Inequality in 1,700 Popular Films:
Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBTQ+ & Disability from 2007 to 2023

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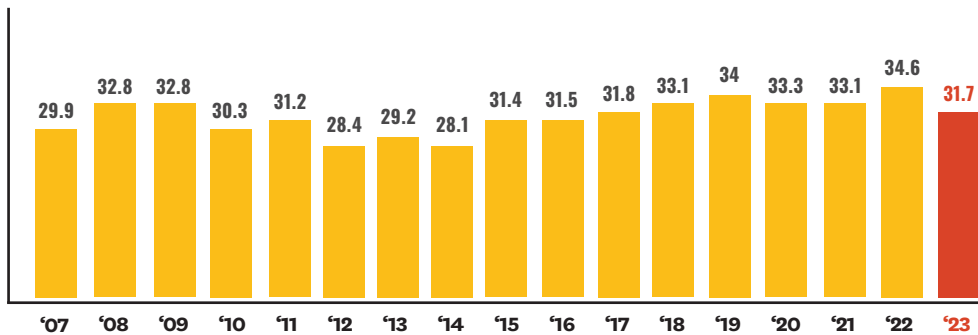*Inclusion Initiative*

INEQUALITY IN 1,700 POPULAR FILMS

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NO PROGRESS FOR GIRLS & WOMEN ON SCREEN

Prevalence of girls and women as speaking characters across 1,700 films, in percentages

Year	Percentage
'07	29.9
'08	32.8
'09	32.8
'10	30.3
'11	31.2
'12	28.4
'13	29.2
'14	28.1
'15	31.4
'16	31.5
'17	31.8
'18	33.1
'19	34
'20	33.3
'21	33.1
'22	34.6
'23	31.7

Percentage of 1,700 films with Balanced Casts **11%**
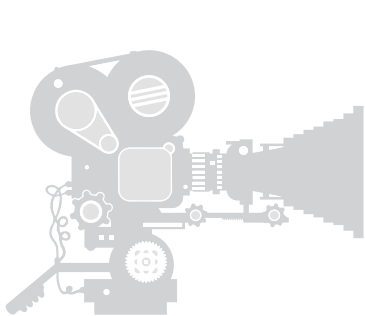
Ratio of males to females **2.2 : 1**

Total number of speaking characters **74,991**

PROGRESS TOWARD PARITY STALLS FOR GIRLS & WOMEN AS PROTAGONISTS

Of the 100 top films in 2023…

30 Depicted a **Girl or Woman** as a **Lead** or **Co Lead**

44 films in 2022 and 20 in 2007 depicted a girl or woman as a lead or co lead.

And of those 30 films…

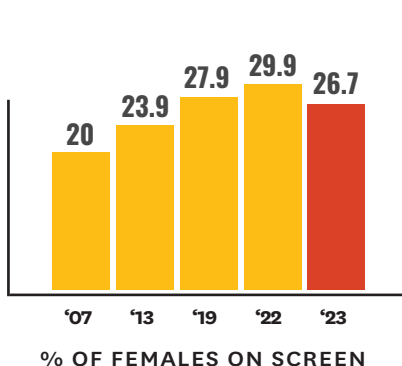**14** had a female lead/co lead from an **underrepresented racial/ethnic group**

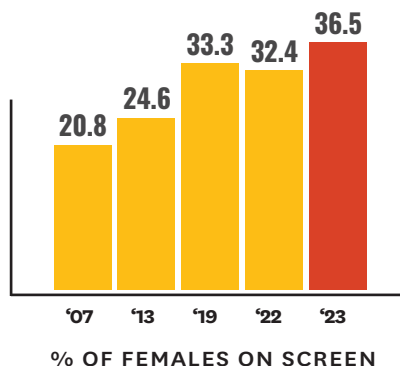**3** had a female lead/co lead **45 years of age or older**

Excludes films w/ensemble casts

GENRE GAPS PERSIST FOR GIRLS & WOMEN

Year	Action
'07	20
'13	23.9
'19	27.9
'22	29.9
'23	26.7

% OF FEMALES ON SCREEN

ACTION

Year	Animation
'07	20.8
'13	24.6
'19	33.3
'22	32.4
'23	36.5

% OF FEMALES ON SCREEN

ANIMATION

Year	Comedy
'07	36
'13	36.5
'19	38.7
'22	34.5
'23	32.6

% OF FEMALES ON SCREEN

COMEDY

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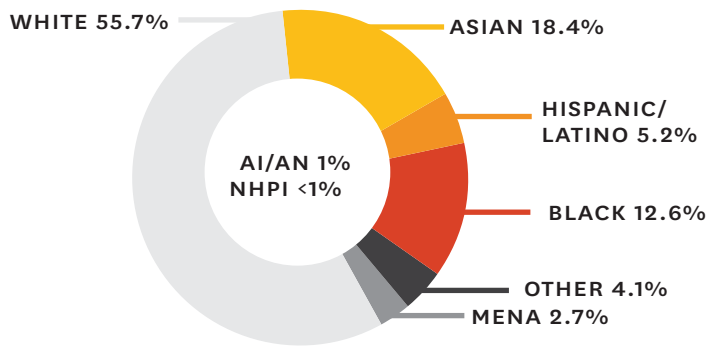*Inclusion Initiative*
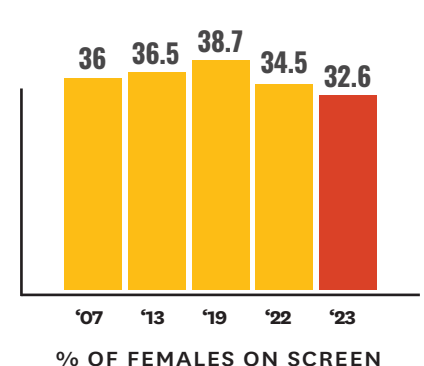
LIMITED PROGRESS FOR PROTAGANISTS OF COLOR IN FILM

Number of films with underrepresented leads or co leads by year

	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	'20	'21	'22	'23	OVERALL
ALL UR LEADS	13	13	17	12	9	13	17	17	15	14	22	27	32	29	35	31	37	21%
FEMALE UR LEADS	1	4	4	5	5	3	3	4	3	3	4	11	17	9	14	18	14	7%

INCLUSION OF RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS ON SCREEN IN 2023

Percentage of all speaking characters by racial/ethnic group

WHITE 55.7%
ASIAN 18.4%
HISPANIC/LATINO 5.2%
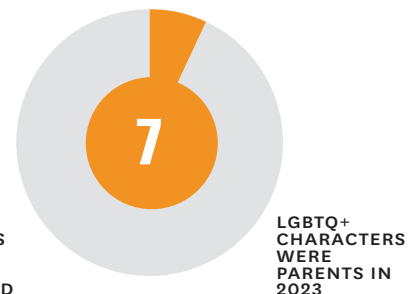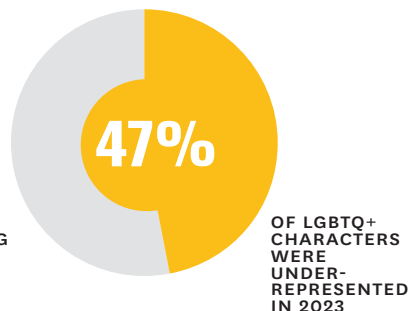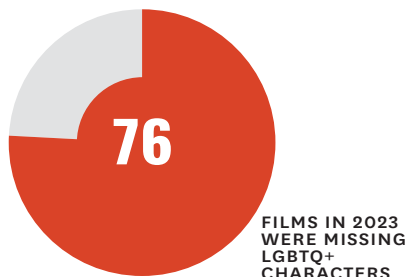AI/AN 1%
NHPI <1%
BLACK 12.6%
OTHER 4.1%
MENA 2.7%

Since 2007, the percentage of White speaking characters decreased by 21.9 percentage points and the percentage of Asian characters increased by 15 percentage points
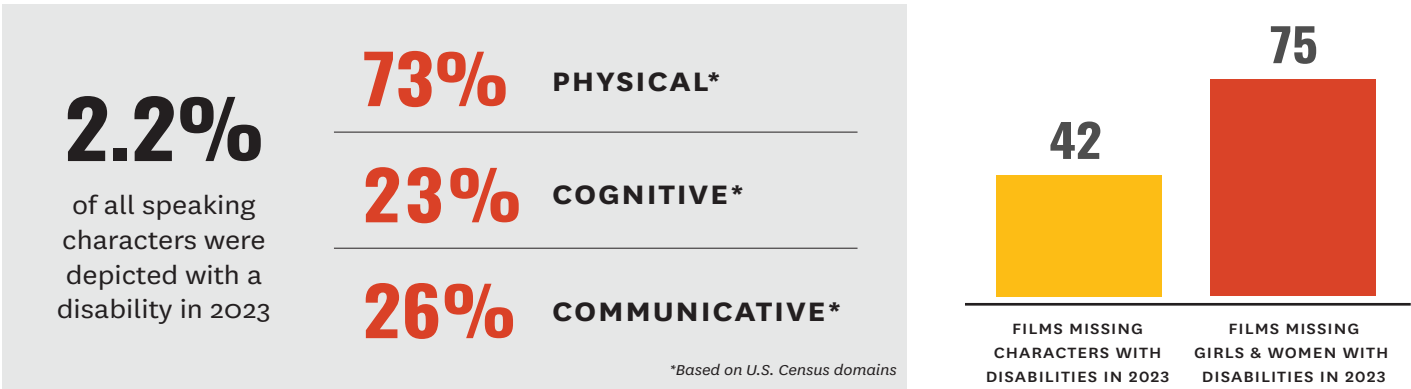
percentage of **under-represented characters**: **44%**

18 films had **NO Black or African American** speaking characters

42 films had **NO Hispanic/Latino** speaking characters

31 films had **NO Asian** speaking characters

LGBTQ+ CHARACTERS ARE LEFT BEHIND IN FILM

Of 44,255 speaking characters across 1,000 films...

MEASURES	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
GAY	12	19	36	16	33	45	12	24	43	31
LESBIAN	4	7	9	9	17	10	15	6	27	20
BISEXUAL	5	5	6	6	8	3	2	7	13	8
TRANSGENDER	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	2	5	0

One character in 2023 was coded as having another sexuality. This brings the total of LGBTQ+ characters to 60
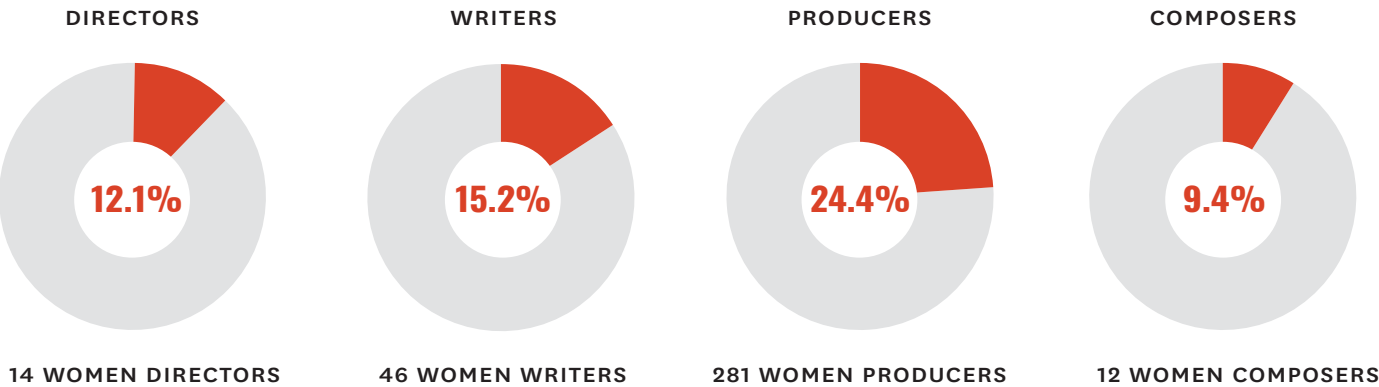
76 FILMS IN 2023 WERE MISSING LGBTQ+ CHARACTERS

47% OF LGBTQ+ CHARACTERS WERE UNDER-REPRESENTED IN 2023

7 LGBTQ+ CHARACTERS WERE PARENTS IN 2023

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CHARACTERS WITH DISABILITY FACE A DEFICIT ON SCREEN IN FILM

2.2%
of all speaking characters were depicted with a disability in 2023

73% PHYSICAL*

23% COGNITIVE*

26% COMMUNICATIVE*

Based on U.S. Census domains

42
FILMS MISSING CHARACTERS WITH DISABILITIES IN 2023

75
FILMS MISSING GIRLS & WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN 2023

WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA IN 2023

Across 1,571 content creators....

● MEN ● WOMEN

DIRECTORS
12.1%
14 WOMEN DIRECTORS

WRITERS
15.2%
46 WOMEN WRITERS

PRODUCERS
24.4%
281 WOMEN PRODUCERS

COMPOSERS
9.4%
12 WOMEN COMPOSERS

GENDER FLUIDITY IS HARDLY REPRESENTED IN ENTERTAINMENT

ONLY ONE composer was *non binary* in 2021

ONLY FOUR speaking characters were *non binary* in 2023

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WOMEN DIRECTORS ACROSS 1,700 TOP-GROSSING FILMS

Abby Kohn	Halina Reijn	Mimi Leder
Adele Lim	Hallie Meyers-Shyer	Miranda July
Angelina Jolie	Janicza Bravo	Nancy Meyers+
Anna Boden	Jennifer Flackett	Natalie Erika James
Anna Foerster	Jennifer Lee+	Natalie Krinsky
Anne Fletcher+	Jennifer Yuh Nelson+	Nia DaCosta+
Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari	Jessica M. Thompson	Nia Vardalos
Autumn de Wilde	Jessie Nelson	Niki Caro
Ava DuVernay+	Jill Culton	Nora Ephron
Betty Thomas	Jodie Foster	Olivia Newman
Brenda Chapman	Julie Anne Robinson+	Olivia Wilde+
Castille Landon	Julie Taymor	Patricia Riggen
Cate Shortland	Kasi Lemmons+	Patty Jenkins+
Catherine Hardwicke+	Kat Coiro	Phyllida Lloyd+
Cathy Yan	Kathryn Bigelow	Reed Morano
Celine Song	Kay Cannon	Robin Wright
Charise Castro Smith	Kelly Fremon Craig	Rosalind Ross
Chinonye Chukwu	Kimberly Peirce	Roxann Dawson
Chloé Zhao+	Kirsten Sheridan	Sam Taylor-Johnson
Christy Summerhays	Kitty Green	Sanaa Hamri
Diane English	Lana Wachowski+	Sarah Smith+
Elaine Bogan	Laura Brousseau	Shari Springer Berman
Elizabeth Allen Rosenbaum	Laura Terruso	Sharon Maguire
Elizabeth Banks+	Liesl Tommy	Sofia Coppola
Emerald Fennell	Lilly Wachowski	Stacy Title
Emma Seligman	Lisa Joy	Stella Meghie+
Emma Tammi	Lorene Scafaria	Susanna Fogel
Faryn Pearl	Loveleen Tandan	Susanna White
Fawn Veerasunthorn	Lucia Aniello	Thea Sharrock
Floria Sigismondi	Maria Schrader	Tina Gordon
Gail Mancuso	Marielle Heller	Trish Sie
Gina Prince-Bythewood+	Meghna Gulzar	Veronika Franz
Greta Gerwig+	Melina Matsoukas	

+=woman has worked more than once

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DIRECTORS AND COMPOSERS: FEW WOMEN FILL THESE ROLES

	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	'20	'21	'22	'23	OVERALL
123 WOMEN OUT OF **1,900** DIRECTORS	3	9	4	3	4	5	2	2	8	5	8	5	12	15	14	10	14	**6.5%**
	112	112	111	109	108	121	107	107	107	120	109	112	112	111	113	113	116	
61 WOMEN/NB OUT OF **1,958** COMPOSERS	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	3	6	9	5*	10	12	**3.1%**
	107	108	109	115	109	105	114	105	114	121	113	108	118	131	131	122	128	

includes one gender non binary composer

MOST CASTING DIRECTORS ARE WHITE WOMEN

Across 1,700 films the demographic breakdown of casting directors…
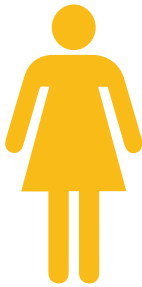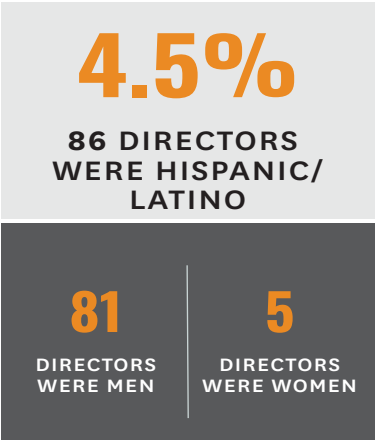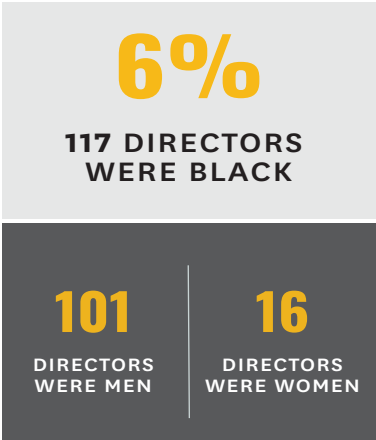
17.8% ARE WHITE MEN	**69.8%** ARE WHITE WOMEN	**2.7%** ARE UNDERREPRESENTED MEN	**9.7%** ARE UNDERREPRESENTED WOMEN

STORYTELLERS ARE STILL PRIMARILY WHITE AND MALE

Across 1,700 films and 1,900 directors…

6% 117 DIRECTORS WERE BLACK	**4.5%** 86 DIRECTORS WERE HISPANIC/LATINO	**5%** 94 DIRECTORS WERE ASIAN
101 DIRECTORS WERE MEN / **16** DIRECTORS WERE WOMEN	**81** DIRECTORS WERE MEN / **5** DIRECTORS WERE WOMEN	**81** DIRECTORS WERE MEN / **13** DIRECTORS WERE WOMEN

ERASURE OF GIRLS AND WOMEN IN TOP-GROSSING FILMS

Of the 100 top films in 2023, the number missing girls and women on screen that were...

12	62	39	49	99	99	81	56
White	Hispanic/ Latina	Black/African American	Asian	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Middle Eastern/ North African	Multiracial/ Multiethnic
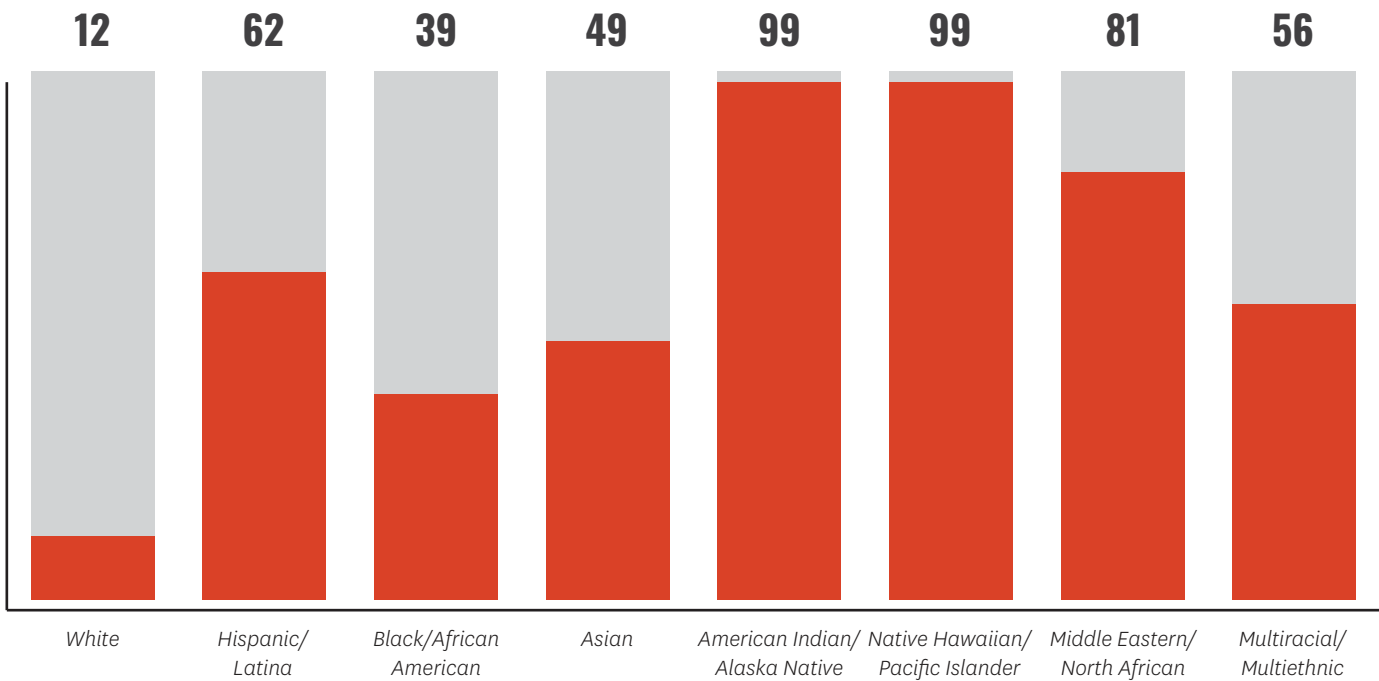
STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS TO FOSTER SYSTEMIC CHANGE

COLLECTIVE ACTION	SET TARGET INCLUSION GOALS	INCLUSION RIDER	SHAREHOLDER ACTIVISM
COMPANY-WIDE INCLUSION POLICIES	TRANSPARENT INTERVIEWING & HIRING PRACTICES	CREATE INCLUSIVE CONSIDERATION LISTS	SUPPORT NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TRAINING NEW FILMMAKERS

Inequality in 1,700 Popular Films:
Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBTQ+, & Characters with Disabilities
from 2007 to 2023

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The aim of this report was to document inclusion across the most popular films in North America. To this end, we examined the 100 top-grossing films from 2007 to 2023 for portrayals of gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ+, and disability. In total, 1,700 top-grossing narrative live action and animated movies have been evaluated. In addition to on screen portrayals, we also assessed gender and race/ethnicity of directors, writers, producers, composers and casting directors working behind the camera. Below, we summarize our key findings from the 17th edition of this report.

Key Findings

Gender

On Screen. A total of 5,084 *speaking characters* were coded for gender. A full 68.2% of speaking characters were male (*n*=3,469), 31.7% were female (*n*=1,611), and <1% (.08%, *n*=4) were non binary.

The percentage of female speaking characters has not meaningfully changed since 2007. Girls/women comprised 31.7% of speaking or named roles across the 100 top films of 2023 and this percentage did not differ from the top 100 films of 2022 (34.6%) or 2007 (29.9%).

Only 11% of the 100 top movies of 2023 were *gender balanced* or featured girls/women in roughly half of all roles (45-54.9%). This percentage did not deviate from 2022 (15%) or 2007 (12%). Only 5 movies in 2023 had more girls/women on screen (55% or higher) than boys/men.

2023 was not different from 2022 in terms of the prevalence of girls/women on screen in *action/adventure, animation, or comedy*. However, there were gains for females on screen in action and animation from 2007 (20%, 20.8%, respectively) to 2023 (26.7%, 36.5%, respectively). This was not the case for comedy, however.

The percentage of movies with girls/women as *leads/co leads* was substantially lower in 2023 (30%) than 2022 (44%). This difference represents a 14-percentage point drop within one year! The percentage of films with girls/women at the center in 2023 (30%) was higher than in 2007 (20%), however.

Only 14% of the 100 top films of 2023 featured an *underrepresented female leads/co lead*. This was 4 percentage points lower than in 2022 (18%) but 13 percentage points higher than 2007 (1%).

Only 3% of the 100 top films of 2023 depicted *women leads/co leads 45 years of age or older* (i.e., Keri Russell, Nia Vardalos, Salma Hayek) which was a significant decrease from 2022 (10%) but not different from 2007 (1%).

Only 1 of the 100 top movies of 2023 featured a *women of color 45 years of age or older* as a protagonist (Salma Hayek), which was not different from 2022 (5%) or 2007 (0).

In terms of *age*, women represent less than a quarter (24.8%) of all speaking characters 40 years of age or older across the 100 top movies of 2023. The prevalence of women 40 years old and above on screen in 2023 was not different from 2022 (25.8%) or 2007 (22.1%).

Only *22 older women (65 years of age or older) were cast in ensemble storylines* across 1,700 movies from 2007 to 2023. Of these, 16 roles were filled by actors working more than one time (Candice Bergen, Diane Keaton, Jane Fonda, Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Mary Steenburgen). This is less than 1 per year. Almost half of the roles appeared in 2022 and 2023 films. Twenty one out of 22 roles or 95.4% were white. The one non White actor was Rita Moreno in the 2023 movie *Eighty for Brady*!

Women (46.4%) were more likely to be shown as *parents* than were men (40.8%) across the 100 top films of 2023. In terms of women caregivers, 2023 was not different from 2022 (43.8%) or 2007 (50%).

Behind the Camera. A full 116 individuals were credited as *directors* on the 100 top-grossing films of 2023, with 12.1% women and 87.9% men. While 2023 (12.1%) did not differ meaningfully from 2022 (8.8%), it was almost 10 percentage points (9.4) higher than 2007 (2.7%).

There were three *top performing* women directors from 2007 to 2023. Both Lana Wachowski and Anne Fletcher have each directed 4 narrative feature films across the sample time frame. Greta Gerwig has directed 3 movies and 17 different women directors have helmed 2 movies each.

The top performing male directors were Tyler Perry (18 movies), Steven Spielberg (14 movies), Clint Eastwood (12 movies), and Ridley Scott (11 movies).

A full 303 individuals were credited as *writers* across the 100 top movies of 2023, with 84.8% men and 15.2% women. No difference emerged in the percentage of women writers from 2022 (16.3%) to 2023 (15.2%) or from 2007 (11.2%).

A total of 1,152 *producers* were credited across this year's sample of 100 top films. A full 75.6% of producers were men and 24.4% were women. The percentage of women working as producers in 2023 was not different from the percentage in 2022 (26.8%) or 2007 (19.7%).

In 2023, 90.6% of *composers* were men and 9.4% were women. Twelve women were credited as composers across the 100 top films of 2023. 2023 (9.4%) was not different from 2022 (8.2%) but was significantly higher than 2007 (0).

Out of 157 *casting directors* across the 100 top films of 2023, 73.9% were women and 26.1% were men. The percentage of women casters was lower in 2023 (73.9%) than in 2022 (80.7%) and 2007 (86.1%).

Across the 100 top movies of 2023, there was a *relationship between director gender and gender of speaking characters on screen*. Films with at least one-woman director attached were more likely to have female speaking characters on screen (43.1% vs. 30.2%) as well as female leads/co leads (75% vs. 22.2%) than those films without a woman director attached.

Race/Ethnicity

On Screen. Of those characters evaluated for *race/ethnicity* across the 100 top films of 2023, 55.7% were White, 12.6% Black, 5.2% Hispanic/Latino, 18.4% Asian, 2.7% Middle Eastern/North African (MENA), 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, <1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 4.1% Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic/other. Collapsing across categories, 55.7% of characters were White and 44.3% were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups.

There has been no meaningful change in the percentage of specific underrepresented racial/ethnic groups on screen in film. One difference was observed for White characters, however. When compared to 2023 (55.7%), the percentage of White characters has decreased significantly from 2022 (61.7%) and 2007 (77.6%).

In comparison to 2023 (58%), the prevalence of underrepresented characters in *action/adventure films* has increased from 2022 (46.8%) and 2007 (21.6%).

A significant uptick in underrepresented characters was also observed in *animation*. Roughly two thirds of all animated speaking characters (67.9%) were underrepresented in 2023 whereas 59.2% were in 2022 and 8.1% in 2007.

No differences were observed in underrepresented characters on screen in *comedy* from 2022 (36.7%) to 2023 (36.5%). However, the prevalence of underrepresented speaking characters in 2023 comedies (36.5%) was higher than in 2007 comedies (23.1%).

Only 4 movies featured *Black characters at proportional representation* with the U.S. (13.6%). This finding is the lowest it has been in 17 years. However, a total of 34 films in 2023 depicted storylines with Black characters above proportional representation. This is a 17-year high.

A full 18 movies *erased Black speaking characters* altogether in 2023, which was not different from 2022 (15 movies). There was more invisibility of Black speaking characters on screen in 2023 (18 movies) than in 2018 (13 films).

Zero of the 100 top movies of 2023 depicted *Hispanic/Latinos at proportional representation* with the U.S (19.1%). Seven films in 2023 were above proportional representation.

Forty-two films *erased Hispanic/Latinos*, which was similar to the results from 2022 (46 films) but lower than the results from 2018 (47 films).

A mere 17 out of 100 top-grossing movies of 2023 depicted *Asians at proportional representation* with the U.S. (6.3%). Twenty-six movies were above proportional representation in 2023, which was lower than 2022 (31 movies) but similar to 2018 (27 movies).

Just under a third of the 100 top movies of 2023 (31 films) *erased Asian characters*. This number was slightly lower than 2022 (34 movies), but on par with 2018 (32 movies).

We conducted an *invisibility analysis of girls/women* from every race/ethnicity evaluated. In 2023, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander girls and women were missing on screen across 99 of the 100 top films. MENA girls/women were notably absent from 81 out of 100 top movies of 2023, Hispanic/Latino girls/women from 62 and Multiracial/Multiethnic girls/women from 56.

In 2023, 37 films featured an *underrepresented lead/co lead* driving the plot. This percentage approached U.S. Census (41.1%) and was higher than underrepresented leads/co leads across the 100 top movies of 2022 (31%) and 2007 (13%).

The number of films with *women of color as leads/co leads* decreased from 18% in 2022 to 14% in 2023. It is important to note that the percentage of films with women of color at the center in 2023 was higher than in 2007 (1%).

Behind the Camera. Of the 116 directors in 2023, 78.4% were White and 21.6% were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. The percentage of *underrepresented directors* is well below the U.S. Census (41.1%).

The percentage of underrepresented directors has not changed over time. The percentage of underrepresented directors in 2023 (21.6%) was virtually identical to 2022 (21.2%). Both years were higher than 2007 (12.5%), however.

Of the 308 underrepresented directors across 17 years, 276 (89.6%) were men and 32 (10.4%) were women. The top performing male directors were Tyler Perry (18 films) followed by Antoine Fuqua (8 films), James Wan (8 films), Tim Story (8 films), M. Night Shyamalan (8 films), and Jaume Collet-Serra (8 films).

The seven top performing women all helmed 2 narrative pictures during the 17-year sample time frame examined: Stella Meghie, Chloé Zhao, Kasi Lemmons, Nia DaCosta, Ava DuVernay, Gina Prince-Bythewood, and Jennifer Yuh Nelson.

In terms of *Black directors*, a total of 8.6% or 10 helmers worked in 2023 (9 men, 1 woman), which was not significantly different from than 5.3% (3 men, 3 women) in 2022 or 7.1% (8 men) in 2007.

The 10 Black directors in 2023 include: Antoine Fuqua (*The Equalizer 3*), Blitz Bazawule (*The Color Purple*), Calmatic (*House Party*), Cord Jefferson (*American Fiction*), Justin Simien (*Haunted Mansion*), Kemp Powers (*Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*), Michael B. Jordan (*Creed III*), Nia DaCosta (*The Marvels*), Steven Caple Jr. (*Transformers: Rise of the Beats*), and Tim Story (*The Blackening*).

Black directors – in comparison to non Black directors -- were far more likely in 2023 to feature Black leads/co leads (72.7%, 6.9%, respectively) in their movies as well as populate their storylines with Black casts (44.4%, 9.1% respectively).

Hispanic/Latino directors comprised 3.4% (*n*=4) of helmers across the 100 top movies of 2023. The number and percentage of Hispanic/Latino directors in 2023 did not differ from the number and percentage in 2022 (3.5%, *n*=4) or 2007 (2.7%, *n*=3).

The 4 (male) directors of 2023 movies were Alejandro Monteverde (*Sound of Freedom*), Andres Muschietti (*The Flash*), Angel Manuel Soto (*Blue Beetle*), and Steven Caple Jr. (*Transformers: Rise of the Beasts*). Only one of these directors was Afro Latino.

In terms of *Asian directors*, 10.3% (9 men, 3 women) worked across the 100 top films of 2023. This percentage was almost identical to 2022 (10.6%) but higher than 2007 (2.7%).

The 12 Asian directors across the 100 most popular films of 2023 were as follows: Adele Lim (*Joy Ride*), Atlee (*Jawan*), Celine Song (*Past Lives*), Fawn Veerasunthorn (*Wish*), Hayao Miyazaki (*The Boy and the Heron*), James Wan (*Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom*), Makoto Shinkai (*Suzume*), M. Night Shyamalan (*Knock at the Cabin*), Prashanth Neel (*Salaar*), Sandeep Reddy Vanga (*Animal*), Siddharth Anand (*Pathaan*), and Takashi Yamazaki (*Godzilla Minus One*).

Movies with Asian directors in 2023 were more likely to have Asian leads/co leads and Asian speaking characters (75%, 83.6% respectively) than those films without an Asian director attached (0%, 5.6% respectively).

In 2023, 62.8% of **casting directors** were white women, 21.2% white men, 10.9% underrepresented women, and 5.1% underrepresented men.

There were more white males (21.2%) working as casting directors in 2023 than there were in 2022 (12.5%) or 2007 (13.6%). The percentage of white women casters (62.8%) in 2023 decreased from 2022 (69.8%) and 2007 (78.7%). Underrepresented male casting directors have increased from 2007 (<1%) to 2023 (5.1%).

LGBTQ+

Onscreen. In 2023, a total of 60 speaking or named characters were **LGBTQ+**. Of these, 33.3% (*n*=20) were lesbian, 51.7% (*n*=31) gay, 13.3% (*n*=8) bisexual, 1.7% (*n*=1) another sexuality, and 0 transgender. This culminates into 1.2% of all speaking characters.

Has the number of LGBTQ+ speaking characters changed over time? The prevalence of lesbian, gay and bisexual characters in 2023 was lower than in 2022 (87 characters). However, the number of lesbian, gay and bisexual characters has increased since 2014 (21 characters).

Transgender representation in 2023 was identical to 2014. Across more than 9,000 characters evaluated and 200 top movies, there was not one transgender character who spoke or was named on screen in 2014 or 2023.

Six movies in 2023 depicted the LGB community at **proportional representation** with U.S. population (~10%), but this number did not differ from 2022 (3 movies). Only 1 movie out of 100 featured the LGB community above proportional representation on screen (*Bottoms*).

In 2023, just over three quarters (76 out of 100) of the films in the sample did not feature LGBTQ+ characters. The number of films rendering this community **invisible** in 2023 (76 films) was not different from 2022 (72 films) but was lower than 2014 (86 films).

Of the 20 **lesbian speaking characters** coded, 50% were teenagers, 40% were 21-39 years of age and 10% were 40-64 years age. Only 3 were depicted as parents across 100 top movies of 2023. Of those lesbian characters coded, 38.9% were White, 38.9% Black, 11.1% Multiracial/Multiethnic, 5.6% MENA and 5.6% Asian.

Seven or 35% of the 20 lesbian characters coded were completely inconsequential to the plot. Nine or 45% were supporting characters.

A full 61.3% of *gay speaking characters* were 21-39 years of age and 25.8% were 40-64 years of age. Only 12.9% of gay characters were teens. Just over 40% of all gay characters were parents and 54.8% of were inconsequential to the plot. Less than a third (32.3%) of gay roles were supporting characters.

The 8 *bisexual speaking characters* were largely female identified (62.5%). In terms of age, 50% were young adults (21-39 years), 37.5% were teens (13-20 years), and 12.5% was middle aged (40-64 years). Only 1 bisexual character was inconsequential to the plot. Not one bisexual character was depicted as a parent.

The number of films with an LGBTQ+ lead/co lead in 2023 (5 movies) was not meaningfully different from the number of films in 2022 (9 movies) or 2014 (2 movies).

In terms of protagonists, a total of 5 movies depicted an *LGBTQ+ lead/co lead*. Those movies include *The Color Purple* (Black, woman, 21-39 years of age), *Poor Things* (Caucasian, woman, 21-39 years of age), *Bottoms* (Caucasian, female, teen; Black, female, teen), *Saltburn* (Caucasian, male, 12-20 years of age) and *Knock at the Cabin* (Caucasian, male, 21-39 years of age).

Disability

Overall, only 2.2% (*n*=113) of speaking or named characters were depicted with a *disability* across the 100 top films of 2023.

The percentage of characters with a disability has not meaningfully changed over time. 2023 (2.2%) was not different than 2022 (1.9%) or 2015 (2.4%).

The most frequently portrayed *type of disability* on screen involved physical impediments (73.4%) followed by communicative (25.7%) and cognitive (23%) disabilities.

Only 1 out of 100 movies portrayed disabled characters at *proportional representation* with the U.S. population (27.2%). A full 42 films out of 100 *erased* disabled characters altogether in 2023. This number was lower in 2023 than in 2022 but did not meaningfully differ from 2015.

In terms of *gender*, the majority of on-screen characters with a disability were men (71.7%). *Age* also related to disability with characters 40 years of age or older (49.1%) most likely to be depicted with a disability followed by characters 21-39 years of age (35.7%). Only 8.9% of characters with a disability were teenagers and only 6.2% were children.

Just over one-third of disabled characters were *inconsequential* to the plot.

Focusing on *race/ethnicity*, the majority of disabled characters were White (54.6%), Asian (15.2%), Black (11.1%), and Multiracial/Multiethnic (6.1%). Few disabled characters were Hispanic/Latino (5%), Indigenous (3%), MENA (4%), or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1%).

Not one disabled character on screen was a part of the *LGBTQ+ community*.

Only 8 out of 100 top films of 2023 depicted a *lead/co lead with a disability*. This overall percentage was significantly lower than 2022 (14 films) but not meaningfully different from 2015 (10 films).

Inequality in 1,700 Popular Films:
Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBTQ+, & Characters with Disabilities
from 2007 to 2023

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with assistance from
Katherine Neff, Ariana Case, Zoily Mercado & Sarah Neff

The aim of this report was to document inclusion across the most popular films in North America. To this end, we examine the 100 top-grossing films from 2007 to 2023 for portrayals of gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ+, and disability. In total, 1,700 top-grossing narrative live action and animated movies have been evaluated. Clearly, *this is the largest and most rigorous longitudinal evaluation of inclusion across cinematic content in the history of social science research*.

In addition to on screen portrayals, we also assessed who worked behind the camera. Here, we examined gender and race/ethnicity of employment patterns across specific departments (i.e., directors, writers, producers, composers, casting directors). By collecting this data, we were able to explore the relationship between identity indicators behind the camera and portrayals of actors on screen.

Given that this is our seventeenth time reporting on the 100 top movies, we do not expect any positive change. Rather, we anticipated that the strikes, streaming platform successes (e.g., Netflix) and inflation have all had profound effects on not only greenlighting decisions but decreasing box office receipts. Typically, in times of economic hardship, DEI efforts fall by the wayside. It is in this context that we anticipate that 2023 will reveal a reversal of any previous gains reported from 2019-2022.

In the sections that follow, we present the study results by global indicator (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ+, and disability). Within each section, the findings for 2023 are featured first and then comparisons are made to 2022 and 2007. Only 5% or greater differences between groups are highlighted to avoid reporting on meaningless deviations. Given that this longitudinal report is hosted on line, the methods are not detailed in the footnotes of this report. Rather, we encourage interested readers to visit earlier Inequality in Film reports on the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative website (https://annenberg.usc.edu/research/aii).

Gender

Each speaking or named character across the 100 top films of 2023 was assessed for their apparent gender (i.e., male, female, non binary).[1] We also measured the gender of personnel working behind the camera as unit heads in certain departments (i.e., directors, writers, producers, composers, and casting directors). Below, the gender identity prevalence results are presented first, followed by on screen portrayals, and behind the camera patterns.

On Screen Prevalence. A total of 5,084 *speaking characters* were coded for gender (male, female, non binary). A full 68.2% of speaking characters were male (*n*=3,469), 31.7% were female (*n*=1,611), and <1% (.08, *n*=4) were non binary. This calculates into an on screen gender ratio of 2.2 male characters to every 1 female character. The percentage of female speaking characters by year is shown in Table 1. 2023 (31.7%) was not meaningfully different from 2022 (34.6%) or 2007 (29.9%). Simply put, there has not been any meaningful change over time. Further, the percentage of girls and women on screen is substantially below U.S. Census (50.4%).[2]

Looking at the percentage of all female speaking characters across the sample of 100 top films is important. However, it is an overall percentage that does not reveal deviation that may occur from movie to movie. That is, the percentage does not tell us how many movies are at, above or below proportional representation (50.4%). As such, it is important to examine the percentage of films that are gender balanced or depict girls/women in 45-54.9% of all speaking roles.

Sample-wide, only 11% of the 100 top movies of 2023 were *gender balanced*. This percentage did not deviate from 2022 (15%) or 2007 (12%). Only 5 movies in 2023 had more girls/women on screen (55% or higher) than boys/men. Additionally, there were two movies that depicted female speaking characters in 8.9% or fewer roles!

Table 1
Prevalence of Female Characters On Screen by Year: 2007 to 2023

Year	% of Female Characters	% of Balanced Casts	Ratio of Males to Females	Total # of Characters	Total # of Films
2007	29.9%	12%	2.35 to 1	4,379	100
2008	32.8%	15%	2.05 to 1	4,371	100
2009	32.8%	17%	2.05 to 1	4,342	100
2010	30.3%	4%	2.30 to 1	4,154	100
2011	31.2%	12%	2.21 to 1	4,508	100
2012	28.4%	6%	2.52 to 1	4,476	100
2013	29.2%	16%	2.43 to 1	4,506	100
2014	28.1%	9%	2.56 to 1	4,611	100
2015	31.4%	18%	2.19 to 1	4,370	100
2016	31.5%	11%	2.18 to 1	4,590	100
2017	31.8%	19%	2.15 to 1	4,454	100
2018	33.1%	9%	2.02 to 1	4,422	100
2019	34%	14%	1.94 to 1	4,450	100
2020	33.3%	15%	2.00 to 1	3,755	100
2021	33.1%	15%	2.02 to 1	4,301	100
2022	34.6%	15%	1.89 to 1	4,218	100
2023	31.7%	11%	2.15 to 1	5,084	100
Total	31.6%	12.8%	2.17 to 1	74,991	1,700

Each year we examine the percentage of girls/women in three stereotypically male genres across the 100 top-grossing films: *action/adventure, animation, and comedy*. The results in Table 2 show that 2023 was no different than 2022 in terms of the prevalence of girls/women on screen in action/ adventure, animation, or comedy. The percentage of females on screen in animation and action/ adventure in 2023 movies (36.5%, 26.7% respectively) was significantly higher than females on screen in 2007 (20.8%, 20% respectively). Comedy did not demonstrate the same gain from 2007 to 2023 in girls/women on screen, however.

Table 2
Prevalence of Female Characters On Screen by Genre and Year: 2007-2023

Year	% of Female Characters in Action/Adventure	% of Female Characters in Animation	% of Female Characters in Comedy
2007	20%	20.8%	36%
2008	21.6%	26.9%	40.2%
2009	21.6%	30.8%	39%
2010	23.5%	30.7%	35.6%
2011	25%	23.7%	37.2%
2012	22.7%	27.5%	36%
2013	23.9%	24.6%	36.5%
2014	21.8%	21.5%	33.1%
2015	25.6%	26.8%	36.5%
2016	23.3%	30.8%	40.8%
2017	24.4%	30.8%	42.9%
2018	29%	31.3%	37.5%
2019	27.9%	33.3%	38.7%
2020	24.7%	35.2%	39.2%
2021	29.2%	35.7%	34.4%
2022	29.9%	32.4%	34.5%
2023	26.7%	36.5%	32.6%

Note: Genre distinctions were made using Box Office Mojo and IMDbPro descriptors. Movies were categorized into one mutually exclusive genre type prior to analysis.

Pivoting to *__protagonists__*, we also looked at the gender distribution of leads/co leads driving the plot. Eighty six percent of all movies depicted a single protagonist, 10% a lead and roughly equal co lead, and 4% were ensembles (i.e., 3 or more leads). For these analyses, we primarily focus on the 96% of films that feature a single or co leading set of protagonists.[3]

As shown in Table 3, the percentage of movies led or co led by girls/women was substantially lower in 2023 (30%) than 2022 (44%). This difference represents a 14-percentage point change within one year. The percentage of films with girls/women at the center in 2023 (30%) was higher than in 2007 (20%), however. A similar reversal was observed for women of color in leading roles. Only 14% of films featured underrepresented females driving the plot. This is 4 percentage points lower than in 2022 (18%) but 13 percentage points higher than 2007 (1%). The numbers were more problematic for women 45 years of age or older, however. Only 3 films depicted women leads/co leads 45 years of age or older across the 100 top movies of 2023, which was a significant decrease from 2022 (10%). Only 1 movie featured a women of color 45 years of age or older as a protagonist across the 100 top films of 2023.

Table 3
Prevalence of Female-Identified Leads & Co Leads by Year: 2007-2023

Year	% of films w/ Girls & Women	% of films w/ Women of Color	% of films w/ Women 45 Yrs & Older	% of films w/WOC 45 Yrs & Older
2007	20%	1%	1%	0
2008	27%	4%	4%	1%
2009	27%	4%	4%	0
2010	30%	5%	3%	0
2011	23%	5%	4%	2%
2012	24%	3%	3%	0
2013	28%	3%	7%	2%
2014	21%	4%	0	0
2015	32%	3%	5%	1%
2016	33%	3%	8%	1%
2017	32%	4%	5%	1%
2018	39%	11%	11%	4%
2019	43%	17%	3%	1%
2020	36%	9%	4%	0
2021	41%	14%	7%	1%
2022	44%	18%	10%	5%
2023	30%	14%	3%	1%
Total	31.2%	7.2%	4.8%	1.2%

Note: To construct this table, the unit of analysis was the movie. Gender was determined at the character level, using presentational cues on screen. For race/ethnicity, however, the actor's background information was retrieved. Ensemble casts are not included in any column.

While older women seem to be noticeably absent from leading and co leading roles, we do see them in ensemble movies.[3] We examined elderly women actors (65 years of age or older at the time of release) that were featured in ensemble casts from 2007 to 2023. A total of 10 films, across 17-years, featured older women as a part of an ensemble cast. Six of those films were franchise or sequel type movies (i.e., *Book Club, Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, Downton Abbey*).

Even with these additional leads in ensembles, the findings are problematic. Only 22 women were cast across 1,700 movies from 2007 to 2023. Of these, 16 worked more than one time (Candice Bergen, Diane Keaton, Jane Fonda, Maggie Smith, Mary Steenburgen). Over half of the roles appeared in 2022 and 2023 films. Twenty one out of 22 roles or 95.4% were white. The one non White actor was Rita Moreno in *Eighty for Brady*! As a point of comparison, 15 movies had a lead in an ensemble that were men 65 years of age or older. Twenty one roles (7 underrepresented) were occupied by 14 distinct actors. Only 4 elderly men of color worked across the sample time frame as an ensemble lead (Danny Glover, Hector Elizondo, Morgan Freeman, Samuel L. Jackson).

Overall, the prevalence of girls/women on screen in 2023 regressed from 2022 levels. This is true for overall speaking characters as well as protagonists. Fewer films were filled with women of color or older women (45 years of age or older) driving the plot. Older (65 years of age) women of color were erased from films with ensemble casts. While this section focused on prevalence, we now turn to the nature or way in which girls/women were portrayed on screen.

On Screen Portrayal. Here, we examine two stereotypical attributes of gender portrayals. The first is *apparent age.* Each character was coded as a child (0-5 years), elementary schooler (6-12 years), teenager (13-20 years), young adult (21-39 years), adult (40-64 years) or elderly (65 years of age or older). Prior to analyses, these categories were collapsed into four levels: child (0-12), teen (13-20), young adult (21-39) and adult (40 and above). We then assessed whether age was related to gender on screen.

As shown in Table 4, there is a relationship between character gender and apparent age. Across 2023's top 100 films, children (40.6%) and teens (45.3%) were more likely to be female than were young adults (34.4%). Even fewer elderly characters were women, with less than a quarter (24.8%) of all speaking characters clocking in at 65 years of age or older. Table 5 reveals that the prevalence of women over 40 on screen has not changed since 2007. It is important to note that non binary characters represent <1% of teenage (.21%, *n*=1) and young adult (.14%, *n*=3) speaking characters across the 100 top films of 2023.

Table 4
Character Age by Gender in Top-Grossing Films: 2023

Gender	Children 0-12 yrs	Teens 13-20 yrs	Young Adult 21-39 yrs	Adults 40 yrs or Older
Males	59.4%	54.5%	65.4%	75.2%
Females	40.6%	45.3%	34.4%	24.8%
Ratio	1.47 to 1	1.20 to 1	1.90 to 1	3.0 to 1

Table 5
Gender of Characters 40 years of Age and Older: 2007 to 2023

Year	Men	Women
2007	77.9%	22.1%
2008	72.8%	27.2%
2009	75.6%	24.4%
2010	78.2%	21.8%
2011	78.2%	21.8%
2012	79.2%	20.8%
2013	78.4%	21.6%
2014	79.4%	20.6%
2015	75.4%	24.6%
2016	74.3%	25.7%
2017	75.4%	24.6%
2018	75%	25%
2019	74.6%	25.4%
2020	73.2%	26.8%
2021	74.3%	25.7%
2022	74.2%	25.8%
2023	75.2%	24.8%
Total	76%	24%

Note: Only characters with the apparent age of 40 years or older were applicable for this analysis.

Another stereotypical gender portrayal pertains to domesticity, particularly in the form of *parental status*. Women have traditionally been more likely to be shown on screen in a caregiving role than men in our prior research.[4] This is what we found again in 2023. Of those characters with enough information presented to evaluate parental status, women (46.4%) were more likely to be shown as caregivers than were men (40.8%). Over time, there has also been change – but only for male characters. When compared to 2023 (40.8%), males were more likely to be shown as parents than in 2022 (32.6%) but less likely than in 2007 (51.5%). It is important to note that none of the non-binary characters across the 100 top-grossing movies were depicted as parents.

Table 6
Gender and Parental Status: 2007 to 2023

Year	Men	Women
2007	51.5%	50%
2008	41%	52.9%
2009	43%	50.5%
2010	42.6%	49.4%
2011	37.6%	42.4%
2012	45.2%	60.4%
2013	45.8%	51.9%
2014	42%	53.5%
2015	40.2%	44.4%
2016	33.9%	47.5%
2017	33%	40.3%
2018	34.6%	41.3%
2019	31.3%	41.6%
2020	35.7%	44.5%
2021	36.4%	44.1%
2022	32.6%	43.8%
2023	40.8%	46.4%
Total	38.6%	46.7%

Note: The presence or absence of parental status was evaluated for each character. Subtracting each cell from 100% yields the percentage of characters shown that were not a parent within gender.

Overall, this section demonstrated that gender was associated with prevalence as well as on screen portrayals. To understand why these depictions may be skewed, one only needs to look at who is working behind the camera. As such, this is the focus of the next section of the report.

Behind the Camera. Overall, a total of 1,571 directors, writers, and producers were employed across the 100 top films of 2023 (see Table 7). A full 116 individuals were credited as *directors* on the 100 top films of 2023, with 12.1% (*n*=14) women and 87.9% (*n*=102) men. The calculates into a gender ratio of 7.3 male directors to every 1 female director. While 2023 (12.1%) did not differ meaningfully from 2022 (8.8%), it was almost 10 percentage points (9.4) higher than 2007 (2.7%).

Table 7
Content Creators by Gender: 2023

Position	Men	Women	Gender Ratio
Directors	87.9% (*n*=102)	12.1% (*n*=14)	7.3 to 1
Writers	84.8% (*n*=257)	15.2% (*n*=46)	5.6 to 1
Producers	75.6% (*n*=871)	24.4% (*n*=281)	3.1 to 1
Total	78.3% (*n*=1,230)	21.7% (*n*=341)	3.6 to 1

In order of box office prowess, the 14 women directors across the 100 top movies of 2023 are: Greta Gerwig (*Barbie*), Emma Tammi (*Five Nights At Freddy's*), Nia DaCosta (*The Marvels*), Elizabeth Banks (*Cocaine Bear*), Fawn Veerasunthorn (*Wish*), Nia Vardalos (*My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3*), Sofia Coppola (*Priscilla*), Kelly Fremon Craig (*Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*), Faryn Pearl (*Ruby Gillman: Teenage Kraken*)*,* Adele Lim (*Joy Ride*), Laura Terruso (*About My Father*), Emma Seligman (*Bottoms*), Emerald Fennell (*Saltburn*), and Celine Song (*Past Lives*).

Table 8
Women Directors: 2007 to 2023

Year	% of Women Directors	# of Women Directors	Total # of Directors
2007	2.7%	3	112
2008	8%	9	112
2009	3.6%	4	111
2010	2.8%	3	109
2011	3.7%	4	108
2012	4.1%	5	121
2013	1.9%	2	107
2014	1.9%	2	107
2015	7.5%	8	107
2016	4.2%	5	120
2017	7.3%	8	109
2018	4.5%	5	112
2019	10.7%	12	112
2020	13.5%	15	111
2021	12.4%	14	113
2022	8.8%	10	113
2023	12.1%	14	116
Total	6.5%	123	1,900

Sample-wide, women directors have had access to a total of 123 employment opportunities (see Table 9). Some women, however, have directed more than once across the sample time frame. The total number of women who have directed two or more times across the last 17 years was 20. This reduces the number of unique women directors from 123 to 98. In comparison, a total of 878 individual men have directed one or more movies over the same time frame.

There were three top performing women directors from 2007 to 2023. Both Lana Wachowski and Anne Fletcher have each directed 4 feature narrative films across the last 17 years. Greta Gerwig has directed 3 movies and 17 different women directors have helmed 2 movies. The top performing men, on the other hand, were Tyler Perry (18 movies), Steven Spielberg (14 movies), Clint Eastwood (12 movies), and Ridley Scott (11 movies).

Table 9
Women Directors Working Across the 1,700 Top-Grossing Films: 2007-2023

Abby Kohn	Halina Reijn	Mimi Leder
Adele Lim	Hallie Meyers-Shyer	Miranda July
Angelina Jolie	Janicza Bravo	Nancy Meyers*
Anna Boden	Jennifer Flackett	Natalie Erika James
Anna Foerster	Jennifer Lee*	Natalie Krinsky
Anne Fletcher*	Jennifer Yuh Nelson*	Nia DaCosta*
Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari	Jessica M. Thompson	Nia Vardalos
Autumn de Wilde	Jessie Nelson	Niki Caro
Ava DuVernay*	Jill Culton	Nora Ephron
Betty Thomas	Jodie Foster	Olivia Newman
Brenda Chapman	Julie Anne Robinson*	Olivia Wilde*
Castille Landon	Julie Taymor	Patricia Riggen
Cate Shortland	Kasi Lemmons*	Patty Jenkins*
Catherine Hardwicke*	Kat Coiro	Phyllida Lloyd*
Cathy Yan	Kathryn Bigelow	Reed Morano
Celine Song	Kay Cannon	Robin Wright
Charise Castro Smith	Kelly Fremon Craig	Rosalind Ross
Chinonye Chukwu	Kimberly Peirce	Roxann Dawson
Chloé Zhao*	Kirsten Sheridan	Sam Taylor-Johnson
Christy Summerhays	Kitty Green	Sanaa Hamri
Diane English	Lana Wachowski*	Sarah Smith*
Elaine Bogan	Laura Brousseau	Shari Springer Berman
Elizabeth Allen Rosenbaum	Laura Terruso	Sharon Maguire
Elizabeth Banks*	Liesl Tommy	Sofia Coppola
Emerald Fennell*	Lilly Wachowski	Stacy Title
Emma Seligman	Lisa Joy	Stella Meghie*
Emma Tammi	Lorene Scafaria	Susanna Fogel
Faryn Pearl	Loveleen Tandan	Susanna White
Fawn Veerasunthorn	Lucia Aniello	Thea Sharrock
Floria Sigismondi	Maria Schrader	Tina Gordon
Gail Mancuso	Marielle Heller	Trish Sie
Gina Prince-Bythewood*	Meghna Gulzar	Veronika Franz
Greta Gerwig*	Melina Matsoukas	

Note: The asterisk illuminates those directors working at least two or more times from 2007 to 2023.

A full 303 individuals were credited as *writers* across the 100 top movies of 2023, with 84.8% men and 15.2% women. No difference emerged in the percentage of women writers from 2022 (16.3%) to 2023 (15.2%) or from 2007 (11.2%) to 2023 (15.2%). Clearly, there has been very little deviation in the employment patterns of women screenwriters despite nearly 20 years of activism and popular press attention.

Table 10
Women Writers: 2007 to 2023

Year	% of Women Writers	# of Women Writers	Total # of Writers
2007	11.2%	35	314
2008	14.1%	36	255
2009	13.3%	38	285
2010	11.3%	30	265
2011	12.2%	38	312
2012	11.7%	33	283
2013	7.4%	21	283
2014	11.4%	34	298
2015	11.4%	30	264
2016	12.4%	37	299
2017	10.4%	35	338
2018	14.8%	47	317
2019	19.1%	56	293
2020	12%	31	259
2021	16.8%	51	304
2022	16.3%	42	258
2023	15.2%	46	303
Total	**13%**	**640**	**4,930**

The gender of *producers* was also evaluated. A total of 1,152 producers were credited across this year's sample of 100 top films. A full 75.6% of producers were men and 24.4% were women. This is a gender ratio of 3.1 male producers to every 1 female producer. The percentage of women working as producers in 2023 was not different from the percentage in 2022 (26.8%) or 2007 (19.7%). As such, there has not been gender justice across the producorial ranks in the 17 years we have produced this report.

Table 11
Women Producers: 2007 to 2023

Year	% of Women Producers	# of Women Producers	Total # of Producers
2007	19.7%	164	832
2008	19.7%	172	873
2009	22.3%	195	876
2010	18.6%	165	885
2011	21.7%	192	886
2012	20.3%	181	890
2013	20%	208	1,042
2014	20.2%	207	1,022
2015	21.9%	224	1,021
2016	21%	219	1,045
2017	21.8%	251	1,153
2018	21.2%	239	1,127
2019	24.4%	275	1,125
2020	24.3%	289	1,191
2021	24.9%	300	1,205
2022	26.8%	301	1,121
2023	24.4%	281	1,152
Total	22.1%	3,863	17,446

One of the most exclusionary spaces for women in entertainment is composing. As such, we examined the gender of *composers* across the 100 top-grossing movies each year. In 2023, 90.6% of composers were men and 9.4% were women (see Table 12). Twelve women were credited across the 100 top films of 2023. 2023 (9.4%) was no different from 2022 (8.2%) but was significantly higher than 2007 (0). A list of all the women and non binary composers can be found in Table 13. The top-performing male composers across the 17-year sample were Hans Zimmer (46 films), Christophe Beck (44 films), and James Newton Howard (40 films). The top performing women composers across the same time frame were Deborah Lurie (5 films), Hildur Guðnadóttir (4 films), Rachel Portman (4 films) and Germaine Franco (4 films).

Table 12
Women and Non Binary Composers: 2007 to 2023

Year	% of Women Composers	# of Women Composers	Total # of Composers
2007	0	0	107
2008	1.8%	2	108
2009	1.8%	2	109
2010	1.7%	2	115
2011	0.9%	1	109
2012	1.9%	2	105
2013	1.8%	2	114
2014	1%	1	105
2015	0.9%	1	114
2016	1.6%	2	121
2017	0.9%	1	113
2018	2.8%	3	108
2019	5.1%	6	118
2020	6.9%	9	131
2021	3.8%	5*	131
2022	8.2%	10	122
2023	9.4%	12	128
Total	3.1%	61	1,958

Note: In 2021, the asterisk indicates that one of the composers was identified as gender non-binary and four identified as women.

Table 13
Women & Non Binary Composers Working Across the 1,700 Top-Grossing Films: 2007-2023

Alisa Okehazama	Genevieve Vincent	Miho Hazama
Amie Doherty	Germaine Franco*	Morgan Kibby
Anna Drubich*	Herdís Stefãnsdõttir	Nami Melumad
Anne Dudley*	Hildur Guðnadóttir*	Natalie Holt
Camille Poliquin	Isobel Waller-Bridge	Parampara Thakur
Chanda Dancy*	Jeanine Tesori	Pinar Toprak*
Charli XCX	Jessica Rose Weiss	Rachel Portman*
Chelsea Wolfe	Karen O	Sarah Schachner
Claudia Sarne	Laura Karpman*	Stephanie Economou*
Dara Taylor*	Laurence Lafond-Beaulne	Tamar-kali
Deborah Lurie*	Lesley Barber	Tierney Sutton
Eiko Ishibashi	Lisbeth Scott	Yuki Kajiura
Este Haim	Mica Levi	

Note: The asterisk illuminates those composers working at least two or more times from 2007 to 2023.

The gender of *casting directors* was also examined. Out of 157 casters across the 100 top films of 2023, 73.9% were women and 26.1% were men (see Table 14). The percentage of women casters was lower in 2023 (73.9%) than in 2022 (80.7%) or 2007 (86.1%).

Table 14
Women Casting Directors: 2007 to 2023

Year	% of Women Casting Directors	# of Women Casting Directors	Total # of Casting Directors
2007	86.1%	136	158
2008	80.2%	134	167
2009	85.2%	138	162
2010	81.6%	129	158
2011	79.1%	125	158
2012	76.1%	124	163
2013	79.1%	136	172
2014	80%	128	160
2015	80.5%	128	159
2016	83.6%	117	140
2017	80.4%	119	148
2018	85.1%	120	141
2019	70.4%	95	135
2020	80%	128	160
2021	70.4%	107	152
2022	80.7%	113	140
2023	73.9%	116	157
Total	79.6%	2,093	2,630

Given the predominantly male-centric above-the-line personnel on feature films, we were interested in the relationship among gender behind the camera and on screen portrayals of leads/co leads as well as all speaking roles. To assess this association, we bifurcated the sample of movies helmed by men vs. those with at least one-woman director attached. We then looked at the percentage of girls/women as protagonists and speaking characters in each of these groups.

As shown in Figure 1, women directors – when compared to men directors -- were more likely to have female speaking characters (12.9 percentage point gain) as well as leads and co leads (52.8 percentage point gain) driving their movies. Similar trends were observed for films with women writers and producers attached.[5]

Overall, the landscape of the 100 top movies in 2023 does not reflect the real world. While women/girls occupy over half of the global population, this was not the case on screen or behind the camera across Hollywood's top movies. When there was gender inclusion above the line, a change in female representation was observed on screen. Summing up, few top leadership positions were filled with women auteurs and artists calling the shots.

Figure 1
Percentage of Female Leads/Co Leads and Speaking Characters On Screen by Director Gender: 2023
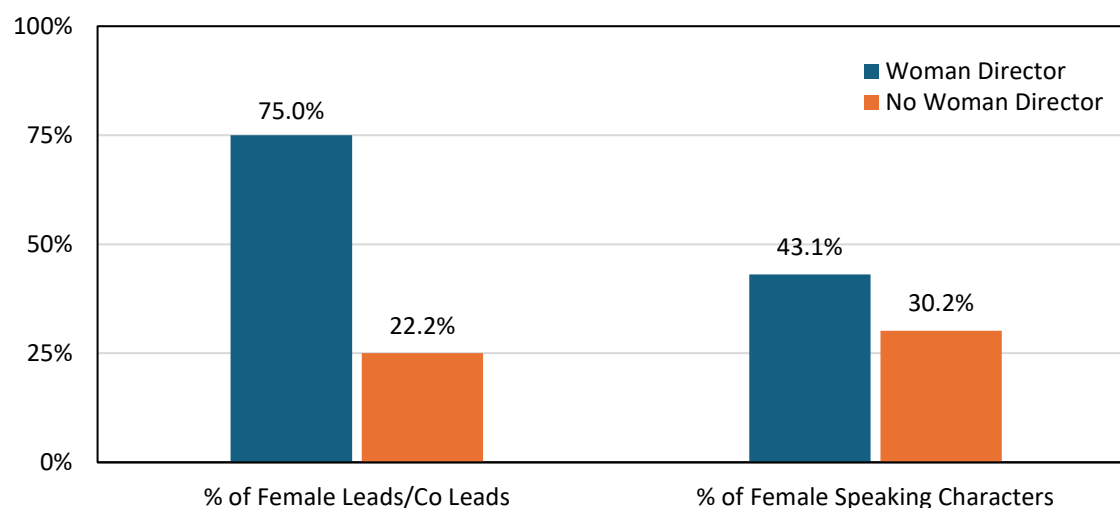
Race/Ethnicity

Each character was assessed for apparent race/ethnicity using a modified version of U.S. Census designations. In this section, we report on screen patterns as well as race/ethnicity behind the camera. Further, we take a deeper look at intersectional representation by crossing gender and race/ethnicity across a variety of measures.

On Screen Prevalence. Of those *speaking characters* evaluated for race/ethnicity, across the 100 top films of 2023 55.7% were White, 12.6% Black, 5.2% Hispanic/Latino, 18.4% Asian, 2.7% Middle Eastern/North African (MENA), 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, <1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 4.1% Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic/other. Collapsing across categories, 55.7% of characters in 2023 were White and 44.3% were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. This latter percentage is slightly higher than U.S. Census (41.1%).[6]

Have the percentages of underrepresented characters on screen changed over time? As shown in Table 15, there have only been two meaningful changes in the percentage of racial/ethnic groups on screen in film over time. One difference was observed for White characters, however. When compared to 2023 (55.7%), the percentage of White characters has decreased significantly from 2022 (61.7%) and 2007 (77.6%). The other difference pertains to Asian characters. The percentage of Asian speaking characters in 2023 (18.4%) was substantially higher than the percentage in 2007 (3.4%). No differences emerged between 2022 (15.9%) and 2023 however.

Table 15
Prevalence of Character Race/Ethnicity On Screen by Year: 2007-2023

Year	White	Black	H/L	AI/AN	Asian	NHPI	MENA	Multi	# of Chars
2007	77.6%	13%	3.3%	.1%	3.4%	.1%	2.4%	0%	4,129
2008	71.2%	13.2%	4.9%	.2%	7.1%	.4%	2.8%	.2%	4,017
2009	76.2%	14.7%	2.8%	.2%	4.7%	.1%	1.2%	0%	4,014
2010	77.6%	10.3%	3.9%	.4%	5%	.1%	2.6%	.2%	3,848
2011	77.1%	9.1%	5.9%	.4%	4.1%	.4%	.7%	2.4%	3,941
2012	76.3%	10.8%	4.2%	.2%	5%	0%	3.3%	.2%	4,048
2013	74.1%	14.1%	4.9%	.2%	4.4%	0%	1.1%	1.2%	3,932
2014	73.1%	12.5%	4.9%	.1%	5.3%	0%	2.9%	1.2%	4,025
2015	73.7%	12.2%	5.3%	.3%	4%	.3%	.6%	3.6%	3,975
2016	70.8%	13.5%	3.1%	.1%	5.6%	.7%	3.4%	2.7%	3,758
2017	70.7%	12.1%	6.2%	.5%	4.8%	.1%	1.7%	3.9%	3,691
2018	63.7%	16.9%	5.3%	0%	8.2%	.4%	1.5%	4%	3,895
2019	65.6%	15.7%	4.9%	.4%	7.2%	.2%	1.6%	4.4%	3,890
2020	58.5%	9.6%	5.6%	.2%	19.5%	.2%	3.4%	3.2%	3,318
2021	58.8%	14.3%	8.6%	.1%	13%	.2%	1.3%	3.6%	3,941
2022	61.7%	13.4%	5.2%	.1%	15.9%	.1%	1.5%	2.1%	3,802
2023	55.7%	12.6%	5.2%	1%	18.4%	.3%	2.7%	4.1%	4,480
Total	69.6%	12.8%	4.9%	.3%	7.9%	.2%	2%	2.2%	66,704

For genre analyses, we collapsed characters into one of two categories: white vs. underrepresented. We then looked at the percentage of underrepresented characters within *action/adventure, animation, and comedy*.

In comparison to 2023 (58%), the prevalence of underrepresented characters in action/adventure films has increased from 2022 (46.8%) and 2007 (21.6%). A significant uptick was also observed in animation. Roughly two thirds of all animated speaking characters (67.9%) were underrepresented in 2023 whereas 59.2% were in 2022 and 8.1% in 2007. No differences were observed in underrepresented characters on screen in comedy from 2022 to 2023. However, the prevalence of underrepresented speaking characters in 2023 comedies (36.5%) was higher than in 2007 comedies (23.1%).

Table 16
Prevalence of Underrepresented Characters On Screen by Film Genre by Year: 2007-2023

Year	% of UR characters Action/Adventure	% of UR characters Animation	% of UR characters Comedy
2007	21.6%	8.1%	23.1%
2008	32.1%	10.5%	27.8%
2009	23.4%	12.4%	24.7%
2010	30%	1.5%	23.4%
2011	25.2%	27.5%	26.8%
2012	29.4%	5.3%	24.1%
2013	26.9%	12.4%	27.6%
2014	24.9%	27.8%	28.9%
2015	28.9%	13.2%	27.3%
2016	27.3%	48.5%	32.1%
2017	28.1%	34%	35.6%
2018	40.3%	35.2%	38%
2019	42.4%	41.1%	37.5%
2020	47%	56.2%	26.8%
2021	45%	59.4%	22.5%
2022	46.8%	59.2%	36.7%
2023	58%	67.9%	36.5%
Total	35.4%	35.9%	28.8%

Note: All non-White characters were collapsed into an "UR" or underrepresented level.

Each year, we focus on representation in film across the three largest underrepresented racial/ethnic groups (i.e., Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian) in the U.S. Two measures were evaluated for each group. First, we assessed erasure or the number of films out of 100 that failed to depict at least one speaking or named character of a specific identity. Second, we examined proportional representation. Here, the goal was to see how many movies depict a percentage of speaking characters that mirrors (with ±2 percentage points) the U.S. Census for a particular group.

Table 17
Proportional Representation and Invisibility of Black Characters Across 600 Films: 2018-2023

Measures	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
# of films w/out any Black speaking chars	13	15	24	20	15	18
# of films w/proportional representation	17	20	15	14	16	4
# of films above proportional representation	31	30	20	31	24	34
U.S. Census	13.6%					
Total Films Per Year	100	100	100	100	100	100

Only 4 movies reflect *Black characters at proportional representation*. Matter of fact, this finding is the lowest it has been in 6 years. However, a total of 34 films in 2023 depicted storylines with Black characters above proportional representation. While this number was higher than 2022, it does not deviate meaningfully from 2021 or 2018. A full 18 movies *erased Black characters* altogether in 2023,

which was not different from 2022 (15 movies). There was more invisibility of Black speaking or named characters on screen in 2023 (18 movies) than in 2018 (13 films).

The findings for Hispanic/Latino representation can be found in Table 18. A full 42 films *erased the Hispanic/Latino* community altogether, which was like the results from 2022 (46 films) but lower than the results from 2018 (47 films). Zero of the 100 top movies of 2023 depicted *Hispanic/Latinos in proportion to their prevalence in the U.S.* This number was not different than 2022 (3 movies) or 2018 (2 movies).

Table 18
Proportional Representation and Invisibility of Hispanic/Latino Characters Across 600 Films:
2018-2023

Measures	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
# of films w/out Hispanic/Latino speaking chars	47	44	51	38	46	42
# of films w/proportional representation	2	2	0	2	3	0
# of films above proportional representation	4	5	6	10	6	7
U.S. Census	19.1%					
Total Films Per Year	100	100	100	100	100	100

Lastly, we assessed *proportional representation and erasure of Asian speaking characters*. As shown in Table 19, just under a third of movies (31 films) rendered Asian characters completely invisible. This number was slightly lower than 2022 (34 movies), but on par with 2018 (32 movies). Only 17 out of 100 top-grossing movies of 2023 depicted proportional representation of Asian characters (6.3%). Twenty-six movies were above proportional representation in 2023, which was lower than 2022 (31 movies) but similar to 2018 (27 movies).

Table 19
Proportional Representation and Invisibility of Asian Characters Across 600 Films: 2018-2023

Measures	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
# of films w/out Asian speaking chars	32	36	46	28	34	31
# of films w/proportional representation	20	18	16	21	17	17
# of films above proportional representation	27	27	27	32	31	26
U.S. Census	6.3%					
Total Films Per Year	100	100	100	100	100	100

The above analyses focused on overall trends within specific racial/ethnic communities. Now, we turn our attention to the intersection of gender and race/ethnicity. This type of analysis allows us to illuminate the unique and specific discrimination women of color face in the film industry. For each racial/ethnic group, we assessed the total number of movies out of 100 from 2018-2023 that *erased girls/women on screen*. The results can be found in Table 20.

Table 20 reveals at least three trends. First, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander girls and women were missing on screen across roughly 97-100% of 600 movies from 2018-2023. Second, erasure of MENA girls/women decreased across the 6 years studied (see Table 20). Black girls/women were more likely to be invisible in 2023 than 2022 or 2018. Finally, erasure of Asian and white girls/women was more pronounced in 2023 than in 2022.

Table 20
Epidemic of Invisibility Facing Girls/Women On Screen by Race/Ethnicity: 2018-2023

Racial/ Ethnic Group	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total Across 1,700 Movies
White	4	7	9	6	7	12	93
H/Latinas	70	71	69	57	61	62	1,148
Black	33	33	52	37	32	39	724
Asian	54	55	61	52	44	49	1,031
AI/AN	99	97	97	98	100	99	1,677
NH/PI	97	99	99	98	99	99	1,678
MENA	93	92	89	94	95	81	1,572
MR/ME	51	45	68	66	70	56	1,256

Note: Each of the racial/ethnic groups are abbreviated for space reasons. H/L=Hispanic/Latinas, AI/AN=American Indian/Alaskan Native, NH/PI=Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, MENA=Middle Eastern/ North African, MR/ME=Multiracial/Multiethnic/other.

Our previous analyses in this section have focused on all speaking characters. The analytics will now center squarely on leading/co leading characters driving the plot in popular films. In 2023, 37 films featured an *underrepresented protagonist*. This percentage approached U.S. Census (41.1%), and was higher than underrepresented leads/co leads across the 100 top movies of 2022 (31%) and 2007 (13%). Table 21 illuminates that most of the gains were for men of color. In explanation, the number of films with women of color at the center decreased from 18% in 2022 to 14% in 2023. It is important to note that 2023 was higher than 2007 (1%), however.

Table 21
Percentage of Underrepresented Leads/Co Leads Across 1,700 Films: 2007-2023

Year	% of UR Leads/ Co Leads	% of UR Female Leads/Co Leads
2007	13%	1%
2008	13%	4%
2009	17%	4%
2010	12%	5%
2011	9%	5%
2012	13%	3%
2013	17%	3%
2014	17%	4%
2015	15%	3%
2016	14%	3%
2017	22%	4%
2018	27%	11%
2019	32%	17%
2020	29%	9%
2021	35%	14%
2022	31%	18%
2023	37%	14%
Total	20.8%	7.2%

On Screen Portrayal. Here, we capture two attributes related to on screen portrayals across the 100 top movies of 2023. The first is *gender*. Prior to analysis, we collapsed the race/ethnicity variable into 5 levels (White, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Multiracial/Multiethnic/other). Then, the gender breakdown for speaking characters within each racial/ethnic group was calculated.

Table 22
Percentage of Men & Women Characters by Racial/Ethnic Grouping in Top-Grossing Films: 2023

Gender	White	Black	Hisp/Latino	Asian	Multi/Other
% of men	69.9%	66.4%	57.9%	64.8%	63.3%
% of women	30.1%	33.6%	42.1%	35.2%	36.7%
Ratio	2.3 to 1	2 to 1	1.4 to 1	1.8 to 1	1.7 to 1

Note: Due to small sample sizes, speaking characters coded as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern/North African, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Multiracial/Multiethnic were collapsed into an "other" category.

As shown in Table 22, gender was associated with race/ethnicity across the 100 top movies of 2023. Here, we will only focus on the distribution of females speaking characters. Girls/women from the Hispanic/Latino community (42.1%) were more likely to be depicted on screen than were girls/women from the other four groups evaluated. Asian (35.2%) and Multiracial/other (36.7%) girls/women were more likely to appear on screen than their White counterparts (30.1%). The percentage of Black girls/women on screen did not differ significantly from these latter (Asian, Multiracial/other, White) three groups.

Similar to gender, each speaking character was also assessed for _parental status_. Each applicable character was coded as a single parent, co parent, parent but relational status unknown or not a parent. These categories were collapsed into a binary measure (parent vs. not a parent) prior to analysis. Differences in parental standing emerged by race/ethnicity across the 100 top movies of 2023.

When compared to Black (42.2%) or White (44.7%) male characters, Asian (51.8%) and Hispanic/Latino (50%) males were more likely to be shown as parents and male characters from Multiracial/other (24.6%) racial/ethnic groups were less likely (see Table 23). For women, a different pattern was observed. Hispanic/Latino (60%) women were more likely to be depicted as parents, followed by Asian (53.2%) and then White (47.6%) women. Black women (39.7%) and women from Multiracial/other (35.8%) races/ethnicities were the least likely to be portrayed as parents.

Table 23
Percentage of Men & Women Parents by Racial/Ethnic Grouping in Top-Grossing Films: 2023

Gender	White	Black	Hisp/Latino	Asian	Multi/Other
% men that are parents	44.7%	42.2%	50%	51.8%	24.6%
% women that are parents	47.6%	39.7%	60%	53.2%	35.8%

Note: Due to small sample sizes, speaking characters coded as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern/North African, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Multiracial/Multiethnic were collapsed into an "other" category.

Overall, the prevalence and portrayal of underrepresented characters was reviewed in this section. While underrepresented leads/co leads increased in 2023, the percentage of speaking characters, proportional representation, and erasure measures still revealed alarming trends. Despite all of the activism and promises made in the wake of George Floyd's murder, the Hollywood community is still coming up short on racial/ethnic inclusion. One reason for the lack of inclusivity on screen pertains to who was being hired behind the camera, which is the next section of this report.

Behind the Camera. Of the 116 directors in 2023, 78.4% (_n_=91) were White and 21.6% (_n_=25) were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. As such, 3.6 white male directors receive work behind the camera across the 100 top films of 2023 to every 1 underrepresented director. Further, the percentage of underrepresented directors is well below the U.S. Census (41.1%).

The percentage of underrepresented directors has not changed over time. The percentage of underrepresented directors in 2023 (21.6%, _n_=25) was virtually identical to 2022 (21.2%, _n_=24). Both years were substantially higher than 2007 (12.5%, _n_=14), however.

Of the 308 underrepresented directors across 17 years, 276 (89.6%) were men and 32 (10.4%) were women. The top performing male directors were Tyler Perry (18 films) followed by Antoine Fuqua (8 films), James Wan (8 films), Tim Story (8 films), M. Night Shyamalan (8 films), and Jaume Collet-Serra (8 films). The seven top performing women all helmed 2 narrative pictures during the 17-year sample time frame examined: Stella Meghie, Chloé Zhao, Kasi Lemmons, Nia DaCosta, Ava DuVernay, Gina Prince-Bythewood, and Jennifer Yuh Nelson.

The race/ethnicity breakdown of the 25 underrepresented helmers in 2023 was as follows: 48% (*n*=12) Asian, 32% (*n*=8) Black, 8% (*n*=2) Hispanic/Latino, and 12% (*n*=3) Multiracial/Multiethnic. While this is the distribution across underrepresented directors, the percentage drastically changes when we focus on all 116 helmers: 10.3% Asian, 6.9% Black, 1.7% Hispanic/Latino, and 2.6% Multiracial/Multiethnic.

Each year we assess the frequency of directors working across the 100 top movies from the three largest non White racial/ethnic groups (Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian). Here, we recategorize the Multiracial/Multiethnic helmers into all identity groups with which they belong. As such, the findings will deviate from the overall percentages where directors are coded into one mutually exclusive racial/ethnic group.

In terms of *Black directors*, a total of 10 helmers worked in 2023 (9 men, 1 woman), which was not significantly different from than 2022 (*n*=6; 3 men, 3 women) or 2007 (*n*=8, all men). The 10 directors include: Antoine Fuqua (*The Equalizer 3*), Blitz Bazawule (*The Color Purple*), Calmatic (*House Party*), Cord Jefferson (*American Fiction*), Justin Simien (*Haunted Mansion*), Kemp Powers (*Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*), Michael B. Jordan (*Creed III*), Nia DaCosta (*The Marvels*), Steven Caple Jr. (*Transformers: Rise of the Beats*), and Tim Story (*The Blackening*).

Table 24
Number of Black, Hispanic/Latino, & Asian Directors by Gender & Year: 2007-2023

Year	Black Men	Black Women	H/L Men	H/L Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Total
2007	8	0	3	0	3	0	112
2008	5	2	3	0	2	1	112
2009	7	0	7	0	1	0	111
2010	5	0	2	0	3	0	109
2011	2	0	3	0	3	1	108
2012	6	0	3	0	2	0	121
2013	7	0	7	0	5	0	107
2014	4	1	8	0	0	0	107
2015	4	0	4	0	4	0	107
2016	7	0	2	1	4	1	120
2017	5	1	8	0	3	0	109
2018	14	1	5	0	4	0	112
2019	6	3	3	2	6	0	112
2020	3	1	5	0	7	4	111
2021	6	3	10	2	13	3	113
2022	3	3	4	0	12	0	113
2023	9	1	4	0	9	3	116
Total	5.3% (*n*=101)	<1% (*n*=16)	4.2% (*n*=81)	<1% (*n*=5)	4.3% (*n*=81)	<1% (*n*=13)	1,900

To examine the relationship between ***director identity and on screen characters*** (Black leads/co leads, Black speaking characters), we bifurcated the sample into films with a Black director vs. those without a Black director attached. Then, we looked at the percentage of Black leads/co leads as well as Black speaking characters in both groups. Figure 2 shows significant and pronounced associations between

these variables. Black directors – in comparison to non Black directors -- were far more likely in 2023 to feature Black leads/co leads (72.7%, 6.9%, respectively) in their movies as well as populate their storylines with Black casts (44.4%, 9.1% respectively).

Figure 2
Percentage of Black Speaking Characters On Screen by Director Race: 2023
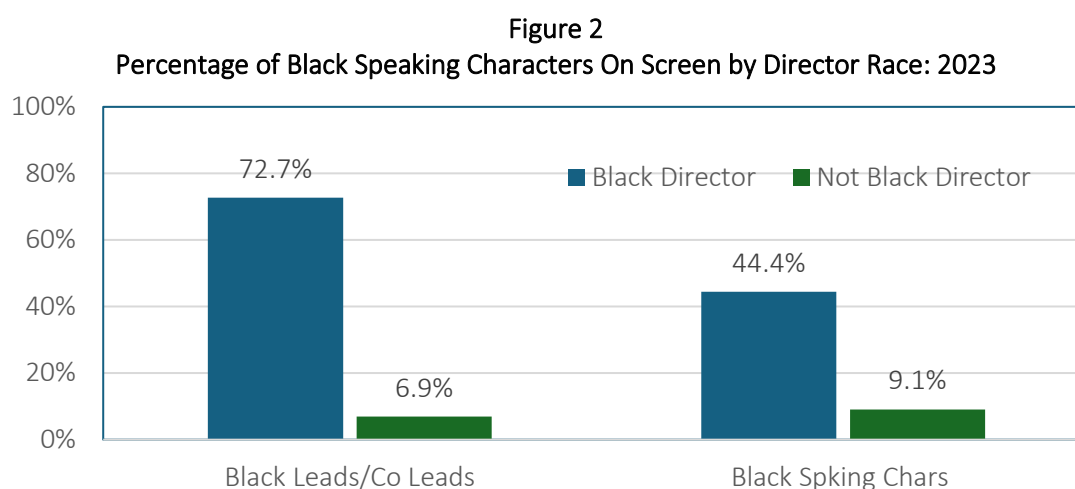
Next, we examined employment patterns of *Hispanic/Latino directors*. Only 4 helmers (all male) were Hispanic/Latino across the 100 top movies of 2023: Alejandro Monteverde (*Sound of Freedom*), Andres Muschietti (*The Flash*), Angel Manuel Soto (*Blue Beetle*), and Steven Caple Jr. (*Transformers: Rise of the Beasts*). Only one director is Afro Latino.

The number and percentage of Hispanic/Latino directors in 2023 (3.4%, *n*=4) did not differ from the number and percentage in 2022 (3.5%, *n*=4) or 2007 (2.7%, *n*=3). Given the small sample size of Hispanic/Latino directors, analyses on the relationship between on screen and behind the camera identity patterns could not be computed.

Finally, we assessed the prevalence of *Asian directors* working yearly across the 100 top films. In 2023, 12 (9 men, 3 women) helmers were of Asian descent, which was identical to 2022 (10.6%, *n*=12, all men) but higher than 2007 (2.7%, *n*=3, all men). The 12 directors across the 100 most popular films of 2023 were as follows: Adele Lim (*Joy Ride*), Atlee (*Jawan*), Celine Song (*Past Lives*), Fawn Veerasunthorn (*Wish*), Hayao Miyazaki (*The Boy and the Heron*), James Wan (*Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom*), Makoto Shinkai (*Suzume*), M. Night Shyamalan (*Knock at the Cabin*), Prashanth Neel (*Salaar*), Sandeep Reddy Vanga (*Animal*), Siddharth Anand (*Pathaan*), and Takashi Yamazaki (*Godzilla Minus One*). Similar to women and Black directors, movies with Asian directors in 2023 were more likely to have Asian leads/co leads and speaking characters (75%, 83.6% respectively) than those films without an Asian director attached (0%, 5.6% respectively).

The last analysis in this section examines the race/ethnicity of *casting directors*. Over time, we have been clocking the intersectional identity of casting directors across 4 groups: white men, white women, underrepresented men, and underrepresented women (see Table 25). In 2023, 62.8% of casters were white women, 21.2% white men, 10.9% underrepresented women, and 5.1% underrepresented men.

In 2023, there were more white males (21.2%) working as casting directors than there were in 2022 (12.5%) or 2007 (13.6%). The percentage of white women casters (62.8%) in 2023 has decreased from

2022 (69.8%) and 2007 (78.7%). Underrepresented male casting directors have increased from 2007 (<1%) to 2023 (5.1%).

Table 25
Underrepresented Status & Gender of Casting Directors by Year: 2007-2023

Year	White Men	UR Men	White Women	UR Women
2007	13.6%	<1%	78.7%	7.1%
2008	18.3%	1.8%	72%	7.9%
2009	15%	0	77.5%	7.5%
2010	16.6%	1.9%	76.4%	5.1%
2011	17.7%	3.2%	72.2%	7%
2012	23.3%	<1%	68.7%	7.4%
2013	18.7%	2.3%	70.2%	8.8%
2014	16.2%	3.8%	68.8%	11.2%
2015	19%	<1%	72.2%	8.2%
2016	15%	1.4%	72.1%	11.4%
2017	19.7%	0	67.4%	12.9%
2018	12.1%	2.9%	72.1%	12.9%
2019	27.4%	2.2%	54.1%	16.3%
2020	14.6%	5.1%	72%	8.3%
2021	20.7%	8%	58%	13.3%
2022	12.5%	7.4%	69.8%	10.3%
2023	21.2%	5.1%	62.8%	10.9%
Total	17.8%	2.7%	69.8%	9.7%

Overall, very little employment progress has been made behind the camera across 1,700 popular films. While more Black male directors worked in 2023 than in 2022, the number was on par with 2007 employment practices. Few opportunities have occurred behind the camera for Asian or Hispanic/Latino directors. In the next section of the report, we turn to another identity group that routinely faces exclusion in the film industry: the LGBTQ+ community.

LGBTQ+

Since 2014, we have examined the prevalence and portrayal of the LGBTQ+ community on screen in popular films. A total of 60 LGBTQ+ speaking characters were coded across the 100 top films of 2023. Of these, 20 (33.3%) were lesbian, 31 (51.7%) gay, 8 (13.3%) bisexual, 1 (1.7%) another sexuality, and 0 transgender. This culminates into 1.2% of all speaking characters, which is substantially below population estimates (10%) of individuals identifying as LGBTQ+ in the U.S.[7]

Has the number of LGBTQ+ speaking characters changed over time? Over the last year, no. All numbers in 2023 were lower than what was observed on the same measures in 2022 (see Table 26). The number of lesbian, gay and bisexual characters has increased since 2014. Transgender representation in 2023 was identical to 2014, however. Across more than 9,000 characters evaluated and 200 top movies, there was not one transgender character who spoke or was named on screen in 2014 or 2023.

Table 26
Prevalence of LGBTQ+ Speaking Characters Across 900 Top-Grossing Films: 2014-2023

	Lesbian	Gay	Bisexual	Trans	Total
2014	4	12	5	0	21
2015	7	19	5	1	32
2016	9	36	6	0	51
2017	9	16	6	0	31
2018	17	33	8	0	58
2019	10	45	3	3	61
2020	15	12	2	0	29
2021	6	24	7	2	39
2022	27	43	13	5	87
2023	20	31	8	0	60
Total	124	271	63	11	469

Note: The 2023 row does not add up to 60. That is because one character was coded as having "another sexuality" not listed in the table. The character was included in the "total" of LGTBQ+ characters for 2023.

We examined *erasure* of the LGBTQ+ community across the 100 most popular movies since 2014. In 2023, just over three quarters (76 out of 100) of the films excluded LGBTQ+ characters completely (see Table 27). The number of films rendering this community invisible in 2023 (76 films) was not different from 2022 (72 films) but was lower than 2014 (86 films). Six movies in 2023 depicted the LGB community at *proportional representation* with U.S. population norms (10%), but this number did not differ from 2022 (3 films) but was higher than 2014 (1 film). Only 1 movie out of 100 featured the LGB community above proportional representation on screen to U.S. population norms (*Bottoms*).

Table 27
Proportional Representation and Invisibility of LGBTQ Characters Across 1,000 Films: 2014-2023

Measures	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	'20	'21	'22	'23
# of films w/out LGBTQ chars	86	82	76	81	76	78	86	77	72	76
# of films w/prop rep	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	6
% of LGBTQ people in U.S.	10%									
Total Films Per Year	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

It is important to unpack the context surrounding LGB representation on screen. Of the 20 lesbian speaking or named characters coded, 50% (*n*=10) were teenagers, 40% (*n*=8) were 21-39 years of age and 10% (*n*=2) were 40-64 years age. Only 3 were depicted as parents across 100 top movies of 2023. Of those lesbian characters whose race/ethnicity could be evaluated, 38.9% (*n*=7) were White, 38.9% were Black (*n*=7), 11.1% (*n*=2) were Multiracial/Multiethnic, 5.6% (*n*=1) were MENA and 5.6% (*n*=1) were Asian. Seven or 35% of the 20 lesbian characters were completely inconsequential to the plot and 9 or 45% were supporting characters.

For gay characters whose age could be ascertained, a slightly different picture emerged. 61.3% (*n*=19) of gay speaking characters were 21-39 years of age and 25.8% (*n*=8) were 40-64 years of age. Only 12.9% (*n*=4) of gay characters were teens. Just over 40% (44.4%) of gay characters with enough information

presented in the plot were coded as parents. 54.8% (*n*=17) of all gay characters were inconsequential to the plot and 32.3% (*n*=10) were supporting.

The 8 bisexual characters were largely female-identified (62.5%). In terms of age, 50% (*n*=4) were young adults (21-39 years), 37.5% (*n*=3) were teens (13-20 years), and 12.5% (*n*=1) were middle-aged (40-64 years). Only 1 bisexual character was inconsequential to the plot. Not one bisexual character was depicted as a parent.

In terms of protagonists, a total of 5 movies in 2023 depicted an LGB lead/co lead (see Table 28). Those movies include *The Color Purple* (Black, woman, 21-39 years of age), *Poor Things* (Caucasian, woman, 21-39 years of age), *Bottoms* (Caucasian, female, teen; Black, female, teen), *Saltburn* (Caucasian, male, 12-20 years of age) and *Knock at the Cabin* (Caucasian, male, 21-39 years of age). The number of films with an LGBTQ+ lead/co lead in 2023 was not meaningfully different from the number of films in 2022 (9 movies) or 2014 (2 movies).

Table 28
Number of LGBTQ Leads/Co Leads in Film by Year

Year	# of LGBTQ Leads/Co Leads	% of LGBTQ Leads/Co Leads	# of Films
2014	2	2%	100
2015	0	0	100
2016	1	1%	100
2017	2	2%	100
2018	2	2%	100
2019	2	2%	100
2020	3	3%	100
2021	1	1%	100
2022	9	9%	100
2023	5	5%	100
Total	27	2.7%	1,000

Summing up, the LGBTQ+ community saw losses or stagnancy across the 100 most popular films of 2023. Both the prevalence of LGBTQ+ speaking characters and leads/co leads decreased from 2022 to 2023. This year (2023) also included the complete erasure of transgender representation across all 100 top-grossing films. Matter of fact, 600 of 1,000 most popular movies over the last 10 years have thoroughly erased transgender characters on screen.

Disability

Overall, only 2.2% (*n*=113) of speaking or named characters were depicted with a disability across the 100 top films of 2023 (see Table 29). This percentage has not meaningfully changed over time. 2023 (2.2%) was not different than 2022 (1.9%). And, the percentage of characters with a disability was higher in 2015 (2.4%) than in 2023. Fully 27.2% of Americans identify with having a disability, which is 25 percentage points greater than the percentage of characters shown with a disability in 2023.[8]

Table 29
Prevalence of Characters w/Disabilities Across 900 Top-Grossing Films: 2015-2023

Measure	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
% of speaking chars	2.4%	2.7%	2.5%	1.6%	2.2%	1.8%	2.1%	1.9%	2.2%	2.2%
# of speaking chars	105	124	112	69	101	68	93	81	113	866

What types of disabilities are shown on screen? Nearly three-quarters (73.9%) of portrayals in 2023 featured one or more physical disabilities. These portrayals included characters who used a mobility device (e.g., cane, wheelchair), who were missing limbs and had prosthetics, experienced facial difference, were ill with severe ailments (e.g., asthma, sickle cell anemia, diabetes), characters of short stature, and those with other damage to body parts that restricted functioning.

A full 25.7% of depictions portrayed a character with one or more communicative disabilities. Communicative disabilities refer to restrictions and conditions related to sight, hearing or speech. Accordingly, characters with communicative disabilities were deaf, experienced hearing loss, were blind, or were mute.

23% percent of characters were featured with cognitive disabilities. Disabilities in this arena were those that impacted mental health or cognitive processing. Characters with cognitive disabilities included those with dementia, Down's Syndrome, depression, PTSD, schizophrenia, and traumatic brain injuries, among other conditions.

Besides type of disability, we also measure invisibility and proportional representation. A full 42 films out of 100 erased disabled characters altogether in 2023. This number was lower in 2023 than in 2022 but did not meaningfully differ from 2015. As Table 30 shows, only 1 movie in 2023 portrayed disabled characters consistent with their percentage in the U.S. population (27.2%).

Table 30
Proportional Representation and Invisibility of Characters w/Disabilities
Across 900 Films: 2015-2023

Measures	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
# of films w/o disability	45	38	41	58	48	62	48	54	42
# of films w/prop rep	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Disability in the U.S. pop	27.2%								
Total Films Per Year	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

In addition to prevalence, we also assessed the context surrounding characters with disabilities. Across the top films of 2023, a full 71.7% of characters were male and only 28.3% were female. Most disability was shown with characters 40 years of age or older (49.1%) or 21-39 years of age (35.7%). Only 8.9% of characters with a disability were teenagers and only 6.2% were children. Most characters with a disability in 2023 were either supporting (54%) or inconsequential to the plot (35.4%).

The majority of disabled characters were White (54.6%), followed by Asian (15.2%), Black (11.1%), and Multiracial/Multiethnic (6.1%). Few were Hispanic/Latino (5%), Indigenous (3%), MENA (4%), or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1%). Not one disabled character was a part of the LGBTQ+ community. Of those disabled characters with enough information to ascertain caregiving status, 41.2% were parents.

Table 31
Number of Leads/Co Leads w/Disabilities by Year

Year	# of Leads/Co Leads with a Disability	% of Leads/Co Leads with a Disability	# of Films
2015	10	10%	100
2016	15	15%	100
2017	14	14%	100
2018	9	9%	100
2019	19	19%	100
2020	11	11%	100
2021	9	9%	100
2022	14	14%	100
2023	8	8%	100
Total	109	12.1%	900

Looking at lead/co leads, only 8 out of 100 top films of 2023 were depicted with a disability. This overall percentage was significantly lower than 2022 when 14% of films featured a disabled lead/co lead. The percentage of films with a disabled lead/co lead in 2023 was not meaningfully different from the percentage in 2015.

Only two lead/co leads with a disability in 2023 were women, one who experienced a cognitive disability (*Scream VI,* anxiety and PTSD) and the other who experienced a physical disability (*Titanic,* mobility issue). Of the male leads/co leads, 6 were shown with physical disabilities: *John Wick: Chapter 4* (missing finger), *Cocaine Bear* (missing fingers), *Saw X* (brain cancer), *The Creator* (prosthetic arm/leg), *The Holdovers* (hyperhidrosis, trimethylaminuria), and *Animal* (severe bladder injury). Two male leads were shown with communicative disabilities: *The Holdovers* (amblyopia) and *Animal* (hearing loss). The male lead in *The Creator* also experienced a cognitive disability, PTSD.

The results in this section demonstrate that portrayals of characters with disabilities are still all too rare in top-grossing movies. While a range of disabilities are represented, these characters appeared in just over half of all top films last year. Moreover, there are few leading characters with a disability. There has also been no change over time. In our next and final section, we link these findings to the other trends presented in this paper.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

Each year, Dr. Stacy L. Smith and the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative team assess 100 top-grossing films to catalog representation across gender, race/ethnicity, the LGBTQ+ community, and people with disabilities. This analysis provides the basis for a longitudinal investigation that now spans 17 years and 1,700 top movies—the largest and most comprehensive analysis of representation in popular film across the social science literature. In this section, we review the findings from the most recent analysis and link these to the ongoing trends across the complete sample. Lastly, we offer recommendations to result in change across the entertainment industry.

Increases in Gender Representation Remain Elusive

After more than a decade and a half of monitoring, there has been no change in the representation of girls and women on screen in top-grossing movies. Fewer than one-third of nearly 75,000 speaking characters are female-identified across 17 years. At this point, the number of data points in this analysis reflects the population of a small city—one that is desperately in need of a population adjustment. Beyond the overall percentage, a mere 12.8% of all 1,700 movies (including 11% in 2023) feature a gender-balanced cast. This finding reflects that it is not one or two movies each year that bring the overall numbers down but a systematic refusal by an entire business to cast girls and women in proportion to their presence in the global population.

There are other symptoms that suggest the film industry is either sluggish or backsliding when it comes to representing girls and women. In particular, the decline in lead/co lead roles for women in 2023 indicates that decision-makers see little value in stories that center female-identified protagonists. This is even more true when it comes to older women, considering that only 3 movies feature a lead/co lead who was a woman 45 years of age or older. Popular film continues to reflect a world that is male-populated and male-centered in defiance of a reality where women are half the population.

Behind the camera, progress is also perilous. For women directors, there has been significant improvement since 2007, but not since 2022. Overall 6.5% of top-grossing directors are women, and these helmers continue to have truncated careers in long-form storytelling. The top male directors have between 11 and 18 films to their credit across the last 17 years while the top women have 4. Thus, while there may be an overall increase by percentage, few individual women are seeing career progress and sustainable employment behind the camera. The story is the same for women composers, who still fill less than 10% of all positions in 2023 and only 3.1% overall. For women writers and producers, the reality is even more grim, with no change across 17 years. In the position most likely to employ women, casting, 2023 saw a decrease in women working in this role. These trends indicate that despite activism and pleas for change, Hollywood remains mostly indifferent toward women behind the camera, who are the best hope for creating on screen improvement.

Representation of Race/Ethnicity Reveals Both Improvement and Ongoing Issues

If there is one area where the entertainment industry would like to believe there has been change, it is in the realm of racial/ethnic representation. The data in this paper demonstrate that the evidence for that change is mixed. The percentage of underrepresented characters overall (44.3%) surpassed proportional representation in 2023. This is a significant improvement from 2022 and from 2007. This promising finding is likely due to the increase in Asian representation from 2007 (though not 2022), which reached 18% in 2023. However, the percentage of characters from every other racial/ethnic group has not seen a similar uptick over time. Moreover, the influx of international content and films from independent distributors is one explanation for this change and reflects more about audience desire for content than the legacy studios' abilities to create and distribute content that matches consumer taste.

Erasure and invisibility are still normative for Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian characters. Although in 2023, 34 films were above proportional representation for Black/African American characters and 26 surpassed proportional representation for Asian characters, films still fail to include even one character who is Black/African American (18 movies), Hispanic/Latino (42 films) or Asian (31 films). The findings for characters who are Middle Eastern/North African, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander are even more dire, as these characters are virtually absent

from top films. Multiracial/Multiethnic characters fill fewer than 5% of all speaking roles, compared to 10.2% of the U.S. population in 2020.[9] If studios wish to be celebrated for progress, they must move forward much faster and in much greater measure for that applause to arrive.

Behind the camera, there has been little change for underrepresented directors. In 2023 (21.6%), the percentage was unchanged from 2022 (21.2%), though both years represent an increase from 2007 (12.5%). However, it should be noted that in 17 years the number of underrepresented directors working on top-grossing films has not even doubled. In 2023, there were 12 Asian directors, 8 Black/African American directors, 2 Hispanic/Latino directors, and 3 Multiracial/Multiethnic directors. In other words, the demographics of who works behind the camera in the position of director closely mirror who is seen on screen. It is clear that directors may tell stories that focus on their community —or they may be chosen for the job because they reflect who is already cast in a role.

Popular Films Paint an Incomplete Portrait of Intersectional Inclusion

One important contribution of this report is to examine the prevalence of girls and women of color in popular films both on screen and behind the camera. Across each racial/ethnic group evaluated, girls/women make up less than half of the characters seen on screen. Because racial/ethnic groups are underrepresented overall, women of color are even less likely than their male counterparts to appear in popular movies. They are also more likely to be invisible—particularly women from Indigenous backgrounds. Among leading characters, 2023 represents a decline in the percentage of girls/women of color as protagonists compared to 2022. Moreover, only one woman of color age 45 or older was shown in a leading role. Not only are women of color missing on screen overall, but they are also rarely at the center of stories across a variety of ages.

Looking behind the camera, it is clear why this is the case. Across 17 years, only 32 women of color have directed a top-grossing movie. Only 7 women of color have helmed two or more top films. The lack of intersectional inclusion behind the scenes undoubtedly influences the casting process in front of the camera. Yet Hollywood refuses to pursue the hiring and casting of girls and women of color at anything greater than a snail's pace.

The LGBTQ+ Community Lacks Opportunities to See Their Stories Onscreen

A mere 1.2% of all speaking characters were identified as members of the LGBTQ+ community across the most popular films of 2023. More than half of speaking characters in this community were gay, and one-third were lesbian. Few were bisexual or another sexuality. This lack of representation is a decline from 2022 and on par with 2018 and 2019.

The LGBTQ+ community continues to be erased on screen as well. More than three-quarters of the most popular films of 2023 did not feature even one LGBTQ+ character. Only five films had an LGBTQ+ lead/co lead character, two of which had male-identified leads/co leads and three with female-identified leads/co leads. Of note, not one speaking or named character in 2023 was transgender. In 2024, according to the Trans Legislation Tracker, 47 anti-trans bills have passed across the U.S. and 73 federal bills have been proposed.[10] In this moment, entertainment offers the chance to portray the trans community in a humanizing, empathic light that can help to shift perceptions and encourage understanding—yet across 992 films from the last 10 years, there have been zero portrayals of trans characters. Not only is this a missed opportunity to create a cultural shift, it also reflects fear and capitulation to anti-trans voices by decision-makers.

Characters with Disabilities Are Dismissed in Storytelling

Each year, we catalog the prevalence of characters with disabilities. And each year, the numbers prove stubbornly resistant to change. In 2023, 2.2% of all speaking characters were shown with a disability, 25 percentage points below the proportion of the U.S. population that lives with a disability.[11] Physical disabilities were most often seen on screen, followed by communicative and then cognitive disabilities. There were 42 films in 2023 that did not feature even one character with a disability, which is no different from 2015.

The portrayal of characters with disabilities also reflects a lack of imagination on behalf of storytellers. Most characters with disabilities were men, nearly half were age 40 or older, and more than half were White. Not one was LGBTQ+. Stories thus reflect a portrait of this community that ignores younger, female-identified, underrepresented, and LGBTQ+-identified people. Given the longstanding stigma and biases surrounding disability, stories do little to offer a different perspective on people with living with disabilities and instead perpetuate a narrative of invisibility and homogeneity.

Recommendations for Change

In addition to updating annual statistics, each year, this report offers recommendations and solutions for change. Our goal is to provide the entertainment industry with tactics to increase representation and employment of people from the communities evaluated in this analysis. Given the lack of improvement and in some cases the reversal of progress noted in this study, it is clear these recommendations have been heeded little, if at all. Nevertheless, we once again outline straightforward, strategic, and effective pathways to increase the portrayal of marginalized groups in film.

Alter the Process, Alter the Outcome

At a time of industry contraction and uncertainty, it is clear that the film industry has reverted to a decision-making process that relies on what has worked in the past. However, the industry must recognize that what "worked" in the past was also exclusionary, discriminatory, and catered to the whims of a majority audience that no longer exists. The very systems of decision-making that are called upon to increase stability and reduce ambiguity will not work to reach a consumer base that is more diverse than ever across nearly every indicator.

One solution we have forwarded in the past is the idea of establishing target inclusion goals. By setting intentions, developing strategies to reach those goals, measuring progress, and adjusting both processes and targets as needed, companies can position themselves to create inclusive content and long-term change. The second solution we have advanced is to "Just Add Five"—adding five female-identified characters from a variety of backgrounds to each film in the top 100. In less than five years, this strategy will lead to gender parity across the top 100 films and will improve representation of other groups. It also does not take jobs away from anyone and is a cost-effective way to create inclusion.

Rely on Criteria to Underpin Decision-Making

Subjective decision-making is the enemy of progress and the hallmark of how the entertainment industry has operated for many years. Instead of relying on gut instincts or feelings about what might work, objective criteria can ensure that decisions are made based on qualifications rather than familiarity or

liking. We have discussed this solution extensively in past reports, yet the desire to move toward a systematic framework for decision-making seems to elude entertainment industry members.

Objective criteria is essential if the movie business wants to move toward a more sustainable and more diverse industry. For one, criteria can overcome psychological biases (e.g., social dominance orientation, implicit biases) by ensuring that decision-makers have to overtly account for the rationale behind who they hire and cast. Second, in an industry supported by contract labor where friends, family, or frequent collaborators are preferred, objective criteria can help to ensure that jobs not filled by individuals in those categories go to the most qualified people—from any background.

Though presented briefly, these two solutions encompass a variety of tactics that can be used to create meaningful change both on screen and behind the camera in film. The most important part of these solutions is to increasingly rely on equitable processes that circumvent decision-making based on what has worked previously and which perpetuates inequities. Until that happens, we anticipate that this report will continue to reflect an outdated and disappointing status quo.

Limitations

As with all scientific endeavors, a few limitations must be noted. We mention annually that this study is specifically designed to understand the trends evident in the most popular theatrically-released films in North America. This means that less popular films, award contenders, or streaming movies are not reflected in the data. Our work in other studies investigates these domains and in those studies we often rely on popular films as a comparison. However, we also believe that it is still important to understand how theatrical films portray the communities under study here. Though the public and the industry seem bearish on the long-term prospects of theatrical distribution, these creative products reflect enormous expenditure and still retain cultural importance. For that reason, we maintain that this is an important sample to examine.

Overall, this study serves as an update and a warning to the entertainment industry and consumers. To date, 29 U.S. states have introduced or enacted legislation to curb efforts toward DEI[12] and the very phrase seems to induce apathy or enmity. Yet the film industry has an opportunity that few other arenas can boast. By telling stories that feature the diversity and breadth of the human experience—including people from all genders, races/ethnicities, sexualities, and ability levels—movies can create empathy and provide an opportunity to overcome stereotypes and prejudices that still exist. Doing so, however, requires embracing the chance to tell different stories and support new storytellers. When that happens this report will begin to reflect reality rather than a skewed representation of a world we do not inhabit.

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Notes

[1.] Each year, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative has dozens of student researchers trained to evaluate the 100 top films. Training takes places in a classroom environment (in person) and diagnostics are given to researchers to learn unitizing and variable coding. After roughly 6 weeks of training and practice, our coders begin evaluating the 100 top films.

Each film is evaluated by 3 independent coders. Then, the film is quality checked a fourth time by senior members of our coding team. In the past, we have provided a detailed summary of reliability. Because we are confident that no one reads this, we have turned to an abbreviated description of the reliability statistics sample wide. For interested readers, please email us at aii@usc.edu if you want more information on our approach.

In terms of unitizing, we calculate the number of speaking characters seen by at least 2 of 3 coders evaluating the film. All but 7 movies had agreement at 70% or above, which is excellent and consistent with our previous top-grossing reports. Because we quality check each film prior to analysis, all of the unitizing disagreements are discussed and resolved with a veteran coder. Thus, we have the utmost confidence in unitizing across the 100 top films each year.

For variable coding, we utilize the W.J. Potter & D. Levine Donnerstein (1999) calculation. Sample wide, the mean reliability coefficient for every variable reported in this study is at/above .90. As such, we are certain that the measures were reliably assessed across sample of films evaluated.

[2] U.S. Census Bureau (2023). Quick Facts. Retrieved August 10, 2023 from https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/SEX255219#SEX255219

[3] There were 4 films with ensemble casts in 2023. Eighteen different characters comprised the ensemble casts with 61% (*n*=11) female and 39% (*n*=7 male). In terms of race/ethnicity, 8 actors were White (44.4%), 22.2% Black, 22.2% Multiracial/Multiethnic, and 11.1% Hispanic/Latino. Most ensemble actors were elderly in age (44.4%) followed by 21- to- 39-year-olds (33.3%), and teens (22.2%). Only one ensemble lead was LGBTQ+.

[4.] See our 2018 and 2023 Inequality in Film reports: https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/inequality-in-1100-popular-films.pdf; https://annenberg.usc.edu/sites/default/files/2023/08/17/1600pop_3.pdf

[5.] For films with at least one-woman writer attached, the percentage of girls/women as leads/co leads was 54.8%. For films without at least one-woman writer attached, the percentage of girls/women as leads/co leads was 20%. For speaking characters, the percentage breakdown as follows: movies with at least one-woman writer (38% of cast girls/women), movies without at least one woman writer (29.2% of cast girls/women).

For producers, 32.3% of films with at least one female producer attached featured a female lead/co lead. The number of films with female leads/co leads with only male producers was 0. 32.3% of speaking characters were female in movies with at least one female producer attached. Only 25.2% of the cast were girls/women when there were no female producers attached.

[6.] U.S. Census Bureau (2023).

[7.] Point estimates for the percentage of the U.S. population that identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community differ across sources. Two groups indicate that roughly 8% of the U.S. population identifies as LGBTQ+ (Human Rights Campaign, Gallup Poll), while another places the figure higher, as much as 12% (GLAAD). However, U.S. Household Pulse Survey data from 2021 demonstrates that roughly 10% of respondents indicated they were gay, lesbian, bisexual, or "something else." Given this survey data and to reconcile the differences across these sources, we use 10% as our population benchmark.

Sources: GLAAD (2017). *Accelerating Acceptance 2017.* Retrieved July 23, 2024 from https://assets.glaad.org/m/1dbaf27e1f7baa32/original/2017-GLAAD-Accelerating-Acceptance.pdf. Powell, L. (2021, December 9). *We Are Here: LGBTQ+ Adult Population in United States Reaches At Least 20 Million, According to Human Rights Campaign Foundation Report.* Human Rights Campaign. Retrieved July 23, 2024 from https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/we-are-here-lgbtq-adult-population-in-united-states-reaches-at-least-20-million-according-to-human-rights-campaign-foundation-report. Anderson, L., File, T., Marshall, J., McElrath, K. & Scherer, Z. (2021). *New Household Pulse Survey Data Reveals Differences between LGBT and Non-LGBT Respondents During COVID-19 Pandemic.* Retrieved July 23, 2024 from https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/11/census-bureau-survey-explores-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity.html. Jones, J.M. (2024, March 13). *LGBTQ+ Identification in U.S. Now at 7.6%.* Gallup.com. Retrieved July 23, 2024 from https://news.gallup.com/poll/611864/lgbtq-identification.aspx.

[8.] U.S. Census Bureau (2018). Americans with Disabilities: 2014. Retrieved August 27th, 2020 from: https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2018/demo/p70-152.html

[9.] Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., & Ríos-Vargas, M. (2021, August 21). *2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country.* Retrieved from: https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html

[10.] Trans Legislation Tracker (n.d.). https://translegislation.com/

[11.] U.S. Census Bureau (2018).

[12.] Alfonseca, K. (2024, April 5). Map: The impact of anti-DEI legislation. *ABC News.* Retrieved July 23, 2024 from https://abcnews.go.com/US/map-impact-anti-dei-legislation/story?id=108795967