Exclusionary Hiring Practices On Screen & Behind the Camera for People of Color in Entertainment

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Since 2005, I have been conducting research on diversity and inclusion on screen and behind the camera in entertainment. In 2008, I founded the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative at the University of Southern California to not only document patterns of exclusion in media but also to offer research-driven solutions for change.[1] Much of our work has focused on identity groups which are historically marginalized (i.e., gender, age, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, mental health conditions) by the entertainment industry in general and the film business in particular. Our team has also examined barriers facing content creators behind the camera in film as well as factors related to box office performance.

Using this body of work, my written remarks are framed below for the House Committee for the Judiciary hearing on "Diversity in America: The Representation of People of Color in the Media." This prepared statement seeks to answer four central questions about the exclusion of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) community in film: 1) what is the inclusion profile of BIPOC characters on screen in popular film?, 2) who calls the shots behind the camera in popular films?, 3) what are the barriers facing people of color as directors of feature fictional films?, and 4) what are concrete solutions for creating career sustainability for the BIPOC community in Hollywood and viable change?

A few caveats are important to note before addressing these queries. My remarks focus on film, as motion pictures are often the most exclusionary when examining cross media comparisons (e.g., TV, streaming). Given that this hearing is about media, footnotes address patterns of inclusion in television content (broadcast, basic and premium cable) and digital scripted series. In this way, this document provides a holistic overview of exclusionary hiring practices across different delivery mechanisms (I.e., film, tv, streaming). Additionally, it is important to understand trends in storytelling from an intersectional perspective. Racial/ethnic characters, in combination with other identity factors (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, disability, age), tend to be erased on screen. As such, this document tries to highlight the unique challenges facing women of color in film and incorporates other identity factors when data was available.

This document also begins with the assumption that media exposure can contribute to negative and positive effects in society. Studies show that media can be both an independent and interactive factor that contributes to the socio-emotional, cognitive, and/or behavioral development of youth.[2] Media messages can also impact adults. These assumptions are a given based on over 50 years of empirical research and theorizing and thus effect studies are not reviewed in this document. Rather, we focus on employment patterns and labor issues facing on screen and behind the camera talent in storytelling. Given the focus on fictional narratives, we do not address inclusion in more realistic forms of media content (e.g., documentaries, news) or the impact of exposure to stories framed as news, reality series or current events.

On Screen Patterns

This section seeks to answer the following central question, ***what is the inclusion profile for BIPOC characters on screen in popular film?*** To answer this query, we have conducted a longitudinal content analysis of the 100 top-grossing movies from 2007 to 2019.[3] Put differently, this study has assessed 1,300 of the most popular films in the U.S. and more than 55,000 speaking characters over time. While we look at multiple indicators of representation, two are particularly relevant to this report. The first pertains to leading or co leading characters that drive the action or carry the plot. We also capture every named or discernable speaking character on screen. Speaking characters only need to utter one word independently to be counted in this study. This is a very low bar!

Focusing first on leads/co leads, only 17% were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups across the sample of 1,300 movies.[4] As shown in Table 1, 2019 was an all-time high with 32 films depicting an underrepresented lead/co lead. Not only was 2019 higher than 2007 but also was meaningfully different than 2018.

Disaggregating the 2019 findings is important, as the 32 movies had 37 leads/co leads of which 20 were Black, 4 Asian, 2 Hispanic/Latino, 1 Middle Eastern/North African (MENA), and 10 Multiracial/ Multiethnic. It is important to note that Hispanic/Latinos are the largest minority group in the U.S. (18.5% of population) and the largest group of ticket buyers at the box office (21%), and were relegated to only 2 leads/co leads across the 100 top movies of 2019.[5]

Table 1
Percentage of Underrepresented Leads/Co Leads Across 1,300 Films: 2007-2019

Year	% of UR Leads/ Co Leads	% of UR Female Leads/Co Leads
2007	13%	1%
2008	13%	4%
2009	17%	4%
2010	12%	5%
2011	9%	5%
2012	12%	2%
2013	16%	3%
2014	18%	4%
2015	13%	3%
2016	14%	3%
2017	21%	4%
2018	27%	11%
2019	32%	17%
Total	**16.7%**	**5.1%**

Note: Each year we assess the 100 top films. Thus, for each year indicators represent the total number of leads / co leads from the designated group.

The results for all independent speaking or named characters are presented in Table 2. Most characters across the 100 top-grossing films of 2019 were White (65.7%), 15.7% Black, 4.9% Hispanic/Latino, 7.2%

Asian, 1.6% Middle Eastern/North African, <1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, <1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 4.4% Multiracial/Multiethnic.[6] In total, 34.3% of all speaking or named characters were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups which is notably below U.S. Census (39.9%).[7]

Table 2
Prevalence of Character Race/Ethnicity On Screen by Year: 2007-2019

Year	White	Black	Latino	Asian	AI/AN	NH/PI	MENA	Multiracial
2007	77.6%	13.0%	3.3%	3.4%	.1%	.1%	2.3%	<.01%
2008	71.2%	13.2%	4.9%	7.1%	.2%	.4%	2.8%	.1%
2009	76.2%	14.7%	2.8%	4.7%	.2%	.1%	1.2%	<.01%
2010	77.6%	10.3%	3.9%	5.0%	.4%	.1%	2.6%	.2%
2011	77.1%	9.1%	5.9%	4.1%	.4%	.4%	.7%	2.4%
2012	76.3%	10.8%	4.2%	5.0%	.2%	<.01%	3.3%	.1%
2013	74.1%	14.1%	4.9%	4.4%	.3%	0	1.1%	1.2%
2014	73.1%	12.5%	4.9%	5.3%	.1%	<.01%	2.9%	1.2%
2015	73.7%	12.2%	5.3%	3.9%	.3%	.3%	.7%	3.6%
2016	70.8%	13.5%	3.1%	5.6%	.1%	.7%	3.4%	2.7%
2017	70.7%	12.1%	6.2%	4.8%	.5%	.1%	1.7%	3.9%
2018	63.7%	16.9%	5.3%	8.2%	<.01%	.4%	1.5%	4.0%
2019	65.7%	15.7%	4.9%	7.2%	.4%	.2%	1.6%	4.4%

Note: Latino refers to Hispanic/Latino, AI/AN refers to American Indian/Alaskan Native, NH/PI refers to Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and MENA refers to Middle Eastern/North African. Across 104 indicators, 33 cells (32%) represent a group's prevalence under 1% within a given year and 67 (64%) represent a proportion under 5%.

These findings have moved little over time. Though we have seen *decreases* in the percentage of White characters from 2007, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and characters from other racial/ethnic groups have not meaningfully increased (5 percentage points) in 13 years. Matter of fact, the percentage of speaking characters from the largest racial/ethnic minority groups (i.e., Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian) were lower in 2019 than they were in 2018.

Presenting findings across all movies per year may mask important deviation (I.e., highs, lows) within the sample. As a result, the following analyses looked at how many films erased characters from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups on screen altogether. The analysis focused on women and girls, as research has continuously demonstrated that men and boys are more likely to be depicted on screen.[8]

As shown in Table 3, an epidemic of invisibility faces all non-white girls and women on screen in storytelling. In 2019, 33 of 100 top films erased Black girls and women from appearing on screen, 55 deleted Asian and Asian American females, 71 movies were devoid of Hispanic/Latinas, and 92 excised Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) women and girls. Females identifying as Indigenous were virtually obliterated from all on screen portrayals.

Table 3
Epidemic of Invisibility On Screen by Race/Ethnicity
across the 100 Top-Grossing Films of 2019

Racial/Ethnic Group	All Speaking Characters	Female Speaking Characters
White	4	7
Hispanic/Latino	44	71
Black	15	33
Asian	36	55
American Indian/Alaskan Native	94	97
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	96	99
Middle Eastern/North African	80	92
Multiracial/Multiethnic	33	45

If we intersect women and girls of color with our measures of LGBTQ or characters with disabilities, the numbers become even more dire.[9] Almost all films (96) rendered underrepresented women from the LGBTQ community invisible. Similar erasure occurred for underrepresented girls and women with a disability who were missing from 92 out of 100 movies. Even more alarming, 498 movies erased transgender women of color across the 500 top U.S. films from 2014-2019. Clearly, the movie business is not motivated to ensure that the world we see on screen reflects the world we live in.

The above analyses focus on mere prevalence on screen. But stereotyping is also alive and well in storytelling.[10] Research in this vein typically looks at the nature or context of roles involving different races/ethnicities. To illuminate these tired tropes, one must look no further than our analysis of Hispanic/Latinos across the 200 top films of 2017 and 2018 (see Table 4).

Table 4
Attributes of Hispanic/Latino Characters across 200 Popular Films: 2017-2018

Attribute	All Speaking Characters	Top Billed Characters
Criminal	24%	28%
Low Income	13%	17%
Immigrant	3%	5%
Religious	21%	26%
Isolated	36%	60%
Temperamental/Angry	12%	21%
Total	262	72

Note: Each column refers to Hispanic/Latino characters among the group. The first 5 actors listed on Studio System were designated as those receiving top billing.

Just under a quarter (24%) of all of Hispanic/Latino speaking characters and 28% of top billed talent within this group were depicted as law breakers across a range of violent and non-violent crimes. Over

half (61.9%) of all characters engaged in illegal activity were depicted as gang members or drug dealers. Thirty-eight percent of criminals were shown committing fraud, thievery, or murder or were portrayed as previously incarcerated. One-sixth (17%) of all top billed Hispanic/Latino talent and one-eighth (13%) of all speaking characters were shown poor or impoverished on screen. Apparently, the bias in film is to write and cast Hispanic/Latinos characters in poor, isolated, and criminal roles which may have harmful in group and out group effects on the audience.[11]

Scholars have found similar patterns when investigating tropes surrounding Hispanic/Latinos as well as other racial/ethnic groups.[12] In her research article, Mok[13] overviews antiquated stereotypes of the Asian and Asian American community in Hollywood (e.g., *Dragon Lady, Fu Manchu, Noble Sufferer, Charlie Chan, Geisha*) and Shaheen[14] delineates the portrayal of Arab characters (e.g., *Villains, Sheikhs, Maidens,* and geographically specific stereotypes of Egyptians and Palestinians), while the MENA Arts Advisory Council[15] examined tropes in prime-time and streaming television (e.g., *Tokens, Threats, Foreigners*). These are similar to the stereotypes captured by the Pop Culture Collaborative and Pillars Foundation[16] in film (e.g., *Terrorist/Hijacker, Sheikh, Killer Kids, Siren or Silent, Haters, Redeemers, Good Muslims, Bad Muslims*). In terms of Black and African American characters, Bogle has outlined the negative and demeaning stereotypes found in the early days of Hollywood that are still being perpetuated today.[17]

Summing up, the movie business knows how to marginalize and perpetuate inequality in storytelling. Whether we look at leading/co leading protagonists or those that only speak one word on screen, the erasure and stereotyping of underrepresented racial/ethnic groups persists over time. To understand what factors might be contributing to these on-screen trends, one only must look behind the camera. This is the focus of the next section of this brief.

Behind the Camera Employment Patterns

This section answers the question, ***who calls the shots behind the camera in popular film?*** Across 1,300 of the top-grossing films in the U.S., we examined the number and percentage of directors from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. Of course, directors are not only the top leadership position on a film but set the agenda for casting and crewing up production teams. Focusing first on 2019, out of 112 directors, a full 80.4% were White and 19.6% (*n*=22) were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups.[18] Nine of the 22 helmers were Multiracial/Multiethnic (8%), 7 were Black (6.3%), 4 were Asian (3.6%), and 2 were Hispanic/Latino (1.8%).

Looking across the 13-year sample (see Table 5), we zeroed in on the three largest racial/ethnic groups (i.e., Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian) in the director's chair. Only 6% (*n*=88) of all directors were Black alone or in combination with another racial/ethnic group. The number of Black directed films across 2019 (9) decreased from a 13-year high in 2018 (15). 2019 movies were not different from those in 2007 (8 movies), in terms of hiring Black directors. The majority (*n*=80; 90.9%) of these helmers across the 13-year sample were men while only 7 different directors were Black women: Gina Prince-Bythewood, Kasi Lemmons, Melina Matsoukas, Sanaa Hamri, Stella Meghie, Tina Gordon, and Ava Duvernay, who directed two movies over the sample time frame.

Table 5
Number of Black, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian Directors by Gender & Year: 2007-2019

Year	Black Men	Black Women	H/L Men	H/L Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Total
2007	8	0	3	0	3	0	**112**
2008	5	2	2	0	2	1	**112**
2009	7	0	7	0	1	0	**111**
2010	5	0	2	0	4	0	**109**
2011	2	0	3	0	3	1	**108**
2012	6	0	2	0	2	0	**121**
2013	7	0	5	0	6	0	**107**
2014	4	1	8	0	0	0	**107**
2015	4	0	3	0	6	0	**107**
2016	7	0	2	1	4	1	**120**
2017	5	1	8	0	4	0	**109**
2018	14	1	3	0	4	0	**112**
2019	6	3	2	2	6	0	**112**
Total	**5% (*n*=80)**	**<1% (*n*=8)**	**3% (*n*=50)**	**<1% (*n*=3)**	**3% (*n*=45)**	**<1% (*n*=3)**	**1,447**

The presence of Black directors behind the camera has been associated with on screen portrayals. Black directors were more likely than non-Black directors in 2019 to have Black leads/co leads (100%, 14.3%, respectively) and Black speaking or named characters on screen (53.1%, 12.1% respectively). The prevalence of Black women and girls also increased on screen with Black helmers (vs. non-Black; 21.9% vs. 4.4% respectively).

The numbers and percentages for Asian and Hispanic/Latino directors also have been abysmal. Using our 1,300-film sample, only 3% of helmers were Asian or Asian American. 2019 was not different than 2018 or 2007 in hiring patterns for Asian directors. In 13 years, only three Asian women have helmed one of these large budget films. However, this number reduces to two individual women as one female director worked twice (i.e., Jennifer Yuh Nelson). The other Asian woman director had her credit contested on *Slumdog Millionaire*.[19] Similar to Black directors, Asian helmers were more likely to have Asian characters on screen than non-Asian directors (27.3% vs. 5.9%). Our 2019 findings replicate what we have found in earlier research across 500 movies.[20]

Hispanic/Latinos only accounted for 4% (*n*=53) of directors across 1,300 movies. No changes have been observed over time; 2019 did not deviate meaningfully from 2018 or 2007. It is important to note that of the 53 Hispanic/Latino helmers, only three were women.[21] If we were to report on the percentage of Latinx or U.S. born Latino or Afro-Latino directors, these numbers fall precipitously.[22] Matter of fact, only 18 of the 53 directors across these 1,300 films were born in the U.S. and only 2 were Afro-Latino.

Overall, inclusion in the director's chair has been associated with onscreen visibility and representation. But, we also have evidence that underrepresented directors are associated with below the line hiring patterns.[23] Our research shows that across 300 top films from 2016-2018, few underrepresented artists were hired in key production jobs.[24] Only 10.3% of producers were underrepresented (men=90, women=12), 15.4% of cinematographers and/or directors of photography (men=41, women=0), 5.7% of

editors (men=15, women=6), 9.5% of composers (men=28, women=1), 5.9% of production designers (men=12, women=4), 13.2% costume designers (men=7, women=29), and 12.7% of casting directors (men=5, women=43).

The proportion of underrepresented crew across these six positions was significantly different when an underrepresented director was attached to a film versus a white helmer. Across films with an underrepresented director, 23.5% of the crew belonged to an underrepresented racial/ethnic group compared to 7.1% when the director was white.

One possible explanation for the lack of inclusion in the director's chair is the profile of executive management teams across Hollywood studios. Based on research[25] released in early 2020 and examining leadership positions across 11 "major and mid-major studios," 91% of Chairs/CEOs were White, 93% of "senior executives," and 86% of "unit heads" (as defined in the report as "casting, marketing, legal and other core studio functions") were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. Without inclusion in the executive ranks, it will be very difficult for these companies to create diversity and belonging across their movie slates and production teams for top feature films.

Barriers Facing Underrepresented Directors

Besides the composition of the executive ranks, our work has also explored the reasons or explanations for the lack of inclusion in the director's chair.[26] More specifically, we have asked ***what barriers or impediments face underrepresented directors of narrative films?*** To answer this question, we draw on our qualitative work completed with the Sundance Institute and funded by the Research: Art Works Programs at the National Endowment for the Arts. For this project, we interviewed 20 emerging and seasoned narrative directors about the barriers they experienced navigating fictional film careers. While the sample size was small, the findings mirror those from our other qualitative studies asking women helmers and decision makers (e.g., executives, agents) about the impediments female film directors face in the narrative space.[27] The findings illuminate not only the experiences of underrepresented directors but how industry biases and beliefs impact career paths and result in an industry with skewed employment patterns on screen and behind the camera.

The barriers are displayed in Table 6. Ninety percent of the underrepresented directors indicated they faced a financial impediment working in film. As we stated in this report, "the barrier reflects low or intermittent pay for work, the time filmmakers spend developing projects, and the difficulty obtaining financing" (2014, p. 18). As noted in the press, on panels and in discussions about barriers to entry in the film business, financial resources are a common impediment for those who do not hail from generational wealth. It should be noted that a lack of inherited or familial wealth due to class and/or race/ethnicity was also spontaneously mentioned specifically by 25% of participants in the study.[28] A similar general financial impediment was noted by female filmmakers in other research,[29] though the percentage of women reporting this barrier was substantially lower (37.2%) than what we found with underrepresented directors.

Table 6
Response Categories for Spontaneously Identified Barriers

Barrier	% Reporting
General Finance	90%
Politicized Market Forces	65%
Abilities Doubted	40%
Class & Wealth	25%
Perceived Community Incongruity	25%
Gendered Barriers	25%

Besides paying their bills, a second and perhaps more insidious barrier was reported by underrepresented directors. Nearly two-thirds of those surveyed (65%) expressed that *perceptions* of decision makers about the market or audience limited their ability to secure work/obtain financing. We labeled this impediment ***politicized market forces***. The (*mis*) perception of decision-makers manifested itself in three different ways: 1) lack of market value for stories featuring underrepresented racial/ethnic protagonists, 2) limited bankability of BIPOC talent, and/or 3) lack of audiences for these stories (see page 18). Each theme provides industry leaders with a justification for not hiring underrepresented directors—even if it is not based in evidence. Examples from the interviews include:

"People have straight up told me, 'Nah, you can't really have these characters all be Black or you can't have this one character be Black.' And ''Cause, you know, people won't go see it, or people won't like it, or people won't finance it, or you know you can't get distribution in this country or that country.' I mean people with the power to distribute film and with the power to finance films have told me that to my face…"

"I am very aware that film is a commodity and they're trying to figure out how to sell it, and there's nothing very sexy or marketable about Asian-American stuff, maybe Asian stuff, but not Asian-American, you know?"

"…there's a very short list of movie stars, the people that are considered movie stars that are Latin."

Market-based exclusion can be countered with empirical research, however. In early 2020, with Reframe, we released an economic analysis of what sells in films by race/ethnicity and gender of leading/co leading characters. After controlling for a variety of production, distribution and exhibition factors, the underrepresented status of leads/co leads (white vs. not white) was *positively* associated with box office revenue in the U.S., suggesting that BIPOC protagonists do in fact sell in this country.

Internationally, movies with underrepresented leads/co leads and primarily underrepresented casts (.80-1.0) were among the highest earners across the sample of films, whereas those with White leads/co leads with primarily underrepresented casts were among the lowest earners. These findings were revealed in an exploratory interaction between leads and casts and thus need further scrutiny with additional data. Also, the number of movies in these two categories reflect a much smaller subset of the 1,200 films, therefore this result should be interpreted cautiously and warrants replication once the box office stabilizes post COVID-19.

The same data set examined the impact of A-listers or star power on box office performance. Controlling for a variety of factors, our path models showed that star power[30] was *not* a significant predictor of box office performance in the U.S. or abroad. These findings suggest a fundamental disconnect between executives' perceptions of what sells and the types of stories and protagonists that make money. This is true for leads/co leads from the BIPOC community as well as those that are Caucasian. Hence, the myths that decision makers use to finance or green light projects are inconsistent with what we know empirically about stories and audiences.

One reason for this disconnect is that the audience of films is increasingly diverse. According to the most recent MPA (2020) study, a full 46% of those buying movie tickets in 2019 were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. Twenty five percent of ticket buyers were Hispanic/Latino, 11% Black/African American, 7% were Asian, and 3% were from other racial/ethnic groups. Thus, the concern over "audience receptivity" seems to be unfounded given that underrepresented consumers comprise nearly half of ticket buyers. It is important to note that girls and women make up 51% of the audience, a stable finding for quite some time, and yet the film business has marginalized their stories for decades.[31]

Simply put, a viable marketplace exists for underrepresented directors and their stories. Yet, the industry does not prioritize their artistic talents as they do white male directors. In fact, a full 40% of those directors we interviewed stated that their abilities were doubted, questioned, or challenged in some way (p. 20). Of those listing this barrier, 62.5% indicated specifically that their race/ethnicity or a personal attribute was the basis of the impediment whereas 50% referenced their age. Examples of this barrier include:

"There was definitely the sense when I would shadow on shows like I was a Make-A-Wish foundation kid, like this is a treat for the person of color to get to see how TV shows are made as opposed to actually taking me seriously as contender."

"I feel like on set sometimes… people don't take you seriously. Especially being…if you look young and if you are, maybe just you're not White."

For those executives concerned with an underrepresented director's point of view or artistic talent, our research suggests that they shouldn't be. Across 1,300 top films from 2007 to 2019, the storytelling prowess of directors does not vary by underrepresented status (white vs. not white). Examining Metacritic scores,[32] the average rating for films with white directors (Mean=54.2) was not meaningfully different than the average rating for films with underrepresented directors (Mean=54.9). This bias is another means of justifying decisions not to hire underrepresented directors rather than a judgment based in evidence from outside evaluators.

Having your abilities and perspective doubted can have at least two negative consequences. First, the support underrepresented directors receive is lower than what is provided to their white counterparts. In fact, our economic analysis shows that films with white leads, in comparison to those with underrepresented leads/co leads, have higher median production budgets ($50,735,000 vs. $35,481,000), domestic print and advertising costs ($42,525,000 vs. $37,746,000), and were released in more U.S. theaters (3,201 vs. 3,016.5).[33] When the point of view and abilities of an underrepresented director are not valued or trusted, there may be a direct loss of real dollar support for the stories they want to tell and how they (and the underrepresented protagonists and cast of the film) are compensated.

Second, underrepresented filmmakers may also experience negative psychological outcomes. Forty percent of the underrepresented directors interviewed stated that they developed coping strategies to navigate the emotional turmoil they experienced from stigma or discrimination. In fact, 25% of the directors interviewed in the NEA study mentioned spontaneously that the entertainment industry was racist or discriminatory in nature, even though these terms were not explicitly mentioned by the interviewer. While such strategies may be helpful, they shift mental effort and affective resources away from the task at hand and can have a detrimental impact on performance – a situation not likely to face white male directors.

The final two barriers were mentioned by 25% of the respondents: ***perceived community incongruity*** and the ***intersection of gender and race/ethnicity***. Perceived incongruity or lack of fit between their identity and a broader community was expressed by statements such as: *"I realized that would've been nice to be, to be part of one of the groups that control or they are in the system…being Latino is not enough….Latinos, they are not necessarily all united. It depends if you're coming from Mexico, if you're coming from Cuba, if you're coming from Colombia, you know it's difficult."* Another example from the interviewees included, *"I think being mixed-race…because it's like everything in the world you kinda fall through the cracks, and you're not part of any sort of African-American community and you're not really part of a White community either, you're kind of somewhere in the middle."* A lack of fit is particularly important given the film financing and distribution networks that may result within communities. For filmmakers who feel that they do not fit within one community, this may limit access to the funding sources and information that they need to accelerate their careers.

Finally, 25% of those interviewed—all but one of the women included in the study—stated that as women of color they faced barriers related to both their gender and race/ethnicity. This was exemplified by statements such as: *"You're just not taken as seriously, people think you can only direct certain types of films, and not necessarily action films or dramatic films or something that's more generally directed by men."* Women directors from all backgrounds face career obstructions, a finding substantiated across multiple studies conducted by the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative.[34] Yet, across the entertainment industry, women of color face exclusion on nearly every metric.

The lack of girls and women of color as speaking characters in popular film has already been reviewed, along with the marginalization of women of color working as directors and in other creative positions. In addition, 17% of leading/co leading roles across the 100 top films of 2019 went to girls and women of color. This is a notable increase from 2007, when the percentage was 1%. However, across 817 live-action top-grossing movies from 2007 to 2018, only 34 were centered solely on a girl or woman of color. This translates to 4% of those 817 films or a ratio of 14.85 films starring white men to every 1 film starring a woman of color.[35]

Movies with girls and women of color in leading roles receive the lowest support when it comes to production, marketing, and distribution. Production budgets for movies with underrepresented female leads were lower ($19.2M) compared to those with white male ($52M), underrepresented male ($38.5M), or white female ($31.3M) leads. The same trend was observed for domestic marketing budgets, where the difference between the median figure awarded to white male-led films and underrepresented female-driven movies was roughly $13.8 million. For international marketing, the median difference between films with white male leads and women of color leads was approximately $9.7 million.

The lack of support extends to other factors, including film genre, sequel status, and the number of international territories in which films starring women of color are distributed.[36] Across the sample, 2 action movies starred women of color, compared to 128 with white male leads, 27 with underrepresented male leads, and 10 with white female leads. Only one movie in the sample with a solo woman of color in a leading role was a sequel. In terms of international distribution, only 3 movies starring women of color were exhibited in China. However, 174 movies with white male leads, 48 with white female leads, and 24 with underrepresented leads were shown in this large film market. Each of these factors may impact the long-term career sustainability of film stars and filmmakers. Biases regarding the economic profitability of movies starring women of color have resulted in few being made—but these biases are predicated on providing fewer resources to these films.

The dearth of underrepresented women in entertainment extends to film critics as well. Across the 300 top movies from 2015 to 2017, underrepresented women critics wrote a mere 4% of movie reviews.[37] Nearly half (48.3%) of the 300 top movies did not have even one woman of color as a top critic composing a review. This was also true of 45.4% of the 108 female-driven movies and 35.1% of the films with underrepresented leads. These figures show that women of color working as film reviewers were not only shut out of a large share of popular movies, but of those that align with their own identity.

Despite this, when women of color reviewed films starring underrepresented girls and women, they rated those films higher than white male critics did. The lack of women of color as film critics means that the perspectives, voices, and talent of these reviewers is missing from the ecosystem. In the case of the few films that star women of color, this may also perpetuate biases held across the wider industry about the quality and story strength of these movies.

Taken together, the aim of this section was to review barriers facing underrepresented film directors. Hiring BIPOC helmers was not only associated with inclusion on screen but also below the line. Thus, the key to creating more inclusive storylines and production teams involves hiring and curating more underrepresented directors from a variety of different backgrounds. To achieve these goals, a series of solutions are presented in the final section of this brief.

Solutions for Change

Given the representational gaps noted above, a variety of solutions are needed to create systemic change. The solutions must be specific to be successful and evaluated for their efficacy over time. Further, the solutions must apply to different inclusion gaps on screen or behind the camera. Toward this goal, we overview five actionable steps that the film industry, festivals, state and federal governments, colleges and universities and other creative organizations can take in the short- and long-term to foster inclusion and belonging in entertainment over the next 2 to 5 years.

Company-Wide Inclusion Policies and Actions

Entertainment companies can take steps create change. The first way to do so is by developing a comprehensive company policy for change at the studio or production company level. This includes setting target inclusion goals. Target inclusion goals are not quotas, but aspirational benchmarks regarding inclusion. By setting these goals, companies can ensure that future employment does not reflect the status quo.

Goals should be constructed while considering current percentages of both employment as well as pipeline figures. For example, the percentage of underrepresented directors at the Sundance Film Festival in 2018 and 2019 (42%) is higher than the percentage of underrepresented directors working in episodic television (27%), which is in turn greater than the percentage of top-grossing film directors who were underrepresented (19.6%).[38] With these and similar guideposts to gauge the size of the talent pool, companies can critically examine the progress they want to make in employment patterns on screen and behind the camera not to mention their own executive ranks.

A second aspect of company policies must be to outline their approach to increasing inclusion. This policy must include transparent approaches to interviewing and hiring practices. These must be applicable to the highest positions within the company, where the demographic profile rarely matches the audience. Additionally, the use of objective and quantifiable criteria in hiring is essential to counteract biases that continue to limit the employment of those from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. This is also important for processes related to film financing, marketing, and distribution. By accurately calibrating resource allocation without basing decisions upon the race/ethnicity of the lead character or director, companies can ensure they are providing equivalent levels of support to movies and their helmers. Countering biases that arise in decision-making with criteria or evidence is necessary if the industry wants to move beyond the myths that have resulted in the status quo.

The third aspect of organizational goal setting is to consider the entire supply chain, from above-the-line talent to the vendors and individuals who provide ancillary services for film. Moreover, organizations across the entertainment ecosystem can take steps to be more inclusive. This applies to unions, guilds, film and journalism schools, press outlets, film festivals, publicists, and other groups affiliated with the film and television industries. With collective action, the industry can seek to course correct from its history of exclusion and create a more equitable and inclusive future.

One solution studios and production companies can enact immediately is to commit to eradicating the epidemic of invisibility on screen, particularly for women and girls of color. Beginning with the greenlighting process, executives can charge casting directors with the task of inclusive auditioning and casting, along with adding roles when targets are not met. Setting flexible casting targets prior to production may be imperative, as many casting directors have been White women who have had little impact on increasing on screen inclusion across the 1,300 top films from 2007 to 2019.[39]

Here, we will illustrate just how easy it would be to eradicate invisibility on screen for different racial/ethnic groups using our principle ***Just Add Five*** on Hispanic/Latino characters in film. Only 7 movies across the top 500 films from 2015-2019 had proportional representation of Hispanic/Latino characters. ***Adding 5 Hispanic/Latino characters to each of the 100 top films would increase the overall percentage from 4.9% in 2019 to 15.7% in just one year.*** After setting a new norm, enacting the same procedure across 100 films from a subsequent year would increase the overall percentage of Hispanic/Latino characters to 24.3%. This figure is above current population proportions in the U.S. In two years, the invisibility of this ethnic group would vanish in film.

Apart from the ease of enacting this solution, it is also cost-effective. Wages for a small speaking role in a feature film are not expensive. This process does not take jobs or parts away from other actors and builds and reinforces the pipeline to larger roles on screen. For small roles in particular, the need for skilled, talented, or “name” actors should be low or nonexistent. Casting actors with little experience provides a point of entry for people from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups who want to work as actors, especially when filming occurs outside of large cities such as Miami, Los Angeles, or New York.

For example, more than three-quarters (77%) of U.S. states have a population of Hispanic/Latino individuals greater than the percentage of Hispanic/Latino characters in film.[40] The ***Just Add Five*** solution aims to increase the overall percentage of characters from a specific underrepresented racial/ethnic group through a simple, inexpensive, and effective means.

Tax Incentives

To increase participation of people from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, another place to focus is on tax incentives at the state and federal level. Tax incentives have been used to encourage productions in locations across the country, with states offering incentives for resident labor and other expenses.[41] These strategies to reward productions that take place in a specific location are government-backed and often require legislative approval. As such, there is a key opportunity to tie inclusion metrics to tax incentives to ensure that productions are representative of the constituents in that location both on-screen and behind-the-camera.

One example is recent film tax credit provisions created by California. Productions are required to report diversity statistics, supply evidence of policies that ban harassment and retaliation. There is also a provision for large studios to report programs related to diversity.[42] Other state and federal tax incentives could not only mirror this strategy but extend the stipulations to encourage achieving on-camera or behind-the-scenes inclusion metrics, particularly when filming occurs in locations that have resident populations from underrepresented groups that exceed overall population figures. ***Tax incentives already reward hiring resident labor; extending this to include resident labor from historically marginalized groups would provide reasons for productions to cast and hire crew members for local productions while serving to increase inclusion on sets***.

Film Funds to Support Underrepresented Filmmakers

The U.S. offers little in the way of governmental support for film and television projects. While Arts funding via the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities may encompass film, the ability of filmmakers creating fictional stories to access these resources may be limited. Instead, philanthropists and independent funders fill the gaps for many productions. The process of seeking funding may force filmmakers from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups to encounter the biases outlined above related to the economic value of stories about protagonists of color. ***A funding source that does not rely upon biases, is accessible to filmmakers from all backgrounds, and awards resources to projects that reflect diversity and inclusion is one way to ensure that more stories from underrepresented filmmakers are brought to market.***

It is not necessary to invent such an opportunity wholesale. Countries across the globe provide direct project support through national film funds. Some countries, including the U.K. (via the British Film Institute) and Sweden (via the Swedish Film Institute), have criteria that ensures funding is awarded with an eye toward achieving diversity in production. For example, the BFI Diversity Standards[43] are applied to funding requests for films and television, as well as movie distribution, festivals, awards eligibility, and other activities. They incorporate on-screen metrics, behind-the-camera staff, access to industry opportunities, and audience engagement. Federal and state funding sources could adopt similar principles, going beyond tax incentives to actively support filmmakers from all backgrounds whose access and opportunity have been limited by the current structure of film financing.

Build a Bridge from Film School to Industry Careers

Arts education is accessible to many young Americans. However, it is not educational opportunities that filmmakers and other individuals interested in working in entertainment need. Instead, a bridge from academic or training programs (including colleges and universities) into various aspects of the entertainment industry would facilitate career progress for talented and qualified individuals from underrepresented groups. Specifically, there is a need to strengthen existing programs and create new opportunities that provide pathways into leadership roles for underrepresented individuals.

Effective programs provide mentorship alongside tangible opportunities to move into paid positions that have the potential to result in ongoing work or promotion. This allows individuals from under-represented backgrounds to forge the network connections so essential to the entertainment industry as well as the chance to demonstrate proficiency. Additionally, removing impediments that stem from decision-making biases, union and guild policies, and financing structures must be tackled. At this level, programs will not be sufficient. Companies and industry organizations must take steps to ensure that they have addressed the barriers within organizations that restrict hiring, promotion, and/or membership. Moreover, other areas within entertainment must also take steps to make it possible for underrepresented individuals to move from entry-level or freelance positions to full-time and secure employment. This includes agencies, management teams, and publicists who work with creative talent. It also applies to journalism programs, publication outlets, and other entities that are necessary for the infusion of underrepresented voices into the fields of criticism and reporting. By tackling the problem both within organizations and through support offered to future industry professionals, the future of entertainment can be one in which the employment of individuals from underrepresented groups is not a goal but a reality.

Invest in the Pipeline of Underrepresented Filmmakers

A final way to improve the number and percentage of individuals from underrepresented groups in the film industry is to strengthen the talent pipeline. Data on submissions to the Sundance Film Festival[44] reveal that individuals from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups both desire to and are pursuing careers in filmmaking. Yet, the pipeline into top directing jobs must be bolstered. Programs that nurture and support talent, provide access to capital, and track directors from short films into larger job opportunities currently exist. These entities need ongoing funding, and for talent that emerges from these programs to have a pathway to larger jobs. Moreover, additional resources must be available in order to expand program offerings that address needs and gaps that affect specific communities.

A stronger pipeline for creators across all media platforms should bring about more authentic storytelling. As the number of directors, writers, and producers from these communities enter the industry, this should provide opportunities on screen for actors and access below the line for crew from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. Supporting pipeline programs that lead to careers in all aspects of entertainment are a crucial way to expand representation and inclusion overall. One example of this is the Group Effort Initiative,[45] launched by Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively, which aims to provide training and access to underrepresented groups in below-the-line roles. Programs like this can ameliorate the divide noted earlier between white directors and underrepresented directors when it comes to the inclusion of underrepresented individuals in on-set crew positions.

In summary, this section reviewed five potential solutions to address the exclusion people of color face across the entertainment industry. These remedies span on-screen casting, behind-the-camera hiring, and ways to support the current and next generation of storytellers. What is most important across

these solutions is the need for collective action. As entities across the industry, including in government, philanthropy, and education take an active role in fostering more inclusive environments, providing resources, and supporting creative and executive talent, percentages that have historically been resistant to change should move. Only by working together and addressing the biases and barriers that continue to restrict access and opportunity can there be true improvement and inclusion.

Endnotes

1. This testimony was prepared with the assistance of Dr. Katherine Peiper and Marc Choueiti. These two individuals, along with Dr. Stacy L. Smith, oversee the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative at USC and have published over 50 articles on inclusion in media. See Annenberg Inclusion Initiative (2020) research: http://annenberg.usc.edu/research/aii. Prior to 2017, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative was known as the Media, Diversity, and Social Change Initiative and published research under that moniker.

2. Bushman, B.J. & Huesmann, L.R. (2001). Effects of Televised Violence on Aggression. In D.G. Singer & J.L. Singer (Eds.), *Handbook of Children and the Media* (pp. 223-254). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Ramasubramanian, S. & Murphy, C.J. (2014) Chapter 17 - Experimental Studies of Media Stereotyping Effects, (M. Webster, J. Sell, Eds.) *Laboratory Experiments in the Social Sciences* (2nd Edition, pp. 385-402), Academic Press.

3. Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M., & Pieper, K. (2020a). *Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBTQ & Disability from 2007 to 2019*. Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inequality_1300_popular_films_09-08-2020.pdf.

4. Recent research on television (Hunt et al.) reveals that despite making gains in the past four to six years, leads from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups were consistently below the norm in the U.S. population. Across the 2016-17 broadcast, cable, and digital scripted TV series landscape, underrepresented actors accounted for just over a fifth of all leads (21.5%, 21.3%, and 21.3% respectively). According to data presented over time all three formats demonstrated increases, specifically from 2011-12 for broadcast and cable scripted series and from 2013-14 for digital scripted shows when the authors began examining online content. Comparisons between Smith et al. (2020) and the *Hollywood Diversity Report 2019* should be interpreted with caution. For *Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films*, leads and co leads are based on narrative and plot structure, whereas Hunt et al. (2019) define 'lead' as "the first credited actor/performer for a given project's list of cast members" (page 66).

Hunt, D., Ramon, A., & Tran, M. (2019). *Hollywood Diversity Report 2019*. University of California, Los Angeles. https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/UCLA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2019-2-21-2019.pdf

5. MPA (2020). *2019 THEME Report*. Retrieved from https://www.motionpictures.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/MPA-THEME-2019.pdf

6. Across television (Hunt et al., 2019) underrepresented actors overall approached proportional representation in broadcast scripted series (36.7%) in the 2016-17 season. Meanwhile, less than a third of cable scripted (28.2%) and digital scripted series casts (29.7%) featured actors from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. Authors noted that across all three platforms, the share of white actors decreased from the previous season (2015-16).

7. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). *Quick Facts*. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/LFE046218

8. Smith et al. (2020a). *Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films*.

9. Smith et al. (2020a). *Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films*. Unpublished raw data.

10. Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M., Case, A., Pieper, K., Clark, H., Hernandez, K., Martinez, J., Lopez B., & Mota, M. (2019a). *Latinos in Film: Erasure On Screen & Behind the Camera Across 1,200 Popular Movies*. Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-study-latinos-in-film-2019.pdf

11. Rivadeneyra, R. Ward, L. M. & Gordon, M. (2007). Distorted reflections: Media exposure and Latino adolescents' conceptions of self. *Media Psychology 9*, 261-290.

12. Negron-Muntaner, F. & Abbas, C. (2016). *The Latino Disconnect: Latinos in the Age of Media Mergers*. The Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, Columbia University. National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts. Berg, C. R. (1990). Stereotyping in films in general and of the Hispanic in particular. *The Howard Journal of Communications, 2(3)*, 286-300.

13. Mok, T. (1998). Getting the message: Media images and stereotypes and their effect on Asian Americans. *Cultural Diversity and Mental Health 4*(3), 185-202.

14. Shaheen, J.G. (2003). Reel bad Arabs: How Hollywood vilifies a people. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 588(1), 171-193.

15. Yuen, N.W., Chin, C.B., Deo, M.E., DuCros, F.M., Lee, J.J-H., Milman, N. (2018). Terrorists & Tyrants: Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) Actors in Prime Time and Streaming Television. *MENA Arts Advocacy Council.* Available: https://www.menaartsadvocacy.com/

16. Alhassen, M. (2018) *Haqq & Hollywood: Illuminating 100 years of Muslim Tropes and How to Transform Them*. Published by the Pop Culture Collaborative. https://popcollab.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/HaqqAndHollywood_Report.pdf

17. Bogle, D. (2001). *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films* (4th Edition). New York: Continuum.

18. Based on data from the Director's Guild (2019), underrepresented directors fare better in episodic television than in feature filmmaking but are still below proportional representation in the population. The most recent report from the DGA reveals 27% of episodes across the 2018-19 television season were helmed by underrepresented men and women, though not equally. The majority of those episodes were directed by men of color (19% of all episodes), whereas 8% of episodes were directed by women of color. Overall, the percentage of underrepresented directors increased by three points from the previous season (24% of episodes in 2017-18).

Apart from directors, TV show creators and writers from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups are far from reaching proportional representation (Hunt et al., 2019). According to the *Hollywood Diversity Report 2019* underrepresented men and women accounted for 9.4% of creators across 2016-17 broadcast scripted series and 11.2% across cable TV shows. The authors note that over time underrepresented creators increased greater than double between 2011-12 (4.2%) and 2016-17 in broadcast. For cable series, there was a slight increase from the previous season (2015-16, 7.3%) but otherwise gains and losses ranged under 5 percentage points over the six-year period examined for underrepresented creators. Though somewhat greater in proportion, just 16.5% of digital scripted series creators were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups – a gain of over 10 percentage points from the 2013-14 season (6.2%).

Recent data from the Writers Guild of America, West (2020) showed near proportional representation and upticks over time for writers of color. During the 2019-20 television season, 35% of writers hired across broadcast, cable, and streaming were from underrepresented racial ethnic groups. Increases occurred over a 10-year time span from 17% in 2009-10 to 35% in 2019-20. Differences by gender revealed that women writers of color outpaced underrepresented male writers by 3%. By examining racial/ethnic groups, Latinx writers were more underrepresented than other groups contrasting their share in the population (18.3%) with the percentage across TV writing jobs (8.7%). Analyses of the 'writer's room' or the hierarchy within writing credits on television series demonstrated that writers of color congregated at lower levels (executive story editor, story editor) and were less prevalent in the highest levels of TV writing (showrunner, executive producer).

Director's Guild of America (2019, November 19). *DGA Reports New Inclusion Records in the 2018-19 TV Season*. Retrieved from https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2019/191119-Episodic-Television-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx. Writers Guild of American West (2020). *WGAW Inclusion Report 2020*. Retrieved from https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/WGAW_Inclusion_Report_20.pdf

19. Singh, A. (2009, 23 January). Slumdog's female director 'should be able to share Oscar.' *London Evening Standard.* https://www.standard.co.uk/news/slumdog-s-female-director-should-be-able-to-share-oscar-6809470.html

20. Pieper, K., Choueiti, M., & Smith, S.L. (2014). *Race & Ethnicity in Independent Film: Prevalence of Underrepresented Directors and the Barriers They Face*. Los Angeles, CA: Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Research-Art-WorksSundance.pdf.

21. The three Hispanic/Latina directors across the 1,300-film sample were Patricia Riggen, Melina Matsoukas, & Roxann Dawson.

22. Smith et al. (2020b). *Latinos in Film*. Unpublished raw data.

23. Positions that are 'below the line' refer to film crew outside of the director, writer, producer, and principal cast. The term references the physical line drawn on a film's budget during development, related to positions set prior to and after the beginning of principal photography. See page 228 of Squire, J. E. (2017). *The Movie Business Book*. (4th edition). United States: Taylor & Francis.

24. Smith, S. L., Choueiti, M., Choi, A., & Pieper, K. (2019b). *Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Gender, Race, & Age of Directors Across 1,200 Top Films from 2007 to 2018*. Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/inclusion-in-the-directors-chair-2019.pdf. Data presented in text are slightly different (less than 2 percentage points) than statistics listed in the January, 2019 report. The updated information includes unpublished raw data and reflects the final sample of the 100 top-grossing films released in 2018 once box office receipts were settled well into 2019.

25. Hunt, D., & Ramon, A. (2020). *Hollywood Diversity Report 2020: A Tale of Two Hollywoods*. University of California, Los Angeles. https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/UCLA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2020-Film-2-6-2020.pdf

26. Pieper et al. (2014). *Race & Ethnicity in Independent Film*.

27. Smith, S.L., Pieper, K., & Choueiti, M. (2014). *Exploring the Barriers and Opportunities for Independent Women Filmmakers Phase I and II.* Report prepared for Sundance Institute and Women in Film Los Angeles, Female Filmmakers Initiative. Smith, S.L., Pieper, K., & Choueiti, M. (2015). *Exploring the Careers of Female Directors: Phase III.* Report prepared for Sundance Institute and Women in Film Los Angeles Female Filmmakers Initiative. Los Angeles, CA. Smith, S.L., Pieper, K., Choueiti, M., & Case, A. (2015). *Gender & Short Films: Emerging Female Filmmakers and the Barriers Surrounding Their Careers.* Report prepared for LUNAFEST. Los Angeles, CA. Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M., Pieper, K., Clark, H., Case, A., Choi, A., & Yao, K. (2019). *Increasing Inclusion in Animation: Investigating Opportunities, Challenges, and the Classroom to C-Suite Pipeline.* Report prepared for Women in Animation.

28. The ***class and wealth*** barrier was mentioned specifically by 25% of participants in Pieper et al. (2014) and was exemplified by statements such as, *"I don't come from a family that has money that can support me if I'm not doing that great…I have friends who don't have a full-time job and they can dedicate their whole time to making their film and that's definitely, they have an advantage because they don't have to worry about the stresses of everyday life…"*

29. Smith et al. (2014). *Exploring the Barriers and Opportunities for Independent Women Filmmakers Phase I and II*.

30. Smith, S. L., Weber, R., Choueiti, M., Pieper, K., Case, A., Yao, K., & Lee., C. (2020c). *The Ticket to Inclusion: Gender and Race/Ethnicity of Leads and Financial Performance Across 1,200 Popular Films.* ReFrame & USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-2020-02-05-ticket-to-inclusion.pdf

'Star power' was measured per film based on the lead or co-lead actor(s) having led or co-led one to three or more of the 15 top movies at the box office each year within the previous three years.

31. Smith, S.L. & Cook, C.A. (2008). *Gender Stereotypes: An Analysis of Popular Films and TV*. Los Angeles, CA: Annenberg School for Communication & The Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media. https://annenberg.usc.edu/sites/default/files/MDSCI_Gender_Stereotypes_in_Popular_Films_and_TV.pdf

32. Smith, S.L, Choueiti, M., Yao, K., Clark, H., & Pieper, K. (2020d). *Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Analysis of Director Gender & Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019*. Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-directors-chair-20200102.pdf

As a measure of story quality from low to high, Metacritic scores were collected for films in Smith et al. (2020d). Metacritic.com describes the construction of the score as "… carefully curate a large group of the world's most respected critics, assign scores to their reviews, and apply a weighted average to summarize the range of their opinions." *How We Create the Metascore Magic*. Retrieved from: https://www.metacritic.com/about-metascores

33. Smith et al. (2020c). *The Ticket to Inclusion*.

34. See studies listed in Footnote 27.

35. Smith et al. (2020c). *The Ticket to Inclusion.*

36. Smith et al. (2020c). *The Ticket to Inclusion.*

37. Choueiti, M., Smith, S.L., Pieper, K., & Case, A. (2018). *Critic's Choice 2: Gender and Race/Ethnicity of Film Reviewers Across 300 Top Films from 2015-2017.* Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/critics-choice-2.pdf

38. The USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative (2020). *Inclusion at Film Festivals: Examining the Gender and Race/Ethnicity of Narrative Directors from 2017-2019.* Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-film-festivals-20200127.pdf. Director's Guild of America (2019). *DGA Reports New Inclusion Records in the 2018-19 TV Season*. Smith et al. (2020a). *Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films*.

39. Smith et al. (2020a). *Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films*.

40. Smith et al. (2019a). *Latinos in Film.*

41. Sandberg, B.E. (2016, April 21). Film and TV Tax Incentives: A State-by-State Guide. *The Hollywood Reporter.* https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/film-tv-tax-incentives-a-885699

42. Bollag, S. (2018, June 19). California lawmakers push diversity through film tax credit. *Associated Press* https://apnews.com/c458d7e41d07414f9be769f0df2117e6/California-lawmakers-push-diversity-through-film-tax-credit

43. BFI Diversity Standards. See https://www.bfi.org.uk/inclusion-film-industry/bfi-diversity-standards

44. Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M., Clark, H., & Pieper, K. (2019c). *Sundance Institute: Artist Demographics in Submissions & Acceptances*. Annenberg Inclusion Initiative & Sundance Institute. http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-study-sundance-institute-jan2019.pdf

45. Group Effort Initiative. https://www.groupeffortinitiative.com/