



NETWORK RESPONSIBILITY INDEX

Primetime Programming 2007-2008



A SPECIAL REPORT FROM THE GAY & LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION

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Dear Readers,

It was historic. As I sat watching the wedding of Kevin and Scotty on *Brothers & Sisters*, I was moved by the gravity of the moment. Never before had two leading gay characters wed on a broadcast network. Watching them, I saw myself, a member of the gay community, reflected on television. Just four days after the episode aired, the California Supreme Court handed down its decision extending marriage in the state to gay and lesbian couples. Progress is happening everywhere we look.

As we can see in the country's current cultural and political shift, that progress doesn't happen in a vacuum. When lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are portrayed in a fair, accurate and inclusive manner on television, hearts and minds are changed.

The more accurately the diversity of our community is reflected, the more opportunities there are for understanding and acceptance. In addition to Kevin and Scotty's wedding, *Brothers & Sisters* featured Saul, one of the rare images of a gay character over 60. Transgender characters are appearing as regular and recurring characters in honest and nuanced story arcs on *Ugly Betty*, *Dirty Sexy Money* and *The L Word*. Young adult shows like *GREEK* and *South of Nowhere*, as well as the daytime drama *As the World Turns* feature multi-dimensional gay teen characters that go to school, live their lives, date and, yes, kiss. These portrayals make all the difference in making the lives of LGBT people real to TV viewers across the country.

In a time of such momentous change, however, it can be easy to get caught up in the singular portrayals of the LGBT community. It becomes necessary to step back and to examine with a careful eye the quantity and quality of LGBT images on television. In 2007, we issued our inaugural *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, a yearlong examination of the five broadcast networks' inclusion of LGBT representations in primetime programming. With the second year of our report, GLAAD not only examined 366 days of programming on the five broadcast networks, but also evaluated original primetime programming on 10 of the highest-rated cable networks.

The results of the examination were enlightening. On broadcast networks, LGBT-inclusive hours ranged from 4% (Fox) to 24% (ABC) of primetime programming hours. The evaluated cable networks had LGBT-inclusive hours of original programming from a mere 1% (TNT) to 45% (FX). Although we can clearly commend some networks for their consistent inclusion of LGBT people, there is still much work to be done.

We live in a country where hardworking people are fired solely for being gay or transgender, committed couples are legally unable to take care of and be responsible for one another, and people live in fear of becoming victims of violent hate crimes in their own communities. Study after study shows that what people watch on TV shapes how they view and treat the gay and transgender people around them.

What I find particularly distressing in this moment of historic change for our community and our country is the staggering lack of diversity in our representation on television. On 11 of the 15 networks evaluated, LGBT impressions overwhelmingly represent gay men. On 10 of the 15 networks, white LGBT characters dominate the landscape. If television viewers—both gay and straight—understand the LGBT community to be a group comprised almost exclusively of white gay men, we have a serious problem. Our community is as diverse as our country, and media images do a disservice when they do not reflect that diversity.

Networks have a responsibility to make sure the images they broadcast foster awareness, understanding and respect for all LGBT people. This year's report offers a critical examination of where networks excelled and how they can improve.

In Service,



Neil G. Giuliano, President
 Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

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 toward increasing fair, accurate and inclusive LGBT media representations.

Seeing multi-dimensional gay and transgender people on television changes public perceptions. This is not just anecdotal. Studies from the University of Minnesota show that exposure to positive portrayals of LGBT characters on television and in film can reduce levels of prejudice among viewers.

We also know that programming *to* LGBT viewers is good business. Based on U.S. Census household data, demographers suggest there are at least 9 million adult Americans who are lesbian, gay or bisexual. In addition, market research projects at least 6.8% of all Americans over 18 – almost 16 million adults – self-identify as LGBT. This is a significant portion of the television audience watching to see themselves 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 be \$712 billion in 2008.

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 still a long road ahead toward accurate portrayals of our diverse community that reflect the world in which we live.

Methodology

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

For the broadcast portion, GLAAD researched all primetime* programming on ABC, CBS, The CW, Fox and NBC from June 1, 2007 – May 31, 2008, for a combined total of 4,911 programming hours. These networks were also analyzed for last year's inaugural report covering the 2006–2007 season.

With this year's report, for the first time, GLAAD evaluated original cable programming as well. The sampling

of the 10 cable networks examined for the 2007–2008 report includes non-sports and non-news networks that appeared on Nielsen Media Research's lists of top basic and premium cable networks as of June 2007. This report includes, alphabetically, A&E, FX, HBO, Lifetime, MTV, Showtime, Spike, TBS, TNT and USA. The original primetime* programs on these 10 networks were examined from June 1, 2007 – May 31, 2008, for a combined total of 1,240.5 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 other than wrestling, 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, alternative series (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. GLAAD analysts noted whether the LGBT depictions were minor or major, as well as the gender and 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 clearly, no gender or race/ethnicity could be assigned.

Ranking of the Broadcast Networks

Listed by percentage of LGBT-inclusive hours of primetime programming

	2006-2007	2007-2008
1. ABC	15%	24% **
2. The CW	12%	21%
3. CBS	9%	9%
4. NBC	7%	6%
5. Fox	6%	4%

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 “impression.” If one LGBT character appeared on 12 episodes, for example, this character made 12 impressions. If a single episode addressed marriage equality in a secondary storyline, for example, it was counted as one minor “impression.”

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

Overview of Broadcast Network Findings

- For the second year in a row, ABC led the broadcast networks in LGBT-inclusive content. Of its 1,150 total hours of primetime programming, 280.5 hours (24%) included LGBT impressions.** The drama *Brothers & Sisters* was a particular standout, portraying television’s first marriage between gay or lesbian series regulars. The series also featured Saul, the only gay character over the age of 60 on any network. GLAAD analysts also found that ABC consistently offers the most fair, accurate and inclusive representations of the five broadcast networks.

- The CW, now in its sophomore year, offered 139.5 (21%) LGBT-inclusive hours, out of a total of 678 primetime programming hours. This is an increase from last year, in which 12% of the network’s programming was LGBT-inclusive. Though *America’s Next Top Model* is responsible for most of The CW’s LGBT content, new drama series *Gossip Girl* and *Reaper* introduced gay recurring characters after the writers’ strike, contributing significantly to the network’s favorable rating.

- CBS is ranked third this year, in line with last year’s report, with 103.5 hours (9%) of LGBT-inclusive content, out of 1,150 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 84.5 of its total LGBT-inclusive hours.

- Out of 1,150 total hours, NBC featured 71.5 hours (6%) of LGBT-inclusive content. Although the quality of its gay characters increased for the network this year on comedies like *30 Rock*, *My Name is Earl* and *The Office*, NBC slipped from 7% of LGBT-inclusive programming hours last year, largely due to the departure of *ER*’s Dr. Kerry Weaver, television’s longest-running lesbian character.

- Ranked fifth again, Fox only had 33.5 (4%) LGBT-inclusive hours, out of 783 total primetime programming hours. This is down from last year’s analysis, in which Fox’s LGBT content was tallied at 6%. The addition of the bisexual character Thirteen on *House* and the inclusion of out gay contestants on *American Idol* was not enough to significantly increase Fox’s score.

- The CW offered the most racial and ethnic diversity of any broadcast network. Of its 236 LGBT impressions, 86 (36%) were African American, 77 (33%) were Latino/a, 65 (28%) were white and 7 (3%) were Asian Pacific Islander.

- NBC’s inclusion of Latino/a LGBT representations improved considerably. Of its 113 LGBT impressions, 43% were Latino/a, up from only 12% last year.

- CBS and ABC overwhelmingly featured white representations (97% and 84%, respectively) in their drama, comedy and alternative series. For ABC, this is consistent with last year’s findings, but CBS, which GLAAD hailed for the number of impressions of LGBT people of color last year, disappointed by not featuring the same level of racial and ethnic diversity in its representations this year.

- CBS boasted the highest percentage of lesbian representations of any network, with 19% of all of CBS’ LGBT hours including a lesbian. This is due largely to the presence of Jupiter, the lesbian contestant on *Pirate Master*.

- Of ABC’s 280.5 LGBT-inclusive hours, 11% were transgender-inclusive. The network featured a transgender series regular on *Ugly Betty* and recurring transgender characters on *Dirty Sexy Money* and the short-lived *Big Shots*. No other broadcast network offered an ongoing story arc involving a transgender person.

- Though ABC’s transgender-inclusive hours were impressive, overall, the broadcast networks’ LGBT programming featured mostly gay male representations: The CW 99%; NBC 82%; ABC 80%; CBS 77%; and Fox 74%.

Overview of Cable Network Findings

- Of the 10 cable networks evaluated, FX ranked highest for LGBT-inclusive original content. Out of 62.5 total hours of original primetime programming, the network offered 28 hours (45%) with LGBT-inclusive content, due largely to *Nip/Tuck*, which featured at least one LGBT character in every episode, as well as minor gay and transgender storylines in *Rescue Me*, *Damages*, *The Riches* and *It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia*.

- Conversely, TNT offered only one hour (1%) of LGBT-inclusive programming out of 91.5 total hours of original primetime programming (due to a single episode of *The Closer*), resulting in the lowest ranking and score among the 10 cable networks evaluated.

Ranking of Cable Networks

Listed by percentage of LGBT-inclusive hours of original programming

1. FX	45%
2. Showtime	32%
3. HBO	26%
4. MTV	16%
5. Lifetime, Spike	10%
6. TBS	7%
7. A&E, USA	4%
8. TNT	1%

- HBO was by far the most ethnically and racially diverse cable network in its LGBT representations. 35% of its gay characters were African American; 22% were Asian Pacific Islander.

- However, several networks offered overwhelmingly white representations of LGBT people, with Spike, TBS, TNT and USA's representations being exclusively white. Other networks that featured dominantly white LGBT impressions were Lifetime 97%; Showtime 82%; A&E 80%; FX 79%; and MTV 65%.

- MTV offered the most lesbian and bisexual-inclusive programming of any cable network, with 14% of its total programming hours featuring at least one lesbian impression and 9% featuring bisexual representations. These high numbers are due in large part to two seasons of *A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila*.

- Showtime led the cable networks in transgender representations with *The L Word*'s Max, garnering the network 10 transgender-inclusive hours, 14% of Showtime's total programming hours.

- 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: Spike and TNT 100%; HBO 76%; Lifetime 76%; USA 75%; A&E 73%; and TBS 62%.

Overall Recommendations

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

On the broadcast networks, ABC and The CW have raised the bar by increasing their LGBT visibility considerably during the past year. Though each network's programming slate looks quite different from the other, both have demonstrated that each can interweave LGBT characters or issues into anchor shows like *Grey's Anatomy* and *Gossip Girl*.

On cable, FX's high percentage of LGBT-inclusive programming shows that the basic cable network is serious about its inclusion of LGBT characters. Subscription networks HBO and Showtime also posted impressive numbers this year, due to series like *The Wire* and *The L Word*, which offered viewers complex and authentic LGBT characters from diverse backgrounds. MTV broke ground by airing *A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila*, the first dating show with a bisexual person receiving admiration from both straight male and lesbian suitors.

However, the era of shows with a predominantly gay or lesbian cast of characters may be coming to a close. When *The L Word* goes off the air in 2009, there will be no series with a leading cast of mostly gay characters to take its place.

While great progress has been made in television programming, the close of this groundbreaking show signals that LGBT visibility on primetime television is not something that can be taken for granted. Just because *The L Word* (and *Queer As Folk* before it) have aired does not mean LGBT issues are no longer relevant. Showrunners need to follow in the tradition of *Brothers & Sisters* and *Ugly Betty* and add multi-dimensional LGBT people to their series regular casts. This addition offers LGBT viewers — and their straight friends and family members — a chance to see the LGBT community reflected on TV.

Though *Brothers & Sisters* and *Ugly Betty* deserve accolades for their high-profile gay and transgender 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 both broadcast and cable networks. Though many television series have excelled in diverse casting, it is still rare to see gay people of color on television, leaving many LGBT viewers struggling to find images that reflect their lives and communities.

Television has the power to shape public opinion. When LGBT stories are told fairly, accurately and inclusively, attitudes shift. LGBT Americans are fighting for equality every day, and television can play a significant role in helping to achieve the equality so many millions deserve.

*Primetime begins at 8:00 p.m. Eastern and Pacific (7:00 p.m. Central and Mountain) and ends at 11:00 p.m. Eastern and Pacific (10:00 p.m. Central and Mountain), Monday through Saturday. On Sunday, primetime begins at 7:00 p.m. Eastern and Pacific (6:00 p.m. Central and Mountain). Fox and The CW do not air network programming during the last hour of primetime.

**The increase in ABC's LGBT-inclusive hours from last year is due in part to counting the openly gay cast members in alternative series *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* and *Dancing with the Stars*. These shows were not counted as LGBT-inclusive in the 2006–2007 survey.

ABC

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

ABC has raised the bar through its consistent and rich LGBT inclusion, and has the highest percentage of transgender-inclusive hours of any broadcast network. With 84% of its LGBT representations being white, however, ABC needs improvement when it comes to LGBT racial and ethnic diversity.

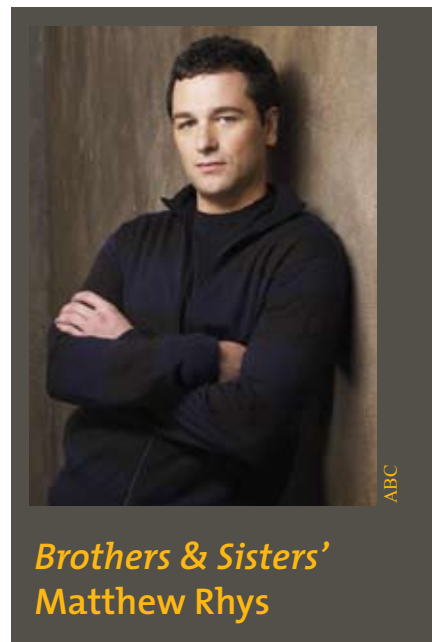
1,150 Total Hours of Primetime Programming 280.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 24%

Disney-owned ABC has a distinguished history of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) inclusiveness, offering up a number of television “firsts.” In 1977, the network premiered two sitcoms that featured gay representations: *Three’s Company* introduced Jack, a character pretending to be gay in order to live with his female roommates, and *Soap*, which featured the gay character of Jodie Dallas. The 1980s and ’90s brought more multi-dimensional LGBT representations: *thirtysomething* was the first television series to show two men in bed together (albeit with its share of controversy); *My So-Called Life* featured a gay teen; and the long-running *NYPD Blue* had a gay character in the police department for most of its run. During the spring of 1997, 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.

Last year, in the inaugural *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, out of the five broadcast networks, ABC led the way in LGBT inclusiveness, receiving a rating of “Good,” the highest of any network. In the 2006-2007 season, ABC offered more LGBT series regulars than any other network, with freshman series *Brothers & Sisters* and *Ugly Betty* as particular standouts. *Desperate Housewives*, *Grey’s Anatomy* and *Men in Trees* also offered gay and lesbian representations during that season.

The 2007–2008 Season

ABC continued to lead the way in LGBT representations during the 2007-2008 season. Gay assistant Marc and transgender CEO Alexis were strong supporting players on *Ugly Betty*, and Bree’s openly gay son Andrew continued to make occasional appearances on *Desperate Housewives*. On *Brothers & Sisters*, Saul stepped further out of the closet, a storyline unique for its portrayal



Brothers & Sisters’
Matthew Rhys

of a gay character over the age of 60, and Kevin and Scotty were married in the season finale. The marriage between two series regular gay characters in a scripted series was a television first. Coincidentally, the episode aired only four days before the California Supreme Court overturned a ban on marriage for gay and lesbian couples in that state.

In addition, a handful of new LGBT characters were added to returning shows. Marc began a relationship with Cliff on *Ugly Betty*. On *Desperate Housewives*, Lynette’s stepfather revealed he was gay, and partners Bob and Lee moved onto Wisteria Lane and held a commitment ceremony in the season finale. Previously void of any LGBT representations, *Lost* revealed that now-deceased supporting character Mr. Friendly was gay (though astute viewers picked up on this from a line in the previous season). On *Grey’s Anatomy*, Dr. Callie Torres and Dr. Erica Hahn acted on their attraction for each other by sharing two passionate kisses.

New shows further contributed to ABC’s LGBT inclusiveness. *Cashmere Mafia* featured Caitlin, a high-powered executive navigating her first relationship with a woman. Openly gay pop singer George Michael played himself in multiple episodes of *Eli Stone*. *Miss Guided* offered minor gay and lesbian characters in at least three episodes. Two other new series, *Dirty Sexy Money* and *Big Shots*, each

featured transgender characters, though the quality of the representations differed dramatically. *Dirty Sexy Money*'s transgender character Carmelita provided a love interest for Sen. Patrick Darling, while the transgender escort on *Big Shots* reinforced stereotypes.

Unfortunately, there were a handful of disappointments related to gay characters missing in action. *Men in Trees*' gay hairstylist Terri was left without any romantic interest after the departure of George. Similarly, *Grey's Anatomy* did not feature out bartender Joe, his partner or their child a single time during the 2007-2008 season, particularly curious when other characters regularly visited Joe's bar. Also, after the WGA strike, as writers wrapped up key storylines, the relationship between Marc and Cliff on *Ugly Betty* fell by the wayside.

Outside of primetime, the daytime drama *All My Children* brought back Bianca, Erica Kane's lesbian daughter, for a short holiday visit to Pine Valley. On *One Life to Live*, Marcie hid out for one week in a gay bar and participated in a drag cabaret act.

The 2008–2009 Preview

Due to casting and series renewal changes, the landscape for existing LGBT characters at ABC will change when new episodes appear in the fall. Rebecca Romijn will be cutting back on appearances as Alexis on *Ugly Betty*, downgraded from series regular to recurring character, while openly gay actor Luke Macfarlane, who portrays the gay character Scotty on *Brothers & Sisters*, has been upped from recurring to series regular. *Cashmere Mafia*, *Men in Trees* and *Big Shots* will not be returning in 2008.

Two ABC series created by gay men feature characters who have not yet come out to viewers. *Ugly Betty*'s creator Silvio Horta has stated that he wrote Betty's fashion-forward, musical theater-loving nephew Justin as gay — a childhood version of himself, an out Latino. And *Pushing Daisies*' openly gay creator Bryan Fuller has said that the coroner, played by Sy Richardson, is gay.

New series under consideration include the eagerly anticipated comedy from *Will & Grace* creators Max Mutchnick and David Kohan. The show, based upon Mutchnick and Kohan's own relationship, will be about a gay man and a straight man who are business partners and life-long best friends. And the untitled Dave Hemingson project, a legal drama based at an "outrageous" Los Angeles boutique law firm, is also set to feature a gay male character.

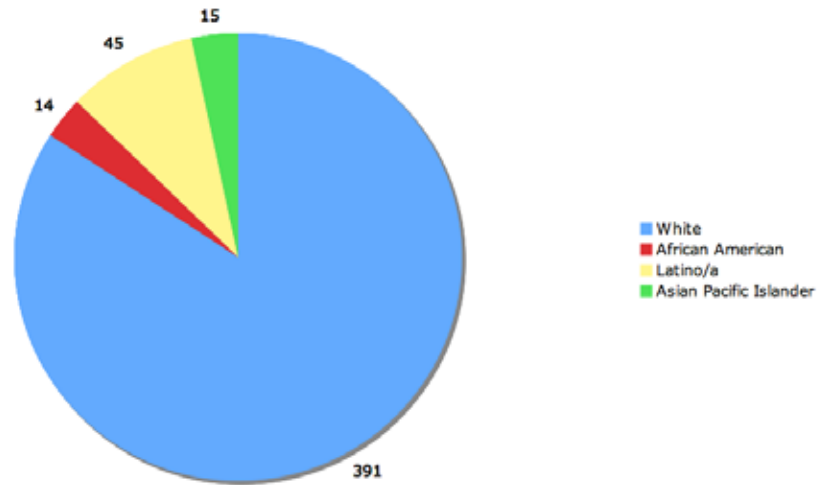
Recommendations

We encourage *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* to bring the story of a deserving LGBT family into America's living rooms, and for *Dancing with the Stars* to feature an openly gay performer. If *Desperate Housewives* stays five years in the future as they jumped ahead to in the season finale, that opens up new story potential for Andrew, Bob and Lee. On *Grey's Anatomy*, we look forward to the exploration of romance between Callie and Erica and, hopefully, viewers will find out what happened to Joe, his partner Walter and their child.

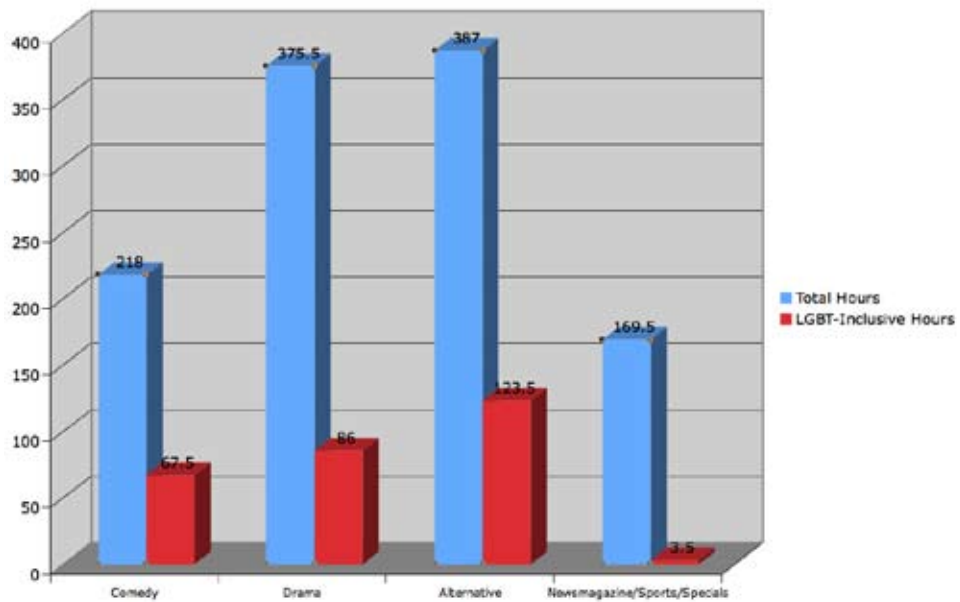
In upcoming series, the drama *Cupid* holds much potential for representing gay and lesbian romance, as does *Five Year Plan*, a comedy about a group of twenty-somethings navigating life. Other new series holding high promise for LGBT inclusiveness include *The Goode Family*, an animated comedy about a family who always wants to do the "right" thing, and *Prince of Motor City*, a Hamlet-inspired primetime soap.

ABC is raising the bar by featuring LGBT representations on its most prominent programs, affecting how LGBT people are seen internationally as well: *Desperate Housewives* and *Brothers & Sisters* are either airing in or being remade to broadcast in various international markets.

Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on ABC



ABC Primetime Programming



While the network is lacking in LGBT scripted characters, CBS has a history of being inclusive in its alternative programming. Unfortunately, 97% of the network's LGBT representations featured a white member of the gay community, almost completely ignoring LGBT people of color.

EXCELLENT

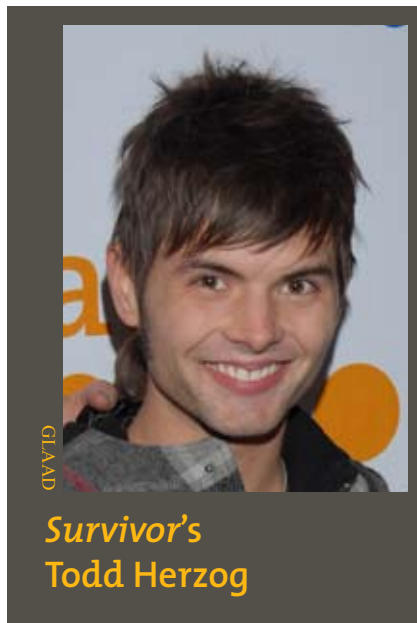
GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

CBS

1,150 Total Hours of Primetime Programming
103.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 9%



sions, and 65% of those inclusive images appeared on CBS' alternative series.

The 2007–2008 Season

In the 2007-2008 season, CBS continued to offer gay representations in its alternative series, providing a total of 84.5 hours of LGBT-inclusive programming. Lesbian, gay and bisexual participants appeared in *Pirate Master*, *Big Brother 8*, *Big Brother 9*, *Survivor: China* (won by openly gay Mormon contestant Todd Herzog) and *Survivor: Micronesia*. Openly gay actor George Takei appeared on the short-lived *Secret Talents of the Stars*, and gay-related questions were asked on three episodes of *Power of 10*.

During its early years, CBS was home to classic television fare such as *I Love Lucy*, *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *The Beverly Hillbillies*. In the 1970s, CBS began working with producers Norman Lear and Larry Gelbart, whose work propelled the network forward on a multitude of social issues, including those affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. Lear's *All in the Family* premiered in 1971 and almost immediately tackled sexual orientation with the episode "Judging Books by Covers." Another Norman Lear series, *Maude*, featured an episode in which Maude fought for the right of a gay bar to open in her neighborhood. In 1976, Gelbart's *M*A*S*H* dealt with a soldier beaten by members of his own unit for being gay in the episode "George." Unfortunately, outside of a few socially-conscious shows in the 1970s, scripted LGBT 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, gay and lesbian people have played a vital role in CBS' alternative series, including *The Amazing Race* and *Big Brother*. In the first *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, which covered the 2006-2007 season, CBS was awarded a "Fair" rating by GLAAD. Only 9% of CBS' primetime programming hours included LGBT impres-

sions, and 65% of those inclusive images appeared on CBS' alternative series. LGBT-inclusive scripted programming was limited to individual episodes; there are no series regular LGBT characters on CBS primetime. Wayne Brady briefly appeared as Barney's gay brother in an episode of *How I Met Your Mother*, and in *The New Adventures of Old Christine* it was revealed that Christine had a lesbian experience in college with a female friend. Unfortunately, CBS crime dramas continued to relegate LGBT characters to criminals or victims: *Criminal Minds* featured a gay killer with a homophobic father, while the investigators on *Cold Case* looked into the death of a transgender teenager.

While not counted as part of this report on primetime, CBS' GLAAD Media Award-winning daytime drama *As the World Turns* continued to feature teenage character Luke Snyder, who came out to his parents in 2006. LGBT characters on daytime are still a rarity, and this soap is the first to feature a regularly appearing gay male character who is part of the drama's core family. In 2007, Noah Mayer moved to Oakdale. Over time, Luke and Noah became romantically involved and ultimately shared daytime's first kiss between two men. Their storyline increased ratings and had fans clamoring for more.

The 2008–2009 Preview

New summer series *Swingtown*, set in the sexual revo-

lution of the 1970s, is expected to provide a few minor storylines of LGBT interest. Happily married neighbor Trina is open to sexual encounters with both men and women; young Rick has a crush on his friend, B.J., though he will not confess his feelings this season.

In the fall, CBS will be premiering *The Ex List*, a comedy about a businesswoman who is told by a psychic she has a year to find the love of her life, and it is someone she has dated before. There are also comedies *Worst Week*, about bad luck with in-laws, and *Project Gary*, about a divorcing couple.

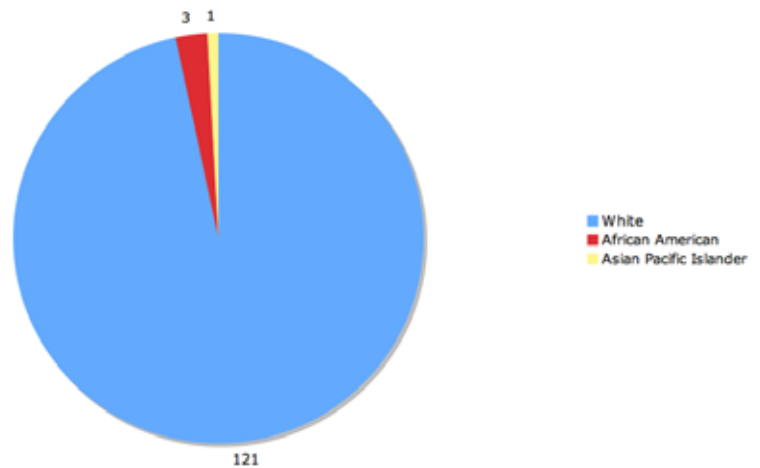
Two dramas will also be added to CBS' slate: *The Mentalist*, about a psychic-turned-detective, and a Jerry Bruckheimer-produced series entitled *Eleventh Hour*, which follows a biophysicist who is a science advisor to the government.

Recommendations

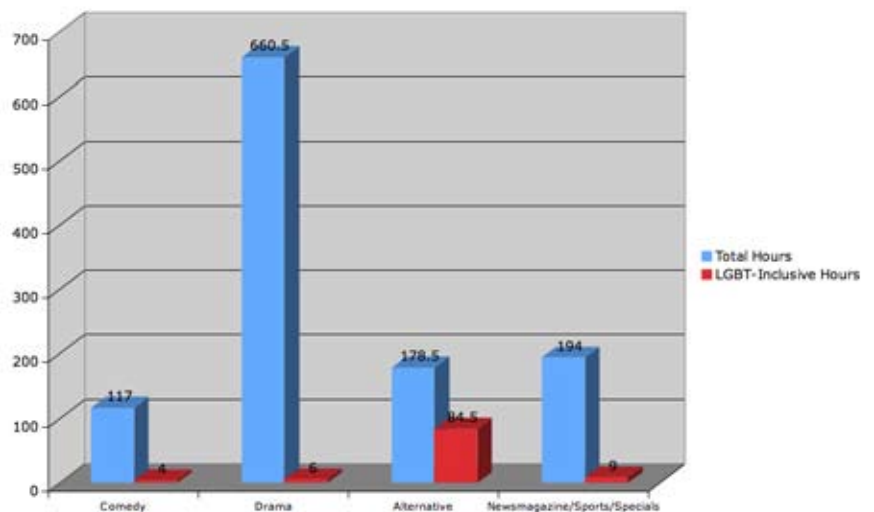
CBS set the bar for alternative programming that includes LGBT participants, but the network continues to lack LGBT representations in its scripted dramas and comedies. While *Cold Case* has included meaningful LGBT episodes, the network's procedural crime dramas tell LGBT stories without offering any LGBT characters on the crime-solving teams. Adding a supporting LGBT character to the *CSI* franchise would help tip the visibility scale. Actress Lauren Lee Smith has joined the *CSI* team; the writers should take this opportunity to make this new character gay or bisexual.

Upcoming new series such as the detective drama *The Mentalist* and science thriller *Eleventh Hour* could easily work a gay character into their casts. One of the exes in *The Ex List* could be a woman. Clearly, there are many opportunities for the network to improve its scripted diversity; CBS just needs to seize them.

Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on CBS



CBS Primetime Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008



The CW continued to showcase LGBT participants in its alternative programming while showing improvement in scripted representations. The CW also offered the most LGBT racial and ethnic diversity of all the broadcast networks, but progress will be made when the net includes an LGBT scripted series regular.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

The CW

678 Total Hours of Primetime Programming
139.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 21%



The CW was formed two years ago after a merger between The WB and UPN, two networks that held respectable track records in offering LGBT content. The WB's seminal teen series *Dawson's Creek*, from openly gay creator Kevin Williamson, featured the groundbreaking gay character, Jack McPhee. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, which aired on both The WB and UPN, included the character of Willow Rosenberg, a lesbian who shared a longtime romance with her girlfriend, Tara. On UPN, *Half & Half* featured a gay character played by openly gay comic Alec Mapa.

In its freshman year, The CW failed to incorporate LGBT characters into its scripted shows. *Veronica Mars* and *All of Us* each aired only one gay-inclusive episode. However, even with a lack of scripted representation, The CW was ultimately awarded an "Adequate" rating in last year's *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index* because of the very LGBT-inclusive alternative series *America's Next Top Model*.

In a recent interview with AfterElton.com, Dawn Ostroff, The CW's entertainment president, was asked about the network's lack of gay characters in scripted

programming. Ostroff said that The CW and its young audience had made it to a world where sexual orientation ultimately did not matter: "It's almost like in some ways it's such a non-issue for [our audience] that it's not even an issue whether or not you see it." We respectfully disagree.

The 2007–2008 Season

At this time last year, only one of The CW's announced series featured LGBT characters, the short-lived summer series *Hidden Palms*. Following the release of the *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index* last year, which brought to light the network's lack of scripted LGBT representations, several shows introduced inclusive representations mid-season. The dramas *Reaper* and *Gossip Girl* each introduced more new gay recurring characters, while alternative series *Pussycat Dolls Present: Girlicious* and *Crowned: The Mother of All Pageants* increased the number of LGBT impressions on the network.

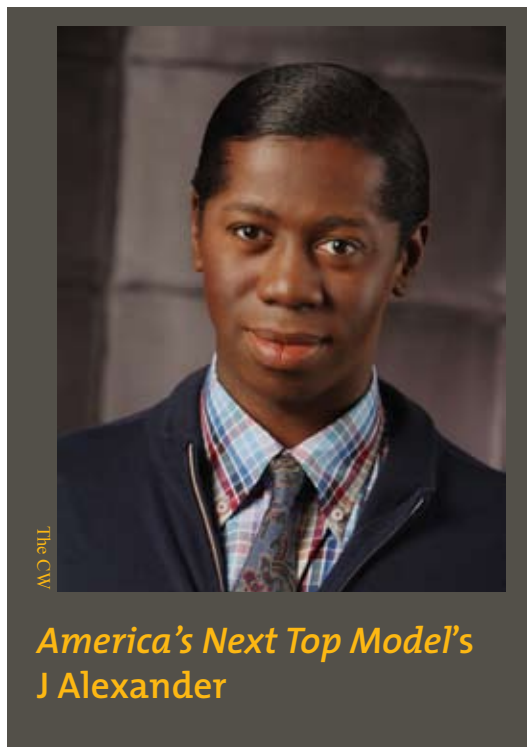
Gossip Girl, from *The OC* creator Josh Schwartz, follows an affluent group of teens in Manhattan. One of the teens spent the holidays with her gay dad and his partner, and another teen came out near the end of the season. The new drama *Reaper*, about Satan's bounty hunter, added a friendly demon couple that happened to be gay. *Crowned: The Mother of All Pageants* was hosted by *Queer Eye*'s Carson Kressley. *Pussycat Dolls Present: Girlicious* only aired one episode with lesbian contestant Keisha, but featured gay choreographer Mikey Minden throughout the run.

Returning alternative series *America's Next Top Model* continued to buoy The CW's *Network Responsibility Index* score, regularly showcasing LGBT photographers, stylists and judges. *Beauty and the Geek*, in its fifth and final season, introduced its first gay "geek," the lovable self-proclaimed "gaysian" Greg.

The 2008–2009 Preview

The CW's highest-rated series, *America's Next Top Model*

is returning for its eleventh cycle and will be featuring Mr. Jay and Ms. J., the two regularly seen gay mentors on the series. *Gossip Girl* and *Reaper* will both return for their second seasons. The new series, *Surviving the Filthy Rich*, includes a gay chef.



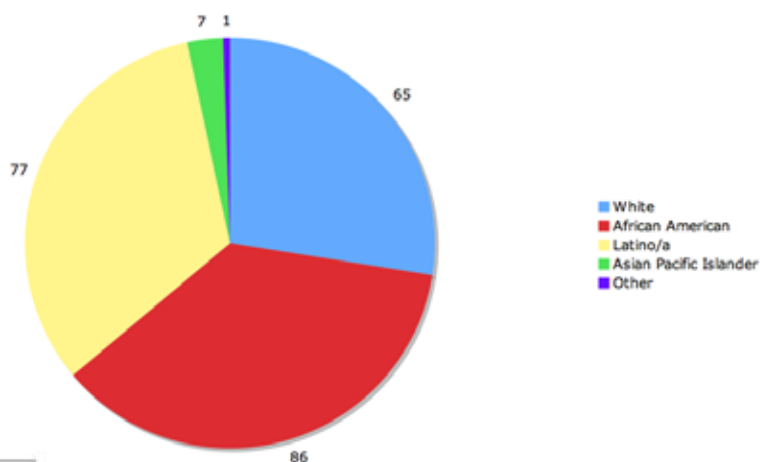
Recommendations

Going into year three, The CW should continue to make progress with its scripted LGBT representations. *Gossip Girl*'s gay teen character, Eric, needs to be better integrated into the series with his own significant storylines, and we would welcome the return of Blair's gay father and his partner.

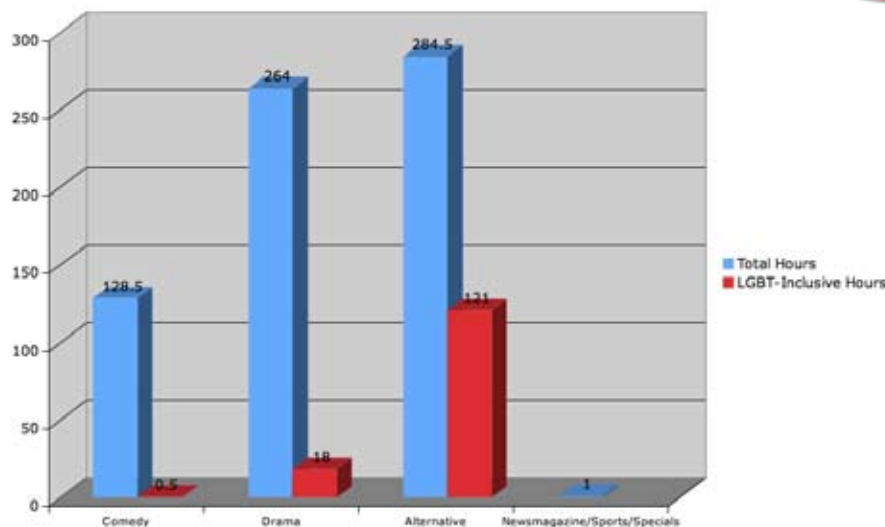
And the update of *Beverly Hills, 90210* has the opportunity to do something the original on Fox did not: include gay students and faculty at the high school.

Ostroff tells AfterElton.com, "I think particularly among a younger audience there is just such an acceptance [of gays and lesbians]." If this is the case, The CW can best increase its core audience by telling stories with LGBT content.

Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on The CW



**The CW Primetime Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008**



With the lowest percentage of LGBT-inclusive hours of any broadcast network, Fox's numbers fell even further than the previous season when it also received a Failing. The network looks to turn this around with the recent addition of a bisexual character on *House* and new series in production featuring LGBT characters.

EXCELLENT

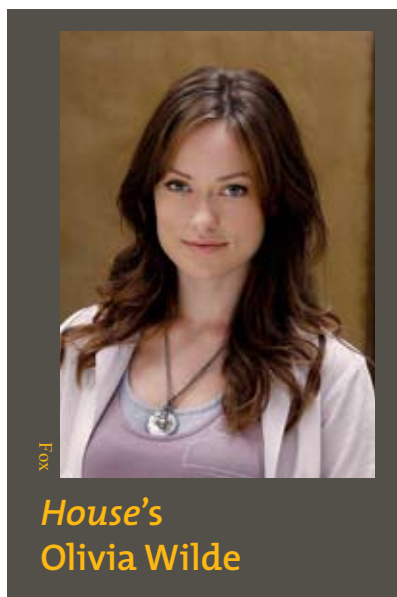
GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

Fox

783 Total Hours of Primetime Programming
33.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 4%



**House's
Olivia Wilde**

Founded in 1986 by News Corporation CEO Rupert Murdoch, Fox has made quite a cultural impact, broadcasting series such as *21 Jump Street*, *Beverly Hills, 90210*, *Melrose Place*, *The X-Files*, *Ally McBeal*, *The Simpsons*, *America's Most Wanted* and *American Idol*. Unfortunately, the network's sensitivity to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues has frequently been called into question.

Melrose Place (from *Sex and the City* creator Darren Star) may be considered a pioneer in early representations of gay men, but in 1994 GLAAD took Fox to task for censoring a kiss between two gay characters on the show. In 1999, GLAAD condemned a segment of the newsmagazine *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 aired.

The first *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, cover-

ing the 2006–2007 season, gave Fox a "Failing" grade for its mere 6.4% of 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. Two of the network's rare inclusive series that season were *The War At Home*, from openly gay creator and executive producer Rob Lotterstein, and the unscripted series *Trading Spouses: Meet Your New Mommy*, which featured its first lesbian couple. Both series were nominated for a GLAAD Media Award.

The 2007–2008 Season

Unfortunately, the LGBT hours on Fox decreased even further from last year, possibly as a result of the writers' strike. There was, however, new inclusion of LGBT portrayals on two of its most popular shows. *House*'s new female doctor, Thirteen (played by Olivia Wilde), revealed she is bisexual. *American Idol* featured several openly gay contestants who advanced through the ranks, marking the first time in its seven seasons that the show featured contestants both the judges and the audience knew are gay.

Fox's animated shows returned with their satirical — albeit minor — LGBT representations. Primary among these were *American Dad!*, with gay couple Terry and Greg and alien Roger, and *The Simpsons*, which featured two recurring gay supporting characters: Marge's sister Patty Bouvier and Waylon Smithers, assistant to Mr. Burns. *Family Guy* and *King of the Hill* each aired one episode that had a storyline involving an LGBT character.

Two live-action series offered individual episodes with lesbian storylines. Comedy *'Til Death* featured a lesbian therapist and her partner in one episode. Freshman drama *New Amsterdam* offered an episode in which one of a pair of lesbian criminals fell in love with a straight man, prompting her partner to kill her. Unfortunately, this did little to combat the myth of lesbians' orientation being easily changed by the affections of a man.

The War At Home did not return this season, which meant the end of Fox's only live-action gay male character, Kenny, who was also a rarely seen gay Middle Eastern American. New comedies *Unhitched*, *The Return of Jezebel James* and *Back To You*, as well as new drama series *K-Ville* and *The Sarah Connor Chronicles* all lacked any LGBT content.

The 2008–2009 Preview

Following last year's *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, Fox showed improvement during the development process for new series. The upcoming animated comedy *Sit Down, Shut Up* focuses on a group of teachers at a northeastern high school, one of whom is gay. *Do Not Disturb* is a sitcom set at a posh hotel in New York where one of the employees is gay. The two-hour science fiction film, and back-door pilot, *Virtuality*, takes place on a NASA mission and is expected to feature a gay couple.

Returning animated series on Fox will likely continue to feature occasional LGBT impressions, while Olivia

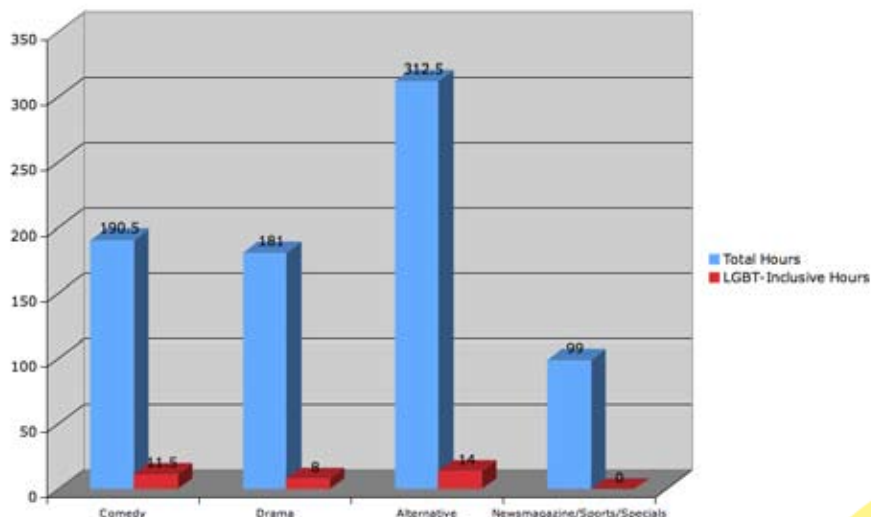
Wilde will be returning to *House* as Thirteen this fall. Wilde, who previously portrayed another bisexual character on the same network (Alex Kelly on the second season of *The OC*), revealed to *TV Guide* that a "shocking" romance is ahead for Thirteen.

Recommendations

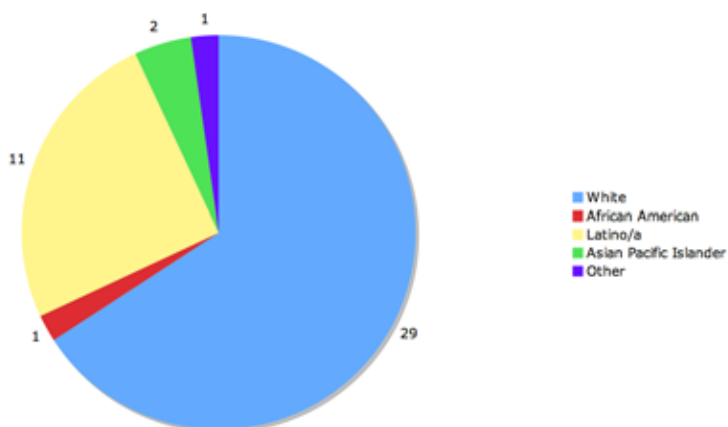
Fox seems to be making a conscious effort to increase the quantity and quality of its LGBT portrayals. Highlighting the participation of openly gay contestants on alternative series such as *So You Think You Can Dance* and *American Idol* will be progress. Further exploring the character of Thirteen on *House* will also be a step in the right direction, but this needs to be supported by additional LGBT presence on other scripted shows as well.

Many new series present Fox with opportunities for LGBT inclusivity. The highly-anticipated sci-fi thriller *Dollhouse*, from creator Joss Whedon (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*), can certainly benefit from a gay or lesbian character. *The Cleveland Show*, a spinoff of *Family Guy*, will hopefully continue its predecessor's track record of LGBT inclusion, and even build upon that tradition with an openly gay series regular.

Fox Primetime Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on Fox



NBC's LGBT-inclusive hours dropped 1% from the previous season, but there was growth in the quality of representations that did exist. With new series in production featuring LGBT characters, the net looks to turn around their poor performance. Adding LGBT participants to alternative programming will help as well.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

NBC

1,150 Total Hours of Primetime Programming
71.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 6%



Since *Will & Grace* went off the air in May 2006, LGBT impressions on NBC have become few and far between. Out of 1,147 total hours of primetime programming counted in the 2006-2007 season, only 83 hours included any LGBT impressions. This represented only 7.2% of their primetime schedule, ranking NBC fourth out of the five networks in last year's *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*. Dr. Kerry Weaver was written off of *ER* in January 2007 after 12 seasons, and the medical drama has failed to elevate the presence of two rarely-seen recurring gay characters to her status. This lack of significant LGBT characters is problematic for the network as a whole.

The 2007–2008 Season

After the *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index* was released last year, NBC made strides to integrate gay characters into its programming. In an interview with AfterElton.com, Ben Silverman, co-chairman of NBC Entertainment and NBC Universal, said his network had “an absolute responsibility to represent the diversity that exists within the American landscape.” And in regards to the lack of significant gay characters on NBC since the departure of *Will & Grace*, Silverman vowed, “that will change under my watch.”

While Silverman's intentions are admirable, NBC's

LGBT-inclusive hours this season actually decreased. The writers' strike likely played a role in the network's decline of LGBT impressions. Yet, the quality of NBC's representations increased. During the 2007–2008 season, the visibility of Oscar on *The Office* and the recurring character of Kenny on *My Name is Earl* escalated considerably on their respective shows. New *ER* EMT Chaz appeared in a recurring storyline over several episodes. The drama also introduced Javier, a gay desk clerk, seen twice. Both *ER* representations were people of color. *30 Rock* offered a significant story arc featuring ruthless gay TV executive Devin, as well as several individual episodes that centered on LGBT issues or gay guest characters.

New series *Journeyman* hinted that the main character's boss was gay in what ended up being the show's final episode, eliminating any opportunity for further character exploration. Candace Bushnell (of gay-inclusive *Sex and the City* fame) introduced *Lipstick Jungle*, but unfortunately the show did not include any LGBT characters.

NBC did feature a few outstanding individual episodes with LGBT characters or storylines this season. *My Name is Earl* highlighted the romance between two rival prison gang leaders, a story that offered the rare chance to see African American and Latino gay characters. The episode was nominated for a GLAAD Media Award. In an episode of *Scrubs*, Dr. Kelso spoke to his gay son on the phone about his poor taste in men. Openly gay *Queer Eye* and *Top Chef* personality Ted Allen made a guest appearance on *Las Vegas* as himself. Classic 1980s series *Knight Rider* returned in the form of an updated television movie and back-door pilot, including actress Sydney Tamiia Poitier as a lesbian FBI agent.

Three of the *Law & Order* series offered LGBT episodes. Flagship series *Law & Order* featured a murdered gay victim in one episode, and another featured a story inspired by Sen. Larry Craig. On *Law & Order: SVU*, a closeted pro football player was investigated for the murder of his boyfriend. And

the team on *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* looked into the murder of a young transgender woman housed as a male prisoner.

In alternative programming, *Project Runway* winner Christian Siriano served as a judge on *Miss USA*, *Project Runway* personality Tim Gunn made a guest appearance on *The Biggest Loser*, and Ross “The Intern” Matthews from *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* was a guest on the primetime game show *1 vs. 100*.

The 2008–2009 Preview

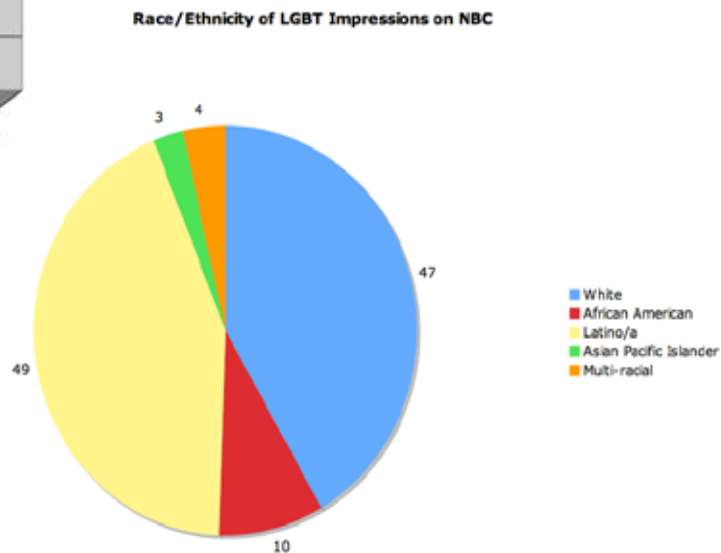
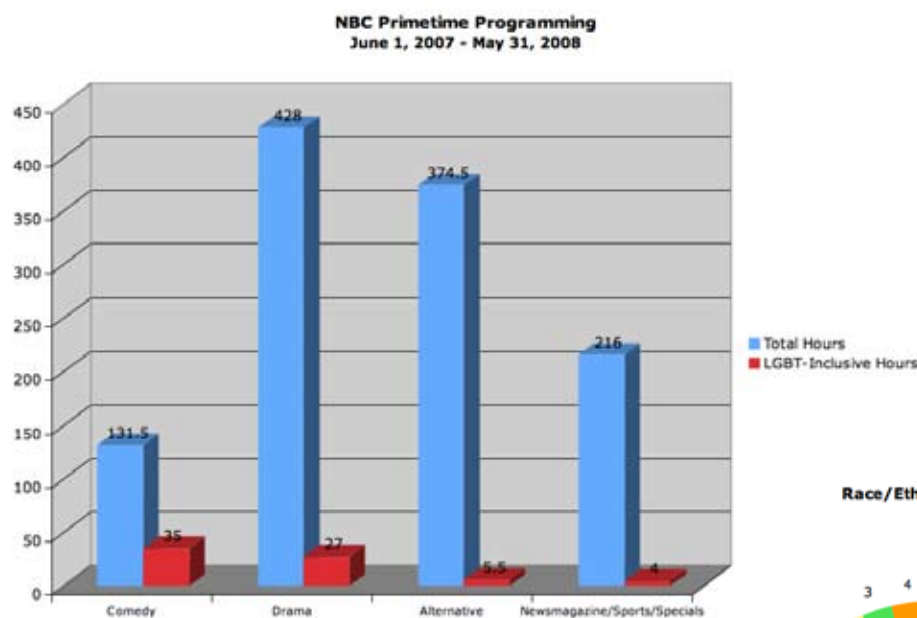
NBC is already showing promise with the inclusion of openly gay acts on *America’s Got Talent*. In addition, NBC is rolling out a number of new comedies and dramas this coming season. The two-hour *Knight Rider* pilot that aired in February 2008 will return as a series and it is expected that the lesbian or bisexual FBI agent will as well. The new Ian McShane series *Kings* is to feature a gay son. Alternative series *Chopping Block* and *America’s Toughest Jobs* both have the potential for LGBT participants, although neither has confirmed casting at press time.

Other series with LGBT content renewed by NBC include *The Office*, *30 Rock*, *My Name is Earl* and *ER*, though the amount of screen time these characters will have over the course of the season remains to be seen.

Recommendations

With NBC’s existing programming there is room for growth with Oscar on *The Office*, Kenny on *My Name is Earl*, and Chaz and Javier on *ER*. Additionally, the *Law & Order* franchise would benefit from a regularly appearing LGBT character as part of the investigative and prosecutorial team.

New series, such as the drama *The Philanthropist*, about a wealthy man helping people in need, provide the network with many opportunities for LGBT impressions. One particularly promising new series is the spin-off of *The Office*, which could feature Oscar more frequently or introduce an entirely new gay character who is central to the weekly storylines.



A&E is a surprising disappointment with an overall lack of LGBT inclusion in both its scripted and alternative programs. There is a lot of room for improvement in this area and with the network's focus on alternative programming, including LGBT participants will allow additional access points for audience growth as well.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

A&E

123.5 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

5.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 4%



**The Andromeda Strain's
Ricky Schroder**

A&E is a joint venture between The Hearst Corporation, Disney-ABC Television Group and NBC Universal. Established in 1984, the network has expanded to A&E Television Networks Group, which also houses Biography Channel and The History Channel.

In 2004, A&E branded itself as a destination for alternative programming by premiering popular unscripted series *Dog the Bounty Hunter*, *Family Plots*, *Growing Up Gotti* and *The First 48*. The network also debuted *Airline*, a docu-series that captured the lives of the employees of Southwest Airlines. This show regularly featured gay flight attendants, pilots, airport employees and passengers. The series aired three seasons, and, unfortunately, no series with significant LGBT impressions has aired on A&E since.

In 2006, A&E aired two gay-inclusive original movies. *Flight 93*, about the passengers of the fateful United Airlines flight that terrorists attempted to take over on September 11, 2001, spent a significant amount of time on passenger Mark Bingham, a gay publicist, delving into his personal life and highlighting his heroism.

Wedding Wars, a romantic comedy, addressed the inequalities of unions between gay and straight couples. Produced by the out powerhouse duo Craig Zadan and Neil Meron, the movie tackled issues rarely addressed on television.

The 2007–2008 Season

History shows that A&E is open to airing LGBT-inclusive content, and yet, in all 123.5 hours of original programming, the network only aired 5.5 hours that featured any LGBT impressions. One hour can be attributed to *Intervention*, which showcased a lesbian addicted to crystal meth. There was also a 30-minute episode of *Gene Simmons Family Jewels* that briefly featured two alleged transgender escorts.

A&E's LGBT-inclusive hours increased as a result of the four-hour original film *The Andromeda Strain*. Starring Ricky Schroder as a gay member of the military, the apocalyptic thriller wove this detail about his character into the story, briefly addressing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," and ultimately demonstrating to viewers that sexual orientation does not affect one's ability to serve one's country.

The 2008–2009 Preview

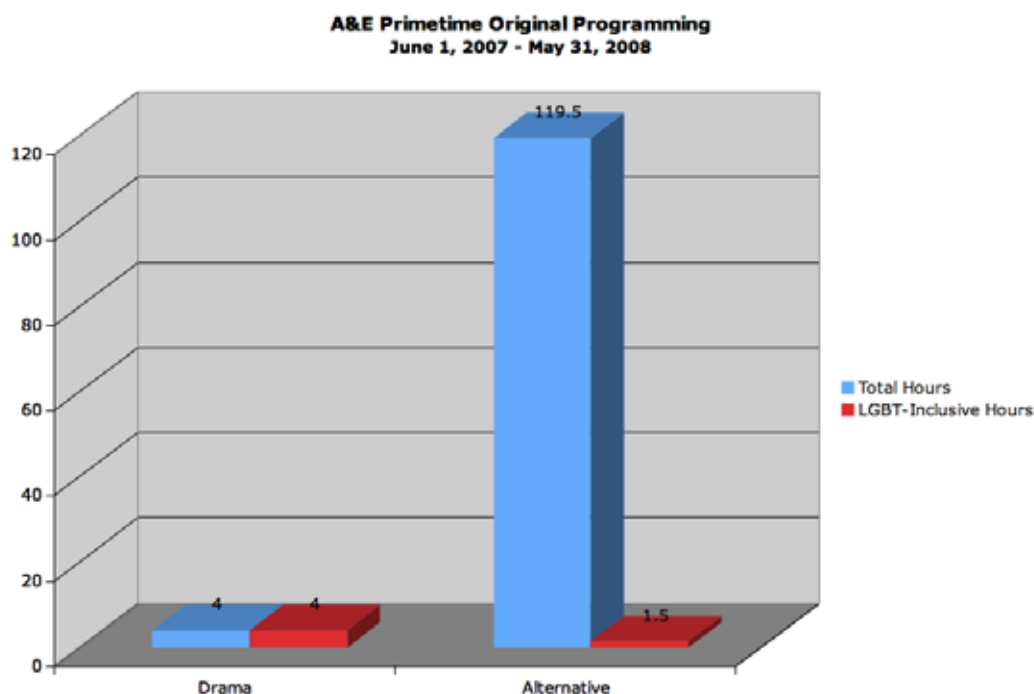
At press time, there is no obvious LGBT-inclusive content planned for the future, but A&E will be offering a number of new series, including its first two scripted series in years. *The Cleaner* is a drama based on a real "interventionalist" who, after striking a deal with God, agrees to help others beat their own addictions. *The Beast* follows an unconventional FBI veteran as he trains a new partner. The network has also announced three new alternative programs: *The Squad*, which gives an insider's look into a maximum security prison; *Psychic Kids: Children of the Paranormal*, serving as a companion to returning series *Paranormal State*; and *Jacked!*, which examines the tactics police use to catch car thieves.

Recommendations

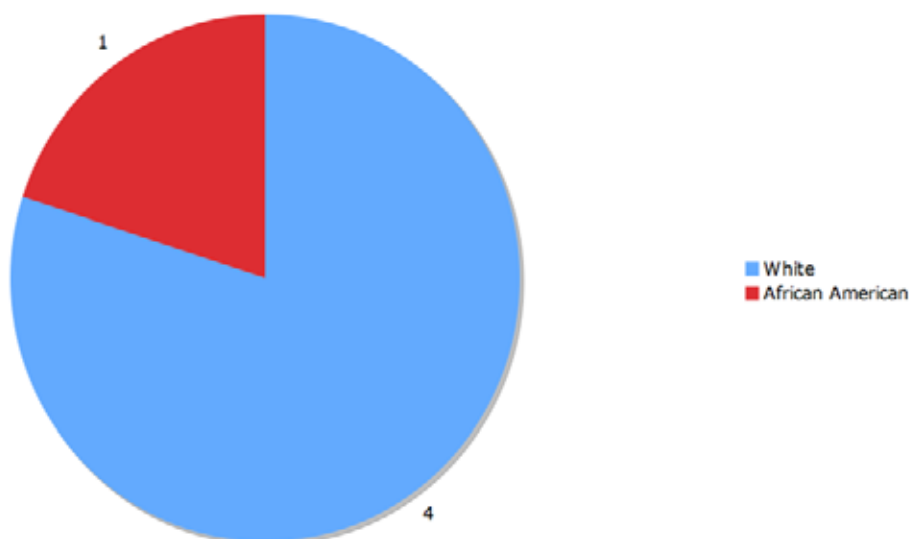
With only five-and-a-half programming hours in an entire year featuring minor gay content, it is time A&E strengthens

its portrayals of LGBT people. When a viewer watches the network, the only lesbian image is that of an addict; the only transgender image is that of a sex worker. This is not an accurate picture of the reality of the world. Given the strength of LGBT programming associated with its parent companies, A&E should strive to be as inclusive of LGBT people as cable networks ABC Family and Bravo. What A&E needs is buzz, which can be achieved by creating access points in programming that gives reason for LGBT viewers to tune in.

Since A&E airs so many alternative series, the network should have no problem increasing the presence of LGBT images on the channel. It needs to seek out LGBT participants for not only its new series, but also returning favorites. The network that brought us *Airline*, *Wedding Wars* and *United 93* is certainly capable of doing better.



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on A&E



FX ranks highest for LGBT-inclusive original content of the 10 cable networks evaluated. Every single one of its scripted series featured at least one LGBT representation during the season. With 79% of FX's LGBT characters being white, however, FX should consider color-blind casting for additional LGBT racial and ethnic diversity.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

FX

62.5 Total Hours of Original Primetime
Programming
28 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 45%



Nip/Tuck's
Joely Richardson

News Corporation's Fox Entertainment Group launched FX in 1994, breaking ground by becoming the first television network to embrace the Internet as an interactive tool. Live programming was broadcast from the "fX Apartment" where hosts would read e-mails live and respond in real time to viewer feedback. By 1997, however, executives scaled back and re-launched the network as "FX: Fox Gone Cable," targeting a male audience by airing NASCAR races and select hockey and baseball games.

In 2002, FX shifted again, dropping the "Fox Gone Cable" tag. The network began to find its own identity by branching out into high-quality original programming with the debut of the police drama *The Shield*. Its breakout success was followed with the plastic surgery drama *Nip/Tuck* (2003), the firefighting series *Rescue Me* (2004) and the darkly comedic world of *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* (2005).

Still targeting a male audience, these FX originals focused on macho protagonists, yet each one of the series featured a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) storyline at least once during any given season, with several LGBT characters appearing on a regular basis.

The 2007–2008 Season

Nip/Tuck had the greatest number of LGBT impressions on FX this season. Not only did it provide the majority of FX's LGBT content, the series featured at least one lesbian, gay or bisexual character on every single episode. Created by openly gay executive producer Ryan Murphy in 2003, *Nip/Tuck* has consistently pushed the envelope, never shying away from the darker aspects of plastic surgery. In the morally ambiguous world of the series, LGBT characters are just as complex and flawed as other characters.

This season, the most prominent gay storyline focused on Julia's romantic involvement with a woman, and her subsequent struggle with her sexual orientation as she tried to fight her feelings for her ex-lover Christian. The supporting character of Dr. Liz Cruz, a lesbian anesthesiologist, made regular appearances throughout the season, as did several new and recurring LGBT secondary characters.

Another series with gay content this season was the new legal drama *Damages*. Most of the 13 episodes featured a closeted gay lawyer until his unfortunate suicide in the eighth episode. *Rescue Me* spent two episodes on a minor storyline involving a commitment ceremony between a male couple. And the comedy *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* aired one well-handled episode in which Mac's transgender girlfriend, Carmen, returns to woo him.

However, FX did not rise to the occasion on all fronts this season. Though the tabloid drama *Dirt* featured several gay storylines in its first season—including a sweeps-worthy kiss between star Courteney Cox and her real-life best friend Jennifer Aniston—its sophomore year was a disappointment in terms of LGBT representations. In a season cut short by the writers' strike, there was only one appearance by Lucy Spiller's bisexual brother, and a minor story about a closeted actor in the season finale.

On *The Riches*, leading man Eddie Izzard has said the young character of Sam is loosely based on Izzard as a boy: a child

who is curious about donning female clothing. This exploration was touched upon in Season One, but was revisited only briefly in Season Two. Sam's journey could have been a groundbreaking storyline about gender identity in such a young character. Unfortunately, the show did not flesh out this particular plotline, but did offer a brief but touching storyline involving Nina's gay ex-husband and his partner.

The 2008–2009 Preview

Many FX favorites are returning for the 2008–2009 season. The GLAAD Media Award-winning documentary series *30 Days* airs its second season over the summer, while *Damages* will return for its second later in the year. The LGBT-inclusive drama *Nip/Tuck* will return for a fifth season, and *The Shield* returns for its seventh and final season.

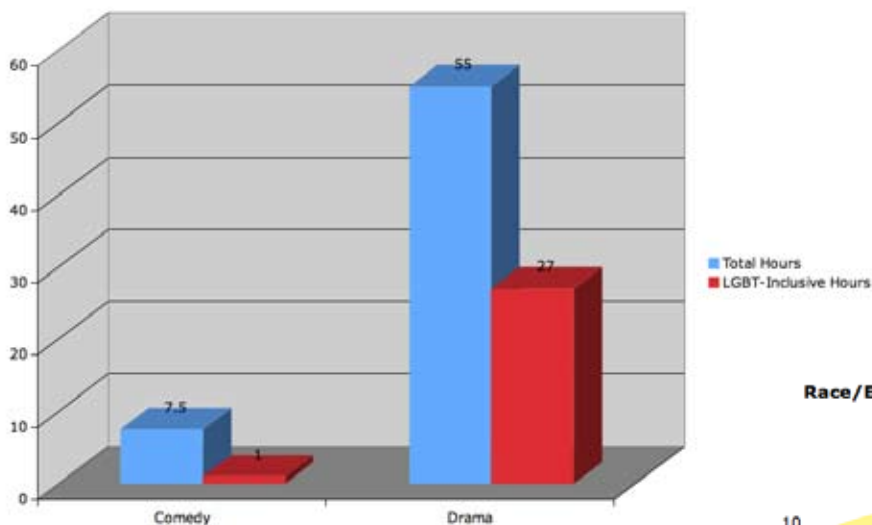
FX is also introducing the edgy drama *Sons of Anarchy*, a dark comedy that follows a motorcycle club determined to defend its small California town from drug dealers and corporate developers. It is due to air in September.

Recommendations

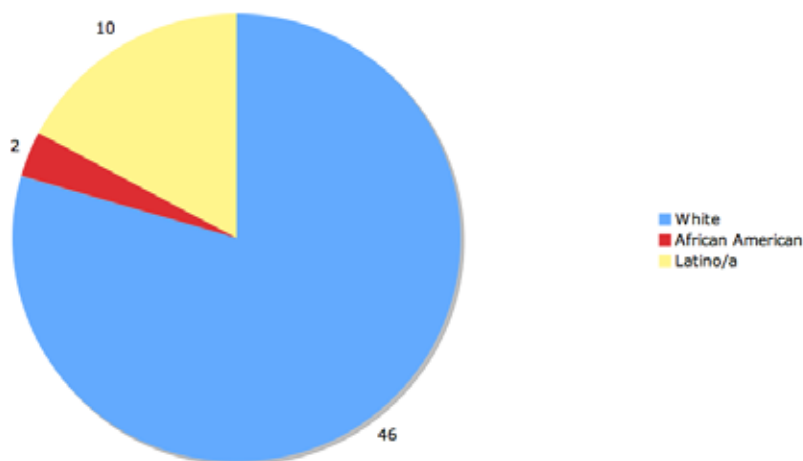
FX currently leads the cable networks in LGBT inclusion. To continue in this vein, FX should continue to introduce gay and transgender characters to new and returning series. Though no LGBT content has been announced for *Sons of Anarchy*, there is definitely room in a motorcycle gang for gay or lesbian bikers. There is also LGBT growth potential for FX's returning legal drama *Damages*. And with *The Shield* going into its final season, it is time for closeted Julian to come out.

FX has always been bold in its programming choices, and it has paid off in the ratings. The fact that LGBT storylines are regularly woven into hit series is to be commended. Sister network Fox should follow suit.

FX Primetime Original Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on FX



HBO boasted the most racially and ethnically diverse LGBT characters of any cable network, but 76% of its LGBT representations were gay men. The network should take a cue from competing network Showtime and include more lesbian and transgender characters to reflect the scope of the entire LGBT community.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

HBO

177.5 Total Hours of Original Primetime
Programming
46 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 26%



**The Wire's
Sonja Sohn**

Home Box Office (HBO) debuted in 1972 with the intent of airing acquired feature films and offering sports coverage. Eleven years later, in 1983, HBO premiered the first television film ever made for a cable network, *The Terry Fox Story*, about the Canadian athlete and amputee. That same year, the network also debuted its first original program for children, the Jim Henson-created series *Fraggle Rock*, which quickly became a hit—for both children and adults.

Following the success of *Fraggle Rock*, HBO began producing more original films, specials and scripted series, while still offering individual sporting events and televised premieres of box office films. The same model applies today.

HBO has a long history of airing original LGBT-inclusive programming. From movies about the AIDS crisis like the 1989 documentary *Common Threads: Stories From the Quilt* and 1993's original film *And the Band Played On*, to gay-inclusive hit series like GLAAD Media Award-winners *Sex and the City* (1998–2004) and *Six Feet Under* (2001–2005), as well as the 2006 documentary *All Aboard! Rosie's*

Family Cruise, HBO has consistently provided quality inclusive programming.

The 2007–2008 Season

This season, HBO's standout series for LGBT representation—and ethnic diversity—was clearly *The Wire*. Set in the gritty streets of Baltimore, series regulars Det. Kimba Greggs and Omar Little are two African American gay characters on opposite sides of the law dealing with their own private struggles. In this fifth and final season, Kimba tried to repair the broken relationship with her ex-girlfriend Cheryl in an attempt to get to know their son. Omar, a notorious criminal known for his ability to wield a shotgun, only showed his tender side when in the presence of his soft-spoken boyfriend. *The Wire* is an epic series, with interweaving characters and storylines. The fact that two gay characters of color are featured so prominently deserves accolades.

Another source of LGBT-inclusive programming is the live current affairs program *Real Time With Bill Maher*, which, with some exceptions, is consistently strong in its coverage of LGBT issues. This season, 14 out of 25 episodes included a gay guest panelist or discussion of an issue pertinent to the LGBT community. Gay commentators like conservative blogger Andrew Sullivan and progressive columnist Dan Savage regularly appeared on the show to share their perspectives. Even Bill Maher himself went to West Hollywood hotspot The Abbey in an episode to interview gay and lesbian people about their take on the presidential campaign. However, Maher made a misstep in his April 11 episode, in which he used the famous “we’re here, we’re queer” chant as a punch line to a Catholic church child abuse rant. Maher apologized soon after.

HBO offered three series with minor gay content this season. *John From Cincinnati* featured Barry Cunningham, a gay lottery winner. The drama *In Treatment* offered the surprise reveal of a gay character, Alex, who was an officer in the military. *Big Love* hinted at two characters whose sexuality is suppressed: Juniper Creek compound lieutenant, Alby, and Sarah's teenage friend and coworker, Heather.

Though *Entourage* boasts the only series regular Asian Pacific Islander gay character on television (the lovable Lloyd), one of HBO's most popular series has featured uneven representations of LGBT people. The episode titled "Sorry, Harvey" was the series' low point in its depiction of a transgender woman, with the show's protagonists using highly problematic language such as "she-male."

The 2008-2009 Preview

Alan Ball, the openly gay creator of the gay-inclusive drama *Six Feet Under*, is returning to HBO with two new series in tow. One is *True Blood*, based on the popular *Southern Vampire* series of books, featuring at least three gay and lesbian vampires, one of whom is Lafayette, one of the main characters in the series. Another is *Bad Girls*, an American adaptation of the British women's prison drama. Although no lesbian or bisexual characters have been officially announced, Ball is expected to keep the original's LGBT content, as he has not shied away from LGBT inclusion in past shows.

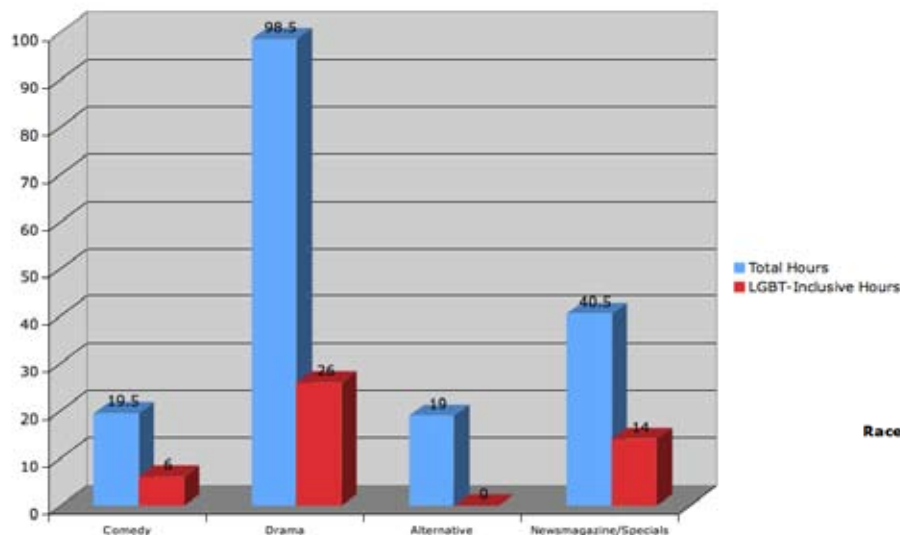
HBO is adapting another British series, entitled *Sensitive Skin*. Starring *Sex and the City*'s Kim Cattrall, the comedy focuses on a middle-aged wife and mother who begins to question her choices in life as well as her sexuality.

Sister network Cinemax premiered two LGBT-inclusive documentaries in June. *Freeheld* is the Academy Award-winning documentary short about the legal battle of Laurel Hester, a New Jersey police officer fighting to transfer her pension to her domestic partner in the months leading up to her death. HBO Films' *When I Knew*, based on the book of the same name, featured filmmakers Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato asking people about the time they first knew they were gay.

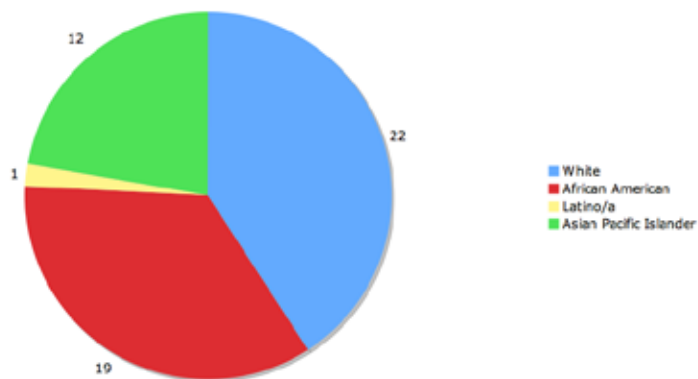
Recommendations

By airing series like *Six Feet Under* and *The Wire*, HBO was a trailblazer when it came to programs weaving gay characters into the fabric of the show. As HBO struggles to find its next tentpole series, we are hopeful the network's new programming and documentaries that will continue to embrace LGBT inclusiveness.

HBO Primetime Original Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on HBO
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008



Lifetime's original programming offers surprisingly little LGBT-inclusion and less in the way of diversity: Only one of the 25 LGBT impressions was a person of color. The addition of LGBT representation will only increase access points for growth of Lifetime's core audience.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

Lifetime

164.5 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

16.5 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 10%



How To Look Good Naked's Carson Kressley

Lifetime Television debuted in 1984, focusing exclusively on health and wellness programming. However, after the introduction of the network's Lifetime Original Movies in the 1990s, Lifetime rebranded itself and quickly became – and remains – the most-watched women's network. Now jointly owned by The Hearst Corporation and The Walt Disney Company, Lifetime has expanded its reach as Lifetime Networks, which encompasses three individual cable channels: Lifetime Television, Lifetime Movie Network and Lifetime Real Women.

Lifetime is currently the largest producer of original television movies. In 2006, Lifetime broke ground by airing its first transgender-focused 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.

Though still known for its original movies, Lifetime has also historically aired off-network reruns. In

fact, when it acquired the camp TV classic *The Golden Girls* in 1997, the network was embraced by a new audience and, in some circles, unofficially deemed “Lifetime: the Network for Women and Gay Men.” From that point onwards, Lifetime has continued in this vein by re-airing gay-inclusive programs like *Will & Grace* and *Desperate Housewives*.

In recent years, Lifetime has made a foray into alternative programming, such as the series *Gay, Straight or Taken?*, which premiered in early 2007. The premise involved a single girl thinking that she has been set up for a date with three single guys and must choose who wins her heart. However, the twist is that one of the would-be suitors is already in a relationship with a woman, and one of the suitors is gay. With clever casting, the audience was left guessing along with the contestant and the show succeeded in breaking stereotypes about gay men.

However, despite having a programming grid filled with original movies and popular second-run series, Lifetime's numbers had dropped in recent years. By the 2007 upfront, the network knew some serious changes had to be made if it wanted to remain in the Top 10.

The 2007-2008 Season

Lifetime shifted its programming considerably this season, offering a fresh slate of original programs and movies. 10% of these programming hours included minor LGBT-related content.

Most notable to this report was the addition of Lifetime's new alternative programs. *How to Look Good Naked*, hosted by openly gay fashion expert Carson Kressley, made a splash in early 2008 due to an aggressive marketing campaign and favorable early reviews. And the competition series, *Your Mama Don't Dance*, offered gay visibility because of three gay participants.

Under the direction of Lifetime Networks then-president of entertainment Susanne Daniels, a new scripted series called *Army Wives* was added to the slate in the summer of 2007. The origi-

nal drama quickly became the most-watched series in the network's history. Other series that lured new viewers to Lifetime were the summer romantic comedy series *Side Order of Life* and the dramedy *State of Mind*, starring Lili Taylor as a tough psychiatrist. All three of these new series offered at least one episode that featured an LGBT character, including a gay soldier (*Army Wives*), a lesbian teen (*Side Order of Life*) and a transgender patient (*State of Mind*).

And though these new series have boosted Lifetime's viewership considerably, the network has remained true to its roots by continuing to produce original movies throughout the year, which make up the bulk of Lifetime's original programming. One film from the season, *Girl, Positive*, addressed HIV and AIDS and featured both a supporting gay and lesbian character, the latter of whom was portrayed by Emmy winner S. Epatha Merkerson.

Lifetime is also one of GLAAD's broadcasting partners in airing our *Be an Ally & a Friend* PSA campaign.

The 2008-2009 Preview

Lifetime has ambitious plans for the upcoming season, repositioning itself as a contemporary network with a younger-skewing audience. Not only is the network launching seven new dramas, three new comedies, four new reality series and a new original movie every month, it has also acquired Bravo's LGBT-inclusive *Project Runway*.

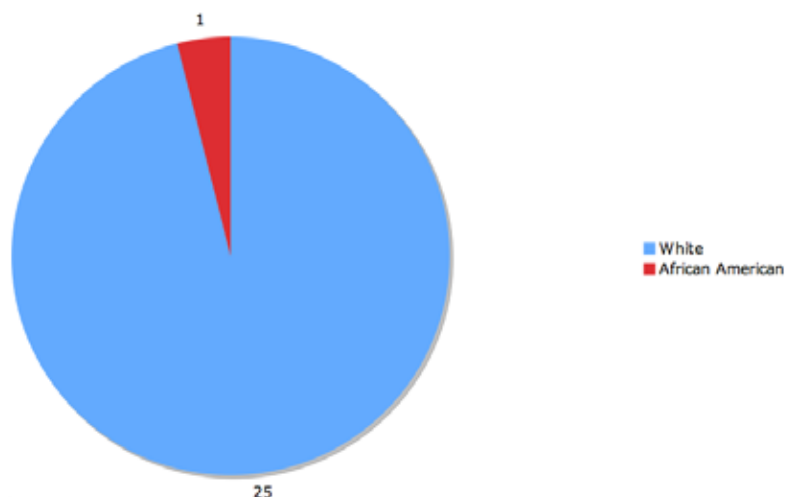
In addition to the second season of *Army Wives*, Life-

time also renewed *How to Look Good Naked* and will expand the format from 30 minutes to one hour. This will increase the network's LGBT-inclusive hours considerably.

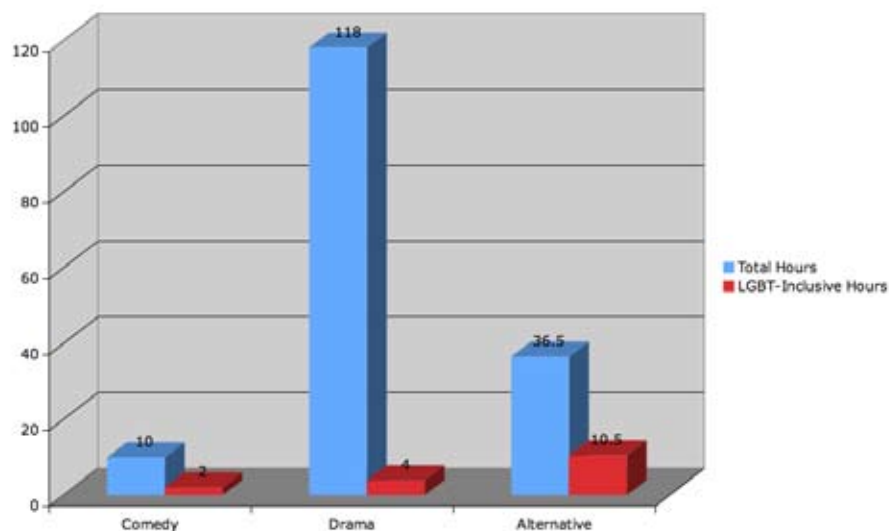
Recommendations

Lifetime is clearly making aggressive efforts to increase its viewership by becoming a destination for original programming. With women continuing to be Lifetime's core audience, the network should remember that women made up the bulk of the audience for *Queer as Folk* and *The L Word*; Lifetime should certainly tap into this vast audience interested in LGBT-inclusive programming. With new eyes coming to the network for *Project Runway*, Lifetime needs to take this opportunity to capture these viewers by increasing LGBT points of access in other programming as well.

Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on Lifetime



Lifetime Primetime Original Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008



MTV

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

With the most original programming hours of any cable network evaluated, MTV has more opportunities for LGBT inclusivity — but doesn't take them. Yes, Tila Tequila hosts a bisexual dating show, but the only way MTV will improve its ranking is if LGBT representations are spread across its platform.

225 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

36 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 16%

MTV was founded in 1981 as a network dedicated exclusively to airing music videos. The channel also featured music news and artist interviews from its inception, but 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 a completely new kind of show. *The Real World* offered an unprecedented view into the lives of seven strangers—including gay housemate Norm—as they learned to live together on camera in New York. Though it was initially pitched as a soap without professional actors or a script, the series quickly took on a life of its own, with viewers ostensibly growing along with the housemates as they faced issues of race and sexual orientation.

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. His presence on the show negated perceptions that AIDS is an all-consuming and thoroughly debilitating disease; but more importantly, it showed young people that yes, it can happen to them.

MTV has introduced viewers to many lesbian, gay and bisexual reality stars, regularly featuring participants on *The Real World*, *Road Rules*, *True Life*, *Made* and other alternative series. MTV has set a precedent for visibility, including gay people in many of its popular series while helping to make a generation accepting of LGBT issues.

The 2007–2008 Season

MTV has long been at the forefront of offering its viewers daring and often groundbreaking alterna-



A Shot at Love's
Tila Tequila

tive series. This season was no exception. In October 2007, the network premiered *A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila*, the first-ever dating show featuring both male and female suitors trying to win the affections of a single woman. Internet sensation Tila Tequila offered 16 straight men and 16 lesbians the chance to win her heart through challenges and dates. Though Tila ultimately chose a man as the winner, disappointing many “Team Dani” fans, the competition was fierce and the show brought in some of the highest ratings the network has ever seen. MTV launched *A Shot at Love 2* six months later as Tila's search for romance continued.

Another significant LGBT-inclusive show this season was *Real World/Road Rules: The Gauntlet III*, an intense competition series between past reality personalities from *The Real World* and *Road Rules*. Openly gay contestants included Tyler (*The Real World: Key West*), Evelyn and Ryan (*Real World/Road Rules Challenge: Fresh Meat*), Coral (*The Real World: Back to New York*), and the newly-out Brooke (*The Real World: Denver*), who, in true MTV-style, promptly locked lips with Evelyn in episode one.

Other season highlights included *Celebrity Rap Superstar*, which featured openly gay blogger Perez Hilton competing in six of its eight episodes, as well as two *Engaged and Underage*

episodes featuring young gay and lesbian couples.

The 2008–2009 Preview

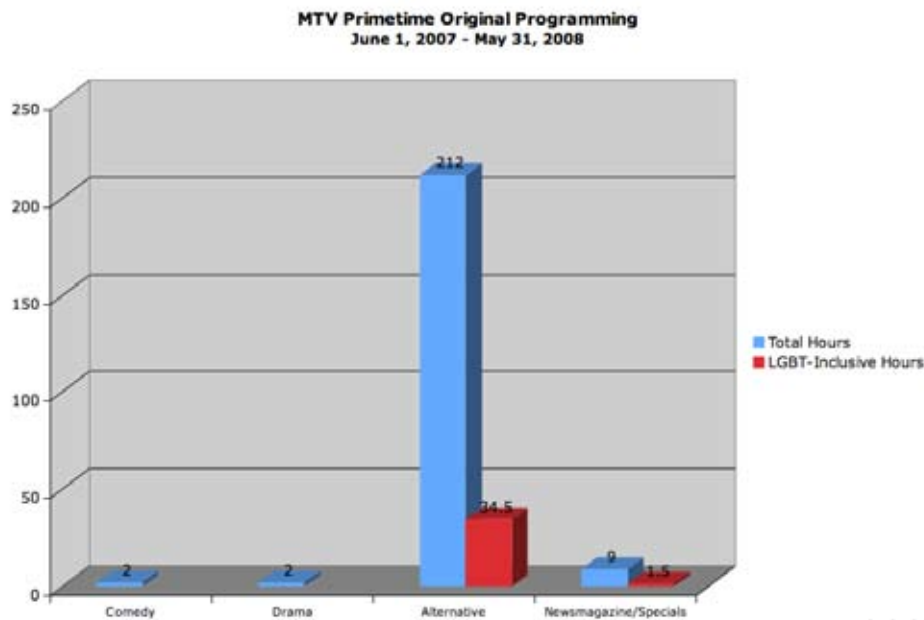
The Real World: Hollywood, which aired in the summer of 2008, did not include a gay or lesbian housemate. When *The Real World* heads to Brooklyn in 2009, we hope the show returns with an LGBT cast member. There are also opportunities for LGBT inclusion in returning favorites like *The Hills*, *True Life* and even *My Super Sweet 16*.

Recommendations

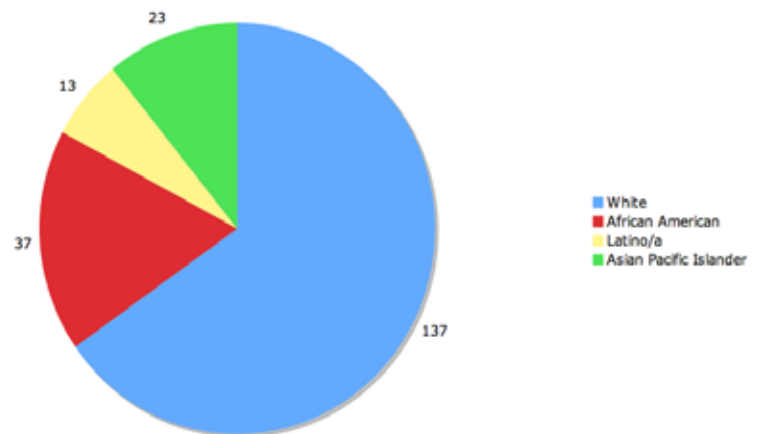
With all the unscripted and competition series the network regularly introduces, we are confident that MTV will continue in its efforts toward diverse casting by including LGBT people in their many hours of original programming.

For a show set in Los Angeles and in the entertainment and fashion industry, MTV’s mega hit *The Hills* surprisingly offers zero LGBT representations. It is not unimaginable that Lauren Conrad would have a gay friend at the Fashion Institute or Whitney Port a gay coworker at her PR firm.

And in keeping with MTV’s goal of expanding its programming and challenging its viewers, the network should seriously consider casting a transgender person in one of its reality series. A transgender housemate on *The Real World* could have a tremendous impact on transgender visibility and acceptance.



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on MTV



Showtime

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

Showtime's inclusive hours are impressive this year with LGBT representations appearing on many of its original programs. The net, however, needs to replenish the gay characters killed off of *The Tudors* and plan ahead for the vacuum left behind when *The L Word* exits in 2009.

71 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

23 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 32%

Though Showtime was launched nationally in 1978 by Viacom as a platform to air Hollywood films without commercial interruption, the network began to venture into its own programming in 1984 with the premiere of its first original movie, *The Ratings Game*, directed by and starring Danny DeVito. Based on its success, Showtime continued to produce a number of its own movies and series, airing them alongside acquired motion pictures.

Showtime has had a profound impact on the visibility of gay and transgender people, with a rich history of airing original programming that sets the bar for quality depictions of the LGBT community. Highlights of their acclaimed LGBT-themed original films include *As Is* (1985), *Losing Chase* (1996), *Twilight of the Gods* (1997), *More Tales of the City* (1988), *Execution of Justice* (1999), *Common Ground* (2000), *A Girl Thing* (2001), *Further Tales of the City* (2001), *Bobbie's Girl* (2002) 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, that featured two major gay characters.

In 2000, the network adapted the popular British series *Queer as Folk* for an American audience. The series 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. *Queer as Folk* forever changed the way relationships—gay or straight—are portrayed on television.

As *Queer as Folk* was gearing up for its fifth and final season, Showtime introduced another original series,



Showtime

**The L Word's
Jennifer Beals**

The L Word. Set in Los Angeles and focusing on a group of lesbian and bisexual women, the drama offered unprecedented visibility for lesbian and bisexual women when it premiered in 2004. This level of visibility has yet to be matched by any show on broadcast or cable television since.

The 2007–2008 Season

The L Word is by far the most LGBT-inclusive series on television today, with a core cast consisting of several lesbian and bisexual women as well as one transgender man and his gay love interest. The series offers a sense of fun and drama in every episode in its depictions of both the day-to-day lives of LGBT people and the challenges and struggles faced by the community. In this fifth season, *The L Word* told stories on issues ranging from “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” to closeted athletes and celebrities.

Another Showtime series with gay content is the comedy *Weeds*, with two gay supporting characters. Isabelle is the young, fiery daughter of Councilwoman Celia Hodes. Sanjay is an Indian American pot dealer who comes out in the sec-

ond episode and subsequently begins dressing provocatively to sell at gay clubs. The comedy paired with *Weeds* on Showtime's 2007 summer schedule was the sexually-charged *Californication*. Though there are no series regular characters that identify as gay or bisexual, Marcy, Charlie and Hank flirt with a more fluid sexuality as they experience threesomes with both men and women.

In the second season of the historical drama *The Tudors*, viewers were introduced to Mark Smeaton, a gay musician in King Henry's court who takes up a clandestine affair with Anne Boleyn's brother, George. And in the second season of *Brotherhood*, Tommy's closest aide, Alex, is openly gay. Though not seen often, the character is developed enough for viewers to meet his boyfriend, Scott, and learn that he has political aspirations of his own.

The 2008–2009 Preview

Showtime's LGBT-inclusive hours will likely remain high, with all five inclusive series mentioned in this report returning next season, as well as other favorites. Comedies *Weeds*, *Californication* and Tracey Ullman's *State of the Union* are back on the summer schedule in '08. *Brotherhood* and *Dexter* will return in the fall with *The Tudors* returning in 2009, but without the aforementioned gay and bisexual characters who met an untimely death at court. And *The L Word* comes back that same year with eight episodes to round out

its sixth and final season.

Showtime is also introducing a new inclusive comedy *Nurse Jackie*, starring Edie Falco about a New York City nurse who struggles to balance her personal life with her tough job. One of her coworkers is Maurice, who will be one of the few gay Muslims to be represented on television. Another new show is *Secret Diary of a Call Girl*, the hit UK series. This comedy features a young woman who is sensible Hannah by day and sexy Belle by night.

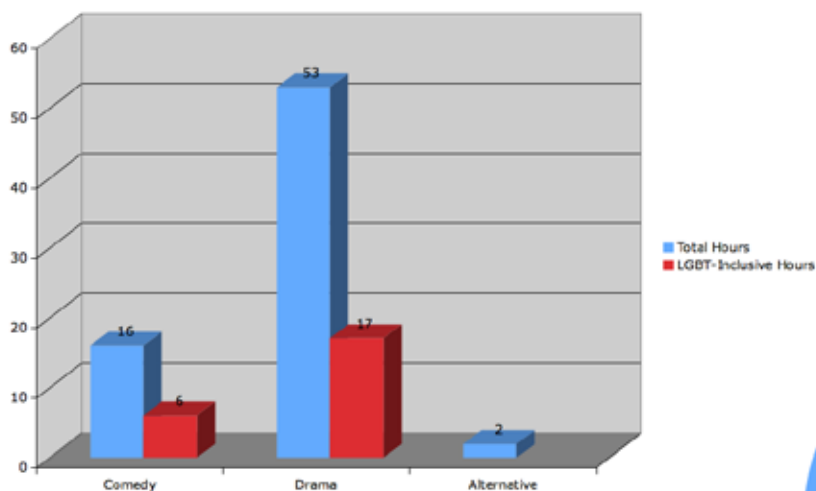
Recommendations

The critically-acclaimed drama *Dexter* regularly brings in Showtime's highest viewership. With one of its core characters killed off in the season finale, the drama is poised to introduce a new character. Why not make him or her gay? With such a large cast of detectives and forensic scientists, there's an opportunity here to write in a supporting LGBT character.

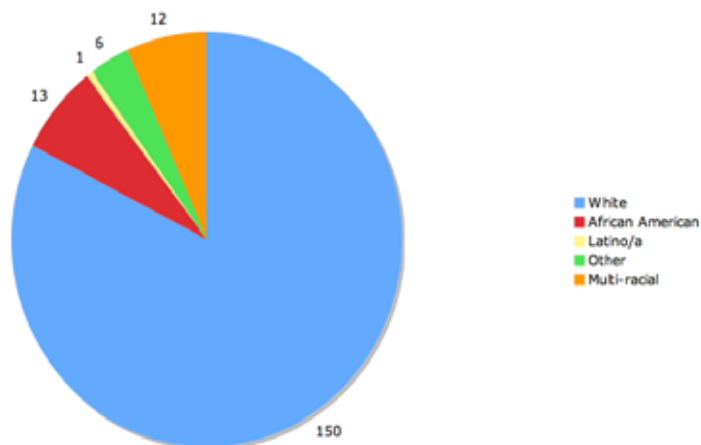
Brotherhood hints at Alex's desires to be politically prominent. This may be the time to have him rise from minor character to major political powerhouse. Tracey Ullman has demonstrated she can portray a wide range of characters. We would love to see an LGBT character in season two of *State of the Union*.

Showtime has a strong history of being inclusive, and its fearless efforts to break new ground are all too rare in this industry. While we expect to see another stellar year of diverse content, the end of *The L Word*, however, may unfortunately spell the end of LGBT-centric dramas on non-LGBT-specific networks.

Showtime Primetime Original Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on Showtime



Spike's 10% comes solely from an eight-hour mini-series that featured a minor supporting gay white character. Spike's male-centric audience also includes gay male viewers, yet the network is not providing access points that either attract these viewers or support them.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

Spike

81.5 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

8 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 10%



Owned by MTV Networks, Spike was founded in 2003 as Spike TV, a network whose programming was solely aimed at adult male viewers. Marketed as the first network for men, Spike filled its programming slate by airing syndicated series like *Baywatch* and *The A-Team*, as well as original animated shows for adults, like the Pamela Anderson-voiced superhero series *Stripperella*.

In addition to these scripted series, the network also aired wrestling matches from World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) and Total Nonstop Action (TNA). In 2005, Spike debuted *The Ultimate Fighter*, an original reality show based on Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), the sport of mixed martial arts. This series proved to be a success for the network and, based on its popularity, Spike began to cover actual UFC fights.

Through the course of its first five years, Spike began airing more original programming, including the vampire drama *Blade: The Series*, the well-received documentary *Metal of Honor: The Ironworkers of 9/11*, and several annual awards shows, including the *Scream Awards* and *Video Game Awards*. However, its anchor programs are still syndicated off-net series like the *CSI* and *Star Trek* franchises, as well as weekly wrestling and UFC matches.

The 2007–2008 Season

In July 2007, Spike premiered its first miniseries. Entitled *The Kill Point*, John Leguizamo starred as Mr. Wolf, an

ex-soldier who decides to rob a bank with a group of his former Marine comrades. When the heist hits a snag, the group takes hostages, one of whom happens to be gay. Because of this small detail woven into the fabric of the storyline, *The Kill Point* provided Spike eight hours of minor gay-inclusive content, which represents the entirety of the network's LGBT impressions and inflates the network's ranking in this analysis.

The 2008–2009 Preview

Spike's focus on male viewers continues with a number of alternative one-hour pilot orders that focus on extreme jobs performed exclusively by men: *Tank & Cobra* features real-life bounty hunters; *River Men* examines the men who steer large barges of cargo down the Mississippi; *USA vs. the World* pits Americans in dangerous jobs against their foreign counterparts; and *Human Predators* profiles men who kill—either professionally or criminally.

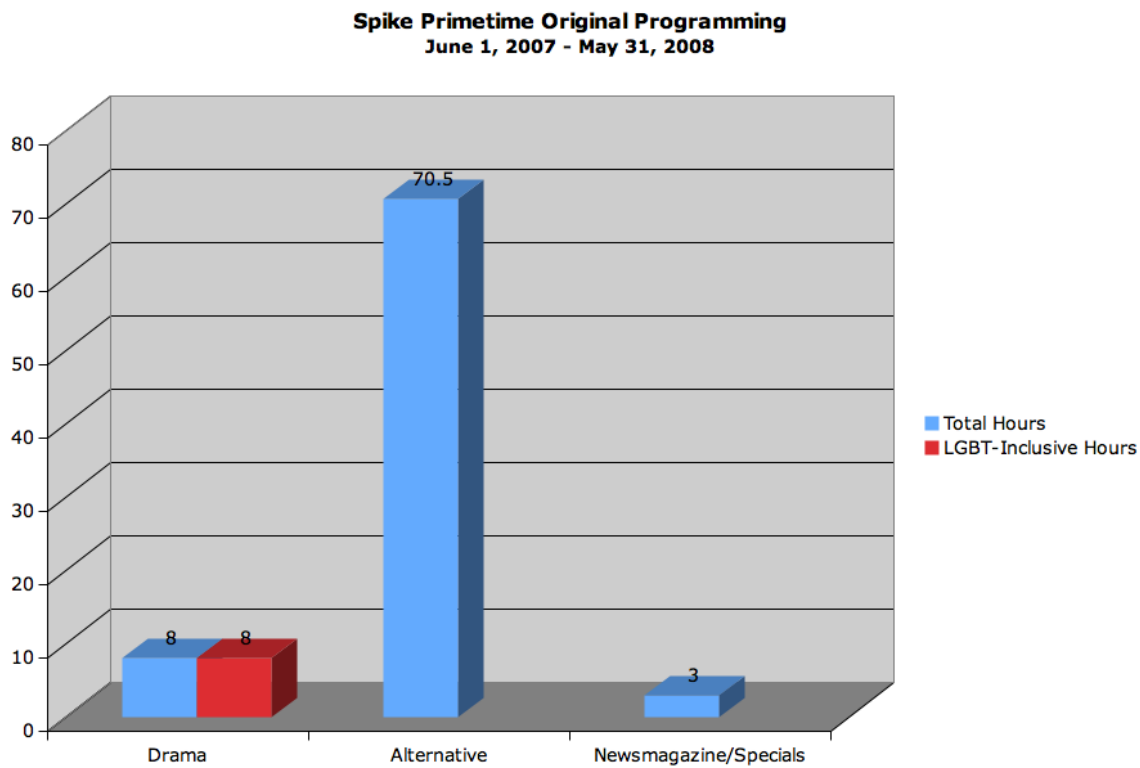
Also on the horizon is *Caught in the Action*, a hidden camera show hosted by TNA champion Kurt Angle. Cade Courtley, a former Navy SEAL, will host *Surviving Terror*; while *Idiot Hall of Fame* is a new 30-minute late night show that highlights video footage of men doing stupid things.

Recommendations

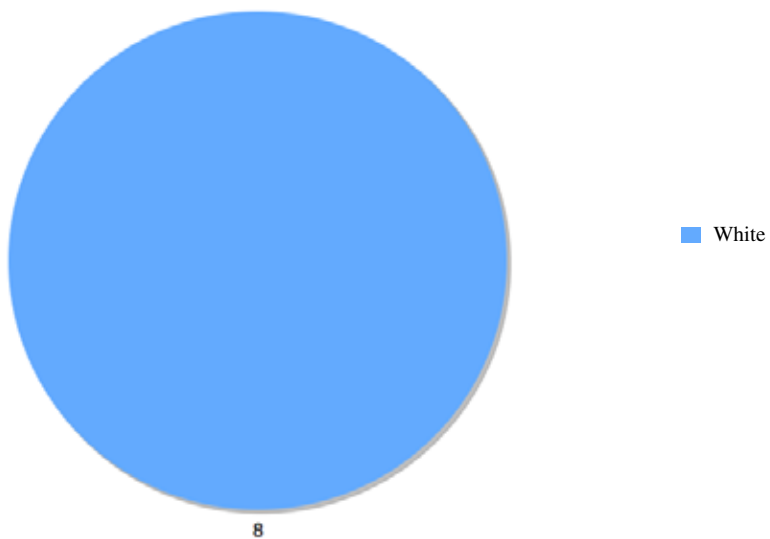
With MTV Networks being so inclusive in its programming on MTV, Vh1, Comedy Central and Logo, it is disappointing that Spike is so devoid of any LGBT-inclusive content. The gay story on *The Kill Point* was minor and fleeting, and there is no obvious future gay material in Spike's upcoming season. Programming targeted at men can—and should—allow for LGBT access points. After all, many of those men are gay.

While Nielsen does not count the sexual orientation of its viewers, anecdotally we know that many viewers of Spike's wrestling and ultimate fighting are gay. Spike needs to tap into this market. As the success of FX's origi-

nal dramas prove, you can bring in male viewers while also being LGBT-inclusive. Diversity will only expand viewership, making this smart business and the right thing to do.



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on Spike



With a focus on comedy, TBS apparently didn't get the memo that gay characters can be funny. And with an original programming slate rife with racial diversity, it is a shame that TBS' four hours of LGBT-inclusive programming featured exclusively white representations.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

TBS

54.5 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

4 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 7%

Perry's House of Payne, made up 64% of all of TBS' original primetime programming hours, but offered no LGBT representations.

The 2008–2009 Preview

The Bill Engvall Show, *My Boys* and *Frank TV* return to TBS for their second seasons, while *10 Items or Less* is returning for its third in 2009. The network also ordered 26 additional episodes of *Tyler Perry's House of Payne*.

In addition, the network is developing a number of new projects with prominent actors like William H. Macy and Jamie Foxx, as well as a late-night show involving the Jim Henson Company Muppets. No premiere dates have been announced.

Recommendations

According to TBS, with the network's recent focus on comedy, the median age of the TBS viewer dropped from 40 to 33 during the first quarter of 2008. The bulk of its younger viewership is drawn by its syndicated acquisitions like *The Office* and *Family Guy*, which are both LGBT-inclusive but not counted in this report as TBS original programming.

"Despite what everyone seems to think, there's no prerequisite that says cable has to be edgy," Steven Koonin, president, Turner Entertainment Networks told *MediaWeek* in May. "That may work at other networks, but we're looking to be relatable, to put up the kind of smart, family comedy that you can't find on broadcast anymore."

Using *The Office*, *Family Guy* and *10 Items or Less* as examples of shows that celebrate, to a limited extent, gay inclusiveness, TBS should employ LGBT diversity on its other original programming as well. *My Boys*, for example, is ripe for an exploration of gay athletes; *Tyler Perry's House of Payne* could benefit from the addition of a gay relative or committed couple in the neighborhood.



10 Items or Less'
Christopher Liam Moore

Turner Communications Group (TGG) oversees several networks, including Cable News Network (CNN), Turner Classic Movies (TCM), Turner Network Television (TNT) and Turner Broadcasting System (TBS). TBS, the first of TCG's networks, was founded in 1976 with an initial focus on Atlanta Braves baseball games.

Today, TBS is almost solely dedicated to comedy, using the slogan, "Very Funny." It broadcasts many popular acquired sitcoms like *Seinfeld* and *My Name is Earl*, as well as original comedies including *Tyler Perry's House of Payne* and *The Bill Engvall Show*.

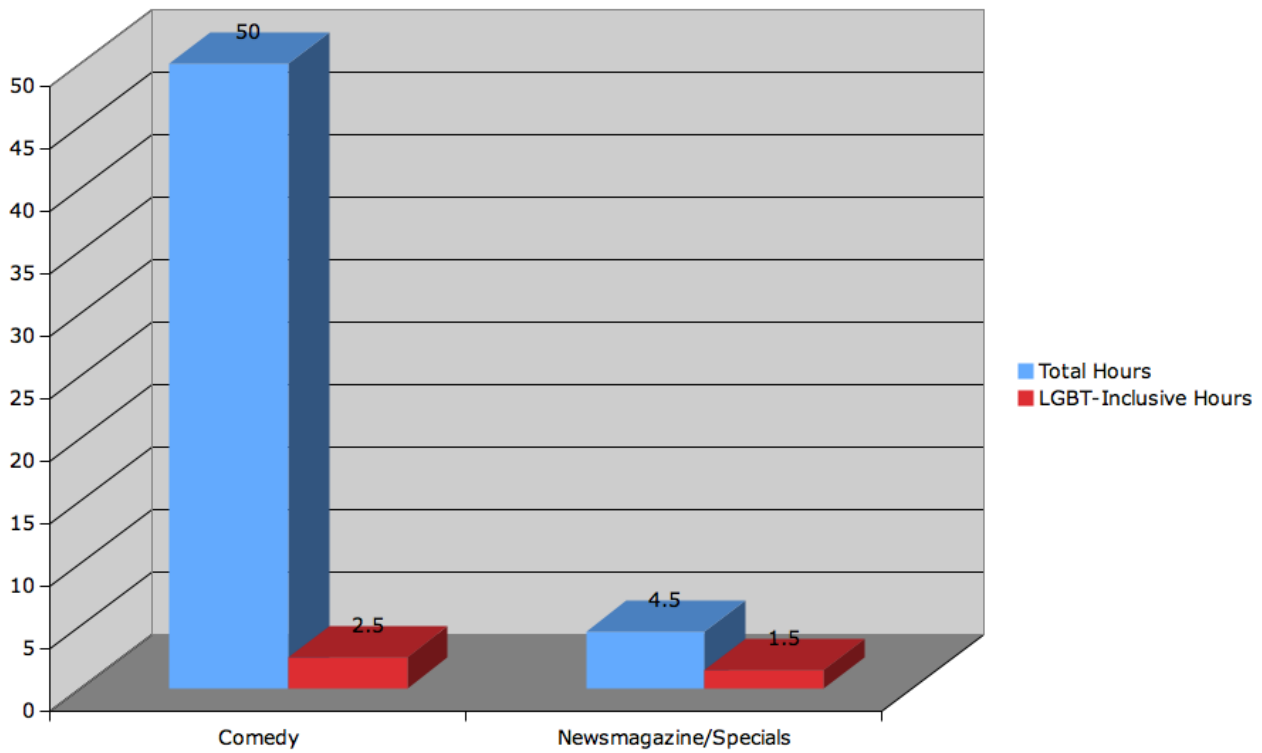
The 2007–2008 Season

This season, TBS offered five original half-hour comedies, only one of which offered any LGBT content. *10 Items or Less* is a humorous look into the lives of eight people working in a family-owned grocery store. One of the supporting characters, a cashier named Richard, came out officially this season, the show's second, after being confronted by his boss about his sexual orientation.

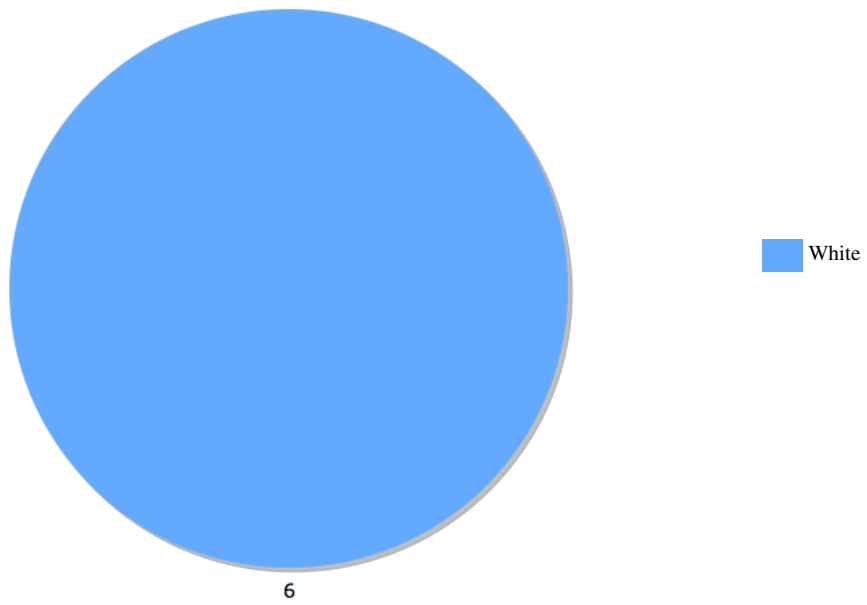
Also on TBS this season was *Ellen's Really Big Show*, a variety special hosted by openly gay comic Ellen DeGeneres. The 90-minute special showcased a number of singers, dancers and comedians, with DeGeneres serving as the master of ceremonies.

One of TBS' most prominent and popular series, *Tyler*

**TBS Primetime Original Programming
June 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008**



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on TBS



With only one hour of programming that featured any LGBT content, TNT ranks lowest of all networks evaluated. With a focus on drama and crime procedurals, there are many opportunities for TNT to be LGBT inclusive in upcoming new series. They just need to take them.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

TNT

91.5 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

1 LGBT-Inclusive Hour, 1%



Turner Network Television (TNT) launched in 1988 under the Turner Communications Group (TCG) umbrella, which at the time already owned Turner Broadcasting System (TBS) and Cable News Network (CNN). TNT's initial programming was made up of older movies, but once Turner Classic Movies (TCM) was introduced in 1994, the network expanded its programming with original dramas and acquired series.

From its inception, TNT has also regularly aired professional sporting events, including NASCAR races and NBA and NFL games. Today, NBA coverage makes up the bulk of TNT's primetime programming during the long-running basketball season. Sporting events are not counted for this analysis of cable programming.

TNT uses the slogan "We Know Drama" to signify its expanding platform of dramatic series, which launch after the NBA season is closed. This is a counterpoint to its sister network, TBS, whose tagline is "Very Funny." Many of TNT's dramas have been nominated for Emmy Awards, like the 2005 miniseries *Into the West* and the crime drama *The Closer*, which returns in July 2008.

The 2007–2008 Season

In fact, *The Closer* was the only series that gave TNT its single hour of gay-inclusive programming. In the season

three opener, a young student has just witnessed his entire family being butchered before his eyes. The police sense that he is hiding something, making him the prime suspect, but they later learn that he is simply nervous to reveal that he has been having a clandestine affair with his male math teacher.

Since this is the only hour featuring LGBT content all year, TNT needs vast improvement when portraying gay characters. Procedural crime dramas like *The Closer* often feature episodes that cast LGBT characters as victim, villain or suspect, perpetuating antiquated stereotypes. While these are often interesting stories, the lack of images of LGBT characters as police officers, crime scene investigators or attorneys creates a jarring disparity, highlighting the degree to which LGBT characters still inhabit stereotypical roles as victims or villains.

The 2008–2009 Preview

In addition to the return of another popular series, *Saving Grace*, and *The Closer*, TNT adds three new dramas for the 2008-2009 season: *Truth in Advertising*, set in a prestigious Chicago ad agency; *Raising the Bar*, a legal drama from Steven Bochco; and *Leverage*, which follows a team of thieves who act as modern-day Robin Hoods. Also on the horizon is TNT's first foray into alternative programming, *Wedding Day*, which promises to give betrothed couples their dream wedding.

The network has announced it will offer original prime-time programming three nights a week by 2010. Six scripted dramas are currently in development, four of which are police and crime serials. TNT is also developing a number of alternative series, including *Behind the Drama*, which focuses on little-known stories of television and movies; and *Shadow of a Doubt*, which plans to solve a different mystery each episode.

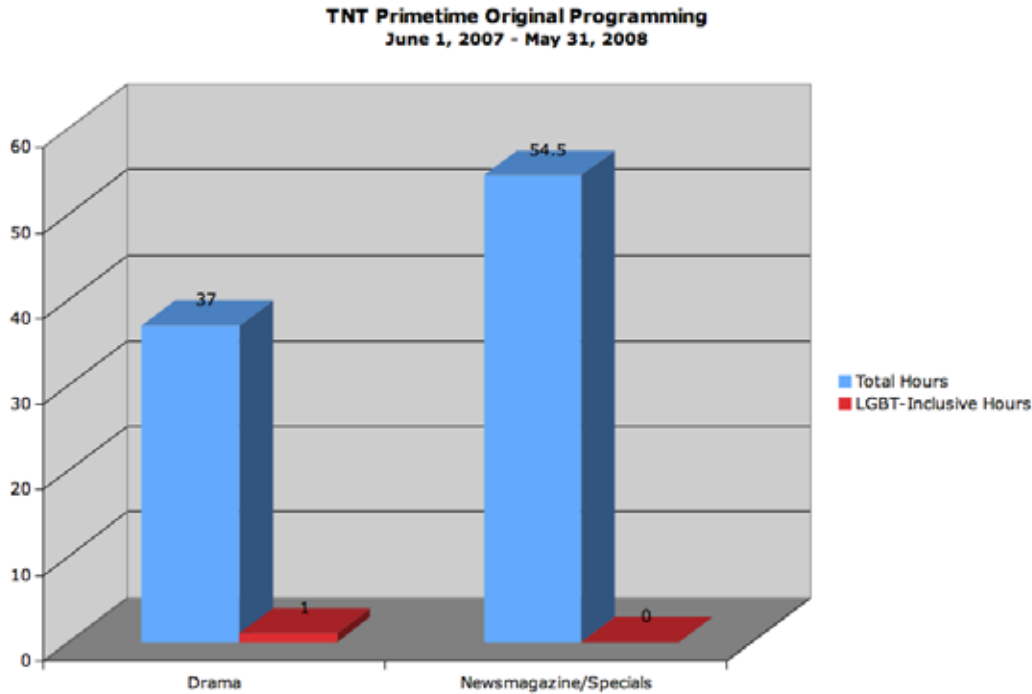
Recommendations

With the announcement of so many new series, TNT is in the perfect position to better represent the LGBT community. All of its new series could feasibly have an LGBT character as part of its core cast. *Truth in Advertising*, for example, is an easy fit for a gay or lesbian ad executive; *Raising the Bar* could easily raise the bar by including a gay attorney, something rare for this genre, but *Bohco* is no stranger to including gay characters.

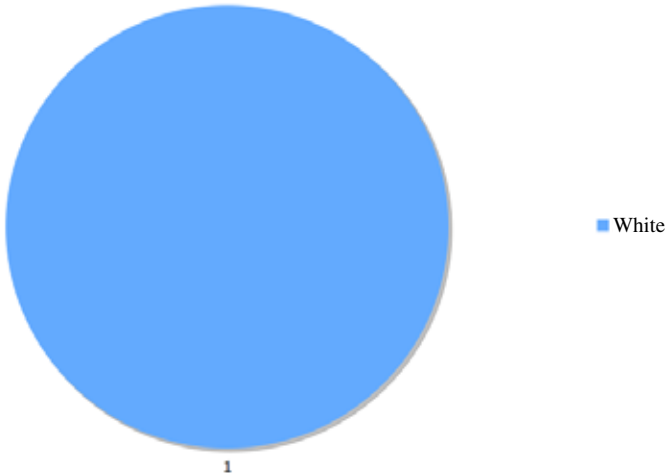
With tremendous changes in recent months about the state of marriage for gay and lesbian couples, TNT’s new alternative series *Wedding Day* should reflect the

evolving cultural climate by featuring a gay or lesbian couple. Several other wedding-themed series have already done this, and TNT has an excellent opportunity to follow suit.

As showrunners prepare for the 2009-2010 season, they should look at continuing to expand the mold of their dramas, as HBO’s *The Wire* did with gay characters on both sides of the law. By introducing LGBT characters into a legal show or crime procedural, TNT will create additional access points for viewers and potentially expand its audience.



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on TNT



USA offered a few individual episodes that featured supporting LGBT characters, but failed to sustain any level of inclusion throughout the year. With new series in the works, and the return of *The Starter Wife*, USA can certainly improve its ranking by better representing the audience it's trying to reach.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

ADEQUATE

FAILING

USA

189 Total Hours of Original Primetime Programming

8 LGBT-Inclusive Hours, 4%

encore presentations airing on sister network NBC in 2008, offered two episodes with LGBT content. One looked into the death of a young transgender woman housed as a male prisoner. The other investigated a lesbian suspect accused of murder.

The spy drama *Burn Notice* offered one episode with gay content in its freshman season, entitled "Drop Dead." The multi-layered plot involved blackmail and a gay singles bar. And though the character assumed to be gay ultimately turns out to be straight, the protagonists' assumptions and prejudices about gay people were brought to light.

The bulk of USA's original primetime programming is *WWE Raw*, which gave viewers 103 hours of wrestling entertainment. *Raw* has been known to air juvenile taunts and personal insults from wrestlers. One of the heroes of WWE is John Cena, whose banter is known to slide into offensive anti-gay jabs against his opponents.

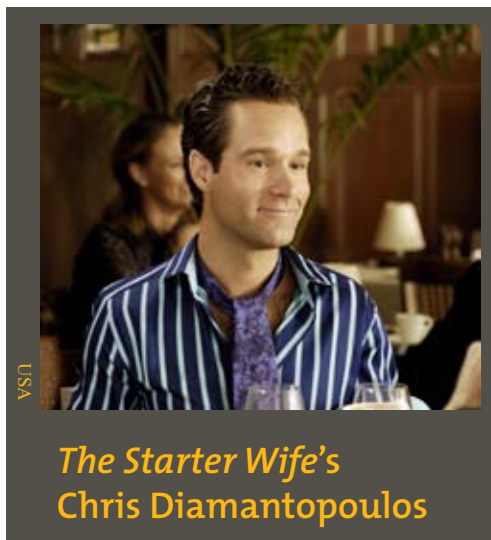
The 2008–2009 Preview

The Starter Wife returns with 10 new episodes in 2008. This means that viewers will be seeing more of Rodney, who is officially USA's only series regular gay character. The network has also ordered new episodes of returning favorites *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Burn Notice*, *Monk* and *Psych*, and recently premiered *In Plain Sight*, about a U.S. Marshal and the witness protection program.

Outside of its original programming, USA Network is developing a multi-platform public education initiative entitled "Characters Unite." According to press materials, this campaign promises to "provide network viewers and clients with innovative ways to fight prejudice and to promote diversity. The underlying message will focus on what each of us can do individually and collectively to acknowledge and respect our shared humanity." GLAAD is proud to participate in this exciting initiative alongside other advocacy groups.

Recommendations

With the return of *The Starter Wife*, USA has the oppor-



USA Network is part of NBC Universal, which also owns the basic cable networks Sci Fi Channel, 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.

Presently, USA is known for airing original and second-run series, as well as for broadcasting World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) matches. The network's popularity increased with the 2002 premieres of *Monk* and *Psych*, two original dramedies with quirky characters at their core. In fact, USA's current slogan is "Characters Welcome" to signify the network's commitment to a slate that focuses on strong personalities.

The 2007–2008 Season

To kick off summer of 2007, USA launched *The Starter Wife*, a six-part original miniseries based on the Gigi Levangie Grazer novel of the same name. *Will & Grace*'s Debra Messing starred as Molly Kagan, a woman whose Hollywood film mogul husband leaves her for a younger woman, forcing her to rely on her friends for support. Among those friends is Rodney, a gay interior decorator, a supporting character who appeared only briefly.

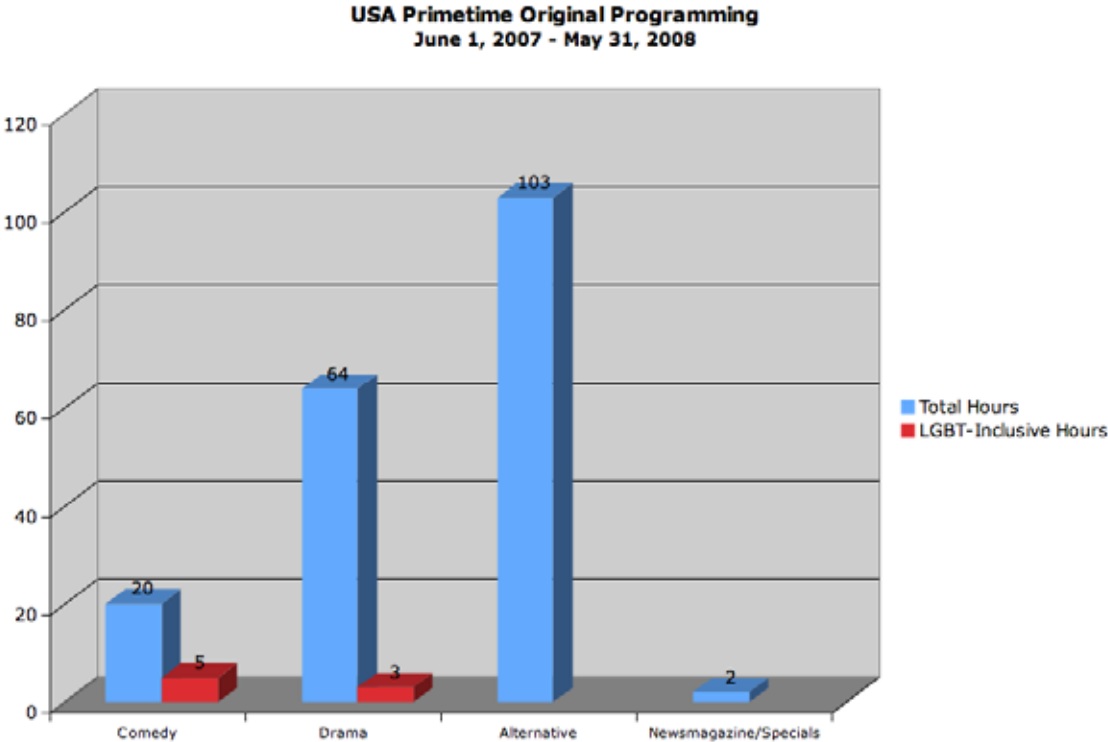
The crime procedural *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, whose seventh season aired first on USA in fall 2007, with

tunity to expand the character of Rodney from stereotypical sidekick to a multi-dimensional person. In a cable universe that has included mobsters, frat boys and police detectives who are gay, a gay interior decorator seems practically retro (and not in a good way).

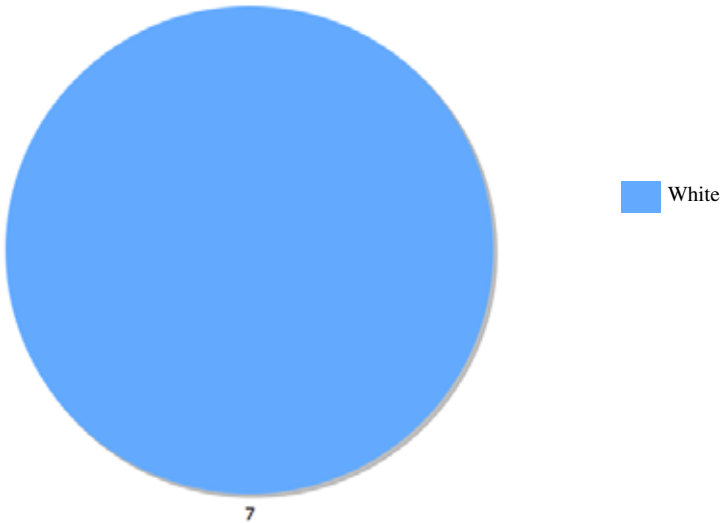
With five other original one-hour programs, the network has many opportunities to increase and achieve LGBT inclusion, but showrunners and writers must take the

lead in bringing these stories to the table and adding LGBT characters to existing casts.

As a responsible broadcaster, USA needs to be aware of the potential impact of anti-gay insults and slurs on *WWE Raw*. Though we know insults are part of the entertainment, by airing anti-gay comments, USA is sending a harmful message to its audience as well as insulting many of its viewers.



Race/Ethnicity of LGBT Impressions on USA



ADDITIONAL CABLE OVERVIEW

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

For the 2007-2008 *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, GLAAD expanded its research by evaluating primetime original cable programming in addition to the broadcast networks' primetime schedules. In a universe of 118 cable networks to choose from, and because of available resources, the cable networks analyzed in this report were limited to 10, selected from Nielsen Media Research's list of top basic and premium cable networks as of June 2007.

However, additional cable networks deserve recognition for their contribution of LGBT programming over the course of the 2007-2008 television season. Because of restrictive broadcast parameters, the existence of these cable networks certainly inspires greater quality and variety when it comes to LGBT images.

- **ABC Family**, a Disney-ABC network, offers few original series, but one standout is the GLAAD Media Award-nominated *GREEK*. Set in the world of fraternity and sorority houses, the drama features Calvin, one of the rare gay characters of color on television. This season, viewers saw Calvin start to date other men on campus, and even engage in the network's first onscreen kiss between two men. *GREEK* is the highest-rated original series in adults age 18–24 in the network's history.

- **BBC America**, a BBC Worldwide network, carries many programs originally seen in the UK on BBC. Launched in 1998, the network has featured many LGBT-inclusive series the past decade, as well as the GLAAD Media Award-nominated miniseries *The State Within*. This season, gay-inclusive dramas *Torchwood*, *Hotel Babylon* and *Jekyll* all crossed the pond and appeared on the network, as did *The Graham Norton Show* featuring out comic and talk show host Graham Norton.

- **Bravo**, an NBC Universal network, appeals to LGBT viewers and gives straight audiences a broader understanding of LGBT lives through alternative programming like *Project Runway*, *Top Chef*, *Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List*, *Step It Up and Dance*, *Work Out*, *Flipping*

Out and *Make Me a Supermodel*, among others. Bravo is perhaps the most LGBT-inclusive mainstream network on television today because of its consistent use of gay and lesbian people in its original series. In full disclosure, Bravo aired the GLAAD Media Awards in June 2008, but the network's previous years of LGBT-inclusive programming, prior to GLAAD's partnership, certainly deserves praise.

- **Comedy Central**, an MTV Network, is known for its farcical and irreverent approach, and its discussion of LGBT issues and depiction of LGBT characters is no different. The GLAAD Media Award-nominated *The Sarah Silverman Program* featured couple Brian and Steve, two gay characters that defy stereotypes every episode. Satirical news shows *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* and *The Colbert Report* often discussed topics pertinent to the community, like marriage for gay couples and "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Returning comedies featuring LGBT characters included *Drawn Together* and *Reno 911!*, while *Mind of Mencia* and *South Park* regularly relied on LGBT stereotypes.

- **here!** is a premium subscription channel or video on-demand service for an LGBT audience. It launched in 2002 and airs a number of series such as the gothic soap *Dante's Cove* and the vampire drama *The Lair*. The network is also home of the Chad Allen detective series, *The Donald Strachey Mysteries*. *here!*'s *The DL Chronicles* was awarded the GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Miniseries in 2008.

- **IFC** aired two original comedies this season with gay supporting characters. *The Minor Accomplishments of Jackie Woodman* included the character Mitchell, a gay writer at the magazine where Jackie works. *The Business* featured Terrance, a shy accountant who came out mid-season.

- **Logo**, an MTV Network, is an advertiser-supported basic cable network that targets the LGBT community with original and acquired programs that appeal to an LGBT audience. Launched in 2005, the network broke ground this season by airing *Transamerican Love Story*, the first dating show featuring men wooing a transgender bachelorette. Logo also is home of *The Big Gay Sketch Show*, a comic sketch series; *RuPaul's Drag Race*, an alternative series that searches for the best drag queen in America;

and *Gimme Sugar*, Logo's lesbian and bisexual answer to MTV's *The Hills*.

- **The N**, an MTV Network, targets teen viewers. In recent years, the network has gone to great lengths to represent fairly and accurately young gay and lesbian characters through two GLAAD Media Award-nominated dramas: *South of Nowhere*, which features two leading female characters who are dating, and *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, which has offered several supporting gay and lesbian teen characters throughout its run.



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 its glaad.org channel *TV Gayed* and its entertainment blog *cineQueer*. Contact us at entertainment@glaad.org.

Damon Romine

Director Entertainment Media

Since 2005, Damon Romine has led GLAAD's entertainment efforts. In addition to his defamation-fighting work, Romine has consulted with all of the networks and dozens of producers and writers regarding their LGBT content. Romine is the architect of GLAAD's ongoing *Be an Ally & a Friend* public education campaign, which has reached millions through network and online PSAs expressing the importance of straight allies. He is the creator of the annual *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index*, first released in 2007, which measures and ranks LGBT content on the ma-

jor television networks. He is also the author of GLAAD's annual *Where We Are on TV* diversity study, now in its 13th year. In 2005, Romine re-imagined the report to include not only LGBT diversity, but the race/ethnicity and gender of every character on primetime network television, making this report a definitive examination of television diversity. He has presented GLAAD findings to many audiences and is frequently called upon by national and local media. A former television development executive, author, entertainment journalist and magazine editor, he is a member of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations' Media Image Coalition, the Entertainment Resource Professionals Association and the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association. Romine holds two bachelor's degrees from the University of Missouri.

Sarah Holbert

Entertainment Media Manager

Sarah Holbert 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. She is the lead researcher on the annual *GLAAD Network Responsibility Index* and is a contributor to *cineQueer*, GLAAD's entertainment blog. She also maintains glaad.org's growing database of LGBT-inclusive film. Holbert holds a degree in women's studies from the University of Redlands and has been at GLAAD since 2004, following a four-year stint as an agent in the entertainment industry.

Eleanor Morrison

Entertainment Media Fellow

The newest member of the team, Eleanor Morrison regularly tracks and examines hundreds of hours of television and is the principal author of *TV Gayed*, a weekly guide to what's LGBT in television on glaad.org. She is also the lead researcher on the annual *Where We Are on TV* report and a contributor to *cineQueer*, GLAAD's entertainment blog. Morrison holds a bachelor's degree in media studies from the University of Georgia and a communication and social psychology MSc from the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is currently working toward her Ph.D. in communication at the University of Southern California.

**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.**

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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.

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GLAAD Network Responsibility Index 2007-2008