Studio Responsibility Index

One Decade
In 2013, GLAAD launched its first Studio Responsibility Index (SRI) to measure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) inclusion in mainstream film after proving the efficacy of our studies and work in television to move the needle on diverse, authentic LGBTQ storytelling. In just ten short years, I’m proud to see Hollywood make swift progress driven by the insights in our studies and the active partnership of our GLAAD Media Institute team.

From GLAAD’s first SRI to the recent milestone tenth edition, the percentage of LGBTQ-inclusive films has grown by 50 percent or 1.5 times, as GLAAD has set industry priorities and best practices. This surge in inclusive storytelling is reflected in the recent expansions of several key GLAAD Media Awards categories to recognize the outstanding LGBTQ characters and stories audiences are enjoying.

In the decade since the launch of the first SRI, the LGBTQ community has made momentous strides in Hollywood, including the introduction of the first gay superhero in a major studio film, several animated films featuring LGBTQ families like mine, Moonlight making history as the first queer movie to win the Oscar in Best Picture, increased diversity in LGBTQ characters on TV and more. We’ve also seen parallel real world progress with the passage of marriage equality in the U.S., multiple state and local governments passing laws allowing LGBTQ people to live more authentically with legal document markers that match your gender, outlawing so-called “conversion therapy,” and more. Yet in 2023 we face a record-breaking number of anti-LGBTQ bills being proposed right now in legislatures across the country and increases in anti-LGBTQ violence. Our community, especially our LGBTQ young people, face increased political bullying and targeting, the power of Hollywood to tell nuanced and authentic stories about LGBTQ characters is more relevant than ever.

Telling authentic and diverse LGBTQ stories is crucial for our survival. A recent study from The Trevor Project found that 89 percent of young people report that seeing LGBTQ characters in film and TV made them feel good about being LGBTQ, the most popular sentiment of those options listed. Polling over the years has shown that seeing LGBTQ images in media is key in fostering real-life acceptance and understanding for LGBTQ people, often the largest factor outside of personally knowing an LGBTQ person. These stories, which travel across the world, can challenge the outright misinformation in political rhetoric, set the narrative in creating connection and empathy, and give hope to all who may be experiencing backlash in many areas of public life at this moment.

As our SRI report celebrates its first decade, we continue to evolve our work with an eye toward the future as the industry shifts and as our community continues to grow in size and diversity of experience. We look forward to the next decade of film diving deeper into authentic LGBTQ characters and pivotal storytelling that shines a light on new voices and groundbreaking narratives.

In solidarity,
SARAH KATE ELLIS
President & CEO, GLAAD
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LGBTQ-inclusive films released from major studios have grown by 50 percent or 1.5 times since GLAAD’s first SRI was issued in 2013.

Five key film genres have seen substantial improvement in LGBTQ inclusion over the past decade: superhero films – led by new inclusion in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, kids and family films, romantic comedies, raunchy adult comedy, and action/sci-fi/horror.

LGBTQ characters remain lacking in total screen time, with the most recent SRI showing more than half appearing for under five minutes. Introducing more central and nuanced LGBTQ characters should be a priority as studios look to their development slates.

Major studio releases have yet to consistently meet GLAAD’s challenge to ensure that at least half of LGBTQ characters are people of color, only meeting this bar once (2018). The most recent study found only 39 percent of LGBTQ characters were people of color.

Bisexual+ people (an umbrella term which includes people who identify as bisexual, pansexual, fluid, queer, and more) represent more than half of the LGBTQ community, yet only two films in the latest study included bi+ characters.

LGBTQ characters remain lacking in total screen time, with the most recent SRI showing more than half appearing for under five minutes. Introducing more central and nuanced LGBTQ characters should be a priority as studios look to their development slates.

The most recent SRI is the first in five years to count a transgender character, and that character was ultimately a small role. For storytelling to improve in the next decade, there must be a number of new trans characters introduced each year who are fully fleshed out characters beyond their gender identity and existing in all settings, roles, and communities.

There is only one upcoming film from a major studio expected to include a character with HIV, the Universal Pictures’ adaptation of the Rock Hudson biography All That Heaven Allows. There are more than 1.2 Million Americans living with HIV and nearly 9 in 10 people believe “there is still stigma around HIV.” GLAAD has challenged studios to urgently prioritize introducing LGBTQ characters living with HIV in their upcoming film slates after a near complete absence in major studio releases in the past decade.

GLAAD will be launching an expanded methodology in its 2023 Studio Responsibility Index which will reflect distribution changes in the film industry. That report will be released later this year.

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In 2023, Gallup reported that at least 19.7 percent of Gen Z Americans (born 1997 to 2004) are LGBTQ — that’s one in five adult members of Gen Z. Previous polling indicates that this number will continue to grow as more members of this generation reach eighteen and can be polled. Millennials mark the next highest percentage of LGBTQ people in a generation (10.5 percent). The 2020 Census found that more than half of Americans are Millennials or younger. These are key audiences that studios need to appeal to as ticket buyers, subscription holders, and consumers.

It’s currently estimated (conservatively) that the LGBTQ community has a global spending power of $3.7 trillion annually with $1.4 trillion in the U.S. alone, per reporting from Forbes and the Census. Nielsen’s research finds that LGBTQ audiences are highly engaged consumers. They are 22 percent more likely to see a new theatrical release more than once and 17 percent more likely to see movies opening weekend “often” or “very often” compared to straight cisgender audiences. As the model for film distribution continues to evolve with the rise of studio owned streaming services, it is also important to note that Nielsen found LGBTQ audiences were far more likely to have actively used a streaming subscription service in the past seven days than the total population, a difference ranging from 16 to 71 percent depending on the platform. Branded merchandise and physical or digital copies are also important to LGBTQ audiences, with LGBTQ fans spending on average six percent more than the average consumer in books, movies, and music.

The Edelman Trust Barometer cites business as the most trusted institution in public life in the U.S. Both consumers and employees are looking to invest in products and relationships with companies which are outspoken in supporting LGBTQ people and prioritizing authentic, fully inclusive content. More than half of American adults agree the entertainment they consume (56 percent) and their purchasing decisions (54 percent) reflect their values and identity. Nearly two-thirds of American adults (64 percent) believe it is important specifically for entertainment companies to support LGBTQ equality, with the plurality agreeing entertainment companies have responsibility to affect positive change in acceptance of LGBTQ people through content (49 percent) and advocacy efforts (48 percent).

A December 2022 survey from GLAAD and The Edelman Trust Institute found that 53 percent of Americans expect CEOs to inform and shape conversations and policy debates about LGBTQ rights. Further, Americans are twice as likely to buy or use a brand if the brand publicly supports and demonstrates a commitment to expanding and protecting LGBTQ rights, and U.S. employees aged 18 - 34 are 5.5 times more likely to want to work at a company if that business publicly supports and demonstrates a commitment to expanding and protecting LGBTQ rights.

It is clear that businesses looking to compete for the attention of consumers in a more and more fragmented market with multiple options for entertainment must prioritize inclusive storytelling that reflects the full diversity of the audiences watching.
A DECADE OF PROGRESS

In the decade since we launched GLAAD’s first Studio Responsibility Index, we’ve seen tremendous progress in film with more studios beginning to create and promote LGBTQ storytelling while eliminating harmful and dangerous portrayals.

Since the inception of GLAAD’s SRI in 2013 up until the most recent SRI covering 2021 releases, LGBTQ-inclusive films have increased by 50 percent, or 1.5 times. This is due in no small part to GLAAD’s role as a guide and partner, setting industry priorities and best practices for LGBTQ inclusion.

Additionally, dangerous narratives of anti-LGBTQ slurs, violence, and “gay panic” gags have drastically decreased after GLAAD created a powerful supercut in 2015 that highlighted a multitude of anti-LGBTQ moments in Hollywood films from just the previous five years, and called on major studios to prioritize interrogating the use of these harmful tropes and depictions.

The first several years of our SRI found each studio was often presenting a mixed bag of titles in their annual slates. Often, there was an outstanding LGBTQ-inclusive title alongside some films regularly breaking box office records and stars being elevated to the top of the A-list. In the most recent report, Disney Studios tallied the highest number of inclusive releases annually, a dramatic improvement from the first year of the report when the studio’s sole content was a cameo by out news anchor Thomas Roberts in Marvel’s The Avengers.

While Marvel comics have featured LGBTQ characters for many years, it took some time before the MCU reflected that inclusion on the big screen. In 2021, the first out gay superhero was introduced with Phastos from Marvel’s Eternals. The film included his husband and their son and went on to win a GLAAD Media Award. As future sequels with this team are developed, we look forward to seeing more of Phastos and his family.

Recent Marvel films have introduced new queer characters such as America Chavez, who made her debut in Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness and who is set to appear in additional projects which should dig further into her identity as a Latina lesbian hero, Valkyrie, with Thor: Love and Thunder referencing more of her tragic backstory and lost lover, and Ayo and Aneka in Black Panther: Wakanda Forever, which confirms that the warriors are a couple. Additionally, Deadpool 2 included the return of Negasonic Teenage Warhead and introduced audiences to her girlfriend, Yukio. With these characters entering the MCU following Disney’s acquisition of 20th Century, the planned third Deadpool movie should include the return of these characters and could further dive into Deadpool’s possible romances as the character has been confirmed to be pansexual in other media. As superhero films and television continues to draw mass audiences and dollars, we hope to see even more LGBTQ heroes and sidekicks make the jump from page to screen in the coming years.

The past decade has also seen notable progress in LGBTQ inclusion in storytelling for kids and families.

Laika’s 2012 film ParaNorman made history with the introduction of gay character Mitch, a core part of the group exploring a paranormal mystery.

Box office hit Storks was released in 2016, and included the return of characters from Previous years before introducing even more LGBTQ characters.

In 2022, Strange World’s Ethan Clade, who was celebrated by audiences and critics alike as a likable and charming character, is a perfect example for what other studios to emulate - his identity as a gay teen is made clear and is an important part of his story, not left for subtext or a last minute reveal, but he also has additional traits and interests which make him an interesting nuanced character and he is pivotal to the film’s plot. Further, Ethan’s sweet crush and romance with his friend Diaz is something that is still far too rare for LGBTQ characters.

GLAAD this year expanded its GLAAD Media Awards categories for programming in the Kids and Family space for three categories to recognize the boom of outstanding LGBTQ inclusive content in TV, we look forward to seeing more LGBTQ storytelling in the film space as well.

The past five years have included a welcome rise in LGBTQ-inclusive romantic comedies, with the 2018 GLAAD Media Award-winning film Love, Simon (20th Century Fox, now 20th Century Studios under The Walt Disney Studios) making history as the first major Hollywood studio film to focus on a gay teen romance.

Warner Bros. Discovery’s Crazy Rich Asians, Sony Pictures’ Rough Night and The Broken Hearts Gallery, and Universal Pictures’ Last Christmas all included queer characters among larger ensemble casts. In recent years we have seen more romcoms which center very natural beats in the story. Since then, LGBTQ parents were introduced in smaller moments in films like Warner Bros. Discovery’s Storks, Paramount’s Wonder Park and Fun Size, and Pixar’s Onward. In 2022, Lightyear and Strange World introduced more central LGBTQ characters. Strange World’s Ethan Clade, who was celebrated by audiences and critics alike as a likable and charming character, is a perfect example for what other studios to emulate - his identity as a gay teen is made clear and is an important part of his story, not left for subtext or a last minute reveal, but he also has additional traits and interests which make him an interesting nuanced character and he is pivotal to the film’s plot. Further, Ethan’s sweet crush and romance with his friend Diaz is something that is still far too rare for LGBTQ characters.

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on LGBTQ characters with films like Happiest Season (acquired by Hulu from Sony Pictures Entertainment for digital release due to COVID theater closures), about a lesbian couple who go to visit one of their families for the holidays, which set a record as a most-watched debut on Hulu; Hulu’s Fire Island, inspired by Pride and Prejudice, which follows a group of gay friends taking their annual weeklong vacation that is complicated by classism and romance; and Universal Pictures’ Bros, about two gay men who have previously avoided commitment stumbling into a relationship together. Nielsen polling cites romance as the third most popular genre among LGBTQ audiences.

While raunchy comedies were long one of the worst offenders when it came to anti-LGBTQ punchlines, gags, and casual violence, recent years have actually seen a turnaround in this genre with smarter humor and more grounded characters taking the spotlight. Booksmart, the 2019 feature directorial debut of Olivia Wilde from United Artist Releasing, centers on two best friends, one of whom is a lesbian, as they face high school graduation realizing they’ve never partied and this is their last chance. Universal Pictures has released several raunchy comedies with LGBTQ characters, including Blockers which features a lesbian girl as part of the core three girls who pledge to lose their virginity at prom, while Universal’s Good Boys and Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising included ensemble queer characters.

The top film genres for LGBTQ audiences per Nielsen polling are horror films and sci-fi or fantasy stories. From our first SRI we’ve seen outstanding LGBTQ sci-fi, fantasy, and action films with the epic Cloud Atlas (Warner Bros. Discovery) from the Wachowski sisters, which occurs during six different eras over time with the cast playing multiple roles. Paramount Pictures’ Star Trek: Beyond continued to include Sulu as part of the crew of the USS Enterprise and the film introduced Sulu’s husband and daughter when the ship touched down at the port Yorktown. There’s opportunity for his family to continue to appear in any future Trek films, as well as hope for the LGBTQ characters introduced in the recent Star Trek TV series to cross over to the big screen. Sony Pictures’ The Girl in the Spider’s Web followed bisexual assassin and hacker Lisbeth Salander as she fought against a mysterious shadow organization out for world dominance. Lionsgate’s action-comedy American Ultra included a gay CIA agent as the film’s moral center, and Walt Disney Studios’ Jungle Cruise included McGregor, the gay brother of the film’s lead, as part of the core group searching for the Tree of Life. In 2022, A24’s GLAAD Media Award nominated parallel universe romp Everything Everywhere All At Once became the first film to cross one million dollars at the box office and has gone on to rack up critical praise including becoming the most nominated film at the 2023 Oscars.

Recent inclusive horror films tracked in the SRI have included Universal’s Freaky, Candyman and Happy Death Day series. In 2023, three different horror films received GLAAD Media Award nominations, including Paramount Pictures’ Scream and Universal Pictures’ Nope, as well as indie distributor A24’s Bodies Bodies Bodies. Inclusion seems set to grow in horror in the coming years with announced titles including Scream VI from Paramount, Universal’s Knock at the Cabin, and more. Another quickly growing category is biographical films with recent years seeing biopics on Elton John (Paramount’s Rocketman), Freddie Mercury (20th Century’s Bohemian Rhapsody), and Lionsgate’s Freeheld about police officer Laurel Hester who is fighting for her partner to receive her benefits after she is diagnosed with cancer. Several titles are currently in development from various studios including films on the lives of George Michael, Halsey, Rock Hudson, Sally Ride, and more.

As more LGBTQ-inclusive films have begun to be released, GLAAD has continued to evolve its methodology to focus solely on the stories being told on screen and raising a higher bar for what is considered to be inclusive, expanded the grading scale to better account for the variety of films included in a studio’s slate and the quantity, quality and diversity of LGBTQ characters and stories, and in the most recent report even added an additional point to our Vito Russo Test ensuring that LGBTQ storytelling and characters continue to improve. In recognition of the significant expansion of outstanding LGBTQ storytelling in major studio films, GLAAD this year expanded its GLAAD Media Award category for Outstanding Film Wide Theatrical Release from five to ten nominees.

Our focus continues to be on evolving and producing actionable research which both is reflective of the state of the industry while also holding those with greenlighting and production decision-making power accountable. As such, it is only appropriate that as we close the chapter on this first decade of the SRI and the wins we have seen that we continue to look to the progress we hope to see in the next decade of LGBTQ films.
As our study shows, there remains a huge opportunity for studios to tell groundbreaking LGBTQ stories that will be fresh and interesting for audiences, highlight the full diversity of the community, and spotlight new voices.

While major studio theatrical releases have overall become more inclusive of LGBTQ characters, our most recent SRI shows that the majority of those characters this year (60 percent) clocked under five minutes of total screen time - an issue that has continued to recur across multiple editions of the study. Furthermore, the majority of LGBTQ characters who appeared for more than ten minutes were white characters (57 percent of the seven).

The most recent study showed an overall decrease in LGBTQ characters who are people of color, down to only 39 percent of total LGBTQ characters. This must be a priority for studios as they move forward with greenlighting, developing, and releasing new films. These titles should also receive equal marketing efforts and promotional budgets as comparable titles. GLAAD has issued a challenge to studios to ensure that more than half of LGBTQ characters are also people of color - film has only surpassed this milestone once, in the 2018 release of the West Side Story, which also garnered significant critical acclaim. Anybodies (West Side Story) was ultimately still a small character in the overall film and marks a first step rather than a finish line.

Pooling shows that around 31 percent of Americans say they personally know someone who is transgender, compared to about 90 percent who know someone who is lesbian, gay, or bisexual. However, when looking at Americans under age 30, that number jumps all the way up to 50 percent of people who say they personally know someone in their daily lives who is transgender. Negative media coverage and misinformation about transgender people has led to the proposal of a record-breaking number of anti-trans legislative measures, and has made it more important than ever that Hollywood ensures that nuanced and authentic stories of trans characters make it to screen. As our study shows, there remains a huge opportunity for studios to tell groundbreaking LGBTQ stories that will be fresh and interesting for audiences, highlight the full diversity of the community, and spotlight new voices.

Moving forward GLAAD would like to see more trans characters in major studio films that are fully fleshed out characters beyond just their gender identity, and more stories with trans characters in all sorts of settings, roles, and communities. More trans characters deserve to have agency and ownership in their stories, and their gender affirmed in storytelling, rather than mocked and disregarded by other characters in the piece. GLAAD is available to studios as a trusted and proven resource, and can also serve as a route to finding outstanding transgender writers, directors, animators, creative and actors to hire to ensure that meaningful storytelling is carried from the page to the screen. As studios continue to compete for audience’s attention and dollars, they should further consider prioritizing active development and promotion of stories that feature bisexual+ characters. While bisexual+ people make up the majority of the community at around 57 percent, only two films in the most recent SRI included bi characters - one of which was outright offensive. This is a finding similar to previous years and the ongoing minimization and erasure of bisexual+ characters and stories has a legitimate impact on bisexual+ people. Multiple population studies have shown that though the bisexual+ community continues to grow that they are less likely to be out to people in their lives than gay or lesbian people and report significantly higher levels of minority stresses, effects which can be furthered by societal misunderstanding of their identities, relationships, and lives.

### Charting the Path Forward

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GLAAD has challenged studios to urgently prioritize introducing characters living with HIV in their upcoming film slates after a near complete absence in major studio releases in the past decade.

More than 1.2 million Americans today are living with HIV. GLAAD and Gilead Sciences’ “The State of HIV Stigma” survey found nearly 9 in 10 Americans believe “there is still stigma around HIV” and 88% agree that “people are quick to judge those with HIV.”

The scarcity of stories which center, or even just include, people living with HIV represents an opportunity for writers to explore groundbreaking new storytelling angles and drive change. We’ve seen how culture can shift when the media gives a face to issues people may fear or not understand—whether the media gives a face to issues people fear or not understand—whether the media gives a face to issues people may fear or not understand—whether the media gives a face to issues people may fear or not understand—through films like Philadelphia, Longtime Companion, and The Normal Heart; celebrations sharing their experiences living with HIV, as Billy Porter and Jonathan Van Ness have done, or moments of activism, like Lil Nas X spotlighting Southern AIDS Coalition from the stage of the MTV Video Music Awards.

Currently, the only upcoming film publicly announced from a major studio set to include a character living with HIV is Universal Pictures’ adaptation of the Rock Hudson biography All That Heaven Allows. Prolific gay director Greg Berlanti is attached to direct the film, though there has not been any news on the title in several years. The GLAAD List honored Three Months, released last year on Paramount+, an edgy and authentic story of a character tied into the plot in such a way that their removal would have a significant impact.

GLAAD and Gilead Sciences’ “The State of HIV Stigma” survey found nearly 9 in 10 Americans believe “there is still stigma around HIV” and 88% agree that “people are quick to judge those with HIV.”

The scarcity of stories which center, or even just include, people living with HIV represents an opportunity for writers to explore groundbreaking new storytelling angles and drive change. We’ve seen how culture can shift when the media gives a face to issues people may fear or not understand—whether the media gives a face to issues people may fear or not understand—whether the media gives a face to issues people may fear or not understand—whether the media gives a face to issues people may fear or not understand—through films like Philadelphia, Longtime Companion, and The Normal Heart; celebrations sharing their experiences living with HIV, as Billy Porter and Jonathan Van Ness have done, or moments of activism, like Lil Nas X spotlighting Southern AIDS Coalition from the stage of the MTV Video Music Awards.

Currently, the only upcoming film publicly announced from a major studio set to include a character living with HIV is Universal Pictures’ adaptation of the Rock Hudson biography All That Heaven Allows. Prolific gay director Greg Berlanti is attached to direct the film, though there has not been any news on the title in several years. The GLAAD List honored Three Months, released last year on Paramount+, an edgy and authentic story of a character tied into the plot in such a way that their removal would have a significant impact.

GLAAD’s most recent SRI found that only 56 percent (9 of 16) of inclusive films passed the test, the lowest percentage in four years, or just 12 percent of the 77 total films tracked from major distributors. In addition to running this test on the films in active development, producers and executives can also look to the annual GLAAD List to find outstanding scripts which pass the Vito Russo Test that are available for acquisition and development.

The 2022 GLAAD List, the third in this annual curated series, named twelve new feature scripts. At least 45 percent of the scripts named in the first two editions have been optioned and are in production currently with the first GLAAD List releases hitting screens in 2022. Three months on Paramount+ and Anything’s Possible on Amazon.

The third release hit theaters this month, Avatar: The Way of Water, which opened in number one at the box office and knocked Knock at the Cabin from the top spot. Executives can also search the Black List’s site or blacklist.com for scripts which writers have marked as passing the Vito Russo Test. The 2023 GLAAD List is set to come out later this year.

One Decade of the Studio Responsibility Index
### OVERALL DEMOGRAPHICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of white LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of Black/African American LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of Latinx LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of Asian/Pacific Islander LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of Multi-racial LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of Indigenous LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of non-human LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of inclusive films with gay men</th>
<th>% of inclusive films with lesbians</th>
<th>% of inclusive films with bisexual characters</th>
<th>% of inclusive films with transgender characters</th>
<th>% of inclusive films with nonbinary characters</th>
<th>% of male LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of female LGBTQ characters</th>
<th>% of LGBTQ characters with disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
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<td>11%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td>11%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
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<td>36%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>12.9%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>9%</td>
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<td>14%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>32%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<td>45%</td>
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<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Transgender men are counted in male LGBTQ characters, and transgender women are counted in female LGBTQ characters. Nonbinary characters were not counted until the 2017 report as there were no characters who identified as such.
PARTNERS IN CHANGE

While the entertainment industry has long been in a state of flux and tension with the rise of streaming services owned directly by many top studios, that change has been hugely accelerated for film by the COVID-19 pandemic and the forced closure of theaters for many months across the country and internationally. This allowed many consumers to get accustomed to home releases and, with the re-opening of theaters, drastically reduced theatrical windows which get films from theaters to streamers more quickly. Most studios have shifted to a mix of shorter 30-to-45-day theatrical exclusive release windows before a film is available on streaming platforms, compared to the previous typical 16-week standard, along with upping production on films which are exclusive to their streaming service.

GLAAD’s SRI has historically focused solely on analyzing those films which received theatrical distribution from a major studio distributor. This methodology ensured that films which are the most widely available at theaters across the country, which typically includes the highest budgeted productions, were core to our analysis. While this focus has allowed us to drive large-scale change at the major studios which release the films that dominate the box office, and ensure that audiences in large cities and small towns alike are able to find inclusive films at their local theaters - we know that as the industry is changing, so too must we to ensure relevant and actionable research reflective of the decisions our partners and allies at studios, streamers, and more are making. GLAAD’s Entertainment Research team is currently in actively testing an evolved methodology which would recognize those films on notable streaming platforms and allow for a wider examination of the film landscape as a whole. These changes will be reflected in the next edition of the Studio Responsibility Index to come out this summer examining 2022 releases.

The GLAAD Media Institute team is a unique center of excellence and a valued resource to creatives, executives, and marketers in entertainment and beyond. Our team is actively working with our partners in Hollywood and through new pipeline initiatives like the GLAAD List, Equity in Entertainment and Media Initiative (EMEI), and more to set the narrative for the LGBTQ community in storytelling and steering culture change. Thank you for your support.

MEGAN TOWNSEND
Senior Director, Entertainment Research & Analysis
GLAAD Media Institute

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.

The GLAAD Media Institute provides training, consultation, and actionable research to develop an army of social justice ambassadors for all marginalized communities to champion acceptance and amplify media impact.

Journalists and media interested in speaking to a GLAAD spokesperson, please inquire at press@glaad.org. Those interested in learning more about the GLAAD Media Institute and its services including consultation, research and contextualized education, media and cultural competency training and more, please visit glaad.org/institute.

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