



2015

STUDIO

RESPONSIBILITY
INDEX



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FROM THE DESK OF SARAH KATE ELLIS

GLAAD PRESIDENT AND CEO

More than twenty years ago, the film *Basic Instinct* was released, and GLAAD's relationship with Hollywood began to take shape. The film's portrayal of bisexual and lesbian women as duplicitous and psychotic murderers was yet another example of Hollywood's longstanding practice of portraying lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) characters as evil villains and tragic victims. This time, however, the LGBT community was going to make their voices heard.

Fed up with how the media had long told our stories, GLAAD spoke out against the film's portrayal of our community and led the conversation in the press and behind the scenes with the studio. It's one of the roles we continue to play today.

Sadly, the mainstream film industry has continued to lag far behind other media when it comes to portraying LGBT people. This is why in 2013, GLAAD launched the annual *Studio Responsibility Index* (SRI) to examine depictions of the LGBT community in mainstream Hollywood film and hold studios accountable for what their films depict.

Every year after analyzing the studios' theatrically released films, we struggle to find the silver lining. For every standout LGBT role, there seem to be two others that either barely register or present us as jokes or offensive caricatures. And sometimes it's worse.

This year, one of the few bright spots we found was the 2014 film slate from Warner Brothers which represented the LGBT community more consistently than any other studio. With most other media, we might take this as a promising sign of progress, but several years of analyzing the mainstream film industry have taught us that the major Hollywood studios demonstrate very little consistency when it comes to depicting LGBT people. Already in 2015, for example, Warner Brothers released one of the most problematic films we've seen in years, the gay-panic exploiting comedy *Get Hard*.

Hollywood must recognize that LGBT people are worthy of depictions crafted with care and humanity, and we should be part of the stories they tell. Doing so won't simply demonstrate respect for a long-standing part of their audience, but it will align Hollywood film with other media in telling more authentic stories that represent the full diversity of our society and encourage greater understanding. Only then will we be able to say that America's film industry is a full partner in accelerating acceptance.



INTRODUCTION

This marks the third year that GLAAD has tracked the quality and quantity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) representations in mainstream Hollywood film, and sadly things have not markedly improved during that time. Of the 114 films GLAAD tracked this year, only 20 (17.5%) included depictions of LGBT characters, and some of those would have been better left on the cutting room floor.

Most depictions of LGBT people in these films tend to be minor, both in terms of substance and screen-time, and occasionally still rely on outdated and even defamatory stereotypes. Meanwhile, one of cinema's biggest competitors has completely lapped the industry in this regard. The characters being depicted on television, everywhere from broadcast networks to streaming services, make those found in film appear shockingly outdated.



Tammy, Warner Brothers

This isn't hyperbole. In fact, for the first time this year, GLAAD extended the number of nominees in the GLAAD Media Awards television series categories from five to ten, in recognition of the sheer number of well-crafted LGBT characters we now see in regular and recurring roles. By comparison, of the 114 films from the seven biggest Hollywood studios GLAAD tracked for this report, only one was good enough to earn a GLAAD Media Award nomination.

Conventional wisdom has long dictated that if you want to find films that better represent LGBT people, you must look at independent and "art house" cinema. Several studios were happy to point this out in response to our previous reports, and so this year we also tracked the films released under the "art house" film wings of the parent studios we have previously spotlighted. While it is true that better depictions of LGBT people could be found here, they were also surprisingly less common. Only 10.6% of the 47 films GLAAD tracked from Fox Searchlight, Focus Features, Roadside Attractions, and Sony Pictures Classics contained LGBT characters.

Despite the prevalence of headlines bemoaning the decline of the film industry, the truth is that films very much do still matter, both in the United States and abroad. The medium remains respected and popular, and continues to wield remarkable earning potential and cultural relevance. If anything, any lethargy in the film market should prompt the mainstream studios to get with the times and innovate. Increasingly, the kinds of films that become massive box office hits often seem to take executives by surprise.



Jersey Boys, Warner Brothers

So as film remains very much a viable industry, what studios choose to portray still matters as well. Mainstream Hollywood film has never been particularly nuanced or empathetic when depicting LGBT people, but the fact that film has remained clumsy and inconsistent as so many other mediums have evolved for the better makes them seem more out of touch with every passing year. That's not a smart place to be when trying to turn younger generations into reliable moviegoers, and it unfortunately helps keep old prejudices against LGBT people alive in our culture.

Fair and accurate representations are especially critical when considering the implications these depictions can have in other countries, where Hollywood film often has a greater presence than any other form of American-produced media. Film remains one of our country's biggest cultural exports, and significant depictions of LGBT people in movies can have a powerful and positive effect in sparking dialogue and understanding.

And we don't have to guess at this. GLAAD has worked with numerous LGBT advocates from places like the Middle East and Asia who repeatedly have told us that Hollywood film has a strong influence in their home countries, and how rare depictions of LGBT people remain there. These are often countries where misconceptions and discrimination remain culturally ingrained, and simply being out as LGBT can put one at risk. The films we export should not reinforce the status quo in places like these.

Still, the stories films tell also have the potential to do a lot of good. Studies have repeatedly shown that in absence of someone knowing an LGBT person in real life, programs and films with LGBT characters can help foster understanding and acceptance,¹ particularly in places where LGBT people still don't feel safe enough to live openly.



Get On Up, Universal Pictures

Given the long amount of time that often passes between a film's conception to its release, it's perhaps understandable that the film industry would lag a bit behind more quickly-produced television programs, but that's only a minor allowance when one considers how far film ultimately has to go. By all appearances, Hollywood still takes too long to learn its lessons and progress, but we hope they've made note of the remarkable success one film released last year achieved.

If you had told most Hollywood executives in 2013 that a period biopic about a gay mathematician would make more than \$200 million dollars in worldwide box office receipts, it's safe to say they likely wouldn't have believed you. Yet, The Weinstein Company's *The Imitation Game* has done just that, winning quite a few awards in the process. The film is readily described as a "crowd-pleaser" by critics, and demonstrates there is a market for well-made films that show audiences stories

they haven't seen before, including those about LGBT people. Hollywood should be paying attention.

As GLAAD's recent *Accelerating Acceptance* report demonstrates, despite all the legislative and policy victories the LGBT community has experienced in recent years, there are still many parts of this country and others where we are not accepted.² The struggle must extend from the ballot box, the legislative chamber, and the courtroom directly to the hearts and minds of those who still harbor anti-LGBT prejudice. It's precisely those hearts and minds that popular media like film has a unique power to touch, which is why GLAAD will continue to hold Hollywood accountable for how it represents us and our lives to the rest of the world.

1. glaad.org/2008/12/03/the-pulse-of-equality
hollywoodreporter.com/news/thr-poll-glee-modern-family-386225
<http://www.publishing.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1058&context=jsbhs>

2. <http://www.glaad.org/publications/glaad-accelerating-acceptance>

METHODOLOGY

For this report, GLAAD focused its quantitative analysis on the seven film studios that had the highest theatrical grosses from films released in 2014, as reported by the box office database, Box Office Mojo. Those seven studios are:

- 20th Century Fox
- Lionsgate Entertainment
- Paramount Pictures
- Sony Columbia Pictures
- Universal Pictures
- The Walt Disney Studios
- Warner Brothers

This report examines films that were released theatrically during the 2014 calendar year (January 1 to December 31) under the official studio banners and imprints. Films released by studio “art house” divisions (such as Fox Searchlight) were analyzed separately and not part of the parent studio’s final tally, as these specialty films are typically distributed and marketed to a much smaller audience than their major studio counterparts. These distinctions were informed in part by the box office reporting of Box Office Mojo and other entertainment industry databases. The total number of films that fell within the research parameters is 114.

As mentioned above, this year GLAAD also analyzed the films released under four smaller studio imprints that are sometimes referred to as “art house” divisions. This was done to compare the quantity and quality of LGBT representations in these studios’ releases directly to their parent companies. These included:

- Focus Features
- Fox Searchlight
- Roadside Attractions
- Sony Pictures Classics

Additionally, each film was assigned to one of five genre categories:

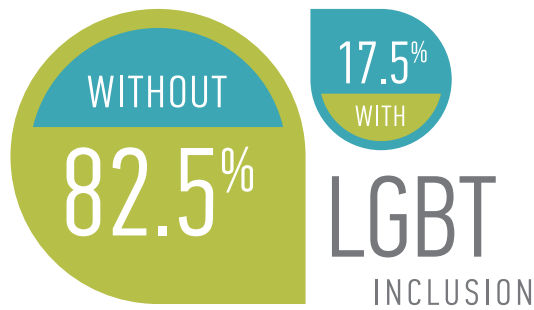
- Comedy
- Drama
- Family
- Fantasy/Science Fiction
- Documentary

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

We must also recognize that some of the films counted here as LGBT-inclusive will not necessarily be seen as such by everyone, and vice versa. Every year we find numerous characters that to be seen as LGBT must be subjectively interpreted as such, require external confirmation of the filmmakers’ intentions, or rely on pre-existing knowledge of source material or a public figure on whom a character is based. We attempt to err on the side of caution, but not every reader may agree.

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

MAJOR STUDIO RELEASES

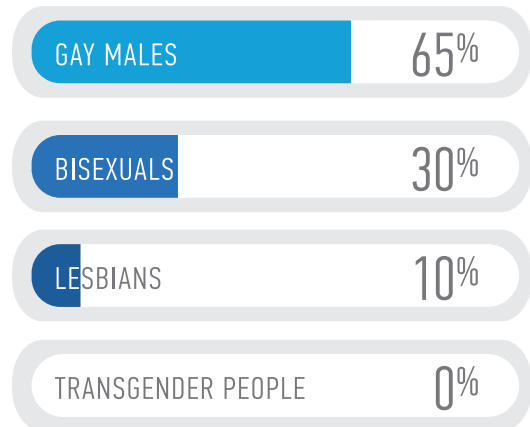


Of the 114 releases GLAAD counted from the major studios in 2014, 20 (17.5%) contained characters identified as either lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

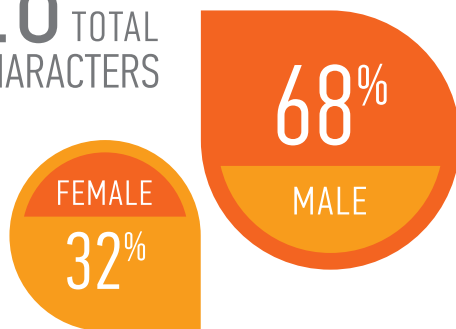
This is a slight increase from the 16.7% of films from the same studios we found to be inclusive in 2013.

Once again, most of the inclusive films (65%) featured gay male characters.

Less than a third (30%) featured bisexual characters, and about one tenth (10%) featured lesbian characters. There were no characters GLAAD determined to be identifiably transgender among any films tracked this year.



28 TOTAL
CHARACTERS

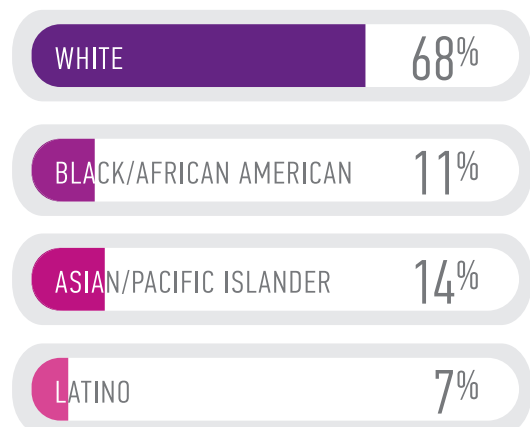


The total number of identifiably LGBT characters GLAAD counted this year was 28, slightly up from 25 last year.

Though most of the bisexual characters counted were women (6 out of 9), there were more than twice as many (19) male LGBT characters.

One notable area of improvement this year is an increase in the racial diversity of the LGBT characters identified.

In 2014, 32.1% were people of color, compared to 24% last year. Of the 28 characters we counted, 19 were white (67.9%), 3 were Black/African American (10.7%), 2 were Latino/a (7.1%), and 4 were Asian/Pacific Islander (14.3%).



For the third year in a row, comedies were the most likely major studio films to be LGBT-inclusive. GLAAD identified 19 different studio films as comedies of 114 films tracked, of which 8 (42.1%) were inclusive. By comparison, GLAAD counted 46 films as genre films (action, sci-fi, fantasy), of which only 3 (6.5%) films were inclusive. Additionally, 3 of 13 animated/family films (23.1%), 6 of 33 dramas (18.2%), and none of the 3 documentaries contained LGBT characters.



*How to Train Your Dragon 2, Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb, 20th Century Fox
The Lego Movie, Warner Brothers*

The most inclusive major studio tracked this year was Warner Brothers, as 7 of 22 films it released in 2014 (32%) were LGBT-inclusive.

Paramount came next with 3 of 13 films (23%), followed by Universal with 3 of 14 films (21%), and Fox with 3 of 17 films (18%). Two of Lionsgate's 17 films were inclusive (12%), while Disney and Sony were last with 1 of 13 (8%) and 1 of 18 films (6%) respectively.

This year, GLAAD also examined the film releases of four smaller, affiliated studios (Focus Features, Fox Searchlight, Roadside Attractions, and Sony Pictures Classics) to draw a comparison between the mainstream studios and their perceived "art house" or "independent" wings. **Of the 47 films released under those studio imprints, we found only 5 to be LGBT-inclusive, or 10.6%.**

THE VITO RUSSO TEST

Taking inspiration from the “Bechdel Test,” which examines the way female characters are portrayed and situated within a narrative, GLAAD developed its own set of criteria to analyze how LGBT characters are included within a film. The Vito Russo Test takes its name from celebrated film historian and GLAAD co-founder Vito Russo, whose book *The Celluloid Closet* remains a foundational analysis of LGBT portrayals in Hollywood film. These criteria can help guide filmmakers to create more multidimensional characters, while also providing a barometer for representation on a wide scale. This test represents a standard GLAAD would like to see a greater number of mainstream Hollywood films reach in the future.

TO PASS THE VITO RUSSO TEST, THE FOLLOWING MUST BE TRUE:

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



This is Where I Leave You, Warner Brothers

About half (11) of the 20 major studio films GLAAD counted LGBT characters in passed the Vito Russo Test this year, compared to 7 of 17 inclusive films released in 2013, and 6 out of 14 inclusive films released in 2012. The numbers have improved somewhat in this regard, and we hope they continue to do so.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- This year, we saw fewer overtly defamatory depictions in mainstream film compared to last year, though they were by no means absent. Among the worst were those in *Exodus: Gods and Kings*, *Top Five*, and *Horrible Bosses 2*, all of which fed into outdated, defamatory stereotypes. GLAAD also found significant defamatory content in films that we did not count as LGBT-inclusive, such as *Transformers: Age of Extinction* and *The Other Woman*.



Exodus: Gods and Kings, 20th Century Fox

- The majority of the LGBT depictions GLAAD found in Hollywood film this year were minor characters or even just cameos. Of the 20 films we found to be inclusive, half (10) of those contained less than five minutes of screen time for their LGBT characters while three others contained less than ten. In the case of several of these films, the characters were onscreen for less than 30 seconds. We were surprised by how many LGBT depictions could have been removed from a film entirely with one small edit.

- In the case of some films like *How to Train Your Dragon 2* and *The Expendables 3*, viewers may not have been aware they were watching gay characters unless they inferred as much from a single,

ambiguous line of dialogue or read an interview with the filmmakers discussing the characters. While the inclusion of these characters in animated and action films, respectively, should be seen as a positive development, we do wish they had been more overtly defined within the film. In countries where the film will be seen with subtitles or dubbed voices, the few hints to their LGBT identities may be easily erased.



The Expendables 3, Lionsgate Entertainment



Mas Negro Que la Noche,
Lionsgate Entertainment

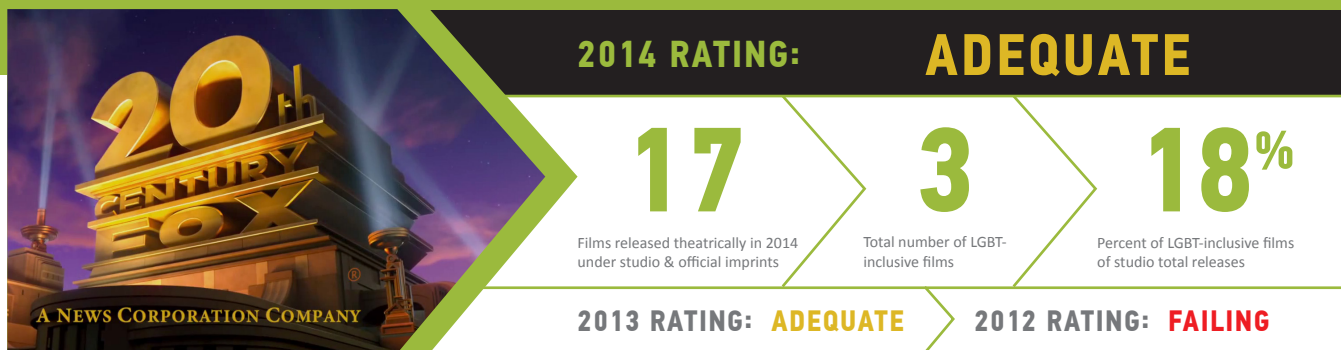
- Several films require the audience to know the sexual orientations of gay and bisexual characters' real-life counterparts to be seen as inclusive. Little Richard in *Get on Up* and Dumbledore in *The Lego Movie* are each relatively well-known figures, but how many audience members knew that important civil rights figure Bayard Rustin was also openly gay when they watched the few moments he appeared in *Selma*? Clearly, there is no simple solution for a potential lack of background knowledge, and we are still pleased to see them included, though we hope Bayard Rustin might get a scripted film of his own one day.

- Given the global popularity of genre films like comic-book adaptations and action franchises, these films must become more diverse and inclusive. These continue to be the areas where Hollywood film studios seem to commit the majority of their capital and promotional resources, but LGBT characters are still rarely seen in them.

- One of the most telling signs that Hollywood films lag heavily behind television in terms of depictions of LGBT people is the complete lack of transgender characters we found in the 161 films GLAAD tracked in this report from both mainstream and “art house” studios. Meanwhile, groundbreaking, award-winning series like *Transparent* and *Orange is the New Black* are attracting millions of viewers, critical acclaim, and remarkable media attention. The closest we found to transgender representation in mainstream film this year was a defamatory joke of a character in *The Other Woman* that would elicit viewer outrage if it appeared in a popular TV show today. The list of mainstream films that have depicted transgender people as multifaceted or even recognizable human beings remains tragically short.

- As noted before, most of the films containing LGBT characters this year were comedies, but there were also many comedies which simply contained LGBT-themed humor that wasn't always welcome. Characters in male-driven comedies like *22 Jump Street* and *Let's Be Cops* were repeatedly compared to or mistaken for gay couples, while nearly every movie that comedian Kevin Hart appeared in last year (*Think Like a Man Too*, *Ride Along*, *About Last Night*) featured numerous gay jokes. We found far fewer defamatory slurs in these films than we've seen in past years, but with few exceptions, the jokes themselves typically ran the gamut from pointless to offensive. We urge more filmmakers to question the necessity of this type of humor, given how rarely it comes across as intelligent commentary or even as funny.

20TH CENTURY FOX



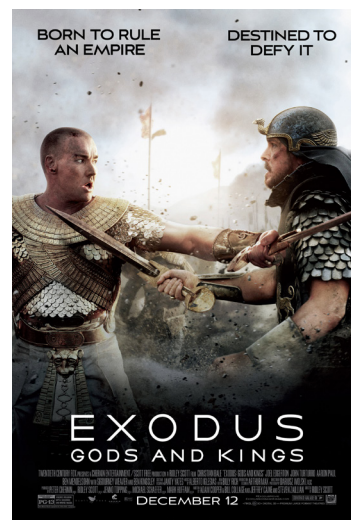
In 1935, the Fox Film Corporation (founded by producer William Fox in 1915) merged with Twentieth Century Pictures (founded in 1933) to form 20th Century Fox. It was in the mid-1980s that Rupert Murdoch bought the studio, making it a subsidiary of News Corporation. 20th Century Fox is now a part of parent-company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

Aside from Walt Disney Studios, 20th Century Fox has one of the slightest track records when it comes to inclusive films, but it includes a few standouts in its repertoire. *Myra Breckinridge* (1970) and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) contain some of the earliest significant transgender characters, though both depictions are arguably more sensationalized than truthful. In 1982, the studio released the drama *Making Love*, which was one of the first (and only) realistically depicted gay love stories ever made by a major studio. Other inclusive films released over the years include *Silkwood* (1983), *The Object of My Affection* (1998), and *The Family Stone* (2005).

IN 2014, 20th Century Fox released 17 films, of which 3 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 18%. ALL OF THESE FILMS PASSED THE VITO RUSSO TEST.

EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3503 THEATERS

Most of the public criticism levied at *Exodus: Gods and Kings* centered on the fact that nearly every important role in this Egypt-set story was played by white actors, though it also happened to feature one of the year’s worst depictions of a gay character. In the film, Viceroy Hegep is the man in charge of Egypt’s slave workforce, who is presented as a loathsome figure that regards the slaves as little more than livestock. He is also quickly shown to be overtly effeminate, vain, greedy, inhumane, and duplicitous. When it’s discovered that he has also been misappropriating funds, Hegep is happy to offer Moses sexual favors in exchange for his silence, asking him “Is there any way that I could please you?” with a slimy inflection meant to elicit disgust and/or



laughter from the audience. Practically every appearance he makes onscreen demonstrates a character trait meant to make the audience loathe him further, so that his eventual death – getting run over by a chariot in what is probably the most “humorously” staged death scene in the film – will be all the more satisfying to watch. This ugly, spiteful caricature harkens back to a time when Hollywood routinely depicted LGBT people as abhorrent villains the audience would naturally root against. For anyone who thinks those days are behind us, Hegep and his pronounced lisp prove that isn’t the case.

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 4268 THEATERS

One of the biggest reveals of a gay character in 2014 happened before the film featuring him even made it to theaters when it was revealed that Gobber the Viking would be “coming out” in the animated family film *How to Train Your Dragon 2*. Writer/director Dean DeBlois mentioned in interviews that voice-actor Craig Ferguson had ad-libbed a line that effectively “outed” his character, which made it into the final cut of the film. Yet, the actual line was more a toe in the water than a proud pronouncement: “This is why I never married. That, and one other reason.” In fact, without the additional context provided by the filmmakers and press, Gobber’s orientation would be no more than an insinuation. For those audience members who saw the stories about his “coming out” however, it was one of the few times they might see a gay character appear in a film of this kind. Hopefully, Gobber can be a bit more forthright in future depictions of the character.



NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: SECRET OF THE TOMB

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3914 THEATERS

The third film in the *Night at the Museum* franchise featured many of the same characters introduced in the earlier films, including the pint-sized Roman general Octavius, played by Steve Coogan. This time around, many of Octavius’ scenes seemed to repeatedly suggest that he was gay, or at least attracted to other male characters. In a near-death situation early in the film, Octavius asks his cowboy friend Jedidiah to take his hand, though Jedidiah seems puzzled and declines. Twice, Octavius is also shown to be quite taken with the appearance of the knight Sir Lancelot, remarking about how handsome he is and his “huge sword and hypnotic blue eyes.” These scenes don’t quite add up to Octavius “coming out,” but it seems clear that the film wants the audience to get the hint. For mass-appeal family comedies like *Night at the Museum*, content like this is still quite rare, making *Secret of the Tomb* a promising (if slightly tepid) sign of progress.



THE OTHER WOMAN

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3306 THEATERS

In this female-driven revenge comedy, three women plot to take down the man who has been carrying on secret relationships with each of them. One of their acts of retaliation includes his wife secretly feeding him estrogen pills and later telling her co-conspirators, “I gave him enough for a pre-op transsexual.” Another thoroughly bizarre scene sees the man agree to a “three-way” with his youngest mistress and another woman named “Dana,” who he is instructed to go meet at the bar. Upon walking up to her, Dana turns out to be a bearded, hairy chested man in a wig and garish women’s clothes who immediately lifts him into the air and begins forcing kisses on his face. The scene is constructed so broadly that it’s difficult to tell exactly who Dana is supposed to be, but it’s one of two things. If Dana is meant to be the filmmakers’ sophomoric approximation of a transgender woman, it’s far and away one of the most offensive representations we’ve seen in years. If instead, Dana is a man who agreed to dress in drag and harass the cheating man as part of the revenge plot, then it’s meant to be a gross-out moment steeped in gay-panic and trans-panic. Because of how cartoonish Dana appears, we’re inclined to assume it’s the latter, but it’s a defamatory scene either way.

FOX SEARCHLIGHT

8

Films released theatrically in 2014 under studio & official imprints

2

Total number of LGBT-inclusive films

25%

Percent of LGBT-inclusive films of studio total releases

Fox Searchlight Pictures, created in 1994, is a subsidiary of 20th Century Fox that specializes in the release and distribution of independent and foreign films in the United States, as well as horror films and dramedies. Fox Searchlight Pictures is responsible for the release of several LGBT-inclusive and Academy Award-winning and nominated films, including *Boys Don’t Cry* (1999), about the murder of transgender man Brandon Teena, and *Kinsey* (2004), a biopic of the famed researcher.

BIRDMAN: OR (THE UNEXPECTED VIRTUE OF IGNORANCE)

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 976 THEATERS

The Oscar-winning film *Birdman* gives a behind the scenes look at a Broadway play and the mind of its star, and includes a brief kiss between the two actresses starring in the play. After weepily commiserating about their failing relationships with their boyfriends (the play’s other two stars), Laura kisses Lesley in her dressing room, prompting the initially surprised Lesley to ask her to do it again. However, moments after they passionately embrace, the kiss is interrupted and the moment is never addressed again. Based on this scene and an earlier comment by Laura that Lesley has “a nice ass,” GLAAD is counting the two minor characters as bisexual; however, it must also be acknowledged that many viewers won’t interpret the scene or characters in the same way. Considering how abrupt the moment is and how little screen time the two actresses get afterwards, the kiss unfortunately comes across as more in the service of a



voyeuristic thrill than anything to do with authentic character development. How that can be read in the context of the film's larger themes is very much up to interpretation.

CALVARY

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 322 THEATERS

Calvary stars Brendan Gleeson as a priest in a small Irish town who is told in the confessional that someone intends to murder him within a week, prompting him to reach out to family and neighbors. Among them is Inspector Stanton, a gay man Father James visits to borrow a weapon. When we first meet him, Stanton has just finished sleeping with a local hustler named Leo, who flirts with the priest before leaving the two men alone. Both Leo and Stanton make additional appearances later on in the film, which features a wide variety of characters Father James encounters over the course of several days. Though they aren't among the film's core cast, both are distinct and fairly non-stereotypical.



DOM HEMINGWAY

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 129 THEATERS

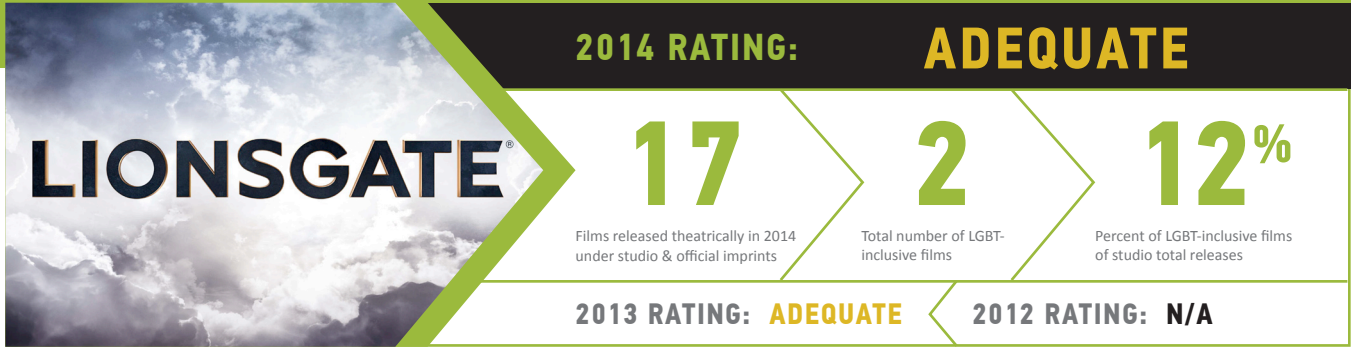
This film opens with the lead character Dom Hemingway receiving oral sex from a male inmate while they are both incarcerated. Given that the scene takes place in a prison, the interaction could easily be seen as situational or transactional rather than indicative of either man's sexual orientation. In fact, the scene is immediately followed by the onscreen words, "12 years is a long time." With no evidence to suggest otherwise, GLAAD did not count either as a gay or bisexual character.

THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 1467 THEATERS

Some have interpreted the protagonist of *Grand Budapest Hotel* – M. Gustave – as a bisexual character based on a few lines, including the film's antagonist calling him such. In one scene, the villainous Dmitri accuses Gustave of sleeping with old women and being a "f*ggot," which Gustave points out is a contradiction. Dmitri then says Gustave is bisexual to justify both of his previous attempts to insult him. A later scene sees some of Gustave's fellow prisoners call him "a real straight fellow," to which Gustave responds, "Well I've never been accused of that before, but I appreciate the sentiment." This too, could be seen more as a comment on others' perceptions of him as opposed to an admission on his part. Collectively, this could be seen as strong hinting on the part of the screenplay, but is not ultimately indicative of Gustave's sexual orientation.

LIONSGATE ENTERTAINMENT



The youngest of the film studios that GLAAD tracked this year, Lionsgate was originally formed in Vancouver in 1997 but has produced some of Hollywood’s biggest blockbusters in recent years. Since its inception, the company has grown greatly through acquisitions of other companies, including Summit Entertainment in 2012, which produced the highly profitable *Twilight* film franchise.

The very first film Lionsgate ever released was *The Pillow Book* (1997), in which Ewan McGregor costarred as a bisexual man, and the company has had quite a few other notable LGBT-inclusive films since then. These include *Gods and Monsters* (1998), *But I’m a Cheerleader* (2000), *Urbania* (2000), *Lost and Delirious* (2001), *All Over the Guy* (2001), *Happy Endings* (2005), *Precious* (2009), *Albert Nobbs* (2012), and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (2012) through Summit Entertainment.

IN 2014, Lionsgate Entertainment released 17 films, of which 2 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 12%. BOTH OF THESE FILMS PASSED THE VITO RUSSO TEST.



THE EXPENDABLES 3

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3221 THEATERS

The Expendables 3, which once again reunited some of the biggest action stars of the 1980s and 90s for more pyrotechnic mayhem, garnered quite a bit of press for a scene at the film’s end insinuating that Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jet Li’s returning characters might be a couple. Following the successful completion of their mission, the entire crew is seen celebrating at a bar, including the aforementioned Trench and Yin Yang, who are leaning in close to one another laughing. Team leader Barney walks by and remarks “Do you guys need a room,” to which Trench (Schwarzenegger) replies, laughing, “We don’t need a room...So jealous!” while Yin rests his head against Trench’s chest. The scene could be interpreted simply as a bit of (slightly homophobic) joking between the characters,

though it's also notably one of Jet Li's only appearances in the film. When asked by a press outlet whether the characters were actually a couple, director Patrick Hughes replied, "I believe they are." This small insinuation at the film's end is hardly comparable to a fully dimensional LGBT character who is "out" from the beginning, but it's a significant inclusion for a hyper-masculine action film opening on over 3000 screens. Much like *How to Train Your Dragon 2*, we hope this small first step will lead to more substantial depictions in the future.



MAS NEGRO QUE LA NOCHE

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 178 THEATERS

The Spanish-language horror film *Mas Negro Que La Noche* was released on 178 screens by Pantelion Films, a joint venture of Lionsgate Entertainment and Grupo Televisa, and was purported to be the first 3D Mexican horror film. The film is a standard haunted house movie, in which a young woman named Greta inherits a crumbling estate from her deceased aunt and moves in with a few friends in tow. One of those is her best friend Pilar, who is the sister of Greta's boyfriend, and who appears to be secretly in love with Greta based on several longing looks she gives when Greta's turned away. A party scene later in the film also shows Pilar flirting with another woman, and one character remarks that she has a very "lesbian" tattoo. Unfortunately, Pilar meets the same gruesome fate as the majority of the film's young cast, though her death is probably treated as the most "tragic" given that it's at the hands of the woman she loves and happens off-screen rather than in gory close-ups. The dead-lesbian character is an all-too-common trope in popular media, but at least in a horror film, it's contextually appropriate.

ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

13

Films released theatrically in 2014
under studio & official imprints

2

Total number of LGBT-
inclusive films

15.4%

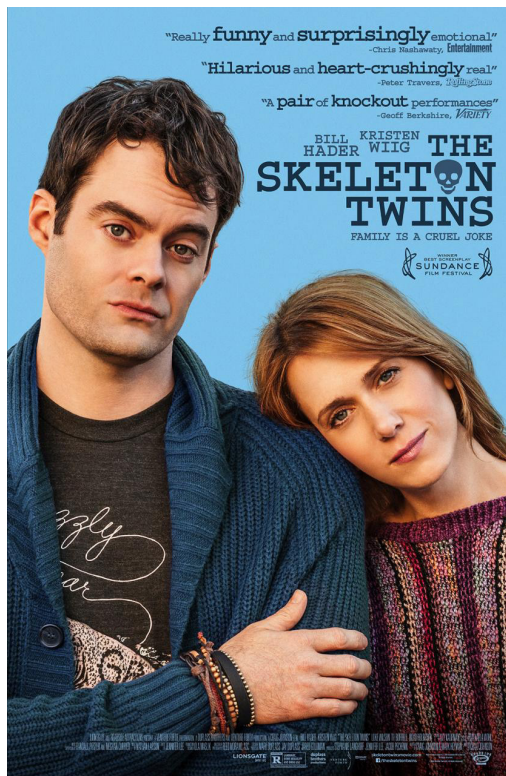
Percent of LGBT-inclusive films
of studio total releases

Roadside Attractions was founded in 2003 by Howard Coehn and Eric d'Arbeloff and specializes largely in independent films. Lionsgate bought a portion of the company in 2007. Notable LGBT-inclusive films released by the studio previously include *I Love You Phillip Morris* (2010) and *Albert Nobbs* (2012).

DEAR WHITE PEOPLE

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 393 THEATERS

The debut feature from out writer/director Justin Simien made headlines for its biting examination of "post-racial" America on a college campus, which is revealed to be a fallacy over the course of the story. *Dear White People* actually follows several "main" characters, one of which is an awkward aspiring journalist named Lionel, who is both gay and black, and who finds those distinctions alienate him from his peers. The racial issues addressed in the film are rare enough to see in a film receiving mainstream media attention, but it's far rarer for sexual orientation to also be a part of that conversation. *Dear White People's* willingness to examine the intersection of these issues will be hopefully found in more films in the future.

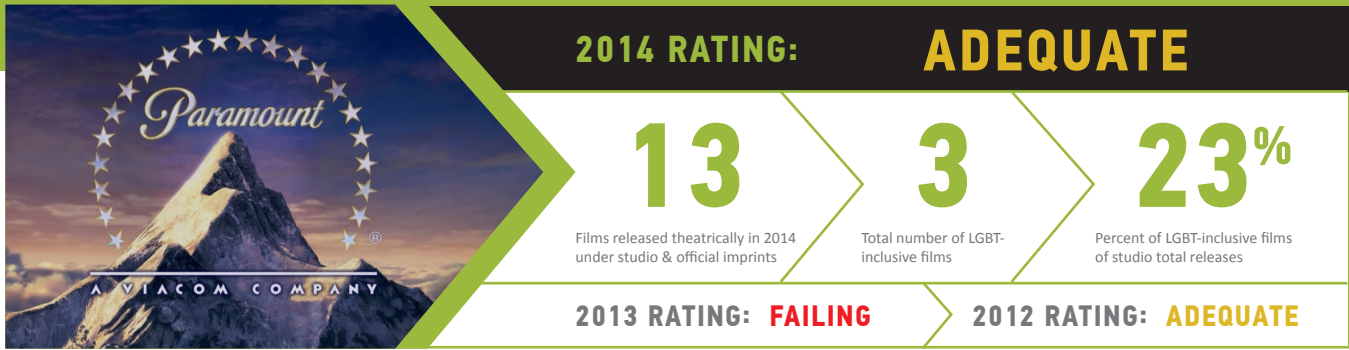


THE SKELETON TWINS

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 461 THEATERS

Estranged twins Milo and Maggie reconnect after their mutual failed suicide attempts in this comedy from out writer/director Craig Johnson. Over the course of the film, it's revealed that the source of their estrangement is an affair Milo had with his high school teacher, who he is sadly still hung up on. Milo is one of the most significant gay characters in any film of the year, not to mention one of the most hilarious and humanely portrayed, thanks to actor Bill Hader. *The Skeleton Twins* was one of the year's LGBT film highlights.

PARAMOUNT PICTURES



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

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

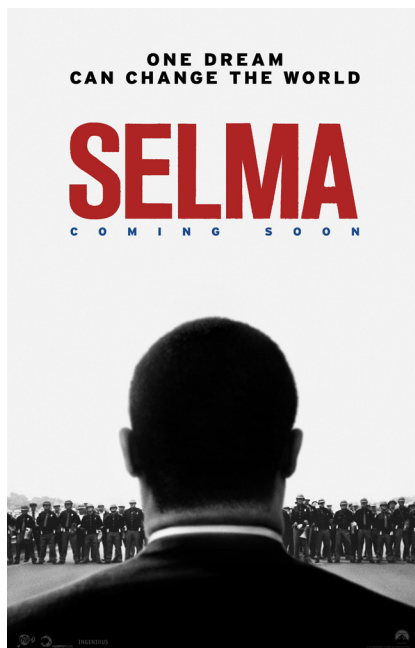
In 1997, the studio partnered with Scott Rudin Productions to release the mass-appeal, gay-themed comedy *In and Out*, which garnered a great deal of publicity for a kiss between lead Kevin Kline and love interest Tom Selleck and became a box office hit. In fact, *In and Out* along with fellow Paramount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

IN 2014, Paramount Pictures released 13 films, of which 3 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 23%. ONE OF THESE FILMS PASSED THE VITO RUSSO TEST.

ANCHORMAN 2: THE LEGEND CONTINUES (SUPER-SIZED VERSION) **WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 1317 THEATERS**

Though GLAAD doesn't normally count re-releases of films in its yearly tally of films, the extended version of *Anchorman 2* added more than 20 additional minutes of material. Among the new scenes was one of newsman Ron Burgundy and his three friends talking to an openly gay staff member of their new office, and their general befuddlement at the fact that he is out and proud. All of the scene's jokes

hinge on the main characters' ignorance or idiocy rather than the gay man's sexual orientation, though he exists solely to set up jokes for others. He obviously has no bearing on the plot, considering the entire scene was cut from the original theatrical release. A more problematic earlier scene also shows Ron telling his young son to avoid the "he-she's down in the Bowery." It goes to show that while many comedies are growing smarter with their gay jokes, there are still plenty of offensive transphobic jokes making it into films.



SELMA

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 2235 THEATERS

Interestingly, *Selma* is actually the second historically-based drama about an important African American figure that features a depiction of a real-world LGBT person released last year. The first was the James Brown biopic *Get on Up*, that included two scenes with singer Little Richard. Much less widely known was Bayard Rustin, the openly gay, black man who was a major figure in both the Civil Rights Movement and the career of Martin Luther King, Jr. *Selma* examines the 1965 marches between Selma and Montgomery, AL. to demand voting rights, which were led by Dr. King. Rustin has a very minor role in the film (he didn't take part in the actual march), but he is at least identified by name at one point. Sadly, the vast majority of viewers probably didn't know the significance of that name, or that Rustin really deserves a biopic of his own.

TOP FIVE

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 1426 THEATERS

It's rare that a mainstream Hollywood comedy displays significant self-awareness, but Chris Rock's *Top Five* practically built an entire movie out of it. Rock both wrote and directed this film about a comedian struggling to control his cultural identity who is interviewed over a long evening by a critical reporter. The film tackles issues ranging from identity politics to representations of minorities in the media, with Rock's character at one point yelling "It's never just a movie!" when discussing the racial subtext in *Planet of the Apes*. That makes it all the more disappointing when the film drops in several scenes that carry some undeniably homophobic subtext of their own just a few minutes later. Andre and Chelsea (Rock and Rosario Dawson's characters) stop by a hotel lobby, only to catch Chelsea's boyfriend and his male friend apparently carrying on an affair. After she storms out, Andre asks her if there were any signs that her boyfriend might not be straight, and



Chelsea begins angrily recalling how her boyfriend had become increasingly interested in being anally pleased by her, which is accompanied by a “humorous” montage of this happening in all sorts of locations. The story’s punchline comes when she reveals that after being humiliated by her boyfriend at dinner one night, she got her revenge with a hot sauce-covered tampon that sent him into painful convulsions. The scene is obviously meant to give the audience fits of laughter, but the subtext is that his sexual transgression was not only hilarious but he deserved to be punished for it (and probably also for being a “deceitful bisexual”). More than one film critic pointed out how disappointing and hypocritical the scene was in a film that asked the audience to think critically about the movies they watch. In the same monologue, Chelsea also mentions that she has had at least two girlfriends herself. Additionally, Rock’s character is interviewed by a DJ at a gay radio station earlier in the film.

MEN, WOMEN & CHILDREN

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 608 THEATERS

Jason Reitman directed and co-wrote this story of the way technology affects the relationships among a group of teenagers and their parents. One brief scene in the film depicts an effeminate teenage boy casually hanging out with two female friends. Though he displays mannerisms many viewers took as an indication that he was gay, there is no mention of his sexual orientation from either himself or any other character. If he had been given more than 30 or so seconds of screen time, he might have been further defined, but as it stands GLAAD did not count him.

TRANSFORMERS: AGE OF EXTINCTION

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 4233 THEATERS

Like many Michael Bay films, *Transformers: Age of Extinction* features at least one scene in which an effeminate man is made into an object of ridicule. In this case, it’s a small-town theater owner that appears in the film’s opening minutes exchanging a limp-wristed handshake with the main character (Cade) played by Mark Wahlberg. The only reason the theater owner seems to be portrayed this way is to throw the hyper masculine Cade into even sharper contrast, particularly when Cade starts inexplicably intimidating and bullying the man, calling him “snakeballs.” There wasn’t enough revealed about him for GLAAD to officially count the character as LGBT, but his inclusion is still a pointless insult. The best that can be said is that at least in this film Bay doesn’t have anyone physically beat the gay-coded character the way he did in 2013’s *Pain and Gain*. When it’s an improvement for a director’s film to not feature an anti-gay assault, that’s a tragically low bar.

SONY COLUMBIA PICTURES



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

By and large, Sony Columbia has never had the most impressive track record when it comes to LGBT-inclusive films. The 1962 political thriller *Advise and Consent* did contain a subplot about a Senate chairman who is blackmailed over a past affair with a man (and subsequently commits suicide), but it's hardly held up as a high point in the LGBT cinematic canon. The same can be said for 1992's *Basic Instinct* from Tri-Star Pictures, which was decried by LGBT groups for its defamatory portrayal of lesbian and bisexual women. On a more positive note, Tri-Star Pictures also released popular inclusive films like *Philadelphia* (1993), *Threesome* (1994), and *As Good as it Gets* (1997). In more recent years, parent company Sony Pictures has released *Rent* (2005), *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* (2011), and *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones* (2013).

IN 2014, Sony Columbia Pictures released 18 films, of which 1 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 6%. THIS FILM DOES NOT PASS THE VITO RUSSO TEST.



THE INTERVIEW

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 581 THEATERS

Due to the devastating cyber-attacks on Sony it allegedly inspired, *The Interview* was easily one of the most headline-grabbing films of the year, though this also resulted in a more limited theatrical run than the studio originally intended. With all the political discussions swirling around its release, less attention was paid to the film's opening minutes in which rapper Eminem, playing a version of himself, comes out as gay during an interview.

The big joke of course is that Eminem is famous for his anti-gay lyrics, so his matter-of-factly stating that he's "homosexual" is a big deal for the fictional tabloid reporter played by James Franco, to whom Eminem says, "When I say things about gay people, or people think my lyrics are homophobic-- it's because I'm gay." The scene met skepticism from many LGBT viewers who saw it more as trolling for buzz than a clever joke about Eminem's persona, and we're inclined to agree.

22 JUMP STREET

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3426 THEATERS

The first *Jump Street* film actually featured a black, gay teen character in a minor role meant to humorously symbolize how progressive today's young people are, but *22 Jump Street's* LGBT-themed humor is significantly more complicated. There are numerous jokes about partners Schmidt and Jenko being mistaken for a gay couple, including one scene in which they engage in couples counseling with a therapist to hide the fact that they were snooping but end up discussing their actual (non-romantic) relationship problems. Another joke sees Jenko becoming more enlightened after taking a human sexuality class and angrily confronting some mobsters for taunting them with homophobic slurs. More problematic was their prison visit to the previous film's villain, Mr. Walters, who they had previously shot in the genitals. Most of the scene's jokes revolve around Walter's bragging that he now has a vagina and is happily the "bitch" of fellow inmate Eric, who was also arrested in the first film. In this film, Walters is not so much a character with a discernable sexual orientation or gender identity as he represents a series of jokes about prison rape, so GLAAD did not count him.

THE MONUMENTS MEN

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3083 THEATERS

The George Clooney-directed war drama *The Monuments Men* was based on the real-life account of an Allied group responsible for saving culturally important art and items from the Nazis during World War II. Among those in the film's ensemble cast is a character loosely based on gay art collector and New York Ballet founder Lincoln Kirstein played by Bob Balaban. Unfortunately, these differently-named characters are not meant as direct depictions of their real-life counterparts, so we did not count "Preston Savitz" since the film never addressed his identity or personal life.

SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

15

Films released theatrically in 2014 under studio & official imprints

1

Total number of LGBT-inclusive films

6.7%

Percent of LGBT-inclusive films of studio total releases

Founded in 1992, Sony Pictures Classics is the independent arm of Sony Pictures Entertainment, which acquires, produces, and distributes independent films and documentaries. Among the many inclusive films Sony Pictures Classics has released since its inception are *My Life in Pink* (1997) about a gender non-conforming child; *The Celluloid Closet* (1995), a documentary about LGBT representations in film based on the book with the same title written by Vito Russo; the Alan Ginsberg-centered story *Kill Your Darlings* (2013); and Pedro Almodovar’s *I’m So Excited!* (2013).

LOVE IS STRANGE

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 138 THEATERS

One of the most impactful films of 2014 to focus on a same-sex relationship was undoubtedly Ira Sachs’ *Love Is Strange*, which followed a gay couple forced to live apart by circumstances. The film begins with Ben and George celebrating their legal marriage following the passage of marriage equality in New York, but this unfortunately results in George losing his long time job teaching in a private Catholic school. Loving friends and relatives are eager to step in and offer places to stay, but the result is that the couple must now live apart, and as time goes on tensions rise on all sides. It actually feels like several character studies going on at once, but at its heart is the decades-old love between Ben and George, who the supporting characters profess to look up to as models of commitment. With its naturalistic, almost mundane style and narrative focus on a gay couple (and an older gay couple at that) this is the type of film that’s nearly impossible to imagine coming out of a major studio under current circumstances. Sony Pictures Classics picked it up following its premiere at the Sundance Film Festival and gave it a targeted roll out in the summer.

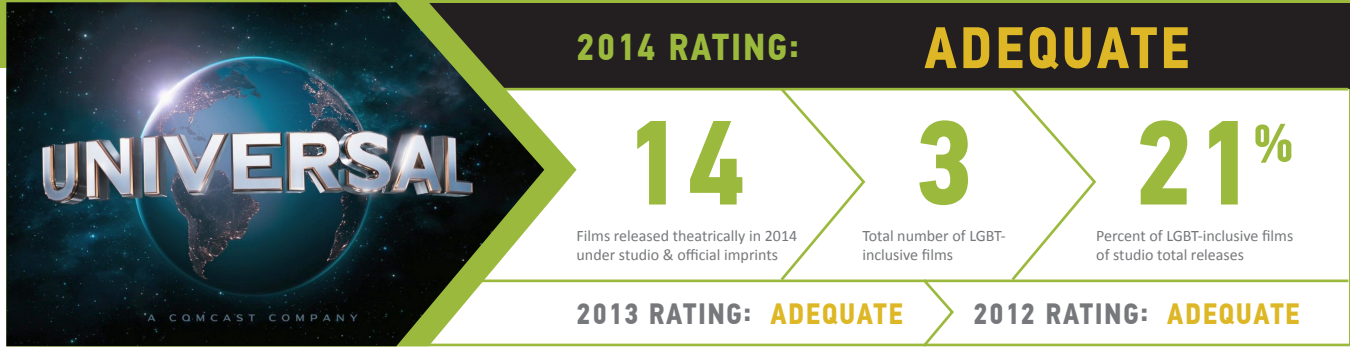


FOXCATCHER

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 759 THEATERS

Though some have speculated that John du Pont – the real life murderer and wrestling enthusiast whose case inspired the film *Foxcatcher* – may have been gay, others involved in the events depicted by the film have disputed this. At any rate, the film takes no clear stance on this, so GLAAD did not count the character as an LGBT depiction, though some may perceive him as such.

UNIVERSAL PICTURES



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

Because of that focus on mass appeal, perhaps it’s not surprising that it wasn’t until the 1990s that any LGBT content whatsoever began showing up in Universal films. Unfortunately, the 1991 adaptation of *Fried Green Tomatoes* removed nearly all traces of the novel’s lesbian content, but the 1994 comedic drama *Reality Bites* did feature a prominent gay character.

Universal’s other inclusive films have been a mixture of highs including *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar* (1995), *Mulholland Drive* (2001), *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* (2010) and *Kick-Ass 2* (2013), and lows like *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry* (2007) and *Bruno* (2009).

IN 2014, Universal Pictures released 14 films, of which 3 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 21%. NONE OF THESE FILMS PASSED THE VITO RUSSO TEST.

DUMB AND DUMBER TO WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3188 THEATERS

Here is another comedy in which a gay character makes a seconds-long appearance just to set up a punchline, but at least this time the character got to make the joke rather than end up the target of one. While trying to sneak into a TED-like conference, Fraida offers to sleep with the desk man in a supply closet if he’ll let her in, to which he replies “I didn’t take 34 years to come out the closet just to go back into one with you.” The moment was neither good nor bad, but its brevity was par for the course for most inclusive comedies this year.



GET ON UP

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 2469 THEATERS

The most significant LGBT character in a Universal release this year was the portrayal of musician Little Richard in the James Brown biopic *Get On Up*, though it amounted to just a few minutes of screen time. In the film, a performance by Richard inspires Brown to take the stage himself, and soon after, Richard imparts some career advice on the young singer with a bit of flirty affect. The sexual orientation of the real-life Richard hasn't been identified consistently by the artist, with him identifying as gay and "omnisexual" at different times. Meanwhile his only public relationships have been with women. Strictly for the purposes of this report, we have counted him as a bisexual character, though what sets both the portrayal and the real-life performer apart is his confident showmanship and refusal to adhere to gender norms in either his mannerisms or appearance. A fictional character who acted the same way might be the object of ridicule or scorn in a mainstream film, but *Get On Up* treats Richard with respect.



NEIGHBORS

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3311 THEATERS

The raunchy comedy *Neighbors* features a brief appearance by an interracial gay couple who are prospective home buyers, which excites the two main characters (a straight married couple) about the prospect of living next door to them. Though the gay couple had no lines and were onscreen for just a few seconds, it was nevertheless a positive moment in which the main characters displayed enthusiastic acceptance that was also repeated in some of the film's trailers. The film also features two same-sex kisses - all between straight-identified characters - one of which was played for laughs but not quite portrayed as a "gross-out" moment.



A MILLION WAYS TO DIE IN THE WEST

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3160 THEATERS

Writer/director Seth McFarlane isn't exactly known for sensitive handling of minority representation in his work, and while *A Million Ways to Die in the West* doesn't quite descend to the mean-spirited depths that his television show *Family Guy* often does, the jokes here are hardly enlightened. Early in the film, Albert (McFarlane's character) engages in a bit of gay baiting when he tries to joke his way out of a gun duel by miming oral sex between his and the other man's shadows. In another scene set in a saloon, Albert's accidental waving of a handkerchief prompts two prim-looking men sitting at a table to wave theirs back, with one exclaiming, "James, I found the friendly locals!" Their mannerisms and feminine inflections are meant to be enough to elicit a laugh from the audience, but thankfully they're onscreen for no more than a moment. Credited simply as "Dandy # 1 and # 2" by the film, GLAAD didn't count the pair as gay characters, though McFarlane obviously still finds the long-running homophobic "sissy" stereotype to be hilarious.

FOCUS FEATURES

11

Films released theatrically in 2014
under studio & official imprints

0

Total number of LGBT-
inclusive films

0%

Percent of LGBT-inclusive films
of studio total releases

Focus Features was established in 2002 when USA Films, Universal Focus and Good Machine combined into one company. Focus Features produces and distributes its own features, in addition to distributing foreign films, and has established an impressive track record of critically acclaimed and popular LGBT-inclusive films, including *The Kids are All Right* (2010), *Pariah* (2011), and *Milk* (2008). Its most commercially successful LGBT-inclusive release to date is the 2006 Academy Award-winning drama *Brokeback Mountain*, about the romantic relationship between two men in Wyoming in the 1960s. In 2013, it released another prominent Oscar-nominated LGBT-inclusive film, *Dallas Buyers Club*, which tells the story of a homophobic cowboy who contracts HIV and begins importing and selling unapproved medication to the LGBT community. In his venture, he meets Rayon, a trans woman also afflicted by the disease who he eventually grows close to.

THE BOXTROLLS

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3464 THEATERS

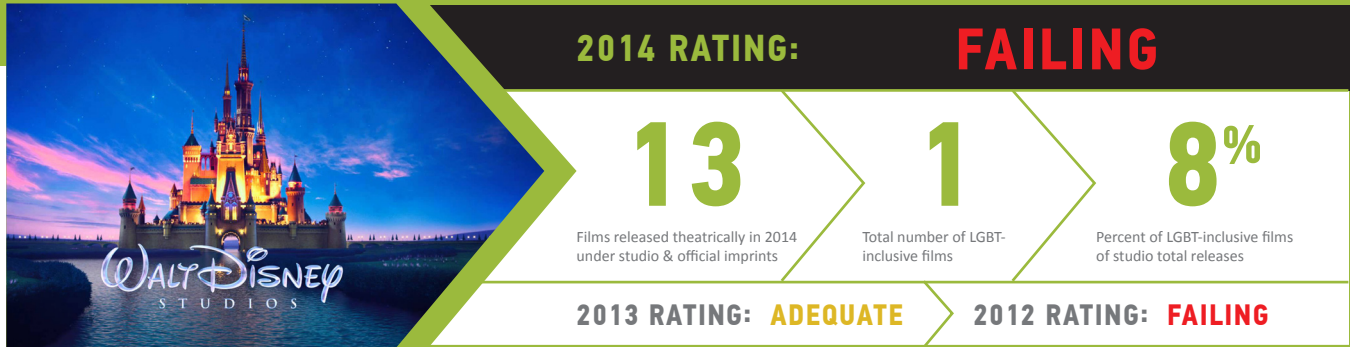
The main antagonist of this film often resorted to cross-dressing as an alter ego named Madame Frou Frou as part of his evil scheme to publicly discredit the kindly boxtrolls, though it always appeared to be a means to an end rather than an indication of a transgender identity on his part. Still, Madame Frou Frou also clearly invoked the image of an insane, murderous cross-dresser, which has been a long-running and unfortunate Hollywood film trope, but appears even more tone-deaf now that transgender stories are finally starting to get their due in mainstream media. On a more positive note, the film created an animated trailer highlighting different types of families that briefly featured a same-sex couple and received great media attention. Unfortunately, these images weren't part of the final film.

UNDER THE ELECTRIC SKY

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 25 THEATERS

This documentary about attendees of the Electric Daisy Carnival and contemporary rave culture is surprisingly free of LGBT individuals, considering the gay club origins of dance music. The film follows one "rave family" made of up both men and women in a polyamorous relationship with each other, but besides some playful flirting between the women, they appear to all be heterosexual. *Under the Electric Sky* feels like something of a missed opportunity to examine the wide cross-sections of society found in the rave scene, including the LGBT people that have been part of its core since inception.

WALT DISNEY STUDIOS



Of the major U.S. film studios, Walt Disney Studios may be the most recognizable, with a well-defined brand identity that it has spread on an international scale. Certainly, most Americans could name several Disney titles if asked, as many have left a lasting impression since childhood. In fact, since the first Disney feature film in 1937 (*Snow White*), entertainment for children and families has been a primary focus for the company that continues to this day.

Many of Disney’s most famous distribution imprints are best known for their animated features, including Walt Disney Animation Studios, Pixar Animation Studios, and the Japan-based Studio Ghibli, for which Disney holds U.S. and international distribution rights. On the live action side, the imprints include Walt Disney Pictures, Disneynature, Lucasfilm (best known for the *Star Wars* saga), and Touchstone Pictures. They also recently acquired Marvel Studios, with whom they released the summer blockbuster *The Avengers* in 2012. Walt Disney Studios has the weakest historical record when it comes to LGBT-inclusive films of the studios tracked in this report, with the animated divisions having no content to speak of. Touchstone Pictures however, has released a small handful of films with LGBT characters over the years, including the British comedic drama *Kinky Boots* (2006), Tim Burton’s biopic of cross-dressing director *Ed Wood* (1994), and romantic comedies *Sweet Home Alabama* (2002) and *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003). Perhaps most impressively, in 1985 Lucasfilm produced the film *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters*, which wove together passages from gay Japanese writer Yukio Mishima’s autobiography with parts of his fictional novels, including his secret love for a peer at school. The film was never officially released in Japan following conservative protests over its portrayal of Mishima as a gay man. It was distributed in the U.S. by Warner Brothers.

IN 2014, Walt Disney Studios released 13 films, of which 1 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 8%. THIS FILM DOES NOT PASS THE VITO RUSSO TEST.

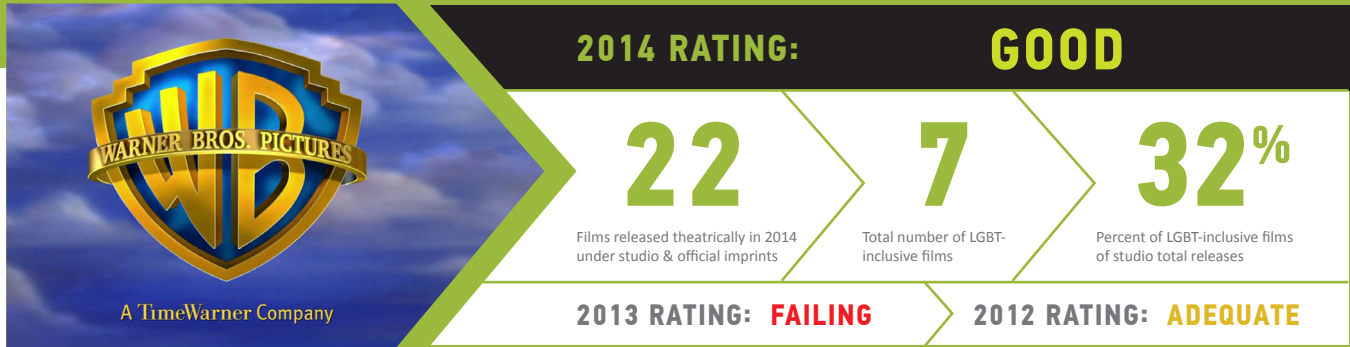


MUPPETS MOST WANTED WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3194 THEATERS

In the opening number of the latest *Muppet* movie, bisexual pop star Lady Gaga appears as herself in a brief cameo. In case there was any mistake, she’s wearing an apron with the word “Gaga” written on it, and sings one line about “one-liner cameos.” That’s the extent of LGBT content in a Disney film this year.



WARNER BROTHERS



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

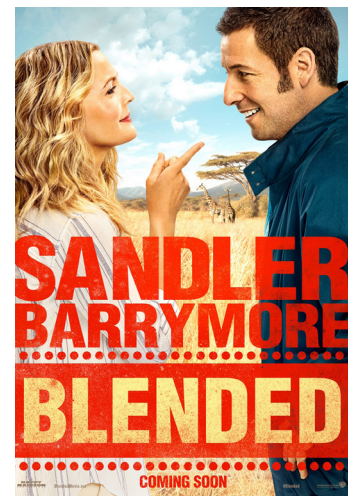
One of Warner Brothers' most iconic films also contains one of the earliest and most celebrated gay-coded characters in mainstream American cinema: Sal Mineo's tragic Plato in 1955's *Rebel Without a Cause*. Other notable inclusive films released by Warner Brothers over the years include *Dog Day Afternoon*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

IN 2014, Warner Brothers released 22 films, of which 7 included appearances by LGBT people, amounting to 32%. FIVE OF THESE FILMS PASSED THE VITO RUSSO TEST.

BLENDED

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3555 THEATERS

This year's Adam Sandler comedy includes several gay and gender-identity jokes, as has become pretty much standard for mainstream films he headlines. In the case of *Blended*, there are several jokes about Drew Barrymore's character being mistaken for being in a lesbian relationship with her business partner, none of which hinge on stereotypes. There are also multiple jokes about Sandler's daughters being mistaken for boys due to their clothes and haircuts. One scene in which an announcer is welcoming couples to a resort includes his mentioning "same-sex domestic partners" and shows a male couple with a baby. Another scene features Barrymore's character descending a staircase while various people watch her, and different songs



representing their thoughts play in the background. Among them is an older Indian woman looking lustfully at her while Katy Perry’s “I Kissed a Girl” plays before she is nudged by her annoyed husband. All of these moments are emblematic of the most common ways LGBT people and content appears in contemporary, mainstream comedies: in service of jokes rather than story.



HORRIBLE BOSSES 2

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3400 THEATERS

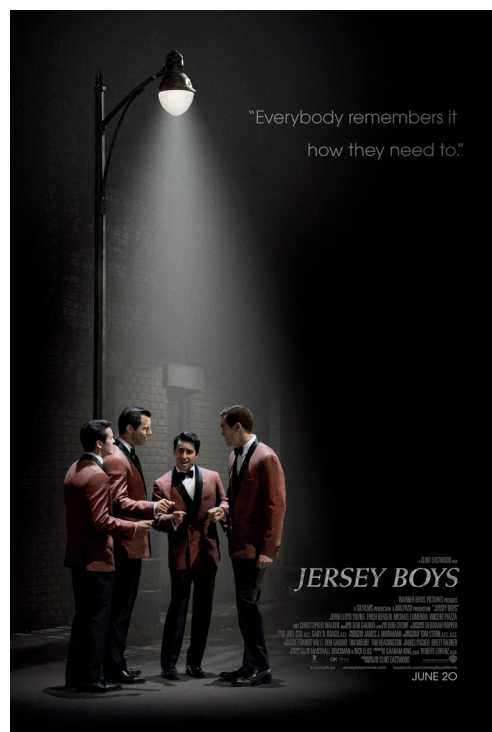
The sequel to 2011’s *Horrible Bosses* rehashes the first film’s vulgarity laced story of three men bumbling through a kidnapping scheme. Also returning is the nymphomaniac dentist Dr. Julia Harris, who is still depicted as an aggressive, sociopathic sexual-harasser. At the film’s end, Julia is shown visiting her ex-employee Dale (one of the three leads) in the hospital, where she makes amorous glances towards his wife before implying that she raped him while he was in a coma, and also tells him that she intends to sleep with his wife when they go away for a spa trip. Since the implied desire for Dale’s wife she displays seems genuine in context, we feel compelled to count her as a bisexual character. We also wish that weren’t the case. Between her behavior in the first film and the characteristics she displays in this one, many of Julia’s most loathsome personality traits fall in line with some of the worst stereotypes about bisexual people, and the eleventh

hour revelation about her attraction to women exists for no other reason than to make Dale squirm. The film also contains a number of jokes about the three men pretending to be gay or simulating sex acts with each other, which, despite the insertion of character lines asserting their acceptance of gay people, widely miss the mark.

JERSEY BOYS

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 2905 THEATERS

Director Clint Eastwood’s 1950s-set *Jersey Boys* follows the young men who became the hit musical group The Four Seasons, who were discovered and first signed by openly gay producer and hit-maker Bob Crewe. In his very first scene, Crewe is shown flirting with one of the band members, who remarks to the camera afterwards that, “I remember at the time thinking there was something off about this guy. I mean, this was 1959. People thought Liberace was just, you know, theatrical.” A later scene sees another band member taunt Crewe about a man with whom he was seen. Despite these small digs and his only appearing in a handful of scenes, Crewe is depicted in the film as an integral part of the group’s success, very much at ease with himself, confident, and talented. However, considering how much time is spent watching the four straight leads flirt, sleep with, and date women, it would have been nice if Crewe had even been shown with any kind of remotely comparable romantic interest.





THE LEGO MOVIE

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3890 THEATERS

Among the multitude of characters pulled from history and popular culture in *The Lego Movie*, was the great wizard Dumbledore from the *Harry Potter* book series and subsequent films. Though it was never addressed in any of the source material he appeared in, author J.K. Rowling revealed during a speaking engagement later on that Dumbledore was in fact a gay man, spurring worldwide headlines. In this film, Dumbledore is simply depicted as one of many recognizable characters living together in a fantasy world, though he does have a few lines and is the subject of several jokes about the pronunciation of his name. For some reason he is also depicted as having a very high voice, though it's unclear whether this is an offensive joke about his sexual orientation or simply meant to be a goofy voice.

TAMMY

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 3465 THEATERS

Of all the films from the major Hollywood studios GLAAD tracked this year, *Tammy* was the only one to feature major characters who were openly and unashamedly depicted as LGBT and cast in a positive light. In the final third of this road-trip comedy, Tammy and her grandmother seek refuge with Tammy's aunt Lenore and her partner Susanne, played by Kathy Bates and Sandra Oh respectively. Soon after we first meet them, the couple throws a massive Fourth of July party at their lake house for what looks like several hundred other lesbians, which becomes the setting for the film's climactic scenes. One of those being Tammy's heart to heart conversation with Lenore, who gives her the reality check she needs to reconsider her path in life. Lenore and Susanne are both depicted very naturally, and get quite a few jokes of their own, most of which have absolutely nothing to do with their sexual orientation. The fact that this is such a notable thing in a mainstream Hollywood comedy says volumes about how far there is yet to go.



THIS IS WHERE I LEAVE YOU

**WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE:
2868 THEATERS**

Four adult siblings mourn their father in this drama based on the novel by Jonathan Tropper, which also reveals a same-sex relationship close to the film's end. When they are asked to sit shiva by their mother Hillary following their father's death, the now grown Altman family is forced to live in the same house for several days where their old secrets and resentments come to the surface. Among those is the relationship their mother is now having with her female neighbor and family friend, Linda. Near the film's conclusion Hillary tells her children that she and Linda grew close and fell in love during her husband's long illness, and that he knew of their relationship and approved. Though one of the kids offhandedly refers to his mother as a lesbian, seeing as both Hillary and Linda had previously been in loving relationships with men – and in Hillary's case a very sexual one, as she herself recalls – we are counting them as bisexual characters. The scenes are well handled, but it's another instance in which the LGBT content was treated as an eleventh-hour "reveal" rather than an organic component of the overall story. We wish it had come sooner.



VERONICA MARS

WIDEST THEATRICAL RELEASE: 347 THEATERS

The film adaptation of the cult TV show *Veronica Mars* made its way to theaters thanks to a historically successful crowd funding campaign, and creator Rob Thomas used the opportunity to bring back many familiar faces from the TV show for a new mystery for Veronica to unravel. One of those was Luke Haldemen, a very minor character from the original series, whom we now learn is engaged to socialite Gia. Luke is a minor character in this film as well, though at one point he becomes the prime murder suspect. After he's seen going into a West Hollywood bathhouse, it's revealed that his relationship with Gia is just a cover to protect his inheritance. Though it's hardly the most flattering portrayal of a gay person, it's appropriate in the context of the film/show's world.

ADDITIONAL FILM DISTRIBUTORS

CBS FILMS

The company CBS Films was founded in 2007 as a division of CBS Corporation and aims to release four to six films each year. In 2014, they co-produced the GLAAD Media Award-nominated film *Pride*, based on the true story of a group of 1980s LGBT activists who supported a small Welsh town during the U.K. miners' strike, and handled all U.S. theatrical distribution. *Pride* was nominated for Best Picture at both the Golden Globes and BAFTA Awards.



FILM MOVEMENT

Film Movement was launched in 2002 as a distributor for exceptional independent and foreign films. The studio previously released several LGBT-inclusive films including the Polish drama *In the Name Of* (2012) about a gay priest who struggles with his vows after he finds himself attracted to a country boy named Lukasz; Australian film *Little Sparrows* (2010) about three sisters including one who is figuring out her identity; and 2004's Canadian dramedy *Wilby Wonderful* about a small town in the wake of a sex scandal. In 2014, Film Movement released the GLAAD Media Award-nominated Taiwanese film *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?* about repressed optometrist Weichung, who is unsatisfied with his marriage when he bumps into a former male flame who stirs up forgotten emotions.

HBO FILMS

HBO began producing films in 1983 under the HBO Premiere Films moniker. This branch eventually was folded into HBO Pictures and then joined by HBO Showcase to create HBO Films as it stands today. Last year, the GLAAD Media Award-nominated documentary *The Case Against 8*, an inside look at the Supreme Court case that overturned California's ban on same-sex marriage, had a short theatrical run ahead of its television premiere on HBO.



IFC FILMS AND SUNDANCE SELECTS

Under the AMC Networks umbrella, IFC Films distributes independent films and documentaries, while its IFC Midnights arm releases films in the horror and thriller genre. Another AMC Networks property, Sundance Selects, focuses on the distribution of independent films, documentaries, and foreign films. Their most successful and critically acclaimed LGBT-inclusive films include the 2011 drama *Weekend*, about two men who begin a relationship shortly before one of them has to leave the country and the controversial but critically acclaimed French lesbian coming-of-age drama *Blue is the Warmest Color* (2013). Last year, they released the LGBT-inclusive documentaries *Gore Vidal: The United States of Amnesia* about bisexual author Gore Vidal and *Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me* which featured an interview with out actor Nathan Lane. The company also released the comedy *Adult World* about a failed poet working at an adult bookstore with a transgender woman, and the dramedy *Last Weekend*, which followed a dysfunctional family spending one last weekend at their vacation home.

MAGNOLIA PICTURES

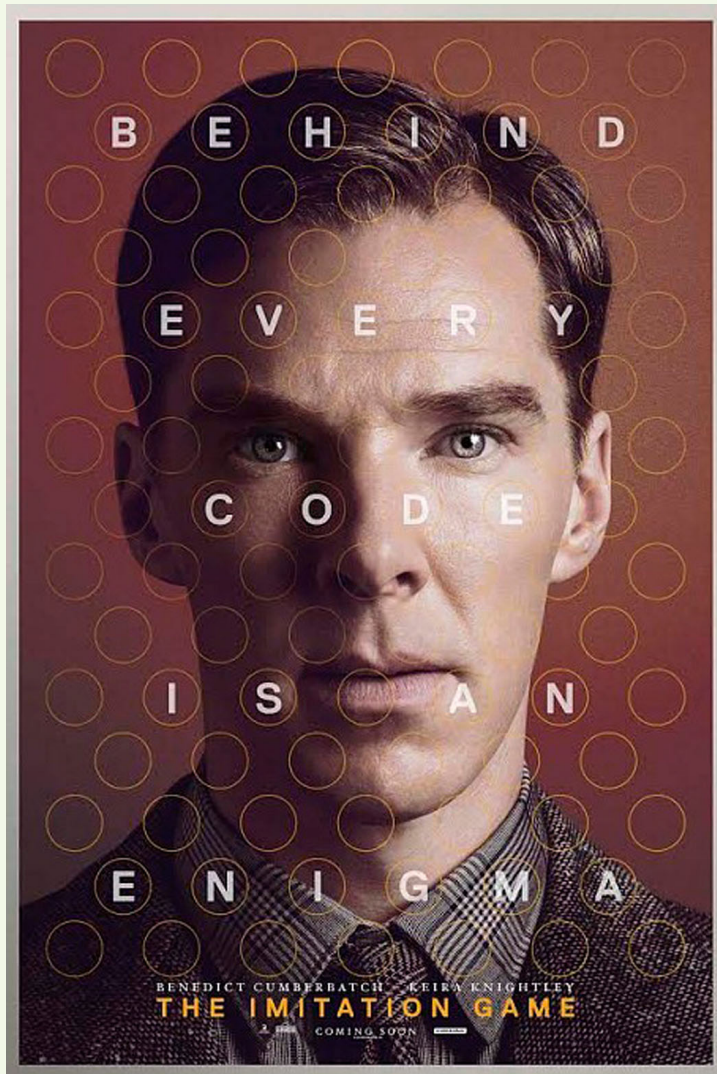
Magnolia Pictures was formed in 2001 and is now owned by Todd Wagner and Mark Cuban as a holding of 2929 Entertainment. The distributor specializes in foreign and independent films with some pictures also released under the Magnet Releasing label. In 2014, Magnolia released the GLAAD Media Award-nominated comedy *Life Partners* starring Leighton Meester and Gillian Jacobs as best friends (one gay, one straight) trying to get their lives in order and *White Bird in a Blizzard* from out director Gregg Araki. Other inclusive films they released last year include *Stage Fright*, *ABC's of Death 2*, and *Nymphomaniac Vol. II*.

STARZ DISTRIBUTION

Starz Distribution, formerly IDT Entertainment and Starz Media, was founded in 2003 as an arm of Starz Inc. designed to produce and acquire original programming content, feature films, anime and other films entertainment. Last year, the company gave documentary *To Be Takei* a limited five-week theatrical run. The doc premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival and follows the life of actor and LGBT advocate George Takei.

STRAND RELEASING

When Strand Releasing was founded in 1989, its primary focus was the distribution of LGBT-inclusive films. In recent years the independent distributor has branched out, releasing non-LGBT films as well, while maintaining a focus on foreign films. Some of the highlights among the many inclusive films released by Strand are *The Living End* (1992), about a gay movie critic and a drifter who go on a dangerous road trip; *Stonewall* (1995), a fictionalization of the Stonewall riots; and *Yossi and Jagger* (2002), about two Israeli army officers who have to hide their love for each other, as well as the sequel *Yossi* (2013). In 2014, Strand released the GLAAD Media Award-nominated film *Lilting*, which follows the journey to understanding between a British man and the Chinese Cambodian mother of his deceased partner. They also handled Brazil's official Academy Award submission *The Way He Looks* about blind teenager Leonardo, his best friend Giovanna and Leo's crush Gabriel who recently moved to their town. Additional films include *Stranger by the Lake* and *Interior. Leather Bar*.



THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

Founded in 2005 by brothers Bob and Harvey Weinstein, The Weinstein Company produces and distributes films and creates content for television. Their most significant inclusive films to date include *Transamerica* (2005, released in conjunction with IFC Films), in which a transgender woman discovers she has a long-lost son, as well as *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (2008), *A Single Man* (2009), and *Philomena* (2013). In 2014, The Weinstein Company released the Alan Turing biopic *The Imitation Game*, which has made over \$200 million dollars worldwide to date, amassed several award nominations and wins (including a GLAAD Media Award), and garnered critical acclaim. The film is now the third highest domestic grossing LGBT themed film since 1980 and has launched a campaign helmed by star Benedict Cumberbatch and out actor Stephen Fry petitioning the U.K. government to pardon the 49,000 others who were convicted decades ago under anti-gay “gross indecency” laws like Turing. The Weinstein Company also released *Yves Saint Laurent*, one of two recent biopics about the legendary French fashion designer, last year.

WOLFE RELEASING

Established in 1985, Wolfe Releasing is the oldest distributor in North America to solely focus on LGBT-inclusive cinema. The company distributes independent films that tell the stories of the LGBT community. Although the company has an impressive roster of films, a few are particularly noteworthy. The 2004 drama *Brother to Brother* is about an interracial gay couple that meets an older gay man in Harlem, who tells them about gay life during the Harlem Renaissance. The French drama *Tomboy* (2001) follows a gender non-conforming child who decides to live as a boy after moving to a new neighborhood, and *Reaching for the Moon* (2013) is a biographical film about the relationship between Brazilian architect Lota de Macedo Soares and Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Elizabeth Bishop. While Wolfe didn't release any films theatrically in 2014, they did distribute several LGBT-inclusive films on digital and DVD/Blu Ray including *Test*, about a young gay dancer living in San Francisco during the early days of the AIDS epidemic, and the drama *Pit Stop*, which follows two gay men living in a small town. Other releases include *I Am Divine*, *Hot Guys with Guns*, and *Free Fall*.



GLAAD'S ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA TEAM

GLAAD's Entertainment Media Team not only works with entertainment-related media platforms to encourage fair, accurate, and inclusive representation of LGBT people, but also to combat problematic content and instances of defamation in these industries. This process may involve reading scripts, viewing rough cuts, pitching story ideas, consulting with writers and producers, working with talent to better inform them about portraying LGBT characters and arranging entertainment-related events and panels. GLAAD also promotes LGBT-inclusive projects through GLAAD's newsroom, social media and the weekly LGBT TV listings, "Must-See LGBT TV," and through its annual GLAAD Media Awards.

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ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA INTERNS

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

CLEO ANDERSON – Antioch University – Class of 2016

MARIAH YAMAMOTO – Boston University – Class of 2015

JORGE MOLINA – University of Southern California – Class of 2016

GLAAD rewrites the script for LGBT acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

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