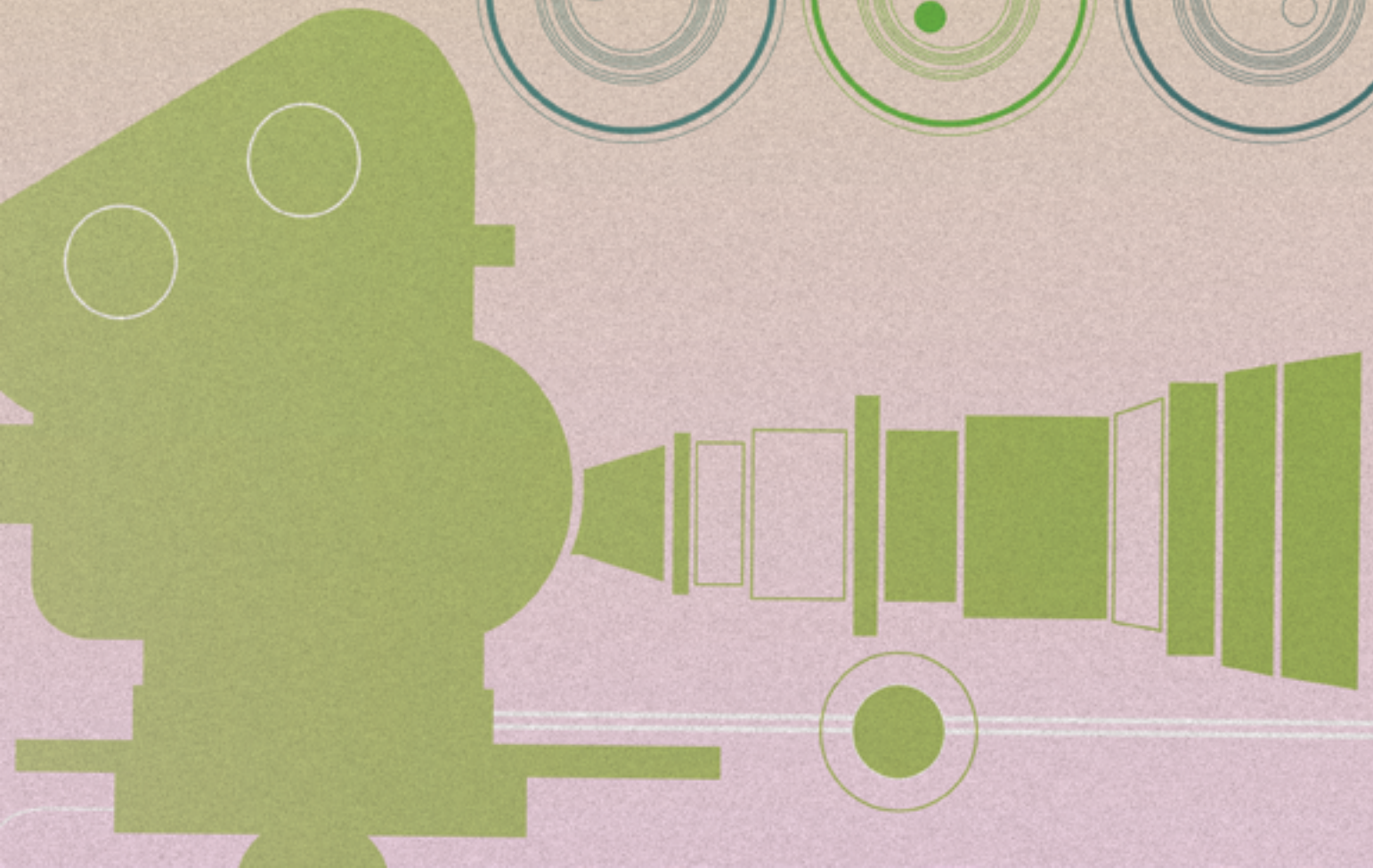


# 2013 STUDIO RESPONSIBILITY INDEX



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## 2013 STUDIO RESPONSIBILITY INDEX

For nearly two decades, GLAAD has carefully tracked the presence of LGBT people and characters on television and remained a constant advocate for more inclusive programming from the major networks. This has increasingly been achieved through quantified research, which often paints the most detailed picture of where the major networks stand when it comes to LGBT-inclusivity in their programming. With GLAAD's annual *Network Responsibility Index* and *Where We Are on TV* report, GLAAD provides facts and figures to shape both the public conversation and our staff's programmatic discussions and meetings with networks. As a result of these reports, the industry has improved the quantity and quality of diversity on TV.

For years LGBT characters were few and far between on TV, with independent cinema often being the only place the LGBT community could see their stories being told. However, a significant shift has happened in the last decade. As television has become increasingly inclusive – including a record high percentage of LGBT characters in the 2012-2013 broadcast season – the film industry is lagging behind. Though indie film still produces some of the most groundbreaking LGBT stories, major film studios appear reluctant to include LGBT characters in significant roles or franchises.

This year, GLAAD has adapted our existing television research methodology to take a closer look at Hollywood's film industry. This report illuminates the current state of LGBT representation in the mainstream film industry by examining our community's onscreen presence in the 2012 release slates of Hollywood's six largest film studios: 20th Century Fox, Paramount Pictures, Sony Columbia, Universal Pictures, The Walt Disney Studios, and Warner Brothers.



*Fun Size*, Paramount Pictures



*Pitch Perfect*, Universal Pictures

It might be asked why it's important that mainstream cinema become more inclusive, when the rest of the media landscape appears to be evolving so rapidly. Scripted television now rivals film in terms of quality and scope, and LGBT characters appear with growing frequency on both broadcast and cable networks. What's more, digital distribution has made LGBT-inclusive film and television accessible to a much wider audience than ever before. Some of us might well remember the days when finding a gay-themed film meant nervously hunting through video stores for solitary copies. Now literally anyone can access hundreds of LGBT titles at the push of a button through computers, tablets, game systems, and smart phones.

Yet the truth is that the cineplex still maintains a very significant and powerful role in American life, and it's one that remains dominated by the major studios. In 2012, 76.4% of the films released theatrically were released by the six studios tracked in this report. Going to the movies is part of the American mythos and identity, and the stories they tell can have a deep and lasting effect on our cultural psyche. When minority characters are marginalized or made invisible within these films, it not only reminds those being underrepresented that their social position is less than, but also makes it more difficult for the majority to see them as part of that film's reality as well as a valid part of our own.

The movies we make are also some of our most wide-reaching cultural exports; accessible and marketed to nearly every person in the United States, but also to billions more overseas. They carry our values with them, even if just in subtext, which is why some of the most restrictive nations ban Hollywood films outright for fear that they will affect a populace's thinking if they watch them. Meanwhile, other nations (and some of the same) are actively enforcing or attempting to pass laws censoring any media that even acknowledges the existence of LGBT people. It's important that Hollywood not be indirectly complicit in similar self-censorship, but we must also emphasize the tremendous potential for good that these films can have. In places where LGBT people must still argue for their right to exist, a popular film displaying even casual acceptance of an LGBT character can help foster understanding and shift public opinion.

Hollywood has long produced what are undoubtedly some of the most memorable and celebrated shared media experiences of our society. The movies reflect the world we live in, while also showing us where we came from and the endless possibilities for where we could end up. It's important that Hollywood acknowledges that LGBT people are an important part of our society's past, present, and future through the stories that they tell.

## METHODOLOGY

For this report, GLAAD focused its quantitative analysis on the six film studios that had the highest theatrical grosses from films released in 2012, as reported by the box office database, Box Office Mojo. Those six studios were 20th Century Fox, Paramount Pictures, Sony Columbia, Universal Pictures, The Walt Disney Studios, and Warner Brothers. These are often collectively referred to as the “Big Six” by the entertainment industry and press.



*Cloud Atlas*, Warner Brothers Pictures

The report examined films that were released theatrically during the 2012 calendar year (January 1 to December 31), and under the official studio banners and imprints. Films released by officially separate studio divisions (such as Fox Searchlight) are acknowledged, but were not part of the final tally. These distinctions were informed in part by the box office reporting of Box Office Mojo and other entertainment industry databases. The total number of films that fall within the research parameters is 101.

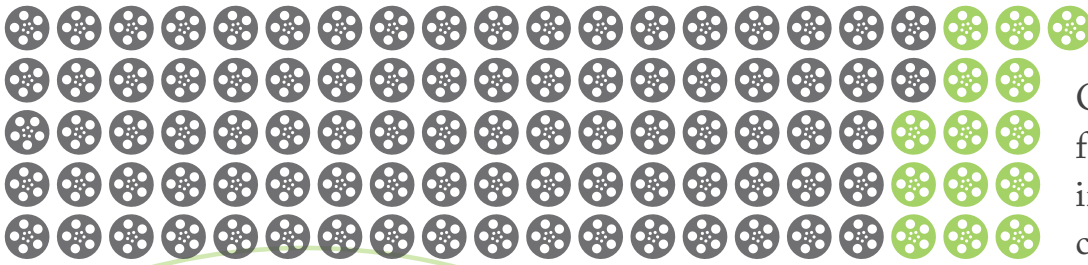
Each film was researched and reviewed for the presence of LGBT characters. The total number of LGBT characters was recorded for each film, as well as the characters’ race/ethnicity, sexual orientation/gender identity, and identification as either a major or minor character (as determined by screen time and importance to the plot).

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

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

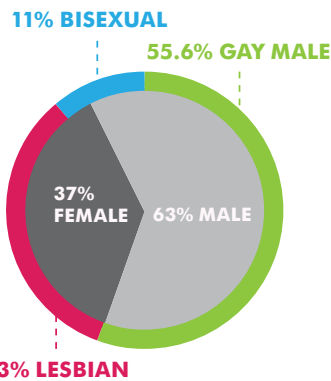


# OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS



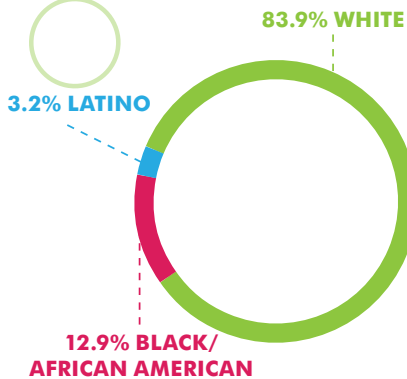
Out of the 101 releases from the major studios in 2012, 14 of them contained characters identified as either lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

## BREAKDOWN OF LGBT REPRESENTATION



More than half of those inclusive films (55.6%) featured gay male characters, while another 33% featured lesbian characters and 11% contained bisexual characters.

Male LGBT characters outnumbered female characters 63% to 37%.



Of the 31 different characters counted (some of whom were onscreen for no more than a few seconds), 26 were white (83.9%) while only 4 were Black/African American (12.9%) and 1 was Latino (3.2%).

There were no Asian-Pacific Islander or recognizably multi-racial LGBT characters counted.

Only 4 films out of 101 (4%) contained any LGBT characters that might be considered “major” as opposed to “minor.” That is, they appeared in more than just a few scenes and had a substantial role in the film’s story.



The most common place to find LGBT characters in the major studios’ 2012 releases were in comedies, where 9 of the 24 comedies released (37.5%) were inclusive. By comparison, 34 genre films (action, sci-fi, fantasy, etc) made up the majority of the 2012 releases, though only 3 (8.8%) of those contained any LGBT characters. Additionally, only 1 of 21 dramas (4.7%) and 1 of 4 documentaries (25%) were inclusive, while there were no LGBT characters in any animated or family-oriented films from the Big Six.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Genre films like comic-book adaptations and action franchises are where major studios seem to commit the majority of their capital and promotional efforts these days, but they remain very reluctant to include LGBT characters in them. Amongst the three inclusive genre films counted by GLAAD, one (*Cloud Atlas*) was initially developed outside the studio system and another (*The Avengers*) included an appearance by out gay news anchor Thomas Roberts that was so brief it was likely missed by many viewers. Until LGBT characters are depicted in these films in a substantial way with more regularity, there will remain the appearance of purposeful bias on the studios' part.
- As mentioned, LGBT characters need to not only appear with greater regularity in a range of film genres, but also in more substantial roles. Arguably the most prominent example of this was the male antagonist from the Bond film, *Skyfall*, who was strongly suggested to be bisexual. While it's good to see an LGBT character in such a high-profile role in a major franchise, depicting a bisexual person as villainous is an unfortunate cinematic tradition, and raises the question of whether a major studio would ever depict a male protagonist of an action franchise as anything other than straight.
- In the absence of substantial roles for LGBT characters, filmmakers should at the very least include them in the world their film is depicting. Even when LGBT people or couples are simply part of a larger ensemble or featured in a brief, casual manner, the audience is reminded that those characters are a part of the film's world, and by extension, our own; it creates a more detailed and accurate reflection.
- As it does in many other areas of narrative-based entertainment, diversity continues to be an area in which the entertainment industry needs to improve. Not only should there be more LGBT people depicted on screen, but those depictions shouldn't be uniform in race, gender, socio-economic background, religion, or even age.
- For all the great improvements there has been in LGBT characters being depicted on television, transgender representations remain at least 20 years behind the curve. This is especially true in film, where transgender characters are rare even in independent cinema, much less major Hollywood productions. Not only does this lack of transgender images reinforce the marginalization of the trans community, it must also be seen as a missed opportunity by studios and screenwriters to tell fresh stories and better flesh out the worlds they create. GLAAD has observed a noticeable increase in media coverage of the transgender community in recent years, demonstrating that the public interest is there.



*Skyfall*, Sony Columbia

## A CHALLENGE TO THE STUDIOS: THE VITO RUSSO TEST

There was a time when a major Hollywood studio would have been seen as “provocative” or “brave” for simply including an LGBT character in one of their releases, much less featuring one in a major role. But a great deal has changed in our culture in even the few short years since *Brokeback Mountain* proved to be a surprise commercial hit. A majority of the country now supports full marriage equality for same-sex couples, which has paved the way for tremendous legislative victories. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual service members can now serve openly in the U.S. armed forces, and anti-discrimination laws protecting the LGBT community are being passed all over the country. But if the major Hollywood studios want a real barometer of how much has changed in our society and how much catching up they have to do, they need only look at what’s become one of the greatest threats to their viability: television.



*The Five-Year Engagement*, Universal Pictures

While there may be room for improvement in a few key areas, the truth is that LGBT characters are more present than ever on our nation’s airwaves. Not only have they increased in number, but prominence as well. Couples like *Modern Family*’s Mitch and Cam or *Grey’s Anatomy*’s Callie and Arizona are heavily featured on TV programs whose weekly ratings the big film studios would love to see translated into ticket sales at the cinema instead. The “novelty” of these characters being LGBT has long since passed, and now they’re simply unique personalities making up part of unique character ensembles. It’s high time that the major film studios follow suit in their own productions.

Taking inspiration from the “Bechdel Test,” which examines the way female characters are portrayed and situated within a narrative, GLAAD developed its own set of criteria to analyze how LGBT characters are included within a film. “The Vito Russo Test” takes its names from celebrated film historian and GLAAD co-founder Vito Russo, whose book *The Celluloid Closet* remains a foundational analysis of LGBT portrayals in Hollywood film. For filmmakers looking to include LGBT people in their stories, these criteria can help guide them to create more multidimensional characters. This test also represents a standard GLAAD would like to see a greater number of mainstream Hollywood films reach in the future. To pass the “Russo Test”, the following must be true:

### THE VITO RUSSO TEST

1. The film contains a character that is identifiably lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. That character must not be solely or predominantly defined by their sexual orientation or gender identity. I.E. they are made up of the same sort of unique character traits commonly used to differentiate straight characters from one another.
2. The LGBT character must be tied into the plot in such a way that their removal would have a significant effect. Meaning they are not there to simply provide colorful commentary, paint urban authenticity, or (perhaps most commonly) set up a punchline. The character should matter.
- 3.

Though these criteria are regularly met on television, less than half (6) of the 14 major studio films GLAAD counted LGBT characters in managed to pass the Russo Test. The LGBT community may be increasingly well represented on television, but clearly there is a lot of work remaining in Hollywood film. With this report and its future editions, GLAAD will track their progress.





## 20TH CENTURY FOX

**2012 RATING: FAILING**

**15                      0                      0%                      \$936M**

Films released  
theatrically in 2012  
under studio &  
official imprints

Total number of  
LGBT-inclusive films

Percent of  
LGBT character  
appearances

Gross box office revenue  
of films tracked in 2012

In 1935, the Fox Film Corporation (founded by producer William Fox in 1915) merged with Twentieth Century Pictures (founded in 1933) to form 20th Century Fox. It was in the mid-1980s that Rupert Murdoch bought out the studio, making it a subsidiary of News Corporation, and now 21st Century Fox. Among Fox's most famous films are early blockbuster franchises like *Star Wars*, *Alien* and *Die Hard*.

Aside from Walt Disney Studios, 20th Century Fox has one of the slightest track records when it comes to inclusive films, but it includes a few standouts in its repertoire. *Myra Breckinridge* (1970) and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) contain some of the earliest significant transgender characters, though both depictions are arguably more sensationalized than truthful. In 1982 the studio released the drama *Making Love*, which was one of the first (and only) realistically depicted gay love stories ever made by a major studio. Other inclusive films they've released over the years include *Silkwood* (1983), *The Object of My Affection* (1998) and *The Family Stone* (2005). Sister company Fox Searchlight has released more recent inclusive classics such as *Boys Don't Cry* (1999) and *Kinsey* (2004).

In 2012, 20th Century Fox released 15 films, **none of which included appearances by LGBT people.**

The sci-fi comedy *The Watch* contained a joke in which one of the male characters assumes he is being hit on by a male neighbor, who turns out to be an orgy enthusiast instead. The characters also joke about being forced to have sex with another man.



### LOOKING FORWARD

News Corp is known for having a very poor track record when it comes to covering LGBT stories, and it's a shame that 20th Century Fox's films seem to demonstrate a similar reluctance to tell LGBT stories more than once or twice a decade. The situation is better on the Fox Broadcasting Network, where highly rated inclusive shows like *Glee* have helped Fox attract a younger audience. They should keep that in mind for their film division as well.



# PARAMOUNT PICTURES

**2012 RATING: ADEQUATE**

**14**

**3**

**21.4%**

**\$760M**

Films released  
theatrically in 2012  
under studio &  
official imprints

Total number of  
LGBT-inclusive films

Percent of  
LGBT character  
appearances

Gross box office revenue  
of films tracked in 2012

Established in the earliest days of the American film industry, Paramount Pictures traces its lineage all the way back to 1912 and the founding of the Famous Players Film Company, which was one of three companies that would merge in 1916 and eventually become Paramount. In recent years, many of its most recognizable releases have been big-budget, mass appeal franchises including *Star Trek*, *Transformers*, and *Mission Impossible*.

If one only look at Paramount Pictures' most recent crop of films, it may not appear that the studio is particularly fond of taking risks, but that hasn't always been the case. Starting in the mid-nineties, Paramount released a string of films that were either LGBT-themed or LGBT-inclusive, including *Home for the Holidays* (1995), *Clueless* (1995), *The Brady Bunch Movie* (1995), *Brain Candy* (1996), *Kiss Me Guido* (1997), *Election* (1999), *The Talented Mister Ripley* (1999), and *The Next Best Thing* (2000).

In 1997 the studio partnered with Scott Rudin Productions to release the mass-appeal gay-themed comedy *In and Out*, which garnered a great deal of publicity for a kiss between lead Kevin Kline and love interest Tom Selleck, and became a box office hit. In fact, *In and Out* along with fellow Paramount releases *Mr. Ripley* and *The Hours* (2002) are 3 of the top 10 highest grossing gay or lesbian themed films in the United States.



In 2012, Paramount Pictures released 14 films (some in partnership with Dreamworks), of which 3 contained appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 21.4%. **Only one of these films passed the Russo Test.**



**KATY PERRY: PART OF ME**

Singer-songwriter Katy Perry was the latest pop act to release a concert documentary last year, and it included several out individuals. In addition to cameo-length appearances by talk show host Ellen DeGeneres and singer Jessie J, the film also included appearances by Katie’s gay stylist and makeup artist.



**A THOUSAND WORDS**

The Eddie Murphy comedy about a man who will die after saying one thousand more words, included a daycare scene that featured a biracial gay couple among various other parents, and two scenes featuring a man in a hotel who initially mistakes Murphy for a prospective “date.” The latter character was included exclusively as a punchline.

**THE DICTATOR**

The Sascha Baron Cohen comedy *The Dictator* contained a character who boasted that he paid male celebrities for sexual favors, but said it was purely a power trip for him and that he wasn’t gay. The film also featured several jokes about a female character’s gender identity.

**FUN SIZE**



This teen comedy co-produced by Nickelodeon Films probably had the most substantive LGBT content of any Paramount releases this year, though it was also on the brief side. In the film, main character Wren comes to realize that she has feelings for an awkward nerd named Roosevelt, whose loving

parents are a hippy-lesbian couple. The stereotype of the new-age lesbian parents as a source of humor has become something of a comedy archetype unfortunately, but at least the joke here doesn’t lie in the couple’s sexual orientation. Though they only appear in two scenes, they had an actual role to play in the film’s plot and left more of an impression than any of the other LGBT people and characters previously cited.



**LOOKING FORWARD**

It’s unfortunate that the most substantive LGBT impression in a Paramount film last year was a couple confined to two short scenes, but it’s more than some other major studios can boast. As noted earlier, there was a time when the studio was more consistently inclusive, particularly in some of their most well-known comedies which have featured significant gay characters. It would be good to see that continued in future films; perhaps even featuring an LGBT character in a lead role.





# SONY COLUMBIA

**2012 RATING: ADEQUATE**

**19                      4                      21.1%                      \$1.7B**

Films released  
theatrically in 2012  
under studio &  
official imprints

Total number of  
LGBT-inclusive films

Percent of  
LGBT character  
appearances

Gross box office revenue  
of films tracked in 2012

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

By and large, Sony Columbia has never had the most impressive track record when it comes to LGBT inclusive films. The 1962 political thriller *Advise and Consent* did contain a subplot about a senate chairman who is blackmailed over a past affair with a man (and subsequently commits suicide), but it's hardly held up as a high point in the LGBT cinematic canon. Neither was 1992's *Basic Instinct* from Tri-Star Pictures, which was decried by LGBT groups for its defamatory portrayal of lesbian and bisexual women. On a more positive note, Tri-Star Pictures also released popular inclusive films like *Philadelphia* (1993), *Threesome* (1994), and *As Good as it Gets* (1997). In more recent years, parent company Sony Columbia has also released *Rent* (2005) and *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* (2011), but it has long remained rare to see a substantial LGBT character in one of their films.

In 2012, Sony Columbia released 19 films of which 4 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 21.1%. **Only one of these films passed the Russo Test.**

**SKYFALL**



The most substantial LGBT role in a Sony Columbia film last year was that of the villainous mastermind Silva in the latest James Bond film, *Skyfall*. In a heavily reported-on scene, Silva overtly suggests that he is bisexual while interrogating Bond, though this doesn't factor into the film's plot or Silva's actions beyond this point. While this is far and away one of the most high-profile LGBT film roles of the year, it's unfortunate that it also plays into some old cinematic clichés of bisexual people being duplicitous or unbalanced, not to mention a bit of possible effemiphobia per Javier Bardem's performance. With no well-known bisexual heroes to speak of in the Hollywood canon, characters like this remain the only impression many audience members have.

**21 JUMP STREET**



The latest film remake of an old television show, *21 Jump Street* featured two inept police officers going undercover in a high school to uncover a drug ring. In a reveal meant to demonstrate how progressively-minded modern high-schoolers are, one of the most popular and well accepted kids, Juario, is depicted as openly gay. Though his sexuality isn't played for a laugh, ultimately he only appears in a supporting capacity in a small handful of scenes and has no bearing on the plot outside of what he symbolizes.

**THINK LIKE A MAN**

Loosely based on a book by Steve Harvey, the heterosexual relationship comedy *Think Like a Man* unfortunately relies on quite a few "gay" jokes throughout. Male characters are referred to as "gay" for things like playing the violin or buying a gift for their mother, while at least one unattached female character is speculated to be a lesbian for not having a male significant other. The film also contains a scene in which a male character designed to read as gay through his speech, mannerisms, and outfit appears simply to serve a visual punch line. All in all, the film's gay content is a disappointing throwback.



**THAT'S MY BOY**



The Adam Sandler comedy *That's My Boy* opens with a one-off joke in a flashback sequence in which one of the main character's childhood friends proclaims that he's "into guys" before promptly vanishing for the remainder of the film. The words "homos" and "faggot" are later used as humorous insults, and the film includes a shot of two female exotic dancers making out with each other.



**LOOKING FORWARD**

Sony Columbia releases often seem to encapsulate what many would consider the classic "Hollywood" model; big name directors working with big name actors on stories that are familiar and pleasing to a mass audience, so it's not surprising that LGBT content has historically been scarce. These are precisely the type of films that need to better reflect the inclusive world-view held by younger generations who need to keep buying tickets if the model is to stay afloat. *Skyfall* and *21 Jump Street* may actually be examples of that evolution.



# UNIVERSAL

## UNIVERSAL PICTURES

**2012 RATING: ADEQUATE**

<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>\$1.3B</b>
Films released theatrically in 2012 under studio & official imprints	Total number of LGBT-inclusive films	Percent of LGBT character appearances	Gross box office revenue of films tracked in 2012

Of the “Big Six” film studios, Universal Pictures is the oldest, having been officially founded in 1912. In 2004, Universal Studios merged with NBC becoming NBC Universal, which was itself acquired by Comcast starting in 2009. Having long focused on mass appeal films, many of Universal’s most classic films came from collaborations with director Steven Spielberg, and include *Jaws*, *E.T.*, *Jurassic Park*, and *Schindler’s List*.

Because of that focus on mass appeal, perhaps it’s not surprising that it wasn’t until the 1990s that any LGBT content whatsoever began showing up in Universal films. Unfortunately the 1991 adaptation of *Fried Green Tomatoes* removed nearly all traces of the novel’s lesbian content, but the 1994 comedic drama *Reality Bites* did feature a prominent gay character. Universal’s other inclusive films have also been a mixture of highs and lows, and include *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar* (1995), *Mulholland Drive* (2001), *I Now Pronounce you Chuck and Larry* (2007), *Bruno* (2009), and *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* (2010). By comparison, sister company Focus Features has released some of the most important and successful LGBT inclusive films of recent years, such as *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), *Milk* (2008), and *The Kids are All Right* (2010).



In 2012, Universal released 16 films of which 4 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 25%. **Two of these films also passed the Russo Test.**

**PITCH PERFECT**



This comedy set amongst the world of competitive collegiate acapella singing included an out lesbian among the group of girls followed by the film as they compete. Cynthia Rose’s storyline is largely confined to the group plot, but she has the distinction of being one of the only lesbians of color on screen last year, much less in a major studio release. This further demonstrates how in need of greater ethnic diversity LGBT representations in mainstream film remain.

**THE FIVE-YEAR ENGAGEMENT**

Among the supporting cast of this comedy about a straight couple’s prolonged route to the altar is lesbian chef Sally, who is the boss of the male lead. Though her role was limited to just a few scenes, the film established Sally as a unique and humorous character defined by traits beyond her sexual orientation and eventually depicted her in a relationship with another woman. For such a minor character, her inclusion was well handled.



**AMERICAN REUNION**



The *American Pie* series hasn’t aimed very high when it came to LGBT humor in the past, and the latest in the series includes some content that crosses over into stereotype-based humor, though there were some positive moments as well. In a later scene, the returning character of Jessica comes out as a lesbian and introduces her girlfriend, Ingrid, while in another set of scenes, the traditionally homophobic Stifler is surprised to learn that several of his old lacrosse teammates are gay (two of whom are engaged).

**TED**

Seth MacFarlane’s track record when it comes to LGBT representations in his television shows (including *Family Guy* and *The Cleveland Show*) has been criticized by many in the community, so it’s unfortunately not surprising that *Ted* has some offensive material, including the words “gay” and “homos” being used in a derogatory manner. Also in the film, a macho male character comes out over the course of a few brief scenes, ultimately ending up with a boyfriend. Though there’s nothing egregious about his depiction, it appears that the filmmakers thought the sight of actor Patrick Warburton simply holding hands with and kissing a man (played by Ryan Reynolds) was enough to elicit laughter from the audience.

▶	<b>LOOKING FORWARD</b>
	<p>All the inclusive Universal films released this year would be considered comedies, which speaks to the greater trend of LGBT characters still being rather limited in the types of films in which they appear. It’s high past time that action, sci-fi, and fantasy films became more inclusive, and Universal certainly produces their fair share in those genres.</p>



# THE WALT DISNEY STUDIOS

**2012 RATING: FAILING**

<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>\$1.5B</b>
<small>Films released theatrically in 2012 under studio &amp; official imprints</small>	<small>Total number of LGBT-inclusive films</small>	<small>Percent of LGBT character appearances</small>	<small>Gross box office revenue of films tracked in 2012</small>

Of the six largest U.S. film studios, Walt Disney Pictures is probably the most easily recognizable, with a well-defined brand identity that it has exported on an international scale. Certainly most Americans could name several Disney titles if asked, with many of them being films that have left a lasting impression since childhood. In fact since the first Disney feature film in 1937 (*Snow White*), entertainment for children and families has been a primary focus that continues to this day.

Many of Disney’s most famous distribution imprints are best known for their animated features, including Walt Disney Animation Studios, Pixar Animation Studios, and the Japan-based Studio Ghibli, for which Disney holds U.S. and international distribution rights. On the live action side, the imprints include Walt Disney Pictures, Disneynature, Lucasfilm (best known for the *Star Wars* saga), and Touchstone Pictures. They also recently acquired Marvel Studios, with whom they released the summer blockbuster *The Avengers* earlier this year. Walt Disney Studios has the weakest record when it comes to LGBT-inclusive films of those studios tracked in this report, with the animated divisions having no content to speak of. Touchstone Pictures however, has released a small handful of films with LGBT characters over the years, including the British comedic drama *Kinky Boots* (2006), Tim Burton’s biopic of cross-dressing director *Ed Wood* (1994), and romantic comedies *Sweet Home Alabama* (2002) and *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003). Perhaps most impressively, in 1985 Lucasfilm produced the film *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters*, which wove together passages from gay Japanese writer Yukio Mishima’s autobiography with parts of his fictional novels, including his secret love for a peer at school. The film was never officially released in Japan following conservative protests over its portrayal of Mishima as a gay man. It was distributed in the U.S. by Warner Brothers.

## THE WALT DISNEY STUDIOS

In 2012, Disney released 13 films under the aforementioned imprints (including several 3D rereleases), of which only one contained an appearance by an LGBT person, amounting to 7.7%. **This film did not pass the Russo Test.**



### THE AVENGERS

The only Disney film that had any detectable LGBT content this year was also the highest grossing U.S. film this year. *The Avengers* broke worldwide box office records, and included a very brief appearance (amounting to seconds) by out MSNBC anchor Thomas Roberts playing himself while reporting on an alien invasion. Roberts has a rising profile as an openly gay man whose recent wedding received national press attention which makes this significant enough to warrant mentioning, though it still requires the audience to know who he is. It qualifies as a cameo at best, and could be easily missed by many viewers.



### LOOKING FORWARD

As recent Oscar nominee *ParaNorman* demonstrated, LGBT people appearing in family oriented films (animated or otherwise) is not the far-off notion it once was. Studios like Disney and Pixar will need to start considering the diversity of the audience watching their films if they want to keep up with the times, and LGBT people and families are very much a part of that audience.

Disney's recent acquisition of Marvel Studios might provide a perfect opportunity for this if they finally greenlight the long awaited screen adaptation of Marvel Comics' *The Runaways*. Among its core cast of super-powered teenagers is the lesbian character Karolina Dean. Additionally, the upcoming *Guardians of the Galaxy* film could include the bisexual telepath Moondragon and lesbian warrior Phyla-Vell; both of whom have had major roles in the film's source material.





# WARNER BROTHERS

**2012 RATING: ADEQUATE**

<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>\$1.5B</b>
Films released theatrically in 2012 under studio & official imprints	Total number of LGBT-inclusive films	Percent of LGBT character appearances	Gross box office revenue of films tracked in 2012

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

One of Warner Brothers' most iconic films also contains one of the earliest and most celebrated gay-coded characters in mainstream American cinema; Sal Mineo's tragic Plato in 1955's *Rebel Without a Cause*. Other notable inclusive films released by Warner Brothers over the years include *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), *The Color Purple* (1985), *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (1997). Notably, nearly every one of those films was based on source material that included LGBT characters to begin with. More recently, Warner Brothers has also released inclusive films like *Alexander* (2004), *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (2005), *V For Vendetta* (2005), and *J. Edgar* (2011).

## WARNER BROTHERS

In 2012, Warner Brothers released 24 films of which 2 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 8.3%. **Both of these films passed the Russo Test.**



### CLOUD ATLAS

*Cloud Atlas* has the distinction of being one of the most expensive independent films of all time, but Warner Brothers handled promotion and distribution of the film. It was also one of the most inclusive big budget films of last year, prominently featuring a gay love story that was central to one of the film's intertwining plots. The film was co-written and directed by the Wachowski siblings, one of whom (Lana Wachowski) also came out as transgender recently, instantly making her one of the most famous trans people in the world.

### ROCK OF AGES



Director Adam Shankman helmed the film adaptation of the stage musical *Rock of Ages* last year, which featured club owner Dennis Dupree and his rock club colleague Lonny. Portrayed by comedic actors Alec Baldwin and Russell Brand respectively, the characters eventually realize they are in love with one another with a duet of “I Can’t Fight This Feeling Anymore.” Though the romance is played somewhat for laughs, it’s also in keeping with the film’s campy tone.



### LOOKING FORWARD

Among the big studio releases, *Cloud Atlas* and *Rock of Ages* contained the most significant gay characters seen in 2012, and Warner Brothers deserves credit for that (even if one of them started life as an independent production). We hope they will continue to make such inclusivity a standing consideration in their future films, with one possible exception. On the horizon for 2014 is *300: Rise of an Empire*; a prequel to the historical action epic *300* which controversially portrayed the Persian King Xerxes as a lecherous and effeminate presence to contrast the macho, heterosexual protagonists. Hopefully the prequel won’t indulge in the exploitative treatment of LGBT content that its predecessor did.

## ADDITIONAL FILM DISTRIBUTORS

### FOCUS FEATURES

Today a subsidiary of Universal Pictures, Focus Features was established in 2002 when USA Films, Universal Focus and Good Machine combined into one company. Focus Features produces and distributes its own features as well as distributing foreign films, and has established an impressive track record of critically acclaimed and popular LGBT-inclusive films, including *The Kids are All Right*, *Pariah*, and *Milk*. Its most successful LGBT-inclusive release to date is the 2006 Academy Award-winning drama *Brokeback Mountain*, about the romantic relationship between two men in Wyoming in the 1960s. Last year, Focus Features released *ParaNorman* which is believed to be the first wide release PG-rated animated film to include a major LGBT character. Also released by Focus Features last year was *For a Good Time, Call...* which features Justin Long as the gay best friend of two girls who begin operating a phone sex line.

### FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

Fox Searchlight Pictures, created in 1994, is a subsidiary of 20th Century Fox that specializes in the release and distribution of independent and foreign films in the United States as well as horror films and dramedies. Fox Searchlight Pictures is responsible for the release of several LGBT-inclusive and Academy Award winning and nominated films, including *Black Swan* and the Academy Award-winning film about the murder of transgender man Brandon Teena, *Boys Don't Cry*. Last year they released the critically acclaimed drama *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, about a group of British retirees moving to India, which included a gay man searching for his lost love.

### IFC FILMS AND SUNDANCE SELECTS

Under the AMC Networks umbrella, IFC Films distributes independent films and documentaries. One of its most recognizable titles is the critically acclaimed *Transamerica* (which was co-released with The Weinstein Company) in which Felicity Huffman portrays a trans woman travelling cross-country with the son she never knew she had; a role for which she was nominated for an Academy Award. In 2012, IFC Films released *Your Sister's Sister*, a dramedy about a lesbian who tries to have a baby with her sister's best friend. Last year IFC Films also released *About Cherry* about a young woman becoming involved with a lesbian adult film director. Another AMC Networks property, Sundance Selects focuses on the distribution of independent films, documentaries and foreign films. One of its most successful and critically acclaimed films came in 2011 with the release of *Weekend*, a drama about two men who begin a relationship shortly before one of them has to leave the country. Last year, Sundance Selects had the highest number, among all distributors, of inclusive films released in theaters. *Beloved* is a French film about the romantic relationship between a gay man and a woman. *Young and Wild* recounts the story of a young bisexual woman in Chile who is torn between her interest in sex and her conservative upbringing. Set in the 1940s, *On the Road* follows a group of friends as they travel across the United States. One of the leads is bisexual and another character in the group is gay. Also, last year, the company released *Walk Away Renee*, a sequel to *Tarnation*, in which the gay filmmaker drives across the country with his mother who is bipolar and suffers from schizophrenia. Arguably Sundance Selects' biggest release last year was the Academy Award-nominated documentary *How to Survive a Plague* which chronicles the rise of ACT UP and TAG, and the efforts of HIV/AIDS activists to obtain proper medication in response to the growing epidemic. This year, Sundance Selects is scheduled to release *Blue is the Warmest Color*, a romantic drama about two women that recently won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.



## ADDITIONAL FILM DISTRIBUTORS

### LIONSGATE AND SUMMIT ENTERTAINMENT

Lionsgate serves as the film division of Lions Gate Entertainment and is currently the one of the largest and most successful distributors of independent films. Among its impressive roster of films is *Precious*, the Academy Award-nominated drama about an abused teen from Harlem who has an out lesbian teacher. In 2012, none of the Lionsgate films were inclusive but in early 2013 the company released *Peeples*, a drama about an African American family with a lesbian daughter who is struggling to come out. Summit Entertainment, which Lions Gate Entertainment acquired last year, did release at least one LGBT inclusive film. Summit Entertainment released the film adaptation of the coming-of-age drama *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. In the film high school freshman Charlie is befriended by seniors Sam and Patrick. Patrick is an out gay teen dating a closeted high school football player.

### MUSIC BOX FILMS

Owned by Southport Music Box Corporation, Music Box Films is a distributor of foreign and independent films. Since its inception in 2007, the company has released the Swedish version of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* trilogy which features bisexual heroine Lisbeth Salander, portrayed by Noomi Rapace. Last year, Music Box Films released the critically acclaimed dramas *Keep the Lights On* and *Any Day Now*. *Keep the Lights On* is about the dysfunctional nine-year relationship between Erik and Paul who have a strong emotional and sexual connection but are torn apart by drug abuse. Set in the 1970s and based on a true story, *Any Day Now* recounts the legal battle of gay couple Rudy and Paul as they try to adopt Marco, a teenager with Down syndrome who has been abandoned by his drug addicted mother.

### SONY PICTURE CLASSICS

Founded in 1992, Sony Picture Classics is the independent arm of Sony Pictures Entertainment, which produces and distributes independent films and documentaries. Among the many inclusive films Sony Picture Classics has released since its inception are *My Life in Pink* about a gender non-conforming child and *The Celluloid Closet*, a documentary about LGBT representations in film based

on the book with the same title written by Vito Russo. In 2012 Sony Picture Classics released Woody Allen's *To Rome with Love* which included a bisexual actress who is in town visiting friends. Their other inclusive release last year was *Celeste and Jesse Forever* in which Elijah Wood plays Celeste's gay best friend who gives her dating advice.

### STRAND RELEASING

When Strand Releasing was founded in 1989, its primary focus was the distribution of LGBT-inclusive films. In recent years the independent distributor has branched out, releasing non-LGBT films as well, while maintaining a focus on foreign films. Some of the highlights among the many inclusive films released by Strand are *The Living End* about a gay movie critic and a drifter who go on a road trip after killing a homophobic police officer; *Stonewall*, a fictionalization of the Stonewall riots; and *Yossi and Jagger* about two Israeli army officers who have to hide their love for each other. Last year Strand Releasing distributed *Yossi*, a sequel to *Yossi and Jagger*, in which the title character is seen ten years after the death of Jagger, trying to move on and find love once again. Last year, Strand Releasing also distributed *North Sea Texas*, a Flemish film about a young boy who escapes his rough reality by dreaming of the older boy who lives next door.

### VARIANCE FILMS

Variance Films works with filmmakers to help them market and release films theatrically without having to sign over rights to their films. Under this format, the company released the 2012 documentary *Strange Powers: Stephin Merritt and the Magnetic Fields* about the out musician's career. Last year, the company released *Hit So Hard*, the documentary about drummer Patty Schemel. Using archival footage from her days as a band member of Hole as well as interviews, the film retraces her struggle with addiction, her coming out story, and her wedding to another woman. Also released last year was *The Perfect Family* about a Catholic woman who refuses to accept her family for who they are, including her daughter who is getting married to a woman. The company's other inclusive film last year, which was more problematic, was *3,2,1... Frankie Go Boom*, in which Ron Pearlman plays a transgender woman.

## THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

Founded in 2005 by brothers Bob and Harvey Weinstein, The Weinstein Company produces and distributes films, and produces content for television. One of their most significant inclusive films to date is *Transamerica* (released in conjunction with IFC Films). Other significant films include the 2008 Woody Allen film *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* about a relationship between two women and a man. Also released by The Weinstein Company was *A Single Man* about a gay professor who loses his life partner. Last year, the company released *Bully*, a critically acclaimed documentary about bullying in schools that featured LGBT students. The Weinstein Company's other inclusive film this past year was *The Intouchables* about a quadriplegic wealthy man who hires someone to take care of him. It includes a lesbian character in a supporting role.

## WOLFE RELEASING

Established in 1985, Wolfe Releasing is the oldest distributor in North America to solely focus on LGBT-inclusive cinema. The company focuses on the distribution of independent films that tell the stories of the LGBT community. Although the company has an impressive roster of films, a few are particularly noteworthy. The 2004 drama *Brother to Brother* tells the story of an interracial gay couple who meet an older gay man in Harlem. The man tells them about gay life during the Harlem Renaissance, and his stories come vividly to life. The French drama *Tomboy* follows a gender non-conforming child who decides to live as a boy after moving into a new neighborhood. *Undertow* is a Peruvian film about a fisherman who has an affair with a male painter. Last year the company released the Chicana drama *Mosquita y Mari* about the friendship and attraction between Yolanda and Mari, two high school students. Also released last year was *Gayby*, a comedy about two best friends, a gay man and a straight woman, who decide to have a baby together.

## SOURCES

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## GLAAD'S ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA TEAM

GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team not only works with entertainment-related media platforms to encourage fair, accurate and inclusive representation of LGBT people, but also to combat anti-LGBT content in these industries. This process includes reading scripts, viewing rough cuts, pitching story ideas, consulting with writers and producers, working with talent to better inform them about portraying LGBT characters and arranging entertainment-related events and panels. GLAAD also promotes LGBT-inclusive projects through GLAAD's blog, social media and the daily LGBT TV listings, "What to Watch on TV."

### MATT KANE

Associate Director of Entertainment Media – [Kane@glaad.org](mailto:Kane@glaad.org)

Matt Kane is a GLAAD liaison to the entertainment industry, advocating for the inclusion of diverse LGBT stories in films, scripted television and reality programming and collaborating with film festivals to launch new LGBT voices. He helps shape GLAAD's response to acts of anti-LGBT defamation in entertainment media, is the principal writer of the *Studio Responsibility Index*, *Network Responsibility Index*, and oversees the publication of *Where We Are on TV*. Prior to joining GLAAD, he worked for several television shows and film festivals and worked for GLAAD as a freelance programmer for the Queer Lounge at Sundance. He holds an M.F.A. in film studies from Boston University.

### MAX GOUTTEBROZE

Entertainment Media Strategist – [Gouttebroze@glaad.org](mailto:Gouttebroze@glaad.org)

Max Gouttebroze serves as an active member of the GLAAD Programs Team by identifying and monitoring LGBT representations, trends and developments in television and film. He is the lead writer of GLAAD's *Where We Are on TV* report and conducts long-term research and data collection for the annually released *Studio Responsibility Index* and *Network Responsibility Index*. Max also serves on the GLAAD Media Awards Communications Team and is a frequent contributor to GLAAD's blog. A graduate of the College of Charleston's Communication Program, Max joined GLAAD in September 2010 as the Communications Intern. In December of that year, he became a part of GLAAD's Digital Initiatives Team and moved into his current role in June 2011.

### MEGAN TOWNSEND

Entertainment and Operations Coordinator

Megan Townsend serves on GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team where she monitors LGBT-inclusive content on television and film and is a frequent contributor to GLAAD's blog. She is the principal author of "What to Watch on TV," GLAAD's daily guide to LGBT-inclusive television programming, and a contributing researcher for GLAAD's *Studio Responsibility Index*, *Network Responsibility Index* and *Where We Are on TV*. She also serves on the Operations team as the coordinator of GLAAD's internship program. A graduate of Central Michigan University, Megan joined GLAAD in January 2012 as the Entertainment Media Fellow and moved into her current role in March 2013.

### ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA INTERNS

GLAAD's Entertainment Media interns join the Programs Team in researching and monitoring LGBT-inclusive content on television and in film. They conduct research for the *Studio Responsibility Index*, *Network Responsibility Index* and contribute to GLAAD's blog.

Hayley Thayer – Loyola Marymount University – Class of 2013

Natalie Meier – Mills College – Class of 2015