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# Network

# Responsibility

# Index



## Primetime Programming 2008-2009

A SPECIAL REPORT FROM THE GAY & LESBIAN  
ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION

[www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)

# Executive Summary

**The GLAAD Network Responsibility Index is an evaluation of the quantity and quality of images of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people on television. It is intended to serve as a road map towards increasing fair, accurate and inclusive LGBT media representations.**

GLAAD has seen time and time again how images of multi-dimensional gay and transgender people on television have the power to change public perceptions. In November 2008, GLAAD commissioned the Pulse of Equality Survey, conducted by Harris Interactive, which confirmed a growing trend toward greater acceptance among the American public. Among the 19% who reported that their feelings toward gay and lesbian people have become more favorable over the past five years, 34% cited “seeing gay or lesbian characters on television” as a contributing factor.

We also know that programming to LGBT viewers is good business. Based on U.S. Census projections, there are an estimated 15.3 million adults – 6.8% of all Americans over 18 – who self-identify as LGBT. This is a significant portion of the television audience watching to see their lives reflected on screen. According to a recent analysis by Witeck-Combs Communications and Packaged Facts, the buying power of the LGBT community is projected to exceed \$835 billion by 2011.

And yet, though many network executives are aware of both the social and economic benefits of including LGBT representations in their programming, we know there is a lot of work that needs to happen before television accurately portrays our diverse communities and reflects the world in which we live.

## Methodology

For this third annual report, GLAAD divided its analysis into two sections: traditional broadcast networks and cable networks.

For the broadcast portion, GLAAD researched all prime-time programming on ABC, CBS, The CW, Fox and NBC from June 1, 2008 – May 31, 2009 for a combined total of 4,901 programming hours. Primetime begins at 8:00 pm

Eastern and Pacific (7:00 Central and Mountain) and ends at 11:00 pm Eastern and Pacific (10:00 Central and Mountain), Monday through Saturday. On Sunday, primetime begins at 7:00 pm Eastern and Pacific (6:00 Central and Mountain). Fox and The CW do not air network programming during the last hour of primetime.

The sampling of the 10 cable networks examined for the 2008-2009 report includes networks that appeared on Nielsen Media Research’s list of top basic and premium cable networks as of June 2008. This list includes, alphabetically: A&E, FX, HBO, Lifetime, MTV, Sci Fi, Showtime, TBS, TNT and USA. The original primetime programs on these 10 networks were examined from June 1, 2008 – May 31, 2009, for a combined total of 1,212.5 hours. Because of the re-airing and re-purposing of cable programming, only first-run broadcasts of original programs were counted when evaluating cable programming. Acquired (syndicated) series and films, as well as live sporting events, were not counted for any cable network, keeping the focus exclusively on network-generated original programming.

All programming content, on both broadcast and cable networks, was divided into four categories: drama series, comedy series, unscripted programming (i.e. reality and game shows), and newsmagazines/special event programming. In the rare instance when a sports program aired during primetime on a broadcast network, those hours were considered “special event programming” and counted as part of our analysis. The categorization of programming hours was implemented so that analysts could understand where a network’s strengths and weaknesses lay when it came to portraying LGBT people.

Each program was reviewed for on-screen inclusion of LGBT representations, and GLAAD analysts noted whether the LGBT depictions were minor or major. GLAAD also noted the gender and the race/ethnicity of those depicted. Any significant discussion of issues pertaining to LGBT lives, whether in a scripted or newsmagazine setting, was also counted, though in those cases no gender or race/ethnicity could be assigned.

For the purpose of this report, each representation of an LGBT person, or significant discussion of an LGBT issue, during the course of an hour counts as one major ‘impression.’ If one LGBT character appeared on 12 episodes, for example, this character made 12 impressions. If a single episode addressed marriage equality, for example, in a secondary storyline, it was counted as one minor ‘impression.’

Based on the overall quantity, quality and diversity of LGBT representation, a grade was assigned to each network: Excellent, Good, Adequate, Failing.

## Overview of Broadcast Network Findings

- For the third year in a row, ABC led the broadcast networks in LGBT-inclusive content. Of its 1,146.5 total hours of primetime programming, 269.5 hours (24%) included LGBT impressions. The drama *Brothers & Sisters* was a particular standout, featuring three regular gay characters, including Kevin and Scotty, a married couple, and Saul, a man who came out later in life. *Grey's Anatomy* was also notable for exploring the bisexuality of a lead character, Dr. Callie Torres. GLAAD analysts found that ABC consistently offers the most fair, accurate and inclusive representations of the five broadcast networks.

- The CW again came in second place, offering 138 (20%) LGBT-inclusive hours, out of a total of 679 primetime programming hours. This is slight drop from last year, in which 21% of the network's programming was LGBT-inclusive. *America's Next Top Model* was responsible for most of The CW's LGBT content, particularly after including transgender and bisexual contestants in the show's eleventh cycle.

- For the first time since GLAAD began this analysis, the network rankings changed and Fox rose to third place with 82.5 (11%) LGBT-inclusive hours, out of 782.5 total primetime programming hours and received an *Adequate*. This is a significant increase from last year's analysis, in which Fox's LGBT content was tallied at 4% and the network received a *Failing* grade. The increase is due largely to the prominence of two bisexual characters on *House* and *Bones*. However, several of the remaining hours of programming included problematic LGBT content.

- Out of 1,145 total hours, NBC featured 97 hours (8%) of LGBT-inclusive content. This marks a 2% increase over last year. This is due in part to the addition of regular gay characters on new series such as *Southland* and *Kings*, as well as the inclusion of LGBT contestants on NBC's alternative programming such as *America's Got Talent*.

- CBS saw the greatest decline among the broadcast networks this year, dropping to last place with 60 hours (5%) of LGBT-inclusive content, out of 1,148 total hours of primetime programming. The bulk of the network's LGBT content is due, once again, to lesbian, gay and bisexual participants on its alternative series, which made up 43 of its total LGBT-inclusive hours.

- The CW offered the most racial and ethnic diversity of any broadcast network and was the only one to feature majority non-white LGBT representations. Of its 259 LGBT impressions, 183 (71%) were of non-white LGBT characters: 113 (44%) were African American/black, 63 (24%) were Latino/a and 7 (3%) were Asian-Pacific Islander.

- ABC's inclusion of LGBT African American/black representation dropped considerably to a single hour of programming. Conversely, their Latino/a impressions rose to 13%, up 3% from last year. Overall however, ABC mostly offered white LGBT images: 83%, more than any other broadcast network.

- Though The CW's racial and ethnic diversity was impressive, overall, The CW, ABC, CBS, and NBC's LGBT programming featured by and large gay male representations: The CW 77%; ABC 71%; CBS 63%; and NBC 62%.

- However, Fox's percentage of gay male representations dropped from 74% last year to 42% this year as the network's bisexual impressions rose to 39%, largely because of the bisexual characters on *House* and *Bones*.

- NBC boasted the highest percentage of lesbian representations of any network, with 26% of all of NBC's LGBT hours including a lesbian. CBS and Fox followed closely with 23% and 17%, respectively. ABC (6%) and The CW (3%) featured the fewest lesbian representations.

### Ranking of the Broadcast Networks, 2008-2009 Listed by percentage of LGBT-inclusive hours of primetime programming

1. ABC	24%
2. The CW	20%
3. Fox	11%
4. NBC	8%
5. CBS	5%

### Ranking of the Broadcast Networks, 2007-2008

1. ABC	24%
2. The CW	21%
3. CBS	9%
4. NBC	6%
5. Fox	4%

- Of ABC's 269.5 LGBT-inclusive hours, 9% were transgender-inclusive. The network featured recurring transgender characters on *Dirty Sexy Money* and *Ugly Betty*. However, both of these characters made limited appearances and were ultimately written off of the shows. No other broadcast network offered an ongoing story arc involving a transgender person, but The CW did include a transgender contestant on *America's Next Top Model*, accounting for 7% transgender inclusive hours.

## Overview of Cable Network Findings

- Of the 10 cable networks evaluated, HBO ranked highest for LGBT-inclusive original content. Out of 140 total hours of original primetime programming, the network offered 58.5 hours (42%) with LGBT-inclusive content, an increase of 16% over the previous season. Of HBO's 14 original series, 10 included LGBT content and of the four that did not, three were sports news programming.

- Although HBO saw a significant rise in LGBT inclusive content, TNT had the biggest increase among all networks. In last year's *NRI*, TNT received a *Failing* grade for airing a single hour (1%) of content. This year, TNT rose 18%, airing 13 LGBT inclusive hours (19%) out of its 69 total hours of original programming. This was primarily due to new series *Raising the Bar*, which features gay law clerk Charlie Sagansky as a regular character.

- Alternately, TBS only offered a half hour (1%) and A&E aired two hours (1%) of LGBT-inclusive programming out of 39.5 and 166.5 total hours of original primetime programming, respectively. This resulted in the networks tying for the lowest ranking and score among the 10 cable networks evaluated.

- While TNT posted the largest increase in LGBT-inclusive programming, FX, last year's leader, had the biggest decline. Out of 70 total hours of original primetime programming, FX aired only 9 hours (13%) of LGBT-inclusive content. That is a 32% drop from last year, when 45% of FX's total programming hours were LGBT-inclusive.

- Four of the ten networks offered significant ethnic and racial diversity in their LGBT representations, a significant improvement from previous years. Though TBS only has a single, minor LGBT impression, it was of a gay African American man. Lifetime was evenly split among its white, Latino/a, and Asian-Pacific Islander representation. FX had 41% Latino/a representation and on USA, 47% of its LGBT impressions were African American/black.

- The other six networks have room to grow in terms of representing racial and ethnic diversity among LGBT people, with A&E's representations being exclusively white. The networks that featured predominantly white LGBT impressions were Showtime (80%), TNT (76%), HBO (66%), MTV (63%), and Sci Fi (62%). However, many of HBO's white LGBT characters were minor compared to the diverse major LGBT characters on *True Blood*, *The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency*, and *Entourage*.

- Despite its deficit in ethnic and racial diversity, Showtime offered significant lesbian and bisexual-inclusive programming, as did MTV. On Showtime, 25% of its LGBT-inclusive hours featured at least one lesbian impression and 25% of those hours featured bisexual representation. MTV featured 31% bisexual representation and 24% lesbian representation.

- FX was the only network, cable or broadcast, to offer predominantly lesbian representations (58%). However, Showtime offered fairly equal airtime with 34% gay, 25% lesbian, and 25% bisexual representations in its total programming hours, as did MTV with 31% gay, 24% lesbian, and 31% bisexual representations in its total hours.

- Showtime and MTV led the cable networks in transgender representation. *The L Word*'s Max garnered Showtime 6 of its 7 transgender-inclusive hours, with 16% total transgender representation, and *The Real World: Brooklyn*'s Katelynn earned MTV 12 transgender-inclusive hours, 14% of its total LGBT-inclusive hours.

### Ranking of Cable Networks

Listed by percentage of LGBT-inclusive hours of original programming

1. HBO	42%
2. Showtime	26%
3. TNT	19%
4. MTV	17%
5. Lifetime	14%
6. FX	13%
7. USA	12%
8. Sci Fi	8%
9. A&E, TBS	1%



- Despite strides by some networks to be inclusive of the entire community, LGBT impressions on most of the cable networks were largely gay male representations: A&E, Sci Fi, TBS, and USA (100%) ; TNT (93%); Lifetime (86%); and HBO (72%).

### Overall Recommendations

All series, whether they air on broadcast or cable television, can benefit from the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) representation.

On the broadcast networks, ABC and The CW have remained consistent in terms of their LGBT visibility over the past year. Yet when you compare broadcast leader ABC (24%) to cable leader HBO (42%), it is clear that there remains plenty of room for improvement. Standout series on The CW and ABC such as *America's Next Top Model* and *Brothers & Sisters* are excellent models that the broadcast networks can use to increase their LGBT-inclusive hours.

On cable, HBO's high percentage of LGBT-inclusive programming shows that the subscription cable network is serious about its inclusion of LGBT characters. Series as wide-ranging as *True Blood*, *Big Love* and *Entourage* offered viewers complex and authentic LGBT characters from diverse backgrounds. However, the large gap in LGBT-inclusive hours between HBO (42%) and second place cable network Showtime (26%) is significant. With the loss of *The L Word* earlier this year, Showtime will especially have to maintain the breadth of its LGBT representation on its other series.

The cancellation of *The L Word* also means that the coming 2009-2010 TV season will be the first time since the premiere of *Will & Grace* in 1998 that there will not be a series on the air with a leading cast of mostly gay characters. While great progress has been made in television programming, the end of this groundbreaking show signals that LGBT visibility on primetime television is not something

that can be taken for granted. LGBT issues have gained increased visibility in all forms of media, and showrunners need to follow in the tradition of *Brothers & Sisters* and *True Blood* by adding multi-dimensional gay or transgender characters and LGBT-themed storylines to accurately reflect the diverse world we live in. The inclusion of these characters and storylines allows LGBT viewers – and their straight friends and family members – a chance to see the LGBT community reflected onscreen. More importantly, it offers a meaningful opportunity to change the hearts and minds of people who may not have close LGBT friends or family members.

On a larger scale, it should also be noted that television characters in general are predominately white, regardless of sexual orientation. According to the *Out of Focus – Out of Sync Take 4* report released by the NAACP in December, the total number of minority actors in regular or recurring roles on television has declined in recent years.

Though *Ugly Betty* and *Desperate Housewives* deserve accolades for their high-profile LGBT characters, these shows – and many more – offer only white LGBT representations. It is clear from our findings that gay white men still dominate the television landscape on the broadcast networks. Cable networks are slowly improving in this area but still have a ways to go. Though many television series have excelled in “color blind casting,” it is still rare to see LGBT people of color on television, leaving many LGBT viewers struggling to find images that reflect their lives and communities.

# Words and Images MATTER

# ABC

## 1,146.5 Total Hours of Primetime Programming

## 269.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (24%)

## Difference from 2007-2008: 0%

Disney-owned ABC has a long and distinguished history of weaving lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) stories into its programming, offering up a number of television “firsts.” In 1977, the network premiered *Soap*, which featured Jodie Dallas, the first gay character to be featured as a series regular on network television. Further series in the 1980s and ‘90s included more nuanced LGBT representations: *thirtysomething* was the first television series to show two men sharing a bed (albeit with its share of controversy) and *My So-Called Life* featured a gay Latino teen. Perhaps the most notable moment in ABC’s LGBT history came in the spring of 1997 when Ellen DeGeneres came out both off-screen and on-screen on her sitcom *Ellen*. Not only did this offer lesbians unprecedented visibility, this would mark the first LGBT leading character on television as well as the first openly gay television star.

For the past two years in the GLAAD Network Responsibility Index, out of the five broadcast networks, ABC has led the way in LGBT representation, airing the most LGBT-inclusive hours compared to the other networks. In the 2007-2008 season, ABC offered more LGBT series regulars than any other network, with *Brothers & Sisters*, *Ugly Betty*, and *Desperate Housewives* as particular standouts. Additionally, *Grey’s Anatomy* began a gay storyline at the end of the season and *Dirty Sexy Money* featured Candis Cayne, the first transgender actress to be featured as a recurring character on network television.

### The 2008-2009 Season

ABC continued to lead the way in LGBT inclusivity among broadcast networks during the 2008-2009 season. On *Brothers & Sisters*, newlyweds Kevin and Scotty have the healthiest relationship in the Walker clan, and Saul, having come out to the entire family, began dating. After leaping five years into the future, *Desperate Housewives*’ Andrew is engaged to Dr. Alex Cominis, and mar-

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ABC is the top LGBT inclusive broadcast network for the third year in a row. However, the growth they showed in last year’s report appears to have stagnated with no growth over the past year. Furthermore, with 83% of its LGBT representations being white, ABC needs to show greater racial and ethnic diversity.



*Grey’s Anatomy’s*  
Sara Ramirez

ried couple Bob and Lee continue to appear periodically on Wisteria Lane.

On *Grey’s Anatomy*, Dr. Callie Torres became the most prominent bisexual character on network television as she explored her relationship with Dr. Erica Hahn while also remaining attracted to Dr. Mark Sloan. Though her relationship with Erica fizzled, Callie has found happiness with new character Dr. Arizona Robbins. Shonda Rhimes’ other ABC medical drama, *Private Practice*, does not feature any regular LGBT characters, but did air two episodes with elderly LGBT patients and one in which new parents grappled over whether to perform surgery on their intersex newborn.

Though *Ugly Betty* continues to be one of the most LGBT-friendly comedies on television, its LGBT representation took a hit this past season. Though transgender character Alexis Meade appeared at the start of the season, she was reduced to recurring status and has not been seen since December. Marc remains a staple on the show, but his relationship with Cliff was short-lived and he has yet to find a new love interest.

Sadly, due to the writer's strike that occurred in the middle of the 2007-2008 TV season, few new shows began airing in the fall, thereby limiting the potential for new opportunities. However, *Dirty Sexy Money* returned and continued to feature the relationship between Patrick Darling and his transgender mistress, Carmelita, though she was accidentally killed by Patrick's brother-in-law. *Eli Stone* featured an episode with a transgender minister, notable because the minister was female-to-male, a community underrepresented on television. Midseason newcomer *Cupid* aired an episode with a gay teenager. *Life on Mars* was nominated for a GLAAD Media Award for an episode about a gay cop in the 1970s. Unfortunately, all four shows have since been cancelled.

At long last, *Dancing with the Stars* included an openly gay contestant when Lance Bass signed on for the seventh season and finished in third place. The show also features openly gay judge Bruno Tonioli. New show *True Beauty* featured openly gay judge Nolé Marin. Outside of primetime, lesbian character Bianca got married and had a baby on *All My Children*.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

With the writer's strike a thing of the past, ABC will be premiering eight new shows in the fall with more to come midseason. Of these, *Modern Family* looks to be the most promising in terms of LGBT inclusivity. The half hour sitcom features three "modern families," including a gay couple who has recently adopted a baby. Animated summer series *The Goode Family* has featured a lesbian couple, Mo and Trish. Legal dramedy *The Deep End* is rumored to feature a gay male character. However, the show has not been put on the schedule yet and will likely debut midseason.

ABC, which has led the way in terms of positive transgender representations the past two years, will have fewer such representations as a result of the cancellation of *Dirty Sexy Money* and the departure of Alexis from *Ugly Betty*. The cancellation of LGBT inclusive shows such as *Eli Stone*, *Cupid*, *Life on Mars* will also be felt.

All of the shows with regular LGBT characters will be returning, and it is possible that *Ugly Betty* may soon be adding another gay character. Creator Silvio Horta has indicated in interviews that as Betty's fashion-conscious, musical theater-loving nephew, Justin, enters high school

he may start to take steps toward coming out.

### Recommendations

Callie's blossoming relationship with Arizona on *Grey's Anatomy* has been a highlight, so we are heartened by ABC's decision to make Jessica Capshaw, who plays Arizona, a series regular. Hopefully, viewers will also see more of Joe the bartender, who was on briefly seen twice last season, as well as his partner and their child. On *Desperate Housewives*, Andrew and Alex remain engaged and we look forward to seeing their wedding next season.

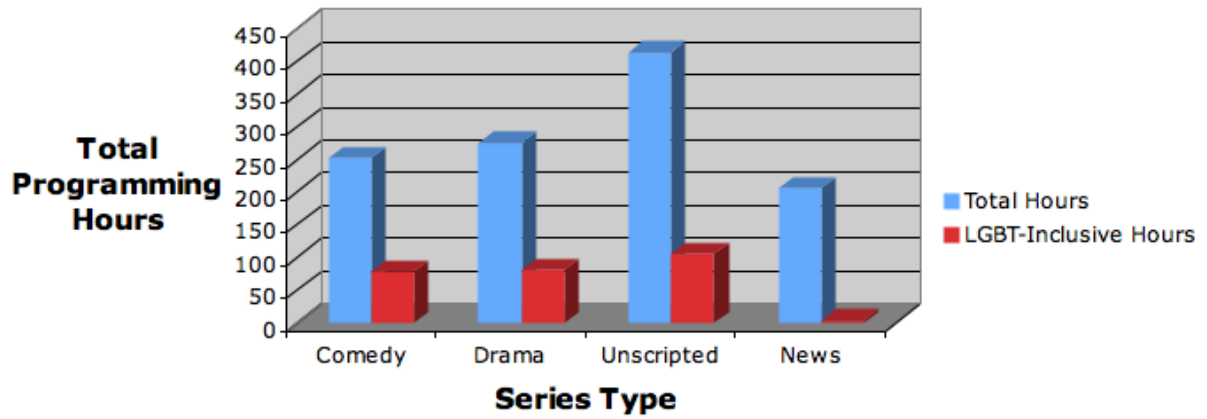
Although *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* includes openly gay designers Eduardo Xol and Michael Moloney, we encourage the show to bring a deserving LGBT family into America's living rooms. Now that *Dancing with the Stars* has had an openly gay celebrity contestant in Lance Bass, we urge them to branch out and include a lesbian or transgender contestant.

Among new series, *Flash Forward*, about a mysterious global event, presents an excellent opportunity to include LGBT stories since it concerns a large group of people coming together to make sense of the recent catastrophe. *The Forgotten* could have an LGBT member of the "Identity Network" detective team, something rarely seen on a procedural drama.



*Brothers & Sisters'*  
Ron Rifkin

### ABC Primetime Original Programming



### Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on ABC





CBS was the only broadcast network to post a significant decline, having received an Adequate rating the previous year. As in the past, the bulk of CBS' LGBT impressions (72%) came from its alternative programming.

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CBS

1148 Total Hours of Programming

60 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (5%)

Difference from 2007-2008: -4%



The Amazing Race 14's  
Mel and Mike White

CBS, the home of television classics such as *I Love Lucy* and *The Ed Sullivan Show*, was an early leader in addressing significant social issues. When Norman Lear's classic *All in the Family* premiered in 1971, the show almost immediately tackled sexual orientation with the episode "Judging Books by Covers." *Maude*, a spin-off to *All in the Family* starring Bea Arthur, featured an episode in which Maude fought for the right of a gay bar to open in her neighborhood. In 1976, *M\*A\*S\*H* dealt with a soldier beaten by members of his own unit for being gay in the episode "George." Unfortunately, since these socially-conscious shows from the 1970s aired, LGBT scripted impressions on the network have been few and far between.

Beginning with the first season of *Survivor* in 2000, which was won by openly gay contestant Richard Hatch, the LGBT community has played a vital role in CBS' reality series, including *The Amazing Race* and *Big Brother*. Since GLAAD released the first Network Responsibility Index in 2007, the bulk of CBS' LGBT-inclusive programming has been found in its reality series.

#### The 2008–2009 Season

CBS' LGBT impressions dipped this season to the lowest

of all broadcast networks, with 60 LGBT-inclusive hours of programming, or 5%. Of these hours, an overwhelming 72% are due to the inclusion of LGBT contestants on CBS' reality series. *Big Brother 10* featured gay rodeo cowboy Steven Diagle. On *Survivor: Gabon*, Charlie Herschel was seen throughout the season and made it onto the Tribal Council jury. Charlie developed a close bond with straight castmate Marcus Lehman that was refreshing to see in primetime. Openly gay *Survivor: Tocantins* contestant Spencer Duham fell just short of making the jury. The standout among CBS reality series was the 14th installment of *The Amazing Race*, which featured gay Rev. Mel White and his bisexual screenwriter son, Mike. The show also included Luke Adams, who is gay and deaf, and Kisha Hoffman, a lesbian, but neither was identified as such during the season. The game show *Million Dollar Password* included openly gay actor Neil Patrick Harris as a celebrity contestant.

Regrettably, none of CBS' scripted series include regular or recurring LGBT characters. The closest any CBS series came was *The New Adventures of Old Christine*, which featured the wedding between Christine and her best friend Barb. Although the two remained married throughout the season, neither character is actually gay, as the wedding was a ruse to keep Barb from being deported. The sitcom did, however, feature two gay characters: Megan Mullally guest starred as a closeted executive from Christine's gym, and Richard's gay brother, Joe, appeared in one episode.

CBS' remaining LGBT impressions occurred on *Rules of Engagement*, which featured interracial gay couple Brad and Jackie for a string of episodes, and *Without a Trace*, on which the team investigated the abduction of a lesbian woman. *Swingtown* included minor gay characters, and it was also implied that one of the main couples' sons was gay, but the show was cancelled before that storyline could be further explored in a second season.

## The 2009–2010 Preview

*Big Brother* returned earlier this month and includes Kevin, a gay former Jehovah's Witness who was excommunicated after coming out. *The Amazing Race 15* and *Survivor: Samoa* return in the fall, with additional editions to follow in early 2010.

*The New Adventures of Old Christine* will be returning, and *Rules of Engagement* will follow at midseason. *Without a Trace* has been cancelled, but the historically LGBT-inclusive crime drama *Cold Case* has been renewed. Four new series will premiere in the fall, along with *Medium*, which CBS picked up after it was not renewed by NBC.

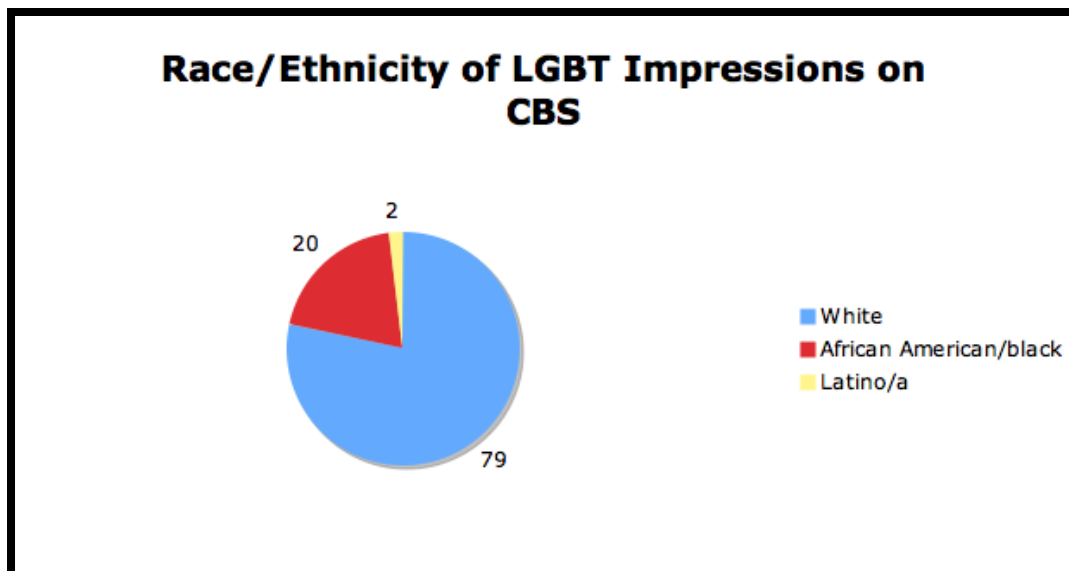
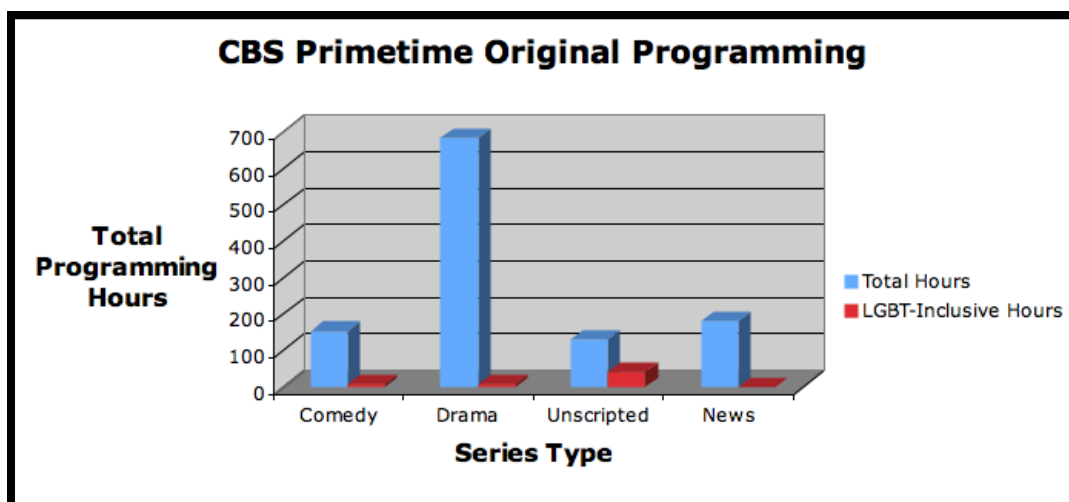
## Recommendations

We are hopeful that when *The Amazing Race 15* and *Survivor: Samoa* return, several LGBT contestants will

be included in the casts.

However, it is time for CBS to branch out beyond their reality programming and begin including regular LGBT characters in their scripted series. With three series in the *CSI* franchise, it is time that an LGBT character be added to at least one of those shows. Barney Stinson's gay brother, James, has not been seen on *How I Met Your Mother* since 2007. His return would be welcome, as would the addition of a gay geek on *The Big Bang Theory*.

Upcoming new dramas such as *Three Rivers* and *NCIS: Los Angeles* could easily work a gay character into their casts. On the new sitcom *Accidentally On Purpose*, one of the lead's best girlfriends could be a lesbian. There are many opportunities for CBS increase its scripted LGBT impressions, and we are hopeful that they will do so.



Although The CW dropped 1% from last year, the quality of its LGBT impressions improved with the addition of gay regular or recurring characters to several of its scripted series. The CW also remains the only broadcast network to offer significant LGBT ethnic and racial diversity.

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# The CW

**679 Total Hours of Primetime Programming**

**138 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (20%)**

**Difference from 2007-2008: -1%**

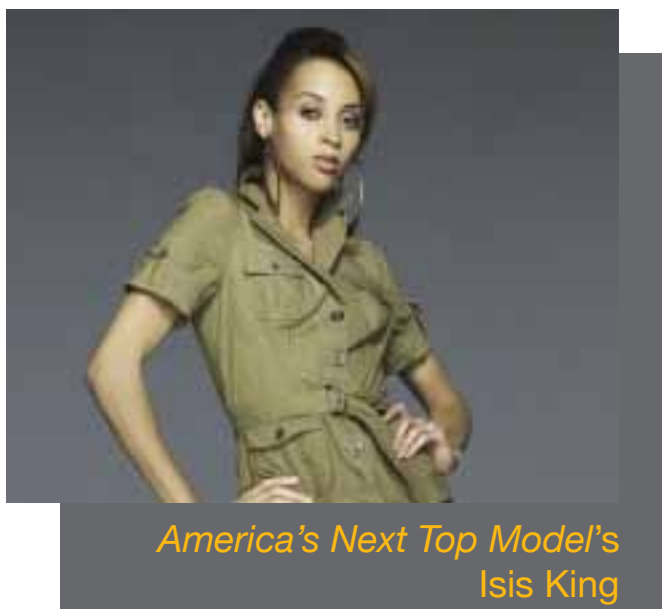
In addition to new seasons of *America's Next Top Model*, The CW also expanded its unscripted LGBT inclusiveness with new series *Pussycat Dolls Present: Girlicious* and *Crowned: The Mother of All Pageants*. Furthermore, *Beauty and the Geek* included its first gay geek.

## The 2008–2009 Season

Tyra Banks' long-running modeling competition, *America's Next Top Model*, broke new ground with the inclusion of Isis King, the show's first transgender contestant. *Top Model* dealt head on with some of the other models' misconceptions and fears and offered a well-developed representation of a young transgender woman. Cycle 11 also featured an openly bisexual model, Elina Ivanova, along with regular mentors Jay Manuel and J. Alexander, who are both openly gay.

On the second season of *Gossip Girl*, The CW's program about a group of affluent teens in Manhattan, Eric appeared throughout the season. He played a major role in several storylines and started dating a boy named Jonathan. Blair Waldorf's gay father and his boyfriend also returned. On *Reaper*, gay demon Tony returned for several episodes and adopted a baby, while his deceased partner Steve, now an angel, factored heavily into the final episodes.

The CW leads all networks in terms of being inclusive of the African American/black LGBT community. The majority of these impressions are made on *America's Next Top Model* because of the prominence of J. Alexander. On *Privileged*, chef Marco played a major role as he helped Megan navigate the world of the fabulously wealthy. Marco married his boyfriend Keith in the series finale. *90210* featured a bisexual cheerleader named Christina for a string of episodes, and *The Game* included a two-part storyline about a closeted professional football player.



Launched at the start of the 2006-2007 TV season, The CW was created after a merger between The WB and UPN, two networks that held respectable track records in offering LGBT content. In its first year on the air, The CW failed to incorporate LGBT characters into its scripted shows, but was ultimately awarded an *Ad-equate* rating in the inaugural GLAAD Network Responsibility Index because 51 of The CW's 55 hours of LGBT content came from the LGBT-inclusive alternative series *America's Next Top Model*.

However, by its second season of programming, The CW had made dramatic improvements to its scripted series. The short-lived summer series *Hidden Palms* featured Leslie Jordan as a gay drag queen and mentor to the show's lead teenage character. *Reaper* introduced Tony and Steve, a loving gay demon couple leading a rebellion against the Devil, while *Supernatural* aired a GLAAD Media Award-nominated episode featuring a gay ghost chaser. At the end of *Gossip Girl*'s buzz-worthy first season, Eric Van der Woodsen was outed by the vengeful Georgina Sparks.

## The 2009-2010 Preview

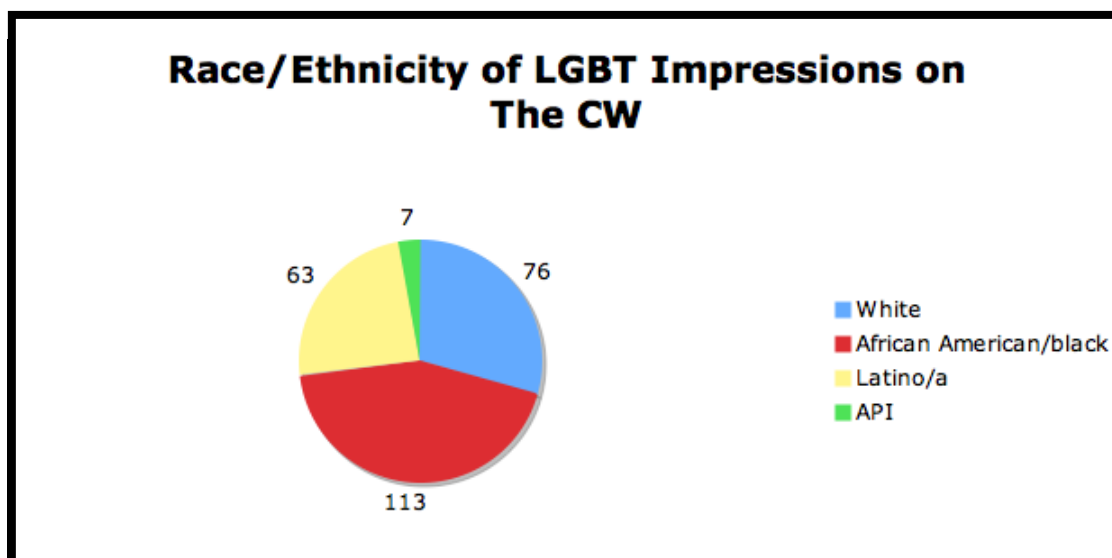
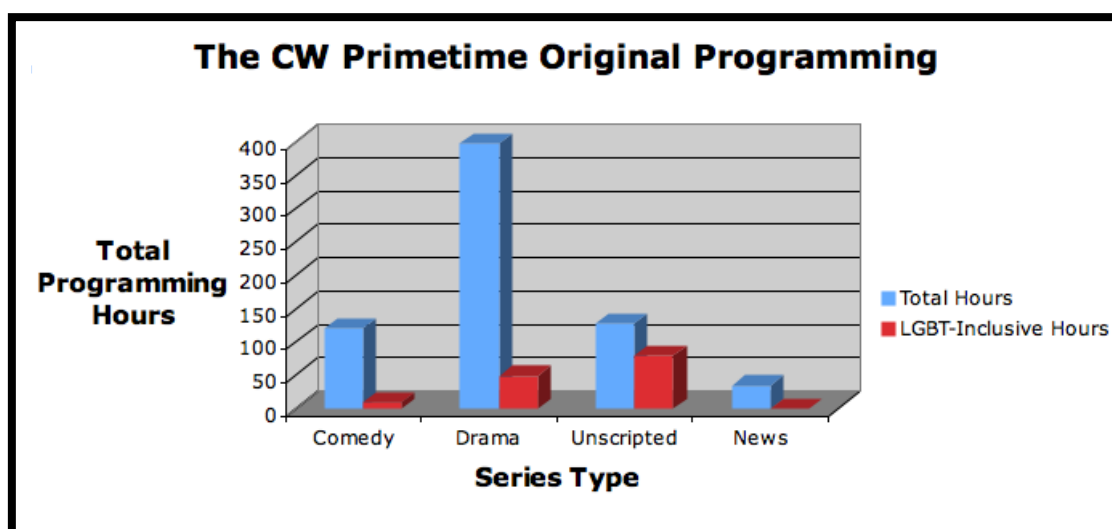
*Gossip Girl*, *America's Next Top Model* and *90210* will all be returning in the fall. Unfortunately, *Privileged* and *Reaper* have both been cancelled. The CW has announced three new series for the fall and one for midseason, none of which include known regular LGBT characters.

## Recommendations

With the main characters going off to college, we hope Eric will be given more screen time on *Gossip Girl*. As one of the youngest openly gay characters on network television, there are opportunities there for many compelling stories to be told. We also hope to see more of his boyfriend. Though the inclusion of Christina was noteworthy, *90210* could benefit from the addition of regular or recurring LGBT students or faculty to more accurately re-

flect real life high schools. It was announced, however, that Rumer Willis will be guest starring as a lesbian on at least one fall episode.

All of The CW's new fall shows are all ripe with opportunities to include LGBT characters and storylines. Chief among these is the highly anticipated reboot of *Melrose Place*, which takes place in gay Mecca West Hollywood. Despite this, the original series only featured a single gay character whose storylines were often edited by Fox. The new *Melrose Place* can make up for the shortcomings of the original. Also promising are *The Beautiful Life*, a new series about the high-fashion modeling industry which will hopefully include gay models and designers, and *The Vampire Diaries*, about warring vampire brothers set in a high school.





Fox improved dramatically, rising 7% from last year's 4% Failing grade. However, not all of Fox's LGBT impressions were positive, with problematic content airing on *Family Guy*, *So You Think You Can Dance*, and *Sit Down, Shut Up*.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

Fox

782.5 Total Hours of Programming

82.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (11%)

Difference from 2007-2008: +7%



*Bones'*  
Michaela Conlin

Founded in 1986 by News Corp CEO Rupert Murdoch, Fox's sensitivity to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues has frequently been called into question. *Melrose Place* is considered to be a pioneer for its early representations of gay men, but in 1994 GLAAD took Fox to task for editing out a kiss between two gay characters on the show. In 1999, GLAAD condemned a segment of the news magazine *Fox Files* entitled "Undercover in the Night," which purported to expose what Fox called a "gay underworld." In 2004, GLAAD questioned the intent and impact of the Fox alternative series *Seriously, Dude, I'm Gay* – which the network promoted as "a heterosexual male's worst nightmare" – in which two straight men tried to convince their family and friends that they were gay for a cash prize. Fox yanked the series before it even aired.

The first GLAAD Network Responsibility Index, covering the 2006-2007 season, gave Fox a *Failing* grade for having only 6.4% LGBT-inclusive content. Questioned about that grade, Fox Entertainment President Kevin Reilly told *AfterElton.com* it was "disheartening" and that the network "absolutely" has a responsibility to represent LGBT people. Despite this statement, Fox's percentage dropped to 4% the following season.

### The 2008–2009 Season

Fox saw a significant rise in LGBT-inclusive hours during the past TV season. Unfortunately, few of these were significant and some were even defamatory. There was also some grey area with regards to Fox's most popular show.

*American Idol* continued to dominate the ratings and featured Adam Lambert, one of the most talked about contestants in recent memory. By now everyone is aware that Lambert is gay, but he did not confirm this fact until a recent interview in *Rolling Stone* magazine, after tracking for the *Network Responsibility Index* had concluded. As such, *American Idol* was not counted as having any LGBT impressions.

Other reality programs were more inclusive. *Hell's Kitchen* included Will, a gay chef who went home in the first episode, and LA, a lesbian who fared considerably better. The fourth season of summer dance competition *So You Think You Can Dance* regularly featured out choreographers and judges, including *Hairspray* director Adam Shankman. However, the start of the show's fifth season in May proved problematic when the show featured a pair of same-sex ballroom dancers. The two men, one gay and one straight, received a homophobic critique from judge Nigel Lythgoe. GLAAD contacted Lythgoe and he later issued an apology for his remarks.

Animated series *American Dad!* regularly features Roger, a gay space alien, and recurring gay neighbors Greg and Terry were featured in a well-handled May episode. *The Simpsons* included recurring LGBT characters Patty and Smithers, as well as an episode in which Homer counseled a gay couple. Conversely, *Family Guy* aired an offensive half hour episode in which Peter was injected with the "gay gene" and proceeded to act out countless gay stereotypes. The short-lived series *Sit Down, Shut Up* featured a character named Andrew who perpetuated problematic misconceptions about bisexual people.

Among Fox's successful live-action series, only *House* and *Bones* featured regular LGBT impressions due to the presence

of bisexual characters Thirteen and Angela, respectively. *Do Not Disturb* included Larry, a gay character, but the show was cancelled after three episodes. *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* featured a transgender storyline in a December episode and *Lie to Me* aired an episode with African American gay rappers. In its season's final episodes, *24* included a minor gay character.

However, Fox showed promise in the final month of the 2008-2009 TV season when it aired the pilot episode of fall series *Glee*. The new Ryan Murphy series includes Kurt, a gay high school student, and Rachel, the glee club queen who has gay dads. The first episode of summer series *Mental* also aired in the final week of May and included Dr. Chloe Artis, a lesbian psychiatrist.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

The full season of *Glee* will begin airing in the fall and is getting a very strong promotional push from Fox. However, *Glee* is one of only three new Fox primetime series premiering in the fall. The others, *Brothers* and *The Cleveland Show*, have no announced LGBT content, nor do any of Fox's midseason series. Outside of primetime however, Fox will begin airing a new late night talk show featuring out comedian Wanda Sykes.

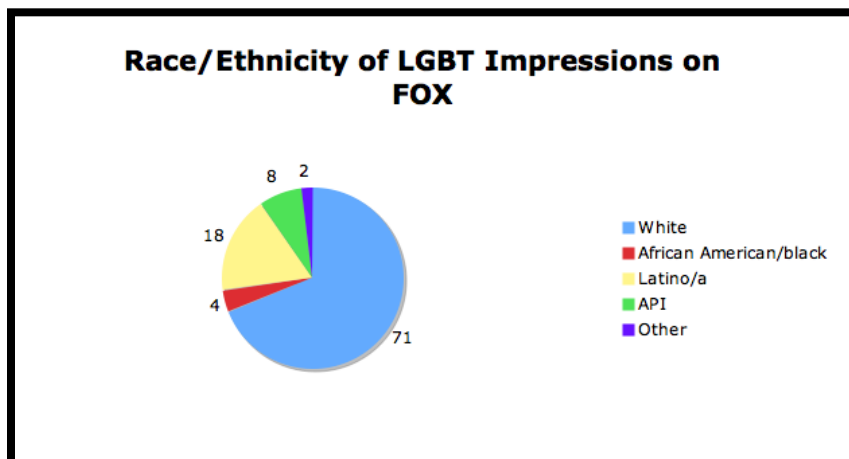
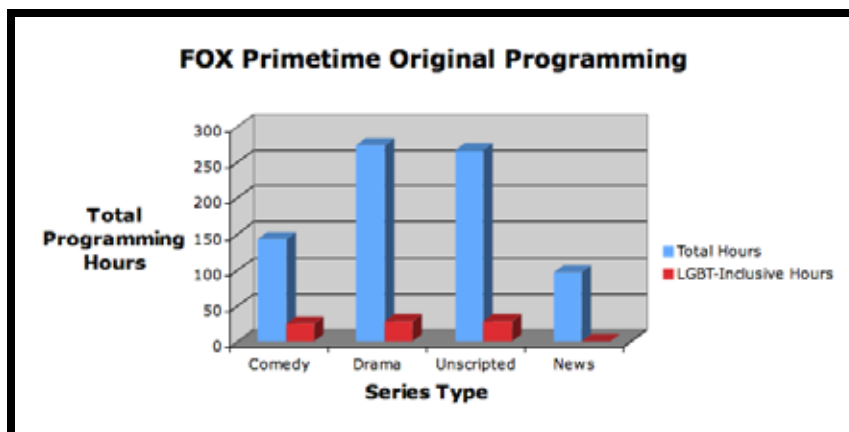
New seasons of *House*, *Bones*, *American Dad!*, and *The Simpsons* will be returning in the fall and *American Idol* will begin in early 2010. For the first time ever, a fall edition of *So You Think You Can Dance* will premiere in September.

### Recommendations

Following the incredible success of Adam Lambert on *American Idol*, we are hopeful that producers and contestants alike will realize that it is possible for an out member of the LGBT community to pull in big ratings and win millions of votes across America.

The characters of Thirteen on *House* and Angela on *Bones* will hopefully continue to be featured prominently. Existing series such as *Fringe* and *Dollhouse* could also benefit from the addition of LGBT characters.

Among new series, *Glee* shows excellent promise for LGBT inclusion. The show has already won widespread critical praise and we hope that viewers will tune in and make the show a success. *Family Guy* creator Seth MacFarlane is a vocal supporter of the LGBT community, but his show sometimes relies on tired gay stereotypes. Just as he has done with *American Dad!*, we are hopeful that MacFarlane will prove to be a stronger ally by making *Family Guy* and its new spin-off, *The Cleveland Show*, more LGBT-inclusive.



NBC showed some improvement over the past year but still only 8% of their total programming was LGBT-inclusive. Though *Southland* shows promise, the network's other LGBT characters on scripted series remain underwritten.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

# 1145 Total Hours of Primetime Programming

## 97 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (8%)

### Difference from 2007-2008: +2%



*Southland's*  
Michael Cudlitz

NBC's history of including LGBT characters as prime-time series regulars or recurring characters dates back to the 1994 debut of *Friends*, which featured the characters of Carol and Susan, a lesbian couple who ultimately married on the show. *ER* provided strong lesbian representation in the character of Dr. Kerry Weaver. On *Homicide: Life on the Streets*, Detective Tim Bayliss was revealed to be bisexual during the show's final two seasons.

Months after ABC cancelled *Ellen*, NBC made the bold decision to premiere *Will & Grace*, a sitcom featuring Will and Jack, two gay male lead characters. A third lead, Karen, was later revealed to be bisexual. Despite initial criticism from anti-gay groups, *Will & Grace* went on to become the most successful series with LGBT lead characters, winning 16 Emmys and running for eight seasons as a staple of NBC's "Must-See-TV" Thursday night lineup.

However, after *Will & Grace* went off the air in 2006, LGBT impressions on NBC declined considerably. In last year's *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, NBC received a *Failing* grade, with only 6% of its total programming being LGBT-inclusive, although the overall quality of those representations improved.

#### The 2007–2008 Season

In a 2008 interview with *AfterElton.com*, Ben Silverman, co-chairman of NBC Entertainment and NBC Universal, was asked about the lack of significant gay characters on NBC and pledged, "that will change under my watch." This past season, NBC slowly began taking steps to deliver on that promise.

Two dramas premiering at the end of the season both featured gay characters in major roles. The pilot episode of *Southland* revealed that Officer John Cooper is gay. Though featured prominently throughout the first season, Officer Cooper has revealed himself to be a complex and authentic character who viewers are only just beginning to get to know. On *Kings*, King Silas' power-hungry son, Jack, is struggling with his sexual orientation because his father, who would otherwise be fine with a gay son, refuses to allow Jack to be next in line to the throne.

Elsewhere on the network, the only other recurring gay character, *The Office's* Oscar Martinez, appeared throughout the season but was only featured prominently on a single November episode. *Lipstick Jungle* revealed that personal assistant Roy was gay, but he was largely a background character. On *Friday Night Lights*, Mayor Rodell, a lesbian, made a handful of small appearances and Devin, a minor character, came out to her bandmate Landry.

In *ER's* final season, Dr. Weaver and gay paramedic Chaz Pratt returned to the emergency room for the two-hour series finale. *My Name is Earl* continued to demonstrate how to do fair and inclusive comedy right. Kenny and his boyfriend Stuart did not recur regularly throughout the season but were featured prominently in a handful of episodes. Jack Donaghy's gay arch-rival, Devon Banks, also returned for an episode of *30 Rock*.

*Law & Order: SVU* aired a pair of LGBT-inclusive episodes: “Lunacy” dealt with the murder of a lesbian astronaut and incorporated her girlfriend into the investigation; and “Transitions” featured a transgender child whose father was murdered. Long-running procedural *Law & Order* offered an episode about a murdered gay author that also included transgender representation.

In alternative programming, Rosie O’Donnell’s variety special, *Rosie Live*, aired but failed to garner enough viewers to be developed as a series. *Project Runway* winner Christian Siriano made a guest appearance on *The Biggest Loser*; lesbian Sandy Gabriel competed on *America’s Toughest Jobs*; and *America’s Got Talent* featured LGBT contestants. Although NBC aired the diving competition that netted Matthew Mitcham a gold medal during its Summer Olympics coverage, it missed an opportunity to tell his story as one of the only openly gay athletes competing in the games. The network later expressed regret at this omission.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

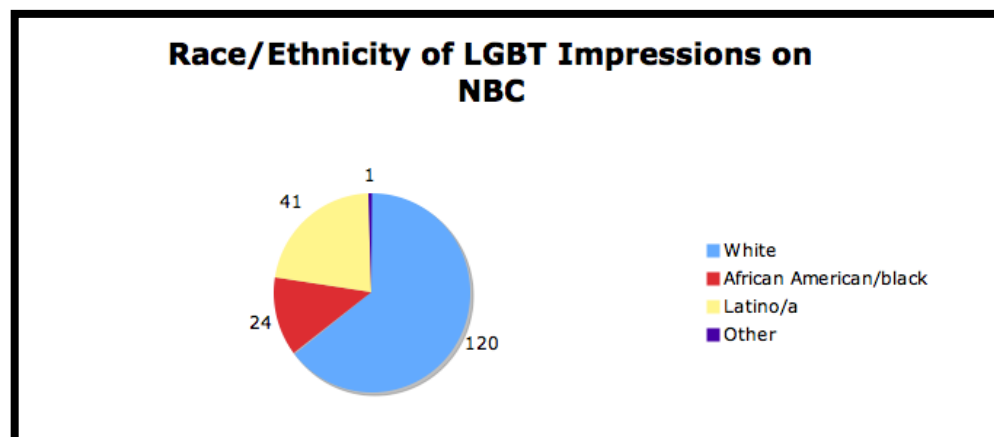
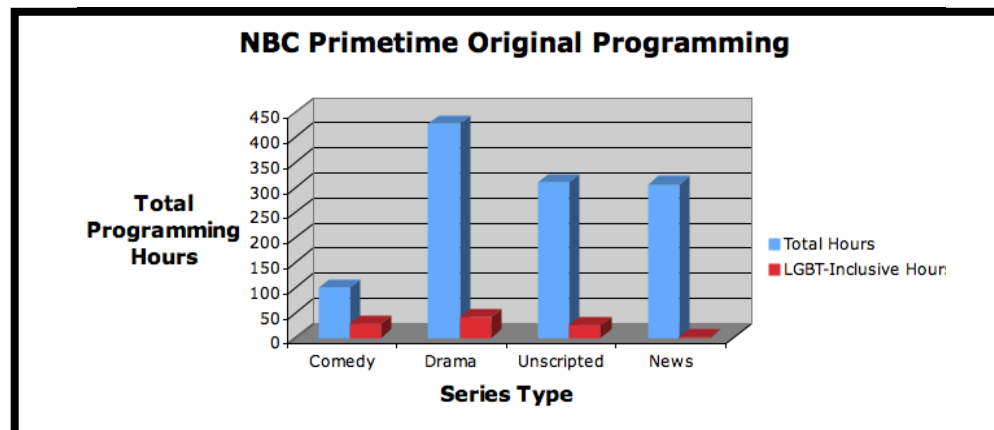
NBC renewed *Southland* for a second, 13-episode season but unfortunately opted not to do the same with the low-rated *Kings*. However, *Kings*’ remaining episodes began airing in June. Also gone are *ER*, *My Name is Earl* and *Lipstick Jungle*.

None of NBC’s announced new programming has confirmed LGBT characters. However, LGBT-inclusive series *The Office*, *30 Rock* and *Friday Night Lights* will all be returning, as will the two series in the *Law & Order* franchise.

### Recommendations

Though NBC has stepped up efforts to be inclusive, there is still ample room for growth on their existing programming. *The Office* could benefit from increasing Oscar’s screen time. Although openly gay writer and producer Brian Fuller recently announced he would be leaving *Heroes*, we continue to hope that the show will add a super-powered LGBT character to the ever-evolving cast. Though the *Law & Order* franchise often airs inclusive individual episodes, we await the day that a regularly appearing character will be added to the investigative or prosecutorial teams. *30 Rock* creator Tina Fey often infuses her show with LGBT-inclusive humor, though it would be even better to have one of the show’s characters come out of the closet.

NBC is hoping to fill the void left by *ER* with *Trauma*, a drama about first responder paramedics. We are hopeful that *Trauma* will also follow in *ER*’s footsteps by telling compelling LGBT stories and by including LGBT series regulars. The Joel McHale sitcom *Community* also offers an excellent opportunity for LGBT-inclusive stories, since it is set in the diverse environment of a community college.





Despite a wealth of alternative and scripted programming, A&E continues to show a disappointing deficit in LGBT-inclusiveness. There is ample room for growth, particularly on its unscripted documentary-style series.

EXCELLENT  
GOOD  
ADEQUATE  
FAILING

A&E

166.5 total hours of original  
primetime programming

2 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (1%)

Difference from 2007-2008: -3%



Created in 1981, A&E was originally a primetime and late-night programming block on Nickelodeon called ARTS until it merged with The Entertainment Network in early 1984, becoming its own channel named Arts and Entertainment (A&E). This move was a joint venture between NBC Universal, Disney-ABC Television Group, and Hearst Corporation. Since then, the network has expanded to A&E Television Networks Group, which includes the Biography Channel and The History Channel.

In 2004, A&E debuted the documentary series *Airline*, depicting the lives of Southwest Airlines employees. During its three-season run, gay and lesbian flight attendants, pilots, airport employees and passengers were regularly featured. Coupled with other hit unscripted series like *Dog the Bounty Hunter*, *Family Plots*, *Growing Up Gotti* and *The First 48*, A&E was able to brand itself as a top channel for alternative programming. Unfortunately, since the cancellation of *Airline*, there has been no other significant LGBT content on A&E.

Two gay-inclusive original movies aired on A&E in 2006: *Flight 93* and *Wedding Wars*. *Flight 93* was about the passengers on the United Airlines flight that

was hijacked by terrorists on September 11, 2001. It remains the most-watched program on A&E to date. The film focused significant attention on passenger Mark Bingham, a gay publicist, delving into his personal life and highlighting his heroism. In the romantic comedy *Wedding Wars*, gay and lesbian people throughout the country went on strike to protest marriage inequality. Openly gay producing partners Craig Zadan and Neil Meron produced this significant movie.

#### The 2008–2009 Season

Given its wealth of programming, expectations were higher for the A&E network. Out of the 18 different programs and 166.5 total hours of programming, only two hours incorporated LGBT impressions, causing the network to drop 3%, from last year's 4% LGBT-inclusivity rating to this year's 1%.

One of these hours aired at the very end of the 2008-2009 season in May with the series premiere of *Obsessed*, a reality program documenting the lives of people seeking treatment for their obsessive compulsive disorder. One of two people featured in the pilot was Scott, a gay man in Palm Springs hoping to overcome his OCD so that his boyfriend could move in with him.

The other hour can be attributed to a very minor character in a single episode of *The Cleaner*, who makes a brief mention of his off-screen partner. This was ultimately not a very meaningful LGBT impression.

#### The 2009–2010 Preview

While there is no known LGBT-inclusive content planned for next season, A&E will have plenty of new programming, including six unscripted series, one new drama, and a mini-series with Kevin Costner that is currently in the works.

Three of the new unscripted series explore the lives of once-popular celebrities: martial artist Steven Segal, actor Tony Danza and rapper MC Hammer. A&E will also be expand-

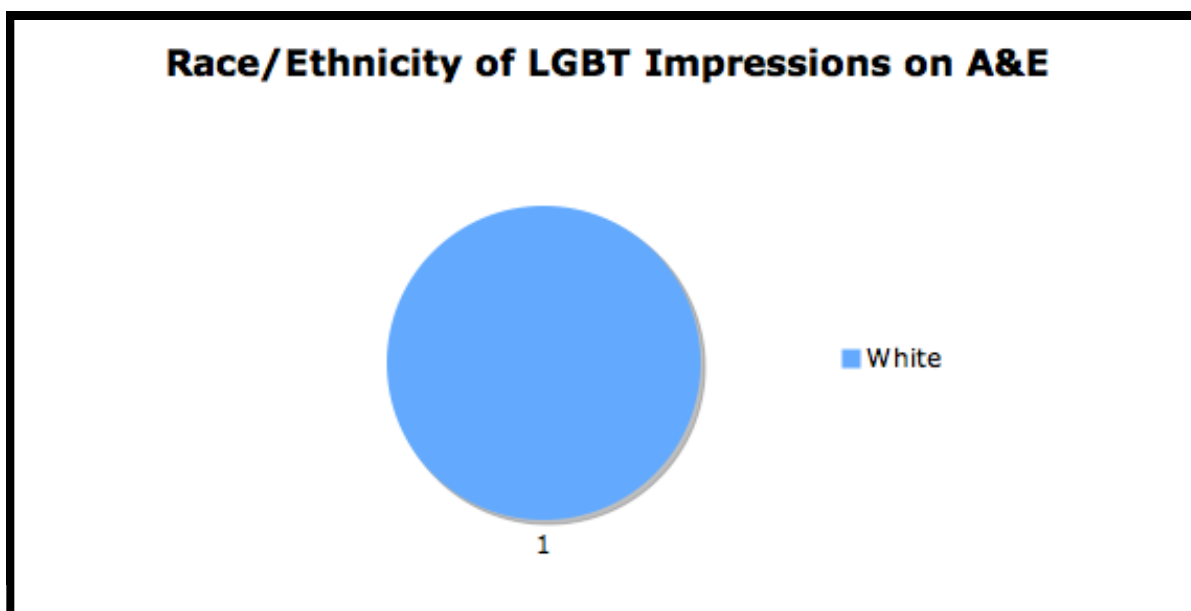
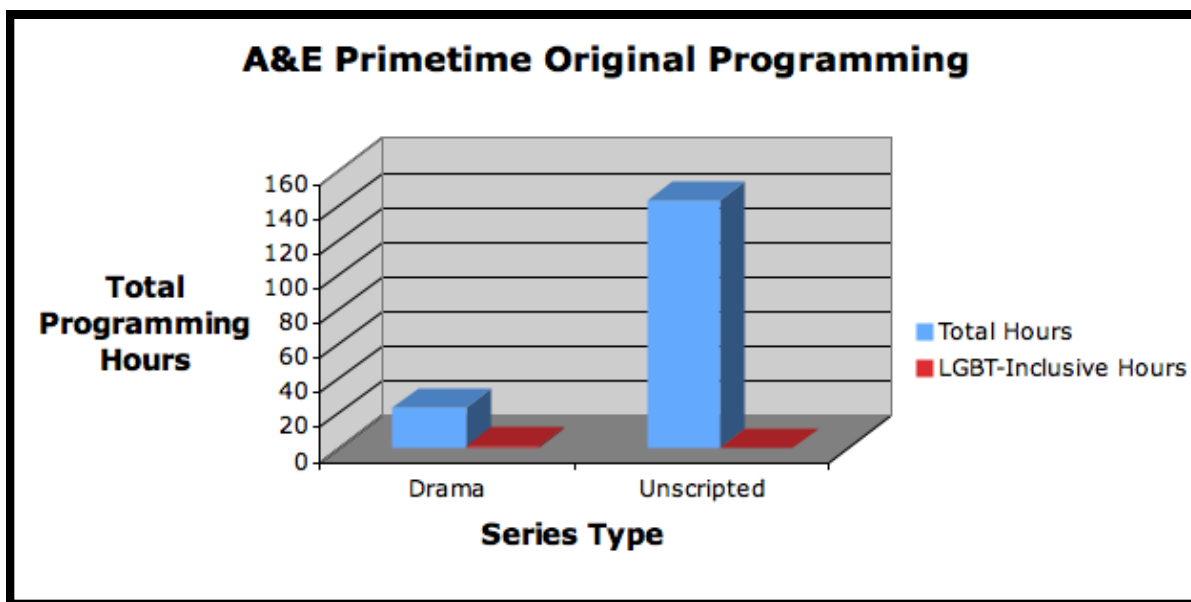
ing upon its popular true crime programming with the three new reality series: *Fugitive Chronicles*, *The Squad: Prison Police* and *Runaway Squad*. The one scripted drama premiering this season will be *Cooler Kings*, about a cop given a second chance after the death of his girlfriend.

The majority of last season's programming on A&E will likely be returning, except for *The Beast* and *The Two Coreys*. *Obsessed* continues its summer run, as does hit series *Intervention*. Last season's new series *Jacked*, *Psychic Kids*, and *Rookies* have yet to be picked up for a second season, nor has *Tattoo Highway*, the first season of which is still airing.

## Recommendations

History shows that A&E is a network not opposed to LGBT-inclusion and yet this season it barely produced two hours of content. *The Cleaner* recently aired an LGBT-inclusive episode, but could still benefit from adding a regular or recurring LGBT character.

There are also many opportunities to be found on A&E's unscripted programming. *Intervention* has previously featured LGBT stories and could easily do so again, and we hope the new series *Obsessed* will continue the strong precedent set by its pilot episode. Criss Angel regularly features guests on *Mindfreak* and could include people from the Las Vegas LGBT community.



FX declined a significant 32% over the past year due largely to the cancellation of several LGBT-inclusive series. With a strong history of LGBT representation, FX will need to infuse its remaining series with LGBT content if it is to reclaim its status as the most LGBT-inclusive cable network.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

FX

70 total hours of original  
primetime programming

10 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (13%)

Difference from 2007-2008: -32%



Nip/Tuck's  
Roma Maffia

Launched in 1994 by News Corporation's Fox Entertainment Group, FX broke ground by becoming the first television network to embrace the Internet as an interactive tool. They continued to push boundaries by having live programming where hosts would read viewer's e-mails and respond to them in real time. Despite loyal viewers, the budget was too high and by 1997 executives scaled back and re-launched the network as "FX: Fox Gone Cable". As it began targeting a male audience, FX dropped the "Fox Gone Cable" tag and joined forces with NASCAR to serve as their cable provider. As a result, cable providers were quick to add FX to their lineup.

In 2002, FX broke new ground with the premiere of the gritty police drama *The Shield*, making them a major player in original cable programming. A huge string of successes followed: plastic surgery drama *Nip/Tuck* (2003), the firefighting series *Rescue Me* (2004) and the darkly comedic *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* (2005). In 2007, FX premiered three new series with significant LGBT content: *The Riches*, *Dirt*, and the Emmy-winning drama *Damages*. All of these series

included LGBT content in varying degrees and in the 2007-2008 *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, FX led all networks with 45% LGBT-inclusive hours in its original prime-time programming. However, most of these images were of white gay men.

#### The 2008-2009 Season

FX was a big disappointment this season with the biggest drop in LGBT content among cable networks, dropping from 45% to 13% and losing their status as the leading cable network in LGBT representations. This drop could, in part, be attributed to the cancellation of shows like *The Riches* and *Dirt*, both of which were very LGBT-inclusive.

The majority of FX's LGBT content came from *Nip/Tuck* this season, with every episode featuring at least one LGBT character. Openly gay executive producer Ryan Murphy created this edgy hit in 2003 and has, for the past five seasons, consistently pushed the envelope, choosing to emphasize the darker aspects of plastic surgery. He also allows LGBT characters to be just as complex, flawed and innately human as everyone else in the show's racy, morally ambiguous world.

There were two strong LGBT storylines this season. One being Dylan McNamara's ex-wife Julia's relationship with her girlfriend Olivia, and another in which lesbian anesthesiologist Liz Cruz questioned her sexual orientation. New and recurring gay characters also appeared throughout this season.

The other series with gay content this season was *Super Size Me* creator Morgan Spurlock's series *30 Days*. Spurlock put subjects in an environment opposite to their own for 30 days. The show won a GLAAD Media Award in 2006 for the episode "Gay/Straight." In one LGBT-inclusive 2008 episode, an anti-gay wife and mother spent 30 days with a gay couple who are parents to adopted and foster children. However, this same episode featured an anti-gay activist who made defamatory claims which went unchallenged. Despite calls from GLAAD to either remove the inaccurate claims from the epi-

sode or bring on a credible expert to provide a counter-opinion, FX aired the episode as it is.

Although *Damages* did not feature any regular gay content in its second season, ruthless lawyer Patty Fiske was haunted the death of Ray Fiske, a gay attorney who killed himself in the first season.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

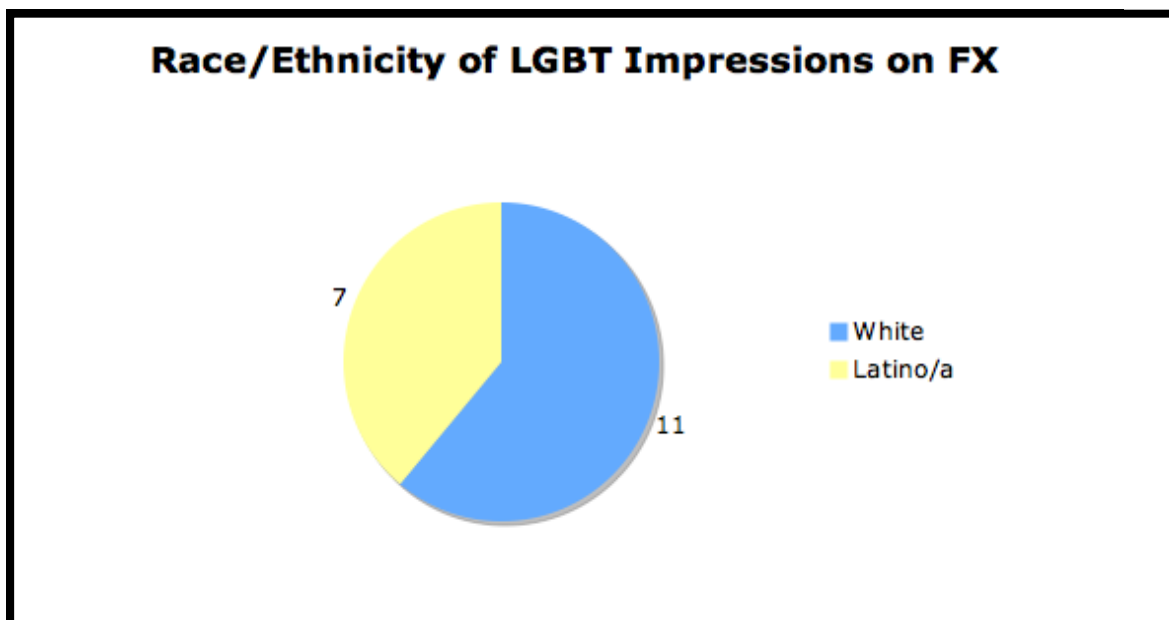
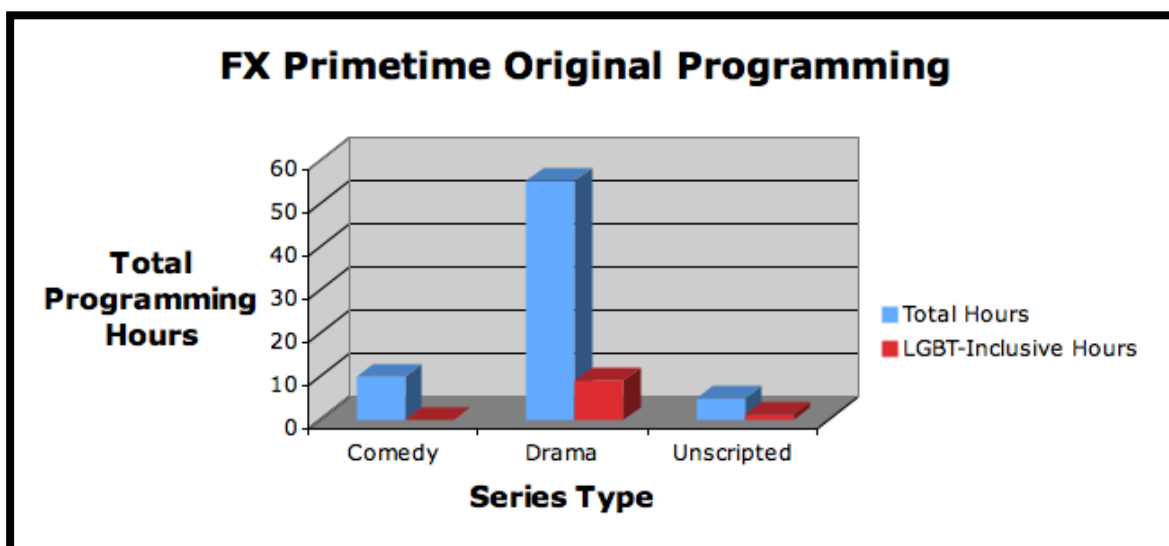
FX's 2009-2010 season welcomes back the Glenn Close vehicle *Damages*, satirical dark comedy *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, and firefighting drama *Rescue Me*. The edgy series *Sons of Anarchy* also returns and will premiere its second season later this fall. The LGBT-inclusive drama *Nip/Tuck* is entering its sixth and final season. However, the season is being split into two halves and may not conclude until the

2010-2011 season. *30 Days* will not be returning at all.

New to the lineup this coming season will be a series based on Elmore Leonard's short story *Fire in the Hole*. The drama centers on U.S. Marshal Raylan Givens after he is transferred to his hometown in Kentucky to pursue a white supremacist.

### Recommendations

With leading LGBT series *Nip/Tuck* going into its sixth and final season and the loss of documentary series *30 Days*, it will be up to the network to keep including LGBT characters in their remaining shows. Hopefully, renewed hits like legal drama *Damages* and *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* will include LGBT characters and content as they have in the past. Gay or lesbian bikers could be an compelling addition to the gang in the biker drama, *Sons of Anarchy*. There is also word on a possible main LGBT character in the new series *Fire in the Hole*.





With 42% LGBT-inclusive hours of programming, HBO scored the highest among all networks. Although HBO featured prominent racially and ethnically diverse characters, most of impressions were of gay men.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

HBO

140 total hours of original  
primetime programming

58.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (42%)

Difference from 2007-2008: +16%

*Six Feet Under* (2001–2005), and the 2006 documentary *All Aboard! Rosie's Family Cruise*.

### The 2008–2009 Season

Out of the fourteen original series aired on HBO this season, ten of them had LGBT-inclusive content. HBO also posted the second highest increase among all networks this year, rising 16% from 26% to 42% in total hours of LGBT-inclusive content.

Openly gay creator Alan Ball's new vampire series, *True Blood*, featured the most inclusive content this season, producing 12 of the 58.5 total hours of LGBT programming. This is mainly due to the gay African American character Lafayette Reynolds and his major presence in every episode. There were also several other gay characters, including Eddie, a gay vampire taken prisoner by Jason Stackhouse's vampire blood-addicted girlfriend. Most significantly, Ball has used the persecution of vampires on *True Blood* as a thinly veiled allegory for obstacles faced by the LGBT community.

*The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency* is another series that premiered this season with significant LGBT content due to the presence of major gay character BK. Set in the African nation of Botswana, the series centers on the country's first and only female-owned detective agency, which is right next-door to BK's hair salon. The polygamist drama *Big Love* aired with 9 hours of LGBT inclusive programming. Almost every episode had LGBT impressions, with gay characters Alby or Heather appearing in most of them.

Gay assistant Lloyd continues to feature prominently on *Entourage*. Newcomers *Summer Heights High* and *Little Britain USA* also included LGBT content this season. *Generation Kill* and *In Treatment* featured minor gay content in single episodes. *Entourage* and *Generation Kill* stand out for having racial and ethnic diversity in their LGBT impressions with gay Asian-Pacific Islander and Iraqi characters, respectively.



*True Blood's*  
Nelsan Ellis

In 1972 Home Box Office (HBO) was created in New York to broadcast feature films and sports coverage to audiences across America. Eleven years later, HBO premiered the Jim Henson series, *Fraggle Rock*, which was HBO's first original program for children. That same year, HBO aired the first television film ever made for a cable network, *The Terry Fox Story*, about Canadian amputee and athlete Terry Fox. With the success of these programs, more original films, specials and scripted series followed, though HBO still continued to air individual sporting events and television premieres of box office films. The same model applies today.

In its films and series, HBO has always been an LGBT-inclusive network, never shying away from representing diversity in its characters. HBO also addressed the subject of the AIDS crisis head on, showing the 1989 documentary *Common Threads: Stories From the Quilt* and 1993's original film *And the Band Played On*. Original series and specials continued to feature LGBT content, including GLAAD Media Award-winners *Sex and the City* (1998–2004),

The few HBO programs that were not LGBT-inclusive were largely sports-centric news shows such as *Costas Now*. However, political talk show *Real Time with Bill Maher* continued to offer supportive discussions of LGBT issues as well as openly gay guests such as Rep. Barney Frank and columnist Dan Savage.

### The 2009-2010 Preview

LGBT-inclusive series *Entourage* and *True Blood* began airing new seasons earlier this summer. New comedy *Hung*, about a well-endowed high school basketball coach, also began airing has had no known LGBT content at press time.

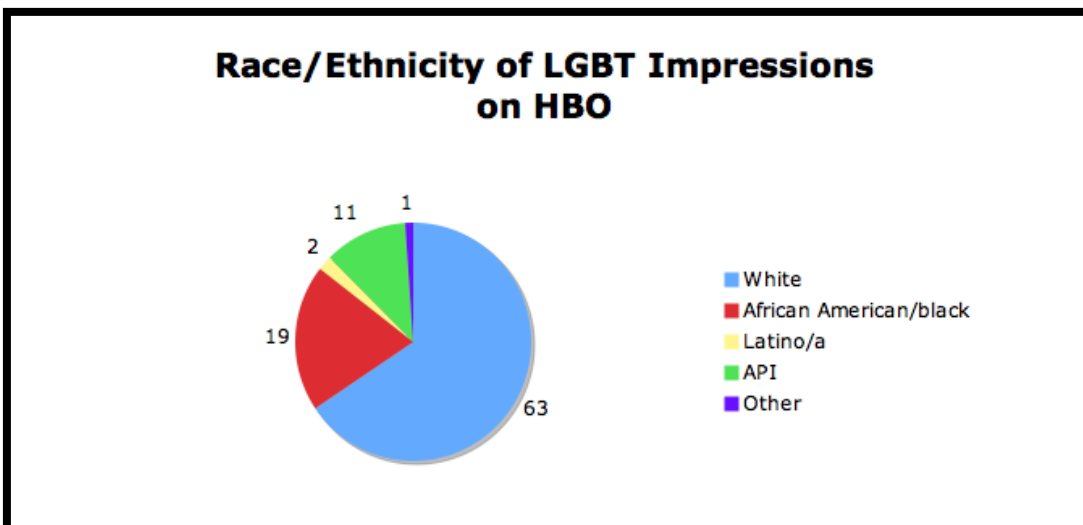
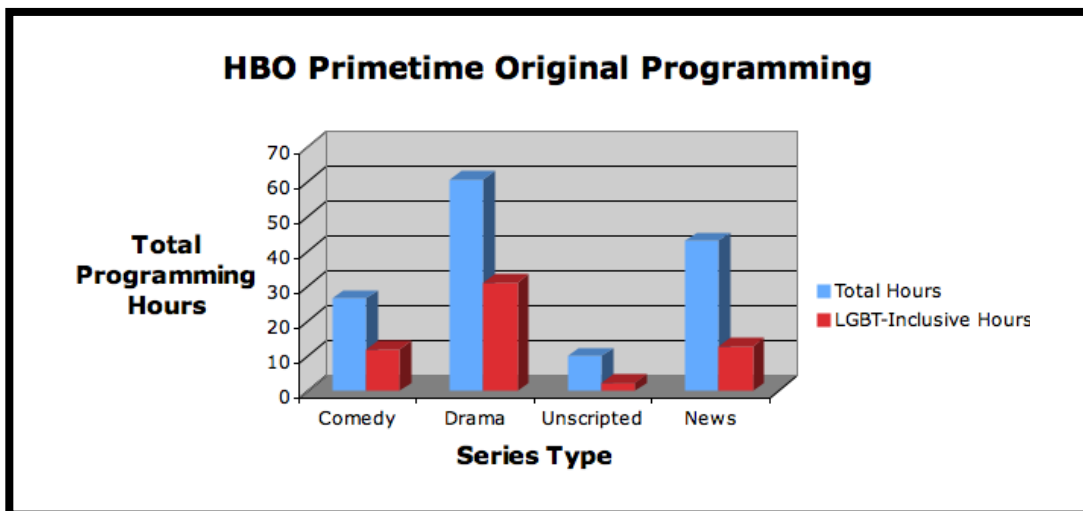
2010 will see the return of *Big Love*. A casting call recently went out for a new gay character who may serve as a possible love interest for Alby. *Flight of the Conchords*, one of the only HBO series not to feature any LGBT content, has been cancelled. No word yet on the

return of *In Treatment*, *Little Britain USA*, *The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency* or *Summer Heights High*, all of which included LGBT impressions this past season.

### Recommendations

HBO has a long history of leading the way in LGBT programming. Their inclusion of diverse characters and storylines always adds to the substance of their already stellar series. Not only does HBO make sure to include LGBT characters and plotlines, the network is also conscious of making these characters racially diverse. This past season saw Asian-Pacific Islander, African American, African, Latino/a and Iraqi LGBT characters.

However, HBO has room to grow in terms of lesbian and transgender representation. *Big Love*'s Heather is currently the only major lesbian character on the network and there was zero transgender representation. As it stands, HBO should serve as a model to other networks, but to truly lead the way HBO could be more inclusive of the entire LGBT community.



Lifetime aired a significant LGBT original TV movie, but the network was lacking in its inclusivity on scripted series. The majority of Lifetime's LGBT impressions were made in its alternative programming.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

# Lifetime

**107 hours of original  
primetime programming**

**15 LGBT-inclusive hours (14%)**

**Difference from 2007-2008: +4%**



*Prayers for Bobby's*  
**Ryan Kelley and Sigourney Weaver**

When it debuted in 1984, Lifetime Television focused on health and wellness programming. However, in the early 1990s Lifetime re-branded itself to focus on women's issues. To this day, Lifetime remains the most watched women's network. Lifetime has also expanded as Lifetime Networks, encompassing three separate cable channels: Lifetime Television, Lifetime Movie Network and Lifetime Real Women.

With over 200 Lifetime Original Movies, Lifetime is currently the largest producer of original television movies. In 2006, Lifetime aired the groundbreaking film *A Girl Like Me: The Gwen Araujo Story*. Starring J.D. Pardo and Academy Award-winner Mercedes Ruehl, the movie delved into the real-life story of a transgender teen who was violently murdered in 2002 because of her gender identity. The film was honored with a GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Television Movie.

Despite the prominence of its TV movies, Lifetime also has a long history of airing off-network reruns. When it acquired *The Golden Girls* in 1997, Lifetime

was embraced by a new audience and was unofficially deemed the "Network for Women and Gay Men." As evidenced by its acquisition of series such as *Will & Grace* and *Desperate Housewives*, Lifetime has solidified its reputation as an LGBT-inclusive cable network.

### The 2008-2009 Season

*Army Wives*, the most-watched series in the network's history, is a compelling drama that tells the story of women whose husbands are serving in the military. This past season, *Army Wives* confronted the hot-button issue of the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy during an episode in which a young lesbian character was accepted into the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Lifetime ventured further into self-improvement programming with two alternative series: *Blush: The Search for the Next Great Make Up Artist* and *How to Look Good Naked*. *Blush* featured several openly gay contestants, including two of Asian Pacific Islander and Latino descent and *How to Look Good Naked* starred former Queer Eye fashion maven, Carson Kressley.

Most notably, Lifetime levied a heavy promotional push behind the Lifetime Original Movie *Prayers for Bobby*. Based on a book by the same name, *Prayers for Bobby* was a moving recount of a mother's struggle to reconcile her strong religious faith with the fact that her son, Bobby, was gay. Burdened by the weight of relentless anti-gay rhetoric, Bobby took his own life, but his mother then went on to become a vocal advocate for the LGBT community. The movie highlighted the all-too-real challenges that LGBT youth face when confronted with intolerance and emotional abuse.

Unfortunately, Lifetime has shifted back its original programming from last years 164.5 hours to 107 hours in what appears to be an effort to reclaim its core audience with primetime reruns.

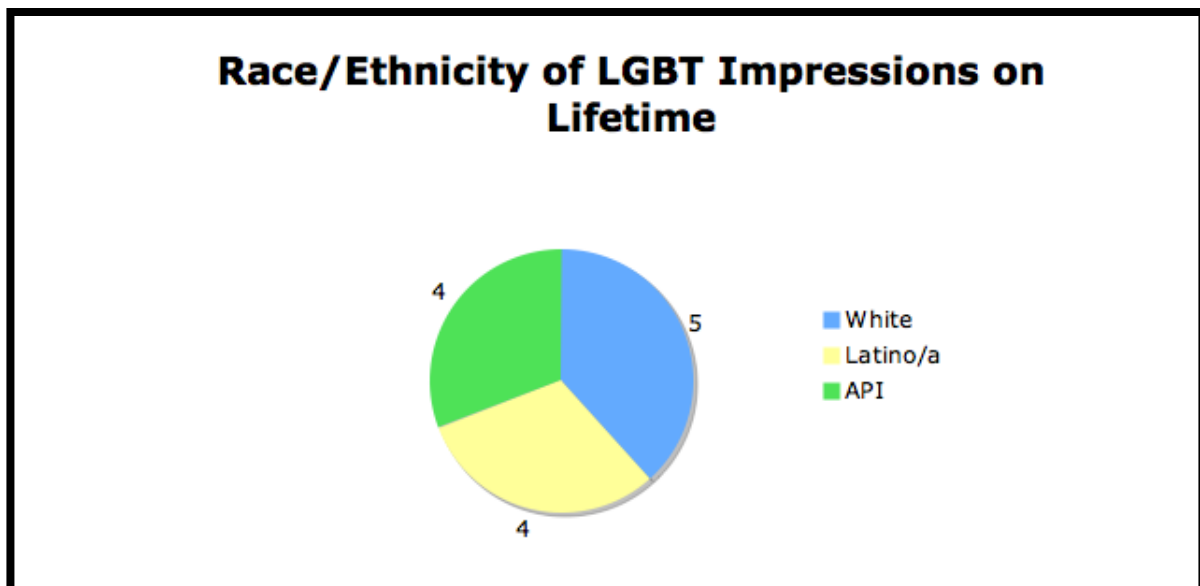
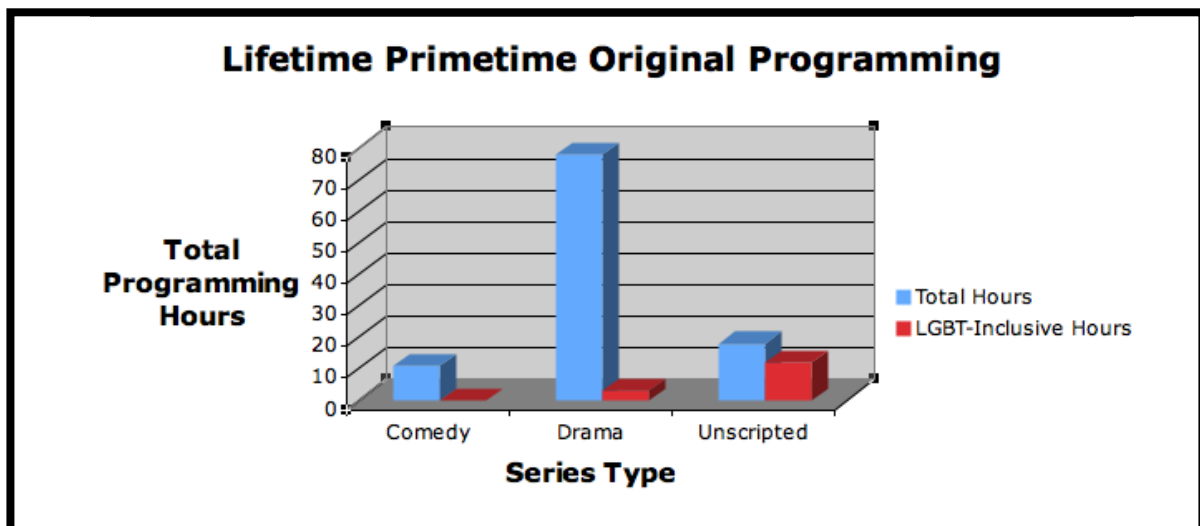
## The 2009-2010 Preview

Despite a reduction in hours of original programming, Lifetime will be augmenting its schedule with a number of new endeavors in the next season. With the highly anticipated airing of the long-stalled sixth season of *Project Runway*, Lifetime's LGBT-inclusive hours of programming will likely increase.

The network is continuing with its popular series, *Army Wives*. *Drop Dead Diva* is Lifetime's newest dramedy that deals with the murky space between beauty and intellect, when a vain and self-centered model dies unexpectedly and is reincarnated as a powerful plus-sized lawyer. Lifetime is also developing a comedy featuring *The View* co-host Sherri Sheppard called *Sherri*, about a woman who will have to juggle her kids, co-workers and auditions as a single mom/paralegal/actress trying to make ends meet.

## Recommendations

As previously mentioned, Lifetime has shifted back the number of hours of original content. Whether or not that remains true this year, Lifetime still has many opportunities to infuse their original programming with LGBT images. The acquisition of *Project Runway* is a promising development, but we also hope *Army Wives* will continue to bring attention to the military's discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. *Drop Dead Diva* also shows potential and could easily work an LGBT character into the story.





Ever since it began airing original programming, MTV has been a leader in bringing LGBT images to younger viewers. However, these LGBT impressions are only made on a handful of MTV's constantly growing slate of original unscripted series.

**279.5 hours of original  
primetime programming**

**47 LGBT-inclusive hours (17%)**

**Difference from 2007-2008: +1%**

MTV Networks operates under the Viacom label with a number of sister networks including MTV, MTV2, mtvU and Logo. Though the network originally aired mostly music videos, MTV's current programming primarily features reality shows and alternative series. MTV has established itself as a leader in LGBT representation, and has featured an significant number of LGBT perspectives in its original programming.

MTV first began to branch out into original programming in 1989 after broadcasting its first unscripted series, *House of Style*. Following the success of that series, MTV struck gold in 1992 with the alternative series *The Real World*, which offered an unprecedented view into the lives of seven strangers living together. 1994's *The Real World: San Francisco* remains a touchstone for many people in the LGBT community. Cast member Pedro Zamora was an HIV-positive Cuban American in a committed relationship with his boyfriend, Sean Sasser. Through Zamora's actions and words, he not only educated his housemates but also the larger viewing public, helping to break down misconceptions about people living with HIV and AIDS. The network has since regularly featured LGBT participants on *The Real World*, *Road Rules*, *True Life*, *Made* and other alternative series.

## The 2008–2009 Season

MTV featured compelling LGBT stories this last year. *The Real World: Brooklyn* broke ground by featuring the series' first ever transgender cast member, Katelynn. Alongside Katelynn were gay dolphin trainer JD and bisexual art therapist Sarah. As in all seasons of *The Real World*, the roommates were frequently at odds with each other. However, through Katelynn, the season offered an insightful narrative as her roommates (and viewers) came to a greater



*The Real World: Brooklyn's*  
**Katelynn Cusanelli**

understanding of the issues facing the transgender community. During the season, Katelynn, JD and Sarah, with the support of their housemates, hosted a special viewing of an MTV LGBT-centric movie, *Pedro*.

*Pedro* was a touching commemoration of former *Real World: San Francisco* housemate Pedro Zamora and his battle with HIV/AIDS. Written by Academy Award-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black, the TV movie went beyond what people saw on *The Real World*, exploring his life prior to and after his participation on the show up until his death.

*The Real World/ Road Rules Challenge: The Duel 2* featured numerous LGBT MTV reality heavyweights like Aneesa, Ruthie, Rachel, Ryan and Davis. Following in the footsteps of controversial bisexual MySpace celebrity Tila Tequila, bisexual twins Rikki & Vikki searched for their one true love among a pool of 12 straight men and 12 lesbian women on *A Double Shot at Love*.

Three other noteworthy shows were the reality series *Made*, *True Life* and *Taking the Stage*. On *Made*, two episodes featured openly gay coaches who helped their young apprentices learn the intricacies of runway stomping and guitar riffing, re-

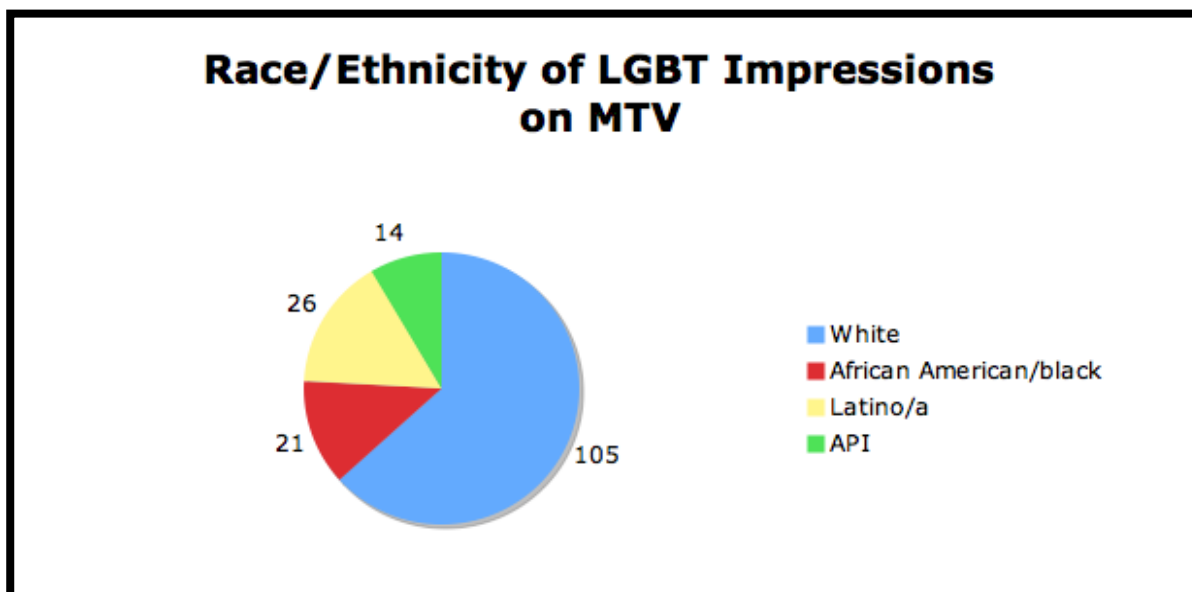
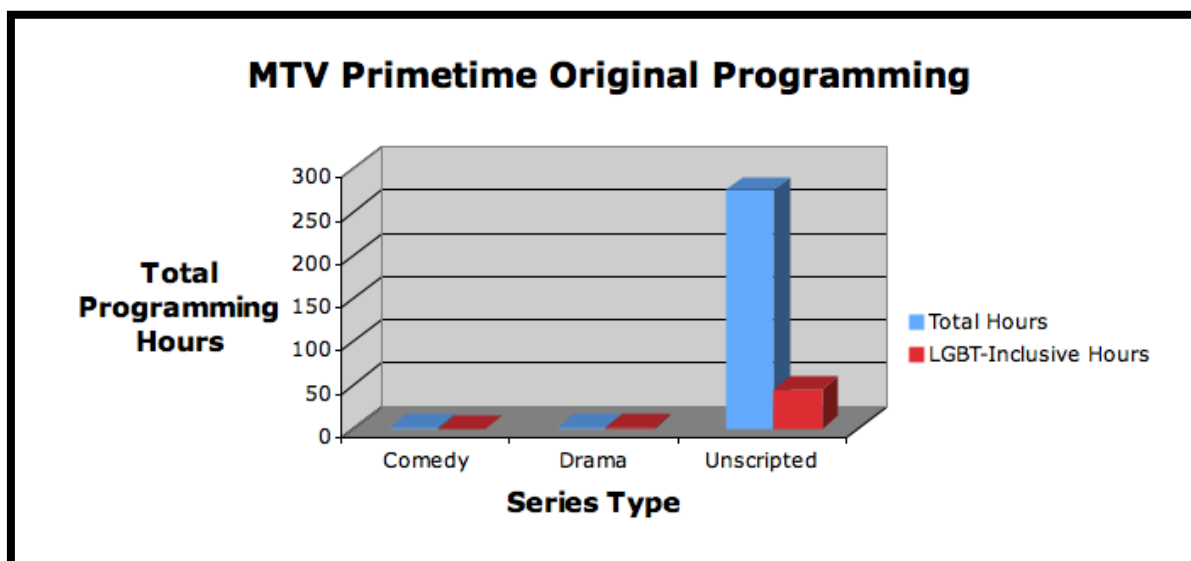
spectively. On *True Life: I Can't Sleep*, an openly gay man coped with the struggles of sleep apnea. *Taking the Stage* followed the lives of young students at the School for the Creative and Performing Arts in Cincinnati, Ohio. One of the students featured, Mailk, was an openly gay African American teenager with an unfettered passion for dance and choreography.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

Shows old and new alike return to MTV for the coming season. The new season of *The Real World: Cancun*, featuring openly gay housemate Derek, has already started airing. Thus far, this is the only show that features known LGBT content, but *True Life* and *Made* will also be returning with new episodes. It is likely that several yet-to-be-announced series will also be LGBT-inclusive.

### Recommendations

If the past is indicative of the future of MTV's casting choices, MTV will remain one of the most fair, accurate and inclusive networks on the air. *The Hills* is a favorite among many in the LGBT community although the show features no regular or recurring gay cast members. The retooling of the show to focus on Kristen Cavallari presents an excellent opportunity to prominently feature some of Kristen's gay friends.



# Showtime

**77.5 hours of original  
primetime programming**

**20.5 LGBT-inclusive hours (26%)**

**Difference from 2007-2008: -6%**

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

Showtime's LGBT-inclusive hours dropped over the past year but still remained impressive. There will likely be significantly less LGBT representation in the coming year following the loss of *The L Word*.

Media giant Viacom expanded its service in 1976 when it debuted the premium subscription network Showtime, which aired Hollywood films without commercial interruption. By 1978, Showtime had expanded its reach to the national market in order to compete with rival subscription network HBO. In 1984, Showtime began to venture into original programming with the premiere of its first original movie, *The Ratings Game*, directed by and starring Danny DeVito.

Showtime has had a profound impact on the visibility of gay and transgender people, showcasing LGBT-themed original films such as *Losing Chase* (1996), *More Tales of the City* (1988), *Common Ground* (2000), *Further Tales of the City* (2001) and *Soldier's Girl* (2003). There has also been a commitment to LGBT inclusion in Showtime's original series, whose impact on audiences and other media makers cannot be overstated. This began in 1984 with the premiere of *Brothers*, pay cable's first sitcom which featured two major gay characters.

In 2000, the network adapted the popular British series *Queer as Folk* for an American audience. The groundbreaking American version told the stories of several gay men – and two lesbians – living in Pittsburgh. Brash and unapologetic, the drama never shied away from showing physical intimacy, but it also addressed serious topics like parenting, marriage and living with HIV. As *Queer as Folk* was gearing up for its fifth and final season, Showtime introduced another original series, *The L Word*, this one set in Los Angeles and focusing on a group of lesbian and bisexual women. This level of visibility for lesbian and bisexual women has yet to be matched by any show on broadcast or cable television since.



*The United States of Tara's*  
Keir Gilchrist

## The 2008–2009 Season

In the past year, the network's overall LGBT-inclusivity was down 8% from the previous season. *The L Word* continued to be the most LGBT-inclusive series on television with a cast filled with LGBT characters. Unfortunately, this was the show's final season.

The fourth season of *Weeds*, about a pot-dealing mom, was sprinkled with gay and lesbian characters. However, with main character Nancy Botwin uprooting her family to the Mexican border, recurring gay and lesbian characters Sanjay and Isabelle saw less screentime. Two new characters, police captain Roy Till and his partner, were revealed to be a couple.

New series *The United States of Tara* is a darkly hilarious show that depicts the life of a woman with multiple-personality disorder. Her son, Marshall Gregson, is a fun-loving gay teenager who falls for a boy in one of his classes. The mish-

mash of personalities Marshall's mother has makes for an interesting relationship. 'Buck,' a pit-stop frequenting truck driver type, exhibited anti-gay attitudes, while Tara, the dominant personality, openly accepts her son.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

The upcoming season of Showtime original programming is underway and features a promising array of LGBT-inclusive characters and plotlines. With a host of shows coming in the 2009-2010 season, LGBT viewers are craving more strong LGBT characters they can look forward to watching on a weekly basis.

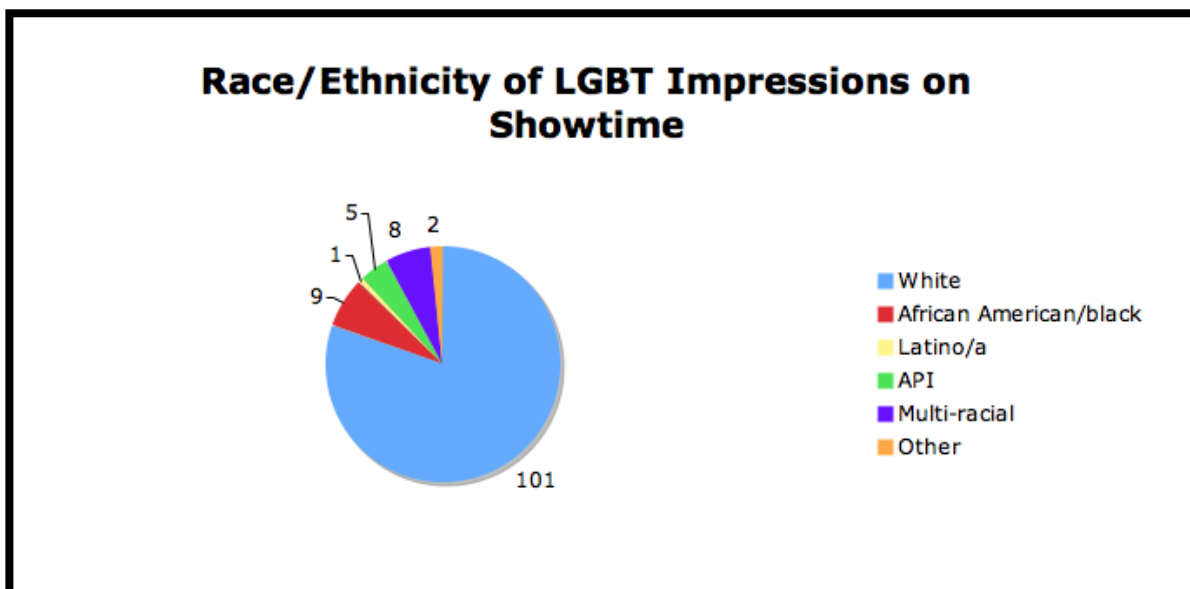
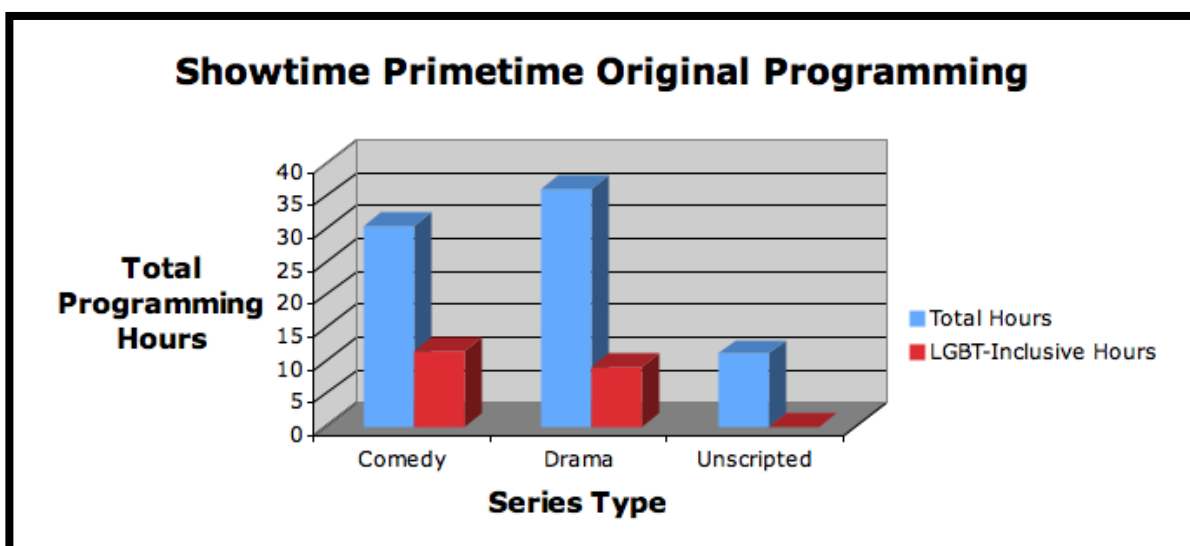
The newest show to grace the network is *Nurse Jackie*, a new medical dramedy series that follows Jackie Peyton, R.N. and her close gay male nurse friend, Mohammed. Nurse Jackie is notable because Mohammed is now the only regular gay character of Middle Eastern

descent currently on television. The show also features an imposing gay nurse named Thor.

*Weeds* is currently airing its fifth season and *The United States of Tara* will air its second season beginning in early 2010. Additionally, Showtime's massive hit *Dexter*, about a serial killer who only kills criminals, will be returning in the fall.

### Recommendations:

With the departure of *The L Word*, Showtime has will have a significant void in their fall schedule and will need to infuse its remaining programs with LGBT images in order to compensate. The premiere of *Nurse Jackie* bodes well, as does the return of *Weeds* and *The United States of Tara*. However, Showtime's other shows, such as *Californication*, could also easily include LGBT stories.





Sci Fi included gay characters on two of its most watched programs, but these characters were minor and their sexual orientation was barely addressed. In one instance, a character was revealed to be gay on a webisode as opposed to the show.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

# Sci-Fi

**171.5 total hours of original  
primetime programming**

**13 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (8%)**

**Difference from 2007-2008: N/A  
(Sci Fi was new to the NRI this year)**



*Battlestar Galactica's  
Alessandro Juliani*

The Sci Fi channel has been the destination for science fiction, fantasy, horror and paranormal programming since its inception in 1992. Created as a joint venture between Paramount Pictures and Universal Studios, the channel first aired classic films and television shows from the studio's vaults.

Sci Fi programming has also included original movies, miniseries and series, gaining national recognition in 2003 with the airing of *Steven Spielberg Presents: Taken*, which won the Emmy for best miniseries later that year. Lately, Sci Fi has also aired successful original series like *Battlestar Galactica*, *Ghost Hunters*, *Eureka* and *Stargate SG-1*.

In July, Sci Fi changed their name to SyFy to end confusion on spelling and in support of a re-branding effort. However, since this report encompasses the TV season from June 2008 to May 2008, we continue to use the network's former name when referring to the past season.

## The 2007-2008 Season

*Battlestar Galactica*, in its final season, produced five of the 13 hours of LGBT inclusive content on Sci Fi, largely due to the presence of gay Latino character Gaeta. While Gaeta may have only appeared on five of the fourteen episodes this season, he was an integral part of those five

episodes. However, Gaeta was revealed to be gay in a webisode, not on the actual series.

The rest of Sci Fi's LGBT content was due to the original series *Eureka* and the gay character Vincent, who made at least a minor appearance in every episode.

With such extensive original programming both in scripted and non-scripted series, there could be much more of an LGBT presence on the Sci Fi channel.

## The 2009-2010 Preview

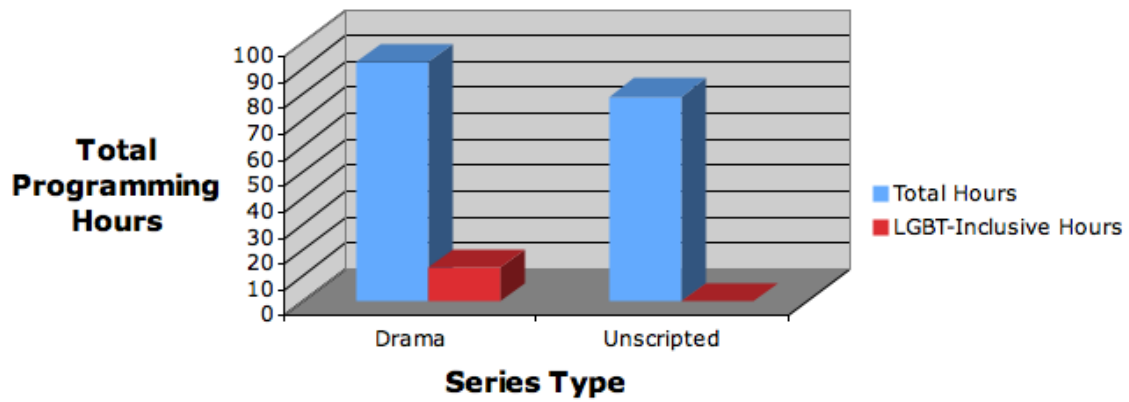
The summer will welcome back *Eureka* for the latter half of its third season, along with the second season of *Ghost Hunters International* and the debut of *Warehouse 13*, about a warehouse where the government keeps mysterious artifacts and how this affects the jobs of the two men put in charge of guarding them.

*AfterEllen.com* reported in April that SyFy's fall series *Stargate Universe (SGU)* will feature actress Ming Na as lesbian political attaché Camille Wray. Later in the season, viewers will also meet her partner, Sharon. Most of the other SyFy programs will also be back for the 2009-2010 season. It is still unknown whether Tracy Morgan's *Scare Tactics* have been renewed. In addition to *Stargate Universe*, the fall will also see the premiere of *Relic Quest*, in which the world's greatest relics are hunted down.

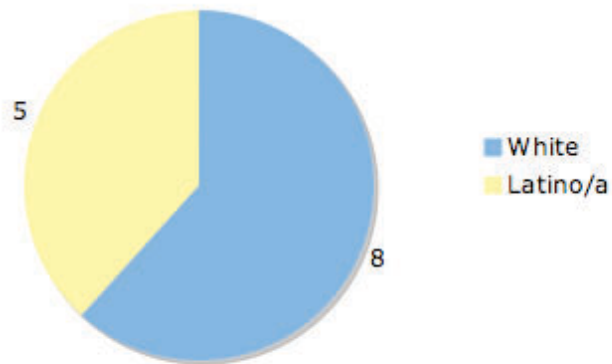
## Recommendations

Sci Fi's 2008-2009 LGBT impressions were decidedly minor. Although Gaeta appeared consistently in *Battlestar Galactica*'s final season, the fact is that viewers would not have known he was gay if not for the web-only content. As the network rebrands and reinvents itself as SyFy, the addition of an openly lesbian regular character to *Stargate Universe* already signals the potential for improvement.

### SciFi Primetime Original Programming



### Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on SciFi



TBS' LGBT impressions dropped to a low of 1% with a single half hour of minor gay content. While it is worth noting that that single gay character was African American, TBS is still lacking tremendously in terms of overall LGBT-inclusivity.

EXCELLENT  
GOOD  
ADEQUATE  
FAILING

TBS

39.5 hours of original  
primetime programming

0.5 LGBT-inclusive hours (1%)

Difference from 2007-2008: -6%



Operating under Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. (TBS) are a number of networks including Turner Broadcasting System (TBS), Cable News Network (CNN) and Turner Network Television (TNT). TBS lives up to its “Very Funny” slogan by bringing laughs to the American public daily by re-airing classic sitcoms *Seinfeld*, *Family Guy* and *The Office*, among others. In addition to its acquired sitcoms, TBS features original comedies like Tyler Perry’s *House of Payne*, *My Boys* and *The Bill Engvall Show*.

### The 2008–2009 Season

TBS broadcast roughly 39.5 hours of new programming. Of these hours, an LGBT impression was only made on a single half hour episode of *My Boys*, or 1% of TBS’ total airtime.

*My Boys*, a sitcom that highlights the lives of a group of buddies in Chicago, featured one African American male gay character who was set up on a date with PJ Franklin, the female lead. The inclusion of diversity with an African American gay male is praise-worthy, although it does not reasonably justify the lack of LGBT inclusion elsewhere on TBS’ original scripted lineup.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

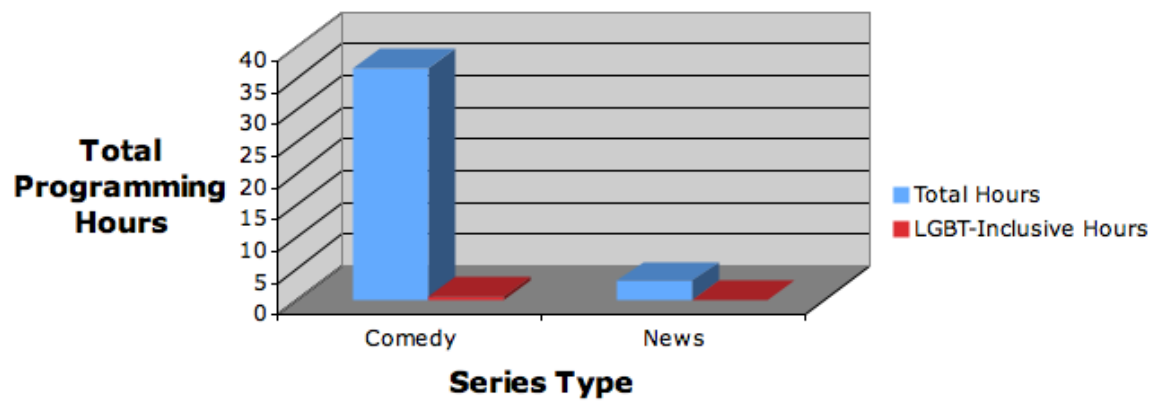
All four of TBS’ scripted series are scheduled to return. A talk show featuring George Lopez will be premiering in the fall, along with *Neighbors from Hell*, a new animated comedy series about a suburban family that is literally from hell. TBS is also developing a sketch comedy series, *Wee Hours*; a sitcom, *The Game of Life*; and another animated series, *Big Tow*. None of these series have scheduled premiere dates.

### Recommendations

While TBS lacked LGBT-inclusiveness in their original programming in this last year, TBS has many syndicated acquisitions like *The Office* and *Sex & The City* that include fair and accurate representations of LGBT characters.

However, TBS could only benefit from writing LGBT characters and storylines into its existing original programming. *My Boys* already showed that it is capable of inclusive humor and could expand on that by giving PJ a gay or lesbian cohort. Considering that three upcoming series are still in the development stage, TBS could seamlessly incorporate LGBT characters into those shows.

### TBS Primetime Original Programming



### Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on TBS





TNT showed the most improvement of any network with an 18% rise in LGBT impressions. Although these characters were overwhelmingly white, TNT is showing promise in the coming season with the addition of a lesbian Latina detective to *The Closer*.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

TNT

69 total hours of original primetime programming

13 LGBT-Inclusive Hours (19%)

Difference from 2007-2008: +18%



*Raising the Bar's*  
Jonathan Scarfe

Launched in 1988 by media mogul Ted Turner, Turner Network Television (TNT) was originally the destination for live sporting events like NASCAR races and NBA and NFL games. When launched as a cable service, the network also aired movies and reruns of television shows. In 2001, TNT re-branded itself with the tagline “We Know Drama” to emphasize its acquisition of syndicated series like *Law and Order* and *Cold Case*.

Programming is still mainly split between sports and original series, with original series premiering in the summer after the NBA finals.

### The 2008–2009 Season

The bulk of the 13 hours of LGBT-inclusive programming came from the new series *Raising the Bar*, which features a regular gay character in law clerk Charlie Sagansky. This major character spent the beginning of the season in the closet and ultimately got a boyfriend. However, Charlie waited until the end of the first season to come out to his colleagues, which will allow the show to address gay issues more extensively in the show’s second season.

*The Closer* was LGBT-inclusive this season, producing one hour of content in which a gay man is accused of mur-

dering his online boyfriend. *Saving Grace* also featured Ham’s gay younger brother Nick in a pair of episodes.

### The 2009–2010 Preview

*The Closer* and *Raising the Bar* have both returned for the summer, as have *Leverage* and *Saving Grace*. In addition to a gay themed episode that aired in June, *The Closer* has added a recurring lesbian character in Det. Mikki Mendoza and revealed that the coroner, Dr. Morales, is gay.

Joining the lineup are three new dramas and one new reality series. A new medical drama, *Hawthorne*, featuring Jada Pinkett Smith, premiered in June, while producer Jerry Bruckheimer will debut the Dylan McDermott police series *Dark Blue*. TNT also recently premiered its first foray into alternative programming, *Wedding Day*, which promises to give couples their dream wedding. Ray Romano will be back this fall on TNT with his new dramedy, *Men of a Certain Age*.

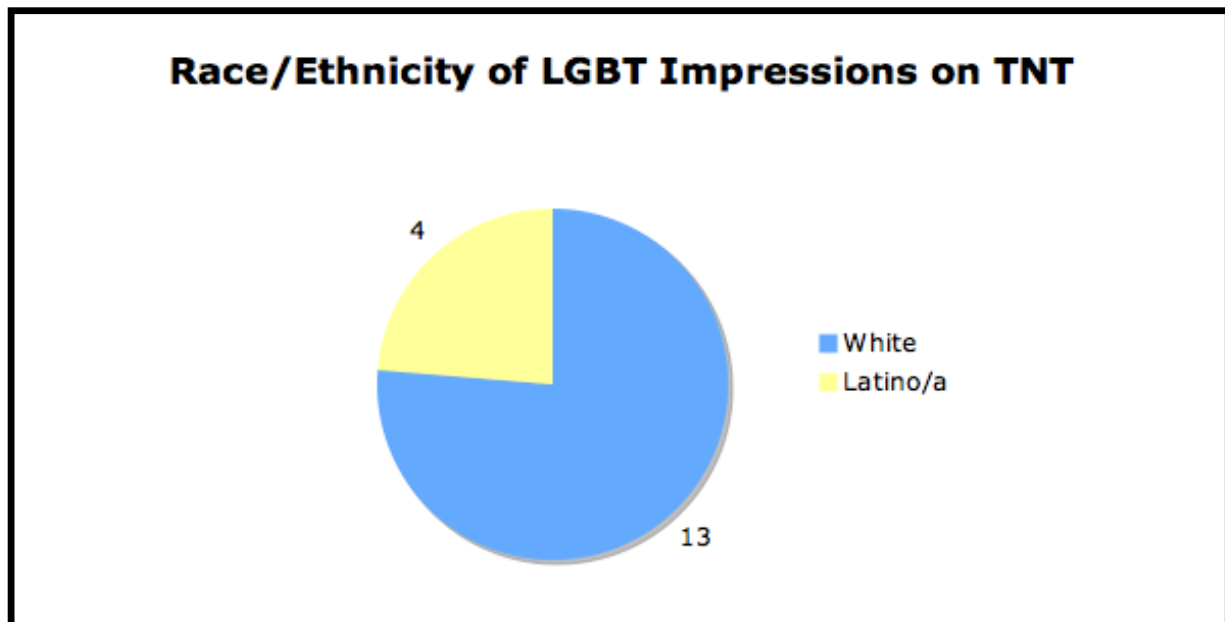
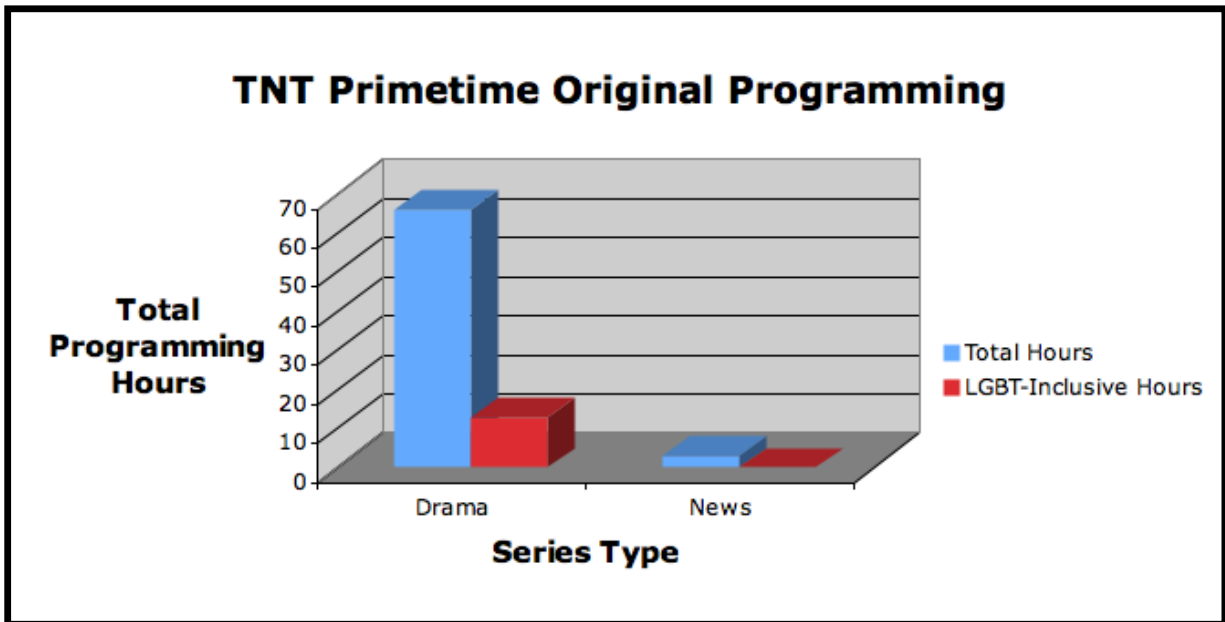
Currently, there are eight scripted dramas in development, with one from *Raising the Bar* creator Steven Bochco and another from *The Closer*’s Kyra Sedgwick and husband Kevin Bacon. TNT also plans to continue its unscripted programming with two new series. One will deal with terminally ill patients and where they go when “nothing more can be done,” and the other will make dreams come true for deserving families.

### Recommendations

While this season has been a big improvement in TNT’s overall LGBT-inclusiveness, more can still be done. Since a large part of TNT’s programming consists of live sporting events, it is important to utilize the opportunities presented by scripted and new unscripted programs as much as possible.

Four new shows are slated to join the summer lineup this season and none appear to have any major LGBT characters. Even without a major LGBT storyline or character, series can still address issues relevant to the LGBT community through the inclusion of secondary characters or plotlines that tackle these issues.

Medical drama *Hawthorne* could easily have an LGBT patient, doctor or nurse. The same could apply to the characters and storylines on police drama *Dark Blue*. Hopefully there will be an LGBT wedding on the new unscripted series *Wedding Day*, which presents a perfect opportunity for TNT to tap into the evolving cultural climate depict the wedding of a loving, committed same-sex couple.



Although USA's LGBT impressions increased over the past year, this was due entirely to a single scripted series which has since been cancelled. It is troubling that USA is entering the 2009-2010 with no known LGBT content.

EXCELLENT  
GOOD  
ADEQUATE  
FAILING

# USA

92 hours of original  
primetime programming

11 LGBT-inclusive hours (12%)

Difference from 2007-2008: +8%



*The Starter Wife's*  
Chris Diamantopoulos

USA Network is owned by NBC Universal, which also owns the basic cable networks SyFy, Bravo and Oxygen, among others. In 1977, the New York City-based outlet was launched as the Madison Square Garden Network, but three years later, the channel was renamed USA Network to reflect its national reach. Among basic cable networks, USA boasts an enormous potential audience, since it is available in roughly 94 million homes in 2008.

USA plays host to a plethora of original programs, including *Burn Notice*, *In Plain Sight*, *Monk* and *Psych*. The network also airs a number of syndicated hits like *House*, *Law & Order: SVU* and *NCIS*. With the slogan “Characters Welcome,” USA is committed to a slate that focuses on strong personalities. Earlier this year, USA partnered with GLAAD and several other non-profit organizations to launch “Characters Unite,” a multimedia platform aimed at “combating prejudice and intolerance while advancing acceptance and understanding.”

### The 2007–2008 Season

*The Starter Wife* aired on USA in 2007 as a miniseries and

was adapted into a full-fledged series in 2008. The show starred Debra Messing as a divorced woman named Molly Kagan and features her gay interior decorator friend, Rodney. Over the course of the season Rodney embarked on a secret relationship with a closeted African American action movie star. *The Starter Wife* included significant gay content, but was the only original series on USA to do so.

### The 2008–2009 Preview

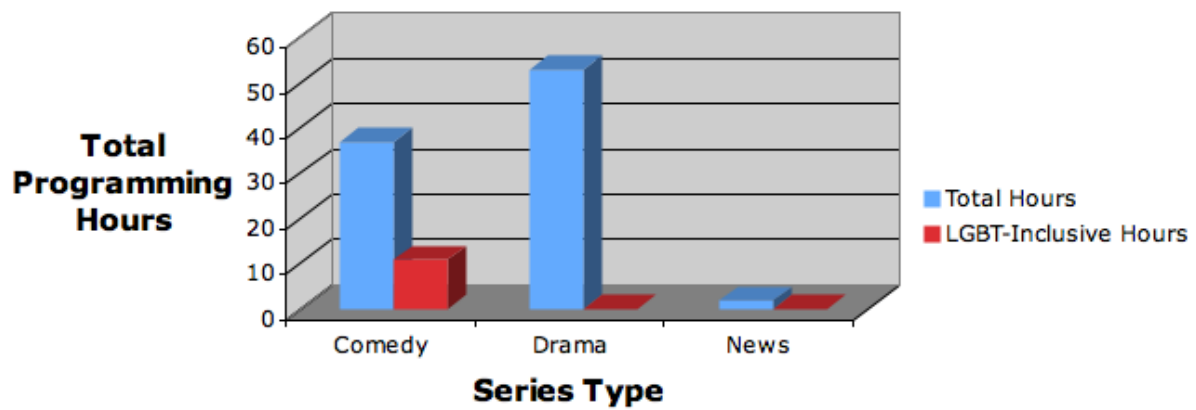
*The Starter Wife* has been cancelled, but USA has kicked off the 2009-2010 season with a new medical drama titled *Royal Pains* that follows Dr. Hank Lawson, a “concierge doctor” for the Hamptons’ elite. The new season will also bring *Operating Instructions*, about a trauma surgeon returning from Iraq, and *White Collar*, about a con artist recruited to aid the FBI. All new episodes of *In Plain Sight*, *Burn Notice* and *Psych* will also premiere this coming season on USA.

### Recommendations

USA LGBT inclusivity increased by 8% over the past year, but this was due entirely to a single scripted series that will not be returning in the new TV season. In the past, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Burn Notice* have featured non-recurring LGBT characters and will hopefully continue their tradition of inclusiveness and diversity.

If indeed characters are welcome, the cancellation of *The Starter Wife* presents USA with an opportunity to incorporate new regular or recurring LGBT characters on its current and upcoming scripted series.

### USA Primetime Original Programming



### Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on USA



# ADDITIONAL CABLE OVERVIEW

Many cable networks remain at the forefront of the television landscape though their consistent inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) stories within series that have broad and mainstream appeal.

The 2008-2009 Network Responsibility Index evaluated and analyzed both primetime original cable programming in addition to the broadcast networks' primetime schedules. GLAAD selected the top ten basic and premium cable networks, as reported by Nielson Media Research in June of 2008, for review.

GLAAD also created the following review of a select group of networks to acknowledge the vast quantity and quality of LGBT-inclusive content found outside of the top basic and premium cable networks. Though GLAAD did not conduct thorough reviews of the following networks, their contributions in LGBT programming during the 2008-2009 season are worth noting.

- **ABC Family:** Among the most popular networks not quite in the top ten, ABC Family, a division of ABC Family Worldwide, Inc. is a subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company. Though the network offers a limited number of original series, there were several standouts. *Greek*, a popular dramedy series about fraternity/sorority co-eds, features Calvin, a rare example of a young, openly gay African American series regular on television. In addition to depicting Calvin's dating life, *Greek* also featured Rebecca, a character who briefly explored her sexual orientation. ABC Family's highest rated series, *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*, featured pregnant teenager Amy, who considered giving her baby to a same-sex couple before deciding to raise the child herself. On *Lincoln Heights*, Stacy, the openly gay daughter of a minister, took a girl to prom in the season finale.

- **BBC America:** Part of the BBC Worldwide Network, the BBC America channel is stocked with original programming imported from the United Kingdom. *Skins*, a darkly funny series about a tight knit group of misfit teenagers, featured gay character Maxxie and his boyfriend. The upcoming third season will feature a lesbian

storyline. *Torchwood*, a spin-off of the supernatural series *Doctor Who*, features openly bisexual Captain Jack Harkness and his boyfriend Ianto. In addition to its scripted series, Britain's popular gay comedian Graham Norton hosts *The Graham Norton Show*, as well as several reality competition programs.

- **Bravo:** As a division of NBC Universal, Bravo has long been an influential player in broadcasting a diverse lineup of LGBT cast members in its alternative programming. The last season of Bravo's original programming was no exception. The ever-popular GLAAD Media Award honoree Kathy Griffin returned with her reality series *My Life on the D-List*. New series *The Fashion Show* featured numerous gay contestants and openly gay judge Isaac Mizrahi. The second season of *Make Me a Supermodel* featured lesbian supermodel Jenny Shimizu as a judge, as well as two gay models. *Millionaire Matchmaker* Patti Stanger arranged a date for a gay millionaire and *Top Chef* continued to include gay, lesbian and bisexual contestants. The network is adding another LGBT-inclusive reality series to its line up this summer with *Miami Social*.

- **Comedy Central:** MTV-owned Comedy Central is known for its edgier approach to comedy and does not hold back in its discussion of LGBT issues or its depiction of LGBT characters. Satirical "fake" news programs *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* and *The Colbert Report* can always be counted on to offer humorously supportive takes on topics pertinent to the LGBT community, including Prop 8 and "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." GLAAD Media Award nominated comedy *The Sarah Silverman Program* features couple Brian and Steve, and *Reno 911!* includes openly gay Lieutenant Dangle.

- **here!:** Premium subscription channel and video on demand service here! is directed at an LGBT audience. New episodes of gay vampire series *The Lair* continued to air and a fourth season of supernatural soap *Dante's Cove* went into production earlier this year. here! Network also aired a number of original LGBT movies, including the



latest installments in the GLAAD Media Award-nominated Donald Strachey detective series, *Ice Blues* and *On the Other Hand, Death*.

- **Logo:** One of MTV's networks, Logo can be found on basic cable and airs original and acquired content targeting the LGBT community. *RuPaul's Drag Race* was a breakout hit earlier this year, becoming the most watched series in the network's four year history. In the past season, Logo also premiered *The Cho Show*, featuring bisexual comedian Margaret Cho, and original scripted series *Sordid Lives*. New reality series *Shirts & Skins* was nominated for a GLAAD Media Award. Logo also offers frequent re-airings of acquired series such as *Queer as Folk*, *The L Word*, and *The Complete Tales of the City*.

- **The N:** A Viacom owned network, The N is targeted at a teen and young adult audience. The network airs a large variety of original programs and has fairly and accurately represented the lives of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning characters on shows like *Degrassi: The Next Generation*. Throughout its history the show has written in several gay and lesbian supporting characters. Three

time GLAAD Media Award-nominated series *South of Nowhere*, about a teenage lesbian making her way in Los Angeles, ended its run in late 2008.

- **Sundance Channel:** Sundance Channel, an extension of Robert Redford's Sundance Institute, is primarily devoted to airing independent films and documentaries, but also airs original series and overseas imports. *The Life and Times of Vivienne Vyle*, which originally aired on Britain's BBC Two, stars Jennifer Saunders as a newly famous talk show host. The show featured Vivienne's gay husband and her transgender PR advisor. Sundance Channel also aired the first three seasons of UK comedy *Shameless*, which included gay teenager Ian and his boyfriend Kash. Season 4, which is currently airing, introduces additional gay characters.

Words and Images  
MATTER

# GLAAD's MEDIA PROGRAMS TEAM

The Media Programs Team at the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation works with media professionals and community leaders to ensure that coverage of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community is fair, accurate and inclusive. Every day, GLAAD staff members work with media professionals by pitching story ideas, identifying potential spokespeople and providing background information and terminology suggestions. In addition, GLAAD staff travel throughout the country to conduct spokesperson trainings with community members while supporting national, statewide and local organizations on the ground to develop messages, create media plans and support day-to-day media communications. We work to ensure that the images of the LGBT community that appear on the evening news, on the front page of the newspaper and in the local movie theater reflect the diversity of our community. From our work in local communities to our initiatives around media coverage of young adults, sports and faith issues, GLAAD's Media Programs Team seeks to change hearts and minds by amplifying the voices of our community in the media.

## Entertainment Media Team

GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team not only works with television and film as a resource to encourage fair, accurate and inclusive representation of LGBT people, but also combats issues of defamation in these industries. This process is unique to each individual project, but may involve reading scripts, viewing rough cuts, pitching stories, consulting with writers and producers, or working with talent to better inform them about portraying LGBT characters. GLAAD also promotes LGBT-inclusive projects through the entertainment section of [glaadBLOG.org](http://glaadBLOG.org) and the weekly LGBT TV listings, *TV Gayed*. Contact us at [entertainment@glaad.org](mailto:entertainment@glaad.org).

## Rashad Robinson

### Senior Director of Media Programs

Rashad Robinson oversees GLAAD's advocacy and programmatic work, leading thirty staff members, consultants and fellows in New York and Los Angeles. During his tenure, Rashad has overseen the implementation of four new programs: Sports Media; Young Adult Media; Religion, Faith & Values; and Digital & Online Media. Rashad has also increased the organization's presence and work in local and regional communities and worked with staff to overhaul the organization's signature Media Essentials Training Curriculum. During his tenure the Media

Programs team has experienced tremendous success with the development of large scale Public Service Ad Campaigns that have been widely broadcast on TV and online, the creation of a host of media resources for journalists and local activists and increased visibility in combating media defamation of the LGBT community locally and nationally. Before joining GLAAD, Rashad served as National Communications Director for the Right to Vote Campaign and served as National Field Director with the Center for Voting and Democracy.

## Jonathan Rosales

### Entertainment Media Manager

Jonathan Rosales monitors and evaluates LGBT images in television and film, tracking the development of characters and storylines to serve as a resource to journalists and the entertainment industry. He is the lead researcher and writer on the annual *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index* and *Where We Are on TV*. He is also a contributor to [glaadBLOG.org](http://glaadBLOG.org), regularly updating the entertainment section. Jonathan holds degrees in gender studies and political science from the University of Southern California and has been at GLAAD since 2005, serving first as the Media Awards Intern and then as the Media Awards Communications Associate before moving into his current role.

## Callan Koenig

### Entertainment Media & Advertising Fellow

Callan Koenig researches and monitors LGBT content and images in television programming in her role as the principle author of GLAAD's weekly guide to LGBT television, *TV Gayed*, which can be read at [glaad.org](http://glaad.org) and [glaadBLOG.org](http://glaadBLOG.org). Callan served as a contributing researcher and writer on the GLAAD Network Responsibility Index. She is also the primary researcher and curator of GLAAD's Advertising Media Program. Callan holds a degree in theatre and marketing from Emerson College.

## Brian McGough

### Entertainment Media Intern

Brian McGough has joined GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team over the summer, assisting with research and writing for the GLAAD Network Responsibility Index and working on other varied tasks two days a week. In August, Brian will return to Massachusetts for the final year of his studies in business administration, marketing and law at Boston University's School of Management.

**22 stars asked viewers to “Be an Ally & a Friend.”  
Millions of homes have been reached because of the  
generosity of networks and local affiliates.**



**To the talent who participated, Red Thread Productions and the  
broadcasters who made it possible, we thank you.**

**[www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)**



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# Words and Images MATTER

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is dedicated to promoting and ensuring fair, accurate and inclusive representation of people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

[www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)

**GLAAD** Network Responsibility Index 2008-2009