden* last year, which featured Zachary Quinto as out journalist Glenn Greenwald.



Strand Releasing

Initially upon its founding in 1989, Strand Releasing's focus was primarily LGBTQ inclusive films. Now, it has branched out, releasing non-LGBTQ films as well, and maintaining a focus on foreign films. Notable films from the past include *The Living End* (1992) a drama about two gay men on a dangerous road trip; *Stonewall* (1995) a fictionalized telling of the Stonewall Riots; *Yossi and Jagger* (2002), a love story between two Israeli army officers, as well as the 2013 sequel *Yossi*; and 2014's *Mala Mala*, exploring Puerto Rico's drag and transgender communities. Last year's Strand releases include the GLAAD Media Award-nominated *Spa Night*, a personal and compelling film about a gay Korean-American teenager trying to deal with the pressures from his parents and exploring his own sexuality. Other LGBTQ-inclusive Strand Releases from 2016 include *Front Cover*, *Summertime*, *Being 17* and *Closet Monster*.



Vertical Entertainment

Founded in 2012 by Rich Goldberg and Mitch Budin, Vertical Entertainment focuses on smaller independent films. Vertical released the comedy *G.B.F. (Gay Best Friend)* in 2014. Last year, Vertical Entertainment distributed the GLAAD Media Award-winning film *Other People*, a touching story about a gay comedy writer who returns to his hometown to take care of his dying mother.



Wolfe Releasing

Wolfe Releasing is the oldest distributor in North America to focus solely on LGBTQ-inclusive content, from its founding in 1985. The company releases independent films that have a focus on telling stories from an LGBTQ perspective. Wolfe has released a large number of inclusive films over the years, but there are a few standouts. *Brother to Brother* (2004) explores gay life during the Harlem Renaissance through a modern lens, *Tomboy* (2011) is a French film about a gender non-conforming child, and in 2015, *Boy Meets Girl*, the story of a trans woman in Kentucky on a quest for love. Last year, Wolfe released the GLAAD Media Award-nominated *Naz and Maalik*, about a relationship between two black, Muslim teens. Some other notable releases of 2016 were GLAAD Media Award-nominated *Those People*, which explored a love triangle between three men, and *Margarita with a Straw*, the story of a bisexual Indian woman with cerebral palsy.

Conclusion

It is unsurprising that smaller studios, which don't often have the budget to compete for box office attention against the majors, are still distributing the majority of stand-out LGBTQ-inclusive films. These movies are limited by reach, often only playing on screens in major cities for a single weekend before being pushed to streaming services. Further, audiences typically only find these features if they go specifically looking for them. Given the groundbreaking LGBTQ stories we are now seeing in other entertainment media, mainstream major film releases appear more and more outdated as they continue to include LGBTQ people only in service of punchlines or as props to add authenticity to an urban setting.

After five years of analyzing inclusion in the *SRI*, we are still frustrated by the lack of meaningful progress on the part of major studios to include authentic LGBTQ characters and storylines. Studio execs should take note of the critical success of some of these indie films like *Moonlight*, *The Handmaiden*, and *Spa Night*. There are audiences who are looking for this content, for our stories. GLAAD will continue to hold Hollywood accountable for the stories these companies choose to tell – or not – on our screens.

GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team

GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team monitors film, television, music, and related entertainment media to ensure inclusive, diverse and accurate portrayals of the LGBTQ community. When anti-LGBTQ content runs, GLAAD speaks out about why anti-LGBTQ attitudes and content have no place in the media and how that affects real lives. The staff also works with TV and film studio executives, producers and writers to provide script consultations and to advocate for the inclusion of LGBTQ people at all levels in an effort to spark conversations about LGBTQ issues in living rooms and around water coolers. GLAAD also promotes LGBTQ-inclusive projects through GLAAD's newsroom, social media, the weekly LGBTQ TV listings, "Must-See LGBTQ TV," and through its annual GLAAD Media Awards.

GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team releases two annual reports. The *Where We Are on TV* report analyzes the overall diversity of primetime scripted series regulars on broadcast networks and looks at the number of LGBTQ characters on cable networks and streaming services. The *Studio Responsibility Index* ranks the major Hollywood studios by the quantity and quality of the LGBTQ representation in the films they produce.

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GLAAD's Entertainment Media Interns join the Programs Team in researching and monitoring LGBTQ-inclusive content on television and in film. They assist in conducting research for the *Studio Responsibility Index*, *Where We Are on TV* report, and contribute to GLAAD's newsroom.

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GLAAD rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

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